

Anadikia Festival to the Nature Divinities
Hyperborean Proto-Demos of Hellenion
Sunday, July 15, 2007

This ritual is a devotional celebration of the nature divinities as they are known within Hellenismos. It was written by Hyperborean Proto-Demos as the second of three rituals for the Anadikia Festival, a modern festival created by the Hellenic Pagan organization Neokoroi. Ideally, this ritual is performed in a wild or pastoral setting, such as a park, but a backyard will do in a pinch.

This ritual involves crafting a votive offering, building a nature divinities shrine, offering libations, and feasting.

Worship of nature divinities is worship of local divinities. Because this ritual was written by a group in eastern Minnesota, libations for local deities such as the Naiades of the Mississippi River are included. People performing this ritual in other locales will want to write libations for their own local divinities.

While arguments can be made that the Protogenoi and many of the Titans and Olympians are nature divinities, this ritual chooses to focus on Pan and the nature spirits who are long-lived but not immortal.

Glossary

temenos: ritual area

khernips: spring water and sea salt

nator: baking soda and salt

theoxenia: a feast where mortals and Gods eat together

Ritual Supplies

- clay
- nator
- khernips
- tools for fire: matches, cast-iron caldron, Epsom salts, rubbing alcohol, etc.
- drinking goblets for each participant
- drink for libations
- celebratory picnic
- eating utensils
- barley
- Homeric Hymn 19: Hymn to Pan
- The Orphic Hymn to the Nymphs

Preparatory Work

The nature divinities are not often discussed in modern Hellenic Pagan circles. Because they are not always familiar, participants may wish to sit together and discuss their understandings of the nature divinities before beginning this ritual. Who are the nature divinities and why are the participants worshipping them? What sort of relationships do the participants and the nature divinities have with each other? How do participants acknowledge nature divinities in their practices?

After this discussion, the participants may sit together and prepare their minds for ritual. Different people have various ways of doing this. Here it's suggested that participants take part in a guided grounding meditation. This meditation is not a reconstructionist activity, but it is an effective way to quiet distracting thoughts and open oneself to devotional states of consciousness. At the very least, it's relaxing and helps to keep the mind focused on the present activities.

As the participants sit quietly with their eyes closed or open but unfocused, one participant will lead them on a guided meditation involving images of the participants merging with the wild surrounding them.

Once this meditation is over, participants create votive offerings for the local nature divinities out of self-hardening pottery clay. Participants may or may not want to do this together. Plenty of time should be allowed to make this a meaningful devotional act.

Ritual Creation of the Nature Divinities Shrine

If the group is small, participants may enjoy searching for an appropriate place together to build the shrine, what will be the temenos. Otherwise, it's suggested that one participant check out the wild area beforehand and choose an appropriate spot. Wild places before caves and/or in close vicinity to water are extremely appropriate, especially on hills or mountains.

At the shrine site, the participants work together to build a shrine to the nature divinities. They use natural objects within the area, such as rocks, mud, and twigs. If the temenos is on a beach, a sandcastle could be built. The shrine should be built to biodegrade back into the earth very quickly and to blend into the environment around it. It should have an altar in front of it, most appropriately facing the east.

Procession

After building the shrine, participants walk a ways away from it and then return in a contemplative and formal procession.

Purification of People

Once near the shrine, participants will purify themselves. One at a time, each person says, "Far off, far off, even to the profane!" as a fellow participant pours khernips over their hands. They then may enter the temenos.

Purification of the Temenos

After calling for solemn silence, a participant walks around the temenos, sprinkling it with nator to purify the space.

After this, the fire tender places the fire source on the altar and lights it, saying, "I conjure you, sacred fire, whose mother is Hestia and whose father is Hephaistos."

Ideally, this fire source will be an established fire pit, but if the shrine isn't near one, a tabletop hibachi-type grill or a large and well-protected candle may be used. In the case of our demos, we used a cast iron cauldron, Epsom salts, rubbing alcohol, and a fireproof surface.

Hymnodia to Hestia

A participant will request solemn silence and then read the following:

Hestia, you who obtained as your lot in the lofty abodes
Of all the immortal Gods and of humans who walk on the earth
A seat that forever endures as the honor due to your age,
Possessing a beautiful portion and honor – for not without you
Are banquets held by mortals, where he who begins pours out
No wine as sweet as honey for Hestia first and last.
– Homeric Hymn 29: Hymn to Hestia and Hermes

First libation

Herald: Sponde! Hestia, guardian of hearth's fire, yours is always the first and the last.

Everyone pours a libation to Hestia and then drinks.

Litany to the Nature Divinities

Herald: Roaming Pan, beloved god of shepherds,
Guardian of flocks, wilds, and rustic music
Who dances on the legs of a goat.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Inspiring Muses, goddesses of the arts,
Nymphs who remember all events
And sing to the great poets.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Shy and cavern-dwelling Maia, eldest Pleiades sister,
Who was loved by Glorious Zeus in secret
And bore Heart-Delighting Hermes.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Rich-haired Nysiades, Okeanides trusted by Father Zeus
To raise Twice-Born Dionysos with Seilenos
In the beautiful valleys of Nysa.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Gentle Asterionides, nurses of Queenly Hera,
The Asterion plant on your shores
Is a handsome garland for Her magnificent head.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Wild-eyed Thyiades, Nymphs in the train of Wine-Dark Dionysos,
Dryads and Naiads who follow the god of Bacchic frenzy
In orgiastic joy.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Wise Daphnis, Nymph of Mount Parnassos,
Delphic prophetess of Gaia,
Speaking at Delphi before Apollon's arrival.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Starry Faced Hesperides, daughters of primordial powers,
In the western garden you watch over the golden apples
that cast the golden light of sunset.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Kind and beloved Nymphs of inspiration
Who bring peace to artists of all kinds,
Quickening the life in creativity.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Soothing Nymphs of healing
Whose sacred waters, through blessings,
Cure the illnesses of humanity.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Mysterious Nymphs of divination and nympholepsy,
Mothers of prophets,
Who keep oracles in caves.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Merciful Nymphs, protecting and nurturing,
Nurses of divine and heroic infants,
Raising great beings in places of beauty.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Pleasure-loving Nymphs, dwelling in places of rich fertility,
Making love with shepherds and gods
In caves, on couches of stone.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Ancient Okeanides, daughters of Okeanos the primordial river and Tethys,
Whose ranks are responsible for all fresh water in the world,
Without which all life would cease.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Swift Nephelai, Okeanides of rain clouds,
Who carry water to the sky in cloud pitchers
To quench the thirst of the Earth.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Cooling Aurai, daughters of Boreas,
Okeanides of moist breezes
That encircle the Earth.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: White-haired Boukoloji, friendly mistresses of grassy pastures,
Who protect the shepherd's herds

And guard the bountiful fruit trees.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Graceful Hekaterides, five in number,
guardians of country dances,
Fun-loving mothers of the Oreaides, Satyroi, and Kouretes,

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Sweet-smelling Anthousai, Okeanides of flowers
Used for eating and admiring
As well as grieving and expressing.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Noble Naiades, Okeanides of freshwater streams, lakes, and rivers,
Strong-limbed companions of Artemis,
Mothers whose sons founded cities.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Poetic Pegaiai, Naiades of springs,
Gifting healing to the ill
And poetic inspiration to the lucky.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Shaded Krinaiai, Naiades of fountains and wells,
Watching the movement of cities
And catching wishes held in coins.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Rushing Potameides, Naiades of rivers and streams,
Who flow over land and under bridges,
Traveling far and wide.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Wet Limnatides, Naiades of freshwater lakes,
Whose feet touch mud and pebble
And whose hands splash the shores.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Nimble-footed Eleionomai, Naiades of marshes and wetlands,
Mistresses of rich and saturated vegetation,
Who accompany the buzz of insects and cries of birds.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Alpine Oreiades, Dryades of the high mountain forests,
Who favor evergreen pine and fir,
Reading each cone like a face.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Rustic Meliai, Dryades of the ash tree,
Daughters of Gaia born from the blood of Ouranos,
Mothers of spears and Bronze-Age men.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Riverside Hamadryades, Dryades of poplar and oak,
Your trees emerged from the moist ground with your birth,
Shading sacred groves.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Laughing Maliades, Nymphs of apples trees and sheep,
Who curl in the boughs of fruit trees,
Watching ewes nurse their young.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Evergreen Daphnaie, Dryades of laurel trees,
Sacred to Foreseeing Apollon,
Your leaves grace the heads' of the victorious.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Towering Aigeiros, Nymph of the black poplar,
Sturdy and strong-rooted,
Leaves rusting in the wind.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Trailing Apelos, Nymph of the vine,
Tendrils climbing to the sunlight,
Curling wily around obstacles.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Heavy Balanis, Nymph of acorn-bearing trees,
Feeding the forest below you,
Delivering your nut in a cup.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Dancing Karya, Nymph of nut trees,
Laying on a bed of hazel, walnut, sweet chestnut, and filbert,
Your stores are earthy and rich.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Brown Kraneia, Nymph of the European Cornel,
Dyes and jam and vodka
Fill your woody kitchen.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Small Morea, Nymph of the black mulberry,
Stiff and rough are your leaves,
Rich and dark is your fruit.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Broad-crowned Ptelea, Nymph of the Wych Elm,
Your frock nearly sweeps the ground,
Modestly dressing your figure.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Smooth Syke, Nymph of the fig tree,
Reaching elegantly into the sky,
You feed us as you fed our ancestors.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Beautiful Haliai, Nymphs of the sea, waves, fish, sea caves, and beach;
Guiding currents of fresh water through the ocean,
You delight in the boundary of the shore and ride the backs of dolphins.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Maiden Nereides, 50 Nymph daughters of Nereus and Doris,
Shapeshifting patrons of sea workers,
The currents are your partners in dance.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Mysterious Lampades, Nymphs of the underworld,
You dip your feet in underground rivers
And carry torches in the retinue of Night Wandering Hekate.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Fiery Asteriai, Nymphs of the stars,
Daughters of Heaven-Bearing Atlas,

You light the night with your faces.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Rainy Hyades, Asteriai of the Hyades constellation,
Mourning sisters of Hyas,
Daimon of seasonal rains.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Mountainous Pleiades, Asteriai of the star cluster
In the Taurus constellation bearing your name,
Loved by immortals and royal descendents.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Colorful Astra, Asteriai of the planets,
Shining with a steady light,
You wander the heavens.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Wild Kentauroi of the mountains,
Half-man and half-horse,
Hooves clopping in forest and in cave.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Joyous Satyrs, dancing and drinking,
Rustic mates of the nymphs,
You are fertile and wild.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Goat-footed Panes, bearded and tailed,
You play lascivious games in mountain and pasture,
And protect the thick-haired herds who graze here.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Herald: Salty Tritons, mermen in the train of Lord Poseidon,
Dancing in the waves with laughing Nereides
And blowing through bored shells.

All: We praise you! We honor you!

Libations for the Nature Divinities

First Hymnodia

A participant will read *Homeric Hymn 19: Hymn to Pan*.

Libation to Pan:

The herald says, “Sponde! Shaggy shepherd-God Pan, Arkadian, delighter of merry noise. Lustful son of Many-Turning Hermes, the mountain wilderness is your domain. We praise you, goat-hoofed one.”

Everyone pours a libation to Pan and then drinks.

Second Hymnodia

A participant will read *Orphic Hymn to the Nymphs* (Athanasakis translation recommended).

Libation to the Nymphs as a group

The herald says, “Sponde! Beautiful Nymphs of the world and the heavens. Daughters of magnificent beings, you are the water so fundamental to life on this planet: every pool, every brook, every drop of rain, every wave that caresses the shore, every roaring waterfall. You are every tree—whether flowering, coniferous, ginko, cycas, or fern—shading the earth and all life with your skirts, protecting the ground, and purifying the air. You are the fiery stars and the wandering planets. You are the mountains, the valleys, the wetlands, the forest, the beach. You are where we live. We praise you, blessed and inspiring beings.”

Everyone pours a libation to the Nymphs as a group and then drinks.

Third Hymnodia

A participant will read a poem appropriate for the Nymphs of Minnesota. Hyperborean Proto-Demos read the first three stanzas of *Tone of Minnesota* by Dennis Siluk.

Libation to the Nymphs of Minnesota:

The herald says, “Sponde! Rustic and dancing Nymphs of Minnesota. You are called Spirits of the Land by the indigenous peoples of this place. You witnessed the birthing of the bedrock. You witnessed the coming of the natives, of the voyageurs from the north and traders, settlers, and slaves from the east, conducting businesses, intermarrying, building friendships, and enacting terrible betrayals. You witness hunting, gathering, cultivation, and urbanization. Merciful guardians, you are Minnesota with every cave, every lake, every hill, every tree. We praise you, beautiful aboriginal beings.”

Everyone pours a libation to the Nymphs of Minnesota and then drinks.

Fourth Hymnodia

A participant will read a poem appropriate for the Naiades of the Mississippi River. Hyperborean Proto-Demos read *the mississippi river empties into the gulf* by Lucille Clifton.

Libation to the Naiades of the Mississippi River:

The herald says, “Sponde! Great Naiades of the Mississippi River. Long and large you stretch, flowing and rolling from Lake Itasca to the Gulf of Mexico. Your majestic tributaries are many and your drainage basin immense, feeding, emptying, filling, carrying, inspiring mortals from your beginnings. We praise you, vast, beautiful beings.”

Everyone pours a libation to the Naiades of the Mississippi River and then drinks.

Sacrifice

Each participant throws a handful of barley on the fire. Participants may pray silently or speak from their own hearts as they make their offering. After offerings are made, participants may make requests of a nature divinity for the upcoming year.

Ritual Dedication of the Votive Offerings

Each participant places their votive offering on the altar. A prayer or verbal offering (hymn, song, poetry, etc.) may be given at this time as well.

Feast

Have a picnic in front of the shrine. A theoxenia plate should be made for the local nymphs of this place. Dishes with fruits, vegetables, and honey are very appropriate. The nymphs were historically also given animal sacrifices, and meat is appropriate.

After the festival, food on the theoxenia plate can be scattered for the local wild creatures to enjoy.

Closing Libations

The herald says, “Sponde! Shaggy shepherd-God Pan, Arkadian, delighter of merry noise. Lustful son of Many-Turning Hermes, the mountain wilderness is your domain. We praise you, goat-hoofed one.”

Everyone pours a libation to Pan and then drinks.

The herald says, “Sponde! Beautiful Nymphs of the world and the heavens. Daughters of magnificent beings, you are the water so fundamental to life on this planet: every pool, every brook, every drop of rain, every wave that caresses the shore, every roaring waterfall. You are every tree—whether flowering, coniferous, ginko, cycas, or fern—shading the earth and all life with your skirts, protecting the ground, and purifying the air. You are the fiery stars and the wandering planets. You are the mountains, the valleys, the wetlands, the forest, the beach. You are where we live. We praise you, blessed and inspiring beings.”

Everyone pours a libation to the Nymphs as a group and then drinks.

The herald says, “Sponde! Rustic and dancing Nymphs of Minnesota. You are called Spirits of the Land by the indigenous peoples of this place. You witnessed the birthing of the bedrock. You witnessed the coming of the natives, of the voyageurs from the north and traders, settlers, and slaves from the east, conducting businesses, intermarrying, building friendships, and enacting terrible betrayals. You witness hunting, gathering, cultivation, and urbanization. Merciful guardians, you are Minnesota with every cave, every lake, every hill, every tree. We praise you, beautiful aboriginal beings.”

Everyone pours a libation to the Nymphs of Minnesota and then drinks.

The herald says, “Sponde! Great Naiades of the Mississippi River. Long and large you stretch, flowing and rolling from Lake Itasca to the Gulf of Mexico. Your majestic tributaries are many and your drainage basin immense, feeding, emptying, filling, carrying, inspiring mortals from your beginnings. We praise you, vast, beautiful beings.”

Everyone pours a libation to the Naiades of the Mississippi River and then drinks.

Herald: Sponde! Hestia, guardian of hearth’s fire, yours is always the first and the last.

Everyone pours a libation to Hestia and then drinks.

Participants clean the area so it's as clean as (or cleaner than) when they arrived.