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Doctoral Dissertation Summary

Polish Remix Culture: The Cultural Role of the DJ in the Age of Digital Reproduction

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The dissertation focuses on Polish DJ culture seen not just as a specific musical space, but also a cultural one, functioning within the framework of popular culture. The central figure of both this culture and the dissertation is the figure of the DJ, the person in charge of playing music recorded on various types of media during musical events. The research material consists of fifteen in-depth interviews with Polish DJs and club music creators. The aim of the work is to embed the activities of a DJ in the broader field of popular culture, and, at the same time, to answer the question of whether his way of doing things can serve as a model for other participants in the cultural world.

The dissertation is divided into two parts. The first part deals with "remixology," a term describing the theory of the remix. The first chapter focuses on the DJ practice in light of samples (samplings) drawn from the theories of cultural studies, anthropology, and aesthetics. The DJ is presented here as an artist, creator, and processor of cultural content. Individual DJ practices and the place of the DJ in the cultural and music community are described. Chapter two places the practices of Polish DJs in a historical context, including temporal and musical reference points such as disco, hip-hop, and rave, as well as important figures and institutions, including media which have shaped the respondents. Chapter three provides a description of the panorama of Polish DJ culture in the first two decades of the 21st century. Chapter four looks at the experience of Polish DJs in the post-transformation era, including practices in response to the economy of musical scarcity present at the time. Access to the Internet, records and equipment, foreign travel, and new media devoted to music provide a reference point for the narratives of the respondents.

Part two of the work is devoted to a detailed analysis of DJ practices narrated by the respondents, including topics such as sampling, attitudes toward remix, as well as the respondents' self-assessment and self-definition in terms of the function and role of the DJ. The second chapter of this section analyses the place of the DJ in the context of the community and club culture, understood in terms of a contemporary tribe.

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