

Dancing Bears and Trump Pancakes: Russians Celebrate Maslenitsa

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Maslenitsa is a traditional Russian folk festival with pagan roots that celebrates the end of winter and the beginning of spring. Traditional activities include sleigh rides, games and family visits.

The holiday culminates with Forgiveness Sunday, when people forgive the wrongs done against them and burn the Maslenitsa mascot, a straw doll dressed in a female costume with a pancake in her hand.

The pancakes made on every day of the week are meant to symbolize the sun and its warmth. It is imperative to eat as many as possible during Maslenitsa, since what follows this bout of gluttony are the seven somber weeks of the Great Lent.

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