



Erkhian Ritual for the Diasia

23 Anthesterion

- ◆ **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

ΟΤΑΝ ΑΙΓΛΑ ΔΙΟΣΔΟΤΟΣ ΕΛΘΗ,
 ΛΑΜΠΡΟΝ ΦΕΙΓΓΟΣ ΕΠΕΣΤΙΝ ΑΝΔΡΩΝ
 ΚΑΙ ΜΕΙΛΙΧΟΣ ΑΙΩΝ.

Whenever brightness Zeus-given comes,
 shining light rests upon men,
 and gentle life.

Translated by William H. Race

- ◆ **Lighting of the incense burner with storax**
- ◆ **Invocation to Zeus Meilichios: Ruler of all, giver of goodness, gentle Zeus . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of *melikraton* (honey and water) *nephalios* (no wine)**

Zeus, beginning of all, leader of all,
 Zeus, to you I send this beginning of my hymns.

Greek Lyric II, Edited and translated by David A. Campbell, Loeb Classical Library 1988, p. 316

- ◆ **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

- ◆ **Lighting of the incense burner with storax or myrrh**
- ◆ **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.

Translated by A. W. Mair, G. R. Mair

- ◆ **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)

- ◆ **Offerings of seven honey cakes, vegetables and/or fruit, or cakes shaped as sheep or pigs
'*olokautos* (sacrifice all, do not eat any of it yourself!)**
- ◆ **Prayers (for blessings, family, friends, etc.)**
- ◆ **Euripides: fragment 912a**

To you, ruler of all—whether you favor the name Zeus or Hades—I bring fresh greenery
and liquid meal; accept, I beg you, this unburned offering of all kinds of produce, poured
forth in abundance. For you wield the scepter of Zeus amongst the gods of heaven, and
also share with Hades the rule of those within the earth. Send into the light the souls of
the dead for those who wish to learn the trials awaiting them—whence they have grown,
what is the root of their woes, which of the gods they should appease with sacrifice and
so find respite from their tribulations.

Translated by Christopher Collard

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**

“May Zeus Meilichios 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**