HOMERIC METAPHOR

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METAPHOR is a comparatively neglected feature of Homeric imagery. Scholars and critics have focused attention on the extended similes that are so prominent in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey;* discussion of Greek metaphor, on the other hand, has almost invariably concentrated on lyric and tragedy.[1] Furthermore, previous appraisals of Homeric metaphor have given rise to some influential misconceptions. The purpose of this essay is to reaffirm the vitality of metaphor as a significant poetic device in the language of the epics, particularly the *Iliad.* We will start with a summary sketch of previous analyses, and proceed to examine a selection of examples. The metaphors in the analysis have been chosen specifically to illustrate the range and sophistication of figurative language in Homer, and to invite comparison with the survey of previous analyses. We will conclude with some suggestions for further research.

W. B. Stanford's definition of metaphor is useful: "the process and result of using a term (X) normally signifying an object or concept (A) in such a context that it must refer to another object or concept (B) which is distinct enough in characteristics from A to ensure that in the composite idea formed by the synthesis of the concepts A and B and now symbolized in the word X, the factors A and B retain their conceptual independence even while they fully merge in the unity symbolized by X."[2] Stanford was far readier than A. L. Keith or Milman Parry to allow the presence of a number of imaginative, striking metaphors in the epics. But his main thesis, that words in Homer's time lacked precise definitions and that therefore the poet was deliberately cautious in using metaphor because he ran the risk of sacrificing clarity, will not survive serious scrutiny.[3] C. H.

1. E.g., A. L. Keith, *Simile and Metaphor in Greek Poetry* (Chicago, 1914), p. 33, declared, "The most striking difference that the metaphors of the *Iliad* present as distinguished from the similes is the almost universal lack of deep feeling." W. B. Stanford, *Greek Metaphor* (Oxford, 1936), pp. 135, 143, felt that the partial overlap in material between similes and metaphors (e.g., *νέφος πεζῶν* at *Il.* 4. 274 and the simile of the cloud at 4. 275–79) could be explained by Homer's desire to clarify possibly confusing metaphors through extended similes employing the same image. A recent study which focuses on the metaphors of the lyric and tragic poets (though not quite to the exclusion of Homer) is the interesting book of M. S. Silk, *Interaction in Poetic Imagery* (London and New York, 1974).

2. *Greek Metaphor*, p. 101. The definition is adopted with approval by W. K. Wimsatt, *The Verbal Icon* (Lexington, Ky., 1954), p. 128.

3. *Greek Metaphor*, pp. 118 (n. 1), 121. The hypothesis that words themselves lacked precise definitions in Homer's time is vulnerable to the results of numerous recent studies of Homeric vocabulary. See, e.g., A. Parry, "Have We Homer's *Iliad?*" *YCS* 20 (1966): 177–216; idem (ed.), *The Making of Homeric Verse* (Oxford, 1971), pp. ix–lxii, an excellent critical survey; Anne Amory Parry, *Blameless Aegisthus* (Leyden, 1973); M. Nagler, *Spontaneity and Tradition* (Berkeley, 1974); N. Austin, *Archery at the Dark of the Moon* (Berkeley, 1975), pp. 11–80 ("The Homeric Formula");

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Whitman, on the other hand, has claimed that the formulas themselves function as a type of metaphor; while perhaps true at one basic level, this theory is too generalized to be really useful.[4]

Keith and Parry are together responsible for the principal theories about Homeric metaphor which must claim our attention; Parry's judgments have been especially influential.[5] Four contentions are particularly significant. (1) Few metaphors in Homer are sustained beyond the single word; it is thus impossible to determine with the majority if the poet had the notion of metaphor in mind.[6] (2) Metaphor in Homer is a "casual poetic device," seldom used to heighten emotion or a crucial narrative incident.[7] (3) A large number of the extended metaphors are vague and problematic in meaning.[8] (4) Many metaphors are used so often that they retain no force greater than that of the ordinary word. These phrases are "fixed" metaphors in their context; although they may possess decorative charm, their semantic force becomes eroded to the extent that it is "felt" rather than "understood."[9] Parry was scrupulous in his emphasis on the contributions of mood and propriety which traditional diction, including the fixed metaphor, had made to the poems.[10] Nevertheless, we are inescapably left with the impression that the vast majority of metaphors in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are "fixed," and consequently devoid of meaning.

In the decades since Parry, the criticism of an oral Homer has demonstrated that repetition, by itself, does not automatically act to deprive a phrase of meaning; recent studies have inclined more to the hypothesis

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A. L. T. Bergren, *The Etymology and Usage of* ΠΕΙΡΑΡ *in Early Greek Poetry* (State College, Pa., 1975); P. Vivante, "On Homer's Winged Words," *CQ* 25 (1975): 1–12.

Despite the disappointing quality of Stanford's more general arguments, he performed a considerable service in classifying Homeric metaphors "according to the degree of their imaginative force" (p. 129), and his description and appreciation of some individual phrases are instructive and observant (e.g., pp. 136–37 on ἔπεα πτερόεντα and ἄπτερος μῦθος).

4. See *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), pp. 102–27. Whitman shows credibly enough how certain metaphors in the poems have their counterparts in action sequences; e.g., the image at *Od.* 5. 383, κατέδησε κελεύθους, is literally part of the scene at *Od.* 10. 19–27, when Aeolus binds the winds. In such cases, the distinction between action and image breaks down; by way of further illustration, Whitman provides a brief analysis of the mingling of literal and figurative clouds in *Iliad* 16–17 (pp. 151–53). But when he speaks of words such as σάκος or ἀσπίς as "metaphors," or as "symbolic of all that a heroic shield should be" (p. 126), Whitman's rhetoric merely embellishes the fact that Homeric heroes usually wield good shields competently. He is forced, then, to see the shield of Achilles as a "tremendous expansion . . . a metaphor of the whole heroic world" (p. 126). The last part of this statement may be true. But the shield of Achilles stands out precisely because it is *not* like any other shield at all (cf. 20. 262–72); its description at 18. 478–608 is thoroughly differentiable from all other shields in the poem and cannot usefully be related to the supposed "metaphorical" qualities of such shields.

5. See Keith, *Simile and Metaphor*, passim. Parry's arguments were first published in an abstract, "The Homeric Metaphor as a Traditional Poetic Device," *TAPA* 62 (1931): xxiv, reprinted in idem, *Making of Homeric Verse*, p. 419. His contentions were argued more fully in "The Traditional Metaphor in Homer," *CP* 28 (1933): 30–43 = *Making of Homeric Verse*, pp. 365–75. References below will be to the pagination in *The Making of Homeric Verse*.

6. See Keith, *Simile and Metaphor*, p. 33; Parry, *Making of Homeric Verse*, p. 373.

7. Parry, *Making of Homeric Verse*, p. 419.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., pp. 419, 371–73.

10. Although the fixed metaphor was devoid of specific meaning, according to Parry's thesis, it was far from lacking in charm: it becomes "an incantation of the heroic" (*Making of Homeric Verse*, p. 375).

that the poet is the master of the traditional phrase, rather than its prisoner, and that meter and meaning may be fully compatible.[11] Our selection of texts from the *Iliad* will attempt to gauge the effectiveness of repeated metaphors, as well as to assess the contributions of unique phrases. The specific illustrations have been chosen both for their intrinsic interest and for their value as responses to one or more of the theories that we have outlined. In addition, these texts have been largely ignored in commentaries and in the critical literature. Collectively, they comprise an argument for the poetic vitality of Homeric metaphor. Limitations of space will permit us to consider only a small fraction of the metaphors in the *Iliad*, but the selection is diverse enough to represent the images' considerable variety and importance.[12]

We begin with a group of brief metaphors which are restricted to single phrases and which occur only once in the *Iliad:*

1. 81	εἴ περ γάρ τε χόλον γε καὶ αὐτῆμαρ καταπέψῃ
1. 170–71	οὐδὲ σ' ὀΐω ἐνθάδ' ἄτιμος ἐὼν ἄφενος καὶ πλοῦτον ἀφύξειν.
1. 231	δημοβόρος βασιλεύς, ἐπεὶ οὐτιδανοῖσιν ἀνάσσεις
1. 243–44	σὺ δ' ἔνδοθι θυμὸν ἀμύξεις χωόμενος ὅ τ' ἄριστον Ἀχαιῶν οὐδὲν ἔτεισας.

Parry, who analyzed the metaphors of *Iliad* 1, comments, "[They] may, for a while, keep the force of their metaphor because they are not elsewhere found in Homer. But because there is nothing outside the word to show the reader that Homer had the notion of metaphor in his mind, and because he soon ceases in reading Homer to look for any active force in such single words, they too finally become for him simply epic words with no more meaning than the usual term would have."[13]

But in all these cases there is sufficient evidence of the literal usage of terms elsewhere in the poems to establish the phrases as metaphorical. For example, compare with καταπέψῃ at 1. 81 the literal meaning of πέσσω at *Odyssey* 7. 119 (= ripen).[14] With ἀφύξειν at 1. 171, compare ἀφύσσω at *Iliad* 1. 598 (= draw off a liquid). For the metaphor in ἀμύξεις at 1. 243, we may note ἀμύσσω at *Iliad* 19. 284 (= lacerate). Finally, with respect to the compound δημοβόρος at 1. 231, Homer has two other literal compounds of δῆμος: δημιοεργός at *Odyssey* 17. 383 and 19. 135 (= public worker) and δημογέρων at *Iliad* 3. 149 and 11. 372 (= elder of the people); compare also the verb καταδημοβορέω at *Iliad* 18. 301. The presumption is certainly

11. Cf. the studies cited in n. 3

12. Stanford, *Greek Metaphor*, p. 120, acknowledges that metaphors "far outnumber" similes in the epics, but provides no comprehensive listing. As a rough indication of the frequency of metaphor, consider the following statistics for three diverse narrative segments of the *Iliad*. Book 6 has thirty-one metaphors in 529 lines (vs. five similes), Book 11 has fifty-two metaphors in 847 lines (vs. thirty-three similes), and Book 24 has thirty-nine metaphors in 804 lines (vs. twelve similes).

13. *Making of Homeric Verse*, p. 373.

14. Cf. also χόλον θυμαλγέα πέσσει (*Il.* 4. 513).

that the phrase δημοβόρος βασιλέυς, employed in an excited context and parallel to other figurative terms of abuse (cf. *Il.* 1. 225), is metaphorical.[15]

Thus, contrary to contention (1) in the list of theories, it is often possible to establish the metaphorical character of a single phrase by examining lexical usage elsewhere in the poems. Even in cases where we may encounter difficulties, that is, with phrases involving terms whose precise meaning is debatable, or terms with a considerable range of meaning, close analysis is useful for arriving at a balance of probabilities. For example, however we regard the Homeric concept of θυμός, it seems clear that such phrases as θυμολέων (*Il.* 5. 639, 7. 228), ἔρις θυμοβόρος (*Il.* 7. 210), θυμὸν κατέδων (*Il.* 6. 202), and πᾶσιν δὲ παραὶ ποσὶ κάππεσε θυμός (*Il.* 15. 280) are all metaphorical. We face similar problems in applying a definition of metaphor to phrases with φρένες, for example, with φρένες . . . μέλαιναι (*Il.* 1. 103; cf. 17. 83). Yet it is likely that a phrase such as δάκε δὲ φρένας Ἕκτορι μῦθος (*Il.* 5. 493) is metaphorical.[16] Compare also τὸν δ' ἄχος ὀξὺ κατὰ φρένας τύψε βαθεῖαν (*Il.* 19. 125). In both of these latter instances, we are aided by literal usages of δάκνω and τύπτω elsewhere in the poems. But even when we do not possess the "control" of a term's literal usage, we may safely categorize certain brief phrases as metaphorical; consider, for example, ἀνεμοτρεφὲς ἔγχος at *Iliad* 11. 256.[17]

These illustrations confirm that, even when an image is not extended beyond the single word, we may identify metaphor through analysis of usage. Let us turn now to assess the claim that metaphor in Homer is a casual poetic device, seldom used to heighten emotion or a crucial narrative incident.

3. 54–57 οὐκ ἄν τοι χραίσμῃ κίθαρις τά τε δῶρ' Ἀφροδίτης,
ἥ τε κόμη τό τε εἶδος, ὅτ' ἐν κονίῃσι μιγείης·
ἀλλὰ μάλα Τρῶες δειδήμονες· ἦ τέ κεν ἤδη
λάϊνον ἕσσο χιτῶνα κακῶν ἕνεχ' ὅσσα ἔοργας.

There are two striking metaphors in this passage, the conclusion of Hector's first reproach of Paris. The only parallel to the phrase at 3. 55, ὅτ' ἐν κονίῃσι μιγείης, is a verse used for the deaths of Dolon in the *Iliad* and Leodes in the *Odyssey:* φθεγγομένου δ' ἄρα τοῦ γε κάρη κονίῃσιν ἐμίχθη (*Il.* 10. 457 = *Od.* 22. 329). Μίσγω, of course, is frequently used in a variety of formulas for sexual intercourse (cf. ἐμίγην φιλότητι καὶ εὐνῇ at *Il.* 3. 445). Given the prominent erotic motifs of *Iliad* 3, it is surely possible to argue for an ambiguous, ironic significance in Hector's expression: he implies, metaphorically, that Paris will clutch at the ground, as in lust.[18]

The unparalleled expression λάϊνον ἕσσο χιτῶνα at 3. 57, which almost

15. Parry, *Making of Homeric Verse*, p. 371, n. 1, denied that the insults in *Il.* 1. 225 were metaphorical; I cannot agree. For wealth as a liquid at *Il.* 1. 171, cf. the phrase of Eumaios, ῥυδὸν ἀφνειοῖο, at *Od.* 15. 426.

16. Cf. θυμοδακὴς γὰρ μῦθος (*Od.* 8. 185).

17. The only analogue to this phrase is also metaphorical, at *Il.* 15. 624–25: ὡς ὅτε κῦμα θοῇ ἐν νηῒ πέσῃσι / λάβρον ὑπαὶ νέφεων ἀνεμοτρεφές.

18. Cf. the apparently neutral usage by Hector at *Il.* 3. 48: μιχθεὶς ἀλλοδαποῖσι γυναῖκ' εὐειδέ' ἀνῆγες.

certainly refers to execution by stoning,[19] may be linked to the emphasis on Paris' appearance in the speech as a whole; compare εἶδος at 3. 39, 45, 55. Aphrodite later draws attention to the Trojan's physical handsomeness and to his clothes at 3. 390–94; compare particularly κάλλεΐ τε στίλβων καὶ εἵμασιν at 392. Thus, ironic reference to a garment, χιτῶνα, at 3. 57 is not to be ruled out. The metaphor itself is probably related in conception to others which picture shame as a garment; compare ἀναιδείην ἐπιειμένε (ἐπιειμένος) at *Iliad* 1. 149 and 9. 372. Both of Hector's images, at the climax of his speech, combine to emphasize the forceful tone of outrage, tinged with irony, of the reproach.

6. 327–31 λαοὶ μὲν φθινύθουσι περὶ πτόλιν αἰπύ τε τεῖχος
μαρνάμενοι· σέο δ' εἵνεκ' ἀϋτή τε πτόλεμός τε
ἀστὺ τόδ' ἀμφιδέδηε· σὺ δ' ἂν μαχέσαιο καὶ ἄλλῳ,
ὅν τινά που μεθιέντα ἴδοις στυγεροῦ πολέμοιο.
ἀλλ' ἄνα, μὴ τάχα ἄστυ πυρὸς δηΐοιο θέρηται.

This passage also shows Hector reproaching Paris. The metaphor of battle and the war cry "blazing" around the city is certainly to be related to a group of images with the simple verb δαίω: μάχη ἐνοπή τε δεδήει (*Il.* 12. 35), στέφανος πολέμοιο δέδηε (*Il.* 13. 736), ἔρις πολέμοιο δέδηεν (*Il.* 17. 253), μάχη πόλεμός τε δέδηε (*Il.* 20. 18). The metaphor, with the verb in the same position in the verse, is also used of rumor (*Il.* 2. 93 μετὰ δέ σφισιν Ὅσσα δεδήει) and of Hector's eyes in battle (*Il.* 12. 466 πυρὶ δ' ὄσσε δεδήει).[20] Virtually all the contexts are martial, and the notion of the metaphor is to be compared with the repeated, short simile, ὣς οἱ μὲν μάρναντο δέμας πυρὸς αἰθομένοιο (*Il.* 11. 596, 13. 673, 18. 1). But whereas the simile is a brief, summarizing image employed in transition passages, all but one of the metaphors of "blazing war" occur in speeches of apprehension and urgency. These emotions are especially evident in Hector's speech in *Iliad* 6, where the verbal structure of the image differs most markedly from the norm (note the enjambement), and where the hero's fear for Troy, expressed in the last verse (331), transfers the motif of fire from imagery to narrative. The rhetorical power of the metaphor is thus reinforced by its context.

11. 241 ὣς ὁ μὲν αὖθι πεσὼν κοιμήσατο χάλκεον ὕπνον

This phrase, employed for the death of Iphidamas at the hands of Agamemnon, is unique in the poems, although the epithets χάλκεος and πολύχαλκος are used in other metaphorical contexts. In the nominative, χάλκεος alternates with ὄβριμος when Ares is to receive an epithet in the adonic segment of the verse; compare *Iliad* 5. 704, 859, 866, 7. 146, 16. 543. It is scarcely surprising, then, that the majority of the epithet's figurative uses occur in martial contexts. In the invocation to the Catalog of Ships, the poet imagines an unbreakable voice and a heart of bronze (*Il.* 2. 490 φωνὴ δ' ἄρρηκτος, χάλκεον δέ μοι ἦτορ ἐνείη). Achilles shouts at the trench with a brazen voice

19. Cf. W. Leaf, *The "Iliad,"* vol. 1² (London, 1900), ad loc.
20. Cf. *Od.* 6. 131–32, 20. 353.

(*Il.* 18. 222 ὄπα χάλκεον).[21] At *Iliad* 17. 424–25 the noise of battle rises to the brazen sky: ὣς οἱ μὲν μάρναντο, σιδήρειος δ' ὀρυμαγδὸς / χάλκεον οὐρανὸν ἷκε δι' αἰθέρος ἀτρυγέτοιο· Here the clash of metal on metal is perhaps suggested by the twin metaphors, χαλκεὸν οὐρανόν and σιδήρειος ὀρυμαγδός.[22] Finally, in related usages, the sky is described as πολύχαλκος at *Iliad* 5. 504 and *Odyssey* 3. 2.[23] Only in the last instance is there no battle context. At *Iliad* 11. 241 the image of bronze sleep for death is particularly striking. Agamemnon's slaying of Iphidamas is considerably elaborated: in ring composition, we are first given details of the warrior's background and marriage (221–28), then the combat scene, and finally a pathetic close, which focuses on the bereaved wife (242–45). The finality of Iphidamas' encounter with Agamemnon is accentuated by the unique metaphor for his death.

15. 694–95 . . . τὸν δὲ Ζεὺς ὦσεν ὄπισθε
χειρὶ μάλα μεγάλῃ, ὤτρυνε δὲ λαὸν ἄμ' αὐτῷ.

These lines occur just before Hector takes hold of the ship of Protesilaus and calls for fire at the end of Book 15 (cf. 716–25). The action has reached a climax. The context is plainly the apogee of the glory granted to Hector by Zeus (cf. the prophecy at *Il.* 11. 192–94). Leaf (ad loc.) calls the passage an "anthropomorphic metaphor": we need not suppose that Zeus is present in person on the battlefield. He then compares *Iliad* 13. 358–60 as "the nearest parallel in Homer." But the context there is one of even battle, and seems scarcely analogous to the present situation. Here the "intervention" of Zeus may be compared to the literal intervention of Apollo at *Iliad* 16. 791–92: στῆ δ' ὄπιθεν, πλῆξεν δὲ μετάφρενον εὐρέε τ' ὦμω / χειρὶ καταπρηνεῖ, στρεφεδίνηθεν δέ οἱ ὄσσε. In view of the close narrative connection between Hector's drive to the ships and Patroclus' entrance into battle, and the thematic links that relate Hector's limited success, Patroclus' death, and Hector's mortality, these unusual passages are appropriately taken together. But there is a fine shading of differences: Apollo intervenes as a hostile god, and with immediate consequences; Zeus intervenes ostensibly as the patron of Hector, but there is something ominous about his standing behind the Trojan, pushing him on to achievements that are perhaps beyond him, and limiting his grant of glory to a brief period, which will expire at sunset.[24] There can be no doubt that Apollo is literally present in the battle in Book 16; the physical effects of his action are described. In the absence of such details, the strong presumption is that the passage at 15. 694–95 is metaphorical. The image of Zeus's intervention, with its under-

21. The simile which directly precedes this verse and compares Achilles' voice to a trumpet (219–21) is possibly to be associated with the metaphor.

22. The epithet σιδήρειος also has a variety of metaphorical usages; cf. *Il.* 22. 357, 23. 177, 24. 205 ≈ 521; *Od.* 4. 293, 5. 191, 12. 280, 15. 329 = 17. 565, 23. 172. Both χάλκεος and σιδήρειος (σιδήρεος) are applied to οὐρανός and ἦτορ.

23. Dolon is described as πολύχρυσος πολύχαλκος at *Il.* 10. 315.

24. Zeus's plan and Hector's doom are recalled shortly before our passage at 15. 610–14.

currents of ambiguity and foreboding, is placed at a major turning point in the narrative.

18. 107–10 ὡς ἔρις ἔκ τε θεῶν ἔκ τ' ἀνθρώπων ἀπόλοιτο,
καὶ χόλος, ὅς τ' ἐφέηκε πολύφρονά περ χαλεπῆναι,
ὅς τε πολὺ γλυκίων μέλιτος καταλειβομένοιο
ἀνδρῶν ἐν στήθεσσιν ἀέξεται ἠΰτε καπνός.

Achilles' words on anger occur in his meeting with Thetis. Parry compared the passage with the metaphor used of Nestor at *Iliad* 1. 249: τοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ γλώσσης μέλιτος γλυκίων ῥέεν αὐδή. He argued that the latter image was "the one active metaphor of the first *Iliad*," but found it deprived of any significant poetic effect since it recurs at Hesiod *Theogony* 83–84 and 96–97. Parry then adduced the more complex phrase of Achilles to show "clearly how little Homer felt its force, unless one should wish to make Homer mix metaphors with all the ruthlessness of an Elizabethan."[25] But the recurrence of the image at *Iliad* 1. 249 in Hesiod does not automatically deprive it of poetic effect, unless one clings rigidly to the theory that repetition of a phrase cancels its semantic force. More important, Achilles' image, far richer and more concentrated than the bare comparison of soothing speech to honey, should be appreciated for its psychological insight. The attractiveness of anger and the sweet satisfaction with which it is nursed over time fuse in the image with the notions of danger and emptiness, conveyed by the brief, internal simile ἠΰτε καπνός. The two vehicles of honey and smoke, taken together, produce a sense of clash which is in turn mitigated by the appropriateness of each separate image. As a whole, the complex description of anger is just what we might expect from a character so familiar with that emotion; the graphic images of honey and smoke, correlated by the antithesis of καταλειβομένοιο and ἀέξεται, are produced by a character of singular imagination.[26]

The last five examples of Homeric metaphor have suggested that figurative language may indeed be employed in the *Iliad* to heighten emotion or to underline the importance of a particular narrative incident. The following three analyses illustrate the poetic significance of complex or extended metaphors.

19. 221–24 αἶψά τε φυλόπιδος πέλεται κόρος ἀνθρώποισιν,
ἧς τε πλείστην μὲν καλάμην χθονὶ χαλκὸς ἔχευεν,
ἄμητος δ' ὀλίγιστος, ἐπὴν κλίνῃσι τάλαντα
Ζεύς, ὅς τ' ἀνθρώπων ταμίης πολέμοιο τέτυκται.

Odysseus' description of war as a reaper who cuts down much straw and gathers a mean harvest comprises a dense fusion of images: satiety in warfare, the bronze which scatters the straw, the poor harvest, Zeus poising his scales, the god as the steward of warfare (19. 224 = 4. 84). Leaf aptly compares the simile at *Iliad* 11. 67–71, which likens the Greeks and Trojans to reapers:

25. *Making of Homeric Verse*, p. 374.
26. Achilles' entire speech at *Il.* 18. 98–126 is rich in metaphor; cf. 102, 104, 114, 117.

οἱ δ', ὥς τ' ἀμητῆρες ἐναντίοι ἀλλήλοισιν
ὄγμον ἐλαύνωσιν ἀνδρὸς μάκαρος κατ' ἄρουραν
πυρῶν ἢ κριθῶν· τὰ δὲ δράγματα ταρφέα πίπτει·
ὣς Τρῶες καὶ Ἀχαιοὶ ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι θορόντες
δῄουν, οὐδ' ἕτεροι μνώοντ' ὀλοοῖο φόβοιο.

Yet the simile is less complex and suggestive than the passage in Book 19. The former presents one principal point of comparison, with little detail, whereas Odysseus' metaphor is far more unusual.[27] It occurs in the context of his exhortation to Achilles to allow the army time to eat before it goes into battle; the soldiers will thus be better prepared to endure hardship (cf. 19. 155–70, 225–29). Thus the images of satiety, harvest, and stewardship are aptly contrived for the context. Leaf (ad loc.) interprets Odysseus' principal metaphor to mean that hard work in battle outweighs a small reward, just as the straw in the field is greater than the grain that is harvested; therefore, the soldiers require food to be strengthened for their task. M. M. Willcock partially concurs: the thin harvest "indicates that the armies have great labor but little reward." He interprets the straw, however, as a metaphor for the bodies of the dead.[28] Willcock is surely right; the bronze (222 χαλκός) is to be understood figuratively as the weapon which slays in battle.[29] The straw (καλάμην) is thus to be interpreted as the dead; compare Odysseus' use of the word to mean an old, worn-out man, battered by sorrow (*Od.* 14. 214). The thin harvest should be equated with the men who are left alive, rather than merely with the reward of battle. Zeus's poising of the scales (223–24) always occurs in the *Iliad* in contexts of deliberation between life and death (cf. 8. 69, 16. 658, 22. 209), and Odysseus proceeds in this passage to draw a contrast between the numerous dead warriors (226) and those who escape the battle alive (230). The metaphor thus becomes more of a generalizing comment than Leaf's interpretation would suggest. Satiety in warfare (i.e., rushing to battle without proper preparations) is said to result in the grim debacle of a tiny harvest (i.e., few survivors); the antithesis of κόρος (221) and ὀλίγιστος (223) emphasizes Odysseus' pointed contrast. The repetition of ἀνθρώποισιν (221) in ἀνθρώπων (224) helps to unify the entire metaphorical statement through a type of ring composition.[30]

27. For additional comment on the simile, and on the interesting phrase ἀνδρὸς μάκαρος at *Il.* 11. 68, see C. Moulton, "Similes in the *Iliad*," *Hermes* 102 (1974): 390–91.

28. *A Companion to the "Iliad"* (Chicago, 1976), p. 219.

29. Cf. the use of αἴθωνι σιδήρῳ in the simile for the death of Simoeisius at *Il.* 4. 485.

30. With the metaphor at *Il.* 19. 221–24 one may compare Aeschylus' famous image of Ares as a gold changer, who converts men's bodies in war to the ashes held by funeral urns (*Ag.* 438–44): ὁ χρυσαμοιβὸς δ' Ἄρης σωμάτων / καὶ ταλαντοῦχος ἐν μάχῃ δορὸς / πυρωθὲν ἐξ Ἰλίου / φίλοισι πέμπει βαρὺ / ψῆγμα δυσδάκρυτον, ἀντ- / ἠνορος σποδοῦ γεμί- / ζων λέβητας εὐθέτους. [εὐθέτους Auratus: εὐθέτου FTri.]. Here, too, there is a metaphor for the presiding deity (ὁ χρυσαμοιβὸς δ' Ἄρης σωμάτων / καὶ ταλαντοῦχος ἐν μάχῃ δορός); cf. Zeus as the steward of war who poises his scales. Living men become ashes in Aeschylus' image; the passage in the *Iliad* likens them to straw cut down by bronze. There are no Aeschylean counterparts for the notions of satiety (κόρος) and harvest (ἄμητος) in the Homeric passage. It is fair to say that the verses from the *Iliad* are just as complex and rich in imagery as the lines from the *Agamemnon*. E. Fraenkel, *Aeschylus: "Agamemnon"* (Oxford, 1950), ad 438, denies any reminiscence of Homer in the Aeschylean passage; but cf. A. Sideras, *Aeschylus Homericus* (Göttingen, 1971), p. 211.

16. 745–50

ὦ πόποι, ἦ μάλ' ἐλαφρὸς ἀνήρ, ὡς ῥεῖα κυβιστᾷ.
εἰ δή που καὶ πόντῳ ἐν ἰχθυόεντι γένοιτο,
πολλοὺς ἂν κορέσειεν ἀνὴρ ὅδε τήθεα διφῶν,
νηὸς ἀποθρῴσκων, εἰ καὶ δυσπέμφελος εἴη,
ὡς νῦν ἐν πεδίῳ ἐξ ἵππων ῥεῖα κυβιστᾷ.
ἦ ῥα καὶ ἐν Τρώεσσι κυβιστητῆρες ἔασιν.

This passage, the vaunt of Patroclus over Cebriones, is the only truly extended metaphor in the *Iliad*, and resembles many of the similes in its structure. Its ironic effect, however, sets the speech apart from the similes. Patroclus' sustained pretense of discerning an acrobatic tumbler or diver in the dying Cebriones has little in common, for example, with the poet's elaborate comparison of Ajax with an acrobatic horseman at *Iliad* 15. 679–84. The speech, too, is clearly distinct from the short diver simile that precedes it at 16. 742 (ἀρνευτῆρι ἐοικώς).[31] The verb κυβιστάω is used at *Iliad* 21. 354 (of fish leaping out of the water), and the noun κυβιστητήρ recurs in literal contexts at *Iliad* 18. 605 = *Odyssey* 4. 18. Patroclus' metaphor is organized through ring composition (cf. ῥεῖα κυβιστᾷ at 745, 749); the elaboration of the diving image contains a contrast between the grim situation of the narrative and a constructive activity (here, diving for food); there is the addition of a gratuitous detail (748 εἰ καὶ δυσπέμφελος εἴη). All these features are typical of similes in the *Iliad*. But perhaps the closest analogue to the passage's tone is the heavily ironic speech of Achilles to Lycaon in Book 21.

21. 54–63

ὦ πόποι, ἦ μέγα θαῦμα τόδ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ὁρῶμαι·
ἦ μάλα δὴ Τρῶες μεγαλήτορες, οὓς περ ἔπεφνον,
αὖτις ἀναστήσονται ὑπὸ ζόφου ἠερόεντος,
οἷον δὴ καὶ ὅδ' ἦλθε φυγὼν ὑπὸ νηλεὲς ἦμαρ,
Λῆμνον ἐς ἠγαθέην πεπερημένος· οὐδέ μιν ἔσχε
πόντος ἀλὸς πολιῆς, ὁ πολέας ἀέκοντας ἐρύκει.
ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ καὶ δουρὸς ἀκωκῆς ἡμετέροιο
γεύσεται, ὄφρα ἴδωμαι ἐνὶ φρεσὶν ἠδὲ δαείω
ἦ ἄρ' ὁμῶς καὶ κεῖθεν ἐλεύσεται, ἦ μιν ἐρύξει
γῆ φυσίζοος, ἥ τε κατὰ κρατερὸν περ ἐρύκει.

No explicit metaphor is sustained here. The speech is carefully structured around the notion of "holding in check," "restraining" (59, 62, 63 ἐρύκω). Like Patroclus at *Iliad* 16. 745–50, Achilles opens with a cry of ironic surprise (ὦ πόποι): the Trojans are indeed courageous if, once slain, they can return from the dead (54–56). This is hyperbole, since Lycaon was not in fact slain, but rather sold into slavery on Lemnos by Achilles on a previous occasion. But Achilles equates him with one of the dead: now he has come back, since the sea journey has not deterred him (57–58). Let him have a taste of Achilles' spear, so that the latter may know for certain if Lycaon can perform a second miracle and come back from *there* (κεῖθεν), or if the

31. On the simile, which is employed with greater effectiveness at *Il.* 12. 385 and *Od.* 12. 413, see B. C. Fenik, *Typical Battle Scenes in the "Iliad,"* Hermes Einzelschriften, 21 (Wiesbaden, 1968), p. 215.

fertile earth will deter him and hold him in check for good (60–63). The literal "restraint" of the sea in the first half of the speech is transformed into a metaphor in the second portion: the idea is that Lycaon, once he has been killed by Achilles, may yet be struggling to "return from the earth." The grim rhetoric is enhanced by Achilles' illogical, but effective, assimilation of Lycaon to the dead in the first place (55–57 *Τρῶες . . . οὓς περ ἔπεφνον / αὖτις ἀναστήσονται ὑπὸ ζόφου ἠερόεντος, / οἷον δὴ καὶ ὅδ' ἦλθε*). The speech itself is highly metaphorical in individual phrases, for example, *ὑπὸ ζόφου ἠερόεντος, νηλεὲς ἦμαρ, δουρὸς ἀκωκῆς ἠμετέροιο γεύσεται*. But the overall conception, which is that of killing Lycaon for the second time, is a suppressed metaphor which dominates the entire passage, making all the more pathetic Lycaon's own recollection of his previous capture and ransom.[32]

Let us pass now to the issue of "fixed" metaphor. Here we will discuss a number of images that occur more than twice in the *Iliad* in either identical or slightly varied form. A fair assessment of Parry's theory—that these metaphors are deprived of meaning through repetition—may concede at the outset that certain phrases appear to lack much distinctive color and seem to have been repeated numerous times as decorative, metrical "fillers." For example, an inspection of the metaphor *ποιμένι/α λαῶν* (repeated fifty-six times, always in the adonic segment of the verse) shows that the phrase is applied to a wide variety of characters, with little discrimination. On the other hand, a recent examination of the numerous occurrences of *ἔπεα πτερόεντα* (123 times by Parry's count) has defended the phrase's vitality and the appropriateness of its placement.[33] Careful analysis of such repeated metaphors on an individual basis is called for, if we are fairly to evaluate their effectiveness as poetic devices. In particular, we should probe the relationships of a group of metaphors to variations of the same image; we must study features of context which may act to reinforce the rhetorical intensity of any given occurrence of a repeated metaphor; and we should investigate instances of "clustering," or the grouping of similar or identical metaphors within a distinct narrative segment. As illustrations of such analysis, let us consider the following passages.

11. 574 (*τά τε δοῦρα . . .*)
ἐν γαίῃ ἵσταντο, λιλαιόμενα χροὸς ἆσαι.

This phrase typifies the frequent personifications of weapons in the *Iliad*.[34] It recurs at 15. 317 and, with a slight alteration, at 21. 168. One may compare as well 21. 69–70 (*ἐγχείη . . . ἐνὶ γαίῃ / ἔστη, ἰεμένη χροὸς ἄμεναι*

32. With respect to the speech of Patroclus at *Il.* 16. 745–50, whose ironic tone resembles that of Achilles, it is interesting that the juxtaposition of death in the narrative and diving for fish in Patroclus' image is refracted at *Il.* 21. 126–27 in the vaunt of Achilles over Lycaon: Achilles says that a fish will jump to break the surface of the water as it feeds on the body of the slain Trojan (cf. *νηὸς ἀποθρῴσκων* at 16. 748 with *θρῴσκων* at 21. 126). Achilles does not employ metaphorical language here, however.

33. See Vivante, "On Homer's Winged Words," pp. 1–12.

34. For other examples, see Stanford, *Greek Metaphor*, pp. 138–39. Aristotle seems especially to have admired the vivid personifications of the battle narrative; for his comments on Homeric metaphor, see *Poet.* 1459a4, *Rhet.* 1411b31.

ἀνδρομέοιο) and a related expression, containing an even more grotesque image, at 5. 289 = 20. 78 and 22. 267 (αἵματος ἆσαι Ἄρηα ταλαύρινον πολεμιστήν). In the *Iliad*, one can have one's fill of mourning (23. 157, 24. 717) or of war (19. 402). But to speak of sating Ares with blood, or of spears eager to glut themselves with flesh, is obviously a figurative transformation of eating (cf. the literal ὄψου τ' ἄσαιμι at *Il.* 9. 489 or the grim feasting of dogs pictured at *Il.* 11. 818 and 24. 211). It is noteworthy that, although our phrase and its cognates are repeated, metaphors involving the verb ἄω come gradually to be concentrated on Achilles in the last books of the *Iliad*; compare 19. 402 (Achilles' speech to his horses), 20. 78 (his hatred for Hector), 21. 69–70 (the capture of Lycaon), 21. 168 (the encounter with Asteropaeus), 22. 267 (Achilles' refusal to treat with Hector), 23. 157 (his speech to Agamemnon). This cluster of metaphors is in turn linked with Achilles' literal abstention from food (cf. ἄω at *Il.* 19. 307) and with the themes of grief and revenge in the last books.[35] The metaphor with which we started (11. 574) must thus be viewed as part of a system, which is manipulated with increasing intensity as the narrative builds to its climax.[36]

3. 212 . . . μύθους καὶ μήδεα πᾶσιν ὑφαινον

This is a key metaphor in the *Odyssey*, although it is important in the *Iliad* as well. The literal usage of ὑφαίνω (= weave at the loom) is clear enough at *Iliad* 3. 125, 22. 440, *Odyssey* 2. 94 = 24. 129, 15. 517, 19. 139. Our metaphorical phrase never recurs exactly, but to be compared are ὑφαίνειν ἤρχετο μῆτιν (*Il.* 7. 324 = 9. 93), δόλον ἄλλον ὑφαινε (*Il.* 6. 187), μή τίς μοι ὑφαίνησιν δόλον αὖτε (*Od.* 5. 356), δόλους καὶ μῆτιν ὑφαινον (*Od.* 9. 422), μῆτιν ὑφαινον (*Od.* 4. 678; cf. *Od.* 4. 739, 13. 303, 386). Of the six Odyssean usages, four are directly concerned with Odysseus at suspenseful crises in the narrative: the landing on Scheria (5. 356), the escape from the Cyclops (9. 422), and the meeting with Athene on Ithaca (13. 303, 386). All these scenes are described in elaborate detail, and in two of them other rhetorical features combine to underline the importance of μῆτις; compare the puns at 9. 410 and 414 and the repetitions of the word or its compounds at 13. 293, 299, 311, and 382. The other two Odyssean usages occur in the narrative of the suitors' plot to kill Telemachus: the first is used of the suitors (4. 678), the second of Laertes by Penelope (4. 739). The Iliadic usages are distributed as follows: the plot of Proetus to ambush Bellerophon (6. 187), and the attempts of Nestor to counsel the Greek chiefs, first to build the wall and the ditch (7. 324), and then to send the embassy to Achilles (9. 93). The metaphor at 3. 212, in Antenor's account of Odysseus, also concerns an embassy. The point of this elaborate speech (the longest in the Teicho-

35. I am grateful here to Julia Heskel, who, in an unpublished essay entitled "Banqueting in the *Iliad:* A Study of Homeric Metaphor," has analyzed in impressive detail this group of images and its links to important narrative themes.

36. There is no reason a priori to believe that such ordering of imagery is inconsistent with the oral theory, whatever the processes of composition or the circumstances of performance. For this question and detailed discussion of the ordering of similes in the poems, see C. Moulton, *Similes in the Homeric Poems* (Göttingen, 1977), esp. pp. 13–14.

skopia) is to describe Odysseus' wondrous rhetorical powers. Although both Odysseus and Menelaus are said to "weave words and counsel" for the assembly, it is clear that Odysseus surpasses Menelaus (cf. 3. 223). Shortly before the metaphor (200), and shortly afterward (216), Odysseus is given the epithet *πολύμητις*, exclusively reserved for him in the *Odyssey* and, with but one exception, in the *Iliad* also (eighteen times).[37] On the whole, the metaphors involving *ὑφαίνω* occur at suspenseful points in the narrative of both poems, where they underscore the evolution of particularly momentous (or treacherous) plans by the characters. At *Iliad* 3. 212, the suspense inheres in the assembly's recognition of Odysseus' true powers, barely suspected from his appearance, but revealed as extraordinary when he speaks (cf. the contrast of the simile at 219, *ἀΐδρεϊ φωτὶ ἐοικώς*, with the simile at 222, *ἔπεα νιφάδεσσιν ἐοικότα χειμερίῃσιν*). The "weaving of words and counsels" results in a dramatic reversal of expectation.

4. 274–75 *τὼ δὲ κορυσσέσθην,*[5] *ἅμα δὲ νέφος εἵπετο πεζῶν.*
ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἀπὸ σκοπιῆς εἶδεν νέφος αἰπόλος ἀνήρ

The metaphor in 4. 274 is part of a remarkably flexible system. After the penthemimeral caesura, 4. 274*b* is repeated with the slight change of *μετὰ* for *ἅμα* at 23. 133*b*. At 17. 755 we find *τῶν δ' ὥς τε ψαρῶν νέφος ἔρχεται ἠὲ κολοιῶν* as the start of a simile. At 16. 66 we have *εἰ δὴ κυάνεον Τρώων*[7] *νέφος ἀμφιβέβηκε*. The second half of this expression, in turn, resembles 16. 350 (≈ *Od.* 4. 180): *πρῆσε χανών·*[3] *θανάτου δὲ μέλαν*[7] *νέφος ἀμφεκάλυψεν*. The cloud of death is virtually interchangeable with the cloud of war, except for the different syntactical requirements of the similar verse at 17. 243: *καὶ σῇ, ἐπεὶ*[3] *πολέμοιο νέφος περὶ πάντα καλύπτει*. The omission of the metaphor's second term results in a lexical variation and enjambement at 20. 417–18: *γνὺξ δ' ἔριπ' οἰμώξας,*[5] *νεφέλη δέ μιν ἀμφεκάλυψε / κυανέη, κτλ.* This expression is loosely analogous to the metaphor at 17. 591 (= 18. 22; *Od.* 24. 315): *ὣς φάτο,*[2] *τὸν δ' ἄχεος*[5] *νεφέλη ἐκάλυψε μέλαινα*. In every case, the cloud is associated with death or extreme danger. The metaphor is extended beyond the single word so often that the figurative meaning cannot be in doubt. The last three examples occur at highly emotional moments: the death of Hector's special companion Podes (cf. *Il.* 17. 575–96), the announcement of Patroclus' death to Achilles, and the point at which Laertes gives up hope for news of Odysseus.[38]

The verbs *τείνω* and *τανύω* are employed metaphorically in the *Iliad* in contexts of evenly matched battle (cf. 11. 336, 12. 436 = 15. 413, 13. 359, 14. 389, 16. 662, 20. 101.)[39] These verbs are also used of Zeus's sending of

37. The exception is at *Il.* 21. 355 *πολυμήτιος Ἡφαίστοιο*. In Antenor's speech, note the repeated emphasis on words and counsel (cf. *μήδεα πυκνά* at *Il.* 3. 208, *οὐ πολύμυθος / οὐδ' ἀφαμαρτοεπής* at *Il.* 3. 214–15); cf. Helen's reference to *μήδεα πυκνά* at *Il.* 3. 202.

38. At *Il.* 4. 274–75, the metaphor is followed by an ominous extended simile involving a cloud; the same technique appears at *Od.* 19. 205–9, where the simile of melting snow precedes the image of Penelope's cheeks "melting" (208). Cf. also *Od.* 19. 136, 263–64, and H. Fränkel, *Die homerischen Gleichnisse* (Göttingen, 1921), p. 33.

39. On 13. 359 (*πεῖραρ ἐπαλλάξαντες ἐπ' ἀμφοτέροισι τάνυσσαν*), see Bergren, *Etymology and Usage of* ΠΕΙΡΑΡ, pp. 45–57.

the whirlwind and of night (cf. *Il.* 16. 365 and 567). It is in *Iliad* 17, the single episode of the fight over Patroclus' body, that such metaphors are concentrated.

The first striking occurrences of *τανύω* are literal usages in the famous simile of the oxhide. The image is placed squarely in the center of the *Leichenkampf*, and serves as a grotesque emblem for it (17. 384–95):

> τοῖς δὲ πανημερίοις ἔριδος μέγα νεῖκος ὀρώρει
> ἀργαλέης· καμάτῳ δὲ καὶ ἱδρῷ νωλεμὲς αἰεὶ
> γούνατά τε κνῆμαί τε πόδες θ' ὑπένερθεν ἑκάστου
> χεῖρές τ' ὀφθαλμοί τε παλάσσετο μαρναμένοιιν
> ἀμφ' ἀγαθὸν θεράποντα ποδώκεος Αἰακίδαο.
> ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἀνὴρ ταύροιο βοὸς μεγάλοιο βοείην
> λαοῖσιν δώῃ τανύειν, μεθύουσαν ἀλοιφῇ·
> δεξάμενοι δ' ἄρα τοί γε διαστάντες τανύουσι
> κυκλόσ', ἄφαρ δέ τε ἰκμὰς ἔβη, δύνει δέ τ' ἀλοιφὴ
> πολλῶν ἑλκόντων, τάνυται δέ τε πᾶσα διαπρό·
> ὣς οἵ γ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα νέκυν ὀλίγῃ ἐνὶ χώρῃ
> εἵλκεον ἀμφότεροι· κτλ.

The repeated *τανύω* (390, 391, 393) is closely associated with the soldiers' dragging of the body to each side (393 *ἑλκόντων*, 395 *εἵλκεον*). The narrative proceeds to emphasize the expectations of each army, Greek and Trojan; the battle was so savage that not even Ares and Athene could have scorned it. The poet then reintroduces *τανύω*, this time in a metaphorical usage, as if to remind us of the image of the oxhide (17. 400–401):

> τοῖον Ζεὺς ἐπὶ Πατρόκλῳ ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ ἵππων
> ἤματι τῷ ἐτάνυσσε κακὸν πόνον· κτλ.

One may note the specific touches which are added to the phrase here: the mention of Patroclus' name (400) and the enjambed verse (401), with the expression *ἤματι τῷ*.

After the episode of Achilles' horses and Automedon's short *aristeia*, the poet returns to the main action with a metaphorical usage of *τείνω*; this expression, too, is fuller than usual (17. 543–44):

> ἂψ δ' ἐπὶ Πατρόκλῳ τέτατο κρατερὴ ὑσμίνη
> ἀργαλέη πολύδακρυς, κτλ.

Shortly after these verses, Athene's descent to the battlefield to stir up Menelaus is described in an unusual simile, where *τανύω* is employed for Zeus's "stretching" of the rainbow (17. 547–52):

> ἠΰτε πορφυρέην ἶριν θνητοῖσι τανύσσῃ
> Ζεὺς ἐξ οὐρανόθεν, τέρας ἔμμεναι ἢ πολέμοιο,
> ἢ καὶ χειμῶνος δυσθαλπέος, ὅς ῥά τε ἔργων
> ἀνθρώπους ἀνέπαυσεν ἐπὶ χθονί, μῆλα δὲ κήδει,
> ὣς ἡ πορφυρέῃ νεφέλῃ πυκάσασα ἑ αὐτὴν
> δύσετ' Ἀχαιῶν ἔθνος, ἔγειρε δὲ φῶτα ἕκαστον.

The notion of Zeus extending the rainbow from the sky may be compared to his sending of night at *Iliad* 16. 567 and his creation of the tempest at *Iliad* 16. 365. But, as commentators have noticed, there is a curious merging in the simile of image and narrative reality; since Athene wraps herself in the purple cloud (17. 551), her journey to earth is associated with a physical transformation into a rainbow, before she takes on her disguise as Phoenix.[40] The ominous *νεφέλη* at 551 is to be noted within the context of Books 16 and 17, where there is a strikingly effective interaction between literal clouds or darkness and cloud imagery.[41] The passage is thus particularly suggestive: the simile itself becomes an omen of evil in the narrative, associated with the prominent cloud imagery of the episode (cf. 17. 243, 591, and 755 for metaphorical clouds, and 17. 269, 368, 594, 645 for literal clouds or mist), and also linked through *τανύω* with the motif of the stretching of battle at 543–44.[42]

The final occurrence of the metaphor in Book 17 comes at the point when Menelaus and Meriones lift the body of Patroclus: a furious battle ensues. Here too the passage is immediately followed by a simile, although there is no connection of motifs (17. 735–37):

> *ὣς οἵ γ' ἐμμεμαῶτε νέκυν φέρον ἐκ πολέμοιο*
> *νῆας ἐπὶ γλαφυράς· ἐπὶ δὲ πτόλεμος τέτατό σφιν*
> *ἄγριος ἠΰτε πῦρ, κτλ.*

It is noteworthy that all the metaphorical usages of *τείνω/τανύω* in Book 17 occur in the second half of the episode, after the unsuccessful attempts of Menelaus and Ajax to defend the body. Perhaps the poet wished to reserve the intensity of evenly matched battle on a general scale for the climactic stages of his long narrative of the *Leichenkampf*.[43] The initial confrontations of Menelaus with Euphorbus, and of Ajax with Hector and the Trojans, give way to a more general battle scene about the midpoint of the episode; compare the speeches of anonymous warriors at 415 and 421. It is interesting, too, that the literal usages of *τανύω* occur first—in the context of the oxhide simile. That unusual image conditions our response to the ensuing metaphors: each recurrence of the phrase for the stretching of battle reinforces the grotesque, literal struggle on the battlefield for the possession of Patroclus' corpse.[44] Thus this particular metaphor, closely

40. Cf. the simile at *Il.* 4. 75–79, where Athene appears to be transformed into a shooting star, also a *τέρας* for mortals, before she completes her mission to earth in the guise of Laodocus (4. 86–88). On both passages, see Fenik, *Battle Scenes*, pp. 182–83.

41. For a summary analysis, see Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition*, pp. 151–53.

42. A similar connection is to be observed in Book 16; note that Zeus's sending of night at 567 (*νύκτ' ὀλοὴν τάνυσε*) and his "stretching of strife" at 662 (*ἔριδα κρατερὴν ἐτάνυσσε*) both occur within the context of a *Leichenkampf*, this time the struggle over Sarpedon.

43. Indeed, at the culmination of the episode (17. 722–61) the narrative is virtually recounted through the imagery of five full similes and their applications; see Moulton, *Similes in the Homeric Poems*, pp. 75–76.

44. This is not tantamount to asserting with Stanford (*Greek Metaphor*, p. 135) that simile "clarifies" metaphor. Both the oxhide simile at 17. 389–93 and the metaphor for the stretching of labor that follows it at 400–401 are equally intelligible on their own terms; the close juxtaposition serves to make each image more powerful. Such reinforcement is also the case in the juxtaposition of the metaphor at 543 with the simile at 547 (*τείνω/τανύω* common to both passages); but the principal vehicle of the second passage, the rainbow, differs in content from the metaphor. Another

allied to formulaic phrases in other passages of the *Iliad*, acquires considerable poetic force in Book 17. Through repetition, slight variation, and skillful placement, the poet is able to employ metaphor for a powerful, sustained effect.[45] At least in this instance, neither repetition nor formulaic composition seems to have deprived a metaphor of meaning. Indeed, these factors, combined with the concentration of an image in a particularly appropriate context, contribute to the cumulative force of a single metaphor.

The examples and discussions in this essay are intended to convey the range and variety of Homeric metaphor, and also to respond to the contentions and theories that have tended to dismiss its significance in the epics. Much remains to be done, and the analysis here can only claim to be a prolegomenon. Specifically, as our insights into Homeric vocabulary become more precise, we need detailed exploration of problematic phrases, for example, μέλπεσθαι Ἄρηϊ (*Il.* 7. 241) or ἐντυπὰς ἐν χλαίνῃ (*Il.* 24. 163), which can be apprehended as striking images but which are decidedly curious in meaning.[46] We surely stand in need of more discussion of the "fixed" metaphors and their variants. And a review of the distribution of images, with a comprehensive list, would aid further analysis considerably. How does the poet of the *Iliad* apportion metaphors among speeches and narrative? And does the distribution in speeches indicate significant differences in the characterization of the heroes? The latter question is particularly interesting, given the evidence that other poetic devices (e.g., similes, apostrophe) are occasionally employed to individualize character in both poems.[47] Finally, a comparison of metaphor in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in which the role and characteristics of similes display important differences, would be informative. For the present, the evidence assembled here should confirm that metaphor is a vital, significant part of the language of Homer.[48]

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variation of the technique appears in the relationship of metaphor at 736 with simile at 737–39. Here, two images in rapid succession emphasize the ferocity of the battle, and thus may be said to reinforce each other; but there is no overlap whatever between them in content or diction.

45. One may compare the metaphors with ἄω used of Achilles; cf. p. 289 on *Il.* 11. 574.

46. A recent example is Bergren's *The Etymology and Usage of* ΠΕΙΡΑΡ *in Early Greek Poetry*.

47. On the similes used, e.g., of Menelaus, see Fenik, *Battle Scenes*, p. 161. For apostrophe, see A. Parry, "Language and Characterization in Homer," *HSCP* 76 (1972): 1–22, esp. 9–21. With regard to metaphor in speeches, one might compare, e.g., Antinous and Eurymachus in the *Odyssey*. That the characters are doublets, and yet subtly individualized in a variety of ways, has been demonstrated by B. Fenik, *Studies in the "Odyssey,"* Hermes Einzelschriften, 30 (Wiesbaden, 1974), pp. 198–205. Antinous speaks more often than his comrade (twenty-three speeches for 212 lines vs. Eurymachus' thirteen speeches for 126 lines). Yet even allowing for this disparity, there is a wide discrepancy in metaphorical content between their speeches: Antinous is made to employ nineteen images, with two unique expressions (cf. *Od.* 16. 389, 17. 448), whereas Eurymachus speaks only three metaphors, all of them with many parallels. The significance of this differentiation is probably related to the typical conduct of the two chief suitors. In the main, Eurymachus is deceptively friendly, hypocritical, and smooth; Antinous, on the other hand, is direct, boastful, violent: his language is exaggerated and colorful (cf. *Od.* 16. 379, 17. 377, 446, 448, 18. 79, 21. 88, 299, 302).

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