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Goddess Runes and The Way of a Cast

*P.M.H. Atwater, L.H.D., Ph.D. (Hon.) P. O. Box 7691
Charlottesville, VA 22906-7691 © 1996 P.M.H. Atwater, L.H.D.,
Ph.D. (Hon.)*

Tradition has it that to use runes as oracles is the masculine approach, but to use runes in a cast is the way of the feminine. The oracle style is based on formats, definition and detail, pre-set formulas for consulting with "divine" or higher guidance. Casting, however, is wide-open and free flowing, able to meet the fullness of each moment while blending and merging the energies from all who are present with the hidden potential of the heart. Thus, there is a yin and yang of runes:

- * oracle runes as the yang aspect, instructive
- * casting runes as the yin aspect, illustrative

Since the recent renaissance of runes has returned to our technological age the masculine approach to their use (Ralph Blum's "THE NEW BOOK OF RUNES," St. Martin's Press), now is the time for the feminine (my latest book "GODDESS RUNES," Avon Books). Learning the way of a cast is like embarking upon an adventure through inner pathways to wisdom and grace, and the heart of true knowing. Oracle styles are well-known, but casting systems still constitute a mystery. . . too abstract to learn, say some, too silly to bother with say others. Yet, the real issue here has nothing to do with rune use; rather, it is the perennial question of whether or not to develop and trust intuitive faculties.

Learning the way of a cast is surprisingly easy, but deciding to do it takes courage, the same courage you need to recognize the limitless wonder of the divine being you are.

Actual runic hieroglyphs trace back in history at least 20,000 years, and have been part of every culture which is known to have existed. Beginning around 500 B.C., however, the glyphs were "modernized" into several written-not-spoken alphabet systems, a development tolerated to accommodate a widespread trend toward literacy. Dubbed "the younger runes," they bear a resemblance to their "elders" but are used differently. The elder, "Old European" runes, are associated the most with regions of Ukraine and Crimea and are freely cast as a way to contact and honor spirit worlds.

The true language of these runes is one of sacred thoughts and secret deeds which illuminate the inner landscape of spirit as it flows through the human experience. We ALL know them, for their shapes



and meanings are primordial!

The casting runes I use are the elder or yin glyphs. Their evolution as a tool for self-understanding is depicted through design and shape in an illustration of male/female relationships, love's stability, the coming of children and the establishment of community, plus the growth of spiritual perspectives as a way to temper the swing from prosperity to hard times and back again. Positives and negatives are faced upfront, since emotions were considered the equal of intellect. Graceful hand movements and body posturing, plus a gentleness of mood and manner, were prerequisites traditionally to being considered a rune caster, as well as an ease in handling life mysteries. Although rune casters were predominantly women, both sexes excelled in the skill.

These elder or casting runes are group runes - cast as a single unit one cast per question asked. Single glyphs separated from the set have no meaning or purpose (removing a glyph for the day's guidance, for instance, is the oracle method, a procedure useless in casting). There are fourteen runic glyphs in the Goddess Runes set plus two question stones. . . the male stone, used when a man or boy asks a question, and the female stone, used with a girl or woman. (The question stone, either male or female, is central to any cast and protects the questioner's spirit.) Formats or layouts are never used in casting, only a toss that freely "flows" with the energy of the moment.

A question is asked; runes are thrown. It is just that fast and that simple. During a casting session I may ask for clarification of what I see from time to time, but generally the patterns created by the runes as they scatter around the question stone are sufficient to obtain accurate and helpful information for the questioner.

I would compare the casting process to taking a photograph with a camera. The asking of a question defines what area of your life you want "pictured." Shaking the runestones in cupped hands (my runes are carved on river pebbles) is like steadying the camera; the toss like pressing down on the shutter button. The patterns within patterns of glyphs encircling the question stone is the "photograph," one that reveals where the questioner is at that moment in time *inside his or her question*. Highlighted are trends, possible outcomes, where energy is building, interactions and options. Since there is no such thing as a fixed future (your future changes as you change), fortune telling is a waste of time, neither is that what casting is for. The power of a cast lies in its ability to illustrate life issues from a detached and objective viewpoint so more reasoned and appropriate decisions can be made.

I am amazed at how quickly people can learn to cast. It has been my experience that the average left-brained individual (such as an accountant) takes about four hours to catch on; most others around two and a half hours. Children usually need less than thirty minutes. In the Rune Casting Playshops I offer, people engage in the joy of being a child again, re-experiencing the wonder of the unlimited power they possess as they partake in the sacred play of spirit. The book "GODDESS RUNES" has ample instructions in how to create your own set, plus labels are included of the runic designs to help you get started. In this manner you can personalize your runes as you learn how to interpret casts.





You can explore reincarnational memories through casting. In fact, just about anything you can think of can be asked. Be prepared, though, for the answer you receive may surprise you. Runes faithfully highlight whatever needs to be known, not necessarily what you requested.

Yes, runes have a mind of their own! Thus, say a prayer of protection before you use them, visualize Divine Light and Love guiding your hands and your heart, and the result will always be in alignment with your highest good and the highest good of all concerned.

After the three near-death episodes I experienced in 1977, and my encounter with The Other Side, it was rune casting that enabled me to rediscover the beauty and the purpose of earth. I wrote "GODDESS RUNES" as a way of saying "Thank You" to the runes for what they did for me, and as a way of passing on their magic to others.

Rune casting automatically instills in its practitioners a grace of movement and posture and brings one back to that innocence of child-like joy and trust. As a way of developing intuition and expanding consciousness, the goddess way of a cast can help anyone celebrate that wellspring of wisdom which is our birthright and our gift.

Dr. Atwater is also the author of "COMING BACK TO LIFE" (Ballantine Books), "BEYOND THE LIGHT" (Avon Books), "FUTURE MEMORY" (Birch Lane Press), and "BRAIN SHIFT: USING THE NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE AS A THEORETICAL MODEL TO EXPLORE THE TRANSFORMATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS" (available from her directly). To obtain "BRAIN SHIFT," arrange for Rune Casting Playshops in your area, or to schedule a rune-casting consultation: visit the P.M.H. Atwater Website:

<http://www.pmhatwater.com> , E-Mail: webmaster@cinemind.com, or Write:

YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE
P.O.Box 7691
Charlottesville, VA 22906-7691

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