

Univerzita Palackého
Filozofická fakulta
Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Rock and roll in American Culture in the Works of Bill Haley,
Chuck Berry and Elvis Presley
(Master Thesis)

Martina Broulová
(Anglická filologie)

Supervisor: Mgr. Jiří Flajšar, Ph.D.

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Autor: **Martina Broulová**

Studijní obor: Anglická filologie

Vedoucí práce: **Mgr. Jiří Flajšar, Ph.D.**

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V Nové Pace dne 17. 6. 2012

Martina Broulová

Děkuji vedoucímu mé diplomové práce Mgr. Jiřímu Flajšarovi, Ph.D. za užitečné rady a připomínky. Dále panu doktorovi děkuji za podnětné diskuze a za trpělivost při zodpovídání mých dotazů.

Mé poděkování také patří celé mé rodině, která mi poskytla materiální i psychickou podporu během studia, bez jejich pomoci bych studium nikdy nemohla uskutečnit. Velké poděkování patří i všem univerzitním přátelům, kteří mi byli oporou.

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Abstract

The aim of the thesis is to cover the era of the birth of rock and roll in American culture in the mid-1950s with the major focus on the whole life and career of the three significant representatives of this genre, Bill Haley, Chuck Berry and Elvis Presley. Firstly a theoretical background of the development of rock and roll in America will be provided, together with the opinions of the society, the revolution that rock and roll brought, and the description of the aspects that helped within the popularization of this genre. It is presupposed that the particular chapters about the singers will reveal the reasons of their popularity and the matters that affected their disappearance or the diminishing fame. Each chapter about a performer will be followed by the analysis of four chosen hits. The findings will be summarized in the conclusion.

Key words

Rock and roll, American culture, young generation, sexuality, Bill Haley, Chuck Berry, Elvis Presley.

Anotace

Cílem této práce je popsat období vzniku rock and rollu v americké kultuře v polovině padesátých let dvacátého století, práce je zaměřena především na život a kariéru třech významných představitelů tohoto žánru hudby, a to Billa Haleyho, Chucka Berryho a Elvise Presleyho. Nejdříve bude poskytnuta teorie týkající se vývoje rock and rollu ve Spojených státech spolu s názory společnosti a revolucí, kterou rock and roll přinesl. Popis aspektů, které napomohly popularizaci tohoto žánru bude následovat. Předpokládá se, že jednotlivé kapitoly o zpěvácích odhalí důvody jejich popularity a také záležitosti, které ovlivnily jejich zánik nebo slábnoucí slávu. Každou kapitolu o umělci následuje analýza čtyř vybraných hitů. Zjištění budou shrnuta v závěru práce.

Klíčová slova

Rock and roll, americká kultura, generace mladistvých, sexualita, Bill Haley, Chuck Berry, Elvis Presley.

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1 Introduction

The aim of the thesis is to examine the establishment of rock and roll in American culture in the 1950s. The main focus involves rock and roll musicians: Bill Haley, Chuck Berry and Elvis Presley.

The thesis will begin with the description of the term popular music and its impact on the listeners. Moreover, the rock and roll inspiration factor in the form of rhythm and blues and country music style will be inspected. Concerning the flourish of rock and roll in America the necessity to characterize the attitude of the society, especially the teenagers, towards this music will be important. The positive judgements as well as negative ones will be covered.

The following chapter will provide an outline of rock and roll's transformation of the music sphere, its origins and the major figures of the new revolutionary rock and roll ideas. Regarding the outputs the thesis will also focus on the sexual element in the rock and roll music. The films with rock and roll theme and starring rock and roll musicians will be briefly described. The last subchapter will provide a characteristics of the recording companies that were also one of the major co-operators within the rock and roll music formation.

Subsequently, the thesis will concentrate on the selected rock and roll stars; Bill Haley, Chuck Berry and Elvis Presley. Every chapter about a singer will offer a detailed account of the personal life as well as career proceedings and falls. It is assumable that the beginnings of their musical line were influenced by a diversity of aspects and strokes of luck; the thesis will convey the justification. Concerning the names of the musicians, it is obvious who will be the sovereign celebrity of the thesis. Elvis Presley will occupy the longest part of the thesis, since his contribution to rock and roll music in America was certainly the biggest one as well as the most famous. Each characteristics of the singer will present a variety of singing features and skills. The typology of nature and inherited aptitudes of Haley, Berry and Presley will be given to.

As a matter of course, these chapters will primarily deal with the music achievements in the form of the fame of the songs as well as the celebrity of the performers. Each chapter will contain a summary of the role of the singer in the rock and roll music in American culture and his contribution to it. The chapters dealing with the musicians are immediately followed by the analysis of their songs.

The songs for the analysis will be chosen according to their success described in the thesis, and also with regard to their suitability for the beginnings of rock and roll in America in the mid-1950s. The analysis will mainly include my own ideas about this music with regard to the theoretical background from the opening chapters.

Lastly, the findings and the interesting facts will be recapitulated in the conclusion.

2 Rock and roll background

2.1 Popular music

Music is the phenomenon that occurs in people's everyday life. It affects our senses, relaxes our mind and evokes positive cogitation. Some individuals use music as a time shortening device. Other individuals listen to music solely for aesthetic purposes. The apparent feature of music is the enrichment of human life.

“I believe my music can make the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf and dumb hear and talk... it regenerates the heart and makes the liver quiver, the bladder splatter, the knees freeze.” Little Richard (Penniman), *The Rolling Stone Interviews*¹

Popular music has become an indivisible component of the human existence. Charles Hamm describes “popular song as a piece of music that is written for, and most often performed by, a single voice or a small group of singers accompanied by some sort of band.”² Rock and roll doubtlessly fits into the group of popular music. “Popular music like so much of American culture, reflects a kaleidoscope of contributions, a cross-fertilization of styles, and blending of dreams.”³ Every individual discovers in popular music different features, which serve for distinctive purposes. The sovereign output is the variety of music that matches the diversity of requirements of the audience.

The following chapters depict the origins of rock and roll and clarify the features of this genre of popular music.

2.2 Rhythm and blues and country influence

Black music has always been central to pop; and rock and roll, in using black musical ideas, used ideas that were already, in a diluted and distorted form, a part of the mainstream of mass culture.⁴

¹ Charles Hamm, *Yesterdays: Popular Song In America* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1983), introductory citations.

² Hamm xvii.

³ Larry Starr & Christopher Waterman, *American Popular Music* (Washington: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of International Information Programs, 2008), 3.

⁴ Simon Frith, *Sound effects: youth, leisure, and the politics of rock* (London: Constable, 1983), 15.

The fact that black music had an impact on rock and roll, the popular genre of the American music, cannot be disproved. Black music was at all times a part of a white culture in America, but no one was willing to admit it and listen to it, until the turnover in the 1950s when it massively attacked the young generation.⁵

Throughout the decade following World War II the American music scene was dominated by rhythm and blues.⁶ *The Encyclopedia of Pop, Rock & Soul* asserts the necessity to explore rhythm and blues, soul and rock as the interconnected genres because one cannot be examined without the other. Rock music was surely rooted in rhythm and blues. Furthermore, *The Encyclopedia* professes the 1950s conversion of rhythm and blues into rock and roll, and later expansion into soul within the black music market.⁷

There exists no doubt that rock and roll was not influenced by this genre, more precisely rhythm and blues. Dorůžka claims that black rhythm and blues was dense and loud enough to keep up with rock and roll. Rhythm and blues meant something prohibited and bizarre for white community; the attraction was powerful. The result of the growing interest of white audience into black music was the establishment of the radio programme “*Moondog’s Rock-and-Roll Party*” conducted by Alan Freed.⁸ Black rhythm and blues received a new label rock and roll and further on it started to be dominated by white singers, who satisfied the demands of the audience and market.⁹ Gillet describes rhythm and blues in the following way:

The vocal styles were harsh, the songs explicit, the dominant instruments - saxophone, piano, guitar, drums – were played loudly and with an emphatic dance rhythm, the production of the records was crude. The prevailing emotion was excitement.¹⁰

⁵ Frith 15-16.

⁶ Charlie Gillet, *The sound of the city: the rise of rock and roll* (London : Souvenir Press, 1996), 10.

⁷ Johnny Ottis, “R&B, Soul and the Roots of Rock” in *Encyclopedia of pop, rock & soul*, by Irwin Stambler (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1974), 1.

⁸ Lubomír Dorůžka, *Panoráma populární hudby 1918/1978 aneb Nevšední písničkáři všedních dní* (Praha : Mladá fronta, 1987), 147.

⁹ Karel Veselý, *Hudba ohně: radikální černá hudba od jazzu po hip hop a dále* (Praha: BigBoss, 2010), 32.

¹⁰ Gillet 10-11.

The mutual features of rock and roll and rhythm and blues are noticeable. Concerning the emotion both music genres burst with passionate feelings. Certainly, this is the proof that rhythm and blues implied the variety. Vlček states that the first era of rock comes also from country, and the influence by the “structures” and “instrumentation” of black rhythm and blues is apparent. Unsurprisingly, some of the first songs, for example “Rock Around The Clock,” are practically taken up from black rhythm and blues.¹¹ Rock and roll as a beginning genre of popular music in America searched for the inspiration.

Black musicians always protested against rock and roll and claimed that it is not anything innovative. The protests were due to the fact that the music, which the white singers established, was not new, the black singers used to do it long before them.¹² “Any music by black performers enjoying popularity on the white market was labelled rock and roll after 1955.”¹³ As a consequence rock and roll may be considered a shelter term for the music of the mid-1950s.

As far as the country music influence is concerned; as well as rhythm and blues this music dealt with shocking phases of the society of the South mainly regarding racial discrimination and sex life. The two styles were finally mingled together to form rock and roll.¹⁴ Rock and roll may be clearly described as a music that represents both previously mentioned genres of popular music. Moreover country music is declared by Frith to be: “music for public celebration, for collective excitement, for religious expression and social commentary.”¹⁵ The term that for certain characterizes rock and roll is diversity. It was not created as a unique music genre that established its own innovative features. Rock and roll is rather a music that contains a variety of influences. The combination of rhythm and blues with country and western music produced a revolution in the sphere of popular music in America approximately in the second half of the 1950s.

¹¹ Josef Vlček, *Rockové směry a styly* (Praha: Ústav pro kulturně výchovnou činnost, 1988), 56.

¹² Dorůžka 146.

¹³ Hamm 408.

¹⁴ Frith 24.

¹⁵ Frith 24.

2.3 Society and the birth of rock and roll

At the beginning of the 1950s “a sense of uniformity” was spreading throughout American society. All layers of the society followed the standards set after World War II. The stereotypical behaviour influenced every family; the society presupposed that men acted in family as a money making figures and women took care of the household. But the stereotypical way of living was not approved by all the members of the society.¹⁶ “Musicians and artists rebelled...”¹⁷ Because of the dissatisfaction, the state of being silent and following the established patterns was not an acceptable situation for everyone.

“The advent of rock and roll music in the mid-1950s brought enormous changes to American popular music.”¹⁸ But not only popular music was transformed; the changes had “great cultural significance”.¹⁹ An alternation in the popular music appeared and in addition the audience started to vary. “The new audience was dominated by the so-called baby boom generation born immediately following World War II.”²⁰ Grossberg in his essay claims: “The frustrations, desires, fears and resentments of puberty provide much of the energy and many of the concerns of rock and roll”.²¹ Obviously, the new audience meant changes; the teenagers pulled down the boundaries and rocked. This was something that society was not accustomed to in the previous years, and it explains the displeasure of a good deal of people and the excitement of the others. “Since the War, adolescents have made a greater show of enjoying themselves than they ever did before.”²² Perhaps the horrors of the War that the world had to experience loosened the teenagers’ boundaries, or the constant threat of cold war, atomic bomb and McCarthyism led them to enjoy every single moment.²³ There simply existed a desire to put all the fears behind.

¹⁶ Howard Cincotta, ed., *An Outline of American History* (United States Information Agency, 1994), 296-7.

¹⁷ Cincotta, 1994, 297.

¹⁸ Starr & Waterman 62.

¹⁹ Starr & Waterman 62.

²⁰ Starr & Waterman 62.

²¹ Lawrence Grossberg, “Boring Day in Paradise: Rock and Roll and the Empowerment of Everyday Life,” *Popular Music, Vol. 4, Performers and Audiences* 228, (1984), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/853365> (accessed February 15, 2012).

²² Gillet 15.

²³ Grossberg 229.

“The more the adult world emphasized their children’s uniqueness and promised them paradise, the angrier, more frustrated and more insecure they grew.”²⁴ And the feeling of the insecurity had to be eliminated. The society was critical towards the growth of the adolescent culture and this made the young generation even more rebellious. They regarded themselves to be somebody unique and special, the kind of people that Gillet names “new breed”.²⁵ Evidently, the generation gap between adolescents and the rest of the society was growing. Not only the music created the rebellious feelings in the teenagers but also the films dealing with the youth culture and life appeared. *The Wild One* (1954) and *Rebel without a Cause* (1955) set the examples, concerning the expression, dressing and thinking, for young boys and girls that they were longing for following.²⁶ The lack of the comprehension from the society was the cause of disputes. “The significance of Holden Caulfield, James Dean, Marlon Brando and the Beats as cultural heroes lies in their struggle to achieve some identity.”²⁷ The adolescents wanted to discover their own identity as well, and rock and roll was the medium through which they could escape or at least put the rest of the world into oblivion for a moment.

Rock treats the problems of puberty, it draws on and articulates the psychological and physical tensions of adolescence, it accompanies the moment when boys and girls learn their repertoire of public sexual behaviour.²⁸

To put it briefly, rock and roll evidently served the purpose of the youngsters. If the adolescent culture did not emerge in the 1950s, rock and roll would not have been so fashionable. It is with no doubt that the young generation made rock and roll widespread and popular; and in some respects unpopular for their parents. But the way how the publicity was positive or negative did not matter, when it still meant that rock and roll was being heard about.

²⁴ Grossberg 229.

²⁵ Gillet 15.

²⁶ Gillet 15.

²⁷ Grossberg 230.

²⁸ Simon Frith, Angela McRobbie, “Rock and Sexuality,” in *On record: rock, pop and the written word*, ed. Simon Frith and Andrew Goodwin (London: Routledge, 1994), 371.

2.5 Summary

The second chapter provides the relevant background information that is essential for the following comprehensive observation of rock and roll and the three significant representatives of this genre. This chapter briefly described popular music as the sphere where rock and roll definitely belongs. Rhythm and blues description is an indivisible ingredient to the rock and roll analysis concerning the inspiration. Perceptibly, if it were not for rhythm and blues, rock and roll would not have been born. Moreover this chapter dealt with the young audience. The young generation plays an apparent role in the creation, and more exactly in the distribution and popularization of rock and roll. Chapter number 3 presents a deeper survey of rock and roll.

3 The new era

3.1 The beginnings rock and roll

The title rock and roll was first used by previously mentioned DJ Alan Freed in 1951 on the Moondog House programme on WJW radio.²⁹ “The term “rock ‘n’ roll” itself was derived from the many references to “rockin” and “rollin” found in rhythm & blues songs and on race records.”³⁰ “Few people knew that rockin and rollin was a black euphemism for sexual intercourse.”³¹ It may be guessed, whether the attitude of the public have changed after the recognition of the exact meaning of the lyrics that were sang, but it probably aroused even bigger ecstasy.

Gillet describes the difficulty to point out the precise period of the establishment of rock and roll.³² “The term had been in use in blues songs to describe lovemaking long before it came to signify a dance beat.”³³ While the blues singers already used the term rock and roll; rock and roll as a genre of popular music was not created yet. It is questionable whether the title rock and roll would exist or not, if there had not been for the blues singers.

“This new music was merely the tip of an iceberg, a visible clue that American life and culture were undergoing violent, traumatic changes.”³⁴ The impact on the masses in America was apparent, even though rock and roll evoked miscellaneous impressions. “If you were young in the 1950s, no matter where you lived, no matter what your race or class, rock and roll was your music.”³⁵ Evidently, the major influence fell on the young generation.

A question to pose is who stands behind the birth of rock and roll. All the music theoreticians, including Hamm, agree on the fact that it was Bill Halley who introduced the first rock and roll hit to the music market. Even though “Rock

²⁹ Vesely 40.

³⁰ Starr & Waterman 63.

³¹ Donald Clarke, *The Rise and Fall of Popular Music* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 373.

³² Gillet 3.

³³ Gillet 3.

³⁴ Hamm 391.

³⁵ Starr & Waterman 62.

"Around the Clock" is considered a first piece of rock and roll, it had a predecessor in the record called "Shake, Rattle, and Roll" also by Haley, which was released one year earlier in 1954.³⁶ Another successful artist in the American rock and roll world following Bill Haley was Chuck Berry. He came into the consciousness with his song "Maybellene." But the immense achievements belong to the best known rock and roll singer Elvis Presley. His first single "Heartbreak Hotel" was between the top records for two months and was followed by several other number one hits.³⁷ The formerly mentioned singers will be observed in more detail hereafter in the thesis. Surely, the credit for rock and roll mania belongs to them.

3.2 Rock and roll revolution

As it was mentioned beforehand the rock and roll wave of the mid-1950s flooded the United States with the immense speed. No force could prevent it. But where the positive aspects exist there inevitably had to be the opposition. In the case of rock and roll several objectors were present. First who blamed the new music era was the angry older generation, who complained about the children's behaviour corruption. The youth culture rebellion was enormous. Other defendant came with the disapproving suggestions in 1958. The daily paper *The Chicago Defender* published an article about rock and roll being a disease; furthermore claiming that the white individuals were pulled down to the layer of black society, and declaring that the major negative cues originate from *The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People*. Other objections were raised by *The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers* who blamed *BMI* organization for unfair operations concerning the persuasion of the audience into rock and roll through the usage of radio.³⁸ Obviously, the doubts of the music industry and the audience were enormous but rock and roll did not resign nor gave up the energy.

Rock and roll outbreak responded to the previously standardized popular music movements and to the habits of an antecedent society. However in the first

³⁶ Hamm 394.

³⁷ Hamm 394.

³⁸ Vesely 42.

years of the existence of rock and roll, the disapproval was not expressed explicitly, the verbal protest arrived later.³⁹

“In truth this music was taken by most people in 1955 as shocking, exciting, and most of all, extraordinary different from what had preceded it.”⁴⁰ The reaction of the audience varied, young generation was ecstatic about rock and roll while the older generation was distressed. “Most people who were young then, upon hearing “golden oldies” now, tend to reminisce about a happier and simpler time, when music was uncomplicated.”⁴¹ The simplicity of the music at that times meant entertainment. Several decades later people realized that the times of a delight were irretrievably lost. They started to be nostalgic.⁴²

Rock and roll took advantage of the liveliness of the young at that time until today. The revolt of the youth against old stepped over the boundaries. What rock and roll created was the modification of the black freedom concerns in rhythm and blues songs into an anxiety of the teenagers for the independence.⁴³ “Rock and roll at its best, transforms old dreams into new realities.”⁴⁴ As well as the post-war world had to undergo numerous changes the music definitely had to follow the development. As far as the dreams are concerned, they constantly change and expand and the music must react. Without the answer to the cultural happening in the mid 1950s in America rock and roll would likely not be so booming and triumphant in the eyes of the young generation.

It celebrates the life of the refugee, the immigrant with no roots except those they can construct for themselves at the moment, construction which will inevitably collapse around them. Rock and roll celebrates play – even despairing play – as the only possibility for survival.⁴⁵

The gap between the generations is obvious that is why Grossberg mentions “the refugee and immigrant”. Most apparently the rock and roll sympathizers were

³⁹ Dorůžka 147.

⁴⁰ Hamm 393.

⁴¹ Hamm 393.

⁴² Hamm 393.

⁴³ Veselý 43.

⁴⁴ Grossberg 236.

⁴⁵ Grossberg 236.

denied or disregarded by the protestors mentioned beforehand. Even though the rock and roll mania from time to time involved conflicts, neither the artists nor the audience was willing to surrender the battle for their dreams. Vesely even talks about “rock ideology” which from the initiation tended towards the image of the rebellion against the boring instructions and prohibitions of the parenthood.⁴⁶ The central feature of rock and roll regards self-realization and struggle against previously standardized attitude towards music.

3.3 Sexuality in rock and roll

To claim that rock and roll does not pulse with or contains sexual energy would be incorrect. “Nineteen-fifties' rock and roll is usually described as a particularly sexual form of expression, a source of physical “liberation”.”⁴⁷ As was mentioned in the preceding chapters, rock and roll tried to push the boundaries as far as it was possible. Concerning the sex boundaries, they did not remain immune towards the rock and roll progress, too. Rock and roll by its rhythm and dance honours human body as a means of delight. Dancing in the rock and roll rhythms is a festivity dedicated to sexuality.⁴⁸ The attraction towards bodily pleasures is obvious. “The body becomes the site at which pleasure is restructured and desire potentially redirected.”⁴⁹ The involvement of the whole body into rock and roll enjoyment only proves the entire devotion of the audience and performers. The youth did not want to manifest that sexuality is something outrageous; rather they wanted to persuade the society that it represented one of several pleasant aspects of love and married life. Of course, the differences between the perspective of men and women occurred.⁵⁰ Surely the jealousy of men was present.

The term rock and roll itself covers the sign of sexuality inside. As it is already known the expression comes from the rhythm and blues songs. The phrase symbolizes the body moving. The singers in the songs celebrate the movement and try to persuade girls to be engaged in it, too. Rock and roll denotes a variety of

⁴⁶ Vesely 43.

⁴⁷ Frith 238.

⁴⁸ Grossberg 238.

⁴⁹ Grossberg 238.

⁵⁰ Frith 238 – 239.

movements from swinging to swiping.⁵¹ Besides, everyone noticed how massively Elvis Presley impressed the screaming crowds; the manner of his performance aroused diverse emotions, concerning the female audience. Ochs asserts: “Every chick in my school loved him while every guy hated him, for his overt sexuality.”⁵² The explanation of the man audience hatred is straightforward, it may be presupposed that boys also wanted to be god-like figures; the image of Elvis surely represented an incredible eccentricity. Elvis had a tremendous success but on the other hand the negative criticism appeared too. A television critic John Crosby claimed that: “Presley was an “unspeakably untalented and vulgar young entertainer”.”⁵³ The expression of sexuality did not have positive impact on all the members of the society.

Surely, there exists a necessity for everyone who desires to achieve a success in the music industry to be original and attractive. The performances of Elvis Presley loaded with sexual energy and power unquestionably brought a success; a boom that the young generation was crazy about. Rock and roll in America would not have brought the same triumph if it had not been for the appalling element that it included.

3.4 Rock and roll films

Would the rock and roll fans enjoy the atmosphere of the revolution without seeing it on the screen, definitely not. As the chapter 2.4 mentions the new wave of music flooded the film industry as well. The establishment of rock and roll entered the market at the point when the tension between cinema and television was great. The cinema struggled for continuing existence by the films that dealt with rock and roll themes. This was represented by films such as *Rebel Without A Cause* and *Blackboard Jungle*. Typical topic of rock and roll era occurred; youth struggling

⁵¹ Dorůžka 147.

⁵² Michael Ochs, “A Forward Look Into the Past,” in *Encyclopedia of Pop, Rock & Soul*, by Irwin Stambler (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974), 7.

⁵³ Gillet 17.

against the bans of the elderly.⁵⁴ The subject matter of the films unquestionably signified the entertainment for the teenagers.

Other triumphant film that appeared, was *Rock Around the Clock* featuring Bill Haley and his Comets. Several subsequent films presenting rock and roll stars emerged. Of course the biggest sensation arrived with *Love Me Tender* with Elvis Presley.⁵⁵ The films seem to be the supplementary segment of rock and roll mania. They represent the phenomenon that clearly contributed to the rock and roll enthusiasm.

3.5 No rock and roll without recording companies

Music business belongs to the sphere of the most profitable industries of the world. The earnings are enormous and the reaction of the public immense. The music syndicate uses the service of a spectrum of people. Without a planned cooperation the commerce would perceive non-profitability and no achievements. Proper functioning means the need of composers, interpreters, office workers and straightforwardly producers. The coordination of all the factors requires time and money.⁵⁶

The money supply cannot be carried by solitary interpreters so that the recording companies had to take over the duties. In America ahead of the advent of rock and roll the music market was led by the six foremost corporations. Their organization contained "Artist and Repertoire staff". Each having their own responsibilities. On the contrary free and self-governing businesses existed too, but they had only minor success.⁵⁷

Thus the popular music industry woke up to the fact that times were changing long after companies like Chess, Sun, Atlantic, and King had established themselves and, whether by accident or design, had established rock and roll as, at

⁵⁴ Phil Hardy and Dave Laing, ed., *The encyclopedia of rock. Volume 1, Age of rock'n'roll* (London: Panther, 1976), 275.

⁵⁵ Hardy and Laing 276.

⁵⁶ Petr Venkrbec, trans., *Zázrak zvaný hudba* (Praha: Knižcentrum, 1997), 98.

⁵⁷ Gillet 7.

least a temporary, fact of life for companies like RCA-Victor, Decca, and Columbia.⁵⁸

As well as the popular music sphere experienced transformations, the recording companies had to respond by alternations, too. The music market was constantly oscillating and every fragment of it had to react.

When the rock and roll era took up an ascendancy over the music domain, some of the recording companies were already established for a long time, for example Columbia and Victor. Decca was brought to existence in 1932 as a division of the British one in America. All three competitors had their place of business in New York.⁵⁹ Concerning the settlement in New York, the strategic planning certainly played a significant role. Where else could the music industry flourish more than in New York, the centre of commerce.

Decca established a bureau in Nashville and gained the prosperity with Bill Haley's hit "Rock Around the Clock". However, Bill Haley was not the only rock and roll singer who worked together with Decca; other rock and roll stars were Johnny Carroll, Webb Pierce, Jackie Lee Cochran, Eddie Fontaine and Brenda Lee.⁶⁰ The most noticeable performer of Decca recording company was with no doubts Bill Haley. On the other hand Chuck Berry made the label Chess Records famous as well by regular creation of the new songs.⁶¹

When RCA-Victor incredibly inexpensively made a contract with Elvis Presley, who would expect him to be such a sensation.⁶² See figure 1 and 2, Appendix 1; the list of the songs, interpreters and recording companies from 1950 to 1956. It is obvious from the figures that the music market was dominated by several recording companies. Except for previously mentioned three corporations, there existed Mercury, MGM, Dot, Capitol and Crew-Cuts. In the years of the emergence of rock and roll, already established companies were defeated by Dot

⁵⁸ David Hatch and Stephen Millward, *From Blues to Rock: An Analytical History of Pop Music*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 85-86.

⁵⁹ Gillet 7.

⁶⁰ Hardy and Laing 99.

⁶¹ Hardy and Laing 72.

⁶² Hatch and Millward 86.

Records. Figure 2 clearly shows the company's predominance. Dot Records did not struggle against rock and roll but tried to manage it differently. A rock and roll singer Pat Boone cooperated with them and acquired a success.⁶³

Achievements are always the matter of determination, cooperation and strategy. Apparently, when recording companies desired to gain triumph a lot of work stood behind. In the case of Elvis Presley, first who recorded his discs were Sun Records in Memphis but the prevalent victory was noticed after the teamwork with RCA-Victor. They together created his discs in Nashville.⁶⁴ Without the existence of the recording companies the singers would only sing with no profit and obtain nothing but misfortune. So that there exists an obvious necessity for the singers to discover a suitable partner, in order to make the music which is appreciated by the audience. Regarding Bill Haley, Chuck Berry and Elvis Presley they all established partnerships with distinct recording companies and it seemed to be a correct direction which brought them enormous win.

3.6 Summary

Chapter number three revealed who stood behind the birth of rock and roll and how the title was established. It is already notorious that rock and roll came to the music industry sphere like a thunder, and it shook with the lives of the young members of the society and it trifled with the beliefs of the older generation. As well as the positive feelings about this music aroused, the negative emotions supplemented them as well. One of the subsequent features of the rock and roll performances is the element of the sexual energy as the sub-chapter number 3.3 explains. The relaxation and loosening up the boundaries are significantly the characteristic aspects of the rock and roll revolution. Also the films helped rock and roll in America to gain fame. But the whole rock and roll development would not have been possible without recording companies and their money distribution. The next chapter describes the three most significant representatives of this genre. It focuses on their lives, the styles of their performances, the successes and the failures. Each portrait of a singer is complemented with an analysis of four chosen songs, that represent the origins of their rock and roll.

⁶³ Hamm 412.

⁶⁴ Hamm 415.

4 Stars that will shine forever

“These six men—Bill Haley, Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, and Jerry Lee Lewis—were at the center of early rock and roll.”⁶⁵ They obviously experienced a success and became the legends of early rock and roll era. The statistics prove it; and the reaction of the audience signified the same. “Their discs sold tens of millions of copies between 1955 and 1958, and this new popular style was perfectly defined in their music.”⁶⁶ Without the personal charm and talent of the singers, and attention catching songs and performances, they would not have gained such popularity. The central focus concerns Bill Haley, Chuck Berry and Elvis Presley.

4.1 Bill Haley

Bill Haley was given an existence at Highland Park in Detroit in 1925.⁶⁷ The alarming fact concerns the dissimilarity of the resources in the information about the date of the birth of Bill Haley. While a number of sources state that it took place in 1925, there occurred two encyclopaedias, where his date of birth was appointed on the year 1927; *The Encyclopedia of POP, ROCK & SOUL* by Irwin Stambler and *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby* by Antonín Matzner et al. This points out the actuality that the authors occasionally used the pieces of information that were not proven.

His full name was William John Clifton Haley. As the above paragraph affirmed, Haley is rooted at the north of America, where he stayed only till the age of four, then the moving to Pennsylvania followed. But he still remained at the north of the country.⁶⁸ Only by the place of the birth Bill Haley is an exception in the rock and roll music sphere. Most of the singers, whether rock and roll or rhythm and blues, came from the south. No matter where Bill Haley was born, he proved himself to be talented enough. The aptitude for music may have been inherited from his parents already in the childhood, both parents were music

⁶⁵ Hamm 394.

⁶⁶ Hamm 394.

⁶⁷ Hardy and Laing 155.

⁶⁸ Hardy and Laing 155.

oriented. Father was a banjo player and his mother managed piano playing.⁶⁹ Evidently this musician to his own benefit started to acquire the sense for music at the early stage of his life.

His early career or rather music attempts are characterized by a diversity. In the teenage period Haley continued to develop his music ability by engaging himself in the country bands. The instrument that he played was guitar. He as well cooperated with his relative and his band. This teamwork provided a song with a name “Candy Kisses” in 1945. Bill Haley was only eighteen then. After these efforts the wandering with various groups followed and after homecoming he became a DJ at a local radio.⁷⁰ Frankly, the early life experiences of Bill Haley signify a certain kind of determination to enjoy all possible adventures.

“After finishing high school, he travelled around the Midwest with his band, originally called the Saddlemen, playing country clubs in many Midwest cities.”⁷¹ Perceptibly, the music beginnings of Bill Haley are not interconnected with only rhythm and blues influence that was discussed in previous chapters, but rather with country music. Alternatively different source claims their music to be a mixture of elements of rhythm and blues, dixieland, country and western and hillbilly.⁷² Rhythm and blues was already explained. Dixieland denotes: “a style of traditional jazz music with a two-beat rhythm, which originally began in New Orleans in the US in the 1920s.”⁷³ Country is an umbrella term for music originated in the south of America resulting from the music of white immigrants, who settled there. In fact country music has a number of different forms.⁷⁴ As a matter of fact hillbilly may also be considered a country music, because it served as a primary title for country music in 1920s and 1930s.⁷⁵ This merger of different genres could not introduce anything else than an entire music innovation.

⁶⁹ Richard Kříž, trans., *100 hvězd rock & pop: portréty nejznámějších osobností historie populární hudby* (Čestlice: Rebo, 2009), 84.

⁷⁰ Hardy and Laing 155-6.

⁷¹ Irwin Stambler, *Encyclopedia of Pop, Rock & Soul* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974), 231.

⁷² Kříž 84.

⁷³ Cambridge dictionaries online, “Dixieland,” Cambridge University Press 2011, <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/dixieland?q=dixieland>, (accessed April 10, 2012)

⁷⁴ Vlček 14.

⁷⁵ Vlček 29.

As Haley recalled for Robert Hilburn of the Los Angeles *Times* in April 1970, “We started out as a country-western group, then we added a touch of rhythm and blues. It wasn’t something we planned, it just evolved. We got to where we weren’t accepted as country-western or rhythm and blues. It was hard to get bookings for a while. We were something different, something new. We didn’t call it that at that time, but we were playing rock and roll. We were lucky...”⁷⁶

Haley himself acknowledged that their achievements emanated from a stroke of luck. Their profit was influenced by several factors, and certainly the willingness of the audience to enjoy modernizations. Haley was astonished by the reaction of the society in America. The events intervened with genuine quickness. All that was the cause of the mixture of aspects regarding the time, audience, occasion and the style that was played.⁷⁷ The combination of fortune brought into being the music, which enchanted the vast public.

Another issue that contributed to the successful career of Bill Haley and his band was surely the decision to rename the group the Comets and delete the antecedent title Saddlemen.⁷⁸ This label absolutely evoked the positive ideas about the performers and everyone must have been sure that the Comets will excel. Not only the renaming of the band took place but they also changed the style of their music from country to the music called soon after rock and roll. The group consisted of John Grande who played keyboards, Billy Williamson and his guitar, Rudy Pompelli who engaged himself to saxophone, a bass-guitarist Al Reed, Francis Beecher who played guitar and Don Raymonds who handled drums.⁷⁹

The popular music was opened for them. Indisputably, the first piece of rock and roll emerged in 1953, in the form of “Crazy man, crazy.” This record mingled together Haley’s impressing dancing style, which provided him worldwide reputation, and simple and remarkably rhythmical accompany, an emphasis on saxophone and Haley’s abrupt, rhythmically precise voice without any decorations

⁷⁶ Stambler 230.

⁷⁷ Dorůžka 146.

⁷⁸ Hardy and Laing 156.

⁷⁹ Antonín Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: A-K* (Praha: Supraphon, 1986), 405.

or any kind of mannerism.⁸⁰ Concisely, Haley did not utilize any sort of exaggeration but the song notwithstanding did not achieve such a respectable reputation as the following ones. Bill Haley and the Comets became more famous one year later, when the single “Shake rattle and roll” was released. The success was proved by the acquirement of the golden disc.⁸¹ It is without question, that this winning was the cause of the fact that the song was recorded in the cooperation with Decca recording company. Even though this song was a remake, formerly sang by Joe Turner, it gained its audience and popularity.⁸² “The Haley version became a number-one best seller in the U.S. and abroad, earning him a gold record for over a million copies sold.”⁸³ This denotes evident appreciation. Even though Bill Haley asserted at the beginning of his career something in the sense of being only a common villager, he certainly remains remembered.⁸⁴

In 1955 his popularity ascended even more, and the power that stood behind this sensation was embodied in the recording company Decca, which issued the incredibly famous hit “Rock around the Clock”. Even greater popularity was provided by the fact that this song was conjoined with *The Blackboard Jungle* film. This film profited from the enormous solicitude of the teenage generation and “Rock Around the Clock” happened to be the sacred song of the youth.⁸⁵ Hardly anyone is aware of the fact that “Rock around the Clock” was firstly issued in 1954 and it experienced total failure.⁸⁶ It can be barely conjectured what was the cause of a reverse but surely the popular status was brought about by the film previously mentioned.

As the chapter already 3.4 pointed out, the rock and roll era was interconnected with the emergence of the variety of films with rock and roll theme. Of course, the films produced even more considerable fame of the performers. “The hit was number one on U.S. hit charts for seven weeks in a row, an

⁸⁰ Matzner et al. 405.

⁸¹ Kříž 84.

⁸² Stambler 231.

⁸³ Stambler 231.

⁸⁴ Dorůžka 146.

⁸⁵ Hardy and Laing 156-7.

⁸⁶ Matzner et al. 405.

achievement few artists matched in the decade that followed.”⁸⁷ Bill Haley & His Comets developed a remarkable reputation and they truly took pleasure from it. See figure 3, Appendix 1; the members of the band put into their performance perpetual energy and a load of cheerfulness. “The band was now one of the major attractions on the pop music circuit and played to thunderous ovations from packed concert and dance halls all over the U.S.”⁸⁸ This confirms the proclamation that Bill Haley & His Comets enjoyed a superior reputation at the times of the establishment of rock and roll in America. As a matter of fact this music group helped to create the fresh new music. The years 1955 and 1956 symbolized for The Comets the prosperity of a real rock and roll attraction with several successful singles regarding: “Burn The Candle,” “See You Later Alligator,” “R-O-C-K,” “Hot Dog,” “Buddy Buddy,” “Rudy’s Rock”.⁸⁹ The titles of the songs definitely offered appealing attributes.

Unsurprisingly, the style of the songs and the performance of Bill Haley himself and his band had an extraordinary power. It is uncertain, which of the great deal of aspects influenced the audience to display such a profound fondness. “Bill Haley recorded with a small group; several guitars, a bass, a coarse-sounding saxophone, and an energetic drummer.”⁹⁰ Perhaps the combination of such instruments with the members of the group produced a performance that was neither tiresome nor outdated. The people simply felt the affection for the way they presented the music. Hamm explains: “Bill Haley’s voice was grating, nasal, delivered in a style somewhere between shouting and singing—a voice that would have been ludicrous in a Tin Pan Alley song.”⁹¹ For some reason Tin Pan Alley style of music would not have accepted the way of singing that completely replaced it in the mid-1950s. Rock and roll of Bill Haley would have been ridiculed by the Tin Pan Alley performers, but the contemporary young society of that time paid tribute to it. Hamm declares: “Tin Pan Alley created traditional music.”⁹² The music was maybe traditional but more important is the fact that it had nothing in common with rock and roll.

⁸⁷ Stambler 231.

⁸⁸ Stambler 231.

⁸⁹ Matzner et al. 406.

⁹⁰ Hamm 395.

⁹¹ Hamm 395.

⁹² Hamm 325.

Haley's records were not straight copies of any particular black style or record. The singer's voice was unmistakably white, and the repetitive choral chants were a familiar part of many "swing" bands.⁹³

Imitation of the styles already established would not have provided such positive results. "Haley proved to be an important popularizer of previously marginalized musical sounds and ideas, and he paved the way for the widespread acceptance of more creative artists."⁹⁴ For certain, Bill Haley was a pioneering and revolutionary artist; the unique performer that participated in rock and roll formation. Together with his band they set an example for a great many different rock and roll musicians.

With Haley, every other beat was heavily accented by the singers and all the instrumentalists at the expense of the relatively flexible rhythms and complex harmonies of dance music records cut for the black audience.⁹⁵

Without a shadow of doubt, Haley may be regarded as a one of the founders of a new way of singing, rock and roll.

Haley created about sixty songs in the course of seven years, but merely "Rock Around the Clock" was victorious in the American charts. His performances achieved better outcome in Great Britain, where no opposition was present and he had a free field to excel.⁹⁶ While in Britain there was no rivalry, in America Haley had to struggle with several unlike performers who were mentioned previously in this chapter.

Additionally, in the year 1955, Haley starred in *Rock Around the Clock* film, so that he constantly appeared in the glare of popularity. Another famous hit of this singer occurred in 1956; it was named: "See You Later, Alligator". He also acted in the film from 1957 *Don't Knock the Rock*. The examples of other songs

⁹³ Gillet 14

⁹⁴ Starr & Waterman 75.

⁹⁵ Gillet 14.

⁹⁶ Clarke 382.

released till 1960s cover: “Burn That Candle,” “Rockin Trough the Rye,” “Billy Goat,” “Skinny Minny,” “Joey’s Song.”⁹⁷ An attempt to keep the pace with the rock and roll development was evident. However, even a colossal star cannot survive permanent changes in the popular music and altering requirements of the audience.

Conversely to the success, there existed also negative observations about Bill Haley’s work and appearance. “Haley was and unlikely pop star, a chubby married man and almost thirty years old when he came to the fore.”⁹⁸ Haley did not burst with handsomeness or sexual attraction, but he surely could in some way impress the audience. Moreover, Clarke adds:

By all accounts he was a pleasant man, modest and grateful for his success. It is a pity that the music was so bad. It was worse than bad; it was a major environmental hazard. The bass *had* to be slapped all the way through every record, and the drums *had* to be tinny and loud, and nobody showed any understanding of time.⁹⁹

Surprisingly, even though Bill Haley is ranked among the founders of rock and roll, the introduction of several hits does not indicate a guaranteed admiration of every individual.

“As Elvis Presley and other solo vocalists became tremendous favorites, Bill Haley and his band slowly faded in the background.”¹⁰⁰ Inasmuch as Haley and his group made a great effort, it was not sufficient to surpass the singers who breathed on their backs. If anyone better had not arrived on the American popular music scene, Haley could possibly enjoy the show little longer. “Time has shown that Haley simply knew his limitations and stuck to them.”¹⁰¹ He easily proved his diffidence and yielded this province to the more favourable singers, who reached the top hereafter. However, Haley’s popularity was weakened, he returned to the country and western music and in 1970s and at the beginning of the 1980s his

⁹⁷ Stambler 231.

⁹⁸ Clarke 382.

⁹⁹ Clarke 383.

¹⁰⁰ Stambler 231.

¹⁰¹ Hardy and Laing 157.

prestige was retraced by several big concerts devoted to classic rock and roll. In those years the interest in rock and roll was regenerated.¹⁰² Apparently, Haley once more enjoyed the recovered fame.

4.1.1 Summary

To sum up, what Bill Haley manifested, was the determination to come with something new as an opening rock and roll singer. He managed to reach the tops of several charts at home and abroad. Nevertheless, Elvis Presley's entrance to the rock and roll music implied the end of Haley's successful era. Even though his music noticed the decline, he remained distinguished. The sad announcement arrived on the 9th February 1981, when Haley succumbed to the brain tumour.¹⁰³ He stays alive in the hearts of rock and roll fans. He was not an exceptional composer, singer or guitarist, but he contributed to the creation of the music style, which carries a key role in the history of popular music in America. Little Richard proclaimed something in the sense of Haley being an interpreter who introduced the black music with actually white face.¹⁰⁴ Another appreciation was expressed by Paul McCartney:

"The first time I really ever felt a tingle up my spine was when I saw Bill Haley and The Comets on the telly," McCartney once said. "Then I went to see them live. The ticket was 24 shillings, and I was the only one of my mates who could go as no one else had been able to save up that amount. But I was single-minded about it. I knew there was something going on here."¹⁰⁵

Straightforwardly, Bill Haley skilfully managed his craft and he achieved the glory for it.

¹⁰² Matzner et al. 406.

¹⁰³ Kříž 84.

¹⁰⁴ Matzner et al.406.

¹⁰⁵ History.com, "This Day in History: March 11, 1997: Paul McCartney knighted," A&E Television Networks, LLC., <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/paul-mccartney-knighted> (accessed April 30, 2012).

4.2 Bill Haley: song analysis

The profound description of Bill Haley's life and career would not be complete without the insight into the selected pieces of his music. The following four chapters deal with the songs that were already mentioned in chapter 4.1 and the same songs that were the sources of Haley's fame. All the following lyrics that are cited are taken from the anonymous web pages, the texts of the songs are enclosed in the Appendix 2. Online references to the songs are included in the footnotes, each time the reference accompanies only the first citation of the passage of the song. The correctness of the lyrics was verified by an actual listening to the original songs.

4.2.1 "Shake rattle roll"

As the chapter 4.1 points out "Shake Rattle Roll" was one of the first victorious songs of Bill Haley and his Comets. The first sight at the lyrics prompts that this hit does not deal with highly profound or serious issue. It contains a great deal of repetitions, which seem to be a feature that predominates most of the early rock and roll songs. The deployment which was inserted into the singing certainly awoke the audience.

The introductory lyrics below urge to an action. The situation is very clear, a man by using rock and roll terminology persuades a woman to prepare a morning refreshments. One would say that such an easy context cannot appeal to the audience, but providing the fact that the performers added their own style of the show, the positive accomplishments indeed appeared.

Get out in that kitchen and rattle those pots and pans
Get out in that kitchen and rattle those pots and pans
Well roll my breakfast 'cause I'm a hungry man¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ http://www.aldielyrics.com/lyrics/bill_haley_and_the_comets/shake_rattle_and_roll.html, (accessed June 17, 2012).

The whole song is clearly oriented against women, their appearance and the way in which they take care of men.

Wearin' those dresses your hair done up so nice
Wearin' those dresses your hair done up so nice
You look so warm but your heart is cold as ice

The masculine part of the audience without doubt had to be ecstatic. The explanation is obvious, the disputes between men and women belong to the whole range of the characteristics of the American and worldwide society that will never dissolve. The offence becomes even more serious in the final two lines of the chorus:

Well you'll never do nothin'
To save your doggone soul

On the other hand, the spectators frequented the concerts to listen to the music and to enjoy the atmosphere of rock and roll in America in 1950s, rather than analyze the lyrics and become insulted. The whole text of this song is for illustration enclosed in the appendix 2.

4.2.2 “Rock Around the Clock”

The emergence of this song is discussed in chapter 4.1 together with the facts that made it a number one rock and roll hit in America. The text is in fact very uncomplicated; composed of a great extent of repetitious phrases. However, the purpose of the majority of the hits to enjoy the rock mania is fulfilled there, too. Haley counts the time and tries to arouse the audience to take pleasure from rocking and rolling along the whole night till the break of the new day:

We're gonna rock, rock, rock, 'til broad daylight
We're gonna rock, gonna rock around the clock tonight.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.billhaley.co.uk/lyrics1.htm>, (accessed June 17, 2012).

This is without doubt a typical example of early rock and roll music in America. The relaxed rock and roll atmosphere is stressed by the continuous occurrence of the word rock. The rock and roll craze was the case of the perpetual entertainment and the following excerpt unmistakably shows it:

When the clock strikes twelve, we'll cool off then
Start a 'rockin' round the clock again.

The enjoyment of every possible activity was exceedingly supported by this song.

With its driving, pulsing, insistent rhythm and suggestive texts, early rock and roll was a raucous and sometimes crude celebration of sex, intended as such by its composers and performers, understood as such by the audience.¹⁰⁸

So that not only musical amusement was concerned in Haley's songs but also the sexuality and its pleasures. The sexual allusion of rock and roll was examined in chapters 3. 3 as well. Sometimes the sex references were hidden in the rock and roll metaphors, in the case of "Rock Around the Clock" for example in the lines:

We'll be right in seventh heaven
I'll be goin' strong and so will you.

Again, for better impression of the whole text, see Appendix 2.

4.2.3 "See You Later Alligator"

See Appendix 2. This song may be summarized as an attention catching tune. The attractiveness is achieved by the constant recurrence of the same pattern A B A B C D:

Well, I saw my baby walkin'
With another man today
Well, I saw my baby walkin'

¹⁰⁸ Hamm 397.

With another man today
When I asked her what's the matter
This is what I heard her say¹⁰⁹

The theme yet again regards the man/woman relationships; that is to say the topic is unsophisticated and uncritical, however meaningful especially for the young audience. The main points in short relate to the refusal, self pity, revenge, shame, apology and inexcusability. Just as a girl cheats on her boyfriend and calls him alligator, he is not willing to accept a request for forgiveness and calls the girl alligator as well and leaves her:

See you later alligator
After 'while crocodile
See you later alligator
So long, that's all, goodbye.

The fascinating feature of this hit is also the Haley's pronunciation of the word alligator; it rhymes together with the word later and creates a pleasant sound.

In the comparison with the preceding songs, the verses contain six lines and therefore occur to be longer. Nevertheless, the length is not crucial and the impact of these songs on the audience is produced by the variety of repetitions, the voice of Bill Haley, His Comets and the instruments involved.

4.2.4 “Razzle Dazzle”

This song is as a matter of fact Haley's attempt to convince the audience to get to an action and start dancing. He clearly describes what the features of this movement are and he teaches the public the style. This music noticeably demonstrates some aspects of rock and roll. The atmosphere of the rock and roll era called for the diversity of bodily movements.

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.billhaley.co.uk/lyrics1.htm>, (accessed June 17, 2012).

You just take your baby
Don't you leave that spot
Then you dance like crazy
Give it all you've got
That's the razzle dazzle
If you're ready or not¹¹⁰

The verse present illustrates the way Bill Haley and His Comets dragged the members of the audience into their performance by commanding their motion. The resonant title of the dancing “razzle dazzle” supplements the song with an interesting liveliness. Another visible feature covers the rhyming of the last letters of the lines. Except for the slang words “razzle dazzle,” the lyrics contain the additional ones. The following example displays them:

Put your best foot forward (wack-a doo, wack-a-doo)
Baby can't you see (baby can't you see).

While the majority of the online dictionaries is acquainted with the slang words “razzle dazzle,” “wack-a-doo” was not found. So that the meaning may be only assumed, but concerning the theme of the song, it is obvious that this name relates to a specific type of the body movement.

Similarly to the preceding songs “Razzle Dazzle” includes a great number of repetitions, because it is a characteristic aspect of Bill Haley’s music and rock and roll in general:

Everybody razzle dazzle
Everybody razzle dazzle
Everybody razzle dazzle
If it's all night long.

¹¹⁰ http://www.aldielyrics.com/lyrics/bill_haley_and_the_comets/razzle_dazzle.html, (accessed June 17, 2012).

To conclude the chapter that analyses the music of Bill Haley and His Comets, it is crucial to point out that the songs do not contain exaggeratedly complicated lyrics. The subject matter mostly covers the encouragement of taking pleasure of dancing and other possible activities that were available for men and women in the United States throughout the era of rock and roll passion.

4.3 Chuck Berry

By full name Charles Edward Anderson Berry was born in 1926 in St. Louis, Missouri.¹¹¹ He was given and existence only a year later after Bill Haley. As long as the information about Berry's date of birth is concerned, the similar situation as with the previously mentioned Bill Haley occurs. The resources deviate from each other in five years regarding Berry's birth. His roots combine together Afro-American and Native-American origin.¹¹² Berry's father earned his living as a carpenter. He grew up in an agreeable and friendly neighbourhood. His interest in the music did not begin to flourish until his teenage period, when he started to take lessons in guitar playing. However, the guitar at that time represented only a pastime for Berry.¹¹³ Conversely to Haley, Berry did not originate in musical family and in his childhood no leading figure that would lecture him about music was present. Nevertheless, the following text reveals that this was not an obstruction on the way to the top.

Courage and heroism circulated in his veins from the childhood. The young age was dominated by miscellaneous activities. He was sentenced for a robbery and then surprisingly he became engaged at a hairdressing and cosmetic sphere. All that interest was accompanied by guitar playing. Further on, he worked at a car factory, a beauty salon and he spent weekends by playing with his band.¹¹⁴ In all conscience, the affirmation that Berry went over diverse life experience is rather exact.

¹¹¹ Kříž 28.

¹¹² Matzner et al. 120.

¹¹³ Stambler 51.

¹¹⁴ Dorůžka 151.

At the beginning of the 1950s Berry had already passed through the changes in the personal life. The wild boy was transformed into a husband and a father of two kids. The necessity to earn the money in order to secure the family was understandable. As a consequence, he dedicated his free time to the music with the intention to improve his profit. The popularity drew closer already in St. Louis, where Berry established a formation of three performers. They repeatedly staged at the Cosmopolitan Club. The outcome was the status of one of the finest music groups in St. Louis and the acquisition of the black listeners favour.¹¹⁵ This was the first achievement of Chuck Berry in the popular music. Berry got himself a first guitar at the age of twenty-five. This seemed to be rather late, considering his music experiments yet in the teenage period. The cooperation with the two musicians in St. Louis brought optimistic consequences. One of his fellow musicians was a lyricist and piano player Johnny Johnson; their teamwork lasted for more than twenty years.¹¹⁶ This may be considered one of the factors that had and impact on Chuck Berry's career. The subsequent influential issue is described below.

Berry's next move was equally part of a wider pattern: the journey to Chicago itself, following in the steps of the many Southern country blues artists who had subsequently abandoned their intimate, solo approach in favour of heavily amplified and raucous bar blues style associated with the northern city.¹¹⁷

Berry simply decided to move his career forward and try the chance. If he had not endeavoured after the success, the sensation of his performance and style would not have been discovered. "By then Chuck had started writing original songs, both words and music in most cases, and was eager to improve his status in the world of music."¹¹⁸ Obviously, Berry had a dream and he made eminent effort to fulfil it at all costs. In Chicago he was excited to go and listen to some of the popular performers of the city. He was present at the performance of Muddy Waters and his band and he chanced to talk to him, but Waters expressed disagreement. Eventually, Waters was impressed by Berry's guitar playing style and suggested an

¹¹⁵ Stambler 51-2

¹¹⁶ Kříž 28.

¹¹⁷ Hardy and Laing 33.

¹¹⁸ Stambler 52.

appointment with Leonard Chess who was a head of the Chess Records.¹¹⁹ There existed nothing to be lost, so that he exploited the chance. “Berry got the audition he wanted and was signed up immediately. His first recording, “Maybellene”, was released in May, 1955.”¹²⁰ The triumph of Chuck Berry was caused by the interest of Muddy Waters and hereafter by Leonard Chess. Berry’s first recording belongs to the number of popular hits that stood behind the birth of rock and roll era.¹²¹ “Maybellene” proved to be a hit by the number of sold copies and by achieving the position number five in the American chart.¹²² It was a victory that Berry alone certainly did not contemplate. “The success of the record was attained with the aid of Alan Freed, who played it on his New York disc jockey show, then the most important rock program in the country.”¹²³ Frankly, “Maybellene” became a triumph.

Within weeks, the record was rolling up impressive sales from one end of the country to the other. Chuck Berry jumped from nowhere to national stardom along with the disc.¹²⁴

The gate to the world of American popular music was widely opened for Chuck Berry and the first victorious song simply proved his talent.

Berry was famous for an unmistakable style of performance and that surely meant one of the several aspects that influenced his popularity. Contrary to other American rock and roll performers the style of his singing was clear, so that the simple but distinctive text fulfilled its mission to address the youth in the audience. What Berry added to the performance was the special “duck walk”. This accompanied every performance since 1956. At that time Berry’s fame was supported by his appearances in four films. These concerned: *Rock Rock Rock*, *Mr. Rock and Roll*, *Go Johnny Go* and *Jazz on A Summer Day*.¹²⁵ See figure 4, Appendix 1; Berry applying his “duck walk” and enjoying the concert.

¹¹⁹ Stambler 52.

¹²⁰ Hardy and Laing 33.

¹²¹ Dorůžka 151.

¹²² Hardy and Laing 33.

¹²³ Stambler 52.

¹²⁴ Stambler 52.

¹²⁵ Matzner et al. 120.

Berry always done a lot of dancing and moving around, but in that show he came up with the duck walk, in which he flashed across the stage, knees bent, with a fluid grace that left formed while playing the most complex patterns on his electric guitar without missing a beat, became a trademark that was always certain to activate waves of applause and cheers from rapt onlookers.¹²⁶

Such innovations clearly represented the guarantee of a boom on the rock and roll stage. The art of his performance achieved the behalf of a white and young public and this signified even a greater triumph, because only a few of the black musicians managed to succeed in front of the white audience.¹²⁷ He fully understood that a good show depended on the performer and he exerted a tremendous effort to achieve the attention of the audience. “Moreover, the performance itself, with its heavily accentuated backbeat, bore a notable resemblance to the rockabilly style.”¹²⁸ The preceding chapters pointed out that rock and roll in America was not a completely innovative genre but rather a mixture of several others.

In every respect Berry was a rock and roll icon, and he was affected by a number of influences. His interest covered country music as well as the songs of the musicians of the 1940s, concerning Frank Sinatra or jazzman Charlie Christian. Berry is noted for the foremost inspiration by Nat ‘King’ Cole, who was a black performer too, and he remained well-known for his ballads.¹²⁹ “Nat ‘King’ Cole, a pioneer of the sophisticated West Coast nightclub style of singing and playing.”¹³⁰ Surely there existed at least one aspect that these two singers shared; both received a consideration of the American audience even though they possessed black roots.

Berry’s style in this period had a number of distinctive features. The bold ‘rocking’ beat of “Maybellene“ was filled out with ‘rolling’ rhythms, achieved mainly by swiftly alternating between a handful of chords, particularly the ‘blue’ sixths and

¹²⁶ Stambler 52.

¹²⁷ Matzner et al. 120.

¹²⁸ Hardy and Laing 33-34.

¹²⁹ Hardy and Laing 34.

¹³⁰ Hardy and Laing 83.

sevenths. His records were also instantly recognizable by the wailing, chiming guitar sound and fast, cutting, high-pitched solos he used as introductions.¹³¹

Berry evidently had power over his performance and he extraordinarily proficiently coped with his guitar. That it to say he grew to be a superstar in the course of few years. Another feature of his performance was a clear articulation of the lyrics; the influence of Louis Jordan may have stepped in. Berry did not apply wild or emotional features too excessively and he additionally gave place to humorous factor. This purported a reversal in the rock and roll music, because the audience was capable of understanding all words and the lyrics immediately obtained a new meaning.¹³² Blankly, Chuck Berry introduced American rock and roll scene with a new way of performance and he demonstrated the energy hidden in the lyrics of the songs. Furthermore, the amplified electrical guitar in his hands developed into an instrument that produced a moral alarms and an aggressive aural disorder, which tended to create an estrangement between the new and the preceding merits of the music. In addition, the loudness covered in general the absence of the technical perfection of the guitar playing. The electrification of the musical instruments became an important reversal in the history of American and global popular music. The musicians including Berry received a chance to establish an assured diversity during the performances.¹³³ Therefore, the electric guitar indisputably belongs to the one of many features that helped Chuck Berry to acquire celebration.

The period of Berry's greatest sovereignty is described below. "With almost every new tour, Berry had one or two new hit compositions to add to his repertoire."¹³⁴ The rock and roll world lay at his feet and Berry took adequate pleasure from it. Berry's record number four was between the top thirty hits; the title of the song happened to be "Roll Over Beethoven" and it occurred in 1956. This success signaled an advancement of Berry's career.¹³⁵ The years 1956 to 1959 involved the string of lucrative songs. For illustration the hit era contained songs like: "Too Much Monkey Business," "No Money Down," "School Days,"

¹³¹ Hardy and Laing 35.

¹³² Hardy and Laing 35.

¹³³ Veselý 45.

¹³⁴ Stambler 52.

¹³⁵ Hardy and Laing 34.

Rock ‘n’ Roll music,” “Oh Baby Doll,” “Sweet Little Sixteen,” “John B. Goode,” “About Grown,” “Memphis” and “Rockin’ and Rollin.”¹³⁶ The titles of the songs alone signified that they would not correspond to the ordinary, average and every now and then annoying music, which constantly flooded the American music world. Berry literally rolled over the American popular music business. “There were no other major hits in the Fifties but several of his minor successes exemplified his mature style at its best and most influential.”¹³⁷ A lot of singers introduced the records that settled unrecognized, Berry managed it as well. On the contrary, a lot of his records became fancied, as a result of his inimitable art.

In his lyrics, Berry defined a new audience. He crystallized the meaning of white teenage rock ‘n’ roll in terms of a life-style in which the search for physical excitement – especially in the form of dancing, driving and sex – was paramount. If rock ‘n’ roll was implicitly anti-romantic and anti-puritan, Berry made it explicitly so.¹³⁸

The important characteristics of rock and roll in American culture and Berry’s rock and roll as well were embedded in the shifting of the emotional sensation as furthest as possible. The agreeable state of mind was reached by all potential means. This musician plainly knew the way how to captivate the audience. “John B. Goode” happened to be the best known song of Chuck Berry. The success was not provided by the fact that it belonged to the typical rock and roll music; the popularization was caused by NASA and Voyager 1 in 1977. When they forwarded a message to the cosmos, it contained a variety of picture and sound records, which symbolized the art of the human beings, including Berry’s record. He even proved his ability in an extremely advanced age. Berry was over his eighties and he permanently performed with the guitar and his friend Jerry Lee Lewis; singing one piece of hit after another. There exists no doubt that describing Chuck Berry as a proficient, would be is immoderate.¹³⁹ Later on in 1986 Berry as a first artist ever was induced to a rock and roll hall of fame.¹⁴⁰ This denoted a great deal of appreciation. Berry is an owner of semi-evil and semi-charming smile that signified

¹³⁶ Stambler 52.

¹³⁷ Hardy and Laing 34-35.

¹³⁸ Hardy and Laing 35.

¹³⁹ Kříž 28.

¹⁴⁰ Kříž 28.

his unpredictability and bohemian life style. He may have not become such an overwhelming idol as Presley, but for instance he was not expectant of it. Another fact that gave him a credit was his non-ageing character. The quick development of the music was sharp about getting old and it expressed the disagreement with the old. That was not the case of Chuck Berry; no signs of age were visible on him.¹⁴¹ See figure 5, Appendix 1, Berry also demonstrates his art in an advanced age. Presumably, Berry was the most influential guitarist and musician in the whole rock and roll sphere; his rhythmical pronunciation provided an ultimate effect of the inventive lyrics. A plenty of songs came to be the anthems of the young generation.¹⁴² Berry's career registered remarkable achievements. Not only the teenagers were bewitched by his craft but also a number of different musicians took advantage of his songs.

For example Rolling Stones began their music route by the recording of several hits by Chuck Berry; these included: "Come on," "Carol, Little Queenie," "Around And Around," "Down The Road A Piece" and "Talkin' about you." "Furthermore, Beatles adopted "Roll Over Beethoven" and "Rock And Roll Music," and Buddy Holly took over "Brown Eyed Handsome Man" and "Memphis Tennessee." Additionally, some of the music performers applied only certain parts of Berry's lyrics, for example Cat Mother created their "Good Old Rock And Roll" on the basis of "Sweet Little Sixteen", as well as Beach Boys did it with their "Surfin' USA." Moreover, Beatles borrowed a little of "You Can't Catch Me" for "Come Together" and likewise Bob Dylan's "Subterranean Homesick Blues" took inspiration in Berry's "To Much Monkey Business."¹⁴³ It is observable that the variety of the musicians and the bands searched for the ideas in his music; and Berry's music turned out to be extremely distinguished and appreciated by the members of popular music scene.

At the turn of the 1950s and 1960s Berry stood on the top of his career, however the reversal appeared. He was black and represented a reasonable revolt of the young generation. The American authorities acted for the opposition and were

¹⁴¹ Dorůžka 151.

¹⁴² Hynek Čáp, Petr Dorůžka and Jan Strouhal, trans., *Nová ilustrovaná encyklopedie rocku* (Praha: Albatros, 1996), 19.

¹⁴³ Matzner et al. 120-1.

not profuse fans of Berry's art. Eventually, they sentenced him to prison for two years.¹⁴⁴ Almost every rock and roll performer more or less expressed a certain kind of rebellion, and Berry did not escape the difficulties as well. Ahead of the imprisonment Berry registered enormous popularity. His music was performed by the new generation of singers and this provided him nothing else but splendour and richness. Additionally he owned a profitable club in St. Louis.¹⁴⁵

The bad news spread immediately. Berry was blamed by fourteen years old girl for carrying her to St. Louis because of the depraved intentions. But the two years of investigation proved her to be a street-girl, in fact she went with him voluntarily. Berry subsequently confessed that the main purpose of this journey was her Spanish, the language that Berry wanted to gain knowledge of. However, the prison stay was not omitted.¹⁴⁶ It may be presupposed that this turnover in his personal life was the cause of the stagnation of his career. "Berry's disappearance coincided with a period when rock and roll had lost a great deal of its original energy and momentum."¹⁴⁷ On the other hand, the main feature of rock and roll was expressed by the rebellion of the musicians and the audience, and Berry showed it as well. Nevertheless, his defiance did not do any harm to his splendid popularity. The audience eventually did not visit his numerous performances in order to judge his personality but rather in order to listen to the legendary rock and roll music. This also applied for the concerts which were held in Berry's advanced age.¹⁴⁸ He managed to keep his audience despite of the solid fact that his music and the performance were influenced by the abode in prison.

The effect of the isolation was strong. His family left him, the club mentioned previously was closed, and the whole rock and roll scene went through the modifications. Berry had enough resources but none the less his temper varied from the pre-prison state of mind. He seemed to be irritable and harsh. Earlier everyone from the music sphere perceived him as a liberalised musician who did not mind using light drugs after concerts, and after this incident he changed to a

¹⁴⁴ Matzner et al. 120.

¹⁴⁵ Stambler 52.

¹⁴⁶ Stambler 52.

¹⁴⁷ Hardy and Laing 36.

¹⁴⁸ Kříž 28.

detached individuality with the wretched thoughts.¹⁴⁹ There does not exist a person that would not be affected by the difficulties that Chuck Berry had to experience.

He returned to a musical sunlight in 1964, and the popularity was the cause of the hit called “Memphis Tennessee.” Following song possessed titles like “Nadine,” “No Particular Place To Go” or “You Never Can Tell.” Even though the songs did not reach the tops of the charts, Berry’s live performances still gathered a success.¹⁵⁰ Although variable mood alternations intervened in his life the sparkle of his shows was not lost. The aspiration to achieve and enjoy more of the popular music world was evident. “The lyrics of his 1964 material covered much the same ground as those of his early hits, but there was a greater stress on his wit and warmth.”¹⁵¹ The willingness to continue the career was proven, but the ideas that would guarantee the tops of the charts did not remain the same. Berry rather inclined to the developing of the antecedent. The next wrong step was signalled by Berry’s signing the contract with Mercury recording company. The production was lower than the average and his reputation was not strengthened at all. The most compelling problem was caused by the wrong selection of the songs.¹⁵² The situation when a song does not appeal to the audience and becomes rather unattractive leads to a failure of a singer. Fortunately, Berry was aware of this fact and made important arrangements. Even though the cooperation with Mercury provided high honorariums, which covered the costs for some time, it did not last long. The most consumptive article concerned Berry’s entertainment facilities in Wentzville. He was an owner but sometimes an employee, too. For Chuck Berry nothing was trouble, so that he made use of himself and did not find it hard to mow the lawn, for example.¹⁵³ He continually persuaded the people in the neighbourhood and elsewhere about being a person that was capable of variety of activities, which would not be managed by everyone. The teamwork of Berry and Mercury carried out five albums over the period of three years but his status of an active singer suffered.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ Stambler 53.

¹⁵⁰ Matzner et al. 120.

¹⁵¹ Hardy and Laing 37.

¹⁵² Matzner et al. 120.

¹⁵³ Stambler 53.

¹⁵⁴ Hardy and Laing 38.

The step back brought its fruit. The year 1969 denoted Berry's comeback to the Chess recording company; this meant total win. The combination of their forces generated two albums called "Back Home" and "San Francisco Dues." This new music re-established blues basis and Berry's own origins. The biggest success was not celebrated in his home country but in Britain. This seemed to be quite a pity but a Coventry performance provided the material for the next album "London Sessions" and also the creation of the most victorious song of Berry's whole singing life "My Ding-A-Ling."¹⁵⁵ In so far that he rebuild his faded popularity and enjoyed it again. This song was commercially the biggest success ever and an older hit "Rockin' and Reelin'" gained the popularity as well.¹⁵⁶ The style and a great deal of effort surely belong to the most important features accompanying Berry's whole career, otherwise no one would be able to explain his triumphant 1972 appearance in one of the Las Vegas' hotels. The performances lasted for two weeks and the reaction of the audience turned out to be positive. It seemed to be a time of Berry's revitalized fame.¹⁵⁷ Berry indisputably made it right to return back to Chess company; the acquirement of a gold record for "My Ding-A-Ling" provides and evidence of it. Moreover, at the beginning of the 1970s he introduced further hits that got into the charts.¹⁵⁸ Simply his music still appealed to the audience and his performances for ever impressed the people addressed. "His stage shows degenerated to a great extent into exercises in showmanship and mindless comedy."¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless comedy as well was a worthy attraction for the spectators.

4.3.1 Summary

Berry absolutely belongs to the group of the legendary rock and roll performers. In the course of his singing career he affirmed his significance by the several hits of the charts and by his perpetual energy shown during the performances. The most fascinating feature of his performance was probably his

¹⁵⁵ Hardy and Laing 38.

¹⁵⁶ Matzner et al. 120.

¹⁵⁷ Stambler 53.

¹⁵⁸ Stambler 53.

¹⁵⁹ Hardy and Laing 38.

“duck walk” for which he obtained a name “Crazy Legs.”¹⁶⁰ Diversity is a word that completely represents Berry’s character. His individuality is described fairly inauspiciously. His reputation suffered from bad moods, choleric behaviour and sometimes strange unprofessional attitude. It is no wonder that an immense part of it may be attributed to the dreadful life experience. However, his magnitude concerning the development of rock and roll is boundless.¹⁶¹ Chuck Berry is not a musician that should be disremembered. “Berry’s singing, his guitar and his lyrics still perhaps represent the essence of rock and roll.”¹⁶² The year 2012 represents his eighty-sixth birthday.

4.4 Chuck Berry: song analysis

The description of a diligence and verve with which Berry spiced his performances certainly must be supplemented by the investigation of the songs that were made note of in the above text. All the following lyrics that are cited are taken from the official sites of Chuck Berry, see Appendix 3. Online references to the songs are included in the footnotes, each time the reference accompanies only the first citation of the passage of the song. The correctness of the lyrics was verified by an actual listening to the original songs.

4.4.1 “Maybellene”

“ “Maybellene” was intended as a comic take-off, based on the hair cream of the same name.”¹⁶³ Even though the purpose of the song was humorous it eventually became a first triumphant hit of Chuck Berry; the preceding chapter provides an evidence. ““Maybellene” sprang from a blues environment but the song – written by Berry himself – owed almost as much to country-and-western influences.”¹⁶⁴ Berry proved himself to be an amazing performer as well as songwriter.

¹⁶⁰ Hardy and Laing 38.

¹⁶¹ Matzner et al. 121.

¹⁶² Clarke 374.

¹⁶³ Stambler 52.

¹⁶⁴ Hardy and Laing 33.

This song represents the topic of a devotion to the cars and to one particular woman named Maybellene, too. Without a doubt, Berry engaged an interesting theme and gained attention of car fans, at least. The endless disputes about cars, their speed and efficiency are immortal. Every young boy in America probably desired to have at least one of the cars mentioned in Berry's song.

As I was motivatin' over the hill
I saw Maybellene in a Coup de Ville
A Cadillac arollin' on the open road
Nothin' will outrun my V8 Ford¹⁶⁵

The competition between the rivals seems to be an exciting subject of the rock and roll music.

The Cadillac pulled up ahead of the Ford
The Ford got hot and wouldn't do no more

The song is absolutely appealing and the whole atmosphere is supplemented with Berry's guitar solo; guitar was the instrument over which he skilfully took control. Of course, the repetitive lines dealing with the woman named Maybellene play the crucial role, too.

Maybellene, why can't you be true
Oh Maybellene, why can't you be true
You've started back doin' the things you used to do

Apparently, Maybellene was a woman oh his heart or a fictional figure. Berry on one occasion announced: "The only Maybellene I ever knew was the name of a cow."¹⁶⁶ This testified not only his magnitude as a musician but also his humorous temper. See the whole text in Appendix 3.

¹⁶⁵ <http://www.chuckberry.com/music/lyrics/maybellene.htm>, (accessed June 17, 2012).

¹⁶⁶ Hardy and Laing 33.

4.4.2 “School Days”

This song is an ideal example of a pulsing and rhyming music that clearly addressed the young generation. The reason of its attractiveness is understandable. As the title of the song suggests, Berry highlights the boredom and greyness of the compulsory school attendance. The obligation that was familiar to every member of the teenage generation.

Up in the mornin' and out to school
The teacher is teachin' the Golden Rule
American history and practical math
You studyin' hard and hopin' to pass
Workin' your fingers right down to the bone
And the guy behind you won't leave you alone¹⁶⁷

Everyone experienced it and every case appeared to be the same. Berry's intention was obvious, he used everyday school topics in order to captivate the youngsters and make them join his concerts.

Furthermore Berry describes the situation, when the lunch break comes; and what should be paid attention to is a skilful and humorous composition of words.

You're lucky if you can find a seat
You're fortunate if you have time to eat

The most important part of the song arrives, when the school is over; the real rocking and rolling is on the schedule.

You're gotta hear somethin' that's really hot
With the one you love, you're makin' romance
All day long you been wantin' to dance

¹⁶⁷ <http://www.chuckberry.com/music/lyrics/school.htm>, (accessed June 17, 2012).

The sexual allusion may be straightforwardly discovered. Surely these prepossessing lines did provide an immense influence on the majority of the young American public.

Berry certainly did not want to set a formative example, he was rather critical towards educational institutions and to the old generation as well. He provokes the teenagers and inspire them to enjoy the graceless activities.

Hail, hail rock and roll
Deliver me from the days of old

The basic element of the song is a necessity to be set free from the commands of the old and benefit from rock and roll music. The amusement of Berry's music does not concern only auditory experience but it fluctuates through the whole body, the following example illustrates the delight:

The feelin' is there, body and soul.

Again for better experience of the whole song, see Appendix 3.

4.4.3 “Roll Over Beethoven”

This is another hit of Chuck Berry that spreads out pure rock and roll energy. The title evokes that it rejects the old and unfashionable and moreover it overcomes such a maestro of the classical music as Beethoven was.

You know, my temperature's risin'
and the jukebox blows a fuse
My heart's beatin' rhythm
and my soul keeps on singin' the blues
Roll Over Beethoven and tell Tchaikovsky the news¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ <http://www.chuckberry.com/music/lyrics/beethoven.htm>, (accessed June 17, 2012).

The spirit of every word is amazing. Berry describes rock and roll infatuation that runs through his body. The popularity of his songs was surely achieved by the diversity and passion of the lyrics. He continues with the same style:

I got the rockin' pneumonia,
I need a shot of rhythm and blues
I think I'm rollin' arthritis
sittin' down by the rhythm review.

The whole song interweaves the rock and roll catchwords and a rising excitement:

Well, if you feel you like it
go get your lover, then reel and rock it.

Undoubtedly, Berry by his attention attracting lyrics surpasses and overcasts the popularity of Bill Haley, whose texts were certainly not as much inventive and fascinating. The example of Berry's originality follows:

Well, early in the mornin' I'm a givin' you a warnin'
don't you step on my blue suede shoes
Hey diddle diddle, I am playin' my fiddle,
ain't got nothin' to lose.

This kind of word plays could not be the cause of anything else but a colossal popularity. Berry knew the way to acquire the attention of the majority of the audience, especially the young spectators. The sexual undertone, shown in the following excerpt, is also a matter of creativity.

You know she wiggles like a glow worm,
dance like a spinnin' top

“Roll Over Beethoven” is an additional evidence that Berry gathered a success in the American popular music sphere.

4.4.4 “John B. Goode”

Unquestionably, another in the Berry’s series of the successful hits. The victory is reflected in the previously mentioned voyage to the cosmos. The popularity was not caused only by this fact but also by the subject matter of the song. Again, the originality takes place. Over fast cars, school responsibilities and dancing craziness, this song reaches the theme of an extraordinary village boy. The exceptionality of John B. Goode originates in his proficient guitar performance.

Who never ever learned to read or write so well,
But he could play the guitar like ringing a bell.¹⁶⁹

The resemblance of John B. Goode and Chuck Berry is more than obvious, both brilliantly handled the guitar. The whole song is a story of this talented boy who was admired by the fellow country people.

The People passing by, they would stop and say
Oh my that little country boy could play

The people present at his guitar performing recognized his aptitude and predicted that he would be popular one day.

His mother told him someday you will be a man,
And you would be the leader of a big old band.

The tale about the gifted young boy utterly belongs to the alluring rock and roll music. The song gives an impression to be an autobiographical narrative of Berry’s life and this fact provides even greater significance. See the whole text in the Appendix 3.

To sum up, the songs of Chuck Berry dealt with the variety of topics. The hits are by no means similar. They do not contain unreasonable number of

¹⁶⁹ <http://www.chuckberry.com/music/lyrics/johnny.htm>, (accessed June 17, 2012).

repetitions, only the necessary ones to stress the rock and roll atmosphere. The lyrics are sometimes humorous and in every situation attractive. Of course, the greatest experience of Berry's music appears with the listening or watching his prepossessing life performance.

4.5 Elvis Presley

His life started in Tupelo, Mississippi January 1, 1935. Perhaps the world could lack the star of an invincible popularity if his twin did survive the birth instead of Elvis.¹⁷⁰ Only the one of several sources mentions the fact that Presley did not have to be the only child. His parents Vernon and Gladys possessed obsessive beliefs that their child would be extraordinary one. Even though the poverty was their foremost dilemma, they still trusted in son's predestined rewarding life. Both parents were strong believers. Some of the Presley's qualities good or bad resembled his mother, for example irritable moods, other features were inherited from his father, such as a good-looking figure. See figure 6, Appendix 1. The whole family could be characterized by a relatively depraved features. The characteristic aspects covered hard drinking, gun playing and variety of health problems.¹⁷¹ Ever since from the childhood Presley's individuality was stimulated by a diversity of dreadful factors that surely settled deeply in his mind.

His earliest musical experiments were of the gospel singing at the First Assembly Of God church, where the impassioned swaying of preacher and congregation formed the basis of the notorious pelvic gyrations that would horrify/delight nationwide television audiences.¹⁷²

The statement that conveys the fact that Presley approved himself to be talented already in young age is correct. His singing attempts are characterized by religious attributes. The family visited the preaches already in Tupelo, later on in Memphis, where they moved to in 1948. Even though Presley did attend these gatherings

¹⁷⁰ Antonín Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* (Praha: Supraphon, 1987), 217.

¹⁷¹ David Comfort, *Rocková kniha mrtvých: sedm osudových cest k nesmrtelnosti*, trans. Jan Kozák (Brno: Jota, 2010), 182-3.

¹⁷² Hardy and Laing 254.

regularly, he never became an inclusive member of the church. However much he respected Christianity and his childhood was affected by choir singing and prayers, he did not let the religion to gain an entire control over him.¹⁷³ Presley was probably aware of the fact that he someday would disobey few of the commandments.

Already in the year 1948 Presley presented a country oriented song at the local trade event; the title of the song was “Old Shep.”¹⁷⁴ He proved himself not to be afraid of public appearance, when he was thirteen. Before the moving to Memphis, at the age of eleven Presley obtained his first guitar. Besides, Memphis keeps the label of one of the renowned music centres of American South and a place where naturalness and liveliness of folk musicianship persisted for a long time, no matter what the music was; black or white.¹⁷⁵ The above mentioned facts certainly had an impact on Presley’s singing career. Moreover, he visited L. C. Humes High School there, where he sang in the school programmes, during the local dancing and in the church.¹⁷⁶ In all conscience, his infancy was characterized by the wide range of activities. The moving to Memphis was also caused by his father’s numerous criminal offences. Elvis therefore spent the most of the childhood with the mother. Their coexistence could be described as a deep and affectionate dependence full of tenderness and love.¹⁷⁷ Almost every time the more preferable relationships concern the boys and their fathers. In the case of Elvis Presley, the father figure represented a collection of problems, so that he adhered more to his mother.

As a matter of fact, the love for his mother brought about the star that Elvis became. The situation was following. Presley came to a recording studio with an intention to make a recording for the jubilee of Gladys, his mother. Sam Philips, the proprietor, with a help of his assistant took notice of him.¹⁷⁸ It can be argued

¹⁷³ Steve Turner, *Touha po nebi*, trans. Veronika Čihulková and Petr Vizina (Praha: Návrat domů, 1997), 16.

¹⁷⁴ Hardy and Laing 254.

¹⁷⁵ Dorůžka 140.

¹⁷⁶ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 218.

¹⁷⁷ Comfort 182-3.

¹⁷⁸ Tony Palmer, *All You need is Love: The Story of Popular Music*, ed. Paul Medlicott (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1977), 211.

whether this was a stroke of luck or an invisible help of one insignificant member of the recording company. More likely the second option is proper.

However his own career began almost accidentally as a result of a visit to the Memphis Recording Services studio, where he paid four dollars to cut a record as a birthday present for his mother.¹⁷⁹

Were it not for his mother's birth anniversary, Elvis almost certainly would not get such a magnificent opportunity. At that time, Presley earned thirty five dollars per week as a truck driver at Electric Crown Company, he enjoyed the evenings by the singing with local bands and was unaware of the fact that one day his life would endure the vast transformations.¹⁸⁰ No one would guess such an astonishing life turnover.

And I asked him: "What do you do?" He said: "Well I can't sing very well, but I'd like to try. As the old saying goes, my momma says I can." And I said: "Well, fine. Get in there and let's go." It's a familiar story. Sam Philips has told it many times.¹⁸¹

It is evident from the previous excerpt that Presley at that time appeared to be an ordinary country boy. He behaved very gratefully, without a slightest sign of being spoiled by extreme self-confidence.

In 1954 Sam Philips was willing to record the first song with Presley and other two Memphis residents, who handled the guitar and bass. Their gathering firstly seemed not to be successful but Presley executed maximum and Sun record's hit was born. The title was "That's All Right Mama." Local citizens favoured this song. The hit was chased by the subsequent ones "The Hillbilly Cat" and "The King of Western Bop," which were representatives of the mixture of country and rhythm and blues music styles.¹⁸² Of course, Sam Philips must have recognized Presley's potential, so that he let him continue singing, instead of

¹⁷⁹ Hardy and Laing 254.

¹⁸⁰ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 218.

¹⁸¹ Palmer 212.

¹⁸² Hardy and Laing 255.

giving up after the initial failures. The reputation of Elvis Presley gradually improved and he gained popularity. He became the main focus of certain Colonel Tom Parker who after a while became his manager. Presley then under his conducting travelled across the southern American states and recorded “Baby Let’s Play House” and “Mystery Train,” and also performed at an annual gathering of country and western disk jockeys in Nashville. Just at that moment in Nashville, Steve Sholes from RCA-Victor recording company took a notice of the rising star and bought his contract for thirty-five thousand dollars. Not only the contract was sold but also all the recordings that were not released till then.¹⁸³ See figure 7, Appendix 1. Perhaps another co-occurrence of circumstances that supported Presley’s future success. Straightforwardly, the direction towards victory, as the name of the recording company implied, was commenced. Moreover, the technique of his performance and singing enchanted scores of fans.

First he sang with remarkable physicality. His body was in his voice, so to speak, whether in the full voluptuousness of his ballad singing, or in the skittering playfulness of his untempo tracks. Second he had a remarkable range of singing styles (to match his unusual tonic range – from bass to falsetto).¹⁸⁴

The achievements in the American popular music field therefore derived from his own capabilities. The question to pose is what was the major influence that assisted within the creation of Presley’s individual and distinctive style and expression. The one of several aspects of his individuality was surely his hair. The black jazz musicians used the grease in order to straighten their hair and Elvis employed the pomade as well to resemble them. Concerning his music the situation was equivalent. He listened to black rhythm and blues musicians in the radio in order to gain knowledge of their art. Presley declared that the black singers performed, what he showed during his fame, for longer periods of time than him. He also stated that no one was willing to pay attention to their craftsmanship; the skin

¹⁸³ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 218.

¹⁸⁴ Will Straw and John Street, ed., *Cambridge companion to pop and rock*, ed. Simon Frith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 75.

colour played an important role.¹⁸⁵ To sum up, Elvis Presley in certain respects imitated his predecessors and was not ashamed to acknowledge that fact.

“Although Presley’s television performances were denounced by authorities as vulgar, the shows were attended by hordes of screaming young fans.”¹⁸⁶ Figure 8, Appendix 1 illustrates Presley’s resistless expression. His attractiveness and sex appeal could not let the audience repulsed. Such a personal captivation, expression, elasticity, temperament and explosiveness of the performance had never been demonstrated by anyone in the music business to such an extent, as in the case of rock and roll ruler Elvis Presley. The above mentioned features were probably the result of a necessity to sing out loud all the things that could not be articulated in an alternative way.¹⁸⁷ An incredibly enormous energy accompanied every performance. Elvis created a music revolution. He provided the transformation with a liberating power of rock and roll; he combined the feelings with singing and rhythm with the body. He was the first of the singers who worked out the real shows; Elvis got the audience off the seats and showed the direction to the teenagers that were searching for the possibilities of life.¹⁸⁸ He supplied the rock and roll era in the United States with a needed explosion of liveliness. No one had ever seen such a personality on the stage, no matter what the colour of skin was. Neither Buddy Holly, Bill Haley, Fats Domino, Bo Diddley nor Chuck Berry could cope with such a superstar. Presley fluttered, vibrated and rippled as a human in the flames; he howled and moaned like someone who had a stroke.¹⁸⁹ In other words the concerts of Elvis Presley left behind the unforgettable experiences that every spectator must have regarded a most fortunate happening of their entire life.

Evidently, the attractiveness of a musician is not only affected by his/her attractiveness, but a selection of an appropriate repertoire is fundamental, too. Presley’s prominence therefore depended also on the recording company and its

¹⁸⁵ Veselý 40.

¹⁸⁶ Starr & Watterman 63-4.

¹⁸⁷ Dorůžka 148.

¹⁸⁸ Kříž 44.

¹⁸⁹ Comfort 182-3.

suggestions. In 1956 RCA released a song called “Heartbreak Hotel” that produced recognition of an unprecedented size.¹⁹⁰

The critical consensus has been that the move to RCA heralded an immediate deterioration in the quality of Presley’s work, and that it’s gone downhill ever since. But though the records made up until his army call-up in 1958 saw a considerable change in Elvis’s style and type of material, they also produced a body of work which in retrospect can be seen as the cream of mainstream Fifties rock and roll.¹⁹¹

Obviously the negative aspects of the recording company change intervened too, but on the other hand the Sun records in Memphis was certainly less significant firm than RCA. Even though the style was modified the promising future and prosperity was guaranteed. The booming songs were recorded throughout the whole Presley’s line of singing and performing, but the most glorified work comes from the initial period of rock and roll. The 1956 represented a number of successful songs that brought about a revolution; Presley’s unrestrained shows at that time turned out to be a pattern for a lot of teenagers who were determined to alternate their lives.¹⁹² Rock and roll madness did not affect only the young American generation but also the bottom layers of the society.

Devotion to his music often bordered on fanaticism. Fans in Forth Worth, Texas, were reported to have carved Elvis Presley’s name on their arms with knives when he performed there in the spring of 1956; a melee broke out between fans and policemen during rock and roll concert in San Jose, California in July of 1956, ending with eleven persons injured and \$3,000 damage to the dance hall where the concert was held...¹⁹³

The manner by which the fans expressed their commitment was sometimes on the border line, but every favour positive or negative could have been taken as the method to increase the publicity of Elvis Presley.

¹⁹⁰ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 218.

¹⁹¹ Hardy and Laing 255.

¹⁹² Starr & Watterman 63-4.

¹⁹³ Hamm 399.

“RCA had taken the unprecedented step of releasing seven Presley singles simultaneously, and he was No. 1 every week between August and December.”¹⁹⁴ This action turned out to be the win. Presley quickly grew to be an idol for thousands of screaming fans. In these years he noted down the best known singles covering “Jailhouse Rock,” “Blue Suede Shoes” and “Hound Dog.” Contrary to the beginnings at Sun, the recording with RCA was clearly planned and without improvisations. Nevertheless, the songs were energetic enough.¹⁹⁵ The triumph seemed assumable when Presley’s interposed effort and enthusiasm was taken into consideration. It was not only Elvis’ tremendous explosiveness combined with his raw animalism that rolled over the hordes of the spectators. Elvis claimed that no lascivious movements were executed, still cardinal Spellman and Frank Sinatra opposed. His absorbing exhibitions burst with the most impassionate theatrical performance that was rooted in the southern evangelistic way of thinking.¹⁹⁶ The effect of his presence at the preachers in the childhood was undeniable. The biggest importance of Elvis Presley is inherent in the success. From 1956 to 1958 he provided the music scene with eleven hits number one in American pop chart.¹⁹⁷ This bears the evidence of an inconceivable prestige.

Moreover, to all the music achievements the work in radio and television programmes was added. This industry was impressed by Presley’s faltering, uncommon colour, provocative and inimitability of voice in conjunction with his exceptional interpretation aptitude. For illustration, he excelled in *Jackie Gleason Show*, *Milton Berle Show*, *Steve Allen Show* or *Ed Sullivan Show*. Furthermore, the signing of a one film per year contract followed. Interestingly, he never executed life performance out of America; Europe fans knew him only from the desks, television and magazines.¹⁹⁸ Presley’s infinite advantage lied not only in his voice but in the visual appearance that attracted masses in the United States.

¹⁹⁴ Hardy and Laing 257.

¹⁹⁵ Dorůžka 150.

¹⁹⁶ Comfort 185.

¹⁹⁷ Veselý, 2010, 41.

¹⁹⁸ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 218.

His first release for Twentieth Century Fox was *Love Me Tender*; a movie so enthusiastically received by Presley fans that the company estimates it recouped the negative costs in the first three days of release.¹⁹⁹

Presley without doubt became the most appreciated rock and roll singer and performer in America. The earliest films concerned, besides previously mentioned one, *Loving You*, *Jailhouse Rock* and *King of Creole*. These films fell into a group of the most valuable pieces of his work. The consecutive screen shots only took an advantage of Presley's colossal popularity rather than impressed audience by their significant quality. The attraction was in addition caused by the eye-catching locations whether they were nature or girl oriented. Moreover, the musical items flowing through the films fell behind the standard of his top music.²⁰⁰ Straightforwardly, in every case the popularity after a while registers a relapse and the formerly new and fascinating aspects lose their sparkle. What was more, Presley's focus on the film industry was caused by his manager Colonel Parker who lacked the music knowledge but went after rapid moneymaking. Thus, Presley performed in worthless movies of Hollywood.²⁰¹ Certainly the harm to his excellence was done. The money factor represented a pressure from the several perspectives.

The one of the privileges related to the wealth was the possibility to spend a lot. Presley thus secured the whole broad family and bought Graceland, where they lived together very peacefully at the beginning. However, his father was delighted to waste Elvis' money and his mother felt like a prisoner.²⁰² For some individuals this could be the dream fulfilment for others huge encumbrance. At the end of the 1950s Elvis went to see his pastor from the past and communicated his secrete feelings about the whole rock and roll craziness. He was sorrowful of the fact that he had the plenitude of money but even worse he made trespasses of pastor's commandments.²⁰³ Apparently Presley himself was not satisfied with the money earning methods which were in conflict with the Ten Commandments. Colonel

¹⁹⁹ Stambler 407.

²⁰⁰ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 218.

²⁰¹ Straw 75.

²⁰² Comfort 186-7.

²⁰³ Turner 16.

Parker in the mean time invented another technique to obtain even bigger amount of money. He made Elvis an icon of the gift items which involved variety of articles; for illustration the pillow cases were sold.²⁰⁴ Presley developed into a distinguished symbol of rock and roll; such a changeover was not expected and perhaps not desired.

The flourishing singing and acting profession was not even brought to an end by basic military service calling to Germany. In fact, he found an adolescent girl of his heart there; her name was Priscilla Beaulieu and Presley did not marry her until 1967. One year later, she gave a birth to a girl named Lisa Marie Presley.²⁰⁵ The image of a married man absolutely could not raise the popularity. The assertion that military service transformed Elvis' style exists. When he returned in 1960, the rock and roll mania receded. Presley started to orient his music at slow ballads. The typical features such as naturalness remained but the songs resembled more the singing of Italian tenors.²⁰⁶ The important music influential matter related not only to military service. The change of repertoire was produced by the death of his beloved mother Gladys at the beginning of the 1960s.

The rapid screaming rock and roll acts were exchanged for the ballad tuned songs. The deviation from the classical American rock and roll was perceptible. The unhurried pieces of Presley's music are covered for example in: "It's Now Or Never," "Are You Lonesome Tonight," "Wooden Heart," "Can't Help Fallin' In Love" and "Where Do You Come From."²⁰⁷ The song titles themselves denoted the tenderness and melancholy. Different source points out that Colonel Parker rejected the offers for the tours, simple performances or television appearances, which would have been worthy high profit. They met their own requirements only with film production and almost no music making. Presley therefore had a spare time for his private affairs.²⁰⁸ If it were not for Parker's having ceaseless control over all commercial steps, the life and professional destiny of Elvis Presley would probably differ a lot. The singing would almost certainly predominate the acting.

²⁰⁴ Hardy and Laing 257.

²⁰⁵ Kříž 144.

²⁰⁶ Dorůžka 150.

²⁰⁷ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 218.

²⁰⁸ Stambler 407.

The music respects did not represent the major concernment for Parker, he rather centred Presley's career at the films. In the 1960s three films per year were created. The Hollywood cliché was typical feature of all the movies and the preponderance of them fell into oblivion.²⁰⁹ Concerning the astonishing beginnings of this rock and roll megastar; the focus on the films signified detriment to his reputation. The different source describes the movies in the following way: "...each revealing a more tired and timid Hollywood orthodoxy than the last, in which he sang whatever third-rate songs had been chosen to fill out their plotless vapidness."²¹⁰ Admittedly, Presley must have known that his most favourite activity, the singing, was deteriorated. He entirely limited the live performances and concentrated on the films. He paid the recording company a visit only at the times, when a necessity to create a new song for further film accumulated. And the previously mentioned marriage with Priscilla followed, too.²¹¹ All this facts bring together an undeniable veracity that Presley's career achievements stagnated and the wide public took note of it.

Conversely, Presley always knew the way how to deal with the women. His appearance was testified by the irresistible look. See Figure 8, Appendix 1. The parental generation was shocked. Presley's singular manifestations appealed to the masses of people. However, the style of the movements and the lyrics of the songs of the post-war black singers did not interpret any less excitability; but it was not carried out through the media. While Elvis at the period of his greatest glory could be seen in television constantly.²¹² As a consequence, he turned out to be such a rock and roll symbol. The women adored him and Elvis undoubtedly derived tremendous benefits from it. Ahead of the wedding Presley passed through an immense number of sexual escapades and obscurities. Even the names of his acting female partners appeared in the list of his mistresses.²¹³ Presley possessed uncontrollable charm that served his lust. Nevertheless, his private life did not interfere into the professional one. The admiration fluctuated and still continues to appear from whatever sides; the respect concerned subsequent successful singers.

²⁰⁹ Dorůžka 150.

²¹⁰ Hardy and Laing 258.

²¹¹ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 218.

²¹² Dorůžka 148.

²¹³ Comfort 192.

Bono Vox from U2 band considered him to be a prodigy, Madonna claimed to be nobody without Elvis, and John Lennon declared that Presley contributed to the establishment of The Beatles.²¹⁴ Elvis not only affected the development of rock and roll in America in the mid-1950s but he also provided a material for the succeeding performers.

Elvis was simply an image, a godlike memory, from long ago and far away. In his time, he had cut loose a whole generation. He had united white and black. He had brought sex into the open and demonstrated the possible.²¹⁵

He brought such a memorable revolution that nobody will ever be able to surpass his stardom. An honour should be paid to his undisguised verve by which he retracted the audience into rock and roll enjoyment, which was similar to the one that he demonstrated. Due to his remarkable fortitude rock and roll was converted into a worldwide conception.²¹⁶

Nevertheless, an inevitability to accomplish the account of Presley's life and career remains. After being wedded to Priscilla, Presley almost terminated his Hollywood production. A regenerated interest in the music arrived in 1969. Las Vegas served as a concert place. The records from that period evinced that the comeback was taken seriously. The names of the songs were following: "In The Ghetto," "Suspicious Minds," "My Boy," "My Little Friend," "I Can't Help Believin'," "I'm Leavin."²¹⁷ The slowdown of the music production seemed to evaporate. Favourably, the music fans could all over again take a pleasure from Elvis' shows. Behind the scene the situation was not especially optimistic. From 1970 to 1977 Presley expended two-hundred thousand dollars on the drug prescriptions.²¹⁸ The enormous expenditures obviously denoted the worsening of Presley's health. The weight of being a king of rock and roll displayed itself as extremely heavy one. Presley's personal existence as well as his physical condition suffered a lot. The delusions connected with the feelings of oppression

²¹⁴ Kríž 144.

²¹⁵ Palmer 229.

²¹⁶ Venkrbec 56.

²¹⁷ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 218.

²¹⁸ Comfort 196.

accompanied his being; this caused seclusion.²¹⁹ From the one perspective Presley experienced popularity which was not probably exceeded by any other musician; from another perspective his physical shape was destroyed.

Between the years 1971 and 1973 Presley complemented his inexhaustible repertoire of the hits with the following ones: “I Really Don’t Want to Know,” “Where Did She Go,” “Until It’s Time for You to Go,” “An American Trilogy,” “It’s Only Love,” “Steamroller Blues,” “Raised on Rock,” et cetera.²²⁰ Even though he was not in a good physical shape, as the previous paragraph explains, he made an effort to recover the previously fading popularity. In January 1973 the endeavour happened to be even greater. Presley arranged a splendid concert carried across the world through a satellite. The name of the programme was *Aloha From Hawaii Via Satellite* and the estimations counted about a milliard of spectators.²²¹ The fame was resurrected and Presley profited by this show:

...which also provided the material for the album “Aloha from Hawaii Via Satellite.” The Album went all over the gold-record level, earning over a million dollars for tape sales alone, and was the top of the U.S. charts during May.²²²

This governing figure of rock and roll music of the mid-1950s in America re-entered the musical market and earned a multitude of money. The final stage of his life was marked by the repugnance against the performances but Presley’s financial shape did not allow him to finish the singing. In 1974 he performed at one hundred and fifty-two concerts and gained seven million dollars. However, the sales of his records gradually stagnated, the assets decreased and Presley took drugs in even greater extent.²²³ The re-born success was replaced by the depression. Two decades passed after the Presley idol establishment and a nostalgia for his extinct magnificence appeared. The essential point, that ruined the flourish of his career, was attributed to the great world of show business in Hollywood and Las Vegas.

²¹⁹ Dorůžka 150.

²²⁰ Stambler 408.

²²¹ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 218.

²²² Stambler 408.

²²³ Comfort 201-202.

Nevertheless, Presley's aptitude for music stays unforgettable.²²⁴ The booms and the collapses took part in the lives of many musicians; Elvis Presley was not spared as well.

Inevitably, the conclusion of this chapter deals with all the important achievements and features of a personality that Elvis Presley represented. "He could be courteous, abrupt, straightforward, unguessable; nobody was close to him, not even the woman he married in a hotel called The Aladdin."²²⁵ This individuality was obviously noted for the variety of good and bad qualities, swings of mood and sexual adventures, which were described formerly.

Elvis Presley was a superstar, a media phenomenon who remained, literally, the boy next door. Of all pop stars he was the one who could have had everything but (and this is what rock critics have never understood) didn't really want it.²²⁶

Noticeably, the fame and the richness did not denote the contentment criteria for Presley. He was rather an ordinary boy who was lucky enough and musically skilled to acquire the celebration and the loads of money. The end of his life however showed frustration. The divorce together with his obsessive feelings, hypochondria, alcoholism and drug addiction could not have satisfactory conclusion.²²⁷ "Elvis Presley died, at the age of forty two, in Memphis, Tennessee, a city to which he had moved at the age of thirteen."²²⁸ Unfortunately, the death intervened exceedingly early. The cause of his 1977 death had not been clarified but the official announcement stated that it was a heart attack. The downfall was probably a consequence of his drug addiction and overweight.²²⁹ If the drug addiction did not ruin his health, Presley could impress the audience for a longer period of time.

²²⁴ Hardy and Laing 260.

²²⁵ Palmer 227.

²²⁶ Straw 77.

²²⁷ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 219.

²²⁸ Straw 77.

²²⁹ Kříž 144.

4.5.1 Summary

Notwithstanding, the outcome of his work is monumental. He created eighty-nine LP's, sixty-one single hits and thirty eight songs reached the tops of the American charts. He acted in thirty-two films and approximately in five hundred television programmes. Elvis persuaded the masses not to be only a rock and roll musician but a universal performer. He was capable of singing gospels, rhythm and blues, musical plays' tunes, ballads, country and western music or modern rock.²³⁰ Simply, Presley was understood as a gifted and versatile artist. "The effect that Presley had on women did not go unnoticed in the music industry."²³¹ He might be considered a genius of the rock and roll movements that provoked the mass mania. "In short, he was to the Fifties what Dylan, the Beatles and the Stones were to the Sixties."²³² The attribution, which corresponds to the personality of Elvis Presley, is an unsurpassable phenomenon. Despite of the fact that he possessed a wide range of negative human and artistic features, Presley was a most significant representative of classic 1950s rock and roll in America and also the major celebrity of post-war popular music.²³³ Blankly, Elvis happened to be an idol.

He had been controversial at first because he was sexy, 'ruining the morals of our youth' and all that, but he confused everyone, for offstage he was polite and soft spoken and worshiped his mother.²³⁴

The previous excerpt characterizes the image that should certainly stay in the minds of the countless number of the devotees. Elvis was stepping across the boundaries but on the other hand he proved himself to be a caring gentleman. The former home, Graceland, turned out to be a place of Elvis' grave, which is every year visited by the hundreds of thousands of the admirers.²³⁵ Such a legendary persona will never be put out of the minds of the rock and roll supporters.

²³⁰ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 218.

²³¹ Clarke 386.

²³² Hardy and Laing 260-261.

²³³ Matzner et al., *Encyklopedie jazzu a moderní populární hudby. [Díl 2]. Část jmenná, Světová scéna: L-Ž* 219.

²³⁴ Clarke 391.

²³⁵ Kříž 144.

4.6 Elvis Presley: song analysis

The strength of Elvis Presley was not embedded in his appearance only. The reputation of rock and roll star was supported by the influential texts, some of which are analyzed below. All the following lyrics that are cited are taken from one anonymous web page, the songs are listed in the Appendix 4. Online references to the songs are included in the footnotes, each time the reference accompanies only the first citation of the passage of the song. The correctness of the lyrics was verified by an actual listening to the original songs.

4.6.1 “Heartbreak Hotel”

Previously mentioned, this song was a first successful hit of the cooperation between Elvis and RCA. “Within a month, it rocketed to number one on all known charts. It stayed there for eight weeks and eventually sold three million copies around the world.”²³⁶ First teamwork therefore resulted beyond expectations.

The lyrics at a first sight do not seem complicated and the three times repeated chorus consists of simple three lines:

You make me so lonely baby,
I get so lonely,
I get so lonely I could die.²³⁷

The whole song story discusses a relationship break up and a subsequent situation of a man feeling the loneliness. He discovers a new place, where he settles down. The emotional collapse surely meant an interesting topic.

Well, since my baby left me,
I found a new place to dwell.
It's down at the end of lonely street
at Heartbreak Hotel.

²³⁶ Palmer 217.

²³⁷ <http://www.elvis-presley-lyrics.com/elvislyricsH.html#11>, (accessed June 17, 2012).

Including Presley's voice quality, the song unquestionably had to captivate at least feminine part of the audience. Moreover, the image concerning Elvis Presley being that lonely man indeed evoked the feelings of regret. Every woman would feel the obligation to comfort such an idol. Equally strong attractiveness appears in the following verse.

And although it's always crowded,
you still can find some room.
Where broken hearted lovers
do cry away their gloom.

As a matter of fact the text is not convoluted but it appeals to the audience by the real confession that men are capable of displaying the emotions of sadness over the loss of a dearest person. The depression presents itself to be so deep that it can cause the sufferer's death. The chorus verifies the previous statement. See Appendix 4 in order to study the whole text.

To sum up, what Presley manifested by the first piece of rock and roll music, which was supported by RCA recording company, was a regretful theme; but he absolutely sang it with an immeasurable verve.

4.6.2 "Jailhouse Rock"

Vice versa, this song definitively exposes an extraordinary energy of the rock and roll vehemence, which in this case surprisingly affects the prison inhabitants.

The warden threw a party in the county jail
The prison band was there and they began to wail
The band was jumpin' and the joint began to swing
You should've heard those knocked out jailbirds sing²³⁸

²³⁸ <http://www.elvis-presley-lyrics.com/elvislyricsJ.html#1>, (accessed June 17, 2012).

Certainly, the atmosphere of the song presents itself to be positive. The inmates exert an effort to enjoy themselves even though they are shut in the penitentiary. The ends of the lines visibly rhyme and create intriguing impression.

As well as the majority of the early rock and roll songs inspire the listeners to execute an activity; “Jailhouse Rock” does it identically in the chorus:

Let's rock
Everybody, let's rock
Everybody in the whole cell block
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock.

Blankly, this hit represents a profound rock and roll with the issues that show the true wilderness. The proceeding of the song describes particular prisoners and the rock and roll euphoria that they perform:

Spider Murphy played the tenor saxophone
Little Joe was blowin' on the slide trombone
The drummer boy from Illinois went crash, boom, bang
The whole rhythm section was a purple gang.

The third line contains onomatopoeic words, which signify the real sounds and adjust the playfulness of “Jailhouse Rock”. The whole song passes in the similar mood. See Appendix 4.

These lyrics created an evidence that Elvis Presley absolutely fits in the group of the best rock and rollers of the mid-1950s in America.

4.6.3 “Hound Dog”

See Appendix 4. This is an additional early rock and roll hit that may be characterized by a lot of repetitions and by an incredibly rapid tempo. Concerning the charisma and the style of the singing that Presley dominated, another triumph was produced. The clear indication against whom the song is launched is absent. It

may develop a certain image that the lyrics attempt to be offensive; the following excerpt presents the aggression:

You ain't nothin' but a hound dog
Cryin' all the time
You ain't nothin' but a hound dog
Cryin' all the time
Well, you ain't never caught a rabbit
And you ain't no friend of mine²³⁹

The insult obviously makes an effort to arouse the feelings of an inferiority. The fictional person concerned may be persuaded about the fact that he/she lacks companions and is worth nothing. The subsequent stanza continues in the similar spirit.

When they said you was high classed
Well, that was just a lie
Yeah, they said you was high classed
Well, that was just a lie
Yeah, you ain't never caught a rabbit
And you ain't no friend of mine

To conclude, the text is provocative, appealing and unusual by the interpretation of the insulting expressions. Some of the listeners may have discovered comic elements. The situation of teasing other people always serves for an entertainment.

4.6.4 “Don’t Be Cruel”

Conversely, this piece of Presley’s rock and roll music builds up the true love emotions. See Appendix 4. The man exposes his attitude towards a girl for whom he feels affection; she probably left him.

²³⁹ <http://www.elvis-presley-lyrics.com/elvislyricsH.html#31>, (accessed June 17, 2012).

You know I can be found,
sitting home all alone,
If you can't come around,
at least please telephone.
Don't be cruel to a heart that's true²⁴⁰

The vision of Elvis Presley singing a confession of loneliness connected with a wish to get the girl back seems to culminate all the attractiveness. The female audience must have been thrilled. The following lines illustrate even greater amount of gentleness and fondness:

Don't be cruel to a heart that's true.
I don't want no other love,
Baby it's just you I'm thinking of.

The entire song is also a sufficient example of rock and roll's capability of expressing the genuine sensitivity. The man is so intensely devoted to a woman that he is willing to marry her:

Let's walk up to the preacher
and let us say I do,
Then you'll know you'll have me,
and I'll know that I'll have you.

The importance of the Elvis Presley's songs for the development of the rock and roll music in America was tremendous; chapter 4.5 confirmed this fact. The variety of fascinating and appealing topics is covered. Who would not respect Elvis Presley? The answer depends on the fans, admirers and also the reviewers. However, his popularity was straightforward and the prevalence of the resources decided about this obvious fact equivalently.

²⁴⁰ <http://www.elvis-presley-lyrics.com/elvislyricsD.html#16>, (accessed June 17, 2012).

5 Conclusion

The core objective of the thesis was to provide a record of the origins of rock and roll in the United States in the 1950s with a regard to the three most important representatives of this genre of popular music, Bill Haley, Chuck Berry and Elvis Presley.

The thesis begins with the description of popular music and the benefits that are provided for the listeners in the form of leisure time activity. Rock and roll in the 1950s was the genre that evoked the diversity of the feelings. Regarding the talking about the variety; rock and roll combined several influences of already established genres of music. Rhythm and blues, covered in the subchapter 2.2, produced a great effect, concerning the establishment of rock and roll. The explanation of the mutual features of rhythm and blues and rock and roll simply proved the fact that rock and roll took an inspiration in it. Country music touched the production as well. The attitudes of the society had to be depicted as well. The thesis set up the theory that the young generation through rock and roll expressed its revolting feelings, while the older generation saw an evil in the form of liberal and immodest behaviour. The standards were advanced and the fighting young generation contributed to the rock and roll attractiveness.

The subchapters 3.1 and 3.2 enlightened the emergence of rock and roll in American culture and presented the explanation of the creation of the term rock and roll and portrayed the personas responsible for the music boom. Moreover, the revolution was commenced and it also brought the disapproving opinions of American authorities. Not all the members of the society were satisfied with the expressions of the revolt and sex. The sexuality was one of the features of rock and roll that provided the attractiveness; chapter 3.3 proves it. Of course, Elvis Presley was the biggest seducer. Rock and roll did not influence the people only through the radio and via live concerts but it spread through the films as well; this presented another device to attract the attention. Special credit belongs to the recording companies, without their help the world and principally United States would not have ever known such great artists as Bill Haley and especially Elvis Presley were, and Chuck Berry still is.

The chapter number 4 is an evidence of their infinite rock and roll enthusiasm. They proved themselves to be profoundly devoted to their music craft and each of them managed to captivate the fans. These three musicians possessed the ability to insert a perpetual energy into the singing, each of them handled his own different peculiar style. Even though Bill Haley's popularity registered a decrease with the emergence of Berry and Presley, he will always be seen as a pioneering figure of rock and roll in America. Though his semblance did not belong to the most alluring one and the songs did not explode with extravagantly passionate feelings. Conversely, Chuck Berry owns the necessary amount of the wilderness that was needed on the way to the triumph. Surely his "duck walk" and amazing guitar playing contributed to his being a highly distinguished performer of rock and roll era in America and also the star of the following decades when he still transmitted his art to the audience. His achievements surpassed his sins.

On the other hand Elvis' family knew from his early childhood that he held a great potential, chapter 4.5 affirms it. Their suggestions were true. Elvis brought such an innovation of singing style and performance that he himself could not believe and the crowded concert halls only proved it. Presley remains an icon up to the present day. And maybe all the more the fans regret his tragic end, partly caused by his own awful habits. His songs and the moods that they activate stay everlasting.

6 Resumé

Hlavním cílem této diplomové práce bylo popsat počátky rock and rollu v Americe v padesátých letech dvacátého století s ohledem na tři nejdůležitější představitele tohoto žánru populární hudby. Těmito třemi představiteli byli Bill Haley, Chuck Berry a Elvis Presley.

Práce na začátku popisuje populární hudbu spolu s výhodami, které poskytuje posluchačům v podobě volno-časové aktivity. Rock and roll byl v polovině dvacátého století žánrem, který vyvolával různorodé pocity. Co se týče rozmanitosti, rock and roll zkombinoval několik vlivů dávno založených hudebních stylů. Rhythm a blues, popsáný v podkapitole 2.2, hodně ovlivnil vznik rock and rollu. Vysvětlení vzájemných rysů rhythm a blues a rock and rollu jednoduše dokázalo, že rock and roll se opravdu inspiroval touto hudbou. Country hudba se produkce dotkla také. Názory společnosti musely rovněž být vyzdviženy. Práce se zakládá na teorii, že generace mladistvých vyjádřila prostřednictvím rock and rollu svoje pocity vzpoury. Starší generace pak viděla hlavně hřích v podobně uvolněného a nevhodného chování. Staré bylo přetransformováno a bojující mladiství přispěli k větší přitažlivosti toho stylu populární hudby.

Podkapitoly 3.1 a 3.2 osvětlily vznik rock and rollu v americké kultuře a objasnily stvoření názvu rock and roll. Dále popsaly osobnosti, které stály za zrodem nové hudby. Poté, začala revoluce a byly vyjádřeny i nesouhlasné názory od amerických autorit. Ne všichni členové společnosti byli spokojeni s vyjádřením vzpoury a sexu. Sexualita byla jedním z aspektů rock and rollu, která přispěla k jeho půvabu, kapitola 3.3 to potvrzuje. Samozřejmě největším svůdníkem byl Elvis Presley. Rock and roll neovlivňoval pouze přes rádio a prostřednictvím živých koncertů, ale také díky filmům. Filmy byly jen dalším způsobem jak upoutat ještě větší pozornost. Výjimečné uznání patří také nahrávacím společnostem, bez jejich pomoci by svět a hlavně Spojené státy nikdy nepoznaly takové skvělé umělce, jakými byli Bill Haley a Elvis Presley, a jakým stále je Chuck Berry.

Čtvrtá kapitola je důkazem jejich neskonaleho rock and rollového nadšení. Projevili se jako nesmírně zanícení svému řemeslu a každý z nich dokázala vtáhnout diváky do svého vystoupení. Tito tři muzikanti vlastnili schopnost vložit do zpěvu obrovskou energii a každý z nich ovládal rozdílný a mimořádný styl. I když popularita Billa Haleya zaznamenala úpadek s nástupem Berryho a Presleyho, bude vždycky považován za průkopníka rock and rollu v Americe. Jeho vzezření sice nepatřilo k těm nejlákavějším a písničky nejiskřily přehnaně vášnivými pocity, ale stejně je pamatován. Naopak Chuck Berry vlastnil a určitě stále vlastní notnou dávku divokosti, která byla potřebná na cestě ke slávě. Jeho „kachní chůze“ a úžasné kytarové umění jasně přispělo k tomu, že byl považován za respektovaného zpěváka rock and rollové éry v Americe a také následujících dekád, kdy stále přesvědčoval publikum, jak dobře to na jevišti umí. Jeho úspěch překonal i jeho hříchy.

Na druhou stranu u Elvise již v době jeho dětství rodina věřila, že skrývá velký potenciál, kapitola 4.5 toto tvrzení dosvědčuje. Jejich představy byly správné. Elvis přinesl takové změny ve zpěvu a vystoupeních, že ani on sám tomu nemohl uvěřit, přeplněné koncertní síně slávu jen potvrzovaly. Presley zůstává ikonou dodnes. A možná o to více jeho obdivovatelé litují jeho tragického konce, který si do jisté míry zapříčinil sám svými špatnými návyky. Jeho písně a nálady a pocity, které vyvolávají, zůstanou věčné.

Tato práce poskytla množství informací o zpěvácích, jejich kariéře i osudech a zvýšila můj vlastní zájem o tuto hudbu a hlavně jednotlivé osobnosti. Určitě doporučuji i poslech analyzovaných písní, které vyvolávají směsici pozitivních, smutných i divokých pocitů.

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8 Appendices

The pictures are taken from the book sources that are listed in the bibliography; see footnotes and bibliography.

Appendix 1

Figure 1, 2²⁴¹

Table II: Some Important Covers of Rhythm and Blues and Country-Western Songs (1950-56)

Song	Cover	Original
"Tennessee Waltz"	Patti Page (Mercury, 1950)	Short Brothers (1948)
"Cold, Cold Heart"	Tony Bennett (Columbia, 1951)	Hank Williams (MGM, 1951)
"Hey, Good Lookin' "	Jo Stafford & Frankie Laine (Columbia, 1951)	Hank Williams (MGM, 1951)
"Jambalaya"	Jo Stafford (Columbia, 1952)	Hank Williams (MGM, 1952)
"Half As Much"	Rosemary Clooney (Columbia, 1952)	Hank Williams (MGM, 1952)
"Your Cheatin' Heart"	Joni James (MGM, 1953)	Hank Williams (MGM, 1953)
"Crying in the Chapel"	June Valli (RCA-Victor, 1953)	Orioles (Jubilee, 1953)
"Sh-Boom"	Crew-Cuts (Mercury, 1954)	Chords (Cat, 1954)
"Shake, Rattle and Roll"	Bill Haley (Decca, 1954)	Joe Turner (Atlantic, 1954)
"Hearts of Stone"	Fontane Sisters (Dot, 1954)	Charms (DeLuxe, 1954)
"Sixteen Tons"	Tennessee Ernie Ford (Capitol, 1955)	Merle Travis (1946)
"Earth Angel"	Crew-Cuts (Mercury, 1955)	Penguins (Dootone, 1954)
"Ko Ko Mo"	Perry Como (RCA-Victor, 1955)	Gene & Eunice (Combo, 1955)
	Crew-Cuts (Mercury, 1955)	
"Dance With Me Henry"/ "Work With Me Annie"	Georgia Gibbs (Mercury, 1955)	Midnighters (Federal, 1954)
"Ain't It a Shame"	Pat Boone (Dot, 1955)	Fats Domino (Imperial, 1955)

²⁴¹ Hamm 411-412.

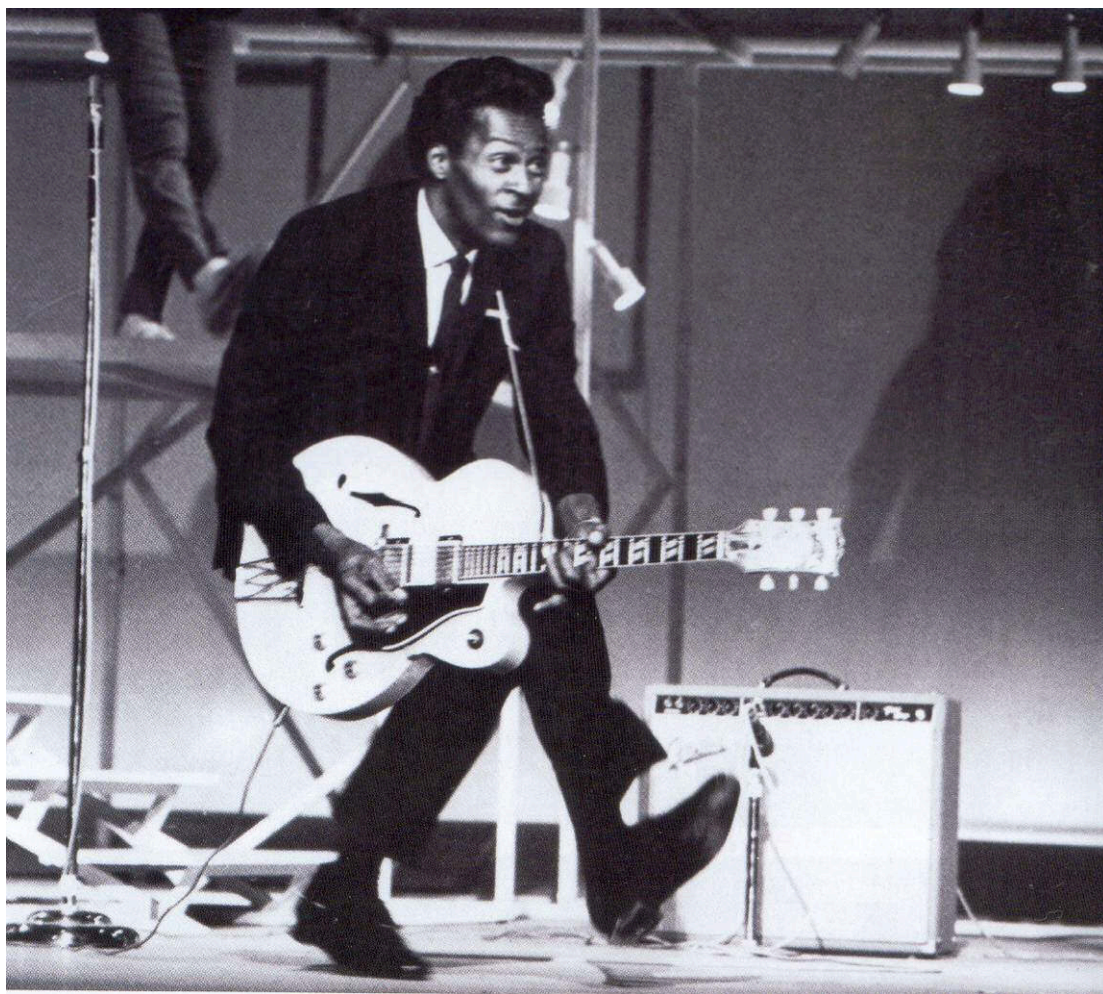
YESTERDAYS / 412		
<i>Song</i>	<i>Cover</i>	<i>Original</i>
"At My Front Door"	Pat Boone (Dot, 1955)	El Dorados (Vee Jay, 1955)
"Only You"	Hilltoppers (Dot, 1955)	Platters (Mercury, 1955)
"Tweedle Dee"	Georgia Gibbs (Mercury, 1955)	Lavern Baker (Atlantic, 1955)
"Hound Dog"	Elvis Presley (RCA-Victor, 1956)	Willie Mae Thornton (Peacock, 1953)
"Long Tall Sally"	Pat Boone (Dot, 1956)	Little Richard (Specialty, 1956)
"Tutti-Frutti"	Pat Boone (Dot, 1956)	Little Richard (Specialty, 1956)
"I'll Be Home"	Pat Boone (Dot, 1956)	Flamingoes (Checker, 1956)
"I Almost Lost My Mind"	Pat Boone (Dot, 1956)	Ivory Joe Hunter (MGM, 1950)
"Chains of Love"	Pat Boone (Dot, 1956)	Joe Turner (Atlantic, 1951)

Figure 3²⁴²



²⁴² Kříž 85.

Figure 4²⁴³



²⁴³ Kříž 28.

Figure 5²⁴⁴



²⁴⁴ Kříž 29.

Figure 6²⁴⁵

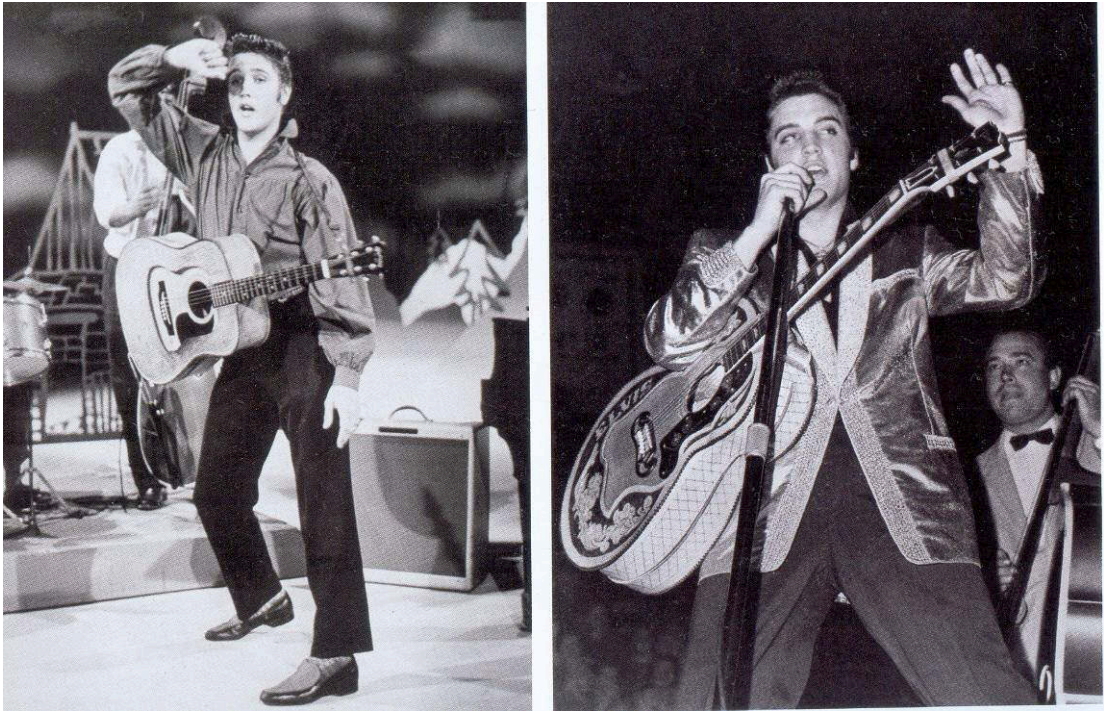
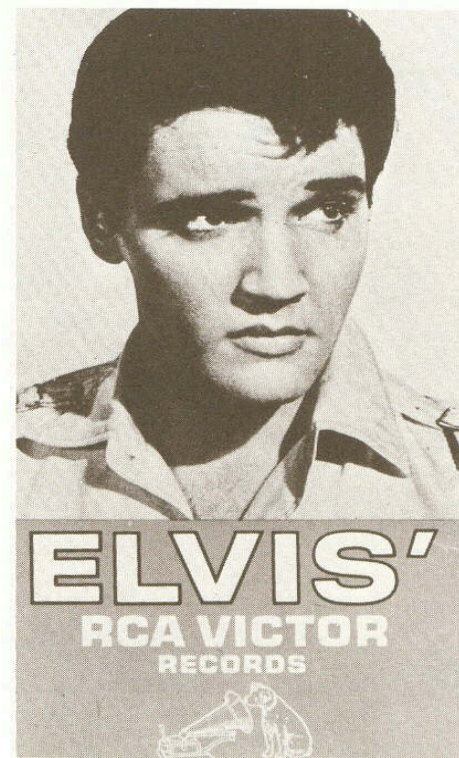


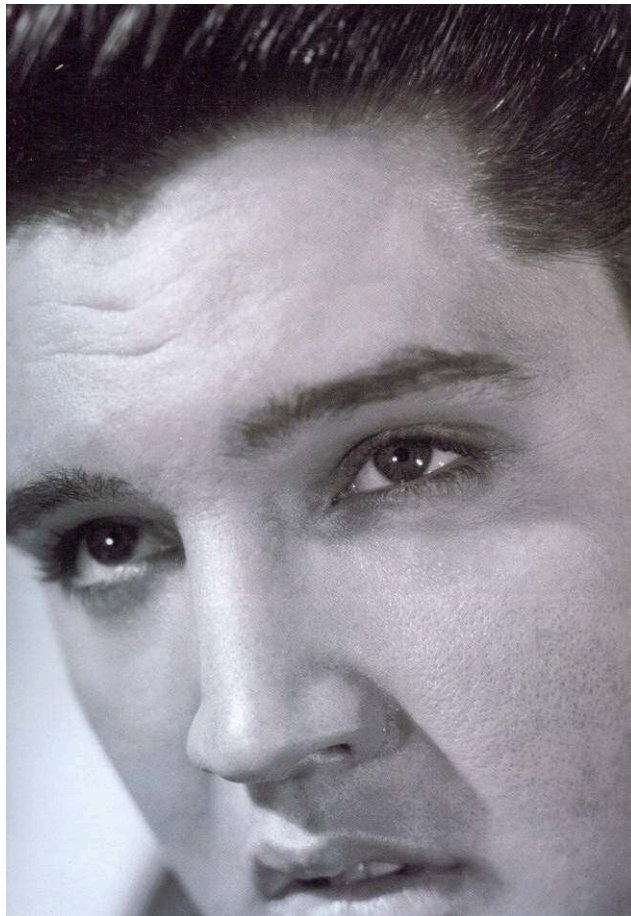
Figure 7²⁴⁶



²⁴⁵ Kříž 144.

²⁴⁶ Palmer 212.

Figure 8²⁴⁷



²⁴⁷ Kříž145.

Appendix 2

" Shake Rattle And Roll "

Get out in that kitchen and rattle those pots and pans
Get out in that kitchen and rattle those pots and pans
Well roll my breakfast 'cause I'm a hungry man

I said shake rattle and roll
I said shake rattle and roll
I said shake rattle and roll
I said shake rattle and roll
Well you'll never do nothin'
To save your doggone soul

Wearin' those dresses your hair done up so nice
Wearin' those dresses your hair done up so nice
You look so warm but your heart is cold as ice

repeat chorus

I'm like a one eyed cat peeping in a sea food store
I'm like a one eyed cat peeping in a sea food store
I can look at you tell you don't love me no more

I believe you are doing me wrong and now I know
I believe you are doing me wrong and now I know
The more I work the faster my money go

repeat chorus

" Rock Around The Clock "

(Max Freedman and Jimmy DeKnigh)

One, two, three o'clock, four o'clock rock

Five, six, seven o'clock, eight o'clock rock

Nine, ten, eleven o'clock, twelve o'clock rock

We're gonna rock around the clock tonight

Put your glad rags on, join me, Hon

We'll have some fun when the clock strikes one

We're gonna rock around the clock tonight

We're gonna rock, rock, rock, 'til broad daylight

We're gonna rock, gonna rock around the clock tonight

When the clock strikes two, three and four

If the band slows down we'll yell for more

We're gonna rock around the clock tonight

We're gonna rock, rock, rock, 'til broad daylight

We're gonna rock, gonna rock around the clock tonight

[Instrumental Interlude]

When the chimes ring five, six, and seven

We'll be right in seventh heaven

We're gonna rock around the clock tonight

We're gonna rock, rock, rock, 'til broad daylight

We're gonna rock, gonna rock around the clock tonight

When it's eight, nine, ten, eleven too

I'll be goin' strong and so will you

We're gonna rock around the clock tonight

We're gonna rock, rock, rock, 'til broad daylight

We're gonna rock, gonna rock around the clock tonight

[Instrumental Interlude]

When the clock strikes twelve, we'll cool off then
Start a'rockin' round the clock again
We're gonna rock around the clock tonight
We're gonna rock, rock, rock, 'til broad daylight
We're gonna rock, gonna rock around the clock tonight

" See You Later Alligator "

Well, I saw my baby walkin'
With another man today
Well, I saw my baby walkin'
With another man today
When I asked her what's the matter
This is what I heard her say

See you later alligator
After 'while crocodile
See you later alligator
After 'while crocodile
Can't you see you're in my way now
Don't you know you cramp my style

When I thought of what she told me
Nearly made me lose my head
When I thought of what she told me
Nearly made me lose my head
But the next time that I saw her
Reminded her of what she said

See you later alligator

After 'while crocodile
See you later alligator
After 'while crocodile
Can't you see you're in my way now
Don't you know you cramp my style

[Instrumental Interlude]

She said, I'm sorry pretty baby
You know my love is just for you
She said, I'm sorry pretty baby
You know my love is just for you
Won't you say that you'll forgive me
And say your love for me is true

I said wait a minute 'gator
I know you meant it just for play
I said wait a minute 'gator
I know you meant it just for play
Don't you know you really hurt me
And this is what I have to say

See you later alligator
After 'while crocodile
See you later alligator
So long, that's all, goodbye

" Razzle dazzle "

On your mark (on your mark)
Get set (get set)
Now ready (ready)
Go

Everybody razzle dazzle
Everybody razzle dazzle
Everybody razzle dazzle
If it's all night long

Now here's a dance
Everyone can do
It's the hipster's dance
And the square cats too
Won't you take a chance
This is all you do

You just take your baby
Don't you leave that spot
Then you dance like crazy
Give it all you've got
That's the razzle dazzle
If you're ready or not

On your mark (on your mark)
Get set (get set)
Now ready (ready)
Go

Everybody razzle dazzle
Everybody razzle dazzle
Everybody razzle dazzle
If it's all night long

interlude

Let's get together (get together)
One, two and three (one, two and three)

Jumpin' to the center (to the center)
Just you and me (just you and me)
Put your best foot forward (wack-a doo, wack-a-doo)
Baby can't you see (baby can't you see)

When you hear them holler
And you ain't nowhere
Honey, you just foller
'Cause we're sure not square
That's the razzle dazzle
Well, it's everywhere

On your mark (on your mark)
Get set (get set)
Now ready (ready)
Go

Everybody razzle dazzle
Everybody razzle dazzle
Everybody razzle dazzle
If it's all night long

Everybody razzle dazzle
Everybody razzle dazzle
Everybody razzle dazzle
A-going on and on

If it's all night long
That's the razzle dazzle
Razzle dazzle song

Appendix 3

" Maybellene "

Maybellene, why can't you be true
Oh Maybellene , why can't you be true
You've started back doin' the things you used to do

As I was motivatin' over the hill
I saw Mabellene in a Coup de Ville
A Cadillac arollin' on the open road
Nothin' will outrun my V8 Ford
The Cadillac doin' about ninety-five
She's bumper to bumper, rollin' side by side
Maybellene

The Cadillac pulled up ahead of the Ford
The Ford got hot and wouldn't do no more
It then got cloudy and started to rain
I tooted my horn for a passin' lane
The rainwater blowin' all under my hood
I know that I was doin' my motor good
Maybellene

Solo guitar

Maybellene

The motor cooled down the heat went down
And that's when I heard that highway sound
The Cadillac asittin' like a ton of lead
A hundred and ten half a mile aheadv
The Cadillac lookin' like it's sittin' still
And I caught Mabellene at the top of the hill

Maybellene

Solo guitar

Maybellene

Maybellene, why can't you be true

Oh Maybellene, why can't you be true

You've started back doin' the things you used to do

As I was motivatin' over the hill

I saw Maybellene in a Coup de Ville

A Cadillac arollin' on the open road

Nothin' will outrun my V8 Ford

The Cadillac doin' about ninety-five

She's bumper to bumper, rollin' side by side

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Maybellene

Solo guitar

Maybellene

The motor cooled down the heat went down

And that's when I heard that highway sound

The Cadillac asittin' like a ton of lead

A hundred and ten half a mile ahead

The Cadillac lookin' like it's sittin' still

And I caught Maybellene at the top of the hill
Maybellene

Solo guitar

Maybellene

" School Days "

Up in the mornin' and out to school
The teacher is teachin' the Golden Rule
American history and practical math
You studyin' hard and hopin' to pass
Workin' your fingers right down to the bone
And the guy behind you won't leave you alone

Ring, ring goes the bell
The cook in the lunch room's ready to sell
You're lucky if you can find a seat
You're fortunate if you have time to eat
Back in the classroom, open your books
Keep up the teacher don't know how mean she looks

Soon as three o'clock rolls around
You finally lay your burden down
Close up your books, get out of your seat
Down the halls and into the street
Up to the corner and 'round the bend
Right to the juke joint, you go in

Drop the coin right into the slot
You're gotta hear somethin' that's really hot
With the one you love, you're makin' romance

All day long you been wantin' to dance,
Feeling the music from head to toe
Round and round and round we go
(*Repeat)

Hail, hail rock and roll
Deliver me from the days of old
Long live rock and roll
The beat of the drums, loud and bold
Rock, rock, rock and roll
The feelin' is there, body and soul.

" Roll Over Beethoven "

I'm gonna write a little letter,
gonna mail it to my local DJ
It's a rockin' rhythm record
I want my jockey to play
Roll Over Beethoven, I gotta hear it again today

You know, my temperature's risin'
and the jukebox blows a fuse
My heart's beatin' rhythm
and my soul keeps on singin' the blues
Roll Over Beethoven and tell Tchaikovsky the news

I got the rockin' pneumonia,
I need a shot of rhythm and blues
I think I'm rollin' arthritis
sittin' down by the rhythm review
Roll Over Beethoven rockin' in two by two

Well, if you feel you like it

go get your lover, then reel and rock it
Roll it over and move on up just
a trifle further and reel and rock it,
roll it over,
Roll Over Beethoven rockin' in two by two

Well, early in the mornin' I'm a givin' you a warnin'
don't you step on my blue suede shoes
Hey diddle diddle, I am playin' my fiddle,
ain't got nothin' to lose
Roll Over Beethoven and tell Tchaikovsky the news

You know she wiggles like a glow worm,
dance like a spinnin' top
She got a crazy partner,
oughta see 'em reel and rock
Long as she got a dime the music will never stop

Roll Over Beethoven,
Roll Over Beethoven,
Roll Over Beethoven,
Roll Over Beethoven,
Roll Over Beethoven and dig these rhythm and blues

" Johnny B. Goode "

Deep down Louisiana close to New Orleans,
Way back up in the woods among the evergreens
There stood a log cabin made of earth and wood,
Where lived a country boy named of Johnny B. Goode
Who never ever learned to read or write so well,
But he could play the guitar like ringing a bell.
(Chorus)

Go Go

Go Johnny Go

Go Go

Johnny B. Goode

He use to carry his guitar in a gunny sack

Or sit beneath the trees by the railroad track.

Oh, the engineers used to see him sitting in the shade,

Strumming with the rhythm that the drivers made.

The People passing by, they would stop and say

Oh my that little country boy could play

(Chorus)

His mother told him someday you will be a man,

And you would be the leader of a big old band.

Many people coming from miles around

To hear you play your music when the sun go down

Maybe someday your name will be in lights

Saying Johnny B. Goode tonight.

(Chorus)

Appendix 4

" Heartbreak Hotel "

Well, since my baby left me,
I found a new place to dwell.
It's down at the end of lonely street
at Heartbreak Hotel.

You make me so lonely baby,
I get so lonely,
I get so lonely I could die.

And although it's always crowded,
you still can find some room.
Where broken hearted lovers
do cry away their gloom.

You make me so lonely baby,
I get so lonely,
I get so lonely I could die.

Well, the Bell hop's tears keep flowin',
and the desk clerk's dressed in black.
Well they been so long on lonely street
They ain't ever gonna look back.

You make me so lonely baby,
I get so lonely,
I get so lonely I could die.

Hey now, if your baby leaves you,
and you got a tale to tell.
Just take a walk down lonely street
to Heartbreak Hotel.

" Jailhouse Rock "

The warden threw a party in the county jail
The prison band was there and they began to wail
The band was jumpin' and the joint began to swing
You should've heard those knocked out jailbirds sing

Let's rock
Everybody, let's rock
Everybody in the whole cell block
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock

Spider Murphy played the tenor saxophone
Little Joe was blowin' on the slide trombone
The drummer boy from Illinois went crash, boom, bang
The whole rhythm section was a purple gang

Let's rock
Everybody, let's rock
Everybody in the whole cell block
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock

Number 47 said to number 3
"You're the cutest jailbird I ever did see
I sure would be delighted with your company
Come on and do the Jailhouse Rock with me"

Let's rock
Everybody, let's rock
Everybody in the whole cell block
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock, Rock, Rock

Sad Sack was sittin' on a block of stone

Way over in the corner weepin' all alone
The warden said, "Hey, buddy, don't you be no square
If you can't find a partner use a wooden chair"

Let's rock
Everybody, let's rock
Everybody in the whole cell block
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock

Shifty Henry said to Bugs, "For Heaven's sake
No one's lookin', now's the chance to make a break"
Bugsy turned to Shifty and he said, "Nix nix
I wanna stick around a while and get my kicks"

Let's rock
Everybody, let's rock
Everybody in the whole cell block
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock

Dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock, dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock
Dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock, dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock
Dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock, dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock
Dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock

" Hound Dog "

You ain't nothin' but a hound dog
Cryin' all the time
You ain't nothin' but a hound dog
Cryin' all the time
Well, you ain't never caught a rabbit
And you ain't no friend of mine

When they said you was high classed

Well, that was just a lie
Yeah, they said you was high classed
Well, that was just a lie
Yeah, you ain't never caught a rabbit
And you ain't no friend of mine

You ain't nothin' but a hound dog
Cryin' all the time
You ain't nothin' but a hound dog
Cryin' all the time
Well, you ain't never caught a rabbit
And you ain't no friend of mine

When they said you was high classed
Well, that was just a lie
Yeah, they said you was high classed
Well, that was just a lie
Well, you ain't never caught a rabbit
And you ain't no friend of mine

When they said you was high classed
Well, that was just a lie
You know, they said you was high classed
Well, that was just a lie
Yeah, you ain't never caught a rabbit
And you ain't no friend of mine

You ain't nothin' but a hound dog
Cryin' all the time
You ain't nothin' but a hound dog
Cryin' all the time
Well, you ain't never caught a rabbit
You ain't no friend of mine

"Don't Be Cruel "

You know I can be found,
sitting home all alone,
If you can't come around,
at least please telephone.
Don't be cruel to a heart that's true.

Baby, if I made you mad
for something I might have said,
Please, let's forget the past,
the future looks bright ahead,
Don't be cruel to a heart that's true.
I don't want no other love,
Baby it's just you I'm thinking of.

Don't stop thinking of me,
don't make me feel this way,
Come on over here and love me,
you know what I want you to say.
Don't be cruel to a heart that's true.
Why should we be apart?
I really love you baby, cross my heart.

Let's walk up to the preacher
and let us say I do,
Then you'll know you'll have me,
and I'll know that I'll have you,
Don't be cruel to a heart that's true.
I don't want no other love,
Baby it's just you I'm thinking of.

Don't be cruel to a heart that's true.

Don't be cruel to a heart that's true.

I don't want no other love,

Baby it's just you I'm thinking of.