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## St. Lucia Celebration

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Sejla Hodzic  
Willard, Utah  
November 10, 2018

**Title:** St. Lucia Celebration

**Genre:** Holiday Custom

**Informant:** Sejla Hodzic is a foreign exchange student from Sweden. She is being hosted by my family who lives in Willard, Utah. She is 18 years old. She has lived in Sweden her entire life, but her parents are from Croatia. She lives with her father and her brother. She came to the United States of America for the first time at the beginning of August 2018.

**Context:** I collected this piece when I went to visit my family. Sejla and I went into our basement so that we could sit and talk with minimal interruption. Our basement is usually pretty quiet during the day and it has comfortable seating. I had given her previous information about what I was going to ask her, so she knew what traditions that she wanted to talk about. This tradition was shared in a collection of other Swedish customs. Lucia is one of many Christmas traditions in Sweden. Sejla informed me that Swedish Christmas traditions are not usually very religious, but Lucia contains religious roots. Lucia is celebrated on December 13 and is celebrated in many different contexts. Sejla told me that students participate in Lucia festivities under the direction of the school from the time that they are little. She also said that they have small Lucia traditions in the workplace.

**Text:**

Sejla: So people dress up, and this is something we do, it's usually children, but not like it can be adults too. [Pause] So we dress up and a like a girl, she has it's like, ya. [Pause] And we sing songs and everyone dresses up. So, this is kinda for Christmas. So the girls, they always wear white dresses and has a crown in her hair.

Alana: Is that to represent them being angels?

S: Ya kindof. [Talks about the story of Saint Lucia. Read more under "Story of Lucia"]. So it's like, the girls always dress up as, so there can actually only be one Lucia and the thing is, so the crown the girl has eh, needs to have real lights or something on it. But I think that is because it

has something to sym... like something that is similar to like hell, like fire. So they kinda want to show that like she, I'm not sure, but it kinda like symbolizes that she is like stronger than what Lucifer was. And this is like a, well every knows this, but I have never been Lucia myself [laughs], I wanted to be. But also this is kind of, has also started to change, but before it was really important that the Lucia had blonde hair and long hair because that is how she looks like, but nowadays it is not as important. So it starts to be okay like brown and black hair but before it was like 'She's blonde. She needs to be Lucia.' [Pause]

A: So is that one more of a religious holiday?

S: Ya but like nowadays it's like, em, I mean many people, like so in Sweden we have rules that, or laws that schools are not allowed to do anything religious. But they still do this because I don't think that it is considered as a thing that is religious any more. But I mean it started as something religious but know it is just for fun kindof. And we always sing like a song like 'Santa Lucia' and I don't know why we, em. Ya so, um we all just sing and the boys can dress up as like Santa's or like gingerbread. So every year my school has one and we go to church and just watch them sing. But it's actually really fun. And one more thing, the girl who is Lucia always needs to sing a song like solo.

A: Are songs sung in English or Swedish?

S: Both. So, the Lucia, she needs to sing and she also kind of needs to read part from like scriptures, but it's just like small parts. So she needs to read them and then two boys and two girls need to read two more, I got to read one.

A: So what do the boys get to do?

S: They actually don't get to do that much. They get to read some scriptures and they get to sing some songs.

**Texture:** Sejla spoke about Lucia with enthusiasm. She has always loved participating in this tradition no matter what part she gets to play, even though she has always wanted to play Lucia. Although Sejla does not think that this is considered a religious holiday anymore, she still took the time to recognize that it has religious ties. Sejla talked about the songs that they sing during the Lucia celebration and enjoys getting to participate in this event that has evolved and become more involved as she are progressed in her primary and secondary education years.

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ENGL 2210  
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