



Ritual for the Demokratia

12 Boedromion

- ◆ **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

The Athenians understood the value of checks and balances and of enforcing time for reflection before acting. They understood that professionalism is necessary in certain jobs, that accountability was necessary of most jobs, and that some jobs required absolute job-security.

From Christopher W. Blackwell, 'Athenian Democracy: a brief overview'

- ◆ **Incense: frankincense or aromatic herbs**
- ◆ **Invocation to Athena Phratria: Khaire Athena, who sprang from the head of Zeus, who bears the aegis, who leads us in wisdom and strength, you who guides the Demos and unites them in common bond . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **From Aeschylus Eumenides**

Chorus

I will accept a home with Pallas, and I will not dishonor a city which she, with Zeus the omnipotent and Ares, holds as a fortress of the gods, the bright ornament that guards the altars of the gods of Hellas. I pray for the city, with favorable prophecy, that the bright gleam of the sun may cause blessings that give happiness to life to spring from the earth, in plenty.

◆ **Homeric Hymn 28 To Athena**

To Athena

I begin to sing of Pallas Athena, the glorious goddess, bright-eyed, inventive, unbending of heart, pure virgin, savior of cities, courageous, Tritogeneia. Wise Zeus himself bare her from his awful head, arrayed in warlike arms of flashing gold, and awe seized all the gods as they gazed. But Athena sprang quickly from the immortal head and stood before Zeus who holds the aegis, shaking a sharp spear: great Olympus began to reel horribly at the might of the bright-eyed goddess, and earth round about cried fearfully, and the sea was moved and tossed with dark waves, while foam burst forth suddenly: the bright Son of Hyperion stopped his swift-footed horses a long while, until the maiden Pallas Athena had stripped the heavenly armor from her immortal shoulders. And wise Zeus was glad.

And so hail to you, daughter of Zeus who holds the aegis! Now I will remember you and another song as well.

Translated by Hugh G. Evelyn White

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering**
- ◆ **Prayers for understanding, for guidance, and for unity . . .**

- ◆ **Lighting of the incense burner with frankincense or myrrh**
- ◆ **Invocation to Eirene: Blessed Eirene who brings peace that nurtures mankind and harmony that establishes wellbeing . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**

And as for the Hours, as they are called, to each of them, according as her name indicates, was given the ordering and adornment of life, so as to serve to the greatest advantage of mankind; for there is nothing which is better able to build a life of felicity than obedience to law (Eunomia) and justice (Dikê) and peace (Eirenê).

From Diodorus Siculus: **The Library of History**

And it is due to anyone who has received the exhortation and the impulse to engage in public affairs that he next hear and receive precepts of statecraft by the use of which he will, so far as is humanly possible, be of service to the people and at the same time manage his own affairs with safety and rightful honour. But as a step towards that which follows and a consequence of that which has been said, we must consider what is the best form of government. For just as there are numerous modes of life for a man, so the government (politeia) is the life of a people, and therefore it is essential for us to take the best form of it; for of all forms the statesman will choose the best or, if he cannot obtain that, then the one of all the rest which is most like it.

From Plutarch on Government

- ◆ **Incense: myrrh**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering of barley cake**
- ◆ **Cleanthes' Hymn to Zeus**

Cleanthes' Hymn to Zeus

Most glorious of the immortals, invoked by many names, ever all-powerful,
Zeus, the First Cause of Nature, who rules all things with Law,
Hail! It is right for mortals to call upon you,
since from you we have our being, we whose lot it is to be God's image,
we alone of all mortal creatures that live and move upon the earth.
Accordingly, I will praise you with my hymn and ever sing of your might.
The whole universe, spinning around the earth,
goes wherever you lead it and is willingly guided by you.
So great is the servant which you hold in your invincible hands,
your eternal, two-edged, lightning-forked thunderbolt.
By its strokes all the works of nature came to be established,
and with it you guide the universal Order of Reason which moves through all creation,
mingling with the great sun and the small stars.
O God, without you nothing comes to be on earth,
neither in the region of the heavenly poles, nor in the sea,
except what evil men do in their folly.
But you know how to make extraordinary things suitable,
and how to bring order forth from chaos; and even that which is unlovely is lovely to you.
For thus you have joined all things, the good with the bad, into one,
so that the eternal Order of all came to be one.
This Order, however, evil mortals flee, poor wretches;
though they are desirous of good things for their possession,
they neither see nor listen to God's universal Law;
and yet, if they obey it intelligently, they would have the good life.
But they are senselessly driven to one evil after another:
some are eager for fame, no matter how godlessly it is acquired;
others are set on making money without any orderly principles in their lives;
and others are bent on ease and on the pleasures and delights of the body.
They do these foolish things, time and again,
and are swept along, eagerly defeating all they really wish for.
O Zeus, giver of all, shrouded in dark clouds and holding the vivid bright lightning,
rescue men from painful ignorance.
Scatter that ignorance far from their hearts,
and deign to rule all things in justice,
so that, honored in this way, we may render honor to you in return,
and sing your deeds unceasingly, as befits mortals;
for there is no greater glory for men
or for gods than to justly praise the universal Order of Reason.

Translated by M. A. C. Ellery, 1976 (modified – Logos translated as 'Word' was replaced by 'Order')

Cleanthes (331-232 B.C.) was a disciple of Zeno the Stoic. He considered the universe a living being and said that god was the soul of the universe and the sun its heart.

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

◆ Libation of honey sweet wine

“May blessings go with us, and may Athena and Zeus unite us in a common bond of unity that brings fruitfulness between us all and guide us in all our relationships 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**