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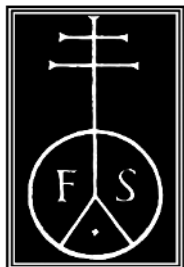
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FASHIONERS OF POETIC DRINKS: THE INHERITED BACKGROUND OF PINDAR'S NEMEAN 3 METAPOETIC METAPHORS

LAURA MASSETTI

ABSTRACT · I focus on the structure and two metaphors of Pindar's *Nemean 3*. After drawing attention to lexical and semantic repetitions of the ode, I concentrate on the image of the 'craftsmen of honey-voiced revels' (vv. 4-7) and that of the 'drink to sing on' (vv. 77-79). I propose that these two metaphors, placed at separate but complementary points in the poem (*i.e.* near the beginning and the end), are found combined together in other Indo-European traditions: craftsmen-deities of the Vedic pantheon, such as the Ṛbhus or Tvaṣṭar are said to be craftsmen of poetic or ritual drinks; Old Norse kennings, connected with the myth of the dwarfs, consist of/contain the same images.

KEYWORDS · Pindar, *Nemean 3*, Metapoetic Metaphors, Stylistics, Indo-European Poetics.

1. "AEGINA'S WATER":

PHRASEOLOGY AND MYTH IN PINDAR'S *NEMEAN 3*

PINDAR'S *Nemean 3* celebrates Aristocleidas from Aegina, who obtained a victory in the pancratium.¹ As explained by Privitera (1988), the ode was performed at the Delphinia, an Aeginetan festival in honour of Apollo featuring a *hydrophoria*, *i.e.* a procession of the amphorae from the Asopian spring to the stadium and an *amphiphoritēs*, *i.e.* a double foot-race in the stadium.² The *aition* of this ritual is found in Apollonius' *Argonautica* (4, 1766-

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¹ The date of the ode is debated, cf. Instone 1993; Pfeijffer 1999, 197-198; Cannatà Fera 2020, 53-55 for an overview. Gaspar (1900, 104-107) proposes 475 BCE, whereas Pohlsander (1963, 132-137) proposes 458 BCE as a *terminus ante quem*.

² On the festival cf. Polinskaya 2013, 144-147.

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1775): when the Argonauts stopped for water at Aegina, they ‘competed in a race for fetching water’ (ὕδρείης πέρι δῆριν ... δηρίσαντο, Ap. Rh. 4, 1777), which was later re-enacted at the local Delphinia.¹ The Aeginetan heroes Peleus and Telamon, mentioned at *Nem.* 3, 33-42, are Argonauts, so, they witnessed or competed in the first *amphiphoritēs*. Achilles, the protagonist of *Nem.* 3, 43-63, did not compete in that race, but he possessed the main quality of runners, swiftness of foot.² The *aition* of the Delphinia is also the key to explaining why Pindar selects the ‘thirst/drink’-metaphors which frame the ode: the first ‘water’-racers *were pressed by the need of water, i.e. thirst* (ἄμφω γὰρ χρεῖώ τε καὶ ἄσπετος οὖρος ἐπειγεν, Ap. Rh. 4, 1769). So, the thirst for ‘ode-drinks’, which is peculiar to victories at games (*Nem.* 3, 6-7) and is satisfied by the performance of *Nemean* 3 at the Delphinia (*Nem.* 3, 77-79), mirrors that of the Argonauts who, because of their thirst for ‘real’ water, competed in the first ‘water-race’ at Aegina. Therefore, the ‘synchronic’ background of the metaphor is clarified through the mythological *aition* of its performance context. But this does not undermine the *traditional character* of the image ‘song to drink’.³ In other words, we should not exclude that, in deliberately employing a metaphor, Pindar is drawing from a repertoire of ancient and traditional poetic images. It is likely, therefore, that the poet has a palette of metaphors at his disposal and employs them according to the specific circumstances of his poetic composition and its performance. However, the reconstruction of a synchronic link between a metaphor and an *aition* does not necessarily tell us anything about the history of the metaphor itself and the compositional technique of the Pindaric ode. These are matters I will address in the next paragraphs.

In this paper, I focus on two interconnected metapoetic metaphors of the ode: that of the ‘thirst for/drinking of song’ and that of the ‘poetic craftsmen’. Although analogous images are found in other Pindaric poems and other Greek texts,⁴ their combination in *Nemean* 3 stands out: in this

¹ Cf. also *Et. Magn.* s.v. ἀμφιφορίτης, which specifies that the competition re-enacted ‘the one of the heroes’ (κατὰ μίμησιν τῶν ἡρώων).

² Cf. the formula πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς (*Il.* 1, 58+). Cf. also *Nem.* 3, 52 ποσσὶ ... κράτεσκε (matching *ex Pindaro ipso* κρατησίπους; *Pyth.* 10, 16; fr. 13 S.-M.).

³ Not only can parallels of the metaphors be identified in other Indo-European languages, but combinatory phraseological analysis also allows us to frame the metaphors ‘thirst for songs’ and ‘song-drink’ in a system of metaphors attested in several Indo-European traditions: the words are ‘poured’ or ‘fill’ the audience, the voice of the performer ‘streams’, ears ‘drink’ the voice etc., cf. Kurke 1989; García Ramón 2008 and 2010; Dardano 2018, 47-64; Massetti 2019, 168-172 with bibliography.

⁴ A collection of Greek literary passages can be found in Nünlist 1998, 178-205 (‘drink of songs’), 83-125 (‘craftsmanship’). See also Manieri 2021 on Pindaric metaphors applying

ode, they are linked by means of lexical and semantic reprises, which build a frame for a chainlike structure. In what follows, I compare the complex Pindaric metaphors with myths and poetic expressions found in two Indo-European (hereafter, IE) traditions: the Old Indic myth of the Ṛbhus, and kennings for ‘poetry’ attested in Vedic and Old Norse. After describing the structure of the ode (§ 2), I propose an Old Indic comparandum, *Rigveda* 10, 144, which contains the same metapoetic metaphors as *Nemean* 3 (§ 3). The hymn in question connects the offer of the ritual drink, soma, to the figure of the Ṛbhu, one of the divine craftsmen of the Vedic pantheon. I further discuss the mythology of the Ṛbhus and its ritual implications (§ 4). Finally, I focus on compact metapoetic metaphors that ascribe the possession or creation of the ‘drink of song(s)’ to the ‘skilful craftsmen’ of the Vedic and Old Norse traditions (§ 5). My analysis reveals that the ring-composition of Pindar’s *Nemean* 3 is fashioned with inherited phraseological and thematic material. The link between the metapoetic metaphor of the ‘craftsmen’ and the ‘ode-drink’ is indeed inherited: the two images combine in the myth of the Ṛbhus as well as in Old Indic and Old Norse kennings denoting [POETRY].

2. THE STRUCTURE OF PINDAR’S *NEMEAN* 3

The ode consists of four triads, each comprising an eight-verse strophe, an eight-verse antistrophe and a five-verse epode, and its structure can be described as a ‘framed chain of rings’: an external ring (i.e. a set of repetitions, which join the beginning and the end of the ode) frames a series of rings, which interlock adjacent triads to one another. More precisely,

- themes and lexemes of the first triad (vv. 1-21) seem to correlate with those of the fourth triad (vv. 64-84), creating an overarching frame, cf.:

1st triad: vv. 1-21

ὦ πότνια Μοῖσα, μᾶτερ ἀμετέρα, λίσσομαι,
τὴν πολυξέναν ἐν ἱερομηνίᾳ Νεμεάδι
Ἴκεο Δωρίδα νῶσον Αἴγιναν· ὕδατι γάρ
μένοντ’ ἐπ’ Ἀσωπίῳ μελιγαρῶν τέκτονες
κώμων νεανίαι, σέθεν ὅτα μαίόμενοι.
διψῇ δὲ πρᾶγος ἄλλο μὲν ἄλλου,
ἀεθλονικία δὲ μάλιστ’ αἰοιδᾶν φιλεῖ,
στεφάνων ἄρετῶν τε δεξιωτάταν ὁπαδόν·

4th triad: vv. 64-84

τηλαυγὲς ἄραρε φέγγος Αἰακιδᾶν αὐτόθεν·
Ζεῦ, τὸν γὰρ αἶμα, σέο δ’ ἄγῶν, τὸν ὕμνος ἔβαλεν
ὅππῃ νέων ἐπιχώριον χάριμα κελαδέων.
βοᾷ δὲ νικαφόρῳ σὺν Ἀριστοκλείδῃ πρόπει,
ὅς τάνδε νῶσον εὐκλείῃ προσέθηκε λόγῳ
καὶ σεμνὸν ἀγλααῖσι μερίμναις
Πυθίου Θεάριον· ἐν δὲ πείρᾳ τέλος
διαφαίνεται ὧν τις ἐξοχώτερος γέννηται,

to poetics (pp. 57-59 on *Nemean* 3) which involve food and drink: as the author points out, such metaphors are often employed in a positive sense, to express the idea of ‘satisfaction’ of a need.

τᾶς ἀφθονίαν ὕπαζε μήτιος ἀμᾶς ἀπο-
 ἄρχε δ' οὐρανοῦ πολυνεφέλα κρέοντι, θύγατερ,
 δόκιμον ὕμνον· ἐγὼ δὲ κείνων τέ νιν ὁάροις
 λύρα τε κοινάσομαι. χαρίεντα δ' ἔξει πόνον
 χώρας ἀγαλμα, Μυρμιδόνες ἵνα πρότεροι
 ᾤκησαν, ὧν παλαίφατον ἀγοράν
 οὐκ ἐλεγχεσσιν Ἀριστοκλείδας τεάν
 ἐμίανε κατ' αἴσαν ἐν περισθενεῖ μαλαχθεῖς

παγκρατίου στόλῳ· καματοδῶν δὲ πλαγᾶν
 ἄκος ὑγιηρὸν ἐν βαθυπεδίῳ Νεμέα
 τὸ καλλίνικον φέρεϊ.
 εἰ δ' ἔδῳ καλὸς ἔρδων τ' εἰκότα μορφᾷ
 ἀνορέαις ὑπερτάταις ἐπέβα
 παῖς Ἀριστοφάνεος, οὐκέτι πρόσω
ἄβᾶταν ἄλλα κίονων ὕπερ Ἑρακλῆος περᾶν
εὐμαρές,

O mistress **Muse**, my mother, I beg of you, come in the **Nemean** sacred month to this much-visited Dorian island of Aegina, for by the Asopian water are waiting the **craftsmen of honey-voiced revels**, **young men who seek your voice**. Different deeds **thirst** for different things, **but victory in the games loves song** most of all, the fittest companion for crowns and **achievements**. Grant from my ingenuity a profusion of it: begin **for the ruler of the much-clouded sky**, (as you are his) daughter, **a hymn that shall be welcomed**. I myself will entrust it to their voices and the lyre.

It will be a task **full of grace** (to make) a monument for the land, where the first Myrmidons dwelled, whose **long-famed** assembly place **Aristocleidas** did not stain with dishonour, **thanks to your favour**, by weakening in the mighty course of the pancratium.

And for his fatiguing blows in **Nemea's** deep plain he **bears** home a healing remedy of **beautiful victory**. If, being handsome and performing deeds to match his form, the son of Aristophanes has embarked on utmost deeds of manhood, it is no easy task to go yet further across the untracked sea beyond the pillars of Heracles

ἐν παισὶ νέοισι παῖς, ἐν {δ'} ἀνδράσιν ἀνὴρ, τρίτον ἐν παλαιτέροισι, μέρος ἕκαστον οἷον ἔχομεν βρότεον ἔθνος· ἐλᾷ δὲ καὶ τέσσαρας ἀρετάς <ὁ> θνατὸς αἰὼν, φρονεῖν δ' ἐνέπει τὸ παρκαίμενον. τῶν οὐκ ἄπεσσι· χαίρε, φίλος· ἐγὼ τόδε τοι πέμπω μεμιγμένον μέλι λευκῷ σὺν γάλακτι, κίρναμένα δ' ἔερσ' ἀμφέπει, πόμ' αἰόδιμον Λιολίσσιν ἐν πνοαῖσιν αὐλῶν,

ὀψέ περ. ἔστι δ' αἰετὸς ὥκῃς ἐν ποτανοῖς, ὃς ἔλαβεν αἰψα, τηλόθε μεταμαϊόμενος, δαφονὸν ἄγραν ποσίν· κραγέται δὲ κολιοὶ ταπεινὰ νέμονται. τίν γε μὲν, εὐθρόνου Κλεοῦς ἐθελόισας, ἀεθλοφόρου λήματος ἔνεκεν Νεμέας Ἐπιδαυρόθεν τ' ἀπο καὶ Μεγάρων δέδορκεν φάος.

The far-beaming light of the Aeacidae is fixed from here, **Zeus**, yours is the blood, and yours the contest, **which this hymn has struck with young men's voices** as it celebrates this land's joy. Loud acclaim is proper to **Aristocleidas who brought a victory home**, (him,) who has linked this island to glorious praise and the hallowed Delegation of the Pythian god to splendid ambitions. But in the test the result shines through, in what ways someone proves superior, as a child among young children, man among men, and thirdly among **elders** – such is each stage that our human race attains. Then too, our mortal life drives a team of four **virtues**, and it bids us heed what is at hand. Of these you have no lack. **Enjoy, friend! I send you honey** mixed with white milk – stirred foam crowns it – **a drink to sing on**, accompanied by the Aeolian breaths of pipes, late though it be.

Swift is the eagle among birds, which suddenly seizes, **as it searches from afar**, the bloodied prey in its talons, while the cawing jackdaws range down below. But for you, through the favour of **fair-throned Cleo** and because of your determination for victory, from Nemea, Epidaurus, and Megara has shone the light of glory.

The following identified repetitions are in bold:

Μοῖσα (v. 1) : εὐθρόνου Κλεοῦς (v. 83)¹

Νεμεάδι (v. 2) : Νεμέα (v. 18) : Νεμέας (v. 84)

νᾶσον (v. 3) : νᾶσον (v. 68)

μελιγαρύων τέκτονες κώμων (vv. 4-5) : πέμπω ... μέλι (v. 77)

σέθεν ὅπα μαιόμενοι (v. 5)² : τηλόθε μεταμαιόμενος (v. 81)

νεανίαι ... ὅπα (v. 5) : ὅπλιν (v. 66)

διψῆ... ἀεθλονικία... ἀοιδὸν φιλεῖ (vv. 6-7) : πέμπω... πόμ' ἀοίδιμον (vv. 77-79)

ἀρετᾶν (v. 8) : ἀρετάς (v. 74)

οὐρανοῦ πολυνεφέλα κρέοντι... δόκιμον ὕμνον (vv. 10-11) : Ζεῦ... τὸν ὕμνος ἔβαλεν (v. 65)

χαρίεντα (v. 12) : χάρμα κελαδέων (v. 66) : χαῖρε (v. 76)

παλαιόφατον (v. 14) : παλαιτέροισι (v. 73)

Ἀριστοκλείδας... τὸ καλλίνικον φέρει (vv. 15-18) : νικαφόρῳ σὺν Ἀριστοκλείδῃ (v. 67)

To these I would also add that reference to the themes of *remoteness/displacement of glory* may count as a further common image. This topic joins vv. 20-21, in which Heracles reached the furthest point of the world (κίωνων ... Ἡρακλῆος, v. 21, cf. also v. 23, in which the columns are said to be 'the famed witnesses', μάρτυρας κλυτάς, of Heracles' travel), to the remote places reached by the glory of the Aeacidae: their glory is 'beaming from afar' (τηλαυγὲς φέγγος, v. 64), 'from afar' comes the eagle (i.e. the poet, τηλόθε μεταμαιόμενος, v. 81), the glory of Aristocleidas shines from different places: Nemea, Epidaurus and Megara (Νεμέας Ἐπιδαυρόθεν τ' ἀπο καὶ Μεγάρων δέδορκεν φάος, v. 84).³

– The first and the second triads (vv. 1-21 and 22-42) seem to be linked by further lexical reprises,⁴ cf.

1st triad: vv. 1-21

ὦ πότνια **Μοῖσα**, μᾶτερ ἀμετέρα, λίσσομαι,
τὴν πολυξέναν ἐν ἱερομηνίᾳ Νεμεάδι
ἔκτο Δωρίδα νᾶσον Αἰγίνα· ὕδατι γάρ

2nd triad: vv. 22-42

ἦρως θεὸς ἄς ἔθηκε ναυτιλίας ἐσχάτας
μάρτυρας κλυτάς· δάμασε δὲ θήρας ἐν πελάγεϊ
ὑπερόχους, ἰδίᾳ τ' ἐρεῖνασε τεναγέων

¹ As noted by several commentators (see, as a recent reference, Cannatà Fera 2020, 310), ἄγαλμα at v. 13 may also belong to the metapoetic metaphor of construction. I did not list it in the repetitions between the first and the fourth triads because nothing correlates with it in the fourth triad. Henceforth I use this sign '·' to mark semantic or lexematic repetitions.

² One may also add the 'sound effect' created 'ΟΠΑ : 'ΟΠΑδόν : 'ΟΠΑζε μήτιος ἀμᾶς ἈΠΟ (vv. 5, 8, 9).

³ On these final verses and their inherited background see now Meusel 2021.

⁴ My reference edition for Pindar's text is Snell - Maehler 1987; the provided translation is based on Race 1997 and modified by the author.

μένοντ' ἐπ' Ἀσωπίῳ **μελιγαρούων** τέκτονες
κώμων νεανίαι, **σέθεν ὅπα μαϊόμενοι**.
διψῇ δὲ πρᾶγος ἄλλο μὲν ἄλλου,
ἀθλονικία δὲ μάλιστ' αἰδῶν φιλεῖ,
στεφάνων **ἀρετῶν** τε δεξιωτάταν ὑπαδόν·

τᾶς ἀφθονίαν ὕπαζε μήτιος ἁμᾶς ἄπο·
ἄρχε δ' οὐρανοῦ πολυνεφέλα κρέοντι, θύγατερ,
δόκιμον ὕμνον· ἐγὼ δὲ κείνων τέ νιν ὅροις
λύρα τε κοινάσομαι. χαρίεντα δ' ἔξει πόνον
χώρας ἀγαλμα, Μυρμιδόνες ἴνα πρότεροι
ῥήκησαν, ὦν **παλαιάφατον** ἀγοράν
οὐκ ἔλεγχεσσιν Ἀριστοκλείδας τεάν
ἐμίανε κατ' αἴσαν ἐν περισθενεῖ μαλαχθεῖς

παγκρατίου στόλῳ· καματωδῶν δὲ πλαγῶν
ἄκος ὑγιερὸν ἐν βαθυπεδίῳ Νεμέα
τὸ καλλίνικον φέρει.
εἰ δ' ἐὼν καλὸς ἔρδων τ' εἰοικότα μορφῇ
ἀνορέαις ὑπερτάταις ἐπέβα
παῖς Ἀριστοφάνεος, οὐκ ἐτι πρόσω
ἄβᾶταν ἄλα κιόνων ὑπὲρ Ἡρακλέος περᾶν
εὐμαρές,

ροάς, ὅπῃ πόμπιμον κατέβαινε νόστου τέλος,
καὶ γὰν φράδασε. θυμέ, τίνα πρὸς ἀλλοδαπὰν
ἄκραν ἐμὸν πλῶον παραμείβεται;
Αἰακῶ σε φαμί γένει τε **Μοῖσιν** φέρειν.
ἔπεται δὲ λόγῳ δίκας ἅωτος, 'ἔσλὸν αἰνεῖν',

οὐδ' ἄλλοτρίων ἔρωτες ἀνδρὶ φέρειν κρέσσονες·
οἴκοθεν μάτευε. ποτίφορον δὲ κόσμον ἔλαχε
γλυκύ τι γαρούμεν. παλαιαῖσι δ' ἐν ἀρεταῖς
γέγαθε Πηλεὺς ἄναξ, ὑπέραλλον αἰχμὰν ταμών·
ὃς καὶ Ἰαολκὸν εἴλε μόνος ἄνευ στρατιᾶς,
καὶ ποντίαν Θέτιν κατέμαρψεν
ἐγκονητί. Λαομέδοντα δ' εὐρυσθενῆς
Τελαμών Ἰόλῃ παραστάτας ἐὼν ἔπερσεν

καὶ ποτε χαλκότηρον Ἀμαζόνων μετ' ἄλκῃ
ἔπετό οἱ, οὐδὲ νῖν ποτε φόβος ἀνδροδάμας
ἔπαυσεν ἀχμὰν φρενῶν.
συγγενεῖ δὲ τις εὐδοξία μέγα βρίθει.
ὃς δὲ διδάκτ' ἔχει, ψεφεννὸς ἀνὴρ
ἄλλοτ' ἄλλα πνέων οὐ ποτ' ἄτρεκεῖ
κατέβα ποδὶ, μυριᾶν δ' **ἀρετῶν** ἀτελεῖ νόῳ γεύεται.

O mistress **Muse**, my mother, I beg of you, come in the Nemean sacred month to this much-visited Dorian island of Aegina, for by the Asopian water are waiting the craftsmen of **honey-voiced** revels, young men **who seek your voice**. Different deeds thirst for different things, but victory in the games loves song most of all, the fittest companion for crowns and **achievements**. Grant from my ingenuity a profusion of it: begin for the ruler of the much-clouded sky, (as you are his) daughter, a hymn that shall be welcomed. I myself will entrust it to their voices and the lyre.

It will be a task full of grace (to make) a monument for the land, where the first Myrmidons dwelled, whose **long-famed** assembly place Aristocleidas did not stain with dishonour, thanks to your favour, by weakening in the mighty course of the pancratium.

And for his fatiguing blows in Nemea's deep plain he bears home a healing remedy of beautiful victory. If, being handsome and performing deeds to match his form, the son of Aristophanes has embarked on utmost deeds of manhood, it is no easy

(Sc. the pillars) that the hero-god established as famed witnesses of his furthestmost voyage. He subdued unstoppable beasts in the sea, and on his own explored the streams of the shallows, where he reached the limit that sent him back home, and he made known the land. My heart, to what alien headland are you turning aside my ship's course? To Aeacus and his race, I tell you, bring the **Muse**. The choicest flower of justice attends the precept "praise the good", but longings for foreign themes are not better for a man to bear. **Search at home**, for you have been granted a fitting adornment: to **proclaim something sweet**. In **achievements of long ago** lord Peleus took delight, after cutting his matchless spear; he took Iolcus all alone, without an army, and captured the sea nymph Thetis with great effort. And mighty Telamon, fighting beside Iolaus, destroyed Laomedon and once joined him in pursuit of the brave Amazons with bronze bows, and never did man-crushing fear check the sharpness of his mind. One with inborn glory carries great weight, but he who has learned to be famed is a shadowy man; ever changing his purpose, he never takes a precise step, but

task to go yet further across the untracked sea beyond the pillars of Heracles attempts innumerable **feats** with an ineffectual mind.

The following repetitions are identified:

Μοῖσα (v. 1) : Μοῖσαν (v. 28)

μελιγαρύων (v. 4) : γλυκύ τι γαρυέμεν (v. 32)

σέθεν ὅπα μαιόμενοι (v. 5) : οἴκοθεν μάτευε (v. 31)

ἀρετᾶν (v. 8) : ἀρεταῖς (v. 32) : ἀρετᾶν (v. 42)

παλαίφατον (v. 14) : παλαιαῖσι (v. 32)

- The second and the third triads (vv. 22-42, 43-63), which are mythological sections, appear to be connected through thematic reprises, cf.

2nd triad: vv. 22-42

ἦρωσ θεὸς ἄς ἔθηκε ναυτιλίας ἐσχάτας
μάρτυρας κλυτάς: δάμασε δὲ θῆρας ἐν πελάγει
ὑπερόχους, ἰδίᾳ τ' ἐρεύνασε τεναγέων
βόας, ὅπᾳ πόμπιμον κατέβαινε νόστου τέλος,
καὶ γὰρ φράδασε. θυμέ, τίνα πρὸς ἄλλοδαπὴν
ἄκραν ἐμὸν πλόον παραμεΐβει;
Αἰακῷ σε φαμί γένει τε Μοῖσαν φέρειν.
ἐπεται δὲ λόγῳ δίκας ἄωτος, 'ἐσλὸν αἰνεῖν',

οὐδ' ἄλλοτρίων ἔρωτες ἀνδρὶ φέρειν κρέσσονες;
οἴκοθεν μάτευε. ποτίφορον δὲ κόσμον ἔλαχες
γλυκύ τι γαρυέμεν. παλαιαῖσι δ' ἐν ἀρεταῖς
γέγαθε Πηλεὺς ἄναξ, ὑπέραλλον αἰχμῶν ταμῶν·
ὅς καὶ Ἰαοκλὸν εἶλε μόνος ἄνευ στρατιάς,
καὶ ποντίαν Θέτιν κατέμαρψεν
ἐγκοιμητὴν. Λαομέδοντα δ' εὐρυσθενῆς

Τελαμῶν Ἰόλα παραστάτας ἐὼν ἔπερσεν
καὶ ποτὲ χαλκότηρον Ἀμαζόνων μετ' ἀλκᾶν
ἔπετό οἱ, οὐδὲ νῖν ποτὲ φόβος ἀνδροδάμας
ἔπαυσεν ἀκμᾶν φρενῶν.
συγγενεὶ δὲ τις εὐδοξία μέγα βρίθει.
ὅς δὲ διδάκτ' ἔχει, ψεφφεννὸς ἀνήρ
ἄλλοτ' ἄλλα πνέων οὐ ποτ' ἀτρεκεῖ
κατέβα ποδί, μυριᾶν δ' ἀρετᾶν ἀτελεῖν ὧ γέυεται.

Sc. the pillars) the hero-god established as famed witnesses of his furthestmost voyage. **He subdued** unstoppable **beasts** in the sea, and **on his own** explored the streams of the shallows, where he reached the limit that sent him back home, and he made known the land. My heart, to what alien headland are you turning aside my ship's course? To Aeacus and his race, I tell you, bring the

3rd triad: vv. 43-63

ξανθὸς δ' Ἀχιλεὺς τὰ μὲν μένων Φιλύρας ἐν δόμοις
παῖς ἐὼν ἄθυρε μεγάλα ἔργα· χερσὶ θαμινὰ
βραχυσίδαρον ἄκοντα πάλλων ἴσα τ' ἀνέμοις,
{ἐν} μάχᾳ λεόντεσσιν ἀγροτέροις ἐπρασσεν φόνον,
κάπρους τ' ἐναιρε· σώματα δὲ παρὰ Κρονίδαν
Κένταυρον ἀσθμαίνοντα κόμιζεν,
ἐξέτης τὸ πρῶτον, ὅλον δ' ἔπειτ' ἂν χρόνον·
τὸν ἐθάμβον Ἀρτεμῆς τε καὶ Θρασεῖ Ἀθάνα,

κτείνοντ' ἐλάφους ἄνευ κινῶν δολίων θ' ἐρκέων·
ποσὶ γὰρ κράτεσκε. λεγόμενον δὲ τοῦτο προτέρων
ἔπος ἔχω· βαθυμήτα Χίρων τράφε λιθίνῳ
Ἰάσον' ἐνδον τέγει, καὶ ἔπειτεν Ἀσκληπιόν,
τὸν φαρμάκων δίδαξε μαλακόχειρα νόμον·
νύμφευσε δ' αὐτὶς ἀγαλόκοπον
Νηρέος θύγατρα, γόνον τέ οἱ φέρτατον

ἀτίταλλεν <ἐν> ἀρμένιοισι πᾶσι θυμὸν αὖξων,
ὅφρα θαλασσῆς ἀνέμων ῥιπαῖσι πεμφθείς
ὑπὸ Τροίαν δορίκτυπον ἀλαλὰν Λυκίων
τε προσμένοι καὶ Φρυγῶν
Δαρδάνων τε, καὶ ἐγγεσφόροις ἐπιμειζίας
Αἰθιοπέσσι χεῖρας ἐν φρασὶ πά-
ξαιθ', ὅπως σφίσι μὴ κοίρανος ὅπισω
πάλιν οἶκαδ' ἀνεψιὸς ζαμενῆς Ἑλένοιο Μέμνων
μόλοι.

But blond Achilles, while living in Philyra's home, even as a child at play would perform great deeds; often did he brandish in his hands **his short iron-tipped javelin** and, swiftly as the winds, **deal death** in battle **to wild lions and kill boars**. He would bring their gasping bodies to the Centaur, Cronus' son, beginning at age six and for all time thereafter. Artemis and bold Athena were astonished to see him

Muse. The choicest flower of justice attends the precept “praise the good”, but longings for foreign themes are not better for a man to bear. Search at home, for you have been granted a fitting adornment: to proclaim something sweet. In **achievements** of long ago lord Peleus took delight, after **cutting his** matchless **spear**; he took Iolcus all *alone, without an army*, and captured the sea nymph **Thetis** with great effort. And mighty **Telamon**, fighting beside Iolaus, destroyed **Laomedon** and once joined him in pursuit of the brave **Amazons with bronze bows**, and never did man-crushing fear check the sharpness of his mind. One with inborn glory carries great weight, but he who has learned to be famed is a shadowy man; ever changing his purpose, he never takes a precise step, but attempts innumerable feats with an ineffectual mind.

slaying deer without dogs or deceitful nets, for he overtook them on foot. The story I have to tell was told by former poets: Chiron of deep mind raised Jason in his rocky dwelling and then Asclepius, whom he taught the gentle-handed province of medicines. Then too he betrothed the splendid-bosomed **daughter of Nereus**, and fostered her perfect offspring, making his spirit great in all things fitting, so that, when sent by the blasts of the winds at sea to the foot of **Troy**, **he would withstand the spear-clashing battle cry of the Lycians and Phrygians and Dardanians**, and when grappling with spear-bearing **Ethiopians** he would fix it in his mind **that their leader Memnon, Helenus’ super-strong cousin, would not go back home again**.

As pointed out by Privitera (1977), Heracles, Peleus and Achilles seem to be represented here as heroes who accomplish extraordinary deeds all by themselves (cf. vv. 24-25 ἰδίᾳ... ὁπαῖ) and without receiving help of any kind (cf. v. 34 Ἰαολκὸν εἴλεε μόνος ἄνευ στρατιᾶς, Peleus; v. 51 κτείνοντ’ ἐλάφους ἄνευ κυνῶν δολίων θ’ ἐρκέων, Achilles).

Both Heracles and Achilles are ‘slayers of beasts’, cf. δάμασε δὲ θήρας (v. 23, Heracles) : μάχα λεόντεσσιν ἀγροτέροις ἔπρασεν φόνον, κάπρους τ’ ἔναιρε (vv. 46-47, Achilles) : κτείνοντ’ ἐλάφους (v. 51, Achilles). Moreover, the deeds of the pair Peleus-Telamon and those of Achilles are presented in analogous thematic order, which involves the references to the following elements/characters/themes:

- [WEAPON of the HERO]: αἰχμὰν ταμών (v. 33, Peleus) : βραχυσίδαρον ἄκοντα πάλλων (v. 45, Achilles);
- [WITHOUT ANY FURTHER HELP]: ἄνευ στρατιᾶς (v. 34, Peleus) : ἄνευ κυνῶν δολίων θ’ ἐρκέων (v. 51, Achilles);
- [THETIS]: καὶ ποντίαν Θέτιν κατέμαρψεν (v. 35, Peleus) : νύμφευσε... Νηρέος θυγάτρα (vv. 56-57, as mother of Achilles);
- [TROY-ENDEAVOURS]: Λαομέδοντα... ἔπερσεν (vv. 36-37, Telamon)¹ : ὑπὸ Τροίαν δορίκτυπον ἀλαλὰν Λυκίων τε προσμένον καὶ Φρυγῶν Δαρδάνων τε μή... πάλιν οἴκαδ’ (ε)... Μέμνων μῶλοι (vv. 60-63, Achilles).

¹ Heracles and Telamon’s expedition against Laomedon was represented on the East pediment of Aphaia’s temple at Aegina, while episodes of the Trojan war were represented on the West pediment (cf. Invernizzi 1965).

- In a similar way as the first triad seems to be attached to both the second and the fourth triads, the fourth triad seems to be linked to the first (see above), the second and the third triads. Moreover, we may recognize a circular thematic organization. It begins and concludes with the image of *shining glory*, at v. 64 and v. 84,¹ cf.

4th triad, v. 64

τηλαυγὲς ἄραρε φέγγος Αἰακιδᾶν αὐτόθεν

The **far-beaming light** of the Aeacidae is fixed **from** here.

4th triad, v. 84

Νεμέας Ἐπιδαυρόθεν τ' ἄπο καὶ Μεγάρων δέδορκεν φάος

from Nemea, Epidaurus, and Megara **has shone the light of glory**.

At the same time, the polarity between 'inborn glorious achievements' and non-inborn, 'taught' glory (vv. 40-41, triad 2) may correlate with the polarities high vs. low and single vs. many, seen in the contrast eagle (i.e. the poet who flies high) vs. jackdaws (i.e. the other poets) at vv. 80-81, in triad 4:

2nd triad, vv. 40-42

συγγενεὶ δέ τις εὐδοξία μέγα βρίθει.
ὅς δὲ διδάκτ' ἔχει, ψεφεννὸς ἀνὴρ
ἄλλοτ' ἄλλα πνέων οὐ ποτ' ἀτρεκεῖ
κατέβα ποδί, μυριαῶν δ' ἀρετᾶν ἀτελεῖ νόω
γεύεται.

One with inborn **glory** carries great weight, but he who has learned to be famed is a **shadowy man**; **ever changing his purpose**, he never takes a certain **step**, but attempts innumerable feats with an ineffectual mind.

4th triad, vv. 80-84

ἔστι δ' αἰετὸς ὥκως ἐν ποτανοῖς,
ὅς ἔλαβεν αἴψα, τηλόθε μεταμαιόμενος,
δαφονὸν ἄγραν ποσίν.
κραγέται δὲ κολιοῖοι ταπεινὰ νέμονται.
τίν γε μὲν, εὐθρόνου Κλεοῦς ἐθελού-
σας, ἀεθλοφόρου λήματος ἔνεκεν
Νεμέας Ἐπιδαυρόθεν τ' ἄπο καὶ Μεγάρων δέδορκεν φάος.

Swift is the eagle among birds, which suddenly seizes, as it searches from afar, the bloodied prey in its **talons**, while the **cawing jackdaws range down below**. But for you, **through the favour of fair-throned Cleo** and because of your determination for victory, from Nemea, Epidaurus, and Megara **has shone the light of glory**.

It is worth noticing that the man with innate glory (συγγενεὶ δέ τις εὐδοξία, v. 40) is opposed to the shadowy man (ψεφεννὸς ἀνὴρ, v. 41). In parallel the step (ποδί, v. 42) of the shadowy man is uncertain (ἀτρεκεῖ, v. 41) contrary to the talons (ποσίν, v. 81) of the poet's eagle, i.e. the one who provides glory

¹ A further coincidence I identify between triads three and four is the term παῖς (vv. 44, 72).

(δέδορκεν φάος, v. 84), which in turn is in contrast to the jackdaws, who range down below.

The metapoetic metaphor of the eagle (vv. 80-81, fourth triad), the best of poets, may further echo images applying to Achilles, *i.e. the best of the Achaeans*, in the third triad: at vv. 47-48 Achilles brings the gasping bodies of the animals he hunted to Chiron (σώματα... ἀσθμαίνοντα κόμιζεν); the eagle carries a bloodied prey in its talons (ἔλαβεν αἷψα, τηλόθε μεταμαιόμενος... δαφονὸν ἄγραν ποσίν, v. 81). Moreover, at v. 52 Achilles is said to overtake his prey by his swift foot (ποσσὶ γὰρ κράτεσκε, v. 52), while the eagle is said to be 'swift among the birds' (ἔστι δ' αἰετὸς ὥκυς ἐν ποτανοῖς, v. 80):

3rd triad: vv. 47-52

... σώματα δὲ παρὰ Κρονίδαν
Κένταυρον ἀσθμαίνοντα κόμιζεν,
ἐξέτης τὸ πρῶτον, ὅλον δ' ἔπειτ' ἂν χρόνον·
τὸν ἐθάμβεον Ἄρτεμῖς τε καὶ θρασεῖ Ἀθήνα,
κτείνοντ' ἐλάφους ἄνευ κυνῶν δολίων θ' ἐρκέων·
ποσσὶ γὰρ κράτεσκε...

He would bring their gasping bodies to the Centaur, Cronus' son, beginning at age six and for all time thereafter. Artemis and bold Athena were astonished to see him slaying deer without dogs or deceitful nets, for he overtook them on foot

4th triad: vv. 80-81

ἔστι δ' αἰετὸς ὥκυς ἐν ποτανοῖς,
ὅς ἔλαβεν αἷψα, τηλόθε μεταμαιόμενος,
δαφονὸν ἄγραν ποσίν·

Swift is the eagle among birds, which suddenly seizes, as it searches from afar, the bloodied prey in its talons...

As this repertoire of reprises makes evident, the chain(-of-rings)-composition seems to be built, for the most part, by means of lexematic reiterations, that is, words which display the same lexemes, *e.g.* Νεμεάδι (v. 2) : Νεμέας (v. 84); a few repetitions are couples or triplets of synonyms, *e.g.* οὐρανοῦ πολυνεφέλα κρέοντι (v. 10) : Ζεῦ (v. 65), or of hyper- or hyponyms, *e.g.* the couple Μοῖσα (v. 1) : εὐθρόνου Κλεοῦς (v. 83). Significantly, the metapoetic kenning of the 'craftsmen of honey-voiced revels' is associated with the motif of the 'thirst for odes' at the frame-beginning and may correlate with the image of the 'drink to sing on' at the frame end:

1st triad

[CRAFTSMEN] + [HONEY] +
[ODE-THIRST]

Nem. 3, 4-7

μένοντ' ἐπ' Ἀσωπίῳ μελιγαροῦν τέκτονες
κόμων νεανίαί, σέθεν ὅπα μαιόμενοι.
διψῇ δὲ πρᾶγος ἄλλο μὲν ἄλλου·
ἀεθλονικία δὲ μάλιστ' ἀοιδὴν φιλεῖ

4th triad

[POETIC PERFORMANCE] = [HONEY],
[ODE-DRINK]

Nem. 3, 77-79

πέμπω μεμιγμένον μέλι λευκῷ
σὺν γάλακτι, κίρναμένα δ' ἔερσ' ἀμφέπει,
πόμ' ἀοιδίμον Αἰολίσιν ἐν πνοαῖσιν αὐλῶν

The correlation is established on the basis of the complementarity of the metaphors: at vv. 4-5, the choreutes (τέκτονες)¹ are said to produce ‘honey-voiced’ (μελιγαρύων κώμων) revels; at v. 77 the poet sends (πέμπω) to the winner ‘honey’ (μέλι), which he also identifies as an ingredient of the ‘drink to sing on’ (πρόμ’ αἰδιδιμον, v. 79). Therefore, this designation of the poem complements the image of the ‘thirst for odes’ (διψῇ δὲ προῖχος ἄλλο μὲν ἄλλου... αἰδιδὼν φιλεῖ), which Pindar introduces at vv. 6-7. The only actual repetition between vv. 4-7 and 77-79 is μέλι, cf. μελιγαρύων (v. 4) and μέλι (v. 77), however, this may allow us to link the ‘craftsmen’ and the ‘poetic drink’: the τέκτονες of v. 4 are the performers of the *honey-voiced* revels; the song sent by the poet is then later described as *mixed with honey*. So, we can imagine that the *drink to sing on* is produced, i.e. performed by the τέκτονες of v. 4. Indeed, as Manieri (2021, 59-60) stresses, the different ingredients of the mixed poetic drink may represent the virtues of the poet’s song (such as sweetness, the ability to give nourishment, the excellence of the poetic result), but also the interpenetration of the different elements which make up the song or the variety of Pindaric poetry: music, Pindar’s poetry itself, and the voice of the performers.²

3. A VEDIC PARALLEL TO PINDAR’S NEMEAN 3

In a previous study,³ I showcased striking similarities between the repetitions attested in the incipit and excipit of *Nemean* 3 (vv. 1-13, 76-84) and *Rig-veda* (henceforth, RV) 10, 144.⁴ This hymn celebrates Indra as the recipient of soma, the divinized ritual drink, which, in our hymn, is called ‘the (im)mortal drop’ (*āmartya induh*, 1ab, cf. also 6) or ‘exhilarating drink’ (*mādam*, 2cd). Like in other Vedic poems, the arrival of the soma at the sacrifice is imagined as a journey, the cyclicity of which is alluded to through the iconic, framing repetition of the word *indu-* ‘drop’ (1b, 6a). Furthermore, the god Soma is said to be ‘the son of the falcon (brought) from afar’ (*parāvataḥ śyenāsya putrāḥ*, 4ab), because a Vedic myth ascribed the conquest of the soma to a bird.⁵ The gifts of Soma are then celebrated in the final stanza of

¹ Cf. Σ *Nem.* 3, 3a Drachm. Elsewhere τέκτων applies to the poet(s), e.g., Pind. *Pyth.* 3, 113.

² Just like in Pind. *Ol.* 3, 7-8, φόρμιγγά τε ποικιλόγαρον / καὶ βοῶν αὐλῶν ἐπέων τε θέσιν ... συμμῖξαι “mix together the *forminx* of modulating voice, the *aulos*’ cry and the arrangement of (my) words”. ³ Massetti 2019, 163-168.

⁴ The *Rigveda* is a collection of sacred texts composed in Vedic Sanskrit comprising 1028 hymns mostly dedicated to deities who were the subjects of Vedic rituals. The hymns consist in stanzas (Ved. *ṛc-*, hence the name *Rg-veda*) built upon colas with a fixed number of syllables, arranged in rhythmical patterns.

⁵ On this myth in ancient Indic and in Germanic traditions cf. Dumézil 1921.

the hymn (cf. 6). I provide hereunder the text (according to van Nooten-Holland 1994 edition) and the translation based on Jamison-Brereton 2014 and modified by the author.

- 1 ayám hí te ámart_ṛya
índur átyo ná pátyate
dákṣo viśváyur vedháse
Because this **immortal drop** here,
like a courser, displays his mastery
as lifelong skill for you, the ritual
adept,
- 2 ayám asmásu ká_ṛvya
ṛbhúr vājro d_āśvate
ayám bibhart_y ūrdhvákṣanam mādām
ṛbhúr ná kṛtv_{yam} madām
He is a **craftsman in poetic art**
among us and a mace for the one
generous with gifts. **Like a crafts-**
man, he brings the exhilarating
drink with pearls [= bubbles] on
top – the exhilarating drink that
gets results.
- 3 ghṛṣuḥ śyenāya kṛtvana
āsú s_uvásu vámsagaḥ
áva dīdhed ahīśúvaḥ
Eager for the energetic falcon, the
bull among his own females [= for-
tresses?] looked down at those puff-
ing up like snakes [/swelling like
fertile cows] [= clouds?] –
- 4 yám suparnāḥ parāvataḥ
śyenāsya putrá ābharat
śatácakraṃ yò 'hyò vartanīḥ
He whom the fine-feathered (bird),
the son of the falcon, **brought here**
from afar – him who had a
hundred wheels [= concentric for-
tresses?] – who is the track of the
fertile cow –
- 5 yám te śyenás cārum avṛkám padá ābharad
aruṇám mánám ándhasaḥ
enā váyo ví tāri áyu 'jīvása
enā jāgāra bandhútā
Whom the falcon brought here
for you with its talon, the cher-
ished one who keeps the wolf
away, who is the ruddy housing of
the stalk – by him is vitality, is life-
time lengthened for living; through
him does our family tie stay vigi-
lant.
- 6 evá tát índra índunā
devéṣu cid dhārayāte máhi tyājaḥ
krátvā váyo ví tāry áyuh sukrato
krátvāyám asmád ā sutāḥ
Thus, **by the drop** Indra will secure
that great surrender (of the offer-
ing) also among the gods. By your
will is vitality, is lifetime length-
ened, o you of strong will; by your
will has this soma here been
pressed from us.

Despite superficial differences, *Nemean* 3 and RV 10, 144 have some features in common:

- (a) the theme of inebriating drink: in *Nem.* 3, 79 poetry is compared to a πόμ' αἰδίμον, whereas the Vedic hymn celebrates Indra as the god who receives 'the immortal (and divinized) drink', cf. RV 10, 144, 1ab *ámartya, índuh* "immortal drop [sc. of Soma]";
- (b) the phraseology 'poetic craftsman': *Nem.* 3, 4-5 μελιγαρῶν τέκτονες κώμων, cf. RV 10, 144, 2ab, (cf. d) *kāvya, ṛbhúh* "a craftsman in poetic art";
- (c) the image of the 'drink's foam': *Nem.* 3, 78 κίρναμένα δ' ἔερσ' ἀμφέπει, cf. RV 10, 144, 2c *ūrdhvákṛśanam mādām* "exhilarating drink with pearls on the top [i.e. foam]";
- (d) the image of the bird of prey that 'comes from afar, carrying its prey in its talons': *Nem.* 3, 80-81 αἰετός [...] δς ἔλαβεν αἰψα, τηλόθε μεταμαιόμενος δαφοινόν ἄγραν ποσίν, cf. RV 10, 144, 4ab *suparṇāh parāvatah... ābharat* "the fine-feathered (bird) brought (him, i.e. Soma) from afar", 5a *yām te śyenás cārum avṛkām padā ābharat* "whom the falcon brought here for you with its talon". While Soma is identified with the falcon's prey, Pindar's text does not allow an immediate identification 'poetry' / 'poetic drink' : 'falcon's prey'. However, the analysis of internal repetitions between the beginning and the end of *Nemean* 3 may suggest that the search for the 'drink to sing on' correlates with the eagle's search for a prey. At v. 5 σέθεν ὅπα μαιόμενοι "(men) who seek your (i.e. of the Muse) voice" seems to be reprised at v. 81 τηλόθε μεταμαιόμενος "(the eagle) searches from afar". The metaphor of the falcon thus further combines with that of the song-drink.

4. "LIKE A ṚBHU, HE BRINGS THE RITUAL DRINK"

Stanza 2 mentions the figure of the *ṛbhú-* who is skilled in poetic art (*kāvya-*). Moreover, this character is said to bring the soma (sc. as a ritual offer), Vedic *ayām bibharti ... mādām, ṛbhúr ná kṛtvāyam mādām*. To understand how similar the images of RV 10, 144, 2 and *Nem.* 3, 4-7, 77-79 are, I must expand on the synchronic background of the Vedic metaphor. Therefore, I focus on two main interpretative matters: (a) why the term *ṛbhú-* is translated 'craftsman' and *de facto* equates Greek τέκτων, and (b) why the *ṛbhú-* (allegedly meaning 'craftsman') is portrayed as a sacrificer offering (Vedic *bibharti*) the soma-drink.

(a) Vedic *ṛbhú-* mostly occurs as a proper name in the *Rigveda*, although it was originally an adjective.¹ It applies to a group of three gods (Vāja, Vibhvan and Ṛbhu or Ṛbhukṣan),² i.e. the Ṛbhus, who achieved immortality

¹ EWAia s.v. and Estell 1999 propose that the term is related to Greek Ὀρφεύς.

² On these divine figures, cf. the studies of Ryder 1901 and Chakravarty 1990.

thanks to their miracles:¹ the creation of four cups out of a single cup which belonged to the smith-god Tvaṣtar; the building of the chariot of the Aśvins² and of Indra's fallow bay horses; the 'carving' and/or the milking of a cow;³ the rejuvenation of their (i.e. the Ṛbhus') parents.⁴ As these deeds are commonly represented as acts of fashioning, the substantivized form *ṛbhú-*, occurring within the expression *ṛbhúr ná* 'like (a) Ṛbhu',⁵ came to be understood and/or translated as 'craftsman', even though the term *ṛbhú-* is not etymologically connected to a root meaning 'to make', 'to carve' or 'to fashion'.⁶ This semantic extension process (namely: 'ṛbhu' = 'craftsman') takes place because the Ṛbhus are τέκτονες par excellence, their work being commonly described by means of the Vedic root *takṣ*, a close linguistic cognate of Greek τέκτων and τεκταίνομαι,⁷ cf.

RV 1, 111, 1

tákṣan rátham suvítam vidmanápasas

tákṣan hárī indravāhā vīṣaṇvasū

tákṣan pitṛbhyām ṛbhávo yúvad váyas

tákṣan vatsáya mātáram sacābhúvam

They **fashioned** the smooth-rolling **chariot**, working with their know-how; they **fashioned** the two **fallow bays** that convey Indra and bring bullish goods. They **fashioned** – the Ṛbhus – for their parents youthful **vigour**; they **fashioned** for the calf **a mother** to stay by it.

¹ Cf. RV 1, 20, 2; 110, 4; 161, 2, 6; 3, 60, 1, 3; 4, 33, 2, 4, 9; 4, 35, 3; 8, 36, 4. Jackson [Rova] 2014 and Massetti 2017 support with different arguments that the Ṛbhus are by name 'the ones who changed the side'. In the light of Hittite *harpp-mi* 'to turn, change the side' one can reconstruct an Indo-European root **h₃erbh-* 'to change the side, turn', which lies at the basis of Vedic *ṛbhú-*, Greek Ὀρφεύς, Hittite *harpp-mi* as well as Latin *orbis* (Weiss 2006).

² The Aśvins are the Vedic divine twins. On their figures in comparative perspective cf. Frame 2009.

³ According to Brereton 2012, 113, it is unclear what the Vedic expression applying to this miracle describes (cf. "They did something to a cow or did something with a cow"). The verbs occurring in relation to the cow-miracle are 'to fashion' (*takṣ*, RV 1, 20, 3) or 'to carve' ([*níh*]-*peś*, RV 1, 110, 8; 161, 10; 4, 33, 4), but also 'to make flow', which entails a reference to the milk of the cow (RV 1, 161, 7). S. Scarlata (p.c.) kindly points out to me that *gām* may stand here for the product(s) of a cow, namely, milk, butter etc., which are made flow out of the skin of a cow, hence the rendering 'milking'.

⁴ Who these 'parents' are is a debated matter. Candidates are Vedic pairs, which are occasionally referred to as 'parents' (dual voc. *pitārā*), such as 'Heaven & Earth', the Aśvins, the sacrifice and his wife (Brereton 2012).

⁵ RV 6, 3, 8d, 9, 21, 6a, 10, 105, 6c.

⁶ By contrast cf. Tvaṣtar, lit. 'Carver', whose name is derived to the IE root **tuerk-* 'to forge, carve', on which Ginevra 2020 and see further below § 5.

⁷ Derivatives of the Indo-European root **tetk-* 'to fashion', cf. LIV² 638-639, which might be derived from **tek-* 'to generate' according to Bendahman 1993, 246-247.

The same root *takṣ* denotes the fashioning of the poetic formulation by the craftsmen-gods, in a similar way as τέκτων applies to poets and singers in Greek, and Avestan *taš* to the strophe (Avestan *vacatašti*- ‘strophe’),¹ cf.

RV 10, 80, 7a

agnáye **brahma** ṛbhávas **tatakṣuh**

For Agni did the Ṛbhus **fashion** their **formulation**.

The combinatory analysis of the phraseological data allows us to recover the missing link between the Pindaric expression τέκτονες κώμων (*Nem.* 3, 4-5) and *kāvya ṛbhūḥ* in RV 10, 144, 2.

(b) To understand why the Ṛbhu brings the soma in RV 10, 144, it is necessary to frame the mythology of the Ṛbhus within its Vedic ritual-context. As Joel Brereton (2012) showed, the miracles of the Ṛbhus “encode the acts of the soma ritual, and, more especially, the acts of the third soma pressing”: the four cups created by the Ṛbhus correspond to the four main soma recipients in the third pressing; the fabrication of the chariot may hint at the shaping of the sacrifice, as sacrifice is often compared to a chariot in the *Rig-veda* (Sparreboom 1985, 13); the fashioning of Indra’s horses may be connected to the *yajñāpuccha* (‘tail of the sacrifice’), at the opening of which Indra’s horses are invoked to leave the ground; the cow-miracle might be connected with the image of *milk*, a substance which soma resembles; the rejuvenation of the Ṛbhus’ parents may conceal a connection with the Ásvins or to the fertilization of the sacrificer and his wife by means of the third pressing.

If Brereton’s interpretation is correct – and the reference to RV 10, 144, 2 indeed supports it – the mythology of the Ṛbhus was primarily connected with the third soma-pressing.² It is through the production of this ritual drink that they achieved immortality and also came to be mythologized as *divine fashioners* of things: objects (chariot, horses), abstract things (‘youthful vigour’, RV 1, 111, 1c) and formulations (RV 10, 80, 7a). The overlap between the fashioning of ‘ritual-actions’ and ‘words’ may additionally be imagined as the result of *concomitant ritual actions*. Prayers and holy formulations accompany different moments of the ritual, including the pressing of the soma-plant. As a matter of fact, the thirst for soma and the need of praise are said to be satisfied simultaneously, cf.

¹ Darmesteter 1878; Schmitt 1967, 297-298; Campanile 1977, 36.

² Cf. also RV 4, 35, 9, “The Third Pressing, the conferring of treasure, *which you made by your good labor*, O you of skillful hands”.

RV 4, 34, 11ab

nápābhūta ná vo_a tītṛṣāma
_aniḥśastā ṛbhavo yajñé asmín

You have not kept away. **We have not let you be thirsty, O Ṛbhus, nor are you unpraised** in this sacrifice.

To sum up: the state of things underlying the myth of the Ṛbhus is comparable to that underlying the Pindaric metaphors of *Nemean 3*: fashioners of poetic words (performers of odes [Pindar] or rituals [*Rigveda*]) fashion (ṛbhū- ... takṣ, τέκτονες) metaphoric or non-metaphoric drinks of immortality: poetry, which grants *glory* (Pindar), is the means to achieve immortality in the world of the living, the ritual beverage (*Rigveda*) is the means to connect with the gods and achieve a place among them in the Vedic tradition.¹

5. OTHER DRINKS, POEMS, AND CARVERS: VEDIC AND OLD NORSE KENNINGS FOR ‘POETRY’

The complementary metaphors of *Nemean 3* and the Ṛbhus’ mythological background match the state of things which lies at the basis of further Vedic and Old Norse kennings for ‘poetry’ with the structure

[DRINKABLE SUBSTANCE/DRINK – (of) CARVER/FASHIONER (IE *t_uerk-, *pejk-)]

The kennings in question have been recently analysed *in extenso* by Ginevra (2020). Therefore, I limit myself to highlight a few, which, in my view, stand close to the metaphors of *Nemean 3*, namely:

- The expression ‘honey of Tvaṣtar’ is a substitution kenning for ‘poetry’ in the *Rigveda*,² cf.

RV 1, 117, 22cd

sá vām mādhu prá vocaḍ ṛtāyān
 tvāṣtrām yád dasrā_u v apikakṣīyaṃ vām

Speaking the truth, he proclaimed to you **Tvaṣtar’s honey**, which was hidden from you, o wondrous ones.

Vedic *mādhu* ... *tvāṣtrām* resembles μελιγαρύων τέκτονες κόμων. The collocations of μέλι and *mādhu*-overlap;³ furthermore, Old Indic *Tvaṣtar*- is a

¹ Note that the achievement of immortality of the Ṛbhus concretely manifests itself as κλέος/*śrávaḥ*, i.e. what is heard on them, as they are celebrated in a variety of religious hymns like (and together with) other deities of the Vedic pantheon.

² On this concept cf. Mittner 1955.

³ Massetti 2019, 3-6.

derivative to the Indo-European root **t_uerǵ-* ‘to carve’ (LIV² 656), which applies to the work of the divine smith of the Vedic pantheon. The god is said to serve the soma in cups (cf. RV 10, 144, 2 on the Ṛbhus), which, according to some hymns, the Ṛbhus produced, *e.g.*

– Tvaṣṭar *bears* the cups:

RV 10, 55, 9ab

tváṣṭā māyāḥ vet apāsām apástamaḥ
bībhrat pátrā devapānāni śámtamā

Tvaṣṭar knew (his own) magic powers, as the best worker of workers, **bearing the cups**, the most beneficial drinking vessels of the gods.

– The Ṛbhus multiply the cups and impress or make happy Tvaṣṭar:

RV 4, 33, 5-6

jyeṣṭhá āha camasā dvā karéti
káníyān trín kṛṇavāmét,y āha
kaniṣṭhá āha catúras karéti
tváṣṭa ṛbhavas tát panayad váco vaḥ
satyám ūcur nára evá hí cakrúr
ánu svadhám ṛbhávo jagmur etám
vibhrájamānāmś camasām áheva
ávenat tváṣṭā catúro dadṛśvān

The eldest said, “**I will make two cups** (from one)”. The younger said, “**We will make three**”. The youngest said, “**I will make four**”. O Ṛbhus, Tvaṣṭar wondered at that speech of yours. The noble men spoke the truth, for they did exactly that. According to their will, the Ṛbhus followed that (will of theirs). **Having seen the four cups**, Tvaṣṭar gazed at them, bright shining like days.

These passages allow us to recover the link between Tvaṣṭar and (i) the preparation/offering of the ritual drink and (ii) the Ṛbhus. In the light of the etymology of the name Tvaṣṭar, the kenning *mádhu... tvāṣṭrá* is an *aequabile* of τέκτονες μελιγαρύων κόμων,¹ although different but quasi-synonym Indo-European roots underlie both terms for ‘to fashion’ (IE **tetk-* vs. **t_uerǵ-*) and ‘liquid/drinkable substance’ (**mélit-*, Greek μέλι vs. **médhu-*, Vedic *mádhu-*).

¹ I call *aequabile* a case in which the constitutive members of two comparanda go back to the same root and display non-identical formations, these include: (i) cases of collocations in which both members go back to the same root, but are formally non-identical; (ii) cases of collocations in which one or more members of the collocation is a perfect or partial match and another/others is/are expressed by means of a different lexeme, as a consequence of lexical renewal.

- Some Old Norse kennings for [POETRY] reflect the structure [DRINKABLE SUBSTANCE/DRINK – of CARVER/FASHIONER (IE **t̥uēr̥k-*)]:

Skáld. G57

Af þessu kǫllum vér skáldskap [...] **dverga drekku**

Therefore, they call poetry [...] **drink of the dwarfs.**

GSúrs Lv. 36^v (*Gísl* 39)

dverga drykkju

... **The drink of the dwarfs** [= POETRY].

In these poetic expressions, poetry is compared to a liquid substance (*drykkju*, *drekka*) which is possessed or created by a *fashioner*. As shown by Ginevra (2020, 71, 75) Old Norse *dvergr* is likely to reflect ‘maker, carver, forger’, being recognizable as a nominal agentive derivative to the IE root **t̥uēr̥k-* ‘to forge’ (i.e. the same root underlying the name of the Vedic Carver, *Tvaṣtar*). Indeed, the *dvergar*, i.e. the Old Norse carvers, are the protagonists of a myth concerning the production of the poetic drink. From the Prose Edda (*Skáld. G57*) we learn that two *dvergar* called Fialarr and Gallarr killed Kvasir, made his blood flow in two cauldrons and mixed honey to it, so as to obtain a drink that would make ‘poet’ or ‘erudite’ (*skáld eða frœðamaðr*) out of anyone who drank it: the sacrifice of Kvasir, which one may imagine as some sort of gruesome carving-act,¹ is thus connected to the fabrication of the first poetic drink.

- A further Old Norse kenning for [POETRY] reflects the structure [DRINKABLE SUBSTANCE/DRINK – (of) CARVER/FASHIONER (IE **peĩk-*)]:

KormQ. Lv. 53

fægir Fjǫlnis veigar

Fjǫlnir’s **drink maker** [= POET].²

Here the term *fægir* is recognizable as a derivative of the root **peĩk-* ‘to carve’ (LIV² 465-466), a term underlying Vedic *peś*, i.e. the verb applying to the cow

¹ Significantly, Vedic *takṣ* denotes the killing of enemies in RV 10, 180, 2c *ví śátrūn tāl̥hi* “(sc. Indra,) carve apart your rivals!” In Ossetic the killing of innocent human beings is connected with the invention of musical instruments cf. Massetti 2023.

² The material is collected by Meissner 1921, 428 and now also Ginevra 2020, 73-75, who proposes that the Old Norse and Vedic kennings [POETRY] = ‘drink/liquid substance of the carver’ derive from the merger of two metapoetic metaphors.

‘carved’ by the Ṛbhus in the *Rigveda*,¹ and ποικίλλω, which is also metaphorically used in Greek.² In this very connection, the words of another choral lyric poet may offer a comparandum for *fægir* ... *veigar*, although the Greek passage as we read it is the result of an integration, cf.

Ibyc. S257a, 27, 3-4 Davies

ποικίλος ὕμνος ὑπὸ φρένας ἀμάς

Μοισᾶν Πιερίδων ἀπολείβεται

A variegated (ποικίλος, ‘carved out’) hymn is oozed by the Pierid Muses in my mind.

If West’s (1984, 29) integration proposal is correct, Ibycus preserves a further instance of the twofold metaphor: ποικίλος is etymologically connected with Old Norse *fægir*, Greek ποικίλλω, Vedic *peś*, and thus accounts for the ‘craftsman-ship component’ of the metaphor,³ ἀπολείβεται for the liquid one.

6. CONCLUSIONS

I have argued that in *Nemean* 3 Pindar reworks material from tradition (in this case a very ancient one), in order to adapt it to the needs of each individual performance. In our ode, the complementary metaphors of the ‘thirst for songs’ and the ‘drink of song’ correlate with the *aition* of the Aeginetan Delphinia. Moreover, this study casts light on the inherited background of poetic images found in *Nemean* 3:

- The structural analysis of the poem (centring on the recognition of framing patterns) shows us that metapoetic metaphors of the craftsmen of honey-voiced revels (vv. 4-5) and the ode-thirst/ode-drink metaphors (vv. 6-7, 77-79) correlate.
- The usage of the two metaphors in Pindar’s poem configures as an ‘expanded’, say ‘distracted’ or ‘dilated’, version of the metapoetic kenning [DRINKABLE SUBSTANCE/DRINK – (OF) CARVER/FASHIONER (IE **tuerk-*, **pejk-*, **tetk-*)] = [POETRY], which is found in Vedic and Old Norse, where it is connected with the myths of the Ṛbhus and Tvaṣṭar (Vedic) and the dwarfs (Old Norse).
- The analysis of further Vedic texts, which are connected with other skilled poetic craftsmen of the Vedic pantheon, i.e. the Ṛbhus, reveals that an analogous state

¹ Cf. Massetti 2017 for an in-length discussion on the verb and parallel Greek-Vedic usages.

² On the metapoetic usages of the Indo-European root **pejk-* in Greek and other Indo-European poetic traditions, cf. Jackson [Rova] 2002.

³ And further to the Latin deity *Picus*, who is said to be a skilled smith, cf. Ginevra 2019, 2020, 93-100.

of things lies at the basis of the *complementary* metaphors that frame *Nemean 3* and the myth of the *Ṛbhus*, which ultimately has ritual implications.

- The structure and distribution of lexemes for ‘fashioning’ within the metaphors may be summed up in the following final scheme:

	DRINKABLE SUBSTANCE / DRINK	– FASHIONER / CARVER	IE roots ‘to fashion’
Greek	μελι(γάρυων κώμων), μέλι ... πόμ’ αἰδιδιμον	τέκτονες	* <i>tetk-</i>
Vedic	bibharti ... mādām, kṛtvyam mādām mādhū	ṛbhūr ná (→ takṣ) tvāṣṭrām	* <i>tetk-</i> (by association) * <i>t_uerk-</i>
Old Norse	drekku, drykkju	dverga	* <i>t_uerk-</i>
Greek	ῥυμος ἀπολείβεται	ποιχίλος	* <i>peik-</i>
Old Norse	veigar	fægir	* <i>peik-</i>

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