

## **TITLE**

**Experiences in Audience Enlargement in the South Tyrol (How to Increase Cultural Consumers in the South Tyrol): Propaedeutics and New Ways of Presenting Art and Culture**

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Antonio Lampis (1964). Since 1997 Director of the Department of Italian culture in the Autonomous Province of Bolzano. He previously worked (since 1983) for the Presidency of the Council of the Ministries. He teaches various masters in economy of culture. He is the vice-president of the Civic Theater and Auditorium Foundation of Bolzano. Author of many publications, speaker at numerous meetings on topics related to: regional autonomy, linguistic rights, public management, cultural marketing.

## **ABSTRACT**

The Paper discusses the process of looking for new audiences and visitors, which the Department for Culture of the Bolzano Province /South Tyrol carried out between 1998 and 2006. The opening of new venues was therefore preceded and accompanied by a massive campaign aimed at making people aware of the uses of culture. A cultural initiative is considered to be successful if it satisfies, at the same time, two, often unmentioned, desires: to learn something while experiencing emotions in a context with a socialising potential.

Various initiatives aimed at an audience increase have been undertaken. Here are three essential lines of intervention :

1. QUANTITY of cultural communication;
2. METHOD on the splitting up of traditional ways of presentation;
3. ASSOCIATIONS focused on mixing cultural and leisure interests.

During this period we witnessed a change in the habits of the local people. There was an evident increase in cultural consumption.

## **KEYWORDS**

"Audience Enlargement"; "To learn something while experiencing emotions"; "New ways of cultural communication"; "How to eliminate the 'activation costs'".

## ARTICLE

1. *"When I hear the word culture, I reach for my gun"*. This phrase, notoriously attributed to Goering, might express the thoughts of a criminal but it is also emblematic of an instinct to be found in many people: that of suspicion of complexity and beauty. While there is a rapid expansion of that part of the population that considers cultural experiences to be the high point of human experience, even today it is a difficult business to sell culture - or even to give it away.

In the following pages an account will be made of the search for a new public for culture, a search that has attempted to fuse together empirically various stimuli arising from recent academic studies, amongst which, in Italy, those of Michele Trimarchi (1993, 2001, 2002, 2003) and Pier Luigi Sacco (2001, 2002, 2004).

This paper presents the projects carried out by the Department of the Bolzano province for the Italian culture over the period from 1998 to 2006 and which had the double aim of increasing the diffusion and fruition of culture throughout the Province and of developing its own initiatives, above all those regarding publications and exhibitions focused on a large part of population. The aim of offering new cultural services to the population was accompanied by that of monitoring expectations that had been expressed or were latent, and at the same time of training, at a local level, young professionals for work in cultural services. The Province of Bolzano is an extremely special case, one characterised by the presence of three languages and of three cultural references (Italian, German, and Ladin), as well as by the widespread diffusion of strong cultural associations, organised on a voluntary basis and often quite traditional in their activities. So the region can be seen to reproduce on a small scale a relationship between diversity and unity that is particularly topical today in view of the forthcoming enlargement of the European Union<sup>1</sup>. The overall panorama must begin by mentioning a pro capita cost that is relatively high with respect to the average of the nation, and that has been employed for a widespread and massive conservation of our heritage. This has made our territory one of the best conserved in the whole of Europe. Such an approach has, however, delayed investment in contemporary art and professional entertainment with respect to the traditional financing of activities linked to the conservation of our cultural heritage, including both buildings and folkloric events. In this context the problem has urgently emerged whether or not public institutions should limit themselves to handing out money or whether they should initiate positive interventions and actions for placing the theme of cultural fruition at the heart of public debate and making it central to the daily life of an ever increasing number of citizens. This last choice has been firmly decided on for the Italian group which, though, did not have the same centuries-long traditions of cultural organisations typical of German and Ladin communities. At the beginning of this process, Bolzano was outside the large entertainment circuits, in part due to the lack of a theatre capable of hosting large-scale opera and ballet performances and of a city concert hall - both of which problems, though, were resolved with the opening of a new theatre and a new auditorium in 2000.

At the same time territorial information was reinforced with the opening of new museums. Since it is by now evident that the presence of cultural venues is not by itself sufficient to increase the public, the opening of new structures has been preceded and accompanied by the previously mentioned process of stimulation in order to prepare the ground for an interest in culture. This process is based on the fact that a cultural initiative today is successful, or in other words it will convince people to leave their homes, when it satisfies two criteria that we are perhaps not too well aware of: to learn something while at the same time experiencing emotions in a potentially socialising environment.

Over the past two thousand years, art and culture have had much influence in evoking wonder and emotions, but only recently have they been able to produce effective contextual learning processes. Having gained this knowledge during the period I mentioned earlier - which in Bolzano has meant generous financial funding and

a liberal and open-minded political management - various initiatives have been carried out aimed at developing an audience that can be grouped under three essential lines of intervention:

### 1.2. QUANTITY.

We have aimed at a qualitative and quantitative increase in cultural communication by developing a genuine media campaign about cultural fruition both in general and in individual events. Even today, after the intense debate about cultural communications that marked the second half of the nineties, a lack of financial and human means for marketing activities is, sadly, typical of the great majority of cultural projects and of the cultural strategies of the bodies concerned with cultural activities or products. Even without reaching the 'American' percentage of 30% of the total budget, we would all the same firmly urge that a sufficient amount of intellectual and financial input should be given from the very outset of planning cultural manifestations and, above all, the expenses for communications should become an integral part of the project and not thought of only at the end. Finally we have kept in mind the opportunity of following new and, as far as possible, customised paths for reaching our potential public, making use of individual marketing techniques and of television. Festivals, manifestations and exhibitions can reach an adequate proportion of expenses for communications and production simply by reducing the amount of output (number of performances, material shown etc. following the simple rule of producing less but with a far higher quality) while keeping in mind that, if even the best initiatives do not have a public or a media response, it is as though they had never taken place. As a result of the Eurisco inquiry<sup>2</sup> carried out in 2000 to discover the perception and expectations of the users of the cultural offer, it has been possible to evaluate the lines of action undertaken. It clearly emerged that the wide extent of enjoyment of the range of cultural manifestations organised and financed is greater than the percentage of those who, actually, actively participate in cultural initiatives. So it became evident that satisfaction is also expressed by those who stay at home, as also was seen from the interviews that were carried out. One of the reasons for this result is that for many of the initiatives promoted, the communicative component was not only aimed at informing and inviting, but was in itself a part of the cultural project. All the projects were also characterised by a component for social communications, not just structured as a means for filling this or that hall, but autonomously thought out for reaching the imagination also of those who, for the moment, did not take an active part in seeing the works or their context. These people became pleasurably aware of the fact that their city was being culturally animated.

### 1.3. METHOD.

Over the years a serial method for presenting art and culture has been developed or, in the words of television, formats based on the breakdown of traditional methods of art and spectacle (concerts, shows, visits to museums) in order to offer, on the contrary, meeting points, different from the ritual ones, built together with events. Experts, well-known for their talent for expressing their own enthusiasm for the subject in hand, broke down and presented the subjects together with the keys to the best paths to follow for interpretation and to the complex symbolism involved. These initiatives were quite different from the by now abused strategy of the 'blockbusters' which made use of multi-media techniques and some patterns employed by the most qualified television broadcasting, as in a series of guided tours. The method adopted derived from what has been called the cultural paradox, which is fed by the new, but which sees everyone interested only in what they already know and not ready to understand what they do not know. In order to eliminate the so-called 'activation costs' we need at times the courage to step outside formulas and narrate a part of the magic of art.

### 1.4. CONNECTIONS.

At the same time a system was worked out based on the most frequent use of interconnected interests, and by the organisation of events that might excite the interests of the different sectors involved in the areas of knowledge or of spare-time activities. The themes used were referring both to particular social classes and to those belonging to well-established leisure-time groups, in order to exchange different audiences and groups of visitors and to cut down the high initial cost of the 'first time' public, the basic obstacle to cultural consumerism. In the context we are taking into consideration, the key areas were those of sport, health, interest in travel, the

cinema, and crafts. What showed to be of very particular importance was an outstanding interest in the local community, starting from local history and folklore, something which could then be directed towards far more profound inquiries into the cultural local area and, in this way, could satisfy the wishes of over a quarter of the local population - an important mission for a local Authority such as a region or a province.

## 2.1.

Here follows a brief description of the three previously mentioned lines of intervention. The need for a greater quantity of cultural information and communication, as described in subheading 1.2., is certainly a condition common to many areas. In the Bolzano province the first problem to emerge was that of informing a greater number of citizens about the services offered directly by the Provincial administration in support of culture, of artists, and of associations and thus of the education of individuals throughout their life. With this end in mind, a massive campaign was undertaken for the distribution of fliers called *Cultura offresi*, Culture for Sale, accompanied by widespread distribution, above all in new urban settlements, of informative material and using a method that until then was more typical in the advertising of foodstuffs by the big distributors. Later campaigns, on the one hand stimulated cultural consumption in general and, on the other, constantly provided information about names, addresses and opportunities offered through the services directly supplied by the cultural Department. The graphics were purposely crude and often imitated commercial advertising. On the one hand the theme followed was that of fitness and health, extremely fashionable in the 90s, - *Culture lengthens life*<sup>3</sup> - the fad for diets - *Measure the quality of your life... don't forget to train your mind ... go to the theatre, to the library, discover art, take part in cultural initiatives* - or else of the advertising campaigns by cell phone companies and the fears of radiation - *No cost culture: only advantages for your head* - or, finally, of the compulsion to invest savings with the campaign *Construct yourself: invest in culture!*. At other times cultural consumption was evoked as an answer to satisfying primary needs by diffusing images that were an invitation to attend cultural venues but by evoking food consumption, daily bread, coffee etc. as in *Coffee culture* or succulent sandwiches like those in the campaign *There's more taste to knowing another language*.

With the aim of involving in culture even the people whom the Eurisko survey had defined as belonging to the "home-work-TV" category (estimated at around 20% of the population) a great use was made of television. In the first place commercial channels were commissioned to broadcast news about cultural events, often explained with the journalistic emphasis typical of city or even more local television news services. Later on a series of low-cost television broadcasts was carried out, lasting about 15 minutes, dedicated to the local cultural panorama or even purposely created for the propaedeutics of contemporary art history. A local museum director known for his competence as well as for his friendship with artists and knowledge of Italian contemporary art, explained the events with a straightforward and often anecdotal language. These programmes were transmitted around the time of the local television news: the rest of the television programmes are not much watched as they are almost wholly dedicated to television sales. Given that the television usually promotes itself only by way of television, it was decided to treat the programmes promoting, expanding and divulging culture in the same way as any other cultural event: people were invited with the usual mailed invitations, posters, and newspaper adverts to watch shows never followed before, in the same way as people are invited to the private views of exhibitions. This communications attack for cultural consumption included periodical full-page announcements in the local papers to give information about individual initiatives, apparently far in excess of the real needs of the single events. At the same time unusual forms of communicating were used in order to attract a public uninterested in radio, television, and newspapers: for example, the use of individual marketing strategies such as those for the promotion of dance festivals in the local discotheques and gyms, or the help of Pakistanis who sell flowers in restaurants for the promotion of academic conferences about new cultural awareness, subjects that might also be of interest to themselves, in particular, those linked to the Islamic world. A particular success was achieved with individual approaches to a young public: groups of youngsters were formed who, during the break between lessons, talked to their school fellows about what they had learned and about their personal interest in

forthcoming activities expressly designed for young audiences. The usual habit of the cultural Councillors who would contact the school board Directorate, which would then inform the head teachers in the hope that they, eventually, might inform the other teachers and, in turn, the pupils, was then avoided. Experience has shown that usually this chain quickly breaks down and only with difficulty reaches the students. Non-differential marketing techniques, instead, have proved their efficiency. This approach had been tried out for years with regard to other sectors of youth consumerism and has proved to be particularly useful when the aim was not simply to get the young students into the auditoriums but to involve them personally in doing something different in their spare time. Initiatives based on the so-called "nursing effect" have proved to be particularly effective: that is the enthusiasm created for activities aimed at meeting the consumer halfway, such as the *Book-Buses*, books on local culture and history brought by bus to the valley communities or the permanent teaching courses in local markets, or the experiments in overcoming reluctance for theatre-going by selecting a particular sector of the public to go to the theatre in exchange for a video-interview about their "first time". The heavy investment of resources and energy for these hard selling communication campaigns, as described above, has after two years caused a marked copycat effect and has encouraged the local City Councils, associations and cultural bodies to review their habits with regard to cultural communications. What remained fixed was the possibility of lowering the aesthetic level of the communication while increasing the quality of its content, with the aim of bringing the public up to a certain cultural level without dumbing down culture itself.

The accurate considerations on communication quantity have been determinant during the implementation phase of the new theatre built in a popular neighbourhood of about 30.000 inhabitants, and which cost about 5 million exclusively renovations. The analysis of the cultural and socioeconomic situation of that city area showed feelings of deep social malaise. Therefore, in order to avoid empty halls for the future, it was decided to focus efforts on nurturing a long term interest in and identification with theatre.

This was achieved through an accurate choice of theatre productions and through strategies promoting the involvement of the neighbourhoods through *guerrilla and viral marketing* strategies, through a surprise effect and loyalty campaign, by encouraging the notion that the theatre could mirror local history and even become a beacon of new cultural habits. Actors and companies showed up in public spaces (neighbourhood markets, commercial areas, and in front of churches) before the theatre's opening, presenting 'live' trailers for upcoming productions. Retailers have also been involved in spreading the information through *flyering, but with a short communication* of the event's relevance at the same time. Thorough direct marketing actions have been carried out in the residential areas surrounding the theatre.

Particularly efficient was the idea to use an unusual 'taste and see' strategy of offering 20 free shows . in return for detailed information about tastes and habits as for culture and performing arts. This course of action was taken consciously due to the socioeconomic conditions of neighbourhoods in question and also current theories on the social exclusion of culture and the economic value of the so-called "activation costs" of potential consumers. It is certainly true that provision of culture at zero cost must be the exception. This strategy, however, is commonly used commercially, especially in times of economic crisis or for goods with a clearly intrinsic value. As far as the execution of cultural events at zero cost is concerned, there is still a deep and unfounded prejudice. The uncritical repetition and acceptance of eighties theories, according to which "*no cost means no value*", is often due to a lacking knowledge of the specific characteristics of cultural consumption, that, in order to be really "cultural", does not have to correspond to a pre-existing demand, but it has rather to be determined by the offer, this one being the most important parts of the demand construction process. Moreover, it is increasingly evident that those having never been exposed to a cultural product do not easily have the opportunity to appreciate or even to imagine its characteristics or modalities of consumption. The so-called "activation cost" which could be defined as the engagement needed in order to turn the prejudice of the event's boredom and heaviness into the consciousness of it being a qualifying cultural moment, is generally faced with great parsimony.

## 2.2.

The 'splitting up' method described in section 1.3. is one of the basic points of force in the politics of the propaedeutics of art and entertainment. It has been carried out with different initiatives, experimented on various occasions and at times on a large scale. The first of these, called *Virtual Meetings* was aimed at proposing to the general public a visit/attack on the main Italian art galleries making use - then something new and pioneering - of the techniques of virtual communications and counting on the interest this would arouse in those not normally interested in art. Sitting comfortably in a local cinema, the public could experience the amazement and emotions of seeing the great works of Italian art and could compare them with works shown in quite different and distant settings. People could also have a taste - and we are talking about 1998 - of the most up-to-date technologies for presenting images. It was hoped that this virtual visit would arouse an interest in a personal investigation of the artworks that had been shown. With the help of five young local professionals, on five different dates, the following venues were built virtually: the Galleria Palatina, Uffizi, Brera, the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna, the Galleria dell'Accademia in Venice, the Cappella Sistina in Rome, the Galleria Borghese and the Capodimonte museum in Naples. The success of this initiative underlined the participants' willingness to understand and to learn, and the project was continued in 2000 and in 2001, transforming these *Virtual Meetings* into *Real Meetings*. Once the initial diffidence of the museums had been overcome, prestigious loans became possible and a plan was created for art propaedeutics making use of a "Room of marvels" containing a single work and available for individual contemplation for a week. This was preceded by a brief propaedeutic phase, and educational interventions which also made use of new technologies were designed for putting into context and understanding the work even by the general public<sup>4</sup>. In the first version of *Real Meetings*, there were, over a five-week period, a work each by Masaccio, Anonymous of the school of Mantegna, Correggio, Luca Giordano, and Pietro Longhi. The second series, called "Incontri reali 2", *Real Meetings 2*, showed, in three different places in the city, a selection of loans representing three national museums, the national archaeological museum of Taranto, the Capodimonte museum in Naples, and the gallery of contemporary and modern art of Rome. The educational element was also present in this case too and, at the same time, art propaedeutics were expanded as part of an increased activity in the field of adult education, a traditional element of culture in the province of Bolzano and one that, for over twenty years, has been continuously carried out by numerous local private agencies and associations with the of public help. The same approach was used for the world of entertainment with particular regard to opera and contemporary and classical music. The first initiative, called *OPERAzione*, had the aim of creating interest in and diffusing awareness of opera in the general public, above all the young, in a city that then, in 1999, still did not have a theatre sufficiently large to host opera productions. In this case too, through five different meetings, we deconstructed that amazing "toy" known as opera in order to show how it functions, and discover the mechanisms and symbolism that go to make it up. It was demonstrated how, in fact, these elements are often quite familiar. Qualified experts such as Alessandro Baricco, Antonio Ballista, Alberto Jona, Nicola Campogrande, and Susanna Franchi illustrated the mechanisms of opera with the support of such artists as Eva Mei, Luisa Castellani, the Toujours Ensemble, Antonella Banaudi, and Oscar Alessi. During these meetings, the talks were alternated with representative excerpts performed by singers and musicians used to the traditional mechanisms of concerts and who were, in this case, used almost as jukeboxes in order to convey to the public the symbols, stylistic features, and constructive elements of opera. The initiatives were presented to the students by their school fellows during the school breaks and were accompanied by a massive media campaign to bring opera to the attention of the public of a city which for some time had had no genuine opera season.

Following the same lines, in 2002 the initiative called *On and On* was carried out. The idea was to encourage the opening of new horizons. In music, as in all paths of awareness, we know the importance of trying to understand what is unfamiliar. For classical music it is evident that we must offer a key to understanding, but this can also be said of new types of music, often considered with general diffidence without knowing the enormous artistic research work lying behind them. So the aim was at informing people interested in music, in particular classical and symphonic music, about today's newest musical phenomena that, above all in other European countries, are now heard, not just in youthful environments, but also as the background music for cultural events,

advertis and cinema. The questions asked were: mixer or cello? Don't you understand your parents passion for concerts? Do you want to understand the music your children like? Is a DJ an artist? Club culture and that of the auditoriums: an impossible dialogue? The method used for getting replies was that of organising a mixed, zigzag programme alternating new trends and classicism. This was done in order to have a public change-over, to get to know the music created by DJs, and to show the most recent developments, including the market results of electronic music, to those used to cultured music and vice-versa; and to give information and suggestions on cultured music to a younger public which already knows about electronic music and the sounds experimented within the discotheques. Those who came to hear Claudio Coccoluto put his hand to the mixer were tempted to return to hear Nicola Campogrande lead a string quartet, just as the fans of Susanna Franchi could hear how Madaski made comprehensible serial music both when produced electronically and also on instruments. Though still creating problems, these were an easier way in the comprehension. Considering the newness of approach and the fact that club culture in Italy and, above all, in the South Tyrol is still something of a mystery, much attention was given to the communicational part of the project and to the quality of its curators (Luca De Gennaro and Alberto Jona) and of the guests (apart from those already mentioned: Alessio Bertalot, Boosta, Nicola Campogrande, Claudio Coccoluto, Fabio De Luca, Giacomo Fornari, Susanna Franchi, Madaski, and Sergio Messina). Now *On & On* is also in book and CD form<sup>5</sup> distributed in the province to a selected group of classical music lovers and the fans of dance music (De Gennaro, Jona 2004).

In this section a mention should be made of the propaedeutic activity aimed at creating interest in cinema, *Itinerari nel cinema*, Excursions into Cinema, that has widely distributed five publications analysing and illustrating a selection of well-known films and divided into five different themes (war, work, animals, reality, diversity). The films chosen were part of the media collection of the audio-visual centre run by the Province and which offers free loans of serious cinema DVDs and VHSs.

2005 and 2006 some projects were undertaken following the analysis method. The first one regarded the world of jazz with five preparatory meetings headed by Paolo Fresu; the second one regarded the analysis of the mechanisms of theatre representation through the preparation of Goldoni's "Vedova scaltra" ('The Shrewd Widow'), called "Vedova scomposta" ('The Analysed Widow'). This latter was carried out in partnership with the 'Teatro Stabile di Bolzano' and with the supervision of Lamberto Trezzini, one of Italy's most respected experts in the organisation of theatre.

### 2.3.

With regard to subheading 1.4., referring to the development of the audience by making the most of *interconnections and overlaps*, there was – again in relation to opera – the repeated projection of a film lasting one and a half hours, created by a young local expert from hundreds of film clips, in which great directors used opera in order to underline the emotional highlights of their films. The aim was that of interesting cinema lovers in opera and also of showing, through films and animated cartoons, that the fundamental aspects of the Italian cultural inheritance, held by the majority of the population to be inaccessible, were in fact present in everyday life. Films anyway have always had an important role in introducing the young to theatre and opera<sup>6</sup>. The use of overlapping interests had also been attempted over the years in various other initiatives such as, for example, the attempts to interest the enormous sporting population in shows of photography about the life and history of sporting associations. In fact, over the years, photography has often been the occasion for contacts between the Province's cultural centre and a new public often attracted by its strong and deeply held interest in its local territory. For many years the Councillors for Italian culture have tried to answer this need by mapping the territory and its society through the eyes of great photographers in order to open new perspectives and inspire new questions. These photographic experiments were able to satisfy the interests of territorial culture, of the lovers of great photography, and of a new public that wanted to see and recognise itself. The photographers who recorded the provincial territory were: Berengo-Gardin, Jodice, Kampfer, Radino, Barbieri, Basilico, Schileo, Cresci, Schick, and Lotti. At times it was the fact of living in a certain area that attracted a new public to photographic shows,

at other times, as in the case of the show *M'impiego ma non mi spezzo*, (I Get Employed but Will Not Break), it was belonging to the class of clerical workers, the largest local class of workers. An interest in local affairs led the public to deepen their knowledge of historical facts, as in the case of those who inquired into the history of cultural associations or the biographies of great local figures, while the traditional passion of the inhabitants of Bolzano for travelling brought a large public to the series of initiatives, existing now for three years, called *Verso nuove culture*, Towards New Cultures. These were contributed to by eminent academics and were presented to a vast public in an accessible manner and linked to exhibitions about aspects of the art and culture of South Africa, Islam, Iran, and other European and extra-European cultures. The idea was to make people think about how such cultures seem distant from our own while many components of "our" cultures have in fact arrived from them through close cultural relations and exchanges.

To stay on the subject of art, and following the same line, a mention should be made of *Musicaxocchi/Eyemusic*, an interdisciplinary exhibition plan which, through exhibitions in various parts of the city, attempted to discover the relationship between contemporary art and music, between vision and sound. This stimulated an understanding of contemporary art and theatre; fans of music were introduced to the visual arts and the traditional public for contemporary art exhibitions was introduced to various expressions of musical research. The following artists participated in this search for affinities, contrasts, and symmetries: Mario Airò, Atelier van Lieshout, Olivo Barbieri, Botto & Bruno, Maurizio Donzelli, Granular Synthesis, Laila Kongevold, Silvia Levenson, Marzia Migliora, Subsonica, Grazia Toderi, Heinrich Unterhofer, Bill Viola and Chen Zhen<sup>7</sup>. Another project was entitled *food4thought*: It exhibited works and performances by exposing contributions of authors, artists and cooks. This time we decided to act upon the interconnection of interests between contemporary art enthusiasts and food lovers. *Food4thought* synthesizes some aspects of the ancestral relationship between food and knowledge, projecting them into the dimensions of art, science, economics and the local territory. Thus, a third figure appears alongside the artist and cook, one more discreet but also certainly more problematic: the land, seen as a synthesis of nature and culture.

### 3.

What reactions did these strategies provoke? In the period under examination we noted a genuine change in the habits of the citizens in the Province of Bolzano and, in particular, in the city itself where there was a notable growth in cultural supply and demand, as shown by the Eurisko data, by the Datamedia constant monitoring commissioned by the Bolzano City Council, and by the statistics elaborated by the co-operative that manages the fortnightly calendar of Bolzano cultural activities and the other big cities in the region. The Trevi cultural centre, where a large part of the activities described took place, passed in two years from 9,000 to 40,000 visitors; the two media-points it hosts had, in four years, an increase of 40% per annum; from 1997 to 1999 the number of cultural references in the local press almost multiplied by ten; in 2003 the Bolzano repertory theatre had an increase in spectators of 44.3%, and a 140% increase of young spectators; the theatre's new productions almost always show a full house, though to many people the theatre had seemed too large for a city of some 97,000 inhabitants. The 2003 family survey entitled "Cultura, socialità e tempo libero" ('Culture, sociability and free time') conducted by the Istituto italiano di statistica (fascicolo n. 12 – 2005) positions the Autonomous Province of Bolzano in first place for the consumption of theatre productions, exhibitions and museums. Around 34.4 citizens over 6 years of age, double the national average, have attended in the past year theatre productions of various types, whilst with other forms of entertainment – museums and exhibitions – the figure is 45.6 (compared with national averages of 17.9 and 28.5 respectively).

Certainly there were many other factors leading to these changes, but the combination of intensive cultural communications and the development of opportunities for learning the ways of appreciating art and performance have certainly had a fundamental role. Now these new structures and an amazingly enlivened scenario in Bolzano constitute a strong and new supply and demand for culture which, together with considerations of its multi-lingual character, has induced the provincial and city administration to candidate itself for the Manifesta '09 and for the cultural capital of Europe in 2019.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Amplius in : Lampis A. (1998, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> This survey can be found in: <http://www.provincia.bz.it/cultura/eurisko.htm>.

Four segments were identified in the samples of people interviewed, each of which offered a specific aspect of cultural life, in terms of: fruition, needs, expectations.

The most active segment from the cultural point of view is the “Search for Knowledge” group (represented by 26% of those interviewed): this is a group mostly consisting of young and adult individuals (18-35 years old) with a high level of education. Culture is very important for these citizens and is seen in a continual search for, and use of, cultural emotions (performances, initiatives) and of opportunities for learning more about it.

The second most active segment from a cultural point of view is the “History/Folklore” group (26% of those interviewed), which is a group mostly made up of adults/elderly people (from 56 to 70 years old) but also of younger adults, with a medium-low level of education. It is, like the preceding group, extremely active in its search for information about culture and in following cultural activities; however, their particular preferences are for activities involving history and local folklore.

The third segment, which also has a strong cultural impetus, is that of the “Social/friendship/travelling” group (28% of those interviewed), and is prevalently made up of young people with a medium-high level of education and in it the search for knowledge is mostly limited to meetings, social occasions with similar groups, and travelling as a means of cultural enrichment.

<sup>3</sup> The campaign took place in 1998. It was created in order to deliver directly to the homes of a great variety of people, through the post and television, the results of a research carried out on a vast statistical group in Sweden. This was undertaken by the Department of Social Health of the University of Umeå, S-901 85 Umeå, and by the Swedish Central Office of Statistics, S-11581 Stockholm. According to the survey, those who assist in at least 80 cultural events in a year (shows, theatre, cinema) are less likely to become ill and, instead, live longer. This is independent of their income or education. An interesting element in this research by the Swedish university into factors that influence people’s survival is that it arrived at its conclusions almost by chance, deluding the doctors who were hoping for more traditional results: sport, food, smoking etc., so much so that the results were not translated into English. The original Swedish text was obtained by us and translated into Italian and German: on [http://www.provincia.bz.it/cultura/publ\\_rip/publ\\_getreso.asp?PRES\\_ID=33741](http://www.provincia.bz.it/cultura/publ_rip/publ_getreso.asp?PRES_ID=33741)

<sup>4</sup> This intuition has had an indirect but comforting authoritative analysis by Umberto Eco, (Eco 2003).

<sup>5</sup> CD attached: Brian Eno, Mascagni, DJ Shadow, Mozart, Autechre, Groove Armada, Mussorgsky, Orbital, Beethoven, Underworld.

<sup>6</sup> According to American professionals, tears, and the expression “I almost peed in my pants”, said by Julia Roberts in the film “Pretty Woman”, have contributed more to the development of an audience for opera than the most massive marketing campaigns.

<sup>7</sup> The initiatives, relative catalogues or other publications, and the intense activity of infusing local history and culture is more widely described on <http://www.provincia.bz.it/cultura/>

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