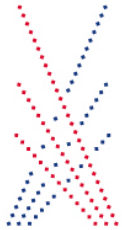

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Unconventional Contributors to the Working Consensus of Festivals

Abstract

The exploration of a literary festival is used to examine the process of development of a working consensus between the managerial stakeholders of the festival. Using a relational lens, the study focuses on how resources are accessed and distributed among the main players, which need to meet some requirements and adjust their behaviour to an agreed performance. The lack of fit and exclusion of potential collaborators, may have unintended consequences on the usage of these resources and the legitimisation of the festival by local communities and writers. Taking the analysis of Edinburgh's International Book Festival, this paper discusses an under-theorised area of research and reflects on its implications for practitioners and policymakers, unpacking the different dimensions of the working consensus and its implications for the legitimacy of players.

1. Introduction

The recognition of festivals' essential role in the creative and experience economy has been acknowledge and instrumentalised to maximise its benefits at the socio-cultural, economic and political domains (Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Andersson and Getz, 2009; Goldblat, 2010; Getz, 2016). The spill-over effects of festivals are particularly relevant in the case of the creative industries because of the rise of demand for these proactive experiences rather than passive product consumption (Richards, 2007). Cultural events and festivals nurture the creative, educational and social aspirations of local communities, and forms an increasingly attractive claim for tourists and visitors (Richards and Marques, 2018). The pressure for product development has not gone unnoticed by policymakers, who position the development and support of creative industries as one of the main priorities of their agendas (Van Niekerk, 2017; BOP Consulting, 2016; UNWTO, 2018). Cultural tourists' essential motivation is to discover and experience the intellectual, emotional and spiritual values and traditions of a given society through its arts, heritage, culinary traditions, literature and music, among other creative industries' outcomes, and current lifestyle (Richards, 1996). These features form the tangible and intangible heritage on which the experience of festivals is based (Derrett, 2003). Cultural tourism scholarship has mainly scrutinised festivals as an act of consumption of culture. Under this marketing perspective, consumer behaviour and other psychological lenses have been used to scrutinise festivals' success factors (Lee et al., 2008), attendees' motivations (Crompton and McKay, 1997; Lee et al., 2004; Chang, 2006), the interaction between individual and context-related factors (Falk, 2011) and how these lead to an intention to return to the same destination (Lee and Hsu, 2013). However, more studies are required to understand festivals from the festival stakeholders' perspective. The contribution of different social groups activates power relations that ultimately converge in an agreed representation of culture selected to be performed to visitors and local communities (Goffman, 1959). The content of the negotiations by which different actors agree to collaborate and the business and managerial factors influencing the development of these partnerships are still areas that remain to be explored (Richards, 2018).

This trend is also observable in the event management literature where studies tend to focus attention on festival attendees (Lee and Kyle, 2014; Song et al. 2012; Tkaczynski, 2013; Yolal et al. 2012), loyalty (Yoon et al., 2004), self-identity (Kim and Jamal, 2007; Wang 2000) and their experience of the place (Boo and Busser 2006). Understanding of the role of

festival organisers in the development and management of cultural amenities remains underdeveloped, with very few studies exploring partnership building between different festival stakeholders (e.g. Van Niekerk et al. 2016; Getz et al. 2010) and how different actors access, develop and supply resources so that festivals can be initiated and maintained (Wilson et al., 2017).

To help address this gap, this paper explores festivals focusing on the stakeholders involved in the management of the organisation and the performance (Goffman, 1959; Falassi, 1987). The examination of the working consensus is conceptualised as the process by which collaboration is set, being a precondition to achieve a certain level of legitimacy. It reflects on how managerial stakeholders reach a compromise aligned with their roles and how it affects the festival in terms of access and redistribution of resources.

The paper is organised as follows. It first provides an overview of the theoretical conceptualisations of management in the festivals' literature, discussing conceptual studies focused on the networks and relationships between festivals' stakeholders. It then proceeds to explain the research and finally, it presents the findings and discusses its implications.

2. Literature Review

In recent years, there has been increasing attention on festivals and event tourism research. From the first publications in the early 60s to the present days, festivals and events have increased their economic and social significance, providing researchers with significant new avenues of research (Getz and Page, 2016). Anthropological explorations of the value of festivals as cultural rituals (Falassi, 1987) now coexist with research on how this performative leisure is shared on social media via mobile technology (Yeoman, 2013).

Festivals have become one of the central foci in the cultural tourism literature (Getz and Page, 2016) now exploring the context of boosterism (i.e. how to increase number of visitors) through place-making (Leiper, 2008; Jarman, 2018), branding (Mossberg and Getz, 2006), and urban development (Quinn, 2006; Van Aalst and van Melik, 2012). This perspective implies a view of festivals as tourism products analysed in marketing terms, such as the festivalscape. This literature explores the environment in which festivals are and examines the factors attracting different audiences and fostering customer satisfaction and loyalty (Lee et al., 2008; Mason and Paggiaro, 2012). The economic impact of festivals raises questions with regards to their level of fit to their own destination. It is necessary to assess the contemporary issues related to infrastructure, local communities and associated to better plan and manage festivals' suitability as tourism destinations.

Another stream of research criticises the instrumentalisation of festivals' genuineness for commercial purposes and the festivalisation of culture (e.g. Richards, 2018), recognising that although most festivals would inevitably develop tourist profiles over time (Queen, 2006), if over-commodified, they can lose their authenticity (Zhou, 2015) and creative capacity (Prentice and Andersen, 2003).

Efforts to make sense of this interdisciplinary field have resulted in the publication of studies beyond the economic and marketing perspectives, exploring the socio-cultural, environmental, developmental and technological dimensions of festivals (Carlsen et al., 2007). Research methods (Mair and Whitford, 2013), collaboration (Jaimangal-Jones et al.,

2018; Marasco et al., 2018) and specific festival sub-types, have also started to receive scholarly attention (Lashua, Spracklen and Long, 2014). There have also been several literature reviews and special issues (e.g. Getz and Page, 2016; Wilson et al., 2017; Van Niekerk, 2017; Laing, 2018) which suggest future research on festivals from a managerial perspective.

Academic research has been developing substantial body of literature on policy-making and practice-led studies. Some of the early managerial papers were published in the late 80s (Getz and Frisby, 1988; Frisby and Getz, 1989) and they highlighted the challenges for festival managers' and tourism agencies' relations. Theoretical concerns about product life cycle, festival goals, embeddedness in local communities, staffing and fundraising, set a fruitful research agenda. However, the discipline still lacks a strong body of conceptual work to bring together the impactful contribution of these studies.

The first conceptual work on festivals, authored by Waterman in 1998, highlighted the relevance of social relations and the intimate connection of festivals to a place. He offered an exploration of festivals' economics, social and political tensions, reflecting on how culture is contested or legitimised depending on processes of valuation and assessment of the upper classes. Those deciding on the sponsorship of events according to their values and the potential audiences they want to endorse, perpetuate an ideology and social discourse that fosters the elitism of certain classes. Waterman acknowledged the inseparability of culture from cultural politics; that is to say, arts and power, as an essential part of the analysis of human geography.

The increasing transformational power of festivals over the rejuvenation of cities faces organisers with the dilemma of choosing between elite culture and popular contents, or a combination of both depending on the need for funding and the potential business outreach and outcomes expected by the different parties (see also Pine and Gilmore, 1999). An additional layer of complexity is added when Waterman reflects on the symbolic meaning of festivals and its bidirectional impact on local and global communities. The co-creation of culture occurring during festivals and fringe events, as well as the re-construction of the place as out of the ordinary, emphasise the ritual characteristics of festivals, that transform its participants and its own performing space. Despite Waterman's critiques against the consideration of culture as a set of industries, his theoretical work suggests a vision of the role of management as the hinges of a door which swings according to the strength of the cultural, social and political powers pushing it open. The ability to reach compromises is going to be crucial to enhance the commercial benefits of festivals without hindering artistic creativity and innovation.

It is not until 2011 that the next conceptual piece appears, with Johansson and Kociatkiewicz's (2011) contribution theorising about festivals from an experience economy lens, focusing in the transformational power of festivals over places and spaces. The notion of festival has evolved from its characterisation as an initial social movement to a marketing device that signpost the type of experiences a place can offer. The festivalisation of culture facilitates the competition of cities for tourism and brings the opportunity to transform and re-interpret global ideas and make them fit local mindsets and spaces, providing festival stakeholders with the opportunity to revisit their identity and meanings. Festivals territorialise cities when they take over the space, creating a fake stage for the authentic, everyday identity

of the place, transforming cities into 'experiencesacapes'. A festival's creation of this liminal space opens the city to new interpretations, strengthening the bonding of local communities through the release of tensions that accompany the reversal of social hierarchies and roles that usually take place during festival performances.

However, positive effects are not always the main consequence of these events, at least not for the living conditions of local communities. Festivals are more likely to present an already sealed, sanitised sample of the city's culture, and negative effects such as social exclusion and gentrification are kept out of sight from the public's eye. Visitors enjoy a sweetened, authentic-enough version of the real life in the city, enjoying a safe environment that perpetuates the image and reputation of the place, which is then open for re-interpretation. The performance agreed by festival organisers includes the translation of ideas with a global appeal, but also the retrieval of pleasant experiences and memories from the past, which incorporate new elements to allow participants and attendees to reinterpret the experience without risks or negative side-effects. Festival management is here regarded mainly as a source of control and sanitation; although their ambitions and passions are acknowledged in the last paragraphs of the paper, this study raises questions regarding the selection of contents for the festivals.

Finally, in 2015, Larson, Getz and Pastras contributed to the conceptual debate, reflecting on the notion of legitimacy and its relevance for the acceptance and sustainability of festivals. The definition of the different types of legitimacy and the propositions related to the complex networks and relationships of festivals' stakeholders, positions the construct of legitimacy as a necessary condition to achieve a common space or political square market (Larson, 2002; 2009) in which to reach a working consensus. The political square market is a conceptual tool to understand the production and marketing processes considered during stakeholders' interactions to build the necessary legitimacy to access resources (Parsons, 1960) and decrease the risk of failure (Getz, 2002). These agreements are based on the trust between the different parties and the need to avoid high levels of interdependency. The complex relationships between the social, political and economic interests of stakeholders' networks converge at the industry, firm and urban policies, establishing the grounds for festivals' acceptance and sustainability.

Once their positions in the political square market have been secured, stakeholders have the chance to contest culture and politics in their own terms, what links legitimacy to a shared social identity and compatible values of the respective stakeholders (Larson, 2009). The management of legitimacy is, therefore, a dynamic political process that happens in the backstage of festivals through the communicative interaction and negotiation of traditional displays of local culture in the alluring light of novelty and globalisation. It is a necessary precondition to achieve a working consensus that clarifies the terms of collaboration, which links backstage political decisions to the staging of the festival performance.

Cooperation and conflict inherent in relations between institutions and organisations in the tourism and cultural industries shape the map of relational interactions that lead to the mobilisation of resources according to both social and economic criteria, justifying the creation of community-driven and market-driven events (Larson et al., 2015). Core and extended partners are governed by a network orchestrator (Getz, Anderson and Larson, 2006) who integrates the knowledge and capabilities of the selected stakeholders, setting their roles,

legitimising their participation and building a sense of trust and embeddedness. They establish the basis of collaboration in the working consensus, which comprises the content, formal and informal rules of the performance. Stakeholders' interactions have only a temporal validity and festivals' contents are likely to be adjusted according to the conflict or consensus achieved by the different networks in a given situation. Legitimacy, therefore, would signpost not only the alignment of values and potential support (Crespi-Vallbona and Richards, 2007) but also the potential level of fit of stakeholders to the festival performance. In turn, the performance would represent the values agreed between stakeholders and the network orchestrator, which would be displayed and presumably legitimised by the festival's broader communities and networks

The aim of this paper is to explore Goffman's notion of working consensus (1959) from a managerial perspective, examining the negotiation and distribution of resources of festivals' stakeholders. The working consensus is conceptualised as the process by which members of the political square market set the basis and legitimise their collaborative relations. The legitimacy of the stakeholders involves a previous stage of definition of the working consensus, and this is going to be determined by the level of fit of the different parties involved.

3. Methodology

Festivals are interdisciplinary events that have been examined adopting a wide array of methodologies (Driscoll and Squires, 2018). They have principally been investigated from an anthropologist view (Turner, 1982; Falassi, 1987), a cultural sociology and a human geography perspective (Quinn, 2005). One of the most dramatic changes in the industry in recent decades has to do with the disappearance of the 'wall' between writers and the audience, which is taken to the extreme by new technologies and the requirement of a constant presence in social media. The increased pressure on authors to interpret their roles as if they were actors whose duty is to entertain the audience, reproduces the tensions between arts and commerce, but also acknowledges the under-theorised reciprocal influence of related fields in the technological, economic and artistic sphere (Driscoll, 2015 in Murray and Weber, 2017).

Within the framework of the creative economy, most of the research on festivals has been quantitative, using surveys and secondary data to collect data (e,g, Yoon et al, 2010; Lee and Kyle, 2012). The majority of these studies are cross-sectional, some of them focused on the development of scales that still need to be tested (Wilson et al., 2017). More experimental approaches are based in game-thinking (Driscoll and Squires, 2018) and the design and implementation of apps such as Clapping Music and Qualia, that facilitate the understanding and development of festivals' audiences (Arts Council England, 2015).

The methodological approach of this study is positioned among the increasing number of studies adopting a qualitative approach to achieve a nuanced view and understanding of the different relationships between the stakeholders of the biggest book festival in the world, The Edinburgh International Book Festival, which began in 1983 and is now a central event in the August Festival season, celebrated annually in Scotland's capital city. The City of Edinburgh and its literary festival were chosen for the richness of this case, as the City hosts several internationally acclaimed festivals that have nurtured a strong literary culture among its

communities. Inspired by relational sociology's dramaturgical metaphors of social interaction, the study began by mapping out the different stakeholders in the context of the literary festival and analysing their collaborative agreements.

The multi-stakeholder approach adopted in this study, selected as the main nodes Edinburgh's literary festival organisers and mapped out the different stakeholders involved in the production of literature, such as support organisations, quangos, policymakers, and organisers of fringe events such as bookshops. This design facilitated the intuitive unveiling of the role different institutions and organisations play in the development and maintenance of the festival and other literary events. The exploration of these boundaries and connections brings together a variety of viewpoints, which expose the conflicted views regarding Edinburgh's literary landscape and the tensions which participants experience when explaining themselves with regards to the festival. Links between the elements belonging to the macro and micro dimensions of this phenomenon were then considered (Layder, 1993), while maintaining the attention in the idiosyncratic narratives of stakeholders about the participation and exclusion from the festival.

The tensions emerging from the narratives of the participants allowed us to reflect on the intentionality of their performances as well as the level of perceived immutability of the values guiding the representation of their roles. The main festival organisers bring together macro and micro elements agreed with other institutions to set the definition of the event, creating boundaries around a liminal space in which stakeholders are allowed and the transformation of these actors occurs. At the same time, the event intersects with other organisations that may or may not meet the criteria to be included in the festival despite being part of the same network, including those who do not wish to participate. Other event organisers would transform this lack of fit into an entrepreneurial opportunity to redefine their position and make the most of the structural holes of these literary networks. The conflicting values of different stakeholders allow one to grasp the interactional order and individual tensions that need to be balanced and concealed to achieve a common definition of the situation that provides them with legitimacy (Larson et al., 2015) and guides their formal and informal social interactions (Goffman, 1959; 1968).

Data collection consisted of archival data, participant and non-participant observation and thirty-three semi-structured interviews amongst which are represented 30% of Edinburgh-based publishers (eleven), and three publishers from Glasgow who agreed to share their views on Edinburgh's publishing context. Among the rest of participants in this study, there are writers, distributors, booksellers, governmental bodies and sixteen organisations developing activities and literary events related to Edinburgh's main festival and/or fringe events, providing a multifaceted perspective on the interaction between its different stakeholders.

In the first round, the data were analysed thematically with NVivo, generating a wide range of themes that were then clustered following a minimal festival's ritual structure adapted from Goffman's theory of presentation of the self (1959). First, the data were used to identify the roles of different stakeholders (e.g. festival organiser, other events organiser, support organisation, or writer) and then the topics covered by them in the interviews were assigned to the part of the festival ritual participants referred to; that is, social front, performance and backstage. Once the relational matrix was created, the second round of analysis identified

several subthemes that were grouped successively in two cohesive and interdependent categories. Visualisation of the thematic analysis is presented in Figure 2. These themes are explored in the findings section which follows.

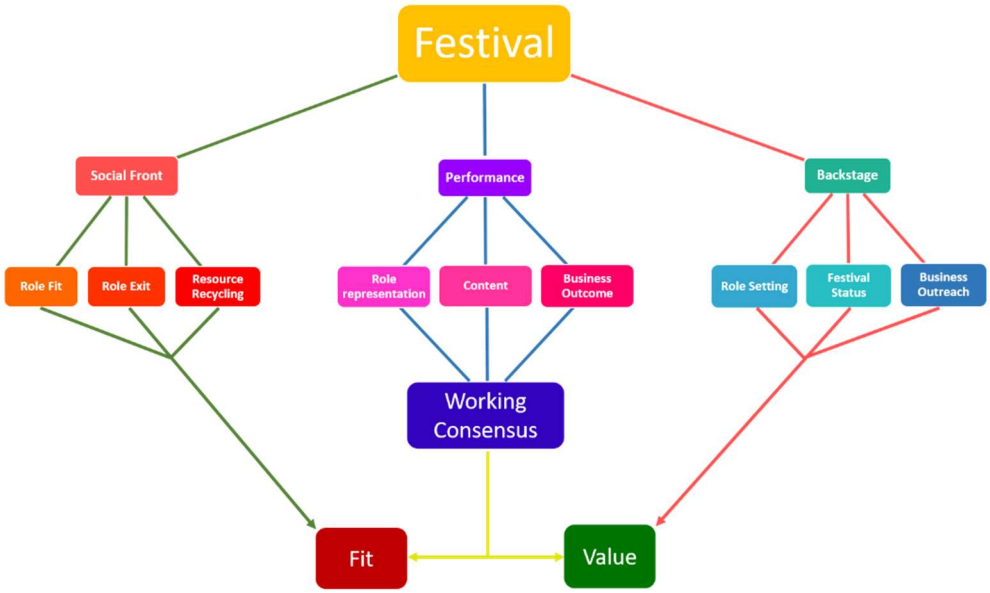

Figure 2: Structure of thematic analysis of the data

4. Findings

In 2004, Edinburgh became UNESCO's first Creative City of Literature, and the inaugural member of it Creative Cities Network. Edinburgh is a centre of intense publishing and literary activity, where stakeholders' levels of involvement fluctuate considerably in terms of festivals and other literary events.

Despite the heterogeneity of roles and levels of participation, their accounts of the different experiences as festival stakeholders converged into two broad categories: creation of value and fitness for participation criteria. These two dimensions shape the working consensus, which is the process by which stakeholders determine he features of the festival, not only in terms of role representation and content, but also establishing social and business boundaries linked to the definition and subsequent nature of the event.

The findings are presented following the structure of the festival's interaction ritual to provide a comprehensive view of the two dimensions identified of the working consensus. The presentation of the data focuses mainly around those stakeholders who have a managerial role, such as the organisers, but includes all of the festivals' stakeholders involved in the creation and maintenance of these events.

4.1 Backstage: role setting, festival status and business outcomes

During Edinburgh International Book Festival, institutions ranging from the Scottish Government to the British Council bring in politicians and other international to enjoy this and other artistic and cultural events that take place at this time of the year. In the same lines,

the annual general meetings of professional associations, quangos and societies related to literature and publishing, orbit around the main public event of the industry and the chance to get international exposure. Several events are also programmed around the festival with the collaboration of public libraries and NGOs creating and promoting a literature culture, expressly among children and young adults from different backgrounds.

Role setting is based on the value and level of closeness of the relationships between different stakeholders. In the case of publishers, the main negotiations regarding the festival are around the writers who are going to participate in their events. They offer writers a welcome package that includes accommodation and designated leisure areas within the festival venue, but they also take care of the commercial aspects of their performance. Apart from the latest book, they also purchase the back catalogue and make sure writers utilise the festival's networks to increase their business outreach. This may consist of charitable events or collaborating with more business-oriented organisations, such as other literary festivals sometimes beyond Edinburgh and Scotland. The typical audience of the festival are 50 and up, middle class, white professionals, being the organisation's concern how to attract younger visitors rather than a more diverse audience.

Festivals adopt the business logics of great pop-up bookstores, struggling between becoming a mainstream business opportunity for publishers and still preserve the originality that guarantees its attractiveness among writers. The increasing number of festivals makes publishers be very selective, although the inclusion of EIBF in the Nielsen BookScan differentiates the festival and brings benefits for publishers as their sales are recorded and ranked in the general marketplace, affecting the visibility and potential sales of their books.

Writers are not oblivious to the risks of this pervasive business focus. In fact, festival organisers point at the commodification of writers' signatures and creations, which are transformed into brands that power the treadmill of 'professional' festivals, repeatedly pushing writers through the same circuits, again and again. This makes it more challenging to find media outlets interested in covering festivals' events, as bestseller writers are very likely to have received media coverage at previous festivals. However, small publishers tend to be more open to involve writers in eclectic formulas that lead to bespoke performances and more interactive events, especially for children and young adults. These 'one of a kind' events more than double small publishers' readership and organisers are keen to suggest the incorporation of elements sometimes belonging to other creative industries (e.g. music, puppets) or a redesign of the format of the event (i.e. discussion of literary influences with a fellow writer, translation in situ of a book) to create other ways of storytelling. Likewise, children and young adult publishers tend to curate more public engagement and make sure that at least a publicist accompanies writers to specific events. This aspect of the event is usually overlooked by adult publishers. As one festival organiser noted:

> *I think if you want longevity as a writer, you have to have a flexibility as a writer and...not pigeonhole yourself because publishers will happily pigeonhole writers because what they want is not a writer, they want a brand. They want a series of books, they want a character people will relate to and will move from one story to another. They want to sell it to Saturday night drama, that's what they want, something you can maximise the income from.*

With regards to Scottish publishers and writers, the EIBF is almost a public manifestation of Scottish writing. They feel that what happens every August is a very integral part of their livelihood. They consider the festival as their space, their platform and their opportunity. They have a strong sense of ownership and belonging to this 'communitas' (Diller et al., 2006) that serves as a signpost of their identity and values. The invitation to present a book in the main literary festival is equivalent to being admitted to this very exclusive community, as a literary birth as a writer.

4.2 Performance: content, role representation and business outreach

The content and format of events within the EIFB is discussed and agreed between most stakeholders, who sometimes have an active role in the decision-making progress and others simply advise based on their expertise, acting as role models for the main organisation. The institutional ethos encourages risk taking through the promotion of new Scottish writers, rather than relying upon established writers and celebrities. They consider festivals substitute what was once the mission of the church. In a secularised world, festivals are in a sense almost like cathedrals. Building up this feeling of relatedness is a key aspect of festivals, as well as the definition of a general theme for the year, creating a cohesive criterion for the selection of contents and the performance format with which all stakeholders need to agree and respect.

The organisation, of course, also needs to bear in mind the popularity of genres among the different audience age segments, evidenced by historical data of attendance in previous years of the festival. Nevertheless, not always mainstream genres bring in the higher number of attendees, poetry being a recurrent and still unexpected success in most years. There is a long tradition of spoken word and poetry nights in the main cities of Scotland's central belt (i.e. Edinburgh and Glasgow), usually organised by young poets.

The bookshops and City Council libraries also are involved in the organisation of literary events around the festival season. The libraries run book clubs throughout the year, and during the festival will contact publishers who wish to promote their writers in local neighbourhoods for free, reinforcing the creation of local communities around their libraries. They highlight location as a strategic advantage for partners involved in these events. This audience is more diverse, and they attempt to reach out to those who are not normally able to attend the book festival to democratise the literary culture in the city. Budget cuts in Scottish libraries have led to the redundancy of some of the employees who were key in the formation and maintenance of the networks that make these activities possible, increasing the risk of exclusion of working-class citizens from the city's literary culture. As one local library representative reflected:

> *We believe that by building a passion and enthusiasm for reading and writing, people are much more likely to succeed. In many different ways, not just financially. It is for a variety of reasons. That is really what is at the heart of it… it is about inspiring people through our live literature programme by bringing authors into communities and that is almost at sort of at the grassroots level.*

The city's high number of visitors interested in literature encourages bookshops to take advantage of the location factor in a more entrepreneurial way. They utilise their contacts in

the industry to bring big names attending the festival to their venues, usually for free. In turn, they have a chance to capitalise on their initial investment and reach a wider audience, as these events do not usually charge an admission fee. They also organise events with local, novelists, who may sometimes be self-published. This way, bookstores create an open space into which local writers bring friends, who will in turn bring other friends, increasing considerably the footfall to the bookshops and, with it, potential sales. There do not appear to be criteria regarding the selection of unknown local writers. This may be due to the low cost these events represent to the bookstores. Writers are able come along for free and if they are self-published, the bookstore does not even need to pay for the stock in advance. Rather, they would store a number of books and agree on a percentage to be paid to the writer after sales. However, depending on the success of the event, the writer may be invited to repeat their appearance, with the bookstore keeping part of the stock permanently on its bookshelves.

In the case of poetry, small publishers do not expect high sales, but poets, much more than novelists, are performers who go out and promote themselves, advertise the book and agree to perform in spoken word events and open mic nights which offer the opportunity to make a positive impression on their audiences. Moreover, a publisher mentioned that it is much easier to get a sense of the collection from hearing the poet read three or four of the poems, than it is to gain a sense of a novel from a reading of half a chapter:

> *They had actually reinvented a poetry reading for the 21st century and made it interesting. There was music, there was a comedy, some really weird variety acts. It had a real energy and usefulness to it which was very attractive. Nobody in the mainstream Scottish Media knew it was going on… It was really interesting, really involved in the political scene. I think in Scotland, when people are deciding on big issues that influence the future of the country, they want to hear from the poets.*

Overall, most stakeholders agree on how cheap producing a book is and how democratic is its prize, considering the low investment for countless hours of leisure. They agree most people involved in this industry do it out of passion and find the value of it beyond the economic rewards. Some publishers mention their main role is in the international arena, increasing awareness of the distinction between Scottish literature and the books from the rest of the UK, which is corroborated by no profit organisations and quangos. They tend to focus on themes of Scottish interest which are not usually represented in London, where most of the UK industry is based, contributing to the visibility of the Scottish cultural identity. Other stakeholders reflect on the spill over effects of writing on other creative sectors, such as the TV or film industry, where they depend on writers to develop their contents. Writing is perhaps the cheapest of the art forms and the statistics show the average earnings of a writer in the UK do not reach even half the amount of the minimum wage. No profit organisations criticise that if a society wants to encourage and see all forms of writing flourish, then they should support the people who are going to produce the finest writing and reflect on which will be seen when you look back in history. Because of low income generation, the high risks of failing to be commercially successful and the need to be highly educated, the publishing industry remains a middle-class occupation, lacking the diversity of social backgrounds and ethnic representativeness that may help reach wider audiences.

4.3 Social Front: role fit, exit and resource recycling

Publishers are described as quite conservative by quangos and policymakers. They are always looking for the next big thing but the only thing they have is the last big thing, so they release to the market endless copies and repeats of books and authors mimicking previous success. Smaller publishers have less money to play with and can afford to have projects that are innovative, or simply add richness to the intellectual garden of books that are available, for instance, reprinting classical books in danger of deletion from the bookshops' catalogues. Poetry publishers describe their mission as based on the present moment, on emotions, without really thinking of whether the book or writer will survive into the future.

The innovativeness of small publishers includes being part of a more heterogeneous range of festivals and events, including those organised by no profit organisations, libraries and bookstores. The fit depends on the perceived benefits for the stakeholders involved. For writers, this is a way to be recognised professionally and position themselves in their communities, whereas for bookstores and local publishers it is the way to assure a short print-run can be released and sold without really making an effort in marketing terms.

For festivals, literary programming is not expensive. The main issue is making it competitive and attractive to the audience despite having the same core writers as the rest of the literary festivals. To achieve a greater breadth and depth, they tend to rely on inviting international writers. An increasing number of festivals also depend on writers engaging in the promotion of their books and interacting with their readers, rather than just sitting behind a table and signing books. Writers need to be an active part of the creation of the performance from the moment that the campaign of the book starts. One festival organiser indicated:

> *Writers have realised or re-realised that they are performers, they are storytellers and there is a kind of openness in terms of writing for stage or for computer games or, so the things are more flexible in terms of what they can do and how they can present themselves. Almost like the fun that they can have on stage and the projects that they create.*

This is a generalisation that reflects what is expected from writers. They need to embrace the promotion of the book and engage in the emotional labour it implies to satisfy the expectations of funders, publishers, festival organisers and, undeniably, the audience. Quangos also point as the increasing importance of digital marketing, which is a major turn point in the industry. The active participation in festivals and events is a sign that writers are trying to hone their craft. Likewise, an active presence and interaction in social media signposts how they can provide festivals with the opportunity to engage with different types of audience, that may otherwise not be so likely to attend their events. By the same token, local writers are very aware of how relevant visibility is for their careers, and create digital spaces and networks dedicated to the promotion of their work, in which they privately exchange marketing tips and publishing and self-publishing advice. The achievement of high levels of popularity and sales could bring them the coveted contract with a publishing house.

However, the organisation of events which may help writers be seen in a different light, is not always welcomed by publishers. Small companies regret the lack of inclusion of novel writers whereas larger publishers rarely agree to engage in more original ways to promote their writer (e.g. conversations between two writers, or discussion of a book written by somebody else).

One of the challenges for festival organisers is to intuitively grasp the feelings which performances awaken in the audience. They engage in a creative search that includes attending other festivals, from which they take away lessons and ideas that allow them to improve their own festival. These activities also widen their communications and global contacts, allowing them to be ambitious about international partners and building the necessary infrastructures create healthy networks and sustainable practices.

The fact that Edinburgh was named the first Creative City of Literature in UNESCO's Creative Cities Network is another factor to consider when scrutinising the EIBF's positioning within the international arena. The City of Literature is funded by the Council and organises an event included every year in the festival programme called the StoryShop, where local writers have the chance to present their work. The local literary culture that makes this event possible, can be seen all over the city through its fringe events. These particular performances arise as a result of the entrepreneurial recycling of resources of the main festival and the overwhelming increase in potential clients attracted to the city during the festival season, increasing discoveries of talent, encounters and business opportunities. The representative of a quango commented on the nature of the environment:

> *Yes, particularly in Edinburgh, there is so much going on. What they say, there is a grassroots type of thing. Where it is anyone in a pub or an open-mic night, where anyone can go and perform. But then from that complete free play, but then goes into more organized nights that are funded… So, you almost have a hierarchy, the ecology metaphor spreads out. There is no top down.*

5. Discussion

The findings of this study offer an initial exploration of the process of creation of a working consensus among the stakeholders that agree to be part of a festival. Following Goffman's considerations on work situations of performance teams, the presentation stakeholders make of themselves is a mere extension of their characteristics as performers (Goffman, 1959). Therefore, the working consensus represents the process by which stakeholders agree on a script that leads to an optimal representation of themselves within the situational boundaries of orchestration necessary to make the performance beneficial for all the stakeholders involved. The assignment of roles adheres to different logics pertaining to how stakeholders and festival organisers have framed the rules of the game and how these guide their performance to allow them to maximise the potential returns. Figure 3, below, depicts the working consensus process and reflects the main dimensions identified in the data. The following discussion explores the working consensus in terms of value and fit. These two dimensions summarise the negotiations occurring during the iterative process of definition of the working consensus. The necessary equilibrium between accessing resources (Getz, 2002) and avoiding excessive dependency on specific stakeholders (Getz et al., 2007) is achieved by a constant review of the consequences the working consensus has for the backstage (e.g. definition of business goals, preservation of festival status, assignment of roles) and the social front of the festival (e.g. best fit in terms of collaboration with businesses, communities and literary flagships).

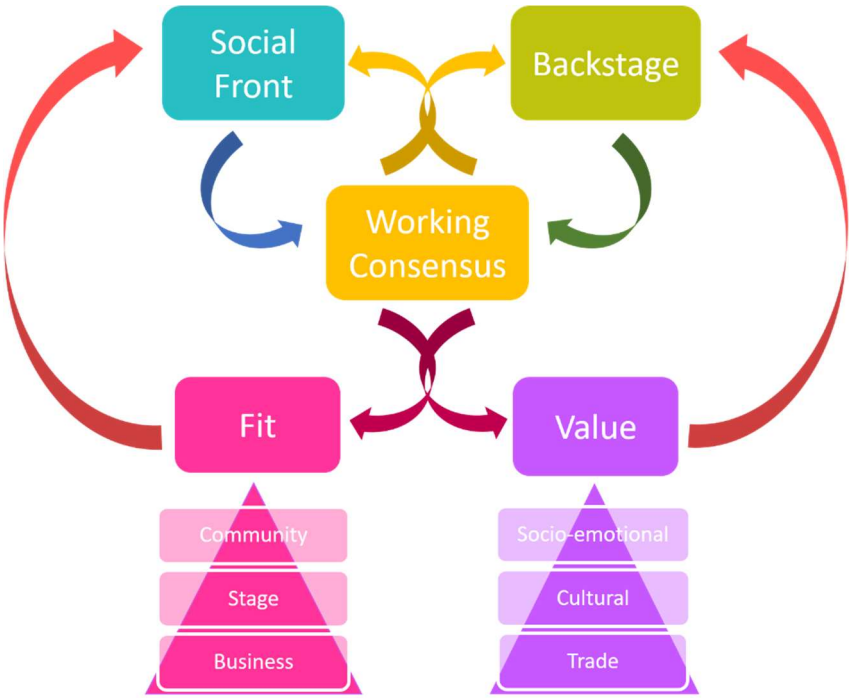

Figure 3: Model of the working consensus process

In the backstage, the positioning and prestige of the festival legitimise network orchestrators, giving them access to resources belonging to public institutions, sponsors and philanthropists that can see the value of the festival beyond commercial terms. Stakeholders reflect on the importance of developing a culture of readership and writing among their local communities, because it feeds into the future development of the literary industry. This investment also responds to the acknowledgement of the spill-over effects of literature in related fields, such as the performance arts or film industry, which represent strategic assets to be capitalised upon by festivals and generally by the tourism industry. The festival provides different stakeholders with a window that allows them to be seen by the world and claim their unique cultural identity. Policymakers and public institutions make use of the attractiveness of the event to invite in potential partners and allies. These meetings create collaboration opportunities with their counterparts in different nations while quangos and industrial partners showcase the most distinguished performers to their guests. Participation in the festival and its parallel events becomes a rich experience in which stakeholders can extend their networks, reach higher levels of status and assess the strength of the contributions of the festival in socio-emotional, cultural and trade terms.

Once backstage requisites have been established, festival organisers assess the level of fit of potential collaborators. At the social front, there are several primary and secondary players that have an influence on the viability and environmental fit of the festival, which must be able to adapt to these contingencies. Collaboration among businesses assures access to tangible resources (e.g. money and services) or intangible ones, such as knowledge and trust. To secure the continuous flow of resources, festivals try to become an institution, a permanent and highly valued brand that has a monetary value (Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Getz et al., 2007) which also benefits the communities in the environment in which they take place. The longevity of festivals relies on their capacity to become part of the local culture

and identity of the place. Therefore, festivals liaise with secondary players to increase their embeddedness in the community, increasing their mutual fit. At the same time, those players excluded from the working consensus due to lack of fit may find a way to take advantage of their situation by redefining the terms of collaboration they are willing to engage with, redefining their position in the field.

It is possible for excluded parties to find collaborative fit established beyond the control of key organisers and stakeholders, which leads to an alternative definition of the working consensus. The data show that the resources brought into the environment for the festival, such as writers, publishers, an increased number of service providers and especially tourists and potential customers, can be recycled for those challenging the existing order, as this situation allows them to create parallel structures outside the control of the main orchestrators. These secondary players increase the entrepreneurial activities in the environment by recycling resources, which in turn increase the attractiveness of the place. It provides tourists and visitors with a wider range of events to attend and ways to join the local literary culture.

The working consensus, therefore, does not need to happen within the strict boundaries imposed by the network orchestrator of the festival. The resources generated by the stakeholders can be recycled within and outside the festival structure and generate a counter-definition of the situation that can be used to differentiate the mainstream festival from the fringe events happening within its environment. The lack of fit also motivates the creation of alternative networks which, in turn, come to occupy more central positions within their communities, as their leaders suddenly become grass-root festival entrepreneurs able to redistribute resources and benefit the local community. Secondary players transform their fit liability into an entrepreneurial opportunity that has unexpected secondary effects for the teams participating in the official performance.

Secondary players play an important role with regards to the definition of the situation. The emergence of grassroot festival entrepreneurs signposts the fertility of the environment and contributes to the effective use of the resources generated by the festival. The existence of these networks does not go unnoticed among the festival stakeholders. These alternative definitions provide an alternative source of legitimisation based on the expansion of its value and adaptability of its business resources, contributing to the reinforcement of more peripheral manifestations of the vibrant literary culture.

6. Conclusion

This paper offers an exploration of the process of creation of a working consensus between festival stakeholders (Goffman, 1959; Falassi, 1987), contributing to the literature on festival stakeholders by its focus on the management dimensions of festival development. It examines the organisation of the performance of a literary festival, reflecting on how stakeholders need to achieve a certain level of fit to be assigned a role, which also symbolises a set of values that align festival organisers and stakeholders.

The findings acknowledge the broader social and economic tensions influencing the negotiation of goals at the backstage of the festival. These drivers exert a strong influence on the performance in terms of content, format and potential outcomes, dictating how roles are going to be represented in front of the audience and benefit the status of the festival. The

social front also contributes to the definition of the performance, as its contents and format are linked to the level of fit of stakeholders to the role requirements. The festival also generates an excess of resources that can be recycled by other collaborators and secondary players outside the political square market.

The dimensions of fit and value within the working consensus are identified and explored as a consequence not only of the agreements among stakeholders and also as the result of its peripheral interactions with secondary players, which materialises the opportunity to recycle these resources by creating alternative structures and fringe events who existence depends upon the legitimacy and success of the mainstream festival. Both festival and fringe events shape the local production and consumption of culture, and this eclectic and unofficial working consensus becomes a source of and forum for entrepreneurial activities that promote social interaction and cultural exchange. The potentially negative effects of the lack of fit of these secondary players are mitigated by the benefits they bring to local communities beyond the target of the festival. Therefore, these informal arrangements allow the recycling of resources to the benefit of the wider community and serve as an alternative source of legitimacy offered from a counter-cultural perspective.

Counter-cultural legitimacy emerges from the misalignment of fit and value in the dynamics among formal and informal collaborators of the festival (Larson et al., 2015), but also from the recognition of the richness and ideological validity of alternative interpretations that can be assign to the recycling of its resources. Although the working consensus refers to the teams participating in the festival performance, thus stakeholders belonging to the same political square market, the informal agreements to recycle resources are an unrecognised part of the process that expands the benefits of the festival to wider audiences and communities. Alternative interpretations of the performance enhance the perception of the festival as a mainstream phenomenon, whose position is questioned and reinterpreted, leading to the organisation of fringe events that act as satellites orbiting the festival planet.

Festival organisers and stakeholders can benefit from a broader understanding of the terms in which collaboration is understood in their political square market. Acknowledging the potential areas of opportunity and friction when agreeing on a working consensus can facilitate the selection of collaborators and foresee which are going to be the key players in the negotiation depending on the content and format of the performance they are willing to create.

Similarly, the effects which fringe events have in the communities and potential audiences of the festival can be used to renegotiate their position and access to resources. Festivals which are surrounded by entrepreneurial secondary players benefit from an unmanaged extension of their networks that benefit niches not reached by their business activities. They become a source of ‘counter-culture legitimacy’ that gives the festival a solid central position in their environment, adding value to its overall activities and increasing its returns.

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