

## THE WHEEL OF THE YEAR IN WICCAN LITERARY TRADITION

*This article explores the formation of the Wheel of the Year — a calendar cycle of festivals originally created within Wicca, the world's largest modern pagan religion. Over time, this cycle has been adopted by nearly all branches of contemporary paganism. The analysis focuses on how the dates of these festivals were chosen in the written Wiccan tradition and examines the historical and cultural precedents that shaped them. It also considers the role of Victorian science and its methodologies in inventing these traditions, highlighting connections to the 19th-century wave of nationalisms that sought to construct pagan pasts. The study draws on foundational works by Wicca's key figures — Gerald Gardner, Doreen Valiente, and Aidan Kelly — as well as on the writings of Victorian anthropologists like James Frazer, John Rhys, and Margaret Murray, whose ideas heavily influenced Wiccan thought. Particular attention is given to the impact of the Celtic Revival and Anglo-Saxon mythology, popularized by J. R. R. Tolkien's works, on the process of festival creation. The article concludes that the Wiccan festival cycle is not just a set of ritual practices but also a framework for constructing collective memory. It draws on Victorian-era ideas about the ancient roots of modern festivals and the “survivals” they embody. This cultural invention born in the framework of romantic nationalism links contemporary traditions to a romanticized past, helping to establish Wicca as a recognized social institution.*

**Keywords:** *Wheel of the Year, Wicca, modern paganism, romantic nationalism, Victorian anthropology, cultural memory, J. R. R. Tolkien, Margaret Murray*

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