

BY
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OUNJIAN LITTLE

OTHER PEOPLES' DEITIES

A HASTILY ASSEMBLED GUIDE TO



This is a drawing after the bronze head of Anahit. She was the Armenian goddess of fertility, rain and the harvest (and possibly war). Anahit may be a precursor to the Greek goddess Aphrodite. She was a powerful member of her pantheon, second only to her father Aramazd, a likely forerunner of Zeus.

A larger, more revered, golden statue of Anahit was destroyed by the Romans during the expedition of Mark Anthony in Armenia in 40-33 BC. The temple at Eriza had been a sacred pilgrimage site, visited yearly by Armenian kings, who prayed there for fortune.

Armenia adopted Christianity under King Tiridates III in the early 4th century. Now, only 0.2% of modern Armenians living in Armenia practice Neopaganism, a revivalist religion, not a continuation from the ancestral origins.

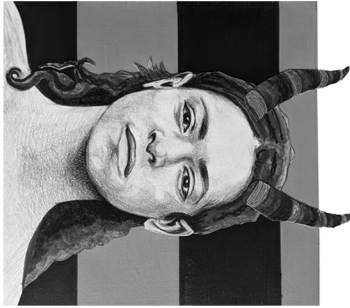
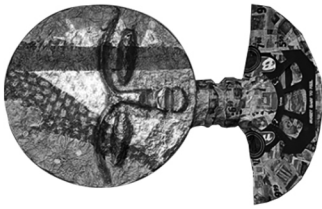
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Asase Yaa is worshipped in the fields rather than at a temple. By dance and ritual, the Akan people connect to their ancestors.

In the Akan religion, still practiced in Ghana and the Ivory Coast, Asase Yaa is the wife of the creator god, sometimes called Nyame. She is second to him in the pantheon but more powerfully tied to humans as he is distant and does not interact with mortals.

Asase Yaa is the Earth goddess of fertility for the Ashanti people of Ghana. Worship of Asase spread to Jamaica with the slave trade.

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Dhat-Badan was an Arab Himyarite nature goddess. She ruled over the oasis and the wet season in Yemen, Somalia, and Ethiopia.

It was forbidden to invoke her without the presence of a seer or priestess. This, then, is a depiction not of Dhat-Badan but of her priestess.

The she-bex was sacred to Dhat-Badan. Here her Priestess wears horns of a she-bex ceremonially.

Arabian Paganism in Ethiopia, where Dhat-Badan was venerated, was displaced in antiquity by the Beta Israel – African Jews. Later, Islam and then Christianity became the dominant religions in the area.

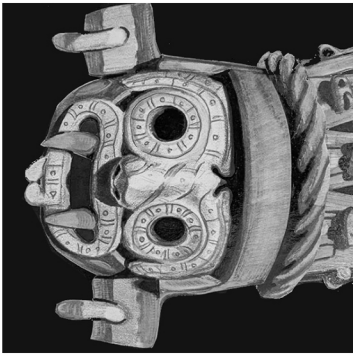
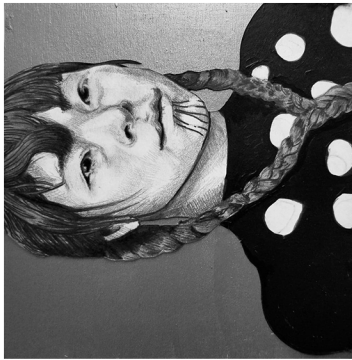
In this depiction, Sedna wears the facial tattoos which are still worn by some Inuit women today. Her body tattoo was inspired by a print by Inuit artist Arreak Sakiasee. The model for this image is a girl in a photograph titled 'Inuit Woman with a Braid', Alaska, 1904.

There are several versions of her legend. In each version, she ends up at sea. She is often with her father. She falls or is thrown out of the kayak. Her fingers freeze or they are chopped off. They become seals, walrus, and whales. She falls to the bottom of the sea, grows a tail, and becomes Mother of Sea and ruler over Adivun, the underworld.

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This is a depiction of Tlaloc, "He Who Makes Things Sprout." Tlaloc was the fertility, rain, and lightning god of the Aztecs.

Teotihuacan (3rd-8th century) images of Tlaloc depict him wearing a mask with round eyes and long fangs. The Mayans of the same period had a similar god, named Chac.

Tlaloc's cult was powerful during the 14th - 16th centuries where it spread throughout Mexico. Even now, he is a sort of patron saint of the town of Coahuilchan, where a huge monument of him was eventually removed (stolen) and moved to Mexico City. The reference for this drawing is a smaller work from the Templo Mayor in Tenochtitlan.

In the early Vedic period, he was worshipped as the personification of sacrificial fire. In contemporary Hinduism, Agni is invoked in ceremonies of birth, marriage, and death.

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This is a depiction of Agni, fire-god of Hinduism. It borrows heavily from the work of Nanadala Bose.

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The Egyptian God Osiris was both a god of the dead and a god of fertility, agriculture, and vegetation. He was heavily associated with the Nile River.

In the myth of Osiris, the god is killed by his brother, Set. Set then dismembers his body. Osiris's wife, Isis, tracks down the pieces and re-animates her husband. She becomes pregnant with Horus, Vanquisher of Set.

Ancient Egyptians celebrated Osiris with annual rituals and fertility rites. He is symbolically tied to wheat grain and the harvest.

Offerings to Osiris have been found by pyramids in Sudan. The model for this depiction is Sudanese.