



# Erkhian Ritual for Kourotophos § Athena Polias § Aglauros § Zeus Polieus § Poseidon § Pandrosos

3 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: aromatic herbs**
- ◆ **Invocation to Kourotrophos: Blessed child nurturer who provides for and guides our children, who nurtures us through life . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of pure water (khernips)**
- ◆ **Offering**
- ◆ **Hear my prayer Kourotrophos and grant nurturing for our children and their wellbeing . . .**
  
- ◆ **Incense: frankincense**
- ◆ **Invocation to Athena Polias: Khaire Athena, you who sprang from the head of Almighty Zeus, you who bears the Aegis, and you who leads us in wisdom and strength . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering**
- ◆ **Homeric Hymn 28 To Athena**

### To Athena

Of Pallas Athena, glorious Goddess, first I sing, the steely-eyed, resourceful one with implacable heart, the reverend virgin, city-savior, doughty one. Tritogeneia, to whom wise Zeus Himself gave birth out of His august head, in battle armor of shining gold:

all the immortals watched in awe, as before Zeus the goat-rider she sprang quickly down from His immortal head with a brandish of Her sharp javelin. A fearsome tremor went through great Olympos from the power of the steely-eyed one, the earth resounded terribly round about, and the sea heaved in a confusion of swirling waves. But suddenly the main was held in check, and Hyperion's splendid son halted His swift-footed steeds for a long time, until the maiden, Pallas Athena, took off the godlike armor from Her immortal shoulders, and wise Zeus rejoiced.

So I salute you, child of goat-rider Zeus. And I will take the head both for you and for other singing.

Translated by Martin L. West

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.

Aeschylus – *Eumenides* (Chorus)

◆ **Prayers: for wisdom and strength in nurturing and guiding children . . .**

◆ **Incense: frankincense**

◆ **Invocation to Aglauros and Pandrosos: Children of Earthborn King Kekrops, granddaughters of Gaia and the river Kephisos, and witnesses of the contest between Athena and Poseidon . . .**

◆ **Libations of milk and honey to Aglauros and Pandrosos**

◆ **Offerings for Aglauros and Pandrosos**

“Aglauros, Princess and first priestess of Athena who gave your life to save the City, patroness of the maturation of boys and who all ephebes make their oaths to, and Pandrosos, Princess and patroness of the maturation of girls, the first to weave woolen clothes for mortals, example and guide to the arrhephoroi, blessed Kourotrophoi, guide us in our care, teaching, and guidance of our children and our dedication to their wellbeing.”

◆ **Prayers: May you be examples to our children and guide them . . .**

◆ **Incense: myrrh**

◆ **Invocation to Zeus Polieus: Khaire Zeus, Councilor, fulfiller, Savior, to you King of all who rules with Hera Queen of Heaven . . .**

◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**

◆ **Offering**

◆ **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

- ◆ **Prayers (for blessings, protection, family, and those in need, etc.)**
  
- ◆ **Incense: myrrh**
- ◆ **Invocation to Poseidon Erechtheus: Lord of the depth of the sea, holder of the earth, savior of ships, mighty sire . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering**
- ◆ **Homeric Hymn 22 To Poseidon**

#### **To Poseidon**

I begin to sing about Poseidon, the great god, mover of the earth and fruitless sea, god of the deep who is also lord of Helicon and wide Aegae. A two-fold office the gods allotted you, O Shaker of the Earth, to be a tamer of horses and a saviour of ships!

Hail, Poseidon, Holder of the Earth, dark-haired lord! O blessed one, be kindly in heart and help those who voyage in ships!

Translated by Hugh G. Evelyn White

- ◆ **Prayers: O tamer of horses and savior of ships, may you guide the ephebes in horsemanship and all who voyage in ships . . .**
  
- ◆ **Libation of wine to all the Kourotrophoi with prayers**

“May blessings go with us, and may Kourotrophos, Athena, Aglauros, Zeus, Poseidon, and Pandrosos watch benevolently over us and our children and guide them 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**