

3.3 **‘Viveiro was already hardcore’: the relevance of the local scene and its territory in the constitution and development of the Resurrection Fest**

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× **Abstract**

Resurrection Fest is currently a large-format music festival which has been held since 2006 in Viveiro (Galicia), and whose line-ups have been comprised of musical genres such as metal, punk, hardcore or stoner, among others. But this has not always been the case: since its origins, its musical programming and organizational dynamics used to be of a smaller scope, being closely linked to the trans-local hardcore scene. The purpose of this communication is to analyse the relevance of Viveiro and its local scene in the constitution and development of Resurrection Fest. For this purpose, participant observation techniques, SWOT analyses and semi-structured interviews have been used, the latter relying on the use of the technique of sociological discourse analysis. This has allowed us to show an unknown intra-history about the origins of the festival, closely linked to the cultural practices of Do It Yourself and the trans-local connections of Viveiro's music scene.

159

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1. **Introduction**

The Resurrection Fest (also known as Resu) is a festival celebrated in Viveiro (Lugo, Galicia) since 2006 (Resurrection Fest, 2021). This festival includes a wide range of musical genres inserted in what could be called 'extreme music'. In its condition as a large format festival, it has been awarded as one of the best festivals on the national scene, and the repercussions have not been long in coming: its economic and tourist implications are visible in the town of Viveiro itself, as well as throughout Galicia (Fest Galicia, 2019).

However, if a retrospective analysis is carried out, it is possible to see how this situation has not always been the case. Throughout the 14 editions² that the festival has been held, the changes in the cultural programming have been more than palpable. And it is that through the structural analysis of the posters of all the editions that has been carried out in this research (Tarrío, 2019), when it has been possible to understand how the Resurrection Fest has undergone modifications in a myriad of issues: an increase in music stages, changes in the price of the tickets, the number of national and international bands, the composition of the headliners, as well as the number of hardcore bands.

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2. It has been chosen not to consider the edition of this year 2021, since as its name indicates (Resurrection Lite) it has been found mediated by the necessary regulations in these times of COVID-19.

In its origins, the Resurrection Fest was born with a strong local base, closely linked to the hardcore musical sub-genre, as well as other musical sub-styles derived from it. Specifically, the initial organization was made up of a local hardcore crew³, a fact that highlights the link between musical communities and the creation of collective identities (Ulusoy & Schembri, 2018). Furthermore, it is from these collective identities that affective communities also emerge, where the experiences of identification and intersubjective participation go beyond normalized social ethics (Driver & Bennet, 2015). Therefore, it is tremendously interesting to know the implications of musical experiences and communities in shaping identities -both individual and collective-.

The initial research in which this communication takes part was focused on understanding how the cultural transformations of the Resurrection Fest affected the identity construction of the people attending. In this research, in addition to the previously mentioned structural analysis, participant observation, semi-structured interviews, as well as the SWOT technique have been applied (as information gathering techniques). And it has been from the semi-structured interviews where it has been possible to verify how the story that has been told about the organization (as a 'myth'), left behind many other processes and agents that have been relevant for the development of the Resurrection Fest.

2. Narratives and myths

Through the different speeches that have been the result of the semi-structured interviews, it has been possible to understand some intra-historical narratives about the Resurrection Fest. And although it is true that a multitude of content blocks have been explored, for this communication it has been relevant to extract the information obtained regarding the organization, about the town of Viveiro (not only as a geographical setting, but also as the set of all those relationships that are drawn between the autochthonous population and those attending the festival), as well as the evaluations about the municipal institution.

Thus, once all the information has been analysed, it has been possible to detect two central narratives closely related to the origin of the festival, and whose discourses have made it possible to deconstruct or reinforce those mythical discourses that have been told since the beginning of the festival's history. Next, the narratives of 'the dream that comes true' will be exposed, as well as the legend of 'Melchor Roel'.

160

2.1. The dream that comes true

The first main narrative detected focuses on the description of the origin of the festival itself. And, according to the press⁴, the story of Resurrection Fest begins with the determination of two young boys who have the dream of seeing their favourite band (the New Yorkers Sick of it all) in their town. For this, they had the permission and help of the municipal corporation, which gave the go-ahead to their idea.

In addition, this narrative has an 'input': the tenacity of these two young people. Consequently, the origin of the first edition of the Resu is the result of the cancellation of the Viveiro Summer Fest. This was scheduled to be held in August, but due to medical problems of one of the members of Sick of it all, it was cancelled. It will be three months later (in November, specifically), and with two more bands added to the line-up (Walls of Jericho and Anal Hard) when the first edition of Resurrection Fest is held.

The development and growth of the festival is explained in this narrative through the 'good work' of the organization, which has been able to develop the large-format festival that it is today. Therefore, this shows a clear representation of the myth of the 'self-made man', attributing the success to these two people, their great capacity for resilience and their perseverance and dedicated work.

It will be from the in-depth interviews and more specifically of those interviewed who belong to the town of Viveiro (since they perform the role of inhabitant, in addition to that of assistant) when this 'myth' begins to be deconstructed. Although all the people interviewed residing in Viveiro have contradicted this main narrative, below is a small extract - by way of example - that accounts for processes and actors that had not previously appeared in the narrative:

3. Crews can be defined as "a group of friends who hang out and regularly go to hardcore shows together", as well as "specific groups who go to shows and hang out together, but also may make claims to specific locales" (Purchla, 2011, p. 202).

4. As a representative example, it can be consulted Balseiro (2015, July 14).

**It looks like it was something dropped from the sky, right? (...) No, no, dude. This has had more to do with a collective effort, with a history and with a cultural substrate, and with a person who put his popularity above this (...); there had to be a determined political bet for a person to be [forward]. This is not the result of the know-how of two people, nor of five. It is a whole set of things that have to do with the decision, a firm people's commitment for a model of cultural expression and with this event (Interviewed 14).*

Through this extract, two key elements are argued that contrast and complement the mythical narrative talked about the organization: the history and the cultural substratum that exists prior to the festival - and that has made its realization possible -, as well as the existence of a political figure who has shown commitment and support in the creation and development of the festival. This person who is mentioned latently is Melchor Roel, a prominent political figure in the town of Viveiro and mayor at the time that the Resurrection Fest began to develop. Melchor Roel will be the central axis around which the next narrative will revolve.

However, before concluding this small point, it should be noted that in 2020 the Resurrection Fest organization posted a documentary on the net where its history was summarized. In this, and contrary to what had been told since its inception, part of the original mythical narrative is deconstructed, since the organizers who talk there include various social and political agents that, at the beginning, had been left out of the history. In addition, indirectly, the existence of a consistent music scene in the town of Viveiro, and which has a strong connection with Asturias, is described.

2.2. The legend of Melchor Roel

As previously mentioned, Melchor Roel was the mayor of Viveiro who allowed the celebration of the Resurrection Fest, providing help and financing for the development of the Resurrection Fest. His figure has emerged as an icon for some of the attendees, who relegate much of the weight of the festival's success to his person:

**"Melchor was an absolutely basic pillar. Without Melchor there would have been absolutely nothing" (Interviewed 1)*

161

In 2013, Melchor passed away, and two key moments occurred that have reified the importance of his person. The first is the celebration of two editions of the Melfest, a festival held in his honour, and whose money raised has been donated to charitable causes. The second of the key moments has been the double commemoration made by the band Madball, dedicating an emotional speech, and hanging a banner at their concert of the 2016 edition, and dedicating a small extract from the video clip DNA, where the band showed a photo with him (Nuclear Blast, 2014).

Although the figure of Melchor has been ignored by the discourse that has permeated the media (and that relegates the importance to the two young people who carried out the festival), the mythical conception of this politician has crossed strictly local limits, and has finally remained as a figure of reference in the public imaginary, where people who have not known him personally, have an opinion about him:

“Seeing how people talk about Melchor, I think he was a good guy. I see that people are very grateful [to him] ... The organization and everyone. Even Madball”

(Interviewed 5)

3. The hardcore scene of Viveiro

Once the two main narratives that have described the history of the festival have been exposed, it is necessary to talk about the Viveiro scene, since it has played a key role in the origin of the Resurrection Fest. More specifically, if we go into the main narrative in depth, the two young people who had been part of the creation and definition of the festival were members of a hardcore band from Viveiro called Twenty Fighters. This band, created in 2003 and which participated in the first edition of the festival, also has as a relevant aspect the fact that its members were part of the Old Navy Port Crew. Considering the above about the crew, it can be seen that this is a community that transcends beyond individual identities. In addition, its connection with the hardcore movement allows us to affirm that we are facing a very specific collective and territorial identification mode: and perhaps the most important thing is that Old Navy Port Crew were not alone, since several more crews flourished in Viveiro, and among them, one strictly related to skate culture.

Trying to describe the origin of the hardcore bands in Viveiro, through one of the speeches of the interviewed people it has been possible to understand that already in the mid-1990s there was a pioneer band in the town, Hopeless Reason - and that later, it will change its name and will become known as Shoot Again -:

**I think the concerts started when we were still in high school. They were made at Christmas (...) and began to be performed in 1995-96 with bands already at a level. Groups from Viveiro, notably, were Hopeless Reason and then others from Asturias. And then there was something like a 'twinning' and we went to Asturias, they came here (...). From there, groups were already coming (...) (Interviewed 14)*

This band - pioneer in the locality - helped to configure a primal scene on which the Twenty Fighters were influenced. In addition, it is possible to see the appearance of Shoot Again in two of the editions of Resurrection Fest (2008 and 2010), although in the first of these they did not get to play.

Returning to what has been said about the relationship between Viveiro and Asturias, it is possible to trace a clear relationship in the late 1990s and early 2000s. This information is also corroborated in the documentary itself issued by the Resurrection Fest, where Nefta - a member of the Asturian band Sound of Silence - claims to have previously participated in concerts in Viveiro:

**I already know the town of Viveiro from the previous festivals that were held before the Resurrection Fest, where I was present there with some friendly bands. Also, for performing in small venues in the centre of town with one of my bands and since then I made a lot of friends with people from there in town. (Nefta in Resurrection Fest, 2020, n/p)*

Through this statement it is possible to understand that the Resurrection has not been an unusual event, but that it has been developing progressively and organically. And although it is true that the relationships had not had such a media impact, the synergies can already be seen in the first edition of the local festival Viveirock, held in 2001. The aforementioned Shoot Again, *Yacam* (another local band that after their dissolution they will give rise to another well-known Viveiro project, Rain Is Art), *Krápulas* (a punk-rock band also from the municipality) and the Asturian band *Posession*⁵.

4. Conclusions

To conclude and standing as one of the central questions of this research, it has been possible to verify that there has been an intergenerational process regarding the hardcore movement in the town of Viveiro. This fact allows us to affirm that the Resurrection Fest has been the result of the evolution of agents and processes that had previously occurred in the locality.

A clear reflection of the intergenerational component can be seen in the fact that, a decade prior to the celebration of Resurrection Fest, some pioneering bands already existed, as well as the first synergies with Asturias were beginning to emerge. Therefore, we can speak of the existence of a trans-local network where people of various age groups were involved, and that has allowed feedback between communities and their cultural production.

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⁵.For further information, it can be consulted in Viveiro (2001).

Another aspect that should be mentioned is the importance of local administration since it has contributed to the origin and development of the Resurrection Fest. And although it has not been the first time that the municipal administration has given the go-ahead to the youth to hold events, in this case, both the funding and the institutional support went a step further. When referring to the local government, it is necessary to mention the role played by Melchor Roel, whose figure has been praised in a large part of the speeches of the people interviewed.

Finally, it should also be mentioned that the discourse of the organization has been partially modified since the launch of the documentary. Thanks to this, it has been possible to validate some of the information that had been obtained only through the interviews, and that seemed to be hidden in the narratives related to the festival.

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