

# HEKATE

## Keys to the Crossroads

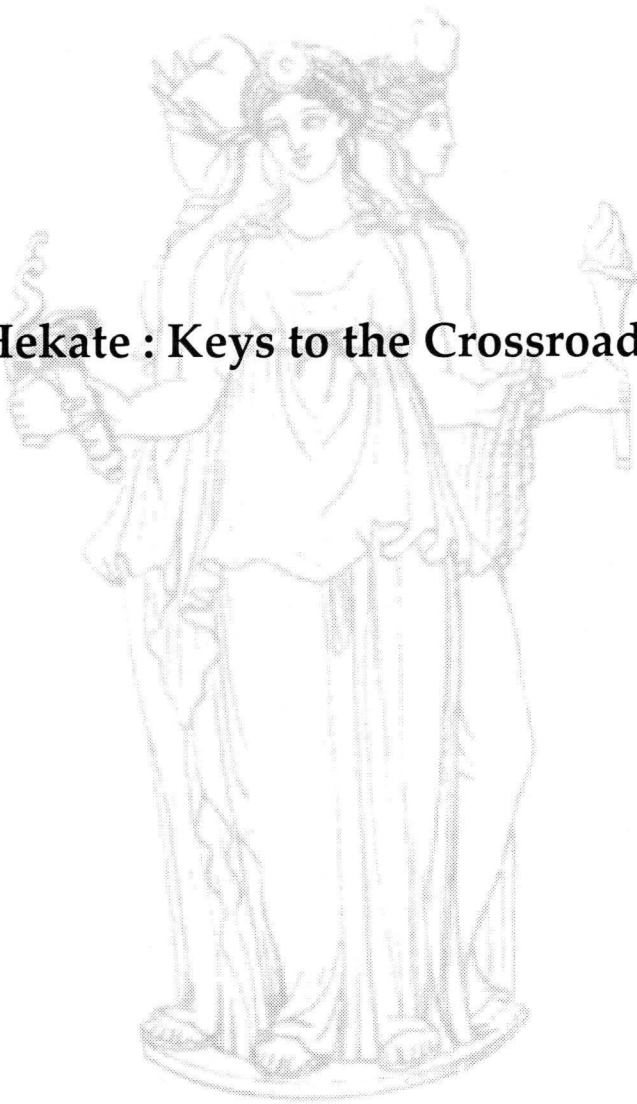
A collection of personal essays, invocations, rituals, recipes and artwork from modern Witches, Priestesses and Priests who work with Hekate, the Ancient Greek Goddess of Witchcraft, Magick and Sorcery



Edited by

Sorita D'Este

**Hekate : Keys to the Crossroads**



Keys to the Crossroads



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Keys to the Crossroads



# Hekate : Keys to the Crossroads

**Foreword by Sorita D'Este**

**Part I : Hekate's History, Myths and Powers**

by Sorita D'Este

**Part II : Hekate's Witches**

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**Part III: Recipes, Rites & Rituals**

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Keys to the Crossroads



*Sweet Mystery*

*Dark Knowledge*

*Hidden Wisdom*

*Hekate of the Sacred Crossroads*

*Crowned with Oak Leaves & the Coils of Wild Serpents*

*Traveller by Night,*

*Soul of the World*

*We offer this to you.*



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## Foreword

By Sorita D'Este

Hekate is a Goddess like no other. Some describe her as a Witch Goddess who rises up from the dark depths of the underworld, whilst others tell of a bright shining Goddess who holds her torches of illumination high, revealing the path through the mysteries, but only for those with the wisdom to follow her. Some say that she is the *Axis Mundi*, the Chaldean World Soul and that that she brings soul fire and light to humanity. Others tell of a powerful Goddess who is crowned with the coils of wild serpents and oak leaves, appearing with three heads, often with three bodies, sometimes in forms which are part-human and part-beast. We are told that she holds sway in many worlds, bearing the keys to the thresholds between, guarding and blessing those who make suitable offerings to her, but feared by those who let injustice come upon the world.

Her ancient followers included the Witch Queen Medeia who, desperately in love with Jason, called upon the power of Hekate to bring success to his quest to be the owner of the magickal Golden Fleece. Circe, the other famous daughter of Helios, who enchanted Odysseus' men and delayed his quest by a year as he sampled the pleasures of her love, was also known to call on Hekate's support. Today Hekate's priesthood consists of Witches, Priests, Priestesses, Artists, Poets and Magickians, all of whom had been drawn to Hekate in a myriad of ways. Feared, hated and loved for many thousands of years, Hekate's power has never waned, it has always been waiting in the shadows of the Sun and the light of the Moon to be discovered by those with eyes to see the mysteries that *She* holds.

I was first introduced to Hekate through the writings of William Shakespeare when I was a child or seven or eight. Not that I thought she was anything more than just a character in a play at that age, but even then she made an impression on me. It



encouraged me to play act the role of the Witch whenever I could, mind you, I really didn't believe that there was something like real Witchcraft back then either! It would be many years later, when as a fledgling witch, I first participated in a ceremony honouring Hekate. The ceremony, which took place in a cave in a fruit growing valley in Southern Africa, honoured Hekate alongside the Grain Goddess Demeter and her daughter Persephone. As the youngest member of the group I took the role of Persephone in the ritual, but it was Hekate who left her mark on me that night, something that I would not come to realise until many years later.

In early 2000 I found myself truly face to face with the Greek Goddess of the Crossroads. Walking to work one morning approaching the Spring Equinox, I found myself chanting *Hekate Hekate Hekate – Dark Mother – You walk with me like no other – Dark Mother...* At the time this was rather significant as I had not been doing any work with Hekate, nor did I have any other explicit reason for having Hekate on my mind. This happened on a number of consecutive mornings and on the fifth or sixth occasion, intrigued, but distracted by mundane work, I scribbled the words of the chant down on a scrap of paper and stuck it in my coat pocket. Several months later, I would discover that scrap of paper again, by then completely forgotten. It happened a few days after the "birth" of a Wiccan circle which I was to lead as High Priestess. The group, VITRIOL Grove, was to be dedicated to the Goddess Hekate following visions by both myself and my partner, David Rankine. Today that original group, having gone through many changes as it evolved over the past few years, has grown into a small network of groups, all working and studying together, and all honouring Hekate as the Goddess who brought us together. We're not a "*Hekate cult*" nor do we work exclusively with Hekate – but Hekate does hold the keys to the paths through the mysteries, which we are discovering together.

This book is the result of the combined efforts of a group of people who all work with Hekate on a regular basis and many of whom have worked with Hekate extensively for a number of years. Some of the contributions have been inspired by dream visions,

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some through group experiences with Hekate and others through personal experiences gained through solitary work with the Goddess of the Crossroads.

This small volume brings together the writings, artwork, photography and other skills of more than 20 people. It is divided into three sections. Part I is an introduction to myself to the history and myths of Hekate in ancient society; Part II brings together the writings of a variety of Priests and Priestesses who share their own experiences with Hekate in a multitude of ways; Part III contains a number of modern invocation pathworkings and recipes which can be used in ceremonies honouring Hekate. It is important to stress that the ideas expressed by the various contributors are *personal*, and such they vary, they are sometimes very different from each other and in some instances may even seem to conflict with each other. Sometimes views put forth may differ from scholastic views, but that does not mean that they are uninformed. From a magickal and spiritual perspective, experience is far more of a valuable possession than knowledge gleaned from history.

The different perspectives of Hekate that have been expressed through history demonstrate the vital and multi-faceted nature of this Goddess. Like the onions that were offered to her, she has many layers, and just when you think you understand one aspect of her, she offers another face and challenges you again to expand your perceptions and horizons, to take another step forward on your path. The awesome nature of Hekate is perhaps best expressed through the keys she bears – there is a mystery she cannot reveal, her diversity encompasses the mysteries, and she is always ready to receive those who approach her with a true heart and pure intent.

*Sorita D'Este*

*London, June 2006*



## Some Notes:

### **Hekate or Hecate**

Ἑκατη / Ἑκατα

Transliteration: Hekatê, Hekata

Latin Spelling: Hecate

We have opted to use *Hekate* which is nearer to the original Greek transliteration of her name, instead of the Latinised version of her name *Hecate*.

### **Pronunciation**

Hekate is pronounced as *He-ka-tay*. The stress should fall on the *te*.

### **Meaning of Hekate**

The name Hekate is given many different possible translations and interpretations. It is likely that it can be connected to the Greek *hekas* which means *far off*; or from one of Apollo's titles, *hekatos*, meaning *far-darting*. Another theory is that it may originate from the Greek for *Dancing Hands*, that is *hekatos hekateris*. Another suggestion is that her name may have been derived from *hekatox* meaning a *hundred*.



## List of Contributors

### **Alison [Croydon, UK]**

Alison has been working as a healer and therapist for some years. She loves to work with Nature and developing her garden, making food and wine from the fruits of her own labours. When not crafting something in the kitchen or garden, she can sometimes be found dancing with a Border Morris side, which she describes as being “great fun”.

### **Amanda [Kent, UK]**

Amanda works as a part time staff trainer and is a full time Mum. She loves spending time with her family, preferably outdoors – whatever the weather. Whenever time allows she enjoys reading books and listening to music, or a nice bottle of wine and scrummy food in the company of good friends. Although Amanda was brought up in the Christian faith, she always felt there was “something else” or “something missing” and found the missing part through a Wiccan study group she attended some years ago to start her formal magickal training. She is now an initiate of the Wiccan tradition working in a London based coven. She lives in Kent, with her husband, her two year old son and the family cat.

### **Amelia [London, UK]**

Amelia is a 2nd degree Witch and priestess based in London. She has been working with Hekate almost as long as she has been involved in Wicca and it is a relationship that has had a profound effect on her life. She lives in fear that Hekate will demand an exclusivity contract and considers commitment to a Goddess more terrifying than marriage or the M25 on a Friday evening.

### **Brian Andrews [Croydon, UK]**

Brian Andrews is an Alexandrian Wiccan and has given workshops on subjects such as Runes and Nature Spirits at conferences in London. A native of South London, his interests include comic books, gardening, computer games and playing music – and of course art! He has written for *Witchcraft & Wicca Magazine* and his artwork features in *The Guises of the Morrigan*, *Becoming Magick*, *Heka* and *Artemis – Virgin Goddess of the Sun & Moon*.



### **David Rankine [London, UK]**

David Rankine is an author and researcher who has dedicated his life to the study and teaching of the Western Mystery Tradition of Magick and Mysticism. He is the author of many books on magick, occult and folklore subjects – including *Climbing the Tree of Life*, *Becoming Magick*, and *Heka*; and gives regular lectures, workshops and presentations around the UK and Europe on related subjects such as Qabalah, Medieval, Renaissance and Egyptian Magick. David also co-produces the Source Works of Ceremonial Magic series with Stephen Skinner. For more information visit David's website: [www.ritualmagick.co.uk](http://www.ritualmagick.co.uk)

### **Hannah [London, UK]**

Is a London based witch who began her "formal" training in Wicca in 2002, however, her study of the occult began as child and one of her earliest memories is of practicing the lesser banishing ritual of the pentagram with in the garden with her father. Wicca offered a framework within which to connect with like minded people, work magick and honour the Gods. Hekate walks with her on this path every step of the way, creating change, chaos, challenges, joy and ultimately fulfilment.

### **Harry Barron [Mid-Wales, UK]**

Harry is the High Priest of *Llwyn yr Eryr*, a Wiccan circle which forms part of a larger network dedicated to Hekate. He has a life-long passion for both healing and Pagan spirituality, and offers a variety of complimentary therapies including Reiki, Qi Gong, Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture from his practice in Wales. He is currently researching and developing ideas centred on Wiccan Ethics and Reincarnation.

### **Helen Hapi [West Wales, UK]**

Having dedicated her spiritual path and work to Hekate a few years ago, Helen considers herself a Priestess of Hekate. This may seem strange for a Welsh Witch, but Helen makes up for it by also spending a great deal of time researching and incorporating traditional Welsh folklore and herbal remedies into the work she does with her coven. She is a fluent Welsh speaker, and specialised in the Arthurian influence during her literature degree studies.



### **Inbaal [London UK]**

Inbaal is the UK's leading media psychic, having been featured in papers, magazines, radio and TV shows regularly since 2000. She specializes in the Tarot and has been using it to aid her clients to move forward in life since the age of twenty. An Israeli Piscean Tiger, she has taken an active interest in Magic since 1998. For more information on her work see [www.inbaal.com](http://www.inbaal.com)

### **Iris [London, UK]**

Iris is a Wiccan priestess with a long-standing interest in the Greek and Egyptian pantheons and their connected myths which – together with Roman and Nordic myths – she started exploring from childhood. Growing up in the countryside she also developed a fascination with the cycles and changes of nature long before she started out on the Wiccan path. Among her other magickal interests are the Qabalah as well as voice, trance and dream work. Iris works as a translator and is also a writer and musician. In her spare time she enjoys reading, going for walks, practicing Kung Fu as well as socialising with friends and dancing.

### **Jenny Sumaya [London, UK]**

Jenny is a photographer based in South East London, a practising Wiccan and Welsh Witch. Working mostly with portrait photography, Jenny has a love of the unique and beautiful. Always open to new challenges Jenny relished the chance to use her photographic skills to contribute to this project, which has a deep resonance within her personal and spiritual life. For more info see: [www.jennysumaya.com](http://www.jennysumaya.com)

### **John Canard [Somerset, UK]**

Having misspent most of his youth in the Cambridgeshire fens, John met the woman of his dreams, who he still believes to be only part-human and moved with her to Somerset to live the wild life. They live on a smallholding where John spends his time tending a menagerie of animals and growing organic vegetables, in addition to cultivating a variety of herbs and other magickal plants for use in alchemical experiments.



**Kay Gillard [London, UK]**

Kay is an energy & sound healer, Reiki Master and Witch, guided to include all these things on her path through her work with Hekate. As well as a love of the classical Gods and ritual magick, her practice is often focused on Shamanic, animal and nature spirit work. She is at least an art fae. For more information visit Kay's website: [www.kaygillard.com](http://www.kaygillard.com)

**Rezley Butler [London, UK]**

Rezley has been working with Hekate almost exclusively since 2000. She admits that this has had a very profound effect on her life but it is a very personal relationship and not one easily committed to paper. She is a priestess, healer, medium and a myriad of other things. Building a relationship with deity has been the most rewarding aspect of her spiritual work over the years. She likes cats, meditating on Dartmoor (and might take to you if you give her chocolate).

**Magin [London, UK]**

Magin has been practising solitary magick for ten years; the early years of which were primarily spent practising runic divination, spellwork and witchcraft. Magin is now a Wiccan working with a range of European deities. She continues to expand on her knowledge of runecraft and the Northern tradition and also has a growing interest in ceremonial magick and the mysteries of the Qabalah. Magin particularly enjoys the creative and practical aspects of her craft such as painting, sewing and cooking.

**Dr. Nina Lazarus [Bath, UK]**

Nina loves dogs and indeed it is her interest in the canine race which led her down paths of discovery towards finding Hekate. She is a Priestess Hierophant of Hekate in the Fellowship of Isis, an Alexandrian High Priestess and ceremonialist. She believes firmly in the expression and manifestation of magick in the landscape and that we should stop worrying about whether or not the Gods exist or not and get on with the Great Work instead. For the last few years she has focused her own work on the manifestation of the magickal current through physical expression.

**Pyxie [London, UK]**

A practising witch for over 15 years and Wiccan initiate devoted to Hekate. She has a passion for creative crafts, herblore and healing.





### **Rainspider [Kent, UK]**

Currently living in Kent, her ancestors include Cornish lifeboat men, Scottish engine drivers a Vikings. Rainspider first discovered that there was some kind of unseen energy in the wo when she was four and her parents took her on a visit to Canterbury Cathedral. Refusing to en as "*something was in there*" she screamed all the way home! Since her teens she has been explori sacred sites throughout the UK. She subsequently discovered yoga and trained as a teacher, s searching for the path which was right for her. Then one day, the path discovered her anc had a name...Wicca. She says "*It felt like coming home.*"

### **Sorita D'Este [London, UK]**

Sorita describes herself as a student of *life's mysteries*. She is the co-founder of a network Wiccan covens and groves dedicated to Hekate and has worked with and researched Hek extensively since 2000. She is the author of several books and hundreds of articles on subje related to the magickal, including aromatherapy, folklore and witchcraft. Sorita gives regu lectures and workshops at conferences and other events throughout the UK & Europe a teaches Wicca through the Avalonia Wicca Homestudy Course which has students from around the world. Her website can be found at: [www.avalonia.co.uk](http://www.avalonia.co.uk)

### **Sue Bowman [Sussex, UK]**

Alternative Therapist Sue Bowman lives in Sussex with her partner Joe, and their baby daugh Rosemary. She is a member of an Alexandrian Coven in London and has recently developed interest in the Qabalah. In her free time she enjoys working with clay and other media to cre sacred images of the Goddess. She also enjoys studying and working with traditional her remedies.

### **How to contact the contributors**

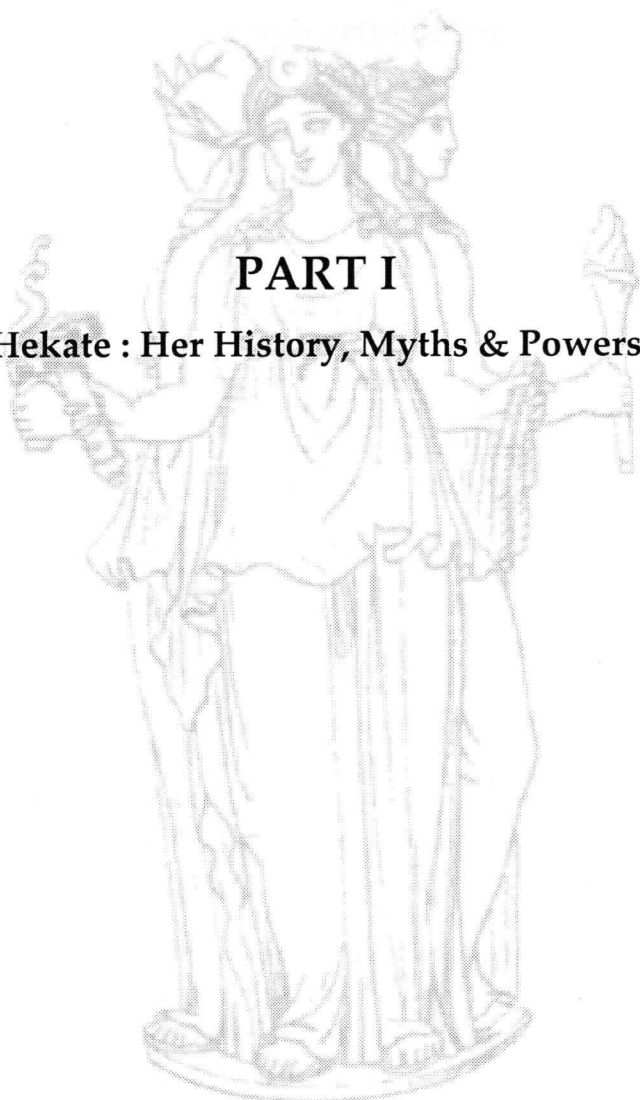
The contributors would love to hear your comments on their work and experiences and you welcome to write to them about your own experiences of Hekate too. You can do so addressing letters c/o the following address:

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**PART I**  
**Hekate : Her History, Myths & Powers**





## The History, Powers & Myths of Hekate

By Sorita D'Es

Today, Hekate's image is as confusing and conflicting as it has always been and possibly even more so! Some attributions, such as that of the archetypal *Crone* are relatively recent provenance, seemingly based on descriptions of some of the women of Thessaly, who were known to call upon Hekate and feared for their powerful magick. This is an image which was disseminated by the Elizabethan playwright *Shakespeare* in his works, including most famously *Macbeth*. In ancient Greece, artists and poets described Hekate as young, beautiful and perfect. They usually depict her in a single form holding two torches, or in later Hellenistic and Roman times, with three bodies and three heads, holding a variety of symbolic items.

With her powers over Land, Earth & Sky, the Goddess of magick and crossroads leads us through the mysteries of life, death and rebirth. She was the only one of the Titan Gods who was to retain their powers under the rulership of the new Olympian Gods and she was even given additional powers by Zeus. Aptly described by J.E. Lowe "arguably the most mysterious and formidable of all Goddesses of the ancient world", Hekate's story is one which leads us down pathways which, each containing a truth, but which is ultimately a labyrinth of truths, myths and integrated propaganda – a labyrinth as complex as the many thousands of years worth of human and natural history which created it.

Confused with, equated with and associated with a whole range of Goddesses including *Selene* (The Moon Goddess), *Artemis* (The Virgin Huntress), *Cybele* (The Great Mother Goddess), *Demeter* (The Grain Goddess), *Persephone* (The Queen of the Underworld) and many others, in both her single form and her triple form, Hekate is certainly one of the most mystifying of the ancient Greek Goddesses. Indeed it is



well be because of the many powers she held that her mysteries also became so entangled with, confounded and identified with those of so many other Goddesses.

### Immigrant Goddess

Most researchers agree that Hekate's origins are to be found in Asia Minor and that she probably originated in what is today south-west Turkey. In Thrace, Hekate was both a powerful and popular Goddess, particularly so in Ionia and Karia. Many believe that Thrace is the true birthplace of Hekate in ancient times. Proof for this is difficult to find, especially from the archaic period, but one of the earliest references to Hekate in Thrace is found in a hymn fragment about the city of Abdera, written by Pindar. This dates to around the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE and says: "*It was the first of the month<sup>1</sup> when this befell, and the gracious Hekate, the maid of the ruddy feet, was hereby sending us a message that was longing for fulfilment.*"<sup>2</sup>

The only known classical temple to Hekate stood in Argos, literary evidence indicates that this temple was already in use by the early 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE and that building work was completed soon after. It is however plausible that this site was in use from a much earlier time. Not much remains on the site today, and it is very difficult to distinguish between changes and additions which were made during Hellenistic and Roman times from that which is older.

Most sources of literary information on Hekate come from Hellenistic Greece, with the exception of *The Theogony* and the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, which are both from the archaic times. As is the case for most ancient Greek deities, it is the city state of Athens which provides us with the largest diversity of literary source material. It is also in Athens that the oldest known votive statue of Hekate was found and where Pausanias recorded that the three-formed statue of Hekate, by Alkamenes, stood next to the

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<sup>1</sup> The first of the month, being the New Moon, a date which was often associated with Hekate  
<sup>2</sup> Pindar, Paean 2

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temple of the *Wingless Nike*; and where a statue of Hekate stood at the main gateway into the Acropolis.

In the Aigina region, according to Pausanias, Hekate was honoured above all the other Gods. The people of Aigina celebrated her mystery every year and venerated a wooden cult statue, portraying Hekate in a singular form for this purpose.

The famous sanctuary temple of Demeter and Persephone which stood at Eleusis for hundreds of years, reduced to ruins today but still not forgotten, provides us with another site at which Hekate's involvement cannot be ignored. Although there are a myriad of theories on the exact nature of the mysteries and rituals which took place at the Greater and Lesser Eleusian Mysteries, we do know that it was a very important spiritual centre. The priesthood there owned large areas of land, were tremendously wealthy and wielded political power throughout the known world. We know from archaeological findings that the sanctuary at Eleusis may have been in use as early as 1500 BCE. A smaller temple, which stood at the entrance to the main temple, was according to Pausanias dedicated to Artemis *Propylaea* and Poseidon. *Propylaea* was one of Hekate's key titles, and this temple may have been dedicated to Hekate and Poseidon, rather than Artemis, who does not have any obvious associations with the mysteries of Persephone and Demeter as enacted at Eleusis.

Additionally Hekate is linked to Poseidon in other writings, including the *Theogony*, and additionally fish were often offered to her in sacrificial rites. Further evidence which indicates Hekate's role at this sanctuary comes from a vase found on at the site which depicts a young female figure, holding two torches, a pose which is called *The Running Maiden* which is widely accepted as being a depiction of Hekate.



## Hekate's Parents

*"Also she bare Asteria of happy name, whom Perses once led to his great house to be called his dear wife. And she conceived and bare Hekate whom Zeus the son of Kronos honoured above all."*<sup>3</sup>

In Hesiod's *Theogony* and in the writings of Apollodorus we find that Hekate is the daughter of the Titan Gods, *Perses* & *Asteria*. The idea that *Perses* is her father is further supported in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, the *Orphic Hymns*, *Ovid's Metamorphoses* and a number of other literary sources. This is by far the best explanation for some of the powers and attributes she is given throughout the ancient world. However, even in a matter as simple as parentage, there is conflicting information. *Zeus* is sometimes named as her father, and *Nyx* (Night) and *Demeter* (Grain Goddess) both make appearances as the mother of Hekate, as well as the Roman Grain Goddess, *Ceres*.

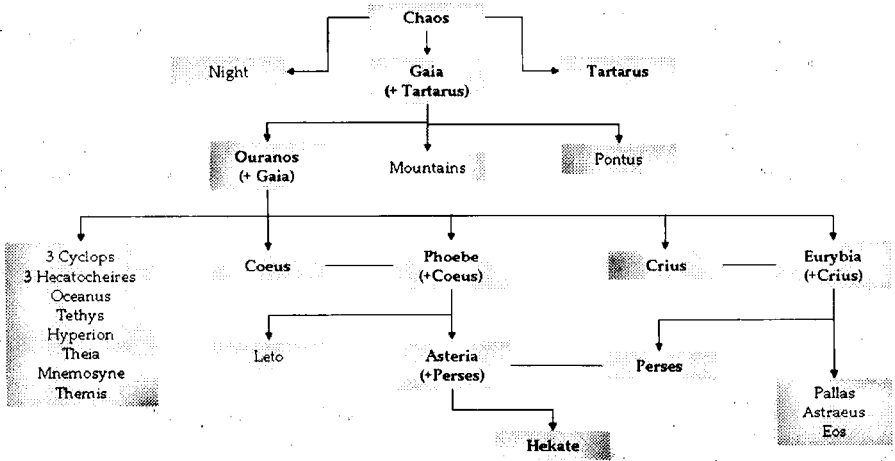
*Perses*, the son of *Krios* & *Eurybia*, was associated with destruction, both in agriculture and war. Some sources suggest that he was sometimes pictured with dog-like features, in a similar way to the Egyptian Jackal headed God, *Anubis* (Anup) who was also associated with the underworld and took the role of the psychopomp. This is of course interesting, considering Hekate's regular associations with dogs, most famously with the three-headed *Kerberus*, as well as her associations with the underworld, often taking the role of psychopomp. Hekate's mother, *Asteria*, is the Titan Goddess who rules over visions, oracles, dreams, prophesies and necromancy. She was also associated with meteorites, shooting stars and *star reading* (astrology). Again a clear link between the attributes of *Asteria* and those given to Hekate can be seen and some believed that Hekate overlooked the nocturnal practices ruled over by her mother, *Asteria*.

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<sup>3</sup> *Theogony*, Hesiod



## Hekate's Family Tree



## Hekate's Children

Hekate was generally viewed, in Hellenistic times, like her cousin Artemis, to be a Virgin Goddess and as such is not usually romantically paired with any of the other Gods. "The only-begotten Maiden"<sup>4</sup> wrote one ancient writer, "The maiden daughter of Perseus"<sup>5</sup> wrote another. However, there are also some who believed that Hekate did have children. Some ancient writers equated Hekate with *Krataeis*. If this is so, then Hekate was the mother of the sea-monster *Skylla*, as well as the monster *Kratais* by *Phorkys*. There are also questionable references to Hekate being the mother and wife of King *Aeetes*, and that as his wife, she gave birth to three children, two daughters – *Kirke* and *Medeia*; and one son, *Aigialeus*.<sup>6</sup> Interestingly both *Kirke* and *Medeia* were of course both famous enchantresses who called on Hekate for their magick.

4 Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 3.840

5 Lycophron, *Alexandra* 1174

6 See Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 4.45.1





In the Roman Arnobius' writings it is mentioned that Hekate is the mother of *Saturn*, *Ops* and *Janus* with *Cælus* as the father. This essentially equates Hekate with *Terra*, the Earth Goddess.

Pausanias, when writing in his *Guide to Greece* recounted a story in which *Daeira*, one of the children of *Okeanos*, bore the child after which *Eleusis* was named. Some believe that *Daeira* may have been another name or a title of Hekate. In another story, the Goddess *Brimo*, an underworld Goddess and a name which is believed by some to be another title of Hekate, loses her virginity to *Mercury*, the Roman god who was equated with the Greek messenger God *Hermes*.

### Hekate, Persephone & Demeter

These three Goddesses are linked primarily through the myths which tell of Persephone's abduction by the Lord of the Underworld, Hades. Demeter (discovering that her daughter is missing) mourns the loss of the Kore and curses the Earth, allowing all life to wither and die. It is at this point in the story that Hekate speaks to Demeter and tells her that she heard the cries of Persephone from a nearby meadow, from within her cave. Hekate suggests that Demeter travels to Helios, the Sun God, to find out whether Helios saw what happened to Persephone. The two Goddesses travel to Helios and learn from him that Persephone was abducted by Hades. Demeter becomes even more perturbed at this and vows that she would let all life on Earth die unless her daughter was returned to her.

A series of events unfold and it is Hekate who travels to the underworld to speak with Hades to broker a deal in which Persephone would be allowed to return to her mother, but only for two-thirds of the year, spending the remaining time with Hades as his Queen. Hekate becomes the companion to Persephone on her yearly journey, and upon her descent each and every year, Demeter still mourns the loss of her daughter - allowing the Earth to become cold and barren. This tale is essentially an ancient myth telling of the birth of the seasons.



## Hekate & Hermes

Hermes, the shepherd God of marketplaces and heraldry, known for his clever guiles, was linked to Hekate on a consistent basis. The divine messenger of the Gods, Hermes was honoured with ithyphallic boundary stones and depictions, which were erected at crossroads, marketplaces (which were often on the boundaries) and sometimes at gymnasiums. Statues and shrines of Hekate and Hermes were often found together guarding entrance ways and gateways into cities and temples, for example: statues of Hekate and Hermes were found together at the entrance way to the Athenian Acropolis during the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE.

In the *Theogony* we find another specific reference to Hermes and Hekate being linked together, when Hesiod wrote: "...and she (Hekate) is good in the stables, with Hermes, to increase the stock..." which may have been a reference to Hekate somehow supporting the work of Hermes as a God of cattle, linking in to the earlier associations Hekate may have had as an agricultural Goddess.

There are also theories which link the young male and female figures seen in Ionian art relating to the worship of *Kybele* to Hermes and Hekate, hinting at an earlier connection between them which is not that transparent in the mythology of later times, but can still be found in a number of attributes they share. For example the title of *Enodia* (in the road), their joint association with crossroads and boundaries. They were also both called upon for safe passage by travellers as illustrated in the many inscriptions found on *katadsmoi* (curse tablets) and they both take on the role as psychopomp in mythology, notably in the various versions of the decent of Persephone to Hades.

## Hekate & Helios

In the legend of Persephone's descent to Hades, Hekate and Helios are the only Gods able to provide Demeter with information about Persephone, playing key roles in ensuring her ascent on a yearly basis:



*"But no one, either of the deathless Gods or mortal men, heard her voice, nor yet the olive-trees bearing rich fruit: only tender-hearted Hekate, bright-coiffed, the daughter of Perses, heard the girl from her cave, and the lord Helios, Hyperion's bright son, as she cried to her father, the Son of Kronos"<sup>7</sup>*

In the *Theogony* Helios is the grandfather of the witch Medeia. Sophocles wrote that Medeia invoked both Helios and Hekate together in her magic when he wrote "*Lord Helios, Lord of the Sacred Flame, You who are the weapon of Hekate of the Roads, which she bears when she leads in Olympus and when she haunts the sacred-three ways on Earth*". Euripides also links Helios and Hekate in his play *Medeia*.

The usual explanation for Hekate to be linked to Helios comes from the associations with the Moon and Sun. (Hekate being associated with the Moon, and Helios with the Sun.) This is not however something which can be substantiated for that period. Selene, the Greek Goddess of the Moon, travelled the night sky in her chariot, just as Helios did during the day. Hekate's associations with the Moon come from her later conflation with Artemis and Selene. A more viable explanation for the links between Hekate and Helios is through the interplay which takes place in the descent of Persephone to Hades as told in the *Hymn to Demeter*.

### Depictions of Hekate

Today Hekate is most often portrayed as a triple-bodied Goddess, an image based on a sculpture created in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE by *Alkamenes*, and according to Pausanias also invented by him. These depictions show three young women, standing back to back (sometimes around a central pillar, whilst sometimes each of the women are backed by their own pillar) holding a variety of symbolic objects including a dagger, keys, apples, torches, a cup, a whip, a staff and snakes. We don't know exactly what the original looked like and the later copies all have slight variations, both in size and in the symbols held by the Goddess.

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<sup>7</sup> Homeric Hymn to Demeter



It is also worth noting that Hekate in her triple form was not always shown as fully human, examples of this includes a love charm<sup>8</sup> showing her with the head of a cow on the left, the head of a female dog on the right and that of a young girl in the centre. An engraving on a piece of magnetised rock shows Hekate with the head of a goat on the right, a dog on the left and a young woman with horns in the centre as recorded in PGM (Greek Magical Papyri) for use in magick:

*“Take a lodestone and on it have carved a three faced Hekate. And let the middle face be that of a maiden wearing horns, and the left face that of a dog, and the one of the right that of a goat.”<sup>9</sup>*

According to L.R. Farnell, writing in *Hekate in Art*: *“The earliest known monument is a small terracotta found in Athens, with a dedication to Hekate, in a writing of the style of the sixth century [BCE]. The Goddess is seated on a throne with a chaplet bound around her head; she is altogether without attributes and character...”* Farnell goes on to say that the only value of this particular finding is that it shows that Hekate was recognised in this earlier form in Athens, prior to the Persian invasion of the area.

## The Symbols of Hekate

The following symbols, herbs, trees, stones and other correspondences are associated with Hekate, and found in literature, myths and depictions of her from ancient times:

Animals	Black Ewe-Lambs, Boar, Bull, Cock, Cow, Dogs, Fish, Goats, Horses, Lions, Mice, Mullet Fish, Polecat, Rams, Serpents, Wolf
Colours	Black, Red, White, Yellow

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<sup>8</sup> Love charm of Pitys, part of the magickal Greek codex of Paris

<sup>9</sup> PGM 2880-2882

## Keys to the Crossroads



Minerals	Copper, Gold, Lodestone, Meteorite, Sapphire
Herbs & Trees	Aconite, Anise, Apples, Belladonna, Garlic, Grain, Oak leaves, Onion, Poppy, Saffron, Willow, Yew
Food (other)	Amphiphôn Cakes, Eggs, honey
Symbols	Dagger, Keys, Horned Crescent, Pegasus, New Moon, Three-Way Crossroads, Trident, Twin Torches

### Maiden, Mother & Crone



The Triple Goddess, as Maiden, Mother and Crone, is a relatively new concept which was made popular during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Hekate is today most often equated to the Crone aspect of this triplicate archetypal image, but this idea of Hekate as a Crone Goddess is one which would have been completely alien to the people of ancient Greece. The only possible explanation for the continued association today is that somehow the darker, scarier aspects of Hekate has been equated to wisdom in old age, which is, when you think about it rather ludicrous. Wisdom and knowledge do most certainly come with old age, but wisdom does not make you *dark* or *scary*- it should in theory make you more illuminating, interesting and exactly what it says, wise. And whilst wisdom for humans



does usually come with age, we should not allow ourselves to be blinded by this when we search for knowledge from the Gods.

In myths from all around the world, Goddesses sometimes take on the form of younger or older, ugly or beautiful women, to communicate clear messages to their followers. The Irish Goddess *The Morrigan*, for example, appears as an ugly old hag and transforms herself into a beautiful maiden when choices are correctly made.

Hekate is a Goddess who has for thousands of years been associated with magick, and such she is capable of manifesting in any form she pleases. In theory, the ancient Gods are all *old* – they are ancient, but since they are immortal, age is not relevant in the same way as it is for humans. Whilst it may be nice to think that deities will fit into our neat modern psychological models, in reality that simply does not work when you start digging even just slightly beneath the surface.

Depictions aside, Hekate has often been linked to Persephone and Demeter, in art, literature and myth. Modern pagan writers often equate Persephone to the role of Maiden, Demeter to the role of Mother and Hekate to Crone, but, when you look at the Greek myths another more interesting and plausible model emerges. Persephone is the wife of Hades and the Goddess who effectively brings fertility to the land when she returns to Her mother Demeter, the grain Goddess, whose yearly mourning for the loss of her daughter brings winter and with it barrenness to the Earth. Hekate on the other hand is often described as being a maiden and believed by many to be a Virgin Goddess. So if you do work with Maiden, Mother and Crone archetypes in your work it is worth exploring Hekate in the role of Maiden, Persephone in the role of Mother/Wife and Demeter as the Crone, which is a more plausible division based on their historic roles in the mysteries.



## The Three-formed & Moon Goddess

The triple form depictions of Hekate sometimes show one of the figures with a crescent moon, with the horns pointing upwards, on the brow. Many other later depictions of Hekate, such as those on coins and other inscriptions, also depict the crescent moon motif. The usual explanation given for this is that the three forms of Hekate represent the three phases of the Moon. This is a problematic analysis as the Moon obviously have more than just three phases and Hekate's association with the Moon was usually with the New Moon, the time at which Hekate Suppers were held at the crossroads. The lunar attributions to Hekate all come from the late Hellenistic and Roman periods, and most of the three-form depictions show only one of the figures with a crescent moon. There are a couple of known images, from the Roman period, in which the other two figures have what could be interpreted as disks representing the Full and Dark Moon phases of the Moon, but this seems to be the exception to the rule.

The references we find in ancient literature, stating that Hekate was honoured at the New Moon, are also often given as evidence that she was a lunar Goddess. However, the Greeks calculated time using a lunisolar calendar, which means that the Moon played an integral part in time keeping. If this is to be used as evidence then almost all Greek deities would be lunar ones!

It is more likely that the artist who designed the image was drawing inspiration from Hekate as Goddess of the three-ways, which was a popular attribution given to her during the Hellenistic period. It was also documented in earlier writings by *Sophokles* and *Charikleides*, who both refer to her as being *three-ways*. The number three has also got other associations for Hekate: In Hesiod's *Theogony*, Zeus gives her a share of three realms, the Earth, the Sea and the Starry Sky, thus another explanation could be that the three-forms represent Hekate watching over her three domains. She is also frequently invoked with the title of *Trimorphis* which means *three-formed*.



It is also a possibility, that as is the case with many horned deities, the crescent is the evolution of a depiction of Hekate *with horns*, such as which is described in the PGM “... let the middle face be that of a maiden wearing horns...”<sup>10</sup> But that is purely speculation on my part.

One could further hypothesize that the lunar associations of Hekate has always been there, but that it was so widely known that it was never necessary to write about it. It is however important to keep in mind when making such assumptions that the Goddess Selene was viewed as the Moon Goddess with a chariot which travelled the night sky in the same way as Helios, the Sun God, did during the daylight hours. It was Selene who was equated to the Moon and considered to be the opposite of Helios, the Sun, and in most classical literature from Greece, Selene is considered the only Moon Goddess. But we also find that in the later period that Hekate, through her links with Bendis, did also become equated with Selene and that they were often invoked together:

*“O Selene, driver of the silver car! If thou art Hekate of many names, if in the night thou dost shake thy mystic torch in brandcarrying hand, come nightwanderer ... If thou art staghunter Artemis, if on the hills thou dost eagerly hunt with fawnkilling Dionysos, be thy brother’s helper now! ...”<sup>11</sup>*

But even if Hekate was not always a lunar Goddess, and evolved into one during the later period, she certainly accepted her lunar powers and attributions with all the grace becoming a Goddess who revels in her power. Today most Magickians and Witches who work with Hekate do view her as having lunar associations.

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10 PGM 2880-2882

11 Nonnus, Dionysiaca 44.198





## Goddess of Earth

One of Hekate's titles, *Chthonia*, which can be translated as *of the earth*, is a reference to Hekate living within and under the Earth. Characteristics shared by chthonic deities include altars which are created on the ground or near to the Earth, rather than the high altars which were usually used for the Gods of Olympus. It was also more usual to find offerings made as libations into the Earth, the sacrifice of whole animals as opposed to just the inedible parts. There are also references to a shrine of Hekate as being deep in the forest and visited by Medeia when she sought knowledge of the poison herbs of Hekate.

## Nocturnal Lady of Ghosts

Hekate was most certainly associated with nocturnal goings on; in particular she was associated with the restless spirits of the dead, especially those who died an untimely death (*nôroi*) and other spirits who were unable to cross over into Hades, thus being left to wander the in-between realms.

*"O nether and nocturnal, and infernal  
Goddess of dark, quiet and frightful one  
O you who have your meal amid the graves  
Night, Darkness, broad Chaos Necessity  
Hard to escape are you" <sup>12</sup>*

Hekate was also associated with nightmares and dreams. Hippokrates condemned the belief that Hekate caused nightmares as mere superstition in the late fifth century, just as Plutarch did. According to Robert Von Rudloff in his book *Hekate in Ancient Greek Religion* the earliest reference of Hekate sending ghosts is to be found in Euripides<sup>13</sup> when Helen confronts Meneloas and he exclaims: "*Oh Phosphoros Hekate, send me kindly*

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<sup>12</sup> PGM 2855 - 2859

<sup>13</sup> Euripides was one of the great Greek writers of tragedy who lived around 480–406 BC.



*phantasms*” with Helen responding saying: “*you do not see in me a night-appearing attendant of Enodia.*” Ghosts were seen as being controlled by and serving Hekate.

As such Hekate is an ideal Goddess to invoke in workings which involves restless spirits or ghosts and to help protect a house or other space from unwanted ghostly activities, for help with necromantic workings and at the festival of Samhain<sup>14</sup>, in which we feast with the spirits of our ancestors and bid farewell to those who left the world of men in the previous year.

### The Lightbringer

As the bearer of the twin torches, Hekate is given the title of *Phôsphoros* which means *lightbearer*, which is one of the most important roles of this Goddess. She is often depicted in art and in literature bearing her torches and was often invoked with this title. The torches symbolise the role Hekate takes when leading and guiding Persephone to and from Hades on her yearly journey, as well as a possible role in guiding initiates in the mysteries, and it has been linked with images found at Eleusis the famous site of the initiatory mysteries most associated with Demeter. Some writers have suggested that her torches symbolise the Moon, but this is highly unlikely as she is usually shown bearing not one torch, but two. Some speculation around the two torches representing the evening and morning stars (the planet Venus) has been made and is a more plausible theory, in particular with the title *Phôsphoros* being one shared with other deities linked to this planet.

### Goddess of the Crossroads

Hekate’s association with the crossroads and in particular, with places where three roads meet, is well documented and also clear from titles she was given. Notably *Trivia* or *Trioditis* which means *three-ways* or *in the three-ways*, but also the title of *Enodia* which means *in the road* or *by the wayside*. That the triple-formed Hekate statues were

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<sup>14</sup> Samhain, a Wiccan and Pagan celebration which takes place on the 31st of October each year.



associated with Hekate's role as a Goddess of the three-ways is not a new association, Ovid wrote: "You see Hekate's faces turned in three ways so she can protect the triple crossroads."<sup>15</sup>

*Deipna Hekatês* (Hekate's Suppers) were held at crossroads on the eve of the New Moon to honour and appease Hekate and according to Plutarch<sup>16</sup> to also appease the ghosts of the dead who were seeking vengeance. Statues which show her as three-formed can be seen as Hekate looking outwards towards the roads which join up at the crossroads where she was honoured. There are references to cakes being left at the crossroads, surrounded by lit torches, which K.F. Smith in his *Hekate's Suppers*<sup>17</sup> suggested to be the prototype of our own modern birthday cakes. These offerings were known as an *amphiphôn*.

### Goddess of Childbirth

In this role, Hekate is given the title of *Kourotrophos* in the *Theogony*, which means *child's nurse*, and associates her closely to childbirth. It is a title shared by many of the Greek Goddesses, thus Hekate is not *The Goddess of Childbirth*, just *A Goddess of Childbirth*. Some writers have suggested that Hekate is associated through this role with the Egyptian frog-headed Goddess Hekat who is also a Goddess of Childbirth. Through the similarities in the names it is easy to see how such a conclusion can be reached, although it is very unlikely that there are any etymological links between the names. It is however, interesting to note that the Egyptian Hekat, like Hekate, was depicted wielding knives and she is credited as being able to help both mortals and Gods ascend to the otherworld upon death.

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<sup>15</sup> Fasti 1.141

<sup>16</sup> Moralia, 709 A

<sup>17</sup> Published in *The Goddess Hekate*, edited by Stephen Ronan, Chthonios Books, 1992



## Key-Bearing Guardian on the Threshold

Shrines to Hekate are frequently found in liminal or in-between places. She is given the role of *Propolos*, that is *guardian* to Persephone in the myths and this is a role she also takes in regards to some other deities and mortals. For witches working with Hekate today, this is an important role which is often better understood through experience, rather than theory. In ancient times Hekate was honoured at crossroad gateways into cities and *Hekataion*, which were household shrines to Hekate, erected at the doorways of houses. In fact these shrines were so widespread that Aristophanes when making a comparison wrote "*just like a hekataion is to be found before every door*"<sup>18</sup>

These places are all transitional, that is places of crossing over from outside to inside travelling from one road onto another etc. Hekate's power over restless spirits may provide us with one reason for this, but there are other thresholds which she also guards. Associated with both birth and death, Hekate could both guard and guide the soul to and from life to the otherworld. In the secret rites which took place at Eleusis it is believed that Hekate took the role of guide to the initiates through the mystery and through the experience that is initiation, guarding the entrance way and the illuminating the pathway with her bright shining torches. For those seeking to come to a deeper understanding of the magickal mysteries of initiation today, Hekate can be invoked as a wise and helpful guide, providing protection from unseen negative forces and leading the way to the deeper mysteries.

## Goddess of Witchcraft & Magic

Hekate and Her followers were considered to hold great power and knowledge of magick and of plants, more specifically, poisonous plants. Many references to these associations can be found in literature and in myths. Most famously associated with Hekate is Aconite (*Aconitum napellus*) a very poisonous plant which the Greeks called *lycotonum* or *wolfs-bane*. Aconite was said to be created by Hekate from the foam

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<sup>18</sup> Aristophanes, Sph. 804



falling from the mouth of the three-headed dog Kerberos, guardian of Hades. It was also the herb used by Medeia, Witch and Priestess of Hekate, in the poison cup she prepared for Theseus. Medeia also prayed to Hekate to send her more potent spells and mightier powers, which Hekate responds to by showing her the whereabouts of further poisonous plants.

Hekate is additionally linked with poisons in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Athena sprinkles Arachne, who had angered her boasts of being the best weaver, with *Hecateidos herbae* that is the *Herbs of Hekate*. Arachne is then transformed into a spider.

There is also a curious tale about the polecat from Aelian<sup>19</sup>, which says that the polecat was once a sorceress who was known as Gale, who dealt in spells and other magickal potions and had abnormal sexual desires. He goes on to claim that Hekate, angered with this sorceress, transformed her into "*this evil creature*" i.e. the polecat.

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<sup>19</sup> Aelian, *On Animals*, 15.11



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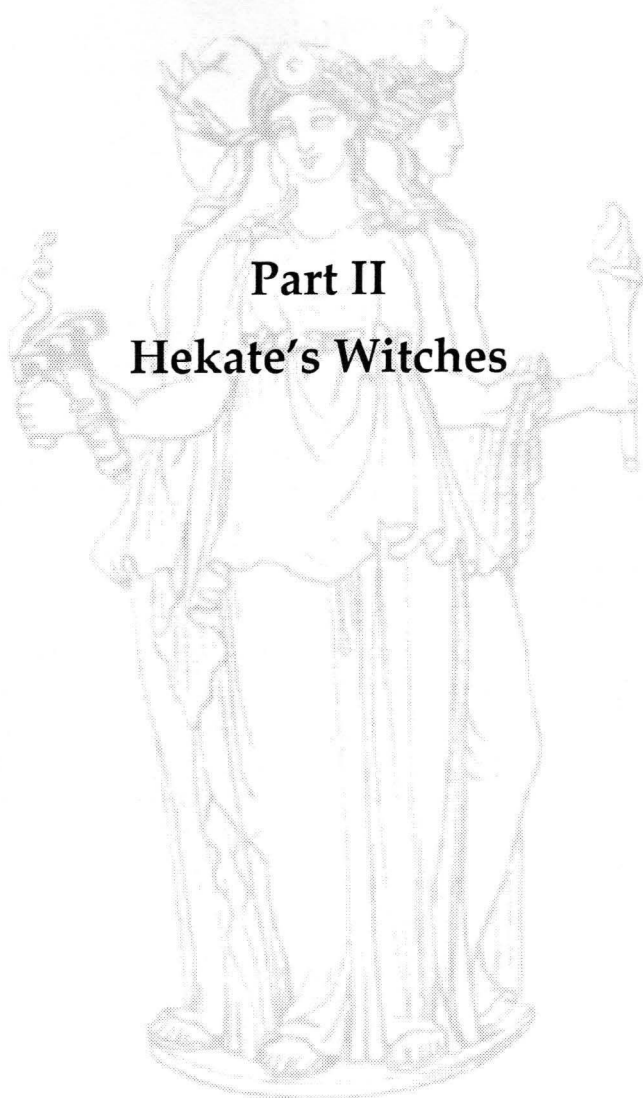
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**Part II**  
**Hekate's Witches**





## Hekate - Divine Intervention

By David Rankine

Although I am not specifically a priest of Hekate, I have ended up working with and for her more than almost any other deity I have encountered on my path. Hekate has turned up many times in my life and taken over for a period of time, often in a dramatic fashion, before imparting her lessons and leaving again.

She first made her mark on me in 1984. I had gone to visit a friend who I had been working with magickally for some years - it was the end of our first year studies at University and we hadn't had the chance to work together for some time. He met me at the train station in the evening and we walked back to his shared flat. On the way there we noticed bats everywhere and decided to work with Hekate, as he wanted some advice on a group he was considering joining and felt the bats were a sign.

We set up the magick circle in his large bedroom, and put a big "Do Not Disturb" sign on the door (it was a shared house). I prepared myself for being the oracle and he started calling to Hekate to come and speak through me. As this went on one of his flatmates, ignoring the sign on the door, walked into the room! This jolted me out of my trance state and I opened my eyes in time to see his flatmate fall over with blood pouring from his nose. After a shared glance, my friend, who fortunately was studying medicine, opened the circle and rushed over to treat his flatmate. After surmising he was okay, we dragged him to the living room and put him on the sofa, woke him with some smelling salts and went back to continue our ritual.

The ritual went very well and my friend joined the group. After the ceremony we talked about the material he had recorded when I was in trance: one of the statements Hekate made was that she would meet me at the crossroads later in my life. At the time I didn't appreciate the significance of her remark, though now it has become





much clearer! On a lighter note, the flatmate never disturbed a ritual again, and I immediately developed an appreciation for Hekate, who would take such immediate action to deal with someone interfering in her business!

Hekate reappeared dramatically in 1987, when I was working in a Thelemic group. During a group ritual where one of the priestesses was in trance channelling Hekate, She made her mark in a very scary way. I was acting in the role of psychopomp in a ritual which took the participants through a series of experiences in different rooms in a house, culminating in an oracle from Hekate.

One of the participants was led in front of Hekate, who told him to kneel. He rather foolishly remained standing, and she (through the priestess whose eyes were closed) reached forward, pulled his knife

from its sheath on his belt, and in a single stroke brought the knife across his throat. Her control was exquisite, as it left the faintest line of blood from breaking the skin on his throat. A millimetre less and she would have missed completely; a millimetre more and his throat would have been gushing blood! The participant was on his knees in a second! Two thoughts ran through my head simultaneously – *“what an awesome Goddess”,* and *“what would we have done with the body!”*



After this rather unnerving experience I decided I would like to know more about the scary Goddess. The priestess in question was performing a three month *Liber Astarte* devotional practice to Hekate, so I spoke to her and shared information. Sadly she made the mistake of breaking her vow and missing a day of her practice. This resulted in immediate punishment from Hekate in the form of a complete loss of her sex drive for six months. It emphasised a golden rule to everyone around, never break magickal vow, particularly when you have promised a deity a regular daily practice for a period of time.



I decided to work with Hekate again, and asked friends in the group to help with ritual. At the time I was doing a lot of possession trance work, and opted to channel Hekate myself. The ritual was very successful, and resulted in several pages

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<sup>20</sup> See *Magick* by Aleister Crowley



information from Hekate which was scribed as I spoke. The next day I was in London, for a Fellowship of Isis ritual. I showed the material to a friend there after she brought up the subject of Hekate, and she declared it was almost identical to material received on the same night through a psychic working with psychic quester Andrew Collins. As a result I was invited to go psychic questing that night. I accepted the offer as it was not something I had ever tried before.

Following the ritual I joined the couple of people going to meet up with Andy Collins in the Essex countryside. We arrived around 10pm and I spoke with Andy about the material. He was on his hunt for the Black Alchemist and had his current gang of questers with him. The evening was interesting, though not exactly my style. Many of the participants struck me as city folk, jumping at the slightest natural sound, and ready to panic at any excuse. At one point there was an unpleasant energy in the area where we were, identified by the psychics there as astral wolves sent by the Black Alchemist, allegedly from Hekate, so having just worked with her I banished them in her name.<sup>21</sup>

After this interesting interlude, I did not work with Hekate for some time. I did observe her influence once more on the priestess who had broken her vow. She decided to redo her *Liber Astarte* practice and try to make it up to Hekate. Unfortunately she repeated her mistake and broke her vow a second time, a spectacularly stupid move by any standards. This time Hekate's punishment was more severe. She literally ripped the magick out of the girl's life. From being a proficient magician of many years practice, she suddenly stopped practising, dropped everything and everyone connected with magick, and acted as if she had never experienced a single magickal event in her life!

Many years passed, and in 2000 I got together with my partner and High Priestess Fiorita D'Este. In the early stages of our relationship we were having a skrying session

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<sup>21</sup> See *The Second Coming* by Andrew Collins



one night with a Wiccan friend who was visiting. As I skryed in the flames I saw Hekate, and she gave me very direct instructions that we were to form a group dedicated to her. I was not prepared to discuss this in front of the friend, and waited until he had left. As soon as he was gone I turned to Sorita and we both exclaimed "Hekate" at the same time. Not only had Hekate appeared to me, she had also appeared to Sorita and given her exactly the same instructions. She was obviously determined that we were going to form a group for her. From this initial vision our group VITRIOL Grove (VG) was born, with Hekate as patron.

Initially we planned to make VG an open Sabbat group, working with a small group of friends and later on, to provide a group for people to continue to work together after completing the Wicca course we facilitated in the early part of 2001. But no, Hekate had other plans once again. The people on the course all bonded and kept asking they could work towards initiation. Hekate was determined to make it abundantly clear that she wanted more groups and more people dedicated to her.

Since then, VG has grown in size, and the group has performed a number of large public rituals to Hekate, with anything from 30 -1000 people present, and she has made her influence felt in the lives of many of the people present. She has also turned up in group members' lives on a regular basis, appearing to them through dreams and other events. One thing is clear, Hekate is a Goddess who is very much present today and is making her presence felt in an ever growing number of people's lives.



## Key Holder at the Crossroads

By Kay Gillard



The key is the symbol I most associate with Hekate and it is in her aspect as 'key bearer' that she has made the greatest impact on me. In many ways the titles Kleidophoros (key bearer) and Kleidoukhos (key holder) could be seen to tie in with her other roles. Hekate is often seen as a guardian at points of transition; crossroads and doorways are sacred to her. She holds the titles Propylaiia 'the one before the gate', Propolos 'the attendant who leads', Phosporus

and Purphoros meaning 'light bearer' and 'torch bearer' respectively and both referring to her role as guide, and Psychopomp meaning 'guide of souls'. All of these titles suggest her role as a guide at sacred 'doorways', points from which one is able to travel to other realms. Hekate is the guardian of liminal spaces, the gateway into the Underworld, the threshold between life and death; the key could be seen as signifying these qualities.

In my own work with Hekate I have found that her guise of Kleidophoros is an important aspect in its own right. She appears to me in visualisation and devotional work with a large bunch of keys at her waist, and almost always at some kind of door or gateway. Of course the doorways can take many forms. I have stood outside grand old stone buildings at ornate, oversized double-doors with huge locks on them, and

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watched Hekate unlock them with one of the keys she carries with her – then fulfilling her role as my guide by leading me through the doors. I have looked on this image often in meditation at times of initiation, in one form or another. In my own experience, finding myself at these huge doors means that the transition in progress is one of a very magickal nature.

My personal work with Hekate has also taken me to less imposing doors, like in an ordinary house, or even a curtain between rooms! The thresholds to underground realms and caves which are also extremely sacred to Hekate and she is present at these liminal spaces as guardian and guide. The ordinary image of the key may not seem as relevant to these doorways but wherever it is Hekate who 'opens the door' for us, we are meeting her in her Kleidophoros aspect. By working regularly with this aspect of Hekate you might find, as I have, that the type of doorway you are faced with will vary according to the type of transition that you are or will be working through. In this way I have found it easier to interpret my meditative experiences and relate them to my life in the mundane world. This helps me work to anchor these 'lessons' on the material plane.

The doors and locks themselves are symbolic, of course. One memorable lesson I received from Hekate Kleidophoros in meditation was at one of the grand doors I referred to earlier, in a fortified stone building. As always the Goddess wore a bunch of keys at her waist, all of different sizes. Wanting to know what all the keys were for, I got an answer that surprised me: they are not for anything. My perception of the door changed, and Hekate passed through the lock itself with me following behind. The act of unlocking a door does not have to be mechanical: doors can be opened for us if we change our perspective or adopt a different approach.

When working with Hekate as the key bearer, it is interesting to meditate on the meaning of the word 'key' itself. It sounds simple, but what does 'key' mean? A tool for opening a specific lock is only one meaning. Some keys, doors and locks are figurative: Hekate holds the key the Underworld. Should we therefore approach it

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expecting a locked door or padlocked gate?! 'Key' can also mean a guide to understanding, a system of reference, a set of symbols that explain and help us to navigate something complex. It could refer to the abstract 'key to knowledge'. We can also use the phrases 'open the doors' or 'unlock' in more abstract situations. A new opportunity in life is often referred to in common parlance as a new door opening. People seeking to improve their lives use all manner of techniques to help them unlock their full potential.

So, as the key bearer, Hekate can be called upon for help and guidance in a wider variety of situations that it may initially appear. The image of the key is useful symbol to use as a jumping off point to experience Hekate Kleidophoros, but to start getting to know her it is important not to assume a narrow view of this aspect. Rather than considering the titles of Kleidophoros and Kleidoukhos in literal translation, seeing Hekate as the key bearer or key holder, personally I find it more fitting to consider Hekate herself as the key: to include her (in any aspect) in my magickal and devotional work opens doors for me, both on the astral and material planes.

When working with Hekate Kleidophoros I place keys on my altar, along with my statue of her, which depicts her with two large keys hanging from her waist. As well as standard keys, I have found through meditation that the ankh is also a useful symbol when working with Hekate. Although the ankh is more often associated with the Egyptian pantheon it does resemble a key, often referred to as the 'key of life' and interpreted as the key to eternal life after death. This symbolism, a key opening the door between life and death, is extremely appropriate to Hekate Kleidophoros, so I think it is fitting to place an ankh on the altar or wear an ankh when working with her. To help inspire me while working on this essay, I have been wearing two ankhs on a chain around my neck; jangling as I walk they are a constant reminder of Hekate's keys.

As always in magickal work, choose your words carefully, and be specific. In the last couple of years I have worked with and made offerings to Hekate, asking her to open



doors for me, and I have always had my requests granted. (It's the old adage: be careful what you wish for!) The metaphor of walking through a door, meaning moving on to a new point in your life in one way or another, makes change sound simple and easy. Devotional work with Hekate Kleidophoros does make things easier usually by presenting opportunities that you may not otherwise have seen. But this is not to suggest that there is no 'mundane' work required to make permanent changes in your life. Too often, magickal people expend all their energies in magickal or devotional work and none in the material world. It is no good asking Hekate, or any other deity, to open the doors to a new career for you and then not applying for any jobs or investing in retraining. The energy we call on in magickal and devotional work needs the opportunity to manifest in our lives; for big changes this usually means a lot of work in one way or another.

I performed a personal ritual at a time in my life when I was dissatisfied with so much in my life – most of all I hated my job, and I had no idea what I wanted to do instead. I implored the Goddess to 'open doors for me'. Within a few months I had begun retraining in a new career, and left the job that made me miserable. My personal situation had also changed dramatically: I met my partner, made new friends, and found myself with a lot of exciting new commitments and opportunities. It has been wonderful... and exhausting!

I don't think I would have got to this point in my life so quickly had I not worked with Hekate Kleidophoros in the way that I have. It has taken a lot of work and demanded sacrifices (no, not the ritual kind!) to get here, and of course I still have a long way to go. It has been and continues to be worth it. If I can offer advice on such personal work, I would say it is important to be sure that what you are asking for really is your goal, and that you are prepared to walk that path. Remember, when Hekate opens a door, she expects you to go through.





## Dreams & Mysteries

By Helen Hapi



My path into the mysteries was through the Celtic world. I am a Celt by blood, and it is the pantheon I was always attracted to. However I have ended up with a patron from overseas, as Hekate has become my guiding light in the darkness. This is how it happened. One night when I was sleeping I became lucid in my dreaming. I was standing in an

underground tunnel with torches bracketed to the walls on either side. I could hear something ahead so I walked down the tunnel, which opened out into a cavern. In the centre of the cavern was an altar with a huge cut sapphire on it. As I approached the altar, a blue light shone forth from the sapphire and illuminated the entire cave with deep blue light. I heard a female voice speaking, and the words resonated through my body, striking such a chord that they were burned into my memory and I woke from the dream speaking them.

I immediately wrote them down in my dream diary. They said:

*In all things there is beauty, do not forget to look for it.*

*In stillness and flow there is harmony, do not forget to find it.*

*In beauty and harmony there is grace, do not forget to embody it.*

*In graceful deed and being there is love, do not forget to radiate it.*



My initial thought was on who had been speaking. The dream had a Greek flavour and I wondered if it might have been Persephone, as her husband Hades is lord of the wealth of the underworld. On my way to work I drove through the Welsh countryside and continued to ponder my dream. It was clear someone was speaking to me, but who?

I stopped at a junction, and as I waited for the cars to pass, I noticed some crows feeding on a dead sheep at the side of the road. My initial thoughts of "poor sheep" gave way to an acceptance of the cycle of life and death, and then suddenly it hit me. It was so obvious, life and death at the crossroads, the voice in the dream was the Goddess Hekate, lady of the crossroads.

I looked through my Greek mythology books and found out a bit about Hekate. Then I made a couple of calls and asked friends about her - this was in the days before the internet and Google! I was familiar with the pagan chant that goes "*Hekate, Ceridwen, dark mother take us in ...*", but apart from that I did not know much about her. That night I lit two candles in Hekate's honour on my altar and asked her to speak to me again in my dreams.

My dreams were very bitty, and initially there was no real cohesion. Eventually, after a kaleidoscope of images I forgot, I found myself standing at a crossroads, in the pouring rain. I looked around but there was no-one in sight. I called out to Hekate, asking her to show herself to me, and heard a laugh. Then I saw a blue light shining from my chest, and realised that Hekate was telling me to look within myself. Grinning like a fool, I stood in my dream storm and enjoyed the thunder and lightning, until the ringing of the telephone woke me up.

Struggling to wake up, I quickly recounted the dream into my bedside Dictaphone and sleepily went downstairs to answer the phone. It was my father with bad news. His mother, my closest grandparent, had passed away in the night. Fighting back the tears, I listened to his account of her death. She had gone to sleep and not woken up. The

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image of the dead sheep at the crossroads from the previous day popped into my head as I offered sympathy to my distraught father.

The next few days before the funeral disappeared in a haze. Before the ceremony my father took me to one side and presented me with a beautiful ring. It was my grandmother's eternity ring, a sapphire set between two diamonds. "She wanted you to have this," he told me as he pressed it into my hands. I put it on the ring finger of my right hand and it fitted perfectly.

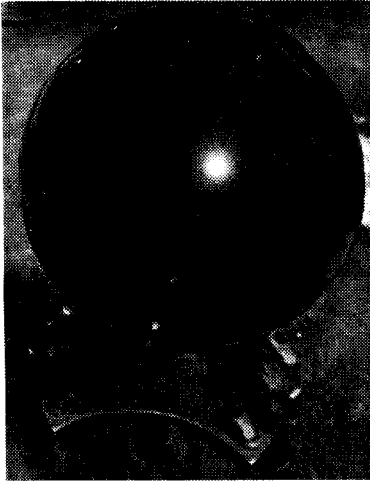
After the ceremony, as we stood in the graveyard watching the coffin being lowered into the ground, the sunlight reflected on the two diamonds in my new ring, making them shine like two torches, and I realised that Hekate was sending me a sign that life was a cycle, and though it was sad she had gone, I should concentrate on remembering the good things my grandmother had done and how she had left the world better for her presence and all she had done for people in her life. I mentioned this realisation to my father, who had always been somewhat dubious of my pagan beliefs, and he smiled at me and told me I should have done the funeral service, because my words meant more than all the words the priest had spoken.

Since that day I have worked extensively with Hekate, and dedicated myself to her path. Through her dreams and mysteries she has not only guided me with her light, but also brought me closer to my father and enriched my life in too many ways to describe. Truly Hekate is she who works her will, and she encourages the same in all who follow her mysteries.



## All Roads Lead to Hekate

By Iris



How we as Wiccans, witches or pagans come to work with our Gods is different for each and every one of us, and it is an intensely personal process. Sometimes we choose to work with certain deities, but often it is they who choose to make contact with us. I used to hear and read statements like this when I first started out on my path, but I did not understand what they meant until I had experienced it myself.

Like many people who are brought up in the Christian faith and either make the decision to follow or are called to the path of Wicca,

witchcraft or paganism later in life, it took me some time to accept the idea that deities who I had considered to be mere myths in the past should be real entities. Once I had distanced myself from Catholicism, feeling it was a path that was not suited to me, I was vaguely agnostic for some time until I first read about Wicca in my late teenage years. Even though I later learned that this particular book was historically inaccurate and the claims made in it were somewhat dubious, it nevertheless opened up a new worldview to me – namely that Divinity could also be seen as female, and that the divine source of all things could be understood as a perfect balance of female and male energies. As critical as I had been of patriarchal religions as a teenager, this thought had never occurred to me until then and that I found immensely inspiring and liberating.



Looking back now I sometimes wish I had simply continued reading up on Wicca and witchcraft and perhaps even started practising as a solitary, but the fact is that I was not ready for it yet – if I had been I am convinced I would have pursued it. I never returned to my tentative agnosticism, but for my spiritual development I first needed to unlearn a lot of religious conditioning from my upbringing before I could embrace another spiritual path, and this process that took a long time. I also needed to get acquainted with the female divine, and for a few years this entailed me trying to get to know “the Goddess” and ignoring the male divine which, I felt, I’d been dealing with for most of my life anyway.

It was not until many years later that I picked up a book about Wicca and witchcraft again. It seemed that the time was right and I started practising as a solitary witch. I realised I needed to redress the balance of energies and I started working with the God and the Goddess, overcoming my negative emotions about a male Deity. Like many of us when we first embark on this path, I read avidly (and not always discriminately, but as long as one takes information with a grain of salt, “bad” books can teach many important lessons too). One recurring statement I read said that whilst many witches or Wiccans prefer to work just with the Goddess and the God, many find they wish to develop a relationship with deities from certain pantheons. Many authors suggested that you look at different pantheons and start with one that one felt close to.

I must admit that I was stumped by this concept at first. Here I was still trying to develop a personal relationship with the Lady and the Lord and now I was being told I was supposed to strike up one with deities that had always been myths to me? Apart from the fact that different authors couldn’t agree on whether deities are archetypes or “real” beings and that I was till trying to get my head around the “Maiden-Mother-Crone” concept (which I’ve since given up on), I had spent years questioning the existence of any type of deity (apart from some nebulous creative force)... how could I simply turn around and believe that the gods and Goddesses in the old myths were real? After all, as a child and young teenager I had loved to read the Greek, Latin and to a certain extent Norse and Egyptian myths, both privately and at school, and I was



quite well-versed with the Greek and Latin pantheons since in my school there was a strong leaning towards the classics. So, whilst this familiarity with at least the major players in those pantheons came in quite handy on my new path, it was also a stumbling block in that I had to ask myself again, how could I take these mythical figures seriously? Would I not feel incredibly dumb calling upon them? I decided to leave it until the right time came, but at least I was inspired to read up on some of those myths again, an enjoyable task in any case.

Eventually, I didn't need to worry about "picking" a deity or a pantheon at all. As it so often happens, a Goddess decided to make contact with me, and she was the first one who showed me what it means when "believing in" is replaced by "experiencing" a deity.

This first Goddess, whom I still work with much of my time, was not Hekate. In fact, I did not really expect I would ever come to work with Hekate at all. Unlike other Goddesses and gods from the Greek pantheon I was not particularly familiar with Hekate; I had come across her name in connection with the story of Medeia, but in the version of the story I read she was only name-checked very briefly as a Goddess of magic. I came across her name in some horror book as a teenager where, ludicrously, the demented mass murderess changes her surname to "Heckaty", in honour of Hekate, and commits murders according to the phases of the moon. And of course I heard her name used in some films or TV dramas dealing with witchcraft. In all these instances that I remember, Hekate was always called upon in connection with revenge or dark magicks. A stereotype, I thought, and I did not pay that much attention to it, until I realised it was one that was not only perpetuated in films and fiction, but also in many books on witchcraft.

In this type of book Hekate was often portrayed very much in the same way as in fictional books for films – as a Dark Goddess (often as the Crone), a Goddess of Magic, and one you tend to call upon for spells of revenge, retribution or black magic. Hekate was described as extremely scary – someone you didn't want to mess with. On the



internet I found some people writing about working with her and they, too, generally spoke of her as the Crone and claimed that she was the mistress of dark magic. What I knew was that I did not want to exact revenge on anyone at the time, nor did I wish to perform Black Magick (I have since stopped seeing magic as black and white, but remember those were my early days). Finally, I felt that many of the people who wrote about Hekate did so in as hackneyed a fashion as the horror movies had done, and that they might speak about working with her in order to gain cred or coolness points. In short, I decided that Hekate "was not for me".

As time went on I became more discerning with my reading materials, and for the first time I ventured out to moots in London to meet like-minded people. This set in motion a series of events which led to my being offered the privilege of being invited to join a London grove for training. The HPS and HP of the grove were satisfied that I met their requirements, the existing members were happy to welcome me – now the choice was up to me. Apart from my general nerves (did I have what it takes to work in a group? Did I really have the time to commit myself?), there was one big issue: the Grove's patron Goddess was Hekate.

By that time I knew that what I'd previously read about Hekate was probably only a small part of the whole picture, but that did not change the fact that I'd never developed any affinity for Her. If I wanted to join the Grove, I would first need to find out whether I wanted to work with her and indeed, whether she would want me to work with her. The answer to the conundrum was some advice I'd found in the first (good) witchcraft-related book I'd read "*you're your research and work with the Goddess!*"

Luckily, this time around I had access to better source materials for my research, and even though I still came across some conflicting information and some unfounded claims, particularly on the internet, I started to see Hekate for the complex and multi-faceted Goddess that she is, rather than the clichéd image that she's been lumbered with by many who claim to worship her. The more I read about her, the more fascinated I became, and by the time I did my first devotional work to Hekate, I had



overcome my initial qualms and found Hekate to be a tough but also enormously welcoming Goddess who has much to teach to those who are willing to learn.

### **Hekate as a Guide**

As mentioned above, Hekate is a very complex Goddess. Among the manifold functions of Hekate, an important one is that of a guide. Thus she is the guide and companion of Persephone on Her journey to and from the underworld, a psychopomp guiding the souls of the dead; as Hekate Phosphoros, she is the torch-bearer, as Hekate Enodia of the Crossroads she is the guide through the mysteries, etc. So what does a guide do and what is a guide needed for?

Generally it can be said that a guide is someone who leads or shows the way, who guides somebody through unknown territory, or acts as an adviser. Broadly speaking there are many situations in life where a guide is needed and many people in one's life fulfil the function of a guide one way or another. It could be said that parents, teachers, friends, or older siblings act as guides. A guide can be sought out intentionally or can simply "appear" in one's life.

In every area of one's life where it is necessary to rely on a guide it is important that one can trust this guide to know what they are doing – the more unfamiliar or dangerous the new territory one is being guided through, the more important this basis of trust.

Another thing to ponder is the extent of the role of the guide. Assume you are in a foreign country where you don't speak the language, you don't know anyone, the culture is very different from your own and the terrain is difficult to navigate. In a case like this you will rely very heavily upon your guide to know all the things that you don't, to enable you to travel safely, and to negotiate on your behalf and keep you out of danger. Alternatively, the guide's main function may be to show you to special points of interest that you, as an outsider, would have never have had access to. On the other hand, even in very familiar territory a guide can be of great help. For





Example, you will not need a guide to show you your daily route from your home to your workplace, or the way through the park in which you go for your daily jog. However, you may decide to go on a guided tour of your home town to learn about its history and its hidden nooks and crannies, or to take a guided tour in your favourite park to find out about the local plants and wildlife. In this function the guide would show you sides of a seemingly familiar territory that enhances the depth of your knowledge about this particular place.

Returning to Hekate in her function as a guide, she can be both – a guide to help you steer through unknown, scary situations or a guide who will show you territory you feel you are familiar with but that you wish to glean a better understanding of. Who and what is more familiar to you than you yourself – and yet, how little do we know about the depths of our own minds or the conflicting parts of our personalities? In practical terms, Hekate can be of great help when working towards self-dedication or initiation (after all, Hekate is the guide through the mysteries, so who better suited than her!); when at a junction or cross-roads in your life where you are unsure which way to turn, and so on. Hekate is also the Goddess to call upon when you wish to get to know yourself better – whether you have an old trauma to overcome, deep-rooted fears you wish to understand, or you feel that you need to explore your personality more in-depth. Here a word of caution has to be added. I once read a good description of Hekate which states that Hekate can turn up the inner monologue to an extent that is deafening, that she holds up a mirror that will make you see yourself in hitherto unknown detail that may scare or appal you – in short, you may get far more than you bargained for. Therefore anyone who has a very deep trauma or similarly difficult issues to work through would be advised to establish a very strong working relationship with Hekate first before attempting any such inner work. Secondly, if there is any danger of uncovering something you may not be able to handle well by yourself, I would recommend seeking professional psychological advice rather than just opening up part of yourself that may be repressed for a good reason. I realise that this is a stark warning, but one that is based on some experiences I myself have made and observed in other people.



However, the above is an extreme example and has less to do with Hekate (I would not want to portray her as the Dark Goddess *par excellence* in the clichéd manner I criticised earlier) but with the darkness you may find within yourself. Luckily, many will not have the need to come to terms with traumas or fears and will call upon Hekate for help with much less traumatic issues. Either way, Hekate is an honest uncoverer of truths, but she is also the bringer of light who will guide you with her torches, warm you with her understanding and give you comfort when it is needed. She can also give you the strength and courage to carry on, whether it is through the act of rebirth at initiation, when embarking on a new stage of life or even with mundane – yet still personally important issues – such as starting a new job. Be prepared to open up to the advice Hekate can give you, even if it may point in a direction that you initially are not happy with or prepared for, and you will find that her guidance is immensely helpful and that she will show you the right path to take in life.

### **Practical work**

The following practical exercise is specifically designed for those wishing to work with Hekate in one of her roles as a guide (in this instance, Hekate Phosphoros). I wrote it based on some work that I have personally done with Hekate, but I have kept the structure very loose and uncomplicated so it can easily be adapted to your personal circumstances and needs. Although this is a simple working I've found it to be very effective.

Before you embark on this exercise you will need to consider one important thing, namely, do you already have a good working relationship with Hekate? If you do, you may have done similar work before and therefore find it easy to achieve good results with this exercise. However, if you have never worked with Hekate before (or haven't done so for quite some time), I recommend strongly that you do a daily devotion to Hekate for at least a week, but ideally longer, in order to (re-)establish such a relationship. This devotional work can be as elaborate or simple as you wish it to be, but it should be done on a daily basis without any interruption. Not only does

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this help you get a “feel” for Hekate, I also think it’s a polite thing to do. I think a deity will be far more likely to show an interest in you and in helping you if you make an effort than if you simply call on them without so much as a proper introduction and ask them for help straight away. You will find that the more you put into this, the more you will also get out of it, and it is therefore time well spent. You may even find that whilst you do your daily devotions to Hekate, particularly if they involve meditation, you already receive answers to some of your questions or the guidance that you require. Hekate can be very forthcoming in such matters!

Once you feel confident that you have established a working relationship and you wish to ask Hekate for guidance about the specific issue at hand, it can be helpful to decide on one aspect of Hekate that you would like to concentrate on. Thus, if you feel you are standing at a crossroads in your life and you don’t know where to turn, concentrate on Hekate Enodia. If you are trying to overcome a difficult time, work with Hekate Phosphorus, the light-bringer, as I did in the exercise below. If you wish to delve deeply into your soul, work with Hekate Chthonia (bearing in mind the above cautionary notes), etc. However, the above does not mean that you have to concentrate on one of these aspects – you can just work with Hekate in all her complexity and see where she guides you.

### Working with Hekate Phosphoros

As mentioned before I will describe some work I have done with Hekate Phosphorus, asking for her help through certain dark times in my life, where I’ve felt I needed guidance and the reassurance that there would be brighter times ahead one day. Because of this symbolism (light into darkness) as well as practical considerations I normally work with Hekate at night and have found this to be very effective.

As with any celebration/magickal working, prepare both yourself and the room in which you will be working (cleaning of ritual space, self-purification, ensuring you will not be disturbed, etc). Set up your ritual space as you normally would, e.g.: statue or other representation of Hekate if you have it, Hekate incense (preferably self-made),

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censer and charcoal, flowers, a chalice of wine and a cup to pour a libation into, a black candle and two white candles, matches or lighter and paper and pen for writing up your insights/impressions.

Light the charcoal and the black candle (extinguish all other lights). Take a few breaths and concentrate on the working at hand. When you are ready, put incense on the charcoal and invoke Hekate Phosphorus.

When you feel you have her attention, tell her in your own words, where you are in your life; why you are seeking guidance and what you feel is holding you back. By this time you will have built a working relationship with Hekate and it will feel natural to you to address her personally. Remember to be respectful and don't forget that it pays to be clear and concise about which issues you are bringing to her attention. Ask Hekate for guidance and help.

Now (preferably with your eyes closed) visualise yourself enfolded by complete and utter darkness, which represents your current situation. Explore how this makes you feel – uneasy and a little scared or oddly comforted? Is your main instinct to open your eyes and turn on all the lights or do you feel you could sink more deeply into this darkness? Contemplate your emotions and your impressions for a while, then concentrate once again on the issues at hand. Then try to let go of them. You may find that chanting a quiet mantra may help with this. This can be as simple as chanting "Hekate" or "Hekate Light-Bearer". When you have stilled your mind, cease the chanting. Visualise yourself still in darkness, but see two lights approaching from afar. The twin lights come closer and closer until you see Hekate, bearing her two torches, standing before you.

Greet Hekate, thank her for coming to your aid, and tell her about your situation again. Visualise Hekate listening to you attentively. At this stage it may well be that you don't have to make an effort to visualise her anymore because you can feel her presence very clearly. In any case, once again try to still your mind and listen to

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Hekate's advice. You may find that this will come as impressions, or sudden insights. You may also experience Hekate talking to you directly. Keep an open mind and keep listening, even if you should hear suggestions or have insights that you are unhappy about or think are not appropriate to your situation.

When you feel that everything has been said, thank Hekate for her help and advice. Ask her to guide you on your way. Visualise Hekate turning around and lighting the path for you. Follow Hekate's torches and see where she takes you. Listen to any further advice she may give you, and then watch her retreating figure, the light of her torches fading in the distance. Notice that even after she has left, you are now in a lighter place than where you first started out.

When you are ready, open your eyes. Light the two white candles to symbolise the light from Hekate's torches. Ask for Hekate's blessing on the wine, pour a libation from the chalice and drink the remaining wine. Take some time to think about what you have learned and to write down your insights. Give thanks to Hekate and bid her farewell. When you feel you are ready, extinguish the candles and clean up your ritual space.

You may feel that this working has not yielded enough insights yet, or that it has benefited you and you therefore wish to perform it again. There is no reason why you should not do so. Repeat the exercise if you wish, but remember – even advice or insights that you are not necessarily happy with should be taken into consideration, even if it is just as a "second opinion". After all, how often do we feel unhappy in life because we act on a whim or because we want something and disregard our own better judgement or good advice.

Of course the above is only one example for a working with Hekate that can be adapted according to your needs and experience with Hekate. For example, when you are at a crossroads or unsure about how to proceed, you could incorporate skrying



into this working, or if you know what you need to change in your life, you could do some spellwork.

I can recommend one particular variation of this exercise: Time your working to start while it is still dark and to end just before or around sunrise. The symbolism is obvious. It adds to the uplifting effect of the ritual and lends more power to the work you've done. If possible, take the libation out (garden, park, woodland). Take time to enjoy the sunrise and contemplate what you learnt during your working.

Finally, no matter when, why or how you work with Hekate, it is always good to show appreciation for the help that she gives you. Whether you do a special ritual in her honour, or a longer devotion to her, or whatever else it is you (or she for that matter) may come up with, do give something back for what you have received. Not only is this good form, but it can lead to an even better relationship with Hekate (or indeed any deity) – and surely that is worth some effort.



## Hekate, Her Dogs & Mirrors

By Inbaal



Having been a solitary witch for several years, when I finally found teachers I was willing to learn from, I asked no questions.

If I'm honest, I've never really looked for a group to join. Having started out a 'book witch', learning all I could from DIY spell manuals and practicing through trial and

error, I later started attending open rituals and groups, and found virtually no one to look up to and respect (and certainly no one I could visualize as my teacher). When I met, miraculously not one, but two people I could see as friends, mentors, and above all real witches, I jumped at the opportunity to join their group.

I'd gone through the obligatory tests and found them easy enough for me – book witcheries hadn't failed me, and years of trial and error certainly taught me to solve problems unaided. But it never occurred to me to put them through tests. I trusted my instincts and turned up for a dedication ceremony that was to bring me formally into the group. I prepared a present for the group, dressed mystically and took extra care with my hair. After all, I wanted to make a good impression.

Upon arrival, I was told to sit down and meditate on Hekate. I'd never heard of her before, and the name didn't even reveal which pantheon she might belong to. So I just sat down. When I shut my eyes, images started flooding in: there she was, a majestic Goddess, holding the leashes of three enormous, black dogs. Unceremoniously, all of them started chasing me up a mountain. The vision was dark and cold, and I was terrified. Why was this Goddess rejoicing at my fear? And what's the deal with the



dogs? There she was, explaining the vision. The Goddess was pledging to 'frighten me all the way to the top'. Those words stuck with me for the five years that followed, when she diligently scared me until I reached the top of my profession, and my ambition, and then without an extra word, surpassed it.

I asked her if there's anything she wanted in return, and she asked for blood. At that point I really started to worry – what did I get involved with here? I vowed to give her blood, but had no idea what she wanted it for, or how I was meant to give it. This, I hasten to remind you, was only the meditation before the ceremony.

During the ritual I experienced wonderful emotions. I felt I belonged there, and I felt accepted, which are not natural sensations for me. One of the messages I got, which I smoothly ignored, was to 'use my looks'. I never thought of myself as a particularly fine-looking woman, and resigned myself to listening to the messages that actually made sense, and focusing on the challenging vows I took.

I soon found out that Hekate will not be ignored. When leaving home for work the next day, I found a mirror outside my house. I'd have taken it in, just that I was running late, so I left it there - only to find it still there twelve hours later, on my way back. I took it in and fixed it to the wall in one of the bathrooms. The next day, the same thing happened with another mirror, a smaller one that was duly taken into the other bathroom. I thought it might have something to do with Hekate's suggestion to 'use my looks', but I hadn't thought of it as an order. Yet.

Yule soon followed, and at a friend's seasonal ceremony I volunteered to invoke Fire in the South. When placed in the south, I realized I'll be invoking towards a mirror. And when we all lucky-dipped for our random Yule presents out of a velvet sack, can you guess what I got? A string with 11 double-sided mirrors suspended on it. After Yule I went to visit my family in Israel. Blood donations are a matter of routine over there, and when I asked my Dad to find out when I can donate in our small town, he made one phone call and notified me that the blood team only operate once a fortnight.





for two hours. "If we hurry we can make it." With that blood, my deal with Hekate was sealed.

You can't turn a frog into a princess overnight, but over the coming few years I learned to honour my physical appearance more. It served me well as I compiled for myself the longest media CV for any psychic in the UK. I'd written the stars for fashion magazines, appeared on many TV shows and even did a bit of Pagan modelling, and always held Hekate as the reason for it.

A year ago, when the man of my dreams emerged out of the mists to my amazement, I asked my grandfather in spirit for confirmation. My dead granddad is surprisingly helpful with dating advice. He assured me that this was the man for me, for the rest of my life, and that's all the confirmation I needed. But Hekate, who had my blood, was not going to miss a chance to have her say.

On holiday in Barcelona, when my partner and I had just finished discussing moving in together, three large, dark brown dogs approached us. My love, who had been bitten by a dog in childhood and dislikes the larger varieties, stepped back, whereas I carried on forward, baby-talking to the trio. One of them approached my love, and bit him once on the ankle. Thus Hekate had his blood too.

Of late, I've been trying to sell my flat. My efforts have been largely unsuccessful, and because I'd spent a couple of years experimenting with devotions to different gods, I was confused and didn't know who to pray to. I tried them all, including, embarrassingly, Jehovah, thinking to myself "what's the worst that could happen?" All that time, mirrors around me kept breaking. That string of 22 mirrors lost three of them when doors slammed on it, a gift mirror from a friend broke clean into a hundred pieces, and a novelty mirror with the word 'Goddess' etched on it, also from a friend, kept falling and chipping corners.

When I started offering devotion to Hekate again, she wasn't totally convinced at first.

## Keys to the Crossroads



We're rebuilding our relationship, with my love joining in by buying a silver Hekate brooch for me to protect us from vicious dogs in future. She now accepts my offerings and I'm confident my flat will sell soon if she's in charge.



## Working with Hekate

By Harry Barron

Hekate is alive and talks to you in dreams – if you don't believe me then read on....

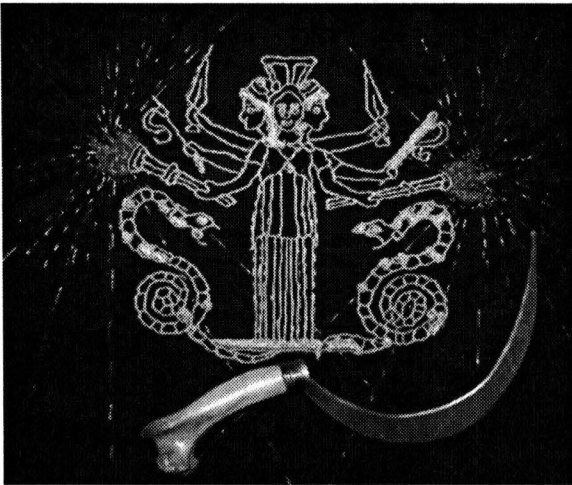
In the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, after a spiritual search lasting well over a decade and a half, I joined a Wiccan training circle which was dedicated to Hekate. At the outset of our training to become Witches, we underwent a dedication ceremony and pledged to follow

Hekate in all her ways. For me it was a very moving ritual and touched me at my deepest level, but somewhere in my psyche I had trouble shaking off a dark and immovable barrier that stopped me from actually allowing myself to even acknowledge Hekate, let alone follow her.

To the uninitiated, Hekate, beloved Spirit of Nature, Goddess of the three-way Crossroads, Goddess of Witches and of Magic, saffron-clothed Queen of Heaven, Guardian at the Gates of the Underworld and Psychopomp to the departed has a very dark and threatening reputation. There is no doubt that these menacing characteristics have been propagated by the monotheistic monopolies of Western civilisation and enhanced through the fantasy of Hollywood. I was very much aware of this reputation and as a novice witchling, it did indeed worry me (and consequently I did my utmost to avoid having any dealings with her.) Unfortunately for me, as part of my training, it



was a prerequisite that I perform a devotional to the Grove Deity for a period of no less than 14 days, preferably more; devotional meaning that I was to promise to research the Goddess Hekate, finding out about her myths and secrets and correspondences. I was also to devote some of my time in meditation and prayer, offering hymns and sweet smelling incenses where possible, and using scents associated with her. How could I do all these things when I thought the Goddess was going to bite my head off at the first wrong move? I had serious problems with Hekate and could not fully bring myself to do any of the work with her or do any research into her mysteries, as I was supposed to do. This was a major hindrance to progressing and attaining the next level in my spiritual journey and training, and something had to be done about it as a matter of urgency...



Another part of my training was to record my dreams for a period of time and try to interpret what they were telling me. So for a period of one month I set out to record my experiences and travels from the night and this is when things started to get interesting. Every morning I was noting down very strange dreams, and it took around two weeks before I

suddenly realised that there were recurring themes in almost all of them. Each night I dreamt of dogs, serpents, people dying and on occasions three-way Crossroads. I understood nothing of these dreams and I was beginning to get very confused and concerned that maybe a dark aspect of my psyche was trying to emerge. But the dreams did not scare me as such and even the death aspects were just matter of fact (although witnessing a family member jump off a cliff did disturb me a little on one



occasion.) Why was I dreaming of so much death? And what about all the other symbols that kept popping up? As I still knew nothing about Hekate or of her correspondences or associations, I did not make any connection between the Goddess and what was happening in my dreams. At some point though, towards the end of my period of dream recording, I felt a definite shove to actually go and do some research on this dark and mysterious Goddess, who was terrifying me. After all, she was supposed to be my protectress and the guardian Goddess of the Grove to which I belonged!

To my surprise, I found that most of the symbols associated with her were occurring in my dreams. Certainly, the most obvious one was that of Death, but she is also associated with dogs and with serpents – I don't recall seeing any oak-leaf crowns, but then I wasn't looking for minute details, as I was not expecting Hekate to drop hints in my nocturnal travels. I knew she had some association with the Underworld and with the souls of the deceased, but I was, at the time, unaware of her association with dogs, serpents or crossroads. Like the proverbial light bulb lighting up above my head, I suddenly realised that all the recurring symbols of these strange dreams were associated with Hekate and that she had been trying to communicate with me through them.

Hekate is not a malevolent Goddess as many would have us believe, nor is she sinister. I think that in this 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> Century culture, we often associate Death with misery, destruction, disease and evil, fuelled by the imagination and misinformation spread by the aforementioned Hollywood studios and popular authors with overactive imaginations. Also, since Hekate is said to stand at the portals of the Underworld, (*Hades* in Greek Mythology,) Christian writers have often associated Hades with Hell which of course is ruled over by the malevolent Christian figure of Satan. As Wiccans it is important that we disassociate Christian Myths from other Myths, or we risk making inaccurate connections and ridiculous conclusions. Many of the problems I had been experiencing had been based on prejudices from my former Judeo-Christian upbringing and too many late nights watching Hammer Horror on TV



when I was a teenager. Needless to say, newly educated with genuine information, I managed to carry out my devotional for more than the allotted time of 10 days – my new-found fervour managed to propel me to a month of nightly devotional work! And not surprisingly, my dreams changed.

As a Priest of the Wicca, I have dedicated myself to Hekate and it is only right to continue to carry out my devotional services to her. When I allow a period to go by without any kind of devotion, she always gently reminds me that she is there watching over me and waiting patiently. As I have developed a more profound relationship with her, I have found that she has started to speak to me not just in dreams, but also in visions and has even been channelled through other people that I work with. I always take these messages (and hints!) seriously, as I know they are for my benefit to grow and mature spiritually and not for the Goddess' benefit.



## Guide and Goddess of Compassion

By Amelia

*Hail Hekate, saffron clad Queen!*

*You whose crown of shining stars lights my way*

*Hekate Propolos! Guide and Companion*

*You whose fiery torches illumine my path*

*Walk always at my side*

My first encounter with Hekate was near the beginning of my discovery of Paganism and it is fair to say that she has been instrumental in my development in the craft at every step. Due to this guiding and nurturing aspect of my relationship with Hekate this essay will necessarily have something of the air of a personal memoir about it. I feel however that any personal encounters with deity must so profoundly shape the direction of our lives that any attempt at understanding their influence and the nature of their guidance must necessarily be an intensely personal one.

I can date precisely my first encounter with the Goddess Hekate. At the time I was discovering my path into Paganism (Wicca to be exact) but had done all my learning from books and the Internet. I had not met any Pagans or Wiccans and was terrified of the prospect – “what if they’re all weird?” was a frequent question I asked myself! My interest in Wicca started with the Tarot. I am a very logical person who needs things proved to them if they are to believe it. Tarot to my utter amazement “worked” time and time again. It made me wonder if other esoteric beliefs also had their elements of truth. This led me to a small book on Wicca which explained such basic premises as the wheel of the year, the Goddess and the God, and the nature of the elements, and gave a few simple exercises such as chakra work and Candle magick. All of these concepts made perfect sense to me and it seemed to me that they were ideas that I had always known, but had only now been brought to the forefront of my consciousness.







I tried things out from books and celebrated my first Sabbat (Litha) in a park near my home, constantly checking the books I had brought with me to make sure I was doing it properly!

Throughout this journey of discovery there was one thing missing. I could not find the spiritual connection with the Goddess and the God. I could not make them seem real to me. I did everything these starter books said about visualisation and could create the image of the Lady and Lord in my mind's eye until they looked like real people, but I could not make a spiritual connection to their energies. The words felt empty and the image a false construct. Perhaps because of my Christian background I found it hard to cope with the concept of worshipping a God who was not Christ. The closest I could come to understanding the Goddess was the Virgin Mary, an image that (coming as I did from a protestant background) felt even more alien. At the same time, I felt that this spiritual connection was a fundamental part of the practice of Wicca and that if I did not succeed in finding a way to make a real and meaningful connection to the Goddess and the God I would be missing out on the whole point.

*Hail Hekate, Guide of the three dominions  
You who guides me through the shadow realms  
Light my path as I stumble without direction  
Through the dark night of the soul  
Let your torches light my way.*

All this changed on September 11th 2001. I had watched the destruction of the World Trade Centre and the other buildings and planes with horrified disbelief. Like many others I desired to seek spiritual comfort, but I was very new to my religion and I did not know any other pagans to talk to. I wanted to do something to ensure that something positive came out of this atrocity – that the world did not descend into terror and chaos as a result. I also wanted to find a way to pray for the souls of the dead. Seeking a direction to focus my energies I turned to the internet and to the website of one of the few Witches whose names I knew – Starhawk. On the website of



the Reclaiming collective I found a visualisation for mourning and healing following the destruction of the world trade centre and attack on the Pentagon. This pathworking featured the Goddess Hekate seated at the crossroads in the underworld holding aloft her torch to light the way for the souls of the dead and to grant illumination enabling us to see clearly.

That night I sat at my altar, lit my candles and sank slowly down into the world of the pathworking, the shadowy lands of the underworld. For the first time I was working with a Goddess with a name and a specific identity and for the first time her image came to me clearly. I saw her with no need to work carefully on my visualisation of the image. She sat before me cloaked in black, her hood falling forward to hide most of her face. Yet although the folds of her hood hid her eyes, I could see clearly the lower part of her face and her mouth, which were not those of the old woman, the Crone that I had expected to meet. Rather, she seemed young – the hands holding her flaming torches were smooth and despite the sad task she performed, there was a warmth and compassion that seemed to emanate from her.

This was a profound experience, feeling the immediacy of her presence, her love and her compassion. In this moment I understood the difference in the connection that I was to experience in working with Pagan Gods and Goddesses as opposed to my experiences with Christianity.

*Hail Hekate, Guide of the three dominions  
You who steer me through the storm tossed seas  
Light my way through the turmoil of emotions  
Lest I be drowned in the deep  
Let your torches light my way.*

Not long after my first encounter with Hekate I made contact with someone who was to train me in my future role as Priestess and Witch. Unbeknownst to me Hekate's dark hand was at work in a series of connections and coincidences. I discovered that

## Keys to the Crossroads



person online via a chain of websites that (it was revealed many years later) turned out to be run by people with groups dedicated to Hekate. More and more, Hekate was the one I thought of when I talked about the Goddess.

The next Sabbat I celebrated was Samhain. I celebrated it with a friend who had also recently discovered paganism and we were very much learning together. She had managed to get hold of some loose incense (up until that point I had only used joss) and we embarked with some trepidation on the fine art of lighting a charcoal block without setting fire to the carpet (unsuccessfully!). Coincidentally – although as I have learned, where Hekate is concerned there are very few coincidences – the incense that she had managed to get hold of was Hekate incense.

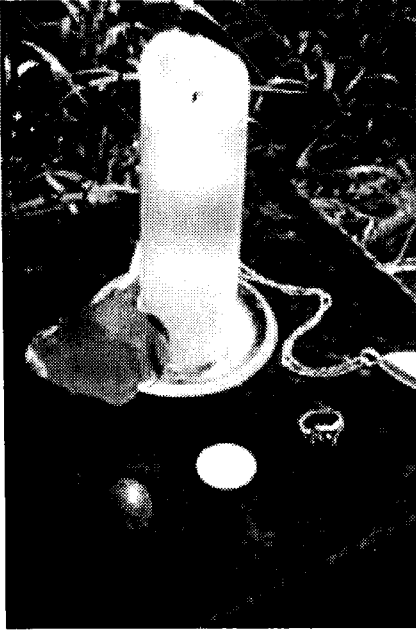
Due to my first encounter with Hekate as Goddess of the underworld I decided she would be a perfect Goddess to invoke in this ritual and as Hekate seems to have been involved in so many of my “firsts” so it was that she was the first Goddess that I called upon out loud in the presence of another to come and bless my rite. Yet even at the dark time of Samhain the Hekate that I encountered was not the terrible Queen of the Restless Dead “*from whom dogs cower as she wanders through the graves*” but was instead a Goddess possessed of a gentle darkness – the dark earth that heals and restores, the nurse that comforts you from the nightmare, the dark mother whose embrace brings us home.

The image of dread Hekate that the Romans spoke of is one that I have periodically wrestled with throughout my time of working with Hekate. I have read about her, I understand the reasons for the existence of this aspect and I know that many people who work with her have had this facet of her character revealed to them in no uncertain terms. I have had my share of terrifying encounters with Goddesses but I have never experienced this side of Hekate. I can only conclude that this aspect of Hekate is not one that she considers necessary to show to me – perhaps the fact that out of thousands of years of her worship that of “*blood-bathed Hekate*” is only a small aspect of this manifold Goddess.

## Keys to the Crossroads



*Hail Hekate Guide of the three dominions  
You who guide me through the starry skies  
Light my path that I may know my true self  
Lest I be forever mired in darkness  
Let your torches light my way.*



And so, Hekate continued to guide me on my spiritual path. One gloriously sunny day I walked with many others on the path over the chalk hills chanting her name for hours until finally arriving at a long barrow surrounded by trees. One by one we entered the dark cave where she awaited her postulants. Like those who came before me and those who came after, I gave her an offering made with my own hands and knelt before her while she spoke to me. What was said in those few minutes in that ancient entrance to the underworld is a private utterance between the Goddess and myself but it has set the course of my life and defined my relationship with Hekate.

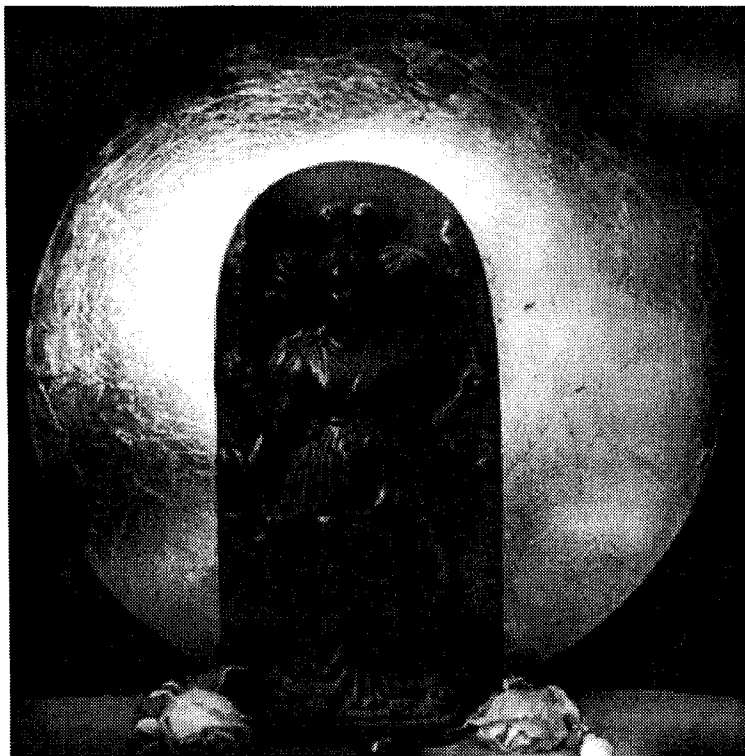
In every step along the path Hekate has been there, guiding and protecting me. It is my relationship with this manifold Goddess that has defined my understanding of all the Goddesses that I have worked with in the past, and will influence my relations with those that I will work with in future. Indeed, the fact that I describe what I do with Hekate as 'work' is a telling statement. My relationship with her has been that of a partnership, all be it the uneven one of Goddess and mortal. It has also been hard, and I have been guilty of shirking from the work when I know it should be done!

## Keys to the Crossroads



Hekate has been my guide and teacher, and has nurtured my understanding of the relationships between humanity and the Gods. Her methods have been those of a loving mentor to an eager (and occasionally dim witted!) student. Hekate is a mentor who is not above manipulating events so that she gets what she wants. Her machinations, such as the coincidences mentioned above, are such that even when they are revealed I would not change them. For Hekate is the keeper of the keys as well as the holder of the light. She has opened doors through which I would never have ventured had she not been there to turn the key in the lock and shine her torch upon the open door. Hekate may act in mysterious ways her wonders to perform but I have found her to have caused some of the most positive and necessary transformations of my life. Without Hekate's loving hand and the guidance of her oracles I would not have known what it is to connect so intimately to the divine in the form of a Goddess of infinite compassion who will always hold up a light to guide my way through the darkness.

*Hail Hekate, Dark Mother of us all  
You who guides and nurtures and protects  
You who are the Queen of Witches  
Come to me now and show me your ways  
Be with me, guide me, let your light shine upon me  
Hail Hekate!*



## Invocator

By Lezley Butle

*I call you.....*

There is now no turning back. I have begun and the words take on a momentum all their own. A growing feeling of dread rises to the surface, only to be pushed back down to the darkness, control must be total. No turning back.

*I call you.....*

Thought, breath, sound. A vowel, a word a sentence. They sparkle, serpentine into the light, given life. Every sound a prayer in itself, building, building.

## Keys to the Crossroads



*From the veil of the stars, I call you.....*

My skin is flushed, hot. Beads of perspiration form on my hands, the hair on the back of my neck rises as if in answer. My breath is hard, fighting the feeling that threatens to engulf me. My heartbeat irregular, pounding, powerful, beating an invitation.

*From the depths of the forest, I call you.....*

My voice falters. My skin begins to burn, energy soars from the soles of my feet to the top of my skull, it lashes in waves. I draw in a breath, form the words again but they are unrecognisable – words of shadow, of the moon, of the sea, the heavens and the earth, magical and mystical; they come from the hidden vault buried deep in my soul that houses the very essence of myself, what I was, what I am and what I will be.

*From the places of dread and shadow, I call you.....*

Incense, the energy lashes me. I am outside of myself, outside of time and space. She is here. A presence forming behind me, stretching, engulfing. I touch the enigma that is life, that is death, that is the eternal journey. Visions build before me, twisting, tearing drawing me further and further in. The crossroad beckons.

Unquestioning, driven, the vision clear; I take up the knife, score my skin. Pressure, greater pressure until the steel draws forth – a sacrifice of flesh and blood. Deeper and the crimson stain grows, rivulets gather, conjoin, fall in slow motion to the floor until a small pool gathers. I watch, as if it were the actions of a stranger. There is no pain.

*From the stones and the tombs, I call you.....*

I look out through her eyes. My tongue is thick as it speaks with her voice, her words. She steps through, through me and beyond. She turns, her gaze holds mine - a fire ignites in my heart – tears unbidden, burn on my skin as they fall, heavy with promise to the floor, mingling with the blood already spilled. Look deep within this; scribe into this pool of human frailty. Only the truth will be found here.



A hand brushes my cheek, lips tender on my forehead, a star fallen to earth, a spark  
burning brighter than the sun, words cutting through the ties that have bound.  
A message. A lesson. An instruction.

And then there is no more time - how much has passed here? It means nothing within  
this sacred space. A circle, the priestess, the knife. The Goddess. Oh yes, the  
Goddess.

*Farewell my lady.*

*Depart.....*

Though I know a piece of the divine remains here with me and some small part of my  
spirit is entwined with yours. An exchange, an oath, a bond for this lifetime.

*Depart.....*

Gain control, fight the turning tides of fire and ice. Claw back to reality. Gain control,  
bolt the door, lock the gates. I bite into my lip, salt and copper upon the tongue, the  
pain my pathway to this physical plain.

*Depart.....*

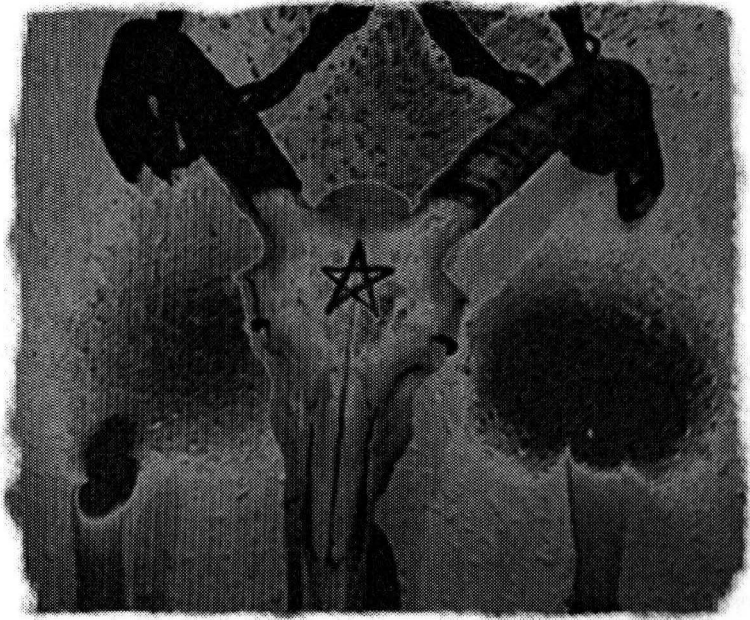
I fall to my knees, my breath laboured, sweat cooling upon my skin. My heart slows,  
the heat subsides, I cease to tremble. Exhausted, I rise. Priestess of the Goddess.

*Titan born, of chaos divined and spat out upon the universe.*

*Great and mighty Hekate, bright and shining queen of all.*

*I am yours.*





## Scary Dark Crone

By Dr. Nina Lazarus

*From in the darkness in my soul the Goddess pushes forth and holds my soul in her sphere of light radiating and shining forth in a flash of inspiration and being the light in the dark which can never be ignored, the dark in the day which is the source of my power. Did I choose you oh Queen of darkness, did you choose me? Can I ever be alone in fear when I have accepted your challenge crossing the threshold of night to be with you in the world of the Gods? Are you in me? Am I in you? How is it that our dance of mystery became so tangled that I can never free myself from it? Your power teaches me, but can you be without me?*

And so when the first star of the night rises I honour you. Mistress divine, Goddess of my sacred altar, with my naked body, I dance and sing... And when the offerings I make are accepted by your brilliance I know that I too, am worthy of your love.



Worthy of your blessing. *Queen of my beloved blood, I pour forth my life blood into your sacred stream, I lift my sword to the heavens and scream your name... And I honour you beloved of Zeus.*

*When every mortal man shuns your light and the women of the world fear your power, I shall remain standing and I shall remain the vessel for your holy blood. When she who called your name in anger stands in fear, when they who speak your name without understanding no longer have your blessing, I shall speak words of encouragement and I shall give them pathways through which they can honour you. Bright Goddess, do not strike the ignorant with Zeus' thunderbolts, let them remain in the world of mortals for an eternity instead. Life upon life they will suffer amongst the mortals without knowing your true name, let them pretend, but Goddess I implore you to show me your true face so that my tongue may speak true words and my mind may find the pathways to wisdom and knowledge...*

*Mighty Goddess crowned with the serpents who give me life... Willpower and knowledge are the weapons of your true priesthood. The memory of one who served you first entered into me, in the temple of another God. The memory of the first encounter will be with me always. The light flickered, and there you were. The light flickered again, and you entered me. And a third time, the light flickered and you remained within me. I love you without fear of retribution.*

*When I walk down the street I see Babalon in women of all kinds. Wild sex pouring forth from their flesh, their rounded breasts bulging from their low-cut tops, in the curves of their fleshy hips, Babalon laughs and then she is gone, to be admired in yet another. Acknowledged by only a few who honour her? Another Dark Sister, who delights in the blood of life and the ecstasy of a passionate embrace, wild sex with a familiar lover and then she is gone. Waiting in the next. Hekate, your power flows through me, in love and in pleasure, as you enjoy spirit made flesh in my mortal body, You and I can bless and we can curse, You and I can give blessing and we can take it. So the cycle turns and the women and men, who come to see you through me, will not know the truth without sacrifice and love...*

## Keys to the Crossroads



I see the Horned One in the eyes of my love, when he takes me with my legs high, I can see the antlers rising above his head and the wildness of the Lord of the wild animals, flickering in his eyes as he reaches ecstasy with me, then it is gone as he passes down into my arms for the eternal embrace. *Let the Horned God be my guide, Hekate, let he show me the way to your temple, to your love. The light of your torches shines forth in the corner of the dark room, where not even a candle light illuminates, yet there is light as you watch, eternally.*

The Lord of the Hunt showed me the place in which to honour you. Then he left me there. Bewildered, like an animal, removed by humanity from its natural habitat. It was like a magnificent beast, kept in a cage to be watched by men and women and children. To be stared at without understanding. So I stood at your crossroads, naked and with fear. *Which way should I go?* I invoked you and you did not answer. I called to you and you came but did not answer. You told me. *Child of the ancient light let it shine so that it will no longer be within you, but there for the world to gaze upon... Let the many that honour me in the dark, be shamed by their ignorance. I speak to many, but they who ignore my calling for honour will not have my blessing. Which path do you choose?* I chose my path, but then it was chosen for me.

In an instance, there was no perfection, no balance and no light. Alone I stood for days, I made sacrifice with blood and tears, I called and I called, but no-one listened. *Mistress of the World, Nature's balance... Hekate of the Crossroads, let me see again...* and so she returned to me, my soul fire, my love and my magick. I stood reborn as a Priestess. Her Priestess. And then with this realization within my soul she spoke and she said: *I am not of life, nor am I of death. I am not above, nor am I below you. I stand in waiting at the place which is not a place, waiting for you to allow me to be honoured in you again...* and so I let her back. Back into my body, into my heart and mind. She who was before time began, ancestress to the world, bringer of the Dawn, the mother and the daughter of Lucifer. *Granddaughter of Gaia, the Earth itself, beloved daughter of the stars. I honour you. This is my gift to you.*



Never has there been a time when Gaia's screams have been heard so far and wide. Mother Earth is hurting. Yet, humanity remains ignorant speaking of the environment as if it is something which can be kept under control with a bit of recycling and a bit of love. Mother Earth is not in need of healing. It is your consumerism and irrational need to be seen as having more than your neighbour which curses your path. *Hekate, mistress of the three realms, I honour you. I shall only take what I need from the heavens and the seas and the earth... I eat not the birds of the sky, or the fish from the sea, from the earth I take only the nourishment I need.*

*Have we forgotten who we are? Let me reveal a mystery to you. The greatest mystery of them all. The keepers of knowledge are the keepers of truth. The keepers of truth are the keepers of understanding. The keepers of understanding know the mysteries from the day they are born from their mortal mother's womb, yet others can only seek to know the mysteries, learn the knowledge they have to give and because of the coveting nature of humanity, some will lead the masses into the pretence that they too are the keepers of knowledge. The true keepers remain obscure – their knowledge is simple, yet they have many secret followers.*

Hekate is one of the most ancient Goddesses. Granddaughter of the primal Titans many of them perished or left the Earth to be elsewhere in the wake of their anger and disappointment with humanity and of course the war between the Gods themselves. Hekate remained powerful even then, more so. Zeus gave her more power than she had before, honouring her and acknowledging her power. Beautiful and powerful. Wise and Immortal, Hekate's power lives within me. Her power shines forth from within the souls of her priesthood, today as much as it always has and always will. Avatars for the Goddess, and yet we are mortal of flesh.

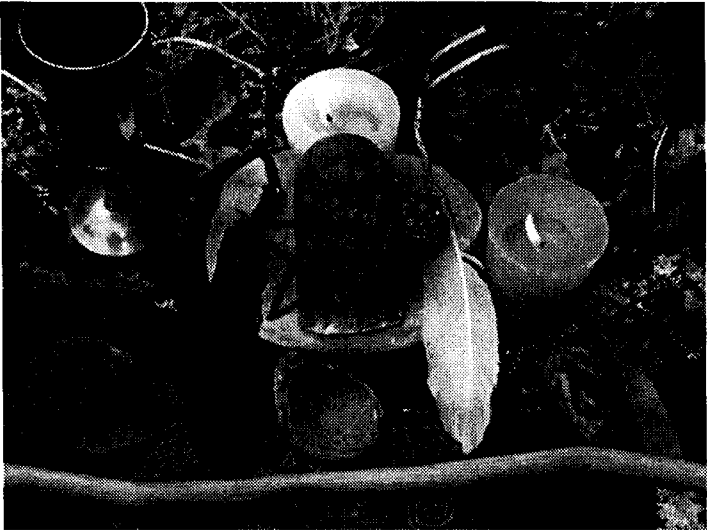
*Mistress of many forms, three or four, animal and human, maiden and queen, dog headed, wolf headed, donkey headed, cat headed, bear headed, serpent crowned, lunar horned, I invoke you and I call upon you, to be within me now. How dare we as mortal woman and men presume that our views of the immortal Gods are true? How dare we strip a Goddess from her powers and her beauty and still claim to honour them? How dare we claim*

## Keys to the Crossroads



What Hekate is no longer a maiden or a mother, no longer fertile nor a siren capable of the love and pleasure of the flesh? She is immortal. She is powerful. She holds the keys to the gateways, the power to open doorways, the knowledge of the thresholds between this life and the next, the threshold of the circle of rebirth and she wields powerful magicks. She chooses the form she shows herself in. We can create images of her, but to deny her true form as light and darkness itself, as the intangible power of magick, remains for the foolish, not for those who seek to know her mysteries. Define the indefinable? Yet there are some who try. Mistress in ancient times you were portrayed as a regal Queen, as three beautiful maidens, always with honour and always with care, as it befits one so highly born. When you come to me Mistress of magick, come to me as Hekate Phosphorous, Hekate Soteira, Hekate Trivia – come as a Queen, dressed in your famous saffron robes, come with the heads of the wild beasts; some crowned with oak leaves and the coil of wild serpents. *Mistress come to my calling, come to receive my libations and offerings.*

*Hekate I honour you without fear. I honour you today and always. I honour you for the gifts you have given me. I honour you. Let your light shine upon me in the darkness. Let your darkness enfold me in the light. Let me walk with you on the liminal. Always whisper your desires to me.*



## The Power of Creation

By Sue Bowman

*Hekate, saffron clad Goddess of the whole world  
At times of beginnings, let your torches show me the way.*

Throughout my own path through the mysteries of magick I have always looked for proof, questioning the work I do and seeking understanding of the results of the rituals and rites I performed. Nothing has changed, I still do the same.

Some years ago I did my first ceremony invoking Hekate with friends, experimenting with spells and rituals, wishing to gain not wisdom, but power. Power to gain that which we sought: sex, wealth and control. Our magicks worked in small ways, but never quite how we expected, without guidance and working only from books and taking our inspiration (for props and dressing up!) from the television series *Charmed* -



most of the people in the group soon lost interest. The thrill was gone. Yet I remained curious, seeking for more.

For a period of time I worked solitary, learning what I could from books and from the internet. Yearning for others to share my interests with, and yearning more than anything to find a teacher, who could guide me and help me on my path. I looked at adverts for covens and groups, applied to a few of them, met up with a few people, but the expectations some people had and the experiences I had as a result were not encouraging. Some seemed to want money; others expected sexual favours and some seemed to know less than I did!

Through my hunger for answers I came across details for a Witchcraft meeting which was taking place at a pub in London. It is here that I first met others who were experienced in Witchcraft and some who were followers of the Wiccan tradition. Expressing my interest in learning more I was told of a public ceremony, in celebration of the Autumn Equinox, which was to be taking place at London's Conway Hall. Some of those at the pub meeting were going along and invited me to join them. The event was organized by the Pagan Federation's Brian and Trish Botham and was in honour of Hekate. So the wheel turned for me. The ceremony was my first encounter with Sorita D'Este and David Rankine, who were leading the ceremony with members of their group VITRIOL Grove. The proceedings of that night would change my life in every way.

Waiting in the foyer with more than two hundred other people the atmosphere was charged with anticipation and excitement that I had never experienced elsewhere. It would be impossible to describe the feeling, for me a mixture of fear and anticipation with excitement and impatience, without removing some of the magick from it. Waiting in the foyer I found myself drawn into a conversation with an elderly man, whom I later found out to be a respected High Priest of the Wiccan tradition. He told me that he always supported rituals by the group that was leading the proceedings that night. Around his neck were a pentagram and a pendant of a hare sitting on a



crescent moon which I asked him about, a he explained that it was a special symbol representing the tradition he worked in. He then recalled a few stories from the "old days" before there were public ceremonies. A lady in her mid-forties joined us in the conversation; she was pretty, with short blonde hair and symmetrical features. She introduced herself as Sandra and I introduced myself to her.



Soon after, the doors of the hall opened and David, dressed in perfect white robes entered the foyer with two other priests, both dressed in black with gold and white cords dangling around their waists. The pungent but sweet smell of incense drifted out from the hall and we all listened to David as he explained some of the proceedings of the night. We would be honouring Hekate, as the Goddess of Light and Dark. As it was near to the Autumn Equinox, this was a traditional time to do so and to honour the Gods of the ancient Eleusian mysteries, Demeter, Persephone and Hades. During the ceremony we would all receive the blessings of Hekate in return for an offering of wheat and barley, which was to be provided. With the help of the two priests, David took us through some of the songs and chants which we would be using in the ceremony that evening. Then we all lined up and entered the hall.





I walked in with my new friends and we were all anointed with woody smelling oil, overtones of pine or cedarwood rose into my nostrils as we entered the hall. We were purified with incense smoke and welcomed with the traditional Wiccan greeting of "Blessed Be". As we entered we all chanted: *Hekate Ancient Queen, Dark Mother take us in, Hekate Ancient Queen, let us be reborn...* We all took our places forming a huge circle, with an altar both in the north and in the east and with nine priests forming a crescent shape, sitting facing North.

Sorita, the High Priestess, indicated to everyone to be seated, but there were so many of us that some had to remain standing at the back to be able to see exactly what was happening. Some sat on the ground and others on chairs which were provided around the perimeter of the hall which had now become our temple. In the NW corner of the hall a candle was lit and two women, both wearing black cloaks and sitting around a cauldron, started a dialogue. I later learned that the piece they were reciting was a spell from an old Greek Magickal Papyri text. In it, a woman scorned by her lover asks for help from a Witch and together they call on Hekate to right the wrongs which have been done ... "*turn magick wheel turn and bring my lover home*".

The ritual was taking the form of a sacred drama, the way in which stories of mortals and gods were often told in ancient times. The two women were then taken from their cauldron and brought to a *Temple of Hekate*, which was the altar in the East of the temple space. Whilst this was happening someone read the story of the birth of Hekate, how she was conceived and born from a union between Asteria and Perses, how it came that she was honoured by Zeus, and which domains she ruled.

The Priestess of Hekate, a beautiful brunette, stepped forward, speaking in an Austrian or German accent of the power Hekate holds over balance and harmony, the choices we have to make, over light and dark, night and day. The High Priestess, Sorita, challenged the woman and asked them to make a choice – did they wish to honour Hekate through the balance of light and dark, inherent in her nature and join the celebration of Hekate that night? Choosing their path, they were blessed with the



gift of sight, the power of words and the wisdom of the Gods and they are then invited to join the ceremony.

The nine priests, all dressed in black, stood up, others took their places at the cardinal points of the temple space, the High Priest unveiled three priestesses, masked and dressed in white and red seated in the North of the temple. The High Priestess and the Hekate Priestess remained by the altar in the East. Then starting in the East, Eurus, the East Wind was invoked to guard the temple and to bless those present with his virtues. Then Notus, Zephyrus and Boreas were also invoked at the appropriate cardinal points and asked to do the same. Each time the invocations are done, I felt a faint breeze coming from the directions we are facing; the power and the energy of that wind become tangible and certainly present in the temple.

I forget that I am in London. At this point I ascend and become more than just a spectator; I become one of the celebrants witnessing an ancient rite being performed. Sandra took my hand and on the other side, the Wiccan Priest does the same, others in the audience do the same. A tremendous feeling of unity and kinship charging the atmosphere, we all join in a simple chant honouring and invoking Hekate. Maybe the feeling in the air was due to the sheer volume of people gathered there, all wishing to partake in the mysteries of Hekate, all wishing to learn and experience the ancient magicks. For me it was the presence of Hekate, feeling the joy of so many calling her name and honouring her in one of the world's largest cities. Certainly the ceremony was not just play acting, something I later found to be common in large public ceremonies – due to a fear from those leading it that the uninitiated should not be exposed to too much real magick and ceremony.

Zeus, King of the Gods of Olympus was invoked. Then Demeter, the Grain mother was invoked and asked for her blessings upon the fruits of labour in the lives of all those present, as well as of course on the food harvests taking place around that time of the year around Europe. Finally, Persephone, the daughter of Demeter and Queen



of the Underworld was invoked, together with Hades, her husband and the ruler of the Underworld.

Then we start to chant again slowly, softly, building up to a peak in which the energy in the room becomes visible and I felt like there would be no return. The nine priests now invoke Hekate, they invoke her as Hekate of the Crossroads, Hekate the Lightbearer, Hekate the Protectress of Children, Hekate of the Roads, Hekate of the Liminal Places, Hekate of the Moon, Hekate of the Earth, Hekate of the Stars – by her many names and titles they call Hekate and she comes. The hall resounds with the sound of “*Hail Hekate!*” following each of the invocations, growing louder and more excited as each priest invokes the Goddess.

Finally the Hekate Priestess invokes Hekate and anoints, each in turn, the three oracle priestesses who have been sitting motionless in the North of the temple. In unison the three speak as one, then one-by-one they deliver messages which speak of the nature of Hekate, ways in which she should be honoured, losing fear and gaining strength and blessing those present. The Hekate Priestess invites the crowd to come and make offerings to Hekate and receive her blessings.

We formed three queues, each person being given a copper coin by an attendant which was to be used to “buy” the wheat from the oracles’ guardian. We all chanted as we walked up awaiting our turn to be blessed by the Goddess of Magick and Transformation, each of us leaving the coin with the guardian, just like travellers in the Greek underworld did when they crossed the river Styx. We each take a handful of wheat and make a wish as we receive the blessings of Hekate when we offer the wheat to her. The seeds represent our hopes and dreams, which need to be nurtured in order to grow into reality.

The ceremony was concluded when the oracle priestesses and the Hekate Priestess blessed two large baskets of bread and three chalices of wine which were then distributed in the crowd for all to partake of. The ceremony lasted for nearly an hour



and a half, yet when it was completed I had a desire for it to continue, I finally understood what real magickal power was about. It was about experience and knowledge of the world and of the Gods, about learning the measures through which power is yielded and used to transform a situation, transformation which birthed creation.

Sandra and I went to join the feasting; whilst drinking a glass of wine she looked at me and asked me what I thought of the ceremony. Tears welled in my eyes as I told her how appropriate the words spoken by the oracle were to me at that time of my life, how much I wished to learn more about Witchcraft and how I desperately felt the need to find a teacher to learn from. A friendship was forged over a few more glasses of red wine in a nearby pub afterwards and marked the beginning for me of a new journey in my life.

Soon after the experiences of that night, I quit my job and enrolled in a college course which I recently finished. I am now working as an alternative therapist and healer, something I had always wanted to do, but due to fear of the unknown somehow always left for tomorrow. Through I did not know it at the time, Sandra was in fact a Wicca High Priestess and at Imbolc the year after the ceremony in Conway Hall, I received initiation into the coven and finally found both others to work with and learn from as well as many close friends whom I trust, something I never really had in my life before. Through the coven I met my life partner and as I am writing this we are expecting our first baby, who is due later this month.

I have done things I never thought possible. My life is completely different from what it was before that night.

I can truly and honestly say that Hekate changed my life. What had started as a search for power and the supernatural, turned into a search for myself that night. I searched, and found the power that I had been searching for with incantations and spells, within me. They say that when the student is ready the teacher will appear. In retrospect I

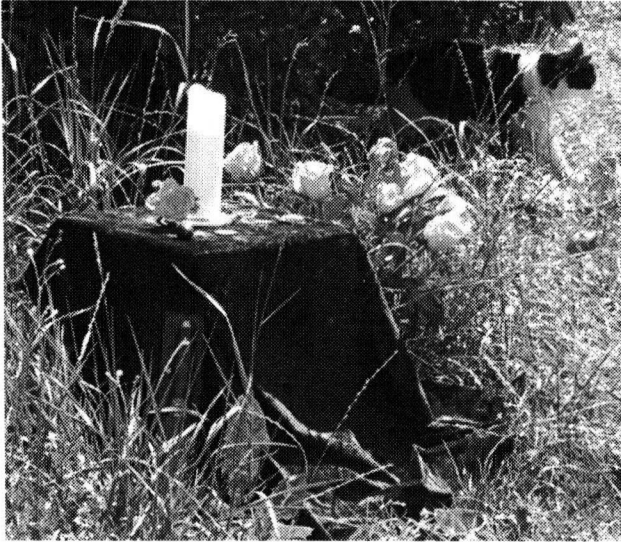
## Keys to the Crossroads



know that I would not have been ready to **join** a coven before that night, I would not have been **able** to live up to the commitment, I was **lazy** and I was always leaving things for tomorrow. Through the changes **in** my life I have met some of the best and most honourable people, people who have **guided** me, **helped** me, and **loved** me, with whom I am able to seek for the deeper mysteries of the Gods. The words of that oracle still resound in my mind at times:

*"The Earth holds as many secrets as the stars, find the lights in the shadows..."*





## My Path with Hekate

By Amanda

I had reached the stage where I had read lots about Wicca but was hesitant to do anything like a ritual myself. So I enrolled on a Practical Wicca course that was being held in London. I hadn't applied to the course to do spells, but to learn how to honour the Gods and Goddesses and celebrate the turning of the wheel of the year in the appropriate and respectful manner.

The gentleman who was running our course took us on a pathworking to meet Hekate. At that time in my life I was having some personal issues and my encounter with Hekate though the pathworking was extremely powerful. There were flashes of circumstances I recognised and it was as if she were telling me off about them. Hekate glared at me, her face an angry vision, reprimanding me for how I was behaving. I knew she was right and thanked her for being there for me. I dealt with those issues



quite differently after that and they came to what I can now see was the correct end and exactly where I needed to be in my life.

I continued along my path by undergoing a dedication to a Wiccan circle. It was held on a bright sunny July day. I had to provide a handmade offering to Hekate so I made an altar cloth decorated with various symbols and torches in honour of Hekate. I've written in my journal for that day *"Feel like I should have more confidence with my altar cloth but so scared of ruining it!"* I've never been very practical and anything I produce I feel like it's been attacked by a five year old not a thirty seven year old! But again this path is getting me to deal and confront various issues – even if it is my lack of creativity!

At my Dedication I was given a personal Oracle by Hekate. I was told to learn, study hard, look deep inside and to be more compassionate. The compassion topic was quite spooky as this has cropped up time and time again in my life through various dreams, tarot and aura soma readings. And it's the same word "compassion" not tolerance, kindness, leniency or pity but compassion. The "study hard" is becoming more appropriate in my life as, being a working mum, I sometimes find it hard fitting everything in.

My Dedication was a very powerful experience for me and I came back fired up with energy and consecrated all my working tools shortly after. I continued working with my group with Hekate as our main Goddess.

In 2003 our group held an Imbolc ritual invoking Pan and Vesta. My husband and I were trying for a baby at that time and during the ritual, which was fertility based, I was holding my hands over my abdomen saying how happy I would be if we were to be lucky enough to be blessed with a baby. Everyone else was caught up in the revelry of the ritual and I just remained quiet with my thoughts. Then, on March the sixth I told my husband, on his birthday, that I was six weeks pregnant. I told him all that had happened, we were both quietly amazed.



With our group, I participated in a public "open-ritual" dedicated to Hekate. Being eight months pregnant I felt honoured to be asked to deliver the rather appropriate invocation:

*Hail Hekate, Korotrophous!*

*Child nurse to all living things*

*You who are invoked before all other Gods*

*Guide us so that we may see with the light of the everseeing dawn*

*Hail Hekate Korotrophous, Hail Hekate!*

For some time, I'd already set up a seasonal altar in our bedroom, changing altar cloths, decorations, flowers and doing rituals. However for my first degree initiation, I had to do a devotion to Hekate. I changed my altar so that it contained lavender, a triformis statue, a small coiled china snake, some saffron and my bottle of cypress essential oil. I started my devotion, performing my ritual each morning after my shower and before breakfast, wearing my Hekate pendant.

I burnt frankincense and then would tidy and dress the altar with fresh lavender etc. I would centre myself, create a protected ritual space and then chant:

*"Hekate, Hekate, Hekate Dark Mother*

*You walk with us*

*Like no other*

*Dark Mother"*

I would then recite the Orphic Hymn to Hekate and light her candle invoking her to be with me with the following invocation:



## Keys to the Crossroads



*"Great Goddess Hekate,  
She who was born of the star and who will remain all the end of time;  
Triple one, beautiful, awesome and wise..."* <sup>22</sup>

I would then say:

*"Great Goddess Protectress of witches  
Goddess of the Underworld  
Great Phosphorous Lightbearer  
And guide to Initiates  
Mistress of the night Sky  
Who is the most shining one,  
Please be with me now."*

I'd meditate for some time and write up anything I had felt or seen afterwards. I had various experiences from sitting quietly in a green summer field with everything ripe and blooming around me; sitting in a dark cave with snakes coiled around me, overlapping, comforting and protecting me and one where she lead me to a grove to a Hekate statue resembling the one I have on her altar at home.

I would then thank Hekate and close, extinguish the candle and remove my pendant. Throughout the day I would be mindful of her and incorporate my devotion into my daily routine. I have a special Hekate journal which I keep on my altar, where I write up my meditations, I also write in any other chants that I use in her name from working with my coven.

Four days into my devotion my son was born. I had intended to end the devotion on his due date but he beat me to it by being born ten days early! But, still, in the early days of lots of cuddles and breastfeeding times I was able to sit quiet and think of

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<sup>22</sup> From Adrian Harris' website, <http://hecate.timerift.net>



Hekate and of the thoroughly enjoyable pregnancy and birth she had blessed me with.

I placed a Hekate pendant on a shelf in his room when he was first born and collected things from when we went out together. Now he collects his own things and puts them next to the pendant. He has a couple of seaside pebbles, a bees wax sheet candle that he rolled and a feather.

I'm now encouraging my two and half year old son to care for the world around him, helping him to notice the changes of the seasons and what is going on around him. He's a keen recycler and loves feeding our wormery, though he's yet to master the fine art of distinguishing weeds from the seedlings he has planted! Though his Great Granddad would have told him "weeds are just flowers growing in the wrong place". I regularly talk with him about the statues and plaques we have round the house (Pan, Vesta and of course Hekate) and place flowers or herbs from our garden next to them. Together, with my incredibly supportive husband, I hope to bring our son up in a world that he respects and appreciates giving thanks to the Gods and Goddesses.

Hekate has played such an important part in my life. I haven't taken down her altar in our bedroom and have had to set up another seasonal altar somewhere else in the house! It just doesn't feel right to take it down. When I walk past her shrine I always feel that I must do a little something - move an altar piece here, dust a little there and then sometimes I just need to sit and be quiet at the shrine - thinking or not-thinking, depending on what I have been bought there to do.

There are days, more than I'd like to admit, when I feel guilty about not being able to do enough "practical magic" but I know she is always there encouraging me and pushing me forward to do the things I need to do.

## Keys to the Crossroads



These probably sound all very simple experiences but it has been difficult putting into words something that has affected my life like this. It's one presence in my life that I hope never to be without.





## My Hekate Devotional

By Alison

The meditation that follows was experienced during a solitary devotional working to Hekate, which I started on the eve of Samhain<sup>23</sup> a few of years ago. During this time I found myself following pathways that in the past I had feared. Working with Hekate during this devotional was an intense experience and one I shall never forget.

*HAIL HEKATE*

*Mistress of the thresholds*

*You who guide me on my journey to the mysteries*

*Leading me on the path of life*

*You show me the door to the worlds beyond*

*May your wisdom, strength and love be my guide*

*HAIL HEKATE*

Hekate, you stand over me, place your hands upon my head and slowly, one by one, give me the keys I need to unravel my mind's mysteries. I find myself following you, going on a journey, deep into my subconscious, I feel like I've been here before. I follow you, my Goddess, into dark landscapes along a winding path, through tall trees, conifers I believe, which try to reach out and touch me as if to give me strength on my journey. It is very black, the moon completely hidden on this Samhain night.

You lead me ever onwards into the forest, over pine needles and cones, my feet are bare and I can feel the solidness of the earth beneath my feet. I have the feeling of being part of something bigger, something eternal and everlasting, something beautiful and serene. I can hear the owls tooting in the distance and if I listen very

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<sup>23</sup> Halloween, 31<sup>st</sup> October

## Keys to the Crossroads



closely I can hear the scampering of tiny woodland feet. I can hear the dogs howling for your attention and every now and again I can see them peaking around from behind a tree, as if to ask their mistress when it is their time for attention, and by this giving me the message to be patient. Relaxing once more, I continue my journey.

The landscape begins to change now and the moonless sky becomes clearer overhead as I enter into a clearing. The moon is dark and no light other than the torch you hold sheds any light on the clearing ahead of me. I notice, through the shadows that surround me, that there are many leaves on the ground, scrunching beneath my toes. I can not see the trees at the outside of the clearing as they are in darkness. You stand as a beacon in the centre of the clearing waiting for me to come forward.

I approach you in the centre of the clearing and suddenly I notice we are at a crossroads. I look about in fear, unsure of my direction and lacking the vision to see ahead. A dog waiting on each of the three paths laid out before me, each one waiting to lead me into my new destiny, my new path. One path appears dark and overgrown, one appears narrow with lots of sharp turns – this one I can not see far along, and the last path is rocky yet straight, I believe that each path has something to teach me but which one to take?

Hekate then reaches out and touches my head and I feel the ancient power and wisdom of her begin to flow through me and she commands my full attention as she says: *"My child, you are strong but weak in your fears, you must walk through your fears as if they are not there, they will only hold you back."*

I felt a feeling of deep release at these words as if the tide had gone out and with it taken my fears and I chose the path directly ahead. This is the rocky but straight path. At Hekate's demand the dog that has been waiting to lead me springs to my heels and gently but firmly takes my hand between his teeth and drags me forward. I take a look back at my Goddess for I do not want to leave her presence, for though she is strict she is also beautiful in her blessings and of these she has given me many. I look back and

## Keys to the Crossroads



see her start to shimmer and slowly the light from her torch goes out and the dark moonless night once again blackens the forest and she is gone. I feel the gentle tug of the dog's teeth on my hand, and I turn to the path ahead of me and begin to walk, avoiding the obstacles and rocks that are in my way, the path eventually brings me out of the forest and into a large meadow. Here the dog lets go of my hand but continues to walk beside me as a constant strength and reminder of Hekate.

My world once again begins to darken and I feel like I am being pulled out of a very small hole into a larger brighter place and I am leaving something behind me. As I come back into consciousness once more, I am aware of a feeling of lightness that surrounds me. I am ready now for what is to come and I shall continue to work with Hekate, allowing her to unlock the doors that need unlocking and following the paths that these might lead me to.

I toast Hekate and eat and drink with her, for she is still with me. I feel her presence behind me, touching me with her robes and as I come to say farewell. She touches my head once more and leaves, though I know that she is never truly gone and will be back as I still have more work to do.

*Beautiful Hekate*

*You who have guided me on my journey to the mysteries*

*Showing me my choices in life*

*You have shown me the door to the worlds beyond*

*I thank you for your wisdom, strength and love that you have given me*

*On my journey tonight*

*Hekate, I bid you*

*HAIL and FAREWELL*



## Hekate – Goddess of Storms

By Rainspider

It's early in the morning.

Under my feet crunch battered pebbles, smooth stones that have spent an age tumbling in the sea, now washed up on the remote beach where I am walking.

The wind buffets my body and batters my face with its endless fingers. It shrieks around my head and seems to take a sadistic pleasure in pushing me back to where I came. I stop for a moment and glare back at it, but it only laughs in my face and sends me sprawling onto the ground.

Was that you? I ask, as I clamber up from the ground. I listen for a moment, no, it's not her but I can feel a presence pushing through into my spirit. The wind skips down the beach as if running away and then suddenly it ceases as if some unknown force has captured it.

The beach is plunged into utter silence – expectant and reverent. I reach the waters edge and lift my face to calm waters in front of me. On the horizon lurks a vast mass of clouds. Black and boiling, hugging the earth's surface as it steadily creeps towards the beach where I am standing. A touch of saffron precedes the edge of the cloud mass, the remnants of the early morning sun? Or the presence of one who wishes to speak to me?

The beach is waiting and the waves gently nudge at my feet as if goading my hesitation. I feel small and vulnerable, my mind in turmoil like the storm heading towards me. A question forms in my mind and I ask for guidance, options – anything that will clear the fog of decision and shine a candle of light on the way forward.

I raise my arms, close my eyes and my mouth speaks the words:



*Hail Hekate of the crossroads  
Goddess of sky, sea and land  
Herald of storm and gale  
Keeper of the way  
Pour forth your light upon me  
Clear the way, destroy indecision  
Sweep away doubt.  
Open my inner eye that I may see the choices before me  
Beautiful and terrible Goddess  
Plunge me into the depths of your spirit  
That I may resurface – renewed and alive  
Hekate, come to me and show me the way  
Hail and welcome.  
Silence. Stillness. Anticipation.*

*The world takes a breath and then plunges into chaos.*

A streak of lightning splits the sky and the storm races across the water as though has been summoned. The sea races ahead of it as if in terror and then crashes upon shore before being sucked back into the melee that was once calm.

I feel exhilarated (and to be honest – a little apprehensive!). The storm hugs shoreline, lightening flashes deep within the clouds and thunder rumbles so deep that I feel it vibrating deep within me. The wind, which has been patiently waiting now surges up the beach even more ferociously than before. I close my eyes and vaguely hear the howls upon the wind, like hounds and I know that she is here. Her towering above me, it almost overwhelms me and I feel dizzy and disoriented. I drop to the ground, comforted by the solidity beneath me. And then the images come...



## Keys to the Crossroads





The scene is familiar to me. I see a bleak, never-ending landscape. It is totally flat and the horizon is so far in all directions that it merges with the sky into a blurred haze. The sky is a whirling mass of darkest indigo and saffron. It moves like living oil on water. The landscape is a blank canvas where images rise and fall, like sea creatures breaking the surface of the blackest ocean and then plunging back into the subconscious. In the centre of all this stands a figure cloaked and hooded in the darkest indigo with a hint of saffron robe. I never see the whole of her face just her lower jaw and her lips which gently move, there is a hint of serpentine hair...

Her lips move, forming words but it is impossible to hear as a ferocious gale constantly shrieks across the landscape. Yet her garments move as if only touched by the gentlest breeze. She speaks to me in my mind and the images continue to surface in front of me. I feel the physical sensation of rain upon my face, large storm droplets that beat upon my head and shoulders. The sensation increases until I am aware of a hand gently placed upon my head as if in blessing.

Her lips cease to move, no answers have been given – I don't need them as I have been given the tools to find my own.

I become aware that the storm is passing. In front of me, the clouds begin to disperse and the presence I felt earlier gradually fades. As the clouds break, the morning sun stretches its fingers over the tops and beneath to the earth below.

I feel refreshed and confident about the decisions I have to make. I leave a piece of almond cake by the water's edge and say thank you. As I turn, a crafty seagull swoops down and pinches the cake, "thank you" he cries.....



## Devotion of Time

By Magin

In the modern world, one of the most precious offerings we can make is our time. During a devotional to Hekate I decided to make her something lasting; a centre-piece for her devotional space. Originally I intended to make a three-sided object reminiscent of the three-form Hekate figure. After some thought I decided that a three-sided centre piece would not be ideal as one side would always be hidden upon the altar – even if this might be quite appropriate I would always feel slightly uncomfortable deciding which ‘Hekate’ would have her face to the wall. I therefore decided on a triptych style painting.

I began by considering a collection of Hekate’s titles and dividing them into three as best I could – not an easy task. This naturally led on to long lists of symbols, colours and objects that are, or could be, associated with each title.



Once I had decided on the three 'themes' I did one meditation each night for three nights, following some devotional work and a request to Hekate for inspiration for that part of the painting. On the first night I went to one of my favourite sites on a hill where a three-way 'crossroads' in the path leads to the old town, new town and graveyard. The second was done at home after dark with a consecrated candle I had been saving for a special occasion. For the third I travelled closer to the graveyard and found a particularly crabby tree which was most helpful following offerings of saffron and copious praise.

In the resulting painting, Hekate is framed in each image by an archway, which one can step through in visualisation to learn more about that aspect of her nature. The right and left archways are slightly recessed and the figures turn to the right and left so that the image remains suggestive of the traditional triformis statue – should she choose to each figure could step back and fuse with the other two aspects.

The lettering on the picture is Templar script which I chose because of the triangular shape of the letters. Each arch contains the titles I thought most appropriate for that representation; the text across the bottom reads:

*Hekate Triformis – Bright Shining One – Dark Mother.*

## **Hekate Triformis**

*Hekate Chthonia - Hekate Propylaia – Hekate Propolos – Key Bearer*

Hekate walks through the underworld, her chosen home, with a dog and wolf at her side. The tunnel glints with jewels and gold, secret treasures of the unconscious mind and of the deep earth from which life springs forth. Although the flowers and serpents are of cold metal and gems they are not the only symbols of fertility present and the phrase "womb and tomb" would be appropriate to this liminal place. As key



bearer Hekate wears a hooded gown of blood red and at her waist hangs the keys to Earth, Sea and Sky. The mask with hair of serpents hangs balefully from its pillar and is reminiscent of Hekate representations where three masks were used to represent her three aspects. I placed the pillar here as a warning to those who would seek Hekate in her role as gatekeeper for the wrong reasons – seeking the glitter of precious gold and gems instead of the mysteries that the hidden caverns of the underworld contain. As the key bearer and gatekeeper Hekate can unlock the mysteries of death, fertility and sexuality which I felt should be present in the earthy aspect of Hekate Chthonia.

### Bright Shining One

*Hekate Phosphoros – Hekate Soteira – Hekate Kourotrophos – Guide*

The stance of Hekate as torch bearer is very well known and this picture appeared to me fully formed and shouting to be painted. Here Hekate is the saffron clad queen, a monumental figure of perhaps giant proportions – in pathworkings to this place the hillside in the background has often dwindled to minute dimensions beneath the gaze of this giant Hekate. Like the serpent-mask pillar of Hekate Propylaia I felt that She offers both an invitation and a warning; perhaps, like the sphinx, only the truly worthy will be allowed to pass.

Like the gatekeeper, this Hekate exists in a liminal space – in this case between day and night. The evening/morning star (of which her torches may also be seen as a representation) hangs above her and the sky is suffused with colour and promise. As a saviour and light bringer she lights the path and I feel that her 'fertility' aspect here is more than of aiding birth than nourishing life. As the light bringer her gifts of inspiration and knowledge bring fertility and strength to the minds and hearts of those that seek her.



## Dark Mother

*Hekate Prytania – Hekate Enodia – Mistress of Magick – Dark Queen*

I found this picture the most difficult to piece together. In my original plan the sea (the third realm of Hekate) and the dark moon would be present. I intended to place Hekate in a graveyard, perhaps, like Hekate Chthonia, with wild animals as companions. This was not, however, what Hekate seemed to have in mind. The resulting figure is dressed in deep purple, the colour of royalty and psychism. Her crown bears seven stars, representations of the seven planets, and, as Mistress of Magick, She bears the knife and scourge. I managed to sneak the sea in by giving the sky a rippling effect and the full moon (as well as signifying the powerful magick Hekate is clearly claiming for her own) also represents command over the tides.

Hekate is powerful, sensual and magnificent; she needs no representations of “scary stuff” in order to demonstrate her authority over the dark realm of the dead. She stands proud and alone, ready to summon the most frightful of beings should she choose. The single tree standing behind her valiantly resisted all my attempts to turn it into a yew or a willow – Hekate’s last message being that, although she had patiently humoured my attempts to neatly divide her into three, any limitations suggested were in my head and not hers.



## The Art of Devotion

By Brian Andrews



Since I began to work with Hekate I have found it most effective to work with her through my art. Through exploring her images and symbols, I feel that I have gained a closer bond with her and to certain aspects of her being. The act of drawing and painting requires concentration on the form of objects. When concentrating on the form I also meditate on the meanings behind those forms.

Initially I start with a broad outline of how I see her standing and then think about where I am setting the picture. I am drawn to Hekate in her role as guardian of the underworld; as I sketch the caverns I try to feel what it is like to be beneath the earth. I try to recall the scent of the earth and the cold darkness. In order to reference these ideas and feelings



it helps to visit ancient sites. You don't need to do magical work while you are there. You just need to experience the stones and the atmosphere of the place and then try to replicate that feeling in your art.

Once I have put in the background I decide if the picture will have Hekate on her own or if there are other beings or creatures in the picture. I then decide what their relationship to her is and show that in the composition. Often the beings in the picture will be 'lesser' than Hekate if she is the main focus so I make sure that they appear lower than her.

As I am fleshing out the detail I am often drawn to how her torches will interact with the main scene. I always include both torches as these are the prime symbol of Hekate within my own psyche and they help me to refocus on different aspects of the picture. Throughout the process I look back and from the flames of her torches constantly reassessing elements in their light. As I draw each part I try to form an idea of how the item would feel on the mundane plane, how heavy is it? Is it hard or soft? Is it a permanent item or a temporary one?

The mood of the picture is also very important, often my mood can affect the outcome of an image although once I get into my stride, mood doesn't seem to matter as much as I layer on levels of detail and refine objects within the composition. Whilst detail does play a part in terms of general accuracy I don't often go into fine detail, as this would impose my view and will on the picture to such an extent that the viewer would not be able to engage with it so readily.

Once I have completed the main sketch the next point involves refinement. I am often very wary of painting over a sketch as I feel that the sketch stage of a painting defines its soul and often holds far more interest for me as an artist than a carefully polished painting. In this age of modern technology I will scan pictures that are to be coloured so I at least have a copy of the original sketch then I can either paint the actual picture or use my computer to colour the artwork.





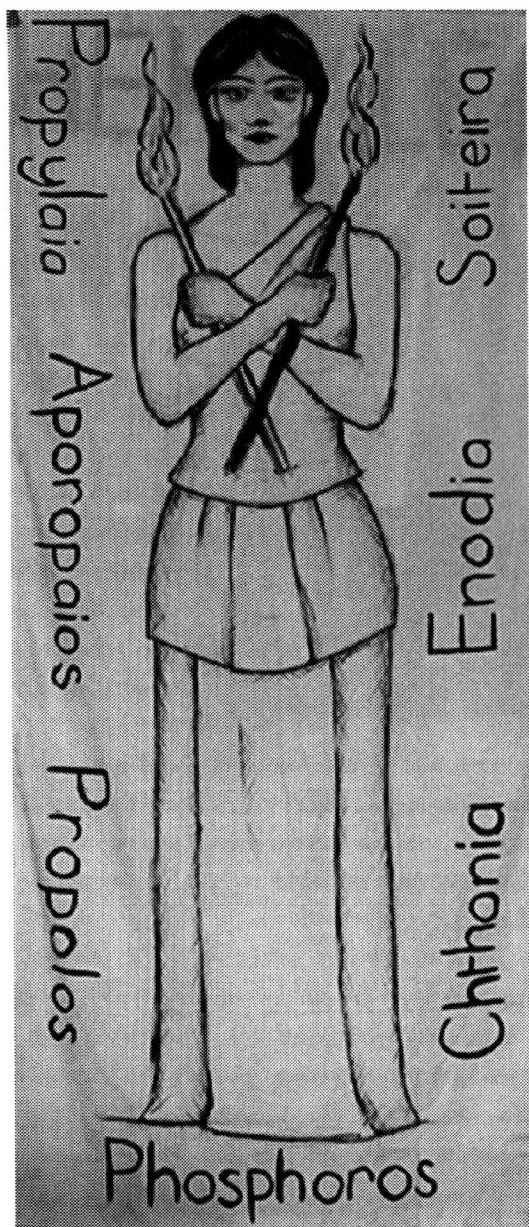


Colour plays an important role in my artwork and my choice of palette often depends on who the artwork is for. My mood when producing and thoughts on my presentation often lead me in distinct directions. When drawing Hekate herself I tend to go for strong bold colours but then work tonally, usually in blue or red, blue for the night and the cold dark or red for passion and activity. Often I will then redraw the image in gold to pick out the sketch once more. This is the one drawback with computer art and why I still resort to paint and canvas board for magical artwork.

If I am doing a more symbolic piece of artwork, perhaps showing just her tools, then I use more subtle colours working with water colours on board, this often makes for a calmer contemplative picture. The one drawback of this is that when performing ritual by candlelight it can be hard to pick out the subject matter in a watercolour as opposed to a bolder image. Candlelight is where I find metallic colours really add to a picture and bring it to life.

Aside from general materials I find that a good painting always requires love to be put into it as well as a strong will and knowledge of what I want to express. No matter the subject, if there is no love in a painting it will often appear flat and devoid of emotion in and of itself. Daring and spontaneity are also important for an artist: my best works are never planned in fine detail before starting. Sure, I might need two or more run ups at it but it is often hard to replicate the first pencil strokes of enthusiasm.

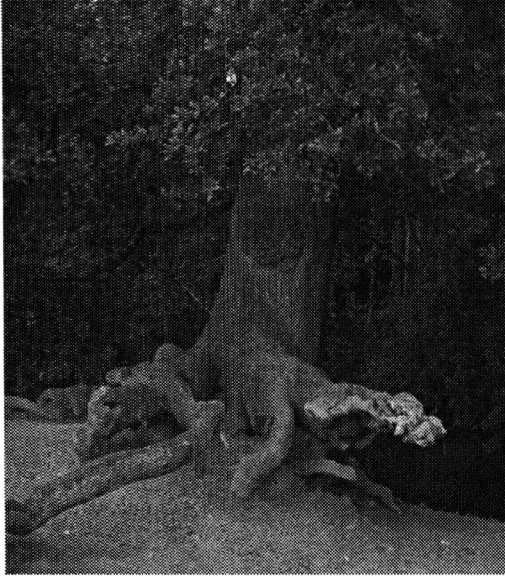
As a devotee of Hekate I also draw on magical experience when drawing and try to recapture emotions from when I have worked with her and encountered her in my magical work. This way I can try to get something of her into my image, often invoking her into the image in my mind in order to capture her as she appears to me, always being wary of when I add in the detail of her eyes, as for me that instils life into a picture and defines the emotion of a piece in the way that I wish it.





## Hexing Herb

John Canard



I have always loved working with herbs, to me they represent the essence of witchcraft. Learning what they look like, where they grow, how they can be used, it is all part of a greater understanding of the lore of the earth. Of all the herbs, the one that intrigued me the most for some time was aconite, or wolfsbane as it is also known. Its connection to my tutelary deity Hekate, Goddess of the witches, meant I had to try it out, without poisoning myself!

Aconite was said to have been formed when Hercules dragged Hekate's guard-dog, the triple-headed Kerberos, out of Hades and into the daylight. Kerberos didn't much like this, one suspects Hercules was not the best of people with animals, and from the saliva that fell from his three mouths, aconite grew. Aconite was hereafter considered a sacred herb to Hekate.

Looking through my herbals, I found an old recipe for a flying ointment which includes aconite as the main psychoactive ingredient, along with wild celery, poplar fronds and soot. I got hold of some goose grease to use as the base, and decided to pick the ingredients as soon as possible. I had to wait a couple of months, as autumn is the time to gather aconite roots, and it was July. In the meantime I was able to pick



my wild celery, which was flowering and available, and the poplar buds, which were forming and ready to gather in the coming weeks.

I decided to wait until the autumn equinox to gather my roots, as it felt a good symbolic time to do so, and it was close to the full moon. Gathering my rowan wand, basket, mead and horn "trowel", I prepared. I bathed and put on clean white linen clothes to best honour the plants, and drove out to the site in Cornwall where I knew they grew, having spotted aconite there whilst on holiday.

As I approached the plants I was lucky, for the wind was blowing from behind me, so I didn't have to walk backwards to avoid having it in my face. I stopped a yard from the first aconite and explained what I was going to do and why I wanted to pluck it. Having done this, I drew a circle in the ground left-handed with my rowan wand around the plant, and set about scooping the earth away from its base with my horn. Iron should always be avoided when digging up plants, and I have found my piece of deer horn ideal for the purpose.

I pulled the plant up with my left hand, brushing away the dirt and thanking the plant for its benevolence, offering mead to the ground with a simple prayer. Placing it on the cloth in my basket (a picked herb should never touch the ground or its power returns to the earth and you have wasted its life), I was pleased to see it had several larger "daughter" roots. If they were all like this I would only need a couple more plants, which would place less of a strain on the plant community there.

I repeated the process with two more plants, and was satisfied I had enough. With a final thanks and farewell I returned to my car and drove home. As soon as I entered the kitchen I started separating off the daughter roots. These were all placed (not touching) on a cloth on a shelf in my airing cupboard, where the heat would dry them out nicely over the next ten days or so.



The next night I returned to the site to replant some of the smaller roots where I had taken the plants from, to hopefully grow strong and replace them. I always try to do this, so that I am not taking away without replacing, and this also ensures the plant spirits know I am sincere and do not hinder me in my endeavours.

A couple of weeks later I had all the ingredients properly prepared and made the flying ointment. Due to the poisonous nature of aconite I will not go into detail here. The truly dedicated will be able to find out for themselves!

I decided to use my flying ointment at a Hekate Supper at a crossroads I use for some of my work. The night traffic there is pretty non-existent so I decided to go for it at the next dark moon. In the meantime I prepared cakes and made a suitable incense to use.

Come the dark moon I was at the crossroads at midnight, discretely dressed in black to be less visible on the off-chance a car did decide to drive by. I applied some of the flying ointment to my armpits, having decided against any internal absorption by the traditional methods. I lit my incense and offered the cakes, and waited.

As the minutes passed by I noticed my vision was getting much sharper. Obviously night vision on a starlit night improves with time, but this went beyond that. There was a clarity of focus that let me see every leaf in the hedge, and I realised I was not alone. The night sounds filled the air around me, a hooting owl, a snuffling that may have been a badger, and then my first guest at the supper. As I sat motionless, a fox trotted up, bold as you like, and gobbled up one of the cakes before staring at me and running off.

Resisting the urge to break into a fit of laughter, I silently thanked my guest for not being greedy and having left the rest of the cakes. Time passed and no more animal guests joined me. I was starting to feel rather stiff from sitting motionless for a long time, when I glimpsed something out of the corner of my eye. A translucent ethereal figure drifted through the hedge and stopped by the cakes. I studied it closely, and

## Keys to the Crossroads



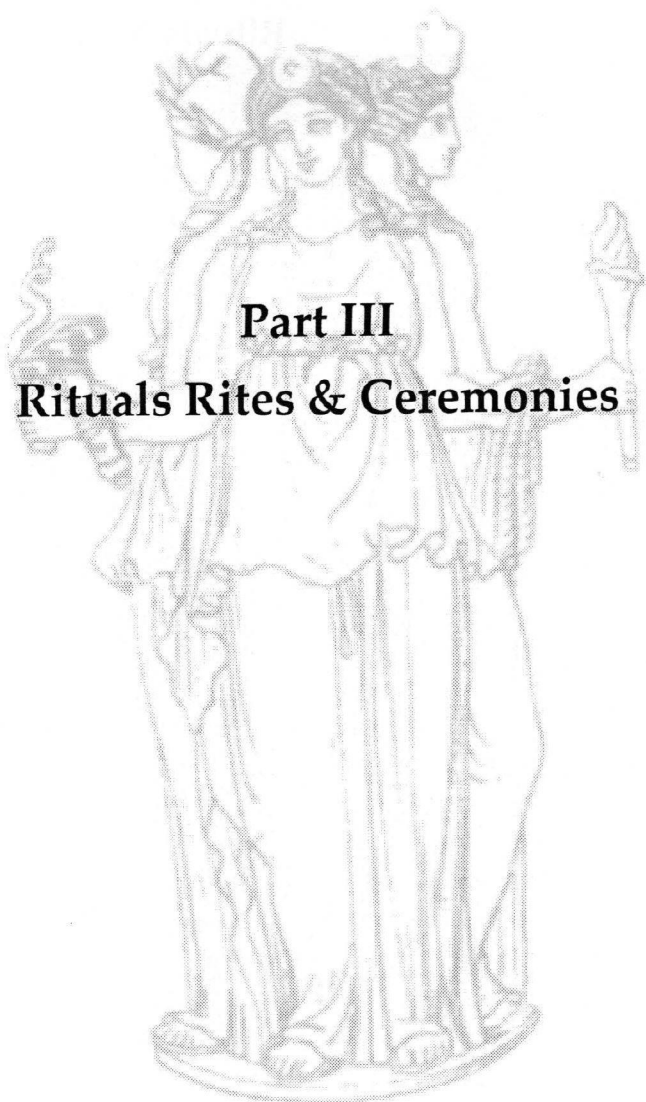
realised it was a young girl. Scarcely daring to breathe, I watched in rapt fascination as she drifted over first one cake, then another, pausing for a few seconds above each one.

Within a couple of minutes she had completed her spectral circuit, and she drifted off again. I couldn't believe it! Had I really seen that, was it the effects of the aconite causing me to hallucinate? There were no other visitors that night, so I walked home at dawn, to go and get some sleep after I had recorded my experiences.

A few months later, giving my system time to process out the active ingredients of the aconite, I repeated this ceremony, at a different crossroads, and again had spectral guests. Since then I have performed the ceremony a number of times, though many times there have been no guests or just animals. Hekate herself has never appeared, but as I see her in my other work when I am not using flying ointment, I don't feel disappointed by her absence. After all, the suppers are for her ghosts, and it is another way of serving her, which at the end of the day is what it is all about.



**Part III**  
**Rituals Rites & Ceremonies**







## Rituals & Rites to Hekate

Introduction by Sorita D'Este

Hekate was primarily honoured by everyday people in the ancient world. Household shrines at entranceways suggest that she had a key role in protection, against evil spirits and outside influences. She was also called upon in rites of fertility, childbirth and for help through difficult transitions – including death. Finally she was often invoked in magickal workings for love, wealth and success. It is likely that many of those who invoked her were women and certainly this does seem to ring true when looking at the stories we are told from both myth and history - there are the sorceresses Medeia and Circe, and also the women from Thessaly. There are also instances recorded where spells performed for and by men called on the power of Hekate; and further evidence to suggest that some members of her male Priesthood, as part of their dedication to Hekate, became eunuchs. The latter however, is not something I would personally recommend to men who wish to serve her today!

As a Goddess who is associated with land, sea and sky, and through her association with crossroads and caves, Hekate can be honoured in a number of ways and at a variety of locations. The natural place to honour chthonic deities is on the earth itself, so for ceremonies to draw on Hekate's power over Earth and Underworld you may wish to create altars and shrines on the ground, or as near to the ground as possible. To draw on a combination of her powers over land, earth and sea the best place to do a ceremony is on the seashore – the place where ocean meets land and the air is all about you. Crossroads have long been associated with Hekate, so they provide another possible location for your ceremonies and shrines. Do your research, spend some time thinking about what you wish to achieve and then decide on a location – the only limit is your own ingenuity!

Keys to the Crossroads





**Notes:**

**What are Shrines?**

Shrines are devotional spaces created to a specific deity, or group of deities. A shrine will typically contain an image of the Goddess or God (as a statue or picture) and other items which are symbolic of the deity you are honouring. So for Hekate items such as onions, garlic, cords, keys, candles and saffron may be included, as well as items which you personally associate with her. Devotional workings often include the making of offerings, such as burning incense, candles or placing fresh flowers or food offerings on the shrine. Shrines can be small, large, elaborate or simple, and they can be placed somewhere which corresponds to the deity, or in a conveniently private space where you will be undisturbed during your workings.

**What is Sacred Space?**

Sacred Space can be any space in which you perform your meditations, devotional ceremonies and other magical workings. In the Wiccan tradition, as with most Pagan traditions, this space is usually created by casting a circle. If you are unfamiliar with this practice I would recommend you read *Circle of Fire* which looks at both the symbolism of and the practice of circle casting, including purification and the invocation of the elemental guardians.

**What is Pathworking?**

Pathworking is a type of creative visual meditation. It is best to do this in a group, where one person reads the pathworking out to the rest of the group, who undergo the journey. It is important to make sure that you are sitting comfortably and that you centre yourself prior to starting the journey. Do this by taking a few deep, regular breaths and relaxing your body, closing your eyes and listening to the words, visualising the journey as you progress. If you are unable to do this with other people, you can read it out to yourself, pausing to allow yourself to visualise and progress on the journey, or alternatively to make a tape or digital recording which you can play back to yourself.



## Hekate in the Underworld

Pathworking by David Rankine

Sit down, close your eyes and relax, finding a comfortable breathing rhythm. In your mind's eye see yourself as you are now sitting in the room. Fix this image in your mind's eye, so you can see yourself clearly, as you are in the room. Be aware of the walls around you, the floor below and the ceiling above. As you see yourself in the room, see a white mist start to fill the room, rolling in, becoming more and more dense until all around you is white mist, you are surrounded by white mist.

And now the white mist starts to disperse, fading away and leaving you standing on rocky terrain, in front of a cave mouth. Standing to the left of the cave mouth is a yew tree, and to the right of it is a white statue of Hekate, bearing a torch in her left hand and pointing to the yew tree with her right hand. As you take in your surroundings, a beautiful young maiden steps out of the cave, wearing a white tunic, with brown hair and eyes. She offers you two silver coins, oboli to pay the ferryman, you realise. She points at the tree and tells you to pluck a sprig of yew from the tree. When you encounter Kerberus, you must hold the sprig of yew in front of your mouth and blow through it into his nostrils to calm him down.

You thank the maiden and she again gestures, this time into the cave, and tells you that is where your journey will lead you, down into the underworld. You walk past her into the cave, which is lit by torches in brackets on either side, along the walls, and you see that the cave narrows to a tunnel about twenty yards into the rock-face. You walk into the cave and start to walk into the tunnel. The tunnel is lit with torches in brackets on alternate walls every thirty yards, and as you walk you notice that the tunnel is gently sloping downwards. You keep walking, and the slope of the tunnel becomes steeper.

## Keys to the Crossroads



After a while you hear the sound of running water ahead, like a rushing river. The tunnel opens out into a mighty cavern, with a huge river running through it. Looking across the cavern you can just make out the other side, through a mist which rises of the water. As you stand at the riverbank, a boat appears through the mist, punted across by a black-robed figure. The boat reaches the bank where you stand, and the tall, black robed figure, whose face is hidden in the cowl of his robe, silently extend his hand. You realise this is Chiron, the ferryman, and offer him a silver obulus as you get in the boat.

Silently he punts the boat across the water, and as he does so you glance down through the light mist into the water. Spectral figures float in the water, and you know these are the souls of those who came without the coin to pay the ferryman, and who cannot cross the river Styx to continue their journey. You look up again and see you have reached the other bank of the wide river. As the boat stops, you thank Chiron, who does not reply, and disembark, onto the bank. There is another tunnel in the cavern wall, leading away. This tunnel is lit in the same manner with alternating torches, but it has a flat floor and does not slope.

You walk along the tunnel, with some trepidation as you can hear a loud barking, like several large fierce dogs. However you keep walking and soon the tunnel opens out into another cavern. At the far side is another tunnel, but in front of it stands a huge three-headed black dog. He is growling and barking at you with each of his heads but you notice there is a chain around his middle neck, which is tied to the wall. Heartened by this you approach, holding the sprig of yew in front of your mouth.

As his middle head darts down at you, you breathe through the yew into his nostril and he immediately calms down and goes silent. He seems to have lost all interest in you, so you hurry past him into the tunnel. This tunnel only continues a short distance before it opens up into a huge cavern, its ceiling so high you cannot see it. The walls have a myriad of different colour crystals embedded in the rock, and a marble plinth in the centre of the cavern bears a silver bowl with a blue flame burning

## Keys to the Crossroads



In it. The light from the flame is reflected by all the different coloured crystals and reflected throughout the cavern, filling it with a rainbow of light.

You approach the altar, but as you come close to it, the altar disappears and the beautiful figure of Hekate stands in its place. She wears a simple white tunic and a silver circlet in her hair which is embedded with diamonds that shine like stars, or perhaps they are stars. A girdle with a ring of keys on hangs around her waist. Yet despite the disappearance of the flame and the plinth, the cavern is still filled with the rainbow hues of light reflected by the crystals.

Hekate smiles at you and points to the far wall behind her. Amongst the crystals you can see a simple lead-rimmed circular mirror hanging on the wall at head height. As you approach the mirror, Hekate's voice follows you, and she says *"This is a mirror of visions. You may look into it and see the past, the future, other times and other lives. It is for you to work your will on the mirror and see what secrets it will divulge."*

You stand for some time gazing into the mirror, seeing visions and endeavouring to call up images that you need to see. After a while Hekate speaks again, and tells you it is time to depart now. You turn to face her, and realise you do not have a gift for her, as you will need your other coin to cross the Styx again, and you might need the yew sprig again. Looking at the play of a smile on her lips, you know Hekate is aware of your predicament. She tells you, *"The best gift you can give me is to follow my ways and spread the mysteries, radiate magick in your actions, and make the world a better place through your deeds."*

Pledging to do so, you thank Hekate and with a backward glance at her, you walk towards the entrance you came in through. You walk down the tunnel into the cavern where Kerberus now lies on the floor. He ignores you as you speed up your pace and hurry across the cavern and down the next tunnel to the bank of the river Styx. The silent figure of Chiron is waiting in his boat to take you back across the river, and as you step into the boat you hand him the second obulus.



Chiron punts the boat across the river and soon you are back at the other bank. You disembark and thank him for his service, but he ignores you and silently punts off into the mist. With a shrug you start to walk up the steeply sloping tunnel towards the surface. As you walk the slope of the tunnel decreases and becomes gentler. Soon it has levelled out and you are standing once more in the cave opening out to the world. You walk out of the cave and gaze at the yew tree on your right. You approach the tree and hold the sprig of yew to the branch where you removed it. The sprig reattaches itself as if it was never plucked. Turning around you look again at the statue, and see that Hekate is no longer pointing at the yew, but holds a torch in each hand.

As you stare at the beauty of her statue, and consider how lifelike it is, you notice a white mist rolling in, becoming more and more dense, surrounding you and obscuring your surroundings, so you can no longer see the statue or the tree, or the cave. All around you is white mist. And now the mist starts to disperse, and as it does so you see once more the walls around you, the ceiling above and the floor below. You become aware of yourself in the room once more. You have returned from your journey to meet Hekate in the underworld. Open your eyes and record your experience.



## Ode to Hekate Chthonia

Blood, bone teeth and tears  
There is no need for foolish fear  
Mistress of the darkened hour  
Hekate bring forth your might and power

Light brought from the depths into life  
Light to break apart barriers and strife  
Bring forth the torch to lead the way  
Bring forth the light that turns dark to day

Storm and tumult, tide and flood  
Lessons learned with fire and blood  
With velvet paw on rock and earth  
Hekate's voice is given birth

Belief torn asunder and build anew  
Power of spirits and magic, brew  
Bless the offering, bless the blade  
Listen ye well as reality fades

Now make your choice at the crossroads end  
Chant the words of power, the call to send  
Decisions made and decisions lost  
For Hekate's wisdom, what the cost?  
Sacrifice made, wish sent on the breeze  
Gateway opens, spirits whisper and tease  
Walk with Her, open your heart if you dare  
Gifts found and earned will be beyond compare

*Written By Lezley Butler, 2003*





## Decision at the Crossroads

Pathworking by Dr. Nina Lazarus

See yourself standing at a crossroads, at night. It is dark, with just the sliver of the new moon in the sky as your gaze takes in the surrounding landscape, adjusting to the low light level. You can make out the silhouettes of trees to your left, and realise that one of the forks goes into the wood. To your right you can see hills, and you know that path leads up into the hills. In front of you the path seems to just go on to the horizon, and from behind you in the distance is the sound of running water, indicating the fourth fork crosses a river. As you look ahead, a figure appears out of the ground in front of you. It is a woman wearing a white tunic, but with a horse's head. In her hands she bears two torches which momentarily blind you as your eyes adjust to the increased light in the darkness around you. She speaks, saying, "This path is the straight flat road, the easiest road. Like a horse you can gallop down this road, but will the horizon ever get any closer? Does the easiest road challenge you, does it fulfil you?" After speaking she turns into stone, and you see she has become a white marble statue, still bearing the two burning torches in her hands.

Taken aback by this, you look around, and then gaze upwards. The moon has changed, and now it is a waxing half moon, the right side of it illuminated and the left side in darkness. You feel movement to your right, and turn towards the fork that leads to the hills. Standing there is another woman, identical to the first except she has a goat's head, and holds a scourge and a noose in her hands. She speaks, in an identical voice, saying, "This path is the hardest path. Soon it will disappear in the hills and you will need the surefootedness of the goat to find your own way when there is none in front of you. Do you wish to walk away from the paths made by others, mindful that you may lose your way, and stumble and fall on the sharp rock beneath your feet?" She also turns to stone, transforming into a white marble statue in the centre of the road. On instinct you look upwards again, and see the moon is now full. Sensing the movement of this cycle, you turn another quarter turn to the third



fork, towards the river. There stands a third woman, with a wolf's head, bearing keys in one hand and a knife in the other. You know she will give you another choice, and sure enough she speaks in the same voice. "This path will take you away from your home, and force you to give up what you thought mattered. You will travel to new places in your quest, uncertain of what you seek until you find it, trusting your instincts and allowing yourself to be open to opportunities. But there is a danger that you will be washed away like a pebble in the river, carried by events stronger than yourself. Is this what you seek?" Her declaration finished, she turns to stone, a third marble statue in the road.

Expectantly you look up to the heavens, and the moon has faded to a waning half moon, its right side dark now and the left side illuminated. You turn again, to the fourth fork, the road which leads into the woods. There stands a fourth woman in the road, bearing a serpent in each hand. This time she has a beautiful young woman's face, illuminated by an inner radiance. She smiles at you as she speaks. "This path demands that you take on causes that may not be your own, that you fight for others and follow a path of service. Like the trees in the forest, you will be one of many, but like each of them, you will make a contribution to the greater whole, the well-being of the wood. Will you deny your self-interest and place your own growth second to help others find their path?"

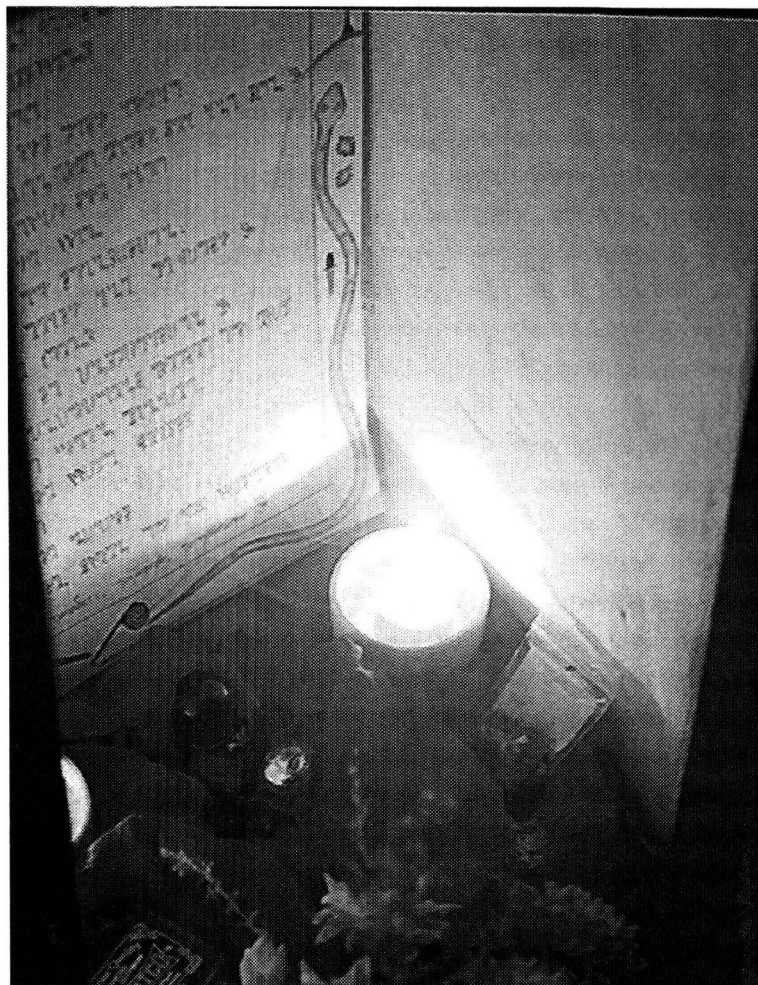
This figure, Hekate in all her beauty, does not turn into stone, but disappears before your very eyes. As she disappears, the light level drops, and spinning around you see all the statues have gone, and the moon in the sky has also lost its light, for you are now at the dark moon. In the darkness you hear Hekate's voice again. "You stand alone in the darkness at the crossroads, which path will you choose?" Make your decision and then open your eyes and act on it!



## An Invocation

Gracious Hekate,  
Radiant Ancient Queen,  
You are Light and Beauty.  
Lady of the Cross-Ways  
Light in the dark,  
You illuminate the path ahead  
Holding dominion;  
over the Earth, Sea and Sky.  
Guiding us through the dark,  
You show us the Way  
Through times of Transition:  
Through Birth, Death and Re-birth.  
Keeper of the Keys,  
You open us to Inspiration  
You are a magnificent Averter of Evil,  
Our Protector from danger.  
Lady of the Wild Beasts,  
Dark Mother, Queen of the Night  
Blessed Hekate, Queen of all witches  
Guide us, join us in our rite this night.  
Show us new paths, inspire our lives,  
Share with us your wisdom and light  
Hear our call  
Hail Hekate!

*Written by Pyxie, 2005*





## The Abduction of Persephone

A Modern Mystery Play written for Lapis Companions 2004

*Ritual drama is an excellent method through which mythology can be brought to life and studied. The following is a short ritual drama which was written for the Lapis Companion-circle (London) in 2004 and which was incorporated into a Spring Equinox celebration, celebrating the return of Persephone to her mother Demeter. We are including it in this volume as the role Hekate played in this myth is an important one. This drama is written for a people, but can easily be adapted. Using props and costume when performing a ritual drama can greatly enhance the atmosphere and is recommended.*

**NARRATOR:** This is the story of how seasons were brought to the Earth, a mystery celebrated in ancient Greece, in the Greater and Lesser Eleusian mysteries every year. Demeter, the Holy Mother, Goddess of the fruitful Earth and Zeus, King of the Gods in Olympus, had a beautiful daughter, the Kore, Persephone. Hades, the Lord of the Underworld, was overwhelmed by the beauty and loveliness of the beautiful daughter of Demeter and watched her from his dark realms in the Underworld, whilst plotting with Zeus, who was his Brother, on how to make her his queen. They knew that Demeter, would never give permission for such a union. They devised a wicked plan. One beautiful morning, the Kore was picking flowers in a soft meadow. The most beautiful flowers grew here, roses and crocuses and beautiful violets, irises and hyacinths also and the narcissus. Rare and beautiful flowers which were growing at the will of Zeus to be a trap for the beautiful Kore. Hades, unable to bear the longing for the beautiful Kore, waiting his chance from his place in the underworld. As the Kore reached for the most unusual of flowers, the Earth opened with a mighty roar, and Hades came forth on his chariot abducting the Kore. She screamed and cried for her Mother, but to no avail. Hades had taken her to his dark realms in the underworld, to be his wife and his Queen. And so our story begins...

## Keys to the Crossroads



**DEMETER:** My daughter! Where is my daughter? I am a mother, and what is a Mother without Her daughter? I curse this Earth, I care no longer for those who walk here. My daughter is missing and no-one is helping me! Oh! Where is my beautiful daughter? Let all the Earth be barren, I care not!

**NARRATOR:** And so Demeter wandered the Earth, for nine days, mourning the loss of the beautiful Kore. All hope had gone from her, the Earth grew barren and cold. All life withered, whilst Demeter the Grain Mother mourned her daughter. And it was Hekate, Goddess of the liminal, who came forth from her dark cave to help the Holy Mother, hearing her cries and anguish.

**HEKATE:** Holy Mother, Goddess of the Fruitful Earth and of the beautiful Kore, I see your mourning and feel your loss. Yet I saw nothing, but from my cave I heard the deafening screams of your daughter, while she was picking flowers in the meadow.

**DEMETER:** Oh! What will I do without my daughter?

**HEKATE:** Mistress of the Grain, let us seek advice from Helios, who from his fiery chariot in the heavens, sees all upon this Earth.

**NARRATOR:** And so, Demeter and Hekate, journeyed to visit Helios, God of the Sun, who travels the sky from East to West, day after day.

**HEKATE:** Lord Helios of the sacred fire, we have come to ask for your aid in a most important matter. The Kore, holy daughter of Demeter, is missing. I heard her cries from within my cave, but saw nothing. Lord Helios, did you see what happened to the beautiful daughter of Demeter?

**HELIOS:** Lady of the three-ways, torch-bearing Hekate, I observe the Earth from my chariot every day. The daughter of Demeter is with Hades, Lord of the realms of gold.

## Keys to the Crossroads



I saw him breaking forth from the Earth, when he took the beautiful maiden, when he took the Kore, the holy daughter of Demeter.

**DEMETER:** No! Hear me Zeus! My daughter is my joy! If she is not returned to me by your wicked brother, I will curse this Earth forever. All life will die!

**NARRATOR:** Meanwhile, in the realms of Hades, the beautiful Kore is mourning the loss of her freedom. She wishes to return to the world, to her mother and the green earth. But, yet, Hades did treat her as a Queen, not just a beautiful Maiden...

**PERSEPHONE:** On Earth, I was the daughter of Demeter, revered as the holy daughter of the Grain Mother. But here, in the underworld, realm of Hades, I could be Queen. He abducted me, for that I am angry, but yet, he treats me like a beautiful woman, with tenderness and with love.

**HADES:** My dear, gentle and beautiful Persephone, who I will have as my Queen, I can offer you all the riches of the Underworld. I can offer you anything your heart desire. Is there anything you wish for? I have prepared this food for you, this cake...

**PERSEPHONE:** No Hades, I know the ways of the Underworld, if I eat of this cake, I will never be able to return to the Earth and I will have to remain with you for an eternity, I wish to return to the Earth, I wish to return to my mother.

**HADES:** But my beautiful Persephone, you will need to eat something. You need your strength, why not eat of this pomegranate fruit, surely the seeds wouldn't hurt you?

**PERSEPHONE:** I am hungry. Maybe just a few of the seeds...

**NARRATOR:** And eating those seeds, the Kore sealed her fate, for one who eats of the food of the Underworld will have to remain there forever. In the meantime, Demeter



and Hekate sat in council with the other Gods on Mount Olympus and it was decided that Hekate would journey to the Underworld, a domain in which she too held power, to talk with Hades and bring the Kore back to her Mother to ensure that Demeter would again bring fertility and growth to the land. And so, Hekate, bearing her two torches, travelled to the underworld to meet with Hades...

**HEKATE:** Hades! You have stolen the Holy Daughter of Demeter! Now the Earth grows barren as Demeter mourns her loss! All life is dying! Hades, I demand that you allow me to return the daughter of Demeter at once!

**HADES:** You speak harsh words Lady Hekate, but Persephone is my Queen now and here she will remain!

**HEKATE:** Hades, I insist, return the Kore now! Demeter mourns the loss of her daughter and has placed a curse upon the green Earth. As the life upon the Earth perish, so do the worship of the Gods.

**HADES:** She has eaten of the food of the underworld! She will remain with me!

**NARRATOR:** But Zeus, knowing that all of mankind would die unless a compromise was reached supported Hekate's argument and insisted that the Kore should be returned to her mother. Hekate and Hades reached a compromise. Persephone would return to the Earth for two thirds of the year and return to the Underworld to rule as Queen for the remaining part. And it is then that Hekate became the companion and guide to Persephone on her yearly journey to and from Hades. Through this cycle of ascend and descent the seasons were brought to the Earth, as each year Demeter mourns the departure of Persephone, neglecting the Earth, tending it only upon the return of Persephone in the season we know as Spring.





## Ode to Hekate

Hekate, Protectress, Companion And Guide  
Mysterious Queen With Hounds At Your Side,  
Goddess Of Crossroads, Of Earth, Sea And Sky,  
A Light In The Darkness From Torches Held High.

The Flame To Guide, The Flame To Purge,  
Walk At My Side Yet With Shadows Merge,  
Illuminate The Path To My Hidden Soul,  
My Truths To Learn, The Prize, The Goal.

Hekate, Hekate, Holding The Key,  
Guarding The Gateway Inside Of Me.  
The Secrets And Mysteries You Can Reveal,  
Mine Is To Trust What I Know, What I Feel.

Beautiful Maiden, Mother And Crone,  
Tearing Away Blood, Sinew And Bone.  
Rip Out What's Decaying And Holding Me Back,  
Light In The Void Helpme Find What I Lack.

Hekate, Mother, Sister And Friend,  
I Follow Your Ways And The Wisdom You Lend.  
The seed you've planted inside me will grow,  
the gift from you is myself I will know

*Written By Hannah P, 2003*



## Ritual Moon Cakes

### Hekate's New Moon Ritual Cakes

*(Contributed by Sue Bowman)*

These cakes are ideal for use in Pagan ceremonies honouring Hekate as many of the ingredients are sacred to Hekate, additionally there are 3 x 3 ingredients, using the number three which is also sacred to Hekate.

#### *Ingredients:*

1 ½ Cups of organic flour

½ Cup of soft butter

½ tsp baking soda

½ tsp salt

2 tbsp black poppy see

1 free-range egg

½ tsp almond extract

1 tsp anise seeds

#### *Instructions:*

Sift the flour, salt and baking soda together. Cream the butter, honey and egg. Blend the two mixtures together and add the remaining ingredients. Shape into small thin crescent shapes. Place with space between the shapes to allow for spreading during baking on a cool oiled baking tray. Bake at 350 F for about 12 minutes or until lightly golden. Some people are not that fond of Anise seed, if you are one of those people, you may want to substitute the anise seeds with ½ tsp Vanilla extract instead.



## Some Hekate Supper Recipe

The following recipes are included to provide ideas for food which may be prepared for Hekate's suppers. They all contain ingredients which are sacred to Hekate.

### Honey Cake

(Egg Free)

(Contributed by Amanda C. - adapted from a recipe in Marguerite Patten's Everyday Cookbook)

#### Ingredients:

- 8oz plain flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 4oz sugar
- ¼ pint milk
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 4oz honey

#### Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350/375 F or gas mark 3-4. Sieve together all the dry ingredients. Warm the milk, butter and honey over a low heat. Stir in the flour etc and beat well. Put into floured loaf tin and bake in a very moderate oven for one hour. Check with skewer to see if it comes away clean to ensure loaf baked throughout.

### Saffron Honey Cake

(Contributed by Amanda C)

This recipe goes well with cheese and is lovely to welcome Beltane morning wash down with plenty of home made Mead! This recipe yields enough for about 10 servings.



*Ingredients:*

*6 saffron strands*  
*4 tspn milk*  
*175g/6oz plain flour*  
*1 tspn of baking powder*  
*100g/4oz butter, softened*  
*50g/2oz castor sugar*  
*2 tspn clear honey*  
*2 eggs, lightly beaten*  
*50g/2oz cut mixed peel*  
*75g/3oz sultanas*  
*vegetable oil, for greasing the pan*

*Icing*  
*16 saffron strands*  
*1 tspn boiling water*  
*200g/7oz icing sugar*  
*1-2 tspn lemon juice*

*Instructions:*

Pre-heat the oven to 180c/350f/gas mark 4, grease a deep 18cm/7 inch round cake tin, line sides and base with greaseproof paper, grease paper. Crush 6 saffron strands for the cake between your fingers and put into heavy based saucepan with milk. Bring just to the boil, remove from heat, leave for 20 minutes. Sift flour with baking powder and leave to one side. Beat the butter, sugar and honey until pale and fluffy. Beat in eggs, little at a time, adding a tablespoon of sifted flour if showing signs of curdling. Fold in the sifted flour. Strain saffron milk, stir into cake mixture, one tablespoon at a time. Fold in peel and sultanas. Turn mixture into prepared tin and level surface. Bake in oven for 65 minutes, or until warm skewer comes out clean. Meanwhile put the ten remaining saffron strands for the icing into a small bowl with boiling water and leave to stand until required. Cool the cake for five minutes, then turn out of tin, remove greaseproof paper, turn cake right way up and leave onto wire rack to cool. Sift the icing sugar into a large bowl and stir in lemon juice. Strain saffron water, then stir into



icing until evenly coloured. Stir in remaining lemon juice if necessary to give a thick pouring consistency. Place a large plate under the rack, pour icing over the cake smooth with palette knife and leave to set before serving.

### **Ancient Greek Sesame Fritters**

*(Contributed by Sue Bowman, adapted from: Classical Cookbook by Andrew Dalby and Sally Grainger.)*

Serves 8 people

#### *Ingredients:*

*240 grams of Plain Flour*

*450 ml water*

*4 large tspn honey*

*Some oil for frying*

*3 tspn (about 40grm) sesame seeds*

#### *Instructions:*

Lightly toast the sesame seeds in a pan until golden brown. Set aside to cool down. Next, mix the flour and the water, with one spoon of honey into a smooth dough. Heat a little oil in a frying pan (just enough to cover the base of the pan) and pour about 1/8<sup>th</sup> of the mixture into the pan. Allow it to thicken and turn around about three or four times, frying it to a golden brown colour on both sides. Repeat the process until you have used all the mixture. Serve hot, pouring honey over them and sprinkle with lots of sesame seeds! This recipe is said to be at least 2000 years old and is still popular in parts of Greece today. It uses simple ingredients and can be made for ceremonies such as Hekate's Suppers. Leave them at the crossroads with the knowledge that the spirits of Hekate will devour them before long!

### **Vegetarian Stuffed Grape Leaves : Dolmathes**

*(contributed by Sue Bowman)*

This simple recipe makes about 4 servings and is great for feasting after group rituals honouring any of the Greek Gods or Goddesses.

#### *Ingredients:*

*250 grams Grape Leaves*



*Fresh Dill & Mint (1 bunch of each)*

*250 ml Virgin Olive Oil*

*300ml rice (brown or white according to taste)*

*1 Whole Lemon*

*500 grams of finely chopped onions*

*Instructions:*

Dip the grape leaves in boiling water and then rinse them with cold water, wipe dry and set aside. Mix the onions with about half of the olive oil and mix in the rice. Add 250 ml of hot water; add the dill and mint (finely chopped). Boil this mixture for about 4 minutes. Next you need to wrap the mixture in the grapeleaves, about one tablespoon per leave. Place each of the completed parcels in a pot, leaving some space between them. Add the rest of the oil and the lemon juice and 500 ml of water. Simmer at a low heat for 30 minutes until the water is absorbed and the rice is cooked. Serve with slices of fresh lemon.

**Mini Greek Onion Bites**

*(contributed by Sue Bowman)*

These are a favourite with members of my coven and I usually make them to accompany dolmathes (above) for Hekate Suppers.

*Ingredients:*

*2 tsp Fresh Dill – finely chopped*

*4 tbspn Virgin Olive Oil*

*1kg small onions*

*125 ml Red Wine Vinegar*

*Salt & Pepper to taste*

Start by cleaning and peeling the onions. Boil them in water and half the vinegar for 25 – 20 minutes (until tender). Drain the onions and let them cool. Mix together the remaining vinegar, oil, dill, together with the salt and pepper. Pour the mixture over the onions and serve.



## Incenses for Hekate

Loose incense grains used in the traditional way, are burned on charcoal disks and can be used to fragrance a room, or of course in magickal and devotional ceremonies and other workings. When correctly blended and burned, the grains will release both the fragrances and energies of the herbs and resins blended together into the air. Using incense in this way may be one of the most ancient ways in which the Gods were honoured, it was used in Ancient Sumeria, Egypt, Greece, Rome, India and in many other ancient religious ceremonies.





### **How to make your own incense**

Making good incense is an art, it involves both the careful selection of ingredients and the cautious blending thereof, to create a good blend which will not only give off fragrant smoke but will also release the desired energies and vibrations when it is burning. The combination of herbs, resins, barks, oils and other ingredients to create such a blend takes time and dedication. Always check, when buying ready made incense, that the ingredients are all natural, artificial ingredients in incenses may result in toxic vapours and does not contain the same energy as the natural equivalent and should be avoided. When burning incense in magickal ceremonies it is important that you use incense made with the correct energies and correspondences in mind. Making your own magickal incense can be lots of fun and of course you can be certain that the ingredients you are using are suitable for the purpose you have in mind. You will need a pestle and mortar for this purpose, some old spoons will also come in useful. Additionally you will need airtight containers (glass is best) in which to store your incense.

Depending on the ingredients you use, it is best to work on breaking down the larger and harder woods and resins first, before adding the finer textured herbs. Binding ingredients such as honey, oils or wine should be added last. Finally it is important that you don't grind the ingredients to a complete powder consistency, nor leave bits which are too big. The "right" consistency will vary from blend to blend, just like cake recipes, but if you grind it to a stage when most of the ingredients are not much larger than a grain of rice, you are probably about right.

Sourcing good ingredients is equally as important. If you have a good knowledge of trees and plants, you can gather some of the ingredients yourself, but unless you are completely sure of yourself it is best to source the ingredients from reputable suppliers. Following a list of recommended UK suppliers. Both *Peacock Angel* and *Starchild* produce great Hekate Incense – worth trying out at least once!





<b>Amphora Aromatics</b> 36 Cotham Hill Cotham Bristol BS6 6LA United Kingdom <a href="http://www.amphora-retail.com">www.amphora-retail.com</a>	<b>Baldwin &amp; Co</b> 171/173 Walworth Road London SE17 1RW United Kingdom <a href="http://www.baldwins.co.uk">www.baldwins.co.uk</a>
<b>Peacock Angel</b>  <a href="http://www.peacockangel.com">www.peacockangel.com</a>	<b>Starchild, Glastonbury (UK)</b> The Court Yard 2-4 High Street Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9DU United Kingdom <a href="http://www.starchild.co.uk">www.starchild.co.uk</a>

### How to burn loose incense

You will need:

- ≧ Incense Grains
- ≧ Charcoal Discs
- ≧ A heat resistant dish or Censer

Prepare the container in which you will be burning the incense. It is a good idea to place some sand or fine gravel at the bottom of the container to help insulate the censer from the heat and also to allow air to circulate more efficiently around it, which in turn allows it to burn more evenly. Light the charcoal disc by holding the edge in a flame (a lighter or candle flame is usually best). If you are worried about burning your fingers, use an old pair of tweezers. Once it ignites you will need to place it in your heat resistant dish and allow it to ignite properly. Sometimes charcoal can be troublesome and you may have to relight it, but with most self-igniting charcoal blocks you should be able to see the sparks travelling across the block. Once the charcoal is fully lit, place approx a ¼ to ½ teaspoon of the incense grains on the block and enjoy! More incense can be added in small quantities as needed.



*Warnings:*

If you suffer from any respiratory problems, or are prone to allergies, it is best to avoid the use of incense in enclosed spaces. The smoke may be fragrant and the ingredients natural, but you may still suffer breathing difficulties due to the smoke! Just like with candles, never leave burning incense unattended and keep it away from flammable objects both when you are lighting the charcoal and when it is burning. Occasionally a charcoal block may sparkle profusely upon ignition, so be careful when lighting them!

**Recipes**

What follows are some recipes from people who work with Hekate, the Priests and Priestesses who have submitted these recipes have used these incenses in their own work as well as in their covens and groups. The ingredients are based on correspondences that work for them, as such they may not always correspond to ingredients which are traditionally associated with Hekate, nor did all the ingredients used exist in Ancient Greece! But as modern Witches, we use what is available to us, just like was done by magick workers in bygone eras.

**Amanda's Hekate Incense**

*1 tbspn copal*

*1 tbspn lavender (herb)*

*5 drops cypress oil*

*1 drop patchouli oil*

*Pinch of saffron*

Grind the copal into small pieces and add the remaining ingredients, mixing it together. Store in an airtight jar and use in your Hekate devotional work.



### **Nina's Hekate Incense**

- ½ tspn white willow bark*
- 1 tspn Mugwort*
- 1 tspn cloves*
- ½ tspn Aloe crystals*
- ½ tspn Poppy seeds*
- 2 tspn Benzoin Resin*

All the ingredients should be blended together on the eve of the dark moon. If possible leave the mixture somewhere in view of the Moon overnight and then store it in an airtight jar for a lunar month and use in your Hekate ceremonies.

### **Sorita's Hekate Incense**

- 2 Tbsp Pine Resin*
- ½ Tbsp Mastic Gum*
- 1 Tbsp Crushed Bay Leaves*
- 9 Drops Cedarwood Oil*
- ½ Tbsp Cinnamon Bark (break into small pieces for measuring)*
- ½ Tbsp Clear Greek Honey*

Mix the pine resin, bay leaves and cinnamon bark together. If possible use pine resin which comes in lumps, rather than powdered, but either will do. Make sure that the bay leaves and cinnamon are in small pieces (but not powdered). Heat the honey in a large spoon over a candle flame, until it is very runny and then mix it, quickly, into the other ingredients. Store in an airtight jar, leaving it to macerate for a lunar month and use for ceremonies honouring Hekate.

### **Sue's Visionary Hekate Incense**

- 1tsp Crushed Bay Leaves*
- 1 tsp Dittany of Crete*
- 1 tsp Mint*
- 1 tsp Thyme*
- A pinch of Asafoetida*

## Keys to the Crossroads



*1 tsp Dragon's Blood*

*1 tsp Frankincense*

*1 tsp Myrrh*

*1 tsp Black Poppy seeds*

Mix these ingredients together, and then **bind** with a few drops each of Camphor and Cypress Oil (about 5-10 drops of each). Store in a tightly sealed jar in a dark place for at least a week before using.

### **Zoë & Helena's Hekate of Heaven, Earth & Underworld Incense**

*4tbsp frankincense crystals*

*1tbsp myrrh*

*2tbsp Mugwort (herb)*

*1/2tbsp Bryony root [English Mandrake]*

*2tbsp Lavender flowers*

*Pinch of Saffron*

*4 drops Cypress oil*

Blend these ingredients together and use to honour Hekate in all her different roles. Ideal for spell work and devotional ceremonies. Use sparingly!



## Hekate Speaks

*I am the Guardian of the Mysteries*

*The Guardian of the Serpent Power*

*Whom you have called upon time and time again*

*Hekate the beautiful*

*Hekate of the crossroads*

*Of Heaven of Earth of Sea*

*Of Life of Death of Rebirth*

*I am the Saffron Clad Terrible Queen*

*Fear'd, Hated, Loved*

*I will lead you into the shadows and Light the darkest night*

*Tonight my chosen*

*I reveal that which is hidden and forbidden*

*My torches, will illuminate the way*

*To the inner most reaches of the self*

*where even you may fear to look*

*Yet there is power in the dark!*

**Channelled through a Priestess during a private ceremony, Summer 2001**





## Further Reading

If you are interested in Hekate and **would like to find out** more we would recommend the following books and writings:

### Books

- ≧ *The Goddess Hekate*, edited by Stephen Ronan; Chthonius Books, 1989
- ≧ *Hekate in Ancient Greek Religion*, Robert Von Rudloff; Horned Owl, 1999
- ≧ *Hekate Soteira*, Sarah Johnston; Scholars Press, 1993
- ≧ *The Rotting Goddess*, Jacob Rabinowitz; Autonomedia, 1998
- ≧ *The Triple Goddess*, Adam Mclean; Phanes Press, 1989

### Important Classical Texts

- ≧ *The Theogony* by Hesiod [circa 8<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE]
- ≧ *Catalog of Women* by Hesiod [circa 8<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE]
- ≧ *The Homeric Hymns*, esp. *Hymn to Demeter* [circa 8<sup>th</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE]
- ≧ *Medea* by Euripides [circa 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE]
- ≧ *Aeneid* by Virgil [circa 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE]
- ≧ *Guide to Greece* by Pausanias [circa 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE]
- ≧ *The Orphic Hymns*

### Wicca & Witchcraft

If you are new to Wicca, Witchcraft and Paganism and would like to find out more, we would recommend the following books as good starting points for your studies.

- ≧ *Circle of Fire* by Sorita D'Este & David Rankine; Avalonia Books, 2005
- ≧ *The Triumph of the Moon* by Prof. Ronald Hutton; Oxford University Press, 1999

# Hekate : Keys to the Crossroads

Hekate is one of the most fascinating Goddesses of the Ancient World. Loved, feared, hated and worshipped by people throughout history, the Witch Goddess of the Crossroads, facing three-ways, with her three faces, remains an image of power and awe in the modern world today, amongst those who understand and respect her power.

This book "*Hekate : Keys to the Crossroads*" brings together the experiences and perceptions of more than twenty modern day Witches, Priestesses and Priests all of whom work with this awesome Greek Goddess in the UK today. Through their essays, rituals and artwork they present a unique view into the realms of this multi-faceted and popular Goddess.

## Part I - Hekate's History, Myths & Powers

Here author and Priestess, Sorita D'Este, presents a detailed and comprehensive study of the history, myths and powers of Hekate. This invaluable section offers the reader insights to some of the roles, relationships and powers Hekate held in the Ancient World.

## Part II - Hekate's Witches

This section contains essays by sixteen Witches, Priestesses and Priests who work with Hekate on a regular basis. Each contribution is as unique as the person who wrote it, clearly illustrating through both their differences and similarities that the many faces presented by Hekate in the ancient world continue on today in the twenty-first century. Hekate is a Goddess of transformation, initiation, childbirth, death and rebirth. She is the Mistress of Magick, Witchcraft and Sorcery.

She is the key-bearing Goddess of Night who illuminates the paths through the mysteries with her bright torches, guarding the entranceways and guiding travellers through the realms of Heaven, Earth and Sea. Powerful and respected by Gods and mortals alike, she has the power to bestow gifts and blessings upon those who call upon her with honour and truth.

## Part III - Recipes, Rites & Rituals

A collection of modern invocations, pathworkings, incense and food recipes, together with a group mystery play of the Abduction of Persephone by Hades in which Hekate plays a key role.

Combining the best of research with a wide range of experiences this compact volume opens doorways to many of Hekate's realms. It is a unique journey - enchanting, funny, scary, magickal and daring, challenging and informative. Whether you find yourself agreeing or disagreeing with the perceptions you will find within, one thing is certain : there is always more to learn and experience when it comes to Hekate!

Cover Illustration by Magin.



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