

Greek Summer Ritual

Written by Michael Talvola and Sonjia Clemens
Sources: Previous Raven's Cry Grove rituals
Raven's Cry Grove members

For ritual June 13, 2015

As performed

Phrases:

Σας ευχαριστούμε [*sahs ef-har-ehs-tOO-meh*] - We thank you
Γένοιτο [*yen-ee-tow*] - May it be so

INITIATING THE RITE

Procession and Purification

These words spoken indoors just as the folk line up to go to the ritual space.

Mike: Children of the Earth! Welcome to the Skirophoria – the Greek Summer Solstice ritual of Raven's Cry Grove, ADF.

Release the cares of your mundane life. Take a deep breath in and allow your mind to be still. Thoughts outside of this time are released. You are here spiraling ever forward in the present.

Sonjia: Feel the pull of our sacred space, calling you, whispering on the wind. In this space we create our sacred realities. We can become all the Kindreds believe us to be. Purification allows us to transform into our sacred selves. Please come forward, be purified, and attune yourself to mythic time. Let go and cross the divide.

Form the Procession – An arch of olive branches is held so the procession will pass under the arch. Everyone walks past two bowls of water with a little salt and washes and dries their hands.

Purification Song/Chant

*Fire in the Heart, fire of the mind
Fire on the wind, fire out of time*

*Fire of the night, fire of the soul
Fire pure and bright, fire make us whole.
(Repeats until finished)*

Mike: I remove the last of all that is profane. With Athena's blessings, I stand clean and true in this sacred time and place.

Sonjia: I remove the last of all that is profane. With Athena's blessings, I stand clean and true in this sacred time and place.

Guardian

Here we stand now, gathered in the nemeton. Warrior, call a guardian for our rite!

Robert:

O Zeus much-honored, Zeus supremely great, to thee our holy rites we consecrate,
Our prayers and expiations, king divine, for all things round thy head exalted shine.
The earth is thine, and mountains swelling high, the sea profound, and all within the sky.

All-parent, principle and end of all, whose pow'r almighty, shakes this earthly ball;
Even Nature trembles at thy mighty nod, loud-sounding, arme'd with lightning,
thundering God.

Source of abundance, purifying king, O various-formed from whom all natures spring;
Propitious hear my prayer, give blameless health, with peace divine, and necessary wealth.

Warrior makes an offering of olive oil to Zeus, pouring

Mighty Zeus, Accept our Sacrifice.

Γένοιτο [*yen-ee-tow*]!

Mike: Oh entryway that supports the weight of the heavens it is between you that we create our threshold. Please hold open the roadway to the sacred center. Warrior, mark this space that the outdwellers shall not enter.

Warrior draws a line at the entrance.

Robert: Zeus we ask you to watch this threshold.

Outdwellers

MIKE: Children of the earth, as we prepare to make offering to the Outdwellers, please avert your eyes so as not to form a relationship with them, and also look to the Outdwellers in your own hearts. This is a celebration of the returning Spring and renewal. All that we carry into the nemeton today will flower. Take only that which you wish to root, grow, and flourish.

Warrior! Make offering and appease the Outdwellers who do not support our ways.

Robert:

Beings not of this rite,
Those who stand against the Gods,
We ask you to stand outside the boundaries,
And trouble not our working!

Warrior makes an offering of ale to the Outdwellers, pouring

Γένοιτο [*yen-ee-tow*]!

Welcome

Mike: *ring chime 3x3 times saying:*

Ancestors! (*chime 3x*)

Nature Spirits! (*chime 3x*)

Shining Ones! (*chime 3x*)

Sonjia:

We have crossed the threshold into sacred space. Please reconnect with the sacred cosmos as we prepare to open the gates to the otherworlds, the place where the kindreds will reveal themselves once more.

HONORING THE EARTH MOTHER

Mike: Gaia, Earth Mother! Bearer of all life! We show you honor!

The people kneel.

Natasha: 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, men are blessed in their children and blessed in their harvests, and to you it belongs to give means of life to mortal men and to take it away. Happy is the man whom you delight to honour! He has all things abundantly: his fruitful land is laden with corn, his pastures are covered with cattle, and his house is filled with good things. Such men rule orderly in their cities of fair women: great riches and wealth follow them: their sons exult with ever-fresh delight, and their daughters in flower-laden bands play and skip merrily over the soft flowers of the field.

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 me for this my song substance that cheers the heart!

All: Γένοιτο [*yen-ee-tow*]!

Statement Of Purpose

Mike: Tonight we gather between the Earth and Sky.
To worship and honor the Kindred as one people.
To sing their praise and make our sacrifice.
As we seek their blessings in return.

Sonjia: We gather here to celebrate the Summer Solstice, inspired by the Skirophoria, an Athenian festival of Summer. Tonight we honor the ancient Greek deities Athena, Poseidon, Demeter, Persephone, and Helios.

Mike: As our ancestors did, so do we now: we are here to honor the Old Bargain between mortals and the Kindreds. So let us join together as one folk to make our offerings in joy and reverence.

Γένοιτο [**yen-ee-tow**]!

All: Γένοιτο [**yen-ee-tow**]!

Inspiration

Rhythmic drumming to accompany the inspiration invocation

Mike: We ask The Muses for inspiration for our rite!

Jessica:

O Muses, O immortal Nine!—
Hear us, in what sharp need we cry!
For we have help nowhere
If not in you!
Pity can much, and so a mighty mind, but cannot all things do!—
Oh, come! Renew in us the ancient wonder,
The grace of life, its courage, and its joy!
Weave us those garlands nothing can destroy!
Come! with your radiant eyes! — with your throats of thunder!

Γένοιτο [**yen-ee-tow**]!

All: Γένοιτο [**yen-ee-tow**]!

Establish the Group Mind

Lisa: [Two powers meditation]

Honor the hearth goddess Hestia

Mike: We begin our rite as by tradition we must by giving honor to the hearth goddess Hestia.

Daughter of Kronos, venerable dame, the seat containing of unweary'd flame;
In sacred rites these ministers are thine, Mystics much-blessed, holy and divine
In thee, the Gods have fix'd place, strong, stable, basis of the mortal race:
Eternal, much-form'd ever-florid queen, laughing and blessed, and of lovely mien;
Accept these rites, accord each just desire, and gentle health, and needful good
inspire.

RECREATE THE COSMOS

The Three Realms

Mike: Druids, let us now re-establish the Sacred Center of the Worlds.

Land and sea and starry sky, you surround and sanctify.

Sonjia: Let the land hold firm we pray. May all ill be turned away!

All: May all ill be turned away!

Mike: Land and sea and starry sky, you surround and sanctify.

Sonjia: Let the sea not rise we pray. May all ill be turned away!

All: May all ill be turned away!

Mike: Land and sea and starry sky, you surround and sanctify.

Sonjia: Let the sky not fall we pray. May all ill be turned away!

All: May all ill be turned away!

Mike: Let us establish the Sacred Center.

I place this stone as the Omphalos, the naval of the world, the sacred center of all the Cosmos. Like the sacred stone at Delphi, let this stone be the place where Zeus's eagles did meet to mark the center of the world. Let this stone mark the grave of the Pythian serpent, slain by Delian Apollon. Through this sacred center, let the World Tree grow, plunging deep within the earth to touch the Sacred Waters below and reaching through the sky to embrace the Sacred Fires above.

Well, Fire, and Omphalos

Start a Drumbeat.

Brit-El:

To the fire

Kindled of the hearth fire
Sacred flame upon the Earth
Joining together hearts and minds
Darkness banished before the roaring blaze
Transcending the realm of light and shadow
Purifier and cleanser of mind, body and spirit
Incense is offered to the fire.
Sacred fire, grow within this place!

Sarah:

To the well

Threshold to the Other world
Window to the souls
Cauldron of inspiration
Sacred shrine of old
Ford of cleansing waters
Vessel of rebirth
Silver is offered to the well.
Sacred well, flow within this place!

Angela:

To the omphalos

Mighty omphalos,
Center of the cosmos,
Road to all realms,
Spanning all worlds.
Keeper of ancient knowledge
Wine is offered to the omphalos.
Sacred stone, joining Earth and Sky.
Let all who walk this way walk in your wisdom.

OPEN THE GATES

Ariel:

Hear, Oh Great One, Swift fleet footed herald of the gods,
You who are the son of the great Zeus and the blessed nymph Maia,
Smiling Lord of shepherds and merchants,
Master of travel, roads seen and unseen,
You who ushers the living after death into the realm of Hades,
Lord of time and space between the worlds,
Mighty Hermes,
We come to you at this time of magic,
When life is at its peak and death has waned,
We make offerings to you and ask that you be with us now!

Druid makes offering of oil at each of the hallows as each are addressed for opening.

Now, Hermes,
join your will with ours.

Let the fire be opened now, as a gate to the Shining Ones.

Let the well be opened now, as a gate to the Otherworld,

Let the omphalos stand as an connector of the ways, to serve as a path to all the Worlds.

Open as a road to our voices so that they may be heard by the kindreds.

Let the Gates be Open!

Mike: Children of the earth, we are now at the center of the cosmos. We are woven into the sacred fabric of the universe. Here, the Kindreds can hear our thoughts and know our hearts. Let there be only truth here.

INVITING THE THREE KINDREDS

Mike: Druids! Make our offerings to the Kindreds – the Ancient Ones, the Noble Ones, and the Shining Ones.

Ancestors

Now, we will make our offering to the Ancestors.

Russell:

Ancestors, Οι πρόγονοι [*ee prO-ghon-EE*]

You who lie deep within this land, you whose memories hold it, and whose hearts are tied to its very essence; tribes of old, we offer you welcome!

Grandmothers and grandfathers, our beloved dead, kin of blood and heart, ancient tribes whose legacy is in our veins, we offer you welcome!

Elders and wise ones, you who guide the people, wise men and women of ancient days, we offer you welcome!

Mighty Ancestors, Οι πρόγονοι [*Oi prógonoí*]

we would give you honour and praise, and we would ask that you join us here today!

offering of Whisky

Ancestors, accept our sacrifice!

All: Ancestors, accept our sacrifice!

Sonja: Children of the earth, close your eyes, take a moment, and feel the Ancestors as they join us here.

Allow a few moments

Nature Spirits

Now, we will make our offering to the Nature Spirits.

Addy:

Nature Spirits, φύση πνεύμα [**fee**-see p-**no**-ma]
Wild ones of the woods and hills,
Flying ones soaring in the skies,
All you who swim, slither and slink,
Come join us in our rite.
All you who grow green and fruitful,
with sheltering shade and boughs,
who nourish us, and teach us,
Come join us in our rite.
We welcome you, kindred spirits,
To be with us tonight!

offering of fruit or flowers

Nature Spirits, accept our sacrifice!

All: Nature Spirits, accept our sacrifice!

Sonjia: Children of the earth, close your eyes, take a moment, and feel the Nature Spirits as they join us here.

Allow a few moments

Shining Ones

Now, we will make our offering to the Shining Ones.

Brit-El:

Shining ones, θεότητα [**thay-OH**-tee-kah]
Come to our fire, come feel the warmth
We welcome you here, so that we may honor you with our praise.

You who we call Gods, Goddesses, Deity, Spirit
You have many names and many faces, we show our respect to them all.

Shining Ones, join the people gathered here and celebrate this Summer night.
We offer you this oil to draw you near, so you may receive more offerings from
your people.

offering of Oil

Shining Ones, accept our sacrifice!

All: Shining Ones, accept our sacrifice!

Sonjia: Children of the earth, close your eyes, take a moment, and feel the Gods and Goddesses as they join us here.

Allow a few moments

Praise Offerings

Sonjia: Children of the earth, as the spirit moves you, come forward and make praise offerings to the Kindreds or your Patrons. You may offer at the well, fire, or tree, sing songs, recite poetry, dance, or do whatever would please the Kindreds.

Folk make offerings as they will

KEY OFFERINGS

Mike: We now invoke and honor the deities of the occasion. Athena, Poseidon, Demeter, Persephone, and Helios.

TO ATHENA

Lisa: Hail Goddess Athena, I invoke thy dread name,
That I may be able to drive away bitter cowardice
Gift me with the piercing eyes of the Owl, so that I may see
what few can.
I call forth that vision, so that I may swoop from the sky and
hit the mark.
When Justice is called for, Wise One,
open the book so that I might understand how
it is best to be served. Fill me with the power to know!
Direct my business sense, my intellectual aspect.
Guide my hands as I weave the bright cords of ideas and
thought, that the threads will hold tight
as I integrate the vision.

TO POSEIDON

Jessica: Hear, Poseidon, ruler of the sea profound,
whose liquid grasp begirts the solid ground;
Who, at the bottom of the stormy main,
dark and deep-bosom'd, hold'st thy wat'ry reign;
Thy awful hand the brazen trident bears,
and ocean's utmost bound, thy will reveres:
Thee I invoke, whose steeds the foam divide,
from whose dark locks the briny waters glide;
Whose voice loud founding thro' the roaring deep,

drives all its billows, in a raging heap;
Add gentle Peace, and fair-hair'd Health beside,
and pour abundance in a blameless tide.

TO DEMETER

Sonjia: Hear, Demeter, Lady of fruits and grains,
Of ripening suns and harvest rains,
I call to you, Mother, to hear my plea--
Bestow Your blessings here on me.
Goddess, who searches in places wild,
To bring home safely Her stolen child,
Who changes the summer's greens to gold,
And causes the cycle of life to unfold,
Beautiful Lady, whose love runs deep,
Who banishes growth during Winter's sleep,
And causes the seeds to stir in Spring,
Attend our circle and blessings bring!

TO PERSEPHONE

Angela: Hear, Daughter of Zeus, almighty and divine,
come, blessed queen, and to these rites incline:
Only-begotten, Plouton's honor'd wife,
O venerable Goddess, source of life.
The dancing Horai attend thee, essence bright,
all-ruling virgin, bearing heav'nly light:
O, vernal queen, whom grassy plains delight,
sweet to the smell, and pleasing to the sight:
Whose holy form in budding fruits we view,
Earth's vig'rous offspring of a various hue:
Hear, blessed Goddess, send a rich increase of various fruits from earth, with lovely
Peace;
Send Health with gentle hand, and crown our lives with blest abundance, free from
noisy strife;

TO HELIOS

Robert: Hear golden Titan, whose eternal eye with broad survey, illumines all the
sky.
Self-born, unwearied in diffusing light,
and to all eyes the mirrour of delight:
Lord of the seasons, with thy fiery car
and leaping coursers, beaming light from far:
With thy right hand the source of morning light,
and with thy left the father of the night.
Foe to the wicked, but the good man's guide,
o'er all his steps propitious you preside:
Great eye of Nature and the starry skies,
doom'd with immortal flames to set and rise
Faithful defender, and the eye of right,

of steeds the ruler, and of life the light:
With founding whip four fiery steeds you guide,
when in the car of day you glorious ride.
Propitious on these mystic labours shine,
and bless thy suppliants with a life divine.

The altar has a kylix (drinking bowl). Pour into it "pentaploa," a mixture of wine, honey, cheese, grains, and olive oil.

Song offering

Dance offering

The five druids speak the following in turn:

Lisa: On this day, long ago, so tradition says, the first harvest was cut of the first grain that mankind ever sowed. Ever since then, the people have been fed from the land. Those of us whose hearts are in the city do come before you today to honor the givers of our nourishment.

Jessica: From the metropolises of the coasts to the great gathering places of plateau and mountain we come on this day. For we could not live without you to support us. We feed from you, and give you little in return, save trinkets and trouble.

Sonjia: We thank you for your honor, and we promise in turn that our abundance shall never cease, so long as you continue your respect. Our lands must remain clean and unfettered by disease and pollution. So long as you grant us that, and safety, and fair commerce, there will always be an equal exchange.

Angela: We thank you for your honor, but you are wrong in that you give us nothing. You are the keepers of thought and culture. When darkness rushes across the land, as it sometimes must, it is in your domain that such things are kept. You are the memory of our people, as we in our eternal round of seasons cannot always be.

Robert: I have come before you to hear your oaths. Will you serve and protect each other?

All: We shall be as two hands on one body.

Mike: So it is witnessed by the overarching Sun. So shall it be written, so shall it be done. Γένοιτο [**yen-ee-tow**]!

All Present: So it is witnessed by the overarching Sun. So shall it be written, so shall it be done. Γένοιτο [**yen-ee-tow**]!

PRAYER OF SACRIFICE

Mike:

O Noble, Ancient and Shining Ones!
Incense have we offered to Your shrines!
Offerings have we made through the Well, Fire and Tree!
Kindreds! All this we give to You in the name of Hospitality.
May our Piety increase Your magic!
May our Courage increase Your Power!
And may our Fertile Spirits show the world Your abundance!
Mighty Kindreds, accept our sacrifices!

PIACULAR OFFERING

SONJIA:

If out of ignorance or faulty memory,
If we for any reason have offended You,
O Kindreds of our People, hear us now.
Accept this offering as recompense,
And know our hearts and our intent are pure.

OMEN

Mike: Seer, what blessings and wisdom do the Kindreds offer us in return?

Russell: *takes the omen*

Mike:

Children of the Earth, all our offerings, all we have done so far in our rite, have led to this moment. This is magic time! We have made offerings to the Powers, and now we shall ask for their blessings in return. Visualize the blessings that each of you desire and need from the Kindreds. See it clearly in your mind's eye. And when we ask for the Waters of Life, when we say, "Give us the Waters of Life", see the blessing you desire descend into the upraised cup like a mist, filling the cup. And when we drink of the Waters, you will receive your blessing. So close your eyes and take a moment to visualize your needs, and the needs of our Grove, that we may all receive the blessings we desire.

Allow time for the people to meditate on needs and desires. Sonjia pours wine into the cup and holds it.

SONJIA: πνεῦμα [*p-no-ma*]! O Ancient, Noble and Shining Ones! We have offered to you, so we ask for your gifts in return.

Sonjia *elevates the Waters.*

Mike:

Hallow these waters! Bless our lives with Magic, Power and Abundance as we drink of your essence. Kindreds, we ask you, **give us the waters of life!**

All: Give us the waters of life!

A pause...

Mike:

Behold the waters of life! Children of the Earth, drink of the waters of life!

Song: *Pour the Waters one time, then drumming and music etc.*

AFFIRMATION OF THE BLESSING

Mike: We have drunk of the Waters of Life! The Powers have given us true and wondrous blessings. We affirm the gifts of our Kindreds and acknowledge their power in our lives.

Children of the earth, do you accept the gifts of the Gods?

All: We do!

THANKING AND CLOSING THE GATES

Mike: The Mighty Ones have blessed us! So as we prepare to depart, let us give thanks to those who have aided us.

Sonjia: [To the deities of the occasion] Σας ευχαριστούμε [sahs ef-har-ehs-tOO-meh] We thank you

All: We thank you!

Mike: Gods and Goddesses of elder days; noble Spirits of the Land; mighty Ancestors; our Kindreds, we say, We thank you!

All: We thank you!

Robert: Mighty Zeus, Guardian of our Rite tonight, For your Watching and Warding, Through magic and arms, we say, Σας ευχαριστούμε [sahs ef-har-ehs-tOO-meh] We thank you

All: We thank you!

Ariel: Hermes, Keeper of the Gates between, we say: We thank you!

Once more we ask you to join your magic with ours and aid us as we close the gates.

Now let the fire be flame

Let the well be water;

And let the tree be but the very heart of us all that we carry forth from this place!

Let all be as it was before.

Let the Gates now be closed!

All: Let the Gates now be closed!

THANKING THE EARTH MOTHER

Natasha: Earth Mother! We give you all remaining offerings, for what comes from the Earth may return to the Earth.

Pour remaining cup to the ground

Natasha: O Earth Mother! For upholding the world and granting us Your blessings, we say: Σας ευχαριστούμε [sahs ef-har-ehs-tOO-meh] We thank you

All: We thank you!

CLOSING THE RITE

Sonjia: Once again, we have continued in our traditions, honoring the Gods, Ancestors and Nature Spirits, just as in times of old. We have made offerings to our Kindreds and received their blessings in return.

But great energy has been raised within us this day! Let us be grounded once more.

leads final grounding.

Mike: *rings the chime 3x3*

Walk with wisdom, children of the earth. This rite is ended!
Γένοιτο [**yen**-ee-tow]!

All: Γένοιτο [**yen**-ee-tow]!

Supplies

*Warrior makes an offering of **olive oil** to Zeus, pouring*

*Warrior makes an offering of **ale** to the Outdwellers, pouring*

*Throw **herbs or incense** on the fire and pour a container of water around the center of the nemeton.*

***Incense** is offered to the fire.*

***Silver** is offered to the well.*

***Wine** is offered to the omphalos.*

*Druid makes **offering of oil** at each of the hallows as each are addressed for opening.*

*Ancestors: **offering of Whisky***

*Nature Spirits: **offering of fruit or flowers***

*Shining Ones: **offering of Oil***