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The New “Ex Yu” Music Scene in Vienna (“Kafana on Steroids” or birth and death of “Ex Yu” pop rock scene in Vienna)

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1. Preface

After arriving in the capital of Austria in March 2016 in order to start my masters studies in Sociology at the University of Vienna, I immediately started looking for some work in order to support myself and my family. As a musician with over twenty years of experience, doing live gigs, music festivals and guitar teaching, it was only logical to explore this familiar path in the new environment.

I started playing in a band at the age of fourteen. It was a school band called “Power Rangers” and we played Serbian rock covers. When I was sixteen, I played for three years in a Serbian folk band, which played typical celebrations such as weddings, baptism, “ispraćaj” (a celebration made for someone who goes to the military) and other private parties. In that band I have learned to play Serbian folk music and also instrumentals for dancing at these celebrations called “kolo”. When I was twenty years old I started my sociology studies and continued to play in different bands and projects oriented mostly on cover music. I had extensively played gigs in my home town of Niš (Serbia) every weekend with my band, called “SOS Band”. We did covers of modern hits at that time (2010 until 2015) and we played in our home town but also had gigs in some of the larger cities in Serbia. Alongside, I always had a blues band because that music was my passion since I was twenty years old. I recorded an album with the band called “Underdogs Blues Group” called “The Hero and The Devil” (and now I am working on releasing another blues album). I was always teaching guitar and had pupils who attended my private lessons. Overall, I considered myself an experienced musician that could cover a lot of musical “ground” and play different musical genres.

After arriving in Vienna, I have tried to find some musicians in order to enter the “Ex Yu”¹ music scene, but my focus was on playing the blues as well. As fate would have it I first met a female singer from Belgrade in 2016 and we formed a duo. After playing one birthday party I met one of the busiest musicians on the Vienna’s music scene. He introduced us to some of the bar owners and got us into some clubs that had live music, which was oriented towards former Yugoslavian pop rock. Parallel with that I went to blues jam sessions and slowly established myself as a blues guitarist/singer and now I host my own blues jam session in one cafe. Since 2016 I have played in many clubs in Vienna, both “Ex Yu” pop rock and folk music, but also blues and rock gigs with different bands and in various projects. I established myself as a guitarist for different music genres such as “Ex Yu” pop rock and folk music, blues, funk and jazz, and I get invitations from different people and bands when they need a guitar player. Alongside, I have my own blues band called “Brother Blues Company”, two blues duos (“Dark n’ Rainbow” and “Taylor Brothers”) and a pop rock band called “Balkan Boys”.

With the acoustic duo we started playing in 2016 in a bar called “Tavern”². At that time that was the only bar that had “Ex Yu” pop rock live music and actually had two bands playing every night, an acoustic band (two guitars and a singer) on the first floor and the full band (in the

¹ “Ex Yu” refers to the former Yugoslavia and this is how it will be used in this master thesis.

² All of the names of the bars and cafes were changed in order to protect the personal and sensitive information.

basement). Shortly after, we started playing in one newly opened small vine bar, called “Blue Beach”, and for a few months we were playing there every Friday and Saturday, and then we continued to play there a couple of times a month until today.

It's October 2022 and the twelfth birthday of the “Tavern”. I love playing at this bar. When I arrived in Vienna in 2016 I first started playing there and for that this bar would always have a special place in my memory. So, when I got the call from the owner to play with the band for the birthday celebration I immediately accepted. It was the beginning of the new session of gigs in the basement so I didn't know what to expect. After arriving at the bar, I saw that there were many reserved tables both on the first floor and in the basement, which meant the place was going to be packed. We did our soundcheck and got to hang out a bit with the musicians that play on the first floor. Since we were going to play one hour after the acoustic band opened, we hung out and listened to their performance. They opened with the song from Prljavo Kazalište “Ako tražiš nekoga”, which was a pop ballad. It was ten o'clock and the first floor was already “packed” with people. At one table one girl was having a birthday party and the atmosphere started to heat up. Soon after, the band shifted towards former Yugoslav (“Ex Yu”) pop/folk music, upon the request of the girl who was celebrating her birthday. And then things started to get going. The audience was singing and clapping and ordering drinks. The night started to take off. By that time, it was our turn to play and we got down in the basement. We waited for another fifteen minutes and then the people started filling in the place. Since the band above was playing “Ex Yu” pop and folk music I decided to go another way. We opened with a song from Simply Red called “Something got me started” and proceeded in that direction (playing songs in English which is not that common anymore since the people prefer more songs in Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian). The audience (twenty of them) seemed to enjoy it since they were all singing along. We made our first break one hour after we started playing and caught up for a drink with the musicians from the first floor. The singer said “man we are only playing “džigere”³ and I noticed that he was not happy about it. I decided (since I also sing) to go even more underground in the next two sets that we played. We started playing and I asked the people, for fun, what they would like to hear. One of them said “Message in a Bottle” from the Police, so we played that. Someone said “Hey Joe” by Jimmy Hendrix, then “Cocaine” by Eric Clapton. We shifted then to “Ex Yu” rock n roll”, playing songs from the bands such as Partibrejkers, EKV and Azra (predominantly rock bands). During all of this time in the breaks between the songs we could hear Serbian and Bosnian folk music from the first floor, along with the singing of the people. The band from the first floor finished their gig and all the people poured down in the basement. Although I knew that they would expect folk music, I decided to play rock n roll covers until the end. That decision had consequences on the audience since half of them left. But the half that stayed wanted to hear more rock n roll so we played “Johnny B Goode”, “Hound Dog” and finished with “Comfortably Numb” from Pink Floyd. At the end the bar owner came to us and said “Well done boys, it was just like in the old days” commenting on our performance.

³ “Džigera” or “narodnjak” is a slang term that describes the most popular folk songs from ex-Yugoslavia.

But what did that mean “just like in the old days”? What did the “new days” bring? What has changed? Is this mixture of music genres that vary from traditional Serbian and Bosnian folk music and pop, blues and rock songs in one evening at the same bar something that we can consider a normal gig? In doing the research for this master thesis and through the conversation with the owner of the “Tavern” I found out that this bar was one of the first “Ex Yu” bars that had success with live music in Vienna. When I say live music, I mean “Ex Yu” rock and pop music. When I first started playing at the “Tavern” the owner told me “play anything you want but just don't play “narodnjak”⁴. But today, twelve years later, the bar slightly changed its concept. It seems that the shift in favor of commercial music genres such as folk music from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia has taken place. The above-mentioned birthday party is a good example. What started as a scene with one club (“Tavern”) which was predominantly oriented towards rock and pop music originating from former Yugoslavia soon expanded into a more complex music scene with more clubs and bars with the concept of live music. Since 2016 there were only two clubs which had a concept of live “Ex Yu” pop rock music as mentioned above “Tavern” and “Blue Beach”, but in 2018 an “explosion” of clubs with the same or similar concept happened. The club “Broz” emerged on Märzstraße (December 2018), and shortly after “Nikola” on Mariahilferstraße (March 2019). The clubs located at Märzstrasse, such as “Bello”; “Fabio” and cafe “October” started introducing the concept of live music also. The restaurant/bar “Klimt”, located in the first Vienna district, opened as the last one (2021) and also introduced live music every Friday and Saturday (more on these clubs in the chapters to come). What most of them had in common is the orientation towards the above-mentioned music genres and it seemed that they wanted to break the prejudice that “Ex Yu” automatically means folk music. The bands created their repertoire to accommodate this trend, but with time the shift towards commercialization of the repertoire slowly started to emerge. This commercialization involved making compromises regarding the repertoire and including some songs that did not fit the above-mentioned pop rock concept. These songs were predominantly more rooted in folk pop and turbo folk music. This trend grew stronger and slowly had “pushed out” first the international pop and rock completely and later also rock music that originated in former Yugoslavia. The repertoire has morphed into a mixture of predominantly pop music, folk pop music and root folk music⁵ and it remains more or less the same until this day. It seems that this pop rock “spark” that ignited the birth of the “new Ex Yu music scene” centered around pop and rock music has “burned out” and the scene has slowly circled back towards pop and folk music. The question that imposes itself is why did this happen?

All of this intrigued my sociological imagination and as I was searching for the theme for my master thesis, I decided to look more thoroughly into this phenomenon. As I did that, I observed

⁴ “Narodnjak” - the term describes the folk music that originated in former Yugoslav states.

⁵ This term refers to the first generation of folk music that originated in the 1960 and 1970, and reached its peak in 1980 with the stars such as Lepa Brena, Miroslav Ilic, Toma Zdravkovic, Cune Gojkovic ect.

a trend that emerged, the clubs with the concept of live “Ex Yu” pop rock music were flourishing since 2012, despite lockdowns because of the Covid pandemic and that this new scene was born being different from the typical folk scene that was often associated with the people from former Yugoslavia. The questions arose: why is this the case; did the audience influence this change and how; are there conceptual differences between clubs, are the same musicians playing in these clubs; what kind of esthetics is present; what specific music is played in these clubs; what are the relations between musicians, etc. It was also interesting to try to answer why the scene changed with time (the example of “Tavern”) and why the clubs slowly turned their backs on this concept and got back to the more audience appealing music rooted in pop and folk. I found those questions very intriguing so I decided to write my master thesis about this social phenomenon.

2. Introduction

In my master thesis I will write about what I consider a “new Ex Yu (former Yugoslav) music scene” in Vienna. At first, I was not seeing what makes this music scene so specific and different to any other music scene, but as time went by and I started playing in different bars and clubs, I started seeing some characteristics that, in my opinion, make this scene an interesting phenomenon. As I mentioned before, when I entered this scene in 2016 there were only two bars in which I played, and by the end of 2019 there were four bars/clubs, and now in 2023 more cafes are shifting to the concept of live “Ex Yu” pop rock music which is what, in my opinion, consolidated this new scene. So in the last seven years I have witnessed the emergence and development of this new social phenomenon embodied in the new “Ex Yu” music scene, as I like to call it.

But what makes this scene new and why is it interesting as a social phenomenon? First of all, there is a shift in the music genre from traditional folk music played in taverns or kafanas⁶ which is often seen as the main characteristic of the first generation of migrants from ex-Yugoslavia who came to Austria, since the majority of them were the members of the working class typically coming from rural areas (Mijić, 2019, 5) and thus brought with them a specific taste in music. The Otakkringerstrasse or “Balkanmeile” is still known for its clubs and “folkoteka” bars such as former “Pinocchio”, “Matchbox” and “Maze” where the second and third generations of migrants that were born in Vienna found their place to socialize. The main characteristics of these clubs and cafes are strong orientation towards so-called “turbo folk”, a genre of music that was created in the 1990s by mixing folk music with electronic beats. It seems that nowadays all the bar owners wanted to get away from this cliché that when someone mentions former Yugoslavia and “a Yugo bar” or a club there is going to be predominantly folk music. Second, all of these clubs that are in my focus, except one, opened their doors in the last five years, so one could argue that there is a trend going on here, since all of these clubs have a similar concept. Third, all of these clubs and bars are based around live music. Fourth, there is a group of musicians (about twenty of them) who circulate in different bands or play solo in these clubs. Fifth - the structure of the audience is predominantly based on the students who came to Vienna in order to complete their bachelor or their master studies.

I decided to use the term “Ex Yu” and not “Balkan” due to pragmatic reasons. What I mean by that are the difficulties one faces when defining what is the Balkans, culturally and geographically speaking. Authors such as Peterson (2003), Todorova (2009), Živković (2011), argue that there is still a dispute that is present even today about where do actual Balkan borders start and where do they finish. Adding the cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity (Hranova,

⁶ Tavern/Kafana—a restaurant, often with Balkan folk music.

2004) it was a complicated task to include this term in my research. In addition to that, the music that is performed in these clubs and bars that are in the focus of this research, is related directly to the countries of former Yugoslavia and includes pop, rock, funk, ethno and folk music. Because of this I have decided to use the term “Ex Yu” since it includes all the countries of the former Yugoslavia (Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia) and all the people that have some kind of relation and/or origin with these countries.

The theoretical framework will be based on the concepts of music scenes by Bennett and Peterson and on the concept of Art Worlds by Howard Becker. Additionally I will introduce the Bourdieu's concept of the production of cultural fields and other approaches (Hara) that are derived from this concept in order to further strengthen the theoretical framework. The concept “music scene,” originally used primarily in journalistic and everyday contexts, is increasingly used by academic researchers to designate “the contexts in which clusters of producers, musicians and fans collectively share their common musical tastes and collectively distinguish themselves from others” (Bennett and Peterson, 2004, 8). On the other side Becker emphasis is on the collective action in forming a so-called art world and the relation between actors in the process of creating specific art such as music, painting, film, dance etc. Bennett and Peterson focus their work on all the actors that make a specific music scene, such as performers/musicians, support facilities and fans that come together to collectively create music for their enjoyment (Bennett, Peterson, 2004, 3). This standpoint is based on the works of Pierre Bourdieu's idea of the concept of “fields” in social sciences, but it is also combined with Becker's idea of “Art worlds”. My special interest lies in the concept of the local music scene that Bennett and Peterson introduce. This concept deals with music scenes in the context of a specific geographic place but also emphasizes the relationship between the music and the “cultural history of the locale” (Bennett, Peterson, 2004, 7) but also how the specific music scene influences the narrative of the locals. More precisely, what kind of influence has a specific music scene on a group identity in a sense of creating a specific identity that is characteristic for one social group? Along this line a local music scene could be seen as a form of community. To summarize, the starting definition of the music scene that would be used in this master thesis is strongly based on Bennett and Petersons interpretation that sees a music scene as specific social activity that takes place in specific geographical space, at the specific time, where the musicians, fans and other actors such as bar owners, come together and create a specific musical taste which helps them to distinguish themselves from other groups by using music and other cultural attributes that represent a specific local place/scene. In the center of this definition is the specific music style that is characteristic for the specific local place, but the focus is also on specific lifestyles that these scenes impose such as specific dressing styles, educational background, alcohol and drug consumption (Bennett, Peterson, 2004, 8).

The research question can be formulated as: what social processes have enabled this “new EX - Yu music scene” to emerge, how did it change over the years due to the mutual interplay between the social groups (musicians, bar and club owners and audience) that stand in the middle of this

social phenomena. I will also try to provide an answer to what specific traits differentiate this scene and what are the main differences between this new scene and the scene that is viewed as a typical “Ex Yu” folk scene presented on the Ottakringerstrasse?

The objective of the thesis is to shed light on the emergence of the new social and cultural phenomenon embodied in the, what I call, a “New Ex Yu music scene”. The thesis aims to grasp the social, cultural and geographic boundaries of this phenomenon, to describe it in full and to try to link it with other social processes, taking into consideration the input of all relevant actors that are involved directly in this scene, such as musicians, audience and the bar and cafe owners. In the presented literature it can be seen that the music that is usually associated with the first “gastarbeiters” that came to Vienna in the 1960s is Yugoslav folk music. Fisher presumes that this can be explained by their lower social status and lack of educational and cultural capital (Fisher, 2003). Although there is still a strongly present audience for this type of music today, which is represented by the second generation of first gastarbeiters that arrived in the 1960s and that there is a whole street in Vienna called “Balkanmiele” or Ottakringerstraße in the 16th district (Mijić, 2019), I will try to introduce and present another alternative local music scene that has emerged in last five years and which is characterized by different musical taste, aesthetics and type of audience. This will be the main object of the thesis.

The subject area will be to try to identify and describe this new “Ex Yu” music scene. How and why did it emerge and what are its main characteristics? More in depth the focus will be on trying to link the emergence of this new music scene with other social trends and demographic processes in order to see the “bigger” picture in which this scene was born.

For collecting and interpretation of the data I have used the qualitative approach, more precisely the framework analysis. As a method which was introduced in the 1980s for the purpose of policy analysis, its focus lies on identifying the patterns which emerge in the collected data in order to group these patterns in predefined topic areas (Smith and Firth, 2011). The framework method reconstructs the data in such a way that the data could be read and interpreted in order to answer the research questions (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid, Redwood, 2013). It is a two-way process which involves managing the data in order to make sense of the data in order to create typologies and explanations and provide answers to the specific research questions (Ritchie, 2003).

For the collection of relevant data, I have used interviews with the key actors such as musicians and bar owners. The interviews are suited for collecting data within the group of musicians and bar owners since they possess a specific and systematic knowledge about this topic but also have a relevant experience in my area of interest and that is years of performing in Vienna as a part of “Ex Yu” music scene or they own a bar or cafe in which this music is performed. The interview, as a form of collecting the data, is well suited for capturing the subjective perception of the specific field and all of its nuances. Based on the predefined criteria (explained more in depth in

the Methodology chapter), I have chosen six musicians and four persons who are involved in running the bars and clubs that are in my focus. Five of the musicians who participate in the research have a music education (University, Conservatorium and music high school) and are playing drums (two of them), singing and playing a guitar (two of them), bass and keyboards. I have also included the representatives of the four clubs that have started this new scene and conducted interviews with the three bar/club owners and one manager in charge of booking the bands that are performing in one of these clubs. All of these actors are a part of the new “Ex Yu” music scene “on an everyday basis” by performing and/or are involved in organizing and managing the clubs in which this scene could be found. All of them have extensive experience as performing musicians and persons that are involved in the gastronomy or management. This provided a very good base for relevant information that could provide answers to the above-mentioned research question.

I have also used the ethnographic method in order to depict this scene and the cafes and clubs in which this scene is to be found. “Ethnography is the study of people in their natural occurring settings or fields by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings in ordinary activities involving the researcher participating directly in the setting if not in the activities in order to collect data in systematic manner but without the meaning being imposed to them externally” (Brewer, 2000, 6). Since I myself have been an active participant in this scene since 2016, I have gathered significant experience in performing in most of the clubs in which this scene emerged. This could be used as a valuable resource in the process of collecting the relevant data and describing this scene as accurately as possible.

The previous research on the “Balkan” music and “Ex Yu” music in Austria deal with the topics such as the rise of Balkan music in Austria (Gebesmair, Brunner, Sperlich, 2014), how the music is used by migrants from former Yugoslavia for creating a specific sense of belonging to one specific community (Fisher, 2003), the migration processes of the people from former Yugoslavia and their cultural life and free time in the process of integration in the new environment in Germany and Austria (Ivanović, 2009). Hemetek (2012) writes about the multicultural richness of Vienna that had led to musical diversity and deal with the music production of migrants and Daniel (2022) puts emphasis on age and class and analyzes the sound objects (two radio shows) that have an influence on linking this migrant community in Vienna with the former Yugoslav Republics.

Although the mentioned articles provide a lot of useful information and theoretical approaches, I found the gap within the presented literature in a sense that all of the presented work deals with a generalized approach to a phenomenon that is music or music scene. I will try to focus my work on a specific local music scene in Vienna and try to explain what makes it the “new” music scene and how it differs (and for that matter does it differs) from the all accepted stereotypes of “Ex Yu” music which is in most cases associated with folk music. All the articles mentioned above describe folk music as one of the staples of the migrant community that originated from former

Yugoslavia and settled in Austria and/or Vienna. The folk music is connected with the cultural heritage of the first migrants that came to Austria in the 1970s, who had lower social status (Fisher, 2003) and a specific taste in music often related to traditional folk music or “narodnjak” (Ivanović, 2012). Their cultural life in the new environment was reinforcing this heritage since the clubs⁷ (such as “Jedinstvo” and “Mladi Radnik”, to name a few) that were aimed for their socializing, also forced folk music by organizing the concerts of famous folk stars from Yugoslavia at that time. I will argue that this trend has slowly shifted/changed from late 1990s towards more pop and rock-oriented music and that the mentioned clubs were partially replaced by the bars and clubs that are putting forward this new scene by organizing live gigs on a weekly level. This will be the main argument of what makes the “new Ex Yu music scene” in Vienna actually a new social phenomenon.

The possible contribution that this master thesis can provide is multilayered. First it can contribute to the field of scene research since it provides an insight into how one specific scene emerges and how it changes due to the interplay of the actors involved. This interplay is based on constant communication and interaction processes which in a way produce and reproduce the specific scene (Pfadenhauer, 2005). This process would provide the answers to the question such as what are key driving forces that perpetuate a music scene; what “plan of action” the key actors implement in order to achieve their goals; what is the inner structure of the scene and how this specific scene relates to other scenes.

Another area where this master thesis can provide a useful insight is music and migration. The significance of music for the people is unquestionable and music is often transferred across the borders of a specific country when the migration process occurs. Both of these phenomena (music and migration) have a universal nature and are present throughout our history. Both involve people and their cultural heritage which crosses the borders along with them. This master thesis can provide insights into the role of music and its relevance in the life of migrants (Barwick, Sorce Keller, 2012) that have Yugoslavian origins and have settled in Vienna.

Based on the work of Bennet and Driver (2014), the thesis could provide an useful insight into how the audience (the body) through the process of embodiment influences the scene, its creation and longevity. More specifically how the audience influences the repertoire that has been played, the choice of which band is going to play in specific bar and the band’s earnings for that night.

The thesis can provide an insight into how this new scene creates a new type of musician. A typical cover band is defined as a group of people who perform specific songs recorded by other artists that have been proven as hits (Mosser, 2008). Most commonly cover bands play music that is positioned in one musical genre (rock, pop, funk, blues, jazz etc.). The audience, based on

⁷ Refers to the first clubs grounded in the early 1970 where the migrants could socialize. Not to be mixed with the bars and clubs of today.

their personal preference and music taste, seeks a specific cover band to go and listen to. My experience as a musician that plays predominantly cover song in Vienna, in the clubs that embodies this “new Ex Yu” music scene, have showed me that in order to be the part of this scene one has to master a lot of music genres and mix them together based on the audience's mood and overall atmosphere on a specific night (more on that in the chapters to come). In order to be an active participant in this scene, musician's skillset has to be on a very high level. I dare to make a parallel between the session musicians (“hired guns”) who always have to provide the best possible musical solution in a recording situation. The studio musician “has to be better than good, he has to be great” (Albrecht, Herbst, 2018, 121). Similarly, we, as musicians that are playing actively in this scene, have to make choices every night which song suits the present crowd the best, often mixing music genres such as rock, pop, funk and “Ex Yu” folk music to achieve that. The gathered data can provide an inside look at how this interaction between musicians and audience creates a specific musical skillset.

The gathered data can provide a view on power relations between bar owners and musicians emphasizing the precarious nature of musicians' lives. This relation is often characterized in a lack of written agreement or contract for a night playing providing the gray zone for paying the agreed amount of money between the two parties. The agreed amount is not paid in full because the audience didn't generate enough income for that night. Also, the bar owners would interfere and change the agreed repertoire of music which is supposed to be played on a specific night, in the middle of the gig, putting more pressure on musicians to go with the wishes of the audience so they could drink more and create more income for the owner. All of this puts an enormous pressure upon musicians to accommodate all sides involved in the process and at the same time try to find within themselves motivation to play a great gig.

3. Theory and Terms

3.1 The theoretical approach

In this chapter I will present the useful theoretical concepts that could be used in understanding first of all what is a music scene and secondly to try to frame the emergence and reshaping of the “new Ex Yu music scene” in Vienna.

Before the “official” introduction of a term music scene in sociological discourse, “the concept of music scene was originally used primarily in journalistic and everyday contexts, it was increasingly used by academic researchers to designate the contexts in which clusters of producers, musicians, and fans collectively share their common musical tastes and collectively distinguish themselves from others” (Bennett and Peterson, 2004, 1). This concept was established to refer to a specific place in a specific city where all the actors involved in the scene such as performers, audience and bar owners come together and enjoy a specific music genre. The examples of this could be found in cities such as Chicago, famous for its blues scene, but also in Nashville (country music scene) and New Orleans (famous for its jazz scene) (Bennet, 2004). Other examples include “The Merseybeat” that originated in Liverpool (Cohen, 1991), “Madchester” scene in Manchester and Birmingham which is often labeled as the birthplace of the heavy metal scene (Henning, Hayder, 2014). The term music scene was also used to describe a specific way of life of the jazz musicians, beatniks and bohemians. The examples used by the authors are Venice West poetry scene, “East Village beatnik scene”, “this year’s London theater scene,” “goth scene,” “punk scene,” “hip-hop scene” (Bennet, Peterson, 2004, 2). Term scene used in this sense by the journalists helped establish a specific unity and sense of belonging between the groups that shared common interest in specific music, dress code and identity in general.

The rising influence of music in everyday life caused more attention to this phenomenon. The theoretical concepts which have music in its center as a form of analysis, started to emerge. The term music scene has its roots predominantly in ethnographic studies. In this context the term has been used to describe predominantly “local variations and subjective representation of what a scene is as viewed by its members” (Maria Tarasi, 2011, 14). The music scenes were taken into consideration as a part of subcultural theories (Clark, 1981) and cultural industries (Becker, 1982). The subculture and post subculture studies were predominantly oriented towards studying the youth culture strongly based on style and appearance that stand opposed to the mainstream culture of their parents that has exploded in Britain during the 1970s and was embodied predominantly in the punk movement. This approach however was strongly criticized since in a way was a “pre-given theory” (Muggleton, 2000) and an “abstract term” (Redhead, 1990) that was not supported by the empirical evidence and just concentrated on the universal nature of

subcultures (Waters, 1981) and completely putting aside the local differentiation. Music scene is often seen hand in hand with cultural industries, as a “tool” that makes great success and has a lot of consumers and financial potential (Peterson 1990). During this introduction of the term into academic discourse it was often used without a precise definition and critical reflection. The term was used in a common sense which implied using this term in “everyday discourses by musicians, fans, music journalists, and academics to refer to a group of people sharing musical tastes and practices, as well as the production and consumption of a particular genre or style of music within a particular context where this style of music has developed” (Maria Tarasi, 2011, 19). In such understanding of the term the crucial role plays the specific local site or a specific space where music is played and created.

The most influential study of music scenes is the book by Peterson and Bennet called “Music Scenes” published in 2004. Bennett and Peterson focus their work on all the “actors that make a specific music scene, such as performers/musicians, support facilities and fans that come together to collectively create music for their enjoyment” (Bennett, Peterson, 2004, 3). This standpoint is based on the works of Pierre Bourdieu’s idea of the concept of “fields” in social sciences, but it is also combined with Becker’s idea of “Art worlds”. The concept of the Art world involves a process in which a specific piece of art is created. This process involves the engagement of all the relevant actors such as the artists, the producers and managers, the audience and the relevant organizations. The collaboration between all of these actors gives birth to a piece of art (music, film, painting, etc.). The interplay between these actors is what Becker calls an Art World (Becker, 1982). I will concentrate more on the work of Peterson and Bennet since I find it very useful for my master thesis.

Peterson and Bennet introduced a useful classification of the music scene, dividing it as local, translocal and virtual. I will focus on the local music scene since my main interest lies in the specific bars and cafes that are located in Vienna and are not geographically far one from another (all the bars are located in 15th, 1st and 8th Vienna district and could all be reach by foot if one chooses one of the bars as a starting point).

3.2 Local music scene

As mentioned before, the local music scene is geographically bound to a specific city, district or a street or a club. The examples that come to mind are the emergence of the blues music scene in Chicago in the 1960s due to the process of electrification of musical instruments. The artists like Muddy Waters, Howlin Wolf, Etta James, Little Richard and Chuck Berry made way for the expansion of the blues in the 1960s. In addition to that this music scene was “captured” with the emergence of vinyl. Chess Records was the recording company which made its name by recording the above-mentioned artists and had strong impact on getting this music to a wider

masses⁸. The other example was the emergence of the country music scene in Nashville. The Nashville Sound (Hemphill, 2015) was born through the attempt to make country music more mainstream and more alluring to a wider audience. The main characteristics of The Nashville sound were moving away from the traditional country music which was in most cases played on the piano and violin towards the string-oriented instruments such as guitars and arrangements that were more receptive to the audience that had a bit more refined taste in music. Nashville remains till this day home of country music and “Mecca” for studio musicians. The grunge music scene in Seattle was born between 1980 and 1990 and established the so-called “Seattle sound” (Bell, 1998). This alternative scene was based on the mixture of garage rock, punk influences and heavy metal. Bands like Soundgarden, Alice in Chains, Temple of the Dog, Pearl Jam and later Nirvana launched this sound into the mainstream. This list could go on and on. I will try to extend the term of the local music scene even more by positioning it more precisely (geographically).

The work of Sara Cohen needs to be mentioned when referencing the local music scene. Her work on Liverpool's Rock Culture (Cohen, 1991) is one of the first studies that puts emphasis on a music scene that emerged in a specific city. Prior to her work there were studies that put the focus more on the music industry and how it creates and influences the music scene and turns them into a product of mass consumption. Two local Liverpool bands are the subject of the book and through their interpretation of their careers a rich depiction of the “micro social worlds” that are a part of the music scene is presented (Cohen, 1991). From the perspective of the members a process that merges social sensibilities that are specific to the locale with the artistic aspirations of these bands is described. The poor state of economy in Liverpool at that time strongly influenced the perception of the band members that music and being in a band is a real job. Linked with that standpoints and attitudes that the females are seen as a threat to bands existence and camaraderie are also seen as products of the economic crisis. Since so many bands were active in a relatively small environment with the living and performing conditions being poor, the fierce competition for resources such as funds, places to play and overall support by the audience emerged. This state of matters was accompanied with rumors, conflicts and disputes. The bands grouped around specific clubs and bars, studios and organizations in order to get better starting points in the race for resources that were scarce. All of this resulted in members changing the bands frequently, bands falling apart and creating new musical projects with different names, mutual conflicts and disagreements. Cohen's works capture a richness of specific social worlds and all their perplexities due to the economic crisis which raged in Liverpool at that time and bands trying to make a living in such an environment.

A study by Shank called “Dissonant Identities: The Rock'n'Roll Scene in Austin” published in 1994 describes the bars and clubs which can be found in Austin, Texas. As a musician himself, Shank portrays the musical landscape of Austin through depiction of its musical history but also taking into consideration the economic and cultural aspects of that time. Shank writes about

⁸ For more reference see the movie “Cadillac Records” (2008, Sony BMG Film), directed by Darnel Martin.

progressive country, blues, rock, folk and disco music and its implications on transforming identities and its contribution to altering oneself through music practice and to assert the usefulness of this practice in capitalist-oriented society (Shank, 1994).

Both of these authors put emphasis on the mutual influential process between music scenes and their continuity and local networks which produce social relationships. Shank even goes one step further by showing how diametrically opposite music genres could be accepted as authentic local music styles which have their own scene. He compares punk and cowboy songs and shows stating that despite their different history, both of these genres are accepted as genuine local music.

Mitchell critiques global cultural industries and their organized consumption of localized otherness (Mitchell, 1996) in favor of locality and its artists that create specific art and other cultural forms. These two opposites are illustrated by the examples of interplay between the global forms of modern rock, jazz and pop music on one side and the localized music scenes in Czech Republic, Italy, Australia and New Zealand. These local music scenes are analyzed in connection with the globally adopted American and British musical discourse that form the so-called World Music phenomenon (Mitchell, 1996) in order to question the cultural imperialism approach.

Bennet writes about adaptation and transformation of local music such as dance, bhangra, rap and rock by Moroccan and Turkish families living in Frankfurt. Reshaping the American rap music (especially the thematic of anti-racism) to fit the German context by using the German language and characteristic German phrases, these young people introduce a new genre which reflects their everyday life and struggles at the local level (Bennet, 2000).

With the use of categories scenes and bohemians as terms that refer to specific socio musical experiences, Stahl describes the process of music making in Montreal. These concepts are used to “capture material, symbolic, expressive, spatial, social, and imaginative practices as they unfold and overlap in relation to urban music making and its urban context” (Stahl, 2007, 141). Based on Becker's Art Worlds, besides musicians and bohemians, Stahl depicts the complexity and depth of a music scene by listing the relevant actors and activities that contribute to this phenomenon. It is a complicated network that consists of promoters, engineers, designers, critics and enthusiasts that keep this scene going.

In a similar way Spring emphasizes the importance of the “outside” actors in keeping the local scene alive. The dance scene in Toledo was transformed from a relatively small scene to successful one by the efforts of one promoter but also his capabilities to draw on a range of local resources such as other musical enthusiasts and relevant persons which kept the scene growing until it hit commercial success (Spring, 2004).

Not just the cities could be taken into consideration when talking about local but also specific clubs. CBGB was the club where the New York rock scene was born and died when the club closed (Blush, 2016). The concept of the club was to host bands who played Country, Bluegrass and Blues (hence the name CBGB) but soon after the club opened its doors it became a birthplace of New York rock and underground punk scene⁹. Liverpool's "Three Graces" (Schofield, 2010) described in an article about Liverpool's musical heritage, refer to the three clubs that forge the musical history of this town from 1960s until 1990s the "Cavern Club" hosted the Beatles in 1960s and established the Merseybeat scene. The "Eric's club" was known for its post punk scene and "Cream club" was the incubator of the house music scene in Liverpool in the 1990s (Schofield, 2010). One of the famous clubs in London was the "Marquee club". Located on Oxford Street (where it first opened its doors in 1958), the club hosted a variety of bands who played music from jazz to heavy metal and was known as a place where one could always find exciting new acts. The "Marquee club" is responsible for many successful careers of the bands who took their stage and the most notable are the Rolling Stones who played their first concert in 1962 there.

As we can conclude from the provided material the music scene is linked to the specific place or locale and the context that is shaped by this specific place. As Maria Tarassi states, the local music scene could be found "between the everyday practices, music styles, locality and identity" (Maria Terassi, 2011, 21).

I should shortly mention here the approach and the authors that are looking at the local music scene through a more critical lens and try to go beyond this concept since it could provide another viewpoint for the specific scene that lies in my focus. The authors such as Massey, Straw and Kruse all emphasize the "complexity of interactions" (Massey, 1995) in forming a music scene and the mutual interplay and influence that global processes have on the local (Straw, 2001). Straw introduces the relationships between different localities and how they influence each other based on the changes that are happening on the international level. Similarly, Kruse introduces translocal interconnectedness (Kruse, 1993) between music scenes and their cohabitation in identity creation of specific social groups. Although concentrated on a local music scene in London, Cohen also considers reimagining the term local music scene with the term "mobile music structures" (Cohen, 1999) and considers this fluctuating and changing character of music scene as a product of music practices that are intertwined on a global level.

I will also present the work of Howard Becker and his book called "Art Worlds" since it could provide a useful theoretical standpoint for my work.

Becker starts with the notion that all art is a product of joined activity. What is meant by that is that there must be a collective activity present for a specific art form to emerge. All the actors such as the artist himself, but also his associates, managers, promoters, engineers, colleague

⁹ For more information see the movie "CBGB" (2013) directed by Randal Miller.

artists, gallery owners, bar owners, producers, critics and consumers must come together in a mutual goal and that is producing an art form. "Through their cooperation, the art work we eventually see or hear comes to be and continues to be" (Becker, 1982, 1). The author names this joint collective activity Art World. In that sense Art World could be seen as a form of social space where the actors engage in mutual collaboration in order to produce a piece of art such as music, dance, painting, comic book, cartoon, movie, etc. This collaboration implies division of labor (the artist provides talent and other actors organizational and technical support), cooperation between all actors (cooperative link), agreed conventions on how to work together and thus form the "Art worlds which consist of all the people whose activities are necessary to the production of the characteristic works" (Becker, 1982, 34). Social organization and distribution of knowledge are the foundations on which the function of the art worlds is based. Resources are essential in the making of the art world and which kind of resources depend on what kind of art is being made. The distribution process is the next step. The artist needs to distribute his work in order to create resources in order to create more art. Thus, art worlds need to create distribution systems in order to sustain the artist and themselves. Self-support, patronage and public sales are some of the distribution mechanisms that serve this purpose. Closely linked with the distribution is the aesthetics. In a sense aesthetics is a categorical apparatus which determines which works of art are appealing or less appealing, nice, beautiful or ugly. Critics use aesthetics to give their judgment on a specific work of art and thus, in a sense determine its value and the reputation of an artist. The higher the reputation the higher the economic and symbolic value of the artist and his work, which affects his financial status. Becker focuses also on the role of the state and its legislature that regulates the distribution of art. Every activity in the process of distribution is regulated by specific law that applies inside the borders of a specific state. Another important process that is a part of the art world is editing. The editors give the artwork its final shape by giving suggestions and remarks in order to find the best form for the final artwork. Once established the art world is responsible for defining its boundaries and who is going to be included and who is going to be excluded. The artists who earned full membership are accepted and appreciated and those who are merely copying the works of others for example are excluded and unappreciated (Becker, 1982). The author also addresses the relation between art and crafts and when does a craft give birth to an artwork and vice versa, and how the art worlds are created, how they change through time or vanish.

Another useful theoretical perspective could be found in Bourdieu's concept of fields of cultural production. In order to fully understand this concept, it is necessary to look at Bourdieu's general and wider theoretical approach. Bourdieu centers his theoretical approach around three crucial concepts: habitus, capital and field (Bourdieu, 1993). These three concepts are constituent parts of his theory of practice which tries to explain the connection between the agency and structure and how these concessions influence people's actions in real life. Artistic creation can only be explained and understood only through this concept and its application in the process of creating a specific art form. Bourdieu introduces the concept of the field in order to explain the relations between the positions (Maria Tarassi, 2011). As Bourdieu states: "It's the field of cultural

production, understood as a system of objective relations between these agents or institutions and as the site of the struggle for the monopoly of the power to consecrate, in which the value of art and belief in that value are continuously generated” (Bourdieu, 1993, 78). The field could be seen as an arena where the struggle for dominance for social positions takes place. Actors or agents in a social field are a part of a specific social setting and act according to specific social relations which are characterized by the dominance (those in power) and obedience (those who do not have the power). The fields are a “battlefield” for power and dominance in order to achieve a specific interest and gain desired resources. The actions of the agents are “fueled” with one purpose and that is imposing their dominant discourse or how they perceive social reality. The fields interrelate with each other but this relation is always a relation of power and subordination between the agents where symbolic power is being used in order to gain or maintain the position that ensures privileges. Transferring this concept into the domain of art, a specific artwork is created within this relation between agents that are occupying a specific social field (Maria Tarassi, 2011). The field can include the agents who produce art but also the distributors.

As Maria Tarassi states, merging the two perspectives (Becker's “Art World” concept and Bourdieu's s cultural fields) could provide a useful framework for a better understanding of how music scenes emerge, change and how they are sustained throughout a specific time period. This approach combines the notion of collaboration and coming together of different actors in order to create, produce and distribute a specific work of art and on the other hand a more “deeper” perspective that emphasizes the competitive nature of agents (actors) in gaining better social positions.

It seems that this approach was attempted in a way by Mariko Hara. Strongly leaning on the Becker's concept of Art Worlds and Bourdieu's cultural fields, the term “musical fields” used by Mariko Hara in her study “Sustaining the assemblage: How migrant musicians cultivate and negotiate their musicianship” (2017) is used to describe a “wide range of musicking arenas where music functions as an animated force to provide discursive affordances in the development of musicians' career paths” (Hara, 2017, 297). The term is based on Bourdieu's concept of field which represents the social arena in which the struggles for development of different forms of capital take place, “music field” goes beyond that concept and captures more the diversity of resources and tools used by the musicians in their practices. Musical fields are conceded and overlap because of the musicians that move from one field to another and change their roles for example by playing different styles of music. As Hara states, taking part in the collective activities in Becker's Art Worlds is based on conventions and group reliance on mutual values and beliefs. She puts focus on possible power relations and struggles that emerge in the music fields. The musicians with the emigrant background are forced to navigate through social structures and different scenes in order to use their resources and gain more skills which would provide them with more job opportunities. On this journey they encounter a plethora of social factors which increase or decrease their social mobility (Hara, 2017). In order to describe the

process of adaptation of the migrant musician in the new environment Hara uses the micro level of analysis focusing on the personal stories of the musicians and their unique life journeys which form their distinctive biographies which could also influence their success or be an obstacle in their careers (Hesmondhalgh, 2013) .

I will shortly address the relation between music and community since it could provide a useful theoretical lens through which we can interpret the rise of the “new Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna. When talking about music and community there are two ways to approach this matter. Community can be strongly based around locally constructed and produced music. This is the case because this locally framed music or music scene provides the individuals their positioning in the specific city, district, street or a region (Bennet, 2004; Holt, 2013). This music serves as a “symbolic anchor” (Lewis, 1992) that brings together people who share a common sense of belonging and mutual past. The representation of communities and their identity towards each other and other communities is often done by emphasizing specific taste in music (Dawe, Bennet, 2001). Following this logic “a shared connection with a locally created musical style becomes a metaphor for community, a means through which people articulate their sense of togetherness through a particular juxtaposition of music, identity and place” (Bennet, 2004, 224). The other perspective sees music as a social glue that can hold the community of individuals who do not share the specific local experience (belonging or mutual past) together. Music in this sense, contributes to the creation of a specific way of life or set of values and moral guidelines on which a person centers his/her life. Examples of this could be found in hippie music and its orientation towards politically and socially oriented rock music. In this case music served as a common denominator, something that has an equal value for everyone and could bring this social group together. The modern examples include underground, “indy” (independent labels) and emo music which all put forward the strong bond between bands and their audience.

For the purpose of this thesis, I will adopt the “starting” concept of the local music scene that Bennett and Peterson introduce. This concept deals with music scenes in the context of a specific geographic place, it also emphasizes the relationship between the music and the “cultural history of the locale” (Bennett, Peterson, 2004, 7) but also how the specific music scene influences the narrative of the locals. More precisely, what kind of influence has a specific music scene on a group identity in a sense of creating a specific identity that is characteristic for one social group? Along this line a local music scene could be seen as a form of community. To summarize, the starting definition of the music scene that would be used in this master thesis is strongly based on Bennett and Peterson’s interpretation that sees a music scene as “specific social activity that takes place in specific geographical space, at the specific time, where the musicians, fans and other actors such as bar owners, come together and create a specific musical taste which helps them distinguish themselves from other groups by using music and other cultural attributes that represent a specific local place/scene. In the center of this definition is the specific music style, characteristic for the specific local place, but the focus is also on specific lifestyles that these

scenes impose such as specific dressing styles, educational background, alcohol and drug consumption” (Bennett, Peterson, 2004, 8).

Although very useful, this definition has a rather descriptive nature, concentrating on a specific activity that is bound to geographical places where different actors come together and create and/or recreate specific music and collectively enjoy this activity. However, this definition does not provide the needed “depth” and specific social context in which the scene emerges, lasts and has its end. A more complex theoretical approach is needed to grasp the complexity of this phenomena. For example, Kruse puts forward the notion that the music scene needs to be seen as “geographical sites of localized music activities and the social and economic networks that exist within these contexts” (Kruse, 2003, 152). In this sense the music scenes are not only a product of specific activities that took place in specific localities but also but also an entity that is embedded and influenced by other social and economic networks (Kruse, 2003).

Another useful framework is a term “music milieu” constructed by Peter Webb (2007). Webb criticizes the term “music scene” as too descriptive and “slippery” in a theoretical sense and often used alongside terms such as community and subculture which makes it even harder to make sense of its true meaning. To overcome this problem, Webb suggests the term “music milieu” (Webb, 2007). The term is constructed to grasp the ever-changing nature and dynamism of music making in general and how this process influences the system of interactions, creation and impact that music makes on actors that are a part of a music scene. This construct (milieu) is a “framework or researching the way in which particular networks of people and music cultures interact” (Webb, 2007, 30). The music milieu is shaped by the specific life experience of the individuals that are a part of it, and this life experience stands under influence of specific locations and belonging to a specific social group. Music scene is a “cultural field” that bears the conflicts and struggles and in its center are individuals with all of their specific selves and their life experience. The conflict arises between the individuals that are a part of the scene but such conflict is also aimed towards the music industry and other actors in power in order to gain financial advantage or acknowledgment. Although this approach is more macro based in a sense that it is aimed toward analyzing the music industry in general, it could be also applied on a concept of a local scene as a “micro” social world.

Perhaps a merging of the Beckers “Art Worlds” and Bourdieu's concept of cultural fields could provide a useful theoretical frame for better understanding the concept of a music scene. In a sense, an approach is needed that could take us beyond the descriptive nature of my starting definition based on the work of Bennet and Peterson in a theoretical sense. Such an approach could help understand not only how the actors involved experience the scene but also what are the specific modes of production (Maria Terassi, 2011) and other “external” influences such as economic interest that can have a strong impact on a specific music scene. The practice of music making that keeps the scene going is one important aspect of every music scene but on the other side the structural and organizational aspects need to be taken into consideration. Becker's

concept could provide just that, a view on how the scene functions and what are the necessary activities and interactions between all involved parties. Producing a work of art is a joined activity, governed through organization and cooperation in order to achieve a common goal and that is a creation of a specific work of art. Coming together in a different process of art production, a specific network is created based on the production, marketing and distribution of a specific artwork. What is missing in this whole process is the answer on how the actors are being selected for their roles in the art creating process and generally not enough attention that is focused on interest and power struggles throughout this process. The concept is reduced to its members and their acceptance of their mutual efforts that make up this whole process. This is where Bourdieu's concept shows its strength and goes theoretically more in depth. A music scene is a field or arena (Hara, 2017) in which the members are continuously entangled in constant struggles in order to provide the more desirable social position. "In Bourdieu the struggle among the agents has much more a symbolic role of being legitimized within the field than a practical means in the creation of a work of art in Becker's perspective" (Maria Terassi, 2011, 58).

I think that these perspectives provide a stronger theoretical base for interpretation and making sense of the gathered data. However, it remains to be seen whether these two approaches provide a satisfactory level of analysis. What I mean by that is predominantly the level of analysis. Both concepts are, at least in my opinion, based on the macro level of analysis, which in regard to the new "Ex Yu" music scene in Vienna could prove to be too complicated to implement. I will address this issue and possibly the need to refine this model in the Conclusion chapter after the analysis of the gathered data.

3.3 The "Ex Yu"

In this chapter I will address the question of what "Ex Yu" means. This is an abbreviation for former Yugoslavia. I will present the short history of this country in order to provide a wider context in understanding this term. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, established in 1919 with the recognition of its sovereignty by the United State of America, France and Great Britain started what would later be known as Yugoslavia (Čalić, 2019). The main characteristic of this state was diversity and complex organization. In its center were the Serbs, Croats and Slovenians but the state also included Montenegrins, Macedonians and Muslims who had been living in Bosnia. Additionally, there were many ethnicities who shared the borders with mentioned groups. In 1929 the name Yugoslavia was accepted by all ethnic groups and minorities. In 1941, with the act of capitulation, Yugoslavia ceased to exist. During WW2 Josip Broz Tito established himself as the leader of the resistance and the commander of partisans. After WW2 in January 1946 the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was created (Čalić, 2019) with Tito as its president. Josip Broz Tito died in 1980 and the state slipped into an economic and political crisis (Srebotnjak, 2016). In the period from 1990 until 1992 the SFRY

was completely dismantled as a state and “the six nations emerged from its territory: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia” (Tomić, 2014, 272).

For the purpose of this master thesis I have adopted the term “Ex Yu” that implies the countries that once constituted Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia; Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia and Croatia and Macedonia. This term will be used in the upcoming chapters to refer to the mentioned countries and people who originate from those countries.

It is worth noting that when you type in “Ex Yu” music in google, the search first shows four song compilations on YouTube called “Ex Yu” rock mix. Other results also include the prefix “rock” and are referring to most popular “Ex Yu” rock artists and bands, the most popular “Ex Yu” rock songs. The images that the search shows are also album covers of rock bands that were performing in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina such as Azra, Bajaga and Ekatarina Velika. As Barber-Kersovan states, the band Bijelo Dugme was a creator of a specific music genre called “Yugo Rock” (Barber-Kersovan, 2001). Bend called “YU Grupa” which was founded in 1970 and is still active today, is a one of the most influential rock bands that originated in former Yugoslavia.

It could be said that the term “Ex Yu” is mostly used to depict the specific music genre such as rock but also pop music. “Sarajevska škola” (Sarajevo School) is a term used to describe pop bands from Sarajevo that had a strong influence on Yugoslav pop culture. Bands such as “Indexi” and “Pro Arte” were encouraged to start writing their own songs and thus began the rise of this scene. Followed by “Teška Industrija”, “Srebrna Krila”, “Mirzino Jato” and “Vatreni Poljubac” the “Sarajevo School” left a strong mark on Yugoslav music scene (“Yugopapir”, online article).

I use the term “Ex Yu” in two ways. First to refer to the states that once comprised Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia and those are Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Macedonia. This also includes the people who originated from these states and/or have some connection to these countries. Secondly, I use this term in more of a symbolic way in order to depict the specific cultural climate which was strongly based on rock and pop music. It is my impression that the term “Ex Yu” is used to describe rock and pop music created between 1970 and 1990 in Yugoslavia and the specific atmosphere of freedom, brotherhood and unity between the people who were listening to this music. This music was a generator in creating specific identities and social feelings that were strongly related to the principles on which Yugoslavia was created and these were “brotherhood and unity” embodied in songs such as “Pljuni i zapjevaj moja Jugoslavijo” by “Bijelo Dugme”; “Jugoslovenka” by “Pedja the Boy”; “Igra Rock n Roll cela Jugoslavija” by “Električni Orgazam” to name a few.

3.4 The Context

In order to provide the context for the above-mentioned theory, I will present the short history of the former Yugoslavs in Vienna, their background and taste in music. This will be done in order to try to describe the specific music taste that these people “brought” with them, how this taste in music formed the specific scene and how this scene evolved to this day.

3.4.1 The first migrants and the students

The temporal working migration, which started in 1960, caused the first cluster of migrants from former Yugoslavia to leave their countries in pursuit of job opportunities in the foreign lands. The term temporal was referring to the return of the guest workers in their homeland after their services were no longer necessary. Austria put forward a call for additional guest workers in 1960 and Yugoslavia responded. The Agreement on Labor Recruitment, between the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Austria, was signed in 1965 providing the legal format for the exchange of the working force (Ivanović, 2012). The return of the guest workers was planned by both Austria and Yugoslavian governments with the idea that both countries would gain benefits of this exchange (Austria would get a cheaper labor force while Yugoslavia would gain experienced workers after their return). In reality that was not the case and the majority of the people who came to work in Austria in 1960 stayed and settled (the majority of them in Vienna). After some years their number began to increase and by 1970 80% of foreign workers in Austria were Yugoslavs (Ivanović, 2012). Seeing this trend, the Austrian government issued an “un invitation” with the idea to motivate guest workers from Yugoslavia (“gastarbajters”) to return to their homeland. This was a futile attempt since the core of this community was established being predominantly located in Vienna. The new wave of migrations hit Austria in the 1980s due to the economic crisis and political turmoil in former Yugoslavia at that time. This trend continued in the 1990s because of the civil war that was raging between the former Yugoslav republics and many were forced to leave their native countries. All of this caused the magnification of the “Yugoslav Diaspora” (Fisher, 2004). The families grew and until today there is even a fourth generation of people with migration background that live in Vienna. Because these foundations were one of the factors that made possible the migration process which is present nowadays. The difference from the first working force call in 1960 is that today we are witnessing a form of “educational migration”. Young people predominantly from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are coming to Vienna to finish their bachelor, master and PHD studies and many of them choose to stay after their studies since they have better chances to find suitable jobs for themselves. Statistik Austria provides the data that “over 500.000 people whose parents (both) were born in the region of the former Yugoslavia, live in Austria; i.e. about 6% of the Austrian population. However, this figure does not consider the 2.5 generation (one parent was born in Austria as a second-generation immigrant) nor the third generation” (Mijić, 2019, 2).

3.4.2 Free time and culture

Arriving in the new country, often alone and without family, unfamiliar with the new environment often caused the feeling of isolation and alienation among the migrants. The guest workers started gathering on the train stations (Südbahnhof in Vienna) since they were receiving newcomers from former Yugoslavia on a daily basis. This provided a chance to socialize, hear the news from their city or village and send packages and money to their families (Ivanović, 2012). Bahnhof was in a sense the “hot spot” for meeting new people and socialization of the first generation of migrants that came to Austria. Due to the large number of workers and their desire to satisfy their social needs, over time there were many newly opened bars and restaurants in which foreign workers could gather. Yugoslav restaurants began to open all over Germany and Austria in the early ‘70s, when they acquired legal conditions under which a foreigner could enter into self-employment or open a bar or shop more specifically. Going to Yugoslav bars meant a lot for Yugoslav citizens and it was very special for them. “On Saturdays, you could eat well there, talk about difficulties, listen to Yugoslav folk music, accompanied by the indispensable harmonica and “singer” (pevaljka¹⁰)” (Ivanović, 2012, 13). As this community was growing, the need to socialize was becoming more prominent. This led to a so-called “Balkan Woodstock” that took place in 1972 in Vienna. Couple of gastarbeiter families started gathering spontaneously a couple of weeks prior to the event in the Augarten (public park and garden in Vienna). Soon after, this became a weekly practice until on August 13 there were more than 3500 people in the park, drinking, celebrating with the sound of harmonica and dancing “kolo”¹¹, with food stands and crates of beer (Ivanović, 2012). This is considered to be the biggest gathering of the Yugoslav diaspora in Vienna. The next step was the establishment of clubs for the guest workers. This was a spontaneous occurrence since most of the workers were homesick and also socially detached from the new environment in which they lived, they felt the need to have specific places where they could occasionally gather and spend their free time. The beginning of the ‘70s marked the phase of accelerated establishment of Yugoslav clubs for workers. In 1971, there were 60 of them in Germany and Austria, four years later, the number of cultural and educational communities, clubs and sports societies on the territory of Western Europe amounted to about 250 (Ivanovic, 2012). The biggest club in Vienna was Jedinstvo founded in 1982 and it is still active today. The club was the place where the workers could gather, see the movies from their homeland, enjoy sports activities (football and ping pong) and other events such as concerts and performance of their traditional dances. This club and many others to follow, also organized concerts of popular folk stars and actors who recited drama plays. Migration to Vienna was

¹⁰ “Pevaljka” is a term that describes the female singer who sings predominantly folk music, often dressed in a provocative way in order to draw more attention to herself, hide the imperfections in singing performance and get more tips in money (“bakšiš”) when someone wants to hear a specific song.

¹¹ A traditional folk dance in former Yugoslavia.

characterized by the large working class that came mostly from the rural areas and thus carried a special cultural and social background (Fisher, 2003). Because of this the predominant music discourse was folk music since it had the most appeal to the target audience which were the guest workers.

“In the large hall “Stadthalle” the event was held for Yugoslav workers on the occasion of the “Republic Day”. The show “Tonight together” was organized by Radio Belgrade. Over 2,500 of Yugoslav workers employed in Vienna, witnessed the program in which folk and other stars performed entertainment tunes. About 3000 workers stood in front of “Stadthalle” because the hall could no longer accommodate a single spectator” (Ivanović, 2012, 263).

Ivanović cites the words of a member of the audience from that night who says: *“When I hear our song, I fall into ecstasy, something grabs my heart, as someone is holding it with the iron pliers and squeezes and squeezes....what can I say, everyone starts crying until the concert is over. It is a miracle my brother. Last time I cried that hard when someone stole my wallet when I just sold my cows” (Ivanović, 2012, 263).*

These events enabled the possibility for the expressions of one's own identity, an attempt to share anger, sadness, love with and to others, a way to realize solidarity with others. Through the music the ethnic identity could be expressed as a form of connection with the country of origin and at the same time differentiating these groups from the local population. These events were an essential aspect of “communication” with their own country (Ivanović, 2012).

One turn in the demographic structure of migrants from Yugoslavia started in late 1980. Due to the civil war that started in 1991, more young people between their twenties and thirties, started migrating to Vienna (Fisher, 2003). These young people were educated and many of them started their studies in Vienna or immediately started working. The cultural resources of this group were on a higher level than those of the first generations of migrants that came in 1970. These young people brought with them a taste for so called “neo Folk”¹² and a culture that goes with it, often associated with criminals and a high life that comes with that. Besides neo and turbo folk, music genres such as rock, pop and punk started crossing borders as a part of the music taste of these young people. Although not mainstream at home (Serbian, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia) these music genres found their way into the new environment and were well accepted between young migrants with the bands such as “Crvena Jabuka”, “Psihomodo Pop”, “Bajaga i Instruktori”, “Djordje Balasević”, “Oliver Dragojević” and many others (Fisher, 2003). This had also a strong influence on the music scene in Vienna.

This short historic context provides a wider frame for understanding how the new “Ex Yu” music scene started and how it changed and evolved through time. In a nutshell, the first migrants that arrived in the 1960s were predominantly from rural areas and with lower social capital (Fisher,

¹² “Novokomponovani Folk”, a mixture of motives from folk music and techno beats, often also called “Turbo folk”.

2003). These people, after they have settled in some way in the new environment, brought with them their friends and families and this community grew with time. It grew so much that people who were employing this work force, but also the authorities, recognized the need to provide more cultural content for these people (Ivanović, 2012). The clubs for migrants were, among other offers, the first places where migrants from Yugoslavia could socialize, watch movies and do sports. These clubs also organized concerts and events on a larger scale with a program that involved folk stars from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Macedonia. After some time the legal framework was changed, allowing people with migration backgrounds to open and own a business of their own and many of them turned to gastronomy since there was a strong need for restaurants and bars that were intended for this community. Many bars and clubs opened bearing the names of cities in former Yugoslavia such as “Mostar”, “Beograd” or “Zagreb” (Ivanović, 2012). In these restaurants one could enjoy food specialties from Yugoslavia but also live music. This music was predominantly performed by acoustic ensembles and was strongly based on folk tradition, mixing different local music genres based on the population that frequented these places. Alongside, Vienna became a city folk stars from Yugoslavia gladly visited since it guaranteed attendance and sold out concerts. Folk music, broadly defined, was a dominant musical discourse of the first generations of work migrants, but also of their children, since they adopted the music which was played in their house everyday (more on that in the discussion chapter). The 1990s brought a slight shift in the demographic structure of the migrants in Vienna. Due to the civil war that broke out in 1991 many young people fled the country in order not to be drafted in the military or they just didn't want to live in the country that was economically devastated by the war. The music discourse started to change since some of these young people had a bit more refined taste in music due to their education and western influences that they gladly accepted (Fisher, 2013). The restaurants and “kafanas” were not appalling to them and they searched for places and bars which would satisfy their music preferences. This resulted in the opening of bars such as “Legato”, “Mellow” and “Cafe Exquisite”¹³ that were oriented towards this new audience and were predominantly playing pop, rock and dance music. “Cafe Exquisite” had a DJ who was playing all the modern pop and rock hits that came from ex-Yugoslavia and was a meeting point for the young migrants where they could meet and engage in communication. Cafe “Mellow” was one of the first bars that introduced the concept of pop rock live music. The concept was based on acoustic bands, often consisting of two musicians that performed rock and pop music without the amplification. The idea was to provide a chance for the young people, predominantly students, to perform and gather musical experience. Although the bar did not have “fancy” interior, it soon established itself as a place where you could hear “good music and hang out until early in the morning”¹⁴. In 2007 cafe “Major” opened its doors to the audience. It was a similar concept as cafe “Mellow” but taken to the next level. The bar was located in the 16th Vienna district and was a success from the beginning. The newly arrived students frequented the place and live music was a must from the very start. The concept

¹³ Although “Cafe Exquisite” started as a pop rock-oriented club, today this bar is predominantly folk oriented.

¹⁴ The information was provided through an informal conversation with one of the owners of cafe “Mellow”.

of live music was also upgraded with a full band playing pop, rock and funk from ex-Yugoslavia, but also some popular American and English songs. Owned by a musician, the place had a specific atmosphere that merged all the people from former Yugoslav¹⁵. I identify cafe “Major” as one of the first clubs that opened the doors for the new “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna. It was one of the first bars that made a move towards rock and pop music from former Yugoslavia and later became the “Tavern”, one of the most famous bars with live music, even today.

This shift in the structure of migrants, from guest workers to educated and educational migrants has also had its impact on the musical discourse of the “Ex Yu” community in Vienna. The folk culture is still present, embodied in big “folkoteka” clubs such as “Vault”, “Maze” and some smaller clubs such as “Cafe Exquisite” and cafes and bars located on the Ottakringerstrasse in the 16th Vienna district. But I think there is one other scene that emerged in the first decade of the 2000s and has exploded in the last six years.

3.5 Theory and Context

To put the above-mentioned context into the theoretical framework based on Bennet and Peterson (local music scenes), Becker (Art Worlds), Bourdieu (cultural fields) and Hara (Music Worlds) as well as into the relation between music and community in the works of Bennet, Dawe and Lewis I will draw some conclusions. First, it cannot be argued that the new “Ex Yu” music scene is locally based phenomena. By that I mean that there is a specific geographic place/places located in a specific city that houses this scene. More precisely, the clubs and bars that are in my focus are located in 15th, 8th and 1st Vienna district (all in the relative proximity of each other). This scene could be also seen as the product of “cultural history of the locale” (Bennet, Peterson, 2004). First of all, as presented above, this scene could be seen as the opposition to folk music as the predominant music style of migrants that come from ex-Yugoslavia. As my research has shown, this was true until a certain shift in the demographic structure of migrants happened. As there were more and more young people fleeing the wars and pursuing education in the capital city of Austria in the 1990s and 2000s (and still ongoing), this folk discourse has been “enriched” with the pop and rock-oriented music. In a sense, the new “Ex Yu” music scene could be seen as a response from the new educational migrants who don't want to be identified as “gastarbajters” and the cultural content that comes with it, but pursue better paid jobs based on their education. Based on my research I have found out that the specific narrative of the atypical music orientation of the new generations of migrants has also shifted but there is still no clear “cut”. Additionally, all of my interviewees have pointed out that there is a line that separates (seen as taste in music) the second and third generation of migrants who were born and raised in Vienna and young people who arrived to Vienna to study in the last two decades. It seems that there is a clear cut between these groups who frequent different locals and bars in order to satisfy

¹⁵ The information provided by the current owner of “Tavern” who also worked at “Major”.

their music preferences. But my personal experience as a musician has shown me that although this distinction is present, it is not that clear. Although the majority of the audience is “separated” by the specific interest and taste in music, there is a fluctuation between these groups. Surely, the young people who were born in Vienna and have emigrational background (one or both parents, or grandparents originating from former Yugoslavia) do visit bars and clubs in which the new “Ex Yu” music scene could be found. But I cannot state the reverse process. It seems that the educational migrants (Mihajlovic Ignjatovic, 2022)¹⁶ who have come and settled in Vienna in the last twenty years, do not frequent the typical “folkoteka” and bars on Ottakringerstrasse for example. This assumption is based on the answers of my interviewees and my personal experience. The bigger conundrum is that the bars and clubs in my focus started to slightly change their concept in the last couple of years, and besides the pop and rock repertoire, started to include at least one set of folk oriented music. This is not typical traditional folk music but rather a modern take on this genre, leaning more to “soft pop folk” with love thematic as a main topic¹⁷. Therefore, in a sense this narrative that folk music is the staple of “gastarbajters” and “Ex Yu” pop rock is the main preferences of the “newly” migrants is presented and reinforced by the music that is performed in the clubs that are the center of my attention. But on the other side, in the last year or so, there is a slight merge of these two populations based on the change of the music repertoire in favor of more pop folk oriented music (this will be discussed more in depth in the chapters to come). Along this line the question of identity presents itself. Identity can have many layers to itself. As a paradoxical category by its name (*idem* - Latin for “the same”) it refers to the categories that makes one a unique individual but also in a way makes us a part of a specific social group (Buckingham, 2008). Identity can take many forms such as cultural identity, sexual identity, gender identity and national identity and all of these categories makes one person a part of the specific group that shares specific social and/or biological characteristics. In this context, “identity is about identification with others whom we assume are similar to us (if not exactly the same), at least in some significant ways” (Buckingham, 2008, 1). Music as an art form has a special appeal, it could be argued that every person has its “own music” that they like to listen to and that has a meaning that is only readable for this person (Ruud, 2009). Frith writes about how subjective and collective identity is produced by a specific music or music performance and how this music creates specific experiences (both musical and aesthetic) (Hall, Du Gay, 1996). Following this logic, the local music scene could be linked to a specific community. Migration, as a specific situation of relocating oneself in another environment, freely or by force, often produces isolation and insecurities, a sense of dislocation from home and uncertainties of what is to come. In this context music serves as a means of “relocation” (Hemtek, 2010) to a familiar environment. With the familiar music, people recognize and further confirm their identity, they are reminded where they come from and where they belong. As presented above, Vienna has always been appealing to people from former Yugoslavia and it still is. The 15th and 16th Vienna districts are considered to be “Balkan” districts and

¹⁶ People who came to Vienna to study their bachelor, master studies or PHD studies.

¹⁷ For more information see the work of Zeljko Samradzić, Zeljko Joksimović, Aco Pejović and “Tropico Band”.

Ottakringerstrasse has established itself as a “Balkan milieu”. Although I use the term Balkan, I put the emphasis on the Serbs, Bosnians and Bosniak, Croats, Macedonians and people who come from Montenegro. This community is growing with the arrival of educational migrants who come to Vienna for their studies. It is only natural that a community so large would be culturally represented. In this master thesis I will try to explain how this new “Ex Yu” music scene is linked to this student community and how it morphed in the last decade.

In order to stress out the complexity of defining this local “Ex Yu” music scene I will shortly turn to Becker and his concept of “Art Worlds” and on the concept of “Music fields” by Marico Hara. Both of these concepts deal with actors in a sense. For Becker in order to create a specific work of art, many actors and support institutions have to be involved in this process. Hara states that the music scene is a form of a social field which provides opportunities and restraints for the musicians. The actors (musicians) need to adapt in order to navigate through these arenas in order to sustain themselves. Adaptation in this sense is defined as an ability to perfect the music craft and branch out into different music genres by improving oneself. The local “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna is no different from these statements. In a specific manner, it is an interplay between the musicians, bar owners and audience. The economic gain (defined by the volume of drinking that happens in one night) or profit is a guideline for the bar owners which musicians to hire. Attendance and alcohol consumption depend on the atmosphere that musicians and bands are able to create with their performance. The more musicians “bombard” the audience with the songs they know, that have some meaning to them and could take them back in time which they could identify, the more they consume alcohol and other beverages. In order to maintain that feeling they drink more and generate profit. The musicians and bands who cannot produce this kind of atmosphere get less jobs. This brings us to the point that Hara makes. In order to get more jobs musicians, need to adapt and follow the established pattern which means playing specific songs that “work” for the masses. This means learning the required songs and branching out into other music genres besides rock and pop which are most common. Another point that Hara makes can be applied here and that is the power relation between the bar owners and musicians. The creativity of a musician and his skillset should be enough of a qualification to perform. But in the “Ex Yu” scene it seems that this is not enough. As my research has shown, the managers and bar owners often intervene in the middle of the gig and demand that the musician plays something else since the night isn't going as expected (consumption wise). Specific songs are requested that get the people in the drinking mood. After that the musicians need to follow that line in order to maintain that level of enjoyment and in most cases abandon what they have prepared to play for that evening (more on this in the upcoming chapters).

To summarize, what would be the suited definition of the new “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna? Although I gave the form of this definition in the chapters above I do think it needs some readjustment and reformulation in order to grasp the wideness of this social phenomena. By definition it is a local scene since it relates to a specific city (Vienna), specific districts and specific clubs. It is a product of specific cultural history and social processes such as migration

of the working force in the late 1960s and migrations caused by wars and educational reasons and the need of the migrant population to satisfy their music appetites. The scene is closely linked to the former Yugoslav community in Vienna, which frequents specific bars and clubs that represent it. This link is reinforced by the music played in these bars and clubs which is oriented towards “Ex Yu” pop rock and folk pop music. Underlayers of this phenomenon imply the interplay and power relations between all the actors involved such as musicians, bar owners and audience and their mutual connection by the process of profit making and satisfying the needs of the audience. I will try to shed more light on these matters in the Discussion chapter where I would present the relevant findings and results of my research.

4. Methodology

4.1 Positionality in the field

I consider myself a musician. This is a part of my personality that I regard as very important. I started playing guitar when I was fourteen and after one year I had my first stage performance. We were performing at the celebration of the “Day of our school” and we were the school band. Personally, this experience was moving on so many levels. The exchange of energy between the people who play but also between the band and the audience (my peers and teachers in this case) and the collective enjoyment of the music that is performed was quite moving. From that day I decided to recapture this feeling as often as I can, by performing music that I like, with the people that I like. As a person I have my preferences of music genres and specific music taste. I grew up listening to heavy metal music and later in my twenties I discovered blues which I instantly liked and still do until this day. When someone asks me nowadays which music do you listen to, I always say blues. On the other hand, I also have preferences as a musician, namely, I have music that I like to play and music I do not like to perform. When my personal taste in music and my music preferences as a musician coincide, I feel very happy. But I have learned in the early days of my music career that this is often not the case. The first time I decided to play something that I do not actually like is when I decided to start playing Serbian folk music when I was seventeen. This was due to the bad financial situation in which my family was at that time. At first, I was supposed to play two sets of Serbian pop rock in wedding celebrations and at other events with the band which was a traditional folk band at that time (big orchestra composed of eight people with traditional instruments such as accordion and violin). But after a month I started learning to play folk music and after a couple of months I got good enough to start doing the whole gigs. I played in this folk band for three years and decided to leave since I could not do it anymore on a personal level. The discrepancy between the music I love and the music that I played at that time was just too big. After I first made that choice to perform music that I actually do not like in favor of financial gain, I decided to view some gigs as a job and that helped me on a personal level to gap that distance between the music I love and the music I play. It was no different when I arrived in Vienna. I have entered the music scene as a part of a cover duo that played a mixture of American and English pop and rock music and “Ex Yu” pop rock, again because of financial reasons. As a musician I am an active participant in this music scene. I perform weekly in different clubs and bars, mostly “Ex Yu” pop rock and folk music, but on the other hand also as a blues musician. All this experience provides a good base for comparison between different scenes and music genres that are performed.

Furthermore, I am also a sociologist. I finished my bachelor and master studies in Serbia in 2009 and worked one year in the Institute for Sociological research at the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš (Serbia). As a sociologist I participate in the mentioned music scene in a whole other way.

Needless to say, as a sociologist I recognize the patterns and trends of behavior, different processes that emerge and relations between all the actors involved in this music scene. All of this serves as an inspiration for my sociological imagination and at the end it did serve as a starting point for this thesis.

As a father and a husband, I can relate to the precarious nature of musicians' profession. The long working hours (often until four after midnight) and uncertainties of constant working engagement have a strong impact on my life.

As a male I can relate to the gender roles that are present or better said absent on this music scene since it is predominantly male orientated. There are a few female singers that are professionally engaged in this scene (perform on a weekly basis). From around twenty musicians that rotate and play with each other, there are three female singers (and one of them that also plays a guitar) that are performing constantly. There are no females that are playing other musician instruments.

As someone who comes from Serbia I can relate to the ethnic component since I myself am a part of this community. The ethnic structure of the scene is mostly based around musicians that come from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I have listed these characteristics in order to define my role in the field and to determine my positionality and all the advantages and disadvantages that this role brings. I am present in my research field foremost as a musician, then as a sociologist and a member of a Serbian community, just to name a few positions. As a musician I am a performer and a colleague, as a sociologist I am eager to find answers to the questions that interest me by linking different social processes together. Being a member of the Serbian community provides me a possibility to be accepted and a part of the music scene that lies in my focus. All of these characteristics have an impact on how I perceive the “Ex Yu” music scene as a social phenomenon. But what are the advantages and disadvantages that could emerge when you are a part of your own research field?

To explore the experience lies in the center of phenomenology (Hopkins, Regeher, D. Pratt, 2016). Trying to research one specific phenomenon thus implies finding out what are peoples' specific experiences regarding this phenomenon. In other words, understanding the experience in order to better understand the phenomena. One of the dangers is that this experience that includes our knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about a specific phenomenon is also inherent to researchers. “These beliefs and assumptions are the researcher's positionality” (Hopkins, Regeher, D. Pratt, 2016, 3). This positionality can influence the research process in many ways. Assumption is the first problem that comes to mind. Being a part of a research field (a music scene in this context) and being very familiar with it could lead to assumption that the other members are on the same level of familiarity. This could be very problematic in gathering the data because the researcher can assume that the person that has been interviewed is already familiar with specific processes and this might not be the case. This can strongly affect the quality of the gathered data. Another

issue is related to understanding specific terms and expressions. What a specific term means to a researcher that already has previous knowledge of a specific phenomenon does not imply the same for the interviewee. This could lead to misunderstanding the questions asked and consequently irrelevant data. Inversely, the interviewees could also assume that the researcher already has some information based on his involvement in the field and do not mention certain things. Being a part of the field as a colleague (musician in this case) to the people that one interviews could lead to desirable answers in order to avoid conflict with other musicians and bar owners. These assumptions or “pre-understandings” (Finlay, 2008) are something that the researcher should strongly be aware of and should be “put aside” in order to shift the focus on the specific experience of the person that provides the answers. On the other hand, philosophers such as Heidegger imply that this specific knowledge or “pre-understanding” is necessary for a better understanding of a specific phenomenon and is even a necessity in order to better understand the matter at hand. “Rather than eliminating it, researcher subjectivity should be managed with reflexivity – the noting, tracking, questioning, and sharing of the ways we shape and are shaped by the research process” (Hopkins, Regeher, D. Pratt, 2016, 5). Being an insider in the field also provides you with the possibilities to test your hypothesis based on your previous knowledge, compare the processes in different timelines, identify “hidden” activities and observe people's behaviors in real time. As Hopkins, Regeher and D. Pratt write, the researcher should always be aware of their pre-understandings and always reflect with this awareness. The researcher cannot be positioned as “insider” or “outsider” but rather change these roles constantly through the process of data gathering. In the research that is presented in the upcoming chapter, I have tried to do just that, constantly be aware of the specific experience I have as a member of this music scene but also my positionality as a fellow musician, sociologist and a member of Serbian/Balkan community. I have tried to approach every interview with a clear mind but keeping “at hand” all the knowledge I have gathered on this scene and using it to explore additional pathways which could lead to increased richness of the data. I was very careful not to “lead” the interviewees and not to suggest too much, I have kept my question as “wide” as possible, and tried to go more into specifics when I have felt the need to explore more about specific topics.

4.2 The research design

In order to try to best capture the essence and depict this new “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna I decided to use the qualitative research approach in order to provide detailed narrative descriptions and explanations of this social phenomena. As the main methods to collect qualitative data I have used ethnography (active participation and observation) and interviews.

When I set out to design a research approach to try to get the best possible and relevant data in describing the new “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna I experienced an obstacle. It seems that this

phenomenon was quite complicated and not easy to capture with the methodological tools. As a musician that performs every week for the last six years in the clubs that are at the center of this scene, I have noticed a lot of variables that I wanted to cover with my research. Firstly, I wanted to try to explain why in the last six years there was an explosion of clubs that had the same or similar concept, oriented towards live music and are there any sociological explanations for that trend or was it just coincidence. Secondly, I wanted to find out how the musicians that are part of this scene see the reasons for its emergence. Also I wanted to hear what the bar owners have to say about this topic, what were the reasons which pushed them to open a bar or cafe with this concept, was it just economic interest or was there something more? Additionally, I wanted to depict the scene as detailed as I could and capture all of its characteristics and nuances (esthetics, specific “vibe” of the locality and what type of audience is to be found in these places). Although I had all of this in mind I didn't have a specific research question per se which could be answered and covered with a specific theoretic approach and/or research design. Because of that I decided to base my methodological approach on the framework approach (more on this approach in paragraphs to come) in synthesizing and interpretation of the data.

4.3 Defining the actors

In order to gather the relevant data and to get a better understanding of the emergence of the new “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna, I set out to find relevant actors who would provide such information. The first idea was to include musicians, bar owners and audience in the interview but I decided to do the interviews just with the musicians and bar owners. This decision was made since I had difficulties choosing who to include as an audience member in the research. I could not find the suitable criteria on which to base that choice. The audience is very coherent and different regarding gender, age, education and background (with or without migration background). In order to create a valid sample, one would have to take all of these variables into consideration and because of time limits and organizational problems I chose to leave the audience out of the research (maybe a separate research can be undertaken just with the members of this social group). Consequently, I was left with the musicians and bar owners as the main target group for providing the relevant data.

4.3.1 Sample structure

Creating a sample structure that could provide relevant data regarding the topic of interest and defining the criteria on which to base this choice (should the criteria be more of an abstract nature or concrete (Flick, 2009) was a bit challenging. I decided to go with the theoretical sampling. Theoretical sampling is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and

where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges. Sampling decisions in theoretical sampling may start from either of the two levels: they may be made on the level of the groups to be compared or they may directly focus on specific persons (Flick, 2009, 118). My focus was to target and find specific musicians which suited the criteria that I defined (presented under in the paragraph below) but here a problem arose (some of the musicians were absent at the time when I conducted the interviews). I solved this problem by replacing the musicians that I first intended to interview with two others which suited the defined criteria. This was not the case with bar owners since I wanted to focus on the four bars/clubs that, in my opinion, started the new “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna. I got access to all of them, apart from the owners of the club “Broz” which I replaced with the manager who is in charge of booking the musicians and bands and is in direct communication with them.

4.3.2 The bar owners

The criteria for choosing the bar and cafe was based on involvement in the creating the concept of the bar/cafe and constant presence in the everyday work of a specific bar or cafe. Ideally, I have tried to reach out to the bar owners who were also involved in creating specific concepts for their cafes in order to see if there was an intention of having the live music from the beginning and what kind of live music was that. When that was not the case I tried to reach the person “next in line” meaning the staff that is responsible for band booking or who are in direct communication with the musicians most commonly the managers of the bars/clubs). The intention behind that was to try to find out if there was a concept of live music present when the idea of a specific bar or cafe was born. But also, which kind of music was that (pop, rock, folk music), what was the population/audience that owners had in mind, did that concept change over time, how and why. The focus was also on their relations with musicians, specifically, which criteria they base their choice upon regarding who is going to play on a specific evening, how do they decide to rehire a musician or a band and do they have an influence on the repertoire that has been played.

Choosing the bar owners was relatively easy since I decided to concentrate my attention on the first four clubs that have started this scene. Those clubs were the “Tavern”, “Blue Beach”, “Broz” and “Nikola” (more about the clubs in the chapters to come). This decision was made since it made sense chronologically. The first club that emerged was the “Tavern” (2012), then “Blue Beach” (2016), then “Broz” (2018) and “Nikola” (2019). I consider these clubs to be the founders of this new music scene since after they opened their doors other cafes started to implement the similar concept of live music. The anonymity was provided for all of the bar owners by using pseudonyms for their names and bars that they own.

I reached out to Jana, the owner of the “Tavern” and did an interview with her on 17.03.2022. in her cafe. The Interview was quite pleasant and provided a lot of useful information since

“Tavern” was one of the first clubs with the concept of live music, having actually two bends every weekend (one at the first floor and one at the basement). Jana provided a useful insight on how the scene formed and how it looks now, and also reflected on her position as a woman in this business which I found quite interesting.

Then I reached out to Miro who is the owner of “Blue Beach” and since I played there since this small cafe was opened, I had a good relationship with him. The Interview was done on 24.03.2022. in “Blue beach” and also was very informative and provided relevant data such as, among others, how the audience changed over the years and what brought upon this change.

Regarding the club “Broz” (the biggest club of these four) I could not reach the owners (there are two of them) so I turned to Aleksandar, a manager who is in charge of booking the bands, and was and still is an employee of the club “Broz”. Aleksandar reflected on how the club was not intentionally built for live music but then the owners quickly realized that there is an audience for that, so they soon changed their concept from a lounge cafe to a club with live music. The Interview with Aleksandar was done on 08.04.2022.

The last interview with the bar owners was done with Dragan, one of the owners of “Nikola” on 14.04.2022 in the same cafe. Dragan provided useful insight on the audience who visits the above-mentioned club and how one typical night at “Nikola” cafe looks like.

All above listed persons showed a high level of willingness to participate in the research and, apart from two rescheduling, all the dates for the interviews were held as planned.

4.3.3 The musicians

Choosing the musicians who will participate in the research was a bit of a complicated task. Although I already had a good view on which of them I would like to interview, since I myself have been an active member of the scene for seven years, the problem of knowing my interviewees arose. This could potentially present a problem since some of data that could be shared could go “under the radar” because the interviewee assumes that I am already familiar with a specific topic or a theme. I resolved this matter by approaching the musician with whom I have not yet shared a stage or did so one time (two of them). I chose the musician that I shared the stage with one time, solely based on our professional relationship. These performances were strictly professional with not a lot of personal contact outside the music that we played that night. I have chosen to include these two musicians as they possess the most experience in performing on the “Ex Yu” music scene. The criteria for choosing the musicians was firstly based on continuity. By that I mean involvement or presence on the music scene in the last ten years (at least, more experience was a bonus). I have set these criteria in order to try to compare the state prior to the emergence of the new “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna. The experience of being a part

of a music scene in Vienna continuously could provide a perspective on how this new scene differs from the previous standpoint, what has changed in specific areas such as repertoire, playing time, honoraria, musicians' skill set, etc. This experience could also provide a perspective on how the typical Balkan music scene that could be found on Ottakringerstraße ("Balkan milieu") which was strongly folk orientated, morphed and evolved into the new "Ex Yu" music scene in Vienna. This criterion was not suited for one of the musicians since he arrived in Vienna 2018. I chose to include him in the research because he established himself as a very active musician in the "Ex Yu" scene and could provide a "fresh" perspective. The second criterion was openness (lack of restriction, availability). This implied the willingness to play with other musicians and not to have a band of his/her own. From my personal experience, and this is also what the research has shown, all of the musicians on this new scene fluctuate between projects and play with other musicians. One of the interviewees has called this phenomenon "ad hoc" bands (more on that in the chapters to come). This involvement with different musicians and different projects could provide valuable information on musicians' skill set, how the repertoire differs, but also which combination of musicians is preferred by the audience and bar owners regarding the music that is played and earnings that has been made for that specific evening. The third criterion was musical education. I wanted to experience the perspective of musicians who have studied music or at least went to a music high school and have knowledge about music and music theory. I wanted to find out how playing cover songs from the former Yugoslavia every weekend affects the artistic approach and motivation of the musicians, their eagerness to perform and the quality of their performance. The fourth criterion was constant performance which strongly leans on the third criteria. I defined constant performing as playing at least two times a week in the above-mentioned clubs. What surprised me was that all of the musicians (six of them) were performing more than two times and some of them even four times a week. This was done in order to try to establish how the scene influences the musician's productivity and what are the reasons for that volume of performance (economic or of some other nature). The anonymity was provided for all of the musicians by using pseudonyms.

The first musician that I interviewed (on 23.02.2022) was Zoran. Zoran is 44 years old and plays accordion and keyboards. He was born in 1978 in Vienna (parents from Bosnia and Herzegovina) and started learning accordion in 1991. He played his first concert in 1994 accompanying one folk star from Serbia. In 2000 he started playing in the club called "Porto Bello". In 2004 he started playing at Ottakringerstraße, in the club called "Pinokio" and after that in the club called "The Maze". In 2015 he shifted his focus towards playing pop rock music, but also continues to play traditional celebrations that originated from Yugoslavia such as weddings and other private parties. He is still very active today and plays with different musicians and bands.

The next interview was with Bojan (on 26.02.2022). Bojan was born in 1982 in Serbia. He arrived in Graz to study music (jazz guitar) in 2006. Shortly after, he started playing in Vienna in the club called "The Maze" four days a week. He is regarded by his colleagues as one of the

most talented musicians/multi-instrumentalists and entertainers on the “Ex Yu” music scene. Apart from his band he plays with different musicians but is also involved in other projects involving jazz and recording and arranging music for other artists. Bojan plays guitar, keyboards and sings.

The Interview with Mikan was done on 6.03.2022. Mikan is a drummer born in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1978. In 2004 he arrived in Austria (St. Polten) and started playing in the clubs there. Shortly after he also started playing in Vienna. After that he went to Switzerland for a short period of time and played there. He moved back to Vienna and started playing on the Ottakringerstraße in clubs such as “The Maze” and “Pinokio”. In 2012 he formed one of the most influential cover bands on the “Ex Yu” music scene. He is a very active musician and is a part of different projects which involve different musicians and music genres.

The next interview was with Jakov (8.05.2022). Jakov was born in Serbia in 1965. He first moved to Vienna in 1984 in order to start studying bass jazz guitar. He went back to Yugoslavia shortly (because of military issues) and then came back to Vienna again and finished the “Prayner Konservatorium”. He started playing jazz immediately after his arrival to Vienna and in 1986 he recorded his first album. Additionally, he started playing in (former) Yugoslav “kafanas” but he also branches out in other music directions such as latino, classic, rock and country music. Jakov is regarded as one of the best all-around bass players in Vienna.

The interview with Davor was done on 9.05.2022. Davor was born in Serbia in 1979. He arrived in Vienna in 2001 and then went to Paris to pursue his drumming career. After one year he came back to Vienna where he studied at “Vienna Konservatorium”. He started playing Balkan folk music in kafanas in Vienna but also with many Austrian bands. He played drums in one Roma orchestra for six years and after that he started working as an educator (guest professor at universities and head of the percussion section in “Vienna International School” (2005). He got back on the “Ex Yu” music scene and started playing in the clubs on Ottakringerstraße but also in the “Tavern”. He has also established himself in jazz, funk, latino and blues.

The last interview was done with Stojan on 21.6.2022. Stojan is 23 years old and arrived in Vienna in 2018 for his studies. He entered the music scene in Vienna by playing student nights on Wednesdays in cafe “Blue Beach”. In a short time, he established himself as a singer/guitar player and started branching out in other former Yugoslav bars and clubs in Vienna. He is a very active musician today who plays alone but also in various bands and projects.

4.4 The Interviews

As the main method for data collection I have chosen the interview, a method of data collection based on verbal exchange about specific topics between two (or more) people. This verbal

exchange is based on formulated questions regarding the topic of interest which is directly linked to the research question. Interviews provide the opportunity to gather relevant information in more detail but also ensure flexibility. In contrast to questionnaires where the questions have already been formulated and presented to the respondent, the interview provides a possibility for constant adaptation as you learn more information. When an answer from the interviewee sparks your imagination to go maybe in a different direction you can note that and follow up with the different question. This way you are not limited by a specific answer but can explore a variety of sub topics. Interviews are also suited for exploring the topics that are in nature complex, multilayered and need a thorough investigation. Also, they are a useful tool in explaining how specific social phenomena occur. In order to fully understand this process, the exchange of specific experiences and practices in the form of dialogue needs to happen. This approach provides a richness of data as every person has a different experience regarding one phenomenon and this could lead, as mentioned before, to new questions and inquiries. To summarize, the interviews as a data collection tool are useful when gathering very detailed information about a specific topic, but also when you need the flexibility to change your questions in order to explore new sub topics that emerge in the process. Interviews are also suited for exploring complex processes that need extensive explanations but also to get an inside on how people make specific decisions and what lies behind this process (Flick, 2009).

I have chosen the semi structured interview since it provides more suitable context for the interviewees to express their viewpoints about the emergence of the new “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna. An open design of semi structured interviews provides a good setting for exploring the circumstances which have led to the emergence of this specific phenomena, both from the musician’s perspective, but also from the standpoint of bar or cafe owners. The semi structured interview is based on loosely constructed questions, serving more as guidelines and being a flexible tool for data gathering. “The researcher orients himself according to an interview guide but one that gives a plenty of freedom of movement in the formulation of questions, follow up strategies and sequencing” (Flick, Kardorff, Steinke, 2004, 204).

The opening question was based on which type of respondents were giving the interview. When I conducted the interview with musicians, an opening question was related to how and when they first arrived in Vienna and started playing music. This was done in order to establish a timeline and continuity of experience of performing music in Vienna. During their response, I have noted subtopics and areas of interest which could provide valuable data for my research. Based on that I have formulated further questions. As the interview was conducted I noticed similarities between topics that emerged and I followed that trend onwards with other musicians. All of the musicians, based on their previous experience, talked about specific themes such as relations with other musicians, relations with bar owners, financial matters (amount of money that they earn for one gig), how the repertoire morphed, the audience, alcohol consuming, working hours, insecurities and precarious nature of their occupation.

When I did the interviews with bar/cafe owners I opened the interview with the question: when did they open their bar or cafe and what was its initial concept. This was done in order to try to establish whether there was the initial idea to have live music from the start or did the concept change with time. With this I wanted to find out which were the bars that had live music from the start and which bars and cafes adopted this approach later as a trend (everybody else has this concept so why shouldn't we as well). As with musicians, the bar owners identified specific topics based on their experience such as: relation with musicians, esthetics of their place, "their" audience and what kind of music they like, atmosphere (here also alcohol consuming was addressed) and what distinguishes them from their competition.

The audio data was captured with the voice recording app on my android phone. After the transcription, the data was erased due to the protection of personal information. The transcripts were done on my laptop manually, without the use of any specific program. I have used a music recording program called "Cocos Reaper" to slow down the audio file in order to transcript more fluently and in detail. The transcripts were done in Microsoft Office Word in Serbian/Bosnian language since that is what all of the respondents found the most convenient. The parts of the interviews that were directly cited in this master thesis were translated into English as it was arranged with the mentor of the thesis.

All of the participants were firstly contacted via phone call, SMS message or on social media. This first contact was to inform them that I am writing a master thesis about the music scene in which they are involved as musicians or bar owners and to see if they are willing to participate in the research. This first contact was also used to arrange a personal meeting to clarify more in depth what my topic was and what were the main goals of the thesis. In these first meetings I have presented my master thesis idea and what are my expectations from the participants. Moreover, I have presented the Informed consent form that I have created based on the form provided by the Research Ethics Review Committee¹⁸ which is specifically designed to use in interviews, focus groups discussions and questionnaires. The form was adopted as suggested by the Committee, for the purpose of the thesis. This form guarantees that the gathered data will only be used for scientific purposes. All of the participants have read the form (prior to interviews) and verified it with their signatures on the date when the interviews took place.

Anonymity was provided for all the participants by using pseudonyms for their names and names of the bars and clubs that they own. Although the majority of participants wanted to use their real names (only one of the bar owners did not agree to that) I have decided to use pseudonyms because of the sensitive nature of the data and possible impact on the reputation of the bars and musicians. The pseudonyms are also used for all of the other bars and clubs (alongside the four bars and clubs that are in the main focus) that are mentioned in this thesis.

¹⁸ More on the activities of the Committee: <https://cureg.unige.ch/en/about-us/>

Overall, semi structured interviews provided the flexibility and richness of information and thus proved as a valid choice for data gathering. It seems that this form was well accepted among the interviewees since they provided a lot of useful data and information that have led to discovery of new possible topics and subtopics that could be further explored. The shortest interview was 37:00 minutes and the longest was 2:01:00. The interviews were conducted from March until June 2022 and there were no major difficulties throughout this process.

4.5 Method for data analysis

As the method of analyzing the collected data I have chosen the concept by Jane Ritchie presented in her book *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers* (2003) called the framework analysis. Data analysis is a two-way process, it involves managing the collected data (organizing the data) and making sense of the data through description and explanations (Ritchie, 2003). These two stages are crucial for the correct analysis of the data and need to be performed correctly in order to provide a solid base for generating explanations and theories. The analysis method framework presented by Jane Ritchie was developed in the 1980 at the National Center for Social Research and it is a matrix based analytical tool which provides transparent data management in all the stages of analytical process but it also allows the researcher to move between the different levels of abstraction while keeping in mind the raw data (Ritchie, 2003). The thematic framework is at the center of the presented method. By thematic framework it is referred to organizing the data in specific themes, concepts and categories. It involves defining the themes and their subtopics which have an adaptive nature, as researcher dives more in depth in the raw data. A table is created for every subject that took part in the interviews where all the emerging themes are given a specific row and all subtopics are assigned under the specific theme. Defining the themes involves familiarization with the raw data gathered through interviews. The themes are based on attitudes, behaviors, motivation or views and are further refined by designing a conceptual framework or index based on the specific topic of the interview. "Themes are then grouped under a smaller number of main themes and placed within an overall framework" (Ritchie, 2003, 221). The content of the index can be semantically based and involves descriptive categories or contains more abstract classifications (Ritchie, 2003). After doing this, the raw data is viewed through the main themes and subthemes or subtopics. This process is referred to by Ritchie as indexing and it provides a more accurate assessment of how the defined categories fit the data. Index in this sense is a tool that can capture a wider scope of dimensions in contrast to coding which is aimed at capturing more precise definitions and dimensions. This makes determining the connections between themes and categories across the data easier. The framework and index are always refined and modified according to the processed data by adding or removing the specific categories. The indexing is applied on every paragraph of the transcribed interview. The next step is ordering the data and grouping the similar concepts. The final process of data

management is summarizing the gathered data in order to reduce it to a manageable level for the fine analysis by creating a thematic chart. The next step involves defining elements and dimensions, refining categories and classifying the data by using detection (identifying content and dimension of a phenomenon), categorization (assigning descriptive data to categories) and classification (assigning the groups of categorization to cases) (Ritchie, 2003). The process then leads to defining typologies which represent multidimensional classifications combining different dimensions in order to establish position and/or specific characteristic. All the cases need to be assigned to a specific dimension that is contained in typology and in order to achieve this, dimensions need to be constantly modded. This leads to detecting patterns, associative analysis and identification of clustering in order to gain deeper understanding of the topic of interest. This is achieved by linking the similar phenomena, by determining whether there are specific patterns that occur within the specific social group or subgroup. When this is done, an explanation of why these connections or linkages exist need to be provided by reading through synthesized data, following the discovered leads, studying patterns and thinking “around” the data, using reasoning, logic and common sense and relying on other relevant studies and theoretical frameworks (Ritchie,2003). At the end of the process it is advised to seek for wider application of gained evidence in order to give contribution to a specific debate and/or prove or disprove of theoretical concepts.

5. Findings

In this chapter I will present the relevant findings. I will try to link them with other social processes that could possibly explain how this new scene came to be, what makes it new and what are its main characteristics. As described in the methodological chapter, I have used the framework analysis (Ritchie, 2003) in order to establish themes and relevant concepts and to sort the gathered data accordingly. I have constructed index boxes and then labeled the data using this index as a tool, and sorted the data based on a theme and concepts. After that I have constructed thematic charts for every interview in order to synthesize the gathered data furthermore in order to define relevant dimensions and categories and refine the data even more. In the end I have constructed specific typologies in order to combine one or more dimensions and create meaningful explanations (Ritchie, 2003). The findings will be presented under a specific subchapter in order to provide a clearer view of the gathered data.

5.1 The professional musicians

I think it would be important to provide some general characteristics of the musicians that I have interviewed since this could give more depth to their testimonies and answers. First, I want to raise a question: what is a professional musician and could musicians that I have interviewed be considered professional musicians? In order to answer that question, we need to answer what is a professional musician? When talking about professional musicians, many authors put emphasis on education (Green, 2002; Boyce-Tillmann, 2018; Smilde, 2007) which is in my opinion one of the crucial characteristics that makes someone understand and perform music in a professional manner. But a form of a discrepancy could be found. Although many famous musicians who occupy the domain of popular music do have the musical education, others equally successful do not. Some of them have found it even quite difficult to relate to the way of thinking that music education imposes. So how could we get past this issue? Green suggests the concept of “formal music education” and “informal music learning” (Green, 2002). These two practices do not exclude each other but are rather most productive when combined. Green also states that although the development of technologies such as internet and online learning increased the possibilities for the people to learn, the music industry has set such high standards of performing and composing that are very hard to achieve for amateur musicians. In the last five decades the musical education system was established based on the western educational models, which involve institutions ranging from primary schools up to universities and conservatories committed to learning music. These institutions provide necessary qualifications for playing and understanding music theory in general. This is embodied in diplomas, degrees and certificates. Additionally, there is a line of informal music learning practices that refers to self-taught

musicians, who “pick up” the knowledge (Green, 2012) with the help of some external actors such as their parents, peers or other musicians, or by trying to mimic other musicians and their techniques. The formal music education could be seen as a skeleton that provides the foundation for understanding the music theory and music language and the informal music learning could be seen as muscle attached to the skeleton and would imply non-conventional learning and all the techniques and tricks of the music trade that come from extensive performances in front of the audience.

Smilde highlights the multiplicity of “musicians’ portfolios” (Smilde, 2007) and the shift that has happened in this field. In order to sustain themselves, musicians have to constantly shift between multiple roles and jobs. Smilde sees the musicians as entrepreneurs in a way but with the high level of uncertainties in regard to their employment. This refers to the part time engagement on a monthly basis and lack of constant income. In order to overcome these uncertainties, the musicians have to shift and change roles constantly. The most common roles are that of a teacher and performer (Smilde, 2007), but not just that. Smilde states that to have a music career today one must constantly shift between the plethora of roles which cover a lot more ground than just performing and/or composing. The important question is what musicians themselves perceive to be their professional identity and does this identity change in different situations. It could be said that different roles emerge in different situations and thus this identity could vary. Different contexts condition different roles, the performer, the teacher, the composer, arranger, studio musician, mentor being just some of them. Musician is someone who constantly takes risks in order to get jobs but also in creative processes in order to stretch out his musical craftsmanship. At the same time, he needs to develop, to identify his weak spots and to try to overcome that by learning new skills. Also, the musician also has to form partnerships with students and other musicians, while the relationships with bar owners, managers and promoters are also an important asset and for this communication skills are needed. The musician needs to manage his income and financial matters, but also be in charge of his own promotion in order to put himself in a spot that could get him jobs. This involves managing the social media such as YouTube, Instagram and Facebook which are today a must in order to get hired but also to promote the concerts and gigs. The specific cultural context demands specific roles in order to correctly respond to presented challenges. Smilde argues that this concept of lifelong learning is very important since education is based on it. The challenge lies in how the universities, music schools and conservatoriums can respond to these issues.

To summarize, being a professional musician requires education and necessary skills. The education is acquired by attending a specific institution such as music school, university or conservatorium. The degree is a written guarantee of an achieved educational level. But a modern-day musician needs additional skills in order to maintain himself in the music world. Many of these additional skills are acquired through non-conventional ways of education such as exchange of specific experiences with other musicians, learning by being in specific situations, and “picking up” knowledge along the way. Additionally, other crafts need to be mastered in

order to be constantly employed as a musician. These involve self-promotion, communicational and entrepreneurial skills. The multitude of these roles makes a musician a versatile professional that can slip and slide between social situations and make his way around challenges that are presented before him.

This short introduction on what it means to be a professional musician nicely describes the musicians that I have interviewed. Five of six of them have some sort of musical education. Four of them have degrees from conservatoriums and one of them has a music school diploma. Most of them (four) came to Austria in order to study music and all of them finished their universities and conservatoriums. Three of them are music teachers in a music school and one university and also give private lessons to students and talented individuals. Besides that, all of them are constantly performing on a weekly basis, often four nights in a row since they arrived in Vienna. In addition, all of them are performing different styles of music depending on the given event. For example, on a traditional wedding they would play predominantly folk music with maybe a hint of “Ex Yu” pop and rock. Playing in the clubs and bars is a different story. You could have a set list but as I mentioned before, that could change because of the way the audience reacts (or better does not react), to the prepared repertoire and you could be attacked by the requests from the audience in exchange for money tips (*bakšiš*¹⁹). Three of five musicians are also a part of the Vienna jazz scene and share a stage with other jazz musicians on a monthly basis. One of the musicians I have interviewed (Zoran) makes posters for online promotion of the concerts and gigs. He distributes them to the musicians so they could post them on their social media accounts. All of this serves to describe the professionalism and skill set of the musicians that have been interviewed but also to emphasize the complexity of what it means to be a musician on this new “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna. It means a multiplicity of roles, predominantly in music genres (you have to be a rock musician, pop musician, a jazzer and a former Yugoslav folk musician in one week), it means handling the audience in the right way. As the owner of “Tavern” says for one of the interviewed musician:

“He (Bojan) searches for what the audience wants to hear on a specific evening. He shifts between music genres and songs and when he “hits them” and “finds them” - you better fasten your seatbelt because it's gonna be a ride”.

On top of all of that, the constant communication with the bar owners and managers in order to get the gig dates is always ongoing. This also requires a specific skill set in order to “sell” yourself or your band in order to get the good days to play (Friday or Saturday). Some clubs even pay more per band member if you play on Saturday since then it is always a full house and the band needs to deliver and must not disappoint. Ongoing communication with other musicians

¹⁹ “*Bakšiš*” is a compensation in money for the musicians if they could play a desired song from an audience member. It varies between 10 and 100 Euros in most cases. The amount depends on how quickly you can play the requested song, quality of the performance and alcohol consumed by the people who request the song (in most cases the higher alcohol consumption the higher the tip).

is also present since one might need a quick replacement in a short period of time and you have to send a musician of equal quality to replace you (more on this in chapters to come).

Overall, the sample of musicians included in this research are the true representatives of professional musicians described above. They are educated in “western” music tradition (except one of them), they have a long experience in performing, they can write and read music, they teach in institutions and give private lessons. Furthermore, they are a part of multiple music arenas, can play a variety of music genres with different bands and musicians, have communication and entrepreneurial skills, they are promoters and managers but also “experts” in public relations who have to know what to play and when to play based on the behavior of the audience. All of this makes them, in my opinion, professional musicians.

5.2 The scene - two worlds (Ottakringerstraße and Märzstraße)

In order to describe the new “Ex Yu” music scene we have to take a look at what makes it new? The answer could be found in comparing the two streets that are the synonym for the cultural life of the “Ex Yu” migrant community in Vienna. One is Ottakringerstrasse and the other is Märzstrasse. In my opinion Märzstrasse is the next step in the evolution of this cultural life and music scene that started on the Ottakringerstraße. In order to get to the explanation why this is the case a short depiction of these streets is in order.

Located in the 16th Vienna district, the Ottakringerstraße is a synonym for “Balkan” (also former Yugoslav) nightlife. The “Balkanmeile” (Dika, Jeitler, 2015) is a colloquial name for this street and describes its essence in full. As already mentioned, during the 1970s guest workers from Yugoslavia arrived in Vienna in a search for a better life for themselves and their families. They have settled around the Ottakringerstraße and quickly built communities of their own. Since most of them came from rural areas, building these social clusters was a necessity in order to function in the new society and to slowly integrate themselves as much as they could. The civil war that devastated Yugoslavia during the 1990s brought new refugees such as Croats and Bosniaks who also settled in this area. Although they could not live side by side in Yugoslavia, they found a new form of unity in this new environment and the “Balkanmeile” was born. What perpetuated the street even more were the restaurants, bars and cafes owned by the migrants from Yugoslavia which were located in the abandoned locals and shops (Mijić, 2019). What cemented the label “Balkanmeile” even more was the night life that was raging on weekends on this street. With more than 30 nightclubs (Mijić, 2019) mostly oriented towards turbo folk music (a mixture of traditional folk and dance and techno rhythm) the street got a reputation as a party place for all the migrants from former Yugoslavia.

The street that in my opinion could be seen in a way as a “successor” of Ottakringerstraße is Märzstraße. Mihajlović Ignjatović, in her master thesis “Naši (“Our” People) in Vienna: Beyond

a “Yugoslav” diaspora”, calls this street the “New Ottakringerstraße”. Located in the 15th Vienna district, this street is filled with stores, cafes and bars that are owned or rented by the people from former Yugoslavia. As Mihajlović Ignjatović writes:

“Märzstraße is a wide, crowded and noisy street. It is always full of traffic, a lot of cars are passing during the whole day, and also two trams (9 and 49) are going through it in short intervals. Since it is full with bakeries and cafes, it is also packed with people who are buying food, sitting and drinking coffee, socializing, standing and talking, or just taking a walk. Many languages can be heard here, but mostly German, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian and Turkish” (Mihajlović Ignjatović, 2022, 57)

As Mihajlović Ignjatović states, Märzstraße is “*more for the older generation compared to the famous Balkansraße (Ottakringerstraße)*” (Mihajlović Ignjatović, 2022, 46). Furthermore, she states the difference between the music that is played on these two streets. Ottakringerstrasse is more oriented towards turbo folk music and that pop rock is more represented on Märzstrasse.

When asked whether there was a difference between Ottakringer and Märzstraße, in regard to music that is played there, all of my interviewees responded affirmatively. The shift from Ottakringerstraße to Märzstrasse is happening (Dragan, owner of the cafe “Nikola”) in regard to taking over the nightlife. The audience fluctuates more towards clubs and bars on Märzstraße. Audience that frequents these bars are mainly over thirty years old while the “kids” who were born in Vienna and like “trendy music” (as Stojan labeled them) are visiting Ottakringerstraße. As the interviewee stated, folk culture and turbo folk music was and still is the core of Ottakringerstrasse while Märzstraße is making a shift towards pop and rock music for audiences that are “over thirty years old”. As Jakov states:

“Ottakringerstraße is the Balkan street with turbo folk and newly composed music, “Tavern” and “Broz” try to maintain some level to make it a little more cultural: the Balkans is a country of peasants, folk songs are sold in larger editions; “Broz” and “Tavern” try to hold up to that level of good old folk songs (in a case this music is played there), not newly composed (turbo folk).

Mikan adds that there was always some sort of rivalry between these two streets but also states that Märzstraße is “stronger” today and that it is suited for a more cultivated audience.

“Märzstraße seems more cultural because Ottakringerstrasse always had that “džigera”²⁰.

Aleksandar, the manager who is in charge of band bookings in club “Broz” also sees the difference between these two streets mainly in the people who visit bars and cafes.

²⁰ See the explanation in the Introduction chapter.

Ottakringerstraße is for the “generation Z”²¹. He describes these young people as the generation with instant access to everything such as music but also drugs and alcohol. In a sense they want instant fun, live fast and have a different approach to music (they have never seen an audio cassette or a cd, desired music is a click away).

Although just one of the clubs (but as I write this thesis more clubs and bars are starting with the same concept of live music) that are in my focus is located on Märzstrasse (club “Broz”, but all of the three clubs are geographically very near) I have presented these two streets as incubators for social and cultural life of the people from Yugoslavia or having the origin therefrom, trying to show the main differences in music genre and people who frequent bars, cafes and clubs located on these streets. Although the generalization that young people prefer Ottakringerstraße and older population Märzstraße is a little bit “far-fetched”, it can serve as a starting point for further analysis. I will address this matter more in depth in the chapter about audience, but at this point argumentation along the line young versus old and pop rock versus turbo folk (young and turbo folk being embodied in Ottakringerstraße) emerges. I will try to follow this line and try to show whether the gathered data support this argument.

5.3 The Clubs

I have reached out to the bar owners of the clubs and bars that are in my focus, in order to find out their initial concept and whether it involved live music, and if so what kind of music. I wanted to find out if this decision changed over the years, and if so what influenced this decision. I think this is important in order to try to see how this new scene came to be.

The bar that all the musicians and bar owners mentioned is the “Tavern”. This club had a strong influence on forming the new “Ex Yu” music scene, at least in the beginning of its existence. The “Tavern” was opened in 2012. The club that presided “Tavern” was the “Major”²². As Jakov states:

“Before the “Tavern”, there was “Major”, a club that offered something more cultural to our audience (both Jazz and Latin music). Folk music was forbidden in “Major”, there was even a sigh with the crossed-out folk singer and crossed-out accordion”. (Jakov, bass player)

Jana, the current owner of “Tavern” met her husband in 2000, who is also a musician and ran the cafe called “Major”. At first, she was there as a support, helping out with organizational things. Together, they made a decision to open a new bar together, and in 2010 they opened the “Tavern”. After two years she took over the business completely and runs the bar until this day.

²¹ Generation Z, colloquially known as zoomers, is the demographic cohort succeeding Millennials and preceding Generation Alpha. Researchers and popular media use the mid to late 1990s as starting birth years.

²² Alludes to the title of Josip Broz, the president of Yugoslavia.

The initial concept was to have music and live concerts and this concept was transferred from the previous bar.

“We wanted it to be something new and original, to push the ex-Yu scene that was new at that time but to have both blues and jazz and to have one mixture of everything” (Jana, the owner of “Tavern”).

The problem they encountered was the shortage of musicians (more on that in the chapters about musicians). After taking over, she doubted herself and her capabilities to run such a bar but when the doors were opened, she took over and just dove in. In the beginning they concentrated on the upper floor, but very quickly the basement also started to work, because there was no room for the band upstairs. With the help of her friend and godfather, she opened the basement just to start with bands as soon as possible. She says that musicians treated the “Tavern” as their cafe, where they are allowed to musically express themselves. She still tries to maintain the basement as a place where musicians come to perform and play other repertoire (which is not folk music) but also states the weight of the choice to change (from what the bar used to be and initial “no folk music” concept) due to the crisis caused by lockdowns because of the Corona pandemic. She allows a slight shift in the repertoire that leans towards pop folk, but also tries to keep it under control so it does not slip into turbo folk. She says that the audience that visits the “Tavern” is partly delighted by this new direction, but on the other hand the people who preferred the pop rock direction are not so thrilled with the new concept. She strongly states how hard it is to accept this change because for her it is a question of personal identity, but she has to find the ways to come to terms with it. All of the musicians and bar owners that I have interviewed, mention the “Tavern” as the bar where you could play something different, exclusively pop rock covers and world music (Bojan), that it was the only club where you could play “other music”, everything else were “kafanas” with folk music (Davor); that it was a cult place that started the rock scene (Aleksandar) to name a few statements. My personal experience also contributes to these arguments. When I arrived in Vienna in 2016, one of the first bars where I started to play was the “Tavern”. I was introduced to Jana and we had a conversation that stayed with me until this day. When I asked her what I should play in my first gig, since I was new on the scene and didn't know what the audience liked, she said “You can play everything that you want, but just not folk music”. One time, I have played with my friend who sings and we did a song from Svetlana Raznjatović²³ called “Belgrade” on a request from one of the guests and immediately after we finished the song we got the SMS from Jana (since she lives above the “Tavern” and had heard us play that song) to stop playing any other songs in that genre. But this has all changed in the last few years (more on that in the chapters to come).

The next club that opened was “Broz”. It is located in Märstraße (16th Vienna district) and it is the biggest of the four clubs that are in my focus. Aleksandar (the manager in charge of band bookings at the time of the interview) found the space for the club and wanted to open it by

²³ One of the most famous folk stars from Serbia (more known as “Ceca”).

himself but had to find a business partner due to financial issues. The initial concept was to connect with the people from former Yugoslavia. The club started working on 27.12.2018 and it was originally supposed to be an ordinary daily cafe or a lounge bar with the concept of live music (acoustic bands consisting of two guitars and two singers). Then the concert for the opening of the club took place and they (owners and himself) realized that it could be a “nightclub lounge bar with the finesse of a club” (Aleksandar). They had only one idea - to be different from others and not to be “from Silvana to Nirvana”²⁴. The idea was to play domestic pop rock or “Ex Yu” pop rock, but also pop rock music from America and UK in order to attract foreigners and tourists, but only the “Ex Yu” (former Yugoslav) audience stayed until this day (Aleksandar). The idea was to create a scene that is cultural, with good musicians and stand-up comedy, and that was possible until it got into the commercial direction due to the financial gain.

Dragan, one of the owners of the cafe/bar called “Nikola” says that the idea for the bar was born due to parties he organized every Sunday in a bar called “Scream”. He saw that there was an audience for this kind of music (a mixture of pop rock with a “flirt” with folk music). The concept for “Nikola” had to be different from the bars and cafes at that time (2019) in regard to location, products and service. They introduced a concert of “music and “meze”²⁵. The cafe opened in February 2019 in the 15th Vienna district, and is one of better-known cafes/bars among the “Ex Yu” diaspora in Vienna. In his words, “Nikola” is a serious business that has a marketing agency in order to compete with strong competition. They stick to their concept and have found their audience because of the concerts that were already organized (at cafe “Scream”). Everyone has their own table reserved and there are no tables for standing. Every night from Thursday until Sunday there is live music, mixed with the concept of finger food that goes well with wine or beer. The accent is on female audiences (concept again transferred from the previously organized parties) and musical repertoire is tailored to the female population. Due to his long experience in gastronomy, Dragan noticed that at the parties that he organized prior to opening “Nikola” more drinks are consumed when the folk songs (“evergreens” as he calls them²⁶) start at the end (the last music set) so he employs this strategy also in “Nikola”. At first only foreign acoustic music (American and English pop rock) was supposed to be played but it didn't work.

“We have to accept who we are, and the music taste of the audience that visits our place” (Dragan, owner of the cafe “Nikola”).

The idea for “Blue Beach” was born 20 years ago but came to fruition seven years ago (Miro, owner of “Blue Beach”). “Blue Beach” is a small vine bar (30 seats) located in the first Vienna

²⁴ The term refers to the mixture of the repertoire that is played by the bands. Silvana (short from Silvana Armenulic, a famous folk singer from Yugoslavia) refers to folk music and Nirvana (a famous grunge band from Seattle) refers to a repertoire that is more underground and includes genres such as rock and pop music.

²⁵ “Meze” is a Turkish word that describes the finger food dishes that are suited for drinking, such as different salads, smoked meat sliced thinly and bread in different forms, most similar to meal starters.

²⁶ Again, making a difference between pop folk and turbo folk music.

district. The initial concept is not what it is now, it has changed over the years. Miro just wanted a place in the 1th Vienna district (a prestigious tourist route with many sights and monuments). The first idea was a combination of Austrian and, so called “our” audience (referring to the population that had originated from former Yugoslavia) but he had to change the original concept since it didn't last a year and he saw that the place is not going in the right direction, so he started having gigs in the bar. Initially, he also wanted to work with only one musician, like the “Tavern”, but, as he says, he realized that he did not open a place for himself but for the people, so he introduced other musicians that changed on weekends. Now that he got back the money he invested, he himself can enjoy his time with the musicians who play the music he likes. Because of the location of his bar (the first district frequented by many tourists), he says that he would not last long with the concept of purely folk music (“narodnjak”) and that he doesn't work anymore with some of the musicians that played at his place but were strongly folk orientated. But on the other hand, he says that sometimes compromise has to be made (referring to a couple of folk songs per night) and that he, like others, looks out not to cross the boundary of good taste (no turbo folk music).

To summarize, only the “Tavern” had live music in its concept from the beginning. This was due to the fact that it had inherited the concept from the cafe “Major”. From the day the club opened its doors there was a band playing there. At first just with two acoustic guitars but shortly after a full band was playing in the basement. The “Tavern” was the favorite place to play amongst the musicians since there they could express themselves in a different way and play a bit different cover. In the beginning (2010) the bar was frequented mostly by the students which also did impact the music that has been played there. At that time the “Tavern” was the only club with a concept like that, and other that there were only “kafanas” with folk music. This is really important for the upcoming discussion on how this new scene has formed but also how it morphed into what I called “kafana on steroids” (more on that in the chapter how the scene came to be). All three other clubs and bars changed their initial concepts and tweaked it to suit the audience they wanted to attract. As being said, all of them (“Broz”, “Nikola” and “Blue Beach”) had initial ideas about what kind of music they wanted to be played in their establishments. All had the idea to merge the former Yugoslav and Austrian population, but also to attract tourists. This demanded the music repertoire that was a mixture of “Ex Yu” pop rock and pop rock covers in English. However, this concept was abandoned by all of them, with some enduring a little bit longer than the others, but generally the shift in concept happened in the first year of their work. The change was the shift from pop rock songs in English towards more “Ex Yu” pop rock but also a genre of music that could be described as pop folk. This pop folk music is a mixture of popular music with the lyrics that are predominantly dealing with love thematic and the music that is arranged in a folk manner but with the modern production. This genre is not to be mixed with traditional folk music or turbo folk, but it could be seen as a bridge that merges these two genres. It is suited both for the female and male population since everyone can relate to the love thematic. The melodies are “safe” musically, with choruses that get into one's ears and the people can sing along. The examples of this music are singers such as Dino Merlin, Željko Samaradžić,

Zdravko Čolić and Željko Joksimović to name a few. This “opened Pandora's box” in a music sense and caused the shift toward folk music even more. It is however a specific mixture of music genres that musicians play during one evening but the general trend is to switch towards this pop folk music towards the end of the night in order to get people going and to motivate them to drink more. But what has become “a flirt” with this pop folk music slowly slides into more and more folk orientated music. What is very interesting is the perspective of bar owners about these matters. All of them do not deny that pop folk and even folk music is played in their bars and clubs but all of them state that there needs to be a border and the line which could not be crossed. This refers to the turbo folk songs and folk songs that are based on the Turkish melos and a specific way of singing. This music is considered in musicians circles as the lowest level of folk music and generally musicians do not prefer to play this kind of music unless at weddings or specific celebrations. But the musicians that I have interviewed confirmed that this is the case and that this music does find its way in the repertoire. It seems like the bar owners do not want to accept the fact that this music is played in their clubs and bars because it was so far away from their initial concepts and music that they wanted in the first place. But the audience demands it. It is like they hide behind this notion that they keep the folk influence on a specific level so that it does not slip into turbo folk or core “narodnjak” but it does. In the last eight months since I finished my field research and started writing my thesis, I have been following Instagram stories of my musician colleagues and clubs and bars. In the last couple of months, I haven't seen an Instagram story that does not include people dancing on tables and shouting the lyrics of specific folk songs. Consequently, this raises a question: what about the “Ex Yu” pop rock repertoire? Is it still present? Did it fade and got replaced by the pop folk and turbo folk? I will try to provide the possible answers to this question in the next chapter.

5.4 The Scene - how it came to be and how did it morph?

If we go back to the presented definition of what a music scene is, no matter are these definitions based on the Bennet and Petersons concept of the local music scene, Beckers “Art Worlds” or Mariko Hara's concept of “music fields” there is one mutual component that is present. These components are the actors involved in the specific music scene. Becker's concept goes the furthest in stressing the importance of all the actors, institutions and mechanisms that are involved in creating a specific art form. Mariko Hara concentrates on musicians and how they change their roles by entering different “arenas” in order to maintain themselves as musicians. Becker states the interplay between the music and identity forming of a specific community. For the purpose of the thesis I will concentrate on the musicians, bar owners and audience and how they influence each other in a never-ending construction and deconstruction of the new “Ex Yu” music scene. By construction and deconstruction, I mean the constant morphing of this scene and its constant change in regard to the musical content or repertoire that has been played and

requested by the audience. But before I go into this in detail, I will present my perspective of how this scene came to be.

The biggest predisposition for the emergence of this new “Ex Yu” music scene was the change in the demographic structure of the migrants that came from former Yugoslavia in the 1990s and are still coming to Austria until this day. As I have mentioned before, the labor force that came to Austria in the late 1970s were predominantly from rural areas and with lower social status. As they settled in the new environment (I refer to Vienna) they started developing a need for cultural life with more content. The biggest change happened when the Austrian authorities allowed migrants from former Yugoslavia to open a business of their own. Many of them opened their restaurants or “kafanas” and live music was “a must”. This music was based on the musical preferences of these groups of people and in most cases, this was traditional folk music from Yugoslavia at that time. In short this marked the beginning of the specific music scene that was strictly oriented towards one community (in this case migrants from former Yugoslavia). As the families of these workers were growing and many of them had children of their own, they transferred their specific taste in music to their children as well. As Miro, the owner of “Blue Beach” explains:

“Here is already the third generation that still goes to those places where folk or turbo folk is played or something like that, I don't even know what to call that orthodox folk, I would call it today, so it's something that they brought with them from their house, that is the only explanation. You're in the car, you're going home (former Yugoslav countries) for a holiday, you are listening to what your Dad's listening to (folk music) and it got into your head and stayed there”.

A similar perspective is offered from Davor:

“Pinocchio” and “The Maze”²⁷ are visited by children of migrants with low cultural capital due to growing up with their parents' music, which was mostly folk music, they are looking for the feeling of warmth from their childhood that they find in the aforementioned clubs, they do not know the Serbian language well, but they know the lyrics of the songs, and on Märzstraße, the audience are students or people who have already finished their studies and who grew up listening to music other than folk, and they are looking for the warmth of home and people of the same understanding” (Davor, the musician).

As I mentioned before, the Ottakringerstraße embodied this folk culture flair with many clubs and bars, some of which are open even today.

In the 1990s began a shift in the demographic structure of the migrant groups that were leaving what remained from Yugoslavia at that time. Civil war and economic devastation forced a

²⁷ Two clubs on the Ottakringerstraße.

younger generation of people abroad and a lot of them settled in Austria and in Vienna. With the higher educational levels and aspirations, they also brought a different taste in music. This situation could be linked with Bourdieu's concept and argumentation that our tastes are determined by the specific position that we have in a social space (Deeming, 2014). Being a part of a specific social class implies having “cultural capital” at your disposal that makes possible certain knowledge, skills, attitudes, specific taste in arts and material resources (Bourdieu, 1984). This deterministic and a little rigid approach has been criticized by many social theoreticians. One of these critiques gave birth to the concept of “cultural omnivorousness” (Karademir Hazir, 2015) that Richard Peterson introduced in 1992. This type of cultural preference emerged due to specific changes in political and economic spheres on a macro level that took place in the 20th century. In short, “cultural omnivorousness” refers to consumers that both have preferences for “highbrow” and “lowbrow” genres (Karademir Hazir, 2015) and are willing to cross cultural boundaries in order to explore other genres and cultural contents. This could be very useful in explaining a complex phenomenon such as the birth of the new “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna.

The mentioned shift in the structure of the migrants who came to Austria and Vienna starting from the 1990s caused a slight shift in the dominant music discourse which was, until that point, folk music. At the end of the '90s first bars and cafes oriented towards pop and rock music from former Yugoslavia started to emerge. Cafe “Exquisite”, “Porto Bello” and later “Mellow” and “Major” were the places where young people with a different music taste could enjoy pop and rock music. “Mellow” and “Major” were the first clubs with live music.

“Major didn't have any speakers for the band or better said had students who were playing acoustic guitars and sang without the microphones but this was the flair of the place, everybody came together and sang together this song that we all knew” (Miro, owner of “Blue Beach”)

Here another social group is introduced and that group are the students from former Yugoslavia. Although there were many young people who fled from the war in the 1990s, there were also a lot of people who came to Vienna in order to study and educate themselves. This “educational migration” exploded during the 2000s and is still present with more and more young people finishing their bachelor, master and PHD studies, in Vienna predominantly, in order to stay and work in this city. The student population had a strong influence on this new scene that was drifting away from a classical discourse that “yugo = folk” and still influences the scene in that manner (more on that in the chapter about audience as a part of the new “Ex Yu” music scene). “Mellow” and “Major” were predominantly places for students, but the place that took such concepts to another level was the “Tavern”. As a successor of “Major”, the “Tavern” raised the concept of live music to a higher level. With the proper stage and music equipment both on the first floor and in the basement, “Tavern” set out to be the only place where you could hear pop rock live music until 2016 when other bars and clubs emerged. “Tavern” was the epicenter of this

new scene with the students as the dominant audience and bands playing from Thursday until Saturday.

“Yes, they (the students) were there, I can't tell you now, there were older students, there were younger students, of course it was all mixed, but there were a lot of students, because Vienna is a famous city for studies, it is a metropolis for studying. And somehow everyone has gathered here (“Tavern”) I mean, now you know, I was again, I'm telling you the only place of that kind of style, so probably it all looks like I was there, yes, I was the only one, and I worked, and probably those 100, 200, 300 people who circulated who like it, it was them because there was simply no other choice” (Jana, owner of the Tavern”).

The “Blue Beach” continued in a way with the concept aimed at attracting students but also the Austrian population. As I played there from the beginning, I can testify that at first the repertoire consisted of songs in English and “Ex Yu” pop rock music. The students had and still have a very important role as a group that frequents this place. Miro (the owner) made Wednesday a student day and still throws parties for students, where they can get together and exchange their experiences regarding studies and life in a new environment in general. He also gives them a 20% discount on all drinks at their parties and puts their diplomas on the walls of his bar. There is always live music at these events and it is not rare that the students themselves are playing.

“I've always been kind of in favor of students and that's what I wanted, that was one of my wishes to work with students. I only hire students and they play at my place 99 percent of the audience that comes to me came from down there (ex Yu), and there is maybe only one percent of those who were born here that come to my bar, I think they very easily and quickly fit in with a part of my audience that is my age because I'm a little older, and they fit in with my friends who come, they're people who are mostly students or have been educated, people who are very flexible, they fit in with others very, very quickly (Miro, owner of “Blue Beach”)”

Dragan, one of the owners of a cafe “Nikola” also states the diversity of the audience that visits his cafe. He says that the audience is a mixture of all sorts, that there are students from ex-Yugoslavia, foreigners but also young generations whose parents originated from ex-Yugoslavia.

“Then that's what you see now, those people now and those who were born here, that's the trend brought by people from Belgrade, from Zagreb, from Novi Sad, and then they started to go to “Tavern”, to “Blue Beach” and “Nikola”, and so on, now of course they “pulled” this third and fourth generation that was born in Vienna and they “dragged” them to those places where you can see that there is no aggressiveness where everything is moderated (Dragan, one of the owners of “Nikola”).

Aleksandar, the manager in charge of band bookings in the club “Broz”, says that the students were the group that visited “Broz” on a regular basis. However, this was in the beginning, in the first year since they opened the club. Then with time the core of the audience changed in favor of a bit older generation (thirty years and above) but there are still some small groups of students that are visiting every weekend. “Broz ” is the largest club of the four clubs and bars that are in my focus and, in my opinion, has the most diverse audience regarding age and social class. At least that is the case now. I started playing there two years after they opened so I could not testify to the audience structure at the beginning.

Overall it could be argued that the students who came from former Yugoslav republics such as Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia strongly influenced the shaping of the new music scene in Vienna. The discourse that “Yugo = folk” has been challenged because of this social group. But I think that was the case in the years from 2000 until 2018. The place that was the incubator was the “Tavern” and from 2010 until 2018 it established itself as a place for students, with pop rock music and two bands that were playing every weekend. The resident band was playing there once a week. The band was a three piece and consisted of a girl who sang and played the guitar, a guitar player and a drummer. Since Mikan (the drummer that I have interviewed) was the founding member of this band, he describes this time period as liberating, in the sense of music they played. These were the songs suited to the audience but they also explored other songs that were not that known to the people in order to see if that would work, and it did. When I came to Vienna, this band was still playing (although they were in their last years together) and I could testify to the energy this band produced, but also the music they played. They could do “Smell like Teen Spirit” from Nirvana, then “Living on a Prayer” from Bon Jovi and then just dive in the “Ex Yu” pop rock but played songs from the bands such as “Majke” (Croatian rock band) and “Osvajači” (a hard rock band from Serbia) and all the people went crazy. Folk music in its every form was a “no go”. These years marked, in my opinion, the real “Ex Yu” pop rock scene in Vienna and the “Tavern” was a place to be if you wanted to hear this kind of music. But then the pandemic hit and things turned drastically.

As Hitzler writes, the scenes are a social phenomenon that is constantly changing, they are in a constant “movement” and change their formations (Hitzler, 2010). If you look at a specific scene one could think that there are clear edges that form a specific shape but if you try to capture this phenomenon more thoroughly one soon realizes this is not the case. The one thing that could actually be said to be a constant when talking about the scene is that they change. This change may vary so the scene could still force just one music genre with a bit of variance, but it could also shift and mix within other different music genres. Borders of the scene could be especially scattered and overlap with other scenes, spread in different directions and include various lifestyles and audiences (Hitzler, 2010). Scenes occupy a specific social and cultural space often merging generations and people who have different ways of life and thus specific attitudes and norms. In the context of the “Ex Yu” scene in Vienna, the shift that happened in the last three years pulled the scene into more commercial territory. The process that brought such change was

all but not simple. As the COVID pandemic hit in the beginning of 2020 and the lockdowns started in Austria with the longest one being eight months (from November 2020 until end of May 2021) the gastronomy was heavily impacted by these restrictions. The clubs and bars closed but also the discotheques that were known for having folk concerts and DJs playing that kind of music. Times were hard for the club and bar owners. The Austrian government did design a help package which aimed at providing financial stability and ensuring that the restaurants, bars and clubs survive the crisis, but that was often not the case. Those who survived have looked forward to opening their doors as soon as the lockdown ends. But this new situation also brought a change that has strongly impacted the scene and pushed it into commercial waters even more. Their income being drained, the bar owners were forced to make certain compromises in favor of financial gain. This process was accompanied by the merging and mixing of the two populations or audiences that before the lockdowns did not really meet in the same bars and clubs. The smaller bars and clubs which were granted permission to start working again after the lockdowns had their regular audience who frequented their establishments. This audience, as I have written before, were mainly students and generally people who liked pop and rock covers. But the audience that preferred to visit folk discotheques did not have where to go since the working hours of such places did not fit into the legal regulations (after the lockdown the bars and clubs were allowed to work until ten o'clock in the evening, and after a couple of month until midnight and that was not financially profitable for discotheques since they started working at ten o'clock in the evening until four or five in the morning). Therefore, the discotheques remained closed but the people who visited them were eager to enjoy their social life again after the lockdown. Hence, they started to frequent the clubs and bars that are in my focus. And these two groups clashed and merged. As Stojan states:

“It used to be known who goes to the “reading nights” (folk music was predominantly played there) and who goes to “Tavern” (rock). There are no longer those boundaries, the influx of new generations changes tastes in the first lockdown, the clubs (“folkotekas”²⁸) were closed after the lockdown, only bars started to work, the audience from the clubs was forced to go to bars, but they also brought their own “culture” or “non-culture”, that audience has expectations or standards when they go out, they are used to party hard from the start, then they come across a different music repertoire in cafes, and by default they give 100 euros for a musical wish, and the musicians who are the most affected by the lockdown they accept that and this also leads to segmentation of the audience because a difference is made between the people who give out these 100 euros and people who came to hear music and drink three drinks (Stojan, singer and guitar player).

This clash strongly impacted the scene since it influenced the bar owners and musicians at the same time. The bar owners saw an opportunity to achieve financial gain and to compensate for

²⁸ Referring to discotheques that put forward folk music and organized concerts from folk stars from former Yugoslavia.

the previous losses caused by lockdowns. These new audiences that poured into their bars and cafes had money to spend and were eager to spend it.

“The owners realized that it can be arranged so that there were not only “narodnjak” and turbo folk because that will be boring and specific musical mixture is made and that it's not too turbo and not too ex yu rock either and people like to go out, they like when something is happening but everything has changed over the years, people came to rock concerts, jumped, drank and had fun, but over the years, you feel how it recedes and moves into another sphere, hearing and listening to music disappear, and people always need to be given something new, they need to be “held” in order to be there, costs are going up, generations are changing, they are looking for something different and I am not comfortable with following that trend of introducing folk into my bar, but people react, we are going into another genre (folk music), but I try to make it different so that we don't cross the line, but people react, the profit is better and you realize that it has to be that way” (Jana, the owner of “Tavern”).

On the other hand, we have the musicians who also found themselves in financial problems due to not being able to perform during the lockdowns. Many of them turned to online teaching and private lessons in order to provide for themselves and their families. Hence, when the bar and clubs started working again, the musicians were eager to please the masses once again. But this time it was different. The merging of the above-mentioned populations caused a shift in the music that has been played before. Before the lockdowns you could at least have a music direction for one specific evening, or a musical frame. This has now changed due to the habits of people who were used to going out in “folkotekas” and were used to asking for songs and giving big tips in money if the musicians indulged. This trend has now moved to bars and clubs and due to difficult financial situations musicians started fulfilling these wishes since they could earn more for the evening. This opened the doors for a specific mixture of repertoire that is performed.

5.5 The Audience

One of the interesting questions that imposes itself is how do the musicians and bar owners experience and “see” their audience? Are there similarities and differences between these two perspectives?

5.5.1 The “Gemischt”

All the interviewees state the complexity of the audience as a social group. By complexity I mean a form of diversity in regard to age and education for the most part. Students as a group are still strongly present but there are other groups such as young people originating from former Yugoslavia (the so called third generation), but also older people (mid-thirties and forties) who have completed their studies and have established themselves as successful entrepreneurs or have positions in important institutions and good paid jobs. Gender was not mentioned as a specific category except the bar “Nikola” where the audience are predominantly women (stated by the owner). What is interesting to mention is that all of the bar owners, but also some of the musicians think that their audience is different from the audience that frequents other bars and cafes. Again, levels of education (whatever the interviewees interpret that) and expressions such as “more cultural” are used to distinguish and segregate the audience. There is a line that all the interviewees emphasize which separates the people who visit the clubs and bars on Ottakringerstraße and their own bars. This is in line with the above presented argumentation that the cultural heritage of the first migrants (taste in music especially) is “rooted” also in their children.

“People who go out in the Ottakringerstraße see that they do not belong in the “Tavern” (Jana, the owner of “Tavern”).

The big question remains who are then the people who brought “folk” into the pop rock scene after the lockdowns? This alone could be the topic of a separate research but I am under the impression that those people are a different social group. Ottakringer is reserved for the youngest generations with the migrant origins (early twenties), but in my opinion when this generation gets a little bit older and establishes themselves professionally and economically, their taste in music becomes a little bit refined. It stays in the “folk” frame but rises to the next level, in the lack of a better term. Economic stability provides the opportunity to visit clubs that are more on the “posh” side, where you need to reserve a table and have to consume specific quantities of drinks and tip the music with no less than hundred euros. All of this could be seen as a status statement and a personal stamp that one carries with himself. So when this social group merges with the students that are generally (at least not before they finish studies and find jobs for themselves) less economically strong the gap emerges. But this gap could be overcome and it seems that students as a group are more flexible to cross this gap in order to stay “in”.

“My audience are students who came from former Yugoslavia and very few of those who were born in Vienna but the students easily fit in with the older generation of my guests (Miro, the owner of “Blue Beach”).

5.5.2 The Instagram generation

All of my interviews talk about the so called “Instagram generation” referring to people in their twenties and early thirties. As Bojan states:

“Instagram audience has an attention span of 30 seconds and strive to present the idea of ideal life and good time on Instagram, they record the chorus and then spent 12 minutes processing the video and uploading it to Instagram and watching the reactions they are too busy with themselves and do not pay attention to the musicians” (Bojan, the musician).

“The Instagram generation only wants to take pictures” ’ (Dragan, the owner of “Nikola”).

“They have patience for the stanza and the chorus, there is no emotion, one does not enter into ambiguity and what the lyrics mean” (Aleksandar, manager in the club “Broz”).

This could also be seen as a product of a lockdown. When the bars first opened their doors, they had restricted working hours in order to prevent the possible disease spread (at first until ten o'clock and later until midnight). The concept of live music stayed but the bands needed to cramp their repertoire in those couple of hours. And not only that, the songs needed to be tailored to provoke the people to get in the drinking mood as soon as possible in order to generate profit for the owners. Reaching the “boiling point” which usually took three to four hours of music, had to be achieved in two, so the climax of drinking and dancing could fit in the last hour of the performance. For a couple of months as this lasted, the audience was used to hearing all the hit songs but shortened (one verse, one chorus) and moved to the next hit song and everything went into this fast mode. It could be argued that this could partially explain the absence of interest for the specific song, has it been played in full or were the chord and lyrics correctly performed.

The audience in this context is seen as self-centered and without the overall focus on who is playing and what has been played. As one of my interviewees stated, people do not go out to hear a specific band or a musician, they just go out to have fun. They engage with musicians as soon as they recognize the song that has been played, but after the first chorus they are no longer interested in the song since they already know it. As one of my interviewees (Davor) said: *“we are always pulling the rope with the audience”*, meaning that in order to gain their attention and in order to keep their attention you have to move fast from song to song, to play a type of a medley. *“It has to be crazy and fast”* (Mikan). In a way this is a product of circumstances that happened simultaneously and unintentionally but had strong implications of how the music that is performed is perceived by the audience and how musicians perform in general.

5.5.3 The pressure

With the intent to keep the audience's attention comes a specific pressure. Mikan describes that situation as follows:

“I didn't suffer that kind of pressure from a guest before in a way like when you play in “Broz” where you play your repertoire but you can see that the audience is eager to hear something else and from all of the three sides (musicians, bar owners and audience) no one is satisfied if at least someone is satisfied, that at least we (the musicians) can take the money or only the boss or the guests, but no guest wants folk songs and if it is not so, then you don't have any money or profit or anything, or atmosphere and they are waiting for those songs, the boss of course has no money because people can't let loose and drink until you play those songs and you are trying to play what you prepared, it's not fun, that feeling” (Mikan, the musician).

I find this very interesting as someone who is a part of this scene. First, I found this statement to be absolutely true since I have experienced this feeling of pressure myself. It is a difficult feeling in a sense that (speaking for myself) you like to perform and like music in general, but this specific situation pulls you away from that enjoyment. As a musician you go into a gig knowing that you get a fixed amount of money but you also know that you can get some extra money from the audience as tips for playing a specific song they wish. And these amounts of money can be from time to time very substantial. Therefore, you are always looking to find the songs that work and to get the crowd going. On the other hand, the structure of the audience is different and though there may be some regular guests, in most cases entirely different people are actually attending. Thus, this specific mixture makes the specific “vibe” of the specific night very different. It could happen that you have what we as musicians call “dead crowd” which is generally not interested that much in music but it could also happen that there is an audience that is eager to drink and celebrate but you just can't find songs that work for them. What is even worse is the category that is called “faster”. Often people come to the singer and say “can you play something faster”, and you just played a song that has a fast tempo. It took a while to figure out that “fast” does not refer to an actual tempo of the song but more to a hit song that everybody knows and could dance and sing to. When such a situation happens, you are suffering a specific pressure as Mikan described because you have to figure out fast what song will work. The audience awaits and the bar owner is looking. Thus, if you “miss” your guess a couple of times there is no going back in getting the audience fired up or at least it is very difficult to go back. Of course, all of this has an impact on drink consumption and thus profit for the evening so it is a vicious circle of a specific direct interplay between the musicians and the audience and indirectly with the bar owners. It goes without saying that playing under these circumstances is a very difficult thing to do.

To summarize, all the interviewees describe the audience as a very complex social group. Complex in a sense that there is a mixture of sorts such as age and education predominantly. The attribute that is used to describe this group is “more cultural” which is by itself a problematic term and could mean a lot of things. In most cases it is used to distinguish the audience that visits clubs on Ottakringerstraße and people who are visiting the clubs that are in my focus.

“They are more cultural than the Ottakringer audience in a sense that they do not make trouble and are not aggressive” (Zoran, the musician).

Another dimension is education. Although this is also a term that could be interpreted in many ways it seems that all the interviewees see the people that came to Vienna for their studies as a group with more cultural capital and that is reflected also in the music they are listening to. This goes well with Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and specific preferences in regard to taste in music. This concept is challenged by the notion that the audience is not that coherent but rather the mixture of different social groups (predominantly from the people who are born in Vienna and have “Ex Yu” origin, people who have finished their studies and have found their place in Austrian society and newly arrived students in the broadest sense). All of these groups come together and create a specific “gemischt” that branches out in many directions with regard to taste in music. This fits more in the concept of “cultural omnivorousness” as people who visit these bars and clubs cross the “cultural boundaries” with regard to taste in music. The mutual interplay between these groups in these bars and clubs gives birth to a specific music taste that is a mixture of pop rock, pop folk and folk music. The enjoyment of these hybrid music genres is made possible by the skilled musician that could perform all of these genres in one night. Due to the commercialization caused by the consequences of COVID pandemic and lockdowns, the musicians have to make compromises and shift between the music genres in order to create income for themselves and the bar owners. This situation is followed by the specific pressure regarding the selection of songs to be performed on a specific evening. The musicians need to “scan” the audience and have a specific sense when to play specific songs which would get the crowd going, dancing, singing and drinking but also to keep the audience in this state through the night. This is by all means not an easy task and it takes a lot of musical craftsmanship as well as specific something to know how to “read” the audience and establish a special bond with them.

5.6 The repertoire

“We all start with rock and roll but end up in “kafana” (Miro, owner of the “Blue beach”)

The repertoire is strongly influenced by the audience in a sense that the audience determines which songs are going to be played and therefore the specific music genre. This is not an intentional process and has different dimensions to it. The audience has to know the repertoire and that is why there are approximately thirty songs that had to be incorporated in every music

set. The interviewees refer to the quality of these songs in a musical sense (they are hit songs and as such will last a long time, the modern music is just not that good). As one musician said (Mikan) the more songs are known the less you have to play it well, you just start playing and the audience takes over (sing along). But here a paradox emerges. Some of the bar owners do see that the same songs are played over and over again so they request that the musicians change their repertoire and offer something new. But when that happens they do not reach the expected profit because people do not drink that much when they do not know the songs that are being played. Hence, you have to go back to playing songs that work. In a way this is how the audience controls who is going to play. The band or the specific musician that can deliver the repertoire desired by the audience would be hired more and get more gigs since that audience knows that they are going to have a good time. This is opposed to the notion that interviewees presented that the audience doesn't care who is playing on the specific night, and that they just go out to have fun and not to listen to a specific band or musician. This is maybe because all of the musicians that circulate this scene have mastered the repertoire that "works" so it is actually not that important in which bar to go because you can expect the same songs anyway. The repertoire is a mixture of different genres.

"When I started playing here (Vienna) you had to prepare two hours of rock repertoire, two hours of jazz repertoire, two hours of international pop, two hours of folk music, today you have to cramp all of that into four hours (Davor, the musician)"

The two of the most dominant genres are the so-called "Ex Yu" rock and what all the interviews call "narodnjak". Both of these terms are to be understood very broadly and without clear boundaries. The "Ex Yu" rock refers to songs performed by the bands from former Yugoslavia such as "Bijelo Dugme", "Riblja Čorba", "Bajaga i Instruktori", "Oliver Mandić", "Crvena Jabuka" and "narodnjak" includes folk stars such as Svetlana Raznjatović, Toma Zdravković, Džej Ramadanovski, Aco Pejović, Aca Lukas but also a crossover with the artists that I consider to be pop folk such as Dino Merlin, Zdravko Čolić and Željko Joksimović to name a few. As the owner of the "Blue Beach" said, it always starts with pop and rock but it always ends with "narodnjak" because you cannot survive (financially) by only playing pop and rock in your bar. He also says that we (people from former Yugoslavia) have that music "in our genes". Although this statement could not be scientifically interpreted it points in a certain direction. The fact that at the end of the evening everybody enjoys this folk music, sings along and drinks, could mean that this music (folk) solidifies the community by sharing this experience with other people who understand this music and enjoy it the same way.

One more conundrum appears when talking about repertoire that has been played. It is a debate that goes in the direction of what is older, "a chicken or an egg" or who's fault is it, the audiences' or the musicians'? All of my interviewees state that some compromise had been made from the bar owners and musicians towards playing the music they generally do not enjoy or appreciate equally, in order to accommodate the audience and generate more profit.

“The musicians have changed in favor of profit and so did the audience (Stojan, the musician)”

It seems that this process has set in motion the shift from pop rock towards “narodnjak” even more. It is not clear how and when this started but in a short period of time the musicians started incorporating in their repertoire more and more of these pop folk and folk songs in order to not fall behind the other musicians who could already play this kind of music. To secure gigs the musicians expanded their musical “arsenal” with these songs and started incorporating them in their repertoire. What started as a musical wish from one of the members of the audience in exchange for “bakšiš” has now become an integral part of the repertoire. Some of the musicians use these songs as a secret weapon when they see and feel that there is something “missing” which could be described as a specific “stimmung” - vibe or energy among the audience. But another problem emerges. All of the interviewees differentiate between the folk music, as Dragan (the owner of the bar “Nikola”) calls it “evergreen”, referring to the songs by Toma Zdravković, Tozovac and Miroslav Ilić and “novokomponovana muzika” or turbo folk. As I have already mentioned, the bar owners want to maintain that level of “narodnjak” which is acceptable to them and fits with the concept of their bar or club, but this is very hard when you made compromises as a musician before. A music wish (accompanied with hundred euros) is a very tempting thing and many musicians (including myself) will play the requested song if they know it, and if not, they would suggest another song of that singer. And in these situations, these boundaries are crossed almost every week. As Mikan (the musician) said:

“I play what people want because I want to indulge them and make profit for the bar owner so I can play there again”.

All of this makes the new “Ex Yu” music scene a mixture of different music genres and the musicians become in a sense a “jukebox²⁹”. Everyone could request a song and tip for the performance. The musicians fill their catalog with songs in case someone wants to hear them. In a way the audience controls the repertoire, maybe not from the beginning, but from one certain point during the evening, when the alcohol hits and the “breaks get loose” this becomes a certainty. And when this starts we end up all again in “kafana”. In a way this stands in line with Becker's argumentation presented in his article “The professional Dance Musician and his Audience” (Becker, 1951). Becker did the research with jazz musicians in order to describe the “occupational dilemma” (Becker, 1951) that these musicians face every day. He starts with the notion that every activity that one produces for the “clients” is influenced by the clients themselves and it is no different with the musicians and audience. This dilemma occurs because of the discrepancy between the music that is “worth” playing, which for the musicians is jazz, and the wishes of the audience or the “squares” which only wants to hear commercial music. The conflict between the artistic aspirations of the musicians and commercialization occurs. In order to make a living, jazz musicians choose to play for the non-typical jazz listeners and therefore are under the influence of the audience or the people who hired them to play at their places, bars

²⁹ A machine that automatically plays a selected musical recording (song) when a coin is inserted.

or clubs. This produces problems for the musicians on two levels: by going commercial they are losing the respect from other colleagues and consequently their self-respect (Becker, 1951). The article is centered around three points: how musicians perceive themselves and other “non-musicians” or the “squares” and their mutual conflict in regard to what music they should play on specific occasions; how musicians deal with this conflict and how they employ separation techniques to distinguish them from the audience and wider community. A parallel with the musicians that are a part of the “Ex Yu” music scene is possible. As mentioned before, the repertoire for the specific evening is based on the wishes of the audience. The musicians have freedom to play something different in the opening set but after a couple of hours the audience is responsible for the selection of the songs. Since they are hired for a specific fixed amount of money for the evening and the audience pays extra in money tips for their song wishes, the musicians become a “YouTube set list players” or a “jukebox”. What is an open question in regard to Becker's work, is how the musicians justify their position and deal with that pressure, but this question goes beyond the scope of this master thesis.

5.7 Skillset, relations between musicians and bar owners

“Diploma has been replaced by the set list” (Davor, the musician)

This statement refers to the importance of the repertoire and musicians’ abilities to perform a variety of music genres and songs. Diversity is the key word here. The musician skill set has to be on a high level, maybe not so much in a technical aspect (although a certain level of technical skill is required) but in regard to knowing how to play a lot of songs. The statement above is a reference about the specific way of motivating the musicians who have musical education. It was an unwritten rule that the musicians who have musician education and play in the “Tavern” get twenty euros more than the musicians without the musical education. This was an ongoing practice for a couple of years but it was abandoned because of the argument from other musicians that they also generate profit although they do not possess a diploma that certifies their musical knowledge. But Davor has a different argument. He makes a parallel with the experience gathered with studies and constant performing.

“As you get the job in a new company without experience you cannot expect to earn the same amount of money like someone who has twenty years of experience, the same is with music” (Davor, the musician)

With time the set list has replaced the diploma, in a sense that the bar owners are now more looking for the quantity and variety of the songs that one musician could perform. The accent is once again on the repertoire and its versatility in regard to different music genres. Here another interesting dimension appears. All of the musicians stated that the bar owners influence the repertoire that is played. They do so in two ways. Firstly, they restrict the musicians by

prohibiting them to play some music genres such as turbo folk (although, as I mentioned before, this is very hard to control since the songs from this genre constantly “slip” into the repertoire). Secondly, and more important, they impact the repertoire with what they consider is pop, rock and pop folk music. As the interviewed musicians state, the understanding of what is implied by rock, pop and folk by the bar owners is most of the time not aligned with their own perspective. The musicians explain this with the lack of musical experience by the bar owners, since they have experience in the gastronomy and not so much the music. This perspective is strongly linked with the profit. The songs that get the crowd singing and drinking need to be included in the repertoire. Some of the managers in charge for the band bookings even made their own set list in consultation with the bar owners and sent this list to the musicians (answer provided from one of the musicians). Although they (managers) see this list more as a guideline it is certainly a frame in which you have to express yourself as a musician. The volume of this list ranges to three hundred songs that cover different music genres (based on my personal experience since this list had also been sent to me). This goes even further when some managers and bar owners “create” bands for specific nights. They have contacts of all of the musicians and call who they think is suited the best to perform for the specific audience that would be there on that night. Since I have experienced this quite often, I could confirm that the judgment of who is qualified to play with whom was, to put it gently, wrong. You get a mixture of different skill sets and it is very hard to synchronize different mentalities of musicians in order to give good performance. As Mikan (the musician) says:

“When you play with good musicians you learn to appreciate the skills and this becomes more apparent when you play with someone who is not on your level”

Another interesting issue is the perception of the skill set of the musicians by the musicians themselves. As Davor explains:

“There are maybe five or six musicians that are doing their work how it's supposed to be done and the others are just not on that level but because there is a shortage of musicians to cover the demand, they “go by” and also get gigs. On the other hand, we are playing the same repertoire and because of this the musical craftsmanship is not appreciated by the audience and they can't acknowledge this craftsmanship because they themselves do not possess that knowledge”.

All of the musicians I have interviewed emphasize the professionalism of the musicians. In order to get into the scene, you have to be prepared and this involves knowing the songs you play from the beginning to the end but also you have to listen to the music that you play. This also involves getting the feel for what song could work with the audience. In my personal experience, some of the musicians I know are quite skillful in recognizing these songs and other musicians just follow their lead. The audience also recognizes these songs and wants to hear them and so these compositions find their way into repertoire. This goes in line with the previous statement that we all play the same songs. But on the other hand, the musicians that were in my sample also state

that this level of professionalism has declined in the last years because the focus is on songs that “work” with the audience and the trend that everything has to be “faster and crazier” so you do not have to play the whole song just one chorus and verse. The solo parts are excluded unless they are intro melodies that everybody recognizes. The criteria that could differentiate a well-rehearsed band from those who are not, is definitely gone (Bojan, the musician).

Ten years ago, there weren't so many musicians you could hire (Jana, Miro, Jakov). The musicians and band were coming from the former Yugoslav republics to perform in Vienna. This was not financially beneficial for the bar owners so they started looking for musicians that are already in Vienna. This changed as the scene has grown but also because the students that came to Vienna and had some previous musical knowledge dared to enter the scene. Clubs such as “Tavern” and “Blue Beach” are known for giving a chance to students to perform. This has widened the range of musicians that could perform but also gave a chance to bar owners to lower the pay for these musicians in exchange for the experience they would gather by performing. Nevertheless, this “pool” of musicians was still not enough to satisfy the demand. The clubs who wanted live music were opening at a high rate so demand was and still is big. This caused another interesting trend and that is “no fix crew” (Stojan).

“In Bosnia I had a band and we were rehearsing all day all the arrangements and all the parts of the songs and with the same band, here (Vienna) I have played one time with a guy I have not seen before in my life, you don't have a fixed crew or you play alone or in a duo, trio or you are a replacement for someone or someone is a replacement for you on the other hand this has helped me as a musician to manage all the situations that come my way the gigs here are ad hoc you just go to whatever bar and play with whatever musicians are there for the night now I like it actually because there is always a different energy from both the audience and the band members and i think this same repertoire that we all play when played with the same people would become boring to the audience it doesn't make much sense to have rehearsals because most musicians go where there is more money (better paying gigs) they are even forced to do so (due to family obligations) if performing is the only source of income for them” (Stojan, the musician).

I found this very interesting, the fact that musicians take the gigs that are better paid when they are already booked for that date. I can confirm this circumstance, since many times some of the musicians canceled on me in order to play better paid gigs. An unwritten rule in these situations is that you have to provide for an adequate substitution. This form of “deputizing” between the freelance musicians in London has been analyzed and described in the work of Cottrell (2002). Cottrell starts with the notion that the more styles of music you incorporate into your skill set the more you will expand your hiring opportunities as a musician. The pool of musicians transcends the demand and the musicians are paid less than in other European cities due to heavy competition and high standards and expectations. In order to overcome this situation and stay busy, musicians take more jobs they can hold at some moment or some better paid jobs emerge and then they are forced to look for replacements. These replacements are called a “dep” which

is short for deputy and this process is referred to as “deputizing” (Cottrell, 2002). This process establishes a network of connections between musicians which are strengthened through the process of deputizing since in a way musicians find work for their colleagues. Of course, the replacements need to have a similar skillset (know the repertoire and can play the required songs) in order to adequately fulfill the task at hand. This could also be applied in the context of the new “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna. The process is no different at all. I myself am a member of a couple of group chats where musicians are looking for their “deps” on a weekly basis and since the repertoire consists of forty or fifty songs (as I described above) this strategy works really well. But more than often the replacements could not be found since the demand for musicians is still growing.

5.8 The finances

“Commercialization in favor of the profit” (Aleksandar, manager, club “Broz”).

This statement of Aleksandar’s summarizes the story of finances. With this dimension I wanted to see if the musicians’ honoraria changed over time and if so, why is that the case. The data showed two levels of this process: the musicians’ perspective and the perspective of the bar owners. The two standpoints however show certain discrepancies. Although the musicians openly talked about the amounts that they earn and how this amount (didn’t) change, the bar owners shifted the focus towards the commercialization of the repertoire in favor of profit. From their perspective the audience but also the musicians are to blame for this outcome. The audience wishes certain songs and the musicians can’t resist the tips in money so they indulge and by doing this certain blame lies also on them. On the other hand, the musicians put the blame on the bar owners thinking that the explosion of the bars and clubs with similar concepts of live music has only financial background and the competition is fierce so you have to make compromises. In a way it’s a loop from which you cannot get out and disentangling this problem would require a separate research. Thus I will focus on more tangible issues and those are the musicians’ honoraria. All of the musicians point out the paradox of their earnings being that the amount of money they get for one evening (“dnevnica”) has not changed in ten years.

“We have stayed on this magic number of hundred euros” (Davor, the musician).

“Nothing has changed since 2007, it’s even worse in a way because of inflation, you actually play for less money than back then” (Bojan, the musician).

The musicians do point out the devastating consequences of the COVID crisis and its impact on the gastronomy and nightlife in Vienna. They do understand the need for commercialization and acknowledge their role in this process since they have also been strongly impacted by it. But a couple of interesting subdimensions emerge here. The first is the institution of “bakšiš”. As I

mentioned before, this is an inherent ritual in the Serbian and Bosnian tradition. Similar to how Austrians have the “Hat” as the means to gather the money for the musicians³⁰. The “Ex Yu” community has tips (in money) that you personally give to the musicians when the song “moves” you. The “bakšiš” is mostly practiced in “kafanas” where you go out to enjoy a meal and hear a band playing traditional folk songs. When you go into a special mood (caused by the consumption of alcohol) and a song that you know “hits” you, you give an appropriate amount of money to the musicians. This ignites the group dynamics and soon other people join in. I could not be certain if this is because of the sense of competition (who has more money) or you have a song in your mind that you think is appropriate for this specific mood or something else for that matter but in doing this the audience becomes an active member and a creator of the musician repertoire at least for a couple of hours. This collective ritual is also to be found in the new “Ex Yu” music scene and it seems that what was once practiced in “kafanas” and restaurants has found its way into modern establishments such as clubs and bars in Vienna. As Davor says:

“After corona and lockdowns “bakšiš” has risen and people give more money and that is the only thing that compensates the stagnant fixed amount that you get for the evening”

“There is no “bakšiš” when you play rock music it just does not work but when you play “narodnjak” it is a different thing, with pop rock you can get hundred and fifty euros the most and when you play “narodnjak” you can get up to six hundred euros, and you need money to live so it is a vicious circle” (Jakov, the musician).

Another interesting sub dimension emerges here. Stojan presented his theory on how the practice of the ritual of “bakšiš” has destroyed the concept of the “stage”. The stage could be seen as a specific place on which specific activities take place, most commonly performances of sorts. The most common are theater performances, concerts and political speeches. The stage is lifted from the ground on purpose so the audience could see the performers better. Being on the stage invokes a certain flare and mystique since being on stage is the privilege of the talented few or those in power. The artists give performances that steer feelings in our bodies, cause emotions and make us want to “be the artist” through the catharsis process. It makes us want to be near the artist so we can experience their talent even more. Movie and music stars are a good example of this. But what happened in the context of the “Ex Yu” music scene was the disintegration of the concept of “the stage” in favor of financial gain. In order to get more “bakšiš” the musicians started to set aside the distance between them and the audience in order to get better communication and share with them the collective enjoyment of the music they perform. This is done by incorporating wireless systems for microphones and instruments, most commonly for the singer or guitar players as well. This allows a musician to not be connected to the stage physically and metaphorically. The musician can go down from the stage and be with the people during the performance, can be on the same “level” with them, share a joke between the songs,

³⁰ Most commonly during the break between the sets, the bar owner goes around the audience with the hat and everyone that has enjoyed the music throws some money in there.

suggest songs to the people, take photos with them and sing along. This mystique of the performer is compromised or better said shared with the audience but for the price of financial gain embodied in “bakšiš”. I have witnessed this situation numerous times and although not all of the musicians do this, the ones doing so, really do earn more. But this is not everyone’s “cup of tea” because dissolving this distance can provoke unpleasant situations I have witnessed myself. When people drink more, they can often lose their “compass” and go into violent behavior which could be provoked by a small thing such as not playing the requested song right away, or messing up the lyrics. As Stojan describes one situation:

“One of my friends who is also a musician told me how he earned so much money with “bakšiš” that he could not believe, but he and the band had an unpleasant situation, one guy gave five hundred euros to the girl who sings for a song but he requested that she looked him in the eyes while singing, of course she looked away at one point and he was so angry that the fight almost broke and the money had to be given back”.

This is the “other side of the coin” so to say when we speak about making no distance both physically and figuratively between the musicians and the audience. It is a risky endeavor which can bring a lot of benefits but also cause some problems.

Another dimension to this process is the precarious nature of the booking process of the musicians and bands. In most cases (what I can also confirm) there is no written agreement or a contract between the two parties involved (bar owner and musicians). This can lead to some unpleasant situations for example when the owner is not satisfied how the evening went financially he could give less money than agreed by justifying that with the poor earnings that night. There is no legal mechanism to battle this since there is no written agreement.

“When the evening was not that successful and the owner earned five thousand euros he cuts your earnings from hundred to eighty euros, but when the night was good and he earns ten thousand euros you get your hundred, it has never happened that they give something extra and say “hey it was a good night so here is a hundred twenty euros” so I stay away from those places” (Davor, the musician).

Another interesting thing all the musicians have mentioned is that the bar and club owners communicate between themselves and thus form the honoraria for the musicians. The bar owners did not mention this, and I myself cannot confirm this, but the five of six musicians I have interviewed had similar statements. What I can confirm is that some of the bar owners do know each other and visit each other's bars and clubs. Since this magic number of hundred euros per musician for the night's performance is in every bar a standard there is maybe some truth to these allegations.

Two of four bar owners are well aware of the commercialization process that has strongly influenced their initial concepts and forced them to go into directions that is not necessarily their wish but they have to do it in order to financially survive.

“We had great concerts there were very good guests, many good musicians, people from all over former Yugoslavia, so to speak, who were here, there were many good concerts and this is something I experienced and was a part of and that was phenomenal and those people who came here in those years and witnessed it they witnessed how good it was for all of us when we had fun when we were young and crazy it was great when you went out and meet your future wife or husband here and believe me I packed all of these memories into one “box” and locked it deep in my heart and I will always know this was something that I know was mine, now I have already entered a situation where I am considering all of this as just a job and nothing more” (Jana the owner of the “Tavern”).

Similarly, Miro, the owner of “Blue Beach” makes a parallel between the amount you can earn and the music that is played in his bar.

“Earning profit has an impact on the repertoire that is played and strongly so however I try not to cross the line and not to be drawn by money people fall into the temptation with their choices when it comes to earning a lot of money last night three thousand euros with “narodnjak” and tonight thousand and five hundred with pop and rock, the question is whether you're going to enjoy while you earn this three thousand and how important is it to you that you enjoy it and how important is it to you that your audience that comes here enjoys it”.

The struggle against the process of commercialization in order to gain more profit and establish a better financial situation could be seen as a main characteristic when considering the financial aspect of this new scene. Both musicians and part of the bar owners are aware of the necessity to go into more commercial “waters” in order to generate more income but they recognize this process and are well aware of it. They do not justify it but also cannot go against it. They are trying to maintain in the frames that work for them (musicians) and also for the bar owners but these frames are often broken and boundaries are moved towards playing music that does not suit either of these two groups. But it suits the audience and this is the main justification why things are developing as they are. It seems that there is a polarization between us (musicians), them (bar owners) and “others” (the audience) so to say. The mutual interplay between these groups produces changes in the repertoire that could not be controlled by either the musicians or bar owners. It is in a way a game of “pulling the rope with each other” as Davor said, but in their directions and there is no winner, just the ongoing game in which someone prevails for a short period of time.

5.8 Alcohol and “atmosphere”

“For the first forty five minutes no one sees the musician, it doesn't matter how he sings you cannot come too strong and too loud especially in the beginning the musician is an accompaniment to the audience the musician plays while people enter the bar, the audience must not wait for the musician, after an hour people relax, they finished their small talk, had some drinks and the atmosphere begins to rise slowly, the musician has to take the audience for a ride to get them high and then down, the last half an hour is a peak, it is the worst when the musician is caught by people at one table that give money (tips, “bakšiš”) that can ruin the evening during that half an hour it is crucial that the musician “leads” the audience with him if he fails to take them with him he loses them, he must constantly monitor what is happening in the audience and adjust his repertoire accordingly” (Dragan, the owner of “Nikola”)

When I analyzed and sorted the gathered data I stumbled upon two very interesting dimensions that I did not expect to appear and these are “alcohol” and “atmosphere”. The consumption of alcohol is mentioned by all interviewees as a substantial activity that strongly influences the scene in many ways. As we are talking about bars and clubs it is not so strange that alcohol consumption is an every night activity. People go out to have fun and alcohol is just part of that. But the consumption of alcohol influences both what is going to be played on the specific night (the repertoire) and the overall “atmosphere”. Although I do not find the term “atmosphere” (too broad meaning and too complex) suited to describe the state in which people fall when they drink, all of the musicians and bar owners did use this term. It is a colloquial term that can mean a lot of things in different contexts to different people so I will introduce another term in order to better describe this specific state caused by the alcohol consumption. I will use the term mood or the German equivalent “stimmung”. As Dragan described in the citation above, when asked how one typical evening starts and ends, we can see that the first hour or so people chat and drink. They get acquainted with the other people in the room, chat with each other and catch up. This part of the evening could be linked together with indifference that the audience has towards musicians. Then after some time when the alcohol starts to hit, the audience turns to the musicians slowly and at this point, usually after the first break, you have to step in as a musician. This is where the “stimmung” begins. It is a rollercoaster ride, as Dragan said. You have to pick the right songs, engage with the audience, be present, be positive (“because no one wants to hear a musician with problems” (Miro). As the night goes by and the alcohol takes over, the people go into a state of frenzy so to say. The group dynamics takes over and everybody is dancing, singing and sweating, some are even crying. As Jana claims:

“It doesn't matter how good the musicians are the important thing is the atmosphere people do not go to a gig anymore, they go where a good atmosphere is it has to be crazy and people need to jump it has to be fast with some folk songs, everything has to rumble like thunder otherwise there will be no “song” for you as a musician or me as the owner, as long as its pop and rock and pop folk and folk and mixture of all of this its ok, there is no listening to music anymore just

only crazy and fast and that something is happening, this atmosphere varies depending on the audience sometimes, there are a lot of people present and there is no atmosphere even though the musician is trying and sometimes it burns the energy which has to be found by the musician” (Jana, the owner of “Tavern”)

“That is in our genes (drinking alcohol) and after midnight the beast awakens in us the first hour they act as some people who appreciate culture and then they awake as Dr Jackil and Mr Hide and after I don't know how much alcohol they all end up on tables dancing” (Davor, the musician).

This mood or “stimmung” as Dragan (the owner of “Nikola”) states, puts us in some sort of nostalgia and people come together using the alcohol as “social lubricant” (Stojan), hug each other and bond because they love the music. This could be linked to their parents and grandparents since going to “kafana” or restaurant to eat and listen to the music and consume alcohol has “a long tradition with our people” (Bojan, the musician). The necessity of playing “narodnjak” at the end of the night has been mentioned in all of my interviews. This is justified with generating more profit in this last hour by drinking more since this music “provokes” the people to drink. It awakens in them some sense of homesickness and transfers them at least for a moment to their homeland. Sharing this experience with other people that are present that night even amplifies that feeling. This is no different from the concerts that the first generation of migrants have organized as I mentioned in the chapter about their cultural life in Vienna. It seems that just the context has changed. From the clubs such as “Jedinstvo ” and concerts organized in the arenas and other smaller venues to the clubs and bars designed to look aesthetically like those in Belgrade, Sarajevo or Zagreb. Some of them (club “Broz”) strongly refers to the heritage of former Yugoslavia with their aesthetics and interior designed to reminisce the memories of brotherhood and unity of Yugoslavia. In that sense it is not that strange that the last set is dedicated to “narodnjak” to ignite even more this sense of belonging and to remind the people of their origins.

“At the end people like to hear “narodnjak” in order to finish themselves off for the night” (Dragan, the owner of the bar “Nikola”).

Alcohol consumption is no different than in any other city or any other club and bar around the world. People go out and want to have fun and to enjoy themselves and drinking is just one of the things that gets them there faster. This is not an issue. However, the specific mood, or “stimmung” or “atmosphere” as my interviewees call it, caused by the alcohol consumption is rather interesting phenomena. The bar owners see this state of the audience as very desirable since it generates more profit because and that is why a certain pressure is put on their part towards the musicians.

“You are always under pressure to keep this atmosphere going as long as you can” (Mikan, the musician)

I myself have witnessed numerous times that some of the managers and even owners come to me and say “play something faster”. This, as I already explained in the chapter above, has nothing to do with the tempo of the song, it is a reference to a “hit song” that will get the crowd going. It is a signal that the repertoire is going in the wrong direction and you have to get back on track. But this track is what the owner or the audience think it is supposed to be. It seems that for the audience the only criteria which bar or club to visit is also this mood or “stimmung”. As Jana explained above, people want to be in the center of things, where everything is happening, where “cool” people go, where everything “burns” and where you can be “seen” and where people flip out. Since live music is at the center of the entertainment the focus is always on the musicians to get the people in the described state. And when the musicians fail it causes dissatisfaction by the audience. You fail twice - you probably will not play anymore. So this is what Mikan meant with his statement above about the constant pressure. You keep the good mood and “atmosphere” going and you get to play next week. But this is sometimes very hard to do. The audience is very different every night and their structure changes constantly and although the place is sometimes packed you just can't get the audience “there”.

“I have played two night in row at the same club and the first night was not that good the people didn't sing along and something was missing I was really bummed out, the next day I played in the same palace and it was a blast a really good gig regarding the atmosphere and money was good also so I learned to deal with this bad evening because I know the problem does not lie with me because I play the same songs basically it just that the energy is sometimes just not there” (Stojan, the musician).

Playing music under this pressure is not something that is easy to do, especially when your only income comes from music. You have to constantly be on top of the things and have a repertoire at your disposal that could cover all the situations. This means constantly working on learning new songs that come out and that “work” for the audience. This pressure is something that leads to commercialization of the scene in a sense that people expect the same repertoire and the same set list so they know when the peak of the evening is going to come in order to plan when to “go heavy” with drinking. The gigs have to be like a rehearsed show with not much variations and wandering off from the repertoire that works. I think that it is obvious what consequences this has on musicians' creativity and eagerness to perform.

6. Conclusion and Discussion

Let us go back to the research question that I have defined as what specific traits differentiate the scene and what are the main differences between this new scene and the scene that is viewed as a typical “Ex Yu” scene presented on the Ottakringerstrasse. Ottakringerstrasse is used here as a representative or a symbol for folk culture that was and still is a connector of one part of the “Ex Yu” community in Vienna. It is not easy to give a specific answer to this research question but it is rather a combination of processes (social and demographic) that have morphed this scene and still do in a way. In this chapter I will provide a concise overview of how this new music scene came to be and what were its predecessors.

The roots of this phenomena are found in the migration processes that took part in the late 1960s and during the 1970s when Austria issued a call for a working force to fill the missing gaps in their economic system. The first ones who responded were the people from Yugoslavia. The “Ex Yu” community was formed in a couple of years, being located in specific Vienna districts such as 15th and 16th district. This localization provided a possibility for easier integration of migrants that came after since the language was a big obstacle that made the integration in the new society harder. As this community has grown the need for a richer cultural life emerged and the Austrian government responded. The clubs that were predominantly aimed at providing the sports activities (mostly football) for the “Ex Yu” community were created. These clubs enriched their offer with additional programs such as Yugoslav traditional dancing and later organizations of concert with guest folk stars from Yugoslavia. Since the first generation of migrants came from the rural areas of Yugoslavia and had a lower educational level (Fisher, 2003) the folk music or “narodnjak” was the dominant music genre. With the legislative change that provided the possibility for people with migrant backgrounds to open their own business the cultural life of this community was enriched even more. The restaurants or “kafanas” that were oriented towards people from Yugoslavia emerged. Some of these places had live music with a small acoustic ensemble that played folk music from Yugoslavia.

“Amongst the countless ways in which we ‘relocate’ ourselves, music undoubtedly has a vital role to play. The musical event, from collective dances to the act of putting a cassette or CD into a machine, evokes and organizes collective memories and present experiences of place with an intensity, power and simplicity unmatched by any other social activity. The ‘places’ constructed through music involve notions of difference and social boundary” (Stokes, 1997, 3).

As Hemetek writes, the music is very important for the migrant communities in Vienna and it has been implemented through “internal practice” referring to the usage of music in religious

ceremonies or events such as weddings and baptism, but also through “folkloristic practice” which puts the emphasis on the importance of traditional music and cultural heritage and by forming something that is called a “public ghetto”. “Public ghetto” refers to clubs, bars, restaurants and cafes that are owned by the members of a specific migrant community that are offering live music based on the music traditions of these communities.

One of the typical examples of a “public ghetto” was and still is Ottakringerstrasse or “Balkanmeile”. Located in the 16th Vienna district which is informally considered as a “Balkan district”, this street and its cultural life flourished in the 1990s and during the first decade of 2000s. Packed with clubs, bars, discotheques and restaurants, it was and to some extent is still today an epicenter for the social life of migrants that originated from former Yugoslavia. The music as a crucial part of the cultural life of this community is predominantly oriented towards folk and traditional music but with the emergence of big discotheques such as “Maze” or “Pinochio” the focus shifted towards so-called “turbo folk”. As I am aware, at this point in time, there were no clubs and bars that would offer another music genre such as rock or pop music from former Yugoslavia. However, this has changed slightly in the mid ‘90s. As the civil war was raging in Yugoslavia in the beginning of the 1990s, many young people were forced to flee in order to avoid being involved in the war and had to escape economically devastated countries. This was a slight shift in the demographic structure of the people who settled in Vienna and had their origins in the former Yugoslavia. This is not to say that work migrations were not taking place, but rather that a new social group has found its way in the “Ex Yu” community. This was a group eager to take their education to a higher level. Henceforth, this group had interests in the western culture and especially music. At the end of the 1990s the first bars and clubs started to emerge with a different concept. These were created for the new social group which had interest in pop and rock music from former Yugoslavia but also in the western music. Since the pool of musicians that could play such music was relatively small, many of the students that came to Vienna and could play a guitar and sing started to entertain their peers and other audience. This was the beginning of what I like to call the “new Ex Yu music scene”. It was different in two things: the music and the audience. Alongside the Ottakringerstraße a new smaller scene started to emerge gathering a younger generation of migrants that predominantly listened to pop rock music. This scene reached its peak between 2010 and 2020 with the “Tavern” as the main club that offered two bands (acoustic duos on the first floor and a full band in the basement) every weekend. The place was always packed with people, predominantly with newly arrived students but also older generations that came during the 1990s. I can not stress enough the importance and impact that this club has had on the forming of the new “Ex Yu” music scene. It was an epicenter for meeting new people with similar aspirations, seeking help from more experienced students on how to make the studies easier, for learning where to find a job and all of that while enjoying great music. All of my interviewees mention the significance of this club in regards to music that has been played but also as an example how to run a business. As a musician who arrived in Vienna in 2016, I have experienced a part of this atmosphere and witnessed myself the energy,

the “atmosphere” and “magic” of this club where you could play songs from “Led Zeppelin” to “Bajaga”³¹ and all of the people sing along.

In 2016 a new trend whose main characteristic was the emergence of new bars and clubs that had a similar concept as the “Tavern” started to emerge. In less than two years three more bars and clubs with the concept of live music opened their doors and solidified what I call the “new Ex Yu music scene”. Although not having the exact same concepts, one thing that was in common was the live music which was oriented towards pop and rock music. Some concepts did include western popular music but after a couple of months a slight shift has been made towards songs that originated in former Yugoslavia. Some of the bars just had acoustic bands consisting of two musicians and some featured full bands. The bands that were playing in these bars were a mixture of twenty or some musicians that circulated within different musical projects and also played alone. As the gathered data showed the market was expanding and there were people who would spend their time on weekends in these kinds of places listening to “Ex Yu” pop rock. Possible explanations could lie in the structure of the audience or at least some part of it. Educational migration did not stop so there were young people who had just arrived in Vienna in order to start their studies. On the other hand, people who came to Vienna to study during the 2000s have finished their studies and have established themselves as entrepreneurs or found good jobs and were integrated in Austrian society. This was the core of this new audience that frequented the newly opened bars and clubs located in 15th, 8th and 1st Vienna district. They were eager to spend their money and enjoy themselves and they had resources just to do that. The scene reached its peak in 2019 with the four bars and clubs that I already mentioned leading the way. Some of them had live music from Wednesday until Sunday, organizing the “student nights” where students could get a discount on drinks and exchange their experiences and mingle, or two bands that were playing on the same night but on different floors. One thing worth mentioning is that this was a club scene meaning that the bands were playing covers of the songs created by the bands from former Yugoslavia. Some of the musicians did play the original arrangements and some did their versions of these songs but in essence the music that has been predominantly played was “Ex Yu” pop rock. Of course, some pop folk songs did find their way into the repertoire but not on a significant level, at least not yet. The thing that changed the course and the development of the scene was the pandemic caused by COVID SARS virus. In order to prevent the disease from spreading the Austrian government has introduced lockdowns with the longest one lasting eight months. This had devastating consequences not just for the bars and clubs but also for the musicians especially for the ones who just lived off of music. They employed alternative strategies, mostly oriented towards online teaching in order to survive this crisis. Between the lockdowns bars and clubs were allowed to open their doors but the working hours were severely shortened and musicians were forced to adapt and to adjust their repertoire for the two-hour gig. This meant no more mid-tempo songs and ballads since there was no time and people wanted to get in the party “mood” as soon as possible so the repertoire was following

³¹ A famous rock author from Serbia.

this trend, as one of my interviewees had labeled this process “fast and crazy”. The lockdowns set into motion another process that would significantly impact the audience structure and thus the repertoire that has been played. The discotheques also known as “folkotekas”, or the epicenters for the people from former Yugoslavia who preferred folk music or “narodnjak”, were closed during the lockdowns and even after that because their working hours were until four in the morning and it was just not rentable to open these clubs in order to work four hours as the regulations permitted. This caused the people who were regular guests there to seek other places to enjoy themselves during the weekend and thus they found themselves in bars and clubs that started the new “Ex Yu” pop rock scene in Vienna. This process of audience mixing or better said clash of these two social groups had a two-way impact: on the bar owners and on musicians simultaneously. Impacted financially, both of these groups got “sucked” into the process of commercialization. Although the cover music scene is by default commercial since the musicians play the hit songs, the boundaries were loosely set around pop and rock music. With the clashing of the audience that frequented mentioned discotheques and the audience that was already visiting bars and clubs, (and which in a way created this new music scene), the music repertoire has changed but also the way the music is played. The specific “culture” that the folk enthusiasts brought with them involved giving money in return for the performance of a specific song that they wanted. This payback in money or “bakšiš” is a common behavior pattern in former Yugoslav countries and it originated in restaurants (“kafanas”) that had live music. Money reward was and still is a common way to express satisfaction with the music performance or to “repay” the musicians for playing the song you wanted to hear. Slowly this ritual found its way into the new scene. It cannot be said that this was not happening before, but the difference was in the songs that people “ordered” and wanted to hear. Before this “audience mixture” you could get a tip in money for songs but most of them were pop and rock songs. This ritual strongly impacted musicians and bar owners. On one hand, the musicians, who were also strongly affected by the lockdowns since they could not perform live, started indulging the wishes of the audience in order to generate more income for themselves. What would a couple of years earlier be a request for a song that would be denied, started now to be reconsidered and taken with more consideration. Tips in money varied from twenty to a hundred euros and when you add four hours of playing that amount of money could be quite significant. Musicians started incorporating more folk oriented songs in their repertoire and started to identify “hit songs” that worked for the audience, getting them into the drinking and singing mood. The bar owners were also impacted by this situation since they saw the opportunity to generate more profit. The audience that drinks brings more income and the audience drinks when the specific music is played. This resulted with the shift from pop and rock towards pop folk and folk music or “narodnjak”. The last two hours of playing were reserved without exception for “narodnjak” and that was the “peak” of the night regarding drinking and positive “atmosphere”. Before that the repertoire “softened” and incorporated the “mellower” songs rooted in pop and folk pop genre, until the audience finished their “settling in” and small talk with their friends. Of course, drawing the boundaries where the music that had been played stays in the frames “of good taste” and

even to define what is “good taste” and whether this goes well with the initial concepts of the bars and clubs is a very difficult thing. The imaginary line that was drawn by the bar owners was the “turbo folk” as a music genre that “lacked quality” and represented a time of devastation of former Yugoslavia³². But this line blurs when the profit is in question. In order to maintain the steady income compromises must be made and these compromises imply stretching the settled boundaries to an extent and some of the songs from this unwished music genre do find their way in the musicians’ repertoire. This then triggers the audience in wanting more of these songs and musicians decline to play them and this triggers more tips in money in order that they (musicians) do so and at one point these walls go down in order to please the audience and the bar owners simultaneously because the happy audience is the drinking audience. The argument could be made that the scene goes back to folk discourse again and that it may have reached a full circle. I will address this question at the end of the conclusion chapter.

Going back to the theoretical frame the question could be raised: where does this social phenomenon fit? By definition we are talking about the local music scene (Benneth and Peterson, 2004) although in a more metaphorical way it transcends this term. It implies that the music performed in specific bars and clubs comes from the former Yugoslavia and that it is performed in Vienna. In that sense it is not a local Austrian scene with the typical Austrian music. The geographical aspect (the bars and clubs that are located on specific streets and specific Vienna districts) defines it as local scene, but the audience and the musicians (predominantly people with migrations background originating from former Yugoslavia) and the strongly present referencing to the Yugoslav heritage in some of the bars and clubs (with its interior design), centers this scene beyond its geographical position. As Mihajlović Ignjatović writes in her master thesis, “there is a community of formerly Yugoslavs in Vienna, a community called “our” people (“naši ljudi”), or just “ours” (“naši”). They also call the language/s that they speak “our” language (“naš”). In practice, people socialize everywhere, at different events, cafes, restaurants, clubs, everywhere you can hear all three “languages”/dialects (Serbian, Bosniak and Croatian)” (Mihajlović Ignjatović, 2022, 115). In a way the scene represents this community since the audience core is based around people who have originated from former Yugoslavia or have been born here in Vienna (with their parents coming from former Yugoslavia). As I mentioned before, music is the bond keeping the communities together in general. It reminds the people where they came from and for a specific time transfers them back to their homeland. The music provokes a specific behavior and through this behavior it strengthens the collective identity. A very interesting issue is the above-mentioned process of audience mixing. This mixture also refers to the taste in music. The folk and rock music genres do not have many things in common except that they originated in the former Yugoslavia. But it seems that the new music scene can transcend these differences and merge these two genres together. It could be argued that the music genre in this sense does not play such an important role as coming together as a

³² The “turbo folk” music was associated with the criminal groups that raged in Serbia during the 1990s with “Ceca” Ražnjatović as its main representative. The specific “diesel culture” of young people who were members of criminal groups put forward “turbo folk” as their dominant music taste.

collective that shares the same country origin although it does not exist anymore (meaning Yugoslavia). To go back to the reformulated definition of this music scene, it could be said that this is a local social phenomenon in a geographical sense but in a symbolic sense it transcends its geographical position since it puts forward the music originating in former Yugoslavia. The scene is a product of the complex social processes that started in the late '60s with the arrival of the first generation of migrant work forces. The need for enriched cultural content and permission to own the bars and restaurants of their own and the new wave of migration due to the civil war in Yugoslavia and later for educational purposes, set in motion the events that would lead to the present moment and in a way a new hybrid scene that includes a mixture of different music genres. The scene is created because and for the "Ex Yu" community that is still strongly present in Vienna and it is to be found in four bars and clubs located in 15th, 8th and 1st Vienna districts, but as I write this thesis I am witnessing the explosion of more bars and clubs that are changing its concept to live music and also taking a turn in similar direction of pop rock, pop folk and folk music.

Going beyond the Benneth and Petersons' definition of a local music scene and its rather descriptive nature, I need to reflect on the suggested theoretical concepts of Becker and Bourdieu. Could the "merging" of these two concepts give more theoretical "depth" to understanding this music scene? In an organizational and interactional sense, the scene could be seen as a form of a miniature art world. The crucial actors involved are musicians, audience and bar owners. They all come together on a weekly basis to produce a musical performance. In order for this to happen in an organizational sense, contacts between all of the parties involved must exist. This contact produces communication between musicians and bar owners in order to set the performance dates, set the pay rate, decide on the technical requirements, working hours and repertoire. Communication is also present between the musicians themselves, in order to coordinate organizational activities between them such as when to arrive at a bar, time for the soundcheck (if there is one), what additional songs to incorporate in their set, but also in regard to finding suiting replacements when some of them cannot play on the specific night. Communication is present between the musicians, bar owners and audience in the form of marketing. These communication channels involve social media promotion with the promo posters that are created every week and posted on Facebook or Instagram by the musicians and on the pages and profiles of the bars and clubs. Bar owners or managers of the bars communicate with the audience also in person when they want to reserve a table for the night. In an organizational sense there is a lot of work to be done in order to prepare for the night of music. Additionally, interaction between all of these actors is present on the night of the performance. It is a triangle of interaction in a sense, since the musicians "communicate" with the audience through their song wishes, and with the bar owners directly when the night doesn't go as planned and they have to "switch on their game" in order to get the people to drink more. It is a process of organization, communication and performance which "merges" all of the actors three or four days a week. If we see this performance as a work of art (since it involves creativity and artistic skills) then the Becker's concept could work in a theoretical sense. The joined activity is

undertaken in order to produce a specific artistic performance. The actors come together to create and enjoy the night of music.

Becker's approach provides a good insight of the scene in an organizational sense but going under these macro processes in a way, there are many underlayers, subdimensions and trends that are very interesting, complex and raise additional questions.

Firstly, it is the complexity of the audience as a social group and music taste that comes as a product of this complexity. The audience is composed of different people regarding age, gender and education to name a few crucial attributes. All of these characteristics affect the music taste and preferences which could lean on the concept of “cultural omnivorousness” as I mentioned before as “the cultural boundaries” (Mijić, 2019) are being crossed in order to explore different music genres and music styles. One of the questions that is present here is the so-called “indifference towards musicians” which means that the audience goes out to have fun and to listen to a specific band or a musician while generally not actively listening to music that is performed. This is opposed to the trend that emerges later in the data analysis and refers to the expectations of the audience regarding the repertoire and general “atmosphere” on the specific evening. So, if the audience is indifferent to the musicians and is focused on presenting their self-image of having a good time on Instagram, how is that they have so much influence on what songs are being played. The specific pressure lies on the musicians to meet the needs of the audience and satisfy their specific taste in music. These two things put together do not make much sense but based on my experience as a performing musician that is a part of this scene, the answer lies somewhere in between. As described by one of the bar owners, every evening has its own “flow” meaning that at the beginning of the night people want to “catch up” with each other, have a talk, maybe eat something and drink a few drinks. During this time the indifference level is the highest since the music, and thus the band or musician, is not a main focus but rather someone who accompanies the audience. This changes as the evening goes on and alcohol consumption rises. It is enough that someone asks for the specific songs that everybody can sing along and this is the beginning of the above mentioned “atmosphere” or a specific mood or “stimmung” that needs to be maintained until the end of the night. This is where the musician changes its role and becomes a leader and the audience are the followers. The level of indifference towards musicians starts to sink and this is when the musician enters the center stage so to say. The above-mentioned pressure starts here and if the expectations of the audience are not fulfilled it can have consequences of future rehiring of the specific band or a musician. Secondly, this leans heavily on the repertoire that is being performed. Since the audience has a specific taste in music and thus also specific music wishes, the “juke box” type of musicians are the desired preference both from the audience and from the bar and club owners. Based on the same principle like with this machine where you put the money in and choose a specific song to play, the musicians fulfill everyone's requests in exchange for the compensation in money. The musicians enrich their repertoire with the most requested songs since they know this will bring extra income. By doing so, they let the audience control the repertoire for the evening. It is a

mutual social ritual where the specific exchange of energy happens, where all come together and create a collective mood for the collective enjoyment. This process strongly resembles the folklore that is practiced in “kafanas” and in a way it could be argued that “kafana” did find its way into a modern concept of gastronomy while the above-mentioned bars and clubs put forward and rebranded themselves. Thirdly, there is a complicated relationship between the musicians, bar owners (although not with all of them) and the audience which is characterized by the constant struggle regarding what songs should be played. The perspective of what is pop, rock, pop folk and turbo folk music is drastically different when seen through the eyes of the bar owners and musicians which often causes a conflict between these two groups. This contrasting perspective leads to a different vision of what songs should be played during a certain night. There is little to no room for improvisations and songs that “work” for the audience need to be included in the set. The other “clash” area happens regarding the finances. A specific trend emerges here, implying the uncertainty of getting the full amount of money that has been agreed upon. Although this does not happen very often, from time to time the bar owner will pay less, justifying this decision with the poor profits for the night. Although the band plays a regular set they get paid less money because the audience did not reach the minimum profit threshold. Since there isn't a written agreement, there is no legal mechanism to pursue this matter. But even if there was, the power position in which the bar owners put themselves provides them the possibility to just choose other musicians that will accept this process as a necessity. This mutual interplay between the audience, musicians and bar owners could be linked with the Beckers concept of “Art worlds” in a sense that these actors engage in mutual processes resulting in musical performance. On a next level this musical performance could be seen as a product of all of these three groups since they, in a way, create the repertoire for a specific evening all together. Engaging with each other through exchange of song wishes or when the bar owner suggests “going back on track” with the repertoire because the audience does not react well produces a different performance every night. The musicians see this constant struggle as “never-ending rope pulling” where no one actually wins. As Harra states it is a “music field” where small “battles” are carried out every weekend and small victories are won but never the war. It is a circle where creativity and commercialization meet but the new trend favors commercialization over musician’s freedom of expression and creativity. Again, we are speaking of “covering” the songs from other artists but even then, a certain level of creativity could be practiced but it seems that the familiarity with the performed material is strongly favored by the audience. This means playing predominantly the same repertoire every weekend and because of this some of the interviewees see their performance strictly as a job, without passion or a certain spark since the framework “same repertoire” does not provide possibilities for a deeper musical expression. Some of the musicians’ venture in other fields such as jazz, blues and funk in other bars and clubs which are strictly oriented towards these music genres and try to satisfy their musical appetite there but when money is in question most of them turn to this new “Ex Yu” music scene. Furthermore, as stated by all of the musicians, the finances did not change in the last ten years. The magic number of playing for a hundred euros has not changed until today. When you

compare the inflation, it seems that the musicians nowadays are playing even for less money. And even to get these hundred euros a lot of compromises have to be made. Commercialization in order to gain more profit seems to be the working rule. Although the musicians and bar owners are aware of this process, it seems that there is not much that any of these actors can do about it. The imaginative boundary that has been set by the bar owners in regard to what could be played in their places shifts in favor of profit. But this suits the audience and that is the main force that perpetuates this scene or so it seems. The audience stands at the center and it is the dominant factor which decides what is going to be played and who is going to play. Keeping the audience drinking and singing is the main task for the musicians. Having a good time has become an imperative and maintaining this mood of joy and excitement or “stimmung” is the most important task. In order to do so, musicians develop additional strategies such as “closing the gap” between them and the audience by incorporating wireless systems for their instruments. They mix with the audience in order to get closer to them, to hear their music wishes, to joke with them and take photos and at the end to get their “bakšiš”. Again, this has and is still being done in “kafanas” and that is actually one of its main characteristics. An acoustic ensemble that plays traditional folk music and goes to the guests that sit at a table in order to hear their music wishes. It is a strategy to make the audience feel more in touch with the musicians but it is only just that, a strategy to get more income. In a way this is why musicians or at least some of them justify being a part of this scene. If it wasn't for “bakšiš”, this job just wouldn't pay off. But this imposes a new problem. It seems that it becomes harder and harder to “satisfy” the audience and to reach this mood and “atmosphere” and to maintain it until the night is over. I think that this demystification of the musicians as artists in order to get more money tips has contributed a lot to this matter. When someone “orders” a song and gives money for their wish it is a way to “buy” a musician for as long as the song lasts. Somehow, the musician becomes a property of many owners which alternate during the evening. It is quite difficult to maintain the line of “good taste” and to keep your credibility as a musician in this situation. But as I mentioned before, the profit is what keeps the scene going which is not surprising since the gastronomy is there to please the guests. Cover music scene is at its core also commercial but I think there lies the biggest problem. How deep can this commercialization process go? Is it just the commercialization of the repertoire or is it the commercialization of the people (musicians) and what they do or represent as artists?

This deeper aspect of the music scene could be seen through Bourdieu's concept of the production of cultural fields. This complex network of interrelation and interaction between the audience, musicians and bar owners could also be interpreted as a constant ongoing struggle for dominance and power. But it is not that simple since each group can in a way dominate the other. Bar owners could decide to hire specific musicians and to leave others out, the audience can practice its dominance by requesting songs from the musicians and could for some reason decide not to visit a specific bar because of the band/music that does not suit their taste. The musicians stand in the least desired position to practice their dominance but that is not entirely impossible. Since they have the responsibility to maintain a certain atmosphere (“stimmung”) where people

drink and spend money, in a sense they hold the power of how the specific night could unfold. But here lies another problem. Namely, in choosing not to accommodate the wishes of the audience they directly jeopardize their future work opportunities. Here Bourdieu's concept hits the target since his vision of a cultural field is a “battlefield” for power and dominance to achieve a specific interest. The actions of the actors have a specific goal and that is imposing their will and practicing their symbolic power. It is a constant struggle where all the parties try to maintain their position of power in order to get more profit (bar owners) or hear the music they like (audience). The musicians develop strategies to stay busy and work predominantly by changing their repertoire and including the songs that are most requested by the audience. This reflects the work of Harra and Becker in a sense that musicians are torn between their artistic credibility and the necessity to play, work and earn their living.

This raises one more interesting question. If the commercialization has taken over, and if we add the precarious nature of being a musician who is a part of this scene, why and how does this scene flourish and even expand? It seems that every actor involved is in a way satisfied with this situation. How else can we explain new bars and clubs that emerge with this same or similar concept, and the number of musicians who circulate stays more or less the same? I am afraid that this goes beyond the borders of this research.

To summarize, it is safe to say that this scene, and that is one constant actually, is always changing as Hitzler already pointed out. As a social phenomenon with a lot of actors involved and their mutual interaction which is more than often very complicated, the change is only a natural thing. The scene is in a constant “movement”, shifting its boundaries and expanding both geographically and in regard to music genres but also in regard to mutual relations between the agents involved. In order for this process to take place there must be the minimum of three parties involved. The audience is the main driving force behind every cover music scene. The new “Ex Yu” music scene is not an exception. The shift in the demographic structure of the migrants that came to Vienna in the 1990s and later put forward a new music genre embodied in pop and rock. The dominant discourse that when someone speaks about the “gastarbajter” from former Yugoslavia necessarily speaks about folk and turbo folk music has changed. Although small, this new social group that came to work and study changed the musical landscape occupied by the people from former Yugoslavia. The pop and rock scene slowly emerged and started to expand until it exploded between the years of 2012 and 2019. It was created predominantly for the students but also for the people who have finished their studies and found their place in the Austrian economic systems. As previously mentioned, the scene morphs and changes constantly. Again, the audience is the key bearer of this change, or better said the clash of different social groups that formed a specific audience mixture. This mixture of people soon became the center point of this scene and the club and bar owners responded by indulging the needs of their newly formed guest structure in order to generate more profit and maintain the income. This resulted with the shift towards pop folk and folk music. But by slowly introducing these music genres into what was until then the pop and rock scene, a specific “genre

Frankenstein” has been born. To need to satisfy the music appetites and wishes of the audience that was anyhow not coherent produced the slow downfall of the pop and rock music scene. It seems that “kafana” with all of its social rituals such as music wishes and “bakšiš” (to name a few) found its way again into the dominant music discourse of the people who originated from the former Yugoslavia. However, unlike “kafana” which is more than often a “dirty” place with old inventory and even older waiters, the image of this new “kafana on steroids” as I like to call it, is represented as “posh” clubs and bars, with the interiors resembling high end clubs and bars from Belgrade, Zagreb or Sarajevo. Nonetheless, the way that people party and enjoy themselves is the same as in “kafana”. Heavy drinking, shouting and singing along to the songs that somebody “ordered” and paid is the “modus operandi”. It seems that folk music just takes over, as one of the bar owners said *“we have that in us, it's just the way it is”*. I do not want to use the word “tradition” since it would require at least one more chapter in explaining this term and what it means when we talk about music. But it seems that this music is the bridge between the generations that were born here (with their parents coming from former Yugoslavia) and the people who came in the 1990s and 2000s. Although the later generations preferred pop and rock it appears that they forget about it after midnight and a couple of drinks. It goes without saying that this music might remind them of their parents and what they liked to listen to when they were young. And for the generations that were born here in Vienna, the folk music is their heritage from their parents that came to work during the 1960s. This could be one possible explanation but it certainly requires that both of these social groups are at the center of the research process.

The musicians on the other hand have to develop new strategies in order to keep playing and make their living from music. These new strategies vary from learning new songs that get the audience going, mastering when to start playing these songs, maintaining the drinking and party mood or “stimmung” the whole evening in order to satisfy the audience and bar owners or the “deconstruction of the stage” in order to get close and personal with the audience in order to get them an extra hundred euros for a specific song. Overall, the process of adaptation is the key. In order to succeed in this new hybrid environment, musicians need to adapt. But this adaptation in most cases leads to the sacrifice of the musician's integrity and artistic aspirations. Skill set is not appreciated, but rather the repertoire that has been played, which in most cases has been created by the audience and bar owners. There is little to no freedom in trying new songs and exploring new musical territories. What people know is what they want to hear, they do not want surprises as one of my interviewees said. I think you have to really love what you do and find a specific strength within yourself as an artist in order to express yourself as a musician in this kind of environment. But the scene grows and musicians do what they do and time will tell what will the new trends bring and in which direction will this new “Ex Yu music scene” develop in the future.

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8. Abstract

The New “Ex Yu” Music Scene in Vienna

(“Kafana on Steroids” or birth and death of “Ex Yu” pop rock scene in Vienna)

This master thesis deals with the emergence of the new “Ex YU” music scene in Vienna in the last seven years and its constant change due to various social and demographic processes. The findings are based on qualitative research with six musicians and four bar and club owners and managers who are involved in this scene. The interviews took place from February until June 2022 and were all conducted in Vienna (Austria).

The findings have shown that the new “Ex Yu” music scene in Vienna was a product of demographic and social processes that started in the 1990s. The new migrant social group of young educated people was leaving former Yugoslavia due to the instability caused by civil war and economic devastation. They had a specific taste in music which was opposed to the dominant “Yugo = folk” discourse. The first rock and pop clubs with live music emerged in Vienna around the year of 2000. The scene slowly grew and reached its peak before the Corona pandemic (2020) with four clubs that had “Ex Yu” pop and rock live music from Wednesday until Sunday.

After the pandemic, the scene was renewed, yet strongly orientated towards commercialization in order to compensate for the lost profits during the lockdowns. This commercialization triggered additional changes in the scene and put forward the audience as a main factor in deciding what is played and which bands are playing. Satisfied audience produces more profits and which rests strongly upon the familiarity with the music and songs that are played. The musicians began to develop additional work strategies, including incorporating the desired songs in their repertoire and closing the gap between them and the audience by using wireless systems in order to get more tips in money (bakšiš) for hearing the requested songs. With time, this produced a shift from pop and rock music towards pop folk and even traditional folk music from former Yugoslavia. It could be argued that this new scene has made a full circle and that it is slowly getting absorbed in the mentioned “Yugo = folk” discourse.

Key words: music scene; “Ex Yu”; “Ex Yu” pop rock; audience; commercialization.

Abstrakt

Die neue „Ex Yu“-Musikszene in Wien

(„Kafana on Steroids“ oder Geburt und Tod der Pop-Rock-Szene „Ex Yu“ in Wien)

Diese Masterarbeit beschäftigt sich mit der Entstehung der neuen „Ex YU“-Musikszene in Wien in den letzten sieben Jahren und deren stetiger Veränderung aufgrund verschiedener sozialer und demografischer Prozesse. Die Ergebnisse basieren auf qualitativer Forschung mit sechs Musikern und vier Bar- und Club-Besitzern und -managern, die in dieser Szene involviert sind. Die Interviews fanden von Februar bis Juni 2022 statt und wurden alle in Wien (Österreich) geführt.

Die Ergebnisse haben gezeigt, dass die neue „Ex Yu“ Musikszene in Wien ein Produkt demografischer und sozialer Prozesse war, die in den 1990er Jahren begann. Die neue migrantische soziale Gruppe junger gebildeter Menschen verließ das ehemalige Jugoslawien aufgrund der durch Bürgerkrieg und wirtschaftliche Verwüstung verursachten Instabilität. Sie hatten einen spezifischen Musikgeschmack, der dem vorherrschenden „Yugo = Folk“-Diskurs entgegenstand. Die ersten Rock- und Pop-Clubs mit Live-Musik entstanden in Wien um das Jahr 2000. Die Szene wuchs langsam und erreichte ihren Höhepunkt vor der Corona-Pandemie (2020) mit vier Clubs, die „Ex Yu“ Pop- und Rock-Live-Musik von Mittwoch bis Sonntag anboten.

Nach der Pandemie wurde die Szene erneuert, jedoch stark auf Kommerzialisierung ausgerichtet, um die entgangenen Gewinne während des Lockdowns zu kompensieren. Diese Kommerzialisierung löste weitere Veränderungen in der Szene aus und machte das Publikum zu einem Hauptfaktor bei der Entscheidung, welche Lieder gespielt werden und welche Bands auftreten. Ein zufriedenes Publikum bringt mehr Gewinn und das hängt stark von der Vertrautheit mit der gespielten Musik ab. Die Musiker begannen zusätzliche Arbeitsstrategien zu entwickeln, einschließlich der Aufnahme der gewünschten Lieder in ihr Repertoire und des Schließens der Lücke zwischen ihnen und dem Publikum durch den Einsatz drahtloser Systeme, um mehr Trinkgeld (bakšiš) für das Anhören der gewünschten Lieder zu erhalten. Mit der Zeit führte dies zu einer Verschiebung von Pop- und Rockmusik hin zu Pop-Folk und sogar traditioneller Volksmusik aus dem ehemaligen Jugoslawien. Man könnte argumentieren, dass diese neue Szene einen Kreis geschlossen hat und langsam in den erwähnten „Yugo = Folk“-Diskurs eindringt.

Schlüsselwörter: Musikszene; „Ex Yu“; Pop-Rock „Ex Yu“; Publikum; Vermarktung.