Freemasonry and mysticism
Modern Freemasonry was born in England at the end of the 17th century. Its most obvious starting points were medieval Masons, also called Freemasons. They were “free” in two senses of the word—the Masons of the Middle Ages were free men and they were carvers of a form of limestone known as freestone.
Tools of the trade

This English image from 1754 shows a stylized Freemason forged through the tools of his trade. The man is enclosed in an exuberant Baroque border that contrasts with the severely linear and monochrome flooring.
Expert knowledge
Masons were the master craftsmen, educated and rigorously trained, responsible for building the great cathedrals and castles of the medieval world. As such, they accumulated a vast store of technical and theoretical knowledge, especially about geometry, which they jealously guarded in tightly knit guilds or craft associations.
Increasingly, Freemasons’ knowledge was spiced with mystical learning: Gnosticism, Hermeticism, Kabbalism, alchemy (turning base metals into gold)

Secret rituals expressed their love of the occult.
MYSTICISM OF THE ROYAL ARCH

“The ritual of the Royal Arch attempts to reintegrate us with the True and Living God Most High, in the same way as the Craft rituals try to integrate us with spiritual Birth, Life, and Death respectively. This re-integration with the Supreme Source and Essence, can only be achieved by a mystical union.”
Initiation ceremony

In this mid-18th-century French image, the initiate, swooning because he has just been struck by a mallet, is laid down in a designated position. Covered figures, not allowed to watch the secret rite, sit to the right; sword aloft, a member guards the entrance at the left. The whole scene is lit by sets of triple candles.
Freemasonry draws on a body of semi-mystical, magic teachings and beliefs.

It venerates a Supreme Being, the Great Architect of the Universe, but it isn’t a religion.

Like Alchemy, Hermeticism, and Rosicrucianism, its concern is the search for a universal truth, using symbolism and rituals.

The most important symbol of all is that of the Temple of Solomon, built in Jerusalem in 960 BCE, because its architect was deemed to be the first Mason.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLG0X4FjkPg
Masonic tracing board

Tracing boards showed what the emblems and symbols of Freemasonry looked like, and were used to instruct new members in each degree of initiation. This stylized representation from 1819 of Solomon’s Temple under the All-Seeing Eye of God is flanked by the Two Pillars, Jachin and Boaz, which stood at the entrance.
ANOTHER IMAGE OF A MASONIC TRACING BOARD.
Painted white leather apron

The Freemasons adopted the apron, an echo of the pouch in which a medieval Mason kept his tools. As here, it often shows emblems such as the square (right-angled tool, seen at bottom left) and compasses used by architects.
FREEMASONRY FOR WOMEN

Freemasonry in England was, for 200 years, only open to men. That changed in the 20th Century.

The first female lodge opened in 1908 with a male Grand Master.

His successors have all been female, however, and men are no longer permitted to join the lodge and now there are 2 lodges.

Anna - not her real name - has been a member for 21 years and has completed all three Freemasonry degrees, making her one of England's most senior female members.
The Order of the Eastern Star is a Masonic-related body, open to both men and women. It was established in 1850 by lawyer and educator Rob Morris, a noted Freemason. It is based on some teachings from the Bible but is open to people of all religious beliefs. The Prince Hall Order of the Eastern Star is the predominantly African-American equivalent of the Order of the Eastern Star. It has approximately 10,000 chapters in twenty countries and approximately 500,000 members under its General Grand Chapter.

The emblem of the Order is a five-pointed star with the white ray of the star pointing downward. The meaning of the letters FATAL surrounding the center pentagon in the emblem is only revealed to members of the Order. In the Chapter room, the downward-pointing white ray points to the West. The character-building lessons taught in the Order are stories inspired by Biblical figures.
Cunning folk were for the most part healers rather than practitioners of the dark arts, however much ancient lore they laid claim to. As healers they were greatly valued, especially in remote areas with no access to other medical care. In their common role of midwives, cunning folk blended mystical spells, herbal remedies, and practical help.

This early 19th-century Swedish print of an ancient, hunched “wise woman” consulted by a fashionable young woman underlines the increasing appeal that “cunning folk” held to members of high society.
The spell book *La Poule Noire* describes 22 silk talismans and bronze rings. A Turkish sage was said to have revealed their secrets to a Napoleonic soldier. This one, Number 10, "will make you invisible to all eyes."
SUPPOSEDLY MAGICAL TALISMANS (LEFT) AND RING DESIGNS (ABOVE) THAT ARE DESCRIBED IN THE BOOK – LE POULE NOIRE (THE BLACK CHICKEN)
**Herbal remedy**

*Valeriana officinalis*, a relaxant and cure for insomnia, was among the cunning folks’ most favored herbal remedies. Valerian was also frequently hung in barns, as people believed that its pungency guarded animals from malign spirits.
Miracle woman  MOR SAETHER (1793–1851)

Of all the cunning folk, none was more celebrated, almost venerated, than the Norwegian “miracle woman” Mor (Mother) Saether. Her desire to heal amounted to a kind of vocation, one augmented by an instinctive and wide-ranging understanding of herbal medicines. She was imprisoned for quackery three times—in 1836, 1841, and 1844. In the end, the public outcry against her incarceration was such that the Norwegian Supreme Court freed her. Among her most famous patients was the patriot and poet Henrik Wergeland. Her rheumatic salve was still being sold into the 1980s.
Fairy tales

By the 1800s, the fairy tale had become a prominent fixture in European culture for both children and adults. Magic was a major ingredient and some tales had a dark, strange occultism, too. Fairies, witches, transformative characters, spells, curses, and potions abounded. Many fairy tales were extensions of existing traditions of magical folklore, such as *Fortunatus*, a story about a purse that magically refills, which was circulating by the 1700s.
folk magic in North America
From the late 17th century, as wave upon wave of people arrived in North America, folk magic spread across the continent. Magical practices took three different forms: the activities of the cunning folk among English settlers; a variant, practiced by those known as “conjurers,” among African Americans; and a Germanic folk magic practiced by the people known as the Pennsylvania Dutch.
As in England, the cunning folk in North America were generally benevolent in their intentions—their concern was the well-being of their fellow settlers. To this end, they used a mixture of spells, herbal remedies, and various prized objects—amulets and written charms in particular, many buried for extra potency—to bring good fortune and to ward off evil.

▲ Sator Square amulet

This early Christian magical tool called the Sator Square shows words that are readable backward or forward. In his book on pow-wows, Johann George Hohman stated that the Sator Square possessed properties that could extinguish fires as readily as protect cows from witches.
This illustration from the 18th-century *Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses* of a man with a sword contains magical Israelite symbols. An inspiration for Hohman’s book *Pow-Wows*, the *Books* were a part-magical, part-religious confection of Hebrew, Roman, and Christian sources and related how, among other biblical miracles, Moses turned his staff into a snake and conjured a pillar of fire.
“POW-WOWS” OR “LONG LOST FRIEND”

It is a book by John George Hohman published in 1820.

The book uses the term Pow-Wow in its title. It was possibly a corruption of a local term used by the indigenous Narragansett people, for a spiritual gathering.

The folk magic tradition called "pow-wowing" takes its name from the title of later editions of this book.

George was a Pennsylvania Dutch healer; the book is a collection of home and folk remedies, as well as spells and talismans.

It contained Wonderful and Well Tested Remedies and Arts, for People and for Livestock.
Both conjurors and cunning folk created magical charms and charged objects with magical meaning.

At **George Washington’s Ferry Farm**, a carnelian bead excavated on the property may indicate that a powerful conjuror might have lived there during the Washington’s time.

It is similar to 2 found in Barbados and they all probably came from Cambay, India.

George grew up at the Farm and moved there with his family in 1738.
Some people thought these were Hex signs, but the star designs were used because many of the Dutch were farmers who were very aware of the cycles of the passing seasons and how it related to the Sun and our planet, circling around it.

Pennsylvania Dutch
From the early 18th century, the German-speaking settlers of Pennsylvania made their mark on their new home, and it mainly took the literal form of boldly painted stars. These star motifs appeared on buildings such as barns and on almost every object they produced, from quilts to butter dishes.

△ Star image on barn
The Pennsylvania Dutch painted vividly exact stars on their barns, probably as stylized images of the unchanging heavens.
Voodoo and Hoodoo

Although Voodoo—more accurately called Voudon, which translates as spirit—and Hoodoo are related, their differences are significant. Both are African in origin, carried by slaves across the Atlantic in the 18th century to France's Caribbean colonies and territories along the Mississippi.

Both were also altered by influences in their new surroundings, Voudon by Catholicism, and Hoodoo by other faith systems, European as well as Native American.
Voudon is a religion, while Hoodoo is a form of folk magic.

From its roots in the Fon religion of West Africa, Voudon evolved in the Caribbean on the island of Saint Domingue (modern Haiti). This was France's richest colony, exporting coffee and sugar produced by enslaved people.

Voudon takes its name from the word for “spirit” in the language of the Ewe and Fon peoples who inhabit areas of what today are Ghana, Togo and Benin.

It is still very much a living religion for millions of West Africans; and millions more who are nominally Catholic or Muslim, continue to mix elements of these animistic traditions into their religious practice.
These are Voudon altars in homes, many in New Orleans, Louisiana.
Musicians in a Vodou rara band play as they approach the sacred mud pool at Plaine du Nord during the Vodou-Catholic pilgrimage honoring St. James of Compostela and the Vodou spirit of war and iron, Ogou, on July 24, 2004.

Vodou became an officially recognized religion in Haiti last year.

Photo by Daniel Morel.
Voudon altar

All sorts of symbols are pressed into service to represent the teeming spirit world of Voudon. Dolls—the more brightly colored the better—have long been favored. Here, the snakes entwined around the arms of Mama Wati (a water spirit) are symbols of fertility and renewal.

AN ALTAR IN THE NEW YORK APARTMENT OF MICHAEL ZWACK, Voudon High Priest and Artist.

Photo by Aric Mayer.
A Veve (pronounced “vee vee”) is a religious symbol for a vodou "loa" (or Iwa) (pronounced “loo wah”) and serves as their representation during rituals.

In Haiti, the veve derives from the beliefs of the native Tainos.

Most similar to the veve are the drawings of zemi or gods of the Taino religion.

Sacrifices and offerings are usually placed upon them.

The veve is usually drawn on the floor by strewing a powder-like substance, such as cornmeal, wheat flour, bark, red brick powder, or gunpowder.

The material depends entirely upon the rite.
The symbolism of the four main Esoteric Voudon Gods (Ghuédhé-Nibbho, Ogou-Fer, Simbi and Damballah).

They are the 4 veve of the main Esoteric Voudon Gods.

(A veve is a religious symbol commonly used in different branches of Voudon throughout the African diaspora, such as Haitian Vodou.)

The veve acts as a "beacon" for the loa, and will serve as a loa's representation during rituals.

Loa are the spirits of Haitian Vodou and Louisiana Voodoo.
As symbols of a bounteous world, Voudon dolls—this one a female figure with an animal head—are central to the exuberant celebration of nature. They proclaim a delight in the real world and fecundity.
Although Voudon followers believe in an overarching god, the creator of all things, called Bondye (a corruption of the French Bon Dieu or Good God), he is too remote to be directly worshipped and there is no single liturgy. Instead, god is worshipped through thousands of spirits known as lwa or loa, who represent every aspect of the world and of humanity. It is in these spirits that the deeply mystical nature of Voudon truly reveals itself.
IWAs

Vodouisants will sometimes comment that there are over a thousand Iwas, most of whom are not known to humans. Of these, the names of at least 232 have been recorded. The large number of Iwas found in Vodou contrasts with the Cuban religion of Santería, where only 15 orichas (spirits) have gained prominence among its followers.

• Adjassou-Linguetor
• Adjinakou
• Adya Houn'tò
• Agaou
• Agassou
• Agwé
• Anaïsia Pye
• Anmino
• Ayida-Weddo
• Ayizan
• Azaka-Tonnerre
• Bacalou
• Badessy
• Baron
• Samedi
• Baron
• Criminel
• Belie Belcan
• Boli Shah
• Bossou
• Ashadeh
• Boum'ba
• Maza
• Brize
• Bugid Y Aiba
• Captain
• Debas
• Captain
• Zombi
• Clermeil
• Congo
• Damballa
• Dan Petro
• Dan Wédo
• Dempleait
• Derelyale
• Diable
• Tonnere
• Diejuste
• Dinclinsin
• Erzulie
• Filomez
• Guede
• Guede-Double
• Guede L'Orage
• Guede-Linto
• Guede Nibo
• Grand Bois
• Jean Zombi
• Joseph
• Danger
• Joumalonge
• Kalfu
• Klemezin
• Klemay
• Lemba
• L'ingesou
• La Sirène
• Limba
• Loco
• Lovana
• Mademoiselle
• Charlotte
• Maîtresse
• Délay
• Maîtresse
• Hounon'gon
• Maman
• Brigitte
• Marassa
• Marinette
• Maroule
• Manze
• Marie
• Mounanchou
• Nago Shango
• Ogoun
• Papa Legba
• Pie
• Silibo
• Simbi
• Sobo
• Sousson-Pannan
• Senegal
• Ti Kita
• Ti Jean
• Quinto
• Ti Malice
• Ti Jean Petro
• Trois
• Carrefours (Kalfoo Twa)
• Wawe
Possession and revelation

Voudon followers believe in two worlds: visible and invisible; the domains of the living and the dead. The spirits of the dead are always among the living, but they can only be made manifest by the lwa. Voudon rituals involve the active participation of everyone present.

The goal of a Voudon ceremony, presided over by an Ougan (priest) or a Mambo (priestess), is to summon these spirits, by means of animal sacrifices and vèvè symbols drawn in corn starch, until one or more of the worshippers is possessed by a lwa.
This is not possession in a diabolic sense: it is a positive affirmation of the vital links between the living and the dead, between the material and the spiritual worlds.

△ Voudon in practice
New Orleans Voodoo

In the aftermath of the Haitian revolt, substantial numbers of formerly enslaved people and their descendants emigrated. Many settled in New Orleans, part of the US since 1803. Here, a distinctive New Orleans Voudon developed, which was much more overtly magical in its beliefs and practices.
MARIE LAVEAU

One of the most famous 19th-century practitioners was Marie Laveau, a hairdresser turned Voudon-savant. By the end of her life, she was widely regarded as the “Voodoo Queen of New Orleans,” a healer, hexer, and fortune-teller, consulted by the highest and the lowest of the city.
HOODOO

Hoodoo was always different from Voudon. Where Voudon traces its origins to West Africa, and especially Dahomey (today’s Benin), Hoodoo is drawn from Central Africa, specifically the Congo. Its practitioners today can be found across the US, even if its roots remain in the Deep South with memories of slavery and oppression.
From the natural world, Hoodoo makes use of herbs and roots—its practitioners are often called “rootworkers”—of animal parts, and minerals, especially lodestones (minerals that are naturally magnetic). It also calls on an array of candles, oils, incense, and powders.

▲ Lucky root

The John the Conqueror root is particularly valued by practitioners of Hoodoo. It has been claimed both to bestow magical sexual potency and to ensure luck in gambling.
VOODOO FESTIVAL OUTFITS IN BENIN, WEST AFRICA
West African links

Voudon may most obviously be associated with Haiti. However, it is still active in West Africa, particularly in Benin, where it originated in the Fon religion and where there are believed to be four million followers of Voudon today (see Dancing with the dead). This talismanic statue

This Fon bocio is laden with powerful objects to protect its maker.
Harmful plants

Just as some plants have been, and still are, used for healing and good magic, so others have long had more sinister associations, especially those that are deadly poisonous. Certain plants contain hallucinogens, used to induce trances and visions, to ward off evil spirits or, in the case of mandrake root, to feature in black magic rituals. In the past, some plants had such a bad reputation that they were believed to bring evil just by growing near the home, particularly if they happened to bloom out of season.

- **Belladonna** (deadly nightshade) is poisonous and has hallucinogenic properties. Witches reportedly rubbed the plant into their thighs to enable them to fly on broomsticks.

- **Aconite** (wool's bane) can cause hallucinations of shape-shifting into an animal and it was said to be taken by Norse Berserker warriors to transform themselves into werewolves for battle.
**Elder trees** are rich in healing qualities but they are also the “death tree” because they seem to regenerate from dead branches. Cutting one down is said to release a malevolent spirit.

**Blackthorn** is thought of as a plant of ill omen. Yet magically, it is used to protect against evil, dispel negativity and toxins, and help people confront their inner demons.

**Wormwood** was thought to have grown first along the trail of the serpent as it left the Old Testament Garden of Eden. It is associated with bitterness. Magically, it is used in spells for revenge.
**Hemlock** contains the deadly poison that was used to execute the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates. Even in small quantities, it causes paralysis and respiratory failure.

**Datura** is highly hallucinogenic and potentially fatally poisonous. It has long played a part in the rituals of some Native Americans as they prepare for spiritual journeys.

**Henbane** is highly hallucinatory. The oracle priests in the ancient Greek temple at Delphi smoked it to communicate with the gods. Witches reportedly used it to fly.
Larkspur sprang from the blood of fallen warrior Ajax according to ancient Greek mythology, and so it is believed to heal wounds and, by extension, offer general protection.

Hellebore is a toxic plant that was used in dried and powdered form in invisibility spells. According to folklore, hellebore should only be shot at with a bow only on a moonless night.
mesmerism and hypnosis

The word *mesmerism* comes from an 18th-century German doctor, Franz Mesmer. He championed the belief that all life forms, animal and vegetable, possessed a magnetic energy or fluid, and that, influenced by the planets, this energy acted much like the tides.

**Group treatment**

The great and the good of Paris flocked to Mesmer’s ritualistic treatments in the 1780s. Even the French queen, Marie Antoinette, attended. On the left here, a woman faints, while others are seated around the baquet.
Mesmer’s popularity was such that, rather than turn away his clients, almost all drawn from the higher reaches of society, he saw them in groups of 20 or more. These sessions were as much theatrical as medical.

Mesmer’s treatments seemed perilously closer to the occult than to medicine, as he apparently assumed control of his patients’ minds. In 1785, a royal commission ruled that there was no evidence for the magnetic force Mesmer claimed, and he was discredited.
Eliphas Lévi’s real name was Alphonse Constant, and he had trained, though never qualified, as a Catholic priest. He became a socialist and, inspired by Mesmer, an enthusiast for magic. Lévi argued for a universal order based on Catholicism, socialism, and magic. His book *Transcendental Magic: Its Doctrine and Ritual* described and illustrated the Baphomet, an idol first chronicled by the medieval Crusaders. Lévi called the creature his “Sabbatic goat,” and claimed that it held all knowledge. With its many magical meanings, it represents male and female, good and evil, fertility and life. Lévi’s work is still studied by magicians today.
READING THE
CARDS

the tarot

Today familiar as a tool for fortune-telling—a form of divination—tarot cards originated in Europe in the early 15th century. Ordinary playing cards are believed to have come to Europe from Mamluk in Egypt a century earlier, and tarot was simply a variation. These early tarot cards were used purely for entertainment, and the name “tarot” comes from a game similar to bridge that was played with them in Italy called tarocchi (fool or joker).

△ French tarot

These illustrations of La Papesse (The Lady Pope) and L’ Impératrice (The Empress) are from Antoine Court de Gébelin’s Le Monde primitif, a text that made the case for tarot as a divination tool.
The deck had 32 cards in it.

▲ All in the cards

Jean-Baptiste Alliette's 19th-century Etteilla cards were the first set of tarot cards designed exclusively for divination. Their assigned meaning changes depending on the orientation of the card.

The deck had 32 cards in it.
Astrology plays a significant role in how tarot cards and the positions they occupy in a reading (known as “spreads”) are interpreted. This connection was established in the late 19th century by a secret society of British occultists called the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. The Order drew links between the tarot suits, each of the astrological signs, and the four classic elements.

The Moon (associated with Pisces), in this 15th-century example painted by Italian Antonio Cicognara, was one of the original cards of the tarot deck.
Kabbalistic tarot
As fascination with the occult grew in the 19th century, people increasingly used the tarot deck for divination rather than for games. Each card had a set meaning, which altered if that card was inverted when laid out.

Tarot comes to America
The first tarot style to gain major popularity in North America was the Egyptian deck designed by French occultists René Falconnier and Maurice Otto Wegener in 1890, based on ideas by Jean-Baptiste Pitois.
The Arcana

The Major Arcana (greater secrets) comprise the 22 trump cards, such as The Magician, The Star, and The Hanged Man; they do not belong to any suit, but carry specific significance. The Minor Arcana (lesser secrets) comprise the 56 suit cards, divided into four suits of 14 each. The first 78-card deck design based on Pitois's system is also known as the Tarot de Marseille, as the game of tarot persisted in France long after it had died out in Italy.

*The Magician* in this design is from the first English tarot deck of 1910.
The Devil here is a 19th-century French card.

The High Priestess design here is from the English 1910 Rider-Waite deck.
A dedicated tarot deck was not essential for divination. The girls in this Russian painting from 1842 by Aleksei Gavrilovich Venetsianov are divining their fortunes with ordinary playing cards.

This Tower is a 1926 design by Wirth with kabbalistic symbols.
The Major Arcana

The 22 picture cards in the Tarot are called the Major Arcana—the greater secrets—each of which has a particular meaning, with that meaning reversed when the card is drawn upside down. Of the many ways to tell a fortune with Tarot, the three-card spread is one of the simplest: drawing three cards from a shuffled pack that represent—from left to right—past, present, and future, and combine to answer a specific question.

▲ The Empress denotes the creation of life, ideas, art, romance, and business.
The Major Arcana

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**The Empress**

The Empress denotes the creation of life, ideas, art, romance, and business.

**The Devil**

The Devil stands for material greed, lust, fear, and feeling trapped.

**The Hanged Man**

The Hanged Man card is ambiguous. He suggests both self-sacrifice and, because he is upside down, a new perspective.

**Wheel of Fortune**

Wheel of Fortune indicates a change in fortune, such as the rich becoming poor or the poor becoming rich.

**The High Priestess**

The High Priestess or Papessa suggests intuition and secret knowledge.

**Strength**

Strength stands for control and dealing with pain and danger well.

**The Hermit**

The Hermit represents curiosity, withdrawal, and soul-searching.

**The Chariot**

The Chariot stands for strength, focus, and a willingness to take the reins; the black and white sphinxes pulling the chariot show opposites working in tandem.

**Judgement**

Judgement suggests an inner calling, rebirth, or self-doubt.

**Justice**

Justice means fairness and balanced decisions, or unfair treatment if reversed.

**The Sun**

The Sun denotes vitality, confidence, and success, or the opposite if reversed.
In the ancient Sanskrit language of Hinduism and Buddhism, mandala means “circle.”

Traditionally, a mandala is a geometric design or pattern that represents the cosmos or deities in various heavenly worlds.

**A mandala generally represents the spiritual journey, starting from outside to the inner core, through layers.**

“It's all about finding peace in the symmetry of the design and of the universe,” says artist Saudamini Madra.
A mandala is a geometric configuration of symbols.

Many are used as a spiritual guidance tool, for establishing a sacred space and as an aid to meditation and trance induction.
The brilliant psychoanalyst Carl Jung believed that the mandala represents the Self and that drawing a mandala gives a person a sacred space to meet that Self.

He considered making mandalas an effective form of art therapy, helping to calm and comfort people struggling with mental health issues.
“The mandala is an archetypal image whose occurrence is attested throughout the ages....

The circular image represents the wholeness, or, to put it in mythic terms, the divinity incarnate in man.”

C.G. Jung
BUDDHIST SAND MANDALAS

For centuries, Tibetan Buddhist monks have made these cosmic diagrams out of colored sand.

As they place each grain of sand intentionally using metal funnels and sticks, monks enter a flow state.

When they approach the center point of the artwork, they experience the transcendence of Self and the reality of a universe in which all beings are free from suffering.

Then, after days or weeks of labor, they practice nonattachment and demonstrate the impermanence of all things by destroying the mandala.
Chenrezig Sand Mandala created and exhibited at the House of Commons of the United Kingdom on the occasion of the visit of the 14th Dalai Lama on May, 21st, 2008
HINDU MANDALAS

Also called yantras, mandalas came to Hinduism from Buddhism.

Traditional yantras are square, with a gate on each side around a center circle that contains one of the Hindu gods.

Through the meditative creation of a mandala, the artist summons that god to help them discover cosmic truths.
The 72 names of YHWH - God

Master Mandela from the book of Solomon’s Magick.
THE ZAOULI DANCE

Zaouli is a traditional dance of the Guro people of central Ivory Coast.

The Zaouli mask, used in the dance, was created in the 1950s, reportedly inspired by a girl named "Djela Lou Zaouli".

Each mask may have its own symbolic history.

Each Guro village has a local Zaouli dancer (always male), performing during funerals and celebrations.

The dance is believed to increase the productivity of the village that it is performed in and is seen as a tool of unity for the Guro community, and by extension the whole country.