

Volume 4 (2020)
ISSN 2612-6966



OJH

Open Journal of Humanities

Homepage

www.doaj.org/toc/2612-6966

Publisher

Universitas Studiorum S.r.l. - Casa Editrice Scientifica
via Sottoriva, 9 - 46100 Mantova (MN), Italy
www.universitas-studiorum.it

International Scientific Committee

Carla Carotenuto, Università degli Studi di Macerata (Director)
Gabriella Cambosu, Università degli Studi di Cagliari
Clementica Casula, Università degli Studi di Cagliari
Matteo De Beni, Università degli Studi di Verona
Federica De Iuliis, Università degli Studi di Parma
Francesca Dell'Oro, Université de Lausanne (Switzerland)
Sonia Gambino, Università degli Studi di Messina
Carmela Giordano, Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale"
Alberto Jori, Università degli Studi di Ferrara
Valetina Laviola, Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale"
Giovanni Lupinu, Università degli Studi di Sassari
Chiara Melloni, Università degli Studi di Verona
Michela Meschini, Università degli Studi di Macerata
Mario Negri, Università IULM
Erika Notti, Università IULM
Isotta Piazza, Università degli Studi di Parma
Paola Pontani, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore
Daniela Privitera, Middlebury College at Mills, San Francisco (USA)
Riccardo Roni, Università degli Studi di Urbino "Carlo Bo"
Marco Sabbatini, Università degli Studi di Pisa
Sonia Saporiti, Università degli Studi del Molise
Domenico Scalzo, Università degli Studi di Urbino "Carlo Bo"
Edoardo Scarpanti, Accademia Nazionale Virgiliana
Marco Stoffella, Università degli Studi di Verona

Editorial and Publishing Committee

Ilari Anderlini
Giannella Biddau
Luigi Diego Di Donna
Edoardo Scarpanti

Open Journal of Humanities (OJH) is a peer-reviewed electronic Scientific Journal, which is devoted to the field of Humanities. OJH is published three times a year, and is distributed online with a full Gold Open Access policy, without any embargo period, through a Creative Commons License (CC-by 4.0), according to scientific best practices.

Peer-reviewing process for OJH is operated on a "double blind" basis, for each proposed article; it is conducted by at least two external referees, and is monitored by members of OJH's Scientific Committee and by the Publisher's Editor. Both the reviewers and author identities are concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa, throughout the review process. Received articles are made anonymous by our Editors, before Peer-reviewing process begins. Selection is based only on intellectual and scientific value and content, with no regards to authors' identity, origins, political or religious orientations. Proposed papers must be unpublished and fully original, and OJH Editorial Board will condemn and report any plagiarism or semi-plagiarism case. Every single Author accepts his own full responsibility for the originality and paternity of the published text.

Accepted topics of OJH include the whole field of Humanities, and namely: Anthropology, Archaeology, Arts (Visual Arts, Architecture), Classics, Philology, Philosophy, Law and Politics, Linguistics, Literature, Sociology, Economics. Correspondent scientific classification in Italy covers the following fields (cf. D.M. 855/2015): Area 10 "Scienze dell'antichità, filologico-letterarie e storico-artistiche"; Area 11 "Scienze storiche, filosofiche, pedagogiche, psicologiche"; Area 12 "Scienze giuridiche"; Area 13 "Scienze economiche e statistiche"; Area 14 "Scienze politiche e sociali".

Ethnography of three fertility rites and transmission of heritage: the construction of time in an Alpine territory¹

LIA GIANCRISTOFARO

University "G. D'Annunzio", Chieti Pescara

MARTA VILLA

University of Trento

Abstract

In the Eastern Alps the german community of Vinschgau still performs a lot of fertility rites. In the *Klosen* rite diabolic masks catch people with chains, donkey masks pinch the women and they make an acoustic paroxysm. In the *Pflugziehen* rite a plough is conducted ritually along the streets and the battle of good against evil is performed. In the *Scheibenslagen* rite people gather to throw some hoops of fire over the forest, so they can forecast about seasonal trend. Many authors have analyzed this method of managing annual time linked to the ancient seasonal agricultural practice. Man needs to scan time through ceremonial moments that pertain to the sphere of the sacred. Therefore, the feasts and rites of the different regions of Europe, as the rite we analyzed, are an excellent material for understanding the transformations of the conceptions of the time in contemporary societies.

Keywords: history, memory, heritage, Alps, fertility rites.

1. The essay was conceived and designed together by the two authors. However, the responsibility for the different parts of the work is specified as follows: Lia Giancristofaro, 1, 2, 3, 4, 9; Marta Villa, paragraphs 5, 6, 7, 8.

1. Introduction: time and holiness

The issues related to the representations of the time in European societies have been extensively reworked by anthropologists, in particular under the influence of historians who have specialized in the theme of the “invention of traditions” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). For their part, historians, since the 1970s, have become increasingly interested in anthropology. In short, today, to understand the complexity of the process of “building cultural identities”, it is necessary to use both history and cultural anthropology.

Cultural anthropologists build their science in the late Nineteenth century focusing on the “time” as social construction, and on the social and cultural manifestations of the holiness. Therefore, at the beginning the anthropologists have explored this theme in close connection with the history of religions. This anthropological perspective still had a rather limited and centripetal view of the cultural expressions.

A theoretical and practical expansion occurred with the Anglo-Saxon anthropology and then in France with the durkheimian “School of Sociology” (Hubert and Mauss 1909), according to which the dimension of the holiness is made “material” and “tangible” by the rites and festivals that mark the time intended as “community size”. The values of society are incorporated into the ritual and the festive calendar, which transformed the study of the customs related to the calendar and to the passage of time into an useful and political action.

Since the beginning of anthropology, the cultural concept of time has been at the center of analysis, because it each human activity is connected to the perception of time, its representation, its calculation and its social management.

Following this path, many anthropologists have identified the main calendars in the societies they have studied. In the nomadic societies, men's time follows the seasons, the planets movements and the moon. The sedentary, allowing to observe the complete cycle of the solar year, led to develop the first solar-lunar calendars. And since the human calendar has dissociated from the rhythms of nature, the groups have imagined various ways to connect the cosmic time to the social time.

2. From rites to myths

In the culture of the time (every social group builds time, and time builds each social group), the "leap" days are days of "suspension from ordinary time" which are interposed in a series of days, or in any case between two or more homogeneous time series. The "leap" days were added arbitrarily to match the calendar year to the rhythm of the sun, and in order to connect the most salient episodes of the natural year (solstices, equinoxes) with the rhythms of society. The intercalary days, which already existed in some ancient societies, gave rise to annual rites, of which the European popular carnivals still transmit the echo (Fabre 1992).

Repeated as "regular intervals", the festive rituals become a way of instilling sacredness into life (Durkheim [1912] 1991). The exceptional nature of the festivals and the suspension of daily activities is an opportunity to take a step back and reflect on life. Paradoxically, holidays allow the person to become aware of the passage of time by making them forget the time, and by experience extreme forms of sacredness, which come to trance or possession. The feasts

of the year mark the renewal of the persons and the seasons, while the celebrations of the person's life cycle (baptism, rites of passage to adulthood, rites of transition to senile age, funeral) mark the key moments in the life of the individuals and both the seasons, because these rituals take place at set times (spring and summer are considered as "wedding and party season").

The work of Arnold Van Gennep ([1943-1953] 1998) represents the most successful solution to systematically describe the "rites of passage" that mark the passage of time in traditional societies. Van Gennep has described seasonal festivals and life-cycle holidays in the different regions of France, theorizing how people mark the time in the societies where the time measurement systems – hourglasses, clocks, watches – were not yet very popular. In the absence of an objective measure of time, festive rites act as concrete reference points, capable to divide time into unequal, but well-known portions. By ordering time, rituals order society: religious and civil institutions, social classes, generations that alternate with each other and seasonal workers are all affected by this order, and all incorporate the passage of time marked by the periodic and inexorable return of the rites.

Therefore, each rite is strengthened by the myths that justify its existence. The study of ritual markers of time thus becomes the study of social representations, i.e. the myths. In the key moments of the calendar, the actors of the holiness fill the scene, the "popular wisdom" is expressed, the hidden social relationships become clear: for example, spring is associated with the time of courtship, the winter with a common retirement in family at home. In his Study of Es-

kimo Societies, Marcel Mauss ([1905] 1950) clearly showed the importance of seasonal rhythms, with a summer period that is open to the natural environment and hunting, and a winter that is spent in domestic spaces.

Each group, each culture develops specific conceptions of the time, with variations that can be geographic, that is, from country to country, but also from social and professional, depending on the guilds and corporations of the groups. Today, for example, the use of skiing marks the time according to social classes. In the Western Civilization, those who belong to the middle class ski in the winter, but those who are rich stand out from the middle class and prefer to ski in the summer, spending more money and moving for thousands of km (Bourdieu 1979). In this way, they differentiate their calendar and highlight the social difference.

In the Christian world, social groups tend to associate themselves with the feast of a patron saint, therefore on a specific date, and through that date, with the values and myths that that feast conveys. In the traditional societies studied by cultural anthropologists, time unites individuals to groups according to a very particular equation that is cyclically reproduced with the seasons, outside the unified and abstract time of clocks.

3. Understanding the contemporary societies through the use of their calendars

Influenced by critical sociology and constructivism, the cultural anthropology over the past thirty years has profoundly changed. Following the work of the Manchester School, which underlines the role of the “temporal crisis” in the con-

firm and renewal of political systems (Gluckman 1954), the lack of consideration of the historical perspective has been equipped from a cultural and critical point of view. In fact, the festivals and rites as social phenomena not politically integrated, that means those phenomena are not aligned with the modernity even though they are perfectly integrated into the needs of today's people (Latour 1993).

According to the political anthropologist Jean-François Bayart, cultural reasoning, like the symbolic anthropology that preceded it,

evades [the] shares of innovation and debt, assuming that the intangibles, through a nucleus of representations, are perpetuated in the centuries and in a vacuum (Bayart 1996: 79).

Therefore, the cultural anthropology of today tries to study the loan, the dynamics of change, the factors of disorder, the hybridizations and the temporality of the social criteria.

A social criterion based on temporality is "cultural heritage". The Nineteenth century was the cradle of the concept of "heritage", which emerged in the Twentieth century and called for the creation of special protection and regulation of objects and activities valued by small and large human groups. The "inheritance" category dates back to Roman times, when jurists created the concept of *patrimonium* to indicate the inheritance that passes from father to son. This device is equivalent, but not entirely, to that of *hereditas* (heritage).

The great success of the concept of "heritage" born with Roman law but overflows from it, because it satisfies the need for "continuity" of modern times.

The "duty to preserve", in fact, characterizes many cultures as the duty to preserve something while time passes

and consumes everything and everyone. For many systems of thought, western and non-western, the transmission of goods (material or abstract) is a foundation of the family and of the larger social group, which from this transmission receives precisely a sense of continuity and identity. Intellectuals of the nineteenth century consolidated the idea of heritage as “national heritage”, able to build the nations, and elaborated the idea of tradition as an element of the past that persists in the present, by an erroneous analogy with the processes of filiation. Currently, common sense still has this idea of tradition (Lenclud 1999: 123-124), basing the idea of “patrimony-festivals”.

4. “Historicity regimes” and heritage process

The french historian François Hartog (2003) recently proposed the idea of a “historicity regime” to describe the differences in the concept of time that exist in relation to societies. According to this author, the traditional societies were mostly oriented towards their past, placing at the center of their beliefs the cult of ancestors, big men, kings or famous people. Modernity, on the other hand, inaugurated a period in which time was illuminated by the future, and for Christianity the passage of time is aimed at the advent of the Messiah. This “futurist” vision of time has influenced both rationalism, with its tension towards individual progress, and Marxism, mobilized in the search for a bright future for humanity. Contrary to these conceptions, the time of our postmodern societies would be “in crisis”, characterized by doubts and uncertainties. Traumatized by the enormous violence of the recent past, suspicious of an uncertain future

that must strive to protect, people can no longer trust neither the past nor the future.

The “study on memory” has become fundamental for anthropologists interested in the phenomenon of identity claims, communitarianism, indigenous rights and cultural rights of regional or national minorities. Faced with the “time of the other”, the anthropologist must evaluate both how there are similarities, and how the time of the other is different from his idea of time and calendars. The existence of such substantial debates in the discipline probably explains the recent emergence of fields of study that concern time, near or far. In fact, many anthropological focus on capitalization processes and on commemorative dynamics.

5. Ethnography of seasonal ceremonial rituals in Venosta Valley

Each year the community of Stilfs, a village in Venosta Valley (a north-western valley in the Province of Bolzano), organizes a festive cycle during the winter period: the main actors of this ritual process are the young males only. The performance is interesting as it is related not only to the dimension of seasonality and time, but also to the strategies of recognition and affirmation of the collective identity (Villa 2017).

The ritual events, closely related to the agricultural landscape, are performed in order to obtain abundance and wellbeing for the field products and domestic animals, even though a large part of the community no longer depends on agricultural practices for its survival. All the characters of the rituals are connected to the peasant world that, in this part of the Alps, is closely linked to the economic and social structure of

the farmstead. These carnival-like events can be attributed to the sphere of fertility and most probably originated in ancient times, from pre-Christian cults of an agricultural nature. Some similar rituals have also been studied and described in other European regions in relation to the transition from the winter to the spring season: the annual temporality related to the seasons is a fragment of folkloric time that Christianity was not able to cancel (Grimaldi 2003: 11-12).

The rituals are organized by the young generation and controlled by the older members of the community: it is exactly in these marginal areas that the emotional investment in the festive aggregative rituals seems to be deeper (Porcellana 2011). The municipal territory presents some peculiar geomorphological characteristics: the residential area, located on an elevation (1300 m), is distributed along the main road axis; there are isolated hamlets and farmsteads, the main agricultural cultivations are vegetable patches, meadows, apple orchards and vineyards. Peasant families who are owners of farmsteads constitute most of the population; until 1970 the community counted 1,600 inhabitants, while today there are approximately 1,200 with an evident majority of native German speakers.² Many people have left in search of work as workers in the Meran and Bozen areas.

Here, when we finish compulsory schooling, we all go to work as workers. However, we still like to work the land. The farmstead is my home; I help my father and even my grandfather.³ I would like to be a secretary, so I will go to a school for secretaries and then my uncle will hire me in his company. Instead, my friend, L., wants to

2. The figure dates back to 2013 (when the four-year ethnographic research was carried out).

3. 11, male, 19 years old (interview collected in April 2012).

work in a shop in Malles.⁴ I am a maths teacher; I went to university in Innsbruck. For me it was important to study. But there was a time when I refused this life, these peasants... Then I understood and came back; now I take care of the farmstead, with my brother. We have reunited.⁵

6. The ritual of *Klosen*: secret nocturnal initiation and diurnal public ceremony

During the winter period three community rituals are celebrated. One of these, for males only, consists in a violent initiation used to transmit all of the organization's knowledge on the rituals and the sense of belonging to the congregation that preserves its traditions (Lévi-Strauss 1985: 43; Remotti, Scarduelli and Fabietti 1989: 60-61). Females are totally excluded from participating, though involved in the sphere of fertility of the land and women.

The ritual ceremonies begin between the 5th and 6th of December, on the occasion of the celebration of Saint Nicholas. Masquerades that occur on this occasion, and not during carnival time, are used as a means to build the aspired world in the real world and are true activators of the transformation (Bargna 2004: 144).

The *Klosen* ritual consists of two distinct moments: the secret nocturnal initiation ritual for 14-year-old teenagers, to grant them entrance into the youth association, and the diurnal ritual ceremony for the entire community.

The initiation ritual, similar to some presented by Van Gennep (1981), takes place at 8 p.m. in the church square. The *Klaubauf* masquerades perform the ritual on the young ini-

4. 12, female, 17 years old (interview collected in November 2010).

5. 13, male, 26 years old (interview collected in January 2011).

tiates: they appear from the side streets, screaming loudly inside the masks and clinking the chains with which they will perform the act. The young boys run away but they cannot leave the sacred ritual fence of the churchyard. The *Klaubaufs* chase them, capture them with their chains and screaming, swirl them around. The entire ritual lasts about an hour and is always done in the same place. At the end, all the young boys reach another indoor venue where the entrance of the neophytes in the association is celebrated with music, food and beer until daybreak. Some of the boys we met in a *Gasthof* before the ritual, opened up:

I am scared and have no idea of what could happen tonight. I'm afraid, for sure, but I have to do it. Nobody wanted to tell me what will happen, not even my brother, S.; he is older than me and did it three years ago. Now he will also be there, but silence... nothing, not a word. I didn't really want to take part but if I don't it would be a disgrace to my family. I have to do it.⁶

The second part of the ritual takes place the next day. The very strict timing followed marks three different moments. There are also three characters that perform all the actions: the *Klaubaufs*, dark demons; the *Esel*s, donkeys; and the *Weissen*, Saint Nicholas with the acolytes. Each character makes specific gestures which were handed down through oral narration and direct observance, according to the boys organizing the event.

Unlike the initiation ritual which is performed before very few people of the community (the fathers of the boys), there are hundreds of other spectators (young people, especially girls from the valley).

6. 14, 15, 16, males, 14 years old (interview collected the 5th of December 2010)

The characters in the parade cross the streets of the village, from west to east. At 2 p.m. the *Esel*s, wearing colorful costumes and material masks, are the first to arrive from the woods and can be divided into two groups: those marking the movement of the parade accompanied by many cowbells, and the more agile who, bursting into the crowd running and doing somersaults, begin the superstitious act. They look for the girls and pinch them on their arms and buttocks, screaming and yelling. On the bridge they meet the *Klaubaufs* wearing wooden masks with exaggerated traits, goat horns and fleece, who with menacing ways swirl their chains trying to trap the spectators, making them, then twirl while hooked to the metal links. The parade continues along the streets until it reaches the churchyard where, at 5 p.m., the second ritual act takes place. The *Weissens* recite the prayer, “Hail Mary” in Latin and German, and Saint Nicholas gives an extemporaneous educational sermon out loud. All the characters, with their faces uncovered (the only moment the disguise is removed), kneel in the square while they listen. When the saint pronounces the Amen, a paroxysm of sound is triggered: masked *Klaubaufs* and *Esel*s stage an acoustic trance that only ends when the last figure falls to the ground exhausted. The noise caused is a good omen for the spring season that still has to arrive (Villa 2017).

We make noise and it's lovely. When you're in the middle of it all it's sort of like a drug, it's euphoric! The community counts on us, and if we make noise then everything will be okay! We cannot fail, everybody gains from this. Everyone is waiting for this moment, and we are the promise for the country: everything must work perfectly. If we don't do it well, the elderly will then scold us. I drink until I'm almost drunk. It's a party, but when the race with the bells

is on, then I am sober... each and every one of us wants to be the last, that's how you really impress girls⁷.

At 8 p.m. all the masquerades get together in small groups and pay visits to the houses. This pilgrimage dominated by tricks, lasts all night; it is only at the first light of dawn that many characters return to their own homes.

7. The ritual of *Pfluziehen*: the struggle of good against evil

On Shrove Saturdays biennially the ritual event of the *Pfluziehen* («to pull the plough») takes place: there are no masquerades acting out split personalities or contrasting roles.

The ritual begins at 11.30: the youngsters gather at the upper eastern part of the main street. Even though the characters represented are both males and females, all the parts are played only by men. The ceremony is preceded by the recitation of the *Angelus* sung by the *baüer* (the owner of the farmstead) when the clock strikes midnight. Behind the donkey mask, there are six oxen, impersonated by children of different ages, who drag a wooden plough, used for at least one hundred years exclusively for this ritual. The plough is driven by a couple of peasants, surrounded by several helpers in traditional costumes and with agricultural tools in their hands. The parade is closed by extravagantly dressed characters with completely black faces: some represent crafts once practiced by wanderers; others are dressed in old rags and carry broken umbrellas.

At the end of the prayer, with a shout the peasant starts ploughing in the streets of the village: the helpers sow and

7. I7, I8, I9, males 20, 23, 22 years old (interview collected the 10th of December 2010).

beat the street with sticks. Two peasants push a wheelbarrow with cages and chickens and distribute hard boiled eggs, as a sign of prosperity for all unmarried women. The black-faced characters called witches, yell without meaning, trying to impede ploughing and sowing and are beaten by the peasant's helpers. A negative role is also played by the trade representatives: shoemakers, watchmakers, tinkers, chimney sweepers, and street vendors of postcards or household linen. Before it is all over, in the church square the traditional «theft of the *canederli*» takes place to end the ceremony: the more dumplings, *canederli*, the peasant will have saved, the more prosperous will the year be.⁸ The audience at this event is mostly composed of unmasked inhabitants, and there are no tourists.

8. Flashes of light in the night: the haruspices of *Scheibenschlaghen*

After the carnival period, the last ceremony, the *Scheibenschlaghen*, is organized. Its main purpose is to chase away winter. In the ritual space next to the woods, a male mannequin and female mannequin are set up. Full of straw and dressed in peasant clothes, these are hoisted on wooden crosses, inscribed with concentric diamonds and planted in the ground (Gorfer 1973: 52).

In the middle of the path there is a large pile of burning wood and the entire community gathers around it for a ritual where fire is seen as the uniting element (Frazer 1965: 712).

8. The theft and defense of the *canederli* takes place with bare hands around the large steaming copper cauldron where these simple meat and bread balls are immersed in the broth. Furthermore, with regard to the relationship between food and fertility rites in the Eastern Alps, see Villa 2013.

The ritual takes place in silence. Each inhabitant holds a long stick made of hazelnut wood and a twine necklace with many wooden blocks, the *karsuntaschaibs*, pyramid sections with a central hole, made of stone pine wood. The disc placed at the top of the stick is heated in the fire until it turns red. Then they go closer to a platform, and moving the stick to the rhythm of an ancient chant,⁹ force is applied to the disc so that at the right time it touches the platform and shoots up into the night towards the valley, drawing a hypnotic trail of light in the air.

See, let me explain, the throw is fundamental, and you cannot make a mistake. It all depends on the trail, you throw and then you look at it. The light that sparks tells us the future. Those old people there, do you see them? They know everything and can tell you the message of the trail. You go to them and they spit out the verdict: well, bad, so-so.¹⁰

When nearly everybody has finished their throws, the mannequins are set on fire. The community stays to look at the bonfire while it burns in the night, whispering formulas in the dialect to drive away the demons of winter.

9. Conclusions

The recent “overdose” of heritage and folk festivals by cultural anthropologists are sometimes criticized as a nostalgic escape

9. «Oh Reim Reim,/ Fiu wein soll diaschai so sein,/ Dia Scheib und mei/ Knia scheib soll firein,/ Hofer tone sein,/ geat sichs guat,/ hol siohs guat,/ Kourer in du Kischf,/ Geld in der tasch,/ Wein in du flash,/ Pfluag vertut Eart./ Oh Reim, Reim/ Schaug schaug wier/ Di scheib ause geart!» The nursery rhyme invokes the disc of fire so that its sparks are long and the launch good so that you can have luck, your pockets full of money, the wine in the barrels, the well-functioning plow in the earth, the fruits ready for harvest.

10. I10, male 31 years old (interview collected the 24th of February 2009).

to the past, and scholars who deal with them are often reproached for neglecting the observation of the most lively aspects of today's societies (Bromberger 2014). In the Western societies, however, analyzing the "heritagization" processes (because heritage is a dynamic process) allows us to illuminate vast fields; for example, the relationship of the present with the economic environment, the commemorations of industrial heritage, the recreational practices, the historical re-enactments. To observe the "heritagization" process also in this case allows us to understand how time and history have become malleable in contemporary societies, strategically elaborated by large-scale collective projects, very significant to understand the transformations of current societies. This new fields of research reside in the intersection of anthropology and history, and make possible the study that today societies make of the social uses of time (Bonnet-Carbonell 2004). Therefore, the feasts and rites of the different regions of Europe, as the rite we analyzed, are an excellent material for understanding the transformations of the conceptions of the time in contemporary societies.

References

- Bargna, I.L. 2004. "L'entre-deux della maschera come luogo di trasformazione." *La Rivista Folklorica* 49: 143-152.
- Bayart, J.-F. 1996. *L'illusion identitaire*. Paris: Fayard.
- Bonnet-Carbonell, J. ed. 2004. *Inventions européennes du temps*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Bourdieu, P. 1979. *La distinction. Critique sociale du jugement*. Paris: Les éditions du minuit.

- Bromberger, C. 2014. "Le patrimoine immatériel entre ambiguïtés et overdose." *L'Homme* 209: 143-151.
- Durkheim, E. [1912] 1991. *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*. Paris: Le livre de poche.
- Fabre, D. 1992. *Carnaval ou la fête à l'envers*. Paris: Découvertes Gallimard.
- Frazer, J. [1915] 1965. *The Golden Bough: A Study in Comparative Religion*. London: McMillan & Co.
- Gluckman, M. 1954. *Rituals of Rebellion in South-east Africa*. Manchester: University Press.
- Gorfer, A. 1973. *Gli eredi della solitudine. Viaggio nei masi di montagna del Tirolo del sud*. Verona: Cierre Edizioni.
- Grimaldi, P. 2003. *Bestie, santi, divinità. Maschere animali dell'Europa tradizionale*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Halbwachs, M. 1925. *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*. Paris: Alcan.
- Hartog, F. 2003. *Régimes d'historicité: présentisme et expériences du temps*. Paris: Seuil.
- Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. eds. 1983. *The invention of tradition*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Hubert, H. and Mauss, M. 1909. "Etude sommaire de la représentation du temps dans la religion et la magie." In *Mélanges d'histoire des religions*. Paris: Alcan.
- Latour, B. 1993. *We have never been modern*. Cambridge-Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Lenclud, G. 2001. "La tradizione non è più quella d'un tempo." In Clemente, P. and Mugnaini, F. eds. *Oltre il folklore. Tradizioni popolari e antropologia nella società contemporanea*. Roma: Carocci. 123-133.
- Lévi-Strauss, C. 1979. *La vie des masques*. Paris: Librairie Plon.
- Mauss, M. [1905] 1950. "Essai sur les variations saisonnières des sociétés Eskimos. Etude de morphologie sociale." In *Sociologie et anthropologie*. Paris: P.U.F. 389-478.

- Poppi, C. 1998. "Was Frazer Right? Cultural Ecology, Knowledge and Masks in West African and Alpine Cross-cultural Perspective." *Annali di S. Michele all'Adige* 11: 231-246.
- Porcellana, V. 2011. "Carnevale e sua madre Quaresima. Una lettura antropologica del Piemonte orientale." *Annali di S. Michele all'Adige* 24: 191-204.
- Remotti, F., Scarduelli, P. and Fabietti, U. 1989. *Centri, ritualità, potere. Significati antropologici dello spazio*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Van Gennep, A. 1909. *Les rites de passage*. Paris: E. Nourry.
- Van Gennep, A. [1943-1953] 1998. *Manuel de folklore français contemporain*. 4 vol. Paris: Ed. Robert Laffont.
- Villa, M. 2013. "Quel mestiere difficile. Ambulanti e venditori girovaghi nel mondo alpino orientale. Discriminazioni identificazioni, repulsione e attrazione. Il *case study* di Stilfs in Vinschgau." *Zapruder* 30: 98-106.
- Villa, M. 2017. "Identità e riconoscimento attraverso i culti della fertilità e il paesaggio agricolo nel Tirolo del Sud. Il *case study* della popolazione giovane maschile di Stilfs in Vinschgau." In Grote, G. and Obermair, H. eds. *A Land on the Threshold*. Bern: Peter Lang International Academic Publishers. 287-304.



Fig. 1. Stilfs. *Klosen* Rite. *Esel* with cowbells (photo Villa M.)



Fig. 2. Stilfs. *Klosen* Rite. *Klaubauf* with chains (photo Villa M.)



Fig. 3. Stilfs. *Klosen* Rite. Prayer (photo Villa M.)



Fig. 4. Stilfs. *Pflugziehen* Rite. Farmer's family and helpers with plow and oxen (photo Villa M.)



Fig. 5. Stilfs. *Pflugziehen* Rite. Negative characters (photo Villa M.)



Fig. 6. Stilfs. *Scheibenslaghen* Rite.
Mannequin burning in the night (photo Villa M.)



Fig. 7. Stilfs. *Scheibenslaghen* Rite. Throwing fiery discs (photo Villa M.)