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TOWARDS A GENERATIVE VIEW OF THE ORAL FORMULA

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The last few years have seen a dramatic and gratifying upsurge of interest in the Homeric formula.[1] This new interest has gradually come to focus on the real nature of the formula as a mental template in the mind of the oral poet, rather than on statistical aspects of "repetition" found among phrases in the text. We are coming to the

[1] Of the considerable amount of secondary material now in print on this subject, the following works will be cited most frequently in the ensuing discussion: **Parry, *ET*** = Milman Parry, *L'Epithète traditionelle dans Homère* (Paris 1928); ***Formules*** = *Les formules et la métrique d'Homère* (Paris 1928); ***Studies I*** = "Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Verse-Making I: Homer and the Homeric Style," *HSCP* 41 (1930) 73–147; ***Studies II*** = "Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Verse-Making II: The Homeric Language as the Language of an Oral Poetry," *HSCP* 43 (1932) 1–50. **Lord, *ST*** = Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964). **Hainsworth, *Homeric Formula*** = James B. Hainsworth, "The Homeric Formula and the Problem of its Transmission," *BICS* 9 (1962) 57–68; ***Structure and Content*** = "Structure and Content in Epic Formulae: The Question of the Unique Expression," *CQ* 14 (1964) 155–64. **Hoekstra** = A. Hoekstra, *Homeric Modifications of Formulaic Prototypes* = *Verh. der Kon. Akad. van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde*, n.s. 71:1 (Amsterdam 1965). **Kirk, *SH*** = Geoffrey S. Kirk, *The Songs of Homer* (Cambridge 1962); ***YCS* 20** = "Studies in Some Technical Aspects of Homeric Style" and "Formular Language and Oral Quality," *YCS* 20 (1966) 73–152 and 153–74. **Russo** = Joseph A. Russo, "A Closer Look at Homeric Formulas," *TAPA* 94 (1963) 235–47. To these may now be added **Edwards** = Mark W. Edwards, "Some Features of Homeric Craftsmanship," *TAPA* 97 (1966) 115–80, which appeared too late to be given the attention it deserves in the body of this article. His results appear to corroborate mine at several points (and to supersede them at least in the area of metrics) although I cannot agree with all aspects of his general conclusions (see below, note 37).

Parts of the present article represent a revision of material presented in my unpublished doctoral dissertation, *Formula and Motif in Homer: Prolegomena to an Aesthetics of Oral Poetry*, Berkeley 1966 (Microfilm Order No. 66–8347). I take this opportunity to acknowledge the directorship of that dissertation by Professor E. L. Bundy and much help in preparing this article by Professor T. G. Rosenmeyer, neither of whom should be held accountable, however, for the shortcomings of either product.

heart of the problem, but it is proving to be so difficult and subtle that it has divided theoreticians of the oral formula into a number of non-too-friendly camps and seems to have brought most aspects of the study of oral poetry in general to an impasse.[2] One group, recently called "soft Parryists"[3] and represented by Hainsworth, Russo, and others, has been demonstrating more and more kinds of resemblance among phrases or parts of phrases in the text and interpreting these resemblances as additional criteria for "formulaicness." Others, while presumably not contesting the statistical significance or general interest of the resemblances in question, refuse to broaden their criteria for *formulaic* resemblance beyond those implied by the famous but no longer standard definition of the formula by Milman Parry: "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea" (*Studies I* 80; and cf. Hainsworth, *Structure and Content* 155). The issue is not merely semantic: when does the echoing of one phrase by another indicate that the poet has employed a formula common to both, which most critics even today still regard as a kind of detraction from his "originality," and when is such resemblance to be explained on some other grounds, e.g. coincidence? Or, to look at the evidence of the texts from a centrifugal rather than centripetal viewpoint, in an array of phrases which are progressively different from one another in various ways, which is a formula, which a "modification" of the formula, and which no formula at all? Our uncertainty as to when we can reasonably decide that a formula has been used rests on a prior uncertainty as to the nature of the formula as a mental entity: we cannot be sure how or when the thing behaves, to say nothing of its poetic value, until we have a much better idea what it is.

Neither "hard" nor "soft" Parryism will, in my opinion, bring

[2] Kirk, for example, writes recently that "little has been achieved since Parry died" (*SH* 68), while McLeod, in his superb review of Hoekstra's *Homeric Modifications*, cites that work as "the first book in nearly forty years on the Homeric formula," and concludes that, "despite the ground won by Hoekstra's efforts, we still do not know enough about the development of formulas" (in *Phoenix* 20 [1966] 333 and 339). Recent differences of opinion between Kirk and Van der Valk, though of great interest, sound in part like the age-old "Homeric Question" slightly sophisticated by knowledge of the oral formula (Van der Valk, *AC* 35 [1966] 5–70).

[3] Cf. T. G. Rosenmeyer, "The Formula in Early Greek Poetry," *Arion* 4 (1965) 297.

us much closer to an answer to this central question.[4] Those who admit of any kind of resemblance between phrases—resemblance of meter, syntax, diction, or the like—as being formulaic can point to the fact that Parry himself had suggested that his criteria were provisional and would need to be expanded (e.g. at *Studies I* 126), but they are then faced with the problem of just how far to expand them, in other words, of inventing a reason for drawing the line at a given point. If one goes as far as Russo, for example, in saying that metrical-grammatical patterns such as $\overset{V}{\breve{}}\ \_\ \overset{12}{\breve{}}\ \|$ or $\overset{N}{\breve{}}\ \overset{7}{\_}$ for single words are "in themselves formulaic" (p. 240) irrespective of their dictional content, the suggestion is likely to be considered hopelessly broad; what, exactly, is the relationship of this "formulaicness" to the word-for-word inevitability of the noun-epithet combination or the imposing rigidity and thrift of the schematized "formula systems" which we, somewhat unfairly, consider the salient features of Parry's work? And similar problems arise with the question of diction: for example with Ruijgh's contention that the occurrence of a lexical item such as *νυ* is formulaic in certain metrical positions, as well as with other criteria.[5]

Those, on the other hand, who have cleaved to the hard definition of the formula and its operations cannot account for these newly discovered kinds of correspondence in any way other than to deny, explicitly or by implication, that the Homer of our texts was "merely" an oral poet.[6]

[4] One can make a further distinction among "soft" Parryists, between those who view the received formula as having one form which "our" poet could vary (Hainsworth) and those who view the formula itself as a (fixed) pattern of some sort which the poet fills in (Russo); the view to be developed here would resemble that of the latter group, but only superficially. The former, along with the "hard" Parryists (Pope, Minton), tend to oversimplify Parry's own view as "a rigid and pervasive schematization of the diction" (Hainsworth, *Homeric Formula* 64); cf. Hoekstra 13.

[5] *L'Elément Achéen dans la langue épique* (Assen 1957) 57–67, cf. Russo 243; Kirk, *SH* 67; Hoekstra 15. The problem has become the more acute in the metrical area with the rewarding studies in word-localization and colometry that have been undertaken since Parry's time. Russo's error of logic in failing to distinguish between oral and written hexameter poetry does not vitiate the importance of his work for theories of the formula; cf. his more recent statement in *YCS* 20 (1966) 223, note 13. On metrics proper cf. E. G. O'Neill, "The Localization of Metrical Word-Types in the Greek Hexameter," *YCS* 8 (1942) 105–78; Hermann Fränkel, "Der Kallimacheische und der Homerische Hexameter," *NGG*, 1926, 197–299; H. N. Porter, "The Early Greek Hexameter," *YCS* 12 (1951) 1–63; H. J. Mette, "Die Struktur des ältesten dactylischen Hexameters," *Glotta* 35 (1956) 1–17; Kirk in *YCS* 20.73–174.

[6] M. W. M. Pope, "The Parry-Lord Theory of Homeric Composition," *Acta Classica* 6 (1963) 20; Kirk, *SH* 92–97, *YCS* 20 (1966) 135, etc.

This lack of unanimity about such fundamental matters as the formula and formulaic repetition is particularly unfortunate at the present time for several reasons. It is not unlikely, for one thing, that the use of electronic computers will soon be adding a good deal to the amount of statistical evidence already compiled on formulas or suspected formulas in Greek hexameter poetry.[7] As Prof. McLeod has ably shown (above, note 2), this effort may only compound our difficulties if no solid conceptual framework can be constructed for the evaluation of such data. For another thing, "formulas," by various criteria, have now been discovered not only in Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns, Delphic oracular utterances, and the fragments of Panyassis, but in such widely disparate areas of literature as Old and Middle English, Medieval French epic, Old Testament verse, Babylonian and Hittite epic, Toda ritual songs, Coorg dance songs, Spanish and English ballads, and still others.[8] It is my impression that in many if not all of these areas the progress of oral formulaic studies has by now run aground on the same problem—the investigators cannot agree as to what is formulaic about their formulas; once they attempt to go beyond statistical observation of the *verbatim* repetition of phrases or lines in a given

[7] Cf. R. R. Dyer, "The Prospects of Computerized Research of Homer," *Revue: Organisation Internationale pour l'Etude des Langues Anciennes par Ordinateur* 4 (1966) 25–29; Pope (above, note 6) 21; Frank P. Jones, "A Binary-Octal Code for Analyzing Hexameters," *TAPA* 97 (1966) 275–81.

[8] For Greek poetry other than Homer, cf. James A. Notopoulos, "The Homeric Hymns as Oral Poetry," *AJP* 83 (1962) 334–68; W. E. McLeod, "Oral Bards at Delphi," *TAPA* 92 (1961) 317–25, and "Studies on Panyassis," *Phoenix* 20 (1966) 95–110, and note 49, p. 110, for further bibliography. Some basic works in Anglo-Saxon and other areas are conveniently listed in Scholes and Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (Oxford 1966) 305–11, to which may be added: Joseph Duggan, "Formulas in the *Couronnement de Louis*," *Romania* 87 (1966) 315–44; James H. Jones, "Commonplace and Memorization in the Oral Tradition of the English and Scottish Popular Ballads," *JAF* 74 (1961) 96–113 (with rebuttal by Albert B. Friedman, 113–16); Robert D. Stevick, "The Oral-Formulaic Analyses of Old English Verse," *Speculum* 37 (1962) 382–89; I. McNeill, "The Meter of the Hittite Epic," *Journal of Anatolian Studies* 13 (1963) 237–42; Murray B. Emeneau, "Oral Poets of South India: the Todas," *JAF* 71 (1958) 312–24, "Style and Meaning in an Oral Literature," *Language* 42 (1966) 323–45 (one looks forward with great interest to more extensive work by Professor Emeneau now in progress on this subject); Ruth Webber, *Formulistic Diction in the Spanish Ballad* = *U. C. Pub. Mod. Phil.* 34:2 (1951) 175–278; James Ross, "Formulaic Composition in Gaelic Oral Literature," *Modern Philology* 57 (1959) 1–12; Michael Curschmann, "Oral Poetry in Mediaeval English, French, and German Literature: Some Notes on Recent Research," *Speculum* 42 (1967) 36–52.

body of poetry, widespread uncertainty prevails as to exactly what was handed to the poet as a traditional formula, what he could and could not do to that formula to suit his immediate purposes, and what he did or did not add to the postulated traditional body of phrases as his own creative contribution.[9] Inevitably, a pair of terms which had long been taken as settled markers for the polarities of a familiar field of thought become disturbingly problematic, namely "traditional" versus "original." The far-reaching connotations of these terms for the aesthetic appreciation of any oral poetry, not only on the level of the formulaic phrase but also on that of the motif, type-scene, and whole plot, are apparent; and this is another reason why the theory of the formula must be thoroughly re-examined. It is very doubtful whether we are justified in discriminating between "traditional" and "original"—to say nothing of making value judgments based on such discriminations—until we have a clearer idea just what these terms may imply in an oral context.

Furthermore, it is an unfortunate fact that, despite many suggestions and some preliminary attempts, no coherent aesthetic theory has as yet emerged which would equip us to understand or appreciate the special nature of oral poetry as poetry. Unlike Parry himself, some students of the formula have tended to regard it as a "phrase type" or "metrical type," without complicating the issue with meaningfulness or aesthetic value—a simplification which, as I shall try to show, throws the baby out with the bath water. On the other hand, literary critics of the poems have understandably not been able to assimilate the concept of formulaic diction, as presented in an incomplete form by Parry, into their theories of poetry. This perplexity was implicit in the following dictum of Meister, whose concept of Homer's "art language" influenced Parry greatly: "Der homerische Kunstdialekt dichtet für seinen Dichter."[10] What kind of art is implied by closed

[9] For the appearance of formulas in literary texts and the vexed question of the "transitional text" as a common problem, cf. Russo, Hoekstra 14–18, and Larry D. Benson, "The Literary Character of Anglo-Saxon Formulaic Poetry," *PMLA* 81 (1966) 334–41.

[10] *Die Homerische Kunstsprache* (Leipzig 1921) 234; cf. Parry's review of Arend in *CP* 31 (1936) 357–60, and this paradoxical statement by Notopoulos: "Hence though the oral poet uses the *ipsissima verba* of formulae throughout his style, his oral version is *mutuum et variabile*, involving degrees of excellence or ineptness in the use of traditional themes and language" ("Originality in Homeric and Akritan Formulae," *ΛΑΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ* 18 [1959] 424–25).

and invariable systems of phrases, fixed and meaningless epithets, inapposite similes, and dead metaphors?

What is needed is a theory of the formula which accounts for the irrefutable statistical facts that distinguish the texts of Homer from those of poets known to have composed by writing, yet does not close the door on the free play of creativity and genius that is so obvious throughout the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* to every unprejudiced reader of the poems. We may go one step further: a sound theory of the formula, consonant with the research on oral creativity carried out by modern anthropologists, should better enable us to understand the beauty and meaning of the poems than any theory designed to explain written epics. For whatever one's views of the recension and transmission of the text, it is obvious on statistical grounds alone that Homeric poetry was fundamentally oral poetry. This study will put forward in outline a theory of oral composition answering to the above criteria. Among other things it is hoped that this theory may facilitate some reconciliation of the rather divergent schools of thought that have arisen on this subject since Parry's time.

I

We may begin by re-investigating the type of corresponsion which Parry called *calembour*, as seen, for example, in the following pair of phrases:

ἀμφήλυθεν ἡδὺς ἀυτμή (*Od.* 12.369)
ἀμφήλυθε θῆλυς ἀυτή (*Od.* 6.112),

about which he remarks: "ἀμφήλυθεν, employé pour décrire l'odeur du sacrifice se répandant dans l'air, convient aussi bien à décrire un son qui semble remplir l'air."[11]

[11] *ET* 91; there is no implication of humorous or other word-play, or even suggestion that one phrase in any way echoes the other, although Parry does imply that there might be some chronological priority of one or the other. See below, pp. 286–88, and, for chronology of the *ν*-movable, McLeod's review of Hoekstra (above, note 2) 337–38. These are the only two usages of ἀμφέρχομαι in Homer (Hesiod uses περιέρχομαι in this sense), so it is difficult to know the "semantic scatter" of the word in the archaic period (for the inscriptional evidence cf. *LSJ*[9]). Note the semantically and phonemically similar ἀκούετο λαὸς ἀυτῆς (*Il.* 4.331), cited by Meister (above, note 10) 19, in another connection.

The impression of sameness which strikes us in juxtaposing these phrases rests on combined factors of sound and sense. But sometimes phrases in non-oral poetry sound alike in this way, for example the intriguing "corresponsions," etc. cited in earlier commentaries on Pindar.[12] Are any of the factors here, as Parry assumed, indicative of *formulaic* similarity, and if so, which ones?

Let us take a more extensive group of phrases, part of which could be considered a formula-system by Parry's definition.[13] This group involves—among other things—an interplay of δῆμος and δημός in the dative case combined with the adjective πίων to realize that portion of the hexameter falling after the bucolic diaeresis, which Porter would call the C[1] form of the final colon and which we shall refer to for descriptive purposes as the adonean clausula.[14] These combinations give end-line phrases such as πίονι δημῷ "(hidden in) rich fat" (*Od.* 17.241) and πίονι δήμῳ "(amid the) flourishing populace" (9 times). Whatever difference the pitch accent may have made in actual pronunciation during an epic performance, few scholars would deny that the overwhelming similarity of rhythm and phonetic sound among these phrases is "formulaic." Yet is is obvious that they do not express one "given essential idea." One may wish to rescue this part of Parry's definition by considering them two sets of formulas in the same system rather than ten examples of the same formula (and the

[12] "Corresponsion" was the term used by Mezger and Bury, "tautometric recurrence" or "echo" by Farnell. Professor Bundy brings the following examples to my attention from *different* epinikia: *Pythian* 2.6–8, 3.30, 1.84, 4.200. Cf. ὄζῳ ἐπ' ἀκροτάτῳ (*Il.* 2.312); in different position, ὄζοι ἐπ' ἀκροτάτῃ (*Il.* 4.484); with different syntax, ἀγροῦ ἐπ' ἐσχατιήν (*Od.* 4.517); and *Il.* 20.328, *Od.* 12.15, 9.382, 19.389, 15.552, *H.* 7.38, 45 (further examples in Edwards, 128), alongside Sappho, fragment 105 (Page). The whole problem of formulaicness in non-oral poetry and its relation to the same in oral verse cannot be treated here, but it is raised most pointedly by Russo.

[13] "A group of phrases which have the same metrical value and which are enough alike in thought and word to leave no doubt that the poet who used them knew them not only as a single formula, but also as formulas of a certain type" (*Studies I* 85). The subjective element of this definition is to be contrasted with the impression of rigidity made by the visual impact of the actual schemata chosen; cf. *ET* 19, *Formules* 22, 50 for other definitions.

[14] I mean to imply nothing here about the ethical value of the terms "adonean," or even "clausula" (Porter [above, note 5] 13); note that the phrases are sometimes preceded by enclitic ἐνί or ἐν, sometimes by metrically and semantically "heavier words" (Fränkel [above, note 5]), so that the adonean portion as such can be more or less detachable from the rest of the verse.

doubt is itself instructive), but no very positive purpose would be served by such a maneuver. It has already been adequately demonstrated by a number of writers that the criterion of the "same essential idea" does not always apply to those phrases, even those noun-epithet combinations, which are sufficiently similar to be regarded as allomorphs of a single template, whatever we may choose to call it.[15]

Whereas the phrases cited thus far are true noun-epithet combinations, there are other examples in the *δημός* group where the adjective *πίων* is not in the dative but in the accusative (singular or plural), modifying some noun which occurs earlier in the verse. In these cases the final *δημῷ* also fulfills an entirely different syntactic function than it does in *Od.* 17.241:

> *ὔμμ' ἐπὶ μηρία κῆε, καλύψας πίονι δημῷ* (*Od.* 17.241)
> *καρπαλίμως δὲ τὰ μῆλα, ταναύποδα, πίονα δημῷ* (*Od.* 9.464)
> *ἔργῳ δ'ἔργον ὄπαζε, ταμὼν κρέα πίονα δημῷ* (*H. Merc.* 120)
> *δευτέρῳ αὖ βοῦν θῆκε μέγαν καὶ πίονα δημῷ* (*Il.* 23.750)

This is a more serious matter than the so-called "conjugation" of a ready-made formula (Hoekstra, *passim*), for it suggests that the oral poet who "knew," consciously or otherwise, that he could produce *πίονι δημῷ* (*δήμῳ*) as an adonean clausula, knew in the same way that he could do so with *πίονα δημῷ* in order to end a verse with an entirely different periodicity of thought in which the adonean section is not a separable syntactic unit.[16]

Furthermore, one feels a strong similarity between the *δῆμος* phrases and the common *θεὸς δ' ὣς τίετο δήμῳ* (cf. *Formules* 49, Meister [above, note 10] 31), especially since the adonean portion of our

[15] W. Whallon, "The Homeric Epithets," *YCS* 17 (1961) 95–142, and Hoekstra 13, discussed by W. B. Stanford in *Hermathena* 103 (1966) 89–90. On puns, and on sound without sense as a formulaic element, cf. Emeneau, "Style and Meaning" (above, note 8) 335–40.

[16] Note punctuation before the adonean section in the second, but not in the remaining, examples. This question is similar to those raised by Parry's famous article on "The Distinctive Character of Enjambment in Homeric Verse," *TAPA* 60 (1929) 200–20. The overall rhetorical structure of oral-formulaic verses in general is a subject calling for much study, to which Kirk (*YCS* 20.76–152) and Edwards have provided an excellent beginning.

group is almost always preceded by $\overline{\grave{\epsilon}\nu}$ (or *ἐνί*).[17] *τίετο* certainly sounds enough like *πίονι* for the resemblance to be called formulaic on subjective grounds, but the former is a different part of speech and stands again in a different syntactic relationship to the final word of the verse than the adjective. *πίονι δήμῳ* and *τίετο δήμῳ*, therefore, confront us with a strong resemblance not accounted for by even the "soft-Parryan" concept of the structural formula. Only the very broadest and, one would think, most fundamental criterion for formulaicness remains—that of the metrical pattern itself, that is, the recurrence of metrical cola in the same position and with the same internal distribution of word-end (cf. Russo 239).

But there are phrases connected in some way with the present group whose resemblances to it pass the boundaries set by even this criterion, in much the same way that ideational boundaries are overreached by *βοῦν . . . πίονα δημῷ*. We can show this by arranging the following end-line phrases as a series, with *πίονι δήμῳ* as arbitrary starting point and progressively greater variation in phonemic and then in various metrical features:

1.	*πίονι δήμῳ*	(9 times)
2.	*τίετο δήμῳ*	(6 times)
3.	*ἵκετο δῆμον*	(*Od.* 21.238)
4.	*παντί τε δήμῳ*	(2 times, cf. *Od.* 8.157)
5.	*τῷδ' ἐνὶ δήμῳ*	(*Od.* 2.317)
6.	*φαῖν' ἐνὶ δήμῳ*	(*Il.* 18.295)
7.	*Τρώων ἐνὶ δήμῳ*	(*Od.* 1.237)
8.	*ἀλλοδαπῷ ἐνὶ δήμῳ*	(*Il.* 19.324)
9.	*ἀλλογνώτῳ ἐνὶ δήμῳ*	(*Od.* 2.366)
10.	*ἄλλων ἐξίκετο δῆμον*	(*Il.* 24.481)

Note that by the time one reaches example 4 the disposition of word boundaries has begun to alter; by itself, — ˘ plus enclitic *τε* would not seem very different from a single word of the shape — ˘ ˘, but in our series it appears as a transition to examples 5 and 6, in which the inner

[17] *ὥς* and $\overline{\grave{\epsilon}\nu}$ may be considered alike as semantically "light" words. I do not think the traditional (Alexandrian) sevenfold division of the parts of speech can have been the functional one in Homeric language; cf. J. A. Russo, "The Structural Formula in Homeric Verse," *YCS* 20 (1966) 230 and note 25 (though he does not try to extend the point from "local influence" to formulas in general), and Edwards 128. Simpler divisions have evidently now been devised by linguists and might well be adapted for formula studies.

word-end of the pattern is one step more recessive, although *ἐνί* is like *τε* in being a semantically "light," or functional, word (see above, note 17). We now take a crucial step to example 7, where the phrase itself has outgrown the adonean clausula by two *morae*, and with our final examples we are carried clear back to the midline caesura—or rather first to within one *mora* and finally to the caesura itself:

χήτεϊ τοιοῦδ' υἷος· ὁ δ' ἀλλοδαπῷ ἐνὶ δήμῳ (*Il.* 19.324)
διογενὴς Ὀδυσσεὺς ἀλλογνώτῳ ἐνὶ δήμῳ (*Od.* 2.366)
φῶτα κατακτείνας ἄλλων ἐξίκετο δῆμον (*Il.* 24.481)

If any additional caesura is to be sought between the midline and the end of the verse on a basis of word-end in these first two lines, it would have to be placed after position 9 (note the absence of correption), which would separate the group *ἐνὶ δήμῳ* from the preceding adjective. This was not yet clearly so with the "transitional" examples 4–7 (note elision in 5 and 6). On the other hand, there are almost uncanny phonemic "corresponsions" between the adonean segments of each of these last three verses and one of the first three phrases:[18]

πίονι δήμῳ	*τίετο δήμῳ*	*ἵκετο δῆμον*
-πῷ ἐνὶ δήμῳ	*-τῳ ἐνὶ δήμῳ*	*-ίκετο δῆμον*

This fact raises as a rather startling possibility the notion that formulas, whatever they are, may not necessarily be made up of word-groups at all. More generally, considerations other than our present concept of word-end may contribute to feelings of subdivision within the epic hexameter. At the least, these corresponsions should suggest the operation of psychological cola or rhythmical groups of some sort, having hitherto undetermined relation to formulas, and based upon factors which are not always statistically quantifiable, indeed, not always readily apparent to modern readers of the text.

Whatever may be the larger implications of these observations for metrical theory, it is clear that objective metrical criteria as we now know them will not provide an indispensable *differentia* for each

[18] This kind of corresponsion involving vowel-and-consonant patterns is in fact present to some degree among all of these examples, as it is in the *δημός* group: *ἀγέτι δημῷ*, *δίπλακι δημῷ* (*Il.* 11.817, 23.243), etc. Cf. also *ἑῷ ἐνὶ πίονι νηῷ* (*Il.* 2.549) with *θεὸς* (*δ'*) *ὣς τίετο δήμῳ* (six times), *ταναύποδα πίονα δημῷ* with *ταμὼν κρέα πίονα δημῷ* (*Od.* 9.464, *H. Merc.* 120). For further examples of such corresponsions across word-boundaries cf. Meister (above, note 10) 30, ¶4 with *Il.* 18.20, 18.208, 9.12, *Od.* 18.52, etc.

member of the above-mentioned series. Nor would it be difficult to extend the series by allowing for positional variation ("mobility"—Hainsworth):

πίονα δῆμον ἔχοντες[12], versus example 1 (*Il.* 5.710, cf. 15.738, 17.330)
ἐς δῆμον ἵκηται[12], vs. ex. 3, 10 (*Od.* 14.126)
δήμῳ ἐν ἀλλοδαπῷ[5], vs. ex. 8 (*Od.* 8.211, cf. 8.220, 13.266, 24.31)

or for further substitution of one word:

πίονι νηῷ (*Il.* 2.549)
πίονα ἔργα (*Il.* 16.283)
πίονα μῆλα (6 times)
πίονες ἀγροί (*Il.* 23.832)
πίονος αἰγός (*Il.* 9.209)

or of both:

μήκαδας αἶγας (5 times, cf. Hoekstra 13)
ἴφια μῆλα (9 times).

But these points have already been adequately established by Hainsworth and others with regard to comparable "formula-systems."[19]

The impression of fluidity presented in these juxtapositions is anything but unique to the present series of examples. Here is a series of whole lines controlled by the word κρήδεμνον in all its appearances in the Homeric corpus as simple word or adjectival compound; the series exhibits striking correspondences of various sorts among the examples, despite the fact that the word involved has at least three different denotations: again, the resemblances in the series as a whole cannot be accounted for by any of the objective criteria thus far put forward for formulaicness:

κρήδεμνον = "veil" (18 times)
ἄντα παρειάων σχομένη λιπαρὰ κρήδεμνα (4 times)
ἄϊεν ἐξ ἄντρου, Ἑκάτη λιπαροκρήδεμνος (*H. Cer.* 25)
τῇσιν δ' ἐγγύθεν ἦλθ' Ἑκάτη λιπαροκρήδεμνος (*H. Cer.* 438)
τὴν δ' ὧδε προσέειπε Ῥέη λιπαροκρήδεμνος (*H. Cer.* 459)
τὴν δὲ ἴδε προμολοῦσα Χάρις λιπαροκρήδεμνος (*Il.* 18.382)

[19] Hainsworth, *Homeric Formula; Structure and Content*, esp. 160; and Hoekstra 13 for this series in particular. On the variability in word order cf. Schmidt's introduction to the *Parallel-Homer* (Göttingen 1885) 5–7.

ἂν κεφαλαῖσιν ἔθεντο θεαὶ λιπαροκρήδεμνοι (*Cypria* v 3)
σῖτον δέ σφ' ἄλοχοι καλλικρήδεμνοι ἔπεμπον (*Od.* 4.623)
σφαίρῃ ταί γ' ἄρα παῖζον, ἀπὸ κρήδεμνα βαλοῦσαι (*Od.* 6.100)
Ὣς ἄρα φωνήσασα θεὰ κρήδεμνον ἔδωκεν (*Od.* 5.351)
τῇ δέ, τόδε κρήδεμνον ὑπὸ στέρνοιο τάνυσσαι (*Od.* 5.346)
αὐτίκα δὲ κρήδεμνον ὑπὸ στέρνοιο τάνυσσεν (*Od.* 5.373)
καὶ τότε δὴ κρήδεμνον ἀπὸ ἕο λῦσε θεοῖο (*Od.* 5.459)
ἀμβροσίαις κρήδεμνα δαΐζετο χερσὶ φίλῃσι (*H. Cer.* 41)
κρηδέμνῳ δ' ἐφύπερθε καλύψατο δῖα θεάων (*Il.* 8.184)
κρήδεμνόν θ' ὅ ῥά οἱ δῶκε χρυσέη Ἀφροδίτη (*Il.* 22.470)

κρήδεμνον = "battlement, crenelation" (4 times)
ὄφρ' οἷοι Τροίης ἱερὰ κρήδεμνα λύωμεν (*Il.* 16.100)
οἷον ὅτε Τροίης λύομεν λιπαρὰ κρήδεμνα (*Od.* 13.388)
ἄσομαι, ἣ πάσης Κύπρου κρήδεμνα λέλογχεν (*H. Ven.* 6.2)
δήμου τε προὔχουσιν, ἰδὲ κρήδεμνα πόληος (*H. Cer.* 151)

κρήδεμνον = "stopper, seal" (once)
ὤϊξεν ταμίη καὶ ἀπὸ κρήδεμνον ἔλυσε (*Od.* 3.392)

Many of our present metrical criteria are eluded at a stroke by the variety of word order (*Il.* 16.100 and *Od.* 5.459 versus 13.388, and see below, p. 298), our syntactic and other criteria for the "structural formula" by the variety of word-end and part of speech shown by λιπαρὰ κρήδεμνα versus λιπαροκρήδεμνος, κρήδεμνον . . . τάνυσσαι (imperative) versus κρήδεμνα βαλοῦσαι (participle), and so forth.

However, one is justified in feeling that the resemblances among the phrases in these two groups is something more than merest coincidence, in other words that they are groups of *something*; and that if some of the resemblances do follow criteria which have actually been put forward for formulaicness while others do not, this fact may be an accident of our present method.[20]

Can we justify this subjective feeling of coherence in any other way? I believe that we can, but in order to do so we must be pre-

[20] Falling back upon purely subjective evaluation of formulaicness seems to be endemic to the study of any oral literature; cf. Wayne O'Neill, "Another Look at Oral Poetry in *The Seafarer*," *Speculum* 30 (1960) 596, note 4. Professor Lord, who has been kind enough to criticize parts of the present study, has cautioned me against this tendency. For the reasons indicated above, however, a measure of subjectivity would seem inevitable once one goes beyond statistical description.

pared to sacrifice some of the precision and objectivity which we have thus far attempted to retain for our various definitions of the terms "formula," "formulaic," "formula-system," etc.; in fact it may prove expedient to relinquish for the time being all attempts to define such terms precisely. Provisionally, the word "formula," since it means different things to different people, might well be avoided and an entirely new concept employed in its stead. It seems to me that one is available and already in use in certain other disciplines, and that it promises to suit the facts better than that which has been the basis of study until now. With the conceptual framework in question, a group such as the *πίονι δήμῳ* (*δημῷ*) phrases would be considered not a closed "system" but an open-ended "family," and each phrase in the group would be considered an allomorph, *not of any other existing phrase*, but of some central Gestalt—for want of a better term—which is the real mental template underlying the production of all such phrases. The Gestalt itself, in our case, would seem to exist on a preverbal level of the poet's mind, since we have found it impossible to define other than as a comprehensive list of all the allomorphs which happen to exist in the recorded corpus. But to approach accuracy this would have to be made an infinitely open-ended list, leaving room for all the allomorphs that escaped recording (the vast majority!) and even all possible allomorphs; it would not really be a definition at all.

The imprecision of this notion can hardly be welcome in an area where imprecision has already caused such a troublesome diversity of opinions; but I suggest that it is inevitable if one wishes to come closer to the actual operations of the mind in its creation of oral epic verses, a process which Parry and Lord recognized to be the production of a language like any other.[21]

An analogous imprecision—that is to say, unwillingness to impose unwarranted precision on phenomena—has by now come to characterize nearly every comparable field of inquiry. An absence of objective, classificatory definitions and the technique of description by family rather than class resemblances are keystones of the linguistic philosophy of Wittgenstein, for example. He uses this metaphor to describe the concept:

> And the result of this examination [of activities included under the label

[21] *Studies II* 12; *ST* 22, 36, etc.; see below, note 27.

"game"] is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail.

67. I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than "family resemblances"; for the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. etc. overlap and criss-cross in the same way. . . . And I shall say: 'games' form a family.

And for instance the kinds of number form a family in the same way. . . . And we extend our concept of number as in spinning a thread we twist fibre on fibre. And the strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres.[22]

Here the individual fibres of the thread sound exactly like our various objective criteria for formulaic resemblance, which seldom seem to stretch from one end to the other of a series like *πίονι δήμῳ . . . ἄλλων ἐξίκετο δῆμον* or *τεῦχε κύνεσσιν . . . δῶκεν ἑταίρῳ . . . δῶκε φορῆναι . . . ἄλγε' ἔθηκεν* (Russo, with additions). From a generative, as opposed to a merely descriptive, point of view these "fibres" are the several parameters which, by themselves or in various combinations, can make a preconscious Gestalt present to the mind of the singer and enable him to realize that Gestalt in the form (metrical, lexical, etc.) appropriate for the moment of utterance.

In linguistics proper, the notion of an underlying "deep structure" from which a potentially unlimited series of "surface structures" (i.e. spoken sentences) can be realized has long held the field, and in fact is now being modified in the direction of less rigid classification of the surface structures and less rigid definitions of the base structures (we refer primarily to the brilliant work of Noam Chomsky).[23]

And in a field which is perhaps more germane to the study of Homer as an oral poet, despite some lingering prejudices against oral "song"

[22] *Philosophical Investigations*, tr. G. E. M. Anscome (New York 1964) 32. Professor Renford Bambrough has kindly discussed with me some of his unpublished work on Wittgenstein's family resemblances and literature, which has given me help and encouragement here. Cf. his essay in *Wittgenstein: The Philosophical Investigations*, ed. George Pitcher (New York 1966) 186–204.

[23] Cf. especially *Syntactic Structures* (The Hague 1962) and *Aspects of a Theory of Syntax* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965).

as opposed to "literature," a great deal of progress has been made with analogous notions of deep and surface structures: namely in the structuralist school of folklore and anthropology.[24] The best-known exponents of this view are still Vladimir Propp and Claude Lévi-Strauss, who have described the fluidity of the living mythopoeic process as repeated fresh realizations of a basic structural idea along similar but ever-varying lines, rather than as repeated presentations of finished products which are copies of earlier finished products accidentally or otherwise altered by their successive inheritors.[25] In this field of inquiry the view in question has already won wide acceptance, but it is in one respect not suitable to our purposes. Lévi-Strauss himself has referred to the "singularity of myth among other linguistic phenomena. Myth is the part of language where the formula *traduttore, traditore* reaches its lowest truth value" ("Structural Study of Myth," §2.5). Unlike a preverbal Gestalt, the structural model of a myth or folktale can in fact be deduced from a given array of allomorphs by simply eliminating as ornamentation those features which are not invariably present in each allomorph, and then deducing the basic similarities underlying the variations of what remains. Thus, as Lévi-Strauss explains, whether Kadmos kills a dragon or Oedipus the sphinx, a pattern clearly emerges which can with some certainty be stated as "denial of the autochthonous origin of man" (*op. cit.* §§4.5, 4.8). No such clearly expressible pattern emerges from the welter of rhythmic, phonemic, ideational, and other parameters of even limited groups of phrases such as those we are now considering. Other folklorists, however, have encountered this difficulty and have not shrunk from the idea of abandoning ironclad definitions of basic

A chave para a argumentação de LS é a fórmula canônica, cuja rel. com a fórmula verbal não é clara.

[24] Lord and his co-workers have already applied structuralist concepts of linguistics and anthropology to studies of the theme and to overall notions of oral tradition; the novelty of the present argument consists only in applying them specifically on the level of the phrase. Cf. *ST*, especially 286, note 15.

[25] Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale* = *International Journal of American Linguistics* 24:4 (1958); Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth," *JAF* 68 (1955) 428–44, reprinted in *Myth: A Symposium*, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (Bloomington 1955). Cf. also Lévi-Strauss' extended review of Propp, "L'Analyse morphologique des contes russes," in *International Journal of Slavic Linguistics* 3 (1960) 122–47; Alan Dundes, "From Etic to Emic Units in the Structural Study of Folktales," *JAF* No. 296 (1962) 95–105; and, for some discussion of the contribution of classical philology (mainly Parry) in these developments, Richard Dorson, "Current Folklore Theories," *Current Anthropology* 19 (1963) 109.

structures on levels where such definitions seem inappropriate or are simply not attainable. B. H. Bronson, after exhaustive compilation of certain ballad tunes and their "variants," expressed this situation with particular clarity in 1954:

> It is moreover to be kept in mind that the folk-memory does not recall by a note-for-note accuracy, as a solo performer memorizes a Beethoven sonata. Rather, it preserves a melodic idea in a state of fluid suspension, as it were, and precipitates that idea into a fresh condensation with each rendition, *even with each new stanza sung*. There is no correct form of the tune from which to depart, or to sustain, but only an infinite series of *positive* realizations of the melodic idea.[26]

All of these precedents from other areas of inquiry do not prove that a preverbal Gestalt generating a family of allomorphs must be the best conceptual framework for the Homeric formula, but they do show that it is at least a possibility that the prevailing concept of the fixed and determinable structure, be it superficial (the completed phrase) or relatively deep (e.g. the localization of a metrical sequence), is not *a priori* the only working model for the production of phrases in oral epic composition.

Before examining further the concept of the preverbal Gestalt, which in the author's experience has already proved more useful than the prevailing view, let us be perfectly clear about the significant ways in which this concept differs from the latter. First of all, it is an ahistorical view in many areas where hitherto the major emphasis of research has been on diachronic change and even on the establishment of relative and absolute chronologies to mark that change. In some respects this will make but little difference, for example with the three stages in the making of an oral poet as described by Lord (*ST*, Chap. 2). In our view, as in his, the aspiring bard is not to be thought of as memorizing phrases which he hears from older singers, gradually stockpiling large numbers of such phrases in his memory, and then merely linking them together to form whole verses (cf. Notopoulos,

[26] "The Morphology of Ballad Tunes," *JAF* 67 (1954) 5–6 (italics added). It is appropriate that Eric Havelock (*Preface to Plato* [Cambridge, Mass., 1963] 147) has cited the improvisatory methods of jazz as a parallel to Greek oral composition, as Robert Stevick (above, note 8) has for Anglo-Saxon; lest the analogy be discounted on the grounds of artistic quality, as that of the South-Slavic songs often is, we may suggest as well the classical music of India.

[above, note 8] 50). But more than this, he is not even memorizing "prototypes" which for dialectal or other reasons he must sometimes "modify" for his own use before linking them together in this way. It is not a question of hearing *πίονι δήμῳ*, committing the phrase to memory, and then simply uttering *πίονι δήμῳ* wherever it fits the "economy" of his "systems"; nor of deducing $\_ \cup\cup | \overset{N}{\_} \overset{12}{\_} \|$ from such phrases as *πίονι δήμῳ*, *ἀργέτι δημῷ*, etc. and then "inventing" or "substituting" to produce, say, *πίονι νηῷ*; it is not a simple question of phrases at all. Rather, in a more complicated and subtle, because more intuitive, way, the poet takes in many hundreds of lines containing units such as *πίονι δήμῳ*, *θεὸς δ' ὣς τίετο δήμῳ*, *ἀλλοδαπῷ ἐνὶ δήμῳ*, *δήμῳ εν ἀλλοδαπῷ*, etc., from all of which he develops an intuitive "feel" for a fluid Gestalt which he retains in his unconscious mind, probably in the same unknown way that the phrasal impulses of any language are retained in the mind when not in use. He then tries to realize that Gestalt at appropriate times *and in appropriate ways*—i.e. into the appropriate forms of its various parameters—in his fledgling attempts at verse-making (Lord's second stage), further securing the patterns in his mind by actually practising them.[27] Eventually (the third stage) he is ready for interaction with a highly critical and highly appreciative audience. What he learns is a method rather than its products; his own usage of the traditional Gestalt will be somewhat different from that of his teachers as it will be from that of his own contemporaries (*ST* 63–64), but the Gestalt itself he cannot profitably be said to adapt or change, for a very simple reason: the Gestalt itself is *undifferentiated* into any of its possible parameters. There is no

[27] For some of these parameters the appropriate form in any given realization may be the "zero grade" (see below, p. 303), i.e. they may not appear. The crucial importance of practice is explained by Lord: "It may truthfully be said that the singer imitates the techniques of composition of his master or masters rather than particular songs" (*ST* 24). "[The singer of tales] does not 'memorize' formulas, any more than we as children 'memorize' language. He learns them by hearing them in other singers' songs, and by habitual usage they become part of his singing as well. Memorization is a conscious act of making one's own, and repeating, something that one regards as fixed and not one's own. The learning of an oral poetic language follows the same principles as the learning of language itself, not by the conscious schematization of elementary grammars but by the natural oral method" (*ST* 36).

need for him to make change in, say, the phonetic configuration of a certain phrase, since that configuration is not determined until the moment of utterance. For this reason also, Lord and others are correct in saying that his usage of traditional patterns is no more mechanical than the speaking of a natural language (e.g. *ST* 35–36).

Thus far the preverbal concept, despite its ahistoric orientation, can be easily accommodated to current views of the formula. In other respects, however, this orientation will make for a markedly different approach, most obviously perhaps with the question of "early and late" in Homeric language.[28] A generative view should make it somewhat easier to understand the occurrence of earlier and later forms side by side in the Homeric texts without recourse to multiple authorship, or to the rather vague and inconsistent attempts to create a special place for Homer outside of his own tradition, which are the most recent forms of that ancient heresy.[29] To take perhaps the best-known chronological sequence of forms, we would not say that pre-Homeric bards of the Dark Ages had memorized a formula-prototype including Mycenaean genitive singular in *-ojo* (<*-osyo*) and then changed this prototype so that it now ended in *-oo*, which later bards in turn (or later scribes) contracted to *-ω* or *-ου*.[30] Rather, all these singers acquired the "feel" of a general impulse, included among the parameters of which was a preverbal notion of the second declension genitive singular masculine; the particular reflex of the notion, *-οιο*, *-oo*, or *-ου*, which the singer produced on any given occasion must have depended primarily on its metrical position in the verse (Chantraine [above, note 30] 165, 194, Meister [above, note 10] *passim*),

[28] The following remarks are intended merely as illustration; space forbids attempting to establish this point in detail. Questions of orthography (*-ου* for uncontracted *-oo*) and textual corruption will be left aside.

[29] Even scholars fundamentally sympathetic to the idea that Homer was an oral poet have not always been able to avoid recourse to qualifications of the latter kind; cf. Kirk, *SH* 97 *et passim*; Bowra, *Tradition and Design in the Iliad* (Oxford 1930) 66; C. H. Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (Cambridge 1958) 13. Having no Indo-European oral poetry prior to Homer, and none subsequently of quite comparable quality, we may never be able to decide this question with any assurance. My own prejudice is to align myself with Parry and Lord in regarding Homer as a typical oral bard in everything but his genius; but in any case the generative approach, which facilitates this view, may be considered on its own merits.

[30] Ruijgh (above, note 5) 114–15, 126, 140; Hoekstra 132; Chantraine, *Grammaire Homérique* 1 (Paris 1942) 44–45.

combined with other factors such as his dialect, the "horizontal" or "local influence" of neighboring usages, and of course various aesthetic considerations, some of which are beyond our understanding if not beyond our ken. Retention of the linguistically oldest form in the phrase πτολέμοιο γεφύρας (4 times)—to take a particularly recalcitrant example[31]—is not so much due to the fact that the whole phrase was fixed and passed on as such in the minds of singers from generation to generation, as to the fact that no other form of the word was metrically possible in the final position—cf. πολέμου ἀκορήτω (*Il.* 12.335), and similarly ἀνὰ πτολέμοιο γεφύρας (3 times) alongside ὀπιπεύεις πολέμοιο γεφύρας (*Il.* 4.371).

The point is not that earlier forms were not being constantly reused in oral tradition after they had dropped from ordinary speech, nor that Homer did not tend to use certain of these archaic (or archaizing) allomorphs in a somewhat less fluid way than he did their linguistically contemporary reflexes—there is some evidence that this is so[32]—but the point is that these differences are relatively superficial; on a more fundamental level, early and late forms (and, for that matter, various dialectal forms) were used in quite the same way by the poet of our texts. As long as the tradition flourished, the creative process was always a question of realizing particular, appropriate allomorphs of the same general ideas that the poet's predecessors had employed in

[31] Page, *History and the Homeric Iliad* (Berkeley 1959) 243. The repeated use of πολέμοιο in the *Batrachomyomachia*, on the other hand, probably is more of a conscious archaism, whereby the word is being artifically retained and not spontaneously recreated (cf. lines 123, 134, and 201 for this metrical position).

[32] The cases assembled by Ruijgh (above, note 5) with regard to αὐτάρ/ἀτάρ are the most impressive, but the statistical samples become dangerously small in much of his subsequent discussion. Similarly, to Hoekstra's sparse examples (38–41) of "departures from the traditional course" which show the metathesis assumed to be linguistically contemporary with Homer, we must add *Il.* 7.94, which does not: ὀψὲ δὲ δὴ Μενέλαος ἀνίστατο καὶ μετέειπε; and cf. McLeod (above, note 2) and Edwards (75). On the general problem of early and late language since Chantraine, cf. T. B. L. Webster, "Early and Late in the Homeric Diction," *Eranos* 54 (1956) 34–48; G. P. Shipp, *Studies in the Language of Homer* (Cambridge 1953). For the use of late linguistic forms in passages of early content, cf. Webster, *From Mycenae to Homer* (London 1964) 46 and Hoekstra 16, note 1. All of this is not to say that our text must be quite free of interpolations, only that chronological differences in forms need not in themselves be evidence of multiple authorship.

comparable situations; if forms from other eras or other dialects provided additional avenues of expression for these ideas, he was likely to use them, exercising the same instinctive control over them as a poetic artist that he did over any other realizations.[33] A generative view is thus consistent with the features of the epic dialect as the product of an oral tradition. Furthermore, it obviates the necessity of creating a special category for the poet of our texts on linguistic grounds. If Homer was—as I believe—a real ἀοιδός, he never "departed" from his tradition. The exact form of the epic singing tradition at any point prior to Homer we shall never know, but if it was like any comparable one in human history it must have been a continuous stream from its beginnings somewhere in the Mycenaean era (?) to its end sometime after the composition of the Homeric poems. Homeric reflexes of it are the appropriate ones for their time and those performances, and what we may be glimpsing of it in the cyclic fragments, the hymns, Hesiodea, and fragments of Panyassis are the forms appropriate to their times, their individual poets, their genres.

Thus the view being put forward is synchronic with regard to the text of Homer, which is seen—aside from the difficult questions of corruption in the written recensions—as an instant in the continuous flux of a living tradition. Therefore, a series of phrases like those compiled above, e.g. from πίονι δήμῳ through ἀλλοδαπῷ ἐνὶ δήμῳ, is not put forward as an historical series: no attempt need be made to guess which of these phrases is the "original form of the formula," for the simple reason that no actual example is taken to be the origin of any other, not even in the analogical sense often implied by Parry.[34] The generative aspect of our position is totally different from "hard Parryism" in looking vertically to a deep structure underlying the production of two similar or identical phrases rather than horizontally

[33] See below. The aesthetic irrelevancy of early and late language has been very well brought out by Dodds in Platnauer (ed.), *Fifty Years of Classical Scholarship* (Oxford 1954) 22: "The present writer was inclined to regard the different linguistic ingredients as so many colors on the palette of the artist; the history of the pigments, it might be argued, has little relevance for the critic concerned with the design and composition of the picture."

[34] *ET*, etc. As far as chronological priority is concerned, it must be noted that, whereas Parry considered that there was some definite sequence for the formulas in an analogical system, he was not foolhardy enough to establish it.

from one phrase to the second. Moreover, it is only apparently similar to contemporary "soft Parryism," for it holds the deep structures involved to be not yet differentiated enough to be verbally definable. The fact that concrete patterns like $\overset{N}{—}\ \breve{}\ |\ \overset{V}{\breve{}}\ —\ \overset{12}{—}$ can be deduced from large numbers of existing end-line phrases is considered merely a statistical phenomenon.

Yet, a flexible and generative viewpoint is not necessarily a non-Parryan one. Parry himself stated that a fully detailed, concrete description of Homer's formulaic technique would be unthinkably complex (*Studies I* 126) and that "that moment which criticism must seek to create [is] the instant when the thought of the poet expressed itself in song."[35]

Wherever this view may fit among ever-burgeoning controversies about formulaic style, its application to the subject has immediate repercussions in the questions of unity and originality. For one thing, noun-epithet combinations need no longer be set apart from other expressions simply because they do not vary as much from one another as do the latter. This may now be considered a secondary matter, having to do with their most frequent poetic functions as bearers of generic rather than particular meaning, and their most frequent syntactic-metrical functions as musical counterpoint to expressions bearing the main ideas of the narration. Nor is there any inevitability about this, as we see from πίονα δημόν, πίονι δημῷ versus βοῦν . . . πίονα δημῷ, and λιπαροκρήδεμνος versus λιπαρὰ κρήδεμνα. Noun-epithet combinations, like other expressions, are produced anew from some unfinished source each time they are used.

Similarly, within any set of identical noun-epithet combinations, complex phrases, whole lines, or even whole passages, absence of variation from one another need by no means imply a fixity in the tradition which hampered the poet's creative urges, or, for that matter, made his creativity unnecessary. The real "variation" is in the process which transmutes pre-verbal Gestalt into utterable phrase, line, or scene, and compared to this process the resemblances among given allomorphs are, again, quite secondary.

[35] From the unfinished "Ćor Huso: A Study in Southslavic Heroic Song," quoted by Lord in *Serbocroatian Heroic Songs* 1 (Cambridge 1954) 5.

If this much be granted as a provisional framework, an old ghost which has been exorcised time and again but continues to pervade our thinking about oral composition, particularly on the level of the phrase, may be laid to rest at last. I refer to the formulation, "traditional versus original," which in statistical discussions can take the form, "norm (i.e. frequent) versus variant (i.e. infrequent)."[36] Perhaps the most unfortunate forms of this dichotomy are those it assumes in the area of criticism. For it seems to follow inevitably from the concept of tradition held by most literary critics (many of whom would surely disavow this view if it were proposed explicitly) that "traditional" implies "faded," while "original" implies "artful, meaningful," in oral poetry as well as in written. Thus, in this view, only those original efforts which can be seen to break away from the traditional background can be the loci of the great creative power in the poems,[37] despite Parry's observation that "the fame of a [good] singer comes not from quitting the tradition but from putting it to the best use" (*Studies II* 14; cf. above, note 29).

It is a telling fact that the same dichotomy can equally well result in the opposite evaluation, namely that only pure, traditional bards could have created the great poetry in our texts, and that original contributions are the products of rhapsodes or other interpolators who were attempting to imitate their oral predecessors, with little

[36] This troublesome idea is as pervasive in the area of metrics as in that of the formula proper; the use of quotation marks in the following statement of O'Neill's ([above, note 5] 116) shows how uncomfortable he himself felt with the value-judgments which he nonetheless felt constrained to impose on his statistical evidence: "to what extent does each poet localize his word-types; i.e., how many of his longer words are in the 'right' and how many are in the 'wrong' positions?"

[37] The following examples are chosen almost at random: Charles Marrot, "Les Origines du poète Homère," *REH* 4 (1934) 32; Tilman Krischer, "Die Entschuldigung des Sängers (*Ilias B* 484–93)," *RhM* 108 (1965) 9–10; Russo 242. Cf. also Kirk, *SH* 74, 167 *et passim*; Whitman (above, note 29) 12; but cf. also 14–15 *et passim*. The emergence of this view in Edwards' "General Conclusions" (175–79) seems to me to follow more this long-standing habit of thought than his own brilliantly developed arguments. It is particularly regrettable that he adds some rather striking conclusions on the differences between Homer and oral poets on the same basis (cf. above, note 29).

For examples of the same thinking with regard to Old and Middle English poetry, cf. A. G. Brodeur, *The Art of Beowulf* (Berkeley 1959) 70, and R. A. Waldron, "Oral-Formulaic Technique and Middle English Alliterative Poetry," *Speculum* 32 (1957) 794, which discusses "formulaic phrases, fulfilling metrical *rather than* stylistic or aesthetic requirements" (italics mine).

success.[38] Kirk, for example (*SH* 340), designates *ὦ φίλοι, ἀνέρες ἔστε καὶ ἄλκιμον ἦτορ ἔλεσθε* (*Il.* 5.529) as a "gratuitous and somewhat unsatisfactory variant of the standard exhortation" *ἀνέρες ἔστε, φίλοι, μνήσασθε δὲ θούριδος ἀλκῆς* (7 times), because of his view that the tradition had reached its acme some time shortly before Homer and that late departures from it in our texts are "decompositions." In reality, lines beginning *ὦ φίλοι, ἀνέρες ἔστε* and those beginning *ἀνέρες ἔστε, φίλοι* are allomorphs of the same idea, appropriate to different syntactic situations, much as *ἔπεα πτερόεντα* formulas, as Parry demonstrated,[39] are syntactic allomorphs on a par with other *loquitur* phrases. Once we view Homer as a traditional oral poet, producing his own poetic reflexes of his tradition along the lines indicated above, then within the text of one performance, or even a series of them, no distinction between traditional and original need be drawn, and this plaguey critical dilemma ceases to exist.

The terms "traditional" and "original" do have legitimate applications in a theory of oral poetry, but not as conflicting polar opposites. Rather, they describe two stages of the same creative process, Gestalt and realization. Since the former is always traditional, furthermore, and the latter by definition always original, these terms merely designate the natural condition of those two stages in true oral composition; they are not in the least controversial and need not enter into any discussion of artistic quality. A modern linguist would no doubt put it this way: "All is traditional on the generative level, all original on the level of performance."[40]

[38] Both evaluations have been expressed in rather prejudicial, value-loaded vocabulary in recent years. Thus, one writer "assumes" that all things traditional are "faded" and "ossified remains," while others refer to "variations," i.e. departures from the tradition, as "contaminated, degenerate, decomposed," even "perverted." In my view, as stated above, until some degree of unanimity has been reached on a theory of the formula, it will be hazardous even to decide what is traditional and what original, to say nothing of making value-judgments based upon such decisions.

[39] Cf. G. M. Calhoun, "The Art of Formula in Homer: *Epea Pteroenta*," *CP* 30 (1935) 215–27, and Parry, "About Winged Words," *CP* 32 (1937) 59–63. The phrase *ἀνέρες ἔστε, φίλοι* serves as opening for the *second* line of an invocation of which the first begins with *ὦ* + vocative; the phrase *ὦ φίλοι* (and hence that line-rhythm) cannot be repeated for reasons of style.

[40] As Professor Chomsky has said (verbally) in this connection, "Every sentence I utter is original;" cf. above, note 23, and *Cartesian Linguistics* (New York 1966) 3–31.

II

Although the main emphasis of the present study falls upon the theory of the oral formula as a word or word-group, we must attempt to enter into the extremely difficult and sometimes desperately subjective questions of denotative and poetic meanings of the traditional Gestalt and its realizations.

The necessity to do so arises from the above-mentioned fact that in the area of aesthetics it is particularly true that "little has been achieved since Parry died" (cf. above, note 2). It is no great exaggeration to say that, just as there has been no generally accepted theory of the formula since then, perhaps because of this there has been no successful aesthetic criticism of Homer *as an oral poet.* We are loath to sacrifice the objectivity of Parry's formula-systems or the structural formulas of later scholars, for they are among the most scientific achievements of Homeric philology, but we are understandably incapable of imagining how poetry of any quality, to say nothing of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, could have been created "by the numbers" in systems of such apparent fixity. In the absence of a positive answer to this question, most evaluations of the oral formulaic style still proceed from the vantage point of written literature, so that they have inevitably tended to be negative, or at best apologetic.[41] But a beginning of a concrete analysis of oral style on its own grounds was made by Parry in his preliminary study of the kinds of meaning expressed by phrases in poetic diction,[42] and it is this lead that we shall attempt to follow in extending and supporting the theoretical viewpoints put forward above.

It has become obvious, even to those who view oral-traditional language as a repertoire of "stock formulas," that this view offers no

[41] Thus it is understandable that Combellack finds the greatness of the oral style "paradoxical" ("Some Formulary Illogicalities in Homer," *TAPA* 96 [1965] 41–56). Cf. Lattimore's introduction to his translation of the *Iliad* (Chicago 1961) 40: "He did not make this style, he used it. *It needs no defense.* Padded, adjectival, leisurely, routine, it works." Whitman provides exceptions to the above, e.g. (above, note 29) 14–15: "The poet's task is, and always has been, to transform the serviceable into the symbolic, and for this purpose Homer's medium is no more restrictive than any other. In fact it has distinct advantages."

[42] "The Homeric Gloss: A Study in Word-Sense," *TAPA* 59 (1928) 233. The third level of meaning, which he called "sense" and I shall be calling "(poetic) signification," is not far from what he intended by the "essential idea" of epithets (see below).

automatic solution to the problem of poetic meaningfulness or its absence in Homeric diction, not even if one arbitrarily limits the scope of his inquiry to true noun-epithet combinations.[43] And the problem becomes increasingly complex with longer or more variable syntactic structures. Consider the verse *ἀλλ' ὅτε τόσσον ἀπῆν ὅσσον τε γέγωνε βοήσας* (3 times), one of a group of more or less similar expressions used as poetic ways of saying "but when . . . a certain distance off," when a person is approaching or leaving someone or some place at various points in the narrative.[44] Sometimes the allomorph in question has no other special denotations or connotations as far as we can tell: e.g. at *Od.* 6.294 when Odysseus is directed to Alcinous' private *temenos* (*τόσσον ἀπὸ πτόλιος ὅσσον τε γέγωνε βοήσας*), and we could paraphrase "a longish distance" rather than "within earshot," for all the line has to do with actual shouting. A few books later, when Odysseus is rowing away from the Cyclops' island, he stops just still within earshot—*ἀλλ' ὅτε τόσσον ἀπῆν ὅσσον τε γέγωνε βοήσας* (*Od.* 9.473) —in order to *shout* his identity to his former captor; but even here the literal meaning of the last phrase could not have intruded very forcibly into the poet's consciousness, for he says only a few lines later, when the ship has been jolted further seaward (*Od.* 9.491–92):

> *ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ δὶς τόσσον ἄλα πρήσσοντες ἀπῆμεν*
> *καὶ τότ' ἐγὼ Κύκλωπα προσηύδων.*

On the other hand, the same expression is used when Odysseus is floundering in the sea within earshot of the Phaeacian coast (*Od.* 5.400–1):

> *ἀλλ' ὅτε τόσσον ἀπῆν ὅσσον τε γέγωνε βοήσας*
> *καὶ δὴ δοῦπον ἄκουσε ποτὶ σπιλάδεσσι θαλάσσης.*

Here there is an explicit connection with hearing, in that he has come close enough to hear the surf pounding on the dry land, and there may also be an underlying suggestion, unconscious perhaps, that he is close

[43] E.g. Whallon (above, note 15), Hoekstra 13, Edwards 118. See above, p. 276.

[44] As a kind of *Zeitangabe* (cf. W. Arend, *Die typischen Szenen bei Homer* [Berlin 1933] Table 5) the line functions as a transitional device between portions of narrative, but in addition to this function the verbs at the end of the line may be pregnant with some idea of human contact (see below). Bowra (above, note 29) 88, recognizes the "signpost" function of certain whole lines without looking for any such implicit ideas and with a merely negative evaluation that they "relieve the mind of some effort."

in enough to *shout* for help if it came to that. In the final example in the *Odyssey*, the explicit meaning of the phrase is not only conscious but definitely pregnant with poetic signification, for it occurs as Odysseus and his men are drawing near the island of the *Sirens* (*Od.* 12.181–83):

> ἀλλ' ὅτε τόσσον ἀπῆμεν ὅσον τε γέγωνε βοήσας
> ῥίμφα διώκοντες, τὰς δ' οὐ λάθεν ὠκύαλος νηῦς
> ἐγγύθεν ὀρνυμένη, λιγυρὴν δ' ἔντυνον ἀοιδήν.

In the face of this flexibility, who could still claim that "the" formula regularly does or does not have a single, intrinsic meaning? (Nor should such an oversimplification be conveniently laid in Parry's lap, as advocates of both sides have tried to do.)[45] But a tentative explanation may be suggested rather naturally along the lines of the generative rather than separatist theoretical framework we have been developing here: some kinds of meaning, including at least literal denotation ("be heard") and poetic suggestion ("contact") may be latent in the traditional Gestalt and may be left latent or allowed to shine forth in various shades and connotations with each particular realization.

Let us make a precautionary observation before testing this theory in the more extensive *πίονι δήμῳ* or *κρήδεμνον* groups: whether or not a possible shade of meaning emerges with a given realization cannot be a simple question of diction. *Od.* 5.400 (=9.473) and 12.181 differ only in the conjugation *ἀπῆν/ἀπῆμεν* (and the interesting metrical realizations of *ὅσ(σ)ον*), while 6.294, *τόσσον ἀπὸ πτόλιος ὅσσον τε γέγωνε βοήσας*, has an entirely different initial half-line; yet this last could be grouped with the first two and opposed to 12.181 in terms of the poetic meaningfulness of the phrase in its context. Clearly, above and beyond the diction of an individual allomorph, the relation of a phrase to the narrative situation can play a role in its overall meaning. A striking case of the effect of the context can be seen in the utterance of the following lines at *Il.* 2.453–54 and 11.13–14:

> τοῖσι δ' ἄφαρ πόλεμος γλυκίων γένετ' ἠὲ νέεσθαι
> ἐν νηυσὶ γλαφυρῇσι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.

[45] Cf. Whallon (above, note 15); Hainsworth, *Homeric Formula* 64, Hoekstra 13; with *Studies I* 126. The unfinished state of Parry's work leaves a somewhat ambiguous impression in the key areas of fixity of idea and expression.

The first occurrence is very poignant, coming as it does after the exhortations of Odysseus and Nestor have barely rescued the expedition when it was all but embarked for the voyage home; the second is simply a straightforward response to one of a series of martial exhortations. Another case, to enlist a noun-epithet combination, is the following line, famous alike for its onomatopoetry and the metaphor of the final phrase (*Od.* 11.598):

αὖτις ἔπειτα πέδονδε κυλίνδετο λᾶας ἀναιδής.

This phrase also occurs, however, in a usage which may be regarded as less specialized and one in which the anthropomorphic power of the figure is certainly far less salient (*Il.* 4.521–22):[46]

ἀμφοτέρω δὲ τένοντε καὶ ὀστέα λᾶας ἀναιδὴς
ἄχρις ἀπηλοίησεν . . . .

On the other hand, some evidence seems to suggest that poetic signification can go hand in hand with diction in a curious way, bypassing denotative meaning. Various forms of γέγωνα occur five times in the *Odyssey* and eleven times in the *Iliad* unconnected with any τόσσον . . . ὅσσον correlation to express the idea, "to make oneself heard" in various narrative situations.[47] Only once is the verb of shouting a participial form of βοάω (cf.*Od.* 8.305), and it is only in this line that a notion of difficult or urgent contact similar to that in some of

[46] Cf. λᾶαν ἀείρας, 3 times. Further examples in Hoekstra 13. For discussion of the onomatopoetry of the line in the Sisyphus story, cf. Stanford, *The Sound of Greek* (Berkeley 1967) 107–8, and Kirk, *YCS* 20.96–97. It is remarkable that in the *Iliad* example, where there can be no question of onomatopoetic mimesis, we have exactly the same rhythm and remarkably similar phonemes—it is questionable whether a person not knowing Greek, upon hearing the two lines, would consider the first one "bouncier." We can only conclude that the "bounce" in the sound of the line-type as used in military situations most commonly (one must not assume "traditionally," "normally," or the like—note its appearance also when Polyphemus is stoning Odysseus' ship, *Od.* 9.537) was a parameter which Homer knew could either be realized effectively in conjunction with the sense or left latent without such support.

It is gratifying to find that Edwards (138–48) has presented much the same picture with regard to other metrical effects, such as positional stress. It is not a very large step from this view to that of the presence or absence of *meaning* put forward below. Meter is to poetry what inflection is to spoken language—a set of signals for the conveyance or stress of potential meanings resident in words.

[47] But cf. the disjunctive expression in *Il.* 8.223–27 and 11.6–10.

the above-mentioned passages seems to be stressed:[48] Menestheus is trying to alert the Ajaxes to the oncoming attack of Sarpedon and Glaucus. Moreover, the word *τόσσον* occurs in the line following this one, albeit without the correlative sense it has in the group discussed above (*Il.* 12.337–38):

> ...ἀλλ' οὔ πώς οἱ ἔην βώσαντι γεγωνεῖν·
> τόσσος γὰρ κτύπος ἦεν, ἀϋτὴ δ' οὐρανὸν ἷκε.

This concurrence of participial *βοάω*, *γέγωνα*, and *τόσσον* may appear to be mere coincidence, even against the background of the *τόσσον . . . ὅσσον* expressions in the *Odyssey*, but it is also possible that the Gestalt of that group has played a part in the production of the lines from *Iliad* 12, and it may even be proper to say that that Gestalt is in fact realized in these lines without its accounting for all of the diction that is finally produced. If so, then the "agglomeration" of these dictional signals is not merely a gratuitous reflex, as Ruijgh uses the term ([above, note 5] 21)—interesting as that may be as an insight into the free-associational process of oral composition. It is also another indication that poetic meaningfulness inheres in the preverbal Gestalt, and further that its realization does not depend upon the simultaneous realization of all other parameters, such as literal meaning, syntax, rhythm, etc.[49]

Inspection of the meanings involved in the more extensive groups we have been considering may help to clarify these conclusions. The most elaborate example of *πίονι δημῷ* diction is to be found in the *Theogony*, in connection, naturally enough, with Hesiod's account of

[48] *γέγωνα* by itself does not necessarily imply calling. Fisk (s.v.) connects the verb with *γιγνώσκω*, probably rightly; aside from Odysseus' fateful address to the Cyclops, it can be translated "make known" in at least the following passages from the *Odyssey*: 8.305, 12.370, 17.161.

Strikingly parallel to the passage at hand is *Il.* 17.246–53, where the contact is difficult for visual reasons. Note *τόσση* (253) and the use of a common noun-epithet combination with obviously apposite significance: *βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Μενέλαος* (246).

[49] All this does indicate that a significant aspect of Homer's artistry is associative, i.e. unconscious; but to deplore this is mere literary prejudice (cf. above, pp. 276–77). In her contribution to *YCS* 20, Anne Amory takes refreshing exception to this prejudice: "The question of how conscious a poet is of his art is equally irrelevant for bard and for writer" (p. 38). It should be added that she sometimes (but not always: cf. p. 36 with p. 58) avoids the assumption of a dichotomy between "traditional" and "poetically significant."

the irreversible trick played upon Zeus by Prometheus at Mecone, the aetiological foundation-myth for all animal sacrifices. Since the phrase in question is deeply and intimately connected with the poetic idea of sacrifice,[50] two reflexes of it are used by the poet here, in a manner familiar from Homer as well, as a ring-compositional bracket around the passage (*Theogony* 538–41):[51]

τῷ μὲν γὰρ σάρκας τε καὶ ἔγκατα πίονα δημῷ
ἐν ῥινῷ κατέθηκε, καλύψας γαστρὶ βοείῃ,
τοῖς δ' αὖτ' ὀστέα λευκὰ βοὸς δολίῃ ἐπὶ τέχνῃ
εὐθετίσας κατέθηκε καλύψας ἀργέτι δημῷ.[52]

The same formulaic Gestalt had already been realized some lines earlier, with the other noun (477; cf. 972):

πέμψαν δ' ἐς Λύκτον, Κρήτης ἐς πίονα δῆμον.

This agglomeration, if it is not sheer coincidence, must mean either that the phrase came to the surface at 477 because at that point Hesiod knew he was leading up to a major sacrifice scene, or that that scene itself was touched off by his usage of the phrase in the earlier context. In either case, neither the apparently mechanical (i.e. phonemic-metrical) connection of the two sets of usages nor the structural anaphora of the phrases within the sacrifice scene prevented the poet from deploying his words in different syntactic patterns, or from expressing subtle and effective nuances of meaning in the latter case. Whereas πίων and ἀργής express the same "essential idea" in connection with δημός, namely "good for sacrificing" (cf. *Studies I* 80), note

[50] Cf. πίονα μῆρι' ἔκηα *Il.* 1.140, etc. This root idea is realized almost explicitly, with striking poetic effect, as an index to Achilles' attitude towards his Trojan victims at the height of his rampage; note *Il.* 21.126–32, Λυκάονος ἀργέτα δημόν, followed by unusual references to animal sacrifice to Scamander. Sometimes the association remains latent (e.g. *Il.* 11.818). Hesiod, of course, is not certainly an oral poet, but in his flexible and imaginative handling of some Homeric themes the technique would seem to be substantially the same. Particularly close to the present passage is *Od.* 14.425–28.

[51] Bibliography on ring-composition as a means of organizing more or less brief passages will be found in Van Groningen, *La Composition littéraire archaïque Grecque* (Amsterdam 1958) 50 ff.; on the same structure as large-scale organizational plan, cf. Whitman (above, note 29) *passim*.

[52] Reading with West, *CQ* 11 (1961) 137–38. Schoenmann read πίονι in 538 as well as 541, but cf. above, p. 277.

that *πίονι* is used to describe the hidden part of the offering, which is really succulent, while *ἀργέτι* modifies the "flashy" exterior, or hiding part, which only appears so. The fact that both phrases stem from the same Gestalt and convey the same meaning on one level in no way prevents the poet from giving his realizations the proper nuances, the imagistically right connotations which make the difference between vivid and pedestrian narrative. But these connotations would seem to depend on the denotative meanings of the two words, "fat" and "bright"; and we are thus left with the very puzzling problem implied by *πίονα δῆμον* at 477, where phonemic similarity is not matched by denotation and the agglomeration may or may not be poetically significant. The *κρήδεμνον* group will help to clarify this problem.

The word *κρήδεμνον* itself has but one etymological sense, "top-, or head-binder" *(< κράς + δέω)*, but is used with roughly three denotative meanings in the Homeric corpus, as shown above (pp. 279–80). These three meanings are not distributed into different formulaic patterns; indeed, as we have said above, it would be inappropriate to subdivide the group by any of the prevailing criteria of formulaicness. Some of its "family resemblances" would be very difficult to objectify, e.g. *λύομεν λιπαρὰ κρήδεμνα* beside *Κύπρου κρήδεμνα λέλογχεν*, and no single family resemblance runs as a *fil conducteur* through the entire group save the lexeme *-κρηδεμνον*, which, of course, we have chosen for the purpose. Interestingly enough, poetic signification turns out to be more consistent than any other parameter, including denotation, within this group.

In its most common and least controversial poetic usage, the word *κρήδεμνον* occurs as one detail—which could be called a motif for these purposes—within what I would like to call the "chastity" branch of the "attendance type-scene." This signification is most obvious in the four cases in which the whole line

ἄντα παρειάων σχομένη λιπαρὰ κρήδεμνα

is realized in exactly this dictional form; it in fact appears thus in contexts of very similar if not identical lines and the same narrative situation—Penelope's confrontations with her suitors. There can be little

doubt that her *ἀμφίπολοι* as chaperones and her veil betoken "sexual chastity" (*Od.* 1.331–34):[53]

> *οὐκ οἴη, ἅμα τῇ γε καὶ ἀμφίπολοι δύ' ἕποντο.*
> *ἡ δ' ὅτε δὴ μνηστῆρας ἀφίκετο δῖα γυναικῶν,*
> *στῆ ῥα παρὰ σταθμὸν τέγεος πύκα ποιητοῖο,*
> *ἄντα παρειάων σχομένη λιπαρὰ κρήδεμνα.*

Similarly for all other cases of *κρήδεμνα* in the denotation "veil," "mantilla," or whatever physical object the poet has in mind,[54] there is a poetic signification "chastity." However, no simple equation "veil = chastity" will get us very far into the poetic artistry of the relevant passages. The interaction of word and context, the precise comment the motif offers upon the character or situation of the personnage(s) involved, is not fixed in a single function. The *κρήδεμνον* is an active symbol that can be realized with a great variety of nuances. Thus, for example, Leucothea actually hands her *κρήδεμνον* over to Odysseus in a series of lines in Book 5 of the *Odyssey*, and only the immediate interposition of a poetic substitute (i.e. an allomorph of the same token) saves her from sexual compromise (*Od.* 5.351–53):[55]

> *Ὣς ἄρα φωνήσασα θεὰ κρήδεμνον ἔδωκεν,*
> *αὐτὴ δ' ἂψ ἐς πόντον ἐδύσετο κυμαίνοντα*
> *αἰθυίῃ εἰκυῖα· μέλαν δέ ἑ κῦμα κάλυψεν.*

We can understand, I think, why the poet should have set up this suggestive detail only to counteract it immediately afterwards, if we consider the next occurrence of the motif (*Od.* 6.100) as part of a series with this one, keeping in mind the place of the series in the narrative as a whole. Odysseus has for many years regularly gotten into trouble with female temptresses and is now on his way towards overcoming such a temptation in the form of the eminently marriageable Nausicaa.[56] This *πεῖρα*, since it breaks with his earlier experiences,

[53] Cf. *Od.* 1.207–10, *Od.* 16.413–16, *Od.* 21.63–65. Van Leeuwen in his edition notes on *Od.* 1.334, "Velamentum sumpsit. eandem ob causam duas ancillas comitari se iussit."

[54] Cf. W. Helbig, *Das Homerische Epos aus den Denkmälern erläutert* (Leipzig 1887) 219–26.

[55] For the diction, see below, p. 301 and note 59.

[56] The courtesan who detains Enkidu in his progress towards Uruk in the Gilgamesh Epic would seem to be the first surviving example of this type, as Vergil's Dido is the one who interferes most explicitly with the hero's destiny. Note his use of the Artemis simile for her (*Aeneid* 1.498–502; cf. note 57, below).

may be considered crucial to the overall change in fortune which leads to the climactic resumption of his total identity in all his proper roles at home in Ithaca. Thus the poet makes temptation suggestively present in the giving of the veil here, as he does in the casting off of that garment by Nausicaa and her companions at 6.100; and then as pointedly avoids the temptation by concealing Ino in the waves as he does by concealing Odysseus' nudity with the branch, comparing Nausicaa and her *ἀμφίπολοι* to Artemis and hers in an effective simile, and other ways.[57]

But there are persons in Homer for whom the *κρήδεμνον* and all it signifies is truly and irrevocably lost, and one case at least in which that detail is expanded to serve as a climax to one of the most poignant scenes in the *Iliad*: this is the frenzy of Andromache upon witnessing the dragging of Hector's body before the walls (*Il.* 22.460–72):

> Ὣς φαμένη μεγάροιο διέσσυτο μαινάδι ἴση
> παλλομένη κραδίην· ἅμα δ' ἀμφίπολοι κίον αὐτῇ.
> αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πύργον τε καὶ ἀνδρῶν ἵξεν ὅμιλον,
> ἔστη παπτήνασ' ἐπὶ τείχεϊ, τὸν δὲ νόησεν
> ἑλκόμενον πρόσθεν πόλιος· ταχέες δέ μιν ἵπποι
> ἕλκον ἀκηδέστως κοίλας ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν.
> τὴν δὲ κατ' ὀφθαλμῶν ἐρεβεννὴ νὺξ ἐκάλυψεν,
> ἤριπε δ' ἐξοπίσω, ἀπὸ δὲ ψυχὴν ἐκάπυσσε.
> τῆλε δ' ἀπὸ κρατὸς βάλε δέσματα σιγαλόεντα,
> ἄμπυκα κεκρύφαλόν τε ἰδὲ πλεκτὴν ἀναδέσμην
> κρήδεμνόν θ', ὅ ῥά οἱ δῶκε χρυσέη Ἀφροδίτη
> ἤματι τῷ ὅτε μιν κορυθαίολος ἠγάγεθ' Ἕκτωρ
> ἐκ δόμου Ἠετίωνος, ἐπεὶ πόρε μυρία ἕδνα.

Here we may gain arresting insight into the poet's awareness of the meanings inherent in his traditional language, as well as his freedom in bringing them to expression. In this case he vividly realizes the

[57] Note explicit mention of her attendants at 109, where she is called *πάρθενος ἀδμής*, and 115–16, alongside equally explicit reference to the fact that she remains behind *οἵη* when they flee. Actually, the band of female attendants itself is no guarantee against rape: cf. *H. Cer.* 5; *H. Ven.* 117, 120; Moschus, *Europa* 28–32, the first part of which seems to be based upon *Od.* 6.1–255 or a pattern common to both; cf. Fraenkel's *Horace* (Oxford 1957) 195. It is not too far-fetched to regard Odysseus' nudity as he sleeps in the bushes and Nausicaa's casting off of her *κρήδεμνον* as allomorphs of the same idea. At any rate, the former fact gains significance as dramatic background for the latter.

etymological roots of *κρήδεμνον* by spelling out, as it were, the components of the word, *ἀπὸ κρατὸς βάλε δέσματα* (468);[58] elaborates that idea by three more words of doubtful denotation but obviously of the same signification (469); then climaxes the whole with a realization of *κρήδεμνον* itself in a stressed metrical position as runover word and leading idea of a whole verse (Edwards 138–48; the remainder of the verse is a genealogical amplification whose precise significance we shall consider shortly).

With this gesture Andromache, who a moment before had ordered two *ἀμφίπολοι* to follow her to the walls (450), now painfully predicts and enacts her certain downfall in every sense, including that feeling of sexual violation so cruelly developed in the Trojan plays of Euripides.[59] These lines are surely among the most inspired and most beautiful in Homer. They are also, on the generative level, among the most unoriginal. We need look no further than some sixty lines earlier, when Hecuba is witnessing the same event (*Il.* 22.405–7):[60]

> *Ὣς τοῦ μὲν κεκόνιτο κάρη ἅπαν. ἡ δέ νυ μήτηρ*
> *τίλλε κόμην, ἀπὸ δὲ λιπαρὴν ἔρριψε καλύπτρην*
> *τηλόσε, κώκυσεν δὲ μάλα μέγα παῖδ' ἐσιδοῦσα.*

The presence of the Gestalt here, and above all in the *Hymn to Demeter* (40–41), where it serves to underscore the rape of Persephone,

[58] Similarly, in the Penelope scenes in which maximum chastity is necessary in the poetic underpinning of the narrative, her two *ἀμφί-πολοι* actually station themselves on "either side" of their mistress: *Od.* 1.335 = 18.211 = 21.66; cf. also 6.18, 7.91, 22.114–15. On Homeric paranomasia in general cf. Amory (above, note 49) 5.

[59] Since writing this analysis I notice the diction of 465, which surely functions as an allomorph of the idea expressed by the words *μέλαν δέ ἑ κῦμα κάλυψεν* in the case of Ino (*Od.* 5.353)—thus Andromache has some protection from *ἀναιδεία* after all. The poet's delicacy on this point has been praised often, but never his use of traditional materials (e.g. Eustathius, Scholiast "B" *ad loc*; Scott, *The Unity of Homer* [Berkeley 1921] 214–15; Bassett, *The Poetry of Homer* [Berkeley 1938] 230, cf. also 129). Cases like these, in which the evocative power of the traditional diction is realized to the full, bring home the profundity of Parry's grasp of originality in oral poetry: "the highest sort of oral verse-making achieves the new by the best and most varied and perhaps the fullest use of the old" (*Studies II* 14).

[60] The realization of the *velamentum* idea as *καλύπτρη* points up the arbitrariness of taking any single allomorph as a starting-place. In fact, *καλύπτρη* is probably a metrical allomorph of *κρήδεμνον* in the final position, where the former is always found (*Il.* 22.406, *Od.* 5.232 = 10.545). On the object itself cf. Helbig (above, note 54), Leaf and Bayfield edition (London 1901), notes to lines 407, 468.

ἀμφὶ δὲ χαίταις
ἀμβροσίαις κρήδεμνα δαΐζετο χερσὶ φίλῃσι,[61]

are clear indications that it was common property in the tradition.

Each of the two passages above sheds some light on an additional facet of oral-formulaic artistry. In Hecuba's case it is particularly clear (and in Demeter's tolerably so) that the lines in question are simultaneously part of another motif than the one under discussion, namely the tearing of hair and clothing, scratching of the cheeks, etc. conventionally associated with lamentations for the dead (e.g. *Il.* 24.711–12). The indications would seem to be that, precisely because the traditional Gestalt is not itself differentiated into any one fixed set of parameters and these parameters themselves have no one fixed form apiece, a given passage, even a single detail, may be the outlet for more than one idea. The oral poet can achieve the same amount of ambiguity, i.e. the same rich density of meanings, as the writing poet; indeed, provisions for this would seem to be deeply embedded in the methods and materials of his tradition. We as critics must turn first of all to the traditional Gestalt, then, if we hope to analyze the meaning of his poetry; and it appears from the dual significance of the preceding example that a generative rather than a strict, classifying approach would again be the most fruitful.

A more familiar and more vexed question is involved in the series of κρήδεμνα verses in the *Hymn to Demeter*. Here the actual detention of Persephone in the lower world forms a long, central portion of the poem which is bracketed by the appearance of a sympathetic personage each time referred to as Ἑκάτη λιπαροκρήδεμνος (25 and 438). The noun-epithet combination cannot be without poetic signification—indeed structurally crucial signification—in these places.[62] But the

[61] Here, as with Ino, Nausicaa, and Andromache, there is a mitigating use of diction for the *velamentum* idea nearby. In this case, as in that of Andromache, there is an associated idea of mourning (see below), for Demeter throws a κυάνεον κάλυμμα around her shoulders in the very next line, as does Thetis mourning in advance the death of Achilles; note the glossing ornamentation there (*Il.* 24.93–94).

[62] The ring-composition serves as a psychological, or rhetorical, transition into and out of the underworld portion of the poem, exactly as it does for the *nekuia* of the *Odyssey*; cf. Whitman (above, note 29) 288; Lord, *ST* 168. I would agree with Whitman in this case, since Lord seems to me to be making a distinction between structure and meaning which is not linguistically and anthropologically sound; see above, note 44,

same epithet in the same position is also applied to Rhea (459), and the word *κρήδεμνα* crops up once more in the poem with a different denotative meaning and in a different syntactic structure (151):

δήμου τε προΰχουσιν, ἰδὲ κρήδεμνα πόληος.

These additional occurrences of the Gestalt could be considered gratuitous associations; that is, one could say that, since the poet of the hymn was keeping the Gestalt near the surface of his mind in order to realize it effectively as an integral part of the poetic narrative whenever appropriate, it also cropped up once as mere duplication of a poetic function already served by another personage (459), and once with no particular poetic relevance (151)—just as *πίονα δῆμον* at line 459 of the *Theogony* may be poetically irrelevant to *πίονα δημῷ* ~ *ἀργέτι δημῷ* later. But to answer a question like this satisfactorily would involve inordinately difficult problems of audience expectations, the meaning of repetition, conscious or unconscious purposefulness, and the like: in a word, the psychology of the creative process.[63] These questions have never been answered even for written poetry, leaving aside the complication of oral performance, in which creation and aesthetic appreciation are a simultaneous, vital interaction between poet and audience. There may always be some doubtful cases, therefore, in which the exact degree of poetic activity of a latent idea will be outside our competence to judge (cf. Edwards 139–40). Certain it is that poetically important meanings can be very deeply associated with that which we have been calling the oral formula; and it would perhaps not beg the question to borrow another concept from linguistics and say that the signification "chastity" is present at the "zero grade" in *H. Cer.* 151.

At any rate, it is evident from a juxtaposition of *H. Cer.* 25 ~ 438 with 459 and with *λιπαρὰ κρήδεμνα* in the epics that to consider the epithet of the noun-epithet combination a mere metrical spacer is a

and Dorson (above, note 25). Many dialogues of Plato use ring-composition in a similar way to set off the special, sometimes revelatory, nature of a central portion; cf. Eva Brann, "The Music of the *Republic*," *Agon* 1 (1967) 1–117.

[63] It is possible—to mention but one unexplored and perhaps unexplorable aspect of these complexities—that the mere usage of relevant diction from time to time keeps the Gestalt in question from sinking too far below consciousness to be perceived appropriately when it is to be realized with full poetic significance.

drastic oversimplification (see above, p. 276). The same is true of traditional metaphors which Parry designated as "fixed" ("The Traditional Metaphor in Homer," *CP* 28 [1933] 30–43), a judgment which has led to the mistaken notion that a poetically active metaphor (like a meaningful epithet) must be atypical and untraditional. That this, too, is in fact an unfortunate oversimplification will be clearer in the next examples to be considered.

We must first of all observe, with regard to our initial inquiry into the relationship of denotative and poetic meanings, that because κρήδεμνα denotes "battlements" or the like, rather than "veil," in the line just quoted (*H. Cer.* 151), it is not at all disqualified from bearing the signification "chastity." It is definitely possible for the word to have this poetic impact without denoting "veil"; indeed to deny this would be to miss the point of the two lines from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* which bring out most poignantly and with such remarkable economy the same "rape" of Troy which assumes personified form in the gestures of Hecuba and Andromache (*Il.* 16.100 and *Od.* 13.388):

ὄφρ' οἷοι Τροίης ἱερὰ κρήδεμνα λύωμεν.

οἷον ὅτε Τροίης λύομεν λιπαρὰ κρήδεμνα.

To the Greek mind the idea of rape for the women followed naturally enough upon that of ἁρπαγή of a city; and, after all, it is partially the artifact of translation which separates κρήδεμνα "battlements" from κρήδεμνα "veil," and αἰδώς "pride of chastity" from αἰδώς meaning roughly "pride of status." The former is αἰδώς as upheld by the women in wearing veils and bringing their attendants when they must go into mixed company; the latter is αἰδώς as upheld by men in battle, especially in defense of their native city. Thus, in the traditional language of the heroic poems, idea and diction are so closely linked that, as Parry often implied (cf. *Studies I* 126), the use of English as a descriptive tool may be self-defeating.

All this does not mean, of course, that the poetic signification of the word κρήδεμνον is completely independent of its denotation in any and all narrative situations. At *Od.* 3.392, for example, where κρήδεμνον appears to denote the seal or stopper of a wine-*pithos*, any notion of a loss of αἰδώς must be quite inactive. One may easily

imagine, however, that if it were the suitors who were "broaching" *(λύειν)* the *κρήδεμνον* of a wine-jar for their own feasting, and not Nestor for a libation to Athena, just this signification could emerge most forcefully.[64]

One further group of examples must be considered in this complicated interaction of diction, meanings, and narrative situations. It would seem at first glance that the use of the word in question in line 2 of the *Hymn to Aphrodite* would again be a case in which no notion of sexual chastity or related type of *αἰδώς* could profitably be read into the phrase (1–2):

> *Αἰδοίην χρυσοστέφανον καλὴν Ἀφροδίτην*
> *ᾄσομαι, ἣ πάσης Κύπρου κρήδεμνα λέλογχεν.*

The denotation here is most uncertain (and not very important for our purposes), the syntax that of the periphrastic expression for a city we have seen above (cf. also Hesiod, *Sc.* 105); in all, the phrase itself does not seem to connote chastity. On the other hand, we have *αἰδοίην* in the preceding line, and of course the particular goddess involved is suggestive. Whereas we tend to think of Aphrodite as representing the reverse of chastity, by the principle, *ἐπιστήμη καὶ δύναμις ἐναντίων ἡ αὐτή*,[65] she is also the goddess who had given Andromache

[64] "Die Übertragung des Wortes *κρήδεμνον* auf den *κρητήρ* war um so leichter, als das Rand des Gefässes als sein Haupt bezeichnet ward" (Bechtel, *Lexilogus zu Homer* [Halle, 1914]). Compare *ἀκρό-πολις: πολίων κατέλυσε κάρηνα* (*Il.* 2.117). An especially striking example of the use of the stem *αἰδ-* in an exhortation of Tyrtaeus, fr. 6, 7 Diehls, lines 9–12 and 21–25, links the sexual and military connotations we have been discussing. Edmonds' emendation of the word in the latter passage (his Loeb edition) is based, as far as one can see, only upon our modern inability to understand this connection; cf. Cauer, *Grundfragen der Homerkritik*[3] (Leipzig 1921) 650–53.

[65] Cf. Arist. *Nic. Ethics* 1129A4, and Heckscher, "Aphrodite as a Nun," *Phoenix* 7 (1953) 105–17. Here the situation is complicated by what might be regarded as another motif or as another set of associations within this one: a toilette scene is basically a feminine allomorph of an arming scene, and *χάρις* can be explictly mentioned with either sort as a summarizing or capping detail of the cosmetics/arming sequence, sometimes followed by the notion, "other(s) admire her/him going forth"; cf. especially *Il.* 14.183 (= *Od.* 18.298, in a different narrative situation), also *Od.* 2.12 = 17.63, 6.235 = 8.19. *H. Ven.* 6, except for the introductory and closing conventions, consists entirely of a toilette scene (capped 15–18) and includes, as we might expect, elaborate allomorphs of the *velamentum*. For some reason, however, Hesiod uses Athena rather than Aphrodite in a parallel scene (*Theog.* 571–84). For preliminary discussions of the arming scenes, cf. Arend (above, note 44) and J. I. Armstrong, "The Arming Motif in the Iliad," *AJP* 70 (1958) 337–54.

her ill-fated *κρήδεμνον* (*Il.* 22.470; see above, p. 300) and who, entreated again by the adjective *αἰδοίη*, gave similar garments to Hera for the purpose of seducing Zeus. The diction involved in the latter scene is instructive:

κρηδέμνῳ δ' ἐφύπερθε καλύψατο δῖα θεάων (*Il.* 14.184, cf. 22.470).

ἦ, καὶ ἀπὸ στήθεσφιν ἑλύσατο κεστὸν ἱμάντα (214).

τῇ νῦν, τοῦτον ἱμάντα τεῷ ἐγκάτθεο κόλπῳ (219, cf. *Od.* 5.346, 373).

These conceptions of the veil as *projector* of sexual *χάρις* (note its visual epithets *λιπαρὸς, σιγαλόεις*[66]) and as *hider* of these attractive qualities for purposes of modesty (*κάλυμμα, καλύπτρη*, etc.) are polar opposites. That a given realization can "break" one way or the other in its particular emphasis is further evidence that the underlying Gestalt is itself undifferentiated into either pole, retained in that part of the mind where polar opposites are conceived of as unities. It is on this preconscious level that Aphrodite is linked to the Gestalt as its most appropriate personification. Thus it is quite natural that the word *κρήδεμνον* (regardless of its denotation) should emerge in the opening lines of her hymn in an expression of one of her attributes, *ἥ πάσης Κύπρου κρήδεμνα λέλογχεν*, just as in the surviving fragments of her epic the nymphs and graces, who are (probably) called her *ἀμφίπολοι* and who are helping her to dress, place crowns of flowers on their own *heads* and are referred to as *θεαὶλιπαροκρήδεμνοι*.[67]

We do not mean to suggest that *Κύπρου κρήδεμνα* or *θεαὶ λιπαροκρήδεμνοι* are conscious puns of any sort. Again, the poetic value of such associations for the traditional audience (and for the modern reader) must remain a somewhat open question for the time

[66] Cf. *H. Ven.* 5.82–90. For factitious explanation of these epithets, cf. Helbig (above, note 54) 218; Leaf and Bayfield, note on 406.

In my view these natural explanations, which abound in the commentaries from Eustathius onwards, usually complement poetical explanations of the same details. That is, the fact that real veils were probably made of linen and were really shiny in Homer's world by no means supersedes what we have said above with regard to the poetic function of this idea in the epic context. Homer's technique was not usually to depict the marvelous, but to transform the ordinary, through the medium of his "art language" (Whitman [above, note 29] Chap. 1).

[67] *Cypria*, Frags. 5, 6; the same function is fulfilled by the *Ὧραι* in *H. Ven.* 6: cf. esp. lines 8–10.

being. But it is still tenable as a general principle, applicable even to passages such as the *κρήδεμνον*, "stopper," of *Od.* 3.392, that poetic signification is always latent, if not active. It is inherent in the traditional Gestalt but not necessarily brought into play—into obvious resonance with the poetic context—each time that Gestalt is realized. We are thus enabled to formulate concisely one of the obviously crucial skills in the artistry of oral verse composition: when and how to bring into play the meanings inherent in the traditional diction.

Whether or not this theory of the latency of poetic signification in some or all Gestalts of epic formulas be accepted, I think one must recognize that, on a statistical basis, meanings of various kinds seem to behave exactly like any other parameters of the Gestalt; to recur to the metaphors suggested earlier, they are like any other feature of the family, or any other fibre in the thread. Neither the denotation "veil" nor the poetic signification "chaste" is fully present in each and every appearance of the word *κρήδεμνον* in Homer; by the same token, there are other ways of denoting "veil" (*ὀθόνη, ἑανός, κάλυμμα, καλύπτρη*, etc.) and there are passages involving chastity in which no such object occurs. In these latter passages, finally, the idea may be channeled into some expression of "veiling" (*καλύπτω*; see above, note 60) or simply remain implicit in the situation without giving rise to any diction whatever.[68]

In other words, poetic signification behaves like any other parameter of a Gestalt in this also, that it can appear independently. Just as the metrical parameter $- \breve{} \breve{} | - \overset{12}{-} \|$ can be realized with no diction even remotely like *πίονι δημῷ* or meaning associable with the idea of "rich fat" or sacrifice in general (*ἄγγελος ἦλθεν* etc.), so these significations can appear without this rhythm or this diction; just as the rhythmical impulse $\breve{} \breve{} - | - - \breve{}$ can appear without the words *λιπαρὰ κρήδεμνα* or any idea of chastity, so the idea can appear without support from rhythm or from diction.

[68] For the latter group, to take only close parallels to the situation of Hecuba and Andromache, cf. *Il.* 1.345–48 (note that Briseis follows the two heralds, not vice-versa), and *Ilias Parva*, Frag. XIX. I have been assuming that the hymns and cyclic fragments, if not texts of purely oral performances, represent artistic practices close enough to be useful parallels. Sometimes they are especially useful to indicate the *Fortleben* of a phenomenon beyond Homer, and thus most likely a part of their common tradition.

At this point the objection could be raised that the foregoing discussion largely depends not upon a "typical formula" (such as δῶκε δέ οἱ, ἄλγε' ἔθηκεν, etc.) which merely advances the narrative, but upon a single, emotionally pregnant word, that is, a motif. A good deal more discussion would be required to give this objection the adequate treatment it deserves, but space forbids our undertaking this here. My own investigations of this question, though only preliminary ones, have led to the conclusion that the amount of poetically neutral diction in Homer—phrases which are mere space-fillers or which merely advance the narrative—is far less than we would ordinarily suppose. Despite its semantic modesty, even a unit like ἅμα + dative by itself can, in the proper context, be powerfully evocative of all the honor that accrues to a person attended by chaperones or other followers; even a τοι can be pregnant with all the minatory signification of the formula (motif) Διὸς δέ τοι ἄγγελος εἶμι.[69] Such a conclusion is not improbable in itself: If the Homeric style is as great as almost all critics have felt it to be, surely there ought to be something great about it, some explanation for its power to cast ordinary narration in a transformed medium of art-language.

In our own age, according to Professor Lord,[70] a South-Slavic singer will occasionally omit a structurally significant portion from one of his songs. When confronted with such an omission, his first reaction will be to deny it outright, "Of course I sang that part." Could this not mean that to the singer and his regular audience, for whom the total effect of his performance is real and the fact (or printed record) of his actual words unimaginably abstract, the "missing" part was there, implicitly sensed because part of the total Gestalt? If so,

[69] For the former, cf. my dissertation (above, note 1) 81; for the latter, *Il.* 1.239, 7.48 (note Διΐ in 47 and Eustathius *ad loc.*), *Od.* 2.286.

[70] Cf. "The Marks of an Oral Style and Their Significance," in the forthcoming *Proceedings of the Fifth Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association* (Belgrade 1967).

My own recordings in the field (made possible by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, June–August, 1967) have corroborated the well known fact that Cretan singers often break off a performance of a song, not only long before the end of the piece, but even in the middle of a sentence, with resulting loss of intelligibility. Of course, their concentration on the music partially explains this catalexis of the words, but it is also to be explained by the presence of the omitted portion in the memory of the hearers.

how much more likely that a singer with the tradition and the genius of Homer, *qui nil molitur inepte*, was exploiting similar potentials for implicit meanings. It is always dangerous to read meanings into poetry, but there are times when one must take the plunge. The only possible safeguard is to learn from the errors of the allegorists and other schools not to look for the kinds of meaning which would be outlandish in oral tradition, but to seek to understand Homer's greatness in its own terms.

The present article has attempted to suggest that this greatness, this richness of signification, is not to be comprehended by any conceptual framework which continues to divide allomorphs into "traditional" and "original" (etc.) or which insists upon categorizing fixed "formulas," "formula systems," or even "prototypes" and "variants" on the generative level. Professor Lord stated in his conclusion to *The Singer of Tales*: "The real meaning of a traditional poem . . . cannot be brought to light by elaborate schematization, unless that schematization be based on the elements of oral tradition, on the still dynamic multiform patterns in the depth of primitive myth." And indications would seem to be that, the more one pursues an anthropological approach to these elements of oral tradition and oral creativity, the less any elaborate schematization is likely to be useful. Even distinctions between structure and meaning (cf. above, note 62) or between (narrative) function and artistry, to say nothing of the more unwarranted dichotomies we have discussed, can obscure more than they clarify.

O que não quer dizer que algum sistema não seja mobiliza do...

With an organic approach of this kind it is obvious that imprecision is unavoidable. Not only are we prevented from verbally defining any Gestalt within our theoretical framework, we cannot even define satisfactorily its boundaries (if there are such) with other Gestalts as a simple matter of method. As we have seen (cf. above, note 65), there will always be cases, actual or potential, which link any series we may draw up with some other series by one or more common parameters.[71]

[71] Another series mentioned above (note 12) similarly exhibits a point of contact in its final example with a different (?) series described at length by Edwards (128):

ἶξε δ' ἐπ' ἐσχατιήν (*Il.* 20.328, cf. *Od.* 19.389)

δεινὸς ἐπ' ἀκροτάτης (*H. Bacch.* 7.45, cf. 38) (cont.)

The following avenue, for example, stretches between our *πίονι δημῷ* group and the *θεὸς ὥς* — ⏑⏑ — ¹² ‖ "system" discussed by Parry in *Formules*:

καλύψας πίονι δημῷ (*Il.* 17.241)
Ἰθάκης ἐς πίονα δῆμον (*Od.* 14.329, 19.399)
θεὸς (δ') ὣς τίετο δήμῳ (6 times)
θεὸν ὣς τιμήσουσιν (*Il.* 9.155; cf. 297, *Od.* 5.36)
θεὸν ὣς εἰσορόωσιν (*Od.* 8.173; cf. *Il.* 12.312)

Further, one of the verses we have just mentioned serves to link the latter group with the *κρήδεμνον* family, for it uses *κρήδεμνον* diction to express the general idea "of high honor in the city" (*H. Cer.* 151):

δήμου τε προὔχουσιν, ἰδὲ κρήδεμνα πόληος.

The result of these potentially illimitable connections is that we can say, "such and such a group (family) of phrases has a Gestalt in common," but we cannot say, "this Gestalt is . . . and is not . . ."; in other words, we are debarred from classification and definition.

The disadvantage cannot be argued away; and there will doubtless be other problems that have occurred to the reader, so that it may be in order to summarize in conclusion the advantages of the foregoing theory:

1. It brings our concept of the psychological processes involved in Homer's versemaking into line with those most widely accepted at the present time in analogous areas of non-literary composition. Similarly, it puts teeth into the statements which hitherto have had to be offered as supposition by Homerists: that oral-formulaic composition is a language, that the training of the oral bard is more like the acquisition of a linguistic skill than the memorization of a fixed content.

2. This view completely bypasses an array of dichotomies, some

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*ὄζῳ ἐπ' ἀκροτάτῳ*⁵ (*Il.* 2.312)
*ὄζοι ἐπ' ἀκροτάτῃ*⁹ (*Il.* 4.484)
*ὀξὺν ἐπ' ἄκρῳ*¹² (*Od.* 9.382, cf. Sappho, Frag. 105 Lobel-Page)

The underlying impulses of a generative grammar, according to modern linguistics, produce a potentially infinite series of realizations, which may help to explain the inappropriateness of attempting to close off our series at any given point. Cf. also Bambrough (above, note 22) 191, which implies the above.

absurdly paradoxical, which have been retarding the progress of oral formulaic studies in particular, and Homeric philology in general, in some important areas for several years. Thus, the polarities "normal versus variant" or "traditional versus original" are subsumed in a general principle which seems to make better sense and may bear repetition: *all is traditional on the generative level, all unique on the level of performance*. The creative process itself may now be seen not as a struggle between the "restraint" of the past and the "needs" of the present, but as a single movement from a central Gestalt outward, if you will, along appropriate lines to the desired realization for the purposes of the moment. The necessity of determining diachronic sequences, especially where no evidence could possibly be forthcoming, largely disappears. More importantly, when all phrases are regarded as "variants," even—as with the notorious noun-epithet combination—when conditions of meter and meaning make the form of the final product all but inevitable, the unity of the style becomes clear. A theoretical groundwork is gained for the strong impression of consistency we feel in almost any Homeric passage, whatever its peculiarities of dialect.

3. Since the "purposes of the moment" just referred to potentially include poetic nuances of any subtlety and poetic meaningfulness of any density, we have a theory of oral poetry that is more than just receptive to aesthetic considerations; it is truly incomplete without them. The most challenging and compelling aspect of these remarks rests in their suggesting a less artificial framework in which to view and from which to enjoy Homeric poetry.