FORMULA AND FORMULAIC: SOME EVIDENCE FROM THE HOMERIC HYMNS

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In view of the rapid expansion of Homeric formulaic studies in recent years, the absence of a systematic formulaic analysis of the *Homeric Hymns* is perhaps surprising.[1] The reason, however, is not difficult to discover: the brevity of even the *Hymns* to Demeter, Apollo, Hermes, and Aphrodite prevents the type of quantitative analysis normally applied to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.[2] My first aim, therefore, in this paper is to suggest criteria for assessing the orality of shorter pieces of early Greek hexameter poetry such as the *Hymns*, the fragments of the Cyclic epics, or even, for that matter, individual books or passages of Homer. My proposition will be that the mark of oral composition in such shorter pieces is not simply the verbatim repetition of words and phrases which are formular in Homer—for this exercise is clearly within the scope of the literate imitator—but rather the composer's facility in handling the various types of formula modification. Secondly I shall argue that the variations in frequency of these modifications in the works examined here may reflect individual stylistic traits in their composers.

The proposition originated in a consideration of the work of J. A. Notopoulos on this topic, especially his paper "The *Homeric Hymns* as Oral Poetry," *AJP* 83 (1962) 337–368, and more particularly the response to it of G. S. Kirk in "Formular Language and Oral Quality," *YCS* 20 (1966) 153–174. Kirk rightly argued against the validity of quantitative formulaic analysis, of the type employed by Notopoulos, in differentiating between authentic oral compositions and literary imitations in the style of oral poetry. Other publications, most notably those of Lord and Minton,[3] have countered Kirk's objections to quantitative analysis but, I believe, one major stumbling block remains: the very nature of the analysis has in practice served to limit the number of lines which may be treated.[4] As an alternative method, therefore, I propose the analysis

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[1]This paper contains material originally presented in my doctoral dissertation, *Formulaic Composition in the Homeric Hymns*. It is with pleasure that I acknowledge my debt to Professor R. A. Crossland and Dr J. B. Hainsworth (whose book *The Flexibility of the Homeric Formula* [Oxford 1968] is referred to by its author's name only).

[2]As for example in Milman Parry, "Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Verse-Making: 1. Homer and Homeric Style," *HSCP* 41 (1930) 118–121; cf. A. B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Mass. 1960) 143.

[3]A. B. Lord, "Homer as Oral Poet," *HSCP* 72 (1968) 1–46; W. W. Minton, "Frequency and Structuring of Traditional Formulas in Hesiod's *Theogony*," *HSCP* 79 (1975) 25–54.

[4]For example, Parry (above, note 2) treated *Iliad* 1. 1–25 and *Odyssey* 1. 1–25.

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of all the lines of a given poem, but of only one element of the diction within those lines, namely the common noun + epithet word-groups (CN–E).[5] The virtue of this method will be that, in conclusion, we may state as a percentage figure how much of one element of the diction of a particular poem is formula, how much formulaic expression (i.e., analogical formula), and how much non-formulaic; in other words we shall have a relevant, if limited, quantitative formulaic analysis. It should perhaps be added that in practice this type of analysis is no more difficult to conduct than the Parry-Lord type.

Besides the use of formular phraseology, Kirk recognized signs of true oral composition in "the observation of formular economy, the naturalness of formular extension and articulation, and the preservation of traditional details of rhythm and enjambment."[6] An essential weakness in this proposition, which Kirk himself readily admitted, is the obvious subjectivity involved in any assessment of "the naturalness of formular extension and articulation." Moreover, in the case of works as short as the *Hymns* the paucity of material available precludes any meaningful assessment of their composers' "observation of formular economy."[7] It seems possible, however, that greater objectivity, in the form of at least rough quantification, may be achieved in seeking evidence of "the preservation of traditional details of rhythm and enjambment."[8] It is of course true, as O'Neill and Porter showed,[9] that certain details of rhythm are to be found in Greek hexameter verse of all periods; those details which will be quantified here, however, may be shown to be a basic feature of the oral art, or rather, of Homer's art. The observation of the same details in another work would, I believe, increase the likelihood of identity of genre between that work and Homer.

This suggestion owes much to J. B. Hainsworth's *The Flexibility of the Homeric Formula* (Oxford 1968). He demonstrated that, far from the diction being entirely subject to sentence patterns, it was possible for Homer to move word-groups to alternative positions in the verse, to modify them for example by inversion, to expand them, and even to separate their elements, without altering their identity as word-groups. This concept of the flexibility of the CN–E should be seen as complemen-

[5]The use of this element will allow comparison with the findings from Homer in Hainsworth.

[6]Kirk 174.

[7]For the application of Kirk's criteria in the case of Hesiod, see G. P. Edwards, *The Language of Hesiod in its Traditional Context* (Oxford 1971).

[8]In fact in this paper I shall limit myself to the traditional details of rhythm involved in formula modification, since enjambment is a sufficiently important test to warrant a separate study; see B. Peabody, *The Winged Word* (Albany 1975) 125–143.

[9]E. G. O'Neill, "The Localization of Metrical Word-types in the Greek Hexameter," *YCS* 8 (1942) 103–178; H. N. Porter, "The Early Greek Hexameter," *YCS* 12 (1951) 1–63.

tary to the traditional view of formulae and, in particular, formulaic expressions: faced at the moment of composition by a difficulty in the use of a certain formula, Homer did not necessarily abandon it in favour of another or the creation of another by analogy; on occasion he chose instead to mutate it. This feature was an integral part of Homer's compositional technique and is quantifiable; the identification of the various types of mutation in the *Hymns*, their frequency, and the "traditional details of rhythm" which facilitated them, may make a significant contribution to an assessment of the orality of the *Hymns*.

By the criteria outlined above I hope to demonstrate that the composers of the *Hymns* worked within the same genre as Homer. Working from the premise that this genre was oral composition, I then wish to suggest that the mutation of CN–E word-groups may represent that feature which we associate with literary, but not oral, composers, namely the desire for variation at the level of diction for artistic effect. As will become obvious, this is not a proposition which lends itself to proof; however, as the various types of mutation are examined below, it will, I believe, become equally obvious that this is at least a likely explanation of the one constant feature in each of these types, namely that the *Hymns* employ the same mutations as Homer but on a considerably greater scale.

My analysis of the CN–E of the four long *Hymns*—to Demeter, Apollo, Hermes, and Aphrodite—is conducted under four sub-headings: (a) the quantity of formulaic diction among the CN–E, (b) the mobility of CN–E, (c) the separation of CN–E, (d) the expansion of CN–E. In addition I include, for the purpose of a control sample, one passage from the *Iliad* and one from the *Odyssey* of comparable length.[10]

(a) The quantity of formulaic diction among the CN–E

For the purpose of identifying formulaic diction under this heading I regard as a "formula" any common noun with epithet juxtaposed which is repeated at least once; a "formulaic expression" I define as a common noun with epithet juxtaposed which is not found repeated but which has one element, either noun or epithet, in common with another CN–E of the same metrical pattern. In assessing whether a particular word-group in the *Hymns* is a formula, a formulaic expression, or non-formulaic, I have sought evidence of repetition not merely within the *Hymns* themselves, but also in Homer and Hesiod.[11] In Table A I give the total amount

[10]Namely *Iliad* 1. 176–611 and *Odyssey* 2. 1–434.

[11]As will become evident shortly, I am well aware of the dangers in regarding "the tradition" as a type of monolith on which all composers drew according to their needs. This view ignores the possibility of variations between the personal store of favoured formulae developed over the years by individual composers. There seems, however, at the moment no alternative to using Homer and Hesiod for comparative purposes: the *Hymns* are simply too short to allow a strictly internal analysis.

of formulaic diction (i.e., formulae + formulaic expressions) in the different works, and I express this amount as a percentage of the total unmutated CN–E.

TABLE A

	Total CN–E	Formulaic Diction (%)
Demeter	139	93.5
Apollo	146	94.5
Hermes	189	86.7
Aphrodite	90	94.4
Iliad	73	94.5
Odyssey	94	93.6

On the sole basis of these figures for formulaic density, we would be forced to conclude that the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the four long *Hymns* were products of the same genre, and to admit that this genre was oral composition, provided we were prepared to accept the equation of formulaic with traditional and oral. If, however, the two types of CN–E are listed separately, the apparent uniformity between the *Hymns* and the two sections of Homer disappears.[12] In Table B I list the number of formulae— each formula being counted only once—and formulaic expressions in each of the works examined, and in each case I express these figures as a percentage of the total unmutated CN–E in that work.

TABLE B

	Formulae	%	Form. Expr.	%	Non-form. Diction	%
Demeter	84	60.4	46	33.1	9	6.5
Apollo	104	71.2	34	23.3	8	5.5
Hermes	101	53.4	63	33.3	25	13.3
Aphrodite	58	64.4	27	30.0	5	5.6
Iliad	59	80.8	10	13.7	4	5.5
Odyssey	77	81.9	11	11.7	6	6.4

Three features are worth noting in this table: the figures for the two passages of Homer are remarkably alike; there are considerable differences between the figures for the *Hymns* and those for the passages of Homer; the figures for the *Hymns* themselves show no real consistency—in particular one may note the difference between *Apollo* and *Hermes*.

At least three explanations are possible for the difference in the for-

[12]In *HSCP* 72 (1968) 24, Lord summarizes his view of formulaic density as a criterion of orality with the opinion that a work containing up to 60% formula or formulaic with up to 25% straight formula is clearly literary. By this criterion even the revised figures in Table B below reveal the *Hymns* as oral.

mulaic texture of the CN–E in the *Hymns* and the two passages of Homer. First, the figures might be taken to show that the *Hymns* and the Homeric epics were not products of the same genre of composition. In defence of this one could argue that the comparatively high percentage of formulaic expressions in the *Hymns* suggests originality and creative activity at the level of diction uncharacteristic of composers working within an oral tradition. Although the view that the language of Homer is wholly traditional has been modified, there nevertheless endures the basic assumption that the true oral composer abides as far as possible by the tradition, and has recourse but rarely to the creation of new expressions; and indeed the figures above for the two passages of Homer seem to point in this direction. Secondly, it might be argued that the figures demonstrate that, even if the *Hymns* and the two epics were products of the same oral genre, there are considerable variations in the degree of reliance placed by their composers upon the tradition: they could, and did, exercise more choice in their use of traditional formulae and in their *ad hoc* creation of new expressions than has hitherto been accepted.

Both of these propositions depend upon the acceptance of one important premise, namely, that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* represent "the tradition;" that is, that "the tradition" was a composite whole from which all composers drew according to their needs but which, by accident of survival, is enshrined mainly in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It was a tacit acceptance of this premise which allowed the use of Homer for comparative purposes in Notopoulos',[13] and in my own, analysis of the *Hymns*. A. B. Lord,[14] however, has suggested that, if we do not accept it, the appearance of an abnormal formulaic usage in, for example, the *Hymns* does not prove that usage untraditional, merely un-Homeric. A third proposition may therefore be suggested: that the composers of the *Hymns*, like all other composers (of whom Homer was but one), had their own store of favoured diction, as it were their own "personal tradition." According to this model of composition, in the case of a CN–E in one of the *Hymns* which could not be classified as a formula because no other occurrences of it could be discovered but which, by deft use of the concordances, could be shown to share one of its elements with another CN–E of the same shape, we would not regard this as a new formulaic expression created by analogy to a member of the monolithic tradition but rather as one of the repertory of phrases of the composer of that *Hymn* which by accident he found no other occasion to employ.[15] Most certainly there would be points where all the various "personal traditions" met, where all composers would employ the same CN–E to express the same idea, and hence we may also refer to the "common tradition."

[13]Above, 1.
[14]*HSCP* 72 (1968) 29 ff.
[15]This third proposition is in part a statement of the limitations of formulaic analysis

None of these alternatives lends itself to proof, but at the very least we may say with certainty that the simple quantification of Homeric diction in a non-Homeric poem does not *per se* establish the orality of that poem. The evidence above supports the view of Kirk that, although formulaic density will certainly be observed in an oral composition, we must look further than this. It seems likely that the figures for the *Hymns* and Homer support the third explanation above, the concept of each composer's having evolved his own personal store of favoured diction.[16] This concept at least has the virtue of plausibility, in that it restores to the various composers the vital element of individuality, and removes the rather naïve picture of them as unoriginal, almost unthinking, memorizers of a vast tradition of oral poetic diction. Further support for this proposition may perhaps be gleaned from the analogy of modern oral composition. There is, for example, Lord's observation from his field-work in Yugoslavia: "Thus the singer has scope for his creative powers on the formula level. And because the basic core of formulas is not necessarily the same even for singers from the same district or who have learned from the same man, these experiments provide us with a means of distinguishing individual styles among singers."[17]

(b) The mobility of CN–E

A word-group is normally associated with a particular metrical shape and a particular position in the hexameter. There are often grave difficulties, both metrical and contextual, standing in the way of any attempt to move an expression to a position other than that which it traditionally occupies, its "primary position." Nevertheless, for a variety of reasons it sometimes proves necessary to overcome such restrictions: the metrical shape of the expression itself may have altered for some reason, most commonly as a result of declension; or the primary position of the expression may already be occupied by some other expression which is itself

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which were seen by Parry himself: "If we had even twice as much of Homer's poetry as we have, the proportions between the repeated expressions, the closer types of formulas, and the more general types, would be much changed, and we should very often find that Homer was using a formula a second time where, as far as our evidence goes, he is only using a formula which is like another" (*HSCP* 41 [1930] 133–134). Clearly this observation is even more appropriate to the limited material from the *Hymns*.

[16]There is of course a very real circularity in the argument at this point: if, as I wish to argue, present methods of analysis—with the probable exception of the enjambment test—are incapable of establishing the orality of the *Hymns*, it is hardly valid to use the *Hymns* as evidence of a fundamental aspect of oral technique. My defence is that I do accept that the *Hymns* are oral compositions and that in the following sub-sections I hope to present reliable criteria for their identification as such.

[17]A. B. Lord, "Homer's Originality: Oral Dictated Texts," *TAPA* 84 (1953) 127.

primary there. An example of this latter may be taken from the *Hymns*:

Herm. 32   ἀσπασίη προφανεῖσα· πόθεν τόδε καλὸν ἄθυρμα

Dem. 16   καλὸν ἄθυρμα λαβεῖν· χάνε δὲ χθὼν εὐρυάγυια.

In *Demeter* 16 the final two feet of the verse, where the composer would normally expect to place καλὸν ἄθυρμα,[18] are occupied by the epithet εὐρυάγυια. There can be little doubt that this epithet is occupying its primary position since, including its use in the accusative, it is found there eleven times in the Homeric corpus against only twice elsewhere. It thus appears that it was under the constraint of the use of the epithet in this position that the composer of *Demeter* opted to move the CN–E καλὸν ἄθυρμα to the beginning of the line.

All the examples of mobility by definition involve formulae, since in every case there must be at least one example of the CN–E in its assumed primary position, and at least one example in some other position. Four categories of mobile expressions suggest themselves:

(i) CN–E which are mobile without alteration either of constituent parts or shape. An example of this very common type may be seen in καλὸν ἄθυρμα discussed above.

(ii) CN–E which are mobile as a result of some modification, such as elision or inversion of the elements. *Aphrodite* 28 supplies an example with both of these modifications:

παρθένος ἔσσεσθαι πάντ' ἤματα, δῖα θεάων.

In this case the primary expression is ἤματα πάντα, with its primary position in the last two feet of the verse; on this occasion the position is occupied by δῖα θεάων, which is itself primary there; the need to move ἤματα πάντα caused first its inversion, and then the elision of the final syllable of the epithet.

(iii) CN–E which are mobile as a result of declension. This type is well illustrated by *Aphrodite* 82:

παρθένῳ ἀδμήτῃ μέγεθος καὶ εἶδος ὁμοίη.

Here the primary expression is clearly the nominative παρθένος ἀδμής at the verse end; thus on this occasion the composer was compelled to move the CN–E by the change in its shape caused by its declension into the dative case.

(iv) CN–E which are mobile as a result of both modification and declension. The model for this type may be taken from *Hermes* 290:

ἐκ λίκνου κατάβαινε μελαίνης νυκτὸς ἑταῖρε.

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[18]Although the CN–E is not in fact repeated in this position, one may nevertheless be reasonably sure that this was its primary position—see E. G. O'Neill (above, n. 9) 148.

The primary expression is νυκτα (—ι) μέλαιναν (—η), with a primary
position in the last two feet; this position obviously was of no use when
the CN–E was declined into the genitive case and so the composer modi-
fied, by inversion, an already modified word-group.

   In Table C below is listed the number of examples in each of these four
categories in the six works under consideration. In addition the number
of mobile CN–E in each work is given as a total, and this figure is also
expressed in terms of "scatter," i.e., the number of verses per occurrence.
In view of the differences in length of the various works treated, the
"scatter" column is clearly the more reliable one in determining the fre-
quency of a particular mutation.

<div align="center">TABLE C</div>

	i	ii	iii	iv	Total	Scatter
Demeter	6	1	2	5	14	35.4
Apollo	13	6	4	6	29	18.8
Hermes	13	2	8	5	28	20.7
Aphrodite	14	4	7	2	27	10.8
Iliad	6	2	2	3	13	33.4
Odyssey	11	1	4	1	17	25.5

The first point to make about this table is at the same time the most ob-
vious and the most fundamental—that CN–E in the *Hymns* are mobile,
that is, in this type of mutation at least, they display the same flexibility
as those in Homer. It is clear from the figures for scatter, however, that
there are considerable variations in the frequency with which the various
composers employed this type of mutation. It is equally clear that in
attempting to explain these variations we should reject at the outset any
"separatist" viewpoint which might regard the figures as criteria for
chronological ordering: the figure for *Demeter* obviously opposes any such
suggestion. At least two feasible explanations may be suggested. In the
first place, the greater incidence of mobility in *Aphrodite*, *Apollo*, and
Hermes might indicate less firm control of the diction by their composers
(i.e., inferiority as singers); or secondly, it might be argued that mobility
was a feature of oral style, and that the frequency of its occurrence in a
composition was dependent upon the composer's artistic tastes. In either
case the importance is the emphasis placed upon individuality: in the
former explanation the individual's failings, in the latter the individual's
tastes. As stated at the outset, I incline to the second explanation, al-
though in no way denying the validity of the first.

   A second point of importance in Table C lies beneath the surface
appearance of these figures: the direction of mobility in the *Hymns* is

generally the same as in Homer. For example in the case of type (i), mobility is most common in CN–E shaped – ⌣ ⌣ – ⌣ and normally placed at the verse end: 19 of the examples from the *Hymns* are shaped thus, 2 from the *Iliad*, and 1 from the *Odyssey*. The figures for the direction of movement of these away from the verse end are striking (the three positions which are receptive to this shape are designated by the feet which they occupy):

	1st–2nd	2nd–3rd	4th–5th
Hymns	2	10	7
Iliad		2	
Odyssey		1	

These figures clearly correlate with those of Hainsworth (50) for this type in Homer, in stressing 2nd–3rd and 4th–5th as the favoured positions to which formulae are moved, with the former being rather more popular.

If it is necessary to establish further the parallels with Hainsworth's results, we may note the figures for another of the shorter shapes, ⌣ ⌣ – ⌣, which is the only other category in which the figures are large enough to be of any significance. Two positions are most receptive to CN–E of this shape, 2nd–3rd and 5th–6th: of the total of 10 examples in the *Hymns*, 1 in the *Iliad*, and 5 in the *Odyssey*, all except one of the examples from the *Odyssey* are found in these positions. Again the figures correlate with Hainsworth's (54), although the popularity of position 4th–5th in Homer is not borne out by the *Hymns*. It would appear that the technique which underlies mobility in the *Hymns* is the same as in Homer.

(c) The separation of CN–E

All separated CN–E from the *Hymns* and the selected passages of Homer may be divided into four categories, according to the nature of the intrusive word(s):

(i) Separation by one or more words, other than of the type in ii–iv below.

(ii) Separation by a preposition.

(iii) Separation by a connective.

(iv) The exceptional case in which a CN–E is separated over the verse end.

In Table D below is listed the number of examples in each of these four categories in the six works examined, in addition to the total number of separated CN–E in each work, which is presented also in terms of scatter. As in the case of mobility, it is obviously to the scatter column that we shall look for evidence of frequency of occurrence.

TABLE D

	i	ii	iii	iv	Total	Scatter
Demeter	46	18	7	10	81	6.1
Apollo	33	17	12	13	75	7.3
Hermes	57	17	9	20	103	5.6
Aphrodite	24	13	13	11	61	4.8
Iliad	18	6	2	8	34	12.8
Odyssey	14	10	1	10	35	12.4

Before considering this table, two points must be made about its contents. First, I have included all separated CN–E, and have not limited myself to those which are demonstrably formulae. The reason is, once again, the brevity of the works examined: limitation of the material to the formular element would produce too few examples to make an identification of the phrase patterns involved in separation. Secondly, in some of the expressions, for example, τέγεος πύκα ποιητοῖο, the intrusive word is an integral part of the word-group and in these cases we are not, strictly speaking, dealing with separation of the elements. This is a minor, but inevitable, consequence of the decision to include in this section all common noun + epithet groups which contain an intrusive element. Furthermore I would argue that it in no way vitiates my results since I have applied the same criteria to the passages of Homer as to the *Hymns*.

With regard to the figures for the *Hymns*, we should first ask to what extent might the presence of separated CN–E be a result of imitation of Homer, i.e., how many of these CN–E in their mutated form are repeated verbatim, or with only minimal variation, in Homer? To answer this question category (iv), separation by the verse end, should be discounted as being far removed in technique from the other three types.[19] In categories (i), (ii), and (iii) I find a total of 7 "Homeric" separations out of 71 in *Demeter*,[20] that is, 9.9%; 15 out of 62 in *Apollo*,[21] that is, 24.2%; 3 out of 83 in *Hermes*,[22] that is, 3.6%; and 9 out of 50 in *Aphrodite*,[23] that is, 18.0%. These figures, although by no means small in the case of *Apollo*

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[19]Below, 12.

[20](i) τέγεος πύκα ποιητοῖο, φίλον τετιημένη ἦτορ, θεῶν μεθ' ὁμήγυριν ἄλλων, ἐῷ ἐγκάτθετο κόλπῳ. (ii) χερσὶν ἄμ ἄμφω, αἰθέρος ἐκ δίης. (iii) αἰπύ τε τεῖχος.

[21](i) πόλεις εὖ ναιεταώσας, θεῶν μεθ' ὁμήγυριν ἄλλων, φρεσὶ βάλλεο σῇσι, ἀνέρι εἰδόμενος αἰζηῷ, κατειβόμενον Στυγὸς ὕδωρ. (ii) ἐϋδμητον περὶ βωμόν, τελεσφόρον εἰς ἐνιαυτόν, πάντας ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους, θοὴν ἀνὰ νῆ', θοῇ παρὰ νηὶ, θοῆς ἐπὶ νηὸς, ὃν κατὰ θυμόν, ἧσιν ἐνὶ φρεσί. (iii) πᾶσαί τε θέαιναι, πάντες τε θεοί.

[22](i) βοῶν γένος εὐρυμετώπων, δόμους εὖ ναιετάοντας. (ii) νύκτα δι' ὀρφναίην.

[23](i) θεοὺς ἐπενήνοθεν αἰὲν ἐόντας, κρατερὴ δέ μοι ἔπλετ' ἀνάγκη, θύρας ἐπέθηκε φαεινάς, ἀγλαὰ δέχθαι ἄποινα, ἀρίστη φαίνετο βουλή. (ii) χρυσέου ἐκ κρητῆρος, ὃν διὰ κάλλος. (iii) χαροποί τε λέοντες, πατρί τε σῷ.

and *Aphrodite*, certainly rule out any possibility that the incidence of this type of mutation in the *Hymns* is explicable merely in terms of imitation of Homeric diction. The "Total" figures in Table D show that separation has a very real presence in the *Hymns*, yet only a small proportion of the examples is shared with the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

If these figures are divorced from the concept of imitation of, or dependence on, Homer, and are viewed rather as evidence of the composers' use of traditional diction, a relative order of the observance of the tradition is established: *Apollo, Aphrodite, Demeter, Hermes*. It is interesting to compare this sequence with two others, derived from the observation of quite independent phenomena. In their edition of the Homeric Hymns (Oxford 1963), T. W. Allen, W. R. Halliday, and E. E. Sikes, by observing the ratio of observances of the digamma to neglects, established the relative order of age of the *Hymns* as *Apollo, Aphrodite, Demeter, Hermes* (cv). In "Notes on the writing of early Greek poetry," *Glotta* 38 (1960), T. B. L. Webster identified a similar relative order by examining the occurrence of certain late linguistic features in Homer and the *Hymns*: he concluded that *Aphrodite, Apollo*, and *Demeter* were probably composed in the eighth century and considerably earlier than *Hermes*.[24] In view of this rough statement of chronology, it is tempting to regard the figures for the relative density of "Homeric" separations in the *Hymns* also as evidence of a chronological sequence, in that the earlier compositions contain many more traditional mutated CN–E than the later *Hermes*. However, as in the case of formulaic expressions earlier, this proposition is dependent upon the equation of un-Homeric with untraditional, and once again illustrates the drawback of using Homer's diction for comparative purposes.

A number of points suggest themselves from the figures in Table D. First, there is the obvious fact that separation does occur in the *Hymns* and, to judge from the scatter column, on a considerably greater scale than in the two passages of Homer. We may also note that in these two latter the density of CN–E separation is almost identical. The situation is the same as that observed in the case of mobility: the flexibility which may be demonstrated to be a feature of Homer's technique is also in evidence in the *Hymns* and constitutes a more common feature there than in Homer. Once again the suggestion, which in the case of a literary composer would be almost inevitable, here appears at least feasible, that we are faced by an individual stylistic trait.

It is, however, beneath the surface of the figures that more conclusive evidence of identity of technique should be sought, in the fixed metrical patterns which facilitated this type of mutation. In 128 of the total of 155

[24]Webster 252.

examples of ordinary separation in the *Hymns*,[25] i.e., category (i) in Table
D, the separation is based on an element at one of the two extremities of
the line; likewise, in the sample of the *Iliad*, 16 of the total of 18 examples
are thus based, in the sample of the *Odyssey*, 10 of the total of 14. The
model of separation may thus be established: one element of the expres-
sion was normally retained at the beginning or end of the verse, or was
brought to that position, while the other element was moved backwards
or forwards along the line to accommodate the intrusion.[26] This process
normally took place according to a number of established metrical pat-
terns: we may instance the case of separations based on an element shaped
$- \smile \smile - -$ at the verse end. This type accounts for 28 of the examples of
ordinary separation in the *Hymns*; the majority of these subscribe to
only two patterns, in which the CN–E is shaped either $\underline{}\underline{} - (\smile) \ldots - \smile\smile$
$- \underline{\underline{}}$ (14 examples in the *Hymns*) or $\smile - (\smile) \ldots - \smile\smile - \underline{\underline{}}$ (8 examples in
the *Hymns*). Within this framework intrusions of two shapes are found:
$\underline{\underline{\smile}}$ which moves the expression back to the third foot, e.g., βοῶν κλοπὸν
ὑμετεράων (*Hermes* 276), and $\underline{\underline{\smile}} - \smile\smile$ which moves it back to the second
foot, e.g., μύθοισιν ἀμείβετο κερδαλέοισι (*Hermes* 162 = 260). The material
from the samples of Homer is meagre in this, as in every other, type of
mutation; however, the three examples from the *Iliad* and the one from
the *Odyssey* conform to identical patterns. Similarly in the case of CN–E
separation by a preposition or a connective, the mutation normally took
place along fixed metrical lines. We may cite the example of separation
by a preposition based on an element shaped $- \smile$ at the verse beginning,
with 14 examples in the *Hymns* and 2 each in the samples of the *Iliad*
and the *Odyssey*. Only two patterns account for all these occurrences:
either an expression shaped $- \smile \ldots - \smile\smile - (\smile)$ is separated by a preposi-
tion $\smile$, e.g. ἄντρον ἐς ἠερόεν (*Hermes* 234), or an expression shaped $- \smile \ldots$
$- - (\smile)$is separated by a preposition $\smile -$, e.g., χῶρον ἀνὰ κρατερὸν (*Hermes*
354). In either case the effect is the same: the mutated expression is of
such a shape as to occupy the position between the verse beginning and
the caesura of the third foot.

The technique of separating CN–E over the verse end is fundamentally
different from the three other types, so much so that separation is prob-
ably an incorrect description; the process is rather the independent location
of the two elements of the CN–E in their respective verses, according to
established patterns of localization. In the *Hymns* there are 54 examples,
in the sample of the *Iliad* 8, in the sample of the *Odyssey* 10. In 31 of the

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[25]This total figure of 155 excludes duplicates, or "complex formulae," within an in-
dividual hymn. For example, μύθοισιν ἀμείβετο κερδαλέοισι (*Herm.* 162 = 260 =
463) is counted only once; hence this figure shows a slight variation from column (i) in
the table.

[26]Cf. Hainsworth 92 ff.

54 examples from the *Hymns* the first element of the CN–E occupies final position in the verse and is shaped either – ⏑ (22 occurrences) or ⏑ – ⏑ (9). In 5 of the remaining examples the first element is demonstrably occupying its own primary position.[27] In 11 other examples,[28] although on the sole basis of metrical shape the first element could theoretically occupy final position, it may be shown that this position is already occupied by a word which is itself primary there. As an example of this we may cite *Demeter* 115–116:

πιλνᾷς; ἔνθα γυναῖκες ἀνὰ μέγαρα σκιόεντα

τηλίκαι ὡς σύπερ ὧδε καὶ ὁπλότεραι γεγάασιν.

The first element γυναῖκες could, and normally did, occupy final position (cf. *Demeter* 126); however the CN–E μέγαρα σκιόεντα is most certainly formular in this position (*Odyssey* 7x) and has forced the movement elsewhere of γυναῖκες. The evidence from the two passages of Homer agrees with this picture from the *Hymns*: in the sample of the *Iliad* the first element in 4 of the 8 cases[29] is in final position, in 3 of the remaining examples it is in its own primary position, and in 2 it could theoretically occupy final position were the word actually in that position not itself primary there. Likewise in the 10 examples from the sample of the *Odyssey*,[30] in 5 cases the first element terminates the first verse, and the remaining 5 observe completely the rules of localization identified in the *Hymns* and the sample of the *Iliad*.

The evidence of patterning in the second element is even more conclusive: in 46 of the 54 examples from the *Hymns* it occupies initial position in the second verse, being shaped – ⏑ 5 times, – ⏑⏑ 20 times, ⏑⏑ – 20 times, and – – – ⏑ once. Of the remaining 8 examples,[31] 6 could in fact by

[27]θεμείλια . . . εὐρέα (*Ap.* 254–255 = *Ap.* 294–295), φάρεϊ . . . λεπτῷ (*Ap.* 121–122), σάνδαλα . . . ἄφραστ' (*Herm.* 79–80), μαντείην . . . ἡμετέρην (*Herm.* 547–548), γάμον . . . τίμιον (*Aph.* 141–142).

[28]βοῦς . . . δοιὰς (*Herm.* 116–117), θυώδης . . . βωμὸς (*Ap.* 87–88), γῆρας . . . νηλειές (*Aph.* 244–245), γυναῖκες . . . τηλίκαι (*Dem.* 115–116), ἰὸν . . . καρτερόν (*Ap.* 357–358), ἵππους . . . ἀθανάτους (*Dem.* 375–376), νύμφη . . . αἰδοίη (*Herm.* 4–5), ὀδμὴ . . . ἡδεῖ' (*Herm.* 131–132), ὅρμοι . . . καλοὶ (*Aph.* 88–89), ταῦρος . . . κυάνεος (*Herm.* 193–194), ὕπνον . . . νήδυμον (*Aph.* 170–171).

[29]ἀρείοσιν . . . ἄνδρασιν (260–261), δαιτὸς . . . ἐσθλῆς (575–576), μέγα . . . ἔρκος (283–284), κῦμα . . . πορφύρεον (481–482), λαοὶ . . . ἐπασσύτεροι (382–383), μέγιστον . . . τέκμωρ (525–526), υἷας . . . σύμπαντας (240–241), υἷες . . . δικασπόλοι (237–238).

[30]ἑταῖροι . . . ἀθρόοι (391–392), ἑταίρους . . . ἐθελοντῆρας (291–292), θάλαμον . . . εὐρὺν (337–338), ἱστὸν . . . λεπτὸν (94–95), ἐσθλὰ . . . κτήματ' (312–313), κῦμα . . . πορφύρεον (427–428), μνηστήρων . . . ἀφραδέων (281–282), νῆες . . . πολλαὶ (292–293), οἶνον . . . ἡδὺν (349–350), σανίδες . . . δικλίδες (344–345).

[31]φαεινὰ . . . ἄγγεα (*Dem.* 169–170), πᾶσαι . . . ἀθάναται (*Ap.* 134–135), πολλὴν . . . ἀνθρακιὴν (*Herm.* 237–238), θεοῖσι . . . ἀθανάτοισιν (*Herm.* 168–169), ἵππους . . . ἀθανάτους (*Dem.* 375–376), παιδὸς . . . τηλυγέτοιο (*Dem.* 282–283), ὅρμον . . . ἐερμένον (*Ap.* 103–104), υἱὸν . . . ἐκηβόλον (*Herm.* 416–417).

virtue of their shape be placed at the beginning of the verse, but 2 are demonstrably occupying their own primary position, while in 3 the word at the beginning of the line is itself primary there and may thus be seen to have forced the second element into an alternative position. The same "rules" apply to the passages of Homer: 5 of the 8 cases from the *Iliad* show the second element beginning the second verse, in 2 of the others it is in its own primary position, and in one the initial position is filled by a word which is primary there; likewise in 8 of the 10 examples from the sample of the *Odyssey* the second element is in initial position, and in the other two it is in its own primary position.

One final case of patterning in the second element deserves mention. In 6 of the 54 cases of verse-end separation in the *Hymns* the second element, in every case the epithet, is expanded by the addition of one or more epithets;[32] and in one quite exceptional case, *Aphrodite* 244–246, the expanding epithets run over into a third verse. In each case the epithet is in initial position and is shaped – $\stackrel{\smile}{\smile}$ or – $\smile\smile$ –; it is then expanded by another epithet, with or without a connective, which in all cases fills the space to the third-foot caesura, e.g., φάρεϊ . . . λεπτῷ νηγατέῳ (*Apollo* 121–122). In one case, *Aphrodite* 88–89, it is further expanded by another epithet which reaches from the caesura to the bucolic diaeresis: ὅρμοι . . . καλοὶ χρύσειοι παμποίκιλοι. The one example of this patterning from the passages of Homer, *Odyssey* 2.94–95, observes a metrical format identical to those in the *Hymns*.

This brief statement of the phrase-patterns involved in CN–E separation in the *Hymns* must obviously be considered alongside Hainsworth's much more detailed description of them in Homer (chapter vii). The conclusion seems inescapable that the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Hymns* were products of the same genre. Separation of CN–E occurs more frequently in the *Hymns* than in the two samples of Homer, yet few of the examples in the *Hymns* are verbatim repetitions of Homeric diction. It may be demonstrated that in all four categories of separation the composers of the *Hymns* and Homer employed the same phrase-patterns. If these two facts are not to be explained in terms of identity of genre, we presumably must have recourse to the argument that the composers of the *Hymns* imitated Homer; in the present case, however, imitation involves the reproduction, not of the diction of Homer, but of the phrase-patterns, the identification of which, even with the aid of the concordances, is at times difficult. As in the case of mobility, my feeling is that the considerable variations in frequency of occurrence of separation in the works examined are best explained in terms of the composers' individual tastes.

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[32] *Ap.* 121–122, *Ap.* 254–255 (= *Ap.* 294–295), *Herm.* 79–80, *Herm.* 191–192, *Herm.* 529–530, *Aph.* 88–89.

(d) The expansion of CN–E

Expansion, like separation, was an important feature of Homer's compositional technique, in which an expression was altered, not by the internal rearrangement of its elements, but by the lengthening of its metrical shape by additional words. In the present case I limit myself to the expansion of CN–E word-groups by additional epithets, which may be simply juxtaposed, or may involve separation by functional words, prepositions, or connectives. Hainsworth differentiated between simple expansion, in which the source of the expanding element was unknown, and the conflation of two known formulae which shared the same term; he demonstrated that the latter was more usual in Homer. The material from the six works examined is extremely meagre compared to the other two mutation categories. In Table E below the evidence is given as a total for each work, and also in terms of scatter.

TABLE E

	Total	Scatter
Demeter	5	99.0
Apollo	8	68.2
Hermes	11	52.7
Aphrodite	4	73.2
Iliad	2	217.0
Odyssey	6	72.3

As in the case of separation, the first task should be to determine how many of the examples from the *Hymns* are also found in Homer, and may consequently be the result of imitation. In fact of the total 28 examples I find only one verbatim repetition, θοῇ παρὰ νηὶ μελαίνῃ (*Apollo* 497 = 511), which occurs once in the *Iliad* and once in the *Odyssey*. Secondly, it will be of interest to know how many of the examples from the *Hymns* are conflations of two known formulae: this too will throw light on their possible dependence on Homer, since it is mainly from Homer that the evidence for the known formulae must be sought. Amongst the 28 examples I count only 5 conflations,[33] a proportion in striking contrast to 4 conflations out of 8 in the passages of Homer.[34] In the present case the evidence does not support a theory of mere imitation of Homeric diction by the composers of the *Hymns*.

[33] ἀγραύλους ἕλικας βοῦς (*Herm.* 567), αἰδοίην ἄλοχον ποιήσατο κεδν' εἰδυῖαν (*Aph.* 44), σὸν φίλον ἤκαχε θυμόν (*Dem.* 56), κοίλην ἀνὰ νῆα μέλαιναν (*Ap.* 405), θοῇ παρὰ νηὶ μελαίνῃ (*Ap.* 497 = *Ap.* 511).

[34] ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖς αἰειγενέτῃσιν (β 432), θοῇ παρὰ νηὶ μελαίνῃ (A 300), βοὴν ἀνὰ νῆα μέλαιναν (β 430), φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν (β 221).

Beyond this there is little to be observed from this type of mutation, other than that it does constitute an element of the technique of the composers of the *Hymns* as well as of Homer. There is a total absence of patterning such as was observed in the case of separation, but this is in itself scarcely surprising since the mutation involves no internal reorganization of the word-group. The technique of expansion presupposes the existence in each case of a CN–E with a primary shape and a primary position; the addition of expanding elements to this CN–E normally took place in accordance with the 'rules' of localization.

An important point of methodology is raised by the *Hymns*: because they share certain features of diction with Homer, we might reasonably suspect that they were orally composed, yet they are too short to allow the kind of formulaic analysis devised by Parry and his followers. What type of analysis then should be employed in works such as these? The root of the problem lies in the fact that a Homeric formula is a word-group which is found repeated in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* only; the appearance of the same word-group in the *Hymns*, or any other non-Homeric work, implies only that the author of that work was acquainted with, and was capable of imitation of, the diction of Homer; it does not prove *per se* that he inherited the same store of traditional diction as Homer, or that he employed that traditional diction for the purpose of oral composition. I would argue further that a formula in one of the *Hymns* is, by definition, a word-group which is found repeated within that one hymn, with no reference to Homer or any other body of material. It was the patent failure to recognize this which vitiated the work of Notopoulos on the *Hymns*,[35] and it is this fact which precludes conventional formulaic analysis of the *Hymns*; by the strict definition given above, there are in fact few formulae amongst the CN–E in the *Hymns*.[36] In view of this I have argued that analysis of the *Hymns* should concentrate, not on the repetition of diction, but on the various types of mutation which may be shown to be characteristic of Homer, and the phrase and verse patterns which facilitated them. Thus in the case of separation in the *Hymns*, for example, very few of the CN–E are demonstrably formular, either in their primary or mutated form, and it was the evidence of the recurrent phrase patterns which was stressed in section (c).

If this statement of methodology is accepted, we may consider whether, in the light of the evidence presented here, we are any nearer to establishing the orality of the four long *Homeric Hymns*. I would wish to argue

[35]Above,1.

[36]See J. R. S. Sterrett, *Qua in re Hymni Homerici quinque maiores inter se differant antiquitate vel homeritate* (Boston 1881); H. Fietkau, *De Carminum Hesiodeorum atque Hymnorum Quattuor Magnorum Vocabulis non Homericis* (Königsberg 1866).

that the cumulative effect of the various strands of evidence suggests a considerable probability that the *Hymns* and Homer belong to the same genre. It was demonstrated that the same kinds of mutation were found in the *Hymns* as in Homer, and that the same phrase and verse patterns described the mutation process. The figures of incidence, however, showed few correspondences in the works examined: the technique was apparently the same, but there were at times quite considerable variations in frequency of occurrence. Even within a single hymn it was impossible to find consistency of occurrence of mobility, separation, and expansion; the one element of agreement which was to be observed was that the *Hymns* contain more examples of these mutations than the two samples of Homer. According to the criterion suggested above, if the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were orally composed, it seems probable that the *Hymns* likewise are oral compositions.

Working from this premise, is it then possible that these differences in incidence of mutation might in some way affect the model of the oral technique? With regard to the formulaic content of the CN–E diction, I argued earlier that "the tradition" was not a type of monolith on which all composers drew according to their requirements, but rather that each composer built up his own "personal tradition" of favoured formulae (above, 5). This idea was proposed some time ago by M. W. M. Pope:

We have two pictures to choose between. One is of generations of oral poets slowly sifting out the most suitable formulae from those their colleagues have been over-fertile in the invention of . . . The other picture is a more human one. It is of poets who build up their own collections of epithets and formulae. Some they will inherit from their teachers, some they will borrow from their colleagues, some—the majority perhaps—they will gradually build up for themselves to suit their own requirements and predilections.[37]

I have likewise suggested in this paper that the use made by a composer of the different types of mutation might also have been governed by his own individual requirements and predilections. To argue thus is tantamount to accepting mutation as a feature of oral style rather than as a particular mode of response to a difficulty during composition. In this case there is nothing remarkable in the lack of correlation in the figures for mutation in the individual *Hymns*: like all stylistic features, mutations will vary in degree of density from composer to composer. General support for what may be termed style is provided by the observation of modern singers: in *The Singer of Tales*, A. B. Lord concludes a description of the training of a singer with information given by two singers, Sulejman Makić and Demo Zogić, and comments: "Both singers stress that they would sing the song exactly as they heard it, Zogić even boasting that he would sing the song in the same way twenty years later. Makić indicates

[37]M. W. M. Pope "The Parry—Lord Theory of Homeric Composition," *Acta Classica* 6 (1963) 8–9.

that changing and adding are not good, implying that singers do change and add; and Zogić states plainly that two singers won't sing the same song alike" (28).

This argument for style may well explain the differences between the individual *Hymns* in their use of mutation, but does it account satisfactorily for the considerable differences between the *Hymns* and Homer? The answer I believe is yes, and I seek support in the same conversation with the two singers recounted by Lord. Zogić told how, after hearing a song just once, he sang it himself: "The same song, word for word, and line for line. I didn't add a single line, and I didn't make a single mistake . . . ." (27). As Lord comments, the importance of Zogić's statement is the emphasis it places on his role as conserver of the tradition: the best singer, he implies, is the one who stays closest to the tradition. If mutation is seen as the assertion of the creative force of the singer against the limiting influence of the tradition, then the comparatively small incidence of mutation in Homer gives us clear indication—just in case we needed it—that he was a composer superior to the authors of the *Hymns*.

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