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# The Festival in the Meta-system of Culture

Krasteva, Nadezhda

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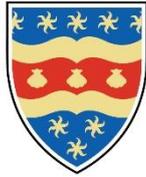
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**UNIVERSITY OF  
PLYMOUTH**

**THE FESTIVAL IN THE META-SYSTEM OF CULTURE**

by

**NADEZHDA KRASTEVA**

A thesis submitted to the University of Plymouth  
in partial fulfilment for the degree of

**RESEARCH MASTERS**

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## DECLARATION

At no time during the registration for the degree of Research Masters has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Doctoral College Quality Sub-Committee.

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**The Festival in the Meta-system of Culture**

**ABSTRACT**

Crossing the borders of various disciplines – anthropology, cultural studies, cultural theory, sociology of culture, sociology of art, art history, art criticism, events management and tourism – festival studies are slowly attracting academic attention in their search for independent status among the social sciences.

Culture, defined by Juri Lotman as a self-descriptive mechanism, is the structure from which perspective I approach the contemporary artistic festival in an attempt to determine its position as an element in the meta-system of culture. The semantic notion of culture proposed by the scholar refers to a dynamic system of signs organising and preserving information in society, forming the necessity for self-renewal, development and yet expression of the social memory. Within the scope of this model of self-consciousness and meta-narration, I place the arts festival as a carrier of meta-function with its main features of remembrance and substance of artistic text.

My study examines the festival events dedicated to all art forms and their genre categories. It endeavours to establish a theoretical framework applicable to the detailed analysis of every festival formation or any single edition.

The thesis illustrates the current festival landscape in Europe, exploring the events performed in all European countries, contributing information about the

geographical and cultural distribution of the arts festivals, following their trends and their proliferation since their year of commencement. Until now, there has been no other work or single informative source providing such complete knowledge about the approximate number of comparable events, their features and classification.

The focus on the current festival circuit inscribed in the meta-system of culture questions the aspects of intercultural dialogue on the global political stage, the status of art, the relationship between the cultural, tourist, and festival industries, and the future of the art festival event itself.

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## INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on the contemporary artistic festivals and their position in culture, analysed as a meta-system. It examines current European festivals dedicated to all art forms and their genre categories: cinema, dance, literature, music, theatre, visual arts, including multidisciplinary festivals, and hybrid festival organisms that present works breaking through the boundaries of two or more types of art. The questions my research poses and the possible answers to them are strongly related to the semantic notion of “culture” proposed and examined by Juri Lotman.<sup>1</sup> His theory is based on the argument that culture is an ever-changing model generated by the specifics of each historical epoch. As a sphere clearly delineated from the background of non-culture, culture is a system of signs determining the variations of the self-defined scope. From this standpoint, the artistic festival event, which encapsulates the current status of the arts and the social conduct of values from a cultural perspective, puts forward its own significance.

The present profile of our society redefines the notion of “boundary” into a new conceptual reading, not only from a political and economic point of view. We are witnessing an intense dialogue between scientific disciplines, between different artforms, between science and arts, which blur the lines of distinction and lead to unexplored alliances. In this regard, the artistic festival can be explored

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<sup>1</sup> Juri Lotman analysed the culture as meta-system in few works. Further in this study references are provided by relevance.

See also for different perspective on this topic:

Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics* (Bloomington – London: Indiana University Press, 1976).

through the prism of anthropology, culturology<sup>2</sup>, art history, art criticism, event management, and tourism. The proliferation of artistic festivals in the second half of the twentieth century and the subsequent boom in their popularity at the beginning of the new millennium are an even more insistent reminder of their significance and the need for empirical analyses and research practices. The reasons for such dynamics are diverse, as are those for the impact the festivals have on several areas of public life on a regional and global scale. However, the festival sphere remains neglected on the periphery of attested academic interest; therefore the literary sources on this subject are extremely limited in scope.

Mikhail Bakhtin's writings have significantly informed my research, especially his notable contribution to the establishment of the concepts of "carnivalisation" and "chronotope" in the humanities. In *Rabelais and His World*, the author presents a detailed analysis of the carnival as an important element of folklore in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.<sup>3</sup> Other keywords used by Bakhtin in this work are *comedy*, *grotesque*, *laughter* and *games*. This suggests the range of differences between the two types of events – "festival" (particularly the arts festival) and "carnival" – and reinforces the need for a substantial theoretical framework of festivals positioned in the present day but tracing their historical transformations.

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<sup>2</sup> *culturology*- an established discipline in USSR (Russian Federation) and some of the Eastern European countries. For further reading in this regard please consider:

Leslie A. White, *The Science of Culture: A Study of Man and Civilization* (New York: Farrar Straus, 1949).

Completing a course of Culturology at Varna Free University "Chernorizets Hrabar" (Varna, Bulgaria), I had the opportunity to acquire knowledge of the most significant academic works presented by scholars of Eastern Europe placed in dialog with the prominent theories and concepts by Western European and North American scientists.

<sup>3</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984).

Perhaps a major role in the attempt to make festival studies an academic discipline has been played by Dragan Klaic who recognised the vast area of festival influence on cultural social capital.<sup>4</sup> In 2004, he launched the European Festival Research Project (EFRP) with a view to building a platform for projects and creating a network of scientists, researchers, critics, and organisers, who would all contribute to this new field of knowledge. This endeavour was active until 2011 but currently has no web presence or archive. The premature death of Klaic bequeathed this idea to us, along with four essays written as an introduction to an unpublished anthology.

The seven publications of the European Festivals Association (EFA) for the period 2006-2017 reflect on thoughts and discussions about festivals.<sup>5</sup> They provide material from conferences and workshops for festival arrangers , essays by leading legislators on European cultural policy, the festival visions of selected directors, articles, and interviews. In parallel, the organisation, together with the Asia–Europe Foundation, launched several editions focusing on the practical aspects of festival and cultural management addressing the challenges

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<sup>4</sup> Dragan Klaic, *Festivals in Focus* (Budapest – New York: Central European University Press, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Hugo De Greef and Kathrin Deventer, eds., *Still so Much to be Done* (Ghent: European Festivals Association, 2006).

Hugo De Greef and Kathrin Deventer, eds., *Give, Get or Get Off!* (Ghent: European Festivals Association, 2008).

Hugo De Greef and other eds., *Cahier de l'Atelier: Arts Festivals for the Sake of Art?* (Ghent: European Festivals Association, 2008).

Kathrin Deventer and Juliane Reissig, eds., *Dialogue: Festivals Act for an Intercultural Society* (Ghent: European Festivals Association, 2009).

Kathrin Deventer and Juliane Reissig, eds., *Inside/ Insight Festivals* (Ghent: European Festivals Association and CultureLink Singapore, 2012).

Zachery Bishop, ed., *Beyond Visions: A policy on culture in Europe* (Brussels: European Festivals Association and the European House for Culture, 2016).

Simon Mundi, ed., *Cahier de l'Atelier # 2* (Brussels: European Festivals Association, 2016).

and risks of curatorial activities. The EFA has the longest standing presence on the festival stage, initiated in 1952 by the Swiss cultural theorist, Denis de Rougemont, and the Russian composer, Igor Markevitch.

Three other collections contain studies that contribute to the slowly-building status of “festivology”. *Festival and Events Management: An International Arts and Culture Perspective*,<sup>6</sup> with its first edition in 2004 and a subsequent one in 2011, focuses on the design of the management and marketing process used in events and gives the reader models and examples from Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States.

*Festivals and Cultural Public Sphere* examines the contemporary festivals as autonomous social texts from an interdisciplinary perspective.<sup>7</sup> This collection draws attention to the perception of “festival - space”, the concept of literature festivals, the role of art biennales in the global cultural dialogue and some aspects of the cinema festival landscape.

*Focus on Festivals: Contemporary European Case Studies and Perspectives* was published in memory of Dragan Klaić in recognition of the EFRP which he founded.<sup>8</sup> The anthology contains a wide range of theoretical approaches and festival case studies highlighting the significance of the festival for contemporary society in various aspects of social activities and scientific disciplines.

Events from the world film-festival circuit have been the subject of critical and theoretical analyses, demonstrating an ambition to establish Film Festival

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<sup>6</sup> Ian Yeoman and other eds., *Festival and Events Management: An International Arts and Culture Perspective* (Oxon–New York: Routledge, 2011).

<sup>7</sup> Liana Giorgi and other eds., *Festivals and Cultural Public Sphere* (Oxon: Routledge, 2011).

<sup>8</sup> Chris Newbold and other eds., *Focus on Festivals* (Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers, 2015).

Studies as a discipline. The Film Festival Research Network founded in 2008 by Marijke de Valck and Skadi Loist, focuses on the interest in this research field.<sup>9</sup>

One significant work concentrating on the role of the cinema, and a substantial source of thoughts related to the specifics of the festival phenomenon is Vera Naydenova's book, *The Cannes Festival*.<sup>10</sup> It is a collection of the author's impressions as a long-time visitor to this glamorous event in her role of film critic.

This research project is a development of the university thesis I presented in 1999 at Varna Free University "Chernorizets Hrabar" , based on the idea that the artistic festival, as a unified model, has properties and functions that enable its definition as an element of the meta-system of culture. The attempt at a socio-cultural analysis, within a theoretical festival framework, refers to Juri Lotman's theory of self-description inherent in culture and the requirements of the cultural mechanism demanded from its own constituent semiotic systems.<sup>11</sup> Present in this sphere, the realities already carry a semantic scar. Built on the mutually alternative principle, they are transporters of the necessary for cultural information statics, but at the same time they become fields for further informative content. The concept of culture introduced in its own text is the basis for self-reproducing conscious phenomena with the status of being

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<sup>9</sup> Film Festival Research, <http://www.filmfestivalresearch.org>, December 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Вера Найденова [Vera Naydenova], *Фестивалът Кан [The Cannes Festival]* (София: ИК „Проф. Петко Венедиков“, 2015).

For additional sources on this topic see also:

Gilles Jacob, *Citizen Cannes: The Man behind the Cannes Film Festival*, trans. Sarah Robertson (London: Phaidon Press, 2011).

Kieron Corless and Chris Darke, *Cannes: Inside the World's Premier Film Festival* (London: Faber & Faber, 2007).

<sup>11</sup> Juri Lotman and Boris Uspensky "On the Semiotic Mechanism of Culture", trans. George Mihaychuk, *New Literary History*, 9/2 (1978): 211-232.

elements of culture. The differentiation and the order of their interrelation construct auto-models of culture. Arrangement and the modelling movement of communication are the key functions according to which we talk about the meta-system of culture.

The moment when a culture reaches a certain structural maturity that coincides with the autonomy of individual private mechanisms of culture, it reaches a certain critical point where the need for self-description, for creating its own model, arises.<sup>12</sup>

Lotman defines the arts as the “artistic text or artistic language”,<sup>13</sup> which, being involved in the dynamics of existence and the development of cultural subsystems, are carriers of cultural meta-functions. The meta-mechanism constructs its essence on three types of foundations – mythological, artistic, and scientific – selecting texts from both the sustainable and mobile subsystems of culture, realised in the present or in the past.

The meta-mechanism of culture restores the unity to those elements that aspire to autonomy and becomes the language used for communication within the culture itself. It assists the reconstruction and unification of individual structural nodes.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Юрий Лотман [Juri Lotman], " Место киноискусства в механизме культуры [The place of cinema art in the mechanism of culture]" в *Труды по знаковым системам VIII [Papers on Sign Systems, vol. 8]*, ред. Б. Гаспаров и др. (Тарту: Тартуский Государственный Университет, 1977), 142.(My translation).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 144. (My translation).

See also for different perspective on this topic:

Horányi Özséb, “Culture and Metasemiotics in Film,” *Semiotica*, 15, no. 3 (2009): 265–284.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 143. (My translation).

Herein lies the question: can the festival be defined as a subsystem within the system of culture? And if such a statement is supported by valid arguments, is the festival phenomenon a subsystem of sustainable or mobile type?

Crossing the borders of several academic disciplines, the research methodology applied to my project does not include an established range of paradigms. Taking an ontological and epistemological approach, I combine the following mixed methods:

**Theory of culture** which emerged in 19<sup>th</sup> century as scientific analysis and these days relates to a variety of branches and diverse dispositions. Culture in a broad definition is a man-made sphere against the background of non-culture exploring its own structure and social implementation. It also inspects the interconnection between culture and personal development, between culture and scientific progress. I apply the critical theory aspect of the method in accordance to layers of interaction between culture and society, the communicative process reflected in the festival event, the institutional nature of art, the connectivity of the festival with cultural institutions and its own institutional role.

**Semiotics** refers to the elaboration of the structuralism into semiology or semiotic studies that advanced in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century primarily in Italy, France and USSR (Estonia). Adopting the culture as a system of signs, semiotics applies the symbolic process of communication not only to language and literature, but to theatre, cinema, visual arts, fashion or advertisement. Enclosing the semantic concept of culture introduced by Jury Lotman, I intend to determine the festival form as an element of the cultural meta-system

examining its feature to accumulate social memory and to act as an independent artistic text respectively as a meta-language of arts.

**Ethnology** revised as a branch of the anthropology applies to the comparison of specifics in different cultural groups which defines range of constant structures relevant to all of them. Using the ethnological element in my research in regard of participants observation, I place in focus the celebratory component of the festival formation associated with the perception of “holy day/ holiday”. Each category is characterised as a rhythmic renewal of the myth, as an expression of the inherited norms and values of the society and the changes demanded by culture, as a time and space divider with ceremonial activities, role distribution and event script.

**Reception theory and museology** relates to the audience perception in the process of artefacts consumption, curatorial activity and the educational attribution of museums. I apply elements of this method to the festival event highlighting the difference between arts and festival arts considering the ephemeral nature of each artistic work beyond the context of its everyday existence. This idea of exclusivity is viable also to the festival visitor whose interpretation is based on the abstractions for aesthetic values, aesthetic norms and cultural identity. With reference to Carol Duncan’s concept for art museums as “environment structured around specific ritual scenarios”<sup>15</sup> I draw a parallel with the festival as a sacred fragmentation of time and space with its own script of rituals and ceremonies. Additionally using this method I examine the role of the curators, organisers, critics and jury, the mission of festival to educate and support creative industry.

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<sup>15</sup> Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (London; New York: Routledge, 1995).

**Collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data** includes wide scope of methods used in the social sciences for observation, examination and evaluation of various phenomena. For the purpose of my research topic I have built a database identifying the festival events by country of performance, locality differentiated in two groups based on population radius, year of commencement and calendar definition, artform and genre relation, motto and formula, national or international factor and competitiveness. The data analysis presents displays of the festival growth, the ratio between nationally and internationally oriented festivals, the comparative number of festivals with an awarding feature, the festival distribution on the geographical and cultural map positioned by country of conduct, urban or rural terrain and division by artform.

The demonstrated research approach positions this project into the scope of slowly developing festival studies as an independent academic discipline. The last mentioned emphasises the objective for well-established critical event studies tending to expand the prime management dimension with more modules in political, social and cultural perspectives.<sup>16</sup> More emerging literature contributes with “examination of festivals and events beyond their economic and business application and benefits”.<sup>17</sup>

The thesis could be conditionally divided in two parts where chapters I-III are formed by analysis and synthesis of theoretical concepts and hypotheses, respectively chapters IV and V are engaging with empirical data and information compiled in the database. The selected data contains information relating to the artistic festivals currently taking place in Europe and dedicated to all artforms.

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<sup>16</sup> Ian R Lamond and Louise Platt, eds., *Critical Event Studies: Approaches to Research* (London: Palgrave Macmillan Limited, 2016).

<sup>17</sup> Louise Platt and Jane Ali-Knight “Grassroots Festivals and Place Making”, *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 11/3 (2018): 262-265.

The collected directory is a result of entirely internet-based work exploring over 10,000 websites, with no implementation of field research which can benefit further extension in a narrowly channelled and long-term study. The qualitative data incorporates a record of festival introspection of models or concepts and formulas or programme structures compiled from the individual festival profiles introduced on each web source. The quantitative data presents an index of festivals in the following categories: country, place, date, year of launch, artform, genre, model, formula, national/international scope and competitive appearance. The graphical analysis of the database was conducted through recap and display using the pivot table visualisation tool of Microsoft Excel software.

One of the main findings leads to the conclusion that a festival event is not exclusively an urban product. The expected higher than 37% difference between city and rural festivals marks the trend for decentralisation of cultural events and products, also for a constantly developing range of tourist destinations. The cultural distribution of the festivals performed in Europe by artform clearly shows that the multidisciplinary festivals often related with the “all-inclusive” concept or “festival for everyone” is not the most popular category. Instead we can observe the tendency for festival niches, dedication to a particular artform and its dialogue dimension with other kinds of art or science.

The absence of a single cognitive source providing an overview of the festival scene geographically clustered by countries, continents or worldwide is significant. The scope of my research includes only Europe indicating the ambition for extension of the festival directory and further research topics based on various comparing factors. The timescale required for such development and the expected volume of written work define the impossibility to be part of this

project. Quite naturally I lay focus in Europe as my native land and place of living which outlines the frame of direct festival impressions and observations. Additionally, in accordance with the concept of UNESCO for preserving heritage and fostering creativity the EU adopts this notion in a set of cultural policies and range of supporting programmes. Considering both, the global approach, and the European institutional strategy for embracing diversity, I have explored the arts festivals performed in all countries on the continent regardless of their membership status.

Extracting my findings from the internet I have faced the limit to access those festivals without web presence and this obstacle prevents collection of data for the events which no longer exist. This opens the opportunity for further study dedicated to the past festival forms investigating the reasons for their discontinuance.

Formulating the answer to the leading research question I allocate for analysis only the arts festivals in accordance with the requirement for mythological, artistic, and scientific foundations which construct the meta-mechanism of culture. In this regard I do not prioritise certain artform as each of them is defined in the role of “artistic text or artistic language” by Lotman’s theory. More importantly the current status of the arts is characterised with intensive dialog between the forms of art, between arts and science. Following the attempt to identify the festival appearance as an element of the cultural meta-system, I present a unified festival framework examining festivals’ shared features:

- Celebratory aspect of the festival
- Socio-institutional parameters
- Artistic content
- Characteristic of values

- Design and trends of the contemporary festival landscape in Europe

The first chapter focuses on the claim that the celebratory aspect of any festival is predicated on the presence of a holiday considered in its entirety, although in a detailed reading the two phenomena exist as distinct categories. I examine their temporal determination according to cosmic or human historical time and their circular movement over time. Furthermore, the specifics of a holiday as an idealised weekday in which are crystallised the preserved cultural values and norms existing on the border between the static aspect of the inherited forms and the dynamics of cultural transformations. It is a cyclically repeatable social action based on mythological content: a myth and the creation of myth viewed as a bridge between the individual and the community, between the world inhabited by humans and divine reality, between fantasy and entity.

The second part examines the socio-institutional parameters of the artistic festival event.

Part three of the proposed text examines those festival components obtained from its primary feature as an embodiment of the arts. The creative activity and creative perception can be measured with the highest concentration precisely during the festival event. The available resources relating to artworks, artistic searches, established and emerging artists, the historical context of the relevant art, the crises in society or the global changes, and the role of the festival as social activist face a number of challenges with regard to each individual festival edition and particularly to any related curatorial activity. In addition to this, we must consider the respective value of every festival appearance, of the image of the artist, and where that artist's name figures in the artistic archive; these are the fibres between existing and future works, which the festival event weaves.

Following the same line of thought in chapter four, I consider the value scope of the festival event from the perspective of the regular aesthetic sphere and its associated aesthetic values and aesthetic norms, relative to the sociological view of arts. I present the ratio between nationally and internationally oriented festivals and, as a second graphical analysis, the number of festivals with a competitive factor compared with festival events where no awards are given. The study tracks the increasing number of festival activities, marking their first boom after the end of the World War II and their second surge at the beginning of the new millennium, and their proportional proliferation by country of performance. This expansive proliferation of artistic festivals proves their significance to the recent direction of cultural policy in a united Europe, the subject of intensive cultural dialogue and cultural diversity. Whether so many festivals and such an overproduction of cultural products are necessary, however, remains controversial. We are witnessing the constantly expanding festival sphere as volume and influence led, not only as a fashion trend and vulgarisation of the notion of "festival", but also as distinctly shaped festival industry.

I further consider which trends have formed the contemporary art festivals in Europe, what the current festival mission is associated with, and what kind of future the phenomenon of the artistic festival can expect. These and many other complete or incomplete questions are begging not just for an answer, but also for academic attention.

## I. THE CELEBRATORY FESTIVAL

The following chapter refers to the extracts of time and space applicable to the variety of social activities in historical or current perspective, among which is the arts festival form.

Recent work in the field of festival studies focus on the link between festival, community, and place of performance, with emphasis on reshaping sites through festivity. In the article “Grassroots Festivals and Place Making”, Louise Platt and Jane Ali-Knight highlight the specifics of grassroots festivals.<sup>18</sup> These authors point the place-embeddedness as a key factor for festival success which differs from the widely explored “festivalisation” of place. In relation with the notion of place Dominique Ying-Chih Liao addresses space and memory with application of theories from the fields of theatre, memory and spatial studies.<sup>19</sup> Andrea Pavoni and Sebastiano Citroni use the ethnographic approach encapsulating eventful temporality, topology and the process of event.<sup>20</sup> These elements link to the “smart city” and “smart rural” concepts further revised in the present study identifying the contemporary arts festival as a landmark of the cultural remembrance through its ability to rethink place.

My viewpoint takes different course interpreting the celebratory aspect of the festival appearance based on the requirement for mythological foundation

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<sup>18</sup> Louise Platt and Jane Ali-Knight “Grassroots Festivals and Place Making”, *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 11/3 (2018): 262-265.

<sup>19</sup> Dominique Ying-Chih Liao, “Space and Memory in the Huashan Event” in *Critical Event Studies: Approaches to Research*, ed. Ian R Lamond and Louise Platt (London: Palgrave Macmillan Limited, 2016), 109-130.

<sup>20</sup> Andrea Pavoni and Sebastiano Citroni, “An Ethnographic Approach to the Taking Place of the Event” in *Critical Event Studies: Approaches to Research*, ed. Ian R Lamond and Louise Platt (London: Palgrave Macmillan Limited, 2016), 231-252.

incorporated in any meta-mechanism in accordance with the Lotman's theory. Exploring the ability of individuals and society for mastering time and space I analyse their unique features through myth creation. The idealised reality expressed in the revival of myths articulates the norms and values preserved in the collective memory and the transitions in culture. The fragment of time intrinsic for the festival chronotope I examine in relation with the concept of "holiday" observed as a separate structure. In the context of celebration applied to the arts festival phenomenon I place the holiday as an independent act in its entirety.

Exploring the attribute of holiday to initiate with cultural or ritual events personified from the myth I see parallel with the definition of "ritualesque" introduced by Jack Santino<sup>21</sup> as opposed to "carnavalesque", a term used by Bakhtin<sup>22</sup>. Santino refers this phrase to different genres of symbolic events which may include ritualistic elements triggering attitudes, opinions, or social actions from the audience. In the scope of his understanding that carnivalesque can exist along with the ritualesque I inscribe the "festivalesque" components of the arts festival considering its celebratory relation to the holiday and its ceremonial features.

The transformation of holiday into the festival framework refers to its time-dependence. Human consciousness has fixed holidays in calendar time according to natural cycles and to the evolution of societies. Having been so defined by time, the holiday moves in a circular space, in time. It is a subjectively measured period, dividing time into weekdays (*profesti*) and holidays (holy days or *dies festi*). Does that mean that "holiday" (the day of

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<sup>21</sup> Jack Santino, "Festival, Politics, and Popular Culture", *Western Folklore* 68, no. 1 (2009): 9-26.

<sup>22</sup> Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*.

recreation)<sup>23</sup> and “not a weekday” are identical concepts? The “empty” (the etymological root of the word “holiday” in some Slavic languages) and the “holy”, the “set apart for sacred use”<sup>24</sup> day is an idealised construct – an imaginary weekday transformed into reality. In holidays, the community is experienced idyllically, expressing the values and norms preserved in the relevant culture. But looking back into the past, the holiday is also prismatic in terms of community change and development. Could it be a border in culture or even a border of culture? The celebration is at the limit between the static nature of inherited forms and the dynamism of cultural transformations.

The holiday has the ability to mythologise the present and culturalise the changes therein. Or the holiday is a rhythmic renewal of the myth, searching for reasons to affirm societal norms and values. Without examining the polyvalence of myth I will outline some of the signs of the cosmogonic myth often reflected into the seasonal myths. Eleazar Meletinsky argues that some of them link to the natural cycles of reproduction and rebirth with beliefs in life after death. The notion of new beginning associated with the time of creation finds its expression in the return of gods who have disappeared. This statement Meletinsky illustrates with the myth of Zagreus (Dionysus) and the mystery cults in Orphic doctrine which play significant role in the origin of tragedy and comedy .<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Barnhart, Robert K. ed, *Chambers Dictionary of Etymology* (Edinburgh: Chambers Harrap Publishers Ltd, 1988), 486.

<sup>24</sup> *The Chambers Dictionary* (Edinburgh: Chambers Harrap Publishers Ltd, 2006), 711.

<sup>25</sup> Eleazar M. Meletinsky. *The Poetics of Myth*, trans. Guy Lanoue and Alexandre Sadetsky (New York - London: Garland Publishing, 1998), 196-200.

For a different perspective on the same topic see also:

Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Myth and Meaning* (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).

Clyde Kluckhohn, “Myths and Rituals: A General Theory,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 35, no. 1 (1942): 45-79.

Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. Carol Cosman (Oxford University Press, 2001).

José Ortega y Gasset uses the term *teoría*, understood as a collective attempt for ascension, to place a bridge between people and God.<sup>26</sup> The transition to a higher reality, to a divine, all-pervasive existence, takes place in the form of a collective religious activity experienced as a festive ceremony. At such an event, the individual is depersonalised; the person is no longer a distinct part of the community; rather he is the community itself – the celebrating community. The path to this other world, to divinity, is shown by the legends or myths created for him. The myth is seen as a way of explaining contradictions in the personal and collective consciousness, as a mediatory element between fantasy and reality. That is why myths form a basis for individual orientation in the cultural space, in the perception of time as a social category, and in the rhythm of public life.

Born of emotional perception, myths are emotional in nature and, therefore, involve poetry as one of their essential features. In having these distinctions, the myth identifies itself by the line between nature and culture, bearing both the idea of creation and development.

Every step forward taken by a social community is embedded in mythological worship, and the holiday does not disturb the balance in culture by looking back at the mythological time. On the contrary, Franz Boas suggests:

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Sir James Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A History of Myth and Religion* (London: Octopus Publishing Group, 2000).

<sup>26</sup> Хосе Ортега- и- Гасет [José Ortega y Gasset], *Идеята за театър [The idea for Theatre]* (Сб. Есета, т. II, София: УИ „Св. Климент Охридски“, 1993), 230; originally published in: José Ortega y Gasset, *Idea del Teatro [The Idea of Theatre]* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1958).

If it is true that myths are built on the experiences of everyday life, we may expect that the dominant cultural interests are reflected in them.<sup>27</sup>

This particular narrative of myth, the system of events it imposes, is projected onto the holiday as a defining ritual. In renewing traditions, the holiday brings the idea of the future appearance of cultural values as the purpose for their preservation, which is, however, a presence in the glorious mythological time of the past. For this reason, the storyline of a holiday, when considered as a semiotic system, is driven by myth.

In myth creation, collective values are themselves designated as sacred in the mythological text. This semantic image sanctifies it as a space of ritual actions, which represent the mystery that enables participants to gain an insight into the other reality: the holiday serves as a symbolic mastery of space. Being a divider, a limit in time, the holiday also represents a symbolic mastery of time as a sacred period interrupting the secularity of weekdays. Mircea Eliade applies the term “hierophanic time”, which “may mean the time during which a ritual takes place and therefore a sacred time, a time essentially different from the profane succession which preceded it. It might also mean a mythical time, reattained by means of a ritual, or by a mere repetition of some action with a mythical archetype”.<sup>28</sup> He also defines it as “the absolute, the supernatural, the superhuman, the superhistoric”.<sup>29</sup> In other words, a holiday is that fracture in time which, in its periodic return, interrupts the profanisation of empirical time. Periods of unorganised weekdays alternate with the latest resumption of the

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<sup>27</sup> Franz Boas ed., *General Anthropology*, (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1938), 622.

<sup>28</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 388.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 389.

regulated statement of values that is the holiday. They are the end of the expired profane (daily) existence and the beginning of a new idealised reality. Rituals, rites, and ceremonies are the signs used by the initiates to read the festive text, which is in fact a secondary encoding of first-level perceptions that have already been converted.

This artificially created celebratory situation of exclusivity and holiness marks its institutionalisation. The establishment of a “holy” (“empty”) day is the first sign of a holiday as an established social activity. Fixed in time, having a beginning and an end, it has its own time status. The community celebrates only during the holiday – an event not included in the period of weekdays. The content of the holiday is not an arbitrary entity, rather it is a recorded dramatic action that has already been put on the cultural stage. The ritual nature of the holiday explains it as a legitimised process, or the rituals or ceremonies constituting it have strictly constructed contents and are put in places precisely determined by their own structure. This form is unique to each holiday and serves as its proof of identity.

The holiday is a time of updating cultural values. Their concentration determines the assimilation of traditions, their movement over time. They are not labile in social formations but constitute stable content in specific structures.

I have already suggested that the celebratory nature of artistic festivals should be thought of as the presence of the holiday, imbedded in its entirety. The festival as an event is set only in modern times and is only considered a collective term for arts festivals. In relation to this, I would like to highlight the different interpretation of the word “festival” in English and in some Slavic

languages.<sup>30</sup> Its use in the context of the arts and the linked speculative values is connected with the contemporary festival landscape in Europe, aspects of which I will examine further in this study.

The roots of the art festival event can be traced back to ancient Greece and Thracia, places linked with the Dionysian and Orphic Mysteries. On a smaller scale or as a formal holiday in Athens, the cult of Dionysus is associated with the death–rebirth theme symbolically represented by the wine. The festive period honouring the god of the grape harvest, fertility, and drama involved religious ecstasy with dance and music liberating the individuals from established social norms and regular daily life. This element which allowed the participation of the marginalised groups will become one of the carnival definitive. The link between the Dionysian Mysteries and the art festivals found its full projection in Athens in the City Dionysia Festival, also known as the feast of Dionysus Eleuthereus, which hosted tragedy and comedy performances. On the last day of the celebration the judges announced and awarded the winning playwrights.

On the medieval stage of history in Europe and in the Christian world the transformations of the art performances and the role of the artist do not refer to that kind of festival model. According to Janos Zoltan Szabo and his article “Festivals, Conformity and Socialisation”,<sup>31</sup> the Bayreuth Festival marked the appearance of the art festivals in Europe. Formulating the idea for a new concept in German theatre business in 1850, Richard Wagner dreamed of “inviting people to a great dramatic festival: after a year of preparation, I shall, in

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<sup>30</sup> Dictionary definitions are presented in the attached appendix.

<sup>31</sup> Janos Zoltan Szabo, “Festivals, Conformity and Socialisation” in *Focus on Festivals*, ed. Chris Newbold and others (Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers, 2015), 41.

the course of four days, set up my whole work”, thoughts he shared with Theodor Uhlig.<sup>32</sup> Twenty-six years later, after a series of financial difficulties and with the prospect of a few different venues, on 13 August 1876 the Bayreuth festival performed its first edition.

Derived from my research, five festival events claim to have been founded on earlier dates:

- 1719 Three Choirs Festival (Gloucester, England)
- 1824 Norfolk & Norwich Festival (Norwich, England)
- 1845 Bonn Beethovenfest (Bonn, Germany)
- 1861 National Eisteddfod (different locations, Wales)
- 1869 Song and Dance Celebrations (Riga, Latvia)

It should be mentioned that “literary salons” appeared in Italy in the sixteenth century and became established in France during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As an object of broad analysis from different perspectives, I believe those events could be subjects for further research within a theoretical festival framework.<sup>33</sup>

From this historical background we can identify the relationship between holiday and festival. The holiday is integrated into the festival at the very moment of its positioning in the time fragment, establishing the days when it begins and ends. The festival divides the time for the artistic works and the audience. Within a limit of time, certain artistic facts exist in a space, and the spectator only has the

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<sup>32</sup> Bayreuther Festspiele, <https://www.bayreuther-festspiele.de/en/the-festival/history/>, October 2017.

<sup>33</sup> Liana Georgi, “Between Tradition, Vision and Imagination: The Public Sphere of Literature Festivals” in *Festivals and Cultural Public Sphere*, ed. Liana Giorgi and others (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), 29-44.

opportunity to observe them in their unified sense in a festival setting. The associated social community is also experienced idyllically at the festival, seeking its own proven values in the selected significant works of art and, at the same time, the achievements, and discoveries of creative experiments.

How is the mythological aspect inherent in the holiday reflected in the festival event? Modern man is trying to surpass his historical existence, to step outside time through modifications of mythological functions, argues Eliade.<sup>34</sup> The attraction to sacrament is contained in the escape through aesthetic or emotional activities concentrated in the overall secular rhythm. That is why humans turn to the “real” stories in the myths, to the way of life prescribed by the gods and heroes. The images of Orpheus, Narcissus, and Dionysus have such a function at festivals, revealing another reality different from the time of productive and carefully controlled life. Their existence embodies the joy and satisfaction, the pleasure and aesthetic delight, that oppose any activity aiming to achieve change and adaptation to the existing world, “but it is a static that moves in its own fullness – a productivity that is sensuousness, play and song”.<sup>35</sup> Orpheus uses the language of art to lead us to a world where the private is distinguished from the common, the holy from the secular. In this sense, the festival script identifies itself with the path that leads to the supernatural realities they inhabit.

The festival space is sanctified in the sacred time of the festival itself. It is a deliberately created situation of exclusivity and unity for the initiated. Time

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<sup>34</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries: the Encounter between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities*, trans. Philip Mairet (Glasgow: Collins, 1968), 33.

<sup>35</sup> Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilisation: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (London: Arc, 1987), 164.

status, formula of actions, specific artistic content, opening, closing, and award ceremonies, as well as accompanying rituals used as measures of its celebratory institutionalisation and strict individuality are all festival components. The festival also assigns roles of visitors, participants, and guests to everyone. Those features are used to write the dramatic text of each festival edition with the actors, theme, conflict, and allocation of values to specific artistic facts. Further aspects of ritualised individual festival acts can develop in relation to the collective memory and the notion of the invention of traditions.<sup>36</sup> But we must not forget that, along with the formalisation and systematisation of every festive phenomenon, its invisible driving force is the spontaneity and the spirit of the event. Each festival edition acquires a unique character based on a certain topic and the selection of the artefacts and the presence of participants, guests, and visitors.

I believe the factors analysed above prove that the celebratory rhythm is genetically embedded in the festival form. Adhering to Andre Leroi-Gourhan's conception of symbols in society,<sup>37</sup> the artistic festival can be viewed as part of the game of signs played by a socialised community that implements the world order in various semiotic incarnations.

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<sup>36</sup> Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>37</sup> André Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture and Speech*, trans. Anna Berger (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1993).

## II. SOCIO-INSTITUTIONAL PARAMETERS OF THE FESTIVAL

In the following chapter, I research the layers of interaction between society and culture, based on the theories of Wolfgang Schluchter, Talcott Parsons and Jeffrey C. Alexander. Applying the models proposed by them on the festival formation, I analyse the symbolic expression of the communicative processes referred to the festival audience and the festival artefacts. They identify their own necessity for the self-descriptive function of culture considered as a meta-mechanism. Subsequently I examine specifications, which can be used for festival analysis of each individual event.

### 1. Festival inscribed in cultural and social systems

How do culture and society cohere and what is the range of their interaction? Wolfgang Schluchter accepts as a basis the value systems and lifestyles created by them.<sup>38</sup> Talcott Parsons illustrates that interpenetration with the symbolic orientation towards cultural patterns in the actions of individuals comprising a social system.<sup>39</sup> The meanings of all types of acts form the core of the cultural system, but they are also an integral part of society itself, conveyed by specific cultural language.

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<sup>38</sup> Волфганг Шлукхтер [Wolfgang Schluchter], „Общество и култура [Society and Culture]” в *Идеи в културологията. Т. II* (София: УИ „Св. Климент Охридски“, 1993), 619; Originally published in Wolfgang Schluchter, “Gesellschaft und Kultur. Überlegungen zu einer Theorie institutioneller Differenzierung”, *Verhalten, Handeln und System. Talcott Parson's Beitrag zur Entwicklung der Sozialwissenschaften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1980), 106-149.

<sup>39</sup> Talcott Parsons, “Culture and Social Systems Revisited”, *Social Science Quarterly* 53, no. 2 (1972): 253-266.

Moreover, the two sets of meanings, that is, from the point of view of actors as components of their orientation patterns and of the object to which they are oriented, must to some degree be integrated with each other at the cultural level.<sup>40</sup>

According to Parsons, the cultural system can be viewed by analysing the social categories within: cognitive symbolism, moral-evaluative symbolism, expressive symbolism, and concept formation symbolism. Parsons accepts the field of arts as the main content of expressive symbolism. In this respect, Schluchter applies a classificatory explanation of the objects in those situations of orientation of action, of the variants of symbolisation. As a starting point for exploring how the festival place in the social system and the cultural system is determined according to the schematic image below, I use the classifications proposed by Schluchter:

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<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 255.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE PROCESSES OF INTERPENETRATION  
BETWEEN CULTURE AND SOCIETY<sup>41</sup>

Interpenetration Method	Objective Relationship	World Slice	Form of Collective Consciousness
Formation of Values	Cultural Objects	Sensory world of Meanings	Constitutive
Formation of Standards	Social objects as Orders	Social World	Appreciative
Goal Formation	Social objects as Persons	Personal World	Expressive
Formation of Means	Physical Objects	Objective World	Cognitive

**Figure 1** W. Schluchter: Classification of the Processes of Interpenetration between Culture and Society

During the time of performance, the festival forms a festive social community, which is part of the event's organisational centre and is valid only within it. The symbolic qualities of the community consist of its emotional sense of belonging, cognitive commitment, desire to communicate, and attitude towards consumptive evaluation. These symbolisation processes are fundamental to the creation of value models consequent to the creation of value systems. It is

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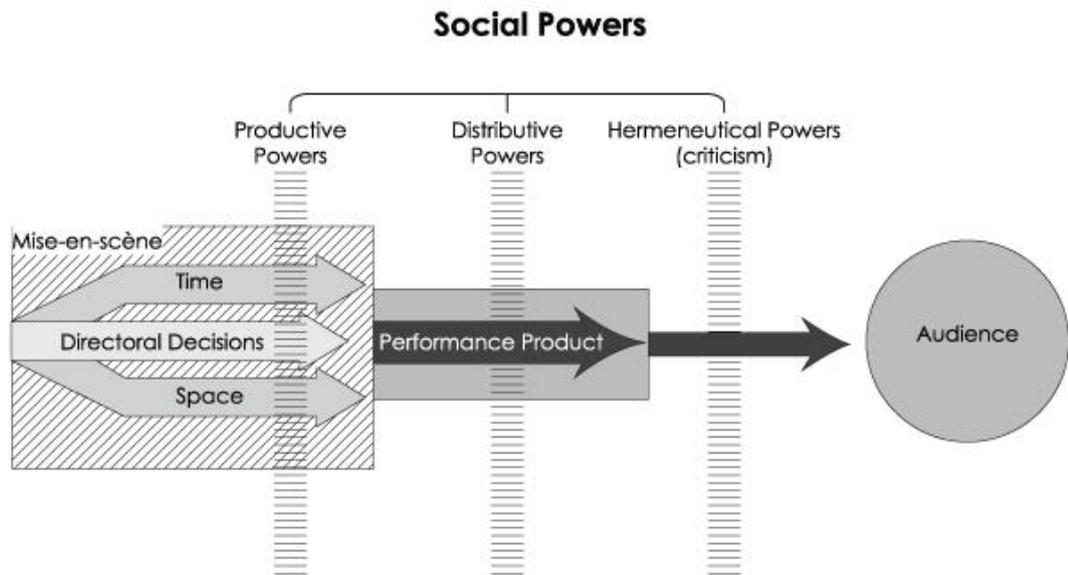
<sup>41</sup> Schluchter, *Society and Culture*, 618. (My translation).

precisely they, according to Parsons, that enable the penetration between cultural and social systems. When applied to the festival structure, we see that at a festival, they are concentrated in the artworks as its main content. But, first of all, they are found in a socially determined festival event. The desire of individuals to be empathetic to the artistic facts created in the context of their own forum is governed by the standards of similar expression in society and by the differentiation of individuals in public. Thus, the points mentioned mark the festival as one possible relationship between the cultural system and the social system. The extent of this role may be underestimated, but it is clear that a festival is an adequate model to make it a true embodiment of the arts- an expression of aesthetic standards, a claim for value searches – and that it may be naturally coordinated in the cultural and geographical space.

With reference to the complexity of modern societies, Alexander offers a multidimensional concept of social performances.<sup>42</sup> The author argues that a cultural script can be successfully consumed or interpreted through effective *mise-en-scène*.

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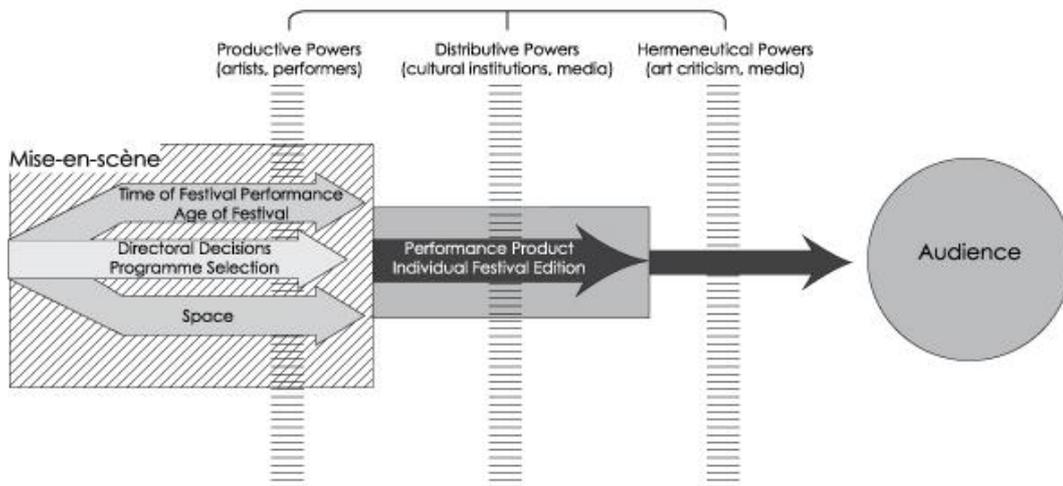
<sup>42</sup>Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Cultural Pragmatics: Social Performance between Ritual and Strategy," in *Social Performance: symbolic action, cultural pragmatics, and ritual*, eds. Jeffrey C. Alexander, Bernhard Giesen, and Jason L Mast (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 68.



**Figure 2** Jeffrey C. Alexander: Mise-en-scène Interfacing with Social Powers

Alexander uses the model shown to derive the need for new social roles generated by new aesthetic requirements created in the process of absorbing a different time and a different place. The author suggests that the elements of social action (“performance”) become “defused” in complex societies. The role of the actors and the audience is to “refuse” those elements. In identifying the festival as a cultural text, and analysing the component elements that constitute social action based on Alexander’s proposed model, I suggest the following version:

## Festival Mise-en-scène Interacting with Social Powers



**Figure 3** Author: Festival mise-en-scène Interacting with Social Powers

We can assume that, in the festival structure, the product (the individual festival edition) reflects the aesthetic demands and current trends in arts. Conversely, the recipients of the festival message will absorb its content by understanding and placing it in the context of the festival profile.

Contemporary arts consumers are expected to have a significant amount of knowledge and to handle systematically a large volume of information from multiple sources. The educated or enlightened festival audience is familiar with the historical changes in the given artform; it is familiar with the names of the authors, actors, and performers who have made a substantial impact. In parallel with this, the viewer is well informed about new names, trends, and approaches to arts. In addition, the current connoisseur of artefacts is required to demonstrate an adequate response with social media activity and digital skills to gather and select as much information as possible. In an era when the new generation is digitally astute, the festivals must adapt very quickly to every

stage of the technical evolution not only to meet visitors' expectations, but also to reflect and contribute to the progress of arts.

### III. FESTIVAL – EMBODIMENT OF ART

Let us now turn to the applications of contemporary arts perception and arts consumption as the main content of the festival event. Referring to the leading research question and the theory about the meta-system of culture, the festival as artistic substance responds to the condition of artistic foundation required for self-descriptive mechanisms.

The arts are what bind the constituent festival elements within its culturally determined space. All festival parameters are subordinate to arts because it is precisely the arts that makes the intrinsic features of the festival figure possible. Born of religious celebrations and encompassing comedic, tragic, and dithyrambic performances, these days the festive event is dedicated to all forms of art. It is also the origin of the primal aesthetic openness of an inclusive and empathic festival community.

The inherent, self-realised development of the aesthetic aspect within the entire range of social phenomena is dependent on the level of intensity of its own functioning; as in arts, the festival constitutes the space where that significance is defined. It is at the festival that creative activity and the recipient's (audience's) power of contemplation can be measured by the highest index. The audience presence is constructive in terms of both the festival and the artistic works featured in it, turning them into aesthetic objects. This is the point of collecting the artefacts at one time and in one place.

The difference between arts and festival arts must be sought in the ritualised synthesis of the artefacts. The creation of any artistic work is accompanied by the thought of potential fields of realisation. The subject of arts enters and exists within certain time parameters in the exhibition space; it is performed periodically on stage or seen in screenings. In other words, this is its life process, its daily existence. The invitation to participate in a festival takes it out of this context and places the festival in the frame of a one-time implementation. Or, from a detailed perspective, the festival function can be differentiated from the extensive scope of the entertainment industry. By emphasising art as the main content, it becomes clear that the main purpose of the festival event is not entertainment, but the conceptual design of creative content. Every work considered within the framework of festival selection seeks answers to the following questions: Why has it been chosen? Why has it been created at this time? What does it reflect? Does it help us to understand the world we live in? This opens a door for dissociation regarding mass and elitist arts, and this notion applies to the festival event, which does not fall within the scope of this text. But I would like to support the above statement with the words of Frie Leysen, artistic director of the Foreign Affairs Festival:

A festival should be about condensation, a clash of visions. You have artists from all over the world, from different disciplines and backgrounds, who come with their vision of the world and when you present all this at the same place and at the same time, there is going to be a clash that should at least be an invitation for an audience to change their point of view.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> *Inside/ Insight Festivals*, 107.

The festival is also unique and inimitable for those perceiving the artistic information. The world of arts, as represented at a festival, has a density and duration only within the temporal and spatial frames set as its beginning and end. They also limit the individual viewer's choice of what to consume. The perception of the artistic work is different because it is placed in a different context, unique for each festival edition. A further aspect of research could focus on the concept of the "festival chronotope", examining its application to the festival act.

The celebratory aspect of the festival also plays a part here, predefining it as a display space or stage for creative appearances that is distinct from an ongoing exhibition, theatre or music season, tour, film, or book premiere. The arts consumers are attracted to the festival because something is happening there. They are driven by the thrill of the unknown, the moment of surprise, the process of exploration – which works have been selected, who the festival participants, guests and jury members are, who will be honoured with awards or media attention. Festivals with educational parallel programmes (discussions, seminars, workshops, masterclasses) rouse the interest of spectators, artists, and critics in what will be stated, which questions and research topics will be defined. This uniqueness is also a distinctive feature of those musical festivals where a certain ensemble of performers implements collaborative projects only within this festival, only in a particular festival edition. This is a trademark of jazz festivals, but likewise of those dedicated to classical and contemporary music which lay emphasis on concerts resulting from master classes, festival academies, and competitions. For some, it is even a model of conduct. And this contagious atmosphere brings the festival audience to fever pitch and keeps it

there. Gavin Henderson, artistic director of the Brighton Festival, encapsulates this idea in his observation that:

You are going there because something will happen in that environment, in that situation, driven by people you know they are going to excite you in some way.<sup>44</sup>

Here is necessary to devote attention to the curatorial process and its multi-layered nature. The curator or the artistic director observes, studies, systemises, and analyses the national and world art scene by making assumptions, experimenting, and taking risks in the construction of the festival programme. All this becomes a much more complicated process when there is a team of curators and a hierarchical selection panel. It is the curator or team of selectors who bear the burden of responsibility and conscience towards arts and their development by mapping the path of future creative expressions and new names. But, at the same time, these are also the figures who have a political commitment to give a platform to topical concerns key to social sensitivity, which is itself characterised by different dimensions in different social frameworks – inspirational for some, painful for others, or unacceptable and offensive for yet more. The curator's mediatory function can be viewed from two aspects. Firstly, the figure acts as a link between artist–arts–audience. He (or she) selects works grounded in the historical context of the relevant arts, sends a message to the jury and the audience, and analyses their reaction. By applying a strategy with a well-measured pedagogical approach, the curator creates and establishes names and styles. The festival product itself proves the sense and evaluates the choice of the selective role. I would call it a game of

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<sup>44</sup> *Cahier de l'Atelier. Arts Festivals for the Sake of Art?*, 49.

scrabble in which the word consists of separate tiles of letters. Robyn Archer (a public advocate of arts) warns of the dangers that can beset those in charge of festival organisation:

As artistic directors we provide a blueprint. We should never fall into the trap of believing that the blueprint (the programme brochure or guide, for instance) is the festival. It is merely the grid. The festival is what happens when your audience comes, when they see and talk and blog, and the media talks about the work and the feel; and artists meet each other and late at night hatch new collaborations with each other.<sup>45</sup>

Galin Stoev, theatre director of the Fingerprint Company at the second Atelier for Young Festival Managers organised by EFA in Varna, Bulgaria, meanwhile, expresses admiration for those who take up the challenge:

I think it is enormous and very courageous because it is a question of creating a melting pot, bringing all these little bits from everywhere, putting them together and trying to produce and provoke an explosion which would probably echo afterwards.<sup>46</sup>

From this second perspective, the curator's mediatory function is to be found in the adaptation of the festival model and formula in parallel with the requirements of the outlined business framework. The curator or curatorial team is required to achieve a balance between the artistic and business aspect. The final result – a specific festival edition – needs to present its unique image within the scope of the Global Festival Circuit and existing festival competition. This complex task involves building a corporate identity and branding of the festival

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<sup>45</sup> *Inside/ Insight Festivals*, 41.

<sup>46</sup> *Cahier de l'Atelier # 2*, 29.

event, in which process is hidden the danger of making the concept completely subordinate to viewing the festival as a tourist attraction or narcissistic project.

In *Curationism: How Curating Took Over the Art World and Everything Else*, David Balzer emphasises the status and function of the contemporary curator, the artist–curator phenomenon, and the quest to develop a distinct curatorial style that ultimately leads to “curators curating themselves”,<sup>47</sup> which, from a festival perspective, brings us back to Richard Wagner and one of the first arts festivals in a modern reading. At this point, we should mention the challenges, opportunities, and restrictions in web-based arrangements and digital cultural display, which expose the curator’s status to new interpretations. Again, it is necessary to look at festival prestige and how the influence of curatorial style and social media results in the copy-and-paste replication of festival programmes and consider what happens when “the power to define the present and narrate the past is placed in many hands”.<sup>48</sup>

There exist myriad possible questions and answers relating to digital consumption of the arts and virtual access to a potential or real audience. The digital dependence dominating today’s way of life enables virtual presence and communication in an unlimited number of realities, as well as the rapid establishment of connections between events and consequences. This wide range of views, which Roy Ascott calls “cyberception”,<sup>49</sup> reaches all spheres of life.

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<sup>47</sup> David Balzer, *Curationism: How Curating Took Over the Art World and Everything Else* (London: Pluto Press, 2015), 72.

<sup>48</sup> Julian Stallabrass, *Internet Art: The Online Clash of Culture and Commerce* (London: Tate Publishing, 2003), 131.

<sup>49</sup> Roy Ascott, *Telematic Embrace* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), 321.

The process of digitalisation has penetrated deeply in the arts, influencing the dialogue and transformation between the genres, between the artforms, and between arts and science. The competition in cultural production requires a digital strategy for archiving, monitoring, and analysing the working stages and rehearsals, the audience engagement, and the marketing tools. This naturally leads to collaboration between professionals and artists from different fields, and to innovative artistic methods and expressive approaches. Hybrid and interdisciplinary techniques are no longer new or eccentric concepts. Of course, this specific feature of contemporary arts finds its application as a festival-defined model or subordinated in the formula content as exemplified in the following:

- DroneUp International Film Festival (Sofia, Bulgaria) – drone cinematography
- MoMo Film Festival (Zurich, Switzerland) – smart phone cinematography
- CLICK Festival (Helsingor, Denmark) – art, technology, biology

All this poses questions about whether we really live in a digital utopia, in a time and space where the natural and the artificial have lost their categorical meaning and human individuality has become entwined within the interface.

The virtual space oriented towards the educated user and the unlimited number of cultural products requiring an unfeasible time to be consumed have led to this “online culture’s obsession with the present”<sup>50</sup> – a mania for sharing opinions, and evaluating the here and now (rating a product or writing a review). That is why browsing and posting on social media or using apps for translation during a

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<sup>50</sup> Stallabrass, *Internet Art: The Online Clash of Culture and Commerce*, 42.

cultural event is considered completely acceptable. In addition, the global expansion of the entertainment industry, specifically the digital delivery of audio-visual products, has given rise to the phenomenon of on-demand culture.<sup>51</sup> A number of streaming platforms, some of which are thematically based, have emerged and become established in an attempt to satisfy growing demand and potential consumption. In 2011, Google launched the Google Cultural Institute driven by an ambition to “craft new bridges between tech and culture”.<sup>52</sup> Consumers have the opportunity to zoom in on fragments of high-resolution artwork, take a virtual tour of over a thousand museums, galleries, and landmarks, and view digital exhibitions accompanied by additional information on the artefacts and historical periods. The project also includes The Lab – a place for engaging in a dialogue, sharing ideas, developing new projects and research, participating in regularly organised interactive meetings and discussions with curators, artists, or directors of cultural institutions, all of which can be browsed from the archive or watched live.

Digital technologies have made us witnesses to do-it-yourself digital distribution, the impact of social media, and the transformed nature of classic media, owing to which consumers of artefacts and vast multiple potential audiences are just a click away. But this multitude of alternatives also has a negative effect. The consumer of cultural products faces an immense choice and has to find a balance between time and options. Virtual consumption of film products is still dependent on national restrictions. In this respect, the festival is a channelised transformer of information selected from a formless and chaotic field of data, which, however, does not remove it from the digital sphere of influence and

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<sup>51</sup> Chuck Tryon, *On-Demand Culture: Digital Delivery and the Future of Movies* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, and London: Rutgers University Press, 2013).

<sup>52</sup> Google Cultural Institute, <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/about>, April 2018.

realisation. The webscape, and the dominant role of social media, has given viewers an additional capability, enabling them to be critics of their own edition, without censorship or editing.

Even so, the blogosphere and leading social media are also loaded with a positive charge. The festival can competently use them as marketing tools to expand the circle of audience. Online access to festival content and some festival events enable the festival visitor or virtual consumer to feel part of the festival community, to make last-minute changes to planned visits, to absorb a larger amount of festival information. A precise analysis of the collected database showing digital consumption can help the festival to build a consumer profile and plan its advertising strategy. Of course, this type of festival consumer is not universal; rather, it is unique for every festival respective to the festival location, model, and content formula. Here I will only mention the points of contact between the festival, including its digital dimension, and the media ecology along with the scope of real and virtual concepts. As Jean-Christophe Simon's observes, we should not consider digital platforms "as the enemy. They are challenging us, asking us to change and we're happy to do [that] – it's just another way of working."<sup>53</sup> Similarly, on the subject of not rejecting the unknown, but of studying, developing, and experimenting with every innovation, Paolo Baratta, president of the Venice Biennale (which in 2015 provided the Google Cultural Institute and its accompanying app with 80 digital exhibitions and virtual 3D access to the national pavilions) remarked:

The bet we're placing on new technology is most definitely not one that replaces the direct experience with a virtual or indirect one, but, on the

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<sup>53</sup> Jean-Christophe Simon's, "Power of the Collective," *Screen International at Berlin*, 17 February 2018, 24.

contrary, one where virtual viewing is used to help enhance the in-person experience.<sup>54</sup>

For anyone who has felt the festival space vibrating with the presence of so many artists, when each of them wants to say something to the world, there is no comparison between a virtual and a real presence, and “the value of immediate perception, the possibility of face-to-face with the actor, director, operator or producer – capturing the unique temperament, the impulses of thought, the drive to communicate”<sup>55</sup> constitutes a magic power of attraction that the virtual world does not possess.

The figuring of selected works attempts to capture the current framework of the arts or at least some of its aspects. For this reason, the festival field may be as wide as possible for the scope of its analytical text. The fragmentation of cultural structures stems from the description of any information and every opportunity for communication. The emptiness of differences is preached, hypothetically the arts and the theory of arts are in their last stage of development. Attempts to give critical explanations, subjective statements, and forms of social expression are considered ineffective. In this regard, we should consider whether it is possible that festivals are a method of seeking an exit from a constructed arts crisis, and whether we can point to problematic values in the cultural order that sufficiently explain its existence. Yes or no, by default the festival is a distinct field for dialogue between unconventional and commercial arts, and between cultural identities and religions. It is a territory of debate, of comparison, of questions and undiscovered answers, created in the process of pushing the arts

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<sup>54</sup> Europe Googleblog, <https://europe.googleblog.com/2015/10/opening-biennale-arte-2015-online.html>, April 2018.

<sup>55</sup> Naydenova, *The Cannes Festival*, 95.

forward. Here we have to observe the meaning of retrospective panoramas placed in a new historical context and contemporary interpretations of classical works, alongside the display of technical achievements and new methods of artistic expression.

The globalisation of the economic, political, and social crises administers a cure by unifying spiritual social dimensions, as result of which it is necessary to find an integrating line through all the chaotic portraits of the world. The purpose of such a meaning-concentrating image entails the achievement of a publicly accessible field where interpersonal (intersubjective) and cultural communication can be deployed. According to Jacques Leenhardt:

In other words, a world is formed where everything is good, whether for economic, political or religious interests, but it has no logical articulation, no worldview that organises those elements. Such a world has lost its orientation and sees successive, equal, indifferent, interchangeable pictures.<sup>56</sup>

If we consider the dimensions of that festival aspect acting as a platform for social reflex, we can postulate that its autobiography constitutes its role as social activist. Festival events achieve this through their content and by developing specific programmes, something that vividly stands out at cinema and theatre festivals with thematic discussions and follow-up initiatives. Even

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<sup>56</sup> Жак Ленар [Jacques Leenhardt], „Кризата на стойностите, бъдещето на изкуството, светът на картината [The Crisis of Values, the Future of Art, the World of Painting]” *Изкуство* 35 (1996): 17. (My translation); originally published in:

Jacques Leenhardt “Crise des valeurs, devenir de l’art, monde de l’image “ , in *Carrefours en Europe centrale : des idées, des thèmes des méthodes et des problèmes de l’art et du critique d’art contemporain = Crossroads in Central Europe : Ideas, Themes, Methods and Problems of Contemporary Art and Art Criticism*, (Budapest : Association Nationale des Artistes Créatifs Hongrois, 1996): 20-27.

more drastic was what happened at Cannes in 1968: the student strike grew into a political rally and an attempt to sabotage the festival, resulting in the jury's withdrawal and a suspension of the competition programme. Forty years later, Thierry Fremaux, the festival's head curator, would say, "I wonder what would happen if this arises now, if the festival is interrupted again? Fingers crossed it will not. But we have to assume it might..."<sup>57</sup>

At the end of the last century, many festivals responded to the problem of sexual identity and its publicity. Some of them were created with this concept in mind, such as the Mezipatra (Mezzanine) Queer Film Festival in the Czech Republic, founded in 2000. In its 68th edition (2018), Berlinale highlighted the importance of the #MeToo campaign and hosted multiple events with a focus on sexual harassment and abuse in the cinema industry, a topic still dominating social focus. The festival formation does not remain indifferent to the people with special needs and the perception of disability. Nevertheless, few events aim to raise awareness of the notion of accessibility and culture, and also to explore disability aesthetics and disability art (examples include the APAJH Handiclap Festival and the Zanzan Films Festival). Some festival models and formula contents reflect the problems of discrimination, human rights, or migration. In this way, the festival manifests itself as a space that opposes fear, stereotypes, and prejudices, but rather captures the present and seeks the image of the future. Other festivals "have the power to shape prominent public discourses, to shed light on invisible or repressed narratives, and to provide a platform for unheard stories and underrepresented communities",<sup>58</sup> to contribute to socio-political changes. But by perceiving arts as a cure for social traumas,

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<sup>57</sup> Naydenova, *The Cannes Festival*, 32.

<sup>58</sup> Zsombor Bodak, "Film Festivals as Sites of Queer Activism," *32. Teddy Awards*, 18-25 February 2018, 16.

where everyone is a doctor and offers a prescription, we risk losing the significance of its aesthetic function. As a result, the danger that the festival starts to resemble a political scene rather than an aesthetic podium is increased.

Here we can extend the interpretation of “biennialist” whose “aim is to reveal the contradictions and incongruities in the statements and releases of biennial exhibitions”,<sup>59</sup> and conclude that each “festivalist” reflects the current changes and insists on future solutions. As Julian Stallabrass observes:

“The ideal biennial is a profoundly political and spiritual event. It contemplates the present with a desire to transform it.”<sup>60</sup>

The attempt to reach a global philosophical thematic understanding of the arts examines the variants of connectivity between established universal themes and contemporary thinking. If historically there has been a clash of generations, the eye of modernity investigates traditions and then reinterprets and plays with their ritual forms by adding new symbolic layers. In connection with such phenomena, each form of art questions the need to explore trends and mix cultural elements. Festivals with diversity in the construction of their model can guide us to the defence or denial of the above. With their various topics and contents, they are forums used to rediscover significant past works and present the trends in new ones. Derived from crisis, they are the common signs of similarity in different authors’ quests for definition and the right decision.

Art is a very particular organism in which highly personal styling applications are celebrated, with the idea that they can lead to an unexpected, unknown result.

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<sup>59</sup> Panos Kompatsiaris, *The Politics of Contemporary Art Biennials: Spectacles of Critique, Theory and Art* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 20.

<sup>60</sup> Julian Stallabrass, *Art Incorporated* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 34.

Any questioning of its existence reflects on its readiness to put itself in the service of formulated preferences and tastes. They belong not only to a wide audience, but to all individuals and institutions who are involved. That is probably the way to avoid the question: how “new” is new? The sociology of arts postulates that there is no pure form of disciplined cognitive methodology. Variations not only increase their contact points, but frequently they are welded together. It is a matter of divergence of genre boundaries within the artforms, as well as the boundaries between different disciplines of art, between art and science. This opens the discussion about art hybridity and cultural hybridity.

The current stage of the arts embraces distinctions and diversity; it aims to erase borders and biases. There are many examples of this kind of festival, but for reasons of economy, I will mention only a few. The Ars Electronica was founded 1979 in Linz, Austria. It performs under the motto “Art, Technology, Society” and for each edition invites artists, scientists, and researchers to confront a specific, interdisciplinary theme. The Batard, established 2008 in Brussels, hosted its last two editions in Amsterdam, presenting “emerging makers and thinkers”<sup>61</sup> and their projects which oscillate between different artforms “and try to work around labels and categories and question those labels instead”.<sup>62</sup> Their aim is one of “pushing ideas and experiences out of their predictable bubbles and making them burst into pores in your brain”.<sup>63</sup>

As I have noted, the festival is a special zone, an open-scenario event where something will happen – a new interpretation of artwork, a new name, a new artistic style, new modus of expression, a space for debate, for posing

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<sup>61</sup> Veem House, <https://veem.house/EN/batard-festival-amsterdam>, April 2018.

<sup>62</sup> Veem House, <https://veem.house/EN/batard-festival-amsterdam>, April 2018.

<sup>63</sup> Batard Festival, <http://www.batard.be>, April 2018.

questions and for supplying possible answers. What, we wonder, is left after the festival? How far does the festival echo reach in the arts space? As Rose Fenton, a co-founder of LIFT (Lindon International Festival of Theatre), says:

Festivals will present things which will later be picked up by the rest of the cultural scene. It's this idea of a festival as a laboratory where ideas are tested, put on show, then picked up and transferred.<sup>64</sup>

Numerous theatrical, film, music, dance, literary, and visual works are premiered at a specific festival edition, where, honoured with awards, as well as public opinion and criticism, they begin their social life and the implementation of their consumer potential. In this regard again the market function of the festival stands out in a worldwide perspective. Digital consumption has brought us new dimensions, fetishism for artefacts has changed its essence, and many movie theatres lie in ruins. But global distribution also depends on other factors: political changes, financial crises, or social upheaval. Recently, it was revealed that the Kuwait National Cinema Company and its Dubai-based partner Front Row Entertainment plan to build twelve multiplexes ending the 35-year ban on cinemas in Saudi Arabia.<sup>65</sup> A similar political context is evident in the new dimensions of the Chinese and Hong Kong markets, where distributors have declared their desire to play a role in the global alignment scene and develop festival strategies for international circulation. The foregoing sets the ground for more collaborative opportunities and multisource funding. Cinema producers are taking advantage of existing tax incentives and rebate schemes offered and advertised in a number of countries. Many festivals present works in progress

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<sup>64</sup> *Cahier de l'Atelier. Arts Festivals for the Sake of Art?*, 110.

<sup>65</sup> Nick Vivarelli, "Duo Plan to Build 12 Multiplexes in Saudi Arabia," *Berlin Film Festival: Variety* 2, 16 February 2018, 6.

addressed to agents. Partnership between festivals has long ceased to be a novelty and has produced positive results. It is precisely within the framework of festival editions that time and space are given for national layouts in the form of individual panoramas, presentations, or market hubs. And in this parallel of national and cultural identity, with festivals emphasise attention on promoting emerging talents – the future creators of those works that will find a place in the history of the arts. These are either festivals whose models are wholly subordinate to young artists, or festivals with competitive or parallel programmes dedicated to undiscovered talents.

Here lies the importance and role of the artist, whom many critics and curators believe should be placed at the centre of the festival event. Therefore, their awareness of idolatry pushes many artistic directors to ensure the presence of big names in the programmes. And it is the artist's denotation, personality, and creative potential that are indicative of the networking opportunities offered by the festival space. Large-scale festivals with a well-established and functioning framework devote resources to variations of events subordinate to this idea in real and virtual space. For example, in Berlinale's formula we find the annual summit and Berlinale Talents network platform, with a variety of initiatives devoted to the exchange of experience and tailored coaching between established names in the cinema industry and emerging talents. Here we can define the festival's missionary role in its attempt to educate and support, to define and eliminate the difficulties faced by creative projects. The establishment of cultural networks must be accompanied by efforts to increase their effectiveness as mentors and lobbyists, as a means of increasing the number of festival visitors and the prosperity of the festival event. In search of making a connection with others, the active networks grow their scope,

developing new and sometimes unexpected results. Observed as an artistic resource, cultural networks complete the circle of the festival trajectory, triggering novel ideas for future projects, commissioning works for the next festival edition, producing performances, or taking part in co-productions.

## CONCLUSION

The definition of the artistic festival as an element of culture observed as a meta-system, or a connectivity and summary of the autonomous festival organisms within culture itself, is possible through the unification of their applied characteristics. This leads to exclusive ratio between their constituent elements and a socio-cultural analysis of festival isomorphism becomes viable based on the theory of the self-descriptive function of the cultural mechanism and the requirements of culture to the inbuilt semiotic systems. Lotman argues that the arts become a semantic structure defined by the author as an “artistic language” or “artistic type text”. Consequently, the perception of each object as text is an intersection between the author’s point of view and work referred to text and audience perspective, when each of the components is a variable.<sup>66</sup>

The scholar explores the dualistic semantic nature of the artistic text: from one side, it simulates reality through a material existence independent of the author, and from the other, it reminds us that it is someone’s creation with many layers of further correlations. This naturally leads us to a new analysis of the festival work – a text subordinate to factors such as the selection of artists and artefacts, geographical space, audience specifics, relevance to the festival model and formula, possible festival awards, and media coverage.

But going back to the leading question of this study, the festival is an independent artistic text, a meta-language of the arts, claiming its position as a

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<sup>66</sup> Juri Lotman, *Culture and Explosion*, trans. Wilma Clark, ed. Marina Grishakova (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2009), 116.

significant element of the meta-system of culture and the dynamics of its contemporary movement. According to Lotman, every meta-mechanism is built on a mythological, artistic, and scientific basis. In this regard, my research project has examined:

- The types of links between mythologems and festival content.
- The orders of interaction in a distinct festival community.
- The parameters applicable for any artistic festival formation.
- The eclecticism of artefacts chosen for the purpose of presenting the festival ambition to demonstrate the current state of the arts and prognosis for its future.
- The regulative function of the festival to legalise universal aesthetic values multiplied in artworks and their modifications.
- The possibility of discovering versions of aesthetic transformation, considering the changes in audience taste and the role of cultural diversity.
- Appeal for comprehensive research approaches and methods for festival analysis in the scope of the relevant disciplines.

Examining the celebratory aspect of the festival, I indicated how its elements refer to the festival structure. The festival and the holiday are temporally and spatially determined. Both social categories are characterised by repetition and rhythm, both social categories are an expression of the inherited values and norms of society, but they are also an expression of the changes demanded by culture. The configuration of time and place or the festival chronotope are applicable to the audience and the distinct festival community, similar to the artworks that mark the beginning and the end of their own existence within the timeframe of the festival act. Myth creation, as a different feature of the festival,

finds its expression in the event through an idealised reality prescribed by gods and heroes. Orpheus and Narcissus lead us to the world of art, which gives us enjoyment, fulfilment, and aesthetic pleasure. The layers accumulated in contemporary society predetermine the mythological incarnation of every objects, as Roland Barthes claims, and “we constantly drift between the object and its demystification”.<sup>67</sup> The festival, as a sacred place and a devoted fragment of time, has its own communicative code understandable only to the initiated: role distribution, ceremonial activities, event script. Being a circulator of the social memory necessary for the meta-system of culture, the festival declares its autonomous, constantly changing entity through its intrinsic socio-institutional parameters and artistic content, emphasised in this study. Symbolisation processes are fundamental to the interaction between culture and society, and through them, the festival inscribes itself in the social and cultural system.

Again, I want to underline the difference between art and festival art, given the ephemeral nature of each artistic work in festival time and the space beyond the context of its everyday existence. This leads to reflections on distinguishing the festival function from the entertainment industry considered in the broadest sense. This concept of one-off time and uniqueness is also valid for participants in the festival – organisers, artists, audience, guests, and jury. When the specifics of interaction with art and the status of all art forms are observed in a contemporary reading, the following areas of analysis stand out:

- Digital consumption and digitised content.
- Critical assessment and media reflex.

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<sup>67</sup> Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (London: Vintage, 1993), 159.

- Theorised changes in art.
- Sociological conditions of artistic resources.
- Validation of aesthetic values and their canonisation in aesthetic norms.

The proliferation of festivals with its highest magnitude at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the present century has led to the formation of an entire festival industry. Positioned in geographical and cultural space, the trends outlined by the festival models relate to the polemic about their necessity and the dimension of the intercultural dialogue in the global political space aiming to make a contribution to development and sustainability, eliminating borders, barriers, and prejudices. This responsible position of the festival mission needs to exist in parallel with the main concept of the festival as a celebration of arts and the human dialogue with it, to be a categorical manifest of humanism. This connects with the festival privilege “to do things differently. That is the whole original sense of a festival – to invert hierarchies and challenge accepted ways of doing things”,<sup>68</sup> as noted by Rose Fenton, co-founder and former director of LIFT.

Subordinate to the range of social circumstances applicable for all cultural activities, the festival above all is that utopian place beyond the time and space of the weekday, inhabited by ideas, fantasy images, projects, and reflections. This magnetic power keeps the thrill of anticipation – what will happen in this festival edition, which works have been selected, to what unknown realities will they take us, will we be able to touch the gods and the idols of the contemporary art world?

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<sup>68</sup> *Inside/ Insight Festivals*, 140.

In alignment with the emerging literature sources of critical event studies aiming to expand the leading management perspective of analyses with approach from other fields of the humanities, the thesis presents a view of the contemporary arts festival form inscribed into the scope of semantic theory of culture. It contributes to the festival studies with a new theoretical frame in addition to the existing models of event evaluation applicable to every individual festival structure or any single festival edition. The research project redounds to the recently formed festival industry with examination of the current European festivalscape including a complete festival directory of events dedicated to all artforms and their genre sets. It displays analysed data regarding their growth in historical outlook, the correlation between festivals with national and international concept, between festivals with competitive factor in comparisons with the events without awards. Furthermore, it provides information about the geographical distribution of the festivals by country of performance and urban or rural locality, also the ratio between the artform based categories identifying the festival trends in Europe.

Is it possible to define the ideal festival and impose a golden rule on every festival equation? Is it possible to see the future of artistic festival events? Julian Stallabrass, paraphrasing the words of Arthur Danto, tells us that "a biennial 'is a glimpse of a transnational utopia'".<sup>69</sup> This line of thought raises a number of questions in quest of polemics, research, and answers:

- What are the reasons for discontinuation of the no longer performed festivals?

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<sup>69</sup> Stallabrass, *Art Incorporated*, 34.

- Is it possible for the festival to have a balancing role between the overproduction of cultural products in certain regions and the deficit of such products in other areas?
- What is the festival's position in cultural, entertainment, tourist, and festival industries?
- What is the effect of digitisation and hybridisation across all social spheres of activity, analysed from both a progressive and a regressive aspect of the festival entity?
- Is the threat of dehumanisation of the arts and of society real and how will they affect the festival?

These questions lead to the impact of the motive sources framing the artistic festival event, at the same moment applied to each individual festival formation. The properties of the entire festival coefficient vary depending on the changing parameters of each festival component. Inscribed into the scope of certain cultural models, the process of interaction with other variable configurations (economy, politics, arts, science) additionally modifies its features. In this way the festival responds to the principles required from the subsystems of culture.

In accordance with Lotman's theory, the mechanism of culture is characterised by continuous reproductive dynamics caused by repeated strengthening of the self-descriptive structures and the duration of their development. The synchronous status in the cultural meta-system is achieved through gradual development and moments of explosion – through moments of unpredictability.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Lotman, *Culture and Explosion*.

## APPENDIX

### Dictionary definitions of the word “festival”

#### English:

- Festival n. 1589, a time of festive celebration, holiday, from earlier festival, adj., of a feast or holiday (probably before 1380); borrowed from Old French *festival*, *festivel*, and directly from Medieval Latin *festivialis* of a church holiday, from Latin *festivus* festive; for suffix see – AL. The specialised meaning of a series of concerts, plays, films, etc., held at recurring periods (as a *Mozart Festival* or a *Shakespeare Festival*), is first recorded in 1857, originally in the sense of the celebration of an anniversary, such as a composer’s or author’s birthday<sup>71</sup>.
- Festival a. & n. LME. [OFr. f. med.L. *festivialis*, f. as next: see – AL.] aj. 1. Of or befitting a feast or feast day. Now only attrib. & usu taken as n. LME. 2 joyful, merry. L16- L17.

B n. 1 A book containing an exhortation for each feast day. L15 - E17. 2 A (time of) festive celebration or merrymaking; a feast day. L16. B A (usu. Periodic) series of theatrical or musical performances, films, etc., of special importance. E19. 3= FETE n. Ib. US. M19.

2 B. Tarkington People were gayest on New Year’s Day; they made it a true festival. B *Publishers Weekly* The annual Shakespeare festival at Stratford-on-Avon.

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<sup>71</sup> Robert K. Barnhart, ed., *Chambers Dictionary of Etymology* (Edinburgh: The H.W.Wilson Company, 1999), 377.

*Comb.*: festival-day: on which a festival is held.<sup>72</sup>

- Fes+ti+val n. a day or period set aside or feasting, esp. one of religious significance. 2. any occasion for celebration, esp. one which commemorates an anniversary or other significant event. 3. an organised series of special events and performances, usually in one place: a festival of drama. 4. Archaic. a time of revelry; merrymaking. 5. (*modifier*) relating to or characteristic of a festival. [C14: from Church Latin *fēstivālis* of a feast, from Latin *festivus* FESTIVE].<sup>73</sup>

In some Slavic languages, the first or the only definition is indicated as follows:

### **Bulgarian:**

Фестивал — съществително име, мъжки род (тип 7)

1. Преглед на постиженията в определен вид изкуство. Музикален фестивал. Фестивал на художествената самодейност.
2. Голям, масов обществен празник. Фестивал на младежта и спорта.<sup>74</sup>

Festival- noun, masculine (type 7)

1. Review of the achievements in a particular art form. Music Festival. Festival of amateur art activities.
2. Large, mass public holiday. Festival of Youth and Sports.

### **Czech:**

Festival [-ty-] ~u m (6. j. ~u, ~e; 1., 4., 7. mn. ~y)

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<sup>72</sup> Lesley Brown, ed., *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, vol. 1* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 937-938.

<sup>73</sup> Patrick Hanks, ed., *Collins Dictionary of the English Language* (London & Glasgow: Collins, 1984), 537.

<sup>74</sup> Моята библиотека,

<https://rechnik.chitanka.info/w/%D1%84%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BB>, October 2017. (My translation).

organizovaná přehlídka uměleckých výkonů a výtvorů  
filmový/hudební/pěvecký festival.<sup>75</sup>

Festival- an organised review of art performances and artefacts, film / music /  
singing festival.

**Macedonian:**

Фестивал мн. Фестивали

Вид збор: Именка, машки род

Периодична културна приредба, смотра на уметноста.

Англиски: festival Албански: festival

Примери:

фестивал на забавни мелодии

фестивал на народни песни

филмски фестивал

џез фестивал.<sup>76</sup>

Festival

Noun, masculine

Periodic cultural event, a parade of art.

English: festival Albanian: festival

Examples:

Festival of Pop Music

Festival of Folklore Songs

Film Festival

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<sup>75</sup> Správně česky, [https://www.nechybujte.cz/slovník-soucasne-cestiny/festival](https://www.nechybujte.cz/slovník-současne-cestiny/festival), October 2017.  
(Automatic translation).

<sup>76</sup> Дигитален Речник на Македонскиот Јазик,  
<http://www.makedonski.info/search/%D1%84%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BB>, October 2017. (My translation).

Jazz Festival.

**Russian:**

Фестиваль, -я; м. [франц. festival] Массовое празднество, включающее в себя показ, смотр каких-л. видов искусства. Театральный ф. Музыкальный ф. Ф. искусства. <Фестивальный, -ая, -ое. Ф-ые дни. Ф. значок. Ф. конкурс.<sup>77</sup>

Festival- Noun, masculine [French *festiva*] Mass celebration, including a display, review in different kind of arts: theatre festival, music festival. visual arts festival.

**Serbian:**

Фестивал (л. festum фр. festival),

1. велика свечаност са музиком; 2. повремена културна свечаност (позоришна, музика, кинематографска и сл.).<sup>78</sup>

Festival (Latin festum French festival),

1. Large celebration with music; 2. Occasional cultural ceremony (theatre, music, cinema, etc.).

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<sup>77</sup> Справочно-информационный портал,  
[<sup>78</sup> Вокабулар,  
\[68\]\(http://www.vokabular.org/?lang=sr&search=%D1%84%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BB&Submit=%D0%A2%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B6%D0%B8, October. 2017. \(Automatic translation\).</a></p></div><div data-bbox=\)](http://gramota.ru/slovari/dic/?lop=x&bts=x&ro=x&zar=x&ag=x&ab=x&sin=x&lv=x&az=x&pe=x&w ord=%D1%84%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BB%D1%8C, October 2017. (My translation).</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

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