

## **THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND MODERN RITUALS IN ROMANIAN CELEBRATIONS**

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### **Abstract**

This article is based on a meta-analytical method in order to observe the need of Romanians nowadays to understand better the traditional rituals in our country. Romanians, after 1989, became curious about other cultures and wanted to explore them instead focusing on their own tradition. However, in spite of this situation, in the present, Romania has started to get back to its roots, to understand the importance of preserving its traditions. People are seeking for traditions and rituals in the period of traditional Romanian celebrations. In order to do that, they have to know which parts of the regions from Romania are mostly based on traditions. In this case, I can say that Maramures and Bucovina which are considered the most desired in the Romanian celebrations period. Our society is in constant change, starting with the manifestation of the interest of the ordinary citizen regarding the stages

from traditionalism to modernism. Our society keeps its traditional celebrations intact, but it fails to escape the influence of other cultures. Today, Romania has a stable culture with a strong nationalist sense, but it is flexible and open to new ideas or cultures. Thus, our country becomes a centre of cultural creation manifested through different traditional rituals.

**Keywords:** anthropology, celebration, Romania, profane, sacred

**JEL Classification:** Z13, Y80

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

A celebration is a manifest of traditional creation with the purpose to put in people's attention its significance over all the society. In the period of a celebration, the social space is starting to become more sacred than profane. Although our society is started to be conduct in a spirit of atheism, people still manage to participate in traditional and religious rituals in the period of Romanian celebrations (Panea, 2005; Rusu-Păsărin, 2005; Hedeşan, 2005) . Not all the celebrations have a sacred structured, most of them have a profane base in which people can find sort of traditional rituals, for example: First of March which is the day when the girls and the women are receiving from boys and men a symbol of spring celebration; the symbol has the name „Mărţişor”. The affiliation of Romanian people in these rituals is generating a different type of behavior, where the rituals are coordinated in a profane way. Thus, sacrality becomes an older link of society with the profane. Between profane and society, we find the society as an equilibrium. Also, the society is not working without one of these two forms of manifestations. The acceptance of the people in participate in a celebration ritual creates a liminal state where its purpose is to make rituals in order to prepare the society for the celebration itself. Anyone

who participates in the ritual becomes a presence that resonates with the sacrality of the event (Cerban & Panea, 2011).

The existence of a threshold period on the celebration day has the purpose to put people in two stages:

— they accept the fact that the celebration is coming, and they are acting as the tradition is saying, participating to the rituals and preparing for it from all the points of view

— they understand that the celebration is approaching, but they don't have time for it. They just enter in the liminal state, but they are just observers of the rituals

The knowledge of traditional and cultural elements has to remain alive in the contemporary times of Romanian society. Romania nowadays becomes a form of receiving and preserving the cultural elements in order to adapt to the current days. The traditional rituals can live even in the future if people are collaborating to preserve them in the present. The celebrations were born at the country in the spirit of traditionalism. Our society has experienced many rituals in our era in which we live. In the village, tradition has the role of transposing and building the society in the traditional environment. All the actions of the old society make the behaviour of the people. The villagers strictly are following the traditional rituals, which they are meant to make them acquire some elementary traits in order to rise up in society. It is a priority for any citizen to know the cultural elements of the village. The desire to become a recognized member of the village group had him to participate in various rituals.

## **2. BEFORE CELEBRATIONS: RITUALS IN LIMINALITY**

Liminality was present in any rituals of the village. In fact, we could say that rituals are directly proportional to rites of passage. French ethnologist Arnold Van Gennep reflects on liminality in the primitive societies of the African tribes village. He relies on the pursuit of African behaviour in tribes and the way in which they acquire a new status. A remarkable difference between them and the traditional Romanian society is motivated by the modernity present in the Romanian village. Here, although the village is known as a traditional entity, it belongs to a modern world. Traditional Romanian society is accentuated by the transition from one stage to another, from a primitivism emphasized to a traditional one that for African tribes symbolizes a concept of modernity. The status of the villagers is influenced by labour and material strength, and the rituals here are viewed through more effective actions. From the rituals of the villagers, the participation of people at various celebrations meant to celebrate the revocation of the past; it has been maintained until today. Birthdays in the traditional village are celebrated with goodwill and are a passing of the person from one stage to another. Depending on the age he or she was celebrating, the person was forced into liminal state to introduce a new state of knowledge of the world (Медведев & Федотова, 2015). For example, if the girl approached a specifically age, she would become a future participant in the woman's world. The wedding or the status of the housewife became a model for the future woman. A girl's growing is making her curious about the world of women where the main purpose is to become a wife in the villages. She becomes more aware about the future and hurrying to give up the childhood.

Rituals differentiate the way people look at society. We could say that rituals shape society. However, society is growing rapidly and it is becoming increasingly difficult for rituals to remain as they were seen in the villages. The

migration of people from the village to the city meant an adaptation to new forms of behaviours and also, they got distant from the sacred rituals in order to accept the profane world as is seen in the urban area (Buşu, 2015; Motoi, 2017). The Romanian society is no longer known as pure traditional, it becomes a means of attraction of modern rituals from other cultures. The dissolution of traditions in the Romanian national celebrations aimed to expose the idea of a profane society. Today Romania is loaded with sacred and profane symbols. Raising religion and maintaining the link with sacrality has proven that Romanians are still not ready to abandon tradition in exchange for an uncertain freedom. Profane is maintained as a composition of the sacred, as it actually represents the basis of any ritual.

Liminality connects the sacred to profane. It becomes a connection of the sacred with the profane, maintaining its ideas as a basis for passing from one point to another. Romanian Traditionalism has traversed a difficult period, now reaching an modernism with traditional tendencies. The modernization of the traditional Romanian village is due to ideas of conceptualization and embrace of the new with the price of giving up the sacred to the profane. Although, people are understanding that the Romanian traditions have an important aim because it is their duty to preserve the whole country in a moral and national point of view. Abandoning various religious rituals marked the birth of the sacred profane. Thus, the profane proved to be a more detailed in modernity, and the sacred remains only somewhere at the bottom. The development of rituals or rites of passage in our era, of today's Romania is still in progress due to the reception of people's idea of preserving their faith in traditions. Maintaining a traditional idea in the modern spirit proves a rebirth of the Romanian ego. Traditions become a consistent spirit in the rituals of both the village and the city. Today's Romanian village becomes more profane. The

differences between the old village and the new village are many and many people have written about the subject. The point is that rites of passage have existed and will always exist as long as society is in a continuous movement. Rite of passages develop society and help it evolve. Stopping them would mean a death of society, burying it in the past and giving up any action of evolution of humanity. Society needs rites of passage with everything that holds: feasts, school, service, participation in various social, cultural, political, sports, etc. actions. The birth of new actions on national holidays can be more profane than sacred. Celebrations are manifested differently according to the society in which they occur. Even the Romanian society is seeing its rituals according to the perception of the people from villages and cities.

### **3. THE INFLUENCE OF CIVIL CELEBRATIONS IN ROMANIA**

Civil celebrations have a national character as long as Romania celebrates as an event that has been or is being held in our country. The Olympics can also be a ritual meant to organize a celebration for the participants. Upon completion of the contest, students receive a prize ceremony. Thus, we can say that a civil feast is organized to promote an important event for a particular environment or space. This celebration does not affect the rest of society unless it is promoted through the media (Colhon, 2015; Quffa, 2016; Jarvis, 2016). Receiving prizes gets sacred shades if it enters on a certain religious space. The more the celebration is promoted, the more sacred it becomes. The profane loses its nuances in favour of the sacred. The disposition to follow the chances children have for participating in the Olympics or various competitions aims to create a connection between the sacred and the profane. The civil feast is represented by the society. Or we can say that society felt obliged to transform the feast into rituals that are important for the development

or balancing of the society. It can even be assumed that society develops into modernity the emergence of other traditions by supporting cultures other than national. Our society is in constant change, starting with the manifestation of the interest of the ordinary citizen regarding the stages from traditionalism to modernism. Our society keeps its traditional intact celebrations, but fails to escape the influence of modernity. Today Romania has a stable culture with a strong nationalist sense, but it is flexible and open to new ideas or cultures. Thus, our country becomes a center of cultural creation manifested through different rituals (Hill, 2016; Ferencová, Ślusarczyk, Kot & Mišencčiková, 2016).

Natale Spineto also said that holidays can also be known as a sport ones. Thus, sports celebrations can be a branch of celebrations in Romania. Sporting events like winning a football or tennis match become a necessity of expressing enthusiasm by creating a ritual meant to prove the citizens' belonging to the performances (Călin, 2015; Bogdan, 2016). The sport event itself becomes a feast. Exiting from liminality marks the need of people to celebrate as Romanian celebrations. Liminality has the role of transformation or metamorphosis of any Romanian gone. It also symbolizes a revival of old traditions in the mind of the one left and thus manifesting a lively interest in attending the days of celebration (Kot, Tan & Dragolea, 2017 Ланцова, 2017; Frunză, 2017). Knowing or going a long way through the history of our society, it is meant to implement in the minds of the Romanians that as far as they go or change, within themselves they will belong to the place where they were born. The Romanian society knows an accelerated secularization and a ritual excess. Protecting against the distortion of cultural elements is Romania's goal to keep society alive.

In our world, modern society is separated from secular and religious, but also from profane to sacred, and the passage of an individual from one stage to

another is due to the execution of a ceremony through an intermediary stage. All these separations date back to older times, starting with the ancient African civilizations where special societies are organized on a religious basis marked by their transition from the past to the future.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Nowadays society is created by the nationalist and traditional spirit of Romanians in order to recreate the sacred space before the days of celebrations. Romania is standing for tradition and has its own way to preserve the rituals through people its importance and to pass them from generation to generation. By birth, an individual occupies a place in the society in which he was born, but can not be considered as a full member within it until he has undergone through numerous rituals. These rites of passage occur when it is subject to the advent of puberty, going beyond the childhood threshold, then following the job, engagement, marriage, and death.

The successive rites of passage is dominated by rituals, where no act can be realized autonomously sacred. Actions in society are carefully monitored by high-profile members in order not to create discomfort in passing the threshold.

Today Romania is divided into two categories: o Romania where the population relies on sacred, namely that traditional holidays should be kept intact and transmitted from generation to generation, and another Romania that pursues an expansion of the values of multiculturalism in the traditional space. Here tradition blends with modernity. Society is in a continuous training of rituals. The city no longer knows what traditions really mean and is seeking an adaptation of them according to the space of modernity. Depending on the purposes they have, people overcome their condition and seek to develop in all their plans.



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