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A CARNIVAL WITHOUT ITS LENT, A TRADITION WITHOUT ITS PAST, CARNIVAL AND OTHER FESTIVALS IN SIENA AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

SUMMARY

The author studies contemporary festivals in the province of Siena (Italy), especially in its mediaeval towns, in which the carnival itself and the carnival behaviour make a part of behavioural paradigm. He identifies so-called "emblem festivals" whose aim is to show specific points of a certain tourist town, as well as to be the sign of identity of the town as a complex contemporary human community. He re-thinks and interprets the festivals' support as real and invented historical traditions. The past that is either distanced in time or invented is -- after the demographic and economic changes that took part during the second half of the century -- so furthered from the new layers of population, as well as from the town newcomers, that it cannot become a symbol. On the other hand, he determines the reflexes of the social stratification and social network in festivals. Regardless of the true existence of the historical continuity of a certain festival, the author defines its meaning in the familiar connection of commemorating the deceased and the contemporary living participants.

The author implements the deconstruction of ethnoanthropological presence, that is, studies and offers legitimacy or seriosity to a festival in the form of anthropological participation through the contemplation of contemporary life and the growth of organized festivals.

The author finally questions the interrelations between ritual, farce and joke, as well as the relationship that festivals have in terms of subordination and superordination. The author concludes that, in the postmodern world, festivals remain pluralist, stratified, complex -- exactly measured by the stratification, ambivalence and complexity of the society that needs them.

(Translated by Sanja Kalapoš)

Keywords: carnival, Italy