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The Universal Rite of making Libations to the Mother Earth

A LIBATION is the offering of Water or Wine to any of the Gods. The following simple formulas can be used as a Rite of Libation to the Mother Earth. It can be done as a simple rite in itself, but its original use was before and/or after any ritual feast shared by Companions of the Western Mysteries.

The Four Quarters

In this Ritual, libations are made in turn to the Four Cardinal Quarters: East, South, North and West. There is a final salute either to Above or to the Centre or to the East again. Libations should, if possible, always be made in the open air and onto bare earth, grass or other plants, not onto any paved or concreted surface, unless there is no other alternative. Those actually making the libation should be bare-footed; although, in inclement weather, any witnesses may cover their feet.

If the weather is extremely bad, then the libation can be made indoors. In this case, someone kneels on one knee before the Libator [one who makes a libation], holding in both hands a large shallow basin into which the offering is poured. A two-handled wok makes an ideal basin for this purpose. If there are many people and basins available, there could be someone kneeling at each of the Four Quarters, but usually it is enough if the Bearer of the Basin goes before, as the Libator moves from Quarter to Quarter, carrying the Cup from which the Libation is poured.

Whether indoors or out, the Libator should, if possible, be accompanied by two

people, each carrying a flask, one containing Water, the other containing Wine.

Because this is essentially a Water ritual, any elaborate procession should not be led by a Thurifer bearing incense, which is a symbol of the element of Air. Usually someone with a bowl of consecrated Water and an aspergillum leads a Libation procession, sprinkling water to one side and the other. If there is a thurifer, they should be at the rear, in this instance.

Going it alone

Of course, all this elaborate ceremonial can be ignored. An individual can make the full Libation alone, by having a small altar at the centre of the grove or place where the Libation is to be made, on which are flasks of Wine and Water, and any symbol of the Great Mother Earth which you feel is appropriate.

In Melbourne, a friend had a roughly shaped basalt block about two feet high and one foot square standing in their garden, which could be used as an altar. I have a tall, wooden clothes-box of similar size, which has been used as a portable altar on many occasions.

Goddesses of the Rite

In the Universal Rite which follows, Names of various Goddesses, each from a different pantheon or country, are included as a guide. While these Goddess-Names are recommended for good esoteric reasons, you can use a book of Correspondences to find the Names of other Goddesses or Spiritual Beings, which you might prefer.

A UNIVERSAL RITE

LIBATIONS TO THE GREAT MOTHER EARTH

If the Libations follow a Feast of the Companions, a morsel of the Bread and Honey shall be place in the Cup, along with the Wine. The Libator, together with any assistants and Witnesses, shall go to the Grove or Place of Libation.

Salute to the Mother Earth in the East

Facing towards the East, the Libator shall make one small circle with the Cup, parallel with the ground, and shall pour the contents of the Cup onto the Earth, and shall say:

Hail, Holy Mother Earth, who is waiting to come to Life,
we salute Thee, by Thy Name HATHOR
Who art the Goddess of Air and East,
and with the aid of all Holy Beings who dwell in the East.

Salute to the Mother Earth in the South

A small amount of Wine shall be poured into the Cup. Facing towards the South, the Libator shall make two small circles with the Cup, parallel with the ground, and shall pour the contents of the Cup onto the Earth, and shall say:

Hail, Holy Mother Earth, who is waiting to come to Life,
we salute Thee, by Thy Name ANAHITA
Who art the Goddess of Water and South,
and with the aid of all Holy Beings who dwell in the South.

Salute to the Mother Earth in the North

Small amounts of Wine and Water shall be poured into the Cup. Facing towards the North, the Libator shall make three small circles with the Cup, parallel with the ground, and shall pour the contents of the Cup onto the Earth, and shall say:

Hail, Holy Mother Earth, who is waiting to come to Life,
we salute Thee, by Thy Name BRIGID
Who art the Goddess of Fire and North,
and with the aid of all Holy Beings who dwell in the North.

Salute to the Mother Earth in the West

A quantity of Water shall be poured into the Cup. Facing towards the West, the Libator shall make four small circles with the Cup, parallel with the ground, and shall pour the contents of the Cup onto the Earth, and shall say:

Hail, Holy Mother Earth, who is waiting to come to Life,
we salute Thee, by Thine own most ancient Name GAIA
Thou Who art most especially the Goddess of Earth and West,
and with the aid of all Holy Beings who dwell throughout the worlds.

Salute to the Mother Earth at the Centre

Facing towards the East and the Centre, the Libator shall hold the Empty Cup aloft and shall say:

Hail, Holy Mother Earth, who is waiting to come to Life,
we salute Thee by Thy Most Secret Name.

[whispering]

ISHTAR SHEKINAH GAIA EM - SHALOM..

As the company return indoors, the Libator shall carry the Cup by its base, upside-down, "to show that the Libation has been made."

NOTES;

The circular motions made with the Cup are like the swirlings that one might make to cleanse a vessel with liquids. They remind us of the swirling cycles of the galaxies, stars and planets throughout the universe.

There is more than one level of meaning in the phrase, "The Mother who is waiting to come to life." It will repay deep and attentive meditation.

Hathor is from Egypt; Anahita is from Persia; Brigid from Eire; Gaia is from Greece; Ishtar was worshipped throughout the ancient Near and Middle East; while Shekinah is the name of the Feminine Divine Principle among the Hebrews.

The Whispered Name of the Goddess as the Quintessence is spelled and measured:

YShTR ShKYNH GYH AM ShLM

519 + 385 + 18 + 41 + 370 = 1333.

1333 is of the 37th and 1st degrees, and reveals the Great Mother as the Source of all Life. Qabalists will recognise in 1333, a numerical picture of the arrangement of the Ten Spheres of the Tree of Life, beginning with the Sphere of the Earth.

Of the Five Names which comprise the Great Whispered Name, the central Name is Gaia, GYH, whose measure of 18 is also that of Chai, ChY, Life.

AN ACT OF DEDICATION

For those who dedicate every act to Gaia, the Great Earth-Goddess, there is a formula which can be used on each occasion of excretion.

"Hail Holy Mother, Who is waiting to come to Life, I return to Thee those portions of Thy gifts which I have not used, so that the Lords of Other Worlds might restore them to their elemental natures; and they can join again in the Eternal Dance of Life."