

LATVJU DAINAS LIECINA par MŪŽĪGO KALENDĀRU LATVIAN DAINAS TESTIFY to PERPETUAL CALENDAR

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A] JĀŅI – the shortest night of the year and one day (night) celebration

For Latvian ancestors, in ancient times the Summer Solstice or *Jāni* marked the beginning of the year. The Solar Legend (Latvian folk-songs about the Sun, the Moon, stars and celestial phenomena) presents the oak-tree as the symbol of the year, the very Sun as round things /Grīns, Grīna/.

33142
Es pārsvedu zelta zīmi / Par sudraba ozoliņu,
Lai tas krita skanedams / Uz Jāniša cepurīti.

I flung a golden pea / Over the silver oak-tree,
So that it fell jingling / On Jāni's hat.

33200
Īsa Īsa Jāņu nakts / Par visām naktsnīgām:
Te satumsa, te izausa, / Te Saulīte gabalā.

Very short is Jānis night, / Shorter than all other nights:
Now it's twilight, now it's dawn, / Now the Sun is high above.

33223
Gauši nāca, drīz aizgāja / Ta lielāja Jāņu nakts: **That great Jānis night / Tardy came, soon went away:**
Ne bij dienu, ne nedēļu, / Vienu pašu vakariņu. **It was not a day, neither a week, / One evening only .**

33223-1
Ilgi gaidu Jāņu dienas / Gaidu visu pavasaru.
Es domāju, ilgi būs, / Būs jēl kādu nedēlīgu;
Ne dieniņas nepalīka, / Vienu pašu vakariņu.

I waited long for Jānis day, / I waited all the spring.
I hoped it stayed long, / To last for a week at least;
It did not stay a single day, / It lasted one evening only.

B] Latvian Annual Festivals at astronomically significant points of the Tropical Year,

which are perceived in nature as changes in the length of daytime and night-time.

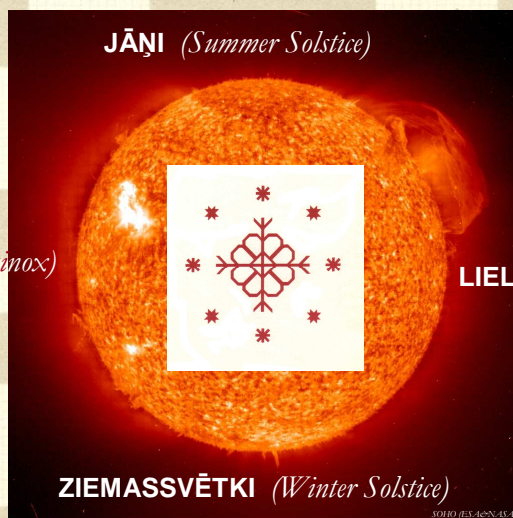
33201
Īsa Īsa Jāņu (Jāņu) nakts
Par visām naktsnīgām:
Vienā malā Saule gāja,
Otrā Saule uzlīgoja.

Very short was Jānis night,
Shorter than all other nights:
On the one side the Sun set,
On the other it rose again.

MIKEĻI (Autumnal Equinox)

33219
Jāņu diena svēta diena,
Aiz visām dieniņām:
Jāņu dienu Dieva dēls
Saules meitu sveicināja.

Jānis Day is a holy day,
More sacred than other days:
On Jānis Day the Son of God
Betrothed the Sun's Daughter.



32938
Jāni's nāca par gadskārtu
Savu bērnu apraudzīt,
Vaj tie ēda, vaj tie dzēra,
Vaj Jāni'ti daudzinaja.

Jāni's came every year
To visit his children:
Were they eating, were they drinking,
Were they lauding Jāni's?

LIELDIENAS (Vernal Equinox)

33240
Brāļi, brāļi, Liela diena,
Kur kārsim šūpulīti?
- Aiz upītes kalniņai
Div' sudraba ozoliņi.

Oh, brothers, it's a Big Day,
Where shall we hang a swing?
- Across the river on the hill
Between two silver oaks.

33295
Ziemas svētki, Liela diena, / Tie Dievam lieli svētki:
Ziemsvētkos Dievs piedzima, / Lieldienā šūpli kāra.
**Winter Festival and the Big Day, / Those are God's great festivities:
In Winter Festival God was born, / On the Big Day the cradle was hung.**

C] Sacred (Cosmic) Tree as a symbol of the year in Latvian Dainas

The tropical year, which depends on the Sun's apparent motion on the celestial sphere (in the ecliptic) and which determines the cyclical recurrence of seasons (spring, summer, autumn, winter), is about 365¼ days long (365.2422 mean solar days). The civil year (practically counted only in full days) or simply the year in Latvian folk-lore is rather frequently represented by *sacred numbers* locating them on the branches, leaves, blossoms, and berries of the cosmic tree. Number *nine* most often captures both the time and the space /Kursīte, 1999/, "9" often points at the minimal period of time – a week (*savāite*), which is a unit of the ancient time reckoning system /Grīns, Grīna/.

34075
Sajāja bramaņi / Augstajā kalnā,
Sakāra zobenus / Svētajā kokā.
Svētajam kokam / Deviņi zari,
Ik zara galā / Deviņi ziedi,
Ik zieda galā / Deviņas ogas.

Brahmen came together / On the high hill,
They hung up their sabres / On the sacred tree.
The sacred tree has / Nine branches,
Each branch at its tip / Has nine blossoms,
Each blossom at its tip / Has nine berries.

Sacred (cosmic) tree + 9 branches x 9 blossoms x 9 berries = 1 + 729 = 730

A high hill is an equivalent of the Universe's centre; with their sabres the brahmen (particularly priests who, among other things, engaged in renewing the time cycle at the cosmic tree) separate the old year from the new one. As the Latvians belong to the Baltic group of peoples within Indo-European stock and ancient Indo-Europeans counted days and nights separately /Kursīte, 1999/:

730 is made up of 365 days and 365 nights of one year.

D] In the course of four years (or summers) the difference in observations accumulates

L.Tēz 10015 (Latviešu tautas dzeisma. – R., 3.sēi., 1979-1993)
Trīs vasaras Saulīt' lēca / Purvā lejas rāvienāi,
Ceturtaji vasarāji / Lec ozola pazarē.

For three summers the Sun rose / Down in the marsh-land,
When the fourth summer came / It rose through the lower oak branches.

The fourth year, when the Sun "rose through the lower oak branches", may symbolize the so-called leap year (every fourth year contains an extra day, i.e. it consists of 366 days) and concludes the common cycle of three years /Kursīte, 1996/.

Inference: The main Latvian annual (seasonal) festivals (*Jāni*, *Mikēļi*, *Ziemassvētki*, *Lieldienas*) celebrated during four equidistant points (two *equinoxes* and two *solstices*) on the ecliptic, the apparent annual path of the Sun on the celestial sphere, shape the foundation of the ancient Latvian time-reckoning system, which established a Perpetual Calendar where a particular day of the *savāite* (nine-day long period) and the date it represented remained constant and unchanged /Grīns, Grīna/.

- Vēres (References)
• <http://www.dainaskapis.lv/>
• Marģers Grīns, Māra Grīna. *Latviešu gadu, gadskārtu un godu* (The Ancient Latvian Time-Reckoning System, Festivals and Celebrations). – Rīga, "Everest", 1992.
• Janīna Kursīte. *Latviešu folklorā mītā spoguļi* (Latvian Folklore and Myths). – Rīga, "Zinātne", 1996.
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