

## INVOCATION TO ATHENA

by Rev. Rob Henderson

I sing of Athena, the Goddess of Warfare  
Whose wisdom and courage inspires the soldier  
Defending the people from threat of invasion  
Maintaining the peace and the order of polis

I read Homeric Hymns #11 and #28, both about Athena. #28 was about her birth, which didn't seem like the right topic for me to write about at this moment. But #11 was about her role as the defender of the city, and that felt right, so I went ahead with that. After writing about Homer's use of dactylic meter, I decided to use a meter with three beats, but accenting the middle syllable, as I do in limericks. I went with tetrameter (four feet) instead of Homer's hexameter and also used four lines in the poem, since I associate the number four with stability. I went with simple images of a soldier defending a city and its people, and used the Greek word for city to end the poem as an affirmation of the goddess' original culture.

In ritual, this could be used as a praise offering to Athena, or in an ADF ritual could be used to acknowledge the Outdwellers, for those who prefer a more confrontational approach than my own Grove does.