

Makeing the Ritual Space and Place

Mare Kõiva

Ritual Year Group, Lisbon 2011

Supported by ESF grant 8147

Mythological beings

Studying fictional and non-fictional belief beings connected with spinning in Estonian heritage, I noticed that they promote work efficiency as well as have didactic power over children and young women, and that they seemed to be tied to the perceiver's health or human fate. They are generally not connected with one certain holiday but rather with a period, e.g. the night-mother with the period when wool and linen were worked.

February/March

vastlapäev Shrove Tuesday (*lihaheitepäev* Meat-Shedding Day, *pudrupäev* Porridge Day in South Estonia, *liupäev* Tobogganing Day in North-East Estonia

April 23, *jüripäev* St. George's Day

Women's holiday. Men Holiday

Women's work was forbidden, especially spinning and works that required moving in circle, else there was to be losses of sheep. Weaving ribbons and rope-making was allowed. No visiting on that day.

St. John's Day- most important Day of the Ritual Year.

Origin

- Folklore
- description of customs
- adaptations of theories about rituals & rituals
- runo songs / alliterative songs
- folk customs (optional)
- porridge making
- sharing with family /friends /children
- (optional) afterparty

Newly rebuild













Origin

- Outdoor
- wild nature / parks
- special places for rites (neopagan places / villages / suburbs / forests / archeological sites & monuments / historical monuments)
- rural environment
- leader or leaders / singer(s)
- small offerings for ancients





















Six years ago, a bunch of dapper women got together, to try making porridge for women's feast. We did that for four years, unerringly, the day after every solstice. It took about four hours and most of the time we sang while groats porridge with yummies in it (often with beef sacrificed by men) was boiling quietly.

The idea was that since women have been given the power to give birth, create new life, they also have the power to make the whole world better, to communicate with god on that topic. Different mothers (Earth Mother, Water Mother, Fire Mother, etc.) were asked to the common porridge-making and at the same time they were sung a song of thanks for things being in the world the way they are, and indirectly asking also to take care of the existing.





conclusion

- rituals in transition
- many local variations
- syncretic mixture of Estonian, New Age, Oriental, etc. traditions
- strong leader *versus* free and *without priest*
- singing *versus* praying, offerings
- porridge

conclusion

- sacred time - liminal, critical
- sacred place
- adaptations

