-Preprint-

Abstract

This paper illustrates how hip hop practitioners in Athens, Greece legitimate hip hop as an authentic musical form within the restricted field of cultural production. First, this paper outlines how fields of cultural production operate. Second, this paper illustrates how the data for this project was collected. Third, this paper highlights how past and current struggles within the field shape how authenticity is defined. Fourth, this paper highlights the discursive techniques used by hip hop practitioners to position rap music as aesthetically superior to the commercially successful genres of *new wave laika*, 'hip pop,' corporate American hip hop and Greek pop. Fifth, I illustrate how hip hop practitioners use two competing processes of aesthetic legitimation: *local authentication* and *translocal authentication*, within the restricted field of cultural production. Finally, I conclude with some suggested avenues for future research.

Keywords: Greek hip hop; cultural production; Bourdieu; authenticity; rap music

1. Introduction

Popular culture and popular music provide important avenues for the extension and refinement of Pierre Bourdieu's theories of cultural production. Although there are a wealth of macro-level studies drawing on Bourdieu that focus on the relationships between cultural consumption, music, and social differentiation (Bryson, 1996; Peterson, 1992; van Eijck, 2001; van Eijck and Lievens, 2008), there are also a growing number of studies that draw upon Bourdieu's theories of cultural production to offer qualitative analyses of music-making (Atkinson, 2011; Lopes, 2000; Moore, 2007; Prior 2008; Regev, 1994; author, in press;

Thornton, 1996). Past studies examine how 'restricted popular art' is unaccounted for within Bourdieu's model of cultural production (Lopes, 2000), how punk operates as a independent field of cultural production (Moore, 2007), how Pierre Bourdieu's theories can improve through an incorporation of actor network theory (Prior, 2008), how rock music is legitimated as 'real art' (Regev, 1994), how the concept of 'location' acts as a supplement to the concepts of position and disposition in understanding how strategies are enacted in cultural fields (author, forthcoming), and how the concept of 'subcultural capital' contributes to our understandings of musical subcultures (Thornton, 1996). This paper examines hip hop culture in Athens, Greece, in order to provide an empirical contribution to Bourdieusian studies of restricted cultural production (Craig and Dubois, 2010; Sapiro, 2010 and Hitters and van de Kamp, 2010).

For Bourdieu, fields are "a structured space of positions in which the positions and their interrelations are determined by the distribution of different kinds of resources or 'capital'" (Thompson, 1991: 14). One of the most important resources or types of capital within the Greek field of popular music is that of authenticity. This paper extends Pierre Bourdieu's work on cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993; Bourdieu, 1996) by refining Bourdieu's understanding of aesthetic legitimacy within the restricted field of cultural production. Towards this end, this paper outlines the competing ways that predominantly male hip hop practitioners in the restricted field of production in Athens, Greece seek to aesthetically legitimate hip hop culture and rap music.

First, this paper outlines how fields of cultural production operate. Second, this paper illustrates how the data for this project was collected. Third, this paper highlights how past and current struggles within the field shape how authenticity is defined. Fourth, this paper highlights the discursive techniques used by hip hop practitioners to position rap music within the restricted

field of cultural production as aesthetically superior to the commercially successful genres of *new wave laika*, 'hip pop,' corporate American hip hop and Greek pop. Fifth, this paper illustrates how hip hop practitioners use two competing processes of aesthetic legitimation, *local authentication* and *translocal authentication*, within the restricted field of cultural production.

2. Legitimation, authenticity, symbolic boundaries and 'restricted popular art'

For Bourdieu, cultural production is best theorized as a social field. The field is a structured space of positions that is shaped by the distribution of different kinds of resources or "capital" (Thompson, 1991: 14) and by the constant state of struggle over the accumulation and distribution of these resources or "capital" (such as prestige, recognition, high evaluation, etc.) (Regev, 1994: 86). Bourdieu envisions the field as a network of objective relations between positions (Bourdieu, 1996: 231) that is structured by the distribution of available positions and by the objective characteristics of agents occupying those positions (Johnson, 1993: 16). Within this framework, cultural fields are stratified as a result of two opposing principles of hierarchization—the heteronomous principle and the autonomous principle (Bourdieu, 1993: 40). The *heteronomous principle* of hierarchization is associated with the field of large-scale production. It is characterized by the struggle for economic capital. It is where producers produce for the broadest possible audience. It is also associated with 'mass' or 'popular' culture. The *autonomous principle* of hierarchization is associated with the field of restricted production. It is characterized by the struggle for symbolic capital. It is where producers produce for other producers (1993: 37-39). It also is linked to the creation of 'art for art's sake' and with elite culture (1993: 40). Based on these distinctions between the heteronomous and autonomous regions of the field, Bourdieu originally conceptualized two general artistic subfields: the

restricted field of production (divided into the consecrated avant-garde and the aspirant

bohemian avant-garde), and *the field of large scale cultural production* (divided into commercial

bourgeois art and popular art) (Lopes, 2000: 173). Whereas restricted production emphasizes

cultural capital and artistic achievement (art), large scale production emphasizes economic

capital and financial success (commerce) (Ollivier, 2006: 97-98). In addition to the competing

principles of hierarchization (autonomous and heteronomous), and competing *regions in the*

field (restricted vs. large scale), there are also competing *principles of legitimacy* in all cultural

fields. The two principles most relevant to the current discussion of the Greek popular music

field are: *the specific principle of legitimacy*, where producers produce for other producers, and

the popular principle of legitimacy, where producers produce for consumers or the mass

audience (Bourdieu, 1993: 50-51).

Within his work, Bourdieu primarily focuses on restricted production at the expense of

large scale heteronomous cultural production or the 'cultural industries' (Hesmondhalgh, 2006:

217). As a result of this emphasis on restricted production, Bourdieu's model is unable to account

for popular art production that is not part of the culture industry (Lopes, 2000: 173). Bourdieu's

model omits cultural production that is neither part of the 'popular art' of the cultural industries

nor part of the 'high art' of restricted production. As a remedy to this limitation, Paul Lopes

introduced *restricted popular art* and *the restricted subfield of popular art* (Lopes, 2000).

Restricted popular art is a type of art that emerges from predominantly dominated classes, such

as the working class, ethnic minorities, and racial minorities (Lopes, 2000:174-175). Within

Lopes's reframing, the field of music production is divided between art (including restricted high

art and restricted popular art) and commerce (including popular art) (2000: 173). The art pole

emphasizes restricted cultural production, autonomy and the legitimation of cultural products by

other cultural producers. The commerce pole emphasizes large scale cultural production, heteronomy and the legitimation of cultural products by consumers and audiences.

Historically, rap music and hip hop culture had a difficult time being incorporated into the field of large-scale cultural production by multinational corporations. As Keith Negus illustrates, the music industry initially sought to 'contain' rap music by confining rap music within black divisions, by maintaining a series of changing relationships with minor labels in order to keep an arm's length from the genre, and by making negative value judgements about rap music's long-term viability and international transferability (Negus, 1999: 94-95). Negus illustrates how multinational corporations sought to keep rap music out of the field of large scale cultural production through various organizational practices that were intended to confine rap music to a marginal position within the popular music field. Thriving hip hop scenes worldwide have proven that these practices of containment have been ineffective in the long term. This is because "no longer is [hip hop] a cultural form that has been localized; now it is a local form that connects to several worlds" (Pennycook and Mitchell, 2009: 35). In this sense, the Global Hip Hop Nation (GHHN) (Alim, 2009: 3) is not "...merely a cultural formation that has spread and been locally taken up...but rather one that has always been local" (Pennycook and Mitchell, 2009: 35).

However, although the long-term viability of hip hop is no longer disputed, what continues to be disputed are issues of authenticity among hip hop practitioners worldwide. As a 'renewable resource' (Peterson, 1997), authenticity is socially constructed through the interactions between musical artists, fans and experts (historians, critics, archivists, teachers, documentary makers, etc.) (Peterson, 2005). Although authenticity is never an objective quality inherent in things, it is a subjective quality or set of shared beliefs about the nature of things we

value in the world (Grazian, 2003: 12). Within this framework, claims of authenticity reveal a great deal about *symbolic boundaries*, the conceptual distinctions made by social actors, used to categorize objects, people and practices (Lamont and Molnar, 2002: 168). Bourdieu's work focused primarily on the symbolic boundaries and hierarchization of fields via social class (Bourdieu, 1993; 1996), at the expense of other types of difference. Recent scholarship has sought to remedy these limitations (Adkins and Skeggs, 2004; McCall, 1992; Moi, 1991), and I would argue that all fields are structured through different forms of othering, inclusion and exclusion. As Roy and Dowd (2010: 197) remind us, music plays an important role in sustaining and reconfiguring stratification by reinforcing race, class and gender distinctions, and there are a growing number of studies that examine popular music, cultural classification and social and symbolic boundaries (Denora, 2002; Dowd and Blyer, 2002; Dowd et al., 2005; Schmutz, 2009).

Historically, issues of authenticity and the creation of social and symbolic boundaries have been *central* in the struggles of African-American hip hop artists to define black masculinity through their music (Dyson, 2001; Boyd, 2003; Quinn, 2005), as well as in the struggles to define authentic hip hop culture in ways that emphasize its roots in African-American experience. With the worldwide transition of hip hop culture 'from the margins to the mainstream' (Stapleton, 1998: 219) authenticity claims function to maintain a culture's identity that is threatened with assimilation into the dominant culture (McLeod, 1999: 135). This paper examines how hip hop practitioners, not corporations, are now actively trying to aesthetically legitimate rap music as a restricted popular art in order to stop its assimilation into the field of large scale cultural production. Drawing on current studies of restricted production (Lopes, 2000; Craig and DuBois, 2010; Sapiro, 2010) and legitimation (Johnson et al., 2006, and Scardaville, 2009), this paper illustrates how hip hop practitioners in the restricted field of production seek to

legitimate hip hop culture and rap music as an aesthetic, not economic, cultural form. Past studies of restricted production have illustrated how the tensions between art and commerce are resolved by cultural producers in the literary field. For example, Craig and Dubois (2010: 450) illustrate how poetry readings provide an avenue for the economic promotion and distribution of poetry, while simultaneously allowing poets to engage in commerce in the name of art. Others studies have mapped out the relationship between restricted and large scale production in the global book market. For example, Sapiro (2010) illustrates how language structures the global book market, with English being the dominant language at the pole of large scale production, and cultural diversity being more present at the field of restricted production. Furthermore, a recent study on the processes of legitimation within U.S. soap operas illustrates how soap operas gained widespread economic legitimacy (popular principle of legitimacy) though they never fully achieved widespread aesthetic legitimacy (specific principle of legitimacy) (Scardaville, 2009). Scardaville draws on Johnson et al.'s (2006) four stage model of legitimacy—innovation, local validation, diffusion and general validation—to illustrate how soap operas in the United States were unable to gain widespread aesthetic legitimacy among large segments of the general public. This paper seeks to contribute to these literatures on restricted production (Lopes, 2000; Craig and Dubois, 2010; Sapiro, 2010) and legitimacy as a social process (Johnson et al., 2006, and Scardaville, 2009) by illustrating how two competing processes of legitimation (*local authentication* and *translocal authentication*) operate within the restricted field of production

3. Data

This study examines Greek popular music as a field of cultural production. Currently, the field of Greek popular music is divided into two subfields: *international music* (music which is

not sung in Greek) and *indigenous music* (music which is sung in Greek, including both Greek popular music genres and international genres sung in Greek). According to Alexandros Patakis, Marketing Manager, International Repertoire, Universal Music in Greece, in 2009 63% of popular music sales in Greece were of local repertoire (Greek music) and 37% were of international repertoire (non-Greek music and classical music).When speaking of the Greek popular music field, this paper refers to the *indigenous music* subfield which includes *rebetika* (urban blues), *laika* ('popular' music), *entehna* (art-popular), *politika* (political-song), *demotika* (folk songs), *new wave laika* (which includes Greek pop and contemporary folk which is disparagingly referred to as 'dog music')[1], as well as rap, reggae, rock, etc. performed by musical artists in Greek.

From January-August 2009, I conducted twenty-three in person interviews with MCs, producers, DJs, industry professionals and other individuals involved in music-making and hip hop culture in Athens, Greece. Interviews were primarily conducted in Greek, though some were conducted in English and a few were conducted in Greek and English. Twenty-two of the respondents were male and one was female. The gender composition of respondents mirrors the gender composition of Greek hip hop, with the vast majority of hip hop practitioners being male. This reflects the gender composition of hip hop in Athens, Greece as hip hop in Athens is still a predominantly male-dominated musical scene. Interviews with respondents were semi-structured, averaged around thirty minutes in length, and ranged from twenty minutes to two hours. All of the interviews were tape-recorded with the respondents' permission. Since my research focused on insights into the popular music industry, an industry where professional success is intimately connected with name recognition, respondents were given the option *not* to

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[1] I am using the term 'dog music' in reference to contemporary folk music because it is the term that was widely used by respondents. The popular usage of the term reveals the lack of aesthetic value placed upon this genre.

remain anonymous so that they could be credited for their ideas on the music-making process. One respondent chose to remain anonymous; the other twenty-two chose to use their musical monikers. The breakdown of types of respondents included: 4 MC/producers, 4 producers, 3 DJ/producers, 3 MCs, 2 DJs, 2 managers, 1 MC/DJ, 1 promoter/DJ, 1 promoter, 1 cinematographer and 1 dancer/MC (the female respondent).

A native Greek speaker transcribed the interviews in Greek and a few in Greek/English, while the bilingual author of this article transcribed the interviews in English. All of the translations were completed by the author, as was all of the coding. Given the small number of interviews, these interviews were coded by hand and they were treated as *texts*, which are basic discursive units and the material manifestations of discourses (Chalaby, 1996: 688). The coding of these texts was guided by my interest in viewing Greek popular music as a cultural field. My guiding concern was to understand how practitioners of a relatively new and 'foreign' popular music genre legitimated their position as newcomers within the field. The discourses of interest emerged organically based on the responses of respondents.

4. **A brief history of Greek popular music: mapping the symbolic boundaries of the field**

This section maps out the historical context of the field of Greek popular music in order to illustrate how cultural fields are dynamic entities marked by past and current struggles, and how hip hop practitioners utilize symbolic boundaries in these struggles over hierarchical classification. Whereas past research has focused on how genre classifications involve hierarchical rankings (DiMaggio, 1987), on how music companies classify genres (Hitters and van de Kamp, 2010), on how genre trajectories change over time (Lena and Peterson, 2008) and on how the relationships between cultural classification and social and symbolic boundaries

operate within cultural fields (Denora, 2002; Dowd and Blyer, 2002; Dowd et al., 2005;Schmutz, 2009), these studies do not account for how marginal music genres gain aesthetic legitimacy within the field of restricted production. Towards this end, this section also outlines the relative positioning of three genres within the field of Greek popular music: *rebetika*, *new wave laika* and *rap music*. Each of these genres was chosen to illustrate the role that symbolic boundaries play in the positioning of genres within the Greek musical field. *Rebetika* and *new wave laika* were selected since they are both institutionalized genres that are differentially valued within the field of Greek popular music, and hip hop practitioners in Athens often implicitly or explicitly made references to these genres when speaking of hip hop culture in Greece.

4.1 Rebetika

Rebetika, often referred to as the Greek 'urban blues,' is a genre of music with a complex history of othering and incorporation. This section outlines the processes of localization that are central to the legitimation of new musical genres within the field of Greek popular music. Namely, the processes of hellenization, masculinization and westernization of this musical form are central to its gentrification from a marginal genre to a dominant autonomous genre within the restricted field of production. This section maps out this history in detail.

Rebetika is an urban folk style of music that originated at the start of the 20th century and was historically associated with 'disreputable' elements in society due to the emphasis of early rebetika musicians on the themes of drugs, hardship, and prostitution (Tragaki, 2007: 25). *Rebetika* may be traced back, from 1850s onwards, to Asia Minor's Smyrna, Istanbul, Syros, Athens, Pireaus, Thessaloniki and the United States (Emery, 2000: 11). *Rebetika* is built upon the use of the long necked bouzouki, the baglamas, and the guitar (Pennanen, 2005: 115), and the

musical roots of *rebetika* are *demotika* (rural folk music) and music from the eastern Aegean (present day Izmir and Istanbul) (Papageorgiou, 2005: 121).

From 1918 until the late 1940s, the Greek state marginalized and censored *rebetika*. During the interwar period (1918-1939), urban popular music was a battlefield between advocates of westernization and advocates of indigenous culture (Kallimopoulou, 2009: 24). *Rebetika* was one of the musical genres at the heart of these debates. The reason for this is that the roots of *rebetika* trace back to the population exchange between Greece and Turkey in the 1920s when one and a half million Asia Minor Greeks were expatriated to Greece from Turkey (Pennanen, 2005: 114). Upon their arrival in Greece, Asia Minor Greeks faced considerably hostility by local Greeks who saw them as representing "...an Anatolian corruption of Greekness, a Turkofied version of themselves, polluted by Turkish language, Levantine mercantilism, and oriental customs" (Pappas, 1999: 353). Similarly, the music that Asia Minor Greeks brought with them, such as *rebetika*, was equally marginalized.

During the fascist dictatorship of Ioannis Metaxas (1936-1941), the Axis Occupation (1941-1946) and the Greek Civil War (1946-1949), *rebetika* was censored by the Greek State. From the 1930s and all the way to the Greek Civil War in the late 1940s, *rebetika* was mostly defined in negative terms by the Greek state. *Rebetika* was looked down upon by elites as the song and culture of the "underworld" and of those not respectable enough to be members of the Greek middle classes (Firillas, 2006: 123). As a result of these tensions, it was not until the late 1940s that *rebetika* enjoyed a wide audience and gained popularity among the Greek middle classes and became a musical genre that could be purchased at record shops and listened to in taverns (Tragaki 2007: 57). From the 1940s-1950s, *rebetika* was a genre of popular music that successfully crossed-over from a marginalized genre to a dominant genre in the field of restricted

cultural production, largely due to changes in musicianship and audience composition. There were three important moments in this cross-over process. First, musicians hellenized *rebetika* in a shift from Greek Ottoman cafe music to a nationalist Smyrneiko style. Second, musicians masculinized *rebetika* in a shift from 'feminine' Smyrnaika to the 'masculine' Pireaus-style *rebetika* (Holst-Warhaft, 1998: 116-120). Third, *rebetika* was westernized by musicians to suit the tastes of bourgeois Greek audiences.

First, the process of *hellenization* began when Greek Ottoman Cafe music was gradually incorporated by rebetika musicians into modern *rebetika* through an erasure of its Ottoman roots. Rebetika musicians nationalized Greek Ottoman Cafe music into Smyrnaiko by recasting this music as the Greek music of the Greek population of Smyrna (Pennanen quoted in Kallimopoulou, 2009: 26). Music that was once multi-ethnic and Ottoman was recast as Greek. Vasilis Tsitsanis, a composer, bouzouki player, and the founder of modern *rebetika*, was a central figure in this transformation. Tsitsanis popularized and made *rebetika* fashionable to high society by "hellenizing" the music and purging it of its Turkish traces (Kallimopoulou, 2009: 26). Second, the *masculinization* of *rebetika* happened in the shift from Smyrneika to Pireaus style, when the 'feminine' laments of Smyrneika were replaced with the 'masculine' sounds of the bouzouki and 'tough-guy' personas of the Pireaus style (Holst-Warhaft, 1998: 116-120). Hellenization and masculinization were also crucial elements in the nationalization of the Pireaus-style which "crystallized" *rebetika* as a pan-hellenic form of popular music by the 1930s (Holst-Warhaft, 1998: 121). Finally, the *westernization* of *rebetika* happened during and after the civil war of 1946-1949, when *rebetika* musicians increasingly performed in luxurious bouzoukia[2]

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[2] The bouzoukia are a form of evening entertainment where Greek popular artists perform. Bouzoukia can refer to the establishments that play bouzouki music, *or* to the music that is played in those establishments (e.g. *rebetika*, *laika*, etc.).

taverns for elite members of Greek society. During these performances of *rebetika*, musicians fused *rebetika* with western popular music to suit the tastes of these new bourgeois audiences (Pennanen, 2005: 115). Therefore, the musical form that *rebetika* acquired after the Second World War was quite distant from the eastern idioms of Asia Minor refugees and from the Pireaus style of the 1930s (Kallimopoulou, 2009: 26).

The 1960s highlighted the aesthetic and artistic pinnacle of *rebetika* within the field of restricted production. In 1960 Mikis Theodorakis released *Epitaphios*, which was an avant-garde *entehna* release that aimed to unite the world of "art" (the poetry of Yiannis Ritsos) with the world of *rebetika*. *Entehna* (art-popular) is a genre of music that combines elements of western art music, Greek musical forms (including *rebetika*) and poetry and is best exemplified by classically-trained composers such as Mikis Theodorakis and Manos Hadjidakis (Kallimopoulou, 2009: 3). The release of *Epitaphios* resulted in "one of the most fervent controversies in the history of modern Greek music among local music experts and intellectuals" (Tragaki, 2005: 50). The controversy focused on how 'Greekness' and Greek identity were represented in *rebetika* (urban blues) and *demotika* (rural folk) (Tragaki, 2005). In her insightful analysis, Tragaki illustrates how opponents of *rebetika* sought to delegitimize this musical form in two significant ways. First, these experts and intellectuals highlighted *rebetika*'s eastern influences, by linking this musical form to Turkish conquest (2005: 57). This tactic sought to frame *rebetika* as not truly "Greek." Second, these experts and intellectuals imagined *rebetika* in feminine terms as a "...corrupted and alluring female that seduces proletarians and leads them to the land of pleasures..." (2005: 62). This tactic sought to frame *rebetika* as not truly "masculine."

In spite of these debates, however, Theodorakis' *Epitaphios* release ultimately elevated Greek musical forms (such as *rebetika* and folk music) to the status of "art" (Tragaki, 2005: 64).

Furthermore, although *rebetika* musicians still faced great censorship during the military dictatorship (1967-1974) in Greece, the 1960s marked an aesthetic and artistic high point for this musical genre. It was ultimately these processes of hellenization, masculinization and westernization, which were solidified in the work of Mikis Theodorakis, which resulted in *rebetika* claiming a dominant position in the field of restricted production. Rock music in the 1960s and 1970s became legitimized as "real art" by adopting the tenets of autonomous art (Regev, 1994), *rebetika* in the 1960s became legitimated as "real art" within the field of restricted production by musicians who sought to merge *rebetika* with western art and classical music.

4.2 New Wave Laika

It was during the 1970s and 1980s that a new musical form known as *new wave laika* first emerged. The roots of *new wave laika* may be traced back to the *laika* of the 1950s and 1960s as well as *rebetika*. During the 1950s, rebetika provided the background for several new strands of Greek popular music: *laika*, *entehna* and political song (Papageoriou, 1997: 69). *Laika* is a broad-based genre of Greek popular music, which originally emerged as a simplification of *rebetika* in order to make this type of music more broadly marketable (Papageoriou, 1997: 69). The influences of *laika* include rebetika, West European, Latin American, North American, Turkish and Egyptian popular music and Indian film music (Pennanen, 2005: 116). From the 1960s onward, *laika* became fashionable among wealthier segments of Greek society and variations of the genre were produced by the music industry to suit the tastes of the middle classes who frequented nightclubs and tavernas featuring these musical forms (Papageorgiou,

1997: 69). At this time, *laika* was also performed by musicians in bouzoukia (Pennanen, 2005: 116), which to this day play a central role in Greek nightlife.

During the 1980s, *new wave laika* emerged as a new musical genre. The *new wave laika* is a hybrid musical form that merges traditional *laika* styles with western pop music. One of the most popular genres of *new wave laika* is contemporary folk. Contemporary folk music, disparagingly known as "dog music" (σκυλάδικα), began as a fringe music that addressed the alienated, nihilist and consumer aspects of urban life while merging traditional *laika* styles with pop music and Arabic and Asian musical forms. It was initially popularized through pirated cassettes of live performances, amateur radio stations and night clubs (Papageorgiou, 2005: 121-122). Originally, contemporary folk addressed itself to alienated rural migrants who were unable to integrate into the city; it was a type of music which was popular in the working class areas of Athens and it was released by musicians primarily through independent labels that charged performers to record and produce their records (Papageorgiou, 1997: 72).

The growing popularity of contemporary folk in the 1980s resulted in this musical form being the subject of much academic debate. The majority of scholars in the 1980s argued that "dog music" was of low artistic value, decadent and inane, and that it threatened the 'purity' of Greek folk song (Tragaki, 2007: 125). Among all of the genres of *new wave laika*, "dog music" is the most disparaged and devalued because of its origins as a hybrid (in particular Eastern/Asian) and working class music of rural migrants that heavily relies upon the bouzouki. For many hip hop practitioners, "dog music" represents everything that they dislike about the Greek popular music industry. Similar to *'volks'* music in the Netherlands (Hitters and van de Kamp 2010), Greek musicians frame *new wave laika* (contemporary folk aka 'dog music') as possessing a low

cultural value because of its links with working class cultures. As a result of these associations, *new wave laika* holds a dominated position in the field.

4.3 Rap Music

Hip hop in Greece began as a subculture in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Similar to Germany and other European countries, one of the first encounters of hip hop culture in Greece was through films such as Charlie Ahearn's *Wild Style* (1983), Stan Lathan's *Beat Street* (1984), Joel Silberg's *Breakin'* (1984), and Sam Firstenberg's *Breakin' 2: Electric Boogaloo* (1984) (Terzides, 2003: 28-32). Television, specifically music videos, also contributed to the spread of hip hop culture to Greece and within Greece. From 1997 onwards, MAD TV, a Greek music channel played a role in popularizing American hip hop. In particular, Nikos Vourliotis, aka Nivo, an MC, producer and DJ, began hosting a television show called 'StreetBeat,' which since 1997 has been showcasing hip hop music and urban culture from around the world. Finally, the movements of people along diasporic routes also played a significant role in the spread of hip hop to Athens. Kebzer, a DJ and producer, based in Athens, though originally from Mitilini (Lesvos), recounts how members of the Greek diaspora played a key role in the early formation of hip hop in Greece:

> "From 1984 and onwards, there existed certain exceptions, certain instances of people, Greek-Americans mainly, who would spend their summers in Greece. One of these people I know personally and he is the person who brought hip hop to Lesvos, to Mitilini in 1986. He was in high school and he would come for three months in the summer from Canada to Greece to visit with family, and every time he came, and especially the first time he came, he brought with him a crate with records. He introduced the rest of the world and some kids I knew in the neighbourhood [to hip hop], he initiated us in this. The same thing happened in the rest of Greece, but essentially hip hop in Greece began to be developed from 1991 and onwards."

These mediated representations of American hip hop culture were some of the first points of contact for Greek youth interested in this cultural form.

However, the popularization of the genre in Greece was not easy. According to Stereo Mike, MC/producer/song writer/sound engineer, the primary limitation for hip hop in Greece - both historically and currently - is that most of the live venues in Greece cater to Greek popular music. Most specifically, they cater to 'dog music' and other forms of *new wave laika*. As Stereo Mike notes: "As you well know, Greece is dependent on 'dog music', or what they call skyladika (σκυλάδικα). Or the night life is dependent on that quite heavily, so there hasn't been an organized live scene for anything else but that." 'Dog music' and other types of Greek popular music are performed at bouzoukia. The bouzoukia (in general) are not venues that cater to hip hop performances which made (and continues to make) hosting hip hop events a challenge.

Overall, early hip hop practitioners in Greece had a difficult time being accepted by the Greek popular music industry. This is because musical genres from outside of Greece, such as rap music, have traditionally had a difficult time breaking into the Greek popular music field. For Diveno, a producer/composer, the reasons for this are simple:

"It would have been very easy [to enter the mainstream] if Greece did not have very strong characteristics in regards to music. Greek traditional music [*paradosiaka*], which later evolved into *laika*, held back all of the independent currents in music. Whichever independent current in music attempted to make it in Greece, it found things to be very difficult, like the rock movement of the 80s, which managed to get to a certain point and obtain fans, but then stopped. Hip hop began along the same lines."

The popularity of more indigenous and traditional genres, such as *paradosiaka* and *laika*, contributed to 'foreign' genres, such as rap music, and rock music, having a much more difficult time being accepted.

Since 2003, however, some aspects of hip hop culture and rap music have gained commercial success. One of the reasons for this success is that Greek hip hop successfully

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merged with other commercially-successful genres of popular music such as Greek pop and

R&B. Another one of the ways rap music has gained increased popularity among fans is through

the adoption of Greek elements (in terms of lyrics, melodies and instrumentation) in rap music.

This change is significant because Greek rock music only gained acceptance by the Greek

popular music industry after rock artists adopted Greek elements and Greek lyrics in their music

(Papageorgiou, 1997: 72). The same is true for rap music. For Diveno, the adoption of Greek

elements was the result of pressures from the Greek public:

> "The way that things changed is that after a certain point, certain hip hop groups moved
> away from the classic hip hop sound, that everyone as a hip hop artist wanted, and they
> placed Greek elements, which however natural this seemed, many within the hip hop
> community felt that it was not right. This, however, was right for the mainstream public in
> Greece, that is, it was easier for them [the public] to listen to this type of song, instead of
> listening to a more [traditional] hip hop song."

The adoption of Greek elements has been one of the most important ways in which hip hop

culture and rap music have gained greater economic legitimacy and commercial success. This

has signalled a marked shift among some hip hop practitioners from an emphasis on aesthetic

legitimacy, and producing for other producers, towards an emphasis on economic legitimacy,

and producing for mass audiences in the transition of rap music from the field of restricted to

large scale production.

      However, as Diveno clearly states, there are tensions within the hip hop community in

Greece about the use of Greek instrumentation and Greek sampling within hip hop. In general,

hip hop artists who have adopted Greek elements in their music have had greater commercial

success than those who have maintained a much more 'classic' hip hop sound. In very broad

terms, the 'classic' hip hop sound in Greece places great an emphasis on 'hardware' (sampling

from records) over 'software' (using computers) and is based on heavy sampling from soul, funk,

blues records. More commercial sounding hip hop involves greater reliance on computer

software, live instrumentation, and the sampling of Greek popular music (such as laika, R&B, and Greek pop). Artists and bands who collaborated with Greek popular artists have been more likely to receive record contracts with major labels (especially from 2000 onwards). The hip hop act that was one of the first to successfully collaborate with popular artists was Goin' Through. Goin' Through collaborated with Yiorgo Mazonaki, Stelio Roko, David Lynch, Peter Andre, among others (Terzides, 2003: 16). However, many hip hop artists have followed suit, such as Stereo Mike. In his 2007 album entitled XLI3H (Evolution), Stereo Mike collaborated with artists such as Haris Alexiou, the Reggae Philharmonic Orchestra, and many others.

However, despite rap artists' increasing commercial success, rap music is still marginalized as an 'alternative' (Stereo Mike) or 'independent' (Diveno) genre. Stereo Mike states:

> "...the list of priorities in mainstream labels means that even if you are one of their biggest successes in the hip hop catalogue, because it is hip hop and its alternative, you are still a very low priority after the international stuff they have to push and after the local pop stuff they have to push. So, you come so low on the list of priorities that you come to thinking that me, my manager, and my team are doing everything by ourselves, just the way we did before, so what's the point of giving a piece of the pie of our record sales to anybody else?"

As Stereo Mike clearly illustrates, major labels and the popular music industry in Greece hierarchically organize the promotion of popular music in Greece in the following manner: Greek popular, foreign popular, and indigenous independent (such as hip hop). So, despite the recent commercial successes of hip hop, with artists such as Stereo Mike, Mhdenisths, Goin' Through, Stavento, Professional Sinnerz, and others being signed to major labels, rap music in Greece has been (and still is) marginalized within the Greek popular music industry. This twinned commercialization and simultaneous marginalization has resulted in rap music being positioned as undecidable since it is *both* mainstream and alternative, indigenous and foreign. Hip hop culture and rap music in Greece currently occupies a tenuous position within the Greek

popular music field as both a type of restricted popular art (restricted) and as a type of popular art (large scale).

4.4 Summary of the Field of Greek Popular Music

Based on this brief historical outline of the positions of *rebetika*, *new wave laika* and rap music within the Greek popular music field, it is possible to argue that *rebetika* currently occupies a dominant position as a type of restricted high art, *new wave laika* occupies a dominated position as a type of mass produced popular art, and rap music occupies an in-between position as a type of restricted popular art and popular art. Within the framework, *new wave laika* occupies the commerce end of the field, *rebetika* occupies the art end of the field, and rap music straddles the middle between art and commerce. In addition, based on this brief history the Greek popular music field is currently structured according to an east/west, feminine/masculine, romioi/hellene[3] series of symbolic boundaries, where favored content within the field of Greek popular music is legitimated through an emphasis on westernization, masculinization and hellenization. In the pages that follow, I outline how hip hop practitioners in the restricted field of production seek to maintain hip hop culture and rap music's aesthetic legitimacy within an increasingly commercial musical landscape.

5. Legitimating Rap Music

This section outlines the *discursive techniques* used by hip hop practitioners to position rap music within the Greek popular music field. Hip hop practitioners in the restricted field of production seek to legitimate rap music in two ways: *local authentication* and *translocal*

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[3] Romioi is a more byzantine and eastern conceptualization of Greekness, whereas hellene is a more western conceptualization of Greekness.

authentication. Both processes of legitimation frame rap music as aesthetically superior, and in opposition to, the economically successful genres of *new wave laika*, 'hip pop,' corporate American hip hop, and Greek pop. Hip hop practitioners espousing *local authentication* seek to frame hip hop culture and rap music in Greece in local terms and only incorporate certain genres of Greek music (e.g. rebetika) into their music. Hip hop practitioners espousing *translocal authentication* seek to frame hip hop culture and rap music in Greece is translocal terms and refused the incorporation of any Greek elements into their music.

5.1 Aesthetically Superior to New Wave Laika

Regardless of whether an artist was on a major or minor record label, there was a unanimous rejection and disparagement of the genre of *new wave laika* among all of the hip hop practitioners I interviewed. For example, Stereo Mike, an MC, producer, sound engineer, and songwriter signed to a major label, clearly explains the historical reasons as to why he refuses to produce contemporary folk aka "dog music:"

> "'Dog music', which is a very specific case in Greece, I wouldn't produce...So, anybody with money could produce anything and you have a famous joke of this club owner who took this girl he fancied in the studio and said can you use your tricks and make this an amazing product and this created the stereotype of the extremely sexy but vocally incapable female 'dog music' artist here, which was supported by a very sexist man-made and man-run industry behind the scenes."

Stereo Mike views 'dog music' as a central component of the musical mainstream. In Stereo Mike's quotation, and in the joke he recounts, the musical mainstream is synonymous with "dog music," which is constructed as female, commodified, talentless, sexy, and male dominated. Given that jokes act as markers of social, geographical and moral boundaries (Davies, 1982), this particular joke alerts us to the symbolic boundaries between hip hop and *new wave laika*. Similar

to *rebetika* of the past, *new wave laika* are framed by hip hop practitioners as the new 'other' within the Greek popular music industry.

Stereo Mike also has personal reasons as to why he refuses to produce 'dog music':

"So apart from the historic reasons why I won't work with that sort of music, it is a bad example of pastiche. It is not a good example of a country which is between Asia, Africa and Europe which is taking all these influences and making something new and amazing...What happened here was like a bad pop which depended on *touberleki*[4] and Turkish Asian undercurrents, which is fine, but it was all based around the belly dancer dancing [*tsifteteli*] around this sort of nightlife that was very much about a repetitive chorus, a rumba groove. And something that I found really non-challenging to my IQ as a musician."

Stereo Mike clearly defines 'dog music' in the following terms: bad pop, Turkish/Asian in sound, associated with the *tsifteteli*, performed in the *bouzoukia*, repetitive, and non-challenging to his musical IQ. Eastern musical elements, the female body and belly dancing (*tsifteteli*) are symbolically associated with "bad pop" and *new wave laika*. The implication being that hip hop is a musical form which is masculine and linked to the mind, whereas *new wave laika* is feminine and linked to the body. The same tropes used by intellectuals to marginalize *rebetika* in the past are now used by musicians to marginalize *new wave laika* in the present.

Eisvoleas, MC of Marijuana Seeds (Τιγρέ Σποράκια) and solo artist succinctly outlines how and why hip hop is not supported by the Greek popular music industry:

"Look, the music industry in Greece cannot give you what you need...They don't give support [for hip hop], they want to make *tsiftetelia*. That's all. And rappers who have gotten into the industry in this way-- In order to get into the music industry you have to become a popular artist (laikos, λαϊκός). And unfortunately you soil your name. And these are not simple remnants that are easily cleaned, they are indelible stains. And that is why we are broke but we are clean."

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[4] The touberleki is a percussive goblet shaped cylindrical drum.

For Eisvoleas, the popular music industry does not support hip hop music. The industry supports popular artists (and popular rappers) who make *tsiftetelia*. If you happen to be a hip hop artist who is signed with a major label you have "soil[ed] your name." Within this quotation, Eisvoleas makes a clear distinction between "us" (hip hop practitioners outside of the Greek popular music industry, signed with independent labels, within the restricted field of production) and "them" (hip hop practitioners inside the Greek popular music industry, signed with major labels, within the field of large scale cultural production). This distinction between "us" (restricted production) and "them" (large scale cultural production) is mirrored by Skinothetis, who notes that "There exists a public who is ideologically on the same phase [as us]. He who listens to Goin' Through and likes them a lot, will not listen to us. That is, the public is not a musical public. It is a public of perception, philosophy and attitude of life." For hip hop practitioners in the restricted field of cultural production, there is an aesthetic disposition, attitude and way of life associated with hip hop culture.

Furthermore, there is much more to Eisvoleas quotation than first meets the eye. In order to frame hip hop as superior to *new wave laika*, Eisvoleas draws upon the discursive techniques used by musicians, scholars, and others, who sought to legitimize or delegitimize *rebetika* in the past. First, *tsifteteli*, along with *Hasapikos* and *Zeibekikos* are dances associated with the *rebetika* (the urban blues). These dances originated in Asia Minor and were transferred to Greece during the 1922 population exchange between Greece and Turkey (Monos, 1987: 306). Historically, *hasapikos* and *zeibekikos* were male dances, while the *tsifteteli* was a woman's dance, very similar to the "belly dance" that originated in the Middle East and Turkey (Giannaris quoted in Monos, 1987: 306). Though it is sometimes danced as a couple's dance, *tsifteteli* is still most often danced by women, sometimes on tables, most often at late night bouzouki

establishments known as the *bouzoukia*. *Tsiftetelia*, conversely, are songs that you can dance the *tsifteteli* to, such as 'dog music' and Greek pop. These are genres of music that are typically performed at *bouzoukia* nightclubs. Second, by choosing the *tsiftetelia*, and not *hasapikos* or *zeibekikos*, as being representative of Greek popular music, Eisvoleas constructs Greek popular music in very specific ways as feminine and eastern. As Angela Shand cogently argues, "for many Greeks, the *tsifteteli* remains an Oriental dance of a woman without restraint: beautiful and sensual, but also dangerous and tempting" (1998: 132). By linking *laika* and *tsiftetelia*, Eisvoleas makes an implicit connection between Greek popular music, 'the orient,' dancing and the female body. Third, these connections between *tsiftetelia* and *laika*, wherein Greek popular music is *tsiftetelia*, and the *tsiftetelia* are popular, eastern, feminine, associated with the body and female sexuality, and 'dirty' or soiled, results in the implicit binary construction of hip hop culture and rap music as alternative, western, masculine, associated with the mind, and 'clean.' So, when Eisvoleas states that "we are broke but we are clean," this implies that hip hop practitioners within the field of large scale popular production are contaminated. This contamination results from hip hop practitioners' contact with the Greek popular music industry—an industry, which according to Eisvoleas, is eastern and feminine. However, although the entire sample of hip hop practitioners interviewed agreed that hip hop culture was superior to *new wave laika*, there were disagreements over how to legitimate hip hop culture and rap music within the restricted field of Greek popular music.

5.2 Competing Forms of Legitimation: Local and Translocal Authentication

For the majority of the hip hop practitioners I spoke with in the restricted field of cultural production, "authentic" hip hop in Greece is distinct from, and aesthetically superior to,

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'hip pop,' corporate American hip hop, and Greek pop, types of hip hop present in the field of large scale cultural production. Hip hop artists in the restricted field of production agreed that rap music in Greece should reflect a Greek reality, it should be distinct from an American reality and it should be distinct from the corporate 'hip pop' of the Greek popular music industry. However, the hip hop practitioners I interviewed were in disagreement over the role of Greek elements (Greek samples and instrumentation) in rap music. Some of the hip hop practitioners believed that certain genres of Greek popular music, such as *rebetika*, could and should be sampled. Whereas, other hip hop practitioners believed that there should not be any Greek elements in rap music in Greece. Hip hop practitioners who emphasized the adoption of Greek elements within the restricted field of cultural production emphasized a process of *local authentication* that sought to legitimate rap music as a type of restricted popular art within the restricted field of cultural production. Within this framework, rap music in Greece is a type of restricted popular art, such as *rebetika*. Hip hop practitioners who rejected the adoption of Greek elements within the restricted field of cultural production emphasized a process of *translocal authentication* that sought to legitimate rap music as a type of transnational popular art within the transnational field of cultural production. Within this framework, rap music in Greece is part of a larger transnational Global Hip Hop Nation (GHHN) (Alim, 2009: 3).

First, hip hop practitioners in the restricted field of cultural production agreed that hip hop culture and rap music must reflect the realities of the people creating the music. Although the culture and genre originated in the United States, hip hop in Greece must reflect the "Greek reality." For example, as an anonymous respondent notes, "Our hip hop is different and is based on the truth, it is based on how we live, it is not based on fantasies, it is not based on things which have not happened here in Greece." For this respondent, hip hop is based on the lived

experiences of hip hop practitioners and not on 'fantasies' that have nothing to do with the reality

of life in Greece.

Second, these hip hop practitioners also agreed that hip hop in Greece has developed

incorrectly because it places too much emphasis on corporate hip hop in the United States. As

Skinothetis notes "Hip hop has developed but in a wrong direction." For Skinothetis, the main

problem is that hip hop, ironically enough, has become 'too American.'

> "It has happened, Americanism has come to Athens. Americanism was late to come to
> Athens, but it came. That is, you see people who are in Greece, they think they are
> virtuous, they live the American style even if they don't understand it, because they see it
> on television and they don't do it. They don't filter it through themselves to see if it
> coincides with a Greek reality and their own character."

Instead of rap music reflecting Greek reality, the music of many hip hop practitioners emulates

an American reality and an American model of hip hop. Instead of reflecting your own locality

and reality, these hip hop practitioners argue that corporate hip hop is based on media

representations of other people's reality.

Third, this group of hip hop practitioners was also against any cross-over of rap music

into the Greek popular music industry that involves the incorporation of Greek pop. For

Skinothetis, the increased merging of hip hop and Greek pop, or 'hip pop,' is problematic

because:

> "instead of bringing the people to hip hop, many went to the people, that is they became
> one with the people and with the perceptions of young Greeks. Instead of trying to change
> their perceptions and bring him closer to what they have to say...That is, where there was
> once a political type of hip hop which spoke of political and social issues, it became pop."

Skinothetis argues that hip hop has changed in order to suit the tastes of the people instead of

shaping the people's tastes to suit the needs of hip hop; that this change has not been positive for

hip hop fans; and most importantly, that this movement to suit the tastes of the people has diluted

hip hop culture from a cultural form concerned with political and social issues to 'pop.' This shift

in hip hop in Greece from politics to pop is problematic for Skinothetis, as we noted earlier,

because this is part of how "hip hop has developed but in a wrong direction."

These sentiments were reflected by another MC/producer who wished to remain

anonymous who had the following to say about hip hop and pop music:

"I don't believe that he who listens to, for example, something which I think is tasteless and commercial and I don't like it, such as pop hip hop or hip hop pop, I don't think that is hip hop! That is, there are very few who I think listen to hip hop, essential hip hop, that which is hip hop for us! I don't think there are that many."

For this respondent, hip hop that has merged with Greek pop is not "essential hip hop." This is

not surprising given how he views Greek pop: "Laiko pop and stupidity, stupid music, and

without meaning." For these hip hop practitioners, rap music is *not* pop music. Rather, hip hop

culture and rap music are politically and socially conscious, whereas pop music is tasteless,

commercial, stupid and without meaning. Sinis clearly summarizes the position of these hip hop

practitioners on the status of 'hip pop' quite well in the following quote:

"...There is no support from the music industry...Unless, of course, if you are very commercial and mainstream, which in Greece means commercial hip hop which is something like bouzouki, hip hop, *laika* (popular), all together, which has nothing to do with hip hop. If you retreat there you can do something with the record labels but I don't think you are doing this type of music, you have changed genres."

The message of these hip hop practitioners is clear: commercial and mainstream 'hip pop' that

blends bouzouki, hip hop and *laika* (popular) together is not 'authentic' rap music. Based on the

aforementioned discussion, here is a summary of the symbolic differences between hip hop in

the restricted and large scale fields of cultural production:

Restricted Field of Cultural Production	*Large Scale Field of Cultural Production*
restricted popular art	popular art
hip hop and *rebetika*	'hip pop,' *new wave laika,* corporate American hip hop, and Greek pop
political and social	stupid, without meaning, tasteless and commercial
"essential hip hop"	"bad pop"

western	eastern (Turkish/Asian)
masculine	feminine
	tsiftetelia, sexy
alternative	mainstream
independent	popular
"clean"	"dirty"
male mind	female body

Although these hip hop practitioners are adamant that hip hop culture and rap music are distinct from corporate 'hip pop' that blends bouzouki, *laika* and pop together, there is disagreement over competing processes of aesthetic legitimacy within the restricted field of cultural production. Although the adoption of Greek elements was wholeheartedly accepted by hip hop practitioners such as Goin' Through and Stereo Mike, who are signed with major labels within the field of large scale cultural production, this practice of adopting Greek elements was a point of contention for hip hop practitioners in the restricted field of cultural production. There were tensions between hip hop practitioners who adopt certain types of Greek elements in their music (*local authentication*) and hip hop practitioners who refuse to adopt any Greek elements in their music (*translocal authentication*).

Local authentication is a process of aesthetic legitimation that emphasizes on the local, the indigenous and the historical. Eisvoleas was the most adamant proponent of *local authentication*. For Eisvoleas and others, it is important to aesthetically legitimate rap music in Greece through a process of localization (Bennett, 1999a; Bennett, 199b) that forges connections between rap music and other popular indigenous genres (namely *rebetika*) within the restricted field of cultural production, and that also forges connections with a classical Greek past. For example, Eisvoleas was very supportive of Greek instrumentation and the sampling of rebetika in order for Greek hip hop to represent "Greek reality."

"When I first started I was occupied with instruments and in my hip hop I would add only Greek elements. Basically only Greek elements. That is, I am not going to take a soul sample, I would rather take a rebetika sample. You understand? It is an old sample because we are representing our place; we are not in America doing this. You know, it is the mindset, if you really want to do this [hip hop] it comes from your place of birth. Understand?"

In order to be able to reflect the realities of Greece, Eisvoleas believes that rap music in Greece should adopt Greek elements in terms of instrumentation and sampling. However, there were limits was to what could be sampled, with preference given to other genres within the restricted field of production (such as *rebetika*). *New wave laika*, 'hip pop' and Greek pop, as already noted, are not acceptable genres to sample from. Those who seek to legitimate hip hop in Greece through *local authentication* also make connections between rap music and Ancient Greece. For Eisvoleas, "...MCs are the rhapsodists of the streets just like in Ancient Greece; they would go to the streets and make their rhapsodies." Similar to the localization of rap music in Frankfurt am Main, Germany (Bennett, 1999a), and the localization of hip hop by white rappers in the north east of England (Bennett, 1999b), hip hop practitioners in Athens, Greece sought to use rap music as a form of local cultural expression with roots in Greece's classical past. For these artists, hip hop culture and rap music have always already been local (Pennycook and Mitchell, 2009: 35).

In contrast to hip hop practitioners who sought to legitimate hip hop culture and rap music via localization (Bennett, 1999a; Bennett, 199b), there were hip hop practitioners, such as White Dragon, DJ MCD, and Kebzer, who sought to legitimate hip hop culture and rap music through translocalization and the adoption of *translocal authentication*. *Translocal authentication* is a process of aesthetic legitimation that rejects the incorporation of *all* forms of Greek popular music within hip hop and instead focuses on how hip hop in Greece is connected with hip hop overseas. Instead of legitimating rap music in Greece through an adoption of Greek

instruments and Greek samples, these hip hop practitioners legitimate rap music in Greece through connections with other global hip hop cultures worldwide. Instead of legitimating hip hop culture and rap music by making connections with other indigenous genres in the restricted field of cultural production, these hip hop practitioners were interested in transnational connections worldwide.

First, these hip hop practitioners refuse to incorporate any aspect of Greek popular music into their DJing and MCing. White Dragon argues that "I will not play any Greek, nothing Greek, not even my own stuff. I'll play funk, I'll play soul, I'll play light rock, pop, reggaeton, latin, those types of things, hip hop, R&B, that's it." For these hip hop practitioners, hip hop culture and rap music are not a part of Greek popular music. For example, DJ MCD notes:

"For sure I would never have anything to do with Greek popular music. It is something that I don't recognize, it is something that I don't listen to, [and] it has nothing to do with myself and my idiosyncrasies. I have never listened to it and I would not be able to make music that I do not know. In my DJ sets I don't place Greek music. I play Greek hip hop which is part of hip hop more broadly. Yes, I never think I would play Greek [music] at all."

Hip hop practitioners such as DJ MCD and White Dragon make clear evaluative distinctions between Greek popular music and Greek rap music. They both refuse to play any form of Greek popular music in their DJ sets, although they will incorporate a host of other genres into their sets. For these hip hop practitioners, Greek hip hop is *not* part of Greek popular music; Greek hip hop *is* part of global hip hop culture.

Second, instead of localizing rap music and hip hop culture in Greece through the adoption of Greek elements and Greek sounds, these hip hop practitioners seek to translocalize Greek rap music by emphasizing its American roots. According to DJ ALX, an American born producer of Greek rap music:

"It has come from there [America], it has sprung from there, hip hop is not Greek, I say that openly. I might be lucky that I was born there and I can say that I am doing something

from the place that I was born. [Laughs] Ok, I take advantage of that fact, but it is not Greek. Greek speaking you can say due to the language, but Greek it is not. We sample sounds from funk music from America. The form is foreign, end of story."

For these hip hop practitioners, Greek rap music is a foreign musical form with American roots. This idea is reinforced through the sampling techniques adopted by many of these hip hop practitioners. For example, for hip hop practitioners such as Kebzer and Eversor, the only 'authentic' type of rap music is rap music that uses boom bap production techniques. Boom bap production is a style of record production that was popular in NYC in the 1980s and 1990s among artists such as KRS-One, DJ Premier, among others. For hip hop practitioners in Greece who adopt this particular sample based production style, they sample from American musical genres such as funk music and not Greek popular musical genres such as rebetika or Greek pop.

In sum, local authentication emphasizes the local, the indigenous and the historical, whereas translocal authentication emphasizes the translocal. Both seek to aesthetically legitimate hip hop culture and rap music, though both processes of legitimation seek to authenticate hip hop culture and rap music in different ways.

6. Conclusion

Hip hop culture and rap music are excellent case studies for refining theories of cultural production and examining how social processes of legitimation and authentication operate. This paper highlights how the field of Greek popular music is hierarchically structured between the poles of art (masculine, western, hellene) and commerce (feminine, eastern, romioi). This paper also provides an empirical contribution to this scholarship by examining how hip hop practitioners in the field of restricted production authenticate hip hop culture and rap music as aesthetically legitimate. I highlight the discursive techniques used by predominantly male hip hop practitioners to position rap music within the restricted field of cultural production as

aesthetically superior to the commercially successful genres of *new wave laika*, 'hip pop,'

corporate American hip hop and Greek pop within the field of large scale cultural production.

Since the majority of respondents were male, one of the limitations of this paper is that these

findings may not necessarily reflect the attitudes and opinions of female hip hop practitioners in

Athens, Greece. However, given that hip hop culture and rap music in Greece are still

predominantly male-dominated cultural forms, these findings are most likely reflective of the

current state of hip hop culture and rap music in Greece. Nonetheless, further empirical research

is required in order to assess whether or not the attitudes and opinions of female hip hop

practitioners match those of their male counterparts.

This paper also illustrates two competing processes of aesthetic legitimation within the

restricted field of production: *local authentication* and *translocal authentication*. *Local

authentication* is a process of aesthetic legitimation of hip hop in Greece that emphasizes on the

local, the indigenous and the historical. *Local authentication* treats Greek rap music as a cultural

form that has always already been local. This process of legitimation seeks to authenticate rap

music at the local level. *Translocal authentication* is a process of aesthetic legitimation of hip

hop in Greece that rejects the incorporation of all forms of Greek popular music within hip hop

and makes connections with hip hop overseas. *Translocal authentication* treats Greek rap music

as an essentially foreign cultural form that connects hip hop practitioners with the Global Hip

Hop Nation. This process of legitimation seeks to authenticate rap music at the translocal level.

Finally, this paper also highlights certain avenues for future research. The first avenue

contributes to the Bourdieusian literature on cultural production. The second avenue contributes

to the literature on global hip hop cultures. First, are local and translocal forms of authentication

found within other cultural fields? Or are these specific to hip hop practitioners within Athens,

Greece? Second, are local and translocal forms of authentication found within other Global Hip Hop Nations? I would suggest that these differing processes of aesthetic legitimation are found within all cultural fields, whether they be literary, artistic or musical, and within different hip hop scenes worldwide. However, these are questions that require further empirical investigation and future research in these areas will only serve to strengthen our understandings of the social processes of cultural production, legitimation and authentication.

Acknowledgements

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