

Chapter 8

Hekate's Companions—Goddesses and the Divine Masculine

*To Hekate, She Who Lights the Way,
Illuminating her companions,
Those of the Moon's Mysteries,
The Illuminating Torchbearers,
The Ancient Witches of Lore,
The Soul Guides,
And Mistresses of Shadows,
Guardians, Guides, and Gatekeepers.
Be with me now,
Lead me on my crooked journey.*

As in the tale of Persephone, Hekate is often a meditator, connecting us to other goddesses and gods. Hekate has been linked to not only Persephone but also Demeter, Persephone's mother. Hekate's lunar companions are Artemis and Selene, along with her witchy "daughters," Circe and Medea. At times, particularly in ancient spells, Hekate is evoked alongside Aphrodite (Venus to the Romans), who often is a companion for modern witches. Hekate is also connected to other dark goddesses, from the Cailleach to Kali Ma, through her associations with shadows, being uncontrollable, and her fierceness. The Morrigan and Lilith are frequently companions for many practitioners today, as may be expressions of the dark gods.

Regarding the divine masculine, while Hekate was certainly connected to the underworld lord Hades (Pluto), she is perhaps most closely coupled with Hermes (Mercury), who shared her role as Psychopomp (Soul Guide), an association found in historical writings. In other texts, such as Hesiod's *Theogony*, her relationship with Zeus (Jupiter) is explained, citing his very different view of her compared to other goddesses. Zeus acknowledged Hekate's dominion over land, sea, and sky. She did as she pleased, in other words. There are references to her being partnered with Kronos (Saturn), hinting at how ancient her origins are. This also fits within her family tree, wherein she was related to both Kronos and Zeus.

Hekate as a Titan was the only child born to Asteria and Perses. Asteria is a goddess of the stars, whereas Perses was described as a wiseman, although his name means "destroyer." In her parentage, the roots of Hekate's association with the night and wisdom were formed. Hekate was also related to her frequent companion, Selene, another Titan goddess, whose work was as overseer of the moon.

Working with Multiple Deities

As the divine Gatekeeper of the Mysteries, it is natural for Hekate to be accompanied by other deities, often those historically linked to her and those with whom she has much in common. She may also introduce us to goddesses, gods, and spirits that she knows will greatly benefit us, much in the same manner depicted in Persephone's story as a mediator who guides and connects.

Other deities may, in turn, lead us to her. The spirits we are close to may evolve over time. Some come for short periods, leaving us with only memories. Others are like good friends whom we may not talk to all the time, but when we do, it's always wonderful. Then there are our closest relationships with the divine, built upon a foundation of serious devotion. Yet even these

bonds transform. Often, our spirit guides are revealed as personalized expressions of the divine. I've heard many accounts of how people were guided by a rather mysterious woman in their dreams, and even personal encounters, which are later understood as visitations from Hekate or other goddesses.

Our personal gods, goddesses, and other spirits create a sort of council of advisors. Some may always be present; others come and go. As with any group, sometimes they may not get along. Fundamentally, as long as Hekate and her companions are met with sincerity, our association with them, be it brief or permanent, will be beneficial. It is when we slide into shadowy expectations, calling upon them as favor-granting devices, as though pressing buttons on a vending machine, that they become troublesome. Goddess-centered witchcraft allows for the divine feminine to appear as she wills; rather than putting rigid expectations on her, we must acknowledge that she is mysterious and magical, following her own rules that we are not privy to. She often undoes conditioning we have about her and witchcraft. When you become aware of an expression of the divine feminine, or the divine masculine, meet it with curiosity, creativity, and trust.

Gender and the Divine Feminine and Masculine

We are fortunate to live in a time when traditional gender roles are being challenged. That being said, it can be helpful to examine the historical differences between the divine feminine and masculine as a means of better understanding our own relationships with them, and perhaps even our own gender.

The divine feminine represents all matters to do with the home, family, intuition, and emotions. For goddesses associated with the moon, add magick and resisting mainstream

expectations. The divine masculine was generally viewed as outward focused, more assertive, and concerned with public life. But there are numerous variations and exceptions.

Hekate was frequently partnered with Hermes in ancient sources, wherein they both typically played roles as mediators, messengers, and psychopomps. Hekate, who doesn't usually have children in the historical records, can be seen as a maiden. Hermes had sexual relations with all genders and had a child with Aphrodite, whose name inspired the former term for intersexed individuals. Through our modern lens, Hermes could easily be described as "gender fluid." These are just a few examples of the complexities of gender when relating to the divine and as reflected in our own lives.

I recommend having some sort of dedicated space for any deity that you are working with, including images and symbols representing how you experience them, along with a candle that is connected to them. Offerings can be made to them individually or as a group.

If you choose to honor them as a group, you can set up something called a Cauldron Council. Having a representation of each member is helpful. A method many in the coven use is inscribing the names and symbols of each of their council on a bay leaf or tile and keeping them in a cauldron or other container. If you choose this method, ask who has guidance to offer, then draw a name.

Communicating with the Divine

The divine communicates with us through dreams, inner knowings, and synchronicities. It is our task to pay attention and watch out for these things. We can intentionally connect with them through rituals, readings, and even exchanging letters with them, one of my personal favorite practices. (This is explained a little later in the section called "Voces Deae.")

Although just about any deity can become part of our personal council, there are some goddesses who are more likely to take up residency. Specifically, other moon goddesses, such as Artemis and Selene, are prone to arrive when we need mystery and rewilding. Hekate's partners in the underworld journey of healing, Persephone and Demeter, frequently show up when we are working on healing, especially wounds from the past. As we awaken to our own witch power, Circe and Medea may arrive, teaching us much about the craft and helping us resist the temptation to misuse it.

Artemis: The Wild Mysteries

*It is nights like tonight,
She comes to me,
Gliding on pale moonbeams,
Shooting the wild back into me.*

Hekate and Artemis share several attributes related to their presentation as expressions of the Great Mother and also as maidens who resist conformity. Fundamentally, they are goddesses who resist the status quo, favoring the liminal and able to open the way to the mysteries. They share a special emphasis on all things related to pregnancy, childbirth, children, and the vulnerable. Hekate's affinity with magick, found in ancient plays and other texts, was sometimes shared with Artemis. It was only Artemis's later evolution into the Roman Diana that she assumed her role as a huntress. Hekate and Artemis and their interwoven nature, both in history and personal experiences, is complex. It is their nature to resist pigeonholing. Ultimately, they invite us into the mysteries of the moon and the wild.

Themes

The Artemis that is popular today reflects her role as the maiden-huntress, the wild one who delights in freedom and all things connected to the moon. Sometimes depicted as the maiden in the triple-goddess three stages of life model, she can thus be associated with the waxing moon. Artemis in this form is vigorous, bearing an energy similar to the sign of Sagittarius. She wanders freely into our lives, typically calling us to return to our own wild nature.

History

While the Artemis as we know her today was found in ancient times, in some areas she was known as a Great Mother—a specific example being her worship at Eleusis. She was incredibly popular, as evidenced by numerous temples, writings, and art.

Much like how we view today's pop culture figures through our own biases, the ways Artemis and Hekate were perceived varied greatly in ancient times. Back then, of course, geography was a limiting factor, and each region would develop its own myths and histories. I feel a kinship with these ancients who were grappling with faces of the sacred feminine and using different names for it. Today we may chant, "Hekate, Cerridwen, come to us, let us be reborn"—not viewing the goddesses as disconnected beings but recognizing the different emanations of the same goddess. Artemis may be the wandering maiden, a figurehead for all of us queer women, or she may show up in our lives as a maternal force.

This association that Hekate has with Artemis is very important when examining their history in ancient Rome. Ancient Romans, much like the ancient Greeks did, adopted many of their beliefs from other cultures. The names Hekate and Artemis were changed, but they kept the compilation of powers associated with them. A lot of Artemis's attributes were transferred to

Diana. Since Artemis and Hekate are so entwined, certain Hekatean aspects—such as magick—also became associated with Diana. But other aspects of Hekate, or Hecate to the Romans, becomes more infernal, while her governance of crossroads and roads becomes associated with a figure known as Trivia, which means “of the three ways.”

Working with Artemis

Artemis is typically an energizing figure. When we engage with her, we are likely to find ourselves wandering in the wild—whether that be walking in nature or breaking free of being “too civilized.” I’ve always liked this contradiction—there were countless temples (normative structure of religion) dedicated to a goddess who resisted conformity. But Artemis will always insert the thrum of individual freedom. She is the eternal archer, piercing us with her arrows to wake us up, reconnecting us to the sacredness of the moon and who we truly are.

Symbols of Artemis, beyond those of the moon and arrows, include wild animals, especially deer. When wildlife shows up unexpectedly, it may well be an envoy of Artemis.

Selene: The Lunar Journey

*Eternal Mother Moon,
Constantly shifting,
Steadfast transformer,
Quiet and swift.*

Selene’s name means “light,” and her epithets include Phoebe and Phos. These epithets are often applied to Artemis and Hekate as well, because they have specific associations with lunar rather than solar energies. Selene was ancient, predating the classical Greek period, and was referenced in Hesiod’s *Theogony*, which was written almost 3,000 years ago.

Over the centuries, Selene's connection with Artemis and Hekate grew stronger, so that the three were often intertwined. In ancient spells, Hekate, Selene, and Artemis were often evoked together as a trinity of lunar goddesses. Selene oversees the moon's mysteries, intuition, magick, and emotions—she embodies all things associated with the moon. Artemis watches over these aspects but also brings the spirit of youthfulness and independence. Hekate is the divine mediator, symbolizing how the moon makes life on earth possible. A modern version positions Artemis as maiden (waxing moon), Selene as mother (full moon), and Hekate as crone (waning/Dark Moon).

Selene's task was to lead the moon through its nightly journey from an oceanic cave to the celestial heights and back again. She was responsible for the moon's phases. She represents the spirit of the moon, and as Hekate is related to all things lunar, they are deeply interwoven. Like Hekate, Selene was a Titan, part of the family of old gods whose supremacy was usurped by Zeus and his Olympians. Both Selene and Hekate are illuminating night goddesses who are connected to the depths.

Themes

While Hekate's lunar aspects represent only one facet of her, Selene is purely focused on the intuitive, magickal, depths of the moon. Her nightly voyage from the bottom of the sea to the Starry Road, along with the changing moon's faces, connects us to the cycles of nature and the mysteries of the universe. Turn to Selene when you are feeling lost and seek her guidance.

Selene fell in love with the mortal Endymion, and every night she would pause in her journey to gaze upon his beautiful face. Zeus had placed Endymion in an eternal sleep, so he retained his beauty forever. Selene's dedication to Endymion offers a way for us to explore our own relationships. Selene even bore children by Endymion, and so unlocks our own generative

potential and creativity. Thus she is an excellent companion for all manner of gestation and birth, from children to projects associated with the lunar aspects of intuition, emotions, magick, and mysteries.

History

The ancient worship of Selene was seen as outside mainstream Greek religion. Much like Hekate, but very unlike Artemis, Selene remained on the margins of religious practice. *The Homeric Hymns* contains a beautiful verse dedicated to her, describing her great beauty and her chariot leading the moon across the sky. The ancient Greeks viewed her as both the moon itself and the goddess who oversaw its cycle. This practice of personifying physical objects was common back then; for example, Nyx was seen as the embodiment of night.

Working with Selene

Selene tends to be a calming spirit, bringing love and healing to those who call upon her. She relieves loneliness, soothes broken hearts, and reminds us that even the darkest moments will yield to brighter days. Above all, she teaches that life, like the moon, goes through phases. Her profound beauty, which we experience whenever we are awestruck by the moon, may lead us to better self-care, acceptance of our own worth, and increased confidence. The stone selenite is named for Selene and is very suited for working with her.

Persephone: From Innocent Maiden to the Queen of the Underworld

Great Goddess, Fierce Queen.

Teach me to craft my own crown,

*From the dust, tears, and blood
Of my pain.*

Persephone's journey from Kore (the maiden) to Persephone (the queen of the Underworld) was brokered by Hekate. In the rituals of Eleusis, Hekate mediated the journey to Persephone's secret chamber, and the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* recounts Persephone's transition from innocent maiden to fierce yet benevolent queen.

Our own relationship with Hekate may place us in the role of Persephone. Hekate often comes to us when we are broken by the nastiness of the world, our innocence having been violated. She emerges from her cave to console and guide us through the healing Underworld journey. Persephone's union with Hades symbolizes our own need to reconcile with our shadow self and perhaps heal our masculine side.

Both Hekate and Persephone are chthonic goddesses who bear illuminating torches and are associated with the riches found only in the depths. In ancient times, the harvest and other treasures were often stored underground or in caves. The chthonic was not viewed as purely hellish but as a complex territory of spirits. Hekate and Persephone were both called Anassa Eneroi (Queen of the Dead); Hekate was the psychopomp who guided spirits to and from the Underworld, and Persephone ruled over them. With Hekate's governance over land, sea, and sky and Persephone's emergence from the depths to awaken the natural world, they shared above-ground powers over fertility and the physical realm of the middle world.

Themes

The central tenet of Persephone's story is her transition from maiden to queen, from helpless to empowered, as evidenced in the two names by which she was known. Kore, which refers to her pre-Underworld period, is an epithet meaning "maiden," "sprout"—symbolizing the vitality of

youth and new growth. Whereas Persephone (Proserpine to the Romans), her actual name, translates as “destroyer,” referencing the power of decay and decline.

Like Hekate, Persephone teaches that life is a cycle of creation and destruction; without death, there is no life. Persephone illustrates the transmutation of pain into power and the sometimes brutal adaptations one must make during unpleasant circumstances. Ultimately, she rises to the obligations of her throne, becoming a benevolent sovereign who is both tender and fierce with the spirits in her Underworld realm.

In one story, she grants the grief-stricken Orpheus his wish to bring Eurydice back from the dead but with one condition: that he walk in front and not look back at her until they reach the living world. Orpheus makes the promise, but as soon as he reaches the light, he looks back. Eurydice, not having yet crossed the threshold, is immediately sent back to the Underworld forever. During the trials that Aphrodite set for Psyche, Persephone willingly shared a piece of her own beauty, with the instruction that Psyche not look at it. Poor Psyche couldn't resist peeking, and she fell into a deep sleep as a result. Both these stories provide examples of how we mortals can fall into the temptations of our own shadow selves. When Persephone speaks, it's best to follow her edicts exactly.

History

The telling of Persephone's transformation from maiden to Underworld queen dates back almost 3,000 years, although some scholars now posit that the story is likely much older. She was a central goddess in ancient Greece and perhaps, like Hekate, was adapted from earlier versions of the Great Mother from cultures visited by the Greeks.

While there were many centers of worship, Eleusis was the main location. The rituals there were incredibly popular and, unlike some other festivals, were available to everyone.

People traveled from far and wide to experience them. The ceremonies consisted of two components—the first was a series of minor preparation rituals; these led to the second and greater celebration of the cycle of rebirth.

This second celebration consisted of three main components: purification, descent into the mysteries, and rebirth, echoing Persephone's governance over the natural cycles of life, death, and regeneration. After Christianity replaced the earlier religions, the essence of the Eleusinian Mysteries became syncretized with saints and Christian festivals. Regardless, Persephone has continued to be a very widely appreciated figure in art and pop culture.

Working with Persephone

“Are you the queen of your own life?” asks Persephone. She can challenge us to let go of the past and offers us great comfort when we are doing personal shadow work, especially when we are trying to resolve trauma. She shows us that spending time in the Underworld is necessary for growth and that our own riches may be lurking down there. If you have buried talents, interests, or passions, she can shine her torch on them, pointing out that these treasures are our personal throne.

Her cyclical journey connects us to the rhythms of the natural world and of our own lives. Honoring Persephone at the commencement of spring and autumn connects us to her and these cycles, echoing the spirit of the ancient Eleusinian rituals. Reflecting on her union with Hades can help us to find the good in bad situations but also make us aware of the seductive powers of “dark lords.”

Demeter: The Mother

*She who knows the story,
She who holds the power,
She who is the Mother,
Knowing pain and joy,
Watching over the cycles of our lives.*

Persephone's mother, Demeter (Ceres in Latin), is very much entwined in her story and rituals. In one myth, Demeter, accompanied by Hekate, confronts Zeus about their daughter's fate. After she goes on a furious rampage, Hekate calms her down, and off they go to sort out the mess. And it was Demeter who gave the Eleusinian Mysteries to Triptolemus, thereby initiating a series of rituals that persisted for hundreds of years.

But worship of Demeter was not limited to Eleusis; she was also an important goddess of agriculture, fertility, and civilization. Like Hekate and Persephone, Demeter was a chthonic torchbearer, although her association was more with the earth itself than with the Underworld. Widely viewed as a Great Mother goddess, Demeter is especially concerned about the sacred feminine in the middle world, although she has her darker aspects. When Persephone was violated by Hades, Demeter swore to destroy humanity by rendering the world barren. Demeter may arrive in our lives when we are veering too far from her priorities; in other words, when it is time to tend to our own crops.

Themes

Exploring the complex relationship between Demeter and Persephone can help to heal our personal mother wounds. Although their relationship was imperfect, they still came together to guide others into the mysteries. Demeter can remind us not to hold on too tightly to others, as she

did with Persephone. She evokes the structured world of intentional growth, but she also challenges us to overthrow systems that confine us. An example of this is the ancient festival of Thesmophoria, when women could temporarily reverse the status quo of the patriarchy and become the leaders.

History

Demeter was claimed by the Greeks in the same way that they claimed to have invented both agriculture and civilization. The Eleusinian Mysteries represented only a fraction of the widespread cult following and many festivals that honored Demeter, which signaled her importance in a country where only about 20 percent of the land was arable. The Lesser Mysteries—celebrated in the spring—and other first-sowing festivals honored her as Chloe (Verdant Goddess), whose name means “of the green.” During the growing season, she was worshipped as Evalosia (Mother of the Harvest). While Persephone reigns with Hades in the Underworld, Demeter was Brimo Cyanopeplos, the raging, dark-veiled mother of the barren world.

Working with Demeter

As with Persephone, rituals honoring Demeter during spring and autumn are excellent opportunities for seeking her presence. Celebrate your own Thesmophoria during autumn, the time when it was traditionally held, by reversing roles with someone for a day. For personal work, Demeter is unparalleled for helping to heal the mother complex, whether it be with our own mother or how we relate to the archetype. Perhaps surprisingly, connecting with Demeter often signals a period of reconciling with our own rage, and she can guide us toward healthy

expressions of anger. She is particularly helpful when we are balancing the need for order, when we are synthesizing our wild and civilized parts, and in all matters relating to the natural cycle.

Circe: Witch Who Sees Beyond

*Mistress of plants and animals,
Knower of secrets and lies.
With unique voice and clearest sight,
Show me the ways of truth.*

In her mythology, Circe is both biological and spiritual daughter of Hekate. She was born a demigoddess, who fit in with neither the gods nor humans. After she was banished to an isolated island, she made a home for herself and created the practice of witchcraft. Circe is the original witch in Greek mythology, and has a special connection with the natural world. She is one who can see beyond the surface and connect with the spirits of the deeper world—from deities to the departed.

Like Hekate, Circe was an outsider because she was a powerful woman who could wield magick, abiding outside civilizations where females did as they were told. Both evoke personal sovereignty, teaching us to become the keepers of our own cauldrons. Circe often shows up to remind us that we have power as a witch and that reigning supreme over our own “island” is better than trying to fit in where we don’t belong. She reminds us to see beyond the surface to reveal lies that have been told to us and to see the spirits of the deeper world.

Themes

Modern witches often feel like misfits, having experienced rejection and invalidation. We can become mired in feeling like outsiders, continuing to define ourselves through the lens of

mainstream society and those who reject us. Circe (Kirke in Greek) teaches us to see our lives through our own eyes and to stop viewing it through others' perception of us. This can be a revolutionary process that can lead to great change. Like Circe, we should shift our gaze toward witchcraft, finding beauty in what speaks truth to us and cutting ties with those who find us peculiar or different.

Circe was criticized because of her voice, but on her island, she learned to harness its power. When confronted by liars, she worked her magick to reveal their true nature—like when she turned a cruel girl into the monster Scylla and men invading her island into pigs. Yet she showed kindness to Odysseus and helped him journey to the world of spirits. Because she was a mother as well as a witch, she is a source of inspiration to all those walking the same path, showing them how to merge the magickal with motherhood.

History

Circe was a mythical woman, playing supporting roles in several ancient stories, particularly that of Odysseus (Ulysses in Latin). Unlike Hekate, Artemis, Persephone, and Demeter, Circe wasn't worshipped—she was viewed as a minor deity and not a proper goddess. However, Circe has captivated the attention of creatives over the centuries, and there are many great works depicting her. She is usually shown as an evil temptress who caused trouble for civilized men; she embodied the spirit of the dangerous woman in the same vein as biblical Eve.

These days, Circe is being reclaimed as a powerful witch and a symbol of justice for all those who feel marginalized because they have power and a unique voice.

Working with Circe

It can be lonely as a solitary witch, so Circe can become our companion, alleviating the sense of isolation. If we talk to her, share our emotions about feeling like a misfit, she will render comfort and advice. Be warned, though, she speaks the truth and can be quite stern with her guidance. If we are living a false life, she may point this out.

When concocting spells, Circe is a lovely helpmate. If we listen to her unique voice, she'll make useful suggestions. But most importantly, she teaches us to see beyond the surface—peering into the cauldron, across the veil, and into the mysteries from whence all magick comes.

Medea: Witch of Shadows

*Teach me how to
Stand in my own power,
Bring light to the shadows,
Where magick is revealed.*

Alongside Circe, Medea can also be considered a “spiritual daughter” of Hekate. As witches of lore, they are entwined with Hekate as queen of witches. Both Circe and Medea were depicted as “evil sorceresses” who worked baneful spells on innocent men. Unlike Circe, Medea received widespread attention thanks partly to Euripides’s widely popular (even today) play about her. Beyond that, like Circe, she has been expressed through many works of art, from paintings to operas.

Little attention has been dedicated to reimagining Medea, and she is almost always shown as a horrible yet pitiable creature who slays her own children. Historians have noted that versions of her story prior to Euripides’s treatment did not include her killing her offspring.

Euripides's play is an excellent example of how views changed from the ancient perceptions of female benevolent magick to the later interpretations of them as malevolent beings.

When I first started writing about Medea in my blog, there was a surprising amount of vitriol in the comments, including pointing out that she isn't actually a goddess. Medea activates our own shadows. As for her not technically being a goddess, she is one for me. In reclaiming Medea from the grip of those who use her as a mechanism for vilifying powerful women, I have found great shadow healing. Yes, I am a witch, capable of baneful things, but I choose to not fall into the traps set by others, which could lead to me lashing out. Medea has become an important spirit for those healing from trauma, and she helps to illuminate the witch power that they have pushed deep into the shadows.

Themes

Medea's story inspires us to be diligent in our practice. She reminds us to carefully craft our spells and talismans, giving thought to the true nature of our workings. Her story is difficult but offers great insights. If we are being tempted by a "heroic prince" to do what is not in our own best interests, think of what happened to Medea, who was forced into all manner of deplorable acts. She was used and abused by powerful men, a story all too common, and we can identify with her vengeance as we unlock our own righteous rage in the pursuit of justice and healing.

History

Medea's story is embedded within that of Jason's adventures, of which numerous versions were known—from ancient times right up until the present. Although there are various tales, generally, Medea is a beautiful daughter of a king in trouble. Jason (or Iason) shows up, seduces Medea, and convinces her to use her magick to capture a powerful talisman, the legendary Golden

Fleece. While ensuring Jason's military victory, it also leads to the death of Medea's brother.

Regardless, Medea then accompanies Jason on an epic journey.

During their trek back to Jason's home, they encounter Circe—who is Medea's aunt—and she absolves Medea of her nefarious deeds. Eventually, they reach Jason's home and settle into married life, although he continues to ask her for magick "favors." At one point, Jason even has Medea restore his father to life in a sort of cauldron of rebirth. Eventually, Jason casts Medea aside in favor of a younger, better connected woman, leaving Medea completely rejected.

In Euripides's version, she then slays their two sons, while the older versions of the tale have her simply being outcast, which lacks theatrical flair. Another depiction finds her escaping, driving a chariot led by a dragon. Horrifying and highly entertaining, Medea's narrative has endured in countless forms. In so many of the later stories, she is the dangerous woman, with her evil nature fully revealed, revealing a cautionary tale from those in power to mind our place and do as we are told. According to those versions, we should accept an unwelcome, cruel fate and step aside quietly. More positive retellings of Medea's story exist, and, as witches, we have an opportunity to vindicate her spirit.

Working with Medea

As a spirit, Medea is a mighty witch—a mythic ancestor who comes to us when we are ready to embrace both our shadow and illuminated aspects. She has no patience with limited views of witchcraft or reinventing it as "light working." Medea reminds us that witchcraft has a complicated history, bound in the portrayal of women and others who use their power to threaten the male-dominated authority. When we are doing shadow work, be it healing our broken pieces or giving light to our hidden talents, she is a most stalwart cheerleader. Rather than being seduced into the trap of conformity, she is a most liberating ally.

Voces Deae—Corresponding with the Goddesses

Voces dea translates as “voice of the goddess.” The practice involves writing a heartfelt letter to your chosen goddess, then allowing her to write a reply through you. This is a great project to do with a partner, so that each of you exchange your written letters, then channel the reply to the other. I try to do this exercise at least once a month, typically with profound results. We do it in the coven at least once a year, and it is beloved by all. When new coven members do it for the first time, many question if the goddess will really reply. She always does.

I recommend creating magickal paper and other supplies to enhance the process. Infusing the paper with sacred smoke, adding images of your chosen goddess, choosing or crafting a special ink, and working in colors that you associate with her, are examples. Amethyst, bay leaves, and the color purple are generally good for this project. You can create a special candle for your chosen goddess as a connector, too. Or write her name and symbols on a bay leaf, punch a hole in it, and wear it around your neck as a talisman. Infused bay leaves can also be burned in the cauldron.

Should you want to divine which goddess to exchange letters with, use the Cauldron Council and pull out one. It will be exactly the right goddess for you at that time.

Connect to your chosen goddess through art, create an altar in her honor, play music that resonates with you and your goddess; you will feel what is right.

When you are ready to write to her, with your correspondences and talismans in place, light a candle and place it near your writing area.

Without self-editing, write to her; just let it all flow without censoring. When you are finished, offer the letter to her by ending it with something like, *“These words are my offering to you. I am open to receiving your reply.”*

Seal the letter with wax, bind it with cord, or put in an envelope. Keep it in a sacred space. Try not to reread the letter before sealing. You may want to do an immediate exchange of letters or wait for a special date to get her reply.

If you are exchanging letters with a partner, you can each read the other’s letter if you want. Keep in mind, however, that our goddesses don’t require that we know what has been written; they do, and they will respond accordingly.

When the time comes to channel the reply, you can have the your letter nearby to better connect to the chosen goddess. Have your chosen correspondences nearby, too. Then ask your goddess to reply through you: *“[Goddess’s name], I ask for you to work through me, as scribe for you reply to my [or partner’s name] letter. May your wisdom and guidance flow through my hands.”*

Don’t filter what she has to say, simply be the one recording her words as she wills. Her reply may be straightforward or more symbolic, calling you into her mysteries. It’s possible that you may not get a written response at this time. She could respond through other means, such as dreams, inner knowings, or synchronicities.

The Sovereign Goddesses Ritual

This ritual evokes the presence of Hekate and all six goddesses who are closely aligned with her—Artemis, Selene, Persephone, Demeter, Circe, and Medea—to awaken the goddess within you and connect you to them. Together, they comprise a Sacred Seven Cauldron Council.

However, you can also include your own goddesses as you feel led to. We've been doing this ritual for years in the coven, always around the summer solstice. One goddess may come through more strongly than the others, or you may experience them all equally. Enjoy this ritual, trusting in the goddesses to show up as and when they are meant to.

Preparation

- A khernips ritual (see page XX) with a sprig of dried thyme or rosemary is lovely as cleansing prior to the sovereign goddess ritual.
- Bay leaves with each of the goddesses' names can be created and kept in the cauldron.
- Purple and amethyst are excellent accompaniments for this ceremony.
- Create an altar honoring them all; include images, candles, and symbols associated with them.
- Choose or craft a special amulet that you can wear as a sacred adornment during the ritual.
- Craft a talisman with charms, symbols, and colors that you associate with each of the goddesses. Select a color of thread that represents each one, braid it, and then add one charm for each of them. The charms can be disks with their images or name inscribed on, stones or symbols that you associate with each of them. Finish the talisman by anointing with Oleum Spiritu prior to the ritual. You can wear this as sacred adornment for the ritual and after as a connection to them, wrap it around a candle or place it on the altar.
- Choose suitable offerings, which you will place on the altar during the ritual.
- Wearing a crown is perfect for this ritual, be it a botanical one you craft yourself or something you purchase.

Procedure

Position yourself comfortably in front of the altar, perform the khernips ritual, light any candles, and then recite:

*Come Goddesses and Witches,
Ancient but new,
To this place,
I beckon you.
Artemis,
Selene,
Persephone,
Demeter,
Circe,
Medea
And Great Hekate,
I welcome you.*

Raise your arms up high. Then make your offerings, saying:

I honor all Goddesses through these offerings, expressing gratitude and connection.

Continue with this invocation:

*Hekate, Queen of Wisdom, Anassa Kleidoukhos, grant the keys of magick and mystery. Guide me with your wisdom and open the way.
Artemis, Wild Goddess, Anassa Apollousa, reveal your wildness, your unapologetic ways and power of destruction for all that no longer serves.
Selene, Mistress of the Moon, Anassa Phoebe, illuminate my journey with your silver light, and loving ways.
Persephone, Undisputed Queen, Anassa Eneroi, awaken triumph, tenacity, and ability to rise strong.
Demeter, Goddess of Structure and Balance, Anassa Theron, share your compassion,*

discipline, and force of will.

*Circe, Original Witch, Anassa Pharmakeia, unlock the knowledge of witchcraft, true voice,
and the power to create.*

*Medea, Eternal Witch, Anassa Venificarum, share your passion, cleverness, and the ability to
heal.*

I invite your powers into me now as a proclamation of my own sacred sovereignty.

The energy of your fires burns within me.

Your mighty winds are my breath,

Your blood-water of creation runs through my veins,

And my feet walk your road.

Like you, I am the darkest night of the Underworld,

The starry heights of the Upper World,

And all points in between.

Eternal,

Strong and wise,

Powerful beyond measure.

Sovereign. Free. True.

Pause here so that the goddesses can speak to you through words and images. When you feel ready, conclude the ritual by reciting:

Great Hekate,

Artemis,

Selene,

Persephone,

Demeter,

Circe,

And Medea,

I am enlivened with your spirits,

May I honor you well.

*May you forever watch over my crooked path.
Hail and Farewell.*

Bring your arms to your sides in a sweeping motion.

As with all rituals, record your experiences and be open to further communications.

The Great Goddesses Oracle Reading

This reading conveys messages from each of the seven goddesses, drawing upon their wisdom and guidance. It can be done with cards (as in the example below) or other divinatory tools. It is a great accompaniment to the sovereign goddesses ritual, or it can be done separately. Given the complexities of this reading, I recommend doing it only once per season.

If you have inscribed bay leaves dedicated to each of the goddesses, arrange them on your reading space, then place the revealed card beside the corresponding goddess.

The structure of the reading is:

- Card #1 Circe: The Seer—what is coming
- Card #2 Medea: The Witch—where to focus your magick
- Card #3 Persephone: The Queen—where your power is
- Card #4 Demeter: The Mother—how the maternal archetype will manifest
- Card #5 Artemis: The Wild—what to do to reclaim your wild soul
- Card #6 Selene: The Journey—what is illuminated
- Card #7 Hekate: The Healer—what the medicine is

Begin with the usual opening ceremony: igniting your candle and performing khernips, if required. Hold the deck and say:

*Hail the Great Goddesses,
Circe,*

Medea,
Persephone,
Demeter,
Artemis,
Selene,
Hekate.
Great Goddesses,
I welcome you.
My intention is pure, my actions true, and will strong.
Grant me guidance through these cards.

Circe, Seer of the Future, what lies ahead? [Draw the card]
Medea, Witch Supreme, where is my magick? [Draw the card]
Persephone, where is my power? [Draw the card]
Demeter, how do I mother/who is mother? [Draw the card]
Artemis, Wild and Free, how do I reclaim my wild? [Draw the card]
Selene, Bright Shining Light in Darkness, what is illuminated? [Draw the card]
Hekate, Mighty Goddess of the Witches, Wise Guide, Guardian, and Gatekeeper,
Where is the medicine? [Draw the card]
[Finish with] Hail and Farewell, with gratitude for your wisdom.

Spend time with the arranged cards after completing the reading, bringing into awareness more details about the messages, then consulting the book that accompanied the cards for standard interpretations. Record the results and impressions from your reading so that you can add notes as more comes to light and so that you can review it all later to see how the reading played out.

