

ABSTRACT. Kupisiński Zdzisław, *W kręgu ogólnokulturowych treści Bożego Narodzenia* [Within the general cultural content of Christmas]. *O wielowymiarowości badań religioznawczych* [On multidimensionality of the research of religion] edited by Z. Drozdowicz – „Człowiek i Społeczeństwo” vol. XXIX, Poznań 2009, pp. 227-240. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISBN 978-83-232-1972-9. ISSN 0239-3271.

Christmas is in Christian culture the most celebrated holiday. This article tries to reconstruct the relation of Christmas customs and the customs of other holidays from the pre-Christian era, as well as the eventual assimilation or relicts of old customs in modern days. The author recalls some ancient Roman holidays, like the Saturnalias to show how deeply these ancient beliefs are rooted in Christian religious practice. He also tries to show how a need for celebrating holidays shaped the way we're thinking today of Christmas. The theses of Mircea Eliade are very useful in this kind of comparison. The struggle for sacrum in the profane world makes people tend to turn to some types of rites, which have their roots in ancient times. Certainly there are many differences, but the common in the general content of these Christian and ancient holidays forces us to look at them as an emanation of similar human needs, that is needs for spirituality.

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