

"Times They Are e-Changing: the psychosocial profile of the music collector of the post-modern era"

Summary of PhD Thesis (in progress)

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The present PhD Research entitled "Times They Are e-Changing: the psychosocial profile of the music collector of the post-modern era" takes on the task to examine, describe and analyze the way that the digitalization of rock music affects the creation of the cultural identities of its listeners.

Music is undeniably a significant form of communication, as a modality of experience and as a resource for cultural expression and social interaction.

As the physical forms of music recordings used to shape our interactions with them and our perception of their value, now that the technological developments have reduced their visual and tactile aspects there has been made a remarkable change in the nature of popular music, its components; (industries, institutions, production, distribution, representation, meaning and consumption) and its practices.

Tangible music acquired an ambient status and thus could be shaped, colored, or embedded with pictures; often in special packaging. Nevertheless music was never just a commodity but a cultural good fertilised with a set of meanings. Those were aspects which had a special impact on the formation of ideology, beliefs, habits, taste, ways of thinking, perceiving and living and generally "being in the world". Moreover they "caused" among its listeners the same experience of music which gave them a sense of unity and community and belonging.

Though in the hyper modern era those factors alternate considerably. The crucial characteristics of the contemporary social environment are the decline of grand narratives, transience, ephemerality, quotation, pastiche, acceleration, ubiquity and globalization. Those facts contribute to radical transformation on the functions of the fundamental "grand narrative" of rock music and its heroes / anti-heroes on the social construction of self.

Drawing on extensive interviews with rock aficionados about their experiences and their views on the subject, what is attempted is the profound description of the ways that the lack of materiality of the recordings along with the absence of accompanying elements such as photographs, lyrics, and stories -which altogether used to build a coherent narrative- are reflected on the rhetoric of rock music, the aestheticization of everyday life, the social and cultural practices, the processes of signification and consequently the creation of their cultural identities.