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‘The Haçienda Must Be Built’: Regional Club Mythology and Place-Dependent Capital in the ‘Madchester’ Era

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‘The Haçienda Must Be Built’: Regional Club Mythology and Place-Dependent Capital in the ‘Madchester’ Era

Contents:

‘We are bored in the city, there is no longer any Temple of the Sun’ [1]

Opened in 1982 by Tony Wilson and the band New Order, the Haçienda exploded to popularity during the ‘Madchester’ scene of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The opening quote comes from Ivan Chtcheglov’s situationist essay, ‘Formulary for a New Urbanism’, from which the Haçienda assumed its name. Writing about Paris, Chtcheglov bemoans the cultural stagnation afflicting the city, with no place of enlightenment to alleviate boredom and monotony:

> You'll never see the Haçienda. It doesn't exist. The Haçienda must be built. All cities are geological; you cannot take three steps without encountering ghosts bearing all the prestige of their legends…We will not work to prolong the mechanical civilizations and frigid architecture that ultimately lead to boring leisure.[2]

It was certainly not in ignorance that the Manchester nightclub chose this name. As Wilson explained in 1983, ‘It is necessary for any period to build its cathedrals, its necessary for any youth culture to have a place, a sense of place.’[3] This mythical Haçienda, a spiritual remedy against dull leisure and soulless urban life, rang true to the mood of the city at this time. Jon Savage notes when reading Chtcheglov’s text, ‘you find it speaks of reverie, to drift, to feel free. For many times during the last ten years, the Haçienda has been that space.’[4] By the late seventies and early eighties, post-industrial malaise had ignited a distinctive post-punk style, that lamented the dreariness of urban decay and inner city deindustrialisation. Local bands, Joy Division and The Smiths produced a soundscape that foregrounded the specific physical environment of Manchester; Milestone writes, ‘so intense were The Smiths allusions to Manchester spaces and places that there is a vivid geographical sense of their ‘soft city’, a sense of their specific stomping grounds and significant places.’[5] Chtcheglov’s city as a palimpsest resonates here; the streets were imbued with the geological ‘ghosts’ and ‘legends’ of the post-punk scene. However, lamenting ones physical environment could only go so far to alleviate boredom, and the so-called ‘shoe-gazing miserabilist’ sound was

[1] Ivan, Chtcheglov, ‘Formulary for a New Urbanism’, *Situationist International Online,* trans. by Ken Knabb, (Oct 1953) <https://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/presitu/formulary.html> [Accessed 15/04/2021]
[2] Chtcheglov, ‘Formulary for a New Urbanism’
[3] *Riverside: The Hacienda*. Fraser Diagram. BBC Archive. 17 Jan 1983.
[4] Jon Savage, *The Hacienda Must be Built!* (London: International Music Publications, 1992) p.17
[5] Katie Milestone, ‘Madchester’ in, *Sounds and the City,* Vol 2, ed. by Brett Lashua, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019) p.307

succeeded by upbeat, hedonistic dance music; the Haçienda housed these regional mythologies under one roof.[6] At the time of the club's conception, the city bore the distinctive stamp of a musical scene grounded in its post-industrial urban fabric. The club and its patrons prided themselves on a firm sense of regional identity; to be unconventionally and unapologetically rough around the edges was to be authentically Mancunian. At a time when Manchester felt keen to distinguish itself from London's elite and polished cultural dominance, the purposeful anti-glamour of the Haçienda undoubtedly propelled the city into the spotlight, all while being commended for never losing a sense of self. As Wilson triumphantly claimed in 1990; 'If the Beatles had been from Manchester and they had made a load of money off a scene that came out of Manchester, and then had pissed off to London and spent it all in Savile row… they wouldn't be very popular here…'[7] Despite its closure in 1997, and later demolition, the explosion of the Acid House scene at the Haçienda gave the city a new spatial urban legend that still looms large in the cultural memory of the city today.

Milestone notes that Madchester spearheaded one of the most powerfully imagined music scenes in the history of popular music culture.[8] At the centre of the narrative of the Acid House scene is a mythological journey to Ibiza, where it was 'discovered' and returned to the UK; Acid House itself has its own folklore.[9] The Haçienda has been remembered as the locus of this cultural moment, with Liam Gallagher enthusiastically recounting, 'it was the centre of the universe… the best night club in the world.'[10] There are certain methodological issues when dealing with such powerful myth. Mythological spaces can achieve even greater salience over time, and with the death of the subject, they can be memorialised as untarnished and ephemeral. When New Order's Peter Hook asked why Tony Wilson hadn't written an autobiography rather than the fusion of fiction and truth in the film '24 Hour Party People', he apparently replied, 'you must appreciate that the myth is better than the fact every time.'[11] This conscious perpetuating of mythology is something that ran through the core of the Haçienda in life and death. As a club entangled within the sensationalist

[6] Milestone, 'Madchester', p.305
[7] *Celebration: Madchester - Sound of the North*. Granada Television. UK: 6 May 1990.
[8] Milestone, 'Madchester', p.316
[9] Caspar Melville, Peter Martin, *It's a London Thing: How Rare Groove, Acid House and Jungle Remapped the City* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019) p.170
[10] *Do You Own the Dancefloor?.* Dir. Chris Hughes. Shiny Brick Films. 2015.
[11] *Do You Own the Dancefloor?* (2015)

urban legends of Manchester and Acid House, to what extent can these mythologies and history be reconciled? Barthes, in his 1957 text 'Mythologies', argues, 'mythology can only have a historical foundation, for myth is a type of speech chosen by history.'[12] In this sense, in order to understand the values of a culture, we must not dismiss mythology, for its very creation, at a particular time, concerning a specific space and community, allows us to see how individuals forged collective identities laden with meaning; myth is human history.[13] Club culture is the expression given to youth cultures for whom dance clubs are the symbolic axis and working social hub.[14] McNeill argues that group membership gives meaning and value to individual human lives: 'Any other sort of life is not worth living, for we are social creatures.'[15] Partaking in club cultures socialises participants into a shared knowledge of the meanings and values of the culture, with mythmaking as a process by which members of an urban music scene can understand themselves, and their connections with others in a shared space. The Haçienda is part of a series of complex shared spatial mythologies. In order to understand club cultural identity here, we must understand it as a space intwined intimately with wider mythologies of the North, Manchester, and the connotations these spatial mythologies carry. Consequently, much of the source base for this essay comes from documentary film and interviews with prominent figures of the scene, DJ's, club owners and local celebrities, credited for the Haçienda boom. These accounts can be seen as problematic in that they seek to maintain the legendary legacy of the Haçienda through blatantly sensational accounts. However, using these folktales is not to corroborate their statements; in looking critically at how and why these myths were constructed, we can understand their relevance in the production of space and identity. Nevertheless, the Haçienda was more than just its star personalities. The 'Lapsed Clubber Audio Map', by Manchester Digital Music Archive, is an ongoing project that collects oral histories to map a wider network of club culture during the first decade of rave (1985-95). Using this source base, one can understand the voice of the community, not just the figureheads of a movement. These personal insights allow an understanding of Mancunian club culture on a more intimate level. While mythology by its nature must take into account the grand

[12] Roland Barthes, *Mythologies,* trans. by Annette Lavers (New York: Noonday Press, 1991) p.108
[13] Barthes, p.108
[14] Sarah Thornton, *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995) p.14
[15] William H. McNeill, 'Mythistory, or Truth, Myth, History, and Historians', *American Historical Review*, 91 (1986) 1-10, (p.3)

narratives, an exploration into the more 'everyday' accounts of the scene allows us to assess how these mythologies fed into identity formation on the dancefloor.

The Haçienda had a distinct regional identity, priding itself on its authentic construction, within the image of Manchester. However, embodying this regional identity meant more than just geography. Manchester as a space-myth is linked intimately with the perception of the city as home to a specific warm-hearted nature, born out of working-class struggle and solidarity.[16] However, these mythologies carried certain paradoxes. Simultaneous to this classed construction, a narrative of 'classlessness' was sweeping the period and the Acid House movement. How then, could the Haçienda nightclub simultaneously occupy both a classed and classless status? Sociological research on taste has extensively relied upon Bourdieu's 1984 work, 'Distinction', in considering how socio-cultural distinction is manifested and reproduced in social space. Bourdieu argues that personal taste is not the result of an individual's intrinsic nature, but of family background, education and class. Cultural capital is 'accumulated through an upbringing and education which confers social status.'[17] These ideas are explored extensively in Sarah Thornton's influential work on club culture, where she defines a subspecies of capital; subcultural capital. Objectified or embodied, subcultural capital confers status on its owner in the eyes of the relevant beholder, defined by Thornton as 'hipness'. She notes that subcultural capital is not as class-bound as Bourdieu's cultural capital, while class is by no means irrelevant, subcultural capital relies on a 'fantasy of classlessness' and a 'wilful obfuscation' of class through subcultural distinctions. As such, young people derive self-esteem from the leisure sphere, 'which is more conducive to the fantasies of classlessness which are central to club and rave culture.'[18]

There are certain paradoxes implicit in this classless fantasy, noted both by Bourdieu and Thornton. Bourdieu identifies a pattern in French middle-class youth, to refuse complicity within economically stratified society; 'Bourgeois adolescents, who are economically privileged and (temporarily) excluded from the reality of economic power, sometimes express their distance from the bourgeois world which they cannot really appropriate by a

[16] Rob Shields, *Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of Modernity* (London: Routledge, 1991) p.208
[17] Thornton, p.25
[18] Thornton, p.28, p.159

refusal of complicity whose most refined expression is a propensity towards aesthetics and aestheticism.'[19] The Haçienda was a place that deliberately reproduced classed, spatial mythologies of Manchester and 'the North', in its very design and construction, through Bourdieu's 'propensity towards aesthetics'. By frequenting the club, consumers were able to lay claim to a regional identity that was historically intwined with working-class identity, paradoxically enabling middle-class clubbers to play out this fantasy of classlessness. The Haçienda thus could simultaneously function as a classed and classless space. I thus wish to build upon these theories, proposing another subspecies of capital; place-dependent capital. Such a methodology has the potential to add a new dimension to understanding cultures of taste. Skandalis et al uses the recent Manchester 'indie' music scene to formulate an understanding of musical taste that foregrounds place-dependent capital, positioning place as the 'primary basis of experience that shapes the creation of capital investments, drives participation in certain musical fields over others, and ultimately leads to spatial taste formation.'[20] Applying this to the Mancunian club scene in the late eighties and nineties, we can understand Thornton and Bourdieu's paradox of class as intwined with complex space-myths. Occupying specific spaces such as the Haçienda, with mythologies built into its very walls, allowed clubbers to lay claim to a distinctive regional identity that was inseparable from class, which in turn enabled a simultaneously classed and classless club culture.

Chapter one will discuss the contextual underpinnings of the mythologised Mancunian music scene. In order to understand why place mattered at the Haçienda, we must first understand the deeper mythology of the city, located as part of the amorphous 'North'. The reciprocal perpetuation of a north-south divide, although grounded in genuine economic inequality, was utilised to emphasise and exacerbate difference. Chapter one seeks to understand 'northernness' as a regional identity entwined with class, and how this identity was utilised to lay claim to a distinctive and creative cultural milieu. Chapter two will detail how these regional mythologies were deliberately deployed in the creation of the Haçienda and its specific brand of club culture. This north-south divide was encouraged with the emergence of an Acid House fanzine culture, while the physical environment and aesthetics of the club replicated these regional mythologies, in a way that allowed patrons to perform a place-

[19] Thornton, p.159

[20] Alexandros Skandalis, 'Musical Taste and the Creation of Place-Dependent Capital: Manchester and the Indie Music Field', *Sociology,* 54, (2019) 124-141 (p.125)

based working-class identity. This chapter is framed by the theories of Bourdieu and Thornton, to justify the sub-category of place-dependent capital; the Haçienda could thus claim working-class, subcultural authenticity through its deliberately regional, classed environment, while simultaneously manufacturing a 'classless' atmosphere. Finally, chapter three will evidence these theoretical claims through an analysis of oral testimonies from Manchester Digital Music Archive's 'Lapsed Clubber Audio Map'. Through looking at sites of club culture across the city, we can understand how the Haçienda's legacy as uniting the city has been contested. The 'fantasy of classlessness' could not be a reality for those in which clubbing was an essential and serious source of escapism from mundane work.

Chapter 1: Mythologising Manchester: 'Northernness' and Working-Class Identity

The Haçienda was, and remains in memory, a club of national and international acclaim, but its claims to distinction would be negligible without its regionality. In understanding the Haçienda as a spatially mythologised venue, we must first explore the mythologies of both Manchester and the North as a whole. With the rise of Madchester, Milestone notes that a sense of local identity was crucial, 'a distinctly northern, working-class hedonism was prioritised in the lyrics.'[21] This idea of 'northernness' as synonymous with working-class identity was deployed in a way that sought to mark the Mancunian Acid House scene as distinct from its London counterpart. The association between the North and the working-class did not spontaneously arise as a narrative in the 1980s. This affiliation is one that has far-reaching roots that illustrate how this association became a dominant myth in the Mancunian music scenes of the late 20th century. The birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, and the subject of Friedrich Engels' 1845, 'The Condition of the Working Class in England', it is no coincidence that Manchester has a traditional reputation for poverty and polluted landscapes. Giacomo Botta argues that Manchester's image has been constructed as a 'place-myth'; connotations of the North as a working-class, industrial region have developed during the last two centuries via a set of cultural elements, with its subsequent 'marginal place' arousing particular fascination.[22] Additionally, mythologies of the working-class north have typically been forged in opposition to its antithesis, the myth of the affluent south. George Orwell's 1937, 'The Road to Wigan Pier' notes:

> There exists in England a curious cult of Northern-ness, a sort of Northern snobbishness. A Yorkshireman in the South will always take care to let you know that he regards you as an inferior…the North is inhabited by 'real' people… The Northerner has 'grit', he is grim, 'dour', plucky, warm-hearted, and democratic; the Southerner is snobbish, effeminate, and lazy - that at any rate is the theory.[23]

Orwell captures here a collective regional identity, a superiority complex that paradoxically arises from a marginalised place of perceived inferiority. As Gregory notes, 'Paradoxically, Manchester has often exhibited something of a superiority complex. While the streets of

[21] Milestone, 'Madchester', p.305
[22] Giacomo Botta, 'The city that was creative and did not know: Manchester and Popular Music 1976-97', *European Journal of Cultural Studies,* 12, (2009), 349-365, (p.352-353)
[23] George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (London: Martin Secker and Warburg Ltd, 1959) p.110–111

Manchester may have not been paved with gold this certainly did not deter the inhabitants from feeling a deep loyalty to the city and its distinctive culture.'[24] Nevertheless, despite the gloomy connotations of a bleak northern landscape that the region carried, it also bore positive counterparts; rugged, real, human. Shields argues that 'the myth of the British North is much more than a simple space-myth, it is also the myth of 'the Land of the Working Class', and indeed stands in as a symbol of the common unity of the British folk.'[25] The Orwellian idea of the North as inhabited by the 'real' people, those toughened by hard times, but with warm-hearts and a solidarity for other humans, persists in narratives of Manchester's music scene, deliberately placing itself as the opposite of the austere, uncaring south. Manchester is a place of complex spatial mythologies, imbuing its inhabitants with a profound sense of regional identity and allegiance.

This 'cult of northernness' was not a one-sided process, but a reciprocal one, with both North and South deploying and perpetuating images of themselves and 'the other'.[26] London-based newspaper, the Economist noted in 1987: 'The victims of decaying smokestack industry live in the North, the beneficiaries of new high-tech, finance, scientific and service industries, plus London's cultural and political elite, are in the South. Cross the Divide, going north, and visibly the cars get fewer, the clothes shabbier, the people chattier.'[27] The readership is reminded of the bleak industrial and amorphous 'North', occupants are displayed as 'victims' of a region that has failed to modernize and subject to economic deprivation. This divide, described by The Economist as almost an invisible border or threshold to be crossed, was visualised in a piece of graffiti that reads 'It's Grim Up North', present on the Northbound side of the M1 motorway since the early 1970s (figure 1). Of course, referring to the 'myths' of North and South, is not to present them as entirely fictional; this idea of a north-south divide was sparked by legitimate regional economic difference and genuine grievances exacerbated by the processes of de-industrialisation over the course of the seventies and eighties. Under Thatcher, the collapse of old manufacturing industries, predominantly located in the North, alongside growing unemployment,

[24] Georgina Gregory, 'Madchester and the representations of the North south divide in the 1980s and 1990s' in, 'Popular Music in the Manchester Region Since 1950'*, Manchester Region History Review,* 25, (2014) 93-106 (p.95)
[25] Shields, p.208
[26] Dave Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the National Imagination* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004) p.3
[27] Shields, p.232

contrasted with a surge of prosperity in some parts of the South. In 1986 over 59% of adult males living in Hulme were unemployed, mainly those under 21.[28] This juxtaposed sharply with the media image of 'Yuppie' lifestyle in London's booming financial and service sectors. These myths were not simple fictions but forged in line with tangible conditions. Nevertheless, the working-class credentials of the scene could be overstated to secure traditional class distinctions of the north-south divide.[29] This deprivation has continued to echo in perceptions of Manchester, particularly in the music scene during the late eighties and early nineties. During the Madchester era the media utilised this division to reinforce class stereotypes, the hegemony of the South, and notions of the North as the 'other'.[30] 'During a period of extreme social and economic division, the depiction of Manchester as home to the workshy, hedonists and drug abusers, set Mancunians apart from the media depiction of 'Yuppie' culture and its headquarters in the southern-centred finance sector.'[31] However, while the Economist depicts a region grim, decaying and 'shabby', there is simultaneously the observation that in crossing this border, the people become 'chattier'. To be northern was to be instinctually welcoming and approachable, to create organic and meaningful community. London could claim economic and cultural excellence, however its people were thus deemed greedy and uncaring. In accepting a 'grim' portrayal of northern landscape, Manchester could claim a grit and realness that did not exist in the financially prosperous mythology of the 'shallow' south.

This 'cultural elite' referred to by the Economist depicted a dominance of the metropole that the Manchester music scene had strove to counter for decades, manifesting itself in regionally specific scenes such as Northern Soul, the aforementioned locally grounded Mancunian post-punk music scene, and the Madchester scene. In all of these, a sense of regional music and style was deployed as a means of expressing originality and distinction. Richard Davis' photography in Hulme highlights the subscription to this idea of the hegemonic south as an elite centre, void of creativity, and the antithesis of northern culture (figure 2). The idea that money made people superficial, uncreative, and less culturally

[28] Gregory, p.98
[29] Gregory, p.103
[30] Gregory, p.93
[31] Gregory, p.93

Figure 1: Unknown, 'Its Grim Up North', *British Culture Archive*, Photograph, M1 Motorway, (early 1990s) <https://www.facebook.com/britishculturearchive/posts/its-grim-up-north-m1-early-90s-photo-unknowngraffiti-reading-its-grim-up-north-h/447653995694612/> [accessed 16/04/2021]

Figure 2: Richard Davis, 'Def 2 Yuppie Fashion Clones', *British Culture Archive*, Photograph, Hulme, Manchester, (1991) <https://britishculturearchive.co.uk/product/def-2-yuppie-fashion-clones-hulme-manchester-1990s-richard-davis/> [accessed 16/04/2021]

authentic is evident in this statement, 'Def to Yuppie Fashion Clones'. In Manchester, subcultural style adopted a fashion sensibility referred to as the 'baggy' look, characterised by 24 inch 'baggy' flared trousers reminiscent of the Northern Soul era, an image that contrasted sharply with the 'Yuppie' lifestyle.[32] This distinct visual identity was driven to a great extent by independent, adaptable Mancunian companies capable of responding to the nuances of local trends.[33] 'Mancunians gave an equally forceful message of indifference to southern style and values'; fashion was thus deployed as a means of forging a recognisable local identity which transcended the city's image as a 'social and cultural backwater.'[34] The acceptance of negative environmental stereotypes of the North was utilised as a way to claim a grittiness that foregrounded Manchester as the true cultural capital; youth culture was not sterile and polished, but authentic and 'real', falling neatly within the pre-existing mythologies of Manchester as a 'human city'. These reciprocal depictions of north versus south were so persistent that they shone through in international representation. Kurt Loder's 1990 MTV report on 'Manchester's new music scene', broadcast to American audiences, depicts the 'wet and gloomy' environment' as an 'unlikely spawning ground' for musical talent. The report deploys images of a monochrome city-scape, alongside the high-security prison Strangeways. This is juxtaposed with quick cuts to noisy, colourful and jarringly filmed clubbing scenes. The scene's Acid House transition is described thus: 'Now Manchester's unique brand of industrial boredom has produced a second wave of wild new bands…Something that couldn't be found in snooty old London', followed by a cut away to a clubbing interviewee, who exuberantly states, 'no hostility, unity. Unity.'[35] Depictions of Manchester as part of the decaying post-industrial 'north' cannot be untangled from working-class identity. A city defined by its austere environment, an inheritance from the genuine grievances of the Thatcher era, its occupants, no matter their genuine socio-economic standing, were seen to embody a certain kind of community, solidarity and warmth. In amplifying the existence of an economic north-south divide, Mancunian's were able to foster a regional identity that marked them as both culturally distinct and creatively superior to their London rival. 'Northernness' became synonymous with working-class

[32] Gregory, pp.93-99
[33] Gregory, p.98
[34] Gregory, p.106
[35] *Manchester's New Music Scene*. Kurt Loder. MTV. 1990.

identity, and those toughened by hard-times were deemed the patrons of authentic art, style and subculture.

Chapter Two: The Haçienda Must Be Built: Constructing Place-dependent Club Mythology

How then, did these regional mythologies permeate the construction of the Haçienda, the focal point of Manchester's musical landscape from the end of the 1980s? Manchester-based Factory Records, established in 1978, co-founded by Tony Wilson, and later used to finance the Haçienda's opening, sought to challenge the image of the North as culturally stagnant. Ingham argues that Factory can be seen as a response to the perceived inferiority of regional culture, demonstrating that music produced in Manchester could be as good as if not better than that coming from the capital.[36] A mobilising of regional mythology to demonstrate a challenge to London's cultural dominance shone through in the justification for the construction of the Haçienda. When asked about the 'special chemistry' of Manchester, Wilson noted: 'Manchester's a human city, like New York, like Liverpool is occasionally, and unlike cities like London. [So London's Amorphous to you is it?] There is a coldness about the people that doesn't exist in Manchester.'[37] The dichotomy of the 'human' Northerner and apathetic Londoner emerges here once again; this warmth was a perceived by-product of the solidarity typically reminiscent of tight-knit, working-class communities in the North of England. In a 1990 Newsweek article, Wilson draws similar connections between a warm-hearted collectivism and the 'Madchester' scene, stating, 'If there is any idea at all, it is about community and collective strength. There is power in people being lovely to each other.'[38] It is true that the entire Acid House movement has been credited with a certain 'loveliness' due to its attachment to the 'love drug' ecstasy. The summer of 1988 (and 1989) was nicknamed the 'second summer of love' with the notion that ecstasy had a similar impact to that of LSD on youth culture in 1967.[39] While the nation-wide scene was certainly attached to a drug-fuelled cheerfulness, this 'loveliness' when talking about Manchester's scene, is not solely in reference to its chemical manufacture, but is deeply ingrained with mythologies of the North home to a class-bound community spirit.

As discussed in chapter one, regional difference was often constructed through media discourse and popular imagery on both sides of this perceived divide. Applying this to the

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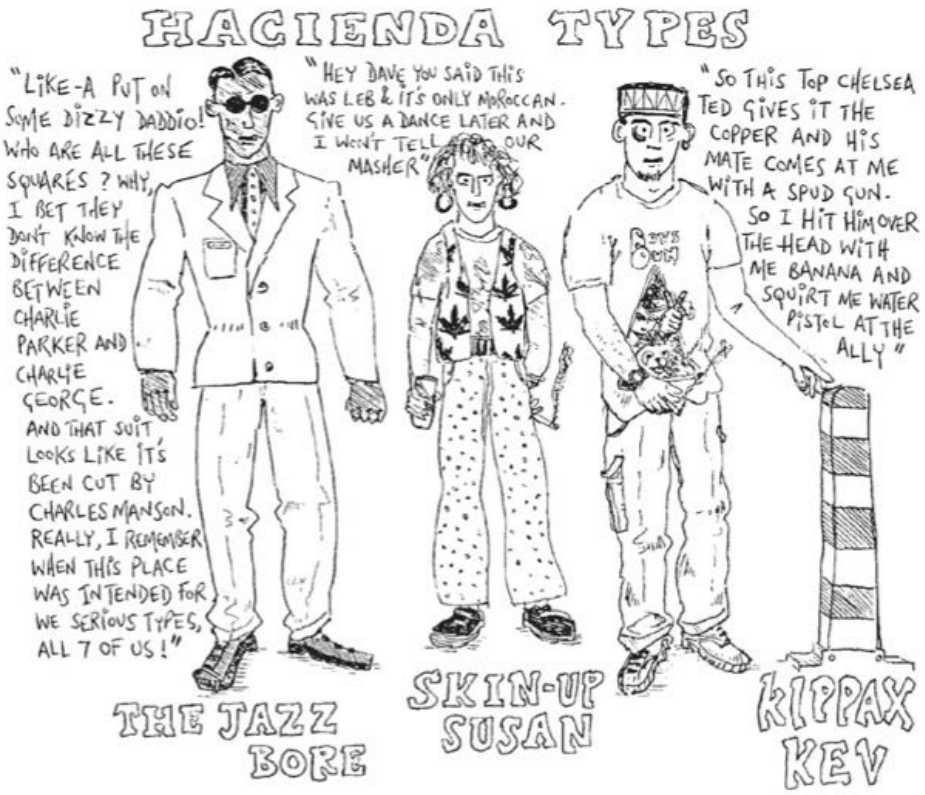
[36] James Ingham, 'Factory records and the situationist influence on urban space' *Punk & Post Punk*, 5, (2016) 163-179 (p.171)
[37] *Riverside: The Hacienda* (1983)
[38] Newsweek Staff, 'Stark Raving Madchester', *Newsweek*, 22nd July 1990, <https://www.newsweek.com/stark-raving-madchester-206796> [accessed 22/04/2021] (para 3)
[39] Milestone, 'Madchester', p.308

Acid House scene, a fanzine print culture sprang up in London and Manchester, that humorously played upon these mythologies in order to light-heartedly assert superiority. 'Boy's Own' was a London based Acid House fanzine that ran from 1986-1992, while Manchester's 'Freaky Dancing', printed between July 1989 and August 1990, was a celebration of the rise of a new music, clubbing and drug scene, at the Haçienda.[40] Both fanzines were written in a playful, satirical and mocking manner reminiscent of the genre. Riddled with spelling errors and rambling, humorous accounts of the scene, these fanzines functioned as the authentic, down to earth voice of a blossoming youth cultural moment. Boy's Own's cartoon 'Haçienda Types' (figure 3) mocks the Haçienda club-goers pretentiousness; 'The Jazz Bore', dressed in a fitted suit and dark sunglasses, with coifed hair, is quoted as saying, 'I remember when this place was intended for we serious types, all 7 of us!' This pompous jazz lover is a reference to the typically more middle-class audience of students and fashion-conscious club kids associated with the Haçienda before its Acid House boom. Matthew Collins notes that initially, the Haçienda was described as 'a freezing Arctic warehouse, the domain of arty group cliqueyness, all dark and dismal indie music', until the onset of the rave revolution.[41] As Haçienda manager Ang Matthews and resident DJ Graeme Park note, [Matthews] 'It was dead. Before house music, there was nobody there midweek. Sometimes there would be five people there.' [Park] 'In the early days, at the band nights, there were a lot of moody men in long overcoats with fringes, drinking beer.'[42] The Haçienda took pride in the diversity and authenticity of its patrons and utilised this as a claim to superiority over the London scene. Contrary to many clubs at the time, the Haçienda proudly boasted no formal dress code. As Happy Mondays member Bez remembers, 'A lot of people thought the Haçienda was a bit of a weirdo club. Other clubs had a dress code, but in there you could do absolutely whatever you wanted, dress exactly how you wanted.'[43] Justin Robertson describes the scene as a more authentic expression of Acid House in comparison to London:

[40] *Celebration: Madchester* (1990)
[41] Matthew Collins, *Altered State: The Story of Ecstasy Culture and Acid House* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2009), p.152
[42] Daniel Dylan Wray, 'The Oral History of the Hacienda, One of History's Most Notorious Nightclubs', *Vice*, (31st December 2020) <https://www.vice.com/en/article/m7a93p/the-oral-history-of-hacienda-nightclub-manchester> [accessed 19/04/2021] (para 23 and 25)
[43] Wray, 'The Oral History of the Hacienda', (para 34)

Figure 3: Boy's Own, 'Haçienda Types', Clive Martin, 'The Story of Boy's Own: The Acid House Gang Who Changed British Clubbing', *Vice,* (25th March 2014) <https://www.vice.com/en/article/vd84wx/how-boys-own-changed-british-dance-music%3E> [accessed 22/04/2021]



In Manchester it was quite close to what Acid House was about – people from council estates and students, not particularly trying to promote some image of togetherness, but just getting on with it. And certainly not being elitist – that's the funny thing. All the early stuff you used to read about the London Acid House scene was love and peace, but then they had the most strict door policy.[44]

The scene's authenticity and perceived superiority over London, stemmed from its transcendence of class. The scene need not celebrate a coming together of different socio-economic groups, for a triumphalist imposition of classless togetherness in fact renders the scene less genuine and counterproductively draws further lines of difference between these groups. As Thornton notes, 'both cultural and subcultural capital put a premium on the 'second nature' of their knowledges.'[45] A 'second natured', silent transcendence of class was thus deemed more authentically unified, real and superior. Boy's Own's 'Haçienda Types' mocks this Mancunian sense of moral superiority through a denial of class transcendence, by

[44] Collins, p.155
[45] Thornton, p.27

playfully depicting the club-goers as a ridiculous group of pretentious, pseudo club stereotypes, inverting Manchester's claims to diversity and distinction. The Jazz Bore mourns the days before the Acid House boom, while 'Kippax Kev' farcically brags of his violent exploits, fighting a 'Chelsea Ted' with a banana and a water pistol.

These jibes were certainly mutual, Freaky Dancing writes: 'Some southern Jessy was handing out 12 month old copies of Boy's Own. Don't be fooled by inferior copies… Freaky Dancing is the real thing!'[46] The page goes on to give a 'completely unbiased', (written with heavy sarcasm) comparison of the two Fanzines:

> Freaky Dancing is free and contains no adverts…Boy's Own costs one pound (Thatcherite Bastards)…Freaky Dancing uses a laser printer…Boys Own uses a type-writer (sic) (technical south indeed…Manchester University invented the computer!). Southerners (London) think they discovered house music, but it was the Haçienda…not Shoom or the Wag Club! So all in all the judge has decided that it's a resounding victory for Freaky Dancing and Manchester!', 'So kids, if a dark stranger comes up to you in the Haçienda offering you a crap southern fanzine…JUST SAY NO! (or if you come from Bramhall or Alderley Edge, NO THANK YOU!)[47]

Similar tropes are used to generalise north and south as opposite, musically and economically. Freaky Dancing's low budget publication, handed out for free in the Haçienda queue, is contrasted with Boy's Own's apparently 'Thatcherite' ethos (Boys Own actually charged 40p per copy).[48] The authors mock the popular conception of London as the technological, financial centre of 'yuppie' culture, noting that Boy's Own is technologically 'behind the times', while Manchester, deemed 'backward' in popular mythology, is declared the originator of modern technology and culture. 'Southerners' is established as referring solely to London, emphasising how a north versus south dichotomy was often utilised as a means for the two large cities, competing for musical and cultural dominance, to express conflict. Freaky Dancing humorously plays upon the interlinking and opposing mythologies of north and south. In their mockery of London's scene, the fanzine playfully but deliberately links perceptions of the south with gentrification and an elitist, flashy musical scene. The

[46] 'Every Boy's Dream…' *Freaky Dancing*, Issue 2, (July 1989), p.12 <http://www.phatmedia.co.uk/flyers/event/freaky-dancing-issue-2-pages-916> [accessed 19/04/2021]
[47] Every Boy's Dream…' (1989)
[48] Stephen Titmus, 'Boy's Own: A History' *Resident Advisor,* (12th Jan 2010) <https://ra.co/features/1139> [accessed 19/04/2021] (para 14)

North, however, is presented as the working-class, un-pretentious, authentic parallel. This light-hearted cultural rivalry was an integral part of Acid House fanzine culture. While glaringly unserious, through these satirical remarks we can understand how regional scenes used pre-existing tropes to assert distinctiveness, and how both sides of this invisible north-south divide utilised the place-based mythologies of the music scene to place themselves at the forefront, and lay claim to a burgeoning youth cultural movement.

While divisions between North and South and their respective clubbing scenes has been culturally constructed in print, these mythologies were also environmental, rooted in the physical creation of the Haçienda. Milestone examines how Shields' idea of 'northernness' as constructed through discourse, images and popular cultural ideas, became more established with the emergence of places like Affleck's Palace and the Haçienda; 'through the creative reuses of industrial buildings, pop culture begins to change the built environment of the city.'[49] Post-industrialism is a theme that reoccurs in discussions of the physical space of the Haçienda. Interviewed in 1983, club designer, Ben Kelly, details the thought process behind its construction. Using roadside cat's eyes, bollards and steel girders, alongside colours and designs taken from industrial environments, such as yellow and black stripes, Kelly knowingly produced a space that 'kept with Manchester's industrial roots.'[50] Botta argues that, between 1976 and 1997 popular music worked in Manchester as a 'creative urban milieu', through 'continuous interaction with the local, social and spatial environment', creating a sensibility in which an 'ugly' northern industrial environment could be perceived and represented.[51] De-industrialisation left many vast spaces in Manchester's urban fabric disused and decaying. The city's vacant warehouses and factories provided ideal sites for post-punk band rehearsals and backdrops for promotional videos, an idea that was reproduced in the spatial construction of the Haçienda, which co-opted a large warehouse.[52] Certainly, the wider Acid House and rave scenes occupied similar large derelict spaces and have been historicised as an expression of hedonism and community, a disruptive antithesis to Thatcherism as a hegemonic project.[53] However, in Manchester, the clubbing scene can

[49] Katie Milestone, 'Urban Myths: Popular Culture, the City and Identity', *Sociology Compass*, 2, (2008), 1165-1178, (p.1172)
[50] *Riverside: The Hacienda* (1983)
[51] Botta, p.350
[52] Milestone, 'Madchester', p.307
[53] Andrew Hill, 'Acid House and Thatcherism: Noise, the Mob, and the English Countryside', *British Journal of Sociology*, 53, (2002) 89-105 (p.89)

be seen as deliberately constructed in line with the architecture of the city itself. Remembered in the documentary 'Do You Own the Dancefloor', the Haçienda is described as the opposite of a 'glitzy club', 'it was a warehouse, it was grunge.'[54] One interviewee, Helen Fielding, notes 'it was an Industrial landscape', while another notes, 'when the Haçienda was built in the early 80s Manchester was a pretty dismal place with not a lot of opportunities and not a lot of hope, there was nothing – you wouldn't come out in Manchester at night.'[55] Redhead has described this Mancunian clubbing sensibility as 'hedonism in hard times.'[56] Freaky Dancing describes a drug-fuelled feeling of escapism that corroborates this, stating, 'This is the happy place – this is the real life. This is the happy place in a bad time. No-one speaks of the bad time in here – because there is nothing new that can be said.'[57] These parties rationalised an emptiness, 'a void in the direction of energy on the dancefloor, void in the mind, void in articulated politics, with E convincing all that this void made sense, that it was not scary or depressing but a thing to feel good about.'[58] While it could be argued that this was the impetus for the whole Acid House project, Manchester's history of industrialism and subsequent post-industrial malaise, allowed this mythology to take on specific place-based traits and utilise them as a club brand; Redhead notes 'the emphasis was on partying in the post-industrial, 'no future' city.'[59] The club's construction conjured up images of a working-class industrial workplace. In this way, the Haçienda felt authentically Mancunian. Tony Wilson, interviewed in 1983, noted this intent:

> If you walked into a space that was anything else, that had velveteen sofas, a renovated staircase approach of The Camden Palace you'd feel like you weren't in Manchester anymore, but here you're still in Manchester; the industrial shapes, the angular lines, the steel is, and can be beautiful.[60]

Once again, the space is juxtaposed against the opulence of a London club. In its romanticising of stark factory space, the physicality of the club amplified the myths that had

[54] *Do You Own the Dancefloor?* (2015)
[55] *Do You Own the Dancefloor?* (2015)
[56] Milestone, 'Madchester', p.305
[57] 'Intro…' *Freaky Dancing*, Issue 1, (1989), p.5 <https://www.mdmarchive.co.uk/artefact/1237/HACIENDA_FANZINE_1989> [accessed 19/04/2021]
[58] Hillegonda Rietveld, 'Repetitive Beats: Free parties and the politics of contemporary DiY dance culture in Britain', in *DiY Culture: Party & Protest in Nineties Britain,* ed. by George McKay (London: Verso, 1998) p.252
[59] Milestone, 'Madchester', p.305
[60] *Riverside: The Hacienda* (1983)

long been mobilised within the city's creative and musical scene. The reclaiming of industrial spaces left vacant from the ravages of de-industrialisation revitalised a gloomy city, authentically resonating with the city's working-class, industrial history and its inhabitants.

This romanticising of the physicality and spatiality of Manchester pervaded every aspect of its environment, even playing into specific weather conditions. The gloom of the post-industrial city is imbued with a sort of pathetic fallacy whereby the city's hardship is connected with the region's grey skies and drizzly weather conditions. One documentary poetically notes, 'the roots of the Haçienda ran deeply into Manchester, it was as much a part of the city as the rain that fell on its red rooves.'[61] The club was profoundly connected with both the built and natural environments, which themselves are linked to historical specificities of the city. Skandalis et al have drawn on interviews with local participants in their study of Manchester's 'Indie' music scene. One participant, Rebecca, alludes to the idiosyncratic cultural character of the city:

> There's an element of creativity that's drawn out by misery and poverty and grey skies…Manchester is a poetic city. It's constantly in juxtaposition of modern and traditional…I think it's just a city that lends itself well to the arts because of its size, because of the necessity of finding interesting things to do when the weather's terrible. I don't know, community?[62]

The well-established trope of northern grit and struggle generating solidarity is again mobilised and further embodied in the gloomy weather conditions, the rain itself begets creativity and community. There is a perceived connection between adversity and cultural authenticity, those who face hardship cope through the forging of community ties and this in turn sparks a distinctive and creative production of culture.

For a long time, the idea of 'real' creativity has been connected to hardship. Since the rise of subcultural theory, and the influential work of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), with formative texts such as Hall and Jefferson's 1975, 'Resistance Through Rituals', and Hebdige's 1979, 'Subculture: The Meaning of Style', it has been deemed that 'authentic' subculture is inherently working-class.[63] In this early work,

[61] *Love Will Tear Us Apart: A History of the Hacienda.* Dir. Jane Stanton. Granada Television. May 1999..
[62] Skandalis, p.130
[63] Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Taylor and Francis Group, 1981), pp.1-208

subculture is interpreted as a symbolic expression of resistance by a younger working-class, against dominant middle-class culture and parent culture. Working-class youths forge resistant subcultures as a means of negotiating the post-war weakening of working-class identity.[64] However, more recently, the notion of subcultural resistance has been considerably diluted in favour of a model that sees subcultural activity as more dependent on commerce and convention.[65] Thornton argues that accumulation of subcultural capital can work to disavow social categories, while 'the assertion of subcultural distinction relies, in part, on a fantasy of classlessness.'[66] At the same time however, it can also paradoxically reproduce these social categories, depending on the place.[67] As widely discussed, in particular by Alwyn Turner, a narrative of a classless society was one which found expression in both political and cultural discourse during this period. In 1990, John Major promised to 'make changes that will produce across the whole of this country a genuinely classless society', to build a country 'that is at ease with itself.'[68] The defining philosophy of the post-Thatcher era seemed an appeal to this more palatable meritocracy, by breaking down the barriers to social mobility. Similarly, the nationwide Acid House scene has been celebrated as a cultural movement whereby social barriers that structured subcultural affiliation were blurred, while rave has been credited with 'offering solutions to the intractable social divisions of class, race and gender which bedevilled life in the late twentieth-century city.'[69] With the popularity of Acid House at the Haçienda in the late 1980s, the club was heralded as an inclusive space that united people from all parts of the city. Tony Wilson noted, 'the wonderful thing about popular music is that it is a classless artform, job descriptions don't enter into it.'[70] Where the club had once been predominantly frequented by middle-class students, trendies and soul boys, it began attracting a new demographic; youths from the sink estates of north Manchester. Paul Cons reminisces; 'It seemed like a really eclectic mix, everyone rubbed shoulders and got on really well whether they were students or scallies or whatever.'[71] Acid House seemed to unite the city, 'the outcasts from the North side of town,

[64] Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson, *Resistance through Rituals: Youth subcultures in post-war Britain,* 2nd edn, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006) pp.1-248
[65] Ken Gelder and Sarah Thornton, *The Subcultures Reader* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp.83-89
[66] Thornton, p.28
[67] Gelder, pp.83-89
[68] Alwyn W. Turner, *A Classless Society: Britain in the 1990s,* (London: Aurum Press Ltd, 2013) p.11
[69] Melville, p.165
[70] *Riverside: The Hacienda* (1983)
[71] Collins, p.140

the scammers and grafters and chancers and characters mixing with the pop stars and students and fashion-conscious club kids.'[72] The paradox Thornton speaks of is thus visible at the Haçienda; heralded for its classless atmosphere while simultaneously perpetuating a place-based and thus class-bound mythology of 'northernness'.

Thornton elaborates further: 'In fact, class is wilfully obfuscated by subcultural distinctions. For instance, it is not uncommon for public-school-educated youth to adopt working-class accents during their clubbing years.'[73] As a place imbued with working-class northern identity, the Haçienda was thus used as a place whereby this transcendence of class by middle-class consumers could be achieved. The contradictions of club politics are twofold; 'At one level, youth do aspire to a more egalitarian and democratic world.'[74] In this sense, these place-based and class-bound mythologies function as stories that can help people deal with contradictions in their lives that can never be fully resolved and can be read as genuine desire to overcome societal divisions.[75] At another level, 'classlessness is a strategy for transcending being classed. It is a means of obfuscating the dominant structure in order to set up an alternative and, as such, is an ideological precondition for the effective operation of subcultural capital. This paradoxical combination of resignation and refusal, defiance and deference would seem to be characteristic of youth subcultures.'[76] In the intersection between childhood and adulthood, young people are less anchored in their social place. By investing in leisure, youth can further reject being fixed socially, acting as a buffer against an acceptance of one's position in a highly stratified society.[77] This obfuscation of class, or as Bourdieu calls it, a 'refusal of complicity' through a 'propensity towards aesthetics' is implicit in the Haçienda's simultaneously classed aesthetic (industrial-design) and classless atmosphere.[78] As such, club culture at the Haçienda was 'intricately and essentially place-bound' and utilised as a means for young clubbers to generate place-dependent capital.[79] Through occupying a space constructed within the image of a traditionally working-class city, patrons could assume this identity, and manufacture a 'fantasy of classlessness'. The

[72] Collins, p.140
[73] Thornton, p.28
[74] Thornton, p.254
[75] Melville, p.171
[76] Thornton, p.255
[77] Thornton, p.160
[78] Thornton, p.159
[79] Skandalis, p.137

Haçienda could thus lay claim to this ‘real creativity’ and working-class subcultural authenticity through its deliberately regional, classed environment, while paradoxically manufacturing an egalitarian, ‘classless’ atmosphere, which as chapter three shall explore, could counterproductively reproduce social categories.

Chapter 3: Exploring the Lapsed Clubber Archive: An Internal North-South Divide?

This theory can be further explored through the analysis of personal memories from the wider Mancunian clubbing scene. In reality, the 'open door' policy that the Haçienda prided itself on may not have led to a utopia of accessibility. Customers typically came from middle-class and upper working-class groupings. 'The scallies that were at the Haçienda were the more progressive ones, more sussed; it was more bohemian working-class kids – maybe they went to Amsterdam or were doing a bit of part-time drug dealing to have a good life, not get a proper job.'[80] For many working-class people, a celebration and romanticisation of industrial space was not reminiscent of a leisure environment. The club failed to function as a place of hedonistic escape for those whose work-days consisted of banal factory work. Peter Saville, co-founder and graphic designer for Factory Records, notes:

> The irony is, when it opened it baffled the young people of Manchester for whom it was created. They didn't know what to make of it. I had an interesting encounter with some young guys who were asking me about it. They were really curious but intimidated by it. They said, "What does it look like?" So I said, "It looks like a warehouse." And the response was: "We spend all day in a warehouse." That was very telling. It made us all realise that there was a sort of middle class intellectual conceit around the idea of the celebration of industrial culture.[81]

For some working-class young people, the work versus play dichotomy could not be achieved when occupying a club based in an industrial warehouse; the illusion of leisure as a place free from the routine of work was shattered. The disconnect between a middle-class 'intellectual conceit' around the romanticization of 'industrial-chic' versus the reality of working-class experience is evident. Milestone has argued that a pop scene was generated that was recognisably Mancunian, 'northern' and working-class, in spite of the fact that many of the key players came from Salford, Cheshire and Lancashire and many were middle-class.[82] For middle-class consumers, this industrial aesthetic allowed them to perform working-class identity, to those who need not perform it however, these spaces could be both intimidating and futile.

[80] Collins, p.140
[81] Wray, 'The Oral History of the Hacienda', (para 16)
[82] Milestone, 'Madchester', p.313

Manchester Digital Music Archive's 'Lapsed Clubber' project is a valuable collection of oral histories by clubbers from the 'first decade' of rave (1985-95). The anonymous public forum allows participants to record their voices as a sound-clip, or write a written memory, and pin this onto a map of Greater Manchester, documenting a far-reaching network of club culture and a social history of rave across the city.[83] In investigating these histories, we can see a narrative of the scene that correlates with Thornton's middle-class fantasy of classlessness, and the counterproductive entrenching of social categories this perpetuated. One memory, pinned to the Haçienda, notes, 'The Haçienda didn't really click with me because it was quite middle-class.'[84] While another tellingly titled 'Not the Haçienda (Life)', writes, 'Bowlers was just amazing because you had The Haçienda which obviously was you know like 'the brand' if you like, but it was pretentious there; it was all bullshit.'[85] A bitterness towards the Haçienda's overbearing dominance in the Mancunian scene is discernible. The image of a pretentious 'brand' reads as a frustration with the mainstreaming and commercialisation of the scene. Those without the disposable income to pay larger entrance fees were alienated from these more commercial clubs. Often, those excluded would be underage working-class kids from the North of Manchester, who sought out less restricted and often 'rougher' clubs:

> I think The Banshee is really special in my memory because it was the first place that I took my E and it was kind of apart from The Haçienda, which I didn't really have the guts to go into yet. The Banshee was easier to get in than the Hac when you were underage. It was a bit cheaper as well, so I think for me with The Banshee, it's that you always knew [you'd get in].[86]

As a young kid, the Haçienda took 'guts' to get into, likely due to the probability of refusal. With the Haçienda's boom to popularity, its open door policy became harder to achieve. Similarly, with the rise of gang violence tethered to the club, doormen started turning away people who they thought looked undesirable, even fanatical devotees.[87] For younger kids,

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[83] Manchester Digital Music Archive, *The Lapsed Clubber Audio Map,* Manchester Metropolitan University, <https://www.mdmarchive.co.uk/map_home/the-lapsed-clubber-audio-map> [accessed 24/04/2021]
[84] Manchester Digital Music Archive, 'Middle class media types', *The Hacienda,* <https://www.mdmarchive.co.uk/map/the-lapsed-clubber-audio-map/45> [accessed 24/04/2021]
[85] Manchester Digital Music Archive, 'Not the Hacienda (Life)', *Bowlers,* <https://www.mdmarchive.co.uk/map/the-lapsed-clubber-audio-map/36> [accessed 24/04/2021]
[86] Manchester Digital Music Archive, 'Upstairs for E's Downstairs for Whizz', *The Banshee,* <https://www.mdmarchive.co.uk/map/the-lapsed-clubber-audio-map/108> [accessed 24/04/2021]
[87] Collins, p.164

with limited funds, these alternative clubs were places where formative memories (such as first drug experiences) were made, and all-importantly could be made, due to the likelihood of entry. A club called the Thunderdome 'drew the youth from the surrounding estates of Miles Platting, Ancoats, Clayton and Newton Heath, people who were desperate to get out, or simply out of it.'[88] Club photographer Gary McClarnan remembers it as a stark space, frequented predominantly by working-class kids from North Manchester: 'The Thunderdome was a very vicious sort of night, very hard-edged…Heavy music, hard, dark. Cheaper drugs. Acid and speed.'[89] A number of memories from the archive similarly highlight the Haçienda as less accessible to working-class young people, who in turn sought out alternative spaces. Contributors note, 'The Thunderdome was a proper gritty, working class night club in the fucking area where anyone could get in'[90] and, 'the Thunderdome was proper, but those kids would not have got in The Haçienda'.[91] This idea of 'grit' is typically something attributed to Manchester as a whole, particularly in relation to London, however, these same mythologies are utilised to draw parallels between the middle-class exclusivity of the Haçienda and genuine working-class clubs.

This theme of a class divide within Mancunian club culture is further elaborated in the Lapsed Clubber Archive:

> Yeah I only went to The Haçienda a couple of times… I never really used to go because it was twelve quid on a Saturday night and that was almost like 50% of what I was living off for a week, so I didn't go, and I think because I thought it was expensive, I had these ideas about the people who went.[92]

This memory notes how monetary barriers prevented working-class people from frequenting the club regularly and created a certain resentment towards the people who could afford to go; an assumed middle-class audience alienated working-class club-goers, who created their own ideas about the people that must occupy this space. The experience of 'classlessness'

[88] Collins, p.142
[89] Collins, pp.142-143
[90] Manchester Digital Music Archive, 'Gritty', *The Thunderdome,* <https://www.mdmarchive.co.uk/map/the-lapsed-clubber-audio-map/4> [accessed 24/04/2021]
[91] Manchester Digital Music Archive, 'Lenny Henry', *The Thunderdome,* <https://www.mdmarchive.co.uk/map/the-lapsed-clubber-audio-map/4> [accessed 24/04/2021]
[92] Manchester Digital Music Archive, 'Destroy Posse', *The Hacienda,* <https://www.mdmarchive.co.uk/map/the-lapsed-clubber-audio-map/45> [accessed 24/04/2021]

could not be a reality for those who had to sacrifice a large sum of their income for one night of hedonistic leisure. One memory acknowledges a spatial divide within the city: 'North Manchester is like a different city to South Manchester, you know it was a different scene and it was a bit more old-fashioned.'[93] The class divide within the Mancunian club scene was also environmental. A stark contrast can be drawn here between the idea of the Haçienda as 'uniting the city' with this depiction of 'different cities' and 'different scenes'. The same mythology of the less advanced, traditional north in contrast to the modern, affluent south is utilised here, except this divide is now evident within the city itself; the national divide becomes local. McClarnan also notes the presence of a local north-south economic divide, like the one frequently portrayed between London and Manchester: 'There's a north-south divide in Manchester. The south is cosmopolitan – students and media types. The North is rough and barren to look at. People have had a hard life. It's an exploited area, a sad case for housing, there's more unemployment.[94] In a denial of the homogeneity of Mancunian mythology, North Manchester's landscape is contrasted as the 'gritty' and bleak counterpart to the wealthier south of Manchester. The Haçienda's claims of uniting the city may not have been as all-encompassing as popularly remembered; the national North-South divide, so heavily dwelled upon by the scene, perhaps overshadowed the divide that existed within the city itself.

Prevalent in these archival memories is a difference in mood, an inflated importance of clubbing for working-class youths who craved escape from the mundanity of work. A seriousness and melancholia is discernible, emotions that contrast with the ecstasy-fuelled cheerfulness of the Haçienda. Of course, the Haçienda was not free from the real fear that pervaded many of the city's late night venues. Collins notes the perpetual dilemma that pervades the regeneration of any city through nightlife: 'Club culture is a traditionally marginal economy, intimately bound up with the trade in illicit drugs, leaving it vulnerable to criminals and black market operators.'[95] Increasing gang violence eventually led to the closure of the Haçienda, amongst many other prominent Acid House venues. However, while negotiating dangerous relations with local gangs, the Haçienda's internal clubbing

[93] Manchester Digital Music Archive, 'Men in North Manchester', *The Thunderdome,* <https://www.mdmarchive.co.uk/map/the-lapsed-clubber-audio-map/4> [accessed 24/04/2021]
[94] Collins, p.142
[95] Collins, p.174

atmosphere is often remembered less ominously, with violence never fully deterring from the hedonistic pleasure. Dave Haslam remembers: 'After all the fighting had stopped, it was like nothing had happened. This sounds like idealistic DJ talk, but I knew I had the records to turn the mood around. I remember feeling like I had the power of music. Whatever else was happening, 99 percent of the audience were there for all the right reasons.'[96] One contributor to the Lapsed Clubber Archive notes this mood disparity, clubs like the Thunderdome were many people's raison-d'étre and making enough money to go was essential: 'A lot of the people I knew didn't work at that time, so they would do whatever they could to get that money for that Thursday and a Saturday there and it was your life.'[97] Another, in a memory aptly titled, 'Dance as if your life depended on it', writes:

> Again, I'm gonna talk about a Thunderdome moment…You got into a kind of very serious frame of mind when you were dancing. It was very different to when you were dancing at The Haçienda because there wasn't much smiling by anybody. You kind of danced like your life depended on it and as if you were dancing because you were working to dance. It's kind of a serious thing.[98]

In the opening sentence, there is a knowing persistence in highlighting the importance of smaller clubs and changing the conversation from the dominance of the Haçienda. This memory is particularly enlightening in providing emotional insight into the clubbing atmosphere, explicitly contrasting the two clubs and their associated temperaments. Places such as the Thunderdome were cheaper alternatives to mainstream Acid House venues, attracting a larger north Mancunian working-class audience. These people's lives revolved around the club, they 'worked to dance'. Again we see a class-based disconnect between clubbing audiences here, a different mindset; hedonistic leisure may encompass the mentality and appeal of clubbing itself, but for some, this hedonism and leisure served a far more serious purpose, a vital lifeline and essential distraction from the everyday; their 'lives depended on it'. It must be noted that the drug-scenes associated with different clubs may have had an effect on their perceived 'moods'. As noted, the Haçienda was associated with

[96] Wray, 'The Oral History of the Hacienda', (para 69)
[97] Manchester Digital Music Archive, 'Fresh, new and Untainted', *The Thunderdome,* <https://www.mdmarchive.co.uk/map/the-lapsed-clubber-audio-map/4> [accessed 24/04/2021]
[98] Manchester Digital Music Archive, 'Dance as if your life depended on it', *The Thunderdome,* <https://www.mdmarchive.co.uk/map/the-lapsed-clubber-audio-map/4> [accessed 24/04/2021]

the use and sale of the 'love drug' Ecstasy, while clubs such as the Thunderdome were associated with cheaper, less euphoric drugs such as acid and speed. The atmospheres in the two clubs could be both demographically and chemically engineered. Ultimately, these personal insights allow us to understand the construction of Mancunian club culture in an intimate and emotional way. While mythology by its nature must take into account the grand narratives, an exploration into the more 'everyday' accounts of the scene allows us to critically assess how these mythologies fed into identity formation and to build upon on Thornton and Bourdieu's theories of taste cultures. Oral histories reveal the Haçienda as a space that, through its place-based and thus class-bound construction, could work to produce a middle-class idea of 'classless fantasy', while simultaneously reinforcing these social categories.

To conclude, using the theories of taste formation by Bourdieu and Thornton as a historiographical and methodological framework, we can use the example of Manchester's Haçienda nightclub to assert a new sub-category of subcultural capital; place-dependent capital. While Skandalis explores this concept in relation to the recent Mancunian indie music scene, due to the nature of 'Madchester', a genre blurring fusion of Acid House and 'indie' music, we can use this same sub-category to bridge the gap between the widely explored spatial histories of Manchester's post-punk musical landscape, and club cultural theory.[99] Regional mythologies of Manchester, long constructed as a working-class city, have been utilised by local musical scenes to claim authentic and creative subculture. Defined by hardship, creativity was seen to bloom from the bleakness of urban environments and the necessity of distraction. This idea of authenticity chimed with the pre-existing mythologies of Manchester as a working-class 'human city'. Through a creative manufacturing of the city's urban space and industrial history within a club setting, the Haçienda allowed clubbers to claim a place-dependent, and thus class-bound form of subcultural capital. At the same time that John Major was defining his classless vision for the 1990s, and Acid House seemed to be breaking down social divisions, the Haçienda's deliberately regional and thus classed environment paradoxically enabled what Thornton dubs a 'fantasy of classlessness'. Through assuming this regionally classed identity, a transcendence of class by middle-class consumers could be realised. Club culture at the Haçienda was thus profoundly place-bound. The Haçienda could lay claim to the 'real creativity' associated with a long history of working-class British subculture, in an attempt to elevate the scene above its London counterpart, which was depicted as a gentrified, superficial parallel, while paradoxically manufacturing the 'classless' atmosphere that was celebrated as the export of the revolutionary rave moment. Using a source base that both encompasses the grand narratives and sensationalised accounts, that enable the mythology in the first place, at the same time as community voices from a broader Mancunian clubbing scene, intends not to discredit mythology but to understand it as part of a wider spatial and temporal context, while doing justice to the voices that mythologies tend to overlook. In encapsulating the Haçienda's unique production of place-dependent capital, one can look to the documentary 'Do You Own the Dancefloor', which records the auctioning of parts of the Haçienda in 2000, after its

[99] Milestone, 'Madchester', p.308

demolition. One buyer who purchased the urinal from the club absurdly, yet poignantly states 'that's Manchester's history in piss I suppose', while a buyer of part of the dancefloor notes, 'Think of all the people that have been on that… and all the moments.'[100] Place-dependent capital achieves new salience; the very dancefloor is imbued with the memories and traces of club goers, these footsteps are all that is left of a vital, ephemeral piece of Manchester's cultural history. The distribution of these cherished objects reflects the process by which significant venues leave a legacy of individual memories but also scatter their influence beyond the four walls of the building.[101]

[100] *Do You Own the Dancefloor?* (2015)
[101] Dave Haslam, *Life After Dark: A History of British Nightclubs and Music Venues* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2016) p.388

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