



# Ritual for the Galaxia

## 15 Elaphebolion

- ◆ **Ritual washing**
- ◆ **Ritual washing with invocation to Okeanos**

Okeanos whose nature ever flows, from whom at first both Gods and men arose; sire incorruptible, whose waves surround, and earth's all-terminating circle bound: hence every river, hence the spreading sea, and earth's pure bubbling fountains spring from thee. Hear, mighty sire, for boundless bliss is thine, greatest cathartic of the powers divine: earth's friendly limit, fountain of the pole, whose waves wide spreading and circumfluent roll. Approach benevolent, with placid mind, and be forever to thy mystics kind.

- ◆ **Purification – khernips (holy water) sprinkled from a bay branch – “Be gone all corruption and evil” (three times).**

“Blessed Okeanos, may your bright waters purify this space, and prepare both me, and it, for the rites that are about to unfold.”

- ◆ **Euphemia sto, euphemia sto, eukhomai tois Theois pasi kai pasais.**  
(Let there be words of good omen, Let there be words of good omen, pray to the Gods and Goddesses.)
- ◆ **Who is present? Those attending answer: All good people!**
- ◆ **Lighting of the lamp for Hestia with invocation: Daughter of Kronos, You whose eternal flame illumines all our worship, come to this oikos with blessings . . .**
- ◆ **Lighting of the sacrificial fire**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Homeric Hymn 24 to Hestia**

### To Hestia

Hestia, you that tend the far-shooting lord Apollo's sacred house at holy Pytho, from your locks the oozing oil ever drips down. Come to this house in kindly (?) heart, together with Zeus the resourceful, and bestow beauty on my singing.

Translated by Martin L. West

- ◆ **Strewing of barley groats around the altar (circling clockwise three times)**
- ◆ **To Gaia**

First of all, in my prayers, before all other Gods, I call upon the foremost prophetess Gaia.

Aeschylus – Eumenides (opening lines)

- ◆ **Invocation to Gaia: Gaia, to you who nurtures us into being, who nurtures us through life, and who accepts us once again unto Thee, blessed Kourotrophos, I honor you with khernips . . . .**
- ◆ **Offering of khernips poured out**
- ◆ **Orphic Hymn 26 To Earth**

**Ges**

[Gaia Thea/], mother of men and of the blessed Gods,  
 you nourish all, you give all, you bring all to fruition, and you destroy all.  
 When the season is fair you are heavy with fruit and growing blossoms;  
 and, O multiform maiden, you are the seat of the immortal cosmos,  
 and in the pains of labor you bring forth fruit of all kinds.  
 Eternal, reverend, deep-bosomed, and blessed,  
 you delight in the sweet breath of grass, O Goddess bedecked with flowers.  
 Yours is the joy of the rain, and round you the intricate realm of the stars  
 revolves in endless and awesome flow.  
 But, O blessed Goddess, may you multiply the gladsome fruits  
 and, together with the beautiful seasons, grant me favor.

Translation by Apostolos N. Athanassakis

- ◆ **Invocations and prayers to Themis: To you who sits leaning against Zeus, who consults closely with Zeus, and who are the just order of all things . . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**

Leap for goodly Themis

From the Hymn of the Kouretes

- ◆ **Incense: myrrh or frankincense**
- ◆ **Invocation to the Mother of the Gods: Khaire Blessed Mother of Almighty Zeus and Hera, Queen of Heaven . . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Orphic Hymn 27 To the Mother of the Gods**

**To the Mother of the Gods**

Divine are your honors, O mother of the Gods and nurturer of all.  
 Yolk your swift chariot drawn by bull-slaying-lions,  
 and join our prayers, O mighty Goddess. You bring things to pass,  
 O many-named and reverend one, you are queen of the sky;  
 in the cosmos yours is the throne, the throne in the middle,  
 because the earth is yours, and you give gentle nourishment to mortals.  
 Of you were born Gods and men,  
 you hold sway over the rivers and over all the sea.  
 Hestia is one of your names, they call you giver of prosperity,  
 because you bestow on men all manner of blessings.  
 Come to this rite, Queen whom the drum delights,  
 all-taming savior of Phrygia, consort of Kronos,

honored child of Sky, frenzy-loving nurturer of life,  
joyously and graciously visit our deeds of piety.

Translated by Apostolos N. Athanassakis (revised edition)

- ◆ **Invocation to Rhea**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering of sacrifice to the Mother of the Gods and Rhea**
- ◆ **Orphic Hymn 14 To Rhea**

### **To Rhea**

Mighty Rhea, daughter of many-faced Protogonos,  
your sacred chariot is drawn by bull-slayers,  
you dance to the sound of drums and cymbals, O frenzy-loving maiden,  
O Mother of Zeus, is yours, aegis-bearing lord of Olympos.  
Illustrious and honored, Kronos' blessed consort,  
you delight in the mountains and in the horrid shrieks of mortals.  
Strong-spirited Rhea, queen of queens, lover of the battle din,  
liar, savior, redeemer, first by birth, mother of Gods  
and of mortals, from you come the earth,  
and the wide sky above, and the sea and the winds.  
Ethereal and restless, come, O blessed Goddess,  
O gentle-minded savior, come, bring peace and a wealth  
and abundance of possessions, and do send death and the filth of pollution  
to the ends of the earth.

Translation by Apostolos N. Athanassakis (revised edition)

- ◆ **Prayers (blessings for the coming year, etc.)**
  
- ◆ **Incense: storax**
- ◆ **Invocation to Kronos: Mighty Sire, pure Titan who brings all things to an end and renews them again . . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Orphic Hymn 13 To Kronos**

### **To Kronos**

Everlasting father of blessed Gods and men,  
resourceful, pure and mighty, O powerful Titan,  
you consume all things and replenish them, too.  
Unbreakable is the hold you have on the boundless cosmos,  
O Kronos, begetter of time, Kronos of shifting stories,  
child of Earth, child of starry Sky.  
In you there is birth and decline, O revered and prudent lord of Rhea,  
You are the progenitor, you dwell in every part of the world.  
I am a suppliant, hear my voice, O wily and brave one,  
and to a good life bring a blameless end.

Translation by Apostolos N. Athanassakis (revised edition)

- ◆ **Incense: myrrh**
- ◆ **Invocation to Zeus Teleios: Khaire Zeus, King of all, who rules with Hera Queen of Heaven, fulfiller . . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Kallimachos, Hymn I to Zeus (selection)**

### To Zeus

At libations to Zeus what else should rather be sung than the god himself, mighty forever, king for evermore, router of the Pelagonians, dealer of justice to the sons of Heaven?

In Parrhasia it was that Rhea bare thee, where was a hill sheltered with thickest brush. Thence is the place holy, and no fourfooted thing that hath need of Eileithyia nor any woman approacheth thereto, but the Apidians call it the primeval childbed of Rhea. There when thy mother had laid thee down from her mighty lap, straightway she sought a stream of water, wherewith she might purge her of the soilure of birth and wash thy body therein.

And holden in distress the lady Rhea said, "Dear Earth, give birth thou also! Thy birthpangs are light." So spake the goddess, and lifting her great arm aloft she smote the mountain with her staff; and it was greatly rent in twain for her and poured forth a mighty flood. Therein, O Lord, she cleansed thy body; and swaddled thee, and gave thee to Neda to carry within the Cretan covert, that thou mightst be reared secretly: Neda, eldest of the nymphs who then were about her bed, earliest birth after Styx and Philyra. And no idle favour did the goddess repay her, but named that stream Neda; which, I ween, in great flood by the very city of the Cauconians, which is called Lepreion, mingles its stream with Nereus, and its primeval water do the son's son of the Bear, Lycaon's daughter, drink.

Hail! Greatly hail! Most high Son of Cronus, giver of good things, giver of safety. Thy works who could sing? There hath not been, there shall not be, who shall sing the works of Zeus. Hail! Father, hail again! And grant us goodness and prosperity. Without goodness wealth cannot bless men, nor goodness without prosperity. Give us goodness and wealth.

Translated by A. W. Mair, G. R. Mair

- ◆ **Prayers (for blessings for the coming season)**
- ◆ **Incense: frankincense**
- ◆ **Invocation to Hera Teleia: Khaire Hera, Queen of All, Goddess of Marriages, Goddess of light . . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Homeric Hymn 12 To Hera**

### To Hera

Of Hera I sing, the golden-throned, whom Rhea bore to be queen of the immortals, of supreme beauty, sister and wife of Zeus the loud-booming; glorious one, whom all of the blessed ones on long Olympus revere and honor no less than Zeus whose sport is the thunderbolt.

Translated by Martin L. West

◆ **Prayers (for blessings for the coming season)**

◆ **Incense: frankincense**

◆ **Invocation to Helios: Blessed Helios, may your bright rays bring life to spring from the earth in plenty and may you warm the earth and bring joy to us all . . . .**

◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**

◆ **Homeric Hymn 31 To Helios (selection)**

**To Helios**

And now, O Muse Calliope, daughter of Zeus, begin to sing of glowing Helios whom mild-eyed Euryphaessa, the far-shining one, bare to the Son of Earth and starry Heaven. For Hyperion wedded glorious Euryphaessa, his own sister, who bare him lovely children, rosy-armed Eos and rich-tressed Selene and tireless Helios who is like the deathless gods. As he rides in his chariot, he shines upon men and deathless gods, and piercingly he gazes with his eyes from his golden helmet. Bright rays beam dazzingly from him, and his bright locks streaming from the temples of his head gracefully enclose his far-seen face: a rich, fine-spun garment glows upon his body and flutters in the wind: and stallions carry him. Then, when he has stayed his golden-yoked chariot and horses, he rests there upon the highest point of heaven, until he marvelously drives them down again through heaven to Ocean.

Hail to you, lord! Freely bestow on me substance that cheers the heart. . . .

Translated by Hugh G. Evelyn White

◆ **Prayers (blessings for the coming season)**

“May the bright gleam of the sun cause blessings that give happiness to life to spring from the earth in plenty.”

Modified from Aeschylus' Eumenides

◆ **Incense: aromatic herbs**

◆ **Invocation to the Horai: Blessed Horai, may you bring the joys of spring, the beauty of Nature, and the fruitfulness of Earth . . . .**

◆ **Libation of pure water**

◆ **Orphic Hymn 43 To the Horai**

**To the Horai**

*Horai*, daughters of Themis, daughters of Lord Zeus,  
Eunomie and Dike and thrice-blessed Eirene,  
pure spirits of spring, of the blossoming meadows,  
you are found in every color, in all scents wafted by the breezes.  
Ever-blooming, revolving, and sweet-faced, O *Horai*,  
you cloak yourselves with the dew of luxuriant flowers.  
At play you are the companions of holy Persephone, when the Fates  
and the Graces in circling dances come forth to the light,  
pleasing Zeus and their mother, giver of fruits.

Come to the new initiates and their holy and reverent rites,  
bring perfect seasons for the growth of goodly fruit.

Translation by Apostolos N. Athanassakis (revised edition)

- ◆ **Prayers (blessings for the coming season)**
- ◆ **Libation poured on the sacrificial fire to Hestia and for all the Gods with prayers**

“May the Gods watch benevolently over us with peace and the beautiful Seasons and guide us with favorable fortunes!”

Adapted from Aeschylus – Libation Bearers – Chorus

- ◆ **Invocation to Hestia: Daughter of Kronos, You whose eternal flame illumines all our worship, we have honored You in first place with a libation of honey sweet wine and will honor you in last place with a libation of honey sweet wine:**
- ◆ **Homeric Hymn 29 to Hestia**

### **To Hestia**

Hestia, you that in the high dwellings of all, both immortal gods and men who walk on earth, have been assigned an everlasting seat as the privilege of seniority, and enjoy a fine honor and privilege, for mortals have no feasts without you where the libation-pourer does not begin by offering honey-sweet wine to Hestia in first place and last: and you, Argus-slayer, son of Zeus and Maia, messenger of the blessed ones, gold-wand, giver of blessings, be favorable and assist together with Hestia whom you love and revere. For both of you dwell in the fine houses of men on earth, in friendship towards each other, fine supports (of the house), and you attend intelligence and youth.

I salute you, daughter of Kronos, and you too, gold-wand Hermes. And I will take heed both for you and for other singing.

Translated by Martin L. West

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine to Hestia**

“Blessed Hestia, Goddess of home and hearth, to you we offer last of all a libation of honey sweet wine, as pious mortals should. Tend to those whom we love and guard the houses of the pious. As the Gods will it, so shall it be!”

- ◆ **Extinguishing of the lamp**