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**Analysis of British Youth Cultures in the
1970s and Their Dramatization in the Sitcom
*The Young Ones***
Master's Diploma Thesis

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2017

I declare that I have worked on this thesis independently,
using only the primary and secondary sources listed in the bibliography.

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Author's signature

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Introduction

The first aim of this thesis is to provide insight into the youth subcultures, which played a crucial role in shaping the Great Britain since the aftermath of the Second World War. The primary focus lies on those subcultures and counter-cultures that emerged during the period of the 1960s and 1970s. The secondary objective of this thesis is to introduce and analyse the dramatisation of such subcultures in the British sitcom *The Young Ones* first broadcast by BBC 2 in the United Kingdom from 1982 to 1984. The thesis provides the readers not only with an introduction into the subcultures and their history but also with a reflection on why the subcultures and the studies of subcultures mattered. It serves as an introduction to the subcultures within the context of their class background, and it attempts to provide an understanding of the significance of youth subcultures in Britain rather than providing a mere compilation of points made by other authors.

The thesis is divided into five chapters, where the first chapter aims at contemplating and defining what culture per se means and how it is generally understood. In addition, it provides a definition of subculture as perceived by sociology and cultural studies. Last, but not least, the cultural studies introduction and overview are outlined within the scope of the first chapter. As for the secondary sources, the thesis mainly draws on *Resistance through Rituals: Youth subcultures in post-war Britain* – a collection of essays edited by Stuart Hall, a Jamaican-born sociologist, cultural theorist, and a pioneer in the field of cultural studies, and Tony Jefferson, a professor at Keele University and a contributor to the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham. The significance of this collection of essays lies in the aim to explain the phenomenon of the Youth Cultures and their emergence in the post-war period, and thus it facilitates understanding of working-class subcultures, middle-class

counter-cultures, and their relation to the dominant culture. Further, the book goes beyond the striking features of the Youth Cultures to clarify the mythologies and confusions surrounding it. Furthermore, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* by Dick Hebdige, a British sociologist, is used as an additional reference to consult the general idea of culture and subculture.

Following the introduction of the terms and the problematics of the Youth Cultures, the second chapter examines the specific British subcultures in detail with interest in the subcultures and counter-cultures portrayed in the sitcom mentioned above namely punks, hippies, and anarchists. The prevailing approach to subcultures is to examine them with a close relation to the music produced by their representatives. However, in this thesis, the focus is shifted away from music towards the values and beliefs the subcultures hold and, moreover, how they have interacted with each other. Even though the thesis does not aspire to provide an insight into the musical connection to the subcultures, it will touch upon the topic of music on rare occasions since the two are closely related. The influences of these subcultures and variations within these groups will be considered. The ultimate source of information on the Punk movement is then *England's Dreaming: Sex Pistols and Punk Rock* by Jon Savage, an English music journalist and writer. This source provides a deep insight into the early beginning of the Punk subculture and is an inexhaustible fount of information on the rise and fall of the Sex Pistols including precise historical details. The knowledge from this book will be supplemented with the second significant work on Punk: *Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the 20th Century* by an American author Greil Marcus. Given its different approach to presenting the story of the infamous Sex Pistols, this book together with *England's Dreaming* provides a complex picture of the Punk era.

The third chapter explores a brief history of the British television. The foremost objective is to present British TV channels, which broadcast the so-called highbrow programmes such as BBC 2, and Channel 4, which provided a range of content for audiences, which were not satisfied with what BBC or a commercial TV network ITV had to offer. These two channels are particularly significant for this thesis given that the TV series *The Comic Strip Presents…*debuted on Channel 4 and *The Young Ones* – which the thesis deals with – was first broadcast on BBC2. This part of thesis consults the publications *British Television Drama: A History* by Lez Cooke and *Television Culture* by John Fiske.

The fourth chapter serves as an introduction to British alternative comedy, as it studies the pioneer of this area, the TV series called *The Comic Strip Presents…* which shares the comedians involved in the aforementioned TV show. The Comedy Store and its relation to the beginning of the alternative comedy will be examined with the help of a doctoral thesis "An Approach to Traditions of British Stand-Up Comedy" by Oliver John Double.

As previously stated, the second primary aim of the thesis is to draw attention to the dramatisation of the British Youth Subcultures in the sitcom *The Young Ones*. The main aim of the practical part of the thesis is to analyse the way subcultures and countercultures are depicted on television. Presuming that *The Young Ones* series is not well-known to the general public in the Czech Republic, even though within the community of people who enjoy the series, it is still being reviewed and discussed[1], the fifth chapter will begin with a description of the TV series. *The Young Ones* provides a remarkable resource on subcultures as perceived and presented by the contemporaries

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[1] It was recently published in the Australian Business Insider that a core fan had discovered a „creepy fifth housemate" in the series and did not hesitate to contact the creators to hunt out the truth. https://www.businessinsider.com.au/ben-elton-knew-nothing-about-the-young-ones-creepy-fifth-housemate-2016-6

especially given the fact that this show is a unique TV series implicitly focused on subcultures. While there might be some peek into the life of subcultures in other TV series such as for instance a peek at the hippie world in the American TV show *Mad Men*, to my knowledge there is no other series that would use youth

Owing to the lack of written sources concerning the sit-com *The Young ones* directly, a website written by Dr Evan Smith from the Flinders University of South Australia will be consulted at times. Moreover, the documentaries *The Making of The Young Ones* and *Alternative Rebellion: The Beginning of Britain's Alternative Comedy* – the special features released with *The Young Ones – Extra Stoopid Edition* in 2007 for the 25th anniversary of the show by BBC present the main source of comprehension of the creation process of the TV show, the context of its making and most importantly the mindset of the people involved in the production which all together set the scope and direction of the series.

1. Theory of Culture and Subculture

1.1. Culture

Culture is a somewhat ambiguous and broad term, whose perception transforms in accordance with the perspective from which it is viewed. Culture is everywhere, and everything around us – the values and beliefs we hold, the way we treat other people, or it can be closely connected to our attitudes. Culture may be perceived as a social glue that provides a common ground for the society, or it can be described as "the way we do things around here" (Bower 22) if we look at the corporate culture. Hebdige examines the *Oxford English Dictionary* definition of culture and points out that interestingly it refers to both a process and a product (Hebdige 6) which corresponds to the culture of

society as culture both influences and affects one's behaviour within the society and can be seen as a product of that society as well. Furthermore, the marginal meaning of culture is perceived as achieving the excellence, which in the words of Matthew Arnold is "the best that has been thought and said in the world" (Hebdige 6). Culture can be therefore understood as "appreciation of 'classic' aesthetic" which is the way culture has been predominantly perceived. However, from the anthropological point of view, the application of culture is much broader and could be even viewed as omnipresent as it does not only communicate values of high literature and art, but culture is also rooted "in institutions and ordinary behaviour (Hebdige 6). The polarity of the various definitions was troubling especially when the Cultural Studies were being established as a separate field at Universities and scholars or intellectuals, such as Richard Hoggart believed that we could not understand a culture without "appreciating good literature" first (Hebdige 8).

Nevertheless, Stuart Hall in the essay "Subcultures, Cultures and Class" disregards the hierarchy of culture and rather than limiting the definition to the elite culture of the upper-class, he views it as a "way of life" of a group or class and as a means to express oneself (10). Culture, Hall argues, is fundamentally: "experience lived, experience interpreted, experience defined" (qtd. In Hsu). It is "the way, the forms, in which groups 'handle' the raw material of their social and material existence" (Hall 10). Hua Hsu in the article "Stuart Hall and the Rise of Cultural Studies" explains that: "it can tell us things about the world, he believed, that more traditional studies of politics or economics alone could not".

1.2. Youth Cultures

It is foremost the adolescents who promptly react to changes and explicitly adopt a stance on sundry issues from political situations and economic policies to how to spend their leisure time. As was discovered by a doctor of psychology Jeffrey Arnett in his research of "reckless behaviour in adolescence", adolescents are reported to have higher "sensation seeking" than adults. The world of the youth is, therefore, undergoing constant evolution and development. Their efforts to make a difference, set themselves apart from the notion of mass thinking lay the basis for the inevitable birth of their own distinguished cultures. The post-war Britain was the ideal starting point for the emergence of youth cultures. The British youth had more freedom than their parents had during the Second World War, more time to devote to leisure time activities, higher income and, thus, had ample opportunities to create and develop a culture of their own. The abundance of the period led people to believe that the discrepancy between the classes was to be reduced and consequently people believed in the emerging myth of the notion of a classless youth.

Several factors played a pivotal role in the emergence of the novel phenomenon of youth cultures. To start with, the wave of consumerism and mass communication was a significant factor affecting the post-war youth, which brought about ‚imitation' and ‚manipulation' and subsequently mass culture. The idea of ‚affluence' was imposed on the post-war working-class. Hall uses the term hegemony - a concept elaborated by Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist theoretic, to describe the phenomenon where „a ruling class is able, not only to coerce a subordinate class to conform to its interests, but to exert a „hegemony" or „total authority" over subordinate class" (Hall 38) to explain that the ideology of „affluence" was a myth targeted at the working-class by the dominant culture based on the hegemony of the 1950's (37). Hegemony is not a

permanent state of a society and is not forced involuntarily, but instead applied with a consent of the class to the dominant classes and as such is not a constant.

Furthermore, the 1944 Education Act also known as the „Butler Act" ensured that all children regardless of their class would have the opportunity to obtain a secondary education without tuition fees. The increasing number of adolescents were spending a significant amount of time at educational institutions which provided ideal circumstances for the development of the ‚adolescent society'. Hebdige summarises the main contributing factors:

> Specifically, we can cite the relative increase in the spending power of working-class youth, the creation of a market designed to absorb the resulting surplus, and changes in the education system consequent upon the 1944 Butler Act as factors contributing to the emergence after the War of generational consciousness amongst the young. (74)

Hall identifies three key terms in relation to the emergence of a distinct Youth Culture: the previously mentioned ‚affluence', which refers to the rise of consumerism and new spending habits, ‚consensus' – both political parties with the majority of electorate accepted measures such as mixed economy or income increase to bring the classes together, and last but not least ‚embourgeoisement' – the assimilation of the working-class towards the middle-class living standard and patterns (21).

However, contrary to popular belief, the notion of classlessness was a far-fetched idea. Drawing on the research of Phil Cohen, Stuart Hall stresses the widening gap between ‚old' and ‚new' industries, areas, and regions as a result of the post-war changes. Where some areas such as the South-East thrived with the help of modern technologies, others were on a decline (35). That led to the redevelopment of the working-class housing patterns. While some areas were left behind to decay enabling the creation of the „urban ghetto". These redevelopments had a direct impact on the

working-class families and their structure, which was now following the more „nucleated" pattern which was considered an „ideal" – a more middle class. As a result, the relationships between members of such more isolated family were changing and, thus, „the precise position and role of the working-class family within a defensive class culture" was not settled (37).

1.3. Definition of Subculture

As Sarah Thorton states in *the Subcultures Reader* published in 1997 "subcultures are groups of people that have something in common with each other" (1) such as their political views, fashion, or interest. However, this definition could be applied to the mass culture or any other group as well. Therefore it is required to examine subcultures and the context of their creation, and to identify in reference to which phenomena subcultures emerge. Hebdige points out that subcultures are "shaped in a variety of locales (work, home, school, and so on)" (Hebdige 84) where each locale has a different structure and values. A subculture can be connected to any area of interest – it can react to the social and political changes, to the institutions such as centralization, the police and media and they represent a set of reactions to the dominant culture and to the so-called parent culture, which as Hall explains is not connected to the relationship between the children and their parents but what it means is that "a subculture, though differing in important ways – in its 'focal concerns', its peculiar shapes and activities – from the culture from which it derives, will also share some things in common with that 'parent' culture" (13). Subcultures do not solely oppose the parent culture, but they also share basis with it and therefore, according to Hall they "must be first related to the 'parent cultures' of which they are a sub-set" (13). The prefix sub- comes from Latin and among others, it denotes the meaning of 'secondary'

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or 'subordinate' suggesting even in terms of linguistics that there is a link between subculture and its parent culture from which it differs.

The youth subcultures sprung up from the working class and subsequently created their own world with distinctive boundaries and specific leisure time activities. They coexisted with the culture of the class from which they originated. Hall affirms that: "Members of a subculture may walk, talk, act, look 'different' from their parents or from some of their peers: however, they belong to the same families, go to the same schools, work at much the same jobs, live don the same 'mean streets' as their peers and parent" (14). Consequently, subcultures share determining experiences and the position within the dominant culture with their parent cultures, though they may differ in a way they respond to the same background and may have different solutions to the class problems.

1.4. Counter-culture

While subcultures emerged within the working-class, the members of the counter-cultures can be found rather within the middle-class youth.

The term counter-culture is often used when dealing with alternative lifestyles, where counter-culture denotes the opposite of the dominant or mainstream lifestyle. Robert Garbutt in his article "Aquarius and beyond: thinking through the counterculture" paraphrases Dennis Altman's understanding of this term: „[counter-culture] conjures up that flowering of a "youth" culture in the late 1960s and early 1970s that was intent of countering the mainstream or "parent" functionalist western culture of the time" (Garbutt 1). Counter-culture is therefore not part of the dominant culture and can be essentially viewed as part of a subculture lifestyle. It expresses opposition to and disapproval of the dominant culture and often seeks to challenge

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economic, political, or social elements of such mainstream culture. Counter-culture, Elizabeth Nelson argues in her book *British Counter-Culture 1966-73: A Study Of The Underground Press,* was engaged in the struggle against the ‚culture of the powerful' and hoped or even expected to indeed break the power of the dominant culture (4). Nelson further points out factors that shaped Britain prior to the emergence of the counter-culture, where she considers Harold Macmillan's prime-ministership to be crucial to the birth of the counter-culture. The notion of the period is encapsulated in the quote by Harold Macmillan, the British Prime Minister of the era (tenure: 1957-1963): „Let us be frank about it: most of our people never had it so good" (qtd. in Judt). However, Nelson points out that Macmillan was rather a „master of the medium" and was an „out-of-place figure" though associated with the affluence and thus remained in the good books (39).

Middle-class youth constructed their own „alternative society" within the dominant culture and tended to blur the leisure time with the necessary, as opposed to the middle-class subcultures, which sought an escape from the mundane everyday reality through the specificities of their pastime activities.

The boom of counter-cultures occurred later than that of subcultures, starting around the 60's and later. The Beat movement is recognized as an early attempt at creating a counter-part culture. However, not many adolescents were involved. Stuart Hall claims that the closer to the 1970s, the more public attention the youth cultures attracted, which he ascribes to the distinctiveness of those middle-classed movements as opposed to the working-class subcultures (60). Hall further stresses the importance of clarifying the differences in the response, where working-class cultures are "clearly articulated" and members have more tendencies to commune, whereas the middle-class counter-cultures are "diffuse, less group-centred, more individualised" (60). On the

other hand, both middle-class counter-cultures and working-class subcultures dealt with problems only at an "imaginary" level. Nevertheless, the middle-class counter-cultures became "an emergent ruptural force for the whole society" thanks to their strategic position within the dominant culture and hence managed to raise political and ideological questions (69).

1.5. The Function of Subcultures

As stated above, subcultures stem from yet also differentiate from their parent culture. Their style and attitude are defined in connection with their surroundings – the locale and they provide a way how to communicate beliefs and values. In Britain, the subcultures that started to emerge after the World War II within working-class youth provided a way how to deal with the class related issues. Hebdige views subcultures as "a series of mediated responses to the presence in Britain of a sizeable black community" (Hebdige 73). The black population in Britain went through a stage of a substantial increase during the 1940s, which can be viewed as the first wave of immigration of black population in the 20th century mainly consisting of people of Caribbean origin. The second wave followed in the 1980s bringing in African Americans. Immigration as such is often viewed as a source of threats to the working class, which argues that the immigrants might seise job opportunities in the country and hence steal jobs from the British. On the other hand, the Black community has a rich musical culture and inspiring trends when it comes to style. Hebdige suggests that the black culture also influenced punk bands such as the Clash who were influenced by black reggae music and furthermore, by the Jamaican street style and its iconography (29). The essential meaning of the subcultures is to react and by reacting they do break

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the mould, question what is happening around them – reacting to a new wave of immigrants, economic changes or other –   and challenge the status quo.

In chapter five of the *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* which is dedicated to the function of subculture itself Hebdige moves away from the previously mentioned relationship between black immigrants and white working-class Britons. He argues, that most scholars focus on the polarities of the basic units such as parents – children, teachers, and students, the so-called 'respectable youth' versus the alternative subcultures "whose social practices and forms of symbolic expressing are defined by protests towards the dominant models of lifestyles" as Jiří Svítek observes in an article 'Alternativní životní styl' published in magazine Vokno in 1990 (79), whereas Hebdige brings attention to the meaning of subculture in relation to the elements of the dominant culture: "parents, teachers, police, 'respectable youth', etc." (73). Each historical period has its own subcultures which emerge or develop in connection the mass culture and political situation. Nowadays, one of the new subcultures is, for example, crypto-anarchism reacting to the centralization of banks and institutions and aim at protecting their privacy from the ever-stronger Orwellian society. Similarly, the subcultures in the post-war Britain responded to the parent culture with all its factors. However, the question Hebdige analyses is the "historical specificity", and he attempts at finding out the "explanation of why these particular forms should occur at this particular time". Subcultures challenge ideologies or social conventions regarding class, gender, and sexual identities, respected and highly regarded by the mass culture. Those ideologies and conventions are linked to the specific historical context on which Hebdige focuses as opposed to the previous traditional studies of subcultures. It was not until the 1950s that the comprehensive study of subcultures was carried out by Albert Cohen who "stressed the compensatory function" of the youth subcultures and observed that one of

the functions of subcultures was to compensate for their failures at school which made them seek boost of self-assurance elsewhere. Cohen newly takes into account factors such as ideology, economic situation, and impact of culture. Furthermore, he stresses out that the gangs' core values were turned upside down and the gangs held values for defiance of authority and hedonism (Hebdige 76).

To illustrate the significance of the historical context in relation to the function and emergence of the subcultures and the notion of conjuncture and specificity Hebdige uses the Teddy boy subculture. The Teddy boys first emerged during the 1950s while the second wave arose in 1970s. Hebdige observes that "whilst they maintained the same antagonistic relation to the black immigrant community as their counterparts of the 50s, the latter-day teds were differently positioned in relation to the parent culture and other youth cultures" (81). The teddy boys of the 1950s were perceived negatively while the teddy boys of 1970s were put into context with the unfavourable and radical punk subculture. Moreover, the adults looked at the teddy boy subculture with nostalgia as many of them were part of this subculture back then.

Ultimately, the subcultures should stay resistant to the hegemony of the parent or dominant culture. Members of the subcultures respond to the socio-economic and political circumstances, although, as was mentioned in the previous subchapters, they manage to react only at the "imaginary level" and not truly solve political problems or issues their class has to face. Hall argues that subcultures "serve to mark out and appropriate 'territory' in the localities" and that their focus is put on the social interactions. They commune at specific locations and "explore 'focal concerns' central to the inner life of the group" (47). Furthermore, Hall stresses that subcultures as such were not a solution to the issues of unemployment, low wages or educational disadvantage"(47).

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1.6. British Cultural Studies

Prior to the 1960s, cultural studies had been associated with the so-called 'high culture' and preoccupied with studying the aesthetics of arts and contemplating classical literature. The field had yet to achieve recognition for research into what is known as popular culture. In *British Cultural Studies: An Introduction,* Graeme Turner uses a quote by Paul Willies to explain that the culture researched by British cultural studies is "not artifice and manners, the preserve of Sunday best rainy afternoons and concert halls. It is the very material of our daily lives, the brick and mortar of our most commonplace understanding" (2). Culture should not be understood only as Greek literature or high morals, as it includes our daily activities as well. Such view was popularized by Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall, and Richard Hoggart, a scholar who established the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies CCCS at the University of Birmingham in the UK in 1964.

Prior to the establishment of CCCS, the Cultural Studies had not been identified as a significant field on its own and as Graeme Turner argues the establishment of such institution elevated the research into cultures and subcultures onto the academic level: „The work of Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart, Stuart Hall and in particular the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) has established the consideration of popular culture ... on an academic and intellectual agenda from which it had been excluded" (Turner 2). As Tracey Skelton, a human geography professor at the University of Singapore, and Gill Valentine, a professor of geography and pro-vice-chancellor of social sciences at the University of Sheffield, point out in *Cool Places: Geographies of Youth Cultures* the CCCS has examined factors such as social classes and ideologies to facilitate a better understanding of culture and they contributed with

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the research into the individual subcultures with the use of Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony with which they were able to explain the rebellions and disputes. The CCCS used two forms of empirical research – ethnographic research and textual research with the connection to semiotics and above-mentioned Gramsci's theory of hegemony (13). While the establishment of CCCS is a turning point in regard to the shift of interest of the interdisciplinary field of cultural studies, Graeme Turner further notes that "the work of the European structuralists – Lévi-Strauss, Saussure, Lacan, Barthes, Foucault – and certain infections of European Marxism – Althusser, Gramsci – are also central to the formation of what is now recognized as British cultural studies" (3).

British cultural studies became prominent in the post-war Britain and together with the emergence of youth cultures can be viewed as a byproduct of the affluence of the era. People believed in the notion of classlessness and unity of the Western power. As Graeme Turner points out, culture was subjected to keen scrutiny as people wanted to grasp the complexity of cultural, economic and political changes and their impact on the society (38). Thanks to new technologies which enabled easy distribution of popular culture via lifestyle magazines, television and radio, the term „mass culture" attained significance. Soon, television became of interest among the sociologists and notable works such as *Reading Television* by John Fiske and John Hartley were publishes. Turner argues that this book was „significant because it took these new methods to new audiences and to new classes of students" (94). In order to describe the function of television, Fiske and Hartley mainly draw on the model of encoding and decoding introduced by Stuart Hall, whose crucial book on subcultures and counter-cultures – *The Resistance through Rituals* – was used in the thesis to provide insight into the area of youth cultures and their function.

2. British Youth Subcultures and Counter-cultures

This chapter aims to give a comprehensive account of the selected British subcultures and counter-cultures of the 1960s and 1970s. The relevance of the examined youth cultures is related to the analysis of the sitcom *The Young Ones*.

The first acknowledged British subculture was the Teds, also referred to as the Teddy Boys, who are characterized by their distinctive fashion inspired by the Edwardian era. Further, the post-war prosperity brought about the baby boom, which soon resulted in a high number of youngsters and teenagers in the 1960s. Therefore, this period can be genuinely considered as the crib of the notion of true *youth culture* where the youngsters are the ones shaping its form, style, and beliefs. The youth cultures were flourishing. The teenagers of the 60s had more financial resources and time to be able to do as they wish and subsequently were able to establish their own culture and to abandon the notion of conforming to the conventions, values, and beliefs of the dominant culture. The most distinctive middle-class counter-culture, which emerged in the 1960s, was that of the hippies.

2.1. Hippies

2.1.1. Etymology of the word

The word "hippie" or alternatively spelt "hippy" is defined by the Oxford dictionary as "a person of unconventional appearance, typically having long hair, associated with a subculture involving a rejection of conventional values and the taking of hallucinogenic drugs". The stem of the word „hip" which could be previously interchanged with „hep" may be derived from its informal use to describe a fashionable

person or an informed person. However, as it is pointed out on the blog [2] of the Oxford dictionaries, the etymology of the word „hip" consists of many explanations which nowadays cannot be proven. One of the possible explanations for the origin of „hippie" is provided by Gerhard and Ursula Falk: „ [hip was] used at the beginning of the 20th century among San Francisco opium smokers who reclined ""on the hip" while smoking" (Falk & Falk 185). Even though one might not be able to track the former context of the expression „hip", the first use of „hippie" is well documented. The designation „hippie" was coined by Michael Fallon who first used the term in the *San Francisco Examiner's* in 1965 when Hippies – then often associated with the Beatniks and put in contrast with the distinguished artists – were mentioned in an article from the 5th of September and a few days later appeared on the front cover of the September 7th issue of the paper in a series called „the new bohemians".

2.1.2. Origin of the hippie movement

The pacifist movement known as the Hippie movement is closely associated with the city of San Francisco and ultimately with its district Haight-Ashboury, which became the hotspot for the community of bohemian like-minded people. Those were attracted to the area by the low rents and who would in turn help boost the business in the area and ultimately fuel the „commercial growth" as Michael Fallon noted in the San Francisco Examiner:

> Haight-Ashboury is the City's new bohemian quarter for serious writers, painters and musicians, civil rights workers, crusaders for all kinds of causes, homosexuals, lesbians, marijuana users, young working couples of artistic bent and the outer fringe of the bohemian fringe – the "hippies", the "heads", the "beatniks".

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[2] http://blog.oxforddictionaries.com/2015/06/history-of-hip/

Anthony Ashbolt states in his book *A Cultural History of the Radical Sixties in the San Francisco Bay Area:* „A conjunction of cultural, commercial and even sexual style marked the beginning of community in the Haight" (Ashbolt 88). They were mainly activists fighting for equal rights and peace, university student protestors and young adults who condemned war and were preoccupied to a great extent with protests against the war in Vietnam. The hippie movement, which originally sprung on the West Coast of the United States, soon began to spread to other countries including the Great Britain. Hippies were known for being open-minded regarding sexual life and leading a promiscuous life rather than feeling the need to stay devoted to a single partner. Their notion of free love far from sexual abstinence was embraced by hippies to oppose the views of representatives of the mainstream culture, whom they believed to be sexually repressed. Hippies had no restraints against wearing their birthday suit, which occasionally caused them problems with the laws as nudity was generally prohibited. The concept of open relationships and sexual experimenting was widely accepted within their community. This type of behaviour was facilitated by the pharmaceuticals industry, which invented the contraceptive pill - a ground-breaking form of protection in order to prevent unintended pregnancies. In addition, their open-mindedness extends to other areas such as a recreational use of psychedelic drugs. The famous quote summarising the experimental and wild era of the 60s states that „If you can remember the sixties, you weren't really there" which implies the extensive use of drugs being the standard of the age. While in Britain the first extensive use of drugs is attributed to the mods, as noted in the *Encyclopedia of Contemporary British Culture* it was the Hippies who „created the proper „drug culture" in that the consumption of hallucinogenics was central to their everyday lifestyle" (Childs & Storry 161). The drug culture originated in the 1950s and 1960s in order to stimulate and encourage fun at the weekend parties:

While some aficionados of jazz smoked cannabis to enhance their enjoyment of music, it was the mod scene of the early 1960s that heralded the large-scale consumption of drugs. In particular, mods used a variety of legal and illegal drugs in order to facilitate all-night dancing at mod and Northern Soul clubs. (161)

For mods, drugs were only part of the fun, on the contrary for hippies „the use of drugs was connected to their political values" and they were used as a part of the concept of not conforming to conventional patterns of the behaviour approved by the mainstream society: „In particular, hippies took hallucinogenics such as LSA as part of their rejection of the „work ethic" central to mainstream British culture" (161) Childs and Storry further explain the problems which go hand in hand with the drug consumption such as its „disturbing power to alter the mind" which caused that many hippies were not able to mentally recover from the usage of LSD and had to face psychiatric problems which then led to declining in the British drug culture until the punk rock came around in the mid-1970s. Besides drug abuse, the hippie lifestyle was also connected with vegetarianism and veganism. In Britain, one of the typical vegetarian dishes was a packet of dried soy ingredients, which were to be combined in a saucepan sold under the trademark Beanfeast by Unilever, which is still sold in many convenience stores in the UK.

Music was an integral part of their culture used as a medium to communicate the anti-war and pro-love beliefs. Among the artists who became closely identified with the hippie culture was Bob Dylan, Rolling Stones and the British band The Beatles – John Lennon, in particular, sympathised with the movement, writing an anti-war anthem „Give Peace a Chance" and a song „Imagine" promoting people living in unity without borders. Furthermore, the lyrics of Lennon's song „Mind Games" uses the anti-war

slogan „make love, not war" - the ultimate motto of the Hippie counterculture movement.

2.1.3. Description of the Hippie Style

Along with music and art, a significant part of the identity of both dominant culture and subculture is the style and way of life the group identifies with. More often it is inseparable from the phenomena of the latter in view of the fact that style clearly and openly communicates the set of ideas and beliefs of the particular society. The hippies had a distinctive style resonating their views – they believed that the society was too focused on banal things as the advertisements for deodorants and grooming products started to appear on TV rather than focusing on ending wars and establishing the world-wide peace. They often looked in a way that would convey the message that they do not truly care. Natural fibres like hemp and cotton were widely popular. The outfits - if wearing any – often consisted of bell-bottom jeans with patches or fringes and top made with tie-dye. The previously owned clothes were promoted and could be seen as an act of defiance against the conformity of the commercial society. Their unconventional appearance was complemented with accessories counting beads or other handmade jewellery. The individual parts of their appearances were trying to prove a point – they wore long hair as opposed to their fathers and grandfathers to show that they question authority and traditional values. The so-called Lennon glasses with their typical round shape and various colours of the lenses were a British addition to the Hippie style. The historian Tony Judt ascribes significance to the way young people were clothed in his book *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*: „Age-specific clothing was important, as a statement of independence and even revolt. It was also new – in the past, young adults had had little option but to wear the same clothes as their fathers and mothers"

(348). The Hippies also developed an extensive list of phrases resulted in the creation of many hippie dictionaries accessible both online or in the paper[3].

2.2 Anarchists

2.2.1 Etymology and the Notion of Anarchy and Anarchism

The origin and of the word „Anarchy" dates back to the middle of the 16th century coming from the Greek expression *anarkhia* from *anarkhos* where, as it is explained in the Oxford dictionary, the prefix an- means „without" and the stem *arkhos* stands for a „chief" or a „ruler". Anarchy denotes an organization of society, where no laws and rules are applied, and people are not bound to follow any bureaucratic proceedings. Some can perceive anarchy as an utter chaos, where on the contrary, it could be viewed as a form of utopia, which might be unachievable and purely unrealistic. The word anarchy has a slightly negative connotation for it is associated with acts of violence and protests even though it can be argued that some anarchists sympathised with pacifist principles and nonviolence[4]. Anarchism is then a political ideology, which has not been yet officially applied to a single state or formal society as opposed to ideologies such as communism, liberalism or even fascism.

2.2.2. The Foundations of Anarchism and Anarchy in the UK in the Second Half of the 20th Century

While a number of youth subcultures including had stemmed from an American environment, the forerunner of the anarchist is of the English nationality. William

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[3] One of such publications is a *Hippie Dictionary: A Cultural Encyclopedia of the 1960s and 1970s* written by John Bassett McCleary.

[4] Ira Chernus – professor of Religious Studies at the University of Colorado at Boulder argues that „anarchism has an important place in the history of the idea of nonviolence" http://spot.colorado.edu/~chernus/NonviolenceBook/Anarchism.htm

Godwin was an English political philosopher, writer and a journalist born on 3rd of March 1756. The most substantial work of William Godwin is the *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and its Influence on Morals and Happiness* – a notable book in which he outlines eight principles regarding his view of political discourse, government, injustice, violence, one's duties and the last but not least „cultivation of happiness". In this piece, Godwin is said to have laid the foundations of the anarchy later adopted by the supporters of the anarchistic ideology. The following excerpt from the book was chosen to illustrate the confrontational stance on the institutions such as government, church, or the army:

> Government was intended to suppress injustice, but it offers new occasions and temptations for the commission of it. By concentrating the force of the community, it gives occasion to wild projects of calamity, to oppression, despotism, war and conquest. By perpetuating and aggravating the inequality of property, it fosters many injurious passions, and excites men to the practice of robbery and fraud. Government was intended to suppress injustice, but its effect has been to embody and perpetuate it. (76)

One of the ground-breaking concepts that Godwin proposes is the contradiction of the well-established relationship between the teacher and the student by criticising that what students are often taught „are a superstitious veneration for the church of England, and to bow to every man in a handsome coat". Moreover, Godwin argues that national education is a powerful tool for the government with which it can easily manipulate the minds of the youth and avoid being questioned as an authority:

> The project of a national education ought uniformly to be discouraged on account of its obvious alliance with national government. This is an alliance of a more formidable nature than the old and much-contested alliance of church and state. Before we put so powerful a machine under the direction of so ambiguous an agent, it behoves us to consider well what it is that we do.

Anarchism draws on Godwin's work as well as on works of other notable predecessors of the ideology: the German Max Stirner and the Russian activist Peter Kropotkin; it was invented both alongside an in response to the other political ideologies such communism or even democracy.

Noam Chomsky in his collection of essays *On Anarchism* illustrates the reason why anarchism affiliated with dismantling society and questioning everything anybody tells you is frowned upon by the authorities:

> See, the idea that people could be free is extremely frightening to anybody with power. That's why the 1960s have such a bad reputation. I mean, there's a big literature about the Sixties, and it's mostly written by intellectuals because they're the people who write books, so naturally, it has a very bad name - because they hated it. You could see it in the faculty clubs at the time: people were just traumatized by the idea that students were suddenly asking questions and not just copying things down. (49)

Noam Chomsky further argues that certain academics such as Allan Bloom describe the Sixties in a negative sense „as if the foundations of civilization were collapsing" which Chomsky agrees within part – the Sixties truly were collapsing and ground-breaking with a lot of crazy things happening, but he explains, why that is essentially a positive thing. According to Chomsky, the foundations of civilization are: „I'm a big professor, and I tell you what to say, and what to think, and you write it down in your notebooks, and you repeat it.". The authorities fear being questioned and challenged, and with the contemporary legal system, they are often not agile enough to react to or to prevent any sudden changes. Hence, the quintessential focus of any mass movements is on the „crazy stuff around the periphery" while „the main that were going on are out of history—and that's because they had a kind of libertarian character, and there is nothing more frightening to people with power „ (49). Furthermore, the efforts of the main mass

culture to suppress the contrary subcultures can still be seen in the language of the mass media, where quite frequently the opposing subcultures and opinions are presented in a sentence denoting an overall negative context by using words such as violent, suicidal, chaos, which can be viewed as a potential subconscious manipulation.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Britain witnessed an upsurge in anarchistic ideology. The concept of anarchism closely intertwines with the hippie youth counterculture and Punk subculture rather than being a solely stand-alone movement. Therefore, it can be argued that the anarchistic tendencies stemmed from the two previously mentioned subcultures and underwent hand in hand with the ideologies of the aforementioned groups. Both punk rock and anarchism are connected with anti-establishment views and disrespect for authorities. Within the period of 1961 and 1970, a magazine *Anarchy* was monthly published by Colin Ward a British anarchist held in high esteem covering especially the housing issues, squatting, and anarchism in general.

In the 1980s, a number of people adopted the anarchist ideologies, which resulted in yet another upsurge in anarchism in the UK. The influence is ascribed to the birth and subsequent boom of the punk movement, which will be further analysed in the next part of the chapter.

2.2.3. Style of the Anarchists

Contrary to the other youth subcultures such as hippies, punk, the Teds, Mods or Skinheads, the anarchists did not follow any particular way of clothing or hairstyles. Their style was therefore adapted based on the other subcultures that they might have been part of. However, a symbol in the shape of the letter A in a circle – letter O is associated with anarchy. Before the A symbol, anarchists had used the red flag, which was abandoned when the red colour became associated with communism.

2.3. The Punk Subculture

2.3.1. Etymology of the word "punk"

The etymology of the term „punk" is unknown, The first recorded use of the word „punk" goes back to the classic English writer William Shakespeare who used to term as a synonym for a „prostitute". Since then, the term punk has been associated with a number of different phenomena such as a juvenile delinquent or a worthless person. Michael Elster from Wayne State University notes in the work *Lexiculture: Papers on English Words and Culture* that the meaning of the word punk shifted several times, but it was not until "sometime in the 70's or possibly the late 60's, [that] punk underwent another semantic shift. This is when punk became largely associated with a musical genre and its respective subculture" (5). Therefore, nowadays, the word Punk denotes both the specific music genre as well as the Punk movement. Furthermore, the word punk is still being used to create a different branch of such phenomena, and thus the words such as "cyberpunk", "steampunk" or "atompunk" were created.

2.3.2. The Emergence of Punk Rock

Even though punk is often closely associated with the emergence of the British subcultures, the origin of punk can be traced to the United States and their iconic bands like The Ramones or the Stooges. Nevertheless, the word punk indeed "belongs" to the British and not only thanks to Shakespeare but to the connection with the former youth subculture – the British Mods, which is often overlooked by other papers investigating the punk phenomenon. Originally, the word "punk" was used already in connection with the British Mods in the 1960s represented by The Who – an English band with the well-known song *"My Generation"*, The Kinks or The Small Faces. However, it had not been a great time of punk yet. Punk was "rediscovered" at the turn of the 70s in America, mainly owing to the music groups from Detroit among which were The

Stooges with Iggy Pop as a frontman. Their music was intense and performances wild, but the third wave of Punk came mainly with The Velvet Underground and New York Dolls. In addition, David Bowie was a musician closely connected to the punk movement, regarded as the main source of inspiration and influence. Nevertheless, the Ramones who are considered the true founders of the American Punk genre. In America, it was mainly the CBGB club that became the hotspot of the punk musicians. The CBGB was founded in 1973 by Hilly Kristal, and besides the Ramones, many other aspiring punk bands performed there: The Patti Smith Group, The Dead Boys, The Misfits, and Television.

2.3.3. Punk in the UK: Malcolm McLaren and the Sex Pistols

The Seventies were the decade of frequent power shortages, queues, and rubbish in streets. Everything closed early. Alwyn Turner states in his book *Crisis? What crisis?: Britain in the 1970s:*"The lights were going out all over the Britain, and no one was quite sure if we'd see them lit again in our lifetime" (Alwyn Turner 1). Nevertheless, Tony Judt points out that: „the depression of the 1970s seemed worse than it was because of the contrast with what had gone before" (456). The Prime Minister was now Edward Heath for the Conservative party who issued a „manifesto *A Better Future*: tax reform, law and order, trade union legislation, immigration, a reduction in public spending, no government support for failing industries (so-called lame ducks) and no statutory incomes policy" (Alwyn Turner 8). The UK had been in a downward spiral stricken with the oil crisis with many workers being dismissed or made redundant especially in the automobile industry and likewise the American economy was weakened by the war in Vietnam, which in turn led to the tax increase and inflation followed up by the recession in the first half of the 1970s. The times were rough and so

was the culture and lifestyle – such was setting for the British "version" of punk. It was the subculture predominantly of the working class, squatters, and unemployed people. On the other hand, in the article *We Have to Deal with It: Punk England Report* Robert Christgau sees punk as not solely associated with the working class:

> Rather than a working-class youth movement—potentially revolutionary, proto-fascist, or symptomatic of the decadence of our times—punk is a basically working youth bohemia that rejects both the haute bohemia of the rock elite and the hallowed bohemian myth of classlessness. Not that it's purely working-class (or purely youth, for that matter). But it gives the lie to the (basically Marxist) cliché that bohemia must always be petit-bourgeois. For punk, class replaces such bohemian verities as expressive sexuality and salvation through therapy/enlightenment/ drugs. It is a source of identity and a means of self-realization.

At the beginning of the British punk as we know it was the person who saw the opportunity in this emerging movement – the entrepreneur Malcolm McLaren. Malcolm McLaren was inspired by the American group The New York Dolls, which he had briefly managed: " [the New York Dolls] had wandered into his shop, played him their records; he'd laughed. "I couldn't believe how anybody could be so bad" (Marcus 49). That was the moment that he decided to make a breakthrough with a similar concept in the Britain and so he did. It happened so in the shop Sex, which he owned with his girlfriend, Vivienne Westwood. As Jon Savage notes in *England's Dreaming* McLaren started to surround himself with the specific skills, for instance, the future manager of The Clash Bernie Rhodes. McLaren copied the style of the American groups he had seen in the CBGB club, Richard Hell – the bass guitarist from the Television – especially. It was Malcolm McLaren who introduced Steve Jones and Paul Cook of the

Strand with John Lydon whom McLaren spotted for his striking appearance: green hair, a Pink Floyd t-shirt with the words "I hate" written over.

The concerts of the Sex Pistols were a watershed event for the development of the British Punk scene as many youngsters started to believe that they themselves can do it too – they can take up the guitar and start a new punk band. Thus, London became the centre of punk rock bands, and soon many aspiring punk bands were headed to the London clubs to pursue a career in the musical industry.

However, since punk is associated, similarly like anarchism, with an anti-establishment way of thinking the governments tried to take action to stop the spreading ideas of dissent against the authorities. In the US it was mainly the newly elected president Richard Nixon (tenure: 1969-1974) who tried to fight the youth cultures and their way of expressing – music. As stated in the Billboard magazine published in 1994: „President Nixon tells radio broadcasters that rock lyrics should be screened and any songs suggesting drug use should be banned" (43). Similar actions were taken in the UK, where the Sex Pistol's „single „God Save the Queen" is banned from British radion because of „treasonous sentiments" (43).

Jon Savage points out that the concerts in Manchester were the turning point for the group as "they gave the impression that the Sex Pistols are the super head of the nationwide movement" which led to an invitation to the television. However, the interview of Sex Pistols at the Grundy's talk show was when things went wrong. It was the first time that someone had sworn on live TV during the time that families watch it. Greil Marcus lists the consequences: Sex Pistols were banned all across the U.K., and it was made sure that they do not hit the number one record, prolonging the Rod Stewart's time in the limelight. The scandal was associated not only with the Sex Pistols but with the whole punk movement which since then was perceived with a negative connotation.

According to Savage "the Groundy scandal made the Sex Pistols, but it also killed them" (288).

In the end, Sid Vicious' heroin addiction was getting out of control, and the conflicts of Malcolm McLaren's interest and the vision of the members of the Sex Pistols resulted in the split-up of the band.

2.3.4. Punk in the 80s

Towards the end of the 1970s and at the turn of the 1980s, the popularity of punk was deteriorating, and the true first-wave punk was stagnating. England was in the hands of the so-called iron lady Margaret Thatcher. Furthermore, it seemed that punk was becoming another mainstream style as more and more shops with punk fashion were emerging and the major recording company were cooperating with the punk bands and thus the view of punk started to change which was ultimately declared in 1978 by the British band Crass which released a song with the lyrics saying that:

> Punk Is Dead. Yes, that's right, punk is dead, it's just another cheap product for the consumer's head. Bubblegum rock on plastic transistors, schoolboy sedition backed by big time promoters. CBS promote the Clash, but it ain't for revolution, it's just for cash. Punk became a fashion just like hippy used to be and it ain't got a thing to do with you or me.

"Punk is dead" became the new motto and the youth were attracted by other genres such as new romance or gothic rock. Nevertheless, it could be argued that the ones who remained loyal to the idea punk though were often in opposition to what was left of it and distanced themselves from the punk of 1977 when the punk era exploded. Among such bands of the second wave, punk was Exploited or later the American bands The Offspring or Anti-Flag. The punk bands of the second punk wave are enumerated in

comprehensive lists based on the region of their activity in the book *Burning Britain:*
The History of UK Punk 1980–1984 by Ian Glasper. The author further touches upon
the topic of the deterioration of the earlier phase of punk towards the end of the
Seventies:

> Major labels had already picked over the carcass, salvaging what they thought was still
> marketable, and the sensationalist media frenzy had subsided to a contemptuous
> whimper. What began as a glorious shakedown of the traditional values and industry
> bullshit was eventually turned on its head, and its essence leeched away by greed,
> boredom and excess – the very things that inspired it in the first place. (10)

However, the youth who were trying to piece punk back together were according to
Steve Arrogant "more genuine" and were all "sounding different" and they "looked
different and had a whole new agenda to rage against". Glasper further explains that
from the rebellion against own parents became the rebellion against the whole state and
its lack of opportunities, unemployment crisis as "Thatcherism was shading our green
and pleasant land the very unpleasant grey shades of despair" (11).

In addition, the perception of punk was affected by the disputes and
controversies over the intentions of Malcolm McLaren since it was believed by many,
that punk was just a promoted hype to make large sums of money.

2.3.5. The Fanzines

The punk movement created its own rules in every aspect of life, so media and
publications were no exceptions. Punk fanzines were a way for punks how to represent
themselves whilst ignoring the mainstream media. Moreover, they reflected the Do-It-
Yourself philosophy which influenced the way they dressed and also how they tried to
boycott the major record companies such as EMI by founding their own independent

recording companies. In the book, *England's Dreaming* Jon Savage argues that the fanzines provided punks with freedom of speech and independence of the mass media: „At the end of 1976, the mainstream media were closed to Punk. Fanzines used the freedom they gained from the exclusion: the people who put them together could say whatever was on their mind, without worrying about censorship, editorial lines, subbing, deadlines" (279). The fanzines were cut'n'pasted together, bits and pieces of paper photocopied. The agile publishing process of fanzines allowed to react quickly to events or any type of situation. Jon Savage explains in the article „Fanzines: the purest explosion of British punk" in *The Guardian* that fanzines were an exceptionally creative response as the creators "were engaged with the changes happening in front of their eyes". Fanzines such as *Ripped & Torn, 48 Trills, London's Burning, Sideburns* and *Jamming* were produced with no allocated budget. They presented a way how to vent frustration with the era. They were created impulsively without the need to wait for anyone's approval or censorship. All the aforementioned fanzines were inspired by the defining *Sniffin'* Glue created by Mark Perry in July 1976. However, it was not the first fanzine by any means as Perry clarifies:

> Sniffin´Glue was being planned before I ever saw the Pistols. It was based on the Ramones album. All that stuff about Glue being the first fanzine is crap. Brian Hogg's Bam Balam, which was all about sixties music, was in its fourth issue by then: it showed that you could do a magazine and you didn't have to be glossy (qtd. In Savage).

Furthermore, Childs and Storry argue that the technology of this era assumed an important role in the distribution and production of the fanzines as well:

> The advent of the Apple Macintosh was the key to the development of an artists' scene for multimedia in the UK. The DIY aesthetic of punk design, and

the typographic revolt associated with Neville Brody, could both now be simulated on relatively cheap software packages, and the impact can be seen in the growth both of desktop published fanzines and the increasingly sophisticated use of photographic retouching programmes (Childs 121).

The punk rock fanzines from the 1970s were the inspiration for all other fields of interest such as sports or science fiction. Their approach was that anyone could do it – anyone can go and start their own fanzine or start a band for that matter. Everyone saw that you do not need any serious hard skills nor grammar and exquisite spelling to publish a fanzine on your own. There was no need to settle with the mainstream magazines. Fanzines and the punk do-it-yourself culture also projects in the style of the anarchists as they provide a decentralized and autonomous opposition to the centralized society.

2.3.6. Punk Style and Fashion

Hebdige argues that the "point" behind the specific style of the subcultures is to communicate the "significant difference" (102). Punk was represented by the anti-fashion image with the main purpose to shock. The punk style intertwined with the punk music and "Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood played major roles in the elaboration of London punk culture" (Childs & Storry 182). In their shop they tried to "transform fetish wear into streetwear under the slogan 'out of the bedroom and into the streets!' and the clothes they offered was often in an S&M fetish style and bondage. The style of punk included tattoos and piercings, Mohawk hairstyle, and safety pins, which could be used as an embellishment of one's garments or used as a piercing. Further, punk also developed its own dance moves known as the pogo dance and slam dancing,

where a group of people jump mainly up and down, occasionally pushing and shoving the people around.

"Moreover, punk quoted and linked heterogenous elements of older cultural styles including those of teds, mods, skinheads and rude boys" (Falk & Falk 182). Style of subcultures is dependent on the budget limitations of the given subculture and "cannot be seen in isolation from the group's structure, position, relations, practices and self-consciousness (Clarke 148). Further Clarke explains, that the phenomenon of putting together various elements and appropriating them uses the concept of *bricolage* introduced by Levi-Strauss. Bricolage can be understood as: "the re-ordering and re-contextualisation of objects to communicate fresh meanings, within a total system of significances, which already includes prior and sedimented meanings attached to the objects used" (Clarke 149). It is essentially a transformation – the meaning of the element differs from the previous usage. Clarke also claims that consequences might arise from the evolution of style, because it influences the way the group is seen by others. A concrete example of the punk bricolage may be the use of swastikas, which punks wore in opposition to the Nazis in order to detach the fascist meaning. Nevertheless, In *Lipstick Traces*, Greil Marcus talks of swastikas as of a "convoluted symbol" and argues that it meant that: "fascism had won the Second World Was: that contemporary Britain was a welfare-state parody of fascism".

However, in the end, punk style was incorporated into the mainstream tendency. In 1977 the designers Zandra Rhodes and Jean-Paul Gaultier "reworked elements of punk stylistic experimentation" and "by the following year, "new wave" and "savage" youth styles were diffusing into the mass market" (Childs & Storry 182) which meant that punk fashion merged with the mass fashion which it once despised only to be soon ignored by the American designers such as Ralph Lauren, who "marginalized the

experimental currents of late 1970s British style innovation, especially punk aesthetic" (Childs & Storry 183).

3. History of British TV

Taking into account the fact that a substantial part of this thesis is devoted to the dramatization of the subcultures and British youth in a TV series, it seems only appropriate to provide the reader not only with the insight into the individual episodes of the series, but also with a brief description of the history of British television.

Ever since the introduction of the television broadcasting, television has become part and parcel of the notion of culture. It communicates the values of our culture; it represents the culture and, moreover, television itself is culture. John Fisk in his book *Television Culture* published in 1987 works with a definition of television "as a bearer/ provoker of meanings and pleasures, and of culture as the generation and circulation of this variety of meanings and pleasures within society" (1). Fiske argues that television as culture plays a key role in the dynamics of society and in his view, he draws on the theoretical perspective of television linked with the cultural studies "which derives from particular inflexions of Marxism, semiotics, post-structuralism, and ethnography" (1). However, television is not the first medium serving the purpose of a widespread dissemination of information. Before the invention of television, the radio was a popular source of information. The first transmission in the United Kingdom can be traced back to 1920. Only in 1922, the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) was established and later granted a Royal Charter, which was followed by a change from the British Broadcasting Company to British Broadcasting Corporation, whilst keeping the acronym BBC unchanged. The then British broadcasting executive John Reith managed to exempt BBC from the dependency on the British government. The first experimental

television transmissions began in 1936. However, Fiske points out that radio was still the dominant medium and even people working in the broadcasting predicted that it would not change soon. The number of licenses was increasing slowly as the service was expensive for ordinary people although the number of licenses sharply increased by 1955. When John Reith became the first Director-General BBC was regarded both by the public and by politicians as "an embassy of the national culture" (Fiske 11). Until an introduction of the Independent Television (ITV) in 1955, BBC had been a monopoly and a sole television broadcasting company in Britain. ITV was the first competitor of the long-established BBC. The year of 1963 brought changes into the broadcasting as the ban on mentioning politics, royalty, sex, and religion in comedy programmes is ended. In 1964, BBC introduced a second channel: BBC2 which was supposed to cater to the whims and tastes of the minority audience, although, not even a second BBC channel satisfied the needs of the then audience which subsequently led to the establishment of a new channel outside the BBC range. In November 1982 Channel 4 was launched and drew the attention of the British conservative press. Lez Cooke notes in his book *British Television Drama: A History:*

> Channel 4 had the advantage of coming into existence before the Thatcherite revolution was fully underway, as the new channel was the result of a process which had begun in the 1970s when Labour was still in power. In 1977, the Annan Committee had recommended that the proposed and long/awaited fourth channel should cater for a variety of different audiences and provide diversity in its programming, a recommendation that found its way into the 1980 Broadcasting Act, which gave birth, to Channel 4. (139)

Channel 4 was not what the Thatcherites would think it could be, as it was not a conventional commercial TV such as ITV 2. As opposed to BBC and ITV, Channel 4

was innovative, and it provided a range of possibilities for the audiences, which were not satisfied with BBC or the commercial ITV. However, despite the new options, this period of broadcasting is still described as "the era of scarcity" by John Ellis a media arts expert and professor at the University of London in his publication *Seeing Things: Television in the Age of Uncertainty*. The era of scarcity is said to last until the late 1970s or early 1980s and is followed by what Ellis calls the era of availability (Ellis 39). This period is also regarded as the golden age of situational comedies, which started to emerge as the television started to attract a mass audience. In *British Culture: An Introduction*, David Christopher explains that sitcoms are together with crime series and soap operas regarded highly by the critics and are rated as most watched and most often analysed. Furthermore, Christopher argues that sitcoms reflected social changes and the most praised sitcoms were dealing with the differences and tensions between the optimistic enthusiasts and the cynical ones (Christopher 154). One of the TV series, which obtained the highest accolade, was the Monty Python's Flying Circus, which influenced and inspired many other comedians including the pioneers of the alternative comedy to which an independent chapter is devoted in this thesis.

4. The Comedy Store and the Comic Strip

4.1. The Comedy Store and the Beginning of Alternative Comedy

It started when Don Ward, a British comedy entrepreneur, and Peter Rosengard, who was inspired by the comedy clubs he had seen in the USA, founded The Comedy Store – a comedy club in Soho, London in May 1979. The club which was situated on the top floor of a strip club played a pivotal role in the birth of British alternative comedy. The beginning of alternative comedy coincide with the beginning of the Thatcher era as Margaret Thatcher was confirmed to become a Prime Minister in the

election of May 1979 and thus becoming the source of material to publicly mock and ridicule. Alternative comedy is ultimately related to the political awareness and its criticism.

"Alternative" provides one with a different option opposing to the mainstream culture, often supported by a small group of enthusiasts. The title "alternative comedy" is claimed to be coined by Tony Allen, an English comedian considered to be the "Godfather of Alternative Comedy". In addition, Tony Allen was one of the comedians performing in the aforementioned club The Comedy Store alongside Alexei Sayle, Rik Mayall, Jennifer Saunders, Nigel Planer, Keith Allen and other entertainers who are considered to be the first alternative comedians. Opposing to the mainstream comedy of that time racism and sexism was not tolerated during the stand-up performances and any comics crossing that line or performing badly were "gonged or booed off" (Cook). In *Rejoice! Rejoice!: Britain in the 1980s* Alwyn Turner quotes Ben Elton who replaced Alexei Sayle in the role of the compere of The Comedy Store and further became a co-writer of *The Young Ones:* „'I don't want to sound like a preacher,' said Ben Elton, the man who came to personify alternative comedy for the public, 'but we can make people laugh without being racist or sexist'" (Turner 2010). Besides the Comedy Store, which became so popular that it has had to relocate twice to accommodate the rising number of attendees, other comedy clubs were soon opened in London such as the Elgin pub or Earth Exchange.

The comedians of the Comedy Store experimental style and were innovative with their sense of humour. Although Monty Pythons had been the most influential source of inspiration when it comes to British comedy, it was necessary to invent new and fresh ways of comedy to define the new style of the young generation. They created their own language and style as Sam Friedman argues in the book *Comedy and*

Distinction: The Cultural Currency of a 'Good' Sense of Humour: „Unlike the elite-educated ´wit´ of the Pythons, the main concern of these comics was ´political life as experienced by their audiences – many of them, young, radical and working class´" (20). The comedians also challenged the audience and expected them to have a wide knowledge of culture and politics and they „often invoked unpleasant emotions such as shock, disgust and sadness (20).

4.2. The Comic Strip and *The Comic Strip Presents…*

It was at the venue The Comedy Store where all the main representatives of the Alternative Comedy met. They created a major network that cooperates together and sets the pace for the alternative comedy as such. Sam Friedman in his paper *Legitimating A Discredited Art Form: The Changing Field Of British Comedy* mapped the social network of these comedians which includes „names such as Alexei Sayle, Rik Mayall, Ade Edmondson, Robbie Coltrane, Dawn French, Jennifer Saunders and Ben Elton"[5]. Furthermore, he notes that these comedians not only were part of a „dense social network" but foremost „performed in similar venues between 1979-1982" (17). Especially Alexei Sayle was not only the first compere at the Comedy Store, but in addition, he was one of the central figures of *The Comic Strip Presents...*, *The Young Ones*, and later a comedy sketch show *Alexes Sayle's Stuff*. Alternative comedy was the result of a close cooperation of comedians who together constituted a uniquely intertwined network and became the experts in that the field of televisual comedy production. After their encounter in the Comedy Store, the comedian duo Rik Mayall and Adrian Edmondson together with Nigel Planer, Jennifer Saunders, Dawn French and Alexei Sayle established a comedy group called The Comic Strip controlled by

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[5] The full list of the well-known comedians and their relationships between each other can be accessed and viewed on page 29 at
http://www.san.ed.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/55911/WP39SamFriedman.pdf

Peter Richardson behind the scenes. It was Richardson who helped the comedy group to get on the television screen of the Channel 4 with a TV series *The Comic Strip Presents...* which helped Channel 4 build a reputation of „Champions of alternative comedy". However, Adrian Edmondson, Rik Mayall, Nigel Planer and Alexei Sayle agreed to star in a TV sitcom *The Young Ones* which was to be broadcast on BBC nearly simultaneously as the former series. As opposed to *the Young Ones*, the target of the jokes is not the phenomenon of youth subcultures, but the mainstream culture itself. This is demonstrated right at the beginning as the very first episode parodies work of the well-known British author Enid Blyton.

Since the thesis is predominantly concerned with the British subcultures and their depiction on the television, the TV series *The Young Ones* will be examined in the following chapter.

5. *The Young Ones*

5.1. The Introduction to *The Young Ones* and The Protagonists

The Young Ones, an anarchic sitcom written by Rik Mayall, Lisa Mayer and Ben Elton, managed to bring the alternative comedy to the wide television audience as it was showed on the BBC channel and managed to assume the 31st place in the list of Britain's Best Sitcom[6].

The name of the series comes from the Number 1 UK Hit single of the same name sung by a British pop singer Cliff Richards. Since the show revolves around the four students sharing a flat, it is at times titled "dom-com" to denote that the series is set in the domestic environment. In addition, the series is ultimately associated with the

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[6]http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2004/01_january/10/sitcom_top_ten.shtml

term slapstick as well, meaning that the jokes are based on the physical comedy, where characters get hurt in an exaggerated way and many scenes often go from the sublime to the ridiculous. The non-sequitur turn of the plot without any explanation is a device used in some episodes together with the Deus ex Machina or "it was all just a dream" ending of the episode "Interesting" where it is revealed that one character – Neil, the hippie had been dreaming all along. Also, the fourth wall between the characters and the audience is often broken as the characters start talking directly to the audience on many occasions. Furthermore, *The Young Ones* "used the techniques of culture shock primarily to shatter the comfortable predictability which dominated many of the bland dom-coms in the 1970s and 1980s" (Cloarec 208). However, most importantly the sitcom made fun of itself and its characters and the archetypes connected to the youth subcultures. In *The Young Ones*, all different groups of people and youth subcultures are mocked and ridiculed, therefore it is ultimately not offensive to one group or another, which is a typical attribute of the alternative comedy as it is demonstrated by Dr Oliver Double in his thesis *An Approach to Traditions of British Stand-Up* with an example sketch of Alexei Sayle who is said to check whether "there are any members of a certain social group in the audience" before he dares to continue with the joke and ridicules that particular absent social group: "'There's obviously no Albanians in tonight. Good! This fucking Albanian goes for a job on a building site... '" Double further points out that Albanians are not the typical target of racial jokes whereas the jokes about someone who goes for a job are typically about "unsophisticated Irishmen". Therefore, it is rather surprising and unconventional to use Albanians for the joke and "in addition to this, the fact that Sayle has checked there are no Albanians in the audience before pretending to begin the racial joke ridicules the cowardice of this type of racially abusive humour" (205). Another example of an alternative comedy joke is portrayed in *The Young Ones*

in episode "Oil" where Rick asks an absurd question – "Five pounds to get in my own bedroom?! Hah! What have you done, turned it into a roller disco?" which is then turned into reality in the following scene.

Although the British audience was used to the domestic comedy television show, *The Young Ones* brought together a hallmark of a surreal and Dadaistic TV series, which had not been available to the broad audience before. The cover of the DVD edition describes the show as a:

> A mad, helter-skelter, rude, awesomely violent, unpredictable, swaggering, staggering, joyously infantile, exhilarating steamroller of a sitcom" and it presents the view that „*The Young Ones* provided the breakthrough for the new generation of aggressive and forthright 'alternative' comedians.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that to become a television sensation the comics had to tone done in order to conform to the views of the producers so as to avoid censorship. Also, the show was affected by the different funding given to the comedies and to TV varieties resulting in appearances of bands such as Madness, Nine Below Zero, Dexys Midnight Runners, the Damned or Motörhead so as to qualify as a variety with a bigger budget. Besides the bands, the show often features cameos of other comics such as Chris Barrie and Norman Lovett now mainly associated with the sitcom *Red Dwarf*, Ben Elton, Dawn French, Jennifer Saunders, Hugh Laurie or Robbie Coltrane.

The story is set in the 1980s Britain and as Evan Smith notes in the article *To understand Thatcherite Britain, all you need is The Young Ones* it "offered the youth of 1980s Britain laughs in the face of severe changes in British society, brought on by the neo-liberalism of the Thatcher government" (Smith 2014). The four main characters, undergraduate students, share a house while studying various subjects at the Scumbag

College and get themselves into many peculiar and ridiculous situations which often reffer to the political and social situation of Britain.

The following subchapters are devoted to the description of the individual characters of the quartet (see figure 1), who present a depiction of the previously noted youth subcultures and counter-cultures. *The Young Ones* not only depicted a punk, an anarchist, and a hippie, but it is itself viewed as a parallel to what punk movement was in relation to the dominant culture in a way that the series challenges and defies the conventional British culture and its representation on TV. *The Young Ones* are the ultimate "Punk version of a theatre" as described by Lisa Mayer in the documentary *The Story of The Young Ones*.
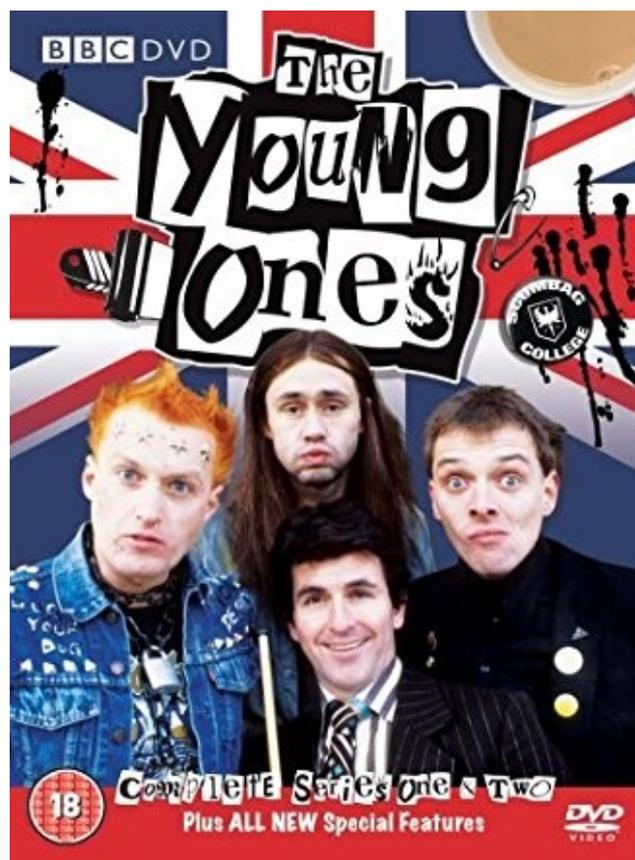

Fig. 1. The famous quartet on the cover of the special DVD edition for the 25th anniversary at www.amazon.co.uk/Young-Ones-1-2-DVD/dp/B000VA3J70

The four students are joined by Alexei Sayle whose primary role was that of a landlord Jerzei Balowski and who reappeared in the show in many roles of various members of the Balowski family. Alexei Sayle performed a stand-up comedy sketch with a Liverpudlian accent in every episode of *The Young Ones* which went hand in hand with the unpredictable and unique sense of humour as opposed to the other situational comedies. Despite being very popular and often described as ground-breaking, the series features only two seasons counting six episodes each.

The argument behind the decision not to continue with another season lies within the reason why the TV show was so popular in the first place, and that is mainly thanks to its unpredictability. The creators felt like there was nothing else to surprise the audience with because everything had been already done.

5.1.1. Neil the Hippie

"Neil, the lentil loving hippy" was portrayed by Nigel Planer and as a character represented the Hippie youth subculture. Scruffy in appearance Neil's visage matches the typical attributes of hippies: long black hair and clothes stretched out of shape. In the last episode "Summer Holiday" it seems that he is even styled in a "John Lennon way" wearing round spectacles and playing the guitar. His garments look soiled and unclean, which is perhaps to emphasise Neil' role in the household as he is forced to the house chores by the others. Neil is the one doing the cleaning, pseudo cooking, shopping for all of them and is shown to have basically no say in the "family matters" of the group – this could be seen for instance in the episode "Oil" where Rick and Vyvyan fight over a bedroom only to set the bed on fire and decide to assign the bedroom do Neil who does not question this and simply gives a sight and enters the room. Neil is the result of generalizations which are taken to the extreme and ridiculed.

He repeatedly states that he is a pacifist and a vegetarian. As Michael Fallon noted in the *San Francisco Examiner* there was a high rate of suicides among Hippies and Neil is depicted proving his suicidal tendencies right at the beginning of the series in "Demolition" the pilot episode where Neil's reaction to the news of demolition of their house is: "I can't handle this. When they come, I'll hide in the wall and pretend to be thermal insulation. When they knock the wall down….Boom Shankar!". Furthermore, towards the end of the episode, we learn that Nail had tried to commit suicide many times before when his reaction to seeing Rick on the cross is: "I've tried it hundreds of times. You can't hammer in the last nail!". Most of the time Neil is very pessimistic and believes that only bad things happen to him and that everyone hates him. He often tries to make the other flatmates sympathise with him or feel sorry for him. Neil is also shown as somewhat unselfish when he takes the job of a policeman in episode "Cash" to provide for pregnant Vyvyan. In this episode, we can also see that Neil has s few friends and therefore his feelings of loneliness and being a good-for-nothing are not substantiated. Perhaps, Neil can be viewed as a bit of a hypocrite when he tries to arrest the attendees of the Hippie party where he gets on his patrol.

5.1.2. Rick the Anarchist

"Rick, right-on anarchist revolutionary and Cliff Richard fan" is a sociology student portrayed by Rik Mayall and is least loved flatmate from the group. He is a self-proclaimed anarchist who likes to call himself "The People's Poet. He wears a buttoned up shirt with a black blazer embellished with various pin badges. He is a hypocrite, often asking whether the others like him, although he himself insults Neil the hippie on a daily basis. Rick often expresses his hatred for Margaret Thatcher and her "Victorian values" and blames her for the country's suffering. He is representing an activist,

although, as Evan Smith points out "as much as Rik 'talked the talk' of the lefty stereotype, there is hardly any moment in either series where Rik actually partakes in any political activity". Rick thinks highly of himself thinking that he is the salvation of the British society and will be remembered for his actions. In „Bambi" the first episode of the second season Rick starts a monologue in which he emphasises his own importance: „This house will become a shrine! And punks and skins and Rastas will all gather round, and all hold their hands in sorrow for their fallen leader! And all the grown-ups will say, "But why are the kids crying?" And the kids will say, "Haven't you heard? Rick is dead! The People's Poet is dead!" Evan Smith in the blog post „What Can *The Young Ones* Teach Us about Thatcherism, Part 5: Activism and the left" further notes that:

> Throughout both series, we also see that Rik was quite accustomed to namedropping revolutionary figures into conversation. In 'Interesting', he invites his tutor to the party so they can discuss Trotsky, while in 'Bambi', he mentions that Lenin probably had a dirty bottom when he led the October revolution. In 'Summer Holiday', Rik namedrops the Red Army Faction when Mike tells the group not to use the guns he bought for the robbery they were planning. But when confronted with the opportunity to partake in 'revolutionary' activity, such as the anarchist bombing of a police car (ala the Angry Brigade), Rik is unsure of this, as seen in this exchange in the episode 'Interesting' (at 1.15)"

Although Rick is portrayed as an anarchistic activist, his character is supposed to mock the more general type that can be found at every campus – the person who is needy and annoying, a know-it-better who is unable of taking any action.

5.1.3. Vyvyan the Punk

Adrian Edmondson portrayed a medical student "Vyvyan, the psychotic punk-metal mohican". Vyvyan represents the typical punk do-it-yourself fashion also taken to the extreme with the metal stars attached to his forehead. He has ginger hair formed into spikes which were sticking up on both sides of his head looking rather goofy than "bad-ass" like the typical punk mohawks. He wears a black T-shirt and a denim vest with studs and mottos "hurt your dog" and "love you dead" ridiculing the typical punk attire. Vyvyan is the most violent of them all, often picking fights with others and frequently destroying furniture, running through the walls and throwing things out of windows. Despite being the most violent member of the group, he is the only one to own a pet – a hamster called Special Patrol Group who is able to talk. Vyv is aggressive and rude towards the Rick and Neil, but he recognises Mike as an authority.

Vyvyan is said to come from a working class as we get to know that his mother is a bartender, though his father is not revealed in the series.

5.1.4. Mike the "Cool" One

Last but not least there was "Mike, the suave, sensible one" who is a little less straightforward than the rest of the group. He is the one in control of the household with natural charm and authority. He is the only one who does not truly represent a youth subculture, although he could be considered a con artist or even a so-called "yuppie" which is short for "young urban professional" a middle-class person living in a city and earing a lot of money as it is not clear whether Mike is truly still a student as he only reveals in the episode "Summer Holiday" that he is blackmailing the Dean to receive money in the form of scholarship. Rick comes to Mike to tell him: "Oh, yes, Michael, that's right. Your tutor asked me to tell you that if you don't show up again next year

that he and the dean might have to seriously reconsider your grant". Nevertheless, Mike is not surprised nor worried replying that" "Well, you can tell my tutor that I've still got the photographs of him and the dean. I think I'll ask for one of those Ph.D.s next year". Mike can be viewed as the father figure in the series as opposed to the childish Rick and Vyvyen and "motherly" Neil. He is self-assured and has no problem talking to women often trying to flirt with them and believes in his prowess with ladies, although in the episode "Oil" we can see Mike taking out an inflatable sex doll out of his suitcase suggesting that he might be even still a virgin.

5.2. The Analysis of *the Young Ones* and the Depicted Youth Cultures

In this sub-chapter, I will look at the patterns in the dialogues covering the theme of subcultural and counter-cultural references, as well as the responses to the political situation of the time – namely the show's recurring innuendos at the government of Margaret Thatcher. Selected dialogues from both season 1 and season 2 will be quoted and commented upon, and relevant scenes will be described. The topics covered in the analysis are: the depiction of the hippie counter-culture as represented by the character Neil, the depiction of the punk subculture and its features as represented by Vyvyan, the perception of an anarchist portrayed by Rik, the representation of Thatcherism and last but not least the perception of police in the show.

5.2.1. Neil and the Depiction of the Hippie Counter-culture

The hippie counter-culture is represented by the character of Neil, who is the least self-assertive member of the group. Right in the first episode of *The Young Ones* called "Demolition" his role in the household is shown:

Neil: Weird, eh? I better get back to the lentil casserole before I get disorientated.

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Neil: Guess it'll soon be over for you lentils!

Neil: Oh wow! This is really amazingly hot! I'd better get it to the table quickly!

Neil: Oh, no room at all, eh? Heavy! I'll never get it back to the cooker in time now--I'm just gonna have to-- *[NEIL dumps the contents of the pot on the floor and starts blowing on his fingers. He then observes the mess on the floor.]*

Neil: Oh no. Bad karma. Again! *[NEIL exits, and calls upstairs]*

Neil: Guys, there's some dinner on the floor if you want it. If you don't, like, that would also be cool, because I only spent all day cooking it, right, and like, I was the one who got it together to put the lentils on to soak last night, but maybe we should just get a cat, right, and give it to the cat, 'cause it's obvious none of you can be both-- guys? Maybe it'd be cool if I just died, right? *[Rick runs past NEIL and into the drawing room without a word. He walks through the food on the floor then immediately frees, seemingly as if shocked by what he just walked in.]*

In the scene above, Neil is depicted as a self-pity complainer, which soon result in suicidal tendencies which are recurring throughout the series and which were associated with the hippie movement. The scene suggests that though Neil is not satisfied with the situation, he is unable to stand up against the circumstances and actively solve his problems. Rather Neil seeks comfort in the existential question implying that maybe if he died the situation would be better. Further, he blames the accident with the lentils on bad karma. Since veganism was a popular lifestyle among hippies, the way Neil personifies lentils in his monologue might be a deliberate exaggeration of the way hippies treated animals and thus mocking them when Neil sympathises with the plant-based food. Furthermore, in this scene the way Neil functions within the group of the students is depicted and it can be seen that the gender roles are broken or transcended, which is a feature that Hall attributes to the counter-cultures as opposed to the traditional middle-class family, where members adapt to masculine/ feminine roles and

to working class where they negotiate the roles (70). During the first episode, Neil attempts to commit suicide; often the situations follow the pattern of Neil stating his intentions:

> **Neil:** I'm gonna kill myself now

However, his attempts are never successful, but they are followed by a funny comment which again could be understood as mocking this particular cliche depressive tendencies of some hippies.

> **Neil:** I'll probably come back as a lentil.

Neil's comment above possibly refers to the experimentations of the hippies with various beliefs such as a belief in the afterlife. Neil's following attempt at a suicide results in a situation that any university students can probably sympathise with:

> **Neil:** Oh, wow! This is the end, man! Doesn't anybody ever suss out cleaning this oven except me? Aw, w--this is so dirty, man, uncool! I bet you could look inside all the dirty ovens in the world, right, and you can--even the ones at the bottoms of swamps, and you wouldn't find one as dirty as this one.
>
> **Rick:** Neil! Why don't you listen to me, Neil? Why don't you listen to ME? Y--d'you find me boring or something? Look. Look. That's a saucer. THAT'S boring. Look.

Nevertheless, Neil's comment about the dirty oven only reinforces his position of a dogsbody for his flatmates. The reaction of Rick demonstrates the others' „interest" in Neil and his doings, which repeats throughout the series. Neil is shown as a pacifist, conforming to the orders of Vyvyan and Rick.

As was argued earlier in the thesis, the counter-cultures sprang up from the middle class, which is also demonstrated in *The Young Ones* in the episode „Sick", when Neil's parents visit the apartment to have a cup of tea with the boys.

As opposed to the what is depicted in the series, it could be of a significance to look at what is not: the sexual experimentation of hippies. Neil is not depicted as a sexual experimentator, and, moreover, it is implied that he has never had sex as he questions Rick about his alleged first intercourse in the episode.

Paul Willis in „The Cultural Meaning of Drug Use" argues that hippies often paused for a moment and did not hurry or say that they have only a minute – we can see that Neil also does not hurry somewhere and bears the assignment of the shopper, maid and cook. He does not complain about the lack of time. Willis further states that drugs were an integral part of the Hippie culture (88). However, in the series drugs are not specifically shown nor is the ritual of taking drugs, though there are some scenes in which drugs are mentioned, or people under the influence are depicted. However, the scenes with talking things and food could be what being on drugs might look like so it is possible that these scenes imply that the boys are on drugs, but it might be solely a feature of the alternative comedy.

5.2.2. Vyvyan and the Depiction of the Punk Subculture

The punk subculture is demonstrated by the character of Vyvyan who is a typical representant of the subculture as he comes from a working-class background and from a broken family with the absent father figure and a mother who works as a bartender but used to be a shoplifter. The figure of an absent father was typical for the subcultures of the 1950s which was thought to cause the juvenile delinquency of the youth subcultures. This phenomenon might have been an inspiration for the creation of Vyvyan's character, who is also delinquent and whose father does not play a role in his life.

Despite the working class background, Vyvyan is able to study at the University to become a doctor which reflects the period during which and more adolescents from working class were able to pursue an academic career. Evan Smith in his blog post „What can *The Young Ones* teach us about Thatcherism pt 7: Higher education and class states":

> As Robert O. Paxton wrote, traditionally universities had been a training ground for the elite tier of British society, with very few lower middle class or working class people being able to enter the higher education system. But with the system being opened up in the 1950s and 1960s, more lower middle class and working class youth entered the world of higher education, and for most, this was the first generation to have a university education.

However, Evan Smith further argues that „the show also reminded viewers that the odds were still stacked against university students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, with the elite, predominantly with an Oxbridge education, still coming out on top in the higher education system". In episode „Bambi" *The Young Ones* mock the Oxbridge elite, which is shown competing with each other with their future plans which they have ensured thanks to their parents. The Thatcherian period was mainly of a benefit for the rich who were getting even richer. The elite students are also sure that they will win over the Scumbag College students Neil, Vyvyan, Mike and Rick. Later in the scene, it is also shown that money can buy anything for those prominent children and they are fully aware of it:

> **Lord Monty:** You know, it's a rotten shame. I went to see the Careers Officer in Big College yesterday, and he said all he'd got left is chairman of British Rail! Well, I wanted to be Director General of the BBC.

Lord Snot: Yes, it's rotten, they gave it to Skapper just because he directed our world tour of "Hamlet" and wrote our hilarious revue, "What Ho, Darkie". Honestly, chairman of a nationalid industry -- I'd rather be a Cabinet Minister!

Kendal Mintcake: Well, I'm alright, 'cause my Daddy's bought me the Socialist Workers' Party for my birthday!

Miss Money: At least we're going to smash the oiks at Scumbag College in University Challenge.

The boys are even told by the organiser that they are not going to win as „the posh kids win, they always do" and in this sense the whole competition unravels:

Bambi:...Who said, "Lawks a lordy, my bottom's on fire"?

Kendal Mintcake: Lenin!

Bambi: Yes, I can accept that, although the exact answer is Joan of Arc. Well done, Footlights, 5 points. And what is the chemical equation...

Miss Money-Sterling: I've got a Porsche. Hee hee!

Bambi: Yes, well, that's not exactly what I've got written on the card, but I knew your father, so Footlights leads by 25 points.

The absurd, unfair competition is finally ended with a giant eclair falling on the four students.

Vyvyan often smashes and breaks everything – his own things, other people's things and even often gets himself hurt. He does not care about things nor other people, and it seems that it could represent the nihilistic views some punks had. This could be seen in the last episode „Summer holiday" where Vyvyan shows that there is nothing that he truly cares about:

Vyvyan: Oh, who cares about exam results? Who cares about life? Who cares about me? Not me, that's for sure! [punches himself in the head] I just don't care. [staggers to the ground]

In the episode, „Sick" Vyvyan's critique of a series *The Good Life* popular among fancied by the middle-class reminds of the punk's reaction to pop culture and their disdain for the mass and dominant culture. Vyvyan's reaction is unrestrained and energetic:

> **Vyvyan:** NO!! No! We're not watching the bloody *Good Life*!! Bloody bloody bloody!! I hate it!! It's so bloody nice! Felicity 'Treacle' Kendall and Richard 'Sugar-Flavored-Snot' Briars!! What do they do now?! Chocolate bloody Button ads, that's what!! They're just a couple of reactionary stereotypes, confirming the myth that everyone in Britain is a lovable, middle-class eccentric - and I - HATE - THEM!!

In the first episode of the second season „Bambi" the topic of the roles within the household is again opened (previously mentioned in relation to Neil, the hippie):

> **Neil:** Anyway, listen, guys...
>
> **Vyvyan:** No, no, Neil, you listen! I've been waiting here half an hour, half a bloody hour, Neil, being hungry, waiting for my tea, and listening to that [points to Rick] bogey-bum!
>
> **Neil:** Oh, that's my fault, is it? Oh yeah, it's always my fault. Why don't you cook your own tea, Vyvyan?
>
> **Vyvyan:** Because I do not cook the tea, Neil, you do! [Neil, defeated, begins cooking the meal] That's what we agreed when we first came. You do the cooking, I look after the plants and goldfish.

This time we can see the demonstration of the negotiating of the roles, which is typical for the working-class. However, it is later revealed that Vyvyan made Neil cook the plants and the goldfish, so the joke is again on Neil.

Furthermore, another feature of the youth subcultures was the way they spent their leisure time, often by hanging out at certain places and having meaningless conversations, which could potentially lead to a surprising situation. Vyvyan out of

boredom often gets the group into various situations which develop from the activities with the label of „doing nothing" which Paul Corrigan describes in the essay "Doing Nothing" where he says that for subcultures it is typical to pass the time by watching TV or talking solely for the purpose of communicating rather than with the intention to share a meaningful or a truthful story. (84).

Despite the class background and style of the character which points out in the direction of the punk subculture, it can be argued that Vyvyan is a specific compilation of various directions and philosophies. He is depicted as a primitive and contentious person with bursts of animal aggression at times appearing to be pseudointellectual like the character of Rick. Furthermore, hippie depressive tendencies mask under the medley of existential and nihilistic philosophies and selfish egocentrism, and thus Vyvyen in himself concentrates characteristics of all the worlds from their community. This depiction of mixed tendencies in Vyvan could be a paraphrase to the punk movement, which itself sympathises with the notion of anarchism and despising authority and the establishment as well as with the vegetarianism and existential philosophies associated with the hippie counter-culture.

5.2.3. Rick and His Depiction of an Anarchist and the Criticism of the Government of Margaret Thatcher

Rick is portrayed as a confused sexually frustrated postpubescent lefty student who tries to capture other people's attention and become a figure that everyone will remember and look up to. At the same time Rick just desperately wants to fit in and be liked. Rick likes to think of himself as the People's Poet – someone who saves ‚the kids' from the injustice imposed by ‚the pigs'. This can be particularly demonstrated by the episode „Bambi" where Rick asks whether others like him:

> **Rick**: Hands up, who likes me! [there is no response]

First being completely ignored by the boys, Rick does not give up and demands to know who likes him, which results in Vyvan betting against him with the rest of the group. However, Rick only discovers that the others hate him and that they truly do not care about him even if he tries to commit suicide out of spite. In his monologue, Rick praises himself as the People's Poet who will live through his poems eternally:

> **Rick:** This house will become a shrine! And punks and skins and Rastas will all gather round, and all hold their hands in sorrow for their fallen leader! And all the grown-ups will say, "But why are the kids crying?" And the kids will say, "Haven't you heard? Rick is dead! The People's Poet is dead!"
>
> **Rick:** And then one particularly sensitive and articulate teenager will say, "Why kids, do you understand nothing? How can Rick be dead when we still have his poems?" Then another kid will say...

Evan Smith even suggests that Rick sees himself as a 'guru' for the left. However, Rick fails to live up to the expectations that one would have for a representative anarchism. Evan Smith notes that:

> In addition to this image of himself as 'the People's Poet' and the fantasy of being revolutionary figure, we also see that we also see that Rick was quite accustomed to namedropping revolutionary figures into conversation. In 'Interesting,' he invites his tutor to the party, so they can discuss Trotsky, while in 'Bambi,' he mentions that Lenin probably had a dirty bottom when he led the October revolution. But when confronted with the opportunity to partake in 'revolutionary' activity, such as the anarchist bombing of a police car, Rick is unsure of this, as seen in this exchange in the episode 'Interesting' (20).

Rick is also a hypocrite who on the one hand saves the world from the police in his dreams yet is unable to act in reality:

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Rick: Hi, Fisher. What do you want to know? Better be ready for some pretty angry

vibes! [Man sprays orange paint in Rick's face, across his mouth]

Anarchist: Political activist, eh? Ah, what's the last thing you blew up?

Rick: Well, I blew up a rubber johnny actually in the union bar. It was hilarious -

everybody thought so. [Anarchist puts his arm round Rick's shoulders]

Anarchist: Yeah. Look, next Tuesday, I'm gonna blow up a Panda in Croydon.

Rick: Yer, right on. Bloody zoos, who needs them?

Anarchist: No, a police car, you terminal wally!

Rick: [Nervously] Oh, the - the pigs?

Anarchist: Bastards

Rick: Yeah [Snort] Especially the few bad apples that spoil their otherwise spotless

image.

Anarchist: Yer, if pigs could fly, Scotland Yard would be London's third airport!

[He laughs, Rick looks confused] I've got everything ready. All I need is a plan, a bomb

and a dedicated and ruthless accomplice. Are you in?

On the other hand, in the episode "Bomb" Rick decides to use the bomb that has fallen

into their house and is not afraid to threaten Thatcher:

Rick: Well, I'm going to tell Thatcher that we've got a bomb. And if she doesn't do

something to help "the kids" by this afternoon, we're going to blow up England.

However, Rick only sends the threat via telegram and even has it signed as Neil:

Rick: Thatcher, We've got a bomb, do..DO YOU MIND? I'M TRYING TO WRITE!

Do what we want, or well blow it up. Signed, Anon. There! See? Didn't take very long,

did it?

Rick is the also the biggest critic of the Thatcherian government and its policies.

Nevertheless, he is excellent at complaining and blaming the Thatcherite values for

everything that happens, yet he is unable to do something about it. In the episode

"Cash" Rick reacts to Vyvyan's pregnancy with an innuendo targeted at Margaret Thatcher and her promotion of the old-fashioned Victorian family values:

> **Rick:** Vyvyan's baby will be a pauper. Oliver Twist! Jeffrey Dickens! Back to Victorian values! I hope you're satisfied, Thatcher!

In the episode "Nasty" he refers to the Britain as to the Thatcherite junta under the ruled by a political and military group.

> **Rick**: Neil, the bathroom's free. Unlike the country under the Thatcherite junta.

Rick does not criticise the establishment in general, and does not behave particularly against the system, but his criticism is solely targeted the Margaret Thatcher who is guilty of all the wrongdoings in Britain as well as in Rick's life. Such accusation is in the last episode "Summer Holiday":

> **Rick:** Thatcher's Britain. Thatcher's bloody Britain! Look at me. I'm young, I'm pretty. I've got 5 O Levels. Bloomin' good grades as well, considering I didn't do a sod of work cause I'm so hard. And look at me now! Homeless, cold, and prostitute.

5.2.4. The Depiction of the Policemen

This sub-chapter will demonstrate the mood and the attitude of the British youth towards the police forces and how it was captured by the series. In the 1970s and 1980s, there were rebellions among the youth of the African-Caribbeans and Asians the spurred by the economic crises, which resulted in the 1981 riots and unrest in Britain. The riots were a reaction to the Thatcherite government which imposed economic policies including higher interest rates, higher taxes, and spending cuts. Due to a dramatic decline in manufacturing, the unemployment rates skyrocketed to three million. Evan Smiths adds in his article „What can *The Young Ones* teach us about Thatcherism, part two: 'Race' and the Police in the 1980s" that the riots were also a result of police

harassment towards the minorities, but points out that 60% of the participants arrested were white. Both white and black youth felt hatred for the police. Lord Leslie Scarman, an English judge, then conducted the public inquiry to find out what caused the riots in Brixton, South London. Evidence confirming the racially biased treatment of the minorities by the British police was found. Evans Smith concludes that: „As a result of Lord Scarman's findings, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 was introduced to regulate police procedures and a complaints body was established. The British Crime Survey, first instituted in 1982 and carried out bi-annually since then, found that people's ratings of the police decreased during the 1980s".

As will be shown in the following scenes from the series, the police are portrayed as unintelligent and unable to solve problems without the use of violence and biased treatment against the members of the youth subculture or against the minorities such as African Americans or gays. Therefore, the police are perceived as authoritarian, racist and are often referred to as fascist or the derogatory slang term „pig" is used to speak of the police. However, as Evan Smith points out in his article: „But at the same time, the show parodied the left's attitudes towards the police (and other issues of 'race') through Rik's pompousness, although most would agree that the show's sympathies lay with the opposition to Thatcherism in the 1980s".

The episode Flood especially depicts the attitude of the youth towards the police. Rick is showed having a dream in which he is defending the kids and defeating the policeman naively only with a poem which is meant to insult the police:

Policeman #1: *[laughs]* You gay, black bastards! We're going to victimise you!

Kids: Oh, no! *[they cover their crotches]* Who can help us now?

[RICK, as PEOPLE'S POET, jumps into the frame. Caption reads: BUT SUDDENLY]

Policeman #1: Oh, no! It's People's Poet!

Kids: Gosh, People's Poet! Is it really you?

Rick: Yes, it is! And you pigs are in for a pretty big shock! Right on!

[RICK pulls out a few scraps of paper and reads. Caption: THE PEOPLE'S POEM]

Rick: What do you think you're doing, pig?

Caption and policemen: THWACK! *[POLICEMEN act as if they were struck]*

Rick: Do you really give a fig, pig?

Caption and policemen: BAM!

Rick: And what's your favourite sort of gig, pig? Barry Manilow? Or the Black and White Minstrel Show?

Caption and policemen: BOKKO! *[POLICEMEN fly off screen]*

Kids: Thanks, People's Poet! Now the pigs won't hassle us now on the street anymore.

[shakes hands with RICK]

Evan Smith notes that: „[The excerpt shows] the police harassing youth, but also satirises Rik, the student-lefty, as the rebellious activist, who can defeat the police with poetry (which does allude to the police as racist through their love of *The Black and White Minstrel Show*). The clip makes fun of Rik's earnest activism and 'right on'-ness defeating the 'fascist' police".

Even though the series often ridicules the police forces, it also makes fun of the of the lefty students on the opposite side of the barricade. This is depicted in also the episode „Flood" when the boys find out that London has flooded. Neil's typical response is a destructive and plain comment about getting killed either by drowning or by an animal. Rick, on the other hand, does not hesitate to call the police suddenly not caring about his „attitude" towards the police or his role of a which makes him the ultimate hypocrite:

Neil: Oh well. well, we'll all probably get drowned or eaten by octopuses, then.

Rick: WHAT? Phone the police!

Neil: But they're fascists!

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> **Rick:** Well, never mind about that now! Telephone, Vyvyan!

Most of the time though, the policemen are depicted as unnecessarily violent and self-provoked. Such behaviour is demonstrated in the following scene from the episode „Sick" featuring Neil's parents:

> **Vyvyan:** Did you see that episode where the pig was going to have a baby? Now, that was quite a promising idea. But it was all done so bloody nicely! We didn't see anything! Even the policeman was nice. *[A policeman comes in (different than the earlier one), smashing a lamp with his nightstick]*
>
> **Policeman:** All right! Why shouldn't the police be portrayed as nice occasionally?! *[threatens Neil's Dad with his stick]* You trendy students are always giving us a bad name!

Vyvyan is annoyed by the depiction of police in the British series *The Good Life* and with his intonation stresses the disgust regarding the notion of a nice policeman when suddenly a policeman comes and smashes the lamp with his baton wondering why the idea of a nice policeman is not what they fancy. In this situation, the unjustified reactions of the police are lampooned as the policeman decides to threaten Neil's father with a baton and addresses him with a comment that the trendy students come up with bad names for the police and behaving n a way which reminds of a child throwing a tantrum. The policeman goes on to hit Rick instead of Vyvan who has actually used an offensive name, which might imply that some policemen tend to leave alone people who can defend themselves and rather misuse their rights at the expense of people who may not be the initiators of the offence or insults in the first place.

The attitude of the youth towards the police and vice versa is also shown in episode „Interesting". The boys are having a party, and Rick decides to turn on the

stereo to play some pop music, when suddenly two policemen inside and immediately push the first person they encounter – a boy sitting on a couch and smash the stereo:

[Police burst in through the front door and smash up the record player]

Policeman: Right, the music's too loud. The neighbours have been complaining. You just watch your step, sonny. [Police leave]

Man guest: Phew!

Woman guest: Pigs, right?

Girl #1: Heavy

Rick: Fascists

Vyvyan: Yer, I'd really like to join the police

Except for Vyvyan, everyone condemns the behaviour of the policeman implying that the police are representatives of the fascist regime.

The reversal of the roles happens in the episode „Cash" where Neil as a policeman goes on a raid against hippies, which might be a reference to the undercover police officers who tried to infiltrate the hippie commune in the 1970s. The episode revolves around the lack of money to the extent that the four roommates end up throwing furniture into the fireplace to warm up. The situation worsens with the mistaken belief that Vyvyan is pregnant. Since there is a baby on the way that will need to be taken care of, Neil decides to „join the Army". In the following scene, the boys are wandering through the cold streets to accompany Neil to the Army Careers Information Office, where he is immediately kicked out because of being a pacifist only to notice an advert for recruiting policemen saying: „We take absolutely anyone". The series is lampooning the police using the cliche that the policemen are unintelligent, which is subsequently elaborated when the chief officer ensures Neil that there are no special requirements: „there's only one thing you need to know to be a policeman, you know?

Really. One thing you have to do, you have to be able to go ,CCCCCHHHHHHHH'''. The chief police officer is portrayed by Alexei Sayle whose appearance and accent reminds of the infamous Italian dictator Benito Mussolini[7]. Evan Smiths explains that: „The surreal nature of Mussolini working for the Metropolitan Force emphasises the hyperbole involved in calling the police 'fascist', which was a common occurrence by British youth and activists at the time". Further, the joke is again on the police, as the chief warns Neil about a special tree branch, which in a bizarre and unexpected way typical of *The Young Ones* humour starts talking to announce that it has a degree in Computer Science. Next, we can see Neil doing a police raid after he had been told to go to 68 Bryant Stree and to „smash the place up, and arrest everybody" without any reason being given. Neil soon discovers that it is his friends who are having a party in the house and who even admit to having drugs with them. This time, it is Neil's friend Warlock who ridicules the police uniform by referring to him as wearing the costume of Mr.Plod – a character of a police officer in the children's series Noddy written by Enid Blyton.

Evan Smiths in the article „'I hope you're satisfied, Thatcher!': Capturing the Zitgeist of 1980s Britain in *The Young Ones*" published in Agora journal argues, that as it is depicted in the episode „Cash" joining the army or the police was an option to almost anyone, even people with no qualification:

> 'Cash' highlights the dire economic situation faced by many in Britain under Thatcher and the lack of suitable employment for many youths. The Army and the police were two state institutions that did not receive the same level of spending decreases as other government agencies under Thatcher and traditionally were avenues for those job

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[7] The portrayl of Benito Mussolini by Alexei Sayle can be watched here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=204&v=TA8Uav7EPlQ

seekers with no qualifications or experience, so were seen as an option for many unemployed youths. (18)

Last, but not least a scene depicting a satirisation of the racist treatment of the minorities typical for the 1980s appeared in the episode „Boring". The scene shows a white man in black gloves ringing a doorbell and a policeman in dark sunglasses who quickly runs up to him and puts his hand on the man's shoulder.

Policeman: Ho ho ha ha ha! Gotcha, Mr. Sambo-darky-coon! I got your number, you're nicked!

Man: [first shot of man's face. He is anglo-saxon, not african] Is there something the matter, officer?

Policeman: Oh oh-oh, don't we sound proper, Mr. Rasta's chocolate drop! Now, listen here, son. I should warn you, I've done a weekends training with the SAS! I could pull both your arms off and leave no trace of violence! Lord Scarman need never know!

Man: Look, what seems to be the trouble, officer? [rings the doorbell again. Policeman grabs his hand]

Policeman: That's white man's electricity you're burning ringing that doorbell. That's theft! I've got your number, so hold out your hand!

Man: Officer, I represent Kellog's cornflakes car competition! [Man takes off his glove to retrieve a business card. Upon taking off his glove, the policeman quickly takes off his sunglasses and grabs the man's hand and stares it. After a while he looks at man nervously]

Policeman: Oh, sorry, John. I thought you was a nigger! Carry on!

The policeman confuses the white man for a black man because of the coincidence of him wearing black sunglasses and the man wearing black gloves. He is quick to insult him with a racial term Sambo used for a person with African heritage. Even though the man has not done anything unlawful, he continues to provoke him and threaten him

with pulling his both arms. He even mentions that Lord Scarman would never know in an attempt to intimidate him. However, when the man pulls his gloves off, the policeman realises that he was mistaken and changes the treatment of the man as he apologises.

To sum up, *The Young Ones* manages to comment on the troubles of the era without being biased, and they ridicule the doers of these wrongs, but also they highlight that philosophy of no subculture or counter-culture is truly the only right one, and the creators are open-minded. As Alexei Sayle explains in the Guardian article:

> I turned up for the recording to find several generations of Cambridge Footlights were in the show. "I thought these people were the enemy!" I railed at the writers. "The whole point of what we were doing was surely to challenge the smug hegemony of the Oxford, Cambridge, public-schoolboy comedy network, as well as destroying the old-school working men's club racists!"
>
> "No, that was just you," the writers replied. "We never subscribed to your demented class-war ravings. We think all these people are lovely. Stephen Fry's made us lardy cake, Hugh Laurie's been playing boogie-woogie piano all morning, Mel Smith's going to take us for a ride in his gold Rolls-Royce, and Griff Rhys-Jones has been screaming abuse at minions to make us laugh. (Sayle)

Conclusion

In the aftermath of the World War II, the new phenomenon knows as youth cultures emerged as a response to the circumstances of their background in relation to their class. Novelties such as newly spreading mass communication, which enabled manipulation of the youth and the birth of a teenage consumer, and easy access to secondary education spurred the response of the youth. Even though the youth cultures aspired to solve the class-related issues that they face but they do so only imaginatively. Since the post-war period was the era of affluence and the notion of classlessness, which was only a myth for the working-class, the adolescents began forming what is known as subculture. They created a world of their own, set boundaries and rules to live by. On the other hand, the middle-class youth created their own alternative society known as the counter-culture, which also dealt with the issues of society mostly imaginatively but as opposed to the subcultures managed to put the matters on the political agenda. The seeds of youth subcultures examined in this thesis can be traced back to the United States which influenced the youth cultures in Britain to a great extent. The youth cultures in Britain then shaped independently as they reacted to issues related to the parent culture of their own. However, neither punk subculture nor the hippie counter-culture was able to solve the problems that they had to face and mainly managed to create their own space and locality which reflected their identity – their style, leisure activities and places to meet at.

Even though the individual subcultures have its own beliefs, gist and goals there are certain patterns that keep repeating. The relatability and applicability to what one knows from their own surroundings is what makes people laugh – no matter how absurd or surreal the depiction or the environment in which the scene is set, those patterns keep reassuring and are the reasons why so many old works within literature, movies or

music – that is the relatability – the topic that never goes out of style – mocking activities which are in peoples nature, discussing society, relationships, views on what is happening in the world and demonstration of such views.Though the characters represent some of the well-known subcultures and countercultures, they resonate with people as they adopted and exaggerated typical human behaviour. No matter where you live in the world, the people are more or less gonna fit into certain groups and categories – some are pessimists, some might have even suicidal thoughts, some feel like nobody likes them and some of them take the high road and take pride in being rational and sensible oversensitive. *The Young Ones* provides an insight into what living in the 1980s Thatcherite England felt like and how it was experienced. *The Young Ones* satirise and make fun of the police, Margaret Thatcher and her socio-economic policies. The protagonists of the series come from various background and represent different subcultures and counter-cultures namely the punks, the hippies and anarchism. However, it seems that rather than attempting a true depiction of the youth cultures the series aims at providing a deep insight into the political and economic situation of Britain in the 1980s. Even though Rick, Neil and Vyvyan all show features typical for the aforementioned subcultures and their background – Vyvyan for example comes from the working class family yet he is able to study at University and Neil grew up in a middle-class family favouring the conventional TV shows – they do not aim to favourise them or force their stances upon the audience. They exaggerate the typicalities of the youth cultures and mock them as anything else. In the series, the consequences of Thatcherism such as high unemployment rates are pointed out often ridiculed. However, the analysis of the selected scenes points out that the youth cultures and their typical features are mocked as well. The show uses laughter and humour as a medium how to

communicate the issues of the period and rather than solely criticising one side of the coin.

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Résumé

The aim of the thesis is to analyse the youth cultures, which emerged during the 1960s and 1970s in the Great Britain and to examine the dramatization of those subcultures in the British sitcom *The Young Ones*. The thesis is divided into five chapters; the first chapter deals with the theory of culture, subculture, and counter-culture. The thesis aims to point out the differences and similarities between the subcultures of the working-class youth and the counter-cultures of the middle-class. Further, the introduction to the social studies, which were closely connected to the establishment of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, will be provided. The second chapter analyses punk subculture, hippie counter-culture and anarchism with the focus on the etymology of the names, background of the emergence and style. The third chapter is devoted to the brief history of British TV in relation to the alternative comedy, which is further explored in chapter four. Last, but not least, the fifth chapter introduces the British sitcom *The Young Ones* whose protagonists are depicted as members of the aforementioned subcultures. The thesis aims to provide analysis of the selected excerpts and thus illustrate the way hippies, punks and anarchists are portrayed in this tv series. Moreover, the criticism of the government of Margaret Thatcher and the depiction of the policemen will be commented upon, as these phenomena are closely connected to the notion of subcultures.

Resumé

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá analýzou subkultur mládeže, které se začaly objevovat v šedesátých a sedmdesátých letech dvacátého století ve Velké Británii, a ztvárněním těchto subkultur v britském sitkomu *Mladí v partě* (*The Young Ones*). Práce je rozdělena do pěti kapitol, kde první je věnována teorii kultury, subkultury a kontrakultury. Diplomová práce si dává za cíl vytyčit rozdíly a podobnosti mezi subkulturami pracujícící třídy a kontrakulturami střední třídy a dále představí pojem kulturální studia, který je úzce spjatý se založením Centra pro současná kulturální studia na univerzitě v Birminghamu. Druhá kapitola analyzuje punkovou subkulturu, hippie kontrakulturu, a anarchismus se zaměřením na etymologii názvů, vznik těchto kultur a jejich styl. Třetí kapitola je poté věnována stručné historii britské televize ve spojistosti s alternativní komedií, která je dále zkoumána ve čtvrté kapitole. V poslední části práce je představen britský sitkom *Mladí v partě (The Young Ones)* jehož protagonisté zastupují jednotlivé výše zmíněné subkultury. Cílem je poskytnout analýzu vybraných ukázek, na nichž bude názorně ukázáno jak jsou v tomto seriálu hipíci, punkeři a anarchisti vylíčeni. Dále bude poukázáno na kritiku vlády Margaret Thatcherové a ztvárnění policie v tomto seriálu, jelikož úzce souvisí s uvedenými subkulturami.

This young group of delinquent young men dressed in 'Edwardian' clothing who introduced anarchy into British society and used early rock and roll as their battle call. 'Teddy girls' also known as 'judies' would dress up in their own drape jackets, rolled-up jeans, flat shoes, tailored jackets with velvet collars , straw boater hats, brooches, espadrilles and elegant clutch bags. 2. 1960s The mods and rockers were two conflicting British youth subcultures of the early to mid 1960s. The Teddy boys were considered their "spiritual ancestors". The rockers or ton-up boys took what was essentially a sport and turned it into a lifestyle, dropping out of mainstream society and "rebelling at the points where their will crossed society's". People in one area may have similarities in age with other people in other areas all over the world, but they surely have difference experiences. Something may be usually done by 19 year-olds person and up while in other area it is usually done by younger people, for example, in the case of the age legacy on driving cars, buying cigarettes and etc. Young people and their parents shared similar clothes, attitudes and social life. Teenagers did not exist at the beginning of the twentieth century. The most important thing that we need to learn from British teenagers is their independence in life, includes in their own finance since they were children. Dress codes are obviously crucial keys to understanding how the lines are drawn in different identities in Britain. With fashion, they have made.