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Articles

ATHENS INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH
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The plethora of papers presented every year will enable the editorial board of each journal to select the best ones, and in so doing, to produce a quality academic journal. In addition to papers presented, ATINER encourages the independent submission of papers to be evaluated for publication.

The current issue of the Athens Journal of Mediterranean Studies (AJMS) is the second issue of the fifth volume (2019). The reader will notice some changes compared with the previous issues, which I hope is an improvement. An effort has been made to include papers which extent to different issues of Mediterranean studies. Two papers are related to history; one to economics and the other to architecture – urban planning.

Gregory T. Papanikos, President
Athens Institute for Education and Research

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12th Annual International Conference on Mediterranean Studies
15-18 April 2019, Athens, Greece

The [Center for European & Mediterranean Affairs](#) organizes the **12th Annual International Conference on Mediterranean Studies, 15-18 April 2019, Athens, Greece**. The aim of the symposium is to give the opportunity to all academics and researchers to exchange their teaching and researching knowledge and experience. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (https://www.atiner.gr/2019/FORM-MDT.doc).

Academic Members Responsible for the Conference

- **Dr. Yannis Stivachtis**, Director, **Center for European & Mediterranean Affairs** and Director & Professor, International Studies Program Virginia Tech – Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, USA.
- **Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos**, Honorary Professor, University of Stirling, UK.
- **Dr. David Philip Wick**, Professor of History, Gordon College, USA.

Important Dates

- Abstract Submission: **deadline closed**
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: **18 March 2019**

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The Social Program Emphasizes the Educational Aspect of the Academic Meetings of Atiner.

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Important Dates
- Abstract Submission: **6 May 2019**
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: **20 May 2019**

Academic Member Responsible for the Conference

- **Dr. Bettina Koch**, Head, Politics & International Affairs Unit, ATINER & Associate Professor of Political Science, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, USA.

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Augustus - The Engineering of Belief & the Pax Deorum
Part 2 in a Serial Study of the Pax Deorum

David P. Wick[*]

The Emperor Augustus would believe at the end of his life that he had rekindled at least a functioning image of the archaic Roman religious spirit in the major arteries of his empire and at least in its Greek and Italian regions, and in his city. His contemporaries seem to have agreed that they could see this happening, even when they acknowledged it as an act of propaganda in some sort. Modern scholars have been more inclined to see through it, or to see only the propaganda, or an event staged by a managed, state religion. My intent in this study – the second of three parts (Wick (2019a & 2019b) – has been to examine the attempt by Augustus to stage (before and during the year 17 of the old era) what he hoped or argued would be a transformative event, one that might re-create the family religious solidarity and wholeness of community he and his wife believed the Roman world needed to survive. This study focuses on the design of the Saeculares event itself – its use of 'captive' popular literature, themes of family and repentance in ritual acts, objects and liturgy, uses of the symbolic teaching nature of spaces in the Roman cityscape, and the participation of Augustus and his wife themselves (and their use of their own property in the cityscape to press the redeeming nature of the rather non-Roman god Apollo) as well as the Greek birth-deity Eilithyia.

Keywords: *Ancient Studies, Roman Religion, Political/Social History, Augustus, Early Roman Empire.*

> Roman you will pay for your forefathers' sins
> Till you rebuild gods' temples from ruins,
> Roofs of worm-eaten oak,
> Statues filthy with smoke.
> To be below the gods your rule defends
> To this fix all beginnings and all ends.
> Gods take a heavy fee
> From wailing Italy… [1]

The poet Horace, whose lines here I used in the first part of this study (and use them again to set the focus) was at once a distant friend of, and often a daring critic of, Octavian's new regime. He had a habit of sounding this note periodically and pointedly, first in opposition to the party and family of the

'Augustus' that Octavian would become; and later, discovering he was an insider, as a corrective to his chattier and more personally reflective writings.

I argued in the article beginning this series that Augustus seems not only to have undergone a conversion of his own on matters of deity and definition of life in the aftermath of the Battle of Actium and what political historians call 'the Settlement of 29," but also to have shared with his generation of political players and thinkers an interest in the general subject of regeneration or even salvation. Rome, its existence as well as character, the *pax deorum* of Rome (or the peace if tried to maintain with the gods was broken fatally, and itself needed healing. He set more store by his own initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries before he left Athens for Italy, than one might have expected from a Roman of his public character.[2] (Jones 1970) A similar initiation, on Italian soil, appeared for the purification of the hero of the *Aeneid*, a poem which must have been much discussed at every stage of its composition in the Augustan circle.[3] (Fowler 1911, Mazzolani 1970: 175) The great act … *acts* … of 'spiritual engineering, though there were the *Ludi Saeculares* of 17 B.C.

The Ludi Saeculares

I suggested as I finished the previous study in this series that the great national festival of the *Saeculares* makes the proper hinge on which to hang any discussion of Augustan public `propaganda', but also that it makes a more useful hinge if we recollect carefully how we are defining the beast -- the word is one we use frequently in the twentieth century, usually with emotion and seldom without disdain. The meaning operative here I gave last year. Even the cheaper sort of propaganda attempts an act of definition, an unprincipled coloring of actual things in the hope they will begin to look in public as the author wished them to. High propaganda (there are better words for it, but we are usually too sophisticated to get much use out of them)[4] hopes by some force or character of its proclamation *to give an idea or intention actuality*.

Augustus had by the year 17, a decade from the solidifying of his regime, spent a great deal of effort attempting to return the *appearance* of a functioning Republic to many parts of the civic life of Rome. There was less illusion about this than has sometimes been thought. The Asian governor who spoke of the years before Actium in terms of suicide (I quoted this in last year's study)

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[2]Jones also quotes (p. 148) without fully catching its spirit, the stanza from the *Carmen Saeculare* in which Horace (or better Augustus, I suspect) agonizes over "generations fertile in guilt" and almost manages to drag the *lex maritandis* visibly into the worship. The bachelors of the Roman political elite, after all, were present for once.
[3]W. Warde Fowler, <u>Religious Experience of the Roman People</u> (1911), cap. XVIII: "Religious Feeling in the Poems of Virgil", pp. 403-427.
[4]"Prophecy" perhaps, in the poetic sense of the word, or even "evangelism". When dealing with the central motivations of human hearts in historical settings -- even when those motivations might be materialist, pecuniary, dynastic, or simply egotistical -- religious words are precisely not out of place.

struck the right note -- "restored to serviceability, if not to its natural state."[5] (Johnson et al. 1961, Price 1984, cf. Ehrenberg and Jones 1949, Dittenberger 1905, Lewis and Reinhold 1966, Gruen 1974). Augustus had just pushed through a series of moral legislations in the teeth of considerable grumbling among the nobility. His program of temple repair, of refounding the infrastructure -- if you like -- of the *pax deorum* was well on toward completion. He proposed before long to spend some considerable time in the provinces. Agrippa would also be abroad. Before he left there were two things to attend to: regularizing the position of his grandsons Gaius and Lucius as heirs, and setting the physical and spiritual regeneration of Rome on a sound basis. To judge by the intensity of his activity in our surviving accounts, he gave the second of these activities as least as much weight as the first. He was not engaged in a simple exercise of display. At worst he would have re-established the peace of his city with the gods before his absence. At best some real purification and definition might take place in the hearts or heads of his capital's people.

The sheer importance of this within the context of its time is often missed by historians of mere political mechanics. The literature and even the street-corner speakers of the late Republic had been broadcasting the idea that the world was nearing the end of an age. Either a new age was coming, or blind chaos.[6] (Dodds 1972: 17-22, Pasquali 1931: 297) Virgil and Horace had put the optimistic view with varying degrees of politeness and real enthusiasm,[7] but

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[5]The quotation, and the references, in case part 1 of the study is not available. *"We could justly hold it (the birthday of Augustus) to be equivalent to the beginning of all things, and he has restored to serviceability, if not to its natural state, every form that had become imperfect and fallen into misfortune, and he has given a different aspect to the whole world, which blithely would have embraced its own destruction if Caesar had not been born for the common benefit of all. Therefore people would be right to consider this to have been the beginning of the breath of life for them, which has set a limit to regrets for having been born."* <u>Ancient Roman Statu</u>tes, ed. A.C. Johnson et al (1961), no. 119. See also the chapter "Greeks and Rome" in S.R.F. Price, <u>Rituals and Power: the Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor</u> (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 53-77. Price is better with the details than with the feeling of the evidence he handles in my view, but has some enlightening points to make about the role of Roman provincial magistrates in personalizing and even Romanizing the Hellenic view of Augustus.

[6]Horace, <u>Odes</u>, III, vi, 46 ff.; <u>Epodes</u>, xvi. Lucretius II, 1150-1174 and V, 826 ff. This reaches its ultimate low point in Seneca, <u>Nat. Qu.</u> III, 27-30 and his Epistle XC, 40, 44. On Romulus as calendary founder of the first Roman age now drawing to its end, and the theurgic magic exerted by calendar-making on the functioning of time see Ovid, <u>Fasti</u> I, 27 ff. By this view Caesar had dislocated and revised the very mechanics of the cosmos (Scott 1933, Jeanmaire 1924). The acquaintance of Julius Caesar's circle with Egyptian "astral science" and with experts in it of international reputation (like Sosigenes) was considerable, and we would be ill-advised to interpret any ancient calendar reform in a purely scientific or practical light. The assassins chose, for whatever reason, to act precisely upon the *Anna Perenna*, the initial day of the old Romulan year. Cf. Macrobius, <u>Saturnalia</u> I, xvi, 39, which preserves the tradition that Caesar's attention to astronomy was in general very Egyptian, and that a treatise of his own on it was for a long time extant (cf Taylor 1931, Maasolani 1970).

[7]Virgil, <u>Eclogues</u> IV, of course, as well as V, 78 f. and IX, 47-48. And again Horace, <u>Epodes</u>, xvi, which admits both optimistic and pessimistic readings. Ovid, Fasti III, 159 f. Manilius, <u>Astronomica</u> V, 734-739.

behind them were philosophical writers and culture critics like Varro[8] and a great deal of (lost) cataclysmic Egyptian-Antonine propaganda. No intelligent skeptic would have wasted so much political and spiritual capital.

To Augustus, for whom each of the continuing scandals, social problem and mutinies in the city probably created fresh private doubts about his handling of the diving peace, the issue was critical. It hardly mattered that Antony was gone from the world; for over a century Rome had shown an astonishing genius for ending one civil war only with a false lull that carried in it the seeds of the next (and sharper) wave of violence. At some point, a new era had to be seen to really begin.

If not, it would always seem by default to have begun at Actium with only the push and shove of enormous physical forces to make it legitimate. The rather leaned-out remnants of those forces remained of course; the legions sat on the frontiers like shadows of Actium. But while they could place Rome under arrest, or loot it, they could never make it work. The *pax deorum* of the legions worried the emperor too, but that of the city most of all. It must come first, as he intended it to define the provinces he was melding into an empire. Augustus put all his tools in a row for this work.

First, he intended that everyone, in symbol at least, should be present. The law *de maritandis ordinibus* of the previous year which prohibited bachelors from attending public events was waived just this once. (Fowler 1911: 442) On the evening of 26, 27 and 28 May priests distributed torches, sulphur and bitumen to all free individuals, *regardless of citizenship*. The people purified themselves by such means and made agricultural offerings in the old Roman manner.[9]

When the city was thus symbolically clean Augustus went on the night before the 1st of June, down into the cavernous little shrine under the Tiber banks of the Campus Martius called Tarentum and began a series of torchlit sacrifices to the darker side of the new rebirth. The place had a tradition of connoting Roman regeneration which Zosimus has preserved along with the details of the festival.[10] The first night the Emperor and Agrippa propitiated the Fates, not only the dark definers of past and future from Greek mythology but also in their hope the beneficial *fata Iovis* that recurrently appeared to drive and protect the refugees in Virgil's *Aeneid* -- and who might be expected to bring in the new age. The second night was devoted to the Eilithyia, the Greek child-birth deity. The third addressed the Mother of the earth.

All this evening business had a strong Greek flavor to it, redolent (so far as we know about it) of the Greek underworld cults, of initiations and death to an old, guilt-stained life after the fashion of the ancient Eleusinian mysteries.[11]

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[8]This bit of Varro's <u>*de gente Populi Romani*</u> has been preserved in Augustine, <u>de Civ. Dei</u> XXII, xxviii.

[9]Zosimus, <u>Historia Nova</u> II, 5.

[10]Zosimus II, 1-4. The Sybilline oracle is recorded in cap. 6.

[11]It bears useful comparison with the <u>Homeric Hymn to Demeter</u> 480 ff. Cf. Dodds, <u>Greeks and the Irrational</u> (Berkeley, 1981), pp. 137, 172 n. 102, 258 n. 29; <u>Ancient Concept of Progress</u>, p. 145, 148 f. Also Fowler, op cit.

(Dodds 1972, Fowler 1911) Augustus finished with a sort of pastoral prayer for the health of the state, and of his house and "*familia*", in which were grouped in mystic fashion all the citizens present.[12] (Fowler 1911)

The actual heralding and founding of the newly regenerated era were carried on in broad daylight. On 1st and 2nd June Augustus and Agrippa sacrificed to the gods of the Capitol in grand convocation after the ancient manner. One hundred and ten select matrons carried out the particulars of the services beginning on the 2nd foreshadowing, hopefully, the fertility and propriety of the coming age for at least the 110 years Atreius Capito had reckoned it to last.[13]

On the final day, however, the scene opened not on the Capitol but on the Palatine, in front of the great temple to Apollo which Augustus had built adjoining his house, and of which he sounds so proud in the *Res Gestae*.[14] This was the 3rd of June. Before the assembled crowd in the court a chorus of 54 boys and girls sang a hymn summing up the purifications and rebirth, and dedicating the people to a new age of *Romanitas* -- of piety, humility, morality and religious scruple.

This was Horace's *Carmen Saeculare* as experienced in its living context, not tossed as it often is into a collection of the poet's detached and ironic pieces. Sung in this setting it seems genuinely to have moved its crowd and many hearts thereafter, and may have had the sort of curiously strong impact we sometimes feel from Byzantine or Victorian public devotional lyrics -- so packed with deities and prospective virtuous states of mind that it must have strained even Horace's skill at finely-inlaid poetic miniature-work to fit it all in.

> "... If Rome *is* your workmanship,
> And bands from Ilium reached the Tuscan shore,
> a number bidden to change, by a prosperous voyage,
> Their household gods and city;
> For whom unharmed through burning Troy, holy Aeneas,
> Outliving his country, opened a free path
> He, destined to give them more than they had left;
> --Ye gods, grant fair morals to a trainable youth;
> Ye gods to quiet old age grant repose ..."[15]

The effect when read out of context may indeed be very, very flat, and the suggestion that Augustus himself may have drawn up the prosaic matter of the piece rather thoroughly[16] (Fowler 1911: 145, Ogilvie 1969: 116) still seems to

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[12]After the manner of the landowner in Cato's <u>Res Rustica</u> (e.g. the formulae in CXXXII and CXXXIV), including all the folk in his agricultural community within his spiritual *familia*. Cf. Fowler, <u>Rel. Exp.</u>, p. 449 n. 42.

[13]On the Augustan particulars in the rituals, C.I.L. VI, xxxii, 323; <u>Ephemeris Epigraphica</u>, viii, 255 ff.

[14]<u>Res Gestae</u> 21.

[15]Horace, <u>Carmen Saeculare</u>, ll. 37-46.

[16]See Fowler's article and R.M. Ogilvie. The idea was never one to please classicists, and needs more argument.

me likely whenever I read it. What startles or disturbs many modern critics is the emotional force it seems to have carried in (and for years afterward, *from*) its setting and its connection to the heart of its audience. Peter Levi, who is obviously himself uncomfortable with its religious tone and the success of its appeal, recently called it "perhaps the most successful publicly commissioned poem in the history of poetry." (Levi 1998: 207.)

It must have carried a different and far more powerful effect when delivered in its original setting. Across the Forum the temples of the Capitol would be the primary objects in view. A little to their left, further off, lay the site of the evening sacrifices -- many of those whose eyes trailed from the new religious heart of the city to the spread of the river and the Campus Martius would have followed the processions that way on the previous nights. Behind the chorus, on the *fastigium* of the new temple, rose a sculptured relief of Apollo in his four-horsed chariot driving away the Gauls (symbols of chaos in the propaganda of Augustus and they had been in Caesar's, and in that of Pergamum before them) by means of thunderbolts.[17] As the chorus sang various parts of the hymn, and moved to indicate with rhythmic gestures the seats of the various deities invoked, it brought back to those attending each rite of the week with some recollection of its meaning, or at least of its flavor and emotion.

> "Phoebus [Apollo] and Diana of the forest
> Bright glory of the heaven sublime,
> Worshipped and to be worshipped, grant our request
> In a holy time,
> When warned by the verses of the Sybils
> These pure boys and these chosen girls who belong
> To the gods who have loved the seven hills
> Repeat this song.
> Kindly sun in your chariot gleaming,
> Bringer and taker of day, for ever reborn
> Fresh and the same, may you never see anything
> Greater than Rome. …
>
> …May the prophet glorious with his gleaming bow
> Phoebus to whom nine Muses sing their hymns
> Who with his saving art rescues from sorrow
> Our weary limbs,
> If he looks kindly on his Palatine
> Altars continue happy Latium
> And Roman wealth, and better things combine
> In the age to come."[18]

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[17]Propertius, ii, 31-40.
[18]Horace, Carmen Saeculare, ll. 1-20, 60-72, again in Peter Levi's version, Horace, pp. 207-209.

This focus of the heart on things greater than itself, *connecting* them to moral renewal, the hymn was at least *meant* to do, and I think we fall far short of understanding the occasion unless we realize that if only one Roman was moved deeply, that one was Augustus. This was most particularly true where the hymn and the ritual touched on the temple and work of Apollo. It is to Apollo we must now turn.

The most important deities of the revolutionary and Augustan ages were not those of archaic times -- those that tended the soil or those that could as E.R. Dodds once said "keep an enemy spear from your vitals". One apparent exception to this -- Mars Ultor -- I must postpone a little. Neither were they those particularly good for business like Hermes, or Castor and Pollux. They were rather the deities that could defend man against chaos threatening to engulf him from without, and from guilt or impurity or jaded impiety (all a result of a world that felt itself somehow dislocated in its relation to heaven) destroying man from within. The three great helpers in this regard were:

- Dionysus, who could remove the guilt or anxiety, and presumably the jadedness, by simply throwing away one's inhibitions temporarily and allowing a rush of catharsis. By a manic plunge back into the divine mind one could get a great many interior things back into harmony again.
- Hercules, who was powerful enough to stand off the forces of chaos, but was especially valuable to that age because he had once been human.[19] (Johnson et al 1961, Price 1984) "He was touched by "the feeling of our infirmities," to borrow a phrase from the later Christians. Hercules was always presumed to have time for the humble and down-trodden.
- Apollo, who had always been the one source of clarity, light and communication whenever the rest of the Greek (and now the Roman) cosmos grew dark, uncertain, hostile. He could "tell you what to do when you felt anxious or frightened; he knew the rules of the complicated game that the gods play with humanity; he was the supreme *alexikakoz,* 'Averter of Evil'."[20]

And any one of these, oddly enough, could be made to have something to do with human arts in general, and government in particular. Dionysus was the patron or theatre in the sense of being *Master of Illusion*. He was naturalized by the Hellenistic monarchs, especially in Egypt, who drew a great deal of temporal and emotional power from pageantry and display of wealth. Hercules had an old connection with the Muses, though it might seem surprising. He could understand and sympathize with human acts or struggles, and at the same time hopefully keep them from losing their proper proportion, from provoking

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[19]Price is better with the details than with the feeling of the evidence he handles in my view, but has some enlightening points to make about the role of Roman provincial magistrates in personalizing and even Romanizing the Hellenic view of Augustus.

[20]Dodds, Greeks and the Irrational, p. 75. Cf. Aeschylus, Eumenides, 616 ff.

the jealousy of the gods. A laborer in a moment of great effort was much safer saying "*Hercule*!" than "'*O Dionysus*!" or (much worse) "'*O Zeus*!"

This last attitude seems to have been the one taken by the new emperor's father, Philippus; it implied the humility he seems always to have tried to impress upon Octavian, but Octavian on the way to becoming Augustus chose Apollo as his defining principle instead. There was more to this than the happy accident of an Apolline temple overlooking the bay at Actium.[21]

Apollo had been evoked into and naturalized as a part of Rome in response to natural disaster in the year 431 of the old era.[22] He had been the protecting god of Troy, and Virgil in due course had his Aeneas land at the same holy site Octavian would one day camp beneath. In fact, Apollo carried enough religious weight with the young Octavian that Virgil could begin his fourth eclogue (which had been written by 40) with the words "Your Apollo now reigns". Octavian may have made a small dedication to Apollo on the Palatine as early as 36.[23] A thunderbolt hit the hill in 28, making the place unchancy even to a skeptical mind of those times.[24]

Augustus saw no ambiguity in the message and set about temple-building quickly, later adding an impressively endowed library to its precincts.[25] Apollo had I think been a useful guardian and identification at first simply because of the contrast with Antony, who had taken to Dionysus (and Egypt, and a queen who was heir in spirit to the old ecumenical culture-leveler Alexander). But the more he saw the forces of chaos, the less did Octavian wish to defeat them by becoming one of them. Apollo offered access, by contrast, to clarity, rightness, the sense of things, inspiration to decisions that could harmonize with heaven.[26] To a Roman enmeshed in the business of becoming Augustus, full of private weaknesses, ironies and misgivings, Apollo seemed though Greek to offer the best chance at a return to intelligent, fertile *Romanitas*.

So the *Saeculares* ended under the porch and chariot of Apollo. Augustus made, or hoped he had made, a choice for his extended *familia* and subjects – a choice *against* the whole previous century of their heritage. He chose for them instead an image of the best things his optimistic and world-weary scholars could discover in the centuries before.

A Note on the Final Part of this Study

My goal here was, within compact limits, to re-create some of the flavor and focus of the *Ludi Saeculares* while expelling the 'red herring' sense of

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[21]Propertius IV, vi, 29 ff. Cf. J. Gagé, Apollon Romain (Paris, 1955), pp. 229, 515. Compare Syme, The Roman Revolution (Oxford, 1939), p. 448, where a "happy" accident is almost all it is.
[22]Gagé, op cit.
[23]Ogilvie, Romans and their Gods, p. 114.
[24]Propertius, ii, 31. Suetonius, Augustus, 29. On Augustus, cf. Fowler, Rel. Exp., p. 305.
[25]Suetonius, Augustus XXIX, 3.
[26]Cf. Horace, Odes I, xxxi, which redefines Apollo's sphere of blessing toward a very modest harmony of life.

games or celebration we dismiss them with. This was serious business to Augustus, but of course while he could engineer effort and pageantry (and even to some degree the acts of belief), he could not engineer results in human nature. Some of the outcomes and legacy of the year 17 I explore in the final part, which can be found in Wick (2019b).

Acknowledgements

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Many Ways to Rome: The LARP's Development of Technical Tools to Approach Resilience and Resistance within the Roman Empire

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The Laboratory for Roman Provincial Archaeology (LARP), a thematic Lab of the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology of the University of São Paulo, Brazil, aims to conduct research on the Roman presence in the areas of dominance in the Mediterranean sphere of influence and beyond. Cultural transformation and its correlates in material culture are investigated through analyses that assess the changes in its many aspects, given the variability of the contexts of societies under Roman imperial power. Thus, this paper seeks to propose a more flexible and multilateral reading between Rome and its provinces, where the forms of contact among Rome and the provinces had, in reality, a two-way relationship that should be considered not to be conflicting, but converging. In essence, we highlight the performance of provincial elites facing Roman domination. One of LARP's main instruments of action is the application of new technologies that act through images, two-dimensional or three-dimensional, interactive or passive. Virtual reality, also a means of scientific visualization, can be used for data analysis both in three-dimensional environments as well as in interactive exemplification that assist in the cognitive process of researchers, teachers and/or students.

Keywords: *Roman Empire, Roman Provinces. Virtual Reality, Cyber-Archaeology.*

Introduction

The research conducted at the Laboratory for Roman Archaeology (LARP-USP), located at the University of Sao Paulo's Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Brazil, resulted in a success extension program in which include educational actions, archaeological research, technology and development of new products and discussions, unprecedented at the national level. Under the flagship idea that of perceiving the relations with Rome not as an unthinking acceptance of a cultural imposition by Rome. But rather than as multi-way relationship where the respect of certain nuances (e.g. resilience and resistance) of each city and people under domination play a part. The main idea is to

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provide a better understanding of the material culture and past agency of those peoples who also formed part of the Roman Empire.

In order to approach Ancient History and Archaeology in Brazil, these innovative projects (more digital, intuitive, collecting geo-data of provinces and regions of Roman Empire) have been widely disseminated to the Luso-Portuguese speakers around the World and in the Brazilian community. The digital platforms such as *LARP-Sig Web*; *Roma 360* (Figure 1); *Domus Romana*; *Domus Redux, Roma Touch, Domus* and *Rome* with *Augmented Reality*, and recently a game named "O último banquete em Herculano" (*The last banquet in Herculaneum*) are new tools that have demonstrated the ability of the a look at the two elements (resilience and resistance) of each Roman city – not noticed or weighed often enough as people learn archeological sites. It is important to highlight at this point that it helps to create a better sense of space, which is pre-designed and materialized. Some of the projects are versions of mobile applications - accessed by smartphones and tablets - and are the first Brazilian cyber archeological projects to win versions for the Android platform, reinforcing the pioneering and diffusing nature of knowledge that is in the heart of LARP[11].

Figure 1. *Roma 360 - Screenshot*
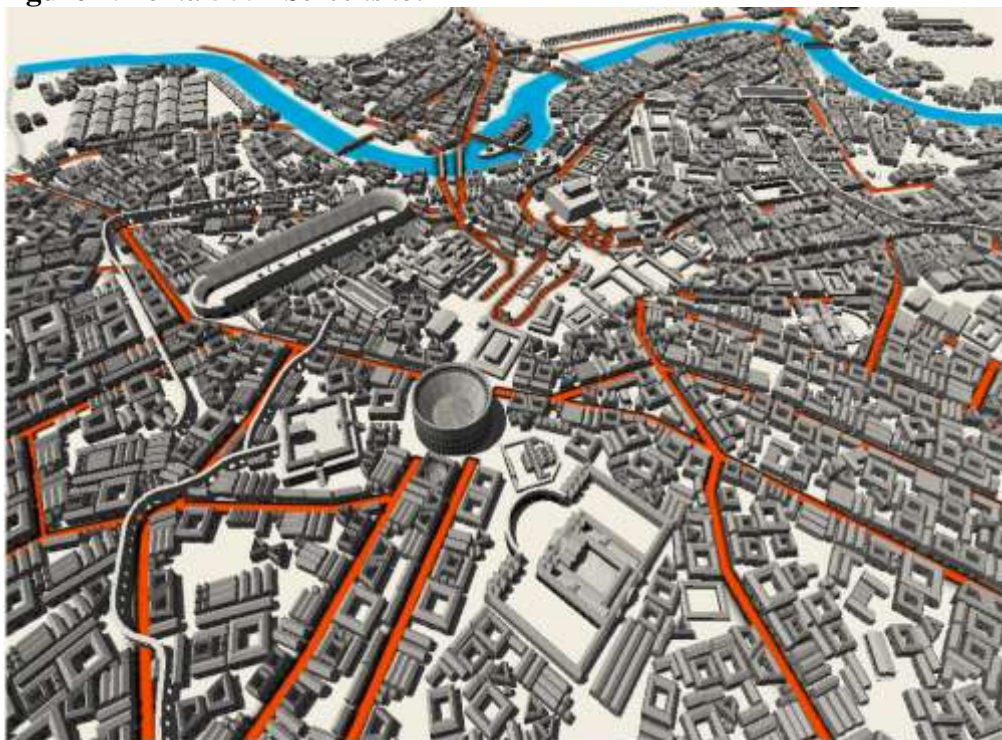
In order to articulate in what degree material culture influenced the organization of human groups in a given context and access a broad picture

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[1]http://www.larp.mae.usp.br.

about their understanding of space, the Laboratory for Roman Provincial Archaeology (LARP) developed and released its virtual reality application called DOMUS by the end of 2013. DOMUS consists of a Pompeii-inspired Ancient Roman house that allows the user to navigate through its rooms, visualizing specific information such as the relevance of oil lamps, the religious cults and the local trading production of pottery. The DOMUS application was totally made by archaeologists, representing the pioneering effort of Brazilian researchers in producing the very first cyber-archaeological project in our country.

Combined with the use of technology, LARP's main academic efforts were concentrated in the promotion of discussions related to Roman Imperialism. Indeed the Romans took advantage of material production (coins, pottery, statues, monumental buildings, etc.) to justify their domination over the provinces, and we see how, through the represented images, the Romans sought to create policies of relations with the natives. On the other hand, we can also observe through the analysis of material culture that there was complete visibility of local elites and representativeness of local populations on these issues. The incessant political statement and/or opposition to Roman rule in the case of local populations and religious identity acts can be a remarkable aspect of this reality that we can approach through the material culture.

So, one has to consider the presence of each city's own deities within the material production from each province, analyzing the impressive ability of the Roman Empire to work ideologically with the cult of these deities and their representation in materiality; but one should consider local authorities' amazing cleverness in perceiving Rome's 'game' and participating in this project so as to make their and their people's culture prevail. Thus, the archaeological record has the potential to help us with the analysis of the strategies of the manipulation of identities in relation to materiality, politics and the economy (Jones 2007: 110). In this sense, when we take the DOMUS application and it is possible to perceived how comfortable and spacious were the houses of the Romans who belonged local elites compared with those dwellings of the representativeness of local populations who were living in Rome, if someone uses *Roma 360* application.

Therefore, the Roman Empire was a multicultural and multi-religious society with complex ritualized forms of religious and social communication. Nevertheless, almost as a strike back, the Roman Empire increased its power and created several forms of ritualization for these local religions. Religion is a basic element of human organization in relation to their landscape and social affairs, and often, archaeological contexts are related to some sort of religious practice. The idea of religion is one of the first we receive within this life, and social organization comes with it during the formation of our lives. The same happens with spatial organization (if not the entire organization of space, in most cases) (Lefebvre 1974, De Certeau 1984). Thus, to some extent our sense of space is always debate on the knowledge of the cognitive process, especially when it comes to the manipulation of materiality and landscape by human groups. Exactly why is necessary to give priority to multidisciplinary

approaches nowadays. With regard to the cognitive and meaning processes, the archaeological record can be addressed using various theoretical perspectives (including structuralism, cognitive semiotics, economic theory, Marxism, critical theory, among others). These perspectives help to foster interpretive possibilities and explanations of social difference and address more problematic questions regarding to the ability or power to return to the original form after being bent (resilience) and the power or capacity to opposing or retarding force (resistance). Without not forget about the problem of representation. The representation as experience brings the ability to produce meanings, and the adequacy of that is to be expressed and inserted in a cultural context (Geertz 1973: 105).

Cyber-Archaeology and Local Elites

In few words, we can explain Cyber-Archaeology as a dialogue between Archaeology and Virtual Reality. Differently from the 1980's Virtual Archaeology, the 2000's Cyber-Archaeology is not a passive process: the user does not only watch a rendered video, listening to the explications about what is seen on the screen – in the cyber-archaeological process, the user is part of the knowledge, being responsible for the development of cognition within the three-dimensional reconstruction. In that way, Cyber-Archaeology is necessarily interactive: it is the result of digital data gathered in the archaeological field, which is next analyzed by archaeologists into immersive environments (such as CAVEs or powerwalls) (Forte 2011: 7-10) and made available to the general audience later using less expensive interactive devices (such as smartphones, tablets and personal computers).

Cyber-archaeology studies have been conducted since the 2000s, when the archaeologist Maurizio Forte (Duke University) established the main premise of this new area: Cyber-Archaeology, as the name suggests, is fundamentally a cybernetic cycle – it starts with fieldwork and then continues to data/information collecting, interpretation, evaluation, feedback and, finally, embodiment (Forte 2010: 12-13). One of the most important researches on Cyber-Archaeology today is taking place at Çatalhöyük (Turkey). The Çatalhöyük Research Project[2], conducted by Ian Hodder and Maurizio Forte, aims to digitally record each step of the archaeological digging. The archaeologists at laboratories study the huge amount of data in order to reconstruct three-dimensionally the results from the fieldwork.

LARP's DOMUS application was developed aiming at the public in general, but with same principle idea (digitally record archaeological remains), mainly to offer as intuitive and interactive tool to teachers and students. From the study of the archaeological remains from Pompeii and Herculaneum, the researches established the major points that could be interesting to work with at classrooms by the teachers. Once chosen, we began the simultaneous

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[2]http://www.Catalhoyuk.Com.

process of writing the supporting texts and modeling the ancient *domus* (house). With each researcher being specialized in a particular Roman aspect, we were able to account for a wide range of subjects (from architecture to economics). For the 3D modeling, Autodesk Maya was used for every object while Unity engine was utilized to develop the interactivity. We opted to mix our texts with 3D objects in order to give complete information on each room that the user can visit from a first person point of view. Below, an example of DOMUS 3D Model (Figure 2).

Figure 2. *DOMUS 3D Model*

The objectives of DOMUS were defined as follows:

- Offer free navigation inside the house: allow the user to go where he/she wants without a pre-established script.
- Offer texts in accordance with the locality of the user: called text-triggers by the working group, these little information pieces form the succinct explanation for topics that are detailed in the supporting texts.
- Offer supporting texts: the application has a list of texts written by LARP researchers that deal with the following subjects: Roman *domus*, *impluvium*, *balneum* and latrine (researcher Alex dos Santos Almeida); *tablinum* and tavern (researcher Irmina Doneux Santos); *lararium* (researcher Tatiana Bina and Marcio Teixeira-Bastos); frescos (researcher Alessandro Mortaio Gregori); mosaics (researcher Silvana Trombetta); Vitruvius and architecture (Anisio Cândido Pereira Filho researcher); Roman economy (Professor Vagner Carvalheiro Porto – LARP's coordinator); oil lamps and Roman ceramics (Marcio Teixeira-

Bastos and Professor Maria Isabel D'Agostino Fleming – LARP's coordinator). These texts were designed and written to provide extra material to use in the classroom as well as anyone who wants to know a bit more about the subject and use the supporting text as a starting point.

- Establish a comparison between the three-dimensional modeling and archaeological remains - through an Image Gallery, is offered the opportunity to compare the 3D reconstruction with photos of objects found in Roman houses and its traces.
- Have free and unrestricted online access - belonging to a public educational institution, the University of Sao Paulo, it is indisputable that all production should be reciprocated to the population free of charge. The best way to disseminate work these days is the Internet, allowing everyone to have the experience of walking into an interactive *domus* and deepen his or her knowledge with own bibliographic material.

Finishing the development of DOMUS, the application was exported to Web platform, making it able to be accessed online at the LARP website[3] through HTML. The decision to make it available on the Internet reflects the lab's concern to make it accessible free of charge.

However, our original DOMUS application has proved to be too heavy for low-end desktop computers (machines without GPU). In our first attempt to apply it at schools, we faced the inconvenient problem of drop in frame rates, breaking the intended immersion in students. Computers at schools' laboratories usually are not equipped with off-board graphics cards, and the high number of polygons in the application turned our DOMUS practically pointless for the majority of schools, unfortunately.

After reconsidering our approach to educational purposes, we decided to reformulate the DOMUS application. This time, our main goal was to achieve the balance between aesthetics and functionality, optimizing the Ancient Roman house. To this end, we established the production of an Augmented Reality application. In Brazil, until then, no application of Augmented Reality had been produced in terms of Ancient History and Classical Archeology. The DOMUS A.R. (Augmented Reality) was LARP's first attempt at producing an augmented reality application (Figure 3). Thinking of offering to students and teachers the opportunity to work in small groups, the laboratory's first step was to develop the augmented reality marker.

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[3]http://www.larp.mae.usp.br/rv/.

Figure 3. *DOMUS A.R. Screenshot*

Since LARP is a thematic laboratory within a public university, all its products are based on its free distribution, seeking the broad dissemination of knowledge produced academically and decoded for the general public, teachers, and students. The examples of educational actions in schools have shown that students get more attached to the subject being able to establish a straight connection with the present living of their own (Figures 4 and 5). It's important highlight this aspect because (beyond the excitement for new tools and more accurate sense of ancient spaces) the students achieved a sense of representation - which means that were able to distinguish areas of activities (e.g. kitchen, shopping places, etc) and ask themselves, who were the people who worked in that place, and who are those people that were "only drinking wine laid down in the sofa", one said.

Figure 4. *Teacher using DOMUS R.A. Application during Training provided by LARP*

As archaeologists concerned with the significance of the use of space, resilience aspects and elite social behavior, we decided that the entire *domus* plan would be useful as a marker: the students could see the augmented reality while the teachers could give hints about the spatial those subjects, based on the printed marker.

Having the printed marker established, the application production process began. All the rooms were remodeled using Autodesk Maya. Being an augmented reality application for smartphones and tablets, the major concern was about the number of polygons to be displayed on the screen. Producing each room separately, we could reach a minimum number of vertices: each local consisted of three cubes (for the walls) and one plane (for the floor). In order to optimize the RAM consumption, all the textures were worked with the Adobe Photoshop software and then applied using just one UV map. For the very first time, we aggregated animated characters to our scene: a pair of Roman senators were modeled and animated with simple gestures, simulating conversations between them. Once all the objects were prepared, the complete scene was exported as a FBX file into the Unity engine.

Figure 5. *Students working with DOMUS at School (Colégio Unidade Jardim Santo André. http://www.liceujardim.com.br)*

For the augmented reality interaction, the Qualcomm's Vuforia Unity extension was utilized. Making the programming easier, Vuforia allowed the simple drag and drop feature of the FBX files into Unity' scene. After the correct scaling and positioning of the models on the A.R. *domus* plan marker, we created the button to show the information about the rooms when pressed. In order to make our application even more complete, we modeled 3D

additional resources (such as oil lamps, wine jars, coin and others) to be manipulated by the users through swipe and pinch gestures. Finished that stage, the application was built for the Android platform and distributed on our website (www.larp.mae.usp.br) and on Google Play free of charge. It is important to be a free pursue because in Brazil public schools (the vast majority in the country) do not have a budget to acquire software - that is a privilege for private schools only possess.

Also is important to note that the application of technological resources and the development of new didactic tools for Ancient History and Archaeology teaching do not offer to the teacher a miraculous alternative work or merely a stimulus in order that the student becomes interested in the school universe. It is a proposal designed to bring to schools more possibilities and resources for the student to appropriate a cultural heritage, reinvigorating the willingness to learn and promoting the collective construction of knowledge. The interaction, the discussion and the debate are favored and the teacher in this project is a mediator, an attentive observer of the formulations and inaccuracies or deficiencies of students: something very significant for understanding the reasoning and possible readings made by students about the past.

Essentially this recognition serves to assert that elite behavior implies an isolated category of practice or action. It is located in the cultural representations, the array of different discourses and practices that aim at the construction of the social world and the contradictory definition of identities.

Representation and Identity: Religious Life Aspects and Roman Elite Behavior

In Rome, the elite continuously controlled religious behavior. The Roman elite defined what should be considered appropriate religious activity in the Imperial areas. Rome was never free for the exercise of all religions. The Roman elite, especially in the provinces, defined what was unsuitable for traditional Roman religion as a way to define their position within the State. Legal initiatives under the aegis of the defense of the Roman religious system were taken against real or imagined enemies, whenever they were within reach of the elite. Although they tolerated religious innovation amongst the subjugated peoples, foreign cults were often associated with mysteries and certain performances, associations and/or joint activities, which were not accepted, and were treated as religious crimes. The penalties for transgressions often involved public punishments. Religion was one of the major aspects of change with Rome and its Empire, which was configured as a federation of elites centered in the Mediterranean and its control interflow (Rizakis and Camia 2008).

Political identity was defined by access to religious rites, which coexisted with political rights within the Roman world. In a certain way, the individual only existed in the public dimension, to the extent that their subjectivity and

inserted context allowed access to groups and their rites. In this sense, the equestrian order was much more amorphous and constantly more open to new members, not only in Italy but also in the provinces. During the reign of Augustus, the term 'religious' served to designate those who practiced the ritual according to the usual status (*ritus romanum*) and did not engage in *superstitio*. Categories of Religion and *superstitio* were not categorized as true or false, and are incorporated and used during the Christianization of the Empire campaign, institutionalized from the fourth century CE onwards. The term *superstitio* was initially used to categorize inappropriate behavior of individuals (not groups) in relation to the internal irregularities of the Roman rite. The term also referred to the meaning of powers and dangerous practices that the rite that could bring, such as some sort of threat to the stability of religion or of the Roman state (Beard et al. 1998: 213-215). Roman ritual traditions were one of the ways in which different people could be differentiated and characterized, as illustrated by the ritus *compendium Graecus* (Scheid 1995: 15-31).

From the Principality period, a number of direct measures were taken to control religious activities and associations of those outside the elite. Cesar Augusto banned private companies (*collegia*) fearing their social and political role of disorder. However, under Claudius was allowed a special dispensation for Jews, their collection of money, and its use for the Jewish community rather than imperial taxes. The ruling elite would, ordinarily, control communal meals in the organization of festivals, processions, purifications, sacrifices and do so in accordance with the calendar that evoked the Roman world. *Saturnalia* and *Parentalia* were cases where the celebrations took place in the household within the scope of domestic rites. However, public Roman rituals were more austere, and there were no sacred books, complex sentences or ceremonies whose meaning could be debated endlessly by scholars. In general, the sacrifice was more central to provincial Roman communities than it was in the metropolis (Elsner 1991: 50, Woolf 2009: 250). The gods who were honored with dedications by senators and equestrian officials who served in the provinces also reflect the traditional emphasis in the gods of Rome, especially Jupiter. By the fourth century CE, senators and equestrian officials were rarely initiated into foreign services. Augusto strictly recommended that his son Gaius should not offer prayers to HaShem in Jerusalem. In fact, during the first century CE, the growth of "foreign *superstitio*" in Rome came to represent a threat to the official political-religious system.

Between the many Lares of Roman religion (*Lares August*, *Lares Compitales*, *Lares Permarini*, *Lares Praestites*, *Lares Publici*, *Lares Viales*)[4] the *Lares Familiaris*, or the "Lares of the Family" were the protectors of the household and can be evidenced as the heart of private religious action and daily ritual behavior. The idea to emphasize the *lararium* at the entrance of

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[4]Respectively "Lares of the Emperor","Lares of the Crossroads" (worshipped during the *Compitalia*), "Lares of the Sailors" (protectors of sailors), "Stand-By Lares" (protectors of the state), "Lares of the People" (also protectors of the state), "Lares of the Roads" (protectors of roads).

LARP's DOMUS aims to perceive this private service as complementary to public services. In a sense, apart from the public worship practices in the temples, Roman religiosity was also expressed in the presence of the *lararium* contained in the Roman domiciles. The act of votive offerings to the gods, inviting them to the intimacy of the house, reflected in truth the primordial conception of the *Pax Deorum*, in which sharing the coexistence between human beings and gods is the essential premise. Therefore, the basic commitment of daily worship at home consisted in the separation of a "sacred place" at home, an altar or the *lararium*. On this altar both the *Lares Familiaris* - protective deities - and the deities of the *paterfamilias* were honored in two daily rites, one in the morning and the other at night. During these rites the gods are flattered and requests for protection, attention and prosperity were made. The *lararium* was a place where individuals could worship the gods confidentially, and yield small offerings. Essentially the *lararium* was the sacred place of the house, where the positive forces of the gods could be brought into existence of *saecularis* life.

The forms of the *lararium* is very varied, in residences of rich families could be located in the *atrium*, made of marble and reproducing aesthetically a temple, like a miniature copy. In other cases, in less affluent residences, it could be just a simple wooden shelf on the wall. Anyway, big or small, the important thing about a *lararium* altar is placed it in a central part of the house, where would not to be ignored or forgotten, nor in a place that obstructs the circulation. The main question, therefore, is that it should be a special place for the deities in the domestic and daily spheres. The composition of the *lararium* altar was made by seven elements: the *pátera*, the *salinum*, the *turibulum*, the *acerra*, the *incensum*, the *gutus*, and the *lucerna* (Figures 6 and 7).

Figure 6. *DOMUS Lararium Screenshot*

The *pátera* was a dish, generally shallow, in which a portion of the food of the house was offered as a way of sharing the supplied goodness in relation to everyday food. The *salinum*, in turn, was a container for salt that served the purpose of purifying the negative spirits. The *turibulum* was nothing more than a censer used to create the sacred scents that would satisfy the deities and could change things from the solid form to an ethereal form, consuming them with fire. This container contained hot coals and the powdered incense or aromatic resin that produced the aroma and votive smoke. Coals were also used to burn small offerings such as food portions, flowers or plants.

The *accerra* was a special vessel for the sacred *incensum* and a variety of incenses were used for those purposes in Roman society. Usually they were resins, substances or herbs sprayed, or even a mixture of the three. The resins as well as the incenses and mirras were very popular, being common the presence of such types of incensum in the *lararium*. The *gutus* consisted of a container for milk and/or the wine offered. Likewise the *accerra* and the *salinum*, the *gutus* were used to keep a substance offered clean and protected. While practically all previous containers were usually made of clay - and in some cases metal, depending on the preference and social position of the individuals - the *gutus* could be made of glass. The liquid of the *gutus* would be poured into the *pátera* when it was to be offered. It is important to say that all these foods offerings could not in any way remain a long period of time exposed, because they would certainly come to decompose. So it would be imperative to keep the offerings fresh, which implies a constant renewal of the votives offerings.

The last two other elements present in the *lararium* rites were: the sacred fire and the *lucerna*. It is through the *lucerna*, the oil lamp, that the representation of the source of the sacred flame was represented in the altar. An oil lamp should always be in the *lararium* and would usually be lit at the

time of rites, which means, once in the morning and once in the evening, save private libations. The light in this context fulfills three essential roles: the first as the representation of the sacred flame, would open the precedent for the interpretation of the flame that produces, and the direction and oscillation of the flame could be interpreted as good or bad omen. The second aspect is of the representation of the image that would be depicted on the disc of the lucerna and could be associated with a certain votive purpose and/or a specific divinity. The third then, arising from both previous aspects - or even from the combination of both - would be the one of represents the material figuration of the communication between worlds. While the others offerings can be considered as the "voice of the offerer" - with the exception of the *salinum* that had a purifying role - the clay oil lamps would expresses both the "offerer's voice" and what we could call the "voice of the offered", regarding to the interpretation sings of the flame. Therefore, expresses communication between worlds present in the rituals of the *lararium*. The best examples of these worship/community-identity rituals come from working or craft class communities – elite homes/areas tend to be more eccentric and LARP's lately have work to modeled craft spaces and dwellings for comparison with elite homes.

Figure 7. *DOMUS Lararium Detailed Screenshot*
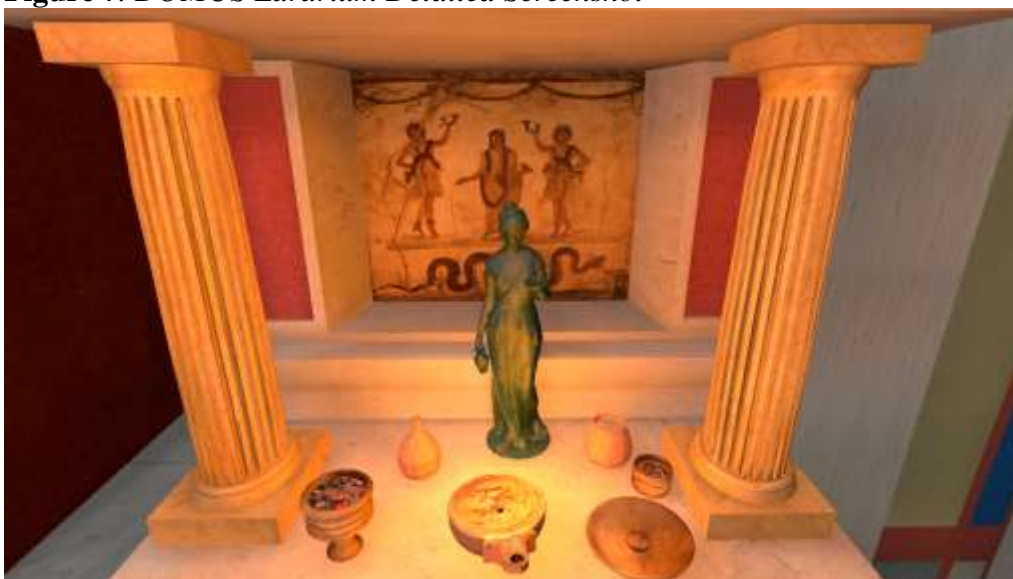
Beyond the private services, there is a broad consensus that public services in *Orbis Romanorum* were at the center of the practice of Roman religion. The concentration of public services in the cities shows that Roman religion in the provinces held similar characteristics to that practiced in the metropolis, especially between the local elites. However, the priesthood of the provincial pontiffs did not seem to be organized in the form of court, at least not in the way their peers did it in the metropolis. Roman priesthood in provincial communities appears to have been more involved with the ritual performance than in Rome itself (Woolf 2009: 244).

In this sense, Roman imperial cult has been understood as a set of rituals designed to integrate the emperor at the local pantheon in order to grant favors and provincial loyalty. It is indicative that the increased power of ritualization in the Roman Empire was a consequence of the slow shift that occurred in the understanding of the ideal of *Civilis Princes*. In other words, between the traditional ideal of equality of all Roman citizens and the new imperial quality of distance and elevation, which led to the understanding of the emperor as a protector of the traditions, and divine arbiter, of the religion and *romanum rituale* (Silva 2003). In this sense, the emperor is the one who can intervene and control the *sacer* (sacred), which refers to what was "dedicated to a deity" in the Roman *habitus* (Bourdieu 1996). This embraces both the understanding of places and objects, such as that people provide the primary functions of religion (and their rituals) precisely because they provide mechanisms to define where secular life ends and religious life begins.

Therefore, political and religious aspects of life helped to forge distinctive ways of being in society during Roman domination. These aspects are still on play nowadays. Thus, combine digital tools to approach those subjects is worthwhile to foster new thoughts about how ancient people could have had managed their social power or capacity to oppose and/or retarding Roman forces within this "Roman way of life".

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Regulating the Stage: Storms, Wrecks and Lifebelts in the Italian Experience

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The paper analyses how the performing arts are structured and regulated in Italy. The orientation and the trend of the legislation shows an endemic instability due to the prevailing view of permanent emergency generated by a combination of static subsidies and peer evaluations. The ambiguous equilibrium between centralization and delegation on a National and Regional level, as well as the byzantine categorisation of the different administrative structures, ended up generating a slow and inefficient managerial system, on the one hand, and the uncertainty and mistiming of funds, on the other hand. Moreover, the amount of funds devoted to supporting the performing arts organisations has been progressively reduced, while the contradictory mechanisms aimed at establishing their distribution has been strengthened, providing theatres and companies with a clear incentive to overemployment, conservative choices, and managerial rigidity. The analysis of the Italian legislation aimed at supporting the performing art system shows a sequence of many acts clearly generated by financial emergency. Each new act has been aimed at counterbalancing the fragilities generated by the previous act, and has paradoxically generated new emergencies, in a sort of self-weakening sequence whose dominating value has constantly been the search for survival.

Keywords: *Italy, Arts, Institutions, State, Reform, Regulation*

Introduction

A substantial reform is needed, in order for the institutional framework, the legal and organisational structure, the fundraising actions and the network of external synergies to be restructured. Internal flexibility, external versatility, serious monitoring and sanctions for managerial choices should be firmly introduced, also in absence of any rises in the amount of public funds. Also the inter-jurisdictional relationships need some radical changes inverting the long-lasting view based upon an inverted subsidiarity. These issues are discussed in four sections of this paper.

The first section of the paper introduces the institutional framework for the performing arts at a macro (i.e., National, Regional, Local level): in particular, an overview of the legislation regulating the performing arts, with reference to the reforms pertaining to the Ministry of Culture and to the coordination (or, better, absence of coordination) between the Ministry and Regional authorities.

The second section introduces the micro (organisational) level: primarily, the categorisation with which the Italian law identifies different forms of performing

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arts organizations, and deals with each individually; secondarily, the strong structural reforms which have affected theatres, and especially the practice of controlled organisation and the recovery plans introduced with Law n.112/2013.

The third section is dedicated to the funding system for the performing arts, and presents an overview of its breakdown between the various performing arts, of the Council evaluating candidates to the fund, of the allocation criteria; the incentive to private donations, which became effective for theatres only in 2017, is also analysed in the section.

A fourth section draws conclusions from the institutional framework outlined above: the uncertainty generated by the ambiguous legislation concerning the dualism of State and Region in regulating the sector, the decades-long state of emergency of the performing arts and the constant but unprofitable efforts of the State to reform call for more effective tools and actions: decentralisation should aim at diversifying tasks at the different administrative levels, rather than juxtapose them. The obsolete and rigid grid of the funding system requires a restructuring of the allocation criteria which should not just consider quantitative indicators, but also valorise social action, inclusion and engagement on behalf of the performing arts organisations, and strongly consider the impact of their action upon their territorial community.

Art and the State: The State of the Art

Reforming Reforms: A Legislative Roulette for Culture

With the Ministerial Decree of 12 July 2018 the former *Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo*, the Italian Ministry of Culture, was subject to a reform aimed at reorganising its functions. Tourism in particular, initially pertaining to this Ministry, was delegated to the Ministry of Agricultural, Environmental and Forestry Policies. The Ministry is now renamed *Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali*.

Of the reforms which the dramatic state of the Italian cultural sector calls for, the one of 2018 was definitely not the most needed; what is more, it is but the last of a decades-long series of administrative revisions: the Ministry of Tourism and Performing Arts, born in 1959, was first reformed in 1974 and then abrogated in 1993, in order to be re-founded in 1998 with the name it has today, i.e., after the reform of 2018; more reorganisations of the State administration of culture occurred again in 2006, 2007, 2014.

Moreover, matters such as tourism were subject to restless reassignments from one Ministry to the other – it was only recently, in fact, and precisely in October 2013, that the Ministry of Culture had been assigned jurisdiction over tourism by the former Government. Tourism, after all, was not the only delegation to be rebounded back and forth: at the time of its creation in 1998, sports pertained to the Ministry of Culture, but was assigned to the new-born Ministry for Youth Policies in 2006.

The abundant, if not redundant, modifications to the State apparatus of culture coincided with a nominal, more than a factual reorganisation, as is evident not just at the ministerial level, but also from its subordinate Directorate General of the Performing Arts, which is the specific focus of the present paper. The performing arts in fact, more than any other subsector of the Ministry, were subject to severe legislative impositions over the past twenty years, which contributed to, rather than relieved, the crisis of the sector.

Political discretion and the sequential governments of different orientations can be pointed out as one cause of the unstable legislation regulating the performing arts; the wave of reforms fostered by the rise of New Public Management (NPM) in the 1990s caused Italy to rethink the structure and management of theatres among other sectors of the public administration – which, filtered by the more or less acute sensibility of the Italian legislators, resulted in controversial choices, such as the transformation of opera theatres from public entities into hybrid public-private Foundations. Moreover, the total absence of a long-term vision and of sustainability makes the legislation resemble an uneven patchwork more than a rational path towards effectiveness.

Among the consequences is the persistent uncertainty of a regulation which is refuted with appalling frequency by subsequent amendments and procedures of abrogation: this causes the persistence of unresolved problems of a sector which was never effectively restructured, though constantly deconstructed.

In the second place, the accumulation of Laws and Ministerial Decrees over the years generated an articulated taxonomy of cultural actors, a long set of definitions and boundaries whose obsolescent rigidity does not account for the natural fluidity of the performing arts scenario. This results in a discrepancy between policies and their object, i.e., artists, companies, theatres and the like, and generates a slow bureaucratic engine.

In the third place, the rapid turnover of actions addressed to culture and, more specifically, to the performing arts generated confusion and bureaucratic dispersion of criteria, definitions, institutional bodies; this confusion hinders access to information from the part of performing arts organisations, and favours the reiteration of public support to a few, established institutions.

Culture & Culture, Inc.: The Ministry and its Tautological Branches

The formidable grid of legal impositions makes dependence on National centralised bodies inevitable for the performing arts organisations from a variety of perspectives: from the hiring of personnel, which happens through National agencies and formal (*rectius*, endless) procedures of approval, to financial aid, which criss-crosses Regional support tools, to the management of the institutions themselves, whose expenses, content production, and direct management the Ministry scrupulously scrutinizes not just through Ministerial branches, but also through the practice of *commissariamento*, with which theatres' state of emergency is handled through special governmental commissioners who divest the theatre's board of directors. This procedure will be dealt with in detail in the second section of the paper.

The decentralisation system developed by the Ministry of Culture resembles, in facts, a decentralised centralisation: agencies and companies entirely managed by the Ministry were founded with the supposed aim of simplifying procedures; the outcome, in reality, was a ministerial doppelganger which increased the Ministry's bureaucratic control over the performing arts organisations. The first of such companies, *Ales S.p.a.*, was founded in 1997 and incorporated to another Ministry-owned company, *Arcus* (born in 2004), with the Stability Law of 2016.

The Ministry is the only member of both companies' board; the purpose of each does not differ consistently from one another, nor from that of the Ministry itself, i.e., to identify and support relevant cultural projects with technical and financial resources. The overlap between the three is almost total, but the bureaucratic efforts are tripled, and so is the inference of the State over every aspect of cultural projects.

The Ministry is additionally articulated into Directorate Generals for each cultural field which, in their turn, are supported by advisory boards. In the case of the Directorate General of the Performing Arts, not differently from the Ministry itself, it is the result of the merging of different Institutes, namely ETI (*Ente Teatrale Italiano*) and EIST (*Ente Italiano per gli Scambi Teatrali*). In present days, it is broken down into a *Consulta* and different consulting bodies, each for every type of performing art identified by State taxonomy: dance, theatre, music and opera, circus, and, since 2018, historical carnivals.

Anatomy of (in)dependence: the Regional System from Segmentation to Duplication

When, in 2004, Tuscany appealed to the Constitutional Court claiming full authority over the performing arts in the Region, the Court, with sentences n.255/256, rejected the appeal and declared the performing arts a matter of concurrent legislative power between State and Regions.

Leaving temporarily aside any value judgement concerning the coordination of power between the State and its constitutive elements, i.e., Regions, the (not-so) hidden truth behind this matter is the absence of clear indications, in the Italian Constitution and even in its following amendments, regarding such coordination. The result is, rather obviously, the absence of coordination between State and Regions, and stresses once more the ineffectiveness of reforms for the performing arts in Italy.

Article 117.2 of the Italian constitution disciplines legislative power of State and Region. When the article was reformed through Constitutional Law n.3/2001[31], "*the valorisation of cultural and environmental goods and the promotion and organisation of cultural activities*" were listed as subject to concurrent power of both State and Region; all items not falling under this category (or under the category of special legislative power, exercised by the State) were subject to the general power of Regions.

As if the highly hierarchical anatomy of the Ministry had not generated enough confusion with gears of interdependences and chains of delegations at the

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[31]For the sake of philological appropriateness, the authors have chosen to adopt an Italian nomenclature for laws and decrees.

macro-level, the absence of clear directives concerning regions and the performing arts in the Constitutional Law of 2001 generated further confusion at the Regional level and gave rise to different interpretations among jurists and Regional authorities (Brigato, 2008); the sentence against Tuscany, besides filing the case, did not provide Regions with any specific indication on the actual nature of this concurrent power.

Regional specificity in Italy is the historical result of scattered conquests, cultural *mélanges*, and unpredictable contaminations. Regions organised their legislation for the performing arts in a diversified way: some have legislated so as to support culture in a holistic and strategic way, focusing on social impact (Lazio, Regional Law n.15/2014), on the programming of integrated and multidisciplinary projects (Lombardy, R.L. n.25/2016, Basilicata, R.L. n.37/2014), on regional networks of performing arts (Marche, R.L. n.11/2009), while others focused on promotion only (Umbria, R.L. n.17/2004, Campania, R.L. n.6/2007). Most regional laws also mention local specificities of language and of cultural expression as relevant forms of heritage.

Of all the policy tools for culture in Italy, the Regional ones potentially place themselves more than any other as a vital junction between the National and the local level; nonetheless, these well-drawn declarations of intents produced, in most cases, a mere duplication of State legislation on the performing arts at a regional level (Trimarchi, 2015). An indolent administrative *escamotage* which ended up generating public calls *erga omnes*, with rigid criteria and a closer attention to the organisational structure than to creativity; this ends up favouring the same institutions already supported by the State - or vice versa: the Ministerial Decree of 27/07/2017 (M.D. hereon) mentions the obtaining of Regional Funds as a criterion for obtaining State funds: a juxtaposition of resources and tools favouring organisations which, being established, are more easily evaluated, supposedly more solid, and often sustained by discretional political relationships.

Mirrors and Mirages: The Unachieved Experiment of Regional Observatories

Attempts to rationalise the Regional role in the support of the arts were made; in 2004 a conference was held in Bologna, called "*Regions and the performing arts: Regional proposals for a National Law in the framework of constitutional reforms*"[32].

In 2007 the Ministry of Culture, and organisations representing Provinces (UPI) and Municipalities (ANCI) subscribed a document for the performing arts activities (*Patto per le attività culturali di spettacolo*) that aimed at creating synergy among the different levels of administration in managing the performing arts.

A project was crafted after this meeting, ORMA, that would lead to the creation of Regional Observatories for the performing arts all over the peninsula, fostering a more holistic view of culture while promoting interregional cooperation and State-Region cooperation (Taormina, 2011). Vital nodes in the project were

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[32]*Le regioni e lo spettacolo. Le proposte delle regioni per una legge nazionale di principi nel quadro delle riforme costituzionali.*

the National Observatory (funded with Law 163/1985), the Piedmont Observatory and that of Emilia Romagna.

Rather than estimating differences and drawing hierarchies between incomparable regional situations, ORMA aimed at providing Regional administrations with shared knowledge on best practices and ideal performance indicators. However virtuous, it had to come to terms with the limits of a lagging system and of a heterogeneous regional patchwork. Observatories, be them for culture or for the performing arts, are still missing in most regions and Regional authorities fail to serve as a focal junction between performing arts organisations operating within a specific territory and National support tools.

The observations that the existing observatories produce are often of little relevance to the purpose of actively interpreting the signs and patterns of culture in Italy: instead of understanding how creativity is spread across the peninsula, numerical data is provided on the Regions whose institutions earn the larger amounts of funds – an almost obvious statement of development inequalities on the Italian territory. Instead of focusing on the type of projects for which organisations apply (be them multidisciplinary, educational and so on), the reports produced by the National Observatory names the organisations which have earned the maximum or the minimum amount of the Fund[33].

A Theatre is a Theatre is a Theatre: In the trap of labels

A Painting with Too Many Frames

Differently from nearly every other aspect of the Italian law, very little literature is available on the evolution of the legal framework of the performing arts. While it has seldom captured the attention of jurists and researchers, making sense of the overabundant legislation on the performing arts in Italy also goes beyond the possibilities of its main target – the performing arts themselves. The self-referential, insistent reformative effort of the Ministry produced, up to the present day, an endless number of laws, ministerial decrees, decree-laws through which the performing arts field has been chained, more than regulated.

Such legislation is as full of aborted attempts of reforms as it is of achieved reforms: draft framework laws, in the past twenty years only, were presented and subsequently abandoned in 2001 (MP Carlucci), in 2004 and 2005 (MP Rostani), in 2006 (MP Luxuria), in 2007 (M Ciocchetti), in 2008 (MPs Carlucci and Barbareschi), 2013 (MP Rampi). The approved reforms were probably as many as, if not more than, the unachieved ones, a symptomatic evidence of legislative overabundance.

The full story of the Italian legislation over the performing arts can be articulated into three couplets of contradictory directives. A vast, supposedly all-encompassing nomenclature was established in order to comprise all the performing arts activities the State could identify.

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[33]This information is extracted from the Report of the National Observatory on the use of FUS for the year 2016.

According to the M.D. of 27/07/2017, each performing arts category (music and opera, theatre, dance, circus) is structured in different forms of institutional structures: regional networks (*circuiti*), companies (*imprese*), entities (*organismi*), centres (*centri*). The actions of such institutions are in their turn broken down into production, planning, purchases (which applies to circuses and travelling shows), and transversal actions. Each sector is then additionally categorised according to its specificity: in the case of prose theatres, for instance, the Decree makes a distinction between National Theatres, Theatres of relevant cultural interest, Theatre production companies, Theatre production centres, and Festivals. The difference between categories is assessed according to the volume of production and the number of regular employees, but variations are slight, and some theatres are sometimes forced to publish tenders and hire employers temporarily in order to remain in their privileged category.

There is almost no need to comment any further the misty superabundance of the Ministerial categories, especially considering that the nomenclature is so excessively punctilious, that definitions often overlap, and some theatres fall under more than one category; what is more, in most cases not only categories, but even criteria for fund eligibility overlap, focusing on the number of workdays, on the maximum number of co-productions, on the number of performances.

A first indirect consequence of the rigid identification of subjects and institutions is that, more than fostering actual diversification of the cultural offer and promoting young creativity through effective performance indicators, the Ministerial Decree ends up favouring those institutions that are already established and have a more structured organisation, because they fulfil institutional requirements.

The second one is the accumulation of sometimes contradictory criteria: Law 175/2017 indicates networking through co-productions as one of the necessary requirements to access funds, while M.D. 27/07/2017 sets for every organisational category a ceiling for the number of co-productions; in the evaluation criteria for the eligibility to the Italian National Fund for the performing arts (FUS hereon), established by M.D. of 03/02/2014, points are halved when taking into account educational activities, while Law 175/2017 establishes that at least 3% of FUS will be dedicated to those same educational activities.

A Revolution with Too Many Barricades

An effort was made, especially in recent years, to homogenise a legal structure which had operated hoppling from decree to decree on a yearly base: before the M.D. of 03/02/2014, for instance, criteria for eligibility to public funding of the Lyric-symphonic Foundations (the main Italian opera theatres, LSF hereon) were set annually.

Similarly (and yet differently, since the LSF are, rather controversially, subject to a different set of laws), the criteria for the other performing arts activities were determined by *ad hoc* decrees: Theatre was regulated by the M.D. of 12/11/2007, Dance by M.D. of 08/11/2007 and so forth. M.D. of 01/07/2014 is

the first decree aspiring to regulate the performing arts as a whole – besides, again, opera theatres.

Nonetheless, even the M.D. which claimed to bring stability were eventually abrogated and supplanted by other, more recent decrees: M.D. 03/03/2017 announced the attribution of extra funds to the LSF, establishing new eligibility requirements which ran parallel to the ones of 2014. A multiplication of deadlines and objectives which most opera theatres are gasping to reach due to their still unresolved difficulties. M.D. 27/07/2017 substitutes the one of 2014 in setting the criteria of public support to the rest of the performing arts. No relevant difference between the two decrees can be pointed out, with the only consequence of causing instability and adding growing confusion to the legal scenario. The M.D. of 2014 itself, after all, did not homogenise the scattered former decrees under a coherent legal rationale, but rather patched them all together in a redundant document.

Law 175/2017, the most recent provision concerning the intricate legal framework of the performing arts, goes even further in mining its own effectiveness, since it anticipates the draft of a more structured and definitive law, a framework-law named the Performing Arts Charter (*Carta dello spettacolo*). The deadline for the promulgation of the Charter was set on the 31 of December 2018, but the political twist of the elections in march 2018 postponed the priorities of the cultural agenda: the "silent shipwreck" of the Charter is now complete[34].

A Highway with Too Many Side-Streets

The wave of reforms fostered by the spread of New Public Management (NPM) in the 1990s had a lasting effect on the Italian administration of culture, though assimilated in a specific fashion attributable to the legal structure of Italy among other *Rechtstaat* Countries (Bonini Baraldi, 2014).

Among the urgencies brought up by the NPM discourse was the increase in efficiency and the blurring of boundaries between public and private sectors. In the case of the performing arts in Italy, these instances were put into practice with a structural reform whose results ended up being more nominal than factual; namely, it consisted of the transformation of many performing arts institutions from public entities to Foundations subject to private law.

The change happened in 1996, when Law 367 marked the beginning of an "era of Foundations": the LSF came first, which turned the 13 main Italian opera theatres into Foundations; the Venice Biennale followed, to which Law-Decree of 20/01/98 n.19 gave the features of a private company, together with the National Institute for Ancient Drama, INDA, transformed into Foundation with the Law-Decree of 29/01/98 n.20. Foundations would feature the inclusion of private members within a more equilibrated board of directors, a more transparent election of the Superintendent, a more efficient use of resources according to specific budget constraints.

The auspicated stream-lining of bureaucracy, legislative homogeneity, managerial autonomy and effectiveness were never reached. Again, new

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[34]*Il silenzioso naufragio del codice dello spettacolo*, A teatro webzine, 30th December 2018.

subcategories were formed: Law 106/2014 decreed the birth of Special Foundations; Accademia di Santa Cecilia and Teatro alla Scala were declared Special Foundations in 2015, and due to their "renowned artistic excellence" ("*comprovata qualità artistica*" in the Italian text) are granted yearly a fixed amount of FUS.

This aspect of the legal framework triggers a particularism without specificity based on discretional hierarchies, which favours exclusively the excellence rather than providing support to the lagging Foundations or to those with specific features.

In addition Law 175/2017, merely a declaration of intents on the part of the State, did not only anticipate the still unwritten *Carta dello spettacolo*; it also anticipates that Foundations will be downgraded to Lyric-Symphonic Theatres, losing a consistent portion of public support, if they do not reach structural balance within 2019.

The structure of opera theatres would be altered once more; this leads to two possible conclusions: that here was an initial misjudgement in setting deadlines for reaching structural balance on behalf of the LSF – especially considering that, since 2013, when the deadline was set to 2016, this doomed zero-hour was postponed to 2018 with budget Law 208/2015, and then again with Law 175/2017; it could alternatively be concluded that the step backwards bears witness to the failure of a managerial system, the one brought up by Law 367/1996, which did not improve public management of opera theatres as expected.

This is additionally demonstrated by the strong inference of the State in the non-existent autonomy of Foundations. The reform in facts, with its ever-changing nomenclature of opera theatres (*ente pubblico, Fondazione, Fondazione speciale, Teatro lirico-sinfonico*) and the mistimed deadlines, added further confusion and laid the foundations for further amendments and procrastinations.

Still, the most controversial and relevant aspect of the reform lies elsewhere, and particularly in the fact that the nature of theatres as public entities was never really reformed.

First, interpretative controversies due to the obscurity of the law arose about the public-private hybridisation happened in LSF: in 2011 the Constitutional Court emanated the sentence n.153 with which it specified that the core of the Foundations' structure was still public: Foundations were not, after all, so different from what they were before – public entities.

Second, public enforcement has deprived the reform of its meaning over and over ever since Foundations began operating. In many occasions and through different tools the Ministry has intervened directly on the management of Foundations: far from improving the persistent state of crisis of opera theatres, Foundations were in such a critical state that the Ministry sent special commissioners with the power of divesting the Board of Directors and controlling Foundations directly. INDA was subject to this practice (*commissariamento*) in 2016, while 9 out of the 13 LSF were put under this Ministerial administration in the time span 2008-2012.

It has been pointed out how the lack of transparency in the designation of the commissioners and their absolute power over Foundations echoes political relationships that are somewhat feudal in their discretion (Ferri, 2012).

Commissariamento represented the peak of Ministerial inference in the autonomy of Foundations – but not its ending. The still critical weaknesses of the Foundations' management, and especially of LSF's, led to the promulgation of law 112/2013: recovery plans were to be submitted by the Foundations' boards and to be evaluated by an external governmental commissioner in order for Foundations to be eligible to a rotation fund. Whereas the inference of the State was not as strong as it used to be with *commissariamento*, it represented, together with the downgrading anticipated by Law 175/2017, the ultimate failure of an incomplete reform.

Funds and Refunds: The Deficit-Covering Counterstrategy of the Italian State

When public support to the performing arts in Italy was first formalised, with the Decree-Law 438 of 03/02/1936, the State was declared responsible for covering the possible deficits of the sector (*eventuali disavanzi*, in the Italian text). Though much has changed in almost a century of public support to the arts, FUS allocated according to often obsolete and discretional criteria aimed at ensuring the mere survival of the sector, dramatically reduced year after year, is still interpreted as a deficit-covering measure rather than an investment on the performing arts culture.

The persistent state of emergency of the sector in facts prove how the lack of any strategic planning on behalf of the Directorate General, combined to an inefficient management of resources on behalf of unprepared administrations, are the core structural weakness of the funding system.

Besides the lack of consistency between the Ministerial and the organisational level, problems in the funding systems can be highlighted at different levels: confusion at the bureaucratic level, constant reductions, mistiming, particularism, if not political discretion, in the allocation of extra funds, obsolete criteria of evaluation.

Like many of the institutional bodies which have been previously analysed (the Ministry, the rigidly categorised theatres, Foundations), the Council evaluating candidates to FUS was subject to numerous nominal modifications which changed the composition of the Council itself, without really implying a significant change in the allocation criteria or on the effectiveness of this tool.

The first Council, *Consiglio Nazionale per lo Spettacolo*, was established with the creation of FUS (Law 163/1985); it was abrogated with Law 650/1996, which assigned the tasks previously performed by the Council to the new-born Committee for the issues of the performing arts (*Comitato per i problemi dello spettacolo*). A Decree of the President of the Italian Republic (D.P.R. 89/2007) introduces, barely 10 years later the formation of a new consulting body, the Council for the performing arts (*Consulta per lo spettacolo*), thus abrogating the precedent Committee. The most recent modification to the structure of consulting

bodies dates to 8 November 2017, as introduced by Law 175/2017: a fourth council is created, the *Consiglio superiore dello spettacolo*, which substitutes the previous *Consulta* with the announced aim of providing the ministry with consultancy services and support in the design of the strategies for the performing arts.

Since its foundation, more than thirty years ago, the Fund was subject to significant reductions attributable to cuts in public spending for culture, to the economic crisis, to changes in monetary values. From 1985 to 2016, FUS has been reduced by 54%, while the ratio of FUS and GDP decreased by over 71%, indicating a disquieting fall in public spending on culture.

The rotation fund established with Law 112/2013 came to rescue the LSF with 74 extra million Euros, increased by 10 million Euros with Budget Law 205/2015; in the meantime Law 175/2017 increased FUS by 10 million for both 2018 and 2019, anticipating an increase by 20 million euros starting from 2020; even so, as said before, no substantial change in the managerial mindset of theatres really occurred in spite of the administrative transformations these institutions were subject to: the inefficient management of resources was perpetuated.

Extemporaneous increases in funds, which are not part of a comprehensive strategy nor related to a scope any wider than mere, temporary rescue, are added to the overall FUS almost from one month to the other; it must be considered that this uncertainty in timing is embedded in an even more uncertain framework - that of a yearly-attributed fund, and not, as it was initially established by Law 600/1985, of a three-years funding plan which would better suit the ordinary long-term vision in theatres' planning of their seasons.

The mistiming in the allocation of resources is not just symptomatic of an idiosyncrasy between policymakers and the funded institutions; in some cases it also hides discretional political adjustments: the M.D. of 28/05/2018, n.229, allocates 1.330.505 million Euros to, respectively, La Scala and Opera di Roma in reason of their "special needs" (*maggiori esigenze*). This mention either evokes an initial misjudgement about the resources needed, or, more likely, a non-objective choice quite weakly justified in the light of a sudden reconsideration of the two theatres' needs.

Such particularism without specificity in funding has already been pointed out in 2.3: whereas La Scala and Accademia di Santa Cecilia are granted a regular amount of the Fund, other theatres with specific features do not find congruous recognition of their necessities in scoring points for FUS: waging the cost of their own ballet company, for instance, is not accounted for while evaluating a theatre. Similarly, the M.D. of 27/07/2017 establishes minimum percentages to be compulsorily attributed to certain institutions, namely the Venice Biennale and INDA (minimum 1%) and Il Piccolo Teatro (6.5%).

The absence of evaluative considerations in the cases described above is indicative of the overall trend of public support to the performing arts in Italy: a support which is oriented towards subjects, rather than towards projects (Balestra, Malaguti, 2000): a stress is put on the institution itself and on its past performance, usually evaluated according to a combination of numerical indicators (number of actors on the stage, of musicians in the orchestra and the like) and of qualitative

aspects. The latter aspect is particularly sensitive: the evaluation of artistic quality in the performing arts is strictly linked to, again, the past performance of a theatre – assuming, as in an enthymeme, that past quality acts as a grant for the future.

Moreover, it has been pointed out how *the ability of the cultural offer to form the audience's critical sense is tied to its pluralism and its variety, not at all to a few initiatives which experts believe to be excellent* (Trimarchi 2015). Thus, not only is this peer evaluation not objective and not relevant for assessing value in the performing arts, it is often neglectful of the target and purpose of the arts themselves, such as the emergence of creativity and the social impact of audience involvement.

It is relevant, in this respect, to mention a paradoxical and contradictory examples: free performances held by theatres in disadvantaged neighbour-hoods, such as the initiatives of *Opera di Roma and Teatro Massimo di Palermo*, are not acknowledged by FUS evaluation criteria because they do not generate revenues: State support is missing precisely for those activities which, not being profitable, need that support in order to generate value for the citizens.

So We Beat On, Boats Against the Current...

The many storms that the ship of State regulation of the performing arts has gone through have led to just as many shipwrecks. In spite of an abundant legislation, the Italian system never managed to prioritise issues and to ensure a sustainable development for the sector, intended as avoidance of short-term or temporary solutions that do not address fundamental issues (Throsby, 2015). As the previous sections of the paper have tried to point out, three main problems affect the performing arts transversally.

First, the constant Ministerial twists, more nominal than factual; the absence of coordination between State and Regions, i.e., between national and local levels of management; the rise and fall of the many FUS Councils; the excessive categorisation of performing arts structures and institutions, which focuses on formal achievements while driving the attention far from projects and their impact; the shift towards private-like Foundations, not supported by a real shift in management and still characterised by the weaknesses of the preceding institutional structure; all this factors generated a perpetual chain of deconstruction and rearrangements which never effectively reformed the sector, but rather threw it into turmoil.

Second, the promulgation of new laws, which happens at a frantic rhythm (on a yearly basis or more), patches a scratched blanket without fixing its holes, causing uttermost instability in a legal system characterised by laws which are not destined to last: the procrastinating attitude of Law 175/2017 and the suppression of M.D. 21/07/2014 by M.D. 27/07/2017 are but the most recent examples of a recurring pattern.

Political discretion and particularism, finally, seem to drive choices within the evaluation grid for the allocation of funds; qualitative indicators established by peer juries rule over the emergence of new forms of creative processes; tenders

address the performing arts in its entirety, from emerging organisations to established institutions: in such a framework, though with a certain degree of diversification, criteria and boards of evaluation are not able to adopt the flexibility that is needed face to the vastness of the creative scenario. What is more, very little attention is paid not just to artistic creativity, but to involvement processes and to education.

The crisis of the performing arts in Italy calls for something more than the umpteenth reform: new tools and actions should be put into practice in order to regulate and regularise the legal dispersion of the framework while simplifying the suffocating accumulation of definitions and categories.

The coordination between State and Regions should not be articulated as a juxtaposition of overlapping laws and structures, but rather as a mediating tool between the national/international level and the local one: State support should be centred on supporting the performing arts as a whole, in both their traditional and experimental forms, while Regions should act as vital node for the maximum diffusion and promotion of the arts at the local level, avoiding centralizations; at the provincial and municipal level, administrations should valorise theatrical infrastructure and tie them to the urban itineraries of citizens.

A long-awaited framework-law should finally provide organic guidelines for the effective management of performing arts institutions, while clarifying the role of the State in their support. For what concerns the latter point, it is easy to notice how State support merely serves as fund allocator, according to subjective and, it could be said, volatile criteria of evaluation. The actual support of the State should not just be financial, but substantial, through opportunities for sharing best practices and access to formation, in order for administrations to reach the intended autonomy and for the use of resources to be not just efficient, but effective.

In order to establish criteria that better suit both the demand and the offer for culture, observatories should emerge from their hibernation and draw a more holistic map not just of the performing arts, but of culture: a more active use of audience data and of the information collected could help understand individual motivations in the search for cultural goods, and be of vital help to policymakers in designing more effective tools for public action towards the arts.

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Dominance or Effectiveness? Which is More Important in Brand Personality Decisions?

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In the post-modern age, consumers have developed strong relationships with brands as brands have become significant tools that are deliberately picked up by consumers to manifest their ideal self-image to others. Hence, one of the most crucial characteristics of a brand is its personality and the level of its congruence with its target market. Brand personality has become a widely-used element in brand positioning and communication strategies. In most academic studies, the dimensional structure of brand personality is assessed and the main personality trait with the highest score is accepted as the brand personality characteristic to be highlighted in marketing communication strategies. This study focuses on the effects of each dimension of brand personality on brand image, brand loyalty and willingness to recommend the brand to others in order to be able to determine which trait should be communicated in integrated marketing communications. The study was conducted on 4410 female respondents in Turkey. An online survey was applied. The results show that although the dominant brand personality trait was found to be a particular one; the most effective traits on brand loyalty, brand image and willingness to recommend the brand to others were completely different.

Keywords: *Brand Personality, Brand Image, Brand Loyalty, Willingness to Recommend, Marketing Communication.*

Introduction

The idea that brands have personalities like human beings and these personalities have become tools for consumers to express themselves is now well established in terms of both brand literature and marketing practices (Belk 1988, Swaminathan et al. 2009). Brand personality is one of the most important characteristic of a brand that aids in the creation of brand image. Brands and their associated images relate to "let consumers express who they are, what they are, where they are, and how they want to be viewed" (Graeff 1997: 50).

In order to take advantage of the utilities of the brand personality concept in full, it is crucial to understand the underlying mechanisms emerging under different circumstances and to identify other constructs "that provide more specific insights into which brand personality traits are going to matter to consumers" (Swaminathan et al. 2009).

Although there are a number of studies that focus on the measurement and the identification of the dimensional structure of brand personality, limited research has been concentrated on the predictive role of the construct on "key dependent variables in consumer behavior" (Sung and Kim 2010: 640). However, as with

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many other constructs developed and tested in brand literature which is particularly related to symbolic consumption, it is crucial to test brand personality in a practical context in order to model its specific function in consumer behavior.

In most of the academic studies and brand personality research conducted by practitioners, the main brand personality characteristic of a company is determined in accordance with the variance scores achieved in Exploratory Factor Analysis and this personality trait is highlighted in marketing communication activities. However, as the purpose of developing positioning strategies and communication activities is to create positive responses in consumers, brand personality dimensions should be examined in terms of their effects on consumer behavior before making a decision on the main personality trait to be communicated. In this study brand image, brand loyalty and willingness to recommend the brand to others are included as dependent variables to measure consumer behavior. In this context, the aim of this study is to investigate the effects of each dimension of brand personality on brand image, brand loyalty and willingness to recommend the brand to others in order to be able to determine if it is the trait with the highest variance that should be communicated in integrated marketing communications.

Literature Review

Brand Personality

Brand personality is "the set of human characteristics that are associated with a brand" (Aaker 1997: 347) and it is a persuasive tool to distinguish the brand from competitors at the symbolic level (Biel 1993, Sung and Kim 2010). Advertisers and brand managers know that brand personality "plays a pivotal role in consumer attitudes and purchase intentions" (Freling et al. 2011: 392). A distinctive, robust, desirable and constant brand personality is the key determinant in successfully differentiating a brand from competitors (Siguaw et al. 1999).

The brand personality concept is based on psychological trait theory and is characterized by the idea that it is the internal personality characteristic which leads people's behavior in different situations (Zentes et al. 2008). The main idea behind the theory is to "characterize individuals in terms of a comprehensive but finite and preferably small set of stable dispositions that remain invariant across situations and that are distinctive for the individual" (Zentes et al. 2008:169, Tan et al. 2004). The Big Five Model that was developed by McCrae and Costa in 1990 has become the most widely used model to describe human personality features (Achouri and Bouslama 2010, Altuna 2014). According to this model, personality is described by emotional, cognitive and behavioral elements which constitute of five dimensions: openness (O), conscientiousness (C), extroversion (E), agreeableness (A) and neuroticism (N) that are known with the abbreviation of OCEAN (Azoulay and Kapferer, 2003, Mulyangerara et al. 2009).

Brand personality literature mostly focuses on two dominant themes: *diagnosing the nature of a brand's personality* and *examining the changes in brand attitudes and related measures as a consequence of having a distinctive,*

favorable brand personality (Freling et al. 2011:393). In the first stream of research which aim to determine the personality of specific brands, Aaker's (1997) brand personality model, which is comprised of the five dimensions *competence, excitement, ruggedness, sincerity* and *sophistication,* is widely used. Despite the criticisms mostly on its generalizability (Austin et al. 2003, Azoulay and Kapferer 2003); it has been applied in a large number of fields and cultures since 1997. Regarding the latter stream of research, brand personality has been examined in relation to various constructs in literature such as consumers' attachment styles (Swaminathan et al. 2009), brand trust (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Sung and Kim, 2010), brand identification (Kim et al. 2001), perceived quality (Ramaseshan and Tsao, 2007), self-image congruency (Sirgy et al. 2000, Kressman et al. 2006), brand love (Delgado-Ballester et al. 2017) and brand loyalty (Kumar et al. 2006, Lin, 2010).

Relationship between Brand Personality and Brand Image

As known from past research, brands have both symbolic and functional meanings to consumers. In other words, an individual interprets a brand in two ways consisting of both functional and symbolic facets (Kressman et al. 2006, Kim et al. 2011). Functional benefits refer to the problem-solving capacity of the brand, whereas symbolic benefits are more abstract qualities that "contain an explanation as to why some consumers are willing to pay considerably more for a brand when compared to the competitor" (Kim et al. 2011:449). Among those benefits, symbolic ones are more associated with brand image and they are known to be the drivers of brand image which leads to brand preference. Consumers are known to choose brands that do not have only functional benefits but also carry a congruent image with their ideal self-image which they desire to transfer to others. Brand personality, due to its symbolic nature, is a key dimension that represents the image of brands (Bhat and Reddy 1998, Lau and Phau 2007) and a strong driver of brand equity (Keller 2003). Being cognizant of this fact, brand managers work hard in developing brand personalities to enhance brand image; to attract consumers to the brand; and create preferences to the brand as brand personality is known to ensure a stable brand image over time (Aaker 1996). Thus, it is hypothesized that:

> *H1: The dominant brand personality dimension has the highest effect on brand image.*

Relationship between Brand Personality and Brand Loyalty

Studies have revealed that brand personality is an effective tool in building trust and loyalty. The marketing activities conducted by companies generally aim to convey the personality of a brand to consumers and hence to strengthen the communication between the brand and the consumer in a way to enhance loyalty to the brand and build brand equity (Lin 2010, Govers and Schoormans 2005). There is a limited stream of work on the relationship between brand personality

and brand loyalty which mostly focus on the indirect and direct effects of brand personality on loyalty. Regarding the indirect effects of brand personality on loyalty, since brand personality is created in consumers' minds' as an outcome of the perception of a brand, "it can have a meaningful and significant impact on both brand trust and brand affect" (Sung and Kim 2010:643). High consumer trust and affect are shown to result in higher consumer loyalty (Chaudhuri and Holbrook 2001). In a study conducted by Kim et al. (2001), the attractiveness of brand personality showed a positive direct effect on word of mouth and an indirect effect on brand loyalty. In their study focusing on a restaurant context, Lee et al. (2009) found evidence for the indirect effects of brand personality on brand loyalty with the mediating effects of emotion and customer satisfaction. Consistent with these findings, the study of Freling and Forbes (2005:155) also shows that brand personality has a positive effect on brand loyalty. According to their study, "a strong, favorable brand personality provides emotional fulfillment and may lead to an increased willingness to continue using a given brand".

In a study examining the direct effects of brand personality on brand loyalty, results indicate that brand personality has a positive influence on brand preference, affection, loyalty and purchase intention (Mengxia, 2007). In another study with a similar research question, it was found that brand personality has an effect on respondents' loyalty to consumer goods (Kumar et al. 2006). In the study conducted on the toys and video games industry, Lin (2010) found that the competence and sophistication brand personality dimensions had a significant effect on affective loyalty whereas competence, peacefulness and sophistication showed significant effect on action loyalty. As may be seen in past research, brand personality has either a direct or an indirect effect on brand loyalty. Thus it is hypothesized that:

> *H2: The dominant brand personality dimension has the highest effect on brand loyalty.*

Relationship between Brand Personality and Willingness to Recommend the Brand to Others

One of the few behavioral intentions measured in literature is the recommend-dation of the brand to others. In the purchase–decision process, consumers often turn to others for recommendation (Punj and Staelin 1983). Especially in this communication era, where the information penetrates at a dramatic pace and the internet and social media enable the individuals to share their experiences and feelings about the brands they use; brand recommendations and word of mouth have become the "dominant forces in the marketplace" (Mangold et al. 1999, Finn et al. 2009). Therefore, marketing professionals are seeking ways to make their customers "talk about" their brands positively and "mention" their experiences amiably. Past research provides evidence that intention to recommend to others predicts company success better than satisfaction (Pingitore et al. 2007, Finn et al. 2009). Positive image is known to contribute positively to willingness to recommend to others (Assaker et al. 2011). As brand personality has a dominant effect

on brand image, it is expected to have a significant effect on willingness to recommend to others as well. Thus it is hypothesized that,

> *H3: The dominant brand personality dimension has the highest effect on willingness to recommend the brand to others.*

Methodology

The aim of this research is to explore whether it is the dominant or other brand personality dimension that should be highlighted as part of marketing communication strategies. Correspondingly, this study focuses on the effects of each dimension of brand personality on brand image, brand loyalty and willingness to recommend the brand to others in order to determine whether it is the dominant or other brand personality dimension which has the highest statistically significant effect on the specified dependent variables.

The research process consists of two parts: exploratory and descriptive. As part of the exploratory research process, a pre-test and a focus group session were conducted in order to generate additional adjectives to Aaker's (1997) brand personality structure, in order to reflect the personality traits in the apparel e-retailing industry more accurately.

Following the exploratory process, as part of the descriptive research, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted on the set of brand personality variables that consisted of both the recently generated adjectives and the original ones in Aaker's (1997) model. Following the EFA, Regression Analysis was conducted to investigate the effects of brand personality dimensions on brand image, brand loyalty and willingness to recommend the brand to others.

Subsequent to the descriptive research, in order to interpret the findings of the data analysis, to get thorough customer insight and to aid decision makers in planning their communication strategies, one final focus group discussion session was conducted.

Exploratory Research Process: Pre-Test and Focus Group Discussion Sessions

In order to determine the adjectives that would describe the brand personality of the female fashion e-retailer company included in the study (*Company X*), a pre-test was conducted on 700 respondents who were registered in the company website, all of whom were females. In the pre-test that consisted of an online open-ended questionnaire, the respondents were asked "*If Company X were a person, what personality characteristics would describe him/her?*"

Following the pre-test, a focus-group discussion session was held to eliminate the adjectives generated in the former step and in order to "refine the research instrument" (Barbour, 2007:16). Twenty participants were invited to the session in order to avoid inadequate attendance of participants. Surprisingly, sixteen partici-pants showed up to the session. So as not to refuse the participants who responded favorably to the management's invitation, two researchers co-moderated the focus

session and conducted the group discussion in cooperation. The focus group discussion lasted for 105 minutes, in which funneling technique was used where the participants were encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings about the company and in the end of the session they were required to imagine Company X as a human being and to describe this person by using various adjectives. After the focus group discussion session, the adjectives mentioned during the discussion were compared with the results of the pre-test and those adjectives which were not mentioned in both phases were eliminated. As a result, twenty-six adjectives were added to Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale.

Measures Used in the Research, Sampling Method and Data Collection

Brand personality was measured using a 5-point scale *(1=strongly non-descriptive to 5=strongly descriptive)* that was based on Aaker's (1997) seminal model which included 68 adjectives (42 from Aaker's model and 26 from the exploratory study). In order to measure *brand image (affective)*, the 3-item, 5-point Likert-type scale *(1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree)* of Martinez, Montaner and Pina (2009) based on Weiss, Anderson and MacInnes (1999) and a direct question *(In general, I believe that x brand has a high image)* was used. For *brand loyalty* 3-items adapted from Yoo et al. (2000) was used (5-point Likert-type scale *(1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree)*. Lastly, *willingness to recommend the brand to others* was measured using one 5 -point Likert-type item (*I recommend this brand to others*). All the negative items were reverse coded before data analysis. Due to monetary and time constraints, convenience sampling and online survey method were used in the study. A total of 4636 surveys were collected. After the elimination of incomplete and incorrectly filled surveys, data were analyzed in terms of outlier analysis (Mahalanobis distance method). As a result 4410 surveys remained for further analysis.

Findings and Results

Respondent Profile

In order to determine the sample profile and shopping frequency from Company X, four questions were asked in the survey. The results are given in Table 1.

As seen in Table 1, the total sample consists mainly of females aged between 26-35 years; university graduates who work at private sector and who shop from Company X once every three months.

Table 1. *The Sample Profile and Shopping Frequency*

	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Age		
16-25	1560	35.6
26-35	1842	42.0
36-45	794	18.1
46+	185	4.2
Education Level (last graduated)		
Primary School	222	5.1
High School	1153	26.3
Undergraduate	2560	58.5
Graduate	441	10.1
Occupation		
Unemployed	1185	27.1
Private sector	1209	27.6
Public sector	902	20.6
Self-employed	259	5.9
Part Time	80	1.8
Student	744	17
Shopping Frequency from Company X		
Everyday	28	0.6
Every third day	34	0.8
Once a week	82	1.9
Once a fortnight	164	3.8
Once a month	989	22.7
Once in three months	1198	27.5
Once in six months	723	16.6
Once a year	867	19.9
Never shopped	272	6.2

Descriptive Statistics Results

For descriptive statistics, mean scores and standard deviations for the 68 scale items were calculated (Appendix 1). As seen in Appendix 1, the brand personality traits with the highest mean scores are *reliable*, *successful, clean (pure), hardworking, wholesome* and *sincere* whereas the ones with the lowest mean scores are *rugged, peasant, tough* and *masculine.* The mean and standard deviations were also calculated for the *brand image*, *brand loyalty* and *willingness to recommend the brand to others* scales. As these constructs took place in the research model as dependent variables, their grand mean scores were calculated and used in subsequent analyses.

As in Table 2, all of the dependent variables show high mean scores (above the mid-point 3.00) indicating high levels of brand loyalty, brand image and willingness to recommend the brand (Company X) to others.

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistics for the Dependent Variables*

Dependent Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.
Brand Loyalty	3.87	1.289
Brand Image	4.20	0.944
Willingness to recommend the brand to others	4.26	1.099

Reliability Analysis

Before conducting any further analysis, all scales were tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha scores. According to the results of the reliability tests, the Cronbach's α score for the 68-item brand personality scale was found to be 0.981. Reliability analysis were repeated for the other multi-item scales: brand loyalty and brand image. The α scores were 0.917 and 0.924 respectively. Assessing the Alpha scores, it may be said that the internal consistency estimates for all the scales used in the study are well above the cut-off point of 0.70 as stated by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) suggesting high internal consistency.

Brand Personality Dimensions of Company X: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

In order to examine the dimensional structure of the 68-item brand personality scale, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted and repeated until no items showed factor loadings below 0.50. The final results of EFA conducted using principal component analysis and varimax rotation emerged six factors consisting of 52 items with Total Variance Explained (TVE) of 67.76% (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin=0.983; χ^2=155002.479; df=1326; p=0.000). The six factors which differed from Aaker's (1997) model, were labeled as, F1: *Elegant & Gracious* (R^2=49.354; α=0.969); F2: *Measured & Conservative* (R^2=6.238; α=0.943); F3: *Sincere* (R^2=4.72; α=0.907); F4: *Excited* (R^2=3.103; α=0.874); F5: *Tough & Rugged* (R^2=2.336; α=0.857) and F6: *Expert* (R^2=2.010; α=0.877). The factors and the loaded items may be seen in Appendix 1.

In order to evaluate the brand personality structure of Company X and to determine the brand personality characteristic that identified with the company the most, descriptive statistics analyses were repeated for the factor dimensions achieved through EFA.

Table 3. *Descriptive Statistics for the BP Dimensions*

Brand Personality Dimensions	Mean	Std. Dev.
F1: *Elegant & Gracious*	4.15	0.824
F2: *Measured & Conservative*	4.30	0.760
F3: *Sincere*	4.35	0.734
F4: *Excited*	4.13	0.856
F5: *Tough & Rugged*	2.17	1.177
F6: *Expert*	**4.40**	**0.763**

As seen in Table 3, *F6: Expert* achieved the highest score among the six dimensions. Considering the highest mean score approach, the results show that the dominant brand personality dimension of Company X is *Expert,* followed by

Sincere and *Measured & Conservative.*

The Effects of Brand Personality Dimensions on Brand Image, Brand Loyalty and Willingness to Recommend the Brand to Others

In order to see which brand personality dimensions has a statistically significant effect on the dependent variables, regression analyses were conducted. The results of the Regression Analyses are given in Table 4.

Table 4. *Results of Multiple Regression Analyses*

Independent Variable	Dependent: Brand Image Beta (sig.)	Dependent: Brand Loyalty Beta (sig.)	Dependent: Willingness to Recommend Beta (sig.)
F1: *Elegant & Gracious*	**0.386 (0.000)***	**0.433 (0.000)***	**0.373 (0.000)***
F2: *Measured & Conservative*	**0.162 (0,000)***	0.022 (0.426)	0.045 (0.109)
F3: *Sincere*	**0.238 (0.000)***	**0.249 (0.000)***	**0.244 (0.000)***
F4: *Excited*	-0.036 (0.062)	**-0.046 (0.035)***	**-0.064 (0.004)***
F5: *Tough & Rugged*	-0.020 (0.095)	**0.033 (0.015)***	0.017 (0.211)
F6: *Expert*	**0.053 (0.009)***	0.022 (0.328)	**0.062 (0.008)***
Adj. R^2	0.537	0.402	0.368

*Statistically significant (p≤0,050)

As seen in Table 4, among the six brand personality dimensions, the dimension with the highest statistically significant effect on all three dependent variables is F1: *Elegant & Gracious.* Following this result the remaining highest effects are: for the dependent variable Brand Image, F3: *Sincere,* F2: *Measured & Conservative* and F6: *Expert*; for the Brand Loyalty dependent variable, F3: *Sincere,* F5: *Tough & Rugged* and F4: *Excited*; and for the dependent variable Willingness to Recommend the Brand to Others, F3: *Sincere,* F6: *Expert* and F4: *Excited*.

As the dominant brand dimension F6: *Expert* showed the highest mean score among the brand personality dimensions of Company X, it was expected that it would also have the highest statistically significant effect on *brand image*, *brand loyalty* and *willingness to recommend the brand to others*. Surprisingly, the results reveal that the personality dimension F1: *Elegant & Gracious* has the highest statistically significant effect on all dependent variables. In other words, contrary to expectations, the dominant brand personality dimension (F6: *Expert)* <u>does not have</u> the highest effect on the dependent variables. Moreover, this dimension (F1) has no statistically significant effect on brand loyalty, and a minor effect on brand image and willingness to recommend the brand to others. **Thus H1, H2 and H3 are not supported.**

Determining the Main Brand Personality Characteristic of Company X

Conflicting with expectations, the dominant brand personality dimension did not have the highest effect on *brand image, brand loyalty* and *willingness to*

recommend the brand to others which are the variables that are known to be highly related with marketing communication strategies. In other words, according to the results of the analyses, it seems pointless and incoherent to designate F6: *Expert* as the main brand personality characteristic of Company X to be highlighted in the marketing communication campaigns and activities of Company X.

It should be noted that in the study, in order to interpret the findings and to determine the dominant brand personality characteristic of Company X to be used as basis in the marketing communications strategies, an additional focus group discussion session and further EFA were conducted based on the results of the focus group session. The additional focus group session was held with eight people with different demographic characteristics. Six of the participants were currently the customers of Company X whereas two of them were registered subscribers on Company X's website but did not conduct any online shopping yet.

The aim of the participant recruitment strategy was to provide extensive insight from both the current and the potential customers of the company in order to determine the most effective brand personality structure to be used in marketing communication campaigns of Company X. The focus group discussion session lasted for 95 minutes in which funneling technique was employed. The findings of the focus group discussion revealed that Company X, which operates as an e-retailer company, is perceived as a technical brand that is successful, productive, an expert and institutional. The participants highlighted the fact that these characteristics were highly identified with e-retailing. As these characteristics did not have a major effect on the dependent variables, it could be said that these are the motivation-hygiene factors for Company X. As known, Herzberg's motivation-hygiene model states that hygiene factors are essential for motivation but do not result in satisfaction in the long term (Herzberg et al. 1959). However, if they are absent, they cause dissatisfaction. Hence it could be said that these characteristics are a prerequisite for e-commerce companies.

The findings of the discussion manifested that assigning F6: *Expert* as the main brand personality characteristic in communicating with the target market would not create any positive reaction in customers as these characteristics are expected as a default precondition rather than as a differentiating competitive characteristic. Therefore, it would be a blunder to construct the marketing communication and positioning strategies on the dominant brand personality characteristic (F6: *Expert)*. It would not be wrong to state that being an expert is actually the point-of-parity (POP) for companies operating in e-retailing business. On the other hand the consensus of the participants was that as Company X is an apparel e-retailer, it is significant that it is perceived as *Elegant & Gracious* as this characteristic is crucial in their preferences for apparel. In other words, basing the communication strategies of Company X on the brand personality characteristic *Elegant & Gracious* would create competitive advantage as it would be perceived as a point-of-difference (POD) by customers.

Discussion and Conclusion

Brand personality serves benefits to both consumers and brands. From the consumers' point of view, it "represents a modern way of expressing themselves by affirming their personalities and defining their standards of living by means of material possessions" (Jain, 2017:43). For brands, it is a tool used to "distinguish their goods or services from those of the competitors and also as a means to inform customers about the advantages they can derive from buying their respective goods or services and/or the status connotations of using them" (Jain, 2017:43). On this basis, companies invest on brand personality research to understand the personality perception of their brands by the target market and they use this personality trait as a communication tool in their marketing activities.

This study, which consists of both an exploratory and a descriptive research process, aims to determine whether the dominant brand personality dimension should be utilized as the main brand personality characteristic in positioning and marketing communication strategies. Correspondingly, the research tested for the effects of each dimension of brand personality on brand image, brand loyalty and willingness to recommend the brand to others in order to determine whether the dominant brand personality dimension would show the highest statistically significant effect on the specified dependent variables.

Results of the EFA revealed a six-factor solution (*Elegant & Gracious, Measured & Conservative*, *Sincere, Excited, Tough & Rugged* and *Expert*) that differed from Aaker's model. Among the six factors, *F6: Expert* was found to have the highest mean score. Considering the highest mean score approach in determining the main personality characteristic of a brand, it could be stated that the dominant brand personality of Company X is *Expert.* In order to test the hypotheses, Multiple Regression Analyses were conducted where Brand Image, Brand Loyalty and Willingness to Recommend the Brand to Others were used as the dependent variables. As the dominant brand personality dimension was identified as *Expert*, it was expected that it would also show the highest statistically significant effect on the dependent variables. However, *Elegant & Gracious* showed the highest statistically significant effect on all dependent variables. Thus, the hypotheses were not supported. The focus group discussion sessions also supported this finding. Hence, it could be said that Company X should embrace *Elegant & Gracious* as the dominant brand personality character-ristic to be communicated in its marketing activities.

In conclusion, the findings of this study indicate that when developing positioning and marketing communication strategies, it may not always be correct for companies to use the dominant brand personality characteristic as the main characteristic to focus on, as this characteristic may actually be the point of parity for the company and have no effect in creating positive reactions in customers. In some cases, other brand personality characteristics may create the point of difference for the company and on which the marketing communication strategies of the company should be based on.

Limitations & Suggestions for Further Research

As with all research, the study holds some limitations in terms of generalizability. Firstly, the data was collected only for one brand. Although this brand is a major brand with high market share and reputation in the apparel e-retailing industry the findings pertain only to this brand. Due to the time and monetary constraints, convenience sampling was used. Additionally, the survey was conducted only on registered females to the company website as the company sells only women's apparel. For researchers who are interested in the field, it is recommended to include different brands from other industries and to test the generalizability of the findings of this study. Besides, other dependent variables may be added into the research model to be tested.

Acknowledgement

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Appendix 1. *Mean Values, Standard Deviations, Factor Dimensions and Loadings*

Brand Personality Scale Items	Mean	St. Dev.	FACTOR DIM./ LOADING	Brand Personality Scale Items	Mean	St. Dev.	FACTOR DIM./ LOADING
☐ Down-to-earth *(a)*	4.07	1.013	F3 / 0,606	Good-looking *(a)*	4.24	.966	F1 / 0.703
Family-oriented *(a)*	4.17	1.031	F3 / 0.619	Charming *(a)*	4.15	1.016	F1 / 0.587
Small- town *(a)**	2.84	1.412	F5 / 0.532	Feminine *(a)***	4.20	1.062	
Honest *(a)*	**4.43**	**.876**	F3 / 0.733	Smooth *(a)***	4.08	1.050	
Sincere *(a)*	**4.44**	**.878**	F3 / 0.729	Outdoorsy *(a)***	4.18	1.023	
Real *(a)*	4.34	.957	F3 / 0.722	Masculine *(a)*	*2.49*	*1.394*	F5 / 0.755
Wholesome *(a)*	**4.45**	**.879**	F3 / 0.694	Peasant *(a)**	*2.32*	*1.391*	F5 / 0.843
Original *(a)***	4.27	1.009		Tough *(a)**	*2.36*	*1.385*	F5 / 0.862
Cheerful *(a)*	4.22	.982	F4 / 0.596	Rugged *(a)**	1.88	1.274	F5 / 0.843
Sentimental *(a)*	3.83	1.196	F4 / 0.571	Elegant/chic *(b)*	4.30	.927	F1/ 0.741
Friendly *(a)*	4.19	1.021	F4 / 0.534	Gracious *(b)*	4.28	.961	F1/ 0.718
Daring *(a)***	3.91	1.168		Noble/aristocratic *(b)*	4.23	1.009	F1 / 0.727
Trendy *(a)*	**4.40**	**.942**	F1 / 0.603	High quality/high class *(b)*	4.27	.974	F1 / 0.700
Excited *(a)*	4.18	1.045	F4 / 0.648	Modern *(b)*	4.33	.927	F1 / 0.740
Spirited *(a)*	4.26	1.005	F4 / 0.617	Perfect *(b)*	4.02	1.109	F1 / 0.751
Cool *(a)***	3.55	1.339		Good *(b)*	4.23	.987	F1 / 0.564
Young *(a)***	4.32	.946		Lovely/wonderful *(b)*	4.08	1.081	F1 / 0.735
Imaginative *(a)*	4.15	1.106	F1 / 0.635	Plain *(b)***	3.80	1.169	
Unique *(a)*	3.77	1.244	F1 / 0.620	Magnificient *(b)*	3.96	1.141	F1 / 0.720
Up-to-date *(a)*	4.25	.997	F1 / 0.607	Decent/well-behaved *(b)*	4.34	.949	F2 / 0.615
Independent *(a)***	4.13	1.077		Colorful/lively *(b)*	4.36	.909	F2 / 0.501
Contemporary *(a)***	4.22	1.004		Stylish *(b)*	4.26	.995	F1 / 0.693
Reliable *(a)*	**4.53**	**.836**	F3 / 0.557	Conservative *(b)*	4.25	1.024	F2 / 0.636
Hard-working *(a)*	**4.47**	**.847**	F6 / 0.513	Naive *(b)*	4.00	1.164	F2 / 0.638
Secure *(a)***	4.30	.980		Easygoing *(b)*	4.25	.967	F2 / 0.632
Intelligent *(a)***	4.23	.992		Innovative *(b)*	4.24	1.006	F1 / 0.580
Technical *(a)*	4.30	.966	F6 / 0.526	Consistent/ harmonious *(b)*	4.32	.926	F2 / 0.611
Corporate *(a)*	4.33	.944	F6 / 0.611	Respectful*(b)*	4.42	.877	F2 / 0.622
Successful *(a)*	**4.48**	**.825**	F6 / 0.541	Tasty *(b)*	4.29	.977	F2 / 0.560
Leader *(a)***	4.15	1.022		Clean/pure *(b)*	**4.48**	**.837**	F2 / 0.636
Confident *(a)***	4.34	.925		Tolerant *(b)*	4.38	.910	F2 / 0.624
Upper-class *(a)*	3.82	1.169	F1 / 0.596	Measured/ moderate *(b)*	4.30	.943	F2 / 0.651
Glamarous *(a)*	3.83	1.166	F1/ 0.722	Mysterious *(b)***	3.63	1.311	
Active (b)	4.31	0.965	F2 / 0.504	*Energetic (b)***	4.32	0.958	

(a) Adapted from Aaker (1997) (b)Generated in the exploratory research process
*Reverse-coded

**Items that have been excluded in EFA due to their low factor loadings below <0.50