6.4. Of goths and salmons: A practice-basedeExploration of subcultural enactments in 1980s Milan

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Abstract

The present paper explores, for the first time, the Italian appropriations of British goth in Italy, and in particular in the 1980s in Milan. Adopting a practice-based approach and a theoretical framework based on the STS-derived concept of "enactment", it aims at highlighting the coexistence of different forms of subcultural belonging. In particular, it identifies three main enactments of goth in the 1980s in Milan: the activist enactment introduced by the collective *Creature Simili* (Kindred Creatures); the enactment of the alternative music clubs and disco scene spread throughout northern Italy; and a third one, where participants enacted dark alone or in small groups. While these three different variations of goth had the same canon of subcultural resources in common (music, style, patterns of cultural consumption), they differed under relevant points of view, such as forms of socialization, their stance on political activism, identity construction processes and even the relationship with urban space. Yet, contrary to the stress on individual differences typical of post-subcultural theories, the Milanese variations of goth appear to have been socially shared and connected to participation in different and specific sets of social practices of subcultural enactment.

Keywords: goth, subculture, enactment, practices, canon, scene, 1980s.

For academic research, the spectacular subcultures (Hebdidge, 1979) in the 1980s in Italy are essentially uncharted waters (Tosoni, 2015). Yet, the topic deserves much more sustained attention. Some of these spectacular youth expressions, in fact, emerged in Italy as a peculiarity of the country, and are still almost ignored in the international debate. Most notable is the case of the *Paninari* who arose in Milan in the early 1980s and soon spread all over the country. They were known for their exasperated celebration of the consumerist and hedonistic mainstream culture of those years, flaunted by a rigorous selection of very expensive brand name clothes[2] (Muscau, 2009). Other youth cultures, like Italian punk or goth, represented in turn the local appropriation of canons of symbolic resources (music, style, fashion and other forms of cultural consumption) deriving mainly from the U.K. (Bottà, 2012; Persello, 2016), and usually intercepted through mainstream and independent media. Nevertheless, in this process, those canons were negotiated, revisited, and imbued with new and specific meanings deriving from the local contexts of appropriation. As a consequence, in Italy these youth cultures presented elements of originality that in large part still remain to be described.

As a contribution to fill this gap, this paper will focus on goth — or "dark", as goth has always been known in Italy — in Milan and its hinterland from 1982 to 1992, and it will present a synthesis of the main results of a three-year research project[3], carried out with Emanuela Zuccalà, and recently published in the first monographic work on the topic (Tosoni & Zuccalà, 2013).

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[2] Paninari were celebrated in the song "Paninaro" by Pet Shop Boys, originally released in 1986 as the B-side of the single "Suburbia". The video of "Paninaro" showed examples of the typical *Paninaro* outfit and the iconic places in Milan where they used to gather (see https://youtu.be/ov7riaL5Fbw, last accessed 10/1/2016).

[3] The research project was carried out from 2010 and 2013 and is based on the life histories of 24 subjects chosen with criteria of typological variation among those who participated in the dark subculture by gender, years of participation in the scene (first or second half of the 1980s), role in the scene (DJs, organizers, musicians or simply participants), place of residence (Milan or hinterland). The interviews lasted from three to six hours, and were carried out in one or more sessions. The research also included a collection of photographic documentation of the 1980s and of material artefacts (such as fanzines, brochures, leaflets, demo tapes) that were also used as stimuli for the interviews.

In the chapter that follows I will illustrate, as the most relevant finding of the research, how at least three different forms of subcultural belonging coexisted in Milan: the activist enactment launched by the collective Creature Simili (Kindred Creatures); the enactment of the alternative music clubs and disco scene spread throughout northern Italy; and a third one — typical of, but not exclusive to, the Milanese hinterland — where participants lived the experience of subcultural belonging alone or in small groups. While sharing the same canon of subcultural resources (music, style, patterns of cultural consumption), these variations of dark differed under relevant points of view, such as forms of socialization, stance on political activism, forms of identity construction and even their relationship with urban spaces. Borrowing a concept from the field of Science and Technology Studies, we will refer to these variations as different *enactments* of dark, an enactment being the process in which something is put in the world through a specific set of social practices (Lien & Law, 2011, 2013).

In fact, the objectives of this paper are also methodological. Neither the subculturalist emphasis on the internal coherence and homogeneity of a subculture, nor the post-subculturalist stress on participants' individual differences are in fact fully adequate to approach the Milanese dark. In the second chapter I will clarify how a practice-based approach, with a linchpin in the concept of enactment, is better suited to make visible and describe the different forms of subcultural belonging described in the first chapter. A few final remarks will indicate some of the main questions arising from an enactment approach that the analysis of the case study on Milanese dark will leave, out of necessity, unanswered, as well as some of the directions for further research that are more urgent in order to extend the approach to other forms of subcultures and post-subcultures.

1. Enacting dark in Milan (1982-1992)

The 1980s are known, in Italy, as "the years of *riflusso*" (flow back) (De Michele, 2003; Mudu & Piazza, 2016): under the pressure of the terrorist drift adopted by part of the movement and of severe repression by the state, the experience of the radical movements of the previous decade came to an end (Ginsborg, 2003). At the same time, a new culture of hedonism took shape, celebrating the neoliberal values of private realisation and success, and of wealth, leisure and rampant consumerism. This quick and widespread disengagement from politics, and retreat into the private sphere, profoundly transformed the country not only under social, cultural and political points of view, but also at the level of everyday life, especially in the larger cities. As Mudu and Piazza (2016) write:

> By the end of the 1970s, the presence of the radical left in public spaces, squares and streets — as well as semi-public spaces as bookshops, cinemas and bars — decreased until it had almost disappeared entirely, thus leaving a new generation of activists, students, proletarian youths and unemployed, mostly young people between 16 and 25 years, with almost no spaces or links to previous experiences (p. 112).

Milan was a paradigmatic example of these tendencies (Foot, 2001). On one hand, in fact, the city had already undergone an intense process of deindustrialization, assuming at the same time a leading role in sectors like fashion, finance, design and advertisement. Thanks also to the private media empire of future Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi (Statham, 1996), that in the city had — and has — its headquarters, Milan became the symbol of the celebration of optimism, wealth and leisure that started characterizing the mainstream culture of the Italian 1980s. On the other hand, the crackdown on all countercultural forms of expression was dramatically changing everyday life in the city, as pointed out by one of our interviewees:

> Milano was changing. It had become difficult to move freely in the city because it had become obvious that we would have been stopped and controlled by the police one, two, three, or even four times. It was the beginning of what has been called '*riflusso*': people locked themselves up in their homes, political engagement started to fade, and everybody started to

live their own life (…). Younger people, who had not lived the 1970s, felt the burden of the on-going repression, but were unable to give it a political interpretation. They simply lived it as a limitation of their freedom (Angela, F).[4]

It is in this context that new and spectacular forms of youth expression made their appearance in the city, some of them assuming a position of open conflict against the on-going socio-political processes: this was, in particular, the case of militant punk, but also of a first enactment of dark, characterized by its engagement in political activism: the one initially introduced and promoted by the Creature Simili collective.

1.1. Creature Simili and activist enactment of dark

"Creature Simili" — a term that could be translated as "Kindred Creatures" — was the name used by militant punx[5] of the anarchic squat Virus to address the darks that hung out at the squat, and came with a sort of derogatory flavour. Punx were intent on pointing out that the darks might be similar to them, but they were not "real" punk. In their eyes, in fact, they were politically ambiguous since they shirked the rigid line of frontal political contraposition and resistance that the squat had chosen, and pursued through intense activist activities, like leafleting, public protests, and occasional clashes with the police. Moreover, all the cultural activities of the squat — such as meetings and assemblies — were rigidly politicized; all mandatorily addressing issues related to resistance to the on-going repression, anti-fascism, and defence of the squat and of other "freed spaces". The policies in respects to what could be performed on the Virus stage were a clear example of this cultural approach: all the bands that were invited to play at the squat (like Wretched and Negazione) addressed in their lyrics the same political themes that were of concern to punx, and could not perform if they did not participate at the political activities of the squat. Other issues did not receive much attention, including those that were held as crucial by Creature Simili: issues related to identity and self-expression, to the body and to sexuality. In the same way, while punx could privately "indulge" in forms of expression like art, literature or theatre, these activities were by and large perceived as not relevant for the political struggle, and therefore dismissed as of secondary relevance when not forms of political disengagement.

While identifying with the anarchic political beliefs of the squat, Creature Simili found this cultural line too suffocating and inadequate to address the new existential concerns that were arising at those times and that they took into primary consideration: concerns related to identity and to the struggle for self-determination in a society where the neoliberal values of advanced capitalism had become mainstream. Conversely, they found these anxieties resonating deeply within the post-punk music that was coming mainly from the U.K. at that time, and with the cultural resources that post-punk music was deeply intertwined with: from French existentialism and the historical avant-garde, to the theatre of Antoin Artaud and novels by Kafka.

> People from the Virus were not very interested in those things. They wanted a band to be politically engaged, so all you heard talk about were bands like Crass, Flux of Pink Indians, Anti Cimex: anarchic bands, that had many experiences in common with them. Punx were interested in music, but above all in politics. Of course, if you talked with people from the Virus, they knew who Siouxsie and the Banshees, Joy Division, Killing Joke or Bauhaus were. But they didn't fit that much with their way of seeing things: Bauhaus never sung about anarchy, squats, or protests against nuclear power or war (Roy, M).

Some events exacerbated these divergences, like the harsh protest against the Italian band CCCP in February 1984, when the band was invited to play at the Virus by Creature Simili and was

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[4] All the reported excerpts of interviews are taken from Tosoni & Zuccalà, 2013, and translated by the author.

[5] The x in "punx" is the way in which these militant anarchic punks marked their difference from other forms — enactments — of punk.

heckled by the punx[6]. The group left the squat, created a new collective, and officially called it by the same name that the punx used to address them, Creature Simili.

In any case, leaving the squat did not imply political disengagement. The new collective kept participating in the political activities of the Virus, and started to organize others of their own. They called them "mental attacks": sorts of situationist actions performed on Saturday afternoons in the main commercial streets of Milan, aimed at sensitizing people to problems like the lack of non-commercial spaces for cultural production.

The enactment of dark introduced by Creature Simili had a very important role in shaping the experience of subcultural belonging not only in Milan and in Northern Italy but also all over the country. Since 1982, in fact, *Quelli di Amen* (The People of Amen) — a relevant group within Creature Simili — published *Amen*, the first and most important Italian dark fanzine. *Amen* was distributed all over Italy in more than two thousand copies, and each issue included a tape of Italian post-punk bands. As was typical of this enactment of dark, the editorial line of the fanzine included music along with political issues related to religion, homeland and nationalism, sexuality and gender:

> [We devoted a lot of] attention to sexuality (...), to the urgency of getting rid of the archaic legacies of the past (...), [to] transgender, homosexuality, self-determination (...). At that time, we thought that *Amen* was more an anomaly than an integral part within the dark scene, but I realize now that for many people we were a point of reference. We were so surprised to sell so many copies and receive so many letters (Angela, F).

By 1984, thanks to their political activities, Creature Simili had a reputation within what was left of the radical left of the city, barely hit by the on-going repression. After some failed attempts to occupy a space in the city, they obtained, along with some activists from the Virus, a permanent and independent space within Leoncavallo, at that time the most important squat run by *Autonomia Operaia* (Autonomism) (De Sario, 2012). At Leoncavallo, in fact, Quelli di Amen had successfully organized several post-punk gigs since 1982. This space, called Helter Skelter, soon became one of the most important points of reference for the dark scene of all of Northern Italy and Switzerland. The cultural line proposed by Helter Skelter was once again characterized by the same radically politicized and activist stance that had already been typical of Creature Simili and Amen. At the same time, Helter Skelter organized, in addition to political actions, cultural activities of international notoriety with bands, artists and filmmakers invited from all over Europe.

This experience, that among other things would introduce cyberpunk in Italy, lasted until 1987 when it came to an end (due to an internal crisis within its organizing group), together with the enactment of dark it promoted.

1.2. Enacting dark at Hysterika

The end of the Helter Skelter experience didn't imply the end of the first dark-wave in Milan since the enactment of dark they proposed was not the only one in the city. A second relevant one had in fact emerged in 1983-1984, in the alternative music club scene that had spread all over Northern Italy and had its centre at the Milanese disco, Hysterika.

As punks had initially looked down on Creature Simili, Creature Simili looked down on people enacting dark in this different way, considering them posers, and dismissing them as interested only in fashion and in what they held as the most superficial aspects of the subculture.

> At the beginning, we kinda laughed at them, because it seemed just fashion to us: something very superficial (Nino, M).

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[6] For more on the incident, see (Tosoni, 2015b).

For Creature Simili, in fact, "authenticity" and subcultural belonging had to be certified with coherence between cultural consumption (a specific canon in the fields of music, movies, theatre, literature, and art), style and involvement in activist practices. On the contrary, for the participants at the alternative music club scenes, those practices were not relevant to enact dark, even if many of them may have been politically active on a personal level:

> The problem was that we were non-politically active, as they used to say: we didn't go around putting up posters; we didn't organize concerts. We did participate at demonstrations: many of us did. But we didn't participate as a group (Sergio, M).

People involved in this second enactment of dark had, in fact, a completely different take on politics. Dismissing any hope of changing a society that characterized the radical movement of the 1970s, for Creature Simili (and for punx), active political struggle assumed an ethical value in itself, and became a relevant aspect of identity: as we have stated, it certified authenticity. For the people at Hysterika, on the contrary, if the social and political tendencies of the 1980s could not be contrasted, there was no point in paying the high personal price of political activism under the harsh repression of the early and mid-1980s. Resistance had to be carried out through identity politics, and at a cultural level. One of our informants summed up this position very clearly:

> If there's no choice, I will do what I have to do, but don't ask me to believe in all of this, and to be what you want me to be (Sergio, M).

Yet, this silent refusal to adopt the new values of consumerism, success and wealth had to be publicly exhibited through visual shock provoked by clothes, makeup and hair styles: it was the "semiotic guerrilla" already described by Hebdidge (1979) for punks in the UK. Especially by women, this shock factor was a way to refuse and deconstruct the gender stereotypes promoted by television and other media at that time:

> I didn't wear makeup properly. It would be more correct to say that I drew stuff on my face: spiders, bats, spider webs. I wore miniskirts, torn stockings, and big long shirts that completely hid my body. And of course, smeared lipstick. I didn't care that people found me ugly, unattractive and not feminine at all. If being feminine meant being that [other] way, then I preferred not to be classifiable at all (Sara, F).

This sort of identity politics overheated the relevance of fashion and style, and of urban spaces (in particular, the city center) as a sort of theater: a stage where one could show off their refusal of mainstream values. Not surprisingly, within this enactment, style was by far more spectacular than in the politically activist one. For Creature Simili, in fact, urban space was more a space for political action than a stage where to be seen.

Consequently, for this second enactment of dark, posers were those who changed their style depending on the occasion, shifting to a conventional way of dressing to avoid conflict, for example, with teachers or employers: since aesthetic assumed an ethical value, a chameleon attitude was deprecated as a sort of betrayal.

Admittedly, in this enactment of dark, the way of dressing also changed depending on the situation: especially in discos and clubs, attended on a regular basis, clothes were more sophisticated and, especially for women, also more openly seductive and sexualized (Brill, 2008). In a way that was completely unknown within the enactment of Creature Simili, being able to dress properly, with taste and creativity, was actually a way to gather "subcultural capital" (Brill, 2007), gaining a reputation within the scene. Botched attire could even imply marginalization from the group:

> There were differences in style, but in any case style mattered. I remember these guys: we called them 'the prodigies' for their look, because, in our opinion, their style was very coarse. In our view they were kinda (…) boorish, because of their style, basically (Paola, F.).[7]

The same applies to the ability to show refined competencies in terms of cultural consumption, especially in music. Once again, always being up to date and in the know about niche bands inside the post-punk canon was an important way to gain a reputation:

> All of us listened to The Cure, Bauhaus, Joy Division, and Sisters Of Mercy. The first band that made you take a qualitative leap was the Virgin Prunes. Older people listened to them. They were more extreme; the genre started to change. I remember one time I was talking with a girl about them and she told me, 'You know, I thought you were a newbie, but I was wrong...' So, to convince her that I was not an idiot, I had to talk to her about a certain kind of music, make her understand that, even if my hair was backcombed, I was not just (…) The Cure, you know. And later I behaved like that with other people when Industrial came out. Listening to that kind of music meant that you were less an idiot than other people, because you couldn't stop at the music from 1982, 1983, 1984. You had to move beyond (Sergio, M).

Hysterika closed in 1992, and this date could also be symbolically regarded as the end of this second enactment of dark. Even if in the 1990s new clubs would open in Milan and its hinterland, dark would be enacted in a new and different way: practices performed in urban spaces — like socializing and "shocking" — would become less relevant; a strict coherence in style would become less mandatory, as aesthetic and ethic would progressively lose their close connection; dark would become mainly a club culture, and the stylistic hybridization with fetish would hypersexualize clothing. Many of the people who in the 1980s had brought the alternative music club scene to life would move to the new techno rave scene, either as participants or organizers.

1.3. Enacting dark alone

Along with these two, the interviewees report a third enactment of dark, even if in this case it did not have a proper scene — if not mediated. Dark, in fact, was also enacted alone, or in small groups of people, not infrequently belonging to different subcultures. This way of living the subculture was typical of, but not exclusive to, the small towns neighboring Milan. In this case, subcultural belonging — the feeling of being part of a broader symbolic community — was not sustained by the daily participation to large groups of people (like what happened in the other two enactments), but mainly through cultural consumption:

> There were people who owned so much stuff — vinyl records, books, clothes — and the desire to accumulate was important. It was something new and different from the previous cultures. It was the construction of a personal world, to be furnished piece by piece, and the longing to create a sort of shelter that was not immediately conflictual (Roxie, F.).

Of course, music played a key role, even if this didn't imply attending music clubs: the practice of going dancing was not relevant to enact dark; when it was not openly refused as too frivolous. On the contrary, concerts where attended with religious enthusiasm as a sort of rite during which the community, otherwise only symbolic, became temporarily embodied:

> I was almost fifteen and I didn't go dancing in dark clubs, so attending a concert was something essential and unique (…), it meant feeling part of a community, of a movement. When everybody was singing the lyrics of a song by The Cure together, and I was among them, I could finally feel that it was not only me, secluded in my room, obsessively listening to Faith and Pornography. It was a sort of liberating rite (Sara, F).

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[7] This excerpt is quoted directly from the source interviews and does not appear in Tosoni & Zuccalà (2013).

Some of these concerts were organized by Quelli di Amen — and at a later point by Helter Skelter at the Leoncavallo squat:

> The artworks [we used to advertise our concerts] were very targeted, and so we discovered a whole universe of isolated people dressing in black. You could really feel that these people had found a situation in which they could recognize each other. For the first time, we saw so many people that probably had a lot in common, and that had developed their interests in a way that was defiladed, intimate, segregated in closed spaces: they had undergone a sort of transformation in their own private sphere, with gothic literature, H.P. Lovecraft and Edgar Allan Poe as milestones, but not overlooking the Italian *Scapigliatura* movement, romanticism, and decadent poets. (…) It was very surprising to see so many people sharing a common identity (Angela, F).

In any case, the explorations of the subcultural canon were deep and systematic not only in music, but also in theatre, literature, art, and cinema, often chasing the lavish homages and quotations that could be generously found in post-punk band lyrics. Reading fanzines was also very important, and some of them were published regularly — sometimes in very few copies — by "isolated" darks themselves.

In this respect, these darks cannot be regarded as those subjects who, addressing hip-hop and grime Todd Dedman (2011) calls "peripherals" (those who limit their participation to the subculture to superficial forms of consumption), and who he distinguishes from "purists" (those who shape the subculture more actively). This enactment of dark had, in fact, its own *peripherals* and *purists*, since isolated darks often had very refined and articulate competencies in terms of cultural consumption and were often very active in the DIY production of music and fanzines.

In any case, publishing and reading fanzines was not the only form of mediated communication sustaining this form of subcultural belonging: writing letters all over Italy to a vast network of pen pals (whose addresses could be found in those same fanzines and magazines) was a practice of primary importance, and somehow it anticipated the role that the Internet would play years later, (Hodkinson, 2003):

> (…) I started putting ads in music magazines, looking for pen pals, to find people that might somehow be similar to me. I exchanged letters with so many people (…): sometimes it looked like my mailbox was about to explode! (…) I met some of them in person, but many wrote to me from far away, even from Sicily (…). I understood that many of them were isolated, just like me, and we all dreamt about London (…). One of my pen pals even became my first boyfriend: we exchanged letters for two years before seeing each other for the first time! Then, later on, I created my own fanzine: *Settimo Senso* (Donatella, F).

Finally, this last enactment of dark had the same identity politics and the same strategy of visual shock performed in public spaces in common with the alternative music clubs. In many cases, it was expressed in the small towns neighbouring Milan, where enacting dark in public was harder since it carried the risk of verbal and sometimes even physical violence. Not surprisingly, isolated darks were therefore the ones that criticized more fiercely, as a sign of inauthenticity, the camouflage of style that, as we have seen, was also deprecated in the music club scene. Isolated and music club darks also shared the same hangouts in Milan — pubs, music shops, clothes shops — that those who lived out of the city reached by train every Saturday afternoon to find the subcultural goods that could not be found in their hometowns.

2. Conclusions: For an enactment approach in the study of subcultures (and post-subcultures).

In his pivotal work on UK goth in the 1990s (Hodkinson 2002), Paul Hodkinson attempts "to rework [the concept of] subculture (…) through indicators of group 'substance', including shared identity, commitment, distinctiveness and a degree of autonomy with respect to spaces and networks."

(Hodkinson 2016, p. 634). Dark in Milan in the 1980s satisfied all these criteria: yet, it still presented internal variations that wouldn't be adequately addressed without more fine-tuned methodological guidelines.

The approach we have proposed here has its linchpin in a derivation of the concept of "enactment" from the field of STS, where it was introduced to deal with issues of sameness and difference. As its proponents John Law and Marianne Elisabeth Lien sum it up, adopting an enactment approach implies two key moves:

> We do without the assumption that there are goths out there with a definite form, in existence outside the practices in which they are being done. That is the first move. And then, here's the second, it follows that since those practices aren't the same, different and multiple goths subsist in different and multiple worlds (Law & Lien, 2013, p. 366).

Actually, the authors are referring to salmons, not goths, but the point I am making here is that what works for salmons will also work for goths — and other subcultures (or post-subcultures). Addressing youth cultures in terms of enactments implies, in fact, a focus on the specific social practices in which a subcultural canon is put into play — going dancing, consuming, being politically active and so on and so forth.

Helping tackle relevant internal variations of a subculture is not the only advantage of this perspective: as we have tried to demonstrate, attention to the performative aspect of each practice may also help to gain a more subtle understanding of the forms of subcultural belonging than other traditional semiotic approaches. We have seen, for example, how in all the described enactments, style and clothes can be regarded as forms of "semiotic guerrilla". Yet, attention to the performative aspects of clothing allows us to describe how "dressing" may vary from social practice to social practice, and how attire in a disco may differ from the clothes worn to socialize (or shock) in urban spaces.

Finally, methodological attention centred on practices may help to circumvent the present frontal contraposition (Blackman, 2005; Bennet, 2011) — or even the stalemate (Woodman & Wyn, 2015) — between subculturalist (Shildrick & MacDonald, 2006) and post-subculturalist approaches (Muggleton, 2000; Bennet 2015) to youth cultures. An enactment approach, in fact, does not imply a stress on the stable, coherent and communitarian character of youth identity suggested by the concept of subculture. And at the same time, it does not imply the stress on fragmented and individualist forms of identity construction and on individual variations (Hesmondhalgh, 2005) advocated by concepts like *neo-tribe* (Bennet, 2005), or *lifestyle* (Miles, 2000) — but actually also by alternative approaches to performativity (Wood, 2003; Driver 2011). On one hand, in fact, a subculture may be enacted in several different ways, maintaining distinctiveness in case of internal fragmentation. On the other hand, each practice that constitutes an enactment, as well as each enactment as a distinct set of practices, has a social and supra-individual character, transcending the specificities of individual practitioners (Schatzki, 1996). This intermediate level between the collective-communitarian and the individual may represent a fruitful common ground both for subculturalist and post-subculturalist approaches.

Yet, an enactment approach opens several theoretical questions that the specificity — and the limitations — of the present case study on darks in Milan in the 1980s has inevitably left unanswered, but that cannot be avoided if the approach has to be extended to other subcultures and post-subcultures. At least three of them seem particularly urgent:

First of all, more research is needed on the relationship between subcultural canons and subcultural enactments. Goth, in fact, is characterized by a canon that is particularly stable (Hodkinson, 2002). Yet, the relationship between an enactment and a canon is always of mutual shaping: in an enactment, a canon is always put into play, restated, but also renegotiated. Addressing other youth cultures could help through the observation of alternative — and more dynamic — forms of this relationship, as well as addressing the historical transformations of these cultures.

Second, the relationship between the social level (of the enactments) and the individual level needs further exploration. In our case study, we have shown how some practices are inseparably linked to an enactment, while others — held as not relevant — are delegated to the individual choices of the practitioners: for example, political activism is an integral part of the first enactment, while it is regarded as a non-essential individual choice in the other two. At the same time, we have seen how, even in their non-subcultural practices, subjects are requested to have coherence in style. Addressing other forms of youth cultures may help researchers observe different forms of integration between the participation in subcultural practices and the individual level, and to complement the ways in which the individual level is generally addressed — that is, through a focus on attributions of meaning, on motivational structures and on different levels of commitment.

Finally, in the present case we have shown how each enactment is connected to particular places: some of them in an exclusive way, others shared with other enactments — serving therefore as a common ground and points of contact and circulation between all the enactments. Addressing other cases of youth culture may help to go beyond the specificities of the case study, achieving a better understanding of the relationship between enactments, scenes, material places and places mediated by computer communication — or by other media.

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