AN ORIGINAL PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP : PERFORMING HERITAGE, THE CASE OF THE CITY OF PROVINS.

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ABSTRACT

In tourism, there is a fundamental but complex partnership between public and private. Tourism is a field where public and private sectors are strongly dependent on each other. The management of a tourism destination implies indeed many public and private partnerships to fit, arrange or manage destinations in order to answer the needs of tourist customers [OCDE 2001].

The public-private partnership is essential for marketing, for organizing demonstrations and performances, event-driven promotion etc. The private status conferred to actors in charge of these fields facilitates the access to sponsorship and gives the flexibility necessary to the organization of events. Moreover, these last years, in France, cities and regions administrations were subjected to multiple constraints. With decentralization and the need for public actors to limit their expenditure, the partnerships play a crucial role in financing the territorial tourism development.

More particularly in the field of developing and performing heritage, many collaborations between private and public sectors are necessary. In this partnership, we often see a way of mitigating the lack of skills of communities. “Technical constraints are often an important selection criterion: the complexity and the technicality of certain activities can require calling upon a specialized private company.” [Chatrie, Uhaldeborde, 1996] If these forms of cooperation between private and public sectors have been going on for a long time, these partnerships are complex and this collaboration between public and private fields can take multiple forms. Traditionally the Tourist Office works with financial supports and logistics from communities, operates facilities and manages tourist sites together [project MP 03-01 2005]. But it is also necessary to note the omnipresence of volunteers from non profit organizations. Local spontaneous productions, implemented year after year, are not; strictly speaking, completely part of local patrimonial development projects in tourism. They are often individual initiatives, and are sometimes integrated into it, and then become performances supported by communities [Lacour, 2007]

This publication attempts to study the public and private partnership initiated before the 20041 PPP Law, made of gradual cooperation, weakly defined at the beginning, but ending up as a coherent unit. In order to state our point, we chose a case study that illustrates the multiple forms this public-private partnership can take in the particular field of performing heritage.

Provins is located one hour South-East of Paris. It is the 27th French site registered on the Unesco World Heritage list: Provins is an exemplary city for its well-preserved built heritage attracting more and more tourists, but with a need for heritage performances. Historic city of 12,000 inhabitants, sub-prefecture of a rural area, with some industrial and tertiary activities, Provins is first known as a tourism city. It is one of rare French cities with as many classified or registered Historic Buildings of Middle Ages: 55 in the classified precinct (58 as a whole).
For several years, the municipality has been undertaking a vast program of development for its tourism potential, through the restoration of historical heritage and the organization of shows and demonstrations. Nowadays, Provins welcomes more than 600,000 visitors per year [website of city, 2008]. Throughout the year, and of course more during the tourism season, several events take place one after the other: medieval festivals, historical shows, "son et lumière" and revivals. Varieties of actors produce these performances, which started in the early 70's. Among them are cultural associations, shopkeepers' associations, the Tourist Office, little private companies, or MJC (youth association). State, regional or European subsidies, or even private companies can finance it. Tradesmen, industrials, farmers or even associations in charge of other events can also support these events. Performing heritage of Provins is thus an example of success of this public-private partnership, and the great diversity of financing in performing heritage but this case illustrates to how complex it is.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a field where public and private sectors are strongly dependent on each other. The management of a tourism destination implies indeed many public and private partnerships to fit, arrange or manage destinations in order to answer the needs of tourism customers [OCDE 2001]The public-private partnership is essential for marketing, for organizing demonstrations and performances, event-driven promotion etc. The private status conferred to the actors in charge of these fields facilitates the access to sponsorship and gives the flexibility necessary to the organization of events.

Moreover, these last years in France, cities and regions administrations were subjected to multiple constraints. With decentralization and the need for public actors to limit their expenditure, the partnerships play a crucial role in financing the territorial tourism development. More particularly in the field of developing and performing heritage, many collaborations between private and public sector are necessary. In this partnership, we often see a way of mitigating the lack of skills of communities. “Technical constraints are often an important selection criterion: the complexity and the technicality of certain activities can require calling upon a specialized private company.” [Chatrie, Uhaldeborde, 1996 ] If these forms of cooperation between private and public sectors have been going on for a long time, these partnerships are complex and this collaboration between public and private fields can take multiple forms.

This publication attempts to study public and private partnerships initiated before the 20042 PPP Law, made of gradual cooperations, weakly defined at the beginning, but ending up as a coherent unit. In order to state our point, we chose a case study that illustrates multiple forms this public-private partnership can take in the particular field of performing heritage. Through a case study, we will illustrate the great diversity of a public-private partnership in performing heritage.

1.1. Heritage: territorial dynamics and collective memory

France has heritage of a quality and an exceptional diversity: 14,000 classified buildings and sites, 26,000 registered at the additional Inventory of Historic buildings, 4,000 museums and 2,000 festivals, which constitute so many attractions for the public.

Performing heritage is a goal recognized by all actors of the Territorial Intelligence: owners of historic heritage, private or public, see there a way of mobilizing resources for their conservation. Territorial communities find a way of giving a positive and attractive image of their territory and the State sees

there the way to assert a strong identity and a territorial economic dynamic. Essential component of what it is agreed to call "territorial tourism", the utilization of heritage takes part in the development of the local identity. Its role, founded on cultural values of the territorial community, is useful for consolidating the collective identity of the community and is in coherence with economic, human and environmental development of the territory [Nifle 2004]. With this particular form of cultural tourism, everybody recognizes significant local economic consequences, in hotel trade, transport or catering. Many local actors place very great hopes in potentialities of this activity, especially in terms of employment. [Lavocat 2005]. In fact, if “the Territorial Intelligence can be understood as the territoriality which results from the phenomenon of appropriation of resources of a territory” [Bertacchini 2004], heritage and culture are major factors which it is advisable to replace in a policy of reappropriation of heritage by local populations. Through performing heritage, it is a question of rising an active and changing collective memory; which, based on populations, their knowledge and their history, allows creating proximity and intra territorial projects integrated in a territorial dynamics.

1.2. Changes in heritage utilization

Since the Seventies, there are more and more performances proposing to visitors a spectacular approach of History in France. Born from the impulse of cultural non-profit associations or local tourist organizations, these shows and performances were primarily used to sensitize local populations and territorial communities with their heritage, and to save some castles or remarkable places from ruin. Becoming year after year essential components in the development of the territories, these performances seek to create a new venue in a city or in tourist sites by animation of the places. The purpose is to revalue a piece of heritage on the occasion of a festive and cultural event.

1.3. A multipolar sector

However, the trilogy “heritage, culture, tourism” seems an issue less homogeneous than others like education or health. Indeed, it unites at the same time:
- heritage, made up of monuments and works owned and exploited by territories and the State,
- culture whose heritage can be regarded as a component,
- tourism which is presented as a specific economic sector.

This complexity is undoubtedly due to the nature of the interests at stake. Interests of public policies and actors of heritage, culture and tourism, are so different in these sectors. We can notice this complexity through difficulties of getting into a network and transversal problems between these various branches of the activity, each one “ignoring” the other, whereas these three sectors are closely dependent when we are talking of development of heritage. We just have to observe the diversity of the actors of heritage to understand the problem. Besides the great diversity of owners of the public or private heritage, at least six sectors of activity exist and coexist in this sector:
- cultural mediators,
- interpreters of heritage,
- organizers of tourism,
- teachers within the framework of school and extra-schools activities,
- professional performers, either acting within a project developed by an association or a community or initiating the project,
- amateurs and volunteers of non profit organizations.

In its financing, we also find the multipolar aspects of performing heritage actors.

1.4. Financing performing heritage

More particularly in the field of developing and performing heritage, many collaborations between private and public sector are necessary. This partnership is essential for marketing, for organizing demonstrations and performances, event-driven promotion etc. The private status conferred to actors in charge of these fields facilitates the access to sponsorship and gives the flexibility necessary to the organization of events.

But with this partnership, we often see a way of mitigating the lack of skills of communities. “Technical constraints are often an important selection criterion: the complexity and the technicality of certain activities can require calling upon a specialized private company.” [Chatrie, Uhaldeborde, 1996] If these forms of cooperation between private and public sectors have been going on for a long time, these partnerships are complex and this collaboration between public and private fields can take multiple forms. Traditionally a local or municipal institution like the Tourist Offices works with financial support and logistics from communities, operate facilities and manage tourist sites together [Perret-Gentil,2005]. However, it is also necessary to note the omnipresence of volunteers from non-profit organizations. Local spontaneous productions, implemented year after year, are not; strictly speaking, completely part of the local patrimonial development projects in tourism. They are often individual initiatives, and are sometimes integrated into it, and then become demonstrations supported by communities [Bourret, Lacour, 2007]

2.1. The place

We choose to study Provins because this city typically gathers, within its own precinct, almost all types of performing heritage that can be found in France. (Even if some of these performances are done on a more modest scale than in other places). 27th French site registered in the World Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO, Provins, city of 12,000 inhabitants, sub-prefecture of rural area with some industrial and tertiary activities, relies primarily on its image of tourism city. The site did not suffer from any inappropriate restorations, only consolidations: it has escaped from neo-middle ages restorations of the 19th century that destroyed the authenticity of many cities of the same times. It is one of the rare French cities that has so many Historic buildings of Middle Ages: 55 in the classified precinct (58 as a whole). The main part of the monuments dates from 11th to 15th century. Among the 55 listed and registered monuments, 39 belong to private owners and 16 to the city.

For several years, the municipality has been undertaking a vast program of development for its tourism potential, through restorations of historical heritage and organization of shows and demonstrations. Nowadays, Provins welcomes more than 600,000 visitors per year. Throughout the year, and of course more during the tourism season, several events take place one after the other : medieval festivals, historical shows, “sound and light” and revivals. These many performances, which began in the early Seventies, are achieved by very diverse actors and are financed and supported as well by public communities as by private ones.
Historical animations of the town of Provins are a perfect example of mixture between public authorities and private initiatives, built progressively and becoming effective year after year; they began without a well-defined will, and now became a part of a coherent unit.

2.2. Non profit organizations

2.2.1. The Harvest festival

- **Management:**
  Last Sunday of August. This festival was born from an ancestral tradition and recreated by the "Free Commune of the Upper City of Provins"; it has been going on for 38 years. Manage by a non-profit organization: “the Free Commune of the Upper City of Provins”. There exists in Provins an Upper city and a Lower one. Inhabitants of the Upper city created after "La Libération" (at the end of the Second World War) “the Free Commune of the Upper City of Provins” on the model of the Montmartre's one in Paris. It is a non-profit organization. Fallen in disuse, it re-appeared in 1970, in the form of a residents association, which refused the weeding of village's streets [web site free commune 2008]. Today, it represents a group of volunteers who maintain folklore and heritage of the rural world, in a medieval city through two annual animations: “the harvest festival” and the “festival of the vine growers”.

  Organizers are all volunteers with no exception. Around 500 volunteers participate according to their competence, they repair the equipment, do the communication campaign, managing the accounts… All year long, in the "Thursday Atelier", they prepare, repair, fix up things they will sell and they make decorations for the performance.

- **Financing:**
  - **Subsidies and supports :**

    **Subsidies**
    - Subsidized by institutional authorities : "Conseil Général", the city, the community of communes.
    Three other communes linked with Provins

    **Supports:**
    - Supported by one bank and one insurance company, one supermarket, 6 shopkeepers and 5 companies (transportation, agricultural equipment), one local radio, the hospital of Provins, either financially or materially (impressions of posters or leaflets, loan of vehicles, insurance offered, catering provided).
    - Also supported by non-profit organizations, like the Tourism Office but also by other folk or historical performance associations. Even associations organizing other shows in the city like the MJC (youth association), which implements the “son et lumière”.
    - 5 farms still operating in the Upper city and in the neighbourhoods take part by lending material and food.

  ➔ **Receipts:**
  - Sale of advertisement in the programme.
  - Entrance fees, 8 € (free for children under 12 years old) : around 1500 visitors
Renting stands for craftsmen or shopkeepers who sell their own products.

- Selling objects made in "Atelier of Thursday" (weaved straw objects)
- Selling sandwiches and drinks. Volunteer cooks are feeding the other volunteers and prepare all the meals to be sold.

➔ Expenses:

- Demonstration guest stands. Each year, according to the theme of the festival, craftsmen are invited to make demonstrations and sometimes, to propose initiations to ancestral techniques.
- Folk groups.

 Comments:

Each year, the non-profit organization balances its budget (except in case of bad weather, but also in case of particular events like a world football championship, or for example the death of Lady Di which happened the day of the festival, and everybody stayed in front of his TV).

Cooperation between public authorities and non-profit organizations includes:

- Security : in charge of the firemen and the city police.
- Means of signalling and fences on the streets.
- Communication of the festival, done by the city and the Tourism Office.
- Public subsidies

2.2.2. The "Son et lumière"

 Management:

By the MJC ("Youth Club and Arts Centre") a non-profit organization. This association proposes four shows in June.

 Financing:

➔ Subsidies and supports:

Subsidies

Subsidized by institutional authorities, the "Conseil Général" and the City.

Supports

Supported by local companies either financially or materially (printing of posters or leaflets, lending of vehicles, free insurance, catering). Also supported by non-profit organizations, like the Tourism Office but also by other folk or historical living performance non-profit organizations.

➔ Receipts:

9 euros / 12 euros
Comments:
The show is designed, produced and achieved since 1982 on the initiative of the "Youth Club and Arts Centre" (MJC) of Provins.
With the participation of 300 volunteers (250 on stage) and 18 local non-profit organizations. Volunteers are making all costumes, accessories and stage setting with free material.
The municipality supplies reception equipment (barriers, rows of seats, lighting, cash desks, cloakrooms,…), at the beginning it subsidizes the creation of the scenery and accessories.
The city gives free the use of the place.
Through its tourism electronics publications, the Tourism Office makes the promotion of this performance, but less than for the four others shows produced by private companies. The "son et lumière" gives its leaflets to the Tourism Office, but does not appear in those of the Tourism Office.
Cooperation between public authorities and the non-profit organization can be defined by:
- Security: through the firemen and the city police.
- Means of signalling and fences of streets.
- The Tourism Office for the communication of the festival.
- Public subsidies

2.3. Municipal government control: The Medieval festival

Management:
Created in 1984, on the initiative of the City and with the participation of all the residents.
Managed by the cultural service of the city hall.
In mid-June during two days.

Financing:
- Subsidies and supports:

Subsidies
No subsidies by institutional authorities (because of its municipal government control state, see below)

Supports:
-Supported by 2 banks, and 15 local companies either financially or materially (printing of posters or leaflets, lending of vehicles, free insurance, catering provided. Companies of national range also support this performance, because of its importance: a television channel, a newspaper, a Web site and a radio.
-Also supported by about thirty local non-profit organizations, folk associations, history, sporting, cultural… We also find “the free commune of the Upper city”. These associations animate most of the festival with their material and their volunteers.

Receipts:
- Entrance fees: 8 euro / 12 euro for 2 days - free under 13 years old (80,000 visitors).
- Renting of stands for craftsmen or shopkeepers who sell their own products.

➔ Expenses:
- Folk groups
- Repayment for participating organizations (food, movement)

- Comments:
At the beginning, a non-profit organization leaded by elected representatives used to manage this performance. Since 2005, a "régie municipale direct" (local government with state control accounts) is managing it. Indeed, the organization was para-municipal, so there is a problem of "gestion de fait", it means that the organization managed something that should have been managed by the city. Subsidies and communal aids were mixed with private participations but managed in the same time by an organization where the city had a direct interest.

The "gestion de fait", according to the article 60-XI of the finance law n°63-156 of February 23, 1963, with "any person who, without having the quality of public accountant or without acting under control and for the account of a public accountant, interferes into the cashing of receipts assign or intended to an public agency…or receives or handles directly or indirectly funds or values irregularly extracted of a public agency”… There is "gestion de fait" when an association exerts actually the deputy management of a public service without having quality of it.

This situation was very common in France until these last years. Associations very close to the municipality and which managed funds and public places without control of institutional authorities used to manage many places or tourist performances.

2.4. Private companies:

There are two private companies producing four spectacles on ramparts site of the town: "Vol libre" and "Equestrio".

2.4.1. The company: "Vol Libre"

- Management:
By a private company

From March to November, this company proposes two shows: "les aigles des remparts©" and "Arkhangai, knights of the steppes".

- Financing:
  ➔ Subsidies and supports:

No subsidies

Sponsoring: six partners: one company of bear taming, the Tourism Office, one restaurant, one hotel, one camping site, one stud farm.
Receipts:
The raptors: Adult: 9 euros / children 6 euros
Equestrian spectacle: Adult: 10.50 euros / children 6 euros
One shop on the site

Expenses:
6 professionals of spectacle for the spectacle of raptors
6 professionals of spectacle for the equestrian spectacle
2 permanent employees and 4 seasonal contracts for administration

Comments:
"Les aigles des remparts©":
In 1996 on the initiative of the mayor of Provins, a private company “the eagles of France” produced this show during 4 years. Then this company yielded the structure to the Tourism Office, which managed it with an associative status during 2 years. Managed by the company “the eagles of France” then by the Tourism Office, the company "Vol Libre" manages it since 2002.
The site belongs to the municipality. The city is renting it to the company with a convention for 8 years by renewal by tacit agreement.
The name of the show: "les aigles des remparts©" is a trademark belonging to the Tourist Office, and rented to the company.

"Arkhangai, knights of the steppes".
"Arkhangai, knights of the steppes" exists since last year, 2007.
In 2006, the company bought a building, 50 metres away from the show stage and restored it. Then, since 2 years, the company proposes a new show in front of the building and two exhibitions inside. The first one is about the equestrian art in Mongolia in Middle Ages, and the second one is about falconry.
The place is thus private and its operation is also private. The municipality takes no part neither in the choice of the spectacle, nor in the way of managing it.
There is a partnership for the ticketing (which is sold partly by the Tourism Office), for the hiring of the site (to the municipality), for the hiring of the trademark (to the Tourism Office) and for the promotion which in major part is made by the Tourism Office (on the Web site and in its premises).
For these two shows, there are two possibilities: first on a municipal site, second on a private site. Both are managed in a private way. For the first case, the municipality has a right to watch on the contents and rents the trademark. The second is a completely free management.

2.4.2. The company Equestrio

Management:
By a private company
From March to November, this company proposes two shows: "Tournaments: the legend of the knights", "the battle of the ramparts"

- Financing:
  - Subsidies and supports:
    No subsidies
    No sponsors.

  - Receipts:
    Audience of 75,000 for the two shows (same company: Tournaments & battle of the ramparts)
    Tournaments Adult: 10.50 euros / children 7.50 euros
    Battle of the ramparts: Adult: 6.10 euros / children 4.50 euros
    One shop on the site

  - Expenses:
    Tournaments: nine stage professionals.
    Battle of the ramparts: six show professionals.
    The company employing 10 seasonal contracts (ticketing, reception…)

- Comments:
  The show “The battle of the ramparts” exists since 1996. The Tourism Office managed it with an associative statis. Like for the harvest festival” (referred above) organization being para-municipal, it represented a danger of "gestion de fait".

  Municipal subsidies and assistances were mixed with private participations while being managed by an organization where the municipality had direct interests. This is why, in 2004, a private company was entrusted to manage this spectacle. The president of this company made the presentation of the falconry show during time when the Tourism Office managed this one, and then he founded his own company in 2004.

  The “Tournaments: the legend of the knights” was suggested by the company to the municipality in 2004.

  The site belongs to the municipality. The city is renting it to the company with a convention for 8 years by renewal by tacit agreement.

  The partnership exists for the ticketing (which is sold partly by the Tourism Office), for the hiring of the site (to the municipality).

  A private company, which began as an organization receiving the benefits of an association managed by Tourism Office, itself managed by the municipality, produces these shows.
2.5. The coordinating role of the Tourism Office

The Tourism Office is proposing leaflets for all performances in its office, on its website and in professional meetings.

The Tourism Office imposes, to each performance produced by private companies on a city field, a very strict schedule of conditions, in order to have coherent performances with the site occupation ("les aigles des remparts©", "the battle of ramparts", "the legend of the knights", except "Arghangai" which is presented on a private place).

Most directors of private companies proposing performances are registered at the board director of the Tourism Office and participate regularly to coordination commissions.

CONCLUSION

Utilizing heritage is part of territories development and consolidates the link between populations and actors on the territory. Cultural events have on the local and regional development a cultural impact, but also a very important economic and social impact. It is this impact, which explains that utilizing heritage has become an essential component of the Territorial Intelligence.

On the other hand, very many actors interfere with aims and according to varied processes in order to make this development. Among them are cultural associations, shopkeepers associations, the Tourist Office, little private companies, or MJC (youth association). State, regional or European subsidies or even private companies can fund it. Tradesmen, industrials, farmers or even associations in charge of other events can also support it. Traditionally the Tourist Offices works with financial support and logistics from communities, operates facilities and manages tourist sites together. [Perret-Gentil 2005]. But it is also necessary to note the omnipresence of voluntary non profit associations". Through "The Harvest festival", "The Medieval festival", the equestrian and raptors shows, and the "Son et Lumière", we see three quite distinct management styles, where public and private are closely mixed: the non-profit organization, municipal government control and the private company. “The secular sedimentation of cultural (and tourist) institutions reveals today a deeply heterogeneous landscape as well by the diversity of legal statuses of its institutions as by the interlacing of its funding sources." [Chiffert, lecat & all. 1997]

The extreme diversity of types of relations established between territorial administrations and organizations under private status, in particular regarding contracts and conventions which, more and more often, are linked to subsidies or the provision of personnel, buildings or other means, make obstacle with an easy and indisputable identification of what is public service and of what is activity of general interest carried on with the support of territorial administrations. This blending is particularly dynamic in the case of a city like Provins. It allowed the public and private initiatives to meet and be able to propose a wide variety of performances.

“The patrimonial objects of tourist interests will continue to diversify while their presentation [will require] always more attention to provide comprehension and emotion to visitors”. [Origet, Vicériat 2001] The diversification of actors involves also a diversification of products and makes the supply wider. In addition, local spontaneous productions, implemented year after year, are not; strictly speaking, completely part of local patrimonial development projects in tourism. They are often individual initiatives, and are sometimes integrated into it, and then become demonstrations supported by communities.

This work illustrates the great diversity of a public-private partnership in performing heritage. Performing heritage of Provins is thus an example of success of this public-private partnership, but it also illustrates how complex it is.
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