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INTERNATIONAL FOLKLORE FESTIVAL OF ZAGREB: EXPERIENCES AND DILEMMAS OF APPLIED ETHNOLOGY

The International Folklore Festival (IFF) has been held in Zagreb since 1966. The organizers of the IFF have entrusted the conception and programme of the Festival to experts – ethnologists and folklorists. The author has been professional and artistic director of the Festival since 1992 and is also research advisor for the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research. Planning the IFF each year has been fraught with professional and organizational challenges. In addition to questions about the purpose of and idea behind the IFF and trying to widen it programmatically, dilemmas concerning the advantages and disadvantages of tying scientific and applied ethnology and the problem of the possible politicization of the IFF are always present.

Keywords: International Folklore Festival, folklore inscenation, science and its application

Croatia has a long history of inscenation of traditional culture, especially of music, poetry, dance, customs and traditional costumes. From the 1930s onwards, performances were held in small Croatian towns and in the capital city of Zagreb where members of the branch organizations of the Peasant Concord would display their home area traditions. Peasant Concord (Seljačka sloga) was the cultural, educational and charitable organization established by the Croatian Peasant Party (Hrvatska seljačka stranka) and was active through its various branches established in the villages. One of the main tasks of the Peasant Concord was the affirmation and preservation of the Croatian traditional culture that belonged to the majority peasant population and that was repressed by the foreign, middle-class culture. The task of the branches of the Peasant Concord involved: In addition to spreading literacy, health and other education and national awakening, they were cultivating their cultural heritage, especially its folklore expressions. To prevent its disappearance and its distortion, they were consciously renewing it, practicing it and displaying

it in various settings (Bratanić 1941). Moreover, with the help of ethnologists and folklorists, they even reconstructed elements that were part of the memories of older community members, but that were no longer a part of the cultural practices of the community. The festivals of the Peasant Concord were abandoned a few years after the Second World War under the influence of a new ideology that did not care about peasant and national traditions but instead fostered industrialization and the interests of the industrial working class. Later social and political changes and the efforts and inventiveness of supporters of Croatian folk traditions made it possible for Zagreb to get the Folklore Festival again. In parallel with the ruling ideology and policy, the idea of cultivation and promotion of traditional cultures has been enlivened globally; the International Folklore Festival, it was stressed, is the meeting point not only of different peoples and cultures from Yugoslav soil, but also of peoples and cultures from around the world.

The procession of participants at the opening ceremony of the first International Folklore Festival gathered such a multitude in Zagreb's main square in 1966 that not even a piece of asphalt can be seen in photographs of that event. The political elite and people from all relevant professions were present, and surely present in the audience were many advocates of the Croatian Peasant Party and the Peasant Concord. Zagreb of that period was much more inhabited than pre-war Zagreb was, and the new population had arrived from the peasant environment; the new proletarians obviously had not forgotten their peasant roots. The Zagreb Festival and other festivals that started that year or somewhat later gave a new impulse to the folklore groups, many of which never ceased their activities. Of the Croatian population that is engaged in non-professional cultural activities, the most numerous are members of folklore groups, i.e., folklore amateurism is present on the most massive scale.¹

¹ For the purpose of this exposition, I have decided to use the syntagms "folklore group" and "folklore amateurism" to simplify various naming that occurred with the changed social and cultural institutions in whose fold such groups were acting (branches of the Peasant Concord, cultural-artistic or cultural-educational societies and the like). Folklore groups are acting in larger and smaller settlements, in villages and cities, so that often village and city folklore groups are mentioned. Village groups are cultivating and displaying the local folklore heritage, i.e., the folklore of their immediate home area, whereas the city groups gather the people of varied origins and heritage and mainly have in their repertoire the heritage of different local social environments. Organized village folklore groups and also non-formal village groups that are not active permanently and not organized that well, are all desirable participants of the Zagreb Festival, and the syntagm "folklore groups" pertains to both. The dichotomy village – city is losing its former meaning nowadays, the once huge and clear distinctions in culture and the way of communicating are being lost; in the administrative sense such differences are determined on the basis of the communal infrastructure and the number of inhabitants. Nevertheless, the folklore groups can be still divided into those which do not have and those that have their own heritage, although they might learn and display the foreign. Most often both create their repertoire in the same way: They learn about it with the

The International Folklore Festival of Zagreb was held, from its inception, at several carefully chosen locations. One stage was located in a spacious courtyard in the centre of the city, another in the Upper Town, i.e., in the old part of Zagreb. The main Zagreb square was always the place for the happening of the Folklore Festival; the ceremonial opening was held there and the ceremonial procession would end there. Some of the events of the Folklore Festival would occasionally take place in Maksimir Park and elsewhere in the city. Zagreb's Concert Hall "Vatroslav Lisinski" was, for over a decade, a main stage for the Festival's programmes. Participants of the Festival were performing in the area surrounding Zagreb, including the villages near Zagreb that later became the part of the present-day Zagreb. Their residents maintained their old folklore groups to the present and participate at the Festival at the same time as performers and as hosts and observers.

The rules of the Festival envisaged that half of the participants of the Folklore Festival would be from Croatia, a quarter from other Yugoslav republics and provinces and a quarter from abroad. At the Zagreb Festival Croats who lived outside of Croatia also participated, not only those from the other republics of the former Yugoslavia, but also members of the older Croatian diaspora from European countries and also folklore groups of the national minorities living in Croatia. Efforts were made to always gather as many professional domestic and foreign participants as possible. It was more difficult to keep a check on the quality of foreign participants, but they were of interest as a means of learning about the other and the different, often perceived as a fresh breeze of the exotic and unknown.

For many years, the firm Arto, under the leadership of Petar Miha-nović, the prime mover of the Folklore Festival, organized the Folklore Festival. Expert advisers included prominent ethnologists and folklorists, the key figures of Croatian ethnology, Milovan Gavazzi and Branimir Bratanić, followed by Ivan Ivančan and Zvonimir Ljevaković as the heads of expert teams, later inherited by a younger generation of the ethnologists (Mirjana Jakelić, Stjepan Sremac, Mandica Svirac, Zorica Vitez). The research fellows of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research (former Institute of Folk Art, i.e., Institute of Folklore Research), the Ethnographic Museum Zagreb and the Department of Ethnology at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb were engaged in the Folklore Festival, along with a few other institutions and individuals. The organization of the Festival was entrusted to Zagreb Concert Management in 1992.

In addition to the performance aspects of the Folklore Festival, meetings and conferences of experts are also organized, and the Festival is

help of choreographers and musical advisors. Village folklore groups might have older villagers in their midst, who learned about their musical and dance heritage through intergenerational transmission.

always broadcast in the media, especially on radio and television. During the preparations for the Festival and during the Festival itself, sound and graphic documentation is made and saved, later to be used for cultural and scientific purposes. The Festival is accompanied by exhibitions, musical and dance workshops and publications.

The Zagreb Festival has always received monetary and other support from relevant institutions and the State and city government. The City of Zagreb hosts the event and carries a multitude of obligations for the Festival and its participants, even to the present. The City of Zagreb organizes the reception for representatives of the participants, where the symbolical gifts are being exchanged and letters of thanks handed out to the representatives of the participants. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian National Tourist Board and the Zagreb Tourist Board give significant sums of money and provide logistical support. The Festival has been organised under several auspices during its time: During the former Yugoslavia and also in independent Croatia these consisted of the highest Croatian state bodies (the government, parliament) or their presidents. After the cancellation of the Festival because of the threat of war in 1991, the sponsor of the 26th International Folklore Festival in 1992 was the first president of the independent Republic of Croatia, Dr. Franjo Tuđman; later, the permanent sponsor became the Croatian Parliament.

In the independent Republic of Croatia, since 1992, the largest number of the participants, around two thirds, come from Croatia, and members of the Croatian diaspora are among the guests from other countries.² Add to these participants folklore ensembles from different countries and continents and it becomes apparent that the Festival is oriented towards the cultural diversity and richness of the contemporary world. The total number of the Festival's participants has been decreasing throughout the years; nowadays, there are thirty to forty folklore groups, i.e., around one thousand people participating.

During the last ten years the Festivals have been organized thematically. The 30th, a jubilee Festival in 1996, was devoted to wedding customs. Afterwards, other themes were chosen: Folklore of the Croatian Adriatic, Revived Heritage (revival of folklore groups in areas affected by the war),

² The Croatian Diaspora is only occasionally represented at the Zagreb Festival, since the Festival gathers only those folklore groups that cultivate and display the folklore of their immediate home area, i.e., the inheritors of particular local folklore traditions. Folklore groups of the Croatian Diaspora, especial those overseas, are rarely organized according to the particular region or settlement from which they originate, which means that they have a wide repertoire, combine various local traditions and different traditional costumes, musical instruments and customs. All these groups are contributing in their own ways to the preservation of the Croatian identity and heritage, they have their own festivals on which they represent themselves in Croatia and abroad, and the present-day Zagreb Festival hosts occasionally some of them.

Folklore Heritage at the End of the Millennium, Carnival Customs, Harvest Customs, Christmas Customs, Folklore of Croats from Abroad, Folklore Heritage of Minority Communities of Croatia, In the Footsteps of Andrija Kačić Miošić, Folklore of North-eastern Croatia: Spring Processions and Queen Processions. Only a few of the themes brought together all participants (wedding and carnival customs, Folklore Heritage at the End of the Millennium), and other themes were covered within one or more of the performances at a given Festival that also covered other programmes. Organizers tried to highlight the chosen theme by featuring it in an accompanying ethnographic exhibition.

The thematic approach gives the opportunity to get to know the context of traditional music and dance, which provides much more information to the spectator and makes a deeper understanding possible, instead of just providing an enjoyable experience of musical and dance proficiency by the Festival's participants. That context is most often some custom or a display of the folklore characteristics of a certain area or ethnic group. The thematic approach makes it possible to easily compare and memorize the elements of the performances, resulting in a longer lasting and wider knowledge of the cultural form.

The programme of the Festival consists also of exhibitions, music and dance workshops and concerts of folk sacral music. The concerts of world music have been organized with domestic and foreign musicians since 1994, with the intent of turning attention to contemporary music inspired by folk music heritage. Music and dance workshops are becoming more numerous and in high demand because they allow the active participation of interested people and also enable them to meet the performers. The potential participants of workshops get in touch with the organizers of the Festival and sometimes are active in designing the workshops, recommend workshop advisors and suggest topics about which they would like to know more. Folklore groups participating in the Festival, especially foreign folklore ensembles and individuals, musicians and dancers, also take part in these workshops.

The concerts of folk sacral music have a longer tradition at the Zagreb Festival, and the participants of the Festival have taken part in a solemn mass at St. Stephen's Cathedral since 1990, singing during the liturgy. Concerts of folk sacral music indicate, among other things, links between folklore and church music, especially the manner and style of singing stemming from local traditions of vocal performance. It is impressive how the same songs performed by church singers from various areas differ in their interpretation.

In recent years music and video recordings have been issued, recorded during preparation for the Festival and during the Festival, and sometimes shows of folk traditional costumes are organized, occasionally followed by modern creations inspired by traditional costumes and folk visual arts.

Unfortunately, because of increasing traffic and safety issues, the city discontinued the picturesque procession of participants through Zagreb streets and the opening ceremony in the city's main square – Ban Jelačić Square. Although it was not a decision brought by the experts, they did not regret it too much, as it seems that the interest of the audience was not sufficient to justify the enormous effort that went into the procession, especially that of the procession participants. The Folklore Festival might not have the same place in Zagreb's life as before, but Zagreb has offered it some favors: The stage and a big audience (Gradec stage in the Upper Town), a second stage in Zagreb's main square, use of the atrium and other spaces of the Klovičevi dvori Gallery, exhibition space in the Ethnographic Museum Zagreb, among others. Accompanying the official programme of the Festival, its participants especially enjoy staying together in the Student Home "Cvjetno naselje". Informal social networking of participants in folklore heritage occurs there, friendships are being made and mutual visits and travels arranged.

Challenges and dilemmas

Planning the IFF each year has been inevitably fraught with professional and other challenges. While trying to make the Zagreb Festival recognisable as a modern cultural event, questions about the purpose of and conception behind the Festival and of widening its programmes are ever present. What are the challenges and dilemmas concerning the scientific and other questions that the experts leading the Festival³ have been encountering in the last fifteen years?

1. The question of change

First among the challenges and dilemmas are those that can be expressed by the question, should the Festival be changed, in which ways and to what extent? This question is tied to the recognition of the Festival as distinct from other similar festivals, and the answer lies somewhere between "freezing" it where it is and changing it according to some plan. Of course, the Festival has been changing all along: The main influences have been changes in its

³ The present expert team leading the Zagreb Festival consists of the ethnologists and folklorists headed by the author of this article, who was given, upon the decision of the director of Zagreb Concert Management and its Administrative Council in 1992, the duty of the professional and artistic director of the Festival. The head of the Festival picks her expert advisors, contingent on the conception of a current Festival, which she proposes to the Council of the International Folklore Festival. The majority of the expert advisors are the scientists from the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research and the associates of the Ethnographic Museum Zagreb. Occasionally, other ethnologists and folklorists from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are taking part in the project too.

leadership, especially its directors, but also some outer circumstances, such as the influences of power, ideology and politics. The Festival has changed too because of the incessant changes that are engulfing the society and culture as a whole. The way of life is gradually changing, as well as attitudes towards traditional culture, including those of exponents and enthusiasts of the traditional culture. Changes have come from both above – the organizers of the Festival, and below – from the participants of the Festival. Every encounter with the participants, every visit of the candidates for the Zagreb Festival, attests to the changes that have occurred since the previous meeting: changes in the leadership, repertoire and in membership.

The people heading the International Folklore Festival lately were aware from the outset that changes in the Zagreb Festival would be inevitable, but were not in favor of radical interventions. They tried to preserve the distinctiveness of the Festival by preserving the continuity of the idea, while looking at the same time for professionally and artistically justified changes in its programme. They consciously kept solving these dilemmas through compromise, for example, by introducing the idea of themes to the Festival, concerts of world music, an increase in the number of dance and music workshops and a preference for open spaces for most of the events because of the more relaxed atmosphere these afford and better audience contact.

What part of the original conception of the Zagreb Festival did we try to preserve? It is the idea of a cultural festival that is about the display of the local cultural heritage of its participants (music, dance, customs, traditional costumes), and a preference given to the older forms, but not excluding newer elements. In a thorough discussion of all of the relevant questions about the "public practice" of folk music and dance and of the conception of these festivals, Naila Ceribašić named it "the conception of originality" (in spite of the preceding critique of the term originality) and defined it as a contemporary conception and practice that is supported by an older practice – that of the folklore festivals of the 1930s (Ceribašić 2003:298).

Of course, that is only a part of the answer regarding the conception of the International Folklore Festival of Zagreb while the problematics are a lot more complex; much has yet to be researched, has been assumed, is changeable, accidental and, above all, questionable. An inevitable question is, who are the participants of the Zagreb Festival, i.e., who are the inheritors and carriers of the local repertoires?

Despite the absence of systematic research, it has been known for a long time that the members of formal and informal folklore groups in villages and especially in bigger settlements are not only "the natives" but newcomers too, who by joining the folklore group identify with the local community. Members of these folklore groups for some time already, have not only been agriculturalists, although there are huge local differences in that respect and differences related to the origins of groups and other circumstances (for in-

stance, establishing groups within the Peasant Concord branches or other organizations). It is known that folklore groups have to practice their repertoire a lot, i.e., that the intergenerational transfer of live music and dance practices is not happening any more, but the organized, amateurish practicing of folk music and dance for recreational and performance purposes, albeit mainly with an awareness of the cultivation of the tradition. Even when the older members of the community, those who participated in the life of their local music and dance practice earlier, have some role in the folklore group, the main role is that of advisors, choreographers and music associates. Their roles increased as the competence of the members of the community who were the participants in the living practice of the local repertoire, decreased. These advisors became the interpreters and mediators needed for the adaptation of the old music and dance practices to a new purpose – scenic display.

These dilemmas and the lack of clarity are tied to the question of local music and dance repertoire and the corresponding traditional costumes, especially because of the existence of the older and newer forms, that sometimes appear in the same scenic performance.⁴ Local music and dance repertoire, as well as the culture as a whole, is subject to permanent change; it accepts with time the new forms and rejects the old, and it is not possible to define it within a certain moment or time slot. Nevertheless, when shaping the repertoire of a folklore group, one skips that problem and uses the folklore elements from different periods for the scenic displays needed, i.e., whatever is known in the community or adopted by it. Since traditional costumes change through time, it happens that the clothes and the music and dance elements being displayed are not from the same time period. However, the purpose of the scenic displays of dances, music and costumes is not the reconstruction of their history.

Regarding the repertoire, there is a tendency for the participants to offer to the Zagreb Festival their tried repertoire, the one they used in the Festival earlier. It is visible moreover that the advisors and members of the folklore groups are aware of the requirements of certain festivals and they adapt to them. Their full repertoire is wider, and they choose from it what they consider suitable for particular festivals. If the expectations of the participants

⁴ The ethnologist Stjepan Sremac, a scientist with an enormous experience in applied ethnochoreography and one of the former directors of the International Folklore Festival, is the author of significant texts on folklore dance and its scenic display. Aside from his published texts I recommend his dissertation "Folklorni ples u Hrvata od 'izvora' do pozornice. Između društvene i kulturne potrebe, politike, kulturnog i nacionalnog identiteta" (Folklore dance among Croats from the 'source' to the stage. Between the social and cultural need, politics, and cultural and national identity) whose manuscript is held in the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research. He wrote in the article "Smotre folkloru u Hrvatskoj nekad i danas" (Folklore Festivals in Croatia Now and Then) also about the changes in the repertoire, i.e., about including in the programmes of the Festival dances of the so called newer tradition (Sremac 1978:287; about the same in Ceribašić 2003:260).

and organizers do not match, the last word, of course, goes to the organizer, i.e., the expert team of the Festival, because it is responsible for the conceptual frame and the realization of the Festival's programmes. Folklore groups and their advisors decide about the conception and repertoire of their groups; it is said that they often decide for wider and more flexible programmes, which they adapt to the various occasions of given performances. It is left to the members of the group to enjoy as they can in the official repertoire of their groups and to "practice", in unofficial moments, also some other kinds of music and dance expressions, which evade the influence of the expert advisors of the Zagreb Festival and other festivals. Interested researchers, ethnologists and folklorists have though, some partial insights about that spontaneous practice.

2. Questions concerning purpose

I would put in second place dilemmas concerning the purpose of the International Folklore Festival of Zagreb, i.e., the question about for whom the Festival is intended and what goals are to be attained by it. Of course, it is intended for the participants and the audiences, and it seems that there are enough of both to justify its continuation.

The Zagreb Festival is a descendant of earlier festivals of Croatian peasant culture that were organized by the Peasant Concord from 1935. These two are tied together by the older generation of professional folklorists and by the participants, and partly by the conception of the Festival. The comparison to the purpose of the festivals of the Peasant Concord comes to mind, since they were intended for the affirmation and preservation of the traditional culture of the Croatian peasantry, and also the whole Croatian national community, at the moment when it was being threatened by foreign influences mediated through the middle-class. That was long ago though, and in the meanwhile a lot changed; two wars, of which one was a World War, and political and social circumstances changed thoroughly twice. Still, we wonder: Can we expect today that the cultivation and presentation of traditional culture on the stage and in the media, folklore festivals included, contribute to the affirmation and preservation of cultural heritage? Personally, I believe that the answer is positive, but I know that along with that lofty purpose there are many other purposes too: recreation, entertainment, commercial and touristic. The latter is surely going to become more and more important, and it could be at this time quite a stimulating area of ethnological interest. It would be worthy exploring who the participants are (age, gender, professional and other affiliation), and who the audience is of the International Folklore Festival of Zagreb and what is its role and how can it be developed as part of the tourism of the City of Zagreb, i.e., its place in the development of cultural tourism.

The Zagreb Festival is perceived by many as the "umbrella" Croatian folklore festival, and performing at it is considered a confirmation of their quality or "originality". Officially, the Zagreb Festival does not have that role but it is one of the oldest and most reputable festivals, planned and prepared by experts of appropriate education and experience, gathering participants from the whole of Croatia and from abroad and is one of numerous traditional cultural events of Zagreb. Of course, the early significance of Zagreb's festivals of Peasant Concord is not forgotten, and among the older members of the folklore groups there are still members of the branches of the Peasant Concord or at least those who remember their activities. As the capital of Croatia, Zagreb continues to be a desirable destination of folklore groups and their members and of Croats who live outside of Croatia.

Interested foreign folklore ensembles offer to come to the Zagreb Festival, thanks to the Festival's Internet page, international calendars of folklore festivals in which it is listed, and the word of mouth of foreign participants of the Festival. The members of the Festival's expert team can only hope to host the groups from different parts of Europe and the world after giving them promptly a passing grade on the basis of received video recordings and few additional data. In this way, some great and some not so great foreign folklore ensembles arrive to the Zagreb Festival, differing quite often from domestic participants and between themselves, especially regarding the stylization of their performances. The selection processes for the domestic and foreign participants are quite different because, due to the lack of funds for that part of the preparation of the Zagreb Festival, the members of the expert team cannot go on planned tours of foreign festivals and ensembles.

It is difficult to include foreign participants into thematic programmes (succeeded exceptionally with the themes of weddings and carnivals, partly also harvests), but that is compensated with the organisation of workshops of foreign participants that create huge interest. Watching how the foreign groups cultivate and display their traditional culture still marks the Zagreb Festival and attracts to it a wider audience than just the participants themselves or the supporters of folklore amateurism. To that wider audience belong the artists, especially painters and theatre people, and even the researchers of a non-ethnological provenance.

3. Questions about application and practice

As the third point, I would mention dilemmas concerning the advantages and disadvantages of tying scientific and applied ethnology and folkloristics. These are the known dilemmas concerning whether the researcher/scientist should or should not, may or may not be involved in practice; for instance, does she affect that way the life of the cultural phenomena, how and how

much. Answers are many and varied, and can be further broken down to questions of quantity rather than to questions of quality of such influence. Some influence is inevitable even when the researcher appears as an invisible and unobtrusive observer, since such an observer does not exist. The only question is, what is her influence and which reactions does she cause? For scientific purposes, i.e., when the research is done for the scientific interpretation of the cultural phenomena, it is possible to adopt the role of an observer, whatever that means, but when it comes to a cultural festival, this is impossible. Festivals have contents, a programme, participants, duration, people organizing them, space, technical equipment and more. A festival is not a spontaneous happening, but an organized one; it has to follow the rules of the scene and the idea of the organizer of the programme. Researchers and scientists, aware of these differences and dilemmas, have to decide if they will engage in applied work too, which in this case means planning and preparing the programme of the folklore festival. It seems indisputable that such tasks should not be left to the unskilled, or trained on-the-job or those unladen with these dilemmas. Moreover, I believe that the double role of the researcher/professional advisor at the Festival brings some advantages. It highlights some of the insights into the dilemmas of the profession and into changes in practices and stimulates the incessant endeavour to apply, to effect the programmes of the Festival, the progress and the new insights of the profession (compare Zebec 2007).

With respect to this, it might be worth mentioning a positive example of the permeating of the scientific and applicative by our associate, Naila Ceribašić, who had, on the basis of her ethnomusicological research on the Zagreb Festival, planned and implemented the thematic event about women-players of the musical instruments that are by Croatian tradition, typically played only by men. That peculiar event crossed the boundaries of the usual frames of reference at the Zagreb Festival, and this was not accidental. The present expert team is remaining open to the questioning of new possibilities and elements even when it seems that they are not in unison with Festival's original conception.

I do not share the opinion that, along with the International Folklore Festival of Zagreb conferences have to be regularly held (Rihtman-Auguštin 1982; 1983). Although this article was a result of the 40th anniversary of the International Folklore Festival of Zagreb and the conference on display of traditional culture and its presentation in the media, the real incentive for these deliberations stems from the connection between the scientific and applied activity of the author. The Zagreb Festival exists even without ethnologic-folkloristic conferences; pondering the Festival is needed by the profession, i.e., by a few scientists participating in the organization of the Zagreb Folklore Festival and other festivals. Involved in designing the programme and in touch with the participants, they happen to be in the centre

of the activity, in their "laboratory". It is understandable that this viewpoint has some strong and weak points, but seems to be better than closing one's eyes to one of the most vital areas of modern culture that is leaning on traditional culture, i.e., it represents its transformative forms and functions, which in simplified terms, we can call folklore amateurism.

It should be mentioned that the present Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia, the Cultural Office of the City of Zagreb and the organizer of the Festival, Zagreb Concert Management, as well as their predecessors, support the directors and their expert teams, i.e., that they have always entrusted the Zagreb Festival to the experts of appropriate education and experience, connected to the research and scientific institutions. In this way, the city and national administration display their attitude towards the Zagreb Festival. They obviously count on the influence of ethnology on planning the Zagreb Festival and believe that it will ensure the quality of that cultural event.

4. Questions on politicization

I would stress yet another dilemma that cannot be avoided while dealing with the International Folklore Festival of Zagreb and that is the question of politicization, i.e., of the possible manipulation of the event for political ends. It is known that nothing that is connected to identity and its symbols can avoid the attention of politics, so such is the case with traditional culture and folklore.⁵ Known in recent years in Croatia is the example of political conflicts and manipulations surrounding Alka of Sinj – the traditional contest of horsemen in hitting a target (*alka*) with a lance, a contest that marks the withdrawal of the Turkish army, i.e., their relinquishing of the siege of the town of Sinj in 1715 (Vukušić 2007). The Zagreb Festival and other folklore festivals have always gotten an ideological framework around them that has been continually adapted to the social circumstances and ruling politics. It is understandable that the festivals that the Peasant Concord organized were in the service of the politics of the Croatian Peasant Party, in the service of the cultural and national revival that the party was advocating. The influence of politics on the International Folklore Festival of Zagreb from 1966 to the present day can be judged by the publications of the Festival. It is clear from

⁵ In relation to this topic, along with the already cited book of Naila Ceribašić and the dissertation of Stjepan Sremec, I am referring to the texts of Dunja Rihtman-Auguštin collected in her book *Etnologija i etnomit* (Rihtman-Auguštin 2001). The author has recognised long ago the need for new approaches in Croatian ethnology and folkloristics, and especially stimulated the explorations of a modernity that does not neglect connections with the past ("transformation of the traditional culture"); she thought about the relations between science and its application, possibilities of the (ab)use of traditional culture and symbols of identity, and stimulated discussions on folklore display and its presentation in the media (Rihtman-Auguštin 1983; 1991; 2001).

its catalogues that politicians participated in the working and ceremonial bodies of the Festival and spoke at the opening ceremonies and at other occasions tied to the Festival. The ruling politics and ideology can be read from the rhetoric of the printed and other media that covered and commented on the Festival, especially from the daily newspapers and the radio and television broadcasts.

The contemporary International Folklore Festival of Zagreb did not avoid, and moreover, did not even try avoiding a certain degree of politicization, believing or hiding behind the belief that benefits would ensue, such as the affirmation and existence of the event. It could be said that the involvement of politicians in the ceremonial bodies of the Festival, sponsorships and ceremonial speeches at festivities and openings are a part of the "folklore" of the Folklore Festival, while the financial aid of the state and city institutions and the engagement of the politicians in the working bodies of the Festival are the precondition for the festival and similar events to be held. Are these two sides of the same coin and can one exist without the other?

The present expert team of the Zagreb Festival is not far from the idea that the time has come to leave out the speeches of politicians, especially at occasions covered by the media, but the same opinion is not held by the organizer of the Festival, embodied in the director of Zagreb Concert Management. It is not easy for him and his institution to take over the responsibility and give up the members of the Council of the International Folklore Festival who are in high political and state functions, or to give up the sponsorship of the Croatian Parliament and take from the politicians and emissaries of the highest state and city bodies their opportunity to address the participants and audience of the Festival and the TV viewers during the opening ceremony. The question is even more complex: Do the participants, audience and TV viewers want to give that up, or would they equally appreciate the festival if those familiar faces and sweet words were left out? The answer is not scientifically confirmed, but can be conjectured: Maybe we all would, for now, lose upon that seemingly democratic move. I believe that nowadays the consequences of that politicization are benign, that they bring to the festivals certain support and to the politicians additional obligations and a few minutes on the TV broadcast of the opening ceremony of the Festival.

On the eve of its entry to the European Union, Croatia should work on making its identity recognizable. Traditional culture could be a part of that identity because it is a part of our heritage and of our contemporary culture. This part of the culture is being stressed by many other nations and countries and folklore festivals and associations for the preservation of folklore heritage exist in many countries of the world. Of course, there is no need to insist on the "folklorisation" of our identity, but even that is more acceptable than Americanisation of the worst kind, the values of primitive capitalism and false business-like efficiency and continual depreciation of the national

culture, especially language and literature. Nowadays, Croatian traditional culture has the opportunity to become part of the awakened heritage of mankind, promoted and protected by globally widespread cultural action, UNESCO's and others'. In a certain way, to that world movement for the preservation and protection of cultural heritage, especially of nonmaterial (intangible) culture, belongs numerous membership of folklore ensembles and informal groups that cultivate and display their local folklore heritage. The modern life of that heritage differs from the last century's and from even earlier times, but also cannot be neglected as a part of contemporary Croatian culture and the stronghold of the national, regional and local identities.

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ZAGREBAČKA MEĐUNARODNA SMOTRA FOLKLORA: ISKUSTVA I DVOJBE

SAŽETAK

U Zagrebu se od 1966. godine održava Međunarodna smotra folklor. Osmišljavanje koncepcije i programa organizatori povjeravaju stručnjacima, etnologima i folkloristima. Autorica članka je od 1992. profesionalna i umjetnička direktorica Smotre; istodobno ona je i znanstvena savjetnica u Institutu za etnologiju i folkloristiku. U radu na pripremama Međunarodne smotre folklor susreće se sa stručnim i izvanstručnim izazovima i dvojabama. Uz propitivanje svrhe i koncepcije Međunarodne smotre folklor te nastojanja oko proširenja njezinih programskih okvira, posebice su prisutne dvojbe o prednostima i manama povezivanja znanstvene i primijenjene djelatnosti u etnologiji te pitanja o mogućoj politizaciji Međunarodne smotre folklor.

Ključne riječi: Međunarodna smotra folklor, prikazivanje folklor na sceni, znanost i primjena