

lar products, which were considered too politically provocative. Generally, the ruling ideology and media censorship in socialist societies helped to preserve a kind of conservative culture. However, on a scholarly level modernist and postmodernist differences between *highbrow* and *lowbrow* culture, as well as controversies between theoreticians concerning artistic values were not so different on the both sides of the Iron Curtain.

### *Transition Over the Barriers of Identity*

In the realm of mass culture, socialism favoured traditional folk art, although as it was producers and authors who created some productions of entertainment in music and in cinema that tried to compete with Hollywood and Western pop music. However, in 1960s, the system in most socialist countries, especially in the central European ones, could not prevent urban youth from listening to rock music nor from forming some very provocative rock bands<sup>4</sup> as well as matching worldviews. Still, such phenomena – no matter how visible and aggravating they were – tended to be more or less sub-cultural exceptions. Hence, Giddens noted: “Paradoxically, state socialism, which saw itself as the prime revolutionary force in history, proved much more accommodating towards tradition than capitalism has been” (Giddens, 1996: p. 51). Considering all these aspects, I may remark that the above-mentioned shooting of the spy movie in the Soviet Union, pointed towards an opening of the already collapsing socialist society to the process of modernisation. However, this pretty obvious point should not be taken too far. A “Western” modernisation from a cultural point of view – including also so-called consumerism – seemed interesting to socialist citizens as long as it was unattainable, but the question of how much had this imported culture influenced deeper structures of the Eastern cultures, remains quite open. Of course, it should be noted that as long as we discuss European societies, the most basic cultural traits were more or less common in all societies both in the East and in the West. The socialist experiment caused a difference in consumer culture by creating a society without free private property and – to a lesser or greater degree in different countries – without a free market in their economies. Apart from this, I can assert that the collapse of the socialist system in a final psychoanalysis actually heftily contributed much more to a renaissance of diverse aspects

4 One of the rare and very instructive books about the role of some radical movements in rock music is a collection of texts, newspaper articles and other documents, published in 1985 in Ljubljana under the title *Punk pod Slovenci* (Punk under Slovenians – Mastnak, Malečkar, 1985).