

Identity Formation in Postmodern Consumption Cultures: An Example of Rocker Subcultures

Okan BALDİL¹

Abstract

In this essay, I will focus on the consumer identity of the rocker subculture, which is reproduced by the do-it-yourself culture and music industry's cultural products. Rock culture is a postmodern culture whose formation and reproduction are continuous deviations from mainstream or conventional culture. The social dynamics and identity characteristics of this subculture and the groups in it should be focused on, because what substitute this culture, what reproduce their emotions, their way of thinking and behaviors are the shared consumption of cultural products, the musical culture, which are produced by their DIY culture² and the music industry and mainstream culture. The identity construction in this subculture is claimed to be based on the postmodern consumption patterns, even if some subgroups in rocker subculture claim that they are in objection to consumerism. So many things contributing to identity construction in this culture and to the reproduction of identities are based on the consumption/shared consumption of the cultural production by the members of this subculture and the rock music industry.

Keywords: *Identity construction, self, rocker, shared consumption, DIY, industrial cultural production, subculture*

¹ *Universidade de Coimbra, PHD in Sociology, Coimbra, Portugal E-mail: okan@baldil.com*

² *Do-It-Yourself Culture: The production of many material and immaterial things in a given subculture*

Introduction

I will present the ideas of some scholars for such central topics in my article under these sub-sections “postmodern identity”, “postmodern consumer”, “rock culture as a consumer culture and as an illusion of opposition to consumerism”, “rocker identity and self- the identity constructed as an opposition to mainstream culture-industrial culture”. The sub-culture named as rock culture in my work is comprised of so many sub-groups, we can say that there are at least 50 kinds of subgroups as there are at least 50 kinds of rock music style/production. Even the slightest difference in themes in the music or in the musical/instrumental/rhythmic characteristic produce various emotions, opinions, reactions and responses in the emotional world of individuals of this subgroups. However, we can see that there are so many similarities and connections between these sub-groups when we compare the musical tastes, the musical consumption patterns or their philosophy of life with other musical styles. So, it will not be wrong to assume that there is a rocker culture which was formed in postmodern processes.

We will start with the definition of postmodern identity to form the ground of our hypothesis. The characteristics of postmodern identity and postmodern consumer will be introduced before we give explanations for rocker identity and rocker culture within the context of postmodern consuming patterns.

Post-modern Identity

Foucault and some other thinkers states that the identities are constructed by the social institutions and regulations (Elliot 139). The social structures and institutions in their discourse are totalitarian structures of modern era. Before postmodern era, many group behaviors, the individuals’ relationships with each other, the market conditions, the individual-state relationship, the communication and expression styles were considered to be more stabilized and long-term whereas they are now far from being stabilized in the postmodern era. But the totalitarian methods in the construction of identity by the social structures and institutions are still available and they are being developed in more complex ways. Foucault has already made influential work on the regulation of self, identity, and subjective experience as modernity’s primary strategy of social control;

and theories of the impact of recent social change – variously designated as postmodernity, late modernity, advanced capitalism, detraditionalization and individualization, liquid modernity, neoliberalism, and/or globalization – on subjectivity, self and identity...Elliot cites that Marx, Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel – have already analyzed the influence of the main structures of modern societies on the subjective experience and selves of individuals (Elliot 139). We should analyze the impact of the structures formed by postmodern societies and cultures focusing on some specific subcultures and groups and understand how the individual is attracted to some cultures in an era of limitless identities and choices.

As modernity has progressed into postmodernity, identity has become even more unstable, even more a question without a definite answer. According to David Lyon, in the postmodern social condition, these new media messages provide “frames” for organizing experiencing, giving a sense of reality (while also blurring the line between the real and the image). These messages shape identity, which is now not seen as fixed, but as fragmentary and fluid (Lyon 1987; quoted by Turnau 2014). The fragmented characteristic of the postmodern identity is also explained by Bauman as follows:

“You have to create your identity, you do not inherit it, not only you need to make it from scratch, but you have to spend your life redeciding your identity”. (Bauman 2015)

Baudrillard argues that selves are diminished by the elaborate ‘hyperreal’ social environment created by the late twentieth-century’s explosion of media: intoxicating, prepossessing and rapidly shifting images become more powerful realities than the immediate physical and social environment. Seduced and bedazzled by these images and their simulated worlds, people lack motivation and means to sustain either the disciplined self described by Foucault or the thoughtful self proposed by the Enlightenment ideal (Elliot 140).

The identity, both personal identity and social identity should not be considered to be stable or lasting, because, the conditions, the insights and characteristics can change and this can lead to changes in the perception

of self and identity in the course of time. Thus, the definitions of some conditions and selves change according to the factors mentioned. The decrease in the influence of conventional and religious life style and of communities’ moral principles leads to acquiring a new morality from other resources such as newly more fragmented life styles from philosophic, scientific or leisure-based communities. Fragmented life styles enforce the self and identity to be adrift in terms of senses. One reason may be the disappearing of conventional lifestyles from urban areas and the emergence of only lifestyles which can be reproduced by someone or groups in very short periods of time. We will call this reproduction process as cultural industry as many scholars do.

Our identity influence so many things we conduct, think and sense. It is a determining factor of our positioning ourselves and other entities in the world. It touches many thing and is influenced by many factors. Below, there is a comparison between the identity of modern age and postmodern age, this table will present an idea about the different factors influencing identity:

MODERN AGE	POSTMODERN AGE
Production	Consumption
Community life	Fragmentation (individualism)
Social class	Identity from other resources
Family	Families (many options)
A belief in continuity and situation	Breakage with the past/tradition
A role of education	Education for what?
A one-way media	Duality of media (choice/interchange)
Overt social control	Covert control (CCTV etc)
Nationhood	Global
Science aided progress and finding the truth	Science is only one source of knowledge – plurality of truths now
Structure/security/place/stability YOU KNEW WHO YOU WERE	Confusion/lack of structure/incessant choice YOU CREATE WHO YOU WANT TO BE

Table 1. *Comparision Between Modern and Postmodern Age (Deakin 2005)*

Deakin summarizes the key features of postmodernism as the following, which gives a general profile of postmodern self-identity:

- Truth is relative
- Consumerism is all
- Transformation of the self
- Fragmentation of social life
- Incessant choice
- Globalisation
- The impact of ICT on social life
- People are constructing themselves and designing their individual identities (Deakin 2005).

People are not creatures who live their life mechanically only in the direction drawn by outer factors, they live by being aware of what they do and by attempting to be influential. However, there are such social conditions among all conditions that the human being can only see the world in flue eyeglasses when he is embedded in these social conditions. He experiences it only in the way the flue eyeglasses show, he only attempts to be influential behind these glasses (Mardin 32). The social, financial, technological structures of the societies and the level of democracy in the cultures may have deep influence on the availability of personality types and transitivity between types of identities and group memberships. There are many structures and social factors influencing the construction of identities in the contemporary society and any change in the small or big social structures or processes in the society can lead to changes in personal and social identities. It is obvious that the identity experienced various formations in accordance with every stage experienced by the social structures in the historical process. As the societies became more complex, changed and developed, the interpretation parameters of identity concept also changed. For example, the identity was associated with such groups as family, clan and ancestry to which one belonged in the traditional period, whereas in the modernity, the individual was taken to the core of the social life and the identity was transformed a multiplied and mobile structure in modern societies (Mardin 32). Mōngü states that the individuals and postmodern identity are influenced by the fragmented social structures as follows:

Along with postmodern times, communities, language groups, sexual groups, physical and fictional groups are preferred instead of national identity as a reference in identity definitions. Image, appearance and leisure activities based on consumption play role in the construction of identity. The postmodern individual not asserting any claim of self is interested in the extraordinary, s/he breaks off the ties and does not care about such ties as family, religion and nation (Mardin 32).

In the age of fragmented identities and social structures, when the totalitarian identity constructors such as national identity and religious life styles lose their influence, many identity construction factors come into play. We will talk about this later within the context of our focus on rocker culture and identity. Individuals can create identities for themselves over fantasy and appropriate the existing identities for themselves. In this surrounding uncertainty, many identities are produced and consumed at the same pace. Online invisibility make the identity fragmented and fluid. This provides the individual with the chance and freedom to adopt multiple identity (Karaduman, 2886-2899).

As for the connections between postmodern identity structure and consuming practice in social life, we should focus on the consumer identity of postmodern urban dwellers. As Mike Featherstone points out, in our modern consumer culture, a new conception of the self has emerged—namely, the self as performer—which places great emphasis upon appearance, display, and the management of impressions. This replaces the nineteenth-century concern with character in which primacy was given to such qualities as citizenship, democracy, duty, work, honor, reputation, and morals. Whereas previously, greater emphasis was placed on other sources of identity formation than that of personal appearance, increasingly, the self is defined primarily in aesthetic terms—that is, in terms of how one looks rather than in terms of what one does (Featherstone 1991, 187–93; quoted by Negrin 2008, 9). For some scholars interested in the postmodern identity construction and consuming practice, body and appearance has gained importance in displaying the identity in social or public realm. Anthony Giddens argues, under the conditions of high modernity, the body has become a self-reflexive project, integral to our sense of who we are (Giddens 1991, 5–8, 99–102; quoted by Negrin 2008, 9). Many subcultures

in contemporary societies use their own symbols and interaction methods in displaying their identity—who they are. The individuals can be a member of many social groups and may have many social identities and display this in the social relationships or social realms. In place of the Enlightenment notion of the self as a unified entity with a fixed essence, it is now seen as something that is fragmentary, decentered, and constantly mutating. Indicative of this is the increasing ease with which individuals adopt and discard various guises in the world of postmodern fashion, where no single style reigns supreme...Rather than regarding the various guises that one adopts as expressive of a “self,” which exists independently of them, the self is defined through the masquerade—there is no self apart from the masquerade. In this sense, the self is “depersonalized,” being dissolved into the various masks that one adopts (Negrin 10). This idea is again contributing to the idea of fragmented postmodern identities displayed in many ways such as subcultures: in our case as rocker subculture as consumers.

Postmodern Consumer

Today, it is virtually impossible to buy any product not embedded with certain symbols of identity acquired by the buyer knowingly or otherwise. Recognizing this, it is possible to draw the conclusion that consumption functions as a way to create a sense of self... The consumer may assume their consumption pattern sets them apart from the rest of society, marking them as an individual, but this is a fallacy. Consumption is one of our most creative and most restrictive practices. Due to this fact it must be concluded that consumer driven production of self is less to do with “who am I” and more with “who are we” or “with whom do I belong” (Todd 48). The importance put on the fragmented and differentiated self and identity in the consumer society may be a good indication of the fact that consumerism plays an important role in the identity construction through creating a culture industry in which people enjoy experience leisure and are impressed by other cultural factors or figures, thus adopting many new identity features and selves. As Malpas explains: The circulation, purchase, sale, appropriation of differentiated goods and signs/objects today constitute our language, our code, the code by which the entire society communicates and converses. Such is the structure of consumption, its language, by comparison with which individual needs and pleasures are

merely speech effects (Malpas 122). We are under the influence of many media productions such as advertisements, popups, spam sms or mails, tv ads, social media accounts of celebrities, movies, songs etc. Many of these cultural productions are designed to influence our emotions or opinions about ourselves, our lifestyles or world views so that we will need cultural or material products or goods manufactured by the industries and so many cultural productions as advertisements or song lyrics will have an effect on our fragmented life processes, our selves and our bodies. As Allen states at the end of the song: "I am a weapon of massive consumption/And it's not my fault, it's how I'm programmed to function"...The expression of her wants or needs is indicative of the way in which consumerism plays on the notion of individualization through consumption (Todd 48).

The consuming experience, in our case mainly the cultural consumption, is based on the fragmentation of life periods, identities and social conditions. The fragmentation of life experiences often requires a fragmentation of the self in order to live deeply each situation encountered and may be even the possibility of the existence of incompatible or contradictory figures in the same individual. These are, identities voluntarily and consciously assumed by the consumer in order to immerse into consumption experiences, in so far as, that each one can construct and organize multiple individual identities (Davis, 2007, 203-208; quoted by Hamouda: 2013, 42). Postmodern consumer is a fragmented individual who lives fragmented and paradoxical consumption moments (Teschl, 2007, 195-201; quoted by Hamouda, 42). Postmodern individual is encouraged to change the image frequently and therefore, he trying to adapt himself to new roles and new identities (Decrop, 2008, 85-93; quoted by Hamouda, 2013: 42).

Consumerism is not only an economic system; it is the way our society functions. Products are symbolic and say much more than we may realize. While it is easy to conclude the consumption of products leads us to develop a sense of who we are as a person, it actually does much more than that (Todd 50). It is now an exchange of values and there is a purchase of cultural and emotional experience. The interaction and exchange of values are realized through individuals in subcultures and this interaction and exchange may lead to some changes in the relationship and identity structures.

Neo-liberalism attempts to supply instances, experiences and products which appeal to our emotions, tastes and opinions. These are produced and reproduced industrially and emotionally by the members of the society in such a convincing way that the social and psychological expectations and needs are met. Capitalism does create a consumerism mechanism which is inclined to transform identity and self into a part of it, this mechanism is a cultural mechanism as well as it is a biological, industrial and psychological one, it gets its power from its becoming more real than the material reality. It is produced and reproduced by the society, subcultures and sub-groups as it has become also a social and psychological need and thus needs reproduction due to the desirability.

Some theoreticians such as Baudrillard and Featherstone who focus on the postmodernist experiences mention about the existence of hyperreality in the mental life of urban dwellers. Hyperreality, is the condition of the constitution of social reality through powerful meanings, and thus, the consumer can build an identity. This process of identity construction plays an important role in the way of how the consumer perceives himself, how he identifies his purpose, his reason for being and to establish a meaningful sense to his life (Van Raaij, 1993; Firat & et al., 1995; quoted by Hamouda 2013, 42).

People from many classes are usually in a search for the right materials that will allow them position themselves successfully within classes. The role played in self-construction has been limited to certain products (such as luxury goods or cars) or practices (Gomez, Helene, Özçağlar, 496). The rocker identity then is a self-construction which gives the image of rebellious, though looking, charismatic, dark, antagonist, and anarchist to the consumer or the identity constructor as individual. The consumer is, henceforth, considered as an actor and producer of meaning. Thanks to marketing system, consumption has become the process by which people define themselves, their statutes or images in contemporary society (Bourdieu, 1984; Ewen, 1988; quoted by Hamouda, 2013, 43)... The act of consumption is, indeed, in the heart of the process of identity construction. "To consume it is not only to buy products, but also, to buy an identity" (Gabriel & Lang, 1995). As indicated by the postmodernists, consumption is not only a personal act of destruction, but also, a social act of symbolic

meanings, social codes and relationships. In other words, each individual is different from another by a set of consumption choices and experiences (Hamouda, 2013, 43). The awareness about the opportunity to be able to select identity or consumption activity may encourage the consumers or individuals to think about and make researches on the potential identities and cultural consumption activities. Firat suggest that, the purpose of the postmodern consumer is to navigate multiple identities and personalities to fit all situations.... In other words, consumers are always looking to be socially desired by changing their identity every time they wish: What will be defined as the level of social desirability (Firat & Shultz, 2001; quoted by Hamouda, 2013, 43). As for the rocker subcultures, we can say that the social desirability may affect especially the young people and they may start constructing their identities by wearing masquerade of the tough rocker boy or girl.

Rock Culture As A Consumer Culture-An Illusion Of Opposition

The consumer culture is an industrially formed culture, it is not a one hundred percent production of the industry, however it is reproduced based on the cultural elements and changing these elements in the long term. According to Daniel Bell, the mass consumption of individuals are manipulated by the advertisements, he states that the mass consumption developing simultaneously with the increase in wealth leads to a cultural change and the reason of this change is the increase of the number of new and various status groups within the extending middle class. These masses are manipulated via advertisements on such issues as how they should wear the suitable outfits for their status, what they should eat and drink and what they should buy or should not buy. This, in turn, generates new life styles. (Atiker 1998:38; quoted by Çalış: 2006: 43). As we stated above, there is a base for the new lifestyles and subcultures can live on and reproduce, this is class structure or popular culture which paths the way for rocker subculture. Lull states that subcultures are generally organized and socialized around music and related elements (Lull 2000, 45). These groups express themselves in such streams as hip-hop, reggae, grunge, heavy metal in the musical styles, the politic elements are usually included in these sub-groups and their music styles. (Lull 2001, 113-114). Individuals advocating heavy metal subculture, one of these musical styles, prefer to express themselves through a resistance to such institutions as

school, church and business for they think these captures their freedom. (Lull 2000, 45; quoted by Çalış: 2006, 60).

Baudrillard uses the sign/signifier technique to explain Consumption so that what we purchase is not just a product, but also a piece of a “language” that creates a sense of who we are. For Baudrillard, our purchases reflect our innermost desires so that consumption is caught up with our psychological production of self (Todd, 48). Postmodern consumers’ condition is that they will never be satisfied, because what they consume are only “sham objects, or characteristic signs of happiness” and do not have any real power to bestow happiness to the possessor (Malpas, 2005, 122; Baudrillard, 1998, 31). In rocker culture case, what is purchased or consumed is music, which helps especially the youth to identify themselves as rebellious or opposite and there occurs a reproduction of identity and perception cycle by the help of symbolic and social interaction. The young people choose to unite with the group which they are a member of, to tell themselves apart from their parents who live in a harmony with the society and to be different from them. What gains importance here is the fact that they want to tell themselves apart from others by being loyal to the various icon types of the group. Music, which is considered to be the most direct way to realize this turns out to be a relationship type for young people. Music is not only a means to get young people and young groups together and to create an individual difference, it is also a progress to being adult for young people. (Attali 2005, 134; quoted by Çalış, 2006, 156). Rocker audiences and subcultures seem to be inclined to differentiate themselves from other groups and styles, there is an abundance of musical styles in rock music category and so many subgroups which are the audience of any kind of sub-rock-categories. Sometimes, the theme in music (for example anti-war theme) catches people, sometimes the hard and loud style of the music group catches, as we stated before, these little fragmentations are important for rock music audience and consumers.

As for the musical consumption of rockers, we can observe many activities showing proof for our issue. The rock festivals are organized around in many countries around the world, some festivals such as Live Aid and Sonisphere have become global festivals such as any cultural product of globalism. In the festivals, like any other festivals, an economic activity

for millions of dollars is created thanks to the sales of concert tickets, alcoholic drinks, accessories, thematic goods, leisure activities, autography sessions etc. in addition to sponsorships. The earlier rock festivals such as Woodstocks are different from the contemporary ones such as Sonisphere, most of them are organized with a concern for good profit. This creates an illusion for the claim that rock is against consumption or industrial consumption. Actually, today rock culture, the identities, the themes to be distributed via songs or other medias are produced by do-it-yourself culture and cultural industry. Musical audiences are considered as joint social groups and consumers (Ebare, 2003).

Each style of music has different characteristics and satisfies different identities, so that marketing mix is designed based on styles of music and designed for different segments (Özkarlı 12). Any individual can choose any kind of rock music style as his/her favourite and adopt the themes in this music to their selves or identities, rocker culture is one of the best examples of the abundance of fragmented life styles and identities as there are so many themes and different goals in producing these cultural products. When the music group has a sense that their cultural products were consumed and the themes, musical elements satisfied their audience no more, they design new cultural products and themes to maintain their social power and entertain their audience by presenting them new fragmentations of life via newly produced themes. Even if there is not an exact definition of an identity in the songs, other cultural themed products of groups, we can say that there is a life-style impression derived from their productions.

Consumption of music is positioned as 'Hedonic consumption' that a term which focuses on the experiential and emotional aspects of consumer experiences. Hedonic consumption deals with issues such as perceived freedom, fantasy fulfillment, personal growth, experimentation with identity and escapism (O'Reilly, 2004). Hedonic consumption research focus on performing arts (theatre & cinema), plastic arts, movies, rock concerts and fashion that creates an emotion and sense. Consumers of live performing arts are people where their hedonic consumption helps them to define themselves as part of a group/community by attending a live concert (O'Reilly, 2004; quoted by Özkarlı, 2008, 13). Hedonic consumption is

an emotional and identical aspect that satisfies the consumers about the group belongingness issue (Özkarslı 13). In rocker subculture, the hedonic consumption is blessed by expression of identity in rock environment (festivals, concerts or in social groups) with different clothing styles, purchase of accessories, piercings, musical pieces from stores or online stores, alcohol or drugs (this can change according to cultures, in the Eastern and conventional countries, the use of leisure materials may be lower due to some cultural restrictions). The consumption of musical experience is a vivid one when we think about the period of time from an individual looks forward to the launch of a new album of the favourite group to the time when s/he feels over-consumed and do not consume/listen to the songs, watch clips anymore. It may not be wrong to exemplify the rock music consumption such as the bodily consumption.

The audience feels hunger when they look forward to a new song, consume it by hours of listening by loop and then give up listening as if they are not hungry anymore for this cultural production. Within the context of this hedonic consumption, the emotions squeezed into the songs are exploded in the listening experience and consumed, the emotions concerning bravery, agony, joy, love, friendship, anti-politic stance are experienced in listening, in head-bang, pogo or mushing. In this hedonic consumption and dance experience, we can also observe a shared consumption experience within a sub-culture when and where no one knowing each other hugs each other, hit each other with shoulder, make crowd-surfing.

This hedonic experience shows us that people can trust with each other as they do not think that a foreign person will not do harm in this blood and thunder rock experience, not harass anyone or misunderstand the leisure codes of this subculture. Music consumption is also regarded as 'symbolic consumption' that deals with consumption of products and services as sources of meaning. Individuals consume the products for what they mean to them and to the others (symbol, image), not for their functional value (O'Reilly, 2004). So to sum up, music does not mean just a 'song' for the individuals but also defines a lifestyle and identity for the people. Music is consumed as hedonic or symbolic that audiences consume music products related to emotional aspects (Özkarslı 13).

Even though rock music moved in a non-conformist manner in the beginning, its cooperation with the commercial production in the capitalist system caused it to function as a leisure for masses and as something providing hedonist ways which help individuals get away from their personal problems (Çalış 96).

Sociologist Maffesoli's concept of "neo-tribalism" inspires this way of looking at consumerism. Neo-tribalism is the result of "a spirit of excess, of shared passions and rituals" as opposed to the characteristically modernist faith in individual agency (Bradford 2003, 227; quoted by Todd 2012, 49). The music groups' or singers' musical themes, musical styles and branding styles are reproduced in accordance with the expectations of rock music industry and with the expectations of many fragmented rocker lifestyles and identities. In contemporary rocker subculture, neo-tribalism has an effect on the inner-group consumption activities, namely shared consumption.

The hedonic experience we mentioned above is an example to the shared consumption. Rock culture is under the influence of mass-consumption due to the marketing strategies prepared and used for them. I do not claim that the main source of influence upon rockers is the consumption patterns/products produced by music industry, but it has an important pie-share.

In the sociological literature subcultures are seen to emerge where groups of interacting individuals, experiencing common shared problems, develop particular meaning systems, modes of expression, or life styles, ideologies and personalities (Roe, 1999). Rocker culture is a typical subculture and includes many fragmented identity types, from which the individual selects the most desirable for him/her and s/he is transformed to be a member of a sub-group in rocker culture. For example, punkers may have some different values than dark metal audience, however, when it comes to hedonic musical experience, the expression styles or lifestyles, many fragmented identities and lifestyles are similar within rocker subculture and sub-groups. Especially rock music listeners' characteristics and thoughts are similar and their expectations are different from the other listener types. Rock music producers tell and criticize their opinions about the political system, wars, pollutions, emotions, etc. in order to share their

feelings, thoughts with the listeners who are also rebellious and dependent to their 'freedom' (Özkarslı 18).

The Rocker Identity Constructed as an Opposition to Mainstream Culture-Industrial Culture

It is observed that the youth of rock culture go to concerts to develop identity and a sense of belonging. According to Featherstone, the concerts can increase the sense of sacredness to create a moral consensus which sneakily contribute to social conflicts and competition and to reapprove this moral consensus. In contemporary societies, the individuals started paying much more attention to such events as the demand for forming a new type of sacredness between generations through TV and to such events as inventing the tradition, manufacturing the charisma and the sacred and manipulating the consensus. During the concerts, as in the Durkheimian definitions, formation of such senses of intense excitement and fluid emotion is made via the help of such communal activities as songs, dance etc. It appears as an undeniable reality before us that the daily world is transformed into a sacredness area and that a sense of unity and solidarity-temporary but close to the ideal- is generated between people (Çalış 158). In the concerts or festivals, an exchange of cultural values and goods occurs. The consumption of musical experience, the type of enjoyment in a social atmosphere where no one knows each other and still they are acquainted with the social values and culture, people of rock subculture feel safe and at home. This is similar to any other music based subcultures. However, the type of interaction (the bodily expression in musical experience, the appearance of body, the spirits or attitudes undertaken in these kind of events) differ from other subcultures. This is related with the identity and the self that is constructed within the rocker subculture.

Such rock festivals-concerts as Live Aid and Sonisphere are global festivals which are organized in many continents and countries around the world. These kind of events shows that the capitalist investments in these organizations take music and culture industry everywhere, make profit as in heavy industries. Rock experience within thematically produced, shared and adverted and transported around the world has become a glocal cultural experience. This experience includes many consumption patterns in the beginning decades of rock culture, it was sex, drugs and alcohol, but

it has changed to some extent now even if it still includes the connections/themes mentioned. As these kind of organizations are globally broadcasted through mass media, and there is a possibility that sponsors supporting these campaigns and the participant rock groups can make use of this activities for their own interest, they were considered to be a problematic activism kind (Çalış 110). The possibility of such a utilization is something “unethical” for the moral values of rocker subculture. These kind of festivals are both presenting many lifestyle impressions for the audience or members of rocker subculture and encouraging them to consume a lot only to live for the moment (*carpe diem*).

Adorno points to the teasing characteristics of the culture industry for the individuals. Culture industry reigns over the consciousness of individuals so effectively that the individuals actually live as an object of the industry even if they see themselves as subjects within this industry (Adorno 2007).

Rock music industry is capable of illustrating the current identity construction-reproduction process due to the corporatization. As mentioned in the texts of such postmodernists as Baudrillard, the consumer (rocker audience) experiences the illusion where s/he selects what s/he desires among the limited choices presented to him/her. During the marketization process, the audiences and the members of subcultures are convinced via social interaction and advertisements to the fact that a musical product or experience should be purchased.

This is the process where the consumer sees himself/herself a subject, however, s/he is diminished into an object in some subcultural and industrial relations. According to Rowe, rock is “an industrially communicated culture which is created with various means, translated into particular types, distributed and sold” (Rowe 1996, 57, quoted by Çalış, 2006, 95). Rock music has been a music style connected with the images of anarchy and violation when it is discussed historically. Rock music, a product of capitalism, was born through a reaction against it simultaneously, paradoxically (Rowe 44).

The biggest paradox of rock music within the industry is the fact that technology is used excessively in its production compared to the other

musical styles and that the young rocker audience choose to express themselves through this music style which is a product of capitalism despite they want to oppose against the dominant culture with anti-capitalist motivations (Çalış 95).

‘Music’ is a very crucial tool in order to symbolize an identity and reflect emotions. Lifestyle and characteristics combine with the music style while renewing the personalities/identities of listeners. Every type of music reflects different emotions, thoughts and symbols for people (Özkarlı 18).

In rock music case, the associations with rock audience and rock philosophies are reflected in the musical works, the other productions of the rock band. The reflected points are the symbols and meanings of the rocker culture and these are consumed in the musical experience. On the basis that one’s identity is determined, the kind of music a consumer listens to will symbolize something about them. Where their musical preferences are discussed socially, consumers can use this to position themselves into a group with a desirable social identity.

Consumers internally construct their self-concept and externally their social world (O’Reilly, 2004 , quoted by Özkarlı, 2008, 19). In the 1950’s and 1960’s music was generally perceived to be salient to youth in terms of a more or less homogeneous *generational identity*. During the 1970’s, however, subcultural and feminist researchers, amongst others, showed the music audience to be more heterogeneous.

As a result, in the 1980’s, research came to be dominated by a perspective which stressed the importance of music in the construction of various distinct *group identities* (Özkarlı 17). This may have stemmed from the fact that rocker culture and the span of music have become widespread and the numbers of subcultures boomed in 1970’s and 1980’s.

The music industry is a cultural production industry. The designs, themes used in the generation/production of musical pieces, the album concepts, accessories, concerts, autography sessions etc. are produced for certain purposes and effects. Specific t-shirts or gadgets are designed for specific classes and sold in different location where various people from different

socio-economical status live. The songs, are of course, not produced for specific groups within any sub-groups in rock subcultures. The most popular groups have become brand companies. They start the production of many goods, accessories which reflect the spirit/identity of their group/company. The themes used in their songs are mostly in line with the musical and emotional expectations of their audiences.

We should state that the customers of the music group (audience) are influencing the production patterns and identities of the music groups, however, they are still there to expect new songs, new cultural and emotional productions which they will enjoy, perceive, evaluate and share. A piece enjoyed by an individual, a consumed piece will probably be shared online now. This kind of shares start the inner-group consumptions, then follow the musical/magazinish news/shares/advertising shares.

An important point is the brand awareness of the listeners that how much they know and follow these brands. The images and perceptions of the brands affect the brand preferences of the listeners (Jaiya, 2004, quoted by Özkarslı, 2008, 37). Moreover, brand preferences give idea about what kind of brands (performer, event, venue, etc.) should be focused on and invested by music market to make high revenues.

These all brands are different type of products and services and their importance rank should be determined in order to use these brands in the marketing strategies of Rock music (Özkarslı 37). Today, many popular rock bands are corporatized and they produce or facilitate the production of many things other than songs. Among the products are console games, movies, documentaries, accessories, clothes, mobile applications and etc., all of which are the licensed products of the group.

These products are consumed and used by the audience in an attempt to feel the spirit of their favourite group and to have impressions from the brand identity. As a production which facilitates the consumption of musical products, the brand identity has to satisfy i) Mind share (cognitive level) ii) Heart Share (Emotional relationship) iii) Buying intention share iv) Self share (self-expression and self-design) v) Legend Share (cultural-sociological proposition; legendary, mythological) . The brand identity of

rock bands aim to attract the listeners to place in their minds, hearts and personal identities (Jaiya 2004).

We can say that there should be a proximity or connection between the brand identity (the product of the group) and the identities of the audience so that the audience will perceive the product of the music band (the brand identity), consume it, associate the musical products with their emotions and values and share it with other people in their neo-tribes.

As for the construction of rocker consumer identity, we can formulize the contemporary process from the band's song production to the final interaction between the band/brand the audience. The band 'internally' develops a working culture and organizational identity. Working on the process of creating, rehearsing, recording, touring and performing, the band becomes 'tight'; develops a strong musical identity. Then, the music is communicated as an external brand identity to the fans by means of the marketing communications process. The fans use the received and interpreted brand image to help with the construction of part of their own identities, individual and collective.

There is then a feedback process whereby the fans feedback, critically or approvingly, to the band, particularly at performances, but also through the web site, fan letters, fan websites and fanzines (Özkarlı 36). This formulation is a summary of a rocker subculture and identity construction within this subculture in consumerism influence as the process is a cultural industry process.

As a conclusion, we may conclude that the issue focused on in our work should be researched in a survey, online or offline so that we can get insights into the living subcultures in terms of their shared consumption, their world views, their identity construction strategies and changes in their lifestyles. I am planning to do a field research for my research problem and will probably do the research study within several months.

Works Cited

Adorno, T., *Minima Moralia*, Metis Yayınları, İstanbul, 2000.

Atiker, Erhan. *Modernizm Ve Kitle Toplumu*, Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 1998.

Attali, Jacques, *Gürültüden Müziğe*, Çev. Gülüs Gülcügil Türkmen, Ayrıntı Yayınları, İstanbul, 2005.

Bauman, Z., “Fronteiras do Pensamento”, (website) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POZcBNo-D4A>, the date of utilization: 30.12.2015.

Bradford, Vivian . “Style, Rhetoric, and Postmodern Culture.” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 35.3, 2002, 223-243. the date of utilization, 20 Nov. 2011.

Bourdieu, P., *Distinction: A Social Critique Of The Judgement Of Taste*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984.

Çalış, N., *Popüler Kültür Bağlamında Rock Müziğinin Analizi*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Konya, 2006.

Davis, J. B. “Postmodernism and the Individual as a Process. Review of *Social Economy*”, 2, 203-208. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00346760701345581>, 2007. the date utilized: 01.01.2016.

Deakin, C., “Postmodernism for Beginners (Official Lecturing Presentation)”, 2005, <http://www.slideshare.net/AlexMacDonald1/postmodernism-for-beginners>, the date utilized: 02.01.2016.

Decrop, A., “Les paradoxes du consommateur postmoderne”, *Reflète et Perspectives De La Vie Économique*, 2, 85-93, 2008.

Ebare, S., “Digital Music and Subculture: Sharing Files, Sharing Styles”, 2004, online site: http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue9_2/ebare/, the date of utilization: 30.12.2015.

Elliott, A., *The Routledge Companion to Social Theory*, Routledge, New York, 2010.

Firat, A. F., & Shultz, C. J., “Preliminary Metric Investigation Into The Nature Of The Postmodern Consumer”, 2001. *Marketing Letters*, 12, 189-203. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1023/A:1011173205199>, the date utilized 28.12.2015.

Gabriel, Y., & Lang, T., *The Unmanageable Consumer - Contemporary Consumption And Its Fragmentation*, London, Sage, 1995.

Giddens, A., *Modernity and Self-identity*. Cambridge, Polity Press, 1991.

Gomez, F., Helene, M., Ozcaglar, N., “Towards An Understanding Of Consumption Objectors”, *European Advances in Consumer Research*, V.8., 2007.

Hamouda, M., Gharbi, A., “The Postmodern Consumer: An Identity Constructor?”, *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2. 2013.

Jaiya, G., S., “Marketing and Branding Strategies”, 2004, online site: http://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/sme/en/wipo_smes_kul_06/wipo_smes_kul_06_www_68916.ppt, the date of utilization: 21.12.2015.

Karaduman, S., “Modernizmden Postmodernizme Kimliğin Yapısal Dönüşümü”, *Journal of Yaşar University*, İzmir, 17(5). 2010.

Lyon, David. *The Steeple’s Shadow: On the Myths and Realities of Secularization*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987.

Malpas, S., *The Postmodern*, Routledge, New York, 2005.

Mardin, Ş., İdeoloji, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2. Baskı, 1993.

Möngü, B., “Postmodernizm ve Postmodern Kimlik Anlayışı”, Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, Erzurum, v.17 (2). 2013.

Negrin, L., Appearance and Identity - Fashioning the Body in Postmodernity, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008.

Özkarslı, S., Marketing Strategies for The Launch of The New Rock Music Productions to Attract Youth in Turkey, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İstanbul, 2008.

Roe, K., “Music and Identity Among European Youth -Music As Communication”, Journal On Media Culture, V2. July 1999, http://www.icce.rug.nl/~soundscapes/DATABASES/MIE/Part2_chapter03.shtml, the date of utilization: 20.12.2015.

Todd, D., You Are What You Buy: Postmodern Consumerism and the Construction of Self, Hohonu Academic Journal of University of Hawaii, V.10., 2012.

Turnau, T., “Postmodernism and the Question of Identity”, online site:<http://www.bethinking.org/human-life/postmodernism-and-the-question-of-identity>, the date of utilization 26.12.2015, 2014.

Teschl, M. “What Does it Mean to be Decentered?”, Review of Social Economy, 2, 195-201, 2007, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00346760701345532>, the date of utilization 24.12.2015.

Van Raaij, W. F. “Postmodern Consumption”, Journal of Economic Psychology, 14, 541-563, 1993, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0167-4870\(93\)90032-G](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0167-4870(93)90032-G), the date of utilization 22.12.2015.