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British Cultural Studies and the Development of Subcultures in the 1960s

Bachelor's Diploma Thesis

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Introduction

World War II was a watershed event in British history. The era following it brought many changes in society, which were marked by an economic boom and an increased standard of living. Britain was determined to distance itself from the past by introducing an education system that would grant people equal opportunities of social mobility and would therefore create a de facto classless society. Thus the country's attention turned to youth, which emerged as a new group and having no experience with the pre-war era, they were supposed to be the future of the new system, which Britain had high hopes for. Despite the standard of living in fact being higher, equal opportunities for everyone turned out to be a rather chimerical plan. A lack of opportunities concerned the working-class youth primarily, who then dealt with their disenchantment in various ways. One of those was joining a subculture, which is a phenomenon this thesis aims to examine, in particular those of the 1960s. Subcultures provided youth with a breakaway from their daily mundane routine and with a way of responding to the problems associated with their class. It did not take too long before subcultures became an object of study and research for Cultural Studies, which were an emerging field themselves. The field was introduced most notably with the establishment of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in 1964 at the University of Birmingham. The Centre was not only a pioneer of Cultural Studies, but it also aimed to shift the direction of previous studies related to culture, which were only concerned with high culture. Researchers at the Centre wanted to alter this paradigm and instead focus on examining culture in terms of everyday lives and prove to scholars that culture in this sense was worthy of being included into the academics. Therefore, the purpose of this thesis is to describe the contemporaneous development of subcultures and British Cultural Studies in the 1960s and to examine the nature of connections between them.

The thesis is organised into three chapters, the first of which looks into the development of the British Cultural Studies in the 1960s. It briefly outlines the history of what might be considered Cultural Studies in Britain before this period, but then the main focus is placed on the history of the first years of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies and events leading up to its establishment. The Centre revolved around a few leading figures such as Richard Hoggart, Stuart Hall and Raymond Williams, who are presented along with their work, as this chapter aims to show their revolutionary approach to studying culture and what ideas it was based on. The main sources for this chapter are Graeme Turner's *British Cultural Studies: An Introduction* and Patrick Brantlinger's *Crusoe's Footprint: Cultural Studies in Britain and America*, which both offer a detailed background of the development of the field, as well as an analysis of the applied theories and the authors' works.

The second chapter is devoted to the concept of subculture itself. It is based mainly on the Cultural Studies' scholars' approach to the phenomenon and illustrates which of its elements were examined in their work. First it provides a definition of subculture and as opposed to it, tackles the myth of "Youth Culture", which was prevalent in post-war British ideology. Among the other aspects of subculture taken into consideration are its function, its relation to the dominant culture and the importance of style within these groups. Through examination of these elements, this chapter intends to demonstrate the importance of studying subcultures to Cultural Studies, which lies mostly in accordance to Cultural Studies' newfound conviction of studying the culture of daily life. Most of this chapter draws from Dick Hebdige's *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, which provides a deep insight into the topic of subculture, covering many of the aforementioned aspects.

The final chapter introduces some of the prominent subcultures of the 1960s in their approximate succession. The respective subcultures are presented in terms of their various features, some of which were theoretically examined in the second chapter of this work. First,

the thesis looks into the birth of the given subculture and then goes on to inquire about its ideologies and focal concerns, around which subcultures are mostly built. The relation of a subculture's relation to their parent cultures, or in some cases other subcultures are touched upon as well. Finally, their style is portrayed by various stereotypical elements, be it their characteristic traditions, music or fashion and others. The first introduced groups are the "mods" and "rockers", two conflicting subcultures in the early 1960s, dubbed "folk devils" by the media for their infamous clashes with one another. Their inevitable decay was followed by the rise of other subcultures, most notably the "skinheads", whose culture was heavily inspired by the "rude boy" culture of West Indian immigrant communities, both of which are also dealt with in the thesis. Multiple sources provide the background for this particular chapter, however a collection of essays entitled *Resistance through Rituals: Youth subcultures in post-war Britain* needs to be pointed out.

1. British Cultural Studies

1.1 Antecedents

As cultural studies is a field that only began to take shape in the 1960s, its roots can be traced back to theorists from other fields, whose work however was related to cultural matters. Patrick Brantlinger regards Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the founder of the Romantic Movement in England, as one of the earliest figures of the tradition, meaning the origins of the field date back to the 19th century (40). Though mostly a poet and philosopher, Coleridge's contribution lay in his numerous works that touched upon many social and cultural issues.

As disputable as Coleridge's influence might be, most scholars however agree that the most notable predecessors are Matthew Arnold, F. R. Leavis and T. S. Eliot, all of whom are related by their ideas of culture being a solution to contemporary social problems and at the same time being a concept opposed to democracy. In terms of cultural studies, Arnold's most prominent work is *Culture and Anarchy* (1896), a collection of essays where he provides a definition of a cultural critic and his supposed functions. Later on, he expresses his belief that culture is the ultimate means of "improving the populace" and preventing it from a decline towards anarchy. Nevertheless, when speaking about "culture", Arnold refers to high culture, the standards of which he believed were preserved in classical literature (Carnie).

Similar ideas are found in the work of the literary critic F. R. Leavis, who was a very influential figure in terms of culture in the 1930s and 1940s and who followed up on Arnold's approach by further developing the idea of high culture being a remedy for the deteriorating society and its values he believed had been shattered through the process of industrialisation. In his works he repeatedly emphasised the importance of consolidating certain cultural standards, which in his eyes were in the hands of the intellectual minority and which were, much like Arnold thought, to be found reflected in classic literature.

The American-born author T. S. Eliot, also an influential personality of the 1930s, devoted a lot of his work to social criticism, and also adopted a rather elitist approach by pleading for a social structure that would comprise of hierarchical levels of culture. However, by doing so he extended the term "culture" to apply to all members of society and therefore was among the first to define culture in a more inclusive way, claiming in his "Notes towards the Definition of Culture" that: "Culture may even be described simply as that which makes life worth living… It includes all the characteristic activities and interests of a people" (In Kohzadi and Azizmohammadi 2823). This statement later came to be the basis for the theories of the scholars of 1950s and 1960s, which will be dealt with in subchapter 1.3, however to give a better understanding of the circumstances that these scholars were coming from, it is first necessary to describe the ways in which Britain and its society had changed following World War II.

1.2 Influences on the field

1.2.1 Changes in the post-World War II era

After World War II Britain sought to reconstruct itself, which led to changes in society and its everyday experience on many levels, which were mostly of a cultural nature and therefore later on scholars tended to speak of this phenomenon as "cultural revolution".

"Mass" is a keyword to these changes, as many fields were now produced or dealt with on a national scale. The most notable of these are the creation of a market that would allow for mass consumption and the usage of mass media.

With the idea of creating a more socially mobile environment, the government created a new system of education which was supposed to grant fairly equal opportunities to everyone regardless of their social rank. As a consequence, the new concept of adult education was introduced.

In the 20th century Britain was also gradually losing the remainders of its former colonial empire, which meant it was no longer considered a superpower, a fact that to a certain extent undermined the national identity and left Britain to struggle to find a new one (Seiler). At the same time, the unstable situation in the former colonies resulted in a vast influx of immigrants from these to Britain, changing its formerly homogenous society and bringing new cultural elements.

In terms of influences from other cultures, American pop culture also poured in with the introduction of mass media and slowly started replacing local traditional culture. The pop music, Hollywood films and TV programs were appealing to the younger generation especially and led cultural theorists to question how the media might "intrude into and alter how we make sense of ourselves and our social world" (Rai and Panna 8). These emerging concepts and rapid changes had an undeniable influence on and were of interest to the pioneers of British cultural studies who are introduced in the following subchapter.

1.2.2 European theorists

In cultural studies and examining subcultures, the scholars borrowed elements from the theories of influential European theoreticians and applied them in the developing subcultural theory.

First of these was the concept of hegemony, originally formulated by the Italian Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci. He used this term, as Hebdige describes, to denote a situation in which a "provisional alliance of certain social groups can exert total social authority over other subordinate groups" (*Subculture* 16). This authority is won by gaining consent which ensures the seeming legitimacy of the ruling class's power. The term "provisional" is key here, as the same alliance cannot permanently exercise hegemony over the majority, because it requires its consent. Later on, in their study of subcultures, cultural

theorists used his findings to, in John Clarke's words, "situate youth in the dialectic between a hegemonic dominant culture and the subordinate working-class parent culture of which youth is a fraction." (in Shildrick 62)

Many of the influential figures were representatives of structuralism, which can be utilised in several fields, but in this case dealt with linguistics mostly and put forward the thought that the "relationship between language/culture and meaning is constructed" and thus challenged the culturalist thought of meaning being reflected through culture (Procter 40).

One of the inspirations was the work of Roland Barthes, a French linguist who was interested in exploring the hidden meanings of everyday life and set out to uncover these in his work *Mythologies*. Barthes tackled the latent codes and conventions through which "meanings particular to specific social groups are rendered universal and "given" for the whole society" (Hebdige, *Subculture* 9), with a focus on the structure of post-war French culture. In the pursuit of his goal, he applied semiotics, which later on allowed cultural studies to adopt linguistics and use a method of applying them to extra-linguistic systems of discourse. Cultural theorists then applied Barthes's method to the study of subcultures as they could also be interpreted in terms of signs they conveyed. They also found a similar inspiration in the Belgian anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, who too dealt with semiotics.

While Barthes and Lévi-Strauss were representatives of semiotic structuralism, the final key figure to influence cultural studies was Louis Althusser whose stance can be defined rather as Marxist structuralist. His theory about ideologies was of importance to cultural studies, as he claimed that ideology is a "system of representations through which we live, in an imaginary way, our real conditions of existence" (Procter 45).

1.3 Pioneers

Generally speaking, there are three academicians who are regarded as key figures that helped form British cultural studies. All of them coming from a working-class background, their focus was on culture in the still class ridden society, which later came to be the primary focus of the field itself. They are also the authors of what are considered founding texts of British cultural studies and shall now be introduced along with other features of their career, such as their other works and fundamental ideas.

1.3.1 Richard Hoggart

Born in Leeds in 1918, Richard Hoggart grew up in a strictly working-class environment. In spite of this adverse social background, he managed to win a scholarship and graduate from the University of Leeds and went on to become a tutor of adult education at the University of Hull. In 1962, he became professor of English at the University of Birmingham, which was an essential step towards shaping British cultural studies, as this is where Hoggart founded the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, the research centre which established cultural studies as a proper academic field.

His classic work *The Uses of Literacy* is one of the founding texts of cultural studies and what distinguishes him from previous cultural theorists as he distances himself from any form of elitism. Instead it is an unprecedented detailed account of the working-class life in the years spanning World War II which reinforces Hoggart's position as one of the first academic advocates for this class. "The Uses of Literacy" depicts the conditions of the working class, as well as "their attitudes towards a range of issues such as religion, poverty, politics and many more" (Seiler). By including these in the work, Hoggart attempts to offer a picture of working-class values and meanings embedded in their patterns. In the second half of the book he is critical of contemporary society and its culture, but unlike Leavis, he does not consider

high culture to be the standard that culture should be aiming for, on the contrary, he finds the ideal in the traditional culture of the working class. He finds that there is a major discrepancy between what he considers to be the ideal culture and the contemporary culture that was slowly debased as its trends were dictated by mass production and mass media (Turner 48). These beliefs were likely caused by his disenchantment with the fact that the traditional values he grew up surrounded by were slowly on the decline in the 1950s. The book's importance lay in several aspects, not only was it recognised as one of the first and honest descriptions of working-class life, but it also helped promote cultural studies as a field.

1.3.2 Raymond Williams

Born in 1921, Raymond Williams's background was very similar to that of Hoggart, however they are not only connected by their class origin, as after graduating from Trinity College in Cambridge, Williams too became a tutor of adult education at the University of Oxford.

Williams became prominent through the release of *Culture and Society* in 1958, another book that is thought of as one of the texts that helped popularise cultural studies. In it, Williams seeks to examine the concepts of not only culture, but also class and democracy and how all of these are related. Basing on his claim that cultural forms "shape and are shaped by the context of time" (Seiler), he places all of the examined terms into a historical context, observing how they were used and how their meanings eventually changed at different stages from the 19th century on. In his attitude towards cultural studies, Williams puts forward the suggestion that culture should be considered holistic and treated as such (Brantlinger 56). Much like Hoggart, he too condemns the notion of culture being only studied in terms of its elite forms, but still affirms that this does not mean the study of elite forms should be dismissed entirely. Instead, he calls for the study of common culture that would value

diversity in society (Seiler). Within this approach, he goes on to introduce the concept of recovering the "structures of feeling", a term coined by Williams himself, i.e. when conducting a cultural research about a given period, one shall not only consider the high literature, but should also examine the marginal texts, which combined with the known political and social facts will provide the most accurate outline of the era (Turner 56).

In 1961, he published *The Long Revolution*, another work he gained recognition for. Here his thoughts bear resemblance to those of Hoggart, as he claims society is heading towards a cultural stagnation and later on proposes ways of avoiding it. Williams also recognized the importance of mass media, even endorsed its use, but insisted that certain aesthetic and moral criteria be used in order to distinguish quality products from the throwaways.

1.3.3 E. P. Thompson

Edward Palmer Thompson was born in Oxford in 1924. Primarily a historian interested in the British radical movements, he stood out by also dealing with a number of social and cultural topics in his work. The most representative example of this is his 1963 "The Making of The English Working Class", a book that was one of the earliest pieces within the field of history to acknowledge the evergrowing consciousness of the working class and to go as far as to label it as the key historical agents. Thompson also argues that class is a formation that is shaped by processes of a political, social and cultural nature and which take place over a long course of time and it is these processes that he aimed to examine in the book.

1.4 Formation of the field in 1960s

After many years of cultural theories and works being a rare occasion and mostly just marginal works of authors generally oriented towards other disciplines, cultural studies have finally become a distinct field in the early 1960s. The two main contributors to this fact were New Left, a left-wing intellectual movement and Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), a research centre at the University of Birmingham. The two were closely connected as many figures were involved with both of them, but their purpose in formation of the field was slightly different. While New Left was more of an ideological source for theories that the field came to be based on, the CCCS, backed up by the University of Birmingham and its members' reputation, gained recognition for the field in academic circles.

1.4.1 New Left

The New Left was a movement that was originally created as a response to the Communist Party of Great Britain's stance to the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Having been previously associated with the party or at least having sympathized with its Marxist ideology, a number of activists now "wanted to distance themselves from the party's Stalinist standpoint by adopting a more liberal approach towards a range of issues" (Carnie).

The movement's ideology can be thought of as Neo-Marxist, as it still drew on Marxist ideology, but also incorporated elements of other approaches into it. Basing on the Marxist tradition, the acknowledgment of the working class was an issue of importance to the movement, as it attempted to find ways of enriching the class's social and cultural life. As for the inclusion of other, albeit related ideologies, the New Left has also been described as radical socialist, as it "supported anti-imperialism, anti-racism, nationalisation of major industries, abolition of economic and education privilege and nuclear disarmament" (Seiler). The promotion of socialism in the 1950s and 1960s was however hindered by the increased

influence of the working class and the ongoing Cold War that shed a negative light on the ideology. Other influences on the New Left ideologies were provided by intellectuals coming from other Commonwealth countries who offered a new perspective and challenged traditional Marxist ideas.

The New Left was never an organized institution; it was rather a collective of like-minded individuals hoping to introduce their approach to the general public. Despite this loose structure, they were linked through the publication of the "New Left Review". Founded in 1960, the New Left Review was a journal that gathered commentaries and essays on a number of contemporary social and political issues. The journal was originally founded and edited by Stuart Hall, a Jamaican-born cultural theorist, who was a key figure in the formation of the field of cultural studies, being linked to both New Left and a founding member of the CCCS.

Other notable members of the New Left scene in the 1960s included Raymond Williams and other cultural theorists. Many have associated Hoggart with the New Left as well, although as Michael Bailey, Ben Clarke and John K. Walton assert in their book dedicated to Hoggart solely, such connection is "misleading, for even though he was linked to the CCCS and the New Left Review, he never identified with the Marxist Left" (96).

The connection of cultural theorists to the New Left goes to show the direct connection of the movement with cultural studies and this is where its importance in terms of the field lay. The New Left was its hotbed of ideas and helped define the matters the field came to be concerned with in the 1960s, which was then dealt with on an academic level at the CCCS.

1.4.2 Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies

The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies was a research centre at the University of Birmingham. Founded by Richard Hoggart in 1964, who then was also its first director, the centre originally grew out of research he and his colleagues conducted at the university. Despite its fast-growing influence, the centre originally had few staff, including Stuart Hall who replaced Hoggart as a director in 1968. As Helen Davis notes in her monograph on Stuart Hall, "the teaching staff never rose above three at any one time" (26).

The main importance of the centre lay in its contribution to establish cultural studies as a distinctive academic field, however it was not an easy process as the field found itself in a complicated interdisciplinary position which meant it was accepted rather reluctantly by scholars of traditional fields at first. Nevertheless, in his work *British Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, Graeme Turner stresses that "interdisciplinary" is the appropriate term to describe the field and to assume it is a brand new field of its own would be a mistake" (Turner 11). The members of CCCS were not put off by the definition of them being an interdisciplinary field; on the contrary, they embraced it, as shown in CCCS's inaugural address given by Hoggart in 1963 which outlined his plans for the centre. In it, he even introduced this integrative approach, which he provisionally titled "Literature and Contemporary Cultural Studies", as one of the proposed methods of research. He described this method as constituted of three categories; the first of which would be dealing with matters from a historical point of view, the second from a sociological one and the third would use a literary critical approach, the last of which Hoggart himself endorsed the most, as he believed that understanding literature of all kinds is the key to understanding society. Among other plans, he followed up on his stance from "The Uses of Literacy" and again challenged the "elitist schools of thought that separated high culture and real life" (Seiler). He expressed the belief there was a need for a type of research that would allow scholars to study culture in a

broad sense and believed that the miscellaneous methods of "Literature and Contemporary Cultural Studies" would be the appropriate tools to achieve this goal. Hoggart's vision presented in the inaugural address turned out to include more or less what were indeed the characteristics and interests of the field in the 1960s.

Despite being an interdisciplinary field, researchers at the centre believed some of the issues they dealt with were previously not tackled. As Hall himself put it, the centre was "a place where like-minded researchers could take up the vocation of the intellectual life, addressing the urgent questions about society and culture which their colleagues in humanities and social science tended to ignore" (in Seiler). For instance, they was particularly aware of the changes that had been taking place in the post-war era and as far the CCCS was concerned, observing them was a crucial part of understanding contemporary society, even though no other field has attached much importance to them. Not only were they examining the changes, they also aimed to change the "ideological categories of thought prevalent at the time, such as embourgeoisement or the absence of class" (Muggleton 208).

While the earlier studies investigated "the nature of modern society through examining contemporary popular phenomena, the early 1970s saw a shift towards Marxism via Althusser and Gramsci" (Davis 30). This eventually meant the focus landed on subcultures, to whom these theories could be applied and proved the CCCS's notions of class being an important social factor.

2. Theory of subculture

2.1 Youth Culture

In the aftermath of World War II, the perception of youth in Britain changed dramatically. While formerly there was close to no consciousness about there being a transition stage between childhood and adulthood, youth now emerged as a fairly distinct group through various social changes.

A number of factors contributed to the development of a youth consciousness. Primarily, as the country was trying to distance itself from the pre-war order, high hopes were invested into youth that was not familiar with it and that eventually became a "metaphor for social change" (Smith et al., *RTR* 9). As one of the first steps towards adopting a new order, the Education Act of 1944 that granted educational opportunities to everyone regardless of their class was introduced, as opposed to the previous system that required tuition fees. The government believed this would in the long run create the possibilities of social mobility and later on released other pieces of legislation that concerned the youth. Another influential aspect was caused by the post-war economic boom which meant the working class's standard of living was relatively increased, a process academicians speak of as "embourgeoisement". As a result, the spending power of working-class youth rose to the extent where there was an opportunity to create an appropriate market.

Media also played an important role in the social changes and it was its interest in the youth that helped spread the consciousness and led to some people even thinking of the youth as a new class of its own. Some scholars also believed that youth culture was partially created by the media, as it was a "means of imitation and manipulation on a national scale" (Clarke et al. 19) and therefore gave young people the option to imitate new cultural habits reflected in the media. Hoggart was particularly critical of this, as he believed that youth was receiving the worst aspects of mass culture.

Driven by these seemingly optimistic events, politicians were convinced that "Britain was entering an era of unlimited affluence and equal opportunity" (Hebdige, *Subculture* 74). Thus the idea of a "youth culture" was created, that carried the notion that youth was an entirely classless group. This conviction was however false, as class division persisted, with few individuals realising the problem for a long time. The first ones to tackle the myth were Peter Willmott and David Downes, sociologists who published separate pieces on the life of the contemporary life of the working-class youth. In his "Adolescent Boys in East London", Willmott observed that there was still a clear discrepancy between the lives of different classes. He also looked into the cultural and leisure options of the working-class youth and found that they were limited within their own class. In his description of this, he went as far as to claim they were leading "boring, dead-end lives that used deviant activities as a way of adding a certain level of excitement to their lives". Based on these findings, he concluded that the notion of a classless youth culture was completely misguided. Downes then confirmed Willmott's findings in his own work, where he came to similar conclusions and also pointed out the lack of career prospects for the working class. These findings were crucial to the CCCS who also aimed to oppose the myth of youth culture and embourgeoisement.

2.2 Definition

Much like with "culture", attempting to produce a unified theory of what a subculture is, is a rather strenuous task as almost every scholar focus on the topic provides his own definition of the concept. In *The Subcultures Reader* Sarah Thornton claims it is "groups of people that have something in common with each other (i.e. they share a problem, an interest, a practice) which distinguishes them in a significant way from the members of other social groups" (1). However, these definitions are somewhat incomplete, as they could be applied to groups other than subcultures. As subcultures are not cultures per se, but rather distinctive

groups within a culture, most CCCS scholars agree that in order to define them, it is first necessary to understand their relations to the cultures that they are essentially a part of.

The first option is to examine them in relation to their parent culture, which is a term that has been used to define the working class. It is worth noting that even though subcultures can be found within any class, the CCCS has always taken subcultures to only mean those that are strictly working-class and it is therefore those that the thesis is dealing with. The relation to parent culture was the subject of some of the American criminologist Albert Cohen's work, who in his research found that it is quite ambiguous. While a subculture feels the need to differentiate itself from the parent culture and seeks autonomy from it, in many cases they still preserve its traditions and identifications. Cohen claims that this makes subcultures "a compromise solution between these two contradictory needs" (91).

A subculture can also be positioned in relation to the dominant culture, which is the culture whose ideologies are presented as the main ones in a society. These ideologies are indirectly being projected onto members of society through "several parts of the social formation, including family, media, education, etc." (Hebdige, *Subculture* 132-3) Even though a subculture will have common ideological grounds and experience with the dominant culture, it will likely struggle to accept its hegemony, which might become a focal concern of the group. Despite occasional expressions of resistance from both sides, they still mostly tend to coexist rather than be directly opposed.

Based on these relations, a few of the defining features of a subculture can be observed. Firstly, it is the subordination of subcultures to a higher structure. Then it is the fact that subcultures bond around their ideas, concerns or activities, which is their main distinguishing feature. Based on their commitment to these focal concerns, subcultures can be thought of as bounded loosely or tightly.

In their definition of subcultures, the CCCS also applied the Marxian notion of cultural production to their behaviour, asserting that "one's identity is created through the use one makes of, and the meanings one ascribes to the "raw materials" of existence" (Gelder and Thornton 84). Subscribing to many Marxist theories themselves, subcultures thus became a significant object of study to CCCS.

The first step towards the creation of a subculture is generally seen as a sign of revolt against the natural order that is refused by a certain person or a group. In the process, an action against the order has to be taken first and if a sequence of such actions follows, it generally results in the construction of a style, which is an indivisible part of a subculture and will be discussed in one of the following subchapters.

Taking into account the aforementioned aspects of a subculture, a very precise summary is provided by Clarke: "Subcultures must exhibit a distinctive enough shape and structure to make them identifiably different from their "parent" culture. They must be focused around certain activities, values, certain uses of material artefacts, territorial space […] which significantly differentiate them from their wider culture. But since they are sub-sets, there must also be significant things which bind and articulate them with the "parent" culture" (Clarke et al. 13).

2.3 Function

Being a part of a subculture can have multiple significances to its members. To working-class youth, the primary function of a subculture is usually a collective response to the unfavourable circumstances imposed on them by their own class. This response is expressed by life-style choices the members make and even though these do not actually resolve the class-related problems, they provide the members with a figurative solution that

serves as a possibility to demonstrate their dissatisfaction and to a certain extent also as an escape from the problems. Their choices, no matter if expressed simply through their clothes or even by law-breaking, were also a form of resistance which was to a certain extent provocative to members of other classes, as subcultures "expressed the generally rejected concept of class consciousness" (Hebdige, *Subculture* 91).

It is however worth mentioning that this applies to only a small fraction of working-class youth, as most of them never enter a subculture and those who do are mostly male. Besides, since a member's level of commitment may vary or as time progresses, some people have switched several subcultures in their life. As Clarke et al. claim (47), subcultures are "representatives of a section of working-class youth that provided one strategy for negotiating their collective existence." One fact that however does apply to working-class youth, both in and out of a subculture, is that they are generally concerned with the question of how to spend their free time taking in account the limits imposed on their class.

Even though they have such aspect, especially since the post-war era, subcultures are not primarily ideological.

As the subcultures could not properly engage in their activities in the workplace or at school, a lot of importance was attached to the strict division of this environment from their rare leisure time, which became all the more valued to them, because this was the time when they could truly take control over their activities, make a statement and get closer to their aspired lifestyle, breaking the bland routine of everyday life. Being bounded over leisure time, each subculture also had a physical territory they claimed where they could meet up and engage in their specific activities.

Despite their discontent with the limited options available to the working class, subcultures did not renounce their parent culture; on the contrary, in many cases they actually aim to resolve its inner contradictions and preserve its traditions they felt were on the decline.

One of these was the sense of community and group cohesiveness, which is why subcultures themselves were "highly structured, visible and tightly bounded groups" (Hebdige, *Subculture* 79).

2.4 Style

Style is one of the most visible and important features of a subculture which "raises several important indicators", as Mike Brake puts it in his monograph on youth cultures entitled *Comparative Youth Culture: the sociology of youth cultures and youth subcultures in America, Britain and Canada* (11). Most importantly, it signifies an affiliation with a specific subculture that can just through its appearance attack values of the dominant culture.

Brake finds that there are three main elements that comprise the style of a member of a subculture. The most striking of those is their image, which includes their entire appearance, from their choice of clothes, accessories, haircut, to any physical object they use to present themselves. The second feature is demeanour, which is conveyed through one's expression, gait and posture. Finally, it is also one's choice of vocabulary, as subcultures often form their own argot with expressions intrinsic to themselves (11-12).

Clarke provides a different take on the aspects of a style, claiming that they are "constructed out of a specific matrix of group concerns, centring around a particular set of activities, which take place within a characteristic set of institutions". (*Style*, 180)This institution was mostly the weekend, but also particular places such as certain streets, stadiums, discos or clubs.

The fact that members of subcultures often frequented these places hints at the importance of music, an inherent part of their life. Several bands were directly associated with some movements, as they had a huge following among them.

An important function of the style is also differentiating the subculture from other groups. This is not limited to other classes only; on the contrary, it also includes other subcultures, as to some extent rivalry was noted between some of them (e.g., Mods vs. Rockers, Skinheads vs. Hippies)

Within their style, subcultures tend to appropriate material objects which become their symbols and reflect both aspects of their life and the group's focal concerns. However, to adapt these to their needs, they rid the objects of their original meanings or connotations and assign them new ones to fit into their context and thus challenge the conventional readings, a phenomenon that Hebdige describes as "bricolage" (*Subculture*, 102). The new meanings then become a shared language which the entire group will understand and develop into a set of cultural practices, a process that strengthens the group's inner relations. Even though some objects gain significance unintentionally and members "often do not realise the significance of their practices" (Stahl), the style of a subculture is predominantly fabricated.

The style of a subculture usually ends up being popularised, if it has the ability to "encapsulate a mood, a moment and express the right things at the right time" (Hebdige, *Subculture* 122). In that case, it also tends to draw the interest of the media, whose portrayal of subcultures tends to exaggerate matters related to them. This includes attempts at finding "shocking" stories and accounts of the latest trends and fads, which were at times celebrated, but other times entirely ridiculed. Despite recognising that a subculture's style was a form of resistance, the media still failed to read the meanings conveyed by a subculture's style and mostly placed it within the framework of dominant ideology, completely missing the point of the style. However by taking away the intrinsic meanings, the subcultural style was now suitable for the general public. Therefore, by further spreading the style, the media did a great disservice to subcultures, as their original ideas of resistance were slowly being included into the broader society and are established as new conventions, the regular subcultural cycle thus

coming to a close. The other factor contributing to a subculture's demise is the market that recognizes its spending potential and the fact that it largely revolves around consumption, thus producing relevant goods and turning subcultural style into mainstream fashion. Generally speaking, by being adopted by the general public, the style and subculture itself meet their ultimate demise (Hebdige, *Subculture* 95).

2.5 Study of subcultures

Before cultural studies emerged, subcultures were studied primarily by sociologists who specialized in deviancy theory. Hebdige finds the origins of the study of subcultures that can be dated back to as far as the 19th century to the works of Henry Mayhew and Thomas Archer (*Subculture* 74). However, as Chris Jenks points out in his *Subculture: The Fragmentation of the Social*, this claim carries the assumption that subcultures were already distinctly visible groups at the time, which he thinks was not true until the post-war era (95). This subchapter will introduce the important milestones in subcultural studies, but since the post-war era is what the thesis primarily deals with, the studies of that time shall be examined, in particular the earliest ones that grew out of the CCCS tradition.

The earliest studies conducted in the 19th and early 20th century used the methodology of participant observation, which, while being a beneficial account of the life conditions of a subculture, did not take in account plenty of important factors, including the significance of class and social, economic and political contexts. Most importantly however, it lacked an analytical approach, which meant the exclusion of such studies from mainstream sociology.

The group of sociology researchers known as the "Chicago school" including aforementioned Albert Cohen was in the 1950s the first to create a theory and analytical framework for these studies. In his research Cohen also, similarly to his British counterparts, stressed the importance of distinguishing dominant and subordinate values system and

examined the nature of connections between them. His object of study was primarily juvenile gangs, in which he observed aspects similar to those later found in subcultures – members compensating for their lower social status and the dominant values being subverted and replaced. Another feature that would too later be seen as intrinsic to subcultures was pointed out by Walter Miller, also an American specialist on juvenile gangs, who found that the gangs' focal concerns are just a distorted form of the values of the parent culture.

Peter Willmott and David Downes, mentioned in the subchapter on youth culture, were among the first British sociologists to publish notable works on the working class youth and dismissed the theory of a classless youth.

Even though the basic ideologies that shaped the study of subcultures were already notable in the works of CCCS in the 1960s, its researchers mostly started publishing their studies on the subcultures of the decade only from the early 1970s on and influenced the approach towards subcultural theory for almost the next two decades. Some of the works published in this era are the most conspicuous works of subcultural studies and shall now be presented.

Phil Cohen's 1972 study "Sub-cultural Conflict and Working Class", albeit not associated with the CCCS, is considered to be an exemplary work that illustrates the approach taken by CCCS scholars in later studies, as it also bases on the interpretation of a post-war class-ridden society, hegemony and double articulation of subcultures. In his research, he examined the lives of the working class in London's East End within the context of urbanisation and concluded the class's ideas of communal property were "heavily subject to middle-class ideology of individual ownership" (Stahl). He thought of subcultures as a result of their opposition to this hegemony and stressed the fact that subculture arise as a response to the decline of the working-class culture. Hebdige labels Cohen's framework of study as "the most appropriate for reading a subculture and its style" (*Subculture*, 78).

During the 1970s, CCCS researchers published a range of papers on a number of cultural aspects, including thorough studies on specific subcultures. Many of these efforts were then summarised in 1975 by Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson in "Resistance Through Rituals", a seminal work in subcultural theory that aimed to encompass all crucial aspects of a subculture and is widely considered to be one of the fundamental works of the field. While maintaining the CCCS approach towards the study of subcultures, they slightly distanced themselves from the likes of Hoggart who rejected mass culture and instead demonstrated that youth is a "point of mediation between the class-located identity of the parent culture and the increasingly attractive commercialized world of mass culture". Acknowledging this position, the authors could analyse more aspects that stemmed out of it, such as the music, clothing and rituals of subcultures. Other notable contributors to this anthology were John Clarke, Paul Willis and Dick Hebdige, who himself later released the final influential work of the decade.

Hebdige's "Subculture: The Meaning of Style", which offered similar aspects as "Resistance Through Rituals", however Hebdige does not consider social stratification the only issue that needs to be taken in account, as he extends the problematic to include the concept of ethnicity. He is also among the first to analyse the influences on the subcultural theory and acknowledges the Marxist, Althusserian and Gramscian models of analysis.

3. Youth subcultures of the 1960s

3.1 The Mods

In the early 1960s, a group of unusually fashion-conscious individuals appeared on the London scene and came to be known as "the mods". However, rather than being connected to a clearly defined subculture, the term covered a wide array of styles that were springing up around the cultural scene for which the term "swinging London" was later coined. Thus many figures, who were simply just expressing their refusal of conventions through their fashion, were also labelled as mods. However, as with most subcultures, most mods were members of the working class and this chapter shall therefore deal with this branch of the movement. Most mods were based in London, with their scene revolving around the clubs in the city centre and Soho. However, in 1964 the subculture spread to south of England too, where it was seen as a bigger threat to the local order.

3.1.1 The origins of Mod

The term "mod" derives from "modernist", which is an expression originating in modern jazz, which was favoured by the black youth in the United States and whose style of elegant dressing some claim the mods emulated. Most scholars do not have a unified theory on the origins of the subculture and multiple possible influences have been examined, the American black youth being one of them. For instance, George Melly (qtd. in Hebdige, "The Meaning of Mod" 87) claims "the inspiration might have come from working class dandies who were followers of the Italianate style". Hebdige (*Subculture* 89) points out the influence of gangster culture on the mods, citing both the Italian-American mafioso and the British gangster. The former, a style set in New York City, which was as far as the mod was concerned a city of a higher rank than London itself, was familiar to mods through black market sellers and spivs who originally adopted it and made it therefore easy to emulate. The

latter however, was a style that was developing contemporaneously with the mods themselves and rose to power after the introduction of favourable Gaming Laws in London. The gangster's lifestyle of glamorous nightlife in London city centre, rival gangs clashes and imitation of classic Hollywood movies were just some of the aspects that made this culture so appealing to the mod. Contrastingly to the aforementioned lifestyles, Hebdige also finds (*Subculture,* 89) a final example in the "rude boy" subculture which was intrinsic to West Indian immigrants and which will be dealt with later on in the thesis. As the mods' generation was the first to have grown up around West Indians, there was room for their mutual relations to be amicable, which eventually led to the mod's desire to imitate the rude boy's style, which showed mostly through the adoption of certain accessories such as dark glasses or pork-pie hats. As contradictory as the rude boys might seem in comparison to the gangsters, the parallel between the two might be a dominant status in the nightlife, which was desirable to the mod. The mod's ideals shall be further looked into in the next subchapter.

3.1.2 The reality and the ideals

The distinction between the real-life mod and one that would live up to the group's ideals was fairly clear. The average mod was a semi-skilled or an office worker of a lower income, who would finish his education at the age of 15. They were generally seen as a group that explored their options of social mobility, however as Hebdige (*Subculture*, 91) states, such claims were "mostly made under the influence of recreational drugs, under which the mods simply had a tendency to boast". In fact, most mods have accepted their low status as perceived by the society, but that did not prevent them from fantasising about a better life and finding ways how to get closer to it. Therefore, the mod realised himself through compensating for his social rank by matters that he could take full control of, which were his leisure time and his appearance, which offered an escape from the otherwise dull reality.

The ideal lifestyle of the mod is portrayed in a 1964 Sunday Times interview with a follower of the subculture:

"Monday night meant dancing at the Mecca, the Hammersmith Palais, the Purley

Orchard, or the Streatham Locarno.

Tuesday meant Soho and the Scene club.

Wednesday was Marquee night.

Thursday was reserved for the ritual washing of the hair.

Friday meant the Scene again.

Saturday afternoon usually meant shopping for clothes and records,

Saturday night was spent dancing and rarely finished before 9.00 or 10.00 Sunday

morning.

Sunday evening meant the Flamingo or, perhaps, if one showed signs of weakening,

could be spent sleeping."[1]

Very few mods would have actually followed these rules this obsessively, but it still makes for an appropriate depiction of their desired lifestyle of frequenting clubs and maintaining an impeccable style as a group. As Hebdige points out ("The Meaning of Mod" 90), mods "lived halfway between their fantasy that involved luxurious clubs and gangsterism and their less glamorous reality of old Vespas and feeding on fish and chips out of a greasy bag".

The thing that helped them create a bridge between these two worlds and made life seemingly easier was their frequent use of amphetamines (or "speed"), which came to be one of the defining features of the subculture. The drug brought the mod into a state which enabled him to make the most of every single night out by having the courage to take otherwise unthinkable risks and to feel life was somewhat tolerable (Hebdige, "The Meaning of Mod" 91). Under the influence, mods moved in an exaggerated way and were overly alert,

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[1] Originally published in The Sunday Times (April 1964), qtd. in Hebdige: "The Meaning of Mod" 90.

which helped them to not only quickly defend themselves from potential harassers, but also to focus their attention on the search for that something they considered to be their ideal. However, since their ideals were rarely attained, they rather indulged in the search itself and when the desired goals were not reached, the relief was found in another dose of the drug and eventually they found themselves in a vicious circle. Among other negative effects of speed was a suspended mental and emotional growth, whilst physical deterioration was sped up. Paradoxically, aging was one of the mod's constant fears, which was reflected in many lyrics of bands associated with the subculture, including one of the movement's anthems "My Generation" by The Who with its notable line: "Things they do look awful cold / I hope I die before I get old."

The style adopted by the mods was confusing to the general public, because they chose a very subtle style that included many of the parent culture's own elements, but their connotations seemed twisted in certain ways that were incomprehensible to outside observers. Indeed, the mods were experts at challenging the expectations connected with some things. As Hebdige describes ("The Meaning of Mod" 93), they did so through "the appropriation of a commodity of which they later redefined the value and therefore placed its meaning in an entirely different context". To the public eye, they did so particularly with the appropriation of smart casual clothing, which was usually associated with people of a higher social rank. However within the group, they also managed to invert the qualities such as vanity, laziness and arrogance that were looked down upon in the daytime to be accepted positively in their subcultural life. Through all these redefinitions, they aimed to take all the things that were so dear to the society and distort them in a way that would parody the society itself, yet in such a subtle way that it would never realise. To mods, it was important enough that they realised the meanings of their actions and took pride in their symbolic victories. As a result of this, despite their seeming obedience of the rules, the rest of the society could sense there was something

out of place about the mods, but as David Laing points out, "they could not make out what exactly the oddities are" (qtd. in McRobbie and Garber 217).

The obsession with image was connected to the mod's craving for constantly purchasing new commodities, which all the more confined him into the capitalist society. This eventually meant that in the mid-'60s the mods met their inevitable demise as the culture was subject to media pressure and exploitation by market forces, which produced goods for the mod market in particular and meant that the style was no longer created by the subculture itself. Finally, the mods split into a number of scenes with slightly different ideals, out of which the "hard mods" are the most notable for later in the 1960s turning into the skinhead subculture, which will be dealt with later on in the chapter.

3.1.3 Style

The symbols intrinsic to the mods were only being developed with the popularisation of the group, however despite this fact, style was perhaps the most important aspect of the mod culture. The style of mods can be perceived as a varying response to various groups, be it attempting to contrast them as they did with the rockers, or emulating them, as they did with the West Indians. However, no matter what they were responding to, the thing that mattered the most was the exquisiteness of their clothes, which was a crucial part considering their aforementioned values and lifestyle.

A mod's subtlety of his dress made it appropriate for it to be worn both in their professional and leisure time. Their appearance was usually described as neat and tidy, as their attire would usually consist of a suit in modest colours and was paid attention to down to the smallest details. The mod would also take care of his hairstyle, keeping it short and clean. Some accessories were adopted from the style of the West Indians, such as the pork-pie hats or dark shades.

Just like their inconspicuous dress or concealed meanings, their scene was fairly hidden too, as mods spent most of their free time in underground clubs, boutiques and record shops in an attempt to get away from the ordinary society. As a part of the leisure time, especially at weekends, a number of rituals which mostly had to do with keeping up the appearance had to be performed. Most commonly, the hair would be washed, clothes dry cleaned and occasionally scooters would be polished. Scooters were also assigned a new meaning within the subculture, even though they were a respectable means of transport to others, to the mods they were a symbol of solidarity.

Another crucial ritual was regularly buying new records, as music was an integral part of the subculture. Through the connections to the black people both local and in the US they favoured soul and jazz music, but an even stronger influence came from ska. However, with the popularisation of the subculture a range of bands associated with this movement in particular emerged, which included The Who, Small Faces, The Creation, Rod Stewart in his early career and many more. Despite having no distinct connection to the subculture, The Rolling Stones and The Kinks also had a large following among the mods.

3.1.4 Mods versus Rockers

The Rockers were a subculture that existed alongside the Mods, but were their utter opposite. However, oddly enough, whenever the two subcultures are mentioned, it is often in relation to each other. This is true for both contemporary media and later studies, which tend to present them as antithetical groups. But as Hebdige points out ("The Meaning of Mod" 88), "the groups' very different ideals and lifestyle originally left very little room for any interaction between them". Nevertheless, the Clacton disturbances of 1964, where both groups took part in aggression against shopkeepers were later fabricated by the media mainly as a clash between the groups, which later on fuelled actual tensions between them. Further

clashes then occurred in southern towns of Hastings, Margate and Brighton. Hebdige also claims ("The Meaning of Mod" 88) that the main incentive for the mod to be involved in fights with the rockers was mainly their own vanity and the desire to put on a show for the camera, rather than a cordial dislike towards them, although there were aspects of the Rocker subculture that the Mod had an aversion to.

The ideals of the rocker were rather nostalgic, as they primarily took pride in sticking to the previous tougher values of the working class and displaying their masculinity, which comes from their background as unskilled manual labourers, whose social rank was even lower than that of white-collar mods. Their music of choice also reeked of nostalgia, as they listened to rock 'n' roll from the previous decade, especially to the likes of Elvis Presley or Eddie Cochran. A lot of these ideals correspond to the Teds subculture of the 1950s, in which Rockers might find their predecessors.

The rockers loathed the club scene of London, which was favoured by the mods and instead spent their time free-spiritedly cruising ring roads on their bikes, which were possibly the most important symbols of their subculture and which eventually gave the subculture the alternative name of "bikers". As Brake (75) states, the bike was a bonding element, but also a symbol of freedom and mastery. The rockers' style matched their vehicles, as they mostly wore black leather jackets with studs, jeans and boots, and so did their attitude. The rockers have been described by various scholars as wild, loutish and anti-authoritarian, which are qualities that correspond to the omnipresent themes of violence and sexism within the culture. Based on their sexist views, they displayed signs of disdain for women and mods, who they considered to be effeminate as compared to the mods themselves who had a rather liberal approach towards women.

By the end of 1960s the Rocker subculture went into a gradual decline, however has been revived numerous times since then.

3.2 The Skinheads

3.2.1 The birth of the Skinheads

In the process of decline of the mod subculture, the mods split into two waves, first of them being "smooth mods", who were rather preoccupied with fashion and the second being "hard mods", who maintained a more working class image. By the late 1960s, the difference was distinct enough for the hard mods to be identified as a new subculture. The skinheads borrowed those elements from the mods that they considered to be proletarian and even exaggerated them, while they categorically refused all the bourgeois elements of said subculture, which to them was mostly the fancy attire of a mod. Most skinheads were based in London's East End, which was traditionally a working-class neighbourhood.

3.2.2 Focal concerns

The skinheads (also known as "bovver boys") are thought of as a very puritanical subculture for their main concern of preserving traditional working class values of a proletarian nature. Unlike the mods, who fantasised about a possible upward social mobility, the skinheads proudly stuck with the lumpen status. In order to strengthen this point of view, they found inspiration in both the core working-class values, but also in the culture of West Indian immigrants.

In terms of working-class values they aimed for, as Clarke puts it, a "magical recovery of community", which they had a strong sense for and felt was quickly disappearing as a result of worsening of the situation of the lower working class in the second half of 1960s. They did so through the creation of "mobs", which were groups operating certain areas and were mostly named after the given territory or the group's leader. The purpose of the mob was to gather and interact in this area and to protect it from other mobs or other potential intruders,

which reflects territoriality and collective solidarity, other strong elements within the subculture.

The skinheads felt that they were excluded from the society, even from the existing subculture, which meant skinheads perceived a strong "us/them" type of dynamic and thus felt an even stronger need for a collective solidarity and created a fundamental antipathy towards authorities. However, this did not only include the official authorities, but essentially any people, even members of their own class, who would try to become a part of the system, especially by displaying social superiority. They felt that authorities were too controlling of everyone's life and if one disobeyed, they would be quickly punished by the authorities. An example of their defiance towards authorities was their dislike of school, as they felt it was a part of the system which "told one what society thinks of you, one learns, in effect, one's supposed place in the social order, and the value which society gives to that status" (Clarke, "Skinheads and The Study" 3). In another article of his, Clarke claims that "all of the elements intrinsic to the subculture were a response to this increased oppression which called for a stronger mutual organisation within the subculture" ("Skinheads and Community" 102).

Clarke also claims that the revival of community was based solely on an image of what the culture once used to be and its traditional values, which was only passed on to them by their parents , but in reality the culture itself had at the time already been deprived of its bases. Nevertheless, skinheads saw themselves as a natural continuation of the generations before them, with the same values and opinions. However, they practiced these in terms of a whole different social context and time.

However, Hebdige also stresses (*Subculture* 54) the importance of West Indian influence, in particular that of the "rude boy" subculture, which he claims to "often be overlooked and limited solely to reggae music". From subtle influences, such as adopting some of the West Indian argot or listening to reggae music, skinheads went as far as

emulating their manners. The alliance with them helped the skinheads rediscover the traditionally white working-class values, which were slowly disappearing through the process of embourgeoisment and which were at that time more embedded in the immigrant cultures, with which the lower working class skinheads shared many features. However, because of the culturally different background of the two groups, their alliance was very unstable. They attempted to resolve these issues with a de facto distribution of certain tasks, such as monitoring trouble spots or ganging up together against other groups.

The skinheads were also eager football fans, which provided the mobs with an opportunity to get together at the football terraces outside of their regular mob patches and served as a focal point for the whole subculture. The appeal of football lied not only within the community interaction, but also spoke to the skinheads' ideals of masculinity and physical toughness, which also meant violence often surrounded the matches.

In general, skinheads were no strangers to violence, in fact it came to be one of the defining elements of the subculture, which meant they were perceived as the folk devils of the time. To them, it was a sign of mutual support in protecting their focal concerns, especially that of keeping conservative values alive. Therefore anybody incompatible with these ideals served as a potential target. The most infamous examples were those of "paki-bashing" and "queer-bashing", both of which included frequent und unprovoked physical assaults. The first was related to attacks on people of Pakistani descent, who the skinheads detested for alleged disruption of social and cultural homogeneity of the community. Even though the Pakistanis were hardly the only immigrant nationality in Britain, they became an easy target as they often moved in public places, especially as shop owners. They aggravated the skinheads not only by their different culture, but also by their reluctance to even defend themselves. The latter, queer-bashing, was related to any males who challenged the stereotypical masculinity.

This mostly included hippies and homosexuals, often even individuals who were simply too odd for the skinheads' taste.

With the 1970s approaching, the tendencies among the working class were becoming more bourgeouis, which led to weakening of the community. At the same time, reggae music found a new direction which was mostly concerned with black pride and therefore alienated the white youth. With the basic elements of the subculture being withdrawn, the skinheads as they were known in their original state were on the decline, although the movement was kept alive and spread abroad, if with different focal concerns.

3.2.3 Style

Opposite to their predecessors, skinheads became significantly less preoccupied with fashion as their choice of clothes became more of a statement rather than an obsession that would have been paid a lot of attention to. A typical skinhead would keep his haircut very short, wear plain shirts, braces and wide jeans or sta-prest trousers that would be rolled up to show off his industrial boots. These were supposed to reflect their core values of masculinity, hardness and affiliation with the working class.

Some elements were also borrowed from the West Indians in some aspects. For instance, in terms of style, it was the crombie coat or the cropped haircut, while in terms of linguistics it was the adoption of certain words or aspects, one of the most prominent being stretching their vowels. Most notably, skinheads were also influenced by reggae music, which they also danced to at the local youth clubs with the West Indians.

Conclusion

The principal aim of this thesis was to examine the nature of connections between the development of subcultures and British cultural studies primarily in the 1960s, the era in which the field was formed. The purpose of the first chapter was to trace the origins of the British cultural studies. First an overview of the early antecedents was given, tracing the first crucial cultural works to the likes of F. R. Leavis, Matthew Arnold and T. S. Eliot. However, it is discovered that while Leavis and Arnold have produced significant works in terms of cultural theory, they cannot be considered a direct influence on cultural studies as they radically differ from it in their perception of culture being limited solely to its elite forms. In terms of direct influences on the field, Eliot then made a breakthrough by being the first one to take up a more inclusive stance towards culture, taking all of its forms into consideration, offering the pioneers of cultural studies a starting point in their own approach towards culture. Examining the works and ideas of the pioneers Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams and E.P. Thompson themselves, the thesis asserted this approach was the very basis of the field of cultural studies, as these scholars aimed to subvert the elitism of previous points of view. As for the work for other figures that had an impact on the field, the thesis found other influences in the concept of hegemony of Antonio Gramsci and the structuralism of Louis Althusser, Claude Lévi-Strauss and Ronald Barthes.

As only the works of a few scholars would have not been the only element to spark the need for a new approach, changes in society in the post-war era are also presented as an important part of the process. Through the introduction of the New Left the Marxist influences were also discussed, as many cultural theorists were associated with this movement. Finally, having considered the key influences on the field, the thesis presented the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, claiming it is the very institution that established cultural studies and that further strengthened the notion that culture should be treated as

holistic. The centre was also interested in the ongoing changes in the post-war era and aimed to examine these in the spirit of their ideas of culture as a holistic concept and the importance of class. The thesis also tackled the field's uneasy interdisciplinary position but came to the conclusion that the cultural theorists themselves accepted such definition wholly.

The second part of the work was focused on the theoretical side of subculture, drawing mostly from the approach of the cultural studies' scholars. First the chapter followed up on the issue of social changes in the post-war era, placing youth in the forefront, which resulted in youth and consequently subcultures being important objects of study for the CCCS. Later on, subculture itself was presented as a subordinate and distinctive enough working-class group defined through the examination of its relations to its parent and dominant cultures and the importance of its focal concerns. Another question that was crucial to tackle was the function of a subculture, where the thesis came to the conclusion that it was mostly a response, conscious or not, to the social status of its own class and the problems related to it. The response mostly took place in the members' leisure time, to which they assigned much importance as it was the only time when they could fully take control of their lives and express themselves in whichever way. Therefore style was a crucial part of a subculture and served as a means of expression and differentiation from other groups.

The chapter concluded with the presentation of subcultural studies first by their originators in sociology, but then focused on the works by CCCS members that reflected influences, ideas and objects of interest introduced earlier in the work. Given that the study of 1960s subcultures did not commence until the later part of the decade, most of the works presented are from the 1970s.

The final chapter was then devoted to the introduction of some of the most notable subcultures of the 1960s, including the Mods, the Rockers, the Skinheads and with some references to the Rude boy subculture too. The theoretical features presented in the second

chapter of the works were introduced from a practical point of view and particularly the subcultures' emergence, focal concerns and style were described. The Mods were revealed as neat followers of fashion that emerged from the interest in the London club scene and its glamorous lifestyle. Adopting the elements from higher classes, they inverted their meanings and were called masters of bricolage by some scholars, even though bricolage was a common feature of subcultures. The Rockers were generally presented as an opposite to the Mods with their interest in rock'n'roll, motorbikes and a tough image that expressed the subculture's affiliation with masculine values, although the thesis presented this opposition might have been partially fabricated.

Finally, the skinhead subculture was introduced as a group that stemmed from a branch of the Mods that wanted to distance itself from the obsession with fashion and upward social mobility and was eager to go back to the roots of the working class and preserve its values, which came to be the main defining feature of the subculture. The skinheads therefore had a strong sense of community, as they gathered in specific territories and around football matches. However their insistence on working class values meant an absolute defiance of authorities and a strong dislike towards anyone who differed too much for their taste, sometimes resulting in an outbreak of violence.

In conclusion, the thesis proved a direct relation between the field of British cultural studies and subcultures. The direction of the field based on the importance of class, leftist ideologies and youth was in correlation with the features of subcultures, which made them a pivotal object of study.

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Résumé

The objective of this thesis is to examine the nature of connections between the development of British cultural studies as a field and subcultures in the 1960s. The focus is first placed on British cultural studies, as the thesis attempts to trace which elements shaped the field. Therefore early antecedents of the tradition are briefly introduced, but then the attention shifts to direct influences on cultural studies and a few of its notable pioneers. Finally, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, the institution that helped put the field on the academic map, is discussed. The second chapter aims to summarise the theory of subculture and its various aspects, basing primarily on the approach of the members of the CCCS. Their own studies of subcultures are presented later on. The final chapter then deals with the subcultures of the 1960s themselves, examining mainly their emergence, focal concerns and style.

Resumé

Předmětem této diplomové práce je zkoumat podstatu spojitostí mezi vývojem britských kulturních studií coby oboru a subkulturami v 60. letech. Práce se nejdříve zaměřuje na britská kulturní studia a pokouší se vystopovat prvky, které tento obor formovaly. Proto jsou představeni dřívější předchůdci této tradice, ale poté je pozornost věnována přímým vlivům na tento obor a několika jeho průkopníkům. Nakonec je rozebráno Centrum pro současná kulturní studia, instituce, která pomohla tento obor dostat na akademickou půdu. Druhá kapitola se pokouší shrnout teorii subkultur a jejich různé aspekty a zakládá při tom především na přístupu samotných členů Centra pro současná kulturní studia, jejichž vlastní studie subkultur jsou představeny později. Závěrečná kapitola je pak věnována samotným subkulturám 60. let a zkoumá především jejich vznik, ústřední zájmy a styl.