



Ritual for the Panathenaia

(First day)

23 Hekatombaion

- ◆ **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: frankincense**
- ◆ **Invocation to Athena Polias–Queen Athena, Protector of the city, shining Goddess . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine to Athena Polias and Athena Nike**
- ◆ **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 and who leads us in wisdom and strength . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering**
- ◆ **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)

I will accept a home with Pallas, and I will not dishonor a city which she, with Zeus the
 omnipotent and Ares, holds as a fortress of the gods, the bright ornament that guards the
 altars of the gods of Hellas. I pray for the city, with favorable prophecy, that the bright
 gleam of the sun may cause blessings that give happiness to life to spring from the earth,
 in plenty.

Aeschylus – Eumenides (Chorus)

- ◆ **Invocation to Erechthonios and Aglauros: Khaire Erechthonios, King of Athens who set up the wooden statue of Athena in the Acropolis, founded the Panathenaia, and the first to yoke the four horse chariot which he drove in the Panathenaia . . . Khaire Aglauros, first priestess of Athena Polias and who gave her life as Savior of the City . . .**
- ◆ **Libations of honey sweet wine to Erechthonios and Aglauros**
- ◆ **Prayers to Erechtheus and Aglauros**

- ◆ **Incense: myrrh**
- ◆ **Invocation to Zeus Polieus: Blessed Zeus, King of All, Protector of the City . . .**
- ◆ **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 Martin L. West

◆ **Aratus' Hymn to Zeus**

To Zeus

From Zeus let us begin; him do we mortals never leave unnamed; full of Zeus are all the streets and all the market-places of men; full is the sea and the havens thereof; always we all have need of Zeus. For we are also his offspring; and he in his kindness unto men giveth favorable signs and wakeneth the people to work, reminding them of livelihood. He tells what time the soil is best for the labor of the ox and for the mattock, and what time the seasons are favorable both for the planting of trees and for casting all manner of seeds. For himself it was who set the signs in heaven, and marked out the constellations, and for the year devised what stars chiefly should give to men right signs of the seasons, to the end that all things might grow unfailingly. Wherefore Him do men ever worship first and last. Hail, O Father, mighty marvel, mighty blessing unto men. Hail to thee and to the Elder Race! Hail, ye Muses, right kindly, every one! But for me, too, in answer to my prayer direct all my lay, even as is meet, to tell the stars.

From the Phaenomena, translated by G. R. Mair

- ◆ **Incense: myrrh**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering**
- ◆ **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)

◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**

“May blessings go with us, and may Athena Polias **and** Zeus Polieus guide us with wisdom and strength and 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**



The Panathenaia (Last day)

29 or 30 Hekatombaion

- ◆ **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 Polias–Queen Athena, Protector of the city, shining Goddess . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of wine to Athena Polias and Athena Nike**
- ◆ **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 and who leads us in wisdom and strength . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering**



◆ **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 Olympos 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 you 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 the many shapes, frenzy-loving, illustrious,
 destroyer of the Phlegraian Giants, driver of horses,
 victorious Tritogeneia, O goddess, you free us from 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)

- ◆ **Invocation to Erechthonios and Aglauros: Khaire Erechthonios, King of Athens who set up the wooden statue of Athena in the Acropolis, founded the Panathenaia, and the first to yoke the four horse chariot which he drove in the Panathenaia . . . Khaire Aglauros, first priestess of Athena Polias, who gave her life as Savior of the City, and to whom ephebes swear all oaths . . .**
- ◆ **Libations of honey sweet wine to Erechthonios and Aglauros**
- ◆ **Prayers to Erechtheus and Aglauros**

- ◆ **Incense: myrrh**
- ◆ **Invocations to Zeus Polieus and Zeus Soter: Blessed Zeus, King of All, Protector of the City . . .**
- ◆ **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 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

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **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

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **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

- ◆ **Incense: frankincense**
- ◆ **Invocation to Hera Teleia: Blessed Hera, Queen of Heaven, You who brings to fulfillment . . .**
- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Homeric Hymn 12 To Hera**

To Hera

Of Hera I sing, the golden-throned, whom Rhea bore to be queen of the immortals, of supreme beauty, sister and wife of Zeus the loud-booming; glorious one, whom all of the blessed ones on long Olympus revere and honor no less than Zeus whose sport is the thunderbolt.

Translated by Martin L. West

- ◆ **Libation of honey sweet wine**
- ◆ **Offering to Hera Teleia**
- ◆ **Prayers (for blessings, protection, family, and those in need, etc.)**
- ◆ **Incense: myrrh**
- ◆ **Invocation to Poseidon Erechtheus**
- ◆ **Libation of wine to Poseidon Erechtheus**
- ◆ **Homeric Hymn 22 To Poseidon**

To Poseidon

I begin to sing about Poseidon, the great god, mover of the earth and fruitless sea, god of the deep who is also lord of Helicon and wide Aegae. A two-fold office the gods allotted you, O Shaker of the Earth, to be a tamer of horses and a saviour of ships!

Hail, Poseidon, Holder of the Earth, dark-haired lord! O blessed one, be kindly in heart and help those who voyage in ships!

Translated by Martin L. West

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

“May blessings go with us, and may Athena Polias and Zeus Polieus unite us in a common bond and lead us in wisdom and strength. May you 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**