Greetings to all, now we will try the theme of Carnival, its origin, first before saying that as everyone knows, it is a party long awaited by people around the world, which is celebrated on days before Lent, between the months of February or March, it depends on the date set for Lent.

Now the question is: Which is the origin of the Carnival???

It is said that the fact of dressing up, painting your face and celebrating it, is a fact that dates back to ancient times and indicate that there is evidence that the Sumerian people already carried out this type of festivities more than 5000 years ago.

But actually, it's more likely and sure that the origin of the current Carnival dates back to Roman bacchanalia and saturnalias, and also to the holidays Greek dionysiacs.

But why is the origin of Carnival due to these Roman festivals???

Because first, the Bacchanalia it was a party Roman dedicated to the god Bacchus, God of came, in itself the word bacchanal means orgy with a lot of disorder and tumult, the main festival made to the god Bacchus I know they were held in mid-March At this party drank and ate without measure, all kinds of orgies were held, a festival that at the same time has its origin in Greek celebrations made to the god Dionysus, from the moment when they had contact with culture and Hellenic mythology, these Greek festivals were held lavish festivals which even gave origin to theaters.

Figure 1. Bacchanalia.

The Saturnal festivals in honor the god Saturn also had their influence on the origin of carnival, although these festivities were celebrated to favor the passage of a year to another, on this holiday he was towards him wearing masks and costumes, I know they had the famous car parades and it was also towards political satire, even slaves were free and did not recognize any masters, customs that inherited to this day and they are made in carnivals.

In the year 186 a.C. the Senate of Rome issues a decree: “Senatus Bacchanalibus ” consultum than prohibits the parties of bacchanalia. But despite this these festivities (the bacchanalia) survive in southern Italy, the ancient magna Greece where religiosity is very great and the festivities to the gods continued.

And how did Carnival appear and become official???

Like happened with others celebrations of pagan origin (Christmas), when Christianity was imposed as an official religion throughout the Roman Empire, the Catholic Church assimilate some parties and pagan traditions, this in order to achieve the largest number of people convert to the nascent religion in the least traumatic way. That was exactly what what happened to the party of the Carnival, than derives from these Roman festivals (The bacchanalia and saturnals) that were not removed, but they lasted and were adopted by the Catholic Church and even already in the Middle Ages it presents an official etymology for the name of this party that was becoming very popular.

But what does the word mean Carnival, what is that etymology???

According to the dictionary of the RAE, the word carnival comes from Italian “carne” which itself is a composition of two words:

- Expensive: Carni, his accusative is where we have meat, is linked to an Indo-European root Kreue (blood, raw meat, scab).

- Levare: (Elevate, remove from above) which is related to the root leg-h (light weight).

Therefore the meaning we would have would be: “Remove the meat”, meaning and name put and given by ChurchCatholic to this party, in addition to giving it as a date of celebration always 3 days before the start of Lent, which means that this holiday was the perfect excuse to get uninhibited, eat and drink without measure, enjoy all this before the deprivation period begins and penance that is Lent.

So as the Christianity was expanding, this party was booming and left doing most popular under the name Carnivals, especially in the age medieval where it stops the Church Catholic the main reason was to say goodbye to eat meat and then lead a life full of deprivation in Lent, like the ban on eating meat every Friday. For rural societies Christian carnival marked exceptional days, a respite where people committed excesses, this party was also introduced in European courts during the Renaissance, refining the celebration, linking it more to dance, theater and music. Carnival party peaks splendor in the 16th century, in Florence Italy, with dances, long parades, allegorical cars and spectacular clothing.

Figure 2. Carnival parades.

It is also interesting to see that currently the Christian religion especially the Protestant gives to the party Carnival, they indicate or believe that this word derives from the expression “ Meat to Baal ”, this because they associate the carnival parties with which they performed the god Baal, religious-type festivals where priests performed rituals and human sacrifices offering them to this god, this is unlikely because these rituals are from many centuries before Christ, since it was a festivity celebrated in ancient Canaan and also in Phenicia, and the influence it might have for the birth of the Carnival festival would be minimal. In conclusion, the Carnivals have a provenance that comes from the Roman festivals (Bacchanalia and Saturnales) at the time when the Christianity was born as an official religion, and these in turn were influenced by Greek festivities, not so by rituals that they made the god Baal although it is not ruled out that he could have a certain influence certain practices.