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Lennart Fjell: Contemporary Festival: Polyphony Of Voices And Some New Agents

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## CONTEMPORARY FESTIVAL: POLYPHONY OF VOICES AND SOME NEW AGENTS

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*The concepts and roles of new, modern festivals of today are the most striking and the most visible within the field of culture. Alongside their popularity and multiple set of new "voices", there come politics, money and business. Traditionally, this combination of thought and ideology would eventually escalate into a conflict of interests. Through empirical examples the author of this paper will give an outline of how such a conflict emerges by using the "model of conflict" by Eric Brahm. He will outline categories of agents within the field of festivals.*

*Keywords: Festival, conflict, ideology, capital, glocal*

### INTRODUCTION

My empirical background to the field of festivals stemmed from the research I conducted for my Master's degree and for my ongoing PhD. In my Master's thesis I analysed the empirical data obtained at a traditional festival called "Torgdagen" (Market-Day). My theoretical emphasis was on festival-experience, performance, re-construction of identity and the process of glocalism. In my PhD I have retained the same perspective, yet with empirical emphasis on the management of post-modern festivals. In this paper I will show, through examples, how two different festivals (Lost Weekend & Up-Helly-Aa) cope with a new arena comprised of a new set of agents involved in running them. I will try to show this through empirical data and analysis.



My primary methods of analysis are the concept of *intractable conflicts* by Eric Brahm, and the terminology of the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (*Habitus, cultural capital and field*). According to Bourdieu:

... a field consists of a set of objective, historical relations between positions anchored in certain forms of power (or capital), while habitus consists of a set of historical relations 'deposited' within individual bodies in the forms of mental and corporeal schemata of perception, appreciation and action... Habitus and fields designate bundles of relations (Bourdieu 1992:16).

Thus *habitus* and field are inextricably linked and mutually dependent: the one personal and embodied; the other objective and structural (Grenfell 2006). Bourdieu considered *cultural capital* to be "embodied dispositions, cultural goods and educational qualifications" (Bourdieu 1986:83). Starting from these premises, I will discuss how festivals enter different levels, spaces or fields of dispute and how they cope with them. I do not offer dichotomies, but polarized entities used as instruments to visualize procedural parts and ideologies of the phenomenon and field of festivals. Festivals are therefore to be understood as a phenomenon where categories keep evolving, and where the field of festivals represents a continuous dialogue between several different ideologies and at different spatialities and times. Ideology is therefore understood as describing social realities and suggesting ways of changing them (Taylor 2007:1), and a festival's ideology is a self-contained vision of how the festival itself, or a festival within different fields, is and should be. It is also important to note that the post-modern term I am concerned with in this paper is the procedural flow of which contemporary Norwegian festivals are a part of.

## PROCESS OF FESTIVALIZATION

In the last 50-60 years the number of festivals in Europe has escalated from about 400 to approx. 30 000, and since the early 1990s, an entire global industry of festivals and events has evolved and developed (Yeoman 2004). The recent growing number of festivals is a Western phenomenon which follows Western economical trends, people seem to have more money at hand now than ever before and they have developed a greater need for - or the society has inflicted upon them - participation in the market of cultural



events. People buy products they think can satisfy their needs and aspirations, and in this case these products are festivals. What, then, are these flourishing contemporary festivals all about?

The explanation of the recent proliferation of festivals is complex, but in part relates to a response from communities seeking to re-assert their identities since faced with a feeling of cultural dislocation brought about by rapid structural change, social mobility and globalisation processes. Moreover, as Long *et al.* (2004) suggested, for growing diasporic communities, festivals, carnivals and melas provided important moments of visibility and occasions of concentrated celebrations of identity beyond the confines of their 'host' communities. At the same time, the growth in number of festivals also reflected the feeling of crisis in situations where recognised systems of continuity were challenged by the realities of new social, economic and political environments (Picard & Robinson 2006:2).

In other words, the patterns we see in the development of festivals are consistent with that of a strategy for entering the global community, and a strategy of dealing with the postmodern "anxiety of perceiving oneself as nonexistent" (von Dassanowsky 2006). It is not so much that the festivals have changed, but they are being used in a different way or at a different level. According to Dimmond and Tiyce: "Festivals are identified as one of the fastest growing forms of leisure- and tourist-related phenomena" (Dimmond & Tiyce 2001; in: Yeoman 2004:38), and we can easily agree with the claim that a place would be more attractive to a stranger if filled with festivals and events. In fact, festivals can be PUT in the same procedural category as tourism. It is beyond discussion that a festival is a global economic phenomenon and a part of an industry; it is just that it is a *culture* driven one (Yeoman 2004:10). It is limited by space and time, and thereby offers a possibility to expand horizons through an intense process of rituality and performance. The market value of this is obvious, and both festivals and tourism cooperate in a joint effort towards the same objective – the objective being a local/regional/national urge to utilize the events and create attractiveness of "the otherness".

The publicity that festivals and events can generate for a community does not only have a cumulative impact on the destination, but also feeds into the image and identity of the community and assists with creating an appealing



In 2005, at its peak, a small-scale music festival called Lost Weekend on the small island of Askøy, just outside of Bergen, Norway, attracted a huge number of visitors (20 000) (Johannessen 2005), and the importance of the event was at national, and sometimes international, level. The festival started in 2001 as a local event, mostly created for the sake of giving the youths of Askøy a meaningful spare-time-activity ([www.lost-weekend.net](http://www.lost-weekend.net)). Another objective for the festival was to give bands from the island a chance to perform and present themselves to a fairly big crowd and potential scouts from the music industry. The two enthusiasts creating the festival put it like this:

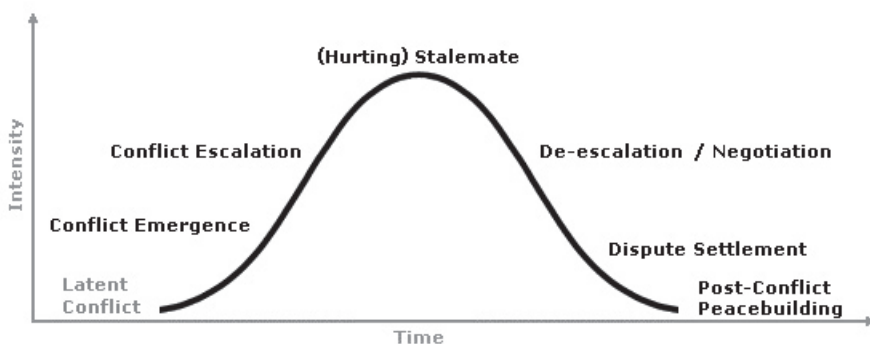
This was the idea of a festival on Askøy! The festival would contain local bands wanting to be on stage, everything would be based on voluntary work, the expenses would be held down so that everybody would have the opportunity to participate: "...our purpose is to contribute to a better musical and cultural life for everyone on Askøy, emphasizing working with anti-drug-related issues, funding of new bands etc" (ibid. [www.lost-weekend.net](http://www.lost-weekend.net)).

All together this was a manifest of the enthusiasts' ideology, and a programme from which they later did not want to yield much. "It is a general assumption that festivals, in their early phase, are small, adaptable, efficient organisations which manage to involve large amounts of resources, and many volunteers" (Svein Bjørkås 2006, my translation). And this also seemed to be the case with Lost Weekend. However, there was a flaw in how Lost Weekend was being managed. It certainly had the objective of a small-scale festival, but the management did not anticipate the enormous and fast growth in number of paying visitors. The growth and the subsequent feeling of the audience wanting more, put the pressure on the managers to bring in more popular artists at both national and international level - to some degree at the expense of the local artists. And this set the first real break with their own ideology, yet the ideology still overcame with the potential of loosing money. One of the two enthusiasts expressed it like this: "Really, it all began as a village-party in 2001. 800 weekend-tickets sold, and the result: 250.000 Norwegian Kroner in debt. But everybody was ecstatic, and we felt we had achieved something" ([www.bt.no/kultur/article252974.ece](http://www.bt.no/kultur/article252974.ece)). The festival was evidently going the wrong way economically and a new set of commercial agents seemed destined to enter the festival field, and a conflict of ideology was inevitable.



## FESTIVAL AS AN ARENA OF CONFLICT

Eric Brahm, the Assistant Professor of political Science at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, has presented a model of intractable conflicts which fit very well into the example of the conflict emergence in Lost Weekend.



*Eric Brahm 2003*

The latent conflict exists when people have different needs, values or interests. The conflict is not visible before it gets triggered by some kind of episode and when the conflict emerges, it is followed by a swift attempt to resolve the situation (Conflict Emergence). However, it often escalates into a clear and public conflict. Most of the time, (although not every time), such conflicts culminate with a situation where no party of the conflict can win. This is usually a difficult and damaging situation which cannot go on for long (Hurting Stalemate). At this point of the conflict two things may happen: good opportunities for negotiation and resolution of the problem may appear (De-escalation/Negotiation), and the conflict may step down towards a solution and settlement (Dispute Settlement); or there may be a clean break between parties within the designated field of struggle. If, however, a settlement is reached, a period of peacebuilding and mending of relationship begins (Post-conflict Peacebuilding). The whole process of building conflicts is, of course, a much more complex process than presented here. It is also debated whether the prospect of the process is too deterministic. However, Brahm argues:





These conflicts are not hopeless, and they most certainly are worth dealing with. But they are very different from more tractable conflicts, such as most labour-management conflicts, some family conflicts, many workplace conflicts and even many international conflicts that can be successfully resolved through negotiation or mediation. Intractable conflicts need a different, more multi-faceted, and more prolonged approach (Brahm 2005).

This is why, in my examples, the period of Hurting Stalemate seems to be the most difficult one for festivals. Within festivals, which are already vulnerable to a number of crucial risk factors, a period of Hurting Stalemate may be devastating and beyond repair. These conflicts need a different approach than labour management conflicts where different roles are clearly marked and positioned in contrast to the more relaxed and less determined fractions found within the management and field of festivals. But then again; these conflicts are likely to be resolved. This also proved to be the result in the conflict emerging in Lost Weekend.

As the number of participants rose, the two enthusiasts in charge of running the event had the right basis for securing a good economic result, but with growing economic potential, managing such a big festival turned out to be difficult. In line with the two enthusiasts' ideology of arranging a small-scale festival "for everybody", too many free vouchers were printed and issued and, in spite of the remarkably good results in ticket-sale that same year, Lost Weekend suffered a bad result and a negative balance in the budget. And as a result of continuously erroneous financial decisions, the economy came out of hand. The latent conflict existed between the ideology of the enthusiasts and the opposite ideology, that of commerce and politics. Basically, it came down to the festival enthusiasts' lack of managing competence, and their indignation towards Lost Weekend being a commodity in the cultural industry. The growth of the festival seemed to be the trigger-mechanism of the latent conflict and with no solution at hand, the end of the festival seemed inevitable.

Trying to cope with the economic difficulties, and as a result of the media debate which started after the crisis was made public, the effect the festival had on its local community re-surfaced again. New interests entered the media debate in an attempt to help and show sympathy for the festival's

existence. Local shopkeepers and merchants, the local politicians and even the sponsors emphasized the importance of the festival (Karlsen, Berg, Myren & Spang 2006). In a world of continuous change, local communities may use festivals as a means of becoming a part of the global community, and to the island of Askøy this was the effect of Lost Weekend. The synergy-effects of festivals are countless and sometimes untraceable, but, in this case, Lost Weekend's money-problems and the resulting debate made it clear to the public and the local politicians how important the festivals could appear to be. Although the economic problem seemed difficult to solve, and next year's festival seemed condemned, the two young enthusiasts held on to their ideology in not involving commercial interests. When a journalist asked them if selling their rights for catering during the festival could be a solution to the problem, they replied: "No, that's a solution we have buried, it is not in the line with the *Lost-Weekend spirit*". Basically, the "Lost-Weekend-Spirit" is based on the fear of commercial interests taking control over the festival, and the fear of being no longer able to keep the festival from becoming a commercial enterprise and commodity.

Many people implied that the festival should be overtaken by purely commercial interests in order to save it, but this was not a solution the leader of the cultural office, Mr. Sandal, was very positive about:

...That would mean to sell the soul of a festival built upon idealism. At the same time I am aware that the commercial investors require something in return for their investments... (Myren & Mogleiv 2006; my translation).

Mr. Sandal is an official who understands both sides, but who chooses to be on the idealists' side, and even though the festival owed money to the local council, they seemed to agree with the "Lost-Weekend-Spirit". This might be because of Sandal's own desire, or the Local Council of Askøy's desire, to see Lost Weekend as something mirroring the "real and authentic" Askøy, and not being something "fake" in the name of commercialism. The politicians though, can use festivals and events to improve image and raise profiles of destinations (Yeoman 2004:37). Therefore, Sandal goes on to emphasise the synergy effect Lost Weekend has had for Askøy, both from a commercial and a cultural perspective:



The festival adds immeasurable value to the accounting, for example, for the commercial community. Besides, it is important for the youth of Askøy. Thanks to Lost Weekend they now say: I'm from Askøy - Not Bergen! ([www.bt.no/bergenpuls/konsert/article236053.ece](http://www.bt.no/bergenpuls/konsert/article236053.ece)).

However, as the crisis evolved, idealism "unfortunately" had to abide to the commercial interests in order to survive. In order to receive funding the festival had to be secured by having professionals inside its organizing committee. This resulted in having one of the creditors taking over the position of the manager. Only then the Council of Askøy was allowed to guarantee further funding. During this period - which we can call a period of hurting stalemate - negotiation emerged, presented solutions, and inferred a de-escalation of the conflict. Bad times make the limp man learn to jump, and in this case the man was still standing, although hurt and battered by the game of different ideologies and values. Therefore, in order for the festival to survive, adaptations had to be made by the management.

### **AFTERMATH – A PERIOD OF RECONCILIATION**

As a result of attending festivals, participants wish to tell other people about their experiences, and the festival becomes a "special place" in their collective consciousness. And with the narrative of Lost Weekend comes the story of Askøy and its inhabitants, marking it geographically as a unique place in the globalised world. Suddenly people from distant places in Norway knew where this small island outside Bergen was, and consequently raised the younger generation's self-esteem. Suddenly it was "cool" to be from Askøy, and the youth was proud of it. This redefinition of the place was of great value to the local council of Askøy. Besides profiting money-wise, the festival posed as a huge PR-event for the small island and seemed like a catalyst for further development. Due to investors demanding full control over the economic side of it, this year's festival (2006) had the economic means *and* a more professional management. Even though the Local Council yet again wanted to guarantee for any possible debts in the future, they were not allowed to do so by the Regional Council (Fylkeskommunen) before the festival employed a more professional management. Now the enthusiasts and the local commercial community are collaborating in a seemingly fruitful way, but there is no telling when the latent conflict will yet again



emerge. Now, the "Lost-Weekend-Spirit", or ideology, also implies a fear of growing particularism, hence creating an urge to be a part of the process of glocalization. In the next brief example of Up-Helly-Aa, an opposite and more traditional solution to the problem of particularism occurs.

## **UP-HELLYAA – BETWEEN THE LOCAL AND THE GLOBAL**



*MultiVit*

Up-Helly-Aa is a Viking festival located in Lerwick, Shetland, and has been celebrated on the last Tuesday of January every year since its beginning in 1873 (Callum 1998:14). It is rooted in Old Norse traditions linked to the turning and returning of the sun, and the event is spun around a fire-ritual where a Viking ship leads a procession of marching Vikings (guisers) and squads of people wearing different theme-costumes. Every man in the procession carries a torch which in the end is thrown upon a Viking ship going off in a blaze, supposedly imaging a Viking funeral. The whole experience of the Up-Helly-Aa is a tremendous one: the smell of paraffin, the cheers from

the people in the procession, the singing of Old Norwegian hymns and the blaze at the end. All put together it is a once-in-a-lifetime-experience - an experience valued as an important part of the Shetlander identity - henceforth, it is also very good tourism-material. Every year approximately 600-900 (Mail inquiries Shetland Tourist Office 2006) visitors come to Shetland to see the fire festival. It is a good example of how smaller communities may use festivals in prolonging, or even creating new seasons of tourism. Even so, during my visit to Lerwick and Up-Helly-Aa, I met very few tourists, and sensed a form of hostility from the Earl-Committee as to being there as an "outsider". The Earl-Committee is in charge of conducting the festival, and may pose as the management of the festival. Even though they assume the role of opposition to the state or Council (carnivalistic role), they are a formal group of people with long and preserved tradition when it comes to arranging the event.

At an informal press-conference with the Committee, they criticised the Shetland Tourist Office for utilising the festival, and stated that they, as the true managers of the festival, wanted to preserve its' exclusivity - not having strangers (read: tourists, journalists, researchers etc.) interfering and making things uncomfortable. Proclaiming some sort of ownership of the festival, the Earl-Committee dismissed the power of the Shetland Tourist Office with an unofficial statement (author's observation). It seemed that they had no aspirations as to changing the ideology and the concept of "their" festival, indicating ownership and preservation.

The festival belonged to the people of Lerwick, all the year round. The festival, or the field of town-interrelations, is a steady and familiar foundation of the community, and with their conservative thought they preserve the local and guard the safe-ground from the unfamiliar global community. This festival is torn between being a part of the local and being a part of the global world. Both Up-Helly-Aa and Lost Weekend belong to the category of festivals with a non-profit-making ideology, whereas the struggle for the descriptive power within the field of festivals and cultural industry is made visual by intervening of other ideologies.

It was clearly a different group of people telling the story of Up-Helly-Aa at the Lerwick Tourist Office. They had a focus on the festival being the "early start" of the tourist season, and being stately funded, they also saw the

festival as a strategy of "luring" tourists to the islands. With such a point of departure, presumably, the collaboration between them and the Committee would prove to be difficult. However, in a mail-interview, the Tourist Office proclaims they have a good collaboration with the Earl-Committee.

It is our aim to speak with the committee as much as possible; we try to support the event wherever possible. But the committee itself does not tend to influence any tourism issues. The Tourist Office does provide Up-Helly-Aa with a program - a printed 10-12 pages leaflet - that is part of the support (Mail inquiries Shetland Tourist Office 2006).

The Tourist Office acknowledged that the Committee had no aspirations as to change the aim of the festival, but still the Office did not seem to be able to make up their mind as to how to utilize the festival. They were torn between local and global perspective, and local ideology and central politics and strategies. In some segments, at least on the surface, the collaboration seemed to be going great, but both parties seemed to be having hidden agendas. Obviously Up-Helly-Aa had an escalating conflict "on the go", however still under cover due to strong social constraints.

Again we see an outline of a latent conflict emerging, with its basis on the local community's struggle to hold on to their local history and identity *and* be a part of the global community. Surely, tourism and commercialism have always been a part of the festival, however not in the way we see them today. To the Committee it seems that the preservation of the festival structure and ideology is very important, and it may seem as if the more incoming strategic commercial aspect poses a threat to the festival's or even society's authenticity. The festival preserves a whole community's (Lerwick) ideology, an ideology that has been forged through a whole century, making history a crucial element in their contemporary identity. This conservative attitude towards the process of glocalism is perhaps more a part of modern cultural processes, than that of the post-modern processes we usually find in the Western world today. Authenticity is no longer considered to be under threat by commercial interests, and these interests now play an important role in contemporary preservation of heritage. However, the managers of Up-Helly-Aa are still regarding the local and global as counterparts, but since the local and global in Western contemporary society are in an alliance, this may eventually cause difficulties for the running of the festival.

## WHEN TWO FIELDS COLLIDE

Most festivals have traditionally had their keystone management based on cultural and artistic avant-gardism, voluntary work and funding, and less on commercialism, sponsoring and market economy. Today we live in a society where information and popular culture have created a higher demand for cultural production and the mediating of culture. The market of cultural entertainment is a difficult market to enter and festivals have to adjust to the same competitive relations as other institutions therein like cinemas, theatres, shows, etc. As a consequence, festivals – in order to survive – have to commercialise and professionalize the running of it all. The festivals are in the process of repositioning and professionalization, and hence they have to consider new and different flows and trends in society. Hence festivals may be the postmodern way of mediating art and music (Björkås 2003). Now they also have to relate to other things like different currents in society, trends, economical ups-and-downs etc. In a spirit of capitalism the element of competition must be sharpened, and in the attempt many art- and cultural conservatives (the avant-garde) will have to break with their own ideology. Here it is inferred that the struggle is between enthusiasts and artists, who, on an ideological basis, want to arrange an event for the minority, not the majority; and the capitalists and profiteers who basically want to make experience related events profitable. In the two festivals mentioned, a silent dispute has emerged between profiled agents appearing within the field of each festival. This is a conflict that reveals basic foundations and creation of ideology within the management of the post-modern festival.

## THE DIFFERENT FIELDS OF THE FESTIVAL SPHERE

The post-modern festivals are entering new spaces of power relations, and there are several fields being manifested through the conflicts emerging. Three different fields of festival-participation seem to manifest themselves through the model of conflict: first, the conflicts within the field of *a specific festival*; second within *a field* of festivals; and third, within the field of the *cultural industry*. Further on there are several ways of categorising the field festivals exists within. At micro-level field is mainly manifested through the subjective dispute between different agents within the field of the *specific festival*; then there is the level of objective dispute within the field of

*festivals*; and then at macro-level, there are the disputes within the field of *cultural industry*. Onwards, this goes on towards a level of global capitalism. Presumably, the two different clusters of capital that are competing for the legitimate form of specific authority within the field of the two festivals mentioned earlier, are those *clusters of cultural and economic capital*. In this paper *cultural capital* is referred to as individual and a part of the creation of the individual habitus. Cultural capital, which is a key component of habitus (Hardy & Grenfell 2006), is derived from the participant's or manager's place of origin, family background, art education, gender, study abroad, work with similar events, artistic practice etc., all within the field of festival management. Within the context of a festival-management, and the context of cultural industry, what constitutes cultural capital is different. In order to map out the objective structure one needs to look at the relations between the positions occupied by the agents within the designated field (Bourdieu 1992:104). In order to construct the field of festivals, one must identify forms of specific capital that operate at micro level, and to construct the forms of specific capital one must know the specific logic of the field (ibid. 108).

The creation of the "enemy", or oppositional party, goes on in a forum where several agents agree on having a joint "enemy", thus forming a joint programme of ideology. In the conflict within the field of festivals the enemy is chosen based on rhetoric pressure from the extreme edge of its ideology, in these cases, the cultural avant-garde and the liberal commercialist. Both parties have their own core of agents having a discussion concerning key issues of their programme: who decides, who has got the right ethics (the festivals philosophical direction) and who is to determine the aim of the ideology. Ideology then, at micro-level, is based on a specific clustering of agent's subjective habitus, their rhetorical abilities, and manifested capital (embodied knowledge). The festival being liberal or commercial, means that the festival has an ideology, an agreed upon manifest proclaimed by a field of agents which have a collective aim. But a festival strategy or programme most of the time derives from either a set of different ideologies or one ideology in particular. An ideology justifies and legitimizes the order of the community, or justifies oppositional movements aspiring to change this. It is manifested through a form of power-relations within a certain field of struggle (Korsnes, Andersen & Brante 1997:124, my translation). In the outskirts of such ideologies the antagonist is found to be the initiator of conflict-emergence



whatever the cause, thus constructing an image of the "new enemy". This way ideology constructs conflict and vice versa. However, the individual must be in a position to initiate a conflict. An individual needs to have the right abilities, which at micro level means, possession of the "right" cultural capital and habitus at a particular time. Many contemporary festivals are at a high competitive level, which demands uniqueness in order to survive and maintain sustainability. In certain spaces certain ideologies seem to function in a good way, however, there is a growing tendency of professionalization within the field of festivals. This also leads to the growth of liberal fractions within ideologies which have been struggling in each direction of the field. Compromises are made on both sides and the liberal fractions in oppositions to their respective field-orientation. The consequences of such compromises, especially for the cultural agents, are de-politization of ideology (loss of descriptive strength), loss of credibility in front of other festivals/colleagues, and degradation within the cultural hierarchy. The "authentic" inferred as the "true" ideology and the only way to go, is therefore employed as lost or at least "dirty". The way such a conflict mostly hurts the cultural agents within the festival field, portray it as being culturally deterministic in its nature.

However, the economic/commercial agents may also loose credibility within its field of conservative economy. A professionally managed festival gone bad, may soon be perceived as amateurism within the field of commercialism. At the same time, running or sponsoring a festival may be viewed upon as a community obligation, and failure may cause the management a bad business reputation. Hereby it is also implied that the cultural agents are at a subjective non-common level, whilst the economic agents are in plural and infer a corporative. It is today a general assumption that festivals, on every level (Local – national – global) have a re-enchanting and important effect on society marked by particularism (See Picard & Robinson 2007:8-9). Therefore a non-contributional ideology will be seen as avantgarde and anti-social. Liberalism within a field, like the cultural industry, filled with an abundance of different ideologies, seems like a necessity in order to create a harmonic "business".

Thus festivals are portrayed as being battle-zones between different clusters of ideas; this is also what unites them - at least those open for it. The festival itself is not a place before it happens, but when it happens all parties



unite in its suggestive and magic expressions. Then it is forgotten that in the rest of the year the battles of power are continuous and often prolonged by debates in the media. However, the event itself may be primed with compelling and intense experiences, and acts as liminal and liberal bridges, arenas, spaces, and forums for uniting-mechanisms in fields and for agents diverted from each other by ideology. Even though it seems like a battle, it may also be a uniting force and a hybrid of tractable ideas. Thus it represents a pliable opening for those who want to develop and follow the global flow. Collaboration at any level of ideology may be difficult in such cases and can be portrayed as circles of ideology within the designated festival field, barely being tangent. Thus with liberal fractions in each ideology the circles overlap and portray a sustainable festival. A liberal form of ideology clustering therefore seems necessary for the two fields to merge together.

### **A THREE-WAY MODEL OF THE IDEOLOGY OF MANAGING A FESTIVAL**

Within the field of festivals there are a multiple set of ways to run the event, yet in the examples shown in this paper a three-way-model for festival-management-ideology is manifested; one that describes the narrow cultural avant-garde basis of a festival; one that describes the festival from a more popular-cultural and commercial level; and one that supersedes them both - a professional, sustainable and functional joint agency of managers from different ideologies. We have two monologues, and one dialogue, and the dialogue seems to be favoured within the field of cultural industry. In other words, for some it is possible to have two different ideologies working together. However, it all needs to be discussed and dealt with through negotiation, and a core ideology needs to be manifested. The dialogic approach to the conflict, or better, as a starting point for the festival managers, may therefore be the best way of ensuring a good and sustainable product. A dictatorial festival hierarchical structure based on cultural capital dominates the first perspective; a hierarchic economic capital the other; and a flat-structured liberal (chaotic) the third. Both the avant-garde approach and the mainstream approach are split into conservative and liberal perspectives, hence outlining the heterogeneous aspect of a festival. By doing this it is easier to understand why some festivals and their festival idealism are more easily adapting to



other ideologies than others. The third chaotic festival structure is more based on liberal ideology, and the festival - being liberal in its form (read: carnival, liminal) - may be, in the long run, a good strategy for success within the cultural industry. However, liberalism also infers danger in its form since it has a tendency of dissolving core ideology and latency of conflicts. Without the enthusiast, and without the avant-garde capitalist, the festival often seems to stagnate in its form and loose terrain henceforth the postmodern perspective. One critique of my three-way-model may be the pessimism contracted to ideologies standing alone. In my theory the festivals are, in the beginning, depended on one joint ideology to get started. Yet, at one point in a festival's advance this is no longer enough to make it sustainable, and even though such festivals will persist, they are being outnumbered. Most contemporary festivals have an agenda demanding sustainability, therefore demanding a joint effort in keeping the festival alive seem necessary. But should festivals survive, or are most of them supposed to be short-lived; and is it even in the nature of the festivals to do so?

## CONCLUSION

The festivals investigated in this paper are different in many ways, but both face a problem when their space becomes intertwined with global structures. Still, Up-Helly-Aa is preserving something more bound up to tradition and community than Lost Weekend. Lost Weekend, however, has earned its right to exist by re-constructing local identity into something more adapted to modern and global structures, and by re-filling space with new and concrete social relations. Lost Weekend thus serves as a way for the whole of Askøy to enter the global cultural sphere, and has always had the aspiration of doing so, while Up-Helly-Aa is a festival still holding on to its traditional content, yet some segments of the community want it to become global. The hybridisation of thought seems therefore to work for Lost Weekend, and not yet for Up-Helly-Aa because the conflict has not yet emerged. However, in order to survive, it seems that most festivals, at least to some extent, have to adjust to structures in the global world.

In this paper I have given an outline of contemporary festival ideology, how the new agents which have entered the field of festivals, have affected the nature of festivals, and how it is manifested through conflicts where

different ideologies and different capital (economic, cultural or social) struggle for descriptive power within the designated fields. In conflicts like the intractable conflicts manifested in Lost Weekend and Up-Helly-Aa, researchers of culture may be the third party mediators in conflicts, solving issues that seem unsolvable. Then it is important to reflect on that perhaps some of the conflicts are not supposed to be solved at all?!

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## SUVREMENI FESTIVALI: POLIFONIJA GLASOVA I NEKI NOVI ČIMBENICI

### Sažetak

U ovom članku autor opisuje kako se sukobi naizbježno javljaju u nekom trenutku tijekom procesa festivalizacije. Autor navodi da postoje određene prekretnice u tom procesu koje svaki festival i njegovo polje utjecaja susreću od svojih začetaka pa do zaključka, ili do njegova sadašnjeg stanja, na putu prema kraju koji mu je predodređen. Jedan od načina vizualiziranja toga obrasca jest korištenje teorije Erica Brahmisa o teško rješivim sukobima. Ova teorija pokazuje da u polju društvenih interakcija, u kojima mora postojati sporazum oko zajedničke ideologije (kao što je menadžment), postoji latentni sukob, koji u određenom trenutku može prerasti u otvoreni sukob; sukob se zatim zaoštava, prolazi kroz fazu pat-pozicije te se nakon toga ublažava pregovaranjem; on se po mogućnosti rješava pa nastupa poslijekonfliktni period stvaranja i održavanja mira. U polju u u kojem se očituju različite ideologije i područja važna je terminologija Pierrea Bourdieua. Koristeći izraze kao što su područje, kapital i *habitus*, predstojeći sukob možemo jasnije ograničiti, pojasniti ga i učiniti vjerodostojnim tako što ukažemo na borbu unutar samoga menadžmenta te između različitih sfera u kojima se festivali ostvaruju. Primjenom ove teorije i terminologije na empirijske podatke lakše možemo sagledati sferu sukoba, a ujedno možemo sukob između različitih ideologija i područja učiniti vidljivijim.

Konkretno, na primjerima suvremenoga norveškog glazbenog festivala *Lost Weekend* i «tradicionalnijega» vikinškog festivala *Up-Helly-Aa* na Šetlandskom otočju autor pokazuje kako se ti sukobi mogu zbiti. *Lost Weekend* se suočava s istim problemima kao i *Up-Helly-Aa*, ali na sasvim drukčji način zbog različitih lokacija, menadžmenta i ideologija. Sukobi se čine neizbježnima, ali ne i nerješivima. Ako postanu svjesni svih razina sukoba, drugi će se festivali moći pripremiti na neizbježno te cijeli proces preokrenuti u svoju korist.

Time se ukazuje na različita područja i kategorije čimbenika u okviru festivalske sfere, što autoru omogućuje da raspravi o tome kako se festivali razvijaju služeći kao forumi i skupovi ideologija te koji to utjecaj ima na





određenu zajednicu. Kroz navedene empirijske primjere autor također pokazuje kako se lokalne zajednice bore kako bi postale dio globaliziranog svijeta te kako festivali mogu biti jedan od načina ulaska u globalnu zajednicu.

**Ključne riječi:** festival, sukob, ideologija, kapital, globalno

