

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni
Fakulta filozofická

BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

Plzeň 2016

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Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta filozofická

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Studijní program Filologie

Studijní obor Cizí jazyky pro komerční praxi

Kombinace angličtina – němčina

BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

**Flower children of fortune: the Idealism of
Hippie Culture in the 1960s and Today**

**Subtitel: The role of rock and beat in rebellion and
social transformation in the 1960s**

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Plzeň 2016

Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

Plzeň, duben 2016

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1. INTRODUCTION

“They gathered around stages, letting the sound waves wash over their bodies. In abandoned vaudeville theatres, in old union halls, in de-industrialized warehouses, in parks, on streets, and in trendy clubs, they circulated into and out of crowds. The thundering vibrations of electronically amplified noise, the sea of coloured lights and flickering strobes, the smells of bodies and incense and smoke, perhaps the first puffs of marijuana or licked tabs of lysergic acid – these made the world porous for them, turning their insides out and bringing the outside in. Many felt frightened by these experiences. Others were baffled by the mixture of the profound and the banal. Still others felt a sense of wonder at the energies – electric, sonic, and social – unleashed in and around them. They felt transported to new time zones and new communicative spaces.”^[1]

“Turn on, turn in, drop out.”^A Leary Timothy

^A “Turn on” meant go within to activate your neural and genetic equipment. Become sensitive to the many and various levels of consciousness and the specific triggers that engage them. Drugs were one way to accomplish this end. “Tune in” meant interact harmoniously with the world around you – externalize, materialize, express your new internal perspectives. “Drop out” suggested an active, selective, graceful process of detachment from involuntary or unconscious commitments. ““Drop Out” meant self-reliance, a discovery of one’s singularity, a commitment to mobility, choice, and change. Unhappily my explanations of this sequence of personal development were often misinterpreted to mean “Get stoned and abandon all constructive activity”. (Timothy Leary, [Flashbacks: A Personal and Cultural History of an Era](#) pg. 253)

The goal of this Bachelor's Thesis is to analyse the role of music, namely Rock and Beat music in the social transformation thanks to the Counterculture movement during the 1960s in the USA and Europe. The Thesis describes the reason, why music was selected as one of the main art forms used for protesting and fighting against social conventions and how did the society and music effect each other. The work also focuses on the organizational structure within the Counterculture music world to point out important personalities and events, which had significant impact on the history of the Sixties.

2. THOSE BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE

“If it feels good, do it! Life is about being happy, not what others think you should be.” This fundamental ideology of the Hippie movement was primitive, yet the path leading to happiness was full of obstacles. Below we will investigate, who those awkward youngsters in the Sixties were, what they thought and believed in, supported and rejected, destroyed and built up.

2.1 Who are Hippies?

Hippies were people mostly of young age, who generally refused to be a part of an established institution. They were individuals and expressed it vividly through their wild and free lifestyle. Hippies wanted to replace a disappointedly materialistic, corrupted society, which their ancestors and parents had built for them, with an Utopian society. They opposed any action of harming and killing, often reflected by their vegetarian diet, eco-friendly practices and particularly protesting against nuclear weapons, Vietnam War, Civil Rights movement during the 1960s. Hippies sought for a meaning in life, some of them found it in Eastern philosophy (Buddhism, Yoga, meditation), some found it in free love and sexual liberation, many found it by exploring consciousness through the effects of psychedelic drugs (LSD, marijuana), others created their own philosophy by music, or some considered the whole Hippie movement a religious movement.

2.2 Phenomenon “Counterculture“

That all contributed to a “boom” phenomenon called “Counterculture”, a complex of beliefs and social concerns. Counterculture was a revolt against conservative “square” society, escaping from subordination to traditions, looking for the meaning of freedom, peace, love, happiness and other

tenets. It is important to mention, that not everybody involved in the Sixties Counterculture movement had to be a Hippie, even though a lot of them were. Regardless age, social or academic background, the Counterculture movement involved from farmers to university professors, musicians to officers, sportsmen to invalids, mothers to children, believers to atheists, black to white, rich to poor. Simply, those seeking freedom of individualism could find a way to happiness through countering what they have.

2.3 Beatniks

Hippie Counterculture movement originated partly from an American Beat movement, also called Beat Generation, which generally aimed to liberate poetry from academic prejudice during the 50s. Created by a group of Columbia University's enthusiastic students (Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs) around year 1948, but the official beginning of the Beat movement is marked on 13 October 1955, when a poetry reading at the Six Gallery in San Francisco publicly introduced works of many writers, including Ginsberg's "Howl" and Kerouac's "The Dharma Bums". The members of this literary movement followed the principle of spontaneity, creativity and non-conformity. They distanced themselves from politics, conventional society, meanwhile tried to release and illuminate their personalities by drugs, jazz, sex or some disciplines of Buddhism – Zen Buddhism, which is a specific form putting emphases on meditation. Why it happened to be Buddhism? The proponents of this Generation were generally looking for new things, inspirations that could help them to cross the borders, get out of western conventions, and so it may just happened to be Buddha, who was chosen to "enlighten" the western lifestyles. This widespread religion in Asia represented one of the main points in Kerouac's work "The Dharma Bums", which tells stories based on a real personality Gary Snyder, also a Beatnik (Beat Generation member) and Kerouac's lifelong friend, who left America for Japan in order to gain experience about Buddhist idealism.^[2] This book in particular and Beat Generation in general helped to promote Buddhism in

the West in a large extent and lasting ways. American post-World-War II literature and culture was influenced and inspired by the movement in a remarkable way.

3. MERGING OF MUSIC AND POLITICS

There is one special element, which played a significantly important role during the 60s in youth cultural movements and political evolution in Europe and the USA, called music. The Sixties' songwriting put aside its "love song" concept, in order to orientate more on political issues and social consciousness. It is neither melody nor sound, where the social prominence of music comes from, but rather, the content and the way of performance are supposed to carry the powerful, mostly political or social message. This newly emerging music of individualism and idealism was not created for "nothing" but filled with "assigned meaning"^[3] by the audience – both fans and critics, the media and the government. Looking one decade back, during the 50s, it was jazz music, which concept could be defined as anti-racism, equal civil society and democracy, meanwhile Rock 'n' Roll took care for rebellious atmosphere. However, at the early 60s the potential underground "big beat" music (later shortened to "beat"), also known as Merseybeat, and rock music in the later 60s overtook the scene.

3.1 Beat music

Beat, as a mixture of Rock 'n' Roll, R&B, doo-wop^A, skiffle^B; and rock, as a combination of Rock 'n' Roll, R&B, country and western mixture, became tightly associated with the social and subcultural issues. The promising

^A A vocal style of Rock 'n' Roll characterized by the a cappella singing of nonsense syllables in rhythmical support of the melody (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/doo-wop>).

^B American jazz or folk music with a Rock 'n' Roll influence played entirely or in part on non-standard instruments, as jugs, washboards, or Jew's harps. (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/skiffle>)

rebellious power of beats and rock were intensively used by political subcultures to spread their opinions and ideologies.^[4] In the book *“A history of Protest and Activism, 1956–1977”*, Detlef Siegfried commented on beat music as follow: “East of the Iron Curtain, beat music was seen as the sound of the Western capitalist style; in the West, it was sometimes seen as a vehicle for communist egalitarianism^A”.

Before going further with the beat and rock's political relevance, we shall slightly describe them as a musical genres. The origins of the term “beat” are connected with Beat Generation, which was already mentioned before. As for the music, typical are strong beats created from backbeat of Rock 'n' Roll and R&B, usually with leading emphasis on all the beats of 4/4 bar.^[5]

3.2 Rock music

The history of Rock music began to be written during the 1950s, as a combination of Rock 'n' Roll, R&B, country and western mixture. It is logically difficult to draw a line between Rock and Rock 'n' Roll, as well as to name the very first Rock artist, but the contrast between these two related genres can be distinguished by the usage of electric guitar, bass guitar and drums as a fixed instrumental group in Rock music. Progressive rock music proponents are usually characterised by unconventional clothing, long hair, using psychedelic drugs and freewheeling sexuality, as an expression of the Counterculture.

3.3 Political potential of electrified music

Music could be simply consumed, or could become a tool for provoking awareness and consciousness. This potential of music was realised by underground the Counterculture as a perfect medium for transferring the revolutionary information. Thus, many new political rock bands of the 60s

^A A belief in human equality especially with respect to social, political, and economic affairs (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/egalitarianism>).

tried to make social changes by expressing opinions and ideas through fast, aggressive rock, which also represents a young outspoken lifestyle. It is worth mentioning the contribution to the politicization of beat music of folk and chanson music^A, which often spread political messages of labour movements and left-wing intellectuals, not only in the USA, but also Europe. Political factors were brought to the folk music during its electrification in the 60s, an example could be Bob Dylan's exchange from acoustic guitar to the electric one in 1965.^[6]

It is a common sense, that musical tastes use to be different according to the social classes or groups, but beat and rock were the exceptions of the 60s, since both genres were widely consumed without class borders. Because foreign language has been traditionally a barrier in the international context, at the end of the 50s, music served as the base of youth transnational culture. Electrified popular music meant democracy of public expression, an international connection between youth, a DIY^B issue as well as shared participation.^[7]

3.4 Social background and basis for musical success

There are many aspects leading to successful implementation of beat and rock music in the 60s. I would like to introduce those, which are in my opinion the most influential ones. A decisive element was the worldwide economic prosperity of the mid-twentieth century, which peaked exactly at the same time as the cultural revolutions in Europe and the USA, providing a beneficial ground for emerging of the pop culture's material section/unit, as radio stations, live music clubs, rock bands, magazines or vinyl records. Furthermore, the post-World War II economic boom, known as "Golden age

^A French art song of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance
(<http://www.britannica.com/art/chanson>)

^B „Do it yourself“

of Capitalism”,^[8] came hand in hand with cultural revolution in 1968, due to the global change of power and also social internal changes asked for radical transformations, in order to avoid big conflicts. And thanks to equality, a strong and flourishing base for the individualization could be established. Importantly, young people could become independent during the 50s, when they started to have their own money (by reason of economic prosperity). Additionally, as a result of extended primary to post-secondary education in Western Europe, youth gained more leisure time, space and resource (money/capital/material) to differentiate and individualize.

This era of reshaping new living conditions meant the commencement (and popularization) of pop, beat and rock music. Having a look at the Europe at that time, we could logically come to the conclusion, that traditional values stayed more stable and longer in agricultural countries in the South and industrial countries in the East. Even though the youth Counterculture from these parts of Europe were also enthusiastic about reforming social values and developing independence, it lacked a few important aspects/facets – no private enterprises, such as record studio, to realise and spread new ideas by using market forces, no particular cultural events section or media, less economic resources, thus no fertile base for pop culture.

Returning back to the point of general social material prosperity, the consequence were intensive changes of social values in Western Europe from early the 60s. Rather than being tied down, obeying to rules and traditions, such as behaving well, self-control, hard-working and saving for later years, people started to enjoy life, they became more active, engaged with social issues and self-realization. Hence young, especially educated people were greatly concerned and excited about reshaping social values, this new ideology was reflected enormously frequent in pop music. It should be noted that the way of expression, development and results of transformation vary largely according to the social groups.^[9]

3.5 Orientation and aims

The unique characteristic of music is generously accepting all kinds of cognitive contributions, therefore it was a perfect ally for the particular revolutionary era of the 60s. Beats' amazing ability to connect and mobilize people is hidden in the sound and its sensitive and emotional character, even though it is the least articulate form of social criticism. So called "unspoken opposition" by Dieter Baacke,^[10] beat music at that era demonstrated a great example of the golden rule "less is more".

From the middle of the 60s, electrical beats and rock developed to become a medium for spreading political messages. Represented by music were often protests against rearmament, militarism (particularly against the war in Vietnam) and protest against abusing and oppression of individualism in the capitalistic society. With the progressive radicalization of revolution, music also became more and more aggressive. Around year 1968, when the revolution reached its final peak, we could define rock music with the word "authenticity", reflected by the artistic originality. Rock turned into a less verbal form, but more based on the acts, which shall support the protest ideas of independence, activism and self-realization, besides it was an authentic evidence of self-criticism of the Western lifestyle. In fact, there was clearly a great difference between singers, whose voices were only hired by the culture industry to present strangers' works, and the individual artists demonstrating social concerns in an independent way without commercialization. An example for this independent group were Afro-American blues artists in the USA, who could naturally, deeply and thus effectively illustrate social problems in their art, since they themselves belonged to the marginalized and persecuted ethnic group.^[11]

4. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

At the end of the 50s, so called grassroots organizations^A were founded by proponents of the cultural movements expressed by rock bands and musical genres, such as jazz, beat, skiffle. These kind of organizations had been existing already for many years, but they were emerging enormously during the 60s and 70s. For instance a very fertile ground for grassroots organizations (“Bürgerinitiative”) offered West Germany, where surveys concluded that they had more members than political parties. Because music was the form of protest, which was the most dependent on production and distribution of the cultural industry’s infrastructure, politically orientated sector of music (for example grassroots organizations) regularly aimed for alternative collaboration with record companies, but still tried to stay independent.^[12] Meanwhile music trends from middle and lower classes were taken up by important players of the cultural market, such as clubs, radio stations, magazines and concert agencies, which could bring success to the political protest movement. In the following part, the dominant sections of cultural structure, which were directly influenced by the musical protest movement, will be described.

4.1 Music Clubs

Provided that one of the biggest music revolution in human history took time in the 1960s, it is understandable that remarkably large numbers of music clubs emerged right during that time.^[13] The introduced clubs below can be considered the brightest examples of music clubs related to the beat and rock music protest scene of different countries.

^A “A grassroots organisation is a self-organised group of individuals pursuing common interests through a volunteer-based, non-profit organisation. Grassroots organizations usually have a low degree of formality but a broader purpose than issue-based self-help groups, community-based organisations or neighborhood-associations” (Anheier, H./List, R. Dictionary of Civil Society, London: Routledge, 2005)

4.1.2 Cafe Wha?

It would not be too much to call Cafe Wha? (see Fig.1) in the Greenwich Village of New York City a “birthplace” of the kings of music. Bob Dylan is said to play here for a burger and place to sleep after his arriving to New York; at that time an anonymous Johnny Allen Hendrix (later Jimi Hendrix) was discovered here by the Animals bass player Chas Chandler; and it was also here where “the Boss” Bruce Springsteen earned his first money with the earlier band the Castiles. Nevertheless Cafe Wha? was a “home” for many famous personalities, such as the actor and filmmaker Woody Allen, comedians Richard Pryor and Lenny Bruce, the Beatnik Allen Ginsberg. It is surprising, that such a small corner in New York City gathered up so many people, whose contributions with lion’s share have changed the global history of the music.



Fig.1: Cafe Wha? – the name was shortened from Cafe What? to advise incredulity. Source: <http://www.vh1.com/news/51851/the-10-most-legendary-rock-clubs-of-all-time/>

4.1.3 Cavern Club

The passionate, originally devoted-to-Jazz-and-Blues Cavern Club (see Fig.2) was opened in 1957 in Liverpool. It is believed to be the cradle of British pop, since the British Beat music scene explored right here and during early the 60s it became the most attractive and followed pop music venue in the world. Many legendary musicians commence their very beginning of the career in Cavern Club, but after the artists gained fame, the club could not afford their expensive costs. The place has welcomed absolutely worldwide recognized artists. Regarding Jazz, Blues and Skiffle, mentioned should be Jazz Band Merseysippi, Big Bill Broonzy, Ringo Starr, The Quarry Men Skiffle Group, Ronnie Scott, Paul McCartney, Mr Acker Bilk's Paramount Jazz Band, Lonnie Donegan, Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee. As for Pop-rock music, the stage was "rocked" by The Rolling Stones, The Hollies, Queen, The Yardbirds, John Elton, The Kinks, John Lee Hooker. From the recent stars are for example Travis, Oasis, Adele, Jessie J, The Arctic Monkeys, The Wanted etc. Despite a serious danger of downfall in 1973, it was reopened 11 years later at a new place, reconstructed and restored perfectly to the smallest details as at the old location. ^[14]



Fig.2: Left – the original entrance at the old location. Right – the new reconstructed entrance across the street from the old location. Source: <http://www.vh1.com/news/51851/the-10-most-legendary-rock-clubs-of-all-time/>

4.1.4 Star-Club

Meanwhile the fabulous Star-Club (see Fig.3), opened in 1962 at Hamburg's Große Freiheit Straße 39 (in the same street as not less famous Kaiserkeller Club), regularly hosted ones of the biggest pop and rock giants ever, as The Beatles, Tony Sheridan, Frank Zappa, the Liverbirds, The Tremors, The Rattles, Jimi Hendrix, Carlos Santana, Joe Cocker, Eric Burdon, Black Sabbath (known as Erarth), Cream, The Searchers, Soft Machines, Gerry and The Peacemakers, Jerry Lee Lewis (one of his live albums was recorded at Star-Club), Ray Charles and Bill Haley.^[15]



Fig.3: Star-Club – one of the main meeting points of musicians and fans in Hamburg during the 1960s. Source: <http://www.beatle.net/50-years-agobeatles-ring-in-new-year-in-hamburg/>

4.1.5 Club Voltaire

A breaking new club concept was born in Club Voltaire (see Fig.4), where the doors opened first time in 1962 in Frankfurt. Beside common live music stages, it was the knot of present revolutionary political culture, offering art exhibitions, films, readings, discussions and political events. The revolutionary concept remains firmly until today and at the moment, the question of refugee crises is often discussed here.^[16] The emerge of dance clubs from 1967 onwards set up a new way of enjoying music, by mixing psychedelic music and drugs together, for example Grünspan (Hamburg), Sound (Berlin) and Klub 27 (Copenhagen). The followers of this kind of discotheques formed a befogged political alliance of political opposition.^[17]



Fig.4: Rudi Dutschke (left) talking to the crowd in Club Voltaire. He played a leader role in the West German student revolution of the Sixties. Source: <http://www.fnp.de/lokales/frankfurt/Frankfurter-Club-Voltaire-erhaelt-SPD-Kulturpreis;art675,754766>

4.1.6 Trips Festival in San Francisco clubs

Rod Mann shares the experience from his club visits during the 1960s in San Francisco so:

What can I say about the Trips Festival? Wild and woolly? Unprecedented? A landmark event?

..... Yes! Were you there when they.....?

In the first place, how could the law allow so many people in one place at one time? It was sardine heaven. But instead of a tin can, it was a dome. I had arranged to meet an old girlfriend in front and we pulled that off. But I didn't see her the rest of the night! The law didn't want one hombre there because he had just been arrested a couple nights before on a rooftop for having a stash. He put the neurons to work and came up with a spacesuit disguise. Kesey was the name, I think. I bumped into him with my camera and didn't know who it was, by golly, till 33 years later. How's that for a flashback?

Well, thank goodness for the pictures, otherwise I wouldn't remember much of anything. I don't know what possessed me to take my camera that Saturday night, cause I just kept bumping into people with it. I was afraid to set it down and it sure made it hard to dance. So I just watched the dancing.

And the dancing, it was ecstatic, beyond – with colour lights moving and pictures merging/changing/undulating on the walls. Some of those images looked like inside the womb or amoebas or something. Kinda like re-birthing or going way back to the beginning of life forms. We were in a dome that could have been a cave. Combined with that new free-form rock music the San Francisco bands were playing, it sure got under your skin. Talk about multi-media: that was the beginning, the signal event for mind-blowing entertainment for the rest of the century. There wasn't a dull minute to be had. There was no quick escape, either. Don't anybody hit the fire alarm – pullleeeeeeeeezzzz!

Now the idea was to make the whole thing seem like an LSD trip without the LSD. That appealed to me because I couldn't imagine wanting to be in a place with 1500 people all tripping on LSD. But still there was a rumour that the punch might be laced with the stuff, just like at Kesey's Acid Test parties and events. I never found out. I

suspect a few people partook before they arrived. Garcia said everybody was zonked, but I don't think so. You didn't need to be, just like they said – promise kept.

This was one of the most anticipated events I can remember in the Haight-Ashbury the 5 years I was there between 1965 and 70. The Human Be-In would be right up there with it, but the Be-In was kind of a bust according to some; lousy sound. Too spread out. Too much daylight, maybe. Some of the Love-Ins and spontaneous things that congealed in Golden Gate Park (mostly the Panhandle) were more engaging as happenings. But the Trips Festival (I can't really speak for the other 2 nights) was one of those events where time seems to meet destiny. There was magic in the air and you didn't have to be chemically altered to feel it. But the chemistry could have had something to do with it.

Well, let's thank the gods for occasionally being in the right place at the right time.^[18]

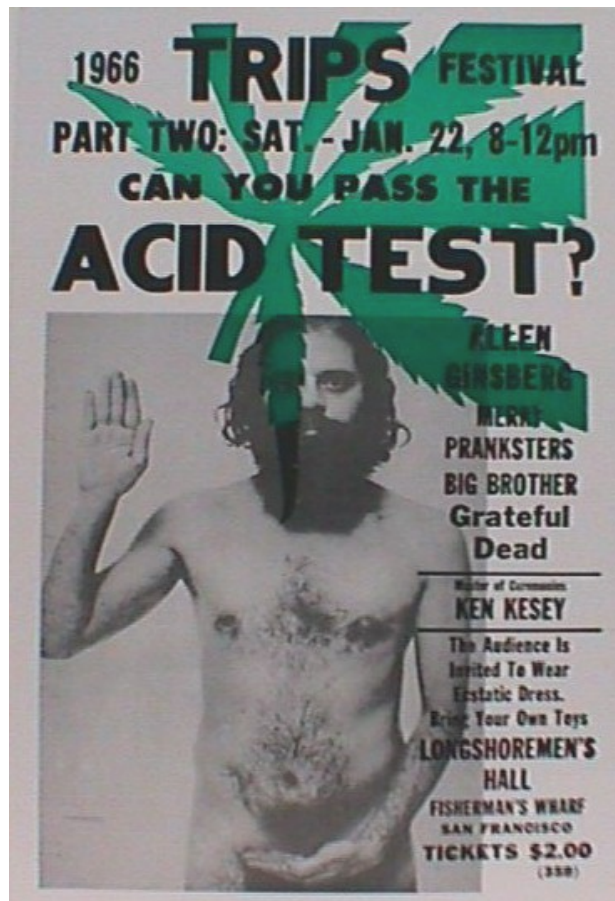


Fig.5: Allen Ginsberg on the poster of Trips Festival in San Francisco, 1966. Source: <https://www.hairofthedawg.rocks/forum/read.php?2,169510,169510.quote=1>

For some controversial people such a crowded mass sticking to each other like sardines dancing wildly in roaring obscure music and vicious lightning could appear as absolutely unacceptable and pointless. However, this is exactly the point. From more abstract perspective, we can interpret the whole scenario from the view of the “Flower Power children” like this: *when the then society of violent capitalism and materialism was trying to suppress and enslave people, we do not give up our freedom, we are dancing a revolt against yielding, we are bestirring/stirring and fighting. We are not robots, not soldiers, but human beings, individuals, looking for peace and happiness.*

4.2 Television

Television music programs were initially apolitical, giving space to independent youth expression. The USA offered spectators entertaining programmes and variety shows, such was a record-breaking Ed Sullivan Show (1948–1971). Resembling “vaudeville”^A shows, it was a mixture of diverse art performances – from circus, theatre (My Fair Lady, West Side Story), comedy acts, to the ballet dance, opera singing, including political scenes and popular artists’ stages (historic performances of for example The Beatles, The Jackson 5, Elvis Presley, Rolling Stones, Supremes and Temptations). “A variety show always has variety, but nothing was as eclectic as the mishmash that Sullivan put together, from puppet shows to opera, the show had it all. Whether it was Broadway for the parents, Rock ‘n’ Roll for the teenagers or Topo Gigio^B for the kids, the show had something for everyone.”^[19] Ed Sullivan Show has influenced the American Television entertaining production in a certain way. As for European continent, in United Kingdom people could enjoy “Six-Five Special” (1957), Oh Boy! (1958),

^A a light often comic theatrical piece frequently combining pantomime, dialogue, dancing, songs, performing animals, comedians. (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/vaudeville>)

^B Ed Sullivan often led conversations with a mechanical Italian mouse named Topo Gigio in his shows.

Ready, Steady, Go! (1963), meanwhile France broadcasted “Salut Les Copains” (1959). But it was Germany, which outperformed/surpassed all expectations and attracted 75 million viewers within Europe in 1968 with its “Beat Club” (1965). Soon talk segments were introduced in the music programs, here and there with political messages. Unfortunately, most of the programs emerging at the end of the 60s could not survive the next decade.^[20]

4.3 Radio

In comparison to Television, beat music was much more present in radio stations, especially in those for British and American soldiers. The first radio stations conquered by new beats are Radio Nord in Sweden and Radio Veronica in the Netherlands in 1960. Four years later pop music was entirely widespread in Radio London and Radio Caroline, which was broadcasting 12 hours per day and was available across Great Britain through southern Scandinavia to the northwest Germany. Particularly pirate stations, such as Radio “L” – Big London, Radio Atlanta, Radio King, Radio City, Radio Invicta and Radio Caroline,^[21] were completely overtaken by pop beats, and so in January 1967, the Council of Europe decided to bring the end to the movement. After this act, Radio Luxemburg remained by youth the most followed one, thanks to its multilinguality. In spite of radio’s apolitical character and little success of cultural protest movement in Television, both media helped to strengthen the idea of rebellion and revolutionary individualization.^[22]

4.4 Magazines

Magazines were almost at every corner, available for wide public, thus it was indeed an important and influential media section. The most consumed youth magazines are, for better orientation, divided according to various combinations of music and political orientation levels as followed:

4.4.2 Pop and politics:

- USA: Berkeley Barb (1965–1980), Berkeley Tribe (1969–1972)
- West Germany: Twen (1959–1971), Konkret (since 1955)
- France: Salut les Copains (since 1962), by the Communist party established Nous les garçons et les filles (1963–1969)
- Italy: Nuova Generazione

4.4.3 Specialists in underground music:

- USA: Rolling Stone (since 1967)^A
- Germany: Germany Song (1966–1970), Sounds (1966–1983)

4.4.4 Entirely separate market

- Serving the underground Counterculture provided numerous magazines with huge circulation numbers, as United Kingdom's Oz and International Times, Hotcha from Switzerland, Peng from West Germany, Superlove from Denmark.

^A Both Rolling Stone magazine and the famous music group The Rolling Stone were named after the blues song "Rollin' Stone" recorded by Muddy Waters in 1950 (Palmer, Robert (1981). Deep Blues. Penguin Books. p. 104)

4.4.5 Special case

•stands for the fact, that even the Catholic Church in West Germany and France wished to keep pace with the youth cultural development and released their own magazines.

4.5 Record companies

Such as Swedish Metronome and American CBS belonged to those record companies, which instead of staying passive or negative to the political protest movement, they played an active role by establishing their own position on the European market. Notably CBS' special "underground" music evolved even to the trademark – "the sound of European Counterculture".^[23]

4.6 "Hippies" managers

Parallel developing with record companies were smaller youth record studios, either fluctuating on the border between left-wing and culture industry or were self-supporting and self-governing. For this purpose, a new sort of managers appeared on the music scene. With a professional approach and respect for branch ethics, they could see artists as independent music producers and not only anonymous puppets of the industrial cultural "battlefield". They were not only concerned about profit margin, but rather answered the demand for youth identification, self-realisation, criticism of Western consumption, racism, colonialism and wars. A compelling evidence is Frankfurt concert agency Lippmann+Rau, thanks to which the American Folk Blues Festival was successfully organized in years between 1962–1969 and where Afro-American musicians could directly bring their Blues to the European audience.^[24] John Sinclair was another example – the American writer, poet and radical political activist guided MC5 from 1966 to 1969 and guided and accompanied the group during its political activities (free concert against the Vietnam War at the

Democratic National Convention in Chicago 1968 and many day-long concerts with political context). He also contributed to the fame of MC5's album *Kick Out the Jams* with his controversial liner notes.^[25]

4.7 Festivals

Outdoor music festivals occurred on a large scale in the late Sixties. Detlef Siegfried in the book "1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956–1977" defined festivals as "manifestations of the Counterculture, which demonstrate on a short term and exemplary basis the ideology of coming together as an alternative to compartmentalized and alienated modernity." He also assured that festivals regularly managed to gather up much more participants than political protests.^[26] For instance, we could compare the attendance of some rock festivals of the 1960s and the international Vietnam Congress in the West Berlin. From the less attended festivals, such as Newport Jazz Festival held in July 1969, attracting 78 000 visitors, Miami Pop Festival in December 1968 with 99 000 attended, Monterey International Pop Festival held in January 1967 with 150 000 visitors, to the most famous Woodstock in August 1969 with incredibly over 500 000 visitors.^[27] In contrast, the international Congress against the war in Vietnam, held in the West Berlin on February 17–18, 1968, followed by a mass demonstration with 12 000 people, gives an evidence of much smaller number of participants. But more importantly, we should consider the fact, that the Congress in Berlin was a firm international connection of 44 delegations from 14 countries all over the world and it made a motion to a 3-days later state-sponsored counter-demonstration with around 80 000 people taken part in it. ^[28]This is certainly a huge number for a political demonstration, where the risks of getting into serious personal and political problems are undoubtedly higher than attending a music festival.

An Underground Poetry Festival, which took place in London's Royal Albert Hall in June 1965 attracted 7000 young poet lovers and writers from all

around the world. There are 2 prominent Folk-Protest Song Festivals of West Germany – Burg Waldeck and International Essen Song Days. A European nucleus for the folk and protest song movement, organized from 1964 to 1969 at Burg Waldeck in Germany, was the very first Open-Air-Festival in Germany and created a big highlight in the history of German folk music. From traditional folk music and fancied Schlager light and entertaining songs, during 6 years of activities the international festival slowly but surely involved other various musical genres including political and social critics. The fourth year was named “Das engagierte Lied”, translated as “The engaged song”, carrying the message of Aldermaston Marches^A against Vietnam war. A famous humanistic German poet Erich Fried read his political poems here. The fifth year called “Song 68” was enriched by great American protest singers Phil Ochs, Guy Carawan and Odetta Holmes.

On the other hand this year concluded in absolute chaos, since its over-commercialization provoked SDS (the Socialist German Student Union) to get on the stage right during the performances and protest against a misuse of political songs for the commercial benefit. Because of the SDS objection, some artists then refused to perform and the whole festival ended up with fairly/highly negative impression. As the consequences of previous events, the last festival in 1969 could not attract enough fans to survive other years.^[29] The Burg Waldeck and the American music underground gave impulse to emerge of another historic musical event – International Essen Song Days, taking place in the Ruhr Valley city and during 5 days of September 1968 the festival could reach over 40 000 spectators, for that time it counted for the biggest European music festival of its format. This festival of folklore, chanson and good pop music (from folk, beat, political protest songs to anarcho-surrealist chanson or psychedelic rock music) is believed to be a German response to a-year-ago Monterey Pop festival in

^A Regular anti-war demonstrations against nuclear weapons, organized on Easter weeks during the 1950s and 1960s, taking place between Aldermaston and Atomic Weapons Research Establishment in London.

California. Presenting transnational innovative and rebellious workshops as well as stages (open discussions, psychedelic sessions, light shows, experimental movies), co-operative performances of musicians from different countries, such as stage-sharing of American The Fugs and The Mothers of Invention with German Franz Josef Degenhardt and Dieter Süverkrüp; or jazz musicians Guntel Hampel and Peter Brötzmann with English singer and actress Julie Driscoll. The festival presented not only top artists, furthermore, it gave opportunities to many new German experimental rock groups, for instance Can, Tangerine Dream and Amon Düül.^[30]

After numerous big transnational music festivals in the second half of the Sixties, including above mentioned Woodstock, Monterey Pop, International Essen Song Days or the Rolling Stones concert in Altamont, rock music somehow managed to cross the social borders and respectively became more a local issue in the next decade. 1970 turned into a year of regional festivals, when e.g. around 500 000 young music followers in Germany attended festivals.^[31] Obviously, this is only an official figure, an estimate number counting smaller underground festivals would be obviously much higher.

4.8 Artists and music bands

Categorizing people's acts is never easy and especially highly controversial, since there is no point, which decides, whether you belong to the first, second or even no group. However, below are some representative examples of artists and bands, who effectively contributed to the Sixties' rebellious Counterculture movement.

4.8.2 Rock bands with political content:

- **The Fugs** (New York City): With the regular changes of line-up, the stable core ones had been drummer Ken Weaver, beatniks Tuli Kupferberg and Ed Sanders, the only remaining member until today. The band, whose name originates from the euphemism "fuck", began their official career in 1965 with an opening performance at the Peace Eye Bookstore, when the close friends Andy Warhol, William Burroughs, George Plimpton, James Michener accompanied and helped the group with the premier. From the very beginning, the Fugs' music presented an obvious anti-war point of view. Their first cross-country tour in late 1965 counted as a part of mass protest against Vietnam War, and after their return back to New York, the group had been observed by both C.I.A. and FBI, for several times even arrested as dangerous activists. No surprise, when they officially burnt the American flag right on the stage. When The Fugs sings "Kill, kill, kill for peace, if you don't kill them, then the Chinese will, if you don't want America to play second fiddle" clearly points out the issue – can peace be obtained by guns? Millions have been killed in the name of pursuing peace. But still, the World has no peace.^[32] In the spirit of the Flower Power '67, thanks to co-organizing the first national anti-Vietnam-War demonstration including hundred of thousands people shouting "Out, Demons, Out!" heading towards Pentagon; and running a "nest" of a countercultural community in the Lower East Side of NYC, they were called The Beatniks and The Hippies,

regarding the leading position in the American protest movement. The year 1969 was, according to Ed Sanders, extremely tough:

It had not been an easy time. We were very, very controversial. We were always on the verge of getting arrested. We had bomb threats. We were picketed by right wingers. Someone sent me a fake bomb in the mail. Someone called once and said he was going to bomb, first me, then Frank Zappa. We were investigated by the FBI, by the Post Office, by the New York District Attorney. We were often encouraged not to try to perform again at the same venue. We were tossed off a major label. It took bites out of our spirit. I was getting weary – four years had seemed like forty, and I felt as if I'd awakened inside a Samuel Beckett novel.^[33]

Evidently, running a rock political band in 60' was a “big bitter bite”.

•**Floh de Cologne** (Cologne): a German Krautrock band and Cabaret group, founded in 1966 by prominent members of SDS, propagated openly political opinions, for instance together with The Fugs at the Essener Songtage.

•**Savage Rose** (Copenhagen): a Hippie band coming from Copenhagen has been one of the most influential psychedelic rock bands of the continental Europe. The vocalist Anisette has been bringing many fans to tears with her powerful voice, which can immediately turn into sweet, gentle childish tone. She is regarded one of the all-time best rock singers.^[34] Unfortunately, during the Sixties the band did not gain much global fame as it would deserve, despite its original and quality music. “This group isn’t coming on in a blaze of glory, they are working very hard at the incredibly difficult process of learning to sing their own song”, said a great rock critic Lester Bangs about the Savage Rose’s album *In the Plain* in Rolling Stone magazine issued on October 18, 1969.

4.8.3 Rock bands with extremely political content:

•**MC5** (Detroit): there are too many things to be said about these rioters from Detroit. They magically included everything, from hard Rock 'n' Roll, garage rock, to punk and even house music. They rather scared than entertain, they were rather revolutionaries than Hippies. “Brothers and sisters, I wanna see your hands right now. I wanna hear some revolution out there. Brothers and sisters, the time has come for each of you to decide, whether you are gonna be the problem, or whether you are gonna be the solution. You must choose, it takes 5 seconds. 5 seconds of decision. 5 seconds to realize it’s time to move. It’s time to get down with it. Brothers, it’s time to justify. Are you ready to justify? Are you ready?”, screamed the vocalist Rob Tyner out loud to the World, before they kicked up a live concert at the New Year’s Eve 1968–1969, which is probably one of the best live performances ever filmed.^[35] With unloaded rifles and an invisible sniper, the boys provocatively brought reality to the stage. They were officially active in the left-wing politics, for example The White Panthers (a radical left, anti-racist, white American political organization founded by Leni Sinclair and John Sinclair – The Motor City 5’s manager in 1966–1969^[36]), free concert against the Vietnam War at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago 1968 (together with Phil Ochs) and many day-long concerts with political context. The group members as well as their famous manager Sinclair were well-known LSD and marijuana users, which brought them many problems with laws.^[37]

•**Edgar Broughton Band** (Warwick): coming from an English city Warwick, the band originally devoted to R&B, later at the end of the Sixties it turned into a hard psychedelic rock band and was a perfect representative of Hippie philosophy – free concerts, anti-war lyrics, free child education of Dr. Benjamin Spock, irony, sarcasm.^[38]

•**Ton Steine Scherben** (West Berlin): the English translation is “Clay Stones Shards”, was one of the first rock bands singing in German and the leading band of the new left movement. Their texts were originally anti-capitalist and anarchist, then focused on freedom, love, drugs, and sadness, later they were concerned about homosexuality.^[39] Even though all the Ton Steine Scherben’s albums were self-made, from writing, publishing to promotion, the revenues could not save the band from regular financial problems. Despite commercial failure, their influence on German rock and punk music is undoubtedly long-lasting.^[40]

4.8.4 Self considered political artists:

•**Frank Zappa** (Baltimore, USA): unlike most of his fellow singers, Frank Zappa was a practical conservative, a capitalism’s supporter while proclaiming communism as “a system that doesn't allow ownership has, to put it mildly, a fatal design flaw” and an opponent of drug use. His political concerns were rather about American domestic politics than global issues, such as Vietnam War, acids or racism.^[41]

•**Country Joe McDonald and The Fish** (Washington, D.C.): the anthem of the Woodstock generation – their best known single “I Feel Like I'm Fixin' To Die Rag” from 1965 – was written in only 20 minutes for an anti-war play^[42], criticising naive American youth, which blindly followed the governmental propaganda about becoming a soldier fighting against malevolent Communism and thus becoming a matured man, an American hero.

*“And it's one, two, three,
What are we fighting for?
Don't ask me, I don't give a damn,
Next stop is Vietnam”^[43]*

•**Phil Ochs** (El Paso, Texas): undoubtedly one of the most productive song writer ever. Not counting the lost and stolen ones, over 200 singles were

written during his short 35 years of life. The vast majority of them was focused on problematical topics – Vietnam, the Civil War, labour struggles, hungry miners and influential personalities, such as Afro-American journalist and dissident William Worthy, journalist and athlete Lou Marsh, iconic Marxist revolutionary Che Guevara or scandalous businessman Billy Sol Estes. He was among a very few singers, who bravely stood on the protest podium at the Democratic National Convention in 1968 and asked for the end of the bloody war in the East. Phil politics was formed during his journalistic study at Ohio State University, which he inserted into his pointed lyrics. Indeed, he remained a journalist in his way, replacing newspapers and TV by rhythm, a microphone and a guitar. The last years of his life were drowned in depression and alcoholism, before he committed suicide at the age of 35. Phil was a revolutionary rebel and has been an endless inspiration for then and later generations.^[44]

•**Bob Dylan:** he refused a nickname “the spokesman of a generation” given by the press.^[45] A big controversial highlight of his career happened in 1965, when he exchanged his faithfully folk solo image with acoustic guitar and harmonica for an electric guitar and a supporting band. This turnover met with much criticism. According to a roadie Taplin, Bob Dylan said “well, fuck them if they think they can keep electricity out of here, I'll do it.” on the organisers’ disagreement about his idea of an electric performance at Newport Folk Festival 1965.^[46] Dylan “electrified one half of his audience, and electrocuted the other.”^[47]

4.8.5 Unintentional political artists

...who became political without any explicit effort, but are rather considered so by the society:

•**Jimi Hendrix**: Jimi Hendrix contributed to the American Counterculture movement in phenomenal ways. It was through his beliefs, his lyrics, his insubordinate performance style, his guitar exploration or simply just the fact, that he was a black, who conquered the stage at that time. Jimi brought peace and love from Buddhism through the melodies to his followers. He pushed the limits of guitar – playing with his teeth or behind his head, burning the guitar or the amplifiers, he was truly an experimenter, entertainer and inspiration. And after all he played in such a natural way, that it seemed like the music just came out of him without any hard-work and efforts. “On stage there was a magical transformation, like a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde”, said his recording sound engineer Eddie Kramer. “He was quite the star performer on stage, quite sexual and very animalistic, but in complete control.” As a prominent figure of the Sixties music scene, Jimi represented a Hippie lifestyle of peace, drugs, parting, sex and is often considered the greatest guitarist of all time.^[48] Sadly, the guitar giant died in London at his 27 by drug overdose.^[49]

•**The Rolling Stones**: the Rolling Stones’ frontman Mick Jagger said in an interview for German magazine Der Spiegel, that the band was rebelling “against nothing at all” and did not desire to become a political leadership, as young people looked for from them.^[50]

•**Led Zeppelin**: Supporting the same thought, Led Zeppelin’s singer Robert Plant shared that “the German audience is okay in and of itself, but it’s far too political.”^[51]

•**The Beatles**: According to the latest research at Queen Mary University of London and Imperial College London, legendary The Beatles actually did not

start the music revolution in America or even across the world, as it is usually said and believed. Regarding the results of the study, published in the book *The evolution of popular music: USA 1960–2010*, Imperial College’s professor Armand Leroi told *The Telegraph* that “The Beatles didn’t make a revolution or spark a revolution, they joined one. The trend is already emerging and they rode that wave, which accounts for their incredible success. The United States was already becoming rockier and more energetic, and moving away from mellow sounds like doo wap. You can already see that by the beginning of the 1960s”. The research found out, that similar sounds, for instance from The Beach Boys, The Top Notes, Elvis Presley, emerged already before The Beatles appeared.^[52]

5. STRUGGLES

The Sixties Counterculture movement of left orientated youth faced somewhat predictable and understandable difficulties.

5.1 Political struggles

Traditionally the right-wing opposition would not remain without action, but uncommonly, the same tool was used as an answer to a political battle. Rock and beat were exploited in order to become a medium of spreading nationalist and racist messages. Music became a knife with two endings fighting against each other, without its own permission. It may be somehow considered as a victim, but still, music profited much and developed incredibly fast during the 60s era by continual innovative inputs.

5.2 Commercialization

Moreover, continuous commercialization of protest music was against the Counterculture ideology of non-conformity and non-materialism, for both musicians and fans. As a reaction to this, innovative elements were produced steadily, new materials and methods were applied into rock music in order to keep its originally rebellious context and prevent rock from perceived domestication. Meanwhile, organized protest against overpriced album and concert tickets took place in some European countries, mostly in West Germany, since here the political protest in music was more intensive than for example in Scandinavia or Great Britain. However, the ideal scenario of anti-consumerism and romanticism of simple life was rather impossible to be fulfilled. From Praxis we can conclude, that the way, how this youth culture went to the movies, attended concerts, bought audio, video records and stereo systems, consumed buttons and posters, drove

certain brands of cars or travelled regularly (even though Hippies preferred Hitchhiking), could be also considered as mass unconscious consumption.

5.3 Geographical differences

Having a closer look at another aspect, from a geographical point of view, the main difference between Eastern and Western European countries was a substantial delay and variety of its expression. Reasons for a delay of the social transformation in Eastern Europe are indignation against the Western world, very strong governmental controls and daily censorship, which lead to the lack of independence in the cultural sector and limited young people's opportunities to protest. Nevertheless, the cultural and political transformation arrived to Eastern Europe, even after a significant delay. However, this transformation did not occur in such a vivid way neither had a mass nor united effect as in Western countries. We could hardly find anything similar to the festival *Essener Songtage*, the very first German political commune *Kommune 1* in West-Berlin, the *Freetown Christiania* with their own laws and administration functioning on the base of Hippies alternative lifestyles in Copenhagen, similarly the Kabouter anarchist movement trying to set up an alternative society in the Netherlands. The process of political beat and rock intervention in Eastern fluctuated in the 1970s from tolerance to repression. The best example is the suppression of the Prague Spring, the political movement for liberalization in Czechoslovakia in 1968. The revolution could be considered unsuccessful, but the trial of liberalization contributed to the cooperation and thus the unity of the Eastern and Western European youth, reflected later in speeding up the internal destruction of the Eastern socialistic system.^[53]

6. INTERVIEWS WITH WITNESSES

Eastern and Western cultural contrast within Europe was a vivid example of political and economic influence. However, the following interviews with particular people, who lived and experienced the Sixties era will bring us somewhat a different picture of underground culture of these two separated worlds.

6.1 Interview 1

Participants: french people living in Alsace, France.

- Raymond Aimé DEGERT, born 20 october 1932
- Denise Gisèle DEGERT, born 15 december 1955
- Marthe Marie STRITMATTER (born BOLTZ), born 1924

This Semi-structured interview was created for french people in ages of 61, 84 and 92, who were living in Alsace, a french region on the border with West Germany and Switzerland, during the 1960s. Since the interviewees are relatives of my french acquaintance, I have known them from earlier and thus they have been cooperating friendly and were willing to answer the questions. Because a long-distance telephone interview would not be comfortable for some interviewees and with all respects to their high ages (worse hearing), I have recorded a video of me with a welcoming speech, explanation about the goals of the interview and prepared questions. The answers were captured in video records and there was the french acquaintance assisting during the whole interviewing process. A Semi-structured form of interview was chosen in order to follow predetermined goal, but still allows the interviewees the freedom to express further comments and points of view. The interviews were originally conducted in German, since Alsace belonged for some particular periods of its history to

Germany and thus older people are still able to communicate in German. The interview was then translated to English by myself.

Did you or people in your neighborhood (and any people you knew) listen to political and social music in the 60s?

Raymond: Not really... If we turned on the radio, we were forced to listen to that kind of music. In that time, there was no TV, and not as many radio stations as nowadays, so there was less choice. We used to listen to "France Inter", sometimes ; that station has always been engaged. But we were not keen on that music... In the old days, we had no time, we used to work more than nowadays and we were more tired. In the morning, we went to the factory, then in the afternoon, we built our own house and cultivated the vegetable garden. And when the day was over, we used to listen to the news above all.

Denise: Actually, we used to listen to some "soft engaged" music, like Georges Brassens and Georges Moustaki.

Marthe: Yes, the form was soft, but the substance was clearly engaged in many of their songs! I like both of them.

How much was the political music accepted by your neighborhood?

Raymond: Yes, it was especially appreciated among young people.

Denise: I was still a bit young in the 60s, but I remember, what people in my neighborhood were saying about that music is "It's noisy" or "Oh! These Long-haired, once again!".

Marthe: Previous generations used to say "it's crazy!". My parents for example, had that opinion about that kind of music. Personally, I didn't like it... Maybe because I was already too old (laughs).

What was the most common political and social topic in music of the 60s in your neighborhood?

Raymond: Against Algerian War, and Vietnam War to a lesser extent.

Marthe: In my opinion, that music didn't especially carry political messages.

Denise: Johnny Hallyday, Sylvie Vartan, etc. were the most listened singers. English singers were more involved, there were also Léo Ferré, Yves Montand, who were engaged. Graeme Allwright — born in New Zealand in 1926, moved to France in 1948 — used to sing protest songs, engaged against materialism, conformism, capitalism for instance. He particularly adapted and introduced in France American protest songs (of Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger), and in the other way, he translated into English some works of Georges Brassens. His albums released in 1966 and 1968 brought him to the forefront among young people after the events of May 1968.

How did you personally feel about political music in the 60s?

Raymond: These songs made me feel ill at ease. We knew what was happening, but we could not change anything of it in any way...

Marthe: It was the trend of the moment.

To which intensity did the political music affect you/your neighborhood?

Marthe: We did not let music influence us.

Did the political music inspire/lead you to some political/social action and what?

Raymond: No, not directly people like us – workers, but the intellectuals yes!

Denise: May 1968 came from intellectuals, not from workers. High school and university students initiated the movement, and syndicates followed, they took advantage of that revolt.

Raymond: Yes, actually we participated in the strikes. But we were a bit forced to take part, since the movement was spreading very widely and quickly. However, some of the revendications^A were justified.

^A to bring action under civil law to enforce rights in specific property whether corporeal or incorporeal or movable or immovable. (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/revendicate>)

Which atmosphere did this music create in your neighborhood?

Raymond: weird...(thinking)

Denise: If you listen to a song just once, it's compulsorily strange... At the time, there was no way to listen to a song again, except being lucky when you switch on the radio, or going to the record shop.

Do you know any case, when somebody got into trouble because of political music?

Raymond: Michel Sardou has been forced to go on stage with a group of bodyguards.

Denise: Mouloudji has been threatened for organizing a collection to help Algerians who were fighting against French.

6.2 Interview 2

Participant: Milan KOHOUT – Philosopher and university teacher, born 1955.

This interview was originally prepared with Semi-structured questions, with a goal to compare the Sixties in Western and Eastern Europe from its representatives' points of view. However, from the very beginning, Mr. Kohout (61) has impressed me, as an interviewer, with his knowledge of Underground culture and that's why I have decided to changed the method of interview from Semi-structured to Unstructured, for giving the interviewee sufficient space to share his personal experience and thought-provoking comments about the Socialist-communist society in Czechoslovakia. The interview was conducted in English, recorded on a dictaphone and notes were taken.

How were the Sixties in Czechoslovakia?

During those time (1960s) there were West camp and East camp. There was a great misunderstanding of the Czech underground members about political songs in english, because they didn't speak English, they weren't able to understand the lyrics of the songs they were enthusiastically consuming. Thus most of us was not aware, that those Western rock and folk stars were very pretty much very critical against/about their own political and economic system. If we had understood the texts, we wouldn't have supported that music so much as we did. We were sort of pissed off about the Socialist-communist system in our country (Czechoslovakia) and we sort of admired that rebellious style and had ilusionary vision and idea about the systems in the Western countries. And some of my friends still have those vision! They got frozen in time over the last quarter of century! (laughing).

Some particular example for that "misunderstanding"?

There was a case of Frank Zappa, who was the key star for the Czech underground and everybody liked him. The security forces STB hated Frank Zappa, because we loved Frank Zappa (the Czech underground) and because they also didn't understand his texts. Now, if there was a case that both parties would had understood English, the reaction would have been reversed. We would have hated Frank Zappa, we would have thought, that he is so critical against Capitalism and democracy in the West, is there something wrong with him? On the other side STB would have loved Frank Zappa for his progressive Western comerit musician fighting against imperialistic agressor and Capitalism.

What made you admire Frank Zappa's texts?

We didn't pay attention to the texts mostly. It was the art form that was beautiful for us, sort of attractive and so different from our Eastern European culture. So it was only based on the fact, that the art form was different and very rebellious, not the content. They had long hair, they moved weirdly, and they played so hard wow. We liked it very much.

How did you come to this progressive music?

From many sources. There were plenty of TV music programmes, which I was watching as a child. Since my father's scientific career was stopped by the System, my parents were thus against the System and so I was brought up in a sort of the Counterculture mood. People were smuggling music records through the border, we were listening to the Western radio stations broadcasted across the borders. It was for example radio Luxembourg, a very popular one. It was broadcasted towards Western block, including TV. I remember in Pilsen we could get the signals of the TV channels broadcasted in West Germany, and everybody had an antenna to catch those signals. In Prague the signals were not available anymore. There were so many illegal underground radio channels to follow. It was interesting to realize I was much more educated about progressive art then people in the USA, when I came there.

Was there anything better in Czechoslovakia then in the Western world?

Yes, an interesting programme was a film club project financially supported by the Czechoslovakia Communist government, where the most progressive American, French, British, German etc. selected movies were shown, and paradoxically they were the best movies at that time, for example "Easy

Rider” from Dennis Hopper released in 1969! The movies were supposed to present the critical edge against Capitalism.

What was the public reaction to that paradox?

We were kinda confused and didn't really believe, what was shown in those movies. Or we were sort of self-sensoring those messages. Sometimes we tried to analyze those messages as a support of an idea, that the systems in the West are good, because there is such a range of weird mess in that society. I remember watching the movie “Midnight cowboy” from 1969, when a Texas cowboy comes to NYC and faced all that horrible life of homeless people, crimes, drugs, gambling, cheating, stealing. So to conclude it, some part of my brain was already pre-conditioned about the reality of the Western world, but some part was still trying to excuse this dark side, convincing myself that it wasn't the main face of Western capitalistic system. While nowadays I already know it is the main face, the transparent Capitalism based on exploitation is the most cruel system in the whole World history.

How did you see the relationship between Western and Eastern underground?

There was no cooperation because we couldn't. The Czechoslovakian underground didn't want to fight the Establishment based on the philosophy of the key member of the Czech underground Martin Ivan Jirous called “Magor” (in English “Nutter”), who said in his essay, that the difference between Western and our underground is that we don't want to fight the Establishment, because there is the danger that if we would win, we would become the Establishment. I think Magor is a genius.

What was the underground system in Czechoslovakia?

1We called the Establishment the “First culture” and aimed to create for ourselves the “Second culture”, where we would live in freedom of creativity and thoughts without censorship, which in many cases happened. I often tell my students in the USA, that if I had to chose the period of my past life with the biggest freedom, I would say under the Totality and Communist system in Czechoslovakia. As members of the “Second culture”, we “fucked” the “First culture”. We had our own concerts, events, magazines, books etc. We only couldn’t show it in radio, TV or public. Of course the STB tried to catch us, but there were no cellphones, internet, satelites, so it was hard for them to control us. It was sort of a lost battle for them. Nowadays, the life of an average member in so-called Capitalistic Freedom society is completely controlled by Big Brother.

What were the Czechoslovakian musicians singing about?

Sort of abstract and absurd things. Sometimes absurdity was pushed to the extreme of socialist Realism, how we called. They were intentionally creating stupid texts. Also the bands had kinda stupid names. For example Pilsener band “The Suřík”, which means in Czech the paint preventing metal sufaces against rust.

What about bigger protests during the 60s in Eastern Europe?

No real protests happened here, because they would immediately send us all to the jails. In Eighties I was arrested for my underground activities, they told me to choose, whether the jail or to leave my country. I was expelled from Czechoslovakia.

What is Counterculture for you?

Counterculture is still a part of the main culture, just trying or pretend to be different. Actually any kind of rebellious culture is slowly being commodified (commercialized) by the system. A bright example is Punk, originally a pure rebellion, but thanks to commodification people were suddenly buying leather jackets for thousands of dollars just to look punk. But since during the Sixties there was still no market economy in Czechoslovakia yet, so if people looked weird in the Sixties, they were really weird. And I have a feeling that the Hippie movement here in Eastern Europe was understood in a very different way than in the USA, where many of them were daughters and sons of rich people and they usually financially supported all the Hippies around them. Here I would say it was much purer, idealistic and completely non-commercial.

6.3 Considerations

One might say the Eastern Europe or World has always been less developed than the Western. But to be objective, this idea usually applies only on the economic aspect. The interviews above are bright examples. Mr. Kohout was very concerned and proactive in social, cultural and even political movements, despite a danger of being arrested or expelled under the Totality and Communist system. In comparison, people living in France — a representative part of Western Europe, which is believed to be a place of freedom of speech, and thus freedom of political beliefs — could be much more conservative and subordinated to the Establishment. Here, family and academic background can play a big role. Furthermore, Mr. Kohout's opinion about differences between Czechoslovakian and American Hippies values — *“in the USA, where many of them were daughters and sons of rich people and they usually financially supported all the Hippies around them. Here I would say it was much purer, idealistic and completely non-commercial”* — is fairly provocative but worth considering. The more human beings are suppressed, the more is freedom valued, the more they are active, clear and determined in achieving goals.

The Sixties was clearly an era of protests. People legally protested, because they could, and illegally, because they couldn't. People protested against everything and sometimes nothing. It was a confusing, difficult but exciting time, when social values were reformulating. What was right and what not, what was prosperous for the future, is still a question to be studied. Not to forget, history repeats itself.

7. CONCLUSION

The 1960s Counterculture movement undoubtedly influenced the society to a large extent, including Television, movies, literature, arts and popular music, in a good or bad way. But did the Counterculture effect the popular music more than the popular music effected the Counterculture? This controversial question has been analysed by many historians, given the fact, that during the Sixties both the society and popular music underwent one of the most dramatic changes in their history. The music sector, particularly beat and rock music, experienced a powerful explosion of fame as well as in sales, which has not stopped until today. Music faithfully accompanied protests. From the very beginning of this decade, the guitar and banjo started to play in demonstrations of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND)^{A.[54]}, the German 1966's Ostermarsch was highlighted by American folk singer Joan Baez, the 1967's march on the Pentagon was leaded by the political music band The Fugs while the crowd was shouting out their anti-war lyrics, the 1968's Democratic National Convention in Chicago even devoted the whole concert podium to musical activists, such as Phil Ochs and The Motor City 5. Music evidently and substantially contributed to making the followers of the movement feel as a part of the social revolution and transformation. Provo newspapers in 1967 wrote, that many people dreamt about their international stars like The Beatles, Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix and others gathering up and fighting against colonialism, racism and wars. An unarticulated turned into an articulated youth culture, this is how the countercultural Danish magazine Superlove described the Sixties youth's radical change. For this countercultural generation, it was extremely important to maintain the pure rebellious character of rock music, thus any action of its commercial exploitation provoked further production of new

^A CND symbol designed by Gerald Holtom in 1958, has become a worldwide universal peace symbol. ("*BBC NEWS : Magazine : World's best-known protest symbol turns 50*". *BBC News (London)*. 20 March 2008. Retrieved 2008-05-25.)

innovative elements and methods applied into rock music, making it the fastest developing music genre of the decade. Music became a form of expression for people, who did not know, how to express themselves. “Purple Haze all around, am I happy or in misery?”^[55] wonders Jimi Hendrix in his song Purple Haze. By this way, many youngsters could find themselves in music, realising they were not alone and that could connect people on an emotional level. Music also lowered the limits for those, who hadn’t had any political concerns yet or who wanted to become politically active, but were afraid of the risks or did not know, how to begin. Because rock characteristics, such as authenticity, breaking rules, strong physical expression, spontaneity or questioning authorities matched with the social aspects of the Counterculture movement, music naturally interweaved with the protest and they merged together in order to gain strength.

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9. ABSTRACT

The goal of this Bachelor's Thesis is to analyse the role of music, namely Rock and Beat music in the social transformation thanks to the Counterculture movement during the 1960s in the USA and Europe. The Thesis describes the reason, why music was selected as one of the main art forms used for protesting and fighting against social conventions and how did the society and music effect each other. The work also focuses on the organizational structure within the Counterculture music world to point out important personalities and events, which had significant impact on the history of the Sixties.

10. RESUMÉ

Tématem této bakalářské práce je analýza role hudby, především rockové a beat hudby během vzpoury a sociální transformace v rámci hnutí Counterculture během šedesátých let v USA a Evropy. Objasní se odpověď na otázku, proč byla právě hudba vybrána jako jedním z hlavních nástrojů v boji proti sociálním konvencím a jak se společnost a hudba navzájem ovlivňovaly během této vzpoury kulturních hodnot. Organizační struktura Undergroundového hudebního života nám přiblíží osobnosti a události, které změnily historii šedesátých let 20. století.