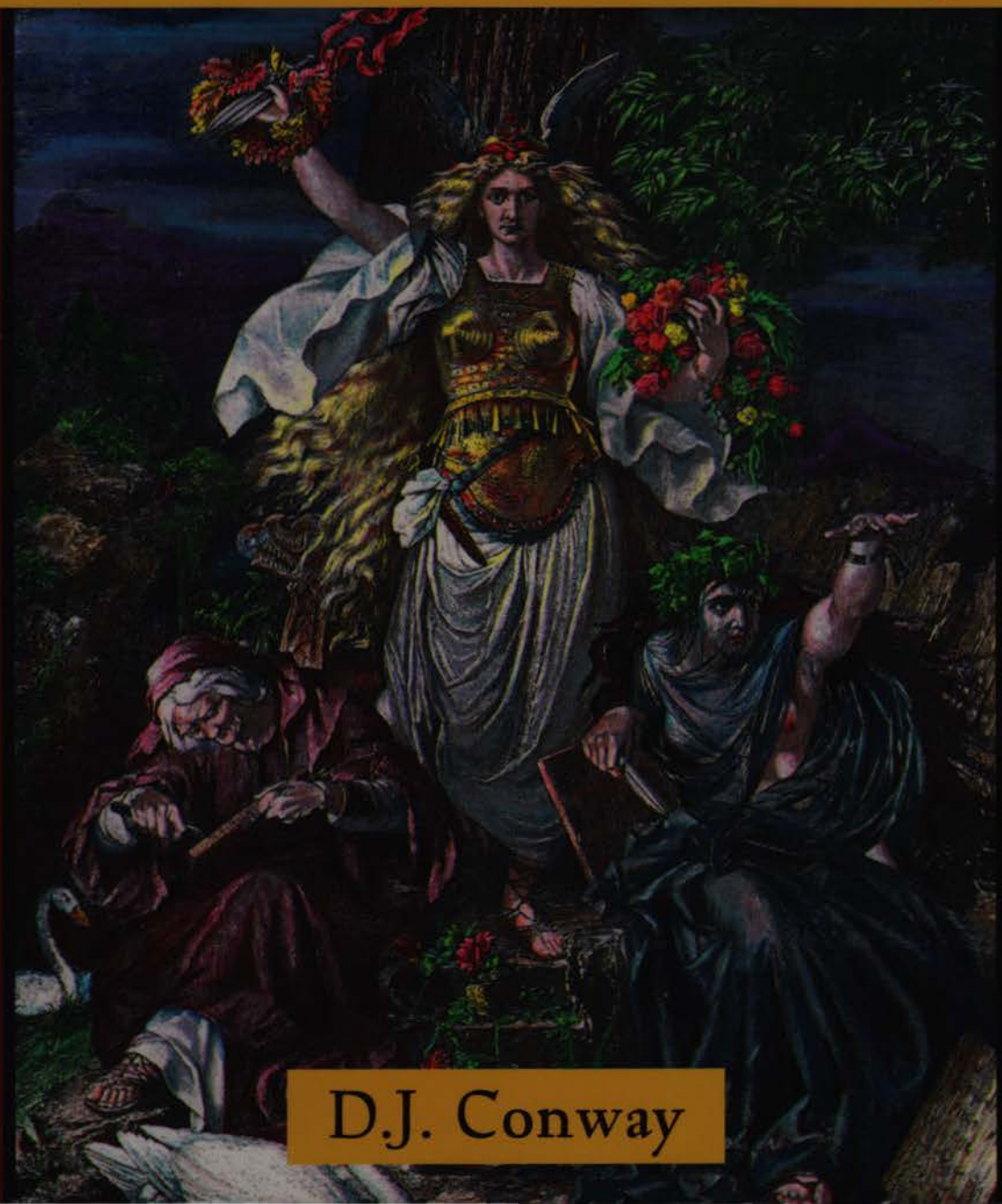


Llewellyn's Women's Spirituality Series



# Falcon Feather & Valkyrie Sword

Feminine Shamanism, Witchcraft & Magick



D.J. Conway

***Y***ou now join the band of warrior-women which stretches back to the dawn of our foremothers, and will continue as long as women walk this Earth.

Once upon a time, women practiced their own exclusive methods of shamanism, witchcraft, magick, and divination. But they lost much of this knowledge hundreds of years ago, when its practice was forbidden by patriarchal religions and governments.

Now you can regain those long-forgotten secrets and learn new ways to celebrate your femaleness as a source of undreamed-of strength. *Falcon Feather & Valkyrie Sword* presents a universal system that draws on women's mysteries from all traditions—Celtic, Greek, Egyptian, Indian, and Middle Eastern—focusing especially on the lessons to be learned from the Valkyries, fearless warrior-women of the Norse pantheon. These simple exercises, rituals, magickal techniques, and compelling guided shamanic journeys will help you tap the deep sources of feminine power within you.

Although women have made much progress toward regaining the respect, rights, and power they once had, too few of them have been confident enough to practice their own forms of worship and spirituality. This book celebrates exclusively feminine ways women can experience the Goddess—without reference to male deities, symbols, or influences—and will enlighten men and women who wish to further explore the realms of feminist spirituality, shamanism, and women's magick.

## About the Author

I was born on a Beltane Full Moon with a total lunar eclipse, one of the hottest days of that year. Although I came into an Irish-North Germanic-Native American family with natural psychics on both sides, such abilities were not talked about. So I learned discrimination in a family of closet psychics.

I love cats, music, mountains, singing, streams, stones, ritual, and nights when the Moon is full. My reading covers vast areas of history, the magickal arts, philosophy, customs, mythology, and fantasy. I have studied every part of the New Age religions from Eastern philosophy to Wicca. I hope I never stop learning and expanding.

Although I have lived in areas of this country from one coast to the other, I now reside on the West Coast. I am not fond of large crowds or speaking in public.

I live a rather quiet life in the company of my husband and four cats, Callisto, Finnigan, Valkyrie, and Beowulf, with occasional visits with my children and grandchildren. I collect statues of dragons and wizards, crystals and other stones, and of course, books. Most of my time is spent researching and writing. I have published nine books. Before I am finished with one book, I am working on another in my head. All in all, I am just an ordinary Pagan person.

## To Write to the Author

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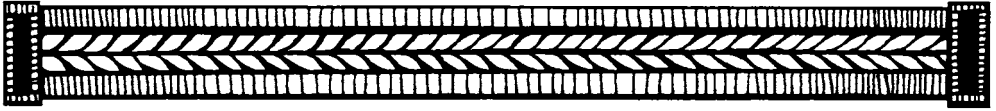
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Feminine Shamanism, Witchcraft & Magick

◀ D.J. Conway ▶

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Llewellyn Publications  
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## About Llewellyn's Women's Spirituality Series

For over 2000 years, the symbol of the trinity has been represented by a male deity. And it is through this trinity that many women have looked for direction in their spiritual lives, not knowing of any other way. But recently, another tradition has re-emerged—one that predates the patriarchal view of the spiritual journey by thousands of years. This ancient tradition is that of the Great Goddess, whose three aspects—maiden, mother, and crone—represent the natural cycles of the Earth and all its creatures.

Many women seeking a spirituality that embraces and honors the feminine principles of creation and natural balance have claimed the Goddess for their own. This series presents books especially written to support and provide a spiritual map for women's inner journeys.

Goddess worship not only affirms the feminine in each woman and man, it celebrates birth, death, and all life transitions in between. It recognizes that in order to be truly connected to our truest human natures, we must be able to see the divine in everything around us—including ourselves. Women's spirituality is political in its emphasis on equality of sexes and races. It is healing in its balanced view of female and male, yin and yang, life and death. And it empowers women to attain wholeness through exploration of their spiritual selves.

Before the earliest beginnings of modern mainstream religions, there was the Goddess. Those who worship her in all things know that they're part of a tradition that began before recorded time, and that will continue to time's end.

## Other Books by the Author

*Celtic Magic*

*Norse Magic*

*The Ancient & Shining Ones*

*Maiden, Mother, Crone*

*Dancing with Dragons*

*By Oak, Ash, & Thorn*

*Moon Magick*

*Animal Magick*

*Flying Without a Broom*

## Forthcoming

*Dream Warrior* (fiction)

*Astral Love*

*Magickal, Mythical, Mystical Beasts*

*Soothsayer* (fiction)

# Dedication

*To all women in this world  
and to the men who lovingly treat them as free and valuable humans.*

*To all women who have suffered abuse in any form and survived,  
and in memory of those women who have died at the hands of an abuser.*



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## Return of the Priestesses

*From misty moor to mountain top,  
From cavern depth to shining star,  
Our minds are free to search for truth  
Whether it be near or far.*

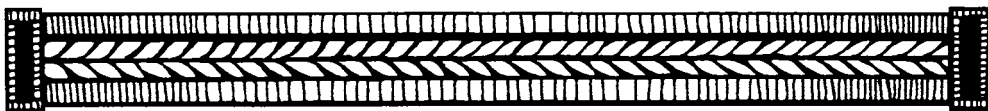
*With falcon feather cloaks we fly  
Beyond the limits set by man.  
Valkyrie swords, sharp and bright,  
New dawn for women is Your plan.*

*Reveal the ancient women's paths  
Of Mysteries and old powers strong.  
Once more lift woman-hood up high,  
To the rightful place where we belong.*

*Show us the past and that to come!  
Grant us the gift of prophecy!  
O, Ancient Goddess, direct our quest.  
As we will, so mote it be!*

Secret Powers of  
Ancient Women





## Searching for Lost Power

**I**t seems that nearly every Pagan woman I meet is searching for an elusive “something.” She instinctively knows that what she seeks is within Paganism, but she cannot decide what is missing from her life. Some women have been shocked into making this search because they discovered male Wiccans demanding that they submit to sexual initiations, or male Pagans setting out rules which amount to patriarchal control.

Some women have been so misused by men, both in and out of Paganism, that they simply do not want to work magick or perform spiritual functions with any males around. They need a safe space to regain their feminism, to empower themselves once more, before they can again relate positively, as lovers or friends, to males.

Women want and need this “something.” Their hearts and spirits crave it. However, there is very little available information about this “something,” which is really the ancient feminine path that leads these Goddess-daughters back to the Goddess and their own special communication with Her.



Lest anyone assume I dislike men, I will make my stand very clear. I like men. I take men, as I take anyone, on an individual basis. If I dislike someone's personality or actions, I dislike that person because of personality or actions, not because they are male or female. Women in general tend to respond in this manner, unless their psyches have been severely damaged.

There is a great need today for feminine-only knowledge in the area of spiritual enlightenment and self-improvement. At one time in our ancient past, this knowledge was available—taught by women, for women, to improve the lives, minds, and souls of women. There were ancient secret feminine Mystery societies which upheld the personal importance and integrity of women's bodies and souls. The greatest part of these societies and their valuable knowledge was lost under the crush of patriarchal take-overs. What was not lost or destroyed outright was changed to fit the patriarchal ideas of women's secondary position in life.



Then followed a period of intense mental conditioning of both women and men. Author Mary Daly<sup>1</sup> says that in order to legitimize themselves the patriarchies taught that "God" was only male, therefore men were the only ones to hold the "God-spark." This left women on the outside looking in. It amazes me that anyone should consider the belief in a Father God more logical or acceptable than the belief in a Mother Goddess. It is even more upsetting that any person or group of people should feel they have the right to dictate to another person what spiritual path they must follow, or force their "spiritual faith" onto others by harassment, intimidation, threats, or legislation.

People in the field of mental health know that if you are told something often enough and suffer pain if you disagree, you will begin to believe what you are told. Author Z. Budapest<sup>2</sup> calls this the practice of someone going inside your soul and throwing out your self-respect. She says this is oppression at its worst: the internalized oppression of the spirit. In my opinion, this is nothing less than spiritual rape.

The sad part of this whole history is that it was not women's loss alone. For when one segment of a society is degraded or diminished in importance, the whole society suffers. Without realizing it, men harmed and enslaved a part of themselves. The result is, we are living in a predominantly masculine world, an atmosphere ruled by power, what is known as science, and the indifferent machine.

When one speaks of matriarchal societies of the distant past, the immediate response from men is "That was slavery of men!" This is not true. The matriarchal systems were a cooperative effort of both men and women to create and sustain a peaceful, vital society in which families, spiritual growth, and creative arts could flourish. For the whole 1,500 years that the matriarchy in Catal Huyuk in Turkey (also other Mediterranean and Middle Eastern matriarchies) existed, archaeologists can find absolutely no signs of war, internal or external. The arts were raised to a high degree. Goddess temples were abundant and rich in murals. When the matri-





archies were overrun by patriarchal clans, the level of civilization dropped dramatically. From then on, history became a bloody story of frequent wars for territory, women, power, and the imposition of patriarchal religions. We find the same actions being repeated today.

When women began their search for personal spirituality by resurrecting the old Pagan religions, they took the first step on the road back to rediscovering the ancient secret powers of their foremothers. Paganism, and particularly Wicca, has been valuable in restoring and reaffirming the importance of the feminine and the Goddess. But I feel it has not gone far enough.

Even with Paganism and Wicca, there remains a taint of the old patriarchal ideas. We are repeatedly told that magick cannot be powerful unless there are both men and women participating, that men are needed for any ritual or spellworking to be truly effective. There is much talk about magick needing a male-female balance, as if women cannot produce the necessary power or balance themselves. I find this train of thought very strange. Male ceremonial magicians have never been accused of being inadequate, or their procedures being negative, because they worked alone or with other men. Women must battle constantly to overcome the subtle propaganda that females need male help to perform powerful magicks.

Within each woman is a natural male energy that provides the balance of male/female, positive/negative energy to do magick. The real underlying fear of this patriarchal idea is that women might once more discover that they do not need men to perform great magicks, that they have a tremendous call upon magickal energies in a way that men cannot duplicate.

This does not mean that mixed groups cannot work well together. They can, and do. Men and women do not think in the same way, nor do they react in the same way to stimuli. Even the access of the subconscious mind is handled differently by men and women. They also relate to the Goddess in different ways. Some women cannot relate to the Pagan God at all, as some men find it a struggle to relate to the Goddess. There has been so much damage to the human psyche by patriarchal ideas that both men and women have needs and growth that can be done best by separate group meetings, and reinforced by the occasional mixing of groups.

Women need a path free of men where they do not have to feel, even subconsciously, that they must be in competition with males. Feminine self-esteem is rebuilt only through special spiritual paths which teach a woman that she is powerful, has a right to be free of patriarchal control, that she has a right to use her natural inborn psychic powers, and that the success of her life does not rise and fall with male acceptance or rejection.

Women need their own societies once more. It is fine to occasionally work with men, but women have their own ways and needs which can only be met through women-only groups. The general public thinks it is wonderful that men now have men-only spiritual and/or counseling groups. However, the same





segment of society derogatorily refers to women-only groups. Women need to break their shackles and realize the true depth and strength of their inborn powers and abilities.

Many times when a woman decides she is no longer going to follow or be controlled by patriarchal religions and ideas, she becomes afraid. Unless she learns about Paganism and the Goddess, she feels overwhelmed by the change from control by others to self-responsibility. But change is a transforming event. It forces us to re-examine ourselves, our lives, and our actions. It is the first step in any initiation process.

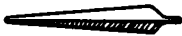
If she decides to follow the Goddess, she finds herself, perhaps for the first time in her life, with a supreme Feminine Image as a role model. By observing and interacting with the Goddess, woman can see herself as whole, as a mirrored image of untapped feminine power. By acknowledging her oneness on all levels with the Goddess, she can bring herself to the realization that she is a Goddess in the making.

Women and men interact differently in regard to their spiritual seeking. Men tend to move outward, while women sink deep inside themselves. The bottled-up rage and fear, the feeling of a loss of identity, compel women to seek within. At first, a woman may experience a sense of being stripped bare and devoured, of being turned inside-out. She may feel as if her emotions are scraped raw, her energy and sensuality dried up. The Goddess is forcing her to re-evaluate herself, her life, and her future goals. When she has seen her inner self as she really is and has accepted herself, there comes a time of silence, a period of dormancy, of waiting. The “seed” of the Goddess is beginning to sprout. One day, there is a sudden turning-point. The woman discovers her true Goddess nature and everything falls into place with ease.

By understanding the secret powers of ancient women, today’s woman can modernize this information to fit her present stage of growth and development. Through its practice, she can rediscover herself, a vital step in spiritual enlightenment. She can discover, rediscover, and/or strengthen her communication with the Great Mother. She can move herself from the status of secondary citizen or unwilling constant nurturer to a powerful Goddess-daughter and Valkyrie. This does not mean she becomes an obnoxious female trying to be a man. It means she takes back the feminine power of her foremothers. She realizes her strengths and talents, her true role in life given in the beginning by the Goddess Herself. She no longer accepts the role of scapegoat or victim. She is strong, yet compassionate. She accepts responsibility for her life. Without trying, she becomes a role-model for the young, both male and female. She learns when to be soft and yielding and when to rise up in anger. In short, she discovers herself, her true identity which has been buried. She becomes whole once more.



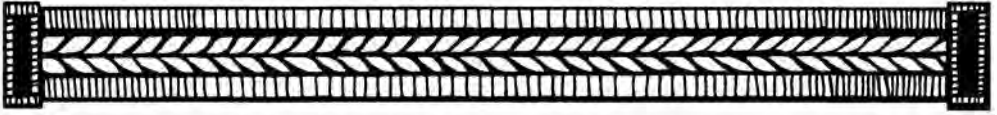




## End Notes

1. Daly, Mary. *Beyond God the Father*.
2. Budapest, Z. *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries*.





## History & Myth

**I**n the beginning there was the Goddess, and women were the first to discover Her. From all evidence of archaeology and ancient history, the first spiritual leaders were women. Through the guidance and spiritual direction of the Goddess, women also discovered or invented the essentials of civilization: farming, animal husbandry, tools, pottery, weaving, spinning, cooking, medicine, music, the calendar, alphabets, building and architecture, metallurgy, navigation, calculation, record-keeping, all the arts and crafts, and magick.

Although the entire community celebrated certain spiritual rituals together, the earliest mystical societies were for women only. It may well be that men also had their secret societies, but very ancient histories mention only those of the women. These Mystery Religions, as they were later called, taught deep spiritual secrets, not to every woman but to those who had the dedication and discipline needed to pass the various levels of initiation. These ancient cults were able to tap a great amount of power, which was at first honored by men, but later feared by them.

The most widely known Mystery Religion is that of Eleusis in ancient Greece. Tradition says that it was instituted by the goddess Demeter as She awaited the

return of her lost daughter Persephone. The Eleusinian Mysteries lasted for centuries, although their later form was taken over and changed by men. This spiritual path was experienced by some of the greatest thinkers in Greek history.

Crete also had its feminine-only societies. Since the remaining records are scanty at best, one must trace the spiritual practices through archaeology and mythology. If one is seeking with open mind and heart, the evidence is clear. Some of the most beautiful statues of that culture are not of the Goddess, but of Her priestesses. It seems that the Cretan civilization fell before there was any patriarchal take-over of the religion.

The Greek Artemis/Roman Diana was a reconstruction of the Cretan goddess Dictynna. To be more precise, a great many of the Cretan goddesses found their way into Greek culture: Rhea, Demeter, Hera, Ilythia, and the ancient Titanesses. It appears that, although the patriarchal cultures which took over gave priority to their male gods, they feared dispensing with the older goddesses. Subconsciously, at least, these male conquerors realized the importance of the Goddess.

Ancient Egyptian myths hold clues to the beginning of Egyptian religion. Several goddesses were always considered to be of great importance and were called “self-begotten.” Gradually, male gods assumed greater importance in most areas, but the goddesses were never eliminated nor considered to be unimportant. Even at the last of the ancient Egyptian civilization, the Pharaoh gained his position only by marrying into the family of a Great Queen. He was always said to “sit on the lap of the Goddess” when he was on his throne.

Ishtar of Babylon was widely recognized throughout the Middle East by a series of names. As Lady of Love and Battles, this goddess was both feared and loved. Her worship never diminished until the Hebrews and Christians declared war against her followers. Even into the Roman era, religious rituals of Ishtar were performed.

Cybele, who came out of the Middle East, more precisely out of Phrygia, was at first worshipped alone as a Great Goddess. Later, her son/lover Attis was joined to her myths and rituals. Cybele’s worship also lasted long into the Roman era.

The famous Greek oracles originally all belonged to goddesses and were served by priestesses. These divination centers, built over power spots, were ancient training centers for priestesses of the Goddess, a place where only women could be trained in the use of their inborn psychic talents.

The two most famous oracles in Greece were Delphi and Dodona. Delphi belonged to Gaea, the Primeval Prophetess and most ancient Earth Mother, long before Apollo took over. Gaea had oracle sanctuaries also at Dodona, Tegea, Sparta, and Athens. Her priestesses were the sacred Sibyls, the wise Pythias, and the devout Mellisae. As with Apollo at Delphi, at Dodona, Zeus became the reigning deity, ousting the Goddess.

Even in the ancient matriarchies of India there were women-only societies and secrets. The surviving myths and the Tantric belief hold clues to these ancient secrets and practices.

In the far North, the Vanir goddess Freyja was the Mistress of Magick and Love, Queen of the Valkyries, an important goddess-deity of the Norse peoples. The Vanir deities existed much longer than the conquering Aesir; the Vanir were the remnants of a matriarchal culture, and Freyja was the greatest of them. Her feminine-only teachings were called *seidr*, an extremely powerful form of spirituality and magick. The secret teachings of *seidr* were so powerful and important that myth says that the Aesir god Odhinn coveted them. Later, *seidr* came to be called evil simply because women would not share their powerful secrets with men. Although this matriarchal culture was subjugated by a patriarchal one, women maintained much of their rights and importance among the Norse peoples.

The Celtic cultures, like the Norse, blended their earlier matriarchal deities with the newer patriarchal ones. Since what records the Celts did have at one time were fanatically destroyed by the Christians, one must trace these pre-patriarchal goddesses through their history and myths. Such goddesses as Brigit, Danu, the Morrigan, Cailleach, Cerridwen, and others held their importance to the people long into the Christian era. In fact, Brigit was such a powerful deity that the Christians could not stop her worship; they made her into a saint.

The ancient women-only societies were a serious threat to the overrunning patriarchal clans because they educated all women and upheld their rights and freedoms. The fact that certain mystical spiritual powers were taught only to women made these societies the focus of male hatred and fear. The patriarchies knew they could not gain complete control until they either destroyed or took over the women's societies. In the Middle East and the Mediterranean areas, the women-only Mysteries hit upon a plan that saved them from extinction: allow men to participate, but keep the Goddess in Her rightful place.

This seeming abdication of power protected many of the women's rights for a time and saved the Mysteries from annihilation. However, when the Hebrews, Moslems, and Christians evolved their patriarchal ideas, the first casualties of their purging were the feminine Mysteries. These three religions went after all Pagan beliefs, and particularly the Mysteries, with a vengeance. After all, the Mysteries upheld, in varying degrees according to the individual patriarchy, a woman's right to own property, control her own money, decide if she did or did not want to have children, and perform magick. The three new patriarchies declared that women were evil, had no rights, and had no business working magick. After all, if women knew the ancient secrets of the Goddess and magick, they might overthrow the patriarchies.

For this reason alone, women should be actively searching out the secret powers of ancient women. They are every woman's heritage and birthright. By apply-



ing these ancient secrets on a personal level, each individual woman discovers a key to her own freedom: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. As the number of women who discover and use these ancient powers increases, the collective power to change the world from patriarchal madness to matriarchal peace also grows.

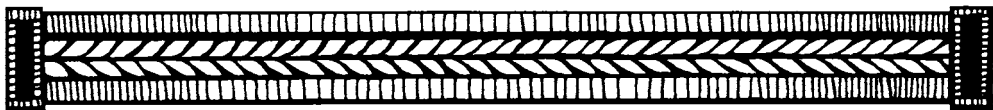
Can these same principles and ideals apply to men? Of course! Men are also a part of this unbalanced patriarchal society which sends them off to die in foreign places for some unclear purpose, forces them to never show emotion (which makes them die young of ulcers and heart disease, or causes them to burst out in violent behavior against their spouse, girlfriend, and/or children), and makes them deny their creative talents in favor of “sports” (approved violence). Men are struggling with self-identity, just as women are.

Men feel just as unsafe in their homes, just as unsure of themselves as men and as spiritual beings. By now they must be heartily tired of the patriarchal image they have forced women to take: the helpless clinging vine, the behind-the-scenes manipulator, the baby-machine in a world gone mad with over-population, the darling of the cosmetics industry and plastic surgeons. They want a different kind of woman, but most of them fear what they desire.

Women have come full circle. Once more they must take positive action with their own inner spiritual lives, then with their outer physical lives. In this way only can women as a group show men that there is nothing to fear from change, that a strong woman can be more desirous than a woman who whines and clings. By taking individual initiative, women can re-make history. Women can be feather-soft or rise up like a Valkyrie if the occasion demands. We must show men that cooperation and helping to share burdens does not mean we are planning to take over the world. We want only to assume our rightful responsibilities and have our freedom once more.

Women can only do this if they learn about the ancient powers of their foremothers. By learning those ancient secrets and re-inventing them to fit into our modern lives, we as women can create powerful changes, both within ourselves and our families, and without in the world itself. It is a great challenge.





## Reclaiming Our Heritage

**T**o even begin to reclaim our ancient heritage as Goddess-daughters, we need to start by building a new heritage for our own daughters and sisters. In order to set our daughters, and ourselves, free of the old controlling mechanisms set in place by patriarchy, we need to instill in the young, and in ourselves, self-confidence, self-reliance, and a sense of being able to draw upon untapped feminine power. The first step is through women-only spiritual groups and women's magick. After all, if we do not first help ourselves, how can we hope to help others?

Some people, both men and women, will always be too fearful to leave their orthodox religion, however restrictive. Realize that you can do nothing directly for them, and leave the situation alone. Put your energy into keeping or creating laws that allow women to make their own decisions (without interference from others) and have their own freedoms. Give your support to abused and battered women and children. Fight against discrimination, however and wherever you find it. Refuse to be beaten down by patriarchal attitudes.

Women are natural life-givers, even though they may never have a child. You may "give life" through the arts or through any action you take. You may never

know when and where you have given life, but it will happen. Sometimes you do find out, and it makes you feel very humble before the power of the Goddess.

At the beginning of my writing career with Llewellyn Publications, I received a letter from a young person which stated: "Both my parents were killed in a car accident, and I was sent to live with relatives I didn't know. I planned to commit suicide. I just couldn't see any reason for living anymore. Then I chanced to read your book *Celtic Magic*. Now I'm going back to school and am not afraid of life anymore. I know I'll make it now." I sat in complete awe as I read that poignant letter. I had touched another soul and never realized that I was doing so.

If you are into any branch of Paganism, there are definite steps you can take to reclaim your heritage. First, you need to rediscover an ancient women's path of spirituality that speaks to your heart. If you must do this alone, do it. If you are able to share this with other women, you are indeed fortunate. But practicing women's spirituality and feminine magick alone is better than not practicing at all. And there will be no less power and enlightenment in solitary practice.

Second, make certain that Paganism does not fall into the "needed male" trap that eventually leads to male domination and control. Pure and simple, this is just another form of patriarchy. I am beginning to hear some unsettling accounts of Pagan priests who are trying to re-make groups into dominions of male power and who are trying to force sex initiations on women in order for them to participate in the group. This needs to stop immediately! If women do not speak up against this kind of action, Paganism will be sucked down into the patriarchal whirlpool of destruction that permeates history. Speak out, loud and clear. If necessary, withdraw from the offending group and start your own. Above all, do not keep quiet about what is going on! You do not want women, new to Paganism, to be brainwashed into thinking these are acceptable behaviors or attitudes.

Part of reclaiming your ancient heritage is learning to look at yourself as a feminine human being. This can be difficult until you weed out the patriarchal female images that have been planted in your subconscious mind. Your inner vision of yourself should be what YOU want, not what someone else wants. Decide why you want that image, why you are happy or unhappy with who you are at the present time. Do not model your goals, desires, behavior, or personal appearance on patriarchal standards with which you have been brainwashed. Patriarchy has long told women: "Don't be the person you want to be. Be the person we tell you to be. If you don't be the type of person we tell you to be, you won't have any value." They told this to women for so long that we began to believe it and play their game.

Every woman must come to terms with herself and her body at some time in her life. You get tired of the absurd diets, the constantly changing fashions, the long sessions of hair-bleaching, whatever. Think about who determined the standards of so-called beauty. It certainly was not women. The Goddess comes in many forms and shapes, and so do Her daughters. Come to terms with yourself and your body.



Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, as the old saying goes. Behold yourself as beautiful whatever your shape or appearance. Every woman is part of the Goddess; within each woman is a Goddess-seed. Therefore, each woman is the Goddess in human form, a Goddess in the making. The Goddess has innumerable names, and every woman's name is that of an aspect of the Goddess.

A great many women are not really comfortable in the company of other women. They have been bombarded so long with the stereotype of "women gossip when they get together" (as if men do not) and/or have been subjected to the company of women who have fallen totally under the patriarchal illusion of the feminine, that they no longer care for the company of their own sex. Women have also been taught to build their lives, goals, and desires around males to the point where they often do not know how to interact well with other females. Women need to learn to honor their own sex before they give any honor to males. Of course, there will always be some people, male or female, you just do not like. At first, this honoring and companying with women may be difficult, but it is important that every woman make this valuable change of consciousness. By liking and appreciating other women, you learn to like and appreciate yourself as a woman.

Another important part of reclaiming your Goddess-feminine identity is to look for the valuable traits and talents you have, both as a person and as a woman. Regardless of her upbringing, every woman is subjected to the insidious patriarchal chipping away at her identity and self-importance. If you make a list of all the things you can do, of all the positive traits you have, you will be pleasantly surprised. Basically, women are the most caring, sympathetic people on Earth. Of course, there are always a few warped members of the sex, just as there are among men.

Because of their usual restriction to home, family, and sometimes a job added to this, women tend not to take the time to develop inborn talents. They have been taught to be self-sacrificing beyond the point of reason. They put nearly everyone else first, before they think of or can justify doing for themselves. At the first sign of changing this attitude, women are accused of being selfish.

To become a true, growing Goddess-daughter, women need to balance their personal needs along with the needs of family. Sometimes we must be "selfish" (according to the opinion of others) and say "NO!" Allow yourself to break out of your shell of imposed patriarchal female-image. Spread your wings and fly. See yourself as you truly are: a tiny image of the Goddess, the Lady of Love and Battles, the Mistress of Magick, the Creatrix. Show your daughters and sisters how to fly with you.

It is time for women to please themselves before they work to please their husband, lover, boss, male friends, or even family. If women honor and support each other more, they will become more powerful and independent, singly and collectively. Men have men-only clubs, groups, and gatherings, fiercely defending any

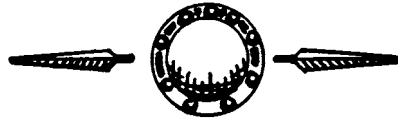




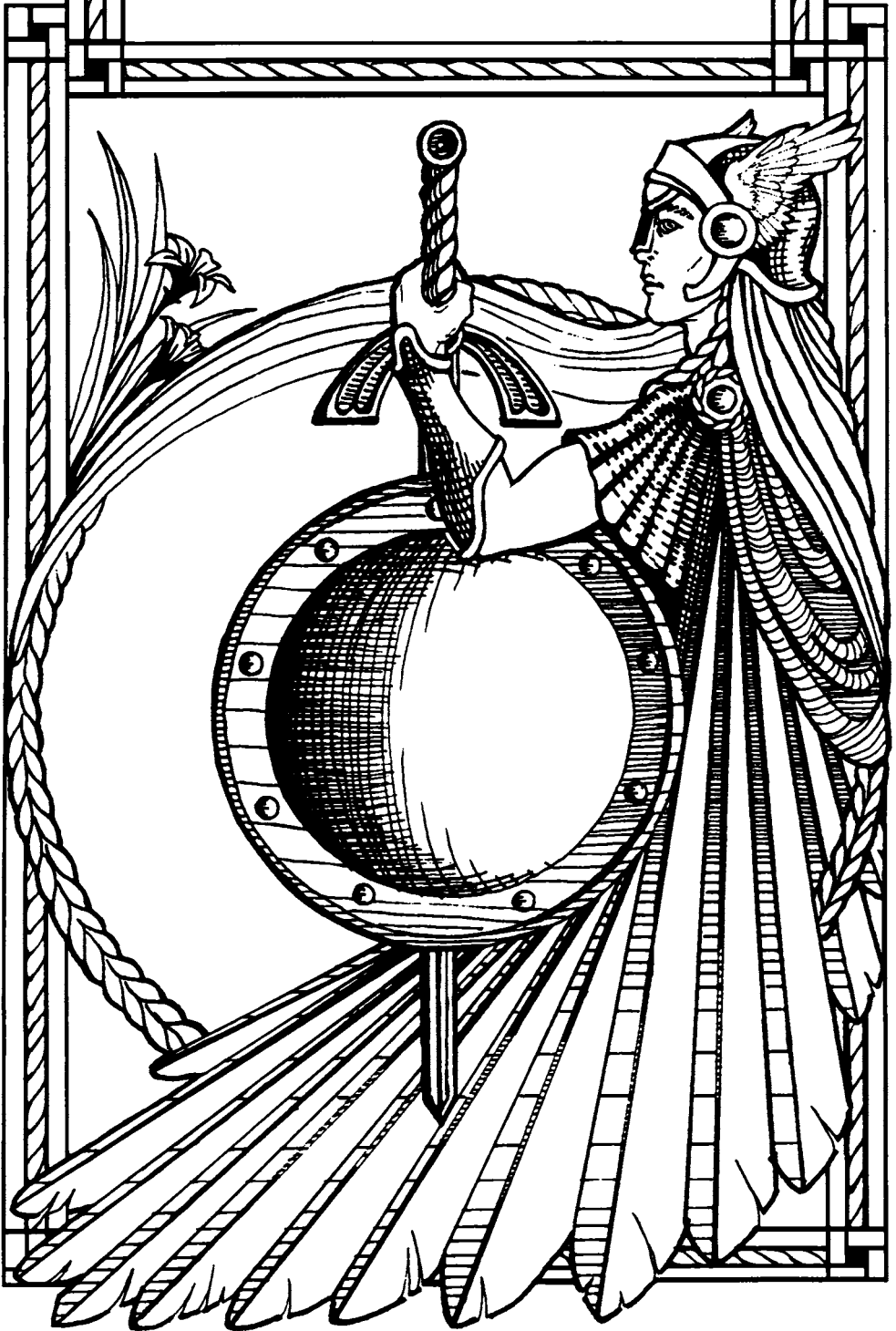
intrusion by women. They take part in these to bolster their maleness. Women should be doing the same and empowering their female-ness.

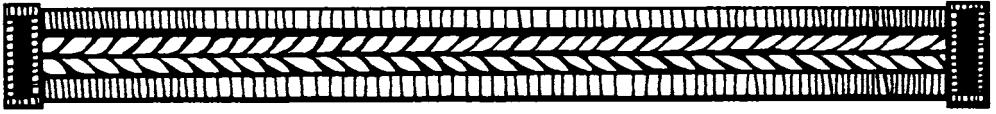
We need new feminine attitudes of self-value in this world. Begin the process of creating these attitudes within yourself, to shine forth as an example for other women. By raising the value and importance of women, first on an individual basis, then as a whole, we can change the consciousness of men. By changing the consciousness of men, we can create a new world.

Put on your spiritual falcon cloak and fly into new areas of feminine consciousness. And keep your spiritual Valkyrie sword ready to defend against old patriarchal ideas of limitation. A new window of spiritual enlightenment is opening for women as they rediscover the secret powers of their ancient foremothers. Step boldly through, and fly to freedom.



# Feminine Shamanism





## She Was the Beginning

**T**he movie producer George Lucas made an interesting statement in 1994 during an interview. He said that mythology is psychological archaeology. This goes along with the writing of Joseph Campbell<sup>1</sup> who called mythology the mother of the arts, not rationally invented, nor meant to be rationally understood.

Mythology is psychological archaeology, for the myths are spiritual teaching stories, full of symbols which speak to the subconscious and superconscious minds, and not meant to be taken literally. Of course, they are not to be understood rationally. One has to seek spiritually before the hidden truths in myths make any sense. They were composed deliberately in this manner. As stories, they are entertaining to the uninitiated. To the initiated and those seeking the Goddess and Her spiritual paths, the myths are full of superconscious symbols which apply to all humans, not just a particular culture or race.

The Goddess alone was in the beginning of all spiritual paths. She is depicted in great detail in ancient cave paintings, with any pictured males being shadowy unimportant forms. The surviving myths, many contradicted by later additions of male creators, speak of the Goddess by hundreds of names creating the world and everything in it out of Her own body or wise blood. This blood is cosmic menstrual fluid,

the primal creating medium of all life. Sometimes it is referred to as bloody boiling chaos. Bloody chaos is a symbol of the nothingness of darkness, boiling with primal energy. When it is fertilized with a life-spark from the Goddess, it coagulates into a desired form and manifests in the physical world.

The Great Goddess and Her aspects are described as the blackness of outer space, the Moon, the Earth, and the seas. If a myth describes the beginning of the Goddess at all, it says She created Herself out of the darkness of chaos. Most of the myths, however, merely say that the Goddess was. The Earth is Her body, the seas Her womb. The mystical energies of the waxing and waning Moon fertilized the oceans, producing life. Humans came last in Her line of created beings.

During the period of matriarchal influence, the Goddess is said to have created a companion for Herself. This companion was always a daughter. In later times, when patriarchy took over, companion/consorts were devised. The companion became a male, the son/lover.

The Goddess was the bestower of certain talents needed for civilization, such as architecture, art, music, dance, agriculture, medicine, all crafts, and much more. In the beginning of human civilization, these talents were first recognized and used by women. The men seem to have been more interested in hunting, athletic challenges, and playing games of chance than in plowing fields, building permanent shelters, or weaving cloth. The greatest gift was in the spiritual areas: shamanism and priestesses.

One can always separate the Creatrix goddesses out of mythology for they continued to hold their titles of self-begotten, self-produced, Great Mother, or Creatrix long into the patriarchal eras. In Egypt, there were Anqet/Anuket, Hathor, Maat, Mut, Neith, and Tefnut. The Middle East had Anat, Ashtart, Astarte, Inanna, Ishtar, Nanna, and Tiamat. The Greek Mother goddesses, many of whom came originally from the matriarchy of Crete, were Cybele, Gaea, Hera, and Themis. The Romans knew of Bona Dea, Juno, and Tellus Mater. Finland had stories of Maan Emoinen, Rauni, Ilmatar, and Lounnotar, while the Slavonic-Russians honored Mati Syra Zemlya. The Hindus of India had Devi, Durga, Kali, Lakshmi, Parvati, Tara, and Uma. Creatrix goddesses in China were Hu-Tu, Kuan Yin, and Nu Kua, while Japan honored Izanami. Among the Celtic clans there were Anu, Arianrhod, Badb, Danu, and Don. Frigg, Nerthus, and Siff belonged to the Norse.

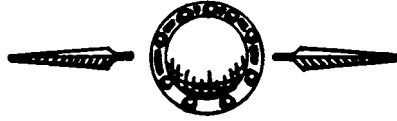
These goddesses have retained their titles of Great Mother in one way or another. Actually, every goddess known upon the Earth is merely a facet or aspect of one Goddess. Their separate identities all come from the One. As all the goddesses are not separate in reality, neither are the Earth and humans separate from Her.

The Goddess is the world, the universe, and a part of everything in it. She was there at the beginning, and she will be all that is left at the end. However, the Goddess will allow nothing to end permanently. She will recycle all the energy which has returned to Her and once more form new worlds, new plants and animals, new



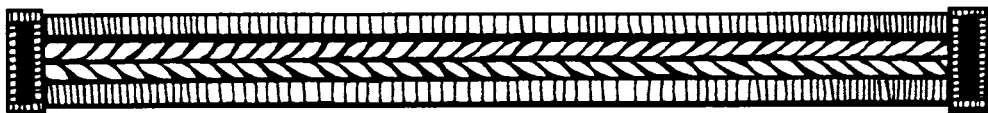
humans. She endlessly creates. We, as women, need to follow Her example and create within our own lives.

It is not desirable that we unthinkingly create children, for the world is vastly overpopulated at this time. We need to re-create ourselves and the atmosphere of the world. We need to pour our natural creative energy into things of beauty, things which are satisfying to the body, mind, and spirit. By doing these things, women can once more reclaim the powers of their foremothers who were confident in being strong, wise women.



## End Notes

1. Campbell, Joseph. *The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology*.



## The Female Shaman Today

**N**ot everyone is interested in Native American shamanism, which is male dominated and controlled. At one time, nearly every other part of the world had, or still has, a form of shamanism. European shamanism is nearly totally forgotten because Europe has been completely dominated and controlled by patriarchal Christians for a long time. Christianity does not want women to be independent, powerful, or knowledgeable. The only thing they condone is a semi-shamanism, in which people are not allowed to see any goddess except Mary.

Women were shamans long before men got into the act. They used their shamanic abilities to heal, find food for the clans, and predict the future. They knew that shamanism enabled them to merge the spiritual and physical without sacrificing either. Their excursions into the Otherworlds were into the Land of the Mothers, a term used much later by the Celts to describe the worlds of faery and the gods.

The original female shamanism was different from what is known as shamanism today. Feminine shamanism had no mention of male deities. No male gods ruled the Otherworlds, nor were they encountered on the journeys. When patriarchal shamans took over, they changed almost every mention of the Goddess into the God, and spoke of the tools and symbols as having masculine interpretations.

The quest of women on the shamanic path should be not only to find their spiritual center, but to embrace their feminine nature. Maureen Murdock<sup>1</sup> writes that the quest will heal the deep wound in the collective feminine soul and teach women how to value themselves once more. Although this quest is not confined to women, society as a whole seldom approves of it. Instead, society, and men close to the questing woman in particular, consciously or subconsciously interfere and often just plain sabotage her efforts.

Shamanism is a path which can appeal to women if it is approached in the proper manner. The basic idea behind feminine shamanism is the seeking and relating to the different aspects of the Goddess. For by understanding these aspects, women begin to understand themselves. Shamanism is a solitary path toward spirituality. Shamans seldom work together. This solitude did not originate because of professional jealousy, but rather because the shamanic journeys, so basic to the practice, can only be experienced by the person making them. A shamanic journey cannot be shared, as can a ritual or circle-working. Each journey is intensely personal. The shaman encounters deities, entities, and experiences tailored to her own spiritual needs. No shamanic journey is ever duplicated by another shaman.

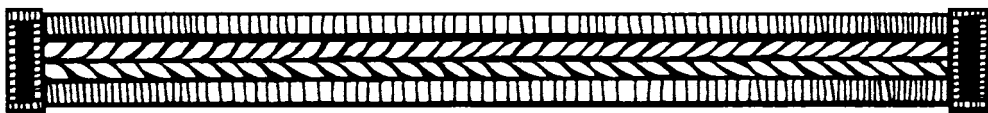
Once a person becomes serious about the practicing of shamanism, she begins to understand the importance of the myths and their spiritual symbols. The myths come alive while on shamanic journeys. One encounters the deities, other entities, and symbolic events mentioned in myths. The shaman discovers that the God/Goddess mentioned by one spiritual path is the same as that held in reverence by other paths. Only the names, and racial fervor, have changed. Shamans of all religions have a common ground in that they become messengers for the All to all people. Mircea Eliade wrote that the reason for our modern-day crises and breakdown of society is that the Western World no longer believes in any mythology.<sup>2</sup>

The practice of shamanism can benefit any woman, whether she presently belongs to a group or is on her own. It provides each woman with a personal method of contact with the Goddess and her own subconscious and superconscious minds. It requires no special equipment, although many shamans gradually gather what they feel they need. It can be done at any time, almost any place. All you need is your resolve to journey and a quiet place in which to do it. Although you may use shamanism to help others, you can easily use it to help yourself.

For a woman, shamanism is an ideal way to begin a spiritual search for her true inner self and to establish once more the vital link with the Goddess.

## End Notes

1. Murdock, Maureen. *The Heroine's Journey: Woman's Quest for Wholeness*.
2. Eliade, Mircea. *Myths, Dreams & Mysteries*.



## Traveling in Otherworlds

**A** shaman is a person who can enter an altered state of consciousness at will in order to contact and use Otherworld energies for gaining knowledge, healing people, and foreseeing the future. This is one of the oldest descriptions of priestessing powers.<sup>1</sup> Through her journeys during out-of-body experiences, the shaman has the help and support of one or more spiritual helpers, which can be spiritual guide, Nature spirit, animal, or deceased human.

Most shamans are healers first and foreseeers second. They are spiritual explorers of other realms of being. Every time a shaman makes her journey into Otherworlds, she is offering her self to help another. Shamans do not usually work black magick, curses, control of others, etc. The shaman's mind is more open to exploration in the inner realms, or Otherworlds, and to communication with all creatures than the minds of the followers of Orthodox religions. She does not believe in, nor has she found any evidence of, an unending hell or do-nothing paradise after death.

The shaman sees all aspects of the universe as interconnected, a network of energy patterns, vibrations, and entities. It is her responsibility to be an intermediary between the different worlds. No shaman will ever consider giving away



self-power, for this creates an imbalance which makes it difficult, if not impossible, to move about freely in the Otherworlds. Loss of self-power comes about through certain types of interaction with other people, drifting through life with no goals or plans, and not accepting responsibility.

The types of relationships which can bring about a loss of power are: associating with drug users, alcoholics, and anyone into criminal activity (their vibrations contaminate your aura even if you do not engage in similar activities); people who use you because they do not want to make a decision for themselves, or because they can convince you that they are incapable of taking care of themselves (they draw off your energy and/or blame you if anything goes wrong); verbally and/or physically abusive people who do not want you to succeed in whatever you try (you might get wise and not allow them to have power over you).

Shamanic methods around the world are basically the same, even though the cultures may be separated by great distances and vast periods of time. The shaman has complete control over entering and leaving her self-imposed Otherworld journey. She knows the differences between the Otherworlds and this physical one, and has no difficulty interacting while in a normal state of being. In summary, the shaman has to become an expert in self-control, self-responsibility, self-discipline, and reality in all its forms.

The shaman can freely move between the Ordinary State of Consciousness (OSC) and the Shamanic State of Consciousness (SSC).<sup>2</sup> In the SSC, dragons and other “mythical” creatures are real, as are flying, conversing with plants and animals, or experiencing symbols. She discounts nothing she sees while on her travels, but carefully considers their symbolism important and how the interpretation applies to her or the person for whom she is working.

Although no myths survive which specifically show the Norse goddess doing predictions, Freyja was also called Syr (seer or sow). The sow has long been a creature of the Goddess, particularly in Her Crone and prophetic form. To Freyja belonged the fabled falcon cloak (the astral method of learning what lies in the futures) mentioned in several stories. Her form of magick was shamanistic in nature, as represented by her falcon skin, which enabled her to shape-shift into a bird, travel to any of the Nine Worlds, and return with prophecies and a knowledge of destinies. Her priestesses knew how to go forth in either the form of an animal or the astral double in order to get information. They traveled to the Well of Urd to see possible patterns of future events. Present-day shamans still count these abilities as necessary in order to predict the future. Among the Norse peoples, the magick of Freyja was called *seidr*.

Details of the magick *seidr* given by the Norse goddess Freyja are sketchy at best because the Christians who recopied old stories deliberately destroyed much of the information. However, it is entirely possible to practice shamanistic *seidr* today. According to anthropologists, the basics of shamanism the world over are quite

similar. Followers of Freyja, whose *seidr* taught the craft of shape-shifting and astral travel, can reconstruct a practical version of *seidr* based on what is known of shamanism and trance-states.

In all shamanic cultures, the shaman's universe has three basic levels. Humans live on the Earth in a kind of middle zone between an Underworld and an Upperworld. These three realms are connected by a central point or axis, symbolized by the World Tree in Scandinavian legend. This Tree is considered to be the Center of the total Universe. The shaman is aware that this Center can be reached from any place she makes sacred, whether by ritual or determination.

The shaman can only reach these other levels through what Mircea Eliade calls "ecstasy."<sup>3</sup> This is actually a trance-state, a much safer method of Otherworld travel than astral dreaming. When in the SSC, the shaman is always free at any time to withdraw and return to the body. There are varying degrees of shamanic trance, from very light to very deep. Success is not measured by the depth of the trance, but by the information gained during the SSC.

Shamanic journeys all take place within the mind, which makes them impossible to prove to another. As in meditation, the shaman can see and hear what she wants to see and hear if she is not truthful with herself. The true shaman has seen the depths of her own soul, warts and all, and still strives toward the upward spiritual path.

Shamanic journeying into Otherworld realms is one of the easiest processes to learn. Using Norse terminology, the shaman would enter the Upperworld by climbing the World Tree or the Bifrost Bridge, the Underworld by following one of the Tree's roots deep into the ground, and the Middleworld of past and future by entering the Tree itself. Male shamans rarely enter the Underworld, as it is considered to be the realm of the Dark Mother, a place of death and magickal darkness.<sup>4</sup>

Since the work of the shaman is performed in Otherworlds and not the physical world, she has to journey into those strange realms of being. She must believe that the Otherworlds do exist, that she can travel to and through them whenever she wishes. She must learn to suspend normal awareness and so-called rational thought. Without this suspension, the shaman cannot build the necessary bridge between the worlds. Without this bridge, the shaman is unable to communicate with Otherworld beings, learn the secrets of the Elements, discover the ancient art of transformation, or use all of her senses to the maximum.

The Norse referred to the shamanic technique of traveling without the physical body as "faring forth." Sometimes the shaman did this by taking an animal form but retaining a human mind and thoughts. This is not the same thing as a *berserker* who lost all sense of humanity while in the animal form. The Norse sagas imply astral travel of the spirit in several stories. When Idhunn and her golden apples were stolen by the Giants, Loki used the falcon cloak to locate her; later, he borrowed it

again to locate Thorr's hammer when it was stolen. Loki also borrowed Frigg's falcon cloak to nose around the Geirrod's palace; to gain his freedom after he was captured, he promised to trick Thorr into the giant's hands. Other records speak of female shamans traveling in spirit, at the request of the clan leader, and returning to give accurate information on happenings at a distance.

Kveldulf Gundarsson<sup>5</sup> writes that the traveler should have a number of what he calls "use-names" because the roads between the worlds are dangerous. I have found about the same level of danger between the worlds as on city streets. The traveler, whether in the physical or astral, must use common sense and be aware at all times of what is going on around you. Hopefully, you would be cautious approaching strangers, talking to them, and letting them know much about you in everyday life. The same precautions should be exercised while on shamanic journeys.

Some astral entities, negative or borderline negative, will attempt to unscrupulously link with your auric field, thus drawing off energy and influencing your life. You should no more allow this than you would allow a total stranger to have your checkbook and then follow you home. Since your name is an intimate part of you and does contain some of your personal power, it is a good idea not to hand it around freely during your shamanic journeys.

Skilled shamans learn to experience the Otherworlds with all of their so-called physical senses. The length of this journey may vary, according to physical time, but the shaman herself is unaware of time. After all, time is a human-conceived idea with no validity in astral realms.

Most shamanic traditions say that the new shaman must acquire a guardian spirit and/or animal when first becoming a shaman. However, Pagans believe that each person already has a guardian spirit (called a *fylgja* by the Norse). Some sources translate this name as the fetch, or astral double, but I consider this entity to be the guide or guides who accompany everyone. Turville-Petre writes that the *fylgja* are personal guardian-spirits, while the *disir* are non-personal guardian-spirits. The name *fylgja* (*fylgjur* pl.; *fylgja* sing.) may come from the root meaning "to accompany." The Norwegian dialect has two words, *folga* (skin or covering) and *fela* (to hide), which may be related. This would make sense, since the *fylgja* is often said in myths to appear as an animal. The *fylgja* are only seen in dreams or by psychic people.

The shaman will, however, draw to herself animal helpers and more guides as she develops. These helpers can be deliberately sought on special journeys for that specific purpose.

Traditionally, shamans have a number of tools for their work: the drum, a special costume, herbs, a bag for sacred objects, smudge pots or incense burners, a staff, and sacred masks or face paints. They also collect stones, crystals, and other objects which become focal points for their powers. Shamans do tend to become pack-rats, each collecting and using whatever appeals to her. As for the drum, I per-

sonally find that appropriate non-vocal music helps me journey better than the pounding of drums. The beat of the drum also is a very penetrating sound, and a potential cause of problems with neighbors.

In the Norse shamanic tradition, the wand would be the *gandr* made of wood or bone. The *gandr* is used for invoking, sending, and charging objects. The staff is really a much larger *gandr* and can be used in place of a sword to trace out magical circles. It is also used for protection during journeys to the Upper and Underworlds. The sax is a dagger with only one edge; it is a tool for invoking, sending, or banishing. The Norse used either a drinking horn or a cup in ritual, but the horn is very difficult to balance. The fire-pot or incense burner symbolizes the primal creative energy of Muspellheim. Candles are used both as lighting and as part of spellworking. The Norse called an altar a *harrow*; this was usually placed in the center of the ritual area with the priestess (if working alone) facing north. If she was invoking for a group of priestesses, she would stand in the north, facing south. In the surviving myths, Thor's hammer was used to *hallow* or bless people or objects. In the original Norse feminine Mysteries, the *labrys* or double-axe of the Valkyries was used.

A circle is traced or cast with the staff, then hallowed with incense smoke. Deosil or sunwise movement is used for the Upperworld, and widdershins or counter-clockwise for the chthonic powers or the Underworld. A goddess is invoked at each direction: Idhunn in the east; Frigg in the south; Nehellania in the west; and Skadi in the north.

The Aett-Ring was the division of the heavens by the eight (*aett*) winds. This can be symbolized by an eight-point star. It is another symbol of the Nine Worlds: Midgard in the center with the other eight around it. The shaman create this in a microcosmic form during ritual. She uses its points as a compass when traveling in the Otherworlds.

Although a shaman may have several kinds of stones in her possession, crystals are considered as separate tools.<sup>6</sup> Crystals are often called stars from within the Earth. They do not have to have points to be of use to the shaman. As living things, crystals are extremely powerful, each resonating to different energies. The use of each crystal must be individually determined by the shaman. Sometimes, a shaman cannot discover the primary use of a crystal until she journeys to the Otherworlds with it by her side.

The Old Norse word *galdr* (magick chant) is mentioned in *Eireks Saga Rauda*, where a description of a prophecy meeting is given. Even into medieval times, *galdr* was spoken of as a murmured charm. *Galdr-magick* is the practice of rune magick and was considered to be different from *seidr*. However, a *galdrabok* was a book of magical spells and rituals.

Choosing to become a shaman is a very serious decision. To have safe and productive journeys, the shaman must be in control of herself at all times. This means dispensing with alcohol and drugs, even prescription drugs if they cause drowsiness



or lose of control. It also means keeping the ego tightly in control. True shamans do not give themselves titles such as “Master,” for they know that no one ever becomes a “Master,” and they have no need to impress anyone.

To become centered and balanced, every shaman must examine her life and discover who or what is obstructing her progress. This is not an exercise in placing blame; rather she must attempt to break negative connections, whether in the present life or influences from past lives. This can be very difficult, especially if the people doing the obstructing are family. We choose to be born into certain families and with certain people to pay off karmic debts, learn lessons, or help someone. Oftentimes, after we are born into this life and get deep into the living of it, we find that it is impossible or too demanding to perform all of the tasks we chose. If this is the case, the shaman must decide whether to continue contact with the negative person or go her own way.

The Norse believed in personal luck that comes with each person. They called this the *Hamingja*. This luck could be lost or damaged by not following your *wyrd* or fate; it could also be transferred from one person to another at death. The Norse also believed that this luck ran in families. I suspect that the *Hamingja* was kept in families by reincarnation or the deceased returning as a kind of family-guardian spirit. However, there was a second meaning of *Hamingja*, referring to people who could alter their appearance (shape-shift); that is, they astral traveled in another form.

Since true shamanic work only takes place through a journey to Otherworlds, the shaman has to become familiar with these dimensions of time-space. For example, the spirit of a sick person can only be healed while the shaman is in Otherworlds. All healing begins on the astral and then manifests in the physical. The shaman must understand how to get there, how to find the needed information, how to contact the sick person’s spirit, and how to begin the healing. The shaman can only begin a healing; the sick person must finish it by desiring to get well.

Take note: no shaman ever gives medical advice! The Goddess gave medical healing knowledge to humans, and we should be wise enough to use whatever physical healing means necessary. Healing through shamanism should be a supplementary aid, as the spirit body must be healed before the physical body can respond. Never recommend that a sick person give up medication or treatment.

The shaman is a messenger between the Otherworlds and this one. She is a sacred servant, a priestess, who sees the unconcealed truth with the inner eyes, who recognizes the interconnecting thread in all things. She must be able to stand apart from the emotions around her, yet care enough to journey to help someone.

During these journeys, the shaman may feel heat or cold. She may see brilliant light and colors or total darkness. Sometimes she will twitch or shake uncontrollably. These things do not always happen, and if they do, the shaman will not be



aware of it happening. These events are the physical body's way of reacting to the restructuring of the mental, emotional, and spiritual bodies of the shaman.

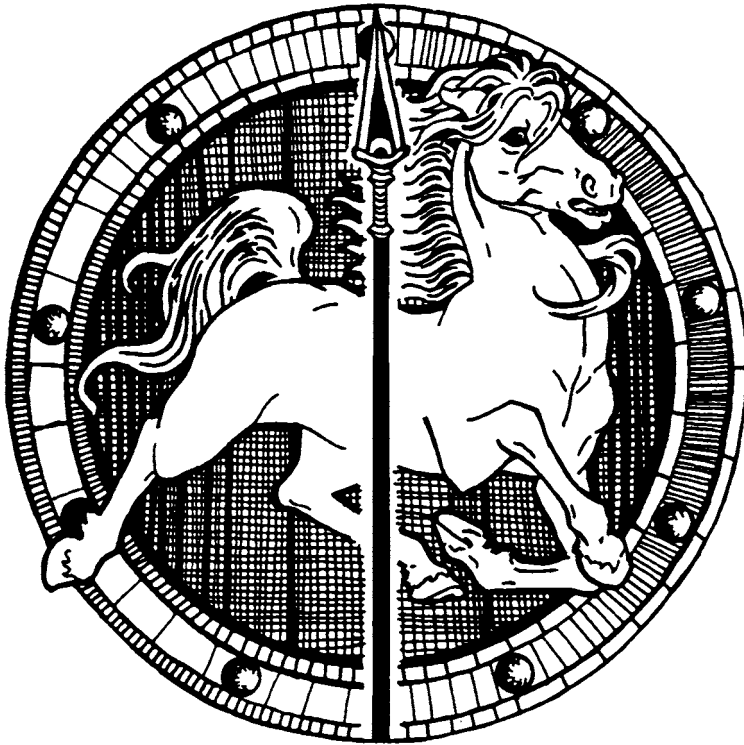
It is not necessary to travel to some ancient site, wilderness, or other special place in order to travel shamanically. A good shaman can perform her work wherever she is, as long as she has a minimum of quiet and privacy. A shamanic journey can be accomplished without any tools, drum-beating, or costume. The power of the shaman is within, not without in physical places or objects.

You need not follow the Nordic tradition to become a shaman. If your inner being does not resonate to the Norse goddesses, use goddesses who do light a spark within your soul. Change the World Tree to whatever is its equivalent in another culture. You may need to experiment with several cultures' traditions before you find what is right for you.

As a shaman, it is your responsibility to rediscover ancient teachings and reframe them into ways which can be used today. Let yourself become a common-sense walker between Worlds, a spiritual healer who is a line of communication between Otherworld beings and humans. Reconnect yourself with the Great Goddess, in whatever form She appears. Through your own reconnection, you are marking the path for other women. Strengthen your spiritual body so that your mental, emotional, and physical bodies may be strengthened as well. By becoming comfortable in the Otherworlds during shamanic journeys, you will know the reality awaiting you when you take your last journey. Greeting the Goddess after death will hold no fear, only anticipation and joy.

The following guided journeys are examples of what a shaman may see or experience while in the Otherworlds. Follow these at first until you are comfortable with your magickal work. Then strike out on your own. Discover new places and new experiences, and meet new entities.

Before attempting deep journeys into the Nine Worlds and three levels, take the following meditation-journey for yourself, a personal inner trip to discover your helpers and to present yourself for shamanic initiation. It will also help you to become comfortable in faring forth into the Otherworlds.





## Initiation Journey

Prepare the area in which you will be resting your body while journeying. Using your staff or the *labrys*, hallow this space by invisibly marking out a circle large enough for you to lie down or sit in comfortably. If you plan to lie down, spread a blanket. If you will sit, consider using a chair instead of sitting cross-legged. There is no advantage to getting leg cramps in the middle of a journey.

Carry smoking incense around the circle you have drawn. Be sure there is not so much smoke that you have difficulty breathing. Breathing during a shamanic journey is very different from the way you usually breathe. You will start out breathing deeply, then subconsciously switch to shallower breaths as you go deeper into trance.

Playing soft non-vocal music or a tape of shamanic drumming will cover most background noises. Place your staff and/or a crystal beside your blanket or chair.

Sit or lie quietly and visualize brilliant white light over your head. Surround yourself with this brilliant light. Take several slow, deep breaths and draw the white light inside your body. You can feel its tingling energy running through you. It is warm and comforting. This light is added protection for your physical body, which you will temporarily be leaving behind, and for your astral body in which you will do your traveling.



Relax your body, beginning at your feet and ending at your head. Mentally tell each body-part to relax; do not dwell on whether or not it is doing this, just assume it is and move on. As you relax your body, you will find that your consciousness moves upward along with the relaxation. Spend extra time on your shoulders, neck, and throat areas as these will be the most tense. As you relax your scalp, your consciousness will automatically move above your head. At this point you are ready to fare forth, or travel shamanically.

Visualize yourself standing on the bank of a pond or river. Call up every negative event or person which is causing problems in your life and throw them into the pond. Turn your back and walk away. This symbolic action informs your subconscious mind that you do not want to be bothered any longer with these negatives.

Now you find yourself standing by the side of a small well at the edge of a forest. Just beyond is a narrow flower-filled meadow with a path leading across it to a rocky mountain. The Sun is bright on the meadow, but the trees around you give cool shade. You reach out and touch the mossy stones which make up the sides of the well. You can smell the rich scent of evergreens from the forest.

As you stand enjoying the call of birds and the scolding squirrels, a tall figure comes out of the forest and greets you. This person is an Elf; it can be either male or female. Talk to the Elf, asking all the questions you wish. Listen closely to the answers.

The Elf lowers the bucket into the well and draws up the cold water. You drink from the bucket and feel strange new energies pulsing through your body. You are told that this water helps to open the psychic centers.

Finally, the Elf directs you to take the path across the meadow. As you walk across the sunny grass, you can smell the flowers dotted in clumps all over the open space. You notice the richness of their colors, the shape of their leaves.

In a short time you reach the foot of the rocky mountains. As you follow the upward-twisting path, you soon come to a narrow cave in among the large boulders. A short figure puffing on a pipe leans against the side of the cave opening. As you approach, you realize that this is a Dwarf. The Dwarf greets you and beckons you to come inside. As you follow this person inside out of the sunlight, you soon become aware that a faint light is given off by clusters of crystals embedded in the cave walls. The Dwarf answers all your questions and shows you many wonderful places in the underground community.

Soon the Dwarf leads you through another tunnel to the surface. There you bid the Dwarf goodbye and walk out once more into a sunny area. This time it is a woodland garden with beds of wild flowers, groves of trees, a whispering little brook, and several paths. You choose a path and follow it deeper into the garden.

You have not gone far when you come upon a Valkyrie standing in the center of the path. She is wearing chest armor and has a sword at her side, a spear in one hand. On her head is a shining helmet.





“Do you seek the Goddess?” she asks. “For only those who seek the Lady may pass this way.”

If you answer no, the Valkyrie will send you back to your physical body. If you answer yes, she will take you to a small pavilion where the Goddess Freyja sits on her throne.

You enter the pavilion and sit on a stool before the throne. The Goddess looks deep into your eyes and heart, then speaks to you of your future. The Valkyrie steps forward and hands a silver-headed spear to the Lady.

“Will you follow Me?” the Goddess asks. “Will you learn the old wisdom of *seidr* and be one of My priestesses?”

When you answer yes, the Lady touches the center of your forehead and over your heart with the tip of the spear. The reactions to this initiation are intensely personal, and each new shaman’s experiences are different. The Goddess gives you a special gift, which may materialize later in the physical.

As you bid the Lady farewell, the Valkyrie leads you back through the woodland garden to where her horse is tethered. The two of you mount, and the Valkyrie’s horse leaps into the sky. Swiftly, the warrior-woman takes you back to your physical body. You slide down from the horse and re-enter your body.

Give yourself several minutes to readjust, then make notes of your journey.

Almost everyone interested in Paganism or at least metaphysics has heard of teachers and guides. The orthodox religions call these entities angels and declare they have no gender. Surprise! All entities on the astral have gender. And everyone, even if they are unaware, has teachers and guides.

I have found over the years that most women believe, or have been told, they have mostly male guides. Women have become so brainwashed into thinking that only male astral entities have great power and knowledge that they fail to recognize and acknowledge the female entities who are with them. Having male teachers is not bad; just make certain that they are female-concerned. You may well find that male teachers take second place to female teachers.

The following guided astral journey will help you to find out about your teachers and guides, to dismiss any beings who are not female-concerned, and to acquaint yourself with the female guides (and/or those truly female-concerned) who are waiting to help you. It will also help you to realize that taking a shamanic journey is not that difficult or exotic.

You will never be trapped in a shamanic journey. You can leave at any time by thinking of your physical body. The part of you journeying will immediately slide back into the body and you will be in the Ordinary State of Consciousness once more.

It is a good idea to keep a shamanic journey notebook in which you record your “adventures.” This should be as private as a personal diary, for you will be recording your innermost thoughts and feelings also.





## Finding Your Teachers

Prepare the area in which you will be resting your body while journeying. Using your staff or the *labrys*, hallow this space by invisibly marking out a circle large enough for you to lie down or sit in comfortably. If you plan to lie down, spread a blanket. If you will sit, consider using a chair instead of sitting cross-legged. There is no advantage to getting leg cramps in the middle of a journey. Carry smoking incense around the circle you have drawn. Be sure there is not so much smoke that you have difficulty breathing. Breathing during a shamanic journey is very different from the way you usually breathe. You will start out breathing deeply, then subconsciously switch to shallower breaths the deeper into trance you go. Playing soft instrumental music or a tape of shamanic drumming will cover most background noises. Place your staff and a crystal beside your blanket or chair.

Sit or lie quietly and surround yourself with brilliant white light. This light is added protection for your physical body, which you will temporarily be leaving behind, and for your astral body in which you will do your traveling.

Relax your body, beginning at the feet and ending at the head. Mentally tell each body-part to relax; do not dwell on whether or not it is doing this, just assume it is and move on. As you relax your body, you will find that your consciousness moves



upward along with the relaxation. Spend extra time on your shoulders, neck, and throat areas as these will be the most tense. As you relax your scalp, your consciousness will automatically move above your head. At this point you are ready to fare forth, or astral travel.

Before you try to go anywhere in the astral planes, always visualize yourself making a stop at a pond or river. Take all the negative events and people who are causing you trouble and throw them into the pond. This act insures that you do not clutter yourself with negative emotions. If you fail to do this, your unbalanced subconscious will attract negative astral entities. You are especially protected from making close contact with negative entities on this journey, so you will not find them masquerading as your guides.

Before you is a path leading from the pond into a small grove of trees. You follow it, aware of the woodland scents and sounds around you. Soon you come to an opening in the trees and step out into a tiny meadow. In the center of this open space stands a single standing stone, covered with moss. Near the foot of the stone is a little spring, bubbling softly inside a basin of stones studded with crystals. You kneel and with cupped hands drink the cold water.

Suddenly you hear someone call your name. As you stand and look across the meadow, you see several figures coming toward you. These are your main teachers and guides. One of them will be your *fylgja*, or main guide.

As these figures stand before you, you notice that they are all women. Although you may not be given their names until a later time, try to determine how they differ one from another. Observe their clothing, hair, eyes, skin coloring, height. If you wish to acknowledge any male teachers and guides, ask for them to make an appearance now. If you do not wish for any teachers of the male sex, also let that be known.

Spend as much time as you want getting acquainted with these beings. Ask them any questions you wish. Ask each one what their specialty is, for each will excel in a particular area. Ask them if there is anything you should or should not be doing in your life. Listen intently to their answers.

Your teachers may suggest that you accompany them on a brief journey to another astral place. Sometimes this will not happen the first time; each shamanic journey is very different and depends upon individual preparedness. You will be safe wherever they take you as long as you remain in the company of these beings.

Before you leave the astral planes, your teachers will ask you to place your hands on the standing stone and make your commitment to the Pagan way of life and the Goddess. If you do not feel prepared to make the commitment at this time, explain this to them. The invitation will be given again later.



Invite your teachers and guides to join you on your future shamanic journeys as well as guide and protect you in your everyday life. One or more of them may give you a special small gift, which will probably materialize later on the physical.

As you are talking with your guides, you become aware that several animals and birds have gathered around you. Animals, birds, stones, and plants are able to communicate with travelers on the astral planes. Talk with these creatures and determine which will aid you in your astral travels.

When you are ready to return to your physical body, simply think of it and you will find yourself sliding down a shaft of brilliant white light into your body. Give yourself a few minutes to readjust before getting up. Then record your experiences in your journal while they are still fresh in your mind.

Before trying to find your way about in the Norse Otherworlds, the shaman should understand something about these places and who dwells there. The following descriptions of Otherworld planes and the goddesses who inhabit them should be looked upon as maps, much as you would use before going on a vacation to some far-away place. You do not need to memorize these details; just let your mind become familiar with them.

In Norse shamanism, there are Nine Worlds, but only three levels. These Worlds are all connected with the World Tree. I refuse to use the name Yggdrasil, as that connects the World Tree with Odhinn; the Tree was a sacred image of the Goddess long before Odhinn came into being. The World Tree has three roots, one of which descends into each of the three levels. In Asgard this root is near the Well of Urd (Fate), where the Norns live; in Jotunheim, near the Spring of Mimir (Wisdom); in Niflheim, at the Spring of Hvergelmir (the source of eleven rivers).

Two races of deities are mentioned in the Norse myths: the Aesir and the Vanir. The Aesir obviously are patriarchal entities who first tried to overcome, then merged with, the earlier Vanir. The Vanir are the remnants of a matriarchal culture. Even after the Aesir came, the Vanir goddesses were considered to be essential, for they held the gift of life, good fortune, wise rule, and victory. They protected warriors in battle; their friendship was never treacherous or devious, as was that of the Aesir. The Vanir rituals included sacred sex, ecstasies, and veneration of the dead.

There are twelve palaces listed in the myths: Bilskirnir (Lightning), of Siff; Thrymheim (Thunder-home), of Skadi; Folkvang (Field of Warriors), of Freyja; Himminbjorg (Heaven Hall), of the god Heimdall; Bredablik (Broadview), of Nanna; Sokkvabekk (Stream of Time and Events), of Saga, goddess of history; Glitnir (Hall of Splendor), of the god Forseti; Gladsheim (Shining-home), of Frigg; Ydalir (Valley of Yews), of the god Ull; Landvidi (White Land or Broad Land), of the god Vidar; Valaskjalf (Halls of Silver), of the god Vali; Noatun (Anchorage or Shipyard), of the god Njord, father of Freyr and Freyja.

The Elements can correspond to certain worlds of Norse legend; the Norse traditional magick has an extra Element—Ice. Jotunheim is an Air Element; Muspellheim, Fire; Vanaheim corresponds to Water, Niflheim to Ice, and Asgard to Spirit. Midgard, of course, is Earth.

The top level of the Nine Worlds contains Asgard (home of the Aesir deities), Vanaheim (home of the Vanir deities), and Alfheim, land of the light elves (Ljosalfar). The beautiful tri-colored Bifrost Bridge, guarded by Heimdall, arches through the skies between Asgard and Midgard. From his tower Himinbjorg (Ward of Heaven), Heimdall can see for a hundred leagues.

Asgard itself is situated on an island in the middle of the broad dark Thund river which flows up through the World Tree from Hvergelmir. This flaming, boiling river laps the base of the high walls around Asgard, making it impossible to enter except through one gate.

Valaskjalf, the Court of Judgment, is in the center of Asgard. This great hall is roofed with silver and all the walls are overlaid with burnished gold. There are thirteen seats here for the deities who sit in judgment.

Valhalla, the hall where the slain warriors dwell, is located in Asgard, with the torrent Thund just outside its Valgrind gate. The Valkyries are said to live in Valhalla.

Vingolf (Abode of Friends) is a beautiful, private sanctuary for the Aesir goddesses. Also in Asgard is a smithy where the Elf-smiths, or Dwarves, work fine metals. In Teutonic myths, the Elf-smiths were stronger than Giants.

Freyja's hall Folkvang is in Vanaheim; as the goddess who kills, then resurrects, Freyja personifies attributes of the Great Goddess. Freyja rules over Vanaheim, while Frigg's domain is Asgard.

Alfheim, or Lightalfheim, is the home of the elves, with the Elf Delling as its guardian. The sagas record that the god Freyr, brother of Freyja, was given Alfheim as a teething gift. As late as 1018 CE in Sweden, country people were celebrating *alfablots*, a healing ritual connected with the Elves.<sup>7</sup>

In Asgard, the goddess who rules is Frigg. Her name means "beloved." She is the best known of the Asynjur (the feminine of Aesir), although her traits point to her Vanir origin. Although very powerful, Frigg is mostly known for her silence. She knows the fate of every human and deity, but, except for her temporary interference in her son Balder's life, she remains aloof from interfering in the *wyrd* of humans. Frigg is often shown with the distaff, which probably makes her the creatrix of the life-thread. This life-thread then goes to the Norns for the weaving of the web of *wyrd*. Legend says she also had a daughter, Fjorgynn, about whom nothing is known.

Several of Frigg's handmaidens are mentioned in the myths. Eir was a deity of healing, while Vor and Var witnessed oaths and punished oath-breakers. The Ger-

man word *wahr* (true), and the English words “aware” and “beware,” are all connected with the name Var. Var counseled being aware and cautious when contemplating oaths, marriage vows, signing contracts, and such. She also punished those who mistreated in any way or broke trust with their spouses, families, or loved ones. Lofn helped those having difficulty getting married. Vjofn made people love each other and also gave aid in keeping peace between spouses. Hlin (Protector) guarded the favorite humans of Frigg, while Snotra granted prudence. Gna (who has many Valkyrie traits) rode the horse Hofvarpnir (Hoof-tosser) through air and over seas to supervise Frigg’s workings. Syn kept out those who should not enter (perhaps the uninitiated?) and aided in law suits. Frigg’s sister Fulla was her personal messenger and gave special gifts to humans from this goddess.

Frigg’s home is Fensalir (Ocean Halls), and near it is Gladsheim and Valhalla, where the Valkyries lived. In *Gudrunarkvica*, the Valkyries are referred to as *Herhans disir*, or Odhinn’s disir, but the *disir* and the Valkyries actually belong to Freyja and possibly Frigg.

Frigg had a cloak of hawk feathers, similar to that owned by Freyja. This would make her a goddess of *seidr* magick also. In later times she was associated mainly with marriage, childbirth, and home crafts. Although the myths do not say, Frigg is very likely a Vanir goddess, for her attributes are Vanir in nature.

Freyja is the goddess who oversees Vanaheim, the home of the Vanir deities who were noted for their wisdom, foresight, and magick. Her name translates roughly as “Lady.” She was not only a goddess of fertility, sexual pleasure, and magick, but embodied the life-force of all creation; this caused her to be the target of the Giants on several occasions, who wanted her, not for sex, but for the life-force she controlled. Ritual marriage may have played a part in some of her rites.<sup>8</sup> Myth calls this goddess Bride of the Vanir.

Freyja was also a deity of riches. The skalds called gold “the tears of Freyja,” for myth says that she wept tears of gold and amber. Brisingamen, the famous necklace or belt, belonged to her. Davidson writes that the word *men* referred to an ornament worn at the neck. In the Old English tale *Beowulf* there is mention of a necklace or collar named Brosingamene. Menglad, or “necklace-glad,” was another of her names. Although Freyja is said to have bought her necklace from four dwarves (Elements?) of the Brisings by sleeping with each one night, the name may come from a form of the word *brisingr* (fire). Necklaces have always been associated with Mother Goddesses around the world.

Right after Freyja obtained Brisingamen, Odhinn had Loki steal it. In *Husdrapa*, Snorri tells how the god Heimdall fought with Loki in the form of seals and retrieved Brisingamen for Freyja. A second version of the theft is in *Sorla Thattr*. Heimdall appears to have been Freyja’s guardian-champion, much like a lover of the Great Goddess.

A little-known myth says Freyja had two daughters, Hnoss and Gersemi, both names meaning “jewel.” The skaldic kenning *Syrar maer* (daughter of Freyja) was used to signify “treasure.”<sup>9</sup> No name is given for the father of these girls. However, as a Great Goddess, Freyja could have produced them without a male, thus creating a form of the Triple Goddess.

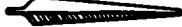

Freyja’s day was Friday, and her number was thirteen. Among the Norse, Friday was considered a very lucky day for marriages, doubly so if it was Friday the thirteenth. After Christianity took over, both Friday and the number thirteen were changed into unlucky omens, in an attempt to dissuade the people from believing in anything connected with the Goddess. Freyja drove a chariot pulled by two cats, or rode a sow called Hildisvini (Battle-Sow). She also possessed a falcon skin cloak which enabled her to fly throughout the Nine Worlds. Robert Graves writes that one of Freyja’s animals was the raven before the patriarchal Odhinn took the bird as his.<sup>10</sup>

A certain kind of love song, called *mansongr* or in German *Minnegesang*, was sung in her honor; the *mansongr* was also part of the sex magick of *seidr*.

Freyja was also a goddess of war, strife, and death. She received half the slain heroes, male or female; the souls of unmarried women were also hers. Snorri relates how she rides out to battle. The *Grimnismal* records the name of her residence, Folkvang or “Field of Folk.” Her hall was called Sessrumnir (Seat-roomer); it was shaped like a ship with rowers’ benches along each side. She is Queen of the Valkyries and rides with the *disir*. The *disir* and the Valkyries were considered to be both spiritual entities and physical beings. As spirit guides, the *disir* appeared in dreams and were then referred to as *spadisir*. The *disablót* (a festival held in their honor) was celebrated at the beginning of winter, in Sweden at the beginning of February.

As a goddess of great power, Freyja could erupt in anger at injustice, even if it came from Odhinn. In one of the myths Odhinn promised her to the Giant Thrym in exchange for Thorr’s stolen hammer (stolen through Loki’s usual trickery). When Freyja heard of this plan, the story says her eyes went wild and her neck swelled with rage, breaking Brisngamen, her necklace. All the gods fled the hall. Needless to say, Odhinn did not send her to Thrym; Thorr went disguised as a veiled bride, with Loki as his attendant.

Idhunn is rather a shadowy figure except for her role as keeper of the golden apples, which did not give immortality but kept the gods from aging. One time Idhunn and her apples were stolen by the Giant Thjazi, the father of Skadi. Loki rescued Idhunn and returned the goddess and her apples to Asgard, killing Thjazi in the process. When Loki was finally chained, Skadi took her revenge by hanging a poison-dripping snake over Loki.



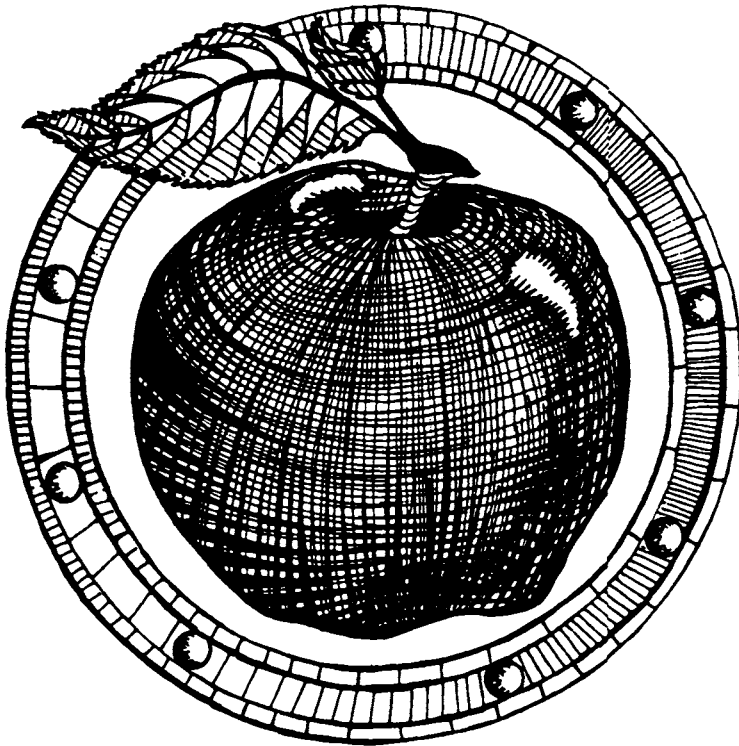
Apples have always been significant in the feminine Mysteries; when an apple is sliced crosswise, a pentagram is revealed in the pattern of the seeds. Myths say that Idhunn's father was a Giant, Ivalde, and her brother was Orvandil. Balder's wife Nanna was also the daughter of Ivalde.

Siff was a prophetic goddess with corn-gold hair. The older German sources call Siff a swan maiden. Her first husband was Orvandil, her second Thorr by whom she had two sons, Magni (Might) and Modi (Wrath). She is a goddess of harvest, fertility, and happy families. In Old Norse, the phrase *Ar ok fridr* (good harvest and peace) was used in much the same way as the modern "May God bless you."

An Upperworld goddess, whom the myths place in the Sun, is Sol. The Anglo-Saxons called her Sunna. As the shining goddess, her fires were so fierce that she protected the Earth from them with the shield Svalin (Cooler). Her chariot was pulled by two horses named Arvakr (Early-Awake) and Alsvith (Very Swift). Tradition says that Sol is pursued by the wolf Skoll, who is constantly trying to eat her.

The goddess Saga is an unusual deity in that she is known only through the fact that each day the god Odhinn visited her hall Sokkvabekk to talk and drink with her.





## Journey to the Upperworld

Prepare yourself for your shamanic journey by hallowing your sacred space, surrounding yourself with white light, and relaxing your body. Remember to rid yourself of negatives at the pond before attempting to enter the Upperworld.

Now you find yourself standing at the bottom of Bifrost Bridge, the rainbow bridge which reaches from Midgard up into Asgard. Swiftly and easily, you climb Bifrost until, at last, you come to the great golden gates of the Upperworld. The god Heimdall stands there in his shining armor and helmet, holding his great sword. He asks you the purpose of your journey, then opens the gates for you to pass through.

Inside the gates awaits a Valkyrie who quickly takes you to Frigg's palace of Fensalir. On your way there, you pass through beautiful gardens and alongside little rippling streams. When you see Frigg's palace, you are surprised at its delicate beauty. The building is long with overhanging eaves; the great doors stand open.

You enter the spacious hall with its high rafters and tapestry-hung walls. In the center of the building is a fire-pit, logs crackling in its stone-lined interior. Benches and carved chairs are grouped throughout the hall. Richly-colored cushions and blankets cover the chairs.

Beyond the fire-pit is a figure seated on a high-backed chair. Several female figures stand around the sides of the chair. The Valkyrie leads you to this figure. As you stand before the great chair, you see Frigg, ruler of this hall. She is tall with long, beautiful earth-brown hair falling in two braids over her shoulders. She is dressed in green and golden-brown robes, the color of the fields in spring and summer. Over her shoulders hangs a cloak of hawk feathers. Her dark eyes look straight into yours as she speaks. You smell the scent of flowers and fresh earth around this goddess.

“Welcome, daughter,” Frigg says. “You are beginning a great spiritual journey which will take you far. My handmaidens and I greet you as a Goddess-sister. Whenever you have need of spiritual replenishment, come to this hall, for here you will find peace and rest from worldly cares.”

Frigg takes your hands in hers and speaks to you of many things which you need to resolve. Although she will not give you predictions for the future, she may offer advice on present problems.

Another slender form steps to your side. It is Idhunn, the keeper of the golden apples. She holds out a slice of fruit and you eat it.

“By eating of this food of the goddesses,” she says, “you can cultivate an ageless mind and spirit. This apple symbolizes the necessary curiosity, willingness to learn, and flexibility to flow with whatever happens. By cultivating these in your life, you will never age in the important areas of your being: the mind and the spirit itself.”

A sudden brilliant light bursts through the hall as the goddess Sol enters. The pulsating light is so bright that you cannot see her clearly. She stands with one hand on your shoulder while she greets Frigg.

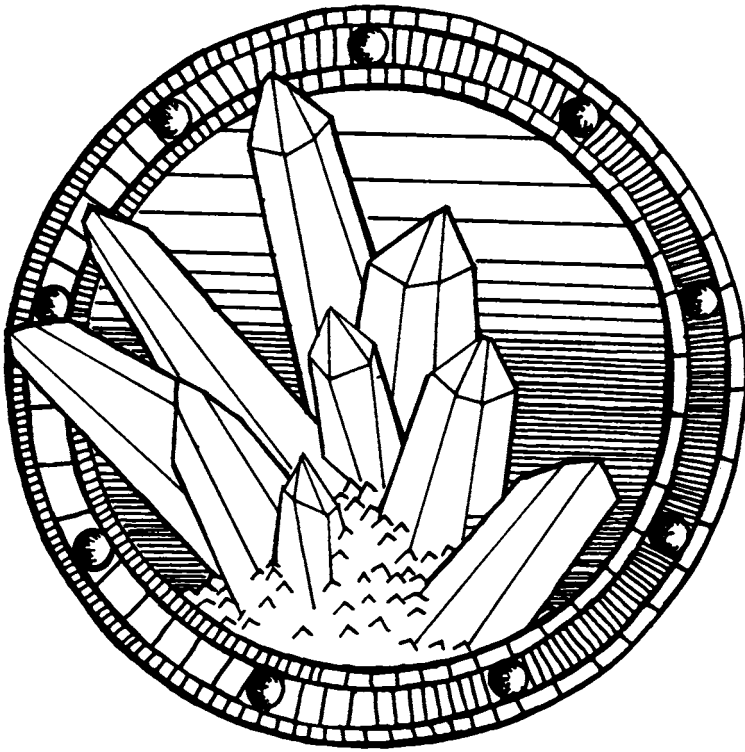
“Hail, Great Mother,” Sol says. “May all women once more find their way to you. And you, sister, may your life be full of growth and prosperity, love and happiness. Whenever you have need of enlightenment, seek my Light.”

The Valkyrie touches your arm and tells you that you must go now. You say goodbye to all of the goddesses and follow the Valkyrie back out into the garden. She takes you back to the great gates and Bifrost Bridge. As you climb the rainbow again, you look back at the walled realm of the goddesses.

When you reach the top of the rainbow bridge, you find yourself sliding down the other side. Just as you reach the end of the rainbow, you slide gently back into your physical body. Give yourself a few moments to readjust before recording your experiences.

When you return on journeys to the Upperworld, you can visit other places, such as Valhalla, the other palaces, or the great forges where Dwarves create beautiful objects for the goddesses.

Freyja is such a powerful goddess that a special shamanic journey to the Upperworld should be performed to visit her.



## Journey to Folkvang

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Your Valkyrie friend awaits you just beyond the gate. Together you go through the garden-like setting into a different area than you visited before. This is Vanahaim, the home of the Vanir goddesses, and the realm of the goddess Freyja.

The palace Folkvang is situated in the midst of a marsh. The Valkyrie leads you down the hard-packed and safe dirt path toward the great hall. You hear the croak of frogs among the reeds and see dragonflies hovering above the little pools of dark water. White herons walk slowly through the cattails and rushes.

When you enter Folkvang, you are immediately aware of the richness of the decorations. Gold and amber are everywhere, set into chests and chairs, embedded



in goblets and dishes on the long table. Freyja sits majestically on her throne at one end of the hall with many Valkyries around her. You move forward until you stand before the goddess.

Freyja's long hair is braided in the front but hangs loose down her back. She is dressed in shining body armor, with a long white skirt below, and a winged helmet. Around her neck is a glorious necklace which sparkles with rich gems. Over the back of her throne hangs her mystical falcon feather cloak. Her sheathed sword leans against her throne near her right hand. A golden-headed spear stands near her left. At her feet are curled two huge cats, their green eyes watching you.

"Welcome, daughter," Freyja says to you. "I am pleased that you seek the old Mysteries and woman's magick. Come, let us talk of magick, of the right to protect yourself, and of the pride of being woman."

One of the Valkyries brings a chair for you to sit beside the goddess. You talk with Freyja of many things. You can ask any questions you wish. When you are finished, the goddess will bless you by touching you with her sword (protection), spear (initiation), the necklace Brisingamen (prosperity), or her falcon cloak (wisdom and knowledge).

You leave the great hall with your Valkyrie guide. She leads you back through the marshes, but turns aside before you reach the gates. Near the banks of a mighty river stands a lone palace, its walls decorated with silver planetary and Goddess symbols. The Valkyrie motions you to enter alone.

The interior of this palace is dim, lit only by small candles which reflect from the surfaces of many forms of crystal. A woman in a deep blue robe comes to greet you. This is the goddess Saga and the palace is her home, Sokkvabekk.

"I am the voice into the future," she says as she looks at you with dark eyes. "Come. Sit with me as I show how things past affect things present and future."

The two of you sit on dark blue cushions on carved wooden chairs. Saga hands you a great clump of crystal, its many points bright in the candlelight. As you hold it in your hands, you feel its coldness and energy.

"Look into the crystal," Saga instructs you, "and you will see past connections with present relationships. The past always affects the present." She taps the center of your forehead with her finger.

You look down into the crystal and see what past events with a certain person are still affecting you now. This relationship may be in the form of a spouse, lover, friend, business person, or anyone. You watch the past unfold within the crystal as if watching a movie.

Saga takes the crystal when you are finished. Once more she taps the center of your forehead.



“You must learn not to leave the psychic eye open all the time,” Saga instructs. “Go in peace, sister.”

You leave the dim hall and follow the Valkyrie back to the Bifrost Bridge. As you slide down the bridge, you re-enter your physical body. After a few moments of relaxation, make notes of your journey so you will remember what you have been told and shown. You may need to contemplate what Saga’s crystal showed you on relationships.

The second level is Midgard, a middle world where humans dwell. There is some confusion about whether Jotunheim, world of the Giants, actually is part of Midgard or is on the same level close to it.<sup>11</sup> Wherever it is actually situated, it is walled off from Midgard. This eastern land of frost, rock, and violent winds and storms is the home of most of the Giants. Thrym the hard-hearted rules Jotunheim.

Nidavellir, land of the dwarves and a subterranean region, and Svartalfheim, land of the dark elves and ruled by Modosgnir, are also found on the borders of Midgard. In Old English the word dwarf was *dweorg*, in Old Norse *dvergr*, and in Old High German *zwerc* or *gitwerc*. In both the *Voluspa* and the *Pulur* are given the names of about one hundred dwarves. Snorri wrote that dwarves were dark elves; no other records or myths backs him on this. We do know that four dwarves created Brisingamen, and that four other dwarves (Austri, Vestri, Nordri, and Sudri) hold up the four corners (directions) of the sky.



Bifrost (Trembling Roadway) is the flaming narrow rainbow bridge which connects Asgard and Midgard; it is said that only the initiated can cross it. Snorri Sturluson (1179-1241 CE), in *Gylfaginning*, wrote that Bifrost has three colors; perhaps these were the three colors of the Goddess (white, red, black). The River Irving forms a boundary between Asgard and Jotunheim, but never freezes over. Nerthus, the Earth Mother, rules over Midgard, while Skadi’s domain is in Jotunheim.

The Norns, who dwell at the Well of Urd, represent time. Urd rules over what has already happened; Verthandi over what is happening; and Skuld over what will happen in the future.

The cauldron and the well have long been symbols of the same attributes: birth and death; renewal and rebirth; inspiration and magick; prophecy and psychic gifts.

The Scandinavian Norns are among the oldest and most mysterious forms of the Triple Goddess. Tradition says they live in a magick cave at the root of the World Tree near the Well of Urd, or *Urdarbrunnr*. Although they symbolize the waxing, waning, and Full Moon, the Norns also have control over the fate of every creature, including the gods. They see that all karma is balanced, that all cosmic order precedes in a logical manner. No one is exempt from their law, or *orlog*.



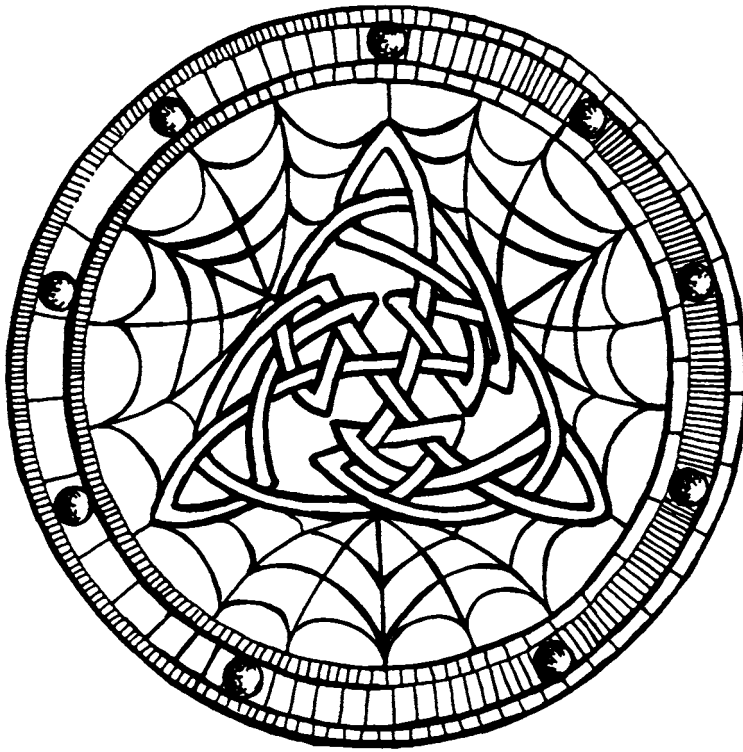


The first Norn is Urd, “That which has become”; she is the oldest. Her name is found in the word Earth and the Saxon word *Weird* or *Wyrd*. The second Norn is Verthandi, “That which is becoming.” Skuld, “That which shall become,” is the third Norn and the youngest. Myth says that occasionally Skuld rode with the Valkyries. The Saxons called her Skadi, Death Goddess. Skuld gave her name to Scandinavia, Scotland, and Scotia.<sup>12</sup> The Norns were later turned into the three faeries or three Witches in Christian stories.

The Norns’ primary association is with threads and cords, the usual tools of Fate goddesses. They do not appear to create life and fate; each person creates her own fate by actions or inactions. The Norns merely shaped the fate, weaving the life-thread given to them by Frigg into a web of *wyrd* and cutting the thread at the proper time.

The Norns, as with all Fate goddesses, are associated with the triangle, the same sign which is a symbol of the Triple Goddess. To the Norse, a sign of Fate or *wyrd* was the Valknut, three interlaced triangles. The Valknut was sometimes called the Knot of the Vala, or Valkyrie. The priestesses of the Earth magick of Freyja’s *seidr* knew the magick of knots, and the Valknut is a kind of knot.





## Journey Through Time

Prepare yourself for your shamanic journey by hallowing your sacred space, surrounding yourself with white light, and relaxing your body. Remember to rid yourself of negatives at the pond before attempting to enter the Upperworld.

Go to the World Tree and place both hands on it. Feel the rough tingling of the bark. As you press against the Tree, it opens and you slid easily inside the trunk. You see the energy of the Tree moving up and down through it like pulsating lines of light. Quickly, you follow one of the upward lines. Soon you find yourself near an opening, and you go through it.

Nearby is a spring which bubbles up through the ground into a rock-lined shallow basin. Just beyond this spring is the dark opening of a cave. Three women come out of the cave and move silently until they stand beside the spring. In their hands they carry cords, which they are constantly weaving into patterns.

“We are the Norns. I am Urd,” says the woman with the white cord. “I am That Which Has Been. Through me, you can look into the past.”

“I am Verthandi,” says the woman with the red cord. “I am That Which is Becoming. Through me, you can look into all parts of present time.”

“And I am Skuld,” says the woman with the black cord. “I am That Which May Happen. I show all future possibilities.”

The Norns sit with you on the grass beside the Well of Urd. You discuss with them what time era you wish to see and why. They may make suggestions about times which will provide you with information. As they talk, the Norns weave their threads together into a giant web. When you have decided where in time you wish to go, they throw the web over you. You feel yourself shoot through the web and into time and space until you reach the era you specified.

You are aware that the glowing web is still over your body-form, but you are not hindered in any way. Whenever you want to return, hold the web in both hands and say: “Urd! Verthandi! Skuld!” You will instantly return to the Norns at the well.

Take time now to discuss your time journey with the Norns. They will be able to answer any questions and clarify anything you are unsure about. When you wish to return to your body, re-enter the World Tree and follow an energy line downward until you come to an opening. Exit the Tree, think of your physical body, and slide back into it.

In the Midgard level of the Nine Worlds, there are three places to visit while on a shamanic journey: Nidavellir, Svartalfheim, and Jotunheim. To begin a journey to one of these realms, start at the World Tree. Ask for a friendly guide to appear.

To visit Nidavellir and Svartalfheim, visualize yourself at the World Tree. Touch it and feel its rough, pulsating bark. Feel the atmosphere around you changing as you embrace the Tree. When you turn around, you will see a Dwarf waiting to escort you to the Midgard realm you wish to visit. Dwarves may appear unfriendly at times, but they are seldom, if ever, threatening to the astral traveler. Dwarves know all the wisdom and magicks pertaining to stones and metals.

If you plan to visit Jotunheim, realm of the Giants, the request for a friendly guide is vital, as all Giants are not friendly toward humans. When entering Jotunheim, it is advisable to carry your magickal staff at all times. It is also a good idea to visualize yourself wearing a hooded cloak as a kind of disguise and magickal armor. Do not give your real name to Giants, as they can use it as a connection to reach your vibration in the physical. By following this thread of connection, certain trouble-making Giants can cause small problems and irritations in your life. If you feel threatened at any time, you have only to think of returning to your body and you will do so. Visiting Jotunheim can be interesting as well as rewarding. The Giantesses, who are more friendly than their male counterparts, know deep Earth magicks.

Nine days’ ride northward and downward brings one to the third level, Niflheim, world of the dead. This world of bitter cold and eternal darkness is ruled by the goddess Hel. The poem *Vafthrudnismal* says that Niflheim and the kingdom of



Hel were two separate places, both on this level. However, this does not seem logical since Niflheim or Niflhel means “Misty Hel” or “Dark Hel.” If Hel and Niflheim are counted as one world, then Muspellheim, land of fire, is the ninth World, the place where the creative life sparks meld with flecks of ice to produce new creations. The Spring of Hvergelmir (Seething Cauldron) is guarded by the dragon Nidhogg; this spring or well is said to hold yeast and venom, the forces of primal birthing water. Hel rules over the Niflheim-Hel level.

Niflhel can be reached only by crossing the bridge over the river Gjoll; this bridge is guarded by Modgudh, a Giant maiden. Hel’s bridge is icy and wide.

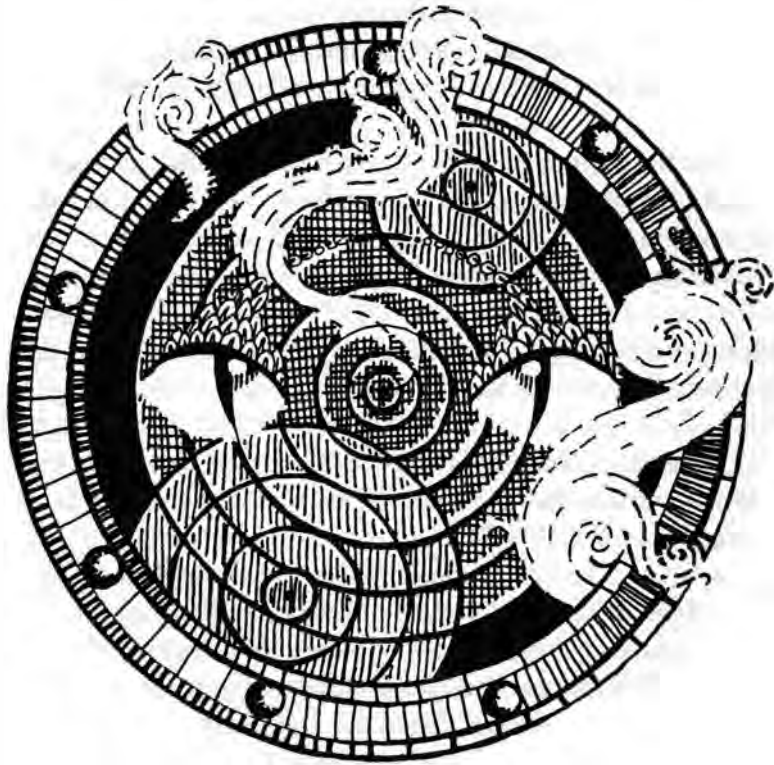
Skadi was a goddess who wore armor, loved the mountains and snow and hunting; she was a huntress and avenger goddess. Of Giant blood, her name means “shadow”; Scandinavia, or Skadinauja, translates as “the land of Skadi.” She was a vengeful deity who hung the poison-dripping snake over Loki’s head when he was chained to the rock; after all, Loki had killed her father Thjazi. For a time she was supposedly married to the god Njord but they parted because they were so different. Her palace was called Thrymheim, a mountain place of great uproar.

Hel is the Queen of the Dead, or the Underworld. She has total say over what happens to those souls who enter her realm.

The Crone’s curse, or Mother’s curse, is widely known throughout many cultures. In Scandinavia, it was believed that any mother could curse, and the curse would stick. The spirits called up to fulfill such a curse came from “the hot lands in the south” or “the Land of Mother’s Curse,” which was Muspellheim.

The goddess Heid is mentioned in the *Voluspa* and is the Goddess in one of Her dark Moon aspects. The word *Heidraupnir*, a combination of the words *Heid* (head) and *Draupnir* (dripper), gives us a clue to the skaldic kenning “wise waters” (menstrual blood), for head is a kenning for “womb.” Thus *Heidraupnir* means “dripping womb,” a long-time matriarchal symbol of the Great Goddess. Since the skalds gave so much importance to certain matriarchal kennings, we can assume that at least originally the skalds were trained by priestesses in certain areas of the feminine Mysteries.







## Journey to the Underworld

Prepare yourself for your shamanic journey by hallowing your sacred space, surrounding yourself with white light, and relaxing your body. Remember to rid yourself of negatives at the pond before attempting to enter the Underworld.

Go to the World Tree and place both hands on it. Feel the rough, tingling bark. As you press against the Tree, it opens and you slide easily inside the trunk. You see the energy of the Tree moving up and down through it like pulsating lines of light. Quickly, you follow one of the downward lines, thinking of the Underworld as you go. Soon you find yourself near an opening, and you go through it.

You find yourself on the rocky banks of the roaring Gjoll river. The deep chasm is crossed by a wide, icy bridge guarded by a Giantess. The light is dim here in Niflheim, rather like sunset on a dark winter's day. A mist hangs over the sharp mountains beyond the bridge. Tiny flecks of ice and fire swirl through the chilly air.

As you approach the bridge, the Giantess asks you why you wish to enter the kingdom of the goddess Hel. There is only one proper answer which will gain you entrance: that you seek the deep Mysteries of the Crone. You must honestly believe that you seek this or the Giantess will see the truth and forbid you to enter.



Quickly you cross the bridge and make your way along a trail leading through the snow-covered mountains. As you come out on the other side, you see below you a vast plain of snow and ice with an ice palace in its center. You hurry toward the palace.

As you cross the plain, you become aware of thousands of shadowy people moving around you. Some are crying for lost loved ones; others are cursing the darkness. If you recognize one of these souls and wish to speak with it, you can.

Soon you enter the wide doors of Hel's palace and find yourself in a brightly lit hall. This hall is so vast you cannot see the other end. Thousands more souls are here, laughing and talking together. You may recognize deceased people here, too.

From a black throne near the center of this huge palace comes the goddess Hel. As she comes closer, you are at first shocked to see that half of her body is beautiful and whole, while the other half is dark with decay. However, you feel the great power emanating from this goddess and understand that she is necessary to the process of life, death, and rebirth.

Hel welcomes you to her hall and guides you through the massed souls to her throne. There you sit on a stool at the foot of her throne while she talks to you about your unresolved pain over the death of loved ones and friends. Her words are soothing and healing to you. You feel more at peace and begin to release the pain buried within you. As you do this, the loved ones and friends to whom the pain was attached may come forward and talk with you.

When you are ready to leave, Hel blesses you. You go to the great doors of the palace and find the goddess Skadi waiting for you. This Giantess is wearing armor and snowshoes. She invites you to go with her to her palace Thryheim in the mountains.

Quickly, the two of you cross the darkened plain and enter the steep mountains beyond. Skadi's palace is bright and warm after your journey to Hel's home. The inside is pleasant with fur-covered chairs and roaring fires. Weapons and ritual tools hang on the walls, lie on the long tables. You sit beside the fire with Skadi while she instructs you into the deeper Mysteries of protective magick.

"Magick is to be used, not just studied," Skadi tells you. "Do what you must to protect yourself and your family. Evil must not be allowed to grow and flourish. Destroy evil wherever you find it."

Spend as much time as you want discussing the deeper magicks with Skadi, for she is very wise in their uses for protection and defense. When you are finished, Skadi guides you to the Spring of Hvergelmir, also called Seething Cauldron. It lies near the lowest root of the World Tree. Skadi leaves you alone for this experience.

The Spring of Hvergelmir is guarded by the dragon Nidhogg. You approach the huge dragon slowly, its yellow eyes watching your every move. When you stand at the Spring, the dragon challenges you.

"Why are you here?" Nidhogg asks. "Do you not understand the dangers of this well? By what authority do you come here?"

“By the authority of the Goddess,” you answer.

“Do you see those bubbles arising from the well’s water?” Nidhogg asks. “That is primal yeast and deadly venom, the necessary components to all life. The water from this spring will destroy.”

“But it will also rebuild,” you answer.

Before you go any further with this discussion, you must decide if you can stand to undergo great changes. Do not drink from this spring unless you are prepared to have drastic changes come into your life, for the water from the Spring of Hvergelmir breaks down old patterns before new ones can be built.

If you feel drastic changes are needed, and if you take the responsibility for their happening, drink from the well. The water will be burning and cold at the same time.

When you are ready to return to your physical body, enter the root of the World Tree which is nearby. Follow a line of energy upward until you come to the opening on the Earth level. Exit the Tree, think of your body, and slide back into it.

Muspellheim, the land of primal fire, is also in the Underworld. The realms of Muspellheim and Niflheim are difficult to understand and will require several shamanic journeys to even begin to grasp their importance and powers. But every shaman must strive to understand the magickal Mysteries of the Underworld or her shamanistic experiences will never be complete. It is the level of ultimate primal birth of matter, an important ingredient in all physical manifestations.

Freyja’s *seidr* magick also included sex magick. Since it is downright dangerous today to have physical intercourse with someone unless you are 100 percent certain about what deadly diseases he or she may have, the shaman should practice her sex magick on the Otherworld planes. Even there, one must not indulge in casual sex. Astral entities can transmit “diseases” of a different nature, but no less threatening.

For centuries orthodox religions, and even patriarchal Pagan ones, have spread the lie that sex is not possible for astral beings or humans now in spirit. Yet, at the same time, they warn against the succubi and incubi who come at night to have sexual intercourse with humans. All evidence points to a cover-up. Matriarchal religions knew that astral lovers and sex on the astral were possible, even desirable under certain conditions.

In Norse terms, the astral lover may be the *fylgja*. Astral lovers may be either male or female, depending upon your present sexual preferences. The astral sexual act can be just like the physical act, but the best astral sex is not performed in the same way as physical sex is. Higher astral sex is a melding of chakras. The climax of such sex makes regular sex seem like juvenile groping. It is vastly superior and more intense.

Loving on the astral planes with an astral being in this manner is not evil, sinful, or dirty. It is a bona fide spiritual experience, one that orthodox religions don’t



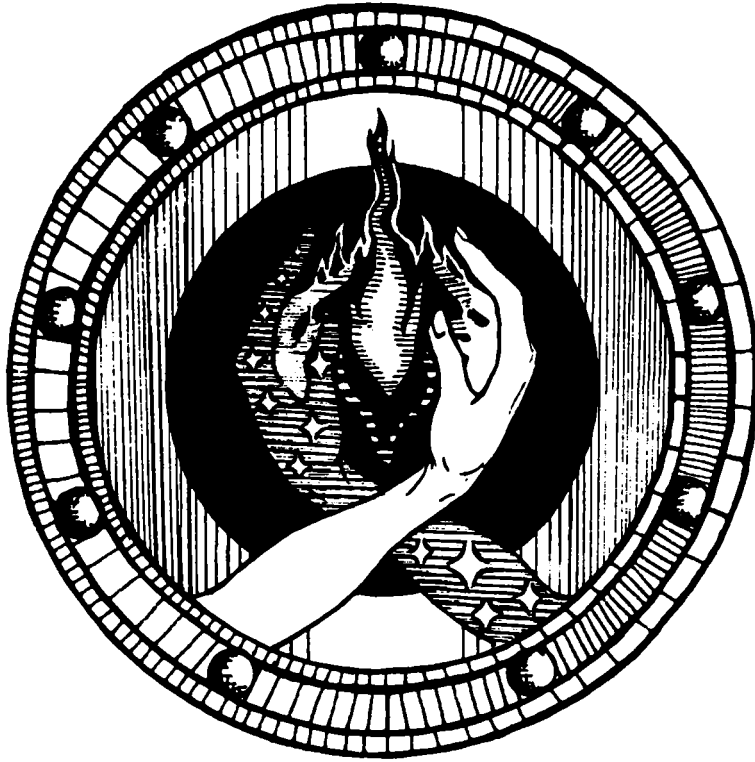
want you to know about. Knowing the truth behind this ancient secret makes it possible for a single, widowed, or divorced person to live a sexually satisfied, spiritual, and happy life without the marriage bonds demanded by the churches. This knowledge puts you outside the control of such organizations and other interfering people. It also makes you resistant to clumsy proposals of unwanted suitors, insincere Romeos, and the undesired attempts by matchmakers. You are your own person.

Your astral lover will probably be a person with whom you have shared several past lives. Since this person is in spirit and you are in the physical, there should be no guilt even though you may be presently in a relationship. In fact, your astral lover will encourage you to form physical relationships and may even guide you to the right person. The astral lover will do all in her/his power to help you have a happy, fulfilling life in all ways.

When finding your true astral lover, spend time in a courtship period. This can be a time for cuddling, hugs, and kisses, and generally getting reacquainted. Spend several Otherworld journeys with your lover as a companion before you get deeply involved. Ask her/him to accompany you whenever you journey so you can learn more about this person through her/his responses to various situations.

Eventually there will come a time when you wish to express your joy and love in other ways than just an embrace or a warm kiss. Do not expect astral sex to be like physical sex; it is very different. Your astral lover will be gentle, guiding you into the astral experience with great love. I can only give you the basics of what to expect; there is no way possible to express the intensity and beauty of the experience. When you feel you are ready to go further, take the following guided journey to experience the higher forms of astral sex with your spirit lover.





## Your Otherworld Lover

Prepare yourself for your shamanic journey by hallowing your sacred space, surrounding yourself with white light, and relaxing your body. Remember to rid yourself of negatives at the pond before attempting to enter the Upperworld.

Go to the World Tree and place both hands on it. Feel the rough, tingling bark. As you press against the Tree, it opens and you slide easily inside the trunk. You see the energy of the Tree moving up and down through it like pulsating lines of light. Quickly, you follow one of the upward lines, thinking of your Otherworld lover as you go. Soon you find yourself near an opening, and you go through it.

As you step from the Tree into a woodland setting, you find your Otherworld lover waiting for you. You embrace and talk about what has been happening since you last met. Your lover leads you off to the beautiful, quiet place where the two of you can be alone.

The two of you stand face to face, your arms around each other. You feel your throat center at the site of your thyroid gland begin to increase in size. Allow this to happen, as it helps to clear all the chakras by removing obstructions. This expansion can also increase creativity and intensify psychic talents. Even without all these side benefits, this enlarged throat center produces an almost sexual tingling throughout your astral body.



With both your lines of chakras, or light centers, lined up, a form of light center intercourse begins. The exchange of energy is fantastic. You have to experience it to fully understand what I mean. This astral loving can go on as long as you wish.

Finally, you and your lover sit together on a blanket on the grass. Your lover shares a goblet of golden-colored wine with you. She/he has brought a picnic of Otherworld delicacies which you savor with all your senses. You talk about your hopes and plans and problems, and your lover promises to help.

When you are ready to return, go back to the World Tree. Enter it and slide down a line of energy until you come to an opening. Go through this opening, think of your physical body, and slide back into it.

Occasionally, this astral intercourse will produce a corresponding reaction in the physical body and you will experience an orgasm. Or you may awake in a very sexy mood and surprise your physical mate with an unexpected invitation to love-making.

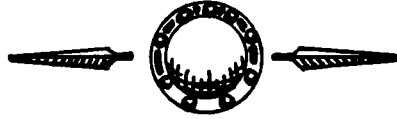
Loving on the astral is not a betrayal of your physical mate or companion. If anything, it will enhance your physical love-making. If you have no present mate, astral loving will satisfy your needs and keep you balanced.

It is easy to lose yourself in shamanic journeying and meditation, but a true shaman does not shun the physical world and its problems. The knowledge gained during these journeys is used to help the self, others, and the world by indirect methods. What is created in the astral must sooner or later become real in the physical. The shaman knows that change comes slowly. She shuns publicity, knowing that it drains and wastes energy and time.

She does not join radical groups, but spends her precious journey-time creating new pathways for humankind, on all levels of being. Her voice of power is soft but firm. She looks beyond and behind the so-called course of events and determines, with the help of the Goddess and her guides, if help is really needed or possible. Sometimes karmic paths cannot be changed more than a hair's breadth, but often that is enough.

Although the shaman's journeys are frequently to aid herself and others in everyday needs, her primary goal is always to travel farther along her spiritual path. Spiritual seeking and communication with the Goddess are important to the shaman. For without this seeking and communication, her life-force would only drift through this lifetime and any future ones. The shaman seeks to step off the wheel of spiritual indifference and blazes a path for others to follow. She does not try to convert others or force them onto her path, for she knows that the true seekers of spiritual enlightenment will find her markers. She is content to experience and learn, to be her own unique self.





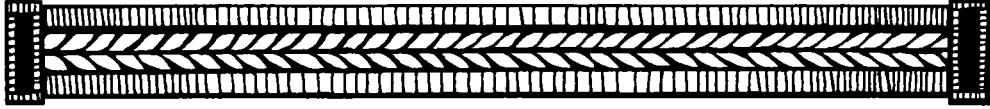
## End Notes

1. For information on Celtic shamanism, see *By Oak, Ash & Thorn: Modern Celtic Shamanism*, D.J. Conway. For a combination of Wicca and shamanism, read *In the Shadow of the Shaman*, Amber Wolfe.
2. Harner, Michael. *The Way of the Shaman*.
3. Eliade, Mircea. *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*.
4. Eliade, Mircea. *Ibid*.
5. Gundarsson, Kveldulf. *Teutonic Magic: The Magickal & Spiritual Practices of the Germanic Peoples* and *Teutonic Religion: Folk Beliefs & Practices of the Northern Tradition*.
6. See Part Four, Chapter 11.
7. Simek, Rudolf. *Dictionary of Northern Mythology*.
8. Davidson, H. R. Ellis. *Gods & Myths of the Viking Age*.
9. Turville-Petre, E.O. G. *Myth & Religion of the North*.
10. *The White Goddess*.
11. Crossley-Holland, Kevin. *The Norse Myths*.
12. Graves, Robert. *The Greek Myths*.



# Feminine Witchcraft





## Goddesses of Ancient Witchcraft

**T**he earliest sculptures we have are from the Stone Age. These depictions make it very plain who the people thought of as being first and strongest in their spiritual life: the Goddess. Of the sixty sculptures we know, only five are of males. These male figures are much smaller and poorly executed; the remaining fifty-five are larger female images done in great detail.

A great many of the ancient goddesses were connected with magick and what the patriarchs termed witchcraft. Some of these were Isis, Neith, Nephthys, Anat, Ashtart, Ereshkigal, Lilith, Nanshe, Circe, Cybele, Gaea, Hecate, Cerridwen, the Morrigan, Freyja, Holda, Ilmatar, Rauni, Diana/Artemis, Diiwica, Kali, Ch'ang-O, and Inari.

Men of the patriarchal clans considered Moon magick to be evil, probably because women got such good results from it. Such magick was called witchcraft and condemned by male spiritual leaders. It did not take long for men to connect every Moon goddess with witchcraft, particularly those goddess aspects representing the dark Moon.

Later, this idea of evil was extended to include all worship of the Goddess. Any woman caught practicing Goddess magick could be killed. The patriarchal leaders



set out to destroy the Goddess and Her holy women. The matriarchies had delineated family connections and ancestors only through the feminine line, which meant property was inherited only by the daughters. The priestesses of the Goddess taught that women had rights to own property, be free of control by men, have or not have children, practice the spiritual path they thought best, and take or dispense with male companions as they saw fit. All these things boil down to one word—FREEDOM—a dangerous word, men thought, if allowed to women.

If you want to control or enslave someone, the first things you do is take away her or his freedom and then convince her or him that you are right in what you do. Then you begin a subtle campaign to undermine the person's self-confidence, substituting your false, created image.

Patriarchy has made a point of saying that the oldest women's profession is prostitution. They are wrong! The oldest profession is that of priestess. In the first place, there would not be prostitution without men; however much they appear to condemn it, they still use it. True prostitution, not the teaching of proper love-making in the ancient temples, is a male-created position. The profession of priestess was a natural outcome of women's worship of the Goddess. It began with the matriarchies, who had no prostitution.

What is now called witchcraft was widely practiced during the matriarchies. Witchcraft began as a Goddess religion for women only. It is interesting to note that the word matrimony, which is closely connected with matriarchy, literally means "mother-marriage." Originally, it was men, not women, who left their families to live within a new family circle upon marriage. Women owned the property, and children took the mother's name. Marriage was based on mother right.<sup>1</sup>

Patriarchy needed to destroy the women-only Goddess Mystery Religions in order to consolidate their control over women. They began this by spreading propaganda about what was actually practiced. As the Mysteries were forbidden, destroyed, or rewritten for male gods, some women rebelled in a private way. They established very secret groups and began to practice dark magick in defense of themselves and their sisters. One can understand the frustration and rage behind this type of revenge. It was women's only avenue left for fighting back.

Gradually, these secret groups of Witches balanced themselves. They went back to their Goddess worship, healing, teaching, and spiritual seeking, but they retained their knowledge of the magick of the Dark Mother. In everyday life, they still were not free.

At first these covens, as they came to be called, were women-only. The first men to be admitted were probably males who were dissatisfied with only male gods or god-only religions. When they discovered the existence of these secret societies, the women likely decided to share their knowledge in the hopes of eventually regaining their former place in life. This backfired. All they got was the inclusion of male gods

in their Goddess worship. For a time, however, the women did insist that these participating males either castrate themselves or dress as women.

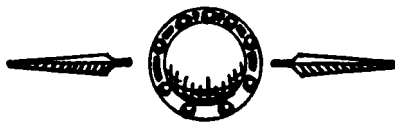
There are hints in the poems and prose that when Norse men practiced *seidr*, which was seldom, they were required to dress as women, which is one of the reasons men disliked *seidr*. These men were called *seiðmadhr* and were looked upon with contempt by other men. This does not mean the man was homosexual; cross-dressing is a very ancient tradition that has its roots in the belief that a man had to spiritually become a woman in order to serve the Goddess. Odhinn is the only male god listed in the myths as having practiced this type of magick, and he was taught by Freyja herself. *The Lay of Grímnir* says that Odhinn called himself Gelding, a name which would go along with learning *seidr* from Freyja.

However, this was not a popular occupation for men. Ragnvald, one of Harald Fairhair's sons, was said to have practiced *seidr* along with eighty of his followers. So did Eyvind, one of his descendants. Both of these men were killed by family members; Snorri, in *Heimskringla*, condemns them as evil.

It is amazing to read the histories and find that men ordinarily practiced magick without threat of losing their lives, but they would not allow women the same privilege. Of course, these male magicians did not invoke the Goddess either. They renamed magick the "occult sciences," and had strange ways of dividing up magick. This seemed to legitimize what they were doing.

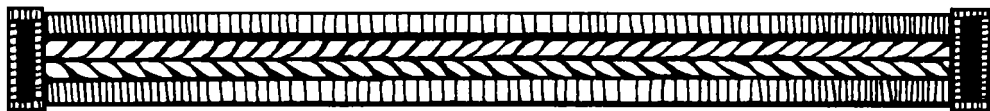
The Moslem scholar Husayn 'Ali Wa'iz al-Kashifi, in his *Compendium*, divided what he called the occult sciences (*Khafiyah*) into five categories: *Limiya*, magick; *Kimiya*, alchemy and chemistry; *Himiya*, conjuring up discarnate spirits and the dead; *Simiya*, receiving visions; *Rimiya*, legerdemain and juggling.

The power behind the magick used by women is no different than that used by men. It would seem, from the way men tried to make people believe that women's magick was evil, that they were, and perhaps still are, afraid that women just might be better at magick than they are.



## End Notes

1. Bachofen, J.J. *Myth, Religion & Mother Right*.



## Around the Cauldron

**F**eminine witchcraft differs from male-female witchcraft. The intense use of emotion for magick is natural for women. They have better access to their emotional levels and are not afraid to exhibit their emotions. Therefore, women have access to greater magickal power than men, because intense emotions must be involved in order for magick to manifest. Although women are freer with their emotions, they also know how to control and harness that energy. They have had centuries of practice in this, learning how to wait until the right time and circumstance to get what they want or need: revenge, supplies, etc.

Feminine-only witchcraft is not a total rejection of men. It is a balancing of the scales of true power after centuries of male domination. Women cannot totally understand and develop their own power unless they dispense with the male presence during rituals. There is just as much, if not more, power within a circle of only women, as there is in the traditional male-female circles. In fact, although there is a difference in energy flow and type of power, there appears to be more cohesiveness in women's rituals.



The idea of needing a male-female balance for ritual and magick is nothing more than a male myth perpetrated to continue the control of women within witchcraft. Every woman is complete within herself. Also, some women will exhibit more of what are called “masculine” traits while others exhibit more “feminine.” These “masculine” traits do not belong exclusively to men; the Amazons were powerful, effective women.

In the Norse myths, the best known of all the goddesses was the independent, beautiful Freyja. The eddaic poem *Grimnismal* records that she was connected also with war and the world of the dead, dividing those killed in battle with Odhinn. Half of the slain warriors went to Valhalla and half went to Sessrumnir, Freyja’s hall on Folkvang (Field of Folk). Since the Great Goddess has always been a deity of both life and death, it is apparent that Freyja’s attributes were divided with Odhinn in order to make the patriarchal gods more palatable.

Freyja’s *seidr*<sup>1</sup> was feminine-only witchcraft, a form of magick, trance, and divination. By the time when the Norse myths were recorded, *seidr* was stripped of runic magick, being more involved with shape-shifting, astral body travel through the Nine Worlds, sex magick, and other techniques. However, in the beginning of this Mystery religion, it is very probable that the runes were connected with Freyja and her followers, not Odhinn.

After patriarchy took over, *seidr* was condemned and frowned upon by the men. However, they did not hesitate to call upon Freyja’s *volvas* (priestesses) when they needed help or predictions. The Germanic culture, for instance, considered women to have closer connections with the Otherworlds and the souls of the dead than men. Germanic priestesses, or holy women, were called the *Velada*.

Freyja’s female followers, called *volvas*, sometimes *seidkona*, were consulted on all manner of problems, whether the *volvas* were alive or dead. In the *Elder Edda*, three poems, “*Voluspa*,” “*Baldrs Draumar*,” and “*Svipdagsmal*,” are accounts of deceased *volvas* being called upon to give knowledge to the gods or protection to the clans.

What few descriptions of *seidr* we have tell of the female *volvas* traveling from clan to clan, giving predictions of the future through trance. They also did healing and occasionally cursing. They did not tend to marry, although they did take lovers. These women carried a staff with a bronze cap or mounting and wore capes, hoods, and gloves of fur. In *Eiriks Saga* there is a very detailed account of *seidr* practiced by a *volva*. There is another story in *Landnamabok*, which records that a *volva* actively brought prosperity to the fishing of a clan through her use of *seidr*.

Freyja was the great Dis (goddess), hence her name Vanadis (Goddess of the Vanir); she was also known as Vanabrudr (bride of the Vanir). She delighted in love-poetry (*mansongr*, women-song), evidently singing used in sex magick, for it was strictly forbidden in Iceland.<sup>2</sup> Some of her priestesses were called the *disir*; traditionally, these were nine women usually dressed in black and carrying swords.



The Greenland account of *seidr* tells us that the *volva* mentioned was the last of a group of nine women who were seeresses.

At the beginning of winter (mid-October), particularly in Sweden, these *disir* and Freyja were honored in a ceremony called the *disablot*, or *disirblot*. The *disir* were said to bring good luck and dream-messages, but they were also merciless in exacting justice. They were described as riding horses. The *disir* were actually Valkyries.<sup>3</sup>

The *horgr* (small temple or shrine) belonged to the goddesses, as seen in the *Hyndluljod*, *Heidreks Saga*, and Snorri's *Edda*. Turville-Petre says that this was not so early, but I disagree with him. In Norway, the name *hof* replaced the older names for a temple, such as *ve* and *horgr*.

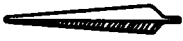
In Christian times, before all the Norse were forced to accept the new religion, there are records of wooden or stone statues of deities in the temples. These were usually placed around the altar (*stalli*). However, not all deity images were kept in temples. Smaller versions made of ivory, silver, and gold were carried as personal amulets.

*Seidr* loses none of its power by being translated into modern terms and practices of witchcraft. It would be of no benefit to reconstruct in exact detail the ancient *seidr*, such as wearing catskin gloves and sitting on a high platform (*hjallr*). The power known as the goddess Freyja still exists. Correctly approached, this power is still viable, capable of being used and producing satisfactory results. The practice of *seidr* requires self-discipline, visualization, and meditation, and a respectful approach to Freyja, goddess of magick and divination. The way of Freyja and *seidr*, as with all types of witchcraft, are not for all who attempt to travel this path. Those who do find their way into Her Light are blessed with new spiritual insight.

Feminine witchcraft differs from other modern forms of Wicca in that followers honor only the Goddess; sometimes this form is called Dianic. They worship Her as a Triple Deity—in Her aspects as Maiden, Mother, and Crone. The Maiden is the springtime, youth and vigor, enchantment and seduction, the crescent Moon, and the color white. The Mother is summer, lustiness, the life-force, the Full Moon, and the color red. The Crone, sometimes called the Dark Mother, Wise One, or Hag, is winter, wisdom, the gateway to death and reincarnation, the Dark Moon, and the color black.

Female Witches celebrate eight yearly festivals, and the Dark and Full Moons. The yearly Norse celebrations are Spring Mother (February 1), Summer Finding (Spring Equinox in March), Walpurgisnacht (Beltane, May 1), Sonnenwende, or Sun's Turning (Summer Solstice in June), Harvest Mother (August 1), Winter Finding (Autumn Equinox in September), Ancestress Night (October 31), and Mother Night or Modresnach (Winter Equinox in December).

Norse feminine Witchcraft also has other days of celebration. January 10 is the Day of Freyja; July 10 is the Day of Hel or Holde. At Harvest Mother, Freyja was



honored by eating pork. The Disirblot of Freyja, on the Full Moon of October, marked the beginning of the winter season for the Norse. The day after Ancestress Night saw the Rite of Hel. You could also honor the fallen women of the world on November 11. On December 31, the Norns are honored.

Female Witches celebrate or work their magick within a cast circle and call the Goddesses of the Four Directions to guide and guard them while they work. These directions represent the four Elements. Their tools all have a Goddess significance and symbolism. The working of magick is considered to be part of their religion, as the Goddess likes to have women aid Her in manifestations.

Magick is produced by communicating with the subconscious mind; therefore, it must be a language of symbols. The subconscious mind is non-verbal. After creating within herself an altered state of consciousness, the Witch then uses her tools, gestures, certain words, etc. to convince the subconscious mind that what she desires actually can become reality. Magick is simply finding a pressure point in the web of the world and knowing how to gently apply energy to change the outcome of an event or desire.

The Hindus use mandalas as focal points in meditation. A mandala is a sacred diagram or symbol of the universe, specifically a circle enclosing a square with a deity on each side. Every time a Witch casts a magickal circle, calls upon the four Elements and stands at her altar in the center of the circle, she is standing on a sacred symbol, in the heart of a miniature universe. She is literally in a position of power unequalled anywhere in the physical world. She can call upon the Elements for power and aid in manifesting her desires through magick. She can expect to see those desires manifested into her physical world.

On rare occasions, the Witch will encounter what is called a negative spirit or entity. Most Witches will not willingly call up these beings, as they are unpredictable and untrustworthy. However, this type of entity can gain entrance into environments where a rift has been created by emotional negative actions. One important thing to remember is that no negative spirit, "demon," or ghost can possess your body and/or mind unless a part of you allows it to happen. Take what precautions you feel are necessary to protect yourself while doing ritual or performing magick. Surround yourself with white light while meditating or astral journeying. And laugh at them! I do not know of anyone, from a malicious prankster on the telephone to a disembodied Otherworld entity, who can stand to be laughed at.

Certain tools are helpful in practicing Witchcraft. They do not need to be elaborate or expensive. The will and power for Witchcraft and magick come from within yourself, not from tools. You will need an altar, dagger, cauldron, goblet, incense burner, offering bowl and plate, candles with holders, wine chalice, a pentagram painted or etched onto a disk of wood, wand, and/or staff. The pentagram acts as a power sink on the altar, in that it will fill with energy anything you set upon it.





Special stones can also help with magick. If you plan to do divination, you will need to have runestones, or some other system, available. Part Four gives several choices which you can make for yourself.

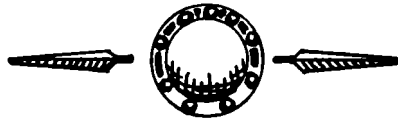
The tools listed do not have to be acquired all at one time. In a pinch, borrow a kitchen paring knife for the dagger, a pot for the cauldron, a glass for the goblet, common dishes for the offering bowl and plate. Your dining table can become a temporary altar. Slowly make or buy the tools you want, and do not be taken in by high prices. Fancy glass wands are pretty, but they are very expensive, break easily, and are not any more powerful than a small branch.

It was a Norse tradition to name daggers and swords. Take your time choosing a name, then carve or paint it in tiny runes on the hilt, along with the magickal name you have chosen for yourself. The runes are given in Part Four, Chapter 13.

To help create the mood necessary for a change of consciousness, a magickal robe is nice. Freyja was also associated with amber, so a piece of amber on a chain or a *labrys* will aid in creating a better connection with the Goddess.

The main ritual tools of Witchcraft should be consecrated by the user. This can be done by placing each tool on the pentagram, lightly sprinkling it with salt and water, then passing it through incense smoke.

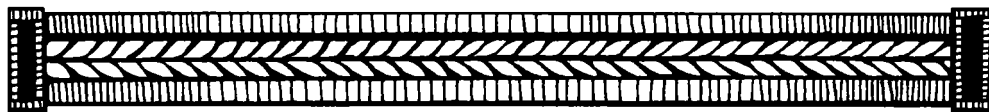
Witchcraft, in the tradition of the feminine *seidr*, is a religion honoring the Goddess. It brings a woman back to the power of her foremothers and puts her in touch with the Goddess. It helps to restore her female-ness and honor in what she is. It can be practiced alone, as well as in a group of other women. It provides a sacred, special time for a woman to stand at the Gate Between the Worlds and pour out her heart to the Mother.



## End Notes

1. The word *seidr*, as well as its uses, has much in common with the Celtic *sidh*, the Hindu *siddhi*, and the Sufi *sahr*.
2. Turville-Petre, E.O.G. *Myth & Religion of the North*.
3. Turville-Petre. *Ibid*.



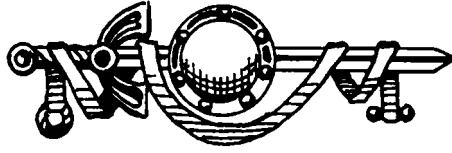


## Woman Celebrations

**M**ost of the magickal procedures and rituals in existence today originated from the historical records of male magicians. Some women's Pagan groups have written their own rituals in an effort to return to the ancient women's Mysteries. Women have special needs on all levels of their lives and approach the Goddess in a different way than men. Unfortunately, these have not been addressed as they should in the Pagan and magickal fields.

I have chosen to approach these needs from ancient Norse women's *seidr*. If this does not appeal to you, read Part Six about other ancient women's Mysteries and substitute names and other information in these rituals. Whichever Mystery path you choose will help in reconnecting you with the foremothers who celebrated these rituals.

The altar generally stands in the center of the cast circle. Among the Norse, the position of power at the altar was to stand facing the north. In other systems, this was facing the east.



## General Circle Casting & Closing

The casting and warding of a circle is done the same before every full ritual. It is basically the same within all branches of Witchcraft. This circle contains the power raised within and holds it until released. It also operates as a power point for opening the Gate Between the Worlds, the astral door into higher realms. When the priestess stands within the consecrated circle, she is in between worlds, in a place that is not a place and a time that is not a time. She has moved beyond the mundane physical world and stands face to face with the power of the Goddess.

Before casting the circle, read over the ritual you will be performing. Assemble all your equipment on your altar; you do not want to cross the circle until you are finished.

To cast a circle, take the dagger in your power hand. Starting in the east, visualize a silver-blue light shooting from the tip of the dagger as you aim it at the floor. Moving clockwise, draw a magickal boundary of an area large enough for you to move freely within it. Overlap the ends in the east when you finish. While you are drawing the circle, say:

*I consecrate this circle of power to the Goddess.  
Here may She manifest and bless Her child.*

Return to the altar, facing north. Raise your dagger in greeting, and say:

*This is a time that is not a time, in a place that is not a place.  
I stand at the Gate Between the Worlds before the Bifrost Bridge.  
May the Goddess help and protect me on my magickal journey.*

Set the water chalice on the pentagram. Hold your dagger over it and say:

*Birth and rebirth come from the womb of the Goddess.  
Bless this water, I do ask.*

Hold your dagger over the salt. Say:

*From the earthy body of the Goddess we all come and we shall all return.  
Bless this salt, I do ask.*

Sprinkle a little salt into the water. Hold up the chalice and say:

*Great Freyja, be you adored!*



Beginning in the east and moving clockwise, lightly sprinkle the water and salt mixture around the edges of the circle. Replace the chalice on the altar. Hold the dagger over the lighted incense, saying:

*Fire is the Goddess-spark that dances within the form of every woman.  
Bless this incense, I do ask.*

Carry the incense around the circle clockwise, beginning in the east. Return it to the altar.

Light a yellow candle in the east. Hold up your hand in greeting and say:

*I call upon Idhunn (ee-doon), Maiden of the Golden Apples,  
to witness this rite and to guard this circle.*

Light a red candle in the south:

*I call upon Frigg, the Great Mother, to witness this rite  
and to guard this circle.*

Light a blue candle in the west:

*I call upon Nehellania (ne-hell-ay-nee-ah), Ocean Mother,  
to witness this rite and to guard this circle.*

Finally, light a green candle in the north:

*I call upon Skadi, goddess of the Forever Twilight Lands,  
to witness this rite and to guard this circle.*

Once more stand at the altar, facing north. Raise your arms in greeting:

*This circle is bound,  
With power all around.  
Within it I stand  
Protection at hand.*

Proceed with your planned spellwork or ritual. When everything is completed, hold your hand over the altar and say:

*Goddess, I ask that You bind all power within this circle  
into the desired manifestation. So mote it be!*

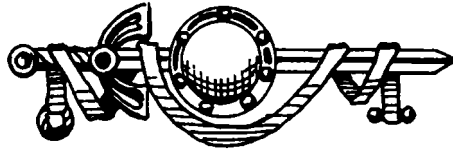
To end the ritual and break the circle, extinguish each candle, beginning in the east. Say at each direction:

*Depart in peace, Goddess.  
My thanks and blessings.*

Cut the invisible circle with a backward motion of your power hand or dagger. Say:



*I close the Gate Between the Worlds.  
 May it always open at my bidding.  
 The circle remains in my heart,  
 A circle which binds all women to me and to the Goddess.*



## Full Moon

**Special Notes:** traditionally, the Full Moon is a time for magick which has to do with increasing and positive energies.

**Special Altar Supplies:** two white candles, one on each side of the altar; a bell; any spellworking equipment.

Cast the circle as usual. Stand before the altar, facing north, and say:

*This is the time of the Full Moon, a time of great power for positive manifestation, a time of increasing and gaining.  
 The tide of Moon-power is strong. I am a Goddess-daughter.  
 I stand before You at this altar, in love and adoration.  
 Be with me, Goddess. Let me feel Your presence here this night.*

Go to the east and ring the bell once:

*Hail, Idhunn. Help me to feel the Lady's power and presence within my mind.*

Go to the south and ring the bell once:

*Hail, Frigg. Help me to feel the Lady's power and presence within my spirit.*

Go to the west and ring the bell once:

*Hail, Nehellania. Help me to feel the Lady's power and presence with my emotions.*

Go to the north and ring the bell once:

*Hail, Skadi. Help me to feel the Lady's power and presence within my body.*



Return to the altar, facing north, and raise up your arms in reverence. Say:

*Hail, Goddess! Moon Mother, Lady of Light,  
Mistress of Magick and Animals. You are the white light of the  
Moon upon the Earth, the brilliant rays of the Sun upon all life.  
You are the beginning and the ending, the One who  
creates and takes away. Within You, I see myself and all women.  
In this time which is not a time,  
You come to me and fill me with Your presence.*

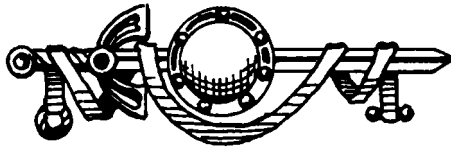
Communicate with the Goddess at this time, telling Her any problems you need solved and any desires you wish manifested. When you are finished, say:

*All honor and love to the Goddess, for She is the Power behind all powers,  
the Goddess behind all gods, the Eternal Life behind death.  
I see Her loving face within the Moon and rejoice.  
All hail the Queen of Heaven and Earth, the Eternal One of wisdom.*

Raise the wine chalice high over the altar and say:

*To Freyja and all the goddesses!*

Now is the time for any divination, spellworking, or meditation. When you are finished, close the circle.



## Dark Moon

**Special Notes:** traditionally, the Dark Moon is a time for decreasing, protection magick, and the use of negative energies. Negative does not mean evil; neither is the color black evil.

**Special Altar Supplies:** two black candles, one at each end of the altar; any spellworking or divination equipment; the cauldron; paper and pencil.

Place the cauldron in the center of the altar, the paper and pencil beside it. You may write on the paper all the things you want removed from your life before you begin, or do it just before the ritual calls for burning the paper. Cast the circle counterclockwise. Stand at the altar, facing north, and say:



*The Moon is dark. She hides Her true face from humans.  
Only women know the true secrets of the Dark Mother,  
for She is a part of each woman.  
Wise One, let me feel Your presence and power.  
I have need of Your wisdom of releasing and removing.  
If punishment be needed by those who work against me,  
I leave it within Your hands.*

Moving counterclockwise around the circle, go to the east and say:

*Remove all negatives from my thoughts and mind, Dark Mother.  
Let them bear no fruit within my life.*

Go to the north and say:

*Remove all negatives from my body, Dark Mother.  
Let them bear no fruit within my life.*

Move to the west and say:

*Remove all negatives from my emotions, Dark Mother.  
Let them bear no fruit within my life.*

Go to the south and say:

*Remove all negatives from my spiritual life, Dark Mother.  
Let them bear no fruit within my life.*

Return to the altar and stand facing north:

*I accept no negative thoughts, words, or deeds from others.  
They are destroyed by the power of the Dark Mother.  
If these negatives come from within myself, turn them into lessons of good.  
Help me to become balanced, a true Goddess-daughter of  
Light and wisdom.*

Write out on the paper any negative things you wish removed from your life. As you read each one, release them to the Dark Mother. Light the paper from a candle and drop them into the cauldron to burn. Say:

*I release these into Your keeping. Show me how to move beyond  
these negatives into a position of light and power.*

Raise your arms high in reverence and say:

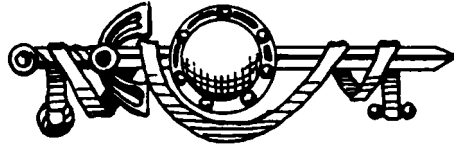
*Dark Mother, Crone Goddess, Wise and Elder One,  
teach me Your deep Mysteries, the ancient Goddess magick known to my  
foremothers. Guide and protect me, Dark Mother.*



Raise the wine chalice and say:

*To Freyja, Queen of the Valkyries, and all goddesses!*

Now is the time for any divination, spellworking, or meditation. When you are finished, close the circle.



## Initiation

**Special Notes:** self-initiation is just as beautiful and binding as initiation given within a coven. The initiation must take place within the heart at all times. The Full Moon is the best time for initiations. You can incorporate the initiation rite into your Full Moon ritual.

**Special Altar Supplies:** plate of bread and salt; white candle; lotus oil. Cast the circle as given above.

Kneel before the altar, placing both hands upon it. Bow your head and silently commune with the Goddess for several moments, telling Her in your own words why you want Her to be present for this initiation. Light the white candle.

*Freyja, Mistress of Magick, bless me, for I declare myself Your daughter. I kneel before this sacred altar to ask for Your guidance and blessing.*

Open yourself to the Goddess and listen with your psychic senses. When you feel the spiritual communication is ended, stand. Using a small drop of oil on the forefinger of your power hand, touch the center of your forehead.

*Bless me with psychic gifts. Open my inner senses to the spiritual.*

Touch both your eyelids.

*Open my eyes to truth, that I may see past all illusions even though the truth may be bitter.*

Anoint just above your upper lip.

*Let me speak no words of false compromise.  
Let my voice be heard in defense of all women.*

Touch over your heart.





*Open my heart to compassion for my sisters of all kinds.  
Teach me to honor their female-ness before all else, for in honoring them  
I honor myself and You.*

Anoint the area just above your pubic region.

*Bless my life with fruitfulness, whether it be of the physical,  
mental, or spiritual.*

Touch the tops of both feet.

*Bless my path through life, so that I may lead the way  
for others to come to You.*

Anoint the palms of both hands.

*Teach me to be strong, independent, responsible.  
Show me how to take charge of my own life, that no other may control me.*

Kneel once more before the altar and place both hands on the pentagram.

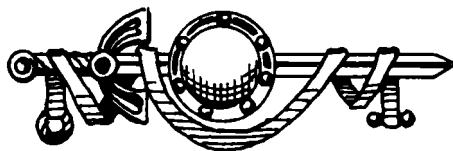
*From this day forward I will call myself Goddess-daughter.  
I am reborn in a new life, a follower of the old ways, the ways of  
the Goddess and Her Mysteries. I join my foremothers  
in giving honor to the Lady of all.*

Now, thank the Goddess in your own words. This is the time to ask Her for help with any special gifts you may wish to develop.

Touch the wine chalice to the pentagram, then raise it high over the altar.

*To Freyja and all the goddesses!*

Close the circle.



## Spring Mother

(February 1. Called Imbolc in other branches of Witchcraft.) **Special Notes:** the first stirrings of Mother Earth; spring cleaning; a time of cleansing and purification; preparation for growth and renewal.

**Special Altar Supplies:** white candle inside the cauldron; red candle to the left, black candle to the right. Chalice of juice or wine.





Cast the circle as usual. Breathe deeply and center yourself.

*I greet you, Mother Earth, as you awaken from your long slumber.  
I join with my distant foremothers in giving honor to the Great Goddess.  
Prepare the fields and forests, prepare all creatures  
for the coming of spring.*

Tap the altar three times with your wand or dagger:

*This is a time of growing sunlight. It signals to all followers of  
the Goddess that we must prepare for initiation and purification,  
for new cycles in our lives. It is a renewed promise of the Goddess  
for the future. At this time and in this place,  
I prepare my thought-seeds for the future.*

Stand in silence while you ask the Lady for inspiration and guidance for the future. When you are finished, tap the altar again three times.

*O Goddess, I give my dreams into Your keeping.  
For only with Your guidance and help may I see these dream-seeds  
grow into reality. If I have chosen wrongly, or if You have better in store for  
me, send me messages loud and clear that I may re-form my goals.  
I do thank You.*

Light the white candle in the cauldron:

*At this time and in this place I do salute the Great Goddess  
as the sacred Maiden, now returned from the darkness.  
Preparation for new life begins as She spreads Her blessings upon  
all the lands and Her children.*

Light the red candle at the left of the cauldron:

*From her realm in the Marsh-Halls, Freyja smiles upon the Earth  
and all things begin regeneration. As there is renewal within  
the physical world, so should there be renewal within my life.  
Great Mother, I ask for insight, good health, prosperity,  
and spiritual enlightenment*

Light the black candle at the right of the cauldron:

*The Crone stirs her cauldron of rebirth, spinning out  
threads of new life. She smiles upon the life-seeds within  
Her eternal womb and sends them forth to be born again.  
The year wheel has turned once more to spring, and the Goddess  
in all Her aspects rejoices.*



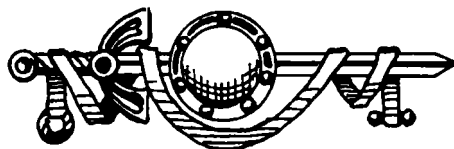
Raise your arms in reverence:

*Maiden of joy, Mother of birth, Wise One of wisdom,  
I greet you all. I am a Goddess-daughter, waiting in anticipation for the  
new things in my life. Send me love and joy, fulfillment and growth.  
Purify my life and initiate me into greater Mysteries.*

Hold up the chalice:

*To Freyja and all the goddesses!*

Drink some of the wine. Do any spellwork or divination you have planned.  
Then close the circle.



## Summer Finding

(Spring Equinox in March.) Special Notes: sowing time in the north; Earth cycle of plant and animal fertility; new beginnings. A balance of light and darkness.

Special Altar Supplies: spring flowers and colored eggs, if you desire. Cauldron; white candle; small piece of paper and pencil; flowery or herbal incense; wand. Chalice of juice or wine.

Before you perform this ritual, take time to consider what goals you would like fulfilled for the year. Write them on the paper and place it next to the cauldron on the altar. Cast your circle as usual.

With your wand in your power hand, raise your arms in greeting:

*Hear me, all you goddesses of old. For I request your presence in this place  
to help me celebrate the ancient festival of Summer Finding.*

Rap the cauldron gently with your wand and say: .

*Loving Goddess, be with me in Your form of Idhunn, the Maiden,  
the fair spring goddess who brings joy and new life.*

Tap the cauldron gently again:

*Oh, laughing goddess of new beginnings, bring warmth and love.*

Rap the cauldron gently a third time:



*May the strength of the Goddess enter into all new things. O Lady of love and wisdom, make all things strong and giving of new life. Blessed be!*

Touch the paper with your wand, and say:

*Now I cast behind me the darkness of winter and the past.  
I look ahead to that which lies before me. Now is the time of planting of seeds in the physical, mental, and spiritual planes.*

Fold the paper and hold it up over the altar:

*These are the seeds of my goals and desires.*

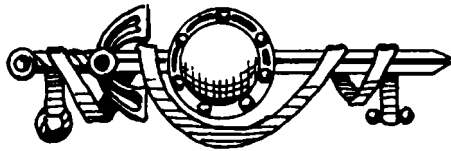
Light the paper from the candle flame and drop it to burn up in the cauldron. As it burns, say:

*These seeds do I place in the hands of the Goddess. May these desires and dreams manifest and become a part of my life. Blessed be the Goddess!*

Hold the wine chalice up over the altar and say:

*To Freyja and the goddesses!*

Do any spellwork or divination you have planned. Close the circle.



## Walpurgisnacht

(May 1. Beltane in other branches of Witchcraft.) Special Notes: an ancient sexual rite. A time to honor woodland spirits.

Special Altar Supplies: the wand and/or dagger can be decorated with brightly colored ribbons. Any statues of your guardian house spirits.

Cast the circle as usual. Raise your wand in greeting.

*I do call upon the Goddess to be here with me, She who was once called Lady of the Greenwood, the Lady of May, Mistress of Love and Fertility. Greetings, O Goddess of all things wild and free. I welcome You, Great Mother and rejoice in Your presence. Blessed be.*



Dance around the altar, beginning in the east and moving clockwise. Salute each directional Element with upraised arms as you pause in your dance. When finished, stand at altar facing north.

*I am a Goddess-daughter, priestess of the Lady. Through me She makes Herself known upon this Earth. I was born to Her service, and by Her will my life shall be a life of light and love. Goddess, fill me as a cup with knowledge and understanding. Blessed are Your words. Let my ears hear them, my hands and feet obey. For I am a Goddess-daughter, a follower of the Old Ways.*

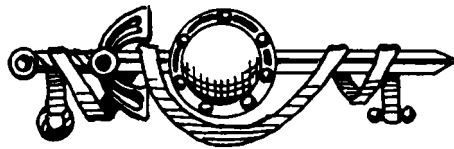
If you have a statue or some symbol which represents the guardian of your house, pass the incense smoke around it. If you do not, at least invite your special guardians to come forward at this time.

*Lovely Lady, I present to you the guardians of this house. I thank them for all they have done for me, and ask that You bless them also.  
O spirit-guardians, I welcome your protection and aid.  
Continue your good work, I do ask of you. Blessed be.*

Raise the wine chalice and say:

*To Freyja and all the goddesses!*

This is a time for divination, meditation, or spellwork. When finished, close the circle.



## Sonnenwende

(Summer Solstice in June. Sun's Turning.) Special Notes: a time for honoring Elves, Faeries, and Dwarves.

Special Altar Supplies: a green and a yellow candle; a cup of fresh water set in the cauldron.

Cast the circle as usual. Light the green candle at the left of the cauldron.

*Green forest Mother, spinner of fates, Lady of the stars, I call upon You in Your ancient names, known and unknown, and welcome You to my circle. All you Elves, Faeries, and Dwarves, welcome, welcome! This is the*





*season of magick. At this time of the year the tides of magickal power flow strong. I rejoice in your presence and wish to build a friendship with you. For I too walk the path of magickal power.*

Light the yellow candle to the right of the cauldron:

*Hail, Sun Queen! Goddess Sol, brightness of the day, welcome!  
This is the time of the Summer Queen, whose dazzling robes  
bless the land. Lady of the Small Folk,  
I ask Your blessing upon this house and all within it.*

Place your hands, palms down, over the water in the cauldron:

*This is the cauldron of Freyja, the Great Goddess. Bless this earthly water  
with the waters from the Well of Urd, I do ask. (Pause for a moment.)  
The touch of its consecrated water blesses, even as the Sun, the Lady of  
Life, arises in Her strength.*

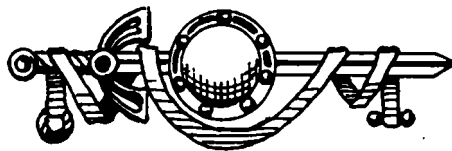
Pass your hands and arms between the two candles, making wishes as you do so. Or set the candles on the floor and carefully, slowly, walk between them. Dip the forefinger of your power hand into the water and touch your forehead, lips, and breast. Kneel before the altar and re-dedicate yourself:

*I will serve the Goddess with all my heart. I choose to be a Pagan,  
a Goddess-daughter, a stone in the ancient circle of Mysteries.  
I will stand firm in my love of the Goddess, enduring through all time.  
May the Great Goddess Freyja witness my words!*

Lift the wine chalice high:

*To Freyja and all the goddesses!*

Do any planned divination, spellwork, or meditation at this time. Close the circle.



## Harvest Mother

(August 1. Lunasa in other branches of Witchcraft.) Special Notes: the turning point in Mother Earth's year; a harvest festival in the northern lands. Both Siff of the golden hair and Nerthus are goddesses of the harvest and Earth.



**Special Altar Supplies:** fall flowers and leaves for decoration. Plate of bread; yellow or orange candle in the cauldron.

Cast the circle as usual. Light the cauldron candle:

*O goddesses of Vanaheim and Asgard, I do ask your presence here.  
For this is a time that is not a time, in a place that is not a place,  
on a day that is not a day, and I await you.*

Set the plate of bread on the pentagram. Breathe deeply for a few moments. Concentrate on the cleansing power which you are drawing into your body from the Goddess. As you exhale, concentrate on expelling all negatives from your life. When you are ready, say:

*I have purified myself by breathing in the cleansing and empowering life  
force of the Goddess. I have cast from me all negative energies.  
I prepare myself for the time of winter and rest.*

Lift the plate of bread high over the altar, offering it to the Goddess. Set it down and briefly raise the chalice of wine.

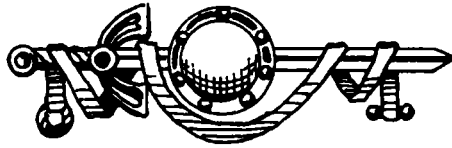
*Every seed, every grain is imprinted with a record of ancient times, and a  
promise of all that will be. This bread represents the body of the Earth  
Mothers. It is a symbol of life eternal through the cauldron of the Goddess.*

Eat a piece of the bread. Drink some of the wine.

*As in the bread and wine, so it is within me. The Mysteries of ancient  
times are imprinted upon my soul. May the Goddess place Her blessings  
upon me, that this season of waning light and increasing darkness may  
not be heavy. Let this time be one of resting, planning, waiting, until once  
more She opens the doors to greater paths. For I am a Goddess-daughter,  
blessed, guided, and loved by the Mother. Blessed be!*

Now is the time for any meditation, divination, or spellwork. Close the circle when finished.





## Winter Finding

(Autumn Equinox in September.) Special Notes: balance of light and dark. Time of rest after the harvest; thanksgiving.

**Special Altar Supplies:** three candles (white, red, black) set around the cauldron; autumn-colored ribbons tied on the dagger; leaves and flowers for decoration.

Cast the circle as usual. Light the three candles around the cauldron.

*I call upon the Triple Goddess, giver of life and of plenty since before time began. As a Goddess-daughter, I ask that You give to me joy and beauty, power and prosperity.*

Salute the cauldron with your dagger:

*Hail, Goddess! Lady of the seed and the growth and the harvest. I rejoice in Your turning year wheel and the changing seasons.*

Take the dagger in your power hand, the wine chalice in the other:

*Each life has always fulfilled the proper cycle, laying aside the old and leading into life anew in the eternal chain of living. In honor of the goddesses of Asgard and Vanaheim, I mark the fullness of my life and the harvest of this year's lessons.*

Walk three times clockwise around the circle, carrying the dagger and chalice, and chanting:

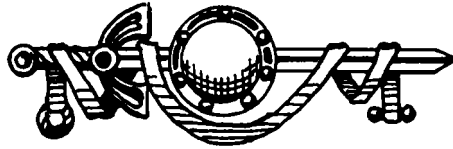
*The year wheel turns and bounty comes.*

Stand once more before the altar; lay aside the dagger. For each of the following toasts, first raise the chalice high, then drink.

*To the good seasons which have gone and the good times yet to come. To the beauty of the autumn and to good friends. To the Goddess!  
May She bring peace and fulfillment to all Her children.  
Merry meet and merry part and merry meet again. Blessed be!*

Do any planned meditation, divination, or spellwork. When finished, close the circle.





## Ancestress Night

(October 31. Halloween or Samhain in other branches of Witchcraft.) Special Notes: time for communication with the dead; the ruling time of the Crone Goddess. Traditionally, the Veil between the worlds is said to be thinnest on this night, making it easier to communicate with souls of the deceased. Remember, people do not change because they die. If there was someone with whom you did not get along, deny them entrance to your circle. Their vibrations can be just as disruptive and uncomfortable now as they were when the person was on the physical plane. There can also be the added complication that, once invited, the spirit will feel free to hang around and annoy you.

Special Altar Supplies: cauldron; chalice of wine; plate of bread and salt; a white, a black, and a red candle. Arrange the candles around the cauldron. Cast the circle as usual.

Light the extra candles, saying:

*I light three candles for the Goddess...as Maiden, as Mother, as Wise One. (Light the white.) Glorious Idhunn, keeper of the golden apples, forever the Maiden of youth and new beginnings, spring, and the planted seed. (Light the red.) Lovely Freyja, Great Mother of magick and prosperity, love and knowledge. (Light the black.) Dark Mother Hel, wise one of the twilight lands; queen of the night, death, and rebirth. I welcome the Goddess in all Her forms.*

Raise your arms and say:

*This is Ancestress Night, the feast to honor my foremothers, the night of the wheel-turning year that brings us to the Thin Veil. The gates between the worlds stand open this night. The footsteps of my foremothers and sisters rustle in the fallen leaves. The whispering winds carry their voices to my inner ears. All those who wish me well are welcomed within this circle.*

Put the plate of bread and salt on the pentagram:

*This is the night to honor my foremothers, the Feast of the Dead, the night strongest for communication with those gone into the shadow lands, those who now dwell with the Goddess. The Veil is lifted that they may know I*



*have not forgotten, and that I may know they have not forgotten me. I await the voices of my departed sister-friends.*

Dip a piece of bread into the salt and eat it.

*I ask all who have gathered here to join me in this feast. For the bread gives strength and prosperity in all worlds. The salt reminds us of the Mother's blood within Her womb of rebirth.*

Raise the wine chalice high over the altar, say:

*May we all be strong in body, mind, and spirit. And may the wheel of karma bring us together once more. To my ancestresses! To the Goddess! Merry meet and merry part and merry meet again.*

Drink some of the wine. Turn back to the extra candles, and say:

*The year wheel has turned, the harvest has come again. I have sowed many thought-seeds since last Ancestress Night. Let the good be harvested; let those that would hinder or hurt me be cast aside. The Threefold Goddess—the Maiden, the Mother, the Wise One—has covered me with Her gentle hands, guided my steps, heard my desires. For this I give Her honor and love.*

Tap the pentagram gently with your wand, saying:

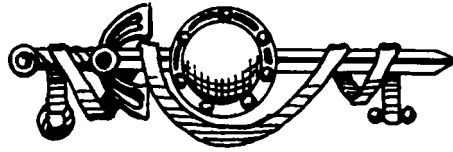
*Give me the true inner vision. Hear my desires, O Goddess! Guide and protect me. Lead me to greater knowledge and fulfillment.*

Stand in silence while you ask what you need of the Goddess. When you are finished, say:

*All love and honor to the Great Lady!*

Now is a time for divination, meditation, or spellwork. It is a special time to listen for the voices of loved ones gone into spirit. Ask them to help you by interpretation of the runestones, cards, or whatever. Thank them when you are finished. Close the circle.





## Mother Night

(Winter Solstice in December. Also called Yule.) Special Notes: a time of rebirth and turning of the Earth force tides.

Special Altar Supplies: yellow candle in the cauldron; red, black, white candles arranged around the cauldron; a bell.

Cast the circle as usual. Facing the altar, ring the bell three times.

*This is Mother Night, the longest night of the year. The darkness which has reigned now gives way to the growing light. The Sun goddess Sol is once more reborn, emerging from the Wise One's cauldron of rebirth. Transformed, she shows us the way into new cycles of life.*

Contemplate the candle in the cauldron for a few moments. Then raise your arms upward in reverence.

*I stand in the stillness behind all motion, before the ancient cauldron of rebirth. Someday I too must pass through the cauldron and be reborn into another life. I give honor to the Triple Goddess and the wisdom of Her ancient Mysteries.*

Light the white candle:

*White is for Idhunn, the Maiden. Goddess, plant your seeds of joy and new beginnings within my life.*

Light the red candle:

*Red is for Freyja, the Mother. From Her come the gifts of creative ideas and the strength and understanding to bring them to completion.*

Light the black candle:

*Black is Skadi (Hel or Holda), the Wise One. She gives the wisdom to understand the ancient magickal Mysteries.*

Look once more at the yellow candle:

*Sun goddess, I welcome you once more into life. Shine your spiritual light upon me that I may grow into a stronger, wiser Goddess-daughter.*



Take the bell and go to the east. Ring the bell once:

*Idhunn, I ask that you bless me with many seed-ideas and plans that I may improve my life.*

Go to the south, and ring the bell once:

*Frigg, I ask that you bless me with prosperity and plenty, so that my life may be free to seek higher knowledge.*

Go to the west, and ring the bell once:

*Nehellania, I ask you fill my life with love and beautiful happenings. I desire happiness and contentedness.*

Finally, go to the north and ring the bell once:

*Skadi, reveal to me the path to the ancient Goddess-Mysteries. Help me to understand the mystical knowledge.*

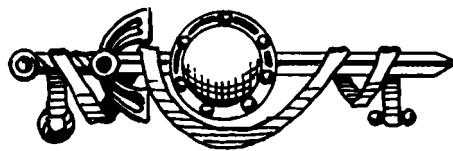
Stand once more facing the altar. Ring the bell three times.

*Hail to the Triple Goddess, the most ancient Three in One, the bringer of light out of darkness and new life out of the cauldron of rebirth. I give You honor and ask for Your blessing.*

Stand in silence to receive the blessing. Then lift the wine chalice high over the altar.

*To Freyja and all the goddesses!*

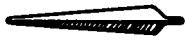
Now is the time for any divination, spellwork, or meditation. Close the circle when finished.



## Freyja's Day

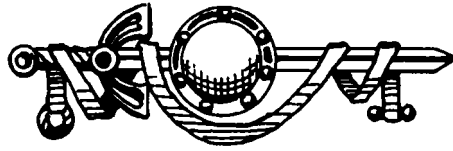
**Special Notes:** Any Friday is Freyja's Day; Friday the thirteenth is especially sacred to Her. Although January 10 is an arbitrarily given date, it is best to do your celebration on a Friday. Treat this celebration as you would any birthday.

Plan for this day in advance. Take special care with perfume, makeup, and dress on Freyja's Day, for she is the goddess of love, as well as of magick and the Valkyries.



Wear a piece of jewelry that makes you feel magickal. Before you leave the house for work, or begin your daily work at home, visualize yourself armored with the power of a Valkyrie. Walk with pride and self-assurance. Remind yourself throughout the day that this is Freyja's Day, and that she will honor you by being with you in the evening.

Before bedtime, have a little party for the Goddess. You can have cake and ice cream, or even luscious chocolates, whatever you would usually have to celebrate the birthday of a very special friend. Sing to Freyja. Tell her how much she means to you. Thank her for the Goddess-spark she has placed within all women.



## Day of Holda

**Special Notes:** July 10 is listed as Holda's Day. The North Germanic name for the goddess Hel was Holda, Holde, or Bertha, which means White Lady. She was the Black Earth Mother, the goddess of winter and Witchcraft, the Crone aspect of the Moon. She was said to ride on the Wild Hunt, accompanied by her spotted hounds. Holda was the goddess of a human's *wyrd* (fate or karma), magickal arts, dark magick, retribution, and revenge. Like all Crone goddesses, Holda should be respected, but not feared. She and her powers are an essential part of the life process.

Choose a Moon-lit night when you can go outside, or if that is unsafe, darken your room and open the curtains to the Moon. Stand with your arms stretched toward the Moon and chant:

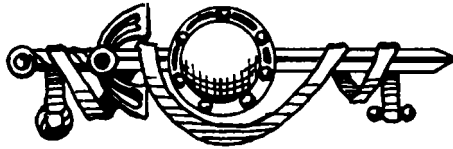
*Holda of the Wild Hunt, hear me! A Goddess-daughter sings your name into the night. Stretch out your protecting hands over your daughters. Let our tormentors and attackers feel your wrath. Bring to justice all those who deny women their freedom and rights. Powerful Holda, I place myself and my sisters into your keeping.*

If someone, particularly a male, is causing your problems, sing his name to Holda. Tell her about any crimes against women and children where the perpetrators have not been punished. Ask her to protect and defend women and children around the world. Finish by chanting:



*Ride on the Wild Hunt, Holda! Give the tormentors and persecutors of women no peace, awake or asleep. Tangle them in the webs of their own words and actions. Lady of Fate, turn their fate against them. Drag them down into darkness. Make my sisters and me strong, that we may triumph over all adversity. Protect us, Holda!*

Throw the Moon a kiss when you finish.



## Disirblot

(Full Moon in October.) Special Notes: Freyja was called the Great *Dis*, placing her at the head of the *Disir*, or goddesses and female ancestors. The *Disir* were traditionally described as nine women dressed in black or white and carrying swords. They brought good luck but were also merciless in exacting karmic justice. They were also involved with divination. Called *Idises* in Germany, the *Disir* were closely associated with the Valkyries and the Norns.

Calling upon *Freyja* and the *Disir* is helpful when you feel a need for more personal power. Use this ritual to re-empower yourself.

Special Altar Supplies: staff, dagger or sword, mask, hooded cloak. Do not bypass this ritual because you do not have exactly what is listed. Improvise. If you do not have a mask and cloak, substitute a shawl or towel draped over your head. Burn jasmine or lotus incense. You do not have to cast a circle to celebrate Freyja and her night-riding *Disir*.

Put on the mask and cloak with the hood pulled up. Take the dagger in your power hand, the staff in the other. While standing in the center of your working space, face the north and tap the staff nine times on the floor. Say:

*Freyja! Leader of the Disir! Come to my aid! My personal power is fading. Make it strong again!*

Point your dagger to the north. Say:

*No one has the right to belittle me! No one has the right to take away my power! I am a daughter of Freyja, mighty goddess!*

Turn to the east and point the dagger in warning:



*Take heed, all those in the east. No longer will you have power over me.*

Turn to the south and point the dagger:

*Take heed, all those in the south. I am free of your criticism and destructive words.*

Turn to the west and point the dagger:

*Take heed, all those in the west. Any harm you wish me returns to you.*

Turn to the north and point the dagger:

*Take heed, all those in the north. I am shielded by Freyja and the powerful Disir. My strength increases, while your control fades!*

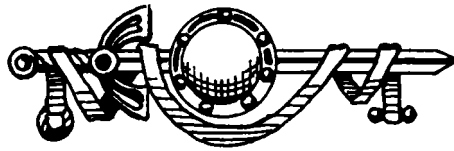
Tap the floor again nine times:

*Freyja protects! My enemies fail! My power is once more strong and whole!*

Feel your aura becoming strong with the light sent from the Goddess. Breathe it in; wrap it around you. You may feel very warm under this part of the ritual.

*My thanks to the Goddess and Her night-riding Disir. I shall stand strong and proud of my woman-hood, for I am a daughter of the Goddess, worthy of respect.*

Now is the time for meditation, divination, or spellwork.



## Rite of Hel

(November 1.) Special Notes: Hel, or Hella, was Queen of the Dead and Ruler of Niflheim. Her home was called Sleet-Den or Sleet-Cold. She rules over dark magick, retribution, and revenge. The Dark Mother Hel often works with her special animals, the wolves. Always cast your circle counterclockwise when petitioning Hel, Skadi, or Holda.

Special Altar Supplies: a black candle in the cauldron.

After casting your circle counterclockwise, stand before the altar with your dagger or sword in your power hand. Think of yourself as a powerful Valkyrie, one who



is about to do battle and win over any tormentors or attackers, whether they be on the physical or spiritual planes. Raise your arms and say:

*Dark Mother Hel, fill me with your power. I am a Valkyrie and Goddess-daughter, worthy of your aid. Fill me with the power to repel and destroy all negative thoughts and deeds sent against me. If the negative comes from within me, change it into positive energy, Goddess wise.*

Breathe deeply as you take in the psychic power needed for this ritual. When you feel empowered, go to the east and point your dagger outward, saying:

*Begone, foul energies which attack the mind! Return to your makers. I am a Valkyrie, a warrior of the Goddess. I command you to be gone!*

Go to the north and point the dagger:

*Disappear, foul energies which attack the body! Return to your makers. I am a Valkyrie, a warrior of the Goddess. You cannot defeat me!*

Go to the west and point the dagger:

*Be washed away, foul energies which attack the emotions! Return to your makers. I am a Valkyrie, a warrior of the Goddess. My word holds great power!*

Finally, go to the south and point the dagger:

*Be destroyed, foul energies which attack the spirit! Return to your makers. I am a Valkyrie, a warrior of the Goddess. You must obey!*

Move counterclockwise until you stand once more before the altar, facing north:

*I am a Valkyrie-daughter of the Goddess. No one can stand against me. All who attack me in any form, by thought, word, or deed, shall be defeated and brought low by their own actions. Let the attackers taste their just reward! Let them go down into darkness! Let them stand in the freezing courts of Hel! Let their negative efforts fly back to them, filling them with dread and fear! For I am a Valkyrie!*

As you think of the negative actions which have caused you distress (never the person!), stab out with your dagger:

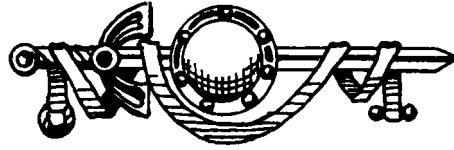
*The evil is dead! The mouths of my attackers are full of ashes, their thoughts of self-created nightmares, their lives of unfulfillment! For the hand of the Dark Mother is over me. I am a Valkyrie, protected and strong! So mote it be!*







Breathe deeply, this time drawing in the protective positive power of the Great Goddess. Breathe out any remaining resentment. When you feel calm and protected, close the circle.



## Fallen Women

(November—what is called Veterans' Day.) Special Notes: A time to honor all fallen women, whether as police officers, firefighters, rescue workers, soldiers, or simply women who were victims.

Special Altar Supplies: usual tools; plate of bread and salt; white candle in the cauldron, red one on the left, black one on the right; an apple.

Cast your circle as usual. Light the black candle to the right of the cauldron. Say:

*This is a time to honor all fallen women. Hel, Crone Goddess of darkness, all souls must eventually return to your cauldron of rebirth. I salute you.*

Light the red candle on the left, say:

*Freyja, Queen of the Valkyries, you who have gathered your share of the fallen women, I salute you.*

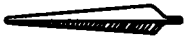
Light the white cauldron which is in the cauldron:

*Hail to my fallen sisters, who now dwell with the Goddess. I salute your courage, however you met your death. My heart remembers you, whether you fell in the line of duty, as a victim, in childbirth, accident, or old age. I honor your connection with all women everywhere. I honor and remember you, even though I may not know your names. Some day I too shall stand in the realm of spirit with the Goddess. I honor you, for you are a part of me.*

Take up the dagger and the apple. Say:

*As there is death in life, so must there be life in death. The life symbol of the Goddess is hidden inside the sacred fruit of Idhunn, the Maiden. Only those who seek and know may find it.*

Cut the apple crosswise to reveal the sacred pentagram made by the core and seeds:



*Behold! The sacred symbol of the Goddess who brings forth new beginnings out of the cauldron of rebirth.*

Eat part of the apple. Place the rest outside for the animals and birds after the ritual is finished.

*The secret of this sacred fruit is forbidden only to those who walk in darkness, those who turn away from the Goddess and the great knowledge that life never ends. Like a dried autumn seed, each passing soul falls into the cauldron, to rest, to be reborn in another time and place.*

Hold up the plate of bread and salt:

*Behold! The grain, fruit of the body of the Earth Mother, which is baked into bread to sustain the body. Salt, taste of Her watery blood, which preserves food and enriches life. Each time I taste salt and bread may I remember that all life turns in cycles of life and death as the Goddess wills.*

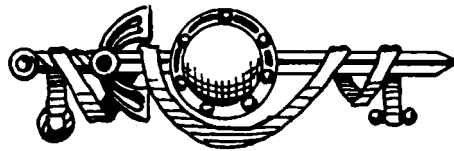
Dip a piece of bread into the salt and eat it, remembering all your female relatives and friendships who are with the Goddess, as well as all those women unknown to you who rest with Her.

*Rest peacefully, all you women who now dwell in spirit. Sit at the feet of the Goddess and learn great wisdom before you return to this world. And when your cycle turns, return to us, for we have need of your strength and knowledge.*

Lift high the chalice of wine, saying:

*To Freyja and all the goddesses!*

Drink some of the wine or juice. Now is the time for any divination, meditation, or spellwork. When you are finished, close the circle.



## Night of the Norns

(December 31, or what we call New Year's Eve.) Special Notes: The Norns are a trio of Fate Goddesses who guard the Well of Urd which lies under a root of the World Tree in Asgard. The Norn Urd (Fate) was interpreted as "that which was"; Verthandi (Necessity) as "that which is becoming"; Skuld (Being) as "that which should



become.” The Norse believed that what each person did influenced her future, not predestination or predetermination. The Norns were said to weave the destinies of humans, gods, giants, Dwarfs, Elves, and every other living being.

Learning to work with the Norns and listen to their advice is important to avoid major problems. If they point out coming problems, and we manage to change our life-direction to avoid them, then we have taken responsibility in the molding of our future. If the problems seem to stay in our path regardless of our efforts, then we must work through them, learning the necessary lessons. This ritual is for guidance in the coming year.

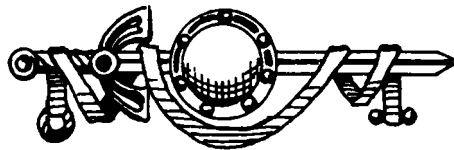
**Special Altar Supplies:** three black candles; extra chalice filled with water; divination tools of your choice. Cast circle is not necessary.

Set the chalice of water in the center of your working space on the table. Arrange the black candles behind the chalice. Light incense, such as bayberry; do not place it too close to cause you breathing problems. Name each of the candles as you light them:

*Urd. Verthandi. Skuld. Lead me to the sacred Well. Show me the future paths which will influence my life for the coming year.*

Look deep into the chalice of water. Whisper your question into this symbol of the sacred Well. Gently set it to one side as you draw out your runestones, shuffle your cards, or whatever applies to the divination method you are using. Lay out the runestones or cards, and carefully consider the meaning which they reveal to you. It is advisable to make notes of this reading so you can refer back to it later during the new year. When you are finished, put out the candles one at a time as you call:

*Urd. Verthandi. Skuld. My thanks for your guidance.  
If I have not understood the true meaning from the Well,  
reveal it to me in dreams and visions.*



## Marriage

**Special Notes:** this ritual is binding under civil law IF performed by a person licensed to perform weddings. Logical, unemotional consideration should be used before anyone agrees to bind their life to another's through marriage. By the same



token, do not overlook prenuptial agreements, especially if you are a woman with property of your own.

A cast circle is not necessary, but may be used if the gathering is a Pagan one. There is no “giving away” of the bride, since that tradition is a patriarchal one, signifying ownership of a woman!

**Special Altar Supplies:** two white candles with the names of the people to be married carved into them; a small white taper for lighting; red, black, and white ribbons threaded through the rings to be exchanged; chalice of wine or juice; a bell. A third white candle is lit on the altar before the ceremony begins.

When everyone is assembled, the couple should walk in together. The two witnesses stand behind the couple, who stand before the altar and the officiating Priestess. If a circle is cast, one side is left open until the couple enters. Then the Priestess seals the circle. The Priestess says:

*Come, Goddess. Be with us as we celebrate this joining in love of (the names of the couple). Pour out upon us all your blessings.*

The Priestess rings the bell twice.

*Hear me, you guides and guardians of (the names of the couple). What you once did for one, you must now do for two. By the power of the Goddess, I charge you to perform your tasks with love and compassion, blessing this couple each day anew.*

The Priestess speaks to the couple:

*True marriage is not to be undertaken lightly. It takes work and commitment, abiding love and compassion, and many times compromise. Life's path may become rocky with illness, periods of financial troubles, sorrows, or a host of little nagging difficulties. Look upon these as tests of your love and dedication to each other. Each of you is giving your heart into the keeping of the other. Do not break the trust you have been given, for it is sacred before the Goddess. Bring not little souls into the world without thinking, for they too are sacred trusts from the Goddess. If you can speak in honesty before the Goddess Herself, answer “I will.”*

The couple answers. The Priestess points to the white, carved candles and says:

*Here are the outward symbols of your inner dedication to each other. Before these witnesses, light the candle of your chosen mate and pledge your troth.*

The Priestess lights the little taper and hands it to the woman, who lights her mate's candle and says:





*I have chosen you above all others. I share with you my love and the light of the Goddess.*

The Priestess takes the taper and hands it to the man. He lights his mate's candle and says:

*I have chosen you above all others. I share with you my love and the light of the Goddess.*

The Priestess snuffs the taper. She picks up the rings, holding the ribbons threaded through them.

*These ribbons symbolize the Triple Goddess in Her aspects of Maiden, Mother, and Wise One. (She carefully removes the white ribbon and lays it on the altar.) White is the Maiden, the bringer of new life and new goals. (She carefully removes the red ribbon and lays it on the altar.) Red is the Mother, the Creatrix of growth and sometimes changes. (She carefully removes the black ribbon and lays it on the altar. The rings now lie in her hand.) Black is the Wise One, the keeper of the cauldron, the one who ends all life and prepares for new beginnings. This is the pattern of all lives, that our lives begin new cycles, they grow, and then they either change to new beginnings or they die. Can you accept this?*

The couple answers:

*I can.*

The Priestess gives the woman's ring to the man and says:

*Place this ring of troth upon the hand of your chosen and make your vow.*

The man places the ring on the woman's hand and says:

*This is my beloved and this is my friend.*

The Priestess gives the man's ring to the woman and says:

*Place this ring of troth upon the hand of your chosen and make your vow.*

The woman places the ring on the man's hand and says:

*This is my beloved and this is my friend.*

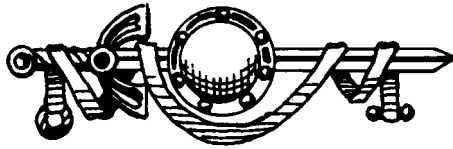
The Priestess raises the wine chalice high and says:

*By the power of the Goddess granted to me by Her as Her earthly representative, and by the civil authority granted to me by temporal powers, I declare before all here that these two are joined in marriage. Goddess, as Your Priestess, I ask that You bless this fair company with joy and happiness. To Freyja and all the goddesses! Blessed be!*

The Priestess hands the chalice to the couple, who drink and hand it back to her. She drinks, then passes the chalice around to any others present. When the chalice is returned to the altar, the Priestess says:

*Let us rejoice with our friends and celebrate their special time.  
For the Goddess is honored by joy and love.*

The circle is closed, and the wedding celebrations continue. Give the ribbons to the couple. They can be used as part of every anniversary. If ever a divorce should occur, these ribbons can be used in the separation ceremony.



## Handfasting

**Special Notes:** this is not a legal marriage. This is simply a Wiccan-Pagan agreement to stay together without benefits under civil law. As much thought should be put into a handfasting as goes into a marriage, whether the couple is of the same sex or different sexes. If at any time, this arrangement is no longer agreeable, the parties involved should go through the divorce-separation ritual.

**Special Altar Supplies:** white, red, and black ribbons lying inside the cauldron; two white candles carved with the names of the couple; a small white taper used for lighting; a broom. If rings are exchanged, see the appropriate part in the Marriage ritual.

Cast the circle as usual. Calling to the Element positions can be performed by other than the Priestess. Since the couple to be handfasted comes in last, leave a portion of the circle open until they enter. When the circle is closed, the Priestess takes the broom and sweeps outward around the edge of the circle. She places the broom on the floor before the altar. Then she goes to her position at the altar, raises her arms, and says:

*Great Goddess, bless all those who are gathered within this sacred circle.  
We join with this couple in celebrating their handfasting, a joining of their  
lives as it was done in ancient times.*

The Priestess goes to the east, raises her arms, and says:

*Rejoice, O Idhunn, for these two have heard your call to begin new things.*



She moves to the south, raises her arms, and says:

*Rejoice, O Frigg, for these two have found love with each other.*

She moves to the west, raises her arms, and says:

*Rejoice, O Nehellania, for these two have discovered a companionship of heart and spirit.*

She moves to the north, raises her arms, and says:

*Rejoice, O Skadi, for these two have chosen to walk this cycle of life together in search of the Goddess.*

The Priestess returns to her position at the altar and rings the bell twice.

*Hear me, you guides and guardians of (the names of the couple). What you once did for one, you must now do for two. By the power of the Goddess, I charge you to perform your tasks with love and compassion, blessing this couple each day anew.*

The Priestess speaks to the couple:

*The sharing of a life-path is not to be undertaken lightly. It requires much love, commitment, trust, and work. Many times it also requires compromise of desires. Life's path may become rocky with illness, periods of financial troubles, sorrows, or a host of little nagging difficulties. Look upon these as tests of your love and dedication to each other. Each of you is giving your heart and dreams into the keeping of the other. Do not break the trust you have been given, for it is sacred before the Goddess. If you can speak in honesty before the Goddess Herself, answer "I will."*

The couple answers. The Priestess points to the white, carved candles and says:

*Here are the outward symbols of your inner dedication to each other. Before these witnesses, light the candle of your chosen mate and pledge your troth.*

The Priestess lights the little taper and hands it to one of the couple, who lights the mate's candle and says:

*I have chosen you above all others. I share with you my love and the light of the Goddess.*

The Priestess hands the lighted taper to the other person, who lights the mate's candle and says:

*I have chosen you above all others. I share with you my love and the light of the Goddess.*





The Priestess snuffs the taper. She takes the three ribbons, one by one, out of the cauldron as she describes them.

*These ribbons symbolize the Triple Goddess in Her aspects of Maiden, Mother, and Wise One. (She draws out the white ribbon.) White is the Maiden, the bringer of new life and new goals. (She draws out the red ribbon.) Red is the Mother, the Creatrix of growth and sometimes changes. (She draws out the black ribbon.) Black is the Wise One, the keeper of the cauldron, the one who ends all life and prepares for new beginnings. This is the pattern of all life-paths, that our lives begin new cycles, they grow, and then they either change to new beginnings or they die. Can you accept this?*

The couple answers:

*I can.*

The couple hold out their left hands, and the Priestess loosely wraps the three ribbons around their wrists. She says:

*May you always stand together, but not too close together. May you be as one, but keep your own self free. May you love fully, but not smother with that love. And may you walk the path of the Goddess each day of your lives. So mote it be.*

The Priestess removes the ribbons. If rings are exchanged, it is done now. (See the Marriage ritual.) If rings are not exchanged, the couple may wish to exchange pieces of magical jewelry. The Priestess then raises the wine chalice high over the altar and says:

*By the power of the Goddess granted to me, I declare (names of couple) joined in handfasting. Goddess, as Your Priestess, I ask that You bless this fair company with joy and happiness. To Freyja and all the goddesses! Blessed be!*

The Priestess hands the chalice to the couple, who drink and hand it back to her. She drinks, then passes the chalice around to the others present. When the chalice is returned to the altar, the Priestess lays the broom where the couple can jump over it.<sup>1</sup> She says:

*Over the broom and into new life!*

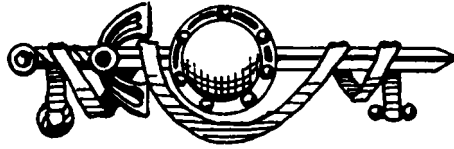
The couple jump over the broom. The Priestess says:

*Let us rejoice with our friends and celebrate their special time.  
For the Goddess is honored by joy and love.*





The circle is closed, and the handfasting celebrations continue. The ribbons are given to the couple who can then use them as part of each anniversary. If ever the couple decides to separate, these ribbons can be used in that ritual.



## Pregnancy

**Special Notes:** this can be used to entice a soul to grow as a baby within you, or to show your appreciation for the soul already within you. Much thought should go into why you desire a baby. Do not get pregnant in hopes of saving a relationship! If there are problems, pregnancy will only make matters worse. And do not get pregnant because you think you should or someone else is pressuring you to. Bringing a child into this world is a great responsibility. You want to draw the highest soul possible, for the world is in desperate need of higher souls.

**Special Altar Supplies:** the Berkano runestone; a piece of crystal; a pink and a blue candle; a vase of small flowers. If you want to write out your desires, do this on a small piece of paper and have a metal bowl available for burning it.

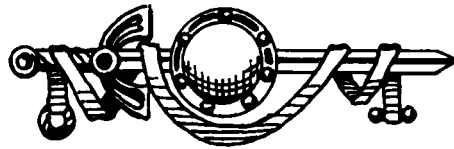
Arrange the altar with the pink candle on one side, the blue on the other, with the vase of flowers in the middle. Place the Berkano runestone (or its symbol drawn on paper) in front of the vase with the crystal on top of it. Light both candles.

Close your eyes and relax, letting your mind wander freely over your ideas of having a child. “Feel” the child in your arms, against your breast. Softly sing a lullaby, or some other song you like, just as if you were comforting a baby to sleep.

Now talk to the Goddess, telling her of your desires. Explain your real reasons for wanting this child and how you will try to raise it. Do not make promises to the Goddess that you cannot or will not keep. And if you do make a promise, be sure that you keep it! If you choose to write out your desires, now is the time to burn that paper.

Take the Berkano runestone and the crystal and hold them against your heart area. Tell the waiting soul why you want it to come to you. Pour as much love as you can through the runestone and crystal, out into the astral planes where the unborn soul is listening. Leave the candles to burn out.

If there is a physical reason why you cannot have a child, this ritual can influence and strengthen your chances for adoption.



## Childbirth

**Special Notes:** even though your spouse may be in the birthing room with you, try to include your closest female friends in the experience. There is a natural bond between all women. During childbirth you will need female energies around you, for comfort, sympathy, and encouragement.

**Special Altar Supplies:** if possible, arrange a small altar space with flowers, a small image of the Goddess, the runestone Berkano, and whatever else makes you feel in communication with the Lady. It is best to leave ritual tools at home, as they are not understood by hospital personnel.

During the last month of your pregnancy, prepare for the coming birth by daily lighting a white candle at your altar and talking with the Great Mother Herself. Place yourself and the child into Her care. Talk to the child as if she or he is already in the physical world; the child is able to understand you in the womb.

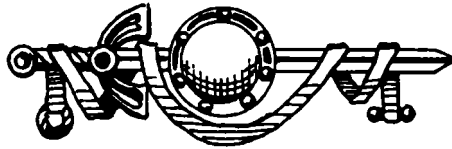
When you begin labor and go to the birthing center or hospital, release your fears and pain to the Goddess. Try to flow with the pain; do not fight it. Place as much of your attention as possible on the new child within you, who is ready to make an entrance into this world. Welcome the child with the onset of each pain.

To help with the pain, your spouse and friends can take turns pressing hard into the web between your thumb and forefinger of both hands right where the muscles begin to be hard. This is an acupuncture point and will help relieve the pain.

After the child is born, and you have some privacy, have your spouse and/or friends present the baby to the Goddess image on your little altar. It is the woman's privilege to call out the baby's name to the Goddess. If she is unable to do so, the spouse and friends should do this. If for some reason the child cannot be presented at this time, do it as soon as possible. Use such words as:

*Great Goddess, we present to You this child. May You bless and protect her/him and help her/him walk the true path forever. The name we have chosen is (the name of the child.) We thank You for this gift of new life.*

Each person present should then greet the child by name and tell her/him how much she/he is loved.



## Adoption

**Special Notes:** you should do the same soul-searching before adoption as you should before getting pregnant. The responsibility for raising and educating a little soul is tremendous. This same ritual can be used for adopting adults into a family. It is especially nice to perform this ritual in the presence of family and close friends.

**Special Altar Supplies:** a white candle with the child's name carved into it; a special piece of jewelry placed inside the cauldron; a chalice of juice and a plate of cookies. If you cast a circle (although this is not necessary for this ritual), do not worry about it being broken if children or pets cross over it. This seems to have little effect on the circle's power, although adults can disrupt it quite easily.

When calling up the Elements at the four directions, you can say:

*Welcome, Lady of the East (or whatever direction).*

*Join us as we welcome a new member of our family.*

The Priestess stands before the altar and touches the carved candle with her wand, saying:

*This candle symbolizes (name of child). She/he has been sent by the Goddess into the love and keeping of (names of the parents).*

The parents come forward and light the candle, saying:

*We have chosen you above all others. We will share with you our love and the light of the Goddess.*

The child is presented to the Goddess by the Priestess. As she sprinkles water on the child's head,<sup>2</sup> she says:

*What is this child's name? (The parents answer with the chosen name.)*

*We welcome you, child of the heart, into our midst and name you (the child's name). May your path be one of brightness, love, and obedience to the laws of the Goddess.*

The Priestess takes the piece of jewelry out of the cauldron and gives it to the parents to place on the child. She says:

*Rejoice with us, all Pagans! Rejoice with us, all you spirits of Nature and the Elements! For a child of the heart is born this day into the family of*



*(parents' names). We welcome you with all our love, (child's name), for you are a gift from the Goddess.*

The Priestess raised the chalice of juice high over the altar and says:

*To Freyja and all the goddesses!*

The child is given at least a drop of the juice first, then the Priestess, the parents, and the others drink. The chalice is returned to the altar. The plate of cookies is raised, and the Priestess says:

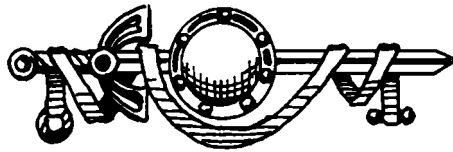
*To the Great Earth Mother, who supplies our needs!*

The child is given at least a tiny crumb of cookie. Then the plate is passed around to the gathering. When the plate is returned to the altar, the Priestess raises her arms and says:

*We thank you, Goddess, for sending us love and friendship.*

*And we trust You to guide us through life and supply our needs and desires. We ask that You pour a special blessing upon this newly-made family. All honor to the Goddess!*

The circle is closed.



## Divorce or Separation

**Special Notes:** even though divorce occurs within civil courts, the woman needs to perform a ritual privately or with female friends. This is necessary in order to sever the mental and emotional ties, and to re-establish self-esteem. Divorces seldom end amicably. This ritual can also be used to sever friendships turned sour or disconnect from negative family ties.

**Special Altar Supplies:** the three ribbons from the marriage ceremony, if possible; if the marriage was not Pagan, use some symbol from the actual wedding. A picture of the two people involved; a pair of scissors; a black candle; the cauldron; a long piece of red yarn or string; a white candle with the woman's name carved into it.

If the divorce or separation has been a particularly bitter or emotional one, be sure you have plenty of tissue within reach. Let the woman involved scream, cry, or whatever makes her feel better. Close friends may bring small gifts which they feel





will help the woman adjust to a new life on her own. These may be as simple as written promises to accompany the woman to dinner, on a short trip, and the like.

Cast the circle counterclockwise as you would for any ritual involving the Dark Mother. The Priestess lights the black candle behind the cauldron and calls the woman to stand beside her at the altar.

*Now is a time of separation, a time for what was once one life to become again two. Life-paths often change. If the changes do not come together, or at the same level of spirituality, those involved must release unconditionally. The outer physical ties of this life between (names of those involved) have been severed. Now we come before the Dark Mother to ask that She cut the ties on the mental, emotional, and spiritual levels. Wise One, we ask that You guide (name of the woman) into deeper understanding of this separation. Bless her with joy in a new life and new beginnings.*

The Priestess hands the picture to the woman and says:

*Sister, speak your heart. Let there remain no hidden thoughts or emotions to boil up into sour reactions later.*

The woman is now free to express whatever she feels in whatever way she wants. This may be emotional, blunt, and highly dramatic. But it is best that she get it out of her system now, among her female friends, than later. When she is finished, the Priestess says:

*By the power of the Goddess, you have the right and the will to sever yourself from (name of the other person). You are a Goddess-daughter, strong and free, guided and protected by the Great Mother. And as Goddess-daughters, we are never alone.*

The Priestess hands the woman the scissors and she cuts the picture in two, separating one person from the other. The female friends may shout encouragements at this point. The woman then takes the part of the photo containing the other person, lights it in the candle and drops it into the cauldron to burn.

The Priestess ties one end of the red yarn to the woman's left wrist, the other end to the black candle. She says:

*Red symbolizes the color of passion and love. And love reaches into all levels of your being. Now you must sever any ties to the rest of your beingness.*

The Priestess gives the woman the scissors and she cuts the red yarn. The Priestess says:

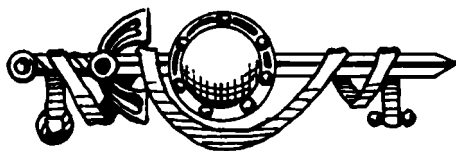


*You are yourself, a powerful Goddess-daughter. Your sisters surround you with their love. Begin a new life with hope and joy and expectation, for the Goddess will never disappoint you in Her gifts.*

The woman lights the white candle bearing her name. She says:

*I cast away the old. I welcome the new beginnings. So I have said, so shall it be.*

The circle is opened. The woman and her friends can now celebrate with good-ies. The red yarn is given a burial by burning or actually burying it.



## Coming of Age

**Special Notes:** preparation for a girl's menstruation should be done well in advance of the onset. Education should include not only the physical part, but connection with the Goddess and the Moon cycles. Be open and honest to any questions.

**Special Altar Supplies:** a calendar listing Moon cycles; a red candle with the girl's name carved into it. The female relatives and guests may bring little gifts to be presented at the end of the ceremony. A cake can be presented as part of the celebrations.

A cast circle is not necessary. Two women are needed for this ritual, besides the girl; they will take the part of the Mother and the Crone. The Mother leads the girl to the altar and says:

*Great Goddess, as the Mother, flowing with the wise blood, I present to You this blooming girl, no longer a child, but now a woman. Bless her, Lady, and reveal to her Your sacred Mysteries.*

The Crone stands on the other side of the girl and says:

*Great Goddess, as the Wise One, who now holds back the wise blood, I present to You this newly-made woman. Bless her, Lady, and teach her Your ways.*

The girl says:



*Great Goddess, as the Maiden, I stand before You. I shall stand with pride and joy that I am made in Your image, the I too hold creative powers within my body.*

The Mother turns to the girl and says:

*Physical love and joy are gifts from the Goddess. Be wise in your using of these gifts.*

The Crone turns to the girl and says:

*Creating of new souls is a great responsibility. Choose the father of your children carefully. And keep your freedom as a Goddess-daughter.*

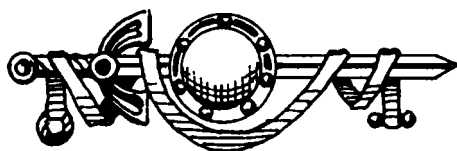
The Mother lays the Moon calendar on the altar before the girl and says:

*Watch the changing faces of the Goddess within the Moon, for this is ancient woman-magick. And by watching, learn the rhythms of your own body. For the flowing of the wise blood is a Mystery shared only by women, a special gift from the Goddess.*

The Crone indicates the carved red candle and says:

*May your life be as bright as the candle flame. We welcome you to woman-hood in the name of the Great Goddess.*

The girl lights the candle. The ritual is ended. The female relatives and friends now celebrate with the girl. The red candle is saved for her to use during her monthly Moon-times meditations.



## Menopause

**Special Notes:** this ritual is one greatly needed for older women who have been made to feel useless when this phase of their life arrives. Also perform this for any woman who had to undergo a hysterectomy. The loss of physical reproductive organs can be devastating to the emotions.

**Special Altar Supplies:** a black candle with the woman's name carved into it and set inside the cauldron. A special piece of magickal jewelry. No cast circle is necessary. Two women are needed to take the parts of the Maiden and the Mother.





The Maiden leads the woman to the altar. The Mother stands on the other side of her. The Maiden says:

*As once you were the Maiden, so do I now stand. But the Maiden is not complete without the Crone. For the cycle must flow, our lives must turn with it.*

The Mother says:

*As once you were the Mother, so do I now stand. The Mother must give way to the Wise One, the carrier of wisdom, the one who represents all our foremothers. The cycle must flow, our lives must turn with it.*

The woman undergoing the Crone time may now express all her hopes and fears about entering this stage of her life. It may be emotional but let her get it out, especially if she entered it early through hysterectomy. Then the Maiden says:

*The Goddess is wise and loving. To understand her, all women must experience each of Her three faces. Each of the three forms is powerful in its own way. Rejoice, (name of the woman). Go to Her for wisdom and understanding. Accept the mantle of Her elder priestess, for you are still a Goddess-daughter and of great value in Her eyes.*

The Mother says:

*The Goddess is wise and loving. There comes a time when child-bearing should end. The energy your body put out each Moon-time is now kept within you to be used for greater things. Stand tall and proud in your new role as elder priestess, for you are still a Goddess-daughter and of great value in Her eyes.*

The Crone says:

*Goddess, I accept this new pattern in my life. (She lights the black candle.) I face this new cycle of my being-ness with love and joy.*

The Maiden hugs her and says:

*Welcome, elder sister. For within you lives the Crone, the teacher of great wisdom. I am honored by your presence.*

The Mother hugs her and says:

*Welcome, elder sister. For within you I see the path that someday I will take. I am honored by your presence.*

The Crone says:

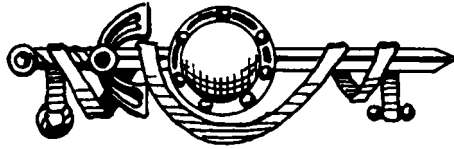






*I welcome the Wise One within me. I am one of three, for within me still reside the Maiden and the Mother. May the Goddess bless me by revealing more Mysteries. I am a Goddess-daughter, beloved of the Lady.*

The ritual is ended. This is a time of celebration with the gathered friends.



## Death

**Special Notes:** death of a loved one can be a very emotional and traumatic time. Too many times the funeral is held in a Christian atmosphere, which can burden a Pagan with negative emotions. The family is preyed upon by funeral directors peddling expensive procedures. Death is a natural part of the life cycle. Our pain and grief come from not being able to physically touch the deceased person after she or he has been buried or cremated.

**Special Altar Supplies:** a picture of the deceased person or pet; a white candle carved with his or her name; a small personal item which belonged to the deceased. Have lots of tissue available, and let the mourners express their grief. A cast circle is not necessary. If the person or pet was cremated, the ashes could go on the altar prior to burial or scattering.

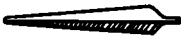
A Priestess, personal friend, or one of the family may take the Priestess's part. The white candle is lit. Those gathered are encouraged to remember happy, pleasant times with the deceased. This may take lots of encouragement to get people to open up, but it is a valuable part of the healing process. When the sharing is finished, the Priestess goes to the altar and says:

*Goddess, we give (name of the deceased) into Your keeping. May she/he rest within Your cauldron of peace until another life-cycle is decreed. Our sorrows come from her/his physical absence. But we know the spirit is not ended at death, only transformed into a different form. Grant to us comfort and understanding of our sorrows, and joy that all pain and suffering are ended. Farewell, (name of the deceased). Go forth in peace. May our future meetings be filled with love and joy.*

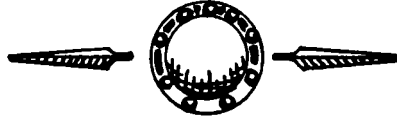
The family says:

*Go in peace. We love you.*





The ritual is ended. The family should again be encouraged to speak of happy times with the deceased. Looking at old photos is helpful to the healing process. The family may want to set out a white candle each Halloween in memory of all family members and pets gone into the spirit realm.

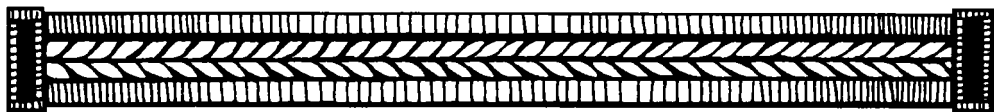


## End Notes

1. Jumping the broom is a very old custom among European Pagans. It was even used for peasant marriages far into the Christian era, either because the peasants could not afford the price of a Christian priest or because they still followed the old ways.
2. Sprinkling water on a child's head as a symbol of acceptance into a family goes back centuries before the Christians stole the idea and called it baptism.

# Feminine Magick





## Moon Magick

**T**he very first religions and Mysteries were of the Moon Goddess. They were secret, women-only societies. Four of their most important aspects were the rites of initiation for girls at their first menstruation, childbirth, menopause, and death.<sup>1</sup> Later, under the influence of the patriarchies and the Sun god, these Mysteries were either taken over and changed, or totally subjugated into meaningless rituals, if any rituals were allowed to remain at all.

Women's Mysteries also taught the establishing of communication with the Goddess, as well as the art of magick. Very little, if any, women's magick is connected with the Sun. Women knew how to harness the powers of the Moon, the same powers which affect the oceans of the world and the bodies of humans. The Wiccan community and many other magicians still use the phases of the Moon to time their magick. The time from the waning Moon up to, and including, the New Moon is used for decreasing or binding magick. The waxing Moon up to, and including, the Full Moon is used to increasing or prosperity magick.



Since the bodies and minds of women appear to be more receptive to the powers of the Moon than men, they learned early on how to respond to these powers in a positive manner. Women were the first astral-traveling shamans, the first intuitive healers, the first oracles, the first magicians. The Moon and psychic abilities have always been connected.

Among the ancient cultures where women accompanied their men into battle, women's magick was thought to be essential. The men would not even consider commencing their journeying or fighting until skilled women magicians read the omens and cast spells.

I often wondered why women seem to have a greater proficiency in the psychic talents, or at least a more natural use of them, until I read books on the human body. It seems the deciding factor of intelligence is not the size of the human brain. It is the ratio of brain weight to body weight. Compared in this manner, women have an advantage over males. It is a fact that women's frontal lobes are over-all more developed than those of men.<sup>2</sup>

The female also has sharper perceptions in other areas: hearing (especially high ranges), vision, sensitivity of touch, retentive memory, quickness in thinking and conclusion reaching, and verbal skills. This should not be surprising; after all, women have been responsible for protecting, raising, and instructing children—the only way to continue any race—since the beginning.

It is also a fact that the connecting tissue between the two brain hemispheres in women is much thicker than in men. This connecting tissue, called the Corpus Callosum, enables communication between the analytical left brain and the creative, psychic right brain.<sup>3</sup> Once women break through the forced negative programming against the use of the psychic and communication with the Goddess and astral entities, they generally have a much easier time accessing and using the power and knowledge they find.

For too long, women have labored under false ideas about their strength, abilities, and natural powers. It is time we dispelled with this misleading propaganda and accepted ourselves for what we really are—just as good and important as men.

Patriarchy would have women believe that they are the “weaker sex.” We are supposed to be physically weaker, not able to hold down certain jobs, and always sick. Certainly, some of us cannot drive heavy equipment or use a jackhammer, just as there are some men who cannot. As for sickness, unless life throws us a bad curve, it is the woman of the family who is the last to give in and go to bed when the rest of her family is down with the flu or whatever. There is absolutely no evidence that women are less healthy than men.

For centuries women were denied extended education, if they were educated at all, because they were said to be less intelligent than men. Patriarchy believed that women could not handle the stress of learning such things as mathematics, biology, geometry, and such. After all, that called for an analytical mind-set, which women



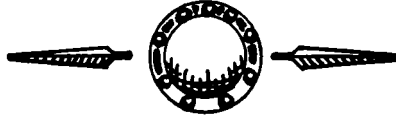
are not supposed to have. Well, some do and some do not, the same as men. When it comes to the need for making quick decisions, I have seen women win hands down. A good example is the woman who spotted a grass fire from her kitchen window. She yelled for her husband to call the fire department, then rushed out, grabbed a hose, and doused the fire. As she started back across the yard, she saw her husband still standing in the doorway, undecided as to what to do. If a child puts something in his or her mouth that he or she is not supposed to, a mother will be up, across the room, and have it fished out while the father is still getting out of his chair. Women have had to be quick on the response, to protect their children and the home. They seem to instantly know what to do, rather than dithering around analyzing the situation. Their first instincts are generally good ones.

One of the biggest put-downs I have heard from men about women is that we are too emotional. For centuries, the only defense women had was to be emotional. Emotions which are denied and bottled up produce physical illness, which both men and women are discovering to their discomfort. Women are in better touch with their emotions and their psychic side, and less hesitant about exploring these areas, so naturally we appear to be emotional to men who believe that their macho image should not touch on emotions, even to express love.

Rather than become more like men, women need to strengthen their communication with the Moon Goddess, the Moon itself, and the powers associated with it. Women are unique individuals, as different as men are different from each other. We need to believe in our own strengths and be understanding of our weaknesses. We should stop trying to conform to the patriarchal image of a woman and step out proudly in our unique individuality.

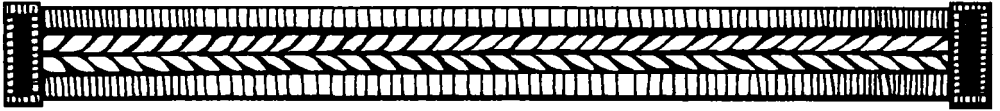
If this world has a positive future in store, it will come about through the efforts of women. Even though as individuals we may not choose to assume leadership of a country, we can still influence both men and children to see humanity as something good, regardless of the race or religion. By example, women can teach others, female and male, how to develop to their full potential and be proud of their individuality. We can teach compassion, strength, and above all spirituality by what we do with ourselves and our lives. By each woman finding her own place as Teacher, Healer, Visionary, Warrior, and Priestess, women can forge a new image of femininity: soft, yet tough when necessary; firm against discrimination of any kind; advocates of peace and equality.

We have accepted someone else's image as our own for too long. We need to stand individually and together to say to the world and to men: "We are Goddess-daughters who will realize our full potential. You cannot do without us, nor can you stop what we will become. Accept us as we are and are becoming, for the new woman is here to stay."



## End Notes

1. Briffault, Robert. *The Mothers*.
2. Oakley, Ann. *Subject Women*.
3. Taylor, Gordon Rattray. *The Natural History of the Mind*.



## Healing

**H**ealing by Pagan women has always been approached from a different standpoint than by men. Women have a gentler touch and are more apt to seek out the root of the health problem. Perhaps this is because women have been the recipients of drastic medical techniques by male doctors, or perhaps it is because the female nature is more empathetic and sympathetic. Whatever the reason, women need to acknowledge that their type of psychic healing needs to be different.

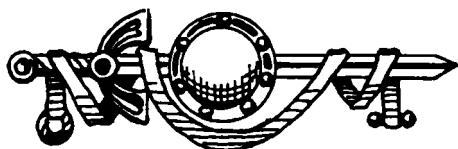
Women have special health problems that men do not have and cannot fully understand, whether the males are psychic healers or physicians. For instance, it takes another woman to appreciate the discomfort of menstruation, the great fear caused by breast lumps, or the soul-deep and lasting pain which comes with the death of a child.

The use of herbs in healing has been well covered in a number of excellent books. So has the practice of healing through the aura, so I will not repeat those techniques here. However, since women like to touch in healing, I will discuss foot and hand reflexology. I will also briefly mention the use of aromatherapy; women are very sensitive to odors.





Crystals and stones, especially those with high crystallization, are able to store energy and information. Some metals, and silver is the strongest for this, can also act as storage batteries. Energy and information, propelled by strong emotional thought, are encoded into the stones by close human contact. The stones become almost like computer chips, passively awaiting contact with a human aura in order to make that energy and/or information available.



## Foot Reflexology

If you have never had a foot massage properly done, you have missed a wonderful experience. The first couple of times it can be pure torture, because your feet will be full of sore spots you did not know you had. After that, it is one of the most relaxing healing treatments you can have. It is also not too difficult to do for yourself.

The charts for the areas of the feet are not to be considered the absolute last word on where everything is. People's bodies vary; some people, for example, do not have their appendix in the usual spot. Use the charts to determine what is most likely associated with a particularly sensitive, painful area.

If you are working with another person, and she or he is new to foot reflexology, be prepared for the lightest touch to have her or him gripping the chair with both hands and yelling. Few people walk barefoot on gravel anymore, so they will have all kinds of painful "buttons" on their feet.

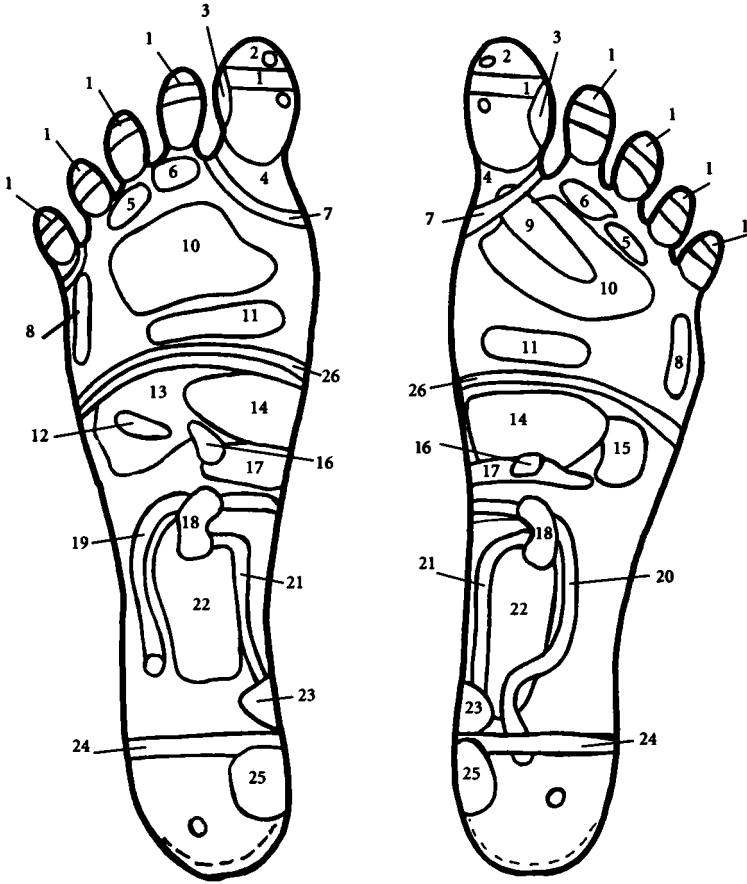
In the beginning, use your thumb to search out sore spots. You will not need to apply much pressure to find them. Use a circular rotating motion for a few seconds over each area. After a few sessions, you will need to use either the first knuckle of your forefinger or a hard rubber pencil eraser to get to the deeper soreness.

When you first began using foot reflexology, do not massage for more than a total of ten minutes. And do it only every other day for the first week to ten days. You do not want to flood your body with toxins which it cannot expel fast enough.

Be very careful not to overwork the areas of the kidneys. You are breaking loose crystallization in the feet. This crystallization enters the blood and must be thrown off through the kidneys, and you do not want to overload them.

Begin the reflexology by taking one foot in your lap and gently working on the toes, from the tips of the toes down to the foot proper. Then work the foot from the top down to the heel. After you finish with the sole of the foot, work around the ankle bones and up the back of the leg for a short distance.



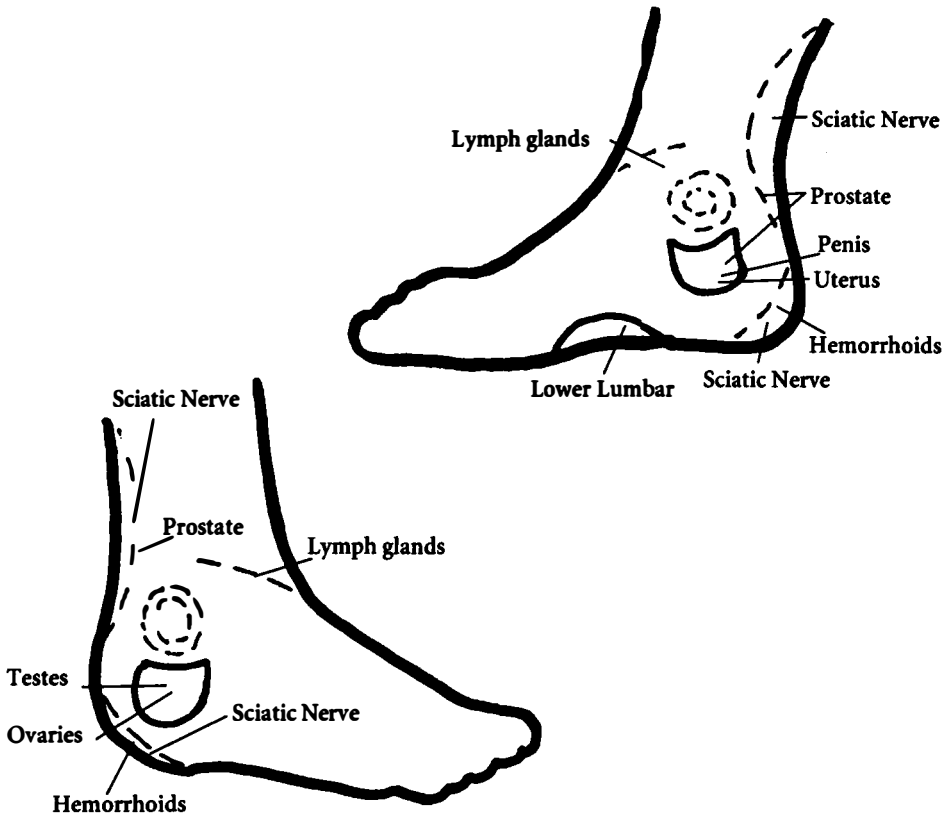


## Soles of Feet

- |                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Sinus                  | 14. Stomach          |
| 2. Brain                  | 15. Spleen           |
| 3. Voice                  | 16. Adrenal Glands   |
| 4. Neck                   | 17. Pancreas         |
| 5. Ears, eustachian tubes | 18. Kidney           |
| 6. Eyes                   | 19. Ascending colon  |
| 7. Thyroid, bronchial     | 20. Descending colon |
| 8. Arms, shoulder         | 21. Ureter tubes     |
| 9. Heart                  | 22. Small intestines |
| 10. Lungs, breast         | 23. Bladder          |
| 11. Solar plexus          | 24. Sciatic nerve    |
| 12. Gallbladder           | 25. Coccyx           |
| 13. Liver                 | 26. Diaphragm        |



# Outside of Foot



Near the top of the big toe (in the number 2 area on the chart) is a tiny spot deep within the toe. This is the pituitary gland. Slightly below it, also tiny and deep, is the pineal gland "button." When these glands are properly stimulated, you will experience a tingling sensation in other parts of your body, particularly in your forehead and on top of your head. Do not massage these gland "buttons" too much at first. It can result in headaches and/or unsettling dreams if overstimulated in a person who is not ready for the inflow of psychic energy.

Near the center at the bottom of the heel is another tiny spot. This is the sciatic nerve. It will take strong pressure to reach this "button." If the person has lower back and sciatic problems, pressing this spot will bring them upright with a scream. Try to be gentle and sympathetic; your foot may be in her or his hands next time.

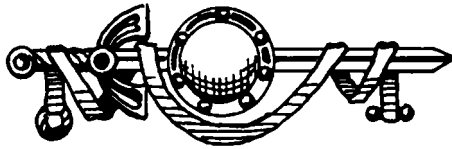
The dotted line around the edge of the heel will be where you find problems with hemorrhoids. Working this area is no substitute for medical treatment, as is any part of foot reflexology, but it can help to relieve hemorrhoidal pain.

When working around the ankle bones, you will find intense pain if a woman has female organ problems or has had a hysterectomy. The scar tissue from any surgery will produce a sore “button” on the feet. If the woman is pregnant, be very careful and use an extremely light touch in these areas. Do not spend more than a few seconds on any areas corresponding to female organs when working on someone who is pregnant.

Finish your foot massage by gently rubbing the entire foot from the toes up over the ankles.

Crystal points can be used to apply pressure to foot reflexology spots (see the section on crystals later in this chapter), but be extremely careful not to damage the skin or cause excessive pain.

You can do this reflexology for yourself by taking one foot into your lap and slowly working it over, just as you would for another person. Grit your teeth when you find a sore “button” and persevere.



## Hand Reflexology

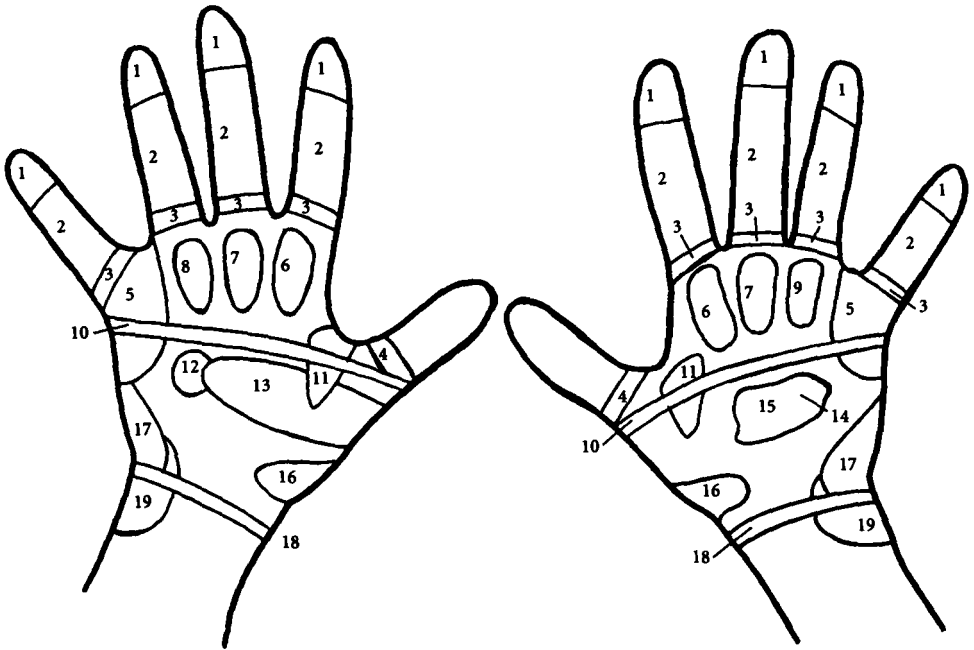
Hand reflexology can be performed any time, any place, without arousing much attention. Everyone can easily do it for themselves.

As with foot reflexology, begin at the tips of the fingers and work downward to the wrist. Be sure to cover the webs between all the fingers.

The charts for hand reflexology are not 100 percent applicable to every single person, no more than are those for the feet. Refer to them when you find a sore “button,” so you can determine the possible problem.

As with foot reflexology, do not overwork the areas of female organs if you or another person is pregnant. Helping a woman in labor by working these spots can, however, make her more comfortable. A special labor pain spot lies in the web between the thumb and forefinger, right against the muscles of the hand. Pressing hard in this area can help the birthing mother endure the rough pains of labor. It may require constant, hard pressure, so try to have someone who can take over for you before you get cramps in your hands.

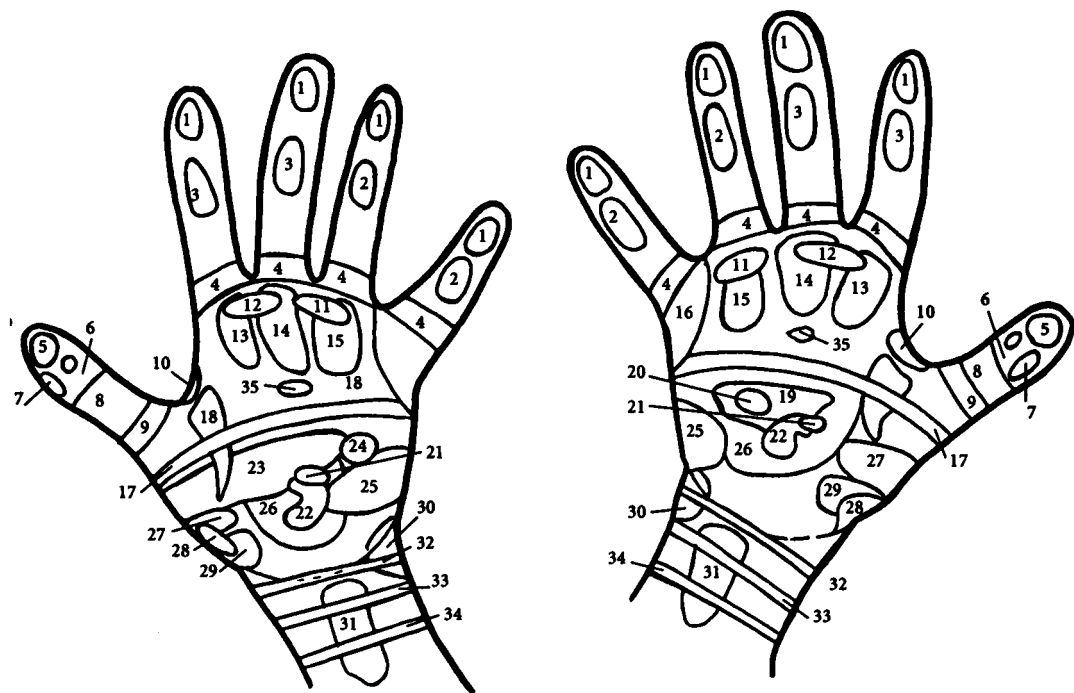
When you are finished massaging the hand, very gently rub from the fingertips completely up over the wrist as if pulling on gloves. Working over your hands with this type of massage can relieve a lot of pain and tension, especially if you type most of the day. This also works well for other tasks which leave your hands cramped and sore.



## Back of Hands

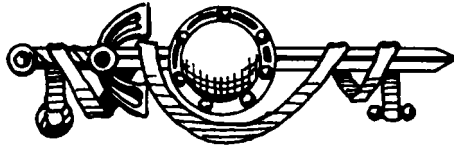
- |                  |                                |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Sinus         | 11. Lymph glands               |
| 2. Nerves        | 12. Spleen                     |
| 3. Eyes, ears    | 13. Stomach                    |
| 4. Thyroid gland | 14. Gallbladder                |
| 5. Arm, shoulder | 15. Liver                      |
| 6. Lungs         | 16. Pancreas                   |
| 7. Breast        | 17. Lower back, hip, leg, knee |
| 8. Breast, heart | 18. Lymphs in the groin        |
| 9. Back          | 19. Pelvic area, sciatic       |
| 10. Diaphragm    |                                |





## Palms of Hands

- |                  |                      |                     |
|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Sinuses       | 13. Lungs, bronchial | 25. Colon           |
| 2. Nerves, ears  | 14. Chest            | 26. Intestines      |
| 3. Nerves, eyes  | 15. Breast           | 27. Pancreas        |
| 4. Eyes, ears    | 16. Arm, shoulder    | 28. Sacrum          |
| 5. Brain         | 17. Diaphragm        | 29. Bladder         |
| 6. Head          | 18. Lymph glands     | 30. Coccyx          |
| 7. Cervical      | 19. Liver            | 31. Lower lumbar    |
| 8. Neck, throat  | 20. Gallbladder      | 32. Sigmoid colon   |
| 9. Thyroid gland | 21. Adrenal          | 33. Sciatic         |
| 10. Throat       | 22. Kidney           | 34. Ovary, prostate |
| 11. Mouth        | 23. Stomach          |                     |
| 12. Teeth        | 24. Spleen           |                     |



## Aromatherapy

Fragrances in healing and magick have been used for centuries. There are records from Egypt, Babylon, and Sumeria which tell how these cultures burned certain resins, soaked herbs in wine, etc. to aid healing and to strengthen magickal rituals. Even today, incense (a kind of aromatherapy) is widely used by Pagans and orthodox religions alike.

Aromatherapy is generally the use of scented oils instead of burned herbs and resins. A few drops of the appropriate oils are placed on cotton balls in a dish so that the scent can gently waft through a room. Sometimes a few drops are added to bath water. Please be aware that some oils should NEVER be used in bath water as they are irritating and dangerous. Also do not use pure oils on your skin as they can often cause adverse reactions. And NEVER drink any oils! The cotton ball method is one of the best and safest methods to use; it is also cheap.

One way to diffuse scents through your house is to use an Aroma-Stream Diffuser. This electric device is safe to use while you are sleeping and can be left unattended.<sup>1</sup>

Simmering potpourri pots can also be used to disperse the scent through a room, but the heat required for this sometimes changes the smell. Sandalwood and patchouli do not work well in potpourri pots.

Some of the safer herbal oils can be used in massage oils or drunk as teas, or the dried herbs can be brewed and the liquid drunk. However, be very certain that you know the safety of herbs before you ingest them in any manner!

Purchase the best and purest oils you can find as they will have the most effect and smell the best. However, some oils are so expensive that you might consider substituting another in its place.

Storing your oils properly is vital. You do not want to spend good money only to have the oils evaporate, get spilled, or lose their scent. Keep the bottles in a cool, dry place away from light, heat, and moisture. Do not leave the cap off for more than a few seconds. And be sure to keep them in a place where children and pets cannot get to them.

Most oils are sold in dark-colored bottles with an eyedropper. This makes it easier to dispense only a drop or two at a time without danger of spilling the oil.

The following list of oils will help you decide which you can use in healing and/or magick. For more detailed information, read any of Scott Cunningham's



herbal books. His book *Magical Aromatherapy*, as well as other books listed in the bibliography at the end of this book, will aid you in your studies.

**Anise:** oil; increasing clairvoyant powers.

**Bay:** oil; purification, psychic awareness.

**Bayberry:** oil; prosperity and blessings; draws money.

**Bergamot:** oil; protection, removes curses, draws money. Increase physical energy. Orange bergamot mint can be used in teas to ease cystitis, anxiety, urethritis, and assist digestion. However, drinking this tea will make you sensitive to sunlight.

**Carnation:** oil; energy, healing.

**Cedar:** oil; instill confidence, protection, cleansing. A spiritual scent which helps with self-control. Do not use during pregnancy! Inhale the scented fumes to treat bronchitis and head colds. Use sparingly in baths for vaginal infections.

**Chamomile:** this is a gentle herb which can be used in baths and teas to treat stomach upsets, insomnia, sprains, earache, and as an anti-inflammatory.

**Cinnamon:** oil; good luck, speeds up magickal actions, prosperity, physical energy.

**Clove:** oil; healing, protection. Strengthens the memory and helps to give courage. A drop of this oil placed directly on a painful tooth will ease the pain until you can get to a dentist.

**Eucalyptus:** oil; healing, cleansing of a sick room or house. Inhale the scented fumes to soothe colds, flu, and congestion. Can be used sparingly in oils to rub on muscular pain.

**Frangipani:** oil; attracts love and respect.

**Frankincense:** oil; high spiritual vibrations. Healing, protection, blessing, purifying. Reduces stress and tension. Can be used sparingly in baths to treat anxiety, asthma, and respiratory infections.

**Gardenia:** oil; relieve strife and stress.

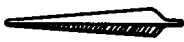
**Ginger blossom or white ginger:** oil; stimulates affections and romance.

**Honeysuckle:** oil; draws money and good luck; sharpens the intuition; instills confidence. Strengthens psychic awareness.

**Jasmine:** oil; attracts positive entities; draws love. Helps increase psychic dreams. Use sparingly in baths or inhale to ease uterine and menstrual pain, depression, and coughs.

**Lavender:** oil; peace, repels those who would interfere in your life. Promotes good health and dispels depression. Use in baths to treat menstrual pain, headache, and sore muscles. Is also a good antibiotic.





**Lemon:** oil; a great cleansing scent. Purification, healing, good health, physical energy. A skin irritant, so use very carefully. A dilution of lemon and warm water can be used as a mouthwash for bleeding and irritated gums. Drinking a weak solution will aid digestion; however, do not use if you have ulcers. It also stimulates the immune system.

**Lilac:** oil; helps in recalling past lives; attracts positive entities. Purification.

**Lotus:** oil; very high spiritual vibrations. Peace, contentment.

**Magnolia:** oil; aids in psychic development. Love.

**Marigold:** tincture of marigold used in the bath promotes healing and helps clear up rashes as it promotes healing.

**Mimosa:** oil; prophetic dreams; getting to the truth; making decisions.

**Myrrh:** oil; high spiritual vibrations. Purification, averting evil. Helps with meditation and shamanic journeys. Do not use if pregnant! A weak mouthwash will promote healing and help ease mouth sores.

**Narcissus:** oil; calmness, harmony, peace of mind, tranquil sleep.

**Orange blossom:** oil; happiness, marriage.

**Patchouli:** oil; peace, settles arguments, calms anger, repels trouble-makers. Sometimes is considered to be an aphrodisiac. Do not overuse! Use a weak solution in the bath to help treat depression, stings, bug bites, and fluid retention.

**Peppermint:** oil; energy, repels negative people. Gets things moving, if someone is not making decisions. Peppermint tea helps treat indigestion, vomiting, and colds. However, do not use before bedtime, and be aware that it can make you sensitive to sunlight.

**Pine:** oil; cleansing, purifying, healing, protection, energy; also attracts money. Inhaling the oil can help treat chest infections, colds, sore throats, and rheumatic pains. However, do not use undiluted!

**Rose:** oil; love, peace, harmony. Can be used in the bath to ease depression and regulate menstruation.

**Rosemary:** oil; very powerful against black magick or negative spells. Purifying, cleansing of the atmosphere. Strengthens the memory. Inhaling the oil can help to relieve headaches, but do not overuse!

**Sandalwood:** oil; a powerful healing oil; helps in developing psychic powers. Good for meditation and shamanic journeys. Can be used in the bath water as an antiseptic for cystitis and urinary infections.

**Spearmint:** oil; protects the home or yourself. Healing.

**Vanilla:** oil; good fortune, draws positive events. Love, sex, physical energy.





**Verbena:** oil; protection, removes curses. A very powerful oil that can take varnish off furniture if spilled. Use very sparingly.

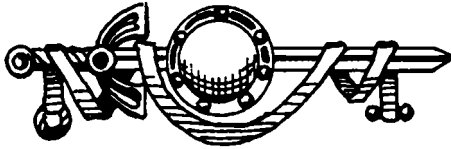
**Vetivert:** oil; protection, attracts money.

**Violet:** oil; marital happiness, peace, love.

**Wisteria:** oil; attracts good vibrations.

**Ylang ylang:** oil; attracts love, opportunity; peace, harmony. Do not overuse! A weak solution can be added to the bath to relieve high blood pressure and depression.

These oils may be used in magickal practices by rubbing them on candles prior to candle burning spells, anointing seals or wish lists, or burning them in the form of incense.



## Crystals

Crystals fascinate almost everyone. They have been called “stars of the Earth” and “petrified ice,” among other things. Crystals have been used in healing and magick back to the dawn of human history. Michael Smith writes that crystals were used 60,000-80,000 years ago in Mu and Atlantis.<sup>2</sup> All crystal formations give off energy, and humans appear to be very sensitive to this.

Quartz crystals are silicon dioxide, which act as transducers and transmitters. They can store energy, discharge build-ups of power, relay information, and heal. They grow deep within the Earth and have growth rings similar to those of trees. If a crystal is photographed by Kirlian photography, it will show a bright blue center with a surrounding field of brilliant white.

Although quartz crystal is most in demand, other forms of crystals, such as amethyst and smokey quartz, are also powerful. When choosing a crystal, hold it gently in your hands and see how you response to its energy. Each crystal is different in the type and strength of energy emitted. Size, color, and clarity have little to do with its ability to transmit this energy. Do not use your intellect; go by your intuitive feelings to see if the crystal feels “right” for you.

Once you have chosen your crystals, you need to cleanse them. Crystals pick up vibrations from everyone who handles them, from the miners to the people who handle them in the shop. You want to cleanse them of every vibration except your own.





There are several methods of cleansing crystals and all gemstones. If the crystal is mounted in metal, do not use the methods calling for salt. The first method is best done beginning three days before the Full Moon. Fill a glass bowl with salt; some say only sea salt will do, but the Goddess makes all salt. Bury the crystal in the salt and leave it there for three days. On the third day (Full Moon), dispose of the salt (it is now full of impurities and negative vibrations) and rinse the crystal under cold running water. Dry it completely. For the next three nights, put the crystal on the windowsill in the moonlight. Never expose your crystal to sunlight, for this can destroy the energy pattern and harm the elemental within. Exposure to moonlight, however, is always beneficial. Now place it on your altar for another three days before you handle it again.

The second method is quicker. Dissolve two tablespoons of salt and two tablespoons of vinegar in a pint of warm water. Put the crystal into this solution for ten minutes. Then rinse in cold running water and dry. Dispose of the vinegar solution.

The third method can be used if the crystal is mounted in metal. Light a white candle and frankincense incense. Wash the crystal thoroughly in cold running water, then dry. Pass it quickly above the candle fire and through the incense smoke at least three times.

After cleansing the crystal, it is not wise to let other people handle it. If you use crystals for healing, cleanse them again after the healing is finished. If you wear a crystal pendant, periodically wash it in cold running water to remove environmental vibrations. Wearing a crystal programmed for protection, for instance, will help you avoid negative thoughtforms from other people and stop them from controlling you.

The energies of all types of crystals appear to wax and wane with the Moon. The powers never get so depleted that the crystal is not usable, but a Full Moon will find your crystals bursting with energy.

There are basically two types of quartz crystals. The most commonly sought are the clear pointed ones; these clear crystal points have been labeled masculine, or positive. However, there is another kind of quartz crystal which I feel has been neglected: the cloudy, milky ones. Milky crystal is called feminine, or negative, and usually is not pointed but in clumps. The truth is, both clear and cloudy crystal can be found in both points and clumps. I like to call milky crystal "Mother-crystal," as I reminds me of the nourishing milk supplied by mothers to their infants. Both kinds are powerful and of great use to healers and magicians.

Programming a milky crystal for refreshing sleep and placing it under your pillow is an excellent way to rest when you have been under stress. Be sure to program the crystal while you are calm and at ease, or you will put stress right into the crystal. Clear rock crystal has the opposite effect and can keep you from getting to sleep at all! Milky crystal can also re-balance the circulatory system. However, do not leave very large clumps of any crystal within your sleeping area for long periods of time, as the great quantities of emanating energy may cause you to awaken with a headache.



Smokey quartz is very potent. Tests have proved that smokey quartz points generate an even greater energy field than many of the medium-sized quartz clusters. It is helpful in strengthening and augmenting psychic powers while traveling in meditation or during shamanistic trance. It is also valuable when working on your Higher Self, especially if you want to see the truth.

Amethyst quartz crystals are less powerful than clusters of rock crystal, but have a beneficial effect on the nervous system. They emit powerful streams of purifying energy which aid both the healer and the patient. These energies can permeate any type of matter. Because of the purifying effect of amethyst, it can be used to cleanse rock crystal by placing the two together overnight. To relieve the irritation of skin disorders, hold an amethyst cluster points downward over the area for several minutes. Tension can be lessened in the eyes by holding such a cluster about two inches above the eyes for a brief time.

Amethyst also stimulates and purifies the chakras. Suspend the amethyst point by a piece of thread or a silver chain, thus making it into a pendulum. Do not use silk thread, for silk has a damping effect on all crystal. While the patient is lying on her back, the healer begins at the root chakra (see the chart on the next page). Hold the amethyst pendulum about two inches away from the body. The pendulum will begin to swing clockwise and will continue to do so until the light center is purified. Then move up to the next chakra and repeat the operation, ending at the top of the head.

Rock crystal points can also be used for activating the chakras and bringing them back into balance. You can either use the pendulum method, or you can simply hold a point in your power hand. Hold the crystal over the root light center, point downward, and move the crystal clockwise several times above the body area, beginning with the root chakra. Repeat this procedure over each light center, ending at the top of the head.

Working with crystals in this manner to stimulate and balance the chakras will also have a beneficial effect on the astral body. Any diseases beginning in the astral body can be transmuted from negative into positive. Latent psychic talents may become activated. You may even begin to have vivid visionary dreams and more informative meditations.

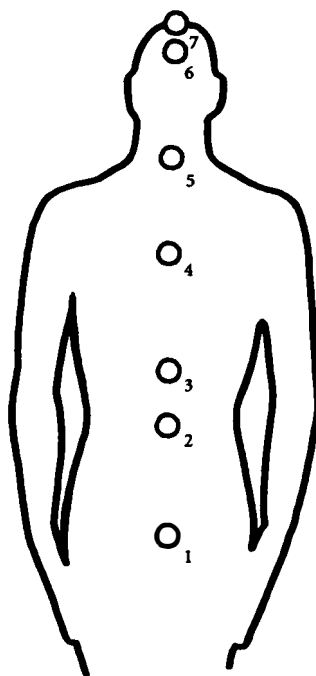
Any crystal can be programmed, which is why you should not allow other people to handle your crystals. The programming may be unintentional or deliberate. Either way, you will have to thoroughly re-cleanse the contaminated crystal before you use it. Programming is not at all difficult. Try this with only one crystal on any given day. Be sure that you are calm and not under stress or you will program those undesirables into the crystal instead of the purpose you had planned. And do not program a crystal with more than one command. You will only get confusion.

Hold the crystal in both hands and place it gently against the third eye in the center of your forehead. Think about the purpose you want the crystal to perform: healing, prosperity, protection, whatever. Keep holding the crystal to your forehead



## Chakra Chart

1. Root Chakra—ovaries or testes; base of spine; red.
2. Spleen Chakra—adrenals; spleen area; orange.
3. Solar Plexus or Navel Chakra—  
islands of Langerhans on pancreas; yellow.
4. Heart Chakra—thymus; back of heart; green.
5. Throat Chakra—thyroid; front throat area; blue.
6. Brow Chakra—pineal gland; between and a little above eyes; indigo.
7. Crown Chakra—pituitary gland; top of head; violet to white.



and thinking about the purpose for about five minutes. Thank the stone's elemental spirit when you are finished.

On rare occasions, you will find a crystal which simply will not take the programming. These crystals already have a deep-set programming for a specific purpose. To discover the secret power of the crystal, you may have to spend days, sometimes weeks, handling the crystal and asking its elemental spirit to reveal the stone's true purpose. If you persist, you will discover it.

If you have not listened to the crystal's elemental and tried to program the crystal for the wrong type of energy, you may find it missing for a period of time. On rare occasions, the crystal has simply disappeared forever. The elementals are the keepers of the crystal's power and should be seriously consulted before you program any crystal.

If used gently, crystal points can also be beneficial in foot and hand reflexology. Being careful not to press too hard, work each point in the feet and hands with the tip of the crystal. Be very careful that you do not overwork the kidneys, or the patient will have trouble expelling the toxins from the body.

Crystals, pointed or small clusters, can also be used in touch healing. Beginning at the feet, and holding the crystal about two to three inches above the body, gently sweep up each leg with the crystal. Continue sweeping up the torso until you get to



the shoulders, then work on the arms from the fingers to the shoulder joint. You may find resistance over the shoulder and neck muscles; working this area may take more time. Finish by sweeping up over the face and over the head. In this manner, you are pushing negative vibrations and energies ahead of you, up through the body, and expelling them through the crown chakra. By working from the lowest light center to the highest, you will have transmuted negative into positive by the time the vibrations are pushed out.

Crystals, single or in clusters, can be programmed to help during ritual and spellworking. By pouring positive energy into these crystals while you are feeling good, you are creating a store of power for a later time when you need it to augment your magickal working. Like any stone, these crystals become a power-sink. When you need them, set them around your ritual area and/or on your altar. To activate them, ask the stone's elemental spirit to release the power to you. Sweep your hands over the crystals as if gathering the energy. Then hold your energized hands over the candle, or whatever, that is the focal point of your magick.

If you are interested in making crystal headbands, staffs, wands, healing rods, etc. for use in magick, read Michael Smith's books on the subject. They are excellent and give all the details you need to make your ritual tools.

You will need to be cautious with your crystal tools, especially those for healing. Try them out on yourself first. After making two crystal healing pen-lights from Michael's books, I discovered that one was so powerful it felt as if it shot a stream of flame. This was good when an injury or disease needed heat, such as bursitis, sinus congestion, ear infections, or sprains, but was too strong for stomach troubles or female problems. Use such healing crystal-lights for only a few minutes at a time, as they can cause soreness of the skin and other discomforts if used for too long a time.

Experiment with crystals in both healing and magick. They have infinite uses, from the simplest healing to powerful magickal manifestations. They are excellent protectors when worn or carried. Their vibrations can be soothing and calming. They are also fascinating to both children and cats, so put them where the kiddies and pets cannot get to them.

Discover your own special uses for crystals. They are the "tears" of joy and love, given by the Goddess to Her daughters. They can ultimately strengthen your tie with Her.

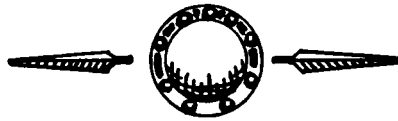
One very effective healing process for groups is to have everyone involved in the healing of a member through group touch. Have the person receiving the healing sit or lie in the center of a circle of healers. Every member then lightly strokes the patient's body, some working inward on the arms and legs, others working upward on the body. While this is being done, the healers can whisper or chant positive phrases, such as "You are loved. You are strong. You are healed." Use phrases which





have meaning for the patient on either the physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual levels. When the healing is finished, each healer should hug the patient warmly.

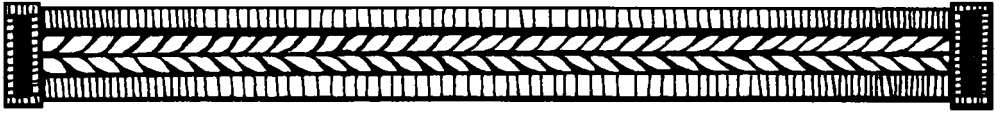
As a woman, your natural instincts are to heal. Every woman approaches healing in a slightly different manner, for we are all individuals. Discover your own unique place in the healing circle of the Goddess. Even healings performed in the privacy of your ritual area with no one ever knowing about them have positive effects on you, your environment, animals, and other humans. The effect may not materialize as you had in mind, but there is always a benefit of some kind. Do your healing without fanfare or seeking approval or praise, and you will find yourself further down your spiritual path toward the Goddess.



## End Notes

1. One business that sells these machines by mail is Red Rose Collection, P.O. Box 280140, San Francisco, CA 94128-0140.
2. Smith, Michael G. *Crystal Power. Crystal Vision. Crystal Warrior.*





## Divination

**T**he art of divination has been practiced by all cultures in one form or another from the earliest periods of history. Many forms of divination throughout history were through the use of alphabets, which were sacred symbols in the beginning of their usage.<sup>1</sup> Because alphabetical letters have the power to describe and transmit knowledge, they were also said to be magickal. Alphabets were not used by the common people, but by the priestesses as a way to both preserve information and to divine the future.

Divination can only be successful when the diviner knows how to contact her subconscious and superconscious minds in such a way that she has direct access to the Goddess. To use memorized meanings without using the intuition and listening to the inner voice is to give a meaningless prediction. Each diviner will develop personal meanings in the system which she uses. This is why, in the beginning, the diviner should pay close attention to the outcome of readings, perhaps even keep a journal. In this manner, she can discover what certain symbols mean to her personally, beyond the given interpretation.





The following methods of divination can be used both for readings and for writing on candles and such during rituals. The symbols could be drawn on parchment and carried as an amulet.

To use alphabets and symbols for divination, you can draw them onto one-inch pieces of heavy poster board, engrave or paint them on small squares of wood, etch them into clay squares or rounds and let dry, or use any number of ways. They could even be drawn onto blank tarot-type cards. You may find that you prefer one method of creation for one type of alphabet and a different one for another. Be open to all possibilities.

The symbols and alphabets will be easier to see if you outline them with black ink. However, the runes may be drawn in red, if you choose. After you have drawn or etched your symbols, you may leave them just as they are or paint them.

When you have created your divinatory tools, keep them in a safe place. Store them in a special box or bag, and do not allow others to handle them indiscriminately. After all, you want your magickal tools to be imbued with your vibrations, not with someone else's.

It is nice to have a special cloth on which to lay out your divinatory cards or squares. Choose a black, dark blue, dark green, or deep purple color. Velvet is nice, but any type of cloth will do. I do not believe that it is necessary to use only silk or pure cotton. Everything comes from the Goddess; nothing exists without Her. Humans cannot create any substance without using Her primal building blocks.

Layouts for divination can be any way you find helpful. You can use the standard Celtic cross layout from the tarot if you like. For quick readings to uncomplicated questions, draw out, without looking, three of your symbols. The first goes on the left for the past affecting the question; the second goes in the center for the present; the last goes to the right for the future. This layout can be increased to five: two for the past, one for the present, and two for the future.

A different layout is based on the pentagram or five-pointed star. In ancient Egypt and Greece this was known as the Pente Grammai or Pentalpha. Reference to it as a game is made in a fragment of work by Sophocles.<sup>2</sup>

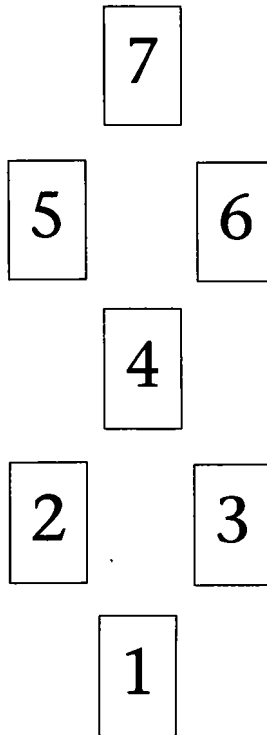
The first card is laid at the top point of the pentagram. It represents the beginning of the situation surrounding the question, perhaps even in another lifetime. The second card goes at the lower right point; it is the personal inner, sometimes unacknowledged response. The third card is laid at the upper left cross-point; it stands for the response of family and friends to the question. The fourth card goes at the right cross-point; it is the questioner's personal outer response. The fifth card is laid at the lower left point; this position represents the outcome which will build a foundation for the next step in the questioner's life.

A layout to use for emotional problems, the Emotional Line, uses seven cards. The first three cards are laid out in a horizontal line, beginning at the left. The next three cards are laid overlapping these. The last card goes above them all. Card one:





## Seven Card Tower Layout



your true connection with your own emotional state. Card two: your contribution to the emotional problem. Card three: what you are subconsciously creating that may be adding to the problem. Card four (overlaps Card one): true connections of others involved. Card five (overlaps Card two): the contributions of other involved. Card six (overlaps Card three): what others are subconsciously creating. Card seven (placed above the line of other cards): the final outcome if the questioner's present action is unchanged.

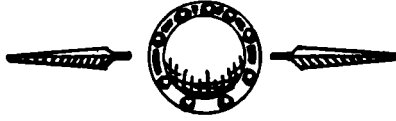
Making decisions can be difficult at the best of times. Usually when we have to make a decision, it is not the best of times for us. Using the Seven Card Tower Layout can be of assistance. Card one is placed at the bottom: the decision itself. Card two goes above it and to the left: underlying positive influences on the decision. Card three goes above and to the right of Card one: underlying negative influences. Card four goes in the middle of the third row: the questioner's subconscious feelings about the decision. Card five, in the fourth row and to the left: how this decision will fit in with your future goals. Card six, in the fourth row and to the right:



the effect this decision will have on your family, friends, and personal environment. Card seven, at the middle of the top row: how this decision will help or hurt you.

Other methods of layout, which apply to specific symbols, are given in the appropriate sections.

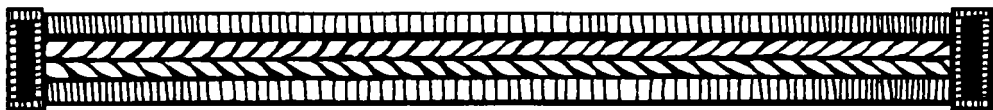
Be patient with yourself and practice with your chosen divinatory tools until you feel comfortable with them.



## End Notes

1. Norman, James. *Ancestral Voices*. Cahn, William & Rhoda. *The Story of Writing*.
2. Pennick, Nigel. *Secret Games of the Gods*.





## Runes

**I**n Old Norse the word *run* meant secret lore, wisdom, and magickal signs. In Old English *run* signified mystery and secret, the same as it did in Old Saxon. The word in Old High German was *runa*, meaning mystery, secret, or to whisper a secret.

Nordic rune-masters were identified by their deep blue cloaks and the leather charm pouches at their belts. Often they carried a staff carved with runes and capped with a bronze mounting. Rune-masters, whether male or female, were treated with great honor and respect. They were required to know not only how to use the runes for divination, but how to write them on weapons to keep them from breaking, on the human body to promote healing and protection, on buildings and borders to protect the people within, and on ships for safe voyages. They were also expected to know how to use them for both blessing and cursing.

According to surviving myths, the runes and their magickal uses were once the knowledge of the Vanir goddess Freyja. When the Aesir gods assumed control, Odhinn tried to get Freyja to share the wisdom with him. When she refused, he



hung himself for nine days and nights on the World Tree to gain the knowledge. Legend does not say that Odhinn gained the magickal wisdom of Freyja.

*Seidr* was a women-only Mystery religion in the beginning. The few men who did participate had to dress like women; these men were often killed for their beliefs. At the same time, it was a common thing for the priestesses (*volvas*) to be called upon for divination by even the leaders. Since this attitude put the *volva* in a precarious position, it is no wonder that she honed her cursing skills.

Knowing what we do about the patriarchal changing of all myths about the Goddess, and the giving of Her powers to male gods, it is easy to see that the runes were, and still are, under the control of Freyja. Even the descriptions of the traditional garments worn by rune-masters are almost identical to those worn by the *volvas* who practiced Freyja's *seidr* magick. Since these runes were stolen and re-appropriated to male gods, I am changing any reference of a male deity back to that of a goddess.

There are several runic alphabets, some with more letters than others. There were also powerful symbols frequently found in Nordic rock carvings, but not considered part of the traditional Elder Runes. Among these separate symbols were Thor's hammer (a form of the *labrys*), the ship, the World Tree, the wealth symbol, two types of the Sun wheel, and the Moon.

Traditionally, the Elder Runes are divided into three groups of eight runes each. Freyja's Aett (eight) are: *fehu*, *uruz*, *thurisaz*, *ansuz*, *raidho*, *kenaz*, *gebo*, and *wunjo*. Hel's Aett (called Hagal's) are: *hagalaz*, *naudhiz*, *isa*, *jera*, *eihwaz*, *perdhro*, *elhaz*, and *sowilo*. Frigg's Aett (called Tyr's) are: *tiwaz*, *laguz*, *berkano*, *ehwo*, *mannaz*, *ingwaz*, *othalaz*, and *dagaz*.

In the following lists I have given the magickal color for each rune. This is not the color the rune should be, but rather an associated, magickally harmonizing color which can be used in robes, altar cloths, candles, etc.

The runes have other uses besides divination. They can be carved into candles for candle burning rituals. They can be written on paper and carried as amulets. They can be drawn on the Earth at the edges of property for protection, or on the soil of gardens or potted plants to help them grow better.

To use the runes for divinatory purposes, paint or etch each rune on one side of a thin one-inch piece of wood or a small flat stone. Originally, the runes were painted with the blood of the person making them. I consider this totally unnecessary and suggest that the runes be painted with red or black paint. Keep them in a bag large enough to easily get your hand inside. Gently stir the runestones and draw out the required number, setting them into position on a cloth.

Before each divination, hold the bag between your hands and chant:



*Freyja, Mistress of Magick,  
Vana-Goddess of seidr,  
Reveal to me the future paths.*

Then gently stir the runes and say:

*Urd! Verthandi! Skuld!*

Without looking, draw out three runestones. Lay them out in a horizontal line, starting from the left. The far left stone will represent the past, the middle the present, and the far right the future. If the future position is unclear, you may draw up to three more runes to clarify it.

The negative meanings of each rune apply to the reversed position or if the rune lies next to another which must be read in the negative.

Another layout is commonly called the Cross of Thorr, but in reality is a double triangle. A more appropriate name for this layout would be Valkyrie Axe. Five runestones are drawn. The first goes in the center area and represents the person for whom the reading is being given. The second goes below this for past conditions still having an influence. The third and fourth go to the left and right of the center rune; they symbolize present conditions affecting the question. The fifth rune goes at the top, over the center rune, and is for the future.

Another method of rune-foretelling is to cast them on a square piece of cloth or fur. Select nine runes without looking. Hold them in your hands over the cloth and concentrate on the question being asked. Gently toss the runes away from you onto the cloth. The nearest runes represent the past or influences moving away from the questioner. Those farthest out on the cloth are the future. Any runes which land with the rune not showing, or off the cloth, are not read.

Still another way to use the runes in divination is to get a deck of blank cards and draw their signs on these cards. If you wish, you could add the meaning in small print to the bottom of each card. The rune-cards are then shuffled and dealt out, much like tarot.





# Runes



F



U,V



TH



A



R



C,K



G



W



H



N



I



J



EI,Y



P



Z



S



T



B



E



M



L



NG



D



O



Triskelion



Unknown



Ship

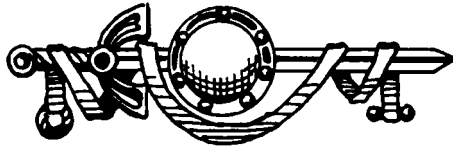


Sun Wheel



Moon





## The Elder Runes

**Norse Name:** *Fehu, Feoh, Fe*—cattle, fee, money, gold.

**Deity:** Gefjun, Freyja, Valkyries.

**Alphabet:** F

**Magickal Color:** green, gold.

**Magickal Meaning:** money, property, fulfillment, good luck, dynamic power, goals reached. Negative: a person or offer to be avoided.

Cattle were originally used as currency and to mark the amount of wealth a family had. Cattle provided much of the family's needs: meat, milk, hide for leather, tallow for candles, hooves for glue.

**Norse Name:** *Uruz, Ur*—ox, aurochs, drizzle, rain.

**Deity:** Audhumla, Freyja, Frigg, Nanna, Nehellannia, Siff.

**Alphabet:** U, V

**Magickal Color:** dark green, deep brown.

**Magickal Meaning:** advancement, good fortune, happiness, basic powers of manifestation. If near negative: bad luck, minor illnesses.

The wild aurochs, like far northern rain storms, could be positive or negative. Both provided necessary ingredients for survival; both could be deadly. Uruz represents raw, untamed psychic and astral energies.

**Norse Name:** *Thurisaz, Thorn, Thurs*—giant, thorn, the good one, the strong one.

**Deity:** Nehellannia, Ran, Skadi.

**Alphabet:** TH

**Magickal Color:** green, yellow.

**Magickal Meaning:** journey over water. Good news from a distance. Inner strength to break resistance or pass a time of waiting. Take great care in making decisions. Negative: delayed or unpleasant journey. Hasty decisions which bring loss.

The Norse Giants, like the Greek Titans, represented the earlier matriarchal cultures. A few of the Giants were friendly toward the patriarchal gods, but most of them were not.

Thurisaz is similar to the Wheel of Fortune card in the tarot. It can bring a sudden change, generally for the good.







**Norse Name:** *Ansuz, Oss, Ass*—ancestral goddess.

**Deity:** Urd, Nerthus, Nanna, Frigg.

**Alphabet:** A

**Magickal Color:** dark blue.

**Magickal Meaning:** transformation, new goals, information which changes your life. **Negative:** bad advice.

Most scholars translate this to mean the patriarchal Aesir deities. However, legends say the Vanir were the oldest of the gods; thus, the Vanir would be the ancestors. And the matriarch which they represented would think in terms of ancestress, not ancestor.

Ansuz symbolizes the power of words and thoughts to create. It can represent information gained from the ancient stories and myths, a re-connecting with ancient Mystery knowledge.

**Norse Name:** *Raidho, Reidh, Rit, Rad*—long journey on horseback, wagon, riding.

**Deity:** Holda, Valkyries.

**Alphabet:** R

**Magickal Color:** black.

**Magickal Meaning:** journey, getting to the truth, seeing past illusions. **If near negative:** travel problems, inconvenience, blocks. Things are not what they seem.

Although this rune can symbolize the horse used for journeys, it more likely represents the vehicle used by the northern shamans for travel into the Other-worlds.

Raidho refers to the magician's ability to tap into astral power and "ride" it into the creation of the manifestation desired.

**Norse Name:** *Kenaz, Kaon, Cen, Kaun*—torch, swelling, sore, boil, forge, hearth, pyre.

**Deity:** Freyja, Ran, Skadi.

**Alphabet:** C, K

**Magickal Color:** silver, green.

**Magickal Meaning:** the rune of craftsmen and the crafty or sly. Controlled energy for dissolution. Life-strength, ambition, determination, inspiration. **Negative:** bad judgment, confusion.

The three goddesses associated with this rune symbolize the three influences on the creation of physical life: the sea, the swelling of the womb, and rebirth after death. Creativity, a form of life, is influenced by the emotions, the physical conditions, and the spiritual.

There are several linguistic connections with the name of this rune: the English *ken* (to know), the German *kennen* (to know), the English cunning, and the Old English *cyning* (king).



Kenaz also stands for the sexual fire, which can be channeled to either form life or create a desired manifestation in the physical world.

**Norse Name:** *Gebo, Gifu, Gyfu, Gipt*—blessing, gifts from the Goddess, hospitality, generosity.

**Deity:** Freyja, Gefjun, Siff, Sjofna.

**Alphabet:** G

**Magickal Color:** deep blue.

**Magickal Meaning:** the exchange of force or power between the Goddess and humans. Wedding, legacies, promotion, windfall. If near negative: sadness caused by someone close.

It is amazing when one thinks about the importance of the X mark throughout European history. X was the mark made on documents by people who could not write their name. Pirate maps were said to use an X to mark the spot where treasure was buried.

Healing, visions, and other psychic talents are often referred to as “gifts.” This includes the use of magick. Through these gifts of the Goddess, this rune symbolizes the influence Supreme Power can have on the *wyrd*, or fate, of the individual through application of ancient knowledge.

**Norse Name:** *Wunjo, Wynn, Wunna, Vend*—bliss, pleasure, joy, delight, hope, pasture.

**Deity:** Sjofna, Nanna, Nehellannia, Siff, Sigyn.

**Alphabet:** W

**Magickal Color:** red.

**Magickal Meaning:** security, comfort, happiness, good social life. Negative: needless self-sacrifice.

In Old English writings, the rune-master was admonished to have three things in life: *blaed*, prosperity; *blyss*, bliss; and *byrg geniht*, a good enclosure, which can mean either a home or a healthy body.<sup>1</sup>

A number of words are linguistically connected with *wunjo*: German *wunsch*, English *wish*, and Dutch *wens*. In German folklore the wand is often referred to as a wishing rod.

*Wunjo* represents the spiritual mystery of finding or creating harmony within a disharmonious situation. As a balance rune, it can restore a midpoint between shortage and excess.

**Norse Name:** *Hagalaz, Haegl, Hagal*—hail, snow.

**Deity:** Audhumla, Holda, Hel, Skadi.

**Alphabet:** H

**Magickal Color:** dark purple.





**Magickal Meaning:** ability to bring opposites into harmony. Delays waiting for the right time. Negative: setbacks, delays, situations out of your control.

The Norse considered the number nine to be a sacred number of completion; Hagalaz is the ninth rune.

In High Dutch *Hachel* means witch; in Anglo-Saxon *haegtesa* is hag (another name for a Crone priestess); in Old Dutch *hagedisse* stands for witch. All these connections to the rune Hagalaz point to an ancient meaning of a Crone priestess or witch who could work positive or negative magick, blessing or cursing. Naturally, this would include working the weather.

Hagalaz symbolizes the primal seed of transformation. In Norse myth, this was found at the border between the primal worlds of Fire and Ice.

**Norse Name:** *Naudhiz, Nyd, Naut, Naudhr*—need, necessity.

**Deity:** the Norns, Ran.

**Alphabet:** N

**Magickal Color:** black.

**Magickal Meaning:** something out of the questioner's past which drives her (not necessarily good). Caution needed to succeed. Distress which clouds reality. Use destiny, don't fight it. Negative: impatience leads to disaster.

This rune looks like an off-balance cross. Esoterically, it represents cosmic resistance to human willpower, when things in life are not looked at truthfully and resolved. We tend to bury unpleasant memories and the emotional residues, because that requires less effort and self-examination than to deal with them. Burying them only brings greater problems, for the emotional residues work through the subconscious mind and influence our actions and decisions without our being aware, restricting us from progressing.

**Norse Name:** *Isa, Iss, Eis*—ice.

**Deity:** Holda, Hel, Skadi.

**Alphabet:** I

**Magickal Color:** black.

**Magickal Meaning:** period of absolute stillness and inaction. Be careful what you do and say. Negative: hasty words bring trouble; indifference, uncaring, detached emotions.

Scholars say that this rune represents primal matter, which is a strange translation for a culture influenced by patriarchy. I suspect that this translation was one borrowed "whole" from the previous matriarchy, which would have considered the Goddess as the One, the Primal Energy Mother. The rune Isa may be a stylized version of the sacred pillar, the icy column of chaos and darkness where everything rests before returning to form.

**Norse Name:** *Jera, Ger, Yer, Ar, Jer*—good year, harvest, good season.

**Deity:** Gefjun, Nerthus, Siff.

**Alphabet:** J (pronounced y)

**Magickal Color:** green, light brown.

**Magickal Meaning:** a cycle, time, reaping rewards, life proceeding in an orderly manner. Negative: no quick results.

This rune, symbolic of movement and time, reminds one of the ancient Goddess symbol for water, the zig-zag or chevron.

**Norse Name:** *Eihwaz, Eoh, Yr, Ihwar*—mountain ash, yew tree.

**Deity:** Frigg, Gullveig, Idhunn.

**Alphabet:** EI, I, Y

**Magickal Color:** dark green.

**Magickal Meaning:** end of a matter, situation, or problem. Drastic change. Death of a relationship. Negative: old conflicts and situations cause trouble.

All Goddess religions had a sacred tree, standing stone, or pillar which represented the Goddess Herself, a physical image which acted as a focal point for Her worship. Northern shamans knew the yew tree as a point of access to the Otherworlds.

**Norse Name:** *Perdhro, Perodh, Peroth, Pear*—fate, dice cup, Well of Urd.

**Deity:** the Norns, Freyja.

**Alphabet:** P

**Magickal Color:** black.

**Magickal Meaning:** the wheel of chance, unexpected material gain, surprise. Destiny, but not predestination. If near negative: a secret which can hurt you.

Many ancient religions used the casting of lots to choose a sacrificial victim. However, the matriarchies were more likely to view this rune as symbolic of the cauldron, cup, and sacred Well. This Well is said to hold what we now call the Akashic records, or the records of previous lives.

**Norse Name:** *Elhaz, Eolh, Aquizi, Ihwar*—elk, stone axe, protection, yew bow.

**Deity:** Idhunn, Valkyries.

**Alphabet:** Z

**Magickal Color:** gold, silver.

**Magickal Meaning:** visible movement, blockages removed. If near negative: people actively trying to stop you.

Elhaz may actually represent elk antlers attached to a shaman's staff. Certain animals were sacred to certain Goddess aspects; their antlers, bones, teeth, and skins would have been used only in rituals. The shaman's staff has much the same use as the witch's or magician's sword: that of commanding and protect-





ing. Connecting this rune with a ritual tool is proper, as seen in the similar Old Germanic word *alhs* which means a temple or sanctuary.

The Elhaz rune has been found carved in a cave of a Pagan sanctuary at Externsteine, Germany. This rune is related to *alhs*, which means sanctuary.

**Norse Name:** *Sowilo, Sigil, Sig, Sol*—Sun.

**Deity:** Sol, Gullveig, Sigyn.

**Alphabet:** S

**Magickal Color:** gold, bright yellow.

**Magickal Meaning:** change, guidance, time of renewal, drastic changes for the good, complete turnaround, advancement of plans, change of residence. Magickal will and force which can counter the forces of destruction. If near negative: failure which leads to new opportunities.

The rune of Sowilo is distinctly different from the mystical rune called the Sun wheel. Sowilo is symbolic of the spiritual Sun's lightning-like rays rather than the Sun itself.

**Norse Name:** *Tiwaz, Tyr, Tiu, Tir*—sky god.

**Deity:** Freyja, Gullveig, Valkyries.

**Alphabet:** T

**Magickal Color:** light blue.

**Magickal Meaning:** unbiased justice, wisdom, law and order. Justified victory and success. Negative: intrigue, deception, others working against you. Needless self-sacrifice.

Tiwaz looks like an upright spear, a weapon which could be used to keep the peace and make people listen to reason. Tiwaz symbolized total impartial justice regardless of social opinions.

**Norse Name:** *Berkano, Beorc, Birca*—birth tree, birch goddess.

**Deity:** Frigg, Nerthus, Nanna, Nehellannia, Siff.

**Alphabet:** B

**Magickal Color:** dark green.

**Magickal Meaning:** creativity, new beginnings, birth, marriage, initiation. If near negative: failure, divorce, miscarriage, stagnant period.

This rune reminds one of two sharp-pointed breasts. Among the Goddess religions, mounds or certain hills were often referred to as the Goddess's breasts. This rune is identical to the character Beth of the Celtic Ogham alphabet.

To the Germans, the Lapps, and the shamans of Siberia, the birch was a sacred tree of life. In documents of the medieval era, witches were said to ride on brooms made from birch branches. What this means is that Witches were followers of the Goddess and knew how to astral travel.



**Norse Name:** *Ehwo, Eoh, Ehwaz, Eh*—horse, steed, stallion, war horse.

**Deity:** Freyja, Holda, Hel.

**Alphabet:** E

**Magickal Color:** white.

**Magickal Meaning:** trust, self-transformation, new attitude, new home, new goals, steady progress. A sacred journey. If near negative: progress blocked.

Here again is a rune which represents the shaman's steed or vehicle for journeying. However, this time the horse may well be the astral body. Ehwo represents any journey which causes a spiritual change.

There did exist ancient horse cults in the North, such as the one recorded in the story of St. Olaf in tenth-century Norway. This saga describes a group of women performing rituals with a severed horse's penis. This penis was called a *volsi*. Scandinavian sources say that Freyja was connected with a horse cult, so this ritual was probably a remnant of *seidr*.

**Norse Name:** *Mannaz, Man, Madhr*—humankind, world.

**Deity:** Frigg, Nerthus, Nanna, Nehellannia.

**Alphabet:** M

**Magickal Color:** deep red.

**Magickal Meaning:** masculine or male-type influence in life. New career opportunities. Positive link with the Goddess. Negative: material loss.

The rune Mannaz, which scholars have translated to mean man, should read as humankind. Originally, in Old Norse the word man actually meant woman; the word for the male was *wer*. In Old German the word-ending *-men* was used to describe both sexes. This points to an ancient matriarchal culture where humanity was considered to be woman-born people and children were a gift from Mana or Nanna, the Moon mother.

**Norse Name:** *Laguz, Lagu, Logr*—lake, water; or *laukaz*—leek.

**Deity:** Nehellannia, Ran, Nanna.

**Alphabet:** L

**Magickal Color:** deep green.

**Magickal Meaning:** hidden movement below the surface; no progress seen but it is happening. Life energy; manifestation coming from other planes. If near negative: behind the scenes action which blocks progress, usually with a woman involved. A desire may be gained, but not without risk.

Water is always associated with the Goddess and is a sacred substance. A German child was sprinkled with water when it was named and accepted into the clan. Water is necessary to all life, but it can destroy as well as nourish.





The goddess Nerthus was worshipped on an island in the midst of a lake; she was probably the predecessor of the god Njord. In the Norse myths, the god Heimdall is called Freyja's *leikur* or guardian. *Logr* or *laukar* in Old Norse also means sorcery, and the practice of sorcery was part of *seidr*.

**Norse Name:** *Ingwaz, Ingvi, Ing—kin.*

**Deity:** Audhumla, Nerthus, Frigg, Nehellannia.

**Alphabet:** NG

**Magickal Color:** yellow.

**Magickal Meaning:** creating life-force at work. Family, relatives, children, parents, spouse. Benefits from relatives. Negative: family becomes a burden; family tries to control.

It is very likely that this rune had another name at one time, for matriarchies claim kinship through the mother, not the father.

The diamond is actually two triangles joined at the flat sides instead of the tips. The triangle is the symbol of the vulva, woman, and the Creatrix Goddess. Another similar shape is the elongated, pointed oval, the symbol of the opening of the birth canal.

It was a common belief at one time among the Northern clans that the *ham-ingja*, or guardian spirit, family luck, could be passed on to another family member at death. This idea is similar to the belief of ancient Goddess worshippers that certain psychic talents were passed down from one woman to another. The Norse also believed that individuals could choose to reincarnate within the same family group again and again.

**Norse Name:** *Dagaz, Dag, Daeg—day, dawn.*

**Deity:** Frigg, Gullveig.

**Alphabet:** D

**Magickal Color:** none

**Magickal Meaning:** sudden realization, awakening, mystic light, attraction between two people.

The Dagaz rune is a stylized butterfly. The butterfly among ancient Goddess religions symbolized transformation, rebirth through death, and rebirth through spiritual initiation.

This rune may be a stylized representation of Bifrost Bridge, the connecting point between Midgard (where humans dwell) and the realm of the deities, especially Vanaheim, home of the Vanir goddesses.

**Norse Name:** *Othlaz, Ethel, Odal, Odhal, Othala—homeland, property, inherited land, sacred enclosure.*

**Deity:** Idhunn, Freyja.

**Alphabet:** O



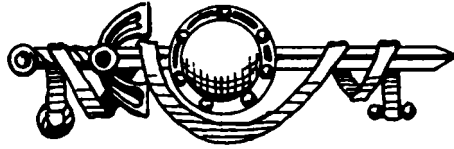


**Magickal Color:** none.

**Magickal Meaning:** inborn qualities which can aid the questioner, tangible possessions. If near negative: illusions, jealousy, greed, wasted efforts.

This rune is a representation of the walled enclosures around homes. These enclosures had only one gate into them, which made them easier to defend.

Related words are the Anglo-Saxon *atheling* (prince or noble), German *adel* and Dutch *edel* (noble). In Frisian, its name is *Eeyen-eerde*, meaning to own earth or to own land.



## Mystical Runes

**Name:** A form of the Sun wheel (triskelion).

**Deity:** Sol, Gullveig.

**Magickal Color:** gold, white.

**Magickal Meaning:** motion, movement, advancement of plans. Possible change of job or residence. If near negative: someone or something keeps you from moving ahead.

This is a symbol of the Triple Goddess, a sign of Her ever-moving power. To the ancient Norse, the Sun was feminine.

**Name:** Unknown.

**Deity:** Freyja, Gullveig, Nehellannia.

**Magickal Color:** green, gold.

**Magickal Meaning:** wealth, material success, gain. If near negative: you must work hard to gain success.

This strange symbol can be found today in the street layout of at least one Pennsylvania town founded by Germans. No one is quite sure of the origin of this rune, but it is found on Scandinavian rock carvings.

**Name:** The battle-axe of the Valkyries.

**Deity:** Valkyries.

**Magickal Color:** red.

**Magickal Meaning:** increase, protection, will power, magickal power under control. Overpowers all negative runes.







This mystic rune is a very simplified symbol of the *labrys*, or double axe of Goddess religions. The Valkyries, as Norse Amazons, would have been familiar with it.<sup>2</sup>

**Name:** World Tree.

**Deity:** the Norns.

**Magickal Color:** green.

**Magickal Meaning:** protection through magickal workings. Cosmic guidance in everyday life. Overpowers all negative runes.

This rune appears to be a combination of Isa (ice) and Gebo (gift from the Goddess). This geometric shape can be found in snowflakes. It represents the wisdom of standing still and listening along with the ability to make connections with the Goddess in order to receive guidance.

**Name:** Sun wheel.

**Deity:** Sol, Freyja, Frigg.

**Magickal Color:** gold, bright yellow.

**Magickal Meaning:** inner guidance, protection, seeking mystical truths. If near negative: bad advice, gullibility.

The Sun wheel is actually a symbol of the year wheel. Within the sacred circle are dividing lines symbolizing the eight seasonal festivals of the ancient matriarchies.

**Name:** Moon.

**Deity:** Nanna.

**Magickal Color:** silver, white.

**Magickal Meaning:** orderly change, psychic abilities. Negative: chaos, false information.

To the ancient Norse patriarchal clans, the Moon was masculine, the god Mani. However, they also had a goddess called Nanna who was associated with the Moon. In most cultures, the Moon was considered to be feminine. The Moon and its powers have belonged to the Goddess from the very beginning.

**Name:** Ship.

**Deity:** Nehellannia, Ran, Freyja.

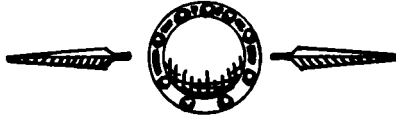
**Magickal Color:** blue.

**Magickal Meaning:** growth, movement, journeys, transmutation of problems into positive situations. Negative: stagnation, problems growing more burdensome.





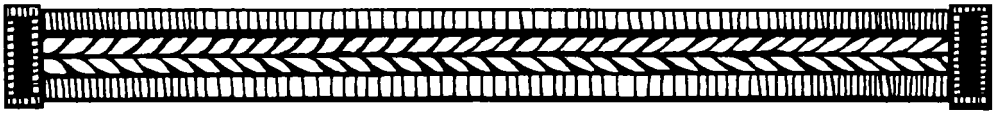
Ships, as Goddess symbols, can be found in the ruins of nearly all ancient matriarchies. They did not represent physical ships, but vehicles of psychic significance. Among the Norse especially, ships were used for the burial of important people. Sometimes this burial consisted of cremation on a burning ship.



## End Notes

1. Thorsson, Edred. *Futhark: A Handbook of Rune Magic*.
2. See Part Four, Chapter 17.





## Ogham Alphabet

**T**he Ogham (pronounced *owam*, and sometimes spelled Ogam) alphabet, or what has become known as the Druidic alphabet, contained hidden secrets for magick and divination. Only the initiated could understand these occult meanings. The letters of the Ogham alphabet were usually single strokes cut against a line or across the corner of an object.

The use of the Ogham appeared among the Celts in about 600 BCE. At least during later times, the Druids knew and used the Greek alphabet for ordinary messages. The Bards of Wales continued to use Ogham to write down what they remembered of Druidic tradition long after the Christian conquest of Ireland. Eventually the Christian church forcibly replaced Ogham with the Latin alphabet.

Druidic initiates, especially the traveling Bards, could use the Ogham as a secret sign language by stroking the nose, legs, or any straight object. By this means, a silent message could be passed to another initiate while talking to a third person about something quite ordinary and innocent. This ability made the Druids so formidable that eventually use of this sign language was outlawed. No one has been



able to resurrect this ancient sign language because we are not certain what each letter meant for that type of communication.

Although many say that the Celts kept no written records, history records that St. Patrick personally burned almost 180 Irish books written in the Celtic language. This set an example for Christian zealots who destroyed every piece of Druidic literature they could find written down.

There appear to have been great wooden “books” of Ogham in ancient Pagan Ireland. Records state that King Art, son of Conn of the Hundred Battles, called together a meeting of Bards and Druids in 166 CE. These Celtic wisemen brought their Ogham Tablets, wooden staves in the form of a fan, which could be closed up to make a staff.

The Druids have been considered as the only Celtic priesthood. However, in the beginning of their history the Celts had similar organizations of women. There are references made in many ancient Celtic myths which point to matriarchal origins and the importance of priestesses among the Celtic clans. The Romans called these sacred women Druidesses, but they were more likely Priestesses of the Groves. Certain historical references hint at the name Dryad.

The ancient Celts had a kinship with trees which is shown in this magickal alphabet and in their tree calendar. Further proof of their respect for trees is in the old Celtic word for oak (*Duir*); the word *Derwydd* or *Duirwydd* (oak-seer) was probably the origin of the word Druid.

The Celts believed that many trees were inhabited by spirits or had spirits of their own. This idea most notably applied to any tree with a strong aura around it. They also believed that certain trees had a healing influence on humans. From this ancient respect for the power of trees came the expressions “Touch wood” and “Knock on wood.”

Oak, ash, and thorn (hawthorn) have long been known as the faery triad of trees. It is still said that faeries live where they grow together or in the vicinity.

The Celts had rules concerning the usage of certain trees. It was considered to be unlucky to bring blossoms of the hawthorn indoors; this idea is still followed by some modern Celts and Wiccans. In fact, the only time one could break or cut branches of the hawthorn without inviting bad luck was on Beltane Eve. The elder could never be cut without asking permission of the tree. Even then, it was best to consider that the elder often harbored bad spirits.

The trees of the Ogham alphabet were divided into three classifications, which had nothing to do with their physical forms. They merely represented their order of importance to the Druids. Chieftains came first, followed by peasants and shrubs. Two symbols, the Grove and the Sea, are not trees; their inclusion points out the Druidic acknowledgement of the power of both the sea itself and a group of trees. Both groves of trees and the sea have long been symbols of the Goddess.





The last five letters are called the Crane Bag. Myth says these were given to humans by the sea god Manannan. However, the originator of this gift was more likely the goddess Don or Domnu, the Irish sea deity.

For divination, paint or engrave the Ogham symbols on one side of flat sticks. See the Ogham chart in this section. Ice cream sticks or tongue depressors work well for this purpose. The symbols can also be drawn on cards and read as you do tarot.

Choose seven sticks without looking. Concentrate on your question while holding them in both hands. Then gently toss them on the ground or floor in front of you. The closest sticks represent the present; the farthest the future. Any sticks which touch or overlap have a direct and enhanced influence on each other.

The Ogham symbols can be engraved on flat sticks for divination, carved into candles, or used in writing out requests to be presented to the goddesses during rituals.

### Beth—Birch

**Month:** November.

**Color:** white.

**Class:** peasant.

**Letter:** B

**Goddess:** Anu, Danu, Blodeuwedd.

**Meaning:** new beginnings; changes; purification.

### Luis—Rowan

**Month:** December.

**Color:** gray and red.

**Class:** peasant.

**Letter:** L

**Goddess:** Arianrhod, Brigit, Macha, Druantia.

**Meaning:** controlling your life; protection against control by others.

### Fearn—Alder

**Month:** January.

**Color:** crimson.

**Class:** chieftain.

**Letter:** F, V

**Goddess:** Badb, Blodeuwedd, Cerridwen, the Morrigan.

**Meaning:** help in making choices; spiritual guidance and protection.





# The Ogham Alphabet



B



L



F,V



S



N



H



D



T



C,K



Q



M



G



NG



R



ST,Z,SS



A



O



U,W



E



I,J,Y



EA,CH,KH



OI,TH



UI,P,PE



PH,IO



AE,X,XI



**Saille—Willow**

**Month:** February.  
**Color:** listed only as bright.  
**Class:** peasant.  
**Letter:** S  
**Goddess:** Don, Scathach.  
**Meaning:** gaining balance in your life.

**Nuin—Ash**

**Month:** March.  
**Color:** glass green.  
**Class:** chieftain.  
**Letter:** N  
**Goddess:** Arianrhod, Blodeuwedd, Branwen, Rhiannon.  
**Meaning:** locked into a chain of events; feeling bound.

**Huathe—Hawthorn**

**Month:** April.  
**Color:** purple.  
**Class:** peasant.  
**Letter:** H  
**Goddess:** Macha, the Morrigan, Scathach, Cerridwen.  
**Meaning:** being held back for a period of time.

**Duir—Oak**

**Month:** May.  
**Color:** black and dark brown.  
**Class:** chieftain.  
**Letter:** D  
**Goddess:** Brigit, Scathach.  
**Meaning:** security; strength.

**Tinne—Holly**

**Month:** June.  
**Color:** dark gray.  
**Class:** peasant.  
**Letter:** T  
**Goddess:** Anu, Danu, Cerridwen.  
**Meaning:** energy and guidance for problems to come.





### Coll—Hazel

**Month:** July.  
**Color:** brown.  
**Class:** chieftain.  
**Letter:** C, K  
**Goddess:** Brigit, Cerridwen, Scathach.  
**Meaning:** creative energies for work or projects.

### Quert—Apple

**Month:** none.  
**Color:** green.  
**Class:** shrub.  
**Letter:** Q  
**Goddess:** Branwen, the Morrigan.  
**Meaning:** a choice must be made.

### Muin—Vine

**Month:** August.  
**Color:** variegated.  
**Class:** chieftain.  
**Letter:** M  
**Goddess:** Badb, Blodeuwedd, Brigit, Cerridwen, Scathach.  
**Meaning:** inner development occurring, but take time for relaxation.

### Gort—Ivy

**Month:** September.  
**Color:** sky blue.  
**Class:** chieftain.  
**Letter:** G  
**Goddess:** Arianrhod, Badb, Don.  
**Meaning:** take time to soul-search or you will make a wrong decision.

### Ngetal—Reed

**Month:** October.  
**Color:** grass green.  
**Class:** shrub.  
**Letter:** NG  
**Goddess:** Cerridwen, the Morrigan, Scathach.  
**Meaning:** upsets or surprises.





**Straif—Blackthorn**

**Month:** none.

**Color:** purple.

**Class:** chieftain.

**Letter:** SS, Z, ST

**Goddess:** Cerridwen, Macha, the Morrigan, Scathach.

**Meaning:** resentment; confusion; refusing to see the truth.

**Ruis—Elder**

**Month:** makeup days of the thirteenth month.

**Color:** red.

**Class:** shrub.

**Letter:** R

**Goddess:** Arianrhod, Rhiannon.

**Meaning:** end of a cycle or problem.

**Ailim—Silver Fir**

**Month:** none.

**Color:** light blue.

**Class:** shrub.

**Letter:** A

**Goddess:** Boann, Branwen, Blodeuwedd.

**Meaning:** learning from past mistakes; take care in choices.

**Ohn—Furze**

**Month:** none.

**Color:** yellow gold.

**Class:** chieftain.

**Letter:** O

**Goddess:** Arianrhod, Badb, Brigit, Cerridwen, Danu, Rhiannon, Scathach.

**Meaning:** information which could change your life.

**Ur—Heather & Mistletoe**

**Month:** none.

**Color:** purple.

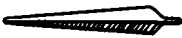
**Class:** heather is peasant; mistletoe is chieftain.

**Letter:** U

**Goddess:** Brigit, Airmid (daughter of Diancecht), Epona, Scathach.

**Meaning:** healing and development on the spiritual level.



**Eadha—White Poplar or Aspen**

**Month:** none.

**Color:** silver white.

**Class:** shrub.

**Letter:** E

**Goddess:** Cerridwen, Macha, the Morrigan, Scathach.

**Meaning:** problems; doubts; fears.

**Ioho—Yew**

**Month:** none.

**Color:** dark green.

**Class:** chieftain.

**Letter:** I, J, Y

**Goddess:** Arianrhod, Cerridwen, the Morrigan.

**Meaning:** complete change in life-direction or attitude.

**Koad—Grove**

**Month:** none.

**Color:** many shades of green.

**Class:** none.

**Letter:** CH, KH, EA

**Goddess:** Blodeuwedd, Brigit, Cerridwen, Danu.

**Meaning:** wisdom gained by seeing past illusions.

**Oir—Spindle**

**Month:** none.

**Color:** white.

**Class:** peasant.

**Letter:** TH, OI

**Goddess:** Badb, Brigit, Cerridwen.

**Meaning:** finish obligations and tasks or your life cannot move forward.

**Uilleand—Honeysuckle**

**Month:** none.

**Color:** yellow-white.

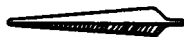
**Class:** peasant.

**Letter:** P, PE, UI

**Goddess:** Brigit, Cerridwen, Danu.

**Meaning:** proceed with caution.





**Phagos—Beech**

**Month:** none.

**Color:** orange-brown.

**Class:** chieftain.

**Letter:** PH, IO

**Goddess:** Arianrhod, Badb, Blodeuwedd, Brigit, Cerridwen, Don, Epona, Rhiannon.

**Meaning:** new experiences and information coming.

**Mor—the Sea**

**Month:** none.

**Color:** blue-green.

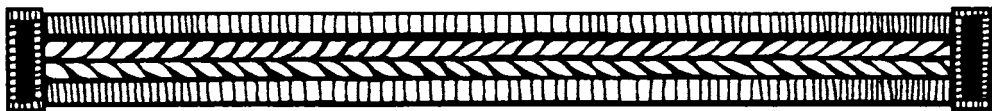
**Class:** none.

**Letter:** AE, X, XI

**Goddess:** Badb, Blodeuwedd, Brigit, Cerridwen, Don, Rhiannon, Scathach.

**Meaning:** travel; journeys of the body, mind, or spirit.





## Sumerian Pictograms

**T**he ancient culture of the Mesopotamian area used many symbols and pictograms on amulets and talismans. The Sumerians first invented and developed a system of writing in the region. All peoples of the area attached great importance to all branches of magick, using magicians on every possible occasion.

The Sumerians, Babylonians, and Assyrians wrote their spells out on clay tablets. The Persians and Arabs cut them on tablets of agate, onyx, carnelian, and other stones. When they wrote their magickal formulas on skins, parchment, or paper, they used black or red ink, perfumed with such scents as musk, saffron, or rose.

Divination by priestesses was a part of every person's life, from the lowest to the highest classes. We know that astrology, consulting the dead, water divination (like crystal reading), and reading the signs in actions of animals was common. There is no reason to believe that these peoples did not come up with a method of divination which used symbols, similar to the present reading of runestones or tarot cards.

We do not know what the Sumerians called these symbols, individually or collectively. However, they have been found etched on small pieces of clay, such as one would expect divinatory symbols to be.



# Sumerian Pictograms



Star



Sun



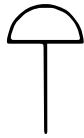
Moon



Man



Woman



Eye



Hand



To Go



Heart



Ox



Fish



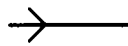
Corn



Peg



Cutting



Arrow



Net





The following list of Sumerian pictograms can be drawn out on cards, cut or painted onto small pieces of wood, or etched into uniform pieces of flattened clay. See the Pictogram chart in this section. It is best to keep them in a bag between uses so they do not pick up random vibrations.

When doing a reading, shake or stir them gently in the bag, while holding in your mind the question you want answered. One at a time, draw out the tiles until you have seven lying in a line, beginning at the left. The first two tiles represent the past. The next three represent present influences. The last two symbolize the future.

**Star, Sky, Goddess:** help and protection from a higher source; divine inspiration; development of your higher aspects. The Star of Ishtar was an eight-point star, representing the planet Venus.

**Sun, Day, Light:** enlightenment; information revealed which will help you see the truth and make decisions. Hapat was an ancient Sun goddess of the Middle East.

**Waxing Moon, To Grow:** movement seen; progress; advancement of plans and goals.

**Man:** male influence of any kind; husband, father, brother, son, lover, friend.

**Woman:** female influence of any kind; wife, mother, sister, daughter, lover, friend.

**Eye, To See:** seeing passed illusions; getting to the truth of any matter. Seeing the end of a matter or problem.

**Hand:** talents and abilities; skill in a job or profession. Further training to develop your skills.

**To Go, To Stand:** indecision; no visible movement; a time of waiting.

**Heart:** romantic attachment or deep admiration. If near a person symbol, a relationship, friendship, or marriage.

**Ox:** stubbornness, not necessarily for your own good. Refusing to see another viewpoint or the truth.

**Fish:** abundance; prosperity; reaching your goals. Only attained through work.

**Corn:** reaping results from past actions, good or bad. Karma working out in your life.

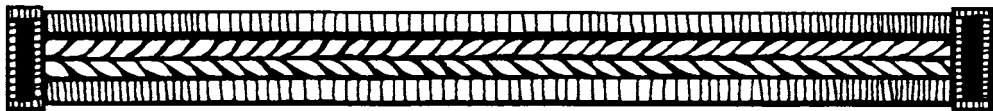
**Peg, To Secure:** security; comfort; stability in life.

**Cutting Instrument:** separation; severing ties; leaving a situation.

**Arrow, To Share, To Run:** running away from problems; enemies are trying to upset your life or plans.

**Net, Joints:** feeling trapped; nothing moving forward in your life. Situations are out of your control.





## Greek Alphabet

**I**n the very beginning of history, all alphabets were magickal and sacred. They were not used to communicate common things. The Greek alphabet<sup>1</sup>, with its twenty-four letters, has a complete assignment of attributions which can be used in divination, much as the Norse runes. Later, during the practice of Mithraism, some of the Greek letters took on patriarchal qualities of meaning which they did not have in the beginning.

The Greek letters, like those of Hebrew, also represented numbers. This numbering symbolism was used in the art of *Gematria*, where each word produced a single number by adding the numerical values of the letters together. I will not be discussing *Gematria* in this book.

The Greek alphabet letters, like the other symbols given in this book, can be etched on small clay or wood squares, drawn on poster board or blank cards. See the chart in this section. Lay them out in the usual five tile method, beginning on the left. The first two tiles are the past influencing the question; the middle one is the present; the last two tiles are the future.



## The Greek Alphabet

α	β	γ	δ	ε
Alpha	Beta	Gamma	Delta	Epsilon
ζ	η	θ	ι	κ
Zeta	Eta	Theta	Iota	Kappa
λ	μ	ν	ξ	ο
Lambda	Mu	Nu	Xi	Omicron
π	ρ	σ	τ	υ
Pi	Rho	Sigma	Tau	Upsilon
φ	χ	ψ	ω	
Phi	Chi	Psi	Omega	

**Alpha:** Prosperity and success through what you do with your hands; good job. Bull or cattle; much like the Norse rune Fehu. Wealth that is mobile, as opposed to wealth in land. Goddess: Athene.

**Beta:** New beginnings; a new cycle in life; new opportunities. The Goddess; similar to the Norse rune Berkano. In the Mithraic religion, this sign denoted the demonic God of Wrongdoing, who challenged and broke unity. Goddess: Allecto, Artmeis, Hecate.

**Gamma:** Spiritual seeking and inspiration. Goddess-ness, the sacred. Goddess: Rhea, Hecate.





- Delta:** A need for balance in your life. The four Elements and the four directions. Goddess: Gaea, Hera.
- Epsilon:** A need for more spirituality in life; seeking a new spiritual path. The Aion, or ether; in alchemy, the fifth Element, which was known as the Quintessence. Goddess: Hestia, Hecate.
- Zeta:** Losing something or someone you consider important at this time; giving up something to gain something better. A sacrifice or offering. Goddess: Persephone, Megaera.
- Eta:** Joy and love. Divine harmony of the seven planets. Goddess: Aphrodite.
- Theta:** Stability; security. Symbolizes the crystal sphere upon which the fixed stars were said to stand. Goddess: Hera, Themis.
- Iota:** Destiny; the working out of a karmic problem. Sacred to the Three Fates. Goddess: Fates, Persephone.
- Kappa:** Bad luck, illness, disease. Sacred to Rhea, the Primal Goddess, in her aspect of Dark Mother. Goddess: Rhea, Furies.
- Lambda:** An orderly growth cycle in life, with many beneficial things happening. In classical geometry, the mathematical progressions whose principles determine organic growth of plants. Goddess: Demeter, Persephone.
- Mu:** Decisions to be made; personal choices which will affect your life. In medieval astrology, the fourteen stars. Goddess: Hecate, Nemesis, Themis.
- Nu:** Involved in a relationship or friendship best ended. Stubbornness about listening to good advice. Dabbling in wrong use of magick. Goddess: Circe, Cybele, Selene.
- Xi:** Drifting through life without goals or efforts. You or someone close not taking responsibility. Severe repercussions will follow unless attitude changed. Goddess: Nemesis, Themis, Megaera.
- Omicron:** Success; prosperity; good health; love and friendship. The Sun. Goddess: Demeter, Nike.
- Pi:** Decision to be made concerning employment, friendships, relationships; a number of opportunities which make it difficult to choose. Identified with Sun deities; the Sun surrounded by sixteen rays of light. Goddess: Athene.
- Rho:** Pregnancy, marriage, fruitful creative ideas. The power of reproduction; growth, and fruitfulness. Goddess: Bendis, Demeter.
- Sigma:** End of a problem, relationship, job, or period of life. Connected with the eighteenth Norse rune. Goddess of the Dead and the Underworld. Goddess: Persephone.
- Tau:** The influence of family and friends; interpretation depends upon what tiles it lies near. Humankind. Goddess: Hestia.





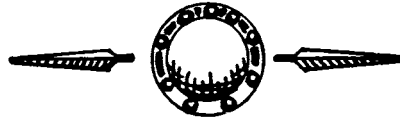
**Upsilon:** Emotions, good or bad, affecting certain areas of life; spiritual initiation. Water and its fluid qualities. Goddess: Hecate, Amphitrite.

**Phi:** Knowledge gained which improves the life on all levels; magickal knowledge revealed. The generative principle of creation. Goddess: Athene.

**Chi:** Gift from the Goddess; a new talent or opportunity arises. Related to the Norse rune Gebo. Goddess: Athene, Muses.

**Psi:** Protection; spiritual guidance; visions; the development of psychic talents. Spiritual light of the Goddess. Goddess: Hecate, Hera, Iris.

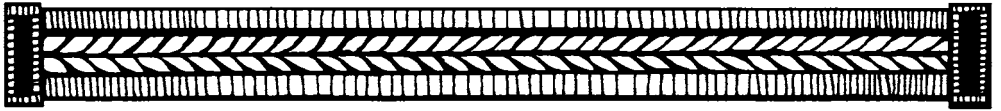
**Omega:** Wealth, prosperity, successful in business. The very best of everything opening up. Goddess: Athene, Nike.



## End Notes

1. *Collier's Encyclopedia.*





## Shamanic Stones

**T**he use of symbol stones by shamans is alluded to in various myths and historical records from around the world. However, there are no records of just how the stones were used in divination and magick. This is not surprising when one remembers that most shamans recorded little or nothing in writing; what records were made by others were often destroyed by one of the predominant present-day patriarchal religions.

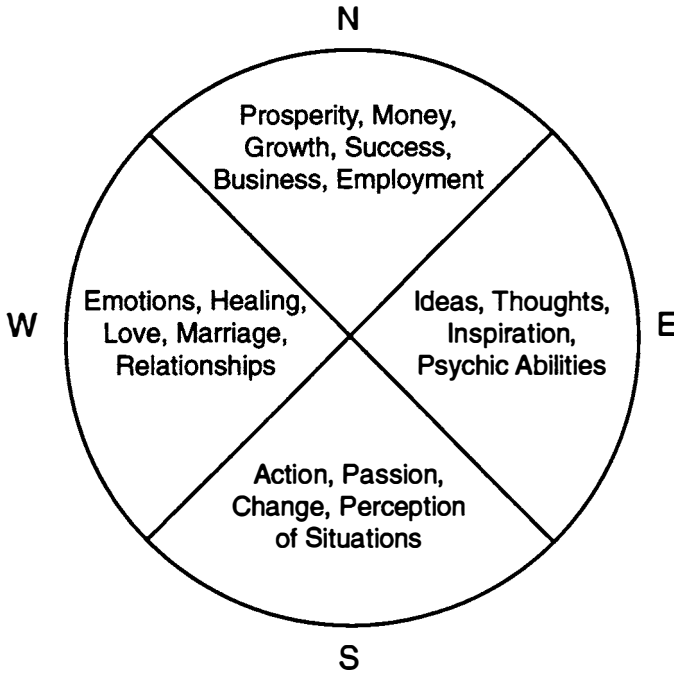
Many little painted or engraved stones have been found which perplex archaeologists, because they are not discovered within what they term “sacred areas.” It should be obvious that these symbol stones were used by the common people in a way other than clan ritual. It would seem that the commoners were practicing a form of divination which they observed among their shamans or spiritual leaders.

Carefully collect small, fairly flat stones on which you can paint symbols with acrylic paints. The type of stone does not matter; it can be one which simply catches your eye while walking. Use the following symbol chart for the designs.

When you have enough of the stones, wash them in a mixture of salt and water; dry thoroughly. Paint the symbols in any color you choose. See the chart of



## Elements Diagram



shamanic symbols in this section. Concentrate on the symbol while drawing it, for this will intensify the connection between you and the stones. When the paint is dry, store the stones in a special bag. When asking a question, gently stir the stones in the bag and draw out the appropriate number without looking at them.

One method is to draw three stones and lay them out from left to right in a horizontal line. The left stone is the past, the middle the present, the right the future.

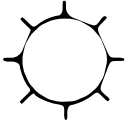
Another way is to make a cloth divided into four sections representing the Elements; lay the stones out as they are drawn, beginning in the East. See the diagram above. Mark out the design with fabric paint on a piece of white cloth.

The East stands for ideas, thoughts, inspiration, psychic abilities. The South is for action, passion, change, perception of situations. The West represents emotions, healing, marriage or relationships, love. The North is the region of prosperity, money, growth, success, business or employment. The center of the cloth stands for the power you are using, either negative or positive, to affect the question.

**The Sun:** The outer personality. The conscious mind. The physical body.

**The Moon:** The inner personality. The subconscious mind. The emotions.

# Shamanic Stones



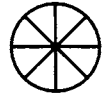
**Sun**



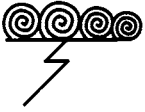
**Moon**



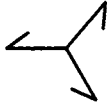
**Spiral**



**Year Wheel**



**Storm**



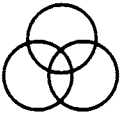
**Movement**



**Cow**



**Cauldron**



**Shamrock**



**Double Axe**



**Heart**



**Mountains**



**Doorway**



**Water**



**Eye**



**Star**



**Spiral:** Searching of any kind; striving toward a goal. Spiritual seeking; finding out what you are here to do.

**Year Wheel:** A period of time before events are completed. The passage of time. A new cycle.

**Storm:** Trouble; upsets; arguments.

**Movement:** Progress; blockages removed.

**Cow:** Prosperity; possessions; success. Gaining something you desire.

**Cauldron:** Guidance; mystical teachings or experiences; learning from past lives. The Underworld.

**Shamrock:** Good luck; change of fortune.

**Double Axe:** Protection, both physical and spiritual. Strong female friends.

**Heart:** Love; friendships; harmonious relationships.

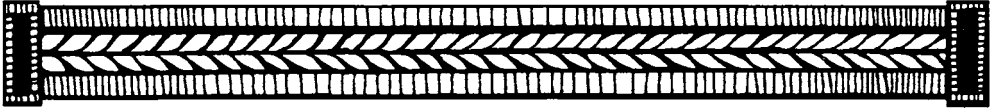
**Doorway:** New beginnings; new opportunities. Things are opening up for you.

**Water:** Travel; journeys, whether physical or spiritual.

**Eye:** Getting to the truth; seeing passed illusions. Developing or using the psychic.

**Star:** Guidance; mystical teachings or experiences of a higher nature. Spiritual initiations. The Upperworld.





## Egyptian Hieroglyphs

**I**n ancient Egypt, writing was a skill of certain temple scribes, priestesses and priests, and magicians. When writing on papyrus parchment, the scribe would fray the end of a reed for a pen, wet this brush, and rub it on a cake of red or black paint. Scribes had individual wooden palettes which they carried attached to their belts or sashes. The palette had two small oval places for the cakes of red and black paint and a sliding storage compartment for the brushes. Statues show small water pots sitting beside the scribes.

Hieroglyphic characters were written either in columns or horizontal lines. These lines usually read from the left to the right, but on occasion were read from right to left.

The hieroglyph for scribe was the same as the word for write. This hieroglyph was made up of the images of the palette, water pot, and reed brush.

In the older Egyptian hieroglyphics, the pot was a sign for woman. The pot is interchangeable with the cauldron. The pot was also associated with menstrual blood, a sign of rebirth, in such widely separated cultures as India and the Northern traditions of Europe.



The hieroglyph for vulture comes from very ancient Egyptian history, long before patriarchal take-over. It symbolizes both “compassionate” and “mother.” This can be traced back as far as the matriarchy of Catal Huyuk in Turkey, where there is a shrine mural portraying priestesses performing elaborate rituals while dressed in vulture masks and wings. In Hebrew, R-M-H at one time meant “pity, compassion, and womb” as well as “vulture.”

The Old World vulture, *Gyps fulvus*, is very different from the one found in the Western Hemisphere. Completely black, this vulture has a nine-foot wing span. Its mesmerizing eye of black rimmed with white was often used on masks and in paintings. The vulture was considered to be a bird of transformation; it does not kill, but awaits death and transforms it.

In the temples of Nekhebet and Mut in Abydos, Egypt, these goddesses were said to have vulture aspects. They hovered over Osiris in that form to protect him. In paintings of the funeral barge of this god, one can also see sixteen vulture plumes.

Feathers always symbolized truth and divination in the Egyptian religion. Although hieroglyphs represent sounds and sometimes whole words, they also represented certain powers, most often symbolized by the creature painted. However, except for foreign words, the Egyptians did not write out the vowels. This elimination can lead to complications in magick, since one needs to be precise. In the book *Fun With Hieroglyphs*<sup>1</sup>, hieroglyphs are given for the vowels.

These hieroglyphic forms were also used in writing out magickal spells while chanting.

Some hieroglyphs were used as amulets, or good luck charms. The Eye of Horus frequently appears in art and jewelry; it was a charm for healing, among other things. The scarab beetle was thought to be very powerful as an amulet for spiritual life and growth. The ankh was a protective charm which also meant resurrection.

Egyptian hieroglyphs can be used as a magickal alphabet when writing out requests for spellworking, or they can be used in divinatory methods. Use any of the layouts given in this section.

## Vulture

**Letter:** A

**Goddess:** Mut, Nekhebet.

**Magickal Meaning:** drastic changes, good or bad, depending upon how you respond to them. The Great Goddess in Her aspects of Creating, Destroying, and Re-creating.







# Egyptian Hieroglyphs



A



B



C, K



D



E



F, PH



G



H



I



J



L



M



N



O



P



Q



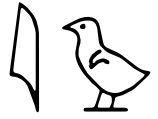
R



S



T



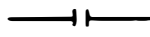
U



V, W



Y



Z



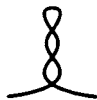
CH, TSH



KH



SH



TCH



TH





### Foot

Letter: B

Goddess: Anqet, Heqet, Isis, Renenet.

Magickal Meaning: movement; progress seen; a new cycle begun.

### Basket

Letter: C, K

Goddess: Bast, Hathor, Maat, Rat.

Magickal Meaning: harvesting efforts of your work; getting your energy and ideas together.

### Rope

Letter: CH, TSH

Goddess: Bast, Isis, Neith, Nephthys, Sesheta.

Magickal Meaning: discovering something which will help you to get a desired result.

### Hand

Letter: D

Goddess: Isis, Maat, Mut.

Magickal Meaning: help from the Goddess; learning how to channel astral energies for physical manifestation.

### Two Reed Leaves

Letter: E, Y

Goddess: Sesheta.

Magickal Meaning: documents, letters, books, accounts; some type of communication from others. Take care to read them thoroughly.

### Horned Viper

Letter: F, PH

Goddess: Buto, Rat.

Magickal Meaning: serious trouble if you do not watch what you say and do.

### Pot

Letter: G

Goddess: Ament, Anqet, Bast, Hathor, Heqet, Isis, Mut.

Magickal Meaning: initiation; rebirth; a new cycle of your existence. A new loving relationship. The pot or cauldron is a symbol of the Regenetrix.





### Shelter

Letter: H

Goddess: Buto, Isis, Ta-Urt.

Magickal Meaning: your home, or a place you think of as home.

Any place where you feel sheltered and safe. A refuge and comfort when life has been hard on you.

### One Reed Leaf

Letter: I

Goddess: Bast, Maat, Nut, Renenet.

Magickal Meaning: you need to communicate with someone, perhaps to re-establish a friendship or to smooth troubled waters.

### Cobra

Letter: J

Goddess: Buto, Isis, Maat, Nephthys.

Magickal Meaning: spiritual growth; the controlled rising of the Kundalini; enlightenment.

### The Circle

Letter: KH

Goddess: Isis, Neith, Nephthys.

Magickal Meaning: establishing a place for ritual; setting limits on what others demand from you; establishing boundaries for yourself so you do not over-do. This circle is crossed by four lines, representing the four Elements. Understanding how to use the Elements.

### Lion

Letter: L

Goddess: Sekhmet.

Magickal Meaning: being firm in your convictions and decisions; knowing when and how to constructively use anger. Can also mean one who “hunts” for trouble.

### Owl

Letter: M

Goddess: Hathor, Isis, Neith, Nephthys.

Magickal Meaning: wisdom; secret Goddess knowledge; having or keeping a secret.



### Water

Letter: N

Goddess: Anqet, Maat, Nut.

Magickal Meaning: the emotions; whether in or out of control, depends upon the surrounding hieroglyphs. Dealing with emotional issues.

### Quail Chick

Letter: O

Goddess: Anqet, Bast, Heqet, Meshkent, Renenet.

Magickal Meaning: exploring new ideas and surroundings; a child; a person who looks at life with the innocence of a child.

### Stool

Letter: P

Goddess: Hathor, Isis, Seket.

Magickal Meaning: position of authority; an employer; a job which gives you more challenge.

### Triangle

Letter: Q

Goddess: Hathor, Isis, Mut, Nut.

Magickal Meaning: a woman who is important to you or who influences you. The triangle is an ancient symbol for both woman and the Triple Goddess.

### Open Mouth

Letter: R

Goddess: Isis, Sesheta.

Magickal Meaning: words which build up or tear down your self-esteem; verbal communications.

### Folded Cloth

Letter: S

Goddess: Renpet.

Magickal Meaning: end of a cycle; finishing with a project, plans, or relationship.

### Lake

Letter: SH

Goddess: Maat, Neith, Nekhebet.

Magickal Meaning: a period of calmness after a rough cycle; a need for quiet and solitude.





### **Bread Loaf**

**Letter:** T

**Goddess:** Hathor, Renenet.

**Magickal Meaning:** prosperity, wealth, needs met.

### **Twisted Rope**

**Letter:** TCH

**Goddess:** Isis, Maat.

**Magickal Meaning:** there is more going on in a situation or relationship that you realize; a sudden turn or twist of events which may take you by surprise.

### **Tear Drop**

**Letter:** TH

**Goddess:** Isis, Sekhmet.

**Magickal Meaning:** tears of joy or sorrow, depending upon the surrounding hieroglyphs. A period of upheaval.

### **Feather & Quail**

**Letter:** U

**Goddess:** Isis, Maat.

**Magickal Meaning:** truth and/or knowledge discovered in an unexpected way; finding new Goddess wisdom and accepting it.

### **Symbol Unknown**

**Letter:** V, W

**Goddess:** Heqet, Mut, Nephthys.

**Magickal Meaning:** a time of neutrality; no idea what to do next.

### **Basket & Folded Cloth**

**Letter:** X

**Goddess:** Bast, Isis.

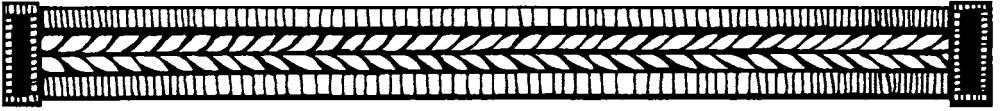
**Magickal Meaning:** successfully ending one project and beginning another. Being content with the outcome of an event.

### **Door Bolt**

**Letter:** Z

**Goddess:** Ament, Maat, Neith, Nekhebet, Nephthys, Nut, Sekhmet, Ta-Urt.

**Magickal Meaning:** shutting the door on past events; refusing to accept negative happenings and their attached emotions which come out of the past.



## Goddess Symbols

**M**aking and using your own set of Goddess symbols is fulfilling. This brings you closer to the Goddess Herself as well as closer to the Goddess-within. These symbols were widely used by the very ancient matriarchal societies and can still have great meaning to a woman working with them today. Primarily, the symbols give you the emotional, mental, and spiritual atmospheres surrounding a problem, decision, or event, rather than answering mundane questions. They are also excellent focal points for meditation.

Draw the images on circles of poster board or transfer them to blank cards. If you are talented with clay, you could form them on thin pieces of this material; then let them dry. If you wish, you could color or paint the symbols.

Keep them in a special bag large enough to get your hand inside. Without looking, draw out three, five, or seven symbols. Place them in a horizontal line, beginning at the left. To read the three, the left is past, the middle present, the right future. For the five, the two left are past, the middle present, the two right future. For the seven, the two left are past, the three middle present, the two right future. In fact, any layout in this book can be used.



# Goddess Symbols



**Bear**



**Bee**



**Butterfly**



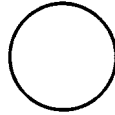
**Cave**



**Cauldron**



**Chevron**



**Circle**



**Crescent**



**Labrys**



**Eye**



**Feet**



**Hands**



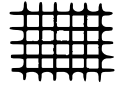
**Horns**



**Horseshoe**



**Pyramid**



**Net**



**Owl**



**Snake**



**Pig**



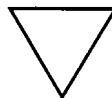
**Spindle**



**Spiral**



**Star**



**Triangle**



What you are determining are the mental, emotional, and spiritual attitudes about the question which you have in mind. Women respond more to these attitudes than do men. Over the centuries we have trained ourselves to recognize the tiniest of hints concerning these attitudes; this has helped us stay out of a lot of trouble with men in general. We also use this talent to pick up on our children.

By understanding these atmospheres around a problem or event, you can better know how to go about getting a solution in your favor.

## Bear

The bear has been considered a holy animal, an ancestress and mother life-giver throughout the northern hemisphere. The Old European root word *bher-* can be found in the Germanic *beran* (to bear children, to carry), the Germanic *barnam* (child), and the Old Norse word *burdh* (birth). Among the Native Americans, the bear is held in high regard.

Up into the twentieth century in the eastern Slavic lands, the grandmother of the family would lay a newborn baby on a bearskin; this was said to give the baby blessings from the Bear Mother. In eastern Lithuania, a woman who had just given birth was called *Meska* (Bear).

Among the ancient Greeks, the district of Arcadia was strongly connected with Artemis, Pan, and Callisto, all deities who had the bear as a sacred animal. Arkas, who was said to give his name to the district, was changed into a bear shortly after his birth. His mother's name is given as Callisto, Megisto, or Themisto, all alternative names for Artemis. Artemis herself was honored in Greece with a yearly festival by little girls called "bears," who danced in her temple. A Spartan sanctuary at one time held a statue of a female dancer wearing a bear mask.

Magickal Meaning: end of one cycle and the beginning of another. A time to be cautious and especially aware of what is going on around you.

## Bee

The bee was an image associated with the Goddess in Her aspect of Regenetrix. This creature was also used to symbolize souls of the dead, who were believed to hover around their funeral urns, burial mounds, or the places where they died. The Greek writer Porphyry said that Grecian priestesses of Demeter were called *Melissae* (bees), while Artemis, as the Moon, was referred to as *Melissa*. He further stated that bees were begotten from bulls, therefore, the souls of the dead were called bull-begotten.

Bees, the Moon, and bulls were closely connected in symbology. Honey was a common offering on the altars of goddesses.

Magickal Meaning: a rebirth of the spirit; an initiation of some kind. A message from the spirit world.







## Butterfly

This insect is related to the hourglass, the triangle, and the double axe. In Minoan art the butterfly was often shown emerging from between bull horns, a symbol of regeneration coming from consecration. The caterpillar, a pre-butterfly state, symbolizes the act of becoming; in this it is connected with the crescent Moon and horns.

**Magickal Meaning:** new opportunities which lead to new goals and life-paths.

## Cave

The cave was often a sanctuary of the Goddess, representing Her sacred womb of rebirth. When temples began to be built, the symbolism of the cave was not forgotten; it was retained in the underground sacred sanctuary built under many Goddess shrines.

**Magickal Meaning:** creating a sacred place of your own; self-initiation; an intense spiritual experience.

## Cauldron or Pot

The cauldron or pot symbolizes cyclical time and the lunar calendar. This is because the cauldron represents the womb of rebirth, the bowl of blood held by the Hindu Kali and other goddesses. This blood is the Wise Blood from the Cosmic Womb. It has been called *soma* by the Hindus, red claret by the Celts, and *greal* by the Welsh Bards. In Vedic myth, Indra stole the *soma* so that he could rule over all the gods, a reference to the stealing of importance and power from the Goddess for a patriarchal god.

The Goddess and Her cauldron is the center of all feminine power and every female group. Spiritual transformation can only come through Her cauldron, or belly-womb. Ancient tradition says that only women can tap into the great power of the cauldron, for only women are made in the image of the Goddess with Her all-renewing womb of rebirth and transformation. This tradition remains in the figure of the witch and her cauldron.

The cauldron is also the repository of inspiration and magick, as seen in Ceridwen's cauldron which was sought by the Bards. The Goddess has long been considered to be the source of inspiration and the Mistress of Magick. When a true initiation takes place, and the initiate willingly descends into the cauldron, she is often filled with ecstatic emotions when she returns to her present state. She may sing, play music, dance, prophesy, see visions, or become creative in poetry and prose. In short, she is filled with Goddess spirit and inspiration, the type of power that only comes from the sacred cauldron. Such Bards as Taliesin stated





that they regularly “drank” from the cauldron to promote their creativity and divine inspiration.

**Magickal Meaning:** development of psychic gifts; creative talents being used. Coming to terms with physical death, either through the death of someone close to you, or a very personal experience in dreams and/or meditation.

## Chevron or Water Sign

A continuous V sign, or chevron, is a symbol for running water. This is also sometimes called a zig-zag, serpentine, or meander. This symbol is the earliest such sign recorded and was used around 40,000 BCE or before. The Phoenicians inverted two Vs into an M, which still meant running water. The Arabic word for water is *ma*, the Greek *mu*, and the Egyptian hieroglyph M. The wave-like motion, a spiral viewed on a flat plane, is one of the ways that energy travels. Light, radiation, and sound all move in waves.

This sign symbolizes the spiritual waters said to be under the Earth, waters which are a connecting point between the physical world and Otherworld realms. Since the beginning of time, there has been a widespread belief that all life sprang from water. Even the Greeks said that the sea was the great womb, sign of the Mother. They baptized their accepted children with a few drops of water in a magickal ceremony.<sup>1</sup> In matriarchies, certain women were appointed to perform rain-making ceremonies.

**Magickal Meaning:** messages from across water or from spirit. A flash of understanding of the true nature and emotions behind an event.

## Circle

The circle is often referred to as the Great Round, representing the womb and the center of being within the Goddess and within each woman. The first sacred places, outside of caves, were circular enclosures with a center pillar. It is no accident that witches and priestesses are associated with circles of magick. The center point of a ritually cast circle is the gateway to other dimensions, to the Otherworlds.

When cities began to build walls, the Goddess was invoked as the deity of protection for those walls. The Roman lares and penates (deities of the home and fields) were said to be companions of *mater larum* or Mania, the goddess connected with the wall. The center of each city was said to be deep within the Earth.

The ancient Mysteries of Hecate, which were considered to be extremely potent, used a device called Hecate’s circle. This was a golden sphere with a sapphire inside; the sphere was twirled overhead by means of an attached thong of oxhide. Undoubtedly, this action produced a whirling sound that could induce a semi-trance state. The later bull-roarers are very similar.



Hecate is a Moon goddess; the circle symbolizes the Moon itself. The circle, as with the Moon, impels endless cycles of energy and being. It is the infinite wheel of time that allows no escape from death and rebirth, in the spiritual as well as the physical.

Circles of stones were originally symbols of the entrance of Her birth canal. These were often erected on high places, much as were the menhirs. The power of the circle of stones was later applied to holed stones. Crawling through the hole in an ancient sacred stone was believed to promote healing and regeneration. This belief can still be found in Ireland, Scotland, Britain, France, and several other European countries. The holed stone symbolizes initiation, renewal, and healing.

Circles of stones are related symbolically to faery rings of dark green grass. Tradition and legends have told of dancing faeries. This idea may have originated with priestesses who danced within stone rings or over power spots. The Bacchantes and Maenads of ancient Greece danced on sacred mountaintops. Even in southern Slavonic regions, the *vile* (faeries) are said to dance on mountain peaks near lakes and springs; their dancing ring is called a *kolo*.

Stories say that the dancing faeries are offended by humans who interfere with or spy upon their activities; they either blind the offender or dance him to death. This goes back to the ancient priestesses who served secret women-only Mysteries. Any male found spying on their rituals was torn to pieces or run to death in a Wild Hunt.

Magickal Meaning: learning to communicate with Nature spirits and elements. A time of quiet, possibly a vacation.

## Crescent and Moon

The crescent is a direct symbol of the Moon and connected with horns. It is a symbol of becoming, a beginning point in a cycle of time. The changes reflected by the crescent Moon are those of steady, methodical, reasonable change.

The symbol of the Moon can be found on all continents of the world. It is one of the oldest of Goddess symbols and also the most pervasive. The Moon is connected with power over water and liquids, especially that of women's bodies. Because of this ruling of the menses, the Moon was associated with life, death, and rebirth; it represented the sexual act and the pleasure gained from that. The Moon was considered to be the source of all women's magick and undesirable powers.

Because of this, the patriarchies called the sexual act experienced by men the Little Death, advising that each sexual act weakened a man and put him into the controlling power of women and evil. This fear became so warped from the original blessing of the Goddess that in ancient Greece it became the general opinion that love between a man and a woman was necessary for children, but of an inferior, degenerative quality.



**Magickal Meaning:** an emotional upheaval; the end of an intimate relationship. A brief love affair. A short period of emotional tensions.

## Double Axe or Labrys

The *labrys*, or double axe, was first used in Goddess worship in Paleolithic caves. The *labrys* is actually two Moon crescents, waxing and waning, fixed on a shaft with the points curved toward the handle. The use of this weapon-symbol was widely used by Goddess priestesses in ancient Crete and among the Amazons. The sign of the double axe was visible at the entrance of all Goddess shrines. It was a tool-weapon that could be used only by women. As the battle-axe and war-hammer, the double axe was later taken over by male gods, notably Thor.

Originally, the double axe was a sign of the hourglass-shaped Goddess of Death and Reincarnation. To the Minoans of Crete, the double axe was associated with the butterfly and the triangle.

An old Serbian proverb says that if you kill a butterfly, you kill a witch. Obviously, the word witch is meant to mean the Goddess or one of Her priestesses.

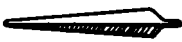
**Magickal Meaning:** learning to use the Valkyrie within. Defending yourself against negative people. Overcoming discrimination in any form.

## Eye

The eye was considered to be both a powerful guard against danger and a death-dealer against aggressors. The power to “overlook,” or the evil eye, may have originally been a prerogative of priestesses as protection against adversaries of the Goddess; later it was believed throughout Europe and the Middle East that women in particular could cast negative spells with a glance.

The eye probably was connected with the owl (bird of death), the night, and Goddess of the Underworld. Many of the eye carvings resemble coiled snakes or spirals. This places its meaning along the idea of rebirth or regeneration, or reincarnation through death.

The eye was also connected with the Sun, long before the patriarchal cultures stole the symbol for their Sun gods and changed it into the Sun wheel. Linguistically, the eye and Sun are connected in several cultures. For example, in Old Irish *suil* means eye, while in Lithuania and Latvia *saule* is Sun. Britain had a goddess whose name was Sulis; as patroness of healing she was connected with the thermal springs at Bath (Aquae Sulis). Another name for this goddess was Suleviae (Twin-sunned), a plural form which may point to her originally being a Triple Goddess of healing and regeneration. The Sun, a Goddess emblem long before patriarchy, was a sign of the cycle of death and renewing, especially through the seasons.



The dual Eyes of the Goddess represent Her unblinking vision of all creation. She knows all that was, that is, and that will be. No lie can confound Her, for She easily sees the truth within every heart.

**Magickal Meaning:** protection against attackers, either on the mental or astral levels. Be cautious about confiding your hopes and dreams.

## Feet

Footprints have always been considered sacred and powerful. Whenever the footprints of the Goddess were painted in caves and temples, they symbolized Her presence. They also represented Her stimulating energy and power which could heal or kill.

Among the Norse, the bare footprint was a fertility symbol connected with the Vanic goddesses, especially Nerthus.

**Magickal Meaning:** manifestation of plans; visible movement after a period of stagnation.

## Hands

The hands of the Goddess have been painted for millennia in caves, shrines, megalithic tombs, on vases, and carved in stone. These hands represent the healing and energizing power of the Goddess. This power can be felt during healings and true initiations. The symbol of the hand is considered to be a strong force against evil and death.

**Magickal Meaning:** physical, mental, and/or emotional healing after an illness or a long period of stress. Unexpected help coming from others.

## Horns

Bulls and their crescent-shaped horns represent the Moon. Horned crowns, for instance, were symbolic of the Goddess and Her Moon connections long before the horns were changed to mean the phallic force of the reigning god. Horns were originally a sign of becoming through the transformation of energy.

The bull head and horns are a symbol of the female uterus and ovaries. It represents fertility and regeneration. When the bull is pictured with the head of a vulture, as on some Minoan sarcophagi, it signifies physical death.

**Magickal Meaning:** a time of productive activity. Possible pregnancy.



## Horseshoe

The horseshoe-shape was sacred to a wide range of goddesses, from the Hindu Kali to the Celtic Brigit. The Hindus say that the horseshoe is Kali's Word of Creation; Shiva performed a dance of sexual desire within a horseshoe of fire, which symbolized the Cosmic Yoni of the Goddess.

Still today, doorways are protected by horseshoes. People who have no knowledge of the Great Goddess hang them for protection, luck, and general prosperity of their household; all these attributes belong to the ancient Mother.

Magickal Meaning: protection, good luck, prosperity.

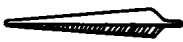
## Mountain, Pyramid, Menhir, and Cone

The mountain, pyramid, cone, mound, and ziggurat all represent the body of the Goddess. To climb the mountain means to approach the Goddess Herself. The cave, labyrinth, underground temple sanctuary, and tomb all reside inside the mountain or artificial mound; thus, to enter one of these is to rest within the womb of the Goddess, awaiting rebirth. The *omphalos* at Delphi, considered by the Greeks to be the sacred center of the world, was originally a sacred sign of the Great Mother and acted as a means of communication between the living and the dead who rested within the Goddess. This cone-shaped meteorite was covered with a net pattern.

The white cone or pyramid was the origin of the Mountain Mother, the deity who gave stability to the world and to life; at Byblos the cone was a symbol of Astarte. Votive cones have been found in great numbers in such places as ancient Babylonia and the island of Cyprus. Often the cone can be seen rising from the center of the Goddess's crown, surrounded by horns. At Sardis, in Asia Minor, the Lydian temple of Aphrodite is crowned with a cone. At the island of Aegina, off the coast of Athens, there was a temple of Aphaia (a local Great Goddess); it stands atop a knoll between two conical hills.

Long before the menhir, or standing stone, was used as a phallic symbol, it represented another form of the Mountain Mother. Like the *omphalos*, the menhir was erected as a center point, a connecting place between one realm of existence and another. Any stone at the center of the top of a hill was thought to be the navel of the Great Mother. A tradition that survived well into patriarchal times was the rubbing of the bare abdomen against a menhir; this was believed to produce marriage, fertility, and an easy childbirth. Menhirs give off a definite psychic vibrations which attract both humans and animals.

Many cultures worshipped the Goddess, often in Her triple form, in the shape of a menhir or standing stone. Pausanias wrote that the three Graces were worshipped at Orchomenos in the form of three menhirs. In Iceland, the goddess Armathr, Mother of Prosperity, was honored at a special stone.<sup>2</sup> At one time



Moabite Arabs referred to themselves as Beni Sahr, Sons of the Rock. The Stone of Fal in Ireland and the Stone of Scone, of Scottish origin and now in Westminster Abbey, may once have been Goddess stones. The fact that the Stone of Scone is called the Hag of Scone and the Stone of Fal is said to cry out for the true king may be remnants of a tradition where ancient Goddess priestesses passed judgment on who was to be leader of the clans.

**Magickal Meaning:** a pleasant relationship; love; marriage. A period of happiness.

## Net

The criss-cross pattern called the net was associated with such goddesses as the Cretan Dictynna and ancient snake Goddesses. The checkerboard pattern probably evolved with the earlier net design. The Greek Artemis, a form of the Cretan Dictynna/Britomartis, was associated with both childbirth and fishing nets. Associated with the water of life, the net symbolizes the source of creative power.

**Magickal Meaning:** circumstances and events in your favor, but everything seems to be stalled. Using the available energy to manifest your desires requires patience and will take time.

## Owl

The owl has long been an animal symbol of the Dark Goddess. Lilith of Sumeria had owl-taloned feet and was flanked by sacred owls. Homer wrote that Pallas Athene had an owl face. In the ruins of Troy, archaeologists uncovered hundreds of marble owl faces and vases with owl heads. The Goddess with an owl's face can be seen at Knowth West, Ireland.

A night bird with an eerie cry and a mesmerizing stare, the owl was associated with the realm of death. The Egyptian hieroglyph for death was an owl. The matriarchal priestesses looked upon physical death as a door to reincarnation and spiritual death-initiation as the beginning of a new cycle within this life. They believed that this Goddess creature had profound wisdom, oracular powers, and was able to avert evil; its eyes had special sacred power, which is why they carved the eyes on some many things. When patriarchy took over, these priestesses were called witches; this may explain the Latin word for owl, *strix*, which also means witch.

**Magickal Meaning:** prophetic dreams and/or revealing divination of any type. The third eye is active during this time.





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## Snake

The snake has long been considered a symbol of active life force or energy. The snake was connected with both water and the Underworld. Its shedding skin and its hibernation made it synonymous with reincarnation and regeneration, both of the body and of the spirit. In Old Europe, the snake was a benevolent creature, except when it represented the death-wielding (but not evil) Dark Mother.

When the snake is painted or engraved as having 14-17 twinings, it represents the waxing Moon; if 29-30 turns, the days of the Moon cycle.

The Greek word *geras* means both old age and the sloughing of the snake. In Lithuanian tradition, Kirmiai or Kirmeline was held on January 25; at this time snakes were believed to come out of the forests and into homes. The name of this celebration comes from the Lithuanian word *kirmele*, or serpent.

The serpent or snake was venerated throughout the Mediterranean matriarchies, as well as in such places as India. In Egyptian hieroglyphics the image of a cobra stood for the word goddess. Neith, as goddess of life and fate, was pictured as a great golden cobra. Another snake deity, Renenet, was goddess of childbirth and nursing. The serpent is found everywhere as a symbol of Isis. Hygeia, Greek healing goddess, was accompanied by a great boa constrictor. Atargatis of Syria was shown with her body encircled by the coils of a great snake. Eileithyia, a goddess of both Crete and Greece, was a snake goddess of childbirth. The serpent, with its yearly shedding and renewing skin, was looked upon as a symbol of fertility, birth, death, the Underworld, and regeneration.

The Cretan goddesses held writhing snakes, as did Anat of the Middle East. Cretan house shrines show goddesses or priestesses with round snake eyes and serpents coiled about their waists and arms. It is possible that the later Greek tradition of keeping sacred snakes in temples, and sometimes even in the home, came from Crete. These snakes were fed milk and used in divination in some manner.

The sacred serpent of Delphi was said to coil around the *omphalos*, a sign that this place of oracles originally belonged to Gaea and Themis. Records say that snakes were also kept in the Delphic caves of Trophonius for prophetic purposes, although no mention is made of how they were used. The Pythia (Delphic Oracle) was said to have been accompanied by a python when she did her predictions in the sacred chamber.

The Greek Medusa had hissing snakes for hair according to legend. She was one of three Gorgon sisters, and known as Mistress of the West Gate (death). The name Gorgon means cunning one or ruler. According to Robert Graves, the Gorgons were originally priestesses of the Triple Moon Goddess, and acted as the masked guardians of women's Mysteries.<sup>3</sup> Terrifying Gorgon masks would certainly have frightened away the uninitiated.



In Athene's temple on the Acropolis in Athens, she was shown flanked by two land snakes and two sea serpents. Her earliest Greek statues portray Athene with snakes coiling in her hair and draped about her robes. This image and snake-connection came from Crete, where this goddess was known as Atana.

The goddess Hera, who originated in Crete, was portrayed in her temple at Argos as a snake-armed figure with bands of dotted scales on her body.

In a Spartan sanctuary, the winged Hecate was shown with a snake coiling upward toward her outstretched arm. The Underworld serpent was especially associated with Hecate, Queen of the Underworld, darkness, and the Dark Moon. Known as the Mistress of Dark Magick, Hecate's powers of sorcery were said to be second to no one.

In very ancient China, the goddess Nu Kua was pictured as a woman with a snake's form for her lower body. She was a powerful Creatrix deity and weaver.

The snake and snake Goddess can also be found in northern European carvings and jewelry. The dragon-serpent was fastened to the prows of Viking ships; these were removed before the homeland was seen so that the land spirits would not be frightened. A gold bracelet found in a woman's grave near Saarbrucken in west Germany has engraved on it a woman with spiralling snake legs, round owl eyes, and bee wings. Snake-limbed creatures are found on Scandinavian rock engravings. Even the Picts of Scotland left a stone carving of a woman with twisted snakes as legs and snake-like hair.

When patriarchies took control, they filled their legends with male heroes and gods slaying the snake. In India, the Vedic god Indra killed the serpent Vrtra; Marduk of Babylon slays Tiamat in her dragon-serpent form; the Norse god Thorr is always trying to destroy the Midgard Serpent. Indo-Europeans feared the whirlwind for they said that the serpent hid within it.

Magickal Meaning: extra energy which must be channeled into positive paths. Success, desires fulfilled.

## Sow or Pig

Both the Pregnant and the Underworld Goddess were associated with the pig, particularly the sow. Ancient figurines, reliefs, and paintings show Her or Her priestesses wearing pig masks and dancing during Her rituals.

During the Greek October festival of Thesmophoria, Demeter and Persephone were honored with sacrifices of suckling pigs. This three-day event was a women-only celebration. Herodotus writes that the Egyptians had a similar ceremony, as did the later Romans under the name of Sementiva (day of sowing) to honor the goddesses Ceres and Tellus Mater.

As late as the seventeenth century CE in Lithuania, the Earth Mother Zemyna was honored at a harvest festival presided over by a priestess, who offered a black



suckling pig. As a symbol of fertility, pork fat was eaten by the farmer, who then rubbed some on his plow.

**Magickal Meaning:** a very productive period of time; take advantage of it and work hard to consolidate your position in life. Possible change to a better job or position. Creative ideas flow.

## Spindle and Loom

In all the myths, spinning and weaving are always associated with the Great Mother and Fate goddesses. Spinning and weaving are synonymous with time and its passage, the cycle of each individual life and the events in that life. The spider was an animal of this aspect of the Goddess. These spinning and weaving goddesses were found in Egypt, Greece, Germany, and almost every other culture in the world. Isis and Neith were called the Weavers in Egypt, while Greece gave this title to both Eileithyia and Athene.

Many triads of goddesses were associated with spinning and weaving of the life threads of each individual. In Greece, there were the Moerae. The Germanic-Nordic traditions knew of the Norns, three Fate goddesses who sat beside the Well of Urd near the World Tree. The Romans called these deities the Fortunaes, the Anglo-Saxons the Wyrd Sisters. During the medieval ages, the Goddess Trinity survived in the form of the Parcae. Up into the eleventh century CE, Christian bishops were complaining that people still honored the Goddess trinity at the New Year by setting out food and drink at three places.

In the Northern Viking tradition, the spindle was associated not only with the Norns, but with Frigg and the north Germanic goddess Holda.

**Magickal Meaning:** karma brings up old issues to be resolved. Having to deal with unpleasant people or events from your past; handle them in a positive way and you will be free.

## Spiral or Labyrinth

The spiral is a fascinating symbol. One can see it in a great many places in a variety of forms, but still recognizable as a spiral. It can be seen in the DNA, whirlpools, galaxies, even in sea shells. The spiral shows one of the ways that energy travels. The labyrinth and the spiral were used interchangeably. The labyrinth as a symbol of initiation, death, and rebirth has been used since the Neolithic times.

As the Place of the Labrys, the labyrinth can symbolize spiritual seeking within. In initiations, the labyrinth was known as the Dangerous Way, the Inner Way, the Secret Way. All these titles refer to the journey through both an actual labyrinth and the inner spiritual labyrinth which every initiate must endure in order to experience a true initiation by the Goddess Herself.



The spiral can begin at the center and move outward, or turn from the outside into the center. When moving outward, it is a sacred circle that releases its transformative power and energy into the physical world. When it moves from the outside in, the spiral becomes a funnel through which all energy is taken into the Cosmic Womb to rest and be reborn.

Spirals can be found in many Goddess temples, such as Stonehenge in Britain, the great temple of Dendara in Egypt, the ziggurats of the Middle East, the labyrinth of Crete, and even the European Mary chapels.

**Magickal Meaning:** everything seems confused because you have lost sight of your true goals. Everything is delayed.

## Star

The star symbol, from one of five points to the eight-pointed star of Astarte, has long been associated with the Goddess.

**Magickal Meaning:** regaining your balance after a period of confusion. Setting new goals.

## Triangle

The triangle, pointing downward, is a very ancient sign for both the Regenetrix Goddess and woman, dating from the Lower Paleolithic period. The triangle symbolizes the vulva (pubic triangle); the hourglass is merely two triangles joined at the tips. It also represents the Triple Goddess in all Her forms around the world.<sup>4</sup> The three colors associated with the Triple Goddess and the triangle were the same in Northwestern Europe and Asia: white, red, and black. White represented the Maiden aspect of the Goddess, red the Mother, and black the Crone. In India, these are called the gunas, or sacred strands, of Kali Ma. Even the early Christian Gnostics worshipped the Goddess as a Trinity.

One of the very earliest forms of the triangle were three parallel lines or three snake coils. This symbol of triple life source can be seen on a stone wall near the main entrance to the ancient tomb at Newgrange, Boyne River Valley, in the county Meath in Ireland. These engravings date from about 3200 BCE.

The trefoil, the three-leaf clover, in fact any design or plant that has three points or three leaves, is associated with the triangular form and the Triple Goddess.

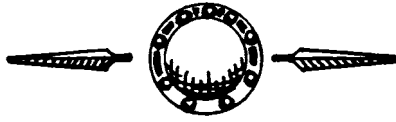
The triangle was also a symbol of Fate goddesses, triads which were composed of a goddess of spinning, one of weaving, and one to snip the life thread. Among the Norse, the *valknut*, or Knot of the Vala,<sup>5</sup> was made up three interlaced triangles, giving a total of nine, a very sacred Goddess number. The Norse called the *valknut* the Knot of the Slain because of its association with the Norns and the Valkyries.





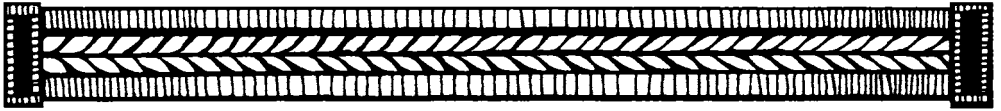
Three rings were used in medieval rituals to invoke the Fate goddesses. In Britain, girls used to pass bread crumbs three times through three rings to invoke a vision of future husbands.

Magickal Meaning: a good time to do spellwork. A cycle of balance where everything flows. Blessings from the Goddess.



## End Notes

1. After the Greeks changed from matriarchy to patriarchal control, the fathers could decide not to keep a child because it was a girl or because it was sickly in some way. Then the child was forcibly taken from the mother and exposed on some hillside to die.
2. Turville-Petre, E.O. G. *Myth & Religion of the North*.
3. Graves, Robert. *The Greek Myths*.
4. The Sacred Trinity began with Goddess religions and was later stolen by patriarchal groups, especially the Christians.
5. Davidson, H.R. Ellis. *Gods & Myths of the Viking Age*.



## Discovering Past Life Influences

**W**hat we learned, suffered, or enjoyed in past lives still influences us in our existence today. Sometimes these influences can be discovered through meditation or shamanic journeys. Other times we simply do not know where to start, or we need confirmation that we are on the right track.

The following simple divinatory symbols and the layout are not meant to answer ordinary questions. They will only give you clues to underlying past life influences. You will have to go beyond this in meditation or shamanic journey to discover details.

Only major cultural points are covered by these symbols. The seeker will have to work backward through time to discover the historical period which has meaning for her. The past life influences affecting each life may be consistent or some may change, depending upon the situation in which the questioner finds herself. Not even the most dramatic past life affects us in everything all the time.

There are actually two sets of cards in past life influences: one for life in a culture, the other for the intensity of influence. These are best drawn out on poster board or blank tarot cards as it will be easier to add words. If poster board is used,



# Past Lives



Egypt



Middle East



Greece



Rome



Norse



Celts



Scandinavia



Australia



Russia



Balkans



Spain



France



India



Tibet



China



Germany



Japan



Africa



England



Scotland



Ireland



Polynesia



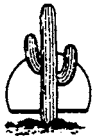
Aztec



Maya



Inca



Mexico



S. America



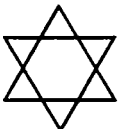
N. America



Christian



Moslem



Hebrew



Atlantis



Lemuria



Karma



turn the life cards upside-down and mix thoroughly; then randomly draw out cards and place them in the proper places. Mix the intensity cards and draw one for each life card. If you use blank tarot cards, the two decks are shuffled separately and dealt out. There are thirty-four life cards and twenty-one intensity cards.

The intensity cards have three for each of the following: Negative, Positive, Mild Negative, Mild Positive, Extreme Negative, Extreme Positive, Neutral. After the layout of the life cards, draw an intensity card to go with each life-card, again beginning at the left.

The layout is quite simple: five life cards laid out in a horizontal line, beginning at the left. Card one: Material; how you react to prosperity and whether or not you have difficulty obtaining material goals or feeling worthy when you do reach them. Card two: Physical; health, possible physical deformities or weaknesses to certain diseases and illnesses. Card three: Emotional; what causes emotional upheavals in certain situations faster than in others. Card four: Mental; certain talents and abilities. Card five: Spiritual; how you perceive the spiritual, how you react to it, and what interests you most in this area.

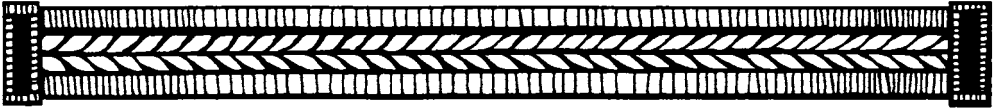
By reading the combination of these two deck layouts, you can begin to come to grips with past life influences which, up until this time, may have eluded your notice or baffled you because you just could not put your finger on where the problem originated.

When a powerful past life influence is discovered from a certain culture, it can be helpful to meditate on the symbol representing that life. This can take from several days to several weeks before you even begin to understand how strong an impact that life made on you. If the influence was negative, you need to work on releasing its hold on your present life. If it was positive, it is helpful to recall as much detail as possible in order to reinforce its power.

It is always interesting to know where you have lived before. However, such knowledge is of little or no use unless it can be applied in a practical way to the present life. Track down your “personal family tree” and learn how you went about creating the present you.







## Dreams

**E**very ordinary person dreams when she or he sleeps. Scientists have discovered that if we do not dream, because of the use of drugs or sleep-deprivation for example, we can become disoriented, distracted, and even nearly schizophrenic during our waking time. Dreaming appears to be essential to a healthy mind.

However, without determination and practice, dreams can be elusive once we are awake. In fact, many people believe they do not dream at all because they have not trained themselves to remember their dreams.

Dreams are not as abstract as we have been led to believe they are. A little weird sometimes, but not abstractions. Dreams are the subconscious mind's way of communicating with the conscious mind. As the subconscious mind uses symbols instead of words to communicate, dreams are generally symbolic of something. The subconscious mind uses metaphors, sometimes in the wildest possible way, to get our attention.

This is why we experience dreams with our senses, rather than unemotionally watch them. The subconscious mind involves us in an emotional way. Some people dream in color, others mix in sound and smell. Still other people dream mostly in



visual images. However we experience our dreams, we are rarely emotionally detached.

If the subconscious mind feels that we cannot emotionally endure to be shown troubling parts of a problem, it will often symbolically present part of the action but delete the toughest parts. When we accept the first actions we are shown in dreams, then the dream will later expand to include the rest.

Dreams can give you faith in your ability to handle a problem or expand a certain talent. Dreams can provide answers. By thinking about a certain thing you want solved just before you go to sleep, you program your subconscious mind to send up solutions. The trick is not to dwell on the problem to the extent that you cannot go to sleep.

Although dreams are intensely personal, they are also connected with the superconscious mind, that part of the mind which ties us to all other humans, past and present. If you find someone reliable with whom you can share your dreams, you will find that they too experience very similar dream-images.

The symbols which often arise in dreams are similar to those found in the ancient Goddess Mysteries. This occurs even if the person has no prior knowledge of old myths, symbols, and religions.<sup>1</sup> This information is tapped through the superconscious mind, which has access to everything ever known to humankind. All myths use symbols to express sacred unending truths necessary to the spiritual well-being of humans. Even patriarchal war on the Goddess religion could not destroy their essential and neverending spiritual meaning; the best they could do was to try to transfer the symbols from Goddess to a god.

Goddess symbols are becoming more frequent in the dreams of women. This is because the Goddess is vital to the restoration of female dignity and power; Her message, through the dream state, is urging women as a whole to seek Her and the ancient paths of Mystery.

This can be confusing to women, as, in one way or another, all women are mourning their separation from Her. We are suffering the results of centuries of acquiescence to male control. To end this deep sadness and lack of self-ness, we must allow ourselves to mourn our loss of the Great Mother in whatever way feels best to us. Then we must release that sorrow, seek the Goddess once more, and move on to greater things. Even if we as women do this quietly, without any public notice, we are creating a spark of ecstatic fire that will leap from heart to heart, encouraging and empowering our sisters. Every Goddess ritual we do, every Goddess-inspired magick we perform, shouts the message across the etheric realms. It cannot be stopped or destroyed by patriarchal resentment.

In order for women to step into their rightful role, with strength and courage, we need to begin by listening to our dreams. To do this, a woman needs to keep a private dream journal. Get yourself a spiral-bound notebook, or if you really plan





to do this long-term, get a beautiful blank, bound book. Record all the details of each night's dreams in this journal.

Many people say they do not dream, or they cannot remember their dreams. Everyone dreams; most just do not make an effort to recall them. It takes determination and practice, but you can train yourself to remember dreams. Some people recommend that you keep a pen and pad by the bed and record the dream as soon as you awake, regardless of the time of night. This is fine if your bed-partner does not mind the light on, and if you can write without glasses. I try to stay awake long enough to think over the main parts of the dream, then write it down first thing in the morning. It is amazing what you can remember if you just review the high points for a few minutes.

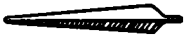
The subconscious mind, which has control of the images in dreams, does not understand words, so it puts the message into symbols and actions. These images and actions are tailored to each individual by her own subconscious mind. That is why so few dream books are any help at all. By recording your dreams, you will begin to see a pattern in the symbolic images and form your own interpretations. However, there are a few symbols which appear to be universal in interpretation. For example, mud and manure represent money or prosperity. Beware of dream books, for their interpretations can be misleading. Such books say that dogs in dreams are good, but cats are bad. I personally prefer cats, so that interpretation is wrong for me.

Much of your dreaming time is taken up with the subconscious mind trying to help you sort out and solve everyday problems. With a little practice, you will be able to immediately know this type of dream.

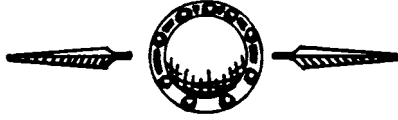
Other dreams are totally different. They deal with spiritual growth and/or prophecies. Chapter 19, Goddess Symbols, will help you to interpret many dreams about your spiritual growth. The Goddess symbols will also help you to understand images you may see in meditation or shamanic journeys.

Prophetic dreams come and go at some unknown schedule. This type of dream is vivid, usually in full color, and you are not confused or frightened during the dream, regardless of what you are seeing. When I have this kind of dream, I date it in the journal and wait for it to happen. Often I know exactly what will happen and where it will occur, but no time is given. I have found a consistent pattern in prophetic dreams of large disasters. My dream will occur about nine months before the actual event takes place. As a female, this is a logical timetable, for the female body in birth responds to the nine-month period of time. And prophetic dreaming is a kind of birth.

Keeping a dream journal, and attempting to communicate with your subconscious mind through the interpretation, is important for a woman. This activity helps her to clear out subconscious garbage and accept her psychic side. As you

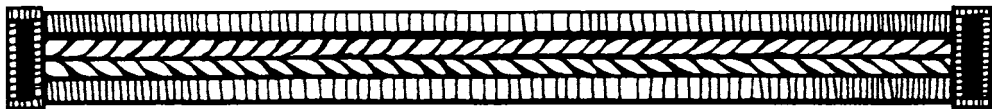


make decisions, grow and change, so will the quality and content of your dreams grow and change. This journal will not only become a record of your dream-life; it will show you the patterns of your subconscious attitude toward your life in general.



## End Notes

1. Harding, M. Esther. *Woman's Mysteries: Ancient & Modern.*



## Woman Magick

**M**agick through spellwork and charming is really learning how to channel emotional energy into the proper paths in order to create a desired manifestation or change an outcome. Magick can only come about through contact with and proper use of the right brain. Science has already accepted alchemy in the form of chemistry and physics, and psychiatry has tried to take over the interpretation of dreams. Only magick remains unaccepted by the scientific community at this time. I sincerely hope that magick is never considered legitimate by scientists, for then practicing it would require a degree, a license, and be unavailable to the common person.

Magick is really finding the crucial event-threads of a certain energy pattern concerning an event you want changed. Through spellwork and charms, the magician applies gentle pressure to that crucial point until she gets the energy to flow into a new path. Naturally, magicians do not think in these terms when they are practicing magick; they concentrate upon raising energy, forming it mentally into a specific manifestation, and releasing it to create the desired effect.



Women have special needs which are often not dealt with from a feminine viewpoint in magick.<sup>1</sup> Because so many women are trying to root out and destroy the old patriarchal programming within their own minds and souls, their needs and desires are approached from a much different angle than those of men. For instance, the usual spells for changing their luck, and gaining prosperity or a better job will do little good unless they also get rid of the programmed feelings that they do not deserve a break.

The first thing almost every woman must deal with is changing her view of herself, her rights, and her abilities. This is vital to positively working woman-magick. If a woman believes she is being selfish, for instance, in spelling for a better life, she most certainly will not get what she spelled for. Women, in particular, have had it pounded into their heads, indeed into their very beings, that to want something for yourself is selfish and sinful.

Set aside a private time when you will not be disturbed. Prepare a little altar with a mirror, a cup of water, a little salt, a glass of juice or wine, and a white candle. Wear something which makes you feel nice, or go to the altar in the nude.

Light the white candle and sit or kneel before the altar. Whichever position you choose, be sure you can see yourself clearly in the mirror. Say:

*Loving Goddess, Great Mother, I need your help. Let me see You within me. Show to me the reality of Your Goddess-spark within my body. Reveal to me Your great love, that I might learn to love myself just as I am.*

Now look at yourself in the mirror. Listen to the thoughts that run through your mind. Keep looking at yourself in the mirror. Every time a negative or critical thought surfaces, answer it. For example, you might hear, "You are too fat. You are not really pretty. You could be a better mother, wife, daughter." These types of programmed negative thoughts are endless, arising from years (centuries) of being told you are never good enough regardless of what you do. **DO NOT ACCEPT THEM!**

Talk back to the mirror. Say, "My shape and size are just right. The Goddess comes in all shapes and sizes. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and I see myself as beautiful. I am a good mother, wife, daughter, whatever. I do my very best in trying circumstances and less than perfect environment. No one has the right to criticize me and try to make me over into their ideal and mold!"

Keep at this conversation until you feel your power as an individual woman, your right to be who you are and how you are. Pull that power around you like a blanket and feel the warmth of the Goddess.

Some of the criticisms may be true, especially if you are involved in drugs, alcohol, mental or physical abuse of others, or affairs. These you can promise yourself to do something positive about; be sure that you follow through.

Sprinkle a little salt into the cup of water, saying:





*I come from the womb of the Goddess and some day to Her I will return.  
Her salty blood and bloody womb declare Her to be the Creatrix of all.  
I am made in Her image. My blood and my womb bear Her salt.  
She is within me.*

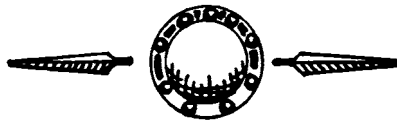
Dip the forefinger of your power hand into the water. Place a drop of the salt-water on the center of your forehead, on your lips, and over your womb.

Raise the glass of juice and say:

*My heart rejoices for I am a Goddess-daughter, child of the Mother of all.  
With pride, I say that I am a woman! I am the Goddess in miniature!  
And She loves me!*

Raise your glass in a toast to your image in the mirror. Drink the juice and talk to your image in positive words. When you are finished with your conversation, extinguish the candle.

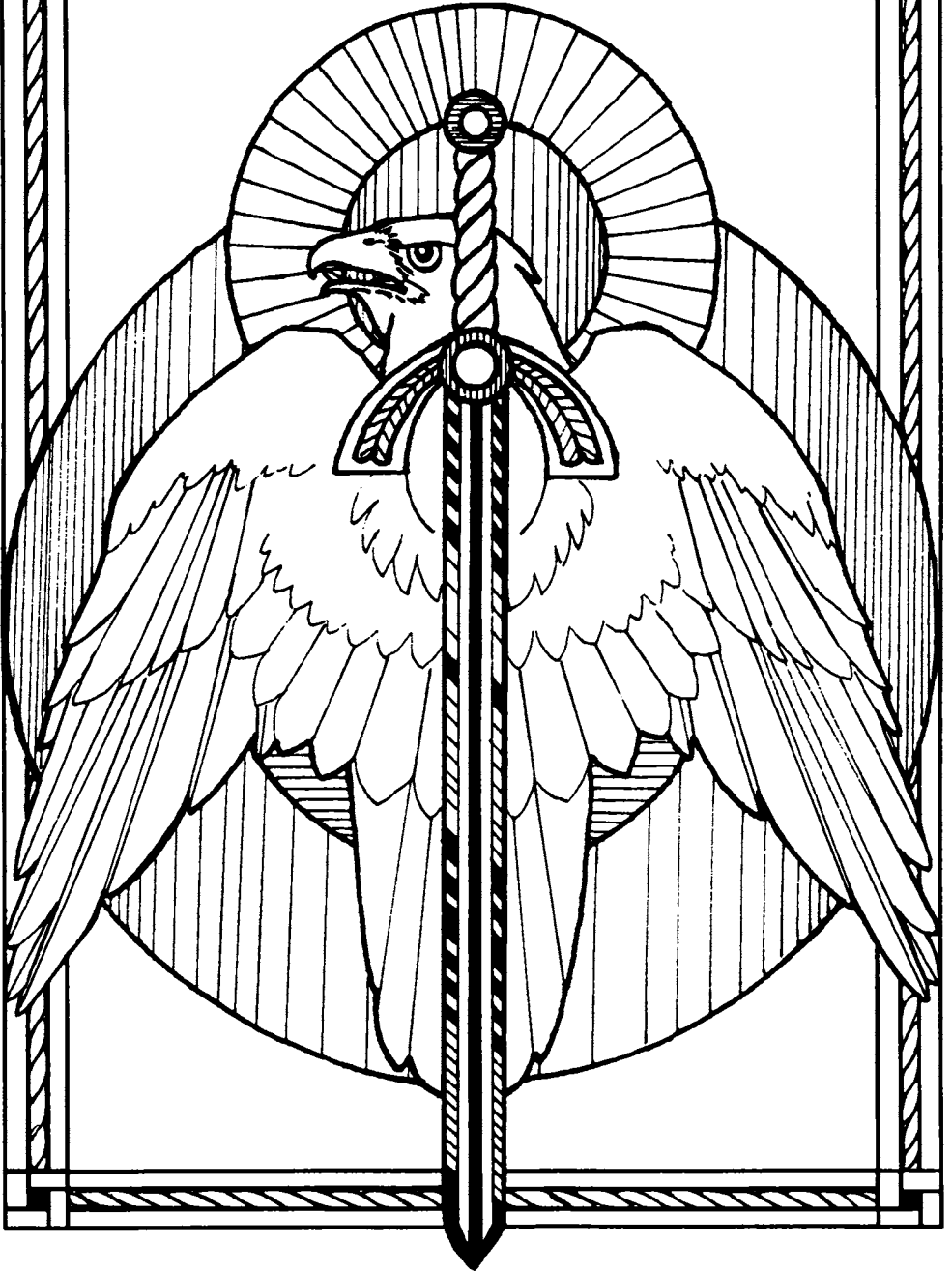
You may find it necessary to perform this little ritual more than once until you can feel comfortable looking at yourself in the mirror. Keep trying until you can look deep into your own eyes and smile with happiness. You have every right to be proud of who you are and your limitless potential for what you can become as a woman. You are special!



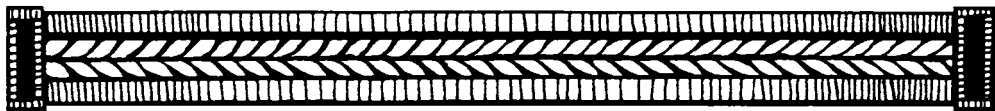
## End Notes

1. Books by Z. Budapest are some of the best for helping women with their own special rituals.

Feather & Sword Today





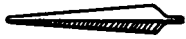


## Walking the Path of the Warrior

**W**omen have forgotten that their lives are meant to have five areas of growth: that of the Teacher, the Healer, the Visionary, the Warrior, and the Priestess. This growth is supposed to extend beyond the physical, into the emotional, mental, and spiritual parts of life. Patriarchy approves of the Teacher-Mother aspect where women expend their energy as wives and mothers. Teaching has been the one profession where women have been encouraged.

Women have had to fight to get into the field of the Healer. Although women were the first healers, discovering what herbs and procedures worked, men later decided (after they stripped women of this profession) that women were not intelligent enough to be doctors. For a great many years women were denied the education necessary for medicine and the right to enter medical school.

Throughout history, women have been the great visionaries of each culture. Even after patriarchy became powerful, women visionaries guided the male leaders, predicting the outcome of decisions and battles, coming natural catastrophes, and



passing on messages from the Goddess (disguised under the name “god”). The training of female visionaries was finally condemned; men did not want women to communicate with or worship the Goddess.

Patriarchy strongly condemned and discouraged the area of female Warrior. The excuse still given is that women must be protected, must not be placed in danger. It does not seem to matter that the greatest danger to women comes from the males closest to them in everyday life. The real reason is that history shows women to be skilled warriors, much more ferocious in protection of their children and land than men. Women do not mess around posturing and idly shouting threats; they will do what is necessary, then get back to the business of creating a peaceful atmosphere for their families. The Romans were quite blunt in stating that they would rather face the Celtic men (whom they considered to be very fierce warriors) than be confronted by the Celtic women.

The aspect of woman as Priestess was the area of women’s rights that patriarchy went after with a vengeance. Being a Priestess was equated with the knowledge of magick, and magick equals power. Under the patriarchal cultures, especially under the Christians, Moslems, and Hebrews, the role of Priestess was destroyed. Under no circumstances must women be allowed to regain that power. Any woman who held to her right to be a Priestess was termed a “witch,” and patriarchy established laws which made witchcraft a crime, usually punishable by death. After all, the Priestesses knew the old laws for women: that a woman had the right to own property, control her reproductive system, choose whatever mate or mates suited her, give her name to her children, pursue any craft that interested her (this included being a warrior, blacksmith, and boat-builder), practice magick, and worship the Goddess.

In order for a woman to realize her spiritual potential, she must re-establish her link with the Goddess and the five areas of growth. She is not complete unless she does this. Women can easily understand the areas of teaching, healing, and visionary; we do these things everyday in a natural way. Even the aspect of Priestess is understood and desired by many women, whether in the Pagan community or those fighting the orthodox churches for the role.

However, the role of Warrior conjures up images of battlefields and turns off most women. They have forgotten that the Warrior is inside each woman and is a natural part of her also. The Warrior fights the rapist and harasser, the person who threatens her children. The Warrior surfaces when there is inequality in jobs, housing, education, applying for a loan, or getting a male doctor to take your complaints seriously. It is the Warrior who replies “I have a right!” when some male says “You’re a woman. You can’t do that.” It is the Warrior who is now surfacing in women who are filled with suppressed rage over centuries of domination and discrimination against their sex. They no longer buy into the doormat theory when it comes to the mistreatment, harassment, and abuse of women and children. They





have learned how to release the Valkyrie within, to express their outrage and anger, and not feel guilty about it.

Acknowledgement of the right and power of the Warrior aspect is actually the first step to taking back women's power and preparing a woman for re-connecting with the Goddess. Women must become so outraged and determined that they rise up and say to all men: "Enough! I will be whole. I will worship the Goddess. I will never again allow any man to abuse, dominate, or control me!" Then women must follow through and rebuild their power through the Goddess.

The Warrior aspect is needed in order to rebuild women's awareness of the Goddess and the Goddess-spark within each woman, for the Goddess is not all sweetness and light. She is also the Lady of Battles, Queen of Death and the Underworld. No human comes into this world or leaves it except through the Crone aspect of the Goddess. The Hindus say that humans must love all aspects of the Goddess before they can get off the karmic wheel. That means we must understand the importance of and love the Crone as well as the Maiden and the Mother. We must learn how to call upon the inner Warrior, the Valkyrie, whenever Goddess religions are threatened by physical laws, or more subtle aggression. Women need to re-learn how to invoke that inner Warrior aspect of themselves and use it.

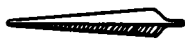
Being a Warrior does not mean a woman becomes an aggressive, obnoxious person, imitating undesirable traits. It means she is willing to defend whatever part of her life requires defending. We must no longer depend upon men to undertake our defense; male desires for women and what they should be and do are not our desires and goals. We must learn to defend ourselves, singly and as a group. Only in this way can women bring sanity and dignity back to themselves and into the world.

When one thinks of Valkyries, they are immediately identified as Odhinn's Choosers of the Slain, the female warrior-attendants of that Norse god. We think of them as Otherworld beings who rode in the air over battlefields. However, history records that certain human females were Valkyries, giving rise to the strong possibility that these women were actually warrior-priestesses. Since Odhinn was known to be a man's god, the Valkyries were obviously not originally connected with him. Freyja was Queen of the Valkyries as well as Mistress of Love and Magick. Like the *disir*, who also belonged to her and carried swords, the Valkyries should be classed as Freyja's priestesses.

Among the North Germanic tribes, the goddess Holda or Bertha, the same goddess as Hel, was considered to be the leader of the Wild Hunt. She was accompanied by her hounds and the Valkyries.<sup>1</sup> This legend may have its beginnings in the physical *disir*, human priestesses, who rode out in the night to exact retribution on offenders against the law and women.

In Old English, the Valkyries were called *waelceasig*, *waelcyrge*, or, as on an inscription found at Hadrian's Wall in northern England, the *alasiagae*; the equivalent in Icelandic was *valkyrja*. Tradition says there were either nine (a Moon num-





ber) or thirteen (a feminine mystical number) Valkyries. Nine and thirteen are ideal numbers for group workings of Witchcraft and magick.

Descriptions in the Norse poems and prose picture the Valkyries as helmeted women with spears crowned with flames and mounted on flying horses whose manes dropped dew or hail. These warrior-women were death angels, swan-women, mare-women, and were associated with horses and wolves. One of the earliest Old Norse poems, *Hrafnsmal*, is a dialogue between a raven and a Valkyrie. Sometimes they were called *oskmeyjar* (wish-women). Another word for Norse warrior women was *sigewif*, or victory-women. The Celts knew of Valkyries by the name of Shield Women.

The Germans called certain warrior women Idisi; they said these physical women could bind or loose fetters (a type of curse), hold back the enemy, change the course of battle (fate), answer to spells to accomplish these tasks, ride through the air (astral travel?), and assume animal forms, the same traits attributed to the Valkyries.

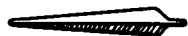
In both *Havamal* and *Ynglinga Saga*, these traits are mentioned, although the fetters appear to be those of the mind rather than of the body. The war-fetter (*herfjoturr*) mentioned is not battle panic, but more of a kind of paralysis of the mind, such as experienced in a nightmare or during an emotional crisis.

The Valkyrie assuming of animal form is not the same as the *berserker*. The *berserkers* were men who belonged to an Odhinn cult. Once these men took on the animal form, they exhibited little, if any, humanity. They fought without armor, bit their shields, were impervious to wounds. Fire and weapons could not stop them unless they were dealt an instant death-blow. They either wore the skin of the animal whose form they took and/or had the image of that animal on their helmets. The *Hrafnsmal* called them wolf-coats.

The shape-shifting Valkyrie, however, never lost control. Sometimes she took her shamanic animal familiar's form in order to astral travel incognito. Other times she assumed the animal shape to carry messages to other psychics, pass on a warning or message to humans who might otherwise not heed her words, or gather information. By working closely with her familiar, the Valkyrie learned to incorporate the animal's traits into her own personality, such as the sharp eyesight of the falcon, the strength of the bear, the cleverness of the crow.

The Valkyries were often said to appear in dreams or visions as a warning. An example of such a dream vision is recorded in *Njals Saga*, a vision which was said to have occurred before the Battle of Clontarf in Dublin in 1014 CE. This poem, known as the *Darradarljod* or Spear-Lay, describes a group of Valkyries as weaving on a loom made of men's entrails and weighted with severed heads. Into a background of gray spears they were weaving a pattern of crimson blood. When the Valkyries left, six rode to the north, six to the south. This depicts one aspect of the Valkyries: that it was they who helped work out the fate of humans, like the *disir* and the Norns.





Other aspects of these priestesses are described as well. Brynhild, as Sigdrifa (Victory-Giver), was a Valkyrie. In the *Sigdrifumal*, she initiated Sigurd into runic wisdom. If the person of Sigdrifa was in actuality a priestess, then this teaching makes sense, as would the description of the Valkyries casting binding spells during battle.

Nine and thirteen are sometimes given as the number of Valkyries in a band, but several sources suggest that the number was limitless. Some of the Valkyrie names found in old records are Mist, Skogul (Rager), Hildir (warrior), Hlok (Lock), Herfjotter (War-fetter), Prudr, Skeggjold, Hrist, Goll, Geirolul, Randgridr, Radgridr, Reginleifr, Hjorthrimul, Sanngridr, Svipull, Gudr, Gondull, Herja, Geiravor, Skuld, Geirondul, Randgnif, Geirskogull, Hrund, Geirdriful, Tanngnidr, Sveid, Pogn, Hjalmbrimull, Prima, Skalmold, Sigrun, Kara, Svafa, and Brynhildir.

The skalds (Norse bards) used *kennings* (a word phrase which meant something else) in their poetry. Some of these directly referred to the Valkyries. “Fire of the Valkyries” often meant a sword and “the Valkyries’ magick song” a battle. “To feed the ravens” meant to kill enemies; the Valkyries were connected with ravens.

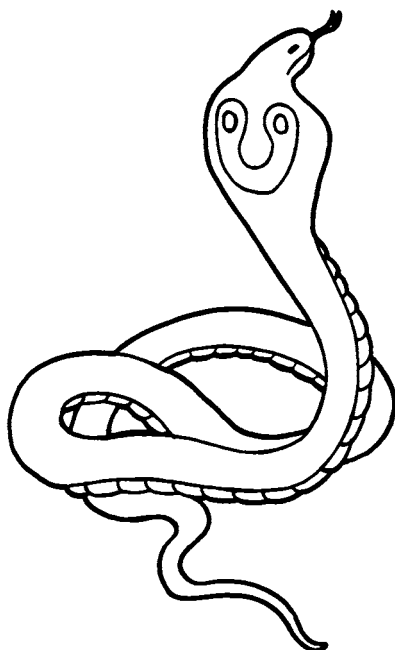
Those women who have a natural fierceness of spirit and determination, or those who develop such a spirit, will find in the Valkyrie way a new opening for magickal and spiritual growth. The ancient Norse peoples gave equal rights to both men and women. Outspoken women, some of whom fought beside the men in battle, were common. Using the power of the Valkyries to take charge of your life, stand up for yourself, and develop a more rounded, power-charged personality is a positive step for any woman.

You begin discovering your own inner Valkyrie by creating and projecting an aura of confidence and no nonsense. Pay close attention to the way you react to male criticism and undesirable behavior. Do you keep quiet, nod your agreement, and fall into line? Ask yourself why you are doing this. Is it expedient, or are you falling into old habit patterns? Expediency to keep a job you badly need, or to keep a lover or spouse from physically abusing you makes sense—at least until you can change the circumstances in your favor by getting another job or dumping the abusive spouse. If, however, you are simply acquiescing just to keep the peace and do not want to make a painful decision, you are seriously harming yourself on mental, emotional, and spiritual levels.

To notify your family and friends that you’re building a new inner you, releasing your Valkyrie self, you might make and display a “don’t tread on me” flag. When they ask what it’s for, and they will, tell them it signals that things are changing. You will no longer be the docile doormat and punching bag for unnecessary and hurtful criticism. They can like it or not, but you will become a whole person.

When you feel that they are getting the message, you might decide to put away the flag. However, there will be times when you need to hang this flag out





*Don't Tread On Me*

as a reminder when old ingrained habits to bow down are coming back. Be fair, but do not allow patriarchal-motivated game-playing with your mind to gain a new foothold.

The “don’t tread on me” flag can be as elaborate as a fully colored flag made of cloth or felt, or as simple as a poster drawn with the symbol (see the illustration). The fact that you make it yourself imbues it with your determination and resolve to make important changes in your life. It can become your rallying point when you encounter difficult times. It can be a personal symbol that you have released the Valkyrie within and are following the Goddess.

The cobra pictured on the banner has long been a sacred animal in Goddess religions. It symbolizes the rise of spiritual power within, the Kundalini which lies deep inside the lowest chakra. It is a fitting symbol, and warning sign, for women to use in expressing their determination to develop their female-ness.

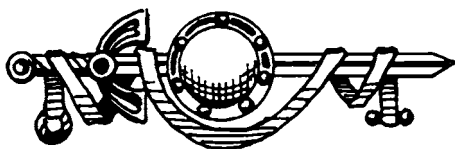
Finding the Valkyrie within, accepting her as she is, and releasing her can run the gamut from easy to difficult, depending upon how you react to the patriarchal image of women. If you are already standing your ground and fighting back, you may encounter her with “I know you. I see you every day.” If you are struggling to break subconscious patriarchal programming, the encounter may be more shocking. Your Valkyrie may be raging like a berserker with pent-up frustration and anger.

The following meditation will help you meet and come to an understanding with your inner Valkyrie. If she is raging from captivity, it will probably take more



than one journey to meet her before you feel comfortable in setting her free. If you are sincerely working on reshaping your life into a Goddess-daughter pattern, each journey will find your Valkyrie less angry than before. However your Valkyrie appears, greet her with love and compassion, for she is part of you.

Prepare for this meditation by finding a secure, quiet place. Soft instrumental music will help to cover background noises. Make sure no one will disturb you while meditating; this includes pets. Silence the telephone, and hang a “do not disturb” sign on the door. If you light a white candle, be very certain that it cannot be turned over accidentally. And if you use incense, set it far enough away that it does not make you have trouble breathing. Meditation is easier if you do not have bright lights in your face, so turn the lights low or draw the curtains.



## Facing the Valkyrie Within

Sit in a comfortable position, but do not cross your arms or legs. Crossing your arms or legs not only interrupts the energy flow set in motion by the meditation, but it will cause numbness when you get back. Close your eyes and visualize a brilliant white light surrounding you. Strengthen this light by seeing it growing larger, until it completely fills the room. Take several slow, deep breaths and draw the light inside your body.

Relax your body, beginning with the feet and legs and ending with the head. Mentally tell each body-part to relax, relax, relax. Spend extra time on the neck, shoulders, and jaw, as tension is the greatest in those areas. It is best to do this in a soft manner as being too determined only increases tension.

Now visualize yourself standing before a well. This is not the Well of Urd, because you do not want to pollute that place with your dumping. Call up all the negative situations and people in your life which are causing you problems. Drop them into the well and walk away.

You are standing in a small meadow facing a thick grove of fir trees. Before you is a path, narrow but well-worn. You follow it into the grove of trees. Little shafts of sunlight fall through the heavy limbs. The scent of the trees is rich around you. You touch the trunk of a tree beside the path and feel its rough, moss-dotted bark. Birds are singing high above you. As you walk along, you begin to notice little patches of wild flowers here and there under the trees.



Soon the path leads out of the trees and into another open spot. To one side of this clearing is a Norse long-house with a thin curl of smoke rising from the smoke-hole in its roof. The doors at each end stand open to the warm day. On the other side of the clearing stands a ring of rough-hewn stones with a tiny spring beside them. You continue to follow the path across the meadow and to the door of the house.

As you enter the long-house, you see movement in the semi-darkness inside. There is the glint of light on sword and armor as a figure rises to meet you.

“Enter,” a voice says. “I have waited long for you to acknowledge my existence.”

As the woman comes to stand before you, you see that she is a Valkyrie. She wears armor on her upper body, leather trousers and boots below. There are heavy, wide arm-bands on her upper arms and wrists, a winged helmet on her head. In one hand she holds a long shining sword, in the other a *labrys*.

She motions for you to come farther into the long-house. Spread over the benches beside the central fire-pit are beautiful furs and woven coverings. Sleeping shelves line the walls, chests beneath them. A long table with benches sits near the other end of the building. The two of you sit beside the low fire facing each other.

Do not expect that your Valkyrie will be blonde and blue-eyed. Valkyries come in all races, with a wide range of skin tones and hair and eye colors. Look at your Valkyrie closely. See her for what she truly is. Is she calm and in control? Or is she tense, holding back frustration and anger?

Ask her what name she uses, and do not be surprised if it is a name like Sword-Wielder or Axe Maiden, or such. If she seems tense and holding back anger, ask her why. At this point, you may get some startling answers, some not to your liking. If you have been restraining her for years, she may burst out like a berserker, screaming and ranting, swinging her sword and axe. You are in no danger, for the Valkyrie is closer to you than your shadow. Stand your ground and ask what you can do to help set her free in a positive way. Get her to talk about what is causing this rage, and most of all, seriously listen to what she says.

This is a crucial point in the meeting with your Valkyrie, so take as long as is necessary for this conversation. Hang in there until she is finished and begins to quiet. Express your feelings about what she shared with you. Welcome her into your life, and ask her advice about any problems you are facing.

On a few occasions, the Valkyrie has been forced into exile for so long that it will take several meditations and conversations before she stops screaming and raging. You need to acknowledge, not only her existence and right to exist, but your own responsibility for locking her away. Call her your special sister-friend, your protector and guide. When she is calm, and you have accepted her as she is, request that she help you to become a Valkyrie.

If she agrees to this request (she may ask you to wait until another visit), go with her outside, across the meadow to the ring of standing stones. There at the spring,





she tells you to strip out of your clothes. You do this as she temporarily lays aside her weapons. The wind brushes across your skin, the grass is soft under your bare feet. The Valkyrie fills a silver pitcher at the spring and gently pours the water over your body. When you are completely wet, she sets the pitcher aside and again picks up her sword and axe. She motions you to follow her into the circle of tall stones.

Once you are inside the ring, you notice a strange sensation in the air around you. No wind blows through this circle, no sounds intrude from the forest outside. There is complete stillness. The air seems almost to crackle with energy as you move to stand beside the Valkyrie at the little cairn of stones in the center of the ring.

The warrior-woman raises both hands to the heavens, the sword and axe glinting in the sunlight. She tips back her head and chants to the Goddess. When she finishes, she strikes the altar-cairn with the flat of her labrys. Blue sparks fly from the stones, followed by the igniting of a column of brilliant white fire. This column of fire expands until it engulfs the altar-cairn.

“Give yourself to the fire,” the Valkyrie says. “Let the sacred flame of the Goddess fill you. Pledge yourself to the Mother of all, for only through Her can you be born again into a new life. If you would become a Valkyrie in your own right, and if you wish to unite yourself with me, you must go forward and lay both hands upon Her flaming altar.”

The flames appear to be very real. You can hear their roar and crackle. You move forward into the rolling column of fire and place both hands upon the altar. You are surprised to find the stones cool, not hot. The flames do not burn you or cause you any discomfort. You breathe in the white flame and feel its renewing energy billowing through your body, mind, and spirit.

As you look upward into the towering column of flame, you see the Goddess. Her voice sounds clear in your mind as She asks for your commitment to Her and Her spiritual path. When you have answered, She speaks to you of your present life, giving predictions of the future and advice about following your newly chosen path. Be very certain that you are not fooling yourself by hearing what you want to hear, instead of the truth from the Goddess. As the Goddess touches the top of your head, the column of white flame is sucked into the heavens, leaving you standing beside the rough stones of the altar-cairn.

The Valkyrie watches you with intent eyes as you look around the circle of stones. You are surprised to see that the Sun has gone down. The sky is dark, and the Full Moon is just above the horizon.

If you did not make the commitment to the Goddess, the Valkyrie will speak with you a few moments, then show you the path that leads back to your physical body, telling you that she will be waiting when you feel strong enough to return. If you made the commitment to the Goddess, the Valkyrie will now clothe you in a long robe and give you a special friend-gift. She will present to you your personal



astral sword and helmet. On the top of the helmet will be a metal image of your animal familiar; this can be any mammal, bird, aquatic creature, or reptile. This familiar will guide, help, and protect you whenever you are on an astral journey or meditating. Its appearance in journeys and dreams are clues to important happenings.

As the two of you leave the circle of standing stones, you hear crickets in the grass, the hoot of an owl in the forest beyond. The gentle evening breeze carries the scent of the trees and the smell of the wood fire in the long-house through the clearing.

The Valkyrie sets aside her weapons and hugs you. "We came from the Mother as one being," she tells you. "I am glad that we will be one again. I will teach you to stand up for yourself, but I also will teach you to open your mind and soul to the powers of the Mother's magick. This was a good day to be reborn, sister-friend." She hugs you again. "Learn to listen to your inner power, and be a wise Valkyrie. A true warrior-woman trusts her instincts and inner knowledge, defending herself and her sisters whenever and wherever it is necessary. A Valkyrie does not strut with arrogance, but walks proudly with confidence in her female-ness and right to freedom of her body, mind, and spirit. When circumstances demand justice which humans are not giving, then the Valkyrie rides forth with the Wild Hunt in ritual and magick, weaving her spell-threads to capture and confine evil-doers. You now join the band of warrior-women which stretches back to the dawn of our fore-mothers, and will continue into the far future, as long as women walk this Earth."

You answer her however you feel in your heart. Share with her your hopes and fears, your goals for the future.

When you are finished, you feel a pressing sensation between your eyes and find yourself sliding down a silver beam of moonlight into your physical body.

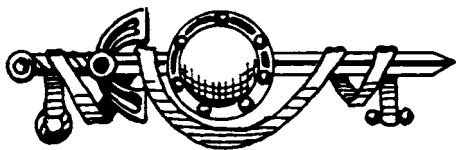
Take a few moments to be quiet and let yourself readjust. Then make notes of your meditation journey. You can repeat this meditation journey to your inner Valkyrie whenever you wish. If you underwent the commitment the first time, you will not repeat that part of the journey again. Each time will be a new adventure.

To fulfill your promise as a reborn Valkyrie, you need to begin by analyzing your personal life and taking definite steps to replace overly passive attitudes and behaviors. Avoid going to extremes and lashing out at every male you meet, chauvinistic or otherwise. If you suppressed your inner Valkyrie for a long time, you may surprise yourself by experiencing times of berserker-like anger. Try to discover who and what in your past created this anger; the person to whom it was directed in the present is only a symbol of someone or something else.

Once you discover the beginning of this rage, and the person or persons involved, visualize her or him standing before you. Feel yourself growing taller and taller until you tower over the culprit. Feel your Valkyrie helmet on your head and your sword in your hand. Look down with disdain and say: "How dare you treat me like that! How dare you treat me as if I have no value just because I am female!"

Raise your sword and bring it down right on the perpetrator of your past distress. You will not be physically hurting them, but she or he will get one heck of a psychic jolt! Then turn your thoughts to the Goddess and let Her bathe you in Her brilliant healing light. Do not waste anymore thought on the person or persons you just put in their place. You have a whole new life-path to follow.

If you want to express your Warrior aspect in ritual, you might consider making crystal tools to use. Michael G. Smith has excellent books on making such tools.<sup>2</sup> These crystal tools and “weapons” are excellent to augment power when doing rituals and spellworking of all kinds, particularly for defense and protection.



## Becoming a Whole Goddess-daughter

Becoming a whole Goddess-daughter is your right, your spiritual inheritance. Females are made in the image of the Goddess. And She is the Creatrix of all things. Women must nurture themselves so we can become a true miniature image of Her. Only by taking control of our lives and destinies can we hope to become more like Her. It is our right, our heritage, our responsibility. No man is going to do it for us.

Feminine responses and responsibilities have always differed from those conceived by males for and about women. Women will be the only ones who can bring about harmony and peace in the world. Their instincts and responsibilities over the centuries have taught them the true value of life. They are the ones who, regardless of minimal “help,” raise the next generation of humans. Women must begin with their sons, teaching them to ignore patriarchal propaganda and evolve into the caring, nurturing males they were meant to be. They must defend feminine rights and protect the younger sisters and daughters, teaching them to stand free of the false female image built by males. Both they and the daughters must learn not to fall for or to be intimidated by the male manipulation and intimidation tactics.

Build a healthy environment for yourself. Begin with your family and friends, before you try to conquer the world. This does not mean going out to violate laws, endanger others, or cause trouble in general. Your environment begins in your own mind and life. Be responsible for your actions. Clean out bad habits. Improve your very personal image of yourself. Then get rid of relationships or friendships which are dragging you down and back into the patriarchal mold.



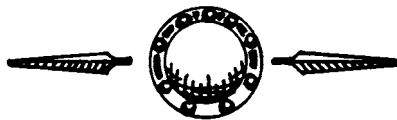
If this sounds harsh, it is. There is an old saying, “If you lie down with dogs, you get up with fleas.” If you are constantly being criticized by so-called friends or a lover, you are leaving yourself in a self-defeating situation. Sooner or later, their attacks, even subtle ones, will wear you down. You will slip right back into the old groove and be what they want you to be. The choice is yours.

Do not be a sucker for “sob” stories. Use common sense. Continual sob stories from a person are simply a manipulative ploy. In order to become a whole Goddess-daughter once again, every woman must personally give up all past negatives in her life and accept full responsibility for what has happened to her. Insist that others do the same. Release old shames, old hurts, and old regrets. By holding onto these, all you do is keep your life filled with negative energy, which in turn draws to you more negative energy. It becomes a vicious cycle. Each person is responsible for breaking that cycle and moving forward into better opportunities.

For thousands of years women have been told who they are only in relationship to men and the needs of others. Women need to be encouraged to consider themselves in a more important light. Men need to look at women with newly opened eyes, to see them as powerful and important, to stop trying to control them and beat them down mentally, if not physically. A strong woman is not a threat to a man who knows and likes himself. Neither will she leave, if he treats her with love and respect. Men would have a very pleasant surprise if they would accept a Goddess-woman, strong in her own right.

This is not to say that women are better than men; they are simply different in a special, unique way. It cannot be said often enough that women are unique, special beings who have a distinct magickal ability from that of men. This magickal ability can compliment female-male magick, and in many areas goes far beyond it into the mystical fields for which we have been denied the maps through male jealousy and interference.

Rejoice that you are a woman, a Goddess-daughter. Revel in the fact that you are a member of a very large, select group (all females) who can and will make a difference in human evolution, beginning with your own little piece of personal turf.



## End Notes

1. These hounds were known to the Welsh Celts as the Cwn Annwn, the hounds of the Underworld god Arawn. In other parts of England, these hounds were called

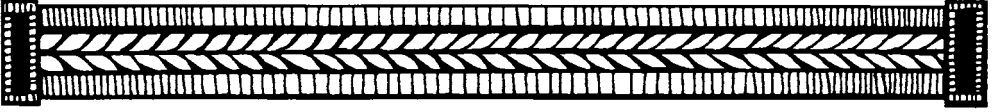


the Yeth Hounds or Gabriel Hounds. They were always associated with the Wild Hunt; the leader was known as Herne the Hunter or even King Arthur. As one can see quite plainly, the Goddess was changed to a god but the hounds and the idea of the Wild Hunt remained.

2. *Crystal Warrior; Crystal Power; Crystal Vision.*



# Ancient Women Religions



## The Old & The New

**I**t is very difficult to find the few remaining clues or scanty details of ancient women-only Mysteries and religions. We know, from the very earliest paintings, statuettes, and engravings, that the Goddess ruled supreme in the beginning. Under the conquest of the patriarchies, She was relegated to a secondary position, if Her functions were not totally usurped by the in-coming male deities.

Following the clues in ancient myths, one can extrapolate backward, from what is known about rituals and the importance still granted to the goddesses, to what were very probably the rituals and beliefs in the previous matriarchal societies.

In the following cultural descriptions, I have eliminated as many male-god references as possible. Most Goddess ritual details have been destroyed or forgotten. What details do remain, I have provided here. Since our present-day cultures are totally different from those thousands of years ago, there is really no wisdom behind trying to authentically resurrect old rituals. Instead, today's women need to take the basic ideas of the old and graft them onto modern Pagan worship. This means that



each individual or group will come up with slightly different, yet effective, Goddess rituals. This is how it should be.

Lest anyone bring up the old patriarchally influenced remark of “Well, that isn’t authentic,” let me point out that all rituals were originally “written” by someone. The Goddess demands growth and movement in Her worship; patriarchy demands static conditions. After all, static conditions are conducive to control, whereas growth and movement are not.

In a few Mysteries, such as the Eleusinian Mysteries and Hindu Tantra, one can find clear evidence of the women allowing the participation of men in an effort to keep the Mystery from being destroyed. As Erich Neumann<sup>1</sup> points out, the Eleusinian Mysteries stand between the matriarchal mysteries intended only for women and the later male-only mysteries, such as that of Mithras. In a society of balance, this is the ideal type of ritual. Unfortunately, this balance is not desired by patriarchal religions, or men in general.

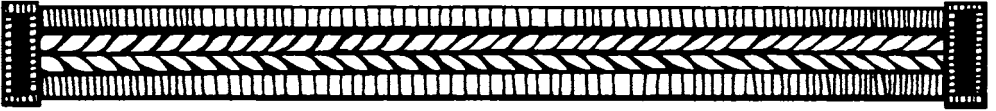
In order to create a counter-balance against the patriarchally controlled religions now dominant in the world, and the patriarchal-conditioned men, women need to re-create the women-only Mysteries, a Goddess religion exclusively for women. It is a matter of feminine spiritual survival.



## End Notes

1. Neumann, Erich. *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype*.





## Lady of the Labyrinth

**T**here are no surviving written records of the history or religions of Crete. What records can be translated seem to be only business accounts and palace record-keeping, with a rare hint about anything else.<sup>1</sup> However, much evidence was left to us in the fantastic wall-paintings, the great palace ruins, and few sculptures of that culture.

At one time, Crete was one of the greatest matriarchal cultures. From its Mediterranean island, this civilization spread knowledge of arts, agriculture, history, writing, and religion throughout the area. The people of Crete were the first civilization of the Aegean to cast art objects in bronze. The Greek writer Plato wrote that women were active in every part of Minoan society, that neither sex dominated the other.

The founders of the Cretan civilization arrived at their island sometime between 4000 and 3000 BCE; evidence points to their possible origin as being in the Black Sea region. The Cretan frescoes all show these people as having coppery-brown skin and dark hair, definitely not related to the fair-haired, blue-eyed Achaeans of Greece.



The Cretans established a successful network of trading throughout the region. They sought gold and other metals which were not found on their island; they especially traded with southern Arabia for incense and myrrh which they used in their rituals. In return, they offered honey, balsamic plants, ladaunum, cedar oil, and other unguents. They produced a special red dye from the kermes insect which lives on the kermes oak; our word carmine comes from the name of this insect. The production of this dye may have been a secret of the priestesses, for the later Roman word *carmina* means a sung spell. And ancient priestesses of the world chanted spells over whatever they made, whether it was medicine, a shaped piece of metal, or a new boat. Yes, women were the first blacksmiths and boat-builders!

Cretan Goddess symbols were already well developed when this culture settled on the island of Crete: the serpent, dove, bull's horns, labyrinth, and *labrys*. Archaeologists know these are matriarchal symbols, for they have been uncovered in such feminine civilizations as Catal Huyuk in Turkey, dating from around 6000 BCE.

Natural disasters, probably earthquakes (accompanied by possible great tidal waves) for which the region is known, finally destroyed this magnificent culture. The looting by patriarchal tribes in the area finished off the matriarchal greatness of Crete.

Originally, the famous Cretan bull was a Moon animal associated with the Goddess. These Cretan bulls were very different from the cattle we know today. They were quite large with wide sweeping horns; they were mostly red and white in color. The bull-leaping pictured in Cretan paintings was part of the Goddess worship. The bulls pictured in these paintings were not meant to be killed. They were sacred animals, and the "dance" done with them was a ritual symbolic of the necessary mating between the Goddess and male energies.

The saying "taking the bull by the horns" may well have come from the early matriarchal worship of the bull as a symbol of the Moon goddess. The priestesses would have had to have total belief in the power of the Goddess to protect them in order to perform any ritual close to an unpredictable bull with sharp horns. Walking or dancing up and grasping a bull by the horns would take a great amount of dedication, courage, forethought, and determination.

Bull horns were synonymous with Goddess consecration in the ancient matriarchal societies. Archaeologists find this use in such wide-spread civilizations as Catal Huyuk in Anatolia (now Turkey) in the seventh millennium BCE, Vinca in Old Europe in the fifth millennium BCE, and Knossos in Crete in the second millennium BCE. In early Sumerian art only the Mother Goddess wore the horned crown; shaped like an upturned crescent Moon, these horns were thought to be conductors of animating energy. Patriarchy changed these horns into phallic symbols.

Priestesses and women figure prominently in Cretan paintings and sculptures, almost to the exclusion of males. We find this same predomination of the Goddess and Her priestesses in the earliest cave paintings. If men did appear, they were in

secondary positions, shown as being much smaller than the women and often dressed as women.

The myth about the Cretan queen's lust for a white bull, the mating of which produced the Minotaur, is a distorted image of the Sacred Marriage. The ancient Cretan kings were considered to be Sun kings, perhaps even Sun priests; the Goddess priestesses represented the powers of the Moon. The mating between a king and a priestess symbolized the necessary joining of the powers of the Sun and the Moon.

The labyrinth, or spiral, is a very ancient Goddess symbol, once used in initiations and spiritual enlightenment rituals. Our word labyrinth comes from the Cretan word *labrys*, a direct reference to the Hall of Double-Axes in the Palace of Knossos (called *labyrinthos*, "the palace of the double-axes") in Crete. Within this Hall, archaeologists uncovered the Cretan Labyrinth. Ancient coins from Crete suggest that the actual labyrinth was designed as a hollow square, with only one entrance which faced the east. A drawing of the Cretan labyrinth is on the ground floor corridor of the Knossos Palace; in its center is a crescent Moon.

The design and use of the labyrinth is much older than Crete. It can be found in Paleolithic and Neolithic cave drawings. To archaeologists, this is sometimes known as the meander. It symbolizes the waters said to be under the Earth and/or the sacred serpent which dwells there. The labyrinth pattern is a spiritual guide to shamanic journeys into the Otherworld.

Paleolithic Goddess worshippers believed that labyrinthine passages leading into caves led into the spiritual Underworld; these caves were used for rebirth initiations. Treading the labyrinth may have been used by priestesses, as well as initiates, in their search for oneness with the Goddess and rebirth into the next step of spirituality. Certain writers, such as Jill Purce,<sup>2</sup> say that the labyrinth's design represents the soul's wandering before and/or after death. When the center is finally reached, the searcher experiences a transformation, which makes it possible to be reborn on the journey back through the labyrinth to the everyday world.

Remnants of this ancient labyrinthine journey are found in the later Crane Dance of Greece and a dance which the Roman writer Virgil called the Game of Troy. Certain children's games are labyrinthine in nature, as is the spiral procession used in modern Wicca.

It is amazing to learn that the spiral form appears spontaneously in certain stages of meditation and to people undergoing the application of ether. The spiral symbolizes the plunge of consciousness into the dark void where consciousness becomes non-being, a necessary step if we are to be reborn. Walking a physical labyrinth, the initiate had ample time to contemplate the spiritual symbols behind the physical form of the initiation.

The *labrys* ("lip"), or double-headed axe, was the central ritual symbol and tool prominent in the Cretan religion, and was carried only by women. We find this same feminine attachment and reverence for the *labrys* in the later Amazonian cul-



tures.<sup>3</sup> It is first found in Paleolithic caves paintings. The *labrys* is symbolic of the female labia at the entrance to the womb and the butterfly, which is connected with rebirth. The double-axe is also associated with the even more ancient hourglass figure of the Goddess. When mounted between cattle horns, the *labrys* was the holiest of Goddess symbols. The matriarchal Cretans made the double-axe in all sizes, from delicate jewelry to nine-foot tall specimens which stood at the ends of altars. This symbol always marked the entrance to Goddess sanctuaries.

The *labrys* was a feminine-only ceremonial weapon, also used by women in agricultural work and battle. In Crete there are absolutely no paintings showing the *labrys* held by a man or a male priest. The two heads symbolized the waxing and waning Moons. The *labrys* design is found on matriarchal murals and mosaics, pottery, seals, and amulets. It was exclusively a symbol of the Great Goddess, until part of its symbolism was later transferred to the Norse god Thor.

The serpent was also a frequent Goddess symbol used in Crete. Snake Goddess statues have been found in great numbers in Cretan ruins; the most commonly known of these statues is a bare-breasted woman with snakes twined around her outstretched arms. It is unclear whether this image represents the Goddess Herself or one of Her priestesses who is filled with Goddess-energy. Sometimes this deity has snake-arms. She is always shown wearing a long tiered dress, spiraling snake-like curls, and a peaked mountain-crown. Sometimes she also has snakes wrapped around her waist or curling in her hair and peering from her headdress. The snake represented the Goddess's ability to be self-fertilizing or self-producing.

At least one Minoan divination center has been directly linked to the snake Goddess Eileithyia/Ilithya (an early form of Dictynna/Artemis), who, besides aiding divination, was called upon during childbirth and was offered honey in Her cave-shrines. In the eastern section of Crete, archaeologists uncovered a small cave-shrine to the Snake Goddess. A small statue of this deity stood on the center of the altar; a tripod hearth, similar to those used in other Cretan Goddess sanctuaries, stood nearby. The vessels found there were decorated with horns and double-axes.

Caves were also used as burial places, not only in Crete but throughout the Mediterranean. These burial caves were connected to underground shrines and temples, with the priestesses performing divinations, burial ceremonies, and caring for mothers giving birth. Any child born in these shrines was said to be a child of the Goddess. These priestesses may well have been the first physicians also. They may have been older priestesses, full of the wisdom gained through their years of service in other capacities; the fact that they were elderly and, in a way, ruled over life and death, would have made them feared and deeply respected.

In the ruins of both Cretan palaces and private homes have been found cave-like rooms with sacred columns; around the bases of these columns were trenches into which libation offerings were poured. The column, cave stalactite, and standing stone (menhir) all had the same symbolic meaning: it represented the Fate God-

dess, the giver of life and death, a symbol of the supporting strength of the Goddess who held everything in its proper place. When there were two pillars set side by side, they symbolized the entrance to the womb, the door of life through which every human enters this world.

Within the great Palace of Knossos, the Throne Room itself has a strange pit or cave-like feature along one side of the room. Several steps lead down into a depression directly below a light shaft. From the decorations and pieces of broken pottery and statuettes, one can easily see that this basin-like area was used to house sacred snakes and to perform special rituals to the cave-loving snake Goddess.

On the lower level of this palace was a special miniature shrine built out of three sacred meteorites. This tiny shrine reminds one of the uncovered dolmens of Europe. On the top of each meteorite was a stone dove. The dove is most definitely a Goddess animal, while the meteorite has been held sacred since humans first discovered that they fell from the sky.

The house shrines, dating from the Middle and Late Minoan periods, also had altars and tripod hearths. Small statues of the Snake Goddess or Her priestesses adorned the altars. Their eyes are round and snake-like, their upraised arms twined with snakes, and still more of these reptiles clinging to their waists. Also found in all shrines of the Cretan Snake Goddess were strange tube vessels with snakes and horns as handles.

Frescoes and seals of the sixteenth century BCE reveal further links between the goddess Dictynna/Eileithyia and a Cretan Nature fertility goddess known as Queen of Mountains and Mistress of Animals. This deity is pictured standing on a mountain and flanked by winged dogs or lions. Dictynna is directly linked to Mount Dicte in Crete.

The symbols of snakes, spiral-shaped eyes, ram's horns, and the labyrinth are all connected. Eyes, shaped like coiled snakes, can be found in the earliest engravings throughout the Mediterranean and into southeastern and western Europe. This inner-coiling spiral represents the power of the Goddess of Life and Death, the path of life spiraling down into physical death followed by the outward spiral into rebirth. The Eye Goddess, first mentioned by that title in 1957,<sup>4</sup> is portrayed with coiling snake-eyes, wide and staring like those of an owl, the brows often joined over a beak.

Bees and their nectar, honey, had an important role in Cretan spiritual thinking. Minoan gems show the ghosts of the dead in the form of bees, hovering around their burial jars. Honey was offered in the temples as food for the dead as well as to the Goddess Herself. Later, the Greeks said that the baby Zeus was hidden on Crete and fed honey by priestesses. This Cretan connection of honey and the souls of the dead may have been the origin of the Greek idea that the gods on Olympus dined on nectar and ambrosia.



The Cretan New Year may have begun shortly after the Summer Solstice, when the great star Sirius rose to conjunct the Sun on July 20.<sup>5</sup> The offering of honey played an important role in the New Year rites of Crete. For forty days before the rising of Sirius, the priestesses gathered honey from the hives they kept in the woods and caves. They then fermented this honey into mead, an intoxicating liquor which was drunk by the women to celebrate the return of the Goddess's daughter with the New Year.

The bee and the bull were symbolically connected, both belonging to the aspect of the Goddess as Regentrix. Even during Neolithic times, an image of the bee goddess is shown on the forehead of a bull. Goddesses, and the priestesses who served them, were called *Melissae* (bees) later in Greece. The Cretan women believed that the voice of the Goddess sounded like the humming of bees. From frescoes we know that the priestesses clashed cymbals during outdoor rituals to attract swarms of bees. It is also possible that the humming, howling sounds made by these priestesses helped to call the bees. The Cretan priestesses believed, as did other matriarchal cultures, that honey (creative energy) came from the Moon (the personal feminine power) and that the hive (the spiritual dwelling place) of the bees (the carriers of this energy) were the stars (spiritual sources).<sup>6</sup>

When the Goddess is pictured on Cretan and Mycenaean seals, She is usually accompanied by one or two female figures. This happens far too often to be coincidence. This may well be the beginning of the Mediterranean Demeter (mother)-Kore (daughter)-Hecate (elder) part of the later Eleusinian Mysteries.

One Cretan fresco shows several brightly-dressed girls dancing among the trees of an olive grove; another depicts naked priestesses spinning in a spiral dance around a sacred tree. The tree represented the Goddess in her life-death aspect. In both Crete and Egypt, the tree was considered to be an image of the Goddess. Special rites and a sacred axe were used whenever a tree was cut down.

A Minoan seal is engraved with a stag dancer, obviously female, for she has breasts. A deer mask with antlers covers her head and her arms are upraised in the gesture of a priestess. The gesture of upraised arms is pictured throughout the matriarchal remains and appears to have been a common spiritual movement performed by worshipping women.

Actual known Goddess names from Crete are rare. One of which we can be certain is that of Britomartis. Britomartis, also called Dictynna (or "law-giver"), was a virgin forest huntress and goddess of feminine power, childbirth, independence, and creativity. A surviving Greek story tells about a Cretan girl called Britomartis who spent nine months hiding from the Minoan king Minos. When he finally found her, she threw herself into the sea to escape his demands. Fishermen rescued her in their nets; thereafter she was called Dictynna. The word *dictyon* means "net."

All evidence points to the fact that this goddess was an earlier form of the Greek Artemis. She was a goddess of the New Moon and retained the same powers in



Greece as she originally possessed in Crete. Dictynna was also associated with fishing and nets, the net (and possibly the checkerboard design) being linked with the sea, a life source, and birth. Dictynna was believed to reside among the rugged mountain peaks, and in deep forests, huge caves, and wet meadowlands. Tradition says her priestesses, like those of Artemis, were wild and savage, running naked through the woods, accompanied by wild animals and performing orgiastic rituals.

There is one reference in the Linear B script in Knossos that may refer to the goddess Athene. It is a close approximation of her Greek name. This script calls her Atana Potinija, which means "Mistress of Atana." There are very old Greek statues of Athene which portray her with snakes, much as the Cretan goddesses were shown.

A painting, which archaeologists call "Descent of the Goddess," portrays three priestesses dancing in a field of lilies, a flower of the Moon goddess Britomartis. In the center, the Goddess descends into the midst of Her worshippers, while one of the priestess clashes the castanets or finger-cymbals. The other two women hold their arms upraised to the Goddess.

A small seal ring is engraved with the Goddess image, bare-breasted and wearing a seven-tiered skirt. She is standing on a conical mountain (womb) with a wand in Her hand. Near Her is a small male worshipper. On each side are Her lion guardians. Behind Her rises a tiered shrine upheld by pillars surrounded by bull horns.

There are mythological clues which point to the Greek Demeter coming from Crete to the mainland. The Cretan word *dyai* or *deai* means "barley"; the Greek word *meter* is "mother." The goddess Demeter was known as the barley-mother or corn-mother. This is not improbable, since the root of the Cretan word *deai* was applied to different kinds of grain.

Demeter was also associated with pigs, as shown by their sacrifice in the deep sacred crevasse at her Greek festival Thesmophoria. At what is called the Peak Sanctuary on Mount Juktas in Crete, pigs were sacrificed to the Crone Goddess of Wisdom. This Crone was a chthonic goddess who often took the form of a sow. This connection with pigs and the Underworld (the cave or crevasse) remained a part of the Grecian Demeter.

The names of the majority of Cretan goddesses, however, remain unknown. They were distinguished, one aspect from another, by the symbols predominantly displayed with their images. During the Middle Minoan III period, the Dove Goddess<sup>7</sup> was shown wearing a crown made of birds and horns. In the center of this crown was a cone, a Goddess symbol of the Great Womb.

Another seal from Knossos pictures an early form of the goddess Hecate with a dog-head. She ruled over the dead and funeral ceremonies. Jackal- or dog-headed helmets and masks have been found which were worn by priestesses who performed these rituals. This depiction of the dog-headed Hecate of the Underworld may have been the prototype of the later Egyptian god Anubis.



As in earlier and later matriarchal priestess-hoods, Cretan priestesses probably were individually committed to the worship of a particular aspect of the Goddess. In Crete, this seems to have been mainly divided into the Goddess of the Earth and the Goddess of the Sea.

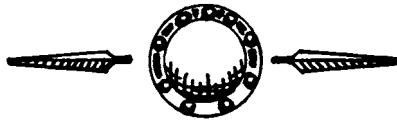
Each shrine or temple had a holy center, either an actual sacred tree or a column which symbolized a tree. These shrines were situated over or very near sacred springs; the Earth shrines were either in or very near caves. Pictures of Cretan priestesses often show them naked or semi-naked, surrounded by symbols of the Moon, the *labrys*, a throne, an altar, snakes, bulls, and a sacred tree. Sometimes the Sun symbol was included. If the priestesses represented the Goddess in Her aspect as deity of the sea, an anchor and a dolphin were portrayed near them.

Cretan priestesses also wore a knot at the nape of their neck, either made of cloth or their own twisted hair. In paintings, this knot is shaped like the *labrys*. It was probably taken down, or “unraveled” during certain ceremonies. This may be the origin of the Greek story of Ariadne’s thread. This particular knot may have been an outer sign that the woman wearing her hair in this fashion was a priestess or royalty.

The Cretan Mysteries for women-only were part dance, part ritual, part re-enactment of old myths. Certain parts of these Mysteries were danced by priestesses, while the other participants sang special mystical songs. In ancient Goddess religions throughout the Mediterranean areas, dancing in a certain spiraling pattern (which is reminiscent of the labyrinth itself) was used to draw down the presence of the Goddess into the sacred area.

Since Crete used a lunar calendar, the Goddess and Her priestesses were often shown in triads. This symbolized the three Moon phases: New, Full, and gibbous. The Moon represented the powers of prophecy, time, destiny, and the three faces of Fate.

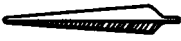
The Lady of the Labyrinth still stands at the center of Her sacred design, but today that labyrinth lies within the mind and soul of each woman. Taking that journey within is frightening and dangerous, in that, once the journey is completed, you will never be the same again.



## End Notes

1. Linear B was not translated until 1952, when Michael Ventris discovered that it was a form of Greek at least 500 years older than Homer and written in an





abbreviated form. Chadwick, Jon. *The Decipherment of Linear B*. Norman, James. *Ancestral Voices*.

2. *The Mystic Spiral*.

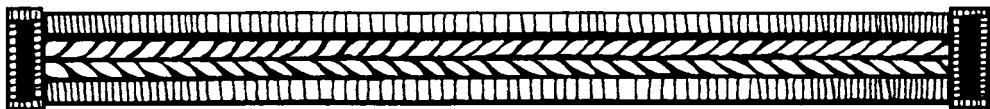
3. See Chapter 26.

4. Crawford, O.G.S. *The Eye Goddess*.

5. Baring, Anne, and Cashford, Jules. *The Myth of the Goddess*.

6. Briffault, Robert. *The Mothers*.

7. The names Dove Goddess, Snake Goddess, etc., are arbitrarily given by archaeologists to distinguish one deity from another because we have no records of the names under which each Goddess aspect was known.



## Goddess of Love & Battle

**T**he Middle East is a region of ancient Goddess religions and Mysteries, later submerged into patriarchal pantheons.

Sumerian dream interpretations date back to at least 2450 BCE. Dreams were considered to be messages from the gods and the dead, in both the prophetic and guidance senses.

There were a number of Babylonian festivals, the greatest being New Year, which took place during the first eleven days of the month of Nisan. This most important festival occurred around the Spring Equinox and centered on the Sacred Marriage. This was enacted by the king, who took the role of Dumuzi (also called Tammuz), and a High Priestess who played the part of the goddess Inanna or Ishtar. At this festival, eggs colored red (the color of the life-force) were presented to friends.

The priestess-magicians of Mesopotamia were the Ummati, who could heal, bless, or curse, according to the need. It was the duty of the Ummati to recite incantations and perform rituals to ward off evil.



When cursing during one type of ritual, the Ummati chanted spells while tying knots and blowing on them. In writing out magickal formulae, ink perfumed with musk, rose, or saffron was used by the magician. Usually this ink was red or black. While writing out these formulae, incense was kept burning as an offering to the deities being asked to help. Cedar resin and shavings were the most common ingredients in incense.

The making of perfumed ink is quite easy. Simply purchase a small bottle of ink, either black or colored, and add two to three drops of the appropriate essential oil to it. Let it sit on the altar overnight. This is best done on the Full Moon for positively charged inks, and on the New Moon for negatively charged ones.

The Ummati magicians also made devil-traps. The Babylonian devil-traps were pottery bowls with a spiraling spell written inside. This spell led from the outer edges down to the center of the bowl.

In the ancient Hittite empire, priestesses developed a divinatory board game called *Kin*, possibly the forerunner of the Ouija board.

The Sumerians invented and developed a system of writing, both cuneiform and a type of symbolic cursive, both of which became widely used in the region. The letters of this alphabet were directly connected to the twenty-eight days of the Moon, the planets, and zodiac signs. Each letter had a numerical value, and some were thought to be more powerful than others. Numbers and the art of numerology were important to these Middle Eastern peoples. The number seven, for instance, was especially sacred, being considered a perfect and mystical number.

Anat, Anath, or Qadesh (Holy One), worshipped in Phoenicia, Canaan, and Ur, was called Progenitor of People, the Mother of All Nations, and She Who Kills and Resurrects. She wore horns and a Moon disk and was linked with the lion. When entering battle, Anat wore coriander scent and purple makeup. Her power was so great to curse and kill that even the greatest gods were afraid of her; whatever she wanted was granted. This attribute may have been acknowledged when the invading patriarchal culture found that trying to oust matriarchal deities brought about disastrous results. The priestesses of this goddess were able to curse and make it stick.

Archaeologists have found a gold amulet bearing a picture of Anat standing on a lion and holding a lotus and coiling snakes. She was a Triple Goddess in her own right: Virgin, Mother, Warrior. In her Warrior aspect, she was shown wearing a helmet and holding a shield. Her worship extended as far north as Anatolia.

Ashtart, Astarte, Ba'alat, and Ishtar may well be aspects of the same goddess. The ancient city of Byblos claimed that Ashtart descended to Earth as a fiery star and landed in a lake near Aphaca. Her sacred stone (a meteorite) was taken from the lake and kept in the goddess's Byblos temple; the stone was said to heal and prophesy. The word bibles came from the name Byblos where the earliest libraries of this region were attached to the temple of Ashtart. One symbol of this goddess was an 8-point star.



The priestesses and temples of Astarte (also known as Ashtart) of Babylonia, Assyria, and Phoenicia were singled out for special persecution by the Hebrew patriarchal culture because her temples had sacred prostitutes. The reigning king was not considered confirmed or potent unless he underwent a Sacred Marriage with the priestesses of Astarte. Her priestesses were also famous astrologers.

Atargatis was worshipped in Syria, Canaan, Mesopotamia, and among the Philistines. As a sea and fertility deity, she had a temple at Harran where sacred oracular fish were kept. This goddess was known in other areas as Derceto or Tigata. Sometimes she was portrayed as having a fish-tail. The dove was also one of her sacred creatures.

Under her Romanized name of Dea Syria, Atargatis had a temple on the Janiculum, the highest of Rome's seven hills. In that temple there was a bronze statue of her encircled by seven coils of a gigantic serpent. Tucked between the serpent's coils and her body were seven eggs.

At Hieropolis, about twenty miles west of the Euphrates River, this goddess also had a temple with a beautiful pond near it for her sacred oracular fish. In the innermost sanctuary were three golden statues: two of Atargatis and one of her consort Haddad. Standing on her guardian lions, the goddess was portrayed wearing a tower crown and carrying a scepter and distaff.

This magnificent temple had the entrance facing the north, but the high altar was situated in the east. Beyond this altar was an inner sanctum with no doors; it held another inner sanctuary which only special priests and priestesses could enter. The statues of Atargatis and her consort were within this innermost sanctum.

This image of Atargatis held a scepter in one hand and a distaff in the other. A towered crown on her head, her gold robe was set with jewels: emeralds, rubies, garnets, onyx, and orange hyacinths. On her head was a strange bright red light from a fire ruby called *lychnis*. It was said that even on the darkest night, the sanctuary of Atargatis was brightly lit by the glow of this stone. Although it dimmed in the daylight, the illumination was still visible. The eyes of this statue were so life-like that they seemed to follow you about the temple.

Between the images of Atargatis and her consort was a third smaller image. This may have been a daughter image as it had a detachable golden dove on its head; the white dove symbolized Atargatis herself. This "bird" was taken down to the sacred lake twice yearly when the priestesses and worshippers got water for the "chasm" where they performed purifications. The priestesses of this goddess were called Doves.

The sacred lake, close to the temple, was full of special fish who had gold ornaments attached to their fins. Although records do not say anything about divination, these fish were probably consulted in some manner, as they were in other Middle Eastern Goddess temples. In the center of the lake was a stone altar which rose well above the waters. Daily rituals were performed at this lake altar. It was



decorated with bright ribbons and scented with fragrant spices. Priests who wore golden crowns had to swim out to the altar for each ritual.

On the first day of spring, the temple hosted a fireworks festival called Bonfire. The priests cut down pine trees and set them up in the temple courtyard where the worshippers could decorate them with silver and gold ornaments of animals and birds. After a set period of time, the trees were burned. Since the lover/consort Attis was connected with pine trees, it is likely that Atargatis may have been a form of Cybele.

In Mesopotamia, Babylonia, and Assyria the goddess Ereshkigal was known as Queen of the Underworld. As deity of dark magick, death, revenge, and destruction, Ereshkigal was feared, yet worshipped for the mystical knowledge that could be gained from a journey into her realm. Myth says that she reigned alone until a god conquered her and made her his wife, an obvious patriarchal ploy when a previous goddess could not be dethroned completely.

The Babylonian goddess Gula was known as the Great Doctress, who inflicted illness or restored health. She also ruled fate. Hounds accompanied her as she hunted for the souls lost and wandering after death. It was considered very lucky if a deceased person met this Mistress of the Way Down, for she would guide her or him to her or his proper place in the Otherworlds. Her main shrine was the E-galmah at Isin, but she had others at Nippur, Borsippa, and Assur.

The most important goddess of Sumeria was Inanna who rode on a lion, sometimes accompanied by a pack of hunting dogs. When she took on her aspect as War Goddess, she was portrayed with wings and armed with bow and quiver. One of her symbols, a serpent coiling around a staff, hints at her power over the life-force and the mystical secrets to bind or loose it. A curved reed bundle often symbolized this goddess. In her role as Queen of Earth, the date palm, cedar, sycamore, olive, and apple tree were her symbols. Animals with which she was associated were the lion, cow, serpent, and dragon.

Engravings show her standing on the sacred mountain, the crescent Moon on her head, and an 8-rayed star (Venus) nearby. This 8-pointed star was the original Bethlehem star, 3000 years before Christianity adopted it. As the Holy Shepherdess and Keeper of the Cow Byre, Inanna gave birth to Dumuzi, the Shepherd, Lord of the Net and of Life. Magi brought gifts to this son/lover in his cow byre birthplace.

The mountain symbolized Inanna's holy sanctuary built at the summit of her temples. It was in that place that the yearly Sacred Marriage took place. Her temple precinct was called Eanna, which means "House of Heaven." There was also a hollow underground sanctuary beneath the temple. This "underworld" symbolized the womb of the goddess. It may have been the place of special initiations for priestesses. It was said that the sacrificed god/son rested there during the winter months. Re-enactment of Inanna/Ishtar's descent into the Underworld may have been performed in this special underground precinct.



The goddess Inanna/Ishtar had a special aspect which we call the Eye Goddess for want of a better description. One of the oldest of Her Eye temples is at Tell Brak in eastern Syria. It dates from about 3000 BCE. In it are thousands of little figurines of the Eye Goddess with wide, staring snake-coiled owl-like eyes. The staring eyes may represent Inanna/Ishtar in her aspect of justice, for she was said to hold the *me* (pronounced may), the Sumerian Tablets of the Law along with Tiamat, before Marduk stole them.

Inanna and Ishtar were said to carry within themselves creative fertilizing power; this is shown by the caduceus (snakes twined about a wand) which they often held. Both goddesses represented more than one aspect of the Feminine, which is evident from the symbols which surrounded them. The double axe was the ancient matriarchal symbol for the Goddess who could give or take away life; the white dove and swallow symbolized the giving, while the scorpion and viper stood for withdrawing.

Both Inanna and Ishtar are mentioned in legend as undergoing the same shamanic spiritual journey into the Underworld kingdom of Ereshkigal. This journey is symbolic of an initiation rite. These rites mirror the difficult transition which humans must make as they move from one phase of life to another.

The most widely known goddess of the Middle East was Ishtar, the Lady of Joy and Battles, the Lady of Heaven, the Mother of All Deities, the Possessor of the Tablets of Life's Records. As a War Goddess, Ishtar carried a bow and rode in a chariot drawn by seven lions. When she took on her aspect as Fate Goddess, keeper of the karmic records, she sat on her lion throne holding a sword with dragons by her sides. As love deity, Ishtar wore horns and sometimes carried a double serpent scepter. Like the Norse goddess Freyja, Ishtar wore a "rainbow" necklace. Her symbols were the 8-point star, the pentagram, serpents, doves, and the double-axe (*labrys*).

In ancient Sumeria, Ishtar had 180 shrines where women gathered daily for prayer, meditation, and socializing, obviously a remnant of a matriarchal culture. On the night of the Full Moon, known as Shapatu, sexual celebrations were held in her temples. At these sacred rites (the Qadishtu), women who lived as priestesses in her shrines took lovers as an expression of the sacredness of sexuality.

Lilith was a Moon goddess of Babylonia and Sumeria. Her sacred bird was the owl. A female principle of the universe, the Jews and Christians demonized her as the killer of babies. However, Lilith's Pagan powers say she protected all pregnant women, mothers, and children. She ruled over the feminine allure, erotic dreams, forbidden sexual delights, and the dangerous seductive qualities of the Moon. As the deity of enticing sorcery, Lilith became the patroness of witches.

On a plaque from the late Sumerian period (2300 BCE), Lilith is shown as a nude seductive woman with wings and taloned feet. She stands on her guardian lions and is flanked by sacred owls. The Sumerian word for owl was *ninna*; in her



owl form this goddess was called Nin-ninna, “Divine Lady Owl.” In Hebrew, her name means “screech owl.” Lilith is a very ancient matriarchal deity of night and death, a form of the vulture goddess of Egypt and other countries in the region. She is not evil for evil’s sake, but the spiritual powers necessary for the recycling of out-worn materials.

In Assyria and Babylonia, Nanshe had special initiations of her priests, obviously a take-over from an earlier priestess-only ritual. To acquire prophetic powers, these priests had to descend into a deep pit, a symbol of death and resurrection. As interpreter of dreams, all divinations done in Her name were through the use of a cup of wine or water. Nanshe was the sister of the grain goddess Nisaba, who was similar to Demeter. This pair of deities, with their rituals of initiation and divination and their connections to grain and death and resurrection, are almost identical to the later rituals of Demeter and Persephone in the Eleusinian Mysteries.

Ninhursag of Sumeria, Assyria, and Babylonia was a Mother Goddess, the Creative Principle, the source of all life. She was also called Mountain Mother<sup>1</sup> (a common Goddess title), She Who Gives Life to the Dead, Lady of the Stony Ground, Lady of the Foothills, and Mistress of Wild Animals. As the goddess Nintur, Ninhursag was the Lady of the Womb, Opener of the Womb, and a birth-giver. Because of Ninhursag’s strong connection with childbirth, her temples probably had a special section reserved for pregnant women to give birth. She wore a leafy crown of regeneration and held a branch representing fertility. Her animal was a doe. She was one of the most powerful deities in third millennium BCE Mesopotamia before she was replaced by the god Enki.

In the ruins of her Sumerian temple at the mound of Al ’Ubaid near Ur, were discovered two bronze lions which guarded the temple’s entrance. Over the doorway was carved a lion-headed eagle between two stags. Friezes of cows and doves decorated the inside walls.

The earliest creation myths of this region speak of the goddess Tiamat bringing into existence all things. Myth says that Tiamat menstruated for three years and three days in order to produce the essential material for creation. This “red flood” became what is now called the Red Sea. Alongside this is a later myth that tells how the god Marduk created everything out of the body of his mother Tiamat. For some reason, the earlier myth was not, or could not be, expunged from the culture. Originally Tiamat was said to hold the Tablets of Destiny, which were later taken by Marduk. These Tablets were identical to the Hindu Akashic records.

In Mesopotamian temples of certain goddesses, there was a tank for holy water, referred to as the *apsu* or *abzu*. This tank may have been used for initiations. The *apsu* was the freshwater ocean said to lie beneath the Earth. Although Tiamat was associated with the ancient salt waters, which were called *tiamtum*, she was also connected with the *apsu*. Myth calls Apsu her first consort, in an attempt to work a god into the creation story. This does not work, as the myth goes on to say that



Tiamat was the Creatrix as well as the universe itself; everything in this world, including the heavens, was made out of her body when Marduk killed her.

Through the stories of Tiamat and other similar goddesses, one can see what appear to be contradictions in powers: day and night, birth and death, changing of the seasons, time (in the physical world) and non-time (in the Underworld), the weaving of life and the spinning out of fate. In spiritual understanding, these things are not contradictions, but merely mirror images. For the Goddess has power of all opposites, reconciling them in Her vast plan for the universe and her creatures.

During the Old Babylonian period of history in the Mesopotamian area, women served in the temples of Ishtar as scribes, priestesses, judges, oracles, prophets, diviners, as well as the sexual rites. They were witnesses to legal documents and may have kept copies of these documents within their temples, as did the later Vestal Virgins of Rome.

Since numbers and letters of the alphabet were gifts from the Goddess, priestesses were specialists in their use. A special class of priestesses did the tablet-writing and were called *maryanu*. These priestesses may have been dedicated to the goddess Mari-Anna, another aspect of Ishtar. Only women who had given birth were allowed to enter the inner sanctuary of Ishtar's Babylonian temples, so the *maryanu* were probably mothers.

By reading accounts of the ancient Ishtar hymns, epics, myths, and liturgies, I do not think it appropriate to call the sexual priestesses of Ishtar prostitutes. A prostitute is in the business for the money and/or sexual gratification. These holy women, or Ishtaritu, were responsible for teaching men how to pleasure their wives, be available for the monthly sexual rituals of worshipping Ishtar through sexual pleasure, and especially for the yearly Sacred Marriage rites. The Greeks called these priestesses Hierodule of Heaven, meaning "servant of the sacred."<sup>2</sup>

The *Entu* (a special High Priestess) called down into herself the energy-form of Ishtar during the Sacred Marriage, so that the goddess herself could mate with the king. All literature about this is specific that the rite benefited the king and the community. The *entu* priestesses lived in a special temple residence called the *gipar*.

In Sumerian, the word *Qadishtu* (set apart or taboo) is the same as *Ishtaritu*. These special priestesses were sometimes used in the rituals of other deities also.

Among the Hittites, the priestesses dressed to resemble the goddess they served. Each priestess had her own personal name, which was kept secret as it was thought to be sacred and denoted her office within the temple. Publicly, the priestess was called by the name of the goddess to whom she dedicated herself for life. In other words, the priestess was thought, at least on ritual occasions, to hold the Goddess-energy within her. Her name given at birth vanished forever when she was reborn into the priestess-hood.





Carvings portray these priestesses as wearing long pleated skirts, closely fitted and wrapped around the body. A low, cylindrical hat held the long gauzy veils back from the face. If the priestess invoked the Earth Mother or Dark Goddess, her hands were lowered toward the ground; if she invoked the Great Goddess of life and fertility, she raised her arms skyward.

The Hittites celebrated the Sacred Marriage between their sky god and the Mother Goddess twice a year, at spring planting and again at the harvest.

Tanith was the major goddess of Carthage. She is shown winged, with the starry heavens and the zodiac above her and holding the Sun and Moon in her hands. Around her are pillars symbolizing the sacred tree. She is accompanied by two doves.

Small shrines in homes were common in the Mesopotamian region. These were usually placed in small wall niches directly across from the door; small deity statues sat on the altar. The use of bells to drive away evil spirits dates back to the first millennium BCE.

The crescent Moon image dates from prehistoric times in Mesopotamia; the Akkadian name for this symbol was *uskaru*.<sup>3</sup> It was thought to have great protective powers.

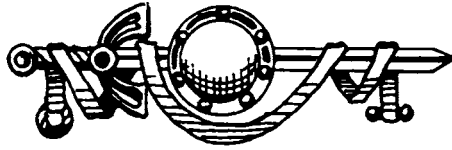
The *Du-ku* of Sumeria was a holy hill or mound where the gods were said to determine destinies. The ziggurat was representative of this holy hill, a matriarchal symbol.

In certain divinatory and exorcism rituals, the magicians used flour in specific ways. Sometimes the magician made small heaps of flour (*zidub-dubbu*) around the ritual area; other times he simply scattered grains (*sebirbirredu*) of it. For an offering, flour was placed on altars. It was common to mark out a circle with flour during magickal rituals; this was called *zisurru* (flour boundary).

Other offerings to the deities were water, beer, wine, milk, honey, oil, and cream. One magickal ritual from this era calls for libations of vinegar to counteract nightmares.

One of the remaining Babylonian magickal collections is called *Surpu* (burning). This type of magick was performed when the client was not certain what act or omission had offended the gods and caused trouble in her or his life. The client had to peel and burn an onion, dates, and matting while the magician recited incantations.

The Akkadian believed in taking care of things before something happened. If a divination shows that something negative was about to occur, the person went to a magician and had a ritual called *namburbu* performed.



## Amazons

The areas inhabited by the Amazons appear to have been in Asia Minor, part of Russia, and around the Black Sea, according to historical records. The Amazons were fierce fighters whom even the bravest of male warriors feared and respected. One of their queens, Lysippe, built the city of Themiscyra. Robert Graves<sup>4</sup> wrote that later queens founded the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Cyrene, Myrine, and Sinope; these centers were named after Amazon queens.

All records of the Amazons speak of them arriving in territories which they settled from other places. These migrating women would appear to be the remnants of matriarchal cultures who would not knuckle under to the conquering patriarchal clans, but decided to find a region of their own where they could safely live and be happy.

Diodorus wrote about a vast horde of Amazons under a Queen Myrina who moved eastward through Egypt and Syria, founding cities along the way, such as Myrina in Aeolis and Mitylene on Lesbos. Even Herodotus speaks of a migration of Amazons, this time from the far north in what is now Russia into the wild region between the Black and the Caspian Seas. Later Greek myth places the exiled Iphigeneia, daughter of Agamemnon,<sup>5</sup> at the Maeotis Lake in that region.

It would seem from reading the ancient writings of the Greeks alone, that the Amazons were not a few scattered tribes or just one nation. They are mentioned as living and ruling over three main areas: one large region stretching from the Propontis to the tip of Lycia; in Pontus along the Euxine to the Colchis in the east; in Scythia to the east of Lake Maeotis and including Thrace.

The Greeks said that an Amazon was the ancestress of the royal line of Troy. The Thracian Amazon Penthesilea was said to have given aid to Troy during the conflict with Greece. The Epic of Troy hints that the proud Achilles, although he killed Penthesilea in battle, had a passion for her which she did not return. King Theseus married an Amazon called Hippolyta, who is sometimes called Antiope in the stories. Their son Hippolytus, who died young, was loved by the commoners of his father's kingdom, but not by the warrior class. Pindar mentions Melanippe in his writings, who he says was the sister of Theseus's queen.

The Amazons ("Moon-woman" or *amazos*, "ample-breasted") at one time ruled the greatest part of Asia Minor, including Anatolia and the area of the Scythians.<sup>6</sup> Briffault, in *The Mothers*, writes that in their own tongue their name for their tribes was *emet-chi* ("descended from women").



They were matriarchal tribes of women only, ruled by elected sister-queens. Children were conceived by annual visits to neighboring friendly tribes; the girls were kept, the boys returned to the fathers. They allowed no cowards to live among them, nor would they allow a coward to bear a child. Any Amazon who died in childbirth was accorded the same funeral rites as one who died bravely in battle. Although the Amazons consorted with men for the purpose of conceiving children, they were not known for trusting or liking them, probably with good reason. Like the Scythian girls, they were called “man killers,” who killed male strangers on sight. The belt (or girdle) worn by an Amazon symbolized her virginity. She could not remove it until she had killed three male enemies in battle.

Paintings show these women with the same type of racial features: long, narrow faces and eyes that turn down at the outer corners. In all the vase paintings and friezes of Amazons they are portrayed as beautiful, strong women.

Not much is documented in detail about these tribes of women, except that they were strictly Goddess-worshippers. By the middle of the third millennium BCE, they had produced a wealth of Goddess images which are still being uncovered. The great Goddess temple at Ephesus was founded by Amazons who built it around the original image of their goddess Artemis (the Moon deity), which was hung on a sacred tree. The Sword Dance, still a part of Scottish heritage, was danced as part of their rituals.

At the very end of their independent existence, one Amazon made a betrothal treaty with King Hattusil of the Hittites, signing her name only with the title High Priestess of Arinna.

They used a Moon-sickle for rituals and battle, as they did the *labrys*, or double-bladed axe. Sculptures at Hattusas<sup>7</sup> show Amazons clad in chain mail and carrying short swords with curved blades in the left hand, while holding the *labrys* in the right.

In other more relaxed scenes, they were decked in earrings, skull caps, embroidered robes, bracelets, and shoes whose toes turned up.

At home, the Amazons wore short skirts of fine material, richly embroidered or painted. The skirt was worn over long, loose pantaloons, hanging in folds and caught in with the tops of their shoes. A little vest closed in the front was used as a bodice. Over this they sometimes added a wide sleeveless tunic clasped at the shoulders and girded at the waist.

In war, some ancient paintings show that they donned skin trousers and often bared the right shoulder and breast for better use of weapons. Other pictures show them wearing a short, belted tunic, panther-skin capes, and armor. They carried ivy leaf-shaped shields and the battle-axe, or *labrys*. They did not, as some male historians hint, remove the right breast.<sup>8</sup> This can clearly be seen by studying Greek vase paintings of Amazons. Also, the Greek writer Philostratus was very blunt in stating that they did not mutilate themselves.





They rode horses or drove them hitched to swift war-chariots. Their prowess as excellent horsewomen was known throughout the region; performing equestrian feats was an everyday thing to them. They would dance on horseback, stand up at a full gallop, jump from one horse to another, and leap bareback across a roaring fire. Like the Scythians, the Amazons were so skilled with a bow that they could hit an enemy at a full gallop. Since one aspect of their Goddess was horse-headed (Hipa which means horse), they often had personal names reflecting this. Like the Scythians, Apollonius Rhodius reported that the Amazons sacrificed horses as part of their funeral customs.

Their priestesses took the names of animals, birds, or insects. The titles referring to “priestess” was often “Bee” or “Dove.” The priestesses always fought with the *labrys*.

The Greeks reported that the Amazons were great tamers of such wild animals as lions, panthers, deer, bulls, goats, rams, eagles, and falcons.

Their extinction was brought about by the Greeks and other patriarchal societies because of the Amazons’ fierce defensive of matriarchy and the rights of women. Their women-only clans probably came about when patriarchal take-over tried to eliminate their rights and their Goddess. At first, the Amazons were driven to the north shore of the Black Sea; by 800 BCE those left probably joined with the Scythians who allowed women greater freedom than other cultures of the time. That their culture was rich and creative can be seen by the photographs of their golden treasures in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

The ancient region of Phrygia lies in the highlands of central Anatolia, which is now Turkey. It is a rugged mountainous area. The Great Mother Goddess (Magna Mater), or Cybele, and her son/lover Attis came from this region. Apollonius tells us that the Amazons worshipped their goddess in the form of a black stone or meteorite. This stone sat on an altar in an open temple, which was built on an island off the coast of Colchis. This stone, or one very like it, was the emblem of Cybele.

Much of Amazonian ritual and symbols were identical to those in the Cretan matriarchal culture. Diodorus, who says he saw their magnificent rituals on the island of Samothrace, believed that Cybele was none other than the Greek Rhea. This is entirely possible, since Rhea herself a Dark Mother aspect, who could well be Cybele, came from Crete in Greece. Artemis is almost identical to Magna Mater of Phrygia, and they all can be traced back, in rituals and aspects, to the Cretan Lady called the Light-Bearer.

Cybele/Kybele was the Great Mother of Anatolia; her worship can be traced back to very ancient times in both Phrygia and Lydia. The earliest form of her name may have been Kubaba or Kumbaba (*Kybebe* in Greek). She was the Ma goddess of Asia Minor, who required transvestism and castration of all males who entered her inner shrines. A deity of the Earth and caverns, her greatest center of worship was





at Pessinus in Phrygia; there, under the shadow of Mount Dindymon, was a cave said to contain the tomb of Attis and an extremely ancient image of the goddess in the shape of a stone.

As goddess of fertility and the wilds, Cybele was portrayed as holding a *tympanon* (tambourine) and wearing a towered crown. Lions were her companions; her symbols were the crescent Moon, cymbal, libation bowl, sickle, *labrys*, vase, roses, honey, pomegranate, caves, violets, meteorites, pine trees, and bees. She also carried a scourge of knuckle bones and liked pearls and cypress. She was the goddess of the natural world and its formations; wild beasts, especially lions; dominion over wild animals and the animal-side of human nature; dark magic, revenge. She was also called the Goddess of Gates or Doors, symbolizing her connection to stages of life, and especially with death and reincarnation.

Rome welcomed Cybele in 204 BCE and accepted her worship in response to an ancient prophecy. Her arrival was said to have saved Rome from being overrun by invaders and destroyed. The best records we have of Cybele's exotic festivals all come from Roman writers. Romans were forbidden to be priests of Cybele or to castrate themselves. Most Roman men despised the priests for their effeminate behavior, their long hair, and their strange feminine-like costumes. All priests and priestesses of Cybele in Rome came from Asia Minor.

The *taurobolium* or *crinobolium* (ritual slaughter of bulls), later taken over by the god Mithras, originated with the initiation and purification rituals of Cybele. A bull was sacrificed on a platform so that its blood fell down on the initiates in a pit below. However, unlike Mithras, Cybele abhorred fire worship.

The castrated High Priest of Cybele was seen as one who called down into himself the being of Attis; in Rome he was called Archigallus. This goddess was served by two kinds of priests: the *Galloi* or *Galli* who were self-made eunuchs, and the *Korybantes* (called *Metragyrtoi* in Greece) who were wandering shaman-priests. The *Galloi* were the most important, as they appeared to stay at their temple. The *Korybantes* were the musicians and dancers in Cybele processions. It was said they could bind or loose men from spells, induce or heal madness. From this description of their powers, it seems that they merely took over the roles of earlier priestesses.

The priestesses of Cybele, led by a High Priestess in each temple, were called *Melissae* (bees), the very same title accorded to the priestesses of Artemis, Persephone, and other goddesses. Some of their duties were performing the rituals of mourning for Attis each spring and carrying the vessels during ritual feasts.

Cybele's Mystery celebrations were held in the spring, beginning just before the Spring Equinox, and (as with all ancient Mystery Religions) re-enacted the story of Cybele and Attis. On March 15, the *cannophori* (reed-bearers) opened the celebrations by carrying fresh-cut reeds in a procession which ended in the sanctuary. All those wishing initiation, or who were initiates, fasted from bread, wine, and other food for the next several days, as well as abstained from sexual intercourse. The pre-



sent-day Christian “Holy Week” coincides with the time of the ancient spring rites of Cybele and Attis.

On March 22, the *dendrophori* (tree-bearers) cut a pine tree (symbol of eternal life) and took it into the sanctuary. There it was wound in linen like a dead body and decorated with flowers, ribbons, and an image of Attis. On that day and the next, the worshippers mourned over the tree in memory of Attis who had castrated himself and died under a pine tree.

The Day of Blood (*Dies sanguinis*) occurred on March 24. The day was spent loudly mourning for Attis. The evening began with a wild procession through the streets. The priests surrounded and followed a statue of Cybele drawn in a cart, winding around the city until they once again reached the sanctuary.

This procession was a mass of singing, piping, dancing, tambourine-playing worshippers. Through the use of wine and possibly some kind of drug, the ordained priests, and male worshippers who wished to become priests, worked themselves into a frenzied state of ecstasy. The celebrants flogged themselves until the blood ran; this blood was then sprinkled on Cybele’s statue and later on her altar. Under the spell of a holy madness, which seemed to impart a sense of mystical ecstasy and supernatural strength, some of the more fanatical followers would castrate themselves with a sickle<sup>9</sup> (emblem of Attis) in imitation of Attis, offering their severed genitals to the goddess.<sup>10</sup> In the temple itself, there was a constant beating of drums, clashing of cymbals, music of pipes; all this created a hypnotic effect on the worshippers who danced about wildly. The ritual ended with the *Tau-robolium*, a sacrifice of a bull in the inner sanctuary. This was followed by an all-night vigil.

There are hints about certain Mysteries which took place on this “holy” night before the Hilaria, but details are sketchy. Since initiates did not have to be castrated, and both men and women could be initiated, there are several references to this special night. It seems the initiates participated first in a feast of fish, wine, and bread. Since part of the Mysteries wording mentions the *pastos* (shrine or bridal chamber), this feast was probably followed by a Sacred Marriage. The final stages of the initiation involved a descent into the crypt beneath the temple where the Marriage took place. After this symbolic descent into the Underworld, the initiate became a “daughter” or “son” of Cybele.

The Hilaria (Feast of Joy) came on March 25; this was a celebration of the resurrection of Attis, a time of joy and hope. The High Priest greeted the vigilants in the morning by saying “Rejoice, for the god is saved! We are delivered as well.” Great feasts were held in honor of Cybele as the Great Mother. March 26 was a day of rest, followed the next day by the holy statue of Cybele being washed in the river and her sanctuary cleansed.

Like most other Asian goddesses, the rituals of Cybele followed the pattern of the seasons. Attis was said to be reborn every spring; his sacred flowers, which

tradition says sprang from his spilled blood, were the violet and the anemone. The Sacred Marriage between Cybele and Attis took place around the time of the Autumn Equinox. He died at Halloween before the first snow fell in Asia Minor. Then Cybele mourned her son/lover through the winter, awaiting his resurrection at the Spring Equinox.

Although the ancient records of Cybele worship dwell on the male priests and participants, probably because of the bloody castrations, Cybele had priestesses as well. These sacred women were called shepherdesses, a symbolic title which comes from the story of the baby Cybele being abandoned by her parents and raised by shepherdesses. Her priestesses had to study music, dance, and medicine, as well as memorize and perform the rituals. The priests and priestesses, and all the worshippers of this goddess, were required to undergo periodic rites of purification which included ritual bathing, fasting, and abstaining from certain foods and sex.

Like the Eleusinian Mysteries of Greece, we have only fragments of records to tell us anything about the secret rituals open only to the more advanced initiates. Clement of Alexandria (a Christian) tried to ridicule what he learned about the Mysteries. Evidently, Clement did not participate or know anything about what took place since he only repeats what the initiates said: "I ate from the tambourine (*tympanon*). I drank from the cymbal (*kymbalon*). I carried the sacred dish (*ker-nos*). I stole into the inner chamber (*pastos*, shrine or bridal chamber)." The tambourine and cymbal are known to have been used in all of Cybele's rituals as well as her Mysteries, as is the sacred vessel, the *ker-nos*. At least two other ancient writers disagree with the last two lines, saying they should be "I learned the secrets of religion" and "I became an initiate (*mystes*) of Attis."

The Amazons knew and honored the Thracian goddess Bendis, who was called the Great Goddess in Lemnos. This Moon goddess was a fierce huntress who carried two spears. As a fertility deity, the rituals of Bendis included orgies.

Diodorus writes that the Amazons knew and worshipped Artemis under her title Artemis Tauropolos. This goddess of the crescent Moon, the woodlands, and wild animals would have appealed to the matriarchal cultures, for Artemis did not consort with or bow to the rule of men. The Greeks called the Scythian devotees of the dark aspect of Artemis the Alani, or hunting dogs. It would be more accurate to say that the priestesses of Artemis the Huntress wore dog-masks, howled at the Moon as part of their rituals, and sometimes ran naked through the forests, hunting down and probably killing any men they found trespassing and spying on their activities.

The Ephesian Artemisium temple in Ephesus was the one reviled, then defiled, by the Christians. This temple was said to have been founded by Amazons. In it was a statue of Artemis carved out of a block of cedar wood. Pliny said that this original statue was made 2000 years before his time and contained a meteorite inside the crown. There was no temple roof directly over the statue; it was protected by a large metal screen. Four-winged Gorgons guarded the inner sanctuary and the statue.



This Artemis statue showed the goddess's torso covered with many breasts (or fruits), a turret crown on her head, and her arms extended from the elbows. These "breasts" may have represented pomegranates. At one time, historians say that this temple held four statues of Amazons sculpted by four of the most renowned artists of the fifth century. The Artemisium was considered to be one of the most sacred places in the world.

During the later history of this Ephesian temple, frescoes were added of the priestesses. They are shown sitting on thrones, their faces calm and inscrutable, and wearing what look like short boots with turned-up toes.

The Artemisium at Ephesus was pre-eminent in giving sanctuary to suppliants. Anyone wishing the protection of the sanctuary for whatever reason would go there with olive boughs tied with fillets of wool.

The Ephesian temple was served by *Megabyzi* and maidens. They were bound by strict rules of diet and purification. The *Megabyzi* were held in very high honor, as were the *Galloi* of Cybele. The maiden priestesses (who entered temple service at age nine) went through three stages of priestess-hood: postulant, priestess, and past-priestess.

Pliny wrote that the priestesses of Artemis, both in Ephesus and in certain Greek temples, were sworn to keep their virginity. However, that did not mean they did women's work, such as spinning and weaving. They held to the ancient Amazonian traditions and were excellent horsewomen and tamers of wild animals, especially the bear, boar, hound, goat, and deer. They danced to the music of lyre and flute.

Many artifacts from the later eras of this temple can be seen today in the British Museum: lions and bulls as door guardians, Gorgons which once leaned over the parapets, winged Victories, frescoes of Magi bearing gifts, and the Mother Goddess as Mistress of Animals.

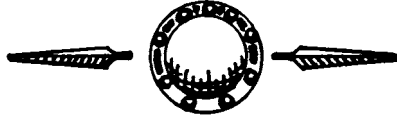
Another aspect of Artemis was Artemis Astrateia, Artemis of the War-Host. Although the Greeks stripped this goddess of any war-like tendencies, Pausanias records that he saw a statue of Artemis in Messenia armed with shield and spear.

Hecate was another goddess known to the Amazons. A Thracian Moon deity, she ruled over the dark Moon and the Underworld as the Crone. She was Queen of the world of spirits, goddess of witchcraft, a snake goddess, the Great Goddess of Nature, and Lady of the Wild Hunt. Her chariot was pulled by dragons, and hounds accompanied her. Some of Hecate's secret rituals, open only to initiates, were orgies.

The Amazons were proud, capable women who firmly worshipped the Goddess. They bowed to no man for any reason. If history has recorded them as war-like and man-haters, consider that men of strictly patriarchal cultures persecuted and killed them for their beliefs, then wrote the histories. The Amazons had refused to submit to the loss of their freedom and rights; therefore, they were considered to be dangerous and unnatural.

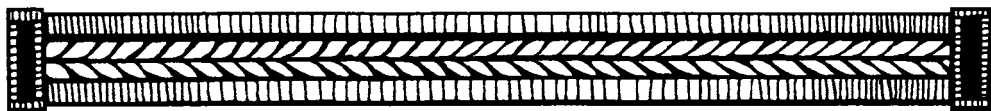
Every woman needs to learn how to be a Warrior or Amazon when necessary.





## End Notes

1. The mountain symbol was the origin of the later throne, signifying supreme power.
2. Baring, Anne, and Cashford, Jules. *The Myth of the Goddess: Evolution of an Image*.
3. Black, Jeremy, and Green, Anthony. *Gods, Demons & Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia*.
4. *The Greek Myths*.
5. When Agamemnon promised to sacrifice his daughter, the goddess Artemis spirited her away to the region of the Amazons. Iphigeneia became a priestess and oracle for the Dark Mother.
6. The tribes called Hyperboreans, whom the Greeks said lived at the back of the North Wind, were thought to be British Amazons.
7. Garstang, John. *The Hittite Empire*.
8. Bennett, Florence Mary. *Religious Cults Associated With the Amazons*.
9. This sickle and the flint knife used by the Cybele priests can be traced directly back to the earliest Goddess rituals.
10. Castration to the followers of Cybele meant more than severing the testicles. According to accounts from that time, they severed everything, making themselves as female-like as possible.



## Mistress of Magick

**E**gyptian magick was primarily practiced in two forms: magick to benefit the living or the dead, and the type used to harm people.<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of each ritual, four lighted lamps were set at the four directions. During later Egyptian records, these represented the four sons of Horus. Symbols were also placed at these quarters: East, a *tet*; South, a model of a palm tree (possibly the *Djed* of Osiris); West, a figure of the god Anubis; North, a figure of a mummy, sometimes lying in a coffin.

The power of any spell, incantation, or any word of power was considered to be greatly increased through the use of magickal pictures and amulets. The *ankh* was a favorite symbol, along with the *Djed* of Osiris, the solar disk, the scarab, the lotus, the Buckle of Isis, and the Eye of Horus.

In the temples of such goddesses as Hathor, Bast, and Neith, women held the chief rank as priestesses and servitors. Any priests there were in a secondary position. Lucius Apuleius wrote that Isis also had a High Priestess who wore the *uraeus*, or sacred asp, on her forehead.



Much of what we know about the rituals of the higher degrees of Egyptian Mysteries comes from the translation of ancient texts and the examination of the chambers and passageways in which the initiations were given. It is evident from artwork that priestesses in Egypt used the upraised arm position during Goddess rituals just as they did in Crete.

Bast (known as Pasht in her Dark aspect) was a cat-headed goddess similar to Artemis/Diana. As Lady of the East and the Mother of Cats, all cats were sacred to her and kept in her temples. Egyptian physicians used the black cat as their symbol of healing; this points to the likelihood of medicine being taught at least in her earlier temples.

The Queen of the West or the Dead was Hathor, also known as the mother of all Egyptian deities. Like several other goddesses of this culture, Hathor was said to be self-begotten and self-produced. She appeared as either a cow-headed goddess or a human-headed deity with horns, cow's ears, and heavy tresses. Although in later texts Hathor was known as a Moon goddess, in the far past she may have been a Sun deity, for she carried the Sacred Eye of Ra, a Sun god. In an aspect of the Seven Hathors, or Holy Midwives, Hathor was associated with the seven planets. The mirror, tambourine, and sistrum were sacred to her. Priestesses used the sistrum to drive away evil spirits and the mirror to reflect back unwanted spells. She was a special protectress of women.

Isis, the supreme Egyptian goddess and Giver of Life, is extremely ancient. Isis is the name the Greeks gave her; the Egyptian name was Au Set. Plutarch translates her name as "wisdom." Although the best known statue of Isis shows her nursing the young Horus, one ancient bronze shows her wearing a small crown of snakes twined around horns. As with many other ancient matriarchal goddesses, Isis is closely connected with snakes, especially cobras. There is also a small figure of Isis, her legs outspread, astride a pig and holding a small ladder. This association with the pig, which to the Egyptians was unclean except for one time during the year, connects the goddess with the chthonic attributes, as was Demeter.

Another statue of Isis showed her veiled from head to toe, a symbol that she revealed her wisdom only to an initiated few who had earned the right to stand face to face with her. Her figure is usually partly nude, sometimes pregnant. Often she holds an ankh in one hand, and a sistrum in the other. At one of her ears hung the Sun, at the other the Moon. Planetary and zodiac signs decorated her robe, as did those representing emblems of the Earth. Under her feet were poisonous reptiles. She stood between a black and a white pillar.<sup>2</sup>

Legend says that Isis was born on the fourth extra day which Thoth won from the Moon in order for her mother to give birth. The number four represents the power the goddess has over the Earth and its Elements.

As Tait, she was the weaver and knoter of the threads of the *Tet*, or life-thread. This definition places her with the Fates; originally Isis may have been a Triple

Goddess. She was believed to bind or loose the lives of humans with the Tet (Knot of Fate); the Tet was a representation of her genital organs. From her came the art of making and blowing on magick knots in spellworkings. Her priestesses were said to be very powerful in controlling the weather by braiding or loosing their hair; this magickal power probably extended to the binding or loosing of many things. Her priestesses were also knowledgeable in the arts of necromancy, invocation, sorcery, thaumaturgy, hypnotism, mesmerism, and other such practices.

Statues of Isis often show her wearing a knotted headband or necklace, as did Hathor. It is possible that the priestesses of these goddesses wore the knotted headband in much the same way as the Cretan ones did the knot of hair.

As the ultimate High Priestess, Isis was a powerful magician, often portrayed with winged arms. The cow was sacred to her, as were the buckle and sistrum. Her sistrum was carved with a cat image at the top, linking her with the Moon. The most famous among her sacred festivals was the Night of the Teardrop.<sup>3</sup>

The high-backed Egyptian throne was a symbol of the sacred mountain belonging to the Goddess, the connecting link between the heavens and the Earth, the symbol of supreme power. Every Pharaoh said that he “sat on the lap of the Goddess” when he was seated on this throne. The early cults of Isis called her the “seat” or the “throne,” the symbol with which she was crowned.

Maat (pronounced may-at) was a self-begotten deity known also as the Lady of the Judgment Hall. Her laws governed the three worlds (Upperworld, Underworld, and the physical world of humans); even the gods had to obey or “live by Maat.” It was through her judgment alone that the fate of souls was decided. Egyptian texts say that the Underworld had seven halls and seven gates; the Chapters of the Secret Pylons says that there were twenty-one gates. Whether it is in Egypt or Babylon, the number of Underworld gates always is seven or a multiple of seven.

Another self-produced goddess was Mut (pronounced moot). In later texts she was known as the Eye of Ra and a sky goddess, which likely means that originally she was a Sun deity. Other titles were the Great Sorceress, the Mother, and Mistress of Heaven. Often winged and with a vulture headdress, Mut’s primary symbol was three cauldrons.

Neith (pronounced night) was the Opener of the Ways, the Huntress, and Lady of the West or the Dead. The Egyptians associated the West with death because the Sun “died” in the West every night and went into the Underworld. Her name means “I have come from myself.” In her very ancient cult, she was known as the Mystical Spirit behind the Veil of Mysteries. Part of her temple sanctuary at Sais was a school of medicine, called the House of Life. On this temple Plutarch read the inscription: “I am all that has been, that is, and that will be. No mortal has yet been able to lift the veil that covers me.”

The sycamore, the Tree of Life and Death, was often regarded as the body of Neith. Known as the Oldest One, Neith’s most ancient form was that of a great



golden cobra. Myth says she gave birth to the god Ra, then strung the sky on her loom and wove the world into existence. She threw her net into the primordial depths of pre-existence and pulled out living creatures to populate the land. As patroness of weaving, Neith is a Fate goddess.

The Terrible Mother, in her aspect as goddess of death and rebirth, was Nekhebet, one of the oldest Mother goddesses in Egypt. The vulture was her symbol. In later myths, when the patriarchal ideas of bodily resurrection were adopted, Nekhebet was said to watch over the dead in the Underworld, but earlier stories say she tore apart the bodies in preparation for rebirth. In vulture form, this goddess was shown hovering over the Pharaoh, holding the fly-whisk and seal. Other times she was pictured as a woman wearing the white crown of Upper Egypt or with a vulture headdress. She carried a scepter with a serpent twined around it. Although Nekhebet gave protection to the dead in the Underworld, she was also connected with the process of rebirth through motherhood and childbirth.

Nephtys, the sister of Isis, was the Revealer who represented the dual aspects of life and death. As the guardian of hidden and mystical knowledge, she taught the secrets of dark magick and dreams.

The Egyptian sky goddess, Nut (pronounced noot), was called the Life-giver, the Mother of the gods, and was known as the friend and protector of the dead. Her star-studded body arched across the sky. Legend said that the Sun entered her mouth at dawn, traveled through her body during the day, and exited at sunset, when it then traveled through the dark Underworld. Accompanying the Sun during the Underworld journey was an image of a human soul, a ba-bird, in a little boat. The image of Nut was painted on the inside of sarcophagi lids so that it appeared as if she embraced the dead.

Renenet was the Lady of the Double Granary, the goddess of the eighth month of the Egyptian calendar. This Lady of Aat was a harvest deity and ruled over childbirth and nursing mothers; she was said to give the child its *ren* (soul-name), personality, and future fate at birth. She was also present when a soul was weighed and judged at death. Renenet was portrayed either as a serpent with a solar disk on its head, or a woman with a serpent's head.

Another healer goddess was Sekhmet, the Terrible One, the dark sister of Bast. As a lioness-headed Sun deity, she was crowned with a Sun disk encircled by a coiled cobra. This cobra or *uraeus* was thought to spit fire; this "fire" symbolized concentrated etheric energy. A goddess of war, Sekhmet was also called the goddess of physicians and bone-setters. At one time her priestesses probably taught the secrets of medicine and were great healers and surgeons. Sekhmet's attributes symbolize the alchemy of the negative Fire Element as Bast symbolizes the positive Fire.

In later Egyptian periods, the goddess Selket was said to be the guardian of the canopic jars after death. Originally, however, Selket was a goddess of magick. Sometimes she was pictured as having a woman's upper body and the lower body of a

scorpion. Other times she was shown as a woman with extended winged arms and a large golden scorpion on her head.

The Mistress of the House of Books was Seshat, a goddess later called the female equivalent of Thoth. In fact, Seshat was far older than the god Thoth, probably his predecessor from whom he took his attributes. She wore a reversed crescent and a star on her head. Seshat was the goddess of the arts of civilization: writing, records, archives, measurement, calculation, architecture, hieroglyphics, time, history, books, learning, and inventions.

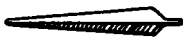
Ta-Urt was the hippopotamus goddess of childbirth, maternity, and nursing mothers. Her hieroglyphic sign was *sa*, which meant the uterine blood of the Goddess which could give eternal life. She was portrayed as a female hippo with pendulous breasts, standing upright and holding a plait of rolled papyrus (a sign of protection). However, Ta-Urt also had a darker side; she was an avenging goddess who went after those who threatened women and mothers in particular. Called the Great, she represented the impersonal executioner of karmic debt.

Greek writers tell of the ritual dances and mythic dramas enacted in Egyptian temples. This is confirmed by ancient frescoes and paintings. Since the labyrinth was known and used as part of initiations in ancient Egypt, some of the spiritual dances of the priestesses were probably in a spiraling pattern.

The ancient Mysteries of Isis and Osiris were celebrated in ancient Egypt at Abydos and several other locations. The original Mysteries held in Egypt were quite different from the later ones celebrated in Greece and Rome. In Egypt, these Mysteries were dramatizations performed at the death of one Pharaoh and the accession of another. By the time of the Hellenistic period, when the worship of Isis and Osiris was established in the Greco-Roman world, these spiritual “plays” had evolved into true Mysteries, as they had been in the ancient Egyptian matriarchy.

These Mysteries in Rome were held in November and were called the Inventio Osiridis (the finding of Osiris). This ritual basically enabled the worshippers to share the grief and joy of Isis. Gathered in the semi-darkened temple of Isis, the devotees would mourn before a prone statue of Osiris. A priest carried a light into the sanctuary. Another priest anointed the throats of the worshippers and whispered, “Be of good cheer, O initiates (*mystai*). The god is saved. We shall have salvation from our woes.” Then the devotees would shout, “*Heurekamen, synchairomen*. We have found! We rejoice together!”<sup>4</sup>

Originally, these Egyptian Mysteries probably were more in honor of the goddess Isis and contained Osiris only as the son/lover consort. It was said that Isis alone revealed mysteries (*myseis*) and granted true initiations; one of her aspects was known as Thesmophoros (Law-giver), a Greek designation which linked her with the goddess Demeter. They believed the powers of Isis could even overcome Fate (*heirmarmenon*).



The *Djed* pillar or column has been linked by historians to the god Osiris who say it represents the backbone of this god, but there is greater reason to consider it as the Goddess's sacred tree, as columns were in Crete, and connected with the goddess Isis. The word *Djed* means "stable, durable." During the last part of the rites of Osiris just before the New Year, this pillar was raised from a horizontal to a vertical position. The Tet, a knot of cloth or leather, was tied around the top of the pillar. This combined symbol, the Djed "penetrating" the Tet, is obviously sexual in nature and represents the Sacred Marriage.

About 80 BCE, a college of priestesses of Isis was established in the city of Rome. The prudish Romans, however, outlawed her religion and pulled down her temples after a few years. Under pressure of the Roman people, who evidently liked what they saw, the religion of Isis was reinstated and her temples rebuilt in 43 BCE.

The Egyptian Mysteries were performed in the inner rooms of these temples. These were very secret ceremonies which were forbidden to ordinary people. However, unlike the Greek Eleusinian Mysteries, we do have records of these Mysteries. They were dramatizations of the life and death of Osiris, his difficulties in the Underworld, and the assistance of Isis and Nephthys, which made his resurrection possible.

The ancient writer Apuleius was initiated into the Mysteries of Isis. He says he had to undergo a voluntary death (*ad instar voluntariae mortis*) and approach the threshold of death in order to experience his spiritual birthday (*natalem sacrum*). It may well be that initiates of these Mysteries, as well as those of other Goddess Mysteries, were symbolically buried in a tomb; this ritual would have been followed by a symbolic rebirth.

The goddess Hathor also had her own popular and elaborate rituals. Although these were not considered Mysteries, they retained many symbols of the previous matriarchal Goddess rituals.

The morning ceremony was the most elaborate and the main one; afternoon and evening rituals were much simpler. There was a definite order of performance to these ceremonies: water was brought into the inner sanctuary; the offering was consecrated and laid out before for the goddess; the inner shrine was cleaned and the statue paid homage. While the High Priest<sup>5</sup> was busy in the inner shrine, other priests were conducting a more or less public ceremony in the outer temple. Hathor was greatly loved as well as held in awe by the people. There still exist written copies of a series of hymns honoring this goddess.

There were four yearly festivals of Hathor that all commoners could participate in. The first was known by the strange name of "the plucking of the papyrus." The papyrus plant was a symbol of renewing life. Papyrus was shaken during the ceremonies as an invocation and propitiation of Hathor in her form of the savage Delta cow. It would seem that the word rustling should be substituted for the word plucking.

The second festival came on the twentieth day of the month of Thoth; it was called “inebriety for Hathor.” People spent the day drinking large quantities of wine, hoping to produce a kind of ecstasy. This celebration may well be a remnant of an ancient ritual that involved certain physical practices which did indeed produce a state of ecstasy within spiritually-prepared people.

The voyage of Hathor took place on certain days during the month of Tybi. Legend says that her father Ra instituted these ceremonies in her honor. A statue of Hathor was taken by boat for a short journey on water. It could well have symbolized the goddess’s superiority over the destructive forces of chaos and death.

The fourth voyage was the journey of a statue of Hathor from her temple to the city of Edfu where it was said she visited with Horus. In this way it was said that Hathor commemorated the victory of Horus over his enemies. This was probably an idea grafted onto a matriarchal celebration, as this festival also had parts that refer to the farming, harvests, and the dead.

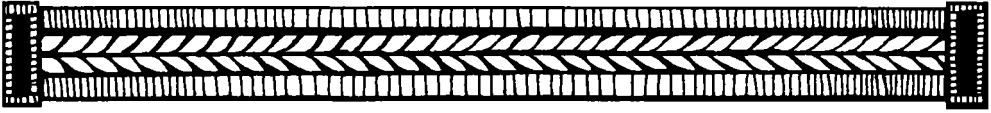
The Ethiopians, who at one time were connected either through bloodlines or acquisition to Egypt proper, followed a matriarchal system in the beginning; by about 624 BCE they still had records of eight generations of priestess-queens. These queens were called the Mistress of Kush. Such a queen also presided as the High Priestess at Napata, on the bend of the Nile above the Third Cataract.



## End Notes

1. Budge, E. A. Wallis. *Egyptian Magick*. Budge devotes an entire book to this subject, giving many translated examples of ancient Egyptian magickal procedures.
2. Sound familiar? It should. This description of Isis is almost identical to the Catholic Mary.
3. This festival has been preserved by the Arabs as their June festival *Lelat al-Nuktah*, which means Night of the Teardrop.
4. These quotes are loose translations of old wordings in ancient translations.
5. Any time a priest is mentioned as performing rituals for the goddess, you can bet it was not this way originally. Only priestesses served goddesses under the matriarchies. This is a strong clue to a goddess aspect that the common people would not give up under patriarchy, so the power was taken from the priestesses and given to priests.





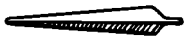
## Goddess of Secrets

**I**n ancient Greece, women often held rituals and celebrations where no males were admitted. Common incenses used were Kyphi (originally brought from Egypt), frankincense, storax, laurel, and olive. Wheat ears were offered specifically for Demeter and myrtle for Aphrodite.

Wise women known as Sibyls were attached to no particular temple or sanctuary, but earned their living by going about the countryside prophesying, purifying, and healing.

The Greeks held that 3, 5, 7, 9, and 12 were very magickal numbers. They took much of their knowledge of numbers, numerology, and the zodiac from the Middle Eastern cultures. The most popular magickal number was three, a trinity, especially when pertaining to goddesses. Nine was considered a complete number, a triad of threes (3 x 3), as shown by the Nine Muses.

There is evidence in Greek writings that they marked the Solstices and Equinoxes. Among followers of certain goddesses, rites were performed at the New



and Full Moons. Out of the myriad of ancient Greek festivals, a great many of them were in honor of goddesses.

The Panathenaea was celebrated at the end of July (Hekatombaeon) in honor of Pallas Athene. From March 19-23 was the Lesser Panathenaea, with games of skill open to all comers. Festivals honoring Cybele were held March 22-27. On August 13, Hecate as the Dark Mother was feasted, with pilgrimages to the cemeteries. The goddess Nemesis had a festival on August 23. The exact dates for the festivals of Artemis are unknown, but we do know that the Brauronia occurred every five years and a minor celebration was held annually.

February (Agrae) 1-2 was the Lesser Eleusinia, or the Festival of the Returning Daughter, which celebrated Kore's return from the Underworld and the rebirth of vegetation.

Initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries was difficult and not for everyone. The later edition of the Mysteries was open to both men and women, although they originally were women-only rituals. The Eleusinian Mysteries were bound by oaths of secrecy; to this day there are no records of exactly what went on during certain parts of these rituals. No Greek initiated into them ever broke the oath of silence; initiation into the deeper Mysteries granted the initiate immortality only if she/he obeyed the oath. We do know a few facts that picture these Mysteries as an intense spiritual experience.

The annual Sacred Festival of the Greater Eleusinia was celebrated September 23-October 1 in honor of Demeter, Kore, Persephone, and the holy child Iacchus (Dionysus). During this secret autumn ritual, the Divine Child was displayed in a wicker winnowing basket as part of the ceremonies. Eleusis means "advent," later explained as the appearance of the Divine Child, but originally meaning the reappearance of Kore as Persephone. The later addition of Iacchus was definitely a patriarchal attempt to infiltrate these Mysteries. The addition was probably allowed by the Eleusinian priestesses in order to preserve the rituals from extinction by the patriarchies.

The Greater Eleusinia took place every five years and could be attended only by first and second grade initiates. And only the second-degree initiates (the Epoptae) could participate in many of the rites. Candidates for initiation had to fast all night in a vigil of silence. As the final act of their initiation, they went veiled into the deep caverns, where a single ear of wheat and other secret symbols were revealed in flashes of light.

The Thesmophoria came October (Pyamepsion) 9-13 every year in honor of Demeter and was definitely confined to women only, even in later times. This was a three-day remembrance of Kore's (Persephone) return to the Underworld. At this festival the initiates shared a sacred barley drink and cakes. The abduction of Kore was enacted, followed by the *hieros gamos*, attended only by second degree initiates. This was the Sacred Marriage, the actual physical union or copulation of the

hierophant (priest) and High Priestess. This physical re-enactment was said to represent the union of Demeter and Zeus that had produced Kore. Since myth says that Zeus raped Demeter, this re-enactment must be of a much later date than the Greek matriarchy. It probably is a remnant of a very ancient ritual symbolizing the sexual union of the Goddess and Her lover.

At Olympia in Elis, a festival only for girls and unmarried women was held in honor of Hera every five years. The contestants wore short dresses and raced for prizes, their hair unbound and streaming behind them. The judges were sixteen married women. Each year at this festival the statue of Hera was draped in a new, richly embroidered *peplos* made by selected Greek women. Hera's chief festival was the Matronalia, held every year on March 1; this was celebrated only by women also.

Hera was an ancient goddess, predating the patriarchal culture of later Greece. The town of Argos was the oldest and chief center of her worship; in her main temple there was a beautiful statue carved by Polykleitos. This goddess had other temples at Samos, Corinth, Eubaea, Boeotia, Crete, and Lakinion in Italy. Her Cretan temple points to the fact that she was originally a goddess of that culture, brought to Greece by priestesses.

Aphrodite may well be a version of Ishtar. Known as She Who Binds Hearts Together and She Who Came From the Sea, Aphrodite also had priestesses who celebrated sexual rites in her temples. Men were excluded from most of her rituals. The love of women, in whatever form, was especially sacred to her.

Artemis, the Virgin Huntress, was a Greek counterpart of the Cretan Dictynna. In Ephesus she was called "many-breasted" and was the patroness of nurturing, fertility, and birth, aspects she kept in Greece while becoming a physical virgin deity with little use for males. The Amazons, who were loyal to her, worshipped her in her New Moon phase. Acorns were the symbol of her association with forests, the woodlands, and wild animals. As goddess of the soul-hunt, Artemis was accompanied by a stag and the Alani (her pack of hounds), and carried a silver bow. One huntress aspect of Artemis was another form of the Crone or waning Moon. The Greeks called her Scythian devotees Alani, or "hunting dogs." She could bring destruction, but was usually benign. She was the defender of all women who were harassed or threatened by men.

Greek myth says that the goddess Athene was born from the head of Zeus, obviously a later patriarchal ploy to subjugate a powerful goddess to a new male god. Like Artemis, Athene was a physical virgin, who liked men only as occasional companions. The Parthenon, "Virgin Temple," was her shrine, the greatest in Greece. An all-powerful warrior goddess who disliked senseless violence, Athene wore a helmet and *aegis* (breastplate) and carried a shield and spear. Besides being honored at the Panathenaea, she was worshipped on the Day of the Geniae on December 25.



Circe, who is described in myth as a woman, but who obviously was originally a goddess, was called the She-Falcon (*kirkos* or death-bird) and Moon deity. As the circle, or *cirque*, she was the Fate-spinner, weaver of destinies. Ancient Greek writers spoke of her as Circe of the Braided Tresses because she could manipulate the forces of creation and destruction by knots and braids in her hair. Tradition says that she had a magnificent palace on a small isle (*Aeaea*) in the Aegean Sea. The name *Aeaea* is reminiscent of the Mediterranean death-wail. This story of the sacred isle probably comes from the fact that at one time priestesses of Circe lived there and were proficient in both sex and dark magick.

Cybele came to Greece from Phrygia. The greatest center of her worship was at Pessinus in Phrygia; there, under the shadow of Mount Dindymon, was a cave containing the tomb of Attis and an extremely ancient image of the goddess in the shape of a stone. As the Great Mother, deity of the Earth and caverns, she carried a scourge of knuckle bones.

The Sorrowing Mother Demeter was always shown carrying a sheaf of wheat and crowned with ears of corn. She was a woman's goddess, the protectress of women, and the deity who revealed her deep Mysteries to a queen who began the Eleusinian Mysteries.

Gaea was the most ancient Earth Goddess of Greece, the Primeval Prophetess and the greatest of oracles. The ancient divination center of Delphi was hers long before Apollo usurped her position there. All sacred oaths were made in her name. Her priestesses were the sacred Sibyls, the wise Pythias, and the devout *Mellisae*. Into her sacred cauldron at Delphi, the priestesses threw barley and laurel leaves. Gaea had other sanctuaries at Dodona, Tegea, Sparta, and Athens.

Hecate, goddess of the Dark Moon and the Underworld, came to Greece from Thrace. Another deity of the Amazons, her chariot was pulled by dragons; a pack of hunting hounds accompanied her. She could change forms or ages and rejuvenate or kill. The women who worshipped her stained their palms and the soles of their feet with henna, probably a symbol of blood. Her festivals were all held at night by torchlight. Because of Hecate's connection with the world of spirits, Greek men feared her and her followers and said she was the goddess of witchcraft. Hecate was a soul-huntress goddess who knew her way in the realm of spirits. Every year on the island of Aegina in the Saronic Gulf, a mysterious festival was held by women in her honor. Among her symbols were the key and the cauldron.

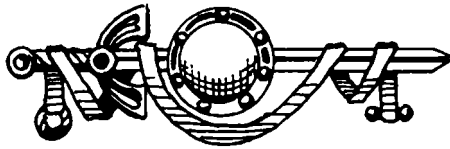
The goddess Hera probably originated in Crete, then was brought to the Greek culture by her priestesses. As the Queen of Heaven, the Holy One, and the Lady, Hera's earliest symbols were the double-axe (*labrys*), the sacred shield, helmet, spear, the cow, the Milky Way, and golden apples of Hesperides (a Cretan symbol). Later she was associated with the peacock and pomegranate.

The goddess Nemesis does not fit comfortably into Greek religion. As the goddess of destiny, the Inevitable One, she represented divine anger against mortals

who broke moral laws or taboos. She was a harsh, unremitting force representing acceptance of what must be, even for the male gods.

Persephone, originally called the Kore (Maiden), was seldom invoked without Demeter. She was an essential part of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Queen of the Underworld, and often called the Destroyer, Persephone held the keys to Elysium (reward) and Tartarus (punishment). Sacred to her were the bat, willows, grain, corn, narcissus, and the pomegranate.

Themis was a Titaness, one of the deities in existence long before the Greek patriarchal culture arrived. Her role, which personified law and order, was so respected by the Greeks that they declared all the gods bowed to her decisions. She was made into the advisor of Zeus, whose position of importance she probably held before he came into existence. She was said to be the mother of the Moerae (Fates) and protected the innocent while punishing the guilty. Our present-day statue of blinded Justice is a patriarchal image of Themis who carried a pair of scales; however, nothing handicapped Themis and blinded her to truth. Her festival was near the end of September.



## Rome

The Romans borrowed most of their deities from the Greeks. Their dealings with their gods were of a practical nature. The Roman either wanted to avoid their ill will, or enlist their support for definite material blessings. Sacrifices were offered with the idea of getting some benefit in return.

The use of *carmina*, or spellcasting, was forbidden early in Roman history if it was used negatively against another person. In Latin, *carmina* means a song or charm, probably a chanted charm, which affected fortune or fate. It was permissible to use *carmina* to increase the abundance of a crop or make a business venture profitable. In mythology, the goddess Circe was said to have changed the companions of Ulysses into pigs by the use of a magick song or *carmina*. The priestesses of the goddess Carmenta cast fortunes of children at their birth. The famous sacred books of Oracles had fifteen Keepers of the Sibylline Books, which were said to predict the complete future of the Roman Empire.

The Romans had fewer goddess festivals than did the Greeks. There was an annual festival called Mania for the ancestral Moon-Mother, or Mother of the Dead. During this time the Lapis Manalis, or Stone of the Underworld (dead), was



removed and the spirits of the ancestors invited to join in feasts. This stone covered the pit of the Manes located on Rome's Palatine Hill. Not much is known about this festival except that it was sometimes called Parentalia; this second name referred to the Underworld ghosts as the parent-ancestors of the Romans.

The Parilia, in honor of Pales, a very ancient country spirit, was held on April 21 (the founding day of Rome). Worshippers leaped over fires of straw and drove their herds through the same fires.

Maius, sacred to Maia, goddess of summer warmth, was the time of the Ambarvalia. This was a family crop festival for purification and protection of farmland. After a procession went three times around the fields, sacrifices and prayers were made to Ceres (the Roman form of Demeter). On April 15, at the festival called the Fordicidia, a pregnant cow was sacrificed to Tellus Mater, the Earth Mother. On April 19 the Cerealia occurred, honoring the grain goddess Ceres.

Junius was sacred to Juno (Hera) and therefore was considered a lucky month for marriages. Her festivals were the Matronalia at the Kalends of March, June 1-2, and July 7-8.

June 7, the Vestalia, was also the time of the cleansing of the *penus* (a sacred vessel) in the Temple of Vesta by the six Vestal Virgins. Her priestesses never offered blood sacrifices; in fact, blood only touched her altar once a year, during the Horse Festival. The goddess Vesta was called the Shining One and the One of Light, which may refer to an ancient connection with the Sun.

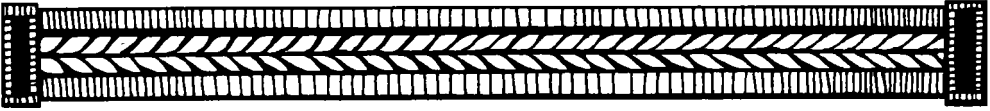
Bellona, goddess of war, who had her temple near the gate of Carmenta in Rome, had celebrations on March 24 and June 3. The Dianic festivals honoring Diana were held May 26-31 and again on August 13 and 15.

Bona Dea (Good Goddess) was a fertility goddess worshipped only by women. During her rites (May 3-4 and December 3), all statues of men were covered.

Ops was a harvest goddess; her festival was the Opalia on December 19. She was invoked by the person sitting down and touching the Earth with one hand.

The goddess Venus had a place in the Floralia April 28-May 3 and again in the Vinalia Rustica on August 9. But her own special festival was June 24.





## Goddess of Woodland & Steppes

**T**he Finnish clans of Estonia called their Earth Goddess Maa Ema, while the Votyaks of Siberia called her Muzjem Mumi. Goddess names still known in Finland are Ilmatar, Mielikii, Maan Emoinen, and Rauni.

The goddess Rauni was associated particularly with the rowan tree or mountain ash. Throughout much of Scandinavia the mountain ash tree became part of rituals performed on May 1, called Rowan Witch Day. Rowan twigs and branches have long been used as a protection against evil.

Ilmatar was considered to be an ancient Creatrix Goddess, while Mielikki was called Mistress of the Forest. Very old sacred chants still used among the Finns call upon the spirits of Nature for help. Wild forest animals were considered to be the herds and property of Mielikki.

The Finno-Ugrian races venerated ancestors, worshipped a variety of “spirits,” and believed firmly in magick and sorcery. They also believed in personal and Nature deities. Their belief in (and evidently their performance of) magick was so strong that in the Middle Ages Norwegian kings forbade their subjects to travel to



Finland to consult the shaman-magicians. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Swedish authorities even went so far as to search out and confiscate the *quodbas* (magick drums) of the Laplanders.

The Finnish spiritual leaders were usually called shamans. However, shamanism is not a religion in itself. The shamans did magick, conjuration, incantations, and spells to control people, animals, divine or demonic entities, and inanimate beings. Shamanism was the privilege of a gifted, chosen few. Only the highest grade of sorcerer was allowed to use a drum and raise spirits.

Among the Lapps and Samoyeds, natural stones of curious shapes resembling humans or animals were considered to be sacred. These were called *seide*; a most curious coincidence, since this is very similar word to that used to describe the Norse goddess Freyja's special magick (*seidr*). These stones were placed in a sacred spot and used to gain predictions or obtain desires. Wooden tree-trunks or posts were used in the same way.

In their original form, the Finnish rituals followed no discernable cyclic pattern, such as did the Norse or Celts. Where possible, most of their rituals were conducted within a grove or forest.

Finnish wizards or shamans were considered very powerful, able to raise or stop winds. The Estonian peasants still fear the winds from Lapland, saying they are caused by Finnish wizards and can strike a man dead.

The Finns believed in the Little Folk in the forms of Dwarves and Kobolds. To them the Dwarves, who lived in a magnificent underground kingdom, were basically friendly toward humans if they were treated with respect and kindness. The Kobold was a home sprite also found in other parts of northern Europe. Although people made pacts with them, offering food and shelter in return for prosperity, the Kobolds were noted for causing mischief. The Kobold, called Para in Finland, could be enticed to become a willing servant of a human, but loved to do things like steal milk from cows. Whether a Kobold was enticed into a house or came of his own will, they were considered notoriously difficult to remove. Some churches in the region kept exorcists whose primary job was to expel unwanted Kobolds.

Maan-Emoinen, also known as Mader-Akka, was the Earth Mother, a goddess of the harvest and female sexuality. Like Rauni, mountain ash was sacred to her.

Ilmatar/Lounnotar was the Creatrix Goddess, the daughter of Nature. Her immense powers of magick made it possible for her to create anything.

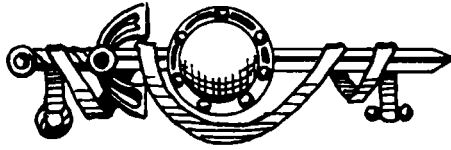
The forest goddess Mielikki was known as both the protectress of animals and the goddess of the Hunt. In this instance, the Hunt does not refer to hunting, but to the soul-hunt.

Rauni was the spirit of the mountain ash, the goddess of thunder. She was considered to be one of the most powerful Finnish deities.

Yambe-Akka was the Old Woman of the Dead. The Lapps said she had charge of the Underworld, which could be reached through caves and deep cracks in the ground.







## Slavonic-Russian

In the beginning of their histories, the Slavonic-Russian cultures were very similar in racial background and ancient religious ideas.

The Slavonic term for god was *bog*, meaning “good” or “communicating.” They believed that all life was unified, with even inanimate objects having an invisible agent controlling them. Trees and animals were considered older and wiser than humans and were their ancestors. Animals were believed to possess superior powers. For this reason, specific animals were never killed or eaten. Certain trees marked a sacred zone and were never cut. Cracks, caves, and holes in the Earth were gates to the Underworld where most of the dead lived.

Ancestor worship was widespread among the Slavs, especially. They made small statues of their ancestors and gave these prominent places in their houses near the door or above the hearth.

Their cult of the Great Goddess was greatly influenced by their contacts with the Scythians. She was pictured in human form with her arms upraised. After the Christians destroyed all her images, the Slavs still portrayed the Great Goddess in that form in their embroidery.

There were three prominent Pagan religious festivals celebrated by the Slavonic and Russian peoples. For about ten days, beginning at the Winter Solstice, there was a festival honoring Lada, the goddess of love, spring, youth, and fertility. This goddess was considered to be reborn each year with the Sun at Winter Solstice.

The Rusalki (water nymphs) were honored in a spring festival, probably held at the Spring Equinox. In Russia, dolls called Morena (death-doll) were thrown into rivers to gain the aid of the inhabiting Rusalki. The Slavs buried, drowned, or burned dolls at this Equinox to symbolize the end of winter and death.

At the Summer Solstice there was a Sun festival called Kupalo/Kupala. Kupala was the name of an ancient Slavic goddess of the Sun, treasure, and fertility. She was later changed into a god named Kupalo. The main features of this festival were lighting of fires, sprinkling of water, and foretelling the future. During this season, dead ancestors were remembered and marriages made.

Baba-Yaga, a Slavic goddess, was described as a tall, gaunt hag with dishevelled hair. She ate humans and build her revolving house and stockade out of their bones. Her ally was the snake called Zmei Gorynich.



Diiwica of Georgia and Armenia was very similar to the goddess Diana. As goddess of the hunt, she presided over forests, hounds, horses, wild animals, and ultimate victory. Other names for her were Devana and Dziejwona.

The Slavic goddess Kupala, whose festival was held at the Summer Solstice, was also the deity of springs and water. Plants sacred to her were the birch, fern, saxifrage, and purple loosestrife.

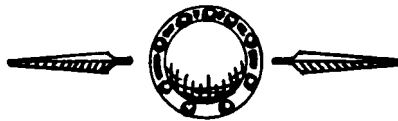
Lada, who was “reborn” at the Winter Solstice along with the Sun, was also honored between May 25 and June 25. She was a goddess of rivers, merriment, well-being, and sexual pleasures.

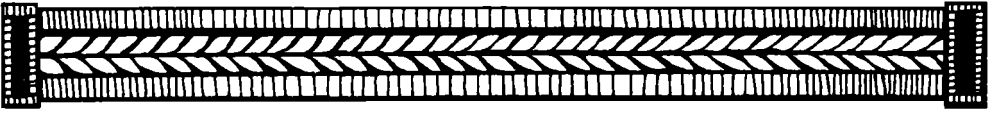
Among the Slavonic clans, Mati Syra Zemlya was honored as the Moist Mother Earth. She not only reigned over fertility and agriculture, but also over oracles and justice.

The Rusalki were water and woodland goddesses. They were considered to be very evil and dangerous as they enticed humans into water and drowned them. Weeping willow and birch were sacred to them.

Zvezda Dennitsa was a dawn daughter, goddess of the Morning Star. A virgin warrior herself, she was the patroness of all warriors. She had tremendous power, making her the equal of all other gods. The Slavs and Russians both called upon her for protection and during exorcisms. Her sister, Zvezda Vechernyaya, was goddess of the Evening Star, who had the same powers. Sometimes the name Zvezda is written as Zorya or Zarya.

The matriarchal spiritual leadership of these cultures was basically shaman in nature. The shamans never took part in everyday affairs or physical leadership of the clans. She, and later he, dealt only with the spiritual well-being of the people.



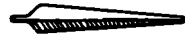


## The Dancing Shakti

**T**here are no surviving records of the matriarchal cultures which once existed in India, but as with other mythologies, there are clues left within the existing myths. One spiritual practice still in existence which shows every matriarchal sign is that of the Tantra, or sex magick. Women study these private writings to learn spiritual discipline in the service of the Divine Mother (Shakti or Kali).

There are several important Hindu goddesses whose festivals were celebrated throughout the year. The New Year festival of Diwali, or Festival of Lights, was in honor of the goddess Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity. Hindu wives danced for their husbands amid lamps; all kinds of special good things to eat were produced for this celebration. Lakshmi was born during the churning of the milk ocean. It was she who gave the god Indra the drink of *soma* (or wise blood) from her own body so he could produce the illusion of birth-giving and become king of the devas.

For four days in October, the Durga Puja was held. Durga was considered to be a matriarchal figure and was a very popular deity with the people. In her aspect of



Durga Pratyangira, she is a beautiful woman with ten arms, who carries a trident, sword, drum, and bowl of blood; she rides on a lion and uses the weapons of the gods to defend them against demons. As the symbolic image of the Motherland still today, Durga is shown smiling, with many arms and in bright colors. Marigold garlands are draped on her statues.

Devi, or Mahadevi, is the Shakti, or female energy, which each Hindu god must have to give him power. She is called the Great Goddess, the most powerful of all the goddesses.

The goddess Kali Ma is the most recognizable, and the most misunderstood, of Hindu goddesses. She is called the Black Mother, the Terrible, and Mother of Karma. Her dual personality exhibits traits of both gentleness and love, and revenge and terrible death. She is the Female Principle of Life-Death, the patroness of witches.

As the Kalika (Crone), she governs every form of death, but also rules every form of life. She is always a Trinity manifested in three forms: three divisions of the year, three phases of the Moon, three sections of the cosmos, three stages of human life, three types of priestesses at her shrines. As the Holy Trinity, Kali is called Prakriti (Nature). She commands the *gunas*, or threads of Creation, Preservation, and Destruction, and embodies the past, present, and future. She is said to command the weather by braiding or releasing her hair. Her karmic wheel devours time itself.

Statues of Kali can be very upsetting unless one understands the spiritual meaning behind the symbolism. She is pictured with black skin and a hideous face smeared with blood, bare breasts, and four arms. She wears a necklace of skulls and is draped with snakes. Her brow has a third eye, and her four arms hold weapons and heads. Violence against any woman is forbidden by her. Blood sacrifices are a daily part of her rituals, but so are garlands of marigolds, strings of tinkling bells, incense smoke, and gifts of sweetmeats and spices.

Parvati, the Mother Goddess and virgin aspect of Kali, represents the union of positive/negative, god/goddess, man/woman; in other words, the worship of Parvati is the Sacred Marriage of the two parts of every human.

The beloved goddess Tara, the Star, represents the control of human sexuality in order to achieve spiritual enlightenment. The Hindus recognize that uncontrolled sexuality leads only downward on the spiritual path.

Much matriarchal influence can still be found in the Hindu beliefs of today. The yantra is a Tantric meditation graphic or symbol. It is the physical, visible equivalent of a mantra, which is a sound. A yantra helps to activate the mind on a spiritual level. Yantras represent thoughtforms of the deities in visual symbols, as the mantras express them in sound.

The most important yantra is the Sri Yantra or Great Yantra. This is the design of two interlocking triangles representing the union of the God and Goddess. We know it as the hexagram.



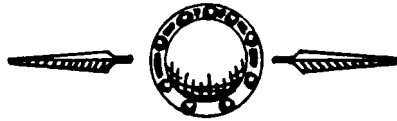
Mantra is a Sanskrit term for “words of power.” They are one or more words or a series of sounds which promote deep meditation. The goddesses themselves are said to be controlled by mantras. The most famous Tantric mantra is *Om mane padme hum*, which literally means “Jewel (penis) in the lotus (vulva),” or union of Goddess and God. The Hindus believe that anything can be accomplished if one knows the correct mantras.

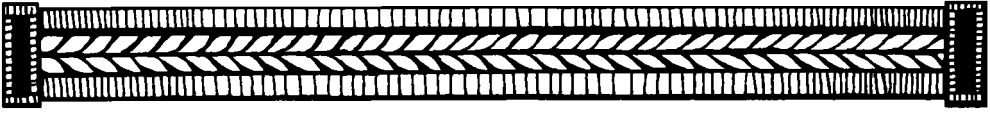
Om or Aum is considered the greatest sound possible. It is the basis of all sounds and is the universal symbol-word for deity. The Aum or Om of the Vedas became the sacred word *Hum* of the Tibetans; *Amin* of the Moslems; *Amen* of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians.

In Hinduism, the mantra Om is uttered before any prayer. Conch shells are blown from the temples to indicate offering of prayer or sacrifice.

Most homes have a room or corner for worship (*puja*) where there is an image or symbol of the deity. *Puja* is the worship of a deity by means of an image or abstract symbol. Incense sticks are lit, and lamps, flowers, and food are placed in front of the shrine. The images are sprinkled with water. Worship is performed at dawn, noon, and in the evening.

Women have their own special deity images. There are private writings (tantra) which teach spiritual disciplines in the service of the Divine Mother (Shakti or Kali).



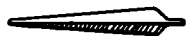


## Lady of Compassion & Mercy

**I**n China, much of the goddess worship of the old matriarchies is deeply hidden under the patriarchal influences of Buddhism and other male religions.

Chinese Taoist priests could be either male or female. The *Wu* (magician) could be an oracle, exorcist, or sacrificer. The *Wu* wore a *kang-i* (red garment), which was a robe for ceremonial and magickal occasions. It was embroidered with trees, mountains, thunder spirals, and dragons to signify control over Nature. The *kang-i* was formed from a square sheet of silk with a slit in front and a head-hole in the center. It had a wide blue silk border sewn at the bottom, and was sleeveless in that it had no separate sleeves sewn into it. Thick silk ribbons of various colors hung down the front. The *Wu* wore her hair piled up on the head and covered with a round black cap embroidered with the golden Sun rays.

The female *Wu* was considered to be particularly good at trance and mediumship. She worked in cooperation with a spirit called Lady Tzse. This class of women were really shamans; they were feared and respected for their great powers.



Certain items were part of the Taoist *Wu* rituals: swords, rice, water, and bells. Swords and daggers were primarily used for exorcisms. Symbolic swords were made from the joining of Chinese coins with holes in the center; these “swords” were hung in the home or ritual area for strong protection. Very small swords carved of willow were made to repel demons; these were decorated with red tassels and worn or hung near doors. Swords and *kiens* (double-edged daggers) were often made of peach wood; these were used in rituals for getting rid of demons. The hilts of ritual swords were wrapped in red cloth; when not in use, the ceremonial swords were kept concealed in silk cloth.

The Chinese used astrology, but their system of casting charts was considerably different from the Western method. They used a cycle of twelve signs based on animals: Rat, Buffalo, Tiger, Cat, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig. These signs were not based on the day and month of birth, but on the year.

Chinese goddesses may once have been preeminent and powerful, although they fell to a lower position among the deities during later times. Ch’ang O was goddess of women’s menstrual cycles and the Moon, where she had her Palace of the Great Cold. Chih-Nii may once have been a Fate goddess, for she was later called the goddess of spinners and weavers. Feng-Po-Po is the only goddess who supplanted a god, Feng-Po. As a deity of winds, storms, and moisture, Feng-Po-Po probably was the original deity, replaced by a god, then returned to her position of authority. Hou-T’u was the Empress Earth, while Chuang-Mu reigned over sexual delights. Tou-Mou was known as the goddess of the pole-star and the record-keeper of all the gods; she also judged the worthiness of all peoples.

Hsi Wang Mu, Queen of the West, was considered to be the highest goddess. Her palace was in the Khun-lun mountains where she grew and protected the herb of immortality. The Broom Lady, Sao-Ts’ing Niang, was responsible for ending drought; Tien-Mu ruled over lightning.

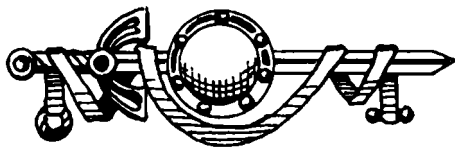
Nu Kua was a goddess whose lower body was that of a snake; she was the Creatrix who made humankind. She was very ancient, probably the first form of any Chinese goddess.

Tsi-Ku, or Tsi Ku Niang, was the Purple Lady, strictly a goddess worshipped and consulted by women. Tradition says that when a woman wanted to know the future, she went to the outhouse and asked Tsi-Ku.

Meng-Po Niang Niang was a Crone aspect of the Goddess. She was said to live just inside the exit door from hell where those souls reincarnating would depart. Her secret brew, of which she administered a few drops to each departing person, made all humans forget their previous lives.

The best known Chinese goddess was Kuan Yin, the beloved Great Mother. She was the lady of compassion and mercy and a patroness of all priestesses. Sometimes she is shown holding a child, symbolizing her powers over motherhood, childbirth, and the granting of children. Her main temple was on Miao Feng Shan,

where pilgrims used rattles and fireworks to emphasize their prayers. It was believed that Kuan Yin sat on her paradise island of P'u T'o and answered every prayer to her. She also reigned over purification, success, and enlightenment.



## Japan

The Shinto religion of Japan still has many aspects of Goddess worship within its rituals. At the Shinto center at Ise, the inner shrine (the *Kotai-jingu*) was sacred to the Sun goddess Amaterasu. The *Kotai-jingu* contained the mirror which was said to enshrine the soul of this goddess. Only the emperor and priests could enter the *shoden* (central shrine). The numerous small shrines and pavilions around it were for pilgrims.

In the individual homes, the gods were honored with small shrines called god-shelves (*kami-dana*),<sup>1</sup> which were fastened high on the wall above the sliding screens. In front of these little shrines hung a twisted straw rope (*shimenawa*), which kept away evil. Vases held small green branches, flowers, and leaves; bottles of water or sake were set out. Candles and incense were lit daily as the worshipper clapped her hands and chanted sacred texts.

At the New Year, the god-shelves were renewed or replaced by new ones. Doors of the homes were decorated with branches for good luck and new life. Demons were exorcised, both from temples and many houses. In the spring and autumn, the dead were remembered and the tombstones cleaned. There were also seasonal festivals for fishing, rice growing, and flowers.

Amaterasu is one of the very few remaining Sun goddesses. As ruler of all Japanese deities, her emblem of the rising Sun is seen on the Japanese national flag.

Benten, sometimes called Benzaiten, was the only Japanese goddess of good luck. In one form, she was portrayed as a dragon-woman with a company of white snakes; in another form, she was a lovely human woman mounted on a dragon. One of her powers extended protection from earthquakes.

The shape-shifter Inari was very popular and had many shrines. She was pictured as a woman with a fox-tail and could take on the appearance of a fox whenever she wanted.

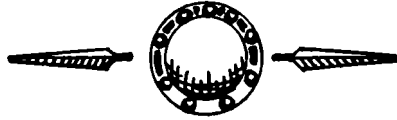
Izanami was the Divine Mother, the Female Principle, and a Creatrix goddess who knew much magick. Kaya Nu Hima was known only as a deity of herbs, while





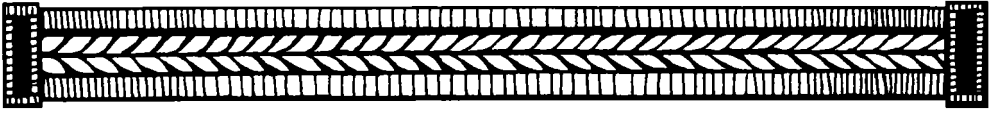
Toyota Mahime was a sea goddess. The Universal Mother Kishi-Mojin was a protectress of children. Naru-Kami ruled over thunder and protected trees; she was also the patroness of artisans.

Ishikore-Dome (Stone-Coagulating Old Woman) was a smith-goddess who created the first mirror from copper stones out of the Isuzu River. It is said that this mirror is preserved as a sacred relic in the Imperial Shrine at Ise. No one is allowed to see this mirror, but tradition says it has eight sides.



## End Notes

1. The translation of the Japanese word *kami* is “god,” but means much more “god” or “deity.” It means anything that is believed to possess supernatural power or beauty. This includes many inanimate objects.



## Lady of Fire & Ice

**T**he Norse religious rituals encompassed the Solstices and Equinoxes, but primarily most of them were used for everyday happenings: plowing, harvest, birth, marriage, death, traveling, trade undertakings, etc. The most powerful times for rituals were thought to be dawn, noon, sunset, and midnight.

The cultures of the Nordic-Germanic peoples had a number of important goddesses. By digging into the clues left in their myths, one can trace the fact that these deities were remnants of an earlier matriarchal society. There were full-time priests and priestesses in temples, while among the people were men and women who practiced as seers, looking into the future and doing various magickal rites. The name for both sexes of these seers was a *vitki*, a magician or wise one.

Nerthus, the Earth Mother, had her own sacred grove and sanctuary on a sea island. In the spring of each year, her chariot drawn by cows made a pilgrimage throughout the land. This chariot contained her image or a veiled priestess acting as the goddess. No sword dared be lifted for any reason during this journey. At the end of her trek, the image was returned to the sacred isle and washed in the sea.



Sacred symbols were widely used for all types of decoration. One of these symbols was the boar, special to both the god Freyr and his sister, the goddess Freyja. Boar images were used on ceremonial objects and war helmets. Some Teutonic tribes wore masks or helmets which covered the face and had a tusk protruding on each side. Neck-rings and arm-rings also carried the boar symbol.

Wise women, seeresses, rune-mistresses, and female healers were all closely connected with Freyja, goddess of magick and love affairs (not marriages). The female *volva* went about the tribes giving predictions of the future through trance and were linked to cults of both Freyja and Odhinn. Another name for the *volva* (priestess) was *seidkona*. In Old English she was called a *haegtessa*, in Iceland a *gythia*. They were all initiates of Freyja's specialized magick, *seidr*.

Although the myths say that Odhinn was the Master of the runes and magick, one must consider that these records were all written down long after the fact of Nordic Pagan worship and under the influence of the Christians. The myths do say, however, that Freyja knew great magick when she first came to the Aesir gods and that Odhinn coveted her knowledge. The Vanir deities were the oldest of the gods and were the remnants of a matriarchy taken over by patriarchal beliefs.

Freyja was commonly known as the great *dis*, leader of the *disir*. Late into Swedish history, during the *disirblot* held at the beginning of winter, nine women representing the *disir* would ride from house to house where they were offered welcome, food, and drink. As representatives of the spiritual *disir*, they were thought to bring good luck. If seen in visions, the *disir* could be luck-bringers or merciless executors of justice.

The runes, which had few curved lines, were both magickal symbols and (at a later date) letters of the alphabet. Since Norse women maintained much of their freedom and rights, there is nothing that says they did not learn the runes along with the men. The Norse believed that knowledge of the runes could save life, blunt sword blades, calm the seas and winds, quench fire, and help to understand the language of birds and animals.

From shortly after the patriarchal conquest, the runes were taken over by Odhinn. Runic magick became the sole practice of the male *rynstr*, or runester. Magickal runic knowledge required that the user know how to carve them, read them, color them, and use them. Tradition says that the runes were to be colored red. If one checks into the meanings of the ancient German words for "to make red" and "to endow with magickal power," you find they were the same. Red is always connected with blood (the life-force) and especially menstrual blood. This clearly points to the runes originally belonging to a goddess.

In Norse mythology, Asgard was the realm of the Gods where all those who died violently, warriors, and righteous men went after death. The word "men" is a misnomer, as there is nothing to suggest that women did not have the same privileges. Helheim, the kingdom of the goddess Hel, had one section for criminals, and

another for those who died of old age or illness. Oath-breakers and secret killers, two unforgivable crimes to the Norse, were also condemned to the worst section of Hel's kingdom. Hel, sometimes called Hela, was the ruler of Niflheim; her palace home was called Sleet-Den or Sleet-Cold.

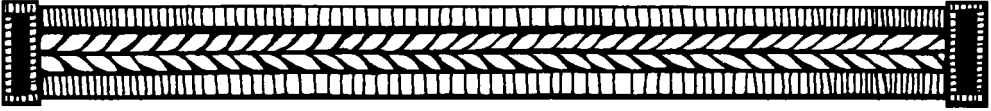
The North Germanic name for Hel was Holda or Bertha (White Lady). She was the goddess of winter and Witchcraft, the Crone aspect of the Moon. She was said to ride on the Wild Hunt in search of souls. Sometimes in her more benign aspect, Holda was said to ride on a goat with a pack of 24 spotted hounds (her daughters) running beside her. In Germany, when it snows, it is said that Old Mother Holda is shaking her feather-bed. This goes directly back to Holda's connection with Hel and the ice kingdom of Niflheim.

Predestination and predetermination were unknown to the ancient Norse. They believed that certain basic paths were laid out in a life, but that each person influenced the future by what she or he decide to do and how she or he responded to difficult situations. This idea is reflected in their descriptions of the Norn (Fate) goddesses. Another name for the Norns was the Weird Sisters. The Vikings also believed in continuing contact between the living and the dead.

Freyja was also known as Syr (seer or sow), She Who Shines Over the Sea, and the Lady. She owned the famous necklace Brisingamen and chose half of the slain warriors in her hall. Her falcon cape enabled her to shape-shift and go anywhere in the Nine Worlds. She was called the mistress of cats, leader of the Valkyries, the sage or "sayer" who inspired all sacred poetry. The number thirteen was hers and Friday was her day; Friday actually means "Freyja's day." The Christians said that Friday the thirteenth was unlucky in hopes that people would stop honoring the goddess on that day.

The Valkyries, who were said to be the female attendants of Odhinn, were also strongly connected with the goddess Freyja, who was their leader. Originally, they were very likely Freyja's priestesses and spiritual leaders. Remaining records speak of the Valkyries as both human and supernatural, thus pointing to the distinct possibility that there were physical priestesses called Valkyries who represented their supernatural counterparts. They directed the course of battles and chose the valiant warriors for Valhalla. Associated with horses and wolves, the Valkyries were known as death angels or mare-women.





## Goddess of Sword & Cauldron

**T**he Celtic people do not appear to have kept written records of their history until the latter part of their independent existence; the Celts in Ireland and Wales seem to have been the only ones who made a concerted attempt to record some of their history, mythologies, and spiritual beliefs. This all occurred before the Christian monks arrived. Under the direction of the monk known as St. Patrick, a purge took place in Ireland. Patrick personally burned almost 180 Irish books written in the Celtic language. This set an example for Christian zealots who destroyed every piece of Celtic literature they could find.

The Christian Church also forcibly replaced the Celtic Ogam (pronounced *owam*) alphabet with the Latin alphabet. The Ogam alphabet was sacred and probably used only for special recordings by the Celtic spiritual leaders. The Celts, and particularly the Druids, knew and used the Greek alphabet for ordinary messages. The Irish Bards simply rewrote many of the lost pieces of literature in Latin. The later Bards of Wales continued to use the Ogam to write down what they remembered of their traditions.



The remnants of ancient Celtic traditions today can be sifted out of the remaining Irish and Welsh books of mythology. If one knows what to look for, one can follow the trail of clues which speak of ancient Celtic women of power.

We know of one instance of Celtic women-only Mysteries through the Christians themselves. The goddess Brigit had a sacred place at Kildare, Ireland where only priestesses served her. This goddess was so popular with the people that Christians found it impossible to eliminate her worship. So they changed Brigit to St. Brigit in hopes of changing the peoples' minds from Paganism to Christianity.

The Celts had sacred organizations of women similar to the Druids. The leader of these priestesses, and the feminine counterpart of the Arch-Druid, was the High Priestess of the Grove. The Celtic word for a sacred grove was *nemeton*, which is seen in place-names such as Aquae Arnemetiae in Britain. The comparative Irish word is *fidnemed*. Classical writers like Tacitus, Strabo, Dio Cassius, and Lucan all mention the use of sacred groves for training, ritual, and sacrifice.<sup>1</sup>

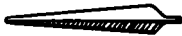
The ancient writer Strabo mentions, for example, a specific group of Celtic priestesses who lived on a channel island off the coast of Gaul.<sup>2</sup> Roman writers also spoke of women tribal leaders, such as Queen Boadicea and Queen Cartimandua, who performed sacrifices and rituals for the benefit of their people.

The priestesses were the first healers, judges, astronomers, teachers, oracles, and religious leaders of the clans; with the change from matriarchy to patriarchy, the priestesses shared these duties with the Druids. Special schools were available for the fledgling priestesses, as well as for the Druids.

Priestesses learned to sing the dying to sleep, do enchantments, prophecies, charms, birthing, and healing. They knew the power of words, stones, and herbs. In magick, they knew the secret powers of binding and loosing, which they symbolized by binding or loosing their hair during rituals. Curses were laid when needed, and especially for the mistreatment of women. Red-haired women were sacred to the War Goddesses, as red was the color of blood and especially menstrual blood.<sup>3</sup> A Celtic name for this fluid was *dergflaith*, or "red mead" or "red ale." To be stained red in Celtic Britain meant to be chosen by the Goddess as king.

A magick cauldron, bowl, pool, or spring was one of the central features of their Groves. Certain hills, lakes, caves, springs, wells, monoliths, islands, clearings within groves of trees, and ancient stone circles were sacred worship places. Both the Druids and priestesses occasionally built large rectangular or horseshoe-shaped wooden buildings as temples.

Most Celtic celebrations were held at night, for the Celtic day was reckoned as beginning at either dusk or midnight. Their original calendar, based on the Moon cycles, had thirteen months. Evidence of this is found in their religious holidays, which were based on the Solstices, Equinoxes, and Moon phases. They also observed Imbolc (February 1), Beltane (May 1), Lughnassadh (August 1), and Samhain (which is now called Halloween).



Samhain (pronounced sow-en) marked the ending of one Celtic year and the beginning of another. The new year actually began with sunset on October 31. They believed that the veil between the Worlds was thinnest at this time, and the dead could be contacted for help and knowledge. Feasts were held for departed ancestors. Priestesses were called upon for divinations.

Imbolc, which comes from the word *oimelc* or sheep's milk, marks the season of new lambs, the first signs of spring after a long, cold winter.

Beltane came in the month of Mai or Maj. This was a month of sexual freedom for all Celtic adults. Temporary marriages often were made at this time, to last a year and a day; at the end of that time, the couple simply went before a priestess and stated whether they wished to continue or go their separate ways. The color green was worn for this celebration, linking it with the growing season and fertility. The Christians, in an attempt to outlaw this festival, first declared wearing of green as illegal, then as unlucky.

Lughnassadh was a celebration of the sacred marriage of the Sun god Lugh to the Earth Mother Goddess. This is very likely a later addition to a matriarchal harvest festival, for the goddess Macha was also honored at Lughnassadh.

The Triple Goddess, or triple aspects of the Goddess, were known and revered among the Celts. To the Irish Celts, these aspects were represented by Anu or Danu as the Maiden, Badb as the Mother, and Macha as the Crone. Sometimes, the Morrigan (Morrigan), who was in herself triple, took the part of the Crone. To the Celts of Wales, the Maiden was Blodeuwedd, the Mother Arianrhod, the Crone Cerridwen.

The goddess Anu was honored at the Summer Solstice by lighting fires on hill-tops.

The priestesses knew and used the power of the circle, as is shown in tales telling of circle dances and circles of power. To represent the four directions of this circle, they used specific colors: East, the dawn, red; South, noon, white; West, dusk, gray; North, midnight, black.

Both the priestesses and Druids considered the oak and mistletoe as sacred, as were wrens, which they thought to be prophetic. Holly was sacred to the Morrigan, the Underworld Goddess of death and regeneration; her symbol was a 5-point star.

In Wales, the goddess Arianrhod was a Full Moon deity of reincarnation. Her palace, which was called *Caer Arianrhod*, was symbolized by the Aurora Borealis. This was also known as the Oar Wheel, a spiritual ship which carried dead warriors to Emania, the Moon-land. Arianrhod, as the keeper of the circling Silver Wheel of Stars, controlled time and karma.

Badb of Ireland was called both "Boiling" and "Battle Raven." Her boiling cauldron of ever-producing life places her as a regenerating Mother and as a death Crone.

Brigit, whose name and functions were known from Ireland through Wales, Spain, and France, was the goddess honored at Imbolc. Sometimes she was



acknowledged as triple: the Triple Brigits, the Three Blessed Ladies of Britain, or the Three Mothers. At her sacred spot in Kildare, she was served by an exclusive female priesthood, who kept an ever-burning sacred fire in her honor. She was also called the Poetess.

The Cailleach, known in both Ireland and Scotland, was the Destroyer. As the Veiled One, she represented the difficult and frightening discoveries of past lives, which are concealed until the initiate is able to face them.

The terrifying, but extremely important, Moon goddess of Wales was Cerridwen. Only through her could the Celtic shamans and Bards pass into the Underworld for their supreme initiation. Welsh Bards called themselves *Cerddorion* (sons of Cerridwen); the greatest of these Bards, Taliesin, declared that he was born of Cerridwen and had tasted the life-death-giving potion from her magick cauldron in the Underworld.

Don of Ireland ruled over the Land of the Dead. Entrances to her kingdom were always in a *sidhe* (pronounced shee) or burial mound. In Wales, Don was sometimes called female, sometimes male, and ruled over the womb-tomb sea.

The Morrigan, known throughout Ireland, Wales, and Britain in various forms, was called a war goddess, but never actually joined in battles. She reigned over the battlefield and the death of warriors through her magick. She was said to often speak in a mysterious language, perhaps a remnant of the sacred tongue used by priestesses during the earlier Celtic matriarchy. Associated with the crow and raven, the Morrigan could shape-shift into their forms.

The Irish Scathach (Scota in Scotland) was called the Shadowy One and She Who Strikes Fear. As a Dark Goddess of the Underworld, or Land of Scath, this goddess was connected with the mystical teachings of martial arts. Her priestesses taught the greatest of warriors in Albion, probably on the Isle of Skye, and also initiated them into the deeper Mysteries.

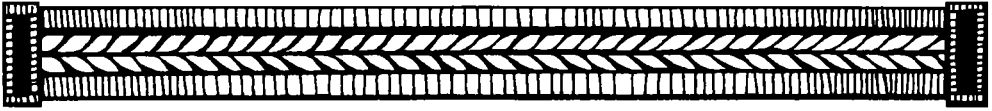
The Celtic priestesses practiced a form of European shamanism and magick. They used a variety of divination methods, including sleeping overnight on burial mounds. Early on in Celtic history these women were trustees of the knowledge of blacksmithing, weapon-making, martial arts, healing, and astral-traveling. According to the legends, some women still had these powers and knowledge well into the time of the patriarchal clan system.





# Appendices





## Stone Symbolism

**Agate:** Strength, courage, love, healing, protection.

**Amazonite:** Taking a chance to be successful in a project.

**Amber:** Luck, healing, strength, protection.

**Amethyst:** Dreams, psychic abilities, healing.

**Aquamarine:** Psychic abilities, divination, purification.

**Bloodstone:** Victory, wealth, power, legal matters, business.

**Carnelian:** Protection, eloquence, courage.

**Cat's Eye:** Wealth, success, protection.

**Chrysoprase:** Luck, success, friendship, money.

**Citrine:** Protection, psychic awareness.

**Coral:** Healing, wisdom, peace.

**Cross Stone, Faery Cross, or Staurolite:** Luck, money, elemental magick.



**Crystal, Quartz:** Divination, psychic abilities, power.

**Diamond:** Gaining spirituality, protection, reconciliation.

**Emerald:** Money, psychic talents, protection, exorcism.

**Garnet:** Protection, strength, healing.

**Geodes:** Astral travel.

**Holey Stones:** Protection, divination.

**Jade:** Love, healing, long life, wisdom, prosperity.

**Jet:** Protection, good luck, divination, magick.

**Lapis Lazuli:** Spiritual growth, courage, protection.

**Malachite:** Power, business success, prosperity.

**Moonstone:** Divination, developing psychic talents, protection.

**Obsidian:** Grounding, divination.

**Onyx:** Protection, defense.

**Peridot:** Health, prosperity, sleep.

**Ruby:** Wealth, power, protection.

**Sard:** Thought to be more effective in women's magick. Protection, courage, easing childbirth.

**Sunstone:** Energy, protection, success.

**Tiger's Eye:** Money, protection, good luck, divination.

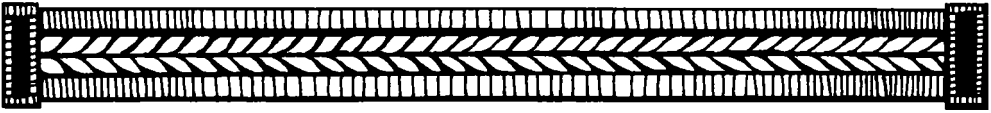
**Topaz:** Money, love, healing, protection.

**Tourmaline:** Money, business success, friendship, courage, astral travel.

**Turquoise:** Good luck, friendship, prosperity, love.

**Zircon:** Sexual energy, healing, love, peace.





## Color Symbolism

**Black:** Candles: Reversing, uncrossing, binding negative forces, discord, protection, releasing, repel dark magick and negative thoughtforms.

**Auras:** An ambivalent color that must be read according to the other colors and symbols in the aura. Can mean deep pessimism and feeling bound or unable to do anything about a negative situation. On the other side, black can represent working to repel psychic attack and defending against dark magick. When a person is reversing the effects of negative spells and thoughtforms, changing the power into positive energy, the black in the aura will be shot with silver sparkles.

**Blue:** Candles: Truth, inspiration, wisdom, occult power, protection, understanding, good health, happiness, peace, fidelity, harmony in the home, patience.

**Auras:** Healing, harmony, an understanding of other creatures; transitional periods that will go smoothly. Very pale blue symbolizes a new healer or one giving up the talent. Dark blues are associated with disharmony in life.



**Brown:** Candles: Attract money and financial success; influence Earth Elementals; concentration, balance, ESP, intuition, study.

Auras: An Earth color associated with elementals, faeries, elves, and other such entities. One who has brown in any shade in her or his aura will have close connections with these entities as well as with the animal kingdom.

**Gold:** Candles: Great fortune, intuition, understanding, divination, fast luck, financial benefits, attracts higher influences.

Auras: The color of success in one or more areas of life. Dark gold shows greed, while a pale, beautiful gold indicates a growing awareness of the person's right to be successful.

**Gray:** Candles: Keep someone from seeing your real action; to hide something behind an illusion.

Auras: Symbolizes depression, a loss of confidence, a negative turn of mind and thoughts. Lighter shades indicate the beginning of these problems, while dark shades show up when these problems are severe. Dark spots of gray are also evident in the auras of people who are developing diseases.

**Green:** Candles: Abundance, fertility, good fortune, generosity, money, wealth, success, renewal, marriage, balance.

Auras: A Nature color associated with fertility of the mind, body, and spirit. Crafts people who work with their hands show this color strongly, as do gardeners and Nature lovers. Pale green can mean a new beginning in life. A green so dark as to be almost black will often indicate a problem in relationships or marriage.

**Indigo or Turquoise:** Candles: Meditation; neutralize another's magick; stop gossip, lies, or undesirable competition; balance out karma.

Auras: Associated with one who is able to access their Akashic records and put to good use the knowledge found there. Also seen around those who spend quality time astral traveling. A very dark color represents karmic problems which are not being faced. Pale indigo means a beginning of awareness of the importance of karma and the Akashic records.

**Magenta:** Candles: Very high vibrational frequency that tends to cause the color-magick of other candles to work fast, so usually burned with other candles; quick changes, spiritual healing, exorcism.

**Orange:** Candles: Encouragement, adaptability, stimulation, attraction, sudden changes, control, power, to draw good things, change luck.



**Auras:** Clear orange symbolizes a feeling of personal power and the strength to change personal events to your satisfaction. Dark orange means the person is on a power-trip. Pale orange represents a feeling of either personal control slipping from your grasp, or not making an effort for personal control in your life.

**Pink:** Candles: Love, affection, romance, spiritual awakening, healing of the spirit, togetherness.

**Auras:** True love, friendship, and the type of natural innocence found in children. A dark shade of pink means the love or friendship is moving toward possessiveness; a lighter shade is timidity.

**Purple or Violet:** Candles: Success, idealism, higher psychic ability, wisdom, progress, protection, honors, spirit contact, break bad luck, drive away evil, divination.

**Auras:** A true shade of this powerful color represents psychic and spiritual growth, while a dark shade shows a tendency toward misuse of these talents and a craving for the power gained through their use. Violet, a pale shade of purple, indicates one who is balancing out her or his karma and intent upon replacing undesirable habits.

**Red:** Candles: Health, energy, strength, sexual potency, courage, will-power, to conquer fear or laziness.

**Auras:** Pure red can mean lots of vitality and activity. Dark red is anger, resentment, lust, and exploding temper. Light red is connected with waning energy levels.

**Silver:** Candles: Removes negative powers, victory, stability, meditation, develop psychic abilities.

**Auras:** An occult color that symbolizes the gaining and development of psychic talents. Also appears in auras of those especially dedicated to the Goddess. Often appears in small quantities when astral teachers are healing and soothing the emotions of their charge. For dark silver, see gray.

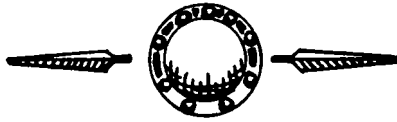
**White:** Candles: Purity, spirituality and greater attainments in life, truth, sincerity, power of a higher nature, wholeness.

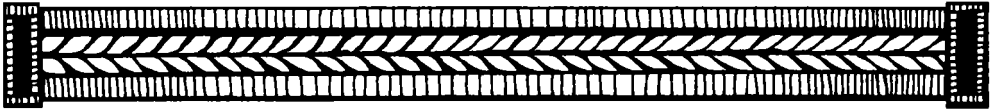
**Auras:** Shows spiritual guidance and will often indicate the presence of personal teachers and guides. The person with a brilliant white in the aura is being directed into the right paths for growth, and learning to see beyond illusions; centered and calm. There are no dark or light shades of white.



**Yellow: Candles:** Intellect, imagination, power of the mind, creativity, confidence, gentle persuasion, action, attraction, concentration, inspiration, sudden changes.

**Auras:** A bright sunny yellow is creativity and intellect, the workings of the mind. A dark yellow represents sudden changes which are not to your liking. A pale, almost washed-out yellow means lost interest in learning anything new.





## Goddess Animals

**Adder:** Cailleach. Shedding something in favor of something better. Getting rid of a person, attitude, or situation that is holding you back.

**Ant:** Demeter/Ceres. Stamina, planning. Working with a group. Working with a plan for your life.

**Antelope or Gazelle:** Astarte, Isis, Artemis/Diana. Developing a strong survival instinct in yourself. Swift, strength. Caution when approaching something new.

**Bear:** Artemis, Callisto, Dea Artia, Freyja. A creature of dreams, astral travel. Finding balance and harmony in life. Strength, stamina, defense. Seek quiet places for answers.

**Bees:** Aphrodite, Demeter, Cybele, Artemis/Diana, Rhea. Prosperity. Astral traveling to the realm of the Goddess to better understand the cycle of reincarnation.





- Blackbird:** Rhiannon. Learning mystic secrets while in meditation.
- Buffalo:** Durga. Working with spirit to achieve goals. Abundance, work, survival. In visions, prayers are being heard.
- Boar, Sow or Pig:** Aphrodite, Demeter, Persephone, Ceres, Tellus Mater, Circe, Freyja, Brigit, Cerridwen. Cunning, intelligence when in danger. Concealing oneself when in danger.
- Bull, Cow or Cattle:** Lakshmi, Aditi, Prithivi, Kali, Gauri, Kauri, Hathor, Nut, Isis, Astarte, Ishtar, Ninhursag, Asherah, Hera, Artemis Tauropolos, Nerthus. Knowing when to be aggressive and defend yourself. Being alert for danger.
- Centaur:** Demeter, the Muses. Inspiration for an artistic talent. Healing, shape-shifting, music, divination.
- Cobra:** Neith, Isis, Ua Zit/Buto. Protecting yourself from religious persecution. Spiritual wisdom from the Goddess.
- Cock:** Athene, Demeter, Nephthys, Brigit. The power of words and magick to dispel and repel negativity.
- Crane:** Cailleach. Learning and keeping secrets. Reaching deeper mysteries and truths. Learning new types of magick.
- Crow:** Rhea, Kronia, Athene, Macha, Badb, the Morrigan, Branwen. Trickery, boldness, skill, cunning. A bringer of knowledge. Learning to mentally shape-shift.
- Deer or Stag:** Artemis, Aphrodite, Athene, Diana, Isis, Flidais. Using methods other than force to reach your goals. Being alert for danger. Abundance, dreams, visions, intuition, transformation, death and rebirth.
- Dolphin or Porpoise:** Astarte, Ishtar, Thetis. Freedom, magick, change, harmony. Creating a rhythm in your life.
- Dove or Pigeon:** Astarte, Atargatis, Demeter, Aphrodite, Athene, Venus, the Furies, Hera, Parvati. Peace, gentleness, love. Communicating with friends and loved ones who are in spirit.
- Falcon:** Circe, Freyja. Magick, astral travel. Sending energy and soul-healing to a dying person for an easy death.
- Fish:** Atargatis, Ishtar, Derceto, Isis, Aphrodite, Demeter, Kuan Yin, Kwannon. Abundance, prosperity, fertility.
- Frog:** Heket, Aphrodite, Hecate. A symbol of initiation and transformation. Beginning a new life cycle by dispensing with negative things.
- Goat:** Artemis, Athene. Removing guilty feelings of the past or present. Getting in touch with the wilder Nature energies and beings.

- Goose:** Hera, Isis, Epona, Holda. New beginnings, wisdom, inspiration, happiness.
- Griffin:** Nemesis. Spiritual enlightenment.
- Guinea Fowl:** Athene. Protection, warning.
- Hawk:** Amenti, Artemis. Clear-sightedness. Far-memory, or recalling past lives. Omens and dreams. Overcoming problems. Taking advantage of opportunity.
- Hedgehog:** Ishtar. Less defensiveness and seriousness in life. Reconnecting yourself with the Dark aspect of the Goddess.
- Heron:** Athene, Aphrodite. Gaining dignity and self-confidence for facing personal problems.
- Hippopotamus:** Amenti, Ta-Urt. Birth of new ideas. Righteous anger when threatened, cheated, or taken advantage of. Mother-fury when necessary.
- Horse:** Kuan Yin, Kwannon, Anahita, Valkyries, Freyja, Epona, Rhiannon. Endurance, freedom, travel, swiftness, loyalty. Astral traveling. Guide to overcoming obstacles.
- Mongoose:** Ningal. Destroying evil. For the capture and conviction of criminals of any kind.
- Nightingale:** the Muses. Using your talents with joy. Moon magick.
- Ostrich:** Tiamat, Maat, Amenti. Protection from troublesome spirits.
- Owl:** Lilith, Athene/Minerva, Blodeuwedd, Cailleach. Often a guide to and from the Otherworlds during meditation. Silent and swift movement. Dreams, shape-shifting, Moon magick. Unmasking those who would deceive you.
- Peacock:** Isis, Hera/Juno, Sarasvati, Lakshmi. Self-confidence. Warning of approaching danger.
- Pegasus:** The Muses, Medusa. Poetic inspiration, astral travel. Changing evil into good.
- Phoenix:** Circe. Renewal, strength.
- Quail:** Artemis, Astaeria. Good luck, courage, success.
- Rabbit or Hare:** Eostre, Holda, Andraste, Freyja, Aphrodite. Receiving hidden teachings and intuitive messages. Quick-thinking when necessary.
- Ram or Sheep:** Hera, Aphrodite, Brigit. New beginnings. Courage to keep your balance in an unstable situation. Being confident of your abilities.
- Raven:** Athene, the Morrigan, Badb, Nantosuelta, the Valkyries. Wisdom, magick, divination. A change in consciousness. Sometimes symbolizes upsets necessary to create something new. Messages from the spirit.



**Scorpion:** Ishtar, Nanna, Selket, Isis. Revenge, retribution.

**Sea Gull:** Don. Spiritual messenger. Developing communication with the Goddess.

**Snakes:** Isis, Ninhursag, Lamia or Lamashtu, Atargatis, Dea Syria, Hygeia, Persephone, Hera, Athene, Medusa, the Graiae, the Erinyes or Furies, Hecate, Gaea, Nu Kua, Brigit. Psychic creative energy. Facing your fears of spiritual initiations and life problems.

**Sparrow:** Aphrodite. Getting pregnant. Bringing a love into your life.

**Sphinx:** Hathor. Initiation. End of a cycle.

**Spiders:** Neith, Ishtar, Atargatis, Athene, the Fates, the Norns, Holda/Bertha. Creativity, being industrious. Beginning a new project.

**Swallow:** Aphrodite, Venus. Good luck, success. Changing your luck.

**Swan:** The Muses, Aphrodite, Sarasvati, Devi, the Valkyries. Help with dream interpretations. Seeing into the future.

**Toad:** Hecate. Long life, prosperity, new beginnings, good luck. Changing your luck.

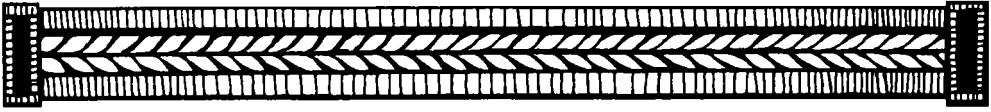
**Turtle or Tortoise:** Aphrodite/Venus. Patience, perseverance. Allow your ideas time to develop properly. Learning to relax and enjoy life.

**Unicorn:** Artemis/Diana. Fame, prosperity, strength of mind. Developing unlimited personal power.

**Vulture:** Isis, Hathor, Mut, Nekhebet, Aphrodite, Eileithyia, Juno, Athene, the Harpies. Cycles of death and rebirth.

**Whale:** Derceto. Music, long life, family. Developing psychic and telepathic abilities. Using sound and music to balance and heal.





## Goddesses & Their Attributes

**B**ecause not all of the Goddesses could be included in the space provided, the following is a list of some of the goddesses and their attributes.

**Aditi** [ah-dee-tee]: India. Mother of the Gods. The past and the future.

**Aer** [air]: Wales. Goddess of war and revenge; goddess of the River Dee.

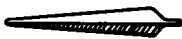
**Aine** [aw-ne]: Ireland. Faery queen of Knockaine; associated with Summer Solstice and a fruitful harvest. Moon goddess and patroness of crops and cattle.

**Airmid** [air-mit]: Ireland. Physician-daughter of Diancecht. Healing on all levels.

**Alaisiagae**: Norse. War goddesses. See Valkyries.

**Amaterasu** [ah-mat-er-ah-soo]: Japan. Sun Goddess; ruler of all deities. Warmth, harvest, love, fertility, wisdom, peace, light, compassion.

**Amenti** [ah-men-tee]: Egypt. The Westerner; the Hidden Goddess. An Underworld goddess who welcomed the dead. Akashic records, helping with a peaceful transition into the spirit realm.



**Anahita** [ah-nah-hee-ta]/**Anat/Qadesh**: Phoenicia, Canaan, Ur. A Virgin (independent) goddess; Mother of All Nations. Linked with the ankh, horns, Moon disk, lion. When going into battle, she wore coriander scent and purple makeup. Her power to curse and kill was so great that all the gods were afraid to deny her anything. Revenge, conflict, fearlessness, overcoming obstacles.

**Andraste** [an-drahs-tay]: Britain. A war and Nature goddess whose animal was the hare. She was worshipped by Queen Boadicia. Plans when under attack by whatever method, divination.

**Anu** [an-oo]: Ireland. Mother Earth; greatest of all goddesses. Maiden aspect of the Triple Goddess. Health, fertility, prosperity, comfort.

**Aphrodite/Venus**: Greece, Rome. She Who Binds Hearts Together. Symbols were golden apples, pomegranate, cockle shells, poppy, rose, the ocean, heron, dove, swan. Love, beauty, joy of physical love, passion, all forms of partnerships and relationships, fertility, continued creation, renewal.

**Arianrhod** [ari-an-rod]: Wales. “Silver Wheel”; “High Fruitful Mother”; goddess of reincarnation and the Full Moon. Her palace was called *Caer Arianrhod* (Aurora Borealis). Keeper of the circling Silver Wheel of Stars, a symbol of time or karma. This wheel was also known as the Oar Wheel, a ship which carried the dead warriors to the Moonland (Emania). Mother aspect of the Triple Goddess in Wales. Beauty, fertility, reincarnation.

**Artemis/Diana**: Greece, Rome. The Huntress; Moon Goddess of wild places and wild things; a shape-shifter. Protectress of young girls; mistress of magick; sorcery, enchantment, psychic powers, women’s fertility, purification, mental healing, dance, wild animals, healing, herbs, forests.

**Asase Yaa** [ah-sah-se-yah]: West Africa. Goddess of creation of humans and receiver of them at death. Birth, dying.

**Ashtart**: Phoenicia. Powerful goddess whose temple in Byblos held her sacred meteorite. Similar to Ishtar.

**Ataentsic**: Iroquois/Huron. Great Mother. Marriage, childbirth, feminine crafts.

**Atargatis** [at-are-gah-tis]: Syria, Canaan, Mesopotamia, Philistines. Sometimes shown with a fish-tail. Oracles, prophecy.

**Athene/Minerva**: Greece, Rome. Sacred to her were the owl, snakes, and oak. Protection (both psychic and physical), writing, music, the sciences, sculptors, potters, architects, wisdom, true justice, wisdom, renewal, battle strategy, peace.

**Baba Yaga**: Slavic. Goddess of the Underworld and death. Evil, death, dark magick.



- Badb** [bibe]/**Badhbh**/**Badb Catha**: Ireland. “Boiling,” “Battle Raven,” “Scald-crow”; the cauldron of ever-producing life; known in Gaul as Cauth Bodva. War goddess and sister of Macha, the Morrigan, and Anu. Mother aspect of the Triple Goddess in Ireland. Associated with the cauldron, crows, and ravens. Life, wisdom, inspiration, enlightenment.
- Banba** [ban-bah]: Ireland. Her name might be derived from *banua*, which means “sow,” thus connecting her with other Underworld goddesses, such as the Welsh Cerridwen. Repel danger.
- Bast** [bahst]/**Bastet**/**Pasht** (in her Dark aspect): Egypt. Cat-headed goddess; mother of all cats. Cats, especially black ones, were sacred to her and kept in her temple. The Moon, pleasure, music, dance, communication with animals, intuition, healing.
- Belit-Ili** [beh-lit-ee-lee]: Mesopotamia. She set each human’s fate at birth. Determining your life’s plan. Similar to the Fates, Norns, Moerae, and Carmentis.
- Benten**/**Benzaiten**: Japan. The only Japanese goddess of good luck. Queen of the sea, snakes, and dragons. Protection from earthquakes; bringer of inspiration and talent, wealth and romance.
- Black Annis** [ahn-is]: Northern Britain. A blue-faced hag, similar to the Cailleach Bheare. The fact she is a hag places her with the Crone goddesses of the Underworld. Akashic records, reconciling past life influences upon the present life.
- Blodeuwedd** [blod-oo-eeth]/**Blodwin**/**Blancheflor**: Wales. “Flower Face,” “White Flower.” Lily Maid of Celtic Welsh initiation ceremonies. Also known as the Ninefold Goddess of the Western Isles of Paradise. Goddess of the Earth in bloom, her symbol was the owl. Flowers, wisdom, lunar mysteries, initiations.
- Boann** [boo-an]/**Boannan**: Ireland. Goddess of the River Boyne. Other Celtic river goddesses: Siannan (Shannon), Sabrina (Severn), Sequana (Seine), Deva (Dee), Clota (Clyde), Verbeia (Wharfe), Brigantia (Braint, Brent). Healing.
- Bona Dea** [bone-ah-dee-ah]: Rome. “Good Goddess” worshipped only by women. Fertility.
- Branwen** [bran-oo-en]: Manx & Wales. Venus of the Northern Seas; one of the three matriarchs of Britain; Lady of the Lake (cauldron). Goddess of love and beauty.
- Brigantia** [bree-gan-tee-ah]: Britain. “High One”; pastoral and river goddess. Associated with Imbolc. Flocks, cattle, water, fertility, healing, victory.
- Brigit** [breet]/**Brid** [breed]: Ireland, Wales, Spain, France. “Power”; “Renown”; “Fiery Arrow or Power” (Breos-saighead); “High.” Called the poetess. Often called the Triple Brigits, Three Blessed Ladies of Britain, the Three Mothers.



Associated with Imbolc. Goddess of fire, fertility, the hearth, all feminine arts and crafts, and martial arts. Healing, physicians, agriculture, inspiration, learning, poetry, divination, prophecy, smithcraft, animal husbandry, love, Witchcraft, occult knowledge.

**Britomartis** [bree-toe-mar-tis]/**Dictynna** [dick-tee-nah]: Crete. Law-Giver; Sweet Virgin. A form of Artemis.

**Buto** [boo-toe]/**Ua Zit/Uatchet**: Egypt. Cobra goddess. Protection, hiding from evil.

**Caillech** [cal-yach] **Beine Bric**: Scotland. "Veiled One"; Destroyer goddess of the Underworld; similar to Cerridwen and the Morrigan. Another name is **Scota**, from which Scotland comes. Originally Scotland was called Caledonia, or land given by Caillech. Some sources call her the Gray or Blue Hag, the Gyre Carlin, Black Annis, or the Hag of Beare. Was pictured as having a blue face, or three blue faces, and fangs. Disease, plague.

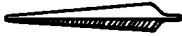
**Cailleach Bheur**: Scotland, the Isle of Man, southern Ireland. A blue-faced hag of the winter season. It is said she is reborn every Samhain and lays aside her rule every Beltane. Similar to Black Annis of Ireland. A mountain-mother of southern Ireland; she never aged. Similar to Cerridwen and the Morrigan; also sometimes called the Gray or Blue Hag, or the Gyre Carlin. Control of the weather, healing, initiation, great wisdom, shape-shifting.

**Caillagh ny Groamagh**: Manx. The Old Gloomy Woman; similar to Cailleach Bheur. Associated with weather changes.

**The Carmenae** [car-men-aye]: Rome. Similar to the Muses. **Antevorta** [ann-teh-vor-tah] knew the past; **Postvorta** [post-vor-tah] knew the future; **Egeria** [eh-ger-ee-ah] foretold the fate of new babies; **Carmenta** [car-men-tah] knew prophecies in general and gave the alphabet. Similar to the Fates and Norns. Determining the purpose for your life this time.

**Cerridwen/Caridwen** [care-i-dwen]: Wales. Moon Goddess; Great Mother; grain goddess; goddess of Nature. The white corpse-eating sow representing the Moon. Goddess of the Underworld and the Cauldron of Inspiration. Welsh Bards called themselves **Cerddorion** (sons of Cerridwen); the Bard **Taliesin** called Her his initiator. Taliesin was said to be born of Cerridwen and to have tasted a potent brew from Her magick cauldron of inspiration. This potion known as "greal" was made from six plants for inspiration and knowledge. Death, fertility, regeneration, inspiration, magick, astrology, herbs, science, poetry, spells, knowledge.

**Chalchihuitlicue** [chahl-chee-hwit-lee-cue]: Aztec. Precious Green Lady. Storms, youthful beauty, whirlpools, spring growth, love, flowers, spirits, streams.



- Ch'ang O:** China. Goddess of the Moon. Moon magick, menstruation, foreseeing.
- Chantico** [chan-tee-co]: Aztec. Goddess of pleasure and pain. The home, fertility, wealth, precious stones found in the Earth.
- Charities/Graces:** Greece. Triad of Moon goddesses, usually portrayed nude and dancing. Aglaia [ah-glay-ee-ah] (the shining one, glorious), Thalia [thal-ee-ah] (the flowering one), and Euphrosyne [you-fro-see-nee] (the one who makes glad, joy). Drawing joy and happiness into your life.
- Circe** [sir-see or kir-kee]: Greece. Moon Goddess; She-Falcon. She can manipulate the forces of creation and destruction by knots and braids in her hair. Physical love, sorcery, enchantments, dark magick, witchcraft, cauldrons.
- Coatlucue** [co-aht-lee-cue]: Aztec. Serpent Lady; both positive and negative; could bless or punish. Life, earthquakes.
- Creiddylad** [cred-dee-laid]/**Cordelia:** Wales. Daughter of the sea god Llyr. Connected with Beltane and sometimes called the May Queen. Goddess of flowers and love.
- Cybele** [ke-be-lee]: Phrygia, Greece. Symbols were the crescent Moon, cymbal, sickle, lions, pomegranate, caves, violets, meteorites, pine trees, bees. Dominion over wild animals, dark magick, revenge.
- Dactyls** [dak-tills]: Greece. "Fingers"; 5 male and 5 female spirits born from the fingerprints of Rhea. They were blacksmiths, magi, founders of meter, inventors of magickal formulae. A form of Earth elementals. Help with learning magick and shamanism.
- Danu** [danoo or thanoo]/**Danann/Dana** [dan-ah or thana]: Ireland. Possibly the same as the goddess Anu. Ancestress of the Tuatha De Danann. Mother of the Irish gods; Great Mother; Moon goddess. She gave her name to the Tuatha De Danann (People of the Goddess Danu). Patroness of wizards, rivers, water, wells, prosperity and plenty, magick, wisdom.
- Dea Syria:** Rome. Literally means "the Syrian Goddess." Used to describe Atargatis, Ishtar, Cybele, and Anahita, among others.
- Demeter/Ceres:** Greece, Rome. Eternal Mother; Mistress of Magick. The goddess of the Eleusinian Mysteries in Greece. Protectress of women. Motherhood, marriage, crops, renewal, initiation, law, higher magick.
- Derceto** [dur-seh-toe or dur-keh-toe]: Babylonia. Whale of Der; a fish- or whale-goddess and creatress. Seeking connections with the Water elementals.
- Devi** [deh-vee]/**Mahadevi:** India. "The Great Goddess." The goddess who is the energy existing within chaos, the energy for creation of all things. The Hindus say that all goddesses are merely aspects of Devi. Shakti or female energy.





- Diiwica:** Georgia, Armenia. Similar to Diana; goddess of the hunt. Forests, hounds, wild animals, victory, success.
- Djanggawul Sisters:** Australia. Founder goddesses. Ritual tools, water, trees, sacred spaces and ceremonies.
- Don/Domnu** [dom-noo]: Ireland, Wales. “Deep Sea,” “Abyss.” Queen of the Heavens; goddess of sea and Air; Mother of the British gods. The equivalent of the Irish Danu. In Ireland, Don ruled over the Land of the Dead. Entrances to this Otherworld were always in a sidhe, or burial mound. Control of the Elements, eloquence, communication with the dead.
- Druantia** [doo-ahn-tee-ah]: “Queen of the Druids”; Mother of the tree calendar; Fir Goddess. Fertility, passion, sexual activities, trees, protection, knowledge, creativity.
- Durga** [dur-gah]: India. The Divine Great Mother. Death-rebirth, destruction-recreation, fertility-comfort, protection, power.
- Eileithyia** [ill-lee-thi-ah]/**Ilithyia:** Crete, Greece. In the beginning a separate goddess of childbirth, later her name was added to that of Artemis. The Romans, however, still considered her as a separate deity. Her symbols were dogs and horses. Childbirth, midwives.
- Eostre/Ostara:** Germany, Anglo-Saxon. Spring goddess associated with the Spring Equinox, colored eggs, and rabbits. New beginnings, a new cycle of life.
- Epona** [ee-po-nah]: Britain, Gaul. “Divine Horse,” “The Great Mare”; goddess of horses; Mother Goddess. Fertility, maternity, protectress of horses, horsebreeding, prosperity, dogs, healing springs, crops.
- Ereshkigal** [er-esh-kee-gal]: Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Assyria. Queen of the Underworld; Dark aspect of the Goddess. Dark magick, revenge, retribution, destruction, regeneration.
- Erinyes** [eer-in-yeez]/**Furies:** Greece. Children of Eternal Night; Daughters of Earth and Shadow; the Angry Ones; the Avengers. Three goddesses, Allecto [al-lek-toe] (beginnings, unending), Tisiphone [tiss-ee-fon-ee] (continuation, retaliation), and Megaera [me-gair-rah] (death and rebirth, envious fury), who punished sins, especially crimes against mothers. Justice against those who break customs or taboos, social and bloodline laws.
- Estsanatlehi/Changing Woman:** Navajo. A shape-shifter. Transformation, immortality.
- Fauna** [fawn-ah]: Rome. Nature goddess whose festival were forbidden to men; they ended in orgies. May have been the original form of the god Pan. Connecting with Earth elementals; communication with animals; grounding yourself.

**Flidais** [flee-daz]: Ireland. Goddess of forests, woodlands, and wild things; ruler of wild beasts. She rode in a chariot drawn by deer. A shape-shifter.

**Freyja** [fray-yah]: Norse. Vanir goddess of great power and magickal knowledge. Mistress of cats; leader of the Valkyries; a shape-shifter. Inspires all sacred poetry. Love, beauty, animals, sex, enchantment, witchcraft, gold, wealth, trance, wisdom, magick, luck, the Moon, writing, protection.

**Frigg** [frig]: Norse. Aesir Mother Goddess; a shape-shifter; knower of all things. Independence, childbirth, cunning, physical love, wisdom, foresight, destiny, magick.

**Gaea/Gaia** [gay-yah]: Greece. Universal Mother; Primeval Prophetess. The greatest of oracles. Motherhood, agriculture, dreams, trance, divination, oracles, healing.

**Gauri** [gow-ree]: India. "The Golden One." A sky virgin deity worshipped in August festivals. The Hindus consider August the best time for marriages and naming babies. Marriage, children, growth of the soul, wealth, good fortune.

**Gefion** [ghev-yon]: Norse. The Giver; a shape-shifter. Magickal arts, prosperity, luck, crops, fortunate turn of events.

**Graiae** [gray-ee-ah]/**Graeae**: Greece. Mothers of Greece (Graecia). Three gray goddesses who shared one All-Seeing Eye. Enyo [en-yoh] (Fear), Pemphredo [pem-free-doe] (Dread), and Deino [day-no] (Terror). War, retribution, divination.

**Gula** [goo-lah]: Babylonia, Kassites. The Great Doctress. She inflicted illness or restored health; also ruled fate. Similar to the Fates and Norns. Healing, Akashic records.

**Gullveig** [gool-vague]: Norse. Vanir goddess and sorceress. "Golden Branch"; Mistress of Magick. Magick, foreseeing, prophecy, healing.

**Ha'iaka**: Polynesia. Sister to Pele. Magick, flowers, healing.

**Hathor**: Egypt. Considered self-produced. Sky and Moon goddess. The mirror and sistrum were sacred to her. Protectress of women. Joy, love, pleasure, flowers, the Moon, motherhood, beauty, music, dance, artists, astrology, prosperity, the family.

**Hecate** [he-ka-tee]: Greece, Thrace, Rome. Dark Moon Goddess; goddess of witchcraft; Lady of the Wild Hunt. All secret powers of the realm of spirits and of Nature are hers. Patroness of priestesses. Dark magick, enchantments, prophecy, charms and spells, vengeance, averting evil, wisdom, victory, riches, transformation, purification, crossroads, curses, change and renewal.



**Heid [hade]:** Norse. “Gleaming One.” See Gullveig.

**Heket [heh-ket]/Heqet:** Egypt. The frog-headed goddess of creation, childbirth, fertility, corn, resurrection.

**Hel/Hella [hell]:** Norse. Queen of the Dead and Ruler of the Underworld. Dark magick, revenge, rebirth in the midst of life.

**Hera [he-rah]/Juno:** Greece, Rome. Queen of Heaven. Symbols were the sickle, labrys, shield, golden apples, pomegranate. Protectress of all phases of feminine life. Fertility, renewal, purification, the Moon, when facing insecurity, punishment.

**Hestia [hes-tee-ah]/Vesta:** Greece, Rome. Virgin goddess of the hearth and fire. Circles, discipline, dedication to duty, humility, modesty, prudence, acceptance, continuity, service to others.

**Hina/Hine:** Polynesia. Goddess of two faces; Great Goddess. Darkness and death; patroness of travelers.

**Holda/Bertha:** North Germany. Similar to Hel. “White Lady”; “Black Earth Mother.” Goddess of winter and witchcraft; rides on the Wild Hunt. Crone aspect of the Moon. Fate, karma, the arts, dark magick, revenge.

**Horae [hor-ay]:** Greece. The Hours or Seasons; guardian goddesses of Nature. Eunomia [you-no-mee-ah] (order), Dike [deye-kee or dee-kee] (justice), Carpo [car-poe] (fruit), Irene/Eirene [eye-ree-nee] (peace). Law, justice, peace.

**Hygeia [hy-gee-ah]:** Greece. Goddess-daughter of the great physician-god Asclepius. Statues always show her holding a boa constrictor. Women healers, midwives, Kundalini energy for healing.

**Idhunn [id-doon]:** Norse. Asa-goddess of long life; keeper of the golden apples. Youth, responsibility, beauty, long life.

**Ilmatar [ill-mah-tar]/Lounnotar:** Finland. Creatress Goddess. Immense powers for creation out of nothing. Starting over in life; beginning a new cycle.

**Inanna:** Canaan, Phoenicia, Sumeria, Uruk, Babylonia. Queen of Heaven and Battle. War, defense, victory, love, fertility, destiny, prosperity, sexual love, justice, crafts, law.

**Inari [in-ah-ree]:** Japan. Very popular rice goddess who can shape-shift into a fox. Business, prosperity, smithing, sword-blades.

**Ishtar:** Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Assyria, Sumeria, Arabia, Phoenicia, Canaan. Lady of Sorrows and Battle; Great Mother and Moon Goddess. Sister of Ereshkigal. Symbols are dragons, lions, horns, double serpent scepter, 8-point



star, the pentagram, the *labrys*. Patroness of priestesses. Love, fertility, revenge, war, resurrection, purification, initiation, overcoming obstacles.

**Isis** [eye-sis]: Egypt. Great Mother and Moon goddess. The weaver and knoter of the threads of the Tat. Magick through the tying of knots. Her sistrum had a cat image on it. Sometimes she was shown with protecting winged arms. Powerful magician. All arts and crafts; civilization. The Moon, motherhood, purification, initiation, reincarnation, success, healing. Patroness of priestesses.

**Itzpaplotl** [its-pop-lo-tl]: Aztec. Obsidian Butterfly; a mixture of sensuality and death. Fate, stars, agriculture.

**Ixchel** [ix-chel]: Maya. Rainbow Goddess. Childbirth, medicine, the Moon, pregnancy, floods, weaving, domestic arts.

**Iyatiku**: Pueblo. Ruler of the Underworld; similar to Persephone. Compassion, agriculture, children.

**Jahi** [jah-hee] the Whore: Persia. Great Mother. The Moon, women, menstruation, sex.

**Julunggul/Great Rainbow Snake**: Australia. Life-giver; bisexual deity. Rain, procreation, magick, life, blood.

**Junggowa Sisters**: Australia. Ancestress goddesses. Ceremonial rituals, medicine bags, amulets.

**Kali/Kali Ma** [kaw-lee]: India. The Terrible; the Black Mother; Mother of Karma. Patroness of witches. Past, present, future. Said to command the weather by braiding or releasing her hair. Regeneration, revenge, fear, dark magick, sexual activities.

**Kishi-Mojin**: Japan. Protectress of children; Universal Mother. Compassion, childbirth, life, balance, fertility.

**Koevasi**: Melanesia. Snake Goddess; Creatress Goddess. Languages, dialects, the necessities of life.

**Kuan Yin/Kwannon**: China, Japan. Great Mother; Goddess of compassion and mercy. Success, mercy, purification, fertility, children, healing, enlightenment.

**Kunapipi**: Australia. Great Mother Goddess. Oversees all initiations and puberty rites. Initiation, rituals, spiritual magick.

**Lakshmi**: India. Goddess of love and beauty. Good fortune, prosperity, success, love.

**Lama/Lamashtu**: Sumeria. Goddesses who guided worshippers into the presence of the particular deity they were worshipping. Intercession with the Goddess.



**Lamia** [lam-ee-ah]: Crete, Greece. Originally a Cretan snake-goddess who ruled the Underworld, this deity was changed by patriarchal Greeks into a nightmare goddess who stole children and sucked their blood. The inner labyrinth, understanding Kundalini energy.

**Lha-Mo/dMagzor Rgyal-mo**: Tibet. The Great Queen; She-Devil; similar to Durga. Disease.

**Lilith** [lil-eeth]: Hebrew, Babylonia, Sumeria. Moon Goddess; patroness of witches. Enticing sorcery, feminine allure, erotic dreams, forbidden delights, wisdom, regeneration.

**Maat** [may-at]: Egypt. Lady of the Judgment Hall; her law governed the three worlds, for even the gods had to obey her. Truth, justice, law, order, divine order, reincarnation.

**Macha** [maax-ah]: Ireland. “Crow”; “Battle”; “Great Queen of the Phantoms”; Mother of Life and Death; a war goddess; Mother Death. Associated with ravens and crows. She was honored at Lughnassadh. Protectress in war as in peace; goddess of war and death. Cunning, sheer physical force, sexuality, fertility, dominance over males.

**Maev** [mayv or meeve]/**Mab**/**Medb** [meev]: Ireland. “Drunk Woman”; “Queen-wolf.” A warrior queen of Connacht; also a faery queen. War deity, actually participating in the fighting; combined mother and warrior aspects of the Goddess. Physical sexuality and fertility; revenge, war.

**Mama Quilla**: Inca. Mother Moon. The calendar, festivals, protectress of married women.

**Mati Syra Zemlya**: Slavic. Moist Mother Earth. Agriculture, fertility, justice, solemn oaths, oracles, healing, divination, truth, property disputes.

**Mawu**: Africa. Moon Goddess; creatress of all things. New beginnings, pregnancy.

**Medusa** [meh-doo-sah]: Anatolia, Greece. Originally an Anatolian Sun goddess with snake-hair; masks of her facial image were worn by her priestesses. Later in Greece, she was turned into a paramour of Poseidon whose look turned people to stone and who birthed Pegasus at her death. Justifiable anger; calling for justice and retribution against anyone harassing women.

**Mielikki** [meh-lee-kee]: Finland. Goddess of the Forest and the Hunt. Protectress of woodland animals. Animals, hunting, crops. Connecting with the Earth elements; grounding yourself.

**Moerae** [moh-ee-ray]/**Moirai**/the Fates: Greece. Three goddesses who decided the destiny of each individual: Clothos [cloh-thos] spun the thread of life; Lachesis [lah-keh-sis] added good luck and measured it out; Atropos [ah-troe-pos] cut it. Akashic records, determining the purpose of this life.

**The Morrigan** [mor-ee-gan]/**Morrigu** [moor-rig-oo]/**Morgan** [moor-gan]: Ireland, Wales, Britain. “Great Queen”; “Specter Queen”; “Supreme War Goddess”; “Queen of Phantoms or Demons”; shape-shifter. Reigned over the battlefield, helping with her magick, but did not join in battles. Associated with crows and ravens. Crone aspect of the Goddess. In her Dark Aspect (the symbol is then the raven or crow) she is the goddess of war, fate, and death; she went fully armed and carried two spears. The carrion crow is her favorite disguise. With her, Fea (Hateful), Nemon (Venomous), Badb (Fury), and Macha (Battle) encouraged fighters to battle-madness. Tradition says she has nine loosed tresses on her head, a sign of her connection with the Ninefold Goddesses of the Cauldron. Goddess of rivers, lakes, and fresh water. Patroness of priestesses and witches. Revenge, night, magick, prophecy, wisdom, war, peace.

**Morgan Le Fay**: Welsh death-goddess; Morgan the Fate. Glamorgan in Wales is said to be her sacred territory. She can cast a destroying curse on any man. Gawaine of the Round Table bore Morgan’s pentacle as a heraldic device on his blood-red shield. Same qualities as the Morrigan.

**Muses**: Greece. Nine goddesses of springs, memory, music, writing, dance, and astronomy: Clio [cleye-oh] (history), Euterpe [you-tur-pay] (flute playing), Thaleia [thal-ee-ya] (comedy), Melpomene [mel-poh-men-ee] (tragedy), Terpsichore [turp-say-kor-ee] (dancing and lyric poetry), Erato [air-ah-toe] (love poetry), Polyhymnia [polly-him-nee-ah] (mime), Urania [you-rain-ee-ah] (astronomy), Calliope [cal-ee-oh-pay] (epic poetry). Developing a new talent; writing, music, dance, astrology.

**Mut** [moot]: Egypt. Great Goddess, World-Mother, and the Great Sorceress. She wore a vulture headdress; three cauldrons were her symbols. Considered self-produced. Marriage, creation.

**Nanna** [nan-ah]: Norse. Asa-goddess; “The Moon”; Great Mother; Earth Goddess. Love, gentleness.

**Nanna/Nina**: Sumeria. Ancient Mother. Winged lionesses guarded her temples. Shown with a fish- or serpent-tail. Herbs, the Moon, healing, magick, intercession, interpretation of dreams.

**Nanshe**: Assyria, Babylonia. Interpreter of dreams; divination by scrying. Her initiates descended into a dark pit, symbolizing death and reincarnation. Initiation, divination, dreams.

**Nantosuelta** [nan-toe-swell-ta]: Britain. “Winding River”; river goddess; linked with the war goddess Morrigan. Associated with ravens. Maternity, bees, doves, domestic arts, wells, childbirth, fertility. Connecting with the Water elements.



- Nehalennia** [nee-hal-een-ia]: North Germany. Goddess of plenty, seafaring, fishing, fruitfulness. Her symbol is a cornucopia.
- Neith** [night]: Egypt. The Huntress and Opener of the Ways. Her name means “I have come from myself.” She is the Spirit behind the Veil of the Mysteries. Herbs, medicine, magick, healing, knowledge, rituals, meditation.
- Nekhbet** [neck-heh-bet]: Egypt. Guardian goddess, often in vulture form. She carried a serpent-twined scepter. Motherhood, childbirth, protection.
- Nemesis** [neh-meh-sis]/**Adrasteia** [ad-dras-tay-ee-ya] (the Inevitable): Greece. Goddess of destiny, divine anger against mortals who break moral laws or taboos. A harsh unremitting force representing acceptance of what must be. Calling down justice and retribution upon criminals, especially offenders against women and children.
- Nephthys** [nef-this]: Egypt. The Revealer; an Underworld goddess. Death and dark magick; guardian of hidden things; mystical knowledge and secrets; protection, intuition, dreams.
- Nerthus** [near-thus]/**Erce**: Norse. Earth Mother. Peace, fertility, witchcraft, wealth, the sea, purification.
- Niamh** [nee-ahm]: Ireland. “Brightness”; “Beauty.” A form of Badb who helps heroes at death.
- Nicneven** [nick-neven]: Scotland. “Divine”; “Brilliant.” Said to ride through the night with her followers at Samhain. During the Middle Ages she was called Dame Habonde, Abundia, Satia, Bensozie, Zobiana, and Herodiana. Communication with the dead; reconnecting with the Dark Mother.
- Nimue** [nim-oo-ee]: Britain. A Celtic Moon goddess; also called Vivienne or Morgan. Divination, magick.
- Ningal**: Ur, Syria, Babylonia. Listed as wife of the Moon and mother of the Sun. Models of eyes carved from semi-precious stones were dedicated in her shrines. Petitioning for guidance and spiritual enlightenment.
- Ninhursag** [nin-her-sag]: Sumeria, Assyria, Babylonia. Great Mother Goddess; Creative Principle; Mountain Mother. She gave life to the dead. Reincarnation, Akashic records.
- The Norns** [nornz]: Norse. The Fates; the Wyrd Sisters; three women usually found at the Well of Urd in Asgard: Urd [erd] (past, destiny), Verthandi [ver-than-dee] (present), Skuld [skulld] (the future). Similar to the Greek Fates. Akashic records; determining the purpose of this fate; looking into the possible future events in your life.

**Nu Kua:** China. The creatress goddess who made humankind. The lower half of her body was that of a snake. The spiritual and physical female energy that creates on all levels.

**Nut [noot]:** Egypt. Mother of the Gods; friend and protector of the dead. Reincarnation, weather.

**Ops [ahps]:** Rome. A harvest goddess who was invoked by sitting down and touching the Earth with one hand. Wealth, success.

**Pachamama:** Inca. Earth Mother. Rituals, agriculture.

**Parvati [par-vah-tee]:** India. Represents the union of god and goddess, male and female. Desire, ecstasy.

**Pele [peh-leh]:** Hawaii. Personification of the female power of destruction. Volcanic fire, sorcery, the hula.

**Persephone [per-sef-oh-nee]/Proserpina/Kore [kor-ee]:** Greece, Rome. Queen of the Underworld. Sacred to her were the bat, willows, grain, corn, keys, pomegranate, caves. Overcoming obstacles, surviving.

**Prithivi [preh-theh-vee]:** India. “The Broad One,” the cosmic cow. Mother of the deities of the dawn and Fire. Birthing mental ideas and projects.

**Ran:** Norse. Vana-goddess; “The Ravager”. Unpredictable and malicious. Drowning, the sea, sailors, storms, great terror.

**Rat [rate]:** Egypt. Mother of Maat. Wisdom, knowledge.

**Rhea [ree or ree-ah]:** Greece, Crete. Universal Mother. Inventor of the arts and magick. Help with understanding ancient knowledge; women’s rituals.

**Rhiannon [hri-an-non]:** Wales. “The Great Queen”; goddess of birds and horses. Enchantments, fertility, and the Underworld. She rides a swift white horse.

**Sarasvati [sair-as-vah-tee]:** India. The Stimulator; Mother of the Vedas. Crescent Moon, creative arts, science, music, poetry, learning, teaching.

**Scathach [skath-atch]/Scota/Scatha:** Ireland, Scotland. “Shadow, shade”; “The Shadowy One”; “She Who Strikes Fear.” Dark Goddess; Underworld Goddess. Also a warrior woman and prophetess who lived in Alba (Scotland), probably on the Isle of Skye, and taught the martial arts. Patroness of blacksmiths, healing, magick, prophecy, martial arts.

**Sedna:** Eskimo. Goddess of the sea and its creatures. Hunting; sending terror and retribution to offenders against women and children. Connecting with Water elementals and water creatures.





- Sekhet** [seh-ket]: Egypt. Lady of Flame; sister of Bast. Strength, might, violence, cultivated lands.
- Sekhmet** [sek-met]: Egypt. The Powerful; lion-headed goddess, crowned with a disk and coiled cobra. War and battle, physicians and bone-setters.
- Selene** [see-lee-nee]/Mene: Greece. Full Moon, magick, spells, enchantments.
- Selket** [sell-ket]/Selqet: Egypt. Shown as a woman with a scorpion on her head, often with extended wings. Sometimes portrayed as a woman with the lower body of a scorpion. Protectress of marriage; goddess of happy marriages and married sexual love.
- Seshat/Sesheta**: Egypt. Mistress of the House of Books; female equivalent of Thoth. Writing, archives, measurement, calculation, record-keeping, time, history, books, learning, inventions.
- Siff** [siff]: Norse. Asa-goddess; Earth Mother. Noted for her beautiful corn-gold hair. Harvest, fruitfulness, plenty, generosity.
- Sjofna** [syof-nah]: Norse. Goddess of love. One of the Asynjor.
- Skadi** [skaw-dee]: Norse. Mountains, winter, hunting, revenge, dark magick.
- Spider Woman**: Navajo. Charms and magick.
- Tailtiu**: Ireland. Foster-mother of Lugh. Connected with Lughnassadh. Goddess of the Earth, peace, and prosperity.
- Tara** [tah-rah]: India, Tibet. Star; Great Goddess. Knowledge, compassion, enlightenment.
- Ta-Urt** [tah-oort]/Tauret: Egypt. Hippopotamus goddess; sometimes an avenging deity. Her hieroglyphic sign was sa, meaning the uterine blood of the Goddess that could give eternal life. Childbirth, maternity, nursing, mothers, revenge, protection.
- Tefnut** [tef-noot]: Egypt. An Underworld goddess of destruction and reincarnation. Moisture, dew, rain, mist, the blood.
- Tellus Mater** [tell-us-mah-ter]: Rome. Ancient Earth goddess. Fertility, marriage, children, fruitfulness of the soil.
- Thetis** [thee-tis]: Greece. Daughter of the sea queen Tethys and goddess of womanhood. A shape-shifter. Invoke in all rituals of puberty, motherhood, menopause.
- Tiamat** [tee-ah-mot]: Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Sumeria. Goddess of the primal abyss; keeper of the Tablets of Destiny; self-begotten. Revenge, karmic discipline, dark magick, regeneration, rituals.

**Tlazolteotl** [tlah-zol-tee-oh-tl]: Aztec. Goddess of Filth; Lady of Witches. Goddess of the crescent Moon, she rode naked on a broom holding a red snake. Physical love, fertility, death.

**Tozi** [toe-zee]/**Teteoinnan**: Aztec. Our Grandmother; personification of the powers of Nature. Midwives, women healers.

**Uma** [oo-mah]: India. Mother Goddess; Daughter of the Himalayan Mountains. Light, beauty, fertility, harvest, crops, the Earth, the dark seasons, yoga.

**Valkyries** [val-kir-reez]: Norse. Choosers of the Slain; helmeted warrior-women and swan-maidens. Associated with wolves and horses. Fearlessness, war, death.

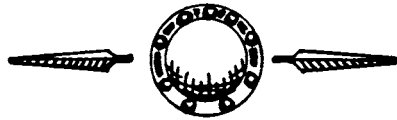
**Wawalug Sisters**: Australia. Fertility goddesses. Rituals.

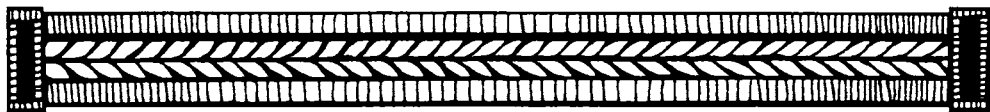
**Xochiquetzal** [zoe-chee-ket-zal]: Aztec. Flower Plume; Flower Feather. Goddess of the Underworld. Flowers, sexual love, twins, children, craftsmen.

**Yolkai Estasan/White Shell Woman**: Navajo. Earth Goddess. Seasons, the land. Learning to adjust your life to the rhythms of the seasons; grounding yourself.

**Zvezda Dennitsa**: Slavic. Goddess of the Morning Star; patroness of warriors. Protection, exorcism.

**Zvezda Vechernyaya**: Slavic. Goddess of the Evening Star. Protection, exorcism.





## Glossary

**Aesir** [ay-seer]: one of the races of deities in Asgard; the later patriarchal deities.

**Aett** [eht]: eight or “family,” such as the division of the runes and the eight directions.

**Alaisiagae**: war goddesses. See Valkyries.

**Alf** [ahlf] (pl. Alfar): Elf.

**Alfheim** [alf-hame]: land of the Light Elves.

**Asa-Gods** [ay-sah]: the Aesir; also used to refer to both the Aesir and Vanir deities.

**Asgard** [aws-guard]: home of the Aesir deities.

**Asynja** [aw-sin-ya, sing.], (pl. Asynjor [ahs-in-yur]): the Aesir goddesses; the feminine of Aesir. Also the title of the female attendants of Frigg in Vingolf.

**Audhumla** [ow-dumb-lah]: the Great Cow who licked the Giants into being out of primal ice.



**Berserker** [bur-sir-ker]: a male warrior who shape-shifts into an animal form and/or mentality, temporarily leaving behind his humanity.

**Bifrost** [bee-frost]: the rainbow bridge between Asgard and Midgard; guarded by Heimdall.

**Billing**: Elf of the twilight or west.

**Bilskirnir** [bill-skeer-ner]: “Lightning”; Siff’s great hall in Asgard.

**Blot** [bloat]: a religious celebration.

**Breidablik** [brade-a-blick]: Nanna’s hall in Asgard.

**Brisingamen** [briss-ing-a-men]: Freyja’s necklace made by four Dwarves. Brisingamen is the magickal counterpart of the Midgard Serpent, and is under Freyja’s control.

**Bygul** [bee-gool] (“Bee-Gold” or honey) and **Trjegul** [tree-gool] (“Tree-gold” or amber). Freyja’s cats which pull her chariot.

**Delling**: Red Elf of the dawn or east.

**Disir** [dis-seer]: both supernatural beings and physical priestesses of Freyja.

**Dokkalfar** [dock-al-far]: Dark Elves.

**Dwarves**: small human-shaped beings who live primarily in caves and mountains in Svartalfheim; they do not like daylight. They are skilled crafters, jewelers, and miners, but tend to hoard precious metals and gems. The four Dwarves sent to hold up the sky are Nordhri (North), Austri (East), Sudhri (South), and Vestri (West).

**Einherjar** [eyn-heer-yar]: slain heroes.

**Elves**: In Old Norse the word is *alfar*, “the shining-white one.” Human-shaped beings who have much wisdom and lore to impart. Light Elves live in Ljosalvheim or Alfheim and are helpful. Dark Elf may be another name for Dwarf. Elves live in almost every wood and stream in Midgard.

**Fountain of Mimir**: the well in Jotunheim on the Midgard level; also known as the Fountain of Knowledge.

**Fulla** [fool-ah]: sister of Frigg. She cares for Frigg’s magick box and slippers.

**Fylgja** [filj-ya]: Old Norse for the fetch or personal guardian spirit.

**Galdr** [gall-der] or **Galder**: magickal song or chant.

**Galdrabok** [gall-drah-bok]: a book for keeping magickal spells and incantations.

**Gandr** [gahn-dur]: a wand.

**Garm:** monster dog who guards the island where Loki and his wolf-son are chained.  
Hound of the Underworld.

**Giants:** possibly the deities before even the Vanir.

**Gimli** [geem-lee]: golden-roofed hall in Asgard for righteous humans after death.

**Ginnungagap** [ghin-un-ga-gap]: a great wasteland between Niflheim and Muspellheim.

**Gjallarbru** [gyall-ar-broo]: “Resounding Bridge”; the bridge into Hel.

**Gjoll** [gyohl]: “Howling”; the boundary river over which Gjallarbru stretches.

**Gladshheim** [glahds-hame]: part of Asgard for the gods.

**Gna** [gnah]: Asynjor and servant of Frigg. A messenger, she rode a horse named Hofvarpnir.

**Hallow:** bless.

**Hamingja** [ha-ming-ya]: personal luck or power.

**Hamr** [hah-mer]: “hide”; shape of the soul.

**Harrow:** an altar.

**Heimdall** [haym-doll]: the guardian-god of the Bifrost Bridge and a special protector-companion of Freyja.

**Hel** [hell]: realm of the dead; also the name of the goddess of Death.

**Helgrind:** “Death Gate”; the barrier between the worlds of the living and the dead.

**Hildisvini** [hill-dee-sveen-ee]: “Battle Pig or Sow”; sow belonging to Freyja; she travels at great speeds.

**Hvergelmir** [hvair-gel-meer]: “Seething Cauldron”; the well or spring of the Underworld or Niflheim. It is the source of eleven rivers.

**Jormungand** [yore-mun-gand] or **Midgardsormr:** World-Serpent; a great dragon-snake which inhabits the Ocean surrounding Midgard.

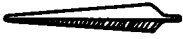
**Jotunheim** [yot-oon-hame]: the mountainous home of the giants or Jotuns; located east of Midgard or over the Ocean.

**Ljosalfar** [lyos-al-far]: Light Elves.

**Midgard** [mid-guard]: Earth; home of humans.

**Mimir** [mee-mer]: the Giant who possessed the Well of Wisdom. Possibly a female deity originally, since various forms of Ma, Mammi, Mimi, etc. refer to the Great Mother the world over.

**Modgud** [mode-good]: the giantess maiden who keeps the bridge on the road into Hel.



**Muspellheim** [muss-spell-hame]: part of the lower level of the Nine Worlds; an area of fire.

**Nidavellir**: land of the Dwarves.

**Nidhogg** [heed-hoog]: the dragon which guards the Spring of Hvergelmir in Niflheim.

**Niflheim** [niffle-hame]: lowest level of the Nine Worlds; a land of ice and snow.

**Orlog** [or-log]: cosmic wyrd or fate.

**Saga** [sah-gah]: “Seeress”; a giantess who lives in Asgard; her palace is called Sokkvabekk (Deep Stream). One of the Asynjor.

**Seidr** [say-dur]: the magick taught by Freyja to women.

**Sessrumnir** [sess-room-near]: “Many Seats”; Freyja’s hall in Asgard.

**Skald** [scald]: a Norse bard.

**Spring of Hvergelmir** [hvare-ghel-meer]: the well in Niflheim guarded by the dragon Nidhogg.

**Svartalfheim** [svart-alf-hame]: the home of the Dwarves or Dark Elves.

**Thund** [tinder]: the river in Asgard.

**Utgard** [oot-guard]: the Giants’ stronghold in Jotunheim.

**Vala** [vah-lah]: sibyl or prophetess.

**Valhalla** [val-hal-ah]: “Hall of the Slain”; home of the dead warriors and the Valkyries. Valhalla has 640 doors, rafters of huge shining spears, and tiles of golden shields.

**Valkyrie** [val-kir-ee] or **Valkyrja** [val-kir-ya]: “Chooser of the Slain”; warrior-woman dedicated to Freyja.

**Vanaheim** [van-ah-hame]: land of the Vanir deities; on the same level as Asgard.

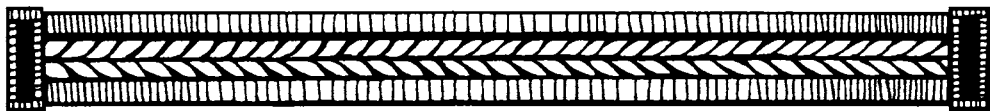
**Vanir** [van-yeer]: one of the races of Norse deities; the original matriarchal deities.

**Vingolf** [veen-gulf]: the part of Asgard especially for the goddesses.

**Volva** [veul-vah]: prophetess of *seidr*.

**Well of Urd** [oord]: the well in Asgard tended by the Norns.

**Yggdrasil** [ig-dra-sill]: World Tree; a giant ash or yew tree which holds the Nine Worlds in place by its three roots.



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