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# Weaving a Song. Convergences in Greek Poetic Imagery between Textile and Musical Terminology. An Overview on Archaic and Classical Literature

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## Weaving a Song. Convergences in Greek Poetic Imagery between Textile and Musical Terminology. An Overview on Archaic and Classical Literature<sup>1</sup>

Giovanni Fanfani

εἰ γὰρ ἠδύνατο ἕκαστον τῶν ὀργάνων κελευσθὲν ἢ προαισθανόμενον ἀποτελεῖν τὸ αὐτοῦ ἔργον, ὥσπερ τὰ Δαιδάλου φασὶν ἢ τοὺς τοῦ Ἥφαίστου τρίποδας, οὓς φησὶν ὁ ποιητής αὐτομάτους θεῖον δύεσθαι ἀγῶνα, οὕτως αἱ κερκίδες ἐκέρκιζον αὐταὶ καὶ τὰ πλῆκτρα ἐκιδάριζεν, οὐδὲν ἂν ἔδει οὔτε τοῖς ἀρχιτέκτοσιν ὑπηρετῶν οὔτε τοῖς δεσπόταις δούλων.

Arist. *Pol.* 1253b34-1254a1

For if each tool could perform its own task either at our bidding, or anticipating it, and if – as they say of the artefacts made by Daedalus or the tripods of Hephaestus, of which the poet says, “self-moved they enter the assembly of the gods” – weft-beaters should beat the weft of their own accord, and plectra should pluck the *kithara* of themselves, then master-craftsmen would have no need of assistants and masters no need of slaves.<sup>2</sup>

In an analysis of the household-management (οἰκονομία) in the first book of the *Politics*, Aristotle discusses the nature and use of tools (ὄργανα), both inanimate (τὰ ἄψυχα) and animate (τὰ ἔμψυχα). While such a distinction is functional, in Aristotle’s argument, to illustrate the priority of the latter group (represented by the assistant, ὁ ὑπηρετής, and the slave, ὁ δοῦλος)

over the first,<sup>3</sup> what interests us here lies mainly within the realm of inanimate tools. As commentators to the passage have not failed to notice, a first literary frame of reference for Aristotle’s *exemplum fictum* is to be found in the conflation of two motifs: the myth of self-moving (ἄντοματα) artefacts created by divine or divinely-gifted craftsmen (Hephaestus’ wheeled tripods

1. I would like to thank the three editors for both their work on this volume and for the organization of the conference in Copenhagen back in June 2014; I am grateful to the Danish National Research Foundation’s Centre for Textile Research for hosting my postdoctoral research in the last two years in a stimulating environment. Deborah Steiner, whom I sincerely thank, has generously given me access to a draft version of a forthcoming discussion of hers on weaving and chorality. The research for this chapter has been generously supported by the Danish Council for Independent Research and FP7 Marie Curie Actions – COFUND (DFE – 1321-00158) through a MOBILEX grant.

Greek texts are quoted from the most recent OCT (Oxford Classical Texts) editions, unless otherwise stated. English translations are adapted from the most recent Loeb editions. Double quotation marks are only used for direct quotations (in translation) of passages from classical authors and for quotations of modern scholars; single quotation marks are adopted in all other cases.

2. Translation: Saunders 1995, adapted.

3. A further, significant distinction is operated by Aristotle between assistant and slave: while the first can be defined as “a superior tool among tools” (ὄργανον πρὸ ὀργάνων, 1253b33, literally “a tool that is prior to/outperforms other tools”: see Barker 1961, 10 n.1; Newman 1950, 138; on πρὸ as conveying here a notion of superiority in status see Schüttrumpf 1991, 244-245; on the whole passage see now Besso & Curnis 2011, 226-228), the slave is rather “a sort of animate possession” (κτῆμά τι κτήσις, 1253b32), granted that “a possession is also a tool for the purpose of life” (καὶ τὸ κτῆμα ὄργανον πρὸς ζωὴν ἐστί, 1253b31).

and Daedalus' statues),<sup>4</sup> and the Old Comedy utopia of a golden age when no slaves were needed, as household utensils would move and perform their task by themselves.<sup>5</sup> In addition to that, however, a further underlying element that joins together the τέχνη (crafts) alluded to in the *Politics* passage can be detected in the relationship these entertain with the concept (*cum* technology) of weaving, reflected at the level of poetic imagery by patterns of textile terminology. This may seem pretty obvious in the case of the verb κερκίζειν, *i.e.* the action of beating the weft threads into place by means of a weft-beater (κερκίς).<sup>6</sup> As a fundamental principle in the mechanics of weaving on the vertical warp-weighted loom, striking the threads with a κερκίς had a distinctive visual and acoustic dimension: it was one of the most typical gestures of the weaver, and, more important, it seems to have produced a

recognizable rhythmic sound. Both these features explain, to a certain degree, why in a number of literary as well as iconographic sources the technique of striking the strings of a *lyra* or *kithara* with a plectrum (κιθαρίζειν is the verb used in *Politics* 1254a1) is assimilated to the act of hitting and strumming threads on a loom with a weft-beater.<sup>7</sup> Aristotle's juxtaposition of κερκίδες and plectra is a case in point: while the focus is kept on the similar function performed by the two objects in the realm of their respective (and thus comparable) τέχνη,<sup>8</sup> the passage may, if only indirectly, reflect the long-standing association in ancient Greek musical imagery between the craft of weaving and the craft of playing (mainly stringed) instruments. At the root of this connexion lies a terminological convergence grounded on the semantics of the verb κρέκειν ('to weave', 'to pluck the strings, play' and 'to cause

4. Aristotle quotes from *Il.* 18.376: the passage (vv. 373-377) describes Hephaestus who "was fashioning tripods, twenty in all, to stand around the wall of his well-built hall, and golden wheels he had set beneath the base of each so that of themselves they could enter the assembly of the gods (ἄφρα οἱ αὐτόματοι θεῶν δυσαιάτ' ἀγῶνα), a wonder to behold". As it happens, the elaborate tripods' handles have a 'daedalic' connotation (οὐατα ... δαιδάλεια, v. 378-379): see below on the series δαιδάλεος, δαίδαλον and δαιδάλλω. For Daedalus as "human double of Hephaestus" see Power 2011, 78 and n. 29, in the context of a fine discussion of the choral features of Hephaestean and Daedalic automata (77-82). The reference works on Daedalus in Greek literature and art are Frontisi-Ducroux 1975 and Morris 1992; McEwen 1993 brings architecture into the picture.
5. Several Old Comic passages on the topic are collected by Athenaeus in a section on slavery in the sixth book of his *Deipnosophistai* (267e-270a); a fragment from Crates' *Beasts* (Θηρία), fr. 16 K-A = Ath. 267e, explicitly connects needlessness of slaves and self-moving household equipment (τὰ σκευάρια). Interestingly, a number of literary references to Daedalus' moving figures are also found in humorous context in drama (satyr play: Aeschylus *Theōroi* fr. 78.6-7 Radt (*TrGF* vol. 3); Euripides *Euristheus* fr. 372 Kannicht (*TrGF* vol. 5.1); comedy: Aristophanes' *Daedalus*, fr. 191-204 K-A; Cratinus fr. 75 K-A and Plato Comicus fr. 204 K-A, both in Σ Eur. *Hec.* 838) and in Plato (*Euthphr.* 11b-c; *Men.* 97d-e): see the rich discussion in Morris 1992, 215-237. Cf. Besso & Curnis 2011, 229; Newman 1950, 138 *ad loc.*
6. For an excellent discussion of the multiple functions of the κερκίς in ancient weaving see Edmunds 2012, §40-§51; in addition to beating up the weft threads, two further uses of the device were "to even out the warp threads by strumming across them" and "to pick the shed, especially in pattern weaving" (§46). See also Crowfoot 1936-1937, 44-45; Barber 1991, 273-274; Andersson Strand & Nosch 2015. Moxon 2000 surveys the Greek sources on the 'sound of the κερκίς' and argues for a use of the device as a "laze rod" to create the shed(s) in a "properly vertical" loom (p. 25). On the term κερκίς see chapter by Flemestad, Harlow, Hildebrandt & Nosch in this volume.
7. Pomeroy 1978, 19 points out the "physical resemblance between the loom and the lyre", drawing on two vase paintings depicting a woman sitting and weaving on a tapestry hand-loom (fig. 1, 2 p. 22): the posture of the weavers is remarkably similar to that of female string instruments players (fig. 3 p. 22). See McIntosh Snyder 1981, 194-195 on the "structural similarities between looms and lyres" as a key-element in shaping the imagery of the 'web of song' in archaic Greek lyric. For a more nuanced and convincing view see Restani 1995, 99-100: the analogy in the posture between hand-loom weavers and *barbitos*-players is rather meant to recall, metonymically, the auditory experience of (*i.e.* the sound produced by) weaving on the warp-weighted loom. Keuls 1983, 219 argues that the prominence of depictions of hand-loom over warp-weighted looms in vase paintings is the result of them being more "aesthetically pleasing or symbolically meaningful". See Power 2010, 122-134 for an exhaustive discussion of the technical and performative features of both lyre and *kithara*, including the use of the *plēctron*. On the musical terminology related to the *technē* of lyre-playing in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, where the invention of the tortoise-shelled instrument is narrated, see Franklin 2003.
8. Restani 1995, 106 sees the *Politics* passage as an instance of a persistent and effortless "associazione concettuale dell'utensile da telaio con il suono percussivo degli strumenti a corde", thus laying emphasis on the acoustical sphere.

to resound' in the new *GE* s.v.),<sup>9</sup> which has been traced back to the idea of "hitting strings noisily with sharp instruments":<sup>10</sup> literary and lexicographical sources help locating certain stages in the semantic development of the term. In the first part of this chapter, a sustained pattern of interaction between textile and musical terminology is shown through a survey of passages where κρέκειν, or the cognate term κερκίς, occur in musical context in archaic and classical Greek poetry. Perceived similarities in craft, technology and auditory experience seem to favour the exchange; what we also see is the appropriation of the technical lexicon of weaving by emerging discourses on musical innovation in Greek poetry,<sup>11</sup> in the context of the imitative poetics of early lyric as well as in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century BC musical 'revolution', the so-called New Music.<sup>12</sup>

In the second part of this chapter, such a pattern of terminological interaction is positioned within the broader area of textile imagery for poetry-making. Instances of κρέκειν governing an internal accusative of the type of song/poem or musical mode being executed invite comparison with a group of metaphoric metaphors mapping aspects of the crafts of weaving, plaiting and interlacing onto poetic (and musical, the two notions being largely co-extensive in archaic

and classical Greek literature) composition and performance. The metaphorical domain of textile crafts is in turn to be seen as part of the larger system of Greek craftsmanship imagery for poetic creation:<sup>13</sup> this is particularly evident in the case of cross-craft terminology, as a number of weaving metaphors are generated through the semantically marked use of verbs and adjectives that, while being applied to different crafts in the literary record, convey a specific technical meaning when used in a textile-related context. To illustrate the point, a few instances of textile imagery are shown as produced by two families of terms whose roots, δαιδάλ- and ποικιλ-, seem to express the structural and aesthetic quality of an intricate and variegated pattern in association with skilfully craftsmanship.<sup>14</sup> Finally, the juxtaposition of Hephaestus and Daedalus in the *Politics* passage points back to a Homeric case of interaction between δαιδάλ- and ποικιλ- terms, weaving, and choral dancing.

#### **More than beating threads: κρέκειν in (musical) context and the sound of the κερκίς**

In a study of the semantics of κερκ- and κρεκ- terms – a vast cluster of words encompassing material objects,

9. The meaning 'to cause (the voice, a type of song, a musical instrument) to resound' translates the Italian expression 'far risuonare', which renders the interpretation of κρέκειν as ἠχεῖν 'to resound, echo' and (causative, with internal accusative) 'to cause something to resound' by ancient lexicography, see *infra* and cf. Restani 1995, 97; Raimondi 2000, 144-145.
10. So Barber 1991, 273. Specific discussions on κρέκειν: Manessy-Guitton 1977; Dunbar 1995, 426-427 *ad* Aristoph. *Av.* 682-683; Restani 1995, 97-99; Raimondi 2000, 138-146; Rocconi 2003, 35 n. 185.
11. On the rhetoric of innovation in music as a recurrent motif throughout Greek literature see D'Angour 2011, *passim* (184-206 on the discourse of novelty in *mousikē*); Prauscello 2012 on late 6<sup>th</sup> century BC Peloponnesian musicians and Pindar's position within the musical debate of his time. See LeVen 2014, 71-112 on late 5<sup>th</sup> century BC musicians and their strategies of self-presentation, "which included [...] a reinterpretation of the concept of novelty" (73); as she aptly points out, New Music was in fact "only the latest, and the best documented, in a series of [*sc.* musical] revolutions" (83).
12. See Restani 1995, 105-109 on the lexical borrowings from craft (especially textile) terminology by representatives of the New Musical style in tragedy and comedy as a means to describe "il 'traumatico' passaggio a un nuovo tipo di produzione musicale che, lentamente, professionalizzandosi, precisa i propri contorni rispetto alle alter τέχναι" (105). Restani's emphasis on the language of *mousikē* as craft (τέχνη) and on its auditory sphere ("universo sonoro") in both literary sources and later lexicographical systematisation is a line of inquiry that Rocconi 2003 has broadened through a systematic investigation of the semantic processes leading to the formation of a technical lexicon of Greek music: I build here on these scholars' insights to present a different argument.
13. Nünlist 1998, 83-125 surveys and discusses the occurrences of *Handwerk* metaphors in archaic Greek literature: textile imagery (110-118) represents a substantial portion of the whole picture, together with the domain of *Bauwesen* (98-106), where both carpentry and architecture metaphors belong. On craftsmanship imagery and its implications in terms of archaic Greek poetics see Svenbro 1976, 173-212; Gentili 1988, 50-60; Ford 2002, 93-130.
14. In the case of ποικιλ-terms, the focus on the interaction with craftsmanship imagery serves the limited scope of this discussion: in fact, however, it does not exhaust the rich semantics of the root, which often appears in archaic literature in connection with the natural world: see LeVen 2014, 101-105.

plants, and animals (notably birds) – J. Manessy-Guitton detects the basic concept of the two cognate roots in the idea of a sharp, pointed object: thus κερκίς ‘weft-beater’, a sharp tool used to beat up the weft in weaving, generates κρέκειν ‘to beat the weft with a κερκίς’ and (with extension) ‘to weave’; the same basic gesture of ‘beating rhythmically with an object’, analogically applied to the sphere of music-making, would be at the root of the prevalent usage of κρέκειν with the meaning ‘to strike the strings of/play an instrument’ and ‘to cause [the voice, a song] to resound’ *i.e.* ‘to sing’:<sup>15</sup> in such a view, therefore, any notion of sound or noise connected to the semantics of κερκίς and κρέκειν is a derived, and thus secondary connotation.<sup>16</sup> In fact, the assumption that the κερκίς would have produced a sharp sound while beating the warp threads on the warp-weighted loom is supported by two sets of sources: 1) the ancient lexicographical and etymological tradition connecting κερκίς with κρέκειν (= ἠχεῖν) ‘to resound’, and 2) the literary *topos* of the ‘voice of the κερκίς’ (also in the variant ‘melodious κερκίς’), a characteristic sound that we find associated in Hellenistic epigram with singing and crying birds or insects.<sup>17</sup>

The etymological and semantic relationship between κερκίς and κρέκειν is presented by *lexica* and *etymologica* in connection with the earliest occurrence of the verb, Sappho 102 V., a short poem drawing on a traditional motif of popular song:<sup>18</sup>

γλύκηα μάτερ, οὐ τοι δύναμαι κρέκην  
τὸν ἴστον  
πόθῳ δάμεισα παῖδος βραδίναν δι’  
Ἀφροδίταν.

Sweet mother, I really cannot weave  
my web/strike the loom [with the  
κερκίς],  
for I am overcome with desire for a boy  
because of slender Aphrodite.

Object of the infinitive κρέκην (the Aeolic form for κρέκειν) is ἴστος (Aeolic for ἰστός), ‘loom’ or (with semantic extension) ‘web’: for the latter meaning the literary model is Homeric (*Il.* 3.125 ἡ δὲ μέγαν ἴστον ὕφαινε “she was weaving a large web”, cf. also *Od.* 24.139), and one might be tempted to see Sappho’s κρέκην τὸν ἴστον as a variation on the epic hemistich effected through the choice of κρέκειν (Homer uses the more common verb for weaving on the loom, ὑφαίνειν). The only other occurrence of κρέκειν as ‘weave’ is in Euripides’ *Electra*, where the verb governs the accusative πέπλους ‘peploi’ (εἰ δὲ κάκρεκον πέπλους “and even if I had been weaving clothes [lit. *peploi*]”, 542), closely following a mention of κερκίς three lines earlier (κερκίδος ... ἐξύφασμα σῆς “a garment of [*i.e.* woven by] your κερκίς”).<sup>19</sup> Back to Sappho 102 V., the occurrence of κρέκειν has called for semantic and etymological

15. See Manessy-Guitton 1977, 253: “De « battre un chant, scander un chant », serait issu le sens de « faire retentir un chant », de « battre un instrument à cordes » serait issu celui de « faire résonner »”.

16. See Manessy-Guitton 1977, 236-237, 252 (“nous avons vu que κρέκειν signifiait « battre avec un bâton » et que l’idée de « bruit », musical ou non, était secondaire”) and 253, where the relevant κερκ- and κρεκ- terms are grouped in semantic categories.

17. As Raimondi 2000, 138-146 shows through a systematic survey and typology of the occurrences of κρέκειν, such a motif is paralleled by the sustained pattern of imagery, similarly found in the genre of epigram, where κρέκειν designates the sound of singing birds or insects, often with an implied comparison to stringed instruments (this is the type 2<sup>1</sup>, pp. 139-140: the occurrences are Meleager *A.P.* 7.196.6 (cicada), Archias *A.P.* 7.213.3 (cicada), Archias *A.P.* 7.191.3 (jay)); the first author to associate κρέκειν with birds is Aristophanes in the *Birds*, as we shall see. On the sound produced by the κερκίς see Restani 1995, 98-99; Noxon 2000.

18. The motif of the opposition of love (seen as a distracting activity) to weaving is widely attested in a series of dedicatory epigrams in the sixth book of the *Greek Anthology*: see the detailed discussion in Taràn 1979, 115-131. Sappho’s date is problematic, wavering between the last quarter of 7<sup>th</sup> century and the first quarter of 6<sup>th</sup> century BC: see *e.g.* the discussion by Hutchinson 2001, 139-140 and n.1, who proposes 600-570 as the period of the poetess’ activity. A further occurrence of κρέκειν (in the compound form διακρέκειν) in Lesbian context is a papyrus fragment, attributed to Sappho by Lobel and Page (S 99 L-P) and to Alcaeus by Voigt (303A V.), with the sequence χόρδαισιδιακρέκην interpreted by Lobel and Page as χόρδαισι διακρέκην ‘to strike on the strings’: see McIntosh Snyder 1981, 195.

19. The significance of textiles in these lines is given by the context, *i.e.* the exchange between Electra and the Old Man on the return of Orestes (503-544), in which Euripides stages a rationalistic confutation of the famous recognition scene in Aeschylus’ *Choephoroi*. The date of Euripides’ *Electra* is unknown: the range 422-416 BC, proposed by J. Diggle in his OCT edition, seems a safe collocation.

interpretations by ancient lexicography:<sup>20</sup> interestingly, the first line of the poem is quoted, and the meaning of κρέκειν discussed, in the explanation of the lemma κερκίς. The *etymologica* and *lexica* present κερκίς as a noun derived from the verb κρέκειν,<sup>21</sup> which they gloss as ἠχεῖν ‘to resound/echo’: παρὰ τὸ κρέκειν ὃ ἐστὶν ἠχεῖν “(derived) from κρέκειν, that is to resound (ἠχεῖν)”; κερκίς is thus an instrument that resounds (ἡ ἠχοῦσα in Pseudo-Zonaras), and κρέκειν may have originally referred to the sound or noise produced by the κερκίς on the loom, as suggested by Donatella Restani.<sup>22</sup> The occurrence of κρέκειν with internal accusative (τὸν ἴστων ‘loom’ or ‘web’) in Sappho’s poem suggests that the semantic overlap with ἠχεῖν includes the causative meaning of the verb ‘to make/cause something to resound/echo’: in this perspective κρέκειν τὸν ἴστων in Sappho 102 V. may mean “to make the loom resound (with the sound of the κερκίς)”. The idea of a resounding instrument is especially at home in the semantic field of music: Alcman’s compound formation κερκολύρα (*PMGF* 140 = fr. 196 Calame), a one-word fragment, represents the earliest instance (the poet was active in 7<sup>th</sup> century BC) of the long-standing connection between the roots κρεκ-/κερκ- and stringed instruments – a *lyra* in this specific case.<sup>23</sup> The term, preserved by ancient lexicography, is traced back to κρέκειν

(again, through alleged metathesis: ἀντὶ τοῦ κρεκολύρα “in place of κρεκολύρα”) and, according to the equivalence κρέκειν = ἠχεῖν, it describes a “re-sounding, echoing *lyra*” (ἠχητικὴ λύρα in Pseudo-Zonaras): in this explanation, the supposed onomatopoeic nature of κρέκειν is also part of the picture (as Pseudo-Zonaras illustrates in his gloss: τὸ γὰρ κρέκε κρέκε ἦχος ἐστὶ τῆς κιθάρας “for κρέκε κρέκε is the noise of [the strings of] the *kithara*”). Modern interpretations of κερκολύρα entertain the possibility that, in fact, the first component of the term may be κερκίς: the compound would express the functional analogy between the action of the weft-beater on the threads and that of the plectrum on the strings.<sup>24</sup> A more nuanced interpretation locates the fragment within the archaic Greek poetics of *mimesis*: the poet-musician devises and composes through the imitation of nature and other crafts,<sup>25</sup> and Alcman offers indeed early instances of such a conceit when he claims to know “the modes of song of all the birds” (fr. 40 *PMGF* φοῖδα δ’ ὀρνίχων νόμως / παντῶν) and to “have devised verses and song by putting into words the tongued cry of partridges” (fr. 39 *PMGF* φέπε τάδε καὶ μέλος Ἀλκμάν / εὔρε γεγλωσσαμέναν / κακκαβίδων ὅπα συνθέμενος).<sup>26</sup> Though we lack a broader literary context for Alcman’s κερκολύρα, the image of a *lyra* imitating or echoing the

20. In chronological sequence (9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> century AD): *Etymologicum Genuinum* β p. 183 Miller = *Etymologicum Magnum* 505.57-61; *Etymologicum Gudianum* 316.35 Sturz; Pseudo-Zonaras col. 1190 Tittmann (κερκίς). *Etymologica* and *lexica* only give the first line of the poem; Sappho 102 V. (lines 1-2) is transmitted by Hephaestion in his metrical treatise *Encheiridion* (10.5 p. 34 Consbruch) as an instance of antispastic tetrameter catalectic (scheme ~ ~ ~ ~ / ~ ~ ~ ~ / ~ ~ ~ ~ / ~ ~ ~ ~, where only the second unit has the form of an antispast ~ ~ ~ ~) used by Sappho in her seventh book: on the antispastic and glyconic sequences see Gentili & Lomiento 2003, 154-166.

21. The derivation is explained as a transition from the unattested form κρεκίς (κρεκ- + the nominal suffix -ίς) to κερκίς through internal metathesis (our sources call it ὑπερβίβασμός ‘transposition’). I thank Marco Ercoles for helpful suggestions on the *Etymologicum Gudianum* gloss of κερκίς.

22. Restani 1995, 97: “l’etimo, forse onomatopeico, di tale verbo [*sc.* κρέκειν] si riferirebbe al risuonare, ἠχεῖν, della κερκίς sul telaio”.

23. The testimonia of Alcman 140 *PMGF* are: *Etymologicum Genuinum* s.v. (p. 33 Calame); *Etymologicum Magnum* 506.18 Gaisford; Pseudo-Zonaras col. 1190 Tittman.

24. Cf. Manessy-Guitton 1977, 252, who sees the root κερκ- in κερκολύρα as referring to the plectrum, and the compound thus designating “la lyre dont on joue avec le plectre, la lyre à plectre”.

25. See Restani 1995, 98-99, who interprets Alcman’s κερκολύρα as “a *lyra* echoing the sound of the κερκίς” (p. 99 “una ‘*lyra*’ riecheggiante il suono della *kerkis*”). The poetics of *mimesis* is elaborated by Gentili 1988, 50-54 in relation to the archaic Greek view of poetic creation and music-making: as he puts it, imitation is often presented as “re-creation, through voice, music, dance, and gesture, of the actions and utterances of men and animals” (51).

26. See Gentili 1988, 54: “[I]t is in terms of this poetics – a poetics of heuristic imitation rather than of aesthetic creation – that an author’s reference to the novelty of the modes and techniques found in his own work are to be understood. [...] To “know the songs of all birds” is to have at one’s disposal a full assortment of natural modules to be used in devising melodies”. For the connections of κρέκειν and κερκίς with singing birds (or insects) and stringed instruments in Hellenistic epigram, see note 16 above.

sharp sound of the κερκίς may lie somewhere at the origin of the semantic extension of κρέκειν (in the sense of ἠχεῖν ‘make something to resound’) as to include stringed instruments – a connotation which encompasses as well the more specialised meaning ‘to strike the strings of a musical instrument’.<sup>27</sup> This is reflected by a strand of ancient lexicography that connects κρέκειν to the sphere of instrumental music, often in association with κρούειν ‘to beat, strike’, a verb undergoing a similar semantic extension into the technical language of music-making, with particular regards to the area of stringed instruments.<sup>28</sup> In this respect, the peculiarity of κρέκειν seems to lie in the fact that its semantics is originally grounded in the craft and technical language of weaving, and the terminological convergence with the domain of music reflects an exchange (via *mimesis*) at the level of τέχναι that Alcman’s κερκολύρα may express in terms of musical novelty.

When we meet again κρέκειν in a music-related context, we are in late 5<sup>th</sup> century Athenian drama, at the height of a phase of musical innovations (conventionally labelled as ‘New Music’ in modern scholarship) investing the sung sections of tragedy and comedy, and the lyric genres of dithyramb and kitharodic *nomos*:<sup>29</sup> it is probably not a coincidence, therefore, that three out of four occurrences of κρέκω feature in the lyric sections, both choral and monodic, of the respective drama. The only case where the verb occurs in association to a string instrument is a fragment in

recited verses (iambic trimeters) of the Athenian tragedian Diogenes (*Semele* fr. 1.9-10 *TrGF* vol.1), where κρέκειν ‘strike, pluck the string’ governs the accusative μάγαδιν (a type of harp).<sup>30</sup> Two lyric passages in the *parabasis* of Aristophanes’ *Birds* (staged in 414 BC) exploit the semantic range of the verb and the potential of its connexions with singing birds, as we find κρέκειν associated to the sound of the αὐλός (a wind instrument with double reed) and with the swan’s song. In the opening of the *parabasis* (vv. 676-684), the Chorus of birds sings an invocation to the Nightingale, the archetypal singer-bird, addressed as ὦ καλλιβόαν κρέκουσ’ / αὐλὸν φθέγμασιν ἠρινοῖς “you who cause the fair-toned *aulos* to resound [by playing it] with spring-time tunes” (682-683)<sup>31</sup> – a transparent reference to the αὐλός-player accompanying the singing and dancing of the choral ensemble. In a later section of the *parabasis*, an ode in celebration of the swans’ song depicts how the birds συμμαγῆ βοῆν ὁμοῦ πε- / ροῖσι κρέκοντες ἴακον Ἀπόλλω “vocalizing all together a mingled shout, accompanying it with (the sound of) their wings, celebrated [lit. ‘cried, shouted’] Apollo” (771-772):<sup>32</sup> the wing-beats function here as instrumental and rhythmical accompaniment to the swans’ cry. Parallelism in the syntax of the two passages – similarly structured with κρέκειν + accusative of the instrument/voice that resounds + instrumental dative – is reinforced by diction, with βοή ‘shout’ qualifying both the swans’ cry and, via the epithet καλλιβόας ‘fair-toned’, the αὐλός-sound. The pattern of semantic extension of κρέκειν

27. For a survey of these two semantic areas of κρέκειν, and of further sub-types, see Raimondi 2000, 139-142 (groups 2 and 3).

28. Hesychius s.v. 4044 Schmidt κρέκειν· κιθαρίζει “plays the *kithara*”; *Suda* κ 2367 κυρίως δὲ κρέκειν τὸ τὴν κιθάραν κρούειν “but in most cases κρέκειν (means) to strike the *kithara*”; Pollux 4.63 lists κρέκειν among “instruments that strike/beat” (ὄργανα τὰ κρουόμενα) together with κιθαρίζειν, ψάλλειν (‘pluck the strings with fingers’) and others: see the fine observations by Restani 1995, 107; on the semantic extension of ψάλλειν and κρούειν into the technical terminology of music see the comprehensive discussion by Rocconi 2003, 26-51: the pattern seems to be one of extension and abstraction within the domain of musical, from the more specific meaning ‘strike the strings of an instruments with a plectrum’ to ‘play an instrument’.

29. On the socio-economic context that favoured the rise of New Music in theatrical genres see Csapo 2004; cf. Csapo 1999-2000 on Euripides and New Music; LeVen 2014 is the most comprehensive study of late 5<sup>th</sup> century lyric.

30. See Rocconi 2003, 27 n. 124 for a different interpretation of *magadis* here as a kind of musical accompaniment (“più che uno strumento, [...] una pratica di responsione tra due fonti sonore”), suggested by the musical context of the fragment, a description of rituals connected to the Asian cult of *Semele*, where at v. 9 two other instruments of the harp family are mentioned, the *πηκτίς* and the *τρίγωνος* (on which see Gentili & Lomiento 2003, 85). The passage is transmitted by Athenaeus 14.636, who quotes the verses to argue that Diogenes considered *πηκτίς* and *μαγαδῖς* two different instruments.

31. The text of *Birds* is quoted from Dunbar 1995. The Loeb translation (by J. Henderson) tries to restore the textile semantics of the verb: “weaver of springtime tunes on the fair-toned pipes”. The opening section of the *parabasis* is an astrophic system in aeolochoriambic metre (682-683 are both glyconics). See Dunbar 1995 *ad loc.*

32. Translation Dunbar 1995, 427; see commentary *ad loc.*



in the two Aristophanic passages has been explained in different ways. Raimondi sees a derivation of the meaning ‘play a wind instrument’ from the broader connotation of κρέκειν = ἠχεῖν as applied to the vocal expression (‘to make a voice resound’, ‘to sing’).<sup>33</sup> Locating the original semantics of κρέκειν in the concept of ‘beating, striking with a beating tool’, Manessy-Guitton proposes to set the image of the wing-beats accompanying the swans’ song in *Birds* 771-772 against its textile counterpart, the beating action of the κερκίς on the loom that provides the rhythm for the weaver; the direction of the semantic extension is in this case ‘to beat, to rhythm a song with a beating instrument’ → ‘to make a song resound’, and a similar development invests the specific meaning ‘to strike a stringed instrument’ to encompass the use of κρέκειν in reference to other families of instruments.<sup>34</sup> While a similar pattern of semantic extension – from the domain of stringed instrument to that of the αὐλός – has been illustrated as taking place in the same chronological range for another verb meaning ‘to strike, beat’, κρούειν,<sup>35</sup> the distinctive textile background of κρέκειν may add to the texture of imagery of the two passages from the *Birds*. The same syntactic structure, in reference to the sound of the αὐλός, is found in a fragment of a ‘New Musician’, the dithyrambographer Telestes (late 5<sup>th</sup> century BC), where a weaving verb, ἀμφιπλέκειν ‘to plait/weave around’, is used in place of κρέκειν: the passage, quoted by Athenaeus (14.617b = *PMG* 806), depicts the “Phrygian king of the fair-breathing holy *auloi*”, probably Olympus, as the first “who fit

together (Λυδὸν ἄρμοσε ... νόμον) the Lydian tune, rival of the Dorian Muse, weaving around (ἀμφιπλέκων) his reeds of quick-moving forms (αἰολομόρφοις καλάμοις) the fair-winged breeze of his breath (πνεύματος εὐπτερον αὔραν).<sup>36</sup> As Pauline LeVen has recently pointed out, a distinctive stylistic feature of the New Music that emerges in Telestes’ archaeology of *aulos*-music of fr. 806 is the innovative exploitation of “the materiality of language to evoke musical features”:<sup>37</sup> the ‘breeziness’ connected to the art of playing the αὐλός is expressed through paronomasia at v. 4 (in the consonantal roots of the terms for ‘breathe’, ‘wing’ and ‘weave’ πνεύματος εὐπτερον ... ἀμφιπλέκων), and through the metaphor of the winged and volatile nature of Olympus’ breath.<sup>38</sup> The archaizing rhetorical strategy of Telestes, who traces back the intricacy of his style of αὐλός-playing to the invention of the Lydian mode by the mythical musician Olympus, is one of self-legitimation: by adopting the technical term ἀμφιπλέκειν ‘to weave/plait around’ to illustrate the variegated and composite nature of the Lydian νόμος, Telestes may have in mind the use of another compound of πλέκειν ‘plait, weave’ in a similar context (a previous musical revolution investing αὐλός-music) in a victory ode by Pindar.<sup>39</sup> In *Pythian* 12 (performed in 490 BC), an epinician ode in celebration of a victory in the *aulos* competition by Midas of Acragas, Pindar describes the invention of the αὐλός-music by the goddess Athena.<sup>40</sup> The poem begins with an invocation to Acragas (the Sicilian city), requested to receive Pindar’s choral song as a crown of victory (στεφάνωμα) from Pytho, and to

33. See Raimondi 2000, 145: “l’espressione vocale è assimilata all’emissione di uno strumento a fiato”.

34. See Manessy-Guitton 1977, 236-237, who sees in the occurrence of κρέκειν ‘to weave’ governing πέπλους at Eur. *El.* 542 a similar case of semantic extension from the original connotation of the verb as ‘strike the weft-threads’.

35. See the exhaustive discussion by Rocconi 2003, 32-43, esp. 35 n. 180 (on *PMG* 878 where κρούειν is found together with ἀυλεῖν ‘to play the *aulos*’).

36. Translation: LeVen 2014, 104 adapted; the reading νόμον αἰολομόρφοις at v. 3 is the result of two conjectures (Dobree and Wilamowitz respectively): the manuscript reads νομοαἰολον ὀρφναι. See the discussion of the fragment in LeVen 2014, 113-15 in the context of the New Musicians’ self-presentation of their intricate musical style as variegation (*poikilia*) through reference to different musical modes (the Lydian and the Dorian in Telestes 806 *PMG*). See Steiner 2013, 190-191 for a discussion of the technical aspects of *aulos*-playing mentioned in Telestes’ fragment, and for the fascinating hypothesis that the dithyrambographer may allude in the final verse to an actual change in the shape of the mouthpiece of the *aulos*, which would have taken place in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.

37. LeVen 2014, 166.

38. See LeVen 2014, 167-168.

39. On the *aulos* revolution of early 5<sup>th</sup> century BC and the role of Pindar in it see Prauscello 2012; Steiner 2013; LeVen 2014, 81-83 with further bibliography.

40. As the scholium 12a (p. 265 Drachmann) to the passage points out, the reference is to ἡ αὐλητική τεχνή ‘the art of playing the *aulos*’; later in the ode Pindar refers to the melody that Athena “fashioned with every sound of *auloi*” (αὐλῶν τεῦχε πάμφωνον μέλος,

welcome Midas, who “defeated the Greeks in the art (τέχνη) which Pallas Athena once invented (ἔφευρε) by weaving into music the fierce Gorgons’ deathly dirge (θρασεΐαν <Γοργόνων> / οὐλίον θρήνον διαπλέξαισ’ Ἀθάνᾳ)” (vv. 5-6).<sup>41</sup> In the act of heuristic *mimesis* represented here, the goddess devises (ἔφευρε) the craft of playing the αὐλός by imitating the “echoing lament” (ἐρικλάγταν γόον, v. 21) of the two Gorgons as they are slaughtered by Perseus,<sup>42</sup> and by weaving it into a θρήνος ‘dirge’, a structured form of music – the term designates as well a sub-genre of choral lyric.<sup>43</sup>

While it is difficult to imagine the exact musical effect of διαπλέκειν and ἀμφιπλέκειν in association with the art of playing the αὐλός, the use of compound forms of πλέκειν in the context of programmatic declarations of musical poetics suggests that the craft of weaving represented a favourite source of techniques and technical terminology for illustrating innovations in instrumental music; the composite nature of the αὐλός, made of two reeds, resulted in a highly mimetic and variegated sound according to the sources, and the semantic domain of interlacing, plaiting, and weaving (especially the technique of pattern-weaving) may have been perceived as aptly conveying the complexity of the αὐλετική τεχνή. Occurrences of κρέκειν in association with the αὐλός, and in general the use of the verb in musical context, may thus gain a further layer of connotations if set against the term’s semantic origin in the craft of weaving.

This is especially the case when κρέκειν is matched by the cognate κερκίς, as in a sung monody from Euripides’ fragmentary *Hypsipyle*, a tragedy dating to the last decade of 5<sup>th</sup> century BC and, as far as the text conserved in the Bodleian papyrus (*POxy.* 852) allows to conclude, displaying significant metrical variegation and sustained musical imagery in its lyric sections.<sup>44</sup> The first conserved fragment of the play transmits the end of *Hypsipyle*’s opening lyric monody, which the girl sings to the baby Opheltes: the theme of the song, and of the following lyric dialogue with the Chorus, is a metamusical reflection on just what kinds of song are appropriate for *Hypsipyle* to sing as she wishes to amuse the baby. A reference to the rhythmical sound of castanets (ἰδοῦ, κτύπος ὄδε κορτάλων “Look, here is the sound of castanets”, v. 8) is followed after a one-line lacuna by a *recusatio*, where *Hypsipyle* mentions the work-songs she is not going to sing, as the norm of generic appropriateness (a fundamental principle of archaic aesthetics)<sup>45</sup> requires her to turn to “what is fitting for a tender young boy” (ὅτι ... π]αιδὶ πρέπει νεαρῷ, v. 14):

οὐ τάδε πήνας, οὐ τάδε κερκίδος  
ἱστοτόνου παραμύθια Λήμνι’ ᾗ  
Μοῦσα θέλει με κρέκειν· (...)

Eur. *Hyps.* fr. 752f 9-11 K. (*TrGF*  
vol. 5.2)<sup>46</sup>

v. 19) and “called it the many-headed tune” (ὠνόμασεν κεφαλᾶν πολλᾶν νόμος, v. 23), the *nomos polykephalos*, a melody for the αὐλός which might have been used by Midas in his victorious performance.

41. The text of Pindar is Snell-Maehler (Teubner).

42. The “echoing wail” of v. 21 is referred to just one of the sisters, Euryale: however, as also the scholium 35c (p. 268 Drachmann) makes explicit, the γόος is issued by both the Gorgons. Held 1998, 384 makes the different point that “[T]he singling out of one of the Gorgons implies the singling out of the other”, which supports his view that the deathly dirge woven into music by Athena is composed of two strains of sound, *i.e.* the groaning of each of the two sisters.

43. Through a survey of the occurrences of διαπλέκειν in pre-Hellenistic literature, Held 1998 persuasively argues that in most cases the verb refers to the woven product, rather than to the materials that are interlaced to fashion it: in this perspective, the οὐλίος θρήνος composed by Athena is the final product of her interweaving.

44. I draw in this section on the detailed discussion of the *parodos* of *Hypsipyle* by Battezzato 2005; other important studies of the fragments of the play are Bond 1963 and Collard, Cropp & Gibert 2004. The reference edition is Kannicht 2004 (*TrGF* vol. 5.2, ffr. 752-769). As Collard, Cropp & Gibert 2004, 230 synthetically remark in their introduction, the style of the *Hypsipyle* “is that of the ‘New Music’ of which Euripides was a leading practitioner, characterized by freedom and variety of form and emotional expression, especially through female voices, and mimetic musical performance such as *Hypsipyle*’ castanet-song”.

45. On this crucial principle of distinction between poetic genres see Ford 2002, 13-22.

46. At the end of v. 10 I print Battezzato’s proposal of reading Λήμνι’ ᾗ, with the relative pronoun ᾗ introducing the following clause (“... the Lemnian songs that the Muse..”) in place of Λήμνια of the papyrus, thus linking the double τάδε at v. 9 to the sound of the

These are not the Lemnian songs, relieving the labour of [inserting] the weft-threads and (the labour) of the sounding-on-the-loom [or ‘stretched-on-the-loom’] *kerkis*, (these are not the Lemnian songs) that the Muse desires me to make resound; (...)

The “Lemnian alleviations” (παραμύθια Λήμνια, v. 10) that the Muse wants Hypsipyle to κρέκειν (‘cause to resound’) are at first sight songs sung at the loom to relieve the boredom and labour of weaving; the weft (πήνη, v. 9) and the κερκίς are generally taken as referring metonymically to the act of weaving on the loom. The rare compound adjective ιστότονος is translated as ‘loom-stretching’ or ‘stretching-across-the-loom’:<sup>47</sup> the first component, ιστός ‘loom’, designates the area of application of τόνος, a *nomen actionis* from the verb τείνειν (‘to stretch, put under tension’) meaning ‘tension’, but undergoing a semantic shift into musical terminology with the connotation of ‘sound’ (generated by the tension of a string) and ‘note’.<sup>48</sup> It is inviting to speculate that the adjective may bear here its entire semantic range, and that the notion of ‘tension’ associated with the κερκίς invests both the physical (the striking of the stretched threads) and the auditory sphere of the tool’s action; this seems to be supported by Euripides’ choice of the verb κρέκειν, whose perceived connexion with κερκίς (in terms of the ‘resounding’ of the weft-beater on the loom) is well attested by the lexicographic tradition, as we have seen. Aristophanes’ parody of Euripidean lyric in the *Frogs* (staged in 405), sung by the character of Aeschylus, includes a citation of *Hypsipyle* monody in a passage mimicking the hyper-mimetic and densely imagistic New Musical style of

Euripides’ late production. In this case, the adjective ιστότονος is connected to weft-threads (πηνίσματα), in turn defined as “practisings of singer *kerkis*” and wound by spiders with their fingers – an image with no apparent logical coherence, as it is aimed at mocking Euripides through a juxtaposition of excerpts from his lyric verses:

αἴθ’ ὑπώροφιοι κατὰ γωνίας  
εἰειειλίσσετε δακτύλοις φάλαγγες  
ιστότονα πηνίσματα,  
κερκίδος ἀοιδοῦ μελέτας

Aristophanes *Frogs* 1313-1316

and you spiders in crannies beneath the roof  
who with your fingers wi-i-i-i-i-nd  
the weft-threads stretched across the loom,  
practisings of singer *kerkis*

The focus on the sound/noise produced in weaving is mimetically rendered by the repetition of the first syllable of εἰλίσσετε “you who wind”, signalling “the setting of a single long syllable to a cluster of shorter notes, forming an ornamental turn”.<sup>49</sup> When referred to the weft-threads, ιστότονος makes good sense as ‘stretched across the loom’, in this case by the action of the “singer *kerkis*” κερκίδος ἀοιδοῦ – also a Euripidean quotation, according to the scholia *ad loc.* (ascribed to the fragmentary *Meleagros*, fr. 523 N.<sup>2</sup> = fr. 528a K. *TrGF* vol. 5.1).

The *topos* of the ‘tuneful κερκίς’, with the variant ‘sound/voice of the κερκίς’, surfaces in 5<sup>th</sup> century BC drama in two fragments of Sophocles,<sup>50</sup> but enjoys a new popularity in a number of votive epigrams collected in the sixth book of the *Anthologia Palatina*,

castanets: see Battezzato 2005, 183-189. At v. 11 θέλει (“desires”) is a conjecture by Morel: the papyrus has the problematic μέλει (“is concerned (for me to sing)”). The metrical pattern is acatalectic dactylic tetrameter (four dactyls), also known as ‘Alcmanian’ due to its frequent use in Alcman.

47. Respectively Collard, Cropp & Gibert 2004, 190-191 and Dover 1993 in the commentary *ad loc.*

48. See the discussion on the semantics and usage of τόνος as a technical musical term in Rocconi 2003, 21-26.

49. Barker 1984, 115, who quotes the scholium *ad loc.* and translates ἐλίσσειν with ‘weave’ in the passage: the verb is Euripides’ favourite for denoting the whirling movements of circular Dionysiac dance: see Csapo 1999-2000, 422. In the MMS the number of repetition of εἰ vary between four and six; the metrical pattern of the song is Aeolic, with v. 1316 that can be interpreted as *ia + cho* or as a variation on the preceding *cr + io<sup>ma</sup>* with an added final syllable (hypercatalectic).

50. Both in a non-musical context: the “voice of the *kerkis*” (κερκίδος φωνή) of fr. 595 Radt (*Tereus*), transmitted by Aristotle in his discussion of tragic recognition (ἀναγνώρισις, *Poetics* 1454b 36-37), refers to Philomena’s in-weaving into a fabric of the story of her rape by Tereus; fr. 890 Radt mentions the “songs of the *kerkis*” (κερκίδος ὕμνοις) that (subject is κερκίς) “wakes up those who are sleeping”.

where weavers dedicate the implements of their figuring work on the loom to the goddess Athena, patron of handicraft, often with the purpose of abandoning textile activity to turn hetaerae.<sup>51</sup> The range of sounds attributed to the κερκίς in this group of epigrams encompasses several birds' cries (the swallow, the halcyon, the nightingale):<sup>52</sup> such a ornithological characterization of the sharp noise produced by the striking of threads on the loom may be positioned within a broader pattern of imagery in Hellenistic epigram, where we find instances of κρέκειν in association with singing birds and insects whose cry is compared with the sound of stringed instruments.<sup>53</sup> This seems to have become at this stage a literary *topos*, very far from the imitative poetics of Alcman's singing birds and κερκολύρα, and it certainly does not retain the semantic proximity with the domain of textile craft that we have seen in fifth century occurrences of κρέκειν in musical context.

#### **Metapoetics of weaving and cross-craft terminology: the case of ποικιλ- and δαιδαλ- terms**

Very similar in structure and theme to *PMG* 806, another fragment by Telestes (*PMG* 810) is concerned with projecting innovations in instrumental and sung music back to an archetypal time and to barbarian, Oriental origin; the Phrygian νόμος ('mode' or 'tune') was introduced in Greece by "the companions of Pelops; and the Greeks began to make the Lydian *hymnos* to resound (κρέκον / Λύδιον ὕμνον) with the shrill-voiced plucking of the *pēktis*". While in *PMG*

806 the Lydian νόμος was composed through the act of weaving around (ἀμφιπλέκειν) the composite sound of the αὐλός, here Telestes chooses κρέκειν to convey the image of a song executed with the accompaniment of a harp-instrument. The Lydian ὕμνος ('song') which is made to resound in *PMG* 810 could be set against a sample of metaliterary metaphors that conceptualize the composition and the performance of a choral song in terms of weaving, plaiting and interlacing. As it has been aptly noted, craftsmanship imagery in Greek choral lyric, especially in the well-attested genre of victory ode (*epinikion*), often presents the analogical relationship between the poem/song and the artefact as qualified by "a word for 'loud' or 'sounding'".<sup>54</sup> To stay within the association with the Lydian musical mode that we have seen picked up by Telestes, Pindar presents the choral persona in his eight *Nemean* as bringing a metaliterary "pattern-woven Lydian headband endowed with sound" (φέρων / Λυδίαν μίτραν καναχηδὰ πεποικιλμέναν, vv. 14-15); in the fourth *Nemean* (vv. 44-46) the image of the φόρμιγξ (a stringed instrument) that is invited to "weave out (ἐξύφαινε) this choral song (μέλος) in the Lydian mode (Λυδία σὺν ἀρμονίᾳ)" reaffirms the terminological osmosis between the τέχναι of weaving and music-making.<sup>55</sup> The popular etymology linking the term ὕμνος ('choral song' in pre-classical poetry, but later generally 'song', as probably also in Telestes 810 *PMG*) to the verb ὑφαίνειν ('to weave') in the sense of 'fabric' reflects the significant role of textile imagery within the broader metapoetics of craftsmanship specific to the genre of choral lyric.<sup>56</sup> A good number of metaphors for

51. This group of epigrams, and the dynamics of variation on the model, are discussed in Taràn 1979, 115-131.

52. Swallow: Philip of Thessalonica *A.P.* 6.247.1-3; swallow + halcyon: Antipater Sidonius *A.P.* 6.160.1-2; nightingale: Antipater Sidonius *A.P.* 6.174.5-6. In a few epigrams, the κερκίς is more generally "melodious" (φιλασιδός): Antipater Sidonius *A.P.* 6.247; "singer-and-dancer of the looms" (μολπάτις): Leonidas of Tarentum *A.P.* 6.288.4-5; "sonorous" (εὐθροός): Archias *A.P.* 6.39.5.

53. See the systematic survey of the occurrences by Raimondi 2000, whose starting point is Theocritus *A.P.* 9.433.

54. Ford 2002, 120, in the context of a fine discussion of "singer and craftsman" (113-130).

55. On Pindar's references to Lydian *harmonia*, and the relationship with the rhythmical pattern of the respective poem, see Prauscello 2012, 65 and 80-81: *Nemean* 4 is in Aeolic metre, *Nemean* 8 in dactylo-epitrite.

56. Bacchylides plays on this (par)etymology in two well-known passages (5.9-10 ὑφάνας ὕμνον "weaving a *hymnos*"; at 19.8 ὕμνοισιν ὑφαίνε κτλ. we have juxtaposition but no syntactical relationship). A systematic survey of ὕμνος and ὕμνεῖν in archaic poetry and especially in Pindar is presented by Maslov 2015, 286-307, who discusses as well the prehistory of the term and convincingly proposes as its original meaning 'cult choral song'. A comprehensive argument supporting the different view that *hymnos* is grounded in the semantics of fabric-making and, pointing to a pervasive conception of poetic performance as weaving, should always be taken as 'fabric, weave' in archaic poetry, is built by Gregory Nagy in a number of works of his: see e.g. Nagy 2002, 70-98.

song-making in Pindar are drawn from the semantic domains of weaving (ὄφαινειν: fr. 179 S-M), plaiting (πλέκειν: *Ol.* 6.86-87), and interlacing (εἴρειν: *Nem.* 7.77): they are thus integral to, and should be set against, the communicative strategy of the poet, who may want to illustrate the chorus' performance or dramatize the author's process of composition, and often makes these two temporal levels interact within the structure of the poem.<sup>57</sup>

A distinctive characteristic of textile metaphors within the wider frame of craftsmanship imagery to which they belong is the capacity to appropriate cross-craft terms and integrate them into the imagery of weaving.

It is with regards to the τέχνηαι of metal-working, carpentry and especially weaving that the semantic range of the series (adjective-verb-noun) δαιδάλεος/δαιδάλλειν/δαίδαλον and ποικίλος/ποικίλλειν/ποικίλμα partially converge in archaic and classical Greek literature: both formations point to an underlying model for the different techniques used to craft artefacts of different material (bronze, wood, fibre), and both reflect the perception of the beauty and complexity of elaborately wrought objects (in the case of the adjective ποικίλος, the concept of variegation entails as well the sensory dimensions of colour and sound).<sup>58</sup> The particular weaving techniques that let the intricate, variegated and multicoloured quality of δαιδάλεος and ποικίλος emerge in the shape of in-woven designs and patterns in fabrics have been identified with tapestry and pattern-weaving.<sup>59</sup> Two samples

of literary imagery featuring ποικιλ- or/and δαιδαλ- terms bear special relevance for the purpose of this chapter: a) occurrences of the syntactical construct ποικίλλειν τι ἔν τινι, which in a textile-related context can be rendered as 'to in-weave something (a pattern or pictorial motif) in/on something (the structure of a fabric)', and b) the metaphorical use of δαιδάλεος/δαιδάλλειν and ποικίλος/ποικίλλειν in association with the poem/song as metapoetic markers: this seems to be a distinctive trait of choral lyric poetics, as the extant instances of the trope feature prominently in Pindar and may serve to advertise the composite nature of the choral performance (made of music, singing, dance, and their respective rhythmic, melodic and orchestric patterns) as well as the complexity and variety of the poem's structure.<sup>60</sup>

Among the extant instances of the phrasing ποικίλλειν τι ἔν τινι in archaic and classical literature, the only occurrence in prose is represented by the scene of cosmic weaving described by Pherecydes of Syros (6<sup>th</sup> century BC) in his cosmological work, the earliest depiction of earth as a work of craftsmanship: on the occasion of the wedding between Zas and Chthonie, the god "fashions a beautiful and large robe, and in-weaves into it Gē [the earth], Ogēnos [the see] and Ogēnos' dwellings" (ποιεῖ φᾶρος μέγα τε καὶ καλόν, καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ ποικίλλει Γῆν καὶ Ὠγηνὸν καὶ τὰ Ὠγενοῦ δώματα fr. 68 Schibli = D-K 7 B2).<sup>61</sup> *Pythian* 9.76-79 is a typical statement of epinician poetics on the part of Pindar, who advertises the interlacement of different themes within the ode: "great achievements are

57. On this specific aspect of archaic lyric poetics see D'Alessio 2004. See Gallet 1990, 77-82 for a discussion of weaving metaphors in Pindar.

58. Frontisi-Ducroux 1975, 52-63 explores the technical aspects of metal-working, wood-working and weaving associated with the δαιδάλεος object: in detecting "homologie des procédés techniques" and "solidarité et interdépendance des différentes matières" (60), she concludes that "[L]es diverses techniques mises en œuvre pour la réalisation du *daidalon* paraissent pensées selon un même modèle intellectuel. L'accent y est mis, semble-t-il, sur la relation entre l'ensemble et les parties. Découpage et assemblage en constituent les axes privilégiés" (61). For a survey of δαιδαλ- terms in Greek literature, with focus on the metaphorical use of δαιδάλλειν in Pindar, see Coward 2016, 48-49 with n. 24. LeVen 2013 offers an analysis of the concept of ποικίλος from the point of view of the semantics of colour and sounds, and traces the transformation of the term (and the cognate noun ποικιλία) in the musical discourse of the late classical period (in connection with specific features of the New Musical style); as for the connotation of ποικίλος in archaic poetry as a colour term, LeVen observes that the adjective "does not describe one colour, pattern, or chromatic shade, but a mottled or dapple appearance, or a skilful arrangement of parts" (233).

59. See the rich discussions of the relevant passages, and further bibliography, in Frontisi-Ducroux 1975, 53-55; Barber 1991, 358-365; Nagy 2010, 273-308; Edmunds 2012, §§52-57.

60. On this regard see Pfeijffer 1999, 22: "[T]he kind of ποικιλία Pindar is aiming at is structural diversity that results from the use of different kinds of material", with references to ποικιλία in ancient literary criticism.

61. See the edition and commentary by Schibli 1990, 50-77 on this section of Pherekydes' book.

always worthy of many words; but to in-weave ancillary themes into the structure of the main themes of the ode (βαῖα δ' ἐν μακροῖσι ποικίλλειν, v. 77) is something that (only) wise men can understand (ἀκοῶ σοφοῖς, lit. 'that can be heard by *sophoi*'), for the *kairos* maintains the cohesion of the whole structure (ὁ δὲ καιρὸς ὁμοίως / παντὸς ἔχει κορυφάν).<sup>62</sup> It is significant that the image gains in coherence once it is set against its material background in textile technology: the poetic technique of inscribing minor themes within larger ones, making them surface in a way that only the *sophoi* in the audience can fully appreciate, is described in terms of pattern or tapestry-weaving. The picture acquires a further layer if, as Bernard Gallet suggests, the term καιρὸς 'due measure, right time' is traced back to its homograph καῖρος, the 'chained spacing cord' that keeps the warp-threads separated and in due order: Gallet sees a further connotation of the weaving term καῖρος in the starting-border of the weave, and applying this meaning to *kairos* at vv. 78-79 sees in it a description of the function of the starting band, which "holds the summit of the whole fabric by keeping the threads constantly in order".<sup>63</sup>

Two lyric passages in Euripides present the construct ποικίλλειν τι ἐν τινι associated with the craft of in-weaving (through pattern- or tapestry-weaving) episodes of the myth on fabrics or garments destined to cultic or ritual functions: the Chorus of Trojan captives in *Hecuba* 466-471 envisages the weaving of the Panathenaic *peplos* for Athena in terms of "pattern-weaving into Athena's saffron-coloured *peplos* in weft threads intricately quilted with flowers (ἐν δαιδαλέαισι ποικίλλουσ' / ἀνθοκρόκοισι πή- / ναϊς) the joking of her lovely chariot mares, or the race of Titans", with an interesting juxtaposition of δαιδαλ- and ποικιλ- terms in the same line. The motif of the

sound of the loom in connection with the κερκίς surfaces in the *parodos* of the *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, where Iphigenia laments that she is not allowed to sing in honour of Hera at Argos, nor is she able to "pattern-weave with the κερκίς on the fair-sounding looms (ἱστοῖς ἐν καλλιφθόγγοις / κερκίδι, vv. 222-223) the likeness of Athena Pallas and the Titans".

The second sample of imagery marks Pindar's appropriation of δαιδαλ- and ποικιλ- terminology as a vehicle of metapoetic metaphors, integrating or substituting ὑφαίνειν and πλέκειν, and adding a connotation of intricateness and variegation that may refer to the musical and rhythmical features of the song. The metaphorical use of the verb δαιδάλλω with the meaning 'to ornament, to adorn with song' is a Pindaric innovation: we find instances of this image both in epinician verse (*Ol.* 1.105 "to ornament in famous folds of songs" κλυταῖσι δαιδαλωσέμεν ὕμνων πτυκαῖς, see also *Nem.* 11.17-18) and in a Theban *daphnephorikon* (fr. 94b.31-32 S-M δαιδαλλοῖσ' ἔπεσιν "adorning with verses"). The usage of ποικίλος/ποικίλλω is more regularly associated with weaving imagery: the adjective qualifies both the variegated and multi-coloured aspect of the woven object (fr. 179 S-M ὑφαίνω δ' Ἀμυθαονίδαισιν ποικίλον / ἄνδημα "I am weaving a pattern-woven headband for the sons of Amythaon") and the composite nature of the *hymnos* that is being performed (*Ol.* 6.86-87 "I shall drink [*sc.* the lovely water of Thebe], as I plait for spearmen a pattern-woven choral song" ἐρατεινὸν ὕδωρ / πίομαι, ἀνδράσιν αἰχματαῖσι πλέκων / ποικίλον ὕμνον).<sup>64</sup>

While the metaphor of 'weaving a hymn' is widely attested in Vedic and Avestan poetry, instances of the 'weaving a choral dance'-motif suggests that Greek literature appropriates the image of poetic weaving in a rather genre-specific way.<sup>65</sup>

62. For the interpretation of this gnomic passage I draw on the excellent discussion by Gallet 1990, 83-101.

63. Gallet's identification of καῖρος with the chained spacing cord and, as in the passage discussed, with the starting border of the weave, draws on the lexicographic tradition: see pp. 31-32 for a survey of the glosses.

64. On the future πίομαι see D'Alession 2004, 289-290: "[I]f the subject represents the narrative function of the author, and if the verb suggests a metaphor for poetic inspiration, we have here a case of production projected into the future [...]. If, however, it refers to the performers, the verb may indicate their receiving the water of poetry from Pindar and their performing his song". A further instance of ποικίλος illustrating the poetic artefact (a *kosmos* endowed with words) is fr. 194 S-M., and interesting case of cross-craft metaphor.

65. On Old Indian and Old Iranian texts using weaving and spinning metaphors as poetological device to claim poetic originality see Andrés-Toledo 2016, with further bibliography; West 2007, 37 argues that the prominence of the metapoetics of weaving in Pindar and Bacchylides is to be traced back to the "Dorian tradition of choral song [...] a repertory of Indo-European or at least Graeco-Aryan imagery that is hardly visible in the Ionian epic and Lesbian traditions"; Maslov 2015, 299 links the survival of the Proto-Indo-European metapoetics of craftsmanship in Greek poetry to "the genre of (cult) choral song". For the image of 'weaving a chorus' see Calame 1997, 34-37 n. 63 and the detailed discussion in Steiner (forthcoming).

This brings us back to the *Politics* passage, with the mention of τὰ Δαιδάλου (“the artefacts of Daedalus”, 1253b36) and Hephaestus’ tripods from *Iliad* 18: a constellation of δαιδαλ- terms is used by Homer in that same book<sup>66</sup> – a celebration of the art of the smith-god culminating in the *ekphrasis* of the Shield of Achilles, that Hephaestus “crafted cunningly in every part” (πάντοσε δαιδάλλων, 479) and on which he “made many δαίδαλα” (482). One of these wondrous creations is a scene of choral dancing (590-606) represented on one of the outer circles of the shield; indeed, the opening lines see the only appearance of Daedalus in Homer:

ἐν δὲ χορὸν ποίκιλλε περικλυτὸς ἀμφιγυήεις  
τῷ Ἴκελον, οἶον ποτ’ ἐνὶ Κνωσῷ εὐρείῃ  
Δαίδαλος ἤσκησε καλλιπλοκάμῳ Ἀριάδνῃ.  
ἔνθα μὲν ἠἴθειοι καὶ παρθένοι ἀλφεσίβοιοι  
ὠρχεῦντ’, ἀλλήλων ἐπὶ καρπῷ χεῖρας ἔχοντες.

Hom. *Il.* 590-594

On it furthermore the famed god of the two  
lame legs inlaid (ποίκιλλε) a dance (χορὸν)  
like the one which once in wide Cnossus  
Daedalus fashioned for fair-tressed Ariadne.

There youths and maidens of the price of  
many oxen  
were dancing, holding their hands on one  
another’s wrists.

The passage offers a comparison between Hephaestus and Daedalus as fashioners of a χορός: in its Homeric usage the term can denote both a dancing floor and the actual dance of a choral formation;<sup>67</sup> the choice between the two meanings seems to have troubled already ancient commentators to these lines, as shown by the interpretations provided by the scholia. While the locative adverb ἔνθα (‘there’) at v. 593 seems to suggest that χορός designates here the dancing floor,<sup>68</sup> a scholium connects Daedalus’ χορός for Ariadne to the circular choral dance that Theseus ‘wove’ (ἔπλεκεν, lit. ‘plaited’) after his victorious exit from the labyrinth with the fourteen youths (seven young men and seven girls);<sup>69</sup> the image of ‘weaving a chorus’ of dancers (the ensemble of youths) may as well have been generated here, as the scholiast suggests, by the fact that the choreography of the dance, created by Daedalus and transmitted to Theseus and the youths, was inspired by the “twists and turns of the labyrinth”.<sup>70</sup> In the first line of the Homeric passage (590), χορὸν is

66. See Morris 1992, 226: “*Iliad* 18 is the richest source of such expressions [*sc.* artefacts endowed with “legendary, divine, or exotic craftsmanship”] in their full range, convening Hephaistos, Daidalos, every variant of δαιδαλ- words, and the power of movement in art”. Occurrences of δαιδαλ- terms in *Iliad* 18: adjective δαιδάλεος, vv. 379, 390, 612; noun δαίδαλον (pl. δαίδαλα), vv. 400, 482; verb δαιδάλλειν, 479.

67. χορός indicates the choral ensemble later in the passage, at v. 603 (where a crowd of spectators take delight in the “lovely chorus” ἡμερόντα χορὸν) and in the choral performance executed for Odysseus by Phaeacian dancers in *Od.* 8.264 (whereas at 8.260 χορός is the dancing floor). See Morris 1992, 12-15 for a thorough discussion of our passage and its significance for later traditions about Daedalus (“[R]eaders since antiquity have made him an architect, sculptor, or choreographer on the basis of this passage and its possible interpretations, beginning with the scholia”, p. 14); cf. Power 2011, 80-82 on Daedalus and chorality, and on this passage as “an impetus to the metaphoric elaboration of the choral singer-dancer as a ‘bionic’ statue of stone or metal” (82).

68. See Scholia A *ad* 18.590a (Erbse IV p. 564) τὸν τόπον χορὸν εἶρηκεν, οὐ τὸ σύστημα τῶν χορευόντων “[Homer] calls χορός the place [of the dance], not the formation of dancers” and Scholia BT *ad* 18.590b (Erbse IV p. 564) χορὸν: τὸν πρὸς χορείαν τόπον “χορός: the place for choral dance”, adding that this is made explicit by the following ἔνθα ‘there’; Scholia T *ad* 18.590c (Erbse IV p. 564) introduces architectural ποικιλία (‘variegation’), explaining that Hephaestus adorned the dancing floor with columns and statues in circle. See Morris 1992, 14 on ancient ‘architectural’ interpretations of Daedalus’ χορός, especially Pausanias 9.40.3 (a marble relief with dancers in Cnossos).

69. Schol. AB *ad* 18.590 (Bekker p. 514, ll. 33-37) ἐξελθὼν δὲ μετὰ τὸ νικῆσαι ὁ Ἰησεὺς μετὰ τῶν ἠθέων καὶ παρθένων χορὸν τοιοῦτον ἐπλεκεν ἐν κύκλῳ τοῖς θεοῖς, ὅποια καὶ ἡ τοῦ λαβυρίνθου εἰσοδὸς τε καὶ ἐξοδος αὐτῷ ἐγεγόνει. τῆς δὲ χορείας τὴν ἐμπειρίαν ὁ Δαίδαλος αὐτοῖς ὑποδείξας ἐποίησεν “When Theseus emerged after his victory [over the Minotaur] with the young men and the young girls, he wove such a χορός in a circular formation for the gods, just as his entrance and exit from the labyrinth had been. Daedalus devised the craft of the *choreia* and showed it to them” (transl. Power 2011, 82).

70. Muellner 1990, 91. In other sources this choreography is associated with the ‘crane dance’ (γέρανος), performed by Theseus and the youths in Delos: on the mythical episode, and Daedalus’ role in it as both choreographer and architect, see Frontisi-Ducroux 1975, 145-147; Power 2011, 80-82. Cf. the exhaustive discussion on the ritual prerogatives of Theseus as chorus-leader of circular dances in Calame 1997, 53-58.

direct object of the verb ποικίλλειν in what is our earliest instance of the construct ποικίλλειν τι ἔν τινι, often occurring in textile-related contexts to describe pattern-weaving or tapestry, as we have seen. The choice of the verb (ποικίλλε, 590, a *hapax legomenon* as well as Δαίδαλος at 592) in relation to a choral performance has been seen as pointing towards weaving imagery.<sup>71</sup> However, the cross-craft nature of ποικιλ- terminology and its semantic focus on techniques rather than materials provide the verb with an entirely satisfactory meaning as ‘to inlay’ in our passage: the Homeric verse seems rather to offer an interesting instance of terminological convergence between τέχνη.

While the loss of the totality of the melodic patterns of ancient Greek music accompanying the performance of archaic lyric – a loss that should be paired with that of the choreography of dramatic and non-dramatic choruses – makes it difficult and tentative any discussion on the nature of the relationship between the craft of weaving and the τέχνη of musical and poetic composition and performance, certain patterns of convergence at the level of terminology seem to suggest a profound dynamics of exchange between the two arts. The usage of κρέκειν in 5<sup>th</sup> century BC lyric and drama, and its partial overlapping with instances of other technical terms of weaving applied to instrumental music, invite further considerations and a more systematic study of aspects of musical imagery and poetic technique (metrical and rhythmical patterns, stylistic and structural features) that can still be detected and analysed, and that may reveal precise correspondences between certain instrumental practices, musical modes and rhythmical patterns, and particular techniques of the craft of weaving. The generic appropriation by archaic Greek choral lyric of a repertoire of metapoetics of craftsmanship of Proto-Indo-European origin should be seen as a distinctive tract of poetics, and as the frame against which to explore the prominent role of weaving imagery in illustrating and conceptualizing song-making.

71. See especially the rich discussion and the argument built by Nagy 2010, 273-310, who argues for a number of connections (ritual, religious, technological) between metal-working and pattern-weaving as early as the Bronze Age, and sees the technique of ‘variation’ expressed by ποικίλος/ποικίλλειν (and the equivalent πάσσειν ‘sprinkle’, which the Scholia A and T ad 22.441d2 gloss as the Cypriot term for ποικίλλειν) in the crafts of metal-working and pattern-weaving as apt metaphors for the variegation of Homeric poetry; in the specific case of *Il.* 18.590 Nagy argues that “the bronzework of the god is pictured as an act of pattern-weaving” (291), and that ποικίλλειν as pattern-weaving is a metaphor for metalworking. Steiner (forthcoming) proposes the fascinating hypothesis that χορός (*qua* expression of chorality and its nexus with weaving imagery) may have determined, by means of semantic and imagistic ‘attraction’, the choice of the verb ποικίλλω in the passage.

## Abbreviations

- D-K H. Diels (ed.), *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*<sup>6</sup> 3 vols., rev. W. Kranz, Berlin, 1951-1952.
- GE Franco Montanari. *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*. Editors of the English Edition: M. Goh & Ch. Schroeder. Leiden Boston 2015.
- PCG R. Kassel and C.F.L. Austin (eds), *Poetae Comici Graeci*. 8 vols. Berlin and New York 1983-1998. 2 (1991); 3.2 (1984); 4 (1983); 5 (1986); 6.2 (1998); 7 (1989); 8 (1995).
- PMG D.L. Page (ed.), *Poetae Melici Graeci*. Oxford 1962.
- PMGF M. Davies (ed.), *Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* Vol. 1 Oxford 1991.
- S-M B. Snell, rev. H. Maehler (eds), *Pindari Carminum Fragmentis*<sup>8</sup>. 2 vols. Leipzig 1987-1989.
- TrGF *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*. vol. 1 *Didascaliae Tragicae, Catalogi Tragicorum et Tragoediarum, Testimonia et Fragmenta Tragicorum Minorum* (ed. B. Snell; Göttingen 1971<sup>1</sup>, 1986<sup>2</sup>); vol. 2 *Fragmenta Adespota* (eds R. Kannicht and B. Snell; 1981); vol. 3 *Aeschylus* (ed. S.L. Radt; 1977); vol. 4 *Sophocles* (ed. S.L. Radt; 1985<sup>1</sup>, 1999<sup>2</sup>); vol. 5 *Euripides* (ed. R. Kannicht; 2 parts; 2004).
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