Philosophical Reflection on Selected Contemporary Rituals of the Everyday

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ABSTRACT

Thesis. The present study explores the issue of ritualised behaviour in the context of traditional and non-traditional, individual and collective forms of social life. The research questions map the significance and functions of rituals in contemporary society, as well as the reasons behind individual and collective return to them.

Methods. The authors define and redefine basic terms and traditional characteristics of ritual and elaborate on their current specifics. They use a heuristic method of research and work with case studies, interpreting and reinterpreting relevant domestic and foreign sources.

Results. In comparing traditional and contemporary definitions and characteristics of rituals, we note that 1/ ritual continues to have a place as part of sociocultural regulators in current times, 2/ the dynamism and instability of postmodern society

is reflected in the transformations and diversity of modern rituals, 3/ contemporary rituals are less formally binding and have a less fixed form, are more individualised, and are manifested in different spheres of human life (both formal and informal, including in everyday life).

Conclusion. Regardless of whether contemporary rituals are collective or individual, whether they are religious or profane, we cannot deny their importance in the intellectual and social development of contemporary human person and the formation of community. Some features of ritual remain, others are modified and new ones are added as rituals are located in areas where they were not originally found. Even today, rituals fulfil various functions in the lives of individuals and groups.

Keywords: Ritual, contemporary ritual, everydayness, space, time, belonging, ambivalence of ritual

Introduction

In the context of contemporary society, which is characterised by accelerated cultural, technological, and social transformations, the issue of rituals is gaining renewed interpretative relevance. The disintegration of traditional norms, institutions, and forms of coexistence – accompanied by the rise of individualism, plurality of value orientations, and an increasing sense of existential insecurity – generates a need for new stabilising mechanisms that can offer individuals and communities anchoring points in everyday life.

Rituals, understood as symbolic and often formalised patterns of behaviour of a repetitive character, serve as significant instruments of cultural orientation and psychosocial integration. Their function lies not only in maintaining social order but also in securing continuity of identity, generating meaning, and strengthening social bonds. In this sense, rituals appear as indispensable practices that help bridge the tension between individual autonomy and collective belonging, as well as between the banality of the everyday and the transcendent dimension of human experience.

The philosophical reflection on rituals, in this context, appears both timely and methodologically justified. It does not focus solely on the descriptive or functional aspects of ritualised behaviour but strives for a deeper understanding of their ontological, axiological, and hermeneutic dimensions. Rituals are thus thematised not only as cultural and social phenomena, but as means of articulating meaning, identity, and value framework. Philosophical research of the contemporary rituals, including their profane, hybrid, and non-standard forms, offers a valuable contribution to understanding the dynamics of late modernity and its anthropological implications (Gofman & Levkovič, 1973). Given their potential to stabilise disrupted horizons of meaning and mediate new modalities of coexistence, rituals acquire particular significance not only as objects of philosophical theory but also as performative strategies of survival amid the fragmentation of everyday life.

In late modern societies, traditional forms of social organisation and cultural transmission are being disintegrated. Globalisation, digitalisation, discursive plurality, and secularisation contribute to the erosion of a unified value framework, deepening individuals' sense of alienation and existential dislocation. It is precisely in this context that ritual, as a form of structured and symbolically charged behaviour, acquires renewed significance—not as a relic of the past, but as an adaptive instrument responding to new conditions of cultural and social experience (Frykman, 1979, as cited in Jágerová, 2008).

A ritual is regarded as a distinct category of custom with the highest degree of normativity, sanction enforcement, stability, collectivity, and traditionality. It accompanies pivotal events in the life of an individual, society, and nature. Its performance is an essential condition for the recognition and validation of significant changes. The meaning of a ritual does not lie in the actions themselves but in what they symbolise. Symbols serve to mediate the meaning of social relations and values of a given community. Ritual is intended to evoke psychological states, emotions, and moods in their participants. Its effects are achieved through the use of symbols, movement (dance, gesture, facial expression), sound (music, singing), material components (ritual food, ritual dress, masks, objects of magical significance), and verbal expressions (greetings, song lyrics), which clarify and complement the symbolic meaning of the ritual (Giovagnoli, 2018). The word ritual is derived from the Latin *ritualis* meaning ceremonial, and also *ritus*, referring to individual or collective behaviour that is standardised. Due to its repetitiveness, it functions as a behavioural stabiliser. It is a tool through which society maintains and reinforces its normative order and organisation. The term ritual is also used to denote a certain type of compulsive-neurotic activity, usually associated with superstition (for example, a person may avoid stepping on cracks in the pavement in the fear of misfortune) (Keller & Nakonečný, 1996).

From the perspective of the social whole, ritual becomes a means of integration and solidarity within society by uniting its members around unquestioned collective values (Novosád, 1997; Durkheim, 2002); ritual has often served as an instrument for legitimising social, religious, or political order (Keller, 1988). In the contemporary contexts, increasing attention is being paid to its profane, secular forms, which appear in everyday situations – from morning routines to media-staged ceremonies. Philosophical reflection here explores how rituals articulate order within the world which appears disordered or fragmented. Rituals fulfil a regulatory function by codifying specific patterns of behaviour and interactions, thereby maintaining symbolic order and reinforcing the individual's identity within the community (Giovagnoli, 2017). Ritual is regarded as behavioural stabiliser, "guardian" of the norms and values present in society, as well as standardised set of actions characterised by a higher degree of structural stability, enabling the identical repetition of the enacted form (Karlová, 2013).

Rituals, alongside norms, taboos, laws, customs, and ethical codes, are classified among the so-called *sociocultural regulators*. Unlike explicit rules, rituals often operate

on an affective, performative, and non-verbal level, thereby engaging the deeper structures of cultural consciousness (Jágerová, 2008). In cultural anthropology, definitions of ritual emphasise that rituals are specific forms of activity practised within the context of human coexistence: *rites of passage* (Frankiel, 2001); funeral rituals (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952); the so-called *deference rituals*, which define relationships of superiority and subordination and reinforce bonds within the social group (Eliade, 1995b; Goffman, 1996); *celebratory rituals* (Benedictová, 2019); and *rituals of danger* practised in escalated or hazardous situations (Merton, 1957, as cited in Petrusek et al., 2011).

The contemporary ritualisation of everyday life is commented on by Luc Benoist (1995) in the sense that when we shake hands or bow our heads in greeting today, we are repeating once sacred ritual which has become profane today. It is a symbol that has turned into a mere custom, yet refusing to comply with it could, for instance, jeopardise our reputation. Rituals express both personal and social needs and are marked by deep emotional involvement. (Giovagnoli, 2021) Today, rituals don´t necessarily need to be symbolic (Geertz, 2000), particularly when referring to everyday rituals performed by individuals within their private spheres. When the term ritual is used, we think, it often serves to emphasise the repetitive nature of an activity or its enactment, frequently accompanied by various playful or theatrical elements (such as costumes, face and hair colouring, gestures, and so on). Examples include the Maori haka dance, Jake LaMotta's ritual of drinking blood, John Henderson's pre-match face-slapping, or Connor Hellebuyck's warm-up routine – all of which serve to instil confidence and self-assurance in the participants and act as the prospect of success or victory.

The philosophical research of ritual faces several methodological challenges: it must transcend reductionist frameworks (psychologising, functionalist, or purely symbolic) and take into account broader ontological and axiological contexts. Ritual touches upon fundamental questions of human existence – questions of identity, meaning, belonging, as well as power, normativity, and resistance. Philosophy can thus contribute to a deeper understanding of these issues through an interdisciplinary, open-ended, and hermeneutically sensitive approach.

The aim of this study is the philosophical reflection on the selected contemporary rituals within the context of everyday life. We explore their semantic, functional, and symbolic aspects, with particular emphasis on their capacity to generate a sense of security, order, and solidarity within the conditions of late modernity. The study will analyse specific indicators of ritualised behaviour – such as profane space and time, the ambivalence of ritual, its protective function, and its significance for group identity.

Profane place and time

The fundamental feature of all traditional rituals was the fact that they were, as a rule, performed at a certain pre-selected *sacred place* and at a pre-determined *sacred time*.

Place and time are considered to be fundamental philosophical categories and also coordinates that help people to orient themselves in the world. Traditionally, rituals were performed within a so-called ceremonial situation (in a certain context), when the phenomena of everyday life took on a different, religious or sacred meaning (ceremonial beating, ceremonial theft, ceremonial laughter). As an example, rites of passage, linked to the life cycle of the individual and their social status, can nowadays be represented by various religious, secular, civil, civic, military, student and other rites, with the term ceremony being commonly used here. The origin of the word *ceremony* refers to solemn civil rituals. Examples of a family ceremony might include a family Sunday lunch and Christmas Eve dinner.

Sacred place and sacred time are features inherent in religious rituals. Yet today the phrase *sacred time* is also frequently used in a profane sense. We mean to imply that the ritual associated with, for example, putting a child to sleep and reading a bedtime story, repeated at the same time every night, has its own charm and uniqueness. The sacralisation of time and place in a non-religious context also occurs in terms of a conscious approach to an area or activity. For example, conscious attention to the preparation of meals, to the cleaning of one's living space, cutting a family member's hair, taking a bath, etc. (attention to the energy, specific meaning and intention put into them) are also a way of ritualising and sacralising time and place in the context of the everyday (mindfulness). The relationship between sacred and profane time and space has been addressed as part of sociology of religion by Émile Durkheim (2002), Mircea Eliade (1995b) and also Mary Douglas (1996). Eliade distinguished two kinds of space: profane space/chaos and sacred space/cosmos. He described the profane space as homogeneous, posing a kind of danger that lurked in its boundlessness and unknowability (Eliade 1995b). Meanwhile, he held sacred space as heterogeneous, articulated, a world of order/cosmos that contained a fixed point (the sacred being) (Eliade, 1995b). Interestingly, although Eliade paid great attention to comparing and distinguishing the two spaces, he also observed that even for non-religious people, there are places in the environment in which they live to which they give special meaning and attention. The place where they were born and where they grew up, where they experienced their first loves, successes, and so on, becomes such a special place. This brings Eliade closer to the contemporary understanding of ritual, which is not necessarily associated with a sacred place and time and, on the contrary, takes on a profane nature.

A distinctive feature of contemporary consumption rituals is the abolition of the boundary between the exceptional and the everyday (Babyrádová, 2002). An example of this is haka, originally a Maori fighting dance, which is currently associated with the New Zealand national rugby union team (commonly known as the All Blacks). It has its origins in the war dance of the indigenous New Zealand Maori. The aim of the dance, performed by the players before a match, is to induce the same mental conditions (feelings, moods) in their teammates, to give them courage

and strength, to encourage them to fight and win. The original intention to intimidate the enemy has been transformed into this form. This dance has a precise choreography. The movements, shouting and mimicry that accompany it are synchronised. A group of players is led in the dance by a leader (usually a player of Maori origin) who gives them instructions. The other players are on their half of the pitch close to the centre line, facing their opponents. In addition to movement, the dance includes ritual mimicry (sticking out the tongue, eyes wide open), gesticulation (vigorous hand strikes to the chest or thighs, stamping) and shouting, which are directed towards the opponents. Haka is tolerated by organisers, opponents and fans, being part of New Zealand's pre-match ritual (Ambrózová, 2019).

The search for security and safety

From the perspective of studying the motivation of human behaviour, it can be observed that what a person does is linked to the needs they want to satisfy. There are several such needs, ranging from the primary, material needs to spiritual needs (see Maslow's pyramid of needs and Seligman's positive psychology). The essence of rituals (both individual and collective) is psychologically based on the satisfaction of two needs – security and safety. Especially nowadays, these two elements are strongly emphasised, as current times are perceived from different aspects as constantly changing, replete with new challenges (Giddens, 1998), as uncertain, indeterminate and risky (Beck, 2004).

Whether people realise it or not, they are dependent on knowing the world they live in, and try to give order and meaning to their lives. It is only through this that people gain certainty about themselves and the surrounding world. If the world changes, people experience the change, the previously existing certainty turns to chaos and people try to navigate the world in a new way. Humans are aided not only by the so-called internal mechanisms of cognition, ranging from sensory perception to rational cognition and to faith, magic, etc., but also by the social mechanisms that maintain the stability of social structures (norms, values, taboos, institutions, etc.). Human beings struggle with chaos and uncertainty for the sake of order, harmony and certainty (Novosád, 1997). The constant repetition of certain rituals becomes a guarantee for them that everything is going as it should and the repetition contributes to reaffirming the sense of security and safety.

People, by practicing various individual or collective rituals, affirm the validity of the norms existing in the society to which they subscribe. According to Eliade, a human person conveys reality to things and phenomena at the moment of the repetition of rituals, which are "based on symbols and myths, thus imitating the primordial act of creation (the creation of order) and the establishment of real being" (Eliade 1995a, p. 37). According to Hana Babyrádová, to this day rituals "have retained their original

ontological meaning – they provide man with a sense of higher order and a belief in overcoming situations associated with certain risks" (Babyrádová, 2002, p. 104). This certainty and also the security one feels are of utmost importance to the person, and not only in the context of various rites of passage, initiation ceremonies, and the like, but also in the context of rituals that are aimed at improving performance, reducing anxiety, or increasing self-confidence.

One such example is Giacobbe "Jake" LaMotta's (1922-2017) ritual. LaMotta, nicknamed *The Bronx Bull*, was an American boxer and world middleweight champion in 1949-1951. He became famous for drinking raw beef blood before each fight in order to strengthen his body and guarantee better results, boost his confidence and intimidate the opponent.

Another such ritual is associated with famous American tennis player Serena Williams. She wears special shoes on the court and dribbles the ball a certain number of times before her first and second serves. In addition, she wears a single pair of socks throughout the tournament and considers this to be the most important part of her ritual (n.d., 2015).

Similarly, Connor Hellebuyck, an American ice hockey goaltender (born in 1993) who has spent his entire NHL career so far with the Winnipeg Jets (as of early 2025), is known for his ritual he repeats before every game – a warm-up that consists of a few minutes of eye stretching, head shaking and thigh clapping. (Ďaďo, 2020)

American professional ice hockey player Nate Schmidt (born in 1991) called his pre-game ritual a "magic trick". Part of his warm-up involves drinking "magic drinks" from the bench bar. When he was part of the Vegas Golden Knights, team manual therapist Raul Dorantes used to cover for him two bottles of Gatorade and one bottle of water with a towel. Schmidt would throw the towel in the air and take a little sip of each drink. He and Dorantes then would do a high five and the warm-up went on (Ďaďo, 2020). They repeated all these rituals so that Schmidt would gain confidence and have success.

When discussing rituals as means for providing security and safety, we can also mention the morning ritual for a successful start of the day (sipping green tea and making sun salutations, drinking morning coffee and reading online newspapers) or rituals associated with relaxation and release of tension, accumulated emotions and anxiety (associated with meditation, exercise, breathing techniques, ritual candle lighting). The ritual watching of a favourite TV series as a form of reward and relaxation or the wearing of items "for luck", which are invested with the meaning of protection and success (jewellery, amulets, precious stones, pieces of clothing, etc.), also fulfil the psychological function of reassurance.

Fostering a sense of belonging

Ritual can foster a sense of belonging and the sharing of a moment together. It is a manifestation of interactions between human beings. Clifford Geertz (2000)

has explored the ways in which belief, and ritual in particular, reinforces traditional social bonds between individuals and how the social structure of a group is strengthened and maintained through the ceremonial or mythic symbolisation of its underlying social values (Geertz, 2000).

Examples include modern family rituals that replace traditional cultural practices and are created to transform an ordinary place and time into a festive one, to create a special atmosphere or a shared experience (the choice of new ritual dishes on the festive table, rituals of shared family fun like in the ritual search for Christmas presents or playing the "Secret Santa", a New Year's Eve climb of a local mountain with family and friends, etc.).

It is also true that the relationship between ritual and society is close and reciprocal. On the one hand, ritual helps to ensure the consistency of society; on the other hand, society, by its stability, ensures the permanence of the form of ritual. When society undergoes changes, the formal and content elements of ritual are also transformed. The degree of such transformation is directly proportional to the degree of transformation of the entire society. Ritual is man's natural tool of connecting to the transcendent – be it God, the infinity of nature, or life revered as the highest human value. Currently it can also be a manifestation of participation in a lifestyle one chooses, or a desire for freedom, or an escape from the everyday. At the same time, ritual also connects people with each other and it aids specific communities to be formed and strengthened, defined by an internal order, common ideas and a common meeting place.

Ritual in the original meaning of the word is represented by repeated and collectively shared events, taking place at a particular time and place. By its repetition, it acts as a stabilising and strengthening tool for community, family and interpersonal relationships. An example of a contemporary collective ritual may be one that originated with the New York Islanders of the National Hockey League in the 1980s and grew in popularity very rapidly. It is also interesting to see that it is shared by both the players and the fans. Defenseman Ken Morrow is believed to be the first player not to shave during the playoffs. In 1980, the New York Islanders had two Swedish hockey players who kept up the ritual. Since then, beards and moustaches have become an integral part of the playoffs (n.d., 2015).

Ice hockey forward Timothy Leif (T. J.) Oshie and the renowned sniper Alexander Ovechkin of the Washington Capitals are famous for another ritual. Oshie's arrival to the Capitals in 2015 didn't just boost the team's prospects of winning the Stanley Cup, but it also brought with it some interesting pre-game rituals. The two players literally scream at each other before each game to reinforce a sense of togetherness and "tuning into one rhythm" (Ďaďo, 2020).

Another example of rituals strengthening mutual solidarity is the ritual performed in women's circles, aimed at supporting and "blessing" the future mother or, conversely, at sharing and supporting her in the event of a loss that has befallen the woman ("sister") – i.e. rituals after a miscarriage, a break-up, the death of a loved one, etc.

Ambivalence of ritual

Ritual may be a matter of the individual and of society; it may concern things abstract and concrete; it may contain the irrational and the rational; it may be general and particular. Ambivalence becomes an attribute of ritual that cannot be overlooked, and therefore it is not surprising that ritual, which is part of a living system and is constantly in flux, can have both constructive and destructive effects on society. We do not mean religious or political effects, although they have been studied in abundance. According to Geertz, rituals had not only a religious but also a political function; they were laden with both sacred and secular meanings. As the situation in the country began to change, so did the importance and hierarchy of the elements contained in the ritual. When the political meaning began to prevail, there was a reversal in society, society became politically divided, and some rituals could no longer be performed in their original form (Geertz, 2000).

Not only does the situation in society influence the form of the ritual, the ritual has also effects on how society is transformed. The interdependence of these two elements (ritual – society) influences their reciprocal behaviour. Ritual, which was originally a means of intuitive unification of the individual with the cosmic order, has gradually become an instrument of organisation of society, both in a positive and negative sense. The assumption that any interaction between people that has a social nature becomes a ritual served as a starting point for ritualising the functions of social mechanisms. As a rule, ritual is associated with relations and actions carried out in a group; it is shared collectively.

The desire to move is a constant inherent in all living things. This anthropological constant manifests itself in various spheres of our individual and social life. Today's age builds on it, emphasises it, uses it and often abuses it. Contemporary consumerism is also a manifestation of it. (Moravčíková, 2022) Consumerism is currently primarily determined by factors such as age, personal predilections, cultural and personal identity of the actors and takes the form of *emotional consumerism*, which evokes affective, imaginative and sensory experiences in the consumer. Today's *homo consumericus* "demands emotional experiences and a better life, a high standard of living and quality of health, familiar brands and authenticity, immediacy and communication" (Lipovetsky, 2007, p. 16). There is an epidemic of shopping, a desire for novelty, abundance and wasting, and lifestyle becomes a private matter. The considerations that:

> we are witnessing the emergence of a hyper-consumerist culture, underpinned by a post-Fordist economy, whose axis is a constant increase in supply and demand, the hyper-segmentation of markets, the acceleration of the emergence of new products, the rise of diversity and the unstoppable growth of marketing (Juvin & Lipovetsky, 2012, p. 36)

are confirmed. Nowadays, people do not primarily crave the satisfaction of their desires, as it was in the previous phase of consumerism, but they crave the excitement

of a new desire (Lipovetsky, 2013). People are excited by the movement that accompanies the search for sources of satisfaction. People become part of the consumerist game, the essence of which is that it is not about trying to acquire a thing, to own it, to accumulate things in a material sense, but about the thrill of new experiences. Zygmunt Bauman makes a similar point when he writes that people become *seekers and gatherers* of experiences, and they are collectors of things only in a secondary sense (Bauman, 1995).

An example of ritualised behaviour in the context of hyper-consumerism is retailtainment – retail marketing as entertainment. It is a marketing concept consisting in transforming a shopping centre or point of sale into a place of entertainment and relaxation. George Ritzer, in his book *Enchanting a Disenchanted World: Continuity and Change in the Cathedrals of Consumption* describes retailtainment as the use of environment, emotion, sound, and activity to get customers interested in goods and in the mood to buy (Ritzer, 2010). Retailtainment emerged as a retail marketing strategy during the economic downturn of the 1980s when retailers and marketers began to explore new methods to attract customers. Walking around, browsing, trying on goods or services has become a common ritual for many people. Retailers place emphasis not only on goods and services but also on lighting, colours, sounds as well as the overall atmosphere in the store to influence consumers' purchasing decisions. In this phenomenon we observe, in terms of ritual behaviour, the repetition and the introduction of uniqueness, specific atmosphere and emotions into everyday life, as well as the affirmation of one's social status through self-presentation (social aspect).

In the article "Using Sonic Branding in Retail Environments", Paul Fulberg described retailtainment as a way for marketers to offer consumers physical and emotional sensations during the shopping experience. In his view, *sonic branding* is a tool that has the potential of developing brand loyalty (Fulberg, 2003). The prevailing view among marketers today is that branding is a combination of physical, functional, operational and psychological elements. Consumers are willing to pay more for a good (brand) or service if there is perceived or actual added value from their experience with the good, service or brand. The goal of retailtainment is to change the shopping experience and take it to another level. The visitor is no longer a mere customer, but an engaged participant in the actions of the store. It's also a way to make shopping more enjoyable for families. Ever more retailers offer entertainment for children while parents shop. For example, Dubai Mall, the largest shopping mall in the United Arab Emirates, has an aquarium, an Olympic ice rink, waterfalls and a stunning view of the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa. By introducing gamification strategies, digital screens and sensory marketing, commercial establishments can increase the attractiveness of their spaces (Ziecina, 2025). Part of retailtainment is the ritualization of contests in which customers are offered something for free in exchange for providing contact details to enter the contest. They are even encouraged to share the contest on social media to attract more people.

Another example of contemporary ritual of consumerism is window shopping, or the activity of looking at goods in shop windows without the intention of buying any of them. Window shopping involves browsing through windows or trying on new goods. Window shopping, which is a repetitive ritual, can be fun or it can be performed to gain information about product development, differences between brands or selling prices. Nowadays, due to the availability of the Internet and e-commerce, it often takes place online. Stores use this ritual to their advantage and invest a lot of money in window displays to entice people to visit the store. The window-case in the context of this ritual can be considered the best form of advertising. Window shopping is the trend of current times. People often perform this ritual unconsciously because they spend a lot of their free time in shopping malls. For some people this ritual has become a form of relaxation, for others it is a way to spend leisure time with family or friends. (Business Jargons, n.d.)

Conclusions

The study was aimed at reflecting the significance of individual and collective rituals in current times, marked by rapid changes in all spheres of social and human life. At the beginning of the study, we focused on different definitions of ritual that have emerged from the perspectives of ethnology, cultural anthropology, sociology of culture, cultural studies and philosophy. Although there is a recent shift in the meaning and significance of the term, ritual as such has not lost its relevance in people's lives. On the contrary, it manifests itself in the form of a tool that boosts people's self-esteem, offers them security and safety, and strengthens and consolidates belonging between people. Many contemporary rituals are shifting from the purely collective and sacred levels to the individual and profane levels.

In current stratified society, the rituals of the everyday are emerging and taking centre stage – rituals as part of people's lifestyles; as repetitive activities that people tend to engage in and enjoy: rituals associated with shared meals – with families or groups of friends regularly gathering for shared lunches or dinners, thus strengthening relationships; rituals of celebration – birthday parties, anniversaries or holidays celebrated together create strong bonds between group members; morning or evening rituals – such as morning greetings, prayers or evening talk about the day's events strengthen the bond; rituals of shared interests – such as sports activities, cultural events and hobbies create a space for interaction and cooperation; rituals associated with both formal and informal gatherings – such as family meetings and community events. These rituals help groups build trust, empathy and a strong sense of belonging. We answered three main research questions: 1/ what is the importance of rituals in contemporary society, 2/ why do individuals and groups return to rituals, reinterpret rituals of the past, or create new ones, and 3/ what are the functions of rituals in the life of individuals and society today.

Rituals, just like taboos, prohibitions, orders, norms, values and other sociocultural regulators, arise in society to regulate interpersonal relations. As the times (in terms of knowledge, science and technology, art, social relations and economic relations) and the state of society (the development of science and technology, humanistic knowledge and its components) change, so do socio-cultural regulators. Even though the study of rituals has advanced recently, we still do not know many rituals in terms of their meaning and mechanisms of functioning. In mass society, the centre of individual and collective rituals is shifting to the realm of consumerism, entertainment, sports and leisure (Marcuse, 1991; Lipovetsky,1998; 2007; 2013; Bauman,1995; 1996; 2002).

We believe that neither the process of modernisation and diversification of lifestyles, nor the process of globalisation make rituals retreat from people's lives. These processes only lead to the transformation of their contents and forms depending on socio-historical, economic and cultural shifts. People tend to react to this state of society (globalisation, uncertainty, change, risk-taking, etc.) by increasingly turning to the instinctive sources of their essence, the homeopathisation of animality, exaltation, ecstatic and orgiastic rituals and practices in sports, entertainment, leisure, lifestyle, body adornment, new cults, daily rituals, and even in areas that are relatively new – in ecology, music and information and communication networks.

Ancient archetypal, mythological and fantastic figures (wizards, fairies, mythical heroes) are presented with the help of new technologies (e.g. in computer games). Gurus, music, sports or media stars are emblematic figures that attract many people, with emotions stirred to various forms of collective action. The postmodern age presents itself as a synergy of archaicism and technological development. Computers and smartphones are being implemented in people's lives as modern 'totems'. Micro-informatics, video clips, PlayStation consoles, advertising, a multitude of television channels and magazines, they all provide convincing evidence of the increasing scope of collective forces. Against the backdrop and in the context of these tendencies, individual and collective forms of rituals (or individual and collective forms of ritualised behaviour) are reemphasised and reshaped.

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