

THE INCIDENCE OF ROMANIAN CELEBRATIONS TODAY

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Abstract: Romanian celebrations had known an extension of the festive space where the Christmas symbols managed to appear in the city earlier than the last years. From the wish to keep the traditions as they were in the past, this form of Christmas time extension is marked of the need to tell the young people about the true meaning of the winter celebrations. Thus, this return to the symbols of Christmas for almost two months revive in the people the true feelings about their traditions and culture. Christmas is a period where the memories from childhood are coming back as a wish to celebrate them according to their culture. In the present, Romania is at a limit between new and old; Romanian traditions sometimes represent an unknown space for young people. Thus, in this case, it needs a restoration on the spirit of Romanian winter celebrations : as Christmas' liminal period lasts longer, the chances for Romanians to understand their traditions will grow. The spirit of winter celebrations is identified in people through faster methods: the presences of festive simbols in the city with one or two months untill Christmas, jingles who start to be heard in many public spaces and as time goes by, another elements appear. In this liminal state, the persons who are celebrating Christmas are entering and participating with seriousness to different romanians rituals where they are exposed to a series of information about their true cultures values and the importance of keeping their traditions.

Keywords: celebrations, liminality, Christmas, anthropology, Romania

Introduction

This article is based on meta-analitical method who has the purpose to research the perception of how Romanians are celebrating Christmas in the present and how the new traditions begun to overcome the old ones in the cities. The aim of this article is to show the meaning of the Christmas ornaments' appearance in the period before winters celebrations. Nowadays, it is difficult for the old rituals to survive in our modern society and because of this, new rituals started to grow in order to evoke a magical time. Celebrations represent another way to spend free time which is different from the routine of day-to-day. Romanian society is a continuous transitions and the citizens believe in spirit of Christmas. The appearance of the Christmas ornaments in the cities is starting with almost two months before Christmas. This action affected the behaviour of society's citizen in embrace the spirit of Christmas earlier than in the past.

Traditional celebrations as Christmas are representing more than a special free days for our society. The Christmas period is the time where the entire society is changing from a moral perspective, but in the same time it becomes a time where the citizen actions are changed. In the last year, the festive ornaments have begun to appear even from october, causing the spirit of Christmas to be forced to come earlier in order to aware people, the fact

that they must prepare as the traditions said, in order to bring their spirit in the true meaning of winter celebrations.

Literature review

Christians' celebrations are realised through some special rituals who were formed in the past. In the „Obiceiuri tradiționale românești”, Mihai Pop said that „customs form an active mechanism of social live, a creator mechanism and order keeper, a mechanism of culture creation” (Pop, 1976) Traditional celebrations are organised in every year and are maintained through special rituals. Every customs have a special meaning in the celebrations rituals. Because of this, there are present a series of customs to attract people to prepare for the day when the celebration is celebrated. ”This custmos are required” in Romania's society because if they will not be known by Romanians, the rituals will be lost and the celebrations will not have the special meaning which it can be sacred or profane. Through customs, the Romanian culture is keeping its meaning in order to tell the next generations about the importance of the Romanians traditions in our society.

Romanian culture has many celebrations, but one of the biggest ones is represented by Christmas. In the period of Christmas, the traditions are revealing the nature of Romanian culture; they are creating magical rituals who are send further the meaning of the Romanians folklore. In every year, the Romanian society is following a continuation of Christmas traditions.

In the book ”Caledar popular românesc”, Gabriela Rusu-Păsărin wrote that the ”The old Christmas appears in the collective conscience as an archaic semidivine and as a Christian semidivne” (Rusu-Păsărin, 2006). Christmas is not just a simple celebration who is recreating a traditional time; in fact, Christmas is aware by the Romanians as a union between sacred and profane where it can be brought together all the festive symbols in our society.

The Christmas period in the present is beginning to appear since october-november because of the many festive ornaments that appear in Romania. These festive ornaments are the first who set the tone in passing to people the information that Christmas is coming. In the biggest cities from Romania, the street Christmas ornaments are beginning to cover the entire urban space. The professor Nicolae Panea said the fact that the sight is representing a searching, an excitation in front of limits and in front of senses, where the reality is revealed by the sight as a superficial one, a pole for orientation who is used for the search of the worlds deep searches (Panea, 1995) In the winter, the period of celebration is given in the first sentences by the appearances of ornaments. So, the festive winter ornaments are representing for the society the first call of the fact that Christmas is coming.

The earlier appearances of Christmas ornaments in Romania

In the last years, in Romania, the festive winter ornaments have begun to appear with almost two months before Christmas, and managed to put people in a state of confuse about the fact that is still autumn, but the presence of the Christmas is near. So, Christmas is our Romanian traditional celebration in which we celebrate the born of Jesus Christ, but also the presence of Santa Claus as a person who is giving to the children who were good special gifts. But what is the true meaning of the Christmas in the nowadays Romania? Christmas, seen as the day when Jesus Christ was born, has religious values and is situated in the religion sphere. But, if we look Christmas as the day when Santa Claus is coming, is a profane celebration. And in our society, Christmas is seen as a bond between sacred and profane: we celebrate the

birth of Jesus Christ and the coming of Santa Claus. The last one, Santa Claus has a more influence power over the society and it can be seen through different festive elements represented by the Christmas ornaments. We all know that Christmas is celebrated on 25 december, but its symbolism appear with a long time before it. The period before Christmas is responsible to induce the people in a liminal state in which they become aware by the many festive symbols which can be seen in every city of Romania. The changing from the normal time to the magical time of Christmas is lasting longer than it was in the past.

Winter festive ornaments are the first significant elements which are announcing the start of the magical time (Turner & Turner, 1982; Vulcănescu, 1985; Coman, 1986; Hedesan; Wild & Vivas, 2013). The cities are decorated with festive ornaments from october or november. In Romanian folklore, the Christmas' fasting debuts on november 14 where the liminal state is starting. From november 14 to december 25, in this period, every Romanian must prepare the coming of Christmas. Thus, in this period, are released a series of traditional rituals to embrace the necessity to change people's actions from a normal space to a magical one. People have decorated their houses in anticipation of Christmas. However, in the last years, the festive ornaments not longer appear with the fasting; they appear with almost one month before the starting of Christmas fast. Nowadays Romania is knowing a time acceleration where the people's tendencies is to extend the festive period of winter celebrations. If the Christmas last longer, they can have time to celebrate it as they want.

The Christmas ornaments have begun to have a considerable importance from the moments when they become to have a very large influences over the changing of the society's time. It may seem that, through an acceleration of the period of Christmas, some profane rituals are appearing.

The spirit of Christmas in Craiova between autumn and winter

In 2016, Craiova was decorated from the middle of october, with more than two months before Christmas. The festive ornaments appeared on the buildings, parks, and streets. Even the school was just started and the passing from summer to autumn was still felt for many citizen, the appearance of Christmas ornaments changed the perception about the fact that the winter is far away. The Christmas ornaments in Craiova develop into people the feeling of the spirit of winter celebrations which they embrace faster as they taught. So, the presence of Christmas ornaments will appear with almost two months before it is changing the normal space to a magical one. Rituals are starting to be born in this situation according to the fact they influence the peoples behaviour (Popescu, 2001; Sandu, 2016).

In the last two months of autumn, in Craiova, it was found elements of winter celebrations who marked the beginning of Christmas myth. From the moment when people are starting to decorate their houses, the spirit of Christmas is becoming a part of every person. These ornaments can be seen especially on the street where they are representing the main attraction in Craiova. The moment when the ornaments are on the street, the liminal state starts. In this case, the sacred is not found in the society, but the profane ornaments are bringing close to people the meaning of Christmas. So even the ornaments are not having religious values and are not representing the traditional state of mind, they can have a spiritual values and overcome the necessity of keeping the religion. Here, the traditions are now losing the importance. Also, through the appearance of Christmas ornaments, it can bring to the society the importance of Romanian traditions where they can be kept with the same meaning as they had in the past (Voinea, Opran & Vladutescu, 2015; Colhon, Cerban, Becheru & Teodorescu, 2016). The street ornaments of Christmas captures the necessity of

people to enter in a magical time of winter celebrations. In this space of Christmas celebrations, the time is metamorphosis in a myth and the people's actions are transforming as the special moments is coming close. But, it is important to know that, even the city is decorated with two months earlier, the Christmas rituals are not changed. The single change in the period of the Christmas is that it becomes larger, but it does not affect the rituals. Carols, who are powerful rituals in the Romanian society are not appearing in the same time with the festive ornaments. They can be seen on streets, on the rod post, tying it together and are creating a series of thousands of lights. Almost every festive ornaments have electrical bulbs where they can illuminate the city in the night, creating a magical story. For example, in Sibiu, the festive illuminate was taken place on 18 november 2016, earlier than other cities as Bucharest, Craiova where the period of Christmas starts on 1 december. In Craiova, the Christmas' illumination is starting on 1 december, announcing official that the period of Christmas was started. Also, 1 december has a special meaning in Romania, it is not represented just the Christmas time, also the national day. These streets symbols are awaking in the people the wish to remember their childhood and to be happy about the possibility that they have to be a part of the society (Marian, 2000; Nedelcu, 2015; Budică & Dumitru-Trăistaru, 2015).

Conclusion

Christmas is representing a magical time where people are celebrating the day through different rituals according to their traditions. In the last years, in Romania, the Christmas has become more than just a special celebration; it becomes a special wish of the people to extend this period in order for they to have a longer time to celebrate the Christmas as they want to celebrate it. As the winter ornaments appear in the city, the space of Romanian society of today becomes a magical one, full of emotional embrace and to be prepare to transport people to a normal world to a magical one. The light on of the Christmas ornaments are symbolising an important element in our society in the period of winter. It becomes profane rituals where people are gathering to admire the beauty of the lights and to be a presence in the official start of the winter special season.

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