

# Baphomet & Opfer

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The word 'opfer' generally refers to the sacrifice that occurs - symbolic or otherwise - during certain rituals. There are, generally, two types of opfer: (1) associated with rites to open a nexion (or 'Star Gate'), between Aeons - when such an opfer(s) is considered necessary in terms of the 'energy' required;(2) those associated with traditional beliefs regarding the 'working of the cosmos'.

('Opfers' associated with death rituals form a third type.)

The second type, according to tradition, was chosen once every 17 years and this sacrifice was regarded as necessary to retain 'the cosmic balance' - in modern terms, keep a nexion open (and thus preserve the associated higher civilization etc). The chosen one was made an honorary Priest (this type of opfer was always male) and there was a joining between him and one or more women, as Priestesses. This joining was a simple type of 'hierosgamos', and the offspring of the union(s) were given great honour. At the ceremony itself, the head of the opfer was severed and displayed - usually for a night and a day (although this period may have been longer in the very distant past). The Rite was conducted outdoors in a 'sacred' place - often a circle of stones or hill top.

The chosen one was able, because of the sacrifice, to partake of an acausal existence - becoming thus an Immortal. Thus 'willing sacrifice' was possible, although it is easy to imagine that in later times, the opfer was not so willing.

Traditionally, this type goes back to Albion, and while originally the ritual was probably a community affair, it became more secretive. What survives to the present day (The Ceremony of Recalling with 'opfer' ending) probably reflects the essence of this earlier tradition rather than the detail (the words, chants etc). This essence may be apprehended in the role of the Mistress of Earth - representative of Baphomet, the Dark Goddess. It was to Baphomet that the sacrifice was made - hence a male opfer. Indeed, the whole ceremony (of Recalling) can be seen as a celebration of the dark goddess - the Earth Mistress/goddess in her darker/violent/sinister aspect. The severed head was associated with the worship of Baphomet - the cult deriving from Albion - hence the traditional representation of Baphomet.

The identification of Baphomet as the Bride of Lucifer/Satan probably dates from around the 10th or 11th century, as does the use of the name 'Satan'/Satanas as the Earth-bound representative of the Dark Gods.

It is important to remember that in earlier times (eg. in Albion during the Hyperborean aeon) there was no clear and/or moral distinction between the 'light' and the 'sinister': the two were seen as different aspects of the same thing. Thus, what we know as the Mistress of Earth (the 'goddess') was both what we now call Baphomet (the dark aspect) and Gaia (the Earth Mother). Likewise with the male aspect - Satan and Lucifer - or Dionysus/Kabeiroi and Apollo. We now understand all such symbols as unconscious/conscious projections onto 'reality' (where 'reality' = the region of causal/acausal mergence) - as 'gates'/nexions to the acausal itself, with the seven spheres of the Tree of Wyrð being a 'map' of these gates understandable by 'non-Adept' consciousness. Thus, the

sphere of Mercury re-presents Lucifer/Satan - Mercury, Mars and Sun being "male" spheres, and moon, Venus, Jupiter the "female" ones (Saturn beyond such opposites - Chaos itself).

The cult of Baphomet was the worship of the dark aspect of the "female" energies - where in this context, worship means a striving toward understanding/conscious integration. Traces of the worship of the 'light' aspect survive in the Septenary tradition in the name "Aktlal Maka" and the natural form of the Nine Angles rite. The darker aspect survives, in essence, in the Ceremony of Recalling and the traditions associated with the Mistress of Earth and Baphomet. As to the original name of the goddess in both her aspects, there is a tradition which gives 'Darkat' (early form of Lilith) as the name used before Baphomet became the common usage. However, 'Azanigin' has also been suggested - as has 'Aktlal Maka' for the 'light'/Gaia aspect, although both these are merely 20th century suggestions, not based on any oral tradition. Some aspects of the cult of the (dark) goddess are said to have survived into Greek times in the form of the 'mystery cults' (qv Kabeiroi - and also Eleusis for the 'light' aspect), this being an 'indirect survival', the 'modern' Septenary tradition being a direct one, from Albion.

The use of the name 'Baphomet' probably derives from the 10th or 11<sup>th</sup> century although the traditional pictorial representation of Baphomet is undoubtedly much older. If there was an oral tradition connected with the origin of the name Baphomet, it has been lost.

Thus, there are no indications as to the 'original' names of the 'light' and 'sinister' elements on the 'male' side - known to us as 'Lucifer' and 'Satan'. These latter names probably also derive from around the 10th or 11th century - although 'Karu Samsu' (or something very similar) has been suggested for the 'Lucifer' aspect and 'Sapanur' as the 'sinister' aspect.

The rites associated with the first type of offer - such as 'The Sinister Calling' - cannot be either dated with certainty or seen to be derived from an earlier tradition. In all probability, they derive from the 12th or 13<sup>th</sup> century, although it is quite possible that earlier versions/forms existed. Some

have even considered The Sinister Calling as a later version of the Ceremony of Recalling. Again, if there was an oral tradition, it has been lost - all that remains are the rituals themselves.

The 'Black Mass' itself (and indeed most of the ceremonial rituals in The Black Book of Satan) probably originated around the same time as the Sinister Calling. The original Mass was said in Latin, although by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a translated version had found its way into the Black Book - of necessity, although some Latin chants remained.

NOTES: The significance of the 17 year cycle is unclear. In the past few decades, some theories have been advanced, but they are unconvincing.

Aktlal Maka is a chant sometimes used in the natural Nine Angles Rite by the Priestess if the glade has a spring of water. It means 'the flowing waters of Earth' and is chanted in homage to Gaia since natural springs are regarded as her children.

The 'mysteries of the Kabeiroi' (sometimes spelt Cabiri) is one of the esoteric traditions associated with the Hellenic Aeon. In its original form, 'the mysteries' concerned certain deities often represented in the form of griffins and connected with the sea as well as Demeter - the 'mother Earth' or Gaia. According to esoteric tradition, the mysteries concerned the Dark Gods - in various 'shapechanging' forms - and related how Demeter gave the first Initiates of this tradition a

crystal (later venerated at a shrine near Thebes where a sacred grove to Demeter existed) as well as showing how an individual, through various Rites which involved Gaia, women, sacred marriage and so on, could be transformed to a different realm of consciousness. This transformation, as in other Greek Mystery Cults, was achieved mainly through personal involvement in ritual/ceremonial action often of a mythological kind.

Later, this tradition became divided - Eleusis representing the 'Apollonian' element, the Kabeiroi the 'Dionysian' or darker aspects, for it is said that all Initiates of the Cabiri had to have committed a crime greater than common ones.

The mysteries of the Kabeiroi were often celebrated in mountain shrines (certain combinations of rock and underground water being regarded as sacred - that is, capable by their magickal power of transforming the consciousness of individuals (cf. various sacred sites of the Yezidi who upheld a more garbled version of Dark Gods tradition) and to reach these shrines was considered part of the process of Initiation.

Greeks called the Kabeiroi the 'great gods'.

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**BAPHOMET** – *"Mousa of Swords"* (in the Sinister Tarot)

# Baphomet - A Note on the Name

The name of Baphomet is regarded by Traditional Satanists as meaning "the mistress (or mother) of blood" - the Mistress who sometimes washes in the blood of her foes and whose hands are thereby stained. [See 'The Ceremony of Recalling' .]

The supposed derivation is from the Greek βαφη μητρα and not, as is sometimes said, from μητιος (the Attic form for 'wise'). Such a use of the term 'Mother'/Mistress was quite common in later Greek alchemical writings – for example Iamblichus in "De Mysteriis" used μητριζω to signify possessed by the mother of the gods. Later alchemical writings tended to use the prefix to signify a specific type of 'amalgam' (and some take this to be a metaphor for the amalgam of Sol with Luna, in the sexual sense).

In the Septenary System, Baphomet, as Mistress of Earth, is linked to the sixth sphere (Jupiter) and the star Deneb. She is thus in one sense a magickal "Earth Gate" (qv. the Nine Angles), and Her reflexion (or 'causal' nature - as against Her acausal or Sinister nature) is the third sphere (Venus) related to the star Antares. According to esoteric Tradition, the Antares aspect was celebrated by rites in Albion c.3,000 BP – in the middle and toward the end the month of May and some stone circles/sacred sites were said to be aligned for Antares. In contrast, the Sinister aspect of the Mistress (i.e. Baphomet) was celebrated in the Autumn and was linked to the rising of Arcturus, Arcturus itself being related to the Sinister male aspect (Mercury - second sphere), later identified with Lucifer/ Satan. Thus, the August celebration was a Sinister hierosgamos - the union of Baphomet with Her spouse (or 'Priest' who took on the role of the Sinister male aspect). According to Tradition, the Priest was sacrificed after the sexual union, where the role of Baphomet was assumed by the Priestess/Mistress of the cult. Thus, the May celebration was the (re-)birth of new energies (and the child of the Union). Tradition relates this Sinister, sacred Arcturian rite as taking place once every seventeen years. Once again, some sacred sites in Albion are said to be aligned to the rising of Arcturus, over three thousand years ago. In the middle ages, Baphomet came to be regarded as the Bride of Satan – and it is from this time that both 'Baphomet' and 'Satan', as names for the female and male aspect of the dark side came into use (at least in the secret sinister tradition).

Hence the Traditional depiction of Baphomet - a beautiful mature woman (often shown naked) holding up the severed head of the sacrificed priest (usually shown bearded).

To some extent the Templars revived part of this cult, but without any real esoteric understanding and for their own purposes. They adopted Baphomet as a type of female Yeshua, but with some bloody/ sinister aspects - and contrary to most accepted ideas, they were not especially 'Satanic'. Rather, they saw themselves as holy warriors, and became a military cult with bonds of honour, although their concept of "holy" differed somewhat from that of the church of the time, including as it did dark/Gnostic aspects. Their sacrifices were in battle and not part of a specific rite.

The image of Baphomet (e.g. by Levi) as a hermaphrodite figure are romantic confusions and/or distortions: essentially of the symbolic/real union of mistress and priest and his later sacrifice. The same applies to the derivation of the suffix of her name with 'wisdom' (and a male image at that!) - even the confused Gnostics understood 'wisdom' as female.

# Baphomet - A Note on the Name II

There is a tradition regarding the origin of the name Baphomet which deserves recording, even though it is not regarded as authentic, having no present-day proponents.

This tradition regards the name as deriving from **βουβαστις** - the Greek name for the Egyptian goddess Bastet, recorded by Herodotus (2.137 ff). It is interesting that Herodotus identifies the goddess with Artemis, the goddess of the moon. Bubastis was regarded as the daughter of Osiris and Isis and often represented as a female with the head of a cat - cats were regarded as sacred to her. Artemis was a goddess unmoved by love and she was regarded as Apollo's twin sister (the identification of her as a 'moon goddess' followed naturally from this since Apollo was linked with the sun). Like Apollo, she often sent death and plagues, and was propitiated sometimes with sacrifices.

It is interesting that (a) **βουβαστεία** is the Pythagorean name for 'five' [qv. Iamblicus: *Theologumena Arithmeticae*, 31] - perhaps a link with the 'pentagram'?; (b) the Templars, with whom the name Baphomet is associated, were said to have worshipped their deity in the form of a cat.

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The tradition recorded above, and the one described in part I, both regard Baphomet as a female divinity - and both are esoteric traditions, hitherto unrecorded. It is possible that both are correct that is, that the actual name Baphomet derives (as mentioned in part I) from the Greek **βαφη μητρα**: the prefix referring to being 'dyed/stained' or 'dipped' in blood. The suffix derives from 'mother' or 'mistress' used in a religious sense (qv. Iamblicus 'De Mysteriis'). This name - Baphomet - is thus a descriptive one for the "dark" (i.e. lunar) goddess, to whom sacrifices were made, and which was actually known in former times as 'Bubastis' - that is, Bastet, to whom cats were sacred. Thus, Baphomet could be regarded as a form of Artemis/Bastet - a female divinity with a 'dark' side or nature (when viewed via conventional morality) to whom sacrifices have been, and continue to be, made. Sinister tradition regards Baphomet as the Bride of Satan/Lucifer - this would fit well since Lucifer is often regarded as a form of Apollo: Artemis is the female form ('sister') of Apollo. Here, it must be remembered that both Apollo and Artemis were not aetherial, moral and lofty divinities (the classical gods have been romantically misinterpreted) - they could be, and often were, deadly and dark: both 'sinister' and 'light'.

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# Baphomet - A Note on the Name III

Tradition tells of a community who venerated the goddess in an area of what is now North Scotland. this community is believed to have comprised of the ancestors of 'The Picts', and they were based around the River Oykel. The Latinized form of their name, given by Ptolemy, was *Smertae*, which means 'stained' or 'smeared folk'.

The name by which this community knew the goddess is not recorded, but in Gaulish inscriptions there is reference to a war goddess named *Rosmerta*. Her name translates as 'the greatly smeared goddess' - that is, smeared with blood. It is quite possible that the Smertae were connected with her worship, and they were said to smear themselves with the blood of their enemies, in her honour.

Interestingly, another community which lived near the region of the Smertae during the same era, was known by a name which translates as the 'cat people' (see *Note on the Name II*).

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