

# **Social meanings of male beards**

## **Abstract**

The study focuses on male beard modification, primarily on the significance of beard in the society and beard's ability of social communication. The study is based on the theory of first impression and categorization; male beards are regarded as source of conflictual and cooperative action. Theoretical part draws on previous research about attributed characteristics of beard, fashion and social communication of beard in the past, especially on the European continent, where beards communicated ethnicity, social status, gender and generational distances, sympathy and antipathy to the current events and values. Furthermore, the thesis concentrates on social communication of beard in the present and its perception in the society. Empirical part is based on a questionnaire survey and answers to the question which characteristics are currently attributed to male beard modification in the Czech Republic. Final findings confirm that beards are perceived as symbol of masculinity, dominance and social maturity, clean shaved face and face with mustache or goatee, taken as signs of conformity, are generally well-received, while faces with stubble receive negative ratings.