



Ritual for the Dipolieia

14 Skirophorion

- ◆ **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**
- ◆ **Invocation to Zeus Polieus, Zeus of the City, savior, protector, councilor . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering of barley mixed with wheat:**

Our loved plowing ox that toiled with us, tilling the fields fructified by Poseidon, enabled by Despoina and brought to harvest by Demeter has been killed, a sacrifice to you Almighty Zeus. Let it be a sacrifice for all plowing oxen, a sacrifice for our labors together in Thy service. Savior of our spiritual and eternal Polis, accept the piety of those who honor you O Guardian of our ancient sacred rites, for blessed Athena sprang from your very head, She who bears the aegis and leads us in wisdom and in strength. The axe was found to have killed the plowing ox and it has been tried and found guilty and banished by throwing it into the sea.

Commentary and prayer – R.A.C.

- ◆ **Homeric Hymn 23 To Zeus**

To Zeus

Of Zeus, best and greatest of the gods, I will sing,
 the wide-sounding ruler, the one that brings to fulfillment,

who consults closely with Themis as she sits leaning against him.

Be favorable, wide-sounding son of Kronos, greatest and most glorious.

Translated by Martin L. West

He does not sit upon his throne by mandate of another and hold his dominion beneath a mightier. No one sits above him whose power he holds in awe. He speaks, and it is done – he hastens to execute whatever his counseling mind conceives.

Aeschylus – Suppliant Maidens, Chorus

But may Zeus grant that it go well with us. For Zeus' desire is hard to trace: it shines everywhere, even in gloom, together with fortune obscure to mortal men.

Aeschylus – Suppliant Maidens – Chorus

◆ **Ending of Kallimachos' Hymn to Zeus**

“Hail, greatly hail, most high Son of Kronos, 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.”

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering to Zeus Polieus**
- ◆ **Orphic Hymn 15 To Zeus**

To Zeus

Much-honored Zeus, great god, indestructible Zeus,
we lay before you in prayer redeeming testimony.
O king, you have brought to light divine works –
earth, goddess and mother, the hills swept by the shrill winds,
the sea, and the host of the stars, marshaled by the sky.
Kronian Zeus, strong-spirited god, the thunderbolt is your scepter,
father of all, beginning and end of all,
earth-shaker, increaser and purifier, all-shaker,
god of thunder and lightning, Zeus the sower.
Hear me, god of many faces, grant me unblemished health,
please grant me divine peace and riches, please grant me glory without blame.

Translation by Apostolos N. Athanassakis (revised edition)

- ◆ **Prayers (for blessings, family, friends, all who honor Him and the Gods of Hellas, etc.)**

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine with prayers**

“May blessings go with us, and may Almighty Zeus watch benevolently over us and guard 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**