



Hail Hekate And Her Sovereign Witches

Do we dare answer the calls of Hekate and her ancient witches? If you're like me, there wasn't really much of a choice when I finally decided to heed their calls. I was tired of struggling of living a life of half-truths. When at long last, I embraced them I returned home to who I truly am - a witch who walks the crooked path. Practicing witchery that knows no color or bounds. Together I stand with them at the crossroads of personal development and spirituality. We are bound in our quest for the pursuit of sovereignty. We come together in the shadows, the woods, and always under the pale moonlight.

For all those like me who hear their call, I offer this ritual guide. Finding the courage to stand in our power as our true self is the major task of our witches' journey. Follow Hekate's pale torch light to her Cave where Kirke and Medea await, or perhaps they'll join you wherever you are. Not ones for following the so-called rules, you never know where they'll turn up.

This ritual is suitable for commitment and self-initiation as a Hekatean Witch.

Yours in sovereignty and witchery,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cyndi".

Cyndi Brannen, PhD
Founder of Keeping Her Keys
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Sovereign Goddesses Unleashing Your Inner Witch Ritual

This ritual is designed for activating your power as a sovereign Hekatean Witch. It is suitable for commitment and self-initiation as a Hekatean Witch.

When they speak, I listen...most of the time. As part of my tribute to these Sovereign Goddesses, I offer you this ritual.

This ritual began as part of a New Moon ritual petitioning these witches to activate sovereignty in all areas of my life. I've always felt close to Kirke and Medea but didn't intentionally include them in my practice until they showed up uninvited but most welcome as I was developing this ritual. Since that time, they have spoken through me to hundreds of witches, through my writing, teaching and a version of this ritual known as the Summer Solstice Sovereign Goddesses Rite. This version is shared exclusively for participants at in-person events. Please use and share as you feel led. Hekate and her witch-daughters await.

Modern Hekatean Witchcraft: Stretching To The Witch Mother and Her Ancient Witches for Powerful Witchery Today

“It is not so much the thieves and the wild animals accustomed to disturb the place that concern and bother me, so much as the women who try to twist human minds about with spells and poisons. I just cannot put an end to these women or stop them collecting bones and destructive herbs, once the wandering moon brings out her comely face.” – from Horace's *Satires*, circa 30 BCE

Some things never change, at least not for many of us who walk the crooked, dark path of Modern Hekatean Witchcraft. While our methods may vary from those used by her ancient witches, including Canidia and Sagana who were being indicted by a wooden statue of Priapus in this excerpt, they are our kindred. Rebels. Free spirits. Unstoppable.

The Keys of Hekate's Modern Witchcraft

Hekate as the Keeper of the Keys holds the power of the mysteries of witchcraft. Beginning with her original witch daughters, she has opened the gates of gnosis, pharmakeia and goetia for those who meet at her crossroads. Gnosis comes not from blindly following a tradition, but from listening to Hekate and her witches, and following our intuition. Pharmakeia and goetia, in their truest sense, refer to the practice of witchcraft. While the former is usually seen as related to plant spirit magick and the latter to summoning entities, their basic definition is very similar. Stretching back across the ways these terms have been redefined and corrupted over the centuries, I have found these keys. I have raised the spirits of her ancient witches, claiming them as my close companions. They await for you to open the door to them as well.

The Dance of Bones

Comfortable among her horde of restless spirits, we leave offerings in lonely places on the darkest night of the month. Conjuring spirits, speaking with our familiars, building relationships with our poisonous pretties. Performing the dance of the bones, stones, and spirits while rattling our keys. We serve only ourselves, our goddess, and each other. For here in the shadows, in the liminal between worlds, realms, elements and life and death, we support each other across the witch wave and in person. Unruly to some, and certainly unstoppable.

The Keys of Healing, Sovereignty and Power

When I started on my journey with Keeping Her Keys, I was unsure whether what I had to say about Modern Hekatean Witchcraft would resonate with anyone. In the little over a year since my blog launched on Patheos Pagan, I have been, at times, overwhelmed with the kinship my words have created. I wasn't alone at all, there are tens of thousands who resonate with a path that honors Hekate, pursues personal development, and, above all, actively practices witchery. We are a collective of witches busily creating lives that speak truth and sovereignty. Another phenomenon I've observed is that many of us are called by our Witch Mother during our weakest times. She shines her pale torchlight, leading us out of misery and towards our power. Perhaps our kind ways were forged through the fires of pain. Far from being victims of toxic positivity, we instead embrace our darkness for therein is where healing and true magick reside.

From the Depths of Hekate's Cave to the Heights of The Starry Road

Deep into Hekate's Cave we venture, boldly traversing her crossroads between the worlds and life and death. Up to the heights of The Starry Road we aspire, stretching towards the powers of the Sybils and Hekate's cosmic mysticism. In the Middle World, we enter Hekate's Garden, home to the spirits of pharmakeia: botanical, animal and mineral. To the Sacred Seven Forces of the Worlds and Elements we turn to summon their powers and speak to the spirits that travel through their waves.

The Keys Shared By Hekate's Ancient Witches

Modern Hekatean Witchcraft is borne of the practical methods of those ancient witches, whose stories live on. Even when passed through the minds of men, the essence of these witches cannot be contained. What male writers – and translators – interpreted as nefarious, I reclaim as being effective problem solving. It's the spirit of these witches that drives my personal practice and fuels my writing and courses. I often feel the whispers of Circe, Medea and the others guiding me forward on my personal path and giving me directions for the public work I do. Hekate, in my visions, is content to have her witches speak with their own voice. They were silenced for so long. Now is the time they, and we, have been waiting for. Will you answer their call?

Mythos, knowledge and practice. Passionate creativity weaving throughout all that we do, from the monthly Dark Moon crossroads offerings to working with baneful plants.

Hail to the keys, the crossroads, the torch, and our eternal moon. These are the gifts of Hekate. The keys of magick and mystery that she freely gives to those bold enough to claim them. Behold the power of her crossroads, the otherness of the witch. Dare we enter this space between worlds and beyond time? Follow her pale torchlight, if you will. For it is your choice alone. Lastly, to the moon above, forever watching over our witchery.

These are the gifts of Hekate's Modern Witchcraft, as ancient as Circe and as eternal as the Witch-Mother herself. To the future, where we are free to practice as we so chose, living a life of sovereign power. And to the community of witches who follow this journey. Hail to Hekate, Keeper of the Keys!

*Hail Hekate Chthonia,
Queen of Witches,
She who stands at the threshold
Between the worlds.
I bring you a fine meal
Knowing that you intend it for the animals
And the downtrodden.
They, like me, are yours.
I feel the restless dead
And the haggard spirits
Gathered in this place.
They, like me, are yours.
I am embraced by the darkest night,
For the moon has covered
Her face out of respect for you.
They, like me, are yours.
Here at your crossroads,
I am never alone,
Nor am I afraid.
I am surrounded by my kindred.
Those who seek your mysteries
And those whom you protect.
We are your witches,
Your horde.
Hail Hekate Chthonia,
Queen of Witches,
She who stands at the threshold
Between the worlds.*



Hekate Rising: The Story of Her Keys And The Moon

It is always to the moon that we witches return. For under her light, we work our magick and explore the mysteries. Hekate's association with the moon is a subject that I've often written about, from ways to [honor her on the Dark Moon](#) to [drawing it down](#) Hekatean Witchcraft style. Like seeing my own life as a series of lunar cycles, [Hekate's glorious history](#) also follows clear phases, each one revealing different keys and unique crossroads.

In the beginning, Hekate was most likely known by another name, as part of a Great Mother Goddess. This goddess evolved and traveled, into Anatolia and other parts of Asia Minor. Spreading into what is now eastern Europe. She became Hekate, adopted by the Greeks as their own. Was she Isis by another name? Or at the very least, the Egyptian goddess, Hekat? We'll never know for sure, but what is known is that this was a period when the divine feminine was celebrated. It was the New Moon, the future for the Mother Goddess looked promising. The keys of magick and mystery were abundantly shared.

Hekate's cult grew, that much we know for certain, rising to a place where the regular practice of venerating her on the Dark Moon was most likely common in certain areas of ancient Greece. Ancient writers and philosophers wrote eloquently of her many powers. Her role as Witch-Mother was solidified in many tales and by ancient practitioners. She was Kleidoukhos, the Keeper of the Keys of all the Universe.

The Dark Times: Hidden Keys

Hekate reached her zenith around the beginning of the Common Era. She then transitioned into the Roman Empire, although her keys were shared with other goddesses, and her powers narrowed. A goddess holding the keys to witchcraft and necromancy she became. Thus, was the onset of her waning time. As Christianity grew, the reverence for her and her companions was snuffed out, often with great violence. Her witches hid themselves and her keys. The complete darkness came.

Now, the New Moon has come. Hekate is rising, calling forth her witches. Heed the message of the past: there are those who will always seek to control Hekate and her witches. Don't let this glorious period of freedom to practice our truth be taken from us.

Hold onto those keys. Defend them with all you have.

Share them with those who are sincere. Raise those keys up to the moon, giving thanks for all they bring. Answer the call of their rattle and hum.

Great Mother Goddesses of the ancient world

HEKATE'S TIME LINE

Hekate descends into Greece.
Great Mother Goddess;
Theogony 8th C BCE

Witch-Mother;
Euripedes' Medea;
5th C BCE

Tirformis;
Household matron;
Deipnon

In Modern Hekatean Witchcraft, the first sliver of the new moon is known as Noumenia, while the Dark Moon is the Deipnon, the liminal space between lunar phases. This is Hekate's holy night.

Greek Magical Papyri; Diverse.
Fierce;
5th - 2nd C BCE

Hekate's Horde,
Night Wandering,
Chthonic

Anima Mundi;
The Chalden Oracles
2nd C CE



Keeper of the Keys;
Orphic Hymn
1-3rd C CE

Praeperatio Evangelico; Pistis Sophia, 4th C CE. Early Christian propaganda defiling Hekate and paganism.

Destruction of feminine divine;
Christian era

Hekate's image has changed throughout the ages, although her association with the moon remains. From her earliest days as a Great Mother Goddess, to her brilliance as Anima Mundi and through the dark days of the Christian Era, Hekate has prevailed. Now she has returned in her full power as the Dark Mother of Witches.

Witch, hag, crone,
Queen of Hell
4th c - early 20th c CE

Rise of the divine feminine mid
20th c CE

Hekate's Return
1990s onward

The Triple Goddesses of Modern Hekatean Witchcraft

Hekate is the Regina Maleficarum, the Queen of Witchcraft and her two daughters reign over the two primal forces. Hekate is the Anima Mundi, the force of life itself, bringing creation, destruction and balance. Kirke, Regina Pharmakeia, Queen of Witchcraft of the Natural World, presides over the power of creation. Medea, Regina Venificarum, rules destruction as the Poison Queen. In one account by the ancient historian Diodorus, Hekate is Kirke and Medea's mother. Hekate's rise to dominance undoubtedly brings along her witch daughters. While [Medea's](#) energy and archetype speaks to our shadow selves, Kirke summons us to boldly embrace the transformation found by speaking our truth. While the historical record provides external confirmation for what I know in my heart, the way these goddesses are presented in works of art and literature is often problematic. Filtered through the lens of the men who originally wrote them and those that did the translations, they are presented as vicious, selfish and cruel.

Modern retellings and translations are seeking to correct this, as have I. I adore the Triple Goddesses of Witchcraft. In them I have found affinity, comfort, support and great wisdom.

Hail to the Queens, the Anassas, the Reginas!



Hekate: Regina Maleficarum

Hekate is Queen of Witches, Regina Maleficarum, throughout history and before, she is the source of her witches' power. Through secret rites under the moon, in singing songs to her and in cursing in her name, Kirke, Medea and others across the centuries have turned to their Witch Mother.

Hekate is a complex goddess, which is most befitting the true Regina Maleficarum. Her ancient and contemporary witches are as complex as her, bringing blessing and bane to themselves and others through their witchery.

Witch Mother

While sorting out Hekate as the Mother of All (including things and gods) is enough to make anyone bleary-eyed, her role as a mother figure to witches is resoundingly consistent, just like her role in a "maternal" capacity to creepy things. In the ancient texts, Medea and Kirke all have a maternal relationship with Hekate. Not as a helicopter parent micro-managing their lives, but as a mentor. Of course, everything falls apart for these witches. Especially poor Medea who ends up committing infanticide. However, many contemporary witches view Hekate in a maternal capacity, ranging from a tender parent to a stern disciplinarian. Our modern view of Hekate as Guardian of the Marginalized can be considered quite maternal. Once again, Hekate defies neat compartmentalization and favors highly personal interpretations.

The Raging Mother of Witches

Hekate as Enodia, literally "of the way," often interpreted as "Goddess of the Crossroads" these days was not a benevolent, soft spoken sort of deity. Enodia, originally a Thracian goddess, who scholars posit greatly influenced Hekate's image, was strongly associated with women and childbirth as well as "black magic." Hekate's complex history includes references to her as The Mother of All, and as tender and healing. It can be difficult to reconcile the leader of a horde of raging spirits with a loving mother if we subscribe to the false image of maternity as singularly benevolent. Motherhood is as complex as Hekate. In addition, the mysteries of female reproduction were very much intertwined with that of witchcraft.

Reviewing the existing literature about Hekate reveals that her three-formed nature is reflected in her maternal roles. She can be considered Mother of the Gods, Mother of All Things and a mother to individuals. In addition, her long history portrays her as the Mother of Witches. Contemporary Hekate is often seen as The Dark Mother, which

reflects my personal understanding of her. Hekate is a complex goddess that presents herself in different forms throughout the ages and to those seeking her, as reflected in her various maternal roles. Above all, she is the Anima Mundi, the spirit that fuels all the world. It is that energy we harness in our witchery.

Great Mother
Goddess,
Who birthed the
world,
the moon
and witches.
Witch Mother,
Moon Mother,
Mother of All.

HEKATE



Ἑκάτη

<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/keepingherkeys>

Hekate is a complex goddess with a long history. She is the Goddess of Witchcraft, a guide along the path, and the universal keeper of the keys. There is much to learn about Hekate from the written records, but for a witch to truly know Hekate, we need to experience her.



Triple Hekate (50 BCE - 50 CE) from the MFA, Boston.

A Witch's Understanding of Hekate

Hekate is a goddess that is both complex and very simple. She has many abilities but is also the source of pure energy. She is ancient and contemporary. I know her by a multitude of names, ranging from World Soul to Goddess of the Witches. I understand her as the Keeper of the Keys of the Universe. Symbolically, her hands hold all that there is. Through my efforts, I can attain one of her many keys.

I've been a devotee of Hekate for over a decade. During this time, my understanding of Hekate has grown both on the intellectual and personal levels. In my experience, her energy is intimidating but approachable. Knowing Hekate is often a very intimate experience, seldom fleeting and frequently intense. People have diverse beliefs about Hekate. And she changes with the times. However, most of my intellectual knowledge about Hekate comes from ancient sources.

Historical Hekate

The origins of Hekate lie in the mists of the distant past. The most likely beginning of Hekate was in Asia Minor and parts of Eastern Europe. From these regions, her cult spread to Ancient Greece where she was viewed as a Titan. Unlike the rest of her Titanic pantheon, she wasn't killed by the upstart Olympians. Instead Zeus gave her dominion over land, sea and sky, according to Hesiod's Theogony (approximately 8th century BCE).

The Ancient Greeks worshiped Hekate in various ways, notably she was seen as a matron watching over households. It is from this role that the common contemporary practice of giving her offerings on the [dark moon](#) grew. In ancient Greece, a Hekate's Supper was left out, usually at a three-way crossroads, to seek her favor over a household for the coming month. Her association with the number three extended to her being viewed as a triple goddess.



Hekate as a three-bodied goddess. MFA, Boston.

Torch Bearing Goddess of the Underworld

During this time, her image as a goddess of the underworld was also born. In the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, Hekate answers Persephone's cries when no one else does. She becomes Persephone's guide between the [underworld](#) and the human one, using her [torches](#) to light the way along the journey. Hekate as a torchbearer or lamp-carrier became one of the dominant themes of her depictions during ancient times.



*Lamp in the form of a bust of Hekate
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2nd - 1st century BCE.*

Keeper of the Keys

During this time, the *Orphic Hymn to Hekate* was written, as well. In this poem, Hekate is given many responsibilities, including being the universal [key holder](#):

*I call Einodian Hecate,
lovely dame,
Of earthly, wat'ry, and celestial frame,
Sepulchral, in a saffron veil array'd,
Leas'd with dark ghosts
that wander thro' the shade;
Persian, unconquerable huntress hail!
The world's key-bearer never doom'd to fail;
On the rough rock to wander thee delights,
Leader and nurse be present to our rites
Propitious grant our just desires success,
Accept our homage,
and the incense bless.*

Thomas Taylor translation.

Ancient Hekate's Many Roles

From the ancient sources, we know that Hekate was seen as a [liminal goddess](#), standing between worlds, particularly at the threshold of life and death. She was given many (over 200) [epithets](#) including Mother of All, Queen, [Savior](#), Mistress of Corpses, and [World Soul](#). The variety of the titles bestowed upon her by the ancients often appears contradictory. We need to keep in mind two things. One is that the ancient writers held vastly divergent views of Hekate. The other is that Hekate has always been a complex goddess with multiple roles and abilities.

The Importance of Ancient Hekate

While we will never know for certain the extent of her adoration among the ancient Greeks, there is evidence suggesting that she was an important goddess, particularly with common people. In addition, there are many ancient coins, statues, and other works of art depicting Hekate during this period. In the pictured coin, Hekate is shown wearing pearls with a torch blazing behind her (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston).



Writings About Ancient Hekate

The Greek Magical Papyri (PGM), an ancient text combining Greek, Roman and Egyptian deities, portrays Hekate as an all-purpose goddess. In many spells, she is addressed as everything from the bringer of beginnings to the mistress of corpses. In the *PGM* she is clearly seen as a goddess of the moon. There are other sources of evidence indicating that she was seen by some as a triple-moon goddess.

The Hekate of *The Chaldean Oracles*, written after the earlier texts, is a complex figure who is seen as The World Soul. As such, she acts as a sort of protective membrane between the human world and the realms. She is seen as a savior who helps human souls ascend.

This is the Hekate of the ancient world. If you are interested in reading more about [ancient Hekate](#), there are many ways to going about this. You can sort through the translations of *The Greek Magical Papyri* or *The Chaldean Oracles* yourself. Sorita D'Este's book *Circle for Hekate* provides a great summary of historical Hekate.



Hekate (1st century BCE - 2nd century CE). MFA, Boston.

The Problem with the Ancient Sources

We are fortunate to have such a large resource of ancient images and texts about Hekate. The problem with having so many ancient sources is that we can be fooled into thinking that this gives us a full understanding of how she was viewed by the ancients. Even with everything that is known, it's still impossible to piece together who Hekate truly was to the ancients. Moreover, because the texts were written by men of a certain class, there is no way to know for certain how ancient witches understood and experienced Hekate.

Historical Hekate: The Middle Ages - 19th Century

Hekate during the Middle Ages, through the Renaissance and into the 20th century underwent a striking narrowing of her abilities. While the ancients revered her as a goddess with many characteristics and abilities, the image that emerged afterwards is limited to that of an underworld goddess. One example of this restricted view of Hekate is found in *Pistis Sophia* where she is portrayed as basically the queen of hell. Shakespeare's portrayal of her in *MacBeth* epitomized this version of Hekate:



Robert Thew. Macbeth, Act IV, Scene 1.

While Shakespeare presented a version of Hekate and witches, it is unlikely that this reflected how witches understood and experienced Hekate during these times.

20th Century Hekate

In the early 20th century Hekate's limited capacity as an underworld goddess was further reinforced through the works of Aleister Crowley and Gerald Gardner. Hekate (usually spelled the Latin way: Hecate) became widely known as The Goddess of Witchcraft in neo-pagan circles.

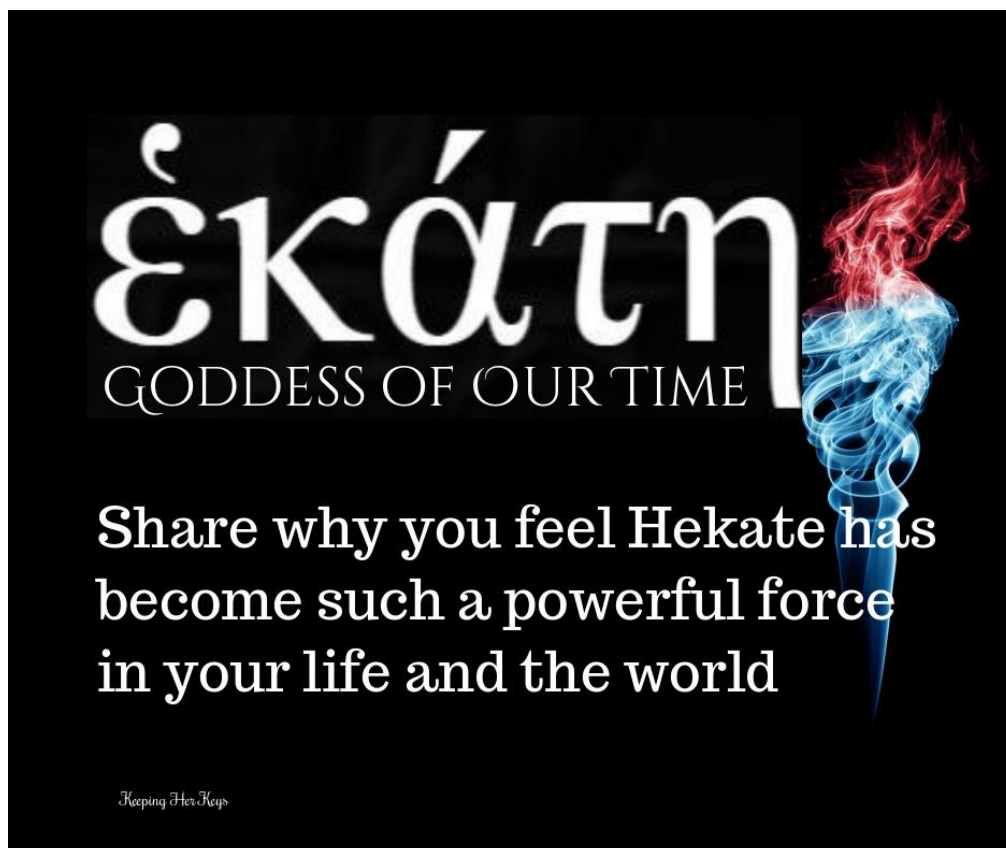
Somewhere along the way, Hekate as a crone became a commonly held belief among neo-pagans. In addition to this interpretation of her as an individual, she was also placed in the "Maiden Mother Crone" tripartite goddess structure as the crone or as the entire trio. While the veracity of these applications of Hekate has been debated, there is ancient evidence that solidifies her as a maiden. Her role as a mother is reinforced through ancient epithets, such as Pammator, and there are a few tales portraying her as a biological mother. Accompanying this new application of Hekate's ancient characterization as a triple goddess was the Wiccan association of her with the moon.

Thus, the 20th century witches understanding of Hekate was limited to two roles. As part of the Triple Goddess imagery she was often celebrated as the wise woman. In her dark goddess incarnation, she could be given homage as Queen of the Witches and summoned for certain types of witchcraft. She was not seen, at least by the majority, as an all-purpose deity yet.

Contemporary Hekate

Today, many Hekatean witches view Hekate as an all-purpose goddess. This understanding of Hekate was greatly informed by the scholarship about her ancient origins that occurred in the late 20th century, notably S.I. Johnston's *Hekate Soteira*. As the 21st century began, other writers were presenting alternative ideas about Hekate, too. The popular contemporary perspectives on Hekate can be divided into four distinct categories: the soul of the world, as a primordial force, as a dark goddess and as the triple goddess/crone.

Sometimes Hekate is the focus of a certain path, like with the Covenant of Hekate's approach to her as the soul of the world, but other times she is part of a framework rather than the focus. Some of these perspectives are more intellectual and theurgical, while others are more witchcraft based. What these approaches have in common is that Hekate is a mighty goddess and that she is a powerful magickal force available to practitioners. Another shared thread is that all these perspectives use the historical interpretations of Hekate in developing their understanding.



Defining Contemporary Hekate

An important consideration when defining contemporary Hekate is that some of the approaches utilize one aspect of Hekate rather than the multitude of characteristics. My personal view is that Hekate is the energy current in all living things. Thus, I see all these perspectives as valid, whether or not they reflect my personal view because all things flow from Hekate as the source, we can use one current, say in understanding her as a dark goddess, or many as in The World Soul perspective. Another distinction is that some of these modern perspectives vary in their approach to Hekate, with some seeing her as a deity that must be petitioned for favors and others viewing her as a force that can be manipulated.

The Use of Epithets

Another phenomenon is the current practice of using epithets, or characteristics, of Hekate to either [call upon her](#) or for devotion. While many of these descriptors are ancient in origin, the way they are applied is very modern. For example, devotees may call upon one or more epithets when involving Hekate in spellwork. There are groups dedicated to Hekate with just one aspect, such as her watery characteristics.

The use of epithets is largely restricted to devotees who primarily focus on Hekate, either to the exclusion or limited use of other deities. Their emphasis is on Hekate with anything else being secondary, even witchcraft for some. I'm the opposite - I am a witch first and then a devotee. Being a devotee implies that a person is committed to regularly engaging in activities that honor Hekate, including making offerings of various kinds.

Summoning Hekate

Then there are those who are witches who may summon Hekate on occasion and aren't devotees. I've found that within this group, Hekate remains narrowly defined as a dark goddess and a Goddess of Witches for the most part, although there is variation in how she is understood even with those who have a casual relationship with her. It seems her diversity is found even with people who only have a fleeting or tertiary involvement with Hekate.

While some devotees criticize people who have a more casual relationship with Hekate, most adopt a stance of ["you do you"](#) accepting that this goddess comes to some only for the short-term. Devotees often extended this perspective to how others interpret and work with Hekate.

Understanding Hekate

I hope this brief overview of Hekate has made you curious to learn more about her, both in the intellectual sense and in terms of truly understanding her. Researching Hekate, whether through direct study of the modern interpretations of the ancient texts or by reading others' takes on these writings is a very worthwhile undertaking. You may also be learning about Hekate through other books or courses, where she is featured as part of the content rather than the focus. I like to think that Hekate desires us to be well-

informed critical thinkers rather than blind adherents to anyone else's version of her. To me, there is a big difference between knowing *about* Hekate and knowing her.

When we know Hekate, we begin to understand her mighty powers and become more skilled at evoking and invoking her presence for our witchcraft. In time, we can learn to tap into her energy currents as well. Truly knowing Hekate requires understanding beyond anything that can be found through the works of others or our attempts to reproduce rituals - we must experience her.

Experiencing Hekate

There are many ways to experience Hekate, and there are countless ways to understand her. Since she is such a diverse all-purpose goddess, we may be drawn to one aspect of hers (or a handful) or we may feel connected to Hekate in her totality. We may have an initial experience with Hekate where she presents herself in a complete vision that is entirely experiential, or we may experience her after we have already read a lot. The more we experience Hekate, the more we understand her. This understanding enables us to become better at witchcraft as we develop the skills necessary to involve her and her energies in our workings.

The key thing in experiencing Hekate is to learn to be open to her messages and visions. You can accomplish this through a variety of methods, from meditation to ritual. You can have spontaneous experiences when Hekate comes to you or plan intentional workings with a goal of experiencing her. If you are interested in an experiential journey with Hekate, you may want to try the Hekate's Key Journey ([download here](#)).



Kirke: Regina Pharmakeia

*Kirke, sorceress divine,
I claim your witchery, making it mine.*

Kirke (Circe) is the original witch, the first in the line of Hekate's chosen. She practiced pharmakeia, the use of the spirits of the natural world: plant, animal and mineral to weave her magick.

There are several different ancient sources for Kirke's story. Homer's *Odyssey* is a great place to start. I'm cobbling together the ancient stories with recent academic interpretations and tossing in elements of Madeline Miller's brilliant book for good measure. Kirke was fond of a good tale and she would have done the same.

Childhood

If we ignore the obviously correct story that Kirke's biological mother was Hekate and go with the more commonly known myths, then she was born to Perseis (an Oceanid) and Helios, the sun himself. Kirke ended up with a human voice. Miller filled in the blanks on Kirke's childhood by painting a dismal picture of mother wound and an absent father. She was a disappointment to them, and they also feared her. Things happened.* She was ostracized by her family. Helios drove her in that fire chariot of his to an island in the far west, Aiaia (Aeaea). Hermes and Athena generally caused her trouble throughout her life. Helios never did her any favors.

* According to myth, Kirke turned a fair maiden into the sea monster Scylla because the guy she fancied and had turned into a sort of demi-god had a thing for the nymph. These were some of her earliest forays into transformation magic and truth revealing sorcery.



Kirke pouring her potion of revelation that transformed Scylla into the monster she really was. Glaucus got what he deserved. Ovid, Metamorphoses 13. Circe Invidiosa by John Williams Waterhouse, public domain.

SIDE NOTE: Whether the mythical island of Aiaia has a geographical basis is less than clear. Most likely it was off the west coast of Italy. I found at least five different ideas about what actual island Aiaia could be based on. It makes sense that it was near the Strait of Messina since this is the likely literal location where the mythic battle between Odysseus and Scylla occurred. Regardless, in the myth it is located where the sun rises. As a daughter of Helios, she is doubly associated with the sun in this way. However, as a witch-daughter of Hekate (regardless of whether she is seen as Hekate's biological offspring, as the Goddess of Witches, she is still her "daughter") she is doubly associated with the Under World.

Island Witch Queen

Alone, abandoned and with problems all around, Kirke could have chosen to meekly go about her business. However, she instead became a woman "isolated by, but not ashamed of her powers" (Yarnall, 1994). Kirke taught herself to be a

pharmakeia, expert in plant magic. She tamed the wild beasts on the island, including lions (panthers, etc.) and wolves. She took advantage of her isolation to develop her full capabilities.

Eventually, visitors showed up on the island. Including Jason and Medea who were fleeing due to their murderous ways. Kirke gave them absolution and cleansed them, thus permitting them to continue on their journey. Things didn't work out well at all for those two. You can read more about it in my article on [Medea](#). Soon others found their way to Aiaia's shores, most notably Odysseus and his crew. Communicating with all these mortals was made so much easier since she had that human voice, although she was "liga" or shrill voiced according to Homer. Let's pause here to consider this point: a

powerful witch woman who needs no one and speaks her truth is regarded as shrill by a bunch of guys. Some things never change. Or do they? Is that why Kirke is calling to so many right now?

NOTE: She had nymphs helping her.

Kirke & Odysseus

Kirke's relationship with Odysseus was incredibly complex. Things started out rough when she transformed his men into pigs (that awesome true self revelation spell of hers). Hermes had inserted himself into things as well by telling Kirke that Odysseus was coming and by giving him a potion to protect against Kirke's swine spell. Moly, that some historians believe to have been garlic, was given to Odysseus and also used extensively by Kirke in her potions. She may have also made philtres, aka lotion potions, to keep Odysseus around longer. Eventually, through her prophetic powers, she tells Odysseus that he has to make a journey to the Under World. She instructs him on the necromancy necessary to raise Tiresias from the dead. Which is necessary for Odysseus to complete his quest. Odysseus comes back to her island and then has to go off to kill Scylla. Circe instructs him on how to accomplish this as well. Kirke has a son, Telegonus, by him. Other stories say they had more children and maybe that he stayed there with her, although the more common story is that he eventually returned to his wife, Penelope.



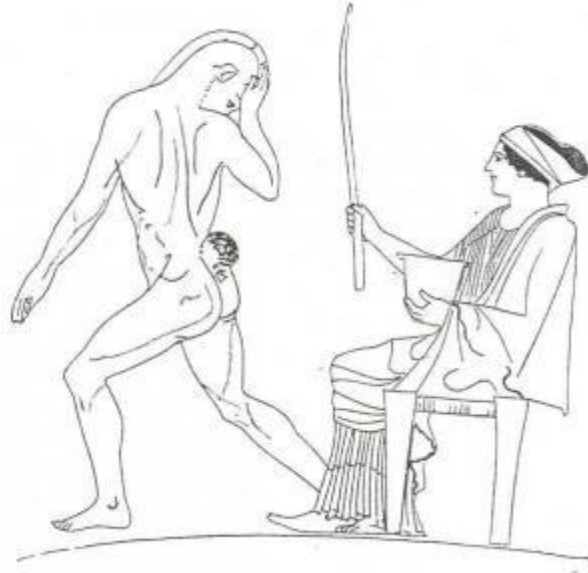
Circe and Ulysses by John William Waterhouse. Public domain. Kirke's poison cup and wand held aloft with power while Odysseus looks on unsure of what will happen. Can you relate?[/caption]

Kirke's Cult and Influences

There were ancient cults devoted to Kirke that practiced necromancy and pharmakeia. Other ancient mythic witches besides Medea involved her in their magic (along with Hekate). "Sisters of Kirke" include Simaetha, Helen, Calypso and The Sirens

(Ogden, 2002). The Marsi were an Italian magical race descended from her. She was the original witch in Greek myth.

Homer was likely influenced by existing goddesses when he brought Kirke to life in *The Odyssey*. One interpretation of her name - "hawk" - potentially references hawk/vulture goddesses in Asia Minor. Some translations have her name meaning "circle" which is a less likely translation but is reflective that this interpretation was common prior to the 20th century. This was all about how she trapped - "encircled" men. The meaning of Kirke's name and how she is viewed is greatly influenced by the time in which she is being studied.



Sketch based on an amphora illustration.

Kirke turning a man into a pig, aka his true self.

She was reviled as an evil enchantress in art and literature for centuries, although this began to change around the beginning of the twentieth century.



*Waterhouse's third Circe painting, *The Sorceress* (1913). "Next time, I'll get that spell right."*

Themes

One of her major themes, besides all manner of witchcraft, is *longing* as expertly imagined by the poet H.D:

*But I would give up
rock-fringes of coral
and the inmost chamber
of my island palace
and my own gifts
and the whole region
of my power and magic
for your glance.* - from *Circe* by H. D. (1886 - 1961)

Circe's portrayal changes over time with the evolving views of women and female power. She has traveled across the centuries, leaving this view of her in the distant past:

*"And then the demon goddess lightly laid
Her wand upon our hair, and instantly
Bristles (the shame of it! but I will tell)
Began to sprout; I could no longer speak;
My words were grunts, I grovelled to the ground.
I felt my nose change to a tough wide snout,
My neck thicken and bulge. My hands that held
The bowl just now made footprints on the floor.
And with my friends who suffered the same fate
(Such power have magic potions) I was shut
Into a sty."* - from - Ovid, *Metamorphoses*

To the ancient Greeks and Romans, she was a powerful witch, highly skilled in necromancy, prophecy, illusion and magical herbalism. Turn to Kirke to connect with your internal eternal witch and to petition her favor over all sorts of magic. Her ancient tools included the wand, the chalice (for those potions), the loom (she was quite a weaver of spells and more) and the blade. Her home and one version of her parentage has her firmly associated with the sun, although her powers were chthonic. She is thus both an Upper World and Under World goddess, yet another way that she represents opposites. She was both the transformer of those who were very basic (nasty men into pigs) and the mud (she had some pretty base motives herself). Kirke found her strength through weakness. She was skilled in change and in revealing things exactly as they were and accepting the inevitable (Odysseus had to leave no matter how she felt about him). She was maiden and mother. She was wise and innocent.

Kirke's darkness is evidenced through the cannibalism that her guests unwittingly engaged in when dining on pork that had once been human. This is symbolic of the ways that the power hungry can consume themselves, with a bit of magical intervention. This theme is one that I'll leave you to contemplate more.



Franz_von_Stuck_Tilla_Durieux_als_Circe (c. 1913). Public domain. There are so many versions of The Odyssey. This is a painting from an early 20th century one.

While Madeline Miller's novel is fantastic, the narrative she presents is not entirely new. Margaret Atwood (and others) reclaimed and re-imagined Kirke's story starting in the 1970s.

*"Ask at my temples,
Where the moon snakes,
Tongues of the dark
Speak like bones unlocking,
Leaves falling
Of a future you won't believe in.
Ask who keeps the wind,
Ask what is sacred..." - from Circe/Mud Poems by Margaret Atwood*

Kirke as The Goddess of Right Now

Kirke's emerging themes over the past few decades expose her in a more positive light: that of a powerful witch making the most of her situation. She used her unique voice to work her magic. She is the goddess for right now because we are all Kirke after she left the island. We have the opportunity to use our powers honed in exile to bring about change in the world. She has returned to remind us all that it is within our power to do so.

Correspondences and More

Kirke is associated with many plants, including the aforementioned moly that's maybe garlic or possibly mullein. Use mandrake to invoke her. Dittany of Crete is favored by

Kirke. Other botanicals include nightshade and traditional witch herbs, including mugwort. She is associated with bronze, gold and onyx.

Correspondences and More

While researching this article, I tried to find popular magical references and methods for working with Kirke. There really isn't much. If you know of a source I've missed, please get in touch. Within the context of modern paganism, she has been at the fringes. For example, she isn't even mentioned in *Llewellyn's Book of Correspondences*.

Fortunately, individual practitioners have been connecting with her. Now that she has gained cultural attention with Miller's novel, she is sure to rise in popularity. Below are tables I've pieced together with her themes, correspondences, epithets and companions for you to use in your own witchery. I'd love to hear about how you understand and work with Kirke.

Witchery with Kirke

The original witch's true self was only fully revealed after triumph over trauma. The witch phase is a time of personal growth when we successfully defeat our wounds and reclaim our innate wildness. Some people don't achieve this, so their years are spent in stagnation. Or worse, they know the witch is inside of them, but she never gets to stand in her power. It can be difficult, but remember "where there's a witch, there's a way." Sovereignty requires curiosity, risk-taking and openness (tempered with the boundaries of the warrior). Kirke's true self witchery is unbeatable, call upon her assistance in revealing yours. Hopefully you won't turn into a pig. - from [Five Sovereign Goddesses: Artemis, Medea, Persephone, Kirke & Hekate \(including a ritual\)](#)

I love to connect with Kirke while wild foraging and when I need to work some serious magic, especially for getting to the truth. A simple technique is to do some phylactery, wearing a charm made of plants associated with her. Call upon Kirke when you need to speak your truth. Also strongly associated with wild animals as well as domestic ones, she can be involved in animal spirit work. In this regard, she controls the beasts so go into such a ritual/journey with this mindset. Rule over those lions and wolves.

Parents: Helios & Perseis; also: Aeetes and Hekate

Island: Aeaia

Name: "To encircle" or "hawk"

Tools

Blade

Loom

Wand

Plants

Dittany of Crete

Garlic

Mandrake

Moly

Mugwort

Mullein

Themes

Absolution

Acceptance

Adaptation

Changing your mind

Cleansing

Individuality

Justice

Revelation

Self deception

Sovereignty

Transformation

Unique voice

Weaving

MAGIC

Binding

Herbalism

Illusion

Knot Spells

Love Magic

Necromancy

Pharmakeia

Phylactery

Potions

Prophecy

Purification

Root Cutting

Sorcery

Transmutation

Truth Spells



W
I
T
C
H



Keeping Her Keys

Circe

Epithets/Characteristics
Beautiful
Braided
Carmina Hecateia
Weaver
Pharamekeia
Daimona of Magic
Nymph
Original Witch
Ghost Wife
Enchantress
Sorceress
Potnia (Lady)
Dia Theaon (Divine Among Goddesses)
Dread Goddess of Human Voice (Deine Theos Aud Eessa)



J. Williams-Waterhouse

Ocean
Bronze
Gold
Sun
Under World
Upper World
All Elements
Ghosts
Monsters
Nymphs
Shades
Domestic and Wild Animals
Pig
Sheep
Hawk
Big Cats
Wolves/hounds

Companions/Associates/ Family
Aeetes (brother)
Faunus
Hekate (mother)
Helios (father)
Hermes
Medea (niece)
Odysseus (lover)
Scylla
Telegonus
The Shades

Kirke

Medea: Regina Venificarum

Medea was daughter to Kirke and Hekate, in spirit, and, in some versions of their mythology, biological offspring as well. Medea represents the poison path inherent to the practice of Hekatean Witchcraft. She weaves her magick through the blessing and bane of toxic potions. Hail the Queen of Poisons.

"Nobody put Medea in a corner. They tried to, but she came out raging. Medea is the Witch of Zero Fucks Given. Pushed beyond caring about anything but violence, we can interpret her murderous ways as extreme vengeance, but that's only the expression of her unbearable pain."

- from [Five Sovereign Goddesses: Summer Solstice Ritual](#)

Medea is so much more than her shadow self, though. Being the Witch of Zero Fucks Given not only implies that she was beyond caring to the point of annihilation, but also that she lived according to her rules. That included standing sovereign in her witch-power. Medea, to me, is an indomitable goddess, representing the power of creation and destruction. She inspires me (both in what to do and NOT to do), guides me and offers her energy to my witchery.



<https://wisesnail.artstation.com/projects/lqQZG> Portrait of Helen McCrory as 'Medea' (London National Theatre, July 2014)

Historical Medea: The Briefest of Summaries

There is no way that I can do a thorough job of summarizing Medea's story as it was told by the ancient Greek and Roman authors who were so fascinated with her. Most likely, her example of the dangerous woman was around long before Euripides scratched out his play. You ready? Here we go...

Medea was a princess/witch trained by her Aunt Kirke (Circe in Latin, I prefer the Greek just like I do for Hekate) who lived on an island where her dad was king. Her grandfather was Helios, the sun itself. She was a Priestess of Hekate, making her also a Daughter of the Moon (and the Under World). Jason (the Argonaut) showed up needing her help to get something he really, really wanted (a throne...which required a golden fleece). Medea killed her own brother to make it happen for that seductive warrior prince. Off they went to claim the throne, get married and live happily ever after.

Into The Cauldron

It didn't work out that way. Does it ever? Medea used her powerful healing abilities to "rebirth" Jason's dad in her cauldron (restore his health). She was persuaded to do the same for his uncle which ultimately led to the death of the king (Jason's dad). That's enough of a story right there to provide loads of symbolism and ways to work with Medea, but...wait...it's only getting started.

Jason and Medea flee the scene. Through a whole bunch of complex events, Jason ends up wanting to ditch Medea (power hungry jerk that he is) for another woman. Medea, not being welcomed back on her home island (due to killing her brother) or in Greece (she is a foreigner), feels backed into a corner. The King of Athens happens to be in town. He offers to give her refuge if she can cure his sterility.

She Who Has Been Poisoned, Poisons Others

However, no one puts Medea in a corner. She goes on a murderous rampage, killing Jason's trophy bride (and her dad also dies just for good measure), her sons and wrecking havoc. NOTE: she gave the replacement wife a poisonous crown and dress. She escapes the mess in one of her grandfather's chariots pulled by either dragons or snakes depending on the translation. Oh, all of this was orchestrated by Hera who was pissed off at Jason's uncle. Medea, in some versions, fled to Athens, married the king, and once again tried the poison thing (this time on the king's son) which backfired. Whew! Now I shall take a nice, deep breath and then talk about ways we can work with Medea in our 21st century witchery.

Like with almost all the Greek myths and stories, there are different versions of Medea's tale. I've tried to summarize the key events from them. I've listed the ancient ones available in the public domain below.



Medea: The Eternal Energy of Female Witch Power

Medea represents an energetic current: that of female witch power. My emphasis on the dangerous woman vibe is most definitely not a slur against those who don't identify as female. Medea's story can be both an inspiration and warning to everyone who uses the label "witch" (and even those who don't). Medea is the mysterious and dangerous "other" that is both alluring and frightening. Moreover, she is the symbol of outlaw witches who refuse to play by the rules. Sadly, Medea succumbs to her wounds, resulting in her wicked ways. But, it's entirely understandable. The question Medea poses is "what would you be willing to believe, to conceal, to do, to save your own skin, or simply to stay close to power? Who would you be willing to sacrifice?" (Margaret Atwood)

Speaking of her enduring lesson, Medea remains a very relevant figure in popular culture and academic study. You can find links below. She has been hailed as a feminist icon and a victim of the patriarchy. Is her story one of empowerment or victimhood? I think the answer is "both," showing how complex a character Medea is. The powerful evil sovereign/victim witch queen theme is found in countless stories across time and cultures. Today, this archetype is most wonderfully, wickedly demonstrated by the character of Cersei in *Game of Thrones*.

Witchery Themes With Medea

Not surprisingly, **Medea as the Eternal Witch** offers many themes for us to incorporate in our own witchery. Medea was a skilled herbal crafter, well trained by her Aunt Kirke, *and* she was a surrogate daughter to Hekate. One powerful witch, indeed. Like all witches, her magic was neither good nor bad. She used it for healing many times, included her rejuvenation spells.

Proceed with Caution

Medea is a very powerful witch, as is the eternal dangerous witch energy current that she represents. Medea and I have been tight for as long as I can remember. She's not a force that will gently rub your back and say kind words. Medea will kick your ass, turn you upside down and, ultimately, help you become the witch you were born to be. However, go gently and respectfully towards her. She does have that murderous side. If you are timid of working with her energy, then I strongly caution against it. There are many more kinder witch ancestors that you can appeal to.

If Medea comes calling, then you might want to read my ["When Hekate Calls"](#) guide but apply to the Eternal Witch. Like mother, like daughter. Medea is definitely experiencing a comeback of late. This is not surprising since Hekate has emerged as a dominant force in witchery over the past few decades. If you're trying to find Medea, try adapting my [Finding Hekate](#) recommendations.

The Shadow Self

I liken Medea to the shadow within each of us. There are times when we need its protection but succumbing to it can destroy both ourselves and those we care for. Like Medea, our shadow side shouldn't be dismissed but understood with compassion. Through this approach, including acceptance of the past, we can move towards healing. If you are drawn to shadow work, petition Medea to help you overcome yours.

Healing

Medea was an herbalist first and foremost. While she is remembered for her speciality, poisons, she also did a lot of healing. Turn to Medea's energy to empower your own skills as an herbalist, medical intuitive and healer. Her energy can be sought when learning new techniques or for following your intuition.

Rebirth

That cauldron of hers was a highly effective tool no matter how she used it. Claim your own rebirth through the witches' cauldron. Take a ritual bath using non-toxic members of Hekate's Garden, such as lavender. Envision being immersed in Medea's Cauldron where she rebirths you into your true self, freeing you from your pain. Hekate awaits on the other side.

"We recall too that Medea's caldron was to effect a rebirth for Pelias. But the image of the narrow waters also recalls that other, more elemental realm where the female is all-powerful. It is precisely through her power as a mother, through the power of the womb that bore Jason his sons, that Medea attains her fullest triumph and her most effective revenge" (Segal)

Passion

Feeling a bit "meh"? Tap into that eternal passionate energy of which Medea symbolizes so well. Put that red dress on and be dangerous (but in a safe way). Develop a passion spell seeking Medea's help, but ask her for only what you can handle.

Honoring Witch Ancestors

Setting up a Witch Ancestor altar and developing a ritual honoring the ones who appeal most to you is a fantastic way to tap into the witch energy currents. I include mythic (like Medea) and actual (like Doreen Valiente) in my workings. Who am I to say what and who is real? They are very, very present in my life. That's real enough for me.

Including Medea in Witchcraft

- NOTE: My experience has been that Hekate is not always keen to be involved in spells while Medea is always up for some witchery.
- When I am witch crafting, kitchen witchin' or doing other spell work, I light a black candle to Medea, Kirke and Hekate, seeking their wisdom and blessing over my actions.
- Banishing spells - write her astrological symbol or others (see below) with a poison pen on an image of whatever it is you need to get rid of.
- I often sing my incantations just like she did. I like to think that she hovers nearby, half-smiling at my lame rhyming skills.
- Bless botanicals, especially poisons, in her name. Offer them to her and infuse them with her energy as appropriate. Aconite is her favorite (wolf's bane, monkshood).
- She can be associated with all of the plants in Hekate's Garden, including popular ones today such as lavender, mugwort and sage. Less common but awesome examples are Dittany of Crete and saffron.
- Connect with animal spirits that she is associated with, including the sacrificial ram, but also owls and snakes. Dragons are her companion. Call upon them to drag you out of the Under World and stand in your own power. Crows as a contemporary symbol of witches are also suitable.
- She can be petitioned and honored at initiation rites.
- Epithets/Roles/Characteristics: Initiator, Herbalist, Wise One, Priestess of Hekate, Witch, Princess, etc.
- Elements: south (fire), west (water).

- Worlds/Selves: Under World/Emotions/Lower Self; Middle World/Actions/Middle Self; Upper World/Intellect/Higher Self. She covers all three, in the same way that Hekate does.
- Colors: red, yellow, black
- Moon and Sun (she also has an asteroid)
- Symbols: crown, leaf, cauldron
- Days: Sunday, Monday and perhaps Saturday since aconite is associated with Saturn (also with Hekate).
- Witch style: anyone who weaves poison into a crown and dress is a style icon to be honored and called upon accordingly

Final Words

Medea, like most witches, even today, was both revered and hated for her talents. Her story is equally triumph and tragedy. Medea's wisdom includes the message that sovereign witches (especially female ones) are often seen as threats. Her humble admission reminds us that, no matter how powerful we become, we are at the risk of our shadow selves' foolish (and harmful) ways:

"If you were to teach the uneducated something new and beautiful, not only will they not appreciate it, but they'll call you "good for nothing." And if those who think themselves to be wise, consider you even wiser than them, then you'll hurt them most awfully. And that's where my own suffering stems from: They call me "wise" yet, in reality I am not very "wise" at all. Some people scorn me, others simply hate me, and you are now afraid that I might do you some enormous harm!"

- Medea, Euripides, translated by G. Theodoris

Summoning Hekate's Ancient Witches

In my experience, petitioning Hekate first and then seeking her introduction to Kirke and Medea is an excellent method for communicating with the three of them. Offerings are usually appreciated. The actual material representation of the sacrifice matters less to them than your sincerity. They typically desire this and your commitment to practicing witchcraft that honors them. That is to say, witchcraft that knows no color or bounds. On the other hand, having your own personal boundaries well established will yield a much closer connection. These are not casual goddesses, nor are they generic do-gooder deities. Fierce, true, sovereign.

The crossroads is of special importance for Hekatean rituals in general and necromantic ones in specific. If you can't perform the following ritual at an actual crossroads, construct one as part of your altar. This can be a form of energetic crossroads, such as using dirt from one, representations of the crossroads creating by bringing together land, sea and sky (using actual representations or plant and animal ones) or create a sigil. A tripod can also be used.

In the section on Medea, I recommended creating an altar to Witch Ancestors as an excellent practice for connecting with these mighty dead. If you are new to necromantic workings, I recommend that you begin by contemplating each of our Triple Goddesses. Journal about how you connect with their themes, stories and associated energies. Work with their correspondences, whether or the plant, animal or color variety.

Summoning the spirits of Hekate's ancient witches is not for the timid. The ritual on the following pages has been carefully developed and refined through repeated performance.

Connect to the spirits of Hekate, Medea and Kirke through your chosen divination methods, such as the cards or runes in the days leading up to the ritual. Concentrate on each one, petitioning them for a card that best reflects their connection to you. Building connection in advance of the ritual will deepen your experience.

Sovereign Witch Goddesses Ritual

In the Keeping Her Keys tradition, Hekate and Her Witch Daughters are viewed as source and extensions of source. That is to say, we perceive Hekate, Kirke and Medea as embodied Goddesses in order to perceive them through the lens of our humanity. Our experiences, personality, thoughts, emotions and actions all interact with our ability to connect with the primal source, the Anima Mundi, that is Hekate and Her Witch Daughters.

As such, there is no “correct” way to understand this Triple Goddess powerhouse. Consulting the historical records, the myths and other forms of literature can help you deeper your personal gnosis.

Keep in mind that these are primal currents, the very ones that are used in all witchcraft, powerful beyond comprehension. The very fuel of all life.

Preparation

Timing: Choose a lunar phase that is suitable for your sovereignty work. Will you be boldly standing in the light of the full moon, or secretly claiming your power when the night is darkest?

Purification: The usual cleansing of mind, body, spirit, supplies and place is required. You may want to wear purple for this ritual. Cast the circle however you usually do or write a special one for this ritual.

In The Keeping Her Keys tradition, we use The Khernips Ritual for purification of mind, body and spirit. Cleansing with sacred water infused with the holy smoke of Pharmakeia Kyrios (Plant Masters) is the general method.

Location: If you’re doing this outside (which I recommend), find a spot that permits you to connect to the Under World aspects of the goddesses, like a small cave or marsh where there is a natural crossroads. You’ll know it when you find it. You can “draw down” the moon while connecting to chthonic forces, bringing yourself into perfect attunement. If doing the ritual indoors, construct a chthonic altar (low to the ground), placing your symbolic crossroads upon it.

Commitment/Initiation: Students in the Keeping Her Keys Mystery School go through an intense process of commitment at the beginning of their studies and perform initiation at the end of each stage of training. The only form of initiation conferred within Keeping Her Keys is by the individual witch, with the Keeper of the Keys, the leader of the school, bearing witness. If you are a singular witch, I encourage you to engage in the same process. This ritual is excellent for both processes. Both the

Commitment Petition and the Proclamation of Initiation are written by the students. You can find more information about this process in two books: *Keeping Her Keys: An Introduction to Hekate's Modern Witchcraft* and *True Magic: Unleashing Your Inner Witch*.

Oracle: During the ritual, it is excellent to do a divinatory reading seeking the wisdom of these Goddesses.

Blessing: All tools of witchcraft can be blessed in the name of these Goddesses during the ritual.

Supplies

- Sovereignty charm for wearing (like a key or a little goddess figure)
- Correspondences of each of the three sovereign goddesses (table below)
- Four candles: Black for Hekate, Red for Medea and White for Kirke and one for you (purple is recommended)
- Anointing oil (plain olive or make one using the botanical correspondences – if using a poison, ensure that it is safe to apply to the skin. Aconite isn't.)
- Images of each of the goddesses

Constructing The Altar

Use the correspondences, themes and energies shared throughout this guide to create a powerful portal for joining with the goddesses.

I've made suggestions in the following table using established correspondences and symbols of each of the fab five. Selecting one botanical for inclusion in an incense to burn or to offer is a great augmentation for the ritual. Connecting with the botanicals helps to activate your sovereignty (thereby taking power away from the shadow self). If you're not familiar with plant spirit work, I highly recommend [*Plant Spirit Shamanism: Traditional Techniques for Healing the Soul*](#).

The Ritual

There are many ways to go about performing this ritual. I recommend lighting a candle with each evocation and adding the botanicals to the burning incense at the same time. If you can't do one or both, the anointing alone will work just fine.

Take the time to connect with your breath prior to beginning the ritual. Push your roots down into the earth beneath you (even if it's through several floors first) and your branches up to the sun itself (through several ceilings if that's the case). See your breath activating your lower self of emotions, the middle self of actions and the higher self of thoughts, creating a state of focused calm.

Keep in mind that these are mighty goddesses, establish prior to evocation how comfortable you are with merging your energies with them. If you're not comfortable letting them in, stand in their presence and let them speak with you.

Proclamation

Kneeling in front of your altar, say:

I claim this space sacred to myself,

Protected from all unwanted and unwelcome attention from spirits and all other beings.

I enter into this ritual of my own free will, of sound mind and strong spirit.

I proclaim that I am a practitioner of witchcraft,

Chosen by Hekate,

And descended from Kirke and Medea.

I kneel in front of this altar summoning the power of fierce love and true magick that lives within me.

I open my Lower Self, seat of emotions and magick to this ritual, and to the Triple Goddesses of Witchcraft

I open my Middle Self, home of action and interaction with the material world to this ritual, and to the Triple Goddesses of Witchcraft.

I open my Higher Self, realm of intellect and gateway to the mysteries of The Starry Road to this ritual, and to the Triple Goddesses of Witchcraft.

May my emotions be true,

My actions just,

And my thoughts pure

In this ritual and for all time.

Pause here to let the energies of the Three Selves mingle throughout your being, connecting and activating their correspondences within your Souls, until you feel unified within.

Next focus on the altar, connecting your own unified energy to the symbols and correspondences upon it, creating an enclosed, merged energetic space from which you can welcome in the Goddesses.

Offerings

Make the following petition while presenting your chosen offerings.

Now I make these offerings to you, Mighty Sovereign Queens,

Expressing my gratitude and petitioning your presence.

I make these offerings to Hekate and her Eternal Witches.

To Hekate, Queen of Wisdom, Regina Maleficarum, Keeper of the Keys of Witchcraft, I call now, hear my words, accept this humble offering, and bless me with your presence.

To Circe, Original Witch, Regina Pharmakeia, Queen of Corporeal Witchery, I call now, hear my words, accept this humble offering, and bless us with your presence.

To Medea, Eternal Witch, Regina Venificarum, Queen of the Poison Path, I call now, hear my words, accept this humble offering, and bless us with your presence.

Pause here to let them accept the offerings.

Evocation

STAND in front of the altar.

In this state of grace and position of power,

I now call upon the Sovereign Goddesses of Witchcraft.

Hail Hekate, Regina Maleficarum!

(hands at heart center)

Hail Kirke, Regina Pharmakeia!

(right hand down)

Hail Medea, Regina Venificarum!

(left hand up)

Pause, taking three activating breaths, breathing out your energetic cords and breathing in their energy, connecting to their offered currents.

(hands at heart center)

Hail Hekate, Regina Maleficarum,

Anima Mundi, Spirit of All.

Hail Hekate,

Queen of Witches.

Hail Hekate, Guardian.

Hail Hekate, Guide.

Hail Hekate, Gatekeeper

And Keeper of the Keys.

I welcome you into this place,

Attend me now!

Pause, taking three activating breaths, breathing out your energetic cords and breathing in Hekate's energy, connecting to her offered currents.

(right hand down)

Hail Kirke, Regina Pharmakeia,

Original Witch,

Sorceress Divine,

Queen of Animals, Plants and Minerals.

Revealer of Truth,

Spirit Speaker.

I welcome you into this place,

Attend me now!

Pause, taking three activating breaths, breathing out your energetic cords and breathing in Kirke's energy, connecting to her offered currents.

(left hand up)

Hail Medea, Regina Venificarum,

Mistress of Healing and Pain,

Queen of Fire and Passion,

Goddess of the Shadows,

She Who Commands the Cauldron of Rebirth

And Wields the Dragon's Chariot,

I welcome you into this place,

Attend me now!

Pause, taking three activating breaths, breathing out your energetic cords and breathing in her energy, connecting with her offered currents.

Acclamation

Hail Hekate, Regina Maleficarum!

(hands at heart center)

Hail Kirke, Regina Pharmakeia!

(right hand down)

Hail Medea, Regina Venificarum!

(left hand up)

Hail Hekate, Regina Maleficarum,

(hands at heart center)

Anima Mundi, Spirit of All.

Hail Hekate,

Queen of Witches.

Hail Hekate, Guardian.

Hail Hekate, Guide.

Hail Hekate, Gatekeeper

And Keeper of the Keys.

I claim my powers as a sovereign witch in your name.

Bless and protect me.

(Kiss her image with the thumbs of both hands, light the appropriate candle, anoint your heart center with both thumbs, add chosen botanical to the altar or incense.)

Pause here to activate your powers and welcome Hekate's blessing onto them.

(right hand down)

Hail Kirke, Regina Pharmakeia,

Original Witch,

Sorceress Divine,

Queen of Animals, Plants and Minerals.

Revealer of Truth,

Spirit Speaker.

I claim my powers as a sovereign witch in your name.

Bless and protect me.

(Kiss her image with the index finger of your nondominant hand, light the appropriate candle, anoint your throat with the ring finger of your non-dominant hand, add chosen botanical to the altar or incense.)

Pause here to activate your powers and welcome Kirke's blessing onto them.

(left hand up)

Hail Medea, Regina Venificarum,

Mistress of Healing and Pain,

Queen of Fire and Passion,

Goddess of the Shadows,

She Who Commands the Cauldron of Rebirth

And Wields the Dragon's Chariot,

I claim my powers as a sovereign witch in your name.

Bless and protect me.

(Kiss her image with the index finger of your dominant hand, light the appropriate candle, anoint your crown with the index finger of your nondominant hand, add chosen botanical to the altar or incense.)

Pause here to activate your powers and welcome Medea's blessing onto them.

(You can hold your dominant hand down and non-dominant one up for the closing section below.)

Great Goddesses and Witches,

Ancient but new,

I claim my sovereignty now,

Standing before you.

I honor myself and each of you.

Oracle

While in this state of activation and connection, ask each Goddess for guidance by drawing one card/rune/bone/etc. in their name.

Blessing

You may claim their blessing on all tools of witchcraft at this point.

Commitment

Now you can make your commitment petition.

Devocation

STAND again if you had been kneeling or sitting.

Sovereign Goddesses of Witchcraft,

In gratitude for your blessings of my sovereign witch power, your oracles and my tools, accept my affection and fond farewell.

Pause here to begin the process of disconnection. Relax your energetic cords. Taking three releasing breaths, breathing out your connection to them and retracting your coils with the in-breath.

Blessed Hekate, Queen of Wisdom, Regina Maleficarum, Keeper of the Keys of Witchcraft, accept my gratitude and fond farewell.

Pause, taking three releasing breaths, breathing out your connection to them and retracting your coils with the in-breath.

Blessed Kirke, Original Witch, Regina Pharmakeia, Queen of Corporeal Witchery, accept my gratitude and fond farewell.

Pause, taking three releasing breaths, breathing out your connection to them and retracting your coils with the in-breath.

To Medea, Eternal Witch, Regina Venificarum, Queen of the Poison Path, accept my gratitude and fond farewell.

Pause, taking three releasing breaths, breathing out your connection to them and retracting your coils with the in-breath.

After the Ritual

Hekate, Kirke and Medea keep their own schedule and counsel, always keep this in mind. If they attended and blessed you during the ritual, they most likely will be close to you, perhaps even remaining constantly by your side. Or they may wander off. Re-establish connection with the proclamation part of the ritual. Don't hesitate to let them know when you need your space from them.

Do the usual processing in your journal, an interpretive imagery exercise is a great follow-up for this working, such as creating a collage with words, images, etc. that represents these Great Goddesses of Witchcraft and yourself. Be sovereign, true and powerful.

Some discomfort can be experienced while the activation of your sovereignty solidifies in the coming days and weeks. The Selves and your interactions with others, human and spirit may undergo transformation. Be gentle on yourself during this period, paying extra attention to your basic needs of diet and sleep. Increased meditation time is advised. Engage in periods of deep, calming breathing throughout the day, and do the Hekate's Breath chanting at least three times/day for three days after the ritual. Taking the time to ensure that your heightened powers can be integrated in a stable and

sustainable way through these practices will help the transition be more comfortable and for the increased abilities to last. Spiritually bypassing the ritual aftercare process can lead to your witchcraft abilities becoming greatly diminished and/or periods of great distress. Journaling daily about your visions and messages being received is very important because it consolidates your new level of awareness of your powers, your connection to these Goddesses, and your knowledge of the deeper world, plus you are possibly experiencing rapid reception of many messages, so you'll be able to keep track. You can go back and process them after the transition.

Hekate's Breath Chant:

<https://youtu.be/sA8ZoAAqFpI>

Tips For Managing A Spiritual Upgrade:

<https://keepingherkeys.com/read/f/managing-a-spiritual-upgrade>

Final Word

Getting Started as one of Hekate's Witches

If you are new to Hekate, I suggest doing a ritual honoring her on the Dark Moon using simple ingredients and a hymn/prayer/petition of your own creation. Set up an altar with her image, symbols and correspondences. Suitable incense includes sage, bay laurel (probably in your kitchen cupboard) and lavender. Make an offering that reflects who you are. If you love roses, give them to her. If heavy metal is your thing, trance out to [Hekate's Torch](#). Do you. My article "[An Evocation of Hekate Suitable For Any Rite](#)" might be helpful. I recommend following this with a commitment ritual on the New Moon (when the first sliver is visible) to yourself, your new path and Hekate. I think this should be very personal, but my [Nine Keys Ritual](#) can be adapted for this sort of working. Read loads (see below).

Practice witchery every day - writing, reading, meditating, observing, spell crafting and more. Keep it simple. Start a Witches' Journal for your personal journey and a Book of Shadows for recording your witchery. Start charting the lunar cycle and your moods. Record your experiences with animals, objects and other things associated with Hekate. Create your own images, music and rituals. Don't worry about "getting it right." Start with your personal healing and grow from there.

I'll let Medea have the final word. She is a cautionary reminder that speaking our truth can cause upset in others. Temper your truth-talking sovereign ways with Hekate's wisdom and Persephone's dark warrior ways to navigate your witches' journey:

“If you introduce new, intelligent ideas to fools, you will be thought frivolous, not intelligent. On the other hand, if you do get a reputation for surpassing those who are supposed to be intellectually sophisticated, you will seem to be a thorn in the city's flesh. This is what has happened to me.” — Medea, lines 298–302 (Eurpides)

Witches' Journal Set

Whether you use this sigil notebook as your journal or Book of Shadows is entirely up to you. Signed and activated with a sigil by yours truly.

You'll receive: One 8.5 x 5.5 KHK sigil logo notebook, one all-weather Witches' Realm sigil sticker (for your inside cover activation spell over your words, or your car, computer, etc.), set of three Keeping Her Keys sigil stickers, and a bookmark with The Witches' Creed.

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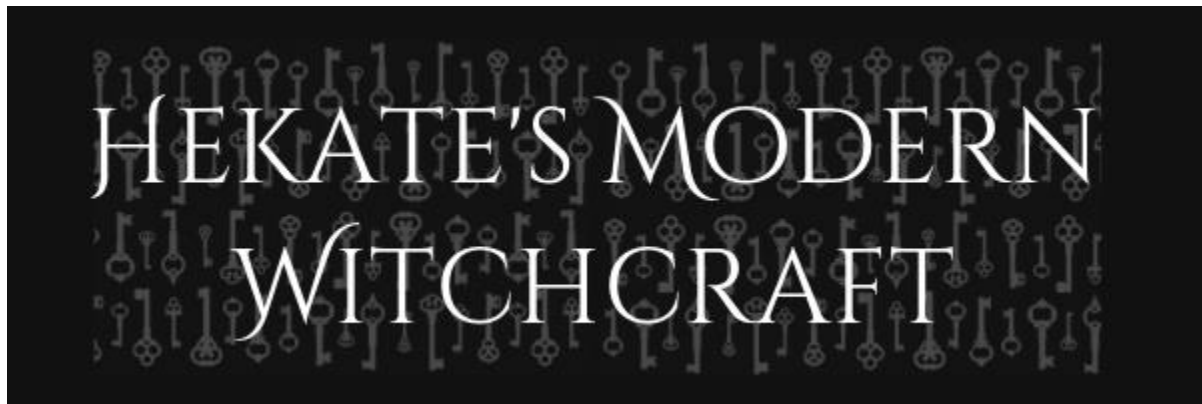


One of my favorite parts of the Keeping Her Keys School of Witchcraft is the emphasis on training others to become healers of themselves and others. That's why this fall, we'll launch a monthly workshop on this very topic that's for all students.



The Sacred Seven is designed for anyone who wants to unleash their inner witch through the Sacred Seven Practices and Principles of Witchcraft. Working with natural forces through practices including herbalism, ecstatic energy work, spiritual writing, and personal development strategies. This course is my greatest gift that I get to share with others. Lessons: healing, relationships, sovereignty, growth, connection, abundance and wholeness.

[Learn more.](#)



Hekate's Modern Witchcraft: The First Key is an intense program for practitioners seeking training in Hekatean Witchcraft. 13 lessons completed over 12-18 months. Take the journey of the Mystai from soul retrieval to initiation.

[Learn more](#)

Apply to join my group, [The Witches' Realm](#), if you're not already a member.

Keeping Her Keys: An Introduction to Hekate's Modern Witchcraft

So much gratitude to everyone who's purchased *Keeping Her Keys: An Introduction to Hekate's Modern Witchcraft*! After spending several months at the top of the Amazon new release bestseller lists for both paganism and witchcraft, it's now in the fray with all books in these categories, and still doing very well. In fact, the first month of sales set a new record for Moon Books. Hail Hekate! It's so humbling to have my work read by so many.

[Purchase Keeping Her Keys: An Introduction to Hekate's Modern Witchcraft](#)

If you haven't yet received your BONUS Wheel of the Year Book of Shadows for 2019, email your proof of purchase to cyndia@keepingherkeys.com to receive it.

KLEIS ARAGOS BONUS

Be a "KEY HELPER" in spreading the word about *Keeping Her Keys: An Introduction to Hekate's Modern Witchcraft*.

1-hour long audio guide to using the book as a self-directed course, including the exclusive Hekatean Cord meditation.

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3. *Email a screen shot of the published post to cyndi@keepingherkeys.com*
4. *Receive the one-hour KLEIS ARAGOS audio guide to using the book as a self-directed course, including the exclusive Hekatean Cord meditation.*

Keeping Her Keys Facebook Study Group

Due to popular demand, I've launched a study group for all those wanting to connect with others doing the book as a self-directed course. You'll also receive support from me, Laura and the Mystai (senior students) of Hekate's Modern Witchcraft.

Join the [study group](#).

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Modern Hekatean Witchcraft Explained

https://youtu.be/_klBUvh6mAI

Prayer to Hekate for the Dead

<https://youtu.be/fpdT47YooFY>

Evoking Hekate's Aviary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXqSeSCBXgc&t=138s>

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Evoking the Dark Mother

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Evoking Hekate of the Under World

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Hekate's Messages

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