



Ritual for the Kallynteria

27 Thargelion

- ◆ **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

*Summary primarily from **Athenian Myths and Festivals** by Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, Oxford 2011.*

On the morning of the 26th of Thargelion (the latter half of the ancient day), the covered statue was escorted by the Epoheboi in a procession to Phaleron and the sea which was the strong ritual modality for purification. Women carried baskets with hegeteria, cakes made of dried figs. There the statue was bathed by the Plyntrides and covered for the return procession by torchlight at night, the beginning of 27 Thargelion, the first day of the Kallynteria. The following day of 27 Thargelion was a joyous occasion of celebrating the return of the purified statue of Athena to the cleansed Temple and the Temple reopened on 28 Thargelion.

The olive oil lamp made by Kallimachos that according to Pausanias burned continuously day and night in the Temple of Athena Polias was re-filled once a year on the same day each year and the appropriate time would coincide with the return of the statue of Athena to Her Temple and the relighting of the lamp the occasion for reopening the Temple. The Priestess of Aglauros (who was the first priestess of Athena) presided over the sacrifices ‘. . . for the health and security of the council and people and their children and wives and king Antgonos and queen Phila and their offspring’.

- ◆ **Incense: frankincense**
- ◆ **Invocation to Athena—Queen Athena, Savior of the city, shining Goddess . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine to Athena**
- ◆ **Homeric Hymn 11 To Athena**

To Athena

Of Pallas Athena the city-savior first I sing, dread Goddess, who with Ares attends to the works of war, the sacking of towns, shouting and fighting, and keeps the army safe as it goes out and returns.

I salute you, Goddess: Grant us success and prosperity!

Translated by Martin L. West

- ◆ **Invocation and Prayers (for blessings, protection, family, ways She influences our lives, etc.) – Khaire Athena, you who sprang from the head of Zeus, who bears the aegis, and who leads us with wisdom and strength . . .**
- ◆ **Offering to Athena**



◆ **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 shining 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 Martin L. West

◆ **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: frankincense**

◆ **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**

- ◆ **Incense: myrrh**
- ◆ **Invocations to Zeus Polieus and Zeus Soter: Zeus of the City and Savior, King of All, we honor you for fulfillment of the Kallynteria, for the return of blessed Athena to Her Temple . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of wine to Zeus**
- ◆ **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

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

- ◆ **Offerings to Zeus Polieus and Zeus Soter**
- ◆ **Prayers (for blessings, protection, family, and those in need, etc.) – King Zeus, give me what is good whether we pray for it or not; as for what is bad, avert it even if we do pray for it.**

But may Zeus grant that it go well with us. For Zeus' desire is hard to trace: it shines everywhere, even in gloom, together with fortune obscure to mortal men.

Aeschylus – Suppliant Maidens, Chorus

- ◆ **Prayer to the Agathos Daimon**

O Zeus – O Agathos Daimon

May I have every grace,
all accomplishment,
for with Thee is the bringer of good,
the messenger standing by the side of Tyche.

Magic Papyri - Poimandres

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**

Then may blessings go with us, and may Athena 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**