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**ELECTRONIC DANCE MUSIC  
IN UKRAINIAN  
MUSICAL CULTURE**

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The purpose of the work is to analyse the features of electronic dance music (EDM) in the cultural space of Ukraine in the late 2000s and early 2010s based on the study of online publications on electronic dance music, review the most important events in EDM culture and provide an interpretation of the most relevant musical trends over the past two decades. The research methodology includes descriptive and interpretive approaches, statistical analysis, synthesis and generalization of the collected information to complete the scientific understanding of the electronic dance music existence in Ukrainian culture. The scientific novelty. The festivals of electronic dance music in Ukraine in the late 2000s – early 2010s were studied for the first time; the study describes the features and genre diversity of electronic dance music and the most popular trends of techno and house music. Conclusions. The study has demonstrated that electronic dance music in Ukraine was the most popular in the late 2000s – early 2010s, when it was played not only in dance clubs, but also at festivals. The following EDM festivals in Ukraine have been analysed: “KaZantip republic” (1997-2013), “Ideologia” (2003–2013), “Ultrasonic” (2011–2014), “The Hamselyt” (2012–2019). The organizers of these festivals declared oppositional ideology, but only the last mentioned festival can be fully considered as a part of the Ukrainian cultural space, while the others were more focused on the Russian or international worldview. It has been revealed that the number of visitors of EDM festivals in Ukraine is higher than the comparable figure for classical music festivals but less than the comparable figure for pop-rock events. EDM festivals were popular thanks to the presence of well-known DJs from European countries. The study shows a decline in the activity of EDM festival life after 2014, but at the same time – the creative search in experimental areas of electronic music has intensified.

*Keywords:* electronic dance music; Ukrainian music; music festival; music culture of Ukraine

**Introduction**

Electronic dance music, as a direction of musical art, was born in the 1970s and by the end of the 1980s became an integral part of musical culture along with rock and pop music. Due to the historical circumstances in Ukraine, the development of dance electronic music and electronic music, in general, was restrained until the end of the 20th century and only from the beginning of the 21st century the first festivals and information resources dedicated to this direction began to appear in Ukraine. The emergence and development of this area of culture in Ukraine requires the scientific understanding.

*Recent research and publications.* Electronic dance music has become the subject of monographs by M. J. Butler (2006), H. John (2006), N. Collins (2013), works by T. Yastremsky (2006) and partly by S. Shustov. The research of these scientists provides a thorough understanding of the diversity of EDM trends and technologies, but in geographical terms is limited to the work of musicians from the USA and Western Europe. In particular, Butler in order to study the rhythmic and intonation features of EDM directions analyses the works of such authors as: Azzido da Bass (Germany), Car Craig (USA), Dave Angel (Great Britain), James Ruskin (Great Britain), Jeff Mills (USA), Kenny Larkin (USA), Mario Piu (Italy), Reese and Santonio (USA) (Butler, 2006, pp. 343-413). Ukrainian artists are not included to this list. In his work, T. Yastremsky (2006) pays a lot of attention to the study of the club culture of St. Petersburg, makes a list of the most famous DJs from Europe (DJ Tiesto, Eric Prydz та ін.) and Russia (DJ Romeo, DJ Renat), however, the Ukrainian musicians are also absent from this list (pp. 193-194). S. Shustov considers electronic music as a “studio genre”, but reviews only the works of the German composer K. Stockhausen.

The dissertations of K. Cherevko and I. Rakunova are devoted to Ukrainian electronic music, however, these studies are limited by the examination of experimental genres, in particular, the works of

composers A. Zahaikevych and I. Nebesnyi, who did not work with dance music. A. Zahaikevych also wrote an article on the history of Ukrainian electronic music, but she examines only experimental areas. K. Fadieieva's works deal with the software for electronic music creation and Ye. Kushch in his study examines the development of electronic musical instruments, but they also do not consider the work of Ukrainian authors in the field of EDM. Therefore, Ukrainian dance electronic music is practically not presented in the scientific literature.

Scientific novelty. Electronic dance music in Ukraine has become the subject of scientific attention for the first time. The study for the first time analyses the festivals of electronic dance music in Ukraine and the genre diversity of electronic dance music presented in the Ukrainian cultural space.

### The purpose of the article

The purpose of the study is to identify the peculiarities of the existence of electronic dance music in the cultural and artistic space of modern Ukraine. Research objectives: to study Internet publications on electronic dance music in Ukraine, review the most important events in EDM culture in Ukraine and find out the most relevant directions in Ukrainian art over the past two decades.

### Main research material

The term "Electronic dance music" or "EDM" encompasses a broad range of music produced during the last two decades, including such styles as techno, house, drum 'n' bass, and trance. The most distinctive characteristic of EDM's production is the use of electronic technologies such as synthesizers, drum machines, sequencers, and samplers (Butler, 2006). EDM is intended to accompany dances in the mass entertainment events. Also EDM includes a derived category of musical works not intended for dances, having an independent artistic value, and all the typical features of electronic dance music: the dominant position of the metro-rhythmic substance, the use of characteristic rhythmic patterns (Yastremsky, 2006).

The lack of specialized literature on EDM in Ukraine encourages us to attract popular sources of information, primarily on the Internet. On the one hand, these are specialized online magazines – the Ukrainian-language "Ukrainian Music Blog" (<http://music-blog.com.ua/>), "Drum and bass in Ukraine" (<http://www.dnb.in.ua/>) and some sources in foreign languages related to Ukraine – "The main club portal of Ukraine" (<http://topdj.ua/>), "Psychedelic trance music in Ukraine" (<http://psyshine.org.ua/>), as well as websites of dance music festivals. Additional information could be obtained from social networks, which contain individual pages of musicians, as well as pages of labels specializing in the production of Ukrainian music. Let's consider these resources.

**"Ukrainian Music Blog"** (<http://music-blog.com.ua/>) was active from 2009 to 2012. During this time the site posted about 150 news stories about Ukraine and abroad, 23 biographies of DJs, as well as a selection of video clips.

The blog focuses on the Western artists who are well-known in Ukraine: biographies of musicians, announcements and reports about their performances in Ukraine, announcements of new world releases.

The analysis of the announced events, which took place in Ukraine, allows exploring the geography of performances of foreign electronic music musicians. At the end of 2012, 52 events were mentioned, 27 took place in Kyiv, 16 – in Lviv, 3 – in Kharkiv, 2 – in Odesa, and one for each city – Rivne, Kazantyp, Solotvyno and Mykolaiv. The venues were mainly large exhibition centres (International Exhibition Center – in Kyiv, Lemberg Exhibition Center and "Shuvar Expo" – in Lviv), airfields ("Chaika" – in Kyiv, "Hidroport" – in Odesa), sports facilities (SKA cycle track in Lviv), large concert halls ("Stereo-plaza", National Palace of Arts "Ukraina" in Kyiv), clubs, shopping and entertainment centres ("Millennium" in Lviv, shopping mall "Ekvator" in Rivne).

The geography of foreign performers is relatively modest. Our analysis showed that out of 32 performers mentioned on the site, the main part was accounted for Central European countries: the Netherlands – 9 participants, Germany – 7, Great Britain – 4, Sweden – 3, France – 3, Russia, Italy, Canada, Hungary, Australia – one representative from each country.

It is important to consider what electronic genres are represented in the work of musicians who performed on the stages of Ukraine. To get an objective answer, we have used the following method: for each performer from a particular list of DJs, we mark the genre it represents. The analysis of the artists on the website "Ukrainian Music Blog" gives the following statistics (Table 1):

Table 1

**Coverage of EDM genres by musicians who performed on the stages of Ukraine in 2009-2012, according to the website “Ukrainian music blog”**

Genre	Representatives	Quota
Trance	16	50,0%
House	13	40,6%
Electro	6	18,8%
Techno	5	15,6%
Tech House	1	3,1%
Dub	1	3,1%

The table shows a significant predominance of two genres – *Trance* and *House*, and a slightly smaller, but also significant popularity of *Techno* and *Electro*. It should be noted that 11 of the mentioned performers also refer to «progressive» varieties of trance and house.

It is also interesting to count the number of performers who combine several genres in their work. Our analysis shows that more often the works of popular in Ukraine performers combine such genres as house and trance or house and electro, as can be seen from the table (Table 2).

Table 2

**Combination of EDM genres by musicians who performed on the stages of Ukraine in 2009-2012, according to the website “Ukrainian music blog”**

Genre	Representatives	Quota
House + Trance	5	15,6%
Electro + House	5	15,6%
Techno + House	3	9,4%
Electro + Techno	2	6,3%
Electro + Trance	1	3,1%
Techno + Trance	0	0

Let's analyse the Internet resource “**The main club portal of Ukraine**” (<http://topdj.ua/>) (also known as TopDJ.ua). This portal was founded by the company “VIRUS Music” at the end of 2004 and was constantly updated until 2012. Its content includes the information about DJs from different cities of Ukraine and news about the club life of Ukraine.

Special attention should be paid to the interactive rating of DJs in Ukraine, which is held annually by the portal. The developers emphasize that the task of the rating is “direct formation of the market of services for the club industry, determining the best, building a hierarchy (based on voting).” Therefore, this rating is purely commercial in nature, and, accordingly, further analysis will focus on the most successful performers from a commercial point of view. The analysis of the top thirty DJs in Ukraine as of the end of 2012 is shown in Table 3:

Table 3

**Coverage of EDM genres in the work of Ukrainian DJs presented on the website “TopDJ.ua”**

Genre	Representatives	Quota
House	25	83,3%
Trance	20	66,7%
Tech House	15	50,0%
Trance	9	30,0%
Electro	5	16,7%
Dub	4	13,3%
Drum`n`base	2	6,7%

Some DJs combine different genres of dance music. As can be seen from Table 4, the most often combined genres are techno and house.

Table 4

**A combination of EDM genres in the work of Ukrainian DJs  
presented on the website “TopDJ.ua”**

Genre combination	Representatives	Quota
House + Trance	8	22,9%
Electro + House	5	14,3%
Techno + House	19	54,3%
Electro + Techno	5	14,3%
Electro + Trance	5	14,3%
Techno + Trance	6	17,1%

In comparison with Western performers, we note a larger percentage of DJs who turn to various areas of dance music in general, and a fairly significant percentage of the combination of techno and trance.

After 2013, these portals ceased to operate, which made it impossible to conduct statistical studies of the subsequent period.

The next part of this article considers the electronic music festivals that took place in Ukraine.

**“KaZantip republic”** (<http://kazantipa.net/>) was the most famous festival of dance electronic music and at the same time a vivid indicator of the relationship between a certain direction of musical art and the subculture of its fans. The festival was held from 1997 to 2013 in the Crimea: in 1997–1999 on the territory of the Cape Kazantyp (hence the name), in 2000 – near the village of Vesele (the territory of the Sudak City Council), in 2001–2013 – near the village of Popivka (Saky district). The festival was organized by Nikita Marshunok.

“KaZantip Republic” can only partly be referred to the culture of Ukraine – the organizers themselves consider the idea of the event as the continuation of the “Russian rave” traditions, emphasize its international nature and publish all the information about the event only in Russian. Meanwhile, the localization within modern Ukraine borders gives us the right to consider this festival as a part of the musical culture of Ukraine.

The organizers of the “KaZantip Republic” consider this project as “a non-existent state..., outwardly somewhat similar to a festival. The Republic has certain attributes of statehood – the position of the “President”, the “Government” and the “Constitution”, which regulates the rules of behaviour during the event, as well as a number of symbols, including – the established form of a yellow suitcase.

The festival lasted for a month, the opening of the festival, according to the press, gathered up to 20 thousand visitors (UNIAN, 2012), and in general, according to the organizers, it had 100 thousand visitors. This figure shows that the “KaZantip Republic” surpasses Ukrainian music festivals of ethno, jazz and academic music. For the comparison, the largest jazz music festival – “Koktebel Jazz”, which was also held in the Crimea, gathered up to 25 thousand visitors (Crimea Information Agency, 2010), the ethno-festival Kraina Mrii (“Dreamland”) in Kyiv gathered about 10 thousand visitors (Skorokhod, 2012), but none of these festivals was held for a month. Festivals of contemporary academic music do not also attract tens of thousands of people, thus, according to this indicator, they are not so popular.

In comparison with the performances of rock musicians, the quantitative indicators of DJ performances look more modest. Paul McCartney's open-air concert in Kyiv gathered the largest number of listeners – 350 thousand people (“Kontsert Pola Makkartni na Maidani Nezalezhnosti”, 2019) the same number of spectators was gathered by Elton John in Kharkiv and 250 thousand – in Kyiv (Kontsert Eltona Dzhona i Queen na Maidani zibrav ponad 250 tysiach hliadachiv, 2012), which is ten times more than at the opening of the “KaZantip Republic”.

**“Ideologia” festival** was held in Kyiv from 2003 to 2013. Anatolii Topolskyi (also known as DJ Topolski) organized the festival. Stylistically, the festival focused on drum`n`base music. Aphrodite, Spor, Mc Junior Red UK, Apache, Dj SS (Great Britain), Noisia, Black Sun Empire (Holland), Counterstrike (South Africa), Dieselboy (USA) were among the participants. The festival was positioned as an oppositional one, as “an appeal to our internal protests to the system, thinking outside the borders and own view”, targeted at those “who can see and understand the true nature of things” (Hubenko, 2010). In 2013, A. Topolskyi closed the festival, believing that “it is better to close when you are at your peak”, and stating that, in his



opinion, “there is no Ukrainian electronic scene as such” and that “there is no really good [electronic] music in Ukraine, and that makes sense” (Topolskyi, 2013).

The identification of “Ideologia” with the Ukrainian cultural space, as in the case of Nikita Marshunok’s activity (“KaZantip Republic” Festival), is to some extent also debatable. All Topolskyi’s recordings were performed in Russian, and the emphasis was made on the participants from abroad. In addition to organizing the festival, it should be mentioned that A. Topolskyi was a long-time radio host of the program «Time2bass», designed to promote drum’n’base music in Ukraine; this programme was also performed in Russian. It is noteworthy that in the final promo video of the festival in 2010, where the festival’s ideology was contrasted with the ideology of “informational aggression”, the latter was presented against the background of Western politicians, including the former US President George W. Bush (2011–2009) and among people, who, according to the authors of the video, opposed totalitarianism were only foreign figures (Topolskyi, 2009), but the Moscow totalitarian regimes (both tsarist and Soviet times) which had the most tragic consequences for Ukraine, were not mentioned. In our opinion, it points to the fact that “Ideologia” is referred to the Ukrainian cultural space only by the geographical location of events.

“**Ultrasonic**” festival was held in Lviv from 2011 to 2014 and represented mainly trance music (DJs Tigran Oganezov and Eugene Kuzyk organized the festival). Kyau & Albert, Marcel Woods (Netherlands), Orjan Nilsen (Norway), Swanky Tunes (Russia), Daniel Kandi (Denmark), Claudia Cazacu, Mark Sherry (Great Britain) took part in the festival. The organizers claimed that the project was aimed at “the destruction of the established stereotypes about modern music and culture, to which the modern youth had unfortunately become accustomed” (Festyval "Ultrasonic", 2011).

**The Hamselyt Festival** was held in Ternopil from 2012 to 2019, and only the COVID-19 pandemic postponed the next festival, scheduled on April 2020. Yaroslav Kachmarskyi is the organizer of the event. According to his estimates, 600 people visited the festival (Kachmarskyi, 2020a), which is comparable to the festivals of contemporary academic music, but is inferior to the mentioned above festivals of dance electronic music.

Unlike the festivals listed above, this one focuses mainly on experimental electronic music. Kachmarskyi himself described the concept of the event as following: “The festival of electronic and experimental music and new media art. Festival music is for dancing, listening or immersion. It's not pop music, it's not too easy to understand” (Kachmarskyi, 2020b).

An important feature of the festival is that the participants from Ukraine along with foreign artists also took part in the event. This fact describes the organizer’s attitude: “They should be – it's nice to show our artists. Provincial patriotism... I've always wanted a local context and content” (Kachmarskyi, 2020b). All of the above and the fact that Kachmarskyi publicly speaks Ukrainian give grounds to consider the Hamselyt Festival as an organic part of the Ukrainian cultural space to the full extent.

These are some international festivals, which took place in the Ukrainian cities:

“**Global Gathering**” is the annual dance music festival, which originated in the UK. It has been held in Kyiv since 2007. The official website provides a complete list of DJs who have toured in Ukraine. The list includes 53 DJs, 23 of which are British DJs and 9 are Dutch. In terms of genres, house is the most represented – 39.6%, while techno, trance and electro genres occupy about 20%. The share of drum and bass is also significant – 17%, mainly due to British DJs.

**A State of Trance (ASOT)** is a weekly trance music radio show hosted by DJ Armin van Buuren. Live broadcasts from Ukraine were made in 2010 and 2012.

“**Sensation**” is an electronic music festival, which originated in the Netherlands, and has been touring other European countries since 2005. This festival was in Kyiv in 2011 under the name “Sensation – White” and in 2012 under the name “Sensation – Innerspace”.

## Conclusions

Electronic dance music (EDM) in Ukraine was the most popular in the late 2000s – early 2010s. “Techno” and “house” were the most popular genres in Ukraine. The study has analysed the following EDM festivals in Ukraine: “KaZantip republic” (1997–2013), “Ideologia” (2003–2013), “Ultrasonic” (2011–2014), “The Hamselyt” (2012–2019). The organizers of these festivals declared oppositional ideology, but only “The Hamselyt Festival” can be fully considered as a part of the Ukrainian cultural space, while the others were more focused on the Russian or international worldview. It has been revealed that the number of visitors of EDM festivals in Ukraine is higher than the comparable figure for classical music festivals but less

than the comparable figure for pop-rock events. The study shows a decline in the activity of EDM festival life after 2014, but at the same time – the creative search in experimental areas of electronic music has intensified.

The prospects for further research are determined by a profound study of the work of Ukrainian artists in the EDM direction. From the scientific point of view, it is expedient to evaluate the experience gained by Ukrainians from Western authors and identify the attempts to combine the conventions formed in Western Europe with the distinctive intonation, timbre and dynamic features of Ukrainian folk music.

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**ЕЛЕКТРОННА  
ТАНЦЮВАЛЬНА МУЗИКА  
В УКРАЇНСЬКІЙ МУЗИЧНІЙ  
КУЛЬТУРІ**

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Метою роботи є з'ясування специфіки представлення електронної танцювальної музики (EDM) в культурному процесі України кінця 2000 – початку 2010-х років на основі вивчення Інтернет-видань, присвячених електронній танцювальній музиці, огляду найважливіших подій в EDM-культурі та осмислення найактуальніших музичних напрямів впродовж останніх двох десятиліть. Методологія дослідження включає описовий та інтерпретаційний підходи, статистичний аналіз, синтез та узагальнення зібраної інформації для створення цілісної наукової картини про побутування електронної танцювальної музики в українській культурі. Наукова новизна. Вперше досліджено фестивалі електронної танцювальної музики в Україні кінця 2000 – початку 2010-х років, висвітлено її специфіку, жанрове розмаїття та найпопулярніші напрями техно і хауз. Висновки. Виявлено, що найбільша популярність електронної танцювальної музики в Україні припадає на кінець 2000 – початок 2010-х років, коли її грали не тільки в танцювальних клубах, але й на фестивалях. Проаналізовано такі фестивалі EDM в Україні: «Республіка Казантип» (1997–2013), «Ідеологія» (2003–2013), «Ultrasonic» (2011–2014), «Гамселить» (2012–2019). Організатори кожного з цих фестивалів декларували опозиційну ідеологію, проте лише останній з названих фестивалів можна вважати повною мірою частиною українського культурного простору, тоді як інші були більше орієнтовані на російське або інтернаціональне світосприйняття. Встановлено, що кількість відвідувачів фестивалів EDM в Україні є вищою за аналогічні показники фестивалів класичної музики, але меншою за аналогічні показники поп-рокових заходів. Популярність EDM-фестивалів досягалася завдяки запрошенню популярних діджеїв з європейських країн. Виявлено, що після 2014 року активність фестивального життя EDM знизилася, але в той же час активізувалися творчі пошуки в експериментальних напрямках електронної музики.

*Ключові слова:* електронна танцювальна музика; українська музика; музичний фестиваль; музична культура України

**ЭЛЕКТРОННАЯ  
ТАНЦЕВАЛЬНАЯ МУЗЫКА  
В УКРАИНСКОЙ МУЗЫКАЛЬНОЙ  
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Целью работы является выяснение специфики представления электронной танцевальной музыки (EDM) в культурном процессе Украины конца 2000 – начала 2010-х годов на основе изучения Интернет-изданий, посвященных танцевальной электронной музыке в Украине, обзора важнейших событий в EDM-культуре и осмысления наиболее актуальных музыкальных направлений на протяжении последних двух десятилетий. Методология исследования включает описательный и интерпретационный подходы, статистический анализ, синтез и обобщение собранной информации для создания целостной научной картины о бытовании электронной танцевальной музыки в украинской культуре. Научная новизна. Впервые исследованы фестивали электронной танцевальной музыки в Украине конца 2000 – начала 2010-х годов, проанализирована ее специфика, жанровое разнообразие и наиболее популярные направления техно и хаус. Выводы. Виявлено, что наибольшая популярность электронной танцевальной музыки в Украине приходится на конец 2000 – начало 2010-х годов, когда ее играли не только в танцевальных клубах, но и на фестивалях. Проанализированы такие фестивали EDM в Украине: «Республика Казантип» (1997–2013), «Идеология» (2003–2013), «Ultrasonic» (2011–2014), «Гамселить» (2012–2019). Организаторы каждого из этих фестивалей декларировали оппозиционную идеологию, но только последний из названных фестивалей можно считать в полной мере частью украинского культурного пространства, тогда как другие были более ориентированы на российское или интернациональное мировоззрение. Установлено, что количество посетителей фестивалей EDM в Украине превышает аналогичный показатель фестивалей классической музыки, но уступает аналогичным показателям поп-роковых мероприятий. Популярность EDM-фестивалей достигалась благодаря приглашению популярных диджеев из европейских стран. Виявлено, что после 2014 года активность фестивальной жизни EDM снизилась, но в то же время активизировались творческие поиски в экспериментальных направлениях электронной музыки.

*Ключевые слова:* электронная танцевальная музыка; украинская музыка; музыкальный фестиваль; музыкальная культура Украины