

SAINT LUCY, THE QUEEN OF LIGHT. THE LEGEND AND FOLKLORE OF SAINT LUCY

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The Feast of Saint Lucy is celebrated on December 13 by a girl wearing a white gown and candles that visits a crowded church. This article investigates the senses mentioned in newspaper reports describing this ceremony. I explain why some senses are not mentioned at all, and I relate my findings to thoughts about the senses as elements of a cultural system guided by power, experiences, and expectations that make up the sense of tradition.

Keywords: *Saint Lucy, senses, newspapers, experience, sense of tradition.*

Praznik sv. Lucije se praznuje 13. decembra. Pri tem je glavna figura dekle, ki v belem ogrinjalu in s svečami obišče polno cerkev. Članek obravnava omembe čutov v časniških poročilih, ki opisujejo ceremonijo. Avtorica pojasnjuje, zakaj nekateri čuti sploh niso omenjeni, in povezuje spoznanja z mislimi o čutih kot elementih kulturnega sistema pod nadzorom moči, izkušenj in pričakovanj, ki osmišljajo tradicijo.

Ključne besede: *sv. Lucija, čuti, časniki, izkušnja, zavest o tradiciji.*

In the Protestant country of Finland, only one saint is celebrated regularly and with great enthusiasm. This is Saint Lucy, who is believed to have been a girl from Syracuse, Sicily, born around AD 285. She was martyred in AD 304. By the 5th century she was already a popular saint, and she remains so in both the Catholic and Orthodox churches. She is the patron saint of throat problems, eye ailments and blindness, blood flow, and dysentery. She is venerated on December 13 and was first mentioned in Finland in 1330.¹

According to legend, Lucy was a beautiful girl that had vowed herself to chastity. However, unknown to Lucy, her mother permitted a young heathen man to marry her daughter and thereby announced a great dowry. Lucy was determined never to marry, and so the boy lost the dowry – and instead, Lucy used it for the poor. The young man informed the authorities of Lucy's belief in Christ and consequently they strove to kill her, but no means were sufficient to take her life. She finally died by the sword, but reached out to receive Holy Communion. Another legend refers to her beautiful eyes, which were such a temptation to the young heathen man that she tore them out and sent them to him. Consequently, he converted to her Christian faith.

Alongside the Syracuse legend in its different versions, the facts about Saint Lucy that folklorists tend to tell interested listeners and inquisitive journalists concern motifs other

¹ An overview of Saint Lucy (in Swedish – Sankta Lucia) and her history can be found in Swahn [1993: 68–91; cf. also Bringéus 1999: 110–119; Lönnqvist 1972; Vilkuuna 1988: 323–324].

than medical needs or fidelity to a beloved or to God. We prefer to talk about food – and lots of it. The explanation for this is that December 13 was the last day before the Christmas fast. Therefore people tended to eat many foods forbidden during the period of abstinence. There are reports of seven meals before breakfast, or one meal in every corner of the house. Meat, sausages, and fatty food made up the meals, consumed with schnapps. December 13 was also celebrated as the last day before the Christmas holidays in schools and universities. There were several more-or-less serious customs connected with this day. In many places, for instance, the schoolboys collected supplies, especially candles, for the coming semester. At the university in Lund, the students put on burlesque plays in which they might make their professors jump over a fire to test their abilities. Saint Lucy's Day thus had traits reminiscent of customs connected with the *mundus inversus*. Although not every step is transparent in the historical accounts, Saint Lucy is said to be connected with the *Christkindl*, one of the Protestant versions of Saint Nicholas. The explanation here is that the Protestants would not approve of a Catholic saint in their celebration of Christmas. Instead, they thought of the child Jesus as the donor of all good gifts. A little girl was regarded as the best person for this. Folklorists also believe that the celebration of Saint Lucy is associated with the winter solstice, and all the malevolent supernatural creatures moving around in the darkness. They explain the changes that took place in the Nordic calendar system and they associate these with the demonic *Lussi* in the folklore of western Sweden and Norway, who was really a rather malicious character. Certainly the folklorists add some words about Lucifer and *die Lutzelfrau*, and they do not forget to point out that her name may derive from the Latin word *lux* 'light'.

The custom of Saint Lucy was brought to western Sweden from Germany in the 18th century. Later on, after 1910, it was introduced to Finland through educational institutions.

PRIVATE AND PUBLIC

Modern Finland celebrates Saint Lucy in two ways – one private, the other public. In private a girl, a daughter of the family, dresses in white, puts a lingonberry or plastic wreath with candles or electric lights on her head, and brings her parents breakfast in bed while singing a special Lucy song. The first Swedish text was written in 1924 by Sigrid Elmblad, "Sankta Lucia, ljusklara hägring" (Saint Lucy, Bright Illusion). Today there are two other serious versions as well as many parodies. The original Italian text describes Naples and has nothing to do with Lucy or even with a saint. The melody was borrowed from Italy and introduced by Gunnar Wennergren. Certainly, there is a lot of personal and family variation in the performance of this custom, depending on the age of the girl, the risks of carrying lit candles, her ability to sing, and whether she is strong enough to carry a tray. A little son may even be deemed fit to pose as Saint Lucy – presuming he can be persuaded to do so. If there are several children in the family, one is Saint Lucy while the others dress

up as maidens, star-boys (*stjärngossar*), or goblins (*tomtar*). The maidens look like Saint Lucy but do not carry a wreath.

A public Saint Lucy is elected from among several candidates with the help of the local newspapers and their readers. The candidates are young girls, generally in their late teens, mostly tall, slim, and fair-haired, with a good singing voice. The candidate that receives the most votes becomes Saint Lucy. She and her maidens are instructed by “Lucy mothers”, who tell them what to do and what not to do as Saint Lucy. Among other things, there has been debate over whether it is appropriate for a Saint Lucy to wave as her cortege moves through town [*Hufvudstadsbladet* 14 Dec. 1993]. When 13 December comes, the girls are taken to a church in Helsingfors (Helsinki) and to the cathedral in Åbo (Turku). The church is packed, mostly with families and elderly people. Saint Lucy wears a white gown, she carries a wreath of lingonberry with candles not yet lit on her head, she may have a candle in her hand, and around her waist she has a red belt. Her maidens also wear white gowns; they have tinsel in their hair and around their waists, and a candle in their hands. Together they sing, perhaps “Nu tändas tusen juleljus” (Now Thousands of Christmas Candles Are Lit). Toward the front of the church they meet the vicar, who preaches on a suitable theme. Then he lights the candles, blesses the girls, and dismisses them. On their way back they sing the Lucy song. The main impression is one of serenity and holiness.



Fig. 1: The crowd outside the Cathedral in Åbo (Turku), December 2006 [Photo by Carl-Gustav Berg].

Outside a crowd of people awaits, sometimes just watching, and sometimes even following them to a venue where Saint Lucy is “crowned”, when a prominent person gives her a specially designed necklace.² Afterwards there is a feast, mainly for the youngest members of the community. After this evening, Saint Lucy visits hospitals, old people’s homes and

² The concept of crowning Saint Lucy with a necklace after she has received the badge of office, the lit wreath, is a relic of the time when the church was not yet involved in the ceremony. Then the crowning took place in a theatre or in some other large hall, and it was there that the candles were lit.



Fig. 2: Saint Lucy and her maidens [Photo by Lena Marander-Eklund, December 2006.].



Fig. 3: Saint Lucy and her maidens in the cathedral in Åbo (Turku) with their candles not yet lit, December 2006 [Photo by Lena Marander-Eklund].

garisons, associations, workplaces, and offices, singing the Lucy song and reciting a poem. Coffee and cakes are usually served during her visit. Saint Lucy's main job is to raise money for special projects decided on each year. There is a Saint Lucy administered by the Swedish-speaking social welfare NGO Folkhälsan in Finland as well as local Saint Lucys. During December and January, all of them collect money for special needs.

NEWSPAPER REPORTS

The Saint Lucy ceremony is regarded as a symbol of Finland's Swedish identity. Consequently, reports on the Saint Lucy celebration are published every year as standard winter items in Finland's Swedish-language newspapers from December 14 onwards. Often they consist

of a full-page text plus shorter reports on subsequent days. Saint Lucy thus appears to be important. I have analysed a number of these reports and an interview with a Saint Lucy and one of her maidens. In this paper I will mainly concentrate on the part of the custom that takes place in the church. Generally, it was not until the 1980s that the church was introduced into this custom. What senses are mentioned in this part of the custom of Saint Lucy? My personal sensual experience and my own memories of the Saint Lucy celebration influence my reading, listening, and understanding. Also, my perception of many corresponding situations makes me aware of which senses are *not* mentioned in the texts, be they seen as self-evident or unseemly. In my interpretation of the newspaper reports, I am highly influenced by David Howes's thoughts on the senses.

SENSES AS CULTURAL SYSTEMS

The primary senses are hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch. Our ears, eyes, nose, mouth, and skin are the sense organs that help us register our experiences. From a physiological point of view, this process is extremely complicated and, furthermore, extremely rapid, from the stimulus that a reaction is needed to the reaction itself. From a cultural point of view, the process of experiencing is even longer and more complicated because it is not until after the reaction of a sensation that we start to question our experience; only then do we start to evaluate and explain it to ourselves and to verbalize or otherwise communicate it to other people. In doing so, we integrate all our former experiences. Each and every step is conducted in a culturally bound, or at least a culturally accepted, way. However, the sensations are only the starting point because they rapidly lead to emotions that are culturally rooted and upheld. Sensations are the gateways to entire worlds of experience containing other experiences and memories, but also longing, fear, and hope. Dealing with the senses from a cultural perspective means dealing with a cultural system of accepted or unaccepted norms, experiences, negotiations, and patterns that make up a consistent whole with sets of rules to be followed or broken depending on the situation. How we do this is guided by our sense of tradition. There is an important interface between sensations and emotions, and this should be given close attention.

According to David Howes, the senses must be regarded, understood, and shared as cultural systems. He maintains that man's perception is culturally shaped and bound. Although man's perceptions are strictly individual, he leans towards culturally bound concepts when he tries to understand, interpret, and explain his experience of the perceived phenomena. He interprets and explains his perceptions against a given background common to those people in a society that try to understand one another. However, folklorists such as Albert Eskeröd and Lauri Honko have demonstrated that a perceiver's expectations are also important for understanding an experience. Eskeröd showed how perceptions were interpreted in terms of emotions depending on dominant interests with the person [Eskeröd 1947: 71]. Honko

stated that folk belief figures were products of culturally and traditionally anchored expectancies and knowledge about heeded and violated norms when people thought that the figures allowed themselves to be seen, felt, or heard in a community [Honko 1962: 86–152].

Howes also states that perception is guided by politics, by power, and can be used in order to exercise power. According to Howes, the senses are filled with meaning; they have a hierarchical and regulating relationship by which social and cosmic order are expressed and maintained. As he puts it: *Biology provides the clay, but culture is the potter* [Howes 2005: 5].

We can maintain that there is no experience that is not introduced sensually, and conclude that the understanding of sensual experiences is culturally bound. Moreover, all our memories were once introduced by our senses [Stewart 2005: 59]. Accordingly, the senses are the gateway to memories, to the imagination of the future; they are the gateway to knowledge [Roberts 2005: 109].

THE SELF EVIDENT SENSES

As a rule, the newspaper articles make no explicit mention of the senses. The reporters concentrate on the effects and consequences of their ability to perceive something – that is, Saint Lucy and her procession – and they do not mention which senses they have activated in the process, or at least they are quite discriminating when they write about their experiences. Certainly, the senses play a great role in the reports, but only in an indirect way. Either they are not considered at all, or they seem to be self-evident and therefore not worth mentioning. Perhaps the explanation for this lies in the close connection between the senses and the body. Every sense is produced with the help of bodily activity. However, this fact is not necessarily a good thing if the situation to which the description refers is expected to be filled with serenity and holiness. The locality to which I have limited my investigation of the ceremony of Saint Lucy is the church. Generally, bodily activity is tempered in church, and especially a Protestant one.

SMELL

In the material analysed here, smell is not mentioned at all. In a Protestant church there is no incense, but there are flowers, dust, smoke from extinguished matches, wet woollen winter coats, perfume, and washed or unwashed bodies. The failure to mention smell can be explained in different ways. Either the smell in the church is not spectacular and therefore merits no description, or it is regarded as impolite to mention smell if it is not enjoyable. Smell alludes to hygiene, and a bad smell implies poor hygiene. One report on a Saint Lucy festival after the church ceremony said there was *an aroma of damp woollen socks and spruce*

needles [*Hufvudstadsbladet* 18 Dec. 1997]. Not even in this case is the smell called a smell, being characterized as an “aroma”. Howes introduced the concept of emplacement when body, mind, and environment fit together. Displacement is the opposite. The mention of the sense of smell seems out of place in the reports about Saint Lucy in the church [Howes 2005: 7]. There seems to be a culturally bound obstacle to the sense of smell as described by reporters.

TASTE

Nor is the sense of taste mentioned in the reports of the church ceremony. However, early on the morning of December 13 several reporters say that a cup of coffee is offered in connection with the visit by Saint Lucy or after the ceremony in the church. No details are given, and perhaps they are not even necessary. All the newspaper readers would know from personal experience what coffee tastes and smells like. Anybody that has been out of doors on a pitch black December morning in mud, snow, frost, or rain would understand what a hot cup of coffee is like without a detailed description. Moreover, it is clear that “coffee” does not mean only coffee but also includes other drinks and cakes. “Coffee” is a symbol for all these different tastes. However, it is also a symbol for much more. Although neither taste nor smell is included in the reports, the mention of “coffee” activates an entire cultural system of light, warmth, and togetherness as well as their opposites.

Yet another association with taste is given by the reporter describing the soldier that dreams of treating the girls to a cup of coffee and a doughnut in the café without competition from the other boys [*Hufvudstadsbladet* 24 Dec. 1987]. Here the sense of taste is not mentioned but, if we share similar experiences, we are able to understand that the meaning of the message is not only the taste of the coffee and doughnut, but the lonely young man’s hope for female company and togetherness. Although the sense is not even mentioned, it opens up memories of tastes and recollections of corresponding situations, and it also allows a dream, which may be extremely detailed. The senses include parts of history and bricks for the future.

HEARING

The sense of hearing comes to the fore through the reporters’ mention of Saint Lucy’s song and some Christmas hymns. The texts refer to the physical ability to hear wonderful singing by Lucy and her maidens, or a special choir impressively echoing in the silent church. One reporter refers to the vicar’s address [*Åbo Underrättelser* 14 Dec. 2006], but most attention is paid to the girls’ singing, and to some extent to the accompanying goblins playing the guitar. This moderate attention to the sense of hearing is surprising because the Protestant

church is generally one of listening rather than feeling. However, what is seldom mentioned is the atmosphere of expectant murmuring as the congregation wait for Saint Lucy to appear. Nor do the reporters say anything about the noise created in a church packed with children of all ages. Such a congregation is not quiet. If the reporters do mention the noise, they write positively: *In honour of the day it seemed that the children had brought along their very best behaviour and acted like little angels* [Åbo Underrättelser 14 Dec. 2006]. In other contexts, there have been arguments about parents' right to bring their infants to solemn gatherings where silence is expected. Perhaps the reporters' professional etiquette (i.e., the reporters' tradition) does not permit observations on unseemly behaviour.

However, the failure to mention the sense of hearing is not parallel to the lack of descriptions of smell. Smell indicates something disgusting, repulsive, and should therefore not be mentioned. Unseemly sound in connection with Saint Lucy is, on the other hand, a matter of age, or lack of education, and such noise will cease in due course. We can see that noise is permissible even in church, provided that the person making it can be excused. There seems to be a hierarchical relationship between noise and smell.

TOUCH

The sense of touch is not concealed in the texts. The reports mention how crowded the church is, and that it is warm and narrow. Outside it is cold, and people are shivering. The church ceremony is described as quiet, in contrast to the noisy feast that follows [Åbo Underrättelser 14 Dec. 2000; Åbo Underrättelser 14 Dec. 1990; Hufvudstadsbladet 14 Dec. 1993; Åbo Underrättelser 16 Dec. 1986]. The reporters mention the physical feeling as a background, a parallel, or even a contrast to the mental state they want their readers to feel. Therefore, they describe the event as old-fashioned, warm, and intimate [Åbo Underrättelser 17 Dec. 1991; Åbo Underrättelser 21 Dec. 2002; Hufvudstadsbladet 17 Dec. 1987]. The Lucy girls, however, felt sweaty and nervous [Hufvudstadsbladet 23 Dec. 1995; Åbo Underrättelser 14 Dec. 2000]. The sense of touch also opens up philosophical and theological associations. The cold weather is a parallel to the cold world, or to the cold relations between individuals in the cold world. In the interview, the Lucy maiden recalls how disappointed and resentful she felt when she tried in vain to make an old woman smile. She thought that such a person, a killjoy, should not attend the event at all [IF mgt 1994/002]. The Lucy girl describes how she cried at the cancer hospital, but how the visit became a light, warm experience thanks to the song [IF mgt 1994/001]. The warmth in the church makes it easy for the readers to think of the individual warmth that should be transferred from person to person not only at this special moment but always, in open-handedness and voluntary efforts [Åbo Underrättelser 16 Dec. 1986; Åbo Underrättelser 14 Dec. 2005]. The sense of touch allows the reporters to associate moral, ethical, and theologically anchored images. In the reports, smell and taste do not clearly function in this sublime way.

SIGHT

Central to all the reporters' texts is the sense of sight. The reporters emphasize the physical ability to see the event by mentioning persons that cannot see properly. In the texts, light is almost the only "object" referred to, even though there is much more to see. In the dark church, the girls dressed in white with candles are quite an impressive sight. If, for some reason, there are electric bulbs in Saint Lucy's wreath, then this is emphasized. Sometimes the reporters refer to electric light as a contrast to the candlelight.

The mention of light also refers to the weather. Almost all the texts tell about the winter darkness, the snow-free darkness, or the dark autumn. Sight also seems to be the dominant sense for associations at a non-physical level. Saint Lucy can spread light in society even when there is economic or social darkness. The mental darkness due to lack of peace of mind,



Fig. 4: The vicar lights the candles in Saint Lucy's crown in the cathedral in Åbo, (Turku), December 2006 [Photo by Lena Marander-Eklund].



Fig. 5: The Lucy girls leaving the dark cathedral in Åbo (Turku), December 2006 [Photo by Lena Marander-Eklund].

warmth in the heart, and love are associated with Saint Lucy. Last but not least, some texts refer to Saint Lucy as a bearer of the light of Christ. This is emphasized by the fact that a flame from the candles on the altar lights the candles on Lucy's wreath, and this same flame is passed on to the maidens' candles, and in some cases even to candles all over the church. The sense of sight inspires the reporters to make observations from several perspectives. Saint Lucy's coming is a contrast to darkness for physical, physiological, meteorological, ethical, moral, or theological reasons. Light symbolizes the most sublime values in modern Western society.



Fig. 6: Two tired Lucy girls, December 2006 [Photo by Lena Marander-Eklund].

CONCLUSION

The press narratives about Saint Lucy are numerous. One could focus on the old and investigate those described as happy and moved when listening to Lucy singing and watching the candlelight. One could discuss the money raised for special purposes, including the storm that arose some years ago when the Folkhälsan association tried to patent Lucy as a brand; this was regarded as an attempt to gain power and did not pass without protest. One could concentrate on the beauty contest aspect. Recently, feminists have commented on the exploitation of girls for a purpose reminiscent of a beauty contest. One might also discuss the scandal when somebody called Saint Lucy a pin-up (1997), an act regarded as politically incorrect. We could study the children having a great time. We could concentrate on the parodies of the Saint Lucy festival. We could study the way fun is poked at the entire ceremony when described by one of the Lucy girls six months later. Or we could concentrate on the different experiences of the girls watching the Lucy procession and dreaming of princesses, or the little boys that are more fascinated by the flashing blue light on the fire engine following the procession than by the Lucy girls' candles [*Åbo Underrättelser* 15 Dec.

2006]. In nearly all these cases, senses play a predominant role. However, I have chosen to determine which senses are more-or-less clearly mentioned in the texts, and how it is possible to understand the mention of the senses in a culturally bound way. The reporters write about Saint Lucy within a cultural system of senses, the meaning of which is to regard the custom as a ceremony of light in contrast to any kind of darkness. Some senses are not allowed to surface in any way. They have a low status in the hierarchy of senses or are not politically correct. The physical environment of the church locality probably limits the options of which senses can be mentioned, but there does also seem to be a professional tradition or an agreement on what to write about the ceremony. The alternative reports of smelly socks, Lucy as a pin-up girl, blue lights, or other non-mainstream, norm-offending issues do not find a place in the reports from the church. The reporters are bound by a cultural system or tradition that makes them write about Saint Lucy in a given, conventional way. In this system, which is built on the experiences of senses, the norm and power of the church as a place for quiet and peace are central, reminding society before Christmas, the feast of cosiness and generosity, of all sorts of physical and mental darkness and of cosmic order. Through their reports, the journalists function as instruments to preserve the cultural system that corresponds with readers' expectations and, above all, with their memories of the Saint Lucy tradition founded on their own sensual experiences. When choosing which issues they want to stress in the articles on the church ceremony, the reporters demonstrate their sense of tradition, which is inspired by other conventional descriptions of the ideal Protestant Christmas from bourgeois Romanticism.

However, I do have one more remark. It was most difficult to distinguish between the senses and the emotions they create. It seems to be impossible to delimit a study of the senses and religion to the senses only because they tend to open up not merely for perceptions and experiences, but also for memories, for analyses of the present and for hopes for the future. These topics touch on deeply philosophical issues.

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SVETA LUCIJA, KRALJICA LUČI. LEGENDA IN FOLKLORA O SVETI LUCIJI

Praznovanje sv. Lucije 13. decembra je v protestanski Finski družinsko, a tudi javno, s procesijo po mestu, ko vikar pošlje dekleta iz lokalne cerkve. Naslednji dan je dogodek opisan v lokalnih časnikih. O sv. Luciji krožijo številne pripovedi. Med njimi je pripoved o starih in bolnih ljudeh, ki so opisani kot srečni in ganjeni, ko poslušajo Lucijino pesem in opazujejo svetlobo sveč. Druga je o denarju za posebne namene. O teh namenih se razpravlja ob razburjenju, ki je nastalo, ko je želelo združenje Folkhälsan patentirati Lucijo kot zaščitno znamko, kar je bilo sprejeto kot poskus uveljavljanja moči. V deklici Luciji so videli tudi lepotno kraljico: njen izbor je bil včasih sprejet in kritiziran kot lepotno tekmovanje. Tako so tudi nedavno feministke komentirale izkoriščanje deklet za ta namen. Omenjen je tudi škandal, ki je nastal, ko je nekdo sv. Lucijo imenoval “dekle z naslovnice”, kar je bilo označeno kot politično nekorektno. Lucija je lik v pripovedi o otrocih, ki se zabavajo. O prazniku sv. Lucije pa krožijo tudi parodije. Zgodba je nastala tudi o tem, kako se je pol leta pozneje dekle – Lucija ponorčevala iz ceremonije. Lahko

bi se osredinili na različne izkušnje deklet, ki opazujejo Lucijino procesijo ali majhne dečke, ki so bolj navdušeni nad modrim gasilskim avtomobilom kakor nad dekleti s svečami. Skoraj v vseh omenjenih primerih imajo prevladujočo vlogo čuti. Vendar sem se odločila, da ugotovim, kateri čuti so v besedilih bolj ali manj jasno omenjeni in kako je mogoče te omembe razumeti kot kulturno označene.

Poročevalci pišejo o sv. Luciji v okviru kulturnega sistema čutov, katerega pomen meri na šego kot obred luči v nasprotju s temo. Pri tem nekateri čuti sploh niso omenjeni, imajo v hierarhiji čutov nizek status ali pa so politično nekorektni. Fizično okolje cerkve verjetno omejuje možnosti, katere čute omeniti, poleg tega pa gre najbrž tudi za tradicijo ali soglasje o tem, kako pisati o ceremoniji. Alternativne zgodbe o smrdljivih nogavicah, Luciji kot dekletu z naslovnice, modrih lučeh ali drugih nesprejemljivih, za norme žaljivih zadevah, ne najdejo mesta v poročilih iz cerkve. Poročevalci so privrženi kulturnemu sistemu ali tradiciji, ki jim narekuje konvencionalno pisanje o sv. Luciji. V sistemu, ki temelji na izkušnjah čutov, sta v središču norma in moč cerkve kot prostora za spokojnost in mir, ki opozarjata družbo na vso mogočo fizično in duhovno temo in na kozmični red. Časnikarji s svojimi poročili delujejo kot instrumenti, ki ohranjajo kulturni sistem, da ustreza pričakovanjem bralcev in predvsem njihovim spominom na izročilo sv. Lucije, kakor so osnovani na njihovih čutnih izkušnjah. V besedilih izražajo svoje občutenje tradicije, ki je povezano s splošno meščansko romantiško podobo božiča.

Vendar je treba opozoriti še ne nekaj. Izjemno težavno je razločiti čute in in čustva, ki jih ustvarjajo. Raziskovanje čutov in religije se zdi nemogoče omejiti izključno na čute, ker se ti ne razpirajo le zaznavanju in doživljanju, temveč tudi spominom, analizam sodobnosti in upanjem za prihodnost. Te teme se dotikajo globokih filozofskih vprašanj.

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