

Poetry – truth and lie

A study of metaphors in two of Pindar’s odes

(*Olympian* 1 and *Isthmian* 1)

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MA in Language and Linguistics, Ancient Greek

SPVR01 Language and Linguistics: Degree Project – Master's (Two Years) Thesis, 30 credits

June 2025

Abstract

The study aims to investigate conceptual metaphors in two of Pindar’s odes (*Olympian* 1 and *Isthmian* 1). The first step was to identify metaphorical words in the two odes and to study their distribution in the text. Based on metaphorical words in the text, conceptual metaphors were formulated. This procedure increases the likelihood of formulating conceptual metaphors intended by the author and not only created by the reader as a characterization of the text. Those conceptual metaphors representing principal concepts and ideas in the odes were identified. These findings were discussed in relation to previous scholars’ opinions on Pindar’s poetry.

However, metaphorical words are not the only source of conceptual metaphors; for instance, the conceptual metaphor EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT in *Olympian* 1 is constructed with metaphorical words, non-metaphorical words and expressions, a comparison between two mental images/a simile, an implicit metaphor, a contrasting metaphor, and an expression that can be interpreted both literally and figuratively. Metaphorical words are unevenly distributed in the two odes. It appears to be a correlation between the importance of a metaphorical message and the number of aggregated metaphorical words.

Pindar wrote poetry on commission to praise the winners of the Panhellenic games, so it is not surprising that excellence is the principal idea of the two odes. The two conceptual metaphors EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT and VALUE IS UP are used to characterize the winning athlete but also his family and ancestors. However, the poet is present in the text as well, and several conceptual metaphors about poetry and the poet can be formulated e.g. POETRY IS A PHYSICAL FORCE, POETRY IS A FABRIC, THE POET IS AN ATHLETE/WARRIOR, and THE POET IS A CRAFTSMAN. It has been claimed that the primary intent of every passage in Pindar is to praise the winning athlete, but one conclusion of the study is that, although praise of the athlete is the frame of the poem, within the frame, other significant intentions can be identified, such as tributes to poetry and the poet.

Pindar has been regarded as a difficult poet because of his unexpected collocations, sudden transitions, and perceived inconsistencies, evoking different attempts to establish unity and logic of the poems. One example is Pindar’s revision of the Pelops myth in *Olympian* 1, where, according to the study, truth and lie are ambiguous concepts and Pindar’s discussion has rhetorical qualities. Pindar often pictures himself as a craftsman, who can fix and fit together the separate elements of his poetry and negotiate different external interests. However, he often leaves visible sutures between the elements in his poetry, at times revealing a tension between poetic vision and the project of praise.

Key words: conceptual metaphors, Greek archaic poetry, metaphor identification procedure, Pindar

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1. Introduction

1.1 Acknowledgements and abbreviations

I thank my teachers in Greek and Latin at Lund University, who have equipped me as a tourist in ancient Greece and Rome. I am especially grateful to my supervisor Professor Christian HØgel for his generous expert guidance. I also wish to thank Professor Jordan Zlatev for his suggestion to study conceptual metaphors based on metaphorical words in the text. Finally, I am grateful to my wife Ann-Kristin for interesting discussions about metaphors.

Abbreviations:

CMT Conceptual Metaphor Theory

LSJ Lidell, H.G. & Scott, R. (1940) *Greek-English Lexicon*. Ninth edition revised and augmented by H.S. Jones & R. McKenzie. Revised Supplement (1996). by P.G.W. Glare & A.A. Thompson.

MIP Metaphor Identification Procedure

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1.3 Pindar’s life and work and reception of Pindar’s poetry

Pindar was born around 518 B. C. near Thebes, where he seems to have spent most of his life. However, he also attended the courts of dictators like Hieron of Syracuse and Theron of Acragas in Sicily. Only a small part of his poetical oeuvre is extant, but the epinicia, poetry to praise the winners of the Panhellenic games is nevertheless a large sample (45 odes) of Greek choral poetry. That work has given Pindar the status of being the master of fifth-century choral poetry.

The Panhellenic games included the Olympic, Pythian (held in Delfi), Nemean, and Isthmian games. These games were held every second or fourth year. Among the events of the games were chariot racing, various foot races, wrestling, boxing, and pankration (a fight where both the techniques of boxing and wrestling were used and with rules that permitted rather severe injuries of a combatant), and pentathlon (which included wrestling, running, long jump, javelin, and discus throw) (Miller, 2006).

Pindar demonstrates little interest in the athletic games themselves, with few comments on technique and course of events. The main target of his odes is rather the victor, his family and ancestors, and the relations between the winner and the poet (Segal, 1985, p. 227). However, to this list should be added frequent self-referential comments and metaphors in the odes that turn the spotlight on the poet himself.

The aim of the following section is to give some examples of Pindaric studies during the last 200 years, focusing on different views on the characteristic features of Pindar’s odes. I have chosen a few prominent representatives of the main views on Pindar’s poetry. Throughout history, Pindar has been regarded as a difficult poet. “Difficult because of his bold collocations, abrupt transitions, loftiness of thought and expression.” (Segal, 1985, p. 227). To many readers, Pindar’s odes appear to be incoherent, and that impression has given rise to different interpretations and judgments. Some viewed Pindar’s poetry as a product of spontaneous, inspirational elation rather than the work of a skillful, conscious craftsman. Others, like Wilamowitz- Moellenddorff (1922), tended not to appreciate the literary value of the poems and treated them primarily as an important historical document. The perceived incoherence of the odes also evoked different attempts to find a unity of the poems: “of those who believe that the ode has a unity there are essentially two camps: the one side finds unity in content, a unifying thought or idea (*Grundgedanke*) or a single pervasive image; the other finds it in external criteria.” (Segal, 1985, p. 227).

Bundy (1986) published an influential analysis of the eleventh *Olympian ode* and the first *Isthmian ode*. Against the alleged incoherences and irrelevances of Pindar’s odes, Bundy launches his “master principle”: “there is no passage in Pindar and Bakkulides that is not in its primary intent encomiastic – that is, designed to enhance the glory of a particular patron” (Bundy, 1986 p. 3). He also suggests another principle after having discussed two examples from Pindar and Bakkulides: in both, he finds evidence of conventions that he regarded as common to encomiastic poets and not expressions of an individual literary style. According to Bundy, these conventions served as a protection for the collective of poets.

Bundy’s profound analysis of poetic conventions in archaic lyrics has been acknowledged by most scholars, but the reception of his master principle is more varied. By definition, the intent of an epinicion is to praise a winner of the games, but is really the primary intent in every passage encomiastic? The risk of Bundy’s master principle is reductionism, not recognizing that the text opens windows with other views.

Bundy’s analysis of Pindar’s first *Isthmian* is rejected by Kurke (1988): Instead of a typical epinician poem, he finds in the *Isthmian* 1 a play of genres. Pindar mentions pentathlon in the poem, and Kurke identifies five genres in the ode: paen, *kallinikos* song, Castoreion, didactic poetry, and homecoming invocation. He views that collection as Pindar’s poetic pentathlon, made with the poet’s intention to show that his ode is an achievement comparable to that of a victor in athletic games. Thus, according to Kurke, the primary intent of the poem is not to praise a winner in an athletic game but rather to open a metapoetic perspective. Kurke’s interpretation is supported by frequent metapoetic statements in Pindar’s ode, but as usual, the poet’s primary intent is difficult to establish.

Maslov (2015) also objects to Bundy’s view that there is no passage in Pindar and Bakkulides that is not in its primary intent encomiastic, and he introduces a historical perspective of the epinicion focusing on the emergence of individual authors. He finds that epinicion is a genre that combines elements from old communal song and new individual art. To dissect these elements, he suggests that the Pindaric corpus should be stratified with respect to different literary and social forms in the poems. He recognizes three general classes in the corpus of Pindar, based on (1) the type of the addressee and (2) the use of particular motifs in the poem. The first class includes poems addressed to tyrants, aristocratic families, and a hereditary king. Maslov refers to this class of epinicia as dynast odes, as they all are addressed to individuals with high political power. The second group includes poems for aristocratic victors that are more reserved in their address. The third group consists of epinicia, in which the author displays a more common, civic attitude (Maslov, 2015, pp. 107-113).

In 2009, Patten published *Pindar’s Metaphors: A study in Rhetoric and Meaning* in which he aims to perform a literary-critical deconstruction of Pindar’s odes and Pindaric studies according to poststructuralist theory. The main object of his analysis is a tradition of seeking a unified meaning in Pindar’s odes. There have been several prominent representatives of this movement during the last two centuries. Patten finds this type of analysis applied to Pindar’s odes for the first time in the final volume of *Pindari opera*, an edition with Latin translation and commentary published in 1821 by August Boeckh, professor of classics at the University of Berlin and his colleague in Göttingen, Ludolph Dissen. Patten explains where Boeckh finds the unity and the meaning of the odes: in the poet’s understanding of the present historical situation (Patten, 2009, p. 75). On the other hand, Patten observes that Dissen finds unity in *ratio*:

It is therefore only consistent when the philologist goes on to tell us that an understanding of Pindaric art can only be achieved by identifying the highest thought (*summa sententia*) or *Grundgedanke* which binds the individual parts of the text together and makes them into a single work of art” (Patten, 2009, p. 94).

Patten also identifies Bundy as proponent of that hermeneutic tradition in Pindaric studies. As mentioned previously, Bundy finds a unified meaning of the odes in the praise of the victor. The many parts of the poems that do not directly express the praise are according to Bundy often established conventions of the encomiastic genre (Bundy, 1986, p. 62). Bundy names these passages in the text “rhetorical” and points out that they may conceal the text’s intentions: “The enkomiast’s rhetorical poses may take forms that speak to the unschooled in the conventions with something less than the precision intended” (Bundy, 1986, p. 10). Patten concludes that, according to Bundy, these various statements must be decoded to reveal “the already determined, generic and uniform intention of praise.” (Patten, 2009, p. 62). He points to a tension in Pindar’s odes between rhetoric and meaning:

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The rhetoricity of all such passages consists in the discrepancy between their notation and their intention, between what they say and what they *mean* to say. The poses of the poet, the multiplicity of his masks and gestures, reveal his true intentions and disguise them at the same time (Patten, 2009, p. 67).

Patten’s criticism of the ideas of unity and coherence in Pindar’s poetry has been inspirational for my essay.

1.4 Aim of the study and research questions

Aim of the study:

The study aims to investigate conceptual metaphors in two of Pindar’s odes, *Olympian* 1 and *Isthmian* 1.

Research questions:

1. What metaphoric words can be found in *Olympian* 1 and *Isthmian* 1 by Pindar? How are these words distributed in the text?
2. Is it possible to generalize some of these metaphorical words in the form of conceptual metaphors?
3. Which conceptual metaphors represent principal concepts and ideas in the odes, and how do these metaphors relate to previous scholars’ opinion on Pindar’s poetry?

2.Theoretical background

The most influential work on conceptual metaphors was published in 1980 by Lakoff and Johnson in the book *Metaphors we live by,* in which they argue that metaphors are more than rhetorical figures; they are a part of ordinary thought as well and serve as means to construct abstract, sometimes complex concepts. A definition of conceptual metaphor given later by Johnson is that of “a cross-domain mapping of structure from a source domain to a target domain, where the two domains are regarded as different in kind” (Johnson, 2010, p. 407). Their first example of conceptual metaphor in *Metaphors we live by,* and since then widely cited, is ARGUMENT IS WAR[[1]](#footnote-1). The authors find evidence of that conceptual metaphor in the following list of everyday verbal expressions:

Your claims are *indefensible.*

He *attacked every weak point* in my argument.

His criticisms were *right on target.*

I *demolished* his argument.

I’ve never *won* an argument with him.

You disagree? Okay, *shoot*!

If you use that *strategy*, he’ll *wipe you out.*

He *shot down* all of my arguments (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980 p. 4).

Gibbs (2017, p. 4) comments on these verbal expressions and the conceptual metaphor:

Each of these statements gives concrete realization to different aspects of the metaphoric concept in which we conceive of arguments as wars. The ARGUMENTS ARE WARS conceptual metaphor has as its primary function the cognitive role of understanding one concept (arguments) in term of a different, often familiar, concept (wars).

Lakoff and Johnson emphasize that the metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR is not just a linguistic expression but rather a metaphor we live by in our culture; it structures the way we are arguing: “Though there is no physical battle, there is a verbal battle, and the structure of an argument - attack, defense counterattack, etc.- reflects this.” This way of thinking is part of our culture, but the authors ask us to:

imagine a culture where an argument is viewed as a dance, the participants are seen as performers, and the goal is to perform in a balanced and aesthetically pleasing way. In such a culture, people would view arguments differently, carry them out differently, and talk about them differently (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 4-5).

The authors point out that the possibility to understand one aspect of a concept in terms of another will by necessity hide other aspects of the concept. If we define argument as a battle, we will not perceive the cooperative side of arguments (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 10).

According to the concept metaphor theory (CMT), bodily experiences are the origin of many metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 14-15). Their first examples of metaphors grounded in physical experiences are spatial orientation metaphors like SAD IS DOWN; HAPPY IS UP and their physical basis are explained:” Dropping posture typically goes along with sadness and depression, erect posture with a positive emotional state”. Grady (1997) suggests that primary metaphors are based on sensory-motor experience from an early age. For example, the conceptual metaphor AFFECTION IS WARMTH can be explained by the early experience of warmth through physical contact. Many of these primary metaphors are widespread in different cultures (Kövecses, 2008).

The analysis in *Metaphors we live by* is focused on metaphors in everyday English language. In *More than cold reason,* Lakoff and Turner studied the construction of metaphor in poetry, and they conclude that “poetic thought uses mechanisms of everyday thought, but extends them, elaborates them, and combines them in ways that go beyond the ordinary” (Lakoff & Turner, 1989, p. 67).

CMT has been influential, but it has also received extensive criticism, e.g. concerning translation validity of important notions in the definition cited above. Zlatev and Moskaluk (2022, p. 127) summarize the objections: One of the notions in CMT is *domain*. In the examples cited above under the heading ARGUMENT IS WAR, why is WAR chosen as source domain and not the more general word STRUGGLE? And *demolished* could also be linked to another metaphor like THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS. It has also been difficult to operationalize the notion of *mapping*. What psychic mechanisms lie behind the creation of these mental correspondences between the domains proposed by the theory? The proposed answers to the latter question range from neurophysiological mechanisms to no psychic activation at all in the case of conventional linguistic metaphors. It has been suggested that neural networks characterize the source and target domains of metaphors, and that these networks are coactivated in everyday practice. Via reentrant pathways the coactivation will strengthen the connections between the two domains. For instance, if we pile up wood or fill up a container, the abstract domain of quantity is correlated with changes in the spatial domain. This coactivation is the neural base of various linguistic expressions of the metaphor MORE IS UP (Gibbs, 2017, p. 31).

3. Methods

I have chosen to study two of Pindar’s odes: *Olympian* 1 and *Isthmian* 1. I chose *Olympian* 1, because it is on the one hand a rich and highly valued ode, but on the other hand it contains parts that have been viewed as problematic, as they appear to create inconsistencies in the text. The *Isthmian* 1 was chosen because of Elroy Bundy’s influential and most debated analysis of the ode (Bundy, 1986).

Pindar’s odes are rich in metaphors. Previous scholars have approached them with different strategies. For instance, Steiner (1986) divides them into different motif spheres; Pattern (2009) focuses on problematic examples; Maslov (2015) has a special interest in genealogical metaphors. As far as I am aware, no study of Pindar’s odes has used my approach to identification of conceptual metaphors based on a review of metaphorical words. That approach aims to achieve a richer account of metaphorical messages in Pindar’s poetry.

My approach to the study has been to start with identification of metaphorical words in the text. I have not intended to make a systematic study of metonymies or similes. Next step was to find generalizations of metaphoric words – conceptual metaphors and see if they also characterize metaphorical thinking in sections of the text without metaphorical words. I chose the CMT for my thesis, because it allowed me to formulate concepts and ideas expressed by metaphors in Pindar’s odes. With this two-step procedure every conceptual metaphor formulated was based on linguistic, metaphorical expressions in the text. After that, the function of these conceptual metaphors was studied: some metaphors represent principal concepts and ideas of the poem, while others essentially fulfil an aesthetic function. That distinction in my analysis is based on a literary interpretation of the ode as a whole. My focus has been on the first category of principal concepts and ideas. I give some examples of the second category, but it has not been my intention to give a full account of them.

 As a next step, I studied the distribution of metaphorical words in the text. The distribution analysis was motivated by my preliminary finding that (1) the metaphorical words are unevenly distributed in the two odes. (2) There are aggregates of metaphorical words in parts of the text. (3) Some metaphorical elements are recurrent in the text e.g. light and the spatial orientation *up* as source domains in *Olympia* 1*.* I also studied to what extent the conceptual metaphors carrying principal ideas in the odes are located in aggregates of metaphorical words. Finally, I intended to study how the identified conceptual metaphors relate to previous scholars’ opinion on Pindar’s poetry.

The basic method applied in this thesis is to identify metaphorically used words in the text using the “metaphor identification procedure” (MIP) published by the Pragglejaz Group in 2007. With this article the authors wanted to address the problem “that researchers often differ in their intuitions about what constitutes a metaphoric word or phrase”. (Pragglejaz Group, 2007, p. 1). The group also comments on the limitations of the method: the aim is not to establish a link between metaphoric words and postulated conceptual metaphors, and they don’t claim that the result of the analysis will predict the reaction of ordinary readers of the text. Furthermore, the method is not created to identify figurative language expressions other than metaphors e.g. metonymy or simile (Pragglejaz Group, 2007, p. 2).

The procedure suggested is as follows:

1. Read the entire text-discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.

2. Determine the lexical units in the text-discourse.

3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by then text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.

(b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. For your purposes, basic meanings tend to be

–More concrete (what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste);

–Related to bodily action;

–More precise (as opposed too vague);

–Historically older;

Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit.

(c) If the lexical unit has a more basic current-contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.

4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical (Pragglejaz Group, 2007, p. 3).

I performed the analysis of metaphorical words without any co-worker. Lexical unit decisions are based on LSJ (1940). The original Greek text was obtained from Thesaurus Linguae Graecae. The English translation is that of Anthony Verity (Pindar, 2007*),* if not otherwise stated.

Conceptual metaphors were discussed above in the Theoretical background section of the thesis. The definition of a conceptual metaphor was cited: “a cross-domain mapping of structure from a source domain to a target domain, where the two domains are regarded as different in kind” (Johnson, 2010, p. 407). Some problematic aspects of the concepts of domain, mapping and difference in kind were also mentioned.

Zlatev and Moskaluk (2022, p. 126)) describe how the analytic process of conceptual metaphor often is carried out:

for example, a common strategy is to present multiple sets of examples and generalize them under a heading written with capitals, claimed not to be the metaphor itself (though often misunderstood in this way in some fields), but a “label” for the underlying construct, as in (1) (the authors refer to ARGUMENT IS WAR).

One obvious problem with such a procedure is that often the underlying construct is not formulated verbally in the discourse studied. Defining the underlying construct and expressing it in words is the result of an interpretation that might be questionable. Actually, Lakoff and Johnson (2003) later reformulated their famous ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor to ARGUMENT IS STRUGGLE. In this thesis, I adhere to Ritchie’s view that there might be multiple correspondences between a single linguistic expression and multiple conceptual metaphors (Ritchie, 2003). Hence, the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor belongs to a field of interrelated metaphors such as ARGUMENT IS STRUGGLE, BOXING, or CHESS and each of them highlights a certain aspect of the target domain. When formulating conceptual metaphors, one also faces a choice in the dimension of specific –generic. The word *καταπέψαι* and *ἕψοι*,both with a meaning of *digest* are in *Olympian* 1 suggestive of the concept metaphor MENTAL HANDLING IS DIGESTION, which belongs to a more generic metaphor: MENTAL PROCESSES ARE PHYSICAL PROCESSES. Furthermore, Pindar often does not provide the reader with a clearly expressed target domain in his metaphors, which makes the formulation of conceptual metaphors even more difficult. Hence, my formulations of conceptual metaphors should be regarded as proposals.

When identifying metaphorical words, I have not strived for a clear distinction between “intentional” metaphor and conventional metaphor. This agrees with Gibbs’ (2017, pp. 64-66) opinion that metaphorical meaning can be retrieved without having to compute a cross-domain mapping: “Conceptual metaphors may simply be part of people’s automatic understandings of conventional metaphorical word meanings”.

Some of the conceptual metaphors that I suggest in my analysis of the two odes are “labels” known from the literature, whereas others, as far as I know, are my own formulations. They always stem from generalizations of metaphoric words identified in the text and are sometimes reinforced by interpretations of metaphorical thinking in parts of the text without metaphorical words. The decision to include the latter category in the discourse is based on the idea that conceptual metaphors may shape discourses without metaphorical words (Gibbs, 2017, p. 59).

The distribution of metaphorical words was studied by identifying aggregates of metaphorical word sin the text. The following definition of an aggregate was used: an aggregate of metaphorical words consists of at least two metaphorical words in the same line or in adjacent lines. The percentage of metaphorical words belonging to aggregates was calculated as well as the percentage of lines with a metaphorical word.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 *Olympian* 1

*Olympian* 1 celebrates the victory of Hieron, tyrant of Syracuse, in the single-horse race of 476 BC at the Olympic games.

The text in *Olympian* 1 is divided into comprehensible sections, each containing the original Greek text with a translation to English. In the Greek text, metaphorical words are designated by bold letters. Most metaphorical words are then discussed, and for some of them conceptual metaphors are formulated. When all sections of the ode have been analyzed, I discuss which conceptual metaphors represent principal ideas in the ode,and finally, I intend to show how Pindar constructs conceptual metaphors.

Lines 1-7

Ἄριστον μὲν **ὕδωρ**, ὁ δὲ **χˈρυσὸς** αἰθόμενον πῦρ

ἅτε διαπˈρέπει νυκτὶ μεγάνορος **ἔξοχα** πλούτου·

εἰ δ’ ἄεθˈλα γαρύεν

ἔλδεαι, φίλον ἦτορ,

μηκέτ’ ἀελίου σκόπει (5)

ἄλλο θαλπνότερον ἐν ἁμέρᾳ φαεν-

 νὸν ἄστρον ἐρήμας δι’ αἰθέρος, (6)

μηδ’ Ὀλυμπίας ἀγῶνα **φέρτερον** αὐδάσομεν·

Water is best,

while gold gleams like blazing fire in the night,

brightest amid a rich man’s wealth;

but, my heart, if it is of games that you wish to sing,

look no further than the sun: as there is no star

that shines with more warmth by day from a clear sky,

so we can speak of no greater contest than Olympia.

Already the first lines of the ode introduce the concept of value:

 Ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ, ὁ δὲ χˈρυσὸς αἰθόμενον πῦρ ἅτε διαπˈρέπει νυκτὶ μεγάνορος **ἔξοχα** πλούτου·

Water is best, while gold gleams like blazing fire in the night,

brightest amid a rich man’s wealth;

Pindar holds the view that water is best. Geber (1982, pp. 7-8) provides a list of possible explanations of why water is pre-eminent[[2]](#footnote-2) but concludes that it is impossible to know “what prompted Pindar’s utterance.” Water as well as gold can be regarded as symbols with different meanings. Fitzgerald (1987, pp. 27-28)) proposes a symbolic interpretation of water as a source: “Pindar begins with an absolute that, refusing any context, speaks for itself: water is best.” From this absolute beginning of the ode, Pindar describes, according to Fitzgerald, other excellent items like gold and stars, and that list leads to the praise of Hieron. Fitzgerald also identifies water as a leitmotif in the myth of Pelops, the mythological part of *Olympian* 1. According to Pindar’s version of the myth, Poseidon falls in love with Pelops when Klotho lifted him out of the cleansing cauldron. This marks the beginning of Pelops’ immortal life on Olympus, where he is brought by Poseidon. However, due to this father’s transgressions, Pelops later loses his immortality and is brought back to the mortals. At the grey salty sea, he calls his divine lover and asks for help to achieve a glorious mortal life. In conclusion, Fitzgerald metaphorically regards water as a primordial sea, out of which the whole ode as well as Pelops’ immortality and mortality is born.

However, if only one symbolic meaning of water is to be chosen, I suggest that water as a symbol of poetry and poetic inspiration is the best candidate. Gerber (1982, p. 8) refers to several other poems by Pindar with this meaning of water. If water symbolizes poetry, and gold means power and wealth, alternative poetic intentions of Pindar’s words emerge: the first is that the opening line of the poem can be viewed as a metapoetic statement about the excellence of poetry and wealth represented in the poem and at the celebration by Pindar and Hieron, respectively. This interpretation also creates a perfect ring structure of the ode: the excellent poet and king appear together in the opening as well as in closing lines of the ode. Lundahl (2019, pp. 18-20), offers the following interpretations: “eau = poésie = sagesse” and “or = le meilleur bien = générosité,” and he presents a second poetic intention of the words by referring to an anecdote told by Aristotle: Hieron’s wife asked Simonides, the poet, who also was present at the celebration of Hieron’s victory, what he valued most, wisdom or wealth. “Wealth,” the poet answered, “because wise men spend their time at rich men’s doors.” To Lundahl, the first line of *Olympian* 1 “water is best, while gold gleams like blazing fire in the night,” means that Pindar refuses to answer the question put to Simonides. He wants both poetry/wisdom and wealth.

Despite these attractive, symbolic interpretations of water and gold, a literal meaning also makes sense; who can deny the importance of water for all living and the value that man attributes to gold? Consequently, the meaning of water and gold in *Olympian* 1 is obviously an intentional ambiguity. Lundahl (2019) argues that Pindar often uses intentional ambiguities to express complex praise with few words.

Water and gold are in many ways contrasts: fluid and transparent versus solid and non-transparent. Yet another contrast should be mentioned: water is essential for every living being, whereas gold is a rare, precious metal for gods and rich men (Fisker, 1990, p. 13). The priamel begins with a universal human value, but then it turns to an example of human excellence, the treasures of rich men. It ends in the challenge to be a victor at Olympia, a unique position.

Maslov’s interpretation of the comparison between the rich man’s gold and a fire in the night is the following:

The elusive simile that opens *Olympian* I rests on the peculiar force of ἅτε, which serves to focus on just one, unexpected aspect of the tenor with the result of undermining its familiar totality. In a sense, here the image (blazing fire) eclipses the concept (gold as wealth), affirming the power of poetical discourse to transform the realia it presents (Maslov, 2015, pp. 162-163).

Maslov’s interpretation is based on the fact that in a simile, the source domain (vehicle) most often defines the target domain (tenor). Here, the fire in the night defines the gold. Maslov characterizes the comparison between the rich man’s gold and the fire in the night as a simile, but I find that debatable. It is of course a simile if we define a simile as a comparison with a marker such as “like”, “as if” or “ἅτε” but less evident if we define a simile as a metaphorical comparison. The Praggglejaz group (2007, p. 32) admits that MIP was not designed to identify similes as metaphorical, but the group still distinguishes between metaphorical and non-metaphorical comparisons. In some examples they apply the same criteria for metaphoricity of comparisons as for single words: “for each lexical unit determine if it has a more basic meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. Basic meanings tend to be more concrete, related to bodily action, more precise, historically older” (Pragglejaz Group, 2007, p. 3). It seems questionable if the comparison between shining gold and fire in the night is a metaphor. I would rather call it a comparison between two mental images. As stated before, in a simile, the source domain usually defines the target domain, but if the expression discussed here is regarded as a comparison between two mental images, it is easier to perceive that gold in the poem (proposed target domain) also confers excellent qualities to different light sources, like a fire in the night (proposed source domain), the sun, and other stars. In lines 1-7, we find the metaphorical word ἔξοχα, the simile/comparison discussed above, and the implicit metaphor THE OLYMPIAN GAMES ARE THE SUN. These figurative expressions can be summarized by the conceptual metaphor EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT. Returning to the comparison between gold and fire in the night, we conclude that the comparison/simile serves Pindar well: the mental images of gold and fire create a splendid poetic comparison that also serves as a brick in building the conceptual metaphor EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT. However, this outcome is based on a perceived ambiguity: on the one hand, “the image (blazing fire) eclipses the concept (gold as wealth)” as suggested by Manson, an interpretation that focuses on the visual and aesthetic properties of gold. On the other hand, according to my interpretation, it creates an association between human excellence (the rich man’s wealth) and light that is processed in the following lines. I suggest that this ambiguity is an expression of tension in Pindar’s ode between poetic vision and the project of praise. That tension reappears later in Pindar’s revision of the Pelops myth, where cannibalistic elements in the traditional version are refuted but nevertheless are incorporated in his new version. The revision of the myth will be discussed under the heading Lines 23-53.

Lines 8 -16

ὅθεν ὁ **πολύφατος** ὕμνος **ἀμφιβάλλεται**

σοφῶν μητίεσσι, **κελαδεῖν**

Κρόνου παῖδ’ ἐς ἀφˈνεὰν ἱκομένους (10)

μάκαιραν Ἱέρωνος ἑστίαν,

θεμιστεῖον ὃς **ἀμφέπει** σκᾶπτονἐν πολυμήλῳ

Σικελίᾳ **δρέπων** μὲν **κορυφὰς** ἀρετᾶν ἄπο πασᾶν,

**ἀγˈλαΐζεται** δὲ καί

μουσικᾶς **ἐν** **ἀώτῳ**, (15)

οἷα παίζομεν φίλαν

ἄνδρες ἀμφὶ θαμὰ τράπεζαν,

From here come fame-giving hymns,

which wrap themselves around the minds of poets

who have come to the rich and blessed hearth of Hieron

to sing aloud of the son of Cronus, 10

Hieron holds the sceptre of justice in the sheep-rich Sicily,

where he chooses for himself the finest fruits

of every kind of excellence.

His glory gleams in the best of poetry and music,

of the kind that men often compose in play

at his hospitable table.

Maslov (2015, p. 302) observes that *hymnos* has a specific meaning in relation to *aoidê (song*): “*aoidê* represents the default term, whereas *hymnos* betokens a claim to identification with cult lyric.” It is notable that the *hymnos’* action does not result in praise of Hieron but in praise of Zeus. Maslov remarks that in several odes, *hymnos “*takes on a rather unexpected agent-like function and meaning”, The agent-like function of *hymnos* is evident in the following lines:

ὅθεν ὁ **πολύφατος** ὕμνος **ἀμφιβάλλεται**

σοφῶν μητίεσσι, **κελαδεῖν**

Κρόνου παῖδ’ ἐς ἀφˈνεὰν ἱκομένους (10)

μάκαιραν Ἱέρωνος ἑστίαν,

From here come fame-giving hymns,

which wrap themselves around the minds of poets

who have come to the rich and blessed hearth of Hieron

to sing aloud of the son of Cronus,

The *hymnos* from Olympia takes possession of the minds of the poets, which creates loud singing in praise of Zeus. Here, the role of the poets appears to be more a medium than a source of praise. Thus, the *hymnos* antecedes the actual praise from the poets or the chorus. Maslovs (2015, p. 306) identifies *hymnos* as a divine product and suggests an English paraphrasis: “the blessing of victory as conveyed in poetic performance.” How are the metaphorical words in the passage related to Maslov’s interpretation of *hymnos* as divine inspiration? One of the metaphorical words in the section, *ἀμφιβάλλεται*, has a basic physical meaning, to wrap around, and the result of the action is the next metaphorical word *κελαδεῖν*, to celebrate loudly. The basic meaning of *κελαδεῖν* is also physical: to sound like flowing water. In this context, the two metaphoric words can be summarized with a conceptual metaphor: POETRY IS A PHYSICAL FORCE. By describing poetry as a physical force, its action is reinforced. Thus, the influence of *hymnos* is strong and the effect is evident.

‘The basic meaning of πολύφατος is according to LSJ *much spoken of, famous* but the dictionary translates *πολύφατος ὕμνος* to *excellent, noble strain*, signaling a high quality consistent with a divine origin. Gerber (1982, p. 25) does not find any justification in translations where “the epithet denotes the many voices of the chorus” like the Swedish translation by Ingvar Björkeson, who uses the word *mångstämmiga* (Pindaros, 2008, p. 19). According to Gerber, “such an explanation renders the epithet insipid and runs counter to Pindar’s practice of describing song in laudatory terms.” I concur with Gerber. Rehenehan (1969, pp. 219-21) suggests that πολύφατος simultaneously also means πολ-υφατος from “*ufainw*” (weave) meaning that the *hymnos* is depicted as a garment that is thrown around the minds of the poets. That would also explain the use of the word *ἀμφιβάλλεται*. Gerber’s translation of *hymnos* is not “song” but “subject for song”: “Olympia provides the poet with themes for his song.” (Gerber, 1982, p. 26) However, with that interpretation of *hymnos,* the character of divine agent discussed above is lost.

 Even though *hymnos* has a more active role than the poets in this passage, Pindar indicates the skill of the poets by using the words *σοφ*ό*ς*, here the meaning is *a skilled poet* and *μῆτις* with the meaning of *a poet’s* *skill or craft.* The main purpose of an epinicion is to praise the winner of a game, but in his odes, Pindar repeatedly returns to the value and power of poetry and its divine origin.

The praise of Hieron is rich with figurative language, including metaphorical words and metonymies, which makes the style poetic and solemn, conveying the poet’s admiration:

ἀφˈνεὰ ἱκομένους

μάκαιραν Ἱέρωνος ἑστίαν,

who have come to the rich and blessed hearth of Hieron

and

θεμιστεῖον ὃς **ἀμφέπει** σκᾶπτον

Hieron holds the scepter of justice.

and a third example:

**δρέπων** μὲν **κορυφὰς** ἀρετᾶν ἄπο πασᾶν

He chooses for himself the peaks of every kind of excellence. (My translation).

The metaphorical word κορυφὰς can be regarded as an expression of the conceptual metaphor VALUE IS UP. As mentioned in the Theoretical background section, Lakoff and Johnson (1980, pp. 14-15) call this type of metaphor orientational metaphors, as they are related to spatial orientation. There are several examples of the metaphor VALUE IS UP in *Olympian* 1, and I will return to that metaphor later.

In the next line, we discover a new example of the conceptual metaphor EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT:

**ἀγˈλαΐζεται** δὲ καί μουσικᾶς **ἐν** **ἀώτῳ**, (15)

His glory gleams in the best of poetry and music,

The basic meaning of ἀγˈλαΐζεται is to make bright or splendid. In medium and passive, the verb can mean adorn yourself. So far in the ode, the EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT metaphor has been applied to Olympia and Hieron. ἐν ἀώτῳ is yet another way of expressing high quality. *ἀώτον* means *fine wool* or *flock* but is used metaphorically to denote *the finest, best of a kind*. A metaphor well suited to praise Hieron in the sheep-rich Sicily.

Lines 17-22

ἀλλὰ Δωρίαν ἀπὸ φόρμιγγα πασσάλου (17)

λάμβαν’, εἴ τί τοι Πίσας τε καὶ Φερενίκου χάρις

νόον **ὑπὸ** **γλυκυτάταις** **ἔθηκε**  φροντίσιν,

ὅτε παρ’ Ἀλφεῷ σύτο δέμας (20)

ἀκέντητον ἐν δρόμοισι παρέχων,

κράτει δὲ **προσέμειξε** δεσπόταν,

Συρακόσιον ἱπποχάρ-

 μαν βασιλῆα·

Come then, take down the Dorian lyre from its peg,

if the splendour of Olympian Pisa and of Pherenicus

has caused the sweetest thoughts to steal into your mind,

as it sped along unwhipped in the race beside Alpheus,

and brought its master into victory’s embrace­–

Hieron, Syracuse horse-delighting king.

The next metaphorical words are about Hieron’s winning horse Pherenicus:

εἴ τί τοι Πίσας τε καὶ Φερενίκου χάρις

νόον **ὑπὸ** **γλυκυτάταις** **ἔθηκε** φροντίσιν,

if the splendour of Olympian Pisa and of Pherenicus

has caused the sweetest thoughts to steal into your mind,

and

ὅτε παρ’ Ἀλφεῷ σύτο δέμας (20)

ἀκέντητον ἐν δρόμοισι παρέχων,

κράτει δὲ **προσέμειξε** δεσπόταν,

as it sped along unwhipped in the race beside Alpheus,

and brought its master into victory’s embrace­–

The first metaphor describes a spectator’s psychological reaction (sweetest thoughts) to the action of the horse during the race in terms of physical action. A verbatim translation would be that the horse puts the mind of the spectator under sweetest thoughts. The second metaphor depicts the horse winning the race as an agent that physically brings Hieron close to a personified victory. The basic meaning of the verb *προσμείγνυμι* is also physical: *to join* or *to mingle*. Another obvious physical meaning of the word is *to hold intercourse with* (LSJ, 1940). The metaphor is well suited for making the owner of the horse the winner of the race. These two metaphorical sentences are just as the section of *hymnos* expressions of the conceptual metaphor PSYCOLOGICAL FORCES ARE PHYSICAL FORCES. Here, the metaphor transforms the forceful physical action of the horse to a mental force influencing human minds: to arouse sweet thoughts in the spectators and to make the owner a winner.

Lines 23-52

**λάμπει** δέ οἱ κλέος (23)

ἐν εὐάνορι Λυδοῦ Πέλοπος ἀποικίᾳ·

τοῦ μεγασθενὴς ἐράσσατο Γαιάοχος (25)

Ποσειδάν, ἐπεί νιν καθαροῦ λέβη-

 τος ἔξελε Κλωθώ, (26)

ἐλέφαντι φαίδιμον ὦμον κεκαδˈμένον.

ἦ θαύματα πολλά, καί πού τι καὶ βροτῶν

φάτις **ὑπὲρ** τὸν ἀλαθῆ λόγον (28b)

**δεδαιδαλμένοι** ψεύδεσι **ποικίλοις** (29)

**ἐξαπατῶντι** μῦθοι. (29)

Χάρις δ’, ἅπερ ἅπαντα **τεύχει**  τὰ μείλιχα θνατοῖς, (30)

**ἐπιφέροισα** τιμὰν καὶ ἄπιστον ἐμήσατο πιστόν

ἔμμεναι τὸ πολλάκις·

ἁμέραι δ’ ἐπίλοιποι

**μάρτυρες** **σοφώτατοι**.

ἔστι δ’ ἀνδρὶ φάμεν ἐοικὸς **ἀμφὶ**  δαι- (35)

 μόνων καλά· μείων γὰρ αἰτία. (35)

υἱὲ Ταντάλου, σὲ δ’ **ἀντία** πˈροτέρων φθέγξομαι,

ὁπότ’ ἐκάλεσε πατὴρ τὸν εὐνομώτατον

ἐς ἔρανον φίλαν τε Σίπυλον,

ἀμοιβαῖα θεοῖσι δεῖπνα παρέχων,

τότ’ Ἀγˈλαοτρίαιναν ἁρπάσαι, (40)

**δαμέντα** φˈρένας ἱμέρῳ, χρυσέαισί τ’ ἀν’ ἵπποις

ὕπατον εὐρυτίμου ποτὶ δῶμα Διὸς μεταβᾶσαι·

ἔνθα δευτέρῳ χρόνῳ

ἦλθε καὶ Γανυμήδης

Ζηνὶ τωὔτ’ **ἐπὶ**  χˈρέος. (45)

ὡς δ’ ἄφαντος ἔπελες, οὐδὲ ματρὶ πολ-

 λὰ μαιόμενοι φῶτες ἄγαγον, (46)

ἔννεπε κˈρυφᾷ τις αὐτίκα φθονερῶν γειτόνων,

ὕδατος ὅτι τε πυρὶ ζέοισαν **εἰς** **ἀκμάν**

μαχαίρᾳ τάμον **κατὰ** μέλη,

τραπέζαισί τ’ ἀμφὶ δεύτατα κρεῶν (50)

σέθεν διεδάσαντο καὶ φάγον.

ἐμοὶ δ’ ἄπορα γαστρίμαρ-

(1) γον μακάρων τιν’ εἰπεῖν· **ἀφίσταμαι**· (52)

ἀκέρδεια **λέλογχεν** θαμινὰ κακαγόρους.

His fame shines out over the land

of fine men founded by Lydian Pelops,

he whom Poseidon the mighty Earth-holder desired

after Clotho had lifted him from the purifying cauldron,

fitted with a shoulder of gleaming ivory.

There are indeed many wonders,

and it may be that in men’s talk

stories are embroidered beyond the truth,

and so deceive us with their elaborate lies,

since the beguiling charm of words,

the source of all sweet pleasures for men,

adds lustre and veracity to the unbelievable.

The days to come will be the wisest judge of that,

but it is proper that a man should speak well of the gods;

thus, he is less likely to incur blame.

Son of Tantalus, the tale I shall tell about you

runs counter to that told by former poets.

When your father invited the gods

to that well-ordered banquet in his beloved Sipylus,

reciprocating the hospitality he had enjoyed,

then it was that the god of the Glorious Trident,

his heart overpowered by desire,

seized you and carried you off in a golden chariot

to the lofty palace of widely honoured Zeus.

where in later time Ganymedes also came,

to perform the same service, but for Zeus.

When you had disappeared from sight,

and, despite their frequent searches,

no one could bring you back to your mother,

immediately an ill-intentioned neighbour

secretly spread the tale abroad

thar the guests had taken a knife and dismembered you,

and had thrown your limbs into water

as it boiled fiercely over the fire; 50

and then at the table, during the final course,

they shared out your flesh and ate it.

As for me, I cannot call any of the blessed gods a cannibal.

I stand aside;

The slanderous seldom win themselves profit.

This section of the ode starts with yet another example of the metaphor EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT:

**λάμπει** δέ οἱ κλέος (23)

ἐν εὐάνορι Λυδοῦ Πέλοπος ἀποικίᾳ·

His fame shines out over the land

of fine men founded by Lydian Pelops,

The next metaphorical word is related to Pindar’s new version of the Pelops myth.

**δαμέντα** φˈρένας ἱμέρῳ

his heart overpowered by desire,

Here, the heart is the seat of passion, and the underlying conceptual metaphor is DESIRE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE. Once again, a psychological phenomenon is described in physical terms.

4.1.1 Pindar’s revision of the Pelops myth

This section of the ode also contains Pindar’s famous revision of the Pelops myth. I have allotted a large part of my thesis to this revision. One reason for that is the controversial nature of this part of the ode. It has raised questions like these: why did Pindar change the myth? Why did he incorporate in his new version parts of the old version that he already had refuted? Another reason to dwell on this part of the ode is that it is an *exemplum* of Pindar’s rhetoric – how he uses figurative and literal language to persuade.

First, I will briefly present the original myth and Pindar’s modifications. Then, I discuss why Pindar made this revision: his own motivations for the change; how he uses metaphors and literal language to persuade; alternative reasons for the revision. The next step is to discuss the perceived inconsistency of the revision; after all, parts of the old myth rejected by Pindar appear to have been transferred into his new version.

In the traditional version of the myth, Tantalus, Pelops’ father, had dismembered him with a knife, boiled him and served him to the gods. Demeter, absentminded by grief over her daughter Persephone, ate one shoulder, which later was replaced by an ivory shoulder. Pindar rejects the old cannibalistic version of the myth – it is false and blasphemous. In Pindar’s new version, Poseidon was overpowered by desire for Pelops and seized him and brought him to Zeus’ to be his cupbearer. Due to Tantalus’ many misdeeds, Pelops could not remain among the immortals and was sent back to the earth. According to Pindar, the source of the cannibalistic version was an ill-intentioned neighbor to Pelops, who spread the rumor when Pelops had been seized and carried to Zeus’ palace.

In his discussion of the revision of the myth, Pindar focuses on the veracity of the stories. Pindar distinguishes between two types of man-told stories (*μῦθοι*). The first type is an aesthetically elaborate story that gives pleasure but is not true. According to Pindar, the original Pelops myth belongs to this category of poetry with deceptive aesthetic qualities. His own, new version of the myth is less fantastic and grotesque but is, according to the poet, the true history of Pelops’s encounter with the gods. Pindar is also referring to piety as a reason to reject the traditional myth. Truth and piety are closely related: in a religious mind blasphemy is a lie about holy things. The question about veracity is important for an epinician. His poetry is about real athletes and events with big audiences, so many could react to perceived errors. In this ode, the question of veracity is extended from the game and the victory to a mythical *persona*, from Hieron to Pelops.

Pindar’s arguments for revision of the myth are supplied by a richness of metaphors. The concepts of truth and lies are presented in the following lines:

ἦ θαύματα πολλά, καί πού τι καὶ βροτῶν

φάτις **ὑπὲρ** τὸν ἀλαθῆ λόγον (28b)

**δεδαιδαλμένοι** ψεύδεσι **ποικίλοις** (29)

**ἐξαπατῶντι** μῦθοι. (29)

There are indeed many wonders,

and it may be that in men’s talk

stories are embroidered beyond the truth,

and so deceive us with their elaborate lies,

**δεδαιδαλμένοι** ψεύδεσι **ποικίλοις** (29)

**ἐξαπατῶντι** μῦθοι. (29)

Stories embellished with richly colored fantasies are deceptive. (My translation).

Pindar emphasizes the deceptive power of art using two words (both metaphorical) associated with beauty δεδαιδαλμένοι and ποικίλοις and combine them with two words for lies ψεύδεσι and ἐξαπατῶντι (metaphorical word). The preposition ὑπὲρ (*over)* is also marked as a metaphorical word. It assigns a spatial relationship between truth and lie (fiction) (Patten, 2009, p.124). The basis for that relationship is the generic metaphor ABSTRACT CONCEPTS ARE PHYSICAL OBJECTS. The lies cover and conceal the truth. The metaphor also gives the impression that these abstract concepts are graphic and tangible objects that can be identified by sense-organs. According to Pindar, stories made by man (*μῦθοι*) can either be true or false implicating the conceptual metaphor POETRY IS A TESTIMONY ABOUT REALITY. Pindar repudiates the traditional version of the myth because it is false (Pelops was never mutilated and consumed) and blasphemous.

Another metaphorical expression is also related to truth:

ἁμέραι δ’ ἐπίλοιποι **μάρτυρες** **σοφώτατοι**.

The days to come will be the wisest witnesses of that. (My translation).

Here, the days to come are seen as μάρτυρες (witnesses), a metaphor that could be formulated as FUTURE DAYS WILL BE A WITNESS. The metaphor is ambiguous. It has usually been interpreted simply as “time will reveal the truth” (Gerber, 1982, p. 67-69). Patten (2009, pp. 129-130) has a more specific interpretation of the metaphor: the expression could be linked to the myth of Ganymede. The fact that Ganymede later was abducted to Zeus supports Pindar’s version of Pelops’ transferal to Olympus.

Maslov (2015, pp. 212-232) discusses two types of μάρτυρες in Archaic Greek choral poetry, “co-swearers”, who were present at legal procedures and were expected later to testify about the procedure and “oath helper”, who were willing to take an oath to help a defendant. Maslov sees both paradigms operational in the sentence above. The coming days can be viewed as an array of co-swearers that confirm the effect of Charis. On the other hand, as oath helpers, the days will reveal the true story. I find the first part with co-swearers far-fetched. The task for the coming days is rather to decide what happened to Pelos.

Gerber (1982, pp. 67-69) regards the expression μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι as evidence of Pindar’s wish to include both the coming days and the σοφώτατος poet as witnesses to the truth. Fitzgerald (1987, p. 33) sees in the verse a denial of an absolute value of what belongs to the past: “the onward march of time is continuously reassembling the past and receiving it into new contexts.” If Gerber’s and Fitgerald’s interpretations of the verse are combined, a metapoetic comment emerges: charmful poetry can make lies appear as truth, but with time the lies are likely to be corrected by new generations of poets. According to this interpretation, the metaphor of coming days as witnesses justifies Pindar’s revision of the old myth. The metaphor builds on the conceptual metaphor POETRY IS A TESTIMONY ABOUT REALITY discussed previously in this section.

Pindar also provides non-metaphorical arguments for the falseness of the original version of the myth: Pindar argues that the origin of the old myth was an envious neighbor of Pelops, who spread the rumor of cannibalism. That part of Pindar’s story is ostentatiously artless and trivial, making it a contrast to the elaborate lies in the original version. The lack of aesthetic qualities in Pindar’s explanation serves as an implicit argument for its truth. Consequently, truth defeats beauty in this part of the story. The reader must contemplate if also the artless and trivial statement can be seductive.

In the following section, I will discuss why Pindar decides to write a new version of the Pelops myth. One obvious concern for the poet was to adapt his ode to the status of the *laudandus* and to the circumstances of the celebration at which the epinicion would be presented. As mentioned in the Introduction section, Maslov (2015, pp. 105-114) finds the construction of the odes to some degree dependent on the status of the praised winner. He identifies three classes based on the addressee: (1) poetry addressed to tyrants and their associates, (2) aristocratic victors, and (3) civic epinicia. Maslov registers that the epinicia in class two “are more reserved and oblique, in their rhetoric” compared to class one. In *Olympian* 1, Pindar addresses Hieron, a dictator with high political power. The myth of Pelops is told as a glorious parallel to Hieron’s successes. Perhaps the traditional grotesque story of Pelops being dismembered and consumed by Demeter was less fit for praising Hieron? Hence, the change to the new version of the myth could be a sign of respect for the dictator. The next obvious reason for changing the myth is simply to improve the story, to supply it with new content. For example, by adding the love-story between Poseidon and Pelops, Pindar hints at Hieron being the gods’ favorite.

Patten (2009) claims that it is often not possible to make a clear distinction between rhetorical figures and true meaning in Pindar’s poetry. I agree with that conclusion. In the revision of the myth, Pindar is advocating religious piety and truth, but the discussion above suggests a rhetorical quality of these concepts: does piety also stand for societal respect and truth for aesthetic propriety? The relationship between piety and societal respect can be thought of as a metaphor. In that case, societal respect is understood in terms of piety. It is possible that in Pindar’s hierarchic and aristocratic universe, the poet’s relationships to gods and dictators have common elements. Steiner (1986, pp. 138-139) states frankly that the practice of praise and not piety lies behind Pindar’s revision of the mythical tale. Köhnken (1974) has a similar view. By changing the myths, Pindar creates perfect *exempla,* with which the praised athlete can be compared.

Truth and aesthetic precision can be related to each other in a similar metaphorical fashion, that is, an aesthetic expression may be perceived as right or wrong. Truth can metaphorically be described as a physical object with a defined location. We approach the truth or are distancing us from it. Finding the proper formulation can also be described spatially as aiming at and hitting a specific target. Pindar does that later in *Olympian* 1, where he describes his poetry as arrows.

ἐμοὶ μὲν ὦνΜοῖσα καρτερώτατον **βέλος** **ἀλκᾷ** **τρέφει**·

for me, the muse keeps a bold and mighty arrow. (My translation).

I will later discuss this metaphor more in depth under the heading Lines 101-116. This interpretation of the concept of truth is supported by Svenbro’s discussion about the meaning of truth in the Greek epinicion (Svenbro, 2020, pp. 194-197; Palme & Svenbro, 1976). Pindar’s concept of truth is oriented towards the category of memory. A true feat to Pindar is an unforgettable achievement and the main task of poetry is to save this truth from oblivion. To Pindar, this project of praise is probably more important than the historical veracity of the myth. In this perspective, Pindar’s new version of the Pelops myth offers the truth about Hieron and his victory.

The discussion above of the metaphorical concepts AESTHETIC PROPRIETY IS TRUTH and WORDLY RESPECT IS PIETY is not grounded in metaphorical words in Pindar’s text; hence, they are not part of the project to formulate conceptual metaphors based on metaphorical words. I have rather used them to characterize Pindar’s rhetorical discourse.

In the following section, I will discuss the perceived inconsistency in Pindar’s revision of the Pelops myth, where cannibalistic elements in the traditional version are openly refuted but nevertheless are incorporated in his new version. Pindar refers to Charis as a creator of aesthetic pleasure that sometimes also results in gaudy fiction far from the truth. Pindar warns us: watch out for beauty and metaphors. However, Charis’ aesthetic domain is also Pindar’s workshop. Has he also not been tempted to trade the truth for an aesthetic effect? If the old myth was false and blasphemous, why does Pindar reproduce the violent and grotesque details of the dismemberment and the consumed shoulder? In that way, the dramatic but false story is incorporated also in Pindar’s poem. The exchange of truth for aesthetic effect is even more evident in the initial section where Pelops and Poseidon are presented. In Pindar’s version, there is no physical violence or dismembering, and consequently, there should not be any ivory shoulder. Nevertheless, Pelops is introduced by the following statement:

Ποσειδάν, ἐπεί νιν καθαροῦ λέβη-

 τος ἔξελε Κλωθώ, (26)

ἐλέφαντι φαίδιμον ὦμον κεκαδˈμένον.

he whom Poseidon the mighty Earth-holder desired

after Clotho had lifted him from the purifying cauldron,

fitted with a shoulder of gleaming ivory.

Pelops’ ivory shoulder is characterized with the adjective φαίδιμον (*shining*) and the participle κεκαδˈμένον (*surpass, excel*). Thus, the ivory shoulder can be viewed as a *pars pro toto* metonymy for Pelop’s beauty and excellence. In this way, the poet makes a reference to a central conceptual metaphor in *Olympian* 1: LIGHT IS EXCELLENCE. Pindar has taken up the most aesthetically pleasing but false part of the old myth and incorporated it in his own version.

For centuries, critics have tried to solve this apparent inconsistency. Patten (2009, pp. 137-140) gives an overview of the historic reception of this revision. Already 1847, Dissen suggests that the washing of Pelops was not related to any dismemberment but meant the washing of a new-born child, and the ivory was a symbol of a birthmark. Other scholars have suggested that Pindar had to mention the dismemberment because it was an essential part of the traditional version, and it helped the audience to identify the myth.

An elaborate interpretation along these lines is presented by Krummen (1990, pp. 168-184). She claims that Pindar’s presentation of his new version of the Pelops myth is coherent. She arrives at that conclusion mainly by identifying double meanings of certain items in the lines cited above, making them parts of the old as well as the new version: καθαροῦ may refer to the restitution process in the old version or cleaning of a newborn child in the new one. Λέβητος is the purifying cauldron used at the restitution process in the old version or a jar for washing a newborn baby in the new version. ἐλέφαντι is the replacement of Pelops’ lost shoulder by an ivory prothesis in the old version, and in the new version according to Krummen, it signifies “ die gesunde kräftige Ausstrahlung des Kindes nach dem ersten Bad.” Hence, Krummen creates ambiguous mental images, the type of image in which the viewer can perceive two different alternating images. That poetic strategy allows the public to initially identify the well-known old version of the myth and later by Pindar’s guidance to embrace the new, true version.

Krummen’s interpretation saves the coherence of Pindar’s discourse, but it comes at a price: an ambiguous image shows two equally true images, in this case undermining Pindar’s discourse on historical truth and lie. The interpretation also offers a place for the old version within the new one, making Pindar’s religious criticism of the old one less credible (Patten, 2009, p.140). Furthermore, Pindar’s strategy, as described by Krummen, is an advanced rhetoric operation close to a kind of poetry that Pindar warns against: “the beguiling charm of words, the source of all sweet pleasures for men, adds lustre and veracity to the unbelievable.” The explanation attests to the historical effort to establish unity in Pindar’s poetry.

Gregory Nagy (1990, pp. 116-135) has an original solution to the inconsistency in the revision of the myth. He suggests that Pindar is not the original author of the revised version. The substitution of the myth presented in *Olympian* 1 is in fact “a poetic expression of a preexisting fusion of two myths”, the oldest one connected to the single foot race, which was the oldest athletic event of the Olympics, and the newer one related to the later four-horse chariot race.

Another interpretation of the inconsistency is presented by Fisker’s analysis of the myth (1990, pp. 36-43), which almost offers a romantic version of artistic freedom. She argues that nowhere is Pindar marking the first version as a lie and his own as truth. Pindar expresses, according to Fisker, that myths are fabrics of facts and fiction and that is valid also for Pindar’s own version. This attitude to myths gives freedom to a poet to choose those elements of myths that serve his intentions. One may object to Fisker’s view that even if Pindar is not explicitly calling the two versions truth and lie, his reasoning about the two versions of the myth gives the impression that historical veracity is a significant aspect. His story about the envious neighbor fabricating the old myth is one example. In my opinion, to accept Fisker’s analysis one must regard Pindar’s discussion about the veracity of the Pelops myth as rhetorical, which according to my judgment is a plausible conclusion.

Another explanation of the combined presence of the old and new versions in the ode is suggested by Hamilton (2003, pp. 87-96). He formulates the conditions of the project of praise: the poetry of praise must be true, and the victory has a divine origin. A cannibal feast for gods like that in the first version of the myth would deny the difference between men and gods undermining the project of praise. Hence, the *laudandus,* in this case Hieron, would remain in oblivion. Thus, Pindar strongly distances himself from the cannibalistic version of the myth. Despite that standpoint, the poet repeatedly returns to the cannibal scene and to metaphors of cooking and consumption. What is the meaning of this construction? Hamilton suggests that it is a measure to protect the victor from the gods’ envy. The *exemplum* of Pelops brings Hieron closer to the gods and, Pindar increases the distance between Hieron and the gods by making Pelops less divine. In my view, it is possible that Pindar needs the old version of the myth to protect Hieron, but it is more likely a means to improve the aesthetic qualities of his poem.

In conclusion, the four interpretations of Pindar’s revision of the myth presented above are problematic, in the sense that they all undermine the poet’s discourse on historical truth. Krummen’s, Nagy’s, and Fisker’s interpretations also question religious piety as the reason for the revision. I suggest that Pindar openly expresses a tension in the ode between aesthetic qualities and the requirements of encomiastic poetry.

To sum up the discussion about the revision of the Pelops myth: the metaphorical words in the revision of the myth are centered around the first “false myth” and they are used to explain “how luster and veracity is added to the unbelievable.” The falseness of the first myth is also evident from Pindar’s non-metaphorical account of the origin of the first myth: an envious neighbor of Pelops, who spread the rumor of cannibalism. On the other hand, Pindar’s own version is presented with a few metaphors. The message is clear: figurative language is deceptive, whereas piety and truth can be presented without rhetoric. However, Pindar’s praise of piety and truth is undermined by the historical context of the ode, in this case the praise of a powerful dictator; by incorporating the cauldron-scene in his own version of the myth; by creating a trivial and artless story about the origin of the old myth. Hence, the audience and the readers may in the end doubt the meaning of the revised myth. Does Pindar want to uphold virtues like piety and truth, or are his arguments rhetoric maneuvers to conceal his respect for worldly power and his striving for aesthetic propriety?

Lines 53-80

εἰ δὲ δή τιν’ ἄνδρα θνατὸν Ὀλύμπου σκοποί

ἐτίμασαν, ἦν Τάνταλος οὗτος· ἀλ- (55)

 λὰ γὰρ **καταπέψαι** (55)

μέγαν ὄλβον οὐκ ἐδυνάσθη, κόρῳ δ’ ἕλεν

ἄταν ὑπέροπˈλον, ἅν τοι πατὴρ ὕπερ

κρέμασε καρτερὸν αὐτῷ λίθον, (57b)

τὸν αἰεὶ μενοινῶν κεφαλᾶς βαλεῖν (58)

εὐφροσύνας **ἀλᾶται**. (58)

Γʹἔχει δ’ ἀ̄πάλαμον βίον τοῦτον ἐμπεδόμοχθον

μετὰ τριῶν τέταρτον, ἀθανάτους ὅτι κλέψαις (60)

ἁλίκεσσι συμπόταις

νέκταρ ἀμβροσίαν τε

δῶκεν, οἷσιν ἄφθιτον

θέν νιν. εἰ δὲ θεὸν ἀνήρ τις ἔλπεταί

 <τι> λαθέμεν ἔρδων, ἁμαρτάνει. (64)

τοὔνεκα {οἱ} πˈροῆκαν υἱὸν ἀθάνατοί <οἱ> πάλιν (65)

μετὰ τὸ ταχύποτμον αὖτις ἀνέρων ἔθνος.

πρὸς εὐάνθεμον δ’ ὅτε φυάν

λάχναι νιν μέλαν γένειον ἔρεφον,

ἑτοῖμον ἀνεφρόντισεν γάμον

Πισάτα παρὰ πατˈρὸς εὔδοξον Ἱπποδάμειαν (70)

σχεθέμεν. ἐγγὺς {δ’} ἐλθὼν πολιᾶς ἁλὸς οἶος ἐν ὄρφνᾳ

ἄπυεν βαρύκτυπον

Εὐτρίαιναν· ὁ δ’ αὐτῷ

πὰρ ποδὶ σχεδὸν φάνη.

τῷ μὲν εἶπε· ‘Φίλια δῶρα Κυπˈρίας (75)

 ἄγ’ εἴ τι, Ποσείδαον, **ἐς**  χάριν (75)

τέλλεται, **πέδασον** ἔγχος Οἰνομάου χάλκεον,

ἐμὲ δ’ ἐπὶ ταχυτάτων πόρευσον ἁρμάτων

ἐς Ἆλιν, κράτει δὲ **πέλασον**.

ἐπεὶ τρεῖς τε καὶ δέκ’ ἄνδρας ὀλέσαις

μναστῆρας **ἀναβάλλεται** γάμον (80)

θυγατˈρός.

If ever the watchers on Olympus gave a mortal honour,

that man indeed was Tantalus.

But no good came of it, for he could not digest his great prosperity,

and by his excesses brought overwhelming ruin on himself:

the father poised a huge stone above him,

and in his constant struggle to thrust it from his head

he now wanders far from happiness.

This is the life of everlasting weariness he lives,

one labour following after another,

because for his feast he stole from the gods

the nectar and ambrosia they gave to make him immortal

and served it to his drinking companions.

If a man hopes his deeds will escape the god’s notice

he is mistaken.

So the immortals sent his son back to him,

to be mortal again in the short-lived company of men.

And about the time of his handsome youthful bloom,

when downy hair began to cover his darkening jaw,

he turned his thoughts to an offer of marriage

that was offered to all: to win at Pisa

the famous Hippodameia from her father Oenomaus. 70

Alone, at night, he went down to the grey sea’s shore

and called out to the deep-roaring Lord of the Trident;

and the god was there, close by him.

Pelops said to him:

“If the delightful gifts of Cypris can give rise to gratitude,

then come, shackle the bronze spear of Oenomaus,

send me on the swiftest of chariots to Elis,

and bring me the power to be victorious.

Thirteen suitors has Oenomaus killed,

and in this way delays the marriage of his daughter.

εἰ δὲ δή τιν’ ἄνδρα θνατὸν Ὀλύμπου σκοποί

ἐτίμασαν, ἦν Τάνταλος οὗτος· ἀλ- (55)

 λὰ γὰρ **καταπέψαι** (55)

μέγαν ὄλβον οὐκ ἐδυνάσθη,

If ever the watchers on Olympus gave a mortal honour, that man indeed was Tantalus.

But no good came of it, for he could not digest his great prosperity.

The word *καταπέψαι, digest* is an example of the concept metaphor MENTAL HANDLING IS DIGESTION, and a more generic version can be formulated: MENTAL PROCESSES ARE PHYSICAL PROCESSES. The result of Tantalus’ lack of temperance is that he “now wanders far from happiness (εὐφροσύνας ἀλᾶται),” which is an expression of two concept metaphor EMOTIONAL STATES ARE PHYSICAL OBJECTS (as a physical object the emotional state has a spatial orientation), and LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

Φίλια δῶρα Κυπˈρίας (75)

 ἄγ’ εἴ τι, Ποσείδαον, **ἐς**  χάριν (75)

τέλλεται,

“If the delightful gifts of Cypris can give rise to gratitude,”

**ἐς**  χάριν (into gratitude). (My translation). The construction is an example of the conceptual metaphor MENTAL STATES ARE CONTAINERS.

κράτει δὲ **πέλασον.**

bring near victory. (My translation).

This expression is another example of the metaphor ABSTRACT CONCEPTS ARE PHYSICAL OBJECTS.

μναστῆρας **ἀναβάλλεται** γάμον (80)

delays the marriage of his daughter.

The original meaning of ἀναβάλλεται is throw or toss up or put off. ACTIONS (here, marriage) ARE PHYSICAL OBJECTS.

Lines 81-100

ὁ μέγας δὲ κίν-

 δυνος ἄναλκιν οὐ φῶτα **λαμβάνει**. (81)

θανεῖν δ’ οἷσιν ἀνάγκα, τά κέ τις ἀνώνυμον

γῆρας **ἐν** **σκότῳ** **καθήμενος** **ἕψοι** μάταν,

ἁπάντων καλῶν ἄμμορος; ἀλλ’ ἐμοὶ

 μὲν οὗτος ἄεθˈλος (84)

**ὑποκείσεται**· τὺ δὲ πρᾶξιν φίλαν δίδοι.’ (85)

ὣς ἔννεπεν· οὐδ’ ἀκράντοις **ἐφάψατο**

ἔπεσι. τὸν μὲν ἀγάλλων θεός (86b)

ἔδωκεν δίφρον τε χˈρύσεον πτεροῖ- (87)

 σίν τ’ ἀκάμαντας ἵππους. (87)

**Δʹἕλεν** δ’ Οἰνομάου βίαν παρθένον τε σύνευνον·

ἔτεκε λαγέτας ἓξ ἀρεταῖσι μεμαότας υἱούς.

νῦν δ’ ἐν αἱμακουρίαις (90)

**ἀγˈλααῖσι** μέμικται,

Ἀλφεοῦ πόρῳ κλιθείς,

τύμβον ἀμφίπολον ἔχων πολυξενω-

 τάτῳ παρὰ βωμῷ· τὸ δὲ κˈλέος (93)

τηλόθεν **δέδορκε** τᾶν Ὀλυμπιάδων ἐν δρόμοις

Πέλοπος, ἵνα ταχυτὰς ποδῶν **ἐρίζεται** (95)

ἀκμαί τ’ ἰσχύος θρασύπονοι·

ὁ νικῶν δὲ λοιπὸν **ἀμφὶ** βίοτον

ἔχει **μελιτόεσσαν** **εὐδίαν**

ἀέθˈλων γ’ ἕνεκεν· τὸ δ’ αἰεὶ παράμερον ἐσλόν

**ὕπατον** ἔρχεται παντὶ βροτῶν.

Cowards do not seek out great risks;

men must die, so why should anyone crouch in darkness,

aimlessly nursing an undistinguished old age,

without a share in glorious deeds?

This contest is meant for me; now give me the success I desire.”

So he spoke and his pleas were not in vain.

The god gave him honour,

and a golden chariot with tireless winged horses.

So he defeated Oenomaus, and won the maiden to share his bed,

and fathered six sons, leaders of the people,

all of them thirsting to do great deeds.

And now he luxuriates in spendid blood-offerings

as he reclines beside the ford of Alpheus.

His tomb beside his altar is well tended,

thronged about by many a stranger.

The fame which stems from Pelop’s games at Olympia

is visible from afar–­­ the games where

the contest is for fleetness of foot

and daring deeds of strength pushed to the limit.

For the rest of his days the victor enjoys honey-sweet tranquillity,

as far, this is, as the games can provide it;

the highest good for every mortal

is indeed that which comes to him day by day.

ὁ μέγας δὲ κίνδυνος ἄναλκιν οὐ φῶτα **λαμβάνει**. (81)

Great risks do not seize cowards. (My translation).

The expression is an example of the conceptual metaphor EVENTS ARE ACTIONS.

τά κέ τις ἀνώνυμον γῆρας **ἐν** **σκότῳ** **καθήμενος** **ἕψοι** μάταν,

so why should anyone crouch in darkness,

aimlessly nursing an undistinguished old age,

In this sentence, I have marked four words as metaphorical. To “crouch in darkness” is contrary to two essential metaphors in *Olympian* 1, which have been discussed above: EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT and VALUE IS UP. This is not the first instance in *Olympian* 1 where these two conceptual metaphors are combined. In the first part of the ode, Pindar refers to a chain of light sources that are visual symbols of excellence, but the passing from the rich man’s gold, over the blazing fire in the night to the sun is not only a progression in light power but also a movement upwards, implicitly referring to the VALUE IS UP metaphor. The words “excellence” and “value” are synonyms and are chosen by me as target domains and they are not explicitly stated by Pindar. Fame, superiority, or power are also possible alternatives. Is the meaning of EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT identical to that of VALUE IS UP? I suggest that the two metaphors present excellence/value in two slightly different ways: the light-metaphor expresses an immediate visual experience of excellence, whereas the up-metaphor expresses value produced by intellectual evaluation. To Pindar the origin of excellence is the gods:

Natural talents are the best in every way.

Many have taken lessons in prowess,

trying their utmost to achieve distinction;

but without a god’s help every achievement

is best passed over in silence.

*Olympian* 9 (100-104)

In Pindar’s poetry divinity is manifested both as *epifaneia, revelation* (EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT) and *dogma, established truth* (VALUE IS UP).

ἀνώνυμον γῆρας … **ἕψοι** μάταν,

aimlessly nursing an undistinguished old age

The basic meaning of *ἕψοι* is *boil*, of food *digest*, and of metals *melt* or *refine*. The meaning of the sentence above is probably to pick out the value of undistinguished old age and cherish it. The meaning of *ἕψοι* here is close to that of *καταπέψαι* used to describe Tantalus’ inability to recognize the value of the honor given to him by the gods, and both words are used metaphorically according to the conceptual metaphor MENTAL HANDLING IS DIGESTION, or with a more generic formulation MENTAL PROCESSES ARE PHYSICAL PROCESSES. Value is a central concept in Pindar’s poetry and the two metaphorical words *ἕψοι* and *καταπέψαι* argue that value can be intellectually separated from worthlessness, but according to Pindar, there is no gold to pan for in an undistinguished old age.

ἀλλ’ ἐμοὶ μὲν οὗτος ἄεθˈλος **ὑποκείσεται**

This contest is meant for me;

The basic meaning of *ὑποκείσεται* is *lie under* or *beneath*. According to LSJ, the metaphorical meaning is *to be put under* the eyes or mind e.g. *submitted* or *proposed to one*. I suggest that the meaning of the sentence is that the contest was not only wanted by Pelops but also offered to him, probably through divine intervention. The metaphor emphasizes that human excellence is dependent on divine grace.

**Δʹἕλεν** δ’ Οἰνομάου βίαν παρθένον τε σύνευνον·

He took Oenomaus’ life and the maiden as a bride. (My translation).

Bowra (1964, p. 208) comments on the use of*ἕλεν*: “A similar effect of surprise comes when Pindar brings two disparate elements together by placing them under a single verb, which in fact is used with two different meanings.” This is another example of Pindar’s intentional ambiguities.

νῦν δ’ ἐν αἱμακουρίαις **ἀγˈλααῖσι** μέμικται,

And now he luxuriates in splendid blood-offerings

This sentence is another example of the metaphor EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT.

τὸ δὲ κˈλέος τηλόθεν **δέδορκε** τᾶν Ὀλυμπιάδων ἐν δρόμοις Πέλοπος,

The fame which stems from Pelops’ games at Olympia is visible from afar,

This expression corresponds to KNOWING IS SEEING.

ἵνα ταχυτὰς ποδῶν **ἐρίζεται** (95)

ἀκμαί τ’ ἰσχύος θρασύπονοι·

games where the contest is for fleetness of foot

and daring deeds of strength pushed to the limit.

These expressions correspond to the conceptual metaphor HUMAN PROPERTIES ARE AGENTS.

ὁ νικῶν δὲ λοιπὸν **ἀμφὶ**  βίοτον

ἔχει **μελιτόεσσαν** **εὐδίαν**

For the rest of his days the victor enjoys honey-sweet tranquillity,

The blessed condition following the victory is characterized by two metaphorical words *μελιτόεσσαν* and *εὐδίαν*. The basic meaning of these two words is *sweetened with honey* and *fine weather.* Thus, both words express the permanent delights of victory. The corresponding conceptual metaphors can be expressed as HAPPINESS IS A SWEET TASTE and GOOD FORTUNE IS FAIR WEATHER.

τὸ δ’ αἰεὶ παράμερον ἐσλόν

**ὕπατον** ἔρχεται παντὶ βροτῶν.

the highest good for every mortal

is indeed that which comes to him day by day.

This is another example of the metaphor VALUE IS UP.

Lines 101-116

ἐμὲ δὲ **στεφανῶσαι**

κεῖνον ἱππίῳ νόμῳ

Αἰοληΐδι μολπᾷ

χρή· πέποιθα δὲ ξένον

μή τιν’ ἀμφότερα καλῶν τε ἴδˈριν †ἅ-

μα καὶ δύναμιν κυριώτερον (104)

τῶν γε νῦν κλυταῖσι δαιδαλωσέμεν ὕμνων **πτυχαῖς**. (105)

θεὸς ἐπίτροπος ἐὼν τεαῖσι μήδεται

ἔχων τοῦτο κᾶδος, Ἱέρων,

μερίμναισιν· εἰ δὲ μὴ ταχὺ λίποι,

ἔτι **γˈλυκυτέραν** κεν ἔλπομαι

σὺν **ἅρματι** θοῷ κλεΐ- (110)

 ξειν **ἐπίκουρον** εὑρὼν **ὁδὸν** λόγων (110)

παρ’εὐδείελονἐλθὼν Κρόνιον. ἐμοὶ μὲν ὦν
Μοῖσα καρτερώτατον **βέλος** ἀλκᾷ **τρέφει**·
ἄλλοισι δ’ ἄλλοι μεγάλοι· τὸ δ’ **ἔ-**

**σχατον** **κορυφοῦται** (113)

βασιλεῦσι. μηκέτι **πάπταινε** **πόρσιον**.

εἴη σέ τε τοῦτον ὑψοῦ χρόνον **πατεῖν**, (115)

ἐμέ τε τοσσάδε νικαφόροις (115b)

ὁμιλεῖν **πρόφαντον** σοφίᾳ **καθ’** Ἕλ- (116)

λανας ἐόντα παντᾷ (116)

My task is to crown such a man as this

with the horseman’s song in Aeolian melody.

I am certain that there is no host today

more acquainted with glorious deeds

or more established in his power,

whom my craft can adorn with fame-giving intricacies of song.

Some god, Hieron, watches over your ambitions,

making this his concern. If he does not desert you

I hope to find an even more inviting path of poetry

to help me to celebrate your victory in the swift chariot,

when I visit the sunlit hill of Cronus.

For me, the muse keeps a mighty defensive weapon.

Other men attain greatness in different ways;

the highest peaks are occupied by kings,

so do not look to climb further.

May you walk on high in the reign of yours,

and may I always be the victors’ companion,

pre-eminent by my poetry throughout all Hellas.

ἐμὲ δὲ **στεφανῶσαι**

κεῖνον **ἱππίῳ** **νόμῳ**

Αἰοληΐδι μολπᾷ

My task is to crown such a man as this

with the horseman’s song in Aeolian melody.

The basic meaning of the verb *στεφανῶσαι* is to crown. Here the meaning is metaphorical. The victor is honored with a song.

τῶν γε νῦν κλυταῖσι δαιδαλωσέμεν ὕμνων **πτυχαῖς**.

whom my craft can adorn with fame-giving intricacies of song

The basic meaning of *πτυχαῖς* is *fold* and *ὕμνων πτυχαῖς* is translated by LSJ as *varied turns of poetry*. A corresponding conceptual metaphor is POETRY IS A FABRIC.

ἔτι **γˈλυκυτέραν** κεν ἔλπομαι

σὺν **ἅρματι** θοῷ κλεΐ- (110)

 ξειν **ἐπίκουρον** εὑρὼν **ὁδὸν** λόγων

παρ’ εὐδείελον ἐλθὼν Κρόνιον.

I hope to find an even more inviting path of poetry

to help me to celebrate your victory in the swift chariot,

when I visit the sunlit hill of Cronus.

Patten (2009, pp. 191-204) suggests that the chariot not only refers to Hieron’s victorious future chariot but also to the chariot of the Muses, which Pindar enters in several of his odes. This passage of the poem refers to Pindar’s own poetic activity and the road metaphor establishes a distance between the poetic intention and its expression.

ἐμοὶ μὲν ὦν
Μοῖσα καρτερώτατον **βέλος** **ἀλκᾷ** **τρέφει**·

For me, the muse keeps a bold and mighty arrow. (My translation).

Patten sees two messages in the metaphors: (1) the poet can establish a successful communication between himself and his public; (2) it is possible to overcome the distance between the poet’s initial, internal intention and the final, external expression. Patten traces the latter idea back to Plato. It says that meaning is created in an interior mental process, and that the subject’s intention therefore should determine the interpretation of the corresponding external expression. Consequently, this philosophy claims that it is possible to find the true meaning of a text. Patten classifies this thought-pattern as metaphysical and finds evidence of that notion in Pindar’s text. He provides good arguments for the view that these thoughts are the philosophical backbone of the two recurrent metaphors about the chariot and the arrow in Pindar’s odes. However, it is not evident that this interpretation captures all relevant aspects of these metaphors. I suggest another interpretation: a conceptual metaphor based on the chariot and the arrow metaphors: THE POET IS AN ATHLETE/WARRIOR.[[3]](#footnote-3) This metaphor emphasizes the poet’s aspiration to mimic the excellence of these two categories. In *Isthmian* 1, Pindar acknowledges “every man who dedicates his heart to excellence” but “the greatest profit is earned by the man who wins splendid glory in war or in the games.” According to Pindar, that excellence is dependent on inborn talent:

Natural talents are best in every way.

Many have taken lessons in prowess,

trying their utmost to achieve distinction.

But without a god’s help every achievement

is best passed over in silence.

On the other hand, in *Olympian* 1, Pindar is using the word *sofos* for poets and the basic meaning of that word is according to LSJ *skilled in any handicraft* or *art*, *cunning in his craft.* Quality in art and handicraft relies not only on god-given talent but also on training and external pre-existing knowledge, making the craftsman a member of a professional collective, like a guild. Poets (in plural) join the hearth of Hieron to praise the son of Cronus (*Olympian* 1, line 8-9). The collective perspective differs from the romantic notion of art being born in the mind of a genius. In this perspective, the chariot and arrow metaphors express an ambition to uphold the status of the poet, Pindar himself as well as poets in general. There is also a collective aspect of Bundy’s “master principle”: “there is no passage in Pindar and Bakkulides that is not in its primary intent encomiastic – that is, designed to enhance the glory of a particular patron” (Bundy, 1986 p. 3). The poetic conventions governing encomiastic poetry during the archaic period were shared by many poets.

τὸ δ’ **ἔσχατον** **κορυφοῦται** (113)

βασιλεῦσι. μηκέτι **πάπταινε** **πόρσιον**.

εἴη σέ τε τοῦτον **ὑψοῦ** χρόνον **πατεῖν**

the highest peaks are occupied by kings,

so do not look to climb further.

May you walk on high in the reign of yours,

*δ’ ἔσχατον κορυφοῦται* and *ὑψοῦ πατεῖν* are two examples of expressions derived from VALUE IS UP whereas *πάπταινε* and *πόρσιον* are expressions of LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

ἐμέ τε τοσσάδε νικαφόροις (115b)

ὁμιλεῖν **πρόφαντον** σοφίᾳ καθ’ Ἕλ- (116)

λανας ἐόντα παντᾷ.

and may I always be the victors’ companion,

seen from a distance by my poetry throughout all Hellas. (My translation).

*Πρόφαντον*, seen from a distance is derived from KNWOWING IS SEEING.

4.1.2 Summary of conceptual metaphors in *Olympian* 1

In this section, I present those conceptual metaphors that, according to my interpretation of the poem, represent principal ideas in *Olympian* 1. The subjective character of these interpretations of *Olympian* 1 and *Isthmian* 1 is obviously a limitation of this thesis, and the results are open to discussion, The original Geek text has been translated to English. Three categories of metaphors are identified: metaphors about excellence, handling of one’s life course, and poetry.

The two most important thematical metaphors are EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT and VALUE IS UP. They both express the theme of excellence, fame, and power, which in *Olympian* 1 primarily is connected to Olympia as athletic arena, to Pelops and Hieron as heroes and secondarily to Pindar as poet. There are multiple metaphorical words and non-metaphorical expressions that build these conceptual metaphors in the poem, and I will address that construction in the next section.

Man’s ever-changing and insecure life course, for example that of Tantalus in this ode, is expressed in the metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY and MENTAL HANDLING IS DIGESTION. The persistent delights of a victory are expressed by the metaphor GOOD FORTUNE IS FAIR WEATHER.

Several conceptual metaphors in *Olympian* 1 are about poets and poetry: POETRY IS AN AGENT and POETRY IS A PHYSICAL FORCE illustrate the power of poetry to influence man’s thoughts and emotions, and POETRY IS A FABRIC expresses the intricacy of poetry. The metaphor POETRY IS A TESTIMONY ABOUT REALITY assigns the value of truth to Pindar’s poetry, which is an important notion when Pindar presents his work. His poetry offers true statements about events in the arena and about the character of people involved. The versions of the myths he is referring to must also be historically true. Finally, the metaphor THE POET IS AN ATHLETE/WARRIOR expresses the poet’s aspiration to mimic the excellence of athletes and warriors. Pindar also explicitly states his wish “to be pre-eminent by my poetry throughout all Hellas.” In summary, although excellence of the winner of the game, in this case Hieron, is the central theme of metaphors in *Olympian* 1, several of them concern the character of poetry and the quality and status of the poetic *ego*, be it Pindar *in persona* or poets in general.

I have identified other metaphors that, to my judgment, do not represent principal ideas in Pindar’s poetry. Most of them are of a generic type, where the source domain consists of physical objects, forces, or processes. The target domains are often psychological states, forces, or thoughts. I will give two examples: ABSTRACT CONCEPTS ARE PHYSICAL OBJECTS, and PSYCOLOGICAL FORCES ARE PHYSICAL FORCES. At an even higher level of abstraction, they might be summarized with the metaphor PSYCHIC PHENOMENA ARE PHYSICAL PHENOMENA, which can serve as a generic description of many metaphors. I suggest that these types of conceptual metaphors are merely intended to achieve a stylistic effect, making the text more concrete, visual, and tangible. A few of these metaphors are well-known examples of conceptual metaphors e.g, EVENTS ARE ACTIONS, KNOWING IS SEING and DESIRE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE.

4.1.3 How does Pindar build conceptual metaphors in *Olympian* 1?

In this section, I summarize how Pindar constructs the conceptual metaphors EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT and VALUE IS UP in *Olympian* 1. The Geek text is presented in English translation. Pindar starts the construction of EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT by attributing value to gold (and water). Gold is then connected to wealth and power through the rich man. The shining gold is then compared to a fire in the night. That comparison may be interpreted as a simile or as a comparison between two mental images. Next step is the introduction of other shining objects in the night: the stars. Then follows an implicit metaphor THE OLYMPIAN GAMES ARE THE SUN. Just as the sun is the strongest shining star, the Olympian games offer the greatest athlete games.

The EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT metaphor can also be perceived when Pindar describes Hieron: 1) “his glory gleams in the best of poetry and music” and 2) “his fame shines out over the land.” The same might be true for the description of Pelops: “after Clotho had lifted him from the purifying cauldron fitted with a shoulder of gleaming ivory.” If Pindar here is alluding to the metaphor EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT, he transforms the prothesis of the shoulder to a mark of excellence. Thus, the light in this expression can be interpreted both literally and figuratively. There is also a description of Pelops’ afterlife: “now he luxuriates in splendid offerings.” The EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT metaphor is matched with a corresponding contrast: INSIGNIFICANCE IS DARKNESS: “so why should anyone crouch in darkness?”

The conclusion is that Pindar builds the EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT metaphor with metaphorical words, non-metaphorical words and expressions, a comparison between two mental images/a simile, an implicit metaphor, a contrasting metaphor, and an expression that can be interpreted both literally and figuratively.

In a similar fashion, the VALUE IS UP metaphor is constructed with different elements. In the first part of the ode, Pindar refers to a chain of light sources that are visual symbols of excellence with an increasing light power, but they also illustrate a movement upwards (from the rich man’s gold, over the fire in the night, to the sun), implicitly referring to the VALUE IS UP metaphor. Fisker (1990, p.14) also notes that *Höhe* is an important theme in the ode, and that it is introduced already in the beginning of the ode.

About Hieron is told that “he chooses for himself the peaks of excellence”, which is a metaphoric expression. A contrasting metaphor is INSIGNIFICANCE IS DOWN referred to in the expression “so why should anyone crouch in darkness?” At the end of the ode, there are three metaphoric expressions (here underlined) alluding to the VALUE IS UP metaphor:

the highest peaks are occupied by kings,

so do not look to climb further.

May you walk on high in the reign of yours,

Finally, the structure of the story about the transfer of Pelops to heaven evoked by Poseidon’s love for him and his return to the earth due to his father’s misdeeds is also aligned with the metaphor. Pelops was carried up to Zeus in a golden chariot and in that image, gold (value) is linked to upward motion. Thus, the VALUE IS UP metaphor is built with metaphorical words, non-metaphorical expressions, and a contrasting metaphor.

4.2 *Isthmian* 1

For Herodotus of Thebes, winner of the chariot race.

The text in *Isthmian* 1 is divided into comprehensible sections, each containing the original Greek text with a translation to English. In the Greek text, metaphorical words are designated by bold letters. Most metaphorical words are then discussed, and for some of them conceptual metaphors are formulated. When all sections of the ode have been analyzed, I discuss which conceptual metaphors represent principal ideas in the ode,and finally, I intend to show how Pindar constructs the conceptual metaphor THE POET IS A CRAFTSMAN.

Lines 1-13

**Μᾶτερ** ἐμά, τὸ τεόν, χρύσασπι Θήβα,

πρᾶγμα καὶ ἀσχολίας **ὑπέρτερον**

**θήσομαι.** μή μοι κραναὰ νεμεσάσαι

Δᾶλος, **ἐν** ᾇ **κέχυμαι**.

τί φίλτερον κεδˈνῶν **τοκέων** ἀγαθοῖς; (5)

**εἶξον**, ὦπολλωνιάς· ἀμφοτερᾶν

τοι χαρίτων σὺν θεοῖς **ζεύξω** τέλος, (6)

καὶ τὸν ἀκερσεκόμαν Φοῖβον χορεύων

ἐν Κέῳ̆ ἀμφιρύτᾳ σὺν ποντίοις

ἀνδράσιν, καὶ τὰν **ἁλιερκέα** Ἰσθμοῦ

δειράδ’· ἐπεὶ στεφάνους (10)

ἓξ ὤπασεν Κάδˈμου στρατῷ ἐξ ἀέθλων,

καλλίνικον πατˈρίδι κῦδος. ἐν ᾇ

καὶ τὸν ἀδείμαντον Ἀλκμήνα τέκεν (12)

παῖδα, θˈρασεῖαι τόν ποτε Γηρυόνα φρῖξαν κύνες.

Mother Thebe of the golden shield

I shall judge your demands even above my want of leisure.

Let not rocky Delos, whose concerns now absorb me,

be angry with me; for what is dearer to good men than

cherished parents?

Give way, island of Apollo. With the gods’ help

I shall complete both offerings of song together,

and celebrate in the dance both Phoebus of the unshorn hair

on sea-washed Ceos, with its seafaring men,

and also the sea-bounded ridge of the Isthmus,

since it has conferred on Cadmus’ people six crowns from

the games –

the honour of glorious victories for their country –

a land where also Alcmene bore her fearless son,

before whom the dogs of Geryon once flinched in fear.

The poet is facing competing expectations of poetic delivery, and he must choose which one to comply with. He puts Thebes before Delos pleading his and Herodotus’ kinship with Thebes with two metaphoric expressions: Thebes is addressed as *Μᾶτερ ἐμά*, *my mother*, and the idea of kinship is further strengthened by the word *τοκέων*, *father* or *parent*. With these metaphorical words, an emotional and moral band is created between the poet and his native town. He becomes the good man that cherishes his parents. The fact that Pindar cherishes not only his mother but also his father is important later in the poem when Pindar is telling the unlucky fate of Herodotus’ father Asopodorus. Pindar also expresses his ties to Delos with the metaphorical word *κέχυμαι*, *I am* *engaged*. The poet creates a third bond by *yoking* (*ζεύξω)* the completion of the commissions given by Delos and Thebes. Based on these metaphorical words (*Μᾶτερ, τοκέων, κέχυμαι* and *ζεύξω*) a conceptual metaphor is formulated by Steiner (1986, pp. 51-54) THE POET IS A CRAFTSMAN. Craftsmen fit together things, while “at a more figurative level, the poet must match the subject to the word and theme and build a tight joint between the laudandus and the particular song Pindar has composed in his honour.” Pindar also mixes or suspends tenses in his initial metapoetic considerations. His concerns about the creative order of his writing are not placed in past tense, before the creation of the poem, but in present and future tense (*ὑπέρτερον θήσομαι* and *ζεύξω*).

The poet’s ability to connect makes him a good mediator between the different external demands he is facing. He seems to enter a negotiating process, where he is slightly changing his bid. First, he chooses Thebes before Delos, and then he expresses his deep engagement in Delos. Further, he hopes to complete both commissions at the same time and celebrate in a dance both Delos’ god Apollon and Isthmus, since the latter had conferred six crowns to athletes from Thebes.

καὶ τὰν **ἁλιερκέα** Ἰσθμοῦ

the sea-bounded ridge of the Isthmus

The word **ἁλιερκέα** is an example of the metaphor EVENTS ARE ACTIONS, and it expresses the idea that the universe is governed by supreme intention.

Lines 14–32

ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ Ἡροδότῳ **τεύ-**

**χων** τὸ μὲν ἅρματι τεθˈρίππῳ γέρας, (14)

ἁνία τ’ ἀλλοτρίαις οὐ χερσὶ νωμάσαντ’ ἐθέλω (15)

ἢ Καστορείῳ̆ ἢ Ἰολάοι’ **ἐναρμόξαι** νιν ὕμνῳ.

κεῖνοι γὰρ ἡρώων διφρηλάται Λακεδαίμονι καὶ

Θήβαις ἐτέκˈνωθεν κράτιστοι· (17)

ἔν τ’ ἀέθλοισι θίγον πλείστων ἀγώνων,

καὶ τριπόδεσσιν **ἐκόσμησαν** δόμον

καὶ λεβήτεσσιν φιάλαισί τε χρυσοῦ, (20)

**γευόμενοι** στεφάνων

**νικαφόρων** · **λάμπει** δὲ σαφὴς ἀρετά

ἔν τε γυμνοῖσι σταδίοις σφίσιν ἔν

 ⸏τ’ ἀσπιδοδούποισιν ὁπˈλίταις δρόμοις, (23)

οἷά τε χερσὶν ἀκοντίζοντες αἰχμαῖς

καὶ λιθίνοις ὁπότ’ ἐν δίσκοις ἵεν. (25)

οὐ γὰρ ἦν πενταέθλιον, ἀλλ’ ἐφ’ ἑκάστῳ

ἔργματι **κεῖτο** τέλος.

τῶν ἀθˈρόοις ἀνδησάμενοι θαμάκις

ἔρνεσιν χαίτας ῥεέθροισί τε Δίρ-

 κας ἔφανεν καὶ παρ’ Εὐρώτᾳ πέλας, (29)

Ἰφικˈλέος μὲν παῖς ὁμόδαμος ἐὼν Σπαρτῶν γένει, (30)

Τυνδαρίδας δ’ ἐν Ἀχαιοῖςὑψίπεδον Θεράπνας οἰκέων ἕδος. (31)

χαίρετ’

But it is for Herodotus that I fashion a gift of honour,

for his four-horsed chariot, and for his handling of its reins

with his own hands, and I wish to associate him with a hymn to Castor or to Iolaus,

for they were born to be the mightiest of hero charioteers

in Lacedaemon and in the Thebes; and in the games

they put their hands to the greatest number of contests,

and graced their houses with tripods, cauldrons, and

 golden bowls,

whenever they tasted the crowns of victory.

Their excellence shines out with brightness

in both naked races and in the contests where armed men run,

their shields clattering; and also when they threw javelins

from their hands, and when they flung discuses of stone-

for the pentathlon did not exist, but a prize was given for each event.

Often they bound their hair with close-knit garlands from

 these games,

and appeared in glory beside Dirce’s waters and by the Eurotas;

one of them Iphicles’ son, of the same race as the Sown men,

the other Tyndareus’ son, who lived among the Achaeans

in his house on the high plateau of Therapne. Farewell to you;

ἐθέλω (15)

ἢ Καστορείῳ̆ ἢ Ἰολάοι’ **ἐναρμόξαι** νιν ὕμνῳ.

I want to fit him with a hymn to Castor and Iolaus (my translation).

This sentence is a continuation of Pindar’s metapoetic discussion and is an expression of the conceptual metaphor THE POET IS A CRAFTSMAN, discussed in the previous section of lines 1-13.

Svenbro (2020) finds more in the metaphor THE POET IS A CRAFTSMAN than the skill of composing a poem. He describes the social and economic conditions of the encomiastic production during the archaic period. To secure his living, the poet had to offer his service to many clients, and he often emphasized his skill directly in the poem. For example, Pindar compared himself to a skillful craftsman, and he used one group of metaphors for the poem consisting in building, statues, and monuments. Another group of metaphors comprised braiding, tissue, and sewing. The metaphor A POET IS A CRAFTSMAN tells us that the poem is a crafted object that can be turned into a commodity via a contractual procedure. According to Svenbro, that ego image of the epinician is different from that of the Homeric bard, who did not look upon himself as the creator of the oral poems he performed. He rather regarded himself as a mediator of a message from the Muse. The bard appeared in a limited circle of people, whom he knew well and whose values he could express. He was not directly paid for his performance. The poem was not a commodity to be sold.

Bowra (1964, pp. 4-8) has a slightly different approach to Pindar as a craftsman:

Though he uses imagery drawn from handicraft to illustrate certain aspects or features of his art, he does not regard this art itself as a handicraft. It calls for something more than skill and this is the assumption of *sofia*.

His genius is given as an inborn gift from the gods, and he is dependent on the Muse to create his poems. Is this view not analogous to that of the Homeric bard according to Svenbro? In my opinion it is not. The bard regarded himself not as the creator of the poem but rather as a medium for the Muse. Pindar sees himself as a brilliant creator, whose excellence emanates from the gods. In this respect, Pindar does not make any difference between the excellence of a poet and that of a victorious athlete.

Despite Bowra’s objection to Pindar just being a craftsman, I find Svenbro’s characterization of Pindar valid. For instance, the social and economic perspectives of being a craftsman are visible in the initial priamel of *Isthmian* 1: the poet is an independent entrepreneur, who has attracted many customers, and now he has delivery problems, but he is confident that he will solve them. In the fictive negotiation with his customers, he trusts the persuasive power of poetical language. The metaphors of relationship will tell why he puts Thebes first. Pindar merges business with poetry. Furthermore, the economic perspective of the encomiastic occupation is also visible later in the ode, where Pindar uses economic metaphors to characterize the relationship between the victorious athlete and his social environment.

Pindar attests to the metaphorical character of the mythological section in the poem. He creates a tacit simile: HERODOTUS IS LIKE CASTOR AND IOLAUS.

**ἐκόσμησαν** δόμον

They graced their houses

The basic meaning of *ἐκόσμησαν* is order or arrange and the metaphorical meaning here is to adorn or embellish. The corresponding conceptual metaphor is BEAUTY IS ORDER.

**γευόμενοι** στεφάνων **νικαφόρων**

tasting the crowns of victory. (My translation).

This expression can be seen as an example of the generic, conceptual metaphor

 A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE IS A PHYSICAL SENSATION.

 **λάμπει** δὲ σαφὴς ἀρετά

Their excellence shines out with brightness

This is another example of the conceptual metaphor EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT.

Lines 32-40

ἐγὼ δὲ Ποσειδάωνι Ἰσθμῷ τε ζαθέᾳ

Ὀγχηστίαισίν τ’ ἀϊόνεσσιν **περιστέλλων** ἀοιδάν

γαρύσομαι τοῦδ’ ἀνδρὸς **ἐν** τιμαῖσιν ἀγακˈλέα τὰν Ἀσωποδώρου πατˈρὸς αἶσαν (34)

Ἐρχομενοῖό τε πατˈρῴαν ἄρουραν, (35)

ἅ νιν **ἐρειδόμενον** **ναυαγίαις**

**ἐξ** ἀμετˈρήτας **ἁλὸς** **ἐν** **κρυοέσσᾳ**

δέξατο συντυχίᾳ·

νῦν δ’ αὖτις ἀρχαίας **ἐπέβασε** Πότμος

συγγενὴς **εὐαμερίας**. ὁ πονή⸏σαις δὲ νόῳ καὶ προμάθειαν φέρει (40)

but I wrap my robe of song about Poseidon

And the sacred Isthmus, and the Onchestus’ shores,

I shall as I honour this man speak of the glorious fate of his father

Asopodorus, and his ancestral lands in Orchomenus,

which have welcomed him back from the boundless sea,

When he was oppressed by shipwreck and chill calamity.

But now his family’s Destiny has again established him

in the fair weather of former times.

The man who has toiled with understanding also wins foresight;

ἐγὼ δὲ Ποσειδάωνι Ἰσθμῷ τε ζαθέᾳ Ὀγχηστίαισίν τ’ ἀϊόνεσσιν **περιστέλλων** ἀοιδάν

but I wrap my robe of song about Poseidon and the sacred Isthmus, and the Onchestus’ shores,

This is a recurrent metaphor in Pindar’s poetry: POETRY IS A FABRIC.

γαρύσομαι τοῦδ’ ἀνδρὸς ἐν τιμαῖσιν ἀγακˈλέα τὰν Ἀσωποδώρου πατˈρὸς αἶσαν (34)

Ἐρχομενοῖό τε πατˈρῴαν ἄρουραν, (35)

ἅ νιν **ἐρειδόμενον** **ναυαγίαις**

**ἐξ** ἀμετˈρήτας **ἁλὸς** **ἐν** **κρυοέσσᾳ**

δέξατο συντυχίᾳ·

νῦν δ’ αὖτις ἀρχαίας **ἐπέβασε** Πότμος

συγγενὴς **εὐαμερίας**.

I shall as I honour this man speak of the glorious fate of his father

Asopodorus, and his ancestral lands in Orchomenus,

which have welcomed him back from a boundless sea,

when he was oppressed by shipwreck and chill calamity.

But now his family’s Destiny has again established him

in the fair weather of former times.

Pindar describes Asopodorus’ misfortune as a shipwreck with ensuing chill calamity. However, he survived and was welcomed back to his native land. He regained his earlier good living conditions. Some scholars have accepted a literal interpretation: Asopodorus was saved from a shipwreck (Farnell, 1930, p. 242), whereas others have interpreted the text as a metaphor. Bundy (1986, pp. 47-53) chooses the metaphorical alternative: “the grief of the past is represented by a storm (shipwreck) and the joy of the present by fair weather.” He compares this section of the poem with other Pindaric odes: I.7.23-38 and I.4.16-19 and concludes that these texts show that storm and fair weather represent misfortune and success, respectively. Bowra (1964, pp. 116-117) also identifies the metaphorical quality of the text without even mentioning the possibility of a literal interpretation. Bundy suggests that the real misfortune could have been a political exile. I agree with Bowra and Bundy and choose to regard the text as a metaphor. One function of this metaphor is to reduce any criticism of Asopodorus: sailing at sea is full of danger and requires courage; bad weather and shipwreck are permanent threats to anyone at sea. Hence, the metaphor conceals possible bad judgments and moral shortcomings on the part of the protagonist. The misfortune is mainly caused by external circumstances. The conceptual metaphors of this section are LIFE IS A SEA JOURNEY; MISFORTUNE IS A SHIPWRECK; GOOD FORTUNE IS FAIR WEATHER. LIFE IS A SEA JOURNEY is a special form of LIFE IS A JOURNEY that emphasizes the dangers of life.

Lines 41-63

εἰ δ’ ἀρετᾷ **κατάκειται** πᾶσαν ὀργάν,

ἀμφότερον δαπάναις τε καὶ πόνοις,

**χρή** νιν εὑρόντεσσιν ἀγάνορα κόμπον

μὴ φθονεραῖσι **φέρειν**

γνώμαις. ἐπεὶ κούφα δόσις ἀνδρὶ σοφῷ (45)

ἀντὶ μόχθων παντοδαπῶν ἔπος εἰπόντ’ ἀγαθὸν ξυνὸν **ὀρθῶσαι** **καλόν**. (46)

**μισθὸς** γὰρ ἄλλοις ἄλλος ἐπ’ ἔργμασιν ἀνθρώποις **γλυκύς**, (47)

μηλοβότᾳ τ’ ἀρότᾳ τ’ ὀρνιχολόχῳ τε καὶ ὃν πόντος **τρ**ἐ**φει**. (48)

γαστρὶ δὲ πᾶς τις ἀμύνων λιμὸν αἰανῆ **τέταται**·

ὃς δ’ **ἀμφ**’ ἀέθˈλοις ἢ πολεμίζων **ἄρηται** κῦδος ἁβˈρόν, (50)

εὐαγορηθεὶς **κέρδος** **ὕψιστον** δέκεται, πολιατᾶν καὶ ξένων **γλώσας** **ἄωτον**. (51)

ἄμμι δ’ ἔοικε Κρόνου σεισίχθον’ υἱόν

γείτον’ ἀμειβομένοις εὐεργέταν

ἁρμάτων ἱπποδˈρόμιον **κελαδῆσαι**,

καὶ σέθεν, Ἀμφιτρύων, (55)

παῖδας προσειπεῖν τὸν Μινύα τε μυχόν

καὶ τὸ Δάματρος κλυτὸν ἄλσος Ἐλευ⸏σῖνα καὶ Εὔβοιαν ἐν

γναμπτοῖς δρόμοις· (57)

Πρωτεσίλα, τὸ τεὸν δ’ ἀνδρῶν Ἀχαιῶν

ἐν Φυλάκᾳ τέμενος **συμβάλλομαι**.

πάντα δ’ ἐξειπεῖν, ὅσ’ ἀγώνιος Ἑρμᾶς (60)

Ἡροδότῳ ἔπορεν

ἵπποις, **ἀφαιρεῖται** βραχὺ μέτˈρον ἔχων

ὕμνος. ἦ μὰν πολλάκι καὶ τὸ σεσω-

 ⸏παμένον εὐθυμίαν μείζω **φέρει**. (63)

and if he dedicates his whole heart to excellence,

employing both expense and effort,

we must with an ungrudging spirit

grant him a proud boast if he achieves it.

For it is a trifling offering if a skilled poet,

speaking a good word to mark many great labours,

erects a splendid memorial in which all may share.

Different rewards bring pleasure to men for different deeds:

the shepherd, the ploughman, the bird-trapper,

the man whose livelihood is in the sea;

For all men strain to keep persistent hunger from their bellies.

But the greatest profit is earned by the man

who wins splendid glory in war or in the games,

through praise, which is the choicest address

from the tongues of citizens and strangers.

As for us, we must sing of our neighbour, Cronus’ son the

 Earthshaker,

lord of the running horses, to repay his aid in the chariot race;

and we must call upon your sons, Amphitryon, and the vale

 of Minyas,

and Demeter’s famous grove at Eleusis, and Euboea’s twisting

 racecourse.

To these, Protesilaus, I add your precinct at Phylace of the

 men of Achaea.

But to give full account of the successes

which Hermes, God of the games, has granted Herodotus

is precluded by the brief measure of my song.

In truth, what is passed over in silence often brings greater

 happiness.

In lines 41-51, Pindar elaborates his view that human excellence deserves praise. Bundy (1986, pp. 57-58) identifies an economic metaphor: “*ἀρετά* creates a debt that must be paid in true coin of praise.” Bundy recognizes the metaphor through the metaphoric words *χρή, δόσις μισθὸς* and *κέρδος*. I suggest that the metaphor can be reformulated based on the implicit simile in lines 48-49:

**μισθὸς** γὰρ ἄλλοις ἄλλος ἐπ’ ἔργμασιν ἀνθρώποις **γλυκύς**, (47)

μηλοβότᾳ τ’ ἀρότᾳ τ’ ὀρνιχολόχῳ τε καὶ ὃν πόντος **τρ**ἐ**φει**. (48)

γαστρὶ δὲ πᾶς τις ἀμύνων λιμὸν αἰανῆ **τέταται**·

Different rewards bring pleasure to men for different deeds:

the shepherd, the ploughman, the bird-trapper,

the man whose livelihood is in the sea;

For all men strain to keep persistent hunger from their bellies.

With this implicit simile, Pindar compares the athlete’s craving for praise with the physical hunger of a shepherd, a ploughman, and a bird-trapper. Consequently, the need for reward after an effort is not limited to an act of excellence but is a general human demand. Hence, a general conceptual metaphor in the poem can be expressed: A HUMAN ENTERPRISE IS AN ECONOMIC TRANSACTION. The effort is an expense, and the successful result is an income. In the case of the athlete, what is then the income? Obviously, it is the appearance of the winning athlete as such, the immediate admiration of the public and the rumor of the triumph spreading, but that is not enough for Pindar. Income is not complete until success is expressed and perpetuated in encomiastic poetry. The metaphor for the athlete can be expressed as VICTORY IS AN EXPENSE THAT SHOULD BE RECOMPENSATED WITH PRAISE. The metaphor holds the notion that there should be a balance between the expense and the recompensation: if the athlete’s performance is excellent, it should be matched by a poem that truthfully brings out the grandeur of the victor (Bundy 1986, p. 65). Hence, when Pindar writes “for it is a trifling offering if a skilled poet, speaking a good word to mark many great labours” he also points at the excellence of the poet. My analysis shows that Pindar structures the relationship between the poet and the athlete in economic terms but in such a way that the material relationship is obscured; Pindar does not explicitly mention the pecuniary compensation for his expenses creating the praise. However, by suggesting the conceptual metaphor A HUMAN ENTERPRISE IS AN ECONOMIC TRANSACTION Pindar gives a tacit reminder of the payment for his own effort. I suggest that Pindar creates an intentional ambiguity concerning who is in debt – the poet or the athlete.

Who is responsible for the compensation of the athlete? The rule that good work should be praised applies to anyone, but anyone is not apt to write a poem. However, it appears that praise is not only an affair between the poet and the victor:

ξυνὸν **ὀρθῶσαι** **καλόν**.

erects a splendid memorial in which all may share.

And,

πολιατᾶν καὶ ξένων **γλώσας** **ἄωτον**.

which is the choicest address from the tongues of citizens and strangers.

According to Bundy (1986, pp. 65-66) the verb *ὀρθῶσαι* (*to set upright*) emphasizes that the *laudator* tells the truth in his praise. Hence, the *laudandus* achieves fair recompensation for his expenses. In *ξυνὸν καλόν,* Bundy identifies a glory that belongs to the individual athlete but also to the state. The poet pays the debt to the victor on behalf of the whole society. The actual economic relationship between poet and athlete has been inverted and transferred to a symbolic level. The economic perspective is inherent in the metaphor THE POET IS A CRAFTSMAN according to Svenbro’s (2020) discourse on the epinician poet, as referred in the section of lines 14–32.

Lines 64-68

’εἴη νιν εὐφώνων **πτερύγεσσιν** **ἀερθέντ’** **ἀγˈλααῖς**

Πιερίδων, ἔτι καὶ Πυθῶθεν Ὀλυμπιάδων τ’ ἐξαιρέτοις (65)

Ἀλφεοῦ ἔρνεσι **φράξαι** χεῖρα τιμὰν ἑπταπύλοις

Θήβαισι **τεύχοντ’**. εἰ δέ τις ἔνδον νέμει πλοῦτον κρυφαῖον,

ἄλλοισι δ’ **ἐμπίπτων**  γελᾷ, ψυχὰν Ἀΐδᾳ τελέωνοὐ φράζεται δόξας ἄυθεν. (68)

May he, lifted up on the tuneful Pierians bright wings,

still yet wreathe his hand with prized garlands

from Pytho and from the Alpheus at Olympia,

bringing honour to seven-gated Thebes.

If a man keeps his wealth hidden indoors,

laughing scornfully at others, he does not realize

that he will render up his soul to Hades unattended by fame.

εἴη νιν εὐφώνων **πτερύγεσσιν** **ἀερθέντ**’ **ἀγˈλααῖς**

May he, lifted up on then tuneful Pierians bright wings,

Bowra (1964, pp. 22-24) finds an ambiguity in Pindar’s poetry; it has an enduring and, as in the line above, also a lively quality: ”In its ambiguous nature song possesses a power of lively motion, and this is aptly conveyed in the language of flight through the air.” In this line we also recognize the two dominant conceptual metaphors from *Olympian* 1: EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT (*ἀγˈλααῖς, bright)* and VALUE IS UP (*ἀερθέντ’, uplifted* and *πτερύγεσσιν wings*). In *Olympian*1 the two metaphors mainly refer to Olympia, Pelops, Hieron, and indirectly to Pindar himself, but here, the light metaphor refers to the Muses, the protector of Pindar’s art, and the UP metaphor to Herodotus as well as to the Muses. The expression confirms that the debt is paid: the excellent performance by Herodotus has been matched with excellent praise by the poet; the athlete and the poet share the same exaltation.

**ἔνδον** νέμει πλοῦτον κρυφαῖον

keeps his wealth hidden indoors

Hidden indoors is a metonymy for the private sphere. Wealth could be interpreted as a metaphor for honor and fame, but Bundy (1986, pp. 85-90) argues that Pindar refers to material wealth and that the word ἄλλοισι, others, concerns poor people and not people with a different attitude to wealth. Hence, the meaning of the sentence is that Herodotus should not keep his wealth in his own house but should be ready to assist people in less favorable circumstances, and that will in the end grant him fame. Instone (2007, p. 179) offers an alternative interpretation: Pindar presents a discrete reminder of the fee he is expecting from the victor’s family. That view is aligned with my previous suggestion that Pindar creates an intentional ambiguity concerning who is in debt – the poet or the athlete.

4.2.1 Summary of conceptual metaphors in *Isthmian* 1

In this section I present those conceptual metaphors that, according to my interpretation of *Isthmian,* represent important ideas in the poem, and for one of them, THE POET IS A CRAFTSMAN, I discuss how it is constructed. The categories of important conceptual metaphors are the same as in *Olympian* 1: metaphors about excellence, handling of a shifting life course, and the poet and his work.

The central conceptual metaphor in this ode is about the poet: THE POET IS A CRAFTSMAN; the poet fixes or fits together. This metaphor acts when Pindar ties himself to Thebes and Delos and hopes to make a joint completion of the commissions from the two towns. He also wants to associate Herodotus with mythological themes. The conceptual metaphor is also constructed with non-metaphorical expressions. When Pindar states that people expect effort to be linked to reward, an idea aligned with to the metaphor A HUMAN ENTERPRISE IS AN ECONOMIC TRANSACTION, he also acts according to the metaphor THE POET IS A CRAFTSMAN, and even more so, when he argues that athletic success deserves poetic praise. Finally, when Pindar describes Herodotus lifted up on the tuneful Pierians bright wings, he connects two metaphors for excellence EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT and VALUE IS UP and in the same image, the excellence of the victorious athlete and that of the successful poet coalesce. The quality of poetry is also reflected in the conceptual metaphor POETRY IS A FABRIC.

The ever-changing fate of man, a recurrent theme in Pindar’s poetry, is reflected in the narrative of Asopodorus, Herodotus’ father, and the conceptual metaphors LIFE IS A SEA JOURNEY and MISFORTUNE IS A SHIPWRECK and GOOD FORTUNE IS FAIR WEATHER.

I have identified a number of metaphorical words that do not represent principal ideas of the ode, the basic and the contextual meaning are given, and I suggest that their main function is to provide aesthetic effects: *Φέρειν* (*carry a load – offer*), *τέταται* (*stretch – strain*), *ἄρηται* (*raise, lift up – carry off, win*), *συμβάλλομαι* (*throw together – add*), *ἀφαιρεῖται* *(take away from – preclude*). *φράξαι* ( *fence in* –*wreathe*), *τεύχοντ’* (*make, build­* – *bring)*, and *ἐμπίπτων* (*fall upon* –*attack)*. Three metaphoric words, *γλυκύς, ἄωτον*, and *κελαδῆσαι* also appear in *Olympian* 1 and have been discussed in that section.

4.2.2 Elroy Bundy’s analysis of *Isthmian* 1

In the following section I intend to present some essential concepts in Elroy Bundy’s analysis of Pindar’s odes and show how he applies them to the initial part of *Isthmian* 1 (Bundy, 1986). Some critical voices of Bundy’s analysis will be presented.

As mentioned in the Introduction section, Bundy’s master principle reads: “there is no passage in Pindar and Bakkulides that is not in its primary intent encomiastic – that is, designed to enhance the glory of a particular patron” (Bundy, 1986 p. 3). The explicit praise of a named victor in a game is the central point of the encomiastic poem, which Bundy often refers to as *concrete climax* as opposed to a *gnomic climax*, which is a climax consisting of an aphorism. Apart from a climax, there are elements in the poem that serve as background to it. Bundy call them *foils,* and they may make a contrast to the object of praise or indicate a similarity. A foil not only serves as background to a climax, but it can also have the same relation to other foils, introduced in the poem like multiple screens on a theatre scene. The latest introduced motive will have the previous ones as foils. Hence, the different foils will form a multifaceted scenography for the praise of the patron. In the analysis of *Isthmian* 1, Bundy suggests that these foils can form a chain eventually reaching the primary intent – the praise of the victor. Bundy names such a movement towards the climax *crescendo*. The movement towards climax can be paused and that is called a *diminuendo*.

Bundys analysis of the first part of the ode (1986, pp. 36-44) demonstrates his conceptual apparatus: The first foil is the invocation of Thebes, Pindar’s and Herodotus’ native town, in parental terms, *mother* and *father*, that gives priority of Pindar’s commission to Thebes over that of Delos, Apollo’s Island, which becomes the second foil. By choosing Thebes and Herodotus before Delos and Apollo, Pindar has already started the crescendo to the first climax in line 14, the explicit mentioning of Herodotus as a victor. However, placing Herodotus before Apollo is a daring gesture by the poet, and he therefore needs to modify his statement. With god’s help he shall complete his both commissions at the same time and celebrate Apollo with dance. He also promises to celebrate Isthmus, since it had conferred six crowns to athletes from Thebes. The result of these poetic maneuvers is a tactful praise of Herodotus. In the next part of the poem Heracles appears. This passage may look irrelevant in Pindar’s praise of victors, but Bundy recognizes the intention of this part: the attention must be moved from the six Theban athletes, who according to Bundy constitute a climax in the poem. By mentioning Heracles, the poet is creating a diminuendo preparing for the concrete climax: the praise of Herodotus.

Many scholars have expressed doubts about Bundy’s analysis. As mentioned in the Introduction section, Kurke (1988, p. 97)) rejects Bundys analysis of *Isthmian* 1:

Pindar’s First Isthmian is a poem of praise by indirection: at each point where we anticipate straightforward praise of the victor, the poet swerves off to another topic. This veering manner produces anything but the conventional epinician Bundy saw in the poem and explains why, in his interpretation, most of the text is taken as “foil”, to be worked through but ultimately dismissed.

It is obvious that Kurke does not accept Bundy’s view on the “foils” in Pindar’s text: that they serve as a background, either as similarity or contrast to the victor’s deed and thereby enhances his glory. An objection to Kurke’s characterization of Bundy’s analysis might be raised: the meaning of Bundy’ master principle is hardly that the ode is a straightforward praise. Bundy is aware of the intricate construction of the epinicion that praises the victor also indirectly by placing him against a background of gods, heroes, and other successful athletes. As mentioned in the Introduction section, Kurke proposes that the ode is a play of genres. He detects five different genres and named the ode Pindar’s poetic *pentathlon*.

Maslov (2015, pp. 246-276) also distances himself from Bundy’s analysis. He too recognizes the synthesis of poetic genres in Pindar’s odes, the main conflict being that the between cult song and myth on the one hand and praise of a victor on the other. In his odes, he amasses different genres, topics, and digressions that are not presented as an organic whole but rather as an overt construction with visible gaps between its elements. Maslov regards the metapoetic presence of the author in the text as an integral part of the literary construction of the epinicion. ”The hypertrophy of Pindar’s first person is directly related to the synthetic nature of his text.”. I discern two compositional roles for the presence of the author of the text in Maslov’s analysis. The first is a specific task: “suturing together its ostensively disparate parts.” One example of that is the “break-off “procedure when a mythic narrative is ended, and the poet returns to his task of praise. The second, more general task for the visible poet in the text is to assure the presence of intention and meaning of the disparate parts: “From now on, authors not only give their names to proliferating forms, and display different degrees of metapoetic awareness; they can step forward to claim responsibility for the mixed constitution of their forms.” However, other mechanisms may as well create ”the hypertrophy of Pindar’s first person”. I refer in the section containing lines 14–32 of *Isthmian* 1 to Svenbro’s (2020) view on the economical and social conditions for the epinician poet. I suggest that the metapoetic presence of the poet in the text is not only a compositional device, as suggested by Maslov; it can also be viewed as a promotion of the poet for further commissions.

4.2.3 My view of Bundy’s analysis

In this section, I compare my review of metaphors in *Isthmian* 1 with Bundy’s analysis of the ode. I agree with Bundy that the foils in the poem can create an implicit praise by placing the victor in a greater whole of gods, heroes and successful athletes. I am more hesitant to some of the other concepts Bundy proposes such as *crescendo, diminuendo* and *climax*. These metaphorical words are not well defined. Bundy’s identification of these elements in the text is close to a circular proof. If explicit praise of the winner is constantly regarded as climax, every movement towards the climax is a crescendo, and any digression from that path is a diminuendo. Another objection can be raised to Bundy’s master principle: “there is no passage in Pindar and Bakkulides that is not in its primary intent encomiastic” (Bundy, 1986 p. 3). As reviewed in the Introduction section, several scholars have questioned the principle on different grounds. My study of metaphors in *Isthmian* 1 emphasizes the metapoetic aspects of the poem: the poet’s deliberation over the balance between different external interests and over the composition of the poem. He also introduces the idea that the encomiastic poem is the true reward for a successful athletic performance. Finally, he shows that the excellence of the athlete can be matched by that of the poet; the athlete and the poet share the same exaltation. I admit that the praise of the athlete is the frame of the ode, but that does not exclude an interpretation of the text finding multiple significant intentions. In *Isthmian* 1, tributes to the poet and poetry are important themes besides the praise of the athlete. It is the concept of *a primary intent* *in every passage* in Bundy’s principle that is problematic.

The following collection of tentative metaphors might illustrate different aspects of Pindar’s odes:

Bundy: The poet is a praiser,

Kurke: The poet is a lyrical athlete,

Maslov: The poet is an amalgamator of genres,

Svenbro: The poet is a craftsman on a market

5. Metapoesis

In both odes studied in this thesis, metapoetic, conceptual metaphors are prominent. The important role of poetic self-reference in Pindar’s odes is confirmed by G. D. Hutchinson (2012). He studies imagery in epinician poetry by Pindar and Bacchylides. Imagery is not clearly defined in the article but appears to consist of metaphor and simile. He finds that both poets predominantly apply imagery to poetry. Hutchinson rejects the idea that this result is due to a wish to posit the poet on the same level as the athlete. Rather, Hutchinson suggests that poetry lends itself well to imagery, and that self-reference to the poem helps to create the characteristic choral lyrics. In a similar fashion, Maslov (2015, p. 164) studies similes in Pindar’s odes. Out of thirty-three similes nine were about the poet and six about poetry. Seven concerned *laudandus*, one gods, and three heroes. The self-referential epinicion can be viewed as a sign of the emerging role of the individual author in archaic poetry (Maslov, 2015). However, Hutchinson may be right in his assumption that the poet’s self-reference also is in the interest of the *laudandus*; poetic self-esteem assures the athlete that he will receive the praise he pays for, and the poet’s brilliance will also shine on the athlete. The established poetical conventions will balance how the poet’s and the victor’s status are expressed in the poem:

I have given examples from the two poets of whose work complete specimens survive (Pindar and Baccylides), in order to suggest that they are not mannerisms of a given poet but conventions protecting the artistic integrity of a community of poets working within well-recognized rules of form and order (Bundy, 1986, p. 3).

What characterizes Pindar’s metapoetic comments? Svenbro (1999, 2002) has written about metapoetry in two collections of essays. His interpretations of ancient and later poetry often reveal a metapoetic meaning based on an allegory. For example, in the famous poem of Sappho (fragment 31 Lobel-Page), the first lines are:

That man to me seems equal to the gods,

the man who sits opposite you

and close by listens

to your sweet voice

(translation by Julia Dubnoff)

Svenbro recognizes in the poem an allegory where “I” is the poet, “You” is the poem and “He” the reader. So, Sappho’s hidden message is “You are my poem, and he will read you” (Svenbro, 2002, pp. 87-101). My reference to the essay is far too short to live up to Svenbro’s discourse, but it demonstrates the allegorical principle.

Another example of metapoetic meaning is the fable “The cicada and the ants” by La Fontaine which is also studied by Svenbro (1999, pp. 52 -84). La Fontaine’s fable is based on old Greek originals. The story is here briefly presented: the cicada sang all summer. In autumn no food was available, and she was hungry. She asked an ant for some bread during the winter and promised to return the capital with interest next summer. The ant asked the cicada what she had done for a living during the summer. “Oh, I sang as cicadas use to do”, she answered. “You sang,” said the ant, “now it is time to dance.” Two common interpretations of the fable have distinctly different moral messages: one is that the cicada deserves the punishment, and the other regards the ant’s answer inhuman. Svenbro proposes another interpretation of the fable: the cicada is the poetic voice; the ants are the letters of the poem that kill the living voice of the poet. They are the material signs of the absence of the voice. Svenbros’s interpretations of both texts refer to the change from oral to written poetry during the archaic period in Greece.

The two allegorical interpretations suggest that there are hidden messages in the poems, like a treasure that must be dug out. The message will be the reward for the digging, and it will tell something important about the poem itself. I have not found any metapoetic allegories in the two odes studied, except for Kurke’s proposal that *Isthmian* 1 is Pindar’s pentathlon. The problem with Svenbro’s and Kurke’s metapoetic allegories is to decide if they are anchored by authorial intent, or if they just are variant readings.

However, I found three examples of possible metapoetic messages in ambiguous expressions in *Olympian* 1. The first is the beginning words of the ode, “water is best”. If water refers to poetry the words can be viewed as a metapoetic statement about the excellence of poetry and wealth. Next example of a possible hidden metapoetic message is Pindar’s discourse on the old and new versions of the Pelops myth, which I suggest could be a metapoetic remark on the unresolved tension between aesthetic values and conditions of praise in the epinicon. The third example is the ambiguous metaphor FUTURE WILL BE A WITNESS:

ἁμέραι δ’ ἐπίλοιποι **μάρτυρες** **σοφώτατοι**.

The days to come will be the wisest witnesses of that,

Is there in any of these metapoetic expressions a hidden message about the poem, and if so, why is it hidden? Attributing the same value to poetry and worldly power may be daring, and an unresolved tension in the poem should perhaps not be simply resolved. The metaphor concerning coming days as witnesses seems less controversial. However, most conceptual metaphors in the two odes expressing metapoetic messages are, by and large, explicit and unambiguous, for example POETRY IS A TESTIMONY ABOUT REALITY, THE POET IS AN ATHLETE/WARRIOR, POETRY IS AN AGENT, POETRY IS A FABRIC, and THE POET IS A CRAFTSMAN. I suggest that these messages reflect the intention to make the poet and poetry visible, by analogy with the overarching intention of the epinicion to illuminate the victor.

What is Pindar’s epinicion saying about itself? Metaphors and literal parts of the text tell us that the epinicion is embracing and enclosing the victor. The poem illuminates the victor, making him more famous, linking him to a heroic past, and preserving his glory in the future. The poem is well suited to do that, as it is all together truthful, charming, and persuasive. The union of epinicion and athletics comes naturally as both are agonistic practices; competition is essential to reach the excellence that may be rewarded with fame by the gods (Fitzgerald, 1987). In *Olympian* 1, the poet appears with a bow and arrows and enters the victor’s chariot in his endeavor to shape his poetic message. This summary of Pindar’s metapoetic statements is indeed a praise of poetry, like that of the winning athlete, but it can also be read as an advertisement on the market of poetic commissions. Pindar is clearly pointing to the competition between poets:

**πρόφαντον** σοφίᾳ καθ’ Ἕλ-

λανας ἐόντα παντᾷ.( (116)

seen from a distance by my poetry throughout all Hellas. (My translation).

1. Distribution of metaphorical words in *Olympian* 1 and *Isthmian* 1.

Metaphorical words are unevenly distributed in the two odes as displayed in Table 1 (page 67) and Table 2 (page 68). The following definition of aggregated metaphorical words was given in the Methods section: an aggregate of metaphorical words consists of at least two metaphorical words in the same line or in adjacent lines.

Table 1. Distribution of metaphorical words in *Olympian* 1

Number= Line number **M**= Metaphorical word Square indicates aggregation of metaphorical words

1 **MM** 32 63 94 **M**

2 **M** 3364 95 **M**

3 34 **MM** 65 96

4 35 **M** 66 97 **M**

36 **M** 67 98 **MM**

6 37 68 99

7 **M** 38 69 100 **M**

8 **MM** 39 70 101 **M**

9 **M** 4071 102

10 41 **M** 72 103

11 42 73 104

12 **M** 43 74 105 **M**

13 **MM** 4475 **M** 106

14 **M** 45 **M** 76 **M** 107

15 **MM** 46 77 108

16 4778 **M** 109 **M**

17 48 **MM** 79 110 **MMM**

18 49 **M** 80 **M** 111 **MM**

19 **MMM** 50 81 **M** 112

20 5182 113 **MMM**

21 **M** 52 **MM** 83 **MMM** 114 **MM**

22 53 84 115 **M**

23 **M** 54 85 **M** 116 **MM**

24 55 **M** 86 **M**

25 56 87

26 5788 **M**

27 58 **M** 89

28 **M** 59 90 **M**

29 **MMM** 60 91

30 **M** 61 92

31 **M** 62 93

Table 2. Distribution of metaphorical words in *Isthmian* 1

Number= Line number **M**= Metaphorical word Square indicates aggregation of metaphorical words

1 **M** 30 59 **M**

2 **M** 31 60

3 **M** 32 61 **M**

4 **MM** 33 **M** 62

5 **MM** 34 **M** 63 **M**

6 **M** 35 64 **MMM**

7 36 **MM** 65

8 37 **MMM** 66 **M**

9 **M** 38 67 **M**

10 39 **M** 68 **M**

11 40 **M**

12 41 **M**

13 42

14 **M** 43 **M**

15 44 **M**

16 **M** 45

17 46 **MM**

18 47 **MM**

19 **M** 48 **M**

20 **M** 49 **M**

21 **MM** 50 **MM**

22 51 **MMMM**

23 52

24 53

25 54 **M**

26 **M** 55

27 56

28 57

29 58

In *Olympian* 1, 86% of the metaphorical words belong to an aggregate, and 43 % of the lines contain a metaphorical word. In *Isthmian* 1, the corresponding numbers are 86% and 53%, respectively. In both odes, the mythological sections contain only a few metaphorical words, which can be explained if these sections as a whole are regarded as metaphors; Hieron is Pelops and Herodotus is Castor or Iolaus.

It appears to be a correlation between the importance of a metaphorical message and the number of corresponding metaphorical words in aggregates. In *Olympian* 1, aggregates of four or more metaphorical words express the excellence of the Olympian games and the songs from Olympia; the excellence of Hieron; the necessity of revising the Pelops myth (two aggregates); the agonistic ideal; the creative process of poetry; the high status of Hieron and Pindar and their close association. In *Isthmian* 1, aggregates of four or more metaphorical words are associated with Pindar’s obligations to Thebes and Delos; the victories of Castor and Iolaus; Asopodorus’ shifting destiny; the discussion about the athlete’s victory creating a debt that must be paid in praise; the extolment of victor and poet.

7.Conclusions

Formulation of conceptual metaphors in the two odes studied has been based on identification of metaphorical words in the text. One advantage of this method is, metaphorically speaking, that it throws a fine-meshed net over the text, retrieving most metaphors. However, it does not catch similes or metonymies. The reader of Pindar’s poetry also faces the task of deciding if a word has a literal or a metaphorical meaning. Water in the beginning of *Olympian* 1 is one example and is perhaps meant as an intentional ambiguity, whereas shipwreck in *Isthmian* 1 reasonably only has one intended meaning. Another advantage of basing conceptual metaphors on metaphorical words in the text is that the procedure increases the likelihood of formulating a conceptual metaphor intended by the author and not only created by the reader as a characterization of the text. However, metaphorical words are not the only source of conceptual metaphors; I have shown that Pindar constructs the conceptual metaphor EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT in *Olympian* 1 with metaphorical words, non-metaphorical words and expressions, a comparison between two mental images/a simile, an implicit metaphor, a contrasting metaphor, and an expression that can be interpreted both literally and figuratively.

I find it difficult to clearly identify polysemes as opposed to metaphors, and that problem is reinforced by the fact that only small parts of archaic Geek texts are extant. I have taken a permissive attitude to mark these uncertain words as metaphorical. Many of these words have later been found not to carry any principal idea of the poem. I have adopted a similar attitude to suspected conventional metaphors. In a literary text, it is difficult to find out if the author has aimed at metaphorical expression or not.

The distribution of metaphorical words shows a distinct pattern: there are many loci of aggregated metaphorical words in the text, and most metaphorical words belong to such aggregates. Most of them correspond to the conceptual metaphors that I have formulated; a result which in my view indicates the author’s intention to present these metaphors. Important metaphors like EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT are also emphasized by repeated linguistic expressions in separate parts of the text.

As evident from the Introduction section, conceptual metaphors often do not exist in linguistic form in the text but must be formulated. Linguistic expressions pointing to a metaphor may correspond to a field of many conceptual metaphors highlighting different aspects of the source or target domain. For example, I suggest that the two metaphors EXCELLENCE IS LIGHT and VALUE IS UP present excellence/value in two different ways: the light-metaphor expresses an immediate visual experience of excellence, whereas the up-metaphor expresses value established by intellectual evaluation. Formulation of conceptual metaphors also includes a choice in the dimension of specific –generic. The word *καταπέψαι* and *ἕψοι*,both with a meaning of *digest* are in *Olympian* 1 suggestive of the concept metaphor MENTAL HANDLING IS DIGESTION, which belongs to a more generic metaphor: MENTAL PROCESSES ARE PHYSICAL PROCESSES.

I found three main categories of metaphors expressing the principal ideas of the two odes: metaphors about excellence, handling of one’s life course, and poetry. The metaphors of excellence are primarily connected to the athletic arena, to the victors, mythical heroes, and to the poet himself. Metaphors about man’s life course emphasize the ever-changing fate of man, in *Isthmian* 1 expressed as passing from fine weather to shipwreck and back to fine weather again. The reader of Pindar’s poetry may find it surprising that a poem commissioned to praise a winning athlete contains so many metaphors related to poetry and to the poet himself. Many of them talk about the value of poetry: its power to charm and seduce, but also to tell the truth. The poem will make the victor more famous and preserve his glory in the future.

The poet himself also has a prominent role in the poem. An excellent victor must be matched by an excellent poet and that relationship can be visualized by the poet’s appearance as an athlete/warrior in *Olympian* 1 entering the winning chariot, as being armed with bow and arrow, or by walking high near the victor. Encomiastic poetry was a complex enterprise: the poet had to fulfill the different expectations of commissioners and the public and to fit together the disparate parts of the poem – an ambition expressed in the metaphor THE POET IS A CRAFTSMAN. According to Svenbro (2020), the social and economic position of the epinician poet is also reflected in the metaphor THE POET IS A CRAFTSMAN. It tells us that the poem is a crafted object that can be turned into a commodity via a contractual procedure. To sum up, the presence of the poet in the poem is motivated by an ambition to match the excellence of the victor, to fit together the separate parts of the poem, and to promote the poet for further commissions.

The perceived incoherence of Pindar’s odes has evoked different attempts to find a unity of the poems. Bundy is an influential example of this attitude, when he launched his “master principle”: “there is no passage in Pindar and Bakkulides that is not in its primary intent encomiastic – that is, designed to enhance the glory of a particular patron” (Bundy, 1986 p. 3). His view has been much debated. Based on my study on conceptual metaphors in *Olympian* 1 and *Isthmian* 1, I regard the praise of the victor as a fixed frame of the poems creating a space for the poet’s multiple intentions, for example, to extol poetry and aristocratic values in general.

Many scholars combine the concept of unity in Pindar’s odes with the idea that the author’s intention is expressed in the text and can be retrieved from it as a logical and consistent message. Pindar offers some resistance to that operation. In *Olympian* 1, Pindar argues that the traditional version of the Pelops myth is a blasphemous lie, and he mobilizes several metaphors to persuade us. Is that the true reason for the revision of the myth, or is it a rhetoric maneuver to conceal the poet’s intention to create a version that works better in the praise of Hieron? The presence of the ivory shoulder in Pindar’s revised version of the Pelops myth despite Pindar’s denial of any physical injury of Pelops is an inconsistency that has prompted many scholars to propose different elaborate explanations to maintain a logical narrative. Pindar also uses what appears to be intentional ambiguities: is water just water or poetry? Could these examples indicate that Pindar created his own poetic, slightly oneiroid logic, perhaps partially explaining why some modernist poets like Ezra Pound have been attracted to his writing?

The title of this essay is “Poetry – truth and lie”, but what is then the meaning of truth in Pindar’s poetry? I suggest that it is an ambiguous concept in the two odes. It may stand for historical facts; poetry saving feats from oblivion; religious piety or social respect; aesthetic propriety. Pindar openly refutes poetic lies; nonetheless, he uses them in his own poetic workshop. Hence, Bundy’s master principle may be rephrased: there is no passage in Pindar that is not in its primary intent poetic.

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1. Like George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in the book *Metaphors we live by* I use capital letters to mark conceptual metaphors. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Gerber mentions: 1) water is the source of everything; 2) water is the most useful of all things; 3) water is everlasting; 4) water is sacred; 5) water is the realm of Poseidon; 6) water surrounded Ortygia, the original settlement of Syracuse, until it was joined to the mainland by a mole in the mid-sixth century; 7) water serves as an image of poetry or poetic inspiration; 8) water plays an important role in the myths of Tantalus and Pelops. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Asper (1997, p.35) comments on the chariot metaphor: Hier dokumentiert die Metaphoric den Versuch, das Verhältnis von Dichter und Sieger als ein reziprokes zu erweisen. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)