

GROUPS OF FESTIVITIES MOST EXPOSED TO COMMERCIALIZATION PROCESSES: OPINIONS OF RESIDENTS IN LATGALE AND PSKOV REGION

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Introduction

In the present-day shifting socio-cultural environment, researchers' attention is attracted to festivities and their transformations and genesis. On the one hand, research literature traditionally defines festivity as one of the most stable forms of spiritual culture that entails folk mythological thinking, features of ancient cults and rituals, social order modelling, daily and family life standards, psychology and morality. On the other hand, none of the world cultures is thinkable as a completely static phenomenon. In real life situation, culture, including festivities, manifests a certain dynamic of traditional culture forms and innovations.

There are transformations concerning various festive culture levels:

- 1) festivities are gradually losing their initial exclusiveness – massive expansion of their elements is observed in the sphere of daily life;
- 2) hyperfestive reality provokes the change of the initial content of festivities;
- 3) under the impact of globalization and multiculturalism, there happens borrowing and adopting of foreign festive culture realia;
- 4) the segment of festivities is constantly subjected to the impact of commercialization processes – more and more frequently festivities and festive events are turned into commodities that need to be sold with a maximum profit.

Methodology

The research, on the basis of the materials of the survey of residents in Latgale (south-eastern region of Latvia – the major object of the research) and Pskov regions (part of the north-western federal province of Russia – the minor object of the research) conducted in 2018 with **810 questionnaires** processed and **96 interview records**, singles out and characterizes the groups of festivities most exposed to commercialization processes according to the views of residents from both countries.

Funding

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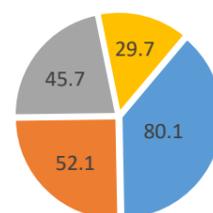
Results

As stated by respondents from Latvia and Russia, in the festivity segment of both countries there are current processes of commercialization that concern various festivity groups. These are borrowed, national, traditional calendar and religious festivities. In Latgale it is mostly Christmas (70%), Easter (64%), Summer Solstice / Jāņi (41.7%), and St. Valentine's Day (32.2%). In Pskov region – Easter (44.5%) and Christmas (33.3%). To a lesser extent the impact of market rules, according to respondents, is related to family festivities: birthdays, weddings, anniversaries. Extremely popular and commercially profitable product in the whole territory of Latvian – Russian borderland is New Year – a public festivity form with a hard to define status (80.4% in Latgale, 68% in Pskov region) (results shown in Chart 1 and 2).

At the same time the intensity of commercialization processes differs much:

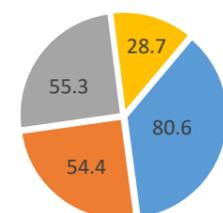
- 1) in Latgale region, like in Western Europe, it is stronger; an important argument in this respect is the fact that, among the consumers of the festivity produce, there is a constant growth of the number of older people as well as rural residents (this appears on the example of Easter);
- 2) residents of Latgale have had a closer connection with festivity commercialization, they grow accustomed to these conditions and gradually feel better in the role of the consumers of festivity produce.

Chart 1. Latgale Region



- borrowed festivities
- national festivities
- traditional calendar and religious festivities
- family festivities

Chart 2. Pskov Region



- borrowed festivities
- national festivities
- traditional calendar and religious festivities
- family festivities

Conclusion

Commercialization of festivity culture as one of the major forms of contemporary festive culture transformations was determined not only by the scientific validity of this topic but also the ideas of interviewees and respondents, that is, their certainty that festivities are constantly turning into commodity, that is defined as a serious condition to be taken into consideration.