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Artemis a Greek Goddesses

Artemis is one of the most ancient and acclaimed deities in Greek mythology.

Artemis has often been described as the daughter of Zeus and Leto and also as the twin sister of Apollo. She was believed to be the Goddess of forests and hills, child birth, virginity, fertility and hunt and can be seen often depicted as a huntress carrying a bow and arrows. The cypress and deer were sacred to her.

Later, Artemis became identified as Selene who was a Greek Moon Goddess and also with Diana, a Roman Goddess and also Hecate, the protector of Entrances.

One of the childhood myths of Artemis is about the six wishes her father Zeus granted her when she was three years old. While sitting on his knee, she has asked her father for these three wishes. The first wish was to remain chaste for eternity and to never be confined with marriage. She also wanted hunting companions such as lop-eared hounds, stags to lead her chariot and nymphs for





companionship. She also wanted a bow and arrow which became her symbol.

There are many other stories surrounding this female Goddess. She was once bathing in a vale on Mount Cithaeron when Actaeon, a hunter prince hid in the bushes and spied on her. She was so angered by this that she turned him into a stag which was killed by his own hounds. When Adonis boasted that he was a better hunter than Artemis, she sent a wild boar to kill him.

There are several myths surrounding Artemis and the constellations in the sky.

Orion, the hunting companion of Artemis was killed by a scorpion sent by Gaia, the Goddess of Earth. Callisto was Artemis's hunting companion who was tricked and raped by her father Zeus (or by her brother Apollo) and who was changed into a bear. Out of pity, Zeus placed her in the heavens, thus creating the Callisto the Bear constellation.

In other stories, Artemis punished Agamemnon, the commander of Achaeans in the Trojan War for killing a sacred stag and boasting that he was a better hunter.

Artemis was widely worshipped throughout ancient Greece. Cults or groups of worshippers gathered in several places such as Delos, her birthplace and Attica, Mounikhia and Sparta. Spartans used to perform sacrifices in her reverence before starting a new war.

Artemis was worshipped as a fertility/Childbirth Goddess, Goddess of maiden dances and Goddess of light. Later, we find representations of Artemis-Diana with the crown of the crescent Moon, as Luna.





In Ephesus, Ionia (Turkey), a temple was built for her worship. Ionians used to worship her as a Mother Goddess, her carving adorned with tear shaped amber beads.

The Romans worshipped Dia Anna (Diane) who became identified with the Greek Goddess Artemis. It was during this period that Diana became the Divine Huntress and Protector of Animals.

Among the ancient traditions of witchcraft, Dianic Wicca is unique in its essentially feminine aspect. Some Dianic Wiccans reject that there is a masculine aspect to divinity while others accept a masculine aspect although they invoke only the feminine aspect in their witchcraft rituals.

Dianic Wicca was founded by Zsuzsanna E. Budapest and three friends in 1975. Z. Budapest, who was actually arrested for reading Tarot cards wrote the book "The Feminist Book of Lights and Shadows". Later, Morgan McFarland created another version of the Dianic Wicca called "The Dianic Cult" which includes both women and men.

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