

Temple of Ascending Flame



OPEN PROJECT

Three Faces of Hecate

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29th March-3rd April 2014

This series of workings is the first open project in 2014, designed and conducted by Temple of Ascending Flame. Previous open projects embraced such themes as the Ascending Flame of Lucifer, Gods of the Atlantean Trident and the Draconian current of Lilith and Samael. The present framework is centered on Hecate, Her ancient myths and symbols, and Her role in Draconian self-initiatory magic. It contains 6 workings which have to be done individually on 6 days in a row, at any hour of the evening/night.

Each daily working contains different elements: the first meditation will open you for the energies of the Goddess and invite Her into your personal temple; the following meditations will successively guide you into Her mysteries, taking you on the journey into your personal Underworld; the invocation of the Goddess will integrate the whole experience in intimate communion with Her timeless essence; while the last day's ritual is left to personal choice of each participant. The purpose of this project is to introduce the practitioner to the mysteries of Hecate as the Lady of Transformation and the Goddess of the Crossroads through Her Draconian/Ophidian current and the mystical journey into the Underworld within.

After each working, write down experiences, visions, or anything else that happened and keep it all for your own records. When the whole project is finished, prepare a report (a few sentences about each day's workings) and send it to us. After gathering all reports, we will prepare a summary of results which will be shared with all participants. If you do not feel comfortable with the idea of sharing your vision and experience, you do not have to send the report (this will not exclude you from participation in future open projects), BUT if you would ever like to work with us in the Temple of Ascending Flame and participate in our inner projects, you have to be active, open-minded, and able to talk about your own work. Our wish and hope is to see the Draconian Current spreading dynamically among the practitioners, not kept in hiding in private temples. That is the purpose of our open projects and all public materials and publications.

The following schedule will look familiar to practitioners who have worked with our projects before. But if you have never worked this way and you have questions about the methods, or if anything here seems unclear, feel free to contact us. You do not need to be an advanced practitioner to take part in the project - anyone with genuine interest in Draconian magic and Desire for spiritual ascent on the Path of the Nightside is welcome to join the workings.

Please send your report within 10 days following the final day of the project. We will cease gathering reports on **April 13th** and shortly after you will receive the summary of results. Thank you for interest in our Work and good luck with the project!

About Hecate

Hecate is the teacher of witchcraft and guide to the personal "underworld," the depths of the psyche. She is the guardian of the Mystical Crossroads, where all worlds meet, intersect, and become one. In myths and legends, She is the mother of witchcraft and the goddess of dark magic. It was believed that She appeared at night at the crossroads, accompanied by dogs, ghouls and wraiths. She endowed witches with power over the forces of nature, revealed secrets of herbs and introduced Her followers into rites of transformation and transgression. Her kingdom was that of wild animals: hounds, wolves, and serpents. Her witchcraft also included mysteries of transformation into a beast, a practice resembling the shamanic tradition of shape-shifting. Her cults referred to the concept of life and death, and mystical transformation through death and rebirth. She was benevolent and generous to nature and to humans, as well as ruthless - responsible for all nocturnal atrocities and malefic magic. She ruled the earth, the sky and the sea, and She held dominion over human fates. But She could also endow man with wealth, power and fame, protect soldiers in battles and sailors at sea, watch over justice in courts, and grant victory in competitions. And finally, She was also associated with the moon and worshipped as the Goddess of lunar magic.

Initiation into the mysteries of Hecate is the descent into the Underworld, the inner darkness, through the portals and tunnels of the Nightside, where ancient knowledge lies hidden, awaiting to be re-discovered. Hecate leads us through dark paths to the gate of "hell," where the terrifying Cerberus guards the long forgotten secrets of power and immortality. The key to the door is in the hand of the Goddess and Her torch is the flame of illumination, shining into the depth of the adept's soul. In rites of Draconian magic, She is the guide into the mysteries of witchcraft and the first Initiator on the Path, the one who meets the aspiring Initiate at the Crossroads of the Worlds, leading the soul into the Womb of Lilith, the gateway to the Nightside. Her symbol is the key and the torch, or two torches, associated with the nocturnal journey, entrance-ways and illumination, and the dagger, which is the tool of separation, representing the mystery of liberating the soul from the mundane body.

In ancient depictions, Hecate was often presented as a triple Goddess, with three bodies or three heads. Sometimes these heads were human, representing Her manifold and mystic nature. Other times they were animal heads symbolic of Her divine powers and the initiatory character of Her rites. Various pictures and statues present Her with the head of a dog, serpent, boar, or cow. In this project we will use Her bestial totems typified by the Serpent, Dog and Horse.

The Serpent is the symbol of metamorphosis, transformation and shape-shifting. It represents the Ophidian current of the Goddess and Her power of altering consciousness in order to make the journey into the Nightside possible. We cannot enter the Underworld in the mundane form - we have to leave it behind. This shift in consciousness occurs at Hecate's Crossroads and is necessary to travel into the realms of the Nightside. The gate opened at the Crossroads is the gate within, leading into the inner darkness, the personal Underworld, where we have to let these forces in, embrace them and become one with them. This is the mystery of Hecate's initiatory rites. The serpent is also symbolic of poison. Transformation occurs through poisoning consciousness and initiating the change within. That is why Hecate is often associated with poisonous herbs used in rites of magic to alter consciousness, such as aconite or belladonna, which separate the soul from the body and allow for the journey to worlds and dimensions that cannot be accessed in flesh. The Serpent is the first "face," or aspect, of Hecate explored in this project. This work includes a meditation on entering the Crossroads of the Worlds and opening the gate to the Nightside.

The Dog is the oldest symbol and companion of Hecate. In ancient sources and depictions She is commonly attended by dogs, especially female, and Her appearance was believed to be heralded by the barking or howling of dogs. Also, dogs were regular sacrificial animals in Her cults. The Goddess herself was sometimes called the "she-dog" or "bitch," and She had two ghostly dogs as servants by Her side. These dogs are symbolic of Her chthonic powers and She is also the mistress of Cerberus, the three-headed beast-dog who guards the entrance to the Underworld. Like Cerberus, dogs in ancient myths are guardians and guides standing by the gateways to the realm of the dead. Such is also the role of this "Face" of Hecate. She is both the guardian of the gate to the Underworld and the guide (*psychopompos*) of souls travelling there. She opens the gateways at the Crossroads and guides the traveler into the labyrinths of the Nightside. In meditation exploring this aspect of the Goddess, you will set on a visual journey into your personal Underworld in order to face your inner darkness and look into the mirror of your soul.

The Horse in ancient mythologies is the symbol of movement, transition and otherworldly journeys. It is the vehicle used by the adept to travel through worlds above and worlds below through the axis of the universe. It is the driving force and the symbol of the journey. The horse is also associated with funerary symbolism, and in

funerary rites hearses are drawn by horses, thus assisting the deceased in their journey to the grave, the chthonic womb of the earth. This has a double meaning, as the womb of the earth is the place of both death and resurrection - all life returns to earth and turns to dust, and all vegetation springs from the earth. The horse, or mare, is one of the main symbolic animals of Hecate. This aspect of the Goddess represents the initiatory journey in which the soul, free from bonds of the flesh, travels to the Underworld and returns transformed, possessing knowledge and wisdom that can only be found in these dark regions. In this working you will travel into the depths of your soul, crossing the border between the mundane and otherworldly, conscious and unconscious, waking and sleeping. It also includes assuming an Ophidian/Draconian form in which you will pass through the gate. This meditation will be followed by a dream-working.

Hecate has many names and epithets. The ones chosen for this project are: *Trimorphis* (three-formed), *Trioditis* (of the crossroads), *Enodia* (on the way), *Chthonia* (of the underworld), and *Propylaia* (before the gate). These names, derived from ancient sources, will be used in mantras and invocations throughout the project. The workings and meditations, as well as the sigil, were written and designed by members, friends and partners of the Temple of Ascending Flame.

Before the rituals:

Prepare your ritual space/room/temple in the way you feel it is suitable for this work. You may put statues, images or other sigils that represent Hecate on your altar - these can be ancient depictions, modern images, or simply your personal seals or drawings. You may decorate the altar by placing offerings - roses (dried flowers work best for the chthonic/underworld goddesses), wine symbolizing the blood of the Lunar Goddess, green candles, or other offerings associated with Hecate. You may also choose to focus on the sigil alone, without any other decorations - this choice is entirely up to you. For meditations you will need printed or painted the sigil provided further in this text, big enough to gaze into comfortably. If you wish to paint it, you can use colors associated with the Draconian/Ophidian current: red, golden and black - a golden seal on black background, or black sigil on gold - all these will work fine in this project. Another option is to use emerald green colors - for the background or the sigil. You will also need black candles, although you can have a few green or golden candles, too.

In ancient sources, Hecate is the "blood-eating goddess" and blood is the traditional offering given to the chthonic, underworld deities. Therefore, we will also use blood in this project. The sigil used in this work *should* be anointed and activated with your own blood. It is not absolutely necessary, though, and if the idea of offering a few drops of your own blood puts you off, you don't have to do it in this particular project. But more advanced projects and initiatory work on the Draconian Path, sooner or later, will include the element of blood anyway. If you find such practices unacceptable, perhaps this work is not for you. Think about it before starting this project. The only blood used in these workings should be your own. Even though ancient practices of witchcraft and traditional cults of Hecate included animal sacrifice, we do not encourage such practices in this project. You must remember that Hecate is also the goddess of birth, associated with growth and nurture, and protector of animals, and sacrifice of life is not always welcome in Her rites. You can make the blood offering on each day of the project, or you can do it only on the first day to activate the sigil - this is left up to you. In the Ophidian/Draconian current of Hecate, blood is the substance that opens the doors to the Nightside and the gateways of the soul, and it is also a token of devotion. It is enough to offer just a few drops, no larger amounts are needed. For this you will need a ritual blade - a dagger, knife or sword - a simple razor or lancet will do as well.

Day 1
29th March

Meditation with Hecate's sigil and mantra

If possible, perform this working outdoors, at the crossroads, in the forest or in a quiet, desolate place. If not, try at least to take a walk to such a place before the working and remain there for a while, calling for the Goddess and possibly leaving an offering of your own choice.

Sit in a comfortable position and put the sigil in front of you. Light the candles and burn aromatic incense, such as sandalwood or frankincense. Anoint the sigil with your blood and focus all your attention on it. See how the lines become charged and activated with your life substance. Visualize the sigil glowing and flashing with emerald-green light, sparks of energy flickering all around. At the same time chant the mantra:

"HEKATE TRIMORPHIS TRIODITIS ENODIA"

Keep gazing at the sigil until you can easily memorize and visualize its shape. It is not only the gate to the Nightside but also connects you with other participants. Visualize them as standing/sitting in the circle around you, as black shadows with dark faces.

Then, close your eyes and recall the image in your inner mind. Focus your inner sight on the shape of the sigil, see it forming in front of you, in the black space, shining with golden and emerald light. At this point you can keep chanting the mantra or continue the practice in silence. Continue to see the sigil forming in front of you, in the black space, shining with golden-emerald light. Then imagine it changing, shifting into other shapes, unlocking the gateways of your mind, opening the doors to the Nightside, and showing you objects, entities, landscapes, and scenes. Let the visions flow freely and open yourself for the experience. Send the message through the sigil and ask Hecate for Her presence and guidance on the journey to the Underworld, invite Her to your ritual space and the temple of flesh. When you feel it is time to end the meditation, return to your mundane consciousness, blow out the candles and finish the working.



The Sigil of Hecate

Day 2

30th March

Opening of the Crossroads

Start this working in the same way as the day before: prepare the temple, light the candles and burn incense. Pour red wine into the chalice and put it on the altar. Then sit in a comfortable position and put the sigil in front of you, focusing all your attention on the image. Again, visualize the sigil glowing and flashing with Hecate's emerald-green energy. At the same time chant the words of calling:

"Hecate Trioditis, meet me at the Crossroads and reveal to me the secrets of the Night. With your Key I open the Gates to the Underworld!"

As you keep chanting, feel how the atmosphere in your ritual space thickens and the energies flowing through the sigil fill your ritual space and sharpen your senses. Drink the Sacrament from the chalice and let it fill you with the immortal essence of the Goddess. Then close your eyes and begin the visual journey to the Crossroads.

Visualize yourself in a dark forest at night. The forest is old, there are many withered trees, stumps covered with moss, bones of animals scattered on the ground. At the same time it seems alive and you feel that you are not alone - you can see the eyes of wild animals or forest spirits flashing in the dark. The wind blowing through tree branches resembles whispering voices, and you can also hear the hissing of serpents beckoning you to go deep into the woods and dogs barking and howling from afar. There is a path in front of you and you follow the voices that guide you to the Crossroads of the Worlds.

At the end of the path you reach the three crossing pathways and you notice the Goddess standing there, dressed in a black hooded robe. You cannot see Her face but you can feel Her piercing gaze reaching into the depths of your soul. She stands by the fire which is pale-white, shining with ghastly light and casting living shadows that move and dance around Her. As you approach, She gives you a chalice filled with magical potion. The chalice is simple and carved in bone. The potion is pitch-black and thick. When you drink it, you can feel fire arising at the base of your spine and spreading over the whole body in waves of pain and pleasure.

The Goddess lowers Her hood and now you can see Her face and look into Her eyes. She has a serpent head with glowing reptilian eyes. Open yourself to whatever may come now. Communicate with the Goddess. Let Her guide you through the vision, and when it is over, return to your mundane consciousness and close the working.



Day 3

31st March

Descent into the Underworld

Like the day before, start the meditation with preparing the temple, candles, incense, and the Sacrament. Again, sit in a comfortable position and put the sigil in front of you, focusing all your attention on the image. Visualize it glowing and flashing with sparkles of the emerald-green energy of the Goddess. At the same time chant the words of calling:

"Hecate Propylaia, let me enter your darkly splendid world. With your Torch I illuminate my way through the Night!"

Keep chanting until you sense the change in the atmosphere in your ritual space and you feel ready to continue the working. Drink the Sacrament from the chalice and let it fill you with the immortal essence of the Goddess. Then close your eyes and continue your visual journey from the previous day.

Start the meditation where you finished the day before - return to the Crossroads and drink the potion given to you by the Goddess. Now envision the Goddess with a dog head and burning eyes. As you feel the fire arising within and you gaze into Her eyes, feel Her divine essence entering you and merging with your consciousness. For a while everything becomes black and the whole scene disappears. Then you are back in the forest, standing at the Crossroads and facing an entrance to a dark cave, hidden among the trees. The cave is a portal leading down, into the Underworld. As you enter the cave, you notice black stairs carved in stone, leading into the bowels of the earth. In your left hand you are holding a torch. You can use it to light up the darkness while you are descending the stairs. Envision shadows moving on the walls of the corridor and hear their whispering voices, inviting you to go down, deeper and deeper.

When you reach the end of the stairs, you find yourself in a fire-lit hallway, standing at a huge, ornamented gate. It is guarded by Cerberus, the monstrous three-headed dog who has a snake for a tail and countless snake heads on his back. You reach to your pocket – there is a key and a lash. You strike the earth with the lash and the hound starts to obey you. You put the key in his jaws and the gate opens. Now you can go inside. You are now in a chamber lit with torches, at the Threshold of the Underworld. In the middle of the chamber there is a huge mirror. You come closer and gaze into the mirror, but it is dormant and there is no reflection. You reach into another pocket and find a dagger. Cut your hand and let the blood flow onto the mirror. Now it is alive. You can see images moving and changing in it. Gaze into the mirror and observe the visions. All you see is the reflection of your soul. When the mirror stops showing images and the vision fades, leave the chamber, take the key back and return up the stairs into the woods. Close the working and return to your normal consciousness.



Day 4 **1st April**

Journey through the Nightside

This meditation is followed by a dream-working, therefore it is recommended to perform it shortly before sleep. If possible, you should also sleep in your temple room, within your ritual space.

Follow the same steps as before. Again, sit in a comfortable position and put the sigil in front of you, focusing all your attention on the image. Visualize it glowing and flashing with sparkles of the emerald-green energy of the Goddess. At the same time chant the words of calling:

"Hecate Enodia, lead me into the Underworld of my Soul. With your Dagger I pierce the veil between life and death!"

Like before, keep chanting until you sense the change in the atmosphere in your ritual space and you feel ready to continue the working. Drink the Sacrament from the chalice and let it fill you with the immortal essence of the Goddess. Then close your eyes and continue your visual journey from the point where you left before.

Return to the Crossroads in the woods, receive the potion of transformation from the Goddess, then go down to the mirror chamber at the Threshold of the Underworld. This time, envision the Goddess with the head of a mare. Again, stand before the mirror. Activate it with your blood and call the name of the Goddess. As you gaze at the mirror, at first you can see your human form in which you came there, but then it changes and morphs. The potion/poison drunk at the Crossroads has worked its way through your consciousness to become the elixir of transformation. You are now transforming into a creature of the Nightside. Let it be spontaneous, your new form shaped by your imagination and the energies of the Goddess, or you can visualize yourself in a chosen shape. Take as much time as you need for this visualization.

When the transformation is complete, touch the mirror - you will see now that it is no longer a solid surface. Now it is silvery, liquid and three-dimensional, forming a portal to the Nightside from lunar energies of the astral plane, and you can use it as a gate to the labyrinths of the Underworld. Ask the Goddess to guide you on this journey and step into the mirror. For a moment all becomes black again, and then the blackness crystallizes and

grows into a landscape that you can enter. Let the vision flow freely and enjoy the experience. When the journey is over, return to your temple and proceed to the dream-working.

Dream Work

When the meditation is over, lie down on your bed and bring the image of Hecate's sigil and visions you have just experienced into your mind once again. While gazing at the sigil (you can use the drawn/printed image or simply visualize it in your inner mind), chant the mantra from the first day:

"HEKATE TRIMORPHIS TRIODITIS ENODIA"

Keep your attention focused on the wish to continue the vision in a dream. If you wake up, focus again on the sigil and try to keep this vision in your mind while falling back asleep. Write down your dreams when you wake up. Take a moment to meditate on whether they are related to the magical work and if so, how. Do not worry if they seem irrelevant at first, their meaning may be revealed at a later time.



Day 5 **2nd April**

Invocation of Hecate Trimorphis

Prepare your temple like on the previous day. Pour red wine into the chalice and put it on the altar. Stand or sit in a comfortable position. For a moment, focus on the sigil again and chant the words of calling: **"HEKATE TRIMORPHIS TRIODITIS ENODIA,"** silently or aloud, in an entrancing rhythm. Feel the energies flowing through the sigil and Hecate's presence behind the gates of the Nightside, awaiting invitation to enter your consciousness. When you feel ready to perform the ritual, begin the invocation.

**I invoke Hecate,
The Three-Formed Goddess,
She who has every form and many names,
Guardian of the Dead,
Immortal One,
Daughter of the Night,
Lady of the Crossroads.
I invoke the Mistress of the Three Ways,
She who comes from Darkness into Light,
Shining and beautiful,
Glorious and kind.
I invoke the Lady of the Threshold,
She who cloaks the world with Eternal Night,
Ghastly and terrible,
Cunning and maleficent.
Snake-Girdled One,
Nocturnal One,
Heavenly One,
Blood-drinker and Flesh-eater,
Who devours hearts of those who died untimely,
Who feasts among the graves,
Who comes with hounds and beasts of prey,
With fearsome wolves and venomous snakes,
With howling and hissing,
And in ominous silence.**

**I invoke the Mistress of All,
Goddess of Darkness and Light,
Born of Primordial Chaos
She who frightens and blesses,
Who holds Cerberus in chains,
And grants the Key to the Gates of the Night.**

I call you through your names:

**Hecate, Chthonia, Enodia, Antaia, Kourotrophos, Propylaia, Propolos, Phosphoros, Soteira, Triodia,
Trimorphis, Klêidouchos, Anassa Eneroi, Apotropaia**

**Hecate! Lady of the Underworld! Goddess of Witchcraft! Lady of Darkness! Queen of all who dwell in
Heaven! Queen of all who are pure upon earth! Queen of all the sorcerers of Hell! Triple Goddess! I call
you this night! Come forth to me! Lead me into the depths of my soul to find the wisdom of the Ancients.
Guide me on the pathways of the Dragon, black as the Night, eternal and never-ending. Let me gaze into
the mirror of my soul through your eyes that see everything, deep in the Underworld that hides the secret
of existence! Let me taste your transforming poison! Manifest as the force of my Self-Creation!**

When you finish the words of invocation, drink the Sacrament from the chalice. Sit or lie down, and open yourself for energies manifesting in your ritual space and in your consciousness. Let the experience flow freely and spontaneously. Observe the temple and sense phenomena which manifest in the ritual space when the Lady of the Crossroads comes through the gateways of the Night. Or close your eyes and let Her manifest and speak to you through your inner mind. Even if you do not experience any tangible manifestation or concrete visions, write down all thoughts that you may have after the working and meditate on them for a while, as these might be personal messages from the Goddess. Finish the working with the traditional closing:

And so it is done!



Day 6 **3rd April**

Personal Ritual dedicated to Hecate

The last day concludes the work of the project and the practices are left to your personal choice. You can repeat the workings from the previous days as a whole, or you can simply open yourself for visions of Hecate's current and let Her guide you through the gates of your personal Underworld. However, it is recommended to prepare something yourself for this last day - you can write a mantra, meditation, small ritual, design a sigil, draw an image, compose a piece of ritual music, etc. - something inspired by this work and empowered by the energies of the Goddess. The ability of self-expression is one of the most important foundations of the Draconian self-initiatory process and all creative efforts are magical operations in themselves.

Make this day personal for you. Take a look at your visions and experiences from the whole project and meditate on your previous and future steps on the path, or your personal relationship with the Goddess. Again, you can go to the crossroads or a quiet, desolate place, meditate there and thank the Goddess for Her presence and guidance. Let this final day be a time of reflections and perhaps new inspirations in your spiritual journey on the Path of the Dragon. If you choose to design your own sigil, invocation or meditation and you would like to share it, this will be greatly appreciated, but it is not necessary and in your report you may wish to only share the results from the previous days.