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Performing Punk: Subcultural Authentications and the Positioning of the Mainstream

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ERIK HANNERZ Performing Punk

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What is punk? More centrally, what is authentic punk, and what
constitutes the mainstream? This book takes you on a journey
through the previous research on punk and subcultures to how
punk is defined and lived out in Sweden and Indonesia—two
countries that are, in nearly every sense of the phrase, worlds
apart. This study is an exploration of subcultural contrasts and
similarities and of the ways that participants similarly enact dif-
ferent subcultural patterns of meaning as they perform and
authenticate styles and identities. The book investigates how
punk is made, for whom, and in opposition to what, pushing
subcultural theory to include multiple set of meanings.

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Abstract
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This thesis is about how and in opposition to what punk is defined and lived out by punks in
Sweden and Indonesia. Arguing against the previous research's presumption that subcultural
meaning constitutes a single set of meaning, this study points to two patterned sets of mea-
nings, each constructed out of several different definitions of the mainstream as well as the
subcultural authentic. Consequently, a central research question concerns how to theoretically
account for similarly structured and structuring heterogeneities across and between the Indo-
nesian and Swedish cases. Drawing from extensive ethnographic fieldwork and interviews in
which a variety of interpretations of punk have been explored, six different definitions of the
mainstream are outlined. Each of these refers in turn to a particular script through which
subcultural styles and identities are performed and authenticated as set apart. These different
definitions are then combined into two patterned sets of meaning through a consistency in
terms of how the binary subcultural/mainstream is worked and extended: A *convex* pattern,
involves a boundary work to what is defined as external to punk, bending outwards. A *con-
cave* points instead bends inwards, a boundary work against mainstream internal to punk. By
showing how these patterns are interrelated spatially and symbolically, it is argued that
subcultural meaning as well as the authentic have to be approached from within the subcul-
tural. The mainstream is thus released from having an inherent meaning as "the outside," "the
dominant," or "the commercial," and more so, so is the subcultural and the subcultural
authentic. Consequently, the same object can be performed differently, drawing upon diffe-
rent binaries, or through working the same binaries differently, to extend the subcultural
through the use of analogies and metaphors. The total similarity between how punk is perfor-
med in Sweden and Indonesia, as well as the consistent differences between the two patterns,
point to a relative autonomy of the subcultural. Different definitions of the subcultural authen-
tic and the mainstream are therefore not a matter of commitment, or degrees of authenticity,
but rather different means to communicate, interpret, and act upon the subcultural.

Keywords: subculture, punk, mainstream, authentication, style, identity, cultural sociology,
ethnography, convex, concave, patterns of meaning

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Sweden.*

For Sara, Milo, and Selma

The more things change
The more they stay the same
We can't grow
When we won't criticize ourselves

—Dead Kennedys, *Chickenshit Conformist* (1986)

Contents

Acknowledgements

If punk taught me anything, it is to question what is taken for granted and explore different ways that things should, and could, be done. So far, academia has tried to take the wind out of such an approach to creativity. The entrance to the Aula at Uppsala University's main building, for example, bears the words of the 18th-century philosopher Thomas Thorild: "It is a great thing to think freely, but it is greater still to think correctly." Subjugating oneself to the task of writing an academic thesis with all its formalities and demands has really proven this point to me.

Luckily, I have been surrounded by people who have given me the opportunity to explore alternative ways of thinking and doing things. Most of the positive aspects of this book are to be credited to them.

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Lastly, Sara, my wife and best friend, this whole book is for you. For always being there for me, for encouraging me, and reminding me that there is so much more to life than writing a dissertation.

Lund, October 2013

1. Introduction

December 1st, 1976, it is Wednesday and half past six in the afternoon and punk is about to explode upon the English public—although they do not know it yet. Bill Grundy's *Today*-show is visited by five English youths, four of which are part of an unknown punk band called Sex Pistols. After being provoked by Grundy, the guests use some well-chosen words to describe their host, including the words "fuck" and "you dirty fucker" (Savage 2001:257ff). After being a small yet vibrant subculture in New York for a couple of years, punk now goes public. The next day the newspapers extensively cover the story and suddenly everyone in England knows what punk is, from the lorry driver who becomes so furious when his son is exposed to such words that he destroys his TV-set (Savage 2001:264), to the thousands of youth who wants to know more about it.

Some say punk died that day, while others say that this marked the beginning of an end. From both these points of view, the dissemination of punk through mass media could only result in the exploitation and pollution of the innovative and resistant. During the time I have researched punk, that opinion has been the most common response from people when I tell them what I am writing about: "Punk? But that died in the 1980s." Such remarks follow from a mediated stereotype of punks as being the safety pin-adorned, studded leather jacket-clad youth, sporting a mohawk or liberty spikes. The meaning of punk is equally stereotyped: punk is about anarchy, rebellion, and anger. Both of these stereotypes refer to authenticity. When I answer to such remarks by saying that punk is still alive as a subculture, and has been for the last 40 years, and that there are now punks in most parts of the world, the second response follows from the first: "Yeah, but that's not real punk; real punk was 1977."

Unfortunately, the homogenization of punk's meaning, as well as of its style, is also prevalent in much of the previous research on punk. Such research explains punk as a single uniform meaning from which participants may very well differ due to differences in commitment, authenticity, or individual interpretations, but ultimately asserts that real punks dress, think, and act in a similar way. In this thesis, however, I will tell another story of punk, one of both diversity and similarity, not only in style, but more importantly, in structures of meanings.

To be sure, when I began doing fieldwork among punks I had no idea a subculture could be so diverse. Basically the only thing that the participants in this thesis had in common was that they defined themselves as punks. Save for that, they did not listen to the same bands, they did not dress uniformly, they did not behave in the same manner, and most importantly, they did not conceive of either punk or what they were opposed to similarly. To be sure, there were significant similarities within and between groups of participants, both across regional and national borders, yet when taken as a whole I am still surprised by the diversity in styles and definitions. There were vegan punks, as well as vegan-friendly non-vegans, yet there were also meat-eating punks who hated vegans and vegetarians, and there were those who did not care at all. There were punks who had sold hundreds of thousands of records, those who had sold none, and those who had sold something in between. Some punks refused anything that had a bar code, while others considered such a distinction elitist. While some participants listened to all kinds of music, others refused all music that was not punk, regardless of its connections to major labels. Others considered bands like Blink 182, Rancid, and Green Day to be authentic, while most frowned at the mere mentioning of these bands. But there were also those who did not care about either. There were every possible hairstyle, with having a mohawk being just as common, or uncommon, as having a shaved head, or having no particular hairstyle at all. There were studded leather jackets, jeans jackets, sport jackets, and no jackets at all. There were bondage pants, baggy pants, leather pants, shorts, skirts, or no pants at all. There were political punks, anarchist punks, feminist punks, anti-pc punks[1], and apolitical punks.

The participants themselves were rather reflective of this diversity as well. All in all there are 79 different categorizations of punk style in my data. While quite a few of them are derogatory, such as "fucking stupid bunch of shit punks," filed under "shit punks," the majority specify a certain genre of punk style: "crust-punks," "raw-punks," "skate-punks," "political punks" etc.. What unites all these participants is that they not only defined themselves as punk, but they also recognized that their interpretation of what punk meant or was against was at least as authentic, and in most cases more authentic, as other kinds of punk.

This book is my attempt to empirically and theoretically account for the patterned sets of meanings that make such differences in styles and identification possible over time and space. Between 2003 and 2010 I have done fieldwork among punks in Sweden and Indonesia, exploring both differences and similarities in terms of how participants define and makes sense of what punk is and what it is against. This is as much a study of different interpretations of punk as it is a study of the boundary work meant to protect what is

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[1] Pc refers here to politically correct.

deemed as sacred and central to participants' lives—how identities are attributed and claimed, and how objects and actions are communicated, experienced, and interpreted through cultural structures based on differences and similarities. I do not assume that the cultural structures and structuring of the world presented herein are something specific to punk, but rather that they refer to an ordering of the world into the familiar and unfamiliar, the inside and the outside. Something that we all experience in making our way through a cultural complexity in which alternative sets of meanings give rise to similarly patterned differences.

The question of punk

In *Inside Subculture,* David Muggleton argues that the essence of punk relates to "what you make of it" (2000:2). Muggleton's study is an attempt to break with previous accounts of punk as being a collective resistance against the mainstream expressed through a conspicuous and provocative style. Instead, he argues that the meaning of punk, as well as authenticity, can only be addressed through individual members' accounts. Muggleton's individualistic definition of punk came at a time when the realist notions of authenticity and the mainstream that punk opposed were beginning to wither away. Following Dick Hebdige's (1979:102) classic claim that punk style goes against the grain of a mainstream culture, punk's alleged opposition against the mainstream has been addressed frequently. Baron (1989a), for example, argues that punk music represents the anger and attitudes of youth, "as an attempt to offend, shock, and attack the mainstream" (1989a:308). Similarly, punk style has been addressed as a means to provoke and resist the mainstream society (Fox 1987, Leblanc 1999, Tsitsos 1999), and punk itself is defined by its distance and autonomy from the commercial mainstream (Lull 1987, Huxley 1999, Gosling 2004, Holt 2007, Moore 2007, Roberts and Moore 2009, and cf. Willis 1993 on hardcore; Schilt 2004 on riot grrrl).

The meaning of this "mainstream," however, is rarely specified beyond the normal, commoditized, and shallow. As Ulf Hannerz has noted (1992: 81), the mainstream remains the unexplained, "the general," from which the subcultural is assumed to have evolved: the subcultural other of a research discourse championing resistance as authenticity. Muggleton's work, together with Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1995), was the beginning of a move away from such realist notions of punk authenticity being tied to style and resistance, but also towards a critical approach to the so-called mainstream. Thornton (1995) was among one of the first to critically assess the mainstream, arguing that the mainstream is constructed to define and affirm individual subcultural identities, which has since been elaborated on by more recent punk theorists (Force 2009, Lewin and Williams 2009, Williams 2011).

Given this development of the relationship between punk, the mainstream, and the authentic, the main purpose of this study is to empirically investigate how participants define the mainstream, and ultimately how it relates to notions of subcultural authenticity. There is also a comparative dimension, since this includes an exploration of how punk is performed in nine different cities, across two different countries, and by a variety of groups of participants. The central research question is therefore, *how and in opposition to what is punk defined and lived out by punks in Sweden and Indonesia?*

This comes down to answering how, and against what, is punk defined? But it also asks, what are the differences and similarities between participants' definitions of both the mainstream and the subcultural authentic? And finally, what consequences does this have for how subcultural styles and identities are performed and authenticated?

The definition of punk, both as a noun and adjective, upon which this study relies is thus not so much a matter of "what you make of it" but rather of how it is made, for whom, and in opposition to what.

The question of the subcultural

Nonetheless, my focus will not be entirely on punk. This thesis is as much an attempt to develop a satisfactory definition of the subcultural that allows for patterned differences in regards to how the subcultural, the mainstream, and the subcultural authentic are defined and acted upon.

From its theoretical beginnings subcultural styles and identities have been assigned and authenticated based on how subcultures are defined and explained. Subcultural style is either the consequence, or the combination, of a spatial segregation (Gordon 1947, cf. Park 1915, Cressey 1932), an inability to meet with societal goals (Cohen 1955, cf. Merton 1938), or the pursuit and furthering of a collective deviance (Becker 1963). These definitions of the subcultural as the subordinated and separated in relation to the general population point to subcultures as a solution to collectively experienced problems associated with being deviant. But these definitions also suggest that style and identities are based on a uniform subcultural morality. The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in Birmingham broke with this definition of the subcultural, substituting resistance for deviance, and spectacular style for an alternative moral value system (Clarke et al. 1976). Even though the CCCS's definition centered on subcultures as the ideological solution to problems stemming from material conditions, they included both a generational and contextual aspect to resistance, accounting for the economic, cultural, and spatial hardships of the working class youth. Nevertheless, the focus on class and meaning as "text," makes the subcultural meaning single and fixed, as deviations from such a resistance are accounted for by pointing to the arrival of middle class youth through the commodification of the subcultural (Clarke 1976b, Hebdige 1979).

Although the ensuing critique against the work of the CCCS focuses on the restriction of the subcultural to the working class, class differences remain the dominant explanation for internal subcultural differences; middle class participants have a different focus and style than their working class counterparts (Frith 1981, Brake 1985, Fox 1987, Wallach 2005). The critique against the CCCS's subcultural theory also revolves around a methodological critique. Arguing that the participants' accounts are left out of the analysis, subcultural researchers have pointed to style and identities as being a matter of subcultural hierarchies based on commitment. Differences among participants are then due to the extent they resist the mainstream (Fox 1987, Baron 1989a, 1989b, Andes 1998, Huxley 1999, Leblanc 1999, Dowd et al. 2004). This coincided with a more postmodern approach to subcultures deconstructing both style and commitment, defining subcultural styles and heterogeneities as a matter of fluidity and individuality. From such point of view, differences among participants are addressed first as a matter of style surfing and individual meaning (Kotarba 1991, Muggleton 1997, Polhemus 1997) and second as the consequence of postmodern conditions such as the hyperinflation of images (Muggleton 2000, Clarke 2003). Collective differences among subcultural participants are thus explained as remnants of different reactions to socio-economic changes stemming from this postmodern condition (Moore 2004).

The "new" subcultural theory that has developed during the 2000s is part a reaction to, and part a continuation of, the work of postmodern subcultural theorists. Retaining that the boundary to the mainstream is constructed and far from fixed focus have instead been on the similarities among participants (Thornton 1997a, MacDonald 2001, Hodkinson 2002, Williams 2011). Internal differences are thus linked to individuality and personal strategies: Style is tweaked in order to avoid being seen as blindly conforming to the collective (Force 2009, Lewin and Williams 2009).

Still, none of these approaches to subcultural theory allow for patterned differences within the subcultural, as they all point to the subcultural meaning as constituting a set of meanings against a mainstream often defined as the commercial. The second purpose of this study is therefore to theoretically refine the concept of the subcultural, by assessing both the "sub" and the "cultural" in relation to the definition of the mainstream, as well as the authentic. This comes down to the question, *How can we theoretically account for similarly structured and structuring heterogeneities within the subcultural?* In so doing, I will ask, how are the authentications of subcultural styles and identities tied to other performances? How are differences and similarities in the way the subcultural and the mainstream are performed connected to each other? But also, how does this relate to the way definitions of the "outside," the "commercial," and the "political" are mobilized and made sense of?

The definition of the subcultural in this study, thus, refers to the patterns of meanings that participants enact in authenticating styles and identities, rather than stylistic objects or actions in themselves.

Situating punk

There are a number of aspects of this study that set it apart from previous research on both punk and subcultures. First, the length of the time in the field is greater; I have followed some of the participants for ten years. Second, I have sought to explore differences within punk, doing fieldwork among different groups of participants, in different cities, and in two different countries. This international focus is the third important aspect, as I have sought to compare how punk is performed in two entirely different contexts: Sweden and Indonesia.

Alan O'Connor (2002, 2004) is one of the few researchers who has conducted an international comparative ethnographic study on punk, investigating punk in the U.S., Mexico, and Spain. Although O'Connor's work is interesting in terms of his ethnographic descriptions of these contexts he nevertheless focuses on a certain group of punks in each context. Further, differences in style among these punks are explained in relation to the local infrastructure, rather than exploring these in relation to similarities across these cases.

This is somewhat endemic to studies of punk outside the U.S. and England—the meaning of style is attributed to the local culture whereas similarities in styles are tied to a globalization of punk. Thus, for O'Connor the similarities in style between Mexican punks and punks in the U.S. and Canada are due "the processes by which punk travels." The meaning of these stylistic similarities differs, however, according to "important differences in the social structure" (2002:231). The extensive use of patches among Mexican punks is, for O'Connor, meaningful in relation to silk-screen equipment that has been widely available outside of the punk scene; the extensive use of patches by punks in the U.S. and Europe, however, is related to differences within punk. Thus, when punk in the Western hemisphere is investigated, little if any focus is directed towards factors beyond the local conditions (cf. Hebdige 1979, Laing 1985, Fox 1987, Lull 1987, Hafeneger et al. 1993 Leblanc 1999).[2]

When moving beyond the Western sphere, however, punk is suddenly addressed as a global phenomenon. Anna Szemere (1992), for example, has studied how punk in Hungary was influenced by Anglo-American culture, and Emma Baulch (2002, 2003b) and Jeremy Wallach (2005, 2008) have both described punk in Indonesia as being initiated through a globalization of punk. Similarly to O'Connor, however, these authors merely speak of

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[2] O'Connor's (2008) work on DIY-record labels is the exception to this; but then again, it nevertheless refers to a specific interpretation of punk.

punk as global in an initial state. Whereas style is authenticated in relation to an "original" Western punk style, what punk *signifies* is due to local factors. Szemere notes that punk became a means to respond to problems encountered in Hungary's socio-economic decline, while for Baulch the development of punk in Indonesia correlated with the Indonesian youth's ability to express themselves more freely and their increasing control over local territories. Similarly, Wallach notes that "Indonesian punk is a Western, imported musical form framed by local agents" (2008:109, cf. Pilkington 1994:228). Whereas Anglo-American punk stands by itself, punk in Eastern Europe, Mexico, and Indonesia is defined through the former, style being imported and the meaning of style localized.

The problem, I will argue, is that focusing on punk as a local phenomenon, whether or not initiated from a particular social base, stresses local cultural traditions as essential in deciding what punk becomes in different parts of the world. This in turn homogenizes meaning by attributing it to a response to such a social base, obscuring the subcultural communication of meaning, as well as different interpretations of this meaning. In contrast, a major part of the empirical purpose of this study has been not to restrict my study to those participants that I perceived as punk, but rather questioning my ability to make such a distinction. Instead I have included participants on the basis of them self-identifying as punk regardless of their stylistic features. Rather than shunning, or downplaying, alternative subcultural performances, I have sought to explore them.

Consequently, the third purpose of this study is to develop a methodological strategy to explore differences among participants within and across my cases. Whereas most previous research on punk has focused on either one particular kind of punk, or one particular context, I have chosen the opposite path, seeking to include a maximal variation of interpretations of punk. In so doing, I have sought to let the participants themselves lead me, through their definitions of other participants, to new and different patterns of similarities within and across local scenes.[3] This adds a diachronic and contextual question, combining the two research questions above: *If subcultures are a response to socio-economic structures, then how do we explain similarities across the Indonesian and Swedish cases, as well as differences within these cases?* How can structured similarities and differences within the subcultural be assessed in relation to subcultural establishment, reproduction, and change? And further, what role do spatial dimensions of subcultural performances play in such a structuring of the subcultural?

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[3] *Scene* is used vernacularly in this thesis, pointing to a particular space within which action takes place. In the analysis, however, I distinguish between the indefinite and definite form, with *the scene* referring to the separated, active, and global when defining punk as against an internal mainstream.

Therefore, in the analysis I will neither distinguish between Swedish and Indonesian participants, nor will I distinguish between groups of participants, nor between cities. Instead, I will pursue patterned similarities and differences across these contexts.

Situating differences between the cases

The comparison between how punk is performed in Indonesia and Sweden relates to a major theoretical point: If differences and similarities in punk are indeed related to socio-economic structures or a resistance to the dominant culture, then this would be rather obvious in comparing punk in Indonesia and Sweden.

Even though the two cases were not chosen at the outset of this study because of their significant differences, Indonesia and Sweden are, in every sense of the phrase, worlds apart. Whereas Sweden is an urban and ethnically homogeneous society, Indonesia is rural and ethnically diverse (EIU 2013). Sweden is predominantly Lutheran, while nine of ten Indonesians are Muslims (UPI 2013). Life expectancy at birth is ten years higher in Sweden (CIA 2013). There is also a difference in terms of education: 60% of Indonesian students finish nine years of education, while in Sweden that number is 90% for twelve years of education (UPI 2013). Further, almost 50% of the Swedish students pursue a higher education while the number for Indonesia is less than 20% (UPI 2013).[4]

Further, whereas Sweden is a stable democracy and recognized as one of the world's most advanced social welfare systems, Indonesia's modern history is scarred by authoritarian rule, internal conflicts, corruption, and poverty (Hefner 2000). Indonesia became independent in 1949, and led by the republican Soekarno, the country sought at first to negotiate between capitalism and communism. It was one of the founding countries of the Non-Aligned movement in the early 1960s together with India, Yugoslavia, Ghana, and Egypt. This ended in 1967 when the military took power under the leadership of general Soeharto, leading to the political cleansing of hundreds of thousands of alleged communist sympathizers (Hefner 2000:63ff, cf. Blum 2003:194ff). After almost three decades of authoritarian government Soeharto was forced to resign in 1998 and the country began its road to democracy with the first free elections in 1999, slowly increasing the power of the parliament in relation to the president (CIA 2013, EIU 2013).

The authoritarian regime had immediate consequences for punk, as punk's alleged association to an anti-establishment attitude and the political left made it a threat to the Soeharto regime well into the 1990s. Metal had a

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[4] In addition, Sweden has roughly 10 million inhabitants while Indonesia has an estimated 245 million. Furthermore, the labor force in Sweden is predominantly in the service sector, with agriculture barely accounting for 1% of the workforce, while in Indonesia agriculture makes up 38,3% of the workforce (CIA 2013).

similar problem. In 1993, a Metallica show in the Jakarta resulted in riots as cars and houses were destroyed and more than a hundred people were injured (Pickles 2001:25). The press reported that the riots reflected gaps between rich and poor and social problems (Thompson 1993:6) or that they were associated with the Democratic Party (Baulch 2003b:28). Contrary to the media's reports, the government's official statement was that these were the actions of well-organized criminals, easily identifiable with their tattooed bodies and long hair.[5] As a consequence, no rock shows, including punk, were allowed for a year and any subsequent shows were to be held in the daytime and far from the housing estates (Pickles 2001:26, Baulch 2002:153f). Many of the participants I followed told stories of the brutal repression of the police during the late 90s and how they had to conceal their lyrics, and that this repression still continues. During my stay in Indonesia several participants were arrested and beaten up by the police or local militia for no apparent reason other than being punks. In December 2011, news agencies across the world reported on a police raid of a punk show in the Sumatran province of Aceh (TWP 2011). Sixty-five punks were detained and forced to shave their hair and remove their piercings before a "spiritual cleansing" consisting of a bath in a lake, a change of clothes, prayers, and learning military discipline (Fiscella 2012:264f).

There are also important economic differences between the two countries: GDP per head in Sweden is almost 20 times higher than in Indonesia (EIU 2013, UPI 2013), and the median income in Sweden is ten times higher than in Indonesia (EIU 2013, OECD 2013). Even though living expenses are significantly lower in Indonesia, punk records or fanzines from other parts of the world are not cheaper in Indonesia than in Sweden, especially records that are distributed exclusively within the subculture. The digital development has done a lot to at least partially level out the inequalities in accessing music and subcultural media, with bands providing mp3s on their webpages and fanzines being available in pdf-format, ready to be printed and distributed. The varied accessibility of the Internet, however, limits this severely. When I started doing fieldwork in Indonesia, only 2% of the population had Internet access (NUA 2004). That number had surged to 12% in 2010 (IWS 2013). The numbers for the same period in Sweden are 47% and 91% (SCB 2013).

In terms of punk's history, the difference between the two countries remains. While punk in Sweden was firmly established in the late 1970s (cf. Carlsson et al. 2004, Ekeroth 2008, Jandreus 2008), Indonesian punk did not develop until the 1990s through the arrival of both music television—mainly

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[5] Similarly, on several occasions the government has proclaimed tattoos to be characteristic of delinquency and during Soeharto's regime, tattooed street gang members were sought out and killed by the military (Kroef 1985:758). Pickles (2001:49), for example, notes how the Indonesian reality show *Patroli*, in documenting the shooting of a drug dealer by the police, zoomed in on his tattooed chest as it was revealed by the police.

MTV—and shows with international bands; for example, Green Day played Jakarta in 1996 (Pickles 2001:33, Baulch 2003b:97). Even though there were bands influenced by Sex Pistols and the Clash in the mid 80s, these were referred to as new wave rather than punk. An important factor in the development of punk was also the underground circulation of American fanzines that were imported, photocopied and distributed (Wallach 2005:18). When internet-cafés became more available in the late 90s this further established punk in Indonesia, as communication of and about the subcultural structures was facilitated. While the Internet did help establish the punk in Indonesia, it also created its greatest drawback. Some punks in Indonesia were involved in credit card frauds against subcultural institutions in the late 90s and early 2000s. Using stolen credit cards, they ordered records and merchandise from the US and European punk labels and distros. When the card companies discovered the fraud, the records had usually already been shipped. Similarly, and by far not unique to Indonesia, punks ripped off distros by agreeing to trade or distribute records, but then keeping the records and the money for themselves. I interviewed participants from the different sides in this matter: Swedish distro and record label owners who were said to have been ripped off, the Indonesian punks that were identified as the perpetrators, as well as the Indonesian punks who claimed to fight the perpetrators in order to regain participation in the translocal aspect of punk. This incident seriously harmed Indonesian punk for a long time.

These cases thus also illustrate a subcultural center and periphery: Indonesian punk is largely unheard of beyond the immediate neighboring countries of Malaysia and Singapore. During the last ten years a number of American, Australian, Japanese, and European bands have toured Indonesia, while to my knowledge only a handful Indonesian bands have ever played Europe, the US, and Australia. With the exception of one band—Superman is Dead, one of the largest music acts in Indonesia—the bands, including for example Keparat and Kontra Sosial, have been invited and supported by local punk collectives. Local scenes and squats in Germany, for example, have arranged benefit-shows where the money was used to support local Indonesian scenes and bands. Malaysian and Singaporean punks have also worked hard to help out their Indonesian counterparts by including Indonesia when booking foreign bands on tour, and by releasing records of Indonesian bands.

Sweden's status in punk is the opposite of the Indonesian, having been one of the dominating producers of punk outside the U.S. in the last 25 years. Swedish punk is often hailed as one of the most influential scenes in developing punk globally, with bands from all kinds of punk genres, including bands such as Anti-Cimex, Mob 47, Moderat Likvidation, Shitlickers, Totalitär, Skitsystem, No Fun at All, Refused, Millencolin, Satanic Surfers, Wolfpack, or Masshysteri, that have all made an impact on global punk in terms of sound and style. The Indonesian participants I followed all knew of

Swedish punk bands, listened to their music, sported their logos on shirts, jackets, pants, caps, and bags, and covered their songs while rehearsing or playing live. The reverse was almost entirely absent in Sweden, limited to a handful of Swedish participants that had travelled in Indonesia.

A final point of difference regards the local infrastructure in terms of setting up shows, finding a rehearsal space, or just having a place to hang out. The Swedish participants I followed benefitted from the welfare state's support of music, either through music education in schools (including municipal music schools) or through the access to instruments, cheap rehearsal rooms, and music studios that these programs sometimes provided. As Khan-Harris (2007:108) points to, the Swedish society's support for musicians is also related to the network of non-state organizations such as *Studiefrämjandet* and *Folkhögskolan*, which help musicians find rehearsal space and subsidize rehearsal costs, either directly or through a youth club (cf. Håkansson et al. 2009, Håkansson and Lundin 2009). These youth clubs also sometimes offer a recording studio and a stage. The comparison to Indonesia is striking, as there was little, if any, support from the state, even though the local community often supported local musicians. The access to municipal rehearsal spaces and network of youth clubs were unheard of by the participants I followed. Instead, rehearsals were often at someone's house or in a rented basement. They were shared with other bands, as costs were often high in comparison to living expenses.

All in all, following from previous subcultural theories, the performances of punk in Sweden and Indonesia have to be different. If, however, punk is similarly structured and performed in the two countries, this would call for a refinement of subcultural establishment, reproduction, and change, as well as patterned differences, pushing subcultural meaning as being relative autonomous in relation to a local social base.

Disposition

Whereas the first part of this thesis—chapters 2 to 5—will provide the theoretical and methodological background of this study, the second part—chapters 6 to 8—will center on the analysis of the data. The reader whose interest lies entirely in punk may therefore jump directly to chapter 6. Chapter 2 will provide an overview of subcultural theory, starting with the work of the Chicago School and ending with the recent "new" subcultural theorists. These previous subcultural theories will then be critically assessed in chapter 3, following from their persistent emphasis on a single subcultural set of meanings, and on authenticity as being tied to either style, resistance, or commitment to such a single set of meaning. Thereafter, in chapter 4, I will provide the outlines to a cultural sociological approach to subcultural theory based on later work of Émile Durkheim (1915), and the earlier works of Mary Douglas (1966) and Clifford Geertz (1973c). These are tied together by drawing on Jeffrey Alexander and Phil Smith's (2003) notion of culture

as a relative autonomous force in itself, as well as Alexander's (2004a) attempt to construct a theory of cultural pragmatics. The last chapter of the first part, chapter 5, discusses the methodological considerations of this study and how I have made use of participants' validations and invalidations in my fieldwork.

Throughout the second part of the thesis, I will apply and refine this theoretical model, arguing that the subcultural revolves around the binary distinction between the subcultural and the mainstream, specified and extended through differently working binary pairs such as deep/shallow, active/passive, freed/restricted, different/undifferentiated, etc.. Instead of focusing on style, I will point to how different styles and identities are similarly claimed and retained by locating them within a deep meaning structure. The authentication of styles and identities thus involves enacting a subcultural background text within which objects are performed and validated as part of the subcultural.

This is based on a move from a focus on style to a focus on the patterns of meanings within which style are performed and validated, accounting for both similarities and differences, as well as subcultural reproduction and change. The point being that objects are not meaningful *sui generis*, but rather they become meaningful through these deep structures of meaning. To perform within these structures is to enact their aesthetic power and position subcultural objects, social as well as human, within the positive side of these binaries, while discarding other objects by placing them on the negative side of this structure. In so doing, I will distinguish between two distinct subcultural patterns of meanings based on how the mainstream is positioned. These two patterns will be referred to throughout this thesis as a *convex* and a *concave* pattern: a convex pattern bends *outwards,* defining the mainstream as external to punk, and a concave pattern bends *inwards,* positioning the mainstream as internal to punk.

The first chapter of the second part, chapter 6, will deal exclusively with a convex pattern in Sweden and Indonesia focusing on three different, but interrelated, definitions of the articulated mainstream—the normal, the complaisant, and the commercial—and how these are related to the authentications of styles and identities through stressing individual difference, freedom, and doing-it-yourself (DIY). In chapter 7, I will turn to the enactment of a concave pattern through three equally interrelated, yet different definitions of the mainstream: the shallow, complacent, and dependent mainstream punks. In relation to these definitions, I will point to the way authentications of styles and identities revolve around a collective difference and freedom from punk in general, through a focus on DIY and the scene.

Chapter 8 will deal with the spatial dimensions of the two subcultural patterns, and the consequences that their enactments have for the structuring of the subcultural as a whole. To do so, I will first point to the structuring of punk as a matter of where, how, and for whom punk is performed. Second, I

will address the individual movement between these patterns, the convex and the concave describing sets of meanings, rather than individual participants, objects, or actions. The outcome of the dynamic relationship between a convex and a concave pattern, I will argue, explains how punk is established, reproduced, and developed, as well as who is included and who is excluded as subcultural participants and audiences. The latter includes a discussion on gender, ethnicity, and the communication of punk.

In chapter 9, I will conclude by relating the theoretical and methodological discussion to the empirical, in order to answer the research questions outlined above.

Short Discussion

To summarize, the main purpose of this study is to explore how punk is performed in relation to the definition of the mainstream and the authentic. In so doing, I aim to provide the reader with a transparent and comprehensive model based on how the mainstream is constructed and positioned as part of subcultural boundary work. The central research questions of this study are as follows:

a) *How and in opposition to what is punk defined and lived out by punks in Sweden and Indonesia?*

b) *How can we theoretically account for similarly structured and structuring heterogeneities within the subcultural?*

c) *How do we explain similarities across the Indonesian and Swedish cases, as well as differences within these cases?*

I will attend to how subcultural differences and similarities relate to each other so as to order and give meaning to identity, styles, and space. I will focus on how participants enact a specific background text and foreground script (or a combination of several) in a specific place, and for an audience validated in relation to the same background text and foreground script, when performing and authenticating subcultural style and identities.

This means that this study has a number of important, yet initially unintended, consequences. The first of these is to expand cultural sociological theory, as it is defined and developed by Jeffrey Alexander and Phil Smith, among others, to include a perspective on the subcultural. Secondly, this thesis contributes to the reestablishment of the subcultural as a theoretical concept within Swedish sociology. With a few exceptions (Hannerz 1992, Lalander 2003, Shannon 2003, Corte 2012), the concept of youth culture has superseded the concept of subculture within Swedish sociology. Erling Bjurström (1997), for example, talks about subcultural styles and identifications yet refers to this within the framework of youth culture, as does Ove Sernhede (2001, 2002, 2011a). However, as recent international studies on subcultural groups such as punks and goths have shown (Bennett 2006, Hodkinson 2011, Bennett and Taylor 2012), age is less a defining trait of the subcultural than previous research pointed to (e.g., Hall and Jefferson 1976).

This study includes conversations and interviews with a number of participants in their 30s and 40s, making youth culture a rather inaccurate term. Lastly, this thesis also contributes to the research on punk in Sweden and Indonesia. Although punk in Indonesia has been covered more recently (Baulch 2002, 2003a, 2003b, Wallach 2005, 2008), punk in Sweden, especially in reference to present times, is largely untheorized. The exception is Magnus Ericsson and Per Dannefjord's (2010) study of the later careers of Swedish punks who were active in the late 70s and early 80s, and Jorge Ferrer's (1983) puzzling ethnography on a variety of youth, including punks and skinheads, in Stockholm in the early 1980s. Apart from a few studies by bachelor's and master's students (cf. Karlsson 2003), the two or three books on Swedish punk are written by former punks and journalists; Daniel Ekeroth's (2008) book on Swedish death metal (!) is one of the few sources of the development of hardcore punk in Sweden in the 1980s. This is rather peculiar given Swedish punk's status in the world. However, apart from the short history provided above, I will not delve into the history of either Swedish or Indonesian punk; for the interested reader, I suggest that you pick up any of the books mentioned above.

2. Previous Research

Given that a full description of the history of subcultural theory is not something you cover in ten pages,[6] I will focus my introduction on its main contributors since Gordon (1947) first theoretically addressed the concept in the mid 1940s. As we shall see throughout this chapter, the work of the Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham (CCCS) remains the only cohesive attempt to establish a subcultural theory. Even though the ensuing work on subcultural theory has been critical to the views of the CCCS and sought to correct some of its most problematic aspects, the work of Stuart Hall et al. (1976) and Hebdige (1979) remains the starting point for most contemporary work on subcultural theory. I have therefore chosen to present the subcultural history accordingly, the first part of this chapter dealing with the work that preceded the CCCS's theory, the second with the CCCS, and the third part the work that followed from it. The pre-CCCS part will start in the Chicago school's emphasis on the urban, spatial, and deviant, and then move on to how Albert Cohen and Howard Becker developed the concept of subculture. The second part will discuss the CCCS's theory, with focus on culture, class, style, and resistance in relation to the subcultural authentic. The post-CCCS part will include the critique against the CCCS and how this is mirrored in more contemporary subcultural research. To do this, I will discuss three interrelated aspects: first, the focus on authentic style as resistance and commitment; second, the postmodern deconstruction of the boundary between the inside and outside, resulting in an individualization of both punk and the subcultural authentic; and third, the more recent arrival of a "new" subcultural theory stressing collective similarities and individual style in relation to both the subcultural as a whole as well as the authentic.

2.1. Subcultural theory pre-CCCS

2.1.1. The urban, deviant, and lowbrow

Even though the concept of subculture did not appear until the mid 1940s, subcultural scholars agree that the legacy of subcultural research can be

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[6] For such a description see Gelder and Thornton (eds.) (1997), Gelder (2007), or Williams (2011).

traced from the seminal work conducted at the University of Chicago in the early 20th century (Thornton 1997b:12, Gelder 2007:27ff, Williams 2011:18ff). The group of researchers that emerged around Ernest Burgess and Robert E. Park were to have a substantial impact on subcultural theory in its focus on urban marginalized groups and deviant behavior, and more importantly, these groups' interaction with the outside view that they were marginalized. Though Simmel and Tönnies, along with others, had already studied city life, the Chicago School developed a micro-sociological approach to the city. This approach stressed that deviance is not a matter of individual pathology or individual refusal of the societal morals; instead, it is collective and a matter of social affiliation (Gelder 2007:4). Park's (1915:579) argument is that the physical geography of the city—in terms of its advantages and disadvantages, and its proximities and distances—determines the general outlines of the city. To Park, the attraction of the city lies in its rewarding of the eccentric, providing an environment and moral climate for all of its inhabitants (1915:609). This, in turn, gives rise to different moral milieus within which each individual, including the deviants and marginalized, can locate oneself, feel at ease, and develop and pursue his or her individual dispositions.

In relation to space, Chicago researchers also focused on the impact of family, neighborhood, and friendship groups on individual life in the city (cf. Lofland 1983, Platt 1983, Andersson 2003). Paul Cressey's (1932) work on taxi-dancers—young women who were paid to dance with patrons—is an excellent example of such a combined focus. Similar to Park, Cressey (1932:75) argues that phenomena such as taxi-dancers are possible due to the city providing the opportunity for its young people to live double lives with little risk for detection. To Cressey, then, taxi-dancing means problem-solving, a way of satisfying unfulfilled wishes by providing a source of income for women in between adolescence and marriage (1932:91). The taxi-dance halls, he argues, offer a "distinct social world" (1932:31) with its own morals, values, and ways of acting and thinking separated from the rest of the city. In short, it provides these girls with their own way of life in terms of personal standards and activities. Another important aspect of the Chicago school was that their work suggested an ethnographic approach influenced by journalism to the study of these social groups and the processes through which urban culture was constituted (cf. Lindner 1996).

Taken together, the work of the Chicago school would have a substantial impact on subcultural theory through its emphasis on the urban, deviant, and lowbrow. There were five major contributions: first and foremost, the idea of social groups being physically delineated by ascribed characteristics, geography, vocation, or class; second, that these groups develop their own moral standards and activities; third, that these moral worlds constitute a means for inclusion of marginalized individuals that can find a home within these urban sub-societies; fourth, that these groups then provide a means for solving

problems associated with being marginalized; and fifth, that the study of these involves immersing oneself in these worlds.

2.1.2. Subcultural deviance and morality

Although the term had been used by Sapir (1932:236) and Linton (1936), Green (1946) and Gordon (1947) are credited as the first sociologists to use the term subculture (Hannerz 1992:277). Still, it was Albert Cohen's (1955) work on delinquent gangs that was to be the first major subcultural theory. Arguing against pathological explanations of deviance, Cohen insists that deviance is a social phenomenon, a meaning derived from collective action governed by collective understandings and morals (Cohen 1955:59, 178, Gelder 2007:41). Similar to the work of the Chicago school, Cohen's point is that even the lowbrow and deviant are constituted of rational and moral human beings.

Cohen's work draws from Robert Merton's (1938) idea that the deviance of social groups could be traced to their deviant means to acquire approved societal goals. For Merton, deviance and nonconformity are the result of dissatisfaction with, and the inability to meet with, social norms and aspirations, producing anomie, or strains. Not being able to meet with these aspirations might then, depending on the level of anomie they experience, lead "mismatched" individuals to the rejection of these goals or to use deviant means to acquire material rewards. Cohen adds to this by arguing that delinquency is a consequence of nonconformity. Nonconformity is thus not equaled to alienation or anomie, but rather to a norm-guided rejection of societal goal, replacing them with an alternative morality within the group (Cohen 1955:65ff, cf. Gelder 2007:42).

Cohen's definition of subcultures follows from this argument, making them a collective innovation to problems encountered by groups of actors. For Cohen, delinquents find "subcultural solutions" in groups with similar situations and problems, as they cannot successfully adjust to dominant societal norms and goals (1955:59). Based on the assumption that all human action "is an ongoing series of efforts to solve problems" (1955:50), the function of subcultures becomes to provide an alternative set of moral standards to solve a shared problem generated by similar circumstances. This way, the subculture works to create a "sympathetic moral climate" within which deviant individuals gain status and thus profit based on these deviant norms (Cohen 1955:65).

Berger and Luckmann (1966:103) develop this idea further in relation to what Weber (1978:1084) refers to as "träger," arguing that subcultures are *carried* by a collectivity that produces a meaning recognized as having an objective reality within the group. The difference between Cohen and Berger and Luckmann, however, is that for Cohen this is an individual frame of reference—that we can choose a group that has a frame of reference that fits our

own—while for Berger and Luckmann this is a collective process in which the individual's frame of reference is a result of the collective that provides it with meaning. For both, however, subcultures emerge as collective strategies to overcome problems. The group stands in for the outside world and provides the actor with cooperation and exchange. As the group moves further away from the larger society its members consequently lose status within the latter. The response, argues Cohen, is to invert the moral standards of the larger society, making nonconformity a positive characteristic.

2.1.3. Furthering deviance

In his study on delinquent gangs, Cohen argues that certain behavior is chosen simply because of the out-group's distaste for it. Howard S. Becker (1963) extends this self-conscious road to deviance in his study of deviant musicians and marihuana smokers. Becker's idea is that collective deviant behavior is related to a group being conscious of their deviance and furthering the distance to larger society. Largely critical of the work of Cohen and more specifically of functionalism, Becker's point is that society is not marked only by consensus and stability, but also conflict and difference. Deviance, he argues, has no meaning in itself, but it is rather created by society, constructed in the outlining of social norms (1963:8f).

Nevertheless, Becker defines subcultures as arising in response to the collective experience of problems. To this he adds that such problem-solving furthers deviance by inverting societal norms and positioning one's own group as the normal and the rest of society as outsiders. The jazz musicians, for example, share the collective problem of all service occupations, namely that the client does not possess the ability to judge the proper worth and meaning of the service, yet nevertheless seeks to control it (1963:81f). As a consequence, conflict arises, and boundaries are created to defend against this outside interference. To Becker, this difference is not something imposed on participants, rather it is by choice: The function of the isolation and self-segregation is to protect the musician from the conventional society (1963:95f). For the musician, this comes down to choosing between conventional success: to succumb to the non-musicians and, "go commercial, or to stay true to artistic standards and then likely fail in larger society" (1963:83). In terms of subcultural theory, Becker's focus on participants' strategies to isolate and protect the creative and deviant from the conventional and commercial would have a strong impact, especially on the work of Dick Hebdige (1979). The importance of the maintenance of subcultural boundaries to the commercial was also something that would be developed and combined with the concepts of class and hegemony by the work on subcultures by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham and their focus on spectacular style.

2.2. The CCCS

2.2.1. Class and culture

In Edward P. Thompson's classic historical study, *The Making of the English Working Class* (1966), he argues that the foundation of the English working class was its opposition to "their rulers and employers" (1966:11). For Thompson, the English working class is primarily defined through their shared culture, rituals, and traditions expressing the way of life of the community. Thompson's stress on the cultural aspect of class and Raymond Williams' (1960, 1965) idea of the relationship between culture and society—that general causes are uncovered through an analysis of meanings and values—would be the starting point for the subcultural theory defined and developed by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS). The theoretical introduction to the CCCS's main work, *Resistance through rituals,* begins with a definition of culture as both structured and structuring in direct relation to Thompson's and William's idea that culture works as a map of meaning through which social and material existence is both transmitted and distorted (Clarke et al. 1976:10f). Being working class involves not only a structural position in relational and organizational terms, but also a structuring in terms of a pattern of meanings through which the former is experienced and made meaningful. Culture then becomes a way of experiencing life, not in a way chosen by the group itself but from an already given and historical past (cf. Marx 1934:10).

Cultural plurality for the CCCS is thus a matter of different positions being ranked and placed in opposition to each other along a subordinate/dominant continuum (Clarke et al. 1976:11f). Even though there are more that one set of cultural forms, it is the interests of the dominant positions that will seek to define and contain those forms that are subordinate. It is within this structuring of cultures, as constituting different positions in a struggle for the ascendency to define, that subcultures emerge: they constitute the ideological reactions to material conditions experienced by the working class. This is what makes them both "sub" and "cultural," the former referring to "smaller, more localized and differentiated structures" (Clarke et al. 1976:13), the latter to this being a means of experiencing and defining a structural positioning. For the CCCS, subcultures are the differentiated response to problems experienced and made meaningful within the working class culture; hence, subcultures are not analytically thought of as having a meaning of their own that is independent from their parent culture. Instead, their meanings can only be explained in relation to the contradictions encountered within the parent-culture.

2.2.2. Youth, class, and subculture

The reference to subcultures as part of a larger parent-culture also points to subcultures as the response to what Phil Cohen ([1972] 2007:539) refers to as a "generational conflict." One of the main points of the CCCS's subcultural theory is that stylistic representations of the working class youth and the rise of spectacular subcultures have to be viewed in light of the structural changes that characterized post-war Britain in terms of the relocation of families but also in terms of relative affluence. Cohen's point is that the increased lost sense of community that marked the post-war working class was due to urban redevelopment and mass consumption. The working class youth represent this double role of a romanticized past and a commercial present, pointing to either a bright or dark future for the working class.

   This tension between the adult world and the youth, the former fearing that consumerism would draw the working class youth away from home and the community, means that the working class family was not only threatened from the outside, but also "undermined from within" (Cohen [1972] 2007:542). Cohen's, and Clarke et al.'s (1976:32), conclusion is that subcultures try to magically recover this lost sense of community through style (Cohen [1972] 2007:545). It is a resistance to the dominant culture's hegemony through consumerism, appropriating and subverting commodities and their meaning while at the same time differentiating themselves from their parents. Consequently, skinhead style is interpreted as a substitution for the decline of traditional working class community (Clarke 1976a:99); teddy boys' style gives meaning to their social plight (Jefferson 1976:86); and the mod style symbolizes a pursuit of leisure as a compensation for the dull and mundane working week (Hebdige 1976:91).

   Nevertheless, these responses are all "imaginary" (Clarke et al. 1976:33), as the material problems they attend to remain "unresolved" (Cohen [1972] 2007:545). Although the spending power of the working class had increased, their means to alter their social and material positions had not changed. Hence there is no "subcultural solution" to the unemployment, poor education, dead-end jobs, and low paid work that the working class encounters. Instead, subcultural style becomes a symbolic solution to material problems experienced within a hegemonic order. Subcultural identities then become, similar to A. Cohen's (1955) argument, a re-adjustment rather then a maladjustment: a solution to problems encountered by the parent culture yet lived out by the youth (cf. Gelder 2007:42, 89). As such, subcultures for the CCCS become liminal, to use Turner ([1969] 1977:94). At the same time that they represent the community of the working class, their consumption mirrors the individualist modern society. Subcultures, then, are a representation of both class and youth.

2.2.3. Subcultures as text

As the meaning of style for the CCCS is attributed to structural conflict, the ethnographic work that had characterized the North American tradition of subcultural theory is replaced by a semiotic and structural reading of style. Relying on the work of Saussure, Barthes, and Levi Strauss, the focus of the CCCS is on supra-individual structures that shape the individual, with the "lived out" aspect of the subcultural reduced to a reading of style as expressing "a system of signs that express ideas" (Saussure 1966:16). The meaning of style thus becomes the making of style: "What makes a style is the activity of stylisation—the active organisation of objects with activities and outlooks" (Clarke et al 1976:54).

Saussure's (1966:67) point is that the relationship between the signifier and signified is arbitrary—that there is no "inner relationship" between the concept and the sound-image. To Saussure this is the independent force of language, as its structure is internal rather than imposed from external social and material structures (1966:95). Even the signified has to be approached as something within language, because both meaning and signification is immanent to language. But the CCCS subcultural theorists instead approach the reading of subcultural style through a Gramscian perspective, arguing that the signification of style is the active innovation of style against the inauthenticity of the consumer market. Culture is then seen as interrelated to the material world, part of a hegemonic ideology, as processes of meanings cannot be entirely separated from the hierarchal social structure in which they take place. As hegemony needs to be won rather than given, the dominated can, and will, resist the hegemonic order. It is this symbolic violation of order that acts "as the fundamental bearer of significance in subculture" (Hebdige 1979:19). It is this initial difference from the dominant that is the primary determinant of style, as subcultures enact the search for and expression of the forbidden aspects of the dominant. For Hebdige (1979:91, 115), these forbidden aspects refer to a consciousness of class. Consequently, subcultures become the signifier of what cannot otherwise be signified. Or, as Hebdige famously has put it, "Subcultures represent 'noise' (as opposed to sound): interference in the orderly sequence" (1979:90).

Hence, Hebdige moves from the street and speech to text and language. Punk, he argues, refused to be read and to be kept in line: instead it was held together, as it "signified chaos at every level" (1979:113). Punk's stylistic resignifications rested upon the obvious manufacture of style, of keeping the boundary between the subcultural and "the mainstream culture" clearly visible (1979:102, 107). Nevertheless, since the struggle against hegemony takes place within the dominant order, it is dependent on material conditions in order to succeed, and punk's semiotic disorder eventually attracted media attention. For Hebdige, this leads to an inevitable defusion of potential resistance and an incorporation of subcultural style into the dominant culture,

as subcultural signs were appropriated by "mainstream fashion" and transformed into commodities (cf. Clarke 1976b:185ff). Subcultural symbols are then "frozen" (Hebdige 1979:96), as they are stripped of their subversive connotations and instead mass produced as public goods. Consequently, Hebdige has a rather bleak future in mind for subcultural resistance: the cycle leading from opposition to defusion encloses each successive subculture. The subcultural resistant is inevitably incorporated.

2.3. Post-CCCS subcultural theory

The critique against the work of the CCCS and Hebdige is immense. Virtually every ensuing article or book on subcultures starts with the same ritual cleansing of the concept through a distancing from the work of the CCCS, to the extent that some theorists has argued that the work of the CCCS has become the mainstream against which one's own work is defined (Muggleton 2000:4, cf. Pilkington 1997:25). As Ken Gelder argues, "[I]t is as if the CCCS is like a (usually, bad) father with whom subsequent researchers are condemned to play out some sort of defiant Oedipal struggle" (2007:100). In a way, Hebdige was right in arguing that punk signaled a significant change, as the focus of the more contemporary work on subcultures has been on redefining the concept against the work of the CCCS's, rather than theoretically developing it.

I will describe three different approaches of the post-CCCS work, one focusing on resistance and commitment, the second postmodern, and a third that I will refer to as the "new" subcultural theory. What unites them, apart from the critique of the CCCS, is an ethnographic approach to how subcultures are lived out by the participants, a focus on style, and an emphasis on authenticity and identity. Given the main focus of this thesis, the first part will mainly focus on punk studies and the definition of the subcultural authentic as the resistant. In relation to the postmodern and "new" subcultural theory[7] I will return to a broader subcultural perspective.

2.3.1. Resistance, commitment, and subcultural identity

The main critique against the CCCS is that the structuralist and semiotic approach removes meaning from the participants, thus ignoring how the subcultural is lived out. As Sarah Thornton notes,

> While youth celebrated the 'underground', the academics venerated 'subcultures'; where one group denounced the 'commercial', the other criticized

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[7] My use of the "new" subcultural theorists should not be confused with Widdicombe and Wooffitt's (1995) use of the same term in reference to the CCCS.

'hegemony'; where one lamented 'selling out', the other theorized 'incorpo-ration' (1995:119).

Sue Widdicombe and Robin Wooffitt (1995:23) make a similar point, argu-ing that the CCCS's admiration of the subculture is coupled with a contempt of the actual members, who often are patronized and referred to as "kids." The work of the CCCS often implies that the members of subcultures do not know what is best for them or what their action should implicate.

The consequence of this critique of treating participants as passive and unaware of the subcultural meaning has been an emphasis on a more actor-focused approach to subcultures (cf. Leblanc 1999, Muggleton 2000, Hod-kinson 2002, Khan-Harris 2004). The subcultural studies that ensued in the 1980s combined such a critique, with a challenge against the CCCS's as-sumption of stable and homogeneous subcultural style. Michael Brake (1985:15), for example, points out that subcultures are not static or homoge-neous, but rather they include both complexity and diversity. Similar to the CCCS, Brake starts with the assumption that subcultural participants sharing the same collective problem due to contradictions in the social structure; however, Brake argues that how these problems are lived out by the individ-ual leads to a variety of subcultural styles.

This focus on individual meaning and stylistic diversity is also carried forward in James Lull's (1987) ethnography of punk in San Francisco and Kathryn J. Fox's (1987) study on the social stratification of punk. Similar to Brake, they argue that although all participants share punk's resistance to the dominant culture, what differs is the consistency between behavior and punk beliefs. To behave rightly is to prove commitment, and this in turn decides the social positions within the subculture, making stylistic diversity a matter of differences in commitment (Fox 1987:345). Fox differentiates here be-tween "hardcores," who incorporate and embody punk as a permanent way of life by endorsing a radical style and a rejection of 'normal' life, and "softcores," who look the part but are not as ideologically committed and loyal as the hardcores. In relation to these two, she also introduces a third category of the "preppies," defined as minimally committed. The definition of the preppies captures the stress on commitment. Defined through their lack of commitment, they are said to prefer a less permanent style to avoid negative sanctions from the mainstream. Lauraine Leblanc makes a similar distinction, combining radical style with subcultural commitment, stating that "punks with mohawks and tattoos were deemed to be more committed to the scene than those who had 'convertible' haircuts" (1999:86).

All of these are examples of how the CCCS's subcultural definition is merely elaborated upon to include stylistic differences between participants and differences in subcultural commitment. For example, even though the CCCS is criticized for focusing on working class subcultures (cf. Frith 1981, Burr 1984, Leblanc 1999), and picturing subcultural meaning as static and

uniform (cf. Andes 1998, Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995), focus remains on a resistance through style. Lull argues, for example, that punk's "major goal is to shock and outrage" (1987:251), and Fox that "[t]he punks needed people to shock" (1987:364). Similarly, Stephen W. Baron states that stylistic heterogeneity is a matter of "different levels of resistance to the dominant order" (1989a:299). Like Fox, for Baron heterogeneity refers to some punks being "totally committed to a lifestyle of resistance," including alienation from dominant goals, rebelling, and street-life, while others "display resistance in only one of these areas" (1989a:311). Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1990:274) add to this by arguing that while authentic punks *are* punk, the inauthentic are merely pretending to be by *doing* punk. Further, theoretically these authors agree that subcultures are a symbolic response to structural contradictions, and both Brake and Fox addresses differences among punks as due to class differences—the working class punk pursuing different collective responses than middle class punks.

Nevertheless, this shift towards studying how the subcultural is lived out by its members became the beginning of a move away from the CCCS's stable and uniform definition of style and practice. The homogeneity of subcultures had already been questioned (e.g., Fine and Kleinman 1979, Clarke [1981] 1990), yet the combination of commitment, resistance, and identity was to have a major impact on subcultural theory and its development through a postmodern definition of subcultures.

2.3.2. Postmodern subcultures and the fluidity of style

Introduced by the work of Steve Redhead (1990, 1993) and carried forward by the work of David Muggleton (1997, 2000), postmodern subcultural theorists criticize the previous subcultural research for having constructed subcultural boundaries and authenticities, including both the work of the CCCS and the ensuing work's focus on resistance. Muggleton (2000:100f), for example, is heavily critical of the work of Fox, arguing that commitment as a basis for stratification risks obfuscating individual interpretations of style. There are no hardcores or preppies, argues Muggleton, only members who construct themselves as authentic by distancing themselves from an imagined and homogenized mass. Similarly, Redhead (1990:25) and Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1995:19ff) propose that authentic subcultures are a product of subcultural theories focused on resistance. These theorists argue for a deconstruction of the boundary between an innovative inside and an exploitive outside, questioning whether subcultures could be seen as existing independently from, and in absolute opposition to, mass media and commercial interests. Thornton (1995:116ff), for example, argues that subcultures do not rise and grow mysteriously in isolation from the mass media. Rather, she argues that the media is part of creating subcultures. Linda Andes (1998:213), arguing against the claims made by Clarke (1976) and Hebdige

(1979) regarding the inevitable incorporation and death of the subcultural, takes this one step further in showing that already commodified subcultural styles can be re-appropriated and re-used by subcultural members, pointing to subcultural style being neither something stable nor independent from the commercial. Postmodern subcultural theorists point to subcultures as "fluid and fragmented 'hybrids'" (Osgerby 1998:203). Rather than substance and unity, style is seen as constituted of a mixing of all kinds of styles (Redhead 1993:3) assembled from a hyper-consumerist society, likened to a "super-market of style" (Polhemus 1997:150).

This critique also relates to the reification of the mainstream. According to Gary Clarke, the CCCS's sharp distinction between the inside and outside "rests upon the consideration of the rest of society as being straight, incorporated in a consensus, and willing to scream undividedly loud in any moral panic" (Clarke [1981] 1990:71). Thornton (1995), followed by Muggleton (1997, 2000) and Ryan Moore (2005), would develop this critique further, arguing that the mainstream is merely a subcultural other used to differentiate between the heterogeneous in-group and the homogeneous out-group, affirming its own distinctive character. Thornton also draws attention to the risk of universalizing the views of a particular group over others if we do not problematize the notion of the mainstream. Postmodern theorists argue that we are facing a society in which everyone claims to be different and the problem of investigating deviance lies not in identifying it, but in explaining how it differs from a mainstream (Moore 2005:250).

Still, the postmodern approach to subcultural theory is similar to that of the CCCS, as both address subcultures as a consequence of material changes. Whereas the CCCS argue that subcultures such as mods, skinheads and punks are a response to the economic circumstance of the post-war era and the increased spending power of the working class, the postmodern subcultural theorists define the rise of post-subcultures as due to effects of post-industrialization and the increased amounts of leisure among youth. Whereas the CCCS stresses class-based contradictions, the postmodern approach refers to infinite malleability and consumer choice (Bennett 1999:613). The biggest difference is that instead of seeing subcultures as magical and inevitable impotent solutions, the postmodern approach is centered on individual power in terms of agency (Williams 2011:32). Divisions such as race, gender, and class dissolve on the dance floor: raves being positioned as classless (Thornton 1995:55).

2.3.3. Subcultural substance and similarity

Although the postmodern critique of the reification of boundaries between the subcultural and the mainstream has been highly influential to the development of more recent subcultural theories, it has been criticized for emphasizing difference and heterogeneity rather than similarities. If style and

meaning are individual, what use do we have for a subcultural theory? Critical to the approach taken by postmodern subcultural theorists, Paul Hodkinson (2002:24ff) argues that the assumption that some boundaries are being dissolved does not preclude the idea that all boundaries are. Neither does it point to collective identity being meaningless for all participants, as Muggleton's work implies, as does Widdicombe and Woffitt's (1995) work. Hodkinson's work on goths is, among a few others (MacDonald 2001, Gelder 2007, Williams 2011), part of a recent attempt to rephrase subcultural theory by combining ideas of the CCCS and the Chicago school with the more contemporary theories recognizing the roles of media and commerce. This approach stems from the ideas of Thornton and especially her critique of the reification of both the mainstream and subcultural authenticity. Instead of arguing that subcultures are the result of resistance, class conflict, or problem-solving, these authors stress similarities that draw participants together, what Hodkinson refers to as a "cultural substance" (2002:29).

Hodkinson's point is that fluidity and substance should not be treated as binary oppositions but rather as a matter of degree. Meanings and symbols might very well differ between participants, as well as their reason for subcultural participation in the first place, yet what ties these people together is a shared set of values and tastes (Hodkinson 2002:30). This is how cultural substance is contrasted to fluidity: through a focus on similarities rather than differences in terms of style, identity, commitment, and relation to the outside world.

This is what sets Hodkinson's, work apart from the previous approaches to subcultural theory. Firstly, in contrast to the CCCS and the pre-CCCS work, there is no assumption of a shared problem or subcultural function, nor that style is something uniform. At the same time, the postmodern approach is criticized for not acknowledging that individual heterogeneity is complemented by conformity. As Nancy MacDonald (2001:132) points out, standing out nonetheless refers to fitting in, as in learning what to do and what not to. This focus on a shared belief that distinguishes participants from other groups has been stressed before, by for example Thornton (1997a), yet it is the combination of the ideas of Thornton with those of the CCCS that defines this "new" subcultural approach. As Patrick Williams points out, the distinct character of the subculture refers to constructing a subcultural "straw man" against which participants mark their distinctive and collective identities; in short, a mainstream (2011:9). The boundary between the mainstream and the subculture exists in the shared interaction and beliefs among participants. Hodkinson refers to this as a consistent distinctiveness—that the similarities in terms of shared ideals, tastes, and styles supersede individual differences. In order to identify as a goth, you are expected to act, look, and think in a certain way, or at least to *not* act, look, and think like everyone else. This means an increased stress on the inside against the outside, yet one that is defined by the members' identification with this shared set of values.

Secondly, these theorists share a critical stance against the previous sub-cultural theory's shortcomings regarding identity. Williams (2011), speaking from a symbolic interactionist perspective, is critical of the assumption that there is a subcultural core that participants internalize, as for example Fox (1987) and Leblanc argue (1999). Similar to Hodkinson, his point is rather that subcultures are both culturally bounded and open, and made of participants who interact and thus share specific meanings, objects, and practices. This interaction among participants, however, is still based on a shared similarity that gives rise to discursive structures affecting how participants experience their world. Subcultural commitment is thus related to subcultural identification rather than to an authentic core.

Thirdly, both Hodkinson and MacDonald describe how identifying with the subcultural has a deep impact on the everyday lives of the participants they followed. The life of the graffiti writers MacDonald followed centered on graffiti; they would spend their free time either making, preparing, or discussing graffiti. Similarly, Hodkinson tells of how the goths he followed were practically immersed in the subculture; goth-oriented activities dominated their daily lives and they travelled to shows and subcultural events. Further, most remained within the subculture for a significant period of time. To Hodkinson this continuous and concentrated involvement is a defining trait of the subcultural, setting it apart from other forms of affiliation (2002:31).

Apart from a shared distinctiveness, identification, and practical commitment to the subcultural, there is a fourth aspect of the "new" subcultural approach's to similarity: that of autonomy. The identification with and commitment to a shared set of values makes the subculture relatively independent, especially in terms of organization and production. The interactionist stand put forward by, for example, Williams (2011:5f) views subcultures as being negotiated through interaction or narrated (cf. Gelder 2007:2): they are being told by the participants, as well as by those documenting and monitoring them. Thus, subcultural difference or deviance can be imputed from the outside, as well as created from within. Hodkinson, similar to Muggleton and Thornton, stresses the role of media as a crucial player in establishing the subculture, and that we need to make a distinction between different kinds of media and commerce—between the independent and the profit making conglomerates. For Hodkinson, autonomy here refers to the production, organization, and representation within the subculture. Although it is not autonomous in the sense of being separated from the outside, the goth subculture Hodkinson investigates relied on, for example, internal production in terms of music, clothes, and services, establishing a singular and coherent translocal movement (Hodkinson 2004:144). MacDonald (2001:184) also refers to an aspect of independence, yet in relation to meaning. Subcultures, she argues, provide a separate set of rules to those communicated at home, in school, or through society at large, as these are self-

made, self-generated, and self-governed. They are constructed by the participants themselves in relation to subcultural practices without an appointed body of authority. Consequently, autonomy for MacDonald is a cultural matter rather than connected to the production of material goods. Instead, acts and objects are made meaningful through adhering them to a shared set of meanings. Subcultures in this sense oscillate between freedom and constraint, providing their members with a free space and a set of rules with which to navigate within them.

Accordingly, the "new" subcultural theorists constitute a sort of synthesis of the previous subcultural theories, incorporating the postmodern ideas of heterogeneity in terms of meanings and styles, while at the same time holding on to the CCCS's and pre-CCCS's definitions of subcultures as relatively stable and bounded space. The work of Park (1915) and Cressey (1932), as well as Fredrik Thrasher (1927), and Nels Anderson (1923) laid the groundwork for a thorough empirical analysis of deviance and urban life that still remains vital to subcultural theory, as do Cohen's (1955), and Becker's (1963) focus on the inversion of moral structures, making the deviant normal and the normal deviant. In this sense, Williams (2011:36) is right in arguing that the North American tradition, including the work of Fine and Kleinman (1979), has largely been underestimated in relation to its impact on subcultural theory, as focus has been on the work of the CCCS.

On the other hand, the work of the CCCS remains the most coherent attempt at establishing a thorough subcultural theory, assessing the relationship between class, culture, generation, and subcultural style. In the same way that we must not forget the importance of the work of the Chicago School and Becker, there is a risk of throwing out the baby with the bathwater in relation to the work of the CCCS. Most of the work post-CCCS has revolved around proving them wrong instead of developing the concept of subculture further. This is why the postmodern turn within subcultural theory is so important, as it started a discussion about what constitutes the subcultural and the mainstream, and the role of mass media in the definition of these. The work of the "new" subcultural researchers, and especially Hodkinson, is a first step in reassembling the pieces of the puzzle that the postmodern subcultural theorists dismantled. Given the purpose of this study, what is still lacking is a way to deal with subcultural plurality and authenticity.

3. Assessing Subcultural Plurality and Authenticity

Given one of the overarching purposes of this study—*how can we theoretically account for similarly structured and structuring heterogeneities within the subcultural*—all of the perspectives I have outlined so far have their advantages, as I will elaborate on in the next chapter. However, they also have a number of problems that first need attention. I will focus my critique on three points, all centered on the inability to address plural definitions within the subcultural: First, the inability of most of these theories to deal with subcultures as relatively independent symbolic systems. Secondly, I will address the realist notions of authenticity and commitment, as well as the definition of subcultural meaning as being single and uniform. The third point deals exclusively with the more recent ethnographic turn within subcultural studies and the epistemological consequences this has for the first two aspects of this critique. Even though there is an increased focus on subcultural heterogeneity and the negotiation of boundaries, the methodological choices often directly contradict this. All of these critiques condense to two larger questions: *what is the subcultural,* and subsequently, *what is the subcultural authentic?*

3.1. The relative dependency of culture

The vast majority of the perspectives on subcultural theory that have been outlined so far inevitably define subcultures as reactive and dependent: Most often subcultures are defined and explained as a direct reaction to material or socio-cultural structures. Further, it is this opposition that provides them with their meanings. Even though focus has increased on how the subcultural is lived out by the participants, explanations for subcultural actions are not sought from within the subcultural but are instead attributed as a response to these external structures. MacDonald's work is the exception here. This boils down to the meaning of the prefix "sub" still pointing to participants constituting a subordinated or deviating group within a conventional and/or threatening dominant culture. Subcultural action in this sense becomes a matter of either solving problems due to this situation or resisting it altogether.

The idea that subcultures arise in order to solve a problem is what connects the theories of Cressey (1932), Merton (1938), Cohen (1955), and Becker (1963) to those of the CCCS, (Hall and Jefferson 1976, Hebdige 1979), and Brake (1985). What differs is that for the former theorists, as well as for Brake, this is an individually experienced problem; for the CCCS and Hebdige, it is a matter of class. Both, however, are equally problematic from the point of view of addressing subcultural heterogeneities in terms of meaning and style. For the pre-CCCS theorists, the stress on the institutionalization of culture reduces the subcultural to institutional problems and values that actors choose between, as for example in the case of Cohen. Additionally, this view of culture in terms of stability/instability, and equilibrium/strain involves seeing subcultures merely as an alternative means to reward what otherwise would be negatively sanctioned. Regardless of Cohen's and Becker's extensive descriptions of the moral worlds of their informants, the subcultures they describe are in the end reduced to having no other meaning than creating a moral equilibrium for the deviant. For Becker, this is explained by reducing subcultures to a solution to the conflict between artistic production and commercial reduction, a claim that Bourdieu (1996), as well as Becker (1982), would further in their work on art and literature. Subcultures, this way, can be explained without having to address their internal meaning, as their function can be explained in relation to the socio-cultural conditions that gave rise to them.

The work of the CCCS and Hebdige is equally problematic in relation to subcultural heterogeneity. While *Resistance through rituals* (Hall and Jefferson 1976) starts by recapturing the work of E.P. Thompson (1966), *Subculture* (Hebdige 1979) is introduced through the work of Raymond Williams (1960). Neither of these, however, attempts to extend the relative autonomy of culture that Williams and Thompson suggest to subcultures. Clarke et al. (1976:10) note that the maps of meaning through which groups of people make sense of their social and material conditions need to be assessed, yet unfortunately they reduce these groups to merely the working class youth instead of exploring whether subcultural groups have their own internal meaning structures. The combination of a Gramscian approach with structuralism leads to the impression that cultural structures determine action rather than inform it. As a consequence, the CCCS's subcultural theory is rather maladroit in an analysis of how the subcultural is defined, negotiated, and validated by participants, as they cannot address why different subcultural groups behave and dress differently, nor can they attend to differences within these groups. While the subcultural, for the pre-CCCS theorists, works to resolve strains such as dealing with being deviant, for the CCCS the subcultural response merely becomes naive.

This inability to deal with differences in terms of subcultural meaning—what is resistance, what is resisted, and do all participants agree—continues to be a problem within subcultural studies. Although critical of the CCCS,

the majority of the work on punk still stresses subcultural uniformity and reifies boundaries between an authentic innovative inside and a commercial threatening mainstream. Instead of developing the concept of subculture and finding a working definition, it is all too often reduced to resistance to such an all-encompassing mainstream. The reason for this resistance echoes the claims made by the CCCS and Hebdige in that it is thought of as having a meaning external to the subcultural group, as if every action and object would have a similar meaning to all groups in a society. The idea seems to be that socio-cultural changes have an unmediated effect on subcultures, which ironically renders the subculture passive and dependent, rather than active and resistant. Instead of investigating how subcultural participants interpret and understand these changes, they are theorized either as threats of incorporation or as profoundly altering them. The latter argument is most strongly stressed by the postmodern subcultural theorists. Subcultural meaning is said to have yielded to the spectacular as a direct consequence of either post-industrial changes (Moore 2004:306f), "the hyper-inflationary market" of images (Clarke 2003:234), or as Muggleton puts it, "contemporary subcultural styles can be understood as a symptom of postmodern hyperindividualism" (2000:6).

The postmodern turn within subcultural theory certainly has its positive sides, such as the deconstruction of the border between the inside and the outside. But for most of these theorists, the deconstruction of this boundary comes to mean the destruction of everything: Individual style takes ascendency over subcultural meaning, as the only meaning style has is the spectacle (Muggleton 2000:44, cf. Redhead 1993:34, Muggleton 1997:194). Rather than investigating whether the mainstream is differently defined and positioned among participants, as well as how it is negotiated and established, it is reduced to a residual category.

The more recent contributions to subcultural theory are therefore certainly a move in the right direction, as in Gelder's and Williams' definition of the subcultural and the mainstream as something created and narrated. Yet in terms of empirical studies, the "new" subcultural theorists nevertheless define subcultural meaning as singular, as styles and identities are claimed in relation to one shared set of meaning, rather than multiple sets. Hodkinson argues, for example, that what is indicative of the subcultural is "the existence of *a set of* shared tastes and values which is distinctive from those of other groups and reasonably consistent, from one participant to the next, one place to the next and one year to the next" (2002:30, emphasis added; cf. MacDonald 2001:184, Haenfler 2006:35). Whereas the postmodern approach conceals similarities through a focus on difference, the "new" subcultural theorists often substitute difference for similarity, arguing that the heterogeneity of style is a matter of individual interpretation of the collectively shared. As participants seek to define themselves as unique in relation to other participants, they seek to individually tweak a singular shared set of

meaning. Consequently, heterogeneities are sought in style rather than in the meaning structures within which styles (and identities) are claimed and made subcultural.

3.2. Style-based subcultures

The second point of criticism I want to make follows from the first: Any study on subcultural authenticity needs to attend to the question of what constitutes the subcultural before addressing the issue of authenticity. Accordingly, if the definition of subcultural meaning is single, so is the definition of authenticity. Regardless of whether subcultures are defined in terms of problem-solving, resistance, or individual distinction, these definitions point to *a particular* reaction to external structures. The postmodern approach to subcultural theory follows a similar path, as there is no collective meaning and thus authenticity becomes an individual matter. Further, as subcultural meaning is single and a reaction to structures external to the subculture, what are investigated are the *forms* such a reaction takes, making authenticity a measure of the distance between subcultural actions, dress, appearance, tastes, values, etc. and the normal mainstream society. Consequently, authenticity is rarely problematized beyond different strategies to attain this single meaning. Instead, as I will show, it is used to order and explain heterogeneities in terms of style and meaning so as to confirm the subcultural logic as singular.

Take Hebdige and his argument that the subculture expresses the forbidden aspects of the dominant, e.g., the consciousness of class (1979:91). What Hebdige investigates is then not so much the meaning of subcultures but rather their dialectic relation to the dominant order in terms of actions, reactions and eventually incorporation: What starts as resistance inevitably ends in incorporation (Hebdige 1979:100). Accordingly, for Hebdige, as well as for the rest of the CCCS (cf. Clarke et al. 1976, Clarke 1976b) subcultural authenticity lies in the formation of style; this first "authentic" moment of resistance creates a distinction between the "originals"—the "self-conscious innovators" to whom style made sense—and the "hangers-on"—attracted by the mass mediated defusion and diffusion of this meaning (Hebdige 1979:122). This way, differences among participants that potentially could disarm this uniform idea of the subcultural—such as heterogeneities in terms of participants' class background—can be explained away in reference to the subcultural authentic: The "original" punks are working class, resisting the dominant order by expressing the forbidden content through the activity of stylization, while those who do not meet this standard are dismissed as merely a sign of the subculture's destined decline (Hebdige 1979:91, 103). Differences are thus explained in terms of maintaining an authentic subcultural core established in relation to existing socio-economic structures.

As I have shown, this is also the case when differences within punk are addressed as dependent on commitment, as differences in punk are not treated as opposing fractions, but as stratification, based on adherence to the authentic. Baron (1989a:299) notes, for example, that the punk subculture is heterogeneous, and that the rebel is but one attitude, the subcultural allowing for plural responses to different goals and problems. However, on the same page he reduces these differences to one single meaning in defining them as a matter of different levels of commitment to resisting the dominant culture. Similarly, when Leblanc argues that "punk was, and is, about living out a rebellion against authority" (1999:34), her subsequent definition of subcultural authenticity refers to giving up school, employment and conventional housing (cf. Davis 2006:64 and MacDonald on authenticity and illegality 2001:171f). Fox's (1987) distinction between core and peripheral participants based on their commitment is another example of explaining differences through a single uniform authenticity based on style, as is Lee and Peterson's (2004:193) distinction between "the fully committed core" who live the life of the scene and "the tourists" whose involvement is temporary and fluid. Accordingly, subcultural change is seen as development, with members moving either away or closer to the authentic resulting in a stratification of participation based on a uniform style.

The critique against the CCCS for reifying the boundary between the inside and the outside does not mean the obliteration of this boundary; instead it remains visible in the notion of the subcultural authentic as that which is distant from the mainstream. More than 20 years, ago Ulf Hannerz (1992:81) criticized subcultural theory for assuming that subcultures constitute some specialized evolution from the mainstream. Still, the binary relationship between the pairs subcultural/mainstream, autonomous/dependent, and authentic/commercial that Hebdige outlines is still prevalent in definitions of the authentic as that which remains autonomous from the mainstream. This is captured in notions of authenticity being lost by the mainstream's "plundering" of subcultures (Leblanc 1999:164, cf. Roberts and Moore 2009:22). Instead of investigating how such a binary relationship is established as meaningful, and whether it differs among participants, it is presumed as single and solid. Thus, how subcultural change is perceived mirrors Hebdige's definition of the relation between authenticity and resistance. If the result of change is moving away from the mainstream, then the subculture's authenticity persists; if not, subcultures are commercialized and inauthentic. To fail in regards to the autonomous and resistant is to be a bleak imitation (cf. Huxley 1999:83). As Dylan Clarke (2003:224) so dramatically puts it, "Torn from its societal jungle and safely taunted by viewers behind barcodes, punk, the last subculture, was dead."

Consequently, even though there has been a turn within subcultural studies towards the construction of authenticity (Noy 2004, 2009, Lewin and Williams 2009, cf. Grossberg 1993, Auslander 1999) that I will address in

the following chapter, the realist notion of authenticity is still largely prevalent. Dowd et al. (2004:161:ff), for example, juxtapose the "original values" of punk rock with those of "corporate interests," arguing that the fusion of these is "unsettling" and produces merely a "compelling illusion of authenticity." Again, instead of being problematized and analyzed, subcultural authenticity is rather used for theoretical boundary work. Inevitably, this homogenizes the subcultural by concealing any different interpretations, leaving little room for deviation from the subculture's defined nature.

This brings me to the matter of the mainstream. Taken together, the consequence of defining the subcultural and the authentic as a resistance, or response, to socio-economic/cultural structures is that the role of the mainstream becomes ambivalent. The mainstream is, on the one hand, seen as passive, mass consuming, and commercialized and, on the other, as threatening, exploitive, and incorporating. Instead of investigating whether this does not point to multiple definitions of the mainstream, this ambivalence is not resolved even among those who criticize it (Thornton 1995, Muggleton 2000, Moore 2005). This way, the postmodern approach to authenticity (as part of an individual distinction referring to a genuine self) confirms a single definition of the authentic. This makes it possible for Muggleton to argue that what he studies are post-subcultural participants freed from structure, while on the very same page outlining a binary code of which the positive side is used by his informants to "characterize themselves" and the negative to "inauthenticate others" (2000:158).[8] Thus at the same time as he argues that his informants express a fragmented identity freed from structure, he describes a collective boundary work against the inauthentic. Instead of pursuing these binary pairs—including alternative/mainstream, heterogeneity/homogeneity, diversity/restriction, freedom/regulation, and innovation/copying—he concludes that his informants' use of these boundaries is indicative of a "sense of individual freedom" (Muggleton 2000:160). As a consequence, the critique of the reification of the mainstream merely reduces the mainstream to an empty residual category, used to contrast individual style.

Further, neither of the perspectives presented here can address subcultural changes for both the subcultural and the subcultural authentic as coming from within. Nor can they explain differences in style and action among participants, nor across subcultures. For the Chicago School, Cohen, and Becker this is because subcultures in themselves are solutions to individual problems of assimilation. To the CCCS, the focus on class restrains them from doing so. Although postmodern theorists do address heterogeneity in styles, they do not stress the process of interpretation and negotiation enough

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[8] The postmodern approach to subcultural theory and their insistence on a more interpretative approach risks obliterating a shared representation of the subcultural, neglecting the collective validation and ordering of meaning. Thus, such an approach, which is at times referred to as a Weberian (Muggleton 2000:9ff), must take into consideration that for Weber individual meaning nevertheless rests on a collective structure of meaning (cf. Weber [1930] 2001:20).

in relation to collective shared sets of meanings. The postmodern approach to subcultural theory cannot address such questions of heterogeneous meanings without referring to fluid boundaries and the ascendency of style over meaning.

What I have referred to as the "new" subcultural theorists capture the above critique against the realist notion of authenticity in their emphasis on subcultural similarities. As Williams puts it,

> The boundaries between the subculture and the mainstream are not concrete, but are negotiated by individuals and groups as an ongoing process of (re)classifying certain tastes and behaviors as legitimate or illegitimate, critical or passive, "highbrow" or "lowbrow," decent or immoral, and so on (2011:9-10).

Yet, these theorists do not provide any solution for how to deal with subcultural differences and plural authenticities and mainstreams. Instead they reduce similarity to one set of meaning and explain differences in terms of individuality. Similar to Muggleton's claims that subcultural authenticity refers to a genuine self, Lewin and Williams (2009:78f) note how inauthentic style is that which does not reflect the self, as well as sudden change (cf. Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995:155). The heterogeneity of the subcultural, as well as subcultural change, is thus attributed to individual strategies and the stress on individuality.

Although this certainly is a more interesting approach to authenticity, what is still missing is how to relate plural authenticities to internal subcultural difference. Muggleton (2000:100), drawing from Thornton, points to the existence of plural authenticities, arguing that the notions of the mainstream, as Williams (2011) also points to, are negotiated and agreed upon. Instead of being problematized, however, these plural notions of the authentic and the mainstream are left hanging, producing an illusion of subcultural unity.

3.3. Insider ethnographies and the epistemological reinstitution of subcultural boundaries

My third critique against the previous subcultural research refers to the epistemological dimension of the definition of the subcultural as single in terms of both sampling and analysis of data: On what basis are informants selected and what consequence does this have for both the definition of the subcultural as well as that of the subcultural authentic? An important matter here is that the postmodern critique against the reification of the boundary between the inside and the outside coincides with a methodological shift in terms of the status of the researcher and his or her proximity to the research field,

stressing the participating insider rather than the observing outsider (cf. Bennett 2003, Hodkinson 2005).

The Chicago School, Cohen, and the ensuing work of the CCCS had no reason to epistemologically construct a distance, or proximity, to the field, as subcultures, or deviant groups, were already presumed a priori as demarcated and homogeneous prior to the gathering of data. The researcher was, with the exception of pioneer insider studies such as Anderson's work on "hobos" and Becker's on jazz musicians, approaching these groups from the outside—in the case of the Chicago School and Cohen looking in, whereas the CCCS had more of an outsider-out approach (MacRae 2007:53ff).

The shift from an emphasis on the outsider to insider within subcultural studies is due to a number of factors. First of all, the methodological critique of the CCCS's work for ignoring the participants' accounts led to an increasing amount of work promoting the subcultural participants' viewpoints and motivations, what Andy Bennett (2002:455) refers to as "the ethnographic turn." Second, a substantial portion of these ethnographies involves researchers with an initial proximity to the researched group, which has been referred to as "the social anthropology of one's own kind" (Rock 2001:34), "native anthropologists" (Narayan 1993:671ff), "native ethnography' (Wolcott 1999:146), or summarized in the term "insider research" (Roseneil 1993:177, Hodkinson 2005:136).

This includes research on clubbing (Malbon 1999, Moore 2003), heavy metal (Weinstein 2000), extreme metal (Khan-Harris 2004), goth (Hodkinson 2002), straight edge (Haenfler 2004b, Williams 2006), and punk (Leblanc 1999, O'Connor 2008, Force 2009); some of these emphasize their own insider status more than others. Malbon (1999:32), for example, states that his "own experience as a clubber" was crucial to his study on clubbing, and Roseneil (1993:189) notes, in her study on protestors, that an insider researcher can access situations that are out of reach for the outsider. Similarly, Hodkinson (2005:138) notes that his "carefully cultivated subcultural appearance" and "ability to participate authentically in activities" were critical to his access to the goth subculture. In sharp contrast to the previous subcultural theories, the insider researcher is conceived of as having the means of telling a truer story of the subcultural. Consequently, although the epistemological debate within sociology and anthropology regarding insider and outsider doctrines was pretty much settled in the 1970s and early 1980s (cf. Merton 1972, Aguilar 1981, Appadurai 1988), it continues to be of relevance within subcultural and youth studies (c. f. Bennett 2002, MacRae 2007).

In his article on the insider and outsider doctrines, Merton (1972) argues that the insider/outsider distinction refers to an epistemological principle: the patterned differences among groups give them different means of acquiring knowledge. The insider doctrine positions the outsider as structurally incapable of accessing knowledge—either, as in its strong version, a call for a monopolistic access to knowledge, or in its weaker version, a matter of hav-

ing privileged access. The opposite, the outsider doctrine, holds that knowledge about groups is only accessible to outsiders that are not prejudiced by membership. Both doctrines presume either a monopolistic, or at least privileged, access to knowledge or exclusion from gathering such knowledge on the basis on one's group membership (Merton 1972:15). To argue for either of these doctrines is to presume that the cultural is both uncomplicated and uniform, as they both homogenize the cultural and cultural identities. Hence, Merton points to the insider and outsider doctrines as simplistic ways of looking at group membership: We are members of different groups at the same time, and thus in a structural sense always both insiders and outsiders regardless of the situation. As Aguilar (1981:25) asks, the question then remains what we are insiders of (cf. Styles 1979, Messerschmidt 1981, Narayan 1993, Ravn 2012).

Unfortunately, the epistemological consequences of this initial subjective proximity are rarely discussed within subcultural and youth studies. And when they are (Bennett 2002, 2003, Hodkinson 2005, MacRae 2007), what is addressed is a call for reflexivity regarding the relationships to the field rather than the impact this has on subcultural theory. Hodkinson (2005:141f), for example, argues that there is no single true view of subcultural experience, but rather multiple views of what constitute insiders and outsiders. His point is that being granted trust and access is related to how the researcher is positioned and classified by the participants: Notions of proximity and distance between the researcher and the researched are then subculturally defined, clarified by a distinctive set of ascribed or achieved characteristics, rather than epistemologically. Nevertheless, he remains a proponent of insider research and argues, similar to Roseneil (1993), that insider researchers have an advantage over outsiders as they already possess knowledge and experience with which they can judge and validate the informants stories and actions based on their own knowledge of the field (Hodkinson 2005:144).

What makes this stance rather delicate is the post-CCCS critique against the reification of the boundaries between the subcultural and the mainstream. Thornton (1995), for example, questions whether there is an existing entity that corresponds to the mainstream, and postmodern theorists such as Redhead (1993) and Muggleton (1997, 2000) argue that there is no core or periphery regarding subcultural membership. Bennett and Peterson (2004:12) make a similar point in arguing that boundaries are hard to draw and that there is therefore little use for separating between members and non-members and between what is a scene or subculture and what is not.

Accordingly, the ethnographic turn within subcultural studies leaves us with two paradoxes that needs attention, one methodological and one epistemological. First, if we cannot separate between members and non-members, between the subcultural and the mainstream, then how do we decide whom to include in such a study, and on what assumptions do we

ground such a decision? Second, if the boundaries between the subcultural and the mainstream, as well as between members and non-members, are hard to draw, how can we possibly speak of insider researchers?

Unfortunately, these paradoxes are dealt with in an incongruous way, with the insider researcher becoming the epistemologically impossible solution to the methodological problem of deciding whom is to be included and who is not. The most obvious way of handling this potential dilemma is the emphasis on informants' and interviewees' self-identification as subcultural participants (Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995, Leblanc 1999, Hodkinson 2002, Haenfler 2006). This is also articulated as one of the strengths of the ethnographic turn in relation to the work of the CCCS; it is an actor-oriented focus on how the subcultural is lived out, rather than a presumed structural resistance. However, it seems that this emphasis on self-identification often hides more than it reveals, as the questions of who is allowed to talk are often tied into the researcher's pre-existing relations with the field. Muggleton, for example, points out that the "typical subculturalists"[9] (2000:15) he interviewed were unwilling to define themselves as belonging to a subculture. This makes him conclude that they resist a stereotypical subcultural image. It is Muggleton himself, however, who defines their presumed subcultural status: "Subcultural informants were selected for this study on the basis of what I regarded as their unconventional appearance" (2000:171).[10] Similarly, Leblanc starts her study on punk girls and resistance by recounting how she was thrown out of school for being a punk, but also how her initial subcultural participation was used as a methodological tool: "In many cases, I resorted to my own initial judgments of subcultural participation through observations of possible interviewees' clothing and demeanor" (1999:25f). Force (2009:293f) states that access and continuous fieldwork in the punk scene was neither obtrusive nor problematic because of his previous involvement in punk (cf. Hayano 1982:155, Fox 1987:346, Malbon 1999:32, Hodkinson 2002:5f, Moore 2003:149ff, Glass 2012:700). Further, both Cisar and Koubek (2012:7) and Hancock and Lorr (2013:325) include their previous subcultural participation in punk as part of their fieldwork, the latter referring to this as an informal participant observation. Thus, not only is participation equaled to doing research, but it is further used to point to an "authentic" researcher who knows how to separate between members and

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[9] The term *subculturalist* is used by Muggleton to refer to members of subcultures, as it is also used by Williams (2011). To complicate things, Thornton (1995) and Gelder (2007) uses subculturalist to refer to subcultural theorists while Haenfler uses the term "subculturist" in speaking about participants (Haenfler 2006: 155)

[10] Muggleton's choice of sampling is increasingly intriguing given his earlier remark that such a classification is fraught with problems due to boundaries becoming fluid: "As differentiated unities are replaced by a similarity of difference, 'appearance perception' becomes a hazardous undertaking, an ever-increasing number of interpretations being possible" (1997:192).

non-members, as well as how to pursue variations among participants, handles the fluid boundaries between the subcultural and the mainstream.

Accordingly, the first paradox is solved by ignoring the second: The insider researcher is able to read the writing on the wall and sort out the authentic participants from the fake based on his or her own subcultural knowledge. This brings about at least two important questions: First, who is *not* included in these studies and on what basis? What happens to those subcultural participants who do not fit the researcher's "initial judgments" of "unconventional appearance"? Second, and even more problematic, how can we avoid finding ourselves trapped in confirming a single subcultural authenticity if we are singling out participants on the basis of how they dress? This is the problem of the "new" subcultural theorists' focus on a single set of similarities of which styles and identity are indicative. Instead of exploring whether there are subcultural performances that point to other sets of meanings (as well as other styles and identities), these are inevitably neglected.

The epistemological consequence of this is that it actually strengthens the CCCS's well-criticized presumption of subcultures as stable and homogeneous entities separated from the mainstream. The clear boundary between the subcultural and the mainstream functions as the foundation for the insider researcher's privileged status in gaining access and knowledge about the participants' meanings and motivations. Far from dissolving these boundaries, the stress on the insider is that the subcultural becomes situated as beyond the reach of the "normal," uninitiated mass, as this distance between the subcultural and the mainstream society calls for an insider researcher. I will return to this in relation to my own methodological considerations.

3.4. Concluding remarks

To conclude, neither of these previous subcultural perspectives provides a means to address plural similarities and differences among participants, nor a means to address plural authenticities. Instead, the CCCS and most of the work that followed from it (cf. Brake 1985, Fox 1987, Moore 2004) focuses on subcultures as a collective solution and resistance, and consequently differences are downplayed or explained away entirely due to socio-economic structures, homogenizing both meaning and style. The postmodern opposition to such a stance is equally problematic. Instead of pursuing how the individualization of style and meaning is collectively made meaningful, it is taken at face value, dismissing both meaning and style as utterly heterogeneous and individual (Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995, Muggleton 2000). The middle point of these two approaches, the "new" subcultural theory, does recognize a collective similarity, yet positions it as singular; participants express the subcultural individually but are joined by a commitment to a

"cultural substance" that provides meaning to both subcultural participation and the individual as the unique (Hodkinson 2002). Still, the recognition of a shared system of meaning is but the first step to an analysis of similarly structured and structuring subcultural heterogeneity; the second step is to address how actions, objects, and identities are authenticated by relating them to patterned sets of meanings that provides these actions both with a past and a present, as well as situating them in relation to other interpretations. In short, how are differences structured and made sense of, both in terms of individual and collective styles and interpretations? In order to do so the relationship between the subcultural, the mainstream, and the authentic needs to be elaborated into a definition that can accommodate both differences and similarities, both contrast and unity. In so doing, I will show that such an elaboration does not have to deviate significantly from the perspectives that have been outlined so far.

4. The subcultural, the Mainstream, and the Authentic

> There are in fact no masses; there are only ways of seeing people as masses. [...] What we see, neutrally, is other people, many others, people unknown to us. In practice, we mass them, and interpret them, according to some convenient formula. Within its terms, the formula will hold. Yet it is the formula, not the mass, which it is our real business to examine (R. Williams 1960:319).

In his book on subcultural theory, Patrick Williams (2011) argues that instead of applying the term subculture to classify groups and social networks, we need to approach it as a cultural phenomenon based on a shared meaning. Although I agree with Williams, the fact that he feels compelled to make such a claim is more revealing than the actual statement. Given the discussion in the previous chapter I will argue that this is due to a preoccupation with subcultures as responses to external structural problems rather than having a relatively autonomous structure of meanings, making both the "sub" and the "cultural" dependent variables. This includes the emphasis on style rather than meaning, and further, a single uniform meaning rather than plural patterns of meanings.

Further, the last two decades has seen a terminological inflation with concepts such as "neo-tribes," "post-subcultures," "club-cultures," and "scene" gaining prevalence over the term subculture. For example, James Lull (1987) uses "scene," "subculture," and "deviant community" to describe punk, O'Connor (2002) also calls punk a scene and a subculture, and Fox (1987) refers to punk as an "antiestablishment style culture," "scene," "community," "subculture," "counter culture," and "social movement" all in the same text and in relation to the same phenomenon. Similarly Thornton (1995), in studying clubbing, equates club culture to "subculture," "underground," "crowds," "scenes," and "clublands." These concepts are rarely, if ever, further defined, nor are the differences between them articulated. The problem with this terminological inflation is that it confines these categories into watered down definitions with little theoretical significance and thus obscures the means available to thoroughly investigate how participants make sense of styles and identities, as well as the shared patterns of meanings made use of in so doing. Instead, subculture has become what Bennett calls "a convenient 'catch-all' term for any aspect of social life in which young people, style and music intersect" (1999:599).

This is why Williams' (2011:33) point that subculture and scene do not have to be juxtaposed as opposites is so important, as it positions this distinction as one between the social and the cultural, the vernacular and the theoretical. Scene can then be used to capture the social aspect of subcultural participation and interaction, whereas subcultures refer to a cultural aspect: a shared system of meanings within which practices, styles, and identities are communicated and interpreted (2011:36).

Having said that much, this theoretical chapter will center on three questions. First, what is the subcultural? What does it mean when we address an object, practice, identity, or meaning structure as subcultural? Second, how does the "sub" relate to the "cultural"? In other words, how are differences and similarities structured? Third, I want to open up for the subcultural as being plural, that there can be multiple definitions of both the mainstream as well as the subcultural. Hence, the definition of the subcultural authentic will have to relate to a structuring of both similarities and differences.

4.1. The subcultural

Similar to Hebdige (1979:6), I want to take my starting point in Raymond Williams' idea of the cultural. The difference, however, is that I want to analytically explore the plurality of cultural structures and the relative autonomy of these structures that Raymond Williams' work suggest, rather than merely positioning them along a subordinate/dominant continuum specified by the hegemonic position of the dominant. This will include a discussion of how the mainstream as constitutes a vital part of the subcultural, with both the mainstream and the subcultural stemming from what Williams calls "the formula" (1960:319). What matters is not so much the mainstream or the subcultural, but the cultural structures within which both of these are made meaningful. Consequently, we would then expect that different formulas, or rather different subcultural structures of meaning, relate to different definitions of the mainstream as well as different authenticities. The more recent focus on similarity and substance is in this sense just as problematic as the work of the CCCS in its individualization of style and differences and its homogenization of meaning.

4.1.1. The "cultural" property of the subcultural

First, I contend with the idea that culture is more reminiscent of a language than it is the property of a specific social group: a signifying system through which social relations and experiences are communicated, experienced, and reproduced (Williams 1981:13, cf. Geertz 1973c). Exploring meaning thus involves an examination of these formulas of classification and interpretation, assessing how objects and actions are ordered and made sense of. Jef-

frey Alexander and Philip Smith (2003:12) refers to this as the relative autonomy of culture: to analytically separate the meanings from the objects, investigating the supraindividual "interpretative grids" that symbolically structures what we experience emotionally, cognitively, and morally (Alexander 2003b:31). Instead of seeing culture as a dependent variable, Alexander asks us to consider the internal dimension of culture—a dialectic relation between inner and outer worlds that simultaneously constrains and enables action (cf. Alexander 1990:3). Reminiscent of Durkheim's (1955:105) notion of man being endowed with both a personal and collective consciousness, the point is that even though action is carried out by individuals, the meaning of these acts, and what turns them into acts in the first place, is collective (Geertz 1973b:52).

Similar to Thompson (1966) and Williams (1960), what is argued here is that material objects and events cannot be seen as having a direct consequence on culture and action. Actions and objects do not speak for themselves; they have to be represented and interpreted by actors (cf. Alexander 2003b:31, Eyerman 2008:10, 2011:13f). This does not mean that the objects are not there, only that in order to be meaningful they need to be communicated and interpreted. The patterned set of meanings that constitute the cultural shapes and constrains the outcome of such a communication. It is through the cultural that actions and objects are mediated and provided with a particular meaning. This is the internal structure of the cultural (cf. Smith 2008:13, 28).

Accordingly, culture is best understood as an adjective rather than as a noun—a contrastive force, rather than something out there that can be grasped physically or metaphysically. The cultural is not a thing or a dependent variable to be studied, but rather the dimensional thread that runs through *all* such communication and interpretation (Alexander 2003a:7). This shift from the noun "culture" to the adjective "cultural" suggests a move from the substantive to the contrastive:

> The most valuable feature of the concept of culture is the concept of difference, a contrastive rather than a substantive property of certain things […] I suggest that we regard as cultural only those differences that either express, or set the groundwork for, the mobilization of group identities (Appadurai 1998:12f).

The dimensional aspect of the cultural that Alexander argues is running through every conceivable social form is to Arjun Appadurai worked through a dialectic between difference and similarity, meaning and action, and collective and individual. Objects are situated as representations of the patterned sets of meanings within which they are at the same time expressed. Further, as Appadurai notes, these similarities are made meaningful through their contrasts. Consequently, what constitute cultures is not what they are,

but rather how they are made through the articulation of differences. To refer back to the "new" school of subcultural theory, cultural substance is then the consequence of participation rather than a prerequisite (cf. Hodkinson 2002:28ff).

Exploring meaning involves an examination of these formulas of classification and interpretation—how objects and actions are experienced, felt, ordered, and made sense of; in short, the way actions and objects are attributed with an intent and meaning. Clifford Geertz (1973c:215) refers to this as the process through which these grounding differences are extended to express what is beyond its initial boundaries so as to render the otherwise unfamiliar comprehensible. Metaphors and analogies broaden the cultural structure to include that which is yet to be included. These extensions and relations are what forms the maps of meaning and patterns that sustain the collective identities expressed by cultural differences, forming "an intricate structure of interrelated meanings" (Geertz 1973c:213).

4.1.2. The prefix "sub"

If there is one unifying trait of all different attempts to formulate a subcultural theory, it is that they all articulate subcultures as different from the conventional or normal, or in short, the mainstream. For the CCCS, the Chicago School, and Cohen, this difference is ascribed as subcultural participants being *already different* due to their class position, ethnicity, age, or to spatial dimensions. To Becker, Brake, Leblanc, and most of the work on subcultural resistance, this difference is something *achieved* through style, including dress, action, language, etc..

The definition of difference also relates to how the "sub" of the subcultural is defined. Thornton (1997a:4) notes that traditionally the "sub" in subcultural studies has referred to the subordinate, subaltern, and subterranean. In particular this relates to the early subcultural work in which participants are included in "society" yet considered deviant and thus beneath (cf. Lalander 2003:6). On the other hand, for much of the work that followed from the CCCS, the "sub" has come to stand for the subversive as in the rebellious and resistant. The definition provided by Clarke et al. (1976:13), however, is that the "sub" refers to subcultures as a part of larger cultural structures. This definition of the "sub" harks back to Green's (1946) and Gordon's (1947) initial definitions of subcultures as sub-societies, and still remains the implicit reference to the prefix "sub": an "embeddedness in a wider whole of differing cultural characteristics" (Hannerz 1992:69).

The work of Thornton, Gelder, and Williams develops this further by arguing that this embedded difference is not something already existing, but rather something constructed and communicated. Narratives of the subcultural are in this sense a matter of taking positions, of drawing boundaries between the conceived different and the equally conceived undifferentiated.

As Hannerz puts it, "subcultures tend to be collectivized perspectives toward perspectives" (1992:78).

Interestingly, Hebdige, in an often-overlooked passage, provides the outline to such an investigation of the subcultural structures of meaning through a communicated difference:

> The communication of a significant difference, then (and the parallel communication of a group identity), is the 'point' behind the style of all spectacular subcultures. It is the superordinate term under which all the other significations are marshalled, the message through which all the other messages speak. Once we have granted this initial difference a primary determination over the whole sequence of stylistic generation and diffusion, we can go back to examine the internal structure of individual subcultures (Hebdige 1979:102).

What Hebdige speaks of here is an idea of a communicated significant difference as an elementary subcultural structure, behind both style and identity, that orders the internal structure of subcultural meaning: It is "the message through which all the other messages speak." This superordinate subcultural structure both works to represent the collective and to divide the world according to this distinction between the different and undifferentiated. Unfortunately, the communicating part, or if you prefer the representations, of difference and collective identity, are lost in Hebdige's analysis and focus on text and language rather than the street and speech. Accordingly, the boundary work between the set apart and the undifferentiated is left untouched.

But Hebdige was not the first to outline the binary logic of the subcultural/mainstream as superordinate, as Becker (1963) did the same in his study on jazz musicians and marihuana smokers. Becker's argument is that the jazz musicians distance themselves from the conventional society through patterns of isolation and segregation, constructing a boundary between the special musician and the undifferentiated square. Even though Becker refers to this boundary as a matter of a shared problem that leads participants to distance themselves from the squares, he allows for an analysis based on an internally communicated and conceived difference. The definition of the musician, for example, is articulated as someone who is "conceived of as an artist who possesses a mysterious artistic gift setting him apart from all other people" (1963:85). The opposite, the square, on the other hand "refers to the kind of person who is the opposite of all the musician is, *or should be*" (1963:85, emphasis added). Thus, similar to Hebdige's claim, rules and regulations, as well as style, are ordered through the communicated difference to the subcultural opposite. Becker's continuing analysis of this relationship only adds to the superordinate status of such a binary distinction between the different and the conventional, established in the working of binaries such as having the gift/lacking the gift, independent/dependent,

talented/ignorant, different/normal, sensitive/insensitive, tolerant/intolerant, etc. (Becker 1963:85-90).

The third example of this binary logic is Sarah Thornton's (1995) work on club cultures. Similar to Becker, she defines the subcultural as a means to imagine one's own world and one's own group's distinct character from an equally imagined mainstream, as difference revolves around the continuous exclusion of the hip world's "perpetually absent, denigrated other" (1995:5). It is in relation to this "other" that one's own distinctive character is both claimed and affirmed (cf. Grossberg 1987:147f, Williams 2011:11). Commitment, as well as authenticity, thus becomes a matter of negotiation and dispute, as the mainstream becomes what the hip world constantly attempts to escape: the image of the undifferentiated mass.

Still, it is Nancy Macdonald, in her study on the graffiti writers in London and New York, that connects such a communicated difference and the boundary work to the undifferentiated other to the prefix "sub":

> 'Sub' not in the sense of different from or beneath other groups and cultures, as this would involve outsiders' own value judgements. But 'sub' as in separate from. A subculture may be defined as that which constructs, perceives and portrays itself as standing apart from others as an isolated, defined and boundaried group. Definition is thus made possible, but it must come from the members themselves (2001:152).

MacDonald's definition works to include the "sub" and the "cultural," as well as the relative autonomy of the latter. What matters is not whether this is an ascribed or achieved difference, but rather how it is perceived and defined by the subcultural participants: A formula, to use Raymond Williams, within which the action, objects, and identities are communicated, experienced, and interpreted. As such, the prefix "sub" refers to a contrastive dimension used to define and separate these representations from others. A boundary work in which the prefix "sub" signals the active articulation of a separation rather than an objective difference or deviance.

Still, in order to arrive at a satisfying definition of the subcultural, two more aspects of this articulated difference need to be addressed. First, who are the "others" that the subcultural is defined as separate from? Second, what makes this perception and portrayal (sub)cultural, as in working different binary pairs into a patterned structure of meaning? Both of these questions refer to the matter of the definition of the mainstream.

4.1.3. The profane mainstream

In his work on the Chicago blues scene, David Grazian (2004:36, 45) notes that cultural producers and consumers generate different myths of authenticity, as well as the specific symbols seen to connote the authentic. Grazian is

not alone in pointing towards plural authenticities; for example, both Lawrence Grossberg (1993:173) and Philip Auslander (1999:67) do the same in relation to rock music. Following from the discussion so far, I will argue that subcultural authenticity has to be approached in relation to the perception and portrayal of difference to and the need for a separation from, a mainstream. The authentic, no more than the subcultural, can therefore not be seen as an objective quality, inherent in the object or person. Instead, it is something accomplished; it is claimed, assigned, and established (Peterson 1997:3, Force 2009:290, Gubrium and Holstein 2009:125).

Durkheim relates to this "added" dimension to objects in his discussion on totems:

> But collective representations very frequently attribute to the things to which they are attached qualities which do not exist under any form or to any degree. Out of the commonest object, they can make a most powerful sacred being. Yet the powers which are thus conferred, though purely ideal, act as though they were real; they determine the conduct of men with the same degree of necessity as physical forces (1915:228).

Durkheim's famous example here is that the soldier does not die defending the flag because it is a piece of cloth, but because it objectifies the collective belief in the sacred. It is through the objectifications of the sacred that this sanctity is given a physical expression that is felt by participants (Douglas 1966:57).

According to Durkheim, the foundation of religious thought is a division of the world into a sacred and a profane domain. Religious beliefs and rites represent this duality, specifying their nature as well as their relations and proper conduct. The sacred, in this sense, is superior to the profane both in terms of divinity and power but also in terms of existence, as participating in the sacred thus calls for a distancing from the profane ordinary life and being. Passing between the two realms is therefore associated with rites of passage that work to maintain this duality rather than to obscure it. The dynamic relationship between the sacred and the profane rests on the distinct character of the former being defined through prohibitions regarding the profane: "By definition, sacred beings are separated beings. That which characterizes them is that there is a break of continuity between them and the profane beings" (Durkheim 1915:299). Durkheim speaks of this distinction between the sacred and the profane as being absolute—two radically opposed categories and thus different from, for example, good and evil, as the latter belong to the same genus of morality. Yet, his definition of the sacred and the profane points to their opposition being interrelated. Far from being a relation of equal difference, the sacred is set apart by collective ideals specifying what must not come in contact with it. As the profane, in turn, is defined by the prohibitions defining the sacred, the profane belongs as much

to the sacred as do these prohibitions. The binary distinction between the sacred and the profane has therefore to be seen as by definition relational.

It is from such a perspective that a more elaborate definition of the subcultural can be traced, as what the subcultural is separated from has to be approached from the portrayal of this separation rather than from some inherent characteristic of the undifferentiated "others." Such a definition of the subcultural pays heed to how the term was articulated by Gordon and Green, as well as the CCCS, in the sense that the prefix "sub" refers to a subset of meaning within something bigger. At the same, it breaks with these by asserting that such a separation defines and specifies that which the subcultural is separated from.

The introduction of the sacred and the profane in relation to this communicated difference specifies that the binary distinction between the subcultural and the mainstream is not only meaningful, but that its structuring aspects penetrate modern social structures and categorizations, specifying who is in and who is out (Alexander 2006:569). It is this very differentiation that creates and defines what constitutes the undifferentiated "others" from which the subcultural is separated. *Consequently, the mainstream will here be treated as the negative outcome of such a perceived and portrayed difference*, as the undifferentiated and wider whole that negatively represents the separation of the subcultural. It is the same pattern of meaning that defines both the set apart and the undifferentiated; in this sense the mainstream can only be traced by investigating how subcultural participants communicate their difference—in short, how the definition of the sacred makes the profane what it is. There is no self-defined mainstream in this sense; rather, just as the subcultural, it will here be used as a relational concept.

In her study on how workers in France and the US define "being worthy," Michele Lamont (2000) argues that these definitions involve the definition and discrimination against the less worthy. Boundary work, she argues, is a social practice that, at the same time as it separates between the "us" and "them," structures and orders what is being said and how it is said (2000:4, 271). Seeing the subcultural and the mainstream as relational is the first step to examine these processes of boundary work, of establishing how the subcultural is set apart from a defined polluted, and polluting, mainstream. This way, *the "sub" of the subcultural refers not so much to a subset of meaning within something larger, but rather as a defined subset of meanings that includes that which it opposes*. The subcultural defines the mainstream at the same time as it communicates and portrays its separation from it. It constructs and communicates what the undifferentiated others stands for. Rather than being embedded in a larger whole, the "sub" refers to the embedding of the mainstream in this distinction.

Instead of dividing the world into subcultural participants and a non-subcultural outside, the focus on the communicated part of both the subcultural and the mainstream means that the mirage of subcultural homogeneity

can be abandoned, as focus is on the contrastive dimension of the relation-ship to the mainstream, rather than the mainstream as being something phys-ically out there (cf. Hannerz 1992:81). The mainstream is thus disenthralled from an inherent meaning as "the outside," but also from a single meaning. Instead, it points to the mainstream as belonging as much to the subcultural as does the articulated difference.

Further, if the mainstream is defined by the articulations of difference that set the subcultural apart, it means that it negatively represents such a distinc-tive status rather than everything that is not subcultural. This brings an im-portant aspect to the binary subculture/mainstream, as prohibitions are not confined to ideological assumptions—e.g., the mass media and commercial forces diluting the authenticity of the resistance against the dominant—but rather refer to the formlessness that is seen to threaten the form.

This allows for multiple definitions of both the mainstream and the sub-cultural sacred. As long as everything is kept in its proper place, the profane does not threaten the sacred. However, if present within the vicinity of the set apart, the otherwise ordered is threatened as the profane does not belong there (Douglas 1966:35). Looking back at the previous subcultural research, we can see a similar pattern. What threatens the subcultural distinction is that which is seen as imposing itself on this distinction, of defusing and diffusing (Clarke 1976b, Hebdige 1979) or cashing in in relation to the autonomous (O'Connor 2004, 2008). Grossberg (1993:173) notes how questions regard-ing the authentic for rock fans have always involved a distinction against the co-opted, and Thornton (1995:6) argues that approval of the mainstream is a "subcultural kiss of death." Still, I will argue that it is not as simple as saying the mainstream is that which constitutes a threat to the subcultural; the main-stream is also needed, and made use of, in order to distinguish the subcultur-al's distinct position (cf. Fine 1998:3). As such, notions of the subcultural sacred cannot be approached without an investigation of how it relates to a subcultural pattern of meaning, of which the definition of the mainstream is central. There are most certainly people and objects that are not part of the subcultural and whose actions have consequences to subcultural participants, but in order to be assessed within the subcultural they have to be interpreted along a subcultural structure based on the distinction between the set apart and the undifferentiated normal. There is no mainstream *sui generis*.

Investigating the mainstream thus means approaching it as a subcultural representation, not presuming that it has an intrinsic meaning or existence outside of the subcultural. What one subcultural group sees as the main-stream might very well be different from what other subcultural groups de-fine as mainstream. This is why the concept of the mainstream is so crucial: first of all, in treating it as an existing material structure, e.g., the commer-cial or dominant (Clarke et al. 1976, Hebdige 1979, Fox 1987, Leblanc, 1999) we overlook how it is subculturally constructed as a means of making both meaning and affect. Further, to treat the mainstream as an empty resid-

ual category is to neglect the consequences it has for making sense of both styles and identities. At the same time, it allows an analysis of how different definitions of the mainstream can result in different subcultural structures within the same subcultural group, or across groups. Differences between how punks, mushroomers, or graffiti writers articulate and represent the subcultural can then be assessed in relation to differences in defining both the mainstream and in what respect participants perceive themselves to be different. Participants may agree on being punk while enacting different patterns of meaning in so doing.

4.2. The subcultural authentic

Merely arguing that the subcultural is that which is conceived and communicated as different from an unspecified "other" would not be a satisfactory definition, as it would then be only another empty categorization. Moore (2005:250) notes, for example, that our contemporary society is obsessed with differentiation from the mass. Swimmers might, for example, define themselves as different from walkers and joggers, but this alone does not make them a subculture. What needs to be added is a patterned similarity in terms of adherence to a subcultural structure—that in order for a subcultural distinction to be significant, it requires depth. This is similar to what Hodkinson refers to as a cultural substance: that subcultures are defined by a shared and distinctive set of tastes and values shared by participants (Hodkinson 2002:30). Yet, whereas Hodkinson focuses mainly on substance as pointing to subcultural objects, identities, commitment, or relative autonomy, I want to focus on the subcultural structure of meaning within which objects and identities, as well as commitment and autonomy, are made subcultural; in short, how subcultural meaning is extended and materialized.

4.2.1. The analogous extension of the subcultural binary

So far, I have argued for a late Durkheimian notion of meaning being superimposed to the material (Durkheim 1915, Durkheim and Mauss 1963). At the same time, it is through the externalization of the collective representations—through material, social, and human objects—that this ideal is lived out for the participants (cf. Douglas 1966:52ff). Hence, representation involves both externalization of meaning as well as internalization of the object (Berger and Luckmann 1966:86). We encounter objects from within the cultural, as representations of symbolic systems. The cultural then becomes the patterned set of meanings based on differences that govern and attribute intent to objects and actions. To act is to objectify the cultural, as explaining or contemplating an act involves drawing upon the collective. This is the idea behind the cultural sociological approach to meaning as a structure, and

one that is equally powerful to that of material wealth and status (Alexander and Mast 2006:2). Arguing that material objects do not act in themselves includes the assumption that neither does culture. Instead, actors enact these patterned sets of meaning in interpreting, classifying, and assessing actions and objects. The cultural then involves performance, doing culture in the sense of both enacting and reenacting these structures within a certain context (Fine 1998:134).

This brings about a number of interesting questions in relation to both the subcultural and the authentic: First, how does such an interrelated binary logic work to structure meanings and actions, and more importantly, how is it extended, as Hebdige and Becker note, and worked through subordinate binary pairs? Second, how is the subcultural binary logic performed and validated within the subcultural—in short, how does the subcultural system of meanings both construct and evaluate action and objects (Alexander 1989:307)? Third, are the symbolic extensions of this binary uniform or are there plural definitions of both the mainstream and the subcultural? And if so, what consequences does this have for subcultural performances?

Answering these questions means combining the definitions of the subcultural and the mainstream to that of structures of meanings and performance: The dialectic relationship between difference and similarity converges into a shared structure of meaning within which the communicated difference to a mainstream is both meaningful and reproduced (cf. Geertz 1973c:211ff). It becomes a combination of what Appadurai refers to as the differences that express and mobilize group identities, and the similarities Geertz talks about in terms of the extensions of these through analogies and metaphors.

Hence, to return to the matter of depth, to argue for a subcultural structure to be significant is to say that it extends the distinction from an undifferentiated mainstream to a pattern of articulated differences that addresses a variety of styles—including actions, objects, appearances, and tastes—interpreted and validated through a shared language (i.e., a patterned set of meanings within which actions and objects are seen to fit) (Fine 1998:102).[11] The deeper the subcultural structure, the more areas of everyday life are integrated and made to fit, making it possible to differentiate between shallower or deeper subcultural structures in terms of salience and extension (Hannerz 1992:72f). Swimmers' possible distinction from walkers or runners would

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[11] The argument that extensions of the subcultural binary are what distinguish the subcultural means that if we are to speak of male-, class-, or youth-based subcultures it is because these distinctions are articulated as analogous to the distinction between the subcultural and the mainstream. As Macdonald (2001:150) notes, what goes for one subcultural group does not have to be the same for another. Whereas I will argue in this thesis that class is not a defining trait of the performances of punk, this does not mean that I exclude such relevance in relation to other subcultural structures. On the contrary, I expect there to be subcultural structures that revolve around class, as well as sexuality, ethnicity, or age (cf. Dean 2009).

thus be significant if that distinction was extended analogically to, for example, prohibitions regarding dress and action: not eating land-living animals, not wearing colors other than shades of blue and green, not having a wet hair look, etc.. Consequently, rather than Willis' (1978:198ff) famous reference to objects being homologous depending on their objective possibilities, the analogous extensions of something symbolically representing something else rather points to such successful extensions appearing *as if* they had these possibilities (Trondman et al. 2011:584).

This is the combination of Alexander's stress on action and validations of actions as relying on a cultural background to Geertz's idea that such a structure involves an intricate structure of interrelated meanings. To act within the subcultural is to enact the subcultural pattern that precedes or is superimposed on the act. It becomes a performance against these background representations of meaning (Alexander 2004a:529). Returning to Geertz and his idea of metaphors and analogies as extending the boundaries of the cultural system, subcultural actions and objects are thus performed as having a resonance with, and extending the binary logic of, the background. Action and objects then become "an act of recognition, a pairing in which an object (or an event, an act, an emotion) is identified by placing it against the background of an appropriate symbol" (Geertz 1973c:215). To argue that actions and objects are subcultural is to say that they are based on, refer to, and contribute to a collective understanding of the separation from the mainstream. If validated as successful, they then work to extend the patterned representations of the background as the performance is fused with it, and thus mobilize a group identity. Hence subcultural representations are used to establish boundaries between real and fake along the binary subcultural/mainstream as they draw upon an internal meaning that is part of the boundary work to the outside (Fine 1998:138).

Still, I want to go one step further, because what matters is not only the drawing of boundaries, but also the belief in and acting upon what is within these boundaries. The subcultural is not only organization; it is also a force in terms of evaluation and action. Returning to Mary Douglas, holiness means a separation of things that must be kept apart and not be confused, but also conforming to the specified class to which they belong (1966:53). Conforming to these structures then ensures the separation of things meant to be kept separated. The authentic and the inauthentic are, in this sense, what are subculturally represented as objectifying the sacred and the profane. They are part of the ordered, the translated, and the interpreted through subcultural patterns that rest on differences as their foundation. Hence, it is not enough to claim that authenticity is a cultural dimension built on contrast: we need to address how claims, acceptances, or refusals of the authentic enact a subcultural backdrop. In short, how authenticity is performed.

4.2.2. Subcultural authentications

So far I have argued that approaching the subcultural means exploring the cultural structures that define the subcultural as the set apart, while at the same time classifying and defining the profane mainstream. Following Durkheim's claim that what is collectively represented is that which is culturally interpreted and ordered, things are made meaningful either as subcultural or mainstream, and as an extension, less or more subcultural, through being validated in reference to these collective representations. Hence, what is subculturally represented is that which is ordered according to the binary subcultural/mainstream.

The subcultural authentic has therefore to be approached as something that is being "worked" (Peterson 1997:3f). This is true both in terms of "working the binaries" (Alexander 2010a:100) and the "boundary work" to the mainstream (cf. Lamont 2000): An ordering and assigning of objects as representing either the positive or negative sides of these binaries and boundary, so as to establish and strengthen the distance between the sacred and the profane. To be authentic is to be representative of this distance. Grossberg (1993:173) and Auslander (1999:69), for example, both point to how authenticity works in rock relies on the inauthentication of other kinds of music, and William Ryan Force (2009:305) notes that authenticity practices within punk involve the positioning of not only the genuine, but also of the non-genuine. Both Force and Auslander relate this to the authentic as being in constant change due to the relationship to the inauthentic, yet I would like to add that this process is dialectic. If the definition of the inauthentic changes, then so does that of the authentic, as what constitutes the latter depends on what is specified by defining the former. The profane does not change in itself, and neither do the objects that are perceived to represent it; they are tied to notions of the sacred. Authenticity is therefore always a "moving target" (Peterson 2005:1094, Vannini and Williams 2009:3).

Similar to my discussion of culture, I therefore want to address authenticity as a contrastive and negotiated dimension rather than something substantial and factual. I will therefore rather speak of this process as one of authentication (Auslander 1999:76, Fine 2004:57). The verb "authenticate" signals that the enactment of a subcultural structure is something active. The cultural does not speak by itself; it is claimed, negotiated, and validated by participants in a certain time and space. To authenticate an object, action, or person is to bring the subcultural backdrop to the front, and to do so in front of a specific audience (cf. Grazian 2010:168). Therefore, as Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein so aptly put it, authenticity is "always open to question" (2009:126).

Alexander captures this relationship between authenticity and performance in his work both on cultural pragmatics (2004a) and on the "iconic consciousness" (2008). Whereas performance to Alexander refers to the

process of conveying meanings to and convincing others, the authentic is a matter of how successful such a performance is in terms of a cultural extension from background text and actor to the audience. A successful performance not only relates to how well the performer attends to the cultural structures that render the performance meaningful; in order for it to stick, such a performance has to be fused with the audience's conception of these structures as well. Similar to Douglas' notion of holiness as involving wholeness and completeness, to authenticate becomes a matter of fusing the disparate elements of the performance so that they appear as one, successfully projecting and extending the cultural meaning text to actor to audience: "The attribution of authenticity, in other words, depends on an actor's ability to sew the disparate elements of performance back into a seamless and convincing whole" (Alexander 2004a:548, cf. Durkheim 1915:210).

Failing such a performance means that the audience perceives the performance as faked rather than as a physical extension of the background. To succeed is to appear natural, as if the patterned representations of the background are part of the actor rather than being acted out (cf. Force 2009:301). Erving Goffman (1963b) makes a similar claim arguing that behavior is informed and patterned by codes: "To fail to adhere to the code is to be a self-deluded, misguided person; to succeed is to be both real and worthy, two spiritual qualities that combine to produce what is called 'authenticity'" (1963b:135). To both Alexander and Goffman, authenticity is then not only a matter of the cultural meaning that is being performed and the performance in itself, but more importantly whether these are validated or refuted by the audience on the basis of conforming to group norms (cf. Fine 1998:136, Noy 2004:127). Authenticated objects are those that have been validated through a performance of affiliation and commitment to the subcultural background, stressing both unity and the ordered.

The subcultural authentic will therefore here be defined as that which is claimed and validated as representing the subcultural sacred: It is the externalization of the subcultural distinction and distance to the mainstream. The authentic is the objectification of an agreed upon representation of the ideal that is valued and pursued by groups and individuals in establishing identities (Vannini and Williams 2009:3). This is the cultural dimension of the subcultural authentic; it involves what Derrida (1988:18) refers to as the "citational" and "iterable" quality of speech, success being a matter of repeating that which is already coded and established. Geertz (1973c:211) makes a similar note in arguing that the success or failure of symbolic extensions of the known to the as of yet unfamiliar depends on whether they manage to represent an analogous relation to a patterned set of meanings already ordered. If the analogy appears, the already known is extended to include the unfamiliar, and if it does not appear then it has failed: "In other words, to be practical and effective in action—to have a successful performance—actors must be able to make the meanings of culture structures stick" (Alexander

and Mast 2006:4). Again, collective representations involve both an externalization of the ideal, as well as the internalization of the object said to represent that ideal.

Further, this is a relative autonomous process, in the sense that it is mediated, experienced, and interpreted *within* a particular patterned set of meanings (Geertz 1973c, Williams 1981). As MacDonald notes in relation to the "sub," what matters is the portrayal of difference within the subcultural, not whether this difference is acknowledged from outside the subcultural. Objects and actions become meaningful in relation to the patterned representations of the background. Outside of these representations, objects and actions either have no performative value at all, or have a different meaning. Lastly, objects and meanings do not fuse automatically; the contingency of cultural action is that even though we know about the background text and the actor the attribution of meaning is still dependent on the performance and the audience's validation of the same in relation to the background.

Alexander's approach to the authentic as involving a relation to a cultural backdrop has its strength in recognizing cultural actions as including such a contingent aspect, without losing the emphasis on the structuring aspect of the cultural. Indeed, such an approach retains the relative autonomy of the cultural, as both performance and validation relies on a specific cultural background. Objects and actions authenticated within a subcultural background would not fuse similarly within a different background. It is not so simple that the cultural backdrop produces authentic objects. As Gubrium and Holstein (2009:122) point to, what might pass as the authentic in one setting, might not in another, with the same objects receiving different interpretations. Force (2009:297) refers to this contingent aspect as "fluid complexity": Authentications take place somewhere and in relation to a specific audience. Consequently, authentication relies not so much on what is being done as on the communication and interpretation of what is being done in reference to a specific structure. It draws from a patterned similarity based on difference.

At the same time it raises a number of questions: First, who validates the audience that validates performances? Alexander speaks of plural audiences, but what interests me is rather how the enacted background text and foreground scripts exclude a certain audience, even if present. Thus, performances have to be seen as including a validation of the audience in relation to the background text similar to the audience's validation of the performance. The cultural is not a matter of a singular structure, but rather of plural performances of the illusion of a singular meaning.

Second, the possibility of assessing plural backgrounds in relation to a similar performance and audience brings about the question of how to address plural authentications as well as subcultural change and stylistic heterogeneities. Again, the material object cannot be seen as having an intrinsic meaning. As Muggleton (2000:101) notes, mohawks, and tattoos might be

signs of authentic membership for some punks, at the same time as it is the opposite for others. The definition of the mainstream has consequences not only for the definition of the subcultural, but also for the authentication of styles.

Thirdly, Alexander speaks of performances taking place within a differentiated and reflexive society as being a matter of re-fusion of the already "defused." Fusion, thus, becomes a matter of collective organization; the more complex and differentiated society is, the more the elements of performances are de-fused (2004a:529). But similar to the question of the validation of the audience, I take this to be a matter of the enacted cultural structures rather than the collective organization of society. The definition of the "sub" as the communication of an ordered and particular difference from the conceived general means a reduction of complexity through an ordering of the world along the binary subcultural/mainstream. Hence, I will refer to subcultural authentications as a matter of fusion, rather than as a re-fusion, both in terms of the performance of style and in terms of identification.

4.2.3. Subcultural identification

The issue of identity is the weakest point of the cultural sociological theories outlined so far. Either collective identities are merely referred to as involving the boundary work between "us" and "them" (cf. Alexander 2003c:85f, Eyerman 2006:194, 2011:7) or is it equated with meaning: "Our distinctive identities, as individuals and collectivities, are central to our projects for life. Identity is meaning [...] Meaning defines us, and it defines those around us at the same time" (Alexander 2006:14). Nevertheless, the stress on the relative autonomy of culture and cultural action as involving the performance and validation of action within a cultural structure provides us with the means to address subcultural identities as being performed similar to styles. I will therefore not differentiate between identities, objects, and actions in terms of how they are mobilized and authenticated. Similarly to performances of objects and actions being a matter of wholeness and representation of the sacred, I will treat identification as a dialectic process between similarity and difference; to identify means to classify and evaluate.

If difference is the foundation for the meaningful, then similarities in regards to how to interpret and enact this difference are the foundation for such a difference to be communicated, experienced, and validated. The set apart rests on a recursive structure regarding our similarities; we know that others know that we know... etc. (Goffman 1986:299f). Identification, just as authenticity, is then a cultural process; it is something that is being done and established, rather than being a thing in itself (Jenkins 2008:5, 17). Further, identification, just as authentication, is boundary work: it involves both an ordering and excluding aspect (cf. Hall 1996:4f, Lamont 2000:3f).

Subcultural identifications, therefore, refer to a mobilization of the distinction subcultural/mainstream to include the object identified; as such, their association, or sameness, is claimed in the embodiment of this difference. This is the individualization of the collective, the material representation of the sacred. At the same time, subcultural structures of meaning are based on this distinction and so are the processes of identifications meant to extend them. What is important, though, is that the cultural aspect of identification refers to these being articulated by enacting a cultural background and being validated in relation to that background. In this sense identification always involves association, because if it is perceived as lacking this shared belonging the performance fails (cf. Goffman 1986:562, Gilroy 1997:301f).

Subcultural identification will therefore be defined here as the communicated claim to locate an object or a person within the subcultural as an individual embodiment of the collective representations of the sacred. These structures refer to the approved and disapproved, a shared (sub)cultural lore. What we then tend to see as organizing our experience we support and perforce, which is why the analysis of patterns of meanings should focus on definitions, evaluations, and explanations (Douglas 1966:38f). For identities to be claimed and maintained there has to be a social setting that confirms this identity as being valid. As Berger and Luckmann put it,

> Saul may have become Paul in the aloneness of religious ecstasy, but he could *remain* Paul only in the context of the Christian community that recognized him as such and confirmed the 'new being' in which he now located his identity (1966:178, emphasis in original).

Similar to objects being the representation of the sacred, subcultural identities mean locating one's own self within this deep meaning structure. In order to be a punk, you need other punks as well as a specific subcultural pattern of punk. Without the latter, the former is rather meaningless.

4.3. Concluding remarks

Throughout this chapter I have argued that a cultural sociological approach to the subcultural means moving beyond style to how objects, actions, and identities are communicated, interpreted, and ultimately acted upon. The foundation for this subcultural structure rests on an articulated difference to the undifferentiated, or what is here referred to as the mainstream. It is the set apart from the undifferentiated, the particular as opposed to the general. This distinction is extended through prohibitions concerning the profane, specifying who and what can come in contact with the sacred. These prohibitions, and the sacred characteristics that they specify, are the deep meaning

structure of the subcultural. The articulation of these prohibitions, and thus also the characteristics that are set apart as belonging to the sacred, are dependent on the distinction between the subcultural and the mainstream: What is conceived of as constituting the latter has consequences for what needs to be protected and from whom.

In relation to this, I have argued that subcultural identities and authenticities as performances that rely on these structures to be claimed, validated, or refuted. This implies a dialectic process between difference and similarity, a definition of a shared subcultural sacred through the prohibitions to the profane mainstream. Hence, both the sacred and the profane are constructed through these prohibitions.

This, I will argue, has consequences for how we can approach how subcultural participants perceive, interpret, and use the material world; that is, how objects, actions, and identities are authenticated or invalidated, but also the spatial dimension of these performances. Further, different interpretations and definitions of these analogies bring differences in terms of subcultural structures. Different patterns can be differently symbolically extended, fusing some actions while dismissing others. Further, when extended through analogies these differences bring about different authenticities.

Such an approach is able to explain differences between subcultures in terms of these structures of interrelated meanings: Participants extend the subcultural binary through analogous binary correspondences that mobilize action, objects, and identities as subcultural. At the same time, this approach provides for an analysis of differences within the subcultural in relation to multiple structures of meaning, allowing for a discussion on how the subcultural is symbolically extended and how this process is far from given as it involves both conflict and alternative interpretations. From such a point of view there are no subcultural objects, only meanings; thus, the same object can have a number of possible meanings even within the same subcultural structure. Consequently, such an approach could, as opposed to previous subcultural theories, address and assess subcultural heterogeneities without having to champion the individual, fluidity of style, or one group's commitment and authenticity.

Therefore, such an approach must include an investigation of how objects and actions are performed and imputed with meaning through relating them to the binary of the subcultural authentic and the mainstream. But it must also investigate how every act of interpretation links up with other binary pairs and creates analogies that work together to establish the subcultural sacred and keep the threatening and polluting profane at bay. Methodologically, this means grounding the analysis in the participants' accounts of the subcultural, investigating how actors perform subculturally in relation to a background text and in relation to an audience.

5. Methodological Considerations

The empirical focus of this study is an investigation of the making of both the subcultural and the mainstream, and how the structuring of styles and identities depends on the pattern of subcultural meaning enacted. So far I have argued that we need to move beyond the object itself and onto how it is understood, interpreted, and ultimately acted upon. I have also argued that every act of interpretation links up with other categories to create analogies that work together to establish the subcultural sacred and keep the threatening and polluting profane at bay: What constitutes the subcultural is the articulation of differences that mobilize group identities as being set apart from the perceived undifferentiated—the mainstream.

   The methodological considerations discussed in this chapter will thus refer to how such an investigation of subcultural plurality can be pursued without being trapped in a single notion of the subcultural or the authentic. This has been a continuous task of exploring differences and making use of the participants' validations and invalidations in furthering the fieldwork, as well as the analysis. In the end, I have decided who is to be included or excluded in this study. Thus, I have to discuss how and why I have made the decisions that I have. The discussion will thus move from the field, to access, interviewing, and finally analysis.

5.1. The field

5.1.1. The study

I started researching punk in late 2002 in Copenhagen around the city's now infamous youth house—*Ungdomshuset*. Back then I was still an undergraduate student but part of a research project on social movements and music[12] (cf. Eyerman 2002, Corte and Edwards 2008, Corte 2012). Prior to this, I had had a pretty clear picture of what real punk was and what was not: real punk was a strong political stance and a refusal to compromise with the market powers and the mainstream. When I moved back to Sweden to finish my undergraduate classes I wrote my bachelor's thesis on the social organization

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[12] The project "Oppositional Cultures in Transition: A Comparison of Swedish Punk and White Power Music Scenes" was financed by the Swedish Research Counsel (VR)

of crust punks in Southern Sweden (Hannerz 2004), a category of punk that fitted neatly into this definition of punk as highly political and stylistically removed from the mainstream. But the more time I spent in the field, the more I became interested in other kinds of punk and their definitions. Why was it that not all punks were as political or listened to the same bands?

During this time I had already started to do fieldwork and interviews with Indonesian punks. I was fascinated by the development of punk that I had experienced on previous trips to the country and had read about in punk fanzines, especially as punk had only existed for a few years in Indonesia. To pursue a more thorough study of Indonesian punk I applied for and was granted a scholarship from the Swedish Development Agency as part of my graduate studies in 2004. Altogether, I spent five months in Indonesia over the course of two years, doing fieldwork in Bali and on the nation's main island Java. When in the field I lived exclusively with punks, including the kind of participants that I had not even bothered to talk to before. Some of these participants made a living from their subcultural participation, had major record deals, and appeared on MTV, in ad campaigns, and in news media. To be honest, this was the first time I actually took the time to listen to multiple definitions of punk and punk identities. The more I listened, the more I saw, and the more I experienced, the more I found that my own definitions of punk prevented me from analyzing this.

The defining moment in Indonesia was when I realized that my own interpretations of punk had led me to believe that the concepts and symbols used had the same meaning to all participants. I had already begun questioning a uniform definition of what constituted the authentic and the mainstream during my fieldwork in Sweden, but as I was interviewing punks in Indonesia, travelling around the country, I became aware that what punks defined as anarchism, politics, DIY, punk music, major labels, radio, etc. to authenticate their own position, as well as how they defined what punk was against, differed significantly among participants. Upon my return to Sweden and after having presented my research in Indonesia as my master's thesis (Hannerz 2006), I therefore continued my fieldwork in southern Sweden, this time with a focus on how these themes and symbols that were often taken for granted were defined and how they differed.

In 2007 I was admitted as a doctoral student at Uppsala University. This gave me the opportunity to further investigate participants in and around Uppsala, including Sweden's capital Stockholm. The summer of 2008 featured a number of large and diametrically different punk festivals in and around Gothenburg, and I thus travelled to Gothenburg and neighboring towns in the spring and summer of 2008 in order to follow punks during these festivals. I also included the more musically diverse Hultsfred festival, as a number of the participants I followed were going there.

By this time, the local scenes had become less and less important to me as I was more interested in pursuing what I previously had overlooked: the

marginal and those who did not really fit in. Geography became less important than a focus on as many different definitions of punk as possible. In part, this was due to saturation in my data as well. My interviews repeated the same definitions and patterns and I wanted to expand my analysis to the punks whom very few participants considered punk but who still identified as such. I decided to leave the field in 2010 as I was preparing to take 9 months of paternity leave. In 2011 and 2012 I occasionally returned to the field in order to further investigate a number of themes that had been highlighted through my analysis of the data.

The focus on plural subcultural patterns of meaning has been a process of investigating how participants define what punk is and what it is not, and more so how they do so differently. As such this has also been a process of reflecting on and exploring my own presumptions about the field.

5.1.2. The fieldwork

This study relies on extensive fieldwork among punks in nine different cities—five in Sweden and four in Indonesia—that stretches from 2003 to 2010. The first part of this fieldwork was the twelve months I spent in the field in Sweden, and five months in Indonesia, between 2003 and 2005; the second refers to the period between 2005 and 2007 when I conducted fieldwork mostly at weekends and the summer months; and the most extensive period was between 2007 and 2010 in which I spent almost twenty months in the field in Sweden. As I noted above, I also made occasional returns to the field in 2011 and 2012.

In the field I have stayed with participants during days and nights, at times even sleeping on their couches or floors, at other times returning home in the early mornings. I have accompanied them to shows, to work, and in a number of cases to see their families. I have tagged along to demonstrations and meetings, squats and festivals, record stores and supermarkets, and I have followed them while they were setting up shows and rehearsing with their bands, in some cases even going on tour with them.

Doing fieldwork has meant participating in these actions at the same time as constantly focusing on the question Goffman (1986:85) asks us to have in mind, "What is going on?" I observed and took notes on the social processes taking place, addressing how they were controlled and made meaningful, but also what and whom they excluded (Charmaz 2006:20). This also included an investigation on how these social processes differed among participants, as well as over time and between spaces. Participating meant that I interacted with participants, sat in on meetings and parties, and was a part of discussions, in addition to quietly observing. I kept field notes of what I heard, saw, and discussed, as well as notes about what I did not hear, see, or discuss. I also conducted more formal conversations in the field, some of which I recorded and then transcribed. My aim has been to understand how the

participants I followed live and experience punk, how they position and validate their identities as well as others', and in relation to what. To me this has meant attending to action and what was being said and done, by outlining the context and situations within which they occurred, examining what was taken for granted and how this differed between participants, and also what consequences such differences have for what is permitted and prohibited within these subcultural spaces.

Moreover, as a cultural sociologist, this process has also included an exploration of the symbols that are invoked by participants to make sense of their world: how do participants articulate and address styles, other participants, settings, etc.? What do they consider important and unimportant, and how do they justify it to each other (cf. Charmaz and Mitchell 2001:163)? These are the questions that I have constantly reflected on while in the field, interviewing, and analyzing the data.

5.1.3. The participants

As will become evident in the empirical chapters the participants I have followed do not look or act in a uniform way, nor do they hang out at the same places. Thus, the overarching problem in terms of the methodological considerations of this study has been to find an adequate strategy for meeting a variety of participants. Using my own subcultural knowledge to identify punks quickly turned out to be highly ineffective as it prevented me from seeing what I could not see (c. f. Luhmann [1990] 2003:497). Even if I had been the most inside of insiders, I doubt I would have been aware of all these different groups of participants. As Kirin Narayan (1993:679) notes, just as there are not any omniscient informants, there cannot be an insider researcher who has access to everything about his or her group. Consequently, I had to find another strategy in order to identify participants and to avoid restricting my fieldwork to groups that *I* defined as punk.

To the extent it is possible, throughout this study I have attempted to limit the extent to which my own definitions influenced who was included as part of the subcultural and who was not. In order to do so, however, I had to decide what I meant by a subcultural participant in the first place. I decided to use others' proclaimed self-definitions to make this distinction; accordingly, when I refer to a subcultural participant that means that the person in question *self-identifies as being punk to other participants*. The second part of this definition is important, as it refers to a claim of belonging that can be validated, refuted, or ignored.

John Lofland (1976) argues that when choosing whom to talk to we can either rely on "member-identified" or "observer-identified" categories (cf. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007:38). The former are employed by the participants themselves, while the latter is constructed by the researcher. "Participant" as it is used here is thus an observer-identified category, yet it

is directly based on a member-identified category, as in being a punk. The point here is that subcultural identities, similar to subcultural objects, involve the positioning of the participant in relation to other participants within a subcultural structure of meaning. Hence, being a subcultural participant is to be able to answer what makes you into one. Fredrik Barth makes a similar point:

> It makes no difference how dissimilar members may be in their overt behaviour—if they say they are A, in contrast to another cognate category B, they are willing to be treated and let their own behaviour be interpreted and judged as A's and not as B's; in other words, they declare their allegiance to the shared culture of A's (1969:15).

I am aware of the possible critique that I have excluded participants who do not self-identify as punks yet who frequent shows and participate in discussions on music and style. The reason for this is simple. If they do not self-identify as punks to other participants they will not be judged by the same rules, and they will not play by them either. Further, an inclusion of these would render me the arbiter of who is or who is not a punk, regardless of what the participants themselves think.[13] There certainly were a number of people who went to shows and who hung out with subcultural participants yet who did not self-identify as punk. In terms of their involvement in discussions these are part of my fieldwork; however, they are not quoted or referred to as participants in this particular study.

Another possible criticism is whether I can be sure of that these people were not lying to me—perhaps they did self-identify as punk, yet would not say it to me. Such a concealment of identity was actually quite common among several of the groups of participants that I followed. These participants would rarely identify themselves as punks to someone they did not recognize as part of their group. Two things are worth noting in reference to this. First, I followed the majority of participants in this study for months, in many cases even for years. I did not just walk up to a random person at a show asking, "Hey, you don't happen to be a punk, do you?" Instead, I hung

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[13] Basically this refers to the "findings" of postmodern and poststructuralist theorists that subcultural participants are unwilling to categorize themselves as subcultural members. This claim is fraught with problems, however. In the case of Muggleton (2000) and Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1995) who are the most quoted in relation to "resisting a subcultural self-categorization" (Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995:96) this "finding" is intimately related to their methodological approach, as they fall prey to their own prejudices: Muggleton, as I noted above, defined subcultural participants himself on the basis of their unconventional dress and Widdicombe and Wooffitt approached people at rock concerts whom the researcher perceived as being subcultural, who were "highly visible" and looked "strikingly different to other people" (1995: 76, 85). If these "strikingly different" people refused to invoke a sense of shared identity with the subcultural, the relevant question to ask is, are these indeed subcultural participants at all (cf. MacDonald 2001:152)? Instead of seeing this as a sign of subcultural identification being fluid or individual, I see it as a methodological failure.

around at shows and parties, and participated in and listened to discussions. This means that such concealment would have to have been both elaborate and persistent over time. Second, what mattered was if they self-identified as punks to *other participants,* not to me. This is also what separates this definition from previous subcultural studies' emphasis on self-identification (Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995, Leblanc 1999, Hodkinson 2002, Haenfler 2006), as focus has been on the claims and authenticiations of identities in relation to the subcultural, rather than to me. Accordingly, while for the first days, or week, some participants did not self-identify as punks directly to me (nor did I ask them to), they did so to other participants in my company. For the few cases in which such a self-identification to others did not occur, those individuals are not quoted or referred to as participants in this study.

To me this has an important methodological aspect: Any investigation of how subcultural participants make sense of their world has to start by questioning whether we, as researchers, have the competence to decide who is a part of this group and who is not. If not, we risk forcing our own definitions upon their reality, excluding those who have alternative definitions of the subcultural. Choosing informants is not the same as choosing friends (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:72); we cannot only talk to the people we find sympathetic or closest to ourselves (cf. Fine 1993:272ff). My intention has been to not exclude anyone based on my own expectations of who is a punk, rather the opposite: If I saw or met someone who did not meet my expectations, I sought to talk to them. If deemed relevant to my research, that is if they self-identified as punk to other participants, I have asked them if I could follow them more closely.

Further, as notions regarding who is a participant and who is not are multiple, not singular (Wolcott 1999:137, cf. Haraway 1988:583), the preoccupation with the insider researcher becomes even more problematic: Instead of problematizing the subcultural participants' creation of the border between the subcultural and the mainstream, or the authentic and the fake, it presupposes it. Thus, the distinctions upon which theoretical and methodological choices are made are based in participation, rather than on the observation of that participation. The consequence is the inevitable rendering of one's own definition of the subcultural as being representative (Aguilar 1981:23).

Subcultural participants, as we shall see in the next chapters, do differentiate between members and non-members, the authentic and the mainstream, and the inside and the outside. Theoretically assessing this is to observe the making of these differences, not relying on them. Methodological choices are not only a matter of what we perceive, but also of what we *can* perceive (Charmaz 2006:15). If we do not realize this we risk becoming like the drunkard looking for a lost coin under the streetlight, not because it was where he lost it, but because this was the only place he could see where he was looking.

5.2. Access

Just as the insider and outsider doctrines outlined by Robert Merton (1972) imply a cultural homogeneity based on an epistemological distinction, ethnography as a method often implies the idea of the visiting researcher being able to dip into "native" life through the help of informants conceived of as being able to directly represent their existence without distortion (Appadurai 1988:37). For instance, the American sociologist Eduard Lindeman, to whom the term participant observation is credited, argued that a "participant observer" refers not to the researcher, but to an insider ("native") recruited and trained by the researcher. This trained insider is then able to provide the observer with insider knowledge (Lindeman 1924:191; cf. Lowie, 1937:133, Narayan 1993:672). The ethnographic tradition is rich with references to researchers being able to assemble data through reading "over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong" (Geertz 1973d:452) or observing "through the eyes of the inmates rather than the guards" (Becker 1967:247). The naturalist notion of the ethnographer as having an epistemological advantage through being "there," where it all happens, is further captured in the ethnographic calls to arms of abandoning our "comfortable position on the verandah" (Malinowski 1926:146) and getting "the seats of our pants dirty in real research" as Robert E. Park famously argued (quoted in McKinney 1966:71, cf. Gubrium 1991). The proximity and intimacy to the researched field secures such an epistemological advantage.

More recent subcultural studies are no different in this sense, as problems with access are dismissed on the basis of the researcher's proximity to the field. Thus, Ross Haenfler can state that his "personal involvement and knowledge" of straight edge enabled him to "gain entrée into the local scene very quickly" (2004b:788, cf. Force 2009:294, Cisar and Koubek 2012:7, Hancock and Lorr 2013:325f). Accordingly, for these authors subcultural participation is the foundation for both access and epistemological claims, instead of being a consequence of fieldwork. Access is not further discussed beyond this ability to dip into the subcultural life, adding to the idea of the subcultural as having a single and uniform meaning.

5.2.1. Entering the field

To me, an ethnographic approach has indeed meant both a focus on access as well as attempting to read over the shoulders of those I have followed. At the same time this has been accompanied by the habit of asking whose shoulder I am are reading over in the first place (Hannerz 1992:13). Clearly, what is defined as the subcultural authentic affects what is being investigated, as well as how, and who is being interviewed.

In terms of access, I experienced both easy entrances as well as being shut out. In all my cases, access was something that was continuously negotiated

with those I followed. As I noted above, Hodkinson (2005:134) argues that proximity to the field is related to how the researcher is positioned and classified by the participants. This is an important remark, as it sheds light on the interactive relationship between the researcher and the researched instead of presuming it. Proximity and distance between the researcher and the researched are then subculturally defined, pointing to the meanings and validations of the researched, rather than the researcher (c. f. Egeberg-Holmgren 2011a, 2011b on co-fielding).

At this point, I could of course argue that my previous subcultural knowledge and status had nothing to do with my ability to gain access to these different settings, yet it most certainly did. Most of the participants I followed identified me as a punk, albeit often as less authentic, as I had a real job at the university and was asking all these questions. Others identified me as being a former punk, someone who had dropped out, yet was still in touch with it. While to others still, I was someone from an unspecified outside sitting in on their discussions. These identifications were, as I will turn to in the empirical chapters, dependent on the subcultural pattern enacted, as well as the particular setting. Sometimes I was viewed as one of them, at other times I was just the researcher, and sometimes I was both, assigned a liminal position, jokingly referred to as "Dr. Punk" or "the academic punk."[14]

But my ability to remain in the field and across settings was dependent on a number of other characteristics that made access and participation possible, such as my age, gender, ethnic background, and most importantly, my willingness to remain in the field. Because I stayed in a particular setting for weeks, and sometimes months, and often returned a year later, access was made a lot easier. To many participants, I was viewed as a part of setting, someone who used to be there. Further, that fact that I was researching different kinds of punk made it possible for me to move across settings and different groups of punks. If I had been a subcultural participant such mingling would have been a certain road to being invalidated, at least within some of these groups. In this sense, my status as a researcher was helpful, as was, at times, being considered part of the subcultural. Further, being a male researcher also had significance. Although the groups of participants I followed were largely anti-sexist, as I will pursue in chapter 8, being a man makes it much easier to become accepted in punk (Leblanc 1999, cf. Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:73ff). During my whole stay in Indonesia I met with fewer than ten women who identified as punk—only two of whom I met outside of shows. It would be futile to claim that being a man in such a homosocial environment did not have advantages in terms of access. Third, the fact that I have a European passport had the consequence of most partici-

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[14] See for example the last song of the Swedish band Ursut (2011) on their full-length debut *Dårarnas Paradis.*

pants in Indonesia wanting to get to know me. For the majority of them, I came directly from punk paradise. Even though such attention was tiresome at times, I was welcomed everywhere I travelled. Lastly, in terms of age, most participants, both in Sweden and Indonesia, were in their late teens and early 20s and I was seen as either their age or just a bit older.

Nevertheless, doing fieldwork among punks was not always smooth. On a number of times I had to rethink what I was actually doing and whether it was worth it. First of all was the risk regarding participating in different sub-cultural activities: So far I have been chased by skinheads, the police, rockers, security guards, teachers, dogs, and in one case a parent. I was also arrested twice during my fieldwork, and both times detained for a few hours. In neither of these cases had I committed any crimes; I was "bagged" together with other participants as a preemptive police tactic and was released without charges. I could probably have explained to the police that I was doing fieldwork and thus maybe gotten away, but as Richard Giulianotti (1995:11) notes in his ethnography on football hooligans, this would have given a rather contradicting message to my informants, possibly losing their trust. Instead I stuck to the ethnographic principle of "When in Rome" (Geertz 1973d:415). If they ran so did I, if they stayed on, then I did too.

Second, moving in between different groups of punks also had its problems. When I did fieldwork in Indonesia, I was approached by a group of participants who I had not met before. They started asking me questions in English about my political views and then asked me if I wanted to come along to a show. During this conversation two of them discussed in Indonesian how they would kick my face in when we arrived to the non-existing show. They apparently had no idea that I could understand them. I quickly declined in Indonesian while looking straight at the two discussants. All of them laughed and one of them told me that I was all right, after which they left. Nevertheless, during the two remaining weeks in that city, I kept looking over my shoulder. A similar situation occurred in Sweden, but without me being aware of it at the time. As I was transcribing an interview I had done a few weeks earlier, I suddenly heard a group of participants on the tape who had been sitting quite far from the interview session, expressing that they would "kick my ass." I had not heard this during the interview but apparently my newly bought recording device was a lot more sophisticated than I had known. I was able to isolate and improve the sound quality of this discussion and it was not a pleasant moment sitting alone in my office hearing them express hatred towards me for having been "too friendly" to anti-fascist punks.

These are the only threats of violence that I know of. I am luckily unaware of others. However, there was a third consequence of access that I had not planned for: the stigmatization by non-punks whom I met doing fieldwork. Apart from making me understand what some of my informants had to go

through every day, this was a very unpleasant experience. In the field I had to endure provocations and insults by passers by, as well as direct threats and harassment by local authorities and the police (cf. Leblanc 1999:25). Further, some of my informants were rather loud and showed little respect for fellow travelers on the bus or to passers by on the street. Sitting amongst them meant that I was getting my fair share of angry looks and comments. One of the most embarrassing moments, however, occurred the day after I began my work as a doctoral student:

> I had made arrangements to meet up with Patrick, Bella, and Joe this morning since I would be in town the whole week. We were supposed to go to Patrick's but his mom was home so we sat down on the playground in the park for a while. I pointed to the building twenty meters away telling them that that was where my new office was. They toasted in my honor and gave me a beer. Suddenly I notice a woman looking directly at us. I recognize her from when I was presented as a new doctoral student yesterday at the department. She recognizes me too. She's on her way to work. To where *we* work. And here I am sipping a beer with a couple of punks at 10am on a Tuesday. She walks away. What a great start to my new job (Field notes January 2007).

Unfortunately I never had the chance to explain myself to this colleague, and tell her that I was merely doing fieldwork. I can only hope she reads this.

5.2.2. Access to multiple settings

Now, defining participants would not have been such a big deal if I were only to investigate one particular setting, or one particular group of punks, as I would have been able to rely on a snowball sample that would grow larger as I accumulated responses from my participants (Patton 2002:194). Similarly, access would then have been a matter of negotiating entrance and a continuing presence in one particular setting or group. However, since I sought to include as many definitions of punk that I could find, my strategies for both sampling and access revolved around finding a way to make use of the information I had gathered to point me in new directions, yet without restricting me to one particular group of participants.

Most often, the strategy I used for finding new participants was attending shows. Even though initial contact at shows is problematic in the sense that the staging of shows includes a separation of crowds, and thus is often dominated by a particular kind of participants they were a useful point of entry in all my settings. The first time I was in a new city I looked for flyers for shows advertised as punk, for example on the notice boards in youth clubs, or in the last years of my fieldwork, on Facebook. The reason for such an initial focus on shows is simple: the chance was much greater to meet up with subcultural participants at shows than to randomly bump into them in

the street, as I could not rely on my own ability to identify who was a participant and who was not.

At these shows I would approach some participants in the bar area, or if at a youth house, outside the venue. Most often I commented on the band playing and asking them if they knew of any more shows in the future. In most cases the answer to such a question was followed by a question of who I was and where I was from. This way, I was able to introduce myself as a doctoral student writing a book on different kinds of punk as part of an already initialized contact. Such a remark would lead to more questions on their behalf and my access was thus negotiated in relation to me being present at the show as well as having an academic interest from the start.[15]

As the empirical chapters will demonstrate, punk is saturated with discussions about what is appropriate and what is not, who is in and who is out. I made extensive use of this in approaching participants as well as in negotiating access. Giulianotti (1995:6) refers to this, in his study on rival football hooligans in Scotland, as a trading of knowledge, arguing that the knowledge the researcher has of one group makes him or her interesting for other groups.[16] I quickly realized that introducing myself as someone writing about different kinds of punk was a great icebreaker. Most participants wanted to know more about what kinds of punks I had talked with so far, and what my impressions were of those groups. Further, in these introductions I would exclude the kind of punk that we had talked about initially, so as to prompt them to tell their side of the story. For example, if I was at a show described as a skate-punk show, I would say that so far I had interviewed raw-punks, crust-punks, hardcore-punks, and 77-punks, and the other way around. Every time this led to a discussion of why I should include the new participants' group in my study:

> I finally got to speak with the "stud-punks" yesterday. I was sitting at the
> square with a case of beer talking with Cory when two of them sat down on
> the bench next to us. I commented on one of the guys' Misfits-patch and we
> began talking. He asked me if I was an old punk, clearly he did not identify
> me as currently looking the part. I told him I was and that I now spent my
> days getting paid by the state to go to shows. This did the trick, he and his

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[15] In some cases, however, I was more formal, for example when I was sending out emails introducing myself to people whom other informants had told me to visit.

[16] To avoid misunderstandings, I want to clarify that I never exposed information about specific participants to other participants. What I mean with trading knowledge is rather that I used my contacts with some participants to talk to others. For example I would be saying something like, "When I interviewed punks in another city they told me that if you are not political then you are not a real punk," as a way to start a discussion. Most often it was enough by saying what kind of punks I had previously followed. If someone asked me specifically what another group, or a particular participant, had said, I referred to their anonymity and kept quiet. I never experienced any problems in relation to such a concealment of information, probably because the person asking such a question realized that s/he depended on this anonymity as well.

friend got up and sat down on the ground in front of our bench, and asked me how this was possible. I told them about my research and how I had followed different kinds of punks looking into what was real and what was fake. They immediately started asking questions of whom I had hung out with and where. I answered that all my informants will remain anonymous. His friend then asked if I could interview them. The whole approach took ten minutes, I will begin following them on Monday (Field notes, Sweden, June 2007).

This was characteristic of how most participants viewed my role as a researcher. Of course, there were those who were negative and feared that I would sell out punk and what they held as sacred, but most commented on what I did as a comfortable and nearly perfect job (cf. Parker 1974:216, Giulianotti 1995:7). They could not believe that I was actually getting paid to go to shows and hang out with punks. At the same time, they were eager to include their own story of what punk was. This again allowed me to gain access through an explicit invitation rather than simply presupposing that I was already a part of the subcultural.

When this initial phase of access was completed, I then started to frequent the spaces where these participants hung out to develop relationships with participants: observing, listening to and participating in small talk, everyday action, discussions, and preparations of style as well as for shows. I will refer to those participants whom I talked to and had discussions with, either formally in interviews or informally at shows, as informants. These also include some 20 key informants that I had in different settings. My key informants were participants that I would turn to for specific information, but they also provided me with the latest rumors and developments when I was somewhere else doing research. In contrast to my relationship with informants with whom I had occasional discussions (even if we sometimes met daily), I met and talked with my key informants regularly when in the field, and talked to them online or on the phone when I was not. My key informants also worked to validate my own position within the subcultural. For me this was of the utmost importance as I had someone who would vouch for me when I was not present, and also introduce me to new participants through comments such as, "Erik's doing this really interesting thing, looking at different punks," etc..

As I wanted to explore differences within punk, it became essential for me to have more than one key informant in each setting. The first key informants were often those participants who were initially positive to my project and who stayed on to discuss it further. As I spent more and more time in the setting, I would usually find others. Often this opened new paths and lead me to new people. Based on the validations and invalidations of other participants I then extended my research to include new settings.

5.2.3. Exploring differences through reversed membership validation

Nevertheless, using shows as an initial means to get access to new groups was unsatisfying in the long run. I could tell from my informants' stories that there were groups of punk that I did not know of, or had little contact with. To address this, I started to make constant use of the participants' validations in terms of where to go and whom to talk to. When participants would validate and invalidate other participants whom they met at shows, in the streets, or had heard of, I would take notes of these discussions as part of assessing where I would go next. This way, access and sampling became a habitual part of mapping out how different groups of people labeled and classified each other, and what meanings they attached to their actions and environment. This strategy of sampling is similar to what Gold (1997:390) refers to a "sociological sampling": grounding the sample in the field on the assumption that significant features of social organization, as well as different interests and groupings, are known to the participants. The sample is thus empirically grounded in the participants' own categorizations and stories attempting to cover as much as possible of a particular and heterogeneous field (cf. Patton 2002:230ff, Glaser and Strauss 1967:62).

Thus, the direct aspect of using the field for finding new participants refers to participants telling me whom to talk to or where to go. I made great use of this in mapping out particular groups of participants and while moving between different cities. When I arrived in a new city, I would most often already have a few contacts that other informants had provided. However, similar to self-identification, I preferred to rely on *indirect* references thereafter. The obvious example was if some participants constantly referred to a group of participants as being authentic, or more punk, I would begin seeking access to that group.

Still, the most important of my sampling strategies was developing what I will refer to as a strategy of *reversed membership validation*. This strategy is based on what is sometimes referred to as "member test of validity" (Douglas 1976:54), "host verification" (Schatzman and Strauss 1973:134), and member or respondent validation (Emerson and Pollner 1988:189f), as it involves an ongoing interaction with participants as a means of grounding the gathering of data empirically. However, I was not so much looking for participants' validation of my analysis or ideas, I was more interested in pursuing participants' invalidations of other participants. In one city, for example, my initial introduction at a show made some of the participants express that they were glad that I had started talking to them instead of the "stuck up political punks" who thought they were "so special." I took note of this, and after having followed the first group of participants for a few weeks, I approached these "stuck up" punks. Similar to the first group, my introduction as a researcher writing on different kinds of punk caught their

interest and they started asking questions about which groups I had followed so far. I then made a reference to the first group of participants, something that made them immediately welcome me so as to straighten out what they considered to be an initial mistake from my side. Instead of wasting time with the "fashion punks" I should have come to them directly.

In the latter part of my fieldwork, I relied almost exclusively on such a reversed membership validation in finding new participants, including doing the exact opposite of what I was advised to by my informants. In his otherwise brilliant ethnography on goths, Hodkinson (2002:90) gives an anecdote of two men entering a "goth night" dressed in jeans and brightly colored shirts. Whereas his claim that most participants avoided these "trendies" is interesting, what is puzzling is his remark that he too refused to come near them on the basis of their inauthentic dress. On the contrary, I made extensive use of such events and discussions—in relation to both the subcultural and authenticity. Whereas some of the proclaimed trendies had nothing to do with the subcultural, merely being in the wrong place, others did indeed self-identify as subcultural participants, yet with a different definition of the subcultural than the others present.

Such events did a lot to expand both my fieldwork and analysis as it pushed me to critically assess both my own preconceptions of the field as well as those of my informants. For example, it became rather obvious to me that my informants often tried to shut me out from alternative definitions of the subcultural. In one of my discussions with a key informant, she told me that I should not talk to another group of punks, as they were "ignorant sexists." Actually, she refused to introduce me to them. As our discussion on this matter went on I became more and more convinced that I had to talk to these "ignorant sexists" to hear their views and definitions. In the end I started hanging out with this group anyway and after a week gained another key informant within this group. I then called my other key informant and told her what I had done, explaining that I needed to talk to everyone otherwise I might neglect something interesting. Even though she was not completely happy with this, she still provided me with insights and stories that I could then pursue with the help of the second key informant. This way, the more tension I got in my data, the more I could explore definitions of the subcultural and authenticity in different parts of the same setting or across settings:

> Lately I have been struck by the stories of John, Hanna, and their friends regarding the "poseurs" and "stupid kids" that they seem to meet at shows yet consider to not be punks. I asked Hanna about it tonight trying to figure out where these kids hang out and if she knew them. She told me that they were mainstream kids from [a local senior high school] who claimed to be punk but they were not, so I should not bother to talk to them. Thus I now have to talk to them. I will go to their school tomorrow (Field notes February 2008).

Groups of participants like this one were the most derided, yet numerically large, groups of punks: those who listened to bands selling millions of records worldwide—bands like Bad Religion, NOFX, Green Day, Rancid, and Blink 182. Initially I had problems getting access to these participants, as the shows or festivals that featured these bands included thousands of people of which most did not identify as punks. Introducing myself as researching different kinds of punk to participants at such shows rarely lead to me meeting any participants. Yet, through the stories from other punks of how stupid and fake these people were, I managed to identify and follow a number of participants in every setting. Of course, in some cases such indirect references led me to investigate people who did not self-identify as punks, and who are therefore not included in this study, but on most occasions it worked. This group of participants is not well researched, given their perceived proximity to the commercial, and when they are included their authenticity is questioned (Dowd et al. 2004:161ff). Nevertheless, their definitions and authentications, as we shall see in the empirical chapters, are important in understanding the plurality of subcultural patterns and performances.

5.3. Interviews

In addition to my fieldwork, I interviewed 45 punks between 2003 and 2008. This includes 15 one-on-one interviews and 12 group interviews with two or three interviewees together. My interviewees ranged from 15 to 35 years of age, with two thirds of them coming from lower-to-upper middle class backgrounds (SCB 1982). This goes for my interviews in both Indonesia and Sweden. The interviews I conducted in Indonesia featured all male participants, due to the absence of female participants in those settings. Further, they were all born in Indonesia. Among my Swedish interviewees, 7 out of 30 were women and 6 out of 30 were born in a country other than Sweden—in all but one case another country within the European Union. Although ethnicity, gender, and class will not be treated here as independent variables, I am nevertheless interested in the consequences plural subcultural patterns of meaning have in terms of the inclusion and exclusion of potential participants and those already participating in terms of these factors. I will deal with this in chapter 8.

All interviews in Indonesia were carried out in English, except for one that was carried out in English and Bahasa Indonesia. An Indonesian English teacher and I translated the latter to English. One of the interviews in Sweden was done in English due to this being the native tongue of one of the participants. The other interviews in Sweden were carried out in Swedish. I have thus translated excerpts from these that appear in the text, as with the field notes that appear in text.

5.3.1. Interviews as part of doing fieldwork

Jaber F. Gubrium (1997:36) points out that the main advantage of using a combination of participant observation, unstructured interviews, and informal conversations is that it allows us to study a large number of participants over time. We can return to certain questions and thus make a thicker description as we attempt to understand how meaning is created and validated. I have followed some of my informants since 2003, and I have thus been able to talk to them on numerous times after I interviewed them.

The reason why I chose to do interviews in the first place was to be able to more thoroughly address certain topics that emerged during my fieldwork. I sought to interview at least two participants in each setting and in all but two cases I had met the interviewees prior to approaching them for an interview. The exceptions refer to two interviews I conducted at a music festival where I had key informants choosing whom I would approach based on what they considered less punk than them, yet still punk. These were based on the reversed membership validation approach outlined above. Apart from this, interviewees were approached on the basis of my observations in the field, and on previous discussions with participants.[17] If the participants complied, I then asked them to bring along another punk or two to the interview. [18]

This approach was chosen for two reasons: First, I wanted to make sure that those I interviewed felt secure and relaxed by letting them pick whomever they wanted present. For a similar reason, I let them chose where the interview would take place. Most often this was at their home, but I also conducted interviews at vegan restaurants, cafés, and at youth clubs. Second, and similar to my overall approach to fieldwork, I wanted to limit my own influence on defining who was and who was not a punk. Thus the only obligation I posed to those I approached for an interview was that the other persons present during the interview needed to be punk. That way the other people present were validated as punks not by me, but by the other interviewees.

5.3.2. Group interviews and one-on-one interviews

The division between group and one-on-one interviews reflects a change in focus regarding what I wanted to discuss during my interviews. The more interviews I did, the more I became interested in the validation of claims and actions—how styles, identities, and categories were being negotiated and used. I therefore shifted towards group interviews, as these tend to be less

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[17] Only two participants approached for an interview declined participating. Both of these, however, approached me some months later and asked me if they could participate.

[18] In two cases I handpicked all the participants present, as I was interested in putting together participants whom I knew from my fieldwork had different definitions regarding the subcultural and the mainstream. These participants already knew each other in advance though.

formal, leading participants to make use of available subcultural meanings in relation to each other, rather than trying to convince me. In short, my intention was to make them negotiate meanings as subcultural participants rather than as individuals (Alasuutari 1995:92). Whereas my one-on-one interviews were interesting as they often left plenty of room for comments about the subcultural, the group interviews took place within the subcultural to a larger extent, as the interviewees were focused on the interaction with each other. This often allowed me to take a step back and observe in the background (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:112). At times I was more active following up on answers, asking the participants to further define the concepts they used, and at other times I sat quietly for fifteen minutes and withheld from intervening in the discussion.

Such an approach also provided me with a number of strategies during the interview. When a claim was made, I could for example either wait for the other interviewees to comment on that claim, or directly asking them if they concurred. But I could also take the opportunity to shift focus to a particular part of that claim, leading the interviewees to discuss these definitions among themselves, rather than discussing them with me. Losing control of the topic was then less of a problem, as long as the discussions still involved the participants interacting as subcultural participants. The oft-mentioned criticism that the group interview frame often excludes sharing information of the interviewees' private lives (Alasuutari 1995:93) was thus rather an advantage: I wanted to keep the discussion within the subcultural, where they would express themselves and interact in a way that made them comfortable. In short, I wanted "code talk" (Nash 1980:84ff).

Another reason why I switched to group interviews was that when I had conducted my first one-on-one interviews I realized that there were two problems that I did not really know how to deal with. Both have to do with how I was positioned by the interviewee. First, as Khan-Harris (2007:25) also notes, there were far too many references to tacit understandings when the interviewee perceived that we shared a familiar standpoint (cf. Hodkinson 2005:139). When I tried to break away from this by acting unknowingly and asking them to further elaborate, the opposite occurred, and some interviewees appeared disappointed that I did not even know the basics. One of my first interviewees, who later became one of my key informants, told me one day that during the interview he had thought that I did not know anything about punk since I asked him so many dumb questions (cf. Agar 1980:456).

The second, but similar, problem that I noticed with one-on-one interviews was that I was often expected to validate or comment on the interviewee's answers (cf. Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:60f). This was not so much a matter of them trying to give me the answers they thought I wanted, but rather, that they seemed afraid that I would not approve of their interpretations. This was especially the case during some interviews in Indonesia,

where the difference between the subcultural peripheries and centers became rather obvious. This was a tricky situation, and one I really couldn't handle very well. I could not simply ignore these pursuits of validation as that would certainly make my interviewees even more insecure, but on the other hand if I validated them I ran the risk of enforcing the idea of me being superior to them and thus validating the authentic as the older, the male, and the Western. In an attempt to address this problem I began asking interviewees to bring a friend along to sit in on the interview. As these friends started commenting during the interviews I noticed a shift regarding who was validating whom, and accordingly, the decision to switch to group interviews was easy. I did however do two more one-on-one interviews. In one case, due to lack of time, I really wanted to ask a participant a bunch of questions before he was leaving and he did not find any friends who wanted to participate. The transcribed interview inevitably follows a similar pattern of, "What do you think?" "Do you agree?" etc.. It was also the shortest of my interviews, lasting only 35 minutes. In the second case, I conducted a lengthy in-depth interview on three specific topics with a participant that I had established a good rapport with. This interview lasted for more than three hours. The other interviews lasted in between 1.5 and 2.5 hours.

I am not arguing that group interviews have some epistemological advantage, nor that they are more authentic than one-on-one interviews. Both types of interview involve tape recorders and questions and constitute "fabricated" discussions, in the sense that some of them would not take place otherwise (Alasuutari 1995:90f). In the group interviews, the interviewees were still asked to meet with me, I was still expected to ask them some questions, there was still a recording device present, and they did have a common theme as they centered on punk. It would be futile to deny the presence of an interview frame, more so it would be problematic.

5.4. Analysis

5.4.1. Coding

In the beginning of this chapter, I called for a mapping of the patterned sets of meanings that participants draw upon in rendering action and objects meaningful. Geertz sums this up in arguing that cultural analysis means "sorting out the structures of significations [...] and determining their social ground and import" (1973a:9). In analyzing the data, I have drawn from what both Barney Glaser (1978:14) and Erving Goffman (1986:85) stress as the initial question in ethnography—"What is going on here?"—in relation to the data, situations in the field, and the analysis (Charmaz 2006:21, Charmaz and Mitchell 2001:163). The coding of data then becomes a definition

and interpretation of what is happening, suggesting both action and a context: what is being said, when and where, and by whom?

Throughout my research I have sought to take notes on themes and patterns, using headings and subheadings when organizing both my field notes and interviews. However, when I coded the transcribed interviews and field notes, I chose to code the data line-by-line as a means to start investigating the particular, instead of summarizing points of discussion based on what I already thought I knew about the data (Charmaz 1990:1168). Instead of jumping to conclusions, I wanted to focus on shifts and variations. Further, often the other participants commented on each other's answers and sought to redefine them. Analyzing this process line-by-line forced me to consider how patterns of meanings are disputed and negotiated, as in the following extract:

Thomas: I think to some extent we all ended up here because of our bad social skills	[code: punk identity being related to bad social skills]
so maybe that's what we really need to sit down and consider how we interact with each other and how we make each other feel	[code: arguing bad social skills have consequences for interaction]
Monica: But that's wrong, 'cause I know because I know	[code: refuting claim of punk being related to bad social skills]
I have really good social skills so	[code: claiming to have good social skills]
I'm not in the scene because I have bad social skills	[code: refuting claim of punk being related to bad social skills]
I know I am here because it is the political thing	[code: punk identity being related to politics]
T: I felt like an outcast	[code: connecting bad social skills with feeling like an outcast]
M: Yeah maybe you did that, I didn't feel like an outcast in that kind of way	[code: individualizing being an outcast] (Interview, Sweden-S8, 2008).

I coded all my data, including the field notes, using English. In part this was because this made it easier to compare codes across interviews conducted in different languages, but also, as in the excerpt above, because I wanted to use gerunds—verb forms that function as nouns, for example "individualizing being an outcast"—a possibility that the Swedish language is lacking. Glaser (1978:108) notes that using gerunds is a way of making a distinction between the static and the process, between what and how, focusing on ac-

tion and that something is being done (cf. Charmaz 2006:136): It is not construction, it is *constructing*. To me this has meant an investigation of how concepts such as resistance and the mainstream are made meaningful and how they are differently defined and used by participants. Instead of dismissing those who are articulated as "fake punks" as less authentic, I have asked what this articulation suggests, and argue that that this rather is an act of authentication than an objective account of it.

I started by reexamining and re-coding the data I had gathered in Indonesia and Southern Sweden, highlighting the more pertinent themes and codes. I then coded my data from the larger Swedish study. As a third step, I merged these and began looking for similarities and differences, a process which made me go back and forth in the data and construct more inclusive codes. I also returned to the field on a number of occasions during the final analysis in order to further investigate certain themes and categories, aiming to reach a point where the collected data provided no new significant information (Charmaz and Mitchell 2001:168).

5.4.2. Combining codes to patterns

The second step of my analysis was to develop these initial codes and organizing the data. Geertz refers to these larger codes as being "established codes" and "frames of interpretations" (1973a:7, 9). To me this meant investigating how different claims are combined into patterns and how these patterns in turn link up with others. The purpose of this was to identify and describe how meaning is created socially, but also how styles and identities are organized and validated in relations to these meanings. I began by connecting codes that were used in relation to each other, asking what kind of differences that were mobilized: In relation to what characteristics and actions were they articulated and thus ordered (Sacks 1989:272ff)? Thereafter I looked at how these articulations linked up to other codes describing qualitative traits and appropriate actions. One example of this was how the code "authenticating participants" was articulated as being analogous to a certain kind of dress, appearance, and action, as well as a number of prohibitions.

This part of the analysis also involved merging this structural approach with a more hermeneutical one, looking at how participants placed themselves and others in relation to these categories as well as to their own style and behavior. In short, focus was on the practical meaning these had for individual participants. Mapping out these articulations meant returning to the data once more, comparing data to data and data to codes, beginning to form theoretical categories (Charmaz 2006:45). In so doing I turned to Alexander's (2004a) notion of scripts as indicative of the relative freedom of performance from the background text within which it takes place. Scripts, he notes, are "the action-oriented subset of background understandings" (2004a:550) inferred by the actors in communicating, experiencing, and

interpreting meaning. I began ordering certain pertinent codes as scripts, and thereafter I started looking at how they were used to combine and highlight different parts of a larger subcultural pattern. The final part of this was linking these scripts and patterns to how styles and identities were claimed and authenticated and the consequences this had for subcultural participation.

5.4.3. Two subcultural patterns of meaning

The last part of the analysis involved constructing two distinct subcultural patterns of meaning defined by how the mainstream and the subcultural sacred were ordered and positioned. I began by merging similar definitions of the subcultural sacred to larger code families on the basis of what was articulated and validated as analogous to the subcultural sacred. The code family "conspicuous style" thus included a number of different articulations all stressing standing out through dress, appearance, and action. Similarly, the code family "downplaying style" was defined on the basis of dress, appearance, and action being articulated as utterly unimportant and shallow.

Thereafter I started comparing the "hows" of this "what": How were styles and identities made analogous to the subcultural sacred and with what consequences? Were there similarities across and between categories in terms of how this subcultural sacred was made to walk and talk? This resulted in the ordering of different scripts, all related to a particular category of authenticated styles and identities. These scripts were then organized on the basis of what they described. The result was three different categories of scripts that referred to what the subcultural was separated from—*difference*—what it stood for—*freedom*, and lastly, how this was to be achieved and maintained—*doing*.

During this process I decided to return to a distinction that I had previously made use of (Hannerz 2006, cf. Hannerz 2013a) in reassembling these scripts and authentications into two distinct subcultural patterns of meanings, defined by how the mainstream is positioned. Whereas I had previously referred to this distinction as one between groups of participants, I reworked them so as to rather point to differences in how the mainstream is defined and positioned as well as how the subcultural sacred is mobilized and authenticated. I will refer to these as a *convex* and a *concave* subcultural pattern.

Similar to how a convex and a concave lens differ in the refraction of the light passing through them, either converging light or diverging it, I made use of this distinction to point to the way the enactment of different patterns of meaning means seeing both the subcultural and the mainstream differently. Rather than the result of this refraction, they are defined here by the direction and boundary of the point of refraction. It is a metaphorical figure for how the relationship of the subcultural to the mainstream is conceived. A convex pattern bends outwards like the reverse side of a spoon; consequently

I used the term to organize definitions of the mainstream that were articulated as *external* to punk as well as scripts and authentications that had a separation from this outside as their foundation.

A concave pattern, on the other hand, bends inwards, as does the side of the spoon we use for eating. I made use of this term to order definitions of the mainstream as being *internal* to the subcultural: scripts and authentications establishing a separation of the subcultural sacred from a mainstream already within punk.

These are patterns of meanings, and a tool with which I have categorized my data. These patterns refer not to individual actors, objects, or styles, but rather to how participants enact different patterns of meaning in communicating, interpreting, and acting upon the subcultural. This was also one of the advantages with these terms as they point to participants being able to move in and out of these patterns, over time and between spaces, as well as making the separation from the mainstream a subcultural construction rather than something factual. Regardless of how the mainstream is positioned, it is defined, experienced, and interpreted through these patterns; the mainstream has no meaningful existence outside of them.

5.5. Ethical considerations

Just as I did not want to expose my informants during fieldwork, I do not want to expose them in this book. All names have thus been changed, as well as identifying characteristics such as dress, appearance, and tattoos. Further, if not deemed pertinent to the analysis, I have left both aliases and characteristics out altogether in order to protect participants' anonymity. I realize that this sometimes makes the excerpts more boring to read, as painting an image and background provides the reader with some frame of reference. Still, I do not think that it is necessary for the analysis. I am less interested in individuals, or individual action, than the patterns used by participants in authenticating identities or interpreting individual action. In two cases, I have chosen to make additional changes to how participants' are referred to. This is due to an incident that occurred after my bachelor's thesis, where I witnessed participants going through the text and instantly being able to tell who was who based on comparing the same name to different excerpts. Thus there are a few excerpts quoted here that have been given another code and date so as to avoid readers tracing out who is who by connecting excerpts. I cannot see that this has had an impact for the non-punk reader.

A second ethical consideration refers to the impossibility of always doing overt fieldwork. When I have participated in discussions at someone's home this has been no problem, but doing observations at shows while making sure that all participants present knew that I was a researcher was not possible. In these cases I had to rely on my informants and key informants having

spread the word regarding what I was up to. However, I doubt this reached everyone. I have tried to limit my quotes from the field to the participants who were informed that I was doing research, but some discussions that I overheard were too interesting not to be part of this study. I guess I will just have to accept eventually spending my time in sociological hell with Laud Humphreys for doing so.

A final ethical dilemma refers to drawing the line of what I could observe as a researcher. On a number of occasions I stepped in so as to break up fights as well as reasoning with participants who were about to drive home when too drunk, climb up a five-story building, or who made blatantly sexist and racist remarks towards other participants, or passers by. On the other hand, just as often I had to quietly endure such matters, for fear of losing access to a particular group. There was also the matter of criminal activity. Early on I made a decision after having talked to one of my supervisors to not to be present when participants had planned crimes, for example break-ins, sabotages, or destruction of property. Still, I did not walk out every time someone did drugs, smashed a window, did graffiti, or stole something. I did not want to do a study in which everything that was illegal was excluded from my observations (cf. Waquant's critique of Dunier (1999), 2002:1477f). Further, being present usually made it possible for me to discuss some of these matters with the participants later.

6. A Convex Subcultural Pattern

> You remember all we were told about the torture-chambers, the fire and brimstone, the "burning marl." Old wives' tales! There's no need for red-hot pokers. HELL IS—OTHER PEOPLE! ("Garcin" in Sartre [1944] 1989).

6.1. Introduction: An external positioning of the mainstream

This chapter will be entirely dedicated to what I refer to as a convex subcultural pattern and the consequences the enactment of such a pattern have for the authentication of styles and identities. In so doing, I will point out that even though the stylistic representation of the subcultural sacred differed among participants, what united these performances was an emphasis on a distinction from a mainstream defined as external to the subcultural. The centrality of the mainstream is evident in the extensive use of the word itself among both Swedish and Indonesian participants. The "mainstream," along with "sell-out" and "DIY," was a crucial part of the subcultural vernacular.[19] When these terms appear in excerpts and quotes, they have thus *not* been translated from a similar Swedish or Indonesian term, but were used as such. These terms transcended both linguistic and national boundaries, as did, as I will show, the definitions of them.

There are three overarching questions in this chapter, as well as the subsequent chapter concerning a concave pattern: First of all, *how are subcultural styles and identities mobilized and authenticated in relation to different definitions of the mainstream?* Second, *what keeps these different definitions together*? Third, and equally important, *what consequences do such performances and audience interpretations have for what can and cannot be fused with the subcultural background?* Following from these three questions the analysis will start in the definition of the mainstream. From there I will turn to the foreground scripts through which the separation from this mainstream is communicated, interpreted, and acted upon. Thereafter I will turn to the outcome of these performances in terms of the authentications of style and

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[19] See for example Andersson's (2005:8) account of how Swedish graffiti writers make use of the same words and terms as do their North American counterparts. Andersson refers to this as a "portable treasure," a cultural heritage being passed on through a subcultural language.

identities: How do participants, through the use of these scripts, locate and organize objects, actions, ideas, etc. as being a representation of, and commitment to, the separation from the mainstream? Throughout the analysis I will use style to categorize the mobilization of objects, actions, ideas, dress, language, and appearances as an extension of the subcultural sacred. Each part of these chapters will deal with a particular definition of the subcultural sacred, articulated as a matter of *difference, freedom,* and *doing.* The order in which these appear in text is reflective of how they were used, difference being included in both the articulation of freedom and doing. Consequently, even though they sometimes appear as separated, both the background distinction to the mainstream, and the foreground scripts through which such distinction are made to walk and talk, are to be seen as intertwined, and often enacted simultaneously. The similarities in how these background distinctions and scripts were enacted in Sweden and Indonesia were nearly identical—there were more differences between different parts of each country then between the countries themselves. Hence, excerpts from interviews and field notes from the two countries will appear in relation to each other, and not as in a separate analysis.

6.2. Being different

It is a dark and cold December day and I am standing outside a youth house somewhere in Sweden all puzzled. I have just spent an entire evening with some of the most derided groups of participants within punk—the skate-punks. They are also sometimes referred to by my other informants in this city as the "emo-punks," "pop-punks," "Green Day-punks," or in some cases completely exempted from the subcultural—dismissed as "the popular kids." To be sure, the participants that I have just started to follow do not dress similarly to the other participants I have followed. They wear mostly rather expensive clothes—often oversized and colorful skate- and surf-brands. Gone are the chains, studs, and mohawks, Doc Marten boots being replaced by converse and vans shoes, and caps as the predominant head ornament. Their shirts are adorned with bands selling records in the millions, such as Rise Against, Rancid, Bad Religion, NOFX, and Millencolin. Yet, as I stand there in the freezing cold, what actually puzzle me are the groups' similarities. When Martin told that story about how he hated normal people because all they cared about was being popular and looking like everyone else, was it not the same story I had heard so many times before? And the way Jenny expressed always having been different from the other kids in school, to which the others agreed unanimously—that sounded just like a lot of the other participants I have followed. The tall guy, whose name has slipped my mind, added to Martin's argument about shopkeepers harassing them by saying that of course they do, they treat everyone who does not look like a

normal person like that: Being punk means always being scrutinized. As I got on the bus that night I was looking forward to the next day. There was clearly something interesting here. These participants also claimed difference and standing out from the normal as the foundation for their identification as punks, using the same arguments as other groups of participants regardless of the differences in style (Field notes, Sweden, Dec. 2007).

One of the alternative titles I had for this thesis was "We are different!" as so much of participants' stories, and articulations of styles and identities, centered on this matter. Indeed, most of the previous subcultural studies point in a similar direction, with subcultures defined by their difference from the normal or the conventional (cf. Brake 1985, Fox 1987, MacDonald 2001, Hodkinson 2002, Haenfler 2006). Further, arguing that punk involves a distinction against the normal is far from something new; instead, it is often the foundation for the definition of punk. Hebdige (1979:90), for example, argues that subcultures per definition represent noise in "the orderly sequence," and puts the "normal" as the subcultural opposite. Leblanc (1999:31) defines punk as a resistance to and rejection of "conventional norms," and Muggleton (2000:55ff) tells of how his informants validated their own style through a distinction against "conventional style."

This stress on difference against an undifferentiated normal is what this first part of this chapter will attend to. How is difference communicated, interpreted, and acted upon, and in relation to what? What are the defining characteristics of the conceived normal mainstream and how do these relate to the definition of the subcultural sacred?

6.2.1. The undifferentiated mainstream

It would be easy to argue that the positioning of the mainstream as external means that everyone, and everything, that is not punk is mainstream. Still, following my theoretical assumption outlined in chapter 4, I will argue that difference is claimed and established in the authentications of identities and styles, rather than being already ascribed. Indeed, following participants to school, to the youth club, to work, or to a show meant observing how the objectification of the mainstream varied according to space and time: The distinction against the normal was contextual, rather than all-encompassing. The undifferentiated normal others called into being at the bus station were the people passing by; at the show, it was the non-punks present; at home, it was parents, room mates, or neighbors. Similarly, references to other kinds of music, celebrities, or TV-shows also constituted a shared immediate present.

The normalcy of the mainstream referred to a state of being that was physically present in participants' lives, characterized as a homogeneous

undifferentiated mass. When these participants were asked to define what constitutes the mainstream, they gave responses such as the following:

> The mainstream, that's my whole school. I can't stand school, all the other girls here they like cuddling with rabbits and cats, that's what they want to do, they are all like that. I can't take it (Interview, Sweden-W2, 2008).

> My whole school looks the same, they want to look like the popular and be like them. They are normal, normal, normal. Everyone (Field notes, Indonesia, Dec 2004).

Just as identifying another person as a punk means implying a shared sense of evaluation and being, the identification of the normal mainstream entails the absence of such a shared understanding (cf. Barth 1969:15). Pointing to the presence of the mainstream in and around participants' everyday lives reinforces the notion of the subcultural as the set apart, specifying who is in and who is out (Williams 2011:131). The opposite of the set apart was consequently the undifferentiated—that which was like everything else, or at least aspired to be. In the excerpts above, it is "my whole school," "all the other girls," but it also included "everyone in this society," "all radio-shit," "everyone in this room" etc.. The mainstream is, in this sense, at the same time distant and present, general and specific, with the fellow students in school being just a representation of "everyone's" aspiration to be normal and like everyone else.

> A: The mainstream is those I talked about before, those who go to a festival to listen to the headlining popular acts like Håkan Hellström, those who just listen to that stuff: radio, pop, radio music. To me, that's the mainstream.
> B: I think I expressed it in the wrong way, I'd say it is Åhlens, H&M, and JC, can't you agree on that? It's you know the clothes you have to wear otherwise you are nothing, otherwise you are just wearing extreme clothes.
> A: Yeah, that's about what I mean by the mainstream (Interview, Sweden-W1, 2008).[20]

> You see, this is what it is all about, punk is about not being like everyone else. Mainstream people who just want that mainstream house, or car, or shop all the mainstream stuff that they have seen on TV at the mall. (Interview, Indonesia-W2, 2004).

The first excerpt is from an interview I conducted at the campsite outside a music festival in Sweden. The reference to "those" who "just" go to a festival to listen to what everyone else listens to was accompanied by this participant pointing at those passing by on their way to the festival entrance. The

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[20] "A" and "B" here, and forth on, refers to the order interviewees appear in the excerpt. "A" is therefore not necessarily "A" in subsequent excerpts from the same interview.

marginal status of the external mainstream as both the specific and present, while at the same time the general and distant, is captured in the second interviewee extending the definition of the mainstream to the retail stores found in almost every medium sized Swedish town. Similarly, music, leisure activities, and hairstyles that were perceived as "general" were inauthenticated. Interestingly, even though Sweden and Indonesia are two thoroughly different countries, the definitions of the mainstream were similar. The Indonesian punks did not consider eating tacos on a Friday night or watching the Eurovision Song Contest with your friends as mainstream as punks in Sweden did, but they did describe taking the whole family to McDonalds on the weekend or watching the latest *Cinetron* on TV as characteristic of the mainstream. When I asked the Indonesian punks to elaborate on it, their argument was simply that the mainstream thought eating at McDonalds was such a special event and distinctive and that was why they opposed it. The Swedish participants expressed their aversion against Friday night tacos similarly.

Similar to the second excerpt above, the normal mainstream was characterized by an intention to be like everyone else. It referred to an external mass—"all of those"—preoccupied by a desire to be like "everyone else": An emulation of normalcy in the sense of consuming, looking, and being *just* like everyone else. Participants' articulated difference was thus strengthened through the perceived judgmental character of the mainstream—that they treated everything that was not like them as the "extreme" or the strange, reducing those refusing to take part of their homogenizing activities to "nothing." Yet, the shallowness of the mainstream articulated by participants in relation to the subcultural invalidated such a claim; the mainstream was "just" doing, they were "merely" shopping, "only" thinking about fitting in, imputing the "extreme" with both depth and activity. The articulation of the mainstream as the normal outside rests upon a set of binary pairs that invert the vernacular distinction between those fitting in and those being left out.

> You do not want to look everyone else, and be like everyone else, that is what punk is. To be different (Interview, Indonesia-E3, 2004).

> Still, what I was looking for when I got in [to punk] was the feeling of being an outsider, that I and my friends, that we are fucking cool, that we are fucking special. And that feeling was there from the very start, and it is very likely still there. So for me, punk as a label, it is being an outsider and the opposite, being someone who sticks out (Interview, Sweden-S1, 2003).

Along with "being different," participants identified themselves and others as subcultural by saying they were "special," "alternative," "outsiders," "outcasts," etc., adding to the distinction against the normal undifferentiated mainstream who were just like everyone else. Previous subcultural research also points to this perceived superiority, with the rejection of the stereotypi-

cal normal creating a feeling of uniqueness and self-confidence (Haenfler 2006:37, Kidder 2006:42f).

Following from Durkheim's (1915) notion that divinity is a matter of human activity, what constitutes the subcultural sacred is here the transformed, that which is superimposed to the undifferentiated and profane (cf. Stedman Jones 2001:204f). Subcultural identifications are a matter of reassuring the sacred character of participants against a profane and simple outside. As such, there is little need to specify the normal beyond the homogeneous and the desire to be like everyone else, as what matters is rather how subcultural difference is communicated and interpreted (cf. Durkheim 1915:432). Hence, the normal mainstream is not equivalent to everyone else who is not a punk. Rather, it is subculturally defined and specified, its physical representation differing according to the present situation and performance. It boils down to clarifying the most basic of subcultural prohibitions: that of not being like everyone else. Further, the inversion of the meaning of the binary pair of inside/outside refers to superimposing meaning onto this defined mainstream; whereas the normal values homogeneity and punishes those sticking out, punk becomes an inversion of the poles, claiming difference and being an outsider as something positive, an object of pride.

Still, the definition of the mainstream as the normal and punk as the different remains unsatisfying, in the sense that it does not further specify either this difference or how it is enacted. In order to do so, I will therefore attend to how this difference from the normal is articulated and related to identification.

6.2.2. Essential difference

Even though there were plenty of differences regarding what participants authenticated as representative of the distance to the undifferentiated mainstream, these enactments focused on a stepping out from the conventional and normal. I will return to the stylistic aspect of this shortly, but first I want to specify how difference in this sense is deeply linked to the similarity of a shared distinction against the normal. In his work on runners, Jeffrey E. Nash (1980:85) argues that being a part of what he calls the running scene involves being able to bring into play the system of beliefs that constitute this scene. This, he argues, is the code that participants adhere to as a starting point in interaction with other participants; it is what gives action a distinctive meaning. It is the code, rather than the action, that works to provide participants with a sense of superiority over non-runners. Similarly, the enactment of a background distinction against a normal external mainstream involved a performance of superiority by rendering difference not only meaningful, but also something desired. At the same time, this also means ordering and focusing difference, enabling some styles to be authenticated while excluding others based upon this shared ideal. The authentication of

objects thus has less to do with the objects themselves than the meaning structure they are perceived to signify.

In both Indonesia and Sweden, the shared sense of difference from the normal was extended in terms of depth. Punk was articulated not as something you became, but rather as something you already were, as when these two participants recount their school years:

> [S]ince I was a little kid I've never liked following other kids, like when I was 12, lots of my friends smoked cigarettes, I didn't think that was cool so I told them like what's so cool with smoking and they said "everybody else is doing it" and I think since then I have realized that I'm not the same person as most of my friends, but that's cool (Interview, Indonesia-E1, 2003).

> I felt that it was me against my whole high school, or that I wasn't even a part of it, I felt that I had my thing [...] I felt that all the others were losers, this may sound very punk but they were pawns in the game; they're going to school and then they're gonna get a job. Instead of studying after school I went to rehearse with my bands, went to shows and did stuff. And I am so satisfied today that I did those things. That I did something that I thought was fun instead of just sitting home like everyone else and studying. [...] But I started feeling that I was part of something, or that I was not a part of the ordinary, I felt that I didn't have to be a part of the whole ordinary system, that's punk to me (Interview, Sweden-S7, 2008).

Whereas difference against a normal and external mainstream constitutes the deep background of the subcultural representations here, the immediate referential text, or script, in relation to this background is that of an already existing difference. It is through such a foreground script that the meaning of an action or an object is elaborated upon by placing it in a particular time and as against an antagonist (Alexander 2004a:530). As in the two excerpts above, participants enacted the difference against a normal mainstream through the articulation of a feeling of always having been different, a feeling that made it impossible to be socially compatible with "everyone else." This was by no means confined to discussions during interviews; it was a common starting point in any mobilization and authentication of identities. Such performances involved working the binaries in front of a background text that prescribes a difference against the normal mainstream as deeply meaningful. Above, these binary pairs include active/passive, rebellion/obedience, difference/normality, standing out/fitting in, and fun/serious. This scripting of difference as an intrinsic quality both extended and condensed the difference against the normal mainstream, attributing an interpretation of subcultural identification as pursuing a difference that preceded subcultural participation.

The main elements of this script were an alignment of the antagonist to the profane and polluted; the mainstream was aligned to the homogeneous, conventional, and passive. As in the excerpts above, "everyone else" is just a

"pawn in the game," or "loser," doing things in order to be like everyone else. Second, in contrast to the homogeneous antagonist, the protagonist is aligned with the individual, different, and active; s/he is struggling for the right to be different, standing up for what s/he believes in, and taking on the homogeneous mass. This included references to a sort of heroic outcast, as in the above claims that "it was me against my whole school" and "I never liked following other kids," but also to a lone outcast, as in stories of pursuing an interest even if everyone else found it strange or crazy. Other examples of this included descriptions of being a part of a group of friends but having a feeling of not fitting in, being left out or teased in school, or not wanting to participate in sports or other social activities. Third, the script of an intrinsic difference also involves the inversion of the binary popular/outcast: The protagonist is not *left* outside, but is rather positioned as such. The normal and conventional are thus turned into the negative, while the deviant is the positive. Lastly, the enactment of this script involves the performance of this experienced difference as something that preceded subcultural participation. Punk, here, is said to have given a further meaning to an experienced difference, rephrasing it into something positive; for example, "I realized I'm not the same person as most of my friends but that's cool," "I started feeling I was part of something," and "I don't have to be part of the ordinary." The script of an intrinsic difference thus positions subcultural identification as something essential, or predestined:

> I was drawn to punk because that it was aggressive in some way or other. I liked that, that is was provocative. And then that you were not like everyone else, you wanted to be an outsider (Interview, Sweden-S4, 2004).

> When I heard punk for the first time, it was so radical, it was like coming home. It didn't sound like anything else, you know just chaos (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan. 2005).

Other participants talked about punk as "the end of a journey," (Field notes, Sweden, Aug 2004) "a haven for misfits" (Interview, Indonesia-E3, 2004), or that "it said things you had wanted to say, but lacked the words for" (Interview, Sweden-S5, 2004). Often this was followed by a reference to punk having saved their lives by bailing them out from depression, being bullied, loneliness, or, more often, from mere boredom. The articulation of punk as a "home" or a place of safety provided identification with a depth that was extended to authenticate the initial attraction to punk in the first place. Becoming punk was then performed as a predestined journey, the steady move from searching for a place of belonging to finding it. This way, subcultural identification is not articulated as a desire to become different; rather, it is something you are drawn to because you already are different.

This articulation of identification as part of a process of channeling an experienced difference has the consequence of transforming the potentially polluting "becoming" to the depth of "already being" through a script that replaces a chronology of change with one of naturalness and inevitability. Thus, when addressed, descriptions of initial participation revolved around punk being something that chose participants rather than the opposite. This scripted difference protects the sacred from the potential pollution of the profane—having once been part of the mainstream—by an articulation of always having been part of the sacred. This is illustrated in the first excerpt above: "you *were* not like everyone else, you *wanted* to be an outsider." Consequently, subcultural authenticity is worked through depth and consistency: you are different and you strive to continue to be so. The reason you are drawn to the "aggressiveness" and "provocative" sound of punk is because it resonates with what is already present deep inside of you. Punk, this way, is said to speak only to ears already tuned to listen.

Before arriving at the implications of this scripted difference in terms of style, I want to point to the pervasiveness of this script within the previous research on punk. This is demonstrated in the following two examples from the work of Shank (1994) and Fox (1987):

> It was different, you know. *I never felt totally successful at fitting in with normal people* […] when I started hanging out with all the punk rock people; I found people that, I don't know, it really had something to do with *just wanting to do something different*. With in a way being an outcast but then being accepted. It was new and different. *And you were sort of bound together because the other people hated you*. I think that might be part of the attraction, too, is being in a minority. Being in a self-imposed minority (Quoted in Shank 1994:121f, emphasis added).

> Punk didn't influence me to be the way I am much. *I was always this way inside*. When I came into punk, it was what I needed all my life. *I could finally be myself* (Quoted in Fox, 1987:353, emphasis added).

Both of these excerpts are almost identical to some of the excerpts we have seen so far; the only difference is that these are from the US in the 1980s and 1990s. Here, punk is similarly articulated as being the communication of an already intrinsic difference. Further, similar to the discussion above referring to joining punk as coming home, Leblanc tells of how the punks she followed used familial metaphors in relation to their subcultural participation, referring to it as an "adoption" and as their "family" (Leblanc 1999:71). She also notes how this was related to a common narrative of highlighting a difference from the mainstream that preceded subcultural participation. Philip Lewin and Patrick Williams make a similar point, arguing that always having been different implies that "a genuine expression of the inner self predicated their subcultural identities" (2009:79f). There is an important differ-

ence between these researchers, however. While Fox and Leblanc connect difference to resistance and commitment, Lewin and Williams point to this being a matter of authenticity work, as in representing a shared ideal. In accordance with this, what matters here is not so much whether participants did or did not experience an intrinsic difference, but rather that the performances of such a difference have consequences for how identities are, and can be, authenticated. Enacting a distinction from the normal mainstream makes it rather hard to fuse an account of having been like everyone else, or having wanted to be popular, as well as acting in a way that could be deemed as such. Indeed, this script of an intrinsic difference is so dominant in my data that even those who felt that they could not enact this intrinsic difference nevertheless claimed it to be the legitimate reason for being punk: "I was not really punk, you know, I was not really different, I had a lot of friends, at first I felt kind of fake" (Interview Sweden-S5, 2004). It was also, as I will return to shortly, used to inauthenticate other participants, claiming that they were not real punks, as they were not really different.

The relationships between difference and similarity outlined so far have the consequence of rendering punk a collective of individuals. Even though the intrinsic difference to the mainstream is a shared difference, the similarities between participants are nevertheless based on the performance of individual differences, of expressing a feeling of not fitting in. It is the first person singular who stands out from everyone else and embodies the boundary to the normal mainstream. Subcultural identification thus means an ordering and structuring of the past through a repeated, simplified, and shared communication of a symbolic homecoming. If authenticated, the outcome of such a performance is both the establishment and the confirmation of the individual's difference to the normal and undifferentiated mainstream. The boundary to the mainstream is, in this sense, essentialized; the difference between the subcultural and mainstream is established in terms of being endowed with this difference or not.

6.2.3. Stylistic difference

According to Durkheim (1915:167), the unity of clan members is a matter of a shared belief about the order and relations of the world around them, as well as shared representations of that unity, rather than some essential common bond. Similarly, the essential difference outlined above is not enough to cause a feeling of unity among participants. Rather, participants are bound together through a shared representation of this sense of being different. Subcultural style will therefore be treated here as a representation of the sacred, mobilized and authenticated as manifesting a difference against the mainstream: Subcultural belonging is objectified through a symbolic communication, mediation, and interpretation of the sacred. In short, objects and

actions are authenticated in relation to shared pattern of representation (c. f Douglas 1966:41ff, Kidder 2011:110ff).

This is what Hodkinson (2002) refers to as a collective distinctiveness—that even though there was a diversity of style and different definitions of commitment among the goths he investigated, there was a shared set of ideals that were consistent among participants over time. Polemicizing against Muggleton, Hodkinson's point is that it is not that easy that meaning and style are individualized and fluid; rather, gaining subcultural acceptance is largely a matter of showing a sufficient compatibility with this set of subcultural ideals (2002:30). Similarly, I have argued that authentication is a matter of fusion between performance and background text and between performance and audience (Alexander 2004a). Having said that much, it should come as no surprise that both the performances and authentications of style drew upon such an articulated intrinsic difference.

The authentication of style within a convex pattern was closely related to style being the externalization of an intrinsic difference, letting everybody see that you were not like everyone else. Similarly, the absence of such an intrinsic difference was also one of the most common references in the defiling of objects and participants. When I did fieldwork on festivals and punk shows, for example, participants would spend the time in between bands commenting on others' styles, categorizing them as real or fake on the basis of whether their style was indicative of a genuine difference or not. The interrelation of depth and difference through the script of an intrinsic and essential difference from a normal mainstream has the consequence that style inevitably becomes subordinated by this difference. Style that is authenticated is that which can be fused with both the background text's emphasis on a distinction against the normal, as well as being consistent to a scripted intrinsic difference. If this relation between form and content, between depth and surface, is perceived to be absent, style is inauthenticated as the meaningless and reduced; it does not stick, and can be cast off as the fake.

One of these inauthentications is engraved in my memory: a young punk who wandered around the venue in search of someone to talk to. I saw someone in need of a friend and some self-esteem, yet one of my informants bluntly stated that "he's got nothing to do here, he's just dressed up, a rich popular kid trying to be cool on Saturdays with the Rancid shirt his mommy bought him for Christmas" (Field notes, Sweden, Oct. 2008). The opposite were those who were esteemed by participants for being representative of the difference against the mainstream: "wow, look at that guy, he does not just look punk, he really is" (Field notes, Indonesia Aug, 2003). Style within a convex pattern is, in this sense, contingent; objects and actions are only meaningful in relation to the background text and foreground scripts. You wear what you are, not the opposite.

A: If you see a huge fucking mohawk and huge fucking studs on a leather jacket, then you know it is a punk, then it is not just a fashion fad.
B: But it is like, when you choose to look that way, it is such a strong sense of being an outsider, it is making such a statement, it takes a hell of a lot of time. You can see that in any regular club people are beginning to pull together a kind of timid mohawk, and they are trying to make it trendy to wear a studded belt, but that is not as strong (Interview, Sweden-S1, 2003).

People may think we're a group of assholes dressing up like aliens, but that's just the way we express ourselves (Interview, Indonesia-W1, 2003).

Similar to these excerpts above, dress and appearance were authenticated through a performance of style as something directly related to an intrinsic difference: finding an appropriate means to communicate an already existing difference. You did not dress differently to become an outsider; you did so because you already were. Enacting a script of an intrinsic and essential difference is adding another layer to style, ascertaining the right sense of the action, providing style with a depth and further meaning (cf. Alexander 2004a:550).

Extrinsic difference was thus downplayed for the intrinsic, both by the studded leather jacket-clad girl claiming that her style was not shallow, saying, "This is who I really am" (Field notes, Sweden, Oct 2008), or as above, when the Indonesian participant wearing a black shirt and cut off jeans expresses that, "[T]hat's just the way we express ourselves." It was not the stylistic objects per se that made them subcultural—the mohawks, studs, and leather jacket—but rather what they were seen to represent: their possible fusion with a background text stressing difference against the homogeneous and conventional.

Above, the authentication of mohawks is, for example, directly related to being an outsider, as that is what sets the authentic "huge fucking mohawk" apart from the fake "timid mohawk." It is not so much the studs or the mohawk that are defined as punk, as the message it gives: a "statement" and "strong sense of being an outsider." When such a performance does not stick, it is reduced to the shallow—"just a fashion fad." The lack of fusion to both the background and foreground places such a performance as external to punk. This extension of the subcultural binary into one of depth and surface is further captured in the reference to one's investment of time and effort.

Hence, even the inauthentication of stylistic objects followed this script; either that the person was not making a statement, or that s/he was trying to be someone s/he was not. When such commitment was called into question, participants were accused of being inauthentic for either lacking this intrinsic difference or for dressing like their punk idols (cf. Andes 1998:216ff). Both pointing to an inconsistency in relation to a genuine self.

This also had the consequence of reifying subcultural hierarchies between the old and new, producers and consumers, etc.. Several of my informants indicated that accusations of being shallow or a poser were inevitable, with the only ones in a secure position being either those who played in well known bands and those who had stayed punk for ages. This is how the attribution of commitment and depth are intimately related in the authentications of style and identities through time. Consistency and inconsistency both relate to a perceived commitment to the background and the foreground, as in the excerpt above in which a mohawk is authenticated because it involves "a hell of a long time" while the non-punk version is merely "pull[ed] together"—representing the temporary and shallow. The articulated fusion between signifier and signified renders the stylistic representations of the subcultural distinct from the profaning mainstream. Everyone can try to look like a punk, yet without the depth of an intrinsic difference it can never be punk. The boundary of the shallow and normal mainstream is thus drawn in terms of a deeper underlying statement of not being like everyone else and having no intention to.

Similarly, changes in style needed to fuse with both this genuine self and an investment in time and commitment to the background. Fia, a participant whom I followed for years, went through a number of rather substantial changes. When I first met her, she was dressed in ripped jeans and an Exploited hoodie bought at the local country fair. Two years later she was skateboarding and had dreads. The studded leather jacket was added just a few months later. I also followed participants who started with the leather jacket and mohawk and then shaved it off, instead going for a more casual style. In these cases the changes were rather swift, usually initiated when participants were drunk or high, but when authenticated they were articulated as a matter of consistency: of better showing off who you are and your difference. In this sense, changes in styles were ritualized by positioning these changes in time and in opposition to the normal mainstream through a script of difference. The actual event—shaving off your hawk when drunk— is replaced with what should have happened—"when even the billboard models in the subway are wearing mohawks, it is time to move on" (Field notes, Sweden Feb 2007). Similar to becoming punk, the potentially polluting—the temporary and contingent—is reworked to the lasting and committed (cf. Douglas 1966:67ff).

Making a mess

The authentications of styles and identities as punk through depth and difference far exceeded mohawks and studs. It was symbolically extended to piercings, tattoos, brightly dyed hair, dreadlocks, Dr. Marten boots, skateshoes, nudity, chains, spikes, hooded sweatshirts, etc.. What these different objects all had in common was that they were articulated as representative of an essential difference from a normal mainstream. Interestingly, in all en-

actments of a convex pattern, participants' own style was articulated as one of standing out, regardless of how participants dressed and looked. Those who sported boots, leather jackets, and dyed hair used the same script of an intrinsic difference being expressed extrinsically as those who wore Vans or Converse shoes, torn black pants, and crew cuts (cf. Hjelle 2013:53).

Further, authentications of identities involved an authentication of the disordered: the drunk, provocative, dirty, chaotic, etc., all of which were articulated in opposition to a normal mainstream that was ordered, clean, and passive.

> You do categorize people, you know [referring to people who attends a music festival], some people are here to get laid, some people are here for the music, and some are here to make a mess. And it is those who are here to make a mess, they are the punks, the real punks (Interview, Sweden-W3, 2008).

> What signifies a punk show? Well there's gonna be a lot of swearing, and a lot of drunk people in the pit, stagediving, pogoing, moshing, it's gonna be a lot of cool stuff that you don't see in pop shows (Interview, Indonesia-E2, 2003).

Both the performance of style and of identities thus refer to a symbolic separation between the subcultural and the mainstream, the authenticated being representative of a deeper difference. Looking, acting, or playing punk was merely dressing the otherwise intangible intrinsic difference. The reference to making a mess, and the related behaviors common at shows, are but one example of this. To mosh, also referred to as thrashing or slamming, was the most common of punk dancing in every setting I did fieldwork in. It is probably best described as a collective push-and-shove movement that starts and stops with the music but follows no particular beat. Participants are running into each other, throwing each other around, and jumping on top of one another (Hancock and Lorr 2013:329ff). It is often rather violent and chaotic, which was also how it was authenticated. Nevertheless, moshing, like other symbolic extensions of the subcultural difference to the mainstream, is both socially organized and deeply meaningful to participants (cf. Lull 1987:239ff, Haenfler 2006:19f). This social organization revolves around the limiting of actual physical harm, either by precluding direct physical violence, or if occurring, as in shoving someone too hard, to instantly show that no harm was intended. The latter was accomplished by extending your hand to pick the other up, making sure the other is ok, or making apologetic gestures. Moshing also involves an active participation and monitoring of others' dancing: catching someone stage diving, picking someone up from the floor, or shuffling away people to make them aware that someone is down on the floor. Hence, it is rather a ritualized violence where the meaning and outcome are already decided (cf. Tsitsos 1999). Nevertheless, as with dress and appearance, moshing was articulated as the direct representation of an

intrinsic difference, the music and atmosphere making "normal" dancing or behavior impossible.

The role of music is interesting. Even though music was ever present, either in terms of live music at a show, or through recorded music being played in between bands, among friends, or on a portable device in a park, it was, just as any other symbolic extension of the sacred, subordinated to the deeper distinction from the profane mainstream. Similar to dress and appearance, the distinct consistency among participants referred to the means of authentication rather than the objects themselves. Most discussions among participants referred to the sounds, lyrics, and attitude of bands enacting the scripted difference from the normal mainstream to either purify or pollute objects and actions. The good and authentic were related to the special, the unavailable, the dirty, the loud, the fast, and the chaotic. Bad or fake music was linked to the normal, popular, melodic, and professional. The ambiguity of these distinctions was apparent in the heterogeneity of musical tastes, ranging from melodic skate-punk to d-beat hardcore. Still, regardless of which kind of music participants listened to, authentications referred to an articulated difference from the normal.

> A: I have a problem explaining it but, I sort of like, I like it to be honest and from the heart you know. And then, you know the music becomes worse to me when they want to reach more people. Because I have a different taste in music than most people have and then it becomes like that.
> EH: But how can it become worse just because other people listen to it?
> A: Yeah, but then they cross this boundary and go from being a good band to you know being rock stars. It's so much more fun to have a kind of connection to the band, and get a feeling that they are really there. Right now it feels like some big bands are cartoons, that they are unreal, they do not really exists, as if they were some kind of thing that a corporation made up.
> B: I was just about to say that, let's say that we are talking about vanilla ice-cream and then they want to reach all these people who do not like vanilla ice-cream so they add all kinds of shitty fucking ice-cream to the vanilla and then you end up with a proper mishmash tasting like ass.
> A: Haha
> B: So that's the comparison I want to make as to what happens with punk bands when they want to reach a bigger crowd and make more money.
> A: And then they blame it on, "No we have to develop and blah blah blah." But you know it isn't like that. If they make seven albums with great music and then there's one album that gets famous all over the world, then it's….
> B: Really I have no problem with bands doing that, it's all right with me if they want to make money, but I don't think they can call themselves punk after such a thing; that, I think, is a miscarriage of justice (Interview, Sweden-W2, 2008).

This particular excerpt refers to a movement from the subcultural to the mainstream, an inauthentication of bands that have failed in their consistency to the background text and foreground script. Still, it follows from similar

binary work between the different/normal, consistent/inconsistent, and committed/temporary, articulating subcultural music as a matter of intent rather than the sound or the lyrics. The "honest, and from the heart" and "really existing" is positioned against "the fabricated," "made up," and available. Again, as with other aspects of style, it is the attributed intent to stand out that is authenticated, juxtaposed with the desire to be popular. In the excerpt above, the boundary between subcultural and mainstream music is drawn entirely based on this separation of the differentiated—"I have a different taste of music than most people"—that loses its subcultural status when indirectly profaned by the mainstream— "music becomes worse when they want to reach more people." It is not the music per se that matters, but rather how it is perceived in relation to the background: "If they make seven albums with good music and then there's one record that gets known all over the world…." The second participant adds to this by arguing that this is a move from the pure to the impure: In order for punk to become big it has to change and become polluted, "add[ing] all kinds of shitty [things]."

The move from inside to outside is, in this sense, literal: you cannot call yourself punk anymore after such a breach of the prohibitions, as the defiled is per definition expunged from the sacred; when you abandon what punk is about, you cannot call yourself punk anymore. Similar to the notion of the poser, bands that still called themselves punk after having gone mainstream were treated as out of frame. They were ridiculed for pretending to be something that they were not. I will return to this in relation to the definition of "selling out," but for now what matters is that the main argument for such a inauthentication of bands and music was the lack of consistency to an intrinsic difference. As the subcultural sacred is articulated as an essential difference to the mainstream, you are either in or not; there cannot be any punk in the mainstream, and vice versa.

Any perceived pollution of subcultural style was therefore rather easy to deal with. Given that style was authenticated if deemed consistent with both the background and the individual performance, stylistic objects could be dropped without having to question the validity of the background distinction against the normal mainstream. Instead, such "de-fusing" strengthens the subcultural distinction from the external mainstream. As Geertz notes, "[I]t will not be the symbol's veracity that has dissolved but its very meaning, its capacity to be either true or false" (1973c:212). One of the most interesting consequences of this was that a multitude of styles could be fused with this background, as long as they were communicated and interpreted as representative of and consistent with this intrinsic difference. Further, other subcultural groups were rarely addressed as negative, and when they were, as with emos and skateboarders for example, it was because these groups were often defined as having lost their set apart status and moved to the mainstream. Similarly, other definitions of the relationship between punk and the mainstream were also tolerated to a large extent as long as they did

not infringe on or threaten the distinction against the normal mainstream. Thus, the plurality of styles rests on the perpetuation of an intrinsic difference that style is merely seen to represent.

This relationship between an essential self and style is stressed in a number of previous studies. Lewin and Williams (2009:73) note, for example, that style that did not reflect the self was inauthenticated. In her study on lesbian subculture, Ilona Mikkonen (2010:317) makes a similar reference to authenticity, arguing that individual essence is part of a "repertoire of authenticity." Mikkonen also notes that subcultural identification revolved around verbally and stylistically dressing an essential difference, as do Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1995:144f). These examples also follow from a similar prohibition against the perceived lack of fusion between individual style and an intrinsic difference. Authentication here follows from a perceived consistency between behavior and the shared beliefs of the group. To behave rightly is to prove commitment, and this in turn decides the social positions within the subcultural.

Throughout this first part, I have argued that the subcultural sacred is individually represented through stylistic expressions of an intrinsic difference. This separation between the intrinsic being and the extrinsic representation of that being lead to a plurality of style, as long as it can be fused with the background that stresses difference against the normal and homogeneous mainstream. Thus, stylistic objects cannot be said to have an intrinsic meaning as punk; they are, similar to subcultural identities, claimed in relation to the deep meaning structure that is the extension of the binary subcultural/mainstream. Accordingly, objects have to be validated in relation to the prohibitions against the normal and homogeneous mainstream that set the sacred apart. Style therefore cannot be assessed without also assessing its relationship to the background, within which it is made meaningful. The defusing of subcultural objects is not so much a matter of the object having changed as an alteration of what it is said to represent. As I now turn to the definition of freedom, I will point to how the emphasis on an intrinsic and essential difference from the normal is intertwined with an articulation of breaking free from restrictions.

6.3. Becoming free

In the summer of 2008, I attended a three-day punk festival in Denmark accompanying some of my informants. It was one of the few occasions when different groups of participants that I followed coalesced at one spot. This was certainly one of the largest Scandinavian punk festivals that summer, with the bill including some 20 bands, mostly from Denmark and Sweden but also from Russia, Australia, Germany, Spain, and Holland. Apart from the bands, there were also a number of workshops and demonstrations.

While some of my informants attended these workshops and demonstrations, others refused, arguing that they were there for the bands and to have fun.

So, as I sit outside the main venue on this beautiful summer day, two of my Swedish informants are discussing how to spend the day. The bands will not start playing until 7pm and it is now around noon. John, the older of the two, is bare-chested and covered with black tattoos, his head shaved apart from a short black stripe in the middle. Hanna, his friend, has dark messy hair, and a black skirt and a black singlet with the logo of an American punk band. They share a joint and some beer. Neither of them is wearing shoes. John asks Hanna if she is going to attend the demonstration later that afternoon. Hanna answers, "Who the fuck wants to attend a demonstration when you can booze?" John, more nervous this times, says, "But it is an anti-racism demo." Hanna just shakes her head and mumbles, as if speaking to herself, replying, "Demonstrating, I'm not even fucking Danish." Five minutes later Per walks by and asks them if they want to go with him to the demo. John answers, "No, we don't care about that shit." Per says "Ok," and leaves (Field notes, Sweden, June 2009).

Similar to difference, freedom is often emphasized as one of the defining subcultural traits. McDonald (2001:180), for example, states that the establishment of a subcultural set of rules provides youth with a "free space" within which they can pursue independence. Muggleton (2000:68) stresses individualism and freedom as being indicative of post-subcultures, and Hodkinson (2002:144) points to the articulation of a "freedom of expression" within goth subculture. Subcultural freedom is also linked to creating autonomy from the "cultural industry" (Moore 2004:307) and "the music-business mainstream of music" (Diehl 2007:8).

The link between freedom and autonomy is also stressed in the definition of punk as being politically radical and subversive. Craig O'Hara (1999:71) states that "[p]unks are primarily anarchists" and that punk involves both an anti-authoritarianism and individual freedom. Similarly, Leblanc argues that punk anarchism includes "liberation, primarily through personal choice and responsibility, leading to an ethic of individualism" (1999:67). To both Leblanc and O'Hara, anarchism is thus the combination of individualism and difference into a political resistance against a dominant mainstream culture. On the contrary, in my data politics were rarely associated with individualism. Instead, they were articulated within both a convex and a concave pattern as being the opposite of individualism. This part of the discussion will try to elucidate this apparent difference to Leblanc's and O'Hara's findings, by assessing how freedom is articulated within a convex pattern, against what, and how this relates not only to how politics can be performed, but also to rules and regulations in general.

6.3.1. The complaisant mainstream

While defining the mainstream as the normal "everyone else" positioned the boundary to the external mainstream as something essential and predestined, there was also a second definition of the mainstream that referred to the perceived passivity of "everyone else." From this definition, what mattered was not so much that everyone else was the same, but rather how this affected people's lives. The mainstream was defined as the controlled and the restricted, happy to comply with societal norms and rules. This way, being punk was articulated as breaking free from the controlled and restricted, adding a moral aspect to an intrinsic and essential difference.

   This definition of the mainstream exceeds the normal as the homogeneous, as the characteristic of this mainstream refers not so much to the desire to be like everyone else, but rather the complaisant passivity that stems from such a desire. Still, similar to the articulation of the normal, this definition of the complaisant mainstream retains a duality between the general and the particular. It was extended to family members, friends, and colleagues at work, as well as to the undifferentiated outside that mindlessly agrees to what they are told (cf. Hodkinson 2002:73, 76, Haenfler 2006:32). Participants argued that the mainstream was preoccupied with shopping or watching TV to the extent that these people could not think for themselves; they were doomed to obedience through passivity and ignorance. The distance between participants and the complaisant mainstream was constructed through stories about parents and peers focusing too much on what others would think or say, afraid to let their punk child or friend live his or her own life and chose a path off the beaten trail.

> I think I will always be a punk because I don't think like a lot of people and I don't act like a lot of people. Maybe a lot of people now dress like you, but that doesn't mean that they are the same as you because it's only fashion. You just can tell that you are different than other people, you just got the feeling (Interview, Indonesia-E2, 2003).

> More or less punk is a style, like music and clothes, but at the same time it is something more. I think that being punk is not being like everyone else, wait, no that came out wrong. But it just feels that you are not agreeing to what everyone else is. It sounds pretty awful in reference to those who are not punk, that they are not thinking for themselves. But, I don't know, you just see things differently I guess (Interview, Sweden-S5, 2004).

The unifying characteristic of the ignorant particular and the restrained mass was the complaisant mainstream's inability to grasp any alternatives to being like everyone else. In the two excerpts above the mainstream is defined as the passive and restricted who simply cannot see or think differently. Much like an intrinsic difference, this distance to the mainstream is articulated not as a consequence of subcultural participation but rather the prerequisite for

it: "I will always be a punk because I don't think like a lot people." Hence, the distinction against everyone else relates here to a moral matter, a depth that surpasses the shallow. Following this line of reasoning, the mainstream can never be punk. Even if they dress like you or look like you, they are too restricted to think like you, reducing any similarities to "only fashion."

Consequently, the boundary to the mainstream is worked so as to reduce any potential similarity to the subcultural. This dimension of the external mainstream thus complements the articulation of an intrinsic and essential difference to the normal and shallow, as it relates standing out to breaking free from the restricted and obedient. The mainstream can never be subcultural because they are too controlled and passive to break away from everyone else. Being, acting, and looking punk is merely representing your difference and freedom from a mainstream that you were never a part of anyway. As Iain Borden notes in regards to the skaters he followed, the totalizing aspect of a subcultural identity leaves the participant with a single binary choice: "skate or be stupid" (Borden 2000:139).

The moral aspect of this distinction to a restricted and complaisant mainstream renders the subcultural superior to this mainstream. The inversion of the binary normal/deviant is, for example, accomplished by associating the normal with the ignorant and corrupt, while the deviant at least is honest. In his study on heroin users, Philip Lalander (2003) shows how the participants he followed symbolized their separation from the mainstream through symbols borrowed from media so as to give this separation both character and authenticity. This, he argues (2003:121), was especially true in relation to movies that represented the established society as perverted and dishonest. Similarly, Leblanc (1999:191f) tells of how her informants accused their accusers by pointing to the ignorance and compliance of the latter. As one of them, Chloe, puts it,

> They look at you like, "Wow, you really stand out." And I'm looking that [sic] them and I'm like, "Yeah, you really blend in." [...] in a way I'm doing them a public service, because once in a while, you need to see somebody that doesn't look like you (Quoted in Leblanc 1999:193).

Lewin and Williams (2009:70) refer to this as punk's distinction against an "ideology of acceptance," that the "system" seeks to constrain individuals' desires, compelling them instead to strive for societal acceptance and conformity. Either way, this discursive reversion of social deviance works to invert the binaries, claiming that the mainstream is exclusionary and controlling (Leblanc 1999:193). The participants I followed enacted a similar background distinction. What is the point in obeying the norms and rules of "everyone else" when this only works to restrict you and put you back in line? The complaisant mainstream was, in this sense, seen as preoccupied with homogeneity and compliance.

> To me, punk means pretty much [...] to not give a shit about all ideals and all the unwritten rules and society shit that normal people adhere to, or are defined as normal (Interview, Sweden-S3, 2003).

> To me everybody can do what they want and nobody can judge other people. You have no right to tell people what to do, it's like a moral degradation (Interview, Indonesia-W2, 2004).

The complaisant mainstream is thus dismissed through pointing to the moral inferiority of the controlled and normalizing. The mainstream has no right to tell you what to do, so why care "about all ideals and all unwritten rules and society shit that normal people adheres to," as the first participant puts it above. The participants I followed only directly invoked this superiority in relation to their family members and teachers; when commented on by others in the street or at a pub, the most common answer was the less articulate dismissal, "Yeah and you suck," or merely "Fuck off." Nevertheless, their discussions revolved around a feeling of being morally superior to the mainstream. Comments like, "They know that we are better than them that's why they hate us," (Field notes, Sweden, Jun 2008) captured the affective aspect of this distinction.

In the discussion on stylistic difference, I argued that styles and identities were authenticated through enacting a background text stressing consistency with an intrinsic self. The subcultural sacred was in this way extended to the individual standing out from the external mass. Following from this, what is called for is a prohibition against any restrictions and violations of the sanctity of the intrinsically different individual. The complaisant mainstream is thus defined as both restricted and restricting; at the same time as they are kept in place, they strive to enforce their rules and norms to keep others in place. The discursive reversal that Leblanc points to is therefore important in understanding how participants authenticated actions and identities, but also the restrictions this had in terms of what could and could not be fused with the background text. This relationship between the unrestricted and different had deep consequences for what could be fused with punk and what could not.

6.3.2. Punk as individual freedom from rules

Whereas the prohibitions against the normal mainstream concern not being, looking, and acting like everyone else, the prohibitions against the complaisant mainstream specify how and why this difference needs to be defended. When participants enacted a moral distinction against an external mainstream, they conceived of this as rejecting external restrictions so as to be able to freely express their intrinsic difference. Perceived attempts by the mainstream to keep them in line were therefore described as a threat not only

to a stylistic difference but also to a moral freedom. Consequently the enactment of freedom, just as difference, is deeply related to the individual.

> IP: I will justify my actions because it's what I want to do and it's my life and I feel that punk or hardcore or any, being part of this subculture represents personal freedom and supposedly understanding with each other that we all had a reason for choosing this path in the first place and that should be our common bond.
> EH: What does this personal freedom mean to you?
> IP: Being able to express yourself however you want to, express yourself regardless of what anyone else has to say about it (Interview, Sweden-S8, 2008).

> Punk is not only loud music, it's a lifestyle how you look and think about the world. I don't want to be mainstream, I don't want to follow and consume what the TV tells me to, I don't want to be like that. I just want to be free (Interview, Indonesia-E3, 2004).

Just as stylistic difference was established in direct relation to a feeling of not being like the conventional mass, the articulation of freedom within a convex pattern centered on the individual and a genuine self, following from a script of "just being": Working the binaries so as to establish and strengthen the distance to the mainstream, through aligning the antagonist with the controlled and controlling, the passive and pacifying. Standing against this, the protagonist is articulated, as in the second excerpt, as merely wanting to be free. Aligning freedom with difference further enhanced this scripted freedom, calling for an emancipation of the intrinsically different individual to be free to do, say, or be whatever s/he wanted. Consequently, the script of just being points to punk as being a matter of pursuing a genuine self through a set of moral rights that protect the individual.

The stress on just being and the individualization of style is the foundation for the postmodern and poststructural approaches to subcultures (Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995, Muggleton 1997). Muggleton (2000:58f), for example, goes so far that he dismisses group identification for an individualistic definition of being yourself and doing what you want. Punk, he argues, is what you make of it. The problem with such a claim, however, is that it confuses an individualization of style as meaningful with a meaning of style as individual. The repetition of style as representing being yourself, going your own way, and pursuing a genuine self rather point to this being a shared structure of meaning, within which such an individualization of style not only makes sense, but is perceived as the only possible interpretation.

Hodkinson (2002) is the main proponent for such an approach to subcultural similarities. Drawing from his work on goths, Hodkinson's argument is that the articulations of individuality and different styles nevertheless occurred within a context of strict stylistic regulations:

> In summary then, there *was* a diversity of style within the goth scene, but any flexibility in terms of individual interpretations and subtle transgressions took place in the context of overall commitment to a complex but generally consistent and identifiable set of tastes (2002:62, emphasis in original).

Haenfler (2006:35, 57) also points to diversity and individuality within straight edge as being tied to a set of rules and ideals within which individuality was ordered.

Still, the relationship between similarity and difference brings about the potential paradox between a scripted individual freedom and an intrinsic difference—at the same time as you are to be yourself you are not to deviate from the collective subcultural identity defined through difference. All the same, it is through understanding freedom as tied to difference that this paradox can not only be understood, but also analyzed as meaningful to participants. By combining a scripted freedom with that of an intrinsic difference, any attempt to limit either of these becomes polluting. Consequently, we are left with what in philosophy is referred to as an exception paradox, as the outcome of such a prohibition against regulating personal freedom and difference means that the only rule is that there are no rules.

> When we say no, we mean no. We don't like any kind of repression, any kind of rules that limit our creativity, like "don't drink," "don't do tattoos," we don't like that (Interview, Indonesia-W1, 2003).

> I tried to have a discussion with the punks about the ordering of style today and it did not really work out. In hindsight I shouldn't have phrased the question as, "So what are the rules," as I was met with a harsh answer from Niklas: "Punk is the absence of all rules, just fucking being who you really want." That was the end of that discussion (Field notes, Sweden, June 2009).

Here, rules are inauthenticated through placing the regulated in direct opposition to personal freedom, regulation is articulated as the repressive, limiting, and the opposite to creativity and emancipation. To argue that the articulation along the line of "just being" is scripted means that it is an available subcultural structure to both performer and audience for communicating and interpreting what is going on. It is a shared extension of the subcultural background in the sense that it allows the latter to walk and talk (Alexander 2004a:554). Similar to scripted difference, the importance of "just being" in relation to the subcultural sacred was never questioned, rather what was discussed was whether styles and identities could be fused with such a scripted freedom or not. The link between "just being" and the absence of rules draws from a similar combination of difference and freedom that proclaims a moral superiority against the mainstream (cf. Traber 2001:32, Baron 1989a). One of the participants I followed was, for example, openly accused outside a show for not being a real punk as he "was too mainstream." This was a

potentially devastating accusation as it referred to a breaching of a consistency to an intrinsic difference. However, the participant turned the accusation around by enacting a scripted freedom, answering to the delight of those present that, "I am just being who I am, who do you think you are?" (Field notes, Sweden, Jan 2008).

Further, the combination of the scripts of intrinsic difference and "just being" works to fuse what at first sight could appear as incoherent—the focus on conspicuous style and action while stressing an intrinsic self. Some of these styles were obviously fabricated, and often prepared in public. The combination of these scripts, however, rather worked to position not standing out as something polluting, by pushing stylistic difference as a declaration of independence from the mainstream: The freed and different individual stands out and is not afraid to do so.

The consequence of the authentication of style as a matter of conspicuously dressing an intrinsically different and thus emancipated self was that the preparation of style was articulated as part of showing commitment. Usually it was just as common as drinking beer or playing music. Participants would fix their hair and make-up, stitch up and patch their clothes, or pierce their ears when hanging out waiting for a show, at the show, relaxing in a park, or at someone's home (cf. Lull 1987:230). Instead of being treated as backstage behavior in the Goffmanian sense—such behavior being relative to the subcultural performance of style—it constituted a major part of it (cf. Goffman 1956:67f). Preparation of style was instead authenticated as what differentiated and freed them from the artificiality of a conventional and restricted outside. Whereas the mainstream was obsessed with being like everyone else, participants were merely being themselves. Further, they were not afraid to show it. Dressing punk may then very well involve putting on a fabricated costume, but on the other hand that costume is perceived as already fitting perfectly to the individual body.

It is in the light of the combination of these scripts of difference and freedom that the potential hypocrisy of valuing freedom to be who you really are while at the same time restricting style in relation to difference can be traced out. Whereas outside rules are conceived of as limiting the subcultural sacred, subcultural prohibitions are meant to secure this emancipation of individual difference. What matters is not so much how you look and act as how you do not act and look (MacDonald 2001:132, Hodkinson 2002:30). Punk is "the absence of all rules" because it represents the absence of the mainstream, just as the sanctity of the sacred is defined by its absence of the profane. The prohibitions against rules and judgment are thus articulated as a means to protect the individual's right to be both free and different.

6.3.3. Non-political anarchists

Given the emphasis on a moral distinction against a restricted mainstream pursued through an articulated absence of rules, the articulation of punk as political was hard to fuse with such a background. Although many participants did claim to be both anti-racist and left wing, this was neither performed as punk nor further specified in discussions with other participants. Instead, a non-political ideal was authenticated in relation to the freed and different, as when I asked the following participants how they felt about politics:

> A: As long as you are a minority, being the minority is punk in that way, that you are going against the stream, even if that means going against being politically involved, being…
> B: Mmh
> A: I mean some kind of non-conformist thinking on every level (Interview, Sweden-S7, 2008).

> Everybody talks politics here everyone wants to be a politician here you know, it's just boring. The way I see politics, I think Indonesia now doesn't need more talk about politics I think what Indonesia needs now is self-control. Stop talking about changing the world, change yourself first (Interview, Indonesia-E1, 2003).

Most often, when politics were articulated it was positioned as closely connected to both the normal and the complaisant mainstream, in the sense that a political attitude was both a sign of the mass and of restriction. The excerpts above also point to a perceived inconsistency between politics and a combination of freedom and difference within a convex pattern. Both of these excerpts refer to discussions about politics and punk, yet as punk is performed in relation to a scripted difference and freedom, the binaries are worked so that politics end up on the negative side of these. While punk is the heterogeneous minority, freed from what everyone else thinks, and focused on the individual, politics are articulated as connected to what everybody does, and thus the boring, restricting, and conformist. In short, whereas punk is articulated as thinking for yourself, politics mean thinking like everyone else. Similarly, politics were often articulated as the misguided, ineffective, serious, and established. Punk on the other hand, as in the discussion above, was true change, as it involved just being yourself and following no one. The subcultural background text that is being enacted here renders politics hard to fuse with this distinction against the normal and complaisant. Instead a scripted difference and freedom are enacted so as to order politics: A "thorough non-conformist thinking" is more important than "being politically involved."

This inability to fuse politics within a patterned set of meanings that emphasizes individualism, freedom, and difference is not something unique to

this study. In his study on Canadian punks, Baron (1989a:305) speaks of a pragmatic take on politics in which participants focused their criticism against that which they conceived of as restrictive. Baron notes that there were contradictory opinions among the punks he studied, mixing anarchism with nationalism, and a political apathy. This makes him conclude that if anything, punk's political resistance is libertarian, reflecting their "doing your own thing"-mentality, and that those "most critical withdraw from the institutions that attempt to restrict behavior and attitudes, especially the family and school" (Baron 1989a:306). O'Connor (2002:226) also notes the opposition to politics among some punks due to it being perceived as "an imposition from the outside." Lewin and Williams (2009:79) make a similar point arguing that the punks in their study did not articulate subcultural participation as a political resistance and that politics within punk are rather subordinated self-actualization (cf. Cisar and Koubek 2012:13). Muggleton (2000) states that whereas some punks in his study expressed that they were anti-politics, others who held political opinions separated these from the subcultural. Punk, he concludes, "is not a challenge to the system, but a liberal declaration of freedom of expression, including the right to dress in ways contrary to dominant social conventions" (2000:149).

Anarchism as an extension of the subcultural sacred

Of course we could argue that this is merely a matter of how politics are defined, and that the prohibitions against following rules and being like everyone else are indeed highly political. Still, this would not only superimpose our own definitions of politics to those articulated by these participants; it would also be missing the point. What matters here is rather that enacting a specific background and a particular script renders some interpretations possible while others remain distant. In Indonesia I followed a group of participants who had squatted a stretch of pavement and who had repeatedly defended this space against the police and security guards. Nevertheless, and thus similar to the excerpts above, these actions were never articulated as political, instead they were referred to as a means to stay free and do what they wanted. When I finally asked them if they did not consider this to be a political act, they just answered that they did not care about politics; it was too serious. To perform this as a political act would have been almost impossible to fuse with a background of moral superiority against the complaisant mainstream, as it would impose external rules on the otherwise free. Such a fusion would rather question the foundation of identification within a convex pattern.

This tension between on the one hand the confrontation and provocation, and on the other hand the prohibition against rules and regulations, is what makes politics impossible to fuse with the subcultural sacred, while at the same participating in activities defined by others as political. The same participants who would argue that politics were either boring or restricting

would at the same time take part in and authenticate attending Labor Day gatherings, anti-Nazi demonstrations, or events such as "reclaim the streets." These occasions, however, were made into authentically punk events through an articulation of them as being anarchistic, fun, and involving the destruction of things, rather than being political. Anarchism, in this sense, was similar to "the only rule is that there are no rules," articulated as the fusion of freedom and difference. Whereas politics were defined as inevitably external to punk as the conformist, restricting, and indicative of the majority, anarchism was worked as an extension of punk: the non-conformist, chaotic, dirty, and active. As such it was most often used without any further specification: "I'm an anarchist," or "anarchism is fun."

This juxtaposition of anarchism and politics was, for example, mobilized in relation to action such as demonstrations against and fights with neo-nazi groups or the police.

> [Anarchism] is fucking cool. That's what you want deep inside, that's why you have a band, so fucking cool to just have a go at everything and making a mess (Interview, Sweden-W3, 2008).

> I have an anarchy-A tattooed. Because I like anarchy. No rules, no fashion, just chaos (Interview, Indonesia-E4, 2004).

The definition of anarchism followed the scripts of difference and freedom to the letter; the analogy between punk and anarchism was rather clear in the definition of the latter as being yourself, going against the stream, and not caring, capturing both the script of essential difference and a freedom from rules. Whereas politics are restricting and boring, anarchism is both fun and different. The discrepancy between politics and anarchism was also present in participants' encounters with different definitions of anarchism. A number of participants told stories of their brief contact with organized anarchist groups outside of punk and how they had abandoned such groups because they were "too political" or "too serious." One of my interviewees, for example, told me how he had approached a local anarchist group only to leave in disappointment, as "they wanted to prescribe what I should do or think" (Interview, Sweden S5, 2004). Other participants told stories of how these groups were only interested in talking instead of doing something fun.

The authentication of anarchism as the anti-thesis of the political, defines at the same time the impossibility of fusing politics within a convex pattern. For example, I asked a group of participants to draw me a political scale and then situate elements of their life on that map. When they handed it back to me it included political parties, organizations, family members, and corporations yet punk and anarchism were absent. When I asked where they would place these, they pointed to the outer edge of the paper. This definition of anarchism as being a matter of punk rather than politics is further captured in

the authentication of styles as well. It is through relating the authenticated object with the available scripts and the separation this represents that the patterns of meaning become visible.

The consequence of this play between freedom and difference through anarchism and a prohibition of rules was a veritable mixing of symbols. My field notes on symbols worn on jackets, pants, backpacks, and caps describe a combination of the circled "A," the black star, the black cat, the black flag, the red star, the iron cross, the hammer and sickle, the crossed out swastika, the Southern flag, and anti-capitalist slogans. What all of these symbols had in common was that they were authenticated first and foremost as being representative of punk.

This is reminiscent of the use of the swastika within punk as early as in the 1970s (Levine and Stumpf 1983, Lull 1987, Crossley 2008). Both Ramones and the Dead Boys, for example, made use of the swastika on badges and in artwork in the New York punk scene (McNeil and McCain 1996:291ff).[21] As punk emerged in London in the mid 70s the swastika became a prevalent symbol of punk (cf. Hebdige 1979:116f, Garnett 1999, Huxley 1999) displayed on shirts, as in tattoos and on armbands. Sid Vicious, for example, is often portrayed wearing a red singlet with a black swastika in a white circle. The late 70s, however, involved an increased politicization of symbols used within punk, either by racist punks endorsing the swastika, or anti-racist punks exchanging it for the crossed-out version. This development led to the swastika being dropped as a symbol of punk, instead regaining its previous connotation of Nazism. Still, it was used in the early 80s American punk scene as a symbol of punk (cf. Blush 2001:30, Spheeris 1981).[22]

The performance of the swastika as punk is interesting in relation to how punk was performed in Indonesia. I have never met a Swedish punk that displayed a swastika.[23] In Indonesia, however, I did meet several (cf. Wallach 2008:111). The meaning of the swastika, however, differed significantly, even when the same subcultural pattern was enacted. Most often it was authenticated as a symbol for punk, pointing to both the Ramones' and Sex Pistols' use of it. It was displayed on patches, badges, and at least on one occasion, on a poster for a punk show. Performances like these always included the word 'punk' in close proximity to the swastika, or in the case of the poster, it was drawn as a head tattoo on a mohawked guy in a leather

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[21] Ramones also included a reference to Nazism on their self-titled debut album. The song *Today your love/tomorrow the world* includes the lines: "One-two-three-four I'm a shock trooper in a stupor yes I am, I'm a Nazi schatze y'know I fight for fatherland" (Ramones 1976).

[22] At the same time, the American band Dead Kennedy's seminal single *Nazi Punks Fuck Off* (1981) did include an armband with a crossed-out swastika. This was also the single's label.

[23] Ferrer (1983) notes that the Swedish punks in his study used the swastika, as a statement "that I am against the government" (Ferrer 1983:105, my translation).

jacket. There were also a few participants that defined the swastika by its Nazi connotations, expressing that as such it expressed "punk's hatred of the world" (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan 2005).

It gets even more intricate when it comes to the crossed-out swastika. In both Java and Bali this was sometimes articulated as an anti-Hindu symbol, and it was also often interpreted as such by parents and authorities regardless of the wearer's intent. I once had to remove a crossed-out swastika when entering a temple, and one of my informants in Bali told me a story of how he was once chased out of Balinese village by the *pecalan* (the local village security) for having displayed a similar symbol on his jacket. Similar to the use of the crossed-out swastika in Sweden, the majority of Indonesian punks articulated this as a symbol of punk.

Other political symbols were treated similarly. The iron cross, for example, was authenticated, in both Sweden and Indonesia, in association to a variety of American Hardcore bands and so was the red star and the hammer and sickle.

Hence, I will retain the articulation of punk as non-political in relation to a convex pattern, as it points to the intricate structure of meanings through which some styles are easier to authenticate than others. In this part of the convex chapter I have pointed to how freedom is enacted by participants through a script of "just being" to authenticate styles and identities as morally superior to that of a complaisant external mainstream. This definition of the mainstream refers to a distinction against the controlled and restricted mass that is too afraid or ignorant to break free from the conventional. Not only is a punk identity articulated as essentially different than the mainstream, it is also better, as it involves an element of autonomy. The consequence of this, in terms of the authentication of style, was a thorough distrust of all perceived restrictions of this genuine punk self, placing politics and rules on the negative side, and anarchism and personal freedom on the positive. Both difference and freedom were in this sense made meaningful against an external mainstream, making it possible to articulate the right to be yourself and the absence of rules, while at the same time conforming to an ideal of standing out. As I turn to the matter of doing, this interrelation between freedom and difference will become even more apparent.

6.4. Remaining free and different

I remember the first time that the participants I followed berated me. At that time I did not know, however, that this would be a rather recurring theme during my fieldwork. Anyway, I had spent roughly three weeks with a group of participants in one of Indonesia's biggest cities. This group consisted of a core of a dozen participants who would hang out every day next to a shopping mall, and a dozen more participants who would be present every two

days, or on weekends. I had followed these participants to all the small shops that their friends either owned or worked at, as well as to two shows—one at a high school and one at a shopping mall. These were all defined as punk: the shows because they featured punk bands, the shops because they sold clothes or records that were defined as punk.

The group was also talking about staging a show on their own, but so far had only a small number of sponsors. Ali, one of my key informants, had told me that it was impossible to do a show in Indonesia without sponsors. What mattered was to get the right sponsors: mainstream clothing brands such as Rusty or Quicksilver were to be avoided for example, alcohol and tobacco companies were ok if they provided free booze and cigarettes. I was intrigued by this relation to what they defined as mainstream: Some of these participants had appeared both in commercials for these local stores, as well as occasionally on TV and radio. A number of the bands they featured in had distribution deals with both shops and labels that were otherwise not considered punk. Nevertheless, all of these negotiations and regulations were articulated as a matter of doing-it-yourself (DIY). Punk, they argued, was going your own way and following your own desires; you were not to be controlled by others.

And so, on a long and warm Indonesian night, I made the mistake of questioning whether this really was DIY. After all, I knew of other participants in other Indonesian cities who managed to set up shows without sponsors, distributed their own records, and refused to participate in mass media. Some of the participants rose to their feet, kicking the plastic chairs "borrowed" from a nearby restaurant to the ground, looking angrily at me. One of them started to lecture me about "real punk and DIY," his dreadlocks shaking concurrently with his fists. Yes, they did set up shows with sponsors that sold the very surf and skateboard brands that they despised, but the owners of these stores were punks, thus how can that be wrong? It was not as if they were sponsored by mainstream brands. They did participate in media and mall shows and at a local high school, but they did not set up these shows, so they cannot possibly be blamed for the sponsors of these events. Those organizers were not associated with them—they were not even punks. And in fact did I not remember that they mocked the sponsors from the stage? Had I already forgotten that they stole beer from the organizers, beer that they then shared with everyone else? And of course they needed to sell records; that is a good way of getting a message out. At least they were not on a major label such as the former punk bands *Superman is Dead* and *Rocket Rockers*. And who the hell was I to question them? I was white and from a rich country, and they needed the money to be able to stay punk, otherwise they had to work and get married. What I was saying was elitist and too serious; it would never work in Indonesia.

At this point Ali interrupted him, saying that he was sure that I had merely misinterpreted DIY. Of course, I said, adding that I was sorry. And I actu-

ally was sorry, and while walking the two miles to the place where I slept, I felt shame. What kind of sociologist was I to presume that there was but one definition of DIY?

In the field notes from later that night I tried to go through my previous observations, realizing that the authentication of their actions that they had just provided made sense in relation to my other observations. I *had* misunderstood them, but I was still intrigued by how DIY from their point of view included an ongoing negotiation with the mainstream they defined. The questions I wrote down that night were, "What is it that is resisted?" and "What are they striving for?" (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan 2005).

So far I have shown how the binary subcultural/mainstream can be worked by extending it to a distinction against a normal mainstream that participants are already intrinsically different from, or a complaisant and restricted mainstream that the participants seek to break free from. I have also pointed to how the scripts of difference and freedom can be combined so as to further this distinction, rendering the emancipated and differentiated individual the representation of the sacred. To be punk is accordingly defined as following your heart and standing out from the normal and complaisant by merely living out who you really are. In relation to this there is a third definition of the mainstream within a convex pattern that concerns the pursuit and maintenance of this freedom and difference: The commercial mainstream that threatens to impose itself on the subcultural, specified by a binary logic of DIY/sell-out that is largely analogous to that of staying punk/becoming mainstream.

The emphasis on DIY and the commercial mainstream are often referred to in previous research on punk as the extension of freedom to autonomy from the commercial. Punk, it is argued, is the anti-commercial and anti-corporate resistance to the dominant culture (Fox 1987, Lull 1987, Leblanc 1999, Moore 2004, O'Connor 2008). On the other hand, more recent research on DIY paints a more ambivalent picture. Ondrej Cisar and Martin Koubek (2012:12), writing on Czech punk, note that DIY involves a negotiation as to what constitutes the commercial. Participants discussing whether bands that follow a logic of do-it-yourself (as in doing what they wanted and writing their own songs) yet had ties to sponsors and major labels could be accepted. Corte (2012:34) makes a similar claim in analyzing the White Power scene, stating that the definition of the commercial revolves around a perceived repression of freedom, the authentic being that which is seen as representative of "the genuine expression of the activist's feelings." These researchers allow for a more nuanced analysis of how both DIY and the commercial are defined and acted upon. Given the previous discussion on politics, the last part of this chapter will pursue how both the commercial mainstream, as well as DIY and sell-out, are defined when performed in relation to a convex pattern. How does, for example an articulated separation

from the commercial relate to politics as being polluting? And what role does difference and freedom play in such articulations of DIY and sell-out?

6.4.1. The commercial mainstream

Above I argued that the authentication of music related to the different, in terms of the deep and honest. The mainstream on the other hand was cast off as the available, shallow and fabricated. Accordingly, the move from the sacred to the profane was articulated as due to the abandoning of consistency in favor of a pursuit of the popular and profitable. The definition of the commercial mainstream relates to this movement from the pure to the polluted as a perceived force that can render the most sacred of objects profane if not supervised. Participants were convinced that what they were, and the freedom and difference they had, were something unique and special. The commercial outside on the other hand was seen as interested in capitalizing on the subcultural sacred, and as such, deeply polluting the sacred.

> I think that we are, both you and I, quite agreed on the opinion that punk, that there has been quite a brutal exploitation of punk as a mode of expression […] there are numerous ad campaigns that have profited from that […] there's the Nike ad, the notorious one that Dischord tried to sue them for.[24] That's the whole thing, let's capitalize on punk. And that's the way it is. Everything is being exploited […] I just feel that it is wrong to exploit a subculture. Cause that's how it is, subcultures are constantly being exploited, that's what keeps the fashion industry going, that's what keeps the ad business going, that's what keeps the design business going, that what pushes them forward, all the good ideas always start at the grass roots level (Interview, Sweden-W4, 2008).

> I think the mainstream is ruining our scene by turning everything into profit, turning everything into a market. Like a major label says "Hey there's a anti-capitalist rock band it's such a huge market." We make it, they take it and destroy it and we get nothing (Interview, Indonesia-E5, 2004).

There is an important shift here, in terms of both agency and power in relation to the definitions of the mainstreams that I have touched upon so far. The definitions of both the normal and complaisant mainstream are positioned as directly inferior to punk, lacking an intrinsic difference and moral

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[24] The Nike commercial that is referred to here was an ad, run by the famous shoe company in 2005, picturing a bald man on a set of stairs with a pair of Nike shoes, hiding his head in between his legs. Apart from the shoes, the picture is a perfect clone of the cover of Minor Threat's self-titled 7" (1981). This is further enhanced by the ad having the words "Major Threat" written on the right to replace the original logo. The band and its label Dischord fought the use of their imagery using a similar frame as above: "To longtime fans and supporters of Minor Threat and Dischord, this must seem like just another familiar example of mainstream corporations attempting to assimilate underground culture to turn a buck" (MacKaye 2005).

quality, as well as the courage to do what you want that characterizes the subcultural sacred. In contrast, the commercial mainstream defined above is a powerful antagonist. Certainly, the normal and the complaisant mainstream were articulated as threatening as well due to their emphasis on being like everyone else, yet this was rather defined as a consequence of their passivity.

Further, the definition of the mainstream as the commercial and threatening means that the present and available character of the mainstream has here ceded completely to the institutional. The commercial mainstream described above is not defined as constituted of physical actors, but rather of "the market," "major labels," "ad business," and "the fashion industry." Most often, the mass media and the equally unspecified "corporate" were also related to this exploitation. This commercial mainstream is active, and articulated as at war with the subcultural for no other reason than making a profit out of it.

In her study on graffiti writers, MacDonald shows how writers established a distance to the mainstream through an articulation of the subcultural as a state of war. Writers described the subway system as being a battleground that is "bombed," "destroyed," and "burned;" graffiti pieces were "dropped," and subway cars showed signs of "scars" from previous "hits" (MacDonald 2001:109, cf. Fine 1998:138ff, Lalander 2003:69, 134). The narrative defining the commercial mainstream is somewhat similar, but the difference is that it is not the subcultural that is the active part. Instead the subcultural is articulated as constituting the victim of such an ongoing war: the mainstream is "plundering," "destroying," and "distorting," or as in the excerpts above, it is "exploiting" and "ruining" punk. Consequently, whereas the subcultural is defined as the active and heroic in relation to the normal and complaisant definitions of the mainstream, it is being victimized and defined as something fragile that risks being plundered by outside forces in relation to a commercial mainstream: "We make it, they take it and destroy it and we get nothing." Still, just as the previous two definitions, this mainstream is nevertheless defined, communicated, and perceived through the subcultural.

This image of war, however, is complicated by the participants' actions and authentications. It was not as simple as arguing that the commercial constituted major labels, corporations, and clothing brands. As I implied in the field note that opened this discussion, the participation with such institutions were quite common. Rather, the definition of the commercial mainstream was performed as intimately interworked with difference and freedom. That which is polluting is that which cannot be ordered, and as such the definition of the commercial has to be approached from the pattern of meanings that define order as the absence of such defilement (Douglas 1966:35ff). Take for example these answers to why the commercial was such a threat to punk:

> Cause punk should be something that sticks out, and you should grow stronger because of everyone else harassing you, and that's why all punks can probably unite under one flag, that we are all outcasts, regardless if we listen to trall [melodic], skate, or crust. And if mass media praises punk as something good for society, then I think that could be some kind of death to punk (Interview, Sweden-S1, 2003).

> If punk is just another thing on MTV then what's the point of it (Interview, Indonesia-W2, 2004).

The consistency among participants in referral to the commercial mainstream was that it pointed to a fear of a profaning of punk. The commercial, regardless of whether it was defined as major labels, corporations, or mass media, was that which could render the subcultural into "just another thing," depriving it of its set apart status. As in the two excerpts above, what was being protected from the commercial was openly articulated as the special, unique, and alternative, for the sole reason of keeping it different from the mainstream. Similarly, when participants defined the threat of the commercial mainstream it rarely went beyond "turning punk into you know everything else" (Field notes, Sweden, April 2008), or as one Indonesian participant put it "the mainstream makes punk trendy and we hate the trendy" (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan 2005). Consequently, the fear of commercialization rather refers to normalization. As the first of these excerpts states, "punk should be something that sticks out" and further that subcultural strength relates to "everyone else harassing you." To rephrase the claim made above, what is defended is thus the idea of being different, for the sake of staying different (cf. Wallach 2008:99). Consider for example the similarities between the excerpts above and that given by one of the goths that Hodkinson followed:

> T3 (female): If every single person in the UK was a goth then a lot of goths wouldn't like it . . . I think I'd still be one, but I wouldn't like everyone else being one.
> S7 (female): I wouldn't like it.
> PH: Why?
> T3: It's not like you're a goth because you want to stand out, but you do like sort of being different from everyone else, although when you're with a load of goths you blend in, but you're all different, if you know what I mean, from everyone else (Quoted in Hodkinson 2002:76).

As in the examples above, it is difference that is being held as threatened. Still, even though participants agreed on what was being threatened, there was a significant diversity in terms of what was deemed threatening and what was not. What mattered was not so much whether punk was being played on MTV, or associated with major labels and sponsors, as how participants handled such an encounter with the commercial. The commercial

mainstream was not defined in relation to a resistance meant to bring about social change, rather its threat was articulated as being a matter of dissolving the boundary between the sacred and the profane, making the subcultural just as normal or complaisant as the mainstream that it is set apart from.

Having said that, I want to turn to the authentications of action and practice, pursuing the binary relation between DIY and sell-out, and how this binary is articulated as closely related to consistency/failure and depth/shallowness. In short, how are difference and freedom maintained in the encounter with the communicated mainstream?

6.4.2. Going your own way: Dealing with the mainstream

Far from avoiding the defined mainstream, the participants I followed in both Indonesia and Sweden had constant contact with what they perceived as either the normal, complaisant, or the commercial mainstream. Most of them went to school, had jobs, visiting shopping malls and public spaces, played festivals, or had their records distributed and sold by record stores or larger distribution networks. Some of them were on major labels and appeared in media. All of these encounters with the mainstream were performed and authenticated through a script concerning the maintenance of an intrinsic difference and personal freedom in this encounter with the mainstream. What was considered to be DIY was in the end a matter of a performance of styles and identities as a matter of going your own way.

Major labels, as well as non-punk acts associated with them, were for example seen as part of the commercial mainstream, yet it was not that easy that a punk band that was on major labels was automatically polluted. Instead, there were plenty of bands that were on major labels, had sold hundreds of thousands of records, and were interviewed in mass media that were still authenticated. Participants also reflected upon this ambivalence. Either by working the binaries so as exclude the band from the subcultural, as in the example in reference to a change of music to please a non-punk crowd, or by comparing such participation with the mainstream with bands already fused with subcultural. Examples of this were making references to Sex Pistols, Clash, Ramones, but also to Discharge and Black Flag, bands that were authenticated while still acknowledging their success outside of the subcultural. These were also called upon in authenticating the actions of other bands, as in saying that "Black Flag was distributed by a major, and Discharge was so popular, would you call them sell-outs?" (Field notes, Sweden, Aug 2007).[25]

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[25] The British band Discharge was hailed by most participants in my study, regardless of subcultural patterns enacted, as the foundation of punk, and more specifically of crust-punk. The reference here refers to this first album, *Hear nothing, See nothing, Say nothing*, (1982) reached number 40 on the British album chart (Joynson 2001:125). The American band Black Flag is arguably even more important for the sound of punk of today. It was, similar to Dis-

Whereas discussions regarding freedom and difference were more a matter of either-or, discussions on DIY, and the relation to the mainstream, were instead much more diverse, and at the same time drawing heavily on both a scripted intrinsic difference as well as personal freedom.

This encounter with the mainstream is ever-present in relation to both the normal and the complaisant mainstream, yet superiority is then already defined; we are better than the mass, we are different from it. In relation to the commercial mainstream, difference was rather articulated as something that needed to be defended, and superiority as something that had to be taken and won. The articulation of something as DIY therefore referred to action, especially in relation to production, that secured the boundary to the mainstream: "We are writing our own 'zine because the media refuses to write about real punk," (Interview, Sweden-E1, 2008) or "This record is as much DIY as you can get" (Field notes, Indonesia, Feb 2005).

The script of going your own way meant that difference and freedom had to be actively pursued, an incitement to do something that separated participants from the commercial mainstream.

> A: [I]f I hear a song on the radio, let's say Pirelli's "Hero",[26] I cannot hear what the song is about, I cannot grasp it in the same way as I can with a punk song, as for example Rise Against. They have these really deep lyrics that make me wonder whether they mean this or that. I can grasp it. But Pirelli that's just pure shit.
> B: You know, I can't take artists that don't write their own songs.
> A: Exactly, the record labels control everything.
> B: I mean the words she's singing.
> A: They're not hers.
> B: It's fake you know, she's standing there singing something someone else wrote.
> A: And that's what the mainstream is. And that's what separates us from them. 'Cause we go with our own lyrics, we write what we want, we write what we want people to understand, right?
> B: Yeah, the opposite doesn't work (Interview, Sweden-W1, 2008).

As opposed to the normal and complaisant mainstream that consumed music produced by a commercial mainstream, DIY was thus articulated as a marker of distinction, of pursuing an alternative way of producing objects. The

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charge, one of the bands that stand out in my data as the foundation of hardcore punk. Black Flag's (1981) first full length album *Damaged* was supposed to be distributed by Unicorn records which was backed by the major label MCA, but this deal was at the last minute refused by MCA due to the album's "anti-parent" content. This was to become the start of a devastating lawsuit for the band that went on for years (cf. Blush 2001:58-66).

[26] At the time of the interview the Swedish singer Charlotte Pirelli had just represented Sweden in the Eurovision Song Contest. The media exposure of her and her entry, "Hero," was a subject of ridicule among many of the participants I followed in 2008. Apart from being articulated as a representation of the commercial mainstream, her fame and music were seen as representative of both the normal and complaisant mainstream.

combination of doing and freedom—"we write what we want"—is here used to clarify the boundary—"that's what separates us from them" —to a commercial mainstream. It was not so much the quality of the music, fanzine, patches, etc. that mattered, rather the result was subordinated by difference, freedom, and DIY. As long as the music could be deemed different than the mainstream—that you were doing it because it was something you wanted, and that you were doing it yourself—it could be performed as both mobilizing and authenticating a subcultural identity.

The antagonist of this script of going your own way was the commercial mainstream that sought to control and limit both difference and freedom as a means for capitalizing on the subcultural: forcing participants to change their looks, their music, and their behavior in order to sell more records, ads, tickets, etc.. The protagonist, on the other hand, refused to do so, remaining committed to what s/he really believed in and wanted to do, even when faced with economic rewards. Indeed, the most revered bands in relation to a script of going your own way were those who had made a career, sold a lot of records, and still refused to sign to a major, participate in the morning TV shows, or if on a major; change their style and music. Consequently, DIY is scripted as the extension of the relationship between an intrinsic and stylistic difference—between always having been different and expressing this difference through punk, and being able to be what you want within a subcultural space that is devoid of rules. The symbolic representation of this maintenance of difference and freedom was the authentication of the amateur. On stage participants commented on their skills and failures, as well as pointing out that they did not really know how to play: "Seems I'm missing two strings, but I guess it does not make a difference," (Field notes, Sweden, Oct 2004) or "I don't know how to play that song, but let's do it" (Field notes, Sweden, Aug 2008). Playing music focused on the doing, rather than the consequences of that doing in terms of a profession, or career. Instead what was authenticated as DIY was that which had remained different and free, and consistent to individual intent and desires. The opposite was the restricted, fabricated, and ultimately fake, as when these participants were asked to reflect on what DIY meant to them:

> Still in punk I think the most important thing is that you play the music for yourself and not for other people. It's more like you know, every time when my band, when we make music if we don't like the song we are not gonna sing it, you know. Music is important but the most important thing is following your heart [...] I think that's the most special thing about punk that we don't care about trends, we don't care what's selling today about what's gonna sell a lot. We just do what we feel like (Interview, Indonesia-E1, 2003).

> When you're no longer, or not just no longer, but you know when you have a band and walk into the rehearsing room and make a song that is awesome, a song that *you* think is awesome and are then just fine with that, and then you

make a couple of shows, then I don't think that you are sell-out. But, if you from the start have the ambition that this will sell like hell, and then you are promoting it like hell everywhere in Sweden. And when you notice that it doesn't sell that good, you go down in the rehearsing room again thinking that that doesn't sell. And then you write a song that you think is decent, but still, or even worse, you rewrite your old songs to sell more, then I think that you're a fucking sell-out, there's plenty of bands like that (Interview, Sweden-S3, 2003).

This relationship between difference and freedom permeated discussions among participants in regards of the authentic. What mattered was whether there was a perceived consistency to the intrinsically different and freed individual. Some of participants I followed articulated that the North American band Rancid were not punk anymore as they had signed to a major and were thus controlled by a label focused on profits and a broad audience. Accordingly they argued that the music sounded like "any other radio crap," that they were "more focused on looking cool than having fun" in line with such a break with the subcultural (Field notes Sweden, Aug 2007). Other participants I followed argued that Rancid were punk, because they had managed to stay punk despite being on a major, they were "still outsiders" and spreading punk in their own way. Thus the same band, the same background, and the same prohibitions were used to negotiate these statuses.

Controlling the mainstream

So far, I have argued that the subcultural within a convex pattern is not set against making money or being on a major label, rather these were sometimes authenticated as part of being able to be free, in the sense that it provided a means to stay punk. Nevertheless, money was a highly sensitive issue among the participants I followed, as it involves the direct encounter with all three dimensions of the external mainstream. Most of the participants I followed had jobs, or went to school, and those who did not either depended on their family, or, in the case of Swedish participants, on state benefits. Being on the dole, or on supplementary benefits, fused well with the articulated distance and difference from the normal as well as an idealized image of the outcast. Having a job, or attending university, on the other hand, were rarely authenticated as they were hard to fuse with the background distinction against the restricted and complaisant. The most common way to deal with this was to simply not talk about it. Sometimes it took me weeks to find out that participants were actually working. When school and work were addressed, it was either scripted as unfulfilling, restricting, or boring, following an ascribed positioning of the protagonist as the outcast, the freed individual, and going his or her own way. To claim otherwise would be to blur a convex pattern's distinction against an external mainstream. School was boring, work was a necessary evil, and it was not part of the subcultural, period. Participants told stories of how they hated their jobs,

and how they had to tone down their dress and appearance to keep it; how they could not stay active enough, as they worked late, or had to get up early in the morning. But these stories also involved cheating their bosses and stealing from work, articulating that they stayed punk even at their jobs.

There was also subcultural work, or work that was articulated as related to the subcultural: working in a tattoo parlor, at a record store, at an independent record label, or as a musician. The latter two, as they directly involved the subcultural, were heavily restricted in terms of prohibitions. While some punks argued that making money was counter to punk in itself as it meant doing something for someone else, most stated that as long as actions and style were consistent to going your own way and staying different it was not a problem. When money was positioned as something good, it was articulated as something that made it possible for punks to stay punk, and, as I showed above, as being bad when it pollutes the subcultural by changing it:

> We made the decision that if the label wants us to do, like if they tell us to this, do the cover like this, the video clip like this, then we are not gonna sign, and the label was pretty cool they just say do what you want we just give you money to record and distribute it, and you get your royalties (Interview, Indonesia-E2, 2003).

> A: Let's say that Sony/BMG approaches us and says that you'll get the fattest deal but we want to have the control over how the music sound, we don't want that much distortion on the guitar.
> B: Then I would have just said fuck you, and I would have had [making an obscene gesture].
> A: Like, we don't want that much screaming, or something like that, then it had been a different thing, I don't think anyone in the band would have accepted that [...] however, if we had been given a deal, maybe not in the contract, but if had gotten a deal that we will not interfere with how the music sounds, we want to support you the way you are, we think that you sound good, then I would not see any problems whatsoever.
> B: Still, just play with the thought that BMG would say, "Oh you have potential, but we want you to play this instead" and you think, "Shit, here I stand next to this fucking machine at work everyday, 8 hours a day." I mean think about how much fun it would be to just play music all day. It's a profession as a musician, you know.
> A: Well, but if you're not playing that kind of music, let's say that they would have said "turn down the distortion on the guitars," then it wouldn't have been fun anymore. Then I would rather have taken a job as a delivery man, cause that would have been more fun, just dropping stuff off at places.
> B: Yeah, that's true.
> A: That sure beats playing some fucking shit that I find fucking boring to play (Interview, Sweden-W3, 2008).

Whereas the first quote refers to an experienced relationship with a major label, the second is hypothetical, yet they both point to how action is authenticated through enacting the script of going your own way, negotiating the

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relationship to the commercial. Similar to sponsors and being interviewed in mass media, the boundary between the subcultural and the mainstream is here worked through the reinstatement of the difference that has momentarily been breached. They both refer to the same attribution of an intent of remaining consistent to what you believe in and being in control. The potentially polluting aspect of making money and being on a major label is here disarmed through an emphasis on difference and freedom, authenticating this choice as using the label to do what you want. Even those participants who would never accept being on a major label argued in a similar way, claiming that the most important thing was remaining the same and not yielding to commercial forces that were outside of the subcultural. The last excerpt is interesting as the second participant opens up for another interpretation in arguing that getting paid to do what someone else wants beats having a dead end job. Nonetheless, he is quickly retracted back in line by the first participant's reinstitution of the scripts of no rules and going your own way; not getting paid is better than complaisance and "having to play some fucking shit."

Yet, these two excerpts also point to how the making of money off music was often purified through a script of going your own way: if you have control over the chain of production and distribution then you are able to stay the same, as no one is forcing you to change and subcultural identities can still be claimed as remaining outside of the mainstream. Even though only a few of the participants who I followed could live off their music, their authentications were still similar to those who either dreamt of achieving such a position, or who dismissed it as polluting. They argued that they were still DIY, as they did not concede to the normal and the commercial, but continued going their own way.

Similarly, the script of going your own way meant that any relationship to the mainstream was related to control. Bands on stage often mocked the sponsors: "This show is sponsored by Pepsi, we don't like Pepsi, in fact fuck Pepsi!" (Field notes Sweden, June 2008). Consequently even if perceived as being present in relation to the subcultural, the border was drawn to separate the profaning elements from the sacred, making use of the defined mainstream to confirm that action does indeed take place within the subcultural. Similarly, a number of participants that I followed were interviewed in magazines and newspapers where they would stress their difference and "fuck-everything"-attitude. What the regular readers would think was of less importance in authenticating these actions than how other participants interpreted them. A group I followed in Indonesia for example participated in a commercial radio show about punk:

> Sofyan, Bambang and Akbar appeared on Hard Rock Radio yesterday. There was a show about punk featuring [a local punk band considered by these punks as having sold out]. Sofyan and the others were drunk and kept on in-

terrupting and making fun of the hostess and the band. When they came to the public parking afterwards, they were greeted with cheers. I asked them why they did it and they told me they wanted to show that punk was more than just mainstream shit. A couple of days before Bambang had told me that radio was mainstream, so I asked him if he was mainstream now as well. He answered, "No, because we fucked them" (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan 2005).

In this case the appearance in the mainstream is authenticated through pointing to the persistence of the subcultural boundary. Interviews in local media were authenticated in a similar way, if deemed as maintaining a difference against the mainstream by for example mocking and provoking them, it would be fused to the background, if not, such a position had to be reinstated to avoid pollution. Such reinstatements mostly referred to reclaiming an intrinsic difference and freedom by drawing from a script of going your own way. Thus in relation to Thornton's (1995:135) claim that positive coverage in the mass-media signals a "subcultural kiss of death," this was rather performed in relation to the maintenance of a distance to the mainstream and individual consistency (cf. Hodkinson 2002:156). Even though participants did express a fear that the commercial mainstream would encroach on the subcultural, the performances of media exposures were discussed, similar to music, as a matter of intended difference and freedom represented through a perceived control.

To an extent, the authentication of the subcultural as the independent, honest, and as driven by a subcultural logic rather than an economic one, comes close to Pierre Bourdieu's (1996) distinction between the autonomous and the heteronymous pole, between pure art and the "commercial." Bourdieu's point is that the difference between the two refers to a matter of independence vis-a-vis the economic field, the autonomous pole emerging as due to,

> the moral indignation against all forms of submission to the forces of power or to the market [...] or the subservience to the demands of the press and of journalism which pushes writers of serialized fiction and vaudeville into an undemanding literature devoid of style (1996:60).

Bourdieu's work has become increasingly popular among punk theorists (cf. Moore 2007, O'Connor 2008) to explain differences within punk, something that I will return to in the next chapter. The problem with this approach, however, is first of all that the distinction between the independent and dependent is defined from the point of view of the former. For Bourdieu "submission," "subservience," and "undemanding literature devoid of style" are the characteristics to the heteronymous pole whose agents—described as "mercenary producers of commercial literature" (1996:82)—are oriented towards immediate rewards. In contrast to the commercial's dependence the autonomous pole is articulated as the active: a "daily resistance which led to a progressive affirmation of the autonomy of writers" (1996:60). It is a one-

way distinction, similar to the participants quoted above; the commercial is enacted to constitute the dark background upon which the stark relief of the autonomous pole appears against. The meaning of the "commercial" for Bourdieu is defined from the point of view of "the anti-'economic' economy of pure art" (1996:142).

The second problem relates to defining the commercial as the "submission to the forces of the market," as this overlooks how the commercial can be differently defined within different groups of people. Alan O'Connor's (2008) study on DIY-records labels, for example, features no interviews with what he defines as the "commercial" labels. Instead the commercialism of the latter is defined through the ideals of the DIY-labels and is presupposed to refer to all participants. Interestingly Matt Diehl (2007), also investigating punk in North America in the early 2000s, has a completely different view on punk and the authentic. The same bands and labels that O'Connor mentions as constituting the commercial pole constitute to Diehl the authentic, independent, and DIY. O'Connor (2008:23) defines the labels Epitaph and Fat Wreck Chords as part of the "commercial punk labels" as well as the bands Bad Religion and NOFX associated with these labels. Diehl, however, has a different interpretation, arguing that these are bastions of independence and DIY; "totally independent Epitaph" (2007:67) and "NOFX has remained a staunchly independent operation, free of major label interference or commercial concerns" (2007:49). O'Connor (2008) does not comment on this apparent difference regarding what constitutes the authentic and the commercial; the only time Diehl's work is mentioned is in a short footnote describing it as concerning the "commercial 'neo-punk' associated with the Warped Tour and Epitaph" (2008:31).

The definition of the commercial as something solid and self-evident is what makes it possible to state that punk is anti-commercial without pursuing what the commercial means. Jeremy Wallach (2008:100) for example points to punk in Indonesia as opposed to "major labels and commerce in general." Thus, that the Indonesian band Superman is Dead (2003) open their first album on Sony Records with a song decrying the commercialism within punk, is described by Wallach as ironic (2008:100). Among many of the participants I interviewed in Bali, however, Superman is Dead was not considered sell-out, nor commercial. Rather, this very song was used to authenticate the band for being able to go its own way, despite being on a major. Rather than presupposing that any contact with major labels or sponsors is inevitably polluting, or measuring "purity" through the production and distribution of subcultural objects, my point is that it has to be placed in relation to the structures of meanings used to define and construct the commercial.

Instead of dealing with this as a matter of punk for punk's sake, what is important here is the ongoing dialogue with the mainstream: a give-and-take relationship that is carefully orchestrated and supervised. The ambivalence regarding the encounter with the defined mainstream is a consequence of the

enactment of both freedom and difference within a convex pattern. Most participants I followed played in small bands that had recorded maybe one or two 7 inches, or a demo cassette, that were distributed at shows and seldom sold more than a hundred copies. But I also followed participants whose bands had sold thousands of copies worldwide, in some cases hundreds of thousands. Yet they all performed this using the same script: we do music for ourselves, not for anyone else.

This makes the definition of the commercial, within a convex pattern, rather ambivalent. What is cast off as polluting is that which is seen to comply with the mainstream: a desire to become like everything else, someone who you are not, doing things you do not want, etc.. This further means that entering the defined commercial mainstream is subculturally anticipated rather than resisted. The bands I followed who struck record deals, or got to play big shows, articulated their own actions in a similar way as did the participants who opposed such relations with the defined mainstream, by stressing consistency over popularity, going your own way, and that the mainstream could never truly appreciate punk anyway as they had neither the brain or the heart for it (cf. Culton and Holtzman 2010:279f). Haenfler's work (2006) on straight edge supports a similar line of thought. Arguing that how the commercial was defined differed among participants, he notes that while some participants were in favor of signing with a big label as it meant good exposure, others were against it, with those in-between arguing that signing to a major is ok if they do not change and still help other bands (2006:172). Regardless of which definition was used, this was negotiated as a matter of subcultural control against getting screwed over by the mainstream (Haenfler 2006:172, cf. Cisar and Koubek 2012:12). Corte (2012:34) also points to the issue of DIY and an anti-commercial stance within the White Power scene as being a matter of protecting personal freedom and a distinction against the mainstream (cf. Corte and Edwards 2008).

Still, what remains to be discussed is the definition of the negative side of the binary DIY/sell-out: How did participants perceive failing to withhold this boundary to the mainstream, of ceding difference to popularity, freedom to complaisance, and consistency to sudden change?

6.4.3. Doing it for yourself

The indecisiveness in relation to major labels, sponsors, and mass media points to the importance of approaching subcultural objects and actions as being made meaningful in relation to a specific background text. The consequence of this ambivalent relation to the commercial mainstream, that is both present and distant, is that this boundary was being constantly negotiated rather than being fixed. Above, I argued that the script of going your own way specifies the distinction to the commercial mainstream through an emphasis on maintaining both difference and freedom in the encounter with this

mainstream. Going your own way, in this sense, becomes not caring about what other people think, what is trendy, and what is marketable to the out-side, while still being consistent to an intrinsic difference. Further, since intent is attributed and statuses negotiated, there were plenty of bands and participants that were cast off as mainstream that had never been in contact with major labels or mass media; instead they were inauthenticated for hav-ing betrayed what they previously stood for and thus for betraying their in-trinsic difference. Thus action, just like objects, is flexible, depending on the cultural structure within which it is both performed and validated.

The fake is thus fake for having yielded to the commercial mainstream, while the authenticated on the other hand is perceived to have made use of the mainstream to remain different and free. As such, it is not so much doing it yourself as a doing it *for* yourself:

> DIY, to me, is the possibility to be as good as I can get. And that is punk too. Punk to me and DIY are a possibility (Interview, Sweden-W4, 2008).

> DIY, well even if you join whatever label, as long as you are being true to yourself you're doing what you want and you don't let anyone control you. That's punk I think, it's so simple (Interview, Indonesia-W1, 2003).

I am now approaching the binary logic of the distinction between DIY and selling out. O'Hara (1999:160ff) refers to DIY as an anti-corporate approach reducing selling out to the failure of living up this ethic. Haenfler (2006:70, 86f) notes that sell-out is a matter of dropping straight edge, arguing that it is a betrayal of both friendship as well as the subcultural identity. In relation to graffiti, MacDonald (2001:173) equates sell-out with giving up on the sub-culture's illegal tradition and instead paint for money and Leblanc (1999:74) mentions it as a matter of abandoning "the cause." Similar to these accounts of sell-out as a betrayal of the subcultural, sell-out in relation to a script of going your own way referred to a pollution of the sacred. The difference, however, was that it was defined in relation to the individual and not to the subcultural as a collective.

> It doesn't have to be [sell-out to sign with a major]. If they have ever said that they would never do so, or have had songs about that, then it is sell-out you know. But I still think that you cannot sell out to someone else, the first one you sell out is yourself (Interview, Sweden-S4, 2004).

> I think sell-out is doing what your label tells you because that's selling out your ideology and that's worse than selling a million records, because you can still sell a lot of records without selling out your ideology. You cannot blame people for liking your music (Interview, Indonesia-E1, 2003).

There was no "cause" or tradition that was being sold out, instead articula-tions of sell-out referred directly to the individual, albeit in slightly different

ways. Here, sell-out refers to pollution in relation to both a script of just being and going your own way. It is selling-out to restrain yourself and do what you are told, as well as yielding to the desire of the label to change just to sell more albums. Similarly, it was often articulated in relation to a script of intrinsic difference, then referring to an inconsistency to the genuine self and desiring to be like everyone else. What all of these articulations had in common was that selling out was an individual matter, as in "betraying yourself," and "selling out yourself," or as above "selling out your ideology."

This definition of selling out as tied to the individual is due to two important consequences of the enactment of both the background distinction—against a normal, complaisant and threatening external mainstream—and the scripted emphasis on difference, freedom, and going your own way. First, the prohibitions that surround the sacred are meant to secure the distance to the mainstream through the stress on individual rights: the right to be yourself, the right to do what you want, the right to be creative, and the right to be in control of your own life. The definition of the commercial mainstream refines this by pointing to institutions, such as mass media and major labels, trying to force bands to play a certain kind of music, write a certain kind of lyrics, or to be popular and cool, in order to please the normal and complaisant mainstream. The stress on DIY within a script of going your own way is extended to pursuing these rights, of being able to do something for yourself, as in one of the excerpts above, "becoming as good as you can." The outcome of such boundary work is symbolically represented through the individual stylistically breaking free from the homogeneous mainstream.

Second, since subcultural authentications within a convex pattern refer to the articulation of an essential difference and moral superiority, of which style is the mere mirroring, what matters is the articulated intent rather than the consequences of actions. The commercial mainstream is not resisted because of profit or consumption, but rather for being restrictive, as long as you actively pursue your own desires—e.g., remaining free to stay intrinsically different—selling records is just an unfortunate consequence. Subcultural control does not refer to keeping the mainstream out of punk, but rather keeping the mainstream from interfering with these individual rights: As in on the excerpt above, the subcultural sacred can be retained "even if you join whatever label, as long as you are being true to yourself." Just like other aspects of style, the authentication of action relies on the boundary between the subcultural and the mainstream being embodied by a group of individuals rather than a collective. This articulation of honesty and individual rights further means that even though selling out is exclusive to the subcultural—the mainstream cannot sell out as they are per definition oblivious to these rights—in the end it is not punk that is being sold out.

The articulation of selling out can therefore not be approached without the background text that provides meaning to both sides of the binary approach to action and practice. Sell-out, just as the articulated opposite DIY, is con-

stantly negotiated in relation to the available scripts, making the relation to the external mainstream incessantly ambivalent. As is pointed out in the excerpts above, signing to a major label is thus only sell-out "if they have once argued that they would never do so." As long as you are perceived of as going your own way, then "you cannot blame people for liking your music."

The binary distinction between DIY and selling out works to ensure that even if punk enters into the mainstream, there cannot be punk in the mainstream and vice versa. If authenticated, such action is a matter of pursuing difference and freedom; if failed, it is a matter of selling out a genuine self. Either way, the essential difference to, and moral freedom from, the mainstream is retained. The focus on the individual is both the foundation for this boundary as well as the consequence of it. Thus what is being sold out is the individual representation of the sacred. If you are not being yourself anymore, then you cannot be punk anymore. Consequently, although participants disagreed on what bands, or persons, had sold out, they all agreed on that by so doing they had left punk. They were not punk anymore. The intricate meaning structure that is externalized in the excerpts above involve the interworking of difference and freedom through commitment and depth to oneself, making it possible to discard subcultural objects without having to question the structure of meaning they were once believed to signify.

Both DIY and sell-out thus have to be analyzed in relation to the patterned set of meanings within which they are mobilized and authenticated. This is a subcultural distinction in the sense that those positioned as in the mainstream cannot sell out or be DIY; they are always just mainstream. Instead the move from the DIY to sell-out refers to the profaning of the subcultural sacred.

Further, I have shown that the definition of the commercial mainstream within a convex pattern refers solely to the threat of profaning the set apart status of punk, making it rather hard to argue that punk within a convex pattern is against commercialization, or profiting for that matter, especially if the commercial is not further defined. Instead, the relationship between the subcultural and the mainstream is rather ambivalent in terms of what can be fused to the background and what cannot.

Before I conclude this chapter I want to make a brief comment on the relation to participants' class backgrounds, especially in relation the discussion of DIY and sell-out. Given that the previous research has tended to explain both the meaning of punk as well as subcultural heterogeneity in regards to style through differences in class (Hebdige 1979, Ferrer 1983, Brake 1985, Fox 1987, Wallach 2008), what needs to be repeated here is that enacting a subcultural pattern means drawing from an established set of subcultural meanings in the mobilization and authentication of subcultural styles and identities. Hence, there are neither any convex punks nor convex objects. Even so, there is no difference in my data in terms of how the subcultural

was performed or authenticated in relation to the participants' class background; participants with a working class background enacted these scripts similarly to those with a middle or upper middle class background. Instead, subcultural distinctions worked to obfuscate class as a defining trait (Thornton 1995:12). The majority of the participants I followed came from a middle class background, with a least one parent having a job requiring two or more years of post-comprehensive school education (cf. SCB 1982). Nonetheless, the only class background, in both Sweden and Indonesia, that was authenticated was that of the working class. Whereas the middle class was worked along the normal and complaisant mainstream, the definition of the working class within a convex pattern drew on individual consistency, poverty, and being an outcast. The upper middle class in turn was associated with the commercial and threatening. The consequence of this gap between the perceived ideal and one's own background was that the subcultural was mostly articulated as classless, replacing differences among participants with a similarity in terms of difference against the external mainstream. What mattered was breaking free from a commercial and complaisant mass, rather than articulating this as a matter of class. This predominance of the middle class is consistent with more recent subcultural research (cf. Leblanc 1999:27, O'Connor 2008:ix), as well as the revisions of Hebdige's and the CCCS's claim of subcultures being a working class youth phenomena (cf. Frith 1978, Clarke [1981] 1990, Fryer 1986, Sabin 1999).

6.5. Concluding remarks

Given the discussion throughout this chapter, I want to once again approach the subcultural in relation to the mainstream. In chapter 4, I proposed a definition of the subcultural as the representation of a perceived ordered and shared difference from an equally perceived homogeneous other. In this chapter I have sought to map out such a subcultural formula in relation to the positioning of the mainstream as external to punk. My argument has been that what matters is not so much the mainstream or the subcultural as the cultural structures within which both of these are made meaningful. The prefix "sub" signals here the articulation of a separation rather than an objective difference or deviance, but also that the subcultural includes what it opposes in this separation. In mapping out how this separation is made meaningful my argument has been that the different definitions of the mainstream give rise to different subcultural structures of meaning, combined into a patterned set of meanings, or what I have referred to as a convex subcultural pattern.

The participants I followed did not unanimously enact these scripts and definitions of the mainstream. Some participants, for example, never extended the mainstream beyond the normal and complaisant, and consequently did

not articulate DIY as an important characteristic of punk. Others downplayed the differentiation from the normal and instead emphasized an opposition against the commercial. Depending on which dimension that was stressed, the stylistic expression of punk differed as well. When the boundary against the normal mainstream was worked, radical style was deemed important. Similarly, when the distinction from a commercial mainstream was articulated action superseded dress and appearance. Most often, however, participants moved between these definitions of the mainstream and the scripts depending on the situation and context. They enacted a distinction against a normal mainstream when referring to style, personal freedom when being criticized, and lastly the commercial mainstream when authenticating styles and identities over time.

What combines these different definitions of the mainstream and subsequent scripts together into a patterned set of meaning relates to four consistent extensions of the subcultural binary. First is the positioning of the mainstream as external to punk. This is not to say that everything that is not punk is automatically mainstream, nor that the mainstream is the same for all participants, but that when articulated, the mainstream was positioned as external to punk. The boundary between the subcultural and the mainstream was drawn through prohibitions against an external mass that specified the sacred inside.

Second, the external mainstream is physically and directly taken on through the prohibitions concerning the sacred, rejecting that which threatens to impose itself on punk.

Third, the basis of these different definitions relates to difference in the end. If punk is not different from the external mainstream it does not matter how free you are to express yourself or how DIY you are. Whereas freedom in the end boils down to the freedom to be different, going your own way refers to the means and intentions to achieve and maintain this difference and freedom from an external mainstream.

The fourth consistency is the emphasis on the individual as the symbolic representation of the sacred. Punk, as I have shown, is made meaningful as the emancipation of the already differentiated individual from the homogeneous mass. All of these scripts and dimensions of the mainstream refer to this distinguished individual: The stylistic representation of an intrinsic difference that precedes subcultural participation, the absence of rules so that you can follow your heart and do what you want is summarized in the definition of selling out as betraying who you really are. In the end, a convex pattern refers first and foremost to the conservation of this individual distance to the external mainstream. Punk is not articulated as a means to change anything, apart from helping those already different to break away from the constraints imposed by everyone else. As such, a convex pattern revolves around an individualization of both difference, freedom, and DIY.

7. A Concave Subcultural Pattern

> And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves. And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves (Matthew 21:12-13).

7.1. Introduction: The internal positioning of the mainstream

The results presented so far are fairly consistent with at least parts of the previous research on subcultures and punk. The relationship between authentic style as a representation of an authentic self is, for example, stressed by a number of studies (Fox 1987, Shank 1994, Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995, Leblanc 1999, Lewin and Williams 2009, Mikkonen 2010), as is personal freedom (Baron 1989a, Traber 2001, Hodkinson 2002), and DIY as a maintenance of difference (Corte and Edwards 2008, Corte 2012). Further, the emphasis on a shared pattern of meaning that I have argued for is similar to what Hodkinson (2002) refers to as a subcultural substance: a shared set of tastes and values that differentiate the inside from the outside (cf. Leblanc 1999:101, MacDonald 2001:68, Haenfler 2006:33, Williams 2011:9f). Still, all of these have a shared complication, as they relate such findings to a single set of meanings.

Even though the positioning of the mainstream as external was the dominant pattern enacted by participants in Sweden and Indonesia, there existed in every town, however small it was, a second subcultural pattern that centered on a distinction against other punks. I will refer to this as a concave subcultural pattern, as it bends inwards. This chapter will deal with how such an internal boundary work was mobilized and authenticated in relation to difference, freedom, and DIY, and discuss the consequences this had for styles and identification.

In so doing, I will follow a similar disposition as in the previous chapter, starting with an analysis of how the mainstream and its characteristics were defined. Thereafter, I will outline the foreground script that established both this definition of the mainstream as well as the subcultural separation from

it. Lastly, I will point to how styles and identities were authenticated in relation to extending each background definitions through the foreground scripts.

Seeing that both identity and authenticity are defined in this thesis as something being done and established in relation to specific background text, this chapter will also focus on the differences between a convex and a concave pattern in reference to these matters. As I will show, the positioning of the mainstream as internal to punk turns almost every aspect I have discussed upside down.

7.2. Becoming different

It was one of those special moments during fieldwork when almost all the participants that I had followed in this particular city in Indonesia were present under the same roof:

I am standing just outside the provisional entrance to the University gym that will soon host seven punk bands. The group of participants organizing the show is wary, as three of the bands playing are from Malaysia and Singapore and they are afraid that the "punks" will give the organizers a bad reputation. "Punks" is the word they use to refer to other kinds of participants who do not share their vision of what punk should be, including those who have given punk a bad name through parties and fights. Yet now, most of them are here, a bunch of them sitting below me in the stairwell, drinking, singing, and laughing. Emas, one of the organizers, is also watching them, shaking his head in disbelief. Clean shaven, wearing jeans and a black t-shirt, he looks like one of the students who we met when we unloaded the equipment. He does not drink, and neither do his friends; one of the main arguments for this is that they believe that drugs and alcohol, just as a focus on style, have destroyed punk and turned it into something it is not supposed to be. Just before the doors open I see the punks in the stairwell loudly pass a bottle of arak around while putting on their leather jackets and getting ready. In front of me the group of organizers has gathered in the hallway, quietly passing a black marker around, drawing large Xs, the sign for being straight edge,[27] on their hands. For them the separation between groups is now estab-

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[27] "Straight edge" refers to a lifetime commitment to a clean living by staying away from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. To some adherents of straight edge clean living is also extended to an avoidance of caffeine, medicinal drugs, and meat (cf. Wood 1999, Haenfler 2004, Williams 2006, Mullaney 2007). Originating within the Washington D.C. punk scene in the mid 1980s, it is often referred to as a subculture on its own; however there are also many punks, as those mentioned here, who adhere to straight edge as a part of their subcultural identification (Heanfler 2006). I also want to take this opportunity to note that the adherence to straight edge was in no way limited to the enactment of a concave pattern. I followed a number of participants who defined straight edge as part of a distinction against a normal or complaisant main-

lished; for the punks in the stairwell, it is just strange (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan 2005).

What matters here is not so much the inauthentication of other participants as the background enacted in so doing. In relation to an external mainstream inauthentications of other participants meant pushing them as external to punk, in the cases such the one recounted above; however, the mobilization and authentications of subcultural identities and styles rest on a background separation from a mainstream entirely consisted of other punks.

Tim Gosling (2004) is one of the few researchers to recognize that the mainstream can be internally positioned within punk. Gosling argues that what he refers to as "anarcho-punk" is built on a reaction against "mainstream punk" characterized by the "ineffectual fashion posturing" of mohawks and safety pins and a close relationship to mainstream media and industry (2004:169). Dylan Clarke allows for a similar reading in arguing that contemporary punk, or post-punk, is a reaction and opposition to "what the discourse of subcultures has become" (2003:225). Nevertheless, for both Gosling and Clarke this opposition to other participants becomes little more than just a critique for having conceding to the mainstream society. In contrast to Clarke's (2003:233) and Gosling's (2004:175) claim that such an internal differentiation is indicative of a more authentic resistance to a mainstream media and commercial powers, I will here focus on how this positioning of the mainstream within punk has consequences for both how difference is articulated and what is authenticated, especially in relation to style.

7.2.1. The shallow mainstream

The most prevalent definition in my data of an internal mainstream within punk relates to a simplified definition against the homogenized general. Thus, similar to the normal mainstream, discussed in the previous chapter, difference is worked through a separation from the articulated shallow mass. The difference, however, concerns how this positioning is mobilized and authenticated. Whereas the term "mainstream punks" is an oxymoron within a convex pattern—as the background proclaims that there cannot be any punk in the mainstream and vice versa—it is highly meaningful within a concave pattern. The undifferentiated majority of punks are dismissed on the basis of lacking in depth, as when these participants comment on this internal boundary against the shallow:

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stream obsessed with alcohol, pointing to their parents' and peers' habits. When mobilized and authenticated in relation to a concave pattern, as above, it was instead aimed at other punks. This ambivalence regarding whether the distinction is internal or external is also present in the accounts of the first waves of straight edge (cf. Blush 2001:26ff and Andersen and Jenkins 2003).

The main reason [for not sporting mohawks] is that we don't wanna be labeled as punks by everybody and thus become connected to those mainstream punks, we're tired of getting mixed up with people who have transformed symbolism into fashion (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan 2005).

A: Of course I call the shit-punks punk, they are also punks, but it's a totally different kind of punk, but it's still punk [...]
B: Punk, as it is for people in general, then we and [the shitpunks] are the same, but when I'm referring to it now, it's about how I see it. [...] They are punk according to [people in general], it just happens to be called the same name. A word with the many meanings, my meaning is not the same as those with mohawks.
EH: So why don't you have a mohawk then?
B: Because it represents something that I do not approve of. Punk is a word with many meanings, and that way of manifesting it represents something that is not, it is two totally different things, call it something else, call it mash. But it is absolutely not the same thing, it does have some similarities, and the name is the same so it keeps coming into the discussion again and again, but I think these mainstream punks are completely irrelevant (Interview, Sweden E3, 2008).

Just as the status of the external mainstream referred to the present and particular, yet distant and general, the definition of the shallow internal mainstream involves a similar relation between the proximate and the remote: it is punk while at the same time it is not. This ambiguity is captured in both excerpts above, summarized in the claim "they're also punk, but it's a totally different kind of punk, but it's still punk." The definition of punk in this sense is liminal: it contains both the subcultural and the mainstream. What is beyond this definition was rarely articulated in the authentication of style and identities. Parents, classmates, colleagues, people on the street, etc. who were perceived as having no relation to the subcultural were ignored, and largely meaningless. Instead, the mainstream was defined as the punks who were obsessed with the fabricated and conspicuous—of looking and being different. Further, this shallowness referred to the simple and empty: the mainstream was defined as that which had no point behind stylistic difference other than looking different, as in the first excerpt above (i.e., "people who have transformed symbolism into fashion"). Far from being something cherished, standing out in terms of style was rather a sign of superficiality.

Hence, the interesting aspect is not so much the authenticated or inauthenicated objects, but instead how the material surface is formed and shaped through a textual depth (cf. Alexander 2010b:13). Whether we refer to such symbolic condensations of social meanings into material form as icons (Alexander 2010b:10), totems (Durkheim 1915:206), or physical expressions of holiness (Douglas 1966:57) they refer to an extension of the background to a specific object, establishing depth where there otherwise would only be surface. Accordingly, if the script and the background differ, then so does the working of the binaries in relation to the objects. Mohawks,

although constituting a minority of hairstyles worn by participants, are the most prevalent examples of such scripted icons in my data, rooting the separation to the mainstream in a material form. Whereas the mohawk is made a sacred object through a script of intrinsic difference to the external mainstream, it is here profaned through placing it against the background of the style-centered and shallow. This performance of the mohawk as either a representation of the subcultural sacred or of the shallow mainstream is captured in Fox's (1987:355) argument that radical style is indicative of subcultural commitment and ideals, and Muggleton's (2000:99ff) point that it instead constitutes a subcultural stereotype that signals conformity and predictability (cf. Andes 1998:227, Leblanc 1999:63). Similar to both Fox and Muggleton I want to stress the subcultural sacred that these distinction refer to, rather than the object itself. The derogatory classification "mohawk-punks" was for example used as synonymous to the mainstream, and included a variety of punk styles all defined as style-centered.

On one occasion, I was walking with some of my participants when we met a couple of participants whom I had previously followed. I stopped to talk to them and ask how they were doing. When we continued walking, one of the participants turned to me and said, "What are you doing with those mohawk-punks?" I replied, "Mohawks? None of them have even dyed hair." Another participant filled in, "They are still mohawk punks, all focused on looking the part" (Field notes, Sweden, April 2009). The style-centered was by definition the mainstream, as when these two participants were asked to clarify their use of the mainstream:

> EH: What do you mean by the mainstream?
> A: Being fucking obnoxious and provocative, you know, without striving for something, just for the sake of it, that's the worst part, the most tiresome. Like the leather jacket with all those expensive studs on it.
> B: Yeah, that's not that much punk.
> A: Yeah, a leather jacket for fuck's sake, they are expensive as hell as well as being leather, and then you decorate them with studs that costs a fucking lot of money, doesn't really feel that punkish. Most of it is included in the obnoxious attitude, that's what I dislike the most.
> B: Being all, you know, turned against society, hating everything, thrashing things, destroying things just for the sake of destruction, without another goal, being turned against society (Interview, Sweden-E2, 2008).

The definition of the shallow mainstream as being style-centered is here refined to include the provocative and destructive, or "just wanting to destroy things without a purpose." This characteristic of the mainstream was also articulated in relation to actions such as throwing up, being obnoxious, positively commenting on style, making a fool of yourself when too drunk, getting busted by the police, urinating in public, etc., all summed up by a reference to the shallow mainstream being the general majority of punks.

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This ambivalent relation to other punks had the consequence that punk, both as a noun and an adjective, was often articulated as something negative. Instead of embracing punk as a sign of an already existing difference, the definition of the mainstream as the shallow punks pointed to a reflexivity and reaction to punk as a whole. The excerpt above captures this in defining punk through what it is not punk: The positive is achieved from the negation of the negative. One of the more recurring lines in relation to the background distinction against the shallow internal mainstream was for example that "punk is what is not punk." The implications of such a reactive boundary work are illustrated by the following event during a Friday night I spent with some of my informants:

> Last night as we walked home from the show, Lars suddenly threw up as we were waiting in line to buy a falafel. The others immediately started laughing and pointing at him. Mia shouted, "Oh he is sooo punk!" while pointing at him, and Fredrik added ironically, "Where's your leather jacket?" For those in line this made little sense, especially when Lars answered back, "Fuck you! Stop making fun of me," which only led the others to laugh harder, "Oh fuck you this, fuck you that, you're sooo punk" (Field notes, Sweden, May 2007).

The distinction between punk in general and punk in particular will run through the remainder of this chapter. Far from being something revered, "punk" in the general sense was, similar to the field note above, a joking matter, a derogatory phrase that either defined the mainstream or could be used to make fun of someone who happened to step out of line. The symbolic extension of the undifferentiated to include punk in general, was also captured in the categorizations of the shallow mainstream as consisting of "all those other punks" (Interview Indonesia-W6 2005) and "that other huge fucking group of punks" (Interview Sweden, S8, 2008). Even when specified the mainstream retained this indefinite character through prefixes pointing to the superficial and simplistic: "the bloody rawpunks," "the ordinary punks," "the fashion-punks," "the fuck-everything studpunks," "the popular skate-punks," "the shit punks," "the fake punks," "the apolitical punks," "the stupid mash punks," "the drunk punks," etc.. Usually, these were summed up as the undifferentiated "mainstream punks."

The definition of the shallow mainstream as being merely punk in the general sense is what makes the definition of the subcultural sacred inevitably reactive and critical: If the mainstream punks are style-centered, provocative, and standing out, then we are not (cf. Leblanc 1999:110, Hodkinson 2002:82). One of my informants described this as "a move from talking about what it is, to making fun of what it has become" (Field notes Sweden, March 2010). Instead, the own identification with the subcultural, as I shall return to, was always specified as the particular— "DIY-punk," "political punk," "true punk," or in reference to "the scene." Accordingly, this back-

ground distinction against the shallow and general punk has deep conse-
quences for how the subcultural sacred is performed and authenticated.

7.2.2. The developing self

In chapter 4, I defined subcultural identification as a mobilization of the
distinction subcultural/mainstream to claim an association, or similarity,
through an embodiment of this difference. Seeing that the background dis-
tinction against a shallow mainstream proclaims a prohibition against the
style-centered and general punk, subcultural identifications cannot be per-
formed as something stable or intrinsic. In short, as identification establishes
and strengthens an internal boundary, it is not enough to *be* punk.

Whereas the script of intrinsic difference against a normal external main-
stream made it possible for participants to embody the background distinc-
tion through standing out, it is this very focus on style and conspicuous dif-
ference that here was prohibited. Instead, the mobilizations and authentica-
tions of styles and identities in relation to the internal mainstream empha-
sized a separation from punk in general, a move beyond the mere shallow.

> I just liked the music of punk, maybe like Sex Pistols, Iggy and the Stooges,
> Cocksparrer. I just liked the music, no more. First I started with the music
> and then I became involved in the fashion and the clothes and the hair, but
> now I don't care about that, but then it was the first I was attracted to. But as
> time went by I learned that fashion is not important. It is more than that (In-
> terview, Indonesia-E6, 2005).

> IP: When I was younger I used to focus on how I looked and, "Oh my stylish
> boots" and bleaching my pants (laughs).
> EH: So then you did consider style important?
> IP: Yes, I did but then it was more about you know, it was important to be
> different (laughs). Now it is more about the community (Interview, Sweden-
> S6 2004).

As the subcultural sacred is set apart through a distance from the undifferen-
tiated profane, the positioning of the latter as internal has the consequence
that punk in a general sense cannot be something revered. Instead, the estab-
lishing and strengthening of the distance from this mainstream follows a
script of development from the individual and style-centered, to the collec-
tive and evolved. It represents a movement that is both articulated as internal
to punk as well as to the individual. These two aspects of the scripted separa-
tion from the mainstream constitute a striking difference to the convex pat-
tern I described in the previous chapter. Whereas a scripted intrinsic differ-
ence enacted within a convex pattern points to difference as preceding and
authenticating becoming punk, initial attraction is here articulated as some-
thing shallow: "I just liked the music, no more." Second, stylistic difference

is dismissed as "fashion" and superficial rather than being representative of a genuine self. Third, change is not a matter of consistency to this genuine self, but rather an abrupt awakening and break with a previous definition of punk. Fourth, the individual is then worked alongside the negative sides of the binary pairs deep/shallow, authentic/fake, and active/passive.

Whenever the mainstream was defined as the shallow general punks, difference was mobilized and authenticated through a scripted development that separates the set apart from those merely *being* punk, articulating initial attraction as something naive and clumsy. The scripted identification through development ensures that the boundary to the mainstream remains intact, a ritual play between the inside and outside, as the previous shallow identification can be explained away as merely an introduction that can only be dealt with in hindsight. The authentication of identities through an emphasis on development has as its foundation a point of origin. Such performances thus profane the initial attraction to the subcultural, mobilizing it as part of the shallow mainstream. One of the most common references to previous participation in punk was almost apologetic—that they had no idea of what punk really was.

This scripted development captures the reactive definition of punk—what punk is, is what it is not—as it retains the negative as the foundation for the definition of the positive. An initial inauthenticity is then articulated, and at the same time made sense of, within a scripted development, as you simply did not know enough to know better. Participation is then not enough; instead, the authentication of identities centers on recognizing the past and initial punk identity as the shallow and mainstream. Consequently, subcultural participants are both the protagonist and antagonist of this script, as even those set apart embody the marginal status of the mainstream. The definition of the subcultural sacred through a scripted development means that even though this distinction makes them special, they each carry a memory of the mainstream with them at all times.

This movement within punk was often described through a metaphor of school and education. The mainstream is the uneducated novice, whereas the subcultural sacred refers to an enlightening: A move from the general and individual to the specific and collective.

> Although we were involved, we were still spectators, I was still in Junior high school at the time and whenever I went to a show I always looked up to these people [refers to another group of punks] as role-models, "Oh man these people are so cool," but then as I discovered more and more about punk I got so disappointed with them [...] for me it's more like, like when you go to college for example you have this basic one on one units or courses and listening to bands like Sex Pistols and Ramones is like the introduction for a punk and then later on you have these specific courses that you have to take, it's like a

cone and then you get into this whole thing, like Kontrovers,[28] and the whole community (Interview, Indonesia-W4, 2005).

You have to dare to dig deeper, that's the thing, you have to have the courage to get even more involved and immerse yourself in that, which at first sight seemed challenging and tricky. You have to make that choice. It's either you're on the surface layer and you know, "I live among punks, I listen to punk, I drink beer in the parks," but then as you go deeper, attending demonstrations against things, then you're getting closer to this culture of action, where it is not only about punk any more but about a whole life. You are taking stands against a whole system, and that can be scary to many (Interview, Sweden-W5, 2008).

Becoming punk is here not described as something predestined and liberating, but rather as something that is both shallow and embarrassing, related to being "spectators" and merely "on the surface." Further, the development beyond this initial step relates to the opposite of the shallow: hard work, commitment, courage, and education. What is referred to here is an articulated and attributed development that is fused to a background stressing difference from the superficial and style-centered: An active search for and discovery of a sacred realm that remains oblivious to those who only care about style and merely being punk. You *are* not different. Rather you *become* different through depth and commitment, thus shifting from the general to the specific.

What is central here is the movement from the profane into the sacred. The script of development authenticates this journey from a shallow past to a present depth. The proof of having succeeded in this transition is the embodiment of this distance in reference to your initial participation.

It should be noted that what I refer to here as development refers to a structuring of previous and present participation: a performed development, in the sense of a representation of difference from the mainstream to other participants. Needless to say, all participants I followed, regardless of which pattern they enacted, developed in terms of ideas and styles; what differs is how changes and consistencies could be performed and in relation to what.

The scripted development here is thus different from how the distinction between an ignorant past and enlightened present has been assessed in the previous research on punk and subcultures. Ross Haenfler, in his work on

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[28] Kontrovers is a Swedish band that was being played on the stereo when this interview was being recorded. It was one of many Swedish bands that were articulated by Indonesian punks within a concave framework. As the excerpt points to, the global character of punk is here stressed as part of the development from the shallow; of realizing that there is more to punk than the local bands or the "mainstream" bands. For example, the self-titled album by Kontrovers (2002), was released on cassette by punks in Indonesia, as were other Swedish bands such as DS-13, Mob 47, Totalitär, and Skitsystem; often with the liner notes translated by someone in the scene. Sometimes this was done without the consent of the band, often however it had been authorized by email.

straight edge, for example notes that some of the older participants he followed argued that straight edge was a way of life rather than following trends and the fashion (2006:163). Andy Bennett (2006) also points out that among the older punk fans he interviewed, extreme dress was rejected in favor of a more subtle style where a few specific objects were included in a more casual style, or through a patch or tattoo (2006:225). Similarly Bennett notes that the older punks saw punk as a lifestyle as opposed to the younger, more visually dramatic punks, interpreting crowd surfing and stage diving as a "phase" that you have to pass through (2006:232).

Haenfler's and Bennett's accounts are consistent with Linda Andes' (1998) work on punk identities as evolving over time. According to Andes there is a developmental aspect to punk identity involving a change in reference groups over time. Following a state of mind of being different from others, punk becomes the channeling of this difference, a rebellion against parents and friends centered on deviance: "Being 'punk' is anything that is offensive and shocking to their reference group" (1998:223). The second stage of this development is one of affiliation, in which the members find out that everything unconventional is not punk. Andes' point is that there is thus a shift from searching for recognition based on what the "normal" others think, to other members of the subculture. In this stage members learn the standards of how to behave and dress, and they become part of a distinctive lifestyle of a subculture. Punk then moves from a single unit (dress or music) to expert knowledge of punk as a whole. This includes being conscious of how to separate between punks and posers and learning why this is important (1999:224f). The third stage, Andes (1999:226ff) argues, involves a transcendent identity and moving away from the subculture; not identifying yourself as punk, not listening to the music or going to shows. Punk then becomes an ideological commitment that is both anti-authoritarian and highly individualistic as well as revolving around a stress on the production and distribution of one's own culture. During this stage the views of other punks become unimportant, as it is the self that is the primary reference group: the former elements of style have been transformed into an individualistic belief, a feeling of being unique.

Andes' distinction between different punk identities is probably one of the most fruitful attempts to cover subcultural identification over time, as it explains subcultural change and heterogeneities in relation to subcultural systems of meanings. Nevertheless, it is not enough to explain the scripted development, nor the differences in how the mainstream and the subcultural sacred were defined.

First, even though it is tempting to explain a script of development as a matter of years of involvement and age, this relationship is absent in my data. The same goes for the scripted intrinsic difference within a convex pattern. When participants mobilized and authenticated their own, as well as others', identities in relation to an internal mainstream, the script of devel-

opment from the shallow was articulated by everyone, regardless of age or years of involvement in punk. Enacting such a script was an available and pragmatic ordering of identities that would most often fuse directly. For example, one punk I met stressed that as a 14-year-old punk he was "totally into dressing wildly and looking different." To this he added that as he grew older he started to realize that punk was more than this and what mattered was "doing something for the scene." When I asked him how old he was now, he added quietly, "I'll be 16 next month" (Field notes Sweden, April 2009).

Second, Andes' description of this development is tainted by a uniform subcultural logic, as these different identities are seen as steps on a subcultural latter: "[P]unks *progress from* rebelling against […] normal others […] to affiliating themselves with a punk community and lifestyle, *then finally to* internalizing punk ideology and transcend their own membership" (Andes 1998:229, emphasis added). Leblanc speaks of a similar logic in arguing that differences among the punks she studied are due to some punks "never 'graduating' from softcore to hardcore" (1999:88). Counter to such a view, my argument is that these differences do not point to a uniform logic, but rather to heterogeneity in terms of the ordering of mainstreams and authentications.

Third, the individualistic trait that Andes points to in relation to a retreat from style is not only absent within the scripted development outlined here, it is defined as indicative of the shallowness of the mainstream, of focusing on being different. Rather, my point has been that a script of development, just as one of an essential difference, refers to a subset of background understandings ordering action through enabling some performances to fuse more easily with this background than others (cf. Alexander 2004a:550, 2010a:286). Further, the scripted ordering of styles and identities within these patterns were so tied to the positioning of the mainstream that if participants switched patterns, their authentications of their identities shifted as well; in the case of suddenly enacting a convex pattern, the once articulated development was then replaced with an intrinsic and essential difference. One of the participants quoted above for example, did switch patterns and thus the development articulated here was absent in his performance of identity some years later. I will return to this in chapter 8.

Having said that much, I now want to turn to how styles were performed and authenticated in relation to both this script as well as the background distinction against the style-centered and shallow.

7.2.3. The performance of an absence of style

In relation to a convex pattern, in chapter 6 I argued that style was authenticated if seen as consistent with an intrinsic and individual difference, making it possible to address heterogeneities in terms of styles and interpretations.

The clear division between the subcultural and the external mainstream is highly encouraging in this sense; locating identities and objects within this background depends on a performance of being different from what is outside of the subcultural—you are either punk or not. As such, conspicuous style was proactively performed as something revered: the difference from an external mainstream constructed through a representation of an intrinsic difference.

In contrast, the positioning of the mainstream as internal to punk, as outlined here, revolves around a critique against the state of the subcultural. In terms of the mobilization and authentication of style, the patterned differences represented in the movement from the superficial and undifferentiated to the significant and special becomes apparent. Thus, whereas differences within a convex pattern were overlooked in favor of a moral and intrinsic similarity, the distinction from the shallow punks through a scripted development demanded a critical examination of subcultural heterogeneity, as this is what sets the sacred apart from the undifferentiated profane.

To put it simply, not only were most of the stylistic objects authenticated within a convex pattern positioned as representative of the shallow mainstream, but so was the validation of style as being a matter of standing out. Nevertheless, style was authenticated within both patterns as representative of the distance from the mainstream. Still, as the boundary to the mainstream was differently positioned, what could be fused within each pattern related to how and where the boundary to the mainstream was drawn.

To openly perform a subcultural identification through style, rather than through a distinction against style, was for example, if not meaningless, then highly polluting. When the mainstream was positioned internally, style was rarely performed as something positive, rather the binaries were worked so that to look and act like a "punk" was indicative of the shallow mainstream. The positive side was thus achieved through an anti-stance, a matter of what you were not wearing or what you did not comment on. The extremes of this stance became obvious to me when doing fieldwork:

> I'm cruising the area together with Lisa getting introduced to a lot of new people, and a lot of interesting people. Bands are playing, most people however are outside […] I start talking to Robert whom I have wanted to talk to for a long time, he seems interested. He has the same shirt as I do, I point that out. He looks at me as if I'm out of my mind, mumbles something about having to get back inside and then leaves. Lisa sighs and turns to me and says, "You have to stop doing that." "Doing what?" I reply. "Stop commenting on people's dress, it's shallow, we don't think about what clothes we wear, we just wear 'em, we're not the kind of punks who changes clothes just for the show." I ask her to expand on this; it's obvious that Robert and I have the same obscure shirt, how can someone miss out on that? She thinks for a while, then tells me, "If you comment on his shirt you either cast him off as being shallow, or you assume that he is aware of what he is wearing and that he cares, that's insulting" (Field notes, Sweden, June 2008).

I am breaching the prohibitions here, and I am being punished for it, twice. First by him leaving me, not even bothering to comment on my remark, and second as I am taught a lesson regarding how I should act and think. I cannot say that this was the proudest of my moments in the field, but on the other hand this was one of the few occasions that these prohibitions were openly mobilized. It is one thing to have them described to you, and another to be on the other end when they are being put in place. The boundary against the style-centered and undifferentiated is here symbolically extended by placing mindless style as on the negative end of the binaries just because of the shallowness it supposedly represent, "that kind of punks who changes clothes just for the show." Further, whereas change and development from the shallow are articulated as matters of intent, style is here performed as something unintentional, thus extending the prohibition of a focus on style to include being conscious about style—it is negative to "assume that he is aware of what he is wearing," The critical and reactive stance that is indicative of the enactment of a concave pattern thus also permeates the mobilization and authentication of style, to the extent that the positive aspect of it was most often absent or vague. If the mainstream punks dress that way, listen to that kind of punk, behave like that, then we do not.

Instead, the attributed intent of style was rather to prevent a blurring of the boundary to the mainstream. Drawing from both the reactive stance of the background and the scripted development, subcultural commitment was performed and authenticated through the articulation of an absence of style.

> I think hardcore punk is not about fashion, not style, I think it's a lifestyle, when people say, "You are a punk, you're hardcore, so why don't you look like one," I think it's not a problem. I wear a shirt and shaved hair, I think punk is more than style (Interview, Indonesia-W5, 2005).

> The ultimate thing would be that you looked like a hobo, you know people wouldn't know what you were, but you would at least not be conceived of as caring about dress and appearance (Field notes, Sweden, Feb. 2009).

In a similar way some of my Indonesian informants told me that they were happy when people mistook them for anything but punk, as that was a proof that they did not cared about style. The script of development is crucial in these performances of an anti-style, as it flips the convex logic of authenticity equating standing out. Instead, as in the field note above, the binaries are here worked so as to make the stylistic representation of punk analogous to the superficial, strengthening the prohibition against the style-centered.

Nevertheless, all participants I followed, regardless of the subcultural pattern enacted, did use stylistic objects to communicate their punk identities. What differed was rather how style was performed and authenticated. Even though style was rarely authenticated within a concave pattern, identities were claimed through an extensive use of band logos. To be sure, these log-

os, with a few exceptions, were hard to read for someone unfamiliar with either the bands or the intricate design of band logos. Consequently, few people outside of the subcultural recognized such styles as punk, which was also the attributed intent of the absence of style. There was no need for communicating subcultural differentiation openly.

To given another example, as I was accompanying one of my informants to a show in a small Swedish town we got lost in an industrial area. There were plenty of people around to ask for directions, however, and at least a couple of them looked like punks to me, as they were wearing studded jeans vests scribbled with different band logos. My informant, however, approached a bearded guy in a flannel shirt, tight black pants, and with short hair. They nodded at each other, and the guy simply noted, "You're on the way to the show? I'll show you." Later that night I asked my informant why he approached that guy instead of the others. "Didn't you see the 'Bread and Water'-badge he had on his shirt, that was a sure sign, I mean the shit-punks we saw, they ended up here too, true, but they could just have been on their way to some other shitty place" (Field notes, Sweden, March 2004). The bearded guy told me a similar story—that he had seen my informant's shirt and then decided that we were ok.

As is rather obvious in the field notes above, I never did master these interpretative grids, but every time they were pointed out to me style was articulated as a matter of a tacit communication, rarely commented upon. Both of these participants drew from a scripted development as represented through the downplaying of style: Commitment and authenticity were worked through the performance of an absence of style.

Attributing a functionality of style

When participants' own style was addressed in relation to a script of development, it was usually in reference to a past involvement, as in, "When I was new to punk I used to…." Current style was instead articulated as a non-style, or rather the conscious absence of style, as in the excerpts above. The absence of style is paramount in relation to a background that proclaims such an absence as meaningful and an audience both authenticating performances in relation to that background as well as being authenticated as an audience through this background. Consequently, when the subcultural sacred was mobilized as a separation from the shallow punks, style was either indirectly addressed or discussed in terms of failed performances, prompting those on the side of the accused to distance themselves from the style-centered. Instead, clothes and objects were rather authenticated in terms of their relation to action. Whereas the shallow mainstream was worked along the extreme, the provocative, the fabricated, and the fashion-minded, the positive side of style was related to the useful, the subtle, the natural, and the unintentional.

As in the discussion of DIY in relation to a convex pattern, the articulation of class has to be mentioned in relation to practicality of style. A con-

cave pattern included a similar stereotyping of the working class as within a convex pattern, yet instead of articulating individual consistency, poverty, and being an outcast, the working class was revered for being practical, uncomplicated, hard working, and collective. The middle and upper classes were rarely touched upon other than in reference to accusations of the shallowness of the mainstream punks or invalidating other participants for not working hard enough, of not being committed due to their parents supplying them with money and housing. Similar to a convex pattern, there was no relationship between how punk was defined, or which subcultural pattern was enacted, to participants' class background. The same scripts and definitions of the mainstream were enacted regardless of whether participants came from the working or middle class. I will return to the question of class and the consequences it has for the structuring of the subcultural in chapter 8. What matters for now is how the performance of an absence of style was linked to a romanticizing of the uncomplicated and practical.

Hairstyles, for example, followed a similar script of a development from the shallow form to the depth of content. Most often hair was performed and authenticated indirectly through not being stylized, yet even when hair was somewhat ordered (a number of participants had dreaded hair, for example), the emphasis on an absence of style remained:

> I stopped combing my hair, and then my long hair became dreads (Interview, Sweden-S9, 2008).

> It's practical, you never have to wash it or comb it you just cut in front so that you're able to see what you're doing (Field notes, Sweden, April 2007).

On the other hand, I observed participants constantly working their dreads, twisting and rubbing them, as well as separating them. This was not, however, articulated as a fabrication of style, but as a pastime, something to occupy your hands with. The authentication of dreads above follows the same pattern: the way you have your hair is articulated as involuntary, it just happened; "my long hair *became* dreads" (emphasis added), and further as it is related to action, "it's practical, you never have to wash it or comb it."

The emphasis on practicality at the same time negatively included the distinction against fabricated mainstream punk styles: the fixated mohawk or spikes, the dyed hair, the improvement of style rather than the community. Similar to the scripted development in terms of identification, I am not arguing that participants never thought of style, or never had the intention of preparing style. Most certainly they did. But what matters here is that such an open performance of style-consciousness would not fuse with a background's prohibition against the style-centered. The downplaying of one's own style followed from a scripted relation to the background, a motion

away from the shallow, within which style could be ordered, and as such it had a practical meaning for these participants.

In his ethnography on bike messengers, Jeffrey L. Kidder (2011) makes a similar parallel to functionality as separating the shallow from the deep. The fixed gear bike of the messengers, for example, is articulated as superordinate to other bicycles as there is nothing to steal from it, there are few things that can break or that need tuning, and that controlling the speed in traffic or on slippery streets is easier when done through the pedals as opposed to combining hand brakes with coasting (Kidder 2011:52). This way the messenger use of the bike is separated from weekend riders' or hipsters' use of it, as its meaning is intertwined with its functionality as a working bike. In relation to the participants I followed in Indonesia and Sweden the mobilization and authentication of style through a scripted development revolved around either the clean—as in no brands, often just a pair of jeans, sneakers, and a band shirt—or the dirty—as in the worn and used, not something flashy and new (cf. Hjelle 2013:36). Still, both the clean and the dirty related to the unintentional and the practical in the sense that it was a consequence of depth and action rather than something fabricated and thought of. Similarly, black was the dominant color on clothes and the rest of palette was equally somber—dark grey, dark brown, and military green. Such a monochrome style was authenticated from a similar stance of functionality: it rarely got dirty, it was good for sneaking around at places at night, etc.. Focus was rather on how clothes could be used than as a matter of style: Secret pockets were sewn into shirts, pants, or jackets so as to facilitate shoplifting, fanny packs worn so as to carry around the basic amenities such as a multi-tool, wrench, or flashlight, and patches were used to mend clothing that had been ripped apart when jumping a fence. Or so it was articulated.

The stress on style as the unintentional or practical also had the consequence of ordering the otherwise potentially polluting; if style is indicative of the shallow mainstream how come participants all pretty much look the same? The articulation of an absence of style instead meant that similarities and conformity could be treated as a sign of the absence of the mainstream. When I followed participants to shows, a frequent comment was, "Oh you see, everyone dressed in black, we can relax" (Fieldwork Sweden, June 2010). The performance of an absence of style thus works to fuse the collective to the background's distinction against the shallow mainstream as well as the separation from it through a development beyond this shallow. Whereas style is authenticated by drawing on functionality, the very pattern of meaning that is used to make such an extension from the subcultural to the practical and to the object is at the same time enacted to erect a symbolic boundary precisely by the denial of this symbolism.

Although I agree with Kidder's (2011:163) claim that, "Clothing is modified for functionality, and this functionality then becomes symbolic," I would like to add that functionality in this sense is just as scripted as is the

stress on development of which it is a part.[29] The failure of such performances of the absence of style referred to being perceived as distinguishing yourself from this community, of wearing practical objects merely as a way to look cool.

The heavy regulation of style described here is what renders the performance of an anti-style into a style: How objects are made meaningful in relation to a background text that renders some objects and action more available than others. A mohawk is probably just as conspicuous as having dreads from a non-subcultural perspective, but the point is rather that meaning is attributed to these objects rather then presiding within them, and hence their meaning differs depending on what perspective we are looking from. Thus similar to the discussion in the previous chapter on the authentication of style through a consistency with the sacred, style is here framed as a direct consequence of depth, collectivity, and development. The difference between the convex and concave patterns in the performance of style relates to how the sacred is established through the prohibitions defining its distance from the profane. As the subcultural sacred is differently defined, so is the representation of it. The prohibitions against the shallow and undeveloped render an articulation of style as something positive hard to fuse with such a background. If objects cannot be said to be either unintentional or practical they must be shallow and fabricated.

Still, this was only possible as long as the audience authenticated these objects as being unintentional. For example, during the latter part of my field work there was an increasing discussion among participants regarding dreads. The analogous extension of dreads to the practical and untransformed ceased to stick; instead it was articulated as a failed attempt to signal a distance from style. When this defusing of dreads from the background spread, dreads began to lose their unintentional meaning and a lot of participants either shaved their heads or combed them out. When asked about their sudden change, the same participants that had previously performed dreads as part of the sacred, referred to the abandoning of such a hairstyle as "a more natural look," something "untransformed" (Field notes Sweden, Aug. 2010). Interestingly enough, when performed within convex frames, dreads were never authenticated as unintentional and practical but rather as something that stood out and represented your intrinsic difference.

It is important to note that distinctions against shallowness in terms of style are not exclusive to the enactment of a distinction to an internal mainstream, these occurred in relation to an external mainstream as well, reducing those who were seen to lack either an intrinsic difference, or did not

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[29] The exception of this practicality was musical equipment. Participants did sometimes play on expensive instruments and amplifiers yet this was exempted from such a discussion on practicality. Even in Indonesia where instruments were shared, this was not part of a discussion of style, but rather one of DIY, related to a different dimension of the mainstream and another script (see section 7.4).

stand out, to "poseurs" or "sell-outs." Muggleton (2000:90f) and Hodkinson (2002:40) also note that their participants were hostile to other participants and their style. Yet, my point is that instead of dismissing such distinctions as being a matter of lack of consistency, imitation, or trying too hard, we should ask whether there are differences in regards to what this consistency refers to. Failing a performance in relation to the functionality of style, for example, often resulted in accusations of being either a hipster-punk or utility-punk, depending largely on what kind of function they were accused of imitating. There were also references to hipsters within a convex pattern, but then these were defined as strange music nerds that were always treated as outsiders. Within a concave pattern, however, the articulation of the hipster as something negative always included a punk suffix: they were hipster-punks, described as the good-looking punks who wore practical clothes to look good, with tattoos that were neither spontaneous nor made by a friend, but designed to look that way. They were punks who looked right but did it for the wrong reasons, and were as such ascribed an individual intention of looking good. Consequently, the result was similar to that of a convex pattern: they were mainstream.

So far, I have argued that the subcultural sacred is represented through a development from the superficial and the shallow mainstream. The positioning of this mainstream as internal means that the boundary work against the mainstream refers to difference being a matter of separating between the undifferentiated punks and those who have dared to move beyond a merely being punk. A different positioning of the mainstream, articulated through a different script, thus enables different authentications of style and identities. I have shown how the mobilization and authentication of both identities and style are scripted as a matter of becoming different than the mainstream punk through a critical stance against the subcultural. Instead of embracing punk as the set apart in relation to an external mainstream, "punk" in a general sense is constantly used as a sign of the fixated and simple. The script of development reinforces this liminality of punk as something that is both the set apart and the profane, as it includes the past and initial subcultural identification as an embodied and felt aspect of the mainstream. The performance of an absence of style thus works to make the development from the shallow consciously felt in each participant. To locate yourself in relation to this background is to symbolically represent the move away from the shallow and style-focused mainstream to a subcultural sacred, for now only vaguely referred to as "something more" or a "higher purpose." As I now turn to the second definition of the mainstream within a concave pattern I will develop this further in relation to the definition of freedom, pointing out that the extension of the internal and shallow mainstream is interworked with the definition of the mainstream as being self-complacent and hedonist. The regula-

tion of style is then merely one of many regulations established to free the distinguished from the ordinary.

7.3. Collective freedom

The first time I saw Gustav and his band playing they signaled such a youth-fulness and energy. It had been quite some time since I had been to a show within the scene where the band jumped around on stage and actually smiled, as if they were having a good time. A year later I see them play again, and this time they remind me of the other bands considered to be a part of the scene in this Swedish town. The miscellaneous style that seemed so fresh is now replaced with a uniform somber look. Gone are the Misfits, Dead Kennedys, and Metallica shirts, as are the short mohawk of the drummer and the dyed hair of the others. Now they look cleaner, all dressed in black, fanny packs, and patched jeans vests. Hair is either shaved or dreaded in the back. Gustav is no longer jumping around on stage smiling and laughing; instead they all look down, at times sweeping their blank eyes over the crowd as if this was something they had to do, rather than something that was fun. They blend in perfectly with a crowd that is solemnly watching band after band play, occasionally flinging a fist in the air, letting it bounce to the monotonous d-beat. I decide that this will be my point of discussion that night: Are they not having fun?

Those whom I talk to, including Gustav, ensure me that of course they are having fun, but that is not the point, it is not like you play in a band, organize shows, release records, or tour just for the fun, you are doing it for all the others, to be sure that they can have a good time. Staffan, the 30 year old singer of one of the most active bands in town explains it to me: "Do you think I do this for myself, that we pay for own tours, lose money on pretty much every record we sell, and spend tens of hours every week to organize shows just to have fun? We do it so that everyone can enjoy bands, and be able to discuss politics and trade stuff. It is entirely for the scene" (Field notes, Sweden, Jan 2010).

Similar to the previous discussion on difference, the analysis of the articulation of freedom within a concave pattern will start in a discussion on the current state of the subcultural. In so doing, I will once again approach politics and rules in relation to the subcultural sacred, addressing the role of autonomy that the previous research has deemed of such an importance in relation to resistance against the dominant culture (Leblanc 1999, Moore 2004, 2007, O'Connor 2008). In reference to this autonomy, I will also attend to the articulation of the scene within a concave pattern, both asking what role it plays in relation to difference and freedom, but also how its definition parallels the distinction of the set apart from the undifferentiated?

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My use of the term scene will, however, differ from its use as a theoretical alternative to subculture (cf. Irwin 1977, Straw 1991, Bennett 2000:64ff, Peterson and Bennett 2004). Similar to punk, DIY, style, and anarchism, I will approach scene through how it is mobilized and given its meaning in relation to a specific subcultural pattern of meaning. I do see the point of, for example, Khan-Harris' (2007) use of scene, as it is an attractive concept freed from the historical and theoretical constraints that have plagued the concept of subculture, as well as something already used by the participants to describe their own reality. However, that is also the reason why I find it so problematic. The vernacular use of the term "scene" among participants risks confusing the reader and blurring its use as a theoretical concept: whose definition is it that is being referred to? As Williams' (2011:33) argues subculture and scene does not have to be juxtaposed as opposites, especially when the former is rid of the rigid dichotomization between the inside and outside that the work of CCCS suggests. Instead, Williams (2011:36) points out that scene can be used to capture the social aspect of subcultural participation and interaction, whereas subcultures refer to a cultural aspect: a shared system of meanings within which practices, styles, and identities are communicated and interpreted.

Hence, my focus will be on how the articulation of the scene was mobilized to further the boundary work against an internal mainstream.

7.3.1. The complacent mainstream

In *Purity and danger*, Mary Douglas (1966:94f) points out that the marginal have a double role: disorder can both spoil the existing patterns as well as be the material for new patterns to emerge. The relationship between the set apart and the undifferentiated, she argues, is thus a ritual play between articulate and inarticulate forms, between the limited and the potentially unlimited. Given the discussion above in relation to authentication through a scripted development, this means that what is in between the form and the formless is that which can be developed into new forms, or reordered to fit the existing patterns. Consequently, just as punk identities are located through an articulated motion from the shallow past, so is it possible for the mainstream to make this transition as well. The focus on change, as well as punk's ambivalent character as both the sacred and the profane within a concave pattern, thus potentially reduce the boundary to the mainstream into one of the developed and the yet to be developed. There was, however, a second dimension of the internal mainstream that restricted this possibility severely.

Even though some enactments of a concave pattern did entirely focus on a distinction from a shallow mainstream, such a definition was usually extended through articulating the mainstream as incapable of real change. The mainstream was not only perceived as preoccupied by the form, they were also seen as the content and ignorant.

Most punks here are hedonist, happy, just fashion. They just speak about politics they don't do anything. In lyrics they say fuck the government but they don't do anything to fuck it, people in here followed the style not the politics, it is a follower scene. They don't know what punk means (Interview, Indonesia-E6, 2005).

Still, the difference [from the mainstream] has to be a matter of ambition. That sometimes within the punk scene it is enough to say that you're an anti-sexist and then you're fine. That you're not a homophobe, and then that is ok. The difference has to be between those who aspire to develop into becoming something that they do not dislike, and people who are content by saying, "No, I'm not a sexist." Either you have the ambition to disassociate yourself from such a thing, or you're just being content with how something is. You know, the difference lies between people who think that they are done, and those who think that you can never be done (Interview, Sweden-E3, 2008).

The characteristics of the complacent mainstream refer here to a refining of superficiality to include more than a focus on style. Shallowness is here extended as being indicative of an ignorant state of being. The transition from an undifferentiated "follower scene" to what is here described as the political scene is thus articulated as unavailable to the majority of punks through an emphasis of development as something constant rather than a one-time shift. In the second excerpt this is articulated as a matter of ambition: between "people who think that they are done and those who think that you can never be done." Development beyond the shallow is thus articulated as a matter of intent, of having the ambition to continuously develop, as well as enforcing these prohibitions to the actions of others, supervising that they are not becoming content. This ambition in turn is confined to the critical and reactive stance that is indicative of a concave pattern: "those who aspire to develop into becoming something that they do not dislike." It is only positive indirectly. Depth is related to the intent of constantly staying clear from the bad rather than being something good.

This definition of the mainstream as the complacent punks also involved working the binaries so that everything that was seen as polluting to the subcultural was placed alongside the careless and apolitical punks. The excerpts above capture the apolitical characteristic of this dimension of the internal mainstream in the argument that hedonism and self-complacency, rather than change and politics, are indicative of the mainstream. Racism, sexism, fashion, and passivity were all worked so as to be a consequence of this lack of ambition. In many ways the complacent mainstream was in this sense a rather convenient excuse. Whenever there was a problem within the subcultural the discussion could be ended by either blaming the mainstream or dismissing the accused as part of this mainstream.

In one of the cities I did fieldwork in, for example, there was a discussion on how to battle sexism at shows and on stage. One of my informants, a woman in her early 20s, outlined the problem arguing that there was far too

much drinking and doing drugs in relation to shows and that the first step had to be to limit this. A second participant made a remark that on the last show one of the "raw-punks" had even groped a member of a visiting band. When properly confronted the "raw-punk" had claimed that he was too drunk to know what he was doing. A third participant added that this was unacceptable and that she was so "goddamn tired of all those shitty drunk punks who managed to ruin every fucking show." The discussion went on for quite some time, restoring the boundaries to the mainstream, placing sexism, drunkenness, and irresponsible behavior on the end of the complacent mainstream that were obviously absent in the discussion as "they don't care about anything but themselves and their fucking cocks" (Field notes, Sweden, Aug 2009).

The emphasis on the subcultural sacred as a critical reflection on the state of punk and the subsequent push on prohibitions mean that pretty much every aspect of the subcultural sacred outlined in the previous chapter are cast off as indicative of the mainstream. Consequently, just as a scripted development from the shallow refers to a move from the style-centered individual to a collective oblivious to style, the characteristics of the complacent mainstream as the content and the apolitical directly relate to an invalidation of the individual, as well as individual rights, as something sacred. Far from being something revered, personal freedom is instead cast off as defiling the subcultural sacred, turning it into just one big hedonist and self-centered party:

> You know, there's a fucking huge group of punks, I don't know, street-punks, Oï-punks, or what the fuck they are, who just prances around saying that punk means screwing everything and just boozing and being gross, you know. I mean, I do that too, but that's not what the whole point is about (Interview, Sweden-S2, 2003).

> Ahmed is pointing towards a group of people wearing motor cycle helmets and studded jeans vests. "You see those punks Erik, they are the reason why we do this, because if we would leave it to them to set up shows then we're doomed. They don't care about anything. Oh besides getting shitty drunk every night, they sure enjoy that" (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan. 2005).

Haenfler (2006) starts his work on straight edge with a definition that places straight edge in direct relation to a similar complacent mainstream. Straight edge, he argues, arose as "a response to the punk scene's nihilistic tendencies, including drug and alcohol abuse, casual sex, violence, and self-destructive 'live fast, die young' attitudes" (2006:8). Even though the majority of the participants I followed did not adhere to a straight edge ethos of not drinking, the articulation of the complacent mainstream followed a similar argument as that provided by Haenfler. It was articulated as both the self-destructive and self-complacent, a hedonist approach that corrupted the sub-

cultural from the inside. This is not to say that participants did not drink or take drugs, most of them certainly did, but rather that the authentication of such acts was not possible to fuse with the background. Instead drinking was just articulated as something you did without mobilizing the background text, and the same was true for drugs. In some cases I even thought that there were no drugs at all since participants so vehemently condemned the "pill-munching punks." It took me quite some time in the field to realize that they too used amphetamines; yet similar to style, such use was rarely openly discussed.

The downplaying of drug and alcohol use further points to the reactive stance of the positioning of the mainstream as internal. If drugs and alcohol are seen as indicative of the mainstream then any use of these, just as style, has to be addressed as unimportant so as to avoid a blurring of boundaries. The first excerpt above captures my point by working the binaries so that it is the fundamental focus on alcohol and being gross that characterizes the mainstream rather than simply doing it. Being gross and drunk is therefore acceptable as long as it is not recognized as being important. It is this critical reflection that marks the separation from the mainstream, as another participant added, "They would not know real punk even if it came crashing down on them" (Field notes, Sweden, Nov 2008) This way, the distance to the mainstream is established through pointing to the irremediable state of the complacent mainstream; the ignorant, apolitical, and self-indulgent punks simply cannot develop beyond the shallow and complacent. Just as in Gary Alan Fine's reference to the amateur mycologists' distinction against other mushroomers, the boundary is being drawn internally as a matter of commitment and a strive beyond the shallow: "Some mushroom societies don't want to do anything except eat. If a mushroom isn't edible, they step on it" (Quoted in Fine 1998:180).

Having said this much, I now want to turn to the definition of the subcultural sacred as that which is distinct and freed from such an immediate gratification of individual desires: the scene.

7.3.2. The scene

In their analysis of the Long Island DIY punk scene Kenneth R. Culton and Ben Holtzman (2010) argue that participants locate themselves within a system of relations where "the scene" is perceived of as an alternative freed space meant to eliminate hierarchies, racism, and sexism. The participants' definition of the scene surpassed both music and individual identification, instead equating punk to a motion towards the communal and significant:

> Most participants viewed the scene as a means through which to further personal, cultural and political change [...] Many had been involved in these other scenes, but felt that they were not emphasizing that punk should attempt to

build an alternative community to further positive social, political, and personal change. They believed that many scenes and bands were not interested in progressive change and instead furthered only the commodification of punk through their emphasis on fashion, winning "fans," and gaining popularity (and often power) (Culton and Holtzman 2010:272).

Haenfler (2006:22) makes a similar note in arguing that the term scene within a subcultural vernacular refers to a variety of meanings, pointing both to specific genres of music as well as geographical locations ranging from the local to global. Among the participants I followed, scene was also used to describe and locate various kinds of spaces, "Yeah Gothenburg has a nice scene," "There is a strong skate punk-scene, but also a big crust scene." Yet what interests me here is the suggested implication of a distinction between the general—"scenes" or "a scene"—and the specific—"the scene." The quote above from Culton and Holtzman points to a motion from the shallow and complacent to depth and the alternative, in part through a stress on change and development, but also through a shift from the indefinite "these other scenes" to a definite form "the scene" that is established through the perceived failure of the former. In relation to the definition of the internal mainstream in my data, this distinction between the undifferentiated and the definite was fundamental:

> [The boundary], to be sure, is really between the scene and those who are not a part of the scene, you know punks who look like punks and who listens to punk, but who really doesn't care about the scene, shows, or about what to think, or anything (Interview, Sweden, E4, 2008).

> We are a part of the scene, they are just punks (Field notes, Indonesia, Feb. 2005).

The centrality of the categorization of participants along either belonging or not belonging to the scene surpasses the definition of the mainstream as the complacent. The depth of the developed and community-focused outlined in relation to the shallow aspect of the mainstream refers as much to the representation of the scene as the subcultural sacred. The scene is the committed and the developed, the result of a move from the formless to the form.

Indeed the use of the term scene was differently articulated among the participants I followed depending on how the mainstream was positioned, and thus, how the boundary between the subcultural and the mainstream was symbolically extended. When a convex pattern was enacted, for example, the articulation of the scene was not something inherently punk, but rather a descriptive term. It referred to a geographical or musical entity, as in "the Balinese scene," or "The pub-scene here is good for shows." It rarely gestured outside of this "here and now," neither was it something particularly sacred. Within a concave pattern, however, it was a normative articulation

that separated the subcultural sacred from the "ordinary," "fashion-centered," and hedonist punks. As in the excerpts above it was a matter of belonging. To be a part of the scene was to have developed beyond the superficiality and complacency of the mainstream, striving for something more.

Further, this extension of the binary subcultural/mainstream to one of belonging/not belonging relates to conformity and doing rather than difference and being. The depth that excludes merely being and looking punk as shallow and/or complacent is the focus on working and caring for the scene. The mainstream's preoccupation with "looking like punks and listening to punk" is what excludes them from fully participating. They remain, as in the second excerpt, "just punks."

This symbolic extension of the subcultural to the scene through the interrelation of depth and development to commitment and the collective is further worked in the articulation of the scene as single and definite. The sacred is not *a* scene, as in one of many different musical scenes, or even different local punk scenes. Instead it is used in a definite form—*the* scene: It is a single entity as opposed to the undifferentiated punks. When this definite form was further specified it retained this set apart status through prefixes that were on the opposite end of the characteristics of the mainstream; "the political punk scene" and "the DIY-scene" contrasted to "fashion punks" and "fuck everything punks." Much like the graffiti writers who identify themselves as well as others by approaching other participants with the question, "What do you write?" (MacDonald 2001:135, Andersson 2005:8), participants were introduced through claiming their belonging to the scene.

> I was at Per's place last night and I met a lot of new people from all over Europe. Every time someone approached our table he or she was introduced as, "Have you met Mark he's playing in [band x] and he's been a part of the scene since the 90s," "This is Jenny, she's active in the scene in Berlin, organizing shows." I think I was the only one to find this [focus on belonging] intriguing, the others were just like, "Oh cool" (Field notes, Sweden, Feb 2007).

Similarly, when talking about someone unknown, the first question would be, "Is s/he part of the scene?." Further, if the answer was negative it was usually followed by a disclaimer: "No she just a friend, but she's nice" (Fieldwork Sweden, Feb 2007). It is like the classic distinction in mafia movies, between "He's a friend of ours," and, "He's a friend of mine"—the former signaling that the person is a part of the group and can be trusted, the latter that he is a civilian so as to warn others to take caution.[30] The relationship between the shallowness of style and the depth of the collective makes belonging to the scene a matter of honor. To be authenticated and thus a part

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[30] I'm grateful to Elias Mellander, Ph.D. student in Ethnology in Gothenburg, and thus a friend of ours, for pointing out this similarity to me.

of the scene is to be more than just an individual, more than just a punk, it is an elevation from the general to the distinct. Consistency is thus related more to a collective space than to an individual essence, as the actions of a single participant are interpreted through belonging to the differentiated and freed collective.

Further, the singularity of the scene transcended the local and national so as to include all participants who worked to establish the boundary to the internal mainstream. Thus participants in Sweden and Indonesia spoke of *the* scene as including bands, spaces, and other participants from all over the world. I will return to the aspect of the translocal in chapter 8. The point I want to make here is that just as the scripted development refers to a move from the shallow and individual to the deep and collective, the geographical transition marks belonging as a development from the local to the translocal.

Accordingly the articulation of belonging worked to order and categorize the subcultural. Bands and participants that belonged to the scene were always welcome, whereas those who did not had to earn their inclusion. Similarly when the scene did include a local prefix, such as "the Stockholm-scene," it was often used to point to a local deviation or negative development in parts of the global scene.

> A: A friend of mine was in Ukraine last summer. That seemed nice.
> B: Is there a scene there?
> A: Yeah the DIY-scene is getting big there (Field notes, Sweden, Feb 2008).

> Some people in the scene were so obsessed with credit card fraud because they could steal stuff from the Internet. There are some people who do that and claim to be hardcore punks and they ripped off small independent labels in the US and Western Europe, like my friend's label got ripped off. Consequently the unfortunate situation was that the DIY scene in the US and Western Europe started to look at the Indonesian scene differently, the Indonesian scene in general and you know how fast rumors spread within the DIY scene through fanzines and when you hear "Indonesian people are just scammers, don't deal or trade with them." Then people who actually wanted to trade stuff, people who were honest couldn't get even a single a reply because of that stigma during two years (Interview, Indonesia-W5, 2005).

These two excerpts point to how the boundary between the sacred and the profane is worked in relation to definite and indefinite. The first illustrates the discursive move from the undifferentiated—"a scene"—to being included in the set apart—"the DIY-scene." The second draws on a national prefix to represent the inability of some parts of the scene, those who "claim to be hardcore punks" yet do not respect the sanctity of the scene as they pursue individual gain at the expense of those who "actually" wanted to participate and were honest.

What remains to be outlined, however, is how the distinction from the complacent mainstream through a collective belonging is scripted. This in-

volves asking what role the definition and articulation of freedom and politics play in the establishment of the scene as a subcultural sanctity.

7.3.3. The subordination of the individual to collective rules

In the discussion of freedom within a convex pattern, I argued that a distinction from a restricted and controlled mainstream was scripted through an emphasis on just being and a prohibition against rules. At the same time, I showed that even though subcultural rules were rarely openly discussed in relation to this script, the mobilization of subcultural identities and styles through the absence of rules nevertheless ordered and limited this personal freedom. Hence, I argued that the distinction between the individual and collective should therefore be seen as culturally meaningful rather than a realist statement.

In this sense, even though the collective is authenticated within a concave pattern, and not within a convex, both of these nevertheless rely on a collective distinctiveness. The difference is rather how the latter is expressed and what can be fused with the background text. Within a convex pattern the emphasis on intrinsic difference, just being, and going your own way had the direct consequence of an individualization of punk; within a concave pattern, the stress on the scene as the definite and the developed had the opposite effect: The sacred was related to working for the collective.

> There are happy-punks, anxiety-punks, drunk-punks, fuck everything-punks, and then there are the we-have-to-do-something-about-it-punks (Interview, Sweden S9, 2008).

> For me I think punk is a way of life, just like if you do something you must take responsibility, it's a choice but you have to respond to that choice (Interview, Indonesia-W3, 2004).

The prohibitions concerning the shallow and complacent mainstream within a concave pattern neither starts nor ends with the individual. On the contrary individual change and development are articulated as but a step within a wider development of the subcultural. When participants described their involvement in the scene what was articulated was thus an affective commitment to a collective cause. It was something that just had to be done in order to improve the subcultural, as in the second excerpt above—"you have to respond to that choice." The first excerpt summarizes this distinction between the active set apart and the shallow and complacent undifferentiated; either you care about only yourself or you work to improve punk.

In her article on different definitions of veganism, Elizabeth Cherry (2006) argues that the implementation of veganism is not so much a matter of a collective identity as one of social networks and their support. Cherry

differentiates between punk-vegans and non-punk vegans, arguing that while the latter construct individual definitions of veganism the punk-vegans draw from an extensive subcultural structure where veganism is both valued, as well as something expected (2006:160). Cherry's analysis of veganism can easily be extended to cover the differences in terms of freedom and regulation between the enactment of a convex and a concave pattern. In assessing how veganism was defined she notes for example that non-punk vegans lacked a social network to support a vegan lifestyle. They did not engage in discussions on veganism with other vegans but rather with non-vegans, and as a consequence they viewed veganism as a deviant dietary lifestyle (2006:163). The punk-vegans on the other hand relied on a collectively constructed definition that held participants in place to the point that veganism was normalized.

What makes Cherry's work so compelling is that it relates identification to a wider cultural pattern of meanings and relations within which actions take place, and that this in turn has deep consequences for action. The background text and foreground scripts within a convex pattern give little, if any, support to an articulation of either freedom or the subcultural sacred as collective. Instead, such a performance would not fuse with the scripts of intrinsic difference and personal freedom. Within a concave pattern, however, every performance and authentication works to induce such a feeling of the subordination of the individual to the collective. Just as Cherry's punk vegans relied upon a discursive and supporting network that kept them and others in line, the articulation of freedom within a concave pattern refers to the restriction of individual freedom and desires, as everything and everyone around them was a manifestation of such subordination (cf. Douglas 1966:39).

> In the end punk is equal freedom, where everyone can work for themselves and for the collective […] You know, the total freedom within the group in some way. That's something that is really hard to connect with specific points of view, but it sure as hell does not connect to racism and sexism because it is a freedom for everyone who is a part of this group, a total freedom that is […] and if it is not equal, if people are different, if there is some kind of hierarchy, in a way that's always gonna be there, but then punk cannot be 100 % free, and maybe it simply can never be that (Interview, Sweden-E4, 2008).

Similarly I took part in a meeting in Indonesia where the daily matters of the scene were discussed. As the discussion moved to the matter of when and where the next show would be staged, one participant argued that the time set was too late to include female as well as under age participants as they would not most likely be allowed to leave home that hour, nor would the local authorities allow them to walk around at night. This was taken into further consideration and summed up to me later by another participant:

> This can only work as long as everyone is able to participate, that they feel that they are able to contribute, not excluding people because of who they are and where they are from (Field notes, Indonesia, Feb. 2005).

This articulation of freedom as a collective freedom from the mainstream is based on the enactment of script of an individual subordination to the rules of the scene. The protagonist suppresses his or her own desires and follows the rules and regulations established to achieve a freedom within the group. Further, authentications regarding actions and music focused on the impact they had on the scene, not on the individual or band. When the individual was mobilized it was rather a sign of a singling out for exclusion, as when someone was perceived to have broken the rules and regulations, meant to protect the collective. Instead participants expressed their own actions as a way of "contributing," "helping out," "working for the scene," or more commonly, as I shall return to in relation to DIY, "doing it for the scene." The prohibitions against the complacent and hedonist were thus extended through such a scripted subordination to a number of rules and regulations that set the scene apart from the mainstream punks.

The scene was both the representation and achievement of this separation; it was only through the compliance to the rules and regulations that the individual could be acknowledged as belonging to the sacred. In contrast to performing punk as the absence or rules, in relation to an external mainstream, rules were thus articulated as essential to regulate both style and participation. The references here to an "equal freedom" and "total freedom" are indicative of how participants articulated freedom in relation to the scene. Freedom was not something you just lived out by following your heart and inner desires, as this would not fuse with the prohibitions against the shallow and self-complacent, instead freedom was deeply related to development and the continual separation of the sacred from the undifferentiated punks.

The definition of the scene as a space freed from the shallow and complacent means that this separation is both a means and an end: there cannot be any racism and sexism in the scene as the scene per definition represents the absence of such shallow and complacent values. This is also where the paradox rests, as freedom was not extended to the mainstream but rather placed in direct relation to other participants who were part of the sacred, as above "the total freedom within the group" that ensures that "everyone can work for themselves as well as for the collective." It is the scene, rather than the subcultural whole, that is being freed, even if the articulation of change refers to all punks. Yet, as implied above, the articulation of freedom through difference means that imperfection is anticipated, the sacred can never be total and this is to be blamed on the shallow and apolitical punks who are to preoccupied with themselves and style to participate in maintaining a collective freedom.

The articulated need for regulations

Most often the rules and regulations meant to secure a collective freedom referred to behavior and dress; sexist, racist, and homophobic comments, shirts, or actions, were openly articulated as a ground for exclusion. So was violence, and sometimes eating meat. Moshing, for example, was often heavily regulated, and sometimes even banned among participants. This was authenticated through arguing that an unregulated moshing restricted everyone's ability to fully participate. As there were people of different physical sizes and with different ideas of how to fully experience the music, participants made each other aware of what was accepted and what was not. The script of individual subordination to collective rules and the stress on inclusion and total freedom also had the consequence that shows that were perceived as being in a dangerous area, too late, or having age-restrictions were criticized for excluding participants. Instead there was an articulated intent of keeping shows all-ages, regulating alcohol sales, and if held at a pub or club, closing the bar so that everyone, within the scene that is, could participate. These regulations and prohibitions were often posted on flyers for shows, next to the entrance to subcultural spaces, and repeated by bands on stage. Signs proclaimed that these spaces were anti-racist, anti-sexist, vegan environments, implying that if you did not share these ideas you were not welcome. As a participant you could not avoid them. The distinction against the internal mainstream was felt and embodied in almost every action.

These regulations were authenticated as something that was needed so as to accomplish the positive. Conformity and consent were mobilized to ensure the continual strive for freedom from the shallow and the complacent mainstream punks who were conceived of as constantly excluding participants on the basis of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, or physical differences. They simply did not care enough. These regulations were also what kept participants together as they were discussed during scene meetings as well as during shows. Female participants on stage were kept track of so as to avoid a male bias, and bands and participants were frequently accused and ejected from the scene for being sexist, homophobic, or violent. In some of the spaces I did fieldwork these regulations also included a regulation against the heteronormative and monogamous, limiting physical contacts between male/female couples. All of these were authenticated through enacting a distance against the shallow and complacent punks; if the scene was left unregulated it would by destroyed and the freedom of the collective would ultimately be limited.

The role of vegetarianism and veganism is an interesting aspect of how the internal boundary to the mainstream is worked so as to authenticate behavior. Vegetarianism has been articulated within punk alongside collectivism, pacifism, and anarchism since the late 1970s, as bands, such as Crass, included information on the cruelty of meat production on their records (Le-

blanc 1999:48). The stress on collective freedom, and prohibitions against racism and sexism, were in this sense easily extended to speciesism (O'Hara 1999:134). Such a stance was developed by American hardcore bands on the east coast in the mid 1980s and was eventually extended to include a vegan stance, abstaining from any animal products (cf. O'Hara 1999:136f). This coincided with an increased coverage on animal rights groups such as Animal Liberation Front in fanzines, as well as on benefit records (O'Hara 1999:137). In the 1990s punk fanzines such as *Maximumrocknroll* and *Profane Existence* began for example to include vegan recipes and vegan columnists. Additionally, the more militant wave of straight edge hardcore that emerged in the early 1990s helped fuel a vegan focus, as veganism was included in being edge (Haenfler 2006:52ff). The story of punk and veganism in my data follows from a similar point as that taken by Cherry (2006:159), participants feeling an ethical, political, and emotional attachment to being vegan. Even though there were numerous articulated reasons for being vegan—ranging from environmentalist to ethical—what they had in common was a stress on freedom being collective: Everyone should be able to participate, hence food has to be vegan so as not to exclude anyone. As everyone within in the scene is to be able to fully participate, eating or serving meat would be a sign of a lack of commitment to the cause of the scene.

Even though a few participants occasionally ate meat or dairy products, doing of so within the scene was articulated as unthinkable. As one of my informants put it, "Outside of the scene few of us are strict vegan, within the scene, however we are all vegan, and will always be" (Field notes Sweden Nov. 2009). This stress on the scene being vegan was similar in Indonesia, as well as when I followed bands to other European cities.[31] Collective freedom was thus achieved through an articulated subordination of the individual to the collective, that at the same time endowed the individuals with the freedom of belonging.

The political as the structuring of regulations
Politics were crucial in this constant motion between inclusion and exclusion and between difference and freedom, as it was articulated as the link between the subordination of the individual and a continual development. In contrast the apolitical was worked along the self-complacent, individual, and stagnated. Indeed, "political" was one of the most common prefixes used in the boundary work against the mainstream, as in "the political scene," "political punks," and "political bands." It was thus a matter of belonging to the specific.

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[31] This, however, was not the case when a convex pattern was enacted, as veganism was then often dismissed as too serious and politically correct. The latter also resonates well with early punk bands dismissing the political awareness and animal rights focus of bands like Crass as being hippy (O'Hara 1999:10).

> A: When punk was transferred from the West, the things that were mostly embraced by the people here were the tangible aspects of it, the music, the style of clothing, the packaging and those sort of things. However the intangible aspects of it, or the core or the fundamental aspects of it like DIY-ethics or the political aspects of punk, anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic
> B: Anti-capitalistic.
> A: Anti-capitalistic, were not touched until late '99 when people started to write their own 'zines and tell their own opinions (Interview, Indonesia-W4, 2005).

> What separates me from the apolitical punk is that, to me, politics and music are merged. It is the same thing. It becomes part of your everyday life and cannot be separated. There is no point where punk starts and everyday life ends: they are the same thing, they cannot be separated. Whereas I'm fucking convinced that, you know the fucking apolitical punks, who eats at McDonald's and speaks loudly of how good meat is, he thinks that the lyrics are cool, that it is the music, the beat, that is the whole thing. And those beats have nothing to with politics, or with his life for that matter. It's just something to listen to. It is like two complete different ways [of approaching punk]: listening to the music or having punk in your life (Interview, Sweden-E2, 2008).

The political was repeatedly, albeit not always, performed within a concave pattern as the dividing line between the subcultural and the mainstream. The mainstream, as above, was the empty and simple: "the packaging," referring to a partial or inauthentic involvement in punk. Instead of working to improve punk through a political stance, the complacent mainstream was happy with just listening to punk, and looking punk. As in both of the excerpts above, political punk was deeply related to a scripted development, often articulated as that which made the move from the undifferentiated to the scene both possible and meaningful. This fusion of politics to the background is possible through the subcultural background's emphasis on a difference from an internal mainstream—"the tangible" and "non-political"— through the subordination of the individual to the group—"of having punk in your life"—and a continuous development—"there is no boundary between where punk begins and everyday life ends." The articulation of politics followed from a similar reactive stance: what mattered was that you were not similar to the mainstream, the prefix "anti" being prevalent. Thus participants expressed that they were anti-sexist, anti-racist, anti-homophobic, anti-meat, anti-fascist, and anti-capitalist, rather than being pro-feminist, pro-gay, etc.. The boundary to the mainstream was thus both extended and worked through performing the abundance of rules as part of a political stance.

Anarchism, in turn, was articulated as the sum of these anti-stances, providing them with a direct relation to a collective freedom. It was thus intertwined with both a distinction against the shallow and complacent as well as development and the improvement of the collective. Yet, similar to a

convex pattern, anarchism was both a means to protect the sacred, and a representation of the sacred itself.

> [Anarchism means] everyone's equal value, no hierarchy, no central power. I'm not saying that punk looks this way. I do not mean that punk is anarchism, that it exercises anarchism, that it is a small anarchistic society. It is not, really, really not. But it is worth striving for, and if everyone agrees on those rules of the game, and if everyone agrees that that's what we want, that's how it's supposed to be, that's how it should work, that's what I mean by punk consisting of anarchists (Interview, Sweden-E3, 2008).

> We can make our own movement, we can do it ourselves. We don't have leaders, no gods no masters. [Therefore] politics and social politics are important, we read from Internet like from the anarchist black block, and writers from the French revolution. And then we discuss it with friends. Someone finds something and then we discuss it and trade thoughts (Interview, Indonesia-W6, 2005).

Both these excerpts are somewhat typical to the performance of anarchism within a concave pattern. Following from a scripted subordination, anarchism is defined as a movement beyond the complacent and stagnated, an active choice and a political education within the collective. Collective freedom and the articulation of abandoning hierarchies and leaders are here both referring to the scene, rather than to societal change. It is within the scene that anarchism "is worth striving for." I will return to this in chapter 8 when discussing subcultural consequences, yet there were close ties between the enactment of a concave pattern and participation in political groups. Participants were actively taking part of both organizing and carrying out both direct actions and demonstrations. Further, politics were not just a strategy to keep the mainstream at bay, even if that was the consequence. For many participants a political stance was a matter of affect. They cried when hearing the news of someone being beat up, or killed, by racists. They were angry about injustices and social problems. One of my vegan informants once accidentally ate a sandwich with butter on it, which made him immediately throw up when he was made aware of it. This cannot be reduced to a rational and strategic boundary work; it is embodied and felt, just as most of the performances and authentications I have referred to so far. Nevertheless, the patterns of meaning enacted as the background of these actions and attitudes, as well as the scripts used to authenticate them, do have the consequence of constantly establishing a boundary to an internal mainstream.

Consequently, the articulation of the scene as the representation of the sacred follows from a mobilization of a definite and regulated space freed from the complacent and shallow mainstream. The very same prohibitions that are thus called in to being to define the sacred are also actively used to restrict access to the subcultural and exclude the mainstream from fully participating. The total freedom refers to the collective, not to punk as a whole: the

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boundary to the mainstream is established through the active exemption of those who do not commit to these rules and regulations. Similar to the discussion regarding a convex pattern, the mobilization of freedom within a concave pattern is then deeply related to that of difference. Given that the sacred is differently defined within these two subcultural patterns, the interworking of difference and freedom is however differently articulated. The authentication of identities and styles in relation to a collective freedom follows from the mobilization of consistency to the scene through a scripted subordination of the individual to the collective, rather than the opposite. Additionally, the emphasis on development and change, rather than staying true to whom you are, has the consequence of rules and regulations being something needed so as to order the subcultural and separate the sacred from the profane. Anarchism and politics are therefore differently performed within a concave pattern than within a convex, due to the differences of the background text. These differences are a direct consequence of the positioning of the mainstream as internal. Consequently, as I now turn to the definition of the DIY, I will point out a similar difference between a collective difference freed from an internal mainstream and an individual difference freed from an external mainstream.

7.4. Doing it ourselves

I will never forget one of the discussions I had with a group of participants in Indonesia. They had invited me to one of their gatherings so as to show me that there was an alternative to the "hedonist" punks I had so far followed in that city. One day, I got a text message saying that I was welcome to meet them at their regular spot:

And so we meet on the beautiful white staircase that constitutes the entrance to one of the city's municipal buildings. It's just after 5pm and the sun is setting. The stairs, just as the building and the enclosing park, are empty, except for a few skateboarders in one of the park's corners. Twice a week this group of participants gathers at this spot to discuss matters regarding the scene and to trade music and fanzines. The big discussion matter this day is an upcoming show with two international bands and six local bands. After having decided how the flyer should look, who is going to do the design, and who is going to print them, there is still the matter of how to pay for the whole thing. They discuss it back and forth without coming to a decision. They need to raise about US $ 200 in order to pay for the venue and the P.A.. I suggest that I will lend them the money and if the show breaks even they can pay me back. If it does not, then they can consider it as a well-meaning gift. Camunk, who is the one who invited me, looks at the others then turns to me and says, "That's kind of you Erik, but we cannot rely on outside founding, even if it is you, next month or next year you will not be

here to lend us money. We have to learn how to do it ourselves." I go quiet. Another of the participants adds that this is what has ruined the scene here: that punks have had to rely on distros and sponsors to set up shows. Camunk points to the other groups of participants that I have followed and how they are currently not setting up any shows by themselves but only playing mall shows, and sponsored events. This he adds, while holding out his palms to symbolically include the others, is the DIY-scene, and there is no other way to do it. This brings the discussion matter to an end. They decide that every one of them will chip in with whatever money they have saved. I suggest that I can maybe help with posting flyers. They agree and I am once again included, my previous faux pas forgotten (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan 2005).

The remainder of this particular field note refers entirely to me specifying my research questions: what is the definition of DIY here? How is it similar to that of the other participants I had followed? What are the differences? And finally, what consequences does this have for the meaning of selling out? Although this was the first time I participated in a discussion of DIY as a structuring aspect of both action and identification, I was to experience similar discussions in other places. In these discussions the embodiment of DIY was seen as indicative of a protection of the scene, as discussions revolved around what was to be expected in relation to the freed collective and what would be selling out.

The previous research on DIY also points to a relation between DIY and the articulation of the scene. O'Connor (2004:190) points for example to the punk use of the term "scene" as focused on creative action kept within the same: The scene is an infrastructure built on a DIY-ethic surrounding the production and distribution of subcultural products (cf. O'Connor 1999). Leblanc (1999:234) adds to this by claiming that DIY extends to a general philosophy in punk to include lifestyle choices as well as artistic production. Ryan Moore (2007:453) further notes how DIY can foster camaraderie as it calls for solidarity and support of other independent bands, labels, and fanzines, and how the production and distribution of these works to create a confirmation to those consuming it that the scene exists. DIY, he argues, is a response to threats to the autonomy of punk, as in corporate interests and bands selling out. This relationship between internal action and external resistance is also stressed by Haenfler's (2006:24) point that the DIY ethic is an anti-commercial strategy meant to keep the production internal so as to avoid "selling out" and going commercial. The questions outlined in my field notes, however, still remain unanswered; if there are different definitions of what constitutes punk and the mainstream then how does this relate to the definitions of the commercial and selling out? The remainder of this chapter will deal with this issue in relation to the identification and authentication of actions and style.

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7.4.1. The dependent mainstream

So far, I have argued that through enacting a subcultural pattern participants are involved in a negotiated categorization of styles and identities, as either part of the sacred or as polluting it. In chapter 6, I discussed how DIY within a convex pattern refers to such a categorization by defining it as a matter of maintaining individual difference and freedom in relation to a commercial mainstream or by conceding to the latter. Both DIY and sell-out were thus a matter of individual consistency; selling out was a betrayal of a genuine self, whereas DIY meant going your own way. Given the discussion in relation to the articulation of an internal differentiation against the shallow and complacent punks it should come as no surprise that the authentication of identities and styles in relation to DIY differs from that within a convex pattern.

Still, similar to a convex pattern, the articulation of DIY within a concave pattern is related to both freedom and difference through a particular definition of the mainstream. As the mainstream is defined as the shallow and style-centered, or hedonist and self-complacent, it cannot be trusted to secure the values of depth and collective freedom related to the scene. Instead, characteristic of this third definition of the mainstream, within a concave pattern, was its irresponsibility and dependence:

> A: If we go back to what we would like to change, I would like to change people's commitment, that they are so fucking lazy, and would rather sit down drinking than doing something. That's how most of them are, the majority of those who consider themselves to be punk and who listens to punk, and wants to go to punk shows.
> B: Yeah, to them punk is brewing your own mash.
> A: And it can be really reasonable people, but there is not enough commitment.
> B: They waste their energy on doing stupid things, just to confirm all prejudices.
> A: If we just didn't do shit about setting up shows for a whole year, then where would they go then? (Interview, Sweden-E4, 2008).

Similar to the story from the field that opened this section, the definition of the mainstream as the dependent points to an innate passivity and inability to achieve something on their own. The binary between the set apart and the undifferentiated is here extended by articulating the mainstream as lacking in commitment and wasting their energy instead of doing something for the collective. Above, this distinction to the undifferentiated is captured in the reference to the dependent as constituting "the majority of those who consider themselves to be punk."

This dependency of the mainstream was articulated doubly: as punks in general could not do anything by themselves they had to either rely on the work of the scene, or turn to sponsors and major labels so as to be able to

continue their hedonist lives. Either way the mainstream was seen as a para-site, cashing in on the hard work of the scene.

Just as the definition of the commercial mainstream within a convex pattern, the dependent mainstream here refers to a constant threat to the subcultural, a pollution of the sacred. The difference, however, is how the antagonist and protagonists in this play are positioned. In relation to the commercial external mainstream, I showed how institutions such as major labels and mass media were placed as active exploiters, the subcultural being an innocent victim. In relation to an internal dependent mainstream, however, the antagonist is defined as the passive, the threat of the mainstream being articulated as a consequence of the mainstream's continuous reliance on others. In keeping with the double reference, this was defined in relation to relying on someone else to produce and distribute records, as well as to pursuing an individual career rather than collaborating to keep prices within the scene low. Further, it was not the actions per se that are seen as threatening but the consequences they have for the subcultural: of introducing a commercial logic and inviting other actors to profit from the subcultural. Other participants articulated that if it were not for the mainstream punks' pursuit of fame and fortune punk could actually have been something positive; as one of my Swedish key informants put it, "You know they ruined it, instead of doing something to help the scene they just cashed in" (Field notes, Sweden, June 2009). The threat of the dependent mainstream thus refers to this innate passivity, rather than an intention to ruin or exploit the scene. Nevertheless, like the bull in the china shop, their mere presence was articulated as destructive.

> A: Ok, if you want to buy a shirt with our band, great, but [local band] is really pushing it, hell, "Look how many shirts we have," they're really focused on selling.
> B: It's so gross! [...]
> C: They have 17 different shirts I think, at one of the last shows I saw with them they had that many different shirts on the wall.
> B: On the shows! Not that they have seventeen shirts all together?
> C: They have old shirts that I think they haven't sold, because I think they make new ones before every tour, and they're constantly touring, three tours every year.
> EH: Can you see the similarities with DS-13, they were amazing in promoting themselves, and then they became too popular?
> B: What they went mainstream or?
> A: They played Hultsfred for instance.
> B: Ok.
> A: That's kind of suicide to do (Interview, Sweden-S8, 2008).

The two bands mentioned here, the local band and the Swedish band DS-13, released their own records, booked their own shows and tours, and were previously authenticated as part of the scene. This negotiation between the

collective and responsible and the individual and irresponsible defines action as either positive or negative. The binaries are here worked so that transgressing the boundaries of the scene—as in "pushing it" to make a profit, or playing one of Sweden's biggest music festivals—are deemed indicative of the mainstream, while touring, selling a couple of shirts, and promoting your band within the scene are acceptable. Note the ease by which popularity and availability is directly linked to the mainstream, there is no discussion as to whether DS-13 is mainstream or not, as B's unawareness of their de-fusion from the sacred is instantly addressed and accepted. The last note further establishes the order by placing playing large festivals as a ritual suicide, polluting the sacred through not respecting the boundaries of the scene, leading to the band's exclusion.

The mainstream as having sold out punk

Given the previous research's focus on anti-commercialism it should be noted that there was a definite commercial aspect of the dependent mainstream. Yet, the commercial was not defined in relation to society or in terms of institutions such as major labels and the media. Instead the commercial was almost entirely tied to punk. The exception of this was boycotts "borrowed" from political groups against multinational companies such as Shell, McDonalds, Coca-Cola, Nestlé, or the more all-encompassing meat- and fur-industries. Nevertheless, such boycotts were used to separate between participants, making them a sign of whether participants were committed or not to rules and regulations of the scene so as to subordinate their individual desires to that of the collective. Neither of these activities were in any way connected to punk at all, yet associating with these companies, such as consuming their products, was seen as irresponsible and polluting. For boycotts that emanated within punk however, these concerned an internal mainstream, in the form of punk labels, venues, or spaces. Certain venues and shops were cast off as mainstream for having ripped off participants belonging to the scene. Punk labels that were seen as profiting from punk; labels like Fat Wreck Chords, Victory, Jade Tree, and Epitaph were also articulated as being mainstream for having diluted the essence of punk and made it available, thus breaching the subordination of the individual to the collective by focusing on style, money, and having fun.

In contrast to a convex pattern, the actions and interests of the mass media or major labels were of no interest within a concave pattern as long as punks did not associate with them, and then it was the punks that are being accused of having threatened the subcultural, not the companies. This is how sell-out directly related to dependency: the mainstream punks were willing to sacrifice all that was sacred within punk to be able to pursue their style-centered and hedonist lifestyles:

These bands, these stupid fucking skate-punks, they brought this, everyone wants to make money now, be a superstar. (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan. 2005)

The kind of punk that you see, are the sell-out bands, those everyone watches on TV […] those who are connected to the major booking agencies and distributors, like there's a score of old men making money off your record, people you have never met, just because it is diffused. And the record costs a lot fucking more than if you print it yourself and sell it to your friends (Interview, Sweden-S2, 2003).

Indeed, the commercialization of punk and the profiting from punk within a concave pattern were not defined as a problem related to mass media or major labels. These were rarely addressed at all, other than as guilty by association. Thus, as in the second excerpt above, the big booking agencies and distribution companies as well as "a score of old men making money off your record" are only indirectly criticized, while it is the "sell-out bands" that associate with these profiteers that are to be blamed. They are the ones that brought the problems of style and hedonism. For example, one of the bands I followed was interviewed in the local newspaper on being punk, something that was widely commented on by other participants. When a convex pattern was enacted it was the newspaper that was criticized for trying to cash in on punk, thus following a distinction from a commercial external mainstream. The band itself was authenticated for staying punk despite the media exposure. When commented on within a concave pattern, focus was entirely on the featured band "finally showing their real faces" and dismissing them as "selling out punk" (Field notes Sweden May 2007). The interests of the newspaper were not even mentioned.

This means that the term sell-out has to be refined. It is not so simple as to define it as a failure of living up to the standards of DIY (O'Hara 1999:154), betraying the subcultural (Haenfler 2006:86), or a conflict between individual intentions of success and loyalty to the scene (cf. Smith-Lahrman 1996). Neither is Moore's (2007:442) definition of selling out as coopting the subcultural enough to cover the intricacy of this process. Instead, the first question should be, what is it that is being sold out, and second, on what grounds is this defined as selling out?

Because that is just the thing, you don't want to be featured on TV and expose punk too much, because it is something that we should keep in our basements. For a similar reason I would not want to sell out punk to a major label, that would be like murdering our music (Interview, Sweden-S6, 2004).

In the 90s selling out was not really a problem, it became so when bands like Superman is Dead sold out punk and started making big money (Interview, Indonesia-W3, 2004).

Given the differences in how the subcultural sacred is mobilized between a convex and a concave pattern, the definitions of sell-out also differed. Whereas sell-out within a convex pattern pointed to a movement from the sacred to the profane and an individual betrayal, sell-out is here a matter of the collective: it is punk that is being sold out. Betraying your own ideals such as dropping straight edge, veganism, or punk was still polluting, yet, not because of the impact it had for individual consistency but for the consistency to the scene. Further, even though this also refers to a movement from the sacred to the profane, sell-out is at the same time articulated as a characteristic of the mainstream, in the sense that it points to an innate failure to develop from the shallow and care about something more than style and individual rewards. The mainstream punks have already sold out punk in general, and now their dependency on others threatens to encroach the specific.

The prohibitions against selling out for example referred exclusively to the pollution of the scene: to expose to the mainstream punks what should have remained closed and exclusive. To sell-out the scene is then equated to disrespecting the scripted development from shallowness to depth—by making the sacred directly available—or the collective freedom of the scene—by including those who did not respect the rules and regulations. Thus selling out is not confined to the subcultural but rather the profaning act that defines the mainstream. The scene cannot sell out; only individual participants can sell out the collective. Hence, regulations and rules are needed so as to protect the scene from the dependent mainstream and exclude those who threaten to pollute the sacred by making it available. The background distinction against the dependent sell-out pointed directly to the need for these rules, as the scene was something that was to be cared for. As it is expressed above, "I would not want to sell out punk to a major label, that's like murdering *our* music" (emphasis added).

7.4.2. To serve and protect the sacred realm

The definition of sell-out as being a matter of a transgression of boundaries meant to be kept separated, reinforces the need for a scripted development and subordination of the individual to the collective. As long as the mainstream is kept at bay, that is, as long as it is mainstream, this is an ordered problem, dealt with by participants by merely stating, "We are not like them." When this boundary is conceived of as having been breached, however, as when the sacred is made available to all punks regardless of development and subordination, the sacred is suddenly threatened.

Consequently an important topic of discussion within the scene concerned the breaching of these prohibitions. I witnessed this on several occasions, how participants were derided for having made sexist comments, stealing money from the scene, or for not being active enough. At times, the conse-

quence of these discussions was that some of the participants were banned from entering the scene, or that bands were considered as having sold out the scene and thus were not allowed to play. Boundaries were worked in terms of the prohibitions concerning the self-indulgent, individual and passive, preventing them from having contact with the scene. For participants who were on the other end of this ritual cleansing this was of course devastating. Often rumors spread fast and they either had to promise amendment or accept being locked out. In some cases participants moved to other cities to get away from these accusations, while in others they accepted them and dropped out, or looked to other participants for validation. In the latter case this often included a switch from enacting a concave pattern to a convex. In terms of bands that were expunged from the sacred such a move was one of the few means to survive as a punk band.

Both the regulating aspect of access and the exclusion of those breaching the rules meant to protect the sacred were performed and authenticated through a scripted demand of serving and protecting the scene. Consistency and commitment to rules were of utter importance to keep the scene out of reach of the dependent mainstream. The present subcultural situation was therefore not articulated as one of consensus and harmony but rather as a never-ending struggle. The shallow, complacent, and dependent punks are selling out punk, while on the other side of this script was DIY, defined as the collective, active and continual fight for the scene:

> [I]t was more of like a call from us who really cared about the scene which at the time was really, we were really disillusioned of what punk and hardcore had become. The bands from the mid 90s were breaking up and those who stayed big became really big by joining the mainstream corporate music industry by, they would sign to Sony, they had videos coming out on MTV and they didn't want to play shows any more, although we were already dissatisfied with the scene because we thought this is not an actual DIY-scene. As you might know shows at that time were sponsored by multinational corporations, even McDonald's sponsored. I think me and B and the other people, even though we didn't know each other at that time, we who had that kind of idealistic side of punk, felt like this man this is wrong this is not how punk is supposed to be [...] I felt maybe we should gather people who actually believe in the DIY-ethics and you know and form a community-centered scene instead of a fashion-centered [...] you know they only focused on selling more and more clothes (Interview, Indonesia-W4, 2005).

Similar to the script of DIY as going your own way within a convex pattern, DIY within a concave pattern followed from a script that was a practical extension of both freedom and difference. The antagonist of this script refers to a dependent mainstream that is exempted from the sacred for relying on the work and money of others—"joining the mainstream corporate music industry"—with the consequence that punk had become something it was not. Against this stands the protagonist who cares about the scene rather than

individual profit or fame. Above, this is referred to as "people who actually believe in the DIY-ethics" and "we who had that kind of idealistic side of punk" but it was more commonly articulated as the DIY-scene. Either way, it worked to further distinguish the definite form from the undifferentiated formless, working together to "form a community-centered scene instead of a fashion-centered." This script of DIY as a means to secure the scene's exclusivity permeated discussions regarding the past, present, and future state of punk to the degree that the prefix DIY was often extended as a description of that which belonged to the scene: DIY-punks, DIY-punk music, DIY-shows, DIY-spaces, and DIY-ethics. These were synonymous to the sacred in the sense that they expressed an exclusion of the mainstream through a script of serving and protecting the sacred.

Further, the commitment outlined in relation to the subordination of the individual to the rules of the collective is thus focused through a script of commitment to the survival of the scene; it is an injection of both spirit and heart towards the maintenance of the sacred (cf. Weber [1930] 2001:124, Kidder 2011:10). This articulation of serving and protecting the scene as something you have to do is similar to Weber's idea of duty in one's calling ([1930] 2001:19, 124). The articulation of DIY as a calling was also associated to the difference of merely listening to punk and living punk. It was not enough to just do things yourself, as in learning to play an instrument or distributing your own record; instead DIY was extended to include everything you did.

> To me DIY has to do with protecting the scene in certain ways, I mean you can see all the waves of punk, the seventies punk which wasn't really DIY to start with, but as soon as, let's call them the market powers were invited then the whole idea of punk just went away, because it became unimportant, it became something else than it was to begin with, and I think it was probably the same in the eighties and I mean, all the punk waves go like that. It's like if you stop caring about being independent as a scene then someone will exploit the scene. What's special about punk is that, at least the part of the punk scene that I care about is that DIY is important (Interview, Sweden-S8, 2008).

In this sense the script of serving and protecting the scene referred to a control of any of the scene's perceived openings to the mainstream. Above, for example, DIY is worked as something that should permeate every aspect of scenic life, as "if you stop caring about being independent as a scene then someone will exploit it." Note also the move from the specific—"the punk scene"—to the general—"a scene"—in reference to such pollution. Similarly, DIY was often extended to an anti-consumerist stance so as to strengthen the independence of the scene: things should not be bought and sold, but rather appropriated—e.g., stealing, borrowing, or finding—and traded. This commitment to the scene through DIY was also articulated in discussions as a measure of development and freedom from the simple, individual, and

dependent. What was deemed as non-profit was thus not automatically authenticated; indeed, parts of the mainstream were perceived as non-profit, as in punks printing their own shirts or writing their own fanzine. The invalidations of such participants rather followed from a lack of depth and lack of ambition to continuously develop: the mainstream punks were either non-profit for the wrong reasons or not enough DIY. Identities and styles that were authenticated in relation to DIY instead followed from the script of serving and protecting the scene, of constantly supervising the boundary to the mainstream so as to not let go of either difference or collective freedom. This way, shoplifting and dumpster diving were authenticated as DIY if contributing to the scene, as was the printing of shirts and patches. If sold outside of the scene they were not. Bartering and sharing goods were similarly authenticated if occurring within the scene, with participants trading records for tattoos, or one shirt for another.

Establishing autonomy

The scripted responsibility in relation to the scene also involved the articulation of limiting access to the sacred, rendering it exclusive and out of reach of the profane. The prohibition against sponsors was extended to a regulation of cooperation with punk labels and distribution networks outside of the scene. Bar codes on records were also something that was to be avoided, authenticated through an emphasis on making distribution outside of the scene hard, if not impossible (cf. Gosling 2004:174). Conforming to these regulations was authenticated as a sign of a subordination of individual desires and interests to that of the scene. Shows were to be internally financed and any profit would go back into the scene so as to finance more shows in the future. Bands that performed were paid a symbolic sum and most bands on tour were rarely paid enough to cover their travel expenses. The only way to finance a tour, apart from "gas money," was to sell band merchandise in relation to the shows—records, t-shirts, patches, badges etc.—which most often were self-produced and sold for little more than the production costs. Yet it was one of the few authenticated ways to make money as a band. Shows also included participants bringing their boxes of records to trade and sell to other participants. Some of these were small companies, although most often not registered, that bought records wholesale from bands and then distributed them at shows. There were also online distros making trading and distribution translocal. The whole infrastructure of the scene thus depended on a commitment to continuously work for the collective.

Similarly, the participants I followed in Indonesia would for example trade and buy records and fanzines from Swedish, German, and American online distros. The exclusivity of the in-scene business was further strengthened through records being predominantly on vinyl. Even in Indonesia, where few of the participants I followed even owned a record player, vinyl was authenticated and money pooled together to both buy and produce vinyl

singles and albums. The production and distribution of subcultural objects thus pointed to a ritual separation of those with the right knowledge from those who lacked that knowledge and could thus only stumble upon it by accident or through initiation.

The script of DIY to serve and protect the scene thus refers to including those who care about it and respect its sanctity and excluding those who threaten to defile it. This also relates to the subordination of individual interests to those of the collective, making this something that has to be done, an obligation meant to be felt, the attributed intent of which is to reinstitute the copy with the original, the form with the content, through DIY.

This articulated autonomy of the scene was apparent in other popular descriptions of the scene as "an alternative world," "a bunker," or "an island." Either way the clearly defined parts of the scene as separated from the undifferentiated and general punks. The consequence is that DIY becomes the means to an end as well as the end itself. It serves and protects the very same ideal that it signifies. Conforming to these rules and prohibitions means that you are letting it permeate your whole life in terms of what you eat, what you buy, and how you behave. This interrelation between difference and similarity, and exclusion and inclusion, was maintained by the articulation of DIY as a political and collective struggle, similar to the other rules and regulations of access and participation.

This relationship between the scene, commitment, and autonomy is consistent with more recent research on punk and DIY. Moore (2007) argues that punk is an autonomous field of cultural production on the basis of DIY-ethics, arguing that punk's resistance to mainstream music and corporate industry is carried out through the production of independent media (cf. O'Connor 2004:180). These acts are then encouraged by an opposition to mainstream music and the corporate industry. Moore's work is interesting as he notes that the search for commercial purity becomes an end in itself, rendering the subcultural exclusive. What sets DIY-punk apart from other kinds of punk, for Moore, is thus the focus on keeping the boundaries to the mainstream intact so as to remain insulated from the commercial and superficial society. Instead of focusing on change, this insulation is rather articulated as a protective measure:

> The scene had to be "defended" from the moment it was built, even during the times when corporations and most young people had absolutely no interest in hardcore. Enemies and alien forces were needed from the start, and they could always be found in the form of sellouts and "poseurs," bands which supposedly craved commercial success and spectators who only imitated "true" punks in their dress and demeanor (Moore 2004:321).

While I agree with both Moore and O'Connor (2002:226, 2008:4) that politics and DIY is indicative of an internal differentiation within punk, what I

miss in their analyses is the further subcultural pattern of meaning within which politics and DIY are given their meaning. O'Connor (2004:180) notes for example that DIY relates to a freedom from commercialization and keeping costs to a minimum, and keeping action within the scene, as opposed to what he refers to as "commercial" punk music. This is what sets DIY-punk apart from other kinds of punk focused on commercial strategies (O'Connor 2008:22). Thus similar to Moore, instead of relating such an articulated autonomy to the definition of the mainstream as well as the commercial, these are taken for granted as constituting an external capitalist order which punk per definition resists (cf. Clarke 2003, Gosling 2004). The consequence is that the difference between DIY/anarcho-punk and other kinds of punk becomes a matter of the former two being both more committed and authentic than the others, rather than investigating whether the reason for these differences stems from different definitions of not only the mainstream and the subcultural, but also of the commercial, sell-out, and DIY.

7.4.3. Collective doing against individual being

In chapter 6, I noted that within a convex pattern, the boundary to the mainstream is worked through DIY as a means to live out and maintain an intrinsic difference and personal freedom through prohibiting any infringement on the individual's rights to be different and free. Punk, in this sense, is the absence of rules, the unchanging individual in control of his/her life. So far, I have argued that DIY in relation to an internal mainstream is also interworked with freedom and difference. It is mobilized and authenticated through a script of serving and protecting the scene as a constant and permeating boundary work against the mainstream. Thus similar to a convex pattern where DIY relates to the symbolic representation of the subcultural sacred through the individual, within a concave pattern DIY is defined in relation to the symbolic representation of the sacred through the collective freed space. The definition of DIY in relation to a dependent mainstream follows directly from the subcultural sacred established by the prohibitions against the shallow and complacent. Just as the scripts of development and subordination emphasize *becoming* over simply *being*, an active move beyond the shallow and complacent through subordinating yourself to the rules of the scene, the script of serving and protecting the scene defines DIY as a *doing* over *being*: You are not merely being free and different, you are continually striving to make everyone, within the scene, free and equal. Difference against the shallow, complacent, and irresponsible mainstream is emphasized as a direct consequence of *doing*. This is evident in the following discussion in which two participants discuss how they first began participating in staging shows:

> A: You know, the first time I worked with a show, I thought it was so fucking nice to just come here and work a bit, come here for free and see some fucking great bands, you know. And there were just great people, and everyone's doing it for the sake of the scene. You really felt that this was DIY, everyone was doing what they loved and with an ambition.
> B: That people were doing it, yeah exactly out of an ambition, and that you all gathered around something that everyone was doing (Interview, Sweden-W5, 2008).

It is also evident in the following distinction by one of my Indonesian informants when asked about why they did not associate with the other punks in their city:

> The difference between the mainstream and DIY-punk is, the mainstream is commercial, and it's complicated. The mainstream is looking for profit. It's just about getting famous, it's not what punk is about. When we have shows there are no sponsors. If there are no sponsors I will play, but with sponsors I won't play. When we do shows everybody put in the money, the audience and the bands. All profit we give to the bands. We pay the venue afterwards and if the bands don't want the profit it goes back into the scene (Interview, Indonesia-E6, 2005).

The enactment of the script of serving and protecting the scene relates directly to both a scripted development and subordination of the individual. Above, the move from *being* to *doing* draws from all three of these scripts: the awakening from the shallow, the subordination of the individual to the collective, and continual action for the sake of serving the scene. Similarly, when discussed among participants DIY was not just defined a means to be different, it was rather the reason for being different in the first place. Whereas *being* was worked as related to the negative—the shallow, style-centered, stagnated, and dependent—*doing* was related to the positive—developing, digging deeper, working for the scene. The consequence is that the individual is submerged into the collective, as in the first quote above equating "everyone was doing what they loved" to "everyone was doing it for the scene." Collective work creates a collective space based on its separate rules that sets it apart from the mainstream. It is thus rather doing-it-"ourselves" than "yourself" that DIY points to in relation to this background.

The emphasis on doing, as in serving and protecting the scene, also had the consequence of participants devoting much of their free time to making sure the scene was functioning. Most of the interaction between participants occurred within the scene. Participants would meet, often on a daily basis, to discuss matters that concerned the scene such as which bands to book, how to finance the show, and who should be doing what. This collective doing not only referred to maintaining, but also to creating. Establishing a physically separated space often meant starting from scratch, finding an appropriate venue, preferably in some industrial area with no neighbors at night to

complain about any disturbances. Thereafter the interior and exterior were decorated with either graffiti, posters, or objects acquired through dumpster diving building sites, and asking paint shops and lumberyards for scraps (cf. Glass 2012:705). A bar and stage, as well as a light rig, needed to be built, and a functioning P.A. assembled, and it was often necessary to make sure there was equipment and space for bands to rehearse. These scene-related chores also included getting groceries, preferably through dumpster diving or shoplifting, but also through money acquired through door admissions. At most shows, food was either included in the entrance fee or sold for a low cost. These spaces often had some sleeping areas to cater to bands and participants visiting from other parts of the scene; in some there were bunk beds in a separate room, in others, guests and bands would sleep on one of the couches that were part of the regular furnishings. There was often a designated place for repairing participants' bikes, cars, and caravans. This also included workspaces for screen-printing, designing, and copying fliers and setting up hacker-spaces, activist workshops, a small library, etc.. In Indonesia these spaces tended to be rented temporally or were a lot smaller than in Sweden, yet the scene-related chores and preparations were similar, as were the articulated need for such cooperation.

This continual stress on doing worked to further establish the prohibitions against the dependent and the self-indulgent. It was articulated as an altruistic stance; you were not doing this because it was fun but to make sure that others could enjoy themselves. Regardless of whether the space was rented temporarily or long-term, owned by the municipality, or squatted, it was articulated as open to anyone who was interested in using it. Still, being a part of the scene meant participating in keeping it alive and thus excluding those who were not supposed to be present. Collective doing was expected of every participant, and if needed, reinforced through accusations of passivity and individualism, as in this description of how the DIY-scene was established through a separation in terms of participants' action:

> But we chose not to deal with [the shallow punks] by confronting them directly, but through doing stuff instead, stuff that means a lot to the community and for us like the DIY shows we do. Ever since then we've done it, our first show was collectively founded and there were no sponsorship involved [...] Maybe because one our biggest threats to them is that not only are we involved in the DIY community, we are actually the ones who are doing it ourselves (Interview, Indonesia-W5, 2005).

Similarly, some of my Swedish informants lamented what they considered to be a threat from a dependent mainstream in terms of a lack of DIY permeating participants' lives:

> A: To me it is evident that DIY is about not wanting to, or that you want to position yourself as outside of this dependency on market powers, or society,

that is so fucked up. That's the whole point for me, and that's why I feel that I belong in the punk scene because I feel there's a huge political aspect of it. And that's the problem today, because I feel that people are letting go of it, and for me DIY is just, that if you are doing your own things then you don't have to answer to anyone else. Then you're doing it yourself, you don't have to be dependent. That's what it is, letting go of being dependent on someone else. That's what you are struggling against.

B: Absolutely, but I mean there are bands that are DIY that release their own albums and stuff, but what separates the punk scene from all other scenes is that DIY permeates the whole scene. You know, in staging shows, there're no booking agencies behind our shows, it is not about the bands, it's about the whole scene, that it should be free from any desire of profit [...] The best thing would be if [punk] always would be DIY, that we did everything ourselves because then you would have the most control of things (Interview, Sweden-S8, 2008).

The reference to control above points to such an articulation of doing as being superior to being, relating to a matter of autonomy—"getting rid of a dependency from someone else"—as against the dependent mainstream punks—indirectly defined as "dependent on the market powers." This anti-commercial and anti-profit logic is nevertheless immanent to the subcultural; the problem is not so much the market powers or booking agencies as other participants reliance on them. This distinction from the mainstream "is what separates *the punk scene* from *all other scenes*" (emphasis added), a commitment to "DIY that permeates the whole scene," and focused in both excerpts above on a collective doing—"we are actually the ones who are doing it *ourselves*" (emphasis added). Consequently rather than a measure of consistency to a genuine self DIY becomes a measure of commitment to the collective values and prohibitions that regulate the performance of action, objects, and identities.

This distinction between being and doing punk is problematic in relation to subcultural theory, first because of a fixation of subcultural meaning as uniform, and in part due to a confounding blurring of theory and empirical data. Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1990:274, 1995:156ff) for example argue that authenticity is a matter of *being* a member rather than *doing* membership, the latter being shallow and superficial. Muggleton (2000:154) and Lewin and Williams (2009:65f), make a similar distinction, arguing that *being* relates to the authentic and deep, and *doing* to the artificial and shallow. This is due to these authors pursuing authenticity as a matter of consistency to a genuine self. This becomes rather evident in comparing a concave pattern to a convex one. Whereas enacting a convex pattern involves a focus on being yourself, enacting a concave pattern positions the mere being as shallow. What is authenticated within one subcultural pattern fails within another, making meaning a matter of an active negotiation within a specific background text. Force (2009:301) is one of the few to acknowledge that the

distinction between being and doing can be inverted, in terms of the active versus the passive.

The second problem of the being/doing relationship is related to the first, as it involves extending the subcultural distinction between being and doing to a theoretical distinction. Not only do Widdicombe and Wooffitt and Muggleton argue that the focus on being excludes the existence of a collective meaning, but they further claim that this renders it impossible to speak of subcultural action as a performance. Their argument is simply that as participants distance themselves from doing punk we cannot address this as either collective or a performance, as this would be, to quote Muggleton, to "propose a model at odds with subculturalists' own conception of their authenticity" (2000:92). For these authors, subcultures are not something performed as they are claimed by participants to reflect "the attachment of sincerity to a real, unique self" (Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1995:213). Throughout this whole thesis I have argued against such a simplistic view of both style and meaning. Just because style and identity are individualized does not mean that they are individual, rather the similarities among Muggleton's and Widdicombe and Wooffitt's informants point to this as a collectively meaningful performance that relies on the articulation of individuality. Instead, focus is too much on what is said and too little on what is being said about what is said. The differences between how being and doing are defined therefore have to be related to the subcultural patterns of meaning within which they are performed, rather than being presumed as singular.

7.5. Concluding remarks

Seeing that both the positioning of the mainstream and the articulation of the subcultural sacred within a concave pattern differ from those of a convex pattern, the need for a refinement of the relationship between the subcultural and the mainstream outlined in chapter 4 is strengthened. I have shown how authentications of styles and identities within both these patterns mean bringing the distinction of the background to the front through the articulation of the action-oriented scripts that enable some styles to be fused with such a background while excluding others. Different definitions of the mainstream thus bring different subcultural authentications. Further, the positioning of this mainstream has consequences for how different definitions of the mainstream can be combined into patterns of meanings.

Similar to a convex pattern, not all participants enacted these three scripts or definitions of the mainstream at the same time. Whereas some participants focused solely on DIY and the establishment of an autonomous subcultural space, others emphasized development and the aversion to the style-centered. Politics, for example, were sometimes dismissed in relation to a collective freedom, due to their perceived effects of creating an elite that saw

themselves as better than other participants within the scene. This way, although politics most often fused with all three scripts within a concave pattern (continual development, the subordination of the individual to collective rules, and serving and protecting the scene), they could also be criticized in relation to all of these, either as stagnation, individual superiority, or creating hierarchies within the scene. Even though the performance of politics most often fused with a concave pattern, this illustrates that politics are made meaningful, as any other symbolic extension of the sacred or profane, in relation to a particular background text and foreground scripts, rather than having intrinsic meaning or ties. The differences between the authentications of objects further point to this. Whereas the same object, or action, could be performed within each pattern, the meaning of the objects and how they were performed differed significantly. Accordingly, there were heterogeneities in terms of what styles were authenticated within a concave pattern as well, ranging from the clean and casual to a more dirty and crusty look, depending upon from what dimension of the internal mainstream separation was established: The causal was related to a distinction against the shallow and style-centered, the crusty in relation to the complacent and dependent mainstream.

Nevertheless, these different definitions of the mainstream and different scripts conjure into a subcultural pattern of meaning through three consistent extensions of the subcultural boundary to the mainstream. First and foremost, by the definition of this boundary as being internal to the punk; that which was defined as external to the subcultural was of little interest regardless of which script that was enacted. There were no distinctions against what was defined within a convex pattern as the "normal" or "complaisant" dimension of an external mainstream. Second, all of these scripts refer to a reactive definition of the subcultural sacred; beside the scene, positive aspects of the subcultural were absent. Instead, dress and appearance, just as action and politics, were authenticated as not dressing, looking, doing, and thinking like the mainstream punks. The articulated intent of this anti-stance was to exempt the mainstream from directly accessing the sacred. Third, all of these definitions stress individual change and development as something positive and needed; subcultural identifications are a matter of never ceasing to improve your own work for the scene in establishing a freed space centered on collective rules meant to ensure an equal freedom. The subcultural sacred referred to the developed, the subordinated, and the protective, all in direct opposition to the individual and static.

This mapping out of the extensions of the subcultural boundary to the mainstream is what separates this analysis from the previous research on punk, as it points to the consistencies between subcultural styles and identities and the background text within which they are both performed and authenticated. As I noted above, even though subcultural researchers, such as Clarke (2003), point to a focus on political action, anarchism, and the scene,

even shedding the categorization as punks, they nevertheless define this as anti-commercial strategy against an external mainstream (cf. Gartside, 1998:59, Culton and Holtzman 2010: 272). Further, in so doing they inauthenticate other definitions of the subcultural instead of pursuing these differences. The participants that do not care about politics or the scene, and gladly calls themselves punk are thus dismissed as behind their time, or as an ineffective posturing (Gosling 2004:169). In contrast I have argued that differences in terms of DIY and politics relate to the structured representations of the subcultural background. There is little need within a convex pattern to articulate the strive for, and protection of, a collective freed space, as punk is rather defined as an individual matter. Similarly, the performance of politics in relation to such a background is almost impossible to fuse with the emphasis on personal freedom and an absence of rules. Within a concave pattern, however, this is of absolute importance as the boundary to the mainstream is drawn within punk, making the articulation of politics and a stress on DIY as protecting the scene an important part of this boundary work. As I now turn to the structuring of the subcultural through the spatial and symbolic play between these two subcultural patterns, I will argue that the differences between the convex and the concave patterns are important for the subcultural as a whole.

8. The Structuring of the Subcultural

Whereas the two previous chapters have focused on the mapping out of the convex and the concave subcultural patterns of meaning—the definition of the mainstream, the subsequent articulation of the subcultural sacred, and the authentications of styles and identities based on these—I will now turn to how the enactments of these two patterns work to structure the subcultural as a whole. Largely, this means asking how the differences between a convex and a concave pattern point to similarities in their consequences.

In so doing, I will attend to a series of binary extensions worked so as to structure places, participants, and actions. The most important of these binaries are absence/presence, available/exclusive, proximity/distance, masculine/feminine, different/undifferentiated, open/closed, and inclusion/exclusion. All of these pairs are articulated as analogous to that of the sacred/profane, albeit how these binaries are worked, including which side is the negative, differs in terms of how the mainstream is defined and positioned.

I will discuss this binary work through three different kinds of transitions. The first of these refers to a spatial play between the available and the exclusive through the emplacement of the subcultural sacred. In relation to this I will ask what consequences this spatial play has for how the subcultural is established, reproduced, and changed. Thereafter, I will turn to the relationship between the two subcultural patterns and the individual movement from one to the other, either temporarily or more persistently. What happens when the enactments of these patterns clash? This will also include asking who constitutes the subcultural audience and how is the validation of the audience achieved? The last transition refers to one from the inside to the outside, and vice versa, in terms of inclusion and exclusion: The question remains, how do the different articulations of the subcultural sacred nevertheless lead to punk being rather homogenized in terms of class, ethnicity, and sexuality? In relation to this I will also assess the inside and outside in relation to the gendering of the authentications of styles and identities. The spatial dimensions of the enactments of these patterns will run through this whole chapter, pointing to that the subcultural is largely structured through where, when, and for whom it is performed. All of these movements refer, albeit in different ways, to a transition from the profane to the subcultural sacred, from the formless to form. As such they are an intimate part of the boundary work that separates the set apart from the undifferentiated.

8.1. The spatial performance of punk

> Kusung is sitting next to me on the sidewalk, it is around noon, and he already has a beer in his hand. We are sitting on a busy street in [one of Indonesia's biggest cities] watching people pass by on their way to the nearby mall, or to grab something to eat from the warungs next to where we sit. Kusung is waiting. For his friends, but also for something to happen. On the other side of the street, cars are parked in uneven rows. A man in a suit approaches a white Toyota. Kusung is already on his feet. He walks up to the man and tells him that he has kept an eye on the car for him. The man looks at this rather tall 18 year old with green hair, torn jeans and military boots. He sighs and gives Kusung a couple thousand rupiahs. Satisfied, Kusung returns to the sidewalk. This is how the punks here make their living, they "watch" cars. Parking is free on this small street while it is regulated closer to the mall, yet you cannot park on this street without paying the punks, or you can, but few do. In some cases the punks halfheartedly direct those parking by waving their hands. Most often they simply walk up to someone who is leaving and hold out their hand outside the window to collect the "parking fee." An hour later there are some ten punks present at the sidewalk. They are sitting on the concrete, on plastic stools, or on wooden crates basically in the middle of the warungs that cater a variety of soups, rice, noodles and fried vegetables to people working nearby. In order to access the warungs people have to either walk around the punks or pass through them. When the latter occurs the ironic comments are never far away. Passers by are ridiculed, or if female and young, sexualized. The punks tell me that a few years before the police had wanted to rid them from the area but they stood their ground and now no one bothers them. Except for the mainstream, that is, they add. Most people do stare, and hurry by. The group of punks does stand out with their bright hair cuts, tattoos, chains, and by the fact that quite a few of them are wearing military boots. It is 30 degrees Celsius and its humid, I am wearing flip-flops. This how these punks spend their days, they drink, socialize and collect "parking fees." This small street in the middle of the city belongs to them. Outsiders are merely visiting (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan, 2005).

The subcultural, like anything else sociologists study, takes place somewhere, sometime, and in relation to someone. Still, it is not that simple to say that the spatial dimensions of a performance merely refer to bringing the performer and audience, as well as the background text, together in a given time and place (cf. Pavis 1988:87, Alexander 2004a:554). To be sure, styles and identities are performed and authenticated *within* space, but they also occur *through* space, meaning that differences in space have consequences for what is performed as well as how it is performed (Kidder 2011:137, 192). Kidder (2011:215) refers to this as an *emplacement* of subcultural meaning, an affective appropriation of space in the sense that styles and identities are worked in direct relation to the material environment within which they are performed (cf. Gieryn 2000). Hence, to emplace the subcultural is to move from the abstract and undifferentiated to the specific and transformed: transforming space into place (Tuan 1977:6, Lofland 1998:65). Thomas F. Gieryn

argues that place involves not only a specific spot and a material form but what designates them as places is that such a bounded and felt spot is identified and named so as to represent something: "Put positively, place is space filled up by people, practices, objects, and representations" (Gieryn 2000: 465, cf. Franzén 2002:1113). Just as turning objects into symbolic representations of either the sacred or the profane means adding invisible qualities to the material and visible, the emplacing of action means affixing patterns of meaning onto a spatial dimension (cf. Durkheim 1915:228). This movement from space to place, from the undifferentiated to the transformed and meaningful, both defines and constructs subcultural places at the same time that these emplacements have consequences for how the subcultural is mobilized and authenticated (cf. Gieryn 2000:468).

Accordingly I will first ask what meaning specific places have for subcultural participants and how this relates to the subcultural patterns of meaning enacted. Second, I want to address how the subcultural is emplaced through enacting a specific pattern of meaning and the consequences this has for the mobilization and authentication of style and identities. In this sense, I will depart from Alexander's notion of the mise-en-scene of performances being "initiated within the act of performance itself" (2004a:555) and instead point to that place also enables and initiates action, to ask not only how they come into being but also what they accomplish (Gieryn 2000:468). The argument is rather that the symbolic meaning of places, in short what separates them as places, has consequences for what can be performed and how (cf. Eyerman 2006:199ff).

8.1.1. Emplacing the subcultural

During my fieldwork, punk was performed in a variety of settings. Participants would engage in arguments and discussions about bands, objects, and definitions while rehearsing with their band, on the bus home, watching television, printing t-shirts, planning shows, or sharing a beer in a park. In this sense, punk as a whole was everywhere; there was no specific place where styles and identities were not performed or discussed. Similarly, during large parts of my fieldwork, doing punk meant participants were merely hanging around a specific place watching people pass by or dozing on a couch, "doing nothing" (Baron 1989b:210, cf. Corrigan 1979:121ff, Karlsson 2003:24). Still, the spatial aspect of both performances and authentications is crucial, as some things would only be performed in some places, and some actions and styles were unthinkable in others.

There is an important difference here between spaces defined and designated as subcultural places, and the emplacement of punk as in action taking place somewhere. Subcultural places, for example, concerned mainly shows and areas where participants could gather and hang out, and these were defined as temporarily bounded places to which access was in some way con-

trolled. The instantiations of performances in space, as in the physical and visual performance of punk, were deeply tied to the establishment of such subcultural places but could occur anywhere. Hence, grocery stores were not defined as subcultural places, neither was public transport, nor a barn in the countryside, yet such places were at times designated as places where the subcultural sacred was manifested and felt by participants. Before I go into detail on how such spatial extensions of the subcultural sacred were accomplished, I want to discuss what characterized these emplacements, and how they differed according to the subcultural pattern enacted. Subcultural places, just as any physical environment, involves a set of rules that designate that particular place from other places, as well as providing it with a specific meaning (Kidder 2011:128).

First and foremost, where and how the subcultural was performed and authenticated was a matter of who else was present in that particular place. Subcultural performances and authentications within a convex pattern always included a reference to a perpetually present outside that surrounded the subcultural. The background text's definition of the mainstream as a homogeneous, normal, complaisant, and commercial majority, as well as the scripts of intrinsic difference, being yourself, and going your own way, were emplaced through an emphasis of the subcultural as the minority. Primarily, punk was performed and authenticated in places that were perceived of as lacking both a subcultural control and domination. The main examples of such places were participants gathering to hang out at the town square, the train station, the local park, parts of a shopping street, or outside schools, performing punk through discussions, representations of dress and appearance, consumption of food and drinks, and actions.

What these places had in common was that they were all articulated as accessible and open to the outside. They were worked so as to emplace the minority status and subcultural difference in relation to the mainstream. Both performances and authentications referred to such a presence of the subcultural sacred in the midst of the external mainstream. Accordingly, participants would perform their subcultural identity in most situations that involved such a presence in the open. Regardless of whether it was shopping for groceries, having a beer at a bar, or playing pool, the defined mainstream was given both a physical and visual access to these performances, as participants would play music, dance around, provoke passers by and openly display subcultural dress and appearance.

In some cities, there were several designated spots so that participants could move from one to another during the course of the day. Further, the openness of these places in relation to the outside was defined as both problematic and desired. The field note that opened this part—referring to the group of participants that occupied a busy downtown street—is typical of how performances took place amidst the defined mainstream that participants despised. Consequently the emplacement of the subcultural sacred

within a convex pattern was public, in the vernacular sense of the term: performances were accessible and visibly available to the other people present regardless of their subcultural knowledge or belonging (cf. Goffman 1963a:9, Lofland 1998:8f). Still, the important matter here is not so much whether these places were accessible or not to outsiders, as the participants' articulations that this was the case. These places were seen to not only include the mainstream, but more importantly, that outsiders dominated such a place. These were places that worked to establish and confirm participants' conception of themselves as intrinsically different and set apart from the homogeneous mass.

Within a concave pattern such open emplacements of the subcultural were completely absent. Instead of embracing the presence of the mainstream, focus was rather on the absence of it. This should come as no surprise given the discussion in chapter 7 on subcultural style and identities being authenticated through an emphasis on development, subordination, and protective measures to establish and enforce the boundary to a shallow, hedonist, and dependent internal mainstream. Many participants did define the places outlined above—such as the street, the park, the bus station, etc.—as being punk, often commenting on these places as, "That's where 'the punks' hang out." Yet this was never articulated as something positive, rather it was another sign of the undifferentiated mainstream punks who focused more on being drunk in public than doing something for the scene. Subcultural emplacements in relation to the accessible and open were rather juxtaposed with the subordination and commitment to the scene. To the same extent that subcultural emplacements were enabled by the presence of an outside within a convex pattern, these were precluded within a concave pattern, with participants commenting on bars and parks, "No, there's too many people here," or "Let's go somewhere we can relax" (Field notes, Sweden, June 2008, Aug. 2008).

As I noted in chapter 7.3, participants often expressed that the exclusive emplacements of punk made them relax, as they knew by merely being there that they were among like-minded friends. In this sense, belonging to the scene was already defined spatially. The subcultural places within a concave pattern were for example often established in industrial areas in the outskirts of towns, or in basements and abandoned buildings, defined through the absence of the mainstream. This involved the performances of punk at someone's home, in the rehearsal room, or in places defined as part of the scene. Given the meaningless character of the non-subcultural within a concave pattern, subcultural emplacements that were defined as accessible and visually available were placed along the shallow, self-satisfied, and passive, rendering them a sign of the mainstream. Similar to the performance of an absence of style, the subcultural was thus nevertheless emplaced in the open, albeit indirectly: The refusal to perform punk external to the safety of the scene was indeed an instantiation of the subcultural sacred.

When a concave pattern was enacted while going shopping, attending a demonstration, or sitting at a bar, participants either kept to themselves or to other participants that they trusted. They might also sit with their friends in parks and squares, yet they would not identify as punks to people they did not know and they would not perform punk openly in the sense of discussing it with someone they did not know, as long as a concave pattern was dominant. Similarly, at demonstrations punk identities were accordingly downplayed in favor of a political stance. Participants who would perform punk at these demonstrations, such as playing punk music from a portable speaker, discussing bands, etc. would instantly be inauthenticated and placed as mainstream. Their presence and overt behavior were mobilized as tied to an individual differentiation rather than a political cause based on the spatial dimensions of such performance. Instead, the prevalence of the sealed off and exclusive emplaced the scripted development, subordination, and protection of the scene. There was no need to show off your identity to anyone, at any time, as this was rather a sign of the shallow and hedonist. Further, such performances risked exposing the scene to the mainstream punk that threatened to destroy it. Consequently, whereas emplacements of punk within a convex pattern revolved around the proximity of the defined mainstream, within a concave focus was rather on a spatially distancing from the defined mainstream, indirectly emplacing an absence of style and self-centrism by the refusal to do so.

Defining subcultural shows

Subcultural emplacements in relation to shows were probably the best example of this spatial difference between the enactment of a convex and concave subcultural pattern. Within both a convex and a concave pattern the definition of shows centered on distinctions between presence/absence and the overt/covert. On one end were shows that were organized by a booking agency and advertised in music media, newspapers, and billboards. Participants agreed that these shows represented a minimum of crowd selectivity, as these were available to anyone who was willing to pay admittance. This category included arena shows and large festivals, as well as shows at a local club. Attendance ranged from 50 people to tens of thousands depending on the venue and the band. What these shows had in common was that participants defined them as being open and accessible to the non-subcultural, who constituted a major part of the crowd.

On the other end were shows that were exclusive to the subcultural in the sense that they were held in a place sealed off from the non-subcultural outside. Advertisement for these shows was direct, via flyers at similar shows, posts in specific online forums, or more commonly, face-to-face. Either way, such advertisement clearly separated between who was given access and who was not. Such a category of shows was defined by a perceived subcultural control not only in terms of organizing the show but also in charging

admittance, rigging the stage, lighting and sound, and serving food and drinks. There were no receipts, no tax, and any profits were usually given to the bands playing so as to cover parts of their costs, or to a common cause such as staging a festival or buying a new P.A.-system. Most often, they drew an attendance of 15–50 participants. This category also included festivals with 10–20 bands playing over a weekend, with bands visiting from all over the world. The biggest of these sometimes drew crowds of hundreds of participants, in Indonesia even more. If participants considered themselves as a minority within the first category of shows, this kind of show was rather defined by their subcultural exclusivity in the sense that it was concealed from the outside; you did not just stumble upon one of these shows. I did, however, meet a lot of people who did not identify as subcultural participants at such shows, yet even these people considered the shows to be exclusive to the subcultural.

The middle point of these two poles refers to the most common of shows frequented by participants. These were shows at the local pub, youth house, skateboard hall, or in the local park. It was often debated whether such shows were to be considered sealed off or open to the non-subcultural. Whereas subculturally exclusive shows were almost always tied to the physical representation of the scene, this kind of show was separated from the scene both spatially and symbolically. Often it was organized by individual participants and featured only bands self-defined as punk, although outsiders were both expected and tolerated to a larger extent than within the subcultural exclusive. Similar to exclusive shows, bands rarely got paid any money for these shows and ticketing was usually cheap. On the other hand, the bar kept profits from any alcohol sales, and both bars and youth clubs had bouncers or other staff who would be in charge of admittance and regulating behavior. Nevertheless, this kind of show was often articulated as including a subcultural control as outsiders could be, if they were not already, reminded that this was a subcultural carving out of space, however limited in time, and outsiders could thus be excluded. The guy with the wrong shirt could be told to leave, outsiders that ventured into the mosh-pit at a pub show could be pushed out, and bands frequently commented on the presence of outsiders from the stage.

Regardless of which pattern that was enacted, these kinds of shows were similarly defined along the lines of the available against the subcultural exclusive. What differed however was how they were authenticated and used for emplacing the subcultural sacred. Within a convex pattern all of these categories of shows were considered as subcultural places, while within a concave, only the subcultural exclusive was, as the others were dismissed as characteristic of the mainstream due to their availability and lack of adherence to the scene. When I followed participants to festivals this distinction was rather obvious. At larger music festivals that featured a variety of bands, of which the majority were not punk bands, participants that enacted a con-

vex pattern would openly perform punk: They would show off their identity either through dress and appearance, by playing loud music in the camping area or inside the festival area, or by provoking and confronting the perceived mainstream during or in between bands. At festivals that were subculturally exclusive these participants would behave similarly, save for the provoking of the mainstream, which then occurred outside of the festival area; on the train to the festival, at a restaurant or bar outside the festival area, or on the street outside the venue. Further, even when the mainstream was physically or visually absent, it was still present in participants' performances and authentications, as is rather evident in the excerpts presented in chapter 6.

When a concave pattern was enacted, the spatial dimensions of these festivals clearly directed how the subcultural was to be emplaced. At larger festivals that were defined as mainstream, punk was never performed openly, dress was toned down, and participants would stay away from the moshpit, even if they considered the band playing as being punk. Instead they stuck to themselves and their friends, authenticating their styles and identities by the distance to the mainstream punks present. At subculturally exclusive festivals however, music was played outside tents, and the same participants would sing along to the band playing, drinking and shouting, moshing and hugging each other. Such action, however, was dependent on the number of mainstream punks present; if these were seen as being large in number, then action would be refocused on establishing the intended symbolic distance.

The emphasis on the absence of the mainstream rather than its presence within a concave pattern had the consequence of establishing subcultural places in the least expected of areas. As is rather obvious in the accounts above, punk is a profoundly urban phenomenon, yet gathering in a barn in the middle of the countryside with a few bands playing and fifty participants cooking food and having a party was a common feature among Swedish participants. Such an emplacement would be utterly meaningless within a convex pattern unless there was a Christian summer school, or a popular campsite, in the direct vicinity of the barn, as the emplacement of an intrinsic and moral difference was hard to establish when the defined mainstream was absent. Within a concave pattern, the absence of the perceived mainstream was a sign of the sanctity of a particular place.

Gesturing elsewhere

Before we turn to the symbolic aspects of this spatial boundary work, there remains one crucial difference in regards to the emplacements of the subcultural: the definition of place in relation to the subcultural as a whole. Within a convex pattern the emplacing of the subcultural sacred—intrinsic difference, just being, and going your own way—all referred to a "here and now": the subcultural sacred was spatially represented by being present amidst the

external mainstream. The emplacement of the developed, regulated, and protective in relation to the scene within a concave pattern, however includes a reference to the scene as a whole; a global entity of which "the here and now" are merely a small part. This way, subcultural emplacements within a concave pattern constantly "gesture elsewhere" (Baulch 2003a:196, 2003b:82ff, cf. Hetherington 1998:329), captured in the emphasis on continual development and protective measures meant to keep the mainstream at bay. Subcultural places in other cities and countries were for example frequently addressed and compared, and fanzines and message boards were used to organize tours as well as to communicate with like-minded participants.

Even though there were a number of national fanzines in both Sweden and Indonesia, participants mainly commented on the American fanzines *Maximumrocknroll* (MRR), *Profane Existence*, *HeartattaCk,* and the collective/label *Crimethinc* (cf. Thompson 2004, and O'Connor 2008, for an extensive analysis of these). These, and especially MRR, were often fused with the subcultural as a whole, yet how they were read and performed differed depending on the pattern enacted. Within a convex pattern this referred to the record reviews and band interviews, within a concave, focus was instead on the scene reports and columns. These subcultural institutions were crucial to the enactment of a concave pattern as the authentication of style and identities constantly gestured towards the scene as a whole, transcending the here and now. Fanzines provided scene reports and contacts, as well as pointing to the importance of regulations to improve the scene. But more interestingly, as Moore (2007:453) states, fanzines worked to confirm to participants that the scene existed in the first place, locating the local representation within an imagined community through scene reports from different cities and countries, reinforcing what Hodkinson (2002:169) refers to as "a translocal sense of a shared identity" in relation to the scene.

The "elsewhere" of the scene was therefore ever-present: Support shows held for other parts of the scene were common and when I was in Indonesia both German, Singaporean, and Malaysian collectives gathered money to support their Indonesian counterparts. During my stay in Indonesia, Japanese, German, Swiss, Singaporean, Malaysian, and Australian bands toured the country, and most shows within the scene in Sweden included at least one international band. Similarly, when travelling or touring participants would stay either in any of the subcultural places or at someone associated with the scene's home. This both kept costs for traveling down as well as strengthening the ties to other parts of the scene. Swedish participants would also move around between different parts of the scene, either within the country or to the European continent and the US, and there was a constant flux of visitors both in Sweden and Indonesia from all over the world. Some stayed for a few days, others stayed for years.

The gesturing elsewhere also relates to the emphasis on DIY as a way to serve and protect the scene, as participants were authenticated in direct relation to how much they contributed to the scene. The hierarchical structure articulated within a concave pattern, for example, referred to a consistency to the background but also to this gesturing elsewhere. In regards to bands, those that were authenticated as being at the top of the hierarchy were those bands who toured extensively and exclusively within other parts of the scene, as well as keeping their merch within the same. Similarly revered were participants who had DIY-record labels and put out albums by bands from the scene as a whole. In Sweden, participants put out records by American, Japanese, German, Danish, English, Brazilian punk bands, and distributed records from every part of the world including the Middle East, Northern Africa, and South East Asia. In Indonesia, these record labels were few, yet hierarchies followed from a similar stance: those who set up shows with bands from other parts of the scene were the most revered, together with those who copied, translated, and distributed records, books, and fanzines (cf. Futrell and Simi 2004:17, Colton and Holzman 2010:271, 276).

The hierarchal structure articulated within a convex pattern had no reference at all to this elsewhere; instead hierarchies were authenticated through stressing going your own way and remaining different despite selling a lot of records, or having a record company. Putting out records by international bands and distributing records were only authenticated if these bands were considered as known bands. Instead hierarchies, just as other authentications, relied on an individual consistency and a "here and now": DIY was a means for the individual, or the group of individuals, to be able to pursue their interests and desires, rather than protecting punk, especially punk in other parts of the world.

Having said that much, I now want to turn to how these emplacements of the subcultural sacred were symbolically controlled.

8.1.2. Spatial and symbolic border control

Both the direct encounter with the defined mainstream as well as the withdrawal from it are well covered in the previous research, the former even going back to the definition of punk as an introduction of noise in the orderly sequence (Hebdige 1979:90, cf. Clarke et al. 1976, Brake 1985). Lull (1987) and Baron (1989a, 1989b) for example focus on the street in terms of the everyday lives of punk participants, and Leblanc summarizes the spatial aspect of punk as, "Punks live out substantial portions of their subcultural participation on the streets" (1999:171). Similarly, the refusal of an overt display of punk and the emphasis on the exclusivity of the scene are commented on by a number of recent studies on punk. Leach and Haunss (2009) note how social networks within punk in Hamburg and Berlin were tied to a spatial location of the subcultural within squats organized by punks. Cisar

and Koubek (2012:8) also relate the spatial dimension of the scene to a policing of boundaries, separating the scene from the "commercialized" parts of it, focusing more on politics than fronting a public identity (cf. Clarke 2003:233, Gosling 2004:169f, Moore 2004:321).

For once I will refrain from pointing out that all of these studies focus on a singular subcultural logic, as what is even more interesting here is the failure to relate such spatial performances to the positioning and definition of the mainstream. Instead, the availability of the street and the exclusivity of the scene are both analyzed in relation to an external mainstream that punks resist. Consequently, the discrepancy among these studies between where, and how, punk is lived out is left hanging, as different emplacements merely become more or less effective acts of resistance. This is unfortunate as these emplacements of the subcultural are deeply related to both the definition of the mainstream that constitutes the background text and the available scripts by which styles and identities are claimed and performed.

A stylistic appropriation of space

In chapter 6, I argued that the authentication of styles and identities, within a convex pattern, is centered on individual difference and freedom from the normal and restricted external others. The emplacements of this subcultural sacred enhance such a performance and authentication by locating subcultural styles and identities amidst this external mainstream. All of the scripts within a convex pattern point to the set apart as the individual who is not afraid to stand out and show his/her intrinsic difference. Consequently, the direct encounter with the mainstream works to prove such a distinction to other participants by physically and stylistically breaking free from the restricted outside and going your own way—emplacing the essential and moral superiority against a homogeneous mass.

First of all, it was not as if the places described above were the only ones available to participants, as they could easily have chosen a space to hang out that did not include the presence of the defined mainstream. Further, the performance of punk on the street, in parks, or at the train station was not always something pleasant as passers by, cops and security guards, and religious groups in Indonesia often harassed participants, urging them to either behave or to leave the premises (cf. Leblanc 1999:170). Yet, even when privacy was available, places that were open to outsiders were preferred. When I did fieldwork among participants in Sweden I often quietly lamented this. Instead of having a quiet discussion in the warmth of someone's apartment we were always on the move to an often freezing outside. On the other hand the opposite often occurred in the heat of Indonesia. One group of participants that I followed would for example hang out in front of a club in the middle of one of the city's busiest shopping streets. Besides the club, owned by one of the participants, the remainder of this place included two clothing stores owned by other participants. Thus, it was not as if participants were

barred from the shops and the clubs they gathered outside. Nevertheless, the air-conditioned insides of the stores and the club were shunned for the visibility of the sidewalk on either side of these stores. Participants would spend their days playing music, drinking, playing cards, getting tattooed, fixing their hair, and commenting on passers by, right in the middle of the constant flow of tourists passing by on their way to the beach, their hotel, or to a club.

Further, participants could have toned down their style when entering the public. Yet they did not, rather the opposite. I followed participants preparing to go out, I watched them fixing and dying their hair, tearing their clothes, sewing patches on pants and jackets, writing obscenities with a marker on their hands and arms. Most often this was done in groups, participants helping each other. As I was attending a music festival in Sweden I was walking towards the entrance with a participant that had a 30 cm tall red mohawk, which was thin and perfectly fixed. Suddenly it started to rain. He cursed, and then pulled out an umbrella to protect his hair. He was the only one in the line with an umbrella. Still, it worked; his mohawk was still standing as he entered the festival area. A few hours later I met him outside, his mohawk was down, and I asked him about the umbrella. He answered, "You have to show people that there are still punks around" (Field notes, Sweden June 2009).

The emplacements of punk in the midst of the perceived mainstream work to temporarily seal off specific places in terms of physical access through a stylistic boundary work. As we I showed in chapter 6, the stylistic objects that were authenticated within a convex framework follow from a direct refusal of the normality and complaisance of the external mainstream: These included discernible hair styles dyed "unnatural" colors (blue, green, pink, bright yellow), torn or ripped clothes, patches on jackets and caps, piercings, and visible tattoos. Similarly, acting out punk was authenticated following a similar logic of standing out, "making a mess," "causing chaos," "always being in someone's face." Playing music fast and loud, drinking in public, skateboarding on the sidewalk, taking over the local bar, moving in groups across the city, and shouting at passers by were all examples of behavior that was authenticated in opposition to an external mainstream. Space was thus appropriated and marked off through a stylistic boundary work.

In his work on the urban struggle for common ground, Elijah Anderson notes how some of the young men he studied made symbolic use of an "urban uniform" that induced fear as well as a distance to other residents (1990:167). These men, argues Anderson, "move convincingly through the area as though they 'run it,' exuding a sense of ownership […] symbolically inserting themselves into any available social space, pressing against those who might challenge them" (1990:164). Hodkinson (2002:89f) stresses a similar motion of exclusion through a shared visual distinctiveness in terms of style among the goths he followed. In this sense, Hebdige's point that punk means introducing noise in the otherwise orderly sequence is well suit-

ed, the point being that this spatial and temporal seizing of space is established through a break with the mutual cooperation and civil inattention that is expected in such public spaces (cf. Goffman 1963a:83f, Lofland 1998:28ff).

Thus, whereas Kidder (2011:143) speaks of an affective appropriation of space in terms of bike messengers' pursuit of flow, I will here rather speak of a stylistic appropriation of space: The stylistic display performed by participants inserts itself not only on the particular space but also on the others frequenting it. The participants I followed also referred to the places where they hung out as being owned by them, "This is our place, nobody dares to take this from us," as one participant put it in relation to the benches at the city center where they used to hang out. At the same time they were well aware that this was a temporal appropriation that could be shifted by the local authorities either chasing them off, or as happened in this case, by removing the benches. Instead a curved staircase nearby was appropriated as "our new place" (Field notes, Sweden Sept 2008, cf. Massey 1998:151).

Such stylistic appropriation of space means that even though outsiders are seen as dominating a particular place, the power of that place is temporarily shifted so that it is controlled and defined by the participants. The physical environment is thus spatially and temporally reworked through style so as to exempt outsiders present from fully participating (cf. Borden 2001:8). Iain Borden's example of this is skateboarders' appropriation of the city, of making creative use of the objects of the city, playing with its defined boundaries. A handrail designed to ease climbing or descending a stair is appropriated by redefining it as an object of risk that can be used to slide down its metal bars on the skateboard. Similarly Kidder (2011:130f) states that the bike messengers he followed appropriated the city streets by playing with city traffic lights, making dodging cars and running across red lights a matter of deep subcultural play. To both Kidder and Borden such an appropriation of space refers to marking spots off by making alternative use of them, as with graffiti writers using trains, walls, and tunnels as their canvases (MacDonald 2001:158). The emplacement of the special minority status of the differentiated and emancipated individual within a convex pattern, thus means appropriating specific places through establishing what Lyman and Scott (1967:231) refer to as a "home territory" where participants have established a sense of control over an area and a relative freedom of behavior. This transforms parts of the bar, the square, bus station, or the street, into a place where subcultural identities could be claimed, maintained, and confirmed while at the same time excluding the mainstream (cf. Lofland [1973] 1985:138f).

Consequently individual consistency to an intrinsic and essential difference from the mainstream is both performed and controlled through a physical and visually available refusal of the present and available mainstream. Participants display a rejection of the desire to fit in and be like everyone

else, which in turn is interpreted in relation to this outside by other partici-
pants present. MacDonald's (2001:71, 179) work on graffiti provides an
interesting parallel in this sense. In graffiti the work itself, the tag, throw-up,
or piece, is subordinated to its placing through its visibility and risk. Com-
mitment is articulated through the placing of your work, through an invest-
ment in time as well as preparations and skill in carrying it out. Performing
punk within a convex pattern works similarly. Just as a tag is the external
representation of the graffiti writer, punk style is the external representation
of an intrinsic difference. Just as a tag in a place where no one sees it poorly
represents the writer, the externalization of punk through style is dependent
on visibility. As the boundary between the subcultural and the mainstream
within a convex pattern is drawn in terms of the inside and the outside, it is
in the encounter with the latter that punk stands out. In short, as the prohibi-
tions that set the sacred apart refer to an external mainstream all around you,
the boundary to the mainstream is drawn visually as it is blurred spatially.

   As I showed in relation to DIY such a transformation of non-subcultural
space was prevalent among participants in the meeting with the mainstream.
Far from being dismissed as sell-out, appearances on TV, radio, and in print
media were, just as selling a lot of records and being associated with a major
label or distributor, possible to authenticate through drawing on a script of
going your own way and stylistically establishing a distance to the commer-
cial mainstream. Such emplacements of the differentiated and emancipated
individual in the midst of the perceived mainstream were also used by partic-
ipants to mark off shows and festivals that were open to everybody, as con-
stituting a temporary subcultural space. The mosh-pit was an important em-
placement of the sacred at these shows, constituting a symbolic transition
from the open and available to the temporarily sealed off as it separated be-
tween parts of the crowd. The more open the space was perceived to be, the
more importance participants placed on participation in the mosh pit. At
large arena shows, or festivals, that featured bands that drew both a subcul-
tural and a non-subcultural crowd, participants would often push their way
through the cheering, yet passive crowd and start moshing, forcing the latter
to either participate or leave. Such moments were often recounted to other
participants.

> When we went to [a now defunct Swedish music festival] this one year, De
> Lyckliga Kompisarna was playing in front of the huge mainstream crowd. So
> we just rushed it and started a massive circle pit. Like twenty of us. These
> people got so afraid, you know some dumb kid got his faced kicked in by
> someone crowd surfing, and I saw a bunch of girls crying. What a rush (Field
> notes, Sweden, Aug 2008).

This appropriation of space through style points to a shift in terms of both
access and control. Lyn H, Lofland (1998:14f) refers to a similar transition

in her discussion on private, parochial, and public realms, arguing that what matters is not so much the physical space in which it is located, as the dominating relational form among those present. Even though Lofland's trichotomy is interesting in terms of shifts in relational forms in public space (cf. Glass 2012), her focus is on regulatory measures aimed at controlling those whom authorities find unwanted. My point is rather the opposite, as it concerns the regulatory control advocated by "the unwanted" to temporarily appropriate space. Consequently, I prefer to retain the reference to presence and absence, but also to access and exclusion, that is indicated in the participants' different definitions of space, rather than referring to these as either public or private realms.

Such an emphasis of how control is taken and enforced through a spatial and stylistic play between inside/outside, presence/absence, and the available/exclusive borrows instead from Anselm Strauss' (1961) distinction between the locale and the location. Whereas the former to Strauss refers to a minimum of a physical segregation between social worlds, a location means the increase of segregation as in shutting out strangers and establishing an exclusive space (1961:65). This is even more evident in relation to the enactment of a concave pattern.

Regulating presence

Similar to subcultural emplacements within a convex pattern, the instantiation of the subcultural sacred within a concave pattern also emphasized control in terms of subcultural access and visibility yet to a different extent. Spaces that were defined as open and that included the presence of a non-punk outside were not subculturally claimed, rather such a distinction was aimed internally through the performance of an absence of style, and the refusal to openly identify as punk. Instead, this distance was established through a separation of participants consistent with the scripted emphasis on development, protection, and regulation of the subcultural. The use of abandoned houses, basements, etc. as sites for subcultural performances within a concave pattern meant symbolically enhancing the segregation already established spatially. Instead of the spatially inclusive yet stylistically exclusive emplacement within a convex pattern, emplacements within a concave pattern related to a spatial and symbolic exclusivity so as to include those who already belonged to the scene.

As if the seclusion of these spaces was not enough to shield them from the mainstream punks, shows and other events were rarely advertised outside the scene. There were no signs saying, "Tonight: punk show!" Further, the flyers and information distributed did not include any information other than the basics: who was playing, where, at what time, and the entrance fee. Most often these flyers did not even include the word "punk" at all, but rather euphemisms such as "melodic d-beat hammering from the US," "scandi-crust attack," "noisecore thrashers" and "anarcho-riot." Subcultural devel-

opment and special knowledge were thus expected to separate desirable from undesirable participants, as well as giving a message of the appropriate behavior. The emplacement of the subcultural privacy of these shows was thus furthered through a message of exclusivity; it was taken for granted that if you entered these spaces you deserved to be there, as you knew about it in the first place. Consequently, authentication was deeply tied to space, as participation required an active participation in and subordination to the collective regulations:

> I just think that if you have come that far so as to a go to a show, to you know an underground punk-show, it is not an arena show with Millencolin but rather a show within the scene, then you're a punk, really. I mean then you cannot talk about fake punk anymore, since you are, as soon as you go to a show then you become a part of the scene (Interview, Sweden-E2, 2008).

Most often, the first time participants visited the subcultural exclusive they were invited by another participant. The reference above to having "come that far so as to go to a show" thus meant first being selected to participate. Control over access was in this sense transferred to individual participants who would vouch for, as well as being responsible for, the introduction of newcomers to the subcultural sacred. Being invited therefore involved being taught how to behave, a first step in the transition from the shallow "fake punk" to the depth of the scene. The field note quoted in chapter 7, in which I was lectured by my informant on how to behave in relation of style, is but one example of this.

Culton and Holtzman (2010:273) refer to a similar exclusion within the DIY-scene they investigated, arguing that the establishment of subculturally exclusive shows was brought by a symbolic and spatial separation to other venues and groups of participants, stressing a collective doing. Instead of cooperating with people external to the scene, self-sufficiency was sought so as to keep bands, participants, and profits within the scene. My point here is that it is only in relation to the enacted background text that we can understand this separation. Similar to the excerpt above, participants argued that the spatial exclusivity of shows was something needed so as to avoid the presence of the internal mainstream. The prohibitions that separated the scene from the undifferentiated punks were thus both made possible and strengthened through such a spatial extension.

In Sweden, this regulation of presence was often controlled through a membership system within which entrance depended on being a registered member of the "music club" or "culture association" that organized shows.[32]

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[32] This organization of groups into associations is somewhat typical of Swedish way of club activities that also surrounded band rehearsals and workshops. This was a means to get parts of the costs subsided by different educational associations, such as *Studiefrämjandet* or *ABF* (cf. Håkansson et al. 2009, Håkansson and Lundin 2009).

The articulated intent was to bypass the strict alcohol laws in Sweden, an organized private association being exempted from the requirements of having a license to serve alcohol. It is unclear in my data to what extent participants were aware of the other legal requirements concerning such an exemption—for example that the law stipulates that such an exemption refers to a occasional event and that it concerns a non-profit event—but either way, it usually worked; access was controlled and alcohol was served usually without any police interference. When asked about this legal ambiguity participants sometimes recognized that it was a bit far-fetched but that it at least made it less illegal.[33] Similarly, participants in Indonesia referred to the importance of keeping shows exclusive due to a legal matter of rock shows being banned in the evenings due to the riots that occurred around rock shows in the 90s. Both Joanna Pickles (2001:26) and Emma Baulch (2002:153f, 2003a:204) refer to this ban, however it is still doubtful to me whether it was still in place during my time in the field. Some participants argued that it was not, and I did go to a number of shows that were held at night that were both openly advertised and close to the city center. Likewise, participants in Sweden staged shows without any membership or restrictions regarding entrance, but then these, just as the public night shows in Indonesia, were most often emplaced within a convex pattern. Still, what matters here is how these references to legal matters were worked so as to further regulate the proximity and access of the defined mainstream.

Pepper G. Glass' study on a specific punk house comes close to this regulation of presence and access, as she notes that "[p]articipants did not simply focus on punk identities; they were concerned with punk identities in *this particular setting*" (2012:713, emphasis added). Nevertheless, for Glass this refers to a distinction between punks and non-punks rather than a boundary against other punks. In contrast I would argue that the emplacement of punk within a concave pattern is deeply related to a background stressing difference and freedom from the shallow, complacent, and dependent mainstream punks. The inauthentication of the perceived available and open is an extension of the prohibition against the style-centered and hedonist. The definitions of the subcultural exclusive were authenticated following the scripts outlined above; it was articulated as a needed development and regulation of access and participation meant to serve and protect the scene. The boundary to the internal mainstream was thus worked spatially in establishing places to which access was a matter of belonging, and sustained participation was a question of compliance to rules.

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[33] The police and fire brigade did sometimes raid these places imposing a fine for breaching safety regulations and confiscating alcohol as well objects that could be used as weapons, but during my time in the field this only happened a few times.

8.1.3. Subcultural establishment and reproduction

The spatial dimensions of performances and authentications within each subcultural pattern bring about the question of how the subcultural is established, reproduced, and changed. Even though the previous research on punk has focused on the establishment of punk, this is, as I have noted, preoccupied with a notion of punk as a resistance to local socio-economic structures, or as against a globalized hyper-consumerist society. Still, throughout this thesis, I have time and time again shown the similarities between how punk identities and style are mobilized and authenticated in Sweden and Indonesia. Given the substantial socio-economic differences between these countries, the question thus remains, how do such similarities come about, and what role do the convex and concave subcultural patterns play in such an establishment?

Historically, the establishment of subcultures has been attributed to a response to a collectively experienced problem, associated either with socio-geographical, ethnic, moral, occupational, or class-related differences (cf. Park 1915, Cressey 1932, Cohen 1955, Becker 1963, Hall and Jefferson 1976). Such a bounded definition of the subcultural is also coupled with a clear distinction from the outside world that threatens to impose itself and correct any deviant behavior back in line. Unsurprisingly, from such a perspective the role of the media and commerce is treated as opposite to the authentic. Sarah Thornton's analysis of the rise and development of club cultures in the 1990s would signal the definite break with such a juxtaposition of media and the subcultural. Instead of seeing media and commerce as part of the mainstream's inevitable incorporation of the subcultural (cf. Hebdige 1979:96), Thornton (1995:116) argued that these are central to the subcultural formation. By examining how participants defined various types of media Thornton shows how moral panics and disapproving tabloid stories work to disseminate the subcultural, making them into major events (1995:129ff). In relation to such mass mediated exposure, media oriented towards the subcultural—what Thornton calls "niche media"—and media produced within the subcultural—"micro media"—used this moral panic to assert what the subcultural is "really" about (1995:134). Subcultural establishment in this sense refers to a play between inside and outside, rather than posing them as opposites; new subcultural participants are attracted by the mass media exposure of the subcultural, while learning the meaning of the subcultural from niche and micro media.

Gary Alan Fine and Sherryl Kleinmann (1979:8f) refer to a similar idea in what they call "communication interlocks." Arguing that subcultures emerge as a product of interaction, Fine and Kleinmann point to media, as well as fluid boundaries between different subcultures and between subcultural participants and the non-subcultural, as ways through which the subcultural is disseminated. As such, the ideas and practices, as well as notions of subcul-

tural rules and styles, are initiated and developed through a play between different levels of interaction (cf. Williams 2011:40f).

With a few exceptions all participants that I followed told a similar story of how they were introduced to punk at first. Regardless if it was through a friend, family member, or through media, the initial contact related either to having been exposed to punk dress and appearance or through punk music. In either case it was articulated as something available and open to them, usually related to a mass mediation of both dress and music. The initial bands mentioned were the same for participants in Sweden as in Indonesia during the years I spent in the field: Sex Pistols, Ramones, Offspring, Bad Religion, Green Day, and Rancid. What these bands have in common is that they have all been frequently played on the radio and MTV, as well as mentioned in news media in reference to punk. This is concurrent to the accounts of the establishment of punk in both Sweden (Carlsson et al. 2004) and Indonesia (Pickles 2001, Baulch 2003b).[34] In Sweden the starting point of punk is dated to the spring and summer of 1977 during which the Ramones, Sex Pistols, Clash, and Television all played Stockholm (Carlsson et al. 2004:199). These shows in turn were followed by a rather extensive coverage in the press focused on the exciting and dangerous aspects of punk (e.g., the tabloid *Expressen's* headline reading, "Swastikas and pins through the cheeks—the punk wave has now hit Stockholm," 1977-07-29). As Williams puts it, "[S]uch news stories can go a long way in introducing young people to such 'deviant' youth subcultures" (2011:113, cf. Thornton 1995:131)

In regards to Indonesian punk, Baulch (2002, 2003b), Pickles (2001), and Wallach (2008) recognize the mediation of punk as essential to the establishment of punk in Indonesia. Baulch (2002:154) notes that punk in Indonesia was established through a number of large shows in the nation's capital in the beginning of 1996 and how this coincided with a change in media reports on rock fandom (cf. Wallach 2008:99). Whereas previously presented as a dissonant group reacting to social divisions, rock was then portrayed as being in line with a globalized bourgeoisie and consumerist ideals. As the television market as well as the recording industry were opened up to private investors including MTV and major labels, young Indonesians were able to experience alternative music as a mediated ideal (Baulch 2003b:115). Baulch notes, for example, how Green Day cover-bands emerged in Bali after the band played Jakarta in February 1996. Pickles (2001) also recognizes how a mass mediated image of punk was appropriated by Indonesians and served as a starting point for subcultural participation, "It appears punk rock arrived in Indonesia through the popular culture channels in the early 1990s, with major labels bands like the Sex Pistols, Rancid, and neo-punks such as Green Day" (2001:8). My interviews with Indonesian participants

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[34] Shannon (2003:16) and Kimwall (2012:64) both point to a similar dissemination in relation to graffiti.

who were active during these first years confirm such an establishment of the subcultural through media (cf. Clarke [1981] 1990:77, Moore 2004:312).[35]

Whereas such findings concur with the ideas of both Thornton and Fine and Kleinmann that the subcultural dissemination is an effect of multiple sources of communication, I want to expand this in relation to plural definitions of both the subcultural sacred and the mainstream. Whereas Thornton does have a point in differentiating between different kinds of media, she nevertheless presupposes that such a differentiation is similarly experienced, communicated, and interpreted within the subcultural. Instead, I want to highlight the dynamic relationship between the present and the absent as well as between the available and the exclusive that dominated emplacements of the subcultural sacred within both a convex and a concave pattern.

To start, one of the things that all participants agreed on, regardless of the subcultural pattern enacted, was that the direct encounter with an external mainstream through style was crucial in attracting new subcultural participants. Within a convex pattern this was articulated as an inevitable and positive aspect: individuals are drawn to punk so as to be able to express their intrinsic moral difference against the homogeneous and restricted mainstream. It was also used to negotiate the statuses of bands that had close contact with the defined commercial mainstream, arguing that it was good that they got a message out. In contrast, within a concave pattern this was articulated as a necessary evil: in order to be a part of the scene you had to develop from the shallow. Such a stance is implied in most of the previous excerpts that relate to a scripted development: the shallow mainstream punk is nevertheless recognized as serving as a first step of a subcultural development. This was the only aspect of the mainstream that was positively framed within a concave pattern because it attracted new participants, who if they worked hard and committed themselves to the collective, could eventually become part of the sacred.

My fieldwork also confirms that, with a few exceptions, subcultural entrance occurred through a convex pattern.[36] This refers as much to the spatial

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[35] The role of the media in establishing the subcultural and attracting new participants is nevertheless a sensitive matter. In relation to citing the bands above, participants often added that this "was before punk became trendy again." Interestingly, this moment when punk resurfaced as "trendy" differed among participants, except that it was similarly articulated as having occurred shortly after they discovered punk. Thus, depending on whom I talked to, where, and how many participants were present, the trendiness of punk seemed to have occurred every year from 1993 to 2007. The exception was some performances within a concave pattern that made reference to how stupid they were initially, just following the trend. But, then again such a stance was easy to fuse within a script of development from the shallow.

[36] This is not to say that it was impossible to enter the subcultural through a concave pattern; I saw this happen a couple of times, in the form of siblings, partners, and friends who had never been in touch with punk before. Yet in order to be authenticated as different from the mainstream punks, they quickly shifted their performances so as to suit a scripted development from the shallow as a representation of their belonging to the scene.

dimensions of subcultural performances as to the articulation of an essential boundary to the mainstream marked off through style. The blurring of the spatial border to the defined mainstream opens up punk to be consumed through a variety of channels. Many of my informants expressed how they had been struck by the colors, brutality, and danger the first time they had seen and heard punk, regardless of how they were first introduced to the subcultural. This spatial play between the available and the exclusive, the mainstream and the subcultural, exposes the subcultural to the non-subcultural through a spatial inclusion of the mainstream that is used to rein-force the subcultural binary. The scripts of intrinsic difference, just being, and going your own way make participation within this defined mainstream something possible. Bands could play large shows, be interviewed in mass media, have their records out on large labels, yet still be authenticated. Thus whereas Thornton for example argues that positive mass media coverage constitutes a "subcultural kiss of death," this was not always the case in rela-tion to a convex pattern. As I noted in chapter 6 such an exposure was rather easy to fuse with the script of going your own way: instead of the message it was the messenger that was criticized for attempting to cash in on punk. As Hodkinson (2002:156) notes in reference to the goths he studied, at times such positive coverage rather strengthened their sense of identity.

Second, not only is the differentiation from an external mainstream open and visual within a convex pattern, it is also rather simple: the communicat-ed reason for becoming punk is that you are not like everyone else. When I followed new participants it was rather obvious how quickly this first step was taken, some of them visiting a show for the first time on Friday night and calling themselves punk on Monday morning. Of course, in order to stick such identification required learning the ropes in terms of prohibitions and sets of meanings, but this usually did not take long. The script of an essential intrinsic difference, for example, specifies this initial attraction to punk as a means to be able to express a genuine self. Thus, this play between the subcultural and the mainstream is present both in communicating and consuming punk. What is authenticated is depth, while style is articulated as merely the representation of who you really are, making it possible for new participants to mobilize their subcultural identities instantly. Learning the ropes of a convex pattern is thus forgetting punk's openness and instead establishing a distance to the mainstream through the articulation of an es-sential and intrinsic difference that preceded becoming punk.

The insistence on doing

The emphasis on DIY within both these patterns is crucial in understanding how the subcultural is established, reproduced and changed through giving the subcultural sacred a tangible form. Regardless of how DIY was defined and acted upon within these patterns, there was a pervasive focus on *doing*. From the first contact participants had with the subcultural, any problems,

obstacles, or desires were to be overcome or realized by a distancing from the mainstream. Within a convex pattern this referred to the homogeneity, passivity, or obliging characteristics of the mainstream. Thus, whether you had always wanted to play an instrument, set up shows, write in a fanzine, print shirts, or tell the world that you hated it, the subcultural reply was the same: do it! Further, the authentications of style and identities also emphasized an active stance vis-à-vis the external mainstream. As a consequence, when new participants entered the subcultural what was expected of them was a complete change of routines, by which they would represent the subcultural sacred. This was no different within a concave pattern; the shallowness, hedonism, and dependency of the mainstream could only be countered by an active and collective doing. If you were tired of there being no shows in your city, disappointed by the thrashing and hedonist behavior, or furthering a desire for improving the state of punk, the articulated subcultural solution was doing it yourself. Seen this way, punk definitely changed participants' lives as it extensively influenced their practices and the way they encountered everyday life (cf. Hodkinson 2002:31).

The consequence of this focus on doing was that participants were greatly involved in subcultural production. Most of the participants I followed played in at least one band, or they wrote for a fanzine, printed patches and t-shirts, sold merch at shows, drove bands on tour, set up their own record label, or often did all of the above. Further, during the time I spent in the field I observed how participants dealt with all kinds of articulated problems through finding alternative and creative solutions. The bigger of these was of course how to organize an international tour without any financial backing from sponsors, record labels, or booking agencies, but it is the more mundane actions that strike me as fascinating. Participants found ways to build and repair incredible vehicles such as tall-bikes and refurbished campers. Some of them managed to live largely outside of large parts of the surrounding society, renting a former mechanic shop during winters in which they slept in their caravans. Food for shows was gathered from asking shop owners for near-expired goods, or exploring the waste containers outside these stores at night, ingeniously getting past the locks and other obstacles. Among the Indonesian punks I followed, groups of participants acted as a social security for other participants: when someone had housing, s/he invited those who did not. The collection of "parking fees" that Wallach (2008:106) also reports in relation to Indonesian punk is just one of these strategies. The outcome and income of these doings were shared among participants in both Sweden and Indonesia, be they money, tricks of the trade, food, or other acquired items.

This focus on doing to deal with both the essentials and banalities of life was especially clear in the staging of shows. I have been to shows in participants' living rooms, basements, or when a sheltered space was unavailable, in backyards, parks, and parking lots. Similarly, if something broke down, be

it an amp, an instrument, a fuse, or someone's car, the other participants often lent a hand or their own equipment in order to solve the problem. To hire someone from the outside was extremely rare, and if needed such an expert could often be located within someone's immediate set of acquaintances. At one time during my field work a water pipe broke at a show on a Saturday night, and a phone call later some guy in a patched black denim vest arrived with a bunch of tools and had sorted it out. He did not ask for any reimbursement but got a ride back to his home with another participant and a bunch of beers in a plastic bag.

Not only did the emphasis on DIY ground the subcultural in participants' daily practices, it also allowed them to learn a variety of skills by merely participating in the subcultural. To book a tour for example you need to learn how to organize everything from a budget to housing, transport, and most importantly where to play in the first place. Participants improved their English through writing songs or fanzine articles, or by reading them. They learned basic German, Spanish, Polish, or in the case of the Indonesian participants, Thai or Chinese, by hosting visiting bands or touring themselves. Many of the participants also learned about welding, construction, woodwork, rudimentary plumbing, painting, etc. as it was expected of participants to contribute and help out, whether it was their own rehearsing room, someone's apartment, or a space for shows. Further, participants learned some impressive needlework both in terms of sewing and tattooing simply by doing and learning from other participants. They learned how to plan and prepare food for as many as 100 guests at larger shows, and some of these participants now work as chefs. All of this is based on the simple pragmatism that the restrictions that limit the mainstream do not concern you.

This informal learning process of the subcultural is rarely touched upon within subcultural studies, instead DIY is explained as an anti-commercial strategy. The work of the Swedish sociologist Ove Sernhede is the main exception here. Writing about hip-hop, Sernhede points to the variety of skills that participants acquire merely by actively participating in the subcultural in terms of computer skills and administrative and organizational knowledge, as well as in terms of the performance, recording, mixing, and distribution of music (2011b:188, cf. Beach and Sernhede 2012, Hannerz 2013b, 2013c). Sernhede's argument is that subcultural practices often serve as a "compensatory learning" (2011c:211) in the sense that it is a form of learning that is directly relevant to the experiences and understandings of those involved, something which the formal learning institutions fail in accomplishing (Beach and Sernhede 2012:949, cf. Söderman 2007:115, Kimwall 2012:45). This is similar to MacDonald's (2001:132) argument that much of the attraction of the subcultural is that it provides a separate set of rules to those enforced by society, and that this set of rules is both self-made, self-governed, and generated from participants' own experiences. I would like to combine both of these ideas in the sense that the practical aspect of

subcultural doings works to introduce new participants to the subcultural as well as reinforcing the prevalent set of meanings to all participants. The enactments of DIY had a similar consequence within both subcultural patterns as it emphasized going beyond the rationalizations of the perceived mainstream. The excuse that "it cannot be done" was in this way similarly abandoned, yet with different significance. Doing it yourself within a convex pattern established and strengthened the boundary to the normal, complaisant, external mainstream, whereas within a concave pattern the boundary was drawn internally.

Subcultural change

The direct link between a convex pattern and subcultural establishment and attraction is indicative of the extent to which a concave pattern relies on a convex one. The spatial and stylistic exclusivity of the emplacements of the subcultural meant that if a concave pattern constituted a single subcultural logic, the subcultural would most likely not last longer than the initial internal distinction. Not only as new participants would then have to be actively recruited, but also because such recruitment would be impossible to fuse with the stress on development beyond the initial and shallow. Becoming part of the scene requires both an invitation and knowledge of the regulation of dress, appearance, action, and the foreground script of subcultural development. The sacred can only be reached through hard work, subordination to the rules, and a respect of the protective measures regarding the scene. Further, the reactive stance and the negative inclusion of initial involvement means that a concave pattern needs a convex one, both to perform and authenticate a scripted development and protection. On the contrary, a convex pattern can easily last without a concave one, as the subcultural sacred is protected through an essential difference: you are either different than the mainstream or not.

Still, a convex pattern as a single subcultural logic would mean that subcultural change and development would be limited to different interpretations of the external mainstream. Instead, the reactive stance as well as the emphasis on regulation and development within a concave pattern renders the subcultural as a whole in constant motion by endlessly upping the ante in terms of difference, freedom, and doing. This relationship between a convex and a concave pattern, the move from a focus on already being different to becoming different, is also consistent with how punk is described to have developed in both the U.S. and England during the 1970s and early 1980s (McNeil and McCain 1996, Savage 2001, Hannerz forthcoming). Consider for example punk's alleged initial establishment and naming in Manhattan. Initially, punk is described as a reaction to what rock n' roll had become, the first punk bands reacting against rock n' roll's alienation from the streets (McNeil and McCain 1996:146). The articulated distinction is internal to rock, a reaction against those "weary of the posturing virtuosity

of the stadium rock" (Leblanc 1995:35). These first punk bands instead called for a return to a simpler and direct approach to music and performance. This internal distinction within rock was what the two teenagers Legs McNeil and John Holmstrom then sought to describe when they named their fanzine "PUNK" in 1975 (McNeil and McCain 1996:204). The naming of this reaction to the state of rock n' roll not only defined and established punk as something of its own, it also involved a shift in terms of what this was a reaction against. It was a shift from rock to society in general, the name "punk" being articulated as chosen for its negative connotations:

> It was what your teachers would call you. It meant you were the lowest. All of us drop-outs and fuck-ups got together and started a movement. We'd been told all our lives that we'd never amount to anything (McNeil, quoted in Savage 2001:131).

When the style and music of the Manhattan bands were introduced to a London crowd in 1976, this external positioning of the mainstream was firmly established, especially through the performances of bands like the Sex Pistols. The Grundy-incident referred to in chapter 1 is indicative of this focus on standing out and provoking a general public, rather than an internal distinction within rock (cf. McNeil and McCain 1996:258, Savage 2001:257ff).

The subsequent changes within punk follow on the other hand from an articulation of an internal mainstream. The second wave of English and American punk, for instance, is explained through the disappointment with the posturing and commercial interests of the first wave of bands (Blush 2001:12f, Joynson 2001:16, Glasper 2004:8f, 2006:11). When straight edge emerged within punk in the mid 80s it was similarly articulated as a move away from the complacent and shallow (Andersen and Jenkins 2001:75, Blush 2001:26f, Haenfler 2006:8) as was DIY-punk during the 90s (Clarke 2003, Gosling 2004, Moore 2004, O'Connor 2008). Similarly, punk in Sweden is described as having followed these shifts, learning from them through fanzines and record trades (Ekeroth 2008:18ff).

This is also where the importance of the dynamic relationship between these two subcultural patterns lies, as whereas a concave pattern in Sweden can be traced back to the early 1980s (Carlsson et al. 2004:104, 127, Ekeroth 2008:18ff), it did not appear in Indonesia until the late 1990s and when it did it was intimately tied to discussions within the "elsewhere" (cf. Fiscella 2012:265). Pickles (2001) describes how the Indonesian fanzine *Submissive Riot* redefined punk as a political struggle, calling for a boycott in 1998 of an event deemed to be a capitalistic enterprise and that "[r]eal punks wouldn't spend a cent to support this enterprise" (Quoted in Pickles 2001:58, cf. Wallach 2005:18). Largely this shift can be attributed to the increased availability of global punk fanzines such as the anarcho-syndicalist punk fanzine

Profane Existence (PE) from Minneapolis. Pickles (2001:51) notes that parts of a compilation of column pieces and articles from PE were translated and published in the Indonesian fanzine *Kontaminasi Propaganda* in 1999 and that this coincided with a growing tension between different groups regarding how to interpret punk. Bands who failed to meet these demands were recognized as less punk. This internal separation between the apolitical and shallow punks and the political and deep was also described by several of the Indonesian participants I followed. Nevertheless, even among the researchers who recognize the importance of fanzines in communicating punk, punk meaning is analyzed as a resistance against local socio-economic structures (Pickles 2001, O'Connor 2008, Thompson 2004).

Wallach's (2008:111) story of how the meaning of the swastika in Indonesian punk changed during his fieldwork is a case in point here. On Wallach's first visit the swastika was deeply associated with punk, participants being unaware of the political history of the symbol. However, consistent with the shift suggested by Pickles, this changed as the subcultural developed from within.

> As the Indonesian underground punk scene developed, its more intellectually engaged members increased their knowledge of punk history, including the movement's frequent (if not always consistent) opposition to fascism, racism, and neo-Nazism in the West. While some punks in Jakarta still wore the symbol, many more adopted anti-Nazi symbols. By late 1999, anti-Nazi slogans and iconography had become conspicuous at punk shows (Wallach 2008:111).

The shift that Wallach here describes is what I have referred to as the difference between an emplacement of the subcultural sacred as a matter of the "here and now" and a translocal elsewhere. The previous use of the swastika is here similar to how it was authenticated within a convex pattern during my fieldwork as a symbol of punk, representing the distance to an external and present mainstream. The development of a concave pattern in Indonesia in the late 90s through the use of fanzines establishes a transcendence of such a localization of meaning, emplacing the subcultural sacred within a translocal elsewhere within which the use of the swastika is unacceptable. The different use of the swastika is but one example of this establishment of a defined internal mainstream. Participants in Indonesia would, for example tell of how they were anti-sponsors, anti-fascist, and against the shallow punks, long before there were any such threats to the scene in Indonesia. Instead this was articulated as solidarity gesture towards the translocal elsewhere of the scene (cf. Karlsson 2003:29).

Although a more thorough examination of punk's subcultural history would most likely significantly refine such a general description of punk's development, it is hard to argue against the correspondence of these general lines to the convex-concave model presented here. The initial internal dis-

tinction against rock brings about a significant stylistic change and a patterning of meaning. The redefinition of this distinction as something of its own, and as against an external mainstream, coincides with punk's "breakthrough." From having constituted an exclusive scene in New York, it suddenly spread around the world in the late 1970s. On the other hand, this exposure of the subcultural also resulted in a number of significant changes, all from the point of view of an internal distinction. These shifts were eventually redefined against an external mainstream. Even though the initial definitions of hardcore, straight edge, and DIY-punk were part of an internal boundary work, the meanings of these have been pluralized so that they are not exclusive to a concave pattern. Thus the subcultural circle goes from concave to convex to concave to convex, etc.. Whereas the enactment of a convex pattern establishes and reproduces the subcultural, significant change and development are brought by the enactment of a concave pattern that open up new styles to be performed within a convex pattern as well.

Further, such an analysis is not tainted by a Bourdieuan analysis of this being a matter of the pretenders against the orthodoxy, as it is equally clear that even though punk has developed over these years much of its structuring aspects remain the same (cf. Hannerz forthcoming). Surely the politics of Thatcher in England and Reagan in the U.S. had a considerable impact on the punk subculture during the 1980s, but they had so through the deep structures of meanings that constitute the subcultural. These events, as well the rise of democracy in Indonesia in the late 90s or when a conservative government was reelected for the first time in Swedish history in 2010, do not affect subcultural action in themselves, but rather they are filtered and interpreted through subcultural structures of meanings.

Further, as the positioning of the mainstream and the authentication of objects, actions, and identities differs, subcultural change is partial. In the spaces I did fieldwork, changes and breaches first and foremost followed from the background enacted and the available foreground scripts. Within a convex pattern, change was authenticated in line with its stress on an external restraining mainstream, individualism, and freedom. Hence, redefinitions of, for example, veganism and straight edge, meant establishing these as indicative of a distance to either a normal or complaisant external mainstream. Within a concave, change was authenticated through a break following the scripts of continual improvement and development as well as protecting the collective. Thus, subcultural changes initiated through a concave pattern do not abolish the old, they merely provide alternative means to interpret the past, present, and future. Most of the changes that occurred during my time it the field for example were related to either rumors within the scene or to discussions from fanzines, such as the regulation of moshing. Changes, such as the decline of veganism in the late 2000s, as well as the loosening up on moshing during the same time, had little impact on participants outside of

the scene, other than, as I will return to shortly, when participants moved in and out of these patterns.

To conclude, the different emplacements of the subcultural within each subcultural pattern contribute to the establishment, reproduction, and change of the subcultural. Further, these spatial performances of punk within both subcultural patterns point to a critique against the post-subcultural theories of for example Muggleton. Far from being a decontextualization and individualization of style, these emplacements of the subcultural rather point to a desire for context (Traber 2001:51). The significance of these spaces differed depending on which subcultural background was enacted, and reversely, the spatial situating of some objects and actions were regulated by these patterns. The enactment of a convex pattern was deeply tied to a transformation of the physical available to the symbolically exclusive, whereas a concave pattern related to an extension of a spatial exclusivity through regulations of access and participation. Further, space had consequence for how subcultural participants claimed their identities, an open display of identity being authenticated within a convex pattern and inauthenticated within a concave. The scripts outlined here, just as the background text they draw upon and strengthen, are not so much a matter of a mirroring or altering reality, as a means to construct it (Leblanc 1999:260f). The cultural is, as Alexander puts it, "less toolkit than storybook" (2004a:568).

8.2. The conjunction of patterns

I am at a show at this abandoned industrial warehouse that has been turned into an alternative meeting place for political activists and subcultural participants. Tonight's a punk show and there's roughly a hundred people gathered to see three bands: two Swedish bands and one American. Everyone is happy and drinks beer, eats vegan food, and chats. This place is in a rough neighborhood far from the city center and the people who have made it here tonight know each other well. The first band starts to play and I am standing in the back observing. The band plays standard scando-crust punk, it's loud and fast with the lyrics being shouted out by the two singers. The crowd watches in silence, nodding their hands and sometimes raising their fists. There is no moshpit, there seldom is in this place, as it is considered macho and excluding. Suddenly two male punks enter the venue and it is safe to say that they stand out in the crowd. In the sea of black clothes, shaved heads and dreadlocks, these two guys looks like a color explosion: one has a green mohawk, the other blue spikes. One is wearing a white singlet with a spray painted circled "A" over chloride bleached blue jeans. The other wears a leather jacket and a white torn t-shirt. They both have what appear to be 16 hole Docs. Both are pretty drunk. As they approach the stage they stop. They look around and then they move in closer to the band. They start jumping around, throwing beer at people standing next to them. The band looks on in disbelief, yet they

continue playing. You can actually feel the tension in the air, everybody's looking at each other, wondering who will take the first step. After two songs, the two newcomers start to dance even more violently. I can see how "Billy" moves closer to the newcomers and then takes a step back at the same time as he puts his weight on his legs. The guy in the green mohawk inevitably bumps into Billy who turns around starting to yell at him. The scene that unfolds is as if it was rehearsed: the band stops playing at once, everything goes quiet, people move in closer. Suddenly these two newcomers do not seem that cocky any more. As they are surrounded Billy takes to the stage, grabs a mic and continues yelling at them, rendering this a public scolding. What at first seemed to be a private matter, at least for the two outsiders, never was. This is a collective response. Billy switches to English as it turns out these guys do not speak Swedish. They look kind of scared now, he's calling them macho, who do they think they are, they're disrespectful, the crowd answers with "yeahs" and by staring at the newcomers. Finally Billy asks "What the fuck are you, are you Nazi punks?" Accompanied by the crowd he tells them to "get the fuck out of here," "you don't belong here." They get thrown out. The show continues and everyone seems happy. No one thanks Billy, if he hadn't spoken up, someone else would have. He spoke for everyone. The singer in the American band that is up next is excited, he says to me: "That was fun, these Hollywood-punks, you don't see them much these days." The scene has stricken back, the intruders are gone. After an hour the mohawk-guy and his friend come back. This time with a totally different approach, they are apologizing to Billy and everyone else, stopping to talk to anyone who approaches them. I let things cool down and then I walk over to the corner where they sit. The guy in the blue spikes is really drunk but he really wants to talk, he tells me they're from Finland and had heard about there being a punk show here. But as they arrived there were no punks, a band was playing punk, but people were just standing there listening, dressed like normal people. So they thought they would show them what real punk is. Then there was a fight. He still does not know why these people are so angry with him. I want to tell him that they are punk too, and see themselves as more punk than him and his friend, but he would not understand it. All the time people come by and talk to him and his friend, repeating that they should not fight, and that they should show respect. It is like a mantra: "This is a security announcement. You have now entered the DIY-scene, please beware of the following rules...." Power has switched and these two punks know about it, yet they do not know why. They are now subordinated and in no position to resist, the views of the scene still persist (Field notes, Sweden, May 2006).

In the previous discussion about the emplacement of the subcultural sacred, I opened a discussion on change and reproduction through a dynamic relationship between the available and the exclusive. Whereas the analysis so far has centered on the structural implications of this relationship, the consequences of individual transitions between these movements remain to be outlined. Participants did for example move in and out of these patterns over time and they were often enacted in the same places, and sometimes in front of similar audiences. I therefore want to focus on the conjunction of these patterns both in terms of between individual participants as well as over time in relation to

the same individuals. In so doing I will start in the direct encounter between the enactment of different patterns.

8.2.1. Clash of patterns

The extensive field note quoted above refers to a moment that I had anticipated for quite some time. It was one of the highlights of my fieldwork and I still remember exactly where I stood and the excitement that I felt when these two "Hollywood-punks" entered the sacred place of the scene and stepped right into a subcultural hornet's nest. This is not to say that this was the first time that the enactment of a convex pattern occurred in direct relation to a concave. On the contrary, such intermingling frequently occurred. Most shows included enactments of both patterns, still, there were few arguments and direct clashes between different enactments of the subcultural sacred.

The positioning of the mainstream and the spatial dimensions of the subcultural boundary work are central in understanding how these two subcultural patterns could exist alongside in the same space. To begin with, this coexistence was possible since a lot of participants simply had no idea that there were alternative definitions of the subcultural. Whereas the reactive stance implied by a concave pattern often required some knowledge and interest in other definitions of punk, any alternative definitions of punk often remained oblivious to those who enacted a convex pattern. Similar to the two Finnish punks wondering about what just had happened, participants would sometimes tell stories of meetings with an unknown alternative. Kim, a 25 year old Swedish punk, told me how he had gone to a show with a bunch of his friends and had gotten a remark from someone unknown to him that he should get rid of "the stupid leather jacket and that clown hair-cut." Kim expressed that his first feeling was that this was someone who was not a part of the subcultural but "some feminist anarchist girl." When he later found out that the woman who had made that remark was the one organizing the whole show, he did not know what to think. Instead, he dropped it. To him and his friends, this was just strange.

Given that styles and identities within a convex pattern were authenticated through stylistically standing out, being who you really are, and doing what you want, critique against the style-centered and individual were rather hard to fuse within a convex pattern. Instead, alternative interpretations of the subcultural sacred was treated as an anomaly: Surely this could not be punk as it showed no sign of either an intrinsic difference or moral superiority in relation to the external mainstream, yet at the same time these people apparently had a lot of knowledge and ideas about punk.

In the summer of 2008, for example, I followed some of my informants to a punk festival in Sweden. To this group of participants this was the highlight of the year. To me this was one of the few opportunities to observe how

they related to and interacted with other groups of punks. Although stylistically disparate, this group was rather uniform in terms of their definition of punk as being opposed to a commercial, complaisant, and normal mainstream. They usually hung out with each other during the afternoons and weekends and I had not really seen them with other groups of participants. In short, they were a tight group of punk friends in their early 20s. While some sported leather jackets adorned with studs and band logos, others wore t-shirts or hoodies. All had their hair dyed but the colors as well as hairstyles ranged from bright pink spikes to messy short black. They all only listened to punk, but the genres ranged from "skate" and "hardcore" to "crust" and "raw punk," something that was a source of argument from time to time. Yet, whereas they could handle their own differences in relation to standing out from an external mainstream, it was harder to deal with those who did not play by the same rules:

> So we arrived and they began unpacking their tents bought cheaply at some sport store or borrowed from parents, and placing them next to each other with a small patch in front of the biggest tent being reserved for two portable speakers and three camping chairs. As cans and bottles of beer and wine were popped open comments on the other participants passing by began flying. Most of these comments were affirmative "Wow look at that jacket," "Now that's a real punk," etc.. Other comments distinguished the inside from the outside as a bunch of younger participants were questioned due to their choice of t-shirts; "Really, My Chemical Romance? Come on." In the farthest end of the camp site a bunch of people causally dressed were sitting next to an old camper van. When we passed them on the way to the entrance I asked my informants what kind of punk that was. They seemed puzzled. Lena did not think they were punks at all. After a moment John said to the group rather than to me, "Those are the vegetarians and feminist punks, they think they are so much better than us." Marcus added "Yup, they're here to change the world," and they laughed. We continued walking to the entrance (Field notes, Sweden, Aug, 2008).

There are no available scripts within a convex pattern to deal with critique from within the subcultural in any other way than in relation to an essential difference and the stress on being yourself and going your own way. Instead, such encounters were ordered both in Sweden and Indonesia as a "hyper-political," "misguided," and "stuck-up" elsewhere with whom they had little contact and even less understanding. Further, the emplacing of the subcultural sacred in the "here and now" meant the there was little communication and discussion of alternative ways of ideas, actions, and style. The consequence was that a lot of the participants that I followed had no idea that the people who were standing in the back of the show, or who they sometimes met in the street, also identified as punk. Neither did they know that some of these others considered them to be mainstream.

But the coexistence of these patterns was also possible through the background text and foreground scripts of a concave pattern. The spatial dimensions of such performances are crucial in understanding how alternative interpretations of the subculturally sacred was most often tolerated and left at bay. For one thing, the emplacement of punk as in opposition to the available and overt precluded an open and direct opposition to mainstream punks outside of the subculturally exclusive. Thus, I would observe participants sitting in a park, or at a festival, quietly discussing matters, while next to us other participants would play punk music on a stereo, fix their hair, etc.. In all but a few cases, such a proximity to the perceived mainstream would result in nothing other than tacit smiles, signs, and vivid discussions within their own group once they had left the place. When I asked about what such events meant, and why they did not sit down and try to persuade the mainstream punks that there was an alternative, the answers either followed from a background distinction against the shallow and complacent, or from a script of development:

> What would be the difference? They don't understand what really matters anyway, for them punk's just drinking and wearing those clothes. It'd be a complete waste of time (Field notes, Sweden, July 2009).

> They have to learn themselves what is real and what is not, you have to learn it the hard way, that's what we had to do (Field notes, Sweden, Aug. 2008).

Instead the unawareness of the mainstream punks only added to the perceived superiority of the participants. Further, the prohibitions against openly performing punk to both the non-subcultural and the mainstream precluded such a discussion anyway, at least outside of the sanctity of the scene. I have already shown how the emplacements of the subcultural sacred as the exclusive and secluded often worked in the sense of keeping the mainstream punk away. This had the consequence that I was on several occasions told by some participants that there were no other punks in that city, and that there were no shows at all, only to spend the night within the subculturally exclusive watching bands from all over the world play a show to 50 other participants. In larger cities this spatial segregation was sometimes complete, some participants organizing basement and rehearsal room shows twice a week, with the majority of the subcultural participants in that area having no idea that these shows, let alone these participants, existed at all. Thus similar to how freedom and DIY was defined, the articulated intent was not so much to change the mainstream as to make sure that the mainstream punks did not approach the sacred. As long as the mainstream remained in place, the inauthentications of their performances were kept to one's own group.

The sanctity of the sealed off and exclusive, however, meant that if the perceived mainstream suddenly appeared within the subcultural sacred, the

tolerance and tacit jokes expressed outside of the scene were instantly replaced by protective measures. Such occasions were the only times the two patterns were openly and directly placed against each other. Examples of this were wearing a band-shirt or patch with a band that was perceived within the scene as overtly racist or sexist, making a remark that suggested you did not care about the scene, or not showing enough respect to other participants as in thrashing too hard. Thus, to return to the example of the two Finnish punks, what makes their performances so interesting is that their mere presence breached these spatial and symbolic boundaries and called for a reinstatement of the boundary to the mainstream within the subculturally exclusive. They had no idea that the rest of the participants were also punks, and more so, that they were entering a place that was meaningful to participants through its exclusion of their kind of punk. What they defined as the encounter with an external mainstream turned out to be the opposite, and a complete inauthentication of their performance. The reentrance of the Finnish punks follows from the trajectory of a scripted subordination and development, they were accepted as long as they respected the scene and the prohibitions it rested on.

The spatial and symbolic anticipation of direct clashes between a convex and a concave pattern means that the coexistence of these two patterns did little to affect how and where punk was performed. A convex pattern was not, for example, suddenly renegotiated and changed just out of knowledge of alternative ways of defining the subcultural sacred and the mainstream. Again, the convex and the concave refer to patterns of meaning, not groups of participants. If the latter was the case then the convex and the concave would have been different in Sweden and Indonesia, as well as across these countries, as authentications would then be matter of pitting one group against the other, making each group of participants different. Or, such encounters would have led to groups changing and merging due to new influences. Even though groups of participants did merge, and did pit one against the other, these patterns remain the same in my data over time, as well as between and across Sweden and Indonesia. Whereas styles and how identities were claimed and authenticated did change, and participants moved between these patterns, it was the enactments of these patterns that were in motion, rather than the patterns themselves.

8.2.2. Temporary and individual movements between patterns

Even though the coexistence of these patterns was symbolically and spatially structured, the knowledge of alternative ways of interpreting punk did have consequences for individual participants. I followed quite a few participants who would claim their identities within one pattern yet would sometimes perform their styles within another, depending on both the specific place and who else was present. The most common of these were performances within

the realm of the scene by participants who would on almost every other occasion define themselves as opposed to an external mainstream. What made such participation possible was that these participants were aware of the prohibitions and scripts prevalent within a concave pattern so that they knew what to do and what not to do in order to remain accepted within such a space. Even though these participants did not always agree on the rules and prohibitions that regulated participation, they would still respect them. They would for example refrain from moshing too hard, and keep a low profile. In some cases this meant they performed punk in radically different ways depending on the particular place. At the same time, other participants viewed them as temporary visitors: their presence was not one of "truly" belonging.

Take Kristoffer for example, one of my informants who was into melodic punk and skateboarding. Most of the time I followed Kristoffer he would enact a convex pattern, identifying himself against a normal and commercial mainstream that was external to punk and with which he would never reconcile. When we had private discussions, however, he would point to punk being more than just being different and that he believed in DIY as the opposite of being overly focused on style. This was something he rarely touched upon with his close friends. However, over the years Kristoffer quickly got a name as a good drummer, and was asked to substitute for the drummer in one of the bands associated with the scene as they went on a short European tour. Upon his return his views on punk had expanded, although he remained in his band and among his friends. He would however be a frequent visitor at shows within the scene, both in his own town as well as in other cities. At these shows Kristoffer would tone down his dress, wearing mainly a black t-shirt with one of the bands he had met while on that tour. He would not discuss matters regarding a commercial and normal mainstream but would instead draw upon his experiences from the short European tour. All of which signaled a difference to how he behaved and dressed when at shows outside of the scene. Nevertheless, when we discussed these visits he claimed that it was no different going to a show within the scene to that of the local youth club, just that people were more serious and political: It was not as if he changed his style and ideas just for a night, instead, he again and again pointed out that the he remained himself.

This retaining of a script of just being is important in the transgression of these patterns. Other participants I followed were more open with the alternation of patterns; one of my Indonesian informants, for example, would tell me that it was rather simple, in the scene you can discuss matters that you cannot discuss at other times such as politics and internal boundaries, while when hanging out with your friends in the street "you can relax, have fun, and get drunk without being all serious all the time" (Field notes, Indonesia, Feb 2005). I followed other participants who similarly articulated a temporal and spatial transgression of patterns. This way, discussions on matters such as politics that would be rather easy to inauthenticate within a convex pat-

tern, could instead be fused as these were performed as an individual desire for knowledge and fulfillment. As identification here follows from a separation from an external mainstream, transgressions are skillfully used to declare commitment to the shared subcultural sacred (cf. Barth 1969:15, Nash 1980:85). The spatial separation ensured that it did not clash with the prohibitions against rules. Peter, another of my informants whom I followed for almost seven years, was highly interested in politics, yet his band and the other punks he socialized with were not. Thus, he would participate in political discussions within the scene and eventually came to play bass in one of the bands associated with the scene. He did however retain a convex pattern as the foundation for his identity as a punk, and his transgression was to my knowledge not inauthenticated, rather the opposite, as he was perceived of as handling his interest in a good way.

Further, in relation to a concave pattern, these temporary transgressions were possible due to the emphasis on the subordination of the individual to the collective. As long as these participants respected the prohibitions and regulation meant to protect the scene, they could be temporarily accepted. Some of my informants, for example, were only vegan within the subcultural exclusive; outside of this realm they would occasionally have cheese or other diary products. Others would refrain from political discussions when outside of the scene.

Such temporary transgressions were, however, harder to fuse the other way around, (e.g., performing your identity within a concave pattern and style within a convex) due to the background distinction against the internal mainstream and the scripts of subordination and development within a concave pattern. Yet, the negative inclusion of the internal mainstream, indicative of the reactive stance of a concave pattern, sometimes did enable such a transgression in the encounter with the non-subcultural. Most often, such a meeting was anticipated by the performance of an absence of style and refraining from openly identifying as punk, yet sometimes this was inevitable. This was especially so when participants played in bands that did extensive tours, making it hard not to proclaim their identities to acquaintances, classmates, and colleagues. This meeting between a concave pattern and a subculturally meaningless outside was one of the most intriguing aspects of my fieldwork. The prohibitions within a concave pattern against exposing the scene sometimes had the consequence that participants would temporary enact a convex pattern to address the outside if prompted to.

One of my key informants was, for example, asked by a non-punk friend to make a compilation CD of good punk bands. He agreed, yet he included none of the bands he listened to, but only bands that he considered as mainstream. Nevertheless, he told his non-punk friend that this was really good punk. The friend remained unknowing about this distinction and continued to ask for more music. When I asked my informant about this and whether he did not care that he was associated with the mainstream he laughed and

said, "The people to whom [the friend] plays those CDs must be convinced that I am some fucking skate punk or melodic punk, but why should I care, they are not punks." The other participants present laughed and claimed to have done similar things. "It's about keeping people away from the scene," my informant said, "I can't just give him the real stuff directly, he has to develop from that" (Field notes, Sweden, March 2011).

A similar event occurred during my fieldwork when I was having a beer with another informant at a pub, when his band was on tour. While we were sitting there talking, a rather drunk man approached us and kept insisting on knowing what we were talking about. Finally, I told him that we were discussing punk. The drunk guy, in his forties and dressed in a shirt and jeans, replied, "Punk, really, so what is punk then?" To this my informant replied, "Well punk is being yourself and not giving a fuck." I was in shock; this was the first time during the two years we had spent together that he had said something like this. Normally such a description of punk was part of his standard repertoire for defining the mainstream. I was, as it turned out, about to be even more shocked as the drunk guy turned around and walked away while saying, "Oh, I see, sorry I thought you were DIY-punks." My informant turned absolutely pale and hid his face in his hands. He remained that way while answering my questions: Of course he had not meant what he said, but why would he tell an outsider about what punk really was, he would not understand anyway, it was more convenient to use a mainstream definition of punk. The problem, however, was that this turned out to be someone who was now probably laughing with his friends for having tricked my informant into making a fool out of himself. We left the bar, and did not see the guy again, even though I spent the whole night looking for him in the crowd at the show (Field notes, Sweden, Sept 2007).

Both these stories refer to a temporary shift of patterns that relies on a scripted protection of the scene, a selective presentation of information about subcultural meaning (cf. Nash 1980:94). Yet, it also shows how deeply reflexivity is tied to the enactment of a concave pattern. Far from ignoring alternative interpretations of the sacred, such an enactment depends on the knowledge of these and an active differentiation from them.

Persistent shifts of patterns

Even though temporarily shifts between patterns were rather common, subcultural identification occurred in relation to one particular pattern. This provided a consistency both in terms of how punk was performed and authenticated, as well as where. Further, similar to the discussion in chapter 7 on the social network and support, this meant that even though participants did sometimes enact a distinction against a shallow, complacent, or dependent internal mainstream within a convex pattern, the background text and the scripts meant that such a performance did not stick. If not inauthenticated, it

was ignored, and participants were corrected back in line. This is the "cultural" in relation to the "sub":

> [Culture] provides in advance some basic categories, a positive pattern in which ideas and values are tidily ordered. And above all, it has authority, since each is induced to assent because of the assent of others (Douglas 1966:38f).

But this consistency also had important consequences for what was possible to fuse within each pattern. The spatial and symbolic play within a convex pattern where the defined mainstream is physically and directly taken on meant that a lot of jobs or hobbies were hard to fuse with the distinction from a normal and complaisant external mainstream. Taking a "real job" outside the subcultural or studying at the university was, just as the scripted encounter with the mainstream of "going your own way," a matter of negotiating one's own subcultural identification, as a matter of remaining different and free. Thus if the participation in the mainstream did not involve taking on this mainstream and retaining the distance to it, action was instantly inauthenticated and participants were accused of selling out.

This was the most common way of dropping a punk identity within a convex pattern, as continually claiming it while at the same time pursuing an academic or professional career would not fuse. Sometimes this had rather intriguing consequences. A number of participants that I followed in both Indonesia and Sweden refused for example to apply for a "real job" or study at the university even though their class background clearly pointed to such a choice. These participants had parents who either had an academic degree or an academic career in medicine, social sciences, and law, while others had parents who were business owners. Instead they applied for jobs in which they could remain subculturally active, working in a clothing store, as tattoo artists, or bartending at the local club or bar.

Drawing from the work of Bourdieu (1984), Thornton (1997c:206) argues that subcultural participation involves a procrastination of a "social ageing," temporally resisting the "disinvestment [...] which leads agents to adjust their aspirations to their objective chances" (Bourdieu 1984:110). Thornton's argument is that this is what makes subcultures attractive to participants even beyond their youth. I would rather see this as a consequence than a strategy. To remain subculturally active within a convex framework precludes the pursuit of a career or degree unless this involves taking on the defined mainstream. Regardless of class background, and whether they continued to claim a subcultural identity through their late twenties and thirties, or in some cases even forties and fifties, the scripts of essential difference and the prohibition against being like everyone else were enacted to inauthenticate both education and having a real job. Thus participants would tell similar stories of how intelligent they were and how easily learned new things, yet that they

actively chose to opt out of scholarly rewards as a way of showing depth and subcultural commitment, as well as a contempt for the restricted mainstream. What matters is not so much whether participants were intelligent and could have gotten a degree or not, but rather that the articulated desire to was inauthenticated and placed as contrary to the authenticated emancipated and intrinsically different individual. Temporary shifts between patterns were not enough to negotiate such transgressions of the boundary to the external mainstream. More persistent shifts were, however, even though this included a complete change in how identities and styles were performed and authenticated.

Among the participants I followed the most common of such shifts was that from a convex pattern to a concave. This was also a movement that was rather easy to fuse with both the background distinction against a shallow, hedonist, or dependent mainstream, as the scripts of development and subordination to the collective refer directly to the split with a previous punk identity. When this occurred this involved not only a change in background but also in performances and authentications of style and identity, as well as the emplacement of the subcultural. This often resulted in a clear breach between the present and the past: participants left their former bands, ceased to hang out with certain people at certain places, etc.. As their own subcultural identities were authenticated in opposition to their previous subcultural involvement, the shift to a concave pattern was rather subtle.

Such a shift from a convex to a concave pattern enabled another relationship with the non-subcultural. Given that what was conceived of as external to the subcultural within a concave pattern was rather meaningless in relation to performances and authentications of styles and identities, as long as subcultural performances were toned down, participation in what was considered outside of the subcultural was possible to fuse with a subcultural identity. Accordingly, having a job or going to the university was not defined as something necessarily polluting, rather the other way around. Many of the participants I followed that enacted a concave pattern did pursue a university degree, mostly in social sciences, and having a "real job" was not something polluting in itself. Instead this could easily be fused with the emphasis on development, subordination of the individual to the collective, and a political stance, as long as it was performed as positive for the scene. Studies in law, medicine, or economics were for example authenticated as they provided needed knowledge and experience to scene-related chores such as accounting and handling possible prosecution or injuries, as were jobs in design and printing. Similarly, gender studies, political science, and sociology were authenticated through a political stance.

Again, this is intriguing in relation to class background. Far from being a resistance against a social aging, some participants who had a working class background would pursue an academic degree, articulated not as a means to break away from their past, but rather to work to improve punk. Other partic-

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ipants could indeed meet the demands of their parents by getting a degree. The exclusivity that follows from a concave pattern makes participation within the non-subcultural possible, as the boundary work is internal to the subcultural, and what is beyond it is rather meaningless. Still, supporting the argument that subcultural developments were more a matter of consequences than strategies, none of my informants expressed having switched patterns in order to pursue a professional or academic career. Instead such persistent movements were tied to space, as I will return to shortly.

The opposite movement, from the enactment of a concave pattern to a convex, goes for example for bands that were pushed out from the scene for having breached the prohibitions meant to protect the scene. I followed a number of such bands in Indonesia and Sweden. Rumors of them selling out the scene would pick up fast and they were getting less and less offers to play within the scene. These bands were faced with few choices: either they quit the band so as prove their allegiance to the scene, or they left the scene and started playing shows somewhere else. In the latter case, such a move of audiences often involved a change of patterns, as the internal distinction against the shallow, complacent, and dependent punks would not fuse with playing shows outside of the scene, nor with the audience. This in turn only furthered their exclusion from the scene.

Such shifts from the enactment of a concave pattern to a convex were usually handled by criticizing the scene for being restricting, and asserting that such a move instead meant a realization of who you really were. Johanna, a 30-year-old participant that I had followed for almost five years, had gradually shifted towards a convex pattern. Tired of what she saw as an abundance of rules, she started to express among her friends that punk was about being yourself rather than an internal dispute. As she got a job in another city she completed this shift, dyed her hair pink, and associated with participants that had no connection to the scene. Whereas she had previously been a politically active vegan and animal rights defender, the last time I met her she had a leather jacket and boots and was eating a pizza. Even though I asked her several times about her previous identification within a concave pattern, she merely shrugged this off, arguing that she had not really changed. Other participants that switched from a concave to a convex expressed their transitions similarly, that is, by downplaying that it was a shift in the first place.

The spatial dimensions of these transitions should not be underestimated. Shifts from one pattern to another were usually preceded by a change of place, moving to a new city or school, meeting new friends, or starting to play in a new band. Doing fieldwork within the defined subculturally exclusive was especially telling in this aspect. Participants would come for a show, then become increasingly involved in the scene-related chores helping to set up the equipment, cook food for the show, or take care of admission. The more they stayed within the realm of the scene, the more they began

enacting a concave pattern in claiming their identities and authenticating others.

The establishment of a subcultural exclusive place was integral in this matter. In both Sweden and Indonesia I did fieldwork in the same cities over the course of several years, which made it possible for me to study the development of the subcultural, as well as the movement of participants between both pattern and subcultural places over time. In cities where there was no established subcultural exclusive place, the enactment of a concave pattern was less common than in cities in which there was such a place. Further, if such an established space was dissolved, as happened repeatedly when the lease had expired or the local authorities and the police shut it down, the enactment of a concave pattern decreased (cf. Glass 2012:711f). If a new place was not secured, participants who retained a concave pattern often moved to another city where the scene was seen as strong. In Indonesia where a lease was hard to obtain due to participants having problems carrying such a cost, most of the actions of the participants that enacted a concave patterned strove to establish such a place at least temporarily. When this happened there was also an increase of participants who enacted a concave pattern.

Similarly, in cities where there were not more than a few dozen participants, the subcultural pattern enacted depended entirely on the spatial dimension. If a temporary subcultural exclusive place was established, as when participants organized shows with visiting bands in basements or rehearsal rooms, a concave pattern dominated in the planning, executing, and reflecting over the situation. On the contrary, if the staging of such exclusive shows were few and far between, a convex pattern dominated as action and style that were not centered on the exclusive and internal could more easily be fused against such a background. To put it the other way around, sustaining an identity in opposition to the mainstream punks was rather hard to fuse without the emplacement of subcultural sacred as the sealed off and exclusive. Thus, when the emplacements of performances suddenly changed, this was often followed by a change in terms of identification. Barth's claim on the circumstantial limitation of identity work is worth considering in relation to this:

> Since ethnic identity is associated with a culturally specific set of value standards, it follows that there are circumstances where such an identity can be moderately successfully realized, and limits beyond which such success is precluded. I will argue that ethnic identities will not be retained beyond these limits, because allegiance to basic value standards will not be sustained where one's own comparative performance is utterly inadequate (Barth 1969:25).

Apart from Barth's argument that identification thus involves both a performance and a validation of that performance by others, the important part is

that he recognizes that there are circumstances that make a successful realization of identity hard to sustain; some circumstances are more felicitous than others, to borrow from Austin (1962:22). A change of place, as in moving to a new city or beginning to frequent the subcultural exclusive of the scene, means an alternation of these circumstances in relation to the background, limiting what kind of identity can be mobilized and authenticated. This brings the discussion to who constitutes the audience and how this differs between different enactments and emplacements of the subcultural sacred.

8.2.3. Refining subcultural audiences

So far in this chapter I have argued that the openness regarding space is enabled and restricted by the enacted background text and foreground scripts that preclude some of those present from fully participating. This constitutes the subcultural appropriation of space within the convex and concave patterns. What is important here is an ongoing and one-way dialogue with the mainstream: a spatial and symbolic play that is carefully orchestrated and supervised. Even if the defined mainstream is physically present, it is reduced to the backdrop through participants' performances and authentications. The background texts of both a convex and a concave pattern point to the mainstream as the passive and ignorant, per definition subordinated to the set apart. The stories of the treatment of the two Finnish punks, or of the provocation and confrontation of passers by, are not centered on what the defined mainstream does or thinks; what matters is how their subordination is communicated, experienced, and interpreted. Accordingly, this calls for a refinement of the concept of the audience.

In reference to the enactment of a convex pattern, most of the time it did not matter if outsiders were "really" appalled, frightened, annoyed, or even aware of the distinction made by participants. Rather, participants attributed such fear, annoyance, and shock to the mainstream. As I noted in chapter 6, every time a convex pattern was enacted participants expressed that they were, looked, and behaved differently than the mainstream. This is the play between a conceived difference and a perceived one. Participants thought of themselves as essentially being different than the external mainstream, a difference that was strengthened by the invalidation of the present outside as constituting a part of the audience. This way, even if the physical representations of the mainstream were unaware of the distinction being made, participants still articulated them as such. To be sure, most people are not that shocked by a studded belt, baggy pants, or dyed hair, yet when authenticating style and identities the external mainstream was imputed with such an attitude, separating the outsiders from the background text through an articulated difference that fuses both the performance and the audience to this background.

Consider for example MacDonald's remark about the graffiti writers she followed:

> This is not really a war, the subway system is not really a battleground, the writers do not really fight, the spray can is not really a gun and the subculture is not really an army. They become these things through the work writers put in both on stage and behind the scenes. They write the script, they act the part and they design the costumes and props which sustain the authenticity and quality of this production […] Ultimately, [the authorities] play the most important, albeit inadvertent, part in this production—the leading role. Without their opposition, there would be no enemy and without an enemy, there would be no war (2001:112f).

Following from MacDonald's positioning of the authorities as being assigned an important role in the subcultural performance, my point is that the audience is selected and interpreted through the same background and scripts as the performance. Likewise, the mainstream is exempted from this audience on the same grounds.

A case in point in regards to the part of the attributed opposition is the definition of parents as a representation of the mainstream within a convex pattern. With a few exceptions that either referred to the parent being or having been part of the subcultural, parents were always articulated as part of the normal or complaisant external mainstream. The binaries were worked so that parents would be the repressive, controlling, ignorant, and complaisant, while participants just wanted to be who they really were. However, and to my initial surprise, a lot of these parents were positive about their children's involvement in punk. At times I stayed at participants' homes for a few nights, and in some cases for weeks, and I thus had the opportunity to observe how they interacted with their family members, as well as talk to them myself. In Indonesia I was staying with an informant who I had previously heard discuss how much his mom hated what he had done to his body and life. He had said, "She cannot tolerate my provocative style, she don't talk to me." A few days later the following incident occurred:

> Ketut is sitting in a chair smoking a joint when his mother comes through the door. Terrified I go all quiet. She cannot see me and she turns to him asking, "So how was the show last night, were there a lot of people?" He answers, "Oh it was great you know Ali and all the others were there." He then stops and looks at me. His mother turns around, sees me and says, "Oh hi Erik I didn't know you were here." She then leaves. He is quiet for a few moments, and then he says with a smile, "Really, she's kind of cool" (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan 2005).

There are a number of similar stories in my data, and needless to say this event did not change Ketut's performance of his mother as representative of the mainstream to other participants. The scripted difference, freedom and

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going your own way all made it easier to fuse parents, or colleagues, class-mates, and teachers for that matter, with the restricted and normal main-stream, than to claim the opposite. In fact, not doing so could easily fall back on you: "If you think that they are cool, then are you *really* different?" (cf. Goffman 1967:43)

This was no different within a concave pattern, the shallow punks consti-tuting just an inverted representation of the sacred. What the mainstream punks actually did, or thought, did not matter. Like parents, teachers, politi-cians, media, etc. within a convex pattern, the mainstream punks were ex-empted from the negotiation of meaning within the subcultural: their exist-ence was only necessary for the participants to define the situation, not the other way around. Consequently, the mainstream has no existence without the subcultural; it is constituted by outlining the prohibitions and boundaries that define the subcultural sacred. John Irwin captures this regarding the deviating performances of the surfers he investigated:

> [T]he surfing character […] chose to make a spectacle of himself […] He was not performing for the conventional society (it was not even necessary for outsiders to see the acts, though it was more convincing if they did), but for his own reference group (1977:114).

Irwin focuses here on the amusement deviant behavior had for the partici-pants rather than how outsiders reacted. The conventional society, in this case, has no other function than as a front against which action is performed. Their watching only makes the action more convincing. As Kidder says of the bike races among the messengers he studied; "those outside the race are ignored or treated simply as obstacles to be overcome" (2011:104, cf. Appa-durai 1998:101). Hence, outsiders are degraded to a part of the setting. Goffman (1986) refers to this position in his discussion regarding participant status. As opposed to a full participant status where the capacities and privi-leges to talk and to listen in a given situation are on somewhat equal terms, "toy status" refers to "the existence of some object, human or not, that is treated as if in frame, an object to address acts to or remarks about, but out of frame (disattendable) in regard to its capacity to hear and talk" (1986: 224, cf. Cahill et al. 1985:41). Even though Goffman does not expand on what consequences this might have for authenticating both action and ob-jects, he provides an important tool in the separation of those present: partic-ipation is not so much a matter of spatial position, but rather depends on the level of ratification. The particular background text and foreground script enacted validate both the audience and the participants.

Such refinement of the audience as a matter of a spatial and symbolic separation among those present means that arguing that the distinction be-tween the convex and the concave is equal to one between "the overground" versus "underground" would be missing the point. Within a convex pattern

punk is always performed as underground, and if styles are perceived to have emerged from punk into the mainstream then they are simply not punk anymore, like the vampire stepping out on a sunny day. As we I showed in relation to the commercial external mainstream, enacting a convex pattern is not so much resisting the commercial as a means of retaining an emancipated and differentiated identity. Participation in this defined mainstream is possible to fuse with this background distinction as long as other participants perceived the participants as consistent to individual freedom and difference. To be sure some participants who enacted a convex pattern refused to have anything to do with the external mainstream, while others negotiated their identity in direct relation to it, for example bands that were on major labels. Both performances follow from the same background text and the same foreground scripts.

Similarly, within a concave pattern authentic punk is always articulated as underground, not in relation to an external mainstream, but to other subcultural participants. What is beyond the subcultural is of little, if any, interest. This definition of the subcultural sacred is accomplished by a spatial segregation and the exemption of the majority of subcultural participants from the audience through the background's distinction against the shallow, complacent, or dependent mainstream. References to the underground here refer to a distancing from other punks' sponsors, major labels, and corporations, not these institutions *sui generis*. Consider for example this example between dealing with punk as a trend within a convex and a concave pattern:

> Because punk cannot, you cannot hear punk on the radio and what we do, it is so unique, and deviant, and special. It's not something you can buy anywhere. Even if JC [Swedish retail store] or H&M hire a designer who has been punk, they still can't make punk clothes, they just can't, you know! (Interview, Sweden-S5, 2004).

> Yeah, the thing of the commercialization of punk, studs being sold at H&M and you know. Well, of course you can find that a bit tiresome, but really no. I rather think it's the opposite, it doesn't threaten punk, that's what maintains punk. Let's say there are ten punks and seven out of them are true, and three of them are like fake, when there's a trend then it's suddenly a hundred punks, and when that trend has passed 90 of them disappear, but they will drag those three punks with them (Field notes, Sweden, Nov. 2005).

In the first excerpt punk is authenticated against an external mainstream that imposes itself on the subcultural. Punk is the opposite of the normal, it is "the deviant," and "the unique," that which cannot be consumed by the mainstream. Following from a scripted essential difference, what is argued here is that only punks can produce punk, it cannot be heard on the radio and it cannot be fabricated. If punk music is heard on the radio it is not punk anymore, just as the fictional fashion designer for these brands is not a punk,

but used to be one. In the second excerpt this is nowhere to be found. The commercialization of punk is dismissed with a mere shrug, "[It's] a bit tiresome, but no." Instead the distinction is directed against the fake punks, the trendy and temporary. "True" punks are those still standing, notwithstanding what is deemed cool or not. Thus any commoditization of punk objects external to punk is either meaningless, or articulated as something positive; new participants are invited, and when the trend disappears then so do the fake punks, with the result that the scene is cleansed from polluting objects. Whereas the first distinction is entirely directed externally to punk, the second is internal. What makes it even more interesting is that it is the same participant in both excerpts, having switched subcultural patterns during the year that had passed since the interview.

8.3. Inclusion and exclusion

Throughout the empirical chapters I have argued that the authentication of styles and identities have direct consequences for what can be performed, where, as well as what and where it cannot. So far I have covered how binary pairs such as absence/presence, available/exclusive, proximity/distance, and controlled/open are worked to structure subcultural space, subcultural establishment and development, and the individual movement between the convex and the concave patterns. Still, one crucial question remains in relation to the structuring of the subcultural: What consequences does the subcultural boundary work have for who is included in the subcultural sacred and who is not?

My data do not, for example deviate from previous research on punk in terms of male participants constituting the majority, as well as representations of both ethnic and sexual minorities being largely absent. Judging from what I have argued so far this might seem intriguing given a convex pattern's stress on emancipation and difference from the normal, and a concave pattern's emphasis on collective freedom and a highly political stance. This last part of the empirical chapters will therefore address the dynamic relationship between an external and internal mainstream and the inclusion and exclusion of subcultural participants.

8.3.1. Subcultural inclusion

In relation to the establishment and reproduction of the subcultural, I noted the importance of the simplicity of the background text's distinction towards an external mainstream within a convex pattern and how this related to DIY as a pervasive embodiment of this boundary. It is through this spatial and symbolic play between the inside and outside, the different and the undifferentiated, the open and closed, that new participants enter the subcultural. As

such, how inclusion is achieved and articulated within a convex pattern is critical in understanding to whom punk becomes attractive in the first place.

The prohibitions that define both the mainstream and subcultural sacred within a convex pattern revolve around the inversion of the distinction between fitting in and standing out through an emphasis on rights: the right to be yourself, the right to do what you want, and the right to be different. The foreground script of always having been different than everyone else makes it possible to turn the otherwise potentially disadvantageous—a feeling of not fitting in and being like everyone else—into something positive—a sign of being special. Thus, being picked on in school, being left out, or not having a lot of friends—the horror of most adolescences—can instead be redefined as representative of an intrinsic difference that preceded subcultural participation. It does not take much consideration to see how such a stance can be appealing to those who feel that they do not fit into the "normal," or to those who feel that they do not want to fit in.

A lot of the participants I followed told stories of being bullied in school and feeling lonely; how they were picked on for being fat, nerdy, different etc.. Even though these experiences of being left out were never recounted as a positive experience, the way they were articulated followed from a positive script of an essential intrinsic difference and finding a place within punk. As one of the previously bullied participants put it, "It felt so fucking good to become part of something, something that wasn't like everyone else, something different" (Interview, Sweden-S4 2004). More often, however, this intrinsic difference was articulated as a desire to step out from the normal and complaisant mainstream.

Daniel S. Traber's study on the L.A. punk scene between 1977 and 1983 is crucial in understanding how these scripts of an intrinsic difference and personal freedom relate to what he refers to as a "tactic of self-marginalization" (2001:30). Traber's point is that punk identities are pursued through an appropriation and celebration of an inner-city underclass forced to negotiate poverty, hunger, and dangers in the streets as a way of distancing themselves from the rest of society:

> It is a choice about a certain way of life: immersing oneself in urban decay and the asceticism of harsh poverty […] The lifestyle works as an inverse form of social mobility; in their own social formation punks earn status by becoming tougher and going "lower" (2001:35).

Glass (2012:703) also refers to an "imagined marginality," in terms of characteristics such as poor, dirty, and stigmatized, as being closely tied to authenticity in punk. This romanticized image of the down-and-out is prevalent in my data both within a convex and a concave pattern. There was an overall disdain for class privileges in terms of social, economic, and cultural capital, and these were instead downplayed and ignored, consistent with either the

stress on difference or with committing yourself to the collective (cf. Hjelle 2013:14). When such privileges were pursued, as in for example getting a university degree, this could only be fused within a concave pattern and then in relation to the individual working for the scene.

Further, the mobilization and authentication of style followed this romanticized image of the poor and the dirty. Within a convex pattern style was authenticated in relation to living out punk in the street, as in the dirty, torn, drunk, and outcast. The absence of style within a concave pattern was similarly authenticated through an emphasis on absolute necessity and practicality. Shoplifting, panhandling, destruction of property, fighting the police and security guards, and sleeping outdoors were also part of this ritual asceticism, albeit differently performed depending on the background. Performances of punk within both subcultural patterns thus emulate a notion of the marginalized and outcast.

The point here is not that there are no poor participants or participants from troubled homes in my data, as there certainly are, but rather that performing punk, within either of these patterns, attributes a meaning to poverty and the outcast that is independent from participants' socio-economic backgrounds. Workingclassness is then ritually signified, as "the exact origins of the individual punks [are] disguised or symbolically disfigured" (Hebdige 1979:121). The authentication of poverty within punk, as well as the torn and the dirty, is not a consequence of a struggle for survival or necessity. It is not even articulated as a means for change, but rather it is ritualized as a way to signal distance and refusal from either an external or internal mainstream. In relation to the commercial dimension of the external mainstream I showed that participants articulated resistance to the commercial not as a critique against economic, cultural, or structural inequalities but rather to remain different from the homogeneous and complaisant mass.

Similarly, the celebration of the marginalized and outcasts can only remain as long as they are perceived as such, thus the authentication of individuality and freedom are immanent to the subcultural. Those from whom this way of life is borrowed, just as the defined mainstream, remain objectified and denied both freedom and individuality (Traber 2007:116). Instead, the subcultural performance of a proximity to the down-and-out rather cements a stereotype of the latter as the dirty, poor, simple, and real instead of transcending such a categorization. The matter of an essential difference within a convex pattern, for example, is performed and attributed by the participants rather than ascribed from the outside. Even in those cases where participants articulated having been bullied or picked on, this was redefined according to an attribution of superiority in terms of a moral difference (cf. Hebdige 1979:120f). Traber (2001:33f) points to this as a rejection of privileges, with focus on difference against the conforming mass (cf. Glass 2012:703). Nevertheless, the performed proximity to marginalized groups becomes meaningful as a token in a boundary work against the mainstream

rather than as a working class resistance or political struggle to battle inequalities. Within a convex pattern the self-marginalization through the emphasis on an intrinsic and moral superiority represented through style become little less than "a privatized differentiation from the status quo as a person free from external control" (Traber 2007:122).

Excluding the already marginalized

What are still missing in Traber's analysis, however, are the consequences the celebration of the way of life of the marginalized and outcast have for subcultural inclusion and exclusion. The shunning of socio-economic privileges and the authentication of the down-and-out are first of all based on the freedom to do so. Redefining difference means having the power to do so. The deep interrelation between essential difference and individual rights to do and be what you want both attributes and orders difference, regardless of the origins and experiences of participants. Although this meaning structure does make it possible for the bullied, depressed, and excluded to find an alternative and positive evaluation of their exclusion, they exclude those for whom difference is not something self-attributed or self-defined. During my time in the field I rarely encountered participants with a minority background either in terms of ethnicity or sexuality. Punks in Java were mostly middle class, heterosexual, male, and Javanese, just as the punks I followed in Sweden were predominately middle class, heterosexual, male, and with an ethnic background of, if not Swedish, than at least Western European. This might seem peculiar within a subcultural structure that stresses difference and freedom, but on the other hand a convex pattern provides little, if any, meaning and authentication to an ascribed difference: You are not more punk because you have an immigrant background, have a non-heteronormative sexuality, are disabled, etc.. On the contrary, those who had experienced such an ascribed difference never performed their punk identity in relation to this ascribed difference, and neither did others authenticate them in relation to this. Rather, as I will also show in relation to gender shortly, they described this as a double difference.

Whereas the self-marginalized participants positively reevaluated a moral difference through stepping out and standing out from the external mainstream, ascribed differences remained intact. As one of my informants expressed it: "I always get in a fight, either people pick fights with me because I'm a punk, or because I'm a immigrant, usually for both" (Field notes, Sweden, June 2004). Whereas having an immigrant background can be renegotiated as something positive within for example hip-hop (see Mitchell 1996, Lull 2002:246f, Sernhede 2002), a convex pattern lacks such a structure of meaning. As Leblanc states, "[A]lthough most punks are not explicitly racist, the subculture implicitly excludes people of color" (1999:263). Further, one can ask how attractive self-marginalization is to those who already suffer from being marginalized.

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Regardless of what class and ethnic background participants had, the emphasis on self-marginalization against "everyone else," within a convex pattern, meant that ethnicity and class were articulated from the point of view of the majority—the marginalized and outcast being romanticized for being "lower." Consequently, whereas I agree with Tim Dean's (2009:38) point that "subcultures depathologizes their deviances," and render them meaningful, I would like to add that such a view has to include how these deviances are constructed and made sense of in the first place (cf. Khan-Harris 2007:73).

There is a second and even more problematic aspect to the emphasis on individual freedom and difference that relates to the inclusion of new participants and the exclusion of those already participating. Whenever I have met punks with racist paraphernalia and ideas during my fieldwork, these have been performed within a convex pattern. Even though the majority of punks I met articulated being anti-racist, I did sometimes encounter participants that were wearing racist slogans and patches. In Indonesia, for example, one of the places in which I did fieldwork involved participants who frequently addressed immigrants as a pest to the Indonesian society. They expressed hatred against Indonesians with a Chinese background, often verbally abusing these people in the street. These participants were still authenticated because they adhered to the background text of standing out. During the weeks I spent with this group such comments were rarely discussed and never inauthenticated within a convex pattern. I also encountered punks in Sweden who were critical against immigrants and who wore nationalistic shirts and slogans, and participants frequently made racist, homophobic, and sexist statements. These claims were as much inauthenticated as they were authenticated. Even though most participants I met never said anything remotely racist, the emphasis on thinking for yourself, individual freedom, and standing out had the consequence that such remarks were hard to completely defuse from the background (cf. Resborn and Resborn 2012:127ff).[37]

This relationship between punk and racism is not something new. Roger Sabin (1999), for example, argues that punk in Britain in the late 70s has been uncritically assessed in terms of racism. Sabin's argument is that far from being unanimously left wing and anti-racist, punk was characterized by a political ambiguity that was used by both the political left and right. Tracing articulations of anti-racism in interviews and fanzines, Sabin manages to show that an anti-racist stance against Asian immigrants—the group which the British far right focused their hatred against—was not only absent in lyrics and interviews, but many of the most popular subcultural figures of the

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[37] Such occasions were, by far, the hardest moments of my fieldwork, as I could not just sit there and do nothing about such remarks. I did on a number of times engage in rather heated discussions with these participants. The only thing such discussions resulted in was me being temporarily being shut out. As I noted in chapter 5, this also led to the only times I was threatened while in the field.

time openly made racist remarks against Jews, Puerto Ricans, Asians, as well as criticizing immigration and anti-racist organizations (Sabin 1999:206ff). Punk, he concludes, was no less or more racist/anti-racist than the society within which it occurred. The sharp distinction between racism and punk becomes even more ambivalent when considering the similarities between punk and subcultures on the extreme right. Ugo Corte and Bob Edwards (2008:10ff), for example, point to how the White Power scene values DIY, standing out, and becoming who you really are, thus making the foreground scripts of a convex pattern of punk and parts of the white supremacist scene at least potentially compatible.

Consequently, even though punk, within a convex pattern, is articulated as resisting the homogeneous and restrictive mainstream, the consequence of the emphasis on an intrinsic difference is the reproduction of punk as deeply homogeneous and restrictive. The combination of inclusion and exclusion—the availability of the subcultural through its emplacement and focus on difference, while at the same restricting this difference to a self-marginalized dominant view—means that marginalized groups in terms of ethnicity, sexuality, and class were largely exempted from subcultural inclusion. The lack of scripts to authenticate an internal critique against this exclusion, as well as the prohibitions against rules and the definition of politics as being a violation of individual freedom, only furthered the problem. The answers that participants gave to my questions regarding the homogenization of punk are indicative of this. Instead of being critical against punk, such homogenization was blamed on the marginalized individuals themselves, "It is not our fault that there are not more immigrants or fags in punk, if they don't want to be a part of it, it's their decision" (Field notes Sweden, June 2008). Accordingly although participants did celebrate the marginalized, these remain "hypothetical entrances" into the subcultural (Mullaney 2007:393). This is even more evident in relation to female participants.

8.3.2. The male authentic

The authentication of styles and identities within a convex pattern as the provocative, dirty, and tough, together with the inauthentication of rules and regulations of that style, have consequences beyond discouraging the inclusion of the already marginalized. They also work to exclude participants within the subcultural, as these authentications are highly gendered. Subcultural participation was not male-dominated only in terms of numbers but also as masculinity ran through both performances and authentications of style. This is consistent with the previous research on a gendered subcultural authenticity, both in punk (Leblanc 1999), straight edge (Haenfler 2004a, 2004b, Mullaney 2007), and graffiti (MacDonald 2001), making the lack of women within the subcultural a matter of an active exclusion of femininity rather than due to women's lack of interest in resistance, pursuit of social

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rather than political ends, or difference in parental control (cf. McRobbie and Garber 1976, McRobbie 1980, Brake 1985, Baron 1989a, 1989b). Leblanc (1999) for example points out that whereas the male punks in her study could claim authenticity through the acting out of a resistance against the mainstream, female punks had to battle a double struggle, resisting both societal and subcultural norms of femininity. Similarly, MacDonald (2001) states that masculinity was used as the yardstick for authenticity among the graffiti writers she followed, rendering the female graffiti writers fake, until proven real.

All of these aforementioned authors point to this relationship between masculinity and authenticity as deeply related to the symbolic representations of the subcultural. Jamie L. Mullaney (2007:393), for instance, notes that although the straight edgers she interviewed did articulate that everyone was free to participate regardless of race, gender, class, and sexuality, notions of authenticity as the hard, aggressive, and in control heavily restricted this inclusiveness. Leblanc also states that subcultural authenticity is related to an extreme style, confrontation, and violence, an ideal that was both defined and supervised. Against this authenticated subcultural representation, femininity is then painted as the fragile and emotional, the passive and inauthentic. As MacDonald (2001:130) notes, whereas male participants construct both authenticity and masculinity through subcultural actions and style, the combination of femininity and authenticity is impossible, making authenticity for female participants as much a matter of a distancing themselves from femininity as commitment to the subcultural (cf. Brake 1985:176). The feminized is thus rather a characteristic of the mainstream than of the authentic and subcultural (Free and Hughes 2003:139ff, c.f. Thornton 1995:100).

This gendered authentication of style and identity is prevalent in my data as well, although I will argue that the relationship between the different subcultural patterns needs to be addressed in order to understand the consequences this has for the subcultural as a whole as well as for possible change. Styles, as I have shown, were differently authenticated within a convex and a concave pattern, as was the regulation of inequalities. Nevertheless performances of punk within both subcultural patterns do indeed position femininity as polluting, and often as external to the subcultural. When the attractive male was performed and authenticated by female punks this was consistent with the authentication of punk to a much higher degree than when male participants articulated the attractive female. Female participants who enacted a convex pattern would claim attraction to the tough and stylistically different man who went his own way, whereas male participants articulated the beautiful, ordered, and clean as attractive in women. Thus whereas female participants associated attractive men with subcultural style, male participants separated the attractive women from the subcultural. This difference was less obvious within a concave pattern yet male participants

articulated beauty and style as the attractive while female participants almost exclusively articulated depth, politics, equality, and commitment. One could think that this would result in male punks being more vulnerable for having such a desire for the defined mainstream, but the bizarre consequence of this was that sexual relationships, in relation to the subcultural, were more damaging to female punks than to male. Female participants had to constantly validate their position within the subcultural, making a relationship within the subcultural potentially polluting. The inauthentication of participants as merely being someone's partner were for example exclusive to female participants; during my time in the field I never heard any male participant being reduced to "just the boyfriend." For female participants this was a constant threat.

> A: Guys just make room for each other in such a more natural way; "Oh you're that guy, ah shit, nice that you're here, welcome," really much more like that.
> B: Absolutely, if I had been a guy and had done the same things
> A: And you know as a girl you really have to prove that you actually listen to [the music] and have been there, and there.
> B: Yeah, and that you're not someone's fucking girlfriend.
> A: Yes, that you can get, like, you can get secretly interrogated, you know. That people make references, if you talk to someone who wants to know who you are then they make references to things that they don't think that you know of. Like being tested a bit, really you know, that you're presumed to be someone's girlfriend or for thinking that hanging out with punks is cool, or boys that are punk (Interview, Sweden-E3, 2008).

Other female participants also pointed to these double standards of sexual relations as well as in relation to subcultural authenticity, of having to prove something that was taken for granted in relation to male participants. Haenfler (2006:141) notes in his study on straight edge that whereas male participants are accepted by merely participating, female participants are judged against another standard, having to prove that their participation is authentic rather than just being the property of a male participant. Similarly, in the excerpt above male participation is described as the self-evident and simple—"nice that you're here, welcome"—whereas female participants are "secretly interrogated" and "tested," pointing to the ever-present situation "that you're presumed to be someone's girlfriend." The consequence is that female participation is authenticated in opposition to femininity, as this is related to both the temporary, shallow, and fake (cf. MacDonald 2001:136).

Yet, there is nothing in my data that suggests that female participants enter the subcultural through male participants; rather, they seemed to follow the same path as their male counterparts, being introduced to punk through a friend, family member, or mass media. Mullaney's (2007:401) findings in relation to this are even more appalling; although female straight edgers were accused by male participants of being attracted to straight edge because

of their partners, none of the female participants she followed entered the subcultural in such way, while three of the male participants she followed did.

Much like the homogenization of the subcultural in terms of ethnicity, sexuality, and class, gender inequality was not articulated as being a problem within a convex pattern. The scripted emphasis on individual difference and the absence of rules, as well as the authentication of the dirty, tough, outgoing, and loud, further established the authenticated participant as male. Representations of the sacred were almost entirely masculine within a convex pattern, as in, "The authentic punk? Well you know someone who really stands out, you know *he*'s just going against everything" (Interview, Sweden-W2, 2006, emphasis added). This authentication of the male punk was so prevalent that even female punks often described the authentic punk as a man when asked. Further, enacting a convex pattern provides few solutions to this, the prohibition of rules and the inauthentication of politics making it hard for participants to call for a change of attitudes. Similar to the articulation of the absence of ethnic and sexual minorities as being a matter of these individuals not wanting to be a part of punk, any gendered problems, such as the absence of female participants in bands, in the mosh-pit, or in the subcultural, were articulated as being a matter that had little to with punk (cf. Mullaney 2007:400). It was not punk's fault that women felt excluded; rather this was seen as a lack of consistency and commitment. They were too afraid to either get dirty, get hurt, or to stand out.

Regarding mosh-pits, there was no discussion of regulation in terms of including everyone within a convex pattern; you were either in or out, active or passive. As one punk told me: "The only legitimate way to leave the pit before the show ends is with a bleeding nose or broken arm" (Field notes Sweden, July 2011). To mosh was instead articulated as the legitimate way to fully experience the music. The exclusiveness was rather the whole point of it. It should be noted that although these mosh-pits were male dominated, they did frequently involve female participants, and in my data only a few female participants lamented the mosh pits excluding them from fully participating. Still, both female and male participants used this to distinguish the deep and active from the shallow and passive, arguing that most female participants were too "girly" to mosh (cf. Haenfler 2006:131). Far from being an all male ritual, moshing was nevertheless performed as such, creating a space that was conceived of as freed from the passive and fake, but also from women, creating and reinforcing the masculine through male bonding (cf. Bird 1996:120f).

The ambivalent positioning of politics within a convex pattern also meant that discussions on structural rather than individual inequalities were hard to fuse with the emphasis on moral superiority and freedom. Feminism for example was as often vilified as it was seen as something positive, especially if it referred to restrictions within the subcultural. As in this discussion be-

tween two male participants on what they think about calls for increased gender equality within punk:

> A: I can understand feminists, vegetarians, and vegans and all those things.
> B: Yeah, but I think it's an easy matter for feminists to become über-feminists, you know, that they really become like
> A: For all that, one has met people, you know who have been feminists and then they have become you know lesbians just because they hate men. That they construct such an image of hatred against men just because you know "Uh for fuck sakes, shave that pussy."
> B: I think that's wrong, because feminism I think
> A: Yeah sure, getting equally paid and such.
> B: Exactly.
> A: But you have to at least be able to maintain a decent personal hygiene. I mean, that you can do what you want with your body as long as that's something you feel comfortable with.
> B: Yeah, you shouldn't do something just to
> A: Just to go mainstream.
> B: They're like, "We should do like this so that the fucking old pricks understand what we are." I mean if you want to be equal, and I absolutely think that it should be that way, then it should be on equal terms.
> EH: But going mainstream, what do you mean by that?
> A: Yeah, going mainstream. Let's say that 85 out of a hundred girls shaves their genitals, arms and everything with a razor and
> B: Yeah that common.
> A: And then you have 15 who don't. 85 girls they are mainstream, the 15 who are on the side they look at those other girls as if they were shit. You know, "How the hell can you do like that, men are pigs, they don't deserve it," yeah you know what I mean.
> EH: But you have said that punk is against the mainstream.
> A: It definitely is, but
> B: Fundamentally yeah.
> A: Still, you have to have some kind of decent common sense, and look after yourself, I am not saying that you have to sit and shave your pussy, everything's natural, but still, in the end it is a certain freshness to it (Interview, Sweden-W1, 2008).

This performance follows from the same convex scripts that we have addressed above: Punk is personal freedom, the exception of rules and going your own way. The external mainstream in turn is restricting this freedom by imposing rules on what you should do and think. The positive performance of feminism follows from the stress on inner difference, freedom, and DIY: "you can do what you want with your body as long as that's something you feel comfortable with," "getting equally paid," etc.. This is the good feminism as it does not in any way contradict being punk, instead it fuses with the scripted intrinsic difference and going your own way. The working of feminism as negative, however, relates this to politics and restriction, the "über-feminists" who hate men and "become lesbians" as a direct consequence. This negative performance of feminism is instead worked along a

restriction of personal freedom, as it tells people what to do against their will. Further, it is invalidated because it imposes control on the feminine body, urging "girls" not to shave their bodies as a resistance to male desires. This working of the binaries precludes the alternative interpretation that altering your body to conform to a societal image of women as clean, soft, and youthful is even more restrictive.

The authentic punk in this excerpt is a man, as women are completely and utterly exempted from the sacred. Whereas punks are defined as in opposition to the normal and complaisant mainstream, "girls" are here instead expected to comply with such normality and restrictions. The consequence is that while punk should be against the mainstream, feminism should not. When asked if this does not interfere with their interpretation of punk, it becomes clear that the attractive female body is not included in punk; it is to be consumed by male punks demanding "a certain freshness" and thus a "shaved pussy." The boundary work between the subcultural and the mainstream within a convex pattern is thus extended to the male and the female, the dirty and the clean, and the active and the passive. Far from questioning the boundary between the male and the female, the enactment of a convex pattern has the consequence of strengthening this distinction. As one of Leblanc's female informants sums this up, "It's cool for a guy to be dirty, but for a girl it's not. Girls should be clean and girls should shave and should wear makeup" (1999:111).

8.3.3. The absence of a concave "solution" to subcultural homogeneity

Both the gendered authentication of styles and the individualization of the lack of heterogeneity in terms of ethnicity, sexuality, and class background should be an easy target for any enactment of a concave pattern. Such a critique would fuse with the background distinction against the shallow, self-satisfied, and dependent mainstream and points to the need for a scripted development and collective freedom.

On one level this certainly was the case. The gendered representations of the subcultural sacred referred to above were largely absent within a concave pattern; instead open discrimination against women was seen as highly polluting. Male participants were on several times excluded from the scene for having made sexist remarks or harassing female participants, and further these accusations were openly articulated at shows and meetings. There were workshops and discussions including both male and female participants on how to increase the number of active female participants, as well as how to limit male participants taking up too much space both physically and verbally. Further, a number of participants, mostly female, did openly engage in non-heteronormative relations with other participants. Participants would

also decorate the interior of subcultural places with rainbows and pink triangles and there were workshops and collaborations with different queer activists.

Further, moshing was for example regulated so as to not exclude participants on the basis of their physical features. Most subcultural exclusive spaces featured a list of prohibition next to entrance saying, "no sexism, no racism, no homophobia," and when the defined mainstream was openly confronted, as in the example with the two Finnish punks, the main accusation would center on having breached these prohibitions. Still, it is exactly such a stance that is the vital point here, because these performances of gender equality, and ethnic and sexual diversity had little effect on the subcultural as a whole in terms of inclusion. This was due to two rather obvious consequences of the enactment of a concave pattern.

First of all, the prohibitions against sexism, racism, and homophobia were mainly aimed at excluding the shallow, ignorant, and dependent mainstream punks, rather than changing their opinions. The reactive characteristic of most enactments of a concave pattern is indicative of this. What matters was not so much what you were, as that you were not as the mainstream. As the complacent mainstream was defined as the ignorant, apolitical individual, emphasis was on an anti-stance rather than a positive definition of for example integration. Thus whereas previous punk researchers have stressed the political resistance and potential associated with punk and especially with that of the scene (cf. Leblanc 1999, Clarke 2003, Gosling 2004, O'Connor 2008), my data rather suggest that the consequence of a political stance was rather an increased boundary work meant to protect the subcultural sacred within a concave pattern.

Let me briefly comment here on the more recent attempts to develop subcultural theory through a new social movement (NSM) approach. Williams and Cherry (2011:165ff), for example, point to social movements and subcultures being similar in their focus on the disenfranchised against the established, the "new" of NSM referring to the notion that such a focus may very well emanate from within the already established. Corte (2012:56) adds to this by arguing that NSM theory can cover more goal-oriented and orchestrated manners among participants, whereas subcultures rather refer to a sharing of style, values, and taste. For Williams and Cherry this is where the point of contact lies, as an NSM approach to subcultures allows an appreciation of the political nature of subcultures without having to rely on a class-based rhetoric (2011:169). I do think that the relationship between new social movements and subcultural groups deserves further research, especially in terms of how the relationship between plural subcultural patterns of meanings precludes or allows for collaboration with other groups. The involvement of some of my informants in a variety of groups concerned with the environment, globalization, the meat and fur industry, and racism further adds to this. What I want to focus on here, however, is what I find to be the

crucial difference between social movements and subcultures. To me this boils down to a matter of how change is articulated, as well as for whom such change is articulated as needed.

Whereas a social movement works to move the general public and influence the opinion of both supporters and adversaries (Eyerman 2006:194, cf. Ring 2007:19), the definition of the subcultural here refers to an immanent movement. The refinement of the concept of the audience captures this difference from social movements, as the separation and definition of audiences prevalent within both patterns refer to performances being directed within the subcultural. There is no "general public" to be "moved," or adversary to influence, because in the case of a convex pattern the former is to be confronted, while within a concave its opinions are meaningless as emphasis is rather on the active exclusion of the latter. In short, within both patterns focus is entirely on a change within the subcultural, and society at large is either opposed or avoided. Change within a convex pattern refers to an individual change meant to emancipate and separate the already different from the normal and complaisant outside. The foreground scripts of a concave pattern instead point to a collective change meant to secure a secluded and freed subcultural space.

Consequently, even though participants that enacted a concave pattern did have extensive discussions on politics, were involved in political groups—such as Anti-Fascist Action, Anarchist Black Cross, Animal Liberation Front, and No One Is Illegal—and emphasized equality in terms of gender, class, sexuality, and ethnicity, the consequence in relation to the subcultural was an increased exclusion and policing of boundaries. There was, for example, a clear distinction in terms of political action between punk and political groups. Political action that was carried out against society—porn shops, mink farmers, or groups such as neo-Nazis—was not articulated *as* punk, but rather as resonating *with* what punk should be. As soon as politics related to the subcultural, they were reduced to a means to keep the mainstream punks at bay, inauthenticating those who did not conform to these rules. Participants were thus seen as acting as an articulated collective representing the scene; in the encounter with what was perceived as external to the subcultural, they were instead articulated as acting as individual participants part of a political collective associated with the scene. Consistent with the articulation of DIY as doing-it-ourselves, collective freedom was, similarly to individual freedom within a convex pattern, inevitably exclusive to the subcultural sacred. The mainstream was not to be freed, it was to be controlled.

The second consequence of the enactments of a concave pattern in relation to the homogenization of the subcultural is directly related to the first, as it puts the protection of the scene as superordinate thorough subcultural change. There were no real initiatives to actively include either sexual and ethnic minorities or structurally marginalized individuals, if they were outside of the scene. In Indonesia, for example, there were almost no women

within the defined boundaries of the scene, yet the discussions on how to improve the situation stopped at pointing out that this was due to the machoism and sexism of the mainstream punks. Similarly, participants in Sweden defined problems within the scene as due to the shallowness, complacency, and dependency of the mainstream punks: If they were not as focused on looking cool and enjoying themselves at the expense of others then punk would be more inclusive and welcoming. Still, there were few attempts at actively seeking out and changing this defined fallacy. Participants could have gone to shows outside of the scene to hand out pamphlets and initiate discussions, or they could have intervened when they witnessed what they defined as shallow or hedonist displays of punk. Further, they could have participated in mass media, played shows at large festivals, or openly performed their style and identities so as to demonstrate an alternative interpretation of the subcultural. Instead, such actions were dismissed as selling out the scene.

Opposition was instead reserved for the subcultural exclusive, reducing the political to preaching to the choir. Although the boundary work against an internal mainstream rested on prohibitions meant to secure an equal space where participants could be free, this referred to changing those already participating in the subcultural rather than attracting new participants. The consequence of this was, as I pointed to above, that many participants outside of the sacred realm of the scene had no idea of the need for regulations or what these were supposed to accomplish.

This immanent movement in regards to change relates to both the emplacement of the subcultural sacred and the script of development. As the spatial play with the inside and outside, the available and exclusive, was absent within the emplacements of the subcultural sacred within a concave pattern, few participants entered the subcultural through a concave pattern, and there was no articulated interest in changing this either. Thus even though an ascribed identity such as being immigrant, homosexual, or disabled was possible to fuse with a concave pattern, doing so all too often included enacting a convex pattern initially. This scripted development from the shallow to the deep, from the individual to the collective, effectively shut out the very diversity that such a development was meant to accomplish.

Several participants openly stated that it was good that the scene was exclusive as it separated the real punks from the fake. The only way the mainstream could move from the profane to the sacred was through taking responsibility and choosing to go beyond the shallow. Further, although regulations were to be forced upon the mainstream if present within the sacred realm of the scene, change was only authenticated if articulated as active and conscious. It had to be initiated by the participants themselves. As one of my Indonesian key informants put it, when asked about what characterized the scene:

> One of our, not agreements, but it's more like an attitude or manifesto we have to be as inclusive as possible and not exclusive, everyone is welcome as long as they are into the DIY-ethics and non-sexist, non-racist, non-homophobic and that's it (Field notes, Indonesia, Jan 2005).

Consequently the relationship between availability/exclusivity, proximity/distance, and overt/covert as well as that of the positioning of inside/outside as either an external or internal matter, the interrelation of these two subcultural patterns, render punk conservative and change as immanent to the subcultural. Rather than fighting for, or to improve on the situation of, disenfranchised groups, punk in this sense remains a representation of the dominant.

8.4. Concluding remarks

I want to return to the critique against the previous research's reluctance to treat the subcultural as a relatively autonomous structure of meanings, with the consequence that both the "sub" and the "cultural" become dependent variables in analyzing both the subcultural and the subcultural authentic. From such point of view the similarities in how punk was performed in Sweden and Indonesia, as well as the consistent differences in regards to how the mainstream and the subcultural sacred were articulated, are hard to explain.

Whereas the previous two chapters have focused on the two subcultural patterns as separated, the purpose of this chapter has been to point to how they relate to each other in the subcultural structuring of participation, transitions, audiences, as well as the establishment of the subcultural in the first place. In this chapter I have shown how the interrelation between a convex and a concave pattern can be used to explain the structuring of the subcultural. This is the relative autonomy of the subcultural, an examination of the formulas of classification and interpretation within which both the subcultural and the mainstream are articulated and given meaning. And further, that these formulas enable some styles and identities to be more easily fused with this background, while obstructing others. The subcultural, in this sense, reproduces itself; by enacting these patterns participants establish and reproduce both the subcultural sacred and the profane. Consequently, punk in Indonesia and Sweden is similarly structured and performed because it follows from a similar relationship between the enactment and emplacement of a convex and a concave pattern of meaning.

Throughout this chapter I have emphasized the spatial dimensions of the relationship between the convex and the concave, and how their enactment involves working the binaries of open/closed, available/exclusive, absence/presence, proximity/distance, etc. so as to position the positive as

analogous to the subcultural sacred and the negative to the mainstream. Further, as the definitions of the subcultural sacred and the mainstream differ between these two patterns, so does the binary work through which they are extended. Within a convex pattern this refers to the emplacement of a superior minority status as the open and available performance of difference and freedom from a present and proximate mainstream. At the same time, this blurring of the spatial border to the defined mainstream is directly related to a reinstitution and strengthening of that border stylistically. This play between the open and closed works to disseminate subcultural style through a variety of channels and to attract new participants. Still, the stylistic boundary work orders this play with the inside and outside, between the old and the new, by reproducing a shared feeling of separation from the defined mainstream through the scripts of essential difference, just being, and going your own way. Performing punk from within a convex pattern is then open only to be closed.

The emplacements of the subcultural sacred within a concave pattern, on the other hand, extend the regulation of access and participation spatially: A closed and exclusive space is established by the absence of, and distance to, the defined mainstream. The reactive stance of the enactment and emplacement of the subcultural sacred within a concave pattern is what brings change and development to the subcultural as a whole, as the emphasis on development, as well as on a translocal elsewhere, is communicated as a means to protect the sacred realm of the scene. In relation to this I showed for example how the development of a concave pattern in Indonesia directly related to calls for protection and development within other parts of the scene. Through fanzines and subcultural communication, participants learned that in order to achieve a collective freed space, access and participation needed to be regulated. Performing punk within a concave pattern is thus closed in order to be open.

The interrelation of different workings of the binaries further explains both subcultural coexistence of different interpretations, and the homogeneity in terms of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class. Inclusion of new participants occurs in relation to the open—the inclusion of those who do not, or have no desire to, fit in with "everyone else." Yet, what is spatially opened is then stylistically closed through the scripted consistency between the extrinsic representations of an intrinsic difference through style. Difference is thus ordered and directed as a standing out from the external mainstream, rendering it a matter of self-marginalization rather than an ascribed marginalization. Regardless of participants' ethnicity, sexuality, or class background, difference was performed in relation to a subcultural script and background, pushing the already marginalized into a romanticized stereotype as the simple, lower, outcast, and dirty—part of the boundary work against the mainstream. The binary work involved in the enactment of a concave pattern did little to change this. The emphasis on the closed and regulated had the con-

sequence that in order to be authenticated participants had to develop from the general and subordinate themselves to the scene. The openness that this regulation was to produce was thus limited to those who already belonged to the sacred. Different interpretations of the sacred and the mainstream, as well as the exclusion of minorities, were thus tolerated within a concave pattern as long as they did not intrude on the exclusivity of the scene and the distance to the defined mainstream.

Punk is thus structured through the interrelation of the convex and concave patterns, through differences in where, when, and for whom, punk is performed. This interrelation has as its foundation an ongoing and one-way dialogue with the defined mainstream, a spatial and symbolic play between the open and closed, and the available and the exclusive, that is carefully staged and supervised. This play refers to an inclusion through exclusion, a selection and validation of a subcultural audience that is defined by the subcultural pattern enacted, not by presence or proximity. Both subcultural patterns point to the mainstream as being the passive, shallow, and ignorant, per definition subordinated to the set apart. Hence, change is therefore immanent to the subcultural, while the mainstream is there only to be controlled.

9. Conclusion

In this last chapter I want to recapitulate my argument throughout this thesis by pointing to four main findings. The first of these refers to the disenthrall-ment of the mainstream from having an inherent meaning as "the outside," "the dominant," or "the commercial," but also from having a single meaning. Instead, I have shown how different definitions of the mainstream lead to different scripts for authenticating styles and identities. The second point I want to make refers to the ordering of different definitions of the mainstream into two distinct subcultural patterns of meaning based on how the main-stream is positioned. In so doing I have stressed the relative autonomy of the subcultural, pointing to the similarities between how punk was performed in Sweden and Indonesia, as well as the consistent differences across these two cases. The third finding calls attention to the convex-concave model as a comprehensive and transparent model for understanding plural subcultural authentications, by focusing on structures of meaning, rather than individual participants or a presumed resistance. All of these findings are based on my fourth point, which refers to the sampling of participants. Instead of relying on my own presumptions of the field, I have actively sought to challenge them through a strategy of reversed membership validation. This sets this work apart from previous subcultural studies. Lastly, I will briefly comment on the applicability of the convex-concave model beyond this particular study.

The "sub" and the "cultural" of the subcultural

The empirical purpose of this study has been to investigate how participants define both the subcultural authentic as well as the mainstream, and how this relates to differences and similarities within and across groups of partici-pants. In short, how is the distance from the mainstream communicated, interpreted, and acted upon?

Theoretically, this has included relating similarly structured differences in relation to how the mainstream is positioned and the consequences this posi-tioning have for the authentication of styles and identities. I started by point-ing out the gaps in the previous research on punk and subcultural theory in relation to plural definitions of the mainstream and the authentic, arguing that subcultural heterogeneities were treated either as anomalies, or as a mat-ter of differences in terms of commitment, class background, or the individ-ual interpretations of the subcultural. Instead, I called for a refinement of the

relationship between the subcultural, the mainstream, and the authentic so as to accommodate differences and similarities, and contrast as well as unity. Drawing from the work of Geertz, Appadurai, and Alexander, I suggested an increased emphasis on the "cultural" aspect of the subcultural, stressing the contrastive dimension of meaning and how objects, actions, and identities are made sense of through formulas of classification and interpretation, what Geertz (1973c:213) calls "an intricate structure of interrelated meanings." This means that instead of focusing of style, I have sought to map out how subcultural styles and identities are made meaningful within such a patterned set of meanings. In short, it is the meaning attached to the object that is subcultural; the object itself is merely the material representation of the subcultural (cf. Durkheim 1915:189).

This I have argued is a performance of the subcultural. There are no objects that are intrinsically subcultural, neither are there any essentially mainstream nor authentic objects. In order for them to appear as such, they need to be performed by participants in relation to a background text, script, and to an audience. Consequently, the same object can be performed differently by drawing upon different binaries, or by working the same binaries differently, to extend the subcultural through the use of analogies and metaphors.

From this discussion, I argued that the prefix "sub" has to be related to this patterning of meaning, because if authenticated these performances are seen to represent a perceived distance to a homogenized other: the mainstream. Instead of presuming that this mainstream has an intrinsic meaning as the commercial, or as a dominant Culture, I pointed to the mainstream and the subcultural as being in a dialectic relationship: The communication, interpretation, and acting upon of a perceived difference constructs both the subcultural and the mainstream, the latter as it represents the former negatively. Consequently, this combination of the "sub" and the "cultural" pointed to an investigation of the patterns of meanings within which the separation of the subcultural from the mainstream is made both meaningful and authentic.

The relational aspect of the subcultural and the mainstream

The first of the main findings of this thesis refers to the answer to the first of the research questions stated in the introduction: a) *How and in opposition to what is punk defined and lived out by punks in Sweden and Indonesia?* By analyzing how participants performed and authenticated styles and identities, I pointed to six different definitions of the mainstream, each referring to a particular articulation of the subcultural sacred and with different consequences that enable some performances of punk to be authenticated while limiting or excluding others.

The first of these referred to the mainstream as the normal and undifferentiated outside, characterized by a desire to be like everyone else. This involved both a present and general outside, as in a non-subcultural outside

that participants encountered on the street, in school, at home, or through media. This normal mainstream was both established and strengthened through an articulation of the subcultural sacred as an intrinsic and essential difference that preceded subcultural involvement. Participants mobilized and authenticated subcultural identities by drawing on a shared state of always having been different. The consequence was that conspicuous style and standing out were seen as representative of the subcultural sacred: the consistency of an extrinsic display to an intrinsic difference.

The second definition of the mainstream emphasized a homogenized outside that was morally inferior to the subcultural, as the outside was seen as ultimately restricted and passive. This complaisant mainstream was defined as happy to comply with the societal norms and rules and do what they were told. The script through which this background distinction was brought to the front articulated the subcultural sacred as the emancipated individual through a prohibition against rules and restrictions, instead stressing "just being." The authentications of styles and identities in reference to the emancipation from the restricted had the consequence that politics were worked along the negative side of the binaries and addressed as indicative of the serious, restricting, and boring. Similarly, the absence of a conspicuous style was inauthenticated as it pointed to a lack of consistency with who you really were: the freed individual instead is able to do what s/he wants, not being afraid or restricted by what everyone else would think.

The third definition of the mainstream differed from the first two, as it positioned the mainstream as an active threat to the subcultural. This commercial mainstream was instead defined as institutions, such as major labels, mass media, and corporations, seeking to capitalize on punk and turn it into another commodity. The subcultural sacred articulated in relation to this threatening mainstream clarified the separation from the commercial through reinstituting difference where it had been blurred: real punks did not concede to the demands of the commercial in terms of a change of sound, dress, ideas, etc., Instead, the script through which this separation was achieved referred to a focus on DIY as in going your own way. The consequences of this were that the commercial was fought not in terms of an anti-capitalist or anti-consumerist stance, but in order to secure the boundary between the set apart and the undifferentiated. Participation in this defined mainstream was thus authenticated as long as participants retained an essential difference and personal freedom vis-à-vis major labels, mass media, and sponsors. DIY was the positive outcome of such a performance and selling out the negative, both referring to a negotiated identification revolving around the maintenance and pursuit of difference and freedom in relation to the defined mainstream. Selling out thus referred to a betrayal of the individual and not to one of the subcultural.

The fourth definition of the mainstream outlined in this study pushed the boundary to the mainstream as being internal to punk. The mainstream re-

ferred to the shallow punks, obsessed with conspicuous style and being different. This separation was established and strengthened through a script of development by which the subcultural sacred was established as the conscious move beyond the mere being of punk, to becoming part of a collective depth. This involved the active distancing from the shallow as participants invalidated their own initial subcultural participation as something superficial and embarrassing, so as to prove an achievement of depth. Authentications of styles and identities thus concerned an absence of style, articulating dress and appearance as being practical and something that they were oblivious to. Nevertheless, I showed how this emphasis on functionality was highly symbolic in terms of locating participants as either belonging to the sacred or not.

The fifth definition of the mainstream also drew from a distinction against other punks, by claiming punk in general to be ignorant, self-complacent, and hedonist. This definition emphasized the mainstream as being the content and lacking in ambition, thus unable to reach beyond the shallow and undifferentiated. The script relating to the subcultural sacred articulated this as being a separation of those who had the ambition and commitment to subordinate their own interests to those of the collective. The authentication of styles and identities referred in this sense to a belonging to a collective freed space: the scene. The definite use of *the scene* was also used to capture a translocal character of the subcultural sacred: it referred to all participants in the world who fought to achieve a distance from the complacent mass of punks. Politics were here claimed and authenticated as a vital tool for ensuring an equal and emancipating space, yet at the same time they were predominantly used to separate between participants, rather than liberating them. Freedom, in this sense, was defined as a collective freedom from, rather than a freedom for.

The sixth, and final, definition of the mainstream pushed the boundary to the dependent punks, who were seen as too passive and irresponsible to achieve anything on their own. Instead, they had to either rely on the efforts of the scene or seek assistance from sponsors. The script related to this definition articulated this passivity and dependence as being a threat to the subcultural sacred. To belong to the scene was thus a matter of serving and protecting it through a focus on communal doing, closing the ranks to the defined mainstream. Subcultural styles and identities were authenticated along the extent they contributed to keeping the scene separated and alive. The positive end of such binary work was DIY, defined as fighting off the presence of the mainstream punks, the commercial interests of major labels and mass media being largely unarticulated. The commercial interests and media were only indirectly referred to, as in breaching the boundaries of the scene by exposing the subcultural sacred to the profane mainstream. The negative end of this binary work in relation to actions was selling out, not as in a be-

trayal of individual consistency and beliefs, but as in betraying the sanctity of the scene. It was punk that was being sold out.

What these definitions of the mainstream, as well as the associated scripts, have in common is that they work to separate the set apart from the undifferentiated, the particular from the general. Where they differ refers to how this distinction is perceived and portrayed: different definitions of the mainstream bringing different articulations of the subcultural sacred, as well as of the prohibitions meant to protect the latter.

To be sure, the previous research's claim that punk is defined by its distance and autonomy from the mainstream is thus at first glance confirmed in this study: punk is indeed defined by its distance from the mainstream. The difference, however, is that instead of presuming this to be a single mainstream, equal to the commercial or the dominant, I have argued that the interrelation between the mainstream and the subcultural sacred suggests that there is no mainstream without the subcultural, and no subcultural without the mainstream; they are just two sides of the same coin. They both come to life through the articulation of styles and identities as belonging to either side. Hence, the mainstream cannot be reduced to "the commercial" as this would be to reduce a range of definitions into a single one, as well as overlooking that the same object or identity can have a different meaning depending on which definition of the mainstream that is enacted in the performance. Politics, the individual, conspicuous style, and rules are but a few examples of this identified in this thesis.

Ordering differences

The second main finding of this study refers to the ordering of the different definitions and scripts into two distinct subcultural patterns of meanings. Whereas the first three definitions of the mainstream point to a mainstream defined as external to punk, the last three establish this boundary as internal to punk. In chapter 6, I showed how the definition of the mainstream as the normal, complaisant, and commercial is combined together into a patterned set of meanings through a consistency in terms of how the subcultural binary is worked and extended: First, as these definitions draw the boundary to the mainstream through prohibitions concerning what is perceived as external to the subcultural. Punk in this sense can never be mainstream, as punk is defined by the absence of the mainstream. Bands or objects that were seen as having breached these prohibitions were thus not seen as punk anymore. Further, the scripts of essential difference, personal freedom, and going your own way push the boundary to the mainstream through stylistic difference and an individualization of punk. The external is physically and symbolically taken on in order to secure a number of basic individual rights: the right to be different, the right to be yourself, and the right to do what you want. I have referred to this pattern as a convex subcultural pattern because it bends towards the outside.

The second subcultural pattern, what I have referred to as concave, combines the distinction against a shallow, complacent, and dependent mainstream, first and foremost by drawing the boundary to the mainstream as internal to punk. In chapter 7, I showed that the prohibitions outlined by the scripts of development, subordination, and serving and protecting the scene all refer to the style-centered, hedonist, and passive punks. What was defined as external to the subcultural, as in a general public, mass media, or corporations, were not referred to within these scripts. As long as the non-subcultural remained outside of the subcultural, it had little, if any, meaning within a concave pattern. The combination of these scripts was also possible as they all involved a critical and reactive stance to punk, the subcultural sacred being defined by the absence of what it was not: If the defined mainstream focused on style, getting drunk, and having fun, then real punks do not. Lastly, the internal distinction of the background and the foreground scripts all had the consequence of subordinating the individual to the collective: individual consistency was something polluting as a continuous development, and allegiance to the rules and regulations of the collective were to ensure the maintenance and protection of the scene.

This means that the third research question can be answered: c) *How do we explain similarities across the Indonesian and Swedish cases, as well as differences within these cases?* One of the crucial consequences of the theoretical model of the convex and the concave is that both subcultural similarities and differences can be assessed as stemming from *within* the subcultural. As such, subcultural consistencies across national and regional boundaries, as well as differences within these, can be explained.

The structures of these patterns, as well as the participants' enactment of them, were identical when comparing how punk was performed in Indonesia and Sweden. Given the significant geographical, socio-economic, and infrastructural differences between the two countries, such consistency can only be explained in relation to subcultural structures of meanings. If punk would indeed have been a resistance to a "dominant culture," a hyper-consumerist society, or a response to particular socio-economic structures, we would have seen differences in how both the mainstream and the subcultural sacred were defined. Instead, I showed in chapter 8 that subcultural establishment, reproduction, and change relate to the spatial dimensions of these patterns and their combined enactment. The emplacement of the subcultural sacred within a convex pattern, as amidst the defined mainstream, has the consequence that punk is rendered both available and exclusive in relation to what is seen as external to the subcultural. New participants can thus be attracted and subcultural structures enforced through mass media and commercial interests, as the boundary to the latter is spatially blurred yet symbolically reinforced. The persistent emphasis on DIY as the doing of this separation to the mainstream—that every participant is expected to embody the distinction

to the defined mainstream through a pervasive change of routines—worked to reproduce these subcultural structures and give them a concrete form.

The reactive stance of a concave pattern, as well as the emphasis on development, subordination to the rules of the collective, and the gesturing elsewhere, meant that the subcultural as a whole was constantly being redefined and changed through this relation between inside and outside. The interrelation between a convex and a concave pattern, I argued, refers to a spatial and symbolic play between the open and closed, the inside and the outside, that has deep consequences for the structuring of the subcultural as a whole. Whereas the enactment of a convex pattern points to the open that is to be closed, the enactment of a concave emphasizes the closed that is to be open. The result of this play between different insides and outsides is a structuring of inclusion through exclusion.

Further, the convex and the concave refer to patterns of meanings: there are no convex or concave groups of participants. Indeed, I pointed to how individual change was related to shifts, including temporal ones, between these patterns, largely dependent on where the subcultural sacred was emplaced. Whereas the previous research on punk has separated between participants by commitment, class background, or individual strategies, my focus has rather been the intricate structure of interrelated meanings within which commitment, style, class background, and individual strategies are communicated, interpreted, and made sense of.

Throughout chapter 8 I also pointed to how punk is structured through the emplacements of the subcultural sacred. Where, how, and for whom participants perform have deep consequences not only for the establishment of punk, but also for a reproduction of punk as remaining largely closed to ethnic and sexual minorities. I also related this to the prevalence of the male authentic, pointing out that the authentications of styles and identities, especially within a convex pattern, are highly gendered, leading female participants to fight a double boundary work. In relation to the homogenization of the subcultural, I showed how the emplacement of the subcultural sacred within a concave pattern as the secluded and exclusive has the consequence that any potential change that an anti-racist, anti-sexist, and anti-homophobe stance carries is stopped short at the boundaries of the scene. Despite the consistent emphasis on development and subcultural improvements, the articulated and achieved change remained immanent to the subcultural.

Subcultural authentications

The ordering of differences and similarities, as well as the structuring of style and identities, as a matter of how the mainstream is positioned also provide the answer to the second of the research questions posed in chapter 1: *b) How can we theoretically account for similarly structured and structuring heterogeneities within the subcultural?*

To return to the discussion on performance and authenticity in chapter 4, subcultural identities and authenticities have here been treated as performances relying on a specific pattern in terms of being claimed, validated, or refuted. Performing punk thus describes the process of symbolically extending the background text in conveying meanings to other participants. The authentication of these symbolic extensions refers to the double fusion of the background text to the performance, as well as the fusion of both of these to the audience. As such, the subcultural pattern of meaning enacted has consequences for how we can approach how subcultural participants perceive, use, and interpret the material world; this includes how styles and identities are authenticated or invalidated, but also where these performances occur spatially. Consequently, whereas the enactment of a convex pattern centers on the emancipated and differentiated individual standing out from an external mainstream, such an articulation can not be fused within a concave pattern that stresses the scene as the representation of the subcultural sacred. Instead of individual rights being something sacred, these were inauthenticated following a scripted subordination of the individual to the collective rules. Any intrinsic and essential difference from an external mainstream was not even articulated, as identities were rather located through a script of continual development and change. You were not better than the scene, and consequently individual style and going your own way could not fuse with the background text's emphasis on the collective.

Indeed, far from being articulated as a means to keep the commercial or corporate out of the subcultural, DIY was enacted within a concave pattern as a means to protect the scene from the mainstream punks. The mobilization and authentication of actions as DIY thus follow from a similar emphasis on development and subordination to the collective. The authentications of style and identities, through any of the foreground scripts outlined in this thesis, thus means a dialectic relationship between the positioning of the mainstream and the structuring of the subcultural: the former is established and strengthened by the latter, and vice versa.

The biggest difference of this study to the other recent work on subcultures is thus a focus on structures of meaning rather than individual participants. In regards to the work of the CCCS, however, the difference here is that the recognition of action as contingent in relation to these structures, rather than determined by them. Hence, the approach to subcultural theory presented here provides a comprehensive and transparent model for understanding both subcultural similarities and differences in regards to how the binary subcultural/mainstream is extended: Differences in how the mainstream is defined bring about different prohibitions to communicate, experience and authenticate style and identities. As Smith (2008:28) and Alexander (2004b:10) point to, there is no clear line between material cause and consequence or effect, but rather to have an impact any occurrence needs to be turned into an event

(cf. Alexander and Smith 2003:12). That is, in order for an incident to become an action it has to be culturally mediated and interpreted Eyerman 2006:195, Mast 2006:139).

Enacting a specific subcultural structure of meaning has consequences for how performances are fused. Still, these structures do not act in themselves, but are used by participants in rendering styles and identities meaningful. The outcome of action is thus dependent on the enacted background, the performance, and the space, as well as those validating such an act.

Exploring differences

The fourth main finding of the thesis refers to the sampling of participants. Even though the definitions of the subcultural, the mainstream, and the authentic are derived from the previous subcultural research, how these have been applied in this study refer in the end to a methodological and an epistemological consideration. The previous research on both punk and the subcultural has first of all presumed a single subcultural meaning, and accordingly the sampling of participants has either been limited to one particular group of participants, or decided by the researcher on the basis of his/her own subcultural knowledge. When different kinds of participants are included these are nevertheless ordered according to commitment and authenticity, with one group of participants being more committed or authentic than the other. In short, the definitions of one group are given the privilege of defining the others. Fox's distinction between different forms of commitment among punks is one of the most telling examples of this, as the hardcores are either allowed to define the other categories, or their ideals are used by Fox to measure the commitment of these other groups. I have rather used such signs of different interpretations of the subcultural as a means to purposely explore articulated differences between participants. In chapter 5 I outlined what I have referred to as a reversed membership validation as a strategy for the sampling of participants. Largely, this meant making use of participants' inauthentications of other participants so as to further the inclusions of new groups of participants in this study. The consequence was that I was able to follow and interview participants that I would never have met if I had relied on my own subcultural knowledge, or one group's presumed authenticity over another.

Further, instead of measuring the commitment of different groups of participants on the basis of their relationship to the commercial, I have rather focused on investigating and exploring differences in how the commercial, just as difference, freedom, and DIY, is communicated, interpreted, and acted upon. Thus in the end we are left with the question of what constitutes the commercial, and more so, from which point of view it is defined?

The discrepancy between different accounts on what constitutes the subcultural authentic and the commercial is indicative of the previous research's championing of one subcultural definition over others. Whereas some have

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stressed individuality, style, and the apolitical, others have emphasized the collective, the political, and the scene. Instead of exploring alternative and plural interpretations of the mainstream, subcultural heterogeneities have been explained away on the basis of commitment, autonomy, or authenticity. By drawing upon a wide sample of participants, I have instead shown that the ambivalence of what constitutes both the subcultural and the mainstream within the previous research points to the impossibility of assessing a realist notion of the commercial, the authentic, or the autonomous. There is no all-encompassing answer to what is punk, mainstream, DIY, commercial, or authentic; rather, such terms are imputed with meaning in relation to a specific background text and communicated, interpreted, and acted upon through a particular script.

So…

This leaves us with an important question: Does the convex-concave model presented here apply to other subcultural groups as well, or is it limited to punk, or even worse, to punk in Sweden and Indonesia? Even though this is something I have yet to pursue, my preliminary answer have to be that yes, it does have applications beyond these confines. There are a few studies on a variety of subcultural groups that at least open up the possibility of such an extension of the model of the convex and the concave beyond punk. Gary Alan Fine's (1998) study on the mushrooming subculture, for example, features a discussion on a division between those who pick mushrooms for fun and for food, and those who have a more scientific orientation (1998:179). The former pursue a distinction from the general public who are either never out in the woods, or if they are, remain unaware of the treasures it contains (1998:207). The amateur mycologists, however, define themselves through their difference to other mushroomers, their primary distinction being against the "pot hunters," whom they refer to as ignorant and self-complacent. Instead they prefer to discuss mushrooms in reference to their Latin names and other esoteric knowledge, something which the "pot hunters" recognize as elitist and "excessively scientific" (1998:181). The "pot hunters" rather stress the beauty of nature, and describe themselves as a "happy group" (1998:181). Fine also notes how participants changed their attitude toward what mushrooming is about over time.

Further, MacDonald, in her study of graffiti, notes that the main division among writers centers on "how, where, and why graffiti should be practiced" (2001:165). Whereas some writers prefer an internal focus on keeping graffiti hidden, illegal, and distant, others emphasize availability, legal work, and a positioning of graffiti within the larger society (2001:163). MacDonald further points to how those participants that proclaim an internal focus argue that the legal view threatens the whole meaning of graffiti—defined as an art form that asserts itself where it is not allowed. From such point of view, the legal writers are fake. The participants associated with legal work, on the

other hand, have another interpretation, claiming graffiti is first and foremost a matter of art. From this point of view authenticity refers more to quality and how good you are than to illegality. Stylo, one of the legal writers, puts it as follows:

> The most hardcore supposedly illegal writers have got, like, a whole book of rules about how to be illegal or how to be a graffiti writer and it just kills me because, to me, it's all about doing what people are telling you not to do or it's just doing what you want to do really (Quoted in MacDonald 2001:170).

There are similar divisions between an internal and external distinction in relation to metal (Johannesson and Klingberg 2011:151, 167) and heroin users (Lalander 2003:98ff). Further, in Tim Dean's (2009) study on the barebacking subculture—homosexual men who pursue condomless sex with, at least potentially, HIV-positive men—his definition of barebacking is centered on a distinction against what they see as the "homonormativity" and assimilationist model of other gay men and women (2009:9).

Still, in all of the cases above, the divisions of alternative interpretations of the subcultural are not extended beyond the particular point of discussion. Thus, the differences between pot hunters and amateur mycologists are, according to Fine, a matter of identification rather than to a structured patterning of meanings; this dynamic is not explored or extended beyond the mutual typifying of each group. Similarly, for MacDonald there is no discussion of the consequences the division between legal and illegal might have for other areas of the subcultural, such as the authentications of styles. Nevertheless, these examples are at least a sign that the subcultural logic of the convex and the concave is not limited to the Swedish and Indonesian participants that I followed. This is something that I hope to pursue in my future work.

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