

Culture, the Cultural Management and the Art Market

The cultural evolution of management

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Cultural management is the science regarding the organization of cultural activities. For a better understanding, we must first define culture, indicate the object of cultural management, mention its objectives, establish who is the cultural manager and indicate the components of cultural management. According to some anthropologists, culture is a social behaviour, while others consider it a mere abstraction of general behaviour, and others see it as something that only exists in our mind. One of the first definitions of culture is: culture is that whole complex that includes knowledge, faith, art, moral, and other abilities and skills achieved by men as members of society.¹ Ever since the Renaissance, culture with its forms, values, and history has been a matter of interest for the intellectuals. Naturally, there have been periodic cultural crises, when authors and critics witnessed the decadence of a style or time period.² Culture is defined as a process of generating historical and social meaning. Studying different forms of culture facilitates the analysis of contemporaneous society.³

The word culture refers to the idea of product or growth, as well as to agriculture. But culture is also considered to be the everyday life, our mood, approach and way of understanding the world around us, which must be offered meaning. Raymond Williams, in his work *Culture and Society*, also supports the idea that the inner or spiritual process, which is different from the exterior one, is an alternative meaning of culture. This alternative meaning is related to art, religion, family, and personal aspects of life. Thus, culture becomes, as well as subjectivity and imagination, the reflexion of spirituality.⁴ James Clifford, on the other hand, talks about an art-culture system, where art, a good that can be owned or collected, becomes the pivot around which culture revolves. He analyses the system using both the structural and the historical method, reaches the conclusion that this is crucial in order to form subjectivity, and finds a connection between this and the idea of culture. According to Williams, in the 18th Century, art is mainly an ability and a skill.

The culture was associated with growth in nature, for both plants and man must be cultivated. Just as art, culture requires creativity, spontaneity, sensibility, and expressivity. Thus, the artist is given another social status. The word culture has been following a path which is parallel to that of art and has gotten an elevated meaning, sensible, essential and precious in society. Thus, culture and art have come to form a special category. In the 19th Century, the majority of these definitions remained the same, but let us not forget: culture is always changing and developing like a living organism. At the beginning of the 20th Century, starting with the development of culture in all the functional societies of the world, emerged a continuously growing number of artefacts, then considered exotic, primitive or archaic, which demanded to be seen as artistic and equally esthetic and moral as the previous centuries masterpieces. At the middle of the 20th Century, these forms of art became generally accepted.⁵

Cultural management in Romania

¹ E.B.Tyler – *Culturile primitive*, 1871

² David Chaney, *The Cultural Turn*, Routledge, 1994, pag.7

³ Ibidem, pag.20

⁴ Simon During, *The Cultural Studies Reader*, Routledge, 1993 – Carolyn Steedman, *Culture, Cultural studies and the historians*, pag.49-50

⁵ Simon During, *The Cultural Studies Reader*, Routledge, 1993 – James Clifford, *On collecting art and culture*, pag.57, 68-69

Trying to approach this discipline, dr. Aura Corbeanu stated that the gradual professionalization of the operative field in culture (the emergence of new jobs in management, communication, administration) determined me to try a systematic structuralization of data and a formulation of the competencies that I have achieved in the last years, in order to offer some proper work tools to the new generations of cultural operators and to all the professionals interested in this type of activities.

Cultural management is part of culturology and part of the contemporaneous management, but in our country it is not yet a prestigious scientific discipline. Cultural management defines the space within which the conditions of cultural and artistic creations can be met and implemented. The object of study of cultural management is represented by the totality of organizing methods of the cultural institutions that emerge in different societies and in different historical time frames.⁶

The cultural management in general respect

Accepted in Europe only starting with the '80s, when culture was developing internationally, the discipline is known as Cultural Management more and more specialists from different fields are becoming interested in it. This is a discipline of mainly Anglo-American origin, and its definition, as well as its components, varies to great extents from a European country to another. For example, museums management is different from the management of the theatres or cultural industries.

The fundamental object of cultural management is the discovery of solutions and proper organizational models that determine an efficient cultural activity in society and the market economy.⁷ Hence, there are two basic dimensions of cultural management, which merge and complete each other: the analytical-descriptive dimension, which describes and analyzes the existing organizational methods, and the projection-modelling dimension, which aims to develop and discover new forms of organization and organizing methods.

Among the specific objectives of cultural management are the following: designing the cultural system, that starts from a certain cultural politic of a country and community, modelling the cultural system within a country and community, planning the cultural development by establishing its aims, priorities and implementing methods, analysing the current cultural situation as a starting point in designing the planning models, designing the partnership systems between the public and the private sector, that will lead to the optimisation of the obtained results, organizing the production process, independently or within the cultural institution, organizing the process of culture display, all these being only a few.⁸

When speaking of cultural management, we refer to cultural politics, cultural development, cultural decentralization, the strategic management of cultural institutions, the management of cultural projects, culture economy, culture research, cultural exchange and cooperation, and thematic cultural networks.

The mission of cultural management is to connect management with creativity and culture in order to develop a long-lasting community. The cultural manager is the servant of a public cultural institution, of a cultural association or foundation, of a cultural centre, being the one who runs a theatre or the cultural affairs of the city. He is supposed to possess very good knowledge regarding the cultural economy, for he designs a project of the organization he serves that requires a budget he must be able to manage. If the philosophy of American management is future-oriented and it is defined by vitality, mobility, lack of formalism, abundance, quantity, and exemplary organization, the philosophy of European management, past and present-oriented, is characterised by prudence,

⁶ Aura Corbeanu, *Managementul proiectelor culturale*, București, Editura Comunicare.ro, 2000

⁷ Milena Dragičević-Šešić, Branimir Stojković, *Cultura: Management. Mediere. Marketing*, traducere de Liubița Raikici și Lucian Alexiu, comentarii de Sorina Ivanovici-Jecza, Timișoara, Editura Brumar, 2002, p. 15.

⁸ Aura Dvoracic, *Managementul cultural în contextul actual*

stability, compliance with conventions, accepting the necessities, underlining qualities and diversity.

Actually, the American Fr. Taylor, and the French Henry Fayol, the two “fathers” of management theory, clearly highlight the differences and influences on managerial practice. Thus, Taylor stresses on production, on the economic, efficiency and productivity factors respectively, whilst Fayol considers the good organizational administration and the repartition of leading tasks as a basis for the theory of management.⁹

Through their nature, the matters of running cultural institutions, which are a crossroads for management and culture, prove that these units, apart from their specific finalities, are, at large, like all the other organizations. They have a distinct organizational structure, a specific inner process, using their own private resources (inputs) and realizing cultural products and services (outputs).

The institutional system built and developed in culture constitutes a complex tool used by a certain human community for solving specific and concrete problems, determined by spiritual necessities. Therefore the cultural unit cannot ignore, unless by taking great risks, the concepts, symbolic paradigms, and qualitative reasoning that form the science management corpus. In an institutionally organized culture, management becomes a functional requirement, a compulsory condition for that system to be able to properly survive and function.¹⁰

Artistic management, according to Dan Martin, means applying traditional management functions (planning, organizing, staffing, supervision and control) in order to facilitate the production of visual arts and to present the artists’ work to an audience. Financial stability is a necessary starting point which allows an artistic program to unfold, and adopting a managerial orientation is presentation-related.¹¹ Duchamp admitted that the artist, identified as the producer on the market, and the spectator (the consumer) represent the two poles supporting artistic creation. Thus, even if creating an art piece is often reduced to the artist’s personality, the spectator completes it with a set of interpretations.

The object of cultural management or of the science related to organizing cultural activities, how it used to be called before this scientific discipline was applied, is the study of all organizing methods, forms and models that emerge in different societies and different historical time frames within cultural manifestations as a whole and within some cultural sectors (theatre, cinematography, radio fusion).

Peter F. Drucker pointed that management in its current state first appeared in the great economic organizations. We just recently realised that management is necessary for all modern organizations, be they economic or not. As a matter of fact, we came to the conclusion that these are even more necessary in non-economic organizations, as well as in the nonfinancial ones (the so-called social sector or state institutions). They need management precisely because they are not subordinated to the discipline imposed by profit and loss.¹²

Socially speaking, but also from a managerial point of view, each culture defines in time its own institutional structure, forming an original set of cultural tools that are interconnected through specific and governmental relations. The latter are also interconnected through specific relations, governed by their own organizational purposes and principles which generate valorizing directions.¹³

Both as part of culturology and contemporary management, cultural management starts from the premise that we only bring it up when we have a system within which we can organize, educate, and guide spiritual development, all through human activity. It defines the space where the conditions of cultural, especially artistic creation can be met, and its forms of implementation can be realized.

What is the role of artistic management? Conceptual action and thinking seem to be the two faces of the same coin when speaking about the interaction between management, economy, and

⁹ Idem

¹⁰ Vasile Zacheru , *Management si cultura*, Lutera, Buc. 2002

¹¹ Derrick Chong, *Arts Management*, Routledge, 2002, pag.15

¹² Drucker, *Managing the Non Profit Organization Bullerwork* - Heinemann, 1990

¹³ Gusti D. - *Opere*, vol. III, partea I, Editura Academie Bue 1970

aesthetic object. Hence, any attempt to define artistic management must take into account a set of clarifications like public/private, non-profit/commercial, or high/low.¹⁴

The art and the market

Art has always been connected to the market, and what used to refer to patronage, today refers to galleries, collections and sponsors. The aesthetic side has always intersected with the economic and managerial one. Regardless of how we evaluate the different types of art from the point of view of quality and quantity, the market remains the best filter able to determine the course of artwork.¹⁵ The art market and its practices like we know them today came to exist from the middle of the 18th Century when they began to form their institutions and functioning mechanisms. Starting from the Enlightenment, this term comes into use. This is the frame within which the demand and offer system takes shape on one hand, and a new artwork concept which eventually earns its special status compared to the other human productions emerges on the other hand. This happens when the confusion between artist and artisan, which had existed for centuries, finally disappears.¹⁶ *The emergence of the true poles of art trade in Netherlands, Italy, and especially in England translates the triumph of the commercial republics and the mercantilist spirit, intensifying trade before agriculture*¹⁷, stated Elena M. Pavel Rebegel in her study dedicated to the art market. The emergence and development of the printing machine and the emergence of the art museum add to these factors. The printing machine development brings chaos to the notion of a unique model and original idea. The relations between the creator and his work totally change with the emergence of the etching technique and later of photography, which just like the printing machine, favours the easy multiplication and spreading of an artistic product. The art museum emergence establishes new hierarchies between art products, between them and other categories of collections, between their owners and those who get access to them.¹⁸ The market does not analyse art from the point of view of affective values, but by the values established by the artistic system, by the art world, made of critics, collectors, museums, galleries, media and others. Who is better entitled to judge the artwork than the world of art itself?¹⁹ For, as Bourdieu used to say, the artwork only has meaning and is interesting to someone with cultural competences, which manifests like a code. The greatest challenge for the artistic manager is change, according to Dan Martin.²⁰ Art is so much more than what is presented to us at first sight. It reminds us of the innovative power of man above all. Creation is the essence of our purpose and of the progress of mankind.

¹⁴ Derrick Chong, *Arts Management*, Routledge, 2002, pag.15

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, pag.6

¹⁶ Elena Mihaela Pavel Rebegel, *Piața bunurilor de artă. Teorii și realități*, Ed.Economică, București, 2000, p.94

¹⁷ *Idem*

¹⁸ Elena Mihaela Pavel Rebegel, *op.cit.*, p.95

¹⁹ Giancarlo Politi, *Flash Art*, 2000

²⁰ W.J. Byrnes, *Management & the Arts*, Elsevier, 2009