# Indo-European Mythology and Poetics

Instructor: Riccardo Ginevra

In this class we will:

- Learn about the devices and techniques of IE poetic language

  = **Poetics as Grammar**

- Use this knowledge to analyse IE poetic formulas and themes and find out what they can tell us about IE mythology

  = **Poetics as Repertory and Comparative Mythology**

- Use this knowledge to read and analyze texts in IE languages

  = **Poetics and Mythology in Performance**

Indo-European
Mythology and Poetics

Indo-European Language Family:
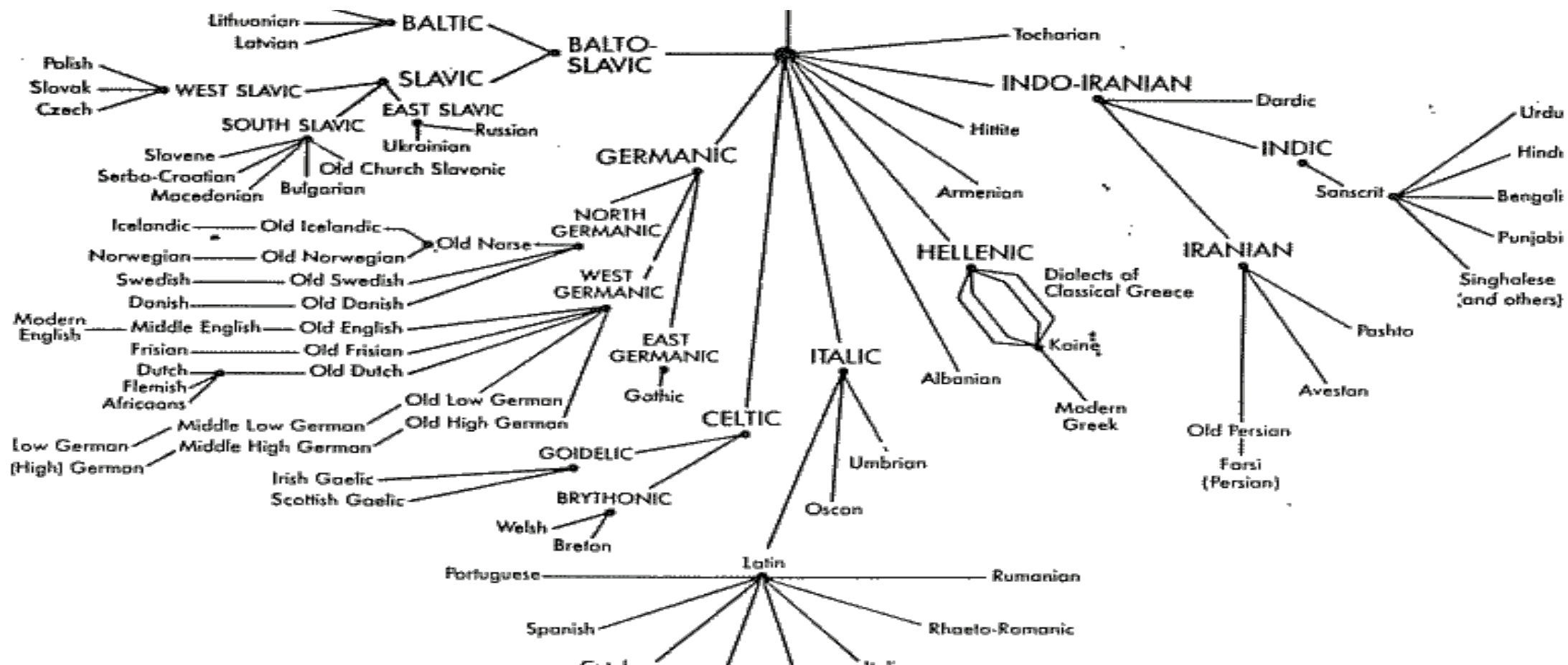
Historical Comparative Linguistics

- Latin *pater*

- Greek πατήρ *patḗr*

- Vedic Sankrit *pitár-*

- Gothic *fadar*

- Old Irish *athair*

- Classical Armenian *hayr*

Proto-Indo-European
*$p\partial_2 tér$- 'father'

Historical Comparative Linguistics

- Latin *equus*

- (Greek ἵππος *híppos*)

- Vedic Sankrit *áśva-*

- Old English *eoch*

- Old Irish *ech*

Proto-Indo-European
*(*h₁*)éḱwo-* 'horse'

Indo-European Mythology and **Poetics**

What is Linguistics?

- The scientific study of **language**

What is **Poetics?**

- The scientific study of **poetic language**

What is poetic language?

- Any language: several registers
(= language varieties employed in different contexts)

- Language: A or B

- Poetic language: A' or B'

- Juridical Language: A" or B"

- Scientific Language: A‴ or B‴

What is poetic language?

• Any language: several registers
(= language varieties employed in different contexts)

- • Language: A or B

- • Poetic language: A' or B'
  - • **NOT only poetry!**

- • Juridical Language: A" or B"
  - • **NOT only law!**

Poetic language and poetic function

- Jakobson: each verbal message has several functions **at the same time**

  - **Referential function:**
    focuses on the context of communication,
    describes the reality in which the speech act takes place

  - **Conative function:**
    focuses on the addressee/receiver of the message,
    elicits a reaction from the person we are talking to

  - **Poetic** (aesthetic) **function:**
    focuses on the verbal message itself,
    it structures the way in which the message is conveyed

Poetic language and poetic function

- Jakobson: a verbal message has several functions

  - **Poetic language:** linguistic items dominated by the

  - **Poetic** (aesthetic) **function**: **focus on the verbal message** itself

Poetic language and poetic function

- Jakobson: a verbal message has several functions

  - **Poetic (aesthetic) function:**
  Odyssey 1.1–2
  "Tell me, O Muse, of that many-sided hero who traveled far and wide after he had sacked the famous town of Troy."

Poetic language and poetic function

- Jakobson: a verbal message has several functions

  - **Conative function (vocatives, imperatives):**

Poetic language and poetic function

- Jakobson: a verbal message has several functions

    - **Conative function (imperatives):**
    An imperative Odyssey 1.1–2
    "Muse! Please tell me about Odysseus and his journey!"

Poetic language and poetic function

- Jakobson: a verbal message has several functions

  - **Referential function (descriptions):**

Poetic language and poetic function

- Jakobson: a verbal message has several functions

    - **Referential function (descriptions):**
    A brief and informative Odyssey 1.1–2
    "This poem is about the journey of the Greek hero Odysseus."

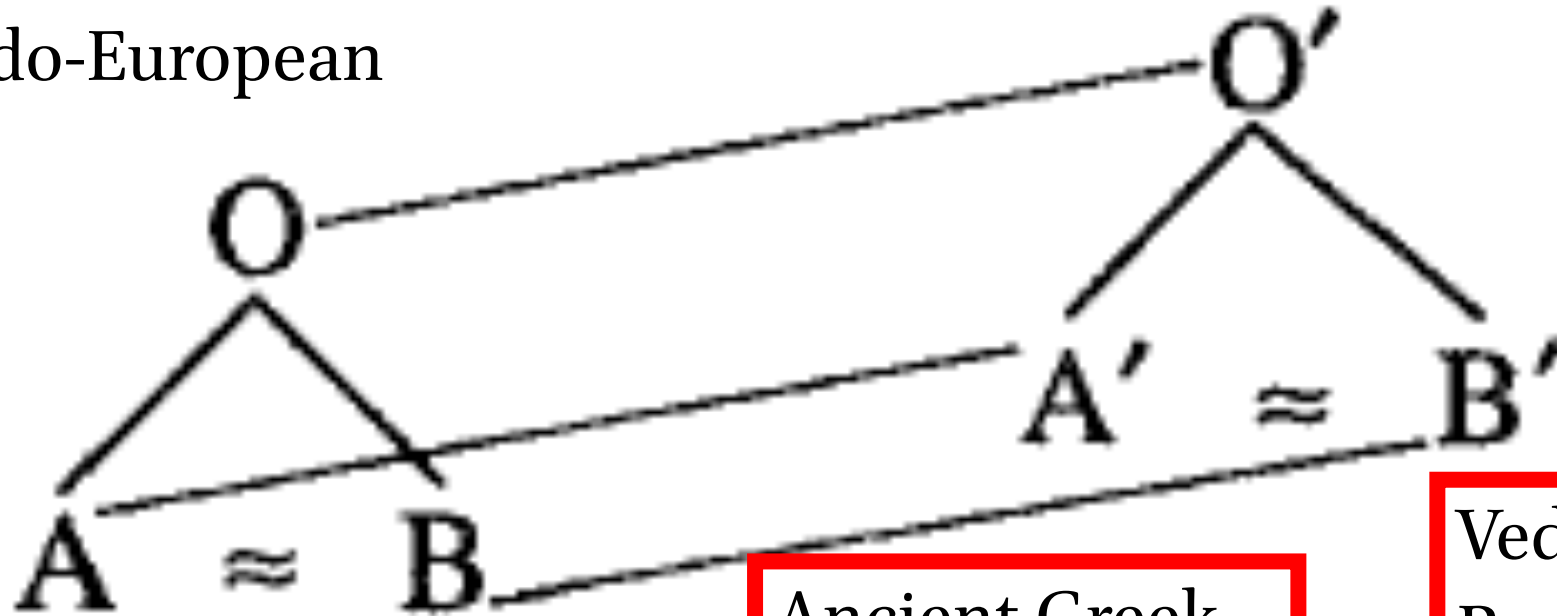# Comparative Indo-European Linguistics

Proto-Indo-European Language

Ancient Greek Language   Vedic Sanskrit Language

Comparative Indo-European Poetics

Proto-Indo-European Poetic Language

Proto-Indo-European

$$O \qquad\qquad O'$$

$$A' \approx B'$$

$$A \approx B$$

Ancient Greek

Vedic Sanskrit

Ancient Greek Poetic Language

Vedic Sanskrit Poetic Language

2 sides of Comparative Indo-European Poetics:

- Reconstruction of formulaic expressions

  and semantic collocations:

  Indo-European Poetic Repertory

Reconstructing the Indo-European Poetic Repertory

- Comparative analysis and reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European

  etymologically identical formulaic expressions and semantic collocations

Reconstructing the Indo-European Poetic Repertory

- Comparative analysis and reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European

- **etymologically identical formulaic expressions**

- and semantic collocations

Formulas

- What is a formula?

  A fixed **traditional** phrase.

- Fixed = it always occurs in the same manner
$$(A_1 \approx A_2)$$
- **Traditional** = it occurs **repeatedly**
$$(A_1, A_2, A_3, A_4, A_n...)$$

Formulas

- Formulas are present in everyday language as well.
  Idioms (Croft and Cruse 2004:225ff):
  all of a sudden, X *blow* X's *nose*
  - **conventionality** (meaning unpredictable)
  - **inflexibility** (restricted syntax),
  - **figurative** meaning (*break a leg*)
  - **proverbiality**
  - **etc.**

Formulas

- Formulas were first recognized in poetry because the instruments to systematically research a corpus (**indexes, concordances**) were first developed to study literature.

- Specifically in Archaic Greek epic poetry,
  aka **Homeric poetry**.

Milman Parry, 1902 – 1935

- Pioneer of formulaics
- Student of Meillet
- Comparative perspective
- Died very young
- His work was continued by his student Albert Lord

Milman Parry, 1902 - 1935

Milman Parry (1928) and Oral Theory

- What is an (Homeric) formula?

    A group of words which is regularly used
    under the same metrical conditions
    to express an essential idea

- Fixed ($A_1 \approx A_2$): "words" "under the same metrical conditions"

- Traditional (A_1, A_n): "regularly used to express an essential idea"

Milman Parry (1928) and Oral Theory

Parry's initial research focused on **traditional epithets:**

- τὸν δ' αὖτε προσέειπε θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη (Il. 1.206)
    "Then in answer the goddess grey-eyed Athene spoke to him"

- ὣς ἔφατ᾽, οὐδ' ἀπίθησε θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη (Il. 2.166)
    "So she spoke, nor did the goddess grey-eyed Athene disobey"

- σοὶ δ' ἐπὶ τοῦτον ἀνῆκε θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη (Il.5.405)
    "It was the goddess grey-eyed Athena who drove on this man"

GROUP OF WORDS:

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GROUP OF WORDS: θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη :   ESSENTIAL IDEA: [ATHENA]

Milman Parry (1928) and **<u>Oral</u>** Theory

- Why did Homeric poets make use of formulas?

    Because they were oral-traditional poets (Parry 1930s)

- What is an **oral-traditional poet**?

    An **oral** poet who **composes while performing**, without **making use** of writing, but **only of traditional devices.**
    (= Indo-European poets)

Milman Parry (1928) and **<u>Oral</u>** Theory

Parry's hypothesis was confirmed by fieldwork:

- Parry's professor Antoine Meillet encouraged him to research synchronically a living oral poetic tradition, the South Slavic (Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian) tradition.

- <u>South Slavic oral traditional poets (*guslari*) composed while performing making extensive use of formulas.</u>

Milman Parry (1928) and __Oral__ Theory

South Slavic guslari play the gusle   Greek aoidoi played the phorminx

Milman Parry (1928) and **Oral** Theory

ἀμφ᾽ Ἄρεος φιλότητος εὐστεφάνου τ᾽ Ἀφροδίτης,
ὡς τὰ πρῶτα μίγησαν ἐν Ἡφαίστοιο δόμοισι
λάθρῃ, πολλὰ δ᾽ ἔδωκε, λέχος δ᾽ ᾔσχυνε καὶ εὐνὴν
Ἡφαίστοιο ἄνακτος. ἄφαρ δέ οἱ ἄγγελος ἦλθεν
Ἥλιος, ὅ σφ᾽ ἐνόησε μιγαζομένους φιλότητι.
Ἥφαιστος δ᾽ ὡς οὖν θυμαλγέα μῦθον ἄκουσε,
βῆ ῥ᾽ ἴμεν ἐς χαλκεῶνα κακὰ φρεσὶ βυσσοδομεύων,
ἐν δ᾽ ἔθετ᾽ ἀκμοθέτῳ μέγαν ἄκμονα, κόπτε δὲ δεσμοὺς

Reconstruction by Danek and Hagel

Milman Parry (1928) and **<u>Oral</u>** Theory

Parry's revolution lead to several studies on oral traditions and formulaic poetry around the world.

- Germanic narrative poems: Francis Magoun (1953) for OEng poetry

- Vedic hymns : Paul Kiparsky (1976) for Rig-Veda and Atharva-Veda.

- Many further traditions!

Francis Magoun (1953) and Oral Theory

Hwæt! Wé Gárdena in géardagum

þéodcyninga þrym gefrúnon·

hú ðá æþelingas ellen fremedon.

Oft Scyld Scéfing sceaþena þréatum

monegum maégþum meodosetla oftéah·

"Listen! We --of the Spear-Danes in the days of yore,

of those clan-kings-- heard of their glory.

how those nobles performed courageous deeds.

Often Scyld, Scef's son, from enemy hosts

from many peoples seized mead-benches"

Beowulf 1ff

Francis Magoun (1953) and Oral Theory

hú ðá æþelingas ellen fremedon.

"how those nobles performed brave deeds

Oft Scyld Scéfing sceaþena þréatum

Often Scyld, Scef's son, from enemy hosts

monegum maégþum meodosetla oftéah·

from many peoples seized mead-benches"

heard or learned long ago.' 3a **FAp** *3 hú þá æðelingas / ellen* cýðdon, *85* þus þá æðelingas; *Rid 49, 7* þá æðelingas. *Cp. without def. art. but with a preceding word, usually of light stress* **Gen** *1059* þára-þe æðelingas, *1647* þá nú æðelingas, *1868* ellor æðelingas; **Dan** *689,* **And** *805* þǽr æðelingas, *857* Him þá æðelingas. *3b* **And** *1208* Scealt þú, Andréas, / ellen frem-man. *4b* **Jul** *672* sceaðena þréate; *cp.* **Glc** *902* féonda þréatum.

5a **Bwf** *75* manigre mǽgðe, *1771* manigum mǽgða. *6b* **Bwf** *1947; cp. 1775* siþþan Grendel wearþ; **Ele** *913* siþþan furðum wéox. *Note the more general metrical scheme involving* siþþan *plus a two- or three-syllable word plus verb:* **And** *1223* siþþan ge-ypped wæs; **Ele** *18* siþþan

Francis Magoun (1953) and Oral Theory

*hú ðá æþelingas **ellen fremedon.***

"how those nobles performed brave deeds

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5a *Bwf* 75 manigre maégðe, 1771 manigum maégða. **6b** *Bwf* 1947; *cp.* 1775 siþþan Grendel wearþ; *Ele* 913 siþþan furðum wéox. *Note the more general metrical scheme involving* siþþan *plus a two- or three-syllable word plus verb: And* 1223 siþþan ge-ypped wæs; *Ele* 18 siþþan

Francis Magoun (1953) and Oral Theory

hú ðá æþelingas ellen fremedon.

Oft Scyld Scéfing **sceaþena þréatum**

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Francis Magoun (1953) and Oral Theory

hú ðá æþelingas ellen fremedon.   "how those nobles performed brave deeds

Oft Scyld Scéfing sceaþena þréatum   Often Scyld, Scef's son, from enemy hosts

monegum maégþum *meodosetla oftéah·*   from many peoples seized mead-benches"

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Joseph Russo (1963, '66) Structural Formulas

- Homeric structural formulas:

    Patterns of syntax and meter which
    underlie several lexically different phrases.

- Fixed: by syntax and meter

- Traditional: underlying several lexically different phrases

Joseph Russo (1963, '66) Structural Formulas

βῆ δὲ θέειν, τὰ δὲ τεύχε' ἀμύμονι **δῶκεν ἑταίρῳ**   (*Il.* 17.698)

　　"but he went on the run, **he gave** his war gear **to a** blameless **companion**"

ἦ ῥα, καὶ Ἀντιλόχοιο Νοήμονι **δῶκεν ἑταίρῳ**   (*Il.* 23.612)

　　"He spoke, and **gave to** Antilochos' **companion**, Noëmon"

ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια **τεῦχε κύνεσσιν**   (*Il.* 1.4)

　　"of heroes, but **served** their bodies as prey **to the dogs**"

Structural formula: $[\ ^{-\,\smile}\ ]_{verb} + [\ ^{\smile\,-\,x}\ ]_{noun.dat.}$

Find the formulas!

παῖδες Ἀλωῆος, δῆσαν κρατερῷ ἐνὶ δεσμῷ: (*Il.* 5.386)

"the sons of Aloeus chained him in bonds that were too strong for him"

ἦ ῥά κεν ἐν δεσμοῖς ἐθέλοις κρατεροῖσι πιεσθεὶς

"would you really be willing, crushed in strong bonds" (*Od.* 8.336)

τὼ δ' ἐπεὶ ἐκ δεσμοῖο λύθεν, κρατεροῦ περ ἐόντος, (*Od.* 8.360)
"After he'd freed them from the bond, strong as it was"

ὣς ἄρ' ἔφη, καὶ χερσὶ περίστρεφε καρτερὰ δεσμὰ (*HHerm.* 409)
"While he was talking he plaited strong bonds round the wrists of the other"

No formulas in Parry's sense:

παῖδες Ἀλωῆος, δῆσαν **κρατερῷ** ἐνὶ **δεσμῷ**: (*Il.* 5.386)

"the sons of Aloeus chained him in **bonds** that were too **strong** for him"

ἦ ῥά κεν ἐν **δεσμοῖς** ἐθέλοις **κρατεροῖσι** πιεσθεὶς

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Hainsworth (1968) Flexible Formulas

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Formula: [κρατερό- 'strong' – δεσμό- 'bond']

Hainsworth (1968) Flexible Formulas

- What is an (Homeric) formula?

  A repeated word-group (a phrase) whose parts are linked by mutual expectancy and may be modified in several ways (inflected, separated).

- Fixed: repeated, but also modified in several ways

- Traditional: mutual expectancy of lexems

Russo or Hainsworth?

- Are syntax and meter essential, as per Russo?

  Structural formula: $[\ ^{-}\ ^{\smile}\ ]_{\text{verb}} + [\ ^{\smile}\ ^{-}\ ^{\text{x}}\ ]_{\text{noun.dat.}}$

- Is lexical mutual expectancy essential, as per Hainsworth?

  Flexible formula: [κρατερό- 'strong' – δεσμό- 'bond']

- Bozzone 2014, 2024 takes into account lexicon, syntax and meter.

Bozzone's (2014, 2024) Homeric constructions

- A Homeric formula is a construction:

    a learned pairing of form and function.

- Fixed: any learnable pattern (language acquisition)

- Traditional: stored units (corpus linguistics)

Bozzone's (2014, 2024) Homeric constructions

• How do kids learn language?

  1. Exposure to several items:
       More juice.
       More grapes.

  2. Learning of a general construction (pairing of form + function).
       Form: *More* [___] (*grapes, juice*).
       Function: **To request more** (something, food).

Bozzone's (2014, 2024) Homeric constructions

- **How did Homeric poets learn their poetic language?**

1. Exposure to several items:

    εἵλετο δ' ἄλκιμον ἔγχος, ὅ οἱ παλάμηφιν ῥήρει (*Il.* 3.338, Od. 17.4)
    'and he took a powerful spear, which fitted his grip'

    εἵλετο δ' ἄλκιμα δοῦρε δύω κεκορυθμένα χαλκῷ (Il. 11.43, Od. 22.125)
    'and he took two powerful spears, tipped with bronze'

    εἵλετο δὲ σκῆπτρον πατρώϊον ἄφθιτον αἰεὶ (*Il.* 2.46)
    'and he took the staff of his father, always imperishable'

Bozzone's (2014, 2024) Homeric constructions

2. Learning of a general construction (pairing of form + function).

Form:

$εἵλετο_V δ(ὲ)$

"And (s)he took"

$εἵλετο$ = 3 sing. aor. mid. αἱρέω 'take, grasp'

Bozzone's (2014, 2024) Homeric constructions

- How did Homeric poets learn their poetic language?

1. Exposure to several items:

εἵλετο δ' ἄλκιμον ἔγχος, ὅ οἱ παλάμηφιν ρήρει (*Il.* 3.338, Od. 17.4)
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Bozzone's (2014, 2024) Homeric constructions

2. Learning of a general construction (pairing of form + function).

Form:

εἵλετο$_V$ δ(ἐ) [(¯) ˘ ˘ ¯ (˘)]$_{Obj.NounPhrase}$

Bozzone's (2014, 2024) Homeric constructions

2. Learning of a general construction (pairing of form + function).

Form:

εἵλετο$_V$ δ(ὲ) [(‾) ˘ ˘ ‾ (˘)]$_{Obj.NounPhrase}$

Usually Obj.NounPhrase = WEAPON

Bozzone's (2014, 2024) Homeric constructions

- How did Homeric poets learn their poetic language?

1. Exposure to several items:

εἵλετο δ' ἄλκιμον ἔγχος, ὅ οἱ παλάμηφιν ἀρήρει (*Il.* 3.338, Od. 17.4)
'and he took a powerful spear, which fitted his grip'

εἵλετο δ' ἄλκιμα δοῦρε δύω κεκορυθμένα χαλκῷ (Il. 11.43, Od. 22.125)
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Bozzone's (2014, 2024) Homeric constructions

2. Learning of a general construction (pairing of form + function).

Form:

$$\text{εἵλετο}_V \; \delta(\grave{\epsilon}) \; [\;(\;\bar{}\;)\;\breve{}\;\breve{}\;\bar{}\;(\;\breve{}\;)\;]_{\text{Obj.NounPhrase}} \; [\;(\;\breve{}\;)\;\breve{}\;\bar{}\;\breve{}\;\breve{}\;\bar{}\;\breve{}\;\breve{}\;\bar{}\;X\;]_{\text{Obj.Modifier}}$$

Bozzone's (2014, 2024) Homeric constructions

2. Learning of a general construction (pairing of form + function).

Form:

$εἴλετο_V \; δ(ὲ) \; [\; (\; ^– \;) \; ^\smile \; ^\smile \; ^– \; (\; ^\smile \;) \;]_{Obj.NounPhrase} \; [\; (\; ^\smile \;) \; ^\smile \; ^– \; ^\smile \; ^\smile \; ^– \; ^\smile \; ^\smile \; ^– \; ^X \;]_{Obj.Modifier}$

Expression which describes the WEAPON.

Bozzone's (2014, 2024) Homeric constructions

2. Learning of a general construction (pairing of form + function).

Form:

$$\text{εἵλετο}_V\ \delta(\grave{\epsilon})\ \big[\ (\ ^-\ )\ ^{\smile}\ ^{\smile}\ ^-\ (\ ^{\smile}\ )\ \big]_{\text{Obj.NounPhrase}}\ \big[\ (\ ^{\smile}\ )\ ^{\smile}\ ^-\ ^{\smile}\ ^{\smile}\ ^-\ ^{\smile}\ ^{\smile}\ ^-\ ^X\ \big]_{\text{Obj.Modifier}}$$

Function:

Specific thematic connotations:
the construction is mostly attested in arming scenes,
"when a warrior or a god is getting ready for action".

Bozzone's (2014, 2024) Homeric constructions

2. Learning of a general construction (pairing of form + function).

Form:

$εἵλετο_V \, δ(ὲ)$ [(⁻) ˘ ˘ ⁻ (˘)]$_{\text{Obj.NounPhrase}}$ [(˘) ˘ ⁻ ˘ ˘ ⁻ ⁻ ˘ ˘ ⁻ X]$_{\text{Obj.Modifier}}$

'he took X'

Function: 'he armed himself with a WEAPON'.

Specific thematic connotations:
the construction is mostly attested in arming scenes,
"when a warrior or a god is getting ready for action".

Frog's (2014, …) Skaldic constructions

- Old Norse *dróttkvætt* poetry attests several useful examples:

1. Exposure to several items:

lands folk	í gný branda	'…in the roar of brands (swords)'
fjǫrspell	í gný hjǫrva	'…in the roar of swords'
sigrtrúr	í gný vigra	'…in the din of spears'
saddr varð	í gný nadda	'…in the roar of barbs'
herr œxti	gný darra	'… the roar of darts'

2. Learning of a construction: $(í)$ *gný* – [NOUN]$_{gen.pl.}$ (BATTLE-kenning)

Frog's (2014, ...) Skaldic constructions

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herr œxti	gný darra	'... the roar of darts'

2. Learning of a construction: $(\acute{\imath})$ *gný* – [WEAPON]$_{gen.pl.}$ (BATTLE-kenn.)

Frog's (2014, ...) Skaldic constructions

- Old Norse *dróttkvætt* poetry attests several useful examples:

1. Exposure to several items:

Sigurðr fell	í dyn	vigra	'...in the din of spears'
skǫrungr fell	í dyn	hjǫrva	'...in the din of swords'
morðteins	í dyn	fleina	'...in the din of shafts'
bryngǫgl	í dyn	Skǫglar	'...in the din of Skǫgul (valkyrie)'
einarðr	í dyn	sverða	'...in the din of swords'

2. Learning of a construction: *í dyn* – [NOUN]$_{\text{gen.}}$ (BATTLE-kenning)

Milano & Pavia 2021-2024: formulas as constructions in IE poetic traditions

- **Ancient Greek formulas:**
  - Ginevra 2021
  - Brigada Villa, Farina & Zanchi forthcoming
- **Sanskrit formulas:**
  - Biagetti 2023, 2024
  - Brigada Villa, Biagetti, Ginevra & Zanchi 2023

- **Old English formulas:**
  - Ginevra, Biagetti, Brigada Villa & Giarda 2024
- **Indo-European formulas:**
  - Ginevra 2021
  - Ginevra 2023

Adalbert Kuhn (1812-1881) and comparative poetics

- Franz Felix Adalbert Kuhn in 2 studies from 1853

- compared phrases resembling Hainsworth's formulas

- in poetic texts of various IE traditions:

Famous example:	"**fame**	**imperishable**"
- Homeric Greek	κλέ(ϝ)-ος	ἄ-φθι-τον
	klé(w)-os	á-phthi-ton
- Vedic Sanskrit	śráv-as	á-kṣi-tam
- Proto-Indo-European	*kléw-os	n̥-dʰgʷʰi-tom
	"hear-ing	im-perish-able"

Comparative Indo-European Linguistics: Lexicon

- Latin   *pater*
- Greek   πατήρ *patḗr*
- Vedic Sankrit   *pitár-*

Proto-Indo-European   **ph₂tér-* 'father'

Comparative Indo-European Linguistics: Lexicon

- Latin   *Iouis*
- Greek   Ζεύς
- Vedic Sankrit   *dyauṣ*

Proto-Indo-European   **di̯éu̯-* 'heaven'

Comparative Indo-European Poetics: Etymologically Identical Formulaic Expressions

- Latin   *Iūpiter < *iou-pater*

- Homeric Greek   Ζεῦ πάτερ *Zeû páter*

- Vedic Sankrit   *Dyauṣ pitā*

Proto-Indo-European   **di̯éu̯- ph₂tér-* 'Father Heaven'

Comparative Indo-European Linguistics: Lexicon

- Greek   ἵππος *híppos*

- Vedic Sankrit   *áśva-*

- Avestan   *aspa-*

Proto-Indo-European   *(*h₁*)*éḱwo-* 'horse'

Comparative Indo-European Linguistics: Lexicon

- Homeric Greek   ὠκέες *ōkées*

- Vedic Sankrit   *āśávaḥ*

- Avestan   *āsauuō*

Proto-Indo-European   **(h₁)ṓḱéu̯es*
'swift, quick'

Comparative Indo-European Poetics: Etymologically Identical Formulaic Expressions

- Homeric Greek   ὠκέες   ἵπποι

- Vedic Sankrit   *āśávaḥ*   *áśvās*

- Avestan   *āsauuō*   *aspåŋhō*

Proto-Indo-European   *$(h_1)ōḱéu̯es$ $(h_1)éḱu̯ōs$

'swift, quick   horses'

Reconstructing the Indo-European Poetic Repertory

- Comparative analysis and reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European

- etymologically identical formulaic expressions

- **and semantic collocations**

Etymologically Identical Formulaic Expressions

- Latin   *Iūpiter < *iou-pater*

- Homeric Greek   Ζεῦ πάτερ *Zeû páter*

- Vedic Sankrit   *Dyauṣ pitā*

Proto-Indo-European   *di̯éu̯- ph₂tér-* 'Father Heaven'

- Luwian   *Tatiš Tiwaz*

                           "Father Tiwaz"

- Hittite   *Attaš Šiuš*

                           "Father Šiuš"

Luwian *Tiwaz* and Hittite *Šiuš* < PIE *$d\!i\acute{e}u$- 'sky(-god)'

But *Tatiš* "father" and *Attaš* "father" **NOT** < *$ph_2t\acute{e}r$-

Semantic Collocations
(no or partial etymological match)

- Latin   *Iūpiter < *iou-pater*

- Homeric Greek   Ζεῦ πάτερ *Zeû páter*

- Vedic Sankrit   *Dyauṣ pitā*

- Luwian   *Tatiš Tiwaz* "Father Tiwaz"

- Hittite   *Attaš Šiuš* "Father Šiuš"

Proto-Indo-European   [FATHER – HEAVEN (**di̯éu̯-*)]

Semantic Collocations

- Synchronic perspective: all languages have synonyms, words with (more or less) the same meaning

- Diachronic perspective: all languages change over time, undergoing a renewal of their lexicon

- Formulas same meaning : different etymology
  - Result of synonymic variation (synchronic process)
  - Lexical renewal (diachronic process)

- We must take into account semantic correspondences

Calvert Watkins (1995) inherited IE formulas

- What is an (inherited IE) formula?

    A fixed traditional phrase which is the vehicle of an IE theme, the verbal expression of a culture.

- Fixed: stable association of concepts, lexical renewal expected!

- Traditional: repeated because central to symbolic culture

Calvert Watkins (1995) inherited IE formulas

- What is an (inherited IE) formula?

  A fixed traditional phrase (**Parry's "group of words regularly used"**) which is the vehicle of an IE theme, the verbal expression of a culture (**Parry's "essential idea"**).

- Fixed: stable association of concepts,
            lexical renewal expected!

- Traditional: repeated because central to symbolic culture

Calvert Watkins (1995) inherited IE formulas

Stable association of concepts:

[MEN and LIVESTOCK (*peḱu-* : German *Vieh*)]

- Lat.   *pastores pecuaque*
                "shepherds and cattle"
- Umb.   *ueiro pequo*
                "men and cattle"
- Av.   *pasu.vīra*
                "cattle and men"
- Ved.   *púruṣaṃ páśum*
                "man and cattle"

Calvert Watkins (1995) inherited IE formulas

Lexical renewal

     [MEN (*$u̯iHró$-) and LIVESTOCK (*$peḱu$-)]

- Lat.   *pastores pecuaque*
            "shepherds and cattle"
- Umb.   **ueiro** *pequo*
            "**men** and cattle"
- Av.   *pasu.**vīra***
            "cattle and **men**"
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Lexical renewal

[MEN (*u̯iHró-) and LIVESTOCK (*peḱu-)]

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Umbrian = Avestan lexical archaism

Calvert Watkins (1995) inherited IE formulas

Lexical renewal

[MEN (*u̯iHró-) and LIVESTOCK (*peḱu-)]

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       "cattle and **men**"
- Ved. *púruṣaṃ páśum*
       "man and cattle"

Umbrian = Avestan lexical archaism

Why did Latin and Vedic innovate?

Calvert Watkins (1995) inherited IE formulas

Lexical renewal **for the purpose of** ALLITERATION

[MEN (*$p°$) and LIVESTOCK (*$pek̂u$-)]

- Lat. *pastores <u>pecua</u>que*
  "shepherds and <u>cattle</u>"

- Umb. *ueiro <u>pequo</u>*
  "men and <u>cattle</u>"

- Av. *<u>pasu</u>.vīra*
  "<u>cattle</u> and men"

- Ved. *púruṣaṃ <u>páśum</u>*
  "man and <u>cattle</u>"

Why did Latin and Vedic innovate?

Calvert Watkins (1995) inherited IE formulas

- We may reconstruct IE LEXICALLY specified FORMULAS:
    [MEN (*u̯iHró-) and LIVESTOCK (*peḱu-)] (= formulas as per Hainsworth)

- What is really fixed in IE formulas? The stable association of CONCEPTS (Watkins):
    [MEN and LIVESTOCK] (lexical renewal is expected on several grounds)

- What makes IE formulas traditional? THEME (central part of symbolic culture)
    [MEN and LIVESTOCK] = [MOVABLE WEALTH]

They were regularly used because they were considered TRUE by the speakers, part of their shared knowledge of the world.

- formulaic expressions

- and semantic collocations

- generated by means of specific devices and techniques

= **Indo-European Poetic Grammar**

2 sides of Indo-European Comparative Poetics:

- Reconstructed formulaic expressions

  and semantic collocations:

  Indo-European Poetic Repertory

- In order to understand their deeper meaning:

  Indo-European Poetic Grammar

Indo-European Poetic Grammar

- Sound:

    - Meter

    - Phonetic figures

Indo-European Poetic Grammar

- Sound:

  - Meter: isosyllabic ≠ quantitative ≠ accentual

  - Phonetic figures: alliteration ≠ rhyme ≠ assonance

Indo-European Poetic Grammar

- Meaning:

  - Formulas and phraseology: easily reconstructable + allow for a typology

    - Noun Phrases: [MEN and LIVESTOCK (*_peḱu-_ : German _Vieh_)]

      Lat.   _pastores **pecua**que_

      Umb.   _ueiro **pequo**_

      Av.   _**pasu** vīra_

Indo-European Poetic Grammar

- Meaning:

  - Formulas and phraseology: easy reconstruction + typology

    - Verbal Phrases: [**PROTECT** – MEN + LIVESTOCK]

      Lat.   *pastores pecuaque **salva servassis***

      Umb.   *uiro pequo **salua seritu***

Poetic grammar: Epithets

Parry's initial research focused on **traditional epithets:**

- τὸν δ' αὖτε προσέειπε **θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη** (Il. 1.206)

    "Then in answer **the goddess grey-eyed Athene** spoke to him"

- ὣς ἔφατ᾽, οὐδ' ἀπίθησε **θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη** (Il. 2.166)

    "So she spoke, nor did **the goddess grey-eyed Athene** disobey"

- σοὶ δ' ἐπὶ τοῦτον ἀνῆκε **θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη** (Il.5.405)

    "It was **the goddess grey-eyed Athena** who drove on this man"

GROUP OF WORDS: **θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη**   ESSENTIAL IDEA: [ATHENA]

Epithets

- What is an **epithet**?

    "An adjective indicating some quality or attribute which the speaker or writer regards as characteristic of the person or thing described."

    (*OED*, s.v.)

Epithets

What is an **epithet**?

- An adjective
- indicating some quality or attribute which the speaker or writer regards as characteristic
- of the person or thing described.

Epithets

What is an **epithet**?

- An adjective indicating some quality or attribute:
    [**SWIFT**]
    [**IMMORTAL**]
    [**BROAD**]
    [**DARK**]

Epithets

What is an **epithet**?
- An adjective indicating some quality or attribute:
- of the person or thing described:

    [SWIFT – **HORSES**]

    [IMMORTAL – **GODS**]

    [BROAD – **EARTH**]

    [DARK – **EARTH**]

Epithets

What is an **epithet**?
- An adjective indicating some quality or attribute:
- of the person or thing described.
- which the speaker or writer regards as characteristic:

[**SWIFT** – **HORSES**]	**NOT** [**SLOW**] **!**
[**IMMORTAL** – **GODS**]	**NOT** [**MORTAL**] **!**
[**BROAD** – **EARTH**]	**NOT** [**NARROW**] **!**
[**DARK** – **EARTH**]	**NOT** [**SHINING**] **!**

Epithet + Noun

Several poetic phrases wich we reconstruct for PIE are noun phrases of the type SUBSTANTIVE + EPITHET (grammar: SUBSTANTIVE + ADJECTIVE):

[**SWIFT** – **HORSES**]

[SWIFT – HORSES]

- Homeric Greek   *ὠκέες*   *ἵπποι*
- Vedic Sankrit   *āśávaḥ*   *áśvās*
- Avestan   *āsauuō*   *aspåŋhō*

Proto-Indo-European   *$(h_1)\bar{o}\acute{k}\acute{e}\underset{\circ}{u}es$ $(h_1)\acute{e}\acute{k}\underset{\circ}{u}\bar{o}s$
"swift, quick   horses"

[SWIFT – HORSES]

- Homeric Greek   *ὠκέες*   *ἵπποι*
- Vedic Sankrit   *āśávaḥ*   *áśvās*
- Avestan   *āsauuō*   *aspåŋhō*

Proto-Indo-European   **(h₁)ōḱéu̯es*   (h₁)éḱu̯ōs
                       "**swift**, **quick** horses"

[SWIFT – HORSES]

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[SWIFT – HORSES]

[**IMMORTAL – GODS**]

[IMMORTAL – GODS]

- Latin   *immortales*   *di*
- Homeric Greek   ἀθάνατοι   θεοί
- Vedic Sankrit   *amŕ̥tā*   *devă*

Proto-Indo-European *ņ̥-mŕ̥tó-   *dei̯u̯ó-*
                     "immortal   god(s)"

[IMMORTAL – GODS]

- Latin $\qquad$ ***im**mortales* $\quad$ *di*
- Homeric Greek $\quad$ **ἀ**θάνατοι $\qquad$ θεοί
- Vedic Sankrit $\qquad$ ***a**mr̥tā* $\qquad$ *devă*

Proto-Indo-European $\quad$ ****n̥-mr̥tó-** $\qquad$ *déi̯u̯ó-*
$\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ "**not**-mortal $\quad$ god(s)"

[IMMORTAL – GODS]

- Latin   *im**mort**ales*   *di*
- Homeric Greek   ἀθάνατοι   θεοί
- Vedic Sankrit   *a**mŕ̥tā***   *devă*

Proto-Indo-European   **n̥-**mr̥tó**-*   *dei̯u̯ó-*
              "im**mortal**   god(s)"

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- Vedic Sankrit   *amr̥tā*   ***devā̃***

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Epithet + Noun

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    [SWIFT – HORSES]

    [IMMORTAL – GODS]

    [**BROAD – EARTH**]

[BROAD – EARTH]

- Greek   εὐρεῖα   χθών

- Vedic   *urvī́-*   *kṣā́-*

Proto-Indo-European *$h_1$urHu-*   *$d^hé\acute{g}^hōm$/$d^h\acute{g}^h\mathring{m}$-*
                                         "broad   earth"

[BROAD – EARTH]

- Greek   **εὐρεῖα**   χθών

- Vedic   **urvī́-**   kṣā́-

Proto-Indo-European ***h₁urHu-**   dʰéǵʰōm/dʰǵʰm̥-
           "**broad**   earth"

[BROAD – EARTH]

- Greek   εὐρεῖα   **χθών**

- Vedic   *urvī́-*   **kṣā́-**

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"broad   **earth**"

Epithet + Noun

Several poetic phrases wich we reconstruct for PIE are noun phrases of the type SUBSTANTIVE + EPITHET (grammar: SUBSTANTIVE + ADJECTIVE):

[SWIFT – HORSES]

[IMMORTAL – GODS]

[BROAD – EARTH]

[**DARK** – **EARTH**]

[DARK – EARTH]

- Hittite   *dankui*   *tekan*
- Homeric Greek   μέλαινα   γαῖα
- Old Irish   *donn*   *domun*

Proto-Indo-European [DARK   –   EARTH]

[DARK – EARTH]

- Hittite   *dankui*   *tekan*
- Homeric Greek   **μέλαινα**   γαῖα
- Old Irish   *donn*   *domun*

Proto-Indo-European [**DARK** – EARTH]

[DARK – EARTH]

- Hittite   *dankui*   ***tekan***
- Homeric Greek   μέλαινα   **γαῖα**
- Old Irish   *donn*   ***domun***

Proto-Indo-European [DARK   –   **EARTH**]

Epithet + Noun

Several poetic phrases wich we reconstruct for PIE are noun phrases of the type SUBSTANTIVE + EPITHET (grammar: SUBSTANTIVE + ADJECTIVE):

- The epithet/adjective in these phrases is **ORNAMENTAL**:

    it does **not** add **new information**, **everyone knows** that HORSES are SWIFT (and NOT SLOW) and GODS are IMMORTAL (and NOT MORTAL).

Epithet + Noun

Several poetic phrases wich we reconstruct for PIE are noun phrases of the type SUBSTANTIVE + EPITHET (grammar: SUBSTANTIVE + ADJECTIVE):

- The epithet/adjective in these phrases is ORNAMENTAL: it does not add new information, everyone knows that HORSES are SWIFT (and NOT SLOW) and GODS are IMMORTAL (and NOT MORTAL).
- **Why does everyone know that?**

Epithet + Noun

Why does everyone know that?

- Because epithets are formulas, they convey **traditional associations of concepts** (= **traditional themes** = **verbal expressions** of a **traditional culture**)!

    [**HORSE**] – [**SWIFTNESS**]

    [**GOD**] – [**IMMORTALITY**]

    [**EARTH**] – [**BREADTH**]

    [**EARTH**] – [**DARKNESS**]

Epithet + Noun

- Epithet phrases are formulas, they convey traditional associations of concepts (= traditional themes = verbal expressions of a traditional culture)!

- According to Milman Parry's definition of formula

    "A group of words which is regularly used under the same metrical conditions to express an essential idea"

- the ESSENTIAL IDEA of the epithet phrase

    [**SWIFT** – **HORSES**] =

Epithet + Noun

- Epithet phrases are formulas, they convey traditional associations of concepts (= traditional themes = verbal expressions of a traditional culture)!

- According to Milman Parry's definition of formula, the ESSENTIAL IDEA of the epithet phrase

  [SWIFT – HORSES] = **[HORSES**]

Epithet + Noun

- Epithet phrases are formulas, they convey **traditional associations of concepts** (= **traditional themes** = **verbal expressions** of a **traditional culture**)!

- According to Milman Parry's definition of formula, the ESSENTIAL IDEA of the epithet phrase
  [SWIFT – HORSES] = [HORSES]
  [**IMMORTAL** – **GODS**]

Epithet + Noun

- Epithet phrases are formulas, they convey **traditional associations of concepts** (= **traditional themes** = **verbal expressions** of a **traditional culture**)!

- According to Milman Parry's definition of formula, the ESSENTIAL IDEA of the epithet phrase

    [SWIFT – HORSES] = [HORSES];
    [IMMORTAL – GODS] = [**GODS**];
    [**BROAD** – **EARTH**] =

Epithet + Noun

- Epithet phrases are formulas, they convey **traditional associations of concepts** (= **traditional themes** = **verbal expressions** of a **traditional culture**)!

According to Milman Parry's definition of formula, the ESSENTIAL IDEA of the epithet phrase

[SWIFT – HORSES] = [HORSES];

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[BROAD – EARTH] = [**EARTH**];

[**DARK** – **EARTH**] =

Epithet + Noun

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According to Milman Parry's definition of formula, the ESSENTIAL IDEA of the epithet phrase

[SWIFT – HORSES] = [HORSES];

[IMMORTAL – GODS] = [GODS];

[BROAD – EARTH] = [EARTH];

[**DARK** – **EARTH**] = [**EARTH**]

FUN WITH EPITHETS

(4) FOURTH EPITHET

- RV 1.67.5a   *ajó ná kṣā́ṃ dādhā́ra pr̥thivī́ṃ*
                   "Like Aja (Ekapad) he supports the broad earth"

- RV 1.89.4b: tán *mā́tā́ pr̥thivī́ tát pitā́ diyaúḥ*
                   "At this (let) Mother Earth, at this Father Heaven"

- *Yasna* 10.4:   *staomi. ząm. pərəθβīm. paθanąm.vərəziiaŋhuuąm.*
                   xvāparąm. barəθrīm. tē. haoma. aṣāum

                   "This wide earth do I praise, expanded far (with paths),
                   the productive, the full bearing, thy mother, holy plant!

- *Skáld.* 57   *Hver eru jarðarheiti? Hon heitir Jǫrð* [...] *Fold* [...]

                   "What are poetic terms for earth? She's called *Jǫrð, Fold* [...]"

(4) [BROAD (PIE *$p̥lth_2$-) – EARTH]

- RV 1.67.5a
  *ajó ná **kṣā́ṃ** dādhāra **pr̥thivī́ṃ***
  "Like Aja (Ekapad) he supports **the broad earth**"

- RV 1.89.4b:
  tán *mātǎ **pr̥thivī́** tát pitǎ diyaúḥ*
  "At this (let) Mother **Earth**, at this Father Heaven"

- *Yasna* 10.4:
  *staomi. **zą̇m. pərəϑβīm.** paθanąm.vərəziiaŋhuuąm.*
  xvāparąm. barəθrīm. tē. haoma. ašāum

  "This **wide earth** do I praise, expanded far (with paths),
    the productive, the full bearing, thy mother, holy plant!

- *Skáld.* 57
  *Hver eru jarðarheiti? Hon heitir Jǫrð […] **Fold** […]*

  "What are poetic terms for earth? She's called *Jǫrð*, **Fold** […]"

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                      "This **wide earth** do I praise, expanded far (with paths), the productive, the full bearing, thy mother, holy plant!"

Formula [BROAD (PIE *$p̥lth_2$-) – EARTH]:

EPITHET + NOUN formula

(4) [EARTH (PIE *$p̥lth_2$- 'broad')]

- RV 1.89.4b: tán *mātā́ p̥thivī́ tát pitā́ diyaúḥ*
  "At this (let) Mother **Earth**, at this Father Heaven"
- *Skáld*. 57 *Hver eru jarðarheiti? Hon heitir Jǫrð* […] ***Fold*** […]

  "What are poetic terms for earth? She's called *Jǫrð*, ***Fold*** […]"

Substantive for [EARTH] is the reflex of a word for [BROAD] :

TRANSFERRED EPITHET

Transferred epithet

- What is a **transferred epithet**?

  A lexical item which requires the assumption of the prior existence of a fixed formula of noun and epithet (substantive and adjective).

  (Watkins 1995:156–7)

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- which requires the PRIOR existence of a fixed formula of noun and epithet (substantive + adjective):

RV 1.67.5a   [...] **kṣā́ṃ** *dādhāra* **pṛthivī́ṃ**
              "he supports **the broad earth**"

Transferred epithets and gods' names

Transferred epithets are often terms of the every-day lexicon:

- Latin *terra* 'earth, land' < **ters-ā-* 'the Dry one'
- Ved. *márta-* 'man' < **mórto-* 'the Mortal one'
- OIr *duine* 'man' < **dʰǵʰom-i̯o-* 'the Earthly one'

Transferred epithets and gods' names

Transferred epithets are often terms of the every-day lexicon: Latin *terra* 'earth, land', Ved. *márta-* 'man', OIr *duine* 'man'.

BUT another lexical field which is very rich in transferred epithets is:

RELIGIOUS or MYTHICAL PROPER NAMES

Transferred epithets and gods' names

Lexical field which is rich in transferred **epithets**, RELIGIOUS or MYTHICAL **PROPER NAMES:** Ved. *Pṛthivī́* 'Earth', Skr. *Śiva* 'god of Destruction', Skr. *Buddha* 'Siddharta Gautama'.

• **Epithets easily become proper names**. The study of religious/mythical proper names should ALWAYS take into account traditional epithets.

Religious/Mythical Proper Names

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   Within Christianity:

   the *Almighty*, the *Lord*, the *Father* <u>NOT</u> *God*
   Oh my gosh! <u>NOT</u> *Oh my God!*

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Religious/Mythical Proper Names

Reasons:

1. Names of gods and mythical characters may undergo distortions of various kind for various reasons. E.g. tabooism, when the actual name of a deity is avoided.

2. Names do not always have a real connection with the objects they refer to:

    my birth name ***Riccardo*** (PGmc. ****rik(j)a-hardu-*** **'strong in rule'**) does not imply **I am 'strong in rule'**.

Religious/Mythical Proper Names

1. Names of gods and mythical characters may undergo distortions of various kind for various reasons.

2. Names do not always have a real connection with the objects they refer to.

- **N.1** is true (and can be **a problem for linguists**), but is **n.2 true as well?** Is there **no difference between** personal names like *Riccardo, Yusef, Meloni* and religious or mythical names like *Pṛthivī, Śiva* and *Buddha*?

What's in a name?

SO:

- A **personal name given at birth** does **not** (usually) tell us anything about the **actual qualities associated with the person** who bears the name.

- **Within systems of meanings** and semantic associations (= semiotic systems, such as poetic language, mythology, religion), HOWEVER, **names** do **mean something**.

- **Mythological names ALMOST ALWAYS** have **meaning**: sometimes we are able to actually understand it, sometimes we are not. **Never meaningless names** for **GODS**: you do **not** call a GOD *Riccardo* or *Yusef* or *Meloni*

- **Unless** these **proper names** have acquired a **specific meaning**, e.g. [PRESIDENTE]. In that case, you may call the supreme **GOD** *Meloni* (**of the UNIVERSE**).