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Abstract The aim of this article is to problematize young people's desires for musical experiences in Western society by theoretically analyzing such needs from a deep psychological as well as a sociological perspective. The rationalized society and new patterns of socialization form the foci of analysis. Further, special emphasis is placed on understanding and analyzing the causes of the high volume of music played at rock concerts and music festivals. Music is a medium that allows young people to get in contact with and process the deep psychological patterns that, in contemporary society, are often repressed by hard rationality. It is claimed that new patterns of socialization have made it more difficult for adolescents to establish contact with, and to integrate into, the pre-oedipal mental layer, which is a prerequisite for growth, achieving a greater degree of maturity, and the progression to and realization of new life phases.

Introduction

For many young people today, rock and pop music form an important dimension of life. A desire to live a life surrounded by music seems to be something that unites various Western youth cultures, even though the ways of expression vary considerably. Ever since the development of youth cultures at the end of the 1950s, music has become an increasingly important part of young people's lives and a strong force in society and in the mediated world (Fornäs, Lindberg & Sernhede, 1990; Shepherd, 1991). Arguably, music has been of importance for most young people throughout the 20th century and indeed for as long as industrial society has existed. The development of jazz during the 30s and 40s was in particular a source of inspiration for young people and, since these times, different musical genres have had a strong impact on the self- identity and lifestyles of successive generations.

While youth culture is prominent in society and youth is a highly valued social commodity, most young people's lived realities are completely different from the images and myths that exist in the worlds that are mediated by popular media forms. For many, experiences of marginalization, alienation and powerlessness are significant dimensions of their realities. Whilst the concept "young people" can be recognized as a social category, young people, like other groups in society, differ in terms of class, gender and ethnic and geographical affiliations (Fornäs, Lindberg, & Sernhede, 1995; Bennett 2000). The desire to be surrounded by music, however, appears to be something that unites different groups within the Western youth cultures, even if forms of expression differ. Youth as a life phase is problematic and difficult to define. In particular, it has in recent decades been increasingly extended over time (Arnett, 2004). Thus, in this respect, youth culture and its various manifestations have radically expanded and today it influences the lifestyles of more people than at any other time before.

Rock artists fill gigantic sport arenas with many thousands of people, many of them young. The commercial forces of the music industry are, of course, incredibly powerful and

many. For example, the recording and retail industries and concert promoters exploit young people's needs for musical experiences. The demand for musical experiences is enormous and, whilst to a certain extent it is created by the market, it needs to be acknowledged that many young people today also have a deeper interest in and a selective consumption of music (Flender & Rauhe, 1989).

Young people's need for music thus seems to be a common pattern in the Western world. Music experiences appear, moreover, to have a personal and deep importance as they facilitate for individuals to come in contact with strong emotional feelings that allow them to be able to feel "alive" (Ruud, 1997; Sachs 2007; Whaley, Cross & Thaut, 2009).

If music is a counterbalance to a rationalized society, which sanctions the use of logos and rational thinking, finding ways of expressing feelings and getting in contact with subconscious layers of emotions, it functions as a means of enhancing processes of identity development. As a consequence, there is reason to reflect upon some issues and questions. Are there, for example, components in our rational society which function so as to reinforce young people's needs for musical experiences? If so, what are they? The aim of this article is thus to problematize young people's desire for musical experiences by analyzing such needs from both a psychological and a sociological perspective. Together, the rationalized society and new patterns of socialization form the foci of analysis. Further, particular emphasis is placed on understanding and analyzing the high volume of music played at rock concerts and music festivals.

Rationality, social control and the disciplined body
Modern industrial society is based on a rational market economy. The growth of industries and the expanding urban structure and organizations comprised new forms of social control

(Foucault, 1994). Obedience and discipline were demanded of citizens and new orders of civilization emerged. In addition to rational working hours and designed operations, social interaction and human behaviour also became important components in the new forms of social order that emerged. Many sociologists and philosophers have provided extensive descriptions of the impact of capitalist society on individuals' psychological and social lives (Simmel, 1959; Weber, 1978; Tönnies, 1979). Weber, for example, described the rationalization process, that, with increasing frequency, came to permeate not only social structures and the formation of a rigorous bureaucracy, but also social relations and the human psyche (Weber, 1978, 1985). According to Weber, the world had become disenchanted (in German Entzauberung) as a consequence of both secularization (God was dead) and processes of rationalization. Further, there was an immanent connection between the emergence of capitalist industrialism and forms of Protestantism that emphasized hard, disciplined work, self-denial and asceticism. The individual's own desires were repressed. The body's uncontrollable expressions and emotions should be suppressed in order not to affect the ongoing manufacturing processes in factories (Flender & Rauhe, 1989). Protestantism contributed to "a rational ordering of the body which was thus protected from the disruption of desire in the interests of continuous factory production" (Turner 1984, p. 100).

Repressed emotions and incorporated social norms and values are also relevant in Norbert Elias' theory of the civilizing process (1978a [1939], 1982 [1939]). The concepts of individualization, rationalization and socialization of the body function as focal points of his theory. He describes these long-term processes as crucial to the understanding of Western society and the individual. In adopting an evolutionary perspective, he explains that the change of social order in society presaged the formation of the "civilized body". According to Elias, there was, compared to pre-modern times, a shift in emotional and physical

expressions, in that people were less constrained by behavioural norms and could give more spontaneous physical and emotional expression to desires (Flender & Rauhe, 1989).

The culture also sanctioned intentions to satisfy bodily desires. The "uncivilized body" was not separated from the natural or social environment. There was closeness between people in everyday life. Individuals were, in a sense, unprotected against other individuals' intrusions which, on occasion, could be violent.

The gradual civilization of the body has to be regarded as an ongoing process of change. Characteristics of the civilized body are a high degree of control over emotions and an ability to establish a mental distance to other individuals. A similar characteristic is the internalization of appropriate values and behaviours expected by the social environment. Controlling the body means being opposed to everything that the individual considers "natural" or "animal" (Elias, 1978a [1939]). Emotions of shame affect those who are unable to conform to and maintain established social codes that require the concealment of the body's natural functions. The individual needs to be subjected to a socialization process in order to obtain a civilized body.

A young child is closely related to nature, or as Shilling puts it, is "closely associated with the rhythms and dictates of nature" (Shilling, 1993, p. 156), and reacts with spontaneous impulses. In early life the child has not yet adapted to the norms and social order of the parents and the adult world. Consequently, it has no feelings of shame. Eventually the child will adapt to the norms and values of the significant others in the social environment and also learn that functions are socially organized and systemized by technical facilities, for instance toilets being separate units behind closed doors. The child knows at a very early age, and increasingly earlier it seems in contemporary society, what is appropriate in regard to natural and bodily functions. The child internalizes codes of social control and is socialized into becoming aware of its behaviour and expressions. As the process of civilizing continues, the

body becomes increasingly socialized and rationalized as individuals increase their capacity to control their bodies (Shilling, 1993).

When separating the body from nature, individuals are also differentiated from each other and have to maintain their own mental and bodily boundaries. Social control is integrated in the individual's mind. Both body and mind are rationalized. Distance to other people makes self-reflection possible. A psychological interaction arises between people. It becomes possible, from a distance, to look at other people's actions, faces, gestures and tones of voice as expressions of hidden motives, emotions and hopes. The individual becomes aware of her or his behaviour and can perform and interact according to individual preferences. Before the separation of the body from nature, Foucault (1990) has described the human being as being a mystery to himself. Up until this point in time the human being had been, as Foucault (1990) describes it, a mystery to himself. The psychological human being was born when she was able to choose what features of her character to display and which to would hide.

In analyzing the civilization process, some aspects can be distinguished. Both Weber and Elias believe that, in the progression of the civilization process, life will be safer but less exciting (Shilling, 1993). Planning and developing strategies for life provide control and security at the cost of pleasure and more spontaneous expressions of life.

The emotional, spontaneous, and sometimes passionate forces that once existed in pre-modern cultures, and which were acted out and operationalized directly in the surrounding social context, now take place more in terms of the individual's own internal struggle with her conscience. Elias (1982) explains this shift in the following way:

> The battlefield is…. moved within….the drives, the passionate affects, that can no
>
> longer directly manifest themselves in the relationships between people, often

struggle no less violently within the individual against this supervising part of himself. (p. 242)

By utilizing external and internal forces, the individual tries to gain control over her body, something that also entails that driving forces and urges lead to compulsive actions which can be difficult to handle. To achieve and maintain self-control, which is crucial in contemporary society, is a struggle which, not least for young individuals, is painful, difficult and can create deep scars in their personality.

The audience as a modern phenomenon

In a society comprised of people who have achieved self-control over their bodies and minds, it is possible to attend public events such as the theatre, concerts, sporting events and maintain a distanced view and circumspection that does not trigger operationalized emotions. Individuals have, from an early age, been socialized and rationalized into excluding aggressive and enjoyable expression. In a civilized society, the *audience* arises as a social phenomenon. In 1901, the social psychologist Gabriel Tarde publishes his work *L'Opinion et la Foule* (1989) in which he draws a distinction between a "mob" or "mass", and an "audience". He argues that, whilst the mob or mass has existed for thousands of years, the audience is a recent phenomenon. Indeed, it is not until the advent of the art of printing that the conditions were created in which it is possible to talk of audiences. During the 19th century the kind of conditions developed that allowed for a new form of social interaction, namely the audience. Along with the emergence of railways and telegraph systems, modern newspaper production blossomed in this period. The press could reach large numbers of the literate public, not only nationally but also internationally. An audience for this type of media was thus created. According to Tarde's reasoning, the modern period can be expressed as the

age of the audience. A modern audience is characterized by individuals which are physically separated from each other and held together purely in terms of a mental community. We can, for example, watch a play or a concert without necessarily expressing emotional responses. A civilized audience responds appropriately by, for example, applauding at a concert in a correct manner which involves the suppression and control of emotions. If too many emotions are released, an audience can quickly transform into a mass. Such a transition can sometimes be extremely rapid, and an igniting spark from a person or group can become a catalyst that activates forces below the surface. Examples of the release of such emotional outpourings are football stadiums where an audience can swiftly transform into a mass, and where transitions of this type can lead to uncontrolled emotions, sometimes manifested in terms of violence and destruction.

Rock concerts are other events when emotions are released and sometimes uncontrollably. Joy, euphoria, sadness, sorrow, aggression or feelings of desire and delight can make an entire stadium into boiling pot of both tremendous collective emotional expressions as well as internal and strong intense emotional states (Flender & Rauhe, 1989; Shepherd, 1991). Taking drugs of any kind will, of course, contribute to the disarmament of the body's defense and control mechanisms and can enhance emotional intoxication. Rock concerts, sport arenas, public demonstrations and certain religious gatherings are in modern times all examples of public arenas where emotions are allowed to be expressed under social control. This can be compared to pre-modern times when strong emotionally-charged expressions were a natural part of everyday life and could arise when people were working, celebrating, participating in public festivals, attending district meetings, or watching public executions. A proximity to a natural expression of emotions was simply a part of life. Spontaneous outpourings of emotions were sanctioned in the social culture, provided of course, that such expression were not in direct conflict with general law, or involved

disruption of social order. Social control has always existed in various forms in all societies, but the control of modern society has been internalized in both the body and the psyche of the individual, so that uncontrollable expressions or behaviour will elicit feelings of shame and will be met by rejection, contempt and sometimes disgust from the surrounding environment. The norm of exercising self-control over body and emotions is a form of socialized behaviour, unproblematically accepted by the modern individual.

Identity in late modern society

The individualization process that has permeated society in modern times has greatly contributed to problematizing the human being's identity. Breaking away from traditions and old safe communities has brought individual emancipation on different levels. It has, at the same time, also brought dread, uncertainty and alienation as well as external and internal requirements for appropriate decision-making and self-fulfillment. Today it is not only young people who have to grapple with choices and transitions in life; the identity of every individual adult is fragile and is undergoing constant change. The sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (1991, 2007) talks about the "floating stage" of modern times, arguing that the social and cultural conditions for assessing and making choices in life are constantly changing. There are no specific unitary values that can be used as a base. The existential questions about the origins, directions and meanings of life have no given responses. Individualization is also associated with a process of distance which is a prerequisite for becoming aware of, and of reflecting upon, the self and the environment (Giddens, 1991). What people want to display and what they want to hide are choices that they make themselves. Self-control is required, both physically and psychologically, in order not to lose face, experience shame, or lose the sense of boundaries in relation to surrounding social contexts. Striving to maintain control is

one of the consequences of the problematic split between the conscious, thinking mind and unconscious, spontaneous emotions.

We live in a distinctly rational society where priority is given according to logical and rational thinking. Emotions, aesthetic values and a creative approach are ranked lower in terms of social approval and prestige. It is in such a context that the importance and effects of music need to be appraised.

Music as a social uterus

The German socialization researcher Thomas Ziehe (1984, 1991) has argued that in modern societies, young people display qualitatively new forms of behaviour and new attitudes towards society. There is a gap between a young person's actual life and the culturally created expectations. Furthermore, this is a gap that in recent decades has become increasingly wide. Young people have new possibilities to create their lives by, among other things, not being obliged to assume parental identities or to follow family traditions. Ziehe (1991) uses the concept of *cultural release* in order to describe and analyze how young people free themselves from old traditions and ways of living. The concept of cultural release involves trying on, changing and playing with different identities. Whilst, as Ziehe demonstrates, these favorable possibilities provide a more extensive individual freedom, he nevertheless argues that, at the same time, they bring with them a need for accepting the consequences of all these choices. Fear and anxiety can easily be experienced when people are forced into making appropriate decisions all by themselves. Consequently, it is today incumbent on young people both to establish a distance from other people and their surroundings, and to have an understanding and control of their own opportunities and limitations.

Expectations in relation to individual desires, dreams and wishes can function as a vital driving force in processes directed towards bringing about change in an individual's life. However, they can also develop in negative directions, when anticipated goals are not achieved, in ways that result in paralyzing forms of depression, drug abuse and somatic diseases. The mental instability and feelings of emptiness that Ziehe (1991) has found in young people can, he argues, be compensated for by group interaction with other young people where the group becomes a kind of "social uterus". In such types of interaction, the search for identity, and fusion, takes place within the group, often through the mediating effects of music and the use of drugs. In explaining the reasons underpinning such new forms of behaviour, Ziehe points to the changing dynamics and conditions of the family and, in particular, the fact that parents no longer serve as adequate identification sources.

The adolescent society

Both young and older individuals today have to live with an ambivalence and insecurity concerning both their identity and the guidelines for how to live and manage their lives. It appears that the young person never really leaves adolescence, but continues to live in an adolescent state as an adult. Researchers such as Wirth (1984) and Sernhede (1995) talk about an "adolescent society" that encompasses a much broader ensemble of society than that demarcated by the traditional uses of the term. People may process, create and develop their identity and take responsibility for their own choices and actions, as well as indeed finding meaningfulness in their lives, in series of processes that continue to take place across the entire lifespan. Adolescence has, in our time, changed in relation to the chronological period of life in the agricultural and the early industrial societies (Arnett, 2004). Puberty and adolescence have traditionally been associated with transitions and rites of passages that have been sanctioned by the cultural order. Clear rituals, many of which are imbued with a high

symbolic resonance, indicate to the young people that they are in the midst of a maturation process that involves entry into the adult world (Wirth, 1984). However, the more static, socially regulated and unitary transition rites of previous times have, in contemporary society, dissolved and although transitional rites do remain, they appear in a radically differentiated manner. Primarily, it is among young people's peer groups that rituals are performed. Different cultures have developed group-specific rituals imbued with symbolic values and codes which involve the employment of clothing and linguistic resources. It is these resources that youth groups which share common interests of various kinds, such as rock music, sports, political commitment or a general social nightlife, use to symbolically mark processes of transition (Willis, 1990; Fornäs, Lindberg & Sernhede, 1990).

Ziehe (1991) describes three directions that youth groups are looking for in order to process and manage problems and ambivalent feelings regarding identity and belonging. One direction is a drive to experience a closeness and authenticity of feelings and expressions by oneself and others. In processes of *subjectification* young people attempt to circumvent the alienation and exclusion they experience in a cold, rational society. Another direction is about seeking meaning and counterforce to a society that is increasingly subjected to secularism and "Entzauberung", as Weber (1985, 1904-5) has described it. The search for *ontologization* means that young people may also enter various spiritual contexts that can either take the form of open groupings or centers, or more closed sects with established doctrines. Longing for intense experiences is a defining characteristic of late modern society. Through processes of *potentiating*, feelings of emptiness and the futility of life can be managed and kept in control. Getting kicks and doing things that are exciting, and sometimes extreme, can give life a temporary glow. According to Masłów (in Whaley, Cross & Thaut, 2009) who spent many years studying so-called peak experiences, it is clearly evident that "the two easiest ways of getting peak experience [are] through music and sex" (Whaley, Cross & Thaut, 2009, p. 452).

Experiences of intensity and kicks are desirable because they are never negative or unpleasant. In addition, they bring, as Maslow (in Whaley et al., 2009) points out, a disorientation of time and space and cause a loss of fear, anxiety, doubt and inhibition. Not least, a peak experience gives a sense that life is worth living. Experiences derived from attending a rock concert can readily satisfy all three directions as a young person can experience feelings of closeness, togetherness and meaning. Alienation and emptiness can, for a couple of hours at least, disappear and life becomes more vivid, intense and exciting.

In recent decades researchers have challenged the classical psychoanalytical approach to adolescence as a stage in life directly related to childhood and primary relationships (Erdheim 1982, Wirth 1984, Sernhede 1995). The prolonged adolescence in our time is associated with psychological processes of transformation that do not lead directly to particular personal characteristics. The adolescent state is flexible and its beginning and end are not in any sense clearly demarcated. The French psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva (1987) argues in her discussion of adolescence in our time that it is not an issue of age but one that relates to the exposure of an open mental structure. The question young people face in today's individualized society relates to understanding the environment they are a part of and to developing a self-awareness and an identity that correspond to their personal needs and abilities. According to Sernhede (1995), the changed conditions of socialization have created new and deeper psychological structures that have reformed the driving forces for shaping identity and understanding the world.

This psychological change focuses on the importance of the *oedipal conflict* that, primarily, was characteristic of the bourgeois public personality in late modern society and which has given place to the need for the processing of pre-oedipal processes. It is thus possible to speak in terms of an historic shift that has taken place in psycho-structural development (Sernhede, 1995). Adolescence is the phase when important breakpoints occur,

enabling the occurrence of processes that fluctuate between the need for closeness and security, on the one hand, and, on the other, similar processes that strive for autonomy and individual freedom. In efforts to free themselves from the bonds of tradition and to develop individuality, young people commute between regression and progression. Processes of regression, or attachment to the pre-oedipal state, function as a precondition for individual growth.

Regression and progression

Regression or regressive states in adults are, in traditional psychoanalysis, regarded as something undesirable and as manifestations of a lack of integration of mental functions (Blos, 1962, Sernhede, 1995). Adolescence is, however, the one phase of life where regression is desirable since an attachment to pre-oedipal states is the prerequisite for the individual's continued growth towards maturity. The young person must have contact with pre-linguistic, mental levels in order to resolve infantile conflicts and affective ties. Only then is it possible to realize inner needs, dreams and desires aimed towards the future (Blos, 1979). Nietzsche expresses such processes in a similar manner arguing that "They say that he is backing, he does that because he is in the process of taking a great step forward" (Blos, 1962, p. 92). Nietzsche's example offers an association to a number of musical metaphors. Performers of music, as well as active listeners, sometimes talk about "entering into the music" and "going with it" (DeNora, 2000, p. 7). Music, as they experience it, transports them from one place to another. As DeNora explains, "One of the most common metaphors for musical experience in post-nineteenth-century Western culture is the metaphor of 'transport', in the sense of being carried from one (emotional) place to another (and indeed, at times, being 'carried away')" (DeNora , 2000, p. 7).

Changes in living conditions experienced by individuals in modern society involve difficulties in reaching regressive layers, thus also complicating the consolidation of regressive and progressive processes (Ziehe, 1991). Ziehe (1984) argues that the infantile conflicts of our time are encapsulated, meaning that the binding to the pre-oedipal state (the pre-oedipal mother), liberation from the primary relationship, and a narcissistic loading of the self, are all interwoven and take place simultaneously. The new pattern of socialization involves living in an ambivalent world, something that young people are accustomed to since they were babies. The ambivalence has almost come with their mother's milk (Ziehe, 1991). It also means living in a state of non-continuity in the sense that sudden breaks occur in the identity development as new needs are experienced. Ziehe suggests that the uncertainty in the societal culture leads to the reinforcement of narcissist personality traits. Ziehe (1984) also believes that a lack of empathy, derived from the early mother/child relationship, is a result of socialization. Whilst narcissism is a key concept in modern socialization theories, theorists offer differing interpretations (Kohut, 1971; Kernberg, 1975; Lasch, 1978; Ziehe, 1984). If self-centeredness is a typical feature of human beings today, this does, however, not mean that the individuals are overly in love with themselves. Indeed, the opposite is often the case and these individuals are more likely to have difficulties accepting themselves and may also have an ambivalent relation to self-image, thus making it difficult for them to accept themselves as they are. As Kristeva (1983) explains in Tales of love (Histoire d'amour), the acute internal crisis of the modern human stems from the experience of a fundamental lack of love of a sort that has its origins in the primary narcissism of infancy.

Theories of narcissism, and indeed Kristeva's theory, offer perhaps a partial explanation for why young people are attracted by music and have a fascination for expressive forms such as rock music. Via the heightened stimulation of sensory organs, music allows the perception of body and soul as a unitary whole. Everyday feelings of uncertainty, ambivalence and

fragmentation can, through the intensity of experience and resolution of self during a rock concert, lead to an experience of being a whole person (Sernhede, 1995). When boundaries between self and surroundings dissolve, deep narcissistic needs are met. This experience of unity can be seen as the manifestation of a phenomenon that is not sanctioned by the dominant culture. The search for a resolution between the conscious and unconscious involves a form of connection with the pre-linguistic fusion that creates a wholeness and which stands in opposition to and as a critique of a rationalized society (Habermas 1981; Sernhede, 1995).

Music rooted in the unconscious

One way to understand the contents and expressions of music, and its meaning to the individual, is to regard music as rooted in the unconscious and in pre-oedipal processes that occur during the young child's first months of life. There is, among psychoanalysts (Kohut, 1990; Noy, 1990, 1993; Epstein, 1993; Ruud, 1997) a strong consensus of opinion concerning music being closely linked to primary sexual drives connected to desire and the libido. When people dream, fantasize or devote themselves to unconscious wishes and projections, they are close to the pre-oedipal condition. Musical expressions and experiences thus originate from a period before the young child was differentiated from the parent and could discern itself from the environment. Even Ruud (1997) is one of the analysts who unanimously hold the view that regressive processes start when certain unconscious wishes are stimulated by certain types of music. The human desire to dream and to recall earlier wishes dominates a range of different mental processes. The intake of music activates unconscious and latent experiences and conflicts. This condition can be likened to the "oceanic" feeling Freud (2004) describes in *Civilization and Its Discontents (* in German Das Unbehagen in der Kultur).Those who have

participated in or observed a rock concert can easily recognize such regressive processes. The individual is absorbed by the collective community and control, logic and critical thought dissolve. Instead, attention is entirely focused on the musicians on stage and the music that pulsates straight into the body. Feelings such as joy, ecstasy, aggression, sorrow and melancholy pour out and are manifested in outbursts such of screaming, crying and, indeed, fainting. Whilst it is difficult, intellectually, to put what is happening into words in such situations, regression is never far away. Thomas Ziehe (1984, 1991) talks about group affinity as a social uterus, a place where young people can find community and an emotional connection through music.

Cracking the body's armour

There are, and always have been, various ways of listening to music. According to music researcher Even Ruud (1997), most people do not have an active attitude towards their listening. Ruud argues that today, many people listen to music in a detached, relaxed and neutral way which does not have any impact on their personality at any level of depth. The sound simply passes transiently through the ear without any further processing. The music that so many young people have been attracted to, and, over the past fifty years, have devoted so much time listening to, is characterized, according to H. Rauhe, whom Even Ruud (1997) refers to, by a kind of sensitive, reflective listening. This differs from a more unconscious, passive listening, in which all kinds of music merge and do not connect on a deeper level, in that it is a more conscious form of listening and one that connects with the listener. This transition is assumed to happen when the rhythm of the music is transformed to body movements. If there is anything which characterizes traditional rock and pop music, and more or less all contemporary commercial music, it is the emphasis on rhythm. Above all, it is the

rhythm of the bass which is powerful, ever-present and physically experienced. Through the distinct pulsation of rhythm, music is reflected as processes of bodily tension. It is striking that music needs to be very rhythmic in order to break through certain barriers and attract listening. Ruud (1997) argues, however, that it is not the strength of the rhythm itself, but rather the fact that it dominates musical expression, that functions so as to eliminate other ways of listening to and experiencing music. Sensitive and reflective listening is thus repressed by musical forms that are typically rhythmical and which, instead, stimulate experiences of spontaneous body sensations, hitting in particular the region of the stomach. The ability to concentrate on the music itself, to discern details and wholes, and having what Ruud refers to as "structural reception", becomes, when listening to such music, lost in the more overtly physical sensation.

Unlike Ruud and Rauhe, other researchers argue that the rhythmic pulse and the high volume of rock and pop music activate a person's internal life and internal psychological processes. When listening to rhythmic music at high volumes, emotions are stimulated and unconscious processes take place. Dieter Baacke (in Fornäs, Lindberg & Sernhede, 1995) considers rock and beat-dominated music to be related to bodily sensations, and that the stimulation of emotions assists the processing of unconscious processes. A repetitive beat played at high volume makes it possible, he argues, to focus on the individual's internal life and facilitates introspection. The rhythmic and repetitive pulse of rock music thus affects the body's armour and facilitates the emission of regressive energy and emotions. Baacke (in Fornäs, Lindberg & Sernhede, 1995) emphasizes the importance of the musical, metaphorical and physical language as a form of expression that is different to the spoken word and written language. It is, he argues, the former types of "language" that can break through the logos and verbal forms of expression.

In a similar manner, the Swedish rock musician Ulf Lundell defines what he considers to be a successful concert in a way that is strikingly similar to the perspectives of the youth researchers cited above:

> People should feel released and satisfied when they go home, and they should have cracked the shell and the armour which we are developing in everyday life; it should be destroyed for a while. There should be a free zone for a while afterwards. (Lilliestam, 2006, p. 143)

In an empirical study of young people's music experiences (Ljung & Erlandsson, 2008), a series of interviews were conducted with young women and men. The general trend among the interviewees was to stress the importance of high volume when going to venues to listen to music. One young man, for example, expressed a wish to be absorbed by the music or to be "wrapped up in it" and, as he expressed it, to experience a force that was beyond his own control. It emerges from these interviews that music becomes an irresistible force and one in which the volume level is crucial to the experience. As this informant explains:

> It must be loud, but not so it bursts my eardrums. You're not supposed to hear yourself or the instrument without amplification. Then it is totally meaningless. You're supposed to hear the music where it comes out from the loudspeakers so to speak, and then you have to turn it up,… turn it up quite a lot. Because I believe that when it is acceptably loud, then the experience gets much stronger because you are caught in …..the wall of sound itself sort of comes and gets you. (p.124)

This same informant adds:

> Yes, if it's loud, then it is not possible to resist. You can't defend yourself, you can't just sit there and chat with someone….la..la..la..but oooh, like there it is!

Almost like a steam-engine…and that's what you're after, at least when it comes to music that is a bit more rough, like … Yes, that's in a way the ultimate, it is this total experience. If you listen with only one ear, or half an ear, then…. (p. 124)

These quotations illustrate a longing to be liberated from distance and self-control. The musical experience becomes a space for connecting to other dimensions of life that have been oppressed in a modern society that gives priority to goal rationality and where such priorities have penetrated deeply into social structural systems, social interaction, and even into the human psyche. Habermas' (1981) argument that the *life world* has been colonized by the *system world* functions to explain the way in which music has the potential to allow access to life worlds that are normally repressed. The life world, which has its basis in the practical everyday world of human relationships and proximity to the world, has during the modern period increasingly been forced to give way to the system world, which has been separated from the life world that it was once associated with. Market forces have in cooperation with the State created an instrumental rationality. In accordance with Habermas' line of reasoning, the expression of the young man cited above can be interpreted as a protest or something that Baakke (1972) calls "die Sprachlose Opposition" against the prevailing goal rationality. Whilst the reasons why large venues are night after night filled with thousands of young people, devoted to experiencing music performed at high decibel levels, may be many, some doubtlessly relate to the way in which Western societies have been created in recent decades.

Rock concerts and festivals function as magnets that draw large numbers of young people. Large arenas enable thousands of people to simultaneously experience an intensity of pleasure derived from listening to pulsating, rhythmical music that is invariably played at high volumes. The focus of this article has been to demonstrate how these events are relevant to young people by examining ways in which regressive mental processes are stimulated in such situations. Music is a medium that allows young people to get in touch with and to process the

deep psychological patterns that, in contemporary society, are often repressed by hard rationality. High volume levels are a crucial component without which the total experience would be reduced and become virtually meaningless. Radical social changes, including value shifts and a highly developed individualization have, in recent decades, created new patterns of socialization, which make it harder for adolescents to establish contact with, and to integrate into, the pre-oedipal mental layer, which is necessary in order to grow to a greater degree of maturity and to progress to and realize new life phases.

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