

## Two Carnivals

### Summary

The article starts from the fact that formerly renowned Split carnivals are no longer held, and he attempts to find the reasons why they have disappeared. The author states some features of carnivals in general, that have sustained the custom to the present: the attraction of mask and costume, noisy revelry, drinking, eating and the exceptional freedom which are so great that the carnival as a collection of characters and procedures, and as a collection of standardized or conventional symbols outlives its forgotten messages and meanings. Carnival symbols have been polysemic for centuries now, full of differing (and often contradictory) meanings.

This very polysemic nature and the durability of carnival features and symbols has made it possible for carnivals to continue to exist outside the traditional way of life, along with the constant historically conditioned changes.

On the basis of research in the Split vicinity, the author describes and interprets carnivals in Donja Kaštela and Radošić, as the examples of the two main types of carnivals: *saturnalian* and *lupercalian*. These two types of carnival sometimes exist as two components of the same carnival, but rarely merge completely.

The author begins his distinction between the two types of carnival with the popular contention that Roman customs are the precedent for the carnival. J. C. Baroja, Spanish culturologist, in his capital work on the history of the carnival discerned three models of folk festivities evident in the carnival as well, the Saturnalia, Matronalia and Lupercalia. It is clear that the carnival is hardly a simple amalgam of these three antique *festivities*, and that it also contains many other admixtures, of both earlier and later provenance.