

## **Cultural Festivals in Memory Venues : Architecture as a Vehicle of Tourism and Civilization Junction**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper aims at investigating the contribution of cultural Festivals hosted in historical venues (archaeological or industrial sites) as a tourist policy instrument. More specifically, the focus is set on examining the relationship between cultural activities and the host venues in Europe as a key driver for the development of international cultural tourism.

The perception of cultural activities as expressions of aesthetic form will be examined through a brief review of international festivals. Most common aesthetic forms include theatre, performance, interventions, events taking place in urban, industrial, archaeological or historical sites. Various performances and events are linked to the architectural and natural landscape, forming living experiences, functioning as a lever for the development of alternative forms of tourism.

**Key Words:** cultural festival, heritage tourism, industrial heritage

## **INTRODUCTION**

This paper seeks to examine the contribution of cultural festivals taking place in architectural heritage sites to the promotion and protection of the sites themselves, and the substantial to growth of cultural tourism, following tactics of sustainable tourism development. Tourist exploitation of the area is demanded as its characteristics are largely incompatible with the one-dimensional model of promotion of mass tourism. Specifically, since the 1960s, the tourism model of 4S (sea, sand, sun, sex), which is constantly being addressed to the same type of tourist-consumer, is being used without much consideration of the new requirements of tourism. As this model tends to saturate, new innovative approaches to designing a country's tourism promotion are needed (Galanos, 2013).

## **CULTURAL FESTIVAL AND POLICIES**

A historiographical approach to festivals is the differentiation of the role of artistic festivals in relation to cultural policy. In the beginning, festivals aimed at collective entertainment. Since 1980 there has been a change as artistic festivals turn into an industry and prevail in modern societies. This spread of festivals has had an impact on economic, political, social and cultural fields. Then the model moved to the consumption of experience. Cultural strategies have led to an economy of experience.

Festivals include a series of connected events and are differentiated from those that include only one cultural event, such as a play or a concert (Falassi, 1987). At the same time, the audience participates in some type of action related to the features of the festival as a member of a wider community and finally participates during holidays and this is not characterized as a part of everyday life such as watching a play (Macmillan, 2015).

Festivals also create identity and help communities to unite by providing social stability. At the same time, they encourage artistic production and activity, and they attract more and more artists to create. They are linked to the place where they happen, resulting in festival cities, meaning cities that have created a new identity (re-branding) and have been re-positioned (re-position) in relation to international competition of cities as a tourist destination.

Urban policy making can employ the cultural festival for the development of urban tourism. In recent years, cultural festivals have been greatly multiplied by providing multiple benefits to host cities. The organizations responsible for them are seeking to compete with other festivals, while retaining their artistic features. At the same time, however, festivals have to evolve in terms of their characteristics and content, as they risk losing their originality and consequently their competitiveness. This development should be determined according to a policy framework of the festival by the organizations so that it can be determined in advance how they evolve (Quinn, 2010).

The rapid development of festivals in recent decades has turned them from cultural events to cultural spectacles. As the production of a new type of festival was difficult to start, many cities adopted the serial reproduction solution. This has led to a reduction in creativity and innovation in terms of outcome. At the same time, the festivals which originated from the copying other

successful festivals, without adaptation, were less and less related to the specific features of the site where they took place, such as the architectural cultural heritage and the way of life.

Public policy related to the festival is usually related to tourism, place-marketing and economic development and secondly to cultural issues (Getz, 2009). For sustainable tourism development through the festival, a policy must be followed that takes into account the stakeholders and society, while at the same time striving to meet their equal needs. This process is particularly complex as each stakeholder has different motivations, needs, aspirations and behaviours in relation to the development and realization and management of the festivals (Dredge and Whitford, 2010).

## **HERITAGE TOURISM HYBRIDISATION**

The classic model of cultural tourism management was based on the promotion and preservation of cultural heritage. Art as a different sector contributes to the reinforcement and promotion of tourism through cultural and artistic events. The conciliation of the two sectors to the production of a hybrid product of art and cultural heritage is an important prospect for the development of heritage tourism. The two areas present an incompatibility as the cultural heritage refers to the past and tradition, while the arts look forward to the future and to innovation (Della Lucia et al., 2016). The hybridisation of art and cultural heritage has created scepticism about its necessity and its implementation, as there are very successful policy models that focus on the traditional model of cultural heritage promotion, such as several Italian cities (Center for Strategy and Evaluation Services, 2010). For the best exploitation of cultural heritage, there is also a need for change in the social behaviour of local communities so that they interact with visitors to create cultural experiences.

According to Della Lucia et al., 2017, the consideration of a hybrid art and cultural heritage model must take into account the stakeholder parameter. This creates a scheme of complete or non complete hybridisation with parallel matching of high involvement either of the public body or other parties (stakeholders). Four different urban development models occur from this model. Public patronage, a top-down practice that corresponds to the classical model with high involvement of the public body in funding for the preservation of the cultural heritage, but also in policy-making in an interventionist way, without taking advantage of modern arts, resulting in low heritage hybridisation. According to this model, urban tourism adopts traditional management models. Keeping the involvement of heritage hybridisation low, but giving the stakeholders power, leads to the model of managerial innovation. According to this, organizational efficiency and promotion are achieved, but only traditional cultural tourism models benefit from that. If the previous model with a high stakeholder role includes heritage hybridisation, the socio-cultural innovation model emerges. According to this, culture is the driving force behind urban economic development and exploits partnerships between private and public sectors. It includes artistic festivals and hybrid artistic models that are related to the local area. As there is no strong involvement of the public body, it is difficult to develop tourism development policy centrally. Finally, the framework proposes a public driven regeneration model that adopts high hybridisation with a strong public role. According to this model, the design of cultural policy is carried out centrally and supported by the state with funding. It retains from its previous model its relationship with artistic festivals (Della Lucia et al., 2017).

The above models are schematic and aim to provide a structure that describes the role of the parties involved in the design and the degrees of freedom of mixing and engaging art in the cultural heritage. The choice by each party or community may be conscious, or it can emerge as a socio-economic process. Adopting a model and having a successful outcome implies the existence of both conditions and circumstances.

## **INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE TOURISM**

The de-industrialisation of the western world, as a result of the collapse of the model of the accumulation economy, has caused most of the industrial plants to fall into disuse. Buildings are part of the industrial cultural heritage of cities as the reason for being there is to nostalgically remind them of their industrial past and the way of life that this entails. Each region has developed into different industrial sectors and therefore the industrial heritage of each city stands out from the others, creating a different narration of the history of the place and a different scenery and atmosphere of the city of aesthetics of de-industry (Hospers, 2002).

The narrative also needs the people who participated in this process, thus reviving the memory, reinforcing the sense of identity of the locals and localisation. Industrial heritage is not limited only to buildings and equipment but also to its intangible elements such as people and their stories that are the cultural value embodied in them (Firth, 2011). However, it must be kept in mind that industrial cultural heritage has not been accepted as a tourism destination despite all the efforts made by the various stakeholders. This is due to the negative image of a collapsed world as well as due to the “good old days” that do not correspond to the image of an industrial worker of survival and harsh living conditions (Hospers, 2002). Industrial cultural heritage must be seen and presented as a living heritage. The architectural environment alongside the social history of the region can be employed to overcome the concerns, producing such a content to enhance tourism promotion.

## **TOURISM AND CULTURAL FESTIVALS**

The modern consumer feels the future is uncertain due to political, economic and environmental reasons. They feel more secure in the past as they find it more authentic. Tourism uses the sense of authentic past and exploits it through the forms it is expressed and mainly promoting the cultural heritage, while improving the tourism product. Authenticity has been examined in a variety of ways and focuses on the following categories: Firstly, authentic is considered what has unaltered quality and refers to material objects. Object based authenticity is addressed throughout our study through the material cultural heritage i.e. the architectural heritage. Tourism relies heavily on tourists having new experiences, so the degree of authenticity of the experiences determines the quality of the tourism product. Experience based authenticity examines the engagement of the visitor's experience, whether it is real or based on his or her identity and feelings. The sense of authenticity is conveyed by the experience of the visitor, in the way he perceives himself as it strengthens the sense of personal authenticity. Through this process the visitor discovers elements of his identity that he can not experience in everyday life (Wang, 1999),

(Brown, 2013). Experience based authenticity is sought in the activities of cultural festivals and how they are experienced, especially in interactive activities. The content of the projects can reinforce the sense of authenticity through the authenticity that results from acts that we have not yet experienced but will emerge in the future. In potential based authenticity, things are authentic now because of the future reality that is presented (Cohen-Aharoni, 2017).

## **THE AVIGNON FESTIVAL**

At this point there will be a detailed description of the Avignon Festival, as an optimal example that significantly contributed in culture, as well as in the maintenance of cultural heritage and tourism development. Avignon city, capital of the Vaucluse province, is located in the Provence district, in Southern France (map), built on the left side of the Rhone river. It has 92454 inhabitants (Kurt Salmon consulting, 2010) and is known for its architectural heritage as well as its cultural festival. Its significant architectural heritage was officially recognised as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO: 150 buildings, most of which are protected by UNESCO. In 2000, Avignon was selected as Europe's cultural capital. Avignon's cultural festival, held annually every July, is one of the biggest performing arts festivals in the world.

The Festival d'Avignon was created in 1947 by Jean Vilar. Since the first organisation of the Festival in September 1947, its program has include less known works of the international repertoire and modern texts. Four important phases of its evolution have been distinguished to date.

- From 1947 to 1963, for 17 consecutive years, the festival is organized by the same group with the same subjects and in the same place, the Grand Chapel of the Palais des papes.
- From 1964 to 1979, under particular political developments, (May 1968) young people, new groups, new content: Cinema, music theatre and dance enrich the content of the festival. New venues of cultural heritage host the festival. Chartreuse de Villeneuve lez Avignon, an old monastery of the twentieth century, becomes an international centre of research and creativity (CIRCA), where concerts and shows are hosted.
- From 1980 to 2003, a new period is taking place, inviting new generations of artists from around the world. Discussions and proposals about new modern pioneering forms of arts are being made. In 2003 the festival is being cancelled due to the big strikes.
- From 2004 to 2013, the festival aims at developing relationships between artistic events, place, local partners and the general public. The time of artistic activities is extended and now happen throughout the year. This enhances the cultural character of the festival by developing cultural links with the rest of Europe and the rest of the world ("Festival d'Avignon", n.d.).

Through the festival, Avignon is now a cultural crossroads, open to all arts, with an emphasis on forefront, debates which appeal equally to all contributors: artists, creators, spectators. Everyone is invited to experience discovery, reflection of emotions. As part of the policy implemented to amplify festivals and local communities, incentives are being given to develop all arts. Communication networks are established between the University, the Artists, the citizens and public and private sector (Kurt Salmon consulting, 2010).

The festival is hosted in places of cultural heritage:

- Cour d'honneur du Palais des papes
- Cloître des Carmes
- Cloître des Célestins
- Opéra Grand Avignon
- La FabricA
- Gymnase du lycée Aubanel
- Cour du lycée Saint-Joseph
- Chapelle des Pénitents blancs
- Cour du collège Vernet
- Maison Jean Vilar
- Cloître Saint-Louis
- Jardin de la rue de Mons
- Conservatoire du Grand Avignon
- Jardin de la Vierge du lycée Saint-Joseph
- Site Louis Pasteur Supramuros de l'Université d'Avignon et des Pays de Vaucluse
- Basilique métropolitaine Notre-Dame des Doms
- Église de Roquemaure
- Collégiale Saint-Didier
- Cour du château de Vacqueyras
- Carrière de Boulbon
- Hôtel de La Mirande
- Jardins de l'Université d'Avignon et des Pays de Vaucluse

When it comes to tourism, the Avignon region is considered to be the first in attracting French tourists, accounting for 12.5% of the tourist market and second in attracting tourists outside France. Around 4,000,000 tourists visit the area annually (Kurt Salmon consulting, 2010).

The most important attraction for tourists is the international cultural festival, which with over 50 years of operation, has managed to make Avignon world-famous, increasing the number of tourists. The operation of the festival has attracted a permanent establishment of the largest number of theatres per inhabitant in France. In the city, 19 theatrical groups, a theatre opera house, a school of fine arts and a music school have been established on a permanent basis. There are 140 subsidized cultural clubs and cultural events throughout the year. The city is transformed into an international Market of European Live Show. Tourism and Culture are directly connected to Avignon.

Typical features of Avignon's cultural tourism are: The high proportion of international tourists, great coverage of tourist accommodation needs and City short break practice outside the

summer season. The attractiveness of the monuments and cultural activities of the Festival have contributed to the significant development of tourism alongside culture, offering multiple benefits to the local economy and quality of life.

## **ART FESTIVAL PROPOSAL, CONCLUSION**

Subsequently, we will then turn to the case of Eleusis. Today, Eleusis is a small town of about 30,000 inhabitants. It is a city of the Prefecture of Attica and headquarters of the Regional Unity of Western Attica, 20 kilometres north-west of the city centre of Athens.

Its name derives from the word "helefsis" (ἑλεφσις), meaning place of arrival, arrival, presence. It is known for its long history of ancient and industrial too. In ancient times, for 2000 years, Eleusis has been one of the five sacred cities of Ancient Greece. Eleusis is known for the great tragic poet Aeschylus, for its relationship with the goddess Demeter and the myth of Demeter and Persephone and the Eleusinian mysteries, which attracted pilgrims from all over the known world. Today, an important archaeological site is preserved.

Since the 1880s some major industries begun to be installed in the area of Eleusis until 1971. Nowadays they are inactive, leaving empty remarkable shells that make up its architectural historical industrial heritage. This zone extends to the coastal front of the city, occupying spaces of the city and also entering its archaeological site (Belavilas et al., 2011).

Eleusis is also known for the Aeschylus Festival, which since 1975 has been housed in the industrial venues of the city. The festival lasts for a month and takes place every September, at the same time as the Eleusinian Mysteries took place in ancient times. It always happens in the same places, with the same goals and organization. Today however, Eleusis is not particularly a tourist destination.

We believe that the Aeschylus Festival can help the city and the entire region of Western Attica, contributing significantly to the development of cultural tourism. We propose the correct planning of the festival and its exploitation according to modern hybrid models, as a tool for strengthening and substantially developing tourism.

The existing promotion policy follows the public patronage model, where the management of cultural heritage and policy-making is determined by the state, while modern arts are not used in combination and therefore there is low heritage hybridisation. The existence of the Aeschylus Festival in its present form does not guarantee hybridity. In response to the problem, it is proposed to adopt the public driven regeneration model, which adds high hybridisation without changing the status of the role of the public operator. The reason is that a great deal of involvement of stakeholders, even though they are models that attract innovation, does not certify that local stakeholders will be able to respond directly to such a change. The intention is for Eleusis to appeal both to the Greek public and to an international audience which will bring increasing benefits to the local community.

The hybrid socio-cultural innovation model requires the active involvement not only of the stakeholders but of the whole society by changing social behaviour so that interaction with the visitors occurs. It implies a dynamic within society, a society with increased cultural reflexes that supports and reinforces actions around culture.

The proposal for public driven regeneration develops the current model of choosing a tourism policy from the central administration and makes it easy to move from the previous situation. Employing a hybridisation model enhances the sense of authenticity of the visitors. Until now, the approach was based mainly on object based authenticity through architectural cultural heritage. Enhancing the sense of personal authenticity will come through active participation in the actions taking place at the festival, which makes it necessary to develop artistic events through modern art forms, and also to interact with the local population. The particularity of the city of Eleusis has to be emphasized as it has an urban industrial cultural heritage. Experience has shown that these sites are suitable for their exploitation in relation to the arts and culture. The possible negative image of the declining industries can take on a new meaning associated with the arts, while, at the same time, creating a sense of nostalgia for the productive Eleusis.

Consequently, through such a prospect of evolution of the Aeschylus festival, the archaeological, industrial heritage and art will be brought into being as a whole, with an emphasis on the contemporary art of all forms, experimentation with the forefront of modern technology and the interplay. The cooperation of the Aeschylus Festival with the University Institutions located in Attica is considered necessary, strengthening and expanding the Festival's institution with research, artistic creation, creating new generations of artists. At the same time, the festival must work with all local partners (local clubs, businesses, etc.) and the general public with the aim of active citizens, exploitation of experiences, strengthening of culture and the local economy. Extroversion, communication and collaboration link the festival with international festivals, aiming at exchanging experiences and creating cultural ties.

The exploitation of the Aeschylus Festival through this type of development and progress will lead to the enhancement of cultural tourism. A major challenge for Eleusis is its prospect as a cultural capital of Europe in 2021. Within this framework, a major concern is the upgrading of the Aeschylus Festival, which can contribute to the realization of the objectives of the cultural capital. (Eleusis 2021, 2016).

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