YUGOSLAV NEW WAVE, 1980 – 1985

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Abstract

In this MA thesis I examine the Yugoslav new wave music scene and the ways these were represented on the pages of *Polet*, the official weekly newspaper of the Socialist Youth League of Croatia, and *Džuboks*, the first rock music magazine in the socialist world. I analyse the back issues of these music magazines in the period from 1980 to 1985. I focus on what kind of socio-political critique the musicians felt free to express, the ways in which they negotiated with, made compromises with and challenged the system, the increasing visibility of youth in this period, the complex relationship between the West and the 'East', as well as the other punk and new wave scenes throughout Eastern Europe. The magazines and the bands under examination provided constructive criticism that aimed at realising the proclaimed ideals of 'socialist humanism'.

Contents

Introduction

In this dissertation I will analyse the significance of the Yugoslav New Wave music scene and the sociohistorical context surrounding it, looking at the ways these were represented on the pages of *Polet*, the official weekly newspaper of the Socialist Youth League of Croatia, and the rock music magazine *Džuboks*, published in Belgrade. *Polet* was unique in that its style and content resembled that of a subversive underground fanzine, but it was, in fact, financed and controlled by a strict communist regime. This, to my present knowledge, is globally unparalleled. *Džuboks* was, significantly, the first rock magazine in a socialist country.

I analysed the back issues of *Polet* and *Džuboks* from the period of 1980 to 1985 because this was the time when almost every single major Yugoslav new wave album was released. I am using the term 'new wave' in a broad sense, implying not so much a single genre but a scene encompassing punk, post-punk as well as (strictly speaking) new wave genres. The conventional wisdom says that the scene peaked in around 1980 and then began the decline, but in my view, the vast majority of the best albums were released after the ‘golden age’.

Through examination of the content of the two magazines, focusing primarily on interviews with bandmembers, as well as of the secondary literature, I will analyse the ways in which the Yugoslav youth appropriated Western musical styles to express local concerns, meet their specific desires and needs.[1] I will examine the ways in which the Yugoslav youth culture became more visible and 'present' in the early eighties and analyse the complex negotiation between the ruling ideology

[1] John Storey (2003) *Inventing Popular Culture – from Folklore to Globalization.* Hoboken: Blackwell.

imposed from above and the unofficial popular ideas and practices emerging 'from below'. By emphasising the vibrancy of the local music scene and the culture around it, as well as the open-minded, progressive ethos of *Džuboks* and *Polet,* I will attempt to challenge the dominant view in the West of communist societies as culturally stagnant, isolated, closed off to external influences and unable to produce anything interesting culturally other than propaganda. Eighties Yugoslavia was in many ways an antithesis to this stereotypical portrayal. As Todorova notes, there was no single practice or idea of communism; the communist experience was diverse.[2] Following Todorova, I see people living under Yugoslav communism not necessarily as victims, but as subjects with agency.

My fascination with the music of eighties Yugoslavia stems from incurable nostalgia I feel for that time and place. This nostalgia, which I share with many of my friends, is the nostalgia of the first generation of Croats with no personal memories of Yugoslavia, nostalgia for that which has never been experienced. The nostalgia is not for the autocratic regime, but for the unofficial practices of the ordinary people that arose alongside of and often in spite of official propaganda. It is also for the existence of a shared (multi)cultural space, which was not dominated by market forces and not divided along ethnic lines, in which ideas were exchanged, communication occurred and relationships formed, which was made possible by the regime but whose actual content could not be anticipated and controlled by it. One of the most tragic consequences of the destruction of communism was the disappearance of this space.

[2] Maria Todorova (2014) 'Introduction' in *Remembering Communism*, ed. by Augusta Dimou, Maria Todorova and Stefan Troebst. Budapest: CEU Press. 5

I will describe the first contact the bands had with punk, the reactions and reception of the bands in the media as well as the bands' reactions to each other, the ways in which Zagreb's new wave scene was partially a project masterminded by *Polet*, the particular relationship the fans and the musicians had with the city, the new wave as a 'glocal' phenomenon, the role and the criticism of the official communist youth organization, the Yugo-rock as a catalyst of the social critique, the interplay and negotiation of the 'above' and 'below', the shared, common multicultural space as the setting of the scene, the analysis of subcultures drawing from CCCS's work, as well as the scenes in the rest of Eastern Europe.

Yurchak describes the strategies which people in the USSR devised to cope with living under communism - not so much resisting the state power, but rather evading, ignoring and / or avoiding it and carving out meaningful social spaces away from it; reinterpreting, refusing and transgressing some norms; interpreting socialist values in ways that were not dictated by the state.[3] Late Soviet nonofficial culture, rather than positioning itself in open opposition to the regime and the official structures, existed 'vnye' – within them, but in an eternal, apolitical 'elsewhere', nominally participating in conventional rituals and practices while at the same time living outside these conventions.[4] The nonofficial discourses in late socialism were based on attempts to have a fulfilling, meaningful and 'normal' life despite the state's oppression.[5] I will examine to what extent certain aspects of Yurchak's model can be used to analyse the Yugoslavian context.

[3] Alexei Yurchak (2005) *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation.* Princeton: Princeton University Press

[4] Yurchak (2005) 202

[5] Yurchak 2005

Stuart Hall and the other theorists associated with the Birmingham University Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies do not see consumers as brainwashed dupes (in stark contrast to Adorno's views, who thought of them as conformists, manipulated masses)[6] and point out the ways in which consumer objects and commodities (such as fashion and music) can be appropriated and used to resist the hegemonic order. Hall et al. place youth culture in the dialectic between the 'hegemonic' dominant culture and the subordinate working-class 'parent' culture, which the youth belongs to.[7] This dialectic consists of both resistance and incorporation.[8] Previously existing cultural patterns form a sort of a historical reservoir of possibilities, to be developed and transformed by various groups.[9] Subordinate cultures will not always be in open conflict with the dominant culture. They may coexist with it, negotiate the spaces in it.[10] Subcultures are collective, 'magical resolutions' of certain problems, such as class contradictions.[11] Subcultures express and imaginatively, symbolically resolve the class contradictions which remain obscured or unresolved in the parent culture.[12] I will examine if this kind of class-based analysis of youth culture is applicable to the Yugoslavian context. I will draw on Perasovic's analysis of the most prominent Yugoslav youth subcultures - hashomani (Yugoslavian variant of a hippie), dandies (*šminkeri*), punks and goths (*darkeri*)[13] and look at the ways in which lifestyles of

[6] Storey 2003

[7] John Clarke et al (2006) 'Subcultures, Cultures and Class', in *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain*, ed. by Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson. London: Routledge

[8] ibid. 6

[9] Ibid 4

[10] Ibid. 6

[11] Clarke et al 2006

[12] Ibid. : 23

[13] Benjamin Perasović (2001) *Urbana Plemena.* Zagreb: Hrvatska Sveucilisna Naklada.

these subcultures were represented in the pages of *Džuboks* and *Polet*. Following Storey, I understand popular culture not as the imposed from above culture as described by the mass culture theorists, nor a spontaneously emerging from below, non- or anti-hegemonic subaltern culture, but as a space of interaction and negotiation between the two, involving both resistance and incorporation, the 'commercial(ized)' and the 'authentic', structure and agency.[14]

In his book about *Polet*, *Polet – Igraonica za Odrasle,* Željko Krušelj focuses mostly on the behind the scenes, internal politics of the newspaper and the ways in which the socialist youth league controlled it. I will try not to completely neglect this aspect of the story, but my focus will be elsewhere. In the autumn of 1978, *Polet's* new editors radically changed the earlier concept of the paper, aiming to become the 'real and authentic voice of the youth'.[15] Throughout the 80s, the magazine put forward the agenda of liberalization; it spearheaded the struggle for women's and LGBT rights, challenging sexual taboos, writing extensively about the problems of delinquents and addicts in a sympathetic manner, criticizing the bureaucracy and the welfare system, mocking the authorities.[16] *Polet* did the styling and shot the photos of anonymous punks, which was how the first stars of the Croatian punk scene were born. In some ways, Zagreb's new wave scene *was Polet's* brainchild.[17] Throughout the eighties, *Polet* carried and promoted the mostly invisible liberalisation of social values which had to be fought for again for decades in the independent Croatia.[18] *Polet* never published explicit anti-regime articles.

[14] John Storey (2001) *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture.* Abingdon: Routledge

[15] Igor Mirković (2003) *Sretno Dijete documentary*

[16] Željko Krušelj (2015) *Polet – Igraonica za Odrasle – Polet 1976 – 1990.* Rijeka: Adamic. 10

[17] Škvorc, B. (2015). 'The Politics and Poetics of Supppression and "Memory Loss": the (Re)construction of Popular Culture in Post-Yugoslav Croatian Discourse'. *Anafora : Časopis za znanost o književnosti,* 2(1), 79-104.

[18] Krušelj 2015: 11

However, almost every analysis, commentary and interview implied that the system was not functioning, that it was becoming rigid, stale, inflexible and conservative, that it restrained creativity and that changes were necessary.[19] *Polet* created an urban mythology of sorts out of life on the margins of the society, out of rock, literature, film, theatre, sport, activities in cafes and youth clubs,.[20]

Frances Pine claims that when people evoke the good socialist past, it is, rather than a nostalgia, an invocation of a past in order to contrast it with, and criticize, the present; not denying the negative aspects, but choosing to focus on other ones – economic security, universal healthcare, free education.[21] In Boyer's view, post-socialist nostalgia is not interpreted as wanting to return to state socialism per se. It is understood as a desire to recapture what life was at that time, whether innocent, euphoric, secure...[22] Boym claims that the post-communist nostalgia provides a corrective to official memory. It signifies an attempt to retrieve that history which resides in people's memories rather than in official records or textbooks. Boym identifies music as one possible nostalgic trigger.[23]

I will now turn to the research questions I identified. One of the main ones was about the extent to which the *Džuboks* and *Polet* journalists and the new wave musicians were critical of the dominant ideology, and what kind of criticism they posed. To what extent did the musicians feel free to criticize the mentality, the bureaucracy, the 'system', the regime, in interviews? There is also a question of how come *Džuboks* and *Polet* and the music scene were tolerated and/or

[19] Ibid. 50
[20] Ibid. 51
[21] Pine cited in Todorova 2010: 5
[22] Boyer, Dominic (2010) 'From Algos to Autonomous – Nostalgic Eastern Europe as Postimperialist Mania' in *Post-communist Nostalgia,* ed. by Maria Todorova and Zsuzsa Gille. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 18
[23] Boym cited in Donna A. Buchanan, (2010) 'Sonic Nostalgia' in *Post-communist Nostalgia,* ed. by Maria Todorova and Zsuzsa Gille. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 129-130

supported, and what this tolerance/support tells us about the regime. Following Yurchak, I will ask what kinds of strategies journalists and rock musicians devised to cope with life under communism. I will also examine the complex negotiation between the official ideology and the spontaneous practices emerging from below. The overarching question I constantly had on my mind throughout the research was the one about what kind of socio-historical context it was in which the new wave scene could thrive. I am not focusing on the music itself, I am consciously staying quite far away from music theory and music criticism. My focus instead is on the sociohistorical context.

My initial idea for this thesis was to interview ex-band members and new wave music fans who were around, on the fringes or in the midst of the scene in the early eighties. Due to the covid situation, however, as well as logistical issues of travelling and not feeling well versed or comfortable conducting interviews, I chose to analyse the content of the magazines. Not using the interview method made it harder to establish to what extent *Polet* and *Džuboks* really were the authentic voices of the youth, expressing real-life concerns and documenting life as it was actually lived; whether the representation of the youth in the magazine pages actually corresponded to the situation on the ground or whether there was a level of distortion involved. For this reason my focus while reading the magazine archives was primarily on interviews with the bands, which represented first hands accounts of the scene unfolding, and I devoted as much space to the secondary literature sources as I did to the magazine articles, again focusing on interviews. I gained access to the issues of *Polet* in the National and University Library in Zagreb, and having established contact with the Popular Culture Fan Society from Belgrade,

they kindly gave me access to the digital archives of *Džuboks*, which are not publicly available anymore.

Findings

a. Intro

Yugoslavia was in many ways unique among the socialist countries, for example, in its openness to the West. Citizens were free to travel and to take in Western influences, which was decisive for the development of the new wave scene.[24] Another crucial element was the SSO (The League of Socialist Youth) – the only official youth organisation, under whose umbrella the rock clubs were opened and *Polet* was financed and controlled.[25] The new wave story unfolded shortly following the 1974 constitution which further decentralised power to the republics, escalated the withering away of the state[26] and loosened the grip of the party on many aspects of the social life; after the death of Tito in 1980 the country decentralised even further and, arguably, the central power of the party significantly weakened and allowed for more spaces for enclaves and oases of free speech and subcultural activity.

Since the Yugoslav ideologues had denounced the centralization and bureaucratization of Soviet socialism, they were led towards alternative, independent ideas of the organization of social life, such as decentralization, the return of political control to the 'people' and the unique system of self-management, instituted in 1950, under which the ownership of the means of production was, at least in theory, taken away from the state, declared social property and given to the workers themselves.[27]

[24] Mirković 2004
[25] Spaskovska 2017
[26] Dejan Jovic (2011) *Yugoslavia: A State that Withered Away*. Purdue University Press
[27] Barbara Jelavich, (1983) *History of the Balkans vol 2*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 386

This was, very briefly, the context in which the first issue of *Polet* (the word meaning elan or enthusiasm) appeared in 1953. The official description of the magazine at the time was that it was a 'secondary school magazine for literature, science and art'.[28] The last issue of *Polet* was published in 1990. The magazine provided training for the future Croatian media personnel;[29] many of the journalists who began their careers in *Polet* later started a variety of significant media projects in the independent Croatia.[30] ***Džuboks*** was launched in 1966 by the Belgrade-based Duga publishing company and was the first magazine in SFR Yugoslavia dedicated to rock music as well as the first rock magazine in a post-World War II socialist state.[31] Perusing the pages of *Džuboks*, it was very difficult to find any indication that it was published in a socialist country. There were hardly any ideological statements and pressures. There was no glorifying of Tito or mentions of the Communist party.[32] The pro-Western editorial policies of *Džuboks* were evident on almost every page. From their very beginnings, they ran musical bestseller lists, consisting of top hits from the US, UK, France, and Italy. Later, ***Džuboks*** top list coverage included other countries, but significantly, the magazine never published any of the Eastern European countries' lists![33] The two magazines were kindred spirits in many ways and journalists recognized themselves as such, with favorable mentions of each other's magazines in articles. ***Džuboks*** article from 1980 thus describes Polet as 'phenomenal' and their relationship as 'brotherly'.[34]

[28] Krušelj 2015: 13-16
[29] Ibid. 722
[30] Ibid. 608
[31] Petar Janjatović (2007). *EX YU ROCK enciklopedija 1960-2006*. Belgrade: self-released. 303
[32] Radina Vučetić (2010) 'Dzuboks' in *Remembering Utopia – the Culture of Everyday Life in Socialist Yugoslavia.* Ed by Luthar, Breda and Pusnik, Marusa . Washington: New Academia Publishing. 152
[33] Radina Vučetić (2018) *Coca-Cola Socialism: Americanization of Yugoslav Culture in the Sixties.* Central European University Press. 124
[34] ***Džuboks*** 104, 19.12.1980

The Socialist Youth League, which published *Polet*, was a party-controlled organisation whose official 'mission' was to cultivate the loyalty of the nation's youth, and serve as a training ground for political careerists. Instead of disseminating the usual party's dogmas, Yugoslavia's youth press — not only *Polet*, but also Rijeka's *Val* and the Slovenian *Mladina* - ended up eroding it. The youth press explored the boundaries of critical journalism and political satire at a time when "adult" media remained more cautious.[35]

Jugoton and EMI signed an agreement in January 1967. ***Džuboks*** would include from its tenth issue a folio record as a gift. While young people in the USSR were disseminating rock music on copied *samizdat* discs, the Yugoslav youth had access to folio records containing hits from around the world at magazine stands, even in the most remote corners of the country.[36]

The ethos of the eighties Yugoslav youth generation had its roots in the late sixties and early seventies student movement, which criticized the party elite for their inefficiency in carrying out the socialist revolution. In the view of these student activists, there was too little self-management, egalitarianism or international solidarity[37] - it was mostly nominal rather than really existing. Their main demands were debureaucratisation and dedogmatisation.[38] The new wave generation's activism can be seen as a less explicitly political continuation of the struggle and ideals of the '68 generation.[39]

[35] Jonathan Bousfield, 'Rock and Rijeka' https://www.calvertjournal.com/features/show/12893/val-magazine-yugoslavia-croatia-rijeka-punk-music-youth-culture
[36] Vučetić 2018
[37] Ljubica Spaskovska, (2017) *The Last Yugoslav Generation – The Rethinking of Youth Politics and Cultures in Late Socialism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 41
[38] *Polet* 9.4.1980.: 5
[39] Ibid

Yugoslav new wave and punk is considered an era which had more far-reaching repercussions than those limited to musical innovation. Ninoslava Vićentić describes the new wave as a period between two times and two cultures, and Ines Prica sees it as an anticipation of the crisis. New wave as a concept is elevated from an umbrella term with narrower musical connotations to an umbrella term with broader socio-artistic connotations, which implicates it in a wider artistic spectrum.[40] Alongside new wave and in the mutual permeation of influences, there occured revolutionary changes in the youth and student media, in theatre, poetry, photography, comics, videoproduction.[41]

Kugla glumište was an experimental theatre in Zagreb that seemingly everyone involved in new wave attended at least once. All the cast and crew were also directors; they experimented with multimedia, thematization of social problems, putting on shows in public outdoor spaces such as fields in front of buildings. This marked perhaps the first time in Yugoslavia that a successful artistic idea was realised outside of institutional framework.[42]

The infamous and incomparably influential first Pankrti show in Zagreb was held as an accompaniment to the exhibition of the comics movement Novi kvadrat, in the SC gallery. The new arts such as comics, experimental theatre and new wave music were intertwining and influencing each other.[43]

[40] Kora Girin (2016) 'Vizualni identitet glazbene produkcije novoga vala (1977. - 1987.)' Diplomski rad mentor: dr. sc. Frano Dulibić, University of Zagreb, 8
[41] Dusan Vesić (2020) *Zamisli život… Novi val – prva generacija.* Zagreb: Ljevak. 288
[42] Ibid 40
[43] Ibid 46

New wave musicians generally did not see any problem with fusing the mass appeal with the avantgarde tendencies, the elitist and the 'naive'.[44] In an interview for Polet, Johnny Štulić from Azra states that he wishes more people would hear about Azra and that their debut LP is a first step towards that. 'How is playing in every dump in the city and having some kind of fucking cult status of any use? (...) Not being enslaved to labels, the crowds, or the market - that to me is the basic idea of the new wave.'[45] Here, Štulić implies that he has no qualms about reaching wider popularity beyond the cult status he had at the time, but that he also does not want to be subservient to the market or the commercial forces. This juggling between popularity and obscurity, authenticity and commercialization, the mass and the elitist, is a recurring theme for the new wave musicians. The rhetoric of the new wave erased the boundaries between academic and mass culture, offering novel kinds of texts. The ideal is to combine the serious and the accessible.[46] The aim was to dethrone the art.[47] The everyday realm is reimagined as the only domain in which an individual can express himself / herself.[48]

Džuboks journalists would often ask the bands about their influences. The responses were indicative of the level to which the Yugoslav society was open to the West and to which the Western pop culture was available and accessible in the country. For example, Prljavo Kazalište leader Jasenko Houra names The Boomtown Rats, Blondie, The Jam and Stiff Little Fingers as his influences (‘I'm up to my neck in the new wave, it's the only thing I listen to').[49] Others such as

[44] Ninoslava Vičentić, ‘Iznosenje drustveno-angazovanog stava beogradskog novog talasa’ Univerzitet umetnosti u Beogradu, Fakultet primenjenih umetnosti – Odsek za scenografiju, Beograd, 4
[45] *Polet* 30.1.1980
[46] Vičentić 333
[47] Ibid
[48] Ibid
[49] *Džuboks* 81, 1.2.1980

Katarina II listed somewhat more obscure bands such as Pere Ubu[50] and Tuxedomoon[51] which indicates that the bandmembers would listen not only to records released by Jugoton (which were plenty) but also the more obscure music played on radio shows or imported from the West. Largely unknown Western bands such as Pere Ubu or PiL still found their way to Yugoslav music connoisseurs.

b. First contact with punk, reception of punk, reaction to punk and new wave – the public, the critics and the bands themselves

Nebojsa Čonkić Čonta from the Serbian punk band Pekinska Patka studied English in London in 1978, where he saw Magazine and other punk bands.[52] Gregor Tomc from the Slovenian punk band Pankrti says that, after reading a disparaging article about punk in the *Time* magazine,[53] he had an agreement with Pero Lovšin, future bandmember, that he would go to London, check out some shows and buy every punk record he could find, and in the meantime Lovsin would find band members in Ljubljana.[54] Their aim was to found the first punk band in the socialist world.[55] Max Wilson from Azra travelled around Europe via Interrail and overheard some Englishman mentioning punk in a conversation. He told his father, who was then in London, to buy any record he could find that had anything to do with punk. When he played the compilation featuring Ramones and Talking Heads to Johnny Štulić, Azra's soon to be legendary frontman, the latter was stunned; he said hearing this was like hearing the Beatles for the first time,[56] a breath of fresh air compared to

[50] *Džuboks* 142, 4.6.1982
[51] *Džuboks* 194, 2.11.1985
[52] Branko Kostelnik (2004) *Moj Život je Novi Val.* Zagreb: Fraktura. 193
[53] Ibid 41
[54] Ibid.: 22
[55] Vesic 31
[56] Mirkovic 2004: 36

the then ubiquitous prog, which he was not a fan of.[57] Jura Stublić from Film saw lots of punk bands at the rock festival in Belgium in 1977,[58] while Mladen Puljiz from Boa saw Talking Heads play on the TV while he was on a skiing holiday in Austria.[59]

Polet's rock journalists Vlatko Fras and Sven Semenčić spent the summer of 1977 in London and saw the birth of the new subculture firsthand. They bonded over the desire to recreate the excitement they witnessed in London's clubs in the sleepy Zagreb. In *Polet*, the only magazine that would accept journalists of their age (fresh out of high school), they promoted the bands which reminded them of the ones they saw in England.[60] Mirković claims that the spark of the new wave in Zagreb was ignited by the children of the Interrail, the ones who travelled around Western Europe by train and did not want to reconcile themselves with the return to their dull hometowns.[61] It seems to me, looking at all this evidence, that the Yugoslav new wave could not have happened if it wasn't for Yugoslavia's openness to outside influences. Freedom to travel and to absorb Western influences, even to experience the punk explosion in England firsthand, made a crucial contribution to the vibrancy of the Yugoslav new wave scene.[62] Is it potentially problematic to describe Yugoslavia as sleepy, dull, grey and culturally stagnant until punk was transported / imported from the West? This is presented as a one way exchange, a strictly core-periphery kind of relationship in which the West was utterly dominant and Yugoslavia dependent, the Yugoslav youth eager to emulate the Western trends and to fetishize Western products, unable to produce anything truly original and

[57] *Polet* 30.1.1980.: 14
[58] *Polet* 11.3.1981.: 19
[59] *Polet* 12.8.1981.: 14
[60] Mirković 2004: 43
[61] Ibid.: 46
[62] Ibid

unique of their own. It was the western influences, according to this narrative, that brought Yugoslavia to life. What occurred in the late seventies and early eighties Yugoslavia might have been an imitation of Western trends in the beginning, but the bands, with time, found their own distinctive styles, appropriated punk and new wave to address locally specific issues, incorporated other influences, gave the Western punk form local color and Yugoslav-specific content. Bands such as Pankrti at first played Sex Pistols covers at shows, but gradually developed their own style and started to sing about local issues and real life problems of Yugoslav youth.[63] *Džuboks* journalist describes his initial reaction to Pankrti as bewilderment - they appeared to be mere imitators of English punk; he could not understand why they were playing a cover of Sex Pistols' God Save the Queen - 'It was dumb to play this song in Tito's Yugoslavia... it did not make any sense'. He does describe the band as later developing and growing into their own style which was 'real, their own, *ours*'.[64] Punk in Yugoslavia was nothing if not authentic. If anything, the bands imported punk, new wave and post punk styles and then developed them, enriched them, and in cases of bands such as Idoli, Haustor and Paraf, perfected them, produced some of the best examples of their respective styles, *anywhere.*[65]

In 1977, Pankrti started playing in small venues in cities. In an early article in *Polet*, they were described as wearing dark glasses, chains, locks, pins, mohawks, as having schizoid movements, and their sound was described as an eruption of unintelligible words and noise.[66] Seemingly everyone who saw them started a band of their own.[67] 'Novi val' (the new wave) was born. It was only then that Yugoslavia

[63] *Drugom stranom – almanah novog talasa u SFRJ* (1983)
[64] *Džuboks* 141, 21.5.1982
[65] this is strictly my personal opinion, of course
[66] *Polet*, 4.3.1978.:14
[67] Mirković 2004: 28

acquired its first rock media and rock industry.[68] Pre-new wave, rock in Yugoslavia was an import from the West. New wave was the first authentic Yugo-rock.[69] The new wave put the Yugoslav youth on the cultural map of the country.[70] A prominent Yugoslav rock critic Darko Glavan states that punk and new wave was the first real Yugoslav rock'n'roll. Decent bands did exist before the new wave era, but these were the exceptions, anomalies. 'Now, interesting bands constantly play in newly-opened rock clubs in big cities across the country... It is a scene, a movement, rather than individual endeavors and excesses like earlier, in the Bijelo Dugme era.'[71]

Kustić, describing the new wave ethos and style, writes that 'until a couple of years ago a good band was good because they knew how to play, and a bad band was bad because they didn't know how to play. Today the bad, the not so good or the inexperienced musicians can form a good band if they are confident in using the little musical knowledge that they've got, if they know how to write a catchy, attractive tune, if they can play it fast and even faster, and if they have an authentic stage act.'[72] This was very much a (post)punk attitude that was specific to the early eighties, standing in stark contrast to the previous progressive rock era, which was all about musical / technical proficiency, virtuosity and pomposity. In interviews, members of the bands Boa[73] and Azra[74] describe their music as a reaction against prog rock and the new wave / punk spirit as liberating. For Idoli, the era of 'long hair'

[68] Mišina 2013: 85
[69] Vesić 288
[70] Ibid
[71] *Drugom stranom – almanah novog talasa u SFRJ* (1983)
[72] *Polet* 15.4.1981.: 15
[73] *Polet* 12.8.1981.: 14
[74] *Polet* 30.1.1980.: 14

and 'pretension' in counterculture and music scene was over.[75] In an interview for *Džuboks* in 1981, Prljavo Kazalište frontman Jasenko Houra describes his band as being 'outspoken and honest about who we were and what we thought. We didn't shy away from 'abnormal' gigs at a time when rock'n'roll was being presented as some glamorous show with big cars and silver boots. Rock'n'roll was mystified back then and we unknowingly demystified it, which the mass media was unprepared for.'[76]

In attempting to explain why Yugoslav punk first emerged in two specific cities – Ljubljana and Rijeka - Vesić looks at the geographical proximity of these cities to Italy and Austria, the ubiquitous presence of foreign music magazines, but most importantly perhaps, the autonomous development of these cities and their music scenes from the dominant 'media triangle' of Zagreb – Belgrade – Sarajevo. Perhaps the most important element was that Ljubljana's and Rijeka's punks were reacting against their cities' peripheral status and the total lack of any interesting cultural events, spaces and infrastructure (a lyric by Paraf: 'Rijeka is the worst shithole in Yuga', Pankrti complaining in one of their songs that there's nothing in Ljubljana except zoo and circus). Additionally, neither Rijeka nor Ljubljana had huge mainstream pop stars which would have 'suffocated' the scene with their star status.[77] According to Tomc, Slovenian subculture had the highest level of autonomy, and Sarajevo's the lowest, with other places somewhere inbetween. This is apparently the reason why the Slovenian music scene produced the biggest number of punk bands, and it was followed by the scene in Rijeka which due to its

[75] Vesić 213
[76] *Džuboks* 106, 16.1.1981
[77] Vesić 73

location was communicating with Ljubljana fairly easily.[78] This account is somewhat odd and does not explain why Sarajevo had a strong scene as well despite the apparently lowest level of autonomy.

Polet's journalist, describing the evolution of the rock scene , writes that 'for years, there were only two Yugoslav rock bands worth mentioning – Buldožer and Bijelo Dugme. ..One couldn't speak of a scene. Media and the state did not give them too much freedom... There was lots of censorship... How did the sudden change come about, in the beginning of 1980? There was an influence of deep and wide changes rooted in the rock music of 1977 in the 'decadent' West which not even our Yugoslav environment could resist, not even our inert state-controlled culture and media. Rock got into a huge vacuum of unfulfilled wishes of our heterogeneous, urban youth'.[79] This account, like many others, sees the pre-new wave Yugoslav scene as a sort of prehistory and the emergence of the new wave as the 'year zero'; before this, there was no scene to speak of. Yugoslavia provided a fertile ground for the music that was initially imported from the West and soon found its specific local expressions.

Džuboks journalist describes Pekinska Patka as a 'parody of punk, nothing more, an overhyped farce'. Paraf are described as 'simple-minded decadence'. Prljavo Kazalište, on the other hand, impressed the journalist with their debut album, demonstrated a courageous approach and broke off with 'punk pour l' punkism'.[80] I personally strongly disagree with this assessment of the state of the scene - for me, Prljavo Kazalište were the least interesting and most generic band on the entire scene, Paraf were hardly decadent, while Pekinska Patka made some of the most

[78] Girin 26
[79] *Polet* 17.11.1982.: 21
[80] *Džuboks* 79, 4.1.1980

entertaining punk music *anywhere*. *Džuboks* really did not like Pekinska Patka - in another article, they were again described as a parody; 'the trouble is, we always had many more of those who parodied punk rather than played it... 'if Patka did not exist.... things would have been better.'[81]

The readers' letters section in Dzuboks was a space of 'punk wars' throughout the year of 1980. Readers would debate the 'cred', value and quality (or lack thereof) of punk. 'Greetings to all the punks,' states 'punker Zoki' from New Belgrade. 'I am wishing all the punks a happy new year and we also wish that as few punk music records as possible come out next year - the hard rock crowd from Novi Sad' (this was mostly a hard and classic rock vs punk type of war). Another letter: 'the value of punk music cannot be diminished only by the personal taste of some outdated types who get lost in the music of Zeppelin, Yes or Genesis'.[82] 'I am of the opinion that punk, musically, not only did not bring anything new, but that it represents a stagnation, as well as a decadence, of rock'.[83] 'Listen to some Doors or Zeppelin, punks take the safety pins off your noses, hey you disco losers'.[84] The walls of Yugoslavia's cities also bore witness to these debates - the journalist noticed graffiti such as 'punk everywhere', 'death to hippies', 'I hate hippies', 'punks of the world unite'... 'what in the countries with political turmoil is a form of struggle for one's opinion and ideas, in our country takes the form of small street advertisements for frustrations and unquenchable passions ...'[85]

In Fenruary 1981, Dzuboks published a somewhat unexpectedly scathing review of an Azra show in Belgrade.

[81] *Džuboks* 16.1.1981
[82] *Džuboks* 79, 4.1.1980
[83] *Džuboks* 80, 18.1. 1980
[84] *Džuboks* 82, 15.2. 1980
[85] *Džuboks* 88, 9.5.1980

'Azra has fanatical fans in Belgrade who react aggressively to even the slightest criticism of the band... There were five sold-out concerts in Belgrade... The band might have even transcended their cult status... Students, who would normally only be spotted at a Clapton's gig or a similar rock show, mingled with the youngest rock generations in a joint celebration of the ‘right thing’. The problem is that 'real things' are, as a rule, some of the most dubious features of a more serious part of domestic production. This primarily refers to the ‘rock poetry’ syndrome. Johnny Štulić is the latest name in the long line of our geniuses, such as Topic, Balašević and Bora Đorđević, through which part of the audience buys deliverance from the inferiority complex, interested in 'lower forms of culture' such as rock, expecting from it 'classical poetic values'. All these domestic variants of Dylan and Morrison appear least convincing when they try to be poets. The same is true of Johnny, who ruined a couple of good themes with a quasi-poetic struggle to metaphysically grasp the world around him, although it cannot be said that he cannot produce a good verse. Combining a ‘poetic’ personality and music that fits the modern tendencies, Azra has become something of an excuse to include the old guard in the new wave. If I got money for every occasion I heard someone commenting 'they are new wave but they are actually good and have serious lyrics' .... it is the same level of consciousness as failed rockers who are considered superior to Zdravko Čolić just because they insist on some variant of rock. From the Azra concert I got the impression that a big part of the crowd bought a precisely worked out hour of specific mood to be experienced. Good guys get a little instant bohemian and

weird vibe for cheap money ... The singer is irritating , his singing tactics consist of ... a diarrhea of words and ... inarticulate and convulsive sobs of his voice.'[86]

Zagreb is described as not a only a home to interesting new wave bands, but also having a 'lower deck with a heavy load' (unimaginative hard rock bands). The same is the case with the Belgrade scene - the hyped-up trio is at the very top of the pyramid, but most of the bands are sadly average heavy metal rockers. 'People from Zagreb really have no reason to envy us.'[87]

In January 1981, Houra lamented that 'a lot has changed in Zagreb in the last year and a half. Back when we started, Film, Azra, all the new wave, all of us were together. Now we are falling apart, everyone is pulling in different directions. I have the impression that there is a good vibe in Belgrade now for bands from your alternative scene, the way it was here when we started.'[88]

Paket Aranžman, the 1981 compilation showcasing Idoli, Šarlo Akrobata and Električni Orgazam, was recognised as hugely significant and a turning point for the Belgrade scene: 'This album separates these 3 groups from the musical stagnation in which rock has been drowning in our capital for years. i'm sure this LP marks that turning point. The eighties have started and it's time for the real stuff...'[89]

In an interview with Šarlo Akrobata from 1981, the *Džuboks* journalist notes that 'the new wave swamp is becoming increasingly stagnant' (in another article from December 1980, the new wave had already been proclaimed dead!). The band responds:

[86] *Džuboks* 109, 27.2.1981
[87] *Džuboks* 106, 16.1.1981
[88] *Džuboks* 105, 2.1.1981
[89] *Džuboks* 110, 13.3.1981

'I was really disappointed in all these new wave dudes of ours. At first I was delighted. I thought it would bring out some more authentic relationships, like, no more stars and all that shit, but everything is the same as before ... when we played in Subotica last year I was amazed at how many new groups and new people there were. However, they have not developed at all since, and that was a year ago. Everyone just plays the same shit. The basic desire of the trio (Sarlo, Idoli, Elektricni Orgazam) is to be their own people, not to hide behind the herd. if punk stinks, let it. It deserved it, if it allowed it... these punks from Ljubljana, they will remain punks all their lives. and why? They're utterly clueless. I talked to those kids ... they want to kill themselves ... they're like - Sid Vicious this, Sid Vicious that .... really? Sid Vicious was the biggest moron... our rebellion is against dogmas, against stupidity, against slowness. if you haven't figured out a way to say something of your own, then you're just repackaging and recycling old stuff. What's the point of playing something called punk or a new wave if you haven't figured it out?'[90]

A review of the Prljavo Kazalište album Heroj ulice, from 1981, notes that the band has finally dispensed with the new wave radicalism and embraced the comfort of the tradition. 'They might have burned some bridges, but they also found spaces in which to roam for a long time...'[91]

An article from 1984 describes some post-new wave developments, such as the Belgrad electro-pop scene - Beograd, D'boys, Laki pingvini - as 'fashionable fabrication'[92] and somewhat dubiously labelled 'alternative rock' - Disciplina Kičme,

[90] *Džuboks* 123, 11.9.1981
[91] *Džuboks* 127, 6.11.1981
[92] *Džuboks* 173, 2.2.1984

Kozmetika, Mira Furlan, who are, according to the journalist, getting more hype and positive reviews than they deserve. It is, however, understandable, because the critics and fans are thirsting for interesting music after witnessing the unscrupulous commercialization of 'that thing that used to be celebrated as the new wave.'[93]

In a *Džuboks* interview from November 1985, EKV note that 'we have two bands that are world class, the best thing I've heard after Tuxedomoon: 'Sexa and La Strada... they are the true alternative, by which I mean something that is marginal to such an extent that it cannot succeed on the market...'[94]

In a *Polet* article from 1985, Glavan describes the Ljubljana punk scene as isolated, defining itself in contrasts - progressive - commercialized.[95] He goes on to discuss an approach in rock criticism that would in today's terms be described as 'poptimism', as well as an opposition to it. The authors of *Polet* have been writing for years about the devaluation of this dichotomy in the poetics of the new wave. The *Polet* journalists have been offering the apparatus to evaluate phenomena such as drawing from a number of pop traditions. For a long time, they have polemically defended the right to the 'popism' of pop from the Ljubljana authors who demanded from pop music an expression of a clear political consciousness. Polet has recently come to an agreement with the *Ljubljana line* when it comes to conventional pop production, which is a consequence of certain developments within world and domestic pop. Polet often drew attention to the ramifications of the conventionalization of the idea of popism of pop, of its use as an apology for the ideology of the top lists, for promoting mediocrity, limiting the profile and scope of pop music, limiting its expressive possibilities. These are the results of the

[93] *Džuboks* 173, 2.2.1984
[94] *Džuboks* 194, 8.11.1985
[95] *Polet* 8.2.1985

banalization of that idea. Some more recent groups imitate and 'everyone thinks it's normal' (eg the band Dorian Gray liberally borrowing from Bowie). Glavan identifies the specific cultural logic that makes such 'blatant' imitation possible, the logic that something is good in our framework, that we should be satisfied with reproduction, as the bearer of the most harmful cultural policy, politics which puts us exclusively in a consumerist position. Record companies impose this, a repetition of a successful formula, as the only possibility of acting within domestic pop, lowering audience expectations.[96]

c. Zagreb's New Wave as *Polet*'s brainchild

In the autumn of 1978, *Polet's* new editorial team radically changed the concept of the paper, aiming to continue as a 'real and authentic voice of the youth'.[97] This meant that its writing had to reflect the realities and the actual lived experiences of the people who the magazine chronicled, and that the actual issues of the actual youth would be presented in a manner that truthfully reflected youth's cultural sensibilities.[98] Here is where the communist economic system, somewhat ironically, allowed for the introduction of some truly subversive styles and material - as the youth press was published and financed by the state, it did not depend on sales; the publisher would typically not be particularly concerned with what the budget was spent on, which allowed for *Polet*'s introduction of extravagant, experimental rock photography and avant-garde comics.[99] Polet used the opportunity and space for freedom from commercial concerns, profitability, marketability and from pandering

[96] Ibid
[97] Mirković 2003
[98] Mišina 2013: 115
[99] Mirković 2003, 2004, Pavković 2010

to the lowest common denominator. This kind of freedom has normally always existed under communism, at least in theory, but in practice, most 'official' journalism in socialist countries was risk-averse, if not blatant propaganda. *Polet* was a glorious exception. Rather than repeating the usual tired cliches and party propaganda and disseminating the dominant ideology among the youth, the explicitly declared aim of the paper was to document the youth culture, lifestyle and most importantly, rock music. 'All the other newspapers were so uniform and dull. Us kids felt that our *Polet* was dangerous, inflammable stuff.'[100] In 1979 and 1980, *Polet* would devote 50% of its pages to closely following the development of the music scene.[101] Zagreb's new wave scene was in many ways *Polet*'s brainchild. They were the first to print interviews with the New Wave bands. In the beginning, there was no other media interested or even aware of the scene. Describing the eruption of the scene, journalists say that 'the balloons blown by *Polet* flew all over the place.'[102] *Polet* not only wrote about the bands, but also organized their concerts. Bands such as Šarlo Akrobata were featured on the front page of *Polet* at the time when not even their friends knew what they were up to. The magazine did all of this, claims *Polet's* own journalist, because the editors felt that rock music was the only medium left in this corner of the world through which one could express freedom of speech and thought.[103] Houra, leader of the first Croatian punk band, Prljavo Kazalište, says that in the early years, the bands did not know each other. 'We thought we were the only ones playing that kind of music. The guys from *Polet* connected us... shaped us as a scene.'[104] *Polet* did not only champion Zagreb's,

[100] Mirković 2003
[101] *Polet* 17.11.1982.: 21
[102] *Polet* 15.4.1981.: 16
[103] *Polet* 17.11.1982.: 21
[104] Mirković 2004: 42

but also Belgrade's bands. The Belgrade new wave bands were getting their initial exposure and coverage on the pages of *Polet* rather than in the local media.[105]

In Slovenia, the equivalent of *Polet* in terms of stature and influence on the new wave scene was Radio Študent. *Džuboks* article from 1980 describes it as the first institution to introduce young Slovenes to rock in the late sixties. It informed and educated its listeners like no other radio in the country - punk came to *Radio Študent* in 1976 and in 1977 the first live punk concert was already broadcast. It lived exclusively from the work of enthusiasts and 'other people of pure heart.' Part of its costs was covered by the sponsor, SSO, the rest they had to cover themselves - through advertising, renting studios, events... 'Those students have found a way not to be irretrievably commercialized. This is an anti-consumerist alternative media creation.'[106]

d. The New Wave as the eruption of Yugoslav youth's urban consciousness

Yugoslav subcultures developed a new mythology of the city.[107] Glavan describes the bands as attempting to convey and articulate the typical frustrations of urban teenagers.[108] In an interview on the occasion of the first Film LP, Jura Stublić describes his band's mission as attempting to present what life in the city was like and some urban archetypes. He complains about previous Yugoslav bands mindlessly copying trends from the West, no one singing about real life concerns of the actual people. 'We sound the way we sound because I've lived in Zagreb. Zagreb, Belgrade, Ljubljana.... those are cities, urban environments, and I cannot

[105] *Polet* 15.10.1980.: 13, Mišina 2013: 134
[106] *Džuboks* 85, 28.3.1980
[107] *Drugom stranom – almanah novog talasa u SFRJ* (1983)
[108] *Drugom stranom – almanah novog talasa u SFRJ* (1983)

just imitate the folk melodies, and portraying that as our own music. I really have nothing to do with the flute! There is no flute here! There are cars, trams, buildings, concrete, it's a completely different sensibility. Our music originated from life in our city; that city affected us and we spewed out everything that had been accumulated...' He describes Yugoslavia as a whole suffering from a provincial inferiority complex.[109]

In the interview a year later, Stublić confesses that they want to be the band of the people, with a wide appeal, in the domain which they believe to be appropriate for rock'n'roll, which is the urban environment.

> 'We speak from the position of people who live in the city, who perceive things in a certain way... Take a walk around the streets of Zagreb, and tell me where the flute is, the white sheep, white horses. They're not there. I could put it in my songs because I understand it is there in the minds of my potential audience, but I want to be fair towards the environment in which I find myself in. Us in Film are attempting to create art that is a reflection of that environment... My task is to reflect what is going on in the minds, in the perceptions of the people from the environment surrounding me.'[110]

Stublić is here most probably referring to and subtly criticizing Bijelo Dugme, the most popular band in the country, who sang about rural themes, sheep and horses in vaguely folk-ish melodies.

Primarily because of *Polet*'s enthusiastic coverage, Zagreb's new wave scene became the stuff of legend and made Zagreb the 'new rock capital'. There developed a vibrant local club scene which provided the basic infrastructure for the

[109] *Džuboks* 111, 27.3.1981
[110] *Džuboks* 141, 21.5.1982

development of future bands.[111] The Zagreb scene emerged in a few cafés in the city centre where the musicians and fans would gather. One of them more than any other became a symbol of the alternative urban culture. Zvecka - a tiny, modest cafe, open only until 9 P.M., became a hub of activity, overflowing with creatives - musicians, journalists, students, photographers, comic book artists, avant-garde actors, punks and goths.[112] Zvečka was an egalitarian space in which class hierarchies were temporarily erased; working class children were socializing with sons and daughters of army generals.[113] It was the new wave generation's common room;[114] a free rock'n'roll zone.[115] Zvečka and the other cafes nearby did not become popular because they cultivated a cool image or catered to a cool clientele. People started meeting there because there was nowhere else to go! In the beginning, before the scene erupted, there were only a couple of cafes, only two rock clubs. 'Zvečka and Blato were the only two places where people could meet because they didn't have anything else'.[116] 'To us, Zagreb looked really, really, depressing. There were maybe two bars open after 10 p.m.'.[117] Similarly, in the late seventies there were only two cafes in Ljubljana - you could only drink alcohol in two bars that would close at 8 PM.[118]

As the New Wave scene spread across the city and country, new bands kept appearing, and new venues were opening; 'the city changed in those two years. People started going out and stayed out longer. People were partying the whole day and night. Everybody felt that they could breathe freely, so they all charged full

[111] Mirković 2004 117
[112] Ibid 16
[113] Piskor 2011: 374
[114] Ibid.: 376
[115] Ibid.: 377
[116] Mirković 2003
[117] Ibid.
[118] Vesić 31

speed ahead. There were songs, choreography, theatre, conceptual art performances on the streets; Zagreb lived life to its fullest'.[119] Houra happily notes in February 1980 that the bands in Zagreb have finally started helping and supporting each other; playing together in the Student Center.[120]

Džuboks devoted several articles praising the Zagreb club scene. Zagreb is the most dynamic urban rock center, ' more than a renaissance, this is the beginning of a more thorough affirmation of bands operating in Zagreb... A key factor for the growth of the new scene were two spaces - Lapidarij and SC club, which started operating a year ago with the practice of live concerts in a club atmosphere, as well as providing practice space for bands, supporting the claim that such a representation is crucial for each vibrant music scene.'[121] Zagreb has a club scene, a journalist writes in a later article, from 1981.

> ' it is no coincidence that Zagreb achieves the most within the framework of the new wave. There must be a material basis, as it existed in Sarajevo or Belgrade at a time when the rock scenes of these cities were much more talked about. One of the biggest problems of our rock scene remains the insurmountable gap between the basement or garage and the large concert hall in which only those with hit records can perform. That is the reason why we have so many bad debut albums. It is necessary to create an opportunity for bands to appear before the people, to gain experience. Zagreb has a club scene.'[122]

'In the last 10 years in Belgrade, there have been no clubs or other places in which rock culture could develop. Only the Student Cultural Center has systematically

[119] Mirković 2003
[120] *Džuboks* 81, 1.2.1980
[121] *Džuboks* 83, 29.2.1980
[122] *Džuboks* 106, 16.1.1981

supported young bands, by providing rehearsal spaces and concerts. SKC has recently closed its doors and doesn't support young bands anymore. So, 'an embryo of the scene remained. One could talk of the Zagreb, Novi Sad or Rijeka scenes - over in those cities, musicians have had the opportunity to continuously release and showcase their work and progress.[123] My personal note here would be that Belgrade scene was absolutely fantastic, considering the dire situation of the nonexistent club infrastructure...

People, especially the young, started experiencing and using the urban public spaces in novel, different ways: 'That period was very interesting. That spring, the kids were occupying the city center. Things were happening on the streets ...' The feeling of inferiority vis-a-vis the west waned: 'Even us, who were raised with painful frustrations because we lived in a poor country at the end of the world, where films and books came with a hundred years delay, even we thought that this was the place to be'. 'All of a sudden we realized that we were not a periphery and that the centre of the world was right where we were.'[124]

'We are not lagging behind the West anymore!' proclaims *Džuboks* in an article in 1980.[125] In a review of the Pankrti album Dolgcajt, the critic describes the band as representing the strongest argument that Yugoslavia is not five light years behind the worldwide scene; actually, quality-wise, Yugoslav's scene is very close to the West.[126]

Polet's and *Džuboks's* self-congratulation and optimism should also be placed in the context of a novel phenomenon of punk rock reaching Yugoslavia with very little delay in relation to the Anglo-Saxon world – in contrast to the earlier periods'

[123] *Džuboks* 111, 27.3.1981
[124] Mirković 2003
[125] *Džuboks* 83, 29.2.1980
[126] Ibid

musical trends. Punk arrived in Slovenia and Croatia at the same time as it did in non-Anglo Western and Northern Europe, which was cause for optimism and self-confidence in the country that had always seen itself significantly lagging behind the West culturally.[127]

In a *Polet*'s article about Zagreb's New Wave scene, Zelmanović describes the seemingly overnight transformation of a faceless, dull and grey city to the city of action and possibilities, an open city, a 'cult-city' in the eyes of the rest of Yugoslavia, a city that rewards peculiar and eccentric characters. The whole of Yugoslavia would come to play in front of Zagreb's audiences, and the young people from Belgrade, Sarajevo and Skoplje, upon hearing mythical stories about a new rock mecca, would make pilgrimages to the city.[128]

Songs such as Azra's 041 described the characters from the city streets: 'freaks' who drink until the dawn replaced by the 'alcos' who drink from dawn ...'It is not clear whether Johnny loves or hates Zagreb.'[129]

'Pankrti sing about topics relating to their own immediate environment and vital everyday issues, rather than spewing cliches about love.'[130] 'The precise attitude in the Šarlo Akrobata song about washing the *Stojadin* tells us more about the economic and social situation of our compatriots than a bunch of statistical data and reports. Finally, guys who grew up on the city streets and speak the street language...'[131] Prljavo Kazalište were 'the first band to sing about their own coming of age, about things dear to their hearts...' The protagonist of their album is Zagreb.

[127] Z. Jovanović (2014). "All Yugoslavia Is Dancing Rock and Roll": Yugoslavness and the Sense of Community in the 1980s Yu-Rock. Københavns Universitet, Det Humanistiske Fakultet. 59
[128] *Polet* 4.3.1981.: 15
[129] Vesić 202
[130] *Džuboks* 83, 29.2.1980
[131] *Džuboks* 93, 18.7.1980

'The song Zagreb was written after a melancholic walk around the empty streets and out of the deep sense of attachment to the city.'[132]

e. Global styles, local expressions

In this subchapter I will look at the ways in which the Yugoslav youth appropriated New Wave and Rock music to meet their local needs and desires, express local concerns;[133] what they did with it, rather than only what it did to them.[134] New wave in Yugoslavia was a 'glocal' cultural phenomenon, in the sense that it combined Western influences with a dedication to local authenticity, roots and place;[135] it was a genre that used a 'global language to express local color'.[136] Johnny Štulić, the leader of Azra, the most popular new wave band, wrote about the iconic characters from his own surroundings, from the streets of Zagreb, rather than using common punk tropes of rage and rebellion. Another popular new wave band, Film, was similarly dedicated to documenting the city life. The songs of the scene evoked the atmosphere and 'vibes' of Zagreb.[137] The New Primitives movement in Sarajevo, spearheaded by Zabranjeno Pušenje, aimed to express universal pain through local myths; to translate from the universal to the local. Two cultural levels clashed here - the neighborhood and the media, the tradition and the urban.[138]

Tomc describes the youth as the most progressive segment of the Yugoslav society, and rock'n'roll as the cultural cement connecting it. A teenager from

[132] *Džuboks* 97, 12.9.1980
[133] Storey 2003
[134] Storey 2001
[135] Ken Gelder (2007) *Subcultures – Cultural Histories and Social Practice.* Abingdon: Routledge 121
[136] Boym cited in Buchanan 2010: 139
[137] Mirković 2004: 37
[138] Prica 26

Ljubljana is closer to a teenager from London than to his / her parents or homeland.[139]

According to the theories of cultural imperialism, Anglo-American pop-rock 'displaces and appropriates authentic representations of local and indigenous music into packed commercial music commodified for ethnically indeterminate, but predominantly Anglocentric and Eurocentric' markets.[140] Mazierska and the authors she draws on insist that the 'imperial' influences are always relocated and reworked at a local level, leading to the creation of music which reflects and addresses local needs and sensibilities, as well as global trends.[141] Following Mazierska, I consider Eastern European popular music as a form of global pop-rock, rather than an imitation.[142]

f. The end or the peak of the new wave?

New wave was proclaimed dead by *Džuboks* as early as October 1980.[143] In the same issue, Srđan from Električni orgazam complained about new wave becoming trendy, 'everyone wants to record some new wave thing. It's horrible! Over here, people put a label of new wave onto anything that crops up.'

In April 1984, Haustor played in a half-empty venue in Belgrade. The crowd appeared uninterested; due to the serious nature of the new material it was difficult to communicate with them. The author asks whether the Haustor era was over.[144] Ironically, this was when Haustor were at their peak, SImilarly and more broadly, many of the best albums of the scene were released after the supposed

[139] Vesić 252

[140] Mitchell quoted in Mazierska (2016) 'Introduction' in Popular Music in Eastern *Europe*. Ed by Mazierska, Ewa. Palgrave Macmillan

[141] Ibid 4

[142] Ibid 5

[143] *Džuboks* 99, 10.10 1980.

[144] *Džuboks* 175, 1984.

"end" of the new wave – Luna's Nestvarne stvari (1984), Haustor's Bolero (1985) and Treći svijet (1984), Paraf's Zastave (1984). The bands were evolving, taking their sound further away from their pop/punk beginnings, taking cues from British post-punk, German kraut-rock, sixties rock, reggae, power pop, and ancient Balkan folk melodies, and sometimes, producing something genuinely new and unique... There was a strong underground / experimental scene in Slovenia; dark electro, industrial, Borghesia and, of course, Laibach; in Rijeka and Novi Sad, Paraf and Luna were the purveyors of post-punk gloom; in Zagreb, Haustor were experimenting with world music and folklore. What I personally consider the best album of all time was made in Belgrade - Idoli's *Odbrana i Poslednji Dani* (*Defense and the Last Days*), from 1982, a record full of manic energy, catchy pop melodies, synth experiments, Byzantine chants, religious symbolism and cryptic lyrics... The songs on the album, in the words of *Polet's* critic, are immersed in the mysticism of Orthodox sacral music.[145] With this album, Idoli demonstrated that, with an intelligent approach, one could tackle even the biggest Yugoslav taboos – nationalism and religion.[146] It was the first record published in Eastern Europe whose main subject matter was the Orthodox religion.[147] The band's leader Vlada Divljan claims that 'at that time, the so called Serbian nationalism, as well as Orhodox Christianity, had a different connotation; it represented a kind of a resistance against the dominant ideology'.[148] Idoli's examination of religion was an act of defiance against the dying Titoism.[149] They looked at religion as both a historical socio-cultural and contemporary political current within Yugoslav society,

[145] *Polet* 19.5.1982.: 14
[146] Ante Perković (2011) *Sedma Republika – Pop Kultura u Yu Raspadu.* Zagreb: Moderna Vremena, 108
[147] Ivacković, Ivan (2013) *Kako smo propevali – Jugoslavija i njena muzika.* Belgrade: Laguna, 252
[148] Mirković 2004: 176
[149] Ivacković 2013: 252

as a sociological rather than metaphysical category.[150] For the music critic Dragan Todorović, 'the boys are experimenting with religion so as to examine freedom—their own, inner, and the system's, outer'.[151]

Idoli's Srđan Saper, discussing the theme of religion on the album, notes that religion can be seen as an idea on several levels - as an idea of religion itself, as something that is present, the idea of ritual... there is an ethnic aspect, then there is the idea of discovering something new musically and emotionally and finally the idea of religion as fashion, as following trends.[152] Also, in Vlada's songs the theme is always the simplicity of love as opposed to the chaos of the world... Saper's songs are always about some kind of departures - 'love me kindly while I am still here...'[153]

Popović, in his well-known *Džuboks* review of the album, states that Idoli do not deal with religious mysticism, nor with the philosophical aspects of religion. Their choice is anthropology. Idoli contemplate the formation of the principles of the individual, who, under a web of historical-religious-ideological pressures, re-examines possible paths and tries to realize his own, authentic one. They are reproducing all those images that appear at the crossroads - They (materialism, ideology) - I (the individual, the element of the nation) - He (the Absolute, the religion). The solutions are revealed in the end - redemption for the individual, and a logical transition to the general and the domain of the nation. They are contemplating returning to the roots and conversion to a faith on the level of the individual, and reviving the shadows of forgotten ancestors, renewing the rituals and constituting the feeling of neo-slavism on a broader level. Popović notes,

[150] Misina 2013: 146
[151] Ibid.
[152] *Džuboks* 134, 12.2.1982
[153] Vesić 263

however, somewhat wrily, that outside the context of quality and accessible pop, these lyrics would not even make it to the annual collection of high school papers.[154] This was probably the first album in Eastern Europe thematizing the orthodox christianity. Nebojša Pajkić: this was an 'orthodox punk oratorio released to the public two years after Tito's death, in a country that is in the state of panic, still nurturing pain towards its dictator'.[155]

If I personally had to provide a short summary of the new wave scene, I would divide it in four tiers, strictly in terms of popularity rather than quality – first, the most popular bands, who transcended their initial cult statuses and became household names, had big hit singles, played in venues bigger than clubs and produced what are nowadays considered classic albums – Azra, Prljavo Kazalište, Haustor, Idoli and Pankrti. The second tier consists of bands who were popular but are not household names among today's casual music fans, perhaps have either been somewhat forgotten or still only have a cult status – Boa, Šarlo akrobata, Pekinška patka, Disciplina kičme, Paraf, Zabranjeno pušenje, Električni orgazam and Ekaterina Velika (some would include the latter three bands in the first tier); third tier – the often criminally underrated bands who produced quality or even fantastic music but have been completely overlooked by the mainstream – Luna, Gustaph y njegovi dobri duhovi, Beograd, Mizar, La strada, Kongres, Stidljiva ljubičica, U skripcu, Via talas, Termiti, Mrtvi kanal, Sexa, and the fourth, the truly obscure bands who typically only recorded demos and cassette tapes – Nezaboravan san o…, Data, Ogledala, Romantične boje, Fakt, Karlowy Vary, Telo-nauka sovršena, Pingvinovo potpalublje, Trobecove krusne peci, Pleroma, Padot na Vizantija, Trivalia, Propaganda, Phantasmagoria, PPP, Komakino, Nemesis, Endymion…

[154] *Džuboks* 141, 21.5.1982
[155] Vesić 264

I will end this subchapter with a mention of what I consider to be the best and most important Yugoslav New Wave band along with Idoli – Haustor. They were unique in the strong but somewhat conventional Zagreb scene, an 'island of art-rock in the sea of power-pop'.[156] The band was an oddity on the scene because it did not adhere to the established rock'n'roll form as the default foundation of its expression. Rather, it sought to expand and subvert it by introducing ethnic elements, anticipating the trend of World music, as well as free jazz, samba, bossa nova, dub, reggae, ska and funk elements. Their fantastic album *Treci Svijet (Third World*), from 1984, was a fusion of reggae/dub/ska and otherworldly melancholia. *Polet*'s music critic Borislav Knežević sees their attempt to interpret various traditions from a position of the music of the Third World as being unprecedented in the Yugoslav context.[157] Discussing his band in 1981, Rundek notes that they did not set out to be a band in a classic rock format. 'We were happy to dream of having a band that plays fiddles, bagpipes, flutes, accordions. Srđan (Sacher) is studying ethnology, so he studied these instruments in college. He gained a different approach to music than some self-taught guitarist who only knows three chords.'[158] It is evident here that the band's unique background and influences were what made them so interesting and fresh - they had non-standard influences, not just the obvious western rock.

[156] Mirković 2004: 138
[157] *Polet* 15.3.1984.: 20
[158] *Džuboks* 110, 13.3.1981

g. Criticism of the official communist youth organisation

Polet's journalists were often openly critical of SSO (The League of Socialist Youth – the only official youth organisation). In one such critical article, the author claims that, in Yugoslavia, the youth organisation's *raison d'etre* is linked with the uniformity of the problems and interests of youth in general, and the existence of differences and requests for the acknowledgment of these differences is considered a deviation from the aims and principles of the youth organisation. The youth is, rather than being homogeneous and unified, in fact diverse and divided into many strata, with very different statuses (peasants, young workers, pupils, students). SSO is described as incompetent and unable to solve the problems of the youth, off-putting and unpopular, content with a small number of 'activists' in the barely active primary organisations. All of the important and meaningful youth activities are undertaken outside of SSO. SSO 'plays it safe' and abstains from interesting, original activities.[159] It must be noted here that this kind of criticism is not necessarily unique or specific to Yugoslavia in the context of the wider communist world. Sheila Fitzpatrick demonstrates that hardly anyone was more critical of Soviet bureaucracy than the Soviet leaders. Local bureaucrats were often satirical targets of state-sponsored humorous journals.[160]

In an interview with Tomislav Jantol, an university professor and a former member of the Central Committee of the Croatian Comunist League, *Polet's* journalist posits that the activity of the youth in the socio-political domain is not satisfactory. Jantol agrees with this and says that the pupils and students are not particularly involved

[159] *Polet* 16.1.1980.: 4

[160] Sheila Fitzpatrick (2000) *Everyday Stalinism.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

and active, neither in schools and universities nor in SSO. He claims that SSO's methods are outdated. He turns the thesis about the 'apolitical' youth on its head. The youth is political, ready for political action, but those who are supposed to provide some kind of political program to the youth are not up to the task![161]

It seems that *Polet*'s criticisms did not fall on deaf ears. In Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia, starting in the beginning of the eighties, SSO underwent internal liberalisation and assigned leadership to individuals who were in many cases quite knowledgeable about rock culture.[162] Almost every factory, high school, town and faculty had their own SSO branch and some sort of a youth bulletin / newspaper.[163] Wide, decentralized youth infrastructure of the SSO represented a public space which accommodated both mainstream and alternative politics and cultures[164] in which dissenting voices were heard (rather than there being a clearly defined alternative sphere). Decentralised nature of the SSO allowed for pockets of freedom to spring up (*Polet* being one of the most prominent examples). Youngsters who wished to express alternatives found possibilities in the peripheral parts of the SSO – cultural realm, youth media. [165] SSO was progressively opening up to critical thought.[166] Because of its complex structure which also included the music youth, the literary youth etc, SSO involved many educated, creative young people who deviated from the stereotypical profile of the conformist, sycophantic young functionary. It was not a monolithic structure.[167] In 1989, in an all-Yugoslav survey, many more young people expressed the wish to become members of the

[161] *Polet* 9.4.1980.: 16
[162] Ivacković 2013: 269
[163] Spaskovska 2017: 14
[164] Ibid.: 27
[165] Ibid.: 38
[166] Ibid.: 50
[167] Ibid.: 53

SSO than of SKJ (the Party) . By that time, SSO had become cool! It had recovered its legitimacy and support among the youth.[168]

Most significantly for the New Wave scene, SSO were the owners of student cultural centers in cities where the New Wave bands would practice and play gigs, and where avantgarde exhibitions and art films were regularly shown.[169] Student Centre (SC) in Zagreb and Student Cultural Centre (SKC) in Belgrade, both owned by the SSO, were the two most significant venues for the new wave bands not only in their respective cities, but in the entire country. Petar Janjatović, journalist and rock critic, claims that the entire rock, punk and New Wave were financed by the Socialist Youth League. 'Today, if a governmental body gives you money, you'd be forced to make a lot of compromises. At the time they didn't ask us to do anything in return, no speeches, no flags. No one made us get involved into any type of propaganda.'[170] Under socialism you could (mis)use the socialist infrastructure and framework in order to establish your own free territories.[171]

The people typically in leadership positions of the clubs owned by youth organisations were not businessmen obliged to collect profit – all they had to do was explain, in one of those tedious bureaucratic forms, that the state money was being spent for useful and proper purposes. The clubs operated according to the principle of 'general social usefulness' and 'public service', and were largely free from commercial pressures.[172] Arising out of a dull and rigid bureaucratic environment, the movement turned some of the features of this very system to their advantage. The measure of success of a club manager was not profit, but a rich,

[168] Ibid.: 51
[169] Ibid.: 56
[170] Ibid.: 51.
[171] Ibid.: 65
[172] Misina 2013: 116

prolific musical program. The youth activists who controlled their activities genuinely did not care about profit.[173] The socialist ethos was crucial for the survival of many young bands and the growth of the scene. In a way, the youth organisation subsidised the New Wave generation's rebellion.[174] In the words of a Slovenian feminist activist: 'We cooperated a lot with the League of Socialist Youth of Slovenia, who gave us huge support.... Yugoslavia might have been a dictatorship in the immediate post-war period, but in the eighties – certainly not!'.[175] All of this shows that an economic system that does not have profit as its raison d'etre is capable of providing support for underground, alternative, radical art – the image of a communist society drowning in propaganda, dogma and platitudes from the conservative party elites is one that really did exist in reality, but not in all cases - Yugoslavia was clearly an example of a communist society that did provide for and support genuinely courageous, innovative, radical art.

h. **Yugoslav rock as a catalyst of socio-political critique**

A journalist asks Štulić whether he has ever thought of some problems he might have due to his quite unrestrained lyrics. 'I'm aware of that. I have to agree to some compromises, man, because we have to be able to work. We have to play... those people who always misinterpret those lyrics.... those honest and open lyrics... I sing in my songs - investments are through the roof, loans are being spent, there is a lot of paranoia everywhere, crisis everywhere, and we wanna be the center of the world. Chinese syndrome .... how can I stand in front of some commission with this? I don't even know if you can print that in the newspaper. - I don't see why I

[173] Mirković 2004: 132
[174] Ibid.: 133
[175] Spaskovska 2017: 135

wouldn't? - Okay then (laughs).'[176] The peculiar and very specific Yugoslav semi-openness and semi-free speech confused even the bandmembers as to what would be allowed to be published and discussed openly. How subversive is too subversive? The bands were constantly pushing the limits of acceptable speech. The criticisms of the society and even, to some extent, the establishment and the system were very frequent, both in the bands' lyrics and in the articles published in magazines such as *Džuboks* and *Polet*:

'Our bands are united by the critical attitude towards certain negative social phenomena... Prljavo Kazalište sing about a dad 'who was in the war, and now he fights for his tie', Paraf scream about some negative aspects of the education reform, which points to the fact that our reality is rife with anomalies, which do not deserve a treatment better than cynical trashing.'[177]

The creativity of the new wave generation was unleashed in the context of a cultural vacuum; the scene was born out of boredom; in cities where 'nightlife' ended at 10 PM, where all the media was hopelessly dull, where life prospects consisted of finishing university and becoming a bureaucrat, a clerk 'just like your father'[178] ... Young people felt that the course of their lives was predetermined, resulting in a sense of frustration, disempowerment and alienation.[179] Punk and new wave emerged as the results of this frustration; this was a parochial kind of

[176] *Džuboks* 85, 28.3.1980
[177] *Polet* 15.5.1978.: 20
[178] Mirković 2003, 2004, Pavkovic 2010
[179] Kate Gerrard (2014) 'Punk and the State of Youth in the GDR' in Youth and Rock in the Soviet Bloc, ed. by William Jay Risch. Lexington Books. 176

frustration, which had its roots in the realization that beyond Yugoslavia there were places where life was much more fun.[180]

Many kinds of expression, from fashion and music to explicit apoliticism, can end up being considered political by the representatives of the establishment and of the official culture of society, which in fact was the case with the official reaction to the lyrics and interviews of rock musicians, when the really existing apoliticism became political for those who could tolerate and allow only one prescribed kind of politicism for the young.[181] This is also what happened in the communist Poland, where the regime promoted what essentially were apolitical countercultural trends to the level of hostile movements, to the point of endowing them with an ideology of a political program of sorts.[182]

Mirkovic describes his generation as apolitical. 'We considered political activity to be an indication of primitivism, low intelligence. Us urban kids stayed away from politics, considering it to be a terrain for the 'rednecks'. It was our own little urban racism....'[183] Speaking of their own apoliticism, members of Pankrti describe their encounter with Jello Biafra from the American punk band Dead Kennedys and note that he was much more political than they were. They came from an environment in which one tended to cynically mock politics, and he was an earnest, honest radical idealist. In fact, he reminded them of a young communist party activist.[184]

What does being 'apolitical' mean in this context? As I will show below, Pankrti were described in *Polet* and elsewhere as 'Yugoslavia's most political punk

[180] Mirković 2004: 46
[181] Perasović 2001
[182] Tom Jones (2014) 'Facing the Music' in Youth and Rock in the Soviet Bloc, ed. by William Jay Risch. Lexington Books, 230
[183] Mirković 2004: 21
[184] Kostelnik 2004: 29

band',[185] therefore it is odd to see the band member referring to themselves as 'apolitical'. Apoliticism implies a degree of apathy or aversion, or lack of interest, towards politics and political ideologies. Most of the new wave bands displayed a quite high level of social and political consciousness and sometimes sang about political issues; they were not by any measure devoid of political attitudes or interests, nor passive or neutral. The rigidly hierarchical society with its many hollow rituals as well as prevailing conservativism of the 'on-duty moralists' and party apparatchiks who criticized punk without even attempting to understand it, and in the background of it all, the promise of progressive egalitarian society that awaits in the future but whose attainment was seemingly indefinitely postponed and, instead, servility, conformism and conservativism prevailed… all of this created a rampant sense of cynicism among the socially conscious youth and an absolute lack of interest in the affiliation with the party. Pankrti, in addition, had anarchist / anti-authoritarian tendencies, which, I would guess, were perhaps mistakenly described by the bandmembers themselves as a kind of apoliticism. For the new wave generation being apolitical meant the rejection of party hierarchy and bureaucracy and of participation in official politics, but not of all politics as such. They constructed their own micro-political realm, the small local, urban oases, away from macro-politics. The ruling structures made this micro-political sphere possible (as previously mentioned, SSO financed the rock clubs and *Polet*) but they couldn't define or anticipate its content.

In the eighties, The New Wave generation posed a challenge to socialism of the older generation. They were committed to the reforming (not dismantling) of the

[185] *Polet* 6.4.1984: 16

federation.[186] The new wave musicians and rock journalists were not dissidents, they did not aim to topple the regime. Many of them embraced socialism, but they did differ from the regime in their interpretations of what socialism could and should be.[187] Vesić describes the bands of the period as politically engaged and progressive but never quite anti-regime.

Štulić did not criticise Yugoslav "trećost" from the perspective of being against "the system," but against its decadence.[188] In Yugoslavia, punk and a new wave cultural rebellion was directed against the stupidity of the system, with no intention of challenging it (as in the west). A generation of Yugoslav teenagers directed their accumulated but untapped social energy toward art. Since the society in which they lived at the time did not resemble any other experience, anywhere in the world, Vesić concludes that the Yugoslav new wave was an authentic social phenomenon on a global scale.[189]

Punk, as a response to the advanced Western capitalist and consumer society, was not in theory completely untransferable to the situation in Yugoslavia. The hybrid socialist model which, by opening the market under controlled conditions, allowed the penetration of the consumer mentality into Yugoslavia was therefore a fertile ground for the development of a critique of consumer society.[190] On the other hand, Tomislav Brlek, writing about the music of the 1980s, says that "the oppositional character of rock 'n' roll in socialism obviously cannot be directed against the same symbolic opponents as within capitalist conditions of production."

[186] Spaskovska 2017: 2
[187] Spaskovska 2017: 11
[188] Jovanović 74
[189] Vesić 288
[190] Girin 26

Criticism can also be directed at self-governing socialism and the circumstances of such a system.[191]

When asked to compare new wave in the UK and in Yugoslavia, Prljavo Kazalište drew special attention to the different socio-economic contexts British and Yugoslav youth were growing up in. According to the band, the situation in Yugoslavia was much more favourable in at least two respects. Yugoslav youth was in a much better social position (including better job prospects) than their British counterparts, and the Yugoslav audience was more liberal in its musical tastes. Although the band's assumption might have had something to do with the fact that in the UK punk rock was a working class, and in Yugoslavia a middle class phenomenon, Jovanović argues that this statement has more to do with growing up in the system that promoted social justice and that was built on the political mythology emphasizing social equality.[192]

The relationship between Yugoslav musicians and the regime was a constructive one,[193] in marked contrast to British punks' explicitly hostile and confrontational attitude towards the English establishment.[194] The bands provided a constructive critique aimed at aiding and encouraging the realization of the proclaimed ideals of socialism;[195] they were positively rethinking Yugoslav socialism.[196] Yugoslav rock'n'roll and youth culture were perhaps the only socio-cultural outlets through which official society could get an insightful and disinterested view of itself.[197] Zemira Alajbegović from the band Borghesia notes that 'one was critical towards

[191] Ibid
[192] Jovanović 62
[193] Misina 2013: 3
[194] Ibid.: 91
[195] Misina 92
[196] Spaskovska 2017: 41
[197] Misina 101

the socialist system, but on the other hand we genuinely believed in some of those ideas'.[198] This attitude is analogous to the one found in Yurchak's work, in which he describes the young Russians of the seventies and eighties as holding the ideals of socialism as being genuinely important and meaningful while at the same time transgressing some of the official norms. [199]

Zagreb's Azra was one of the most politically explicit new wave bands. In 1982 they published a song 'Nedjeljni komentar' which offered a bold and courageous criticism of the regime: 'people with no ideas are imposing black-and-white truths on us'. The censors contacted Jugoton, the music publishing company, and asked them not to release the song. The music editor of Jugoton held off the attack and 'defended' the song. Azra's frontman Štulić's comment on the affair was: 'Fuck art which isn't polemical! That's just art in the service of the regime'.[200] In the song 'Poljska u mom srcu' (Poland in My Heart) Štulić sang about the Polish Solidarity movement, which the Yugoslav papers were not allowed to mention.[201] The Poland that Štulić identifies with is one of working-class solidarity and struggle against oppression.[202] Štulić claims that everyone around him warned him that the song would never be allowed to be released. 'People were telling me – this will not pass – but it did pass!'[203] With songs like these, Štulić was raising the level of political consciousness among the youth, keeping them from becoming apolitical and easily manipulated.[204]

[198] Spaskovska 2017: 96
[199] Yurchak 2005
[200] Ivacković 2013: 281
[201] Ibid.: 290
[202] Misina 2013: 128
[203] *Polet* 27.5.1981.: 16
[204] Ivacković 2013: 290

In *Polet*'s article about Pankrti, Lisica writes: 'Pankrti, like the partisan songs or The Clash masterpiece ‘Spanish Bombs,’ remind us that revolution is not a purely Marxist definition but also a feeling that, with its richness and multi-layeredness, rises above the one-dimensional sensibility of commemorative parades with recitals. .. Since we are not used to feeling politics (they teach us to think about it, not to feel it), the emotional politics of Pankrti remains unintelligible and thus suspicious.'[205] In their albums, Pankrti treated urban youth's problems, most significantly the feeling of having nothing to do, a sense of alienated boredom. As band member Lovšin puts it, speaking about the band's first album, 'this record is a reflection of youth’s general sentiment—the feeling of passive emptiness that debilitates'.[206] For Lovšin, being critical does not mean being destructively predisposed against one’s society. Critical engagement implies 'not being quiet' and involves 'dealing with problems that touch you as a member of a community'. 'What’s crucial is that we are working against the enemies of true self-management.' [207]

Jura Stublić from the Zagreb band Film describes their music as wanting to return to the spirit of the fifties and sixties, which was the time when people had ideals and dreams, when everything was 'much purer and healthier than it is today'.[208] Members of the band Paraf note that until not that long ago, rock musicians never spoke up about boredom, the military, jobs, the topics they are trying to tackle. 'We are trying to inspire a spark of life in the masses that are drowning in greyness' and, as well-read Marxists, they say that 'as labour is a man's essence, his being; by being alienated from labour he is alienated from his own essence, and in this way

[205] *Polet* 12.3.1980.: 14
[206] Misina 2013: 111
[207] Ibid.: 113
[208] *Polet* 11.3.1980.: 14

he loses all his power and strength'.[209] We can see here that the musicians were using Marxist concepts to criticise the Yugoslav society; they were posing criticism of the system without diverging from the parameters of Marxism.

The headline of an article in Jutarnji list from 2020 asks: 'Is it finally time to stop romanticizing the New Wave?' The journalist notes that for years, one would get the impression that

> 'everyone or almost everyone listened to the "new wave" during the 80's, and this is definitely not true ... Only Azra and Prljavo kazalište managed to get closer to the recrd sales of Bijelo Dugme, Parni Valjak and Riblja Čorba. The latter continued to perform in packed huge venues, and new-wave bands mostly played in clubs with their records often inadequately produced. Had the musical and cultural life in Zagreb, Belgrade or Ljubljana at that time been rich and vibrant, there wouldn't have been that much anger, nervousness and anxiety, all because of the shortage of goods, because of the greyness and boredom of everyday life, erupting from the songs of the new wave bands.' [210]

In a basement of a club in Sarajevo, during the 1984 Winter Olympics, Elvis J. Kurtovic and his Meteors were performing a cover of Bob Dylan's "Maggie's Farm". Their version was ostensibly about Margaret Thatcher. But actually, what they were singing about — in a disparaging and critical way that should have been

[209] *Polet* 17.2.1982.: 16

[210] (https://www.jutarnji.hr/kultura/glazba/paket-aranzman-40-godina-poslije-je-li-konacno-doslo-vrijeme-da-prestanemo-romantizirati-novi-val-15050513)

unacceptable to the Communist authorities — was Yugoslavia's prime minister, Milka Planinc.

> 'They mocked the Yugoslav regime and its ideology while playing with the form and content of a three-minute punk song… They accused Planinc… of incompetency and corruption in Kosovo… If a journalist had tried to publish anything of the sort, she would have been imprisoned and banned from working. If an ordinary citizen had talked like this in public, he would at the very least have been investigated by the police for "spreading false reports and alarming the public." But this was a song that referenced Margaret Thatcher. The police and the Communist Party pretended that it really was about Thatcher, and nothing happened.'

These bands attacked the police, the authorities and the tenets of Communist ideology. But still, they were allowed to do so with hardly any interference. Jergović identifies the reason for this tolerance, using a variant of the safety-valve theory: 'It is less dangerous for something to exist in the shop windows of record stores and on the stages of Party-sponsored "houses of culture" than for it to live underground, conspiring against the system.' The Yugoslav Communists offered culture to their citizens as an outlet to present the illusion of freedom and to safely relieve social trauma / tensions. Tito did not think that young rock musicians would bring down the state. [211]

Yugoslav bands had to deal with both existential security and existential insecurity. Even if they enjoyed the benefits of the welfare state – stable job and an income – they still sang about instability. Rijeka's Termiti sang about electricity shortages in

[211] Miljenko Jergović, What Punk Rock Meant to Communist Yugoslavia https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/18/opinion/punk-rock-communist-yugoslavia.html)

their song ‘Redukcija’ (‘Cuts’): “Don’t turn on the light/we live in the dark/we are saving the electricity/the electric energy/well these cuts can fuck off.”[212]

A devious method to act against this outspokenness, rather than pure repression, was the “trash tax”, charged for the music releases of “dubious cultural value”. “That meant that after the tax was applied, the price of your CD would almost double,” recalls Valter Kocijančić from Paraf.[213]

Another repressive method included police interruptions of concerts, as well as censorship. The cover of Paraf’s first LP had to be changed several times. Also, they had to censor all their lyrics, using subtle irony to express their points. Ostensibly, Paraf’s song ‘Narodna pjesma’, was a tribute to the police. But really, the lyrics such as “There’s no better police than our police” were ironic - the song was about police repression.[214] “Živjela Jugoslavija” (“Long Live Yugoslavia”) was similarly ironic - it was a long pastiche of official slogans (including “Mi volimo liniju!” or “We love the [party] line!”). Another classic of the era was Termiti’s “Vjeran Pas” (Faithful Dog), whose chorus “U životu prolazi samo vjeran pas” (“The only way to get on in life is to be a faithful dog”) was a sarcastic rallying cry.[215]

Rock from Eastern Europe is seen as more political than its western counterpart; an opinion which is problematic. Existing studies focused on Eastern European popular music, most importantly Timothy Ryback’s *Rock Around the Bloc* (1990) and the collection *Rocking the State: Rock Music and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia* (1994), edited by Sabrina Petra Ramet, are based on problematic assumptions and have questionable conclusions, such as that western rock stars

[212] Jelena Prtorić, Anarchy in the E.U: the history of punk in Yugoslavia, https://www.europavox.com/news/anarchy-e-u-history-punk-yugoslavia/).
[213] Ibid
[214] Ibid
[215] Bousfield

were more popular in the East than local stars and that the socialist East remained under the spell of a limited number of iconic western stars, hence being doubly backward, by being unable to develop its own rock culture and having limited access to western rock. Projecting the Eastern European rocker as an anti-communist fighter, they render the consumer of such music as a machine for capturing political (sub)text, rather than young people searching for entertainment, who care more about catchy melody than the message of a song.[216]

On the Paket Aranžman compilation, Idoli ridiculed communism (the song Maljčiki), Nazism (Schwule uber Europa) and capitalism (Amerika) - they walked the thin line between camp and kitsch.[217]

The society was rife with hypocrisies that provided endless material for song lyrics- Pavica Mijatović from Paraf grew up in a family of port workers. In the fifth grade of elementary school she realized that Rijeka's intellectuals would give lectures about worker as a pillar of society, all the while not allowing their children to hang out with her - because of her working class background.[218]

The bands would sing about phenomena such as these as well as other concrete topics rooted in everyday experiences of the ordinary people - the police, eavesdropping, the ugliness of the new cities.[219] In a *Džuboks* interview, Pero Lovšin from Pankrti describes his songwriting process: 'I do not start from the assumption that I should write socially-critically-engaged lyrics... I live in a specific

[216] Mazierska, Ewa (2016) 'Introduction' in Popular Music in Eastern *Europe*. Ed by Mazierska, Ewa. Palgrave Macmillan
[217] Vesić 192
[218] Vesić 222
[219] Prica 25

environment. The lyrics are my reaction to what I see and experience around me - the life, the environment, the problems...'[220]

New wave was not directed primarily against the system, but against the prevailing mentality.[221] In a 1980 interview in which he complained about how Azra's first album came out and how badly produced it was, Johnny Štulić implicitly criticized the prevailing mentality, conformism, the typical ambitions of a party apparatchik or a sycophant, the stifling of the striving for excellence. 'It doesn't mean anything to me that they tell me that this is a good record for our circumstances. What kind of criterion is that? What would Tesla have done if he was the first in our circumstances? He would have ended up as a bureaucrat, parading around with his medals...'[222]

Džuboks would similarly often publish veiled or not so veiled criticisms of the institutions and the prevailing mentality. The review of the Festival of the Youth in Subotica, from 1980, describes it as purportedly presenting new forms of youth creativity, but in reality exactly the opposite is happening - instead of supporting the new, fresh and quality youth expressions, this event completely adhered to the worn-out pattern of our music festivals, suffocating true inspiration and spreading petty-bourgeois conceptions that long ago ruined the 'older musical brothers', molding everything really youthful into the average adult kitsch.[223]

In an interview with Darko Rundek from 1981 there again appears a criticism of the mentality. When asked why the band waited so long to appear before the Yugoslav-wide audience, Rundek replies that they did not want to play the game of 'sucking

[220] *Džuboks* 89, 23.5.1980
[221] Vesić 295
[222] *Džuboks* 98, 26.9.1980
[223] *Džuboks* 104, 19.12.1980

up and fucking others over. It seems to me that that is a rule in this society of ours. I am not saying that we never accept compromises, but we refuse to play this game.' When asked to explain the incident in which he, during a performance of a song, appeared to show the middle finger to the audience and was promptly accused of 'showing a dick to the whole Belgrade', Rundek states that

> 'such a reading belongs to a patriarchal society that is waking up, confused, so lasciviousness and sexual jokes have been banished from the mass media in the name of some sort of puritanism... and when there is a lot of swearing, then puritanism is strong. So entire stories of mentality, television, false openness, the psychosis of false political and social morality could be woven around this phenomenon of my finger. If I explain it, I would take away all other interpretations from the people and impose my own - I would impoverish it. Anyone who has a little sensibility will see that this is not about banalities that have to do with showing a dick'.[224]

Džuboks would often slip in criticisms of mentality in album reviews, where they would be less obvious and visible, such as in the one that praised Stidljiva Ljubičica's *Osvrni se na mene* album. 'The cutest Yugoslav band has their first album out. I love it when someone is pleasant and unobtrusive, when he does not try at all costs to show how insanely smart he is and does ingenious things (in this country which probably, according to statements, has the highest percentage of geniuses and saviors of culture on the planet, they are very rare), when he is

[224] *Džuboks* 110, 13.3.1981

honest and cordial and does not try to encompass the essence of the universe with his ideas'.[225]

In an interview for *Dzuboks* in 1981, Pankrti panned Azra and Prljavo Kazalište as

> 'pop....', representatives of a 'negative tendency ... of subordination to what is current in the market... punk in England was created as a result of the crisis. We are in the period of crisis, there are a lot of problems concerning young people, and the bands that wanted or could respond to that are now somewhere in the clouds... Električni Orgazam have shitty lyrics. Idoli were produced by Bregović, they are all in symbiosis with that fucking shitty scene...' (Here, Pankrti prove themselves to be punk snobs / purists / elitists, raging against what they perceive to be pop bands posing as punks but really appeasing and collaborating with the mainstream and betraying their initial punk ideals). 'Pankrti and Paraf are nowhere to be found, everywhere you hear Bregović, Azra, Prljavo Kazalište who have deviated from their initial concept ... the media have squandered everything that is charming, they have promoted easily digestible bands and are now selling them as a new wave. There is a tendency in the media for our rockers to stand out as, albeit a little naughty, but still golden youth. Our young people are naughty but just want to have some fun. That's the ultimate meaning and range of a rocker - to joke around, get a jaguar, and if they're a little naughty along the way ... it's fine. And that kind of relationship and that kind of goal ... that's bullshit.'

The journalist asks what are the chances of alternative ideas being more present. The band reply that the chances are weak, 'primarily because of the mentality, the

[225] *Džuboks* 130, 18.12.1981

consumer mentality of the people. The consumers are passive, it is easier for them to watch Pink Panther (a children's cartoon) on TV than to listen carefully to one of our songs, for example...'

'No punk band in our country ever went all the way, said everything they thought, and the question is what the reactions would be if the punks sang everything they had in mind... self-censorship is pronounced in everyone, which also speaks of what kind of society this is, since self-censorship is a consequence of censorship that objectively exists... Rock is the first youth culture that reflects not only boredom but the inferior position of young people in society.'[226]

In a show in 1982, Štulić modified the lyrics of his song *Kurvini sinovi* ('Sons of bitches') from 'They are coming' to 'The Russians are coming', and when asked for a comment in an interview, went on and on about the Russians being 'the worst... it's horror...complete totalitarianism.'[227]

In an interview from 1985, the time by which the new wave scene was officially over, the journalist describes the Zagreb scene as mutilated and semi-pathetic. Houra agrees with this and says the scene is 'comatose... everyone here is afraid of eccentricity, of weirdness. There are so many people with madness in their eyes, positive madness, and they are afraid to show it. I can't do this, I can't do that, because 'what would people say'. It is those petty-bourgeois moral boundaries that have screwed us up'.[228]

[226] *Džuboks* 113, 24.4.1981
[227] *Džuboks* 137, 26.3.1982
[228] *Džuboks* 185, 1.2.1985

i. **Interplay and negotiation between the ruling ideology and the unofficial popular practices emerging 'from below'**

In a Džuboks interview, Jasenko Houra confusingly states that '(The label) Suzy was helpful to us insofar as they did not impose any censorship. they only asked me as an author to perform self-censorship'.[229] The question that occurs to me here is what, really, is the difference between suffering from censorship and being asked to perform self-censorship – are they not, in effect, one and the same?

Mainstream Yugoslav media described punk as pure nihilism and anything it did not understand as subversion and exaggerated, overdone criticism of everything under the sun.[230] The new wave expression manifested itself exclusively in 'unofficial' or 'semi-official' culture, beyond the clearly demarcated spaces, so it remained insufficiently acknowledged by theorists and critics who do not feel comfortable with phenomena they are unable to easily categorize and place in a specific box.[231]

In an article in *Polet* from 1977, the author defends the practice of wearing jeans as being perfectly in line with the official ideology. 'I went to the party and SSO meetings wearing my new Levi's. It is backward to think that the jeans with the western label are irreconcilable with SSO'.[232] Similarly, Yurchak notes that for the young Russians active in the communist youth organisations, it did not seem contradictory to be enthusiastic about both Lenin and Led Zeppelin. Soviet youth translated and appropriated artifacts of bourgeois mass culture in ways that were different from their literal meaning. For the young party activists in USSR who were also rock music connoisseurs, the experimental, improvisational aesthetic of prog bands (like King Crimson) made them much more compatible with their vision of the

[229] *Džuboks* 81, 1.2.1980
[230] Prica 24
[231] Vincetić 333
[232] Kolanović 2013: 207

avantgarde communist revolutionary aesthetics than the pretty, cliched, dull and unchallenging dogmatic music of the professional Soviet pop groups authorized and promoted by the state. For them, the Communist ideals and British experimental rock were equally 'progressive'.[233]

Džuboks review of the Pankrti album Dolgcajt acknowledges that many would say that Pankrti are too provocative, but that is what rock is like - engaged and provocative. Rock, along with film, new theater and comics, created an interspace and disturbed the balance between two seemingly polarized and established worlds - serious arts and various forms of the entertainment industry. 'These bands create the most progressive music - the only one that speaks in an honest and open way about the thoughts and obsessions of the young generation - its speech and language.'[234]

In Yugoslavia, the so-called 'trash committee' determined which records, due to their artistic value, qualified for the exemption from paying taxes.[235] When it placed Prljavo Kazalište's debut on the list of records which, because of their dubious artistic value, were not exempted, a big debate in the media ensued. The representative from the committee wrote a letter to *Polet*, arguing that the band's music was 'confused, vulgar, immature... these 'dilettantes' see something negative and proclaim it universal, they proclaim the singular as general and typical, as if the corruption, bribery and lies are this society's politics'.[236] *Polet's* journalists, of course, defended the band, asking in their response to the letter whether the 'commercialized slimeballs' who manage to pass the filters of their commission are

[233] Yurchak 2005
[234] *Džuboks* 83, 29.2.1980
[235] Perković 2011: 108
[236] *Polet* 17.10.1979.: 10

more suitable for the self-managing socialist society than Prljavo Kazalište, who were courageous enough to speak up with an almost documentary approach about serious themes (such as unemployment, alcoholism and excessive bureaucratisation). The committee was described as petit bourgeois and moralising, having no sensibility and understanding for contemporary musical expression.[237]

The members of the band Električni Orgazam defiantly wore their trash status as a badge of honor, stating in an interview in *Polet* that they would 'cry if the record was not proclaimed trash, because then we'd think it wasn't good enough'.[238] In an open letter to Polet, the punk band Paraf lamented that ‘Jugoton fucked us over... did not accept our songs... are we the aliens from another planet, did our parents fight in the war so that we would have to stay quiet. Can anyone tell us why we are not allowed to speak?’.[239]

Dzuboks was relentlessly critical of the infamous 'trash committee', often ridiculing it. 'the Prljavo Kazalište affair is hopefully the last dying breath of the ridiculous trash committee'.[240] In the review of Idoli's Maljčiki, another target of the commission, they describe the 'beloved trash committee as all-knowing and omnipotent. Maybe it could reveal to the world what Idoli did wrong.'[241]

In 1980 Pankrti received one of the most prestigious awards in the country. They duly accepted it, noting in a later interview that they never fought against the

[237] *Polet* 24.10.1979.: 9
[238] *Polet* 15.10.1980.: 13
[239] *Polet* 14.2.1979.: 11
[240] *Džuboks* 83, 29.2.1980
[241] *Džuboks* 110, 13.3.1981

system, always made compromises with it, and ‘never suffered too much’.[242] Tomc notes that these people did nothing wrong and it would be impolite to say no.

> 'We would have been totally hypocritical if, on the one hand, we accepted the censorship, signed the contract and made other compromises, and then, when the official Croatian youth organization offered us an award, we suddenly became very principled, ideologically pure and screamed no, we are radical, we fight against your system! We did not fight against the system. We made music which had certain subversive connotations... and we enjoyed that. in order to be able to do that, we were forced to make lots of compromises and agreements with they system in our everyday lives, and we never suffered too much. I am not aware of anyone, not among the 'new left', nor among the right wing dissidents, who fought against the system'.[243]

Nebojsa Čankić Čonta from the band Pekinška Patka had a parallel career along with being a musician – that of a high school teacher. ‘I don’t think I could have been a serious teacher and a punk singer anywhere in the world but in Yugoslavia’.[244]

Bands were formed and operated independently of party orthodoxy; the ‘soft’ autocracy of the communist Yugoslavia gave the creative youngsters a certain degree of freedom to carve out their own spaces, little oases of freedom.[245] In the words of one of the bandmembers: ‘Look, times changed. People started breathing more freely. People felt more liberated. All those university students were around and they felt that they could talk more freely. - You were still

[242] Kostelnik 2004: 37
[243] Vesić 181
[244] Ibid.: 228
[245] Perković 107, Pavković 2010

living in a communist country with all of its rules... - But I created my own world. Politics was out of mind, we never bothered about that. Tito, the Party, what was that?! It never mattered.'[246] This was the time when it was possible to form pockets, not of resistance, but of autonomy and independence, autonomous youth culture, in which macro-politics did not loom large, where one could engage in activities independently of the regime and the ruling ideology.[247] I must note here, however, that even in this environment of relative freedom, the specificities of the Yugoslav socialism were open for discussion but there was no possibility of questioning socialism as such.[248] Yugoslav socialism was pluralist, meaning that diverse visions were allowed to exist, but they all, however, represented various shades of the overall uniform ideological spectrum.[249]

At the assemblies of the leadership of the Croatian branch of SSO, *Polet* was controlled and discussed, sometimes penalised.[250] The common criticisms were that they wrote too much about 'marginal phenomena' and that there was 'too much swearing'.[251] The issue number 145 from 17.12.1980. was deemed problematic because of a photograph of John Lennon on the cover, which was black and white, without a coloured logo of the paper, which led the SSO leadership to believe that the editors were treating Lennon in the same way as they did Tito half a year before (Tito being the only one who had previously received such a coverage by *Polet*).[252] Throughout the late seventies and early eighties, several editors were fired. At an assembly in 1984, the conclusion was that the musical topics were not dominant in

[246] Mirković 2003
[247] Pavković 2010
[248] Misina 2013: 23
[249] Ibid.
[250] Krušelj 2015: 11
[251] Ibid.: 251
[252] Ibid.: 259

the magazine anymore. The past editors, due to their 'sensationalist, petty bourgeois journalism', had 'negative and overly critical attitudes' towards the socio-economic problematic and the political system.[253]

Polet was tolerated because the prevailing opinion was that suppressing it would not only be an unpopular political act, but it could also have ramifications such as the increasing passivity, escalation of anti-regime attitudes among the youth, even the appearance of illegal dissident press.[254] *Polet* was considered useful in channeling and containing youth rebellion. Similarly, new wave was tolerated because it let the young let off steam; it was easier to gain insight into their habits if you kept an eye on them and did not drive their activities underground.[255] This is where the regime adopted a fairly liberal attitude stemming from its generally pragmatic approach.

James C. Scott, in his book *Hidden Transcripts*, discusses (and refutes) the safety-valve theory, which posits that events, rituals and traditions such as carnivals are permitted and tolerated to allow subordinate groups to play at rebellion lest they resort to the real thing. Suppressed speech and acting in carnival, ritually serves to displace and relieve social tensions, restore social harmony. Events such as carnival act as relief-valves taking the place of actual resistance. Scott does not think that allowing these events would diminish the likelihood of an actual revolt. The Yugoslav regime adopted a version of the safety-valve theory in its approach to rock music. Authorities came to the conclusion that if rock music could not be suppressed, perhaps it could be put to work for socialism. It was easier to maintain control of young people by avoiding the possible emergence of an underground

[253] Ibid.: 423
[254] Ibid.: 11
[255] Ivacković 2013: 69

scene, illegal clubs, and black market for records, and by making it open and transparent. Visibility, with approval from the regime, would help create a positive image of Yugoslavia. By letting rock'n'roll be visible, the regime was preventing rebellion.[256]

Domestically, rock reduced the potential causes for disaffection among young people, while in foreign policy Yugoslavia once again demonstrated to the West that it had a good ear for its values. Rock became a politically acceptable phenomenon.[257] The subversive power of rock was mitigated, and then turned around to work for the system. When rock fans first appeared, the establishment criticized them as "trying to mimic the decadent idols of the West." Very quickly, however, various functionaries in the youth organizations saw that rock and roll could serve as a way to score political points, and so many public discussions on politics were followed by rock shows. In return, musicians received rehearsal spaces, in town halls, scouting houses, or local houses of culture.[258]

Due to the need to demonstrate liberalization to the West and the fear that conflicts over rock would assume other forms of protest, everything became possible in Yugoslavia as far as popular music went.[259] Besides helping to construct the image of liberal, humanist socialism, rock was a means of keeping the youth under control and circumventing a potential open rebellion. Yugoslav artists practised self-censorship, did not challenge the regime with outright resistance and revolt, thus securing political suitability for themselves, as well as media coverage, record production, and the organization of concerts. By "opening the door" to American popular culture and trends, the Yugoslav government pacified its society

[256] Vučetić, Radina (2010) 'Dzuboks' in *Remembering Utopia, 150*
[257] Vućetić 2018 121
[258] Ibid 126
[259] Ibid 127

and provided at least the illusion of freedom. The openness was welcome as long as it did not threaten any dogmas and as long as it did not lead to questioning of the system. As far as form is concerned, everything was permissible, from abstraction, pop art, to spitting on the public, concerts on deliberately out-of-tune pianos, nudity on stage and in literature, but when it came to substance - the ideology of brotherhood and unity, communist dogma, the working class, workers' self-management— these things were untouchable and carefully preserved with all means, including judicial ones.[260] The dichotomy between the tolerance of form/style versus that of substance/content is interesting to note here.

Punk in Slovenia developed with the social background of repressive tolerance - a climate which did not encourage the appearance of subculture, but also did not thwart it.[261] The environments in some cities were freer and more tolerant than in others. The local authorities in Zagreb were much more tolerant than in Rijeka. In an article in *Polet*, Zelmanović notes that the police was almost non-existent at shows in Zagreb, while in Rijeka it was known to ban concerts and shoo band-members off the stage.[262] Members of Rijeka's Istočni Izlaz (Eastern Exit) complained that a policeman dressed in civilian clothes kept harassing them, warning them that they shouldn't sing about the working class, and that the frontman shouldn't sing about his dad being a lumberjack when he was in fact a taxi driver.[263] Another band from Rijeka, Paraf, had to submit all the lyrics of the songs they would play before a show to a policeman in charge.[264] In an interview for *Polet* with Prljavo Kazalište's frontman Jasenko Houra, journalist Bakalović notes that

[260] Ibid 299
[261] Vučetić 2010 192
[262] *Polet* 4.3.1981.: 15
[263] *Polet* 5.11.1980.: 14
[264] Kostelnik 2004: 122, Vesić 249

Bregović, the leader of the superstars Bijelo Dugme, had to prove his orthodoxy by attending well-publicised work actions, which was 'both hypocritical and sad', and asks Houra if he is also going to have to prove his devotion to the communist cause. Houra says 'maybe yes, maybe not... There are certain compromises I just won't make, I'd rather fuck off.'[265]

Džuboks devoted lots of articles to scathing criticisms of dogmatic, conservative moralists from mainstream media and party ranks. 'The new wave is still a very controversial topic. I hope that it will soon become clear to everyone able to think for themselves that punk will not spoil our youth, that it is not a decadent stain on the conscience of our society or something like that. But no matter how much noise is made in family and TV magazines, it is not so important because it is often written so meaninglessly and sensationalistically (I hope they don't think it is socially positive?) that it causes the opposite effect.'[266]

Predić, a journalist from mainstream magazine *TV Revija*, complained about a 'crusade led by *Džuboks* against rock music that was created before and that is created now that harks back to 'before''. *Džuboks* wrote a reply, defending punk from Predić's attacks, stating that 'on this occasion we will not argue about new wave with a man who is convinced that punk was invented by those selling musical instruments. Predić knows nothing about punk. The only thing that can be discerned from his writings is that punk is a very nasty thing. And dangerous... Fascism is mentioned but the progressive engagement of the best new wave works is ignored.'[267]

Džuboks then published a reply from Predić, in which he states that

[265] *Polet* 8.10.1980.: 14
[266] *Džuboks* 81, 1.2.1980
[267] *Džuboks* 85, 28.3.1980

'by promoting punk and fighting recklessly for its survival on our soil, you have completely lost your head and brought yourself almost to the brink of being classified as black media that intentionally or accidentally, or out of sheer ignorance, acts contrary to our socialist morality. Behind your music magazine are political pamphlets and propaganda with roots in the negative phenomena from the west. You are happy, comrade Milisav, that the people responsible for the security of our country do not read your newspaper… it is true that a young punk camouflaged himself as a Hitler... this is related to the threat of fascism and the achievements of the anti-fascist struggle in Yugoslavia - you are so powerless in your further defense of "punk" that you hide in the lap of the "new wave."[268]

The debate was concluded by yet another reply by *Džuboks* in which they explained that they published Predić's text not to fulfill a legal obligation, but to 'demonstrate a primitive form of journalistic behavior that is in direct conflict with journalistic ethics. Predić wages a private war against punk. He claims that punk was invented by manufacturers and sellers of instruments to boost sales. his musical distaste turning into a crucial measure of socio-political suitability. Predić suspects there are no members of the SKJ among us - we openly ask - where and when did Dzuboks publish articles that opposed the ideas and attitudes of the SKJ!'

Predić exhibits 'a very recognizable form of behavior characteristic of the practice of dogmatic parties, which is in direct opposition to the practice of the SKJ and the Yugoslav self-governing, socialist society. For Predić the politics of the SKJ

[268] *Džuboks* 91, 20.6. 1980

> is the same as his private lack of taste.... his paranoid projections - people responsible for the security of our country, cold-bloodedly (or out of ignorance) tolerate subversive activity in the midst of the country. Most domestic journalists based their assessments of punk on the syntagms and ideologues of the western establishment. Predić's lesson for the formulation of socialist morality is based on the authority of Western bourgeois tabloids'.[269]

In other words, anti-punk prejudices are bourgeois, dogmatic socialism is not the Yugoslav socialism!

In a letter from a reader, Predić is described as an 'insignificant little man incapable fo doing anything else in his life so he decided to do the easiest thing - to be the on-duty moralist.'[270] *Džuboks* was consistently critical of those conservative on-duty moralists trying to create an atmosphere of panic about punk and rock. 'Whenever a fool appears in public insidiously slandering rock'n'roll as an 'import of evil from the rotten west' and an 'anti-socialist element' we are appalled and say that we thought such notions became extinct in the sixties.'[271]

'It is not easy to be a supporter of the new wave here because the on duty moralists and various officials are zealously trying to suppress any activity that they do not understand and a priori declare it dangerous for the psyche and moral education of the youth.'[272] Criticisms of the establishment such as these demonstrate that there was a certain freedom of speech as well as lack of uniformity and unanimity in Yugoslavia, especially considering that Džuboks was a relatively mainstream magazine.

[269] *Džuboks* 92, 4.7.1980
[270] *Džuboks* 93, 18.7.1980
[271] *Džuboks* 123, 11.9.1980
[272] *Džuboks* 88, 9.5..1980

Pero Lovšin from Pankrti was happy about the reception from the official society: 'nobody is harassing us, we have an excellent relationship with the label, we can play shows whenever we want...it seems to me that the public does not consider punk or rock a potential danger.'[273]

i. Shared multicultural space

One of the tenets of the Yugoslav socialism and the foundation of the Communists' claim to legitimacy was a specific kind of multiculturalism, described by the party theoreticians as 'Brotherhood and Unity.'[274] In the Yugoslav version of multiculturalism there was no standard Western pattern of 'one core - many minorities'; cultures of all the nations were perceived as equal, indigenous and ancient.[275] 'Brotherhood and Unity' implied federalism, decentralization and the autonomy of the republics. The 1974 constitution further decentralized powers to the republics, and further institutionalized equality between them – using quotas and rotation systems to ensure balanced representation, and granting the right of veto to the republics over any decision made on the federal level.[276]

The connection between Yugoslavia's three principal political centres, Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana was never stronger than in the new wave era.[277] Inter-republican concerts and bands from different republics playing together was the

[273] *Džuboks* 113, 24.4.1981
[274] Gorana Ognjenović (2016) 'The Uniqueness and Non-uniqueness of Josip Broz Tito: A Foreword' in *Titoism, Self-Determination. Nationalism, Cultural Memory,* ed. by Gorana Ognjenovic and Jasna Jozelic. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. viii
[275] Nena Močnik (2016) 'Brotherhood and Unity Goes Multiculturalism' *Titoism, Self-Determination. Nationalism, Cultural Memory,* ed. by Gorana Ognjenovic and Jasna Jozelic. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 222
[276] Kate Hudson (2003) *Breaking the South Slav Dream: The Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia.* London and Sterling: Pluto Press. 53
[277] Jovanović 88

norm.[278] New wave was one of the most significant links between Belgrade and Zagreb. Bands from Zagreb would often play in Belgrade and receive a more enthusiastic audience response than in their hometown, and vice versa. Idoli and šarlo Akrobata were never as popular in Belgrade as they were in Zagreb.[279] Zagreb's Jugoton did not see any problem with publishing Idoli's album with Cyrillic letters on the sleeve; in fact, according to Divljan, 'it was easier to publish a Cyrillic album in Zagreb than in Serbia'.[280] Formal 'exchanges' were even organised – a big rock 'caravan' of 10 big Zagreb bands performed in Belgrade at an event entitled 'Greetings from Zagreb'. In return, the Serbian colleagues were welcomed in Zagreb only a month later with a similar event called 'Greetings from Belgrade.'[281] Dzuboks describes the event in Belgrade as being incredibly popular - the press, radio and TV went wild, everyone was fawning over the guests.[282] As for the event in Zagreb, it was successful as well - the Idoli gig in Kulušić was sold out in two hours, and the audience reception was euphoric; there were four encores.[283] What these events produced was a strong sense of community, bonding and solidarity between these two cities. The bond between these two scenes was defined by musical tastes and preferences rather than by their member's ethno-regional identites or origins.[284]

Based on examples such as this one, it is possible to argue that Brotherhood and Unity of the official party proclamations indeed did take root among Yugoslav youth and rock scene. So did the Yugoslavness among the members of the Belgrade rock

[278] Ibid 90
[279] Mirković 2004: 141
[280] Ivacković 2013: 269
[281] *Polet* 18.2.1981.: 22, Ivacković 2013: 269, Mirković 2004: 141
[282] *Džuboks* 108, 13.2.1981
[283] *Džuboks* 110, 13.3.1981
[284] Jovanović 93

scene. This Yugoslavness was experienced as “a sense of community."[285] The scene constructed this solidarity around the common “we” not defined by ethnicity or territory but rather by musical tastes, positioning itself in the opposition to the growing folk music scene.[286]

Yugoslavness was based on tolerance and the idea of the existence of a Yugoslav miniature universe filled with diversities, yet interconnected by a collective fate. It was not always explicitly and openly “Yugoslavist,” but always the opposite of nationalist segregation and exclusiveness.[287] It is difficult to determine to what extent did the country's official policies determine the cosmopolitan and antinationalist character of Yugo rock - or was it more the universalism of rock'n'roll as well as the attachment of the scene to the international music trends.[288]

Academic narratives about Yugoslavia frequently mention shared cultural space, which some authors see as the only "place" within which the SFRY survived even after its disintegration, i.e. the "place" that still lives in the memories of many generations. Mitja Velikonja finds this space in rock and roll, while Ante Perković bases the idea of the "seventh republic" on this perspective.[289] According to Perković, the Seventh Republic of Yugoslavia was an imagined space, bounded by music, sharing with Yugoslavia only its geographical territory and developed far from the interests of cultural and political elites. It was urban, cleansed of any folklore and populated by characters from popular culture. The central argument of the book is that the Seventh Republic, i.e. Yu-Rock, was *Yugoslav* in

[285] Jovanović 110
[286] Ibid 110
[287] Ibid 174
[288] Ibid 175
[289] Marija Ristivojević "Novi talas" u percepciji novih generacija, Institut za etnologiju i antropologiju Filozofski fakultet, Univerzitet u Beogradu,

the “real sense of the word,” being indeed the only “real” Yugoslav phenomenon in the multi-ethnic and multicultural country.[290] The nationalists who started cropping up in the late eighties were disparaging Yu-Rock because it generally stood for values that they despised: critical thinking, cosmopolitanism, openness and personal autonomy.[291]

Pogačar has argued that the relationship between Yugoslav popular culture and the country’s unique geopolitical position in the Cold War world led to the emergence of a specific symbolic Yugoslav cultural universe, or *Yu*niverse. There developed a shared, common cultural experience created through popular culture in the context of Yugoslavia’s unique geopolitical position.[292]

j. Analysis of youth subcultures in relation to CCCS’s and Perasovic’s work

Škvorc (2015) depicts the New Wave as a rebellion against the power of local socialist authorities and against a semi-rural and double-faced parent culture. In Yugoslavia there has always been an antagonistic relationship between the cities and the countryside. [293] The rural population was distanced from the institutions that distributed power, privileges and wealth. These institutions were as a rule located in the city centres.[294] According to the dominant ideology, the new urban, progressively-oriented Yugoslav citizen, as opposed to the 'backward' peasant, was to be the bearer of authentically-Yugoslav cultural expressions.[295] The massive rural-urban migration did not necessarily result in a wished-for cultural effect of a new 'deruralized' individual with progressive values. Instead, the new socialist man

[290] Jovanović 7
[291] Jovanović 6
[292] Ibid 11
[293] Stipe Šuvar (1972) 'Neki aspekti konfliktnih odnosa selo-grad u nasem drustvu'. *Sociology and Space.* no. 35-36, 3
[294] Ibid. 4
[295] Misina 2013: 33

had a dual personality, an 'urban body with a rural soul'. The New Wave generation, the offspring of these 'pseudo-urban semi-culturalites', was the first truly urban one; these were the first 'properly socialized' Yugoslavs.[296]

In post-war Yugoslavia, the migration from rural to urban areas was considered a necessity for building communism and a working class lifestyle. The old rural culture survived in popular culture. The folk tradition, which produced mass culture, was always more popular than subcultural movements.[297]

In his analysis of the most significant Yugoslav youth subcultures, Perasović notes that the fetishisation of consumption on part of sections of shminkeri (*dandies*) expresses a desire for belonging rather than actual belonging to a high socioeconomic position.[298] This is similar to CCCS's account of mod style as an attempt to realise in an imaginary relation the conditions of existence of the socially mobile white collar worker. Their dress and music reflected the hedonistic image of the affluent consumer.[299] Perasović describes the fashion of another subculture, hashomani (a Yugoslav variant of a hippie) as having long hair, 'tankerica' - a version of an American military jacket,[300] wornout skinny jeans, a shirt, a scarf, and jewelry (bracelets for the girls). They had various rituals, including dancing or sometimes lying on the floor of the clubs (or 'listening rooms') listening to music, and gathering in certain places in the city. In these locations, sometimes a few hundred hashomani would gather, despite the absence of official infrastructure.[301]

[296] Ibid.: 36
[297] Škvorc 2015
[298] Perasović 2001
[299] Clarke et al 2006: 24
[300] The use of 'Tankerica' jacket as one of the symbols of hashomani, proves Hall's point in *the Resistance through Rituals* (2006) that neither money nor the market could fully dictate what groups used expressive goods, objects and activities to signify about themselves. It is also an example of the subcultural bricolage – taking an object from one context and placing it in another, recontextualising it and changing its meaning.
[301] Perasović 2001

They endorsed a ‘culture of listening’, a question ‘what do you listen to’ as an identifier.[302] Hashomani’s culture of listening and Yurchak’s concept of the parallel universe of the ‘imaginary West’ emerging in the minds of young Soviet rock music connoiseurs point to the role of imagination and active listening, which goes contrary to Adorno’s claim that pop music promotes passivity and passive consumption, confirms the world as it is.[303] Pop and rock music, for hashomani, played a role that Adorno assumes only the ‘serious’ music can have (Beethoven, Schoenberg) - encouraging imagination, imagining the world as it could be.[304] Yurchak's Soviet rock fans and the Yugoslav New Wave generation reinterpreted communist ideals through rock music - to use Adorno’s terminology, rock music, for them, in this context, was emancipatory.

A young people’s international of sorts emerged across the communist world, sharing similar lifestyles, fashion, music and entertainment.[305] Risch claims, somewhat simplistically, that rock music and its association with the capitalist West led to young people’s disillusionment with Soviet socialism and turned them away ‘from Lenin to Lennon.’[306] Yurchak’s and Mišina’s views are more nuanced – rock musicians and fans subscribed to the tenets of socialism, aimed for the constructive rather than destructive criticism of the system; both Lenin and prog rock were seen as role-models, two worlds coexisted. For the youth, rock was not an antipode to communism.[307]

[302] Ibid
[303] Adorno cited in Storey 2001
[304] Ibid
[305] Risch 2014
[306] Ibid.
[307] Briggs 2014: 280

Unlike the Birmingham authors writing about the situation in Britain, we cannot place Yugoslav subcultures within the working class.[308] Misina claims that the Yugoslav New Wave was primarily a middle class phenomenon. It differed from British punk in that the source of British punk was the disenfranchised working-class youth and their economic predicament, while the Yugoslav New Wave had its roots in the 'alienated', 'invisible' middle-class youth and their condition of 'absent presence'.[309] The initial acts of rebellion in the Yugoslav New Wave came from the middle-class youth's feelings of boredom, emptiness, resignation and alienation, caused by the lack of adequate, if any, urban cultural infrastructure.[310]

In an interview for *Džuboks* in 1980, Jasenko Houra from Prljavo Kazalište notes that they are kids from 'good families... I cannot say I had an unhappy childhood, that I had some serious social problems in my life. I actually had a really happy childhood. Our music stems from us coming from a certain urban environment and a sort of monotony of the city which we're trying to run away from just because we had it all... I do not really believe that a lot can be created in rock music from poverty and misery.'[311]

Anđelković describes the Yugoslav subcultures as completely apolitical, continuously refusing open confrontation. They did not embrace egalitarianism, growing out as they did from the middle class parent culture, focused on the defense of the social position of the middle class.[312]

In *Polet*'s brief analysis of local subcultures, Zagreb is claimed to be the site of the worldwide phenomenon: the poorer children (hashomani) are choosing the value

[308] Perasović 2001
[309] Misina 2013: 91
[310] Ibid.: 91
[311] *Džuboks* 81, 1.2.1980
[312] *Drugom stranom – almanah novog talasa u SFRJ* (1983)

system of the quasi-intellectual middle-class hippiedom, while the well-off youngsters (shminkeri, the dandies) are identifying with the populist, 'working-class' disco sound.[313] In 1980, *Polet* published a surprisingly scathing critique of hashomani, accusing them of uniformity, conformism, herd mentality, and perhaps most importantly for Rudek, the author of the article, terrible taste in music. Hashomani lagged behind the musical trends, still listening to Led Zeppelin and heavy metal in the New Wave era. Their tastes are described by Rudek as reactionary. 'Heavy Metal does not care for the alternatives or changes, it accepts the system as a static and unchangeable fact, which enables its success in the most basic and vulgar commercial sense. In light of this, the claim that the heavy metal culture is the heir to the hippie culture is equally stupid as the claim that the Stalinist Russia is the heir to the ideas of the Paris Commune. One must not forget the utter apoliticism of heavy metal fans...' Rudek compares heavy metal to the religious sects.[314]

As a symbolic violation of the social order, punk attracts attention, provokes censure.[315] The rhetoric of punk was drenched in apocalypse, in the imagery of crisis and sudden change.[316] Hebdige interpretes the history of post-war British youth culture as a succession of responses to the black immigrant presence in Britain.[317] For Cohen, the 'latent function' of subculture was to 'express and resolve, albeit magically, the contradictions which remain hidden or unresolved in the parent culture.' Hebdige, however, does not see the puk subculture as making any symbolic attempts to 'retrieve some of the socially cohesive elements destroyed in

[313] *Polet* 30.1.1980.: 14
[314] *Polet* 9.4.1980., 5
[315] Hebdige 19
[316] Ibid 27
[317] Ibid 29

the parent culture' beyond the expression of a highly structured, visible, tightly bounded group identity. Rather, the punks seemed to be parodying the alienation and emptiness, realizing the direst predictions of the most scathing social critics, and celebrating in mock-heroic terms the death of the community and the collapse of traditional forms of meaning. As a spectacular subculture, punk has a signifying power as a mechanism of semantic disorder: a temporary blockage in the system of representation. Spectacular subcultures express forbidden contents (class consciousness) in forbidden forms law breaking, etc).[318] The subcultural stylist repositions and recontextualizes commodities, subverts their conventional uses and invents new ones; [319] radically adapts, subverts and extends forms of discourse such as fashion. Punk bands dispensed with musical pretensions and substituted 'passion' for 'technique', the common everyday language for the arcane posturings of the élite.[320] Sniffin Glue, the first punk fanzine , in an inspired piece of subcultural propaganda, contained the definitive statement of punk's do-it-yourself philosophy – a diagram showing three finger positions on the guitar over the caption: 'Here's one chord, here's two more, now form your own band'.[321]

Džuboks, in fact, published a surprisingly scathing review of Hebdige's book, describing it as full of 'naive Marxist pretensions', misunderstanding the musical trends which do not engage in subversive design (white swing, disco, glam rock), treating punk and new wave as identical phenomena, and then, even more damningly, comparing punk with criminal forms of deviant behaviour, classic adolescent delinquency, etc. In this way, according to *Džuboks*, Hebdige transforms

[318] Ibid 90-92
[319] Ibid 102
[320] Ibid 110
[321] Ibid 112

himself, in a typical 'young-leftist' vein, from a wanna-be progressive into a conservative, pathetic, armchair intellectual.[322]

k. **Scenes in Eastern Europe**

Yugoslavia liked to present itself as a "special case" with a “special path to socialism",[323] "The West of the East."[324] In Yugoslav media there were barely any mentions of connections with the history of rock and roll in Eastern Europe. The sole mention of an Eastern European band I've found in the *Džuboks* archives referred to the Polish band Brigada Kryzis and it was, unsurprisingly, and hilariously, dismissive - "these so-called Polish musical greats.... are in fact cunts singing for fat managers, the songs are about birds, sun, the sky...."[325] Brigada Kryzis was, in fact, a truly interesting band from the excellent and surprisingly varied and rich Polish scene. The Yugoslav rock media was not only seemingly unaware of the existence of this and similar scenes, but seemed profoundly uninterested. It really did like to present the Yu-scene as the only interesting new wave scene in Eastern Europe.

> "Not in the history of rock and roll in Yugoslavia, nor in the parts of books treating mass culture of that period, is there any mention, for instance, of the fact that in tightly-controlled East Germany an album of hits by the Beatles came out in 1965; or that 92 percent of young people in Budapest in 1969 had attended at least one rock and roll concert; or that the Polish state agency for concert bookings organized a concert by the Rolling Stones in Warsaw in 1967. Although rock and roll in Yugoslavia did have a preferred status in the socialist era,

[322] *Džuboks* 112, 10.4.1981
[323] Vučetić 2018 112
[324] Jovanović 68
[325] *Džuboks* 130, 18.12.1981

Yugoslavia had to wait until June 1976 for its Rolling Stones concert; two of them were held that year in Zagreb, in front of 16,000 guests." [326]

Eastern Europeans liked and 'overvalued' Yugoslav cultural products, as they were experienced as “windows” to Western cultural currents. Touring Eastern Europe was popular among Yugoslav rock bands.[327] The idea of Yugoslavia being the most free and most liberal socialist state was prevalent. In 1982 Johnny Stulic from Azra felt free to openly and harshly criticize Soviet Communism as “totalitarianism of the worst kind,” which prompted an official protest from the Soviet Embassy in Belgrade.[328]

Compared to the Soviet bloc, Yugoslavia offered considerably more freedom of expression, press, more space and tolerance for unorthodox political opinions, and delivered a version of consumption-driven wealth.[329] Ramet’s *Rocking the State,* Risch’s *Youth and Rock in the Soviet Bloc* and Ryback’s *Rock around the Bloc* analyse music scenes in Eastern Europe. Cultural policy and official attitudes towards rock'n'roll in Yugoslavia were certainly the most liberal in the communist world,, particularly when compared with the Soviet Union which, pre-Gorbachev, had an official anti-rock policy;[330] GDR, where punk was illegal until the end of the eighties, and Czechoslovakia, where rock musicians who wanted to perform professionally had to pass a written exam on Marxism-Leninism, and the fight against punk was the priority of the secret police. [331] Certain other regimes,

[326] Vučetić 2018 112- 113
[327] Jovanović 68
[328] Ibid 72
[329] Hyder Patterson 2011: 322
[330] Timothy W. Ryback, (1990) *Rock around the Bloc – a History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. Ramet, Sabrina Petra (ed) (1994) *Rocking the State – Rock Music and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia*. Boulder: Westview Press.
[331] Sabrina Ramet (1994) 'Rock music in Czechoslovakia' in *Rocking the State – Rock Music and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia*. Ed by Ramet, Sabrina Petra Boulder: Westview Press. 59

however, notably Polish and Hungarian, occasionally displayed tolerance, rather than repression and censorship only.[332] In Poland, the security service concluded that punks were not engaged in explicit political activity and they were, to an extent, tolerated.[333]

[332] Ryback 1990, Ramet 1994

[333] Marta Marciniak (2015) *Transnational Punk Communities in Poland.* Lexington Books

Conclusion

As I hope I have shown above, *Polet* and *Džuboks,* as well as the musicians themselves, were navigating the space in-between subversion and orthodoxy. They were critical of the system, but the criticism was always constructive and aimed at realising the ideals of 'socialist humanism' that the party ideologues paid lip-service to. To use Yurchak's terminology, the new wave generation managed to carve out a space for themselves in which they could, mostly unsanctioned, engage in activities and exchange ideas that deviated from the dominant ideology. The new wave musicians, fans and journalists were neither dissidents nor obedient party members – they reinterpreted and transgressed certain norms without ever aiming to topple the regime. Their relationship with the state was ambiguous – their activities were financed and subsidized by the state, while at the same time many of them continuously criticized the system and the mentality and/or carved out a space for themselves in which they could live in an apolitical 'elsewhere', [334] a micro-political free zone. In a country that for a long time did not acknowledge and did not provide resources catering to the alternative youth culture, people showed an admirable initiative to create their own spaces and their own fun; to create hubs of activity, veritable zones of freedom, out of the few less-than-exciting resources that were available – a small group of musicians starts hanging out in a tiny cafe that closes at 9 PM; it becomes a mecca. Young editors of a dull communist youth league party paper dare to write about rock music; what follows is an unprecedented outburst of creativity.[335] I hope I have shown that even in an autocratic regime, such as the

[334] Yurchak 2005

[335] Pavkovic 2010

Yugoslavian one, a complex web of initiatives and endeavours could arise from below that could transform a culture and define an era.

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