



Università
Ca' Foscari
Venezia

Corso di Laurea magistrale (*ordinamento
ex D.M. 270/2004*)

in *Lingue e letterature europee,
americane e postcoloniali*

Tesi di Laurea

—
Ca' Foscari
Dorsoduro 3246
30123 Venezia

A sociological approach to The Beatles' protest songs

Relatore

Prof. Marco Fazzini

Correlatore

Prof. Shaul Bassi

Laureanda

Silvia Marcato

Matricola 837138

Anno Accademico

2012/2013

Table of Contents

Introduction	p. 4
I. A general overview: The 1960s and the international context	
1.1 The 1960s	p. 9
1.2 The international context	p. 14
1.3 Contrasts with the 1950s	p. 18
1.4 The Sixties Britain	p. 22
1.5 The Beatles	p. 31
II. The role of protest songs	
2.1 Music's role within the political context	p. 55
2.2 Protest songs	p. 59
2.3 The Beatles' protest songs	p. 74
Conclusion	p. 109
Bibliography	

Introduction

A careful study of Postcolonial culture allows us to reflect upon the importance of writing, both in poetry and in song lyric. It seems clear that the process of writing not only follows compositional strategies but it also witnesses historical and formal aspects as verbalism, performance, inspiration, denounce, propaganda. Poets and singers seem to express not only personal feelings but also political and historical facts. Within the whole worldwide context, several songs and their lyrics appear to be the reflection of a socio-cultural context and also a means to spread a society's voice.

The analysis of the period from the 1950s to the early 1970s seems a catalyst of that writing process. Indeed, the 1960s were a strong revolutionary period made of rebellions, acts of disobedience towards the system, and youth insurrections in the West (Donnelly, 3). Those risings were caused by several factors such as politics and a general hard international situation (Donnelly, 2). The end of the two World Wars, the fear of a Nuclear conflict, the rising of capitalist economy and living standards, the improving of mass communications were relevant elements in that context (Donnelly, 2). Furthermore, the growing of the importance of the youth, their leisure and their own tastes influenced art (Donnelly, 3). Most importantly, cruelties, tragedies, violence, oppressions were the keys of the 1960s and it seemed that artists were inspired by them (Donnelly, 4).

In that general turmoil, music appeared to be the most important part of popular culture. In fact, it became a vehicle of free expression, a means to shout out its own voice including feelings, fears and discontents (Donnelly, 42). Thus, a great number of songs began to have a different purpose from the previous period: they were not made for fun anymore, but they carried a message (Donnelly, 42).

However, there were still music bands which were not interested in exposing social and political issues.

The relationship between music and poetry will constitute an important part of this dissertation because it will be worth focusing on the strategies that a song has to pursue in order to spread its message adequately. In particular, The Beatles, the most important British band, and their lyrics will be the object of this study. They were famous all around the world and their songs are known by everyone (Muncie in Inglis, 35). Moreover, they were spokespersons of all the turmoil which characterized the 1960s and they offered a vivid example of revolutionary messages that popular music of those years brought with (Whiteley in Womack, 204).

Furthermore, it seems worth reconstructing a clear panorama in order to reflect upon the influence that all the political and social aspects of the 1960s had on culture, and in particular on music. As a matter of fact, the most important foreign affairs will be used as a framing device, along with the analyses of wars' impacts on societies. Then, since the 1960s represented a break with the previous decades, moral codes of the 1950s' generation will be studied here. The break of ancient values caused the main oppositional generational gap (Marwick, 21). Figure of teenager will be analyzed since it had a close relationship with a new wave of art, literature and music of that period (Marwick, 73). Youth began to be the main protagonist (Marwick, 73).

Since those years onwards, new attitudes created new self-representations (Marwick, 73). Trends and tendencies of the 1960s will be analyzed because they had a strong impact on art. Pictures, movies and songs were influenced by the new waves (Levy, 6). In particular, since youth was a key element of the new orientation, new subcultures composed by teenagers were born (Levy, 6). They were characterized by the same set of meanings, values, signs, symbols and above all leisure and taste as art and music (Levy, 6). So, a deeper analysis of the most important characteristics of those subcultures seemed important because, through

them, it will be easier to focus on the message that the most important bands and singers shot aloud in their songs during the 1960s.

Indeed, Britain was one of the countries in which tension provoked by the new generation was felt more strongly (Donnelly, 5). Its capital was named “Swinging London”, in order to show what its role was (Donnelly, 92). For instance, it was the location of some of the most striking subcultures (Levy, 6). Above all, British music was known everywhere and it created a phenomenon called “the British Invasion” that was the development and the overwhelming success of British music in America. Indeed, London in the 1960s, as Ackroyd wrote in one of his books, “became the ‘style capital’ where music and fashion attracted the ancillary industries of magazine publishing, photography, advertising, modeling, broadcasting and film-making to create a bright new city” (Ackroyd, 24).

After having examined the political, cultural and social British situation, the role of music seemed fundamental within that context. Indeed, as I have asserted before, it was used as a communication tool. Musicians and songwriters around the world embodied the figure of the “rebel”, the only one who had the power to condemn society’s struggle. Thus, the most important musical leaders will be studied here in order to offer a wide perspective.

Most importantly, this dissertation will offer a definition and a description of “protest song”. Two books appear to be fundamental in order to fulfill the aim: Dorian Lynskey’s *33 Revolutions per Minute* and Marco Fazzini’s *Canto un mondo libero*. They both analyze the most successful protest and revolutionary songs, along with an exhaustive introduction.

However, after offering a worldwide perspective of the most relevant protest songs, this dissertation will focus on England, and on the most important English band and its lyrics: The Beatles. Their story will be described along with their musical style and their striking success. The meeting between John Lennon and Paul McCartney, the Quarryman, the Hamburg tour, the Beatlemania, The Cavern, Brian Epstein, George Martin, their albums, their inspirations, their studio recordings, their sound, their musical experiments, the broke up, their solo careers

will be key elements in the description. Moreover, important quotations of The Beatles' members and the most influential essayists which dedicated themselves to the band's analysis will be added in order to offer critical examinations.

It seems clear that descriptions of the Sixties, British Sixties, Sixties music, protest songs and The Beatles probably converge to a meaningful core. Hitherto, they all constitute the framing of the central part of this dissertation: a deep analyses of The Beatles' lyrics. In particular, The Beatles' production of the second part of their career will be studied since songs appeared to turn to more serious topics by reflecting most relevant upheavals of the 1960s (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 87).

The aim of this dissertation is to consider how on the one hand The Beatles have influenced youth generation with their music; indeed, Beatlemania phenomenon enlarged teenagers interest towards music (Muncie in Inglis, 42). On the other hand, I would like to point out that it was the 1960s uprisings and cultural revolutions that changed The Beatles and their lyrics. The members of the band, being important icons within the whole international context, had to express their ideas toward the most important political facts (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 86). Moreover, not only did they comment and give their opinions on politics, but they also showed the most important problems that the 1960s' generation faced: abuse of drugs, "generation gap" with their parents, cultural and social fervor.

A critical and a sociological approach on lyrics which were produced during the second part of The Beatles' career seemed fundamental in order to support the idea that lyrics turned from emotional and romantic topics to more serious ones (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 87). Indeed, a social and a political influence of members of The Beatles could be easier identified by 1965 onwards (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 87).

Moreover, I suggest to divide songs into groups because they could allow a more careful cataloguing of lyrics. They could be regrouped into sociological branches which correspond to the most important 1960s topics: anti-war supports, social condemnations, drug addiction and "generation gap" issues.

My work will aim to support the idea that The Beatles, being a leitmotif for the 1960s generation, were influenced by the political international conflicts, the attacks against the governments, the abuse of drugs and the teenagers' controversial feelings. My idea is to show how those songs that The Beatles produced in the second part of their career mirrored those sociological changes.

I.

A general overview: the 1960s and the international context

1.1 The 1960s

The whole international context experienced an astonishing transformation during the 1960s, due to the surge of political, social and economic changes that signed the time (Donnelly, 3). “The Sixties” represented a multifaceted wider phenomenon; it was characterized by a set of revolutions and subversions that made the decade a web of complex inter-related political events and also a significant cultural period (Donnelly, 3). It seemed clear that a great many new, radical, revolutionary trends made the “Sixties-phenomenon” the most subversive and significant period of the twentieth century (Donnelly, 3). A combination of meanings, values and attitudes made possible the construction of a real identity of the 1960s, as they were “a totem”, an incomparable decade (Donnelly, 3).

As Arthur Marwick observed in *The Sixties*, opinions about that decade can be split into two parts: on the one hand, there are those who believed the 1960s was a golden era and, on the other hand, there are those who thought values of authority, morality and discipline were dismantled (Marwick, 3). Even according to Marwick, “[i]n the eyes of the far left, it was an era when revolution was at hand, only to be

betrayed by the feebleness of the faithful and the trickery of the enemy; to the radical right, an era of subversion and moral turpitude” (Marwick, 3).

As far as a negative perspective was concerned, it might be assumed that society experienced a breakdown of authority and order, in favor of freedom and tolerance (Donnelly, 5). In addition, Christopher Booker, who referred mainly to Britain, argued that the 1960s left a “nightmarish blanket of unreality” (Booker in Donnelly, 6). Then, he added that “the climate was one of aftermath, disillusionment, exhaustion” (Booker in Donnelly, 6), leading people to a false dream of fulfillment and progress (Donnelly, 6). However, even according to Donnelly, it seemed that the 1960s represented a time of social and economic progress, characterized by an unprecedented culture (Donnelly, 3).

Nevertheless, it might be assumed that a strong common feeling was shared by everyone, even by those who lived and those who did not live during that decade (Donnelly, 9). A general political disorder, protestant young movements, black civil rights, rebellions, new cultural trends, new canons of self-representation, international cultural exchanges, sexual inhibitions, feminism wave, gay liberation, emergence of new music as a universal language, technological inventions, contributed all to make the period between the late 1950s and the early 1970s an enormous varied kaleidoscope (Donnelly, 9).

Thus, it seemed that “for good or ill, something significant happened in the Sixties” (Marwick, 23). Hence, it might be argued whether periodization of time had to be made when the 1960s were concerned. Indeed, the periodization process does not divide the line of time into decades but into chunks, which correspond to eras or ages. According to Eric Hobsawm, in *The Age of Extremes: the short twentieth century 1914-1991*, history is divided into three long periods: the Age of Catastrophe from 1914 to 1945, the Golden Age from 1945 to 1973 and the Landslide from 1973 to 1991.

Therefore, could the 1960s represent a significant period? On the one hand, it seemed that a single decade was too small to be cut off from the line of time but, on the other hand, the 1960s contained a certain unity, events, attitudes, values that are

significant points for the identification of a period. What happened in the 1960s, due to historical and economic reasons, transformed both culture and society for the rest of the century (Marwick, 17).

Then, Marwick added:

This periodization is sensible one, but if we are primarily interested in social and cultural developments, the growing power of young people, the particular behavior and activities associated with them, the changes in family relationships, the new standards of sexual behavior, then the idea of a point of change around 1958-9 begins to make great good sense after all. Economic expansion began in the fifties, but the social benefits came in the Sixties (Marwick, 17).

As a consequence, benefits of the new era began to influence people's way of living and self-expression (MacDonald, 22). It was possible through clothes and fashion and, moreover, through art. It seemed that music witnessed a meaningful transformation during those years (MacDonald, 22).

Pichsake in *A generation in motion* argued that 1960s' music was involved in nonviolent protest (Pichsake, 55). It seemed that songs produced in that period could find their roots in those protests made by important American icons such as Woodie Guthrie (Pichsake, 55); he sang the most important American struggles such as the striking battle between Colorado miners and Rockefeller's scabs, the fight among workers and bosses and the hard times of the Dust Bowls (Lynskey, 16). As a result, "the folk scene in 1960 was dominated by the past: the collection of Alan Lomax and other pioneers, the songs of Guthrie, Seeger, the scattered Weavers, traditional folk material of all countries and races" (Pichsake, 56). It seemed that the 1960s' singers were mainly protesters who had learnt from their predecessors how to be controversial (Pichsake, 56).

Blowing in the Wind by Bob Dylan was released in 1963. It seemed that it had no specific purpose, but it was a representative song of those uneasy times. Bob Dylan's message said that alienated people had to be set free because everyone deserved freedom (Pichsake, 55).

The 1963 was also the year of Martin Luther King's campaign (Pichsake, 55). He had the courage to stand up and spread aloud his voice, denouncing an antiracism society against black communities (Pichsake, 55). Saying aloud 'I have a dream', he helped everyone to condemn and point the finger at discrimination (Pichsake, 55).

Moreover, a great number of topical songs were released and they all dealt with racism and military issues. As Langston Hughes noted: "in a worried period, the folksingers, many of them, particularly the city folk singers, [were] taking the troubles of our times and wrapping them up in songs-documentary songs, musings songs and angry protest songs" (Hughes in Pichsake, 59).

American echoes spread among European countries and they allowed "naïve idealism, post-war materialism, youthful revolutions, sexual freedom, social mobility and artistic innovations to fuse together" (Donnelly, 9). Tolerance was essential in the 1960s since it was extended to both the private context, that regarded sexual inhibition and drug addiction, and the public context, that regarded fashion, art and music (Donnelly, 9). Ancient values of austerity, strictness, severity and formality dismantled in favor of new ideals (Donnelly, 5).

Moreover, Marwick affirmed that:

the sharp expansion in the number of teenagers would not, of itself, have created the changes of the sixties. That needed to coincide with continuing affluence in America and rapid economic expansion in Europe, and with the new ideologies of civil rights, challenge to the family and other authorities, 'Free speech', and with technological innovation, and with the birth of rock'n'roll (Marwick, 20).

As far as music was concerned, some British teens were attracted by rock and roll sound. They began to create original music mixing different genres as rock and roll, Celtic folk and dancehall. Electric bands started to populate England: the Searchers, the Fourmost, Gerry and the Pacemakers (Donnelly, 44). Along with them, The Beatles band reached the British record charts in late 1962 (Donnelly, 44).

Later, a great number of bands were sent in America as “charming invaders had borrowed (often literally) American rock music and returned it—restyled and refreshed—to a generation largely ignorant of its historical and racial origins” (Pichsake, 55). As far as The Beatles’ American invasion was concerned, Robbins argued that:

While the beat boom provided Britons relief from the postimperial humiliation of hand-me-down rock, the Beatles and their ilk brought the United States more than credible simulations. They arrived as foreign ambassadors, with distinctive accents (in conversation only; most of the groups sang in “American”), slang, fashions, and personalities (Robbins, 32).

Peter and Gordon, the Animals, Freddie and the Dreamers, Wayne Fontana, Rolling Stones, the Troggs and Donovan dominated *Billboard*’s singles charts. That phenomenon was called “The British Invasion” and it will be carefully analyzed in a later chapter.

As a matter of fact, according to Marwick, it seemed impossible to forget repercussions of the Second World War, the aftermath of austerity in Europe, the Cold War and the Vietnam War as far as the 1960s were concerned (Marwick, 24). Whether one wishes to analyze the 1960s’ culture, wars and economic crises that struggled the worldwide context cannot be omitted.

1.2 The international context

Let us begin by examining the political situation of the 1960s because it seemed worthwhile in order to focus on the general international turmoil. Across the globe, wars and internal conflicts drastically shaped relationships among countries.

First of all, the Cold War was one of the major conflicts of the time (Marwick, 45). It saw the two superpower nations, United States and Soviet Union, fighting for global influence (Boyer and Dubofsky, 142). Physically, the war was fought in Vietnam: during the Vietnam war (1955 -1975), which involved both the two superpowers. Outwardly, it seemed they both wanted to support the North and the South Vietnam, but on the other hand, the conflict increased the political tension (Boyer and Dubofsky, 142).

Moreover, the countries belonging to the “Warsaw Pact” decided to erect a wall between the Berlin area controlled by the Soviets and the one controlled by the Western troops (Burner, 101). It increased the tension between the two major powers (Boyer and Dubofsky, 142). The wall was built on the night of 13th August 1961 which prevented the freedom movement between the East and West of the city, dividing suddenly families and producing suffering (Robertson, 44). That division was very hard for a few years; anyone who tried to “exercise the universal right of freedom of movement by crossing it, should [have been] shot on sight” (Robertson, 44).

The peak of the battle was reached in 1962 with the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boyer and Dubofsky, 168). It “come very close to triggering a Third World war in which hundreds of millions would have died in a nuclear holocaust” (Robertson, 45). However, President Kennedy decided to organize a blockade of the island in order to prevent the arms to reach Cuba (Boyer and Dubofsky, 168).

Then, Khrushchev agreed to withdraw the Soviet ships after the ultimatum gave by the American President in October 22 (Boyer and Dubofsky, 142).

President Robert Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas, during a visit (Boyer and Dubofsky, 418) . The attack was not possible to reconstruct (Boyer and Dubofsky, 418). Johnson, following his policy, increased the American military presence in South Vietnam (Boyer and Dubofsky, 807). Moreover, United States began bombing and harassing Vietnam population without having officially declared war to the country (Boyer and Dubofsky, 807).

In those years, the United States were hit by an unprecedented social protest: people opposed themselves at the military intervention in Vietnam (Boyer and Dubofsky, 711). Indeed, as Robertson argued:

The move to end the Vietnam war came after America wearied of television pictures of its boys being brought home in body-bags from a country where ragged children ran screaming with the pain of napalm in their eyes and where police chief could shoot suspects in the head in few views of photographs (Robertson, 48).

Moreover, youth began to manifest their dissident position toward the system. Firstly, they manifested within the University campus.

Furthermore, it seemed that Martin Luther King's campaign was catalyst within that context. He was spokesperson of blacks, condemning their repression (Pichsake, 55).

As a matter of fact, brutality of wars had several repercussions on American society. Marwick wrote that:

were profoundly shocked by the assassination on Kennedy in 1963, and then by the assassinations in 1968 of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy. They deplored the way in which social welfare programs were curtailed as a result of the colossal expenditure on the Vietnam war; even

more they regretted the bitter divisions in American society provoked by that war, the often violent demonstrations, and the still more violent repression by the police. They were shocked, again, by the split in the civil rights movement after 1964, with blacks moving towards violence and separatism; shocked too by the destructive and murderous rioting in the black ghettos in the major cities (Marwick, 16).

In addition, not only does an overview on the American political context appear important, but also an European political contextualization has to be considered. Europe experienced a period of economic stagnation, which struck in particular Germany and England.

Germany was governed by a coalition, led by Democrat Kurt Kiesinger. A economic crisis also affected the UK, led by Harold Wilson's Labor. The Irish question appeared to exasperate the situation (Burner, 101). Great Britain had to oppose to several Irish attempts to overturn the system. After several battles, Great Britain had the supremacy over the territory. The IRA, the Irish Republican Army, founded in 1919, resumed its activities after having deposited their arms for the first time in 1962 (Marwick, 247).

It is important to remember that during the 1960s some European countries were governed by dictatorships, as Fascism (Robertson, 34). Those governments were installed earlier, and they kept on having repercussions. Spain and Portugal represented two cases in point: the former was governed by General Francisco Franco while the latter by Antonio Salazar (Robertson, 35). Those countries were affected by inferior economic conditions, compared to other Western Europe countries. In addition, tolerance and freedom were always censored, and when violated, dissidents were arrested.

Even Greece witnessed hard times. The dictatorship was reached in April 1967. The coup, called the "colonels" because it was achieved by two Army colonels, intended to react to the Left, led by George Papandreou (Robertson, 45). It

appeared that the coup was favored by Americans, allowing the rise of one of the “most brutal regimes of the post-war history” (Robertson, 45).

That international climate, during the 1960s, favored the independent action of many Third World countries in Africa. The country “with its system of Apartheid [...] egged on by the Soviet Union of South Africa [...]. It was in 1960 that South Africa first provoked that horrified international response which is the hallmark of crimes against humanity” (Robertson, 46).

However, the struggle of the white minority populations in the southern regions of the Africa ruled by Britain was more serious and decisive. Malawi, Zambia and Southern Rhodesia gained independence (Robertson, 46).

Going back to America, the General Pinochet established the mission “Operation Condor” in order to kill more than 4,000 leftists and liberal leaders. Pinochet’s coup was the “most vicious human right violation” (Robertson, 47).

In Brazil, the President Juscelino Kubitschek made several reforms in order to establish a plan for economic development during the last years of the 1950s (Robertson, 48).

On the other hand, Cuba appeared to represent an “exempla” for the others Third World countries, as those in Africa and in Latin America (Marwick, 20).

Ernesto Guevara, known as “Che”, was the revolutionary leader of the island. “Portraits of Che were reproduced everywhere as he became the single greatest hero of the European and North American protest movements” (Marwick, 20).

The political contextualization already examined reveals the turmoil that countries were experiencing. It might be argued that the fervor began in the late 1950s and, then, it had repercussions in the 1960s. A great number of political events and struggles happened in those years which deteriorated the relationships among countries.

Moreover, people paid attention to the worldwide context. Youth began to fight for their civil rights, even helped by some pacifist campaigns. Thus, teenagers established some divisions with the previous generation since they had to fight

against new struggles and new oppressions (Marwick, 20). As a consequence, “[t]he rise to positions of unprecedented influence of young people, with youth subculture having a steadily increasing impact on the rest of society, dictating taste in fashion, music and popular culture generally” (Marwick, 20) is considered one of the key of Sixties.

1.3 Contrasts with the 1950s

“To understand the Sixties, you have to understand the Fifties” (Pichsake, 4) claimed David Pichsake in *A generation in motion*. The reason why the 1960s were an astonishing decade lied on all the changes and revolutions that occurred at the end of the 1950s onwards (Pichsake, 4).

First of all, the generation of young people who were born in the 1950s and grew up in the 1960s did not live the Second World War and had no experiences of it (Donnelly, 29). A worldwide conflict had significant consequences not only geographically but also demographically, because it brought changes on people and on their habits even more than any other conflict (MacDonald, 7). Cruelties and violence of the biggest armed conflict in history drastically struck 1940s and 1950s generation’s mind. People also experienced its economic devastating consequences (MacDonald, 7).

Moreover, the 1940s and the 1950s’ societies were based on a set of values such as austerity, morality, patriotism and conservatism (Marwick, 21). As listed by Arthur Marwick, the key features of the 1950s were: rigidity, found in both the social and familiar context, repression of libidinous attitudes, respect for the government, the law, the education, the national anthem, etiquette, dress codes (Marwick, 21).

However, after two decades marked by the most cruel worldwide wars and by their consequences, the 1960s appeared to be “the first decade in which people seemed settled with the war, at least economically if not mentally” (Hecl in Marwick, 23). During the postwar period, capitalist economy increased more and more and innovations, within the technological field, “brought down the price of consumer goods while making it possible to pay higher wages” (Marwick, 110). Hobsawm observed that manufacturer production quadruplicated whilst their sales grew up of ten (Hobsawm in Marwick, 45). In the meantime, population duplicated and lifetime increased (Hobsawm in Marwick, 45).

Since their wages grew up, workers were allowed to rise their living standards, thanks also to new technological innovations (Donnelly, 9). Refrigerators, televisions, satellite broadcasting, female birth-control contraceptives, cars, motorcycles, cheaper air travels led all to a general welfare and to a better lifestyle (Donnelly, 9). People had a place where to live, they all had their jobs, clothes and food (Donnelly, 9). Shawn Levy in *Ready, Steady, Go!* clearly analyzed Britain capitalist economy saying that:

by the 1956, [it] had finally relaunched itself: key industries were denationalized by a conservative government: American multinationals were choosing Britain as the home base for their expansion into Europe; unemployment dipped, spiking the housing, automobile and durable goods markets; credit restrictions were eased, encouraging a boom in consumerism and the value in property soared (Levy, 4-5).

So, consumption was important since people were allowed to create their own identities by buying different products, as clothes (Donnelly, 29).

As a matter of fact, that development contributed to a new demand: entertainment. As people could afford it, “there was a new hedonism abroad in the land; [...] life was lived with greater gusto [...]” (Marwick, 152). That new attitude

provided a new kind of awareness among people. Indeed, it might be argued that the end of the Second World War and the subsequent economic growth led to a “new consumer society in which hitherto underprivileged and silent groups now had, if not a voice, certainly purchasing power” (Marwick, 123).

Most importantly, not only did the working class lead the consumption boom, but also the youth were able to consume (MacDonald, 19). Young people were richer: they had more money to spend for their free time and for their own enjoyment (Marwick, 73). They were in fact “influential players in the marketplace, creating a distinct and separate ‘youth culture’” (Marwick, 73). Even according to Marwick, at the beginning of the 1960s, young people shared common tastes and leisure, which were different from those of the previous generation (Marwick, 73). As a consequence, they bought specific products for their own activities, increasing a new market (Roszak, 27). Theodore Roszak’s words seem catalysts for the importance of youth in that market: “Teenagers alone controlled a stupendous amount of money and enjoyed much leisure; so inevitably, they have been turned into a self-conscious market” (Roszak, 27).

It appeared that that process contributed to create a “homogenous worldwide category” (Marwick, 81) which could find its root in the United States. A youth consciousness was also gained for the attendance of campus universities, which increasingly expanded during the 1960s. On the one hand, they offered a higher education and, on the other hand, they allowed students to create a new identity.

Therefore, a mass of young people at the beginning of the 1960s began to rise up against the government, which was implied in the Vietnam war. As rebels against war and violence, they promoted a life to be lived in peace and in love. They also refused to join the Army, they left their homes and lived all together in communities. In addition, they rebelled to old and rigid values of their parents. The so called “hippie movement” has a relevant importance in the context since it is related to the birth of an unprecedented culture (Donnelly, 148).

Indeed, art began to be orientated toward the youth and its taste (Levy, 6). It was the time of new tendencies in arts and in popular culture which reflected the

domination of the rising generation (Levy, 6). There were music, TV and radio programmes, movies and fashion witnessing the youth's influence (Levy, 6). About teenagers' cultural innovation, Theodore Roszak said:

Most of what is happening that is new provocative and engaging in the arts, in politics, in education, in social relations (love, courtship, family), in journalism, in fashions and entertainment, is very largely the creation either of the discontented young or of those who address themselves primarily to the young (Roszak, 85).

Then, he added:

The fact is, it is the young who have-gropingly, haltingly, amateurishly, even grotesquely-gotten dissent off the adult drawing board. They have torn it out of the books and journals that an older generation of radicals wrote, and they have fashioned it into a style of life (Roszak, 10).

Teenager's figure began to be the protagonist of literary, cinematographic and musical art (Bertinetti, 14). It appeared that the younger character was the best one who could recount what happened in everyday life (Bertinetti, 14).

Indeed, Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson in *Resistance through rituals* stated that: "youth played an important role as a cornerstone in the construction of understandings, interpretations and quasi-explanations about the period" (Hall and Jefferson, 3). More generally, according to Hobswam, youth was not even seen as a preparatory status for the adulthood, as happened in the Bildungsroman, but as the final status of human development (Hobswam in Bertinetti, 14).

1.4 Sixties Britain

The “youth culture” that originated in America influenced Europe, as well (Marwick, 76). Mass communications, in fact, helped teenagers to transmit their feelings (Marwick, 76). It was believed that in England the new wave of culture was “a way of emerging from decades, maybe centuries, of slumber” (Levy, 7). Arthur Marwick also claimed that it was “an attack upon the coziness, the clichés, the stereotyped assumptions, and the parochialism of British society” (Marwick, 125). Youth rebelled against the “Victorian moral code” (Marwick, 147) of the previous generation.

Moreover, Levy asserted that there was a new class which was emerging, composed by: “English people who’d absorbed the sensibilities and attitudes of the French and the Italians and grafted them onto the materiality and energy of the Americans” (Levy, 8).

Furthermore, the number of young people enormously increased in the late 1950s (Donnelly, 35). That phenomenon was called “baby boom” (Donnelly, 35). There were more teenagers who dedicated their money in other kind of consumerism, in contrast with their parents who spent their wages in “home-stuffs” (Donnelly, 35). Donnelly wrote that:

The distinctive leisure market for youth was hardly a new phenomenon: something resembling one had begun to take shape in Britain as far back as the mid-nineteenth century (Donnelly, 36).

Attention to youth was also caused by the growing of subcultural groups which formed in the major British urban centers (Hebdige,7). London was onwards the epicenter of all the cultural expressions; it was the center of new experimentations.

It embodied “the common conception of a big city excitement” (Levy, 5). In contrast in 1920s, the journalist Peter Evans recounted that:

‘London was kind of a grown-up town’ remembered journalist Peter Evans. ‘It was an old man’s town. Nightclubs were where you went if you wanted to hear people playing the violin. There was nowhere to go. Even Soho close early. There were drinking clubs, but they were private’ (Evans in Levy, 5).

In contrast, London in the 1960s was completely different. In order to give London a name that included all the fashion and cultures flourished in the 1960s, *Time* magazine called its front page “London: the Swinging city” for the first time on the 5th April 1966 (Donnelly, 92). The aim was to highlight how cool and fashionable the capital was and to focus on “how the capital had reinvented itself from being the center of a once-mighty empire into a city that now set the social and cultural markers for the rest of the world” (Donnelly, 92). Peter Ackroyd argued in *London: the biography*: “for a few years, it became the ‘style capital’ where music and fashion attracted the ancillary industries of magazine publishing, photography, advertising, modeling, broadcasting and film-making to create a bright new city” (Ackroyd, 759).

Thus, Swinging London explored the consequences caused by the post-war context, which allowed the youth to express themselves through new lifestyle practices and consumption (Ackroyd, 754-55). They all led to the creation of a capital as a cultural “myth making” (Ackroyd, 754-55). A new aesthetic was about to be spread in the city and then it was soon shared by the whole country.

In addition, London witnessed a combination of different trends and fashion, which embodied youth’s obsession (Donnelly, 3). As Jobling and Crowley argued in *Graphic Design: reproduction and representation since 1800*: “myth of youth

had repercussions on design, appearance and style which aimed to create codifying identities” (Jobling and Crowley, 212).

Firstly, the development of Pop Art was fundamental for the fabrication of Swinging London and youth icons (Livingstone, 45). Pop Art movement was born in the last years of the 1950s in Britain and, then, it influenced United States as well (Livingstone, 45). Characteristic of that art was the representation of the popular culture such as advertising, news, etc. (Livingstone, 45). It seemed that Pop Art contributed to the increase of youth culture since, as Whiteley noted, “the ‘meaning’ Pop was determined by your outlook on life whether of things or sensations, Pop was a lifestyle based on consumption, the logical development of the consumerist society and ethos” (Whiteley, 17).

Donnelly argued that:

it was Pop Art’s greatest strength, producing images that were glamorous, sexy, witty and euphoric, using visual references that were familiar to anyone who watched television, put posters on their wall, read magazines or shopped in the high street (Donnelly, 101).

Moreover, industries in the 1960s oriented their markets towards youth commodities (Murphy, 321). Robert Murphy suggested that music, fashion and films were leitmotifs of the new British orientation (Murphy, 321). As a matter of fact, during the postwar period London’s image began to be reflected also in clothes (Evans, 117). Indeed, Nigel Whiteley defined the 1960s youth in the following way: “‘children of the Age of Mass-Communication’, [that] brought up on the mass media and consumerism” (Whiteley, 19). Jobling and Crowley claimed:

Wages of British teenagers rose twice as fast as those of other employees. As a corollary, this new, youth-cultural movement forged a social identity of

its own, having its own economic, political and moral agenda that postulated more pluralist patterns of production and consumption” (Jobling and Crowley, 211).

It is possible to identify three different expressions of fashion that youth culture developed in London: Teddy Boys, Mods and Rockers (Hebdige, 46). Those trends were important within that context because they were strictly correlated to consumption, art and music of the decade. Those youth categories shared the same taste for clothes, the same way to behave, the same leisure and the same musical preference (Hebdige, 2-3)

In addition, John Clarke claimed in *Youth Cultures: Scenes, Subcultures and Tribes* by Hodkinson and Wolfgang:

The whole mid-1960s explosion of ‘Swinging London’ was based on the massive commercial diffusion of what were originally, essentially Mod style, mediated through [media] networks, and finally into a ‘mass’ cultural and commercial phenomenon...what was in origin a subcultural style became transformed, through increasing commercial organization and fashionable expropriation, into a pure ‘market’ or consumer style (Clarke in Hodkinson and Wolfgang, 69).

The Mods were working-class boys of London suburb area who emerged in Britain in 1962 (Hebdige, 52). They were “fashion-obsessed and hedonistic cult of the hyper-cool” (Jobling and Crowley, 212). Being the first generation that did not experience the war, they did not feel guilty when they spent money for extravagant clothes (Jobling and Crowley, 212). They wore a mixture of Italian and French styles with tailor made by themselves, hand-made winkle-pickers and their hair was “always flawless” (Jobling and Crowley, 212). Mods’ fashion derived from the

Teddy boys and they inherited the meticulous attention to style. The only things they were interested in were clothes and appearance. Moreover, according to Hebdige:

The Mods invented a style which enabled them to negotiate smoothly between school, work and leisure, and which concealed as much as it stated. [...] the mods undermined the conventional meaning of 'collar, suit and tie' pushing neatness to the point of absurdity (Hebdige, 52).

In 1964 *Daily Mail* released an article which reported the lifestyle of a 17-year-old Mod who spent most of his nights clubbing out and his afternoons buying clothes and records. However, as Jobling and Crowley noted, it seemed that few mods would have had so much time and money for clubbing and shopping (Jobling and Crowley, 212). But that obsession to fashion aimed to relieve themselves from their existence, from the "humdrum of daily existence" (Jobling and Crowley, 212). Their shopping addiction was like a pursuit of the pleasure they could not find in the workplace and a way to escape from daily life routine.

However, the Mod style was original and innovative until it was popularized and commercialized on a vast scale (Hebdige in Hall and Jefferson, 78). Once generalized, Mod style involved different styles which all contributed in making the myth of Swinging London (Hebdige, 160). As Halasz noted in "London: The Swinging City - You Can Walk Across it On the Grass":

London is not keeping the good news to itself. From Carnaby Street, the new way, way out fashion in young men's clothes is spreading around the globe, and so are the hairdos, the hair don'ts and the sound of the beat [...] London is exporting its plays, its films, its fads, its styles, its people. It is also the place to go. It has become the latest mecca (Halasz, 30).

In order to offer a wide and complete description of all the fashion and youth cultures that spread out in Britain during the 1960s, it seemed necessary to describe another youth trend of those years: the Rockers. They were young boys attracted by motorcycles which were used as an object of intimidation and masculinity (Brake and Kegan, 75). Their hardness was also represented by their leather motorcycle jackets, with metal studs, open-face helmet or leather caps, and motorcycle boots (Brake and Kegan, 75). Rockers were not widely accepted in local places such as pubs and discos because of their aspect (Brake and Kegan, 75).

Many critics tried to debate upon the main differences of two youth culture. On the one hand, there were the rockers who were rude motor biker. On the other hand, Mods were addicted to fashion and cleanness. However, Hebdige alleged that discussions about them and their conflicts were unsubstantiated since Mods were from London and Rockers came from the rural areas and they had “totally disparate goals and lifestyles” (Hebdige, 168).

According to *The meaning of subculture* by Hebdige, Teddy Boys, Mods and Rockers can be classified as subcultures. He stated that the meaning of subculture is not well defined since there are several conflicting definitions (Hebdige, 3). However, it is assumed that, despite the mystery that surrounds it, the term implies a set of different styles and signs that made a group identifiable (Hebdige, 18). Hall and Jefferson added that “subcultures [...] have reasonably tight boundaries, distinctive shapes, which have cohered around particular activities, focal concerns and territorial spaces. When these tightly-defined groups are also distinguished by age and generation, we call them ‘youth subcultures’” (Hall and Jefferson, 7).

When subculture is concerned, culture is implied. Mods, Rockers, Teddy boys and all the subcultures did not express culture in the way members wore, rather “they manifested culture in the broader sense, as systems of communication, forms of expression and representation” (Hebdige, 129). Indeed, the advent of youth culture was followed by “the arrival of mass communications, mass entertainment, mass art and mass culture” (Hall and Jefferson, 11).

Literature, music and cinema were not only a mirror for the current variations in society, but they were also translated into art. Subcultures needed art in order to show their styles and signs. Hence, magazines, radio and TV programmes helped teenagers in showing their pop culture. Moreover, it seemed that music was the kind of art which mainly experienced a change during the 1960s, due to the surge of youth subcultures. “[F]ashion innovations and pleasurable consumption” (Breward, 12) engraved in musical mutations. Music, indeed, represented an important aspect of subculture since it was the reflection of tastes and flavors of the group. According to Hebdige:

These mutations in their turn occur at those moments when form and themes imported from contemporary black music break up the existing musical structure and force its elements into new configurations. For instance, the stabilization of rock in the early 60s (vapid high school bop, romantic ballads, gimmicky instrumentals) encouraged the mods to migrate to soul to ska, and the subsequent reaffirmation of black themes and rhythms by white r&b and soul band contributed to the resurgence of rock in the mid-60s (Hebdige, 69).

Mods were used to spend their nights in clubs like The Roaming Twenties, The Flamingo, La Discotheque, The Scene & The Marquee; they were the most eccentric and famous emblems of Swinging London (Hebdige, 69). In those clubs, youth showed off their new clothes, their fashion style and they listened to the latest records (Hebdige, 69). Then, thanks to technological innovations typical of that decade, youth were allowed to buy portable plastic cassettes that they could listened to in their own rooms (Hebdige, 69). Furthermore, along with the cassettes, posters and pictures of the favorite bands and singers were sold (Hebdige, 69).

Mods’ music constituted a relevant phenomenon. Music clubs of London’s West End were previously attended by Blacks. Thus, Mods inherited a kind of

music that fused together blue beat and ska. John Muncie in “The Beatles and the spectacle of youth” argued that: “if the mods were something of an apolitical or ‘imaginary’ reaction against the ideology of classiness, then they equally reacted against the music and style of the previous decade” (Muncie in Inglis, 44), as rock and roll.

It seemed that on the one hand each subculture had their own musical preference, on the other hand “a new form of rock music which emerged around 1964-5 had a more universal youthful appeal” (Donnelly, 42). Rock music formed in that period and it was characterized by different elements mixed together, such as modern jazz, folk protest songs and rock and roll (Donnelly, 42). The Beatles or Bob Dylan, which emerged in that period, seemed to join together all the subcultures described above (Donnelly, 42).

However, it was believed that there were two kinds of music: ‘pop’ and rock. The first appeared to be pure entertainment, whereas the second one seemed to be “artistically authentic” (Inglis, 6). Moreover, pop “promotes qualities of creativity and distinctiveness”, while rock was “commercial, contrived and predictable” (Inglis, 6).

Nevertheless, popular music matured enormously during the 1960s. Mass media helped youth to be always informed about last records (Donnelly, 42). Radio London and Radio Caroline, two pirate radios, were important references for teenagers until police banned them (Donnelly, 42). Then, Radio One, and TV programmes as *Ready, Steady, Go!*, *Top of the Pops* and *The Beat Boom* “drew on pop music’s energy and elevated it into the driver of sixties youth culture” (Donnelly, 42).

Charts were occupied by some famous bands as Rolling Stones, Pacemakers, The Dreamers, the Tremeloes; however, the most successful group was undoubtedly The Beatles (Donnelly, 45). They were extremely important and they were the most famous British pop icon band. As a matter of fact, they deserve more attention in a following chapter of this dissertation.

An important quotation of Donnelly in *The Sixties Britain* seemed to include a relevant meaning of the aesthetic taste and music mutations typical of the period: “unlike their fifties counterparts, this generation of musicians demanded extensive artistic control over writing, production, album cover design, marketing and the lighting and staging of live shows” (Donnelly, 100).

A careful description of the 1960s, youth subcultures and styles aims to offer a wider panorama of the kind of art that characterized Britain in that period. “Beatlemania, King’s Road boutiques, Pop Art, student activists, hippies and most other emblems of sixties culture either depended on the wealth generated by a buoyant mixed economy, or emerge in dynamic relation to it” (Donnelly, 28). In particular, music will receive a major attention since it seems that popular music, evolved in that period, reflected the historical, political and cultural upheavals.

THE BEATLES

1.5 Who were The Beatles? Formation, 1957- 1962

At the beginning of the 1960s, a British rock band began to be popular within the British musical context: the Beatles. Its members, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr, were undoubtedly considered popular entertainers of the world since they allowed to change the perception of it (Inglis, 15). Indeed, they represented “the most important single element in British popular culture of the postwar years” (Evans, 7).

The band formed by the meeting between John Lennon and Paul McCartney in Liverpool on 6th July 1957: “this chance meeting in 1957 would change the history of pop music. [...] Together, they would become one of music’s greatest creative teams” (Roberts, 5). By the way, Lennon later said: “That was the day, the day I met Paul, that it started moving” (Lennon in Roberts, 12).

The first name of the band was The Quarryman which was taken by the school that members attended in Liverpool, the Quarry Bank Grammar School (Roberts, 12). The group, then, was joined by a Paul’s friend, the fourteen year-old George Harrison who later became the lead guitarist of the group (Roberts, 12).

As far as Quarryman’s music genre was concerned, Jeremy Roberts in *The Beatles, Music Revolutionaries* asserted:

The band played skiffle, a cross between American bluegrass, country, rhythm and blues, and early rock ‘n’ roll music. A British style, skiffle had a

primitive sound that featured musicians playing banjos and household items such as washboards (Roberts, 12).

In 1959, other Quarrymen's members left the group and Lennon began to attend the Liverpool College of Art, where he met the bassist Stuart Sutcliffe. It seemed that he suggested Lennon to change the name to Silver Beatles, which then became The Beatles (Roberts, 12). Later, in 1960, the three guitarists decided who was the steady drummer of the band: Pete Best.

Later, in an interview, Lennon, McCartney and Harrison affirmed that an American rock group, Buddy Holly and the Crickets, inspired them in the choice of the band's name, "changing the spelling of the insect name 'beetles' to 'Beatles' made for a pun on the world beat, as early rock 'n' roll was something called (Roberts, 14). Indeed, it was likely that important American singers and music bands influenced them, such as Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis and Chuck Berry (Roberts, 15). As Roberts again suggested, "their music had a harder edge and beat than the most popular groups of the time. In Britain, for example, Cliff Richard and the Shadows emphasized a softer, more melodic approach to rock and pop ballads" (Roberts, 15). In fact, Liverpool, the city in which those boys were born, represented an important element as far as American influences of Silver Beatles were concerned: the city was one of the most important British ports, where Americans left their goods and, most importantly, their music, influencing British people (Roberts, 11).

Silver Beatles began their career playing in some "dance halls and rough clubs" (Roberts, 11) in the suburban Liverpool area, then they travelled all around Scotland. However, the most important tour they made at the beginning of their career was that one in Hamburg. In *The Complete Beatles Chronicle: The Definitive Day-By-Day Guide To the Beatles' Entire Career*, Mark Lewisohn wrote that:

they pulled into Hamburg at dusk on 17 August, the time when the red-light area comes to life ... flashing neon lights screamed out the various entertainment on offer, while scantily clad women sat unabashed in shop windows waiting for business opportunities (Lewisohn, 22).

It was a very strenuous tour since they had to play every night in many different clubs of the city with energy, as asked from German clubs owners (Laing in Womack, 24). It seemed that, thanks to the Hamburg tour, the band “achieved their simple, economical, distinctive style, soon to be dubbed the ‘Liverpool’ sound” (Gammond, 46).

Indeed, Roberts added that:

The German audience liked the group’s rough sound and their tough-guy act. John would insult the crowd and do crazy things like giving the outlawed Nazi salute. They would joke between sets and interact with the audience. Bruno Koschmider, the club owner, encouraged them to *mach shau* – “make show”. Their wild performances were good for business (Roberts, 16).

In 1960 the four completed their tour in Germany for different reasons. George was forced to leave the country because he was underage and McCartney and Best were arrested since it seemed they started a fire in a theater; as a consequence, Lennon followed them but Stu was engaged by a club owner and remained in Germany (Roberts, 19).

The Hamburg tour seemed to have been a kind of training for the group and an opportunity for improving their performances. Once back in England, they again confirmed to be a rock and roll band. They weekly performed in the Cavern Club in Liverpool (Laing in Womack, 25). It appeared that in that club The Beatles met Brian Epstein for the first time. He was a local record businessman (Inglis,

16). Later, he said: “I immediately liked what I heard. They were fresh, and they were honest, and they had what I thought was a sort of presence ... [a] star quality” (Lewisohn, 34-35). Thus, in January 1962 Epstein officially became The Beatles’ manager (Roberts, 28).

The following quotation was a Roberts’ description of the manager:

Brian Epstein was intelligent and creative. He was able to oversee and coordinate many details to get a job done. He had a knack for figuring out what people wanted, and he was a good salesman. He also had complete and total faith in The Beatles (Roberts, 24).

The Beatles did an audition in February at the Decca Record which rejected the band asserting that “Guitar groups are on the way out, Mr. Epstein” (Gregory, 35). One month later, the band, after having replaced Pete Best with Ringo Starr, signed their contract with EMI's Parlophone label, thanks to the record producer George Martin (Inglis, 16). According to Gammond (in *The Oxford Companion to Popular music*), “he signed up the Beatles in 1962 and became very much part of their creative activities, not only leading them into various artistic technical venues but also arranging for them and even recording with them” (Gammond, 373).

The first official single produced was “Love Me Do”. In 1963, The Beatles dominated the British charts as Melody Maker, the New Musical Express, the Disc and Pick of the Pops with the song “Please Please Me” (MacDonald, 51).

1.6 Middle period, 1963 - 1966

The incredible success gained by the band was also due to the advent of mass communications during the 1960s (Inglis, 24). As we have already asserted, technological innovations became common objects in people's houses. Above all, television "by 1961 was reach[ed] into the homes of 75 per cent of the population [of Britain]" (Marwick, 134). According to Marwick, it "offered an alternative source of information and explanation and promoted new forms of entertainment" (Marwick, 7). The Beatles took advantage of the rise of television at the beginning of the 1960s, making their appearances in some of the most famous TV programmes (Inglis, 8). At the very beginning of their career, they made their performances, then they also released interviews in which they expressed their ideas on events and on important issues (Inglis, 8).

Lewisohn asserted that:

this transition was to become increasingly evident as the decade progressed. From October 1962 to April 1970, the group made more than 120 television broadcasts in the UK alone, during which time the proportion of those in which the primary content was musical rather than discursive reduced significantly (Lewisohn in Inglis, 8)

It seemed that what captured people's attention was their behavior, in addition to their original sound (Gammond, 46). As Gammond claimed, "as personalities they were endearing, arrogant, witty, cynical by turns; interesting and articulate, but out to have good time; with a self-deprecating honesty that cut through the publicity hype" (Gammond, 46).

Furthermore, those four Liverpool boys did not have a professional approach when performing and they seemed to be appreciated by the revolutionary

generation (The Beatles, 67). Brian Epstein tried to convince them to be more conventional while performing but Lennon recounted in an interview: “We used to dress how we liked, on and off stage. He’d tell us that jeans were not particularly smart and could we possibly manage to wear proper trousers, but he didn’t want us suddenly looking square. He’d let us have our own sense of individuality” (The Beatles, 67).

However, not only were The Beatles popular among teenagers, but they were also adulated by people of different age and coming from different social class and different gender (Muncie in Inglis, 41).

The following statement appeared to summarize things already considered:

The Beatles performed in an area of rapid changes in technology as well as music. Their images were sent by television and radio across the world. For a while, many considered them as famous as God. But the reality of the Beatles was always much larger than the image generated by and for the media. Their talents were such that nothing could contain them, not even hysteria and hype so crazy it was called Beatlemania (Roberts, 20).

“Beatlemania” was the phenomenon that recognized the widespread success the band achieved during the first years of the 1960s (Muncie in Inglis, 41). It represented a real social movement run by fourteen-year-old white girls who were interested not only in The Beatles’ songs but also in their personal lives (Muncie in Inglis, 42). Furthermore, “it was the first and most dramatic uprising of women’s sexual revolution” (Ehrenreich in Inglis, 42). In addition, Ingham referred to Beatlemania as a “teenage hysteria” (Ingham, 20), made by “female members of the audience, with their often hysterical screaming utterly drowning out the band” (Ingham, 20).

The Beatles’ first album was released in March 1963 (Muncie in Inglis, 39). *Please Please Me* hit the top of the UK album charts in May 1963 and remained

there for thirty weeks (Muncie in Inglis, 39). Singles such as “From Me to you” and “She loves you” sold more than three-quarters of a million copies in one month. As John Muncie in Inglis wrote:

the programs *The Evening Standard* proclaimed 1963 as the ‘Year of The Beatles’ and announced that “an examination of the heart of the nation at this moment would reveal the word BEATLE engraved upon it” (Muncie in Inglis, 40).

In the same year, several TV and radio appearances contributed to make the Beatles even more popular and, during the summer, the band had a fan magazine called *The Beatles Monthly Book* (Ingham, 19). In November, the second album was released: *With the Beatles*, which sold a million copies (Harry, 978).

The following year, the British band made its first travel to America (Ingham, 21). At the JFK airport, they were received by thousands of “screaming American fans” (Ingham, 21). Indeed, until 1964, American music charts were influenced by British music too, as by Cliff Richard (Ingham, 21). Moreover, Brian Epstein had sent several Beatles’ songs to his American EMI/Capitol colleagues (Ingham, 21).

It seemed that Ed Sullivan, an important TV star, was attracted by their particular sound and was aware of their great success in Great Britain (Ingham, 21). Hence, when they decided to made their first appearance in America, it was believed that Americans screamed out the motto ‘The Beatles are coming!’ (Ingham, 21).

Ingham wrote in his book that:

Their first appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* was watched by 73 million people; in March the single “Can’t buy my love” sealed the deal; and at one

point in April The Beatles held all top five slot in the US singles charts. America had never seen anything like it (Ingham, 21).

According to Gordon Thompson in his book *Please Please Me*, after Beatles' arrival in their country, Americans began to be aware that rock and roll genre was not just an exclusive of American art because "British performers and production teams were fixtures in an internationalized pop music industry" (Thompson, 4). Indeed, it was British music that changed how to make music all around the world. To look at Britain as a forge of ideas created a phenomenon called "British Invasion". Not only did it regard music, but also band's fashion style: Americans wanted to "appear more British" (Thompson, 4).

However, in the mid-Fifties, it was believed that British musicians were inspired by those American artists who made their tour in England, as Eddie Cochran (Thompson, 5). But historical events such as the Cold War, the wall of Berlin, and Cuban missiles crisis of the early 1960s led to a general tension among teens, who began to find their own way to express themselves (Thompson, 5). Then, "numerous male, guitar-orientated, British groups achieved unprecedented levels of success within USA, thereby challenging the established dominance of US performers" (Fitzgerald in Inglis, 53).

When The Beatles came back in Britain, they spent several months in producing their first movie, entitled *A Hard Day's Night*, which was an international success (Harry, 489). It was believed that the band decided to keep on the *A Hard Day's Night*' format with the next album, *Beatles for Sale*, recorded between August and October 1964. It contained original songs.

Moreover, as far as the album *Beatles for Sale* was concerned, Ingham wrote that:

allowing a Bob Dylan influence to permeate his writing for the first time, there is much earnest acoustic strumming and the lyrics are discernibly

moodier. Tales of girls who lie, girls who don't turn up, girls who don't answer the phone and tears 'falling like rain'. None of these songs would figure in a Lennon Top Ten, but you wouldn't want to be without them either (Ingham, 33).

It was assumed that year 1965 was particularly significant in The Beatles' career (Ingham, 34) . Firstly, they produced their second movie *Eight arms to hold you* and secondly, "1965 was also the year when The Beatles somehow arrested the temporary dip in their musical standards and began to transform themselves from mop-tops into pop artists" (Ingham, 34). Thirdly, it was probably during the 1965 that the four started their secret use of LSD (Ingham, 34). They made regular use of it and McCartney recounted that "it opened my eyes" and "it made me a better, more honest, more tolerant member of society" (Brown and Gaines, 228). In short, LSD "blew their minds" (Ingham, 35).

Most importantly, The Beatles' songs changed at the end of the year, because the members were influenced by Indian music and religion (Inglis, 18). The music band tried to do some experiments, exploring spiritual sphere (Inglis, 18).

As a consequence, the fifth album, *Rubber Soul*, released officially in 1965, was considered a "transitional' album, the shift from successful pop act to unparalleled masters of the studio took but three years" (Decker in Womack, 75). Peter Brown and Steven Gaines wrote about the new band's orientation that: "The Beatles' now habitual use of marijuana" (Brown and Gaines, 182) contributed to the new kind of sound; indeed, Lennon referred to the new album as "the pot album" (The Beatles, 194) and Starr said that: "Grass was really influential in a lot of our changes, especially with the writers. And because they were writing different material, we were playing differently" (The Beatles, 194).

Furthermore, it was with the following album, *Revolver*, that new areas of music were explored (Zolten in Womack, 47). Gammond wrote that: "on these albums the group moved away from simplicity, experimenting with electronic effects and added instruments in the studio, moving in all kinds of stylistic

directions” (Gammond, 46). And again Ingham, as far as *Revolver* was concerned, wrote that:

it was music made by thoughtful men, and the world was about to get thoughtful with them. [...] Everything was better; the arrangements, the playing, the sound, and the songs. The Beatles had not only tightened up their own quality control over the previous fifteen months or so, but had made a record that upped the ante for pop music all over the world (Ingham, 39-40).

1.7 Last period, 1967 – 1970

St. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club band (1967) album was considered “a mixture of surrealism, mysticism vaudeville, and rock that took pop music to new levels of inventiveness” (Gammond, 46). According to Jerry Zolten:

The Beatles indulged every creative impulse that came to mind. If there was a unifying theme, it was that stature afforded them the freedom to sound exactly as they pleased – which they did (Zolten in Womack, 48).

The Beatles, a double LP commonly known as the *White Album*, was produced along with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, an Indian guru (Whitley in Womack, 107). About this album, Sheila Whiteley claimed that “the group was disintegrating, that this was both an ironic take on their earlier successes and a testimony to Lennon

and McCartney's individual talents, with little to suggest either literary or musical unity" (Whiteley in Womack, 214).

A great number of critics considered the album as a failure, a fragmented work (Whiteley in Womack, 105). Its lack of cohesion and unity raised many interpretations about the real meaning of that album (Whiteley in Womack, 105).

The critic Ed Whitley asserted that *White Album* was a clear example of "postmodern text" and its "fragmentation, genre mixing, and other postmodern aesthetic techniques [...] created a zone where meaning can be opened and where readers can participate in the discussion of what this album does in contemporary society" (Whitley in Inglis, 105). In conclusion, the listener of *White Album* was able to reflect upon the role of pop music within Western culture (Whitley in Inglis, 123).

Let It Be was released as the last album of the band, but it was recorded before *Abbey Road* (Zolten in Womack, 58). Commenting on the sessions, Lennon said that it was: "hell ... the most miserable ... on Earth"; moreover, Harrison defined it: "the low of all-time" (Lewisohn, 310).

Members of the band, then, seemed to argued for an appointment with another financial adviser, because the need of him was indispensable after Brian Epstein's death (Hamelman in Womack, 129). On the one hand there were Lennon, Harrison and Starr who favored Allen Klein, the manager of the Rolling Stones and Sam Cooke; on the other hand, McCartney asked for his wife's brother, John Eastman (Hamelman in Womack, 129). In the end, on 8th May, Klein was officially the new manager of the band (Hamelman in Womack, 129).

After *Let It Be*'s flop, McCartney asked George Martin to produce another album. Thus, the band began their recordings for *Abbey Road* on 2nd July (Hamelman in Womack, 137).

On 4th July, John Lennon released his first single as soloist: "Give Peace a Chance" (Hamelman in Womack, 136). Then, Lennon decided to leave the group and he made a public announcement on 20th September (Hamelman in Womack, 126). Released six days after Lennon's declaration, *Abbey Road* sold four million

copies within three months and remained at the top of UK charts for a total of seventeen weeks (Hamelman in Womack, 133). *Abbey Road* received mixed reviews, and MacDonald called it “a set of solo performances” (MacDonald in Womack, 133). It was also associated to the legend that Paul was dead (Zolten in Womack, 56).

The album was definitely released with the title *Let it Be* on March 1970, with the help of Phil Spector, an American producer (Zolten in Womack, 60). It was believed that he was able to reedit and reshape the album within two weeks and he created a great product (Hamelman in Womack, 137). It seemed that the album was born from single tracks made by each member of group. It was not a cooperation by the musicians, but a collection of their single compositions (Hamelman in Womack, 50).

The song “The Long and Winding Road” was at the center of some argumentations between McCartney and Spector, since the first one did not agree on the addition of orchestra and chorus within the track (Hamelman in Womack, 139). However, when he objected the producer, it was too late. Soon, McCartney announced his decision to leave the band (Hamelman in Womack, 140).

McCartney’s dissatisfaction was not considered the only cause of Beatles’ breaking (Hamelman in Womack, 137). Even the figure of Yoko Ono appeared to make members of the band frustrated. Indeed, they never allowed stranger to attend their recording sessions’, but it seemed Lennon encouraged Yoko Ono in assisting (Hamelman in Womack, 137).

Along with the album, the movie *Let It be* was released on the same year but any member of the band assisted at the première in London (Hamelman in Womack, 137). Hundreds of hours of the movie were reduced at just 88 minutes, as revised by the band, except for John who did not manage to be present at the revision session (Lewisohn, 349).

On August 1971, a letter by Paul was released for his fans:

The time has come for me to withdraw from the Beatles fan club. As you may know, the band split up over a year ago and has not played together since. Each of us is getting together his own career, and for this reason, I don't want to be involved with anything that continues the illusion that there is such a thing as the Beatles. Those days are over. In the past, you have been great supporter, and the idea of this letter is to let to let you know I want it to be in the future, in case you wanted to know. Now I'm not a Beatle any longer, and want to get back to where I once belonged – living my own life, having my own family, my privacy, and getting on with my own music (Lewisohn, 365).

The break up was confirmed on 9th January 1975 after several legal disputes (Lewisohn, 320).

1.8 The solo career

From Paul McCartney's declaration, the most famous British band officially broke up. Onwards, each member of the group tried to gain success as solo artists (Frontani in Womack, 153). Let us get a glimpse on their respective years as soloists.

Ringo Starr released two albums, *Sentimental Journey* and *Beaucoups of Blues* arranged with George Martin, Quincy Jones, Elmer Bernstein, Maurice Gibb and, also, Paul McCartney (Frontani in Womack, 155-156) . He also played with John Lennon and Harrison several times. He seemed to be a “renaissance man”, not addicted to experiments but interested in recording for his own pleasure (Frontani in Womack, 156).

Harrison's career after The Beatles was very prolific. He devoted himself to Judeo-Christian philosophy and to meditation as Krishna (Frontani in Womack, 157). He began to reflect upon spirituality and on maya, "a sentiment that anchored his artistic and personal life over the next three decades" (Frontani in Womack,157). In 1970 he released his first single album *All Things Must Pass* which expressed his addiction to Hindu culture. Then, he issued *Dark Horse*, *High Fidelity*, *George Harrison*, *I Me Mine* and *Somewhere in England* (Frontani in Womack, 157).

Paul McCartney, along with John Lennon, was one the most prolific songwriters of The Beatles (Frontani in Womack, 162). When the band broke up, Paul continued his career but, as Frontani argued, "his situation was completely different from that of the pop art intellectual of 1967, and the domesticity of post-Beatledom was less attractive to a segment of the youth culture audience that continued to expect rock to rebel" (Frontani in Womack, 165). In 1971, he performed with his new band, The Wings. They issued several albums as *Wild Life*, *Red Rose Speedway*, *Band on the Run*, *London Town* and *Back to the Egg* (Frontani in Peddie,165).

John Lennon appeared to embody the figure of the rebel and of the radical, even after The Beatles (Fazzini, 171). He was involved in peace and anti-war movements, and his songs spread out pacifist messages (Fazzini, 171). The most famous Lennon's songs were "Give Peace a Chance", "Imagine", "I don't want to be a soldier", "Gimme some truth". In 1971 when Lennon and his wife Yoko Ono moved to America, they were involved in radical politics and they met the most American controversial figures (Lynskey, 137). It seemed that in 1972, the Nixon Administration began a "strategic counter-measure" against Lennon, trying to deport him (see *John Lennon*). As a consequence, Lennon and Yoko declared the State of Nutopia, "a conceptual country" that had "no land, no boundaries, no passports but only people" (Lennon and Ono, 1973). In 1980, while he was coming home from a recording session, Lennon was shot by Mark David Chapmen (Frontani, 176).

1.8 The Beatles' Music

Let us begin by examining the changes that The Beatles' music witnessed during their whole career. It appeared that their way to compose music experienced an evolution.

Indeed, at the beginning of their career, the four teenage boys were influenced by black music and by rock and roll, and by the most prominent figures as Chuck Berry, Roy Orbison, Isley Brothers and Elvis Presley (Schinder and Schwartz, 160). Lennon said about Presley: "Nothing really affected me until I heard Elvis. If there hadn't been Elvis, there would not have been The Beatles" (Mackenzie, 43). Skiffle and music hall influenced their sound, too.

The Beatles' first genre was called "Merseybeat", which identified a distinctive style performed by bands from Liverpool (Brocken in Inglis, 23). Gammond said that it was "an Anglicized form of rhythm 'n' blues, with a swinging beat and clean harmonies" (Gammond, 380). The Beatles' songs were mainly love songs in this first period and they usually recounted their personal experiences (Fazzini, 172). A great number were also cover versions of rock and roll and blues songs.

The fact that The Beatles' sound was influenced by blues, rock and roll and pop exponents, draw on the band's intention to make black American music accessible to white British people (Muncie in Inglis, 39).

Beatlemania and its original Merseybeat lasted about three years, from 1962 to 1965. Once *Rubber Soul* and *Revolver* were published, The Beatles' sound stopped to be simple and began to be the product of electronic experiments. Moreover, for the first time, black influences did not appear in those albums. Soon the band began to include pop music in their repertoire and from 1965 even ballads and classical music were introduced.

However, the most important Beatles' album was considered *St. Pepper's Lonely Heart Club* (1967). As far as it was concerned, Zolten argued that a wide range of instruments were used: "battery of keyboards including piano, Hammond

organ, harpsichord, harmonium and Mellotron” (Zolten in Womack, 48). Indeed, electronic innovations provided new effects to the album (Zolten in Womack, 51).

In the second period, it seemed that the uses of drugs, to which every component of bands were addicted to, influenced the composition of songs. For instance, “Strawberry Fields Forever”, “A Day in the Life”, “Tomorrow Never Knows”, “Rain” and “Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds” hid references to hallucinogen and psychedelic substances (Marwick, 143). Kureishi in *Eight arms to hold you* asserted that: “Musicians have always been involved with drugs, but the Beatles were the first to parade their particular drug use – marijuana and LSD – publicly and without shame” (Kureishi, 89).

Moreover, for the first time in their repertoire, The Beatles reported historical and political events or newspaper and television articles in their lyrics (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 87-88). Generally, pop songs recount unrequited love, disenchantment or laments (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 87-88). But their involvement in everyday facts and events did not weakened their success; on the other hand, people were more fascinated by what they were telling in their songs. “She came in through the Bathroom Window” was based on a real event occurred in Paul’s house (MacDonald, 295).

They began to write about alienation, estrangement, rebirth, escape, solitude, nostalgia, regret, greed, division of subcultures and political involvement (Inglis, 9-10). However, it seemed that the only song that contained some criticism against the government was “Taxman”. Indeed, George Harrison wrote: “Taxman was when I first realized that even though we had started earning money, we were actually giving most of it away in taxes; it was and still is typical. Why should this be so? Are we punished for something we have forgotten to so?” (Harrison, 94).

It seemed that despite of a series of evolutions, the band remained on a traditional form. Indeed, in *The Songwriting Secrets of The Beatles*, Dominic Pedler claimed about Beatles’ combination of genres:

One of the greatest of The Beatles' achievements was the songwriting juggling act they managed for most of their career. Far from moving sequentially from one genre to another (as is sometimes conveniently suggested) the group maintained *in parallel* their mastery of the traditional, catchy chart hit while simultaneously forging rock and dabbling with a wide range of peripheral influences from Country to vaudeville. One of these threads was their take on folk music, which would form such essential groundwork for their later collisions with Indian music and philosophy (Pedler, 67).

As far as The Beatles' songs were regarded, it seemed important to recount how a recording studio was important for the group. It was believed that when the band made their first appearance in Abbey Road's studio in 1962, they discovered that it was a very pompous and formal place. There were assistances, phonics and engineers wearing suit and tie at work (Ingham, 44).

However, The Beatles were interested in making songs. Paul McCartney affirmed in the Official Beatles Fan Club Christmas Message:

What we like to hear the most is one of our songs taking shape in the recording studio, one of the ones that John and I have written, and then listening on the tapes afterwards to see how it all worked out (quoted in Riley, 1989, p. 3) (McCartney in Julien, 3).

During the first recording years of the band, there was an attempt to create a studio recording similar as much as possible to songs played on stage. Hence, sound was simple and time spent on the studio was very short; "there was just no time for sophisticated arrangements or experiments of any kind" (The Beatles, 72).

Later, from 1966 onwards, The Beatles gained a great experience on stage and on the studio; thus, they achieved so much "confidence" and "arrogance" to try new

experiments while producing records (Inglis, 3). Within four years, members of the band were aware of their ability to play instruments and their incredible success did not make them afraid of new music approaches (Inglis, 3). Moreover, they were fully aware of their role as “musical leaders” and “trendsetters” (Whiteley, 13). Songs produced in that period included innovative arrangements, unconventional instruments as French horn, string quartet, sitar, electronic sounds (Whiteley, 13).

Thus, it was assumed that the hours spent in studio for the first album, *Please Please me*, were about 20 and it costs £400; in contrast, the hours spent for *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* were 700 and it cost £25,000 (Inglis, 5).

However, their studio-engineered tracks were almost impossible to be reproduced on stage, and so they used to reproduce their precedent repertoire, from 1963 to 1964. It seemed that their last tours in Germany, Japan, Philippines and United States were drastically criticized: “Beatles concerts are nothing to do with music anymore. They’re just bloody tribal rites” (quoted in Lewishon, 210).

1.9 Success

“More popular than Jesus” once said John Lennon about his band. Despite all the religious controversies risen from this remark, it seemed to sum up the overwhelming success gained by The Beatles during the 1960s.

The Beatles, being “the most important single element in British popular culture of the postwar years” (Evans, 7), were believed to be inseparable from the impact they had not only on popular music industry but also on a vast scale of related areas (Inglis, 17). The Beatles’ success in Great Britain and all over the world was due to several factors. First of all,

in so much of their personal, musical and professional behavior, they were perceived – rightly or wrongly – as innovators, who were consequently elevated into spokespersons for a generation. Whether the subject was the legalization of drugs, the war in Vietnam, traditional and alternative religions, the relationship between the performer and the recording company, the politics of musical integrity, the connections between popular music and other media forms, the Beatles and their opinions were sought out and heard: they were given a multiplicity of voices by the community within which they were active and successful (Inglis, 17).

It seemed that “The Beatles involved much more than music” (Somach and Sharp in Inglis, 4). About the band, Aaron Copland said: “When people ask to re-create the mood of the Sixties, they will play Beatles music” (Copland in Frontani, 156). The Beatles indeed were the manifesto of the generation gap that 1960s’ youth witnessed.

Furthermore, Inglis wrote in his book that:

the group’s comments and behaviors, amplified by an attendant mass media, unexpected because of their origin, and contrasted against a contemporary background in which it was widely supposed that “an intellectual generation...simply never appeared”(Jacoby, 3), gained a currency which in other times and other circumstances might not have been theirs (Inglis, 13).

Protest songs, British invasion and a worldwide impact changed the role of pop music; from Sixties onwards, popular music was taken as a serious form of art. As Wicke asserted: “music and musicians [could] play a very effective role in radically changing the political and cultural environment of which they [were] a part” (Wicke, 196).

Sheila Whiteley in “‘Tangerine trees and marmalade skies’: cultural agendas or optimistic escapism?” alleged that *Sgt. Pepper Lonely Album Band*, released in 1967, summed up all the generation’s feelings. According to her, it was believed that this album did “exemplify a mood of getting better” (Whiteley in Julien, 11). During the last period of their career, The Beatles’ songs seemed to embody a wide range of new attitudes, giving voice to generalized feelings that left out the older. This kind of tracks, moreover, led to cultural and political changes (Whiteley in Julien, 11). Indeed, Whiteley added:

Even at the time, it was apparent that the Beatles had a privileged position within the pop world, that they were able to voice opinions in current situations and be heard by their thousands of fans worldwide. They had become, in effect, the socio-political zeitgeist for their generation (Whiteley in Julien, 11)

Although at the very beginning of their career they produced mainly love songs, The Beatles’ songs of the last period were involved in political affairs (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 87). John Lennon first released about the 1960s politics was issued in June 1966 when Capitol, the American label, withdrew an edition of *Yesterday...and Today* album where the Beatles appeared in butchers’ smocks, with meat and beheaded dolls (Lynskey, 129). Lennon said that that cover was “as relevant as Vietnam” (Lennon in Linskey, 129) and then he claimed that they “don’t like the war, war is wrong; we think of it every day, we don’t agree with it, we think it’s wrong” (Lennon in Lynskey, 129).

It seemed interesting to investigate on the capacity that a lyric had to inspire people, on the ideas that influenced the composers and on the conditions that a songwriter had to follow while producing. It seemed that a great number of sociologists and historians asserted that music could reveal “who we are and what

we want” (Street in Inglis, 3). Moreover, as far as popular music was concerned, Inglis affirmed that:

ideas are seen as significant [that] continue to exert its influence inside and outside the industry, it is also true that the activities of a small number of performers have attracted attention and investigation for reasons other than those typically associated with the crudely commercial concerns of the industry (Inglis, 3)

Lyrics and songs could tell a message for a real pure intention of the songwriter or, on the other hand, could be the product of the industry market (Cloonan in Inglis, 126). Music could represent a vehicle used by the record companies to make money. However, The Beatles were not influenced by industry market at all (Cloonan in Inglis, 129). They did not rely on EMI’s control; The Beatles’ luck was to have two songwriters within the group, Lennon and McCartney. As a matter of fact, they did not need anyone else to write songs for them. They were also great musicians (Cloonan in Inglis, 129). Weiner wrote:

The Beatles’ music was created under conditions that gave them a degree of artistic autonomy rare in the world of pop music. Because they wrote their own songs, they were free from the grip of hack songwriters and A&R men of the publishing industry. Because they accompanied themselves, producers had less power over how they sounded. Because they had served a long apprenticeship, and because they had tried out their songs in front of the audiences before recording them, they knew what made their music work better than producers and executives did (Weiner, 50).

Please Please Me was entirely composed by the members of the group, confirming a self-artistic control (Cloonan in Inglis, 128). Their autonomy and their artistic freedom created the myth of the British band as a spokesperson for a whole generation, the one who struggled for its independence (MacDonald, 290). Two songs seemed to be representative of it: “Eleanor Rigby” and “She’s Leaving Home”. The first one, released in 1966 in *Revolver*, was an attack to Victorian strict codes of the 1950s generation. In the second one, the band recounted the story of a girl who left her home in order to live her own life alone. Thus, parents said: “we gave her most of our lives, sacrificed most of our lives, we gave her everything money could buy” but in the end they said: “Fun is the one thing that money can’t buy” (The Beatles, 1967).

Martin Cloonan asserted that artistic freedom was different for each member of the group (Cloonan in Inglis, 128). It appeared that Lennon was more interested in self-expression, creating genuine music (Cloonan in Inglis, 132). However, by the end of their career, the Beatles were less involved in fans’ tastes and they tried to get over those boundaries (Cloonan in Inglis, 132). Their initial attempt to be liked by mums and dads was replaced by open attitudes, as references to drugs (Cloonan in Inglis, 129). George Harrison said about the song “Day tripper”:

This was getting towards the psychedelic period when we were interested in winking to our friends and comrades in arms, putting in references that we knew our friends would get but that the great British Public might not...the mums and dads didn’t get it but the kids did. ‘Day Tripper’ was to do with tripping...that was one of the great things about collaboration, you could nudge-nudge, wink-wink a bit (Harrison in Inglis, 132).

Another factor that increased The Beatles’ worldwide success was the release of five movies: *A Hard Day’s Night* (1964), *Help!* (1965), *Magical Mystery Tour* (1967), *Yellow Submarine* (1968) and *Let it Be* (1969). Those films appeared to

represent a massive part in band's celebrity, both in Britain and USA (Neaverson, 150). Bob Neaverson, in "Tell Me What You See: the influence and impact of the Beatles' movies", argued that:

Although the group had achieved a remarkable amount of international success prior to its forays into film, my suspicion is that the phenomenon of Beatlemania could not and would not have been either as substantial or as durable without the identificatory process afforded by cinema (Neaverson in Inglis, 152).

Indeed, movies influenced pop music and videos of the 1960s (Neaverson in Inglis, 150). The Beatles showed their images, attitudes, ideas and styles in the movies (Neaverson in Inglis, 150). For instance, *A Hard Day's Night* provided to show to the world their visual look and to affirm their identities as "amusing, witty, sarcastic, profound and compassionate" (Neaverson in Inglis, 152) characters. On the other hand, in *Magical Mystery Tour*, the Fab Four developed the image of psychedelic figures while in *Let It Be* they were "taciturn philosophers who, having turned the full musical circle, were now in an advanced state of personal and, to some extent, professional decay" (Neaverson in Inglis, 152).

Movies were important under two mainly perspectives: a formal and an ideological one (Neaverson in Inglis, 151). According to Neaverson, "from a purely pragmatic perspective, making films for international distribution was the easiest and most cost-effective way to ensure consistent global exposure and generate maximum box office and/or television exhibition revenue" (Neaverson in Inglis, 151). Film-making provided a greater success than all the appearances in TV shows (Neaverson in Inglis, 151).

In addition, movies were important as far as British Invasion was concerned. They increased not only their success as British characters in America, but they made pop music more accessible (Neaverson in Inglis, 153). Furthermore, it could

have been possible that, with the circulation of those movies, US was encouraged in considering British popular music (Neaverson in Inglis, 153).

A deep analysis of The Beatles seemed fundamental in order to introduce the core meaning of this dissertation. Thanks to a panorama of the whole international context, and considering the political, historical and social perspectives, it would be easier to explain what the role of music and songs of the 1960s was among people.

In the following chapter, a definition of protest songs will be given. Although this thesis focuses mainly on British music, the most important protest songs coming from different countries will be identified and analyzed in detail.

The role of protest songs

2.1 Music's role within the political context

In the first chapter of this dissertation, the 1960s and its features have been analyzed and it seemed to be clear that music played a central role within youth rebellion. Indeed, songs had the power to include a message in their own and, as they can be spread easily thanks to mass communications like radio and television, they were reached by everyone. Thus, a deep analysis of The Beatles, the icon British music band, was fundamental since the group functioned as spokesperson for an entire generation in the last period of their career. Their songs turned mainly from love songs to protest social songs, and they also represented the manifesto of the frustration felt by the younger British population during the 1960s, due to a gap with their parents.

After having examined the general context, it appears necessary to carefully study what music was able to communicate and what strategies it followed in order to fulfill its scope. Moreover, the previous description of the political and historical context constituted the humus for a clear understanding of the evolution music experienced during the 1960s. At the time, most of the songs and music seemed to reflect people's polemical feelings towards a controversial political and social situation.

As we have asserted before, music was the main means of youth's entertainment and since younger people were more frustrated than others, they appreciated lyrics that expressed their struggle.

Let us begin by explaining what type of music propagated during the 1960s. According to Donnelly, it appeared that music listened to during those years was

called ‘popular’ music (Donnelly, 4). Historically, it was believed that “‘popular’ reveal[ed] both the plurality of its inflections and some of their historical movements. It had to do with ‘the people’” (Middleton, 3). ‘People’ derived from *vulgus*, that meant common people and, as a matter of fact, the term was soon associated with a negative connotation: it was music of lower class. However, it achieved a “good meaning” in Britain during the nineteenth century (Middleton, 3). Thus, when bourgeois market increased a lot in the 1960s, most of the songs produced were called “‘popular’, in order to identify that they were lower people’s art disseminated by the mass market songs” (Middleton, 4).

Therefore, the term popular involved a variety of meanings since it referred also to ‘national’ and ‘traditional songs’ (Middleton, 4). However, “popular music can only be properly viewed within the context of the whole musical field, within which it is an active tendency; and this field, together with its internal relationships, is never still – it is always in movement” (Middleton, 7).

Music appeared to incorporate cultural changes of a particular class. It was believed that the “cross-connotation” (Middleton, 9) between art and popular culture were born in the late Victorian music hall, because songs were crossed with political facts, such as those linked with imperialism (Middleton, 9). That practice evolved during the centuries and, lately, figures as Elvis Presley and Woody Guthrie appeared to be important icons of this kind of link songs’ (Middleton, 9). As far as the mingle between music and political elements was concerned, Middleton wrote:

the classes fight to articulate together constituents of the cultural repertoire in particular ways so that they are organized in terms of principles or sets of values determined by the position and interests of the class in the prevailing mode of production (Middleton, 9).

What Middleton tried to explain in his book *Studying popular music* was that popular music was always located in a particular period of time, whose political and social aspects were fundamental songs (Middleton, 15). The Second World War represented a striking situational change on a wide range of aspects: multinational industries began to dominate the global market, technology and mass communications took over people's habits songs (Middleton, 15). Consequently, new subcultures formed and they looked for new musical sources, as American blues and jazz (Middleton, 15). The 1960s saw the rise of "new social-historical phase", "welfare capitalism" and "ideology of liberal tolerance" (Middleton, 15). According to Middleton:

Demands for greater "freedom" and "authenticity" can often be channeled into established stereotypes of rebellion and expression, and thus articulated to the framework of the dominant musical ideology, mediated by a discourse which is organized round notions of 'youth', 'modernity' and 'pleasure'" (Middleton, 15).

The music industry also experienced an astonishing transformation due to technological innovations and new social patterns: there were new methods of music propagation and production (Middleton, 14).

A case in point was represented by rock and roll music that was highly influenced by all the mid-Sixties situational changes (Middleton, 21). Moreover, that music began to embody the cultural struggle's message in its songs, and they soon were associated with the "counterculture" (Middleton, 27).

The Beatles constituted the perfect example for that issue: by 1967, their songs began to involve more instruments for their compositions, and as a consequence, they were harder to be performed on stage. Thus, "music [was] for listening rather than dancing" (Middleton, 28).

What seems fundamental in this approach is: lyric. Rooksby offered the following description of lyric:

A lyric is the place where the emotional suggestions of pure music are defined as concrete human concerns and events. It is like a piece of translation, from one medium into another. The general musical mood is focused by a lyric into a context, a voice, a human drama (Rooksby, 10).

Lyrics established a close relationship between music and language (Middleton, 172). Indeed, music represented a “communicational activity” (Middleton, 172) whose key element was the code songs’ (Middleton, 172). The code involved several categories of values: communicative, ritual, technical, erotic, and political. The last one appeared to be relevant for our deep analyses of 1960s music. That category, indeed, expressed “political content or orientation” (Middleton, 253):

Conventionally, the possibility of a musical politics – as of any other politics – depends on whether it makes sense to talk about ‘how things really are’; hence about how well particular musical practices measure up to this or help us to feel understand or participate in it. In popular music, this has usually involved claims to emotional ‘truth’, cultural ‘authority’ or social ‘emancipation’ (Middleton, 254).

Thus, the music that involved political aspects produced protest songs, which aimed to convey a message and to make people aware of the general social situation through its words (Peddie, 4). Peddie argued that:

Protest songs are defined as such by virtue of their words, but many make their impact in tandem with their sonic elements, the emotionality of the music, the strength and confidence of the vocals, or their simplicity and repetitive phrases, which allow the audience to sing along (Weinstein in Peddie, 4).

2.2 Protest songs

There was a great number of political songs that can be subdivided into different groups. However, it seemed clear that those songs could be split into two main categories: the first one clusters songs which were involved with specific political events; the second one regroups songs which were written by artists from the same country.

The first category classifies songs that denounce various social movements such as women's suffrage, labor movement, civil rights, anti-war movement, feminist movement, animal rights movement, vegetarianism, veganism and environmentalism which exploded in a particular period of time. They all shared the condemn for that particular issue. In particular, the 1960s represented a period of very "high political fervor" (Peddie, 5). Civil rights protests and movements of anti-Vietnam war also involved teenagers in those complaints. They were interested in rock music, so, as a consequence, it "created the conditions for a proliferation of protest songs" (Peddie, 5).

In the second category there are protest songs written and produced in the same country, by composers who shared the same patriotic spirit and the same nationalism.

Although this dissertation aims to study British protest songs, in particular the songs written by The Beatles, it would be interesting to glance at the worldwide

protest songs panorama, focusing on several countries which were affected by political social movements and protest risings. It is likely that they can help us to identify which techniques and strategies are involved with the spread of songs' messages.

It could also be stimulating to evaluate how composers, from different countries, have tried to deal with those strategies.

2.2.1 A worldwide protest songs panorama

After a careful examination, it appeared that many countries produced protest and revolutionary songs, from China to America. The composition of this kind of lyrics was influenced by the social contexts; indeed, they resulted to be the fundamental keys.

However, the most prolific countries would be analyzed here. Their leaders appeared to have reached an overwhelming success throughout history.

2.2.2 United States

American protest songs can find their roots at the beginning of the twentieth century, with the rise of the IWW, known as the Wobblies, a military labor group including socialists, anarchists and union organizers (Rodnitzky in Sheurer, 113). The Industrial Workers of the World was founded in 1905 in Chicago by one-hundred eighty-six members (Ciani Forza in Fazzini, 103). Their aim was to

overturn the system run by bosses. Indeed, in those years immigrants and workers were excluded from all the benefits of society. Whilst “whites” enjoyed their economic stability, new rebels claimed their rights (Ciani Forza in Fazzini 103). In order to fulfill that attempt, the Wobblies used a wide range of means, and protest songs was one of them. The following stanza is taken from a revolutionary song used by IWW:

Arise then, arise then,
Ye men of the plow and the hammer,
Ye men of the helm and the lever,
And send forth to the four winds of the earth
Your new proclamation of freedom.

Their lyrics are simple and they are characterized by immediate perception. The most significant songs were collected in the so called *The Little Red Song Book*, published in Spokane in 1909 (Ciani Forza in Fazzini, 103). As Ciani Forza described in Fazzini’s *Canto un mondo Libero*, themes varied from denouncing their social conditions to exhorting to rebellion (Ciani Forza in Fazzini, 105).

The Wobblies did not fight with violence, they were contrary to it. During the First World War, many members of the group were imprisoned and in 1924 the IWW broken. However, messages of their songs continued to be spread thanks to ex-Wobblies throughout the Twenties and Thirties (Munro, 14).

Joe Hill (1879-1915) was the most prolific songwriter among the Wobblies. He was a Swedish immigrant; during his career he wrote a great many folk songs. According to Rodnitzky: “he had imbued both the spirit of class struggle and the evils of wage slavery, and he began to write new-style labor songs” (Rodnitzky in Sheurer, 114). Then, he became an icon for many labourers, since it is believed he was accused and executed for the supposing murderer of a grocer (Rodnitzky in

Sheurer, 114). It seems important to cite a Hill's declaration that Ciani Forza quoted in *Canto un mondo libero*:

A pamphlet, no matter how good, is never read more than once, but a song is learned by heart and repeated over and over. And I maintain that if person can put a few common sense facts into a song and dress them up in a cloak of humour, he will succeed in reaching a great number of workers who are too unintelligent or too indifferent to read (Ciani Forza in Fazzini, 107).

Later, the struggle of the First World War (1914–18) appeared in several songs, including a great number of different topics, such as the decision to enter in the European war or soldiers' fear to fight overseas.

During the Thirties and Forties, America was marked by the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl. Among the many artists who raised their voice against the system, the most representative songwriter in those times was Woody Guthrie (1912-1967), who sang about dustbowl misery and union struggle. Appearing in public with the motto inscribed on his guitar "this Machine kills Fascists", Guthrie "made up songs telling what [he] thought was wrong and how to make it right" (Guthrie in Sheurer, 116). He was considered "one of the nation's most famous folksingers and songwriters" (Coombs, 7) and the representative of the American folk music, the music of proletarian and lower classes.

In a short time, he composed a wide range of songs, including love songs, work songs, hobo songs, outlaw ballads (Coombs, 8):

He wrote about disaster, the simple joys of childhood, the working man's struggle, the black man's misery, the fight against Adolf Hitler, and the beauty he saw around him. Mainly, he wrote songs of hope, because Woody

Guthrie believed that given the right song, downtrodden and discouraged people everywhere could rise up singing (Coombs, 8).

On the one hand, his songs presented the problematic issue, on the other hand they tried to offer a solution for nation's problems. For instance, the song "Pastures Plenty" has a double meaning: it recounts the injustice of seasonal workers who "cut the grapes from the vine to set on your tables your light sparkling wine", then Woody ended with a positive statement:

Well, it's always we ramble that river and I,
All along your green valley I will work till I die,
My land I defend with my life, if it be,
'cause my pastured of plenty must always be free

"This land is your land", "Dust Bowl Blues" and "Deportee" are other famous protest songs, characterized by the typical Woody Guthrie musical style: the talking blues, a rhythmic speech. In 1943, he sailed in Merchant Marine and when he came back he decided to compose anti-war, anti-Hitler songs and historical ballads. A case in point is the song "Sally, Don't You Grieve" in which the speaker tried to console his girlfriend since he has to leave.

Furthermore, Guthrie talked about migrant workers, working class and how life was during the Great Depression (see *This machine kills fascist*). Along with Pete Seeger, Millard Lampell and Lee Hays, he was one of the members of the Almanac Singers band, a labour-movement group. The group sang unionist and peace songs (Lynskey, 27).

It seems that a wide range of political struggles made possible the proliferation of protest songs in America. Indeed, it was the advent of the Second World War (1939-1945). Hitler Soviet Union's invasion, bombardments in Hiroshima and

Nagasaki, attacks at Pearl Harbor and Vietnam war persuaded artists to compose songs about those events and about their intimate feelings.

Furthermore, Rodnitsky wrote that:

The 1960s had brought events and mass movements that called folk guitarists to arms, and the civil rights movement was the catalyst. Martin Luther King's movement was clearly a sing-in, as well a sit-in, campaign (Rodnitsky in Peddie, 18).

It is believed that in the second half of the century the civil rights movement against racial discrimination worked as a catalyst for protest singers. While Martin Luther King tried to sensitize people with his campaign, there was another important character that become spokesperson for the political events of the 1960s: Bob Dylan (1941). It seems that Dylan, the pseudonym of Bobby Zimmerman, wanted to:

sing about the things that were happening around him. Some of these things, such as the fight for racial equality, were important. Some, such as a fight at a picnic, were a little silly. He wanted to sing about people he knew and things that had happened to him. But silly or serious, he wanted to tell stories with his music that would interest other young people (Roberts, 30).

Being involved in King's movement, he sang along with his partner Joe Baez at the march on Washington on August 28, 1963. Although he never considered himself as a protest singer, several songs reflected political issues as "Blowin' in the Wind" (1962), "Masters of War" (1963), "Talking World War III Blues" (1963), and "The Times They Are A-Changin'" (1964) (see *No direction home*).

He also raised his voice against unjust crimes and tragedies, such as the murderer of Medgar Evers or the death of the boxer Davey Moore. The author Jeremy Roberts, in his *Bob Dylan: Voice of a generation*, asserted that “his songs would voice the dreams of an entire generation. Many would call him a prophet” (Roberts, 7).

In 1963 Dylan wrote “A hard rain’s gonna fall”, which was believed a controversial record against the Cuban Missiles Crises, although it was written and performed one month earlier (Lynskey, 45). It is believed that Dylan’s lyrics can be interpreted in many ways (Cogan and Kelso, 128). Later in 1965, the American singer decided to turn from acoustic to electric guitar, stopping in doing protest songs and declaring himself as a free artist (Rodnitsky in Peddie, 17).

Pete Seeger was another key American protest singer. He was born in 1919 in New York and grew up in a left-wing environment (Lynskey, 21). His father, Charles Seeger, was famous in the American musicology and ethnomusicology context and he was deeply involved in leftist protests (Lynskey, 21). He sang about civil rights movement, racial segregation, discrimination, Vietnam War and environment (Winkler, IX). Pete began his career in 1938 after his College years thanks to the meeting with Lead Belly and Woody Guthrie. Along with the latter, Seeger founded the Almanac Singers and then, in 1949, the Weavers (whose most famous song was “On Top of Old Smoky”). Other hits are “Where have all the flowers gone”, “We shall overcome”, “Wimoweh” and “Turn! Turn! Turn!”. Professor M. Winkler asserted that:

Pete Seeger sounded the times with his music and lyrics perhaps better than anyone. The labor movement of the 1930s, the peace movement on the eve of World War II, the civil rights and antiwar movements of the 1960s, and the green crusade for clean water all bear the mark of Seeger’s melodies and echo the rhythms of a century of change (Winkler, viii).

2.2.4 Ireland

Ireland was involved since the early 19th century in the so called Irish question, the struggle for the independence of the Northern part of the island that still belongs to the British Empire. That complex problem caused violent crimes throughout the centuries; it inevitably inspired Irish artists in setting the struggle into music. Indeed, lyrics mainly recount persecutions, rebellions, revolutions and battles for freedom.

Within that political fervor, a great many young dissidents claimed their rights for freedom. The most important rebel was Bobby Sands (1954-1981) who died in jail, at Long Kesh, in Northern Ireland (Calamati in Fazzini, 189). His last days were signed by a hard agony due to a hunger strike he decided to undertake as a protest form (Calamati in Fazzini, 189). During his days in prison, he learnt how to play guitar and, along with his fellow prisoners, he wrote most of the best Irish protest songs (Calamati in Fazzini, 199). He wrote down his compositions in small pieces of paper that he passed to his fellows (Calamati in Fazzini, 189). “The Voyage” became one of the most famous Irish contemporary ballads; it recounts the story of some Irishmen who fought in Dublin against the British Empire on 23th July 1803 and they were forced to serve their sentences in Australia (Calamati in Fazzini, 200). The following stanza is taken from the ballad:

In 1803 we sailed out of the sea
Out from the sweet town of Derry
For Australia bound if we didn't all drown
And the marks of our fetters we carried.
In the rusty iron chains we sighed for our wains
As our good wives we left in sorrow.

As the mainsails unfurled our courses we hurled
On the English and thoughts of tomorrow.

2.2.5 South Africa

South African music dealt with protest music as well. Indeed, the racial segregation system (called Apartheid, that ruled from 1948 to 1994) repressed the rights of black inhabitants who were deprived of “every human rights conventions” (Roberts, 68). The system regarded white supremacy over the blacks who had no access to education structures, medical care and public places as beaches. As a consequence, Apartheid, wanted by the National party, raised uprisings and revolts but protesters were banned or imprisoned. The government replied with violence and repression against all the anti-apartheid leaders.

An important African singer raised his voice against the injustices his compatriots were witnessing: Mzwakhe Mbuli (Brown, 239). At the beginning of his career, he recited two pomes at the funeral of Father Castro Moyathula, “Sies” and “Ignorant” (Brown, 241). He was successfully asked to repeat the performance in other occurrences; therefore, he regularly performed at political and cultural events (Brown, 241). According to Horn in *Writing My Reading: Essays on Literary Politics in South Africa*:

Anybody who has seen and heard Mzwakhe Mbuli perform at a political meeting, at a funeral or in concert, cannot be overwhelmed by both his presence and his performance, and anyone who has experienced the reaction of his audience to his poetry will understand that at the moment he is the

people's poet [...], the poet of the mass democratic movement, with an endorsement from Mandel himself, and acknowledge by all who have heard him (Horn, 115).

His songs were written both in English and in Zulu language with different musical backing, such as mbaqanga and isichatamya (Brown, 240). Sometimes his performances consisted in unaccompanied poems. Often unrhymed, his songs are characterized by a repetitive style typical of izibongo, the Zulu praise poetry (Jones and Jones, 49). For instance:

Ukulimala kwengqondo, ukilmala komuntu

Ukilimala Komuntu, ukilimala komndeni

Ukilimama komndeni kusho ukulimala kwesizwe

Injury of the mind is injury to a person

Injury to a person is injury to the family

Injury to the family is an injury to the nation

He was politically engaged from the early beginning of his singing career, even when he joined the New World Quartet (Brown, 240). In 1979, Mbuli formed the group Khuvhangano that performed more dramatic songs, reflecting the development of black consciousness (Brown, 241).

When in the mid-eighties South Africa declared the State of Emergency due to an economic crisis that struggled the country, many books, pamphlets, publications and songs, considered politically controversial, were banned.

Even some Mbuli's songs were censored, as "Change is Pain" because "its stirring music and dramatic presentation [would] have great influence among revolutionary groups in the RSA and at mass-meetings as well" (Brown, 244). As Duncan Brown has argued:

Mzwakhe's poems emerged from the hybridizations engendered by these popular political movements, which were characterized by shifting allegiances, strategic allegiances, and the mobilization of support across societal divisions (Brown, 245).

The African situation makes us reflect on the importance of music within a strict censorship context. Indeed, since newspapers and magazines were banned, oral poetry, as the one performed by Mbuli, was the only tool that could provide information to people. Thus, Mbuli "has the ability to move audiences with the powerful resonances of his performance poetry" (Brown, 255).

2.2.6 Jamaica

The island is strictly linked to a kind of music called reggae music. It is protest music that carries a message of rebellion and poverty. Moreover, "many reggae songs act as alternative history texts, providing their audience with narratives of slavery, a subject historically downplayed in Jamaica's educational system, especially when the island-nation was under colonial rule" (King in Peddie, 112).

It is believed that reggae also concerned a typical lifestyle and mindset, as it is something more than music. It is always associated with the Rastafarian movement that ruled in Jamaica from 1930s onwards (King in Peddie, 109). The leader is

Marcus Garvey, a black Jamaican, who promoted and propelled his fellow countrymen in opposing to white supremacy (King in Peddie, 110). Garvey's followers were arrested and harassed by authorities, and, as a consequence, "members of the movement began to rely more and more on popular music as a means of disseminating its ideology to both its own internal constituents and various external audiences" (King in Peddie, 111). Reggae songs depicted slavery as experienced by Jamaicans and they functioned as "alternative history texts" (King in Peddie, 112).

The most prominent Jamaican artist was Bob Marley (1945–1981), whose success was overwhelming within the Caribbean popular music context (Moskowitz, 3). His music style appeared to be unique and original and he seemed to "draw the meaning and the emotion out of each word as he swung his thick dreadlock around the stage" (Moskowitz, 3). Marley's voice carried a message of peace, love and brotherhood.

Linton Kwesi Johnson (1952) is another living important Jamaican artist (Juang, 655). He wrote political poems that dealt with the struggle of being an African-Caribbean in England and racism in general. He, then, wrote against Margaret Thatcher's conservative government and he recounted the story of Haiti: it once was "a symbol of black pride" and then it became a colony for mariners who fought in the First World War (Juang, 656). Johnson considered his poems tools to fight the system, indeed he asserted that "writing was a political act and poetry was a cultural weapon" (Wroe, 2008, *The guardian*). His poems were performed in a style called dub-poetry that mixed dub music with reggae (Juang, 656).

2.2.8 Portugal

Manuel Alegre de Melo Duarte (1936) is a Portuguese poet who experienced the long resistance process of his country (Bagno in Fazzini, 123). In his collection of poems he talked about the social conditions established by the *Estado Novo* (Bagno in Fazzini, 124). As Sandra Bagno recounted in his essay *Manuel Alegre: canzone-poesia e politica in Portogallo* in Fazzini, Alegre was a political activist during the 1960s and, consequently, he was imprisoned. In jail, he was inspired by his state of oppression and he composed a great many poems, then included in *Praça de Canção* (1965). Two years later he wrote *O Canto e as Armas*. These two works were not only collections of poems but they were also set to music and sung (Bagno in Fazzini, 127). Although Alegre did not composed his poems to be set on music, once published, they became songs (Bagno in Fazzini, 129). This evolution relies on the fact that Alegre's verses are characterized by rhythm and musicality (Bagno in Fazzini, 130). A great many singers and musicians challenged by Alegre's poems: Luís Cilia, Manuel Freire, José Niza, António Portugal and António Bernardino.

2.2.7 Conclusion

A great number of social movements, wars, protests and revolutions provided the conditions for cultural expressions to artists. Each country appeared to need to recount social conditions, throughout poetry and music,. In particular, it seemed interesting to investigate on how culture has been shaped differently in each area. We have seen the birth of folk music with Woody Guthrie in America, soon followed by the protest singer Bob Dylan. In their songs, they recounted historical

struggles of the 1930s until the 1960s in America. Irish question, Apartheid, and controversial racial suppressions in Jamaica and Portugal encouraged people from those countries in singing their emotions, setting their protests to music.

As a matter of fact, all around the world protest artists shared the attempt to condemn society in their works. Thus, “throughout history, the leaders of countries have been very particular of what songs should be sung. We know the power of songs” (Pete Seeger).

Although the previous examination focused on a wide range of historical and political occurrences throughout history, the center of attention remains the 1960s. Indeed, as Dorian Lynskey analyzed in *33 Revolutions per minute*:

For a while, in the dizzying rush of the 1960s, it was thought that pop music could change the world, and some people never recovered from the realization that it could not. But the point of protest music, or indeed any art with a political dimension, is not to shift the world on its axis but to change opinion and perspectives, to say something about the times in which you live, and sometimes, to find that what you’ve said speaks to another moment in history [...] (Lynskey, iv).

It is believed that the youth generation involved in the turmoil, caused by the political fervor, provided “the proliferation of [a great number of] protest songs” (Weinstein in Peddie, 5). Therefore, the diffusion of televisions, radios and cassettes made the commercialization of music possible during the 1960s (Weinstein in Peddie, 6). TV and radio programmes showed interviews and performances of the most revolutionary singers of the time (Weinstein in Peddie, 6), as happened in Great Britain.

However, Deena Weinstein argued that the number of protest songs produced is insufficient (Weinstein in Peddie, 7). The cause relied on a general

misunderstanding of songs by people, since political meanings did not always reach their listeners (Weinstein in Peddie, 9). It depends on a wide range of reasons, as the misapprehension of lyrics. Words are not catch by listeners. For instance, “Hold your head up” by Argent recites “Hold your head up, woman” but it seems that people did not hear “woman” but “whoa” (Weinstein in Peddie, 11). The song was a feminist protest song, but it did not fulfill author’s will.

This kind of misheard songs is included in a category called “Mondergreen”. The term was coined by Sylvia Wright who published an essay on *Herper’s Magazine* in 1954 (Weinstein in Peddie, 11). It is believed that the mishearing depends on a cognitive dissonance, since some words are psychologically uncomfortable to be listened (Weinstein in Peddie, 11).

There are other reasons for the dearth of protest songs, for instance when the political meaning is not caught by listeners. It could depend on ignorance, as for The Monkees’ “Last train to Clarksville” whose anti-war meaning is lost if people do not know that the city is near to an Army training camp (Weinstein in Peddie, 11).

Sometimes, misread songs do not rely on the incapacity of catching the message by listeners: the real intent of the author is the one to be vague (Weinstein in Peddie, 12). His willing is to “leave a lot of room for the listener to fill in the blanks” (Weinstein in Peddie, 12). A case in point is Bob Dylan, who released that “I didn’t grow up in the tradition of pop songwriters who feel it is essential to make everything clear to the listener (quoted in Hilburn, 2004, 3)” (Weinstein in Peddie,12).

However, it seems that throughout history many artists agreed with Dylan’s point of view, as Radiohead’s leader Thom York, who thinks that art is good when it can be interpreted and also misinterpreted (Weinstein in Peddie, 12). As a matter of fact, Deena Weinstein argued that:

So many protest songs are riddled with ambiguities and vague allusions for both artistic and commercial reasons. In part, lyricists wish to be poetic, creating lyrics replete with metaphors like Fogerty's use of "rain". A protest song also has a far longer shelf life if it is oblique, since it can be heard generations later merely as a song relieved of the baggage of a protest that may no longer be relevant or popular (Weinstein in Peddie, 12).

However, protest songs that managed to spread their revolutionary messages are believed to be powerful tools. They seem to have a great impact on social change and it could be supposed that revolutionary songs put together a mass of people that share the same feeling (Weinstein in Peddie, 15). Pete Seeger once reported after one of his concert: "For a few short hours the audience had the illusion that by singing they, too, were fighting (quoted in Rosenthal, 2001, 14)" (Weinstein in Peddie, 15).

2.3 The Beatles' protest songs

The previous analyses considered the most important protest songs within the worldwide context. Although the delineation of those songs comprehended a wide range of periods, the focus of this dissertation remains on the 1960s.

As I have asserted in the first chapter, the 1960s were a revolutionary decade. It was characterized by a general turmoil, due to political, social and cultural evolutions.

The Beatles' songs represented a cornerstone as far as the 1960s were concerned. The band produced about two hundred and eight songs during their whole career (Tuner, 7), which covered a wide range of different topics.

However, it is possible to divide The Beatles' compositions into two main blocks: the first one regroups those released in the first part of their career, the second one contains later songs. Indeed, it appeared that the British band's career was marked by a turning point. As Fazzini reminded in *Canto un mondo libero*, Inglis recounted that from 1962 to 1965 97% of Beatles' compositions were love songs; later, from 1966 to 1970, the main part (68%) insisted on topics as alienation, rebirth and their involvement in politics (Inglis in Fazzini, 172).

Indeed, the British band's involvement in political affairs appeared in the second part of its career. Firstly, The Beatles dedicated their songs to people's relationships and their lyrics were full of emotions and feelings concerning love (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 87). They also had to follow pop market's impositions, since the audience was characterized by female presence (Turner, 13). John Lennon admitted that:

We were just writing songs à la Everly Brothers, à la Buddy Holly. They were pop songs with no more thought to them than...to create a sound. And the words were almost irrelevant (Lennon in Turner, 13).

Then, John Lennon and the other Beatles felt the need to express themselves in different ways, and that was possible when they began to recount true stories in their lyrics (Lennon in Turner, 13). From 1966, they separated from market's limitations. Moreover, a great number of events that marked the decade drastically changed their flavors. According to Ian Inglis in his essay "Revolution", the following political and historical affairs had repercussions on The Beatles' music:

US escalation of the war in Vietnam, Czechoslovakia's election of Alexander Dubcek and its invasion by the Soviet Union; the assassinations

of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy; the increasing numbers of student-led demonstrations, rallies, and occupations across Europe; the violent police response to protests at the Democrat convention in Chicago; Irish catholic marches leading to street battles in Londonderry and military intervention in Northern Ireland; Conservative MP Enoch Powell's 'river of blood' speech at the focus of anti-immigration policies to which it meter medalists Tommie Smith and John Carlos at the Mexico Olympics; and the election of Richard Nixon as US President (Inglis in Womack, 112).

2.3.1 A division: early and later songs

In this light, it may be argued that early and later songs were effectively different; indeed, as Cook and Mercer wrote, "lyrics of the later songs became more salient and complex" (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 96) and "the words dealt unpredictably with a much wider variety of topics: taxation, pulp fiction, circus acts, traffic wardens, family arguments, places in Liverpool, revolutionary politics, cowboy shoot-outs, car accidents, 64-year-olds" (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 88). Romantic songs still appeared in later albums, but the number drastically diminished (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 88).

Before paying the due attention to revolutionary and controversial topics that characterized those songs of the later part of The Beatles' career, it seems interesting to analyze the passage their lyrics witnessed. In order to offer a deep critical examination, the essay "From Me To You: Austerity to Profligacy in the Language of The Beatles" by Guy Cook and Neil Mercer will be considered. Indeed, it offered a linguistic analysis of some albums' songs, focusing on the use of pronouns and nouns in both the early and later lyrics.

First of all, Cook and Mercer argued that the grammar and vocabulary of the songs changed (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 88). Early songs tended to be more

simple and conversational because they dealt with people's relationships; on the contrary, later songs involved more serious topics such as politics so that they were more elaborated (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 89).

Moreover, it has been argued that The Beatles' songs written until 1964 were characterized by unnamed characters (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 89). Protagonists did not appear with their proper names but they were introduced by pronouns: *I*, *you*, *he* and *she*. For instance, in "She loves You", that appeared in the album *With The Beatles* (1963), neither the girl (*she*) who loved nor the beloved (*you*) are named (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 89). They remained general characters.

On the other hand, from the album *Rubber Soul* (1965) onwards, a great number of proper names appeared in The Beatles' lyrics (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 89). Titles of the following songs reveal how many songs were dedicated to specific people: "Michelle", "Eleanor Rigby", "Lucy in The Sky With Diamonds", "Lovely Rita", "Hey Jude", "Sexy Sadie", "Martha My Dear" and "Julia".

The abundant use of pronouns instead of proper names caused a lack of identification in the earlier songs, as they were less specific. *He* and *she* are often used in everyday conversations, among people that know each other. Indeed, when listening to The Beatles' lyrics, it seems that protagonists are like "face-to-face exchanges, in which the participants are either discussing each other (*you* and *I*), or someone who is in their sight or very much on their minds (*I* and *you* talking about him or her)" (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 90). As a matter of fact, inner thoughts and intimate feelings are reflected among people's conversations (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 90).

The use of *I*, as in "I'll be Back Again" or "I'll Cry Instead", expressed on the one hand the need of the composers (Lennon, McCartney or Harrison) to talk about their emotions; on the other hand, the personal pronoun referred to the fact that *you* was not near the speaker (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 90). For instance, the song "No Reply" offered a vivid example:

This happened once before, when I came to your door, no reply (“No Reply”).

Moreover, even details about time and places were unspecific in those first songs. The Beatles used terms such as ‘your door’, ‘tonight’, ‘tomorrow’, ‘home’, ‘here’ and ‘there’(Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 93).

On the contrary, later songs were more specific. They often recounted true stories: thus, they needed to give details to the narration (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 91), as “it’s five of clock” in “She’s leaving home”. *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely hearts Club Band* reported several places as the Isle of Wight, Blackburn, the House of Lord (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 89). Consequently, the use of pronouns was relevant as far as specificity and complexity of songs were concerned: “she is leaving home”, from the homonymous song, is evidently different from “he was from the House of Lords” in “A Day In The Life” (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 93).

The previous examination helps us to individuate linguistic differences between early and later songs. Cook and Mercer also offered a text-analysis of The Beatles’ lyrics in order to support this argumentation. They counted how many times the words *I*, *you* and *love* appeared in all The Beatles’ albums, except for *Please Please Me* and *Magical Mystery Tour*.

The following table, that appears in Cook and Mercer’s essay, shows the results of their analysis:

Album Title	Year	Total words in lyrics	No. of different words	No. of I	No. of You	No. of Love
A Hard Day’s Night	1964	2004	420	184	130	53
Beatles For Sale	1964	1228	293	131	43	25
Help!	1965	2131	420	154	131	15

Rubber Soul	1965	2518	528	183	168	25
Revolver	1966	2114	542	119	99	21
Sgt. Pepper	1967	2257	743	82	73	13
The Beatles	1968	2857	982	131	209	23
Abbey Road	1969	1644	545	53	58	8
Let It Be	1970	1643	452	98	74	7

“Table 1. Concordance analyses for selected early and later albums” (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 99).

As a result, it appeared that words typed in the later albums were reduced; in particular, there was a great difference between *A Hard Day's Night* released in 1964 that counted 2004 words and *Let It Be* released in 1970 that counted 1643 words (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 99-100). Moreover, love appeared 53 times in the former and just 7 times in the later (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 100). This result shows that in the second part of their career, The Beatles drastically reduced lyrics about love and romantic topics. In conclusion, Cook and Mercer affirmed that:

These shifts support our claim that the later songs dealt less with autobiographical-style love issues, and more with observed events, named characters and non-romantic themes (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 100).

The Beatles' preoccupation towards the social and political context reflected in the language they used. Since war facts marked the decade from 1964 to 1970, only later songs became more complex (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 104). Indeed, Petrie and Pennebaker wrote that:

Along with the emotional changes, their lyrics became more complex and intellectual over time. While early songs were related to personal experiences and feelings, later songs were more often written about other people (e.g., “She’s leaving home,” “Lady Madonna,” and “Get Back”). The orientation of the lyrics also changed from immediate emotional experience to a more emotionally distanced approach that was often trying to understand people or situations (Petrie and Pennebaker, 200).

2.3.2 Later compositions: protest and controversial songs

The Beatles’ political involvement in the second part of their career was due to several factors. A great number of critics argued whether The Beatles’ shift into sociocultural and political topics of the time was a ploy market or not. However, it appeared that historical and political upheavals which happened in the 1960s drastically reflected in the band’s way to compose music. With regards to it, Inglis wrote in his essay “Revolution” that:

While it was always true that historical and cultural conditions helped to implicitly shape the Beatles’ output, the dramatic and divisive events of 1968 created a political context of fragmentation, argument and disunity, confrontation, and disillusionment, which inevitably – and explicitly – found its way into their music (Inglis in Womack, 112).

It seemed that it was John Lennon the first one who claimed his interest in political affairs. Indeed, in 1966 he condemned the American bombardment in

Vietnam, and later, the other members of the band did the same (Fazzini, 173). For the first time musicians expressed their political controversial ideas (Fazzini, 173).

As Sheila Whiteley argued in her essay, The Beatles became zeitgeists of the 1960s since they embodied political and social transformations (Whiteley in Womack, 204). They were the major icons in a troubled period, signed by a great number of changes. Whitely reported UKTV History's lists of changes: the end of censorship, sexual tolerance, new consumer markets and a new kind of entertainment (Whitely in Womack, 204). Therefore, Turner argued in *A Hard Day's Write* that the analyses of The Beatles' songs, in particular those released in the second part of their career, could give "an insight into the Sixties and the live of The Beatles" (Turner, 10).

The Beatles' music "can be interpreted as responding to the political and ideological shifts that took place over the Sixties while at the same time, instigating change" (Whiteley in Womack, 204-205). Their lyrics became a mirror of all the changes that marked the decade and a cornerstone for teenagers' demonstrations (Whiteley in Womack, 205).

The following part of my dissertation will be focused on critical analyses of the main controversial and revolutionary Beatles' songs, composed between 1965 and 1970. Not only did they compose songs that were explicit against the government, but they were able to reflect all the controversial circumstances that characterized the 1960s in their lyrics. As we have analyzed before, the decade was marked by a general turmoil that overturned a great number of values.

The Beatles' lyrics will be studied here following a sociological approach. It seemed clear that John Lennon, Paul McCartney and George Harrison, the main band composers, were influenced by all the sociological facts that occurred during the second part of their career. So, in order to support this idea, most relevant lyrics will be examined.

The albums that will be considered here are *Rubber Soul*, *Revolver*, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, *Magical Mystery Tour*, *The Beatles*, *Let It Be*

and *Abbey Road*. It seems necessary to divide the most relevant songs belonging to those albums into different groups.

In my opinion, second part's songs could be divided in the following categories: anti-war, social topic, drug addiction, generational gap. They all dealt with relevant key elements that characterized the 1960s, as we analyzed in a previous chapter.

- *Anti-war*

“Revolution” (1968) appeared to be the first Beatles’ song with explicit statements about political revolutions (Turner, 169). It was released in 1968, a year marked by political protest against America’s attacks to Vietnam. Indeed, “Spring of Revolution” marked that year, due to thousands of protests made by people against war (Turner, 169). In Berlin students demonstrated their support to the Vietnamese National Liberation Front; in London, teenagers organized a huge march to the American embassy but it was repressed with violence by the police (Wiener, 58). Moreover, Paris also witnessed a huge students’ rebellion (Wiener, 58). As a consequence, “these waves of revolutionary politics washed into John’s life, at home in Weybridge” (Wiener, 58).

In order to express his idea concerning youth protests, John Lennon wrote “Revolution” (Turner, 169) which “quickly became the most hotly discussed protest song in history” (Lynskey, 132). The British band needed to express its idea against the war and, as once Lennon declared, “Revolution” was “a statement of The Beatles’ position on Vietnam and the Beatles’ position on revolution” (Lennon in Riley, 255). Lennon followed 1968 violent events on television, and “he opposed [them] as a matter of principle” (Weiner, 59). In his WNET radio interview, John

expressed his political views about the Vietnam war: “It’s another piece of insanity, another part of the insane scene. It’s just insane. It shouldn’t be going on. There’s no reason for it – just insanity” (Lennon in Weiner, 74).

The song portrayed the fact that people wanted to overturn the system using violence but, according to Lennon, peace was the only way to achieve it. The song promoted the idea of a peaceful world.

Moreover, Lennon became a cornerstone for Leninist, Trotskyist and Maoist groups because they saw him as a supporter for their causes (Turner, 169). In “Revolution” he claimed “you say you want a revolution” (Lennon, 1968), but, according to the song, “you better free your mind instead” (Lennon, 1968). It meant that the only possible revolution was the one that changed people’s minds.

Indeed, the student John Hoyland once wrote a letter to John saying that: “In order to change the world, we’ve got to understand what’s wrong with the world. And then - destroyed it” (Hoyland in Turner, 169). Lennon replied him that people were the only thing that did not work; “So do you want to destroy them?” wrote Lennon back to the student (Lennon in Turner, 169).

Lennon seemed to share the idea that everyone wished to change the world: “we all want to change the world”. At the light of what we have studied before, the use of the personal pronoun *we* instead of *I* is relevant. Indeed, *I* and *you* were generally used when lyrics speak about love and romantic affairs in the first period of The Beatles’ songs. Everyone could be identified with that *I*. In the second part of their career, when they felt more engaged with politics, it seemed that The Beatles involved all the humankind and not just single characters. Wars and peace were worldwide affairs.

However, the message was not the one to start a revolution and it would have caused a “involution” rather than an “evolution”. Indeed, Lennon pulled himself away only if revolution meant “destruction”, as he wrote: “But when you talk about destruction, don’t you know that you can count me out” (Lennon, 1968). He did not believe that violence was the right way to change the world. Lennon released that:

I want to see the plan. That is what I used to say to Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin. Count me out if it is for violence. Don't expect me to be on the barricades unless it is with flowers (Lennon in Turner, 169).

Then, the lyric kept on repeating that "everything is gonna be alright": it suggested that people would have been better if they stuck together: it showed a sense of brotherhood.

A great number of critics expressed their ideas upon the song. "Revolution sounds like the hawk plank adopted in the Chicago convention of the Democratic Death Party" said *The Berkeley Barb* while the *New Left Review* defined it "a lamentable pretty bourgeois cry of fear" (Weiner, 60).

Moreover, Lennon was attacked when he claimed that "You say you want a contribution" (Lennon, 1968). Ramparts replied:

They've gotten so far from thinking of 'contribution' to a political cause as meaning what they can do as artists that they conceive of their role essentially as that of millionaires" (Ramparts in Weiner, 60).

Then, John suggested that peace was the contribution he gave, as an artist (Weiner, 60).

When Lennon composed "Revolution", he was aware of his role as a spokesperson; since he was a singer and a composer, he could spread out his messages through his lyrics:

The song marked John's decision that he had political responsibilities, and that he ought to fulfil them in his music, That was a momentous decision,

much more significant than the lyrics of the song. Some of the issues he raised in the song were, in any case, legitimate. He was concerned about the nature and extent to the destruction advocate by revolutionaries, he wanted to know how they envisioned future society, and he seemed to say that the politics of Maoist students were self-defeating: They weren't "gonna make it with anyone, anyone" (Weiner, 61).

Lyric of "Revolution":

You say you want a revolution
Well, you know
We all want to change the world.
You tell me that it's evolution,
Well, you know
We all want to change the world.
But when you talk about destruction,
Don't you know that you can count me out.
Don't you know it's going to be alright,
Alright, alright.
You say you got a real solution
Well, you know
We'd all love to see the plan.
You ask me for a contribution,
Well, you know
We're doing what we can.
if you want money for people with minds that hate,
All I can tell you is brother you have to wait.
Don't you know it's going to be alright,
Alright, alright.
You say you'll change a constitution

Well, you know
We all want to change your head.
You tell me it's the institution,
Well, you know
You better free your mind instead.
But if you go carrying pictures of chairman Mao,
You ain't gonna make it with anyone anyhow.
Don't you know it's going to be alright,
Alright, alright

Although there are no relevant political and wars references, “Back in USSR” (1968) can be included in the category of war songs. Furthermore, since the lyric remained vague in the recounting of a travel from America to Russia, a great number of hypotheses could be made upon the lyric song.

Firstly, the song appeared to be at the center of the Cold War disputations (Turner, 150). Moreover, it shocked the American public opinion since The Beatles were thought to prefer their Russian enemy.

The title was inspired by “Back in U.S.A.” by Chuck Berry and the song was a pastiche between “California Girls” and “Surfin’ in the USA” by Beach Boys (Turner, 150).

Furthermore, the statement “Georgia's always on my mind” appeared to be a reference to the song “Georgia on my mind” by Ray Charles. It had ambiguous associations: on the one hand it could be referred to a woman called Georgia, and on the other hand it could be referred to the State of Georgia. Whether the reference is geographical, it could relate to the American state, situated in the East-South of United States or it could refer to the country in the Western part of Eurasia. It appeared that the State of Georgia in U.S.A. witnessed a huge student’s demonstration against the Vietnam War. It seemed important to quote Christopher Allen Huff:

Opposed to US political leadership and dissatisfied with American culture, student activists held demonstrations across the state and experimented with lifestyle changes in the hope of effecting fundamental change in American life [...]. The growing sentiment among Americans against the Vietnam War (1964-73) generated numerous protests in Georgia (Christopher Allen Huff, 2011).

As a matter of fact, although it recounted that “Ukraine girls really knock me out”, the song could be connected to students’ activism. Indeed, Ed Whitley affirmed that “Back in USSR” is an “observation on East-West political relationships” (Whitley in Inglis, 114).

In addition, it has been argued that the song could have some references with a British political campaign (Gregory, 216). When Paul, the major contributor of the song, was composing “Back in USSR”, the British conservatory party were supporting their cause with the motto “I’m backing Britain”. The title of the Beatles’ song probably reminded to that specific campaign (Gregory, 216).

Lyric of “Back in USSR”:

Oh, flew in from Miami Beach B.O.A.C.
Didn't get to bed last night
On the way the paper bag was on my knee
Man I had a dreadful flight
I'm back in the U.S.S.R.
You don't know how lucky you are boy
Back in the U.S.S.R. (Yeah)

Been away so long I hardly knew the place
Gee it's good to be back home
Leave it till tomorrow to unpack my case
Honey disconnect the phone
I'm back in the U.S.S.R.
You don't know how lucky you are boy
Back in the U.S.
Back in the U.S.
Back in the U.S.S.R.

Well the Ukraine girls really knock me out
They leave the West behind
And Moscow girls make me sing and shout
That Georgia's always on my mind

Aw come on!
Ho yeah!
Ho yeah!
Ho ho yeah!
Yeah yeah!

Yeah I'm back in the U.S.S.R.
You don't know how lucky you are boys
Back in the U.S.S.R.

Well the Ukraine girls really knock me out
They leave the West behind
And Moscow girls make me sing and shout
That Georgia's always on my mind

Oh, show me around your snow-peaked mountains way down south
Take me to your daddy's farm
Let me hear your balalaika's ringing out
Come and keep your comrade warm

I'm back in the U.S.S.R.
Hey you don't know how lucky you are boys
Back in the U.S.S.R.

Oh let me tell you, honey
Hey, I'm back!
I'm back in the U.S.S.R.
Yes, I'm free!
Yeah, back in the U.S.S.R.

- *Social causes*

As Jon Fitzgerald asserted, The Beatles' second production was characterized by a careful "observation about society" (Fitzgerald in Inglis, 80). The band reflected all the sociological elements that marked the 1960s in their lyrics, such as social class fighting, youth and hippie movements and also the power of capitalism. As far as social changes were concerned, Lennon said: "I am like a chameleon, influenced by whatever is going on" (Lennon in Inglis, 45).

According to George Harrison, "Piggies" (1968) appeared to be a "social comment" (Harrison in Turner, 160). At the beginning, it was believed to refer to the policemen, since the term "piggies" was used to indicate them during the 1960s.

The song described two kinds of "piggies": the little ones who "crawl[ed] in the dirt" and the bigger ones who "stirr[ed] up the dirt". It appeared that the former was a metaphor for the working class, "having dirt to play around in". On the other hand, the latter was the metaphor for the upper class who "starched white shirts".

As a matter of fact, there was a great difference between the little piggies, whose life was not easy, and the bigger piggies who lived "in their stys with all

their backing” and who had “always white shirts”. The picture of bigger piggies was a really negative one: they had “something lacking” in their eyes and they seemed to sport their clean clothes and their expensive dinners. In this sense, the song revealed that a big gap existed among the social classes, and the economic disparities split society into two groups: a superior and an inferior one.

Moreover, the song was misinterpreted by the psychopathic Charles Manson and his family, who thought that “piggies” were white people. Indeed, he claimed black uprisings (Turner, 160). George Harrison said that the song has “nothing to do with American policemen or California shagnasties” (Harrison in Turner, 161).

Lyric of “Piggies”:

Have you seen the little piggies crawling in the dirt?
And for all the little piggies life is getting worse,
Always having dirt to play around in.
Have you seen the bigger piggies in their starched white shirts?
You will find the bigger piggies stirring up the dirt,
Always have clean shirts to play around in.
In their styes with all their backing they don't care what goes on around,
In their eyes there's something lacking,
What they need's a damn good whacking.
Everywhere there's lots of piggies living piggie lives,
You can see them out for dinner with their piggie wives,
Clutching forks and knives to eat their bacon.

“Rain” (1966) proposed John Lennon’s idea to make people develop a new state of mind, a new consciousness. According to him, people had to be aware of the possibility to overturn the system if they changed their minds.

It appeared that “Rain” was the first song in which Lennon considered his role as a spokesperson (Turner, 102). The statements “I can show you that when it starts to rain, everything's the same” and “Can you hear me?” offered vivid examples.

At first sight it seemed that the song referred to the weather. The singer criticized those who “hid[...] their heads” when it rained and “slip[ped] into the shade” when the sun came out. As a matter of fact, the lyric might have referred to the upper class that, according to Gregory, “avoid[ed] real direct experience of life, preferring to shelter from any extremes” (Gregory, 122). On the contrary, the singer differentiated himself from the mass recounting “Rain, I don’t mind / Shine, weather is fine”. In order to support this idea, Gregory added that:

“Rain” conjures up a strong, cinematic vision of the English middle classes escaping from the rain during a Sunday afternoon cricket match on a village green, cutting to images of an ecstatic, tripped-out John rolling naked on his lawn, arms outstretched to embrace the downpour (Gregory, 122).

It appeared that the weather was a metaphor in Lennon’s song. Sun and rain were not meteorological references but they dealt with more serious elements: they could be political and social events. People moving together to find shelter when it rained and coming out when it shined meant that the mass behaved in the same way when the social context was struck by an important factor. Moreover, Lennon declared that the weather was “a state of mind”.

Furthermore, another important hypothesis could be the one related to “A Hard Rain is gonna fall” by Bob Dylan. The song was written during the summer of 1962, before the Cuban Missile Crises (Lynskey, 45), “but became uncannily timely when listeners misinterpreted the hard rain nuclear fallout” (Lynskey, 45). Consequently,

The Beatles could have played with the misinterpreted Dylan's song and they could have given their own personal misunderstanding song's version. In this sense, on the one hand they provided a reference to Bob Dylan and on the other they toyed with the "nuclear rain" topic.

Similarly to "Revolution", Lennon made directly invocation to people and he again referred to the fact they have to change their minds in order to change things.

Lyric of "Rain":

If the rain comes they run and hide their heads.
They might as well be dead,
If the rain comes, if the rain comes.
When the sun shines they slip into the shade,
And sip their lemonade,
When the sun shines, when the sun shines.
Rain, I don't mind,
Shine, the weather's fine.
I can show you that when it starts to rain,
Everything's the same,
I can show you, I can show you.
Rain, I don't mind,
Shine, the weather's fine.
Can you hear me that when it rains and shines,
It's just a state of mind,
Can you hear me, can you hear me?

“Taxman” (1966) was a controversial lyric against British government. Indeed, the Beatles, having achieved a great success, became enormously rich in the second part of their career (Turner, 103). When George Harrison realized that he had to pay 96% of his amount in taxes, he decided to write the song “Taxman” (Turner, 103). Dorian Lynskey in his *33 Revolutions per Minute* defined the song as a “petulant moan about the Wilson government’s sky-high top-rate tax” (Lynskey, 129).

However, the song appeared to be self-mocking (Gregory, 124). George identified himself with the figure of the taxman who said “Let me tell you how it will be, there’s one for you nineteen for me”. The band also reproduced the sound of money that cackled in the background (Gregory, 124). Then, the lyric kept on joking and exaggerating on how many taxes the government imposed, such as on cars, on seats, on heat and on feet.

Gregory, in his book *Who Could Ask For More: Reclaiming The Beatles*, argued that:

the real ‘tax’ we pay is the loss of freedom. Thus our spirit are constrained, the value of our lives carefully calculated. Our souls are mortgaged, confined, and we’ll be paying the ‘interest’ to the Taxman until we die (Gregory, 125).

As a matter of fact, Harrison claimed the loss of freedom since he had to pay taxes for the rest of his life. The topic appeared to be a relevant one during the conservative government of the Prime Minister Harold Wilson.

The song also revealed the great power the British government had on people: “Don’t ask me why I want it for”. Moreover, “you’re working for no one but me”.

Lyric of “Taxman”:

Let me tell you how it will be
There's one for you, nineteen for me
'Cause I'm the taxman, yeah, I'm the taxman

Should five per cent appear too small
Be thankful I don't take it all
'Cause I'm the taxman, yeah I'm the taxman

If you drive a car, I'll tax the street,
If you try to sit, I'll tax your seat.
If you get too cold I'll tax the heat,
If you take a walk, I'll tax your feet.

Don't ask me what I want it for
If you don't want to pay some more
'Cause I'm the taxman, yeah, I'm the taxman

Now my advice for those who die
Declare the pennies on your eyes
'Cause I'm the taxman, yeah, I'm the taxman
And you're working for no one but me.

- *Drug addiction*

According to Jon Muncie, “by 1966, the group, under Dylan’s influence, began to ‘abandon their previous nice-boy personae, falling all the while from generalized public favor, and to produce increasingly complex and meaningful work’ (Davis,

200)” (Muncie in Inglis, 48). Indeed, youth began to increase their abuse of drugs during the 1960s; hallucinogenic substances appeared to expand users’ minds and they helped them to discover new worlds (Leaf, 81). “Drugs were just one means, like a spaceship or a spell, of getting through the fog of what ‘they’ called reality” (Diski, 38) wrote Jenny Diski in *The Sixties*.

The Beatles were influenced by drugs as well as other musicians such as Bob Dylan. The British band “were the first to parade their particular drug-use – marijuana and LSD – publicly and without shame” (Kureishi, 89). Moreover, the abuse of drugs influenced their way of living, performing and also their lyrics. MacDonald wrote that:

it was only when LSD arrived, bringing an ‘alternative’ outlook for which inner freedom was more important than material success, that the pieces fell into place and the group’s new direction became clear (MacDonald in Stark, 43).

Furthermore, lyrics became more reflective and they offered more interesting topics for the intellect during the period in which The Beatles’ were addicted to drugs (Reising and LeBlanc in Womack, 99). Band’s members were also more open-minded and they began to “express something new, something urgent” (Reising and LeBlanc in Womack, 100). According to Reising and LeBlanc:

The Beatles clearly peaked during their psychedelic period, having fully transformed themselves from the tight rock and roll band of the Hamburg years into a group who embraced, echoed, and shaped the *Zeitgeist* of the early mid-1960s better than other composers and performers of that era (Reising and LeBlanc in Womack, 99).

Although a great number of compositions were influenced by the use of those substances, “Day Tripper”, “Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds” and “Yellow Submarine” analyses appeared to be the most relevant as far as drug addiction was concerned.

According to Turner, ““Day Tripper” was a typical play on words by John, who wanted to reflect the influence of the growing drug culture within a Beatles’ song” (Turner, 86). On the other hand, Lennon never admitted the drug reference of the song but he claimed that “day tripper are people who go on a day trip right?” (Lennon in Turner, 86).

However, there were several elements that did not fit with Lennon’s statement. The lyric recounted about his decision to leave “she”, and so “take easy way out” because “she was a day tripper”. “She” could be referred to an acid which John and the other Beatles’ were addicted to.

Indeed, the use of drug could be “one way ticket” because when someone begins to use it, it is impossible to escape from it; the phrase “she is a big teaser” could be referred to the fact that the more you use it, the more you need it.

Furthermore, the song introduced an important thematic as far as the use of hallucinogen substances was concerned: the trip. Reising and LeBlanc wrote that:

One of the differences between the group’s earlier work and that of the psychedelic phase can be glimpsed in their songs about psychedelic “tripping”, represented as various forms of traveling, from the literal to fantastical images of hallucinatory vividness and strangeness (Reising and LeBlanc in Womack, 102).

Thus, while The Beatles started to use drugs as LSD, their lyrics reflected their new way to see the world and provided social criticism (Reising and LeBlanc in

Womack, 100). LSD users appeared to see what others cannot see, and they could reveal reality as it really was.

Lyric of “Day Tripper”:

Got a good reason for taking the easy way out
Got a good reason for taking the easy way out now
She was a day tripper, a one way ticket yeah
It took me so long to find out, and I found out

She's a big teaser, she took me half the way there
She's a big teaser, she took me half the way there now
She was a day tripper, a one way ticket yeah
It took me so long to find out, and I found out

Tried to please her, she only played one night stands
Tried to please her, she only played one night stands now
She was a day tripper, a Sunday driver yeah
It took me so long to find out, and I found out

Day tripper
Day tripper yeah
Day tripper
Day tripper yeah Day tripper

The first drug reference that appeared as far as “Lucy in The Sky with Diamonds” (1967) was concerned was the title: the initial letters composed the

word LSD. John Lennon, the composer of the lyric, kept on affirming that the song was inspired by a painting made by a Julian Lennon's friend, Lucy O' Donnelly (Turner, 123). Julian described it as "Lucy, in the sky with diamonds" (Turner, 122).

The fact that the song was connected with the use of drugs relied on all the psychedelic and hallucinatory images that the lyric recounted (Turner, 123): "tangerine trees", "marmalade skies", "kaleidoscope eyes", "cellophane flowers", "newspaper taxis" and "plasticine porters". Moreover, the song did not present rhyme schemes, and it created a flow of fantastic images.

In addition, according to what Everett wrote in *The Beatles as Musicians. Revolver through the anthology*, "the songs' amphibolous phantasms entice the listener away from all the concerns with reality" (Everett, 104).

The lyric was also connected, as it happened in "A Day Tripper", to the journey topic. Lucy, the protagonist, seemed to be portrayed by some imaginary postcards the speaker recounted: she appeared "in a boat on a river / with tangerine trees and marmalade skies" and she then seemed to travel with "plasticine porters with looking glass ties" (Reising and LeBlanc in Womack, 103). According to Reising and LeBlanc, "such attention to vivid detail also characterizes many LSD test subjects" (Reising and LeBlanc in Womack 103).

Furthermore, in order to support the idea that "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" was written under the use of drug, Reising and LeBlanc wrote the following statement:

The effects of Lennon's voice in "Lucy" suggest that of a seductive guide on an outwardly excursion. The sound is technically enhanced using vari-speed and echo, producing at times a "helium-light" delivery, as well as dreaming floating emphasis on the word "Ah" and the phrase "incredibly high" (Reising and LeBlanc in Womack, 103).

Indeed, manipulations on speed of sound, that accelerated and decelerated, were musical experiments provided by LSD addicted artists. As Russell Reising and Jim LeBlanc reported in their essay, Sheila Whitley defined that as a new way of making music, which was influenced by the drug, “psychedelic coding”, “for the ways in which different styles of progressive rock share techniques that convey a musical equivalent of hallucinogenic experience” (Reising and LeBlanc in Womack, 92).

Lyric of “Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds”:

Lucy in the sky with diamonds:
Picture yourself in a boat on a river
With tangerine trees and marmalade skies.
Somebody calls you, you answer quite slowly,
A girl with kaleidoscope eyes.

Cellophane flowers of yellow and green
Towering over your head.
Look for the girl with the sun in her eyes
And she's gone.

Lucy in the sky with diamonds
Lucy in the sky with diamonds
Lucy in the sky with diamonds, ah, ah

Follow her down to a bridge by the fountain
where rocking horse people eat marshmallow pies.
Everyone smiles as you drift past the flowers
That grow so incredibly high.

Newspaper taxis appear on the shore

Waiting to take you away
Climb in the back with your head in the clouds
And you're gone.

Picture yourself on a train in a station
With plasticine porters with looking glass ties,
Suddenly someone is there at the turnstile,
The girl with kaleidoscope eyes.

The second period of The Beatles' production of songs, as we argued, contained a wide range of topics. The band experimented on the idea to create easy lyrics that children could learn by heart. "Yellow Submarine" was characterized by short words and by repetitive patterns which made the song easy to remember. However, the lyric was considered a reference to drugs (Turner, 109).

Indeed, according to Gregory, "Yellow Submarine (mainly composed by Paul) is [The Beatles'] first full-blown children's song, and their first identification of the parallels between the acid experience and the innocence of childhood" (Gregory, 130).

Once again, the lyric was full of psychedelic and fantastic images: a man recounted his life trip (the image of trip appears again). He lived in a land called Submarines, that it was "into the sun" where there was a "a sea of green" and, there, it was possible to "live beneath the waves".

Furthermore, according to Russell Reising and Jim LeBlanc:

"Yellow Submarine" picks up [...] an anti-materialistic tone. The crew lives 'a life of ease' because everyone has all [they] need' but such desires are fulfilled not by money or goods, but rather by the simple 'sky of blue and sea of green (Reising and LeBlanc in Womack, 101).

The song also provided a sense of brotherhood offered by “everyone of us, has all we need”, and it was also supported by the use of an “exuberant chorus” (Reising and LeBlanc in Womack, 101).

Lyric of “Yellow Submarine”:

In the town where I was born,
There lived a man,
Who sailed the seas,
And he told us of his life,
In the land of Submarines,
So we sailed into the sun,
Till' we found a sea of green,
And we lived beneath the waves,
In our yellow submarine,

We all live in a yellow submarine,
A yellow submarine,
A yellow submarine,
We all live in a yellow submarine,
A yellow submarine,
A yellow submarine.

And my friends are all aboard,
Many more of them live next door,
And the band begins to play,
(a band plays a short song)

We all live in a yellow submarine,

A yellow submarine,
A yellow submarine,
We all live in a yellow submarine,
A yellow submarine,
A yellow submarine.

And we live a life of ease,
Everyone of us,
Has all we need,
Sky of blue (echo) Sky of blue
And sea of green (echo) Sea of green
In our yellow (echo) In our yellow
Submarine (echo) submarine!

We all live in a yellow submarine,
A yellow submarine,
A yellow submarine,
We all live in a yellow submarine,
A yellow submarine,
A yellow submarine.

- *Generation gap*

The generation gap appeared to be another important element as far as the 1960s were concerned. In the first chapter of this dissertation we focused on all the circumstances that caused a huge distance between the 1950s and the 1960s generations. Younger people were richer than before, they did not have to go to wars and they were able to experience new entertainments.

As a consequence, teenagers felt a discontent towards their parents who seemed not to understand their lifestyles. That new state of mind began to be a popular topic among the 1960s' generation. A great number of teenagers run away from home and their families: FBI counted more than ninety thousands of runaways in San Francisco (Turner, 126). Turner wrote in *A Hard day's write* that:

As part of the creation of an alternative society, counter-culture guru Timothy Leary had urged his followers to drop out, to abandon education and 'straight' employment (Turner, 125).

Moreover, a new phenomenon which was born in America influenced European teenagers as well: the hippie. Hippies "attempt[ed] to create a new distinct way of life that would, they hoped, convert others by example" (Muncie in Inglis, 46). Alienated by materialism, the so called "flower children" promoted an unconventional open-minded and tolerant life. Which were reflected by their long hair, casual clothes and use of drugs (Muncie in Inglis, 46).

The Beatles appeared to embody the 1960s' generation gap in their way to dress, behave and in their abuse of drugs (Everett, 44). They also identified themselves with the youth thanks to the "criticism of the lack of understanding between disagreeing people, including those on the opposite sides of the 'generation gap'" (Everett, 44).

"She's leaving home" (1967) offered a recount of an unhappy 17-year-old girl who decided to leave her home: "the subject of teenage runaways was a topical one in 1967" (Turner, 125). The Beatles' song was based on a real fact that happened in February 1967. The girl was Melanie Coe who came from a respectable family from the North of London. As she recognized herself in The Beatles' haunting song, she admitted in an interview that she felt uneasy with her parents; they gave her everything but she was not happy: "I left because I couldn't face them any longer [and] when I went out, I could be me" (Coe in Turner, 127). She was not

able to express freely herself while she was at home with her parents: it was recounted in the songs with “she hoped would say more”.

As far as generation gap that the 1960s caused was concerned, Turner affirmed that:

Melanie’s case was a good example of how the Sixties’ alternative culture caused a clash of values between generations, and expanded the gulf between them (Turner, 126).

The songs began with a specific time reference “Wednesday morning at five o’clock”: according to Guy Cook and Neil Mercer, time details were typical of the Beatles later lyrics because they offered a detailed narration of real events (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 93). The first stanza revealed the girl’s silent runaway: “Silently closing her bedroom door”. Parent’s desperation for their daughter’s escape was recounted in the second stanza and in the chorus too. Moreover, the chorus appeared to disconnect from the parents’ question while their daughter left. It expressed all the discomfort that the 1960s generation gap produced: “we gave her most of our lives”, “sacrificed most of our lives”, “we gave her everything money could buy”.

In *The Beatles as musicians: Revolver through the Anthology* Professor Walter Everett argued that:

Distance between the daughter and her home and parents is the central theme, both in the distance caused by their inabilities to communicate (the “generation gap”) and in the physical distance caused by the girl’s leaving home (Everett, 46).

Lyric of “She’s leaving home”:

Wednesday morning at five o'clock as the day begins

Silently closing her bedroom door

Leaving the note that she hope would say more

She goes downstairs to the kitchen clutching her handkerchief

Quietly turning the backdoor key

Stepping outside she is free

She (We gave her most of our lives)

Is leaving (Sacrificed most of our lives)

Home (We gave her everything money could buy)

She's leaving home after living alone for so many years. Bye, bye

Father snores as his wife gets into the dressing gown

Picks up the letter that's lying there

Standing alone at the top of the stairs

She breaks down and cries to her husband

Daddy, our baby's gone

Why would she treat us so thoughtlessly

How could she do this to me

She (We never thought of ourselves)

is leaving (Never a thought for ourselves)

home (We gave her everything money could buy)

She's leaving home after living alone for so many years. Bye, bye

Friday morning at nine o'clock she is far away

Waiting to keep the appointment she made

Meeting a man from a motor trade

She (What did we do that was wrong)

Is having (We didn't know it was wrong)

Fun (Fun is the one thing that money can't buy)

Something inside that was always denied for so many years
She's leaving home, bye, bye.

In 1967, The Beatles were asked to take part at a global television series broadcasts by BBC. The programme was shown in twenty six countries, from Europe to Australia. In order to reach and capture all those communities, The Beatles wrote more simple songs. “All you need is love” (1967) greatly fulfilled that aim: lyrics and tune were uncomplicated and they were captured by the worldwide viewers (Turner, 136). Although Lennon was criticized for the simplicity of “All you need is love”, the message’s song “came not only from his flower-power convictions but also from a desire to be intelligible to the hundreds of millions of viewers across twenty-four countries who would receive the live feed” (Everett, 55). Indeed, Epstein commented on the song:

This is an inspired song, because they wrote it for a worldwide programme and they really wanted to give the world a message. It could hardly have been a better message. It is a wonderful, beautiful, spine-chilling record (Epstein in Turner, 137).

The song became the soundtrack of the Summer of Love and that one of hippies. As Gerhard Falk and Ursula Falk wrote in *Youth Culture and the Generation Gap*:

The Beatle, a group whose “singing” consisted of repetitious monotonous, insisted that “all you need is love”. The message downplayed the material culture; and the word “love” became the catchword of the hippie culture in

the 1960s and led to the development of communes, collectives, encounter groups and “group marriages”. Associated with all that “love” were drugs of all kinds, as getting high was the symbol of final liberation (Falk and Falk, 188).

Furthermore, the song could be included in the ‘generation gap’ group because not only the 1960s’ youth experienced a discontent towards their parents, as expressed in “She’s leaving home”, but they also enhanced the “flower power”. It changed teenagers’ mind struck by the main political events such as the Vietnam War; thus, they promoted a life to be lived in peace and in love.

As a consequence, not only did The Beatles recount the bridge among the 1950s and 1960s generations, but they became spokesperson of an entire hippie generation.

Lyric of “All you need is love”:

Love, Love, Love.

Love, Love, Love.

Love, Love, Love.

There's nothing you can do that can't be done.

Nothing you can sing that can't be sung.

Nothing you can say but you can learn how to play the game.

It's easy.

Nothing you can make that can't be made.

No one you can save that can't be saved.

Nothing you can do but you can learn how to be you in time.

It's easy.

All you need is love.

All you need is love.
All you need is love, love.
Love is all you need.

Nothing you can know that isn't known.
Nothing you can see that isn't shown.
Nowhere you can be that isn't where you're meant to be.
It's easy.

All you need is love (All together, now!)
All you need is love (Everybody!)
All you need is love, love. Love is all you need (love is all you need).

Conclusion

My dissertation *A sociological approach to The Beatles' protest songs* has focused on the role of The Beatles' music, considering the sociological impact the band embodied during its career. The importance of that British band relied on the striking success it achieved at the beginning of the 1960s and on the fact that several songs and the behavior of the members of the band witnessed all the fervor that marked an entire decade. It appeared that not only were The Beatles icons within that musical context, but, according to what Ian Inglis wrote in *The Beatles: popular music and society*, they were “prominent across a variety of categories – historical, sociological, cultural and musical” (Inglis, 15). Therefore, the aim of my dissertation is to analyze the importance of The Beatles' protest songs because for a few years the members of the band appeared to be spokespersons of an entire generation.

My work has been divided into two main chapters: the first one has analyzed the 1960s and all the things that contributed to make the decade “a revolutionary entity”, including the Beatles' story (since they were considered a leitmotiv of those years); the second one has examined the role of music throughout history, focusing on The Beatles' songs. After having studied the role of protest songs within the worldwide context, it appeared that the period comprehended between the 1950s and the 1970s is a catalyst of the power of songs. Indeed, The Beatles' lyrics seemed to represent how songs could be used as a means to spread a message. In particular, it was likely that the sociological evolutions which the 1960s' generation witnessed influenced The Beatles' strategies of musical composition.

As a matter of fact, my dissertation has covered a wide range of aspects in order to provide a careful examination of what music depicted during those years. Firstly, a worldwide political panorama has resulted to be fundamental. Indeed, the 1960s were a revolutionary decade. A great number of political and historical events caused a turmoil which contributed to make that period as the most subversive and controversial throughout history.

It appeared that the Vietnam war was the most cruel and violent war ever fought among the two superpowers nations: United States of America and Russia (Marwick, 45). The two struggled for the supremacy over the worldwide continents, increasing the tension that characterized the so called Cold War. The Vietnamese situation and the crimes that the population were subjected to had striking repercussions on the cultural context too. A huge wave of demonstrations and rebellions raised against the American government which seemed to have bombarded the country without having officially declared war. People felt the need to express their discontents towards the political fervor and they promoted peace and love in their slogans.

Along with the Vietnamese cause and the new protests made not only by Americans, the 1960s were marked by a great number of positive waves due to the end of the Second World War in the previous decades. An economic boom and technological innovations improved people's lifestyles. People were richer and they also afforded to entertain themselves. In particular, according to Mark Donnelly, Great Britain appeared to be the country that mainly embodied all the 1960s evolutions (Donnelly, 36).

Moreover, young people had a fundamental role as far as the 1960s were concerned. That generation was the first one who did not fight a worldwide war and they also experienced a better lifestyle than their parents (Donnelly, 29). As a consequence, they were controversial because they created a "generation gap". They also experimented new self-expressions, which created new subcultures as the ones which were born in England: the Teddy Boys, the Mods and the Rockers. A critical approach has been provided in my dissertation through Dick Hebdige's

book *The Meaning of Subcultures*, because it offered a careful description of those British subcultures.

Music appeared to be fundamental within that revolutionary context. Indeed the “communicational activity” (Middleton, 172) is the power that music could convey. Songs’ message could regard a great number of topics such as romantic affairs or political controversies.

It seemed that a wide range of artists throughout the whole international context expressed their political ideas and their uneasy feelings through music and lyrics. According to Middleton’s book *Studying popular music*, it seemed that protest songs recounted “how things really are” (Middleton, 254), since musicians wanted to express the truth. They also had a dual aim: on the one hand those songs provided a source for an entire generation that felt the same discomfort; on the other hand, they represented an historical testimony.

There was a great number of relevant protest songs composed throughout history. It appeared that the most important political events reflected their consequences on artists; moreover, the most uneasy periods that some countries witnessed were testified by those composers. For instance, Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger and Bob Dylan were the most significant leaders of that genre in America.

The Beatles could be considered the major contributors of protest songs in Great Britain. They were a cornerstone for the entire 1960s’ generation and their lyrics appeared to be a prism of all the inflections.

A great number of critics argued that The Beatles’ career could be divided into two different parts: in the first one (from 1960 to 1965) they composed mainly love songs, which recounted unrequited feelings or romantic affairs; in the second one (from 1965 to 1969), lyrics turned to talk about more complex topics such as politics or social issues (Inglis in Fazzini, 172). As a matter of fact, The Beatles’ music witnessed a turning point.

My thesis focused on that later compositions, providing a critical and sociological approach to them. All the sources and references considered were text-analysis on the most relevant Beatles’ protest songs, statements and interviews

released by the band and several sociological documents which testified The Beatles' involvement in political issues.

First of all, a linguistic approach appeared to be fundamental when studying both earlier and later Beatles' songs. Indeed, there were several differences that distinguished them: the use of nouns, pronouns and adverbs. The first songs were characterized by the personal pronouns *I*, *you*, *she* and *he*; protagonists and characters were never named (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 89). The use of pronouns instead of personal names relied on the fact that every listener could identify himself in the songs' narration, because they recounted general feelings. In contrast, proper names appeared in later songs: they are more detailed (Cook and Mercer in Inglis, 89). They also offered a more specific narration using adverbs. The essayists Petrie and Pennebaker argued that the shift towards more complex topics required a distance from an emotional approach (Petrie and Pennebaker, 200), which was provided by the introduction of specific characters and famous places.

Secondly, the reasons why The Beatles turned to be interested in more complex and worldwide affairs have been investigated. Indeed, it has seemed clear that the political tension and the cultural revolutions established in the 1960s deeply influenced their songs. With regards to it, William Turner in *A Hard Day's Write* affirmed that The Beatles' songs could give "an insight into the Sixties and the live of [them]" (Turner, 10).

Thus, after a careful examination of all The Beatles' songs produced in the second part of their career, it has appeared that there were four main topics recounted: anti-war, social comments, drugs addictions and generation-gap. Although there was a great number of hypotheses and suppositions about every Beatles' song, I have decided to divide the most controversial songs into those four main categories. Indeed, anti-war, social, drug and generation-gap themes were the main issues which characterized the 1960s.

A careful linguistic and sociological examination have been made of the following songs: "Revolution" and "Back in USSR" considered anti-war songs;

“Piggies”, “Rain”, “Taxman” as social songs; “Day Tripper”, “Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds”, “Yellow Submarine” defined as drug songs; “She’s leaving home” and “All you need is love” as generation-gap songs.

The Beatles became zeitgeists of a mass of teenagers who imposed their new lifestyles, as I have analyzed in the previous chapter. The youth was involved in anti-war demonstrations, it was controversial against the government and teenagers became hippies; they abused of drugs and they also witnessed a generation-gap with their parents. As a consequence, it seemed clear that they preferred to listen to music that revealed their same discomfort, as the one composed by Lennon, McCartney and Harrison.

Bibliography

Primary sources

Brown P. and Gaines S., *The Love You Make: An insider's Story of the Beatles*, New York: New American Library, 2002.

Dowlding W., *Beatlesongs*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009.

Evans, M., *The Art of the Beatles*, New York: Beech Tree, 1984.

Everett W., *The Beatles as Musicians: Revolver Through the Anthology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Frontani M., *The Beatles: image and the media*, University Press of Mississippi, 2007.

Gregory C., *Who Could Ask for More?: Reclaiming the Beatles*, Plotted plain press, 2007.

Gould J., *Can't Buy My Love: The Beatles, Britain and America*, New York: Three Rivers Press, 2007.

Hunter, D., *The Beatles: The authorized Biography*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1968.

Harrison, G., *I Me Mine*, London: Chronicle Books, 2007.

Harry, B., *The Beatles Encyclopedia: revised and updated*, London: Virgin, 2000.

Ingham C., *The Rough Guide to the Beatles*, London: Rough Guides, 2003.

Inglis, I., *The Beatles: Popular Music and Society*, New York: Macmillan Press, 2000.

Julien O., *Sgt. Pepper and the Beatles: It was Forty Years Ago Today*, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2008.

Lewisohn M., *The Complete Beatles Chronicle: The Definitive Day-By-Day Guide To the Beatles' Entire Career*, Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1992.

Mackenzie M., *Beatles*, New York: Harper Collins, 2009.

Miles B., *The British Invasion*, New York: Sterling Publishing Company Inc., 2009.

Pedler, D., *The Songwriting secrets of The Beatles*, Omnibus Press, 2003.

Riley T., *Tell Me Why: A Beatles Commentary*, Da Capo Press, 2002.

Roberts, J., *The Beatles: Music revolutionaries*, New York: Twenty-First Century Books, 2011.

Sullivan H., *The Beatles with Lacan*, New York: Peter Lang, 1995.

The Beatles, *The Beatles Anthology*, San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2000.

Turner, S., *A hard day's write*, London: Carlton Books, 1994.

Weiner J., *Come Together: John Lennon in his Time*, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1984.

Wentzel, J., *The Beatles*, New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2002.

Wimmer T., *The Beatles: Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, Minnesota: The Creative Company, 2008.

Womack. K., *Reading the Beatles: Cultural Studies, Literary Criticism, and the Fab Four*, New York: SUNY Press, 2006.

Womack, K., *The Cambridge Companion to the Beatles*, Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2009.

Secondary sources

Ackroyd P., *London: the biography*, London: Vintage, 2001.

Bertinetti R., *Dai Beatles a Blair: la cultura inglese contemporanea*, Roma: Carocci, 2001.

Bertoni A., *La Poesia, come si legge e come si scrive*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2006.

Boyer P. and Dubofsky M., *The Oxford Companion to United States History*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Brake M. and Kegan P., *The Sociology of Youth culture and Youth subcultures: Sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll by 1980*, London: Routledge, 1980.

Brown D., *Voicing The Text: South African Oral poetry and Performance*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Breward C., *Swinging Sixties: Fashion in London and Beyond 1955-1970*, Oxford: OUP Oxford, 2003.

Burner D., *Making Peace with the Sixties*, London: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Chambers I., *Popular Culture: the metropolitan experience*, London: Routledge, 1988.

Diski J., *The Sixties*, London: Profile Books, 2010.

Christgau R., *Grown up all wrong: 75 great rock and pop artists from vaudeville to techno*, United States of America: Harvard University Press, 1998.

Cogan B. and Kelso T., *Encyclopedia Of Politics, The Media and Popular Culture*, California: ABC-CLIO, 2009.

Colaiacomo P. and Caratozzolo V., *La Londra dei Beatles*, Milano: Editori Riuniti, 1996.

Coombs K., *Woody Guthrie*, New York: Twenty-First Century Books, 2002.

Donnelly M., *Sixties Britain: culture, society and politics*, Pearson Education, 2005.

Davis A. and Sinfield A., *British culture of the postwar. An introduction to literature and society*, London: Routledge, 2000.

Falk G. and Falk A., *Youth Culture and the Generation Gap*, Algora Publishing, 2005.

Fazzini M., *Canto un mondo libero: poesia-canzone per la libertà*, Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2012.

Frank T., *The Conquest of Cool: Business, Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Gammond P., *The Oxford Companion to popular music*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Gelder K., *Subcultures: Cultural histories and Social Practice*, New York: Routledge, 2007.

Hall S. and Jefferson T., *Resistance through rituals*, New York: Routledge, 1993.

Hawkins S., *The British Pop Dandy: Masculinity, Popular Music and Culture*, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2009.

Hertsgaard M., *A Day in the Life*, New York: Delacorte, 1995.

Hebdige D., *Subculture: The meaning of style*, London: Routledge, 1973.

Hobsbawm E. *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991*, London: Penguin Books, 1994.

Hodkinson P. and Wolfgang D., *Youth Cultures: Scenes, Subcultures and Tribes*, New York: Routledge, 2007.

Horn P., *Writing My Reading: Essays on Literary Politics in South Africa*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994.

Kureishi H., *London Kills Me.*, London: Faber & Faber, 1991.

Jobling P. and Crowley D., *Graphic Design: Reproduction and Representation Since 1800*, Manchester: University Press, 1996.

Jones D. and Jones M., *South and Southern African Literature: A review*, Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 2002.

Juang R., *Africa and the Americas: culture, politics, and history; a multidisciplinary encyclopaedia*, Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2008.

Levy S., *Ready, Steady, Go! Swinging London and the invention of cool*, London: Harper Collins, 2002.

Lynskey D., *33 Revolutions per minute: a history of protest songs*, London: Faber & Faber, 2010.

Livingstone M., *Pop Art: A Continuing History*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1990.

MacDonald I., *Revolution in the head*, London: Random house UK, 2009.

Marwick A., *British society since 1945*. London: Penguin books, 1990.

Marwick A. *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, c.1958-c.1974*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Mellers W., *Twilight of the Gods: The Beatles in retrospect*, London: Faber, 1973.

Melly G., *Revolt into Style*, London: Faber & Faber, 1970.

Middleton R., *Studying popular music*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1990.

Miles B., *The British Invasion*, New York: Sterling Publishing Company, 2009.

Moore-Gilbert B. and Seed J., *Cultural revolution? The challenge of the arts in the 1960s*, 1992.

Mosckowitz V., *The words and music of Bob Marley*, Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007.

Munro A., *The Democratic Muse: Folk revival in Scotland*, Edinburgh: Scottish Cultural Press, 1996.

Murphy R., *The British Cinema Book*, London: British Film Institute, 2009.

Owram D., *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.

Partington J., *The Life, Music and Thought of Woody Guthrie: A Critical Appraisal*, New York: Ashgate Publishing, 2011.

Peddie I., *The Resisting Muse: Popular Music and Social Protest*, Hants: Ashgate Publishing, 2006.

Perry G., *London in the Sixties*, London: Anova books, 2002.

Pichsake D., *A generation in motion*, Minnesota: Elliss Press, 1989.

Robert, J., *Bob Dylan: Voice of a generation*, New York: Twenty-First Century Book, 2005.

Robertson G., *Crimes Against Humanity: The Struggle for Global Justice*, London: Penguin Books, 2006.

Roszak T., *The making of a counter culture*, Doubleday Publishing, 1983.

Rooksby R., *Lyrics: Writing Better Words for Your Songs*, San Francisco: Backbeat Books, 2006.

Sheurer T., *American Popular Music Vol. 2: The Age of Rock*, Popular Press, 1989.

Strorey J., *An introductory Guide to Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993.

Thompson G., *Please Please Me: Sixties British Pop, Inside Out: Sixties British Pop*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Zollo P., *Songwriters on Songwriting*, Cambridge Mass: Da Capo press, 2003.

Wicke P., *Popular Music and Communication*, Newbury Park, California: Sage, 1992.

Winkler M., *“To Everything there is a Season”*: Pete Seeger and the Power of song: Pete Seeger and the Power of Song, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009

Articles

Cooper L., ‘The Magical Mystery Four: The Beatles As a Successful System of Archetypes’, November 9th 2009.

Halasz P., “London: The Swinging City - You Can Walk Across it On the Grass” *Time*, April 15th 2013.

Inglis, I., ‘Variations on a theme: The love songs of the Beatles’ *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, 28: 37 – 62.

Langager R., “‘With Our Love, We Can Save the World’”: The Beatles Within and Without the Late '60s Zeitgeist’, November 4th 2009.

Roszak, T. “Youth and the great refusal” *The Nation*, March 25th, 1968.

Whiteley N., “Toward a Throw-Away Culture. Consumerism, 'Style Obsolescence' and Cultural Theory in the 1950s and 1960s” *Oxford Art Journal*, February 10th, 1987.

Wroe N., ‘I did my own thing’ *The Guardian*, March 8th, 2008.

Web

“Modes and Rockers”. <<http://subcultureslist.com/mods-and-rockers/>>, viewed 23th February 2013.

“British Invasion”. <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/80244/British-Invasion>>, viewed 2nd March 2013.

“A Concise History of the British Mod Movement by Melissa Casburn”. <<http://www.gbacg.org/costume-resources/original/articles/mods.pdf>>, viewed 14th March 2013.

“John Lennon”. <<http://www.johnlennon.it/john-lennon-quotes-it.htm>>, viewed 24th April 2013.

“The History of the Beatles”.
<http://www.thebeatlesuniverse.com/beatles_history.html>, viewed 11th March 2013

“The sound of The Beatles by Gen Tillekens”.
<http://www.icce.rug.nl/~soundscapes/VOLUME01/The_sound_of_the_Beatles.shtml> viewed 26th April 2013.

“The Beatles ultimate experience: Songwriting and recording database”.
<<http://www.beatlesinterviews.org/dba07revol.html>>, viewed 13th May 2013.

“Georgia Encyclopedia Britannica” .
<<http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/ngc/Article.jsp?id=h-3400>>, viewed 27th April 2013.

“The Beatles”. <<http://www.megatopstars.com/music/bands/the-beatles/>>, viewed 15th March 2012.

“Oldies Music”. <<http://oldies.about.com/>>, viewed 22th April 2013.

Videos

JOHN LENNON: John and Yoko’s Year of Peace (DVD, 2002)

BOB DYLAN: No Direction home: Bob Dylan (Spitfire Picture, 2005)

WOODY GUTHRIE: This machine kills fascists (DVD, 2005)