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ACADEMIA ROMÂNĂ

Food beyond daily life

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Resume

The present text is included in the field of Ethnological research for food and represents an important chapter of the Ph.D. thesis that concentrates on the category of fasting food. In the introduction, are stated the motives that led to choosing this specific area of study and also, we present the objectives of the general paper. These are: studying the food stances, their conceptual and typological delimitation and also demonstrating that food is an identity factor for the culture in which it is studied. It is presented the role of the chapter in the Ph. D. thesis economy and also, the objectives for this piece of paper: the delimitation and the characterisation of the fasting food concept and establishing its roles in the context of Romanian culture.

The second subchapter discusses the definition and the understanding of the fasting food term. In the first phase, fasting food is compared with a series of other concepts like offering, sacrifice, taboo, negatives rites, in the analysis of different researcher from within and outside the country.

Then, the understanding of the term is expanded with the presentation of the its counter-model, the feasting food. It is described the entire behaviour model linked to the fasting, which referrers not only to food abstinence, but to an entire change of attitude. Factors like geography and religion are also discussed here. In the second phase, we give some historical dates from the history of mankind regarding food and hunger, while in the third phase there is presented the Christian Orthodox theological vision regarding the act of fasting and the food for fasting. In the conclusion, we give a personal contribution in defining the concept of fasting food.

The third subchapter presents on the types of fasting. Initially, we present typologies established by some researchers. An important factor discussed here is time, which indicates the differences made between normal periods, fasting periods and celebrating periods. Our conclusion refers to some pairs of types of fasting, a way of classification that highlights the multiple roles of the ascetic act. After this, we present the two big categories of fasting: the ritual one, that includes the four annual fasts and some other special days for fasting that are indicated in the Christian Orthodox calendar and also, the periodical fast. Each type is analyzed from historical, theological and ethnological points of view.

The fourth subchapter concentrates the changes that have interfered in the present practice of Christian-Orthodox act of fasting. We make reference to some theological writings and also, some dates obtained from Ethnological field researched done in the villages from Vrancea County.

The fifth and last subchapter of the paper presents our conclusions regarding the understanding of the fasting food concept, its role in the man's life and also the changes that appeared in the way the act is perceived. Thus, according to the objectives stated, we show how

food is a factor that organizes life and the analysis of it gives us pertinent data about behaviors, mentalities, about the cultural specificity of a community.