

Orpheus' hymn to Earth

Translated by Thomas Taylor



Hymn to Earth¹

Fumigation from every kind of seed, except beans and aromatics.²

O Goddess, Earth, of Gods and men the source,
 Endu'd with fertile, all destroying force;
 All-parent, bounding, whose prolific pow'rs,
 Produce a store of beauteous fruits and flow'rs,
 All-various maid, th'eternal world's strong base
 Immortal, blessed, crown'd with ev'ry grace;
 From whose wide womb, as from an endless root,
 Fruits, many-form'd, mature and grateful shoot.
 Deep bosom'd, blessed, pleas'd with grassy plains,
 Sweet to the smell, and with prolific rains.
 All flow'ry dæmon, centre of the world,
 Around thy orb, the beauteous stars are hurl'd
 With rapid whirl, eternal and divine,
 Whose frames with matchless skill and wisdom shine.
 Come, blessed Goddess, listen to my pray'r,
 And make increase of fruits thy constant care;
 With fertile Seasons in thy train, draw near,
 And with propitious mind thy suppliant hear.³



¹ According to Orpheus, as related by Proclus, in *Timaeus*. p. 292, Earth is the mother of everything, of which Heaven is the father. And the reader will please to observe, that, in the Orphic theology, Rhea, the mother of the Gods, the Earth, and Vesta, are all one and the same divinity, considered according to her essential peculiarities.

² [θυμίαμα πᾶν σπέρμα πλὴν κυάμων καὶ ἀρωμάτων.]

³ *The Mystical Hymns of Orpheus (or Initiations) being Invocations used in the Eleusinian Mysteries*, Hymn XXV, 1824; tr. Taylor