

Αἰτέω σε, φιλάγλαε, καλλίστα βροτεᾶν πολίων,  
Φερσεφόνας ἔδος, ἃ τ' ὄχθαις ἐπι μηλοβότου  
ναίεις Ἀκράγαντος εὐδματος κολώναν, ὧ ἄνα,  
Ἰλαος ἀθανάτων ἀνδρῶν τε σὺν εὐμενίᾳ  
δέξαι στεφάνωμα τόδ' ἐκ Πυθῶνος εὐδόξῳ Μίδᾳ  
αὐτόν τε νιν Ἑλλάδα νικάσαντα τέχνη, τάν ποτε  
Παλλάς ἐφεῦρε θρασειᾶν Ἐργόγων  
οὐλίον θρηῖνον διαπλέξαις Ἀθάνᾳ·

τὸν παρθενίους ὑπὸ τ' ἀπλάτοις ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς  
ἄϊε λειβόμενον δυσπενθέϊ σὺν καμάτῳ,  
Περσεὺς ὁπότε τρίτον ἄσεν κασιγνητῶν μέρος  
ἐνναλίᾳ Σερίφῳ λαοῖσι τε μοῖραν ἄγων.  
ἦτοι τό τε θεσπέσιον Φόρκοι' ἀμαύρωσεν γένος,  
λυγρόν τ' ἔρανον Πολυδέκτα θῆκε ματρός τ' ἔμπεδον  
δουλοσύναν τό τ' ἀναγκαῖον λέχος,  
εὐπαράου κρᾶτα συλάσαις Μεδοίαις

υἱὸς Δανάας, τὸν ἀπὸ χρυσοῦ φαμὲν αὐτορύτου  
ἔμμεναι. ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ ἐκ τούτων φίλον ἄνδρα πόνων  
ἔρρύσατο παρθένος αὐλῶν τεῦχε πάμφωνον μέλος,  
ὄφρα τὸν Εὐρυάλας ἐκ καρπαλιμῶν γενύων  
χρημθέντα σὺν ἔντεσι μιμήσῃται ἔρικλάγκταν γόνον.  
εὔρεν θεός· ἀλλὰ νιν εὐροῖς ἄνδράσι θνατοῖς ἔχειν,  
ὠνύμασεν κεφαλᾶν πολλᾶν νόμον,  
εὐκλεᾶ λαοσκόων μναστῆρ' ἀγώνων,

λεπτοῦ διανισόμενον χαλκοῦ θαμὰ καὶ δονάκων,  
τοὶ παρὰ καλλίχορον ναίεισι πόλιν Χαρίτων  
Καφικίδος ἐν τεμένει, πιστοὶ χορευτῶν μάρτυρες.  
εἰ δέ τις ὄλβος ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν, ἄνευ καμάτου  
οὐ φαίνεται· ἐκ δὲ τελευτάει νιν ἦτοι κάμερον  
δαίμων—τὸ δὲ μόριμον οὐ παρφυκτόν—, ἀλλ' ἔσται χρόνος  
οὗτος, ὃ καὶ τιν' ἀελεπτία βαλὼν  
ἔμπαλιν γνώμας τὸ μὲν δώσει, τὸ δ' οὐπω.

I ask you, lover of splendor, most beautiful of mortals' cities,  
abode of Persephone, you who on the river banks at Akragas,  
grazed by sheep, inhabit the well-fortified hill, o queen,  
propitiously, with the good-will [*eu-meniā*] of immortals and of men,  
receive [*deiknūmi*] this garlanding [*stephanōma*] from Pytho [Delphi] on behalf of famous Midas  
and the man himself, who was victorious over Hellas in the skill [*tekhnē*] which once  
Pallas [Athena] invented as she interwove  
the thick-and-fast lament [*thrēnos*] of the fierce Gorgons, Athena did.

From under the maidens' heads, unapproachable heads, with snakes coming out of them,  
she heard it, the lament, as it poured out with agonizing pain [*kamatos*],  
when Perseus shouted his war-cry, as he carried off a third of the sisters, a part of her,  
bringing apportioned doom to sea-surrounded Seriphos and its people.  
Yes, he made invisible in darkness the wondrous lineage of Phorkos  
and made baneful for Polydektes his feast, as well as his own mother's continuous  
bondage and her enforced marriage bed,  
after taking as a prize the head of Medusa, the one with the fair cheeks—

that is what he did, the son of Danaë, who, we tell the tale, was fathered by gold that became liquid all by itself.  
But when from those pains [*ponoi*] she had rescued this man so near and dear,  
the maiden crafted [*teukhein*] the melody of every sound for the reed [*auloi*],  
so that she might re-enact [*mīmēisthai*] with instruments the echoing wail [*goos*]  
that was forced from the quickly-moving jaws of Euryale.  
The goddess invented it; and once she invented it for mortals to have,  
she called it the tune of many heads,  
a glorious reminder of contests [*agōn*] where people gather,

the tune that often passes through the thin bronze and the reeds  
which grow by the city of the Graces [*Kharites*] with beautiful spaces-for-dancing-and-singing [*kalli-khoros*]  
in the precinct of Kephisos' the daughter of Kephisos, faithful witnesses of dancers and singers.  
If there is any bliss [*olbos*] among men, without pain [*kamatos*]  
it does not come into view. A superhuman-force [*daimōn*] will bring it to fulfillment either today—  
what is fated cannot be avoided—but there will come that  
time which, striking a person with surprise,  
contrary to expectation will give one thing, but not yet another.