



# Ritual for the Aphrodisia

4 Hekatombaion

- ◆ **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**

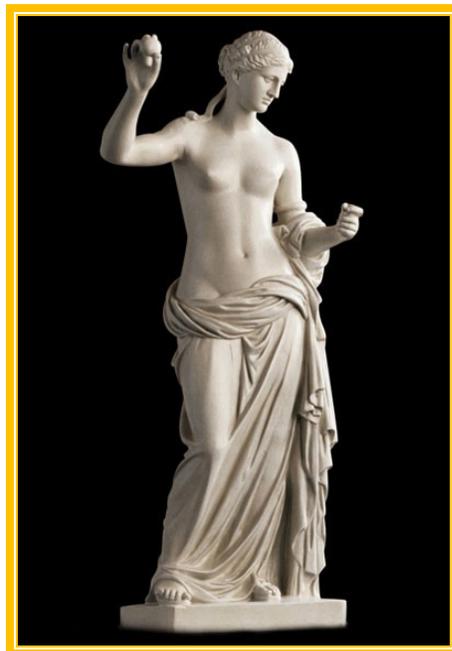
[Gaia Thea/], mother of men and of the blessed Gods,  
 you nourish all, you give all, you bring all to fruition, and you destroy all.  
 When the season is fair you are heavy with fruit and growing blossoms;  
 and, O multiform maiden, you are the seat of the immortal cosmos,  
 and in the pains of 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



- ◆ **Lighting of the incense burner with frankincense or myrrh**
- ◆ **Invocation to Aphrodite Pandemos: To you who engenders love, nurtures love, and brings love to fruition, you who unites all the Demes in love . . .**
- ◆ **Homeric Hymn 10 to Aphrodite**

### **To Aphrodite**

Of Cytherea, born in Cyprus, I will sing. She gives kindly gifts to men:  
smiles are ever on her lovely face, and lovely is the brightness that plays over it.

Hail, goddess, queen of well-built Salamis and sea-girt Cyprus;  
grant me a cheerful song. And now I will remember you and another song also.

Translation by Hugh G. Evelyn-White

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering: a pancarpia (mixture of fruit) or something else pleasing**
- ◆ **From Sappho's Hymn to Aphrodite**

Iridescent-throned Aphrodite, deathless  
Child of Zeus, wile-weaver, I now implore you,  
Don't--I beg you, Lady--with pains and torments  
Crush down my spirit,

But before if ever you've heard my pleadings  
Then return, as once when you left your father's  
Golden house; you yoked to your shining car your  
Wing-whirring sparrows;

Skimming down the paths of the sky's bright ether  
On they brought you over the earth's black bosom,  
Swiftly--then you stood with a sudden brilliance,  
Goddess, before me;

Translation by Elizabeth Vandiver

“Blessed Aphrodite, you embrace all people, nurture our common bond, and ensure love and fellowship! You unite us, give us purpose, and a loving and accepting community!”

- ◆ **Invocation to Peitho: Oh sovereign Peitho, herald of Aphrodite . . .**

“Give holy reverence to the sweetness and charm of my tongue, then you might remain. I will be grateful to You if Your glance keeps watch over my tongue and mouth, when I encounter fierce refusal.”

Adapted from Aeschylus, Eumenides

- ◆ **Libations of honey sweet wine to Peitho**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine to Aphrodite and Peitho with prayers**

“May blessings go with us, and may Aphrodite and Peitho unite us in love and gentle persuasion that brings fruitfulness between us all. May the Goddesses 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**