



The Witch-Cult in Western Europe

Margaret Alice Murray

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The Witch-Cult in Western Europe By Margaret Alice Murray Covering areas such as; 1. Rites and General, 2. Homage, 3. The Dances, 4. The Music, 5. The Feast, 6. Candles, 7. The Sacrament, 8. Sacrifices: Of animals. Of children. Of the God 9. Magic Words, and much much more. This is the essential book on Witchcraft and its ceremonies. The mass of existing material on this subject is so great that I have not attempted to make a survey of the whole of European 'Witchcraft', but have confined myself to an intensive study of the cult in Great Britain. In order, however, to obtain a clearer understanding of the ritual and beliefs I have had recourse to French and Flemish sources, as the cult appears to have been the same throughout Western Europe. The New England records are unfortunately not published in extenso; this is the more unfortunate as the extracts already given to the public occasionally throw light on some of the English practices. It is more difficult to trace the English practices than the Scotch or French, for in England the cult was already in a decadent condition when the records were made; therefore records in a purely English colony would probably contain much of interest. The sources from which the information is taken are the judicial records and contemporary chroniclers. In the case of the chroniclers I have studied their facts and not their opinions. I have also had access to some unpublished trials among the Edinburgh Justiciary Records and also in the Guernsey Greffe. The following articles have already appeared in various journals, to whose editors I am indebted for kind permission to republish: 'Organization of Witch Societies' and 'Witches and the number Thirteen' in Folk Lore; 'The God of the Witches' in the Journal of the Manchester Oriental Society; 'Child Sacrifice', 'Witches' Familiars', 'The Devil's Mark', 'The Devil's Officers', 'Witches' Fertility Rites', 'Witches Transformations', in Man; and 'The Devil of North Berwick' in the Scottish Historical Review.

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