

PUANEPSIA

A Hellenic Ritual at the 2006 Autumn Equinox
Hollow Hills Protogrove, ADF

PRELIMINARIES

Temenos (Sacred Space) Prepared
Pre-ritual Briefing
Individual Meditation /Centering

OPENING

Marking the Boundaries/Claiming the Space

The presiding priests & priestesses carry the offerings and the tools to be used to make the offerings around the temenos and then return them to the altar.

Pompe (Procession)

P3 leads participants in a procession into the temenos, ending near the altar.

PURIFICATION

P1 sprinkles the khernips (salt water) over the altar and offerings. P1 offers the khernips to each participant as they enter the temenos. Participants are to dip their hands in.

P1: "Let all that is profane be gone!"

P2 offers a clean cloth for drying the hands.

OPENING STATEMENT

P1: "We are here to honour the Gods. May our worship be true."

OUTSIDERS

P3 takes the khernips to the edge of the temenos and pours the water onto the ground outside as a libation to the Outsiders, which includes the Ancestors for this particular ritual.

"You unspeakable ones, accept this as your due. As a gift calls for a gift, let there be peace between us."

BARDIC ASSISTANCE

P2: "I will begin with the Muses and Apollo. For it is through the Muses and Apollo that there are singers upon the earth and players upon the lyre. Happy is he whom the Muses love: sweet flows speech from his lips.

Hail, children of Zeus! Give honour to our words!"

NAMING THE DEITY OF THE OCCASION & PRELIMINARY GROUP OFFERING

P2 passes barley to each participant.

P1 raises hands, palms up, and reads:

"We will remember and not be unmindful of Apollo who shoots afar. As he goes through the house of Zeus, the gods tremble before him and all spring up from their seats when he draws near, as he bends his bright bow. But Leto alone unstrings his bow, and closes his quiver, and takes his archery from his strong shoulders in her hands and hangs them on a golden peg against

a pillar of his father's house. Then she leads him to a seat and makes him sit: and Zeus the Father gives him nectar in a golden cup welcoming his dear son, while the other gods make him sit down there, and queenly Leto rejoices because she bare a mighty son and an archer.

How, then, shall I sing of you who in all ways are worthy? For everywhere, O Phoebus, the whole range of song is fallen to you, both over the mainland and over the isles. All mountain-peaks and high headlands of lofty hills and rivers flowing out to the deep and beaches sloping seawards and havens of the sea are your delight.

And you, O lord Apollo, god of the silver bow, shooting afar, many are your temples and wooded groves, and all peaks and towering bluffs of lofty mountains and rivers flowing to the sea are dear to you, Phoebus, yet in Delos do you most delight your heart.

And now may Apollo be favourable. And I will never cease to praise far-shooting Apollo, god of the silver bow.”

At the end of the reading all participants throw barley onto the altar.

DECLARING THE CENTER & OPENING PORTALS

Hearth Center

Pour a libation of wine in the fire while saying,

P1 “Hestia, in the high dwellings of all, both deathless gods and men who walk on earth, you have gained an everlasting abode and highest honour: glorious is your portion and your right. For without you mortals hold no banquet, -- where one does not duly pour sweet wine in offering to Hestia both first and last. Hail Hestia of the Hearth Fire! Accept our offering.”

FIRE WELL & TREE

P2 makes usual offerings.

"The fire is the spark that takes our words and thoughts to the Shining Ones and is our connection to the upper worlds. Sacred Fire, burn within us!"

"The well is connected to all the sweet waters from the Earth. Sacred Well, flow within us!"

"The tree is the axis about which our world revolves and is our connection between the worlds above and below. Sacred tree, grow within us!"

OPENING THE GATES

P1: “Hear me, Hekate!

Kourotrophos, caring parent to all,

Keyholding Mistress of Land, Sea, and Sky

Open the Gates for us.

Enodia, we walk your roads,

Propylaia, Guardian who averts harm,

Antaia in front, Bestower of passages,

Reveal to us the way to walk in safety.

Torchbearer, we praise you for the brightness of your power.
Walk with us, beloved Hekate! Accept our offering.”

Place a food offering in the fire.

MAIN OFFERINGS

Earth Mother

P3: “I will sing of well-founded Earth, mother of all, eldest of all beings. She feeds all creatures that are in the world, all that go upon the goodly land, and all that are in the paths of the seas, and all that fly: all these are fed of her store. Through you, O queen, mortals are blessed in their children and blessed in their harvests, and to you it belongs to give means of life and to take it away. Happy is the one whom you delight to honour! They have all things abundantly: fruitful land laden with corn, pastures covered with cattle, and a house filled with good things. Thus is it with those whom you honour O holy goddess, bountiful spirit.

“Hail, Mother of the gods, wife of starry Heaven; freely bestow upon us for this song that cheers the heart! Gaia, accept our offering.”

Make a libation of olive oil onto the ground.

Nature Spirits

P2: “Nymphs of waters, trees and flowers; Nymphs of air, underworld, and wilderness; Satyroi and Panes of mountains, pastures and the wilds; we offer you welcome. Come and join us as we praise Great Apollo. Nature Spirits, accept our offering.”

Make a libation of olive oil into the fire.

Shining Ones

P3: "We call upon the Shining Ones. Gods and Goddesses of this place, known to us or unknown. Gods and Goddesses of all the people gathered here today, our Patrons. We offer you welcome. Come to our fire, deities. Accept our sacrifice!"

Make a libation of olive oil into the fire.

P3: “If anyone has offerings for their Patron Gods or any deities *other than* Apollo please be welcome to come forward and make them at this time.”

Deity of the Occasion: Apollo

P1 takes the panspermia offering (bean stew) and charges it, then passes sunwise around the group for others to do the same.

“Blessed Apollo come and listen to our prayers,
Illustrious Power, Slayer of Tetyus,
God of Health, Fertile Source of Wealth,
With Your golden lyre, renew the rich fertility of the fields.

Python-destroying, Hallowed Delphian king:
Rural, Light-Bearer, Leader of the Muses
Noble and Beautiful Apollo, armed with dreaded arrows
Far-darting, Bacchian, Two-Fold and divine,
Far reaching power and meandering courses are yours.
Your radiant eye views all within and all beneath the sky.
Golden-Haired One of True Oracles,
Hear me entreating for human kind,
Hear and be present with benevolence,
For You survey the boundless Aether, and every part of Earth,
Abundant, Blessed, Your piercing sight
extends beneath the gloomy, silent night;
The World's wide bounds flourish because of You,
All the source and end divine,
You inspire all Nature's music,
Your immortal golden lyre, sounds the dance of the seasons.
And the changing seasons flow from your music
Thus mixed in equal parts, summer and winter in alternate dance.
Hear me Blessed Apollo, look kindly upon us, and in these rites rejoice.
Grant us an abundant harvest of good things in our lives and bless the seeds
We sow for our futures.

For you, Apollo! Accept our offerings!”

P1 takes offering after all have added their energy to it and pours it into the fire.

At this time, participants are invited to step forward and make an individual offering. If they have no other offering, participants can sprinkle a pinch of incense or pour a libation of olive oil into the fire.

Group Offering: Libation

P1 pours wine into the libation bowl, saying, “Sponde!”

P2 pours non-alcoholic drink into another libation bowl, saying “Sponde!”

Each participant sips a drink and toasts Apollo. P1 pours the remaining drinks into the fire.

OMEN

The mantis takes an omen to determine whether the sacrifice has been accepted and nature of blessing.

“Contemplate the blessing you would ask from the Kindred, especially considering the Omen. What would you ask for your self, your family, our Protogrove, our community... Focus on your intention.”

WATERS OF LIFE

P2: "Ancient and mighty ones we have honoured you. We pray you honour us in return, for a gift calls for a gift. We open our hearts to your blessing."

Pour wine into cup

"We draw blessing from the cauldron of blessing. We pour the drink of inspiration. Behold the holy cup of magic, the outpouring of blessing from the mighty ones. When we share the draught of the gods, we drink in wisdom, love and strength to do as we will in the worlds, in service to the Shining Ones.

"Hear us, Apollo. We rejoice in your gift. Bless our spirits and our lives with love, magic, and bounty as we drink these sacred waters.

"Behold the waters of life!"

All: "Behold the Waters of Life!"

Eiresione

P1 passes out beans to everyone.

"In the Greek tradition today branches of abundance are given to bring blessings to the home. This is called the Eiresione. We have prepared the branches for you all to take and place above or near your front door. In ancient times a group of boys would take these from house to house and they expected a gift in return. We have brought beans for you to exchange for your branches."

P2 offers everyone a branch and takes the beans from anyone who wants one. When finished, P2 puts the beans into the fire.

CLOSING

Piacular Offering

Final libations are made to Apollo

P1: "Bright Apollo,

If anything that we have done here has offended you,

If anything we have done here has been incomplete,

If anything we have done here has not been done in the proper manner,

accept this final offering in recompense."

GIVING THANKS

P1: "The mighty ones have blessed us. With joy in our hearts let us carry the magic from our sacred grove into our lives and work. Each time we offer to the powers they become stronger and more aware of our needs and our worship. So now as we prepare to depart let us give thanks to those who have aided us.

"Apollo, we thank you for your presence and blessings."

All: "We thank you."

Thank in Reverse Order:

Shining Ones
Nature Spirits
Gaia

CLOSING GATES

P1: “Hekate we thank you for your presence and power, for your guidance and guardianship. Hekate Enodia, let the Gates be closed!”

Thank Hestia last with a final libation of wine

CONCLUSION

P1: “The rite is ended. Let us feast in the company of the Gods.”

Feast

Thanks to the following for materials and references used in this ritual:

Ian Corrigan and Ceisiwr Serith

Burkert, Walter. *Greek Religion*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1985.

The Hymns of Orpheus. Taylor, Thomas (trans). 1792.

Homeric Hymns. Homeric Apocrypha. Lives of Homer. ML West (trans). Loeb Classical Library. 2003.