

The Importance of Festivals as Social Phenomenon in Romania

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Abstract- In this society increasingly globalized and multicultural, to cope with cultural diversity has become a major challenge. The migratory waves and the successive enlargement of the European Union have put European peoples and cultures in continuous contact and in the position of exchanging each other so that living in a multicultural community has become something normal for millions of people. Festivals have played a fundamental role in this process since the different cultural trends and phenomena closely related to the issue of immigration and intercultural communities can find in this festive atmosphere an ideal setting to express themselves freely and pacifistically. Festivals have always promoted the protection of the fundamental right to freedom of expression and their programs have catalyzed the circulation of ideas and people, the creation of peaceful coexistence and the promotion of an active European citizenship. Cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and the economic impact of culture now occupy a leading role in the European Union agenda, the aim of which is to create an even closer link between the European peoples and to give all citizens the opportunity to participate actively in intercultural dialogue so as to strengthen the coexistence of different cultural beliefs and identities, while at the same time highlighting their common heritage and recognizing and respecting the differences between individual and local experiences.

Index Terms- Festivals, society, culture, integration, traditions.

I. INTRODUCTION

Festivals also pose a challenge to local traditions - as they recognize cultural diversity and at the same time stimulate innovation and respect the common cultural heritage. Festivals have a unique role in the educational context by promoting a culture of peace, good understanding and respect among different groups of people. By carrying out niche activities, festivals manage to incorporate a wide variety of cultural activities into the cultural activities and thus encourage the social inclusion process and other activities specifically designed to attract young audiences and share fundamental values such as respect for others cultures, involving them in other educational processes in the field of intercultural exchanges [7].

Events in festivals are increasingly taking place in a convivial atmosphere and in open places to which virtually everyone can reach, including people with disabilities or cultural minorities. With the enrichment of the tourist experience, the range of motivations that guides the tourist demand to the satisfaction of the mass tourism or the standard tourist arrangements is diversified. One of the

trends of the "new consumer" of tourist products is to receive a kaleidoscope of pleasure from life. The contemporary tourist is looking for more than simple museum visits, grand edifices, lazily on a sunny beach.



The tourist is tempted to know, discover, explore new cultures expressed through music, dance, traditions and customs. On the other hand, countries with a poorer tourist potential (castles, historical monuments, museums, churches, etc.), as well as the lack of natural tourist attractions (sea, mountains, sunny landscapes), but understand the importance of developing the tourism sector as a branch of the national economy, try to attract tourist flows by capitalizing on the talents, the traditional local specificity, the national port and all the cultural components. In these circumstances, the tourism festival takes on a new scale, and events are becoming increasingly various and attractive for tourists [7].

II. THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF FESTIVALS



Festivals play an important role in transforming a multicultural society into an intercultural society, which is a strategic step in the integration process [5]. With a history of less than two years in Romania, the phenomenon of street culinary festivals is experiencing a real explosion. Starting in 2017, there were 30 to 40 street food events, which popularized new business concepts in Horeca, followed by

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Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Oradea, Litoral and in the big cities in the country.

First, festivals attract a very wide audience. The number of people attending festivals keeps increasing, which shows a growing interest in the events organized by them. It is very important to communicate the principles of intercultural dialogue to a very large number of people because we cannot speak of intercultural interaction as long as people have no means of getting in touch with each other [5].

The festivals offer artists from the world of the world the opportunity to develop their artistic experience, thus initiating a process of exchange of experience in the field of artistic excellence between different countries. For example, artistic residency programs allow artists to live and work in a new context and to complement their own experiences with local tradition, thus creating a good example of integration. Unlike what is happening in the media, the public who participates in the events organized in the festivals is encouraged to take an active part in these events. Festivals, thought to be some moments of communion open a large number of people reinforce the idea of participation and promote a sense of belonging because they are created by a local community but addresses issues of European and international interest. Festivals also boost cultural tourism. Millions of visitors choose each year to participate in different festivals organized in different countries and localities, thus coming into contact with other cultures and learning new things about other traditions and the history of other places [5].

III. FESTIVALS A SOCIAL PHENOMENON IN ROMANIA

They are businesses of tens of millions of Euros, gathering tens and thousands of people in the same place, bringing in the country superstars, the personalities of the moment, passionate about fresh visions, admired everywhere in the world. We know today the people behind these businesses and enter the backstage of some of the biggest festivals in Europe. If you do not live alive for such a moment, it's hard to understand the feel of a festival. It's about the show, but not just that. And about the energy you're loading with the tens of thousands of people around you. It is a contagious joy, and the fact that you can share it with others near you makes you feel even better [15].

Festivals are a relatively new social phenomenon in Romania. If in the United States the famous Woodstock was founded in 1969, and in Great Britain the Glastonbury festival takes place annually, since 1970, in Romania the big festivals appeared after the Revolution and have only grown in the last 4-5 years, an entertainment that our parents and grandparents did not have [15].

In recent years, Romania has entered the European map of cultural events with theater, music, book and arts festivals, most of them being in constant development. IRES (the Romanian Institute for Evaluation and Strategy) assessed the perceptions and behavior of consumers about cultural events among people aged 16-50 in urban areas. Gourmet festivals attract more and more tourists animated by the curiosity of discovering new meals, traditions, places and people. Romania is one of the countries with an extremely rich offer on this segment. The whole year is full of opportunities for tourists to get in touch with the local traditions of each area [16].



For example, gourmets are organizing a culinary event on March 18 at Gastronomy Days, in Harghita resort Băile Tușnad, where chefs from Romania and Hungary participate. Also, every year in the period of 10-12 April, the National Festival of Ingrained Eggs is organized, which will take place in Ciocanesti locality in Suceava county. At the festival, is showed their mastery of teams from different parts of the country. Also, a true feast among Sheep Farmers, The Lamb of Lambs, is organized, yearly, on 16th May, in the Buzaian village of Varlaam [12].

In summer, between June 17-19, the Days of Turia, are celebrated, in Covasna. Then an international gourmet festival is organized. At Turia, even a record was established: the largest bulb cooked ever, with a diameter of 60 meters, was eaten. On August 29 is the time of another interesting destination, Tismana commune in Gorj. There, every year, there is the Cold Festival, an event where tourists will taste real gourmet food prepared by the village's housewives. One of the most known and promoted such events are the "Sarmale Festival" organized in Praid commune. The event brings together representatives of villages across the country, but also from Hungary, who compete in a contest designed to determine where and who prepare the best cabbage [12].

Autumn brings other such events, one of the most popular being the Cheese and Pastrame Festival, which takes place in Bran. On this occasion, the local shepherds and not only will welcome the tourists with traditional sheepmeat, lamb and berry, sprinkled with wine and palinca from their own reserves. From Buzau to Danube and then to Oltenia. The next destination for entertainers of gastronomic festivals is the Berca locality of Buzău County, where, during 3-4 October, a festival dedicated to the famous Pleșcoi sausages, prepared according to ancient methods and still kept secret by locals, takes place. Those who prefer fish have the opportunity to visit the Uzlina commune on 10th October, where the "D' of the Danube Delta" Gastronomy and Cultural Traditions Festival takes place. In most of the areas where gastronomic festivals take place, rural tourism has developed at a rather slow pace in recent years, so most of the hostels are built after 2003-2004 and provide tourists with the necessary comfort, yet retaining rustic air and specific features to each area [12].

One of the largest and most visible festivals at the international level is the Untold Festival, with more than 240,000 people participating in 2015, the magnitude of which has made it necessary to study the social impact of this festival. For example, the privatization of public space is an impact on the Cluj-Napoca community as a result of the Untold festival, it was felt due to the context in which the

festival was organized, namely that it took place in the Central Park, made it necessary to close the park. This measure was used to avoid situations where some people attend the festival without buying a ticket [13].



Untold Festival is the biggest music festival in Romania. [21] [22] It takes place every year on the Cluj Arena in Cluj Napoca. The first edition of the festival took place between 30 July and 2 August 2015, the year in which Cluj-Napoca was designated as the European Capital of Youth. Over the four days of the festival, over 60,000 people per day participated. The first edition was attended by Armin van Buuren, Avicii, David Guetta, ATB, Dimitri Vegas & Like Mike, Tom Odell, Fedde le Grand, Duke Dumont, and others. (full line-up is available on the link: <https://chapter1.untold.com/>).

The second edition of the Untold festival took place on 4-7 August 2016. The festival lasted for 4 days and took place on 10 scenes (the main stage being Cluj Arena, as in 2015). The festival's budget was 7 million euros. Three main names of artists were revealed in January 2016. The first name revealed was Tiësto, the second Hardwell and the third, Afrojack. [20]

On February 9, 2016, the fourth artist, Armin van Buuren, was revealed, and he attended the festival for the second consecutive year. [19] On March 9, 2016, the fifth and final head of the poster was released, Martin Garrix, this being his first concert in Romania. [18] Besides, many other artists such as Faithless, Scooter, Nervo, Parov Stelar, Lost Frequencies, James Arthur, and others have concerts. (full line-up is available on the link: <https://chapter2.untold.com/ro/>)

The third edition of the Untold Festival took place between August 3 and 6, 2017. The festival's budget was increased over the previous year to about 10 million euros. The festival gathered a record number of over 350,000 spectators. More than 200 artists were present in Cluj, including: Afrojack, Armin van Buuren, Axwell & Ingrosso, Dimitri Vegas and Like Mike, Hardwell, Martin Garrix, Alan Walker, Ellie Goulding, Steve Aoki, Lost Frequencies, Marshmello, Tinie Tempah, Sander van Doorn, The Avenir, Era Istrefi, Kadebostany [17] and so on (complete line-up is available on the link: <https://chapter3.untold.com/en/>)

The golden moment of this edition was provided by the appearance of the Dutch DJ Armin van Buuren.

The 4th edition of the Untold Festival took place from 2 to 5 August 2018. This year, the budget allocated for the festival was 12 million euros. More than 85,000 people were present only on the first day of the festival, when special guests were

the band The Chainsmokers, who were first seen on a Romanian stage. [8] The audience record was recorded on the second day of the festival through a number of 100,000 spectators who took part in the shows staged by Jason Derulo and the Norwegian DJ Kygo - also for the first time in Romania. [9]

During the 4 days of the festival, over 200 renowned artists maintained the atmosphere on the scenes of Cluj-Napoca, among them Tiësto, Don Diablo, Parov Stelar, Mahmut Orhan, Will Sparks, Diplo, KSHMR, Afrojack, The Prodigy, Steve Aoki, Dimitri Vegas & Like Mike, Alesso, Tujamo, Danny Avila, Fedde le Grand, Black Eyed Peas and so on (complete line-up is available on the link: <https://chapter4.untold.com/en/>)

Also, in the beginning of summer in 2017, the Street Foods festival started, offering delicious Romanian and international cuisine to the city hunters. Also, the stands feature artisan beers, creative cocktails and selected wines, and the atmosphere was maintained by jazz, blues and world music bands in Romania and abroad [14].

Hundreds of recipes from all over the world, renowned chefs and good will - are the ingredients proposed to the Street Food Festival. The second edition held this year 2018 took place in Oradea, during May 18 to 21, and culinary festival had growing success, which attracted many lustful with a wide variety of products, Street Food Festival will continue in the other eight cities of the country. Behind the most important street food festivals are Mixtopia, Gourmet Entertainment and Why Not events organizers, with experience in organizing musical events [11].

In the period of 3-5 August 2018, for the lovers of art, oriental dishes, customs, and Ottoman crafts, the Anatolian Food Festival or the Turkish Festival, as it was called in the previous years, took place at Oradea Fortress. The Anatolian Food Festival is one of the events of the Tuna Foundation that aims to promote Turkish culture through its specificities: Turkish hospitality, old art, folklore and, most importantly, gourmet art. The event included, in addition to the traditional culinary dishes, a series of works of artistic creation specific to the Ottoman Empire culture [10].

Events and festivals improve the image of the community, they influence how the community is viewed by people outside it, but also the way it is viewed by its members, making it more attractive to tourists, the image of the community being defined as "the sum of beliefs, ideas and the impressions that a person has [about the community] [6]

This aspect is related to the positive recognition of the community, in the sense that the ideas and impressions of the people about the community change in a positive sense, but also the improvement of the quality of life in the community, because an improved image of the community makes the number of tourists increase, money in the community, which contributes to the economic growth and thus the quality of life. Increasing the sense of community - the sense of community - is another positive impact of events and festivals. The sense of community is "the quality of human relationships that makes it possible for people to live together in a healthy and sustainable way" [1].

Thus, we can say that the presence of community events and festivals help create and strengthen human relations and, thus, contributes to an enabling environment for community members who feel like part of the community. It is important

to note that in the literature, these aspects are not actually measured, in the sense that no calculations are made to determine the extent to which the event or the festival contributed to economic development, aiming only to identify the opinion of the residents with regarding them.

Some authors have said that people living up to 1.5 km away from the location of the event or festival tend to have a negative attitude about it, while people living more than 5 km away are, as a rule, they not interested in those events and festivals [3].

The location of the event or festival in the center of the city, the region, etc., means that the money spent by tourists remains in the community, while their location in peripheral areas increases the chances that the money will reach neighboring communities.

IV. CONCLUSION

The palette of special events in general and in tourism in particular is broad enough to be able to embrace concrete aspects that allow their classification according to the motivation that generates the attraction to participate in that event [4]. The reasons for organizing special events are found throughout the literature and can be summarized as follows: increasing the number of visitors in a region; positive economic impact; increasing employment; improve the image of a destination; catalyst for socio-economic development; animation of traditions and customs; strengthening the community.

Some of the reasons for the continued increase in the popularity of special events may result from some demographic and psychographic changes that have taken place in specific sectors of the community such as: increasing the average available income level, increase in weekend holidays; increasing interest in experimental trips; increasing interest in authenticity; increasing interest in culture [2].

The variety of special events on offer is substantial and there are many reasons why host regions want to organize them. Some of the most common reasons are injecting money, investing in the region, raising awareness of a region, building community spirit, and improving facilities for the region as well as tourism itself. However, it is important to recognize that there are costs associated with the needs of participants in events and detailed planning is required to ensure that the relationship between benefits and costs are optimized. In this regard, special events have become a key element in tourism development strategies in many regions and the successful implementation of these strategies requires the need for a management area. Therefore organizers of events must be able to ensure that the special event has a clear position on the market and will be successful in the longer term.

Coming from the hearts of people, local traditions and customs have been promoted through generations through generations from mouth to mouth without making any enrollments. Arriving at the age of advanced telecommunication and electronic performance, people forget what they have inherited from ancient times and the national color blends with breaks from the traditions of other peoples. At present, the biggest problem faced by the nation is the lack of awareness among locals about the cultural treasure held and the possibilities of its use in the growth and development of the local economy. In cultural activities, each

local community is enriched with local traditions that have been transmitted since ancient times and can be promoted through festival tourism, through festivals that take place locally or regionally.

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