



Ritual for the Niketeria

3 Boedromion

(Victory of Athena as Poliadic Deity)

- ◆ **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 or frankincense**
- ◆ **Invocation to Athena – Khaire Athena, you who sprang from the head of Zeus, who bears the aegis, and who leads us with wisdom and strength . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **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 shinning 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 Olympus 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 Marten L. West

- ◆ **Invocation to Athena: To you whose sacred fruit is the olive, whose branch is a symbol of peace, whose oil supplies the sacred flame of Hestia . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Prayers (for blessings, protection, family, ways She influences our lives, etc.)**
- ◆ **Offering to Athena**



◆ **Orphic Hymn 32 to Athena**

To Athena

Revered Pallas, great Zeus bore by himself,
noble and blessed goddess, brave in the din of war.
Renowned and cave-haunting, spoken of and then ineffable,
your domain is on wind-swept hilltops,
shaded mountains, dells that charm your heart.
Arms please you, and you strike men's souls with frenzy,
O vigorous maiden, O horrid-tempered one,

slayer of Gorgo, O blessed mother of the arts, you shun the bed of love,
you bring madness to the wicked, you bring prudence to the virtuous, O impetuous one.
Male and female, shrewd begetter of war,
she-dragon of many shapes, frenzy-loving, illustrious,
destroyer of the Phlegraian Giants, driver of horses,
victorious Tritogeneia, O goddess, you free us of suffering,
day and night, ever into the small hours.
Hear my prayer and give me a full measure of peace,
of riches, and of health, accompanied by happy seasons,
O gray-eyed and inventive queen, to whom many offer their prayers.

Translation by Apostolos N. Athanassakis (revised edition)

- ◆ **Incense: myrrh**
- ◆ **Invocation to Poseidon Erechtheus: Lord of the depth of the sea, Earth Shaker, tamer of horses, and savior of ships**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Orphic Hymn 17 To Poseidon**

To Poseidon

Hearken, dark-maned Poseidon, holder of the earth,
equestrian, carved in bronze is the trident in your hand,
and you dwell in the foundations of the full-bosomed sea.
Deep roaring ruler of the sea and shaker of the earth,
your blossoms are waves, O gracious one, as you urge horses and chariot on,
rushing on the sea and splashing through the rippling brine.
To your lot fell the third portion, the unfathomable sea,
and you delight in waves and in their wild dwellers, O spirit of the deep.

Translation by Apostolos N. Athanassakis

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering to Poseidon**
- ◆ **Prayers, etc.**

- ◆ **Incense: myrrh**
- ◆ **Invocations to Zeus Polieus: Blessed Zeus, king of all, who protects the city, and brings justice and prosperity . . .**
- ◆ **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 Marten 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**
- ◆ **Offerings to Zeus Polieus**
- ◆ **Prayers (for blessings, protection, family, and those in need, etc.) – Almighty Zeus, giver of what is good whether we pray for it or not; as for what is bad, avert it even if we do pray for it.**

- ◆ **Incense: frankincense**
- ◆ **Invocation: Blessed Niki, judge of deserving deeds, of noble glory, of works of renown . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Orphic Hymn 33 to Nike**

To Nike

I call upon mighty Nike, beloved of mortals,
she alone frees man from the eagerness of contest,
from dissent, when men face each other in battle.
In war you are the judge of deeds deserving prizes;
sweet is the boast you grant after the onslaught.
Nike, mistress of all, on your good name depends noble glory,
glory that comes from the strife and teems with festivities.
O blessed and beloved one, come with joy in your eyes,
come for works of renown, bring me noble glory.

Translation by Apostolos N. Athanassakis (revised edition)

- ◆ **Invocation to Erechtheus and Aglauros: To Erechtheus, Earth born, founder of the cult of Athena Polias, inventor of the ‘chariot’ . . . and to Aglauros first Priestess of Athena Polias, Savior of the City, and who the ephebes swear all oaths . . .**
- ◆ **Libations of honey sweet wine to Erechtheus and Aglauros**
- ◆ **Prayers to Erechtheus and Aglauros for inspiration, dedication, and thanks . . .**

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**

“May blessings go with us, and may Athena watch benevolently over us, protect 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