THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTMAS CAROLS IN THE PRESENT

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Abstract: This article is based on a meta-analytical method in which it is demonstrated the importance of Carols in Romania of today. Even the present society is not anymore composed by sacred elements, the carols have their role in the people's participating in the rituals of Christmas. Carols, who are the song of joy about the meaning of Christmas, are becoming more and more known as a part of our tradition, without puting people under some questions about their true believing. Carols can be heard everywhere, especially through media who it helps inducing people to liminality and preparing them for Christmas.

Carols are a part of Romanian tradition and are ones of the most important elements in the Christmas rituals. Every Romanian knows that Christmas is coming if they starting to listen carols everywhere. They are the bond of Christmas with people. For Christmas period, there are many concert in the cities of Romania where people can listen to carols sung by known artists. Romania protects its culture and traditions through different rituals where people are celebrating the meaning of Christmas, learning that it is important to teach their children about Romanian celebrations.

Keywords: Carols, Christmas, celebration, anthropology, rituals

1. Introduction

Carols are traditional rituals who are creating the symbolism of Christmas. ”Carols are songs of joy brought in house by carols.” Said Gabriela Rusu-Păsărin în her book „Calendar popular românesc” (Rusu-Păsărin, 2006). Romanian Christmas' tradition is composed by a series of different rituals and the carols are represented, in fact, one of the most important of them. They are the source of spreading the information that the Christmas is coming in the society through songs of joy. Spirituality has its influences over carols, sacred can be seen in the rituals of carols. Romanian culture has a rich traditions in rituals that according to them, are the ones who are passing from the past to the future the essence of our tradition. Carols are not just songs of joy or songs about the Jesus Christ's birth, they are more that we can see from surface. If we manage to valorify carols as a base of our traditions, we can understand the significance of them.

„*Colindatul, acolo unde este el în floare, nu e numai o datină, el este o adevărată instituție, cu legile și regulile ei, cu o anumită organizare cu totul aparte. Într-adevăr, nici o alta din datinile anuale nu e cultivată cu mai mare interes decât colindatul Crăciunului și nici o alta nu se prezintă așa de organizat ca ea”* (Caraman, 1983).

2. Celebrating Chistmas

Christmas celebration in our present is not anymore celebrating how it was celebrated in the past. Its significance has decreased especially at the cities where the profane symbolistic managed to fill the sacred forms of rituals (Pamfile, 1997; Ghinoiu, 2002). At the largest cities from Romania, Christmas is seen more as a marketing ritual than a traditional one. However,

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carols remain as an inexhaustible source of traditional symbols where they succeeded to be glorified as important root of Christmas in Romania.

Carols in the cities are heard through different forms starting from the traditional one as a group of children or adults singing the joys songs, to radio, television and concerts. The last one is a modern adaptation to the traditional form. Many children in the cities are not going anymore to sing in front of their neighbours or other persons because not many have the time to listen the group singing. Because of that, the concerts are the idea form of carols to be heard by people who are wanting to take part in this rituals. Starting from 1 december to Christmas day, in the cities there are many concerts who are sustaining the people's need to carols. In every Christmas concerts, artists are singing carols from our Romanian tradition, but also from the other culture. It is a need to improve to show to bring to people their expectations.

Carols, as Petru Caraman is seeing them, are an anual tradition who are more cultivate than the others and the Christmas caroling is very organised in that period of december. Every city is a profane world where the tradition is kept alive through a series of transformations from sacred to profane. The spirit of Christmas is construing by a profane world in the need of conserving the winters tradition. „*Colindatul de iarnă este asociat în conștiința poporului nostru în modul cel mai profund cu ideea de sărbătoare, de ceremonie. Fără îndoială, el induce cel mai eficient în rândul participanților senzația de scoatere din profan și de confruntare cu sacrul*”.(Panea:2005)

Carols are forming a sacred rituals in Romanian culture to keep and pass the traditions further. Children are not longer involved in the spirit of carols how they were in the past, however, they performe at their school different acts of singing where they glorify the importance of Carols in the spirit of Christmas. The emotion is still one of the most important feeling that the carols are generated it. This form of Carols rituals are found in school where they represent a repetitive act in the collective conscience. There are a reduce number of children who are participating in the carols rituals, but they have a complete organization where they respect and value the Romanian traditions and culture. In the cities, caroling is losing his sacred significance based more on the power that the concert have over its public. Caroling in the city is not seen anymore as a magical ritual that was before in the past, however, its ritual represents a profane way to celebrate Christmas and to glorify the meaning of carols in our tradition (Cucu-Oancea & Bădescu, 2006; Andreicuț, 2009; Coman, 2016; Sandu, 2016).

In the present, before Christmas, there are many festive concerts in the cities, but also to village are in a shorter version of them. Through the participation in this concerts, the people from the cities or villages are performing a ritual meant to understand in a good way the meaning of the symbols of carols in our tradition. Carols are not just songs of joy about the Jesus Christs birth, they are also strong rituals that are managed to gather a public to celebrate Christmas. Winter celebrations are definitely a true binder of what Christmas is meaning to Romania and how it can be glorify at his true value. The modern days have conquer their power over the people and attempting to imply the profane over the sacred to bring to present the importance of adapting to a new form of rituals. In the cities, children are not anymore about going to caroling as their parents or grandparents did in the childhood, but also they are not refusing to take part in the Christmas rituals. It is important for our tradition to be kept alive, to educate the children about its importance and to induce them the need to take part in different rituals where they can be seen as games. Children are learning faster to adapt to society, but they need to understand the importance of returning to traditions and to celebrated them as people in the past did (Brătulescu, 1981; Bocșa, 2003; Cepraga, Renzi & Sperandio, 2004). Carolling is not just a simple form of celebrating Christmas, it is represented one of the rituals that have the power to induce to people the information that the celebrations are coming and they must be prepare to celebrate it.

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At the school, children are participating in a festive feasts where they sing carols in front of their parents and relatives. Here, they are learning to sing further this carols and to take part in the traditions of caroling.

In big cities as Bucharest, Timișoara, Cluj, Craiova and others, the carols concerts with known artists are bringing to the society the emotions of the past, the emotion of their return to childhood or innocence. These concerts are happening in the approach of Christmas, and before that, there will appear an announce of the shows that will happen; media is generating the information that people need about the concerts dates. Radio and tv are changing the way in which they are reporting to its audiences and they introduce the spirit of Christmas through songs that are celebrating the winters' spirits. Not any Christmas songs are carols, but it happens that they have the same line as them: are generating the feeling that the Christmas is coming.

Christmas is one of the most important celebration in Romanian tradition from the sacred and profane point of view. Carols are a way to introduce people to a state of waiting or to liminality. In that period, people are feeling the presence of the carols as an important element in the Christmas period. Carols are appearing as soon as the ornaments are installed in the city. The announcement of the winter festive period is not just a way for the people to get a time out of their routine, it is represents a transformation of their present in oder to make the idea that the Christmas is approaching faster that they think. Christmas is more than the period where everybody are celebrating with their family, it is a sum of many rituals which they put people under some certain circumstances where they usually won't go if it was a normal day. But because Christmas is not just a simple day, it is a magical time, people are entering in the liminality with the faith that this period will be amazing for them. In the search of happiness, people are building new way to celebrate Christmas and adaptation to the modern day, they renounces to their tradition itself.

Christmas celebration is marked by different modern actions who can affect the Romanian culture and its traditions. Carols are more than a forme of conservative the traditions, they also are representing the consequence of how people are reacted before Christmas. As the period of waiting is longer, people will understand the Romanian traditions and begin to return to Christmas' true value. „*Colindătorii și comunitatea au cunoștiința unei responsabilități inaelienabile, conștiința înfăptuirii a ceva exemplar, esențial, că gesturile lor și efortul imnodic depus în noaptea dinspre 24 spre 25 decembrie au menirea de a reinstaura ordinea unei lumi căzute în negura haosului. Această responsabilitate nu poate fi în niciun fel evitată, căci reprezintă facerea noastră ca indivizi ce conștientizează misterul morții ființei prin participarea la facerea kosmosului, conștientizând, în același timp, misterul morții timpului*" (Panea, 2005).

Romania is a country with beautiful traditions that are starting to lose their values in the cities as time goes by. In the biggest city from the country, it may induce to people the need to take part in the profane rituals with the purpose to conserve the sacred (Bușu, 2015; Călin, 2015; Enachescu & Tarabay, 2016; Ali Taha, Sirková & Ferencová, 2016).

Carols are seen as central elements that have the role to conserve the true significance of Christmas in our society. Even, if our society is facing some changing about the spiritual way in which it is celebrating the festive rituals, it may seem as a warrior who wants to protect its tradition. Present days don't have anymore the spirit of Romanians traditions as our grandparents known, instead it was transformed to another form of rituals where the profane is persuading the sacred and managing to improve the rituals in the modern way. Christmas is a signification of the past times where people are remember the period of their childhood. It is not longer celebrated in the same way as it was by our grandparents. Our Christmas is composed by profane elements and just a few sacred ones. The religious space is overcome by the appearance of Santa Claus where he managed to sustain the power of profane over our society (Keyte, Parrott & Bartlett, 1992; Kelley, 2003; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2012). In the carols

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nowadays, we find many times the presence of Santa Claus who is in fact, the base of Christmas in our times. Thus, carols are about two important subjects: the birth of Jesus Christ, the son of God and the coming of Santa Claus, an old man who is brining present to children. Carols have improved from sacred to profane as time went by and people embrace this fact.

3. Conclusion

Carols are seen as a bond between profane and sacred, in which we find the first in our present and the second in the past society. Our world is consisting in discovering new way in celebrating Christmas, but in the same way, we care about our tradition and we don't want to put them endangered. Thus, carols are songs about joy and Christmas, but are in the same time representing the reason that is notifying people about the fact that Santa Claus is coming soon. Carols are singing by children and adults in an organized gathering where they can be listen by a public, but also listen by smaller number of persons as neighbours, friends or relatives. Carols are the symbols of Christmas in every cities of villages from Romania. They are the ones who bring the atmosphere of Christmas closed to people and keep the tradition has our ancestors left for us. Carols are not just a simple songs, they are representing one of the most important rituals where people are participating in that period before Christmas. Winter celebrations is consisting in proving to the modern society that the traditions can be kept alive even they are facing the profane world. Society is changing, but it is conserving their tradition to keep their culture.

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