Contemporary British Sub-Cultures

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ABSTRAKT

Tato práce popisuje britské subkultury od druhé poloviny dvacátého století do roku 2010. Mapuje subkultury od jejich vzniku v návaznosti na situaci v zemi, zkoumá jejich typické vnější i vnitřní znaky a poukazuje na oblasti všedního života, v kterých se dané subkultury promítly nebo stále promítají. Práce dochází k závěru, že každá subkultura prochází svým životním cyklem a je přirozeným společenským procesem, kterým lidé reagují na určité události a situaci v zemi.

Klíčová slova:

Britské subkultury, kultura, hlavní proud, móda, styl, hudba, vliv, rozptyl, životní cyklus subkultur, Rastafariáni, Teddy Boys, Modernisté, Hipís, Skinheadi, Punkeři, subkultura Goths, Emo, subkultura Chavs.

ABSTRACT

This thesis describes British sub-cultures from the second half of the twentieth century to the year 2010. It examines the origin of sub-cultures connected to the situation in country, their inner and outer features and shows the areas of their influence in the mainstream society. The thesis concludes that each sub-culture goes through its life cycle and it is a social process which is caused by the people's reaction to particular events and situation in the country.

Keywords:

British sub-cultures, culture, mainstream, fashion, style, music, impact, diffusion, life cycle of sub-cultures, Rastafarians, Teddy Boys, Mods, Hippies, Skinheads, Punks, Goths, Emos, Chavs.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This thesis concerns contemporary sub-cultures, which appeared in Great Britain between 1950 and 2010, and documents the reasons for their existence, their way of life, and the interactions between them. Opinions of sub-cultures are varied, but the majority tends to judge them poorly. Just the prefix "sub" itself evokes something low or poor. This thesis attempts to counter this trend by persuading readers to think in a different way about sub-cultures. It tries to show that the existence of sub-cultures is usually tied to political, economic and social events or situations.

As a case study, this thesis will focus on the most influential British sub-cultures, which not only existed in Great Britain, but also appeared to be strong enough to cross its borders and become worldwide phenomena. The thesis describes their position in British society and their contribution to style and music. The main research is then focused on their natural life cycle and influence in everyday life of the British mainstream society, with an emphasis on current fashion and music.

1 YOUNG BRITAIN

1.1 Origin of youth

"Youth is something very new: twenty years ago no one mentioned it." *(Coco Chanel, (http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/24911.html)*

Young people were living in Britain for ages. However, after the Second World War they caught the attention of media and scholars. The interest was mainly raised by the change of young people's social status and behaviour. During the 1950s the standard of living improved and people could enjoy their lives again. Young people, especially those of working-class origin, now had enough money to spend. They created a sort of new consumer group. This was a breaking point for marketing in Britain. Advertising companies focused on the young, as soon as it was discovered, that young people were willing to spend their money on fashionable clothes, good rock-n-roll records, etc. That's how a new social category of "youth culture" originated in Britain.[1]

Of course, the youth culture was not only described in connection with the British market. Unfortunately, it had something to do with disturbances and violence as well. One of the first moments when British youth showed themselves in a bad light, was the Notting Hill Riots in 1958.[2] Since then, British youth of the post-war era started to be often associated with constantly increasing "juvenile delinquency".[3] Youth culture turned into an integrated unit, very distinctive from the rest of the society, with values and opinions usually contrasting with those of adults. In fact, according to Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson, "youth itself became a class".[4]

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[1] Katie Milestone, "Youth culture," *The Guardian*, December 18, 1999. Available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/1999/dec/18/weekend7.weekend5 (accessed February 20, 2010).
[2] Exploring 20th century London partnership. "Notting Hill Riots 1958," Exploring 20th century London. Available at http://www.20thcenturylondon.org.uk/server.php?show=conInformationRecord.161. (accessed February 27, 2010).
[3] Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson, eds., *Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain.* 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 1993), 19. Available at http://books.google.com/books?id=Okw4OoEV670C&dq=resistance+through+rituals&printsec=frontcover& source=bn&hl=en&ei=XfB_S6-zEZ2mnQOKxqjbBg&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4&ved=0CCMQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q =&f=false. (accessed February 27, 2010).
[4] Hall and Jefferson, *Resistance through Rituals,* 15.

1.2   Sub-culture as a product of youth and a subject of observation

"We might look the same to outsiders, but there are big differences between us." *(Lull 1987, cited in Muggleton 2002: 68)*

Britain, which is based on class more than any other European country did not let the claim of Hall and Jefferson go unheeded. The youth soon became an interest of sociologists, criminologists and of course journalists. The very first scholarly interest in British youth and its integral part sub-cultures appeared in the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies of the University of Birmingham in the 1960s. The Centre, sometimes abbreviated as CCCS, was established in 1964 and employed many famous British sociologists, such as Dick Hebdige, Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson.[5] These sociologists examined the British sub-cultural environment and fundamentally contributed to a better understanding of sub-cultures as such. The absolute pioneering works in British sub-cultures were introduced in *Resistance Through Rituals* by Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson in 1975 and *Subculture the Meaning of Style* by Dick Hebdige in 1979.

Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson tried to understand the relationship between culture and sub-culture. They described the culture as a structure, which will be always considered as the standard and normal one, whilst all other structures (sub-cultures) will stand in opposition to the main culture and will try to revolt against it.[6] However, as it might be seen from the book, the sub-cultures actually fight against the society from which they originated. On one hand, they want to differentiate from the main culture as much as they can, but on the other hand they share a lot of features with the main culture. For example, they still need some jobs to make money and people to be friends with. And not all of them share the same sub-cultural opinions.[7] Actually sub-culture can't even exist without the rest of society, because simply – there would not be anyone to resist against.

Dick Hebdige conceived the idea of sub-cultures as "making a noise".[8] This comparison was probably used to explain that sub-cultures have to provoke and shock, otherwise they lose their distinctiveness. The distinctive features they possess are the most

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[5] Education Encyclopaedia, s.v. *"Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, The Great Tradition."* Available at http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2817/cultural-studies.html. (accessed 12 April, 2010).
[6] Hall and Jefferson, *Resistance through Rituals,* 12.
[7] Hall and Jefferson, *Resistance through Rituals,* 14.

precious belongings for them, because they form the style of a particular sub-culture. In fact, according to Hebdige, style is the main way of communication towards mass culture.[9] In case of losing the style, the sub-culture stands on the edge of extinction.

British sub-cultures are a very interesting and broad topic which have appeared in a countless number of books. Some of them are old and reliable, some are very new and interesting, but without any proper research. One of the newest approaches is described in the book called *Inside Subculture: the Post-modern Meaning of Style* by David Muggleton (2000) which contributed to the sub-cultural studies largely just because of the detailed and practical observations. He was able to support his claims with the help of interviews with individual youth sub-culturalists. He determined that members of a sub-culture, which is supposed to be a collective grouping with the same ideology, described their membership in a sub-culture in quite individual terms, such as being yourself, doing what you want to do, living your own life, etc.[10] For the first time in British history, sub-culture was seen as a group of individuals with their own feelings, not as a group as a whole.

1.3   Youth within 4 decades (1950-1990)

The Second World War was over and involved countries, including Great Britain, remained in ruins. In the post-war period, Britain went through a lot of changes, especially under prime minister Clement Atlee, who did his best to help the country recover. He introduced a new idea of the Welfare state with a National Health Service accessible to everyone and accepted the Marshall Plan from the United States.[11] The slow recovery of post-war Britain affected the whole market, public spending and also the young generation.

1.3.1   Rocking 50s

This period in Britain went along with a lot of important events, such as three changes of government, economic recovery, the coronation of Elizabeth II and the test of the first

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[8] Dick Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of Style* (1979;repr., New York: Routledge, 1987), 90.

[9] Ibid., 17.

[10] Duncan, interview by David Muggleton*, Inside Subculture: The Postmodern Meaning of Style (Dress, Body, Culture)* (2000;repr., Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2002),56-58.

[11]Encyclopedia Britannica Online, s.v. "Clement Attlee," Available at http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/42288/Clement-Attlee (accessed February 20, 2010).

British hydrogen bomb. Britain was going through turbulent times. However, these changes were not fundamental for ordinary young people. After the war they preferred to have fun and enjoy their lives. Thanks to televisions and radios people got to know American rock and roll and soon learned to dance to it. They started to believe that there was no better country than America because everything seemed to be so perfect there.

TV broadcasting and the music industry brought to Britain Elvis Presley, the rock and roll icon. Young people simply loved rock and roll because of its wildness, that's why youth and rock and roll matched together very well. On the contrary, older people did not like it at all. With the help of media, rock and roll music and dance were often connected with moral decay. However, it was not only a new type of music that America introduced to Britain. It was a whole complex of mass culture, including films and music for broad audiences. During the decade Great Britain became a consumer society heavily influenced by American lifestyle. However, American influence was not the only one. The 1950s was the after-war decade with a shortage of labour. Needed workers were recruited from West Indies immigrants.[12] The immense immigration of labourers and their families continued untill 1962 when Jamaica gained independence on Britain.

With the growing economy of Great Britain, recovered from the aftermath of the Second World War, employment increased substantially. These circumstances mainly helped young people to get a job and to be financially independent. Suddenly they had enough money to spend on fashionable clothes and rock and roll music records. This was the moment when British youth became an interesting object of cultural and marketing studies. During the 1950s a lot of advertisements were aimed at the young generation, because it was a segment of society that was the most willing to spend a lot of money.[13] On the other hand, it seemed that British youngsters became more and more wild. "Juvenile delinquency nearly doubled from 24,000 in 1955 to 45,000 in 1959."[14]

However, the most probable reasons were uncovered by editors Stuart Halls and Tony Jefferson, members of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at university of Birmingham. In their book called *Resistance through Rituals* they claim: "Change of youth was connected with the spread of mass culture and mainly disruptive

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[12] The National Archives, "Bound for Britain." Available at
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/lesson11.htm . (accessed April 20, 2010).
[13] David Christopher, *British Culture: an Introduction*. (London: Routledge, 1999) 3-5.

effects of war – absent fathers an breaks in normal family life, as well as the constant violence – was responsible for the new juvenile delinquency of the mid 50s.“[15] The phenomenon of juvenile delinquency in the 1950s gave birth to the first original British sub-cultures such as Teddy Boys or Ton-Up Boys.

1.3.2   Swinging 60s

The 1960s could be best characterized by social changes. The changes of the approach to sex were the most fundamental. The sixties were times when sex was no longer an evil topic in art, literature (Lady Chatterley trial in 1960) and especially in people's lives. This shift was also seen in the pharmaceutical market – during the 1960s the demand for a contraceptive pill was on increase, which contributed to a sexual revolution and freedom. This phenomenon was later connected with the hippie movement that came to the UK from the United States.[16]

Those were the years of the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and Twiggy. They all were very good "marketing devices" aimed at the young generation of Britons. People loved these icons, they wanted to be like them, behave like them and wear the same clothes they did. That is why fashion was becoming substantially important for them step by step. This feature can be well observed for example in Mod subculture. Fashion itself, was mostly young girl's interest, so particularly the arrival of the miniskirt in 1966 was a great achievement in the history of British fashion industry (especially those of Mary Quant's). The miniskirt awoke a feeling of self-confidence and feminity in women and helped them to realize the power of their sexuality.[17]

An illustration of the atmosphere in the 1960s can be seen in the film "Quadrophenia" (1979) directed by Franc Roddam or through the memories of those, who grew up in the sixties in Britain, such as Roy Gardiner, one of the commentators on the sixties in the article "Sex, drugs and hype" in *BBC Magazine*:

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[14] Ibid., 4.

[15] Hall and Jefferson, *Resistance through Rituals*, 19.

[16] ICONS Online Limited, "Icons Timeline 1960-1970." Available at http://www.icons.org.uk/theicons/icons-timeline/1960-1970. (accessed February 20, 2010).

[17] Christopher, *British Culture,* 8.

"I left school as a real wimp in June 1962 and from October 1962 lived away from home in Liverpool where I was an undergraduate at the university. What perfect timing! My whole world changed. About six weeks after arriving in Liverpool, wet behind the ears, I was at the Silver Blades ice rink and heard Love Me Do playing over the PA. I knew immediately this was very, very different. The rest of the decade was a complete revolution: Profumo scandal, Beatles, Stones, different cigarettes, mini-skirts, sex, Vietnam, King's Rd., Carnaby St. and... did I say mini-skirts? Roy Gardiner, Everett, WA, USA[18]

1.3.3   Revolting 70s

It was a decade full of dissatisfaction, high unemployment, strikes, distrust and "the Troubles" with the IRA. Immigration became a growing threat during these years especially in the matter of employment. That is why Britons found a solution to this problem in the form of an Immigration act passed in 1971, which limited the number of immigrants coming to Britain. Another reason why immigration became a threat for Britain was the community breakdown of the traditional working-class, vandalism, robbery and violence committed by young people from immigrant families such as Afro-Caribbeans, Pakistanis etc. Britons started to be scared.[19]

During the decade subcultures such as Skinheads and Punks became an interest of the media. Also these subcultures were connected with riots and violence all over Britain. Skinheads fought against Asian immigration, punks were disgusted with a whole society. Football hooliganism became even more violent.[20] British youth of the 1970s simply tried to rebel against British traditionalism and conservatism by all means.

One of those, who experienced the 1970s in Britain, was "Fred from Spokane" who was interviewed by the *BBC* for an article on the 70s:

"I was a young teenager growing up in Reading, Berks in the early 1970s. It is very interesting that I have little recollection of the events in this story, the labour unrest etc. I do remember the greasers and the skinheads, Doc Martens and hob nail Army boots. I

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[18] Roy Gardiner, comment on "Sex, drugs and hype" BBC. BBC News Web site. Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/6707405.stm. (accessed February 20, 2010).
[19] Christopher, *British Culture,* 9,11.
[20] Ibid., 11.

moved to the West Coast of Canada in 1975 at the age of 14 and vividly remember all of the different government workers on strike there."[21]

1.3.4 Controversial 80s

The whole era of the 1980s was named after Margaret Thatcher as Thatcherism. She became an icon, but for a lot of people a controversial one. Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister in 1979 and remained in the position until 1990. She brought limits for trade unions, privatization of the state companies such as railways and airways and got rid of mortgage barriers. However, she also closed coal mines, steel and shipbuilding companies which led to a huge disfavour among some people. Many of them lost their jobs, could not support their families and became losers. The state, adopting a laissez-faire attitude, blankly refused to care about unemployment and left it to employers.[22] Because of the individualistic approach of the government, hard times of climbing the social ladder for young working people began. People lost the feeling for collectivity and everyone understood the necessity of making money.[23] The period could be undoubtedly characterized as "Everyone on their own".

Regarding young people, unemployment was also an important issue, especially for the working-class. These people often tended to gather in a community of skinheads or socialise with other members of lower segments of society, because it helped them to create a sort of the same background.[24] A picture of such socializing might be found in the film "This is England" (2006), directed by Shane Meadows which shows a very young boy, who lost his father in the Falkland War and found his mates among local skinheads. The film also points out the shift of the skinhead movement to a more radical neo-Nazi approach in the 1980s.

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[21] Fred, comment on "Your 1970s: Music and fashion" BBC. BBC News Web site. Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/6729669.stm. (accessed February 20, 2010).

[22] BBC, Denis Kavanagh,"Thatcherism and the End of the Post-War Concensus".BBC History Web site. Available at http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/modern/thatcherism_01.shtml. (accessed February 20, 2010).

[23] BBC,"The Me decade," BBC News Web site. Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/6742385.stm. (accessed February 20, 2010).

[24] BBC, "Under the skin," BBC News Web site. Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/6546617.stm. (accessed February 20, 2010).

Young people, who experienced the 80s in Britain certainly have distinct opinions of this period, but there are certain things that each of them at least noticed. Here there might be seen a list of things, events, music and fashion that shaped the whole decade, represented by Sarah Rooke:

"Ah the 80s... New Romantics, Duran Duran, Spandau Ballet, Human League, Wham!, Adam and the Ants, S Express, Frankie, Gary Numan, Depeche Mode, Madonna, Stock, Aitken and Waterman, mullet haircuts, ra ra skirts, puffball skirts, shoulder pads, Dallas, Dynasty, Star Trek: The Next Generation, The A Team, Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy, Blakes 7, Into the Labyrinth, Margaret Thatcher, Charles and Diana's wedding, Andrew and Fergie's wedding, Falklands, raising of the Mary Rose, unemployment, strike.[25]

1.3.5   The modern 90s

The 1990s are characterized by the change of government from the Conservatives to the Labour, by the Royal Family's approach towards ordinary "subjects"[26] and mainly by the expansion of electronic devices such as the PC, dishwashers or mobile phones to the majority of households. In 1991 the Internet became accessible to the public.[27] Things became easier than ever before, and British society was satisfied. In the 1990s Britain's future looked bright. Evidence of the energy in Britain can be found in Eddie Tyrell's memories:

"Growing up in the 90s was fantastic, it seemed anything was possible, Britain was cool again, we had our own music, our own art, our own identity. Who'd have thought a few years down the line there would be debate on whether Britain even had an identity? In the 90s we did, and it was cool, working class kids were leaving school with optimism, the world seemed open to them, music was good, life was good, for

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[25] Sarah Rooke, comment on "More 80s fashion and music" BBC. BBC News Web site. Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/6752415.stm. (accessed February 20, 2010).

[26] Christopher, *British Culture,* 16-19.

[27] Mandy Barrow, "Britain in the 1990s," Woodlands Junior School website. Available at http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/Homework/war/1990s.html. (accessed February 20, 2010).

once their seemed to be a government in charge that was making things positive. How did it all go wrong?"[28]

In the retrospection of Tyrell, Britain of the 1990s was like re-born. The labour government paid attention to the working-class. The nation again stood together. Their music known as Britpop was introduced to the rest of the world with huge success. Bands, such as Oasis, Blur, Pulp and The Verve climbed up to top positions in Top Ten charts. Considering art, Damian Hirst or Tracey Emin became popular in spite of being controversial for many people in Britain.[29]

The nineties were also considered to be a "party time". Dancing became popular again, and new clubs such as Cream (Liverpool) or Ministry of Sound (London) were opened. However, the arrival of a club culture brought with it a new kind of drug called Ecstasy that supplied clubbers with a lot of energy, but caused dehydration and in numerous cases ended in death. Soft drugs and "recreational drugs" were adopted by mass culture and became easily accessible. This trend remains popular now.[30]

1.4 Youth now

As the newspaper headlines in *The Guardian*, *The Independent* or *The Telegraph* often announce, British youth of the 21st century went wrong. News such as "Teenager arrested over fatal stabbing"[31] or "Teenage knife crime is one of the biggest threats to London"[32] frighten common British people. The young generation has changed a lot since the teenage times of their parents. Unfortunately, it became more violent and antisocial. Robert Stevens in his book *University to Uni* presented alarming statistics, which demonstrates about the seriousness of the whole issue: "Britain has for its teenage generation the worst crime rate in Europe and the worst statistics for unmarried pregnancies, drugs and alcohol. Under-

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[28]Eddie Tyrell, comment on "Cool Britannia" BBC. BBC News Web site. Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/6766539.stm. (accessed February 20, 2010).

[29]Christopher, *British Culture,* 16.

[30]Michael Storry and Peter Childs, eds., *British Cultural Identities,* 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2007), 156.

[31]Haroon Siddique, "Teenager arrested over fatal stabbing of Asha Muneer," *The Guardian*, January 20, 2010. Available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/jan/19/teenager-murdered-reading-river-footpath. (accessed February 20, 2010).

eighteens' pregnancies are twice the rate in Germany, three times the rate in France and five times the rate in the Netherlands. England leads Europe in the use of both cocaine and cannabis by young people. English girls now drink more than boys and five times as much as girls in France. England also has the worst illiteracy rate."[33]

Of course, it would be very narrow-minded to think that every young person in Britain is subjected to Stevens' statistical claim. Considering lives of today's British young generation, there are things which are certainly better than before. This generation is less promiscuous than the previous one thanks to better sexual disease awareness. Girls are more emotionally stable and stopped being overly naive. Nowadays they have the unique possibility to find a lot of information concerning sex and other delicate issues, which even their mothers did not know at the same age.[34]

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[32]Adam Fresco,"Teenage knife crime is one of biggest threats to London," TimesOnline, March 29, 1998. Available at http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/crime/article3640626.ece. (accessed February 20, 2010).
[33]Robert Stevens, "University to Uni." (2005): 65, quoted in Michael Storry and Peter Childs, eds., *British Cultural Identities,* 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2007), 150.
[34]Storry and Childs, *British Cultural Identities,* 162,164.

2 SUB-CULTURES

2.1 The cycle

2.1.1 The birth

British people stood in the limelight after the Second World War. The youth became a special sort of society which was both financially and socially independent from their parents.[35] Young people had new ideas and different opinions commonly in contrast to their elders. British youth usually found the lives of their parents stereotypical and boring after the war. They were looking for adventure and entertainment and did not want to live in conservative Britain any more.

The youth became strong enough to fight for their desires and to revolt against things they did not like by all means. According to Dick Hebdige (1987), the most widespread way to arouse public notice was to shock either through strange clothes or anti-mainstream opinions.[36] Later, in the 1950s this concept gave birth to groups of people who wanted to differ from the others, shared similar opinions and tended to express themselves in the same way. Such groups were named by scholars as sub-cultures.

Over decades, sub-cultures were given various definitions based on traditional opinions of Hall and Jefferson or Hebdige which always stressed sub-cultural homogeneity and collectivity without any admission of diversity between their members such as:

1) "A cultural group within a larger culture, often having beliefs or interests at variance with those of the larger culture."[37]
2) "Broad groups of consumers within a society's culture having similar values which distinguish them from the rest of society."[38]

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[35]Mark Abrahams, "The Teenage Consumer." (1959) quoted in Dick Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of Style* (1979;repr., New York: Routledge, 1987), 153.

[36] Interview with a Punk, interview by Time Out, December 17-23, 1977 quoted in Dick Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of* Style (1979;repr., New York: Routledge, 1987), 116-117.

[37]*Oxford dictionary online*, s.v. "Subculture." Available at http://www.askoxford.com/concise_oed/subculture?view=uk. (accessed February 27, 2010).

[38]*Buseco marketing dictionary online,* s.v. "Subculture." Available at http://www.buseco.monash.edu.au/mkt/dictionary/sss.html. (accessed February 27, 2010).

3)   "Subculture refers to both alternative culture and to individual groups operating separately from mainstream society. Often it refers to revival gangs e.g. mods and rockers, skinheads and bovery boys or punks, but it also refers to groupings of (mainly young) people with gentler outlooks: new romantics, Goths, crusties."[39]

4)   "Subculture is a form of resistance in which experienced contradictions and objections to ruling ideology are obliquely represented in style."[40]

2.1.2   The fade-out

According to American sociologist Phil Cohen (1972), who studied the youth of London's East End, the appearance of the British post-war sub-cultures was entirely associated with working-class youth. He claimed that they experienced a generation gap and saw the "disintegration of community and class".[41] The formations of various sub-cultures then served as a way out of the situation, because it provided the missing feeling of sociability.[42]

Over decades, Britain could see the birth of several sub-cultures. Some of them entered the British history and became very famous all over the world. The other ones sank without a trace. But they had many things in common. Nearly all of them emerged as a solution to certain circumstances in their period[43] (individual reasons will be described in each sub-culture) and absolute majority tried to distinguish themselves from conforming mainstream society, as might be seen from given definitions.

Every British sub-culture that will be demonstrated later went through a sort of cycle. One was stable, another split up into several branches. A lot of sub-cultures had their origin in older sub-cultures. After all, every subculture had its fate. As they originated, they also disappeared. However, the way they disappeared was rather peculiar. Their symbols, fashion and music were often absorbed by mainstream society. In fact, when these codes of

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[39] Storry and Childs, *British Cultural Identities*, 295.

[40] Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of Style*, 133.

[41] Phil Cohen cited in Ken Gelder, ed., *The Subcultures Reader*, 2nd ed. (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), 82. Available at http://books.google.com/books?id=46OYHkjZR4AC&pg=PA82&lpg=PA82&dq=working+class+subculture&source=bl&ots=jZTPUn3VUW&sig=LpLgiybr1UIxPF2nSkpn-giANyY&hl=en&ei=HzuJS7uJC4zwmwPznJ20BA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=7&ved=0CBoQ6AEwBjgK#v=onepage&q=working%20class%20subculture&f=false. (accessed February 27, 2010).

[42] Albert K.Cohen cited in Ken Gelder, ed., *The Subcultures Reader*, 2nd ed. (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), 82.

[43] Dick Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of Style*, 81.

sub-cultures became trendy, the sub-cultures lost their ability to shock and fell into oblivion.[44]

2.2   Position in the British society

Britain is a country of sub-cultures. As might be seen from recent history, during the last fifty years Britain produced several crucial sub-cultures (e.g. Teddy Boys, Mods or Punks). At first, these sub-cultures had their own ideas, style and behaviour that seemed to be more than odd for the rest of the British society. However, after a certain time the British got used to them. They made a lot of films dealing with sub-cultural themes such as Quadrophenia (1979)[45], Made in Britain (1982)[46], This is England (2006)[47] and Awaydays (2009)[48] and even adopted the odd sub-cultural styles as a high street fashion (e.g. fashion collections of Alexander McQueen or Vivian Westwood). And maybe it was the sub-cultures themselves that made the Britons, particularly then the English, so eccentric. Sub-cultures undoubtedly became a part of the British identity, if such an identity exists. But by all means, the sub-cultures are considered as typical elements of the British society by the society itself.

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[44]Dick Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of Style*, 94-96,130.

[45]*Quadrophenia*. DVD. Directed by Franc Roddam. London, UK: Universal Pictures UK, 2006.

[46]*Made in Britain*. DVD. Directed by Alan Clarke. London, UK: ITV DVD, 2007.

[47]*This is England*. DVD. Directed by Shane Meadows. London, UK: Optimum Home Entertainment, 2007.

[48]*Awaydays*. DVD. Directed by Pat Holden. London, UK: Optimum Releasing, 2009.

3 BRITISH SUBCULTURES

3.1 Rastafarians

3.1.1 Origin

The origin of the Rastafarian movement is connected with the beginning of African colonization when African slaves and later indentured workers from India and China came to Jamaica to work on sugar and cacao plantations for Britain. Jamaica was a British colony for more than 300 years, but in 1962 Jamaica became an independent country. The Rastafari movement originated approximately in the 1930s in Jamaica as a symbol of lost community but also hope for future unity. The Rastafarians called the new world, where they lived as slaves as Babylon. Rastafarians believed that soon the day of freedom will come and they will get back to Africa – which is the basic concept of the whole movement to date.[49] The movement spread to the UK in the 1950s as a result of vast immigration from the West Indies which brought required labour to the country.[50]

Rastafarian belief is characterized by the typical immense distance between God and a human. However, whereas in Catholic religion God is placed in heaven and a human down on Earth, in Rastafarian belief the God is in Zion (Africa-Ethiopia) and a human is in Babylon. This belief guarantees them a transfer to Africa after death.[51] Africa here plays the role of a Promised Land. The movement started in black communities but soon spread to white neighbourhoods especially through the power of black Rastafarian music called reggae.

The Rastafarian movement has very old roots which date back to the first half of the 20th century. The main idea is to reunite black people with African roots and escape from the oppression of white people. Whilst the first relationships between whites and blacks were framed as "owners" and "slaves", later after the abolition of slavery was adopted discrimination and racism. That's why the movement changed the direction of resistance.

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[49]BBC, "Rastafarian history", BBC Religions Web site, Available at
http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/rastafari/history/history.shtml (accessed April 8, 2010).
[50]See chapter Youth within 4 decades, The Rocking 50s.
[51]Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of Style*, 34.

In old times it used to resist to the white owners, but nowadays the Rastafarian movement resists oppression in the shape of racism and discrimination.

Rastafari can be characterized as both a religion and a sub-culture. It provides belief for those rejected by the Christian religion (owner's religion), and it also has the characteristics of sub-culture, such as resistance to wider culture, concept of subordination and distinctive style with a meaning. The addition "movement" in their name then could be connected with its vast extent and the existence of the belief or actually religion, which is a unique concept that does not occur in any other sub-culture.

3.1.2 Music and style

The music which illustrates the Rastafarian concept and the hard life of black people is called reggae. It has roots in Jamaican folk music and ska, which played an influential role in shaping other types of music. Reggae is very rhythmical music with a steady tempo and lyrics mainly about the black's man burden in the world of whites. The most famous reggae singer, who brought fame to this music in the 1970s, was Bob Marley. In one of his songs called Africa Unite he sings: "Cause we're moving right out of Babylon, and we're going to our Father's land, yea-ea. How good and how pleasant it would be before God and man, yea-eah! - To see the unification of all Africans, yeah!"[52] – which is understood as a deep sincere wish to unify all black people and go back to the Promised Land.

All the reggae songs have a flowing tempo inviting listeners to the world of peace and love. The music goes together with the well-known herb/drug marijuana. Rastafarians believe that smoking marijuana brings them closer to their God. They are also on a healthy diet with a minimum of meat and they avoid drinking alcohol, because they believe that alcohol is not from God whilst marijuana is. As regards their appearance, they are easily recognizable thanks to long dreadlocks and vivid colours of red, green and yellow on their clothes. Each colour has its meaning: red symbolizes blood of black oppressed people; green as a symbol of freedom and lush land and yellow express the spiritual wealth of Ethiopia.[53]

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[52]Bob Marley, "Africa Unite", Lyrics, 1979, Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AvFRim5C5V0 (accessed April 8, 2010).
[53]BBC. "Rastafari at a glance". BBC Religions Web site. Available at
http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/rastafari/ataglance/glance.shtml (accessed April 8, 2010).

3.1.3   Today's impact

Rastafarianism stands out from the rest of sub-cultures. The communities of this movement can be found in Jamaica, the UK and the USA. Due to the immigration of West Indians in 1950s, the Rastafarianism was spread all over the UK. As can be seen in the Teddy Boys sub-culture, these immigrants were usually eyesores for the rest of the British society. Nowadays, Britons do not consider them to be something strange and uncommon. They simply got used to them, because honestly, there are much stranger people, or sub-cultures living in Britain. Nowadays Rastafarian communities live mostly in Brixton – London, or in industrial cities such as Manchester or Nottingham. The Rastafarian style is still popular and widely adopted by the young generation. Dreadlocks, Rasta hair and Rastafarian colours influence fashion designers all around the world.[54] It again shows how thin the line between sub-cultural style with meaning and fashion style is.

3.2   Teddy Boys

3.2.1   Origin

Teddy Boys were the first originally British post-war sub-culture which originated in the early 50s in London. Their name was derived from the style of dress they wore which was inspired by the "Edwardian look"[55] at the very beginning of the 20th century. The Teddy Boys were usually working-class young men who could afford to invest in nice clothes and music records.[56] The sub-culture was predominantly male based with an occasional appearance of Teddy Girls.[57]

The Teddy Boy sub-culture came into existence for several reasons. According to scholars, one of the reasons could be the absence of their own style icon.[58] Whereas American youth had Elvis Presley and Marlon Brando, Britain had no one like that. That is

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[54] Nicole Phelps, review of L.A.M.B. Spring 2006, Style Web site, Available at
http://www.style.com/fashionshows/review/S2008RTW-LAMB/ (accessed April 8, 2010). ; Meenal Mistry,
review of Lacoste Fall 2008, Style Web site, Available at
http://www.style.com/fashionshows/review/F2008RTW-LACOSTE/ (accessed April 8, 2010).
[55] Roy Williams, "Teddy Boys," Nervous Web site, Available at http://www.nervous.co.uk/ted.htm. (accessed April 8, 2010).
[56] Subdreamer CMS [pseud.], "Teddy Boy History," Federation of Teddy Boys Web site, Available at
http://www.teddyboyfederation.co.uk/index.php?categoryid=4. (accessed April 8, 2010).
[57] Jenny Garber, "Girls and Subcultures," (London: Goldsmith university), 6.
[58] Subdreamer CMS [pseud.], "Teddy Boy History, "

why British youth looked up to the United States a lot and became literally Americanized. Another reason for their creation could be good economic situation and their ability to earn enough money or the apparent change of the social climate and the traditional working-class community caused by the West Indian immigration into the working-class neighbourhoods during the 1950s.[59] However, no sub-culture originated just for one reason. There was always a sequence of events in the particular period and the mood of society which contributed to the rise of sub-cultural elements. The Teds, as they are sometimes called, emerged from the overall situation of youth in Britain in the 1950s.

Unfortunately, they were not associated only with eccentric dress but also with violence and aggression towards immigrants. The most well-known acts of aggression towards black immigrants committed by Teddy Boys were the Notting Hill Riots in 1958.[60] Later on, the Notting Hill Carnival started to be celebrated as a paradigm of peaceful relationships between blacks and whites. Although it may seem that Teddy Boys were racists and hooligans, according to Robert J. Cross they were just a scapegoat of the media that blamed them for the decline of society.[61] Undoubtedly, they were wild because they were young and unfortunately some of them inclined towards racism and aggression, which later led to the inception of Skinheads.[62]

3.2.2 Music and style

The Teddy Boys were influenced by rock n roll and jazz music coming from the United States. They adored American singers and actors such as Elvis Presley, Bill Haley, Marlon Brando and Tony Curtis. These people were idols of the 1950s, so naturally young people, including Teddy Boys were inspired by their appearance. Teddy Boy style consisted of quite expensive tailor-made jacket with the black or velvet trim and narrow tight trousers

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[59] See Chapter Youth within 4 decades, The Rocking 50s
[60] BBC, Alice Bhandhukravi, "Nothing Hills Riots," BBC London Web site. Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/london/7571879.stm. (accessed April 8, 2010).
[61] Robert J. Cross, "The Teddy Boy as Scapegoat" (Kyoto: Doshisha University, 1998). Available at http://elib.doshisha.ac.jp/cgi-bin/retrieve/sr_bookview.cgi/U_CHARSET.utf-8/BD00004445/Body/g00012.pdf. (accessed April 8, 2010).
[62] John Clarke, cited in Robert J. Cross, "The Teddy Boy as Scapegoat" (Kyoto: Doshisha University, 1998), 12. Available at http://elib.doshisha.ac.jp/cgi-bin/retrieve/sr_bookview.cgi/U_CHARSET.utf-8/BD00004445/Body/g00012.pdf. (accessed April 8, 2010).

called drainpipes.[63] They also paid a great attention to the hairstyle, which was done to the "Duck's Arse" shape[64] at the back and a greased fringe that hung down in the front. The whole look was perfected with original tattoos. Teddy Boy style was very elegant and smart in comparison to other younger sub-cultures. However, people did not like it at all − they associated the style with the outrageous behaviour of those who wore it.[65]

3.2.3 Today's impact

The Teddy Boy sub-culture rose to popularity three times during the 20th century: For the first time in the 1950s fading-out around 1958 due to the on-coming Mod sub-culture; [66] For the second time in the 1970s as a transformation to the Rockabilly style (this style was later used as an inspiration for Vivian Westwood and Malcolm McLaren which led to the diffusion of style into mainstream culture);[67] The third Teddy Boys' revival was presented by The Edwardian Drape Society, which arose in 1990s in London.[68]

The Edwardian Drape Society survives and still tries to gather like-minded Teddy Boys and Teddy Girls, who want to bring the Teds back to life.[69] However, it is a fairly formidable task, because the original sub-culture itself melded into society long ago. The only remnants are a few elements of Ted's style such "drainpipe trousers" which might be seen on the catwalks as well as on streets of Britain and all over the world.[70]

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[63]Unknown girl, interview by unknown author on Ideal Man: a Teddy Boy, BBC School Radio, BBC Web site, 1956. Available at http://www.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/history/britainsincethe1930s_clip08.shtml. (accessed April 8, 2010).

[64]BBC, "The ideal husband a Teddy Boy", BBC School Radio, BBC Web site, Available at http://www.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/history/britainsincethe1930s_clip08.shtml. (accessed April 8, 2010).

[65]Cult of the Teddy Boy video 2008. Available at YouTube website http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ZKbCYpSZPY&feature=related. (accessed April 8, 2010).

[66]Pauline Weston, "1950s Teenager Fashion," Fashion Era Web site. Available at http://www.fashion-era.com/1950s/1950s_4_teenagers_teddy_boys.htm. (accessed April 8, 2010).

[67]Subdreamer CMS, "Teddy Boy History,"

[68]Alison Vennes, "Teddy Boy style is back: it never went away," The Independent online, May 16, 1994. Available at http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/teddyboy-style-is-back-it-never-went-away-1436250.html. (accessed April 8, 2010).

[69]Vennes, "Teddy Boy style is back: it never went away."

[70]Alison Vennes, "Teddy Boy style is back: it never went away."

3.3   Mods

3.3.1   Origin

When the Teddy Boy style went out of fashion at the end of the 50s, Britain had already its own icons for young people. Idols such as the Beatles, the Rolling Stones or Twiggy influenced the style of young Britons to a great extent. Everyone wanted to look like them, which helped to start a new trend based on a neat style brought to perfection by sub-culture called Modernists. Mods, as their name is often shortened, originated mainly from working-class youth in Britain at the beginning of the 1960s. This decade was characterized by great social changes which brought sexual freedom, drugs, a lot of fashion trends and a symbiosis of blacks and whites.[71] Mods, more than any other sub-culture were formed by fashion and style. Everything which was in fashion in the 1960s was modern – that's probably why also these young boys wearing expensive suits with perfect hairstyle were called Modernists. Mods and their predecessors, the Teddy Boys, attached great importance to clothing that should be understood as an attempt to show to the rest of the British conservative society that working-class youth can be stylish, too.

During the 1960s working-class neighbourhoods got used to black immigrants from the West Indies and the young generation of Mods was the first one that was open to their culture.[72] This influence might be seen especially in musical tastes of Mods in early 1960s when they inclined towards American jazz, blues and RnB music. The Mods created an interesting world where the weekends became days of celebration and partying. They had their own clubs such as Flamingo Club in Soho[73] and many others. However, the clubbing and partying of Mods often went hand in hand with the usage of drugs, especially "speed". That is why Mods are traditionally labelled as the first British sub-culture connected with hard drugs.[74]

3.3.2   Music and style

Early Mods were heavily influenced by US blues, jazz and soul music performed by Solomon Burke, The Contours and many others. Later they conformed themselves to

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[71]Chapter Youth within 4 decades, Swinging 60s.
[72]Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of Style*, 52.
[73]Jeffrey Kruger, interview by unknown author. Ember Record,November, 2001. Available at http://jeffreykruger.com/flamingo_club.html. (accessed April 8, 2010).

mainstream culture presented by popular British pop-rock bands such as The Who, The Kinks, The Small Faces or The Beatles.[75] Mod sub-culture, as well as any other youth sub-culture suffered from a lack of understanding from media and older generations relabelled as a generation gap. This element can be often observed in sub-cultural music, which is one of the main forms of expression. In Mod music we can find this feature in the lyrics of the song "My Generation" by The Who, which became popular also outside the UK.[76]

Concerning the style of Mods, it is considered as the most smart and elegant among styles of all British sub-cultures. There was nothing strange or attention catching in Mod wardrobe at first sight. Suits were plain in usual colours, but when viewed closely one could notice little details, which refined the whole style.[77] Mods also wore parka coats, which served as a protection when riding an Italian Vespa, Levi Strauss jeans, Ben Sherman shirts and also Fred Perry T-shirts nowadays popular among neo-Nazis. Mod girls did not differ much from other girls in the 60s. They wore A line skirts, used false eyelashes and styled their hair into geometric shapes or short bobs created by the famous hairdresser Vidal Sassoon[78], which remain popular today.

3.3.3   Today's impact

The life cycle of Mods was not very long, but became a foundation for a sub-culture known as Skinheads, which later moved towards the Neo-Nazi movement. Another influence of Mods can be observed in the Punk sub-culture of the 1970s for their similar attitude towards immigrants. According to Hebdige, the fade out of Mods started around 1966 especially due to the breaking up of the sub-culture into two branches with different ideals and financial backgrounds. The Mods from poorer neighbourhoods could not afford to be always stylish and perfect; that's why they tended to gather in similar groupings later named by society as Skinheads.[79]

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[74]Milestone, "Youth culture,"

[75] Leo Network, "British pop music." The Leo Networkm, Available at http://www.learnenglish.de/culture/britishmusic.htm. (accessed April 8, 2010).

[76] The Who, My Generation. The Smothers Brothers show, 1960s, Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9-JdubfUCw. (accessed April 8, 2010).

[77] BBC, "The Mod suit," British Style Genius, BBC Worldwide Web site, Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DetjCfwnWw, (accessed April 8, 2010).

[78]1960s Mod video 2008, Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cHB8ZK4njo&NR=1. (accessed April 8, 2010).

[79]Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of Style*, 55.

Basically, one part of the Mods was absorbed into following sub-culture of Skinheads and the second part into mainstream culture with the help of popularization of Mod bands and quite universal Mod fashion which was easily adaptable for British society. After all, the Mod theme serves as inspiration for many fashion designers even now. The newest trace of the style can be seen in many fashion shows.[80]

3.4 Hippies

3.4.1 Origin

Hippies, together with Mods became the most influential sub-cultures of the 1960s in Britain. Although originating in the same decade, there were substantial differences between these two groups. Unlike Mods, which were the original British sub-culture, Hippies started as an American sub-culture which got to Britain in the 1960s and provided another way of resistance to the mainstream. Their creation was often connected with the situation in the U.S. during the 1960s, which was full of violent events such as the Vietnam War and the assassinations of J.F. Kennedy, Malcom X and Martin Luther King. Britain was prepared for the emergence of Hippies thanks to the overall liberalisation and freedom of speech after the Lady Chatterley Trial in 1960, the first contraceptive pill and a new approach to sex.[81] Britain was still the same traditional country, but British society became more modern and liberal. That enabled to create a base for the Hippie sub-culture.

The style of Hippies was not temporal or a weekend matter – as it was for the Mods. Hippies had a whole concept for the mainstream rejection, which consisted of no work, a world without money, free love and a peace. Another thing which connected Hippies with Mods was a drug culture. However, Hippies saw LSD or marijuana as something spiritual, something which helped them to discover their inner self. For musicians and artists of the 60s such as Jimi Hendrix or Janis Joplin these drugs were a usual source of inspiration.[82]

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[80]Jessica Bumpus, review of Paul Smith collection Spring/Summer 2010. *Vogue* Web site. Available at http://www.vogue.co.uk/fashion/show.aspx/catwalk-report/id,7915 (accessed April 8, 2010).
[81]See chapter Youth within 4 decades – Swinging 60s
[82]Skip Stone, "Hippies and Drugs," Hipplanet Web site. Available at http://www.hipplanet.com/books/atoz/drugs.htm. (accessed April 8, 2010).

Hippies were a sub-culture without borders. They spread from the U.S. to Europe and later even to Asian countries.[83] These groups had the same basic philosophy, but they could be in some ways influenced by the country they lived in. An example might be the differences between American Hippies and British Hippies. Whilst American Hippies dropped out of the consumer society and tried to fight against it from outside, British hippies wanted to change the situation from the inside of the society.[84] The concept of Hippies in Britain can be observed in connection with the social situation in the country, whilst in America it was more about politics. All Hippies preached peace and love, nevertheless even their sub-cultural strategy did not have a long-term perspective. During the 1970s they grew up and let the style to be adopted by society.

3.4.2   Music and style

The Beatles, Jefferson Airplane, Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix were the most popular artists among hippies. Their music was very powerful and unified whole masses of people at huge Hippie festivals. Some of the most famous festivals were Summer of Love in San Francisco in 1967 and Woodstock in 1969. Several festivals took place also in the UK, but on a rather small scale. Music was supersaturated by the idea of love, freedom, a bright future and peace as can be heard in songs "All You Need Is Love" by The Beatles[85] or "Somebody To Love" by Jefferson Airplane.[86]

Hippie style was rather scruffy, with tie dye shirts in bright colours, bell-bottom pants and sandals. Both men and women wore long hair with flowers or at least a flower headband. Men usually had a full beard without any proper shape. The Hippie style was very expressive but highly distinctive from the neatness of Mods and Teds, whose style seemed to be more British.

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[83] Zee [pseud.], comment on "Mcleond Ganj," Travelpod blog, comment posted June 11, 2005. Available at http://www.travelpod.com/travel-blog-entries/zee/asia05/1118496180/tpod.html. (accessed April 8, 2010).
[84] Raymond Palmer, "British Hippies Are Different," *Free Lance-Star*, September 7, 1967. Available at http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1298&dat=19670907&id=zF4QAAAAIBAJ&sjid=ZIoDAAAAIBAJ&pg=7447,6031606 (accessed April 8, 2010).
[85] The Beatles, All You Need Is Love, 1967. Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5dPcUXqZ3cA. (accessed April 8, 2010).
[86] Jefferson Airplane, Somebody to Love, 1967. Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Jj3wZVc7nw. (accessed April 8, 2010).

3.4.3   Today's impact

Hippie sub-culture was unique in a sense that its concept was based on opposing the mainstream society with the help of a gun called love, not with violence or impertinence as it was in the case of other sub-cultures such as Punks or Skinheads. The impact on later generations remained mainly in music and fashion. Their music stayed popular because of its melody, nice lyrics and immensely influential artists who performed it. The evidence of Hippie influence in Britain may be seen every year in the huge Glastonbury Festival, which has taken place since the death of Jimmy Hendrix.[87] Hippie fashion was also accepted in a large scale by the masses. Nowadays the elements of hippie style could be found in collection of numerous fashion designers.[88] Although not being an original British sub-culture, the Hippies helped Britain to loosen British traditional opinions of drugs and sex.

3.5   Skinheads

3.5.1   Origin

At the end of the 1960 the Mods became immensely polarized sub-culture. They split into two distinctive groups. One tried to continue in the elegant flawless style and the other group inclined to more masculine and sharp style of working-class. The latter group became a basis for Skinhead sub-culture, which emerged in Great Britain at the turn of the decade 1960 and 1970 which was full of distrust and strikes. The sub-culture was not based on politics, but on the effort to recall back the lost sense of working-class territory, community and natural collectivity.[89] The traditional white working-class collective was disturbed and weakened by immigrants from India, Pakistan and China who lived in their own closed communities with different lifestyles and cultures without adapting to new environment.

The interesting fact about Skinheads is that they did not originate to be followers of Mods or any other sub-culture.[90] They simply found their own way to go, which made them

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[87]Glastonbury festival. History of festival. Available at http://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/history/. (accessed April 8, 2010).

[88] Review of Marc Jacobs Spring/Summer 2005. *Vogue* Web site. Available at http://www.vogue.co.uk/fashion/show.aspx/catwalk-report/id,1916. (accessed April 8, 2010). ; Sarah Mower, review of Louis Vuitton Spring/Summer 2010. *Vogue* Web site. Available at http://www.style.com/fashionshows/review/S2010RTW-LVUITTON. (accessed April 8, 2010).

[89] See chapter Revolt of the 70s

[90] Nick Knight, *Skinhead* (London: Omnibus press, 1982), 8.

very individual and strong sub-culture. Members of the sub-culture were predominantly youngsters who gathered in streets, dance halls or football stadiums. They got on well with Jamaican immigrants, because they both shared the love of reggae music, ska, dancing and fashion.[91] However, Asian immigrants were not that lucky. They were constantly assaulted during so-called "Paki-bashing" which led to physical and verbal attacks of Pakistanis.[92] This behaviour demonstrated the defence of already mentioned territory and traditional British working-class community.

The original Skinheads were a non-racist sub-culture which quickly spread abroad to Europe and over four decades went through many revivals and changes. Unfortunately, one of the most significant changes was the connection of Skinheads with racists, neo-Nazis and fascists. Nonetheless it is important to realize, that the original British Skinheads had very little to do with people, who call themselves Skinheads today. Rody Moreno, a lead singer of an anti-racist Skinhead band The Oppressed described the differences:

"If you are a racist, you can't be a Skinhead. Because the Skinheads would not exist without Jamaica. So, to deny the culture, which is why we eventually call them Boneheads – because they are not Skinheads. They are Boneheads, we are Skinheads. We look at them as a totally different, but obviously the world outside thinks we are all the same."[93]

3.5.2 Music and style

Original Skinheads loved listening to black Jamaican music such as ska or reggae. Later on they listened to 2 Ton music bands such as The Specials or The Selecter, which stressed racial unity.[94] Regarding Skinhead style, it became easily recognizable thanks to cropped hair, Ben Sherman shirts, Fred Perry T-shirts, crombies, Levi's jeans and heavy industrial

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[91]Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of Style*, 56.

[92]The free dictionary online, s.v. "paki-bashing." Available at http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Paki-bashing. (accessed April 9, 2010).

[93] Rody Moreno, interview by Daniel Schweizer. Available at
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iK8OtNIBP-g&NR=1. (accessed April 9, 2010).

[94]BBC, "Brief History of Ska music and star ska interviews," BBC Coventry and Warwickshire Web site, Available at http://www.bbc.co.uk/coventry/features/stories/west_indian/history-of-ska-music-the-specials.shtml. (accessed April 9, 2010).

Doc Marten boots.[95] The trend remained unchanged and is still popular among Skinheads and neo-Nazis.

3.5.3   Today's impact

Style of Skinheads was always respect inspiring, so there is no wonder that there were people who in spite of not being Skinheads adopted the style very quickly. Especially Doctor Marten boots soon became the best selling article in Britain and a few decades later a must have for European youth.[96] However the boots are not sub-culture specific because they were also adopted by another British sub-culture of punks in the 1970s.[97] Skinhead clothes are nowadays worn mostly by neo-Nazis and eventually anti-racist Skinheads S.H.A.R.P. (Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice) but from time to time the style becomes an inspiration for catwalks as well. The influence can be often observed on the most famous catwalks.[98] Indeed the most current perception of the style in Britain nowadays is connected with a homosexual orientation.[99]

Over decades, Skinheads became unjustly infamous because they were and still are very often associated with neo-Nazis. Although there is hatred between these two groups they are all the same to ordinary people. This perception of the sub-culture might be seen especially in central Europe, including the Czech Republic.[100] The misunderstanding subsists in the wrong qualification of those, who call themselves or are called Skinheads by media, but they are nothing else than neo-Nazis.[101] By contrast, in Britain people are usually able to clearly differentiate between those two opposite sub-cultures.

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[95] Phil Cohen, cited in Dick Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of Style* (1979; repr., New York: Routledge, 1987), 55.
[96] Storry and Childs, *British Cultural Identities,* 169.
[97] Ibid., 169.
[98] Dior Homme Meswear Autumn 2007-8 fashion show. (Paris: *Vogue* TV, 2007). Available at http://www.vogue.co.uk/fashion/show.aspx/video/id,4259. (accessed April 10, 2010). ; Antonio Berardi, review of Neil Barret Menswear Spring/Summer 2007. *Vogue* Web site. Available at http://www.vogue.co.uk/fashion/show.aspx/catwalk-report/id,3603. (accessed April 10, 2010).
[99] Liza and Jason from London, comments on "Skinhead-under the skin" BBC, BBC News Web site, Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/6546617.stm, (accessed April 10, 2010).
[100] TV JOJ Slovakia, TV News. Aired September 11, 2006. Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bnjOwl6UKY. (accessed April 10, 2010).
[101] Andrea Kepková, *Subcultures in England and their place in the British national identity* (Charles university Prague, published in GRIN, 2007). Available at http://www.grin.com/e-book/111371/the-british-national-identity-subcultures-in-england-and-their-place. (accessed April 10, 2010).

3.6   Punks

3.6.1   Origin

The Punk emerged in Britain in the 1970s first as a music genre which later became an impulse to the creation of Punk sub-culture.[102] The music scene of the 1970s included Glam rock singers such as Marc Bolan, Gary Glitter, Alvin Stardust, David Bowie and Lou Reed who laid the first foundation stone to Punk music together with elements appearing in reggae such as despair, decline and a lost hope. The Punk sub-culture drew on black culture as well as many other British sub-cultures such as Mods or Skinheads. According to Dick Hebdige, the great resemblance of Punk with black culture can be formulated as "a white translation of black ethnicity"[103] because of dissatisfaction of both groups with the society they lived in. The Punk sub-culture arose in consequence of the poor economic and political situation in the 1970s in Britain, which was linked to strikes, shortages of coal and electricity, high unemployment, social unrest connected with "the Troubles", oil crisis, racism and disgust with the entire British system.[104]

In general, the Punk was understood as a fight against the establishment and commercialization. True Punks say that there are no rules to be a Punk. It is neither about fashion nor is spiky hair called "mohawk" but it is about attitudes and your lifestyle.[105] As well as Mark Andersen, a reputable American author of several books about Punk sub-culture wrote:

"To start with, I'll tell you what I think Punk isn't – it isn't a fashion, a certain style of dress...it is an idea that guides and motivates your life. The Punk community that exists exists to support and realize that idea through music, art, fanzines and other expressions of personal creativity. And what is this idea? Think for yourself, be yourself, don't just take what society gives you, create your own rules, live your own life".[106]

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[102]See Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of Style*, 62.
[103]Ibid.,62-64.
[104]See chapter Revolt of the 70s
[105]See Muggleton, *Inside Subculture,* 56,57.
[106]M. Andersen, cited in David Muggleton, Inside Subculture: The Postmodern Meaning of Style (Dress, Body, Culture) (2000;repr., Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2002),59.

As might be observed from his words describing Punk as something quite individual – "think for yourself, be yourself, live your own life" Andersen, as well as David Muggleton in his book *Inside the Sub-culture: The Postmodern Meaning of Style*, see the Punk sub-culture as a group of individuals with similar lifestyle rather than one unified element. This post-modern approach later challenged the work of Birmingham CCCS and significantly contributed to better understanding of sub-cultures.

3.6.2   Music and style

Punk music is an embodiment of a revolt, anarchy and disbelief in future that can be heard in songs God Save the Queen by Sex pistols[107] or London calling by The Clash[108]. Other British Punk bands of the 1970s were The Undertones, U.K. Subs, Buzzcocks or The Damned. These bands played an influential role for bands such as The Cure, The Skids, Joy Division, The Exploited, The Offspring or Green Days.

The Punk style is defined by rather scruffy look with torn clothes such as dirty T-shirts with swastika or an anarchic symbol circle A, old leather jackets, tight trousers and heavy industrial Doctor Martens boots. Especially then the usage of swastikas became very controversial issue. However, it did the trick. To shock was the main aim of the Punks.

The Punk look was usually improved by Mohican hair (mohawk), which was a spiky hairstyle that held the shape with the help of soap, eggs or a glue. The most popular Punk accessories were safety pins, chains and all kinds of bondage, which could have both practical and spiritual meaning. In a way the usage of these things could express the boundaries of Punks with the country they lived in - with Great Britain. The appearance of Punks was quite scary, shocking and total opposite of neat British fashion which consequently attracted a number of fashion designers like a magnet.

3.6.3   Today's impact

Punk remained an underground sub-culture till the second half of the 1970s.[109] Then bands such as The Sex Pistols and The Clash originated and became very successful even outside

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[107]The Sex Pistols, God Save the Queen, 1977. Available at
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MeP220xx7Bs. (accessed April 10, 2010).
[108]The Clash, London Calling, 1979. Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGf82oCyLEo.
(accessed April 10, 2010).
[109]BBC, Ian Youngs, "A Brief History of Punk," BBC News Web site, Available at
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/2601493.stm. (accessed April 10, 2010).

British Isles. That was the moment when Punk started spreading very fast, which later led to its diffusion among mainstream society by the help of The Sex Pistols' manager Malcolm McLaren and eccentric British fashion designer Vivian Westwood and their shop Let It Rock on the King's road.[110] Punk remained popular among fashion designers till these days. The elements of Punk might be found in collections of the best fashion designers.[111] Punks can be still sometimes seen in the streets of London and other big cities, but they are strange only for tourists. Britons are used to them and regard them as a British phenomenon.

The slogan of Punk was *THE PUNK'S NOT DEAD*. Well, it depends. On one hand the sub-culture itself is nowadays rather weak in comparison with the 1970s. Although existing, its message to society is out of context today and works only as a symbol. On the other hand the Punk music survived in its sub-genres such as post-punk or hardcore.[112] Punk's contribution to fashion is also significant. Dead or alive, Punk leaked in branches of popular culture and was recognized by people all around the world.

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[110]BBC, "Punk Sets Out to Destroy," British Style Genius. BBC Web site online, Available at http://www.bbc.co.uk/britishstylegenius/content/21841.shtml. (accessed April 10, 2010).
[111]Review of Paul Smith collection Spring/Summer 2003. *Vogue* Web site. Available at http://www.vogue.co.uk/news/daily/2002-09/020912-fashion-week-preview-paul-smith-does-punk.aspx. (accessed April 10, 2010).; Camilla Morton, review of Junya Watanabe collection Spring/Summer 2006. *Vogue* Web site. Available at http://www.vogue.co.uk/fashion/show.aspx/catwalk-report/id,2824. (accessed April 10, 2010).
[112]Ryan Cooper, "The Subgenres of Punk Rock," About.com website. Available at http://punkmusic.about.com/od/punk101/a/subgenres.htm. (accessed April 10, 2010).

4 NEW SUBCULTURES

4.1 Goths

4.1.1 Origin

The Goth sub-culture is another sub-culture whose roots go down to punk music, especially then to post-punk, which later diffused into many sub-genres. One of them was also Gothic rock, which provided sufficient number of fans to create a sub-culture.[113] The sub-culture originated in the 1980s in Britain and with a help of television, radio and clubs spread across Britain and got abroad quickly.[114]

Unlike some other sub-cultures such as Punks or Hippies, the Goth sub-culture did not originated as a reaction to a particular event, politics or a situation in the country. The only feature the sub-culture shares (except style of dress, community etc.) and what makes it a sub-culture is a rejection of mainstream society as a culture with a lack of creativity and no crowd diversity in behaviour and fashion. Paul Hodkinson, who researched the Goth sub-culture from the inside as one of its members identify the straight society as "sheepish and narrow-minded with no tolerance to difference".[115] The Goths basically see the society as very unified and the society see the Goths similarly. However, the sub-culture is in a matter of fact as diverse as the members of the mainstream themselves.

4.1.2 Music and style

As was told, the Gothic music in its birth drew on Punk music such as Joy Division or tough singer Siouxsie who later influenced Gothic rock bands such as Bauhaus, Play Dead, The Birthday Party, U.K. Decay or Specimen.[116] Nowadays the most popular bands among Goths are The Sisters of Mercy, Alien Sex Fiend, Sex Gang Children or Nosferatu, which often participate in Goth festivals in Europe.[117]

The style of Goths is quite macabre and sombre. It is impossible to mistake them for someone else. The black colour prevails over bright colours, but sometimes also the usage

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[113]Paul Hodkinson, *Goth: Identity, Style and Subculture* (2002;repr. London: Berg Publishers, 2002), 35-37.
[114]Ibid., 37.
[115] Ibid., 76-77.
[116] Ibid., 35-36.
[117] Gothic Festival Belgium, programme 2010. Available at
http://www.gothicfestival.be/nl/Bands_&_Program/. (accessed April 10, 2010).

of glaring colours can be seen.[118] The male Goth style consists of tight top, leather jackets or long black coats with a lot of details, black tight trousers or a skirt, heavy platform boots and jewellery such as crucifix or earrings. The female Goth style includes dark, a kind of Victorian dress, bodices or t-shirts with plunging neckline, tight trousers and high heeled platform shoes. A skirt can be seen both on men and women[119], as well as heavy white foundation and black eyeliner. The whole style then evokes an impression of feminity, as it could be seen for example in Hippie sub-culture.

4.1.3 Today's impact

The Goths are generally regarded by society as sad, violent and with tendency to occultism, Satanism and sado-masochism.[120] However, not everything what people think is true. Due to diversity of the Goth sub-culture in fashion, behaviour and opinions of its members, it would be narrow-minded to say that each Goth is violent, Satanist, etc. Nevertheless, people do not like shocks or oddity, so the public opinion is based on what they see in the streets, watch in the TV or read in the newspapers.

Concerning the Goths in mainstream culture, the style is so much odd that it protects itself from soaking into thoroughly. The biggest influence of Goths can be seen again in fashion – both in elements of street fashion such as black laces, black coats, etc. and designer collections.[121] However, for many Britons the sub-culture is considered to be a laughing stock, which can be observed even in jokes and TV serials. (e.g. IT Crowd S1E4).[122]

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[118]Hodkinson, *Goth: Identity, Style and Subculture*, 46.
[119]Ibid., 50.
[120]BBC, "Newcastle Goths," BBC Inside Out Web site, Available at
http://www.bbc.co.uk/insideout/northeast/series1/goths.shtml (accessed April 10, 2010).
[121]Beth Schepens, "Alexander McQueen Holds (Goth) Court," *Wall Street Journal online* (March 2008).
Available at http://blogs.wsj.com/runway/2008/03/01/alexander-mcqueens-holds-goth-court/tab/article/.
(accessed April 10, 2010). ; Camilla Morton, review of John Galliano Meswear Autumn 2006. *Vogue*
website. Available at http://www.vogue.co.uk/fashion/show.aspx/catwalk-report/id,3063. (accessed April 10,
2010).
[122]*IT Crowd*, "The Red Door," episode 4, season 1. Channel 4 (originally aired February 17, 2006). Available
online at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMntWakmuEk. (accessed April 10, 2010).

4.2   Emo

4.2.1   Origin

Except Goths, another "dark sub-culture" called Emo might be found in Britain. It is characterized by dark emotional thoughts about world and great portion of despair. Emo sub-culture does not have very deep roots in history because as a term for sub-culture it was not used until the later 1990s.[123] It is generally believed that it originated from hardcore punk music in the U.S. and later in the 1990s from music of bands which composed darker and more emotional lyrics such as Promise Ring or Jimmy Eat World.[124] At the beginning of the new millennium the sub-culture spread to the world thanks to massive use of the Internet.[125] The web always played an important role in a shaping of the community and still serves as a main meeting point for them as can be noticed on social sites Facebook, MySpace and forums like www.luv-emo.com or www.emo-corner.com.

4.2.2   Music and style

The sub-culture emerged from music connected to emotional music full of despair represented by bands such as The Get Up Kids, Saves the Day, Dashboard Confessional or Paramore.[126] Emo music influenced by Indie such as Paramore or Panic! At the Disco sometimes performs at huge festivals such as Glastonbury[127] and practically saturated into mainstream. That can be the reason why people usually cannot distinguish between Punk music such as Blink 182, metal music such as Nightwish and Emo music such as those listed above.

The way Emos dress consists of tight jeans for boys and girls in dark colours, T-shirts with logos of their favourite bands and All Stars Converse sneakers or skate shoes. The whole style is intensified by heavy makeup, black dyed straightened hair and a side

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[123]Encyclopedia Britannica, s.v. "Emo." Available at
http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1484940/emo. (accessed April 10, 2010).
[124]Trend David Kamp, cited in Warren Hedges "Emo History: As a Musical Trend." Presentation. Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JP1VYSMUy8s. (accessed April 10, 2010).
[125]See chapter The Modern 90s
[126]Warren Hedges "Emo History: As a Musical Trend." Presentation. Available at
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JP1VYSMUy8s. (accessed April 10, 2010).
[127]BBC, "Glastonbury 2008 – Panic at the Disco," BBC Web site, Available at
http://www.bbc.co.uk/glastonbury/2008/artists/panicatthedisco/. (accessed April 10, 2010).

fringe which covers one eye.[128] The most interesting fact about the Emo concept is that everything including clothes, hairstyle, makeup and even lifestyle is a kind of "unisex" , which could not be seen in any other previous British sub-culture.

4.2.3 Today's impact

Emo is a new sub-culture which is worldwide. It can be found in the U.S. and Britain as well as in the Czech Republic and Japan – which gives an evidence of its popularity among young people. Moreover such an expansion often brings the sub-culture closer to the straight society as well as it was in the case of Hippies or Punks. It happened to Emos now. The Emo-inspired clothes are constantly seen in the streets, especially then on the fifteen years old young people who actually created a prototype of today's teen fashion. The sub-culture is a scene very much connected with sad music but more than anything else associated with a self-harm, teenage suicides and bisexuality that can be understood as a rebellion against society. Nonetheless these topics are quite broad and controversial and even the Emos themselves do not have a unified opinion about it.[129]

4.3 Chavs

4.3.1 Origin

Chavs are the newest culture phenomenon that originated in Britain during the new millennium. The existence of Chavs shows the fundamental division of British society into three classes. The *Longman dictionary online* defines Chav as "an offensive word used especially by newspapers to talk about a young working-class person who is rude and aggressive, has a low level of education, and who wears a certain style of fashionable clothing such as trainers, sportswear, and baseball caps."[130] As the definition itself indicates – the Chavs are not very popular among British people who usually found them vulgar and out of taste.[131] The Chavs are often discussed in media especially because of the

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[128] Luv-emo, "Emo clothing," Luv-emo website, Available at http://www.luv-emo.com/emofashion.html. (accessed April 10, 2010).
[129] Emo-corner, "What is Emo," Emo-corner website, Available at http://www.emo-corner.com/what-is-emo/. (accessed April 10, 2010).

[130] *Longman dictionary online*, s.v. "chav." Available at http://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/chav. (accessed 10 April, 2010).
[131] Steve Cawdron and Julia Zagonek, conversation with author, 12 February, 2010.

ASBO violation, which became a "badge of courage" for them.[132] The problem is that their behaviour is not about rebellion or a struggle against mainstream society but it is often about killing the time. The Chavs themselves are actually the core of mainstream. They also do not possess any other common features such as music or desire to oppose the society which would make them a proper sub-culture.[133] Though the word Chav is quite new, the people which are called like that nowadays always existed in the British society. They were working-class and considered as rude, uneducated, they had strange accents and the middle and upper-class always laughed at them. Such a portrayal of working-class in British history might be observed in a musical play Pygmalion by G.B. Shaw, known also as My Fair Lady. Today social situation in Britain and the attitude of middle and upper-class toward working-class is the same as it was, when Shaw wrote his play in year 1913. In short, by means of labelling the working-class as Chavs etc. the British show how important the class in their country is.

4.3.2 Music and style

Chavs are not connected with particular type of music or genre but they incline to hip hop and rap, which can be sometimes understood from the way they dress. The bands and singers connected to Chavs are Goldie Looking Chain from Wales, Lady Sovereign and well-known Lily Allen.[134] The Chav style usually consists of a tracksuit, fake designer clothes (headed by Burberry), trainers and massive golden accessories such as chains or bracelets. Chav girls usually put too much foundation and lip gloss to achieve "cakey" look. The whole Chav style is actually without any style and any taste of fashion and the overall impression is amplified by usage of pejoratives or a working-class accent with heavy slang as can be heard from Lady Sovereign.[135]

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[132]Storry and Childs, *British Cultural Identities*, 171.

[133]BBC, Alison Smith, "Media student Expert on Chavs," BBC News website, Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/education/4091478.stm. (accessed April 10, 2010).

[134]Catherine Solmes, "The Chav & British Music," The Suite 101 website, entry posted 21 August, 2007. Available at http://popculture.suite101.com/article.cfm/chavs. (accessed April 10, 2010).

[135] Lady Sovereign, interview by VIMBY TV. Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZTzR2s8y2dY&feature=related. (accessed April 10, 2010).

4.3.3   Today's impact

Chavs are today very much discussed in TV and tabloids in rather dismissive way. Mass media depict Chav identity as one of the most awful in Britain. According to Verity Jennings, a student who wrote a thesis on Chavs – Britain literally suffers a "chavaphobia".[136] People are used to call them Chavs as a shortening of "council housed and violent".[137] However, even wealthy people such as the Beckhams and the Rooneys are labelled by mass media as the best Chavs ever.[138] The reason for such labelling might be in their association with advertisements for multinational brands such as Pepsi, Coke, Adidas or Nike which are loved by most working-class Chavs. The Chavs themselves are actually very good marketing tools, because in a way - they are walking human advertisements. This phenomenon can be sometimes observed even on the streets of the Czech Republic.

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[136]BBC, Alison Smith, "Media student Expert on Chavs," BBC News Web site, Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/education/4091478.stm. (accessed April 10, 2010).
[137]Michael Quinion, "Chav," Worldwidewords website. Available at http://www.worldwidewords.org/topicalwords/tw-cha2.htm. (accessed April 10, 2010).
[138]Natasha Pearlman, "The Chav Rich List," *The Mail online*, October, 2006. Available at http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-409087/The-Chav-Rich-List.html. (accessed April 10, 2010).

5 FUTURE PERSPECTIVE OF SUB-CULTURES IN OLD BLIGHTY

As could be seen from the analysis of British sub-cultures on previous pages, most of them emerged as reactions to the situation in Great Britain in a given era. From the post-war period onwards, there was not a single decade without any sub-culture. That was caused by already mentioned impulses which governed Britain in its particular period, by overall interest in youth after war and by progress in TV and radio broadcasting. The latter factor became a crucial channel for the spread of British sub-cultures all over the country and world. Nowadays with a global usage of the Internet the sub-cultures are spread more quickly then ever before. This process helps them to "recruit" new members at the beginning and create a solid ground. However, at the end the quick and immense expansion weakens their ability to shock and the sub-culture is diffused into mainstream society.

On one hand the future of British and other sub-cultures is endangered by mass media and fashion trends which often draw on the elements associated with sub-cultural underground. On the other hand, the fashion is the most effective way of preserving the sub-cultural style for years in the future. No sub-culture can exist in its intended form for ever, but it can outlast in other forms such as fashion, films and music which are fully incorporated in society. Their fate is therefore "double-faced". Their future perspective is though bright. The presence of sub-cultures in Britain for sixty years makes them a British phenomenon which will not disappear just so.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this bachelor thesis was to identify the British sub-cultures from 1950 to 2010 from the perspective of their origin, music, style and mainly to show their current, day-to-day appearance in mainstream fashion and music as a demonstration of their natural life cycle. The analysis of the sub-cultures would not be possible without interconnection to the social, political and economic events and situations in the country, which appeared before or during the creation of particular sub-cultures. Such connections not only helped to trace the roots of sub-cultures in British history and determine the reasons of their origin but also helped to understand the importance of the events and mood in society as a base for the sub-cultural study.

The thesis also introduced a number of scholarly opinions from the 1960s to the present that tried to describe the sub-cultural elements from various points of view. The situation in the country in various decades which was connected to the sub-cultures, as well as the scholarly opinions used, bring credibility to the study.

The thesis acknowledges how people react to situations and socio-economic events in society and how natural their behaviour is. The sub-cultures described were the most influential ones that appeared in Britain either as a reaction to the situation in the country or came from abroad and became very popular in Great Britain. It also demonstrates the life cycle of sub-cultures, the modern preservation of their visible elements and the impossibility of preserving their invisible features, which are often the most important characteristics.

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APPENDICES

P I   The first appendix.

P II   The second appendix.

APPENDIX P I: APPENDIX TITLE