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UMBANDA: A religion centering on the worship of the ancient African Gods who have been assimilated as Catholic saints. Similar in practice to Voudon, all worshippers of Santería could be called Santeros but the term Santeros usually refers to the priests or priestesses. The highest order of priest is a babalawo, who has the power to heal the sick, punish the unjust and to divine the future through the Table of Ifá. Also known as Santería.

UNCAST: To open and/or release a magick circle at the end of a ceremony or ritual.

UNDINES: The Elemental Order of Water, the elemental spirits of the Water Element.

UNGUENTS: Greased based preparations that are used in magickal, healing, and oracular rites. Not in common use today for magickal rites as most surviving recipes are believed to have been distorted to disgrace witchcraft during the Middle Ages. Also known as Ointments.

UNICORN: A mythological creature with the body of a white horse, the legs of an antelope and a long, twisted, grooved horn in the middle of its forehead.

URIMANCY, UROMANCY: Divination by interpreting urine.

URIM V'TUMIM: Divination by interpreting the sacred stones attached to the breast plate of a High Priest.

UROBOROS: In Theosophy, the cosmic period between the creation and destruction of the universe and the symbol of the eternity of the universe which undergoes periodic cycles of creation /destruction /resurrection. Also known as Aion, Agatha Daimon (Good Spirit), the Ouroboros.

UTTARARANI: The upper stick of two ceremonial rubbing-sticks (arani) used to ignite the sacrificial fire in some East Indian traditions: the upper stick, uttararani or pramantha, is held upright and set into a groove in the lower stick, the adhararani, and when twirled or rotated rapidly it generates heat and flame. According to the *Rig-Veda*, the upright stick was made from the Sami tree and the horizontal from the Asvattha or Pipal tree (the sacred fig tree). In the *Satapatha-brahmana*, however, both sticks were carved from the wood of the Asvattha. Also called Pramnantha.

V

VAJRA (Sanskrit, *vajra*, "thunderbolt, diamond"): The scepter of power or wand in India that represents both power and purity. The Tibetan form of this wand is called Dorje.

VALLHALLA, VALHOLL (Old Norse, *val*: "choice, death"; *hall, holl*: "hall") In Norse mythology, the hall of the chosen or of the slain where Odin's heroes, the One-harriers, are brought by the Valkyries at the end of each day's battles to feast with Ropt (Odin). Valhalla is located on the plane of Gladsheim with Asgard.

VAMPIRE:

- Spirit that takes possession of a human body (usually its own corpse) to remain on the physical plane. The vampire is immortal, lives on blood or the life force of others, is usually self-regenerative, and is often capable of shapeshifting;
- A nonhuman creature who drinks blood;
- A human who subsists on the blood or life force of others.

VANIR: In the Norse Pantheon, the Gods concerned with earth, agriculture, fertility and the cycle of death and rebirth. See also: Aesir.

VASE OF PHILOSOPHY, The: A pear-shaped earthenware bottle, open at both ends, used as a condenser in the sublimation process in alchemy. Also called Aludel, the Hermetic Vase, the Philosopher's Egg.

VECCHIA RELIGIONE, La: Italian Witchcraft, founded in the mid - 14th century with the teachings of Aradia, the Holy Strega, and based upon the pre-Etruscan Italian belief system. La Vecchia Religione is a worship of the "Source of All Things", through the personification of the Goddess and God. Also known as The Old Religion, Strega and Stregheria.

VENENDUM: A rod the height of a man, traditionally made of hardwood and often decorated with crystals or sacred symbols. In some traditions the Staff represents the Element of Air or Fire. Also known as a Staff, Stang. See Also: Thyros.

VERNAL EQUINOX: The Lesser Sabbat celebrated on or about March 21st, marking the beginning of the return of the evident fertility of the Earth and the return of the God, the Sun. It is a celebration of Balance and Harmony as the day and night are equal in length. Vernal Equinox is a fire and fertility festival. Also known as Alban Eiler,, Meán Earraigh, Ostara, Spring Equinox, Spring Solstice.

VEVE: A symbol of a Vodoun deity (Loa).

VIDYA: The Theosophical term for enlightened knowledge. Its antithesis is Avidya.

VISION QUESTING: Using astral projection, bi-location, or dreamtime to accomplish a specific goal. Also called Pathworking.

VISUALIZATION: The process of forming clear mental images. Magickal visualization consists of forming images of needed goals during ritual. Visualization is also used to direct personal power and natural energies for purposes such as charging tools and casting the Magick Circle.

VITRIOL: In alchemy, the liquid in which all other reactions take place.

VODOUN, VODOO (Fon, *vodu*: "spirit"): Like Santería, Vodoun is a blending the worship of traditional Catholic saints, Christ and the Gods (loas) of Africa, for example, a Vodoun practitioner could beg for intercession from St. Patrick and really be calling on their serpent God, Danbhalah-Wedo. Vodoun worshippers believe that the work of the loas appears in every facet of daily life and that pleasing the loas will gain the faithful health, wealth, and spiritual contentment. The loas speak to their devotees through spirit possession but only for a short time during ceremonies and manifest to protect, punish, confer skills and talents, prophesy, cure illness, exorcise spirits, give counsel, assist in rituals and take sacrificial offerings. The priest (houngan) or priestess (mambo) acts as an intermediary to summon the loa and help the loa to depart when his or her business is finished. Magick, for both good and evil, is an integral part of Vodoun. Also known as Voudou, Voudoun.

VODOO DEATH: Death from a hex or curse resulting from magick or the breaking of a taboo. According to anthropologists the critical factor in voodoo death is the belief of the victim that they are going to die, however sorcerers in various cultures contend that it is possible to cause a voodoo death without the victim being aware of the hex. Voodoo death is found in some form in most cultures around the world. Also known as Hex Death.

VODOO DOLL: A three-dimensional image of a person. The image can be made of any substance and is most commonly doll-size. Such an image is commonly attributed to harmful magick (burning an effigy in protest is still done by mobs in many countries today) but the image is most frequently used as a tool in healing using sympathetic magick. Also called an Effigy, Fith-Fath.

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VOHU-MANO: Good thought in Zoroastrianism as opposed to Ako-Mano (evil thought).