



Program and Abstract Booklet

The Line and the Circle

Comparative Perspectives in Ancient Poetic Traditions

November 3-4, 2025
University of Naples "L'Orientale"

Palazzo Du Mesnil
Via Chiatamone 61/2, Naples, Italy

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Contents

Program — 1

About the Participants — 4

The Keynote Speakers — 4

The Speakers — 5

The Organiser and Her Helpers — 9

Abstracts — 11

Linearity and Circularity: Composition and Movement — 12

Figurative Speech and Poetic Genres: Battles and Competition — 20

Monsters — 25

Figurative Speech and Poetic Genres: Structure, Metaphors, and

Movement — 29

Linearity and Circularity: ἐπέων θέσις — 35

Program

November 3

9:00–9:30 Introduction
Laura Massetti

Linearity and Circularity: Composition and Movement

9:30–10:30 Verbal Fluency and Visual Imagery: Visual and Performative Dimensions of *technopaegnia* in Old Indic and Iranian Poems
Velizar Sadovski

10:30–11:00 New Approaches to Iconicity in the Ancient Greek Technopaegnia
Brian McPhee

11:00–11:30 **Coffee break**

11:30–12:00 Linear Movement and Circular Composition: On the Stylistics and Onomastics of Curse Tablets
Florian Sommer

12:00–12:30 Conceptual Metaphors in the Verbal and Visual Representations of Achaemenian Country Lists
Kianoosh Rezania

12:30–14:00 **Lunch**

14:00–15:00 Unifying Strategies in the Hymns of the Rig Veda: Ring Composition
Stephanie W. Jamison

15:00–15:30 Ring Composition in Lower Land Luwian
Aidan B. Holmgren

15:30–16:00 **Coffee Break**

Figurative Speech and Poetic Genres: Battles and Competitions

- 16:00–16:30 The Composition of Battle Scenes in Homer’s Iliad and the Sanskrit Epics
Andrea Doda
- 16:30–17:00 Words that Wound: Some Reflections on Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad 3.8.2
Giorgio Scalvini
- 17:00–17:30 The Enthronement Scenes of Indo-European *Männerbünde* Deities
Rodrigo García Beni
- 17:30– **Enjoy Naples!**
- 20:00 **Dinner**

November 4

Monsters

- 09:30–10:00 FEAR IS A PREDATOR: Can a Metaphor Shape the Style of a Poem? Some remarks on the ecphrasis in the Shield of Heracles compared to the Shield of Achilles
Giorgio Carboni
- 10:00–10:30 Hercules Lustrator Orbis
Aidan Ackerman
- 10:30–11:00 *maðmæhta wlonc/ansyn ywde*: Ring-Composition in Beowulf and the Shape of the Dragon in Insular Visual Art
Marko Trandafilovski
- 11:00–11:30 **Coffee Break**

Figurative Speech and Poetic Genres: Structure, Metaphors, and Movement

11:30–12:30 Repetition, Parallelism and Creativity: An Inquiry into the Construction of Meaning in Ancient Mesopotamian Literature and Erudition
Nicla De Zorzi

12:30–14:00 **Lunch**

14:00–14:30 Synaesthetic Poetics: Ming-Qing Women’s Poetry and the Sensory Recoding of the Gui Ge
Anqi Fang

14:30–15:00 Anatomies of a Fall: A Comparative Case Study on Cadence and Class in Homer
Claudio Sansone | 倉誦凝

15:00–15:30 “Becoming God”: The Embodiment of Poetry in South Indian Bharatanāṭyam Theatre Tradition
Domenico Giuseppe Muscianisi

15:30–16:00 **Coffee Break**

Linearity and Circularity: ἐπέων θέσις

16:00–16:30 Metapoetic Structures and Cognitive Frameworks: Pindar and Callimachus in Dialogue
Massimo Giuseppetti

16:30–17:00 Lines, Circles, and Zigzags: Metrics and Aesthetics in Pindar
Ian Rutherford

17:00–17:30 Fashioning Immortality: Metapoetic Metaphors and Ring-Composition in Pindar and the Rigveda
Laura Massetti

17:30–17:40 Closing Remarks

Enjoy Naples!

About the Participants

The Keynote Speakers

Nicla De Zorzi is an Associate Professor of Assyriology at the University of Vienna, a member of the Young Academy of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, and currently serves as Vice-Head of the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Vienna. Since 2012, she has received several research grants, including a Marie Curie Fellowship, a Stand-Alone Grant from the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), and an ERC Starting Grant. Her research focuses on Babylonian scholarship and erudition, particularly Babylonian divination and poetry from the first millennium BCE. Her projects have pioneered innovative approaches to Babylonian scholarship by combining traditional philological methods with tools from Linguistics, Anthropology, and the Digital Humanities. A central aim of her work is to integrate Mesopotamian studies into the broader discourse on ancient intellectual history. Her current research explores textual repetition, literary argumentation, and ‘correlative thinking’ in a comparative perspective, focusing on Ancient Mesopotamia and Classical China.

Velizar Sadovski is Distinguished Research Fellow of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, specialist in Indo-Iranian Linguistics, Comparative and Historical Indo-European Studies, Old Indic and Iranian Philology. He finished his PhD studies in Historical Linguistics at Vienna University in 2001, *summa cum laude*, with a dissertation on compound formations in the Veda and Avesta. Since 2010, he held Austrian Habilitation as Associate Professor in Indo-European Studies. He has also held Italian National Scientific Habilitation for Full Professor in the field of General and Historical Linguistics since 2023. Sadovski is the Group Leader of the Department of Iranian Linguistics and Onomastics in Vienna. He is the author and editor of more than 150 publications and the curator of 8 book series (in Hamburg, Milan, Oslo and Vienna), among which *Grammatica Iranica*, *Indo-Iranica et Orientalia*, and, with Prof. Rüdiger Schmitt, of the *Dictionary of Iranian Personal Names*. Since 2005 he has been a regular Visiting Professor at the Universities of Bologna, La Sapienza Rome, Milan, Naples, Verona, Viterbo (Italy), Leiden (the Netherlands), Salzburg (Austria), Bochum, Cologne and Munich (Germany). Author of more than 450 invited papers at more than 60 universities in 22 countries, Velizar Sadovski is Board Member of the *Indo-Iranian Journal* and Member of the Executive Committee of the World Philology Union.

Stephanie Jamison was originally trained as a historical and Indo-European linguist (PhD Yale 1977), but for many years she has concentrated on Indo-Iranian, especially (Vedic) Sanskrit and Middle Indo-Aryan languages and textual materials. She works not only on language and linguistics, but also literature and poetics, religion and law, mythology and ritual, and gender studies in these languages. She is also interested in comparative mythology and poetics, especially with Greek materials. Professor Jamison's teaching at UCLA spans topics including Sanskrit, Middle Indo-Aryan, and Old Iranian language and literature, Indo-European and Indo-Iranian linguistics, and undergraduate courses on Classical Indian civilization. She is the author of *The Ravenous Hyenas and the Wounded Sun: Myth and Ritual in Ancient India* (Cornell University Press 1991), *Sacrificed Wife/Sacrificer's Wife: Women, Ritual, and Hospitality in Ancient India* (Oxford University Press 1996). Jointly with Joel P. Brereton (University of Texas, Austin), she curated a complete new English translation of the *Rig Veda* (Oxford University Press 2014) and a guide to the Rigveda (Oxford University Press 2020).

The Speakers

Aidan Ackerman is a second-year PhD student at the University of California, Los Angeles. His interests include morphology, the languages of ancient Italy, and linguistic phylogenetics. He earned his BA in Classics and Linguistics from Cornell University in 2023.

Giorgio Carboni studied Classics at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan and is now a PhD candidate in linguistics at Università per Stranieri di Siena, working on a project about onomastics in the tragedies of Aeschylus with particular attention to phraseology and poetic and etymological parallels in other Indo-European languages, particularly in Vedic, Old Norse and Latin. His research interests are onomastics, phraseology and poetic language, as well as comparative mythology and cultural reconstruction.

Andrea Doda earned a DPhil in Classics under the supervision of Christopher Metcalf (University of Oxford), focusing on Homer and comparative ancient epic. Following a short-term postdoctoral position at Heidelberg, Andrea has taught Greek and Latin at Balliol College, Oxford. He is now working at Trinity College Dublin as a Research Ireland Postdoctoral Fellow. His research explores the question of oral composition-

in-performance from a comparative perspective. By examining epic texts from three ancient Indo-European traditions (Ancient Greek, Sanskrit, and Old English), he aims to reconstruct a technique of versification that could account for the composition of specific sequences within these texts. His current projects also incorporate neuroscientific approaches and technologies to further illuminate the dynamics of oral composition. In addition to his primary project, Andrea is currently working on Ancient Greek linguistics and Latin literature from the Early Empire.

Anqi Fang is a third-year PhD student in Education at the University of Cambridge. Her research focuses on restoring the historical narratives of female poets from the Ming and Qing dynasties through creative writing. Her presentation examines *synaesthesia* as a core stylistic strategy in Ming-Qing women's poetry.

Rodrigo García Beni earned his Bachelor and Master's degree in Classical Philology (2019-2024) at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Spain), completing the itinerary in Greek language and literature. He is currently a PhD student in the Studies of the Ancient World Program at the same university on the topic of Indo-European *Männerbünde* under the supervision of Juan Antonio Álvarez-Pedrosa Núñez. His main interest is the interaction of myth (and religion) with politics in the development of ancient Indo-European cultures.

Massimo Giuseppetti is Associate Professor of Greek at Roma Tre University. His main area of research is Greek Language and Literature, with particular attention to Greek poetry of the late archaic and Hellenistic periods. His publications include a monograph on Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* and an annotated translation of Bacchylides' poems and fragments. He is currently working on the intersection between religion and literature in ancient Greece and on cognitive approaches to literature.

Aidan B. Holmgren is a first year PhD student in the Program in Indo-European Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles where he has spent the past two years working towards his MA. He works primarily on Anatolian historical linguistics (particularly the Luwic languages), the reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European, and myth and poetics; all of which will inform his future dissertation work. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Classical Languages, with a focus on Ancient Greek, in 2023 from Hamilton College in Clinton, New York where he was also an avid a cappella singer and editor of *The Haley*, Hamilton's undergraduate Classics journal.

Brian McPhee is an Assistant Professor in the Program in Cultures, Civilizations, and Ideas at Bilkent University. He received his PhD in Classics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and has previously held research and teaching positions in Rome, Bloomington, Durham, and İstanbul. In addition to a number of articles on Hellenistic poetry, Greco-Roman mythology, and the epic tradition, he has now published a monograph entitled *Apollonius' Argonautica and the Homeric Hymns: A Study in Hymnody, Hero Cult, and Homeric Reception* (Leiden: Brill, 2024).

Domenico Giuseppe Muscianisi is Assistant Professor of Historical and General Linguistics at the University of Parma. He earned a PhD in Comparative Indo-European Linguistics at the Universities of Cologne and Macerata (2017), studies regularly at Leiden University and has been Research Fellow at Harvard University's Center for Hellenic Studies (2019–2020). His academic interests focus on poetry, metre and nominal morphology. Besides Domenico is a ballet dancer and a Indian classical Bharatanatyam dancer, and studied Vedic chant, poetry and Indian dance at Chidambaram temple (Tamil Nadu) in 2023.

Kianoosh Rezania is professor for the History of West Asian Religions at the Center for Religious Studies, Ruhr University Bochum, the director of the Graduate School of Metaphor and Religion (GSMR), and the PI of the longterm project "Zoroastrian Middle Persian: Digital Corpus and Dictionary (MPCD)." His main research interests cover the history of Zoroastrianism, Middle Persian literature, and the development of the concepts of time and space in ancient and late antique Iran.

He holds a M.Sc. in Computer Science from Sharif University of Technology (Tehran 1998), a M.A. in Iranian Studies from the University of Tehran (2002) and a Ph.D. in Old Iranian Studies from the Georg-August University Göttingen (2008).

Kianoosh Rezania is the author of *Die zoroastrische Zeitvorstellung: eine Untersuchung über Zeit- und Ewigkeitskonzepte und die Frage des Zurvanismus* (Harrassowitz 2010), *Die Raumkonzeptionen im älteren Zoroastrismus: kosmische, kultische und soziale Räume* (Harrassowitz 2017), and the co-author of *Religionsökonomie: Einführung für Studierende der Religionswissenschaft und Wirtschaftswissenschaften* (UTB 2023).

Ian Rutherford is Professor of Greek at the University of Reading. His University education was at Oxford, and has held research positions at the Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington DC, at the University of Cincinnati, at the Institute for the

Study of the Ancient World in New York, and at the Centre for Anatolian Civilisations in Istanbul.

He is interested in questions of performance, genre and chronology, and the transmission of Greek poetry via papyri; ancient religion (sacred travel and pilgrimage, as well as animal sacrifice), relations between Greece and Anatolia, contacts between Ancient Egypt and Greece. Besides being the main curator or the co-editor of several volumes connected with his main research interests, he is the author of *Pindar's Paeans. A Reading of the Fragments with a Survey of the Genre* (Oxford 2001), *Greco-Egyptian Interactions: Literature, Translation, and Culture* (Oxford, 2016), *Hittite Texts and Greek Religion. Contact, Interaction, and Comparison* (Oxford, 2020).

Claudio Sansone is Assistant Professor at the National Central University, Taiwan. His recent and forthcoming publications include works on Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, and Mesopotamian literature—as well as on twentieth century receptions of the Classics. He is currently working on a series of articles, including the one he will present today, on enslaved figures in the Homeric *Odyssey*.

Giorgio Scalvini received his Bachelor and Master degrees in Classics from the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart (Milan). Since November 2024, he is a PhD candidate in Historical Linguistics at the University for Foreigners of Siena and at the Sorbonne Université of Paris. His project is a study of nominal compounds in the *corpus* of the *Homeric Hymns* from both a morphological and a phraseological perspective within Greek poetic language and, more broadly, Indo-European poetic traditions, with particular attention to Old Indian (Vedic and Classical Sanskrit), Latin and Old/Middle Irish. His interests mainly concern nominal derivation processes, compounding, and cultural reconstruction through the combined application of the methodological principles of Classical Philology and Historical Linguistics.

Florian Sommer is a researcher and lecturer at the Department of Greek and Latin Philology in Zurich. Previously, he has worked at the Institute for Comparative Linguistics in Zurich and the Department for Historical Linguistics and Celtic Studies at Marburg University. He is currently preparing a study on Greek and Italic theonyms in the framework of text linguistics. His other research interests include Baltic and Indo-Iranian morphosyntax, Indo-European etymology, religious and magical language as well as mythology.

Marko Trandafilovski is studying for a Master of Philosophy in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at the University of Cambridge, after having obtained a double starred first in his Bachelor of Arts in the same earlier this year. He is the recipient of a number of undergraduate awards, including the N. K. and H. M. Chadwick Awards, two of Corpus Christi College's Foundation Scholarships, and two of its Corpus Prizes, as well as having twice won the Clemoes Reading Prize; his present studies are supported by the Parker Library and Donaldson MPhil Funding scholarship. In composing his two undergraduate dissertations, Marko developed an interest in intersections between Latin and vernacular Insular poetics; he has, in his MPhil thesis, turned his eye to another form of aesthetic cooperation, that between the synthesised and manifold modes of art that together constitute an Insular manuscript, in a later Anglo-Latin specimen. In close reading of *Beowulf* for his examinations he observed remarkable thematic collaboration between visual symbolism and poetic structures; it was largely this collaboration, on a dimension of which he will speak here, that motivated the focus of his current work.

The Organiser and Her Helpers

Laura Massetti was trained in Classics and Music in Milan. She completed a Ph.D. in Historical and Comparative Linguistics at University of Cologne and held several fellowships between 2017 and 2023: Center for Hellenic Studies of Harvard University (2017, Washington DC), Marie-Curie Individual Fellowship (2018–2020, University of Copenhagen), Carlsberg Visiting Fellowship (2020–2023, University of Oxford). She is Researcher at University of Naples “L’Orientale”, where she teaches Greek Literature. She is the author of *Pindar’s Pythian Twelve: A Linguistic Commentary and a Comparative Study* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2024).

Maddalena Costanzo is a graduate student enrolled in the Master’s Degree program in Mediterranean Archaeology at the University of Naples “L’Orientale”. She completed her Bachelor’s Degree in 2024 with a thesis in Classical Philology at the University of Naples “Federico II”. Her academic interests include the study of History, Linguistics, and Anthropology of the ancient world, with a particular focus on Comparative and Indo-European Studies. She is currently working on her Master’s thesis in Greek Literature, addressing the theme of transvestitism, with specific reference to the episode of Heracles at the court of the Lydian queen Omphale. Furthermore, she contributes to the project for the cataloging and classification of

Medieval, Late-Medieval, and humanistic manuscripts preserved at the Library of the Società Napoletana di Storia Patria.

Aanandavardhan Nyaupane has studied Ancient Greek and Latin at the Accademia Vivarium Novum since 2019, where he has also taught in online and summer courses. He received his B.A. in Classics from the University of Salesiana in 2022 and is currently pursuing an M.A. at the University of Naples “L’Orientale,” with a thesis on Demetrios Galanos’ unpublished Ancient Greek translations of Sanskrit literature. His research interests include cross-cultural receptions of the Global Classics, New-Ancient Greek Literature, and Platonic and Aristotelian Philosophy.

Abstracts

*Linearity and Circularity:
Composition and Movement*

Verbal Fluency and Visual Imagery:

Visual and Performative Dimensions of *Technopaignia* in Old Indic and Iranian Poems

Velizar Sadovski

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The talk will treat a series of visual and dynamic-performative elements in Indic (and Iranian) literature, with a special accent on Classical Sanskrit and late Vedic poetry. In Ancient Greek lyrics, we are confronted with various types of *technopaignia* ('games of skill'), poems whose varying verse-lengths produce "a pattern mimicking the shape of an object" [...]. In the last two decades, the interest in these poetical forms has been revived mainly thanks to Christine Luz' important monograph under the title "Technopaignia. Formspiele in der griechischen Dichtung", Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2010. Classical Sanskrit poetry knows similar forms of verbal artistry in combination with strong visual elements: Thus, a sub-group of the various figures eclectically called *citra-* by Old Indic *alaṃkāra-* theoreticians (on the different dimensions of the concept) includes various "patterned verses and stanzas like the 'hop-scotch' (*anulomaviloma-*), 'zig-zag' (*gomūtrika-*), 'criss-cross' (*muraja-*), 'double palindrome' (*sarvatobhadra-*), 'elephant-walk' (*gajapada-*), 'knight-at-chess' (*turagapada-*), and the geometric 'carttrack' (*rathapada-*). Several forms of these *carmina figurata* have been studied by the Austro-Swedish Indologist Sigfried Lienhard, sadly with little to no resonance in the works of more recent scholars. We shall try to trace some elements of such *technopaignia* back to specific ancient Indic ritual traditions. Furthermore, an excursus will treat mechanisms of compositional concatenation of poetic texts from the Veda up to Classical Sanskrit poetry, starting with a group of Rigvedic Kaṇva hymns, and discussing compositional features of stanzaic structures in Old Indic in comparative and contrastive perspectives.

New Approaches to Iconicity in the Ancient Greek Technopaegnia

Brian McPhee

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This paper analyzes two exemplary “technopaegnia” (shape poems), proposing new hermeneutic strategies that take fuller advantage of the expressive potential of this distinctive poetic form. The Greek technopaegnia constitute an epigrammatic “microgenre” in which the meter and sometimes even the text’s alignment are manipulated such that the lines form the silhouette of an image. Though long dismissed as trivial curiosities, recent scholarship has explored these poems’ sophisticated self-reflections on their own “intermedial” status as both text and image. Taking this artistic self-consciousness as given, I investigate the effect of intermediality on the unique way that technopaegnia signify, drawing on new insights from cognitive research into contemporary “visual poetry” that emphasizes the dynamic *interplay* of the text’s semantic and iconic functions.

My paradigmatic readings begin with Simias’ *Wings* (AP 15.24). This poem, I argue, illustrates a foundational paradox in shape poetry: iconicity is a function of both textual presence and absence. Semantically, *Wings* offers a riddling description of Eros; iconically, it represents the god by tracing a stylized pair of synecdochic “wings.” The poem proclaims Eros the offspring of Chaos, a mythological variant that Simias invests with metapoetic significance by making Χάους δέ (7) one of the poem’s shortest lines, where the “gap” (cf. χάος) of blank space dividing the “wings” is deepest, thereby suggesting an intermedial equation: as Eros is born of Chaos, so the iconic *Wings* representing him emerge from the negative space surrounding the text.

I then analyze Simias’ *Axe* (AP 15.22), which describes, and forms in outline, the double-headed axe used to build the Trojan Horse. As transmitted, this twelve-line poem is “antithetic,” meaning its lines must be read chiastically (1, 12, 2, 11, etc.). This format has been questioned by scholars who would rearrange the lines into standard consecutive order, with the resultant triangular shape interpreted as a single-bladed axe. This intervention is contradicted, however, by the poet’s term πέλεκυς (2), which designates a double-bitted axe. Moreover, I argue that the antithetic layout is itself poetically significant, especially insofar as the back-and-forth motion of the reader’s eyes in processing the text correlates with the poem’s verbal imagery and its overarching περιπέτεια-theme. Beyond enriching our reading of these technopaegnia,

these case studies suggest new avenues of exploration for the study of iconicity in ancient poetry.

Linear Movement and Circular Composition: on the Stylistics and Onomastics of Curse Tablets

Florian Sommer

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Ancient curse tablets offer an immense wealth of onomastic material. Minor exceptions apart, anthroponyms are a necessary ingredient of these texts. Without the victim's name, the curse cannot find its target and essentially loses its *raison d'être*. All other textual components are optional. Theonyms, while belonging to these facultative features, are another characteristic of the language of curse tablets. Victims are not addressed, but gods are both named and invoked to guarantee the efficacy of the curse. The linguistic strategies of curse tablets are tightly bound to their magical objectives, which results in a specific pragmatically conditioned usage of names as well.

However, it has been shown that some magicians drew on traditional *Sakralsprache* when composing their curses and deliberately repurposed mythological material from literary sources. As names – theonyms in particular – are an integral part of poetic and ritual diction, the question arises as to how curse tablets make use of the stylistic potential of onomastic elements, given their pervasiveness in the genre.

An example of a construction that is obviously dependent on traditional poetic language is the combination of a theonym with an appositional relative clause in addressing a supernatural being: “Βᾱχᾱ[χῡχ ...], *qui es in Aegypto magnus demon*” (DT 250 = dfx 11.1.1/25, 1–2). However, DT 250 not only uses a hymnic opening but progresses along a structure of line-initial *Ephesia grammata* revamped as theonyms, adding profile to an enumeration of curses aimed at the victim. The effect is visually enhanced by alphabet-switching. In this case theonyms fulfil the function of internally structuring the text.

The text dfx 3.11/1 opens with a vocative *domine Neptune*, which is then repeated at the end of the text, thereby framing the curse in the manner of a ring composition.

The theonym thus serves to mark the boundaries of the utterance. Again, this usage is reminiscent of similar strategies in the register of hymns and prayers. In both cases the utilisation of theonyms transcends the level of referential pragmatics and becomes a feature of style and poetics.

The paper investigates how curse tablets use theonyms and other onomastic elements as text structuring stylistic devices and how poetics and pragmatics interact in this domain. I focus on the two types illustrated by the examples above: progressing additive structures and ring composition.

Conceptual Metaphors in the Verbal and Visual Representations of Achaemenian Country Lists

Kianoosh Rezaia

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In order to transform a cognitive map, as a two- or three-dimensional spatial constellation, into an one-dimensional sequence in a text, a cognitive process called linearization should be employed, which comprises of two cognitive decisions: determining the starting point and determining the order of components.

Several Achaemenian inscriptions include a list of “countries” that have been incorporated into the empire. Furthermore, multiple Achaemenid reliefs represent the empire’s countries through human figures as the representatives of the countries. While some depictions utilize a one-dimensional array of country representatives, others benefit from the two-dimensionality of the relief surface. The representations of the cognitive map of the empire on the two-dimensional surface of these reliefs include two sets of strategies. Firstly, there is the linearization strategy, and secondly, there are the criteria to transform the one-dimensional list into a two-dimensional order. Furthermore, artistic reliefs must be created within the constraints imposed by the spatial limitations of a relief, whilst adhering to aesthetic principles.

Following investigations of cognitive linguists on the frames of reference, it has been demonstrated that the Old Iranians did not utilize the geocentric absolute frame of reference for their spatial cognition, including linearization, but instead employed a heliocentric one, constituted by four referential points, the sunrise and sunset points on the summer and winter solstices. A number of studies have revealed several

criteria that have been employed in the Achaemenian reliefs to order the representatives of the Empire's countries. This paper will provide a concise review of the heliocentric linearization strategy utilized in the textual lists and visual reliefs to depict the Empire's countries.

Conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), initially proposed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson and refined and extended by numerous cognitive linguists, including Zoltán Kövecses and Gerard Steen, posits that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, and metaphor is pervasive not only in language but also in thought and action. Correspondingly, it can be assumed that humans employ conceptual metaphors to solve spatial problems, including linearization strategies and strategies to transform a list onto a two-dimensional surface. The present paper will apply conceptual metaphor theory to elucidate the spatial strategies employed in the representations of the country lists in Achaemenian art and Old Persian inscriptions. It will demonstrate that conceptual metaphors such as PRIOR IS MORE, PROXIMITY IS MORE, RIGHT IS MORE, and UP IS MORE underlie these cognitive spatial strategies.

Unifying Strategies in the Hymns of the Rig Veda: Ring Composition

Stephanie W. Jamison

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The Rig Veda, the oldest Sanskrit text and one of the oldest in any Indo-European language, consists of 1028 hymns (*sūktas*). However, almost since the fixation of the text in antiquity, these hymns have been decomposed into mere collections of verses (*rc*): the text is, after all, called the Ṛg Veda ("Veda of Verses"), not the *Sūkta Veda ("Veda of Hymns"). The hymn has seldom been treated as a compositional unit. However, shifting the focus from the verse to the hymn reveals the many techniques the poets used to create unified wholes, and such analysis enriches our understanding of all parts of the text and provides solutions even to linguistic puzzles that defy explanation when studied in isolation.

One of the most common of these strategies is ring composition. The poetic technique of ring composition – demarcating a unified section in a larger text or the whole text itself through verbal or thematic repetitions or echoes at both ends – is

widespread, and widely studied in archaic literatures, esp. archaic Indo-European. The term was coined by the Dutch Hellenist van Otterlo in the 1940s, and it has been intensively discussed esp. with regard to Greek literature (e.g., Homer, the tragedians, Pindar) and to a lesser extent elsewhere. But it has been only fitfully treated in the earliest Sanskrit text, the Rig Veda, although it is extremely common there.

Unlike ring composition in large, loosely structured texts like the epics, where ring composition generally involves exact or almost exact repetition of key words or phrases, ring composition in the much shorter and highly wrought hymns of the RV (and in other smaller scale texts like the Greek victory odes of Pindar) almost always eschews exact repetition for semantic, morphological, or syntactic variation on the original word or phrase. The poets display extraordinary ingenuity in pushing variation to its limits while still allowing the ring to be discerned.

There are two major types of RVic ring composition – one where the echoes are found only at the beginning and the end of the ring, with the material in between unstructured by the ring; the other, which I have discussed at length as the “omphalos” structure, involves a center mystery or message that is surrounded by concentric rings, in a chiasmic structure. There the focus is on the center, not the peripheries. Both types may have as their domain the whole hymn or some thematically demarcated section within it. Examples of both types will be categorized and discussed to the extent of the available time.

Ring-Composition in Lower Land Luwian

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The Cuneiform Luwian corpus contains prose and poetic texts. The latter occur in Luwian ritual incantations preserved as such for their ritual efficacy. Previous studies on Luwian incantations have identified poetic language such as chiasmus and poetic formulae. Ring-composition has been identified in Hittite translations of Luwian, but its implications for Anatolian poetics are underappreciated. This paper presents examples of ring composition from the Lower Land corpus, specifically CTH 404, CTH 409, CTH 757, and CTH 758-763, as in KUB 35.54 obv. ii 8'–16':

KUB 35.54 obv. ii 8'– 16'
 za-a-ú-i-ia-aš ta-lu-up-pí-[iš a-aš-ta]...
 [ln. 9-14]
 pa-a a-an-da pu-u-na za-a-aš [ta-lu-up-pí-iš]
 la-a-la-ad-du

Here is the *taluppi*-lump...
 So may this *taluppi*-lump take all (the impurity)!

Alliteration between /zāwi=(j)as taluppis/ in line 8 and /zās taluppis lāladdu/ in line 16, and the repetition of the *topos* – the *taluppi*-lump – frames the intervening discourse as a unit and ensures the incantation's purification.

This paper aims to unite the Lower Land incantations under a common oral tradition. Previous research focused on dialectal features and shared *topoi* as a means of assigning Luwian incantations to specific traditions. A comparative study of the Lower Land corpus focusing on stylistics can assess the unity of the corpus. I argue that these incantations achieve ring-composition at a phrasal (/prī patzdu...prī patzdu/), word (/taluppis...taluppis/), and phonological level (/zāwi=(j)as...zās/), showing a fully developed use of the device in Lower Land oral tradition, as below:

KUB 35.54 rev. iii 9'– 11'
 a-ta-at-ta pa-^rri¹ pát-za-du MÁŠ.GAL-iš
 ma-a-u-wa-a-ti pa-[a-a]r-ta-a-ti ma-an-na-ku-na-ti
 SI-na-ti a-ta-a[t-t]a pa-ri pát-za-du

May the billy-goat push it (the impurity) away!
 With (its) four legs, with (its) snout,
 with (its) horns, may it push it away!

Melchert notes the repetition above, but in light of other instances of 'repetition' in the corpus, as in KUB 35.54 obv. ii 8'– 16', /prī patzdu/ is another example of ring composition. An analysis of ring-composition in the Lower Land incantations bolsters previous claims of a common oral tradition, while future study may serve as a starting point for a comparative study of Anatolian and Nuclear-Indo-European poetics, with further implications for ring-composition in PIE.

*Figurative Speech and Poetic Genres:
Battles and Competitions*

The Composition of Battle Scenes in Homer's *Iliad* and the Sanskrit Epics

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My paper is a comparative study on the compositional aspects of battle scenes in Homer's *Iliad* and the Sanskrit epics. The *Iliad*, on one side, and the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*, on the other, are widely believed to stem from a common Indo-European epic tradition: the high number of shared features in the poems, from phraseological parallels to motifs and narrative structures, has even led several scholars to posit a common Graeco-Indo-Iranic proto-epic from which our extant poems derive. Furthermore, both the Indic and the Ancient Greek epic traditions are generally recognised as having been shaped by oral composition-in-performance to a significant degree. The chief aim of this paper is to investigate the mechanics of composition-in-performance and shed light on the process of versification, whereby an oral singer could produce sophisticated lines before an audience under the constant threat of metrical breakdown.

This will be done from a comparative perspective, considering evidence from both the Indic and Greek traditions, and with a focus on one specific poetic context, i.e. warfare. Both the *Iliad* and the Sanskrit epics feature battle scenes in abundance. This is significant: battle scenes, dense as they are with formulaic material and repeated combat patterns, are perhaps the context where the poet's oral artistry is most transparent. In the paper, I will conclude that it is indeed possible to reconstruct at least some of the compositional techniques which an oral singer may have employed to produce sequences of warfare.

After a brief introduction, we will examine the structure of various battle scenes in the poems under consideration, with some remarks on the alternation between general overviews and detailed depictions of close encounters. The discussion and reconstruction of techniques for composition-in-performance will constitute the bulk of the paper. As I will demonstrate, the core principles of these techniques are common to both the Homeric poems and the Sanskrit epics and involve three key features: a special use of demonstrative pronouns, the placement of finite verbs within the verse, and the employment of participial and absolute constructions.

Words that Wound: Some Reflections on *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* 3.8.2

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In *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* 3.8.2, Yājñavalkya, after having correctly answered several philosophical inquiries posed by various brahmins, is once again questioned by the female sage Gārgī Vācaknavī:

*sā hovāca ahaṃ vai tvā yājñavalkya yathā kāśyo vā vaideho vograputra
ujjyaṃ dhanur adhiyaṃ kṛtvā dvau bāṇavantau sapatnātivyādhinau haste
kṛtvopottīṣṭhed evaṃ evāhaṃ tvā dvābhyāṃ praśnābhyāṃ upodasthām |
tau me brūhīti | prccha gārgīti ||*

Then she [Gārgī] said: “Oh Yājñavalkya, just like the son of a warrior of the Kāśi or Videha lineage rises to challenge (a rival), after having drawn the bowstring, once released, and holding in his hand two arrows that pierce rivals, in the very same way I rise to challenge you with two questions. Give me the answers to them;” “Ask, Gārgī!”

As can be seen, Gārgī, compares her two questions (*dvābhyāṃ praśnābhyāṃ*) to two arrows (*dvau bāṇavantau*), with which she is ready to wound Yājñavalkya. The wisdom contest is seen as a battle, where the loser may even face death.

By looking at the Greek poetic tradition, there are occurrences in which the spoken words are described as arrows. Here, this association is primarily due to the fact that, just as arrows may or may not strike their target, words either do or do not hit the mark. Alongside these cases, there are also examples in which words are described as arrows in order to emphasize the speaker’s desire to verbally wound the interlocutor. The following texts are of particular interest:

καὶ γλῶσσα τοξεύσασα μὴ τὰ καίρια,
ἀλγεῖν ἄ θυμοῦ κάρτα κινήτρια
γένοιτο μύθου μῦθος ἄν θελκτήριος

And if the tongue has shot inappropriate arrows,
that surely provoke pains of the soul,
one speech may be the healer of another

(Aesch. *Supp.* 446–448)

τοιαῦτά σου, λυπεῖς γάρ, ὥστε τοξότης
ἀφῆκα θυμῷ καρδίας τοξεύματα
βέβαια, τῶν σὺ θάλπος οὐχ ὑπεκδραμεῖ
Such arrows at the heart, since you are paining (me), I, like an archer,
have shot with anger against you,
unerring (ones), whose heat you will not outrun
(Soph. *Ant.* 1084–1086)

As in *Brhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* 3.8.2, these examples show the dangerous nature of words, an aspect that is confirmed in other Indo-European traditions.

This study aims to highlight how the conceptualization of [WORDS] as [ARROWS] is of great importance for accounting for a fundamental feature of Indo-European culture, namely contests between poets.

The Enthronement Scenes of Indo-European *Männerbünde* Deities

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Recent studies that have revisited the reconstructed institution of *Männerbünde* (literally “men’s groups”) for Indo-European peoples, have offered new insight into previously problematic deities and institutions among cultures descendant from the Proto-Indo-Europeans (in this case, Greek Apollo, the Indian *vrātya* and the Germanic Odin). These institutions can be defined as groups of young men who participate in initiation rituals to separate themselves from normative society and devote themselves to plundering, most often characterized by altered states of consciousness and their use of animal avatars.

This proposal will develop the possibility, not previously observed in academic literature, of a common Indo-European origin of poetic motifs describing the throne of the deities of the *Männerbünde* as iconic representations of their dominion over the poetic canon in different individual evolutions, according to the development of each tradition.

At the beginning of the two sections of the Homeric Hymn, Apollo arrives at Olympus. In the first proem (*Hom. Hymn Ap.* 1-13), Apollo is enthroned by his father after causing serious distress to the other gods. It would even seem that Apollo's violence is only controlled after he receives a special treatment/cult. After the second proem, Apollo leads a dance of the other gods, in a catalogue representing in an iconic and metapoetic manner his dominion over poetry and many of his own divine attributes (*Hom. Hymn Ap.* 182-206).

In contrast, the enthronement scene in the Vrātyakānda (AVŚ 15.3) includes an even more iconic description of the powers of the Ekavrātya. When describing his throne, the elements that constitute it form a catalogue representing the totality of the previous Brahmanic poetic canon: the *Sāmaveda*, the *Ṛgveda* and the *Yajurveda*.

In Norse mythology, the ravens Huginn and Munnin, who accompany Odin on his throne, from where he exercises his control over the world, also symbolise his cognitive abilities: we also know that Odin is the archetypal master of inspired poets (cf. Latin *vates*, Old Irish *fáith*).

This literary evidence will be compared with available iconographical sources (Greek vase paintings, Norse reliefs...) and ritual practice as all representing, through iconicity and symbolic means, ideals that developed in each culture from a common, *Männerbünde* ideology.

Monsters

FEAR IS A PREDATOR: Can a Metaphor Shape the Style of a Poem?

Some Remarks on the Ecphrasis in the *Shield of Heracles* Compared to the Shield of Achilles

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The study of metaphors, not only as stylistic ornaments, but also as evidence of cognitive processes, has become a major tool in the study of historical linguistics. In my talk, I aim at uncovering the interplay between metaphors, similes and stylistic choices within the Greek epic poem *Shield of Heracles*. In the latter, the description of the shield is heavily dependent on the ecphrasis of the shield of Achilles in *Il.* 18.478-608, although their stylistic choices appear to be quite different, since the shield of Achilles deals mostly with quiet scenarios. The description of the shield of Heracles appears, instead, to be filled with terrifying figures and scenes, most of them involving wild animals or entities with animal-like features.

The ecphrasis begins with the god Φόβος, who appears to have monstrous and feral characteristics as do other frightful entities like Ἑρις or Κήρ. Centaurs and Gorgons, whose hybrid features are well known, are also mentioned together with dangerous animals like boars and snakes. Such a combination suggests that an interpretation of the shield as a “nightmarish vision” is rooted in the presence of wild animals and animal-like figures, who induce fear in the listeners. This idea can be supported by the existence of a metaphor which may be represented as FEAR IS A PREDATOR (small caps are conventionally used to mark semantic concepts). Words for FEAR can appear as the subjects of verbs like λαμβάνω ‘to seize’, or αἰρέω ‘to take’, expressing a conceptualization of FEAR as an entity that attacks and holds someone, given that the same verbs are used in description of animal hunts.

Neither before, nor after the ecphrasis, is the mention of animals as frequent as in the description of the shield. I propose this abundance is rooted in the metaphor presented above, since the style changes only after the first mention of Φόβος. The existence of such a metaphor could influence the stylistic choices of this part of the poem, which seems to be encircled between the mention of Φόβος and the description of the fear of a school of fish caused by swans (*Sh.* 317), thus creating a sort of Ringkomposition, in which FEAR delimits a space where the poet is free to come up with terrifying and frightful elements to describe Heracles’ shield.

Hercules Lustrator Orbis

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Among other functions, the Roman poetic tradition presents Hercules as a god of ritual purification. This is seen in the obscure Apuleian epithet *Hercules lustrator orbis* (*Apol.* 22). While similar descriptions of Hercules exist in the Greek tradition (see Parker 1996:211), I argue that mythological archaisms in certain Roman accounts of Hercules point to the existence of a separate Italic mythological tradition.

The story of Hercules and Cacus is related by three Roman poets (Vergil (*Aen.* 8.175–305), Ovid (*Fast.* 1.543–86), and Propertius (4.9)) and one prose historian (Livy (1.7)). These passages collocate *Herculēs* with a word for purification (*lūstrāre*, *piāre*, *sancīre*). Propertius (4.9.74) makes a cryptic allusion to how the people of Cures call Hercules *Sancus*. This calls to mind the Iguvine Tables written in the Umbrian language, which make frequent reference to a deity *Sancus*. *Sancus* is associated with ritual purification (TI VI A 8) and the averting of unfavorable circumstances under bad auspices (TI II A 4).

While one reading of *lūstrāre* is ‘to purify,’ the usage of the term with reference to Hercules expresses a variety of other meanings including ‘to survey’ (*Aen.* 8.229) and ‘to go around’ (8.231). Comparison of the Roman Hercules and Umbrian *Sancus* allows one to determine that the original meaning of *lūstrāre* in reference to the former refers to his function as a god of ritual purification. Therefore, one is capable of tracing the varied meanings of *lūstrāre* to a specific form of ritual purification shared by various Italic-speaking communities.

maðmæhta wlonc/ansyn ywde: Ring-Composition in *Beowulf* and the Shape of the Dragon in Insular Visual Art

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In 1967 John Leyerle argued for parallelism between the ‘interlace structure’ of the lacertine zoomorphs ubiquitous in Insular visual art and the ‘structural interlace’ of

episodic narrative braids in *Beowulf*. This paper will advance that another depictive mode of the serpent, notable in Insular visual media (from early Irish manuscripts as the seventh-century Book of Durrow to Scandinavian carvings of some centuries later), the circular and sometimes ouroboric, exerted analogous influence upon the arrangement of discrete episodes in the Old English poem: the *Beowulf*-poet evoked pre-existing thematic associations that had become attached to the recursive *wyrm*, when apposite, through chiasmic (recursive) poetic structures or 'ring-composition'. These concerns – corruptive provocation of greed occasioned by contact with treasure; the cyclical, self-renewing nature of violence and feud – are first identified as connoted by the treasure-ring (*beag*, *hring*) in *Beowulf* and Norse poetic analogues. As the metonym of treasure (*sinc*), the giving of which by a *dryhten* to his *dugup* was, in pre-Christian Germanic society as portrayed in *Beowulf*, 'the primary agent of social cohesion within the comitatus', the *beag* came to symbolise the perpetuating forces of that society. Its concomitant associations with material wealth and its acquisition through warfare encouraged its transfiguration, under the lens of Christian ethics, into a symbol of encroaching avarice (Matt. 6:19-21) and the cyclicity of bloody *fæhðu* (Matt. 26:52). The presence of these thematic strands in individual poetic treatments of treasure is next exemplified in *Beowulf* by the poet's handling of the *Brosinga mene*, *healsbeaga mæst*, and in Norse by discussion of Andvari's hoard and Andvaranaut in GKS 2365 4^{to}. It is then argued that visual concordance between *beag* and ouroboros in particular, alongside incidental suitability of the second for symbolism of cyclic violence, encouraged the assumption of the connotations of the former by the latter, an equivalence distilled in the metamorphosis of Fáfnir; use of a ring-like structure to evoke the same connotations could then follow in *Beowulf*, and is explored in two episodes of ring-composition previously identified by Niles and Tonsfeldt. A vindication of argument for visual symbolism in the disposition of Old English poetic structure is offered, finally, through analysis of the depiction and significance of the circular *rota* in a striking instance, from Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 326, of the Anglo-Latin *carmen figuratum*.

*Figurative Speech and Poetic Genres:
Structure, Metaphors, and Movement*

Repetition, Parallelism and Creativity: An Inquiry into the Construction of Meaning in Ancient Mesopotamian Literature and Erudition

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Building on research conducted within the framework of the ERC-funded project REPAC (“Repetition, Parallelism and Creativity: An Inquiry into the Construction of Meaning in Ancient Mesopotamian Literature and Erudition”, University of Vienna, 2019-2025), this paper examines the interplay between variant repetition and analogical thinking in the compositional logics and textual architectonics of ancient Mesopotamian literary and scholarly texts. REPAC has demonstrated that variant repetition in these texts operates across graphic, grammatical, syntactical, phonetic, and semantic levels, both locally and across distant textual units, functioning as a key compositional and structuring device, as well as a decisive vector for meaning-making. This paper presents REPAC’s approach to the study of Babylonian scholarship and offers a set of case studies that illustrate the project’s key findings. It demonstrates how the interplay of repetition and variation at both micro- and macro-levels operates as a system of ‘signposts’, designed to impose order on the complex web of associations woven throughout the texts and to create pathways for analogical reasoning. According to REPAC’s underlying research hypothesis, a culture-specific mode of analogical thinking, rooted in an analogistic ontology (‘analogism’), underlies the functions of textual repetition in Babylonian erudite compositions. The study of these features reveals the texts’ ‘deep structure’, which is shaped by recursive, symmetrical, and cross-referential patterns, such as macroscopic mirroring and circular structures, that guide the reader through increasingly complex layers of inference.

Synaesthetic Poetics: Ming-Qing Women's Poetry and the Sensory Recoding of the Gui Ge

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This study examines *synaesthesia* as a core stylistic strategy in Ming-Qing women's poetry (16th – 19th c.), arguing that multisensory metaphors served as metapoetic tools to negotiate gendered constraints. The Ming-Qing era marked the height of Confucian patriarchal control, materially symbolised by the practice of foot-binding, which severely restricted women's mobility to the inner chambers, or *Gui Ge* (闺阁). This confinement prompted a redefinition of the ideal "talented woman" (才女 *cainü*), shifting emphasis from performance arts such as music and dance to literary and visual arts—especially poetry—that could be practiced within domestic interiors. According to archival research by Hu Wenkai, over 3,500 women published their collected works. These exceptionally talented women, through synaesthetic multisensory rhetoric in their poetic practice, transformed the physically constrained, ritual-bound space their corporeal bodies inhabited into an expansive, internal sensory cosmos.

The *Gui Ge* 闺阁 (boudoir/inner chamber), the inner chambers inhabited by women in ancient China, embodies a dual significance as both an architectural space and a gendered cultural concept. It epitomizes the Confucian patriarchal "abstract space" (Lefebvre, 1991) – disciplined into a closed, functionalised space (e.g., for weaving, childbirth, child-rearing). Yet, through synaesthetic imagery, women poets subverted this homogeneous and controlled space, creating instead a rich, multi-dimensional sensory world that transcended physical boundaries.

A stylistic analysis of key poets illustrates this strategy. (1) Jin Yi, in *Summer Night Scene*, merges tactile sensation ("cool") with visual imagery ("watery clouds"), transforming the mist's chill into a tangible spatial presence, evoking both chamber enclosure and spiritual solitude. (2) Wang Yuzhen, in *Bodhisattva Barbarian*, employs visual observation for olfactory decay ("watch its ash expire"), while emphasising the material vessel's transformation, drawing domestic objects into a synaesthetic realm. ("embracing the incense warmer's cold"). Through this layering of senses, mundane domestic objects become expressive of inner life. (3) Wu Qiongxiang's *Morning Toilette at the Window* blends the tactile "west wind" with the conceptual weight of "autumn,"

turning the window—a material barrier—into a conduit between inner emotion and outer world.

Thus, this paper contends that Ming-Qing women poets employed synaesthetic rhetoric as a vital strategy for negotiating gendered space of *Gui Ge*, rather than merely as ornamentation. By constructing multisensory experiences and creating the inner poetic space of artistic conception in their poetry, they negotiated gendered constraints within domestic confines and bounded space, and articulated female embodiment.

Anatomies of a Fall: A Comparative Case Study on Cadence and Class in Homer

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This article examines how Homeric poetry conceals ideological figurations beneath a heroic veneer, particularly in its portrayal of enslaved labor. Focusing on a brief scene in the *Odyssey* (18.394–8), where an anonymous enslaved wine-pourer falls along with his pitcher, it employs close reading to uncover overlooked ambiguities. Before turning to the Homeric passage, a comparative and metaphorological approach is developed, theorizing the pitcher both as a correlative of the wine-pourer and as an independent poetic subject.

Two typological comparanda ground this theorization. The first, Bai Juyi's Tang Dynasty poem *Pipa Xing* (琵琶行), describes a woman's virtuoso lute performance. In it, a falling pitcher metapoetically evokes semantic overflow, likening her music both to water bursting from a shattered vessel (domestic) and to the rattle of weapons (military). This conjunction of domestic and martial imagery, absent in earlier "broken pot" fertility-sexuality tropes (e.g., Aymone and Poseidon; the barren woman in the *Pañcatantra*), is crucial for my reading of the Homeric scene, alongside its metapoetic resonances.

The second comparandum is a well-known Sanskrit *subhāṣita* about a young woman dropping a golden pitcher. Thematically close to the Homeric episode, this poem's textual history—originating in the eleventh-century *Mahānāṭaka*, later reframed in the sixteenth-century *Bhojaprabandha* (where it is attributed to Kālidāsa)—illuminates practices of re-reading. These re-readings provide a vantage

point for my multivalent interpretation of the Homeric fall and introduce the question of aural iconicity central to both the Sanskrit and Greek examples.

The analysis then turns to the Homeric passage itself, recalling Thomas Hobbes' observations on the "facility" of Homeric style, the "contexture" of its semantics, and his carriage-driver analogy. Within the epic's broader diegesis, the description of the wine-pourer's fall employs heroically and militarily coded formulae, elevating and sublimating the figure's low social status. Yet the scene's aural and poetic texture also unsettles that erasure, allowing status ambiguity to surface.

In conclusion, multiple readings of the fall—both of the wine-pourer and the pitcher—emerge through formulaic patterning and traditional referentiality across the Homeric corpus, particularly in depictions of battle or maritime falls. These resonances demonstrate how onomatopoeia, aurality, and synaesthesia mediate the audience's perception of social hierarchies, rendering the ideological fabric of Homeric heroism alternately visible and opaque.

"Becoming God":

The Embodiment of Poetry in South Indian Bharatanāṭyam Theatre Tradition

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This paper concerns the Indic concept of *dr̥śyakāvya* 'dance drama', literally, 'poetry to see'. According to the definition of *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* (ca. 17th–18th c. CE), dance is poetry made by the careful geometric delineation of the performing space, hand gestures, storytelling and the *rūpakas* 'metaphors', through which the dancer is supposed to embody sentiments and "become God".

The present investigation is carried out through the lens of cognitive linguistics, primarily concerning metaphors and embodied cognition. It will be applied to the case study of the Classical Tamil poem *Ellām ariven* by Kavi Kunjara Bharati (1810–1896). The poem was set to South Indian Carnatic music on the *rāga* (scale) *kalyāṇi* and later given choreography. The version here analyzed is an *abhinaya* (expressive) piece with storytelling, performed by Lucrezia Maniscotti (2013) and taught to her by Indira Kadambi in Bharatanāṭyam style.

The main sentiment is the sarcasm of the mature heroine of the poem. She receives an unexpected visit of her lover, who tells stories and makes excuses for his disappearing, but she says “I know everything” (Tamil *ellām ariven*) about his other women and with sarcasm decides to quit the romance, with a journey in metaphors and mental images, from myth, literature and personal experience. I shall analyze the first two pādas, namely *pallavi* and *anupallavi* in Carnatic terms, because each pāda is sung thrice, then there are three metaphorizing processes in dance.

The investigation will focus on how poetry enters the body to express feelings through visual metaphors and enactment, i.e. through embodiment. The interplay between poetry and dance, text and visual performance, also concerns the cognitive item of iconicity, which consists of a culture-specific feature of communication, especially through gestures, the eyes and other pragmatic “tools” in poetry, hand and signed languages and the performing arts.

There will be presented the poetic techniques, including music, that allow the full expression of the sentiments of the verses, namely the embodiment of meaning and the conceptual metaphors for interpreting the texts, made by the performer. This artistic process lets the audience achieve the emotional state required, according to the most important aesthetic vision, as outlined in the *Nāṭya-śāstra*. The storytelling allows the dancer to “become God”, meaning that they can fulfill the aim of dance: to express the *śṛṅgāra* ‘love’ of/for God, thus ultimately their *bhakti* (‘devotion’). Thus, the dancer becomes the connection between the audience/devotee and the Divine.

Linearity and Circularity:
ἐπέων θέσις

Metapoetic Structures and Cognitive Frameworks: Pindar and Callimachus in Dialogue

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This paper investigates metapoetic discourse in ancient Greek poetry through a comparative analysis of Pindar and Callimachus, focusing on how poetic self-reflection operates not only within individual compositions but also across collections of poems. Rather than examining metapoetic language in isolation, the study explores its function within broader poetic architectures, engaging with cognitive literary theory—particularly the work of Terence Cave—to illuminate the interpretive dynamics at play.

The dialectic between the individual poem and the plurality of poems is already central in classical choral poetry. In Pindar's *epinicia*, for instance, metapoetic gestures often point beyond the boundaries of the single ode, inviting reflection on the poet's role, the variability of poetic occasion, and the cumulative resonance of the poetic corpus. However, this metapoetic layering does not culminate in a unified, authorial poetic book in the strict sense. Instead, it reflects a performative and situational logic, where the coherence of the corpus emerges retrospectively and interpretively.

By contrast, the Hellenistic period—particularly in the case of Callimachus—introduces the possibility of a deliberately constructed poetic book. While Callimachus remains the only poet of the period for whom we can speak of a true authorial collection (first and foremost the *Aetia*, but also the *Hymns* and the *Iambi*), his use of metapoetic language across these works suggests a new mode of poetic self-fashioning. Here, metapoetic discourse is not only intra-textual but inter-textual, shaping the reader's engagement with the collection as a coherent literary artifact.

This paper argues that the shift from performative plurality to authorial unity entails a transformation in the cognitive framing of poetry. Drawing on Cave's notion of "cognitive mapping," the study examines how metapoetic cues in Pindar and Callimachus activate different interpretive strategies: in Pindar, a dynamic negotiation of poetic occasion and tradition; in Callimachus, a reflective engagement with genre, reception, and literary history. Crucially, the paper resists reductive accounts that attribute this shift solely to the rise of written culture in Alexandria. Instead, it emphasizes the conceptual and aesthetic implications of poetic structure,

showing how both poets construct meaning through the interplay of individual and collective poetic voices.

By placing Pindar and Callimachus in dialogue, the paper offers a nuanced account of metapoetic architecture in Greek poetry and contributes to broader discussions on stylistics, poetic structure, and cognitive approaches to literature. It also proposes a framework for understanding how poetic collections—whether implicit or explicit—shape the reception and interpretation of ancient texts.

Lines, Circles, and Zigzags: Metrics and Aesthetics in Pindar

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The aim of this paper is to brainstorm about some fundamental aesthetic principles of Greek poetry deriving from metrical structure (The absence of music limits what we can say, but we can still say something). Aspects I'm interested in include: A. anticipation of rhythm, which may or may not align with thought; B. expectation of closure; C. expectation of repetition (similar to A), and D. a sense of development within a pattern (cf. West.1982:63-5). A, B and D. can be thought of as "line", C. is "circle". I'll try to make some speculative suggestions on these with a few examples from Pindar and Greek lyric.

Fashioning Immortality: Comparative Studies in Pindaric Ring-Compositions and Metapoetic Metaphors

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In this paper, I focus on Pindaric ring-compositions featuring the word τέκτων 'fashioner'. The term, which occurs five times in the epinicians, is employed

metaphorically in all its attestations, except Pyth. 5.36. The aim of the paper is twofold: to show that (i) all Pindaric ‘tectonic’ metaphors have an Indo-European background; (ii) their employment within circular structures (“rings”) is no coincidence. More specifically,

- (i) Most metaphorical instances of the term have parallels in Indo-Iranian and can be mapped by taking into account ‘complementary’ metaphors found in Old Indic and other Indo-European languages.
- (ii) Metapoetic **tetk*-metaphors occur within circular structures. In this regard, I will show that comparable circular *takṣ*-structures occur in rings within at least two hymns of the Rigveda.

Building on the comparative evidence, I will claim that a type of ring-composition involving the root **tetk*- within at least one metapoetic metaphor, call it **tetk*-composition, was an inherited (Indo-European) feature that Greek and Old Indic poems have in common. The occurrence of τέκτων/*takṣ* at the beginning and/or at the end of poems is a concrete manifestation of poets’ ‘tectonic’ skill, i.e., the capacity of fashioning special objects, able to move and talk by arranging poetic words in a certain way within his poems.