

Easter - The Holiday.

Easter was originally a pagan festival. The ancient Saxons celebrated the return of spring with an uproarious festival commemorating their goddess of spring and of springtime, Eastre.

When the second-century Christian missionaries encountered the tribes of the north with their pagan celebrations, they attempted to convert them to Christianity. They did so, however, in a clandestine manner.

As with almost all holidays that have their roots in Christianity, Easter has been secularized and commercialized. The dichotomous nature of Easter and its symbols, however, is not necessarily a modern fabrication. Since its conception as a holy celebration in the second century, Easter has had its non-religious side.

Vocabulary:

clandestine - *adj.* secret and furtive, and usually illegal; concealed.

dichotomy - *n.* a separation into two divisions that differ widely from, or contradict each other.

Easter - *n.* 1. the Christian festival commemorating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. 2. the day on which Easter is celebrated, the Sunday following the full moon on or after March 21st.

secular - *adj.* not religious or spiritual in nature.

uproarious - *adj.* loud and boisterous;