

# **PERFORMING AUTHENTICITIES**

**Cultural Forms and Their Functions in the Reclaim the Streets – protest**

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**Master's Thesis**

**Social and Public Policy**

**Department of Social Sciences**

**University of Jyväskylä**

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## Summary

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In this thesis I study the role of culture in the context of social movements. I argue that the role of concrete cultural forms in protest movements' action has undergone a rather small interest in the Finnish study of social movements. I examine culture in social movements by looking at the "cultural turn" in social sciences, the rise of "new social movements" and through the theorizing of Pierre Bourdieu, Sarah Thornton and Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison. I conceptualize culture as both the concrete cultural praxis (e.g. music, art, dancing) and as a semiotic and cognitive system behind all action.

As an empirical case study, I adopt a cultural perspective towards one protest movement, the Finnish Reclaim the Streets –movement, which I consider as a cultural and expressive form of collective action. The Reclaim the Streets -demonstrations are political carnivals, acts of non-violent civil disobedience. The idea is to block a city street from car traffic for couple of hours or one day. A party is held on the street. The idea behind the protest is a critique of private traffic and of global capitalism. Using qualitative methods I examine the role of concrete cultural forms, such as music, visual art and bodily habitus in the Reclaim the Streets –protest. My empirical data consists of 5 theme interviews with the protestors, analysis of flyers, posters and www-pages produced by the activists (micro-media) and an ethnographical participatory observation with one activist group in organizing a Reclaim the Streets –event, and attending 3 Reclaim the Streets –protests in 2 different Finnish cities. I analyze this data qualitatively by looking up themes according to my research questions.

The results of my thesis show that the cultural forms that the protestors are using have important functions in the protest. I divide these functions to pragmatic and symbolic functions. The pragmatic functions are related to the protestors' subcultural capital, their ability to utilize subcultural resources and cultural meanings in order to recruit sympathizers and make the protest event work. On a symbolic level, according to my theoretical interpretation the cultural forms are representing a counter-cultural authenticity which opposes a constructed commercial mainstream. I theorize that this performed countercultural authenticity is an important aspect in producing the movement's cohesion and cognitive praxis in Eyerman and Jamison's terms.

Key words: Reclaim the Streets, new social movements, cognitive praxis, subcultural capital, culture, protest

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## **1 Where is the music?**

The starting point of my master's thesis is an idea that there's something missing from the social scientific research of social movements. My research topic is the carnivalesque form of social protest – Reclaim the Streets. The Reclaim the Streets -actions, also called Street Parties (later in the text also abbreviated RTS), are political carnivals which are arranged by protestors on one or several streets. The idea is to block the street from car traffic – to reclaim it, take it from the cars and give it to the people – for couple of hours or one day. A party is held on the street; there are dj's playing mainly electronic music, which is being amplified through a PA system, people are dancing, drinking, juggling, writing and drawing on the street with spray paint or with chalk, skating, playing foot bag or capoeira, or arranging football matches. There are often some non-governmental organisations presenting themselves, communal kitchens selling food and some performances, such as street theatre.

If I go to a Reclaim the Streets –event, I don't see any movement networks or political opportunity structures, which have been the focus of the mainstream social movement researchers. Of course, movement networks act in the background providing actors with resources, and political opportunity structures enable movements' action. But for me, what I see on the street, happening before my eyes, are people having fun, enjoying the party, dancing, having a picnic, drawing on the street, and altogether enjoying themselves in a myriad of ways. And what I hear, filling the air and the urban space around me, is music. Repetitive electronic music that is being amplified through a huge pa-system, rolling reggae-music, almost aggressive punk music. When I look at the research done on social movements and demonstrations, I have to stop and ask; where is the music? Where is the concrete culture that is happening in such a colorful way in front of my eyes?

Culture and protest have more or less been intertwined throughout human history. It is often the role of artists to be politically active, and specific eras can be named, when political contention was typically grounded to a cultural base, such as in the "sixties generation". In the sixties, there was one innovative group called Enemmistö ry that acted out performative

actions on the Finnish streets in order to affect traffic policies; it can be seen as the predecessor of the RTS (Larjavaara 2002).

However, Finnish social scientists have not been too keen on studying this cultural side of political contention, as the cultural forms of protest have traditionally been seen as external to the political claims. Globally, this started to change after the 1960s radicalism. In the social sciences, there has been a ‘cultural turn’ since the beginning of the 1980s, which has also had its consequences to the study of social movements. In the sociological study of social movements, the cultural turn has meant a growing interest on the cultural dimensions of the protest. The development has also been linked to the rise of the ‘new social movements’, from the 1960s onwards. Some of the leading theorists in the field of the culturally oriented study of social movements have been Alberto Melucci (e.g. 1985; 1989) and his studies of social movements as social constructions. Also Erving Goffman’s frame analytic perspective has become a popular tool for grasping the phenomenon of social movements, after the adaptation of Snow et al. (1986). In Finland however, the interest in cultural protest has been rather limited. Some examples can be named, however, such as Tuominen (1991) who has studied the 1960s cultural protest in Finland, Paasonen (2005) who has been interested in the media activism on the Internet and Pyhtilä (2005) with his studies on the 1960s Situationist movement.

In this thesis I will first contemplate the versatile meaning of culture in social sciences and form a general picture of the ‘cultural turn’ in the study of social movements. Then, I will examine culture as a sociological phenomenon through Pierre Bourdieu’s work. As my interest lies in the concrete level, I argue following Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison (1998) that the *concrete cultural elements* that the social movements have used in their repertoires of action have undergone a significantly smaller interest than culture seen as a symbolic system behind all action.

The point of view provided in this work is that of a process of production. Following Touraine (1981) I see that the human societies have the capacity of not only reproducing themselves and maintaining a social system, but also a capacity to develop their own cultural orientations and

to alter them. According to Touraine, social movements are in the heart of the society, because they are expressive actors who express embedded cultural orientations within the society. Social movements are the expression of the collective will, and therefore the study of social movements is such an important part of sociology. According to Touraine, one can study the changes that have occurred in the society by examining what the social movements are doing. (Touraine *ibid.*, 26—30; 59—60.)

Following Touraine and Eyerman and Jamison (1991) I treat social movements as producers of new ideas and values, rather than just reactions to external strains. I argue that the action of social movements is shaping the culture around us and providing us with new meanings. In a salient role in this process of production are the cultural forms that the protestors are employing. The epistemological background of my study is a social constructionist approach. I regard social movements as agents that construct symbols and meanings and performatively transmit these constructions to a wider audience. Cultural performance is the social process by which actors display for others the meaning of their social situation; it is this meaning that they consciously or unconsciously wish to have others believe. If a performance is successful, the result is a convincing and effective social performance that presents itself as natural and authentic. (Alexander 2004.)

It seems to me that the lack of interest in concrete cultural forms is a deficit in the sociological study of social movements. After presenting some basic principles of the relationship between culture and social movements, in this thesis I am interested in examining the concrete, pragmatic uses of cultural forms in the action repertoires of social movements. I argue that the concrete cultural forms of protest are dimensions of social movements' *cognitive praxis*, their way of constructing the movement as an actor and creating new knowledge through their action (see Eyerman & Jamison 1991). As an empirical example I will examine the Finnish Reclaim the Streets –movement. Mostly I am interested in the musical genres that are used in the protest, but I will also pay attention to the decoration of the reclaimed space as well as the advertisement material, 'micro-media' (see Thornton 1996) that the protestors utilize. I ask, what kind of cultural forms are used in the RTS-protest, how they are being used, who decides about their usage and what kind of roles or functions the cultural practices have. My research methods are derived from my cultural approach. I use qualitative, ethnographical methods,

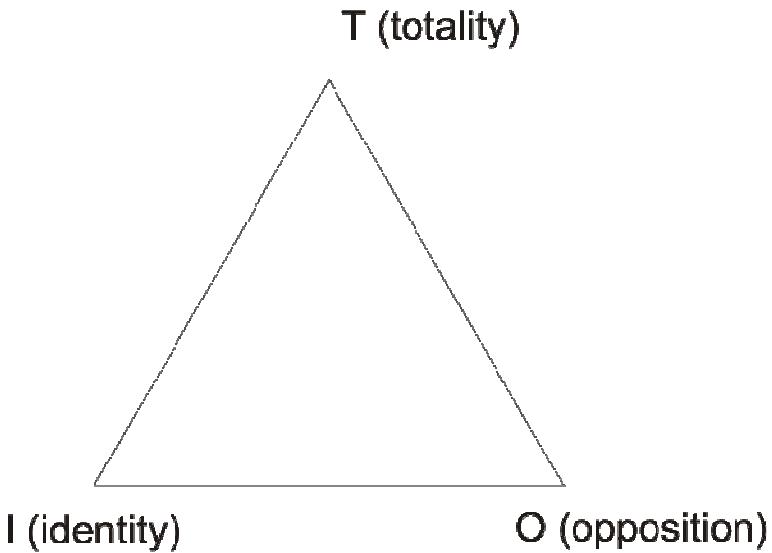
such as participant-observation, as well as theme interviews and analysis of activists' own cultural products.

## **2 Studying culture and social movements**

According to Sidney Tarrow (1998, 2), social movements can be defined as “sequences of contentious politics that are based on underlying social networks and resonant collective action frames, and which develop the capacity to maintain sustained challenges against powerful opponents”. Social movements have common purposes and social solidarities, and they act in a sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities (Tarrow ibid., 4). Another famous definition is that of Della Porta and Diani (1999, 16): social movements are considered “as (1) informal networks, based (2) on shared beliefs and solidarity, which mobilize about (3) conflictual issues, through (4) the frequent use of various forms of protest.”

In this thesis, I adopt a social constructionist approach towards the category of social movements. Following Alberto Melucci (1985; 1989) I argue that social movements are social constructions and the concept of social movement is an analytic one. Social movements are action systems that have structures. These structures are built by aims, beliefs and decisions. According to Melucci, to consider a movement as an action system means that it must not be considered only as an empirical phenomenon, but rather an analytic one. “Only by separating different analytic elements can one understand how they are kept together by an ‘organizational’ structure, how a collective identity is built through a complex system of negotiations, exchanges, decisions; how action can occur as a result of systemic determinations *and* of individual and group orientations” (Melucci 1985, 794). Melucci (1989) depicts that the analytic category of social movement means collective action that involves solidarity, engagement in conflict, and breaking the limits of compatibility of a system. Is the Reclaim the Streets –protest, then, a social movement?

Alain Touraine (1981, 80) provides a famous conceptualization of social movements: he sees social movements as culturally oriented forms of behavior that have an antagonistic role in the society. Touraine depicts this antagonism through a diagram (Diagram 1).



**Diagram 1. The social movement as a combination of a principle of identity (I), a principle of opposition (O), and a principle of totality (T) (Touraine 1981, 81).**

Social movements have to fight on someone's behalf, against someone and on some grounds. The relation of the actor and the adversary, I - O, is the conflictual dimension of the social movement. The relation between the actor and the stakes, I – T, defines what is at stake in the conflict. (Touraine *ibid.*, 81—82.)

Eyerman and Jamison (1991) see social movements as processes in formation. Social movements are formed by individual actors and they form a cognitive territory, a new conceptual space that is filled by dynamic interaction between different groups and organizations. Thus a social movement is not one organization or a particular interest group. (*Ibid.*, 55—65.) This seems to be compatible with my idea of the Reclaim the Streets – movement. I have described the RTS as a temporary autonomous zone or a “movement of movements”, in a forthcoming article (Yliselä 2007). Unfortunately, in this limited space I can't examine this issue further.

In the contemporary study of “new social movements” it is often stated that the new forms of protest are temporary and project-like actions (e.g. Konttinen & Peltokoski 2004; Lindholm 2005). An interesting question is, then, how these sporadic social networks manage to form and maintain social solidarities (cf. Melucci 1989). In their book *Music and social movements* Andrew Jamison and Ron Eyerman (1998) want to accentuate the role of the movements’

cultural aspects – the habits, customs and rituals of movements, as well as the sounds and songs the movements are utilizing – as the maintainers of the movements' cohesion and as the building blocks of the movements' collective identity. My hypothesis is that the musical genres and the other pragmatic cultural forms that are used in the RTS-protest have an important role in constructing cohesion in the process of the collective action.

Conceptually, the term 'culture' is very ambiguous and can be used with many different meanings. Williams (1982) presents a typology of the term. Originally, 'culture' is a noun of *process*: it refers to the culture (cultivation) of crops or animals. By extension the term meant the active cultivation of the human mind. In the late eighteenth century the term became a noun of configuration of the 'spirit' which informed the 'whole way of life' of a group of people. The meaning of culture can have (a) an emphasis on the 'informing spirit' of a whole way of life, which manifests itself over the social activities, but is most evident in 'cultural' activities, such as language and styles of art; and (b) an emphasis on a 'whole social order' within which a specifiable culture, in e.g. styles of art, is seen as the direct or indirect product of an order primarily constituted by other social activities. The former position can be labeled as idealist and the latter as materialist. Each position leads to intensive study of the relations between 'cultural' activities and other forms of social life, but from a different perspective. In the idealist position this implies an illustration of the 'informing spirit', as in national histories of styles of art which manifest the central interests and values of a 'people', and in the materialist position an exploration of the general social order to the specific forms taken by its cultural manifestations. (Williams *ibid.*, 11—12.)

In presenting the history of cultural studies, Stuart Hall (1980) points out that the definition of culture is always political and there is no one 'Culture', but many 'cultures'. Hall adopts a materialist perspective and argues that the concept of culture has a historically specific link to class structures and class struggles “- the struggles between 'ways of life' rather than the evolution of '*a way of life*'” (*ibid.*, 20).

Clifford Geertz (1973) provides a famous definition of culture as a semiotic symbolic system behind all action. According to him, culture is “an (sic) historically transmitted pattern of

meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life.” (Geertz ibid., 89.) To Geertz, all human behavior is symbolic action. The idea in studying culture – ethnography – is to understand the meaning behind all action. However, Geertz wants to surpass the objectivism-subjectivism debate concerning culture. As he states, culture is public because meaning is. Culture is both the meaning and the public expression of it. (Geertz ibid., 10—12.)

Geertz’s definition comes closest to my own in this thesis. I consider culture as both the symbolic system behind all action and the public displays of it, cultural performances. Analytically, it is useful to divide ‘culture’ at this point into two categories. The other one is ‘culture’ in a wide meaning, as the semiotic system behind human action, and the other one the cultural practices, or ‘culture’ as in the everyday meaning of arts. In this thesis, my research topic is the *concrete cultural praxis*, and the term ‘cultural forms’ refers to the field of cultural industries and arts. However, as I do consider these two levels intertwined, I also contemplate on the meanings behind the utilized cultural forms.

Currently I am preparing my doctoral dissertation on the Finnish Reclaim the Streets –protest. The interplay between culture and politics is particularly interesting in this case, as the protestors have creatively combined cultural forms, such as music and dancing, and integrated them to their action repertoire. The phenomenon is not new in a global perspective, as carnivals and carnivalesque have often been means of expressing political claims, but the tradition in Finland has been quite limited in this respect. I have examined the relationship between the Reclaim the Streets –protest and the Finnish protest movements’ repertoires of action in my master’s thesis in sociology (Yliselä 2006).

Because I am currently preparing my doctoral thesis on this same subject, there are interesting aspects that had to be ruled out in order to maintain the coherence of this thesis. Therefore, I have not examined the Reclaim the Streets –movement from the point of view of spatial politics in urban space (see e.g. Lefebvre 1994; Merrifield 2000) or from the perspective of movement’s impacts on traffic policies (see e.g. Robinson 2000). Also, I have ruled out the

relationship between RTS and the theories of carnival produced by Mikhail Bakhtin (e.g. 1995) which I have discussed briefly in my master's thesis in sociology (Yliselä 2006).

In this master's thesis my broadest research question is to ask, how can the relationship between cultural forms and political contention in the context of social movements be described. Specifically, I look at the relationship between protest action and the concrete cultural forms the movements are using, and examine the Finnish Reclaim the Streets –protest as a case study from this perspective.

My research questions can be formulated as:

1. What kind of cultural forms are used in the RTS-protest?
2. How are these cultural forms used?
3. What kind of roles or functions the cultural practices have?
4. Who decides what kind of cultural forms are used?

My empirical methods to solve these problems are qualitative. I use literary review, ethnographical participatory observation, theme interviews and analysis of activists' documents (micro-media) as empirical methods. My analysis moves on two levels. The pragmatic level is the level of the protestors. I am interested in the cultural praxis: what are the concrete practical functions that the cultural forms, such as visual arts, music and texts have in the protest. By function I mean the pragmatic usage of the object in question, for example a banner that is used to block a street from car traffic. On this pragmatic level my approach is hermeneutical and I am interested in the actors' meanings and understandings.

The second level is a more theoretical one, as I argue following Geertz that there is a deeper structure behind the cultural forms that the protestors are utilizing. This deep structure is 'culture' in a symbolic and semiotic sense, something that surrounds the individual actors and manifests itself in different ways, such as cultural products and performances. The individual actors take part in the construction of this deep structure. From this perspective my analysis goes "beyond" the actors' understandings: I as a researcher construct my own idea of the meanings and functions behind the cultural forms which the protestors are using. For example,

I argue that the banners that are being used to cut the traffic have also a more symbolic function of representing the protest itself and the ideas and values that the protestors want to convey. I am not suggesting that this interpretation is “the truth” or a comprehensive explanation of the phenomenon. Rather, as a researcher I am participating in the process of the production of meanings that is behind every social movements’ action.

I start my thesis by elaborating the theoretical discussion that has been going on in the social sciences about the relationship between culture and political contention. First, I develop a general description of the social scientific study of social movements, and the place of culture in it. Then I go on to elaborate my empirical data and analysis. After this presentation of the method I turn to my empirical results. I take up two rather different ways of understanding culture in the context of the Reclaim the Streets –protest. The first one is based on Pierre Bourdieu’s cultural sociology and the idea of (sub)cultural capital, which I will discuss in chapter 6.3. The other point of view is a cognitive and cultural one, based on Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison’s idea of cultural forms as a dimension of social movements’ cognitive praxis, which I examine in chapter 6.6. But first, I begin with a short description of the Reclaim the Streets –movement, its origins and forms of protest.

### **3 The Reclaim the Streets –movement**



**Picture 1. Dancers in the Helsinki Street Party on 26.8.2007.**

*To "reclaim the streets" is to act in defence of and for common ground. To tear down the fence of enclosure that profit-making demands. And the Street Party - far from being just anti-car - is an explosion of our suppressed potential, a celebration of our diversity and a chorus of voices in solidarity.*

*A festival of resistance!*

-(<http://rts.gn.apc.org/prop12.htm>)

The protest movement started to develop in England, in the beginning of the 1990s. Britain's massive new road programs inspired resistance, such as the "Carmageddon" campaign in 1991, and mass road occupations, opposing the M3 highway extension in Hampshire's Twyford Down in 1991-1992, and the highway M11 in East End's Claremont Road in 1994. The first Reclaim the Streets -action was held in May 1995, in London's Camden Town. With the slogan "streets for people", the first direct action festivals were inspired by a desire to

reclaim the roads from the car traffic – taking back a "public commons" that had been hijacked by the car, or more accurately, by capital.

According to St John (2004), the roots of the English RTS-movement lay in the anarchist and the anarcho-punk movement emerging in the UK in the 1980s. The rise of the new information technologies in the beginning of the 1990s enabled alternative collectives – many of whom had their roots in the 1960s green-, peace- and women's movement – to create a new, global Do It Yourself (DIY) -culture. An important influence behind the RTS-movement was also the Situationist International (SI), the European avant-garde movement. Alongside the Situationist and anarchist roots there was also another important culture that influenced the movement: the newly politicised rave culture.

Rave culture and environmental activists were both threatened by the 1994 Criminal Justice Act, which criminalized ware house raves, and even included a clause against music with a "repetitive beat". The protest against the highway M11 in 1994 was a watershed in the movement's history, when a loose collective of ravers, environmentalists and squatters converged on Claremont Road, which was due to be demolished in order to build a new extension to the highway. The protestors camped at the site for months, creating new ways of opposing the motorway. After the Claremont Road conflict, RTS harnessed rave culture's *ekstasis* in to the movement. The loud electronic music, amplified from sound systems, has also had practical use for the protestors: For example in 1996, at the RTS-action against the highway M41, the police couldn't hear the activists drilling holes to the asphalt from the music. The activists used the holes to plant some trees into them. (Ghazvinian 2000; St John 2004.)

What makes Reclaim the Streets -actions differ from the other protests is the style of the protest; the protest is simultaneously tactical, pragmatic and festal (a carnival on the street). An Australian activist has called this combination a "protestival". The protestival is a site of creative resistance. Reclaim the Streets -protestivals are carnivals seen in a Bakhtinian sense, as moments of freedom from the surrounding social order, as a temporary form of life. The protestival is a combination of the reality and the ideal. Thus, the protestival is political as

such. St John sees the RTS events also as reclaiming of the carnivals: nowadays carnivals have turned into predictable festal events, controlled by the authorities and legitimately marked into the calendar. (Bakhtin 1995, 9—11; St John 2004.)

In Finland, there have been approximately 50 RTS-actions, in different cities. The first RTS (under the name of Street Party) was arranged in Helsinki, at Esplanadi, the 17<sup>th</sup> May 1997. It was the first Reclaim the Streets -action arranged outside of Britain. After that, there have been RTS-actions in (at least) Helsinki, Jyväskylä, Tampere, Turku, Lahti, Joensuu, Savonlinna, Rovaniemi and Mikkeli. The biggest protestival was held in Helsinki in 1999, when nine lanes and a level crossing were blocked from the Sörnäisten rantatie. (Yliselä 2006.)

Reclaim the Streets -protest diffused to Finland keeping many of its original British forms. As in England, the Finnish protests' main themes have been criticizing motor car traffic and, connected to this, criticizing the dominance of (neoliberal) capitalism. In the 1990s however, the protestivals in Finland were called Street Parties, and their political content wasn't always obvious. The actions changed their name into the more political Reclaim the Streets in 2001. Also the themes have changed, from car-related issues into more global critique against capitalism. The two main aspects of the Finnish RTS are criticizing the contemporary capitalized car culture and opening a "temporary autonomous zone" into the urban space, an area that is closed for car traffic and commercial enterprises, but open for non-commercial forms of culture. The division between the non-commercial, "real" and "authentic" urban culture and commercialized "mainstream" culture is seen as strong. The political contents of the Finnish Reclaim the Streets –actions have followed the surrounding social movement environment. RTS came to Finland during a heightened phase of protest, the "fourth environmental protest wave" (on the term see Konttinen & Peltokoski 2004). The idea of environmental protest waves follows Sidney Tarrow's (1998) idea of cycles of contention, when there are lots of political protests and contention within the society. After the big globalization-critical demonstrations in Seattle, Prague, Genoa and Gothenburg in 1999—2001, the contents of the protest started to move towards a globally oriented critique of

capitalism. However, the environmental critique of private traffic has remained as an important trait of the protest actions. (Yliselä 2006.)

The combination of global and local dimensions of protest is an interesting characteristic of the RTS. In their web site the original London group describes itself as: "A direct action network for global and local social-ecological revolution(s) to transcend hierarchical and authoritarian society, (capitalism included), and still be home in time for tea..." (<http://rts.gn.apc.org/>). In Finland, this combination of global and local has meant that the English form of protest has been fitted to suit the Finnish peaceful and non-confrontational protest culture. The Finnish version of the RTS-protestival has been less conflict-oriented than in England or in Sweden, where the RTS-actions have ended in violent confrontations with the police. In Finland, relations with the police have been peaceful, there has been negotiations between the police and the protestors and activists have even commented that the "Finnish police is worth of exporting". The police has even "helped" the activists in protecting the protestors' safety, guiding traffic and bringing traffic signs and fences to the blocked street. The streets have also been cleaned after the protestival by the activists – and there have been recycling points on the streets for the garbage. However, the style of the protest has usually stayed as an illegal demonstration, as a form of civil disobedience. (Yliselä 2006; 2007.)

## **4 Social movements after the cultural turn**

### **4.1 ‘Cultural turn’ in the social sciences**

Behind the theoretical framework of my thesis is an idea of a ‘cultural turn’ that has affected the way how social movements have been understood in social sciences. In the study of social movements there have been various competing and coexisting traditions and schools of thought. Eyerman and Jamison (1991) suggest that the different approaches are based on the cultural and historical conditions that the social scientists are facing.

In the 1980s, there was a general turn in the social sciences towards a new sensitivity to cultural issues. Konttinen (1998) has called the period as a turn towards a cultural climate of defending subjectivity. He argues that in the end of the 1970s and in the beginning of the 1980s there was a turn towards a generalized interest on soft values, which were seen as opposites to the “hard sciences” and technology. (Konttinen *ibid.*, 197—198.) When discussed in Williams’ typology, Konttinen’s view is idealist, because it implies that the paradigmatic changes have occurred because there was a change in the ‘informing spirit’ of the western society.

The cultural turn in social sciences can also be seen as a backlash from the very influential materialist Marxist-influenced political economy in the 1970s. Ray and Sayer (1999) discuss the ‘culturalization’ these, which implies that culture is gaining all the more importance in economic life. There has been said to be a shift from material to symbolic consumption, as Melucci (1985) argues. In Williams’ terms, this explanation is materialist, because it involves the influence of economic conditions that shape culture as a dependent variable.

In sociology of social movements, the cultural turn meant a new interest in identities. A now-classic article of Jean Cohen (1985) summarized this development. In her article, Cohen identified two differing paradigms in the study of social movements: the “resource mobilization” paradigm, and the “identity-oriented” paradigm. (Cohen 1985; Eyerman & Jamison 1998, 17—18.)

Another strand in the cultural turn has been the growing interest towards framing and frame analysis in the research on social movements. Frame analysis is based on Erving Goffman's frame analytic perspective, and researchers have been interested in the processes of frame alignment in social movements, such as frame bridging, frame amplification and frame transformation. (Eyerman & Jamison 1998, 17; Snow et al. 1986.)

## 4.2 New social movements

After the classical thinkers of 19<sup>th</sup> century social sciences, e.g. Weber and Marx, who had been interested in social movements, the phenomenon was rediscovered by the sociological world in the 1940s. In the USA, the movements were seen as reflections from the political turmoil of the Nazi Germany and of the communist "totalitarianism". Social movements were conceptualized as potentially dangerous forms of noninstitutionalized collective political behavior, which threatened the stability of established ways of life. In the USA, Talcott Parson's influential structural-functionalist perspective identified social movements as the representations of "strains" related to the uneven development and modernization within the various systems of action that make up the modern society. The collective behavior approach dominated the study of social movements in the United States until the 1960s. However in the Europe, the more class and tradition bound European societies produced their own ways of understanding social movements. The two main competing theoretical-political interpretations in Europe were, not surprisingly, Marx and Weber. To Weber, crowds and masses were seen as aspects of social transition. The Weberian approach stresses the individual and rational orientations of social movements' collective action; values and the role of (charismatic) leadership in explaining the effectiveness of social movements as strategic actors. Marxian perspective on the other hand tended to view social movements as signs of impending collapse of an existing capitalist order. To Marxists, the issue is not so much why social movements emerge or how they are organized, but rather what they represent in terms of their class-based composition. (Eyerman & Jamison 1991, 10—19.)

After the student movements in the 1960s, the social scientific study of social movements was in trouble. The new forms of protest didn't find an easy explanation in the existing schools of thought. New concepts and interpretations were necessary. One significant change was the formation of the 'young' as a distinct political and social group. Global youth subcultures were emerging and being young seemed to last for a longer period of time than ever before. A wave of extraparliamentary political activity was being conceptualized as "new" social movements: the women's, peace and environmentalist movements. The term "new social movements" was designed to make a clear separation between these movements and the institutionalized "old" movements of the working class. Also, the distinction referred to a shift in the society to a "postindustrial" society (Touraine 1981). Postindustrial movements engaged different actors (the young, the middle class), different conflicts and different issues than those of the industrial society. The old sociological theories (e.g. Marxist) on social movements were seen as too strongly rooted in the industrial capitalist society to provide categories which could be applied to contemporary conflicts. (Eyerman & Jamison 1991, 19—23.)

In the post-60s academy in the USA, the new social movements were being theorized through resource mobilization approach. In resource mobilization (RM), the central idea is to elaborate the effectiveness with which movements, that is movement organizations, use their resources in attempting to achieve their goals. In resource mobilization approach a central question is why some movements are more successful than others. In RM approach the distinction between movements and movement organizations is central, as well as the attempt to identify for every social movement a particular social movement sector, within which the various organizations coexist. RM focuses on the "rationality" of the movement actors and studies the mechanisms through which movements recruit their members and the organizational forms through which mobilization of both human and social resources takes place. Focus is in the interaction between actors and the movement organizations. A second important approach is the motivation of the actors; personal motivations that lead to participation in social movements. Both approaches emphasize the rationality of human actors: they are assumed to calculate rationally the costs and benefits of every action. (Cohen 1985; Eyerman & Jamison 1991, 23—26; McAdam, McCarthy et al. 1996.)

In the Europe, the most common approach has been to analyze social movements as carriers of political projects, as historical actors. In Europe new movements were placed in a broader historical context and seen as the dominant social forces of a postindustrial society. For Touraine (1981) social movements are bearers of new social interests. Central to Touraine's approach is the process of collective will formation, the ways through which movements come to recognize themselves as collective actors with a historical project. For Touraine historicity has a double meaning. It is a distinct stage of historical development, the "self-programmed society", where societies are said to have reached a level at which self-reflection upon the foundations of social life becomes possible, often referred to as the modernity. Historicity means also social movements in actualizing this universal process of social reflexivity. Social movement is characterized by the realization of historicity, by the self-conscious awareness that the very foundations of society are at stake or in contest. The aim of Touraine's studies has been to develop a method of action research to overcome the gap between the narrowly defined aims of activists and the wider claims of historicity. (Eyerman & Jamison 1991, 26—27; Touraine 1981.)

Eyerman and Jamison seek to combine the two differing theoretical traditions of social movements. They see that the incompatibilities of approaches in the USA and in the Europe derive from different political cultures, especially the different roles played by the social movements in the political formation of the society. Different intellectual traditions, including central aspects on theories of knowledge have affected the way how sociology has been practiced and social movements been conceptualized. And most importantly to Eyerman and Jamison, different sociological approaches are based on different personal relations of the sociologists to the social movements being investigated. The nature and degree of empathy that the sociologist brings to her investigation is an important element. Eyerman and Jamison want to develop a comprehensive framework for understanding and analyzing social movements, where the position of the sociologist must be considered. They go on to develop a framework of cognitive praxis to understand the development of new social movements. (Eyerman & Jamison 1991, 28—29.) I will discuss their cognitive approach more closely in chapter 6.4.

## **5 Data and analysis**

### **5.1 Empirical data**

My data consists of 3 Reclaim the Streets –events in Finland, in which I have participated in during the summer 2007, in Jyväskylä 4.8.2007 and in Helsinki 18.8.2007 and 26.8.2007. The method of research was participatory observation. I attended these protestivals and also filmed parts of the events. My role in the events was partly a participant of the demonstration and partly an outside observer. When I was filming the events, I took on a role of a researcher, whereas participating in the demonstration, dancing on the street and ‘hanging out’ made me also a demonstrator amongst the others.

After the observation I wrote a research diary. I also participated in the process of organizing one RTS-event as a member of the organizing group. The observation data consists of two months of observation in a social group, the organizers of a Reclaim the Streets –event, in a medium sized Finnish city. The size of the group varied. Usually there were 5–6 people in a meeting, and 2–3 of these were more active participants, ‘core activists’. I participated in 8 meetings that the group held before the event, and in the actual event on Saturday 4.8.2007. I also joined the group’s email list and followed their discussion. By participating in the process of the organizing of the protest, I wanted to get closer on the cultural meanings of the organizers, and to elaborate on the meaning of culture in this process and how the concrete cultural elements in the protest are negotiated, chosen and applied. After the meetings that I attended, I wrote a research diary. I didn’t want to write the diary when participating in the meetings, because I thought that it would disturb the participants.

The other materials for my thesis are 5 interviews, executed in the summer 2007. The interviews were conducted as semi-structured theme interviews, recorded and transcribed word by word. 4 of the interviews were individual ones and one of them was a group interview, during which I interviewed two people. I also utilize advertisement material that I got from one of the activists.

## 5.2 Participatory observation and ethnography

Participatory observation is a method of the ethnographical research tradition. “An ethnography is a written representation of a culture”, says Van Maanen (1988, 1) and therefore it is never neutral. Ethnographical fieldwork means that the researcher wants to approach the understanding of others by living with and living like those who are studied. Fieldwork demands the full-time involvement of a researcher over a typically unspecified period of time. It involves the study of the human targets on their home ground, through ongoing interaction with the subjects, by participant-observation. Ethnographical fieldwork asks the researcher to share the environment, problems, background, language, rituals and social relations of the studied group. Fieldwork is then a means to an end; the idea is to produce a truthful account of the social world being studied. (Idid., 2—3.)

Ethnographical participatory observation is a good research method in my case, because it involves the idea that culture is expressed in the concrete activities of the members of the culture. Culture refers to the everyday knowledge the members of a given group are thought to share. Thus, a culture is constituted only by the actions and words of its members, and must be interpreted by a fieldworker. However, culture itself is not visible, so it is the researcher’s task to make it visible through a written representation of that culture. The fieldworker must display culture as a narrative, a written report of the fieldwork experience in self-consciously selected words. Ethnography as a written product is then an independent representation of the studied culture. Van Maanen stresses this problematic in his book on ethnographical fieldwork. (Ibid., 3—4.)

Atkinson and Coffey (2002) solve this problematic relationship between the “authentic” phenomenon that the researcher is studying and the “representation” that she is producing by discussing social life as performed and narrated. When the “classical” position of the ethnographic tradition states that the nature of social world is unproblematic, and that there is a truth out there that needs to be discovered by methodological means (and participatory observation is seen as the most successful way of doing this), Atkinson and Coffey argue that instead, the social world could be considered as a set of performative actions. Therefore for

example the occasions in which the researcher is doing her participant observation constitute moments in which particular kinds of actions and narratives are enacted, through which the actors construct themselves as particular kinds of agents. According to this view, no action is inherently authentic. (Atkinson & Coffey ibid.) This leads to the idea that when the researcher is writing her research report, she is writing one narrative about the studied phenomenon, which is no less “truthful” or “authentic” than the participants’ interpretation of the events. I consider this thesis as one interpretation or narrative about the studied phenomenon.

The process of ethnographic participant observation was an exciting expedition. I didn’t have a clear picture beforehand as what to expect, but I found out that participating in the organizing group was very rewarding. First of all I was a bit confused about my double role as a researcher and as a participant of a (semi-illegal) protest action, but soon I decided to drop my apprehension and participate in the group as one of the members, as the method of ethnography implies. I got the impression that I was welcome in the group, and as a sign of this trust I viewed the fact that I was asked to join the organizers ‘inner circle’, the group that decided the street that was to be reclaimed. There were only 4 people that knew the street before the actual event, and as I was asked to join, it meant a lot to me. A common criticism towards these kinds of participatory and subjective methods such as participant observation is the idea that the researcher can’t keep an objective distance from her research subject and ends up in creating a too romantic picture about the events. I would argue differently: the idea of the researcher as an objective outsider is not a realist one and has not been considered valid after the paradigmatic change of the cultural turn. Secondly, in my opinion this kind of action that involves civil disobedience requires the researcher’s close involvement, so that she can gain the trust of the participants and is let to enter the ‘inner circle’.

Ethnographic methods really ask the researcher’s involvement. In the process I had to participate in the meetings, one of which was held on the sidewalk when the bar it was supposed to be in wasn’t open. Also, I had to shop and pay for cloth for the banners and go to a punk club in order to give it to the people that needed it. And on the street I participated in the event of blocking the street (thus unfortunately breaking the law) and cleaning, collecting

bottles, etc. afterwards. I also appeared in the local news as a spokesperson for the protestival and had to answer various reporters' questions. But as mentioned earlier, it was rewarding.

### **5.3 Semi-structured theme interviews and the method of analysis**

As I am interested in the actors' cultural meanings, I chose qualitative theme interviews as a method to inquire about these understandings. Deriving from my theoretical perspective, I constructed two groups to choose the interviewees from. The other one are the 'movement intellectuals', that is to say the people who participate in the process of creating the movements' ideological direction (Eyerman & Jamison 1991, 94—99). Analytically, I have defined these movement intellectuals as those people who are active in organizing RTS-events, the 'core activists'. Another group that I am specifically interested in are the 'movement artists', meaning those people who participate in the construction of the movement by choosing the cultural means it utilizes (Eyerman & Jamison 1998, 164—166). In this study they are the dj's who create the musical environment in the events, but also the artists who produce the advertisement material that the protestors utilize. This division between movement intellectuals and movement artists is purely analytical, as these roles vary in the process of organizing the RTS-events. I used this typology as a tool to choose the individuals I wanted to interview. The interviews were semi-structured theme interviews that lasted from 30 minutes to 1 hour 10 minutes. I recorded them with a digital dictating machine, and transcribed them word by word, without paying attention to the pauses or other nonverbal means of communication.

I chose the interviewees through my previous experiences as a participant in the RTS-events and also through my previous research on my master's thesis on sociology (Yliselä 2006). These previous connections meant that I had the social and cultural capital to recognize and contact the people I wanted to interview. I knew by previous experience one person who had been deejaying many times in RTS-events, and I contacted him through the internet ([www.irc-galleria.net](http://www irc-galleria net)). One interviewee I knew from my previous interviews, and I contacted him through email. I also contacted one person I had been acquaintance with for a long time, because I knew that she had been involved in these events. Two of the interviewees I

contacted through an animal rights discussion forum ([www.oikeuttaelaimille.net/foorumi](http://www.oikeuttaelaimille.net/foorumi)), where they were advertising about their upcoming Reclaim the Streets -event. One interviewee I got through my participant observation in the organizing of the RTS-event. I asked for an interview in one meeting, and he was willing to participate.

### **The interviews:**

Interview 1, 4.6.2007: Woman, 25, Turku.

Interview 2, 6.6.2007: Man, 23, Rovaniemi.

Woman, 26, Rovaniemi.

Interview 3, 23.7.2007: Man, 24, Jyväskylä.

Interview 4, 25.7.2007: Man, 32, Helsinki.

Interview 5, 25.7.2007: Man, 29, Helsinki.

The average age of the interviewees was 26,5 years, which suits with my estimation that the protestors in the RTS-protests are mainly from 15 to 35 years old.

One of the interviews was a group interview, during which I interviewed two people. This was a practical choice, because I traveled over 500 kilometers to Rovaniemi, Lapland, and it was practical for me to interview two people at the same time. Group interviews have been criticized for not producing as “authentic” description of the events as an individual interview. However, this criticism can also be applied to individual interviews, because in an individual interview the researcher’s role is more dominant than in a group interview. (Morgan 2002.) As for the “authenticity” of the interviews is concerned, if social world is considered as performative, the question is not whether the interviewees are telling the “truth” or not, but rather what kind of narratives they are producing about themselves and the events (Atkinson & Coffey 2002). Therefore I can compare the results of the individual interviews with those of the group interview, because they both are telling a story about the themes in question and about the interviewees themselves.

The process of interviewing wasn’t difficult, because the interviewees had a positive attitude towards the interviews and I had an impression that the interviews were conducted in a

friendly and equal atmosphere. As I have already written one thesis about the movement, I had acquired subcultural capital (see Thornton 1996) and thus I felt at ease during the interviews. The situations were quite informal. All interviews were conducted in a public, “neutral” space. 3 were conducted in a park in the summer, one on a restaurant’s terrace and one in a restaurant. I had a paper with interview topics and questions (Appendix 1) but the situation was more a relaxed discussion than a structured interview. I also answered to the interviewee’s questions. After the interviews we continued our discussion. I wrote a research diary about the interview situations.

The interviews were recorded on tape and transcribed word by word. After the transcription I analyzed them using my research questions. I read the interviews through several times and marked codes to the margins which indicated the places where the interviewees referred to the topics that I was interested in. After these readings and markings, I gathered the information on a document and produced a table of the results (Table 1).

#### **5.4 Other empirical data**

My other data consists of the cultural produces of the activists, called the micro-media by Thornton (1996). It consisted mainly of flyer and poster advertisements which have the pragmatic function of advertising and informing about the events. I got the material from the Reclaim the Streets –events that I attended, and also one of my interviewees provided me with a collection of posters and flyers from the 1990s onwards. I am very grateful for this material.

These materials functioned as secondary data in my analysis. After the observation and interviewing processes, I turned to these materials and examined them through the theoretical ideas that I had got from the research. I use these materials as well as photographs that I have been taking in the events as cultural representations that illustrate my theoretical interpretation.

## **6 Reclaim the Streets and Cultural forms**

### **6.1 Cultural forms and their functions in the protest**

I started the empirical analysis by analyzing the transcribed interviews. I followed my research questions: What kind of cultural forms are used in the RTS-protest? How are these cultural forms used? What are the functions of the cultural forms that are used in the protest? Who decides what kind of cultural forms are used?

According to my observation and interviews, the protestors are using different kinds of concrete cultural forms in the protest. I divided these into four groups: music, decoration, micro-media and others. *Music* is the category for the music that is played during the protest. It can be played from a record or as live music. I distinguished different genres of music based on my interviews and observations. *Decoration* refers to the different forms of visual art that are used in the protest, on the street as prop for the event. These include the banners that are usually used to close the street from traffic, other cloths that are used to decorate the street and street paintings that are done usually by chalk or sometimes with spray paint. *Micro-media* means the material that is distributed before and during the event to inform and advertise about the protest. The advertisement material includes posters, flyers, stickers and digital advertisement, such as www-pages and internet advertisement, e.g. on discussion forums and My Space. The term micro-media comes from Thornton's (1996) study on the club cultures. *Others* is a category for the rest of the cultural activity that is happening during the events, e.g. street theatre, performance art and capoeira.

After I had made this initial categorization, I turned to the functions that the different cultural forms have in the RTS-protest. I read my interviews several times and marked in the margins the different cultural forms and what kind of functions they had according to the interviewees. Analytically, I divided these functions to pragmatic and symbolic functions. All of the pragmatic functions figured in the interviewees' speech. The symbolic functions are more a subject to my interpretation. Some of the functions that I have labeled symbolic did occur in the interviewees' speech, such as the idea of "reclaiming" the urban space with the

advertisement before the RTS-event, and creating an aura of a cultural event with the use of music. Others, such as the role that the cultural forms have in the creation of the cognitive praxis of the movement, are my theoretical interpretations.

**Table 1. Cultural forms in Reclaim the Streets -protest and their pragmatic and symbolic functions.**

Cultural form	Pragmatic functions	Symbolic functions
<b>Music:</b> electronic, rock, punk, hip hop, reggae	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-to be able to dance</li> <li>-to make people feel comfortable</li> <li>-chilling out, creating good ambiance</li> <li>-to keep people on the street</li> <li>-to prevent the police from breaking up the crowd</li> <li>-to make the event look like more powerful and credible</li> <li>-to be audible from a long distance, to advertise about the event when it is happening</li> <li>-rhythmic electronic music creates the ambiance better than live music that would have pauses between the songs</li> <li>-music brings people to the events year after year</li> <li>-music brings people that wouldn't otherwise come</li> <li>-some of the people come</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to “reclaim” the urban space with the sound</li> <li>-to create the aura of a cultural event in stead of a demonstration and thus create more positive attitudes</li> <li>-to create continuation</li> <li>-to create the cognitive praxis of the movement</li> <li>-to create and perform a counter cultural “authenticity” in the reclaimed space</li> </ul>

	because of the music	
<b>Decoration:</b> banners, street paintings, graffiti, cloths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-to draw attention to the demonstration</li> <li>-to close the street from traffic</li> <li>-to mediate political messages; animal rights, anarchism, environmental issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-to tell about the message, use slogans</li> <li>-to tell about what is happening on the street</li> <li>-to produce a representation of the street party</li> <li>-to create the cognitive praxis of the movement</li> </ul>
<b>Micro-media:</b> posters, flyers, stickers, www-pages, internet advertisement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-to advertise and inform about the events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-to “reclaim the city” with the posters</li> <li>-to create the cognitive praxis of the movement</li> </ul>
<b>Others:</b> street theatre, juggling, performance art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-to make the event more spectacular</li> </ul>	

The pragmatic functions that the cultural forms have in the protest are connected to the concrete process of the street reclaiming. The banners and the music are means which create the event, by cutting the street off from traffic and preventing the police from breaking up the crowd. As one interviewee put it:

“...If you think about a break in the work place, if I have a cup of coffee and a cigarette, it’s immediately coffee- and cigarette break. But if I would just sit there without them, it would seem like, somebody could come and say that when you’re not doing anything, come here to work. The same way, if the Reclaim the Streets –events wouldn’t have this kind of programme, surrogate action, it would seem less credible and maybe not so powerful.” (Interview 4; translation from Finnish AY.)

However, an interesting part of the functions of the cultural forms is their utilization on a symbolic level. Music “reclaims” the space also on a more symbolic level, as it fills the air and transforms the audio landscape of the urban city space. Also the street posters and stickers that

are used to advertise about the events have the same kind of symbolic function to “reclaim” the city space before the event.

Reed (2005) has examined the use of cultural forms in American protest movements, and he has developed several dimensions that describe their functions. According to Reed, cultural forms are used to encourage and empower individuals to feel the strength of the group. This can be compared with my finding of the music as an element that makes the protest seem more credible and powerful. Reed also argues that cultural forms have a harmonizing effect, which my interviewees recognized also. Cultural forms, such as music, can set a new emotional tone, in RTS this has usually been an attempt to create more laid-back and positive ambiance. Cultural forms also inform internally and externally – in the RTS-protests’ case this role belongs to the micro-media, the banners as well as the music that informs and advertises about the protest when it is going on. According to Reed cultural forms enact movement goals. In RTS-protest the written political texts such as press releases, as well as the pictorial motifs and slogans in the posters and in the banners have this role. The banners and posters that the protestors are using often have pictorial motifs that depict the activities on the street; dancing, having a picnic etc. which can be seen as suggestions or objectives for the street protest. Also the slogans that are used in the banners, such as “reclaim the urban space” depict the goals of the protestors.

The cultural forms are in Reed’s interpretation also used to historicize the movement. This role is often handed to the press releases and www-pages that the RTS-activists are producing. Often they have a short history-section in which the history of the movement is reproduced, or as one interviewee put it, copy-pasted from the previous years (interview 5). According to Reed, cultural forms can also critique movement ideology by challenging dominant ideas, values and tactics. In the RTS-protest this could be seen as an underlying tension between the “movement intellectuals” and the “movement artists”, a theme that I will be developing more thoroughly in the chapter 6.7. Last but not least, Reed says that the cultural forms are means through which the activists can feel pleasure and joy through aesthetic pleasures. (Reed 2005, 298—299.) I consider the creation of a “positive vibe” to be one of the most important functions that for example the musical genres have in the RTS-protest. This dimension has

also been emphasized in my previous research on the Reclaim the Streets –protest (see Yliselä 2006).

## **6.2 The sound of music**

Eyerman and Jamison (1998, 43) emphasize that in particular music, singing and songs have a strong meaning in maintaining movements' cohesion. They can even maintain a movement when it no longer has a visible presence in the form of organizations or demonstrations. Music can be a vital force in mobilizing a new movement. The freedom songs associated with the civil rights movement in the United States in the 1950s and early 1960s illustrate the role of music in helping to mobilize protest and create group solidarity. As the carrier of past traditions, music bears images and symbols that can help to frame and understand present reality. However, as a carrier of traditions and political ideas, the images and symbols music gives rise to are open-ended, not closed and determinant. This is how music differentiates from ideologies. Ideologies can be much more ready-formed systems of interpretation, and they can be articulated more clearly. Music, however, suggests interpretation, it does not command it. Music, as any form of art, opens experience to the potentialities of life, but it does not necessarily proscribe or even describe them. (*Ibid.*, 43—46.) Thus, also the interpretation that I am suggesting in this thesis is not to be taken as a definite and exclusive answer, but rather as one possible explanation or interpretation of the role of music in the Reclaim the Streets –protest.

Eyerman and Jamison claim that the construction of meaning through music and song is a central aspect in the formation of a social movements' collective identity. Songs and music provide a unifying force, as they connect actors with larger collectivities that the particular musical genre or style represents. Music of social movements transcends the boundaries of the self and binds the individual to a collective consciousness. In movement music individual and collective identity fuse and past and future are reconnected to the present through the process of mobilizing musical traditions. (Eyerman & Jamison *ibid.*, 160—163.)

In this thesis I illustrate this fusion by examining four musical genres that are being used in the Reclaim the Streets –movement: reggae, which is rooted to the political anti-slavery struggle of the black population in the Caribbean, hip hop, which also represents the Afro-American or Black identity struggle, punk, which was formed in Britain and in America in the late 1970s as a representation of the working class youth rebellion, and ecstatic electronic music, which involves the idea of a ‘trance’ or a ‘flow’ that dissipates the differences between the individual dancers.

### **Reggae**

*What make we can't all unite  
 Put each man difference aside  
 Why can't we just come together  
 Cease dis tribal war and fight  
 Who knows better must do better  
 A source of collective insight  
 May not be exposed to education  
 But surely knows wrong from right*

*Africans with African pride  
 Fighting to attain our rights  
 Want no more shedding of blood  
 For dis nation to move forward  
 -Buju Banton: African Pride*

Reggae draws on a specific experience of the black people in Jamaica. The experience of slavery recapitulates itself in the everyday interactions of the Jamaican black. For example, the 17<sup>th</sup> century English spoken by the master class was refracted through the illicit channels of communication of the blacks and used to embody the subterranean semantics of the new culture. The language developed its own vocabulary and grammar, thus creating the English patois. (Hebdige 1976, 135—136; 1979, 30.)

Hebdige (1976, 140) describes reggae as “transmogrified American ‘soul’ music, with an overlay of salvaged African rhythms, and an undercurrent of pure Jamaican rebellion”. The word ‘reggae’ can have two origins. It can come from the word ‘ragga’, a word that originates from the Middle English word ‘ragamuffyn’ that meant a dirty child dressed in rags. Ragga is

still the name of a sub-genre of reggae. Alternatively, the word ‘reggae’ could come from a distortion of Reco, who was one of the original ‘ska’ musicians. (Hebdige *ibid.*, 141.)

Also the emergence of the music is a subject of discussion. Hebdige (*ibid.*) supports the view through which reggae was seen as the protest music for the Rastafarians, originated from ‘ska’. Ska is structurally the back-to-front version of R’n’B, and the emphasis in ska is put on the upbeat and accentuated by the bass, drums and brass sections. Ska was music for rebellion. It involved the black soul music and the imported music from Africa, mediated through the Caribbean burra dance that celebrated criminality and countercultural elements. The Rastafarians took over the burra dance turning it to the representation of their rebellious attitude, illustrated for example by their use of the illegal ganja herb (cannabis). Ska was exported from Jamaica to the Britain in 1960s, but it was considered as too “rude” to interest a world market at that time. However, ska sold in England and it was transformed to ‘rocksteady’ in the middle of the 1960s. The horns were given less emphasis and the sound became slower. The bass began to dominate and as rocksteady became heavier, it came to be known as reggae. (Hebdige *ibid.*, 144.)

In the 1970s reggae shifted towards Ethiopia, and it became more ‘ethnic’. The mythology of the Rastafarians came to dominate the lyrics. New material was often revolutionary and there was an expansion of class and color consciousness in the West Indian community. Rasta logos became the heart of reggae music, and reggae became to symbolize the culture that had been forced to cultivate secrecy and to elaborate defenses against the white Master Class. (Hebdige *ibid.*, 146—147.)

Daynes (2005) has studied reggae music and the African diaspora. She states that Africa is seen in the reggae lyrics not only as a homeland and a space of origin, but it also symbolizes another place of spatial and temporal dwelling, an ‘elsewhere’. It is idealized, fantasized, a ‘reinvented Africa’ that connects three times (past, present and the future) and three places (Africa, the West and the diaspora). Africa represents ‘an archetypical symbol of elsewhere’, grounded in the experience of slavery. It is a ‘lost paradise’. Africa also symbolizes the notions of good, paradise and liberation, in opposition to the Western world, which represents

evil, hell and enslavement. African culture is seen as authentic, compared with European culture considered as imposed, superficial and ‘untrue’ for the African people. (Daynes *ibid.*, 26—28.) Thus Africa is seen as a utopia in the African diaspora mediated through reggae music. This utopian Africa is being represented in the Buju Banton lyrics cited above. In Eyerman and Jamison’s terms, this African utopia represents the cosmological dimension of the Rastafari movement’s cognitive praxis.

Nowadays reggae has spread all over the world. It involves a tension between a local and a global development. The global dimension is represented by the international diffusion of Jamaican reggae. There is also a local dimension through the emergence of local reggae (such as Finnish reggae in Finland), as well as the influence that reggae has had on local musical styles. This interplay between global and local development has meant that the music is actively reinterpreted and new meanings are being attributed to it. (Daynes *ibid.*, 33.)

According to Daynes, one important element in reggae music is the transmission of a collective memory of the past of slavery and of the black struggle. Reggae has an educational role, which is coupled with a religious content of promoting Rastafarian beliefs. According to her field studies however, the musical performance is also important to reggae fans, not only the lyrical content of the songs. In a reggae dance also the dancing crowd represents the diaspora; the music, the dance, the *ambiance* and physical sensations are all a part of the experience, yet always connected to a mental and moral experience expressed in terms of cultural, social and political consciousness and resistance. (Daynes *ibid.*, 34—35.)

## Hip hop

*Why do I call myself a nigger, you ask me?  
 Because police always wanna harass me  
 Every time that I'm rollin  
 They swear up and down that the car was stolen  
 Make me get faced down in the street  
 They throw the shit out my car on the concrete  
 In front of a residence  
 A million white motherfuckers on my back like I shot the President  
 ...  
 You're a nigger 'til you die*

*If you're a poor nigger, then you're a poor nigger  
 If you're a rich nigger, you're a rich nigger  
 But you never stop being a nigger  
 And if you get to be educated, you's an education nigger*

*It's plain to see, you can't change me  
 'Cause I'm a be a nigger for Life  
 -NWA: Niggaz 4 life*

Hip hop culture consists of three modes of expression: rap music, graffiti and break dancing. It emerged as a source for youth of alternative identity formation and social status. Rap music has deep roots in African American culture. Its stylistic roots come from the multiple traditions from America and Jamaica. In its present form rap music can be traced down to the mid-1970s culture of African American and Afro Caribbean youth living in the South Bronx and upper Manhattan neighborhoods of New York City. DJ:s working in clubs and local parties started to establish reputations by mixing the beats and small parts from various records to encourage their audiences to dance. MC:s (masters of ceremonies) or rappers that specialized in the vocal performances became the focus of the performance, and as technology advanced, the DJ:s and MC:s started create stunning rhythm tracks by taking recorded samples from a variety of sources, mixing them in inventive ways over which rappers would perform dense, lyrical narratives. (Ramsey 2003, 165—166.)

The hip hop has been conceptualized as an act of resistance, finding a voice from the margins where (Black) people are removed from power. Hip hop is a representative for those without power. Hip hop is a political voice, with rap providing a symbolic resistance for alienated minorities. Hip hop's philosophy also embodies the need to reclaim power, and the power to acquire admission to public space, from where the Black minorities are often excluded. (Whiteley 2004, 9.) The NWA quotation is one representation of this need of the African Americans to reclaim public space (the street) from subjugation (represented by the police).

Later, rap and hip hop culture has been heavily commercialized. Boyd (2003) provides an image of rap music being associated with pop charts ('mainstream') while hip hop stayed true to the original underclass roots. According to Boyd, hip hop didn't 'sell out', it remained hardcore, but the public became fascinated with hip hop's sensitivity and adopted it. (Boyd ibid.,

44—48.) Also Whiteley (2004) asserts that despite being commercialized, hip hop culture is, above all, resistant.

## **Punk**

### *Anarchy for the UK*

*It's coming sometime and maybe  
I give a wrong time stop a traffic line  
Your future dream is a shopping scheme*

*'Cause I wanna be Anarchy  
In the city  
-Sex Pistols: Anarchy in the U.K.*

At a very basic level punk can be described as a subculture that had its primary manifestation in music, such as the counter-cultural rock and roll of bands like the Sex Pistols and the Clash. Punk had its high point from 1976 to 1979, mainly in Britain and America. Punk “stood for identifiable attitudes, among them: an emphasis on

negationism (rather than nihilism); a consciousness of class-based politics (with a stress on ‘working class credibility’); and a belief in spontaneity and ‘doing it yourself’” (Sabin 1999, 3). Behind punk there was an alliance of diverse musical and cultural traditions, including reggae’s exoticism and forbidden identity, the 1960s American soul’s fast rhythms and the rock’n’roll heritage and 1960s cultural radicalism. Also the literary avant-garde and Situationist movement is claimed to have had an influence on the controversial sub culture. The clothing style of the punks was equally eclectic, and according to Hebdige (1979, 26) “literally safety-pinned together”. (Hebdige 1979; Sabin 1999.)

Punk’s golden age has said to have ended in 1979 after the death of Sex Pistol’s vocalist Sid Vicious, but punk has left a long standing heritage on youth cultures. According to this view, punk was not dead after the year 1979, or completely assimilated in main-stream. Punk has said to have been a big influence behind the formation of the rave culture, the 1980s street punk movement, anarcho-punk movement, and the feminist punk movement Riot Grrrl. Rather than being just about music, Suber argues that punk was a cultural and political movement that had contributions to literature, fine art, comics, film, theatre, journalism, body modification, and politically on anarchism, green radicalism and neo-fascism. (Sabin 1999, 4—5.)

Gosling (2004) shares this view and sees the punk scene of the late 1970s as a construction of the popular media. He depicts the emergence of an underground punk scene, the anarcho-punk movement, as a reaction of disappointment with the “mainstream” punk. The anarcho-punk scene which developed around 1977 had two camps, one in the United Kingdom and one mainly centered on the West Coast of the United States. Artistic integrity, social and political commentary and actions, and personal responsibility became the scene’s central points. The anarcho-punks played faster and more chaotically than had been heard before. Do it yourself (DIY) –ethos dominated as a reaction of the values of commercial music. Anarcho-punk movement developed its own independent record labels such as Alternative Tentacles in the USA and Crass Records in the UK. The bands that set up these companies had a commitment to a DIY spirit, an antiauthoritarian stance and a belief in authenticity (that would have been crushed by the commercial “production of culture” of the mainstream music industry). The insistence on the “real”, “authentic” punk being situated in values, ideology, and action as opposed to the punk fashion is a common theme of all of the originating bands of the labels. (Gosling 2004.)

## Rave

*Nothing can stop me, I'm never satisfied  
 I take what I want, refuse to be denied  
 Live in the moment, the future can disguise  
 It's starting to touch us, but I still can't touch the sky*

*I need to feel up  
 Hope knows I need it this way  
 Like I'm Walking On Clouds  
 I can't come down  
 -Dj Tiesto: Walking On Clouds*

To talk about ‘rave’ is actually quite confusing, as electronic music involves multiple various genres which are constantly changing; rave music is only one of them. However, in this thesis I use Thornton’s (1996) division of ‘clubs’ and ‘raves’. As ‘clubs’ were thought of as exclusive and superior to the mass-market consumption (as the name ‘club’ implies; not everyone gets in), ‘raves’ in their turn were enveloped in discourses of utopian egalitarianism: they were events without door policies (often illegal ones in warehouses etc.) where

“everybody was welcome and people from all walks of life became one under the hypnotic beat” (Thornton *ibid.*, 56). However, as Thornton points out, this discourse was largely a paradox as only those who were ‘insiders’ could know about the rave parties and locate them. The same notion can be said about Reclaim the Streets –events. Even though the organizers celebrate the idea of a Temporary Autonomous Zone open to everyone, the illegal nature of the events and the youth-attiring musical choices actually limit the heterogeneity of the attendants.

The beginning of the rave culture is said to be in England in the end of the 1980s with the popularity of the ‘acid house’ scene. Electronic house music started to develop from disco music in the end of the 1970s. It was named after a nightclub in Chicago, the Warehouse. In the end of the 1980s house music hit Britain after being imported by dj’s from the USA and Ibiza, which soon became one of the European clubbing centers. The style was labeled as ‘acid house’ after a 1987 house music hit *Acid Tracks* by *Phuture* and after the psychedelic drug LSD (‘acid’). Acid house developed into a phenomenon in Britain with rave parties organized all over the country, especially inside the London orbital motorway M25. The acid house culture mutated into ‘rave’ after wide media coverage on its drug use. As Seppälä (2001) points out, drugs and especially ecstasy has been an integrated part of the culture since the beginning. Rave culture had a countercultural orientation which went closely together with the illegal nature of the warehouse raves and the drug trafficking. Later rave culture has been fragmented and commercialized and the musical genres have multiplied into various different sub genres – ambient, big beat, break beat, drum and bass, goa trance, happy hardcore, melodic trance etc. The scene is changing constantly. (Seppälä 2001; Thornton 1996.)

The Finnish rave culture can be traced back to the year 1988 when acid house was introduced in Finland. In 1989 illegal warehouse raves were organized in Turku and in Helsinki; later in the 1990s they were followed by bigger legal club events with international artists. The Finnish rave scene has remained quite marginal when compared with e.g. Great Britain. One interesting characteristic of the Finnish rave scene has been the popularity of the ‘forest parties’, often illegal raves that are arranged outside of densely populated areas, with dj’s playing music and people dancing through the night in the forest. (Laine 2005; Seppälä 2001.)

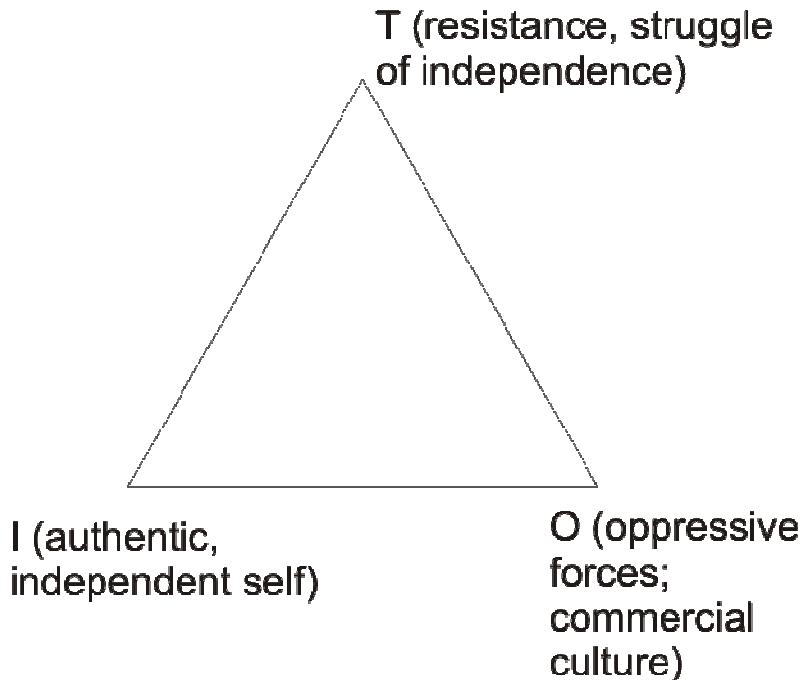
According to Seppälä (2001), the originality of rave culture comes from its hedonistic orientation towards a comprehensive rave experience; the music, lights, dancing and drugs are all used to produce the ultimately postmodern experience. This orientation is represented in the citation from a famous trance dj Tiesto's song: raver wants to 'touch the sky' and never come down from the ultimate rave experience. Malbon (1999) has called the rave an 'oceanic experience'. It means a sensation of transitory euphoria, joy and empathy that can be experienced as a result of the intensive sensory stimulation on the dance floor, the ecstatic experience. Drugs, especially ecstasy can be used to assist these experiences. According to Malbon, these moments of *extasis* are not just moments of egocentric euphoria, but they can produce sensations of personal and group identity formation, amendment and consolidation. The dancer can feel a loss of self and a merge with the music, described by Csikszentmihalyi (1975, cited in Malbon 1999, 139) as 'flow', a pleasurable experience that can be felt when the individuals' acquired skills and competencies meet their challenges. (Malbon 1999.)

Gilbert (1999) states that there is a difference between the politics of representation manifested through punk or rock artists and the politics of present manifested through electronic music. Whereas the politics of representation is about speaking out through a singer, to Gilbert rave represents a politics of present which is about trying to make something happen now. "Get a house *now* (by squatting), stop the road being built *now*, dance *now*, rush your little head off *now*" (Gilbert 1999, 167). Whereas the 'movement artists' mentioned by Eyerman and Jamison (1998) such as Duke Ellington, Janis Joplin or Bob Dylan acted as agents of protest and were the representatives of their audience, electronic music such as techno, trance or drum and bass are not to make the listener feel that they are like (or different from) the performer. They are used to create an experience, described as oceanic by Malbon, rather than understood. So when reggae music could be described as a process of creating a utopian homeland of Africa, techno and trance are about creating a pleasurable moment right now rather than telling a story about the past or about the future. However, this spatialization of politics and culture is not absolute, and it occurs within the horizon of a radical openness to the future and to futurity. (Gilbert 1999, 165—167.)

### **Musical genres as performances of authenticity**

The common nominator with all of these musical genres that have been used in the Reclaim the Streets –protests is their countercultural character. The interviewees described the musical genres in the RTS-events as marginal, subcultural, experimental and uncommercial.

In all of the musical genres there is a thrive towards countercultural *authenticity* and a criticism towards commercial capitalist music industry. In reggae, the Western, commercialized world is seen as evil, hip hop represents the coming of power of an alienated social group, in punk especially the anarcho-punk scene has been very critical towards commercial popular culture and in club cultures the antagonism between the authentic “underground” and commercial “mainstream” is strong. This antagonistic relationship can be depicted through Touraine’s triangle (Diagram 2).



**Diagram 2. The interpretation of the countercultural musical genres using Touraine’s diagram (cf. Touraine 1981, 81).**

In all of these musical genres there can be seen the same structure. The music depicts an authentic, independent group (the punks, the Blacks, the rastas, the ravers) who are opposing oppressive forces (the system, the West, the Babylon, the commercial mainstream) through a

struggle for freedom and self-declaration, which I have in here named as a struggle of independence. Thus, the independence in this case does not mean independence in national context but a right to self-determination for these countercultural groups.

In Reclaim the Streets –protest there is too an ethos of criticizing commercial capitalism and a striving towards authentic, non-commercial culture. Therefore it can be stated that these musical genres were not chosen to the protest by chance, but their countercultural orientation had an influence on the musical choices in the event. Punk, reggae, hip hop and underground electronic music are creating a radical resistance towards the established commercial culture. This resistance is a cultural performance; it has a utopian and symbolic character. The music is creating a *performance of authenticity*, which resonates with the protestors' idea of creating an autonomous, non-commercial zone into the urban space.

### **6.3 Pierre Bourdieu and culture**

It is not possible to discuss cultural sociology without discussing Pierre Bourdieu. He is one of the most influential cultural sociologists. What makes Bourdieu's sociology so significant is the fact that it provides with a whole system of understanding the society, or the 'social space'. This comprehensive approach also means that it is not easy to formulate a short description of his thinking. Especially, it is difficult to separate Bourdieu's terms from one another in order to explain them. This is due to the fact that Bourdieu's concepts are closely linked to each other. Bourdieu's sociology is fundamentally *relational*; Bourdieu puts social relations first. This means also that all his concepts, such as taste, habitus or field, can be explained only in relation to one another. Another problem with Bourdieu's concepts is the fact that they are open by nature. Bourdieu wants to deliberately avoid the problems associated with positivism. Concepts can be defined only within the theoretical system that they constitute. Bourdieu's point of view is processual, and he strived to create a comprehensive model of *reflexive sociology*. (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1995, 35—37; 122—123.)

In this thesis I open up Bourdieu's thinking through four important concepts: taste, habitus, field and forms of capital. The concepts are closely interrelated. I am mostly interested in

Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital and *habitus* and what they can offer to my cultural approach towards the Reclaim the Streets –protest.

Bourdieu bases his idea of culture on an anthropological basis. He sees that one can't understand cultural practices, unless culture is brought back into 'culture' in an anthropological sense. Culture in an anthropological sense means a Durkheimian division between the sacred and the profane. Culture is used as a means to produce distinction between social classes. The social classes deny lower, vulgar, profane forms of culture, in order to affirm the superiority of those who can be satisfied with the refined and distinguished pleasures of sacred forms of culture. The "common" choices and objects must be purified, made sacred, through a process of stylization, which involves the primacy of form over function. To Bourdieu, art and cultural consumption are predisposed to fulfil a social function of *legitimating social differences through cultural distinction*. Behind Bourdieu's elaboration is an economic base; the idea of scarcity. (Bourdieu 1984, 1; 7.)

Adopting a cultural disposition means distancing oneself from the economical necessities: "These conditions of existence, which are the precondition for all learning of legitimate culture, whether implicit and diffuse, as domestic cultural training generally is, or explicit and specific, as in scholastic training, are characterized by the suspension and removal of economic necessity and by objective and subjective distance from practical urgencies, which is the basis of objective and subjective distance from groups subjected to those determinisms" (Bourdieu 1984, 54). Thus in Williams' typology Bourdieu adopts a materialist standpoint. In Bourdieu's sociology cultural dispositions represent individuals' position in an economic and historical order.

In the complex society, there are multiple microcosms, or spaces of objective relations, which have their own distinct logics. For Bourdieu, these are called *fields*, which can analytically be defined as networks or configurations of relations between positions. For example the economic field has its own distinctive logic and code of conduct. Fields are arenas for the struggle for resources. The field can somewhat be compared with a game (*jeu*). However, the rules or codes of the field are not explicit, as the rules of the game are. The resources on the

field are forms of actors' *capital*, may it be cultural, social or economic capital. The actors can try to increase their capital, but they can also try to change the immanent rules of the game, for example by changing the values of the different capitals. In this sense, fields are scenes of struggle that involve the use of power. (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1995, 122—127.)

In this thesis I am interested in Bourdieu's idea of cultural capital. Cultural capital is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications. Cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the embodied state, i.e. in the dispositions of the mind and body; in the objectified state, that is in the form of cultural goods; and in the institutionalized state, i.e. in the form of academic qualifications. The embodied capital is external wealth converted into an integral part of the person, into a *habitus*. In an objectified state cultural capital has a number of properties that are defined only in the relationship with cultural capital in its embodied form. The objectified cultural capital presents itself in material objects and media, such as writings, paintings, monuments, music etc. In the institutionalized state cultural capital refers to academic qualifications, certificates of cultural competence. (Bourdieu 1986.)

The *habitus* is a system of dispositions which organizes practices and the perception of practices. Habitus is an embodied deep structure that is constituted and reproduced through history. It affects actors from within, but it is not strictly individual or fully deterministic. The habitus is the principle of objectively classifiable judgments and the system of classification of these practices. It is in the relationship between the capacity to produce classifiable practices and works, and the capacity to differentiate and appreciate these practices and products. (Bourdieu 1984, 170; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1995, 38—40.)

Lifestyles are the systematic products of habitus. Habitus transforms the distribution of capital into a system of classifications and perceived differences. These differences are perceived through tastes. Bourdieu's idea predisposes tastes to function as markers of social class, of socio-economic position in society. This position means also that the encounter with a work of art, the consumption of art, is never 'love at first sight', but the viewer has to have cultural capital in order to enjoy a certain kind of art. Thus, art-lover's pleasure presupposes an act of cognition, which involves the implementation of the cultural code. The 'eye' for a particular

style of art is a product of history, reproduced by education. This presupposition applies not only to fine arts or so called fine culture, but also to all other areas of life, for example to cooking, clothing or hairstyles. (Bourdieu 1984, 1—7; 13; 172—174.)

Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed. (Ibid., 6.)

Tastes are the practical affirmation of an inevitable difference. They are often asserted negatively, by the refusal of other tastes. Aesthetic preferences, the so-called lifestyle, in e.g. clothing, home decoration or make-up, are opportunities to define one's position in social space. Bourdieu's statement is that especially the petit-bourgeoisie tries to reach out towards the aristocracy, by appreciating cheap substitutes for chic objects and practices. Aesthetic choices are often constituted in opposition to the choices of the closest groups in social space, and more precisely, in relation to marking distinction vis-à-vis lower groups; for petit-bourgeoisie, it is the "common people". Economic power means a power to keep economic necessity at arm's length. This has led to the appreciation of free, sacred 'fine arts' and the undervaluation of paid for, commercial culture. (Ibid., 55—62.)

Distinction is also made through the body and bodily expressions. Strictly biological differences are underlined and symbolically accentuated by differences in bearing, gesture, posture and behaviour which express a whole relationship to the social world. To these are added all the deliberate modifications of appearance – hairstyle, make-up, beard, clothing. They function as social markers deriving their meaning and value from their position in the system of distinctive signs which they constitute. The sign-bearing, sign-wearing body is a producer of signs, a social product which is the only tangible manifestation of the 'person'. (Ibid., 192—193.)

Bourdieu's theorizing provides an impressive comprehensive model of the society and of the cultural reproduction. Bourdieu's aim was to develop a sociology of culture, and his final result certainly doesn't leave one cold. For Bourdieu, culture has replaced society as the object for sociological analysis (Eyerman and Jamison 1998, 16). However, as far as the analysis of social movements is concerned, Bourdieu's theorizing has its limitations. Eyerman and

Jamison (1998) criticize Bourdieu from forgetting the mediating levels between his micro- and macro-level analyses. According to Eyerman and Jamison, Bourdieu pays too little attention to the level where social movements are to be found. Bourdieu shares with Talcott Parsons, the American structural functionalist, an interest in explaining how a society reproduces itself, and not in examining the transformation of the society. Bourdieu's concepts are of relatively little use in trying to understand how social movements contribute to the cultural transformation of the society. Eyerman and Jamison criticize this lack of interest towards the transformation of society and towards social movements, which they see as creative, experimental actors in the society; "cultural labs", arenas for the practicing of new forms of social and cognitive action. (Eyerman & Jamison 1991, 58—59; 1998, 16—17; 20—21; 41.)

## 6.4 Subcultural capital

Social movements are closely connected to subcultures. Eyerman and Jamison point out that social movements provide an alternative vision and way of life than the dominant society. Social movements transform marginal subcultures into real alternatives by offering visions and models of alternative forms of meaning which can be chosen. (Eyerman & Jamison 1998, 170.)

From a classical standpoint, the idea of a subculture involves the existence of a dominant social-cultural order. The dominant culture represents itself as *the culture*, and other cultural configurations are subordinate to this dominant order. Subordinate cultural configurations also struggle with the dominant one, they seek to modify, negotiate, resist it or overthrow its hegemony. However, the dominant culture of a complex society is never a homogenous structure, and subordinate cultures will not always be in open conflict with it. According to Clarke et al., subcultures are the sub-sets of class cultures; they are smaller, more localized and differentiated structures within one or more cultural networks. The character of subcultures can only be seen in terms of their relation to the wider cultural networks of which they form a distinctive part. (Clarke et al., 1976, 12—13.) Hebdige (1979, 17) points out in a famous text *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* that the struggle between different cultural

groups and cultural definitions and meanings is a struggle within signification, a struggle for the possession of the sign which extends to even the most mundane areas of everyday life.

Reed (2005) provides a differentiation between subcultures and countercultures. Subculture is not necessarily countercultural, it can also be alternative. Countercultural subcultures position themselves in an opposition with the mainstream, whereas alternative subcultures adopt a ‘live and let live’ attitude. (Reed *ibid.*, 304.)

Sarah Thornton (1996), who provides a Bourdieu-influenced model of subcultures, criticizes the ‘classical’ approach towards subcultures and maintains that this framework is a heavily dependent on the concept of ‘mainstream’ which is being built as a yardstick against which the resistance of the subculture is measured. Thornton rejects the idea of a mainstream/subculture division as well as another dichotomy often connected with the study of the musical worlds of youth, commercial/alternative. Thornton argues that a more complicated picture should be drawn that takes account of both subjective and objective social structures as well as the implications of cultural plurality. (Thornton *ibid*, 93—94; 95—97.)

Thornton then turns to Bourdieu’s theorizing as a contextualizing tool for her research in *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital* (1996). She argues that even though the British clubbing scene is difficult terrain to map, as club nights continually modify their style and club culture is fragmented, the crowds are local, segregated and subject to distinctions, the clubbers themselves constantly catalogue and classify youth cultures according to taste in music, forms of dance and styles of clothing. The clubbers and ravers are identifying a homogenous group they don’t belong to, and while there are many other scenes, most clubbers and ravers see themselves as in opposition to the ‘mainstream’. ‘Mainstream’ is seen as the commercial ‘chartpop’ culture. The word ‘underground’ is the expression by which clubbers refer to the subcultural. ‘Underground’ sounds are *authentic* and in an opposition with the mass-produced and mass-consumed music. This rejection of the imagined ‘mainstream’ exhibits to Thornton the construction of an imagined ‘other’. In Bourdieu’s terms, the clubbers are rejecting the economic necessities of a bourgeois and commercial world. British youth cultures exhibit a ‘stylization of life’ that develops as the objective distance from necessity

grows. The young adults can reject being fixed socially by investing in leisure. They have loosened their ties with family but have not yet settled with a partner or anchored in their social space through their occupation. (Bourdieu 1984, 55—56; Thornton 1996, 98—99; 101—103; 117.) According to Reed's categorization, following Thornton's argumentation club cultures can be seen as having a countercultural character. However, this is a very straightforward interpretation about a versatile cultural phenomenon.

Thornton gives the name 'subcultural capital' to the set of shared values and knowledge according to which subcultural groups distinguish themselves from outsiders:

"Subcultural capital is the linchpin of an alternative hierarchy in which the axes of age, gender, sexuality and race are all employed in order to keep the determinations of class, income and occupation at bay. Interestingly, the social logic of subcultural capital reveals itself most clearly by what it dislikes and by what it emphatically isn't. The vast majority of clubbers and ravers distinguish themselves against the mainstream." (Thornton 1996, 105.)

According to Thornton, the use of media is a primary factor governing the subcultural capital and it is impossible to understand youth subcultures without a systematic investigation of their media consumption. The media is not simply one marker of distinction, but an important network in the definition and distribution of cultural knowledge. (Thornton 1996, 13—14.)

Analyzed through Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital, also subcultural capital can be embodied, objectified and institutionalized. In this thesis I am mostly interested in the embodied and objectified states of (sub)cultural capital. The embodied subcultural capital is the person's habitus, their subcultural styles and dispositions, for example their taste in music. The objectified state of the subcultural capital means the material objects and media, such as writings, paintings, music etc. (Cf. Bourdieu 1986.)

## **6.5 Reclaim the Streets and subcultural capital**

Thornton's (1996) idea of subcultural capital provides one framework of understanding the role and functions of cultural forms in the Reclaim the Streets –protest. It is important to note

that I am not suggesting that the organizers of the Reclaim the Streets –events could be analyzed as one subculture. My previous studies on the phenomenon revealed that the organizers come from heterogeneous groups of people. I divided the organizers roughly into five groups:

1. people coming from radical (environmentalist) movements, such as Friends of the Earth Finland, the “fourth environmental protest wave” groups and globalization critical groups,
2. squatters,
3. people coming from political organizations and parties,
4. people coming from the electronic music/club scene,
5. friends of the organizers, social networks. (Yliselä 2006.)

This division is purely analytical as there are organizers who have multiple roles and backgrounds, and also it can be argued that almost all of the organizers become friends or acquaintances when organizing an event and they could therefore be counted in the fifth category. However, from a subcultural point of view the categories from 1 through 4 can be constructed as differing subcultures with their own forms of subcultural capital. In this chapter I will take up different examples of this subcultural capital and how it is being utilized in the process of organizing the RTS-protests and in the protest itself.

As an embodied state, subcultural capital manifests itself as the actors’ habitus and their tastes. As depicted above, the musical genres most often utilized in the protest are of countercultural character. This countercultural stance towards constructed ‘mainstream’ and ‘commercial culture’ is one part of the street reclaimers’ subcultural capital. When I asked the interviewees why there were particular genres of music played in the events, the answers were usually that they (as the organizers) or the dj:s liked that kind of music. Following Bourdieu’s theorization, the taste in music is one attribute of the person’s habitus. The street reclaimers’ taste in music could describe them as urban, counterculturally oriented, young city-dwellers. The young age of the protestors (according to my observation mostly 15—35 years) supports Thornton’s

interpretation that the young protestors are rejecting their settling in the bourgeois working life by investing in leisure and fun through this expressive form of protest.

Authenticity is an important part of the street reclaimers' subcultural capital. Subcultural capital, expressed by the person's habitus, is her way of representing her values through bodily expressions and taste in clothing, hairstyle and music. 'Hippie' outlook has a resonance with the 1960s radicalism, countercultural resistance to the commercialized values of the preceding generation. Rastafarianism-influenced hairstyles such as 'dreadlocks' (that are popular amongst the participants of the RTS-events) represent identification with the anti-Western values and criticisms represented by the reggae culture. Punk outfits represent the countercultural and anti-establishment attitudes of the punk movement. These countercultural dispositions in the habitus of these individuals are important parts of their subcultural capital, which is in turn connected to the motivations of the individuals to take part in demonstrations such as the Reclaim the Streets –protest.



**Picture 2. Street reclaimers in Helsinki 26.8.2007. Notably: dreadlock hairstyles, colourful clothing.**

When analyzed in the objectified state, subcultural capital manifests itself in material objects and media. One key issue in Thornton's (1996) subcultural capital is the use of media. From this point of view I can examine the protestors' use of micro-media, that is the flyers, posters, www-pages and other materials that they are utilizing to advertise and inform about the events before, during and after the actual protest. The micro-media are usually produced by the protestors themselves, using a principle of Do it yourself (on the concept see e.g. Toivanen 1997). According to my interviews and observation, if there is someone in the organizing group that knows how to produce www-pages or flyers and posters, they are being employed. Sometimes the posters are being made by an outside 'professional'. The process of making a poster and "flirting" with the subcultural audience is an ongoing discussion in the organization of the RTS-events. Interviewee depicts this process in Helsinki:

"[...] I remember that in a meeting people argued that the poster is, people wanted to make it more commercial, at least then in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that people wanted to make like club culture style posters. [...] But okay who decides, that's a good question, like the party posters in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, they were done by a professional, maybe it was like decided that people wanted to have nice posters, they were given to be made by a professional, like people maybe appreciated to get like impressive posters." (Interview 5, translation from Finnish AY.)

As one interviewee puts it, without a 'catchy' advertisement material, you will not get people to show up:

"In RTS, like in every other party, if you want people to come, you need to make a catchy flyer. So it is quite important. So that if it's just something quickly thrown there, no. It's funny. The flyer is important." (Interview 1, translation from Finnish AY.)

It is not just the advertisement material, but also where the advertisement is spread. When I asked interviewee 1 where the advertisements (flyers in this case) were handed out, she summed up: "In Faces to the hippies." (Faces is a Finnish annual ethnic and world music festival that gathers a lot of 'countercultural' audiences.) Then she continued: "In the bars and at the parties mostly, which are arranged in the summer, and at the festivals. You usually get a

lot of people to come from the summer festivals.” Here the interviewee is evidencing her subcultural knowledge of where the interested audiences can be found.

These citations show that the subcultural capital that the organizers have is an important part in the designing and spreading of the advertisement material. According to Thornton (1996), the micro-media also includes Internet websites and word-of-mouth communication. Subcultural capital has an important role in these networks too. In the Internet, RTS organizers use different discussion forums (such as Eläinoikeusfoorumi, a Finnish animal rights discussion forum, or Klubitus, a Finnish club scene forum), online communities (such as MySpace) and email lists to inform and advertise about the upcoming protestivals. According to my observation, also other kinds of communication devices are used, such as mobile phones by calling and sending SMS messages, and different Internet-based instant messaging systems such as MSN Messenger. All of these examples show a skilful and varied use of information technologies and informal networks, important to Thornton’s idea of subcultural capital.

Another, reverse example can be given where the lack of subcultural capital can be a problem to the organizers. As two interviewees describe their situation:

“But then it is like, that it has been a bit difficult to get performers when you don’t have like connections. Like I have, we have been asking all those punk bands, but they haven’t showed up.”

[...]

“Yes, like I would like to have a more convivial atmosphere, but [not] like heavy electronic music or heavy punk, but somehow those who play more laid-back music don’t necessarily want to come, like they maybe think that this is too radical, or like too political.” (Interview 2, translation from Finnish AY.)

The role of subcultural capital is not only limited to the organization of the event. It also plays an important role in the actual RTS-protest. As one dj put it in an interview, the musical choices that he makes have a profound influence in the people that show up in the events:

“And like I am aware of the fact that most of the audience wants to hear psychedelic trance. But I have tried to make it a bit more pop, not because I could get more like points from it but because I have wanted to guide the musical development like a bit, to a less radical direction than it has been in. Like often I have noticed that all the performers are playing like quite a difficult sound that doesn’t necessarily open up to ordinary people, and I think that it is just such a cool sight to see somebody for the first time of their life to hear like some song and something like electronic music, and you see that

they like it. That's why I have tried to make the sets easy; I prefer to play a bit easier sound in the Reclaim the Streets –events than usually." (Interview 4, translation from Finnish AY.)

According to this interpretation, the organizers' subcultural capital is one resource that the organizers have. As it is central in the resource mobilization approach, discussed earlier, the protestors are using their subcultural capital as a resource in the organizing and realizing of the protests. The utilized cultural forms have an important role in this, as they – the musical genres, the layouts of the advertisements etc. – are also representing the organizers' objectified subcultural capital.

As a researcher I found out that my own subcultural capital is in an important role in the realization of the research. I was able to get many interviews because I knew where to look. I contacted my interviewees through Internet sites, such as the animal rights forum Eläinoikeusfoorumi and the online community MySpace. Also I got to know about the upcoming RTS-events through the Internet, such as the clubbing forum Klubitus. Without the subcultural knowledge that these could be the spaces where I could find and contact the RTS-organizers, it would have been much harder to conduct this research.

## **6.6 The cognitive praxis approach**

Eyerman and Jamison (1991; 1998) argue that one aspect missing from the sociology of social movements is the idea of a *cognitive praxis*. The idea behind cognitive praxis involves the dynamic role of social movements in the social shaping of knowledge. Cognitive praxis seeks to grasp the symbolic or expressive significance of social movements. It is a kind of deep structure, the social action from where new knowledge and new perspectives originate. Thus, cognitive praxis refers to the idea of social movements as knowledge producers. To Eyerman and Jamison, the collective articulation of a movement identity can be likened to a process of social learning, opening a space in which creative interaction between individuals can take place. A social movement is not one organization or one particular interest group, but rather it is a cognitive territory, a new conceptual space that is filled by a dynamic interaction between different groups or organizations. Cognitive praxis as the creation, articulation and

formulation of new ideas is a process through which social movements define themselves in society. As well as creating new types of knowledge, social movements also recombine or connect previously separate types of knowledge with each other. (Eyerman & Jamison 1991, 45—49; 55—59.) This point of view is interesting with regard to the Reclaim the Streets – movement, which was born in England when environmental activists and politicized ravers found each other and combined their ideas together.

Methodologically, studying social movements cognitively means that social movements have to be seen as processes in formation. According to Eyerman and Jamison (1991, 59—60) the distinctiveness of social movements lies in their disorganization and transience; they are constantly in motion. A movement moves; it lives and dies, or it fades away as its cognitive project disintegrates into various component parts which become either adopted or discarded. Eyerman and Jamison ask which new ideas are produced in social movements and what particular social movements contribute to social processes of knowledge production. (*Ibid.*, 59—61.)

When studying the cognitive praxis of the environmental movement, Eyerman and Jamison identified three dimensions of cognitive praxis: cosmological, technological and organizational. These three dimensions capture only a part of the cognitive praxis, but they are useful as an analytical framework. Cosmological dimension consists of the worldview assumptions, the attitudes towards nature and society, and their interrelationships. The cosmological dimension involves the basic beliefs often taken for granted by the activists themselves. What is interesting is the fact that according to Eyerman and Jamison, the cosmological dimension can be “read”, reconstructed from existing cultural materials, such as movement documents, programs and articles. Technological dimension can also be read from movement texts and concepts. It involves the technological issues that the movement develops around. What kind of technology the movement criticizes and utilizes, and what technological issues the movement articulates in its practical activity. The organizational dimension is the way in which the movement gets its message across, and the organizational forms within which their cognitive praxis unfolds. (*Ibid.*, 66—71.)

In important role in the process of cognitive praxis of social movements are the ‘movement intellectuals’. All activists in social movements are, in some sense, movement intellectuals, because through their action they contribute to the formation of the movement. However, all activists don’t participate equally in the cognitive praxis of social movements. Some actors are more visible as organizers, leaders or spokespersons. Eyerman and Jamison use the term movement intellectual to refer to those individuals who through their activities articulate the knowledge interests and cognitive identity of social movements. (Eyerman & Jamison 1991, 94—99.) In this thesis I have adopted the term ‘movement intellectual’ to describe those individuals, ‘core activists’ who are actively involved in the organizing of RTS-events. From my previous experience (Yliselä 2006) I have found out that in the RTS-movement there is a more active insider group of activists who participate in the action over a longer period of time, and a more loose group of ‘hang arounds’, who maybe participate once but are not as committed to the movement as the previous group. I label these ‘core activists’ as ‘movement intellectuals’.

In *Music and social movements*, Eyerman and Jamison (1998) then go on to elaborate on music as a form of cognitive praxis in social movements. By elucidating the relations between social movements and musical traditions, Eyerman and Jamison want to broaden the cognitive approach to encompass additional aspects of movement activity, which precondition and are in turn conditioned by cognitive praxis. According to them, social movements have a deep impact on processes of cultural transformation. The deeper structures of feeling that provide cohesion to social formations are periodically reinvented through social movements. Eyerman and Jamison want to focus not only to the movement intellectuals but also to the ‘movement artists’, who construct and organize the cultural activities of social movements. (Eyerman & Jamison 1998, 20—22.)

Social movements can’t of course escape the “game of culture”, as Bourdieu (1984) points out, but they can actively recombine artistic traditions in an innovative way. Eyerman and Jamison use the concept of ‘exemplary action’ to refer to music and art; it is lived as well as it is thought, it is at the same time cognitive and it draws on more emotive aspects of human consciousness. As cultural expression, exemplary action represents symbolically the

individual and the collective which are the movement. It is symbolic in that it symbolizes all the movement stands for, what is seen as virtuous and what is seen as evil. Thus, art and music in the hands of social movement actors are more than just functional devices that are used for recruitment of new participants or resources to be mobilized. (Eyerman & Jamison 1998, 22—25.)

In the empirical data collection I have paid attention to the concept of ‘movement artists’. I consider ‘movement artists’ to be those individuals who are taking an active part in the formation of the cultural elements in the RTS-protest. By this I mean dj’s who play music in the events and the artists who plan and produce the advertisement material and banners that are being used to advertise about the events and to decorate the reclaimed street during the protest. As with ‘movement intellectuals’ it is not straightforward to say who can be labeled as a movement artist. I have used these concepts as empirical tools that have helped me to choose target groups for my interviews. The same persons could act as movement intellectuals and movement artists at the same time. However, I am not interested in describing the individual characteristics of a movement intellectual or a movement artist, but my interest lays on the impact that these persons have on the knowledge producing processes of the movement; in this particular case, the role and place of cultural forms in the movement.

I share Eyerman and Jamison’s view that music and other concrete cultural elements have an important role in the action of social movements, particularly those culturally oriented movements as Reclaim the Streets. I develop a picture of the role of cultural elements in this particular movement. The role of cultural elements is seen as a part of the cognitive praxis created by the movements (Eyerman & Jamison 1998, 22). My intention is not to provide a whole picture of the cognitive praxis of RTS-movement, but to elaborate the meaning of cultural protest forms in this process.

Eyerman and Jamison (1991, 60—65) discuss the important issue of the researcher’s position in relation to her research subject. In this thesis I provide only one interpretation of the cognitive processes mediated through cultural forms in the RTS-protest. Thus, my approach is not comprehensive and I do not claim so. As Eyerman and Jamison suggest, I take a step back

and look at my research subject with a critical distance. This means placing the movement in a historical and cognitive context and subjecting its praxis to theorization. I use a methodological triangulation to approach the meaning behind the utilized cultural forms. On one hand, I am sensitive to my interviewee's conceptualizations about the cultural forms they are utilizing, but on the other hand I am also interested in analyzing the meanings from a distance, placing the music, arts and bodily habitus in a wider historical and political context.

## **6.7 Movement artists and movement intellectuals**

According to my research questions, I was interested in finding out who decides what kind of cultural forms are used in the protest and how. According to my previous studies on the RTS-movement (Yliselä 2006), it is possible to distinguish two groups that participate in the protest action: the “activists” and the “music people”. This division is of course artificial, but it provided a basis for me to choose the interviewees. From the 6 interviewees I labeled 4 as “movement artists” and 2 as “movement intellectuals”. The movement artists were people that had been active in producing the cultural content of the protest. For example they were dj's who had been playing records in the events, or artists who had been creating the poster images and other advertisement material. The movement intellectuals were people who had been participating in the creation of the protest events' political declarations, such as flyer texts or media material.

The interviewees described this segregation of the organizers as a reconciliation of two different sub cultures:

“They [organizers of the RTS-events, AY] are often people that are actively involved in some organizations, either in political organizations, like for example environmental, animal rights and so on, or then they might be keen on techno culture, like involved in it. Often it seems like either or. Like, it seems to be a bit like two totally different interests, and then there is a symbiosis in this case.” (Interview 4, translated from Finnish AY.)

“But I remember that between them there was a certain kind of discussion about where to take the happening, like should it be politicized more or not, but then, and maybe it is just an issue of personal chemistry and this kinds of cultural, like the activist scene is a certain kind of sub culture and then the music people are their sub culture and it is a question of

their reconciliation somehow, like they both have their own ways of action or thoughts about the other's ways of action and prejudices or something." (Interview 5, translated from Finnish AY.)

This segregation of interests means that the movement artists and movement intellectuals work quite differently in creating the movement's cognitive praxis in their own direction. The aim of the movement artists is to create a good ambiance with the music, to get people to come and to enjoy themselves. Also the advertisement material, posters and flyers have the pragmatic function of being appealing to the target group, as discussed in the chapter on subcultural capital.

Thus it seems that the role of the movement artists is important, as they need to have the required subcultural capital in order to be able to produce cultural contents to the event so that the event is successful. Not surprisingly, all of the interviewees saw that the role of the music in the events was an important part of the protest.

"Like it [the music, AY] is in my opinion a really important part of the event's outline, in that sense that it is the past-time like what you do there, if, nobody would want to, or not many people would want to come there to stand for four hours with a sign in their hand. And we haven't had that either. I have been thinking about it, like is it more like a cultural event, a gig, than a demonstration, but of course the traffic is cut off then.[...] Like most of the people come there probably to enjoy the music and so on, more than just to protest, but I do think that many of them share the same thoughts than us organizers." (Interview 2, translation from Finnish AY.)

This comment illustrates the role of the music as an integrative element between the cultural and political aspects of the movement; whether the RTS is a cultural event, an event of "standing with a sign in the hand" or a combination of these.

## **6.8 Cultural forms as dimensions of the cognitive praxis**

According to Eyerman and Jamison (1998), social movements mobilize traditions as a form of cognitive praxis. Social movements act as cultural labs that set off transformations and provide social spaces for cultural experimentation. Social movements deconstruct and recombine the materials and resources of traditions. Eyerman and Jamison argue that traditions, such as musical ones, involve underlying philosophical and rational ideas. Traditions contain both a philosophy and a set of performance principles. The tradition is thus a set of ideas as well as

practices, and attention should also be paid to the way in which theory and practice are combined in collective rituals or festivals. The mobilization of tradition involves the use of cultural artifacts, for example music and art works, as tools for protest and the formation of collective identity. (Eyerman & Jamison *ibid.*, 41—42.) In this thesis I look at two ways of mobilizing and rearticulating traditions as dimensions of the movements' cognitive praxis: music and works of visual art.

### **Music as a dimension of the cognitive praxis**

As formulated by Eyerman and Jamison, there are three dimensions of cognitive praxis: cosmological, technological and organizational. These three dimensions are useful as an analytical framework. The cosmological dimension grasps the basic beliefs often taken for granted by the activists themselves.

When examined from the cognitive praxis point of view, it can be stated that the countercultural struggle for independence and striving towards a constructed ‘authenticity’ involved in punk, hip hop, reggae and rave are a part of the process of creating Reclaim the Street –movement’s cognitive praxis. The striving towards authenticity and non-commercialism is an important part of Reclaim the Streets –movement’s cosmological dimension.

The music acts as exemplary action, which symbolically represents what the movement stands for; what is seen as virtuous and what is seen as evil. In these musical genres, the commercial ‘mainstream culture’ is constructed as an evil, whereas the countercultural ‘underground’ is seen as virtuous and authentic, a space for defending the independence of a disadvantaged or a powerless group. My argument is that the musical genres are *representations of the cosmological dimension of the Reclaim the Streets –movement’s cognitive praxis*.

Music is also connected to the technological dimension of Reclaim the Street’s cognitive praxis. The movement criticizes private cars and car culture, but at the same time the technologically oriented sounds of electronic music are used in the protest. The music which is being amplified from the pa’s needs various technological devices, such as turntables, head

phones, microphones, mixers, sound reproduction equipment, and an aggregate to produce electricity (or another source of electricity). Some RTS-organizers are critical towards this technological equipment. For example in the Rovaniemi RTS the organizers don't use cars to move their equipment, but they use bicycles and milk carts instead (interview 2). In Helsinki squatters organized a spontaneous RTS in Mannerheimintie using only drums and body percussion as musical instruments (HS 2.6.2007). Technology can be described as a 'mixed blessing' in the RTS-protest. At the same time that the protestors are criticizing fossil-fuelled car traffic, they are using aggregates to produce electricity for the amplifiers, and private cars to transport equipment to the street.

The use of technology can also be linked to the urban and youthful character of the RTS-movement. The Finnish RTS-protestors are young, urban city-dwellers, aged mostly from 15 to 35 (cf. Yliselä 2006). They are the same age group than most clubbers and ravers according to e.g. Thornton (1996) and Seppälä (2001), young adults. In these age groups the use of internet and other electronic medias is common and popular (Suomalaiset tieto- ja viestintäteknologian käyttäjinä 2005). Thornton argues that it is impossible to understand the distinctions of youth cultures without investigating their media consumption. The media is a crucial network to the definition and distribution of cultural knowledge; being in and out of fashion correlates with degrees of media coverage, creation and exposure. (Thornton 1996, 13—14.) The internet and communication medias had an important role in the Reclaim the Streets -movement's diffusion to Finland and other countries: protestors are utilizing the internet in various ways in the process of organizing the protests.

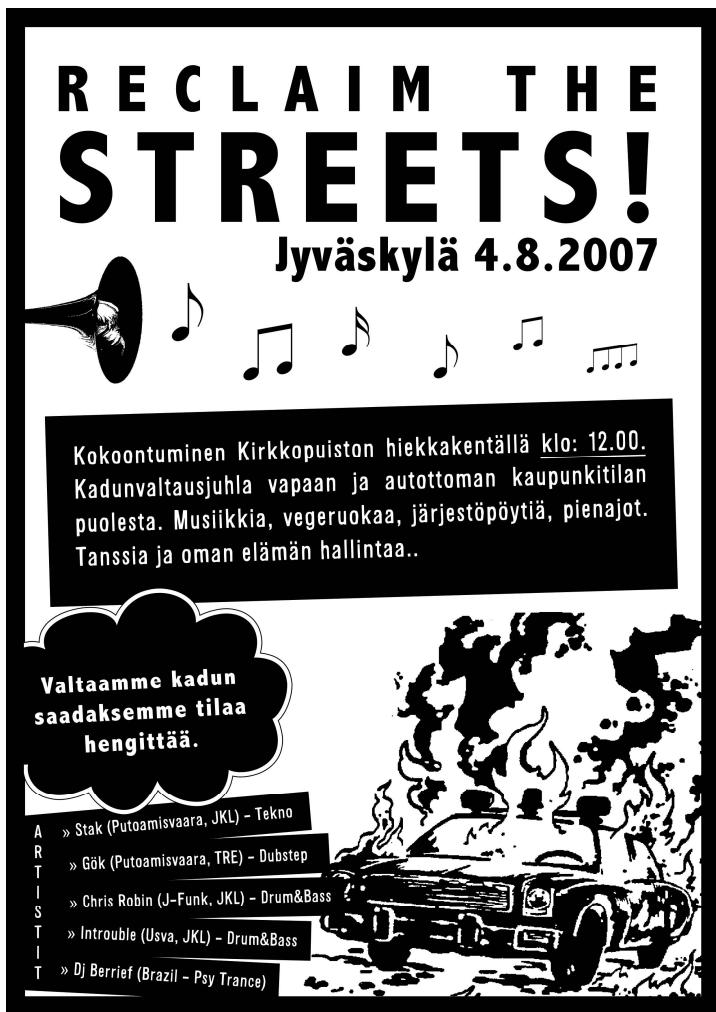
The organizational dimension of the cognitive praxis is the way in which the movement gets its message across. The organizational form of the RTS is a localized network of people, whose subcultural capital is in an important role in the organizing of the events, such as depicted before. The organizers act in a non-hierarchical manner using their subcultural capital as a resource in the process. The role of the movement artists is salient in this process, as it is them who pick the music that is to be played in the events. The RTS-protest is organized much like an "ordinary" gig or a party, as a project that starts a couple of months before the actual event and dissolves after the project has been realized. The network usually

meets regularly before the event. The role of communication technology is vital to the process of organizing the event. The organizers communicate via email lists and instant messaging systems. Also mobile phones were used in almost all the meetings I observed, to contact the organizers that were absent.

### **Micro-media and cognitive praxis**

According to Thornton (1996), micro-media refers to flyers, fanzines, posters, listings, telephone information lines, pirate radios, e-mail lists and internet sites that the subculture is using in order to communicate and advertise about the events that they are arranging. Also word-of-mouth and word-on-the-street communication can be included in these media. This low circulating, narrowly targeted micro-media has the most credibility amongst the subculture, and thus the individuals that are apt in using micro-media can have a good subcultural capital. The micro-media have an aura of being of authentic and autonomous character, but as Thornton points out, they are contingent upon other media and other business. (Thornton ibid., 137—138.)

The group that I observed in the summer 2007 used an email list to arrange meetings and other practical issues. Protestors advertise the RTS-events in the internet, creating web-pages and advertising in discussion forums and web calendars, such as [www.oikeuttaelaimille.net/foorumi](http://www.oikeuttaelaimille.net/foorumi) and My Space. The street advertisement that the group was using included posters and stickers that could be distributed around the city, and flyers that were handed out on the street.



Picture 3. The poster for the Jyväskylä Reclaim the Streets –event on 4.8.2007.

This poster is quite typical as to what the politically oriented Reclaim the Streets -flyers and -posters look like. This A4-sized poster was also used as a flyer in a smaller form. The poster was originally in black-and-white, a choice that was made out of cost saving reasons. The elements that stand out of the poster are the big title that figures the name of the event, Reclaim the Streets, and the place and date. Below this basic information there is a symbol that depicts music (the horn and the notes). In the black box in the middle there is information about the meeting place and time, as well as a small reference to the themes of the protestival: “A Reclaim the Streets –event for free and car-free urban city space. Music, vegetarian food, organizations’ info desks, pienajot (which is an annual protest against the Jyväskylä World Championship Rally). Dancing and taking control over your own life...” After these texts there is a short slogan in the flower-looking bubble on the left: “We reclaim the street in order

to get some breathing space.” This slogan can refer to the pollution caused by car traffic, but also to the protestors’ requirement to get a space of their own in the city. Below the flower there are the names of the dj’s that are playing on the street, their residences and their musical genres. The burning police car in the right corner visibly illustrates the countercultural element of the event. Burning cars are an often occurring theme in the Reclaim the Streets –ads, but usually they are not police cars. This can be seen as a comment towards the police: if you try to stop us, there could be trouble. The burning car –theme can also be seen as a reference to the restlessness that has been occurring in the Central Europe, in France and more recently in Copenhagen when the Ungdomshuset squat was evicted. One of the organizers told me that he would like the Jyväskylä Reclaim the Streets to have a connection with the recent squatters’ demonstrations (observation 19.7.2007).

What is notably absent from this poster is a reference to the World Championship Rally that was arranged at the same time in Jyväskylä. This seems to be a conscious choice in order to avoid the event from being labeled as just a party against the rally. The name of the after party, Beat vs. Rally, was the only reference to the rally theme, as well as the small mention in the poster of the Pienajot-protest against the rallies. Notably the after party is not mentioned in the poster. This is due to the fact that distributing posters around the city is forbidden in Jyväskylä. The organizer of the after party didn’t want to be connected with the Reclaim the Streets – posters in order to avoid trouble. (Observation 19.7.2007.)

Another way of illustrating the cognitive praxis of the movement through visual arts are the banners that are being used to block the streets during the protest and to create the atmosphere on the street.



**Picture 4. Reclaim the Streets –banner. Jyväskylä 4.8.2007.**



**Picture 5. The same RTS-banner as before, in Helsinki 18.8.2007.**

The banner depicted in the pictures 4 and 5 is a popular one and it has been used in many RTS-events. The popularity of the banner is connected to the fact that it illustrates the spirit of the RTS; it provides a representation of actions in the reclaimed street. According to an interviewee, the banner originates from Helsinki and it was made in 2000 (interview 5). In the banner there are people of different ages (including a baby in a go-cart), playing chess, dancing, juggling, sitting, relaxing in a hammock, skating, and a dj playing music. This banner is an illustration of the cosmological dimension of the RTS-movement's cognitive praxis.

The combination of the banners' practical and symbolic functions can also be seen from these photographs. The large banners are used to cut off the traffic from the reclaimed street. Thus the banners function as pragmatic tool for the realization of the protest. However, as it can be observed, the banners are hung so that their message is visible to the outside. The banners have also a symbolic function of telling the outside audience about the protest. The name Reclaim the Streets is painted in big block letters to announce about the event.

From an organizational point of view, the symbolic function of this banner in creating the cognitive praxis of the Reclaim the Streets –protestival is important, because the RTS is organized as an antiauthoritarian form of civil disobedience. The pictures in the banner are providing one suggestion to interpret the actions on the reclaimed street. According to Sampo Villanen (2004) who has studied the spatialization of demonstrations, in civil disobedience demonstrations it is not always clear to the audience what is going to happen, because the demonstrators have a bigger influence on the happenings than in a legal demonstration. The demonstrators want to provide suggestions as to what could happen in the space of the demonstration. (*Ibid.*, 81—86.) This banner can be seen as one suggestion as to what it means to reclaim a street.

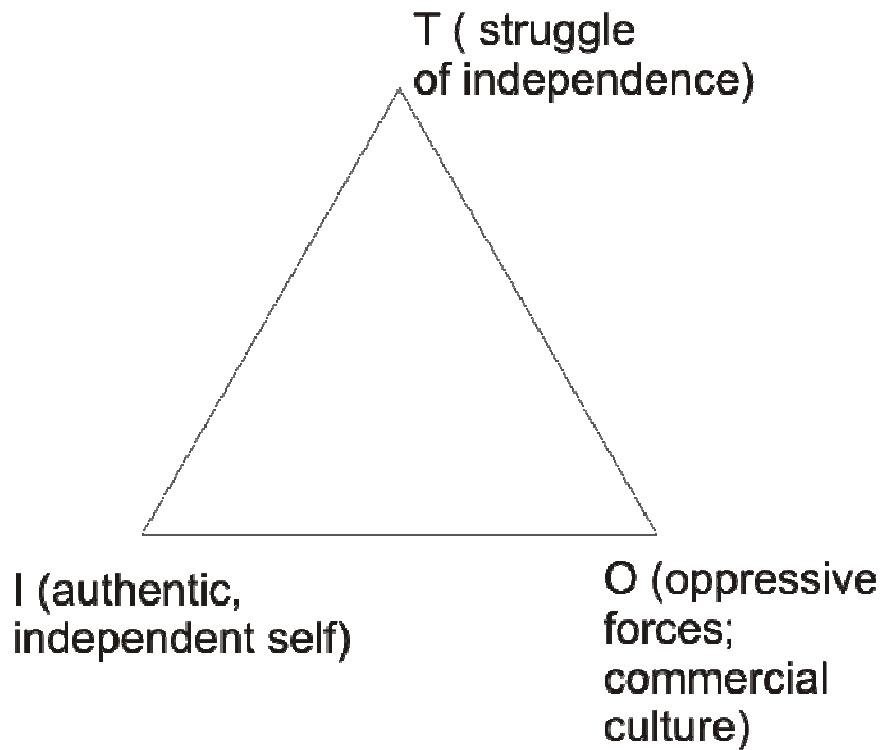
## **7 Performing Authenticities**

My hypothesis has been that the cultural forms that the street reclaimers are utilizing have a profound meaning and an important function for the RTS-protest. I have examined the role of cultural forms, such as musical genres, visual arts and protestors' habitus, from two different points of view.

The other one discusses the role of cultural forms as a form of the protestors' subcultural capital. From this point of view I have stated that the protestors are skilled in using their subcultural capital in order to advertise about the events and to assure the success of the protest. The amount of subcultural capital, such as the knowledge on how to produce a flyer that 'gets people to come', is important in the process of organizing these events.

However, I do not handle the cultural forms in the protest on just a pragmatic level. Rather, following Eyerman and Jamison, I have argued that the utilized cultural forms have a deeper symbolic and cognitive function in the protest as creators of constructed cultural performances that I have labeled as performed authenticities. Cultural forms represent the cosmological dimension of the movement's cognitive praxis. The music, the works of visual art and the bodily expressions and styles are cultural performances that are participating in the construction of the movement's cognitive praxis and performing of countercultural authenticities, that is to say to the way of seeing and doing things differently. I tend to agree with Eyerman, Jamison and Touraine in seeing the social movements as important contributors in the society, as they provide new cultural meanings and practices.

When connected to Touraine's idea of social movements as antagonistic actors in the society, it can be argued through Touraine's diagram that the performance of countercultural authenticity through cultural forms is actually creating the social movement as an actor (Diagram 3).



**Diagram 3. The illustration of the RTS as a social movement through Touraine's diagram (cf. Touraine 1981, 81).**

Thus the RTS is creating itself as a political actor in the process of using certain kinds of music and advertisement material. The used cultural forms do not only support the protest on a pragmatic level, e.g. in cutting the street from traffic or creating a good atmosphere, but on a more symbolic level the used cultural forms are illustrating the movement itself: what the protestors see as virtuous and what they see as evil.

As far as a cultural performance is concerned, there should be an audience that sees and hears the performance. As Alexander (2004) points out, the success of the performance is measured by the fact that if it is convincing and effective, it presents itself as natural and authentic. As the Reclaim the Streets –protest is concerned, the result is contradictory. On the other hand, the success of the protest in Finland, ten years, over 50 Reclaim the Streets –events, and the success doesn't seem to be fading, shows that the form of protest has been accepted as a part of the Finnish protest movements' repertoire of action (cf. Yliselä 2006). However, on the other hand there is always the danger that the protest is reduced to a small scale and

marginalized to the point that only a small number of people, those ‘in the know’ or with a large amount of subcultural capital, are interested in it.

As Eyerman and Jamison (1991, 3—4) point out, this is the destiny of social movements: “[T]heir ‘success’, as we will argue, is thus paradoxical. The more successful a social movement is in spreading its knowledge interests or diffusing its consciousness, the less successful it is likely to be as a permanent organization. Indeed, the longer a social movement continues to exist, as it were, ‘outside’ of the established political culture, the less influence it is likely to have on the development of knowledge.” For example the role of the musical genres illustrates this paradox. If the RTS-movement tries to contact more people by changing the musical genres into more popular or ‘mainstream’ genres, it can attract a bigger audience. But at the same time the movement loses a part of its own countercultural character and the actual existence of the social movement itself is in jeopardy.

In this thesis I have mostly been interested in the movement’s collective identity formation, called cognitive praxis by Eyerman and Jamison. The role of the cultural forms in the expression of individual actors’ identities is also an interesting question. The production of authenticities in this cultural performance can be seen as identity politics. However, in this thesis I had to rule out this point of view and leave it open for further research. On expressive identities in new social movements, see e.g. Hetherington (1998).

In the social sciences, the viewpoint of ‘cultural turn’ implies that there has been a shift towards a more culturally oriented phase in the action of protest movements. In this study I have pointed out that concrete cultural forms seem to be in an important role in this particular movement, the Reclaim the Streets. However, it still can’t be stated on the basis of this analysis if there has been a shift towards more culturally oriented protest. This question still remains open for further investigation.

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## **Appendix 1 Theme interview**

Kadunvaltauksen luonne –poliittinen, kulttuurinen, historiallinen  
Konkreettiset kulttuuriset muodot: musiikki, toiminta kadulla, koristelu, mainonta

Henkilöön liittyvät kysymykset

Taustatiedot: ikä, kaupunki, sukupuoli

Onko sinulla paljon kokemusta kadunvaltauksista? Montako kertaa olet ollut mukana? Missä olet ollut mukana?

Mitä olet tehnyt mukana ollessasi? Ovatko ne tyypillisiä tehtäviä?

Oletko soittanut tapahtumissa levyjä? Oletko soittanut bändissä tapahtumassa? Oletko kirjoittanut tekstejä nettisivuille? Oletko tehnyt tapahtumien mainoksiin kuvia tai tekstejä? Oletko tanssinut tapahtumissa? Oletko esiintynyt katuteatterissa tai jonglööraamalla tai muussa esityksessä?

Millä tavalla tulit toimintaan mukaan?

Miksi toiminta kiinnosti/kiinnostaa yhää?

Mitä mieltä olet kadunvaltaustoiminnasta?

Oletko ollut mukana muussa yhteiskunnallisessa toiminnassa? Entä kulttuuritoiminnassa?

Miten mielestäsi yhteiskunnallisia ongelmia (esim. ympäristö) tulisi ratkaista? Onko kadunvaltaus hyvä tapa ratkaista niitä?

Kadunvaltauksen luonne

Mitkä tekijät määrittelevät kadunvaltausta? Miksi kadunvaltaus on kadunvaltaus?

Mitä Reclaim the Streets merkitsee? Entä Street Party? Entä Reclaim the City? Miksi eri nimityksiä käytetään?

Miten kadunvaltauksissa yleensä toimitaan? Kuvailo mielestäsi tyypillinen kadunvaltaus.

Millainen toiminta kuuluu kadunvaltakseen ja millainen ei? Miksi?

Mitä asioita kadunvaltaus ajaa?

Millä tavalla näitä asioita ajetaan?

Ketkä kadunvaltauksessa toimivat? Ovatko toimijat olleet mukana muissa liikkeissä?

Onko miehiä ja naisia yhtä paljon? Miksi, miksi ei?

Onko kadunvaltaus laitonta vai laillista toimintaa? Miksi?

Liikkeestä

Onko Reclaim the Streets yhteiskunnallinen liike? Miksi, miksi ei?

Onko eri kaupungeissa kadunvaltauksia järjestävillä ryhmillä yhteyksiä keskenään? Miksi, miksi ei?

Miten toiminta syntyi?

Milloin toiminta syntyi?

Missä toiminta syntyi?

Miksi tällainen toiminta syntyi?

Miten toiminta tuli Suomeen? Miksi?  
 Onko toiminta muuttunut historiansa aikana? Miten?  
 Miten toiminta rahoitetaan? Kuka tarjoaa resurssit toiminnalle?

Kadunvaltauksen konkreettiset kulttuuriset muodot

Musiikki

Millaista musiikkia kadunvaltaustapahtumassa yleensä soitetaan?  
 Miksi tapahtumassa soitetaan juuri sellaista musiikkia?  
 Millä periaatteella tapahtumissa soittettava musiikki valitaan? Kuka sen valitsee?  
 Kuka tapahtumissa soittaa? Miten soittajat tietävät tulla paikalle?  
 Mitä musiikki merkitsee näissä tapahtumissa? Onko se iso osa tapahtumaa? Miksi, miksi ei?

Rekvisiitta

Minkäläista rekvisiittaa kadunvaltauksessa käytetään? Mistä nämä ovat peräisin?  
 Koristellaanko vallattu tila jotenkin? Miten?  
 Kuka tekee banderollit? Miksi niitä käytetään? Miten tekstit ja kuvat valitaan? Mitä tekstit ja kuvat symboloivat?

Mainokset ja lentolehtiset

Miten tapahtumia mainostetaan? Kuka tekee mainokset? Internet, katumainokset  
 Kuka kirjoittaa tekstit, piirtää kuvat? Päättääänkö teksteistä ja kuvista yhdessä, miksi, miksi ei?  
 Entä käytetäänkö tapahtumissa lentolehtisiä? Miksi, kenelle ne on suunnattu? Mitä niissä lukee?  
 Kuka kirjoittaa lentolehtisten tekstit ja piirtää kuvat? Päättääänkö niistä yhdessä, miksi, miksi ei?

Toiminta kadulla

Mitä kadulla tapahtuu? Mitä ihmiset tekevät? Kuka siellä on?  
 Kuka saa tulla kadulle?  
 Mitä vallattussa paikassa normaalisti tapahtuu? Kuka päättää toiminnasta tilanteessa?  
 Haluaisitko että kadulla toimittaisiin jollakin muulla tavalla?  
 Mitä kulttuuritoimintaa kadulla on? Toivotko että siellä olisi sellaista?

Minkäläista kulttuuria kadunvaltaus edustaa?

Kadunvaltaus narraationa

Jos mietitään tämän vuoden tässä kaupungissa järjestettyä kadunvaltausta alusta loppuun saakka, kuvaille tapahtumia. Mitä alussa tapahtui? Entä sen jälkeen? Entä lopuksi?  
 Paljonko oli ihmisiä? Olitko tytyväinen määrään?  
 Mikä oli kadunvaltauksen huippukohta?  
 Mitä tässä kadunvaltauksessa haluttiin viestittää?

Onnistuiko viestin perillemeno? Miksi, miksi ei?  
Toteutuiko kadunvaltaus suunnitellulla tavalla? Miksi, miksi ei?  
Miten media suhtautui valtaukseen?  
Entä poliisi?  
Entä yleisö?  
Olivatko reaktiot odotettuja/toivottuja? Miksi, miksi ei?  
Tapahtuiko tässä kadunvaltauksessa joitain erityistä josta haluaisit mainita?  
Soitettiinko tässä kadunvaltauksessa sellaista musiikkia kuin tapahtumissa yleensä soitetaan?  
Miksi, miksi ei?  
Olitko tyytyväinen kadulla olleeseen kulttuuritarjontaan? Miksi, miksi ei?

Kysymykset artisteille:

Miten päädyt tiettyyn settiin mitä soitat kadulla? Miten valitset musiikin?  
Valitsetko kadunvaltauksiin tietyntyyppistä musiikkia? Miksi, miksi ei?  
Muutatko musiikkivalintoja tapahtuman aikana? Miksi, miksi ei?  
Miten tärkeänä pidät musiikkia tapahtuman onnistumisen kannalta?

Miten valitset millaisia kuvia piirräät mainoksiin/banderolleihin? Toistuuko joku tietty teema?  
Miksi, miksi ei?  
Miten tärkeänä pidät tapahtuman visuaalista ilmettä sen onnistumisen kannalta?