Keating P. J. McKeon

Taming the Lion/Feeding the Beast: Homeric Fables and the Ethics of Epic

Abstract: This chapter argues that Apollo's comparison of Achilles to a lion seeking a feast at *Il.* 24.39–45 constitutes a compressed fable narrative, which functions as an embedded ethical program within the epic. Previous scholarship has typically categorized these lines alongside other similes involving lions in the *Iliad*, a classification informed by a conception of generic hierarchy that relegates the beast fable to an inferior status relative to epic and is accordingly disposed to read animal content in Homer as the domain of simile. This chapter looks beyond such limitations both to resolve the paradoxical relationship of beast and feast and to clarify the moral encoding of Apollo's discourse, demonstrating a condensed but complex engagement with the didactic fable (αἶνος). Consequently, I locate not only an intergeneric dialogue with unique implications for the immediate narrative, but also a forceful glance back to the grisly feast (and notorious crux) of the proem

1 Introduction

As the *Iliad*'s final book begins, Olympus is riven by supersized tensions. A poem's worth of battlefield manipulations has led the gods at last to a decisive confrontation over one of the narrative's central ethical quandaries: just how much is owed our enemies?

It is the Greek hero Achilles who has brought these matters to a head. Little satisfied by simply killing his chief Trojan adversary, Hector, the son of Peleus revels in corpse mutilation of the most violent type: lashing Hector's body to his chariot, Achilles drags it repeatedly around Patroclus' tomb, leaving the corpse to lie mangled on the ground at day's end. We as the poem's audience are presented with a scene pitiful and stomach-churning in equal measure — a reaction shared by the god Apollo. Addressing the other Olympians, he expresses his disgust at Achilles' behavior: the hero, he says, is like a savage lion seeking a feast (δαίς). This lion's desired repast, in other words, is no accustomed prey but the typical prerogative of human beings as a meal

My thanks to Ursula Gärtner and Lukas Spielhofer for kindly inviting me to participate in the intellectually invigorating conference from which this chapter arose.

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111181936-003

of ritual importance; it is enough to bring us up short if imagined in a lion's mouth. It suggests an explosion of norms verging on the anarchic, a world in which bloodthirsty lions dine like humankind. In the disruption of Apollo's peculiar construction, however, it is generic hierarchies themselves that may be torn asunder.

In this chapter, I will argue that what has typically been classed as merely another lion-centered simile at *Il.* 24.39–45 may be read more profitably as a compressed fable narrative, which functions as an embedded ethical program within the epic. Viewed in this way, we encounter a condensed but complex engagement with the didactic fable (αἶνος) that carries unique implications for our understanding of Homeric speech. In this emergent intergeneric dialogue, we find not only a recasting of existing hierarchies but also a forceful glance back to the grisly feast — and notorious crux — of the poem's opening.

2 Lions, and lions, and lions — Oh my!

Before examining Apollo's particular lion, we should undertake a brief consideration of simile in the *Iliad*, insofar as such a thing is possible.[1] By virtue of their sheer prevalence, the similes of the Homeric epics have received immense scrutiny and inspired numerous interpretations.[2] Modern critics both affirm their narrative significance and move far beyond a musty view of similes as flights of fancy for the poet grown weary of bloody battlefield tableaux.[3] This whistlestop tour of the form must continue to the simile's fundamental linguistic construction using one of the *Iliad*'s shorter leonine examples, here involving Aeneas in the immediate aftermath of Pandarus's slaying by Diomedes: ἀμφὶ δ᾽ ἄρ᾽ αὐτῷ βαῖνε λέων ὡς ἀλκὶ πεποιθώς […] ("He stepped over him like a lion confident in his strength", *Il.* 5.298). In such a comparison, the lion serves as the vehicle — the thing whose attributes are borrowed — while Aeneas is

1 More complete and illuminating treatments of the topic than this space permits are numerous. Some of the most interesting work on simile in recent years has been refracted through the study of metaphor; see Zanker 2019 (examining Homer specifically) and Donoghue 2014 (on metaphor writ large). For a nimble survey of simile in the wider tradition of Greco-Roman epic, see Gärtner/Blaschka 2019 as well as Feeney 2014.

2 Martin 1997 provides a helpful survey of rhetorical and thematic approaches, proposing himself a fresh 'rhythmic' perspective that Martin sees as evoking a distinctly musical style of performance with intergeneric resonance. See also Minchin 2001, who applies cognitive psychology to the study of Homeric simile.

3 Representatives of this now outmoded view include Bassett 1921 and Bowra 1950. Whitman 1958, 103, presents the simile as almost an intruder on the narrative, "rising like a prismatic inverted pyramid upon its one point of contact with the action".

the tenor, or the thing being described. As Aeneas's example suggests, it is most typically heroes who occupy the role of tenor in the poem. So often, in fact, are heroes compared to lions, specifically, that some measure of tedium is nearly unavoidable for the contemporary reader faced with the latest such simile. A vexing question may arise: while the tenors change, are the vehicles not more or less identical?

Happily, we find a remedy for such doldrums in the work of Jonathan Ready, who has done much to refresh and expand understanding of the Homeric simile by arguing for a sophisticated interplay of "same" and "distinctive" in the content of the poem's comparisons.[4] What we may see as linguistic differences across vehicles, Ready feels Homeric poets envisioned as "same" within certain encompassing templates, producing a narrative in which similes in both the narrator- and character-texts are used to "build on and challenge [...] the previous figuration(s) of the narrator";[5] roiling competition can result as a given simile caps the one previous.[6]

The sameness of a given vehicle's template is never more evident than in the case of lions, who definitively predominate in the poem's comparisons.[7] Ready schematizes the typical features of the lion simile in a comprehensive manner through a terminology of "scenarios", which — drawing on William Scott's approach[8] — he defines as "the irreducible component" that animates the vehicle's construction. Applied broadly to the *Iliad*'s lion similes, Ready identifies the following scenarios:

a. The lion does violence to defenseless livestock.
b. The lion attacks a farmstead with mixed results ("kill *or* be killed"; "kill *and* be killed"; failure and departure).
c. The lion enjoys a "feast".[9]

4 See *passim* Ready 2011.

5 Ready, 2011, 209–210.

6 Here, as he acknowledges, Ready builds on the work of Muellner 1996 in particular.

7 Lions appear in the *Iliad* at 3.21–28; 5.135–143; 5.161–162; 5.299; 5.476; 5.554–560; 5.780–783; 7.255–257; 8.338–341; 10.296–297; 10.485–488; 11.113–121; 11.129–130; 11.172–178; 11.238–240; 11.292–295; 11.382–383; 11.473–484; 11.548–556; 12.41–50; 12.292–293; 12.298–308; 13.197–202; 15.271–278; 15.592; 15.630–638; 16.487–491; 16.751–754; 16.756–761; 16.823–828; 17.61–69; 17.108–113; 17.132–137; 17.540–542; 17.657–666; 18.161–162; 18.318–322 (Achilles); 18.573–589 (Shield of Achilles); 20.164–173 (Achilles); 22.262–266 (Achilles); 24.39–45 (Achilles); 24.572 (Achilles). In the *Odyssey*'s similes, lions feature at 4.35–39; 4.791–792; 6.130–134; 9.292; 17.126–130; 22.402–406; 23.47–48.

8 See Scott 2009, 19, on the concept of the "simileme", which he defines as "the mental structure underlying each simile", that is, "the nonverbal background material shared by poet and audience". Ready 2017, 205, distinguishes his own approach from Scott's insofar as the former believes that the Homeric poet operated not by selecting a vehicle writ large (e.g. a lion) and then considering the simileme for potentially relevant detail; but rather had instant resort to a vehicle as engaged in a particular action (e.g. a lion eating a sheep).

9 Ready 2017, 222–224.

The first two scenarios suggest violence as the end in itself (with varying degrees of retribution), but the third presents a "feast" as the outcome. Of note is that Ready seems to use this term simply to designate the lions' meal as opposed to any especially fine dining. Indeed, the very instances of consumption cited by Ready display all the bloody savagery that we might expect from the big cats: τῆς δ' ἐξ αὐχέν' ἔαξε λαβὼν κρατεροῖσιν ὀδοῦσι | πρῶτον, ἔπειτα δέ θ' αἷμα καὶ ἔγκατα πάντα λαφύσσει ("First the lion breaks her neck caught fast in the strong teeth, then gulps down the blood and all the guts that are inward", viz. *Il.* 11.175–176, 17.63–64).[10] It is, however, precisely the more formal realization of a 'feasting' concept that leads us to the passage at issue in this chapter.

3 Guilt-tripping the gods

Apollo's temper has reached full boil by Book 24's opening. After nearly a fortnight of Achilles desecrating Hector's corpse, the god convenes the Olympians to reproach them for their apparent dereliction in safeguarding sacred norms:

ἀλλ' ὅτε δή ῥ' ἐκ τοῖο δυωδεκάτη γένετ' ἠώς,
καὶ τότ' ἄρ' ἀθανάτοισι μετηύδα Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων·
"σχέτλιοί ἐστε, θεοί, δηλήμονες· οὔ νύ ποθ' ὑμῖν
Ἕκτωρ μηρί' ἔκηε βοῶν αἰγῶν τε τελείων;
τὸν νῦν οὐκ ἔτλητε νέκυν περ ἐόντα σαῶσαι,
ᾗ τ' ἀλόχῳ ἰδέειν καὶ μητέρι καὶ τέκεϊ ᾧ
καὶ πατέρι Πριάμῳ λαοῖσί τε, τοί κέ μιν ὦκα
ἐν πυρὶ κήαιεν καὶ ἐπὶ κτέρεα κτερίσαιεν.
ἀλλ' ὀλοῷ Ἀχιλῆϊ θεοὶ βούλεσθ' ἐπαρήγειν,
ᾧ οὔτ' ἄρ φρένες εἰσὶν ἐναίσιμοι οὔτε νόημα
γναμπτὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι, λέων δ' ὣς ἄγρια οἶδεν,
ὅς τ' ἐπεὶ ἂρ μεγάλῃ τε βίῃ καὶ ἀγήνορι θυμῷ
εἴξας εἶσ' ἐπὶ μῆλα βροτῶν ἵνα **δαῖτα** λάβῃσιν·
ὣς Ἀχιλεὺς ἔλεον μὲν ἀπώλεσεν, οὐδέ οἱ αἰδὼς
γίγνεται, ἥ τ' ἄνδρας μέγα σίνεται ἠδ' ὀνίνησι."
(*Il.* 24.31–45)

So when the twelfth day after this had dawned, then Phoebus Apollo addressed the immortals: "Cruel are you, gods, you agents of harm. Did Hector never burn the thighs of unblemished bulls and goats for you? Now you will not bother to preserve him — even as a corpse — for his wife and mother and child to look upon, as well as his father Priam and his people, who would immediately burn him in the fire and bury him honorably. But it is baleful Achilles

10 Ready 2017, 223.

> whom you, gods, wish to aid — he whose mind is irreverent and whose heart's intent is unyielding. Savagery is innate to him, like a lion who when he has yielded to his towering strength and willful spirit advances against the flocks of men to secure for himself a feast (δαῖτα). Just so has Achilles obliterated pity, nor has he a sense of shame, which both harms and helps men mightily."
>
> (Transl. K. McK.)

Apollo vocalizes a glaring contrast in behaviors: Hector, while living, offered proper sacrifices to the gods, who now do no more than look on while his body is mutilated. Achilles, on the other hand, is a monster of immoral excess. At line 41, reaching his climactic judgment of Achilles' character, the god likens him to a lion intent on seizing a feast, here designated as such by the marked lexeme δαίς rather than as an unmarked 'meal' word elevated by a colorful translation. Despite Apollo's powerful statement of condemnation, however, what makes this example much different from the lion similes that have preceded it? Those lions, too, have marauded at will, threatening the very sort of flocks invoked here.

In the first place, this is but the second lion simile to be spoken by a character within the narrative, lending its deployment a uniquely subjective quality as part of the character-text rather than the narrator-text.[11] Notably, the only other spoken lion simile is uttered by Achilles himself. In fact, it is the last lion simile to appear before Apollo's remarks, when Achilles implicitly likens himself to the animal as he disclaims the possibility of any truce with Hector:

> Τὸν δ' ἄρ' ὑπόδρα ἰδὼν προσέφη πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς·
> "Ἕκτορ, μή μοι, ἄλαστε, συνημοσύνας ἀγόρευε.
> ὡς οὐκ ἔστι λέουσι καὶ ἀνδράσιν ὅρκια πιστά,
> οὐδὲ λύκοι τε καὶ ἄρνες ὁμόφρονα θυμὸν ἔχουσιν,
> ἀλλὰ κακὰ φρονέουσι διαμπερὲς ἀλλήλοισιν,
> ὣς οὐκ ἔστ' ἐμὲ καὶ σὲ φιλήμεναι οὐδέ τι νῶιν
> ὅρκια ἔσσονται, πρίν γ' ἢ ἕτερόν γε πεσόντα
> αἵματος ἆσαι Ἄρηα, ταλαύρινον πολεμιστήν."
> (*Il.* 22.260–267)

> Then eyeing him grimly swift-footed Achilles spoke: "Don't talk to me of dealmaking, Hector, you wretch. Just as lions and men form no trustworthy pacts, nor do wolves and sheep share harmonious feeling — but are instead forever plotting evils against each other — so there's no way for you and me to find fellowship, and there won't be oaths between us until one of us has fallen and filled the fighter Ares, the bull-hide shield-holder, full of his blood."
>
> (Transl. K.McK.)

11 Easy to miss, perhaps, given longstanding negligence towards similes in the character-text; see Ready 2011, 3 n. 6.

Jonathan Ready locates this vehicle's pairing of incorrigible antagonists in fable, looking both to the lines' content,[12] as well as to Achilles' apparent rhetorical purpose. Describing fable as "a genre routinely deployed as a mechanism of blame", Ready observes Achilles' wish to chastise Hector, and in so doing, to distance himself from the norms of heroic epic by spurning the Trojan's generically conventional request.[13] Recalling the 'capping' function noted above for similes, we can see then how Apollo's ascription of a lion's savagery picks up on the hero's self-identification while expanding the scale of its consequences. We will consider the full implications of this development below.

One further peculiarity may be observed in the vehicle of Apollo's apparent simile, centered on the lexeme flagged now several times: *this* lion moves against flocks to get itself a δαίς, a very specific kind of collective meal, namely, one shared among human beings.[14] The δαίς may well be the cornerstone of human coexistence in epic, rooted as it is in ties of community and reciprocity, to the extent that Athenaeus makes a point of affirming the Homeric poet's use of δαίς to describe human consumption alone.[15] Linked closely with sacrifice, it is a ritual occasion with religious significance culminating in the orderly apportionment of a sacrificed animal. As Egbert Bakker describes it, the epic δαίς is predicated upon "division and distribution" and thereby "highlights the symbolic value of food" as opposed to being "a mere act of food consumption".[16] In this way, the δαίς constitutes a crucial institution not only for humanity, but for the gods as well. By seeking a δαίς, Apollo's lion pursues much more than the errant sheep — a marked difference from the broadly construed 'feast' scenario identified by Ready.

12 Ready 2011, 64–69, cites a host of fables featuring shaky oaths between lions and men, ranging from the *Aesopica* to Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (examined below), and argues that the influence of fable appears "even more pronounced" in the tension adduced between wolves and sheep owing to the near absence of the pair from epic as well as their "anthropomorphized, cogitating" character in Achilles' depiction.

13 Ready 2011, 66.

14 As to be expected for such a fundamental part of early Greek society, the bibliography here is ample. See Saïd 1979; Strauss Clay 1994; Rundin 1996; Bakker 2013; Stocking 2017.

15 Ath. 1.12–13. This will have relevance for the *Iliad*'s proem as well. On the playful reception of these epic conventions by Babrius, cf. Lukas Spielhofer's contribution in this volume.

16 Bakker 2013, 39.

4 Where lions dare to dine

Because this pairing is so clearly incongruous within an epic setting, our frame of reference for its explication must reach beyond the world of Homeric simile. By comparison, beast fable (as Ready detects in Achilles' rebuke of Hector) offers an accommodating venue for the unlikely convergence of wild animal with human mores. Indeed, in this realm, lions frequently participate in — and even initiate — the δαίς. The lion's relationship with the event, however, is notably fraught.

A fable by Babrius (Babr. 106) offers a revealing paradigm for the lion's style of feasting. It opens with the creature's chief motivation: λέων ποτ᾽ ἀνδρῶν βίον ἄριστον ἐζήλου […] ("Once upon a time a lion tried to emulate the noblest lifestyle of men […]", Babr. 106.1). Presumably this wish to assume the habits of a gentleman could manifest itself in myriad ways, but the fable concerns itself with only one, the δαίς, which the fable presents as the defining feature of civilized human behavior. With this aim in mind, the lion gathers his fellow worthies from the animal kingdom and convenes a recurring dinner party: ὁ δ᾽ εἰστία τε κἀφίλει νόμῳ ξείνων, | ἄδην τιθεὶς ἅπασι δαῖτα θυμήρη ("…and he entertained them and extended his friendship in a hospitable way, laying out for all a lovely feast (δαῖτα) in utter abundance", Babr. 106.7–8). All quite pleasant, it would seem, but the event has engendered a festering resentment in the lion's housemate, a fox, who finds himself increasingly sidelined in the distribution of meat overseen by the appointed carver (δαιτρεύων), an old ape. When the lion at last asks the fox — who by this point is avoiding the feast — what has spurred his irritation, the fox shares his fear for what the gradual diminution of his portion forebodes. To this, the lion simply smiles and tells the fox to blame the ape, not him.

A different story by Babrius depicts similar tensions between lion and fox (Babr. 95). Strikingly, this fable is the longest example of the form known from antiquity and has attracted attention for its epic features.[17] To make a long fable short, the fox manages, after no small effort, to lure a stag into the lion's den for the latter's delectation, culminating in a solitary meal: ἐπεὶ δὲ λόχμης εἰς μυχὸν κατεκλείσθη | λέων μὲν αὐτὸς εἶχε δαῖτα πανθοίνην […] ("Once he had tucked himself into the recesses of his lair, the lion had for himself a bountiful feast (δαῖτα)", Babr. 95.89–90). The fox is left to scrounge for the stag's heart: […] ἡ δ᾽ ἀγωγὸς εἰστήκει | πεινῶσα θήρης καρδίην δὲ νεβρείην | λάπτει πεσοῦσαν ἁρπάσασα λαθραίως, | καὶ τοῦτο κέρδος εἶχεν ὧν ἐκεκμήκει ("…but the escort stood at hand hankering after the game, and when the stag's heart had fallen away, he snatched it in stealth and

17 On this fable's allusions to Homeric poetry, cf. Spielhofer's contribution in this volume.

gobbled it up, and this was such profit as he had for his troubles", Babr. 95.92–95). Even this, however, is greater recompense than the lion seems willing to permit, and the fox must deceive him by citing the stag's foolishness and claiming a consequent lack of καρδία. Not only, then, is the lion a solitary feaster, but he seeks actively to exclude others' involvement beyond their role as caterer or entrée.

Other, similar tensions around fair distribution shadow the lion's relationships in fable, even when the δαίς is not named as such. In one Aesopic tale about a collaborative hunt (Aesop. 149 P. [= 154 Hsr.; 210 Ch.]), a lion has an ass divvy up the resulting shares (μοίρας), but finds such fault with the donkey's equitable apportionment that, enraged, he makes a meal of his carver. The fox whom the lion then tasks with assuming the role takes the hint, piling the greatest share of meat in one heap with only a morsel for himself. When asked by the lion about his eccentric allocation, the fox names his inspiration — the ass's fate. Fables from Babrius (Babr. 67) and Phaedrus (Phaed. 1.5 Z. [= G.]) depict analogous scenarios. In the former, a lion and an ass undertake a hunt as partners, only to have the lion divide their haul into three portions (μοίρας) and justify assigning each to himself. Phaedrus's tale alters and increases the other members of the hunting party to include a cow, goat, and sheep, none of whom fares any better in the division of spoils; this lion simply produces an additional reason to explain his seizure of all four portions. The epimythium is telling: *sic totam praedam sola improbitas abstulit* ("And so audacity alone carried off the booty in its entirety", Phaed. 1.5.11).

What unites these narratives is the disequilibrium inherent to the pairing of lion and δαίς, both when the feast is named explicitly as such and when its norms guide the planned apportionment of meat. Notably, too, the feast or apportionment — and the lion's relationship to it — is consistently the fable's operative element; it is not, in other words, incidental to other goings-on in the fable but is instead the focus. There is no particularly "happy" ending for the other diners when the lion is involved in this ritual division: at least one other character is left dissatisfied or dead (or scrambling to escape this fate) by the fable's close. The lion is seen either actively overstepping the guardrails intended to ensure a stabilizing sense of reciprocity or simply ignoring them altogether. It is, perhaps, to be expected that the lion would receive a share commensurate with his elite status in the animal kingdom,[18] but the depiction in fable carries this to such an extreme that other would-be diners are provided no share at all. The lion's insatiable appetite produces a δαίς that risks the rest of the community's paradoxical starvation. While these animal fables do not feature human beings who are threatened directly by the lion's

18 This status is itself oftentimes a mirror for human power, on which see the helpful overview of Greek and Near Eastern evidence in Ulanowski 2015.

behavior, humankind is, in a way, menaced implicitly in the perversion of its prerogatives.[19]

So plain is the negative association of lion and δαίς that it seems almost to attain a proverbial level of social disruption. The accompanying narratives are, of course, what establish this picture, but the persistent scenario of the lion taking more than his share, or somehow impinging on the fair share of others, suggests that the lion's role in the feast is fundamentally transgressive and disordered, and oftentimes dangerous. To pair "lion and δαίς" may be enough to summon the audience's anticipatory feeling that something is due to go awry, with damaging and even existential consequences. Consider, in a modern context, the similarly condensed pairing of "the bull in a China shop": rare is the listener who wonders whether the animal's presence is a boon or a bother for the shopkeeper.

In addition to these freestanding fable narratives, we find an even more proximate analogue for Apollo's lion — both chronologically and in its embedded construction — in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. This famous merger of beast and feast appears in the second strophe of the third stasimon (*Ag*. 717–736), as the chorus of Argive elders narrates an unsettling tale about a lion reared at home like a human child; docile in its youth, it matures into the instinctual savagery of its species. The outcome is predictably grisly, albeit with a twist:

χρονισθεὶς δ' ἀπέδειξεν ἦ-
θος τὸ πρὸς τοκέων· χάριν
γὰρ τροφεῦσιν ἀμείβων
μηλοφόνοισι μάταισιν
δαῖτ' ἀκέλευστος ἔτευξεν,
αἵματι δ' οἶκος ἐφύρθη,
ἄμαχον ἄλγος οἰκέταις,
μέγα σίνος πολυκτόνον.
ἐκ θεοῦ δ' ἱερεύς τις ἄ-
τας δόμοις προσεθρέφθη.
(Aesch. *Ag*. 727–736)

Once grown up, it displayed the disposition (ἦθος) of its parents, repaying its foster family by preparing a surprise banquet (ἀκέλευστος δαῖτα) of sheep-slaughtering destruction. The

19 Humans do intersect with a lion in Phaed. 2.1 Z. [= G.], when the creature rejects the attempt of an *improbus* to share in his kill, while permitting another man to approach and take a portion because of his *modestia*. Even this seeming validation of good order, however, is turned on its head by the fabulist's epimythium: *Exemplum egregium prorsus et laudabile; | verum est aviditas dives et pauper pudor* ("This is, by all means, a noble example and should be praised; but in truth greed is wealthy and propriety poor", 11–12). Even as the lion seems to behave in an upstanding way, his actions are revealed to contradict society's "normal" operation.

> house was bathed in blood, an overwhelming anguish for the household, a massive and murderous plague. A god saw to it that what had been raised as a housemate was a priest of Ruin. (Transl. K.McK.)

The lion embraces its ἦθος in transgressing against its human caretakers, crafting a δαίς whose destructive qualities threaten the community's very existence. In fact, the direct evocation of sheep slaughter may point towards an implicit massacre of the house's human inhabitants, an ambiguity that also surfaces in Apollo's Iliadic presentation.[20]

Of course, the Aeschylean passage is treated not as a simile within the play but as a fable, or αἶνος, a distinct genre with origins in archaic Greek poetry. Gregory Nagy describes the αἶνος as being at its most fundamental level "a performance conveying a meaning that needs to be interpreted and then applied in moments of making moral decisions".[21] We can add to this several features typically associated with the form: it is explicitly fictitious; it represents a distinct event taking place in the past through the actions of distinct characters; it is related not only as a story *per se* but told in order to make a point (i.e. there is a moral to these stories); it is metaphorical.[22] Moreover it requires a clever audience, a dynamic that Deborah Steiner captures succinctly: since an αἶνος "challenges its audience to decipher a covert meaning, telling a fable is a test of its targets' acumen".[23] Steiner applies this framing both to the paradigmatic αἶνος of "The Hawk and Nightingale" in Hesiod's *Works and Days* as well as to fables from Archilochus and Aesop, observing the uniquely contentious uses to which αἶνοι are put as "competitive devices deployed […] within agonistic situations […] [involving] issues of opposing poetics, modes of discourse, and genres", with an ultimate aim of "political-cum-civic authority".[24] In this context of debate, whether ethical or generic, the speaker's very status may hang in the balance.

20 At *Il.* 24.43 we observe the potential bivalence of βροτῶν, whether indicating the possessors of the flocks *or* serving as the content of the δαίς.

21 Nagy 2007, 63. On αἶνος, cf. Bottini (in this volume).

22 For the bases of this synthesized typology, see Perry 1952; van Dijk 1997; Kurke 2010. See also in this volume the introductory remarks by Ursula Gärtner and Lukas Spielhofer on fable as "a type of text or textual element recognizable to a group of recipients".

23 Steiner 2012, 6. Nagy 1990, 148, sees the well-defined audience delineated by fable as comprised of σοφοί (they can decipher the message of the αἶνος), ἀγαθοί (they are versed in the relevant ethical norms), and φίλοι (they are well equipped to understand the speaker by virtue of their existing fellowship with that speaker). On the possible role of fables in actual oratory, cf. Damian Pierzak's contribution in this volume.

24 Steiner 2012, 1–2.

This is not to say that similes themselves cannot play a comparable role in moments of rhetorical competition; indeed, we have already noted their frequent capacity to serve this function in the *Iliad*.[25] However, the moral cast of the αἶνος, and the surreal or supernatural abilities that the beast fable most typically entails — that is, animals speaking or acting like human beings — render the genre distinct from the simile and its normal "rhythms of nature".[26] This returns us to *Iliad* 24, where Apollo, it would appear, is now the rhetorical competitor *par excellence*, of the kind that Steiner's "agonistic situations" necessitate. He speaks in assembly, pleading his case, attempting to persuade his fellow divinities of the moral rectitude of his position against the injustice of Achilles' behavior. Still further, he decries the gods' inaction as its own form of injustice, in a way an ancient manifestation of the contemporary dictum that 'silence is violence'.[27]

Apollo's moralizing purpose, conveyed through a metaphorical fiction of lion and feast, may point us towards a condensed but intelligible αἶνος narrative. This, in turn, may indicate a traditional fable template. Between *Iliad* 24 and Aeschylus — and taking into account the examples surveyed above from the wider tradition of fable literature — the elements of this template are apparent enough: a lion transcends the bounds of the animal world to secure for itself a human feast — a δαίς — with consequences that threaten social order. If, for example, Aeschylus represents a more complete rendition (and one that places the lion within a domestic setting from the start), Apollo's version is no less meaningful in its messaging, simply because the pairing of lion and δαίς is so conspicuous. There is also a moral to this story, in the manner that we might expect for a fable; in fact, the so-called epimythium is generally regarded as a standard feature of the genre.[28] Here Apollo

25 Ready 2011 is especially concerned with this use, examining the "competitive dynamics" of the *Iliad*'s similes most fully in chapters 4 and 5.

26 As Buxton 2004, 152, describes the simile's world. The named features of the αἶνος here might be supplemented by the helpful accounting of Ben Edwin Perry's parameters for beast fable in Ziolkowski 1990, 8–10. These 'rules' are as follows: a fictitious narrative; the recounting of a "single action, short chain of actions, or speech that took place once in the past"; the performance of those actions by "specific characters"; and the purpose of a fable as being "for the sake of a moral, not merely for entertainment". van Dijk 1997, 6–7 notes the exceptions to these rules and questions several of Ziolkowski's characterizations.

27 The uniquely contentious dimensions of this appearance are made evident in Hera's response at 24.55–63. On the deep mythology potentially underlying this antagonism, see Burgess 2004 and Mackie 2013.

28 It is what Holzberg 1993 calls a "Schlußwort" and sees as part of a nearly formulaic structure. Strong 2021, 384–385, captures the more measured general reception of the epimythium, noting that while its absence is "common enough", its appearance serves as "a straightforward genre indicator that a given text is a fable".

holds forth on Achilles' obliteration of pity (ἔλεος) and lack of shame (αἰδώς), which, as the god avers, ἄνδρας μέγα σίνεται ἠδ' ὀνίνησι. ("harms and helps men mightily", *Il.* 24.45).[29] Shame constitutes "a central notion in the world of values in the *Iliad* and denotes an inhibition against violating others or attracting their displeasure", while pity in the epic's final book represents "the most effective motivation on both the divine [...] and human planes".[30] Apollo, in other words, concludes his compressed beast fable with those concepts likeliest to be felt by his listeners as a basis for reproach and, in turn, most certain to spur them to action. Furthermore, the god may tap into the leitmotif of shamelessness that surfaces in the fabulistic lion's δαίς: as the Phaedrian fable seen earlier (1.5 Z. [= G.]) states explicitly in its epimythium, *improbitas* ("audacity") is embodied in the lion's wanton behavior.

Certainly, the visceral force of combining lion and δαίς ought not be overlooked by a contemporary audience potentially desensitized to dogs playing poker or Bugs Bunny as the Rabbit of Seville. Far more than a colorful (or absurd) word choice for dinner, the lion's pursuit of a δαίς imposes an encompassing framework of moral norms and their looming violation, just as the lion's embrace of its ἦθος in *Agamemnon* is inimical to the ethical fabric of the οἶκος. If Achilles is allowed to proceed in his depredations, Apollo warns, it will be little different from a lion permitted to procure for himself a human banquet. While no single feature of these lines long viewed solely as a simile renders them instantly as fable, their totality points us in the direction of a deep, and here compressed, fable narrative underlying a typical simile's formatting.[31] Conversely, if we foreclose the possibility of a fable template embedded in Apollo's simile, we are left with only a colorful word choice and a rather toothless rhetoric: just another lion, it would seem, craving yet another mutton dinner, albeit with a gruesome (if vacuous) frisson.[32]

---

29 Brügger 2017, *ad loc.*, observes the challenge of this line since αἰδώς "ought to have an entirely positive connotation in accord with Apollo's intention"; this difficulty led Aristarchus to athetize the line. The basis for preservation, however, as "a generalizing description of the effects" of αἰδώς might itself seem to comport with the function of an epimythium. An alternative approach cited (albeit skeptically) by Brügger would only further this connection: "he who lacks *aidṓs* suffers harm, he who has it is at an advantage".

30 Brügger 2017, *ad* 24.44. Apollo's seeming epimythium can be compared profitably with the observations that follow Hesiod's "The Hawk and the Nightingale" concerning δίκη and its express application to humankind rather than animals (Hes. *Op.* 274–280).

31 And surely compression alone should not disqualify such a reading. See Scodel 2002, 124–154, on the centrality of "abbreviated narrative" to the Homeric epics more generally.

32 Bakker 2010, 40–43 provides a helpful reminder that the hero has rejected sustenance previously in demonstrating his "extreme mourning" for Patroclus, suggesting here that it would be rather silly for Apollo to paint Achilles as simply a *food*-obsessed lion. The added emphasis in Apollo's framing on the θυμός driving Achilles, as opposed to the lowly γαστήρ, further underlines the

Yet the choice of lexeme hardly seems careless given that Apollo has offered only one previous simile in the poem, reflecting a marked degree of selectivity in his character-text. At that moment, several books earlier, the god had urged détente with Poseidon by observing the absurdity of gods enmeshing themselves in the disputes of pathetic mortals, comparing humans to fast-decaying leaves (21.461–467). If only recently Apollo had been loath to enmesh himself in disputes involving mortals alone, what has changed by Book 24?[33] The god's engagement with fable emphasizes the heightened — indeed, universal — ethical stakes of this dispute: Achilles' transgression exceeds the realm of human conflict to destabilize divine prerogatives. This use of fable may function, in turn, as a mirror image of what Ready finds in Achilles' recourse to fable at *Iliad* 22.260–267.[34] As noted above, Ready sees Achilles' reference to fable narratives involving distrust between lions and men, wolves and sheep, as emblematic of the warrior's rejection of the heroic code of behavior. Just as Apollo appropriates Achilles' language to reinterpret, and thereby escalate, the identification of the warrior with an explicitly out-of-control lion, I suggest that the god inverts the hero's purpose as a fable-teller, too. In Achilles' turn as a fabulist, he knocks the epic narrative off-kilter by summoning a distinct genre to disrupt epic norms. Here, Apollo resorts to fable to steady those same conventions, in this case as they pertain to treatment of the dead.[35]

Thus, by so decoding this αἶνος, we find that our own generic hierarchies have been destabilized. Beast fable is ostensibly a 'low' genre markedly distinct from the lofty ideals of Homeric epic, and therefore absent from *Iliad* or *Odyssey* — a

greater signification of δαίς beyond a hearty meal. On the contrast between these motivations, see again Bakker 2010, which elaborates on Pucci 1987, 157–187.

33 Indeed it is *Hera* who feels compelled to respond with a version of Apollo's appeal to divine supremacy, arguing at 24.58–61 that Hector, a mortal breastfed by a woman (Ἕκτωρ μὲν θνητός τε γυναῖκά τε θήσατο μαζόν), must not be afforded the same regard as Achilles, the child of a goddess whom Hera herself had a hand in rearing (αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεύς ἐστι θεᾶς γόνος, ἣν ἐγὼ αὐτὴ θρέψα τε καὶ ἀτίτηλα).

34 This kind of mirroring fits more broadly into the poem's presentation of Apollo and Achilles, on which see Rabel 1990.

35 If Achilles uses fable to interrogate epic, we might wonder if Apollo's generic interplay does the reverse, for which Swift 2014 provides a useful point of reference. Of Hesiod's "The Hawk and the Nightingale" she writes that the poet's αἶνος constitutes a "twist on the conventions of the animal fable, since by stressing the ethical differences between humans and animals his coda questions the meaningfulness of the fable genre", while Archilochus' αἶνος of fox and eagle "reminds us of the gap between humans and animals, and the artificiality of a genre which presents them as moral equivalents" (72–73). If pertinent to Apollo's engagement with fable, I feel that such probing in the character-text would be nonetheless distinct from the dominant view of generic hierarchy that *excludes* beast fable outright from the narrative.

supposition that tends to persist in study of the two genres.[36] This strictly hierarchical conception of intergeneric engagement, however, may obscure deeper points of contact of the kind that we encounter here, and that surely existed in the interaction of different oral traditions in archaic Greek poetry.[37] We are invited to find the reality of "Homeric inclusiveness" not just in terms of the epic audience's composition but also through the intergeneric dialogue in which such an audience would surely have been fluent.[38] Indeed, once we acknowledge the imprint of beast fable, it is as though the epic poet pokes fun at the very notion of generic hierarchy such as it has developed in the millennia since: the fabulist in Book 24 is no Thersites, but a god, and a notably decorous one at that. Perhaps generic hierarchies better reflect modern sensibilities than ancient. Recognizing the role of an ur-fable in elevating what might otherwise be a bog-standard lion simile illuminates a still richer moral and poetic resonance in the god's rhetoric.

5 Back to the future

The deeper poetics binding lion with δαίς draw us back to the *Iliad*'s beginning to another proleptic feast, this one a site of famous text-critical disputation. Here is the poem's opening as it appears in the manuscripts and scholia available to us:

> Μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά, Πηληιάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
> οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε,
> πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν
> ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν
> οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή,
> (*Il.* 1.1–5)

> Sing, goddess, the hateful rage of Peleus' son Achilles, which stuck the Achaeans with sorrows innumerable and dispatched many hardy souls of heroes to Hades, and made the men themselves spoil for dogs and every manner of bird — and the will of Zeus was accomplished.
> (Transl. K.McK.)

36 Kurke 2006, 8–9, describes the place of fable in terms of "generic and sociopolitical abjection" and observes that beast fables appear in Hesiod "but never in Homer's elitist epic". See also Rothwell 1995.

37 Ancient critics may agree: see van Dijk 1997, 124–137, who notes that Theon and Philostratus both "put [Homer] on a par with fabulists", even as he stresses that "[f]ables occur only in didactic, not in heroic epic".

38 The phrase is borrowed from Scodel 2002, 173. She stresses the "actual social inclusiveness of epic performance" in contrast to the reading of *inter alios* Morris 1986, which locates Homeric poetry as part of a wider social program of elite control.

It is, however, Zenodotus' reading of δαῖτα for πᾶσι (transmitted to us only by Athenaeus) that has relevance here, rendering lines 4–5 as "[…] and made the men themselves spoil for dogs and a †feast (δαῖτα) for birds".[39] Aristarchus dismisses the reading without explicit explanation, though Rudolf Pfeiffer voices the generally accepted view that "it is Aristarchean to observe the poet's usage, to reject *daita* in the sense of animal food as non-Homeric, and to charge Zenodotus with ἄγνοια".[40] This assessment clearly colored the ensuing centuries of the lines' reception, but Pfeiffer notes the significance of "rare concord of the three tragedians" in alluding to the version of the proem familiar to Zenodotus.[41] Clearly δαῖτα was circulating widely in the fifth century. The probative value of its place in the textual tradition is bolstered still further on stylistic grounds. As Joachim Latacz observes, "Die Klimax der aufgezählten Schrecklichkeiten […] würde nach verbreiteter Ansicht durch ein komisch wirkendes 'und den Vögeln allen' zunichte gemacht".[42] To this Pfeiffer adds, tellingly, the absence of Aristarchus's view on *Iliad* 24.43, leaving us to wonder how he might have grappled with a second δαίς linked to an animal.[43]

Despite this body of countervailing evidence in favor of Zenodotus' reading, it is rare for an editor to prioritize δαῖτα. Let us, however, recognize for the moment the multiform nature of the Homeric text, and embrace here this alternative window onto the poem that Zenodotus provides in order to understand more completely the δαίς of Book 24. In Zenodotus' rendering of the proem, the rage of Achilles sends countless souls to Hades and makes their corpses spoil for dogs and, yes, a feast for birds. It is, of course, the very perversion of nature's order entailed in this act that so offended Aristarchus' sensibilities. As he recognized, animals in the context of archaic Greek poetry should be a δαίς for people — not the other way around. Yet the poet rationalizes this reversal immediately: in the animals' feasting on humans, the will of Zeus is accomplished.[44] This is surely accurate as it relates to the poem's development. As readers (and listeners) of the poem well know, Achilles is given license by Zeus to harness his rage in a way that will have catastrophic

39 Again Ath. 1.12–13.

40 Pfeiffer 1968, 112.

41 Pfeiffer 1968, 111. The lines are Aesch. *Supp.* 800–801, Soph. *Ant.* 29–30, and Eur. *Ion* 504–506.

42 Latacz/Nünlist/Stoevesandt 2000, *ad loc*. ("The climax of the enumerated horrors […] would, according to a widespread view, be cancelled out by a comical 'and all the birds'").

43 Pfeiffer 1968, 112 n. 2. Pfeiffer attributes the critic's silence to our own poorly preserved scholia for Book 24. He speculates that Aristarchus "may not have had the simile in his text or he may have constructed βροτῶν ἵνα δαῖτα".

44 The bibliography on the significance of Zeus' will for the poem's narrative is substantial. A representative smattering might include Murnaghan 1997; Elmer 2013, 153–173; Allan 2008; Pucci 2018.

consequences for the Achaeans. A δαίς comprised of humans, enjoyed by animals, is all part of the broader plan.

That is, until Book 24, when Apollo gives voice to the view that Achilles has been allowed to proceed too far in his freedom to wreak havoc. Hector, as we have seen, made proper sacrifices; Achilles, as a lion in search of a δαίς, aims to disrupt the normative workings of sacrifice to the gods and reciprocity among humans. The fact that the lion will "seize" (λάβῃσιν) the δαίς is antithetical to the feast's very basis in fair distribution.[45] Apollo moreover reminds his audience that bodies simply should not be left unburied as meals for animals.[46] We see the gods behaving in a manner familiar from the monarchs of tragedy, whether Creon in *Antigone* or the Atreids in *Ajax*.[47] What these rulers fail to understand, and consequently must have communicated to them by others, is that a corpse demands special treatment, even if the body belonged to an enemy in life. Apollo articulates this idea explicitly when he protests that the gods are denying Hector their proper regard "even though he is a corpse" (νέκυν περ ἐόντα, *Il.* 24.35); they persist in a position of enmity that has been made untenable by the fact of Hector's death. Thus, while the vision of a lion securing his δαίς is focused on Achilles and his violent revenge, it simultaneously taps a larger narrative network of ethical repugnance at the disgrace of a human body left to the predations of animal feasters.

In this way, by adopting an adversarial stance vis-à-vis Achilles' actions, Apollo stakes out a polemical position to both the will of Zeus and the poetic narrative itself. Apollo rejects the rationalization of the proem — a beastly δαίς sanctioned by Zeus — and instead argues that this final and most grotesque instantiation of the feast threatens the cosmic order. In other words, in his effort to enhance Achilles' τιμή by staging a macabre banquet, Zeus has now overindulged the hero's appetite — a macroscale peril that may not actually lie much distant from the microlevel of the fabulistic tradition. There, too, the lion is essentially concerned for securing the status he feels he deserves and his associated share of the spoil. The problem arises when,

45 Fairness here not necessarily being synonymous with equality: see Rundin 1996, 181–205 on the distinction and resulting tension. See, too, Tewksbury 2023 arguing that the δαίς aims to make concrete an ideal patron-dependent relationship, thereby enforcing a set social hierarchy.

46 See van der Plas 2021, which builds from Segal 1971 in arguing that instances of corpse mutilation in the *Iliad* feature a carefully constructed sequence encompassing escalation and climax.

47 The latter drama is especially apposite: at the moment of peak tension between Teucer and Menelaus concerning the proper burial of the eponymous hero's corpse, both men turn to fable (1142–1158) in staking out their positions. The tensions surfaced in the debates of epic and tragedy have immense relevance for contemporary conflicts and their associated "necropolitics", which often entail withholding corpses and imposing restrictions on bereavement. See as an introduction to the concept Mmembe 2003.

in the process, he infringes on the participation of other community members by seizing *their* portions, too; that is no longer a proper δαίς but a glut. We might note that Achilles has consented in Book 23 to the conciliatory δαίς owed him by Agamemnon (23.35–56), signaling the restoration of his status and his acceptance of compensation; in slaying Hector, he has also, of course, had his revenge for Patroclus' death. By this point in the narrative, then, Achilles' campaign to reassert his τιμή has exceeded reasonable bounds, and the hero now grasps at excess and enormity, much like the feasting lion of fable.

The metapoetic tension aroused by Apollo's challenge to the proem's δαίς may even gesture towards a variant narrative tradition latent in the epic. As David Elmer observes, a medieval manuscript documents an alternative proem for the *Iliad* that centers Apollo "as the moving force behind the plot and thereby minimizes the importance of Zeus as architect", with the result of an "Iliadic tradition that is anchored in a particularly direct way to Apollo's point of view, at the expense of Zeus".[48] Elmer contrasts this with the more balanced perspective of our *Iliad*, but the opposition that Apollo articulates in Book 24 — and the glaring conjunction of beast and δαίς that he uses in mounting his resistance to the narrative's development — mark out our text's ethical polarities in a striking manifestation of the epic's narrative doubling.[49]

This would seem to indicate that, even as Apollo brings the poem's narrative to a halt, he has been listening carefully the entire time. Seen as an αἶνος, the god's speech nearly breaks the epic's fourth wall, not only by hearkening back to the poem's opening, but by reaching into the world of simile to engage with what is, by this point in the *Iliad*, a reflexive association of Achilles with a lion. This simile type, which otherwise is applied widely in the epic, is used exclusively for Achilles once the warrior retakes the battlefield.[50] Furthermore, as we have seen previously, the last appearance of a lion simile has been in Achilles' own mouth, likening himself

48 Elmer 2013, 155–156.

49 Fenik 1974 largely initiated reexamination of Homeric doublets' importance for the narrative. Kelly 2007 is especially relevant here for his proposal of "increasing doublets" whereby a second example of a template is "magnified and contextualized by reference to its smaller partner" so as to establish "an interpretative primacy […] for the second element, by enabling a completion of the themes or actions exhibited in the first sequence, and so binding the narrative together" (382). A further echo may perhaps be heard at *Il.* 24.405–415, when Priam asks Hermes whether Hector's corpse has been fed to Achilles' dogs: the god reassures Priam that neither dogs *nor* birds have had repast at the hero's expense. Any "collective meal" of the animal kingdom plotted by Apollo's lion, and foretold in the proem, has been foiled at last.

50 We see this at 18.318–322; 18.573–589 (Shield of Achilles); 20.164–173; 22.262–266; 24.572; and, of course, at 24.39–45.

to a savage lion. By replicating the epic simile's leonine imagery, but recasting it in moral terms suited to the moment, the Homeric poet has Apollo produce a legible framework for his argument — one that is embedded within the poem's own world even as it extends into new generic territory. As Steven Lonsdale observes of another αἶνος, Hesiod's famous "The Hawk and the Nightingale", it is "not an independent, self-contained narrative with an internal conversation, but interacts thematically and linguistically with its place in the poem".[51] A deep fable pattern drawing in lion, δαίς, and resulting transgression is very much at home in the *Iliad*'s world.

6 One last lion

Apollo's αἶνος functions as intended, redirecting Zeus' will (24.65–76) — and the track of the narrative — from corpse desecration to the ransom of Hector's body by Priam. Notably there is only one lion simile remaining in the *Iliad*, as the Trojan king meets with Achilles (24.568–575). Once they have spoken, Achilles concludes their conversation with a brisk word of warning that nonetheless suggests his changed perspective. Now the warrior wishes to *avoid* transgressing epic norms by maintaining his composure and preserving the life of his suppliant, Priam. It is no longer Zeus' will that countless human lives be sacrificed as a feast for animals or that heroic dictates of interpersonal behavior be subverted. But the threat of these possibilities lingers for a moment longer. As the old man sits in terrified silence, Achilles leaps to the door like a lion, a comparison whose visceral menace swiftly dissipates in the realization that Achilles is beginning the process of returning Hector's body. Now, instead of the isolated evildoer of Apollo's αἶνος, we see him in company with Automedon and Alcimus, the men described as the friends dearest to him after Patroclus. Community, reciprocity, and moral order have been restored.

The interplay of lion and δαίς offers a subtle but distinctive structure for the poem's narrative. The same ghastly array of imagery that in the proem portends looming battlefield carnage then becomes the focal point in a persuasive fable putting a stop to the poem's slaughter. Here, at epic's end, the image of the lion marks yet one more narrative turn — the first step towards the *Iliad*'s final funeral.

51 Lonsdale 1989, 405. It is, in fact, for this reason that Lonsdale sees Hesiod's αἶνος as a hybrid, straddling the realms of fable and omen, an argument for the fable's very generic fluidity in the *Iliad*, as well. Apollo's αἶνος taps into the epic's own bestiary while accessing a deeper and morally networked narrative pattern. On the relationship between the fable of hawk and nightingale and the narrative in which Hesiod embeds it, cf. also Bruno Currie's contribution in this volume.

Bibliography

Allan, W. (2008), "Performing the Will of Zeus. The Διὸς βουλή and the Scope of Early Greek Epic", in: M. Revermann/P. Wilson (eds.), *Performance, Iconography, Reception. Studies in Honour of Oliver Taplin*, Oxford, 204–216.

Bakker, E. J. (2010), "Remembering the *Gastēr*", in: P. Mitsis/C. Tsagalis (eds.), *Allusion, Authority, and Truth*. *Critical Perspectives on Greek Poetic and Rhetorical Praxis*, Berlin, 37–50.

Bakker, E. J. (2013), *The Meaning of Meat and the Structure of the Odyssey*, Cambridge.

Bassett, S. E. (1921), "The Function of the Homeric Simile", in: *TAPhA* 52, 132–147.

Bowra, M. (1950), *Tradition and Design in the Iliad*, Oxford.

Brügger, C. (2017), *Homer's Iliad. The Basel Commentary. Book XXIV.* Translated by B. W. Millis and S. Strack and edited by S. Douglas Olson, Berlin.

Burgess, J. S. (2004), "Untrustworthy Apollo and the Destiny of Achilles. *Iliad* 24.55–63", in: *HSPh* 102, 21–40.

Buxton, R. (2004), "Similes and Other Likenesses", in: R. L Fowler (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*, Cambridge, 139–155.

Chambry, A. (1925/1926), *Aesopi Fabulae. Recensuit*, Paris. [= Ch.]

Donoghue, D. (2014), *Metaphor*, Cambridge, MA.

Elmer, D. F. (2013), *The Poetics of Consent. Collective Decision Making and the Iliad*, Baltimore, MD.

Feeney, D. (2014), "First Similes in Epic", in: *AJPh* 144, 189–228.

Fenik, B. (1974), *Studies in the Odyssey*, Wiesbaden.

Gärtner, U./Blaschka, K. (2019), "Similes and Comparisons in the Epic Tradition", in: C. Reitz/S. Finkmann (eds.), *Structures of Epic Poetry. Vol. I. Foundations*, Berlin, 727–772.

Guaglianone, A. (1958), *Aviani fabulae. Recensuit*, Torino. [= G.]

Hausrath, A. (^{2}1959/^{4}1970), *Corpus fabularum Aesopicarum. Vol. I. Fabulae Aesopicae soluta oratione conscriptae. Edidit A. Hausrath. Fasc. I. Editionem alteram curavit H. Hunger*, Leipzig; *Fasc. II. Indices ad fasc. 1 et 2 adiecit H. Haas. Editionem alteram curavit H. Hunger*, Leipzig. [= Hsr.]

Holzberg, N. (1993), *Die antike Fabel. Eine Einführung*, Darmstadt.

Kelly, A. (2007), "How to End an Orally-Derived Epic Poem", in: *TAPhA* 137, 371–402.

Kurke, L. (2006), "Plato, Aesop, and the Beginnings of Mimetic Prose", in: *Representations* 94, 6–52.

Kurke, L. (2010), *Aesopic Conversations. Popular Tradition, Cultural Dialogue, and the Invention of Greek Prose*, Princeton.

Latacz, J./Nünlist, R./Stoevesandt, M. (2000), *Homers Ilias. Gesamtkommentar (Basler Kommentar / BK). Bd. I. Erster Gesang (A) Fasz. 2 Kommentar*, Berlin.

Lonsdale, S. H. (1989), "Hesiod's Hawk and Nightingale (*Op*. 202–12). Fable or Omen?", in: *Hermes* 117, 403–412.

Mackie, C. J. (2013), "Iliad 24 and the Judgement of Paris", in: *CQ* 63, 1–16.

Martin, R. P. (1997), "Similes and Performance", in: E. J. Bakker/A. Kahane (eds.), *Written Voices, Spoken Signs. Tradition, Performance, and the Epic Text*, Cambridge, MA, 138–166.

Minchin, E. (2001), *Homer and the Resources of Memory*, Oxford.

Mmembe, A. (2003), "Necropolitics" (trans. L. Meintjes), in: *Public Culture* 15, 11–40.

Morris, I. (1986), "The Use and Abuse of Homer", in: *ClAnt* 5, 81–138.

Muellner, L. (1996), *The Anger of Achilles. Mênis in Greek Epic*, Ithaca, NY.

Murnaghan, S. (1997), "Equal Honor and Future Glory. The Plan of Zeus in the *Iliad*", in: D. H. Roberts/F. M. Dunn/D. Fowler (eds.), *Classical Closure. Reading the End in Greek and Latin Literature*, Princeton, 23–42.

Nagy, G. (1990), *Pindar's Homer. The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past*, Baltimore, MD.
Nagy, G. (2007), "Homer and Greek Myth", in: R. D. Woodard (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Mythology*, Cambridge, 52–82.
Perry, B. E. (1952), *Aesopica. A series of texts relating to Aesop or ascribed to him or closely connected with the literary tradition that bears his name. Collected and critically edited, in part translated from oriental languages, with a commentary and historical essay*, Urbana/Chicago, IL. [= P.]
Pfeiffer, R. (1968), *History of Classical Scholarship from the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age*, Oxford.
Pucci, P. (1987), *Odysseus Polutropos. Intertextual Readings in the Odyssey and the Iliad*, Ithaca, NY.
Pucci, P. (2018), *The Iliad. The Poem of Zeus*, Berlin.
Rabel, R. J. (1990), "Apollo as a Model for Achilles in the *Iliad*", in: *TAPhA* 111, 429–440.
Ready, J. L. (2011), *Character, Narrator, and Simile in the Iliad*, Cambridge.
Ready, J. L. (2017), *The Homeric Simile in Comparative Perspectives. Oral Traditions from Saudi Arabia to Indonesia*, Oxford.
Rothwell, K. S. (1995), "Aristophanes' *Wasps* and the Sociopolitics of Aesop's Fables", in: *CJ* 90, 233–254.
Rundin, J. (1996), "A Politics of Eating. Feasting in Early Greek Society", in: *AJPh* 117, 179–215.
Saïd, S. (1979), "Les crimes de prétendants, la maison d'Ulysse et les festins de l'*Odysée*", in: *Études de littérature ancienne* 1, 9–49.
Scodel, R. (2002), *Listening to Homer. Tradition, Narrative, and Audience*, Ann Arbor, MI.
Scott, W. C. (2009), *The Artistry of the Homeric Simile*, Hanover, NH.
Segal, C. (1971), *The Theme of the Mutilation of the Corpse in the Iliad*, Leiden.
Steiner, D. T. (2012), "Fables and Frames. The Poetics and Politics of Animal Fables in Hesiod, Archilochus, and the Aesopica", in: *Arethusa* 45, 1–41.
Stocking, C. H. (2017), *The Politics of Sacrifice in Early Greek Myth and Poetry*, Cambridge.
Strauss Clay, J. (1994), "The Dais of Death", in: *TAPhA* 124, 35–40.
Strong, J. D. (2021), *The Fables of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. A New Foundation for the Study of Parables*, Leiden.
Swift, L. (2014), "The Animal Fable and Greek Iambus. Ainoi and Half-Ainoi in Archilochus", in: C. Werner/B. Battistin Sebastiani/A. O. Dourado-Lopes (eds.), *Gêneros poéticos na Grécia antiga. Confluências e fronteiras*, São Paulo, 49–77.
Tewksbury, I. A. (2023), *Death Is a Feast: The Ideology of the Homeric Banquet*, Diss. Stanford University.
Ulanowski, K. (2015), "The Metaphor of the Lion in Mesopotamian and Greek Civilization", in: R. Rollinger/E. van Dongen (eds.), *Mesopotamia in the Ancient World. Impacts, Continuities, Parallels. Proceedings of the Seventh Symposium of the Melammu Project Held in Obergurgl, Austria, November 4–8, 2013*, Münster, 255–284.
Whitman, C. H. (1958), *Homer and the Heroic Tradition*, Cambridge.
van Dijk, G.-J. (1997), *AINOI, ΛΟΓΟΙ, ΜΥΘΟΙ. Fables in Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic Greek Literature*, Leiden/New York/Köln.
van der Plas, M. (2021), "Corpse Mutilation in the *Iliad*", in: *CQ* 70, 459–472.
Zago, G. (2020), *Phaedrus. Fabulae Aesopiae. Recensuit et adnotavit*, Berlin/Boston. [= Z.]
Zanker, A. T. (2019), *Metaphor in Homer. Time, Speech, and Thought*, Cambridge.
Ziolkowski, J. (1990), "The Form and Spirit of Beast Fable", in: *Bestia* 2, 4–18.