

Hekate's History

A Review of the History of Hekate and Discussion of Her Return

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Ἐκάτη

GODDESS OF
OUR TIME



Keeping Her Keys



Shining Light on the Past

- Thematic analyses of existing historical records from a feminist applied social psychology perspective, that is ongoing, responsive and borrows from:
 - Feminist qualitative research/interpretation framework borrowing from grounded theory, ethnography, ethnology, comparative analysis, and others.
- Goal: creating a framework situating records and depictions of Hekate within the cultural context of the time they were created, and within the time they were “rediscovered” to develop a theory explaining why Hekate is a Goddess of Our Time.





Shining Light on the Known Sources

- Written documents, objects and works of art
- Interpreted by understanding:
 - What: description of the work
 - Who was the creator: their perspective and characteristics
 - When did they create it: what are the sociological factors influencing the work
 - Why was it created: the original use and context
 - How was it created
 - Who was the intended original audience
 - What was the goal of the work
 - Applying all these questions to the “rediscovery” of the work



Great Mother Goddesses of the ancient world

HEKATE'S TIME LINE

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

Tirformis;
Houshold matron;
Deipnon

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

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

Hekate's Horde,
Night Wandering,
Chthonic

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

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

Rise of the divine feminine mid
20th c CE

Hekate's Return
1990s onward



Great Mother Goddesses of the
ancient world

Hekate descends into Greece.
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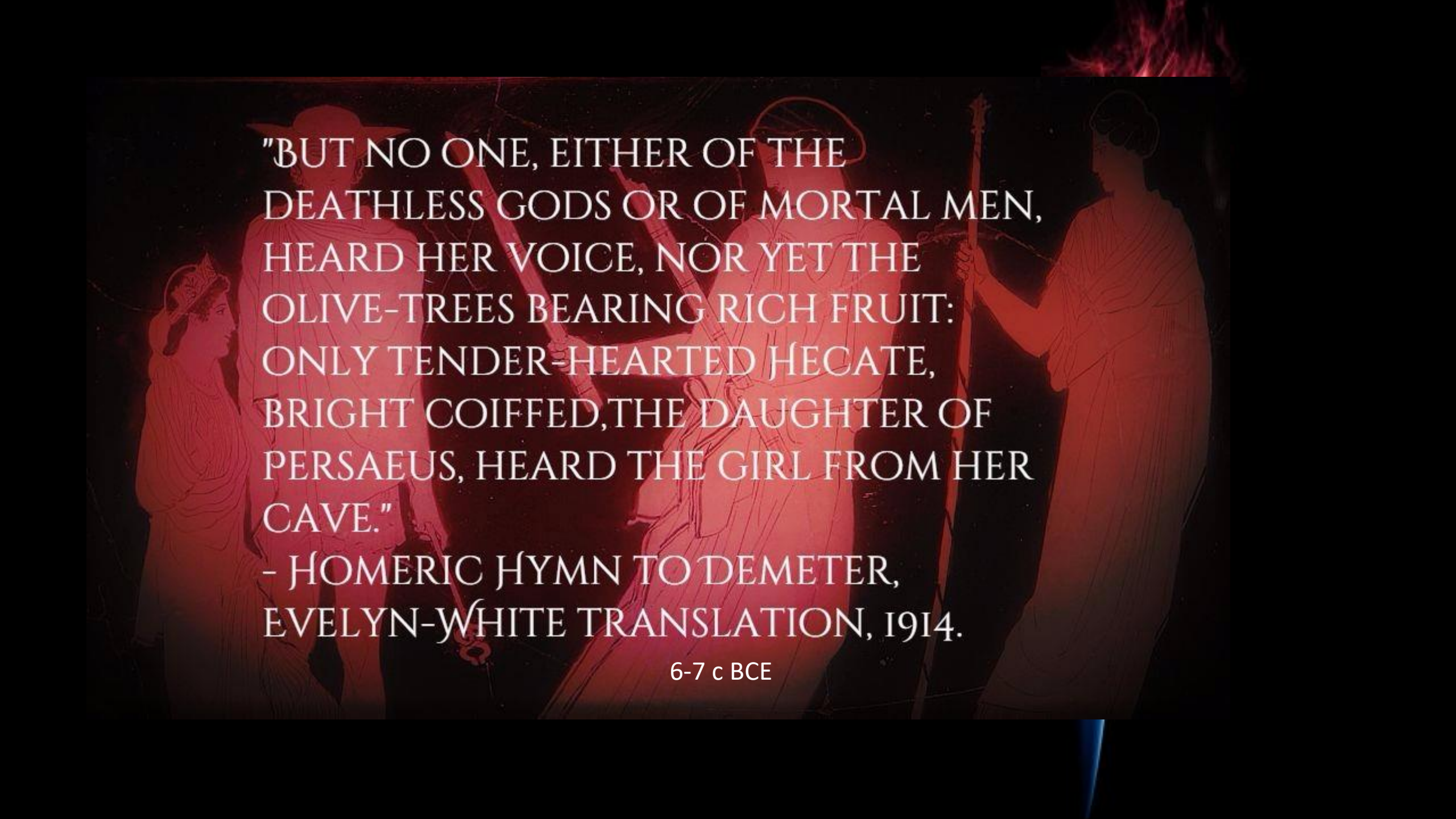


Keeping Her Keys

For even now, whenever any human on the earth seeks propitiation by performing fine sacrifices according to custom, he invokes Hecate; and much honor very easily stays with that man whose prayers the goddess accepts with gladness, and she bestows happiness upon him, for this power she certainly has.

Hesiod's Theogony, 8th C BCE





"BUT NO ONE, EITHER OF THE
DEATHLESS GODS OR OF MORTAL MEN,
HEARD HER VOICE, NOR YET THE
OLIVE-TREES BEARING RICH FRUIT:
ONLY TENDER-HEARTED HECATE,
BRIGHT COIFFED, THE DAUGHTER OF
PERSAEUS, HEARD THE GIRL FROM HER
CAVE."

- HOMERIC HYMN TO DEMETER,
EVELYN-WHITE TRANSLATION, 1914.

6-7 c BCE



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

Tirformis;
Houshold matron;
Deipnon

Greek Magical
Papyri; Diverse,
fierce
5-th - 2nd C BCE

Hekate's Horde,
Night Wandering,
Chthonic



By the mistress I
worship most of all
and have chosen as
my helpmate,
Hecate, dwelling in
the inmost recesses
of my hearth, no one
will bruise and batter
my heart and get
away with it. "

Medea, Euripedes (4 BCE)

Keeping Her Keys



Hekate, Mother of All



AND GODS IMMORTAL
TREMBLE,
GODDESS WHO MEN EXALT,
YOU OF MANY NAMES WHO
BEARS
FAIR OFFSPRING, BULL-EYED,
HORNED,
MOTHER OF GODS,
AND MEN, AND NATURE,
MOTHER OF ALL THINGS.”-
PGM IV -2830-2834

5th - 2nd C BCE



As is usually the case with offerings to the dead, the regular Hekates deipnon on the thirtieth of the month consisted of food. The specific articles, so far as they are mentioned, were magides, a kind of loaf or cake, the shape and ingredients of which are not clear; the mainis or sprat; skoroda, or garlic; the trigele, or mullet; psammeta, a sacrificial cake described by Harpocration as "somewhat like the psaista;" eggs; checse; possibly the basunias, a kind of cake...

- from The Goddess Hekate by Stephen Ronan



καρπυῖ, διγερῶς,
fierce
5-th - 2nd C BCE

Anima Mundi;
The Chalden Oracles
2nd C CE



Praeperatio

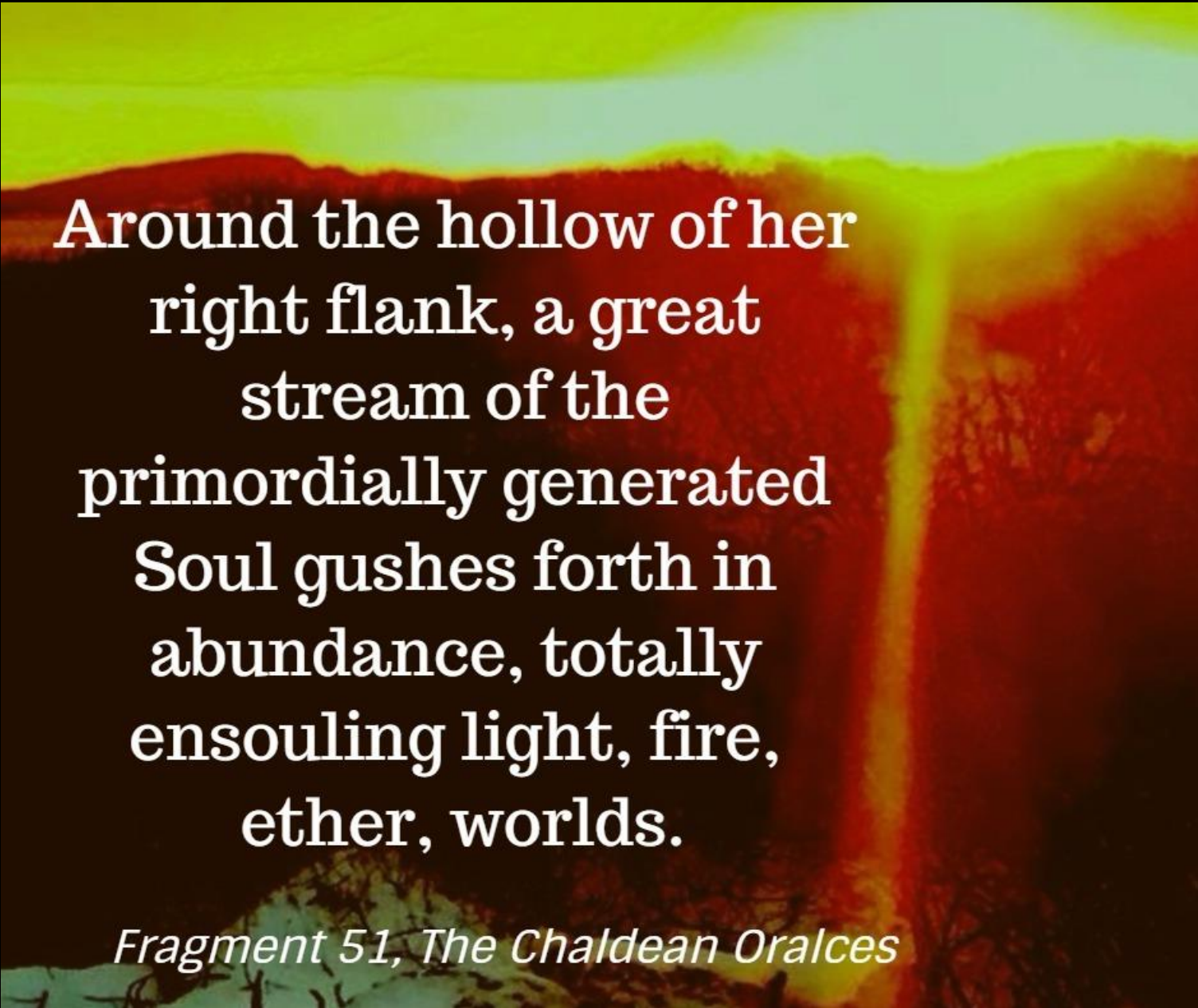
Keeper of the Keys;
Orphic Hymn
1-3rd C CE



Orphic Hymn to Hekate

*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.*





Around the hollow of her
right flank, a great
stream of the
primordially generated
Soul gushes forth in
abundance, totally
ensouling light, fire,
ether, worlds.

Fragment 51, The Chaldean Oracles



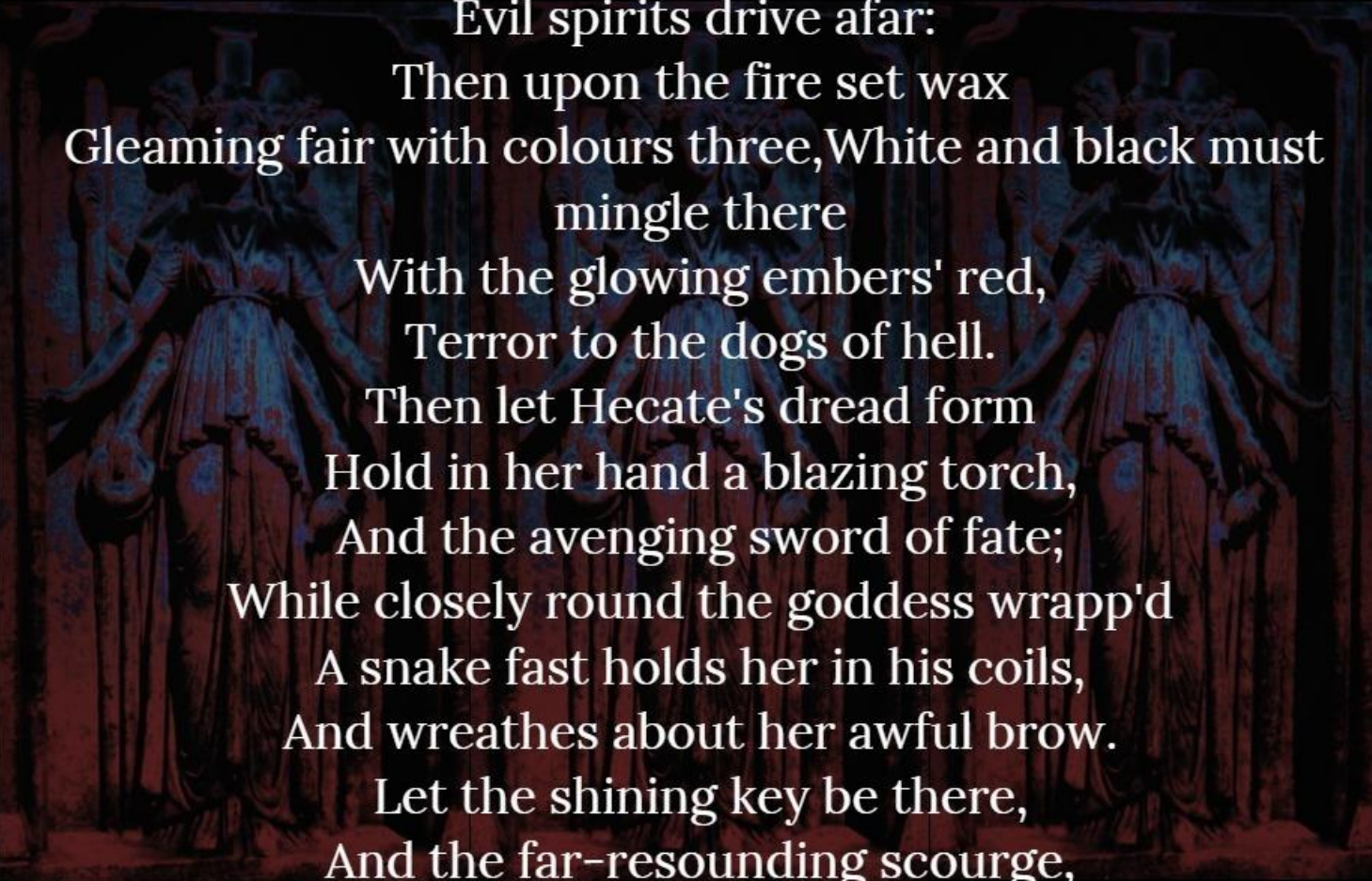


Some things never change...

"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."

A wooden statue of Priapus, who watches over a cemetery, speaking about two of Hekate's ancient witches, Canidia and Sagana, in Horace's Satires (around 30 BCE.)





"The speaker is Pan:
Evil spirits drive afar:
Then upon the fire set wax
Gleaming fair with colours three, White and black must
mingle there
With the glowing embers' red,
Terror to the dogs of hell.
Then let Hecate's dread form
Hold in her hand a blazing torch,
And the avenging sword of fate;
While closely round the goddess wrapp'd
A snake fast holds her in his coils,
And wreathes about her awful brow.
Let the shining key be there,
And the far-resounding scourge,
Symbol of the daemons' power."

Keeping Her Keys

Eusibius, Praeparatio Evangelica, 4th c CEa



and the moon at one time Artemis,
at another Athena, and again Hecate, and Eileithyia---
-are they not again convicted of deifying 'the creature
rather than the Creator.' and the handiwork of the
world but not the worker, with great risk and danger,
and with mischief that must fall on their own head?
Praeparatio Evangelica



he pecked at the rough oaks with his hard beak,
and angrily left wounds on their long limbs;
his wings took on the scarlet of his tunic,
the golden clasp he wore upon it changed
into bright feathers; a band of yellow gold

560

encircled his neck; and now, but for his name,
nothing remained of Picus from before.
“Meanwhile, his comrades, who, with hue and cry
had searched the fields and not discovered him,
came upon Circe (for she’d cleared the air
and let the sun and winds disperse the clouds)
and rightly they accused her of her crime

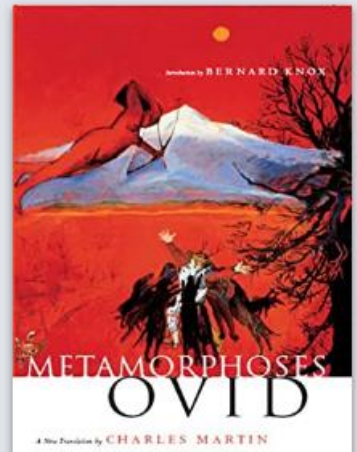
against the king, demanding his return,
and making preparations to attack her
with their fierce weapons.

“Instead, she sprinkled them

570

with noxious drugs and poisonous concoctions,
and summoning up Night and all his gods,
that dwell below in Erebus and Chaos,
she called upon the goddess Hecate
with long-drawn ululations.

“Astonishing
to say it, but the woods leapt from their place,
the earth shuddered, the nearby trees turned white,



Metamorphoses: A New Tra...
Martin, Charles

Latin narrative poem from 8 CE by the Roman poet Ovid



Medea making a potion in the presence of Trip Headed Hekate

Tale of Jason and the conquest of the Golden Fleece (Histoire de Jason et de la conquête de la toison d'or)

Rene Boyvin, 1563

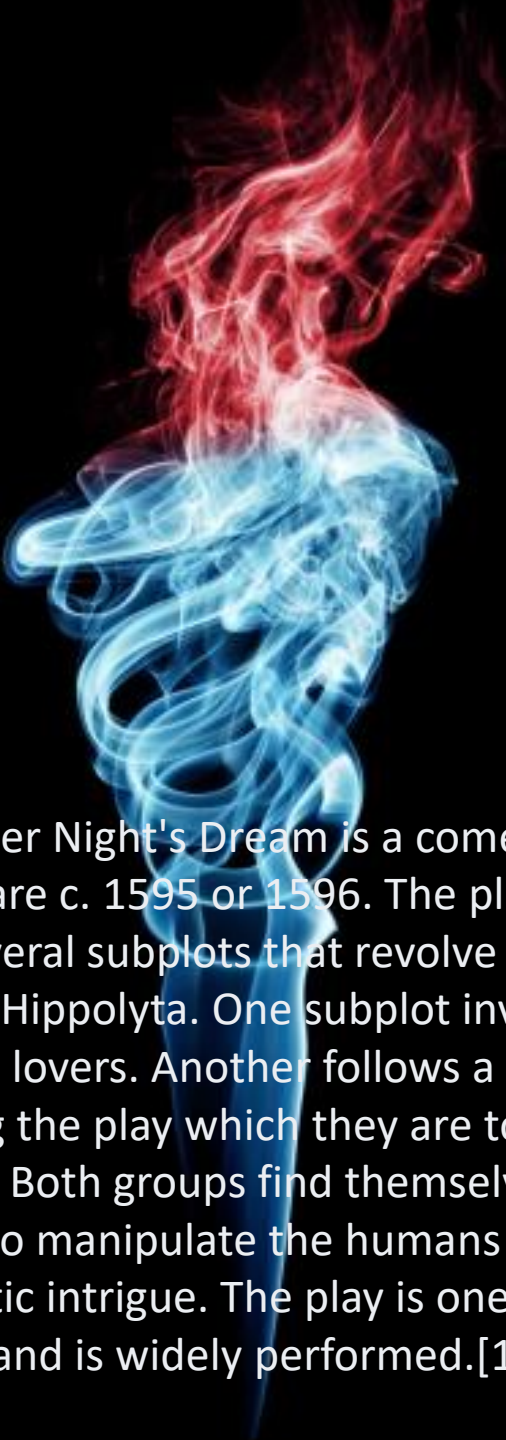




Macbeth Act IV, Scene I,
print published by John
Boydell 1802



And we fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecate's team,
From the presence of the sun,
Following darkness like a dream,
Now are frolic: not a mouse
Shall disturb this hallow'd house:
I am sent with broom before,
To sweep the dust behind the door.



From Wikipedia: A Midsummer Night's Dream is a comedy written by William Shakespeare c. 1595 or 1596. The play is set in Athens, and consists of several subplots that revolve around the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta. One subplot involves a conflict among four Athenian lovers. Another follows a group of six amateur actors rehearsing the play which they are to perform before the wedding. Both groups find themselves in a forest inhabited by fairies who manipulate the humans and are engaged in their own domestic intrigue. The play is one of Shakespeare's most popular and is widely performed.[1]

Hekate came down into Greece as an earth goddess with the usual interest that such a divinity always had in vegetation and nutrition, in wild and human life, but possessing also certain attractions for the moon, and trailing with her a very pernicious cloud of superstition and sorcery.

The Cults of the Greek States is a series of works by Lewis Richard Farnell, D. Litt., first published between 1896 and 1909, in five volumes (at the outset Farnell had only planned for there to be three), at the Clarendon Press, Oxford. The works were groundbreaking because it was the first time that any scholar had attempted to disentangle the history of Greek religion from that of Greek mythology.[citation needed] There was need for the two to be separated since Greek mythology had at the time, in literary circles at any rate, a reputation of being a "bizarre and hopeless thing".[1] – from Wikipedia





Ode to
HEKATE

O triple form of darkness! Sombre splendour!
Thou moon unseen of men!
Thou huntress dread!

Thou crowned demon of the crownless dead!
O breasts of blood, too bitter and too tender!
Unseen of gentle spring, Let me the offering
Bring to thy shrine's sepulchral glittering!
I slay the swart beast! I bestow the bloom
Sown in the dusk, and gathered in the gloom
Under the waning moon,

At midnight hardly lightening the East;
And the black lamb from the black ewe's dead womb
I bring, and stir the slow infernal tune
Fit for thy chosen priest.

Here where the band of Ocean breaks the road
Black-trodden, deeply-stooping, to the abyss,
I shall salute thee with the nameless kiss
Pronounced toward the uttermost abode
Of thy supreme desire. I shall illumine the fire
Whence thy wild stryges shall obey the lyre,
Whence thy Lemurs shall gather and spring round,
Girdling me in the sad funereal ground
With faces turned back,

My face averted! I shall consummate
The awful act of worship, O renowned
Fear upon earth, and fear in hell, and black Fear in the sky beyond Fate!
I hear the whining of thy wolves!


I hear The howling of the hounds about thy form,
Who comest in the terror of thy storm,
And night falls faster, ere thine eyes appear Glittering through the mist,
O face of woman un-kissed

Save by the dead whose love is taken ere they wist!
Thee, thee I call! O dire one! O divine!
I, the sole mortal, seek thy deadly shrine,
Pour the dark stream of blood,

A sleepy and reluctant river Even as thou drawest, with thine eyes on
mine,

To me across the sense-bewildering flood
That holds my soul for ever!

Alister Crowley



Rise of the divine
feminine mid
20th c CE

Hekate's Return
1990s onward




In the dark of the moon small covens awaited
Her near drooping willow trees. She appeared
suddenly before them with Her torch and Her hounds.
A nest of snakes writhed in Her hair, sometimes
shedding, sometimes renewing. Until the new moon slit
the sky, Hecate shared clues to Her secrets. Those who
believed understood. They saw that form was not fixed,
watched human become animal become tree become
human. They witnessed the power of Her favored herbs:
black poppy, smilax, mandragora, aconite. Awesome
were her skills but always Hecate taught the same
lesson:

Without death there is no life.

From *Lost Goddesses of Early Greece*, by
Charlene Spretnak (1978)

Keeping Her Keys



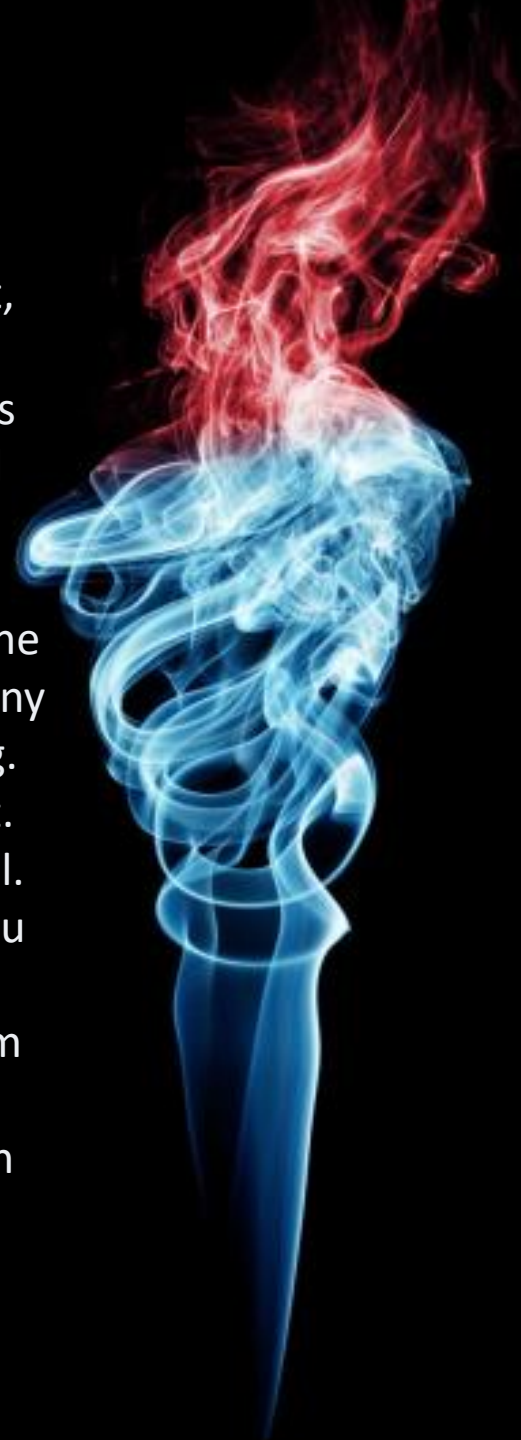
A glowing key is positioned on the left side of the image. The key's head is a simple ring, and its shaft is dark with a small notch at the bottom. It is set against a bright, circular glow that fades into a dark, starry background. The overall color palette is a mix of deep blues, purples, and oranges.

“... “key-holder” described aspects of Hekate that agreed with his (Proclus) portrayal of her as having the ability to bind together and harmonize diverse elements, to close the boundaries of things within the Cosmos, to bring individual souls to fulfillment – in short, as an entity much like The Cosmic Soul.” – from Hekate Soteira by S.I. Johnston (1990)



Hekate's torch illuminates the pervading darkness with a dim lunar light. In ancient classical literature she was known as one of the Daughters of the Night, and with her dogs she guards the gates of the underworld. If she is your angel, you have to learn how to think, speak, and act without countering the darkness that has hold of you. Hekate is at one with the dark. Your way of reasoning and understanding likewise has to be enlightening as the moon illuminates—soft, incomplete, obscure, romantic, slightly chilling, beautiful.

Psychology tends to be solar, wanting to bring all things to light, to overcome the darkness and make everything manageable. It wants to banish darkness with any means at its disposal. But no one needs such a harsh cleansing and brightening. It would be better to be deepened and darkened by an experience of the night. You would then become more complex, more interesting, less one-dimensional. You can see that the point of staying in the dark is not to trick it into making you brilliant and germ-free, but to make you a more interesting person and to give you a more fascinating life. In therapeutic times like ours, these goals may seem odd. But they are ultimately more humane. Rather than giving you a spotless, well-adjusted personality, they give you substance. You become a person worth knowing, worth listening to, and worth loving, in all your dimensions.” – Dark Nights of the Soul: A Guide to Finding Your Way Through Life's Ordeals by Thomas More.



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

HEKATE



Ἑκάτη



FOR SHE IS THE MOTHER OF ALL
CREATION,
ANGELS AND DAEMONS ARE HERS
TO COMMAND.
PROTECTOR OF HER CHILDREN,
STRENGTH TO THE WEAK,
THE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS.
GIVER OF HER KEYS OF GREAT
BLESSING.
BE CONFIDENT IN HER.
TRUST IN YOURSELF.
FOR SHE HAS GIVEN YOU ALL YOU
REQUIRE,
CLAIM THE BOUNTY THAT IS YOUR
RIGHT.

Keeping Her Keys



*Hail to the darkness,
Without and within.
Hail to the Underworld,
Without and within.
I honor my darkness,
I value my time in the Underworld.
Hail to Hekate who stands
With me in the
Dark of my
Underworld journey.
To the light of her torches,
To the gift of her keys,
To the way of the witch,
Our journey is of the dark
And the Underworld.
Hail to the emotional depths
Through which we are reborn,
Hail to the dark, wet womb
From which all life comes.
Hail Hekate of the Underworld*



Hail Hekate, Mistress of the Night.
Pale Chthonic Queen,
It is to your darkness I turn
When the world threatens to consume me.
Hail Hekate, Mistress of the Night.
Torch bearing Goddess,
I freely follow your path,
As you light the way towards truth.
Hail Hekate, Mistress of the Night.
Keeper of the keys,
I take those you offer
And claim them as my right.
Hail Hekate, Mistress of the Night.
Goddess of Witches,
I seek your mysteries of the dark,
Reveal your truth and mine
Hail Hekate, Mistress of the Night.
Guardian of Souls,
Awaken what is deep inside my darkness.



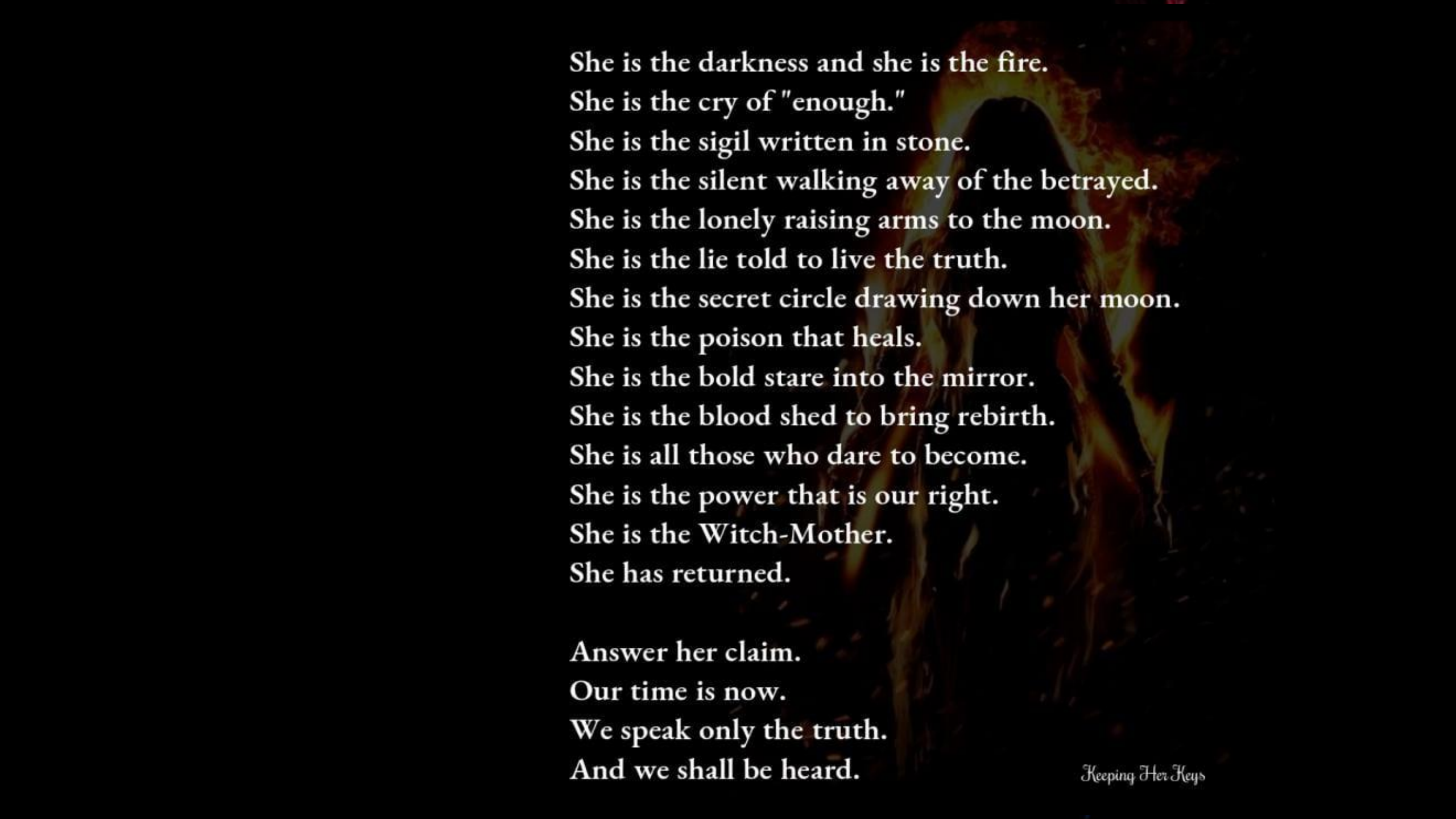


Honoring Hekate on the Dark Moon



<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/keepingherkeys/2018/05/simple-ways-to-honor-hekate-on-the-dark-moon/>





She is the darkness and she is the fire.
She is the cry of "enough."
She is the sigil written in stone.
She is the silent walking away of the betrayed.
She is the lonely raising arms to the moon.
She is the lie told to live the truth.
She is the secret circle drawing down her moon.
She is the poison that heals.
She is the bold stare into the mirror.
She is the blood shed to bring rebirth.
She is all those who dare to become.
She is the power that is our right.
She is the Witch-Mother.
She has returned.

Answer her claim.
Our time is now.
We speak only the truth.
And we shall be heard.

Ἐκράτη

GODDESS OF
OUR TIME

Keeping Her Keys

