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Positioning of Sponsorships on the Cultural Events Market

The paper deals with the relationship between cultural events and financial possession through which a complex web of communication can be discerned, in positions of social responsibility and consumerism. In the first part of the paper, sponsorship is described in its historical context in order to point out its key features and transformations over time, especially in the socialist and post-socialist period. By contextualizing sponsorship strategies and messages, one can accurately track the representations and values attached to the positioning of cultural products in the zone of national and global policies. Musical spectacles (concerts, festivals, assemblies etc.) are attractive and useful products in the sponsorship market. The EXIT festival, Jelen beer, Guća, Telenor, Alpha Bank, Bogoljub Karić, Zepter, Beer Fest, Tuborg, Kustendorf are just some examples – patents of sponsorship of cultural manifestations in the transitional period. This paper constructs three forms of sponsorship strategies in the domain of cultural festival scenes: ownership, leadership and partnership.

In the domain of partnership between collective and private property, sponsorship strategies are based on an ethical mimicry of old/new rules and their enforcers within a gift economy, thus creating arbitrary spaces for action adjusted for crises (the grey economy, money laundering, unstable economic policies etc.). Leadership is a sponsorship strategy which entails complete domination in the sphere of decision making, utilization and spending, without the possibility of outside control. In leadership there is no opposition between owners and sponsors, and everything is subject to the authority of the individual as the one and only, inviolable self-sponsor. Partnership is based on the power of choice in the domain of competition and opposition as bipolar ownership. The tandems of spectacle – sponsor and enjoyment – monopoly, are viable projectors of various strategies for the shaping of ownership, leadership and partnership, thus projecting idealized perceptions and simulacra of common good and social harmony, which are actually just a disguise for various interests and antagonisms in a politically and economically unstable place such as Serbia.

Key words: sponsorship, culture, politics, festivals, ownership and the market.