



# Erkhian Ritual for Apollon Pythios § Apollon Paion § Zeus § Leto § Anakes (Dioskuri) § Hermes

4 Thargelion

- ◆ **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 prophetic 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: frankincense**
- ◆ **Invocation to Apollon Pythios: Khaire Apollon, lord of holy Pytho, teacher and averter of evil, to you we cry ‘Ie’ . . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **From Callimachus Hymn II To Apollon**

### To Apollon

How the laurel branch of Apollo trembles! How trembles all the shrine! Away, away, he that is sinful! Now surely Phoebus knocketh at the door with his beautiful foot. See’st thou not? the Delian palm nods pleasantly of a sudden and the swan in the air sings sweetly. Of yourselves now ye bolts be pushed back, pushed back of yourselves, ye bars! The god is no longer far away. And ye, young men, prepare ye for song and for the dance.

Hië, Hië, Paeëon, we hear—since this refrain did the Delphian folk first invent, what time thou didst display the archery of thy golden bow. As thou wert going down to Pytho, there met thee a beast unearthly, a dread snake. And him thou didst slay, shooting swift arrows one upon the other; and the folk cried “Hië, Hië, Paeëon, shoot an arrow!” A helper from the first thy mother bare thee, and ever since that is thy praise.

Translated by A. W. Mair

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering to Apollon Pythios**
- ◆ **Prayers: For guidance, averting evil, and blessings . . .**
- ◆ **Orphic Hymn 34 To Apollon**

### **To Apollon**

Come, O blessed Paian, O slayer of Tityos, O Phoibos, O Lykoreus,  
 giver of riches, illustrious dweller of Memphis, O god to whom we cry “Ie”,  
 O Titan and Pythian god, yours are  
 the golden lyre, the seeds, and the plows. Grynean, Sminthian, slayer of Python,  
 Delphic diviner, wild, light-bringing, lovable god you are, O glorious youth.  
 You shoot your arrows from afar, you lead the Muses into dance,  
 O holy one, you are Bacchos, Didymeus, Loxias, too.  
 lord of Delos, you are the eye that sees all, you bring light to mortals,  
 your hair is golden, your oracular utterance is clear.  
 Hear me with kindly heart as I pray for people.  
 You gaze upon all the ethereal vastness,  
 upon the rich earth you look through the twilight.  
 In the quiet darkness of a night lit with stars  
 you see earth’s roots below, you hold the bounds  
 of the whole world; the beginning and the end to come are yours.  
 You make everything bloom with your versatile lyre,  
 you harmonize the poles, now reaching the highest pitch,  
 now the lowest, now again with a Doric mode,  
 harmoniously balancing the poles, you keep the living races distinct.  
 You have infused harmony into the lot of all men,  
 giving them an equal measure of winter and summer:  
 the lowest notes you strike in the winter, the highest notes you make distinct in the  
 summer,  
 your mode is Doric for spring’s lovely and blooming season.  
 This is why mortals call you lord and Pan,  
 the two-horned god who sends the whistling winds;  
 it is for this you have the master seal of the entire cosmos.  
 O blessed one, hear the suppliant voice of the initiates and save them.

Translation by Apostolos N. Athanassakis (revised edition)

- ◆ **Incense: frankincense**
- ◆ **Invocation to Apollon Paion: Khaire Apollon, great physician, healer, teacher, and averter of evil . . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **From Theocritus, Epigrams**

The roses covered in dew and that thickly growing thyme are reserved for the Muses of Helicon, but the dark-leaved bays are for you, Pythian god of healing: this is the plant with which the cliffs of Delphi pay you honor.<sup>2</sup> This white, horned billy goat that is nibbling the end of a branch of terebinth will shed his blood on your altar.

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering to Apollon Paion**

- ◆ **Prayers: For good health and wellbeing, for protection and averting illness and evil for family, community, Elaion, YSEE, and all who seek His blessings . . .**
- ◆ **From the Paean of Erythrae**

Sing youths, of Paean, skill-famed, Leto's son,  
 Far-shooter –  
 ië Paean! –  
 who fathered a great joy for mortals  
 when he mingled in love with Koronis  
 in the land of the Phlegyae –  
 ië Paean! –  
 Asclepios, the most famous god –  
 ië Paean!

- ◆ **Incense: myrrh**
- ◆ **Invocation to Zeus: Blessed Zeus, King of All, to you who riles with Hera, Queen of Heaven . . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **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

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering to Zeus**
- ◆ **Prayers: For all who honor Him and the Blessed Gods, for family and friends, and those in need, etc.**
- ◆ **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 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)

- ◆ **Incense: myrrh**
- ◆ **Invocation to Leto: Khaire Leto, mother of the Far-Shooter and the Virgin Profuse with Arrows . . .**

“In Delos Leto bore children once, gold-haired Phoebos, lord Apollon, and the deer-shooting huntress Artemis, who holds great power over women.”

From the Scolia 886

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Orphic Hymn 35 to Leto**

#### **To Leto**

Dark-veiled Leto, revered goddess, mother of twins,  
great-souled daughter of Koios, queen to whom many pray,  
to your lot fell the birth pains for Zeus' fair children.  
you bore Phoibos and arrow-pouring Artemis,  
her on Ortygia, him on rocky Delos.  
Hear, lady goddess, come with favor in your heart  
to bring a sweet end to this all-holy rite.

Translation by Apostolos N. Athanassakis (revised edition)

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering to Leto**
- ◆ **Prayers: Of thanks for Apollon and Artemis and for all who honor them and the Blessed Gods . . .**
  
- ◆ **Invocation to the Anakes (Castor and Polydeuces): Great horsemen who inspire and guide the cavalry and saviors of those at sea . . .**

“Most worthy of reverence from all gods and men, they dwell in a god-built home (beneath the earth, always alive?), Castor—tamers of swift steeds, skilled horsemen—and glorious Polydeuces.”

From Alcman – fragments

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Homeric Hymn 17 To the Dioscuri**

#### **To The Dioscuri**

Of Castor and Polydeuces you shall sing, clear-voiced Muse, of the Tyndarids, born of Olympian Zeus; below the peaks of Taygetus the mistress Leda bore them after secretly surrendering to the dark-cloud son of Kronos. I salute you, Tyndarids, riders of swift steeds.

Translated by Martin L. West

- ◆ **Offering to the Anakes**
- ◆ **Homeric Hymn 33 To the Dioscuri**

#### **To the Dioscuri**

Tell about the Sons of Zeus, O curly-eyed Muses—the Tyndarids, fair-ankled Leda’s splendid children, Castor the horse-tamer and faultless Polydeuces, whom below the peaks of the great mountain Taygetus, after uniting in love with the dark-cloud son of Kronos, she bore to be saviors of mankind on earth and of swift-faring ships, when winter tempests race over the implacable sea, and the men from their ships invoke the Sons of great Zeus in prayer, with (sacrifice of) white lambs, going onto the stern deck, and the strong wind and sea swell overwhelm the ship: suddenly they appear, speeding through the air on tawny wings, and at once they make the fierce squalls cease, and lay the waves amid the flats of a clear sea—fair portents, and release from travail; the sailors rejoice at the sight, and their misery and stress are ended.

I salute you, Tyndarids, riders on swift steeds. And I will take heed both for you and for other singing.

Translated by Martin L. West

- ◆ **Incense: frankincense**
- ◆ **Invocation to Hermes: Gold wand bearer, bringer of blessings, messenger of the blessed ones . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Orphic Hymn 28 To Hermes**

#### **To Hermes**

Here me, Hermes, messenger of Zeus, son of Maia,  
almighty in heart, lord of the deceased, judge of contests,  
gentle and clever, O Argeiphontes, you are the guide  
of the flying sandals, a man-loving prophet to mortals.  
A vigorous god, you delight in exercise and in deceit.  
Interpreter of all you are and a profiteer who frees us of cares,  
who holds in his hands the blameless tool of peace.  
Lord of Korykos, blessed, helpful, and skilled in words,  
you assist in work and you are a friend of mortals in need.  
You wield the dreaded, the respected weapon of speech.  
Hear my prayer and grant a good end to a life of industry,  
gracious talk, and mindfulness.

Translation by Apostolos N. Athanassakis (revised edition)

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering to Hermes**
- ◆ **Prayer**

“May you bring about all things for me and guide them by Agathe Tyche and Agathos Daimon.”

Magic Papyri - Poimandres

◆ **Prayers: Of thanks, for blessings, and guidance . . . .**

◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**

“Then may blessings go with us, and may the Gods watch benevolently over us 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**