

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS COMMONLY USED IN WICCA

**AKASHA** the spiritual ether (or Aether); the omnipresent fifth occult element which embraces the other four- earth, air, fire, and water; and from which they stem. This is the realm of "pattern" or causality, from which the realm the normally thought of "five senses manifests. Some define it is the "other" of the "two worlds" that the witch or magician walks between.

**ARADIA** Daughter of the Goddess Diana, and a name for the Goddess used by Italian Witches or Strega, commonly used in many Wiccan traditions today.

**ASPECTING** Any advanced magickal activity in which a practitioner manifests a particular aspect of the Goddess or God, in thought, feelings, behavior, appearance, etc.; Often as a direct result of a "Drawing Down". Often a minor variation of this phenomena occurs with the selection of a "Magical Name", of Craft Name.

**ASPECTS** Forms, facets, or personas of Deity: for example, Brighid, Iseult, Eos, and Kore are all aspects of the Maiden, and the Maiden is an aspect of the Goddess.

**ATHAME** black handled, double edged dagger. Principally used to cast and dissolve the circle, for which purposes it is interchangeable with the magic sword. A tool of the "Element" of Fire in the Georgian Tradition and some others.

**BELTANE** May Eve festival. One of the Ancient Celtic "Fire Festivals." on this night, the cattle were driven between two bonfires to protect them from disease. Couples wishing for fertility would "jump the fires" on Beltane night. Also the traditional Sabbath where the rule of the "Wheel of the Year" is returned to the Goddess. This Festival also marks the transition point of the threefold Goddess energies from those of Maiden to Mother.

**BOOK OF SHADOWS** Traditionally hand copied book of rituals, recipes, training techniques, guidelines, and other materials deemed important to a Witch or a coven. Each tradition has it's own standard version of the Book and each Witch's book will be different as he or she adds to it with time from many different sources. Only another Witch can see your book of shadows. Also, traditionally, it may never leave your hands or possession until death, when it should be destroyed, or (in some traditions) returned to the coven to be disposed of.

**BURNING TIMES** a term used by some Witches for the period of persecution in the Middle Ages and later. It is in fact a misnomer in some places, as Witches were only burned in Scotland, and on the continent of Europe. In England and the U.S., they were hanged.

**CANDLEMAS** Festival held on Feb. 1. One of the 4 Celtic "Fire Festivals. Commemorates the changing of the Goddess from the Crone to the Maiden. Celebrates the first signs of Spring. Also called "Imbolc" (the old Celtic name). This is the seasonal change where the first signs of spring and the return of the sun are noted, i.e. the first sprouting of leaves, the sprouting of the Crocus flowers etc. In other words, it is the festival commemorating the successful passing of winter and the beginning of the agricultural year. This Festival also marks the transition point of the threefold Goddess energies from those of Crone to Maiden.

**CARDINAL POINTS** North, South, East, and West, marked in the Georgian Tradition by candles of green, red, yellow, and blue, respectively. The Circle is drawn to connect these four points.

**CHALICE** one of the tools of the Witch. Placed on the altar to represent the element of Water.

**CHARGE OF THE GODDESS** The Traditional words of the Goddess to her followers, or "hidden children". Normally declaimed by the HPS at every coven Circle.

**CIRCLE** the area in which the magickal worship and spells takes place. Can also be used to designate a particular group of Witches or Pagans such as "Silver Acorn Circle".

**CONE OF POWER** power raised in the circle by the Witches assembled, and sent out into the world to work magick, is usually visualized as being retained and built in the form of a "cone" prior to release.

organized group of Witches, led by a High priestess and/or a High Priest who meet regularly for worship and fellowship. The traditional membership is 13, but in fact most covens number considerably less. 3 is the minimum in the Georgian Tradition. In Middle English, "Covin" a group of confederates; In Old French "Covine" a band or group with a single purpose; Latin "Com"-together, "Venire"-to come or move.

**COVENSTEAD** regular meeting place for a coven. Usually the home of the High Priestess or High Priest.

**COWAN** a non-Witch. Formerly used in a very derogatory manner. Still used in Masonic Ritual to indicate the non initiate and/or pretender to "real craft". Not often used today among most Witches.

**COYOTE ENERGY** trickster energies. Named for the American Indian Trickster, Coyote, who tricks man into learning what he needs to learn. Applies to one who constantly jokes and clowns. Also applies to the concept of "Holy Fool" in many traditions.

**CROSS QUARTER DAYS** The modern name for the Celtic Fire Festivals of Samhain, Imbolc, Beltane, and Lamas.

**DEOSI** clockwise, or sunwise. Traditional direction for working "building" magick.

**DRAWING DOWN THE MOON** Ritual invocation of the spirit of the Goddess into the body of the High Priestess by the High Priest.

**DIVINATION** magical method of exploration or inquiry into a situation via such methods as Tarot cards, runestones, I- Ching, etc.

**ELEMENTS** Earth, air, fire, and water, plus spirit, which includes them all. These are regarded as realms or categories of nature (both material and non-material) and are not to be confused with the physicists table of elements, which the modern witch, of course, accepts.

**ESBAT** weekly or biweekly meeting of a coven. Traditionally held either on the full moon or the new moon.

**FAMILIARS** Either a Witch's pet animal which has been trained to be a magickal helper, or an artificially created "elemental" which performs the same functions as the animal friend.

**FIVEFOLD KISS, FIVEFOLD SALUTE** The Witches' ritual salute, with kisses; (1) on each foot, (2) on each knee, (3) above the pubic hair, (4) on each breast, and (5) on the lips- really 8 kisses in all. It is only used within the Circle, but the words that go with it are the origin of "Blessed Be."

**GARDNERIANS** Tradition of Witchcraft descended from the teachings of Gerald Gardner.

**GNOMES** an "entity" or "elemental" that dwells in the plane of Earth or is associated with the EARTH Element.

**GREAT RITE** The rite which is the main feature of the third degree initiation, and which is also laid down for certain festivals. It is sexual in nature, but may be 'actual' (and private to the couples concerned) or symbolic, as the participants wish.

**HALLOWS** name used by some traditions for Samhain, or Halloween

**HANDBASTING** Wiccan equivalent of a wedding. It can be made legal if the Priestess and/or Priest are registered as clergy with the local authorities, or it may only be considered binding within the coven.

**HIGH PRIEST/ESS** Technically speaking, a Witch who has received the 3rd. degree initiation. More usually, the male and female leaders of a coven.

**IMBOLC** Celtic name for Candlemas.

**INVOCATION** The ritual "calling-in" of an entity (or energies) higher than human, either for communication with the caller through a medium or by visible manifestation or else to enter into a human body as in the Drawing Down the Moon. In some traditions, a Prayer.

**LAMMAS** August 1st. Witch Festival. The Old Celtic name for this festival is Lughnassadh. It is the Festival of the First Fruits, and is the first of the 3 harvests. This festival also marks the change of the Threefold Goddess energies from that of Mother to Crone.

**MAIDEN** An appointment held by one of the women of the coven. She is virtually the assistant High Priestess. This term is also the descriptive term used to describe the first of the aspects of the Threefold Goddess Energies (Maiden, Mother, and Crone). It is traditionally associated with the Waxing Moon, and the period from Imbolc (Candlemas) to Beltane (May eve) where the energies are those of initiating, beginning, and creation.

**OLD RELIGION** another name for the Craft.

**PAGANING** Presentation of an infant to the Circle and to the Gods.

**PENTACLE** a disc shaped talisman; in particular, the metal disc which represents the earth element among the witch's working tools.

**PENTAGRAM** The five-pointed star. With a single point uppermost, it represents the human being. Inverted, with two points uppermost, it can have Satanist associations; but not necessarily. Some traditions of Wicca use the inverted pentagram to signify an initiate of the second degree.

**QUARTERS** The North, East, South, and West parts of a magickal circle or other ritual area. (See also "Watchtowers")

**REDE** rule or law.

**SABBAT** one of the Eight festivals or high holy days of Wicca.

**SALAMANDER** an entity that dwells in the realm of Fire.

**SAMHAIN** The festival of remembrance for the dead, held on the eve of Nov. 1st. It is the last of the three harvests. This festival also marks the transition of rulership of the "Wheel of the Year from that of the Goddess to that of the God.

**SCRYING** divination, usually using such methods as crystal gazing, or divination via incense smoke, or water as opposed to tarot or other manipulative means.

**SPELL** a prayer, or verbal direction of magickal energies toward the accomplishment of some goal.

**SUMMONER** The male officer of the coven who corresponds to the Maiden. He is the assistant High Priest.

**SYLPH** an "entity" or "elemental" that dwells in the plane of Air or is associated with the AIR Element.

**TRADITIONS** any of the various "sects" of Wicca such as Gardnerian, Alexandrian, Georgian, Seax, etc.

**UNDINE** an "entity" or "elemental" that dwells in the plane of Water or is associated with the WATER Element.

**WAND** A rod or staff that is prepared so that it may be used for magickal or psychic purposes, usually to project some form of power.

**WARLOCK** a term coined in the Burning Times . It was used to denote a traitor to the Craft, or one who had betrayed the followers of the Old Religion. It's origin is Scottish. Because of the negative connotations, it is not used by most Wiccans today.

**WATCH TOWERS** Originally from the Enochian branch of Ceremonial Magick, now incorporated into many "Traditions" of Wicca, these are the four elemental "directions" or "quarters" (corresponding to the appropriate points on the compass) called to protect the Circle during its establishment. Each of them have a correspondence between the compass point, an element, and (varying amongst different traditions) color associated with them.

**WICCA** the name most modern day Witches use for the Craft. It comes from the Anglo-Saxon word Wicce, meaning to bend or to shape. This is the root word from which we get wicker.

**WIDDERSHINS** counter clock wise. Used for "tearing down" OR BANISHING magick.

**WHITE HANDLED KNIFE** the working knife of a Witch. It is used to carve candles, and for fashioning the other tools. Traditionally, it can only be used in a Circle.

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