



Ritual for the Haloa

26 Poseidon-β

- ◆ **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

- ◆ **Invocations and prayers to Dionysos: Oh, twice-born discoverer of the grapevine, he who brought wine to mankind and whom swords and blood and sacred rage delight. Furious inspirer, hear these words...**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine to Dionysos**
- ◆ **Reading from Seneca's 'Oedipus'**

To Dionysos

Bind your streaming locks with the nodding ivy, and in your soft hands grasp the Nysaeon thyrsus! Bright glory of the sky, come hither to the prayers which thine own illustrious Thebes, O Bacchus, offers to thee with suppliant hands. Hither turn with favour thy virginal face; with thy star-bright countenance drive away the clouds, the grim threats of Erebus, and greedy fate. Thee it becomes to circle thy locks with flowers of the springtime, thee to cover thy head with Tyrian turban, or thy smooth brow to wreath with the ivy's clustering berries; now to fling loose thy lawless-streaming locks. Seated in thy golden chariot, thy lions with long trappings covered, all the vast coast of the Orient saw thee.

On an unseemly ass old Silenus attends thee, his swollen temples bound with ivy garlands; while thy wanton initiates lead the mystic revels. Along with thee a troop of Bassarids in Edonian dance beat the ground, now on Mount Pangaeus' peak, now on the top of Thracian Pindus; now midst Cadmean dames has come a maenad [Agaue], the

impious comrade of Ogygian Bacchus, with sacred fawn-skins girt about her loins, her hand a light thyrsus brandishing. Their hearts maddened by thee, the matrons have set their hair a-flowing; and at length, after the rending of Pentheus' limbs, the Bacchanals, their bodies now freed from the frenzy, looked on their infamous deed as though they knew it not.

- ◆ **Incense: storax**
- ◆ **Invocation to Demeter: Khaire Demeter, you who taught us to work the earth and provides for us so bountifully...**

Demeter first turned the earth with the curved plough; She first gave corn and crops to bless the land; She first gave laws; all things are Demeter's gift. Of Demeter I must sing. Oh that my song may hymn the Goddess' praise as She deserves, a Goddess who deserved high hymns of praise.

From Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 5

- ◆ **Libation of a kykeon (barley meal, water, ground goat cheese, mint) to Demeter**
- ◆ **From Kallimachos' Hymn VI To Demeter**

To Demeter

As the Basket comes, greet it, ye women, saying 'Demeter, greatly hail! Lady of much bounty, of many measures of corn.' As the Basket comes, from the ground shall ye behold it, ye uninitiated, and gaze not from the roof or from aloft--child nor wife nor maid hath shed her hair--neither then nor when we spit from parched mouths fasting. Hesperos from the clouds marks the time of its coming: Hesperos, who alone persuaded Demeter to drink, what time she pursued the unknown tracks of her stolen daughter.

Hail, Goddess, and save this people in harmony and in prosperity, and in the fields bring us all pleasant things! Feed our kine, bring us flocks, bring us the corn-ear, bring us harvest! And nurse peace, that he who sows may also reap. Be gracious, O thrice-prayed for, great Queen of Goddesses!"

Translated by A. W. Mair

- ◆ **Invocation to Persephone: Khaire Persephone, maiden Goddess of spring's bounty...**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine to Persephone**
- ◆ **(Part of) Orphic Hymn 29 Hymn to Persephone**

Hymn to Persephone

. . . radiant and luminous playmate of the Seasons,
revered and almighty, maiden rich in fruits,
brilliant and horned, only-beloved of mortals,
in spring you take your joy in the meadow of breezes,
you show your holy figure in branches teeming with grass-green fruits,
in autumn you were made a kidnapper's bride.
You alone are life and death to toiling mortals,
O Persephone, you nourish all, always, and kill them, too.
Hearken, O blessed Goddess, send forth the fruits of the earth
as you blossom in peace, and in gentle-handed health

Translation by Apostolos N. Athanassakis (revised edition)

◆ **Prayers to Dionysos, Demeter and Persephone**

“Blessed Theoi who inspire freedom and joy in women, hear us! Listen to our revelling! We are as alive as the soil under our feet. We may rest but we always renew. We bring forth, craft and inspiration. Fill our minds with pleasure and lightness. Bring us happiness in all ways.”

◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**

“May we be mindful of the powers we women have and the honors bestowed upon us by the Theoi. May we be inspired by our revels to goodness and greatness and may the Theoi 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**