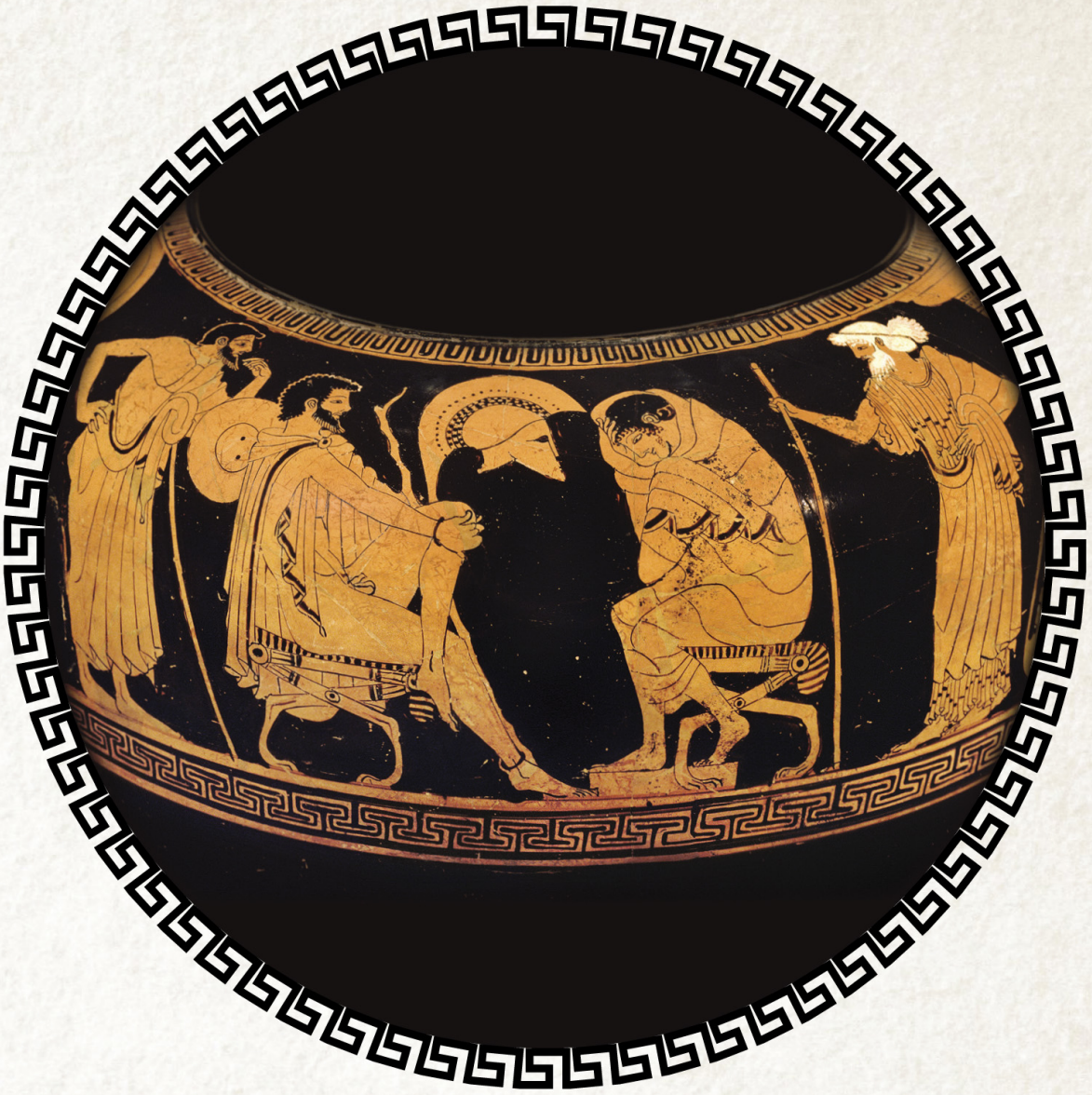

THE MIRROR OF EPIC

The *Iliad* and History

B.K.M. BROWN

The Mirror of Epic
The *Iliad* and History

In order to treat the *Iliad* as historical evidence one must first consider the interpretative implications of its performance as a historical *event*. Combining Bourdieu's theory of practice with Baudrillard's concept of symbolic exchange, Brown approaches the *Iliad* as the trace of a historically motivated speech act whose ritual function was to distil new social possibilities from the context of its performance. In its narrative performance the *Iliad* charts a passage from *stasis* to funerary *agon* giving shape to emergent discourses about value and subjectivity. In essence an aetiological narrative, whose performance realizes what it utters, the *Iliad*, Brown argues, stages the foundation of political society.

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The *Iliad* and History

B.K.M. Brown

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For Kelly and Rayne
τοῖν ϑεοῖν

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book took its shape and its questions from interpretative problems that troubled me in the formative period of a PhD dissertation at Macquarie University. Initially I was interested in the relationship between athletic competition and civic formation in the early Greek city. My attention, as one would expect, was drawn to the famous contest at the funeral of Patroklos in book 23 of the *Iliad*. What was being represented there? Was the narrative of that contest simply the product of a poet's vivid artistry that I could plunder for generic evidence of 'early Greek' thought and practice? Or was 'Homer' *saying something* about contests by inserting them between the death of Hektor and his ransom? Such questions bred a persistent sense that Homeric speech affected what it described, recalibrated its value and, out of this, expressed and proposed new forms of social and political being. The question of what poetry is saying is as old as Homeric poetry itself, and I have benefitted enormously from the different directions scholars have taken in order to frame their responses and answers (Peter Struck's elegant study of the beginning of 'symbolism' in ancient criticism comes to mind straightaway).[1] It seemed to me that the contests could not be detached from the arc of Homer's storytelling, perhaps not even from the entire occasion and tradition of Homeric epic. What happened to an institution when it was refracted through Homer's glass? So the project widened to the question of what the *Iliad is* as evidence of a past: a more philosophical problem to be sure, but one that proved too much of an obstacle for an honest historian to navigate around. It demanded going back to basics and thinking afresh about how the relationship between Homeric performance and reality was constituted, and more broadly about the ways Greeks traversed the terrain of the present via the mirror of an imagined past. What the project disclosed was an unexpected confirmation of Thucydides' disquiet about 'earlier times', a disquiet he was nevertheless unprepared to confront: the impossibility of 'doing history' when one's text evinces a 'past' belonging to an order – symbolic, mutable and generative – radically different to the disenchanted one that would emerge in the 5th century BCE to dominate our Western historiography. This book is the product of that fatal turn to Homer, an attempt to think through what the historian's relationship to the *Iliad* might be, and what the consequences of that encounter entail.

[1] Struck 2004, 1-20.

Preface and Acknowledgements

The debts owed to insights from discussions and arguments over this project with friends, colleagues and students are heavy. Thanks in the first instance must go to Lee Coulson whose unflagging enthusiasm for the project is single-handedly responsible for bringing it to light. I particularly thank students who, over the years, taking my course in 'Historiography, ancient and modern' at the University of Sydney, helped me with their patience and criticism to formulate what I was trying to say. Thanks are due to the Department of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Sydney for their collegiality and unswerving support, as well as the financial assistance needed to complete the project. Of the friends who patiently listened, read and encouraged, I especially thank Rick Ballan, Alastair Blanshard, Tristan Bradshaw, Alyce Cannon, Billy Kennedy, Julia Kindt, Paul Macovaz, Tamara Neal, Andrew Pettinger, David Phillips, Hannah Rabie, Martin Stone (†), Paul Touyz and Kathryn Welch; there are many others besides. The advice of Eric Csapo, Andrew Ford, Leslie Kurke and Richard Martin has been invaluable. The anonymous readers contributed much through their generosity and willingness to plunge into a difficult text; none of what follows, however, is their fault. I owe to my parents the humanism that drives the book; my conversations with them are the origin of so much in these pages that it is as much their book too. The dedication is reserved for two who, through their unconditional love and support, prevented the whole thing from being abandoned.

Ben Brown
West Hoxton
February 2016

Abbreviations

CAVI	Immerwahr, H. 2009. *Corpus of Attic Vase Inscriptions. (published at https://avi.unibas.ch/home.html)*
CEG	Hansen, P. 1983. *Carmina Epigraphica Graeca: saeculorum VIII-V a. Chr. n.*. Berlin and New York.
DELG	Chantraine, P. 1999. *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* (new edition with supplement). Paris.
DGE	Schwyzer, E. 1923. *Dialectorum Graecarum exempla epigraphica potiora*. Reprinted 1960. Leipzig.
FGrHist	Jacoby, F. 1923-58. *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*. Leiden.
GEW	Frisk, H. 1970–3. *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Heidelberg.
GD	Buck, C.D. 1955. *The Greek Dialects*. Chicago.
IC 4	Guarducci, M., 1950 *Inscriptiones Creticae. Opera et Consilio Friderici Halbherr Collectae IV. Tituli Gortynii.* Rome.
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae* 1873- . Berlin.
IGT	Koerner, R. 1993. *Inschriftliche Gesetzestexte der frühen griechischen Polis* (edited by K. Hallof), *Akten der Gesellschaft für griechische und hellenistische Rechtsgeschichte* 9. Cologne.
IPArk	Taeuber, H. and Thür, G. 1994. *Prozessrechtliche Inschriften der griechischen Poleis. Arkadien* (*IPArk*). Vienna.
LSAG[2]	Jeffery, L.H. 1990. *Local Scripts of Archaic Greece*, 2nd ed. Oxford.
LSAM	Sokolowski, F. 1955. *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure*. Paris.
LSCG	Sokolowski, F 1969. *Lois sacrées des cités grecques*. Paris.
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., R. Scott and H. S. Jones 1940. *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th edition. Oxford.
LfrgE	Snell, B. and H. Erbse (eds.) 1955. *Lexicon des frühgriechischen Epos*. Göttingen.
ML	Meiggs, R. and D. Lewis 1969. A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the end of the Fifth Century B.C. Oxford.
Milet I 3	Kawerau, G. and A. Rehm 1914. *Das Delphinion in Milet*. Berlin (= *Milet* I 3).
Nomima	Effenterre, H. van and F. Ruzé 1993-5. *Nomima. Recueil d'inscriptions politiques et juridiques de l'archaïsme grec*, 2 vols. (*Collection de l'École française de Rome*, vol.188). Rome.
PMG	Page, D.L. 1962. *Poetae Melici Graeci*. Oxford.
SIG[3]	W. Dittenberger, 1915-24. *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, 3rd edition. Stuttgart (1960 reprint, Hildesheim).

INTRODUCTION

'Before Reality': worlds in performance

> ἔργοῖς δὲ καλοῖς ἔσοπτρον ἴσαμεν ἐνὶ σὺν τρόπῳ . . .
>
> but we know that fine deeds have a mirror with only one path . . .
>
> Pindar *Nemean* 7.14

> In those days the world of mirrors and the world of men were not, as they are now, cut off from one another. They were, besides, quite different; neither beings nor colours nor shapes were the same . . . one night the mirror people invaded the earth.
>
> Borges 1970, 67-8

> . . . the content of these new motifs allows us to reevaluate the older vision of the classical world, which now proves to be less a matter of individual taste than rather a whole social and collective mirror image . . .
>
> Jameson 1979, 44

> . . . the field of 'Greek History' owes its very existence to a repression of the question of the status of the text.
>
> Loraux 2011, 22

Questions of reference

How should we evaluate the *Iliad* as a historical source? Answers often begin with a different question in mind: *for what* does the *Iliad* provide evidence? Rarely are these answers troubled by the uncertainties raised in debates about the transmission of the Homeric poems, their occasion, function, poetics and so on. Instead, answers move rapidly to an examination of evidence and then to assessments of relative value, typologies of significance and cross-matching with 'external' data. So, for example, when thinking about 'Homeric Society' one begins by extracting and partitioning the 'real world' that has been submerged and obscured beneath the turbulence of the poet's artifice. This 'real world' is the one to which the poet, it is argued, cannot avoid referring if his audience are to feel comfortable with the narrative milieu and appreciate the story's dynamic. 'Homer's Worlds' are almost always understood as a list of culturally real *comparanda* (Bronze Age, Iron Age, and so on) to which the world of the poems is made to align, or not.[1]

[1] From this process derives the so-called 'historian's headache': Raaflaub 1991, 207-15 and 1998. On 'Homer's Worlds' compare the schema for the study of the Homeric poems in Part V of Morris and Powell 1997. On the expanding interest in the historical reality thought to underlie the poems (beginning apace after Michael Ventris' decipherment of Linear B in the early 1950s) see, as a representative sample, Finley 1956, Page 1959, Snodgrass 1974, Kirk 1975, Qviller 1981, Morris 1986, Ulf 1990, Van Wees 1992, Crielaard 1995, Osborne 1996, 33, and 2004. For an updated version of his approach, see now Raaflaub 2006. For attempts to tackle the poem's historical value, see the surveys by Gschnitzer 1991, Burkert 2001 and Crielaard 2003 and the questions posed by Hölkeskamp 2003, 298. Patzak 1992 is

It is not the purpose of this book to attempt once again to identify the historical society to which the Homeric poems refer, or to debate the validity of such a project. Its more modest purpose is to examine instead the assumptions that underlie our initially posed question by considering what the interpretative implications might be for the *Iliad* if we were to begin by inquiring into the poem's *referentiality* – that is, into the ways in which the poem and its content could meaningfully be said to be conscious of referring to something outside of itself in order to establish meaning. It is hoped that such a preface might offer us a different perspective from which to consider how we undertake this exercise and frame its historicizing questions.

For such an inquiry multiple precedents no doubt suggest themselves. Depending on how one strictly defines the question one could cite studies from Wolf to Whitman, or more recently, from Nagy to Bakker.[2] What specifically animates this study, however, are the new connections being drawn in contemporary research between meaning, performance and the occasion of epic poetry, real or imagined. More precisely, it is focused on performance poetry's consciousness of itself as founding new meaning through the irruption of one scenario (the story) into another (the occasion).[3]

We must, however, avoid putting the cart before the horse. In the interpretation of performance poetry we must be careful to show our hand on the question of the causal relationship between context and meaning. Heiden has suggested that "[t]he development of . . . a model [for the context of Homeric epic], or rather the tentative consideration of the variables that could have affected the production and reception of a text such as the *Iliad*, is a task hardly yet begun".[4] Framed this way, the search for context is logically prior to any discussion about meaning. It sees the project essentially as an empirical one: "the search for a historical situation for the *Iliad*." Let us be clear about what is at stake in the development of this model: the search for a (real) context of performance, and therefore for a framework to delimit interpretation of the (imaginary) narrative. Heiden himself is skeptical of success. He looks askance at those who would attempt to write "a Homeric version of *Nothing to do with Dionysos*", a reference to a watershed collection of historicist essays on the social context of Attic drama. With this analogy his point seems starkly obvious – we lack for Homeric epic what we have in relative abundance for Attic drama: historical reference points by which we might anchor meaning.

---

especially valuable for its parallel history of the Homeric question and attempts to locate the worlds of Homer in the past. On narrative as historical evidence in early Greece, see Farenga 1998 and 2006, along with Thalmann's discussion of class in the *Odyssey*, 1998, 272-305.

2 Wolf 1985 (first published in 1795), Whitman 1958, Nagy 1979, 1990a, 1996, 59-86 (but not more recently in Nagy 2009 and 2010) and Bakker 2007.

3 See, for example, the essays in Montanari, Rengakos and Tsagalis 2012. Neoanalysis will come of age when it has fully explored the historicist implications of 'genre' in performance poetry, on which see Calame 1998, esp. 91-2. As a start, see now Rose 2012 whose methodological introduction is timely even if I cannot agree with his subsequent interpretation of the *Iliad*.

4 Heiden 1997.

But is meaning anchored by context? Much of the line of inquiry that informed *Nothing to do with Dionysos* was ambivalent on this question. Indeed, it is uncontroversial to argue that intrusions into civic consciousness were staged by dramatic poets to transform (or, in Plato's view, corrupt) the context of its performance, democratic Athens. Such a bilateral and pragmatic relationship between context and meaning makes even more sense when we take into account drama's *eventfulness*. Performance does not stand on the sidelines of history, observing or commenting indifferently or passively, rather it actively 'takes place', it 'enacts' (δράω), interpolating its event into the weave of the present. Drama could equally be taken as a practical 'effect upon' as an 'effect of' the society with which it is in dialogue. Were we to take this perspective from within the occasion of the *Iliad* the focus would have to shift to the effect that the *Iliad* had on the symbolic terrain of reality *as event*, that is, as a founding act in performance of what would later take shape as the formal criteria of a *critical poetics*, concrete categories such as 'context', 'reference', and 'historical situation'. Put another way, is the *Iliad* evidence for a 'historical situation', or should we in some way see in the emergence of 'History' – in the Greek sense of the objective past – evidence rather of the passage of the *Iliad* as narrative event?[5] Reframing the initial question like this unsettles the orthodox relation between meaning and context. Seen as collective action, the speech-act of performance takes its place as historical event and becomes ambiguous, with the narrative being formed by a context it is at the same time complicit in creating.[6]

How then should we evaluate the *Iliad* as a source of historical information? Any answer must grapple with a hitherto unacknowledged historical event: the *Iliad's* insertion of a new scenario into the world through performance (the 'world-in-performance'). Moreover, an answer must explain the relationship of that scenario to the world it erupts into (the 'world-of-performance'). More than simply informed by historical context (and thus capable of being investigated historically), the *Iliad* also poses the *problem of meaning* for which the formal idea of 'context' becomes, in the 18th century, a later critical solution.[7] To approach

---

5 A theoretical model for dialogue between context and meaning is offered by Jameson 1980. Any historicist reading of the poems is disturbed by a strictly post-structural position, which has been challenged but not refuted by Jameson's defence of Marxist hermeneutics. The proposition that text is autonomous in relation to its context (as in Derrida's view that there is 'nothing outside the text') has been insufficiently tested on oral poetics. As a result, there is little or no communication between context-based approaches to the Homeric poems and those for whom interpretation rests on internal structural relations which make the poems self-sufficient in meaning. For an overview of theoretical approaches to the poems up to 1989, see Holoka 1991.

6 For the notion of 'event' at work here, see Foucault 1991, 76-8 and Sewell 1996.

7 Wolf's *Prolegomena* was informed by Herder's historicism, which stressed the centrality of context to interpretation: see the introduction to Wolf 1985 [1795], 3-37 by Grafton, Most and Zetzel, and the introduction to Herder 2004 (first published in 1774), xxi-xxxv by Evrigenis and Pellerin.

the *Iliad* historically one must, it is argued here, see it first as a founding act of criticism and thus read it as the first handbook on '(Homeric) society'.[8]

If the world in epic narrative in some way mirrors the world of its performance occasion and its extra-discursive social context, then what relationships exist between these worlds and how should their taxonomy be framed? And what if the problem of 'catoptric referentiality' – the relationship between the mirror image and its source – and the disenchantment brought about by epistemological shifts during the Archaic period, in which the status of the image was first raised and then criticized, were found to be something already being tackled reflexively at the heart of the *Iliad's* language and narrative? These questions demand historical solutions for two reasons. Firstly, as a performative event the *Iliad* is historically situated because its enactment occupied, or was imagined to occupy, a temporal moment. Secondly, because, as will be argued here, the *Iliad* raises the *problem of reference* – self, origin, meaning and value – and does so over the horizon of its own performance, by disseminating the problem into the occasion and into text. Thus two further questions are posed. Firstly, can the generative relationship between epic and its portrayal of reality be compared to the way that a mirror reframes the image it reflects? Secondly, in what ways is the event of the *Iliad* expressing a historical moment simultaneously on the levels of occasion, form and content?[9]

The 'problem' of reference

Behind these questions stands the *problem of referentiality*. From where do words derive their meaning, objects their value, or men their worth? The very question already assumes a loss of 'intimacy' in language and social exchange. It assumes that meaning and value have in some way become uncertain and unstable, problems to be solved outside the terms of the practices in which they condense.[10]

---

8 In addition to being a founding text for thinking about dissent, and hence politics: Barker 2009, 31-88.

9 Studies which acknowledge that the social and historical moment of the *Iliad* shapes its discourse and its thought (not exhaustive or consistent on the nature of that 'moment'): Detienne 1996 (first published in 1967), Redfield 1975, Svenbro 1976, 16-35 and *passim*, Nimis 1986, Nagy 1979, 1990a, 1996, 2003, 72-87, 2010, Ford 1992, Rose 1992, 43-91 and now 2012, Seaford 1994, Von Reden 1995, 13-57, D.F. Wilson 2002, 136-47, Farenga 2006, Frame 2009 and the essays in *Arethusa* 1997, especially by Heiden 1997 and Rose 1997. Graziosi 2002 is essential for tracing the naming of the process. Nimis' historical sketch, 1986, 222-5, must in broad outline be right but lacks the institutional specificity to be anything more than a set of guidelines. His point that the *Iliad* articulates the shift from a "gift-exchange economy" to a "more rationalized and explicit mode of evaluation" makes no attempt to refine the general observation by looking at the specific practices in which such a transition is played out. This continues the widespread oversight of the fact that the "scandalous dispute of Book 1" has nothing at all to do with the gift economy and everything to do with the failure of the political economy of distributive practices (*dasmos*).

10 For this sense of *intimacy*, see Bataille 1989a, 43-61.

When meaning and value become questions, no longer catalyzed immanently in, and by, social relations, an alienation is indicated. Evidence of identity, of one's value and social meaning is demanded – who am I, what am I worth, from what does my life draw meaning? The appearance of these terms, isolated in this way by doubt – 'I', 'worth', 'meaning' and so on – are already signs that they have become problems, explicit terms that symbolic exchanges act to contain and revalue. The *Iliad* poses such a scenario. These are the questions hurled by Achilles at the embassy in *Iliad* 9, delivered from inside his *skenē* where he has withdrawn to interrogate what will henceforth, in opposition to the 'individual', be called 'society', the site of the immanent circulation of meaning and value.

Referential thought is not, however, a transhistorically recurring fact of the human condition. Nor is the *act of reference* a universal habit of audiences of oral-traditional poetry as they 'make sense' of narrative, as, for example, John Miles Foley argued.[11] Dialogue between the discursive and the extra-discursive is better understood as an attitude to the world that accompanies quite specific socio-historical imperatives. To think referentially in regard to meaning and value – that is, to go searching for their sources in another more 'authentic' location – marks the passage of a moment of disenchantment that is at the same time a performative historical event. The problem of meaning and value are not raised *en passant*, rather the *Iliad's* text is the trace of a historical moment when meaning and value are being grappled with as *problems*. In that sense the 'modernity' of the *Iliad* – its historical immediacy and *avant-garde* character – lies in the way it poses explicitly as problems practices that distil meaning and value, practices such as ritual or gift-exchange, which depend for their efficacy *qua* practices precisely on non-reflection.

Understanding what is meant specifically by 'problem' here is crucial. In general, practices are effective on the condition that their agents do not reflect on the source of their efficacy. For example, participants immersed in a given ritual never seek to interrogate or 'make sense' of it because ritual practices are a class of actions that, by definition, generate sense. The logic of ritual defies reduction to a problem that can be explained by reference to concepts external to it. In fact, such reflection is inimical to the idea of practical success. Bourdieu has made it clear that theoretical reason imposes 'sense' on practices and by doing so establishes the ground of interpretation outside the space of practice and over the horizon of its enactment.[12] He argues that theoretical reflection translates a specific practice into a universal language of reason,

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[11] *Immanent Art*, 1991. Foley never broaches the possibility that the concept of *traditional referentiality*, which forms the core of his theory of epic meaning, might be an interpretative strategy that emerged under specific historical and institutional conditions.

[12] Bourdieu 1990 *passim*.

embedding in its translation the assumption that a given practice fundamentally lacks sense to both observer and participant. One then dismisses the participant's immanent 'feel' for the practice and begins instead a process of rationalization, which is a search for the meaning of the practice everywhere else but in its enactment. Nevertheless, this kind of sense-making referential thinking, again, ought to be linked to particular historical moments primarily because its presence signals specifically historical disruptions of practical logic, or disenchantment. The proposition therefore is that when these participants themselves begin to regard their practices as problems demanding an explanation in alien terms we must seek the social and political pressures toward disenchantment. To treat the object of a practice (for example, the valuable gift, or the 'past' in mythic narrative) as distinct from its enactment (for example, respectively, generous exchange or performance occasion) is the founding act of disenchantment. Such an approach will always make of symbolic exchange the source of problems rather than the site of an intimacy that holds problematization at arm's length.[13] Disenchantment, furthermore, is precisely what characterizes the figure of Achilles whose trauma of alienated subjectivity is central to the *Iliad's* performance. Moreover, Achilles' alienation takes place as a function of the *Iliad's* narrative distillation and subsequent discharge of the anxieties of the occasion of its performance.

The question of referentiality is closely related to the question of Homeric intertextuality. Studies of Homeric referentiality and intertextuality rarely pay sufficient attention to the ethical and historical dimensions of their topic. For example, Ken Dowden has argued that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as texts are conscious of their textuality in relation to more or less fixed 'texts' of other traditions.[14] Throughout his essay, however, expressions such as 'refer', 'event' and 'text' are treated as self-evidently universal (and therefore transparently obvious) when used of the production of performance poetry. Nowhere at any point does Dowden explore a historical motive for fixity or textualization, or explore the social demands under which a performance so closely linked to ritual occasions and community self-representation might wish or need to 'refer' to others. Dowden suggests that the Homeric poems display "a clear and *deliberate intention* to reach out, embrace, and mold [the] poem on, major events in the war" one is entitled to ask: what social or historical imperatives compel such a self-

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[13] The emergence of problematization as a habit of Greek thought from the 6th century BCE has been the subject of studies (by no means an exhaustive list) by Vernant 2006, first published in 1965, 371-97, Detienne 1986, 1988, 29-81, 2003, 2007, and Lloyd 1979. See also the general observations of Humphreys 1986 and Meier 1986 and the recent survey in the essays collected by Buxton 1999 and, more generally, chapter 6 below.

[14] Dowden 1996.

conscious decision?[15] The more broadly historicist observation, that heroic traditions arise within cult occasions that serve specific local agendas, such as hero-cult, regional hegemony or elite ideology, is left entirely out of the picture.[16] Dowden instead explains narrative choices by invoking an authorial genius, independent of politics, ideology and history, from whom a subjective aesthetic 'intention' can be extracted. Dowden does not discuss the possibility that the act of Homeric reference establishes relationships between worlds (past and present, real or imagined) with consequences more far-reaching than a supposed intertextual conversation between the poets of reified traditions. But when he asserts, in discussing the formation of the *Iliad* as 'supertext', that "the hard copy of the whole document was only printed in 6th century Athens" as part of "the grandiose scheme" of the artist's patron (51), or when he similarly proposes that only a tyrant (Peisistratos) had the resources to carry out such a project (48), Dowden is surely conceding that the historical context of production determines the formation of the very textual self-consciousness he is trying to explain.[17]

Epic performance is still reified in another important recent work by Christos Tsagalis. Possible historical motives for self-reflexivity and intertextuality are not discussed. For Tsagalis the 'web of myth' has a critical instrumental character: "Like internet-oriented browsing on the web, ancient listeners are able *to exercise their control* over the multiple paths emerging as the song is expressed."[18] Here the Internet is assumed to be a technology that emancipates creativity by giving users control over information. But such technological analogies are dangerous without also considering the historically-situated ways in which "networked communications provide multiple instances of expropriation and exploitation of the common".[19] Indeed, it ought to be a priority to locate the 'technologies' of epic poetry (especially textualization) historically and materially as stakes in the representation of power precisely in order to avoid seeing in them only the play and competitiveness between performance traditions in a socio-historical vacuum.

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15 Dowden 1996, 55, emphasis added.

16 For example, the premise of Nagy 1979.

17 For similarly oriented approaches to Homeric intertextuality, which sidestep the question of Homeric epic's "socio-historical will-to-representation" in relation to occasion, see Danek 1998, 2003, Griffin 1977, Scodel 1997, 2003. For the attempt to combine Neoanalysis with history, see Seaford 1994, 154-9. For more historically nuanced approaches, see Slatkin 1992 (combining Neoanalysis with the insights of Nagy), Bakker 1993 (combining narratology) and Cassio 2003. For the most recent state of scholarly approaches see Montanari et al., 2012.

18 Tsagalis 2008, xiii, emphasis added.

19 Dean 2012, 136. See also the provocative title of a recent critical account of the rise of 'Web 2.0': *The Internet is not the Answer*, Keen 2015. Keen argues quite opposite to the sentiment expressed by Tsagalis, that the Internet simply instigates more subtle and fetishized forms of control over its users.

Recent studies into the function and origins of the named composer in Archaic Greece have reframed these questions.[20] The currency of an epic author-figure ('Homeros') increases as the delegated social function of 'singer' is displaced. The song, the focal symbolic act defining the occasion of performance, begins to be conceived more often as originating in the personal and interior competence of an individual who stands outside the nexus of ritual processes. The attribution of performed poetry to an author signifies an attenuation of the role of context or occasion in the generation of meaning.[21] The floating artifact of an author as the sole source of meaning independent of occasion marks the final stage in the autonomy of song as *poiema*.[22] Henceforth text stands apart from the networks of ritual and occasion that allowed the performance to be accessed *without interpretation*.

An author therefore introduces, and discloses, an anomaly. As a substitute for performance context the figure of the author limits access to textual meaning. In the absence of the exchange environment of the occasion an audience must behave as a 'middle man' (*interpres*) to elicit the meanings by joining text to authorial intent and genre choices. The resulting 'interpretation' is a supplementary reading that takes shape over the horizon, and sometimes at the expense, of any performative event. The performance alone is no longer sufficient and a new relationship intrudes between audience and utterance. The author-figure is thus a *supplement* in the Derridean sense: the author is more than simply a replacement for a lost context of performance but a figure whose presence exerts a tidal effect on the narrative, shifting its imperatives and altering its choices by interposing its historical priorities between performance and audience. The author becomes the scapegoat of meaning, which at the same time also awkwardly makes apparent the incompleteness of performance context in any claim to being a self-sufficient site of meaning.

For this study, the historical emergence of the author *as supplement* is represented in and by the *Iliad*. Achilles confronts the *problem* of his own value through a painful consciousness of his 'personal' autonomy from the social networks of his circulation as hero. His nadir can be pinpointed in the scene that confronts the embassy as they arrive at Achilles' tent (*Il.* 9.180-195). They find Achilles there singing an epic poem (*klea andron*) to the accompaniment of an instrument itself said to have been won in exploits not memorialized in the *Iliad*. Like the embassy, we too are astonished to see the hero of the *Iliad* interpolating into his own song performance

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20 See Calame 1995; Graziosi 2002 and Kahane 2005 rightly draw on Foucault's important essay "What is an Author?" (1977a, 113-38) in order to chart the 'invention of Homer'.

21 Nagy 1994, Calame 1998, Ford 2002, 10-13.

22 These traces have been explored by Graziozi 2002 and Ford 2002. Plato *Rep.* 10. follows this logic through to its natural conclusion when he discusses the distillation of content from form.

traditions *exterior* to it. One either sings, conferring unquenchable *kleos*, or one enacts the deeds that trigger the song. At this crucial point Achilles has stepped outside the utterance that defines his particular *kleos* to become the author-instrument of another hero's song – a 'crucial point' because at this moment his contenders for narrative glory approach his tent. The song he sings is unspecified except in one respect: it cannot be the *Iliad*, that is, he is not singing the narrative *kleos* that belongs to him. The scene dramatizes the unmooring of the warrior from his own song, a detachment triggered by a catastrophic breakdown in the defining exchange of the warrior band, the *dasmos*. Restoring order first of all demands that Achilles renounce *authorship* – authorship of the song he sings at that moment, but also his authorship of an *elenchus* of the song he traditionally inhabits, which means renouncing authorship of an alternate future as the subject of a *nostos* epic; ultimately Achilles must relinquish the attempt to be the author of his own selfhood in order for the narrative *stasis* to be resolved. He can return to his identity – 'best of the Akhaians' – only by being the *Iliad's* Achilles once more.

In the short term, however, he refuses, rejecting the terms under which *kleos* is acquired. Achilles, no longer inhabiting the past intimately as the hero of the song, has become, in that instant, an anomaly, a source of narrative *stasis* and no longer bound by its ritual gravity. It is for this reason, we will argue, that Patroklos takes on a special meta-poetic destiny as Achilles' double. In Patroklos lies the operation of archaic thought resolving what we would undoubtedly express, in psychological rather than symbolic terms, as the trauma of subjectivity. The figure of Patroklos is pure social being untroubled by a consciousness of separation: he is social destiny hypostatized. He expiates the disruption caused by the intrusion of a 'critical subject' by means of a variant of ritual substitution: Patroklos treads the path of the sacrificial victim (*homo sacer*) whose death consigns a dangerous social anomaly to the invisible. Patroklos waits for that moment when "Aiakides will leave off singing" (*Il.* 9.191), the signal for the immolation of the double and resolution of the *stasis* created by the intolerable co-existence of two destinies (death/*nostos*).[23]

The emergence of Achilles as a human subject is thus represented as the splitting of the hero into two distinct figures – the man 'inside the tent' (his interiority here is important) overwhelmed by the ramifications of his social exclusion, and the man who must die, reentering social circulation as a heroic warrior, in order to keep on guaranteeing the *kleos* implied by the *Iliad's* performative existence. This is not a figurative separation reducible simply to metaphoric play on the part of the poet. Achilles' social alienation activates the appearance and destiny of Patroklos, the shadow made

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[23] *Pace* Létoublon 1983 (who is followed by Vernant 1991 and Richardson 1990), who sees in this passage Homeric *mise en abîme*, a case of poetic self-reference, without explaining the critical contextual function such a figure might be serving. For a different, but highly suggestive, reading of this scene, see Nagy 1996, 72-3.

flesh that will ultimately "point the way" (σημαίνειν, *Il.* 11.789) to symbolic reconciliation by his sacrificial prefiguration of Achilles' own death. For late archaic artists too the solution to the *Iliad's* split-Achilles was literal and sacrificial. At least one imagined the death of Patroklos as the act, ritually as much as socially, that drew Achilles back into social circulation to find again the confirmation of his heroic identity in slaughter and glory.[24] The withdrawal into the tent to seek the answer to selfhood in, so to speak, an 'authorly' reflection – where the subject seeks an interior 'autogony' – is shown, in spite of his astonishing discourse to the embassy, to be a barren path in the end, for it demands a 'theoric' journey away from the self on a wild-goose chase, hunting after a shadow when the way was in fact being revealed to be where it had always been: on the path of the Iliadic narrative itself, through the (re-)activation of *Patroklees*, the "(epic) glory of ancestral forebears." The human subject is not self-sufficient with respect to meaning; a way must always be found to re-enter one's *narrative* identity.

Such a narrative is not produced *in vacuo.* The *Iliad's* story arc cannot be simply accounted for as sophisticated performance, nor can it be recovered transhistorically by a strictly critical analysis. Rather, the problem posed by the *Iliad* articulates a historical situation by harnessing the energies of an equally historical type of representational capital. The processes involved in the 'invention of Homer' are here woven into the narrative itself: in his figurative *skenē* Homer the author, like Achilles, retards and suppresses the 'evental' nature of performance, remanding epic's meaning to the interior mysteries of the proto-psychological subject, while putting into stasis the relations of the occasion by striving to exit its historical moment. Faced with an author, the occasion of performance, with its social will and delegated ritual narrator, is enjoined instead simply to listen "opposite and in silence" rather than actively *instigate*.[25] With the advent of the author the reciprocity of representational capital between performance and occasion is replaced by the unilateral imposition of meaning by the subject on the world. Context, rather than the inert repository of meaning, is here politicized by being denied in the interests of a self-originating subjectivity desperate to escape the gravitational pull of the social, performance and history. But the *Iliad* resists such a unilateral accumulation of *authority* by reasserting the mutual dependence of performer and audience on the need to enter social circulation as participants, rejecting the subordination of audience to author: "*we*", says the singer, "are only the audience of *kleos* and *know nothing* . . ."[26] So too Achilles' threat to exit the stage of *kleos* is resisted by Patroklos, who reminds the hero

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[24] Red-figure stamnos of the Triptolemos painter, c.470 BC, Basel Antikenmuseum BS 477: Beazley *ARV*[2] 361, 7; Immerwahr *CAVI* no. 1999C; see the critical discussions of Schmidt 1969 and Griffiths 1985, 49-51 (with a possible parallel noted further in Griffiths 1989, 139).

[25] Πατροκλος δέ οἱ οἶος ἐναντίος ἦστο σιωπῇ, *Il.* 9.190.

[26] ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἱ οἷον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν, *Il.* 2.486.

that his identity subsists in the pact of occasion, not in some imagined autonomous selfhood. The *Iliad* thus incorporates into its discourse the *problem* of its own narrative meaning *as it arises in performance*, that is, as *kleos*. In this way it is possible to detect the poetics of a performance's consciousness of the tensions between traditional patterns of narrative and emerging forms of thought.

Historicist studies of tragedy, too, have focused on the way democracy, religion and new expressions of the citizen drive the representational will of Attic drama and set the stakes of its ideological capital. Those who have detected in drama the 'invention of tragedy' as a theme have demonstrated the degree to which the poetic medium constantly reflects upon its own narrative production as a function of specifically historical concerns.[27] The next question then is this: what representational imperatives impel the transformations of epic content through the archaic period?

The Production of Reference

If the *Iliad* thematizes the 'problem' of value and meaning, as well as tackling the emergence of the subject, it does so by precipitating a crisis of identity inside the world of its utterance. Pindar's choice of metaphor is therefore apt.[28] His characterization of Homeric epic as a mirror (*esoptron*, *Nem.* 7.14) signals an *aporia* at the beginning of a specifically Western history: how, and what, does the mirror reflect? Pindar's answer is appropriately ambiguous – the mirror of epic is the only authentic witness to glory, but it distorts and exaggerates. For Pindar, however, the problem is not even that simple: *we* know Aias was the better man, yet the masses, being deceived, could not see it and Odysseus instead received Achilles' arms, and, in the end, a *nostos* and its famous song. None of this discredits epic as the 'mirror of fine deeds', but the injustice to Aias remained and he did not receive the compensation due to the true 'second best of the Akhaians'. For us there is at first glance a troubling contradiction: is not Homer faithfully remembering the mistreatment of Aias as the tradition dictated? Pindar upbraids Homer precisely for his success in achieving *that*: 'what really happened' is shameful and Homer is complicit in perpetuating it. Pindar's use of *alatheia* here is indeterminate and seems to refer to an underlying reality that the image in the mirror of epic, faithful though it may be, cannot convey. Odysseus won unfairly and Homer helped him get away

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27 See, for example, Goldhill 1984, Wilson and Taplin 1993, and Henrichs 1994/5; for comedy, see Silk 2000.

28 Pindar's metaphor (*Nem.* 7.14, quoted at the beginning of this introduction) is, however, by no means a simple one. *Nemean* 7 and its dialogue with the Homeric *logos* in the context of the compensation of cult deserves a fuller treatment. On the idea of the mirror in the analysis of Homeric epic, see Létoublon 1983. Russo 1976, 298-9 deploys the metaphor too but without considering the implications other than that the function of the epic mirror was ideological rather than oracular: "it was no ordinary mirror, but one designed to give back idealized and easily memorized images and thus maintain commonly shared assumptions and values."

with it by telling the story as it happened, not as *it ought to have happened*. So, ironically, by being authentic Homer allowed Odysseus' image to exceed the truth that he was actually the inferior man. For Pindar then the mirror of epic is not passive in relation to reality but central in shaping its form and memorialization. The epic mirror does not function to reflect, but to transform reality. It can do so well, for which Odysseus praises Demodokos, or not, when it upholds the judgment of the democratic mob. In the end, only the honour conferred by the god can be truly free of reproach, and in saying so Pindar reserves his praise only for the divine judgment to which the victor owes his status.

The problem with the mirror's function lies in the indeterminacy that occurs at the very moment it seems to be providing concrete verification of a reality that precedes the image. Such is the pathology of the 'historian's headache': epic reflects but there is static and interference, and the image exceeds its source. The motif of the mirror helps us to understand the deviant ambivalence of the image's simultaneous identity with, and difference from, the real. For example, instead of having to decide whether epic performances were fictional distortions of reality, we can examine the 'epic mirror' reflecting the representational agency of the poet, embedded reciprocally between extra-discursive context, performance occasion, epic form and narrative content. The audience is invited to refract itself through the epic performance and, on that basis, be transformed through the occasion. Pindar's metaphor also evokes the oracular properties of the mirror, which were well known in antiquity. More than providing uncomplicated reflection, mirrors held visions of an image or double of oneself from beyond some initiation or transformation, as if in the form of an otherworldly divinatory encounter. Pre-Platonic performative representation can be understood in a similar way: looking into the mirror of epic never discloses the 'real world' behind epic, rather it establishes a feedback loop of potential occurrences oscillating back and forth between the 'world-of-performance' and the 'world-in-performance'.

The oracular encounter therefore permits the ironically inverted question: 'what type of evidence is *history itself* for the reception of the *Iliad*?' The history of archaic and classical Greece can then be approached as though unfolding at the hands of historical subjects who dispersed their reception of these epic performances into other forms of their social and political life.[29] Narrative not only responds to context; context equally responds to narrative. The metaphor of the oracular mirror provides a dialogic scenario: historical events interact

[29] Compare Farenga 2006, especially 68-95, who offers a complex discussion of the emergence of selfhood alongside citizenship that draws on Habermasian discourse-theory rather than, like the present study, a theory of practice. Farenga's conclusions are rightly drawn from a historical consideration of the relationship between the *Iliad* and the 'scripts' of emergent political identity and, as a consequence, have much in common with the current approach.

with narrative ones or, put another way, historical events are inhabited by discursive presences. Thus when we enter Homeric epic looking for evidence of a 'real world' we find it lying frustratingly over the horizon of the moment of its reception. In other words, the 'real world' of Homeric poetry is what is produced in the wake of its performance. It is a case of cause following effect: what we as historians imagine to be logically prior ('the real world'), and thus providing the substance of representations, is in fact constantly being recast in the crucibles of charged performance occasions. On these grounds it should be possible to rethink the discursive agency that underpins the *Iliad*.[30]

There is, however, a need to push this possibility further. Though it may be trite nowadays to say that the real world is patterned according to discursive forms, it is useful to restate why it helps our analysis. 'Real' and 'imagined' are unhelpful categories because they presuppose a hierarchy in the production of meaning. For instance, 'real' is marked as the privileged term because the real world is held to precede an imagined one, just as the self is held to precede one's image in the mirror. Under this regime the critical task has been to determine to what extent the image accords with the real – and so to determine just which pre-classical epoch the *Iliad* seems to reflect the most, usually conceived as a methodologically straightforward forensic exercise. Alternatively, the *Iliad* can be approached as the trace of an environment where a symbolic indeterminacy prevails and the hierarchy of real over imagined is forestalled. This approach would require different ways of explaining the reciprocal relations that are formed between real and imagined worlds in performance, ways that do not necessarily privilege a causal relationship between them.

Traditionally, a consequence of that hierarchy is that narrative in general is denied any precipitative power to affect the real world. However, in a symbolic environment (like ritual, for example) 'real' (extra-discursive) and 'imagined' (narrative) collude to create relations that are neither real nor imagined, but lived and experienced, a Möbius effect that continually immerses one world into the other. This effect provokes a historical transformation in which the ritual world of occasion precipitates a world in the space of utterance wherein the new human relations expressed give rise to transformative possibilities in the extra-discursive context. The narrative may confirm or antagonize real conditions, but reality is

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30 The discursive character of the 'event' in historical narrative is a property of the historiographic imagination explored in a number of Hayden White's works, especially *Metahistory* 1973, 1980 and 1987, 26-57. Foucault's analyses of the mutually conditioning relationship between discourse and history are historical studies such as *Madness and Civilization* 1965 and *Order of Things* 1970. The socio-historically productive nature of discursive power is explored in *Discipline and Punish* 1977b. For a discussion of Foucault by White, see White 1979 and 1987, 104-41. For Foucault's concept of the charged and structured 'event' as the salient of a convergence of processes, which is at the same time an 'un-self-evident' break, see Foucault 1991, 76-8.

transformed on each occasion, being wedged open to accommodate newly articulated relations. Discussing the relationship of fiction to modern capitalism, Žižek has observed that

> countering the devastating world-dissolving effect of capitalist modernization by inventing new fictions, imagining 'new worlds' . . . is inadequate or, at least, profoundly ambiguous: it all depends on how these fictions relate to the underlying Real of capitalism – do they just *supplement* it with the imaginary multitude, as the postmodern 'local narratives' do, or do they *disturb* its functioning? In other words, *the task is to produce a symbolic fiction (a truth) that intervenes into the Real, that causes a change within it.*[31]

The task here, *mutatis mutandis*, is to understand the representational stakes of the performance of epic in the archaic city in terms of its intervention into, and transformation of, the extra-discursive world of its audience. In Žižek's terms, how does performance intervene to change social reality?

Conceived in this way such an approach develops out of an interest in the way epic poetry 'seeds' its historical environment by serving as an agency of socio-historical 'representational will' through the occasion of its performance. This entails an inquiry into the relationship between content and its framing. In general, the practices of the early archaic period do not begin as differentiated spheres of human activity but share their form and function with other institutions and areas of thought which begin to emerge contemporaneously, including the very narratives in which they appear. Just as Goldhill and Seaford have argued against the dissociation of tragic texts from wider ritual at the Dionysia so here it is held that participants involved in epic performances did not isolate practices of narrative from other practices at the same occasion.[32] Such boundaries that existed between the content of narrative fiction and the real practices taking place on the occasion of epic performance were completely permeable. This permeability allowed the narrative to become both a self-reflexive site of commentary on the total performance as well as being the ritual site of its participants' transformation.[33]

This approach takes its starting point from the central idea of Nagy's seminal work *Best of the Achaeans* – that epic heroes are reflexes of cult heroes and their funerary character. Apart from Richard Seaford's *Reciprocity and Ritual*, a historicist reading of 6th century shifts in representational stakes, few Homerists and even fewer historians are prepared to explore the potential offered by Nagy's model, expanded further in *Pindar's Homer*.[34]

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[31] Žižek 2008, 33, emphasis added. It ought to be noted that Žižek here uses *Real* in its more narrow Lacanian sense, that is, in structural terms, as the *parole* of practices as opposed to their *langue* (the *Symbolic*).

[32] Goldhill 1987 and Seaford 2000 (arguing against Griffin 1998). For Homeric poetry this step had been made in Nagy 1979.

[33] Barker 2009 rightly speaks of performance in terms of institutional foundation in a recent work whose themes closely intersect those expressed here.

[34] Nagy 1990a. For a fascinating and similar approach to early Greek philosophy, see Nightingale 2004, 29-39 and *passim*. Since the reception of the work of

Out of the foregoing discussion the question of Iliadic reference can be framed this way: how does a *critical poetics* express itself in a world *before poetics*? This question also touches closely on any 'critical discourse' prior to the 5th century BCE. The representation of practices and institutions in the poems is not inert; they are framed with this 'pre-critical' focus. Rather than subject practices to interrogation on the assumption that they can be *extracted* from a generalized 'society', epic instead *immerses* practices in its narrative with a view to the transformation of their meaning. Narrative intervenes and alters the practices it enacts in performance. More broadly, this is the direction currently being explored by studies on the relationship between the narrative performance of early Greek poetry and its content. We need to refine our models for tackling institutional practices in archaic Greece, such as funeral contests for example, when they are embedded historically within other practices like the ritualized poetic environments of epic performance. Going further still, we can rethink how narrative and institutional practices collude with each other reciprocally in the production of a meaningfully lived reality. To take an example explored in the following chapters, the funeral contests for Patroklos in the *Iliad* exist as a consequence of this collusion. Insofar as epic is performed at funeral contests and funeral contests are performed in epic, it is meaningless to proceed without articulating the logic by which one is inscribed in the other. Intrinsic to this study, therefore, is an investigation into the way archaic Greek communities approached social and political reality by immersing it in a ritualized form of imaginary.[35]

That early Greek epic poetry was part of, and informed by, ritual practice is uncontroversial and one of a number of recognized interpretative positions.[36] Epic meaning and interpretation ought to hinge upon an understanding of the occasion of performance specifically as a historically determined ritual practice. For the historian,

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Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, the study of 5th century Attic drama displays the opposite tendency to Homeric scholarship: serious criticism of Greek tragedy now rarely reads these performances 'out of context'. Other poetic corpora treated in this way include epinikian ode, beginning with Pindar: first the significance of occasion was recognized (Bundy 1962), then the relationship between form, content and context was explored (for example, Kurke 1991, Currie 2005, and for Bacchylides, Fearn 2008).

35 This line of approach owes a great deal to Halliwell's discussion of 'Homeric poetics' (2011, 36-92) whose repositiong of the urgency of poetics in the performance itself is surely right: "the most urgent, difficult problems of poetics were already there in the poetry to begin with, intimated (as well as produced) by poets themselves." This position lacks only an identification of the historical imperative that would split poetry from poetics.

36 Those who so hold start with Parry 1971 and Lord 1960, but ultimately with Wolf 1985. For a survey of their reception by theoretical studies see Holoka 1991. The role of the rhapsodic performer in Homeric poetry has now been thoroughly reframed by González 2013. It is with considerable regret that the greater part of the present study was completed by the time this rich and nuanced book reached me, preventing the close engagement it deserves. I hope to redress this in future work.

though faced with scarce and ambiguous evidence for this occasion, it is unacceptable to fall back on an uncritical model that assumes a psychologically transparent and historically fixed author as the source of social data and context in the poems. Rather, the project ought first to rethink the *Iliad* as 'eventful performance' and from there rethink how the poems might be reconsidered as historical evidence, as a question parallel to, but nevertheless quite distinct from, the problem of the transmission and composition of the Homeric poems. This is because one cannot imagine a static and pure poetic *content* evolving independently of the ideological imperatives that impel radical changes in composition and performance. On the contrary, the narrative content bears witness to these historical changes. Once we understand the representational stakes of epic historically then we can reframe the 'Homeric Question(s)' itself.

So, for example, the textualization of early Greek epic is historicized as the objectification of its form within a struggle for the stakes of the capital of narrative content in general, as in the value placed on the role performed by epic in political aetiologies during periods of archaic civic transformation. It is often forgotten that textualization is a multi-stage technological innovation. This means that writing constitutes a new force of representational production whose development can be mapped onto the tracks of social and political interests. If writing contributes to the displacement of occasion as a site of meaning we must ask what historically propels this technological change. In turn, when Calame and Nagy speak of 'genre' substituting for displaced occasion, they are also speaking of a historical struggle for the stakes of the capital of metonymic substitution – the transformation of ritual moments into permanent physical objects of aristocratic exchange – stakes that can then be accumulated through textualization.[37] When discussing diachronic change Nagy is particularly reticent about the interests being served when genres 'capture' or 'absolutize' performance, even though these terms disclose acts of expropriation and the acquisition of narrative capital.[38]

Questions about changing sources of meaning are therefore questions about power relations. Writing interferes with and disinters the ideological complex at the core of occasions of poetic performance. Initially, texts, which convert performances into the objects of aristocratic exchange, materialize the narrative capital generated in performances. At this stage, we are yet to find the author whose creative agency can be imagined to transcend the local politico-historical order. The narrative capital is appropriated rather through *publication* – the physical manufacture of a self-speaking object that can inscribe *tradition* as unchanging heirloom (*trado* 'pass

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[37] Nagy 1994, Calame 1998, Ford 2002, 10-13.

[38] For a thorough-going reassessment of the processes by which oral poetry became (and becomes) text, see now Jensen 2011, González 2013, and Ready 2015 (the latter regrettably appeared after the completion of this study). González 2013 has especially set a benchmark for the diachronic analysis of the performer's role in the transmission and textualization of Homeric epic.

on through inheritance') rather than through the unstable flux and *traditore* of composition-in-performance (*trado* 'hand over, surrender'). Audiences henceforth experience the narrative as a conserved and hoarded artifact rather than an avant-garde immersion of present conditions into an immanent 'past', a speech-act that resisted accumulation by arising and disappearing within the time and space of assembly. As heirloom the written text cannot be rewoven from the skein of occasional concerns but legitimizes its possessor differently, supplying the authority to speak via rites of succession and a transmission that transcends immediate historical pressures. From this perspective emerging genres are more than compensation for lost frames of reference or the need for their stabilization. They are attempts to appropriate and accumulate the symbolic capital of meanings produced in occasions, real or imagined. Arguably, resistance to this process can be detected in Homeric poetry itself.

This move anchors meaning by relocating it from the time of occasion to the timelessness of a trans-historical subject, *Homeros*, and in so doing introduces a figure no longer bound in a relationship to meaning-rich occasions of performance. How conscious, for example, were later archaic audiences that the source of a rhapsode's competence was his memorization of a written text whose content no longer necessarily corresponded to their historically-specific congregational moment for its meaning? Thus, as writing plays a more profound role in the production and performance of song the site of interpretation widens from *practice*, where performance is one part of a constellation of occasional practices, to include a *text-object* that materializes the performance as a fixed currency capable of being circulated beyond the occasion. Finally, an *author-subject* displaces the text as source of meaning. One consequence of the utilization of writing in performance contexts will be a lasting tension between the autonomous subject (who precedes and founds genre) and the autonomizing *grammata* which lay the ground for a similarly autonomous *logos* of poetic forms, i.e. genre.

There has been a reluctance to historicize Homeric epic in this way. The absence of a historical explanation for the transformations of Homeric performance and reception contexts (especially textual monumentalization) is apparent, for example, in a very suggestive essay by Andrew Ford. He argues that "the traditions about the Panathenaic rule point to one occasion on which such expectations *were adjusted*, favoring knowledgeable and versatile singers, professionals in a word."[39] In pointing to the Panathenaic festival of the late 6th century as a critical formative context Ford ignores parallels (such as we find at Hdt. 5.67) where the stakes of

[39] Ford 1997, 108, emphasis added. See also the judgment of Willcock 1997 on the question of internal reference raised by Neoanalysis: it is to be explained "as the result of the conditioning of the mind of the poet by the material with which he was familiar . . . there is no need to hypothesize an external source" (188), a remark which neatly excludes historical explanations just as much as it excludes the 'tradition'.

public performances are civic representation and transformation. So when Ford offers no historical explanation for why performances needed to be "adjusted" at all, the vacuum is filled by the whims of authorial artistry or decisions made from 'private' aesthetic judgments. But the fact remains that Kleisthenes' expulsion of the rhapsodes from Sikyon at the beginning of the 6th century, as well as Hipparkhos' 'rule' at its end, put beyond doubt that the presentation and transformation of the content of Homeric poetry was determined by socio-political imperatives.[40]

The occasion of performance is an inextricable part of the *form* of epic and for this reason attention must focus on the collusion between form and content. If epic is to be seen as a practice it follows that form and content inform each other in the same way as *habitus* and institution in Bourdieu's theory of practice.[41] For this reason there can be no useful neoanalysis without an accompanying historical inquiry that can explain why narrative content changes over time. In the same fashion, other conclusions about the 'traditional' content of the Homeric poems, such as the observations of Indo-Europeanists, presuppose timeless and static themes immune to diachronic factors.[42] To address these factors, however, demands something more than indicating in what ways the *Iliad* remained 'relevant' to contemporary audiences. These representations must first be regarded as active and generative rather than the passive

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40 Historicist interpretations of Homeric epic are not lacking (e.g. Van Wees 1992, Seaford 1994, Rose 1992 and 2012) and the focus is often on epic instrumentality and reception: see especially Nagy 1990a. Bakker 2013 now sets a superb benchmark. Examples which look at the 'propagandistic' role played by epic in the archaic period are offered by Cingano 1985, Wickersham 1991, Seaford 1994, Cook 1995, 128-70, Aloni 1989 and 2006; for lyric the bar is now set by Kowlazig 2007. Bertolín Cebrián 2006 proposes a model for the development of Homeric epic from funeral lament in the late Geometric and Archaic period. The question of epic's ontological status as historical evidence is, however, not raised. The discussion of 'Epic and Sports' (115-27, the choice of the term 'sports' is revealing) is over-simplified and seems unaware of Brown 2003 on funeral contests. For a study alive to the ideological stakes in the transformation (including textual fixity) of oral performance traditions, see Bakker 1993, 15-18. On the parallel question of whether the *Iliad* offers evidence of what might be called a 'historical consciousness' and the poem's narrative sense of (its own) temporality and the past, see especially Patzak 1992, 145-161, with Strasburger 1982, 1058-97, Sauge 1992, and Grethlein 2006.

41 Bourdieu 1990 with chapter 5 below. For the scholarly theme 'poetry as praxis' (apart from Nagy and Bakker) see Niles 1998 and his important collection of essays, Niles 1999, 66-88, and D.F. Wilson 2002, 137-46. See also Turner 1974, White 1980, Foley 1991, 1999, Mitsis and Tsagalis 2010.

42 Such as the theme 'quarrel between king and warrior' (Scott-Littleton 1970). The relevance of such observations must come from tracking their institutional antagonisms historically. Agamemnon has much more in common with Achilles than he does with those who presumably once exercised the 'first function' of the tripartite system outlined by Dumézil (e.g. 1988). If the Iliadic quarrel is a reflex of an I-E theme, it is one which actively questions the nature of sovereignty, how it is exercised and by whom, in a world that has long been without 'kings'. Indeed the entire *Iliad* is very conscious that its milieu entirely lacks a sovereign function, a point more generally made by Vernant 1982. As later chapters will argue, the proper thematic parallel would be 'quarrel between *warrior and fellow-warrior*'.

reflexes of artists to an anachronistic 'consumer demand'. They are instead performances that instigate one past as a potential present and permit new social agencies to realize themselves, not by some subjective agency but triggered by the 'objective situation' of the performance's occasion. Reflecting on the impossibility of any story about the past to be neutral or purely 'subjective', Jameson discusses Michelet's historiographic imperative, making remarks that are just as pertinent to the ontology of the Homeric 'past'. The relationship between Michelet's history of the Revolution of 1789 and the context of its production, the revolutions of 1848, enables the past event (1789) to manifest itself as the double of the present one (1848), thus:

> reduplicat[ing] this reinvention of the past by an active present and allow[ing] Michelet himself to resurrect that very present . . . which has become his own past . . . What needs to be stressed here is that we no longer have to do with the contemplative relationship of an individual subject to the past, but rather with the quite different relationship of an objective *situation* in the present with an objective *situation* in the past.[43]

Summoning the past in epic song is therefore not a subjective aesthetic choice made by an author-subject to adhere, or not, to the 'tradition', but the activation by means of collective will (the occasion of performance) of an active past which "will begin to come before us as a *radically different life form* which rises up to call our own form of life into question and to pass judgment on us, and through us, on the social formation in which we live."[44] The mirror of epic is therefore not a passive glass, but the oracular mirror through which the past and present collude in their mutual redefinition. This is how the present was transformed into an instance of the past and vice versa before the historiography of the 5th century BCE displaced epic memorialization with its dialectical opposition of the present to the past.

Points of Reference: Meaning-Value

The two phenomena with which later chapters will be concerned – *Iliad* and *agon* – are connected by the representation of *value* as it is expressed in and through the figure of Achilles. We will argue that the performance of the *Iliad* enacts and stages an epistemic break in the social and political thought in archaic Greece. While this claim is not in itself novel,[45] it is nevertheless one that needs restating with a particular emphasis: that the *Iliad* can succeed in this because it sublimates within its narrative a *critical function*, a function in which funerary athletic competition will play a fundamental role. Funerary contests are positioned as a uniquely *political response* to the vacuum opened up by the voice of Achilles and represent a new institutional strategy that emerged more generally in the shadow of a crisis of

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43 Jameson 1979, 57, author's emphasis.
44 Jameson 1979, 70, emphasis added.
45 For example, in different ways, Seaford 1994, Hammer 2002, and Barker 2009, 41-88. Vernant coined the expression 'la crise de la souveraineté' (1962, 45-55) but did not, as here, place the *Iliad* at the heart of its articulation.

symbolic power in archaic Greece.[46] Social worth is posed explicitly in such contests *as a problem* and then 'sorted out' by publicly agreed-upon forms of adjudication. The narrative traces out, as a set of crises, a mental shift toward *meaning-value* in which symbolic modes of action give way to explicit and critical ones founded on a different principle of efficacy. The *Iliad* poses the suffering of Achilles as a trauma of political subjectivity and does so by translating the immediate social and political anxieties of an audience into the epic concerns of the central hero of the Trojan cycle.

It is important to stress that the alienation of Achilles is not here imagined in existential or universalizing terms but viewed from a historical and anthropological perspective. Alienation is understood as the opposite of what Bataille calls 'intimacy', that is, the immanence of self, meaning and value in the social circulation of (respectively) body, language and objects.[47] One loses one's intimacy by becoming 'theoric', when one begins to regard self, meaning and value as no longer experienced immanently in practices but as separate and distinct. Put another way, *the critical voice issues from a site of alienation*. This site links *historia* with the political in figures like Hekataios of Miletos to whom we shall return at the end of chapter 6.

'Meaning-value' is an expression used by Jean Baudrillard.[48] It links linguistic and poetic *meaning*, understood as the explicit product of reasoned interpretation, with economic *value*, similarly understood as the explicit isolation of an abstract value by means of the act of reference. Value is 'produced' (etymologically: *produco,* 'to bring forth') by being inscribed into a visible set of rational relations of value (such as, for instance, function or use), just as meaning is exposed by disclosing its relationships to other meanings through reference. For Baudrillard, meaning and value are interchangeable – hence *meaning-value* – and, joined together like this, refers to the decisive break with symbolic exchange opened up by theory between what signifies and what is signified. Baudrillard argues that meaning and value are 'arch-signifieds', key forms of abstraction underpinning various Western expressions of the 'real world'. These include (most prominently) Marx on use-value, Saussure on meaning in language, Lévi-Strauss on myth and Freud on the unconscious. Baudrillard argues also that meaning-value is hegemonic in these discourses because they articulate their theoretical objects by privileging the presence denoted in these terms ('meaningful', 'valuable') over their opposites or absence (e.g. non-meaning and 'pricelessness').

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46 Argued in Brown 2003, recast as chapter 4 below.

47 Bataille 1989a, 43-61, especially 43-52. The political space of theoretical examination is therefore a product of a crisis of symbolic power, as Vernant 1982a and Detienne (1996, 1986, 1988) have both argued. On the ritual and political origins of *theoria*, see the excellent work of Nightingale 2004; on the part played by the *Iliad* as a text that founds political dissent, see Barker 2009; as a text that founds consensus, Elmer 2013.

48 In *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (Baudrillard 1981) and *Symbolic Exchange and Death* (Baudrillard 1993), with further explanation in *Passwords* (Baudrillard 2003). For a very suggestive outline, see Baudrillard 1994, 129-41.

Central to this is the idea of *symbolic exchange*, the fundamental economy that both precedes and destabilizes meaning-value. The order established by symbolic exchange knows nothing of either meaning or value and its practices prevent their explicit production. In Baudrillard's play on etymology, the *symbolic* is opposed to the *diabolic*: the symbolic proceeds via metamorphosis and seduction, the diabolic via metaphor and production. On the one hand, a *symbolic* practice like ritual enacts an exchange between terms that are never privileged and operate within constantly fluctuating relations (as, for example, in the exchange between life and death in rites of passage or of objects between participants in the exchange of gifts). On the other hand, a *diabolic* practice, like theoretical reason, establishes a referential hierarchy in which one term is privileged and 'ex-*term*-inates' the other via metaphor – as, for example, in psychology where madness is stripped of its autonomy by being explained negatively as the abnormal state of the sane mind rather than as a potentially 'other' form with which one must enter into a relationship of symbolic exchange. Meaning-value therefore is produced when linguistic or economic interpretation compels symbolic action to make sense unilaterally and metaphorically only in terms of *meaning* and *value*: i.e. "this gift *is worth*…; this poem *means*…" However, as Pierre Bourdieu has clearly shown, with symbolic forms like the gift, the *appearance* of explicit value coincides with the *disappearance* of the object as gift.[49]

To this we add that such transformations in the representation of value can only be understood historically. It helps to assess limitations in studies that purport to historicize Homer, like those of West or Burkert which otherwise serve as lucid explanations of the emergence of the Homeric artifact.[50] When Burkert discusses the survival and 'success' of the Homeric poems he first notes that the question is not reducible to "a necessary or lasting consequence of either age or quality", but rather is the "monumental problem [of] how the public was made to accept these texts as standard, in combination with a single author's name, *Homeros*, to the exclusion of other, similar texts that fell into neglect and were thus lost to posterity."[51] But in his haste Burkert overlooks how the collusion of form and content occupies a precise historical moment whose embodied *will-to-representation* produces similarly precise narratives. These narratives are also saturated with the expressions of the congregational concerns of the occasion itself. The public are not "made to accept" them, as Burkert puts it, but rather the historical redefinition and emergent self-consciousness of this 'public' (either as *demos* or *laos*) was the active agency propelling the formation of these narratives in the first instance. The very

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49 As anyone who has removed the price tag from a gift would appreciate.

50 Burkert 1987 and West 1999. Graziozi 2002 is uncomfortable with the artifactual metaphor, but it is preferred by others, for example, García 2002, 29 n.2.

51 Burkert 1987.

existence of a 'public' is a trace of the will-to-representation that inhabits occasion and is embodied by the symbolic relationship of *kharis* between form, content and occasionality.

The notion of a socio-historical 'will-to-representation', developed from Frederic Jameson, is comprised of two elements.[52] The first is ethical and concerns the *motive* of form and content in any representation.[53] The first element assumes that there are social and historical stakes in any performance and its occasion. This concept therefore treats representation as a modality of power. The second element is historical. Any ethical dimension of representation is articulated within a nexus of historically-determined relations.[54] The concept of a will-to-representation co-opts a Marxist aesthetics in order to pose the question of the mode of representational production (and hence the labour relations of representational production) at work in any epic performance. These fields are not, however, drawn simply in comparison or parallel to material modes and relations. Since representation is here regarded as a constitutive site of the production of reality rather than simply the ideological epiphenomenon of material relations of production, the concept argues, following Althusser, Adorno and Jameson, for the view that, as a human activity, representation escapes a properly Marxist gravitational pull toward the base. Instead, as a mode of the realization of human socio-historical reality representation oscillates between the (re-)production of existing narratives – such as the authentic transmission of tradition, positive ideological expression of existing social relations, and so forth – and the *seduction* (in Baudrillard's sense) of reality into new narrative forms via the subversion of tradition, the problematization of existing social relations, the performance of crisis and social contradiction, and so on. Representation acts by shifting the boundary between audience and performance within the relations of the occasion inhabited by the representation. The radical revision of the relations of the occasion of performance takes place by collapsing distinctions between utterance and audience. To repeat, the idea of the will in such a performance requires both the ethical and historical dimension. Peter Rose puts it thus: "[critical theory] posits in the gap between the working out of an artistic form's own potentialities and the working out of an ideology's various strategies of containment and closure *the cognitive possibility of exposing the limits of ideology*."[55]

Thus, what we are reiterating here is more than the truism that epic themes distil occasional concerns and anxieties. Rather our focus is drawn to the way form and content find their expression via *a mode of enunciation* that, historically speaking, has a particularly

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52 Jameson 1979 and 1980.

53 On which, see Rose's discussion of Frankfurt school aesthetics: 1992, 33-42.

54 A valuable point made in relation to the *Iliad* by Nimis 1986, 221, but underemphasized in Rose 1992, 43-91

55 Rose 1992, 42, emphasis added.

interstitial form – between, to use Baudrillard's terms, the *symbolic* and the *diabolic*. The staging of these symbolic utterances captures the archaic intersection of the political and symbolic with consequences for social reality and for the fundamental operation of mental forms like ritualized performance. The 'success' of the *Iliad* must then lie in the way form, content and occasion collude in articulating the *problem of the political*, by posing and raising a question over meaning and value as though they have now become *problems*. Historicism enables historians to juxtapose the incipient habits of thought and action in the early *polis,* where the main sense of community derives from its identity as a corporation of *politai*, with a more ambiguous multivalent world where all modes of social practice were characterized by the intimacy of rituals and their tacit role in the deterrence of alienation. The intimacy of ritual and the symbolic deterrence of alienation were threatened by the emergence of theoretical reflection upon the value and meaning of ritual practice, and the *Iliad* had a central place in the way this took place.

Political referentiality?

The historicist turn in the interpretation of Attic tragedy (initiated by Vernant and his circle) has yet to be properly replicated in Homeric studies.[56] Overcoming the critic's mistrust of context as a constraint on interpretation involves a nuanced appeal to the concept that *performative context is as determined by narrative as narrative is by context*. Narrative performances seed new possibilities into social practice similarly to the way text is shaped by the micro-narratives of social relations that structure every-day life. If we combine the findings of narratological studies (such as those of E. Bakker) with a theory of practice (Bourdieu) then we can begin to see that social reality – the privileged historical referent in any textual analysis – is itself structured by an infinite number of performative occasions. The question of form and content is therefore one of how reality is structured by a conformity to its own narrativity rather than one of narrative's fidelity to a reality defined as lying 'outside narrative' (i.e. a pure 'context').[57] Once we accept that reality is itself an epistemic form produced by successive historical moments then we can liberate ourselves from being bound to it when we try to understand how poetic performance in archaic Greece shaped the worlds of its participants. The difficulty in closing the gap that separates, for example, the historicism of Vernant and Vidal-Naquet with the dazzling but textually-closed interpretations of Lynn-George's *Epos* highlights the degree to which sophisticated readings still produce, so to speak, a 'satellitic' *Iliad*, that is, one that forever seems to escape the gravitational pull of its own artifactual past.[58] It is remarkable how empirical assessments of the

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56 Heiden 1997, 145 is skeptical but open to the possibility.

57 Bakker 1997 and 2005, Bourdieu 1990, 66-79. For a recent retrospective on narratology and its implications for the interpretation of Homeric epic, see Grethlein 2009 with the criticisms of Goldhill 2010.

58 For example, Vernant and Vidal-Naquet 1988, 23-8; Lynn-George 1988.

Iliad's worth as historical evidence overlook the more fundamentally historical question of form and occasion.[59] It is as if to preserve the place of a 'real' society as the privileged referent of 'Homeric Society' the text must be regarded as inert in relation to its performative environment. For this study, however, the *Iliad* is an alchemical crucible in which relations of the real world found their transformation via an active ritualized imaginary, an approach that is precisely opposite to the position largely taken by empirical studies of 'Homeric Society'.[60] Again, it is by no means the intention here to invalidate this approach, which continues to produce richer and more nuanced catalogues of insights ever since Finley's *World of Odysseus*; rather, as will become clear, it is the intention to ask how this picture changes if we regard Homeric epic as a form of active social *praxis*.

The historian who seeks evidence of the past in the *Iliad* must instead analyze the past for traces of the *Iliad's* presence rather than comb the *Iliad* for signs of the real. From this perspective we should stop scouring the *Iliad* for concrete social and institutional realities, such as the developing *polis*, and focus instead on how the *Iliad* discloses itself in its totality as evidence of the appearance of 'le champ du politique': "a sudden self-awareness of the group, along with practices of debate that raise the question of the idea of the sovereignty of this group, especially as to what concerns it."[61]

To take a comparative example, Peter Wilson has argued that dithyrambic performance is a formal representational moment that distils a defining characteristic of the late archaic period of Greek history.[62] From his and other studies of the dithyramb it is clear that 'the field of the political' did not in some way evolve from pre-political 'mythical thought'. On the contrary, ritual occasions for the performance of myth were the primary sites at which the self-

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59 e.g. Raaflaub 1998.

60 For a general application of such an approach see the chapters in Morris and Powell 1997 under Part 4, entitled "Homer's Worlds" which contains overviews, among others, on "Homeric Society" (Raaflaub 1997) and the "Homeric Economy" (Donlan 1997).

61 Detienne 2001b, 42, and *passim*, with Detienne 2000. Schmitt-Pantel 1992, 107-113, citing further studies on 'le champ du politique' (which she links to the semantic field of the Greek word *koinon*), speaks of a "passage to autonomy" (113) that characterizes the distinction between the archaic and classical Greek city: "entre le politique diffus dans l'organisation sociale et le politique institutionnel, le fracture est celle du monde archaïque au monde classique" (113). In other words, the formalization of practices of civic belonging in the late archaic period involved the autonomization and prioritization of three areas of citizen activity: "délibérer, juger, commander" (113). See also the important observations of Murray 1990, Meier 1986 and 2001, Cartledge 2009, 11-28, and Elmer 2013. The observations of Barker 2009, 41-88 are especially valuable. For the *polis* and public space in Homer, see Hölkeskamp 2003. Scully 1990, 6-15 denies the status of "political community" to the Homeric *polis*. On the concept of 'autonomization' as the radical disinterment of practices by theory and the consequent emergence of new intellectual objects, see Detienne 1988, 7-26, and Arnason 2001 on the concept of 'autonomy' in the work of Cornelius Castoriadis.

62 Wilson 2003 and 2012. For the politicization of myth and ritual, see especially Murray 1990.

reflexivity of the early city was enacted and found its most forceful expression. Dithyramb therefore enters Athenian civic life as a ritual performance that underwent a reshaping under the sign of political subjectivity for the purposes of staging the aversion of civic strife. But the key to dithyramb's success lay in its capacity *to remain symbolic in form* while catalyzing the political in content and occasion. Only in this way can it have effectively prevented both the symbolic and political consequences of *stasis*. This, it is argued here, parallels the experience of Homeric epic around a century before.

The relationship of the *Iliad* to the *polis* is a subject that finds corresponding expression in Dean Hammer's *The Iliad as Politics*.[63] Hammer argues that epic's critical aspects are obscured by a traditional scholarship rooted in Platonic assumptions separating poetic thought from abstract forms of philosophical reason. For Hammer, the *Iliad's* critical dimension is manifested in three ways. Firstly, the public nature of epic performance binds composition to the extra-discursive social realities of the audience: "the composition of the poem, as it conveys both coherence and meaning to its audience, rests, then, on a comprehension of culture: on the attitudes and assumptions that make the plot believable."[64] Secondly, the actions and behaviour of the characters in epic narrative engage in a dialogue with the extra-discursive "cultural grammar" of its audiences: "the possibility of ambiguities, tensions, and even conflict as the Homeric characters constitute themselves and their world by invoking and re-invoking a cultural grammar that organizes and gives meaning and significance to their values, beliefs and social relations."[65] Finally, Hammer draws on Victor Turner's notion of "social drama": "social dramas present breaches in and inversions of accepted norms, actions, beliefs, and social structures, introducing a 'performative reflexivity' in which the artist raises "problems about the ordering principles deemed acceptable in 'real life'".[66]

Despite its comparative sophistication[67] Hammer's work bypasses the effect on narrative content exerted by the symbolic modalities of performance. His assumption of a "cultural grammar" with its structuralist image of the audience as the 'readers' of a performed narrative does neatly harmonize the world *of* the performance with the world *in* the performed utterance. From a

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63 Hammer 2002. From the standpoint of the history of political thought Hammer's examination of the *Iliad* is a significant milestone and dovetails closely with many themes explored here. His observations on the political importance of the funeral contests for Patroklos (2002, 135-43), while different in emphasis, independently parallel the broadly similar findings of this study published previously: Brown 2003, modified as chapter 4 below. For more recent engagements with Hammer's work, see Barker 2009 and Elmer 2013. Radically different again, but also linking (Athenian) civic awareness with Homeric themes especially through formal criteria such as linguistics markers and epigraphic self-consciousness, is Sauge 2007.

64 Hammer 2002, 11. Morris 1986 also makes this point.

65 Hammer 2002, 12.

66 Hammer 2002, 13, citing Turner 1974, 27.

67 Compare with Morris 1986 and Farenga 1998 and 2006.

structural point of view then the *Iliad* can be interpreted straightforwardly as a 'political' poem insofar as it deals with questions of concern to audiences of early Greek state-formation. But this interpretation needs to be modified when we take the view that, as a ritual practice, the form of epic performance is *not* political despite the fact that the content it narrates may represent political solutions.

Hammer hesitates to theorize the *Iliad* as an object of analysis in this way. His solution is to observe that 'the political' is reified in the construction of a 'political field': "a realm in which questions of community organization are raised, determined, and implemented."[68] This argument veers close to begging the question. Hammer first poses the existence of a political field and then searches for the internal evidence in the *Iliad* in order to show that the epic is located within this field. He overlooks the fact that 'the political' ought to be a historical habit of thought and that the evidence for the articulation of this field is a struggle at the core of the whole poem, evidence that is not straightforwardly transparent, or reducible to a simple datum. He therefore overlooks that to be effective the conditions of performance *must be excluded* from this political field, ignoring what implications this might have on what the *Iliad* is attempting to express and how it goes about expressing it. Hammer pays little attention to the symbolic relations of epic occasion, and therefore ignores how the event of performance introduces a political field *symbolically*.[69] When the *Iliad* represents a social ritual *as a problem* to be reflected upon *politically* it makes its break with the symbolic, but it can only *perform* this role by situating its narrative in the ritualized – or *felicitous* to use Austin's term – environment of occasion. Put in Homeric epic's own terms, only within the modalities of *kleos* can *kleos as problem* be posed.[70] To determine whether the *Iliad* is in fact offering an aetiology of this political field requires that we juxtapose instances

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68 Hammer 2002, 14. Unlike Hammer, however, Taplin 1992, 7 and 55-73 is quite prepared to call the *Iliad* "highly political" (a historicist remark whether Taplin likes it or not) without considering how historical conditions "shaped" its content as well as form. If the *Iliad* is so concerned with ethics then what social and historical imperatives made its questions so urgent and why was it so necessary to pose them *in this way*? Both Hammer and Taplin do not consider the representational stakes of which the *Iliad* is a significant trace.

69 On the specific meaning of "symbolic" see p.20-1 above.

70 From this perspective, the reading of the *Iliad* presented here has much in common with David Bouvier's important *Le Sceptre et la Lyre* 2002 especially at 259-278 and 357-414. Bouvier argues rightly that the *Iliad* self-reflexively poses a crisis in its ability to establish intergenerational solidarity through performed narrative and its subsequent inability to underwrite social authority. Whereas the present study focuses on the way the *Iliad* foreshadows historical and political consciousness by disinterring as problems what had usually been expressed in symbolic circulation, Bouvier considers the problematization of generational succession in the poem (both socio-politically and poetically) and the implications this has on the narrative's exploration of its ability to impress itself ideologically upon potential audiences. Bouvier therefore rightly locates the *Iliad* on a fault-line between orality and literacy (436-452), plagued by anxieties about the ongoing efficacy of oral transformations of a fluid tradition (even though questions of occasion and precise historical contexts remain vague in his work).

of critically explicit questioning in the epic (such as Achilles' responses to the embassy in *Iliad* 9) with the immanent praxis of symbolic action like rituals, for example, which proceed only on the condition of their non-reflection.[71] When Hammer suggests that one possible question within the political field is "[w]hat do we value and how are these values expressed in the goals of community life and organization?" he ignores the way *value*, conceived as a rational *political* concept, is itself the product of a historical and psychological shift narrativized in the performance of this poem. Hammer's 'political' questions are raised within the occasion of performance only after first being immersed in symbolic conditions of non-referentiality, *which are the very conditions that guarantee the poem's efficacy as performance*. This is how the *Iliad* can destabilize the ground of its own narrative purpose through Achilles' subversive interrogation in *Iliad* 9 ("why must Argives make war on the Trojans?" *Il.* 9.337-8) without at the same time undermining the ritual premise which assures the success of the performance as a whole.[72]

The 'political field', taken as a field of public questioning and rational reflection, cannot be taken as an *a priori* condition of any performance occasion. As a historicist Hammer acknowledges this: "my suggestion is that the *Iliad* is shaped in important ways by some of the considerations and issues that arise with the emergence of the *polis* in the second half of the eighth century."[73] Once again, however, we see the straightforward assumption that context informs meaning – the *polis* must logically be prior to a social drama about the field of political activity. But to what historical *a priori* does the social drama of the *polis* itself respond?[74] How, for instance, do archaic political communities express a political field when it is an embryonic habit of thought yet to develop its own specifically 'political' discourse and language? Here is the core observation of this study: the *Iliad* is not passively shaped by the emergence of the *polis* but is *actively involved in its instigation.* By drawing on a source of authority located tacitly in the symbolic order, Homeric epic performance *precedes* the political field and by this tacit 'sleight of hand' is able to extend its *ritual authority* to this nascent political field, seeding the ground for the terms, the language and the discourses for what will be expressed in the 5th century as an autonomous field of human activity.[75] The questions posed in the epic performance may in retrospect be assigned to this political field but they are just as suffused with the delegated ritual authority of the poet who sings them. In this sense, the political field emerges implicitly as a consequence of problems of ritual efficacy posed by the narrative and

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71 On this, see more generally chapter 5 below.

72 The use of δεῖ in this line, a Homeric *hapax legomenon*, is taken in light of Frontisi-Ducroux's study of Iliadic self-referentiality (1986), and Henrichs' study of choral self-referentiality in tragic drama, "Why should I dance?" (1994/5).

73 Hammer 2002, 13.

74 Vlassopoulos 2007 has now made important arguments against the centrality of the *polis* to Greek history.

75 On the poet's ritual authority, see Detienne 1996, ch.1-3.

authorized by the occasion. The *Iliad* is less a performance of political thought, as Hammer argues, and more the performance of its aetiology in a paradigmatic event – the *menis* of Achilles, triggered by the failure of an equally central *political* rite, the *dasmos*. The significance of the *Iliad's* expression of this historical moment further explains why the objectified capital of the narrative via its textualization transformed epic performances into talismanic symbolic objects. These texts were hoarded by guilds of performers and acquired as a form of symbolic capital by tyrants and lawgivers eager to wield (or suppress) their objective power in the political reconstitution of their cities.[76] Although useful in raising awareness of epic's critical voice, Hammer's work pays insufficient attention to the way that critique and contemplation arises in the political field via the symbolic forms of remembering and forgetting evoked within the performative relations of epic occasion over which the poet, not the warrior-citizen, is master.

Quite differently from Hammer, and in many ways more aware of the discursive construction of reality that takes place in narrative, is Peter Rose's Marxist reading of the poem, "Ideology in the *Iliad*: *Polis*, *Basileus*, *Theoi*."[77] Rose provides a more sophisticated analytical apparatus for tackling the question of the *Iliad* as ideology.[78] Rose shares with this study an interest in the relationship between narrative utterance and reality. He also addresses the matter of the *Iliad's* socio-historical will-to-representation: what imperatives are driving its performance? Rose sees the *Iliad* as an ironical but ideologically charged form of critical dissent arising out of the world-view of an emerging peasant citizenry locked in an ambivalent and fractured relationship with a ruling aristocracy. This historical context is the late eighth century, the nascent *polis* and its institutions. His thesis intersects with ours in many ways but, although very persuasive, there remain a number of essential points of divergence. Our emphasis is on the generative power of performed narrative to distil new social and political solutions within the framework of cult and occasion. Furthermore, this study locates the historical moment of the *Iliad* aetiologically within the well-developed *polis* and engaging

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76 On this see the excellent remarks of Bakker 1993, 15-8 with Cingano 1985 (on Kleisthenes of Sikyon), and the evidence collected by De Libero 1995, 128 (Hipparkhos), 175-6 (Periander), 286-7 (Polykrates). On 'Homer' in Peisistratid Athens, see Slings 2000.

77 Rose 1997. See now also Rose 2012.

78 On the "chestnut of Homeric interpretation that Homeric epic reproduces elite ideology" see D.F. Wilson 2002, 134-46, at 135, with an excellent discussion of the pitfalls. Her study, however, does not commit to a precise historical contextualization (136) nor does it theorize how epic functions as ideology (the conclusion is titled "Poetry as Practice" and begins with Bourdieu but ultimately seems little interested in the implications of referring to epic performance as a 'practice' in the sense Bourdieu develops). She also views the ideological struggles represented in the *Iliad* as complex but essentially between competing types of social organization. The criticisms here leveled at Hammer can therefore be applied equally to her study.

primarily with an audience for whom citizenship is acquiring formal and institutionalized meaning.[79] While Rose detects a nostalgia in the *Iliad* for a true sovereign whose "resurrection in the form of the tyrant was just around the corner"[80], this study locates the *Iliad* in the context of the emerging supra-aristocrats of the late seventh and early sixth century BCE – of whom Agamemnon is redolent – whose *kratos* and monopolization of *symbolic* power threatened the *political* rites upon which the city ideologically depended. This figure (Agamemnon/*turannos*) precipitates crises that open up new pathways for the expression and resolution of challenges to the political order, especially in its incorporation of *symbolic* power. The tyrant especially catalyzes the problem of authority in the early *polis* precisely because his 'autonomous' power highlights and dramatizes the gap between sovereignty, founded by ritual power, and civic will, founded by political consensus. But Rose's alertness to the question of ideology unfortunately does not extend to the more precise representational function of the epic in relation to the occasion of its performance. On the one hand, is it possible that the conjuncture of form and content in epic performance also catalyzed for audiences the *gap* between ritual authority and the legitimacy of the 'political field'? On the other hand, even if we accept the arguments of those who place the Homeric poems in the eighth century BCE, the *Iliad* was nevertheless exceptionally apposite to Athenian citizens of the sixth century because the *Iliad* framed for them in performance this problem of political authority at a critical moment in their city's history. Why, in other words, did the *Iliad* undergo its structural and textual transformation *then and there*?[81] Finally, where for Rose critical theory provides the materialist framework for making sense of representation as ideology, this study draws on Bourdieu and Baudrillard, both of whom offer sociological frameworks that have attempted to move beyond ideology to explain forms of human social practice.

The symbolic representation of political referentiality

In seeking to release the *Iliad* from the 'pre-political' ghetto where political theorists and historians have remanded it, Hammer's *Iliad as Politics* overcorrects, overlooking how densely the city wove its representations of collective action into the warp and woof of symbolic power. The constant reinvestment of new forms of authority and sources of legitimacy into the ritual efficacy and social functions of the city is a marker of the archaic period in Greek history. This reinvestment has been the subject of useful revisionism by scholars such as Marcel Detienne. In returning to the site of his earlier archaeology of *aletheia*, Detienne recognized that the "transition" from "mythical thought" to "abstract philosophical

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79 Many would argue that the eighth century BCE fits this description already: see Farenga 1998 with further references.

80 Rose 1997, 192.

81 The best recent discussion of this question is Cassio 2003 but Connor 1989 offers suggestive possibilities *mutatis mutandis*.

reasoning" was less linear than his model had initially suggested. [82] Furthermore, Detienne noted how his earlier totalizing notion of 'thought' obscured the contribution to this transition made by the overlapping of practices and discourses. In a more recent study, which looks at the figure of the murderer in various sources, Detienne illustrates how the growing importance of the 'political field' brings to the surface different anxieties about homicide in relation to the civic community understood as a body and where ritual is reconfigured in light of new communal forms of transaction.[83] By concentrating on the figure of Orestes he has noted that the problem of the murderer is more acute in the archaic *polis* because the increasing importance of the political field left the city more conscious of the need for symbolic resolutions than ever before. Although homicide was abstracted in the city's legislation as a legal problem before the law (for example, in Drakon's law: *IG* i^3 104), there remained left over the horror of bloodshed and the pollution of the city associated with the continued presence of the murderer in the community. The excision of the murderer's body and the city's purification thus required a solution that was simultaneously political and pre-political.[84] This solution drew on a principle originating in legends of the murderer's exile, purification and role in the foundation of new communities.[85] The figure of Orestes dramatized problems like these that were beyond the ability of the purely 'political' *polis* to articulate, let alone solve without the help of pre-political practices. Thus the city was supported by a powerful continuity of symbolic modes of thinking and acting which conditioned the emergence of specifically 'political' types of action.

The boundaries of 'thought', Detienne suggests, are clear in some instances but non-existent in others. Detienne's seminal model of the emergence of dialectical speech is qualified by this caveat and the fuzziness of these boundaries is exemplified in the *Iliad* by the role of Achilles. The separation of speech from religious authority and social function, identified in Detienne's genealogy of the 'masters of truth' as the "secularization of speech", is that moment when a warrior society extends into the civic community at large its institutions of equality, encompassing property and language (things and words), the so-called 'hoplite reform' of the 8th to 6th centuries BCE.[86] Nevertheless, there are some important qualifications while still retaining Detienne's model.

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82 In the preface to the American edition of *Masters of Truth*, Detienne 1996, 15-33, reprinted in Detienne 2007, 60-75.

83 Detienne 2003, 102-114.

84 As, for example, in the aftermath of the failed attempt by Kylon to seize the Acropolis: *Ath. Pol.* 1.

85 On which see Dougherty's especially suggestive essay, 1993.

86 Detienne 1996, 89-106, with Detienne 1968. See also the preface to the American edition (1996, 15-33) for a restatement of the conviction with a survey of criticisms. The 'hoplite reform' and the character of warfare in the Homeric poems will not be discussed in any depth in this study although it is a desideratum. It suffices to note that the processes by which the warrior function

Firstly, the types of speech that emerge in warrior societies are not so easily differentiated from the effective types of speech belonging to the poet, diviner and the mythical king who dispenses justice. In Sparta of the seventh century BCE, as Daniel Ogden has shown, the utterances emanating from the assembly of *homoioi* were conceived of in magico-religious ways.[87] For instance, it was the role of the elders and kings to treat any "crooked speech" uttered by the *damos* as though it were the birth of a horrendously deformed child (*teras*).[88] The deliberative act of the assembly could not be disengaged from a view of speech conceived as an action with symbolic consequences, much like Hesiod's king whose pronouncements had both a direct and alchemical impact on his community.[89] Archaic Sparta was equivocal as to whether the *rhetra* of the warrior assembly established a break between speech and reality, that is, between speech and action. A *rhetra* was both political *and* oracular. It was simultaneously an explicit determination of communal matters set down "in the middle" and a symbolic object alive with its own eerie power that only those socially authorized could handle. The sources for the 'Great Rhetra' indicate that public utterances and the oracular affirmations of Apollo are expressed in the same language at this stage.[90] Beginning in the middle of the 6th century, attestations of public utterances (*rhetrai demosiai*) in Chios and Elis begin to indicate a separation of public from oracular speech. We should note, however, that even in democratic Elis of the 5th century, public utterances were inscribed on *pinakes* made from the recycled legs of late Geometric victory tripods, re-used after the reorganization of the Olympic sanctuary.[91] The link that ties the oracle of Zeus at Olympia to the athlete, from the *agon* to the tripod and then

began to be exercised by the *demos* are not as transparently linear as was once assumed by an earlier generation of historians of early Greece. One of the best overviews on the matter relevant to this study is Vernant 1988, 29-53, with the remarks at 39. The *damos* of the Mycenaean world was, nevertheless, distinct from the *laos* who bore arms (see Lejeune 1965, 1968 with Heubeck 1984, who argue that the Mycenaean *laos* should be thought of as a warrior class; for differing views, see Van Effenterre 1977, Latacz 1977, 121-2 and the surveys in Welskopf 1981, Wyatt 1994-5 and Haubold 2000, 1-3). This compels us to locate these processes in the Proto-Geometric and Geometric periods with an acceleration of the process in the 8th century. The technological and material conditions of this transformation are controversial. The social and ideological consequences must have included the representation and articulation of changes to military practice and it is among these that we place the *Iliad*. For a survey of the current view about 'Homeric Warfare' see Van Wees 1997 and on the 'hoplite reform', Singor 2009 and the essays in Kagan and Viggiano 2013. For a thorough and convincing restatement of the older orthodoxy, see Schwartz 2013.

87 Ogden 1994.

88 Plut. *Lyc*. 6.

89 Hes. *Op.*, 225-247 with West's comments, 1978, 213. The principle, which must be old, is found also in the *Odyssey*: 19.109-15.

90 Plut. *Lyc*. 6 and Tyrtaios fr.4 West.

91 Chios: *ML* 8; Elis: *Inschriften von Olympia* 7; the clearest example of tripod re-use is *Inschriften von Olympia* 3 whose *pinax* was originally cut from a Geometric tripod leg: Maass 1978, 195, catalogue no. 247a, Inv. Br 3929; cf. also catalogue no. 210, Inv. B 6073. I thank the *DAI* for permission to examine these items.

back to the object sacred to Zeus once more, but this time bearing a public utterance of the sovereign *damos,* illustrates further the fact that speech in the city always drew upon strategies of the symbolic speech-act. Ogden's study shows the complex degree to which the political and the ritual were intertwined in this quintessential 'city of warriors.' In the case of the 'Great Rhetra' the speech of political spaces was as deeply immersed in concepts of symbolic power as the speech of the poet's performance.

The implications of this more blurred account of the emergence of political rationality do not, however, invalidate the general account first sketched by Vernant.[92] It rather points to a situation where the 'political' resolution of the 'crisis of sovereignty' was continually troubled by the *problem of symbolic power*, both in terms of its necessity and its periodic irruption into the spaces of city. Homeric poetry self-consciously sits on the fault-lines of this tension and dramatizes it. It is therefore essential in any historical interpretation of the *Iliad* to factor in a textual awareness of this tension and the prototypically political question to which it gives rise: whence do utterances derive their truth?

Thus, secondly, the character of the sources upon which Detienne relies when he discusses the speech practices of warrior societies needs some reconsideration. In his discussion of the transition from effective ritual speech to dialogue-speech Detienne turns to the *Iliad* for the warrior practices that anticipate the spaces and thought of the fully-fledged city.[93] But the *Iliad* is more than a collection of significations to be used for propping up historical theory. The *Iliad* is also the product of the effective speech of the poet who, by drawing on the invisible authority of the Muses, weaves a ritualized and performed reality in the here-and-now. That magico-religious speech is *the very form taken by this evidence* compromises its use in corroboration of the transition. Moreover, as Richard Martin suggests, it is not that the speech and actions of warriors in the *Iliad* are a simple reflection of what took place in a warrior society, but that the *Iliad's* warriors utter their oratory like the poet *in and through the hexametric discourse of poetic performance*.[94] It is therefore deliberately unclear whether the *Iliad's* warriors speak authoritatively because of their position in the *Männerbund* or because the surrogacy of the poet's voice lends its discursive power to their speech.

Finally, there is a prescriptive dimension to the epic utterance that conditions fundamentally how the practices displayed within it ought to be understood. Detienne rightly draws our attention to the latency of the political field in practices like spoil distribution (*dasmos*) and funerary *agon*. But it is dangerous to pluck these institutions from the poem without considering that their place in the *Iliad* implies a complex homology within the narrative. On the

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92 Vernant 1962.

93 Detienne 1996, ch.5, described by Pierre Vidal-Naquet as the work's "pivot" in his foreword to *Masters of Truth*: Detienne 1996, 13.

94 Martin 1989.

one hand, *dasmos* and *agon* are homologous in their treatment of objects and spaces.[95] On the other, *dasmos* and *agon* are positioned at opposite ends of a performed event: the disrupted *dasmos* of *Iliad* 1 and the felicitous funeral *agon* for Patroklos in *Iliad* 23. This suggests that the failure of one type of distributive practice (the *dasmos*) triggers a crisis in the particular types of meaning and value to which it gives rise, a crisis to which a *different yet homologous* type of distributive practice – funerary *agon* – is made to respond. Critical attention should therefore focus as much on the differences between funerary contests and spoil distribution as on the homologies that link them, especially when these differences are brought into sharper relief through the narrative context of a representational meta-practice like the *Iliad*.

Homeric warrior practices are representations that function within the symbolic practice of epic. It is therefore necessary to explore how the agency of poetic performance interacts with its own representations. Detienne argues that the speech practices of warrior communities detach speech from reality and thus give rise to the question of referentiality. Following Detienne's suggestion, it should then be possible to demonstrate how this detachment is deliberately posed in epic performance and made to play out its potential crises in the *Iliad* through the figure of Achilles. Only the poet who stands apart as 'master of reality' is capable of doing this. Only in the symbolic milieu of occasion with its ritual suspension of time and its deployment of an archaic 'truth' can this radical break with the world be presented and witnessed by an implicated audience. In archaic Sparta the dialectical power of political speech in the *apella* was checked by configuring it in a network of taboos and ritual that regarded all speech as a potentially dangerous power. Spartan politics in practice involved steeping public space into a ritual complex capable of averting the irruption of symbolic violence. In poetic performance, on the other hand, that capability is deliberately let loose by the poet, a master of symbolic forms able to precipitate the extremes of symbolic violence as well as bring us back from the brink. Both contexts in their different ways recognize that behind the transparent secular dialogues of the *agora* there always lurked the potential for *menis*, described by Leonard Muellner as an atavistic power of *symbolic* outrage that perplexes dialogue and which could cripple political society with *stasis* if it was not ritually acknowledged.[96] In Sparta the "putters-aside" exposed the destructive potential of speech as the misshapen product of a monstrous birth, the *teras*-child who might grow to become, as in so many legends, a *turannos*.[97] In the performance of the *Iliad*, however, *menis* is provoked in the here-and-now ("the *menis* of Achilles, o goddess, sing *it* !"), and then defused by being sung into being under the direction of the poet in a space that is simultaneously real and imagined.

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95 Brown 2003 with chapter 4 below.

96 Muellner 1996. In the same way, the aetiology of the rational and political character of the law-courts in Aeschylus' *Eumenides* is balanced by the acknowledgement of, and the due offered to, the Moirai.

97 On which, see Vernant 1982b.

The *Iliad* therefore offers an aetiology of political *harmonia* in the discharge of *menis* enacted and witnessed in its performance. Detienne can discern evidence of the "secularization of speech" in the *Iliad* precisely because *poetic speech* focuses its problematic upon that paradigmatic process of secularization in order to seduce it into a poetic strategy of 're-presentation'. This strategy of poetic seduction in epic diverts the potentially real into an *actualized imaginary* where the political field confronts its insoluble crises in the form of a ritual confrontation. Although the occasion enacts the suffering of its participants within the narrative reality, it also transforms the occasion into a ritual site for the aversion of suffering. It does this by warding off potential *menis* through a paradigmatic re-expression of *timē* narrated as the transformation of one distributive model (*geras* and *dasmos*) into one more durable (*aethlon* and *agon*).

This reading therefore differs substantially from a widely held interpretation that maps onto the *Iliad* a genealogy of value 'from gift-exchange to money'.[98] If more careful attention is paid to the historically situated and institutionally coherent nature of performance then we cannot be vague about the specific exchanges with which the central social problematic of the *Iliad* is concerned. It must be stated clearly that the poem charts a passage from a crisis in one type of explicit evaluation – the *dasmos* of spoil authorized by the *laos* which reaffirms each warrior's place in the *Männerbund* through the public witnessing of legitimate receipt of allotted goods – to the establishment of another – the funerary *agon*, which intertwines the symbolic gestures that confirm an heir with transparent external rules, and thereby produce a new evaluative object, the prize (*aethlon*). In the performance of epic the *agora* and its practices are drawn into the performative occasion where *menis* is ritually invoked in order to be contained and symbolically neutralized. The transformative power of the performative occasion frames the analysis of distributive practices of Homeric warriors adopted in this study.

This understanding is illustrated aptly in the way the narrative of the *Iliad* parallels the institutional solution offered by funeral competition. Funeral contests succeed by interweaving ritual forms with public adjudicative practices. Social worth generated from victory cannot be disentangled from the symbolic links that connect it to the funeral with its rituals of inheritance and succession. The homologies between heir and victor, explored below in chapters 3 and 4, draw on symbolic relations as well as the more overtly political determinations implied by prizes, rules and publicly witnessed judgments. The contest is a more durable form of evaluation in the *Iliad* because social value from contests emerges as a function of its public resolution, *independently of the claimant*. The funerary *agon* is presented as a site for witnessing the production and authentication of value. Performed in the same public spaces as *agones*, the *Iliad* offers an aetiological account of citizen competence to judge fellow citizens. By narrativizing and ritually

[98] e.g. Nimis 1986 and Seaford 1994.

precipitating the crisis of these evaluative modes the *Iliad* undertakes an inaugural act of self-reflexivity as a performative (and therefore historical) moment. Through the voice of Achilles the poet ritually dismantles aristocratic practices of honour and prestige by posing the *problem* of ritual and its disjuncture within contradictory aspects of lived experience. Ironically only the poet, who keeps one foot firmly in the authorizing terrain of ritually effective power, can achieve this. Only from the seat of symbolic power that the utterer adopts upon the occasion of its performance can the narrative *interrogation of immanent value* act in a ritually effective way. When Achilles asks self-reflexively how a man's claims to worth can be maintained when the rituals of value, including heroic *kleos*, fail, he demonstrates epic poetry's ability to open up a *real imaginary space* for questioning dialogue. The "stage" of ritual performance, with its ability to sing the world becomes the vantage point from which narrative inquiry into rituals themselves can be conducted.

The pact of occasion

The role of Achilles in the *Iliad* confirms the subordinate role played by a supposedly objective extra-discursive 'reality' as opposed to performance ritual as a world-building power in reshaping meaning and value in archaic Greece. In epic performance all participants are obliged to put aside 'reality' and submit to the 'pact of occasion' and the terms of its imagined discourse. This precipitative aspect of epic is condensed in the *Iliad's* opening injunction: "the wrath of Achilles – make *it* the song, goddess…" (*Il.* 1.1) Through the prescriptive impact of this opening line upon the social reality of the ritual occasion the poet co-opts the audience in authorizing departures from 'tradition'. Thus Achilles' rejection of heroic value manifests itself as part of the fabric of a ritual reality in the here-and-now through the socially delegated prescriptive function of the poet.

Performance of epic is thus *meta-ritual*, a ritual of self-reflexivity that can render explicit questions about the meaning and value that circulate immanently within symbolic and practical action. It plunges its participants into tense crises that dare not be stated or reflected upon within the reality of practices. The *Iliad* draws its power from enacting a dialectical interrogation that explicitly poses the *problem* of referentiality and subjectivity ("of what does *my value* consist?") but does so via a mode of enunciation that is nonetheless founded on symbolic and practical efficacy.

Consequently, the performance of epic poetry and funeral contests are practices belonging to the same interstitial historical mentality of the early *polis* in the archaic period. Both practices are cast against the backdrop of the early city, as evidence of an emerging will to critical problematization and collective adjudication that is still obliged to operate within traditional ritual practices. The role played by the *Iliad* in the 6th century Panathenaic festival demonstrates this duality. The processions, celebration of citizen identity and its civic *agones* would henceforth coincide with the successive re-performance of

the *Iliad* as part of its festival programme and, along with other practices in this festival, represent the mythical aetiology of a *political* solution to the social anxieties of the archaic city arising from the problem of ascribing social value within a community of peers.[99]

This study seeks to explain the *incorporated instrumentality* of performed poetry and its character as a situated discourse within the extra-discursive historical milieu of the early *polis*.[100] It addresses the widening gulf in Homeric studies between historicizing approaches to epic and those constrained to exploring the implications of the Parry-Lord model. On one side, historical studies, like Richard Seaford's *Ritual and Reciprocity*,[101] trace parallel diachronic shifts in the form and content of epic. Unlike more positivist historical approaches, which look only to extract what is uncritically assumed to be an active and generative real world from epic's passive documentary imaginary, [102] Seaford and others prefer to see poetic texts as fragments of charged environments.[103] As Leslie Kurke has argued in relation to Pindar, epinikian performance both distilled and catalyzed the capital of victory.[104] In bearing witness to victory the ode acted as a glass diffracting the symbolic consequences of victory in archaic Greece. The significance of the stake invested in the ode is expressed in the degree to which the poet and the enunciative occasion over which he presides determines the meaning of victory in the lives of victor, audience and community, beyond the occasion of the event. Without poetic memory even the greatest deeds are destined for oblivion. Moreover, the advent of epinikian ode is connected with a convergence of representational problems within a changing discourse of eliteness and the place of an athletic victory in that discourse during late archaic and early classical period (540-440 BCE). The epinikian ode is therefore much more than simply the historical evidence for a poetics of victory, it is the practical context in which the discourse of victory took shape, was consumed and contested.

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99 It is impossible to state the following with any certainty: (1) when rhapsodic performances were introduced into the Panathenaic programme; (2) what form these performances took and how this changed over time; (3) at what point the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* predominated and in what form. A strong case can nevertheless be made that Hipparkhos formalized as a 'Panathenaic rule' what had no doubt been developing as *de facto* contest practice, a process by which performances and narratives were regularized and emerged in the shape of our *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The will-to-representation for the formalization of the Homeric text must therefore be sought in the civic transformations of post-Solonian Athens among which the foundation of the Greater Panathenaia and the tyranny of Peisistratos and his sons are central. For a general awareness of this, see Cook 1995, Slings 2000, Sauge 2007 and the work of Aloni 1984, 1989, 2006. On the context of Homeric performance in 6th century Athens, see Cassio 2003, 114-8 for closer argument and references.

100 For a similar approach, see Nagy 1996, 83-6, and 1997, 72-87.

101 Seaford 1994.

102 See n.1 above.

103 Such as Calame 1996 and 1998, Kurke 1991, Von Reden 1995, 13-57.

104 Kurke 1991.

Homeric epic is simultaneously descriptive and prescriptive, telling us at once how things are, may or might have been, should or ought to be, and hypothetically could be. Many recent studies agree that, when Homeric texts are considered as traces of oral performances as opposed to literary objects, archaic audiences could not have borne witness to their performance without being changed. Students of orally performed epic, such as John Miles Foley and Egbert Bakker have helped clarify the specific strategies employed by oral poetry including the nature of referentiality in performance. Bakker, for instance, explores how the 'past' exists in epic through deixis in the form of an immediate present enunciation.[105] The remote past is thus brought about in epic by an *act or gesture of reference* rather than conceived abstractly as an *object of reference*.[106] Foley shows how prior performances of epic ('the tradition') can only be explained in relation to the performance of the present occasion.[107] These approaches put oral poetics back into a lived context and ask how performance generates a specific non-literary meaning. While these approaches historicize concepts like 'past', 'memory' and 'tradition' they fail to explain the historical pressures that drove epic to conjure a world and frame a problematic within that world. If it is accepted that the poet's memory does not materialize as a passive reflection upon events but from critical immersion within realities of the here-and-now then there is an obligation on the historian to connect the poet's artful conjuration of the past with a general theory of a socio-historical will-to-representation.

When Achilles is driven to ask impossible questions of meaning and value, it is inappropriately reductive to consider them universal questions that issue from the 'the human condition'.[108] In the *Odyssey*, as Simon Goldhill argues, the narrative that begins "tell me, Muse, about a man" (*Od.* 1.1) is a discourse not on 'man' in general but on the specific signifier *andra*.[109] Moreover, the narrative does not proceed to instruct an audience about this word nor is the audience expected to interpret the meaning of the word consciously. Rather, the meaning of *andra* circulates throughout performance and its occasion in the form of an interpolated *habitus* as an embodied history.[110] The physical bodies of the *andres* in the audience serve both as the bearers of a bodily inscribed *socio-historical being* and as those who have authorized the poet to speak. Pierre Bourdieu explains this *habitus* as follows:

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105 Bakker 1996 and 1997.

106 This is particularly developed in Bakker's seminal essay on epic time, "Storytelling in the future" 1997.

107 Foley 1991.

108 A point succinctly made by Nimis 1986.

109 Goldhill 1991, 1-68.

110 "Repeated mention of a hero is not just the activation and reactivation of the idea of a person in the performer's and the listener's mind; rather, it is the repeated activation of the *theme* that the concept of the hero represents", Bakker 1993, 13.

> . . . constituted in the course of an individual history, imposing its particular logic on incorporation, and through which agents partake of the history objectified in institutions, [the *habitus*] is what makes it possible to inhabit institutions, to appropriate them practically, and so keep them in activity . . . reviving the sense deposited in them, but at the same time imposing the revision and transformation that reactivation entails.[111]

The ritual complex of occasion and audience is critical in the activation of meaning but it is not the meaning apportioned to the text through our criticism. Taking the lead from Bourdieu and Derrida, the 'oral text' both produces and is produced within this embodied history causing meaning to exist only as something grasped beyond the performance.[112] This is because the relations legitimating the delegation of poetic authority to all the participants involved in the epic performance are precisely those which "revive the sense deposited" in poetic utterance and allow it to act upon the occasion authentically. However, authentic delegation requires that active participation in the form of an authorizing complicity must be tacitly denied and concealed, that is, *misrecognized* by the audience.

'Misrecognition' (*méconnaissance*) is one of Pierre Bourdieu's least appreciated and under-utilized concepts. Avoiding the pitfalls of ideology Bourdieu considers how practices generate a real, lived and experienced reality among their participants. Rather than describe a false consciousness brought about by ideological mystification Bourdieu assumes that the objects produced by practices are authentic and sincere. Engaging fundamentally in an account of practical ethics, Bourdieu tries to steer a path between the Scylla of structuralism (embedded and objective culture) and the Charybdis of existentialism (rational subjects making informed choices). Misrecogniton describes the deliberate blind spot essential to the successful function of practices. It is not conscious choice but part of the way the *habitus* structures, and is structured by, the institutions it inhabits. Bourdieu's best example is the logic of the gift. He asserts that gift-exchange is not to be romantically opposed to commodity-exchange but is instead just as motivated by calculation and interests as any other economic activity. The gift is however an object structured by the sincere disavowal of calculation and interests. How then does gift exchange secure the interests of parties to the transaction while at the same time elicit the feeling of generosity and the obligation to reciprocate that flow from the gift's identity as sincerely disinterested object? Misrecogniton offers the explanation as the effect of a kind of ethical amnesia. The gift is successful in serving interests (i.e., it creates a social relation, establishes status, goodwill, the expectation

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[111] Bourdieu 1990, 57.

[112] See Derrida 1982, 307-330 on the ultimate inability to split writing from orality. For Derrida the basic condition of language is its *iterability*, a concept that permits us to consider speech and oral performance as equally non-present-to-itself as writing has typically (and prejudicially) been regarded.

and obligation to return, and so on) if, and only if, it is sincerely embraced as the product of a generous, uncalculating and disinterested act. Bourdieu uses the expression *tout faire comme si* to describe the outcome of misrecognition: "everything takes place as though" the gift was everything it claimed to be. Misrecognition thus avoids the sinister overtones of direct manipulation and power by tracing the sincerity back into the motive. The gift is discovered to be motivated by generosity *and* calculation of interests simultaneously, neither of which can be made explicit without entailing a complete breakdown of the object's identity as gift. In short, misrecognition is what allows practical agents to experience immanently what theory must isolate and construct as a conscious motive. Bourdieu's philosophical point is that theory is incapable of understanding the formation of culture unless it acknowledges the asymptote that separates theoretical reflection from practical immersion.[113]

Meaning exists immanently, Bourdieu argues, as an endless dialectic between the *habitus* and the institution. This dialectical process for performance poetry will be mapped out in chapter 5. For example, while agreeing with Goldhill that the *Odyssey* is an extended fugue on all the denotative and connotative meaning that *andra* elicited in the uncertainties of the early Greek world, any such reading must not be confused with an explanation of the way meaning arose in the context of the *Odyssey's* performance. The *meaningfulness* of the utterance in the *Odyssey* is activated by the interpolation of its infusing *habitus*. The *habitus* opens up previously unseen homologies and secret metaphorical affinities enabling the suspension of social realities in ritual time and permitting the descent into *aporias*. Put differently, *andra* triggers the *andra-ness* of participants considered as historically situated bodies. Participants in epic performance are not rational actors fully conscious of their own subjectivity reflecting on points of reference, but historically disposed practical agents for whom the word activates meaning as the deferred circulation of their own bodies. Bourdieu put it thus: "Practical belief is not a 'state of mind', still less a kind of arbitrary adherence to a set of instituted dogmas and doctrines ('beliefs'), but rather a state of the body . . . [and] enacted belief." [114] We further add that *history* is what flows from the "revision and transformation that reactivation entails" beyond the event of performance. Not only are epic poems historical documents in the traditional sense, more fundamentally they are *fragments of a historical moment in which the poems were themselves the stakes* and were therefore sought after as symbolic capital in struggles for authority. For participants, meaning is therefore *incorporated meaning*, a form of consumption by the body which disperses meaning into other ritual spaces and extra-discursive milieux.

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[113] *Pace* Scodel 2002, 31-2. On Bourdieu and classical studies (but without developing the hermeneutic value of misrecognition), see Hammer 2006.

[114] Bourdieu 1990, 68

The study of epic meaning must extend beyond the assumptions of a post-Enlightenment opposition between the real world and the representations of it by art and literature. Employing the concept of symbolic value and symbolic exchange Part Two of this book dismantles the concept of a real world that can be autonomized from the imaginary as both fundamentally real and, therefore, the ultimate point of reference upon which the imaginary depends for meaning (the 'reality-principle').[115] Rather, as Bourdieu argues, the 'real' and the 'imaginary' emerge as reversible complements. The so-called "objective conditions" to which the practices of everyday life respond appear on closer inspection to be already entrenched ritualized and habituated actions which lend those practices a natural character appearing as though the "the only thing to do." This is a feature of practices involving the misrecognized exchange between the *habitus* and social institutions.[116] Making sense of the relationship between the worlds of epic as an extra-discursive social reality of occasion, and the world called into being by the poet's ritual imperative, also involves building an image of a unified 'real-imaginary' without privileging one at the expense of the other. The idea of a 'real-imaginary space' aims at underlining the practical effect of ritually performed poetry in which everyday experienced reality is only one of an infinite number of possible realities encountered by participants in which the question of referentiality is never allowed to arise.

The concept of the *habitus* provides the means to see that explicit questions about the meaning of epic and its interpretation can only be asked over the horizon of performance ritual where texts permit the reification of meaning and raise the problem of reference. During the ritual time of its occasion, however, epic performances have no external reference point by which to anchor meaning, only practical immersion in the form of its performance, which, as Bourdieu has said "impos[es] its particular logic on [bodily] incorporation, and through which agents partake of the history objectified in institutions". When meaning begins to be imagined as originating in the 'mind of the performer' – that is, in a notion of authorship – it is a marker of the how far over the horizon of the occasion of performance any act of interpretation is.

As Ruth Scodel has suggested (with different emphasis), "the assumption that a successful oral performance must be fully transparent all the time is simply wrong . . . the common further assumption that all members of an audience must have an equal and high level of understanding is simply false."[117] However, Scodel subsequently rejoins the critics she censures asking skeptically: what could an audience possibly *know* in relation to content? By limiting the analysis to questions about the competence of audiences to 'make

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[115] Nietzsche calls this a "dogmatist's error" in the preface to *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche 1973, 32. See further *Beyond Good and Evil* sections 10, 16 and 17.

[116] Bourdieu 1990, 52-8.

[117] Scodel 2002, 10.

sense' of epic performance, students of oral epic like Foley and Scodel overlook the way practical knowledge operates via a logic of propriety and 'fit', rather than a linear path of logical extrapolation from the text to an external reservoir of sense. Foley's concept of 'traditional referentiality' does not grapple with performance as practice. Without a theory of the practice of performance Foley must try to attach a structural explanation, which posits a kind of internal lexicon of prior performances to which audiences are thought to refer mentally when they try to locate the present performance, to an existential author who founds meaning through an act of *poiesis*.[118] Instead, we refer to the *duality of tradition* in order to appreciate how a symbolic utterance makes the world anew with each performance. Tradition consists of that which is bequeathed in a rite of transmission. Its duality derives from what must be sacrificed or 'let go' in the act of being transmitted. [119] In performance, epic content is transmitted but fundamentally altered by the historical imperatives of the present occasion. In order for the past to be meaningful it must collude with the present. The tradition therefore contains within it the constant transformation demanded and authorized by the congregation. This is the *pact of occasion*, and its success can be explained by Bourdieu's theory of practice: the audience's authorization of the present performance must be *misrecognized* to be effective. Tradition, to be worthy of the name, must simultaneously incarnate a timeless continuity while breaking completely with the past in order to address the immediacy of the present occasion. The past is transmitted but only in the form of a trace, an echo or a fragment half-recollected within performance, at once transmitted and yet broken with, remembered and forgotten in one and the same act, as a relation of tacit ambivalence rather than explicit reference.

Within symbolic contexts the part played by representation in art and ritual is constitutive of, rather than referential to, reality. In a purely political field, by contrast, a disinterred 'reality' provides the reference point for determining the meaning of human action and expression. Rituals and their narratives are discredited if they cannot be aligned with a reality that is independent from them. In symbolic contexts, however, there are no acts of reference that guarantee meaning or truth. As Bourdieu has shown, in a ritual environment, such as a Christian Mass, specific reference to the transcendent existence of God is not the guarantee of ritual effectiveness for those participating in it. God is rather invoked and made present in the act of performing the Mass. In other words, ritual is self-sufficient in meaning. Much of the care and attention devoted to rituals derives from the key role they play in fabricating the social and cultural reality of their

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[118] Foley 1991.

[119] The *duality of tradition* is present in its etymology: *traditio* < *trado* = *trans-do*: "to pass on" as well as "to betray, sell out, surrender". That this is a feature of language in general is explored by Derrida 1982 and 1976, 144-5.

communities. In symbolic fields the formalities underpinning ritualised processes of representation cause things and events to occur or be present.[120] Reality is therefore actively produced rather than passively responded to.

Rituals are therefore contexts in which *metamorphosis* rather than *metaphor* applies.[121] For example, the meaning of the statue of a god is not the signifier of an idea nor is it a resemblance. In the earliest Greek rituals the statue was what caused the god to be present and fixed it to a particular site. Statues were often carried, washed, adorned, clothed and sometimes chained down. God and statue are not the same thing but, on specified occasions and via the appropriate rite, they will for a time coincide.[122] Poetic performance is similarly able to 're-presence' other epochs by binding an invoked past to its present occasion.[123] On performance occasions a pact exists between all the actors contributing to the event. Present, past and future are assembled into an order presided over in the here and now by the poet whose words and gestures bring divine forces into play. Narrative content delivered on these occasions does not refer to an autonomous reality for meaning, much to the chagrin of historians. The 'truth' of a sung past unfolds from the enactment of narrative within the pact of its occasion. The role of the singer, from Homer to Simonides, is to prompt the daughters of Memory to assist in telling the "things that were aforetime" (τὰ πρὸ τ᾽ ἐόντα, Hes. *Th.* 32). During the song the Muses hold off oblivion by summoning the past into the audience's presence and making it happen once more. To sing "as though one had been there or heard it from one who was" (*Od.* 8.491) is not praise for fidelity to some independently real version of events, but a statement that the poet properly fulfilled his role in causing "being-there-then" to become a property of "being-here-now". Odysseus' praise, as his language suggests, is properly understood in this way, that Demodokos has successfully intertwined his proximity to the past with the 'now' of the occasion (αὐτὸς παρεὼν . . . "as though you were *present*"), or had once been in the audience of another who had done so (. . . ἢ ἄλλου ἀκούσας). The poet's memory is hypostatized in the Muses, who represent a complete intimacy with all things past, reducing everyone else, including every potential performer or eyewitness, to the role of audience (*Il.* 2.485-6). The occasion looks to the poet to realize the *truth of the event* in performance. Without his narrative no event can be counted to have occurred at all; equally, and just as importantly, no narrative can proceed without the pact of occasion, a misrecognized collusion between performer and audience that authorizes a new event by uttering the imperative 'sing!'.[124]

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[120] Vernant 1991, 151-185, Faraone 1991, Steiner 2001, 3-26.
[121] On this definition of *metamorphosis*, see Baudrillard 1994, 129-42.
[122] Vernant 1991, 151-63 with further important remarks on 138 and Steiner 2001, 5-11.
[123] See Crieelard 2002, 239-95 and Bakker 2008.
[124] Pind. *Nem.*7.12-13 and 61f. give both a general and specific example of this truth.

This symbolic exchange between performance and occasion gives rise to *relations of intimacy* with the past rather than the *logic of disclosure* that underwrites the truth claims of historical narrative. This concept of *intimacy*, borrowed from Georges Bataille's *Theory of Religion*, is apposite.[125] A past structured by ritual poetics 'makes sense' to an audience by having been seduced into playing by rules that were authorised within the performative occasion. This past is not strange or mysterious. Audiences are not alienated or mystified by its relations, hierarchies and customs. The sung past does not present itself as a foreign country whose inhabitants behave in ways inexplicable to the listener.[126] The meaning of the past in performance is never brought into opposition to, or contrasted with a past *reality* but finds its symbolic value in and through its ritual occasion. The conception of a 'real past' required the development of very different discourses and occasions before it could challenge the reality evoked by song.[127] Only after rethinking performed epic as practical immersion rather than interpretative reflection can the *form* of the *Iliad* be juxtaposed with the radical departure of its narrative *content*.

The Structure of the Work: Part One

The chapters of Part One (chapters 1-4) examine the institutions central to the *Iliad's* social conflict. A close review of the semantic field of *geras* challenges the orthodoxy that the *Iliad* narrates the transition from the reciprocity of the gift-economy to a more abstract and explicit mode of evaluation in archaic Greece represented by the privileged portion in the constitutive rite of the warrior group.[128] This review discloses that the exchanges of the *dasmos* (distribution of spoil) already constituted a radical departure from the symbolic exchanges of the gift with its cycles of dependence and obligation. The *geras* and *moira* are precious objects publicly allotted by the warrior circle that acquire their special value from the founding practices of a political society. Chapter 1 extends this analysis further by considering the character and role of objects arising in the political space of the *dasmos*. The ramifications of these findings are pursued in chapter 2 in a reading of the strife between Achilles and Agamemnon. It is argued that Achilles' outrage, alienation and humiliation are the consequences of Agamemnon's subversion of a peculiarly political rite by his assertion of superior *kratos*, an assertion amounting to an overthrow of the political exchanges of the *dasmos*. The gift in the *Iliad*, far from being the default exchange of the 'Homeric economy',[129] makes its primary appearance in the poem

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125 Bataille 1989, 43-44.
126 See Fowler 2001, 113-4.
127 This point is made by Goldhill 2002.
128 Exceptions: Gernet 1955, Nowag 1982, Lynn-George 1988, Scheid-Tissinier 1994.
129 Scholars seemingly never tire of excavating the Homeric poems for a 'proto-economy' as though conducting an inverse Malinowskian investigation (instead of 'Argonauts of the South Pacific' we have in Homer evidence for the 'Kula of the Aegean'), see recently Peacock 2013, 68-104. The usefulness of anthropological parallels notwithstanding, the anti-historicism of such approaches demands that an interpretation of the 'evidence' of Homer be utterly

deliberately in the context of Agamemnon's attempt to dominate the warrior group symbolically. In the context of the relations structured by the explicit conventions of the *dasmos*, Agamemnon appears as a proto-*turannos* who substitutes a regime of obligation and personal ties to the *basileus* for the transparent and collective gestures of the warrior economy. This reading emphasizes the *Iliad's* sensitivity to the fragility of political practice and assumes an audience for whom an institutional vacuum of this nature renders any community of equals vulnerable to the assertion of force (*bia*) and unilateral power (*kratos*). Furthermore, this reading would locate the historical moment of the *Iliad's* performance in the shadow of the archaic *turannos*.

Chapters 1 and 2 also look beyond the *Iliad's* narrative problematization of the *dasmos* into the context of the occasion of performance. They observe that the cult frameworks within which epics were performed were collectively understood to be the funeral *geras* due to the dead warrior. Although the *geras* originates in a fashion that is already significantly political and secular in the *Iliad*, it is nevertheless shown to be an institutionally fragile form of explicit value. The narrative charts a traumatic transition toward the formation of new evaluative institutions founded on different axes of value. However, strictly speaking, the *geras* of the hero in the 'world of the utterance' – that is, his cult and funeral contests considered as part of the ritual complex and more widely participated in by the audience of epic – is what transpires "after the *Iliad* is finished" or "after Aiakides has left off singing" (*Il.* 9.190). Thus the poem itself is part of the hero's *geras* and in this sense the symbolic value of the poem *as text object* cannot be activated until it is performed. This activation has two movements: in the first instance it takes place as the narrated performance of the funeral of Patroklos (*Iliad* 23) *before* the *laos* of cult, and subsequently in the enactment of the funeral *by* the *laos* of cult *after the song*, that is, at the occasion of performance in the form of the audience's participation in athletic and equestrian contests for the hero. This proper sequence observed by audience/athletic participants is a ritual context that will mirror inversely the *laos'* failure *within the narrative* to prevent the tyrannical *hubris* of Agamemnon from destroying the political character of the warrior's exchanges (*Iliad* 1). To bear witness to the *menis* of the uncompensated hero through the *past* of performed narrative is to participate in the *present* compensation of practices aetiologized, and hence triggered, by the poem.[130] This reading explores the *practical narrative* of the funerary contests that lie beyond the textual narrative of the performance. The practices represented in the song are brought to fulfilment through their impact as real structuring relations among the participants in cult. It is conjectured that for these reasons the rhapsodic performance of the *Iliad* was tied closely to the quadrennial

divorced from the text and the circumstances of its production. The argument here is that what may look like useful anthropology produces bad history.

130 We can again invoke Jameson's interpretation of Michelet's history as the instigation of the past into the present moment in order to cause the present to bear witness to the truth of the past in itself.

festival of the Great Panathenaia inaugurated at Athens in 566 BCE. In this way *epos* and *agon* were woven together offering a charter for this contest's part in grounding new senses of social belonging and evaluation in the wake of Solon's re-invention of the Athenian *polis*.[131]

Chapters 3 and 4 contextualize athletic competition in early Greece by identifying intersecting lines of thought, economy and institutions relating to funeral contests. By locating funeral contests in a semantic field that includes the practices of spoil distribution and the strategies of inheritance and succession, chapter 3 demonstrates how athletic competition in early Greece is founded on practices of social legitimation, a central anxiety of the *Iliad* itself. It is argued in chapter 4 that funeral contests were an inextricable part of aristocratic rituals of succession. It was the success of this aspect of practices associated with funeral contests that led to the rise of seasonally recurring athletic competition at festivals throughout Greece. Key institutions of the city are thus understood to have resulted from the civic appropriation of the specific practices of funeral contests in the form of contests at the site of hero-cult. Particular attention is paid to the contribution made by athletic competition to the prize (*aethlon*) as the expression of a concomitant type of value. The emergence of the prize amidst practices of aristocratic succession provided a new economic model for the articulation of value 'between the symbol and the sign' in a symbolic and pre-monetary economy. To this extent the idea of the prize and the way its particular type of value is derived render the prize proto-monetary in character and foreground the origins of coinage in an environment that began to treat value as something expressed in political contexts.

At the end, this chapter returns to the *Iliad* where athletic competition ceases to be an amusement of elites and becomes one of the most potent solutions to the social problems distilled by the performed narrative. *Epos* and *agon*, both central practices in the *geras* of cult offered to the hero, are joined together in the totality of the

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[131] This study places the formation of structural unity in the Homeric poems firmly in 6th century Athens (see, for example, Nagy 1990a, 52-81; 1996, 77-80; 1997, 42-53 with Merkelbach 1952, Davison 1955 and Cassio 2003, 114-8). In a project with a comparable aim to this one, André Sauge argues that the *Iliad* offers a conceptual foundation for the Solonian reforms via Achilles' critique of aristocratic ideology (Sauge 2000). Sauge has further elaborated this theme in a more recent book (2007) that undertakes a complex reading of a particular narrative element, the fate of divine weapons, alongside a reconsideration of epic language in the light of Athenian graphic conventions at the end of the 6th century. In these Sauge unearths democratic traits and argues generally that "l'épopée homerique appartient de droit à l'espace de la fondation d'une cité." Sauge aligns the *Iliad* historically with a rejection of aristocratic ideology in late 6th century Athens associated with Kleisthenes' re-foundation of the city. While I am in agreement with the approach and the conclusions, my focus here is less on the rejection of elite discourses and more on the aetiological and generative aspects of epic in relation to emerging social institutions. There have been notable recent attempts to perform similar analyses of Homeric epic, such as Haubold 2000, and of the *Odyssey*: Cook 1999 and Aloni 2006.

social function of ritual. It is only when an attempt is made to restore to the *Iliad* something of its ritual instrumentality that the problem of epic as historical evidence can be approached afresh. The mirror of epic is an oracular event from which archaic audiences return transformed. Instead of linking the *Iliad* to a past in the form of a referential relationship, it is more productive historically to think of its performance as an event with its own causes and effects shaped and structured by social and historical conditions. The failure of the proto-civic rite of the *dasmos*, simultaneously brought about and narrated by epic, nevertheless carries the seeds by which a nascent political community celebrates its succession to institutions founded by their ancestral dead. The way the poem achieves this as performance is the subject of Part Two.

The Structure of the Work: Part Two

Part Two (chapters 5 and 6) move from the particular to the general, from the examination of the institution of funerary athletic competition in the *Iliad* to a reconsideration of the relationship between form and content that lies at the heart of the epic performance as a whole. Chapter 5 examines the formation of relations between the poetic utterance and its occasion as ritualized practice. Chapter 6 addresses the character of the exchange relations at stake in epic by explaining the way value as a central theme in the *Iliad* manifests itself in symbolic exchange. Recent interpretations of orality, text and context, as well as theories of ritual practice and symbolic exchange demand that institutions represented in the *Iliad*, such as the funerary contests of *Iliad* 23, be regarded from the perspective of the ritual strategies that allow the 'world in the utterance' of *epos* to be experienced as *simultaneously* real and imaginary.

The danger with the theorization of natural and poetic practice lies in the reduction of the latter to instances of a universal law. What is required is a theory of practice respectful of the unique historical character of eventfully situated artifacts. Structural explanations used to advantage by Detienne and Vernant are insufficiently supple to capture the extra-linguistic motives that shape poetic and ritual performance. For this reason, this study turns to the social theorists Pierre Bourdieu and Jean Baudrillard in order to understand the practical reasoning that motivates the production and exchange of epic as symbolic capital in archaic Greece. Ritual performance translates the extra-discursive conditions of the occasion, expressed in this study as the 'world of the utterance', into the terms and conditions of the ritual itself. But this can be achieved, Bourdieu warns, only by means of a poetics of obliteration that misrecognizes the practical reasoning underlying such a translation: "genesis implies amnesia of genesis".[132] In this study Bourdieu's concept of *misrecognition* is used in explaining how *epos* generates a prescriptive imaginary out of the social and historical conditions of its own performance milieu.

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[132] Bourdieu 1990, 50.

It will be further argued in chapter 5 that the success of epic performance in general, and the *Iliad* in particular, derives from its unique status as ritualized critical discourse – a narrative, so to speak, of meta-ritual, a practice of self-reflexivity and problematization. Problematization is the demystification of commonly argued beliefs through the process of reflective dialogue. The narrative of the *Iliad* resonates with the ritual context at which all the actors of the occasion – audience and enunciator as well as those actors *in the poem itself* – are complicit in a critical reflection upon the here-and-now, 'the world of the utterance'.[133] Nevertheless, it is emphasized that this critical reflection takes place on two levels. Firstly, a crisis is precipitated immediately *within the narrative event* and its impact produces a crisis in the body of the audience.[134] Secondly, the consequences of the utterance for the occasion of performance lie *beyond the horizon of the narrative event.* This is where narrative meaning and 'traditional referentiality' takes shape, not as conscious reflection but as a volatilization and dispersal of the experience of the performance into institutions, as a re-calibration of the *habitus*.[135] The study borrows theoretical approaches from Bourdieu, Derrida and Baudrillard in developing this concept of the 'counter-utterance'.

As an analysis of epic text in context, care is taken to observe Bourdieu's injunction to investigate our own "freedom to distance the world" self-reflexively in order to preserve the character of epic and not to reduce its explication to an instance of theory.[136] While it is legitimate to ask the meaning of epic performance, we are mindful that such a question is meaningless within the terms of a performance that depends for its effectiveness on non-reflection. Bourdieu's theory of practice argues that in any investigation into the epistemological difference between theory and practice, the "viewpoint" taken by the scholar is situated outside the object of practice. Thus a scholarly "viewpoint" must not be conflated with the practical knowledge under study.[137] To this extent practical action never constitutes itself theoretically as 'subject' explicitly in relation to an 'object'. Insofar as all relations of meaning, reference, value and exchange in a practice are implicit it is false to argue that audiences interpret anything in the ritual of performance, only that the performance seeds "iterability" in

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133 If the funerary character of epic performance occasions is accepted (for example, Seaford 1994, ch.4 and 5) then the hero of epic is doubly present as no one else is, both in the *narrative* and at the *occasion* of his cult, in his tomb.

134 This corresponds to Nagy's observation that *penthos* is an immediate consequence of the performance, 1979, 94-102. At the level of the occasion of hero-cult the utterance precipitates grief and suffering. This catastrophe precedes the institutional transformation that takes place at the end of both narrative and occasion, namely, the foundation of enduring community practices, such a civic (funerary) *agones*.

135 See Baudrillard 1993a, 198-205 on the experience of the poetic as the dispersal of meaning rather than its distillation: "the poetic is a process of the extermination of value . . . [and] the insurrection of language against its own laws" (198).

136 Bourdieu 1990, 1-21.

137 Bourdieu 1990, 27.

the audience, to use Derrida's expression.[138] "Iterability" is a potentiality in the *habitus* carried away by participants as embodied history.[139] The key here is that symbolic forms of practical action do not depend on a consciousness of representation or referentiality. The epic imaginary does not seek to invent "something else" and then give it substance nor does it embed within itself some reference to a more highly charged reality that could authorize an interpretation. Poetic practice instead enters into a pact of metaphor with the real world rather than a relationship conducted on dependent, dialectical or antagonistic terms. Baudrillard's concept of *seduction* helps in elaborating this relationship. The poetic metaphor does not 'produce' meaning about the world; it distracts (*seduco*) the world, tricking it into disclosing the secret affinities and uncanny homologies that lie concealed and undeclared in the run of everyday experience.[140] Metaphor is *symbolic* in the etymological sense. It throws things together and causes one term to metamorphose into the other. When James Joyce asks what reveals the affinity of woman and the moon he discloses that one is the irresistible *double* of the other, beyond the structural opposition of real and imaginary.[141] Metaphor does not signify some other relationship or substitute such as a psychological reference, or mental system of classification. This would be tantamount to saying that a metaphor meant something other than it asserted. Poetic language discloses the collusiveness of things by seducing intimacy out of difference causing oppositions to become complements in a cycle of metamorphoses. Woman is not 'like' the moon because the metaphor draws on a signifying regime beyond the moment of poetry; rather, the figure 'un-conceals' the lunarity of woman and the femininity of the moon. Rationalization of the poetic is therefore *diabolic* in its substitution of the *pact* of intimacy with *relations* of distance, opposition and strict division between identities.

The notion of the 'counter-utterance' in epic performance enables audience response to narrative events to be found in the dispersal and volatilization of meaning into institutional society *post eventum*.[142] The 'counter-utterance' parallels the 'return-gift': it is the response of the audience, but deferred, delayed and misrecognized with respect to what prompts it. It takes place not as interpretation but

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138 Derrida 1982, 315.

139 Bourdieu 1990, 66-79.

140 Baudrillard 1990, 2003, 21-3. As with many of Baudrillard's concepts there is an etymological play at work here. Production is opposed to seduction in the same way as political economy is opposed to symbolic exchange. Each of these terms designates a *modus operandi*. Production (*produco*, "reveal") is the mode of disclosure in theory and knowledge, seduction (*seduco*, "divert") the play of appearances and images in symbolic exchange.

141 Cited at the beginning of the preface to Bourdieu 1990. For a classicist's readings of various theories of metaphor from Aristotle to Ricoeur, and their failure to include a discussion of poetic practice, see Silk 2003.

142 Poetry is the symbolic form of language *par excellence* according to Baudrillard 1993, 198-205. In his critique of Saussure, Baudrillard explores the way poetic meaning is received, developing the view that meaning inhabits the audience after being sacrificially consumed. See further below, p.253-4.

as *incorporated history*, detectable only in the trace left behind by the collective action of participants. Thus, for example, the institution of the *polis* can be understood as one of the potentialities made possible by the moment of performance, the 'counter-utterance' that responds to epic moments over the horizon of their narrative events.[143]

This approach enables the historian to move beyond questions such as "what evidence is there for politics and the *polis* in the *Iliad*?" to a realization that the poem in its entirety is evidence of a social strategy oriented to *political* expression of the nascent congregational concerns of an occasion. It is impossible to strip the *Iliad* of its poetic conceit ("epic distance") to reveal a core of historically real people adopting real strategies. The form of the entire poem is the trace of the "real strategy" existing as a metaphoric reality in a symbolic milieu. The poetic form of the utterance does not occlude historical meaning any more than ritual forms of action conceal 'real' psychological aims. The poetic and the ritualized are the forms taken by language and action when they operate in an imaginary and suspended time and space. Poetic form enables protagonists to escape the gravity of the real in order to address the complexities of emerging reality. A practice such as athletic competition in *Iliad* 23 cannot be isolated from the ritual nexus of which the text of the *Iliad* is the trace, but must instead be seen as caught up in the strategies used by epic performance to create alternate realities. Hitherto this has been a trap for more traditional historians, who, in their attempt to disentangle an extra-discursive real world from the epic text, succeed only in unstitching the *symbolic labour* invested in sewing the socio-historical conditions of the performance occasion into a prescriptive imaginary. The 'mirror of epic' of our title refers to this double of the here-and-now embodied in the imaginary 'world in the utterance' of the *Iliad*. In common with all doubles, epic partakes simultaneously of identity and difference. In this way the *Iliad* can operate as critical reflection while keeping that dramaturgical distance that permits transformation, prescription and the positing of an alternate present arrayed in the trappings of an heroic past.

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[143] Such an approach is suggested by the Paris School reception of Athenian tragedy, which has shown how democratic Athens was articulated in dramatic performance as well as many other performative genres. Simon Goldhill's important study of the place of drama in the Dionysia (Goldhill 1987) demonstrates that the relationship between festival (occasion) and performance is the crucible of democratic Athens' will-to-representation. By extension the same observation should hold for the Panathenaia in the 6th century BCE. By linking Robert Connor's thesis, that dramatic contests were re-organized as part of the democratic reforms at the end of the century (Connor 1989), to a study of the role of epic performance at the Panathenaia (such as Cook 1999), one could continue to explore the democratic transformation of Athens via the tension between two forms of symbolic representation, epic and tragedy (for such an exploration, see especially Seaford 1994). On reading the history of Athens as a series of 'Panathenaic moments', see Phillips 2003.

Chapter 6 reflects upon the 'modernity' of the *Iliad* and undertakes to indicate where its place might lie in the context of the intellectual shift "from symbol to sign" as first suggested by Louis Gernet.[144] It examines how symbolic value, which exists intimately only as a function of continuous circuits of exchange, is disenchanted and displaced by *value* conceived as an abstract duality, that is, as something distinct from the object. Meaning also becomes disenchanted because the concept of social worth as a constellation of tacit associations that circulate in practices is similarly abstracted.[145] This chapter explores this process of disenchantment using Jean Baudrillard's notion of 'symbolic exchange' to shed light on the crises brought about within the narrative by the oath sworn by Achilles in *Iliad* 1 (*Il.* 1.233-46). By adopting a 'theoric' perspective – detaching from his milieu to become a spectator of his own social being – on the practices that appear to have failed him, Achilles excludes himself from a social identity that specifically arises from being, so to speak, 'in circulation'.[146] For Achilles, regaining his identity is not simply a matter of unsaying all that he has said. Like the precious objects described by Gernet, which derive a symbolic power by pursuing covert strategies beyond the ends imposed upon them by subjects in exchange, Achilles must pursue a 'fatal strategy'.[147] If adopting the 'theoric' point of view has caused Achilles to operate outside the 'intimacy' of the social (*Iliad* 9), it has also caused him to replace the *symbolic* with the *diabolic*. Life and death, both of which animate

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144 Gernet 1981a, first published in 1948.

145 Money is the horizon of the disenchantment of social worth in that it provides a mechanism by which to alienate labour-value and exchange-value from the social contexts of its circulation. For a seminal study of the process of disenchantment, see Taussig 1980 with Edelman 1994.

146 Taking the lead from Nightingale 2004, 40-71, use of the expression "theoric" links *theory* to the *theoros*. Furthermore, it is necessary to draw attention to the function of theoric choruses in archaic Greece and the way the perspective of the theoric delegation is iterated in the lyric performance of the chorus. As Wilson 2003 shows, in archaic Greece choruses move the community, who are ritually inscribed in the occasion of performance, *from a crisis in ritual to ritual as the resolution of crisis*. From the theoric perspective this takes places first as the collective witnessing of a re-enacted (past) ritual crisis and then as the collective participation of chorus and audience in the present occasion, a ritual that harmonizes the group.

147 This Baudrillardian concept considers how certain objects as well as social figures pursue destinies that are 'fatal', Baudrillard 1990a, 163-98 and 1990b. This means they resist the functional discourses imposed upon them by subjects through the terroristic strategy of brinkmanship. For Baudrillard, the suicide bomber and the poker player both pursue fatal strategies, but it is in the world of objects that his interest lies. Coupled with Gernet's study of value in Greek myth (1981) the concept of the "fatal strategy" provides a way of thinking about the subjectivity of objects like Polykrates' ring or the necklace of Eriphyle, and the way these objects often act counter to the purposes for which they have been put in circulation. Fatal strategies are incorporated into the structure of symbolic exchange and therefore ritual and sacrifice provide the main strategic responses to the uncanny 'fate' of the precious object. One can note Baudrillard's indebtedness to the work of Marcel Mauss and Georges Bataille in the development of this concept.

heroic *kleos* in equal measure, become, via his discourse, mutually irreconcilable opposites. In this criticism death is no longer the necessary complement of the warrior's life for which there will be the recompense of living poetic memory. Death becomes instead hateful, meaningless and aleatory; limited in this way, death can only be reviled. To recuperate the possibility of *kleos*, Achilles *must be reconciled to death*; but it cannot be by a process of rationalization as a reflecting subject. It must be via the 'fatal strategy' of the sacrificial victim. Achilles must rediscover that the identity of the epic hero is founded on the reversibility of life and death and be reconciled to his *double*, that shadow of his social being called "best of the Akhaians." Building on the thesis developed by Gregory Nagy and Dale Sinos, chapter 6 proposes an interpretation of the metaphoricity of *Patroklos* as both 'embodied destiny' (*kleos paterōn*) and sacrificial double.[148] This interpretation co-opts Neoanalytic arguments concerning the relationship between the *Iliad* and the *Aithiopis*.[149] The novelty of the *Iliad* with respect to this tradition lies in the role played by Patroklos. A shift in the status of Patroklos within the *Iliad* enables the poet to construct Achilles as a reflective human subject who is able to pose the question of the *referent* of his own social worth but who can do so only as a function of his self-imposed alienation from the logic of the symbolic. By temporarily choosing stark reality at the expense of the *imaginary function of epic poetry itself*, Achilles interrogates the relationship between a putative 'real self' and the narrative image of the social self, between real and imaginary and ultimately the truth of ritual performance. Achilles is led into privileging an even more imaginary signified – the 'self' – in a sweeping rejection of an economy of honour (*timē*) founded on the exchange of precious goods and poetic memory (*kleos*). In doing this, however, he succeeds only in disinterring himself from the practical contexts where meaning and value circulate immanently.

From this moment in the *Iliad* we encounter two figures of Achilles. One is the reflecting subject adrift in an aleatory reality for which death has now become an indiscriminate, brute and meaningless terminus regardless of achievement. The other is Patroklos, the double who will "indicate the way" (σημαίνειν, *Il.* 11.789) to Achilles toward death as 'fatal strategy' by responding to the song Achilles himself sings. Patroklos is the image of Achilles in the mirror of social exchanges, the imaginary double whose reality

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[148] Nagy 1979, 69-107, 1996, 72-3, Sinos 1980, 29-38 and Lowenstam 1981. See Van Brock 1959 for the original thesis linking Patroklos as *therapon* to *therapon* as "ritual substitute".

[149] In general see Kullmann 1984, 1991 and 2005. Von Scheliha 1943, 236-51 and Schadewaldt 1952, 178-81 suggested Patroklos was 'invented' for the *Iliad*. Kullmann 1960 and Seaford 1994, 154-9 prefer to see Patroklos as redeveloped specifically for the *Iliad*. See Janko 1992, 313-4 for a survey of views and Page 1961, 207-8 for a summary of objections. Tsagalis 2011 provides a new model for Neoanalysis via intertextuality.

Achilles is driven to repudiate. The sacrifice of Patroklos – whose very name Nagy and others have shown signifies him as the marker of a heroic destiny whose death compels the requital of *kleos* – draws Achilles through the trauma of sacrifice back toward a lost intimacy, an intimacy positioned over the horizon of the *Iliad* as their intermingled ashes in the same cinerary urn (*Il.* 23.91-2).[150] Like the *kolossos* double whose ritual immolation in the fire ties one to an irreversible destiny and thereby compels one to act, Patroklos is able to traverse the terrain of death that Achilles, in his exile, is unable to enter. Alone in his *skenē* Achilles exits the 'scene' of his *kleos*, placing in stasis the singular destiny that tradition has hitherto guaranteed him. In his tent Achilles becomes for a time the poetic subject instead of the object of epic praise.[151] From this position he is unable to respond to the prescriptions of a performance tradition from which he has now removed himself. The death of Patroklos is therefore understood as a narrativized ritual immolation that wrenches Achilles back into practices of symbolic exchange, restoring him to his inheritance cast in the form of *traditio* in its most literal sense ("the act of surrendering that guarantees transmission"). Patroklos ventures "outside the scene/*skenē*" of Achilles' alienated subjectivity. The narrative artifice of Achilles' double, which is drawn from practices of ritual substitution, permits the poet to articulate in performance an emerging double nature of the human subject: the social subject formed by communal narratives and symbolic exchanges, and the self, who begins to demand that those exchanges somehow accurately map his own real experience of himself.[152]

Achilles' rationality, posed in the *Iliad* as the product of a traumatic splitting of the subject, is a historically situated moment coincidental with the beginnings of historical consciousness in late archaic Greece. The emergence of historical consciousness is examined in the last section of chapter 6 through the laughter of the *logographos* Hekataios of Miletos. Here the emergence of historical consciousness is foreshadowed in the alienation of the intellectual from his object of inquiry. Hekataios' laughter is an ambiguous marker of disenchantment that parallels the trauma of

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150 This approach is drawn chiefly from Nagy 1979, Sinos 1980, Lowenstam 1981, Lynn-George 1988 and Vernant and Vidal-Naquet 1988.

151 At *Il.* 9.189 Achilles performs on a lyre won from the sack of Eëtion's city. This marks the moment when Achilles veers dangerously close to effacing his heroic identity by becoming the singer of songs praising men *other than him*.

152 The most remarkable visual support for this reading can be found on an early 5th century *stamnos* by the Triptolemos painter (*ARV*² 361, 7; Basel Antikenmuseum BS 477). The alienated Achilles sits in his tent and surrounded by the embassy in one panel, while on the opposite panel a sacrificial ram, identified by the inscription 'Pat[roklos]' (= Immerwahr *CAVI* no. 1999C), lies slain on the battlefield between Hektor and an unnamed warrior. On this astonishing representation of the *Iliad* see the excellent discussion by Schmidt 1969 with Griffiths 1985 and 1989 (who nevertheless sees the role of substitution on the vase differently).

subjectivity expressed by Achilles. The emergence of the historical past as an object of rational speculation is understood to have arisen out of the same practical milieu and habits of thought underlying Achilles' rationalization of the heroic economy in the *Iliad*. In addition, we can observe that the problematization of *kleos* by Achilles is analogous with the problematization of Homeric interpretation by Xenophanes, Theagenes and Herakleitos at the end of the archaic period.[153] It is as though, at the very moment the *Iliad* intimates the rationality of the political and Achilles poses his own meaning-value as a problem, the poem prepares the ground of its own disappearance as performed truth. Beginning with these late 6th century intellectuals, the search for the meanings of the *Iliad* was hampered by its critical alienation from the rituals of performance in which, by definition, the meaning of epic had circulated immanently.

[153] On Homeric criticism and the beginnings of criticism in general from the 6th century onward, see Rocca-Serra 1990, Finkelberg 1998, Ford 1999, 2002, 46-89, Ledbetter 2003, Cassio 2003, Porter 2010, 179-260, Halliwell 2011, and Peponi 2012. I have learnt much from Struck 2004, especially 21-76 on allegory and his genealogy of the 'symbol', 77-110.

PART ONE

CHAPTER 1

γέρας: The expression of political value in the *Iliad*

Myth, then, is not just taxonomy, but *ideology* in narrative form.
Lincoln 1999, 147.

This chapter examines the *Iliad's* central concept of value. Beginning with a survey of recent scholarship into epic value, the chapter further defines the significance of the *geras* – the special share of spoil that indicates the warrior's worth among the group – as the expression of political value in the *Iliad*.

Recent studies into ancient forms of exchange pay little attention to the concept of the *geras*. Most scholars view the *geras* as a minor part of the general Homeric 'gift-economy' and depict the strife of *Iliad* 1 as a crisis in the system of reciprocal gift exchanges underlying heroic commerce and the maintenance of elite identity.[1] Indeed some recent studies into the vocabulary of Homeric thought do not acknowledge the field occupied by *geras* at all. Even Yamagata, for example, in a study of Homeric morality, a field in which economic thought is understood to play a fundamental part, makes no mention of *geras* and its relation to *timē*.[2] However, this failure to consider the contribution made to the development of morality by the proper transaction of goods and the evaluative meaning of verbs such as τίω in the Homeric epics leads to significant misreading of the strife between Agamemnon and Achilles.[3] Tandy, who makes the early Greek economy his central focus, devotes little attention to the shifts in economic thought that occur in the epics.[4] In Tandy's view, the emergence of an economic elite required the development of "tools of exclusion" partly to project an ideal, and partly to suppress the growing trading basis of wealth. Tandy envisages an economic transformation in which the economic demands of trade exchanges drive institutional changes. For instance, on the level of the *realia*, he argues, movements in the development of coinage and colonization

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1 So, for example, Seaford 1994, ch.1§c and ch.6 and Von Reden 1994, 18-27 with Von Reden 1997. Both see commodity exchange and the emergence of money and coin as a "transformation of reciprocity". For both scholars, non-reciprocal exchanges associated with distributive and evaluative practices are left outside the equation. The orthodox explanation that elides *geras* to gift and prize indiscriminately can be traced back to Katluhn's dissertation, 1914, 1-6 ("γέρας primum donum vel praemium honorarium significare", 1).

2 Yamagata 1994, chs.7 and 8.

3 Yamagata 1994, 121, 131, 134.

4 Tandy 1997, 1-19.

reveal a preoccupation with markets, that is, a view that "status follows wealth"; while from the *imaginary* point of view, he argues, epic and public ritual imply that "wealth follows status". In Tandy's schema, the *geras* (although not explicitly mentioned) is simply embedded as part of an idealized system of feasts and gift-exchange. Tandy, however, overlooks the *Iliad's* unique focus on the Homeric economy as it is expressed within the framework of poetic performance occasions. Thus, and of particular relevance to this study, there is little basis in previous scholarship on which to frame the symbolic economy in each epic as a system of misrecognized material exchange. Nevertheless, amongst those who do turn their attention to the *geras*, there is general consensus as to its special meaning even if there is little articulation of the nature of *geras*-objects.[5]

Benveniste defines the term *geras* narrowly within the context of the lexicon of honour. The *geras* is "a privilege in kind bestowed by the members of a social group on the occasion of a sharing out, after a haul of booty (e.g. the sack of a town), all the said booty being first put into a common pool on which the *geras* of the chief is levied."[6] After reviewing the Homeric examples, Benveniste distinguishes between a *geras* and the allocation of a special lot of land (*temenos*) concluding that the *geras*

> consists of extra-ordinary prestations reserved as of right to the king, in particular a special portion of the booty, and certain material advantages bestowed by the people; a place of honour, allocation of the best pieces of meat, cups of wine . . . it designates one of the royal prerogatives, a prestation due to the *basileus* and constitutive of his dignity.[7]

In Benveniste's formulation then, the *geras* is the quintessential "mark of rank."

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5 For example Ecker 1990, 32; Rose 1992, 61. Significant exceptions include (1) the excellent study of the "Verteilungsmodalitäten von Beute" by Nowag 1983, 36-50, whose definition of *geras* is alive to the linguistic and formulaic context, especially at 39-40; (2) the survey of semantic fields in Scheid-Tissinier 1994, 234-55; (3) the useful survey of the relationship between equality and distribution in Greek thought by Borecký 1963; and 1965, and (4) Bottin 1979; and (5) Mauro Battilana 1985, a concise survey of the semantic field of *moira* and *aisa* in the Homeric poems. Her study treats geras briefly as part of a very useful section on supplementary portions in contexts of distribution (1985, 34-42). Borecký 1963 argues that changes in the terminology of distribution from Homer to the archaic period are markers of a shift "from collective distribution of property among the members of the tribe to distribution by the authority of the state and from the common property of the tribal collective to individual private ownership and the individual" (60). See also Pötscher 1960, 36-7 (on the relation between *geras* and *timē*) and Ulf 1990, 9-11. Bottin 1979 argues that the *geras* represents a move away from what is essentially a 'democratic' institution (whose material sign is the *moira*) toward the expression of aristocratic identity in the form of the privileged share of spoil. While this is broadly correct (in that the *geras* does indicate hierarchy) it is an assumption here that the *geras* is a structurally essential part of a regular and ritual re-affirmation of relative social worth among a community of peers (the *dasmos*). As such it is better to think in terms of a political exchange rather than one in which the 'democratic' is subverted by privilege. Ultimately this has a bearing on the question of whether the 'political' emerges out of the context of elite evaluation or as a challenge to an aristocratic monopoly of symbolic and material capital.

6 Benveniste 1973, 335.

7 Benveniste 1973, 336-7, 339.

Van Wees reaches a similar conclusion in his study into the principles of booty distribution in epic – "in assigning *gera*, the king shows who, according to him and ideally according to the whole community, is a member of the elite of princes and eminent fighters, and who is not; and who among these men ranks higher than whom. The allocation of *gera* is, as it were, an 'official' statement about the community hierarchy."[8]

On the other hand, Donlan (in a study with a title that begs the question: "Reciprocities in Homer") sees structural ambiguity in the meaning of *geras* that he bases on a perceived difference in the assignation of the object.[9] In most instances, *gera* were acquired on the authority of the community. In a minority of cases, however, the *gera* were distributed by the paramount chief. Donlan believes the former acquisitions were a remnant of "chiefly due", indicative of a "tribal egalitarianism" and characterized by "generalized-unspecific *giving*, dependent on rank."[10] The latter, however, signaled a "more stratified system, in which chiefly prerogative is an ascribed right", in this case characterized by "balanced-specific giving, dependent on a particular service."[11] In Donlan's view the *dasmos* continued to be a form of personalized gift-exchange since distribution took place according to the generosity of either the group or leader. Conflict in the *Iliad* thus arises as a "dispute over the limits of distributional authority" and requires a resolution in similar terms, a compromise in which "Agamemnon's claim to superiority is upheld, but only after he has indemnified his challenger, Achilles, many-fold."[12]

Even though he introduces the concept of "due" which, as an explicit relation of service or status of reward seems at odds with the logic of gift-exchange, Donlan clearly regards the *geras* and, by extension, the distribution of booty, as part of a "system of reciprocities".[13] He goes on to suggest that *gera* most often took the form of rewards for services rendered or for leadership. Van Wees agrees that the "special portion" was a mark of the particular commitment of the leader to the group and goes so far as to assign a special category to those occasions that still necessitated an award, even though there was no obvious accompanying merit.[14]

Detienne takes a fundamentally different approach.[15] He sees the distribution of booty, of which the *geras* is a special part, as one component within an ideological system of practices that are

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8 Van Wees 1992, 308-9.
9 Donlan 1982a. See also Donlan 1979 and 1982b.
10 Donlan 1982a, 160 emphasis added.
11 Donlan 1982a, 161.
12 Donlan 1982a, 163. A characteristic of Donlan's approach is the assumption that the *Iliad's* referent is society that can be made subject to standard anthropological taxonomies.
13 Donlan 1982a, 160
14 Van Wees 1992, 307.
15 Detienne 1996, ch.5.

connected by a common semantic field peculiar to the *Männerbund* of aristocratic warriors. Detienne emphasizes the significance of the space created by the exchange relations of spoil distribution, the *meson* or communal space of common ownership, that precedes the allocation of individual shares. Although the haul was delivered to the chief, he acted only as the group's representative. The *Männerbund*, however, "as a whole exercised its right to oversee these riches, a right it retained until the moment of distribution."[16] Objects located "in the middle" would remain common property until an explicit communal authority permitted a man to "lay his hands" upon his share. Detienne, following Gernet, sharply separates this act – "a proprietorial right *involving no reciprocity*" – from the field of gift-exchange, "which forges a link between the two men and obliges the beneficiary to reciprocate."[17] Only the *meson* has the capacity to efface the object's prior identity. When, for example, in *Iliad* 19, there is reconciliation between Achilles and Agamemnon it results from the *apoina* traversing space in a way proper to booty distribution (*Il.* 19.242f.), and fundamentally not, as Donlan claims, because Achilles has finally accepted Agamemnon's gifts. These "gifts", once *set down in the middle* (*Il.* 19.249), cease to be anything other than *xuneia keimena* now being reapportioned to Achilles.[18] What makes the compensation effective is that it takes an appropriate form and traverses properly constituted social space. The most important result is that the *meson* removes from these objects the symbolic obligation by which Agamemnon seeks to ensnare Achilles in a relation of dependence. This episode clarifies the way in which the economy of the *dasmos* stands well apart from any "system of reciprocities".

Detienne's conclusions have not been systematically applied to the *geras*.[19] Once we do then the crisis in the relations of power and status in the *Iliad*, where *geras* is the keyword, must derive specifically from a breakdown of the non-reciprocal exchanges of the warrior group rather than from reciprocal relations established in a gift-economy. It is also important to stress that Agamemnon's exercise of force is directed as much against the *meson* institutionally as it is against Achilles personally, and that his actions deliberately challenge the authority of the peer group and its control over the way it regulates membership and status through public distribution. When he does use the language of gift-exchange, Achilles, with quite deliberate irony, indicates the extent to which Agamemnon's perverse management of the distribution of spoils (*Il.* 9.330-6, 365-9) usurps the authority of the *laos,* to whom alone authority is reserved the right to "give" (διδόναι) honorific portions (*gera*). Agamemnon

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16 Detienne 1996, 92.

17 Detienne 1996, 93, emphasis added. For remarks concerning the type of non-reciprocal material exchanges peculiar to the *geras* and the prize, see especially Gernet 1955, 10-12, 14-5 and chapter 4 below.

18 Detienne 1996, 94.

19 Gernet 1955, especially 15f., is the exception.

overreaches his authority in stamping ownership on goods that are in fact *xuneia*. While Benveniste's generalizations are helpful, neither he, Van Wees nor Donlan draw out the transformative property of the spatial context of the exchange (*meson*), in particular its ability *to recast an object's value* as an explicit public act of the elite warrior corps. In other words, it is the *Männerbund*, a body constituted spatially and focused upon a common point, which forms the validating authority of an individual's social worth.

A γέρας is not a gift

'Αγῶν, ἀγορά and μέσον all denote the same arena – that of public discourse (ἀγορά) and practices (ἀγῶν), all spatially configured as the *middle* (μέσον).[20] The unifying principle is that all practices and objects, including speech,[21] located or undertaken in the middle are neutral, un-owned and communal (*xuneion*). Anything so configured is *res nullius* and has the capacity to be revalued by the collective practices that structure the group. For Gernet, seizure of public objects in this spatial context constitutes one of the archaic precursors to a formal notion of private property and ownership.[22] If public objects in this context resemble objects peculiar to the exchange of gifts, they do so as gifts "sans maître, par le fait de celui qui les deposé et leur confère publiquement leur qualité de *res nullius*."[23] There is an antithesis between the gift and the object publicly deposited, which manifests itself in gestures and spaces, as an attitude towards the object.[24] The capacity to neutralize objects by placing them in a common space is thus a virtue of "le cercle intérieur autour duquel sont massés les spectateurs" which finds its juridical counterpart in the ἱερὸς κύκλος of the trial scene on Achilles' shield (*Il.* 18.504) and the body of spectators at the funeral contest for Patroklos.[25] Ownership and, more fundamentally, the legitimate right to seizure is thus a consequence of the public legitimation of objects by the constitutive group. The *public capital* generated by the visible transformations that take place 'in the middle' has a radically different evaluative function than *gift capital* that, by its nature, is covert, misrecognized and context-dependent. This public capital is explicit and referential: the meaning and value of objects 'in the middle' have a worth that is not dependent on, or dissipated within, a personal transaction but rather is openly witnessed and precisely observed with reference to an abstract notion of value. The value of such

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20 Hölkeskamp 2003.
21 Detienne 1996, 89-106.
22 Gernet 1955, 12.
23 Gernet 1955, 13-4.
24 Gernet 1955, 14: "au delà du commerce par don qui lie les partenaires, qui multiplie et prolonge les contact humains et qui, au surplus, suppose la propriété mais ne la crée pas, ils constituent la propriété elle-même en valeur absolue." See also his concluding remarks on page 18.
25 Gernet 1955, 13.

objects is not narrated in genealogies that trace their transmission from exchanges originating in an other-worldly source. Instead genealogy is made redundant as soon as the object's value is expressed purely as a function of collective political sovereignty. As chapter 4 will show, value approaches its proto-monetary form at the end of the *Iliad* in the context of funerary *agon* and in the evolution of the *aethlon,* away from the ambivalence of the *geras*:

> Πηλεΐδης δ' αἶψ' ἄλλα κατὰ τρίτα **θήκεν ἄεθλα**,
> **δεικνύμενος** Δαναοῖσι, παλαισμοσύνης ἀλεγεινῆς,
> τῷ μὲν νικήσαντι μέγαν τρίποδ' ἐμπυριβήτην,
> **τὸν δὲ δυωδεκάβοιον ἐνὶ σφίσι τῖον Ἀχαιοί·**
> **ἀνδρὶ δὲ νικηθέντι γυναῖκ' ἐς μέσσον ἔθηκε,**
> πολλὰ δ' ἐπίστατο ἔργα, **τίον δέ ἑ τεσσαράβοιον**.
>
> *Il.* 23.700–5
>
> Now the son of Peleus *set out the prizes* for the third contest,
> *showing* them before the Danaans, that of painful wrestling;
> for the victor a great tripod to set over a fire,
> *which the Akhaians valued among themselves at 12 oxen;*
> for the defeated man, he placed a woman in the middle,
> and she knew the craft of many works, *and they valued her at 4 oxen*.

In symbolic exchange this 'great tripod' would have a lineage;[26] here, 'in the middle', it functions only as a signifier of the Akhaians' sovereign competence to determine the value of men and things.

The same opposition is revealed in the public evaluation of individuals. On the one hand, the reciprocal and contingent value of the gift exists by denying the economy it creates. It is therefore not only difficult to quantify, but depends on the unacknowledgable form of its value for its efficacy. Indeed, what makes the gift so effective is the risk of non-requital, the consequent deferral of any liberated 'value', and the uncertainty necessarily built into the exchange by the fact that requital (that is, the concrete realization of value) must always remain potential and *cannot be part of the present transaction in the here and now*. The value of the gift is dependent upon an object whose deferred reciprocation provides no clear expression of worth outside of itself and the context of its exchange. Value in the gift economy is created by, and immanently within, a cycle of exchanges whose promise of fulfilment always lies in the exchange that is, so to speak, 'yet to come'. Since the exchange of gifts is never explicitly concluded – to do so would be to abolish obligation – its social capital is always relative and ambiguous.[27] Thus *value* in symbolic and ritualized exchanges exists only in its own dissipation in the act of bringing about the social relation at the centre of its pact. For this very reason it is impossible to ask: "what is this gift-object worth?"

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[26] Achilles' special gift to Eumelos, for example, is given a truncated history shortly before at *Il.* 23.560-1.

[27] Gernet 1981, first published in 1948 and discussed below in chapter 6, is the point of departure for the manifestations of these aspects of the gift in Greek mythical thought.

Ironically the 'truth' of the gift lies ambiguously in this simultaneous *absence and presence of value*, an ambiguity that proves intolerable from the point of view of a political community of peers demanding explicit and guaranteed determinations of their social worth.[28]

The *Iliad's* problematization of symbolic transactions is consciously set against a background of transparent exchanges. This is illustrated in the meeting between Glaukos and Diomedes (*Il.* 6.232-6). Posed explicitly in the narrative commentary to this scenario, the 'problem' of their transaction is the earliest evidence of rationalizing speculation about the value of symbolic exchanges. Modern commentators have tried to explain away what appears at first to be a gratuitous and awkward scene.[29] Less commented upon, however, is the way this narrative disenchants the gift-exchange by explicitly quantifying and then interrogating the 'values' transacted. Other Homeric transactions of *xeineia* focus on the long-term relationship sealed by the exchange of tokens, which are then laid away to await the occasion for further circulation.[30] In this commentary, however, the narrative complicates matters by pointedly drawing the audience's attention to a disparity in the gift-values exchanged. This disparity, of course, cannot be realized at the level of the dispositions (*philia*) created by exchange. This is because the meaning and value of gifts are generated very differently through the exchange of symbolic value, here gaining their significance via each object's ability to recall a 'genealogy' of similar exchanges across a number of 'generations'.[31] In this section of the *Iliad*, however, instant conversion of symbolic value into quantifiable value is achieved in three ways: firstly, by observing the transaction 'theoretically', that is, from the perspective of the outside critical observer; secondly, by artificially detaching the precious objects from the relations they bring about. The story of past exchanges by which objects acquire their prestige value is notably omitted. Finally, this scene replaces this symbolic pathway of value with an abstract and public criterion against which the differential values can be calculated. The reduction of these objects to what can only be

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[28] One crucial aspect of reciprocal exchanges, which space excludes from this discussion, is what Lyons has called the "gendered nature of the gift-economy", Lyons 1993 and now 2012. Gifts of women (marriage exchanges), as well as gifts *from* women, are especially rich motifs in Greek culture and myth. This is because the social and political order is founded to a large extent by the transactions in which women are objects of exchange, but also, in turn, destabilized by the powerful symbolic obligations established by and through women as agents of exchange. Lyons 2012 demonstrates the ambivalent and problematizing implications of women in exchanges, especially when they intersect the political exchanges of the *polis*. Baudrillard follows his discussion of death in symbolic exchange (1993a, first published in 1976) with a parallel study of the feminine in symbolic exchange (*Seduction* 1990).

[29] See Craig 1967, Walcot 1969, Calder 1984, Donlan 1989, Traill 1989, Scodel 1992, Alden 1996.

[30] For example, *Il.* 6.218-20, 7.283-305, *Od.* 21.11-35. See Donlan 1989, 10-14.

[31] See Grethlein 2009.

described as a proto-monetary calculation seems more appropriate to impersonal transactions conducted with outsiders.[32] *Xenia*, however, is the ritual that transforms 'others' into *philoi*. The gifts transacted are quintessentially symbolic objects embodying a constellation of ethical and moral forces that are then discharged in the pact. The narrative comments in the epic, however, construe value quite differently. It may be the case, as some studies argue, that the comments draw attention to a potlatch strategy otherwise concealed, but the narrative appears to do so on the assumption that an audience will be more concerned with the immediately quantifiable value that the gift can realize, than with the aristocratic relationship established. The odd amounts transacted between Glaukos and Diomedes (χρύσεα χαλκείων, ἑκατόμβοι' ἐννεαβοίων "gold for bronze, 100 oxen for 9", *Il.* 6.236) also refer to a third-party arbitrating mechanism for the transparent determination of value outside the exchange, implied by the precise 11-1 'exchange rate' of gold to bronze. The commentary takes for granted that this ratio is known and accepted as though by some public agreement (such as, for example, "the Akhaians valued among themselves . . .", ἐνὶ σφίσι τῖον Ἀχαιοί, *Il.* 23.703). It also presupposes an historical audience for whom an explicit and alienable evaluative system for both men and things is equally as desirable as the unquantifiable relations established by symbolic obligation. Glaukos, therefore, is 'duped' because he accepts the symbolic value over the political. Within the types of relationship that concern the *Iliad* this narrative moment looks, so to speak, 'beyond potlatch', beyond *xenia* and *philia* toward explicit parity and clearly indicated isomorphic relationships established through contracts rather than pacts. If the audience approves it may be less because they applaud the entrepreneurial *metis* of Diomedes and more because in their own dealings with each other there is a growing concern with transactional transparency and a need for the intercession of a collective will that can regulate the exchanges between peers in the same community.

The essence of abstract and 'theoretical' value (in the etymological sense suggested earlier) lies, as with coinage, in its embodiment of a publicly determined and a politically conferred 'truth' upon objects. The effectiveness of public evaluation determined by receiving one's share of what is common derives from the spectacle of a value system disengaged from obligation and reciprocity. Referring to the prizes in Patroklos' funeral contest, with which we will be closely concerned in later chapters, Gernet puts it thus: "nous les voyons "emmener" ou "emporter" *aux yeux des tous*, comme pour consacrer leur acquisition", which recalls "l'essence et la raison d'être du formalisme juridique."[33] The social worth embodied by the *geras* exists independently of the subject because "il

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[32] For this and the following Benveniste 1973, 277-88 is fundamental (although see the cautionary remarks of Hooker 1987).

[33] Gernet 1955, 16, emphasis added.

réside dans une espèce de droit virtuel du groupe." The objectifying authority of the "communauté des guerriers" may be, as Gernet suggests, quite under-developed and passive in the *Iliad*, but it has nonetheless an "efficacité quasi-juridique." In plotting the psychological path toward the abstraction of value, most recent studies have overlooked the somewhat counter-intuitive fact that the *agora* became a marketplace precisely because it was the space for the political determination of the worth of men and things *par excellence*.

γέρας: perquisite of social function or marker of worth?

In the *Iliad* the communally owned and publicly conferred object represents a structurally different notion of value from that found in the symbolic exchanges of gift and reciprocity. In addition, the *Iliad* testifies to a historical tension in the wider social meaning of the *geras*. In the late archaic and classical periods the word *geras* typically describes the privileges granted to those exercising a social function, including those officiating at the cults of gods and heroes.[34] Those performing a ritually essential symbolic function on behalf of the group – officiating magistrates, priests, priestesses and so on – are publicly marked by their *geras*, which may be a special object, portion or honorific role. Pindar in particular draws upon this meaning when he represents athletic victory as the fulfilment of the ancestral destiny of his elite patrons.[35] In the ideology of epinikian ode, eliteness is linked to

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[34] For example, the *Spartan kings* (Hdt. 6.56-8, especially 6.57.1, Xen. *Lak. pol.* 15.3, cf. *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 122 for the expression νῶτα γερασμία); *hereditary prerogatives* (Thuc. 1.13.1, Hdt. 3.142.4, for a *genos* at Keos, the Phyleomakhidai, *LSCG* 151, B lines 18-20); *senior magistrates* such as the γερεαφόρος βασιλέων at Keos (who, after sacrificing, γέρη δὲ λαμβάνει τὸ δέρμα καὶ τὸ σκέλος, *LSCG* 151, A lines 19-22); *sacrificial officiators* (*LSCG* 2 = *IG* i³ 246, A lines 3-4: γέ[ρα] δ[ὲ] δ[ί]κ[ρεας] διδόναι is authorized by the city 'for the priest' (τῶι ἱερεῖ) from portions of the sacrifice; there is a similar dispensation in the cult calendar for the deme Erkhia, *LSCG* 18, E 55-6) or *permanent priests* guaranteed perquisites (such as the priestess of Artemis at Miletos, *LSAM* 45, lines 8-14), a practice attested as early as Late Helladic Pylos (see below n. p.64). As a term for cult practice, see in general *Il.* 4.49, 24.70, Hdt 5.67.5, Pind. *Isth.* 5.30-5, *Isth.* fr.5. 1-3 S-M. These and further examples are considered below. On the etymology of γέρας, see the endnote to this chapter.

[35] An important recent study of the fluid nature of eliteness in early Greece is Duplouy 2006. Duplouy sees eliteness as the consequence of a positive discourse of individual entrepreneurs, in contrast, for example, to that of Theognis, whose voice represents a bitter rump of 'elitist' *ressentiment* morally condemning energetic and practical men involved in the constant reshaping of what constitutes prestige and status. The present study, however, with its focus on the *Iliad*, takes the view that fluid and shifting notions of eliteness, as well as the institutional vacuum within the 'worlds' of Homeric epic for determining status *durably*, were a source of social trauma and anxiety. Such a view certainly does not invalidate Duplouy's further argument that this fluidity was socially and culturally generative and drove institutional change, and in fact the broader thesis argued here, that Homeric epic sought to bring about new possibilities against this uncertain background, dovetails with that argument. Nevertheless, stability of status was a concern for more than just elites and was a source of concern for non-elites as well. Extending Vernant's theses (1983 and 1988), it is proposed that the instability of elite discourse was structurally linked to the profound lack of symbolic and institutional

the ritual monopolies held by *genē* and to those performances associating victory with the realization of an ancestral right. In the epinikian ode victory occurs as a consequence of ritual immersion in the *agon*, and the victor's *kudos* demands the compensation of public recognition in the form of a prize and other community honours. In Pindar the prize can be referred to as a *geras* because a victor, like a king, is understood to enjoy a special talismanic relationship with his community that obliges their recognition. In this schema, victors receive their prize as a *geras* because they fulfil a ritual role requiring compensation. Ideologically, epinikian ode recuperates athletic victory for a conservative aristocratic notion of elite social value. Pindar avoids detailing the institutional practices of the contests in which his patrons have achieved their victories. When victory determination is mentioned it is presented as an oracular confirmation. Olympia is δέσποιν' ἀλαθείας (*Ol.* 8.2) where the *Hellanodikai* fulfil the edicts of Herakles (*Ol.* 3.12) at the site of an oracle on the altar of Zeus for those seeking affirmation of their worth. In Pindar truth (*aletheia*) is produced in ritual and witnessed by the poet (see *Ol.* 7.69), rather than revealed by the application of juridical inquiry. Precision in judgment may indeed be a desirable quality in adjudicators (*Ol.* 3.12) but Pindar makes it clear that his audience consider *atrekeia* to be a quality that cannot be acquired or learned (*Nem.* 3. 41) nor even one that should always be applied in the poet's practice (*Nem.* 5.17). Instead 'sure-footedness' is either an inherited ability or else follows upon the legitimate exercise of a ritual office. In truth, however, the *Hellanodikai* were already political appointees by the mid-sixth century and their judgment deputized that of the Elean *politai*.[36]

Yet another component of the victor's due is the *kleos* bestowed upon him by the poet.[37] In the historical milieu of epinikian ode, however, claims to preeminence based on inherited or exceptional privilege were gradually being challenged and marginalized by civic discourses. Nevertheless, the concept of a privileged portion remained strong in popular thought and, although

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legitimacy that accompanied the autonomization of the warrior function in the early Iron age. The anxiety about guaranteeing regard and position within a peer community permeates a whole age in which the assertion of collective sovereignty was still deeply dependent on the symbolic entrenchment of power and legitimacy. A single definition of 'elite' could, therefore, not be imposed, a fact that had positive and negative consequences. For Duplouy, this is positive and created fertile opportunities for experiments such as the *polis*. This argument is surely right – the city was indeed a meta-institution for regulating the circulation of power and prestige among peers and no doubt developed in response to the uglier consequences of the lack of status definition; for this study, however, in the symbolic vacuum (the "crisis of sovereignty" as Vernant puts it) there always lurked the twin spectre of *stasis* and *tyrannis* that threatened to arrest the political circulation of authority that the city embodied.

36 Harpokration s.v. Ἑλλανοδίκαι = Aristotle *Eleion Politeia*, fr. 492 Rose, Hellanikos *FGrHist* 4 F113, Aristodemos *FGrHist* 414 F2; Paus.5.9.5.

37 See generally, Pind. *Ol.* 2.49, 8.11; *Pyth.* 5.31, 5.124, 8.78; Bacchylides 7.8, 11.36. On *Nem.* 8.25, see further below. Kurke's discussion of the ideology of *kudos* in epinikian ode is decisive (Kurke 1993).

rejected when demanded by tyrants and charismatic elites, was positively embraced in cases of overall civic success.[38] In the developed classical *polis*, the notion of the *geras* is all but absent from the discourse of civic status other than its use in denoting the 'perks of office'.[39] For Thucydides *gera* are the sanctioned privileges of old-fashioned hereditary aristocracies (1.13.1).

Γέρας has been plausibly identified behind two instances of the Mycenaean word *ke-ra* in the Pylos E-series cadastres. (1) contains initial details ('version A') of a dispute between the priestess *e-ri-ta* and the *da-mo* concerning land tenure. (2) is a later record of the same dispute ('version B'): (1) Pylos Ep 704, (so-called 'version A') = Ventris and Chadwick 1973, 252-6, no. 135, = Palmer 1963, 211, no. 94:

> §2: *u-wa-mi-ja te-o-io do-e-ra o-na-to e-ke-qe i-je-re-ja ke-ra to-so pe-no*
> Huamia(?) servant of the god holds an *onaton*, which is the *geras* of the priestess, so much grain, 18 litres of wheat.

(2) Pylos Eb 416 (so-called 'verson B') = Ventris and Chadwick 1973, no. 137 (with addendum p. 449):

> *u-wa-mi-ia te-o-jo do-e-ra e-[ke]-qe i-je-re-[ja] ke-ra o-[na-to]*
> Huamia(?) servant of the god holds the priestess' *geras* as an *onaton*.

If the special allotment of land to the priestess Erita in late Helladic Pylos is correctly identified as a *geras*, then *prima facie* the later classical meaning of *geras*, denoting the perquisites due to a person exercising a ritual social function, was very old and context specific.[40] In Hesiod the word refers exclusively to entitlements

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38 Negatively: Hdt. 3.142.4, 8.125.1. On the positive side one thinks of the lifetime right of a crown victor to dine in the Prytaneion at Athens or the *geras* of occupying a special wing in the phalanx (Hdt. 9.26.5, 9.27.5). Kurke 1991 links epinikian performance with this need to reintegrate victors back into their communities. Regional alliances maintained the principle in reserving honorific roles for the hegemon, on which see, for example, Hdt. 7.157-62.

39 See above, n.34. Solon fr.5 (West) might be an exception were it not for the fact that Plutarch's text (*Sol.* 18.5) has κράτος. Editors (West, Gentili-Prato, Gerber) have preferred Aristotle's γέρας (*Ath. Pol.* 12.1) for its comparatively superior reception of Solon's poetry, and perhaps because the context echoes Iliadic themes. But the sense is still unclear: is Solon referring to a special privileged portion set aside for the *demos* in his distribution? Since he elsewhere expresses a dislike for redistribution and an "equality of portions" between the elite and non-elite (ἰσομοιρία fr.34 West), it would be interesting to know here what the *demos* is imagined to have received. Nevertheless, the fragment describes an arbitration where Solon is imagined as the president of a *dasmos*. *Geras* would therefore be the appropriate word to describe a positive shift in status. On the other hand, *kratos* makes good sense in the context of rethinking the sovereignty of the assembly, which we know from other sources Solon strengthened.

40 In these documents *o-na-to* refers to a type of leasehold and since on both tablets *o-na-to* is in apposition to the *ke-ra* of the priestess, the tablets apparently describe a leasehold held by the priestess as a special entitlement. On the interpretation of *o-na-to*, see Ventris and Chadwick 1973, 235-6, who connect the word to ὀνίνημι, "bestow a benefit" and compare *Od.* 14.67 and *Od.* 23.24; Palmer 1963, 189, on the other hand, prefers to link it to ὠνή, ὦνος, despite the absence of digamma (see also Palmer 1963, 483 for the attestation of *o-na* = ὠνή (?) in PY Ua 158). The idea of the special allotment of land by the home community (*temenos*), linked to the performance of socially important ritual or

allocated by a sovereign and the right to privileges among the society of the gods presided over by Zeus.[41] Zeus exercises a sovereign function granting the oversight of justice as a "kingly right" (γέρας βασιλήϊον) to the Golden Race (*Op.* 126). In the *Theogony* Zeus determines the cosmic order by "honouring other gods with a *geras*" (*Th.* 393, 396, see also 427, 449). Though *geras* in the *Theogony* refers as much to the cult accorded to the divine as "their due" (see *Il.* 4.49 = 24.70), Zeus is, nevertheless, imagined as presiding over a distribution of honours in a radically different way from the *dasmos* of warriors in the *Iliad*. The exercise of absolute sovereignty arrogated by another warrior who is *homotimos* or *homoios,* though he might possess greater *kratos*, is categorically rejected in the *Iliad*.[42] From this perspective the *Iliad's* secular and politically charged application of the word *geras*, linked almost exclusively with the *dasmos* and the publicly authorized distribution of shares to the warrior group, points to a major transformation in the social representation of archaic privilege and function.

It could be argued that the Homeric *basileus* had always received special privileges flowing from his performance of what might be called 'the warrior function'.[43] Nevertheless, Glaukos'

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martial activities, is still active in the *Iliad*, especially at *Il.* 12.313, but see also, for example, *Il.* 6.194, 9.576-80 (where the allocation is the community's 'gift'), 20.391 ('an ancestral plot'). The '*temenos* of the *basileus*' referred to on the Shield of Achilles (*Il.* 18.550) is not specifically linked with ritual activity but the expression parallels *geras basileion* at Hes. *Op.* 126, which is linked to juridical activity. In the *Odyssey* the word often simply means 'estate' (*Od.* 6.293, 17.299), but at *Od.* 11.185 it is clear that for maintaining the ritual and social order (as a δικασπόλον ἄνδρα, *Od.* 11.186) the *basileus* is compensated with *temene*. There may be continuity with the Mycenaean *temenos*, on which see Palmer 1963, 83-5 who links these privileged holdings with ritual function (only the *wanax* and the *lawagetas* hold *temene*). See further Hainsworth 1988, 312, Edwards 1991, 223 and Janko 1992, 165. On the Homeric *temenos*, see Van Effenterre 1982, Hahn 1977, Finley 1983, 213-32 and Donlan 1989, 143-5.

41 In these contexts *geras* can refer either to the sign of office (more common) or to the office itself (less common). *Geras* in the sense of the right or privilege to act in a particular role (for example, Anon. 985(a) *PMG*, Hes. *Op.* 126, Hdt. 7.3.3) is completely absent in the *Iliad*.

42 The most transparent rejections are at *Il.* 16.52-9 and, with precise irony, at *Il.* 9.367-8: ἄξομαι, ἅσσ' ἔλαχόν γε· γέρας δέ μοι, ὅς περ ἔδωκεν, αὖτις ἐφυβρίζων ἕλετο κρείων Ἀγαμέμνων ("I shall *lead* [all this] off, all that *they* allotted; but my *geras*, though he 'gave' it, Agamemnon now outrageously snatches back again."). The *Iliad* even has Poseidon challenging Zeus' assertion of this kind of authority in a spirit quite different to that found in Hesiod's *Theogony*: *Il.* 15.185-94.

43 Two clear examples: *Il.* 12.310-21 and *Od.* 11.184-7. In Herodotus *geras* often refers to the privileges of sovereigns, founders, priests or warriors, that is, those whose special social role demands a mark of status (Hdt. 2.168.1, 4.162.2, 6.56, 6.57.5, 7.134.1 [heralds], 7.154.1). The *geras* is imagined as compensation in exchange for a symbolic function that typically cannot be exercised by the ordinary citizen. In the *polis*, claims to these privileges are rejected unless independently proposed by the citizen assembly (Hdt. 3.142.4-5, 8.125.1. See also Hdt. 4.161-2 for a typical transitional situation). On "la fonction guerrière", see Dumézil 1956, 1970, 40-9, Vian 1968, Lejeune 1968, Kirk 1968 and

generalizations about a warrior's privileges among his home community (*Il.* 12.310-21) are commonly misconstrued: Glaukos never refers to them as the warrior's *geras*. In the *Iliad* the 'warrior's special share' is reserved exclusively for bestowal by his peers in the *Männerbund* as compensation for his contribution. This scenario is governed by a completely different social and economic field of thought than the scenario governing the role of the *basileus* in his domestic setting (as reflected in the *Odyssey*, for example, *Od.* 11.184-7). The *dasmos* among equal warriors is a *political rite* in which the *geras* refers less to the exercise of a social function and more to membership of the group that matters in deliberation, that is, those who are *philoi* and *homoioi*.[44] Unlike epinikian performances, which undertake to mystify aristocratic privilege by immersing it in symbolic contexts, Homeric epic detaches privilege from function and complicates the relationship between action and recognition. This means that the *Iliad* is more widely concerned with the shift from the due that is owed to the *basileus* as a consequence of his status *qua* warrior in relation to other social groups, to the way warriors acknowledge each other's status within the *laos* as a closed social economy of the peer group.[45] *Geras* in the *Iliad* is therefore a concept that straddles the divide between the 'symbol and the sign', that is, between an object whose value properly belongs to the matrix of ritual, status and symbolic exchange, and the object which represents an explicit notion of value signifying an abstract and theoretical essence independent of social exchange.

This explains why Achilles rejects Agamemnon's offer of reconciliation. Agamemnon's offer is not made unconditionally but clearly aims to draw Achilles into his domestic context with a barely concealed ruse calculated to bind Achilles into a subordinate relationship. For Achilles the outrage done to him was perpetrated at the social and economically specific level of the warrior's *dasmos* and for him, therefore, any acceptable restitution needs to be made in the same environment. Agamemnon wants Achilles to acknowledge his status as *anax* that derives from his position in the social order at home in Mykenai. Achilles, on the other hand, wants Agamemnon to accord him a status based not so much on the exercise of a warrior function in general but on the specific role he has played in this

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especially Vernant 1988, 29-53. For a critique of Dumézil, see Lincoln 1999, 145-7 with 1991, 231-68.

44 One of the key points made by Vernant 1988, 29-53, especially at 39.

45 The same point is made more broadly by Van Effenterre 1967 who argues for a shift in the meaning of *temenos* from 'royal domain' to the concession of a war leader. In Herodotus the only occurrence of *geras* with a sense comparable to the *Iliad* occurs in a context parallel to the Akhaian situation on the shores at Troy. When the Athenians and the Tegeans each present their claims to the prestigious right wing of the phalanx they do so in a community of warriors constituted outside of their respective home cities. The arrangements for battle are a type of *dasmos* presided over by the Spartans, who adjudicate the best claim. The *geras* of holding the right wing (Hdt. 9.26.5, 9.27.5) is the choice portion of a figurative *dasmos*.

particular *Männerbund*, that is, as 'best of the Akhaians'. This level of recognition can only be given by Achilles' peers and is marked by *their grant* of the right to choose an extra share of the objects held in common. Inversely, when Agamemnon demands his *geras* in *Iliad* 1, it is on the basis of a superior *kratos* that has been acquired chiefly outside the warrior circle. Agamemnon's sense of entitlement stems from being "more of a *basileus* than another man" and he explicitly rejects any attempt to associate with him on the basis of *homoia* (*Il.* 1.186-7; 9.160). In the end Achilles will hold the *laos* more responsible for his humiliation than the son of Atreus because of their failure to underwrite an exchange made in their name and, as a result, for their timid complicity in Agamemnon's action (ἐπεί μ' ἀπέλεσθέ γε δόντες, "since *you all* took her from me though you were the ones who gave her!" *Il.* 1.299).

Herodotus' descriptions of the world of late archaic tyranny provide a historical context where the tension between these two senses expressed by the word *geras* was topical and volatile. His account relates a tactical sleight of hand performed by Maiandrios of Samos, right hand to the tyrant Polykrates, upon his assumption of power after Polykrates' death.[46] While asserting that *kratos* over the Samians was his to wield by virtue of a formal succession (σκῆπτρον καὶ δύναμις πᾶσα ἡ Πολυκράτεος ἐπιτέτραπται, Hdt. 3.142.3), Maiandrios nevertheless attempts to insure his position against popular hostility by consecrating a new shrine to Zeus Eleutherios and "putting rule in the middle and proclaiming for you equality before the law" (ἐγὼ δὲ ἐς μέσον τὴν ἀρχὴν τιθεὶς ἰσονομίην ὑμῖν προαγορεύω, Hdt. 3.142.3). In return for this supposed magnanimity Maiandrios demands certain lasting privileges:

> τοσάδε μέντοι δικαιῶ γέρεα ἐμεωυτῷ γενέσθαι, ἐκ μέν γε τῶν Πολυκράτεος χρημάτων ἐξαίρετα ἓξ τάλαντά μοι γενέσθαι, ἱερωσύνην δὲ πρὸς τούτοισι αἱρεῦμαι ἐμοί τε αὐτῷ καὶ τοῖσι ἀπ' ἐμεῦ αἰεὶ γινομένοισι τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ Ἐλευθερίου, τῷ αὐτός τε ἱρὸν ἱδρυσάμην καὶ τὴν ἐλευθερίην ὑμῖν περιτίθημι.
>
> Hdt. 3.142.4

> It is just, however, that the following things become my *gerea* – out of Polykrates' possessions six talents will be my special portion, and to take for myself and my descendents forever the priesthood of Zeus Eleutherios – since it is I after all who have established this temple and your freedom.

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46 On Maiandrios, see Roisman 1985. In passing there may be an intersection of the *Iliad's* thematic focus with some 6th century Samian data. Firstly, many of the episodes narrated about the Samian tyranny deal with the exchange and circulation of objects; secondly, Samian aristocrats were notorious pirates (Hdt. 3.47, with further notices in De Libero 1995, 264 n.72) evidence for which suggests that public institutions emerged to regulate and distribute the spoil of raids, which were often dedicated to Hera. For instance, leading families (and the tyrants themselves, De Libero 1995, 264-8) occupied a 'presidency' of distributions (*ML* 16); thirdly, that Polykrates' father was named Aiakes (Hdt. 2.182, 3.39) may point to an interest in the capital of other Aiakid narratives and genealogies. Anything more is pure speculation.

To his classical audience Herodotus' story is redolent of the tyrannical *modus operandi*. Maiandrios exchanges overt power (*kratos*) for symbolic power via a manoeuvre that is arguably calculated to strengthen and prolong his influence in the Samian *polis*. Maiandrios wants the assembly he has called to ratify his symbolic succession to Polykrates (by allowing him to assert control over the dead man's estate), to grant him a founder's privileges in a new Samian polity (a priesthood linking political freedom to his personal generosity) and, in the end, a continued social function within the Samian city that places him and his family outside the civic practices of accountability and transparency usually associated with *isonomia*. As Richard Seaford and Carolyn Dewald have argued, in classical discourse the tyrant is a transgressor of boundaries.[47] Herodotus' listeners would recognize the danger posed by wealthy elites who asserted private authority in the public sphere by means of symbolic obligation and control. This, of course, is precisely how one of Samos' leading citizens, Telesarkhos, puts it: "we see through your false modesty – the only thing owed is a formal account from you of the funds under your administration" (ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ὅκως λόγον δώσεις τῶν μετεχείρισας χρημάτων, Hdt. 3.142.5). Telesarchos' reply speaks the language of the mature city. There will be no *genos* to whom we will owe privileges nor will we ever thank a tyrant for returning a stolen rule to the assembly of the *demos*, rather there will be a formal account given of monies (which were never yours nor Polykrates' to claim) before the sovereign assembly of citizens. The point to be made is that the grand aristocratic households of the archaic period, like those of Pindar's patrons, always sought to blur the line separating privilege as a symbolic due from the formal exercise of publicly delegated authority in the *polis*. For Maiandrios a *geras* is owed to him for his foundation of freedom and *isonomia* as though to an oikist. For Telesarkhos this type of *geras* is an archaic practice that no longer has a place in the isonomic *polis* where worth and recognition are matters for public and transparent determination.[48] If Maiandrios is to have any sort of future in Samos it will be for the assembly to decide. In the *Iliad*, the *geras* stands directly on the fault line between these two ideas of social evaluation. In *Iliad* 9, Achilles, like Telesarkhos, refuses to concede that such deference ought to be accorded to a *homotimos* who with one hand subverts the political circulation of public goods, and so mistreats his peers, and then attempts to give them back as an act of his own

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47 Seaford 1994, 2000, Dewald 2000. Detienne and Svenbro 1989 also discuss this passage in a highly relevant article on the *dasmos* of wolves entitled "the impossible city."

48 The same charge is laid against Themistokles who was accused of personally receiving *gerea* from the Spartans for actions undertaken by the Athenians as a whole: Hdt. 8.125.1. Themistokles violates the public will by seeking to place himself beyond it and by claiming special privileges for personal attributes. His reply to the accusations casts Themistokles as a potential tyrant in his personal usurpation of a field of citizen sovereignty. Diodorus (11.27.3) adds that Themistokles was subsequently stripped of his *strategia*.

personal largesse.[49] Instead, in language that remotely foreshadows that of a civic *euthyna*, Achilles demands that Agamemnon settle his accounts: "Agamemnon will not persuade my heart until he has made restitution to me for all the heart-rending outrage" (οὐδέ κεν ὧς ἔτι θυμὸν ἐμὸν πείσει' Ἀγαμέμνων, / πρίν γ' ἀπὸ πᾶσαν ἐμοὶ δόμεναι θυμαλγέα λώβην. *Il.* 9.386-7). After the failure of the embassy the *geras* is abandoned in the narrative to make way for other forms of explicit determination of value.[50]

The evolution of the *geras* represents a lively historical moment in the changing relationship between the notion of one's self and one's social function, as it is characterized in the *Iliad*. Ideologies of eliteness depend on forms of mystification associating the body of the aristocrat with a worth that eventually condenses in symbolic exchange. By the classical period the *geras* due to the priest at a sacrifice, or the perquisites owing to the magistrate, no longer have anything specifically to do with the individual man who carries out the office. They have evolved into mere civic markers of the prestigious office. In the archaic period, however, the *turannos* – and the many leading citizens whose symbolic and material resources made them quasi-tyrants[51] – depends intimately on a discourse intertwining public honours and the exercise of rights with claims to inherent worth. The public discourse of the emerging *polis*, on the other hand, demanded that value, social and material, were matters for citizen judgment and that *gerea*, when awarded, derived their value from the fiat of the assembled citizenry.[52] The *Iliad*, by evoking a scenario in which this emergent sovereignty is weak and institutionally underdeveloped, deliberately defines this crisis and the 'problem of value' as a problematization of the form and content of the privileged share, the *geras*.

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49 Hence the irony in the multiple types of exchange juxtaposed in the condensed lines of *Il.* 9.367-8: **ἄξομαι**, ἅσσ' **ἔλαχόν** γε· **γέρας** δέ μοι, ὅς περ **ἔδωκεν**, αὖτις **ἐφυβρίζων ἕλετο** κρείων Ἀγαμέμνων.

50 The distribution of the word throughout the *Iliad* reveals its steady decline until *Iliad* 18. Thereafter it ceases completely to be relevant as a signifier of the hero's regard amongst his peers. In one sense what takes place here on the performative level over the course of the *Iliad* parallels what Herodotus' micro-narrative describes at the historical level.

51 Anderson 2004 argues that a definition of *turannos* ought to include more widely the charismatic and powerful heads of great households rather than more narrowly those who exercised (if ever) autocratic rule in their cities.

52 The archaic motif that metonymically substituted *dasmos* for the operation of the entire *polis* is apparent from Solon to Theognis. For the way the apportioning of meat at sacrifice works in the same way, see in general the essays in Detienne and Vernant 1989, especially by Detienne and Svenbro 1989, and Nagy 1990b, 269-75. The body of opinion that this view formed part of a 'middling' discourse in the archaic period that set a civic vision off against a community dominated by its "elite" (Morris 1996) often overlooks that the *polis* has its origins in institutions regulating relations *between elites* and in the problem of the fluidity of eliteness and the problem of fixing the boundaries of status. The *Iliad* is very conscious that the *dasmos* is a structuring practice that attempts to regulate relationships between individual warriors as well as those between individual warriors and the sovereign group. To this extent the *Iliad* is evidence that *civic discourses* derived from *the practices that mediated elite interaction*.

Part of the *Iliad's* historical uniqueness therefore lies in the fact that an episode of the Trojan cycle offers a context within which to explore specifically *relations among a community of equal elites* rather than the relations that bind *basileis* to their domestic communities. The difference with domestic settings lies in the presence of institutionalized social hierarchies. In the Homeric *oikos*, value is a question of degree made permanent within a ritualized social economy, with the *basileus* at its apex. However, in the temporary city of heroes on the Trojan shores, with its aversion to institutionalized hierarchy, there is instead a principle of equal and public access to the economy of prestige.[53] Odysseus' claim that "we Akhaians here cannot all be *basileis*" (οὐ μέν πως πάντες βασιλεύσομεν ἐνθάδ' Ἀχαιοί, *Il.* 2. 203) is ironic for an audience and poet to whom it must be patently clear that every Akhaian hero in this narrative is indeed just that – a *basileus* of one kind or another. The Akhaian camp may be an imagined community composed entirely of *basileis* and their followers and thus an 'epic experiment' quite remote from each hero's domestic experience; nevertheless, in Homeric epic the lack, or fuzziness, of any boundaries that distinguish local domestic honours (such as a *temenos*) from the specific privileges of the warrior group lend the artifice of a '*polis* of heroes' its special volatility, making it precisely the right setting for dramatizing a crisis of public evaluation among a group of social equals. At home the warrior knew where he stood; in the camp of the *Männerbund* the intrusion of domestic privilege clashed with the purpose of the *dasmos*. The *geras* is complicated by this contextual shift in which the warrior no longer exercises a specific function institutionalized and supported by wider social structures, for which a special marker of status is demanded; instead the word refers to the claim to extra status made by social equals at a political rite (*dasmos*) that serves specifically to affirm their equality in equal shares. An important source of dramatic tension in the *Iliad* therefore arises from a historical ambiguity between two actively competing senses in the notion of the word *geras* – between *geras* as a marker of symbolic social function and *geras* as a public measure of worth in the opinion of the collective.[54]

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[53] On the public nature of social value, see especially Gernet 1955, 16, where public transaction and communal witnessing bestow a fundamental evaluative efficacy; see also Ulf 1990, 41f., who usefully draws attention to the fact that "die öffentliche Meinung ist der Maßstab für die Einordnung einer Person in die Hierarchie sozialer Geltung" (42), as well as Nowag 1983, 39f., who rightly notes that publicly affirmed access to an extra portion of the booty (*geras*) is a constitutive part of social value.

[54] The tension is latent even in the most comprehensive lexical survey of the Homeric deployment of the word, *LfgrE* I 134-6 (Schmidt). Schmidt's taxonomy rests on identifying the *geras* as a 'gift' (*Geschenk*) even though more than half the occurrences in the *Iliad* refer to the non-reciprocal special portion of the spoil allocated publicly by the group (sections 1a-b). Schmidt notes parenthetically, however, that *geras* never implies that any services or duties are putatively 'owed' back from the honorand as though a 'counter-gift' (*Gegengeschenk*, 134). This observation suggests asymmetry in that the honorand expresses a sense of

The economy of γέρας

Evidence that the *geras* belongs to exchanges publicly establishing ownership and status, as opposed to their establishment through a system of reciprocity, emerges from a series of formulaic epic phrases referring to entitlements owed to members of particular social categories. In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* we find the expression τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐστί with a genitive plural as a general formula explaining gestures appropriate to the dead (θανόντων, *Il.* 16.457 = 475, 23.9; *Od.* 4.197, 24.190, 24.296),[55] elders (γερόντων, *Il.* 4.323, 9.422) and, *mutatis mutandis*, the gods (*Il.* 4.49 = 24.70: τὸ γὰρ λάχομεν γέρας ἡμεῖς). When a man dies, his kin and countrymen (κασίγνετοί τε ἔται τε, *Il.* 16.456) provide him with a burial, a tomb and a grave-marker since such tokens are owed to men who have passed away. The same formula also describes the mourning and lamentation of wife and family that is due at the funeral of a loved one. At *Od.* 24. 290-6 Laertes contrasts the proper treatment of the body (περιστείλασα . . . ὡς ἐπεῴκει . . . τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐστί θανόντων) with the consumption of the body by fishes, beasts and birds (. . . φάγον ἰχθύες, . . . θηρσὶ καὶ οἰωνοῖσιν ἕλωρ γένετο, *Od.* 24. 291-2). It is noteworthy that these two polar opposites are expressed within the same semantic field: both ἕλωρ and γέρας are words that especially evoke sack, spoil and distribution. In this respect, even the spectrum of possibilities for disposal of the dead is articulated in terms of either positive or negative distribution. On the one hand, funeral rites are a man's allotted death-right (γέρας). On the other hand, exposure and mutilation of the corpse is a consequence of the violent seizure (αἱρέω) of wild animals. Different statuses, although remote from one another, are classified according to a precise modality of exchange. In this case it is the special condition of the dead man that is demanding of ritual propriety. Although it could be argued that funerary rites place an obligation on the dead that serves to avert their potential *menis*, the opposition at work in the preceding example says nothing of gifts or

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entitlement to a privileged portion without any ensuing sense that an obligation has been established in allocating the object (note again that *geras* is not used in the description of the reciprocal relationship between warrior and community at *Il.* 12.310-321). This ought to complicate any location of the *geras* within a generalized system of reciprocities. As argued in chapter 2 and further below, Iliadic heroes resist any blurring of the distinction between *personal* exchanges and those transacted *impersonally* and publicly by the warrior group. The circle traced out by Briseis across the whole narrative illustrates how carefully the *Iliad* develops distinctions between different modes of exchange: (1) spoil >(2) *geras* >(3) spoil/substitute *geras* >(4) offered as part of an *apoina*/gift >(5) restored to the middle as *geras* once more.

55 On this ritual formula Osthoff 1906 and Katluhn 1914. It occurs in at least one late archaic funerary epigram from Attika, *CEG* 40 (= *IG* i³ 1243). It also reappears as a late Roman epitaphic topos, for which see the examples cited by Ecker 1990, 217 n.783 including *SEG* xxvii 956 (Tyana), *IG* vii 2543, 2544 (Thebes), *SEG* xxxix 449 (Tanagra), *IK Iznik* 1296 (Nikaia), *MAMA* 7 560, *SEG* vi 285 (Galatia).

privilege. Instead, it is the marking-out of death as a special social status by acknowledged members of a group gathered specially for this purpose, as highlighted by the phrase: "for such are the special tokens of the dead."[56] The metaphor is chosen for its homology with the way others are publicly recognized by the group.

Age is also a condition that is owed respect: Nestor announces, "I will direct the horsemen with words and counsel: for such is the privilege of elders" (κελεύσω βουλῇ καὶ μύθοισι· τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἔστι γερόντων, *Il.* 4.322-3).[57] The gods receive similar acknowledgement: "for never has an altar lacked its equal share, a libation and its savour, since these things are apportioned to us as a *geras*" (οὐ γάρ μοί ποτε βωμὸς ἐδεύετο δαιτὸς

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[56] Katluhn 1914, 5 interprets the γέρας θανόντων as an extension of dues to the gods, that is, as a form of *Totenkult*. See also Ecker 1990, 30-34. Herodotus refers to the special funeral ceremonies of the Spartan kings as part of their *gerea* (6.56-8). On the *geras* of hero-cult and performance, see especially Pind. *Isthm.* 5.30-5: "in the splendid sacrifices of the Aitolians the mighty sons of Oineus have their *geras*, while in Thebes it is horse-driving Iolaos; it is Perseus in Argos, and the spearmen Kastor and Polydeukes by the streams of the Eurotas; but in Oinona it is the great-hearted spirits of Aiakos and his sons . . .". Pindar, *Isthmians* fr.5 S-M represents the Isthmian games as the τηλέφαντον γέρας for Melikertes set up by Sisyphos (see also the schol. *arg. a*, Pind. *Isthm.* Drachmann iii 392: "he arranged the Isthmia in honour of Melikertes"). The *geras* of the dead child-hero is here coterminous with a particular type of funeral practice, that of funerary contests, along with tomb and rites (part of his τιμαί: Paus. 1.44.8). At Sikyon cult for Adrastos was his *geras*: Hdt. 5.67.5. Perhaps, more generally, cult for founding heroes was always considered their *geras*, as, for example, in Corinna 654 iii 27 *PMG*. On Homer, Pindar and hero-cult, see Currie 2005, 47-84.

[57] On the basis of this expression Osthoff 1906 stated the case for the orthodox etymological link between γέρας and γέρων, with the original sense of γέρας as *Altersprivileg*. Against this stands the *prima facie* fact that any close and obvious semantic link between the notion of the *geras* and seniority would make the formula redundant. Moreover, the more frequent formula, and arguably the prior expression, has to do with customary dues to the dead. Benveniste also argued convincingly against such a derivation by pointing out differences in word formation (1935, 16, 1973, 334-9), on which, see the Endnote to this chapter. Osthoff (1906, 233-5) suggested that the expression πρεσβήϊον at *Il.* 8.289, which seems to be synonymous with γέρας (so Ecker 1990, 32 n.48; Nowag 1983, 37), provides support for a semantic link between γέρας and recognizing the seniority of elders. Osthoff offered by way of example the semantic range of Latin *senatus* and Anglo-Saxon *ealdorman*. In this view, a γέρας would be a physical sign (such as the *skeptron*) of the privileges of elders and counsellors originating as a token of rank based on age (see especially *Il.* 9.422 with Hainsworth 1992, 118). Two possibilities, however, militate against this view; firstly, the parallel expression γέρας πρεσβήϊον (Hes. *Op.* 126) suggests that πρεσβήϊον at *Il.* 8.289 may be an abbreviated form of γέρας πρεσβήϊον, in which case there would be nothing in the word necessarily peculiar to age any more than it would pertain exclusively to the *basileus*; secondly, as it stands, the verse makes it clear that the πρεσβήϊον will be an object of Agamemnon's personal generosity (ἐν χερὶ θήσω, *Il.* 8.289) which will in turn serve to rank Teukros explicitly in relation to him (πρώτῳ τοι μετ' ἐμέ, *Il.* 8.289). In this context πρεσβήϊον belongs to a form of reward and thus, as we will see, shares as much with the idea of μισθός (*Il.* 10.304) as it does with γέρας. The difference is that μισθός is explicit in making a link between service and reward, *pace* Benveniste 1973. In short, if Benveniste's morphological arguments are accepted, nothing *essentially* links γέρας with the notion of 'age', a conclusion supported to some degree by the Linear B evidence.

ἐΐσης, λοιβῆς τε κνίσης τε· τὸ γὰρ λάχομεν γέρας ἡμεῖς, *Il.* 4.48-9 = 24.69-70).[58] The recipients of honours in cases such as these are never obligated or expected to reciprocate the acts involved because the prerogatives are always owed to the office regardless of the individual who holds it.[59] Thus the *geras* is the special honorific share due to an individual by virtue of the social function they exercise or represent.

The idea of the *geras* as a *sema* arises in epic on different levels. Without referring to the *geras* in particular Von Reden points out that throughout Homeric epic recognition and identification are mediated via the revelation of signs and marks in addition to the possession of objects.[60] Objects like Agamemnon's *skeptron* and Achilles' spear serve to identify the status and position of their bearers. The value of these objects, as argued above, is inseparable from their exchange and is narrated in recited 'genealogies'

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58 The general practice is described in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 311, where men honour the gods with "sacrifices and *gera*." See also *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 129, with Vergados 2011, 327, 340-1. In the *leges sacra* of the Classical period the god's portion, specially set aside during the division of the sacrifice, is still explicitly called the *geras*. In ritual practice the actual portion – usually the prestigious chine (νῶτα γεράσμια, *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, 122), but also the ham (σκέλος), hide (δέρμα) and other parts – is subsequently taken by the priest or the presiding sacrificial official in addition to their own perquisites. Certain instances make further terminological distinctions as, for example, on fourth century Kos, where the officiating *genos* is directed to separate the "god's portion" (θεομοιρία) from the parts which fall to them as γέρη (*LSCG*, 151 B 18-20). The allotment of such portions is often expressed in formulae, mostly with λαμβάνω or φέρω, which reflects formal ritual practice in relation to objects dating back well into the Archaic period.

59 Most clear in the case of the Spartan kings: Hdt. 6.56-7; γέρα are generally due to those who hold respected positions or exercise special functions in the group or community: *basileis* (*Il.* 3.170; *Od.* 7.10; 9.159-60; 9.548-51; cf. the expression, γέρας πρεσβήϊον, Hes. *Op.* 126, with τέμενος πρεσβήϊον, *Il.* 18.550); singers (Demodokos, *Od.* 8.471-81, note where he sits [μέσῳ, 473]); priests and those presiding over sacrifices. It is interesting to note the existence of an official in 4th century Kos called the γερεαφόρος βασιλέων, perhaps the officiating member of a college of magistrates, who presides over a sacrifice to Hestia and γέρη δὲ λαμβάνει τὸ δέρμα καὶ τὸ σκέλος (*LSCG*, 151 A 19-21). At Athens we hear of priestesses of Dionysos known as the γεραίραι (Dem. 59.73, with schol. D *ad Il.* 6.270, schol. BLV *ad Il.* 6.87, Hesych. s.v. γεραραί) or γεραιράδαι (*Lexeis Rhetorikai* s.v. in *Anec. Grac.* ed. Bekker I. 228, with Aesch. *Supp.* 666, Eustath. 642, 27 *ad Il.* 6.287); at Argos the wives of leading citizens responsible for clothing the cult-image of Athena were called γεραράδες (αἱ τῶν ἀρίστων ἀνδρῶν γυναῖκες, καὶ αἱ τὸ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ἐν Ἄργει ἄγαλμα ἐνδύουσαι, *Lexeis Rhetorikai* s.v. in *Anec. Graec.* ed. Bekker I. 231). Among the divine, Zeus is often understood to have participated in or overseen the distribution (*dasmos*) of privileges (*gera*) and spheres of authority to the other gods, *Il.* 15.189ff., *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 86, Hes. *Th.* 392-6, *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 29 (Hestia), *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, 291 (Hermes from Apollo), 573 (Hermes from Zeus). In the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* in particular we can see the divine order arising as either an apportioning of meat (each god having an allotted *moira* with a special portion laid upon it [*geras*], 126-9; cf. *Il.* 4.49) or a homologous division of common goods, 428-33. See also Pind. *Ol.* 7, which offers fascinating evidence for the use of the *dasmos*-motif in local foundation narratives.

60 Von Reden 1994, 27-32.

consisting of prior exchanges.[61] Rather than limiting the semiotic character of objects to gifts, as Von Reden does, it ought to be recognized that in the *Iliad* the *geras* manifests a quasi-talismanic value by virtue of signifying the public affirmation of a man's social worth by the *laos*. While Von Reden is right in asserting that "a king without his regalia was not a king", in the *Iliad* it is the *geras* of the *basileus* which advertises his position among his peers.[62] Although gifts announce the extent of a man's ability to establish enduring *personal* relations the *geras* is a *sema* of value generated *impersonally* and publicly within the *dasmos* of the warrior circle. One need not wear or display a *geras* since the very act of receipt is a display of rights and community regard. In a proto-political community a *geras* is a much more important token of one's social identity than a gift. In the *Iliad*, however, the durability of the will imposed at the *dasmos* is shown to be too institutionally weak to prevent its subversion. Under these circumstances the *geras* is revealed to be insecure so long as the public exchange transmitting it can be corrupted.

Baudrillard reminds us that the more often certain types of object recur in particular exchanges, the more often these objects and their images will substitute metonymically for those exchanges. Use-value and intrinsic material value cannot be meaningfully detached from the exchanges in which their value is acquired. In the beginning tripods and cauldrons (*lebetes*), for example, borrow their signification from the spaces and exchanges they traverse. For instance, the tripod signifies 'precious object' because of its central role in the ritual collocation of sacrifice and victory. Eventually, however, the primary meaning of a tripod becomes 'legitimate victory' and its image alone is enough to evoke 'value'.[63] Even its use-value (as a cauldron for cooking meat) is sufficient to bring to mind these talismanic associations.[64] Similarly, it is impossible, for example, to determine whether Briseis is chosen as a *geras* for Achilles because she is a beautiful girl or whether she has become more desirable to him precisely because she is now a *geras*.[65] The point is that a dilemma of this kind would be inconceivable for the Homeric hero insofar as her value is inextricable from the meanings of the exchange in which she was at first the object, and which she continued to signify metonymically thereafter. Her value, and Achilles' too, are catalysed by the *dasmos*;

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61 See Grethlein 2009, with Appadurai 1988.

62 Von Reden 1994, 31. So Donlan 1982a, 162-3 with different conclusions.

63 On the proto-monetary use of tripods and cauldrons, see below pp.209-11

64 The boiling cauldrons at Olympia occupy a nexus of oracular legitimacy, sacrifice and victory. When they boil without fire (i.e. abnormally) a strange power is imagined, compelling but at the same time illegitimate, presaging tyranny: τέρας μέγα, Hdt 1.59.1. On the significance of the tripod in epic and the archaic period, see Papalexandrou 2004.

65 Agamemnon's statement that he found Khryseis more desirable than Klytaimnestra (*Il.* 1.112-5) is not only a statement about her physical beauty but also an indicator of the inextricable relationship between desire and exchange. Lyons 2003 has demonstrated that beautiful women are central to the transactions of elite exchanges whether in marriage or as spoil.

outside it they are nothing. It is all the more striking then when Achilles reviles an economy that would define his very life as a function of the disembodied sign-value of the exchanges through which the hero circulates (whether a narrative exchange (*kleos*) or a strictly material one (*geras*]). Ironically, the disruption of the *dasmos* enables Achilles to interrogate the sign-value of the *geras* and, by extension, the entire economy in which the value of a man is made contingent on the exchanges in which he participates (*Il.* 9.400-9). The alienation of value from exchange and the objects they transact occurs when the value immanent in symbolic circulation is arrested.

In the majority of cases the non-reciprocal nature of the *geras* is indicated by two complementary aspects. The first is the communal anonymity of those who authorize the allocation of objects. The "sons of the Akhaians" allocate special portions of booty;[66] domestic honours are likewise "given by the *demos*" (*Od.* 7.10-11, 7.150) just as choice cuts of meat and land are bestowed under the authority of the community as a whole.[67] When individual leaders sometimes appear to 'give' a *geras* they are acting as deputies of the communal will. As such the receipt of a *geras* is never used to express a *personal* transaction between leader and hero. The notable exceptions are at *Il.* 9.330-4 and 367, both in Achilles' crucial reply to the *apoina* of Agamemnon as relayed to him by Odysseus. As pointed out above, Achilles greets Agamemnon's transgressive 'generosity' with irony and sarcasm (especially at *Il.* 9.365-9). Achilles portrays Agamemnon's seizure of Briseis as consistent with his other

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66 *Il.* 1.123; 135; 162-3; 276; 299; 368-9; 392; 2.228; ἥρωες Δαναοί, 2.255-6; 11.627; 16.56 = 18.444. The assignation of a *geras* by the community is an extension of their authority to distribute spoils generally, e.g. *Il.* 9.138 = 280; *Od.* 9.42; note the formulaic quality of the description at *Od.* 9.548-51: "after taking the sheep, we distributed them (μῆλα . . . ἑλόντες / δασσάμεθα) . . . and dividing up the sheep *my companions* gave the ram to me alone as the extra portion" (ἀρνειὸν δ' ἐμοὶ οἴῳ . . . ἑταῖροι μήλων δαιομένων δόσαν ἔξοχα). There is a similar process behind the allocation of goats to ships at *Od.* 9.159-60. See Donlan 1982a, 158f., who interprets such statements as evidence of "egalitarian, non-centralized, distribution, which is associated with the social organization of tribes." In Nestor's account of the distribution of the spoils from the Epean raid (*Il.* 11.685-705) there is, however, some confusion: initially, heralds summon all who feel they are owed a debt from the Epeans and the spoil is distributed (δαίτρευον, *Il.* 11.688) by the assembled *hegetores* of Pylos. A little further on, Neleus appears to be one of these, "choosing out for himself" (ἐκ δ' … εἵλετο, *Il.* 11.696-7) a huge portion commensurate with his own suffering. This is reiterated at *Il.* 11.703-4, but Nestor adds further that his father then "gave the rest of it to the *demos* to divide up, lest anyone go away deprived of an equal (share)" (τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἐς δῆμον ἔδωκε / δαιτρεύειν, μή τίς οἱ ἀτεμβόμενος κίοι ἴσης, *Il.* 11.704-5). The brevity of the account makes it difficult to determine whether the *demos* can act without Neleus' explicit *fiat* or whether Neleus has been deputized to direct the division. In either case, Neleus' action seems to be overriding the earlier act of the *hegetores* (who may also be acting as agents of the *demos*).

67 At *Il.* 12.310-21, Sarpedon and Glaukos receive their privileges from the general community of the Lykians. The Spartan kings obtain their *gerea* ἐκ τοῦ κοινοῦ τῶν Σπαρτιητέων, Hdt. 6.58.1.

corruptions of exchange. These are deliberate exceptions illustrating an attitude toward objects held in common in the *Iliad* that is utterly out of step with the warrior ideology informing the allocation of *moirai* and *gera*. The narrative problematizes an ambiguous economy of prestige, rather than simply mirroring a synchronic social reality.[68] This interpretation differs from that of Donlan and Van Wees who overlook discussion of epic's socio-historical function.[69] Donlan understands these exceptions as glimpses of a more developed system of "chiefly redistribution" based on rewards for service rather than ranked dues. "As a result", he suggests, "what was 'due' to the leader becomes 'privilege,' and 'sharing' becomes 'redistribution.'"[70] Conflict arises when the distinctions are ambiguous. Donlan's linear anthropological observation is, however, unable to account for the intervening influence of the context in which the latter examples appear. Furthermore, Donlan's explanation is not grounded in semantic shifts illustrating the changing modalities of distribution. As a consequence, he sees the crisis of the *Iliad* as a crisis of Agamemnon's political authority that is only resolved by compromise. It is a reading that overlooks the fact that Achilles' distracted acceptance of compensation in *Iliad* 19 is completely overshadowed by the death of Patroklos, which is a catalyst for, *inter alia*, the replacement of the *dasmos* with funerary *agon* as a new mode of apportioning honour. Donlan's failure to understand the *geras* as a non-reciprocal exchange leads to the erroneous conclusion that "the epic's conception of the Greek confederacy at Troy was an inflated version of the local system."[71] However, there is no corresponding local system in epic that could boast such a high concentration of elite warrior peers all equally able to back claims to prestige with force.

The performative artifice of the 'city of heroes' conjured in the *Iliad* is, therefore, the only context in which the question, "who is the best of the Akhaians?" could arise. Such a question implies the symbolic vacuum of ritual sovereignty that Vernant argued preceded political thinking in the Greek world.[72] A further irony lies in the fact that the poetic 'worlds of the utterance' were already 'cities of heroes' in every sense. The presence of the *polis* in the *Iliad* is thus confirmed by the homology between epic performance and the *polis* itself – both are the synergic result of meditations on the structure and dynamics of relationships between elites in early political contexts.

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68 Detienne and Svenbro 1989 explore the problem posed by the leader who presides over the *dasmos* in their structural analysis of wolves' banquets in Greek literature. They show that it is redolent of the tyrant and the wolf when one's share of a communal distribution is reconfigured as the 'gift' of the one who presides over the allocation.

69 Donlan 1982a, Van Wees 1992, 299-310.

70 Donlan 1982a, 158,

71 Donlan 1982a, 163

72 Vernant 1982a, 38-48.

The non-reciprocal character of the *geras* manifests itself, as Gernet makes clear, in an *disposition* towards the object.[73] The *geras* acquires its identity as the bearer of status via of its deposition, its verbal movement and the spaces it traverses. For example, it is 'placed' (τίθημι, *Od.* 4.66; *Il.* 19.249); 'surrendered' (ἀποδίδωμι, *Il.* 1.98); like booty in general, 'allotted' (λαχάνω, *Il.* 4.49 = 24.70) or part of a general apportioning like food at a feast (δαίομαι, δαιτρεύω, δατέομαι, on which, see further below); 'led off' (ἄγω); 'carried off' or 'taken away' (φέρω, λαμβάνω); 'seized' (αἱρέω); 'chosen out' (αἱρέομαι); 'provided' (ἑτοιμάζω, *Il.* 1.118); 'won' (ἄρνυμαι, *Il.* 11.625); 'torn away' (ἀφαιρέω, *Il.* 1.299); 'held' or 'possessed' (ἔχω, *Od.* 11.534);[74] it is only ever 'given' (δίδωμι) when the donor is the whole group whose very anonymity precludes the formation of personal relations peculiar to the gift and denies the real force of the verb at the moment of its use.[75] When Achilles complains that there was no *kharis* given for risking his life in battle it is a criticism that laments the lack of an explicit and durable relationship between recognition and action in the warrior community. It is not the expression of a personal grievance with Agamemnon's failure to reciprocate, as though the crisis was the breakdown of the relationship between a leader and subordinate. In fact most of Achilles' criticism is prompted by Agamemnon's attempt to impose such a relationship by misappropriating the distribution of spoil and converting it into an act of personal largesse. The *geras* is an object that articulates a precise social relation by means of a similarly precise spatial configuration. In the world of the *Iliad* the disposition of objects is the measure of human relations; to such subtleties the narrative is very much alive.

Even though Achilles maintains that the allocation of special portions of booty ought to reflect the degree of a warrior's participation in the fighting, it should be noted that Achilles makes his point against the backdrop of an inexplicit relationship between participation and compensation.[76] All heroes receive a special portion of the spoils as a token of their position in the elite warrior

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73 Gernet 1955.

74 The quasi-legal and formulaic claim ἔχω γέρας seems very old: see the cadastres PY Ep 704, PY Eb 416 cited above on p.64.

75 The gift of the community is in fact an authorization and guarantee to act proprietorially: a comparison between *Od.* 9.159-60 and *Od.* 9.548-51 reveals that Odysseus understands that his seizure (ἔξελον, *Od.* 9.160) of an extra portion (a tenth goat) can equally be conceived as the concession of the whole warrior band to his position – "my companions gave me alone a ram as the extra portion (ἀρνειὸν δ' ἐμοὶ οἴῳ . . . ἑταῖροι μήλων δαιομένων δόσαν ἔξοχα, *Od.* 9.550-1). See Thersites' succinct description of the process, *Il.* 2.226-8. In general, exceptions arise when the *geras* and rights to confer or receive it are treated inappropriately (*Il.* 9.330-6, 365-9) as well as, say, in the context of the insult which deliberately seeks to diminish honour by casting the relations which underpin it as inferior or servile, such as at *Il.* 20.179-82. Note also the insult of Ktesippos at the suitor's feast where the ox hoof becomes a perverted joke-*geras* and *simultaneously* a potential *xeineion* (guest-gift) for the beggar-Odysseus, *Od.* 20.296-7.

76 So Ulf 1990, 10; Nowag 1983, 39-40; *pace* §1 in Van Wees 1992, 307.

group, usually something unique and personally "chosen out" from the common haul prior to general distribution (*dasmos*).[77] After this has taken place, each hero will get a *moira*, an (ostensibly) equal share of all the booty (*Od.* 11.534; cf. *Il.* 11.687-8).[78] The hero alone is responsible for the subsequent distribution of spoils to his followers. It is not made especially clear but it would appear that the range of choices made available to a hero indicates social rank. Agamemnon's greater status is, for example, demonstrated by his right to take the choicest parts, that is, first pick (*Il.* 2.228; cf. 11.703-4), in this case the girl Khryseis, whom he declares to be more beautiful and accomplished even than his own wife, Klytaimnestra. This right to the best parts parallels the distribution of meat and wine at the feast. For example, the chine or backbone piece (τὰ νῶτα) is the best cut and is typically the extra share bestowed at the feast on guests deserving of recognition.[79]

While in Homeric epic these *gerea* still recall the general perquisites due to the warrior in the exercise of his social function, in the context of communal distributions overseen by the whole group, these *gerea* establish an explicit link between the objects bestowed and publicly determined worth. The *dasmos* in the *Iliad* is the dominant institution for recognizing worth among members of the same warrior group. Moreover, the source of the evaluative efficacy of the institution of the *dasmos* is not symbolic but political: the sovereignty that authorizes the *dasmos* begins and ends, as it were, with the *damos*.[80] The claim to an objective status among the warrior circle is guaranteed by a sovereignty asserted entirely by the constitution of the warrior assembly. For example, at Sparta, according to Herodotus,

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77 Not, as Van Wees 1992, 35 would have it, chosen out for a hero by the leader. If the hero does not pick a *geras* for himself (as at *Il.* 2.690; 9.130 = 272; *Il.* 9.139; *Od.* 9.160; *Od.* 14.232), it is the authorizing group, the "sons of the Akhaians", who select a *geras* and publicly bestow it upon the warrior (e.g. *Il.* 11.627; *Il.* 16.56 = 18.444; *Od.* 9.551).

78 It is not without irony that the general statement in this regard (*Od.* 11.534) is made of Achilles' son, Neoptolemos, and in the context of his *nostos*. For an audience of the late archaic and early classical period this hero features in the foundation narrative of a quite famous distributive rite, the Theoxenia at Delphi (Pind. *Paian* 6, *Nemean* 8) The role he plays in this narrative reprises in some respects that of his father in the *Iliad*. The implications of heroic succession and the interaction of the respective *kleos* of a father's song with that of his son will be explored elsewhere.

79 *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 122 (for the expression νῶτα γεράσμια); *Il.* 4.262 (wine); *Il.* 7.321; *Od.* 4.66; *Od.* 14.437, 441.

80 In general, one could tentatively connect the primary meaning of *demos* to their oversight and conduct of distributive acts: "those among whom a distribution (of land, spoil, meat, *kratos*, etc.) has taken place." On the earliest semantic range of *demos*, see in general Lejeune 1965, who surveys the Mycenaean evidence. This evidence is suggestive of some continuity between the Late Helladic *damos* and what might be termed an institutional memory of distributive functions. See also the important discussion of Lévêque and Vidal-Naquet 1996, 128-33.

> ἢν θυσίη τις δημοτελὴς ποιῆται, πρώτους ἐπὶ τὸ δεῖπνον ἵζειν τοὺς βασιλέας καὶ ἀπὸ τούτων πρώτων ἄρχεσθαι, διπλήσια νέμοντας ἑκατέρῳ τὰ πάντα ἢ τοῖσι ἄλλοισι δαιτυμόνεσι.
>
> Hdt. 6.57.1
>
> whenever there is a sacrifice on behalf of the *demos*, the kings sit down to dinner first and are served first, with each receiving double of all that is apportioned to the rest of the feast's participants.

These *gerea* follow as a result of a ritual function and serve to mark the kings as holders of a significant office. Nevertheless, there is evidence in this passage that the Lakedaimonian *polis* has already asserted a sovereign right to make rulings on how royal perquisites are allocated, especially on *public* occasions (δημοτελής). In other words, at Sparta the kings' privileges are politically determined and limited by the writ of the assembled *damos* in a way that recalls the formulation in the oracular dispensation of the Great Rhetra.[81] Thucydides makes the general point that earlier *poleis* were governed by "hereditary kings with *explicitly stated prerogatives*" (πρότερον δὲ ἦσαν **ἐπὶ ῥητοῖς γέρασι** πατρικαὶ βασιλεῖαι, Thuc. 1.13.1).

For the normative personal relationship between warrior and home community we rely on the general statement by Glaukos to Sarpedon (*Il.* 12.310-21). For the normative personal relationship between individual warriors we rely on the (not uncontroversial) exchange between Glaukos and Diomedes (*Il.* 6.232-6) as well as the many general statements throughout the poem including para-narratives such as the Meleager story in *Iliad* 9. What preoccupies the *Iliad*, however, is the problem posed by the *dasmos* and its failure to institutionalize practices for establishing *normative impersonal relationships between the individual warrior and the warrior collective*. This is another way of saying that the narrative gropes in the dark for the formulation of what will eventually become citizenship, a formalized set of rights that will eventually come to structure the relationships between members of the same political community legally and impersonally.[82]

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81 Tyrtaios fr.4. West: decision-making is to begin (ἄρχειν μὲν βουλῆς, fr. 4.3) with the kings and the *gerousia* but only the δημόται can respond with effective speech (ῥήτραι). This is because "victory and sovereignty shall attend upon the mass of the *demos*" (δήμου τε πλήθει νίκην καὶ κάρτος ἕπεσθαι, fr. 4.9 with Plut. *Lyc.* 6: "sovereignty and dissent belong to the *demos*", δάμῳ δὲ ἀνταγορίαν ἤμην καὶ κράτος). The intersection of *geras* as 'due to the dead', hero-cult, warrior-perquisite and publicly authorized worth is encapsulated in the 'Simonidean' epigram (XVI Page 1981, 213-5 = *IG* vii 53) for the Megarian war-dead of the Persian conflicts: "the citizens granted to us this communal *geras* [public tomb and rites] around the navel of the Nisaians in the *laos*-receiving *agora*."

82 This is why citizenship and coinage develop in historically parallel trajectories, as suggested by Seaford generally in 1994 and 2004. The development of coined money is in a large part historically propelled by the autonomization of labour value from the social exchanges within which labour circulates as symbolic dependency eliciting obligation.

The homology that exists between the distribution of spoil and the carving up and division of meat at the feast appears in the use of a series of verbs formed from the **da*- root:[83] δαιτρεύω, δαίομαι and, more fundamentally, δατέομαι. Δαιτρεύειν means "to carve up" and, although its use is uncommon in epic, the verb bridges the two semantic domains.[84] Δατέομαι is far more significant because it is the main verb associated with the public distribution of objects held in common. Its derivative noun, δασμός, is used only once in epic (*Il.* 1.166) but the social relations it denotes resonate throughout the *Iliad*, reinforced by a semantic pattern established by the verb. The importance of this verb to an understanding of the Homeric economy cannot be underestimated since it serves to connect domains that later become discrete. Its use in epic and other early Greek texts demonstrate that what in the Classical period became differentiated fields of public business – distribution of booty, common meals, reallocation of publicly seized goods, division of new land into allotments, public adjudication of succession to an inheritance and so on – at an earlier stage belonged to a contiguous field of thought relating to the publicly witnessed division of common goods (ξυνήϊα κείμενα, *Il.* 1.124). This basic notion also appears metaphorically: the Trojans and the Akhaians "distribute the wrath of Ares between them in the middle" (ἐν μέσῳ ἀμφότεροι μένος Ἀρήος δατέονται, *Il.* 18.264), in which the idea of communally authorized and witnessed allocation is also attested.[85] The meaning is more specific in relation to war-spoils, that sphere of distribution of which the *geras* is a part.[86] The communal redistribution of property without heirs is understood in similar terms,[87] further illustrated in a law from late Archaic Mantinea dictating the fate of confiscated property: land-bound labourers (ϝοικιάται) and goods (χρεμάτα) are to become property of the

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83 On the **da*-root see Chantraine *DELG* 247-8 s.v. δαίομαι, Frisk *GEW* s.v. δαίομαι, δατέομαι and Lévêque and Vidal-Naquet 1996, 128-133. Even in epic we can see the faint beginning of a differentiation in the field constituted by verbs of this family indicated by the more specific fields of nouns derived from them: δασμός (of booty, *Il.* 1.166); δαιθμός, ἀναδασμός, γαδαισία (of land allocation, Hdt. 4.159.2-3, 163.1, Thuc. 5.4.2, *ML* 13); δαίω, δαίτη, δαίνυμι (meals, e.g. δαιτύς, *Il.* 22.496); δαῖσις (division of the inheritance, Gortyn *Code*, *IC* 4, 72, IV 25, V 47). This autonomization of specific fields from a general system of thought relating to the division of communally held objects is particularly influenced by the intervention of the *polis* in such processes during the Archaic period. By the fifth century the differentiation is largely complete.

84 *Il.* 11.688, 705 (spoil); *Od.* 14.433 (dividing the meat); *Od.*15.323 (carving meat generally); cf. also *Il.* 4.262 (a δαιτρόν of wine); *Od.* 1.141, 17.331 (δαιτρός, carver) and *Od.* 16.253 (δαιτροσύνη, the art of carving up). Compare also the occasional synonymous use of δαίομαι, *Od.* 15.140 (κρέα δαίετο καὶ νέμε μοίρας) and *Od.* 9.551 (= δατέομαι).

85 See also *Od.* 15.412.

86 *Il.* 1.125, 1.166 (δασμός), 1.368, 9.138 = 280 (ὅτε κεν δατεώμεθα ληΐδ' Ἀχαιοί), 9.333 (where Agamemnon is the agent), 17.231 (ἀποδατέομαι), 18.511, 22.118 (ἀποδατέομαι), 22.120, 24.595 (ἀποδατέομαι), *Od.* 9.42 = 549. ἀποδατέομαι conveys a more precise sense of "apportion a specific share" where a sense of the relative amounts is important: *Il.* 17.231 and 24.595 illustrate this.

87 *Od.* 2.335, 2.368, 3.316, 15.13, 16.385, 17.80, 20.216.

goddess, while the city will "distribute households" (ϝοικίας δάσασσθαι), that is, make them *public* property.[88] The use of δατέομαι in contexts of inheritance demonstrate a semantic continuity: on line 20 the condemned man is to be deprived of τῶν χρεμάτον τὸ λάχος, his inheritance, which, presumably, will also revert to public property.[89]

In cases where patrimony is to succeed to more than one child, it appears to have been regarded as property common to all the children before it is divided. Such division is referred to generally by δατέομαι, with the individual allocations by λαγχάνω.[90] The special links between language concerning communal distribution and succession to patrimony will be explored in chapter 3. It is nevertheless important to note that a structural homology exists between the quasi-juridical practices of booty division and the pre-law function of the funeral that emerges strongly from its shared formulary vocabulary (especially in the Gortyn Code, *IC* 72).

Like δαιτρεύω and particularly δαίομαι (from which δαίς "a division (of meat), feast" is derived), δατέομαι can refer to the distribution of food, either among humans,[91] or it can be used ironically and metaphorically.[92]

Finally, δαίομαι and δατέομαι form the basis of words that describe the distribution of land. Nausithoos divided up newly colonized land into arable plots when he founded the *polis* of the Phaiakians on Scheriē (ἐδάσσατ' ἀρούρας, *Od.* 6.10).[93] The redistribution of land in late sixth century Lokris is denoted by a more specific vocabulary: ἀνδαιθμός and γαδαισία.[94] The division of land in general is referred to by δαιθμός as it is elsewhere.[95] An inscription from Aitolia attests the official title δαστήρ, "land-commissioner", but,

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88 *IG* V (2) 262, 14-17 = *IGT* 34 (especially pp. 99-100) = *Nomima* II 2.

89 On λαγχάνω in these contexts see the following note.

90 *Il.* 5.158 (with Hes. *Th.* 606-7), *Il.* 15.189 (δατέομαι), *Il.* 15.190-2 (λαγχάνω), *Od.* 14.208, and especially *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, 86. See also Hes. *Op.* 39 and Pind. *Nem.* 10.86 where ἀποδατέομαι refers to sharing with one's brother. The classical Athenian δατηταί (*Ath. Pol.* 56.6) were state-appointed arbitrators of disputed inheritances.

91 *Od.* 1.112, 3.66 = 19.423 (μοιραί), 20.280, (never in the *Iliad*, although note *varia lectiones* on *Il.* 8.550).

92 *Il.* 20.394 (of a body under the wheels of a chariot), 22.354 (dogs and birds "divide up" a corpse), 23.21 (dogs), 23.121 (mules "cut up" the ground as they walk); *Od.* 18.87 (dogs), 22.476 (to give over to dogs to "divide up"). Note that the improper treatment of the corpse is again articulated as the perversion of a proper "allocation." Note the use of the word in Pind. *Ol.* 1.51 with reference to the distribution of Pelops' flesh.

93 The *ktistes* is especially honoured with *gerea* and cult privileges. The special ritual function of the colonial or institutional founder centres on his presidency of an original distribution conducted under the seal of Apollo Archagetas. The intersection of foundation motifs and the *Iliad's* political theme will be fully explored elsewhere. On these privileges, see Malkin 1987, 195-266 and Dougherty 1993, 24-6.

94 *ML* 13 (= *Nomima* I 44 = *IGT* 47), l.2 and, l.11.

95 *ML* 13.10. The term occurs also at Halaesa (*DGE* 313). Compare also the use of ἄνδαιτος in classical Corcyra, *DGE* 147. Etymologically all these terms derive from δαίομαι, Frisk *GEW* 341-2 and Buck *GD*, 164.4

more literally, simply "distributor (of land)."[96] Herodotus speaks of the redistribution of land at Kyrene as γῆς ἀναδασμός.[97] By the end of the fifth century, ἀναδατέομαι especially refers to a public reallocation of land holdings.[98] Plato and Aristotle generally associate ἀναδάστος with the redistribution of wealth or property.[99] In Herakleia καταδατέομαι is used in reference to the allocation of land.[100] It is noteworthy that in Archaic Lokris the settlement of questions concerning both land holdings and the legitimate line of succession are considered part of the same semantic field.[101]

This system of distributive thought demarcates the honorific portion (γέρας) and the universal share (μοῖρα). These domains are distanced from reciprocal exchange to an even greater degree, as noted above, via gestures of proprietorial seizure. A sequence of verbal actions in relation to the disposal of common goods can therefore be observed as follows: common objects are distributed (δατέσθαι, etc.) by (and under the fiat of) the group (for example, *Od.* 9.41-2; *Il.* 9.138). This takes place on two levels (cf. *Od.* 11.534): (a) the general allocation of shares (μοῖραν/αἶσαν λαγχάνειν)[102] and; (b) the choosing out of special portions (ἐξαιρεῖσθαι γέρας) either by the individual himself (*Od.* 9.160, 14.232) or by the group on his behalf (δόσαν ἔξοχα, *Od.* 9.551; see also *Il.* 1.369; 11.627; 16.56; 18.444).[103] All partitions of goods held in common in epic

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96 *IG* IX² 1, 116.

97 Hdt. 4.159.1, 163.1; the oracle does the same at 4.159.3 (γῆς ἀναδαίομαι).

98 For example, Thuc. 5.4.2, at Leontini. See generally, Asheri 1963 and Brandt 1989.

99 For example, Pl. *Rep.* 561ᵃ, *Leg.* 843ᵇ; Arist. *Pol.* 1305ᵃ5, 1307ᵃ2, 1309ᵃ15.

100 *DGE* 63, 28.

101 One may also note, as an addendum, the presence of ἐπιδατέομαι in Mycenaean: (1) *e-pi-da-to* (Pylos Jn 389.7; 601.7 = Palmer 1963, no. 175). Chantraine *DELG* 254 s.v. δατέομαι) reads the word as a verbal adjective ("distribué"), Palmer (1963, 285-6) as a 3.sing. aorist middle ("was issued in addition"); (2) *e-pi-de-da-to* (Pylos Vn 20.1 = Palmer 1963, no.267 = Ventris and Chadwick 1973, no. 250), 3.sing. perfect middle, "(of wine) is distributed". Compare with ἐπιδασμός, "tax-assessment" *PSI* 8.901.11 (1st.cent. AD) and the late classical δασμός, "tribute" (*LSJ* s.v.).

102 Whereas δατέομαι refers generally to the total act of distribution, λαγχάνω denotes the allocation of one's equal share of the common goods (which, in the sharing of spoil, takes place after the selection of honorific portions), *Il.* 9.367, 18.327 (λαχόντα τε ληΐδος αἶσαν), *Od.* 5.40 = 13.138 (λαχὼν ἀπὸ ληΐδος αἶσαν), *Od.* 9.159-60, *Od.* 14.233. The common portion is understood as one's "share" (μοῖρα) or "proper measure" (αἶσα). Although these two words are in many ways synonymous, in contexts such as the physical distribution of common goods the distinction between μοῖρα as "lot, share" (relative portion) and αἶσα as "due measure" (absolute portion) is preserved. On the distinction, see Yamagata 1994, 105f., and the valuable comments on 116, n. 22 citing *SDGI* 73 from Cyprus where ϝοινῶ αἶσα is simply "a measure of wine." See also *Od.*14.433 where Eumaios is περὶ φρεσὶν αἴσιμα, "mindful of due measure" with respect to the carving up of the meat. On μοῖρα more generally, and its links with τιμή, see Pötscher 1960.

103 Nowag 1983, 39-40, makes the explicit and valuable observation that in epic a linguistic opposition is made between the *Extraanteil* and the μοῖρα (= ἄσσ' ἔλαχον in Achilles' formulation, *Il.* 9.367; cf. *Od.* 11.534) that denotes the different modes by which objects are exchanged. The *Extraanteil* (γέρας or

follow this classificatory system: at a feast the νῶτα γεράσμια might be added to the δαΐς εἴση or μοῖρα (for example, *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, 122-9); spoil is composed of μοῖραι and γέρα; landed property in the form of distributed allotments, κλῆροι or ἀρούραι, are distinguished from the τεμένεα which are assigned or specially selected (τάμνω or νέμομαι, *Il.* 6.194, 12.313).[104] At all levels it is the publicly witnessed nature of the repartition that authorizes it and authenticates the status that both general and special portions confer.

In these instances the *geras* is not to be understood as a 'reward' for martial excellence.[105] Instead a warrior will take a *geras* as something due to him and will jealously maintain his right to it as co-extensive with his position relative to his fellow warriors in the *Männerbund*.[106] Only when social worth is *questioned* do warriors make the (usually derogatory) connection between service and reward explicit. Such a link when made explicitly is in fact an insult: so Achilles sneers at Aineas: "are you driven to fight me in the hope of ruling the horse-breaking Trojans with the honour of Priamos? Even were you to kill me, Priamos would never for that place a *geras* in your hands (γέρας ἐν χερὶ θήσει)" (*Il.* 20.179-82). Ideally, however, a *geras* should not be received from another's hands but be taken from the middle. Symbolically, it is the communal space that clears the ground for full private property. Achilles here reduces the independent status Aineas acquires from participating in a *dasmos*, to the payment of a dependent subordinate of the ruling Trojan house. A proper attitude to one's *geras* should be independent ownership, never gratitude. To reduce one's status to a relationship of obligation and dependence upon another (to receive something "from his hands") effectively annuls (or perverts) the legitimation of status that non-reciprocal exchange seeks to establish.[107] The

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ἔξοχα, *Od.* 9.551) is 'chosen out' but the *Normalanteil* (μοῖρα) is 'allotted'. This remains true regardless of whether we suppose the drawing of lots to be the mode of allocation or not, on which see *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, 128-9, *Il.* 3.325, 7.171-90 and Nowag's remarks, 1983, 41-2.

104 At Thasos special sacrificial portions are "cut out" (γέρα τέμνεται), *IG* XII, suppl. 414, 5-7 (outlining prohibitions at sacrifices for Herakles).

105 This point is made by Nowag 1983, 40, cited below n.109.

106 This is one of the defining qualities of the *geras* that emerges from Nowag's very useful study of the different aspects of booty allocation in epic (1983). He points out that all instances of "choosing out" (*Entnahme*) an *Extraanteil* concern a portion of spoil "der kraft Konvention einem Führer 'zusteht'." In general, Nowag rightly concludes that "es zwar ein kritisches Bewußtsein darum gab, daß die Konzeption des Extraanteils nicht leistungsbezogen war, zum anderen zeigt es, was der Extraanteil tatsächlich war: Eine quasi institutionalisierte Beutevergabe durch das Volk an militärische Führungspersonen, wobei vermutlich dem Status der Person mehr Beachtung geschenkt wurde als seine jeweils konkreten Qualität als Kämpfer", 1983, 39. With respect to the general booty share (*Normalanteil*) he arrives at the similar conclusion that it was allotted "unabhängig von ihrer Position oder ihrem Kampfbeitrag", 1983, 40.

107 Gernet 1955, 11 emphasizes the antithesis between the gesture of "placing in the hands" (ἐν χερσὶ τίθεναι) that he regards as largely synonymous with

essence of the *geras* lies in its effacement of dependence on, or obligation to, another. On the contrary, that a man is "honoured (as if by a *geras*)" (γεραρός) should be obvious to all who gaze upon him. So Priam says to Helen of Odysseus: "indeed others are taller (μείζονες), but so fine (καλόν) a man I have never seen with my eyes nor one so deserving of honour (γεραρόν); he appears like a *basileus*" (βασιλῆϊ γὰρ ἀνδρὶ ἔοικε, *Il.* 3.168-70, see also *Il.* 3.211). Note that well-respected women at Troy are called γέραιραι at *Il.* 6.87, 270, 287. Eumaios, when he has yet to recognize Odysseus, has no special reason to honour him (γέραιρεν) with the backbone piece other than as a special guest: *Od.* 14.437 (δ' Ὀδυσῆα) (= *Il.* 7.321 [δ' Αἴαντα], see also *Od.* 14.441). Appearance ought to betray a natural excellence that, in turn, is expressed as a function of the honorific portions one either deserves or receives. This connection is also expressed by Menelaos to Telemakhos and Peisistratos:

> "Σίτου θ' ἅπτεσθον καὶ χαίρετον. αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
> δείπνου πασσαμένω εἰρησόμεθ' οἵ τινές ἐστον
> ἀνδρῶν· οὐ γὰρ σφῷν γε γένος ἀπόλωλε τοκήων,
> ἀλλ' ἀνδρῶν γένος ἐστὲ διοτρεφέων βασιλήων
> σκηπτούχων, ἐπεὶ οὔ κε κακοὶ τοιούσδε τέκοιεν."
> Ὣς φάτο καί **σφιν** νῶτα βοὸς **παρὰ** πίονα **θῆκεν**
> ὄπτ' **ἐν χερσὶν ἑλών**, τὰ ῥά γέρα **πάθεσαν αὐτῷ**.
>
> *Od.* 4.60-6
>
> 'Take the food and be welcome! And after
> you have tasted dinner, we shall ask who among men you are;
> for the race of *your* parents is clearly not ruined,
> rather yours is that of men who are *basileis*, nurtured by Zeus,
> those who hold sceptres. Vulgar men (κακοί) could not sire such a pair as you'.
> So he spoke, and he placed before them the fatty back-bone of the ox,
> *seizing the roasted meat in his hands*, that very piece set aside *for himself* as his honorific portion (*gera*).

Demodokos receives the back-cut under similar circumstances as due for the innate ability bestowed on him by the Muses (*Od.* 8.475-481). When the Akhaians "chose out" (ἔξελον) what was clearly a *geras* for Nestor they did so generally "because he was the best of all in counsel" (οὕνεκα βουλῇ ἀριστεύεσκεν ἁπάντων, *Il.* 11.627), not for an especially useful piece of advice. It is worth noting that this process can be summarized two verses earlier simply by τὴν ἄρετ' ἐκ Τενέδοιο, "the girl whom the old man carried off from Tenedos" (*Il.* 11.625), that is, seized proprietorially.

In the *Iliad* a specific distinction is made between two types of warrior. One is the disinterested warrior for whom war is an end in itself and for whom the *geras* is a token of worth arising from recognition by his peers and recompense for the risk of his life. The other is the interested mercenary hired to spy or fight for specific payment.[108]

διδόναι, and gestures of property seizure. The appropriate gesture with respect to the *geras* is to "take in one's hands" (ἐν χερσὶ αἴρειν, see *Od.*4.66).

[108] At *Il.* 10.304, Dolon accepts the offer of a "great gift" (δῶρον μεγάλον) which will be "sufficient payment" (ἄρκιος μισθός). Van Wees 1992, 307, mistakenly elides

Amongst one's peers, social rank depends on the ability to project one's inherent worth and there is rarely the sense that this quality is dependent upon reward for service.[109] Thus Agamemnon "honoured Aias with the straight back-piece" (νώτοισιν δ' Αἴαντα διηνεκέεσσι γέραιρεν, *Il.* 7.321), not as a *misthos*, but as a spontaneous gesture at banquet to recognize the special excellence of a great warrior. Even on far away Scherīē, Alkinoos, like Agamemnon, can claim a *geras* simply by virtue of "ruling all the Phaiakians" (οὐνεκα πάσι Φαικεσσιν ἄνασσε, *Od.* 7.10-11).

This is to some degree similar in the context of a *basileus'* homeland. It ought to be noted, however, that there are variations in the meaning of *geras* between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In the *Iliad*, the *geras* occupies an unstable position in the economy of the warrior band that is resolved by developing a different context for the evaluation of peers within the institutions of funerary *agon*. In the *Odyssey*, *geras* refers less to the shifting sands of a man's regard among his warrior peers than to a more fixed sense of an enduring status within the full spectrum of statuses of the home community. In Hades, Odysseus inquires after his father and son, asking of his mother:

> ἢ ἔτι πὰρ κείνοισιν ἐμὸν γέρας, ἦέ τις ἤδη
> ἀνδρῶν ἄλλος ἔχει, ἐμὲ δ' οὐκέτι φασὶ νέεσθαι
>
> *Od.* 11.175-6
>
> Is my *geras* still with them or does some
> other man hold it asserting that I no longer come?

His mother replies,

> σὸν δ' οὔ πώ τις ἔχει γέρας, ἀλλά ἕκηλος
> Τηλέμαχος τεμένεα νέμεται καὶ δαῖτας ἐΐσας
> δαίνυται, ἃς ἐπέοικε δικασπόλον ἄνδρ' ἀλεγύνειν·
>
> *Od.* 11.184-6
>
> Nobody at all holds the fine *geras* that is yours; on the contrary,
> Telemakhos tends the *temenea* and apportions the equal feast unhindered
> those things about which it is fitting for a man who dispenses justice to be concerned.

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misthos and *geras*. For the subordinate and inferior status implied by *misthos* as a consequence of its explicit dependence on service, see especially *Il.* 21.445, 450, 451, 457, where Apollo recalls the occasion he and Poseidon were sent "to work as labourers for a year *on contract*" (θητεύσαμεν εἰς ἐνιαυτὸν **μισθῷ ἔπι ῥητῷ**, *Il.* 21.444-5). The verses which follow go on to illustrate the particularly vulnerable position of the hired hand; see also *Il.* 12.435 (a widowed weaver earns an "insufficient wage", ἀεικέα μισθόν); *Od.* 4.525 (a watchman); *Od.* 10.84 (double pay for a shepherd); *Od.* 18.358 (a farm labourer's pay); Hes. *Op.* 370 (proper treatment of hired labourers consists of a *misthos* that is agreed upon and sufficient. On the transmission of this verse, see the commentary in West 1978, *ad loc.*).

109 *Pace* Donlan 1982a, 167 and the rather glossed taxonomy of Van Wees 1992, 307. Their problems arise from an inattention to the language that surrounds allocation, distribution and apportioning in epic. A philological approach arrives at a conclusion that is more faithful to the patterns of usage: "es sich beim *geras* als Beuteanteil um den Volk erlaubten Zugriff eines militärischen Führers zum Zweck der Entnahme eines Extraanteils handelt, wobei *die Höhe des Anteils eher am Status als am Verdienst des jeweils Entnahmeberechtigen gemessen wurde*", Nowag 1983, 40, emphasis added.

In this instance γέρας denotes a much more formalized position in the community (κατὰ δῆμον), conceived of as access to privileges stemming from the right to make binding decisions bestowed by the authority of the community.[110] Donlan, following Van Effenterre, has suggested that "the chiefly *temenos* is to the *kleros* as the *geras* . . . is to the equal *dasmos*."[111]

There is support for this analogy not only because there is a clear intersection of vocabulary for land tenure and booty distribution but also because it keeps the *temenos* and the *geras* as types of honour distinct.[112] Although there are good grounds for thinking that in the Mycenaean period *geras* refers to the perquisites of office received as a type of land tenure,[113] in the Homeric poems the allocation of a *temenos*, as Donlan has shown, was a more complicated form of land exchange between *demos* and *basileus*. Thus it is fair to say that, in a domestic context a man's social position comprises tokens of the community's endorsement (*proedria*, cups of wine, extra portions of meat, and so on) as well as specially allocated pieces of land.

Again, all sense of obligation to reciprocate is suppressed, even in that *locus classicus* of elite ideology:

> Glaukos, why are we especially honoured
> with seats and pieces of meat and wine-filled cups
> in Lykia . . . administering a great *temenos* by the banks of the Xanthos? . . .
> Now then among the front row of the Lykians
> we must stand and join the blaze of battle,
> that one of the Lykians might say
> 'not without glory (ἀκλεέες) are our *basileis* who rule Lykia,
> dining on choice fat sheep and drinking sweet wine;
> but there is noble strength in them as well (ἀλλ' ἄρα καὶ ἷς ἐσθλή)
> since they fight in the front-row of the Lykians.
>
> *Il.* 12.310-21

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110 That authority must in some way be linked to the assembly represented at *Od.* 2.6- 259 (on which, see the brief remarks of Hainsworth 1988, 128-9). Compare also *Il.* 12.310-21 and Hdt 3.85.1, 7.3.2. Succession to Odysseus' position in the community (marrying his wife, occupying his house, obtaining the right to dispose of his *ktemata*) is synonymous with "possessing Odysseus' *geras*." So Telemakhos says of Eurymakhos that he is quite eager "to marry my mother and hold Odysseus' *geras*" (μητέρ' ἐμὴν γαμέειν καὶ Ὀδυσσῆος γέρας ἕξειν, *Od.* 15.522). Automatic succession of a son to his father's position in the community is not assured and Telemakhos attempts to obtain the community's assistance to exercise his father's rights. On the doubt that surrounds his succession, see *Od.* 1.389-98, especially his assertion at *Od.* 1.390: ἐθέλοιμι . . . ἀρέσθαι). On Phaiakia, Odysseus prays as a suppliant that it be granted to each member of the feast "to entrust to his children the *ktemata* in his halls and the *geras* which the *demos* has given" (παισὶν ἐπιτρέψειεν ἕκαστος κτήματ' ἐνὶ μεγάροισι γέρας θ' ὅ τι δῆμος ἔδωκεν, *Od.* 7.149-50), underlining the precariousness of social rank amongst peers.

111 Donlan 1989, Van Effenterre 1967.

112 This distinction is preserved in *Od.* 11.184-5 and in *Il.* 20.182-4; in this latter case, the sneering Achilles tells Aineas that Priamos will not give him a *geras* since he has legitimate children. Achilles then asks, "or have the Trojans cut out a *temenos* for you?" (τί τοι Τρῶες τέμενος τάμον . . .; *Il.* 20.184). Sarpedon too seems to refer to two different types of honour (τετιμήμεσθα ἕδρῃ τε κρέασίν τε . . . καὶ τέμενος νεμόμεσθα μέγα . . . *Il.* 12.310, 313). For a more detailed discussion of the land tenure implications and the function of the *temenos* in the local economy of prestige, see Donlan 1989. On the intersection of the vocabulary of land distribution and the allocation of spoils in archaic Greek thought, see pp.64-6 and 81 above.

113 See p.64.

Sarpedon acknowledges that his social position is linked to his warrior function, but a middle term – ἷς ἐσθλή – obscures any explicit statement that his honours are dependent upon his *service* as a warrior. Aristocratic ideology inverts the relationship between action and recognition. The imagined praise of an anonymous Lykian makes this clear: glory arises primarily as a virtue of the innate vigour that allows them to be *promakhoi*. It is not that the two parties, *basileus* and *demos*, are not bound together in a complex exchange relationship; it is rather that the spirit of their relationship can only arise once their mutual dependency is misrecognized. The Lykians must see their lords as men who deserve honour because they are noble men; they thereby preserve a tautologous relationship in which services and obligations, nonetheless compelling, are never acknowledged as the true motivations of exchange. Only then can privileges carry the symbolic mystique of a natural response and appear as unsolicited tokens of social worth. Thus, the picture here is by no means as fixed as Sarpedon makes it seem.

Donlan's analogy, therefore, overlooks the way each poem emphasizes uncertainty in the definition of eliteness by situating the ambiguous 'privileged share' at the centre of important narrative crises. The relationship between the *demos* and *basileis* (whose formal community status is never clearly explicated in the *Odyssey*) is very different from the social problematic posed by the *Iliad*. The *temenos* devolves onto the *basileus* under an ethical regime that is very different from the way honorific portions devolve onto warrior peers under the *dasmos* as imagined in the *Iliad*. In the same way, the *geras* of Odysseus *at Ithaka*, which is 'held' in a manner suggestive of formalized perquisites due to one who exercises a social function, is quite a different thing to the object that Odysseus might be allowed to choose as a mark of the special regard in which he is held among his social equals.[114]

In the *Iliad* the *geras* is specifically a non-reciprocal, especially public, expression of the social value of a hero, not as a function of particular acts, services or social function, but as a periodic restatement of his membership of a peer group at those key moments when the *Männerbund* expresses itself in publicly witnessed acts of distribution. There is, as Detienne has suggested, a homology in the semantic fields that cover the public assignation of the *geras*, the distribution of spoil generally (*dasmos*) and feasts (*dais*) by which Homeric warrior elites articulate their relations with one another. Furthermore, these exchanges stand in a field quite opposite to gift-exchanges and the personal relationships binding individual elites. Whereas individual transactions between *basileis* may, through the generous act, serve to create obligation and an extended network of

[114] One need only contrast the themes of strife involving Odysseus and note how both the *krisis hoplon* (situated either at the end of the *Aithiopis* or at the beginning of the *Little Iliad*, see *Od.* 11.543-64 and Proclus' summaries, p.47 and 52-3 Davies, with Gantz 1993, 629-35) and the *Odyssey* deal with quite different aspects of what might be called the theme "the *geras* of Odysseus".

gift-relations, the carefully observed movement of those goods epitomizing relations in the warrior band of the *Iliad*, of which the *geras* is the most valuable item, effaces the ties of personal dependence that may exist between individual heroes. These ties are replaced by a dependence on the community itself, manifested abstractly in *to koinon meson* that validates and in turn authenticates the social identity of the Homeric hero.[115] Without his *geras*, Benveniste states, the Homeric hero ceases to have any social identity at all. Indeed there is a contrast between the faceless *laos*, without name or genealogy, and the named *basileus* whose *ktemata*, booty objects and collected *gera*, proclaim, like inanimate poets, a man's prior (and potential) participation in a circuit of heroic practices.[116] Yet it is only in the public context of the peer group that such meanings can be generated. Only in a community of elites that shuns a specifically symbolic hierarchy can the question of *homoia* and the expression of a parity of honours truly arise. This parity cannot, however, be measured in terms of a capacity to match another in personal exchange; on the contrary, the true peer (*homoios*) is evaluated independently of his fellows. It is in this way that, for most of the *Iliad*, the *geras* constitutes the efficacious token of a man's social capital precisely because it derives the validity of its value from its public sphere of exchange (*to meson*) and to the non-reciprocal movement of its attributed goods (δατέομαι, λαγχάνω).

The break with the symbolic object

Thus the *geras, as it is represented in the Iliad* marks a break with the symbolic object and its 'non-expression' of value. In what might be called a 'theoretical' strategy, the gestures and practices generating the *geras*, the *dasmos*, begin to set a limit to the value of objects involved in symbolic exchange. Because the *dasmos* is a founding act of public space it can properly be called a political ritual. In acts with a political foundation like this, however, the immanence of ritualized meaning can no longer be tolerated. The value of things and the authentic source of that value must be made apparent, witnessed and legitimated by the community whose presence constitutes that space. For Achilles, whose acknowledgement as 'best of the Akhaians' is dependent on an effective political distribution, nothing is more violent than Agamemnon's placement of the *geras* under the sign of the gift and swapping the impersonal sovereignty of the non-reciprocal *dasmos* for the caprice of the tyrant's largesse. A key consequence of this movement away from symbolic exchange is the

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[115] Concerning booty distribution and athletic competition, Gernet makes the critical observation: "le resultat des epreuves a necessairement un charactere de publicite; une notion de verité (*aletheie*, 23.361), s'y trouve attachée . . . La presentation des prix comme leur enlevement comporte la meme publicite: les prix sont l'objet d'une veritable "montre" (23.701); et nous les voyons "emmener" ou "emporter" aux yeux de tous, comme pour consacrer leur acquisition" 1955, 16.

[116] A key trigger for "traditional referentiality" as John Miles Foley has articulated it (Foley 1991). See *Thebais* fr.2 Bernabé for an excellent example.

appearance of value as a 'problem' whose solution is understood to be 'theoretical': it is resolved by looking, witnessing and being reported on by an adjudicating authority. As we shall see in chapter 6 below, this problematization involves the same alienation from the intimacy of the ritualized past that was a pre-condition for Hekataios to ask, "what *really* happened?" A generalized relationship between the warrior and the group is made possible by the way these objects are evaluated by being taken out of circulation first and then given an explicit value that corresponds to something other than itself. The precious object, like the 'past' for Hekataios of Miletos, will be regarded as autonomous, that is, 'without meaning' until it is first examined and then assigned a newly declared value by delegated adjudicators, one that effaces all other values.

In the *Iliad,* this transition from symbolic to political value is nowhere better illustrated than the way Briseis from the beginning of the story occupies a complex range of statuses across uncertain exchange regimes in which a precise value can never be fixed. Her name, her history and genealogy, not to speak of the personal relationships she gains and loses (with her father, Achilles, Patroklos, Agamemnon, etc.), are all markers of social complexity, equivocality of value and the relations created by the aristocratic exchange of women, to which her unique identity and personhood attach enormous symbolic value. To the question "what is Briseis *worth*?" no answer can be given that does not implicate all the actors and tragedy of the *Iliad* itself. By contrast, at end of the poem the woman set down 'in the middle' as prize for the chariot victor at Patroklos' funeral *agon* is assigned a fixed value with unparalleled clarity by the 'sons of the Akhaians' at 'ten oxen' (*Il.* 23.703). Moreover, she is anonymous and generic, without ambiguity or history, an unfree labour-unit with a precise, rational and public value. For this reason the *Iliad* distils a moment in contemporary archaic thinking that questions the differences between the immanent, circulatory and deferred value of symbolic exchanges and the political value that arises in the *agora* that will eventually be realized in the form of coined money, chattel slavery, public accountancy, and so on. In this poem, however, we stand in a liminal zone: the *geras* has the status of an interstitial object that owes its narrative importance to the way it fails to meet the symbolic demand made of it by Achilles, just as it fails to meet the political test put to it by Agamemnon.

As a ritual event, the poem activates these consequences in performance. Having built its narrative around the problem of value arising in public exchanges between members of the warrior group, the *Iliad* then traces a path toward a durable solution to this 'problem of value'. This solution, explored further below and again in chapter 4, leads the narrative toward the social solution of hero-cult and funerary contests adjudicated by the sovereign *polis* – a very different kind of *geras* – and seeds itself beyond the horizon of narrative events enacted within the epic performance into the events of the performance occasion.

Is the Iliad *a γέρας?*

The foregoing analysis of the field of distributive thought and practice within the *Iliad*, in which *geras* is a key term, can be nuanced by examining briefly how the relations established within the poem intersect the relations of the performance occasion. The impact of this intersection on the ontological status of epic performance is treated more fully in Part Two below; it is nevertheless helpful at this point to broach some of the implications and anticipate conclusions developed in later chapters.

A central narrative theme of the *Iliad* is the failure of a political ritual to establish durable political relations. This 'political ritual' is the *dasmos* at which the hero is entitled to choose a token of status by virtue of the nascent sovereignty of the warrior assembly. This token, the *geras*, is the foundation on which the poem builds the relations of performance that exist within the "world in the utterance." The *geras* is an economic object carefully observed in the poem as part of the principal exchanges of the *Männerbund*. It should, therefore, be worthwhile to consider the meta-poetic implications if, at the occasion of its performance, the *Iliad* as a whole was also considered one of the special transactions between group and cult-recipient, and specifically so, as a *geras*.[117]

Insofar as occasion, form and content mutually condition one another, the *Iliad* behaves like a *geras* by interposing with its narrative arc a series of figurative exchanges that will ethically pervade the event of its performance. The way this takes place will be subjected to much closer analysis in chapter 5. At the meta-poetic level, these exchanges impact on the institutions of the wider occasion, particularly its pre- and post-performance rituals and practices (such as funeral contests). The way the utterance narrates the passage from an unstable and ambiguous type of *value* to another more stable and less equivocal – *geras* to *aethlon* – is mirrored at the level of occasion by the poem's narrative consciousness of the comparable instability of the value of *kleos* – that is, by the narrative's problematization of its own symbolic function as a form of positive evaluation. It is as though the *Iliad*, by posing the collapse of the *dasmos-geras* mode of social evaluation, cannot escape the consequences on its own mode of evaluation (the claims of *kleos*), since it too participates in the *geras*-system, being at its core the special portion of memory offered by the group in compensation for the hero's suffering. If cult contexts for the hero were in essence funerary – that is, re-enactments of the hero's original funeral – and hence animated by a concern for the compensation owed to the dead, then the special difference of the *Iliad* in relation to earlier performances in the same tradition lies in the way it 'modernizes' the question of cult compensation into a contemporary historical and political question. These points will be explored in greater depth below in chapter 6.

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[117] What follows has its starting point in the work of Gregory Nagy, especially 1979 and 1990.

As has been observed before, imagining the *Iliad* as a *geras* is possible precisely because at the level of the cult offered to the hero, the poetic performance, along with other ritual acts, is elsewhere referred to as a *geras*, with the word *timē* used to express the cult as a whole. Herodotus provides the most important evidence (5.67.1-5). Poetic performances, including Homeric epic, formed part of a ritual complex for the hero Adrastos at Sikyon.[118] In this case the ritual structure of funereal recompense for a community-founding sacrificial loss of life centres on a narrative performance of the hero's sufferings; the language, however, also intersects the vocabulary of the warrior's due:

> **τὰ δὲ δὴ ἄλλα οἱ Σικύωνιοι ἐτίμων Ἄδρηστον καὶ δὴ πρὸς τὰ πάθεα αὐτοῦ** τραγικοῖσι χοροῖσι **ἐγέραιρον**, τὸν μὲν Διόνυσον οὐ τιμῶντες, τὸν δὲ Ἄδρηστον.
>
> Hdt. 5.67.5
>
> The Sikyonians accord *timē* to Adrastos in many other ways, but especially award him tragic choruses as a *geras* because of his sufferings, not paying this cult to Dionysos but to Adrastos.[119]

Further evidence can be adduced from Pindar, whose entire poetic production is predicated on the fact that his performances are a principal part of cult for the god and hero (and, proleptically, to the victor as hero).[120] In Pindar, however, the term *geras* has a much more ambiguous semantic range since the praise poet draws on a denser set of archaic meanings. For Pindar and his victor the *geras* is an ancestral and inherited right. It is therefore clearly part of the will-to-representation at work in epinikian ode to align victory, and the civic recognition that attends it, with the assertion of that right.[121] In Pindar *geras* returns to

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[118] On the basis of this passage in Herodotus, it appears Adrastos played an important role in the formation of Sikyonian civic identity prior to the tyranny of Kleisthenes, perhaps as founder of key political institutions based in the *agora* where he had his *heroön* (Hdt. 5.67.1). Kleisthenes, in an effort to reconfigure Sikyon's regional identity outside the orbit of Argive cultic and ethnic narratives, attempted to transform Sikyon's cult landscape, part of which included the expulsion of Adrastos and the abolition of rhapsodic contests in Homeric performance. See in general, de Libero 1995, 188-204, and, specifically, Cingano 1985.

[119] Without speculating on what Herodotus means by "tragic choruses" we can note that his audience expects these performances to be more suited to Dionysiac cult, hence the gloss. That the earlier Homeric performances at Sikyon were also part of Adrastos' cult there has been argued by Cingano 1985. At Pind. *Isth.* 5.33 *geras* is metonymic for hero-cult generally.

[120] On this aspect, see Currie 2007. The clearest example of the ode as the hero-athlete's *geras* is at *Isth.* 1.14-5, where Pindar declares his intention to include Herodotus of Thebes in a hymn to paradigmatic horsemen. In Pind. *Ol.* 3.1-10 the *geras* of song for Akragas is the repayment of a debt to the victor accruing from the talismanic benefit of his crown. At *Nem.* 5.8 victory is offered as a *geras* to the Aiakidai.

[121] One oblique example is at *Nem.* 11.5 where election to a magistracy is represented as co-optation into a select priestly college tasked with honouring (γεραίροντες) Hestia, who is responsible for the well-being of the city. This usage draws on a classical set of meanings for an archaic word that had long since disappeared from the active debates about the definition of belonging to the political community. Pindar draws on the intersection of these two meanings because

the earlier signification discussed above, the mark of a status derived from social function. Looking at the meaning of *geras* in Pindar can therefore offer contrasts to the special way Homeric performance could be understood to function as a *geras* for the hero of cult.

Nothing illustrates this better than the way Pindar deliberately treats synonymously what the *Iliad* keeps so carefully distinguished: *geras* in Pindar very often refers to the *victor's prize* as though it were the heroic due of an elite warrior rather than a token of the publicly-adjudicated political institution of contests.[122] For Pindar *geras* and *aethlon* are functionally synonymous. In the *Iliad*, however, these terms are structurally differentiated. Across the *Iliad's* narrative the ambiguous *geras* relinquishes its role to the more objectively determined *aethlon* of the funeral contest, just as the *dasmos* cedes its place to the politically regulated funerary *agon*.[123] In the Homeric poem the contest prize draws its value from a radically different set of assumptions.

This difference is also reflected at the meta-poetic level in the types of *kleos* that each medium confers on the socio-political role played by formal *agon*. On the one hand, the *Iliad* responds to an audience as collective participants who authorize the occasion of its performance, just as Demodokos' performance was dictated by the politically representative nature of the occasion. Terpander's performances also wove the relations of early Spartan warrior banquets into the very form of their songs (the harmony song, and so on).[124] In the *Iliad* the funeral contests of Patroklos are quite precisely memorialized as more accountable and publicly regulated institutions for distributing honour, with a transparency that issues from explicit rules and adjudicatory procedure. The *Iliad's* narrative arc thus looks beyond the *dasmos-geras* system to an *agon* where there is much greater scope for community oversight and participation in its results. On the other hand, the will-to-representation motivating Pindar's medium aims ideologically to sustain the claims upon which an elite group establishes ongoing access to exclusive rights and privileges within a *polis*. Pindar's fame rests on his ability to reconfigure victory within this ideological matrix. Much of the ideological mission of epinikian ode lies in representing victories in athletic and equestrian *agones* as the outcomes of oracular ordeals that affirm the victor's title to aristocratic privilege and heroic honours. For this reason, as Leslie Kurke has shown, the *kudos* of the Panhellenic victor always sat awkwardly or at odds within the ethical frameworks of his city and its institutions.[125] *Agon* in epinikian ode conferred a symbolic legitimacy that jarred with a civic ideology preferring to attribute the victor's

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the epinikian genre is implicated in the redrawing of the boundaries of evaluation that took place in late archaic cities across the Greek world. See Kurke 1993.

122 Most clearly illustrated at Pind. *Ol.* 2.45ff., at 49, *Ol.* 8.11-25.; *Pyth.* 5.31, 5.124, *Pyth.* 8.78 (ἔχεις γέρας, a formulaic expression of having been recognized in one's social function); Bacch. 7.8, 11.36. On *Nem.* 8.25 see below.

123 As chapter 4 will argue; see also Brown 2003.

124 See Gostoli 1988.

125 Kurke 1991 and 1993.

special status to the adjudication of its *political* processes. Each performance 'genre' therefore lays stress upon a very different aspect of the legitimating function of the contests.

The process by which funerary contests were appropriated by the *polis*, and would henceforth take place exclusively within the framework of civic cults, was part of much wider processes by which the city acquired the capital of public rituals, processes that had both an evaluative and distributive goal.[126] In this light, the *polis* can be regarded *in nuce* as the culmination of a process by which communities structured themselves around practices of distribution. Here the archaic *damos* understands itself as the group constituted and defined by the *dasmos*. The truly 'political' break occurred, as Vernant rightly argued, with the *damos*' final assumption of sovereignty over any *dasmos*, whether that was a public distribution of sacrificial meat, or of spoil, land, *kratos*, and so on. With this sovereignty came the corresponding exclusive entitlement to determine the value of all objects in a *dasmos*, and the status the recipients of such objects enjoyed as a result. Vernant also argues that the origins of 'the political' lay in the crisis brought about by the vacuum of symbolic power left behind after the collapse of an earlier distributive regime presided over by a sovereign (*wanax*) whose authority was quite distinct from that of the *damos*. It is argued here that the *Iliad* not only narrates an important aspect of this process but also how, in its performance, the singer and his audience are aware of the way this process problematizes epic's own function as a ritual medium.[127]

In the archaic period this process of restructuring and appropriation placed *agones* on a fault-line between *symbolic value* – where the victor is legitimated by oracular *katabasis* and ordeal – and *political value*, where the victor will instead owe his status to the competent and transparent functioning of civic institutions. Pindar is at pains to prioritize the former over the latter as the source of the victor's special status and only obliquely concedes, if ever, that victory derives from the adjudicatory competence of citizen determinations.[128]

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126 For a study that touches on aspects of this subject, see Mann 2001, 22-39.

127 Vernant 1982, with Detienne 1996.

128 In the *Odyssey* we find public representatives adjudicating a dance competition (*Od.* 8.258) and in *Iliad* 23 alone we have abundant information about how victory is determined via human practices and judgment; in Pindar's poetry, however, even the democratically appointed judges of the Olympic contest (the *Hellanodikai* after 472, Harpokration s.v. Ἑλλανοδίκαι), who represent the city of Elis by means of tribal representation, are only mentioned once. Moreover, in this lone reference (*Ol.* 3.11) they are enigmatically disconnected altogether from public processes – the *Hellanodikas* is not mentioned by title, nor understood to be a judge, nor does he belong to a college, nor is he even referred to by *polis* as Elean, but is only an ethnic identity: the 'Aitolian man'. His duty is merely to put into effect the writs of Herakles, rubber-stamping what Zeus has already made so by physically crowning the victor. We owe our specific knowledge of this college of adjudicators in the Olympic contest and their democratic function in the Elean polity to the scholiast on this passage (*schol. Pind. Ol.* 3. 21b, 22a Drachmann) and Elean public inscriptions (e.g. *Inschriften von Olympia* 2). There is, however, a wistful reference to an earlier *more symbolic* time, for which Pindar's description is nostalgic: the *Hellanodikas was* indeed once a single magistrate held as the privilege of an

One can also contrast the *Iliad's* focus on technical and practical detail in its description of athletic and equestrian competition – including disputes over the conduct of races, descriptions of tactics, and posing the problem of the relation between technical mastery, *aretē* and victory – with an aversion to such detail in epinikian ode.[129] The consequence is the ironical disappearance (or suppression) in Pindaric poetry of a political field that inversely plays such a prominent role in the Homeric *Iliad*. The modernity of Homer arises from the immediacy of the socio-historical pressures to which it both gives shape and responds. In the medium of later Pindaric poetry, however, Homeric epic plays an ambiguous and sometimes negative foil to epinikian ode, especially in the way *Iliad* 23 focuses such sharp attention on political improvements to the distributive practices of the *dasmos* made at the funerary *agon* (shown to be easily subverted in *Iliad* 1 and then critiqued in *Iliad* 9).

In the *agon* for Patroklos there is a double movement. On the one hand, the hero, Achilles, is the present recipient of a *symbolic* transformation, becoming the paradigmatic hero of cult. The process of symbolic transformation takes place via the reflex of an Indo-European ritual of royal investiture in which the figure of the double (Patroklos) is immolated. On the other hand, the reenactment of funeral rites and *agones* for the hero is aetiologized within the wider occasion as the resolution of a genuinely *political* crisis of distribution. The hero of cult receives the symbolic value, while the political right to determine the status of peers publicly in the context of his cult is reserved for participants. The victor in the funeral contest is therefore able to claim a peer recognition that is durable and witnessed, and yet is not charismatic or threatening to the public will of the group. His status is owed not to his genealogical (or other) relationship with the recipient of cult, but to his submission to the adjudication of civic magistrates. Pindar's problem with Homeric epic is that it presented an aetiology valorizing uniquely political types of practice for the determination of social value, practices that ignore the ideological and symbolic claims of elite families. The contests for Patroklos in *Iliad* 23 produce a victor according to rules regulated by delegated and semi-formal community representatives. Although the 'best man' does not always win (the case of Eumelos is paradigmatic: "in last place has the best man ridden his single foot horses . . ." λοῖσθος ἀνὴρ ὥριστος ἐλαύνει μώνυχας ἵππους, *Il.* 23.536), the *Iliad* upholds the public sovereignty signified in the prize by posing mini-crises that are shown to be resolvable within the framework of the contest. In the *Iliad* then the entire question of how one would come by the title 'best of the Akhaians' is closely scrutinized. Its outcome firmly endorses a public

aristocratic clan, perhaps a century or so beforehand, who perhaps once presided over the contest as an oracular priest (Paus. 5.9.5 along with the evidence discussed by Oehler 1912).

[129] It is no coincidence that the value of Pindaric poetry for the ideology of victory is inversely proportional to its value as evidence for the *realia* of contests and the practical details of ancient sport.

framework of rules, practices and agreements among peers to award group recognition. Deciding who is best in the group must be the assembly's decision, mediated by proper procedure.

In epinikian ode it is a scandal when the best man does not win. Pindaric poetry fixes its attention on epic events such as the suicide of Aias, whose obviously superior and innate *aretē* is not correspondingly endorsed by a political assembly. *Nemean* 8, for example, performed before an Aiginetan audience, attributes the shame of an Aiakid to the faulty result of a democratic contest. *Nemean* 8 is especially critical of the outcome of the *hoplon krisis* in terms that deliberately invert Iliadic sentiment:

> ἦ τιν' **ἄγλωσσον** μέν, ἦτορ δ' ἄλκιμον, **λάθα** κατέχει
> **ἐν λυγρῷ νείκει· μέγιστον δ' αἰόλῳ ψεύδει γέρας ἀντέταται.**
> **κρυφίαισι γὰρ ἐν ψάφοις** Ὀδυσσῆ Δαναοὶ θεράπευσαν·
> χρυσέων δ' Αἴας στερηθεὶς ὅπλων φόνῳ πάλαισεν.
> **ἦ μὰν ἀνόμοιά γε** δάοισιν ἐν θερμῷ χροΐ
> ἕλκεα ῥῆξαν πελεμιζόμενοι
> ὑπ' ἀλεξιμβρότῳ λόγχᾳ, τὰ μὲν ἀμφ' Ἀχιλεῖ νεοκτόνῳ,
> ἄλλων τε μόχθων ἐν πολυφθόροις
> ἁμέραις. ἐχθρὰ δ' ἄρα πάρφασις ἦν καὶ πάλαι,
> αἱμύλων μύθων ὁμόφοιτος, δολοφραδής, κακοποιὸν ὄνειδος·
> ἃ τὸ μὲν λαμπρὸν βιᾶται, **τῶν δ' ἀφάντων κῦδος ἀντείνει σαθρόν.**
>
> *Nem.* 8.24-34

> Truly when he *lacks speaking skill* a valiant man succumbs to *oblivion*
> in the hateful quarrel, and the greatest *geras* is offered to shifty lies.
> For *in secret ballots* the Danaans supported Odysseus
> while Aias was stripped of the golden armour and wrestled with a dire death.
> *Of a wholly different order* (ἀνόμοιά γε) were the wounds they each tore in soft flesh
> when pressed in the test of battle with succouring spears,
> both when Achilles was newly-slain and in the death-filled days of their other labours.
> But hateful deception was there long ago too,
> the partner of fawning tales, tricky and shameful in its contrivance of evil.
> It does violence to what is bright and holds out to nobodies a *kudos* that is rotten.

Pindar has contempt for measures used by *sophoi* in the political assembly, such as slick rhetoric and secret voting. Clever speech and secret votes are acts of deception that violate innate virtue.[130] Pindar represents politics as flawed because it subverts the efficacy of symbolic proofs of virtue properly obtained through ordeal. Although, one might object, it is possible to read the *Iliad* in a similar way – for example, the lesser man (Agamemnon) prevails over the man with greater *aretē* (Achilles) – there is a fundamental difference. In the *Iliad* Achilles resists politically via the expression of an autonomous subjectivity, thereby coming to terms with a social exclusion forced upon him by an assertion of Agamemnon's greater *kratos*. The violence is committed not by the assembly *per se*, but by a peer of the *Männerbund* who brings to bear his larger number of personal retainers

[130] Simonides' similar expression (598 *PMG* = schol. Eur. *Orestes* 235, Pl. *Rep.* 365c) may also have come from an epinikian ode: τὸ δοκεῖν καὶ τὰν ἀλάθειαν βιᾶται "Opinion does violence even to the truth".

in order to claim a disproportionate share, as well as to force another to surrender theirs – becoming a figure later described by the word *turannos*. By substituting the *dasmos* of spoil with the adjudicated funeral contest, the *Iliad* poses a solution to such potential misappropriation, strengthening the sovereignty of the *laos* over the circulation of honours via the political appropriation of the funeral *agon*. In *Nemean* 8, however, Aias is not the victim of a peer's greater *kratos* as Achilles is. On the contrary, the ode represents Aias as victim of the *excessive* sovereignty of the Danaans. The clever speaker has claimed a privilege by deception and corrupted the *kudos* flowing from contests presided over by the *laos*. Achilles, then, is the victim of tyranny, Aias of democracy.[131] While Pindar laments the corruption of symbolic value by political decision-making, the *Iliad* poses a solution to the threat of symbolic power in the strengthening of institutions of collective political will. From this perspective the difference between the *kleos* of epic and the *kleos* of epinikian ode – that is, the difference between their respective socio-historical will-to-representation – is not necessarily a product of the occasions of their performances; it is rather a fundamental difference in the way the institutions founded by the hero and practiced within his cult are aetiologized within the form and content of poetic performance itself. Each performance encourages different focus on a relation between the immediate audience (the participants in the wider cult occasion) and the proper function of the practices aetiologized in its narrative. Thus, if funerary contests are indeed promoted in the *Iliad* as a more durable base from which to adjudicate value publicly, then there ought to be corresponding evidence of this valorization in the *agones* of cult occasions.[132]

In Pindar, on the other hand, the word *geras* draws on an earlier signification: the mark of a status derived from the performance of a symbolic function. Pindar strategically plays up an ambiguity between *geras* and prize (*aethlon*) because, as Kurke and others have shown, the epinikian genre is a key catalyst of elite dissent against the redrawing of the boundaries of evaluation that took place in archaic cities across the Greek world. In the world of Pindar's performances *geras* signifies the symbolic legitimacy offered by the festival contests of the early fifth century BCE: it belongs to a vocabulary asserting an aristocratic principle of inherent worth. Pindar's poetic medium represents victory as a ritual of investiture or as the product of oracular confirmation. *Geras* in the odes recalls the cult due to the hero, the priestly perquisite or the *temenos* of the king – in other words, a privilege owed as a sign of a social function rather than a publicly distributed mark of a man positively evaluated by his peers. Consequently, Pindar's ideological brief becomes more strident in his attempt to recuperate the representational capital of victory for traditional elites whose discourse of exclusive rights was being steadily marginalized by civic discourses in the course of the 5th century.

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[131] This *hoplon krisis* may have been treated differently by Aeschylus: see frr.174-7 Radt and the comments by Rausch 1999, 165-6.

[132] As chapter 4 below will show.

Epinikian ode explicitly represents contest-prizes as forms of compensation due to performers of transcendent acts. Compensation is a concept central to the due owed by the poet to the victor, and is the notion lying at the heart of the *kharis* of hero-cult. It is a concept used by Bruno Currie to examine the way Pindar and his audiences represent victors as potential recipients of hero-cult.[133] In Pindar's victory odes the boundaries between the performance occasion (and wider extra-discursive context) and the world evoked by the narrative are very porous. Pindar is interested in praising victors whose inherited virtues oblige the narrative to represent their current actions as the fufilment of an inherited yet vividly present past. The cult context of the poetic performance is rich in doubled meanings in which, for example, cult dues owed to hero and god directly mirror victory and praise for the athlete. The audience is included because their presence as witnesses is required both at the performance and as actors arising within the performed song, such a friends, family, fellow-citzens and so on. This thematic self-reflexivity signals the structural parallelism between Homeric poetry and epinikian performance as forms of compensation for the hero. In *Nemean* 7, Pindar asserts that the best recompense for pain is to become the subject of *epos*. While this ode explores the intersection of theme and function in the performance of both epic and epinikian odes, it is nevertheless a premise of *Nemean* 7 that Homeric poetry itself is an integral part of the hero's rightful due. Thus for Pindar the idea of the *geras*, like that offered to Adrastos at Sikyon, includes the performance of poetry at the re-enacted funeral of the hero.[134]

The decisive difference, however, is disclosed by the political and secular focus of the *Iliad*. In Pindar's poetics the *geras* is a symbolic object whose value derives from exclusive access to the god's ordeal, and its award signifies the succession of the present athlete to a lineage traceable to heroic foundations both at the contest site and the victor's home city. The contest itself is accorded *kleos* in his poetry solely by virtue of its capacity to establish links between god, hero and victor that far exceed what could be bestowed by mere civic (i.e. human and political) adjudication of contests.[135] The *geras*-prize does not depend for its meaning on the judgment of peers or the effective functioning of *polis* institutions.[136]

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133 Currie 2005, 1-11, 31-84, especially 47-59.

134 Different poetic contexts call for different aspects of hero-cult to be singled out as "the *geras* of the hero". Funeral rites, of which hero-cult is an elaborated form (see the general arguments of Seaford 1994), are more generally referred to as "what is due to the dead" (γέρας θανόντων). In Pindar the founding heroes of various cities "receive their due" (*Isth.* 5.27f.), an expression which refers non-specifically to their cult. Space does not permit the larger digression required to explore the effect of these observations on an interpretation of the *Iliad's* themes, which will be reserved for a later study.

135 *Olympian* 1. 1-36 offers an excellent example.

136 Unless we include the story of Helios' accidental exclusion from the *dasmos* of the earth, Pind. *Ol.* 7.68. Here Helios forbids Zeus from recasting the lots in violation of the oath already sworn by the gods (cf. also the oath as the symbolic

The *Iliad*, by contrast, is concerned with peers whose competing claims to privilege are rendered meaningless by their sheer concentration on the Trojan beach, along with the practical realities of reaching agreement and resolving dispute. The crisis it poses propels us toward funeral *agon*, not as the practice of oracular immersion and investiture, but as a site for the recalibration of group recognition, materialized concretely in the form of a new economic term produced 'in the middle', namely, the prize with its strictly delimited and transparent value, linked indissolubly to rules and public adjudication by the group. The procedural transparency of contests, with communally-appointed magistrates and durable tokens of victory (later stamped with the authority of the city itself) further expose shortcomings in the institutionally shaky *dasmos* and its unstable evaluative regime, of which the *geras* is the chief marker. For the *Iliad*, the prize (*aethlon*) foreshadows the evaluation of men *by men*, rejecting the ideological claims that plagued the assignation of a *geras*. On the other hand, by effacing the gap between *geras* and *aethlon* opened up by politics, Pindar grounded the elite claims of his clientele by refiguring victory and prize as a *geras* granted by the god.

The relationship between performance and cult practice is thus provocatively re-imagined in the *Iliad* by its reworking of an epic form, which traditionally narrated the trials of the hero (*pathea*) as the origins of the *geras* of his cult, into a narrative that played out the supersession of a weak political ritual by one far more effective. Here the 'trials of the hero' are precisely the abject failure of Achilles' *geras* to materialize durably his claim to be 'best of the Akhaians', a narrative arc that must impact negatively on any attempt to recoup the symbolic capital of *epos* itself in the service of elite claims to status. Since Achilles' *geras* fails at being sure compensation, can Pindar's statement – that *epos* compensates for toils – remain valid? Achilles himself asks as much in his famous response to the embassy.

If we accept that the critique of the *dasmos-geras* system of honour, analysed more closely in the following chapter, is shadowed at the meta-poetic and meta-cultic level by a critique of heroic cult-honours, then in what possible context could we imagine this ironical anti-*geras* poem being performed, and for what kind of hero? Nagy's argument – that the *Iliad's* focus is 'Panhellenic' because the narrative eschews connections with any individual city's cult identity, with the hero himself becoming more and more a 'meta-cultic' figure – is worth reconsidering.[137] However, this 'stylization' of ritual in the poem may have less to do with epic's Panhellenic aspirations and more to do with traces of a historical process by which Homeric performance was disengaged from local cult contexts.[138] One reason for this follows an attempt to explain why the *Iliad's* content dovetailed with the reformed Panathenaia of the mid-late 6th century BCE. As the Great Panathenaia

limit to the reversal of the allotment in Hesiod) and instead chooses out for himself a new portion, not as yet allotted, as his *geras*, the island of Rhodes.

137 Nagy 1979, 115-21.

138 The poetics of this *historical* disengagement are fundamentally connected to the epic's representation of itself as autonomous artwork, as it is hoped a future dialogue with Becker 1995 will show.

developed, with the city and its tribal adjudicators ('setters-down of prizes', *athlothetai*) overseeing contests, so the shape of the *Iliad* coalesced in parallel as an aetiology of citizens' competence to assess and rank each other through publicly administered institutions. Moreover, the *Iliad* did so by charting a specifically *political* course, steering its audience from a crisis to a resolution both of which pointedly lack any cult reference or context. Whatever raw materials the Panathenaic *Iliad* drew upon were thus transformed in response to a desire to develop a meta-cultic narrative that could specifically acknowledge the anxieties and concerns of a *political community*. This required at the same time that the narrative and its heroes remain aloof from any pre-existing cult association, just as Kleisthenes' tribal reform would go on to redefine civic belonging by establishing political cult foundations deliberately unconnected to specific regional or familial interests.[139] It is not that the Iliadic hero has no cult dimension[140] – indeed Nagy has shown how essential this factor must be to any interpretation of the poem. It is rather that, in order for the epic to communicate its particularly political aetiology, the hero had to transcend the representational imperatives underpinning local cults. At a festival of "all the Athenians" the question of what guaranteed and protected their developing citizen identity and sovereignty could not be expressed by the travails of local heroes bound to the more parochial narrative claims of *genos* and phratry.[141] Perhaps only a narrative tradition, and a hero, altogether unconnected with Athens, would do.[142] Only then could the problem of a man's *geras* acquire the autonomy it needed to be treated 'theoretically' – that is, examined as a political problem by the assembly in the *agora*.

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139 As Arist. *Pol.* 1319b 23-7 specifically notices. On the Kleisthenic eponymous heroes, see Kearns 1985 and 1989, 80-92, who rightly insists (from *Ath. Pol.* 21.6) that the situation is probably much more complicated. Parker 1996, 116-21 in addressing this issue is especially judicious and stresses the blending of traditional practice with innovation.

140 For example, one would like to know more about the circumstances of the empty tomb, ceremonies, and laments performed for Achilles by the women of Elis, and the connection of these, if any, to the Olympic contest: Paus. 6.22.3. For further evidence of Achilles cult, see Hooker 1988.

141 This is a different approach to that taken by, for example, Cook 1995 or Aloni 2006, who are concerned to link epic heroes closely to Attic cult practice. In turn, however, after Kleisthenes a narrative tradition closely woven into (and from) Athenian religious life – Attic drama – would eclipse epic, whose performances, judging from Plato's depiction of the rhapsode in the *Ion*, nevertheless retained their aloofness from specific ritual practices in Athens throughout the classical period. See Connor 1989 and Sourvinou-Inwood 2003, 1-14 and *passim*.

142 The lines in the *Catalogue of Ships* that mention Athens (*Il.* 2.546-56) may reflect this with its distinctly 'un-Homeric' definition of the Athenians as a unified community centred on Olympian cult and as the *demos* of an autochthonous founder hero (see Kearns 1989, 133-4). Compare the insistence elsewhere on describing civic unity by specific attachment to a god: Simonides 589 *PMG*, Pind. *Nem.* 7.106. These lines have traditionally been regarded as 'Athenian' interpolations (see the evidence and remarks in the apparatus of West's Teubner edition, 1998, 70-1). On the other hand, the Athenian leader at Troy, Menestheus, plays a very minor role in the *Iliad* (in spite of Kirk's efforts to suggest otherwise, 1985, 206-7, and Athens' later attempts to elevate him in the Eurymedon herm, Simonides *ep.* XL Page), which *prima facie* lends weight to an argument that Athenians figured little or not at all in the Trojan cycle. On the other hand, the Aiakidai were central to the civic identity of Athens' regional rival Aegina. Further exploration of these problems will have to be reserved for elsewhere.

Endnote: on the etymology of γέρας

In etymological handbooks, the orthodox link is made with γέρων.[143] They follow Osthoff, who argued that an archaic collocation of cognates is found in the formula τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ γερόντων (*Il.* 4.323, 9.422).[144] Osthoff also suggested that the use of πρεσβήϊον at *Il.* 8.289 was a functional synonym indicating that the privileged portion was initially a token of age and seniority.[145] As a consequence for Osthoff the word originally had the sense *Altersprivileg*. Katluhn, in his dissertation on the word (1914), focused on the expression τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ θανόντων, which was interpreted as an extension of cult paid to gods and heroes. However, in *Origines de la formation des noms en indo-européen* Benveniste called attention to traces of noun formation left in the word's denominative cognates, γεραίρος and γεραίρω.[146] He remarked firstly that γέρας shares its formation with an archaic group of neuters in -ας, such as κρέας, κτέρας and τέρας, which display the vocalic grade *e* as opposed to γῆρας which contains the aoristic grade.[147] The example of τέρας, for instance, also shows direct parallels in declension. Furthermore, he noted that the denominative forms (γεραίρω and γεραίρος) supply evidence of a termination in -αρ, which is indicative of these old neuters. By analogy with formation of πέρας from πεῖραρ Benveniste posited *γέραρ. This derivation suggests, *contra* Osthoff, a different morphological and semantic trajectory from the complex of words that refer to 'age'. It is worth adding that the debate has not taken sufficient notice of the Linear B evidence, which *prima facie* strengthens Benveniste's case that a separate line of semantic develoment paralleled a separate morphological development distinct from γέρων. Even if a link with γέρων is likely (on the problem of πρεσβήϊον, *Il.* 8.289, as a possible synonym, see p.72 n.57) γέρας seems to have arrived at one its later attested meanings, 'mark of status attached to the exercise of a social function', well before the Late Helladic period. The presence of *ke-ra* in the Pylos tablets seems to attenuate even a Mycenaean semantic association with γέρων and leaves us with the conclusion that, in our current state of knowledge, the idea of *geras* followed a semantic trajectory that began detaching from a notion of *Altersprivileg* relatively early in the history of Greek.

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143 Frisk *GEW* 299: "urspr. Bedeutung 'Alter'"; Chantraine *DELG* 216: "la part d'honneur réservé au γέρων"; *LfgrE* (Schmidt) I 134. It is a view that derives from the ancient scholarship: for example, *Etym. Gud.* 123, 35; 123, 50; 125, 25; *Etym. Mag.* 226, 32; 227, 14; Hesychius s.v. γέρας, Pollux *Onomastikon* 2.12. See further discussion in Osthoff 1906.

144 Osthoff 1906 offers the most comprehensive survey of the etymology.

145 Osthoff 1906, 233-5. This view is complicated by Hes. *Op.* 126.

146 Benveniste 1935, 16 and 1973, 334-9. In the earlier work Benveniste still adhered to the orthodox derivation: 1935, 32-33.

147 See also Sihler 1995, §§293, 298 who makes a tentative link with a parallel group of old neuters in Vedic.

Ultimately arguments from etymology attempt to arrive at *Wortdeutung* in an unhistorical and formalist manner that is unable to account either for practical or historically contingent contexts of usage. In the final instance, any meaning in the *Iliad* must be sought, as we have attempted above, in the representational will of a performative moment that is both practical and historical.

CHAPTER 2

The economy of social worth in *Iliad* 1

It is argued in this chapter that the conferral of public honour in the *Iliad* through the transaction of the *geras* is shadowed by a narrative in which the system of transactions to which the *geras* belongs, the *dasmos*, is shown to be incapable of establishing a durable sense of social worth that meets the expectations of participants. This breakdown in the practices of public honour is due to a crisis of value arising from the ambivalence of the object's status. Honour (*timē*) is a function of the particular way objects circulate: social identity is informed by the manner and location of their exchange. In an anatomy of *dishonour,* by contrast, critical attention can be expected to focus on breaches of the spirit, the implicit and unstated ethical character, of these exchanges. It cannot be adequate to reduce questions of honour in the *Iliad* to a discussion of the content of *timē* in abstract terms without realizing, with Gernet and Bourdieu, that honour and economic value both reside in the physicality of transacted objects. To speak of economic *estimation* (quantitative value) and *esteem* (qualitative value) as differentiated notions in the world of the *Iliad* is to retroject a false economism into an age in which value was not abstracted from either acts or objects.[1]

Furthermore, by focusing our attention on the failure of an honorific economy, the narrative achieves what would be disastrous outside the performance. By posing this breakdown at all, the narrative pulls off a critical investigation into the nature of *timē* itself, a speech-act that would otherwise disenchant the misrecognition fundamental to the success of exchanges. How does this critical narrative proceed? Let us turn first to the nature of honour in the *Iliad*.

Practices and Ideologies of Evaluation

The equation of personal and social worth with economic and material estimation is made clearest in the semantic field denoted by the verb τίω, its cognates τιμή, τιμήεις, τιμάω and their negatives, ἀτιμάω, ἄτιμος, ἀτίμητος and ἀτίζω. Homeric lexica tend to force differentiation on this verb even though a survey of Homeric poetry reveals throughout that τίω is a verb of generalized estimation and evaluation.[2] It is thus preferable to render τίω with ambiguity

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1 Presented in an oft-cited sub-chapter on "symbolic capital", Bourdieu 1977, 171-83. For a recent reading of the Homeric poems that extracts a 'Homeric economy' as the static backdrop of the narrative, see Peacock 2013, 68-83. It is a good example of the problems that arise when texts are treated as 'documents', on which see Loraux 2011.

2 The thorny question of the relationship between honour and recompense will be avoided suffice to say that there is an etymological and semantic link between τίω and τίνω (evaluation and compensation). This relationship is the subject of a

("esteem, regard") before immediately resorting to "honour", which presupposes the abstraction of one's social worth from objects. Nevertheless, as argued in the previous chapter, evaluation sits on a fault line in the *Iliad* between a social worth entirely invested in the unique symbolic object, and one for which the object is only the sign of a value abstractly conceived as stemming from public processes of adjudication.

The radical sense of "rate, value, estimate" in relation to honour is clearest only at *Il.* 23.703, 705 where one of the prizes at the funeral games for Patroklos is "assessed" by public agreement at twelve oxen and another at four.[3] In some isolated cases a sense of measurement is explicit: at *Il.* 9.378, Achilles says of Agamemnon that "I value him at the rate of a louse". *Il.* 9.608 echoes this statement: "I know that I am held high in Zeus' calculation". The meaning here is "to ascribe a degree of value to." In later usage this sense is stronger still: Theognis observes that "everyone values a wealthy man, and disregards the poor one" (πᾶς τις πλούσιον ἄνδρα τίει, ἀτίει δὲ πενιχρόν, 621). In the Homeric poems, this verb follows the regular grammatical pattern for verbs of comparison with the degree of evaluation found either in apposition or else in an adverbial construction:

θεὸς δ' ὡς τίετο δήμῳ *Il.* 5.78, 10.33, 11.58, 13.218, 16.605, cf. 9.302-3, 9.603;
τίω μάλιστα "value most of all" *Il.* 2.21, 16.146, 17.576, 24.574-5; cf. 9.258;
τίω περί (+ gen.) "regard beyond" *Il.* 4.257, 5.325-6,
τίω ἔξοχον (+ gen.) "regard far beyond" *Il.* 9.631, *Od.* 19.247-8, 24.78; *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, 88;
προφρονέως μιν τῖεν ἄναξ Λυκίης, "the lord of Lykie held him in sincere regard", *Il.* 6.173;
καί μιν ἔτισ' ὡς οὔ τις . . . τίεται ἄλλη "and he valued her as no other woman is valued", *Od.* 7.67.

With a negative, the expression means "to rate at nothing; to hold or regard as worthless; to have no regard for" and can often be synonymous with ἀτιμάω/ἀτιμάζω. With οὐδέν the verb conveys

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specific study, D.F. Wilson 2002. See also Benveniste 1973, 343-5, and the judicious assessment of the etymological situation by Chantraine *DELG* 1123, s.v. τίω: "Aussi bien pour le sens que pour la forme, il ne semble pas plausible de rapprocher τίω (avec un iota long) et τίνω (avec une alternance *ei/i*)" and repeated s.v. τιύω. For a different view, see Frisk *GEW* s.v. τίω and e.g. Adkins 1960a. In general on this question and the concept of ποινή as the point of departure for a numerically evaluative sense for τίω, see Vatin 1978 and Scheid-Tissinier 1994, 188-217. Ulf 1990, 9 n.34 suggests that "[w]enn Time nicht 'Ehre', sondern 'Achtung' heißt, dann kann das Wort leicht auch zur Feststellung des adäquaten Gegenwerts von persönlichem oder materiallem Wert verwendet werden und so auch in die Nähe von ποινή rücken". If anything the point surely must be that it is anachronistic to differentiate between "estimer la valeur d'un objet" and "honorer" (with the exceptions of *Il.* 23.703 and 705 which in any case articulate a new standard of evaluation) which would be to presuppose that a break between social worth and economic value had already taken place.

3 On this passage, see Macrakis 1984.

the notion of devaluation, particularly as a result of adverse treatment or else the deprivation of tokens of social worth.[4] τίω is often used with ἶσον in order to indicate a relation of equivalent value.[5] So Agamemnon proclaims that along with his gifts to Achilles "I will rank him as equal to my son Orestes" (τείσω δέ μιν ἶσον Ὀρέστῃ, *Il.* 9.142 = 284). Finally, when used without an explicit comparison, τίω denotes general high estimation, for example: "the gods . . . value justice and the measured deeds of men", (θεοὶ . . . δίκην τίουσι καὶ αἴσιμα ἔργ' ἀνθρώπων, *Od.* 14.84).[6]

All these instances suggest that honour was a function of public assessment conducted in a manner that was no different from that used to evaluate a precious object. Indeed, in the *Iliad* precious objects are the essential media of human relations and, in this capacity, act as measures of human value. The decisive example lies in the complex meaning of another rarely used expression for value, *agalma*.[7] Although rarely used in the poems, one occurrence is highly suggestive. In the course of battle an arrow strikes Menelaos and blood spurts from the cut. Drawing particular attention to the precious quality of the life-blood pouring away, the text uses a revealing simile. The blood stains his leg just as

> when a woman dyes ivory with purple,
> a Meionian or Karian woman, to be the cheek-piece of horses;
> it lies in a treasury and many yearn,
> horsemen, to possess it. But it lies away as a lord's *agalma*,
> to be both a horse's ornament and his rider's mark of glory;
> (βασιλῆϊ δὲ κεῖται ἄγαλμα
> ἀμφότερον κόσμος θ' ἵππῳ ἐλατῆρί τε κῦδος);
> thus, Menelaos, were stained with blood
> your shapely thighs . . .
>
> *Il.* 4.140-7

In a world where value cannot be abstracted from objects it is possible for a man's blood to be an *agalma* without implying in any way a quantitative economic rationalization. The simile offers us an expression of Homeric 'value' *in nuce*. When the poet thinks of precious drops of blood he immediately thinks of a purple object of beauty which functions socially to confer visible value.[8] The contexts of exchange evoked by this object are those associated with the most socially valuable forms of exchange – the gift, athletic prize, and the *geras*. These are deliberately evoked by the poet to magnify the order of

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4 Especially at *Il.* 1.244 = 412 = 16.274, ὅ τ' ἄριστον Ἀχαιῶν οὐδέν ἔτεισεν, " . . . that you set the value of the best of the Akhaians at nought"; cf. *Il.* 1.354, 9.238, 13.461, *Od.* 13.128-9, esp. 22.370, 414 (= 23.65), 419 with 425; cf. also the *hapax*, ἀτίζω, used of the lion who "pays no regard to" the young men who hunt it, *Il.* 20.166; compare ἀτίω, "despise" at Theognis, 621.

5 *Il.* 5.467, 9.603, 13.176 = 15.551, 15.439; *Od.* 1.432, 14.484; cf. also *Il.* 5.535-6; *Od.* 14.203; *Homeric Hymn to Hera* 5.

6 cf. also *Il.* 1.508-10, 8.540 = 13.827, 9.110, 118, 258; *Od.* 15.543 = 17.56, 16.306, 20.132.

7 On which see the seminal essay by Gernet 1981a, originally published in 1948.

8 Gernet correctly shows that without this mentality the pivotal moment in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* is difficult to understand.

value. These verses employ a language of value that is peculiar to precious things. κεῖται evokes κειμήλιον, the heirloom circulated amongst peers; ἄγαλμα, κόσμος and κῦδος refer to the visible and radiant; κῦδος especially indicates the *array* of the glorious man, especially the victor, who can himself in turn be conceived as an *agalma*.[9] All allude to the ontological status of value, revealed as the intimacy between the symbolic capital of the object and its material presence. The simile links the warrior's blood and the precious object via their artifactual visibility, the fact of appearing as something worn, *kosmos*. That value takes place only as public spectacle is supported in the vocabulary.[10] The wound 'adorning' Menelaos' leg with blood transforms the hero as though *kudos* had been placed upon him by a god.[11] The value of an object is conferred within the ritual and social theatre of its public exchange.[12]

The key quality of *kudos* is visibility, the materialization of the value of victory, either in war or contests.[13] It can be understood as the halo of the man touched or marked out by the divine as distinct. To this extent it is a manifestation of validity, the raiment of the legitimate hero, like the crown of the victor. *Kudos*, in turn, must therefore derive its essence from the public spectacle of community recognition, especially that following an ordeal.[14] In the example above, the emphasis is more explicitly conceived as analogous to adornment even though it is already articulated throughout the *Iliad* as a type of precious artifact, a talisman, supplied by the gods and then *worn*. This elides *kudos* with the visible radiance of the *agalma* and points to the concrete physical nature of archaic value. The other, more common, sense of *agalma* as cult-statue shares this sense of materializing the invisible, other-worldly, nature of value.[15] As the product of artisanal

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9 Kurke 1993.

10 For the *agalma* as an object worn, see (apart from this example) *Od.* 18.300 and *Od.* 19.257. In the first instance, the poet dwells upon the visible power of a series of *agalmata* offered to Penelope by the suitors; a necklace appears "like the sun" (ἠέλιον ὥς, *Od.* 18.296), while a pair of earrings "shone forth with great beauty" (χάρις δ' ἀπελάμπετο πολλή, *Od.* 18.298).

11 For *kudos* as a quality of the victor and of victory itself, see *Il.* 23.400, 406, and more generally, Benveniste 1973, 346-56 and Kurke 1993.

12 Turner 1974, 23-66.

13 "rayonnement de la force", Chantraine *DELG* s.v. κῦδος. See also Trümpy 1950, 198 who rightly concludes that while *nike* denotes the moment of victory, *kudos* designates the state of the victor in the wake of victory.

14 Trümpy's survey of Homeric examples (1950, 196-200) shows that the practical field of *kudos* is war. Various etymologies suggest themselves (see the survey in Chantraine *DELG* 595-6), ranging from a sense of 'miracle, wonder', to 'swelling', or a link with Lat. *caueo,* presumably in its concrete meaning, cf. *Oxford Latin Dictionary* s.v. 8 and 9. From a Dumézilian perspective, it could be argued *kudos* is the radiance peculiar to warrior affirmation, while that of the sovereign is indicated by a quite different form, the halo of kingly fire that signifies legitimate investiture (the I-E root of which is semantically rich: cf. Av. *xᵛarəmah-*, Old Persian/Median -*farnah-* "royal glory", cognate with ἠέλιος and σέλας: Walde-Pokorny 1927, II, 446-7 and Malandra 1983, 88-9).

15 Vernant 1991, 153-6. The word ἄγαλμα occurs only once in the *Iliad* (4.144) though without the cult associations we find in the *Odyssey* (3.274, 438, 8.509,

skill, *kudos* manifests itself as a *kosmos*, invested with secret skill like the magical creations of Hephaistos. At the same time evoking the realm of the invisible gods, the *kosmos* creates a visible spectacle out of the aristocratic relations for which it is the medium.[16]

Moreover, the uniqueness of the artifact derives from the uniqueness of its exchange. Each exchange must therefore be catalogued and narrated; when an object appears in many different narratives the exchange-value of the object and its participants is augmented. The transfer of the precious object from one hand to another takes place in the public rituals that successively magnify its worth; in narrative the magical nature of this value is rendered as the consequence of its special immersion in places connected to the invisible, like the sea, caves or dreams. The precious object cannot be divorced from the exchange that both binds and constitutes its value. While Gernet rightly describes the nature of pre-monetary value in Greece as fundamentally dependent on one's relation to the object, he never explores the social implications of narrative emphasis on consumption at the expense of production. Gernet represents exchanges as creating fields of social gravitation that magically bind and compel participants in often sinister ways beyond the horizon of the transaction ("force contraignante du don").[17] But this is a consequence of the aristocratic reification of inherent worth that resists close inspection of its origins in terms of manufacture, artifice, quantities and learned skill. The non-expression of value as 'price' is certainly a pre-monetary social fact, but it is also an ideological one. The blood of warriors, whose births are narrated in catalogues (like the *Ehoiai*), also has its origins in noble exchanges. A man's life cannot be 'priceless' since the form taken by value against which his life is measured is itself a social artifact – a system of material objects which must nevertheless incarnate value immanently. Thus, if life is imagined to be 'beyond value' this by no means places it outside human exchanges. On the contrary, it is quite apposite to compare life to a great treasure. But the shadow of failed exchange seeds an ever present potential tension into this language and ideology of evaluation, a tension that lies at the core of the *Iliad*.

The sense of evaluation that τίω embodies is contingent upon the dominant socio-economic articulation of value. In the *Iliad*, this oscillates between (1) value expressed as the immanent meaning of an exchange relation, and (2) value projected as the quantitative

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12.347; note however instances which recall a different meaning: *Od.* 4.602), and in later usage. On *agalmata* in Greek thought generally, Steiner 2001, 79-134, and *passim*, is fundamental.

16 "We have to do with a sort of projection of the ideal notion in the other world on to the plane of human life: treasure is real enough socially - an institution indeed; but it is also real enough in myth. It is both a social reality and a mythic reality" Gernet 1981, 139. There is no question that objects exist in both planes simultaneously – the genealogy of an artifact invested with symbolic authority is a necessity if it is to continue to 'entitle' its owner, just as the spectacle of the transaction will confirm the relationship between the practice and the object itself.

17 Gernet 1968, 108 = 1981, 123.

abstraction of potential future exchanges in a reversible and replicable token like money.[18] The authenticity of the *agalma* is vouched for by the recited heritage of its past movements yet fixed in the unique singularity of the precious object. For τίω to have meaning, it must refer to an object that can signify in itself the whole system of social evaluation. The man of honour, the grammatical *object* of τίω, is measured by his proximity to these material centres of gravity – he must have a *thalamos*. If social inclusion is a function of one's participation in an economy of prestige, that is, in the social economy of circulated goods, then honour and dishonour will be permutations of this economy. This conclusion is supported by the semantic development of τιμή, τιμήεις and τιμάω from τίω.

This does not, however, mean that the social exchange at the centre of any public evaluation is necessarily specific to this verb. τίω can accommodate shifting contexts of evaluation. The later historical spectrum of meanings for cognates of τίω (such as τίμημα in Attic)[19] clearly indicates a general flexibility in the expression of social value. As a result, historical shifts in the articulation of value create ambiguity and a conflict between τιμή as an inherent sense of social position ('honour') and τιμή as the 'price' of a thing.[20] In short, the verb τίω refers generally to evaluative exchanges but is not limited to any specific objects.

By contrast, as chapter 1 showed, γέρας is an old term for a type of object that does emerge from specific evaluative contexts. Though it is also the root for words designating honour they all evoke a very particular context, the honorific token peculiar to a specific exchange, the *dasmos*. The denominatives of γέρας are therefore context specific. Its denominative verb γεραίρω cannot be separated from the object that the old noun narrowly defines in terms of the context and modality of an exchange. This, for example, is why

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18 Gernet 1981, 112. As will be explored below in chapter 6, this transitional phase is characterized, in Gernet's formulation, by "displacement" (*transfert*): "the same thematic field, sometimes the same states of feeling and the same attitudes, are evoked or intimated by an object which is deemed identical but which nevertheless is characterized by fundamentally new aspects. And it is of course here that we can see the transition to the full notion of value taking place" 1981, 138. This transitional ambiguity can be seen in the way early coins *refer* to the talisman depicted on them, and draw upon its magical efficacy by acting as supplements to the *agalma*. But coins themselves represent value very differently, and problematize that talisman by rendering explicit, and even *disinterring*, the value stored up in the primordial valuable object. This is illustrated, for example, by the coins of Metapontum which bear a representation of sheaves of gold dedicated at Delphi. In minting such coins the city attempts to capture the exchange-value of the *agalma* by serializing it. In the new abstract system of money Gernet argues that "the object created by labour that *represents* a thing endowed with magical properties, and which we have seen to have acted as a talisman, is here the same as the object in which economic value inheres" (author's italics) 1981, 139. This shift of the site of value from the talisman to the *representation of the talisman* is one of the most important developments in Greek economic practice.

19 See *LSJ* s.v. τιμή II, τίμημα 2-6, and also, e.g., *ML* 78, fr.c, l. 2.

20 As, for instance, in the Parthenon accounts (*IG* i³ 446.10, 15) or in Lysias' oration against unscrupulous corn traders (22.12, 15).

Achilles says οὐδὲν ἔτεισας, "you set my worth at nothing (by depriving me of my *geras*)" rather than *οὐ γέραιρες which would mean, incorrectly, "you did not honour me with *geras*" (which, of course, Achilles was). Achilles refers primarily to the violence done him after the *dasmos*. What is at stake is the visible value arising from the conferral of the γέρας, that is, the τιμή, "honour", with respect to *that* particular social object.[21] In this sense, Achilles is saying something quite precise: "you are not according to me the *timē* owed to me as a *geras*-holder".The dishonour, by extension, is also quite specific, the playing back in reverse of the *dasmos*. In order for the loss of *timē* to be realized the specific exchange must be violated.

The *Iliad* is therefore concerned with a precise field of economic exchange, one that is in transition and represented as under acute stress. Sometimes value has the enigmatic character of the magical talisman, but at other times it is located in the replicable standard formed by explicit consensus in contexts of public adjudication. The *geras* and the *aethlon* (the prize of the formal funeral contest, which conforms precisely to Gernet's definition of *transfert*) intersect both these fields of value because they arise in contexts where value is subject to adjudication. On the one hand, the unique object of authentic value – for instance, the *skeptron* of Agamemnon or the *agalma* – needs no referent or comparandum. The guarantee of their effectiveness is the trail left by their spectacular transmission and by their founding role in sealing legitimate status. As a consequence, there can be no mental separation of the magical efficacy of their value from the exchange-relation that they affect. The necklace of Eriphyle, to take Gernet's example, continues to exert the power generated by its initial role long after the moment of the actual transaction itself – "and so we can relate the possession of an *agalma* to the establishment or the repossession of some religious authority".[22] On the other hand, as soon as the precious object projects its value into the legitimation processes of non-hierarchical relationships then its value is automatically fixed at the point of its transmission and uniquely bound to this role. Thus the *geras* loses its value outside of the public context of its evaluation. A relation of value in this context must be subject to adjudication that involves a resolution of questions relating to degree and equivalence.

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21 *Pace* Ulf 1990, 4ff. Although Ulf makes a very valuable case for understanding *timē* as "Achtung" as opposed to "Ehre", his thesis overstates its case at the expense of the peculiar conditions of specific examples. He does not distinguish between social evaluation and the different exchange contexts that will provide the terms of such evaluations. Ulf is right to assert that *timē* is not the *Standesbegriff* of an aristocratic class but there is nonetheless a link between *timē* and social position provided by certain social objects that are unique to particular groups. When one's *timē* hinges on the public assignation of a share of spoil, which in turn is the mark of membership of the warrior group, then one's *timē* refers to one's membership of a group. So for the Athenians of the 5th and 4th centuries BCE *timē* would have a precise technical meaning: citizenship. Therefore, *timē* is "steuerbar und veränderbar", but within limits that are set by the movement and transmission of social objects and not just because of the instability of Homeric society in general.

22 Gernet 1981, 119.

The substance of 'honour' (τιμή)

With the *geras*, a notion of *due* predominates in the conferral of value. The basis of the conferral is the individual and his claims. These claims should be resolved dialectically, that is, via a process of inquiry interrogating conflicting but equally valid positions. For example, Achilles imagines that the communal recognition he ought to have received has been suppressed by Agamemnon's corrupt presidency of the *dasmos*. Had, however, the relationship between action and recognition been properly adjudicated then the relative worth of each member would be balanced by its appropriate *measure*:

> καὶ δή μοι γέρας αὐτὸς ἀφαιρήσεσθαι ἀπειλεῖς,
> ᾧ ἔπι πολλὰ μόγησα, **δόσαν δέ μοι υἷες Ἀχαιῶν**
> **οὐ μὲν σοί ποτε ἶσον ἔχω γέρας**, ὁππότ' Ἀχαιοὶ
> Τρώων ἐκπέρσωσ' εὖ ναιόμενον πτολίεθρον·
> ἀλλὰ **τὸ** μὲν **πλεῖον** πολυάϊκος πολέμοιο
> χεῖρες ἐμαὶ διέπουσ'· ἀτὰρ ἤν ποτε **δασμὸς** ἵκηται,
> **σοὶ τὸ γέρας πολὺ μεῖζον, ἐγὼ δ' ὀλίγον τε φίλον τε**
> ἐρχομ' ἔχων ἐπὶ νῆας, ἐπεί κε κάμω πολεμίζων.
>
> *Il.* 1.161-8

> And now you yourself are threatening to take away my *geras*
> that for which I fought so hard and was granted to me by the sons of the Akhaians.
> *I never hold a geras equal to you*, whenever the Akhaians
> sack some well-founded Trojan citadel,
> though most of the horrible slog of war
> is the business of my hands – and yet whenever a *dasmos* comes around
> *your geras is much greater*, while I, holding *something little but important to me*,
> go to my ships exhausted from war.[23]

The spectacle of the *dasmos* authorizes a degree of recognition but lacks the institutional framework either to underwrite the durability of the link between the individual and the object's value, or to guarantee that the object aligns with the expectations of participants. At the other end of the poem, at *Iliad* 23, the prize (*aethlon*) represents a form of adjudicated value established by just such an institutional framework. In the prize the force of adjudicatory determinations can be carried forward into the indefinite future securing for the individual a lasting identification between prize and status. Rules for the assignation of status are clearly demarcated, and potential subversion begins to meet the obstacle of more autonomized notions of proof.[24] The prize's value is also vouchsafed by being itself a function of the same adjudicatory processes that it represents (*locus classicus*: *Il.* 23.703, 705). The funerary contest's prize in *Iliad* 23 is so closely bound to the practices that it seals and the moment of its

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[23] Many phrases in this passage defy adequate translation. The passage is rich with the language of exchange where each word carries strong contextual connotations: ἀφαιρήσεσθαι conveys the expropriation associated with violent assault, while δόσαν δέ μοι υἷες Ἀχαιῶν suggests a quasi-formal conferral of status at the *dasmos* itself. The phrase ὀλίγον τε φίλον τε is especially significant in the way it thinks about distinguishing an object's material value from its symbolic value.

[24] Such as the presence of a formal witness, *Il.* 23.360, or adjudicator, *Il.* 23.486.

conferral that the prize realizes a form of value that is entirely circumscribed by the spectacle in which it takes centre stage. In this environment, and in direct contrast to the stereotypical *dasmos* portrayed by Achilles, the precious object becomes an indexical sign and its material presence secondary to an autonomous value conferred by the force of the institutions – contest and judgment – whose proper functioning it represents.[25]

Beyond the *Iliad* is the coin – a universal standard whose physical material presence is virtualized but whose stamp replicates an original source of authentic value, this time the civic body. By this stage the psychological foundations have been laid for differentiating personal and social value from economic worth. As the precursor to this stage the *Iliad* constitutes a key moment in early Greek thinking about value as a narrative inquiry undertaken through the voice of Achilles.

The noun that is most closely related to τίω, τιμή, denotes in a general sense the value accorded to either an individual or an object. It is for this reason that its cognates provide the main expressions for social inclusion and exclusion. In the *Iliad*, however, one cannot separate out social estimation from the exchange-value of objects. One cannot therefore speak of any subject's sense of 'personal self-worth' in the *Iliad*. One would have to imagine being able to exit the circulation of symbolic/material objects which produce τιμή.[26] So, to be 'highly

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25 On prizes and coins, see further chapter 4 below with Von Reden 1997.

26 This point is not as forcefully stated as it ought by, for example, Donlan 1981a, 1981b, 1997 or Adkins 1960a, 1960b and 1971. By conceiving "the material situation" only in arithmetical terms and then relegating it as secondary to a more or less abstract definition of *timē*, Adkins misses the point (in spite of his enigmatic "*Time*, though rooted in the material situation, is far more than this"). When he asserts, quite rightly, "[t]he Homeric hero not merely feels insecure, he is insecure", Adkins offers no historical reason why social value in the Homeric poems should lack such security. Indeed the 'instability' of Homeric society is often the assumption of many similar inquiries, usually by being tied to the perceived institutional vacuum located between Mycenaean Greece and the Archaic period. In spite of his insistence that *timē* be distanced from the context of material evaluation, Adkins cannot escape the presence of precious objects mediating every social evaluation which he examines. By accepting for his "accountancy of symbolic exchanges", the premise of economistic reductionism – "the product of a principle of differentiation alien to the universe to which it is applied – the distinction between economic and symbolical capital" – Adkins fails to entertain the possibility that "the only way in which such accountancy can apprehend the undifferentiatedness of economic and symbolic capital is in the form of their perfect interconvertibility" Bourdieu 1977, 178. Other studies also gloss these questions, e.g. Ulf 1990, 6. n.25, 9-10. n.34. Yamagata 1994, ch.8 is particularly unhelpful. Raaflaub 1997 and 1998 offer the sensible and empirical approach but unfortunately lack any anthropological nuance or indeed any sense of how historical shifts in the ontology of value are central to the *Iliad's* narrative. Since Adkins, Donlan has sought to extend greater sophistication to Finley's model, while the following have been very useful: Greindl 1940, Benveniste 1973, 339-345, Riedinger 1976, Qviller 1981, Vleminck 1982, Cantarella 1983, Ulf 1990, Gschnitzer 1991, Van Wees 1992, Seaford 1994, Scheid-Tissinier 1994, Von Reden 1995 and Chantraine's etymological remarks (*DELG*). Earlier studies, for example, Dodds 1951, 1-27, Snell 1953, ch.8, esp. 159ff., and Fränkel 1975 (first published 1951) 6-93 still have much to offer. Finley 1979 (first published 1954), ch.5, especially 118-21, is also worthwhile though it is plagued with an over-rational view of the Homeric economy. Needless to say, Gernet 1981a has informed these views considerably.

regarded' is to be a 'man of substance'. τιμή simultaneously expresses the esteem while referring to the content of that esteem. One's social position is linked often to one's ability to participate in a circuit of transactions and especially to one's receipt of tokens of social value.[27] The inability to disentangle one's sense of worth from the economy of precious goods is found in the adjective τιμήεις: of objects it signifies 'precious, valuable' (*Il.* 18.475, *Od.* 1.312, 4.614 = 15.114, 8.393, 11.327), a meaning present when the same word is used of individuals (*Il.* 9.605, *Od.* 13.129 and especially 18.161 where a sense of 'precious' and 'honour' are blurred together). The same observation can be made about the participle τετιμένος: *Il.* 20.426, 24.533; *Od.* 8.472, 13.28; *h. Apollo* 479. This is why it is possible to speak of an *economy of honour*. Τιμή is a function of (and simultaneously reproduces) a system of evaluation reflected in the basic meaning of τίω. Τιμή designates the substance of group membership without necessarily stipulating how the constituent members of the group are defined in relation to each other. By the Classical period, τιμή refers to one's standing in the community in an increasingly abstract way. In a much narrower legal sense, yet still recalling epic usage, it refers directly to that constellation of rights that mark out member of the *polis*: to be 'worthless' (ἄτιμος) in Athens strictly meant to have been stripped of one's citizen rights.

One's sense of equal standing in relation to a body of peers, *homoioi*, is thus a function of the distribution of objects in and through marked spaces, in particular, the equal division of the *dasmos* in which everyone "has their share of honour".[28] The link between *moira* and τιμή is especially relevant as an aspect of these particular social relations. The synonymy of *isomoros* (*Il.* 15.209) and *homotimos* (*Il.* 15.186), to which Pötscher draws attention,[29] denotes a general equivalence between 'a share' and 'esteem' because the structure of elite relations rests on the numerical (rather than proportional) distribution of goods held in common. A numerically equal portion signifies equivalent honour in as much as a peer is here being defined as one who is indistinguishable from another with respect to the way objects are disposed to him. What Pötscher overlooks is that the two terms above describe the relations created by the distribution of an inheritance between three brothers (Zeus, Poseidon, Hades). This pattern of language illustrates the homology between the relations of the family structured by the disposition of heirs to patrimonial shares and the warrior community structured by the distribution of goods held in common.[30] The same observations made above linking τιμή and *geras* must therefore also be applied to the equation τιμή = *moira*. If division, distribution and portions characterize the practices that

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27 *Il.* 3.286, 288, 459, 6.193, 9.605, 12.310, 15.189, 23.649; *Od.*1.117, 8.480, 11.495, 503, 13.129, 22.57; *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 132 where it comes very close to 'price'. The honours which the gods receive comprise the physical rituals and sacrifices that are offered to them. These are primarily conceived as gestures and objects that act in ways parallel to the human economy.

28 For the expression ἔμμορε τιμῆς, see generally *Il.* 1.278, 9.616, 15.189, *Od.* 11.338.

29 Pötscher 1960, 36.

30 Discussed further in chapter 3 below.

confer membership of the community, then τιμή will refer directly the tokens of these practices as direct referents. This realization makes more apparent what is only implied in Gernet's thesis, namely, the relationship between the logic of practices and the ontological condition of precious objects themselves.

A crisis of honour

A crisis in the *substance* of honour will destabilize those practices and objects that are used to confer value on a man. Even a quick survey of *Iliad* 1 reveals that dishonour follows upon the subversion of the ritual of exchange.[31] The capacity of the *geras* to be a source of objectified value is put in doubt because the ethics of its transaction are not only compromised by Agamemnon but *compromisable* in general. This is illustrated by three complementary aspects.

Firstly, objects held in common (ξυνήϊα κείμενα, *Il.* 1.124) are especially vulnerable to improper treatment which will subvert the special exchange that gives the *geras* its particular value. In particular, objects held in common are always at risk of being treated inappropriately as items of personal largesse, misappropriated as personal property or mistreated as potential plunder.[32] In Achilles' case Agamemnon may be the initial transgressor but his actions are soon revealed to be structurally always possible in any *dasmos*. Ironically, Agamemnon himself is as much a victim of the uncertain principles by which the economy of honour regulates itself as Achilles, a point that Agamemnon makes in *Iliad* 19.[33] The sign-value of the *geras* object is therefore called into question as soon as its non-reciprocality and the impersonal devolution of its exchange are interfered with. Agamemnon may be responsible but he suffers too because he subverts the very practices that ensure the transparent receipt of his own *geras*. Achilles' attitude to Agamemnon indeed shares the same indifference to process. To see the conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles purely as a battle of wills between two tribal chieftains fails to take notice of the fact that the poet implicates the entire community of elites and their economic relations in the strife which ensues. Resolution must then take place as a necessary reconfiguration of the entire system by which prestige is distributed and circulated. It is only after the complete collapse of the principle of community evaluation, the *dasmos* – epitomized in Achilles' critique of the economy of honour in *Iliad* 9 and his violent retreat from civilized

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[31] The motif of ritual and exchange perversion in early Greek literature has been extensively studied, especially in relation to the figure of the *tyrannos*. For an excellent overview, see Kurke 1999, 65-171. For the *Iliad* specifically Lynn-George 1988 is nonpareil.

[32] See especially the fables examined by Detienne and Svenbro 1989.

[33] One can also note Agamemnon's frustration at the beginning of the poem when Achilles acts on the advice offered by Kalkhas. In the end Apollo is responsible, perhaps acting, so to speak, as the 'anti-founder' of a flawed political mechanism by initiating the strife in the Akhaian camp in this very particular way. One can draw suggestive parallels in this regard that link the *Iliad* to narrative patterns found in colonial foundation stories.

human exchange throughout *Iliad* 20-22[34] – that the ground can be cleared for the entire warrior community to be re-evaluated and re-integrated into civilization (via a rite of passage). It is not surprising then that the language peculiar to the economy of honour (specifically γέρας and words formed from the **da*- root) is entirely absent from the last four books of the *Iliad*.[35] This lexical distribution is a brilliant poetic strategy: by the end of *Iliad* 23 the irresolvable uncertainty of the *geras* has ceded its place to the publicly adjudicated and institutionally more secure *aethlon*, the ultimate word that closes the book: *Il.* 23.897.

Secondly, a *geras* is problematized by the disconnect between its function as a token of group membership and its inability to objectify a relationship between social value and valuable action, one of Achilles' specific criticisms. It was argued above in chapter 1 that a *geras* transmits value by masking its dependence on warrior participation and deflecting attention away from any perceived relation between service and reward. This is because honour derived from a symbolic exchange dissipates as soon as the exchange is explicitly disclosed *as* an interested act.[36] Accordingly, a shadow is cast over the relationship between status and action when the logic that binds them, which must be denied and misrecognized for the *geras* to exist at all, are compromised. From the beginning of the *Iliad* the narrative critically offers us a series of inappropriate gestures that, in turn, trigger critical reflections on the principles that articulate peer-relations. The poem itself is a vehicle of criticism since it fixes our attention on the mode by which symbolic capital is produced in the misrecognized transaction of goods. As argued later in chapter 6, Achilles' disillusionment sustains the narrative's interrogation of the relationship between socially valuable action and evaluation. More specifically, in relation to the economic base of warrior relations, the question posed is this: how is it possible to secure one's publicly authorized social evaluation against arbitrary or inappropriate action by stronger parties?

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34 The analogy used by Aias (*Il.* 9.632-6) and the trial scene on the shield of Achilles both depict the normative resolution of questions surrounding blood-payments, which suggest indirectly that the response of a slain man's relatives should not be to take revenge on the person of the killer if he shows contrition and offers an *apoina*. Achilles' rejection of these, coupled with the ugly treatment of Hektor's corpse, illustrate the limit of Achilles' distance from civilization.

35 In effect, γέρας is unable to carry its evaluative force of *Iliad* 1 and 9 into the last third of the epic, especially in the wake of Achilles' criticism. Apart from *Il.* 23.9 (where mourning Patroklos has become a part of his quasi-cult *geras*), the word shows up only in Achilles' insult to Aineas (*Il.* 20.182) before disappearing from the poem altogether. This is paralleled by words formed from the **da*- root, like δατέομαι, which are represented only in perverted division that is violent and random: *Il.* 20.394; 23.21; 23.121. It is significant that the idea of the *dasmos* appears in Achilles' fury at the dying Hektor: rather than let his body be ransomed back to his family for appropriate rites, Achilles asserts that "dogs and birds will divide every bit of you up" (κύνες τε καὶ οἰωνοὶ κατὰ πάντα δάσονται, *Il.* 22.354). This is surely a pointed perversion of all that this verb normally expresses and marks a transgression of the limits of human exchange. For an excellent discussion of bestial (lupine) division as the inversion of proper exchange in the *polis*, see Detienne and Svenbro 1989.

36 As made exhaustively clear by Bourdieu 1998, 75-123.

The problem for Achilles is twofold. Firstly, in the institutional vacuum left behind by his criticism of the heroic economy Achilles has to decide what evaluative process – and this will mean ultimately *by what transfer of objects* – can he make apparent an authentic connection between a sense of inherent worth (ἀρετή) and the public receipt of honour?[37] Secondly, is it possible to establish an institution in which the *public act of conferral alone secures the value derived from action*, thereby placing both the recipient and the evaluative process beyond the reach of any attempt to overrule or annul the value conferred? Achilles' problem informs the *Iliad*. The poem stages a crisis of *authenticity* (adapting Vernant) focusing attention on the capacity of precise objects to act as objective registers of worth immune to constraint.

The critical voice of Achilles contributes significantly to the devaluation of the *geras*.[38] Out of his interrogation there will arise a need for explicit rules. Aias' analogy ("a man accepts compensation even for a murdered brother or dead child . . ." , καὶ μέν τίς τε κασιγνήτοιο φονῆος / ποινὴν ἢ οὗ παιδὸς ἐδέξατο τεθνηῶτος, *Il.* 9.632-6) may appear to miss Achilles' point but it nevertheless draws attention to an institutional vacuum at the heart of the *dasmos*. Aias in fact anticipates the juridical parallel described on Achilles' shield (*Il.* 18.498-9) suggesting that honour, like compensation for a dead relative, ought to be subject to the same protocols as a formal claim. From there we do not wait very long for the juridical *Prozeß* of the funeral contest which eclipses and replaces the *geras*-system of honour. When Achilles and Agamemnon come together again in *Iliad* 19, the substance of honour has been hollowed out. Neither man finds satisfaction in tokens unable to secure the content of honorific transactions (*Il.* 19.56-60). When

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37 Introducing *aretē* into the discussion raises the question of the semantic field of the root **ar*- which is intimately connected to notions of social worth in early Greece. This question will have to be explored elsewhere.

38 Achilles' voice intersects that of the enunciative subject in the scene that faces the embassy as they enter Achilles' tent: *Il.* 9.186-191. Representing Achilles as an *aoidos* merges heroic and enunciative identities. On the unique language of Achilles' speeches in general and his reply to Odysseus in particular, see Martin 1989, 146ff., especially 179-96 on this language and its relationship to the content of the hero's speeches. The fact that Achilles has at this decisive moment been singing κλέα ἀνδρῶν indicates that the identities of the poet and the critical hero collapse together at precisely the point we expect measured reflection on the entire heroic ethos. It is worth adding that the narratorial voice articulates Achilles' situation more clearly and unequivocally than we hear even from Achilles himself: Briseis is "the girl of whom they deprived him violently and unwillingly" (τὴν ῥα βίῃ ἀέκοντος ἀπηύρων, *Il.* 1.430). The same phrase is diametrically opposed to a personal exchange, for example, at *Od.* 4.646 (theft vs. gift) and removes for us any ambiguity that might still surround Agamemnon's act. Not only has Agamemnon inappropriately personalized his supervision of the *dasmos*, blurring the sovereignty of the *laos* with his own (so Achilles argues, *Il.* 9.328-36, especially at 9.334) and seeking to transform independent relations into dependent ones (Briseis as *geras* [*Il.*1] > Briseis as booty [stripped from Achilles, ἀπηύρων, *Il.* 1.430 and 9.131] > Briseis as gift [*Il.* 9.131-2]), but he will also transform his *philoi* into *ekhthroi* in order to preserve the link between reward and superior *kratos* (explicit at *Il.* 16.76-7).

Achilles returns to battle, the prestige of both men has been diminished. Agamemnon has surrendered two portions of his *ktemata* in order to restore relations compromised by improper gestures (one to Khryses, one to Achilles) and yet still remains *agerastos* and chastised (*Il.* 19.181-3). Achilles has been materially compensated and his *geras* restored to him by a series of transactions which echoes the initial conferral (*Il.* 19.172-4, 243-65), but the main consequence of his withdrawal from the war – the death of Patroklos – is, by Achilles' own logic (*Il.* 9.401-9, 19.199-214), 'beyond compensation'.[39] To that extent, the desire for more authentic evaluation and objective regulation of the economy of honour is not only generated by an angry response to dysfunction, but also by the critical agency of narrative performance. For Agamemnon, and the *laos* as a whole, Achilles' demonstration of proper *agonothesis* at the end of Patroklos' funeral contest (*Il.* 23.884-97) synthesizes *dasmos* and *agon*. With its terminal word lingering (ἄεθλον, *Il.* 23.897), the penultimate book of the poem points programmatically over the horizon of its own performance to the world of the occasion and its orderly civic adjudication of who is best and by what degree.[40] The dénouement echoes a herald's announcement of the victor as well as the poet's praise formula:

> Ἀτρεΐδη· **ἴδμεν γὰρ ὅσον** προβέβηκας ἁπάντων
> ἠδ' **ὅσσον δυνάμει τε καὶ ἥμασιν ἔπλευ ἄριστος**·
> ἀλλὰ σὺ μὲν τόδ' ἄεθλον ἔχων κοίλας ἐπὶ νῆας
> ἔρχευ . . .
>
> *Il.* 23.890-2

> Atreides: *we are witnesses to the extent* of your preeminence among everyone
> and *by how much you are the best in strength and hurling the spear*;
> Go you then to the hollow ships in possession of this prize . . .

The passage is redolent of the verdict of witnessed value and the appearance of ἄεθλον ἔχων in place of γέρας ἔχων is very significant. An entire socio-historical transformation of thinking about the form and content of status in the archaic Greek city is evoked by this substitution.

Thirdly, the practices allocating honour (*timē*) derive their legitimacy by the collective approval and enforcement of equal shares apportioned by the whole group. The authority of the assembled *laos* is represented as weak and its voice is rarely heard.

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39 D.F. Wilson 2002, 136-47.

40 It is important to add that, parallel to the disappearance of the *geras* from the narrative after *Iliad* 19, there is a general breakdown in proper distribution that is not resolved until *Iliad* 23. Thersites' anger, which at the very least is echoed among the rest of the *laos* (if this is the content of ἀχνύμενοι at *Il.* 2.270), is directed toward the greedy *basileis* who brood over their *gera*. Ironically, however, Agamemnon is without a *geras* from book 19 on. On the other hand, the prize he receives in Patroklos' funeral contest is crucially not a substitute for Khryseis (or Briseis), but an item of proto-monetary significance (a new *lebes*) and a lasting marker of formal and communally endorsed status: "*we know by how much* you surpass everyone" (ἴδμεν γὰρ ὅσον προβέβηκας ἁπάντων, *Il.* 23.890). On the proto-monetary significance of the *lebes*, see Von Reden 1997 and chapter 4 below.

The 'sons of the Akhaians' certainly manifest a will for equitable distribution since equal *moirai* give a firm economic basis to the unity of the warrior band as well as providing a 'currency' for articulating their relation to one another as peers. It is nevertheless an important aspect of the crisis that the communal sovereignty of the *laos* lacks durable institutional expression and cannot censure transgressions of its rituals. So Achilles immediately holds the whole group responsible for the outrage committed against him by explicitly pointing out their inability to uphold an act undertaken in their name.[41] Nevertheless, the popular demand for real parity of honour (ἴση μοῖρα, *Il.* 9.318) is one that finds expression in both epics, especially as a reflection of a due that is founded on action rather than inherited right.[42] Compromising the value embodied in the *geras* therefore challenges the way in which the community of warriors is able to ensure a principle of equal access to those objects that confer membership on their recipients. Meeting this challenge is, again, anticipated on Achilles' shield: by means of an objectified and public adjudication of claims.

The narrative elsewhere illustrates different contexts where conflict arises from mutually valid claims that are resolved either by arbitration or through the proper functioning of processes available. Apart from the shield trial-scene (*Il.* 18.497-508) and Aias' comparison (*Il.* 9.632-6), there is, for instance, the dispute between two farmers about a question of boundaries and equal shares with respect to land held in common (ἀμφ' οὔροισι, *Il.* 12.421-3, cf. πεῖραρ at *Il.* 18.501). The language of the simile strongly echoes the wider themes of dispute over communally held goods lying at the heart of the *Iliad* as a whole:

> ἀλλ' ὥς τ' **ἀμφ' οὔροισι** δύ' ἀνέρε δηριάασθον
> **μέτρ'** ἐν χερσίν ἔχοντες, **ἐπιξύνῳ** ἐν ἀρούρῃ
> ὥ τ' ὀλιγῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ **ἐρίζητον περὶ ἴσης** . . .
>
> *Il.* 12.421-3
>
> but just as two men argue angrily *over boundary stones,*
> *each holding measuring rods* in their hands in a *communal* field
> both of them in a small block *locked in strife over equal portions* . . .

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41 Hence Achilles' irony-laden use of the second person plural at *Il.* 1.298-9: "With my hands I'll not fight for the girl with either you or anyone else, since *you all* stripped me of her, though you were all the very ones who gave it!" (χερσὶ μὲν οὔ τοι ἔγωγ' μαχήσομαι εἵνεκα κούρης/οὔτε σοὶ οὔτε τῷ ἄλλῳ, ἐπεί μ' ἀφέλεσθέ γε δόντες). Achilles decides not to fight for his *geras* since he takes the silence of the *laos* as tacit acceptance of Agamemnon's act. This ought not surprise us (as it has some commentators, for instance, Kirk, 1985 *ad loc.*) since in his oath (*Il.* 1.239-44) Achilles has already directed his anger toward "the sons of the Akhaians *in general*" (υἷας Ἀχαιῶν/**σύμπαντας**, *Il.* 1.240-1). The narrator also envisages group culpability at *Il.* 1.430 ("the girl *they* wrested away").

42 In the *Odyssey* (10.40-2) we hear comparable murmurs of resentment: Odysseus' men complain that they will come home empty-handed while their master will be "leading many beautiful pieces of spoil" (πολλὰ . . . ἄγεται κειμήλια καλὰ / ληΐδος), even though they both "completed the same journey" (ὁμὴν ὁδὸν ἐκτελέσαντες).

In this case, however, quite differently from the situation between Agamemnon and Achilles, the strife over equal portions of land held in common between two ostensible peers is here mediated by *metra* as well as *horoi* (boundary markers), both explicit and independent measures designed to assist in the arbitration of just such a dispute. Like the complex trial scene on the Shield of Achilles, this simile represents a stereotypical conflict requiring the intervention of a *histor*. However, regarded from the perspective of the poem's central problems, this simile highlights the absence of *metra* in disputes about personal and public evaluation. In drawing this comparison the performance is suggestive of a social context not dissimilar to the one prevailing in Athens immediately preceding Solon's introduction of a quantitative measure by which the degree of one's participation in the political community could be adjudicated, assessed and given durable expression.[43]

At this point it is worth restating the framework of elite relations among those who understand themselves in the archaic world as the decision-making community.[44] The geometric model of political relations identified by Vernant and others is signaled in the *Iliad* in the same terms as, e.g., Theognis 678: when the *polis* is gripped by *stasis* "an equal *dasmos* no longer takes place in the middle" (δασμὸς δ' οὐκέτ' ἴσος γίνεται ἐς τὸ μέσον).[45] What triggers Achilles' later interrogation of symbolic value in the heroic economy (*Il.* 1.233-44, 9.308-429) is the violation in *Iliad* 1 of the principle foundation of early *civic* relations. The economy of honour in Homeric epic is typified by the fluidity of, and lack of institutionalized hierarchy in, the relations formed within its narrative. These relations seem constantly subject to renegotiation.

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43 Aristotle's language (*Ath. Pol.* 7.3) gives a sense of the thought behind pre-Solonian civic institutionalization of distribution and publicly arbitrated division, as well as the Solonian recalibration of civic *timē* as "quantitative assessments" (τιμήματα) which could foreground a definition of *citizen* status. On 'limits' as a central aspect of archaic *polis* development, see Osborne 1996. On the Solonian τέλη, see Stanton 1990, 66-76, Manville 1990, 144-7, Connor 1987, 47-9, Seaford 1994, 108, Foxhall 1997, Horsmann 2000, Seaford 2004 75-87, Wallace 2007. Seaford 2004 is important for the historical psychology connected with monetization in archaic Greece and many of his conclusions (for instance, on the beginnings of early Greek thinking about coined money, 136-72) accord with conclusions drawn also in Brown 2003, revised as chapter 4 below. One could add that dispute resolution processes for public distributions were formally available in Mycenaean society, and that the Mycenaean *damos* were a group whose identity lay chiefly in its formal role overseeing the management and distribution of communally-held property.

44 It is this body of heroes that is here understood broadly to be the "sons of the Akhaians" (as opposed to the entire army) on the basis of two points: (a) at *Il.* 11.687-8 it is the *hegetores andres* of the Pylians who are responsible for actual division of spoil; (b) at *Il.* 1.226-7 two different groups of Akhaians are distinguished, the *laos* and the *aristoi*. When Achilles does refer to the distributing agents as the "sons of the Akhaians" one imagines the *aristoi* as, so to speak, the 'prytaneis' of the *dasmos*, and the *laos* as the sovereign body whose *fiat* legitimates it.

45 Vernant 1982a, 119-29; 2006, 213-33 and 235-59; Lévêque and Vidal-Naquet 1996, 44-62.

In the regulation of its exchanges, early Greek political thinking gives as much attention to the 'geometricity' of objects as it does to the spaces objects traverse. Yet, while Vernant concentrates on spatial models (*meson, agora*) as a basis for inquiring into an early Greek understanding of civic relations, he does not further add that these locations derive their significance from the practices that take place within them, namely, the public exchange of objects which transform and regulate these relations. Therefore, it is essential to approach the nascent Greek *polis*, as many scholars have stressed, economically.[46] This means we need to focus on the ways men and objects are together evaluated in spaces that are marked by the public performance of the exchanges which determine value.

Gernet points to the precious objects of myth that change their signification after having passed through "that other world presupposed by the religious mind" – places like the land of dreams, the sea, or the underground cave of the oracular hero.[47] Their passage through them confers a ritual legitimacy that, in turn, guarantees authenticity to their bearer, as well as and their ongoing capacity to objectify 'value'. Because its exchange will irrevocably reconfigure a precious thing, exchange acts like a magical transformation; the object becomes invested with different significance that binds its recipient to the pact of the transaction.[48] This idea of a space of transformation is very different to a less attentive notion of transactional space as a vacuum through which something passes. On the contrary, spaces always imprint their mark upon the objects that move through them. Social spaces are *inclined* media of exchange, that is, media through which objects acquire the signification of that which constitutes that space. These spaces are territories of 'resignification' that form the ritual ground on which objects establish their socio-magical efficacy.[49] This is what confers authenticity upon an object, which can be understood as the corporealization of the ethical force in the exchange. While spaces acquire the transformative force of the pacts established within them, in turn objects will signify the lines of force that belong to the specific spaces they traverse. For example, a gift object can become a prize in an *agon* but only once its prior associations have been effaced by the gestures appropriate to the space of contest. This is clearly illustrated in the *Iliad* by the altercation between Achilles and Antilokhos during Patroklos' funeral contests (*Il.* 23.536-562), a dispute which turns on the exchange relation appropriate to the space and institution of

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46 For example, Seaford 1994, 2004, Kurke 1999, Von Reden 1995, 1997. Rose 2012 is now essential even though his chapter on the *Iliad*, for all its focus on materiality, lacks a close analysis of the ethics and modalities of exchange. Without this the *Iliad's* own consciousness of the heroic economy is easily overlooked.

47 Gernet 1981, 131.

48 Of the examples tackled by Gernet, Polyneikes' gift of the necklace of Harmonia to Eriphyle is the most illustrative.

49 See especially Taussig 1980.

contest.[50] Achilles' unilateral decision to recognize Eumelos, who runs last in the chariot race, with second prize is, however, the privatization of a public object since it arbitrarily expropriates a prize bounded by rules, and transforms it into an expression of personal regard from Achilles (*Il.* 23.536)[51]; Antilokhos protests that for precisely this reason second prize cannot be granted to Eumelos:

> εἰ δέ μιν οἰκτίρεις καί τοι **φίλος** ἔπλετο θυμῷ
> ἔστι τοι **ἐν κλισίῃ** χρυσὸς πολύς, ἔστι δὲ χαλκὸς
> καὶ πρόβατ', εἰσὶ δέ τοι δμῳαὶ καὶ μώνυχες ἵπποι·
> **τῶν οἱ ἔπειτ' ἀνελὼν δόμεναι καὶ μεῖζον ἄεθλον,**
> ἠὲ καὶ αὐτίκα νῦν, ἵνα σ' αἰνήσωσιν Ἀχαιοί.
> **τὴν δ' ἐγὼ οὐ δώσω·** περὶ δ' αὐτῆς πειρηθήτω
> ἀνδρῶν ὅς κ' ἐθέλῃσιν ἐμοὶ χείρεσσι μάχεσθαι.
>
> *Il.* 23.549–54
>
> If you sympathize with him and he is *a dear friend* in your heart
> then there is plenty of gold *in your tent* as well as bronze
> and livestock and there are serving-girls and single-foot horses;
> *take up from these later and give him an even greater prize,*
> or even do so right now so that the Akhaians might praise you.
> *But her* [i.e. the mare = second prize, *Il.* 23.265–6] *I will not give*;
> Let him contend for her whomsoever amongst men wishes to fight me with his hands.

Antilokhos asserts his legitimate ownership over the object and upbraids an *agonothetes* abusing his authority. Achilles acknowledges the protest by suggesting that the recognition of *philia* should rightly be made with a gift, 'something from out of my own house', rather than something placed 'in the middle' (*Il.* 23.257-70) which is properly, and proto-legally, public property until claimed by the victor:[52]

> Ἀντίλοχ', εἰ μὲν δή με κελεύεις **οἴκοθεν ἄλλο**
> **Εὐμήλῳ ἐπιδοῦναι**, ἐγὼ δέ κε καὶ τὸ τελέσσω.
> **δώσω οἱ θώρηκα**, τὸν Ἀστεροπαῖον ἀπηύρων,
> χάλκεον, ᾧ πέρι χεῦμα φαεινοῦ κασσιτέποιο
> ἀμφιδεδίνηται· πολέος δέ οἱ ἄξιος ἔσται.
>
> *Il.* 23.558–62
>
> Antilokhos, if you demand of me that *something else from out of my house should be given instead as a compensation to Eumelos*, then I will fulfil even this.
> *I will give him* this corselet, the one I stripped from Asteropaios,
> a bronze one, around which there is overlaid a plate of shining tin.
> It will be worth a lot to him.

Through immersion in a specific domain, what might materially remain unchanged such as the prize in this instance is reconfigured practically and symbolically.[53]

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50 As well as illustrating new and durable institutions for rethinking the distribution of honour among elites, on which, see chapter 4 below.

51 The use of public goods and institutions as means for establishing personal obligations is a mark of tyranny: see Detienne and Svenbro 1989. See also the paradigmatic examples involving Kleisthenes of Sikyon: Hdt. 6.127.

52 As Gernet 1955 demonstrates.

53 Gernet puts it (rather poetically) thus: "By turns objects descend there and return from it" ("tour à tour ils y descendent et ils en proviennent"), 1968, 119.

By definition, then, the *agora* is the space in which the public *dasmos* takes place. A political space – *to meson* – always contains a *relation under transformation*, propelled by the re-configuration and re-signification of words and objects, as they are re-distributed under the sign of each group's unique political identity. Public space effaces the spatial record of an object's prior associations. The *meson* acts as the agent of proportional equality (*isomoiria*). Within its boundaries *ktemata* are transformed into "common possessions" (ξυνήϊα κείμενα, *Il.* 1.124) that are then divided into equal shares thus permitting their quantitative redistribution that maintains the structure providing the warrior band with its identity.[54] This capacity to transform objects into spatially signified tokens of belonging typifies the actions of participatory communities in the early *polis*.[55] It prefigures the spatial representation of relations identified by Vernant in the geometric thought of early Ionian cosmology.[56] The *skeptron* wielded by the speaker guarantees him inviolability, freedom to speak and equality with the others present. In the language of Anaximander the speaker is "constrained by no one."[57] By his actions Agamemnon would efface the function of the *agora* (especially at *Il.* 1.186-7) and deny the sovereignty responsible for instituting the class of "public objects" (τὰ ξυνήϊα). Achilles hints ironically that swearing by the *skeptron* (*Il.* 1.233-9) threatens public sovereignty, and all the elite relations it guarantees. These themes surface again in his most extensive critique (*Il.* 9.308-427), in particular the notion that evaluation should be an autonomous function of publicly adjudicated *aretē* – redefined as a witnessed demonstration of one's worth. They should not result from the effect of another man's greater *kratos*, his goodwill or personal obligation (*Il.* 9.318-20, 16.52-9).[58]

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54 On the notion of *isomoiria* as a point of contact between the warrior *dasmos* and the distribution of an inheritance amongst children at the funeral, see below chapter 3. Consider also, for example, the decision of the Athenians in 484/3 to dispose of the Laureion silver: it first becomes goods held in common (ἐν τῷ κοινῷ, Hdt.7.144.1) and is then intended for communal distribution by equal shares (ἔμελλον λάξεσθαι ὀρχηδὸν ἕκαστος δέκα δραχμάς, Hdt.7.144.1; τῷ δήμῳ διανείμεσθαι, *Ath. Pol.* 22.7, Plut. *Them.* 4.1) pending full debate on the matter. Themistokles' final proposal is, in turn, entirely consonant with this principle.

55 Central in the civic conflicts arbitrated by Solon: fr.34 West; the default public response of the Athenians to the windfall of Laureion silver is again illustrative: Hdt. 7.144.1 and the previous note.

56 Vernant 2006, 213-33, Lévêque and Vidal-Naquet 1996, 44-62.

57 ὑπὸ μηδενὸς κρατουμένη A11 D-K = Hippol. *Ref.* I.6.3. Anaximander is referring the position of the earth, see Vernant 2006, 214-6.

58 Vernant's analysis of the semantic field of *kratos* and *kratein*, 2006, 197-211, suggests that, from the point of view of the *laos*, Agamemnon's dominance and power constitute the greatest threat to the relations which underpin the entire group. At this level one is tempted to argue that Agamemnon's acts are the founding gestures of tyranny and were seen as such by its audience.

The value of a *geras* is therefore compromised as soon as these proto-political spaces and practices lose the power of determining the structure of warrior relations. *Iliad* 1 precipitates this crisis in its performance and narrates the structure of its failing warrior relations, insofar as the city of heroes walled by its ships is an experimental and artifactual 'world in the utterance'. Rather than argue, however, that the success of the performance depends on the degree to which the world it evokes corresponds to that of the audience, it is better to think in terms of the way epic brings about what it utters, drawing a founding moment in the emergence of social and political institutions out of the past so that it happens again in the here-and-now. As argued below in chapter 5, a key function of epic performance includes the precipitation, the 'spilling-over', of the performed crisis into the ritualized space formed by the occasion ('world of the utterance').[59] In this way, the occasion can reflect upon, even be critical of, a growing contradiction between the absence of social hierarchy amongst the elite and the problem of meditating the plurality of claims to legitimacy and authentic excellence. This is why the poem is structured around two axes of social legitimacy, the independent social exchange of precious goods that takes place in a forum of public validation and participation (*dasmos* in *Iliad* 1, *agon* in *Iliad* 23), and the problem of value (*timē*) as it is instilled in the object (*geras*) transacted in such exchanges. To this extent, the *Iliad* constitutes a performed inquiry into the problematization of social evaluation in proto-political contexts. Rather than search for the right context to locate this particular inquiry, it is more helpful to imagine the emergence of 'the political' in early Greece as the cumulative effect of so many similar *Iliadic* inquiries performed in response to the implicit demands (the "socio-historical will-to-representation") that brought occasions of performance together.

If the *polis* is a habit of mind and society articulated in practices and institutions, and joined together by a conscious and continuous public dialogue about the meaning and value of membership, then its presence in the *Iliad* is pervasive and vital.[60] The *Iliad* offers an aetiological narrative of the de-ritualization, the 'deterritorialization', of value by focusing on tokens of social meaning from *geras* to *aethlon*, from ambiguous reward to objectified evaluation, resolving social crisis precisely by instigating crises in the formal exchanges for such tokens.[61] The *polis* is thus deeply implicated as the emerging chief determinant of the signification of objects and the exchanges which produce *political* relations, ultimately culminating in the complete "politicizing" of both exchange-object and the space of transformation: coin, *agora*, sanctuary.[62]

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59 For the metaphor, see Nagy 2003, 72-87, 86-7 and Lynn-George 1988, 183.
60 On the *polis* as an intellectual artifact, see Cartledge 2009, 11-28.
61 On the notion of territory and 'deterritorialization' see Baudrillard 1994, 129-42.
62 This is fully explored in Seaford 2004.

Examining the strife arising between Achilles and Agamemnon like this locates the performance of the *Iliad* as part of a self-reflexive system of evaluation forming an 'economy of symbolic goods'. Its representation of this economy describes social relations within the newly emerging theoretical society of the *polis* and thereby witnesses, through narrative, a change in the transferability of social capital.[63] If 'value' seems to have become such a problem that its appearance and definition are part of the *Iliad's* special anxiety then the *Iliad* also offers the explanation: political relations cannot permit ambiguous ethics. As Detienne points out, value (and meaning) emerges as an *abstract theoretical problem* in the evaluative rituals of the community of warriors, as something upon which attention is focused as the object of the witness' gaze and verified by an adjudicating authority.[64] If it is possible to see *theoria* in the *Iliad* (the objectified referential gaze which observes its reconstituted object), then it is no longer legitimate to refer to the 'birth of the *polis*' as an event independent of its passive expression in epic performance. Just as the *polis* makes its appearance in the dialectics and poetics of the *Iliad*, so too the city emerges out of *cumulative acts of performance.* The 'worlds in the utterance' of poetic performance bring the emerging city's problems 'theoretically' into the audience's presence. As such, performances of Homeric epic can be regarded as institutional contexts in the economy of *polis* formation in early Greece.[65] Returning to the question of the epic as evidence posed in this study, rather than looking for the city in Homer, we can instead see the *polis* and Homer as causally related.[66]

The economy of dishonour in Iliad *1*

At the very outset of the *Iliad*, dishonour (ἠτίμασεν, *Il.* 1.11) – the source of the *eris* around which all the events of the poem unfold – is a problem of economy. Dishonour is the consequence of the subversion of relations that objects establish or the rejection of the ethics of the exchange. In the following instance, Khryses has come to all the Akhaians as a suppliant and bears as a token of his state a ransom (φέρων . . . ἄποινα, *Il.* 1.13). His plea to Agamemnon is a request involving an important exchange, the release of Khryseis and the receipt of compensation (τὰ ἄποινα δέχεσθαι, *Il.* 1.20). There follows a public assent to the exchange (*Il.* 1.22-3), but the girl's identity as Agamemnon's *geras* represents an obstacle to the process.

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63 For this expression see Bourdieu 1998 92-123. "Theoretical" here also carries the force of its Greek use: the "city of heroes" is a scenario to which the performance has invited us to be *theoroi* and from which to carry back testimony … but to carry it back where? To the here-and-now.

64 Detienne 1996, chapter 5.

65 For a very important study of the relationship between the representation of the *laos* in epic poetry and the way this representation is deployed in archaic and classical performance contexts, see Haubold 2000, 145-96. Although the emphasis is quite different, many of Haubold's conclusions about the role of epic representations in the self-reflexive formation of political identity in the early city are paralleled by observations presented in this study.

66 So Nagy 2003, 86-7: "The people who hear Homeric poetry . . . are to become the people of the *polis*."

Agamemnon's honour commits him: "I will not release her" (*Il.* 1.29). The plague that follows results from the rejection of Apollo's suppliant and it forces the entire group to act.[67] Achilles, perhaps in his capacity as the greatest warrior, addresses a new assembly and calls for the seer, Kalkhas, to interpret the cause of trouble. Kalkhas assents but only after receiving a public commitment from Achilles that he will protect him (the holy man) from the anger of "that man who has great power over all the Argives" (*Il.* 1.78-9). Achilles agrees unhesitatingly and goes on to make explicit Kalkhas' oblique reference to Agamemnon with a public lack of deference: "not even if you spoke of Agamemnon, who now claims to be the best of the Akhaians by far" (*Il.* 1.90-1). In this statement together with Agamemnon's exclusion from the debate, the mode of Achilles' challenge to the status of Atreides is made apparent. Though both heroes incarnate a different social virtue, one a charismatic and brilliant warrior, the other a great chieftain and leader, according to the *laos* their honour and standing in the group is identical since each has been granted the right to choose a *geras*. To interfere with another's right to a *geras* undermines public confidence in the man and the object's value. Achilles is not unaware that the seer's pronouncements will humiliate Agamemnon and cause him to suffer a public diminution of honour. Kalkhas reveals that Apollo is angry at Agamemnon's refusal to release the girl and receive the *apoina*. Moreover, he indicates that only surrendering the girl without compensation (ἀπὸ . . . δόμεναι . . . ἀπριάτην ἀνάποινον, *Il.* 1.98-9) will placate the god. Thus, at the end of the *Iliad's* opening scenario Agamemnon's social position is circumscribed by exchanges: he must accept the compromise suggested by ἀποδίδωμι, an action proper to the debtor or, in another context, to a defendant offering recompense (*Il.* 18.499).[68] His position is constrained. Agamemnon can neither exchange the girl nor accept a ransom. His *geras* must simply be handed over. The vocabulary of these exchanges – release (λύω), receipt (δέχομαι), repayment (ἀποδίδωμι), exchange with outsiders (πρίαμαι),[69] ransom (ἄποινα) and *geras* – articulate the processes of social evaluation, plotting the economic limits of a man's capacity to act and be evaluated positively in the archaic world.

Agamemnon's bristling reply rages at the public compulsion to reverse his position. Addressing Kalkhas as "seer of the low born" (μάντι κακῶν, *Il.* 1.106), Agamemnon makes it clear that his compromise is made on condition: "you publicly proclaim that [the god afflicts them] because I was not willing to accept the shining ransom for the sake of this girl Khryseis, since I very much want to

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67 For an interpretation of the role of Apollo here as the god of beginnings and institutional foundation (*archegetas*), see p.81 n.93.

68 It is crucial to note that on the level of the stakes of the performance itself the *surrender* of a *geras* points to the dismantling of cult: at Hdt. 5.67.5 Kleisthenes of Sikyon "surrendered (ἀπέδωκε) the choruses to Dionysos and the sacrifices to Melanippos." These choruses had just been described by Herodotus as Adrastos' *geras* in the overall context of discussing the tyrant's abolition of the hero's *timē* at Sikyon.

69 On the pre-monetary meaning of πρίαμαι as impersonal exchange outside the group defined as *philoi*, see Benveniste 1973, 101-12.

have her in my house" (ἀγορεύεις / ὡς . . . οὐκ ἔθελον δέξασθαι, ἐπεὶ πολὺ βούλομαι αὐτὴν οἴκοι ἔχειν, *Il.* 1.109-113); the collocation is repeated in the concession, "even as this might be, I am willing to *give* her back, if this really is the better way; I would rather the *laos* be safe than destroyed" (ἀλλὰ καὶ ὡς ἐθέλω <u>δόμεναι</u> πάλιν . . . βούλομ' ἐγω . . ., *Il.* 1.116-7). So far Agamemnon's careful response places the emphasis on a compromise but chosen on his terms and as a personal sacrifice for the group. This is indicated by his subtle emphasis on the gift-like nature of the return and in his recasting of the exchange as a function of his choice (ἐθέλω) rather than by compulsion (ἀποδίδωμι). Agamemnon nevertheless insists on public restitution of his honour:

> αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γέρας αὐτίχ' ἑτοιμάσατ', ὄφρα μὴ οἶος
> Ἀργείων ἀγέραστος ἔω, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ ἔοικε·
> λεύσσετε γὰρ τό γε πάντες, ὅ μοι γέρας ἔρχεται ἄλλῃ.
>
> *Il.* 1.118-20

> however, let all of you straightaway provide for me a *geras*, lest I alone
> of all the Argives be *agerastos*, since it would not be appropriate;
> you all here are witnesses to this very fact – my *geras* goes elsewhere.

Agamemnon's formulation stresses the centrality of the *geras* and, in turn, a social value determined by processes of conferral and witnessing by the whole warrior band. Given the position that Agamemnon has maintained amongst the warriors, he can ask for nothing less. Simply drawing attention to his act of compromise to save the *laos* from Apollo's plague, or even in recalling the original receipt of Khryseis as his *geras* at a sanctioned *dasmos*, is not sufficient. Without ongoing physical possession of an object conferred upon him by "all of you" at the founding institution of the *dasmos* Agamemnon's personal and social sense of his own worth has, like Khryseis, "gone elsewhere."

But on what authority can Agamemnon claim a new *geras*? By what process does he envisage immediate compensation taking place? How ought the new object be configured – as a *geras* (in which case he will be the only hero to have received two *gera*), or as an *apoina* (which would mark Agamemnon as the only hero to have been forced to relinquish his *geras* by a compromise)? The situation illustrates that in archaic protocol *form* is everything. Agamemnon's *timē* must arise as a function of a formally-instituted communal act for the object to be effective as a *geras*; his worth must not be seen as based on his greater *kratos*, rather, as he declares, it is simply not right for a great *basileus* to be without his publicly transacted sign of rank.

The son of Atreus appears unconcerned how the Akhaians are to furnish the substitute. It is this indifference to the process vouchsafing the authenticity of his own prestige that aggravates the crisis. The indifference to process expressed in the notion of "what is appropriate" exposes a lack of institutional clarity and draws attention to the ambiguous and vulnerable nature of honour itself. It is the indeterminacy of the *dasmos* as a political rite that the *Iliad* exploits as the narrative trigger enabling the poem to activate its theoretical dimension.

Agamemnon nevertheless does attempt a compromise. Despite this, Achilles' reaction lacks sensitivity labeling Agamemnon "of all, the most concerned with possessions" (φιλοκτεανώτατε πάντων, *Il.* 1.122). Achilles is implying that all of Agamemnon's exchanges aim at power through unilateral accumulation and that his demands impact upon the nature of exchanges expressing the community of warriors (*laoi*):

> πῶς γάρ τοι δώσουσι γέρας μεγάθυμοι Ἀχαιοί;
> **οὐδέ τί που ἴδμεν ξυνήϊα κείμενα πολλά·**
> ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν πολίων ἐξεπράθομεν, **τὰ δέδασται**,
> λαοὺς δ' οὐκ ἐπέοικε παλίλλογα ταῦτ' ἐπαγείρειν.
>
> *Il.* 1.123-6

> How shall the great hearted Akhaians give you a *geras* now?
> we do not know of any great store of *common goods*;
> everything we pillaged from the cities *was in the dasmos*
> and *it is not appropriate* that the *laoi* gather these things back together again.

Achilles' summary of the process pointedly demonstrates his belief that Agamemnon's attitude to the exchange would have the *laos* undermine the ritual principle of the *dasmos*. To cancel the process of distribution for the sake of one man would be "inappropriate" and Achilles re-emphasizes the sovereignty of the group to determine what is morally appropriate. Although Achilles emphasizes the underlying rules that ought to pertain in a *dasmos*, the epic context is pervaded by the lack of an institutional framework by which participants might be constrained to comply with these rules. Only the assembly of the *laos* could, we imagine, provide this.[70] Up to this point Achilles makes a good case: the *dasmos* apportions a share to all warriors and a special portion to particular individuals drawn out of 'public property', a specific type of object (ξυνήϊα κείμενα). This ritual of apportioning converts "things pillaged" (τὰ . . . ἐξεπράθομεν) into "things distributed" (τὰ δέδασται). But Achilles does not call upon the formal prohibition possible in many *civic* contexts. For example, Achilles' phrase οὐκ ἐπέοικε ("it is not appropriate") is of a qualitatively different order to the injunctions proclaimed forcefully already in 7th century Crete.[71] Achilles' rhetorical strategy is therefore

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70 The degree to which the performance poses the backdrop of a weak warrior assembly is largely a function of how institutionally strong the assembly presupposed by the performance occasion is. As Haubold 2000 has also argued, the idea of a warrior assembly without such formal and enforceable rules governing its practices deliberately refracts attention back onto the very formalities by which the assembled audience of epic performance was constituted. See chapter 5 below for a discussion of how the Phaiakian 'festival' was preceded by a carefully organized procedure of assembly. Much further down the track we can see the same self-reflexivity at the beginning of Aristophanes' *Acharnians*: an assembly attending the spectacle of its own (comically dysfunctional) operation.

71 For example, in *ML* 2, a Drerian law prohibiting iteration of the office of *kosmos*, dated conservatively to c. 600: ἧδ' ἔϝαδε πόλι· ἐπεί κα κοσμήσει, δέκα ϝετίον τὸν ἀϝτὸν μὴ κόσμεν· ("the following has been approved by the *polis*: should a man become *kosmos* he is not permitted to be *kosmos* for ten years").

constrained to moralizing arguments and, in the absence of any juridical apparatus, he risks pushing Agamemnon too far. In his next statement Achilles offends Agamemnon by adopting the tone of rebuke, increasing his burden of being the only man without his own *geras*, making his situation even more unbearable:

> ἀλλὰ σὺ μὲν **νῦν** τήνδε θεῷ **πρόες**· αὐτὰρ Ἀχαιοὶ
> τριπλῇ τετραπλῇ τ' ἀποτείσομεν, **αἴ κέ ποθι Ζεὺς**
> δῷσι πόλιν Τροίην εὐτείχεον ἐξαλαπάξαι.
>
> *Il.* 1.127-9

> But now you must surrender the girl to the god; the Akhaians will pay you back three or four times over should Zeus grant some day that the well-walled city of Troy be sacked.

The highlighted words reveal Achilles' complete lack of sensitivity to the level of Agamemnon's compromise. Achilles demands compliance (*definite time* + *imperative*: "send her back now . . .") and offers only a vague promise of uncertain compensation (*indefinite time* + *indefinite amount* + *condition dependent on fortune*: "we will (in the future) compensate you with an uncertain amount . . . if Zeus should at some time . . ."). Not only does νῦν give sharp immediacy to Agamemnon's humiliation but πόθι places his status in a state of suspended uncertainty without a guaranteed solution. The verb προίημι is also carefully chosen: there is no obligation to requite what has been "sent forth" and the objects of this verb do not typically return in quite the way a sender hopes, if at all. Moreover, making any future compensation dependent on the sack of Troy is tactless given that the whole expedition seeks redress for a woman also taken away from a son of Atreus. Finally, the verb ἀποτίνω inappropriately deviates off of the verbal path peculiar to the *geras* (that is, *publicly sanctioned choice* followed by *legitimate seizure*) and reduces Agamemnon's honour to the level of an impersonal payment. Achilles' veiled contempt and indifference to the exchanges at stake forces the older man's hand.

Agamemnon's reaction is in two parts, each directed towards reasserting his authority and expressed in terms of a right to seize objects of rank. He is initially incredulous:

> ἦ ἐθέλεις, ὄφρ' αὐτὸς ἔχῃς γέρας, αὐτὰρ ἔμ' αὖτως
> ἧσθαι δευόμενον, κέλεαι δὲ με τήνδ' ἀποδοῦναι;
>
> *Il.* 1.133-4

> Is it your wish, so that *you yourself* might hold a *geras*, that I sit just like this lacking one, while you order me to surrender the girl?

Speculation quickly gives way to an unambiguous threat of force directed at the most powerful men present:

> ἀλλ' εἰ δώσουσι γέρας μεγάθυμοι Ἀχαιοί,
> ἄρσαντες κατὰ θυμόν, ὅπως **ἀντάξιον** ἔσται·
> εἰ δέ κε μὴ δώωσιν, ἐγὼ δέ κεν αὐτὸς ἕλωμαι
> ἢ τεὸν ἢ Αἴαντος ἰὼν γέρας, ἢ Ὀδυσῆος
> ἄγω ἑλών· ὁ δέ κεν κεχολώσεται ὅν κεν ἵκωμαι.
>
> *Il.* 1.135-9

> If the great-hearted Akhaians grant me a *geras*
> they will accord with my desire so that it will be an *equivalent*;
> Should they not, then I myself will take a *geras*
> perhaps yours, or Aias' or Odysseus', going in person
> and so seizing I will lead her off;
> and the man to whom I go shall be angry.

Agamemnon repeats the demand for his accustomed due but Achilles' lack of deference provokes Agamemnon into threatening to step outside the relations of the *dasmos* toward unilateral self-help, the action of reciprocal violence. In a critical step, Agamemnon threatens to treat his peers as he would the inhabitants of captured cities. This entails forcible entry (ἰών) and threatening the treatment of precious signs of status as spoil (αἱρέω) in demonstration of his greater authority. Agamemnon's assertion of power menaces the system of political distribution providing the *geras* with its very identity. Further illustration is provided in the *Odyssey* by an analogy that uses a similar collocation of this language. At *Od.* 24.290-6, the proper completion of funerary ritual, which is denoted specifically here and elsewhere by the ritual formula "for such is the special share of the dead" (τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ θανόντων, *Od.* 24.296), is contrasted explicitly with the condition of a corpse in the absence of burial rites: the cadaver "becomes an object of spoil for dogs and birds" (θηρσὶ καὶ οἰωνοῖσιν ἕλωρ γένετο, *Od.* 24.292). In the absence of proper ritual, or when the ritual process breaks down, disrespect provokes violence and chaos. The pillage and plunder of one's warrior-peers stands in direct contradiction to the distribution of plunder that founds the warrior group. Later, throughout *Iliad* 20-22, it is a mark of the *stasis* into which warrior relations have descended that dogs and birds conduct an ironical *dasmos* of Hektor's body (*Il.* 22.354), transforming his corpse into an object of spoil (so above, *Od.* 20.292). By *Iliad* 22, the act of distribution has become thoroughly indistinguishable from what ought to be its structural opposite, an act of pillage. The verb αἱρέω in each case is more than a simple reference to an act of proprietary seizure. The sequence ἕλωμαι . . . ἰών . . . ἄξω ἑλών at *Il.* 1.137-9 evokes the sense of forcible capture and violation typifying the lot of the defeated placing an ambiguous sign on those whose participation in the *dasmos* promises to confirm their ongoing membership and status in the *laos*.

This passage in the *Odyssey* also helps in clarifying Agamemnon's parallel anxiety about the *ritual* that re-inscribes an object's value. Achilles' offer of compensation *from Trojan spoil* (*Il.* 1.127-9) could not be regarded as a *geras* under these new terms because there would be no accompanying distributive institution (*dasmos*) able to confer its original quality, that is, *as a geras from the sack of Thebe*; such an object would not carry its *geras*-value from the original *dasmos*. The compensation Achilles promises would be part of an entirely different *dasmos* distributing spoil from Troy. For this reason alone it cannot be compensation for the *geras* won from the sack of Thebe. This explains why Achilles' refusal to hold another

distribution provokes Agamemnon's threat to undo the *dasmos* by force and thereby treat everyone's *moira* and *geras* as spoil once more. His proposal effaces the special quality that normally transmits social value to the object's new owner. The narrative makes it especially clear that under such circumstances Briseis can never be Agamemnon's replacement *geras*, that is to say, properly ἀντάξιον to Khryseis; rather, Briseis can only ever be ἕλωρ, "something sacked."

In passing, it is important to add that the figure of Briseis (and almost every other woman in the poem in a similar or potential position) complicates these social polarities even further. In particular, she illustrates both the multiple roles played by the exchange of women between warriors as well as the potential for women to disturb relationships created by their exchange.[72] For example, Briseis' path in the poem highlights the fine line between the exchange of women between *basileis* as a basis for future co-operation (a pervasive theme in myth) and the exchange of women as objects of value, spoil and distribution, identities by which women can become a source of conflict between *basileis*. In the context of a "city of *basileis*" like the *Iliad's* Akhaian camp the body of a woman becomes the site of a political scenario recalling later themes of tyranny and its (sexual) transgressions.[73] Interestingly, the *Iliad* complicates this even further by introducing the agency of Briseis' own subjectivity through her lament for the fallen Patroklos, which stages the irruption of the object's own desire as a new agency into the political narrative. A study of the way in which women move back and forth across subject-object barriers in the *Iliad,* for instance between Briseis as heroic speaking subject as opposed to Briseis as mute *geras*, and so on, is a desideratum.[74]

It is also noteworthy that the relationships signified by αἱρέω and δατέομαι are marked as much by complementarity as by opposition: each item in any *dasmos* is also an item of spoil. The spatial configuration of an object discloses an encoded social relation. The participation of the warrior in the communal venture of war and pillage guarantees his reversible *moira* in the *dasmos*. To that extent the warrior is defined in his group as one who *takes* – by force, actively and impersonally – and *receives* – through communal ritual, by fiat of the group, thereby securing a political relation of equality with his peers. In *Iliad* 1 Agamemnon inverts these identities.

The very suggestion that the *dasmos*, the political ritual *par excellence*, could be reversed by force is too much for Achilles. Agamemnon's overbearing attitude toward the sovereignty of the *laos* is difficult to bear but a direct threat of assault on personal honour, one that is indivisible from bodily integrity, represents a hostile act. Achilles' response has two parts (*Il.* 1.149-71). In the first part Achilles reminds the audience that the *laos* is fighting to

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72 On which see Scheid-Tissinier 1994, 83-114, Lyons 2003 and 2012, 53-76.

73 See Gernet 1981 and Joshel 1992.

74 In general, the basis for precisely this kind of analysis is provided by Baudrillard's essay *Seduction* (1990) and the work of Loraux (e.g. 1987) and Lyons 2012.

avenge the *timē* of the sons of Atreus, ironically embodied in a woman taken in violation of universally observed covenants, although the Trojans *per se* have not been a cause of any injury to him (αἴτιοι, *Il.* 1.153). Achilles naturally has in mind an act of plunder, that is, a negative transaction such as the rustling of cattle and horses (*Il.* 1.154). Instead, he continues, we are here for your (Agamemnon's) sake. You seem to forget this, he tells Agamemnon, or else you are indifferent. In the second part, however, Achilles not only accuses Agamemnon of subverting the *dasmos* but also that the *dasmos* itself is flawed since it cannot ensure that recognition matches action:

> καὶ δή μοι γέρας αὐτὸς ἀφαιρήσεσθαι ἀπειλεῖς,
> **ᾧ ἔπι πολλὰ μόγησα, δόσαν δέ μοι υἷες Ἀχαιῶν**
> **οὐ μὲν σοί ποτε ἶσον ἔχω γέρας,** ὁππότ' Ἀχαιοὶ
> Τρώων ἐκπέρσωσ' εὖ ναιόμενον πτολίεθρον
> ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν πλεῖον πολυάϊκος πολέμοιο
> χεῖρες ἐμαὶ διέπουσ'· **ἀτὰρ ἤν ποτε δασμὸς ἵκηται,**
> **σοὶ τὸ γέρας πολὺ μεῖζον, ἐγὼ δ' ὀλίγον τε φίλον τε**
> **ἔρχομ' ἔχων ἐπὶ νῆας**, ἐπεὶ κε κάμω πολεμίζων.
>
> *Il.* 1.161-8

> And now you yourself are threatening to take away my *geras*
> *that for which I fought so hard and was granted to me by the sons of the Akhaians.*
> *The geras I hold never equals yours*, whenever the Akhaians
> sack some well-founded Trojan citadel,
> though most of the horrible slog of war
> is the business of my hands – *and yet whenever a dasmos comes around*
> *your geras is much greater, while I, holding something little but important to me*,
> go to my ships exhausted from war.

These criticisms express in quite specific terms the mistreatment of the transactions that give substance to public honour: I have joined you, Achilles maintains, out of a sense of *kharis* (*Il.* 1.158; see again *Il.* 9.316) to help you seek compensation for an object robbed;[75] but now you would rob me of *my* tokens of rank. As far as Achilles is concerned, this is an extension of a pattern of treatment that, from the perspective of the normative practice of the *dasmos*, constitutes an ethical violation. One ought to be equal with you and this should be reflected in our relation to these objects. Agamemnon's threat is so intolerable that Achilles immediately decides to leave for home rather than stay as one stripped of status and "without worth" (ἄτιμος, *Il.* 1.171).

Achilles' criticism reveals not only Agamemnon's contempt for the proper functioning of elite relations but also exposes inherent weaknesses in this nascent political ritual. Firstly, the assembly of the *laos* is unable to enforce ethical propriety. The ability of a man of superior *kratos* to overturn communal decisions made in the warrior assembly will later be regarded as the defining

[75] At *Il.* 1.159 Helen, from both an economic *and* social point of view, literally *embodies* the *timē* of the Atreidai.

act of the *tyrannos*.[76] Similarly the search for constraints on such men, as Robin Osborne has argued, became a key theme in the development of written law in early Greece.[77] The frustration is evident in Achilles' words: this *geras* was something ritually conferred as a token of my suffering on behalf of the sons of the Akhaians, that is, the group physically defined "whenever a *dasmos* comes around". *Il.* 1.162 (with *Il.* 9.316-44) also echoes the context of funereal performances honouring the hero by the *geras* of cult. Herodotus (5.67.3) indicates how re-performance of the *geras* of narrative memory on each occasion celebrates the suffering of the hero. Thus, in linking the suffering of the hero with a proto-tyrannical disruption of political rituals, performances of the *Iliad* align the *geras* of the *dasmos* ("world in the utterance, the world of *Iliad* 1") with the *geras* of cult ("world of the utterance"), further demonstrating the political atmosphere of poetic occasions in archaic life.

Secondly, although there seems to be no formal statement of this requirement in the *Iliad*, it is nevertheless assumed from the beginning of the poem that one of the defining features of a *dasmos* is the parity of its divided shares.[78] Agamemnon goes on to challenge this rule echoing the language of Solon's famous justification for not conducting a redistribution of land. Solon (fr. 34.8-9 West) uses the very apposite, and quite abstract, term *isomoiria* to describe a (for him hypothetical) situation in which all members of the political community are defined by holding equal shares. He argues that extending economic reality to political equality by redistributing the land in equal lots between the *esthloi* and the *kakoi* would go too far. Solon's poetics make it clear that his *nomothesia* (1) responded to a lack of institutional clarity in political institutions (understood to be contexts of division), especially with respect to participation and dispute-settlement, and (2) opposed the growing possibility that men of superior *kratos* could pervert the distributive ethics of the emerging *polis*. A detailed parallel reading of the *Iliad* with Solon's fragments would no doubt disclose a poetics of political formation and a concern with very similar historical problems. This would accord well with the view, expressed by A. Sauge,[79] that the key moment of the *Iliad's* compositional and performative success lay in the post-Solonian period and the foundation of the Panathenaia in 566, especially in an era of Athenian history well-known for its disruption of civic order by powerful aristocratic syndicates in the wake of an attempt to provide definitions, security and institutional limits on potential *tyrannoi*. However, in contrast, Agamemnon's short speech (*Il.* 1.173-87) resonates with violence as he humiliates the younger hero. The

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76 See Detienne and Svenbro 1989 on the "impossible city" of wolves.
77 Osborne 1996. See also Hölkeskamp 1992.
78 As one might expect, the rule is honoured more in the breach. Some of the more explicit statements are *Il.* 1.161-8, 9.316-336, 11.705, 15.185-210, 16.52-9.
79 Sauge 2002 and 2007.

efficacy of Achilles' complaint is crippled by its own passivity because he portrays himself as Agamemnon's victim. Furthermore, Agamemnon's threat intimidates by its suggestion of violent entry without regard for consent (αὐτὸς ἰὼν κλισίηνδε, *Il.* 1.185; see also *Il.* 1.321-5) and is sexually predatory in its evocation of penetration – both of Achilles' temporary *oikos* and of Briseis – which is to be construed as both an indirect assault on Achilles himself and, so to speak, the rape of his *geras*.[80] The verbal echoes reinforce such a view:

Achilles (*Il.* 1.160-71)	**Agamemnon** (*Il.* 1.180-7)
I do not intend to be here without *timē*… οὐδέ σ' ὀΐω ἐνθάδ' ἄτιμος ἐὼν . . . *Il.* 1.171	others… will provide me with *timē*, especially… Zeus ἄλλοι . . . με τιμήσουσι, μάλιστα δὲ . . . Ζεύς *Il.* 1.174-5
you don't care about the things (that I've done) τῶν . . . οὐδ' ἀλεγίζεις *Il.* 1.160	I don't care about you . . . σέθεν δ' ἐγὼ οὐκ ἀλεγίζω *Il.* 1.180 [81]
you *yourself* threaten to strip my *geras* from me μοι γέρας αὐτὸς ἀφαιρήσεσθαι ἀπειλεῖς *Il.* 1.161	My threat to you will be this: as Phoibos Apollo stripped me of Khryseis . . . I am going to lead off Briseis, *your geras*. ἀπειλήσω δέ τοι ὧδε· ὡς ἔμ' ἀφαιρεῖται Χρυσηΐδα Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων . . . ἐγὼ δέ κ' ἄγω Βρισηΐδα . . . τὸ σὸν γέρας *Il.* 1.182-5
Now I will go to Phthia since it is much *better* to go home… νῦν δ' εἶμι Φθίηνδ', ἐπεὶ ἦ πολὺ φέρτερόν ἐστιν οἴκαδ' ἴμεν . . . *Il.* 1.169-70	[I am going to lead off Briseis, *your geras*,] going into your tent myself so that you can see well how much *better* I am than you. αὐτὸς ἰὼν κλισίηνδε ὄφρ' ἐῢ εἰδῇς ὅσσον φέρτερός εἰμι σέθεν *Il.* 1.185-6
I never have a *geras* equal to yours. οὐ μὲν σοί ποτε ἶσον ἔχω γέρας *Il.* 1.163	so that another man may hesitate before declaring himself in my face *my* equal and *my* peer. ὄφρα . . . στυγέῃ δὲ καὶ ἄλλος ἶσον ἐμοὶ φάσθαι καὶ ὁμοιωθήμεναι ἄντην *Il.* 1.186-7 [82]

[80] At *Il.* 9.647 Achilles reminds Aias that his humiliation was public: "Atreides made me into a thing of shame before the Argives" (μ' ἀσύφηλον ἐν Ἀργείοισιν ἔρεξεν Ἀτρεΐδης). The keyword is ἀσύφηλον, which means something like "whore" when used of a woman, e.g. *Il.* 24.767.

[81] Chantraine *DELG* notes attempts to connect ἀλεγίζω (derived from ἀλέγω) to either ἄλγος or λέγω. If the latter can be supported then the sense would be "to reckon, count, enumerate, add up." This would accord well with the Homeric warrior's reliance for his status on performed catalogues of past deeds, as Achilles points to here. The sense of Agamemnon's reply would then be "I don't rate you at much."

[82] The translation cannot capture the politically charged content of this statement. Agamemnon here appears as the proto-*tyrannos*: he has contempt for 'the middle', he cannot tolerate the principle of the equal portion and uses force to prevent being made subject to the ethical strictures demanded by the *dasmos*. His efforts to elide his own personal authority with that of the *laos* become apparent in his attempts to recast the *dasmos* as his own act of generosity as well as his efforts to secure a disproportionate share. See Detienne and Svenbro 1989 on the partitioning of meat

Achilles represents himself negatively, emerging weak and threatened. Agamemnon exploits Achilles' weakness to illustrate the difference between their respective inclinations and capacities to act. Later when Achilles summarizes these events for his mother, he describes his diminution in status as resulting from a confusion of proper exchanges. After we took Eëtion's city, he explains,

> τὴν δὲ **διεπράθομέν** τε καὶ **ἤγομεν** ἐνθάδε πάντα·
> καὶ **τὰ μὲν εὖ δάσσαντο μετὰ σφίσιν υἷες Ἀχαιῶν**,
> **ἐκ δ' ἕλον Ἀτρεΐδῃ Χρυσηΐδα καλλιπάρῃον** . . .
> τὴν δὲ νέον κλισίηθεν ἔβαν κήρυκες **ἄγοντες**
> κούρην Βρισῆος, τήν μοι δόσαν υἷες Ἀχαιῶν.
>
> *Il.* 1.367-9, 391-2

> We sacked Thebe and drove everything here;
> Then the sons of the Akhaians conducted a proper *dasmos* among themselves
> and chose pretty-cheeked Khryseis for Atreides . . .
> but heralds went from my shelter leading off the girl,
> Briseus' daughter, whom the sons of the Akhaians gave to me!

Agamemnon's heralds "lead off" (ἄγοντες) Achilles' *geras*, a verb which typically expresses ownership over goods that are animate (women and cattle) as opposed to those that are inanimate (φέρω). Such an often-repeated word (*Il.* 1.323, 337-8, 346-7) reverts all Achilles' possessions to their prior status as spoil taken from Thebe, virtually transforming Achilles into Briseus. The image of Briseis is evocative, being led off once more against her will only a handful of lines earlier:

> ἐκ δ' ἄγαγε κλισίης Βρισηΐδα καλλιπάρῃον
> δῶκε δ' ἄγειν· τὼ δ' αὖτις ἴτην παρὰ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν·
> ἡ δ' ἀέκουσ' ἅμα τοῖσι γυνὴ κίεν· αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς
> δάκρυσας ἑτάρων ἄφαρ ἕζετο νόσφι λιασθείς,
> θῖν' ἔφ' ἁλὸς πολιῆς, ὁρόων ἀπείρονα πόντον·
>
> *Il.* 1.346-50

> He [sc. Patroklos] led pretty-cheeked Briseis out of the shelter
> and gave her to be led off; and they went alongside the Akhaian ships.
> The woman was unwilling but she went with them all the same; but Achilles
> slipped away immediately and sat weeping far from his companions,
> on the beach of the grey sea, peering at the trackless ocean.

Alone, ashamed and dispossessed, Achilles has, in a very real sense, suddenly become like the vanquished whose home and goods are open to plunder and whose future has become uncertain. The language belongs, moreover, to a larger group of synonyms used to describe Agamemnon's subversion of the warrior economy: ἀπαυράω (e.g. *Il.* 1.356, 19.89), ἐφυβρίζω (a *hapax, Il.* 9.368), ἀμέρδω (e.g. *Il.* 16.53), as well as more generally αἱρέω and ἀφαιρέω. All these words occupy the field of *negative transactions*, which invert the semantic field marked by the expression "proper *dasmos*" (εὖ δάσσαντο, *Il.* 1.368), and which cannot be subject to the influence (*kratos*) of any one individual if they are to function

by wolves in Greek thought as a (negative) way to imagine the early Greek political community as primarily a community defined by equal portions received in a *dasmos*.

effectively. If 'honour' – that is, social worth and recognition – is bestowed at the *dasmos,* then 'dishonour' – exclusion and worthlessness – follow upon a type of anti-*dasmos* in the expropriation of precious objects forcibly and without consent. This is emphasized in the line repeated on a number of occasions (cf. also *Il.* 9.111):

> ἦ γάρ μ' Ἀτρεΐδης εὐρὺ κρείων Ἀγαμέμνον
> ἠτίμησεν· ἑλὼν γὰρ ἔχει γέρας, αὐτὸς ἀπούρας.
>
> *Il.* 1.355-6=1.507=2.240

> Widely-ruling son of Atreus, Agamemnon, has indeed
> taken my *timē* away: for he seized my *geras* and holds it, stripping it in person.

Agamemnon claims that this action taken against Achilles will henceforth cement his own position among the elite. His participation in overseeing proper distributions of spoil, which has hitherto helped to sustain the legitimacy of his leadership, he has now replaced with a violent appropriation that in turn renders ambiguous the status of those others whose honour derived from its public sovereignty. Achilles will often proclaim that Briseis belonged to him by public grant. This is supported by Nestor who calls on Agamemnon to "let the girl remain a *geras* just as the sons of the Akhaians first granted to him" (ἀλλ' ἔα, ὥς οἱ πρῶτα δόσαν γέρας υἷες Ἀχαιῶν· *Il.* 1.276). Nestor is strongly opposed to tampering with the relationships established in these exchanges and is just as concerned for the sovereignty of the *laos* as he is for Achilles' honour. Agamemnon's use of force to secure his claim thus erodes any sense that his leadership is consensual and overtly undermines one of the ethical principles of the warrior band – relative equality and consequent lack of hierarchy. By bringing a series of opposing dispositions to an object that has been carefully configured to express one's honour as a function of communal recognition, Agamemnon effects a corresponding transformation of those object-relations. These relations can only be re-established by means of either a *reversal of the act*, which will involve a re-enactment of the original conferral (*Il.* 19.172-4; 19.243-9; 19.277-81), or, more effectively in the long term, *the resignification of such symbolic goods via a different economy of honour, the funerary contest*.

In the *Iliad*, dishonour (*atimia*) is the consequence of a series of (potentially violent) actions directed toward the material tokens of a man's status and exacerbated by his inability to oppose those actions. Dishonour is publicly asserted by one man's interference with exchanges and the other's passivity that, in turn, establishes an unequal ratio of social value. The treatment of another man's goods or body (as objects, bodies and *ktemata* are, in this context, relatively undifferentiated, as much among heroes as, for example, captive women) as unprotected plunder is, in effect, to announce that he is worthless. The attempt to recover one's worth is often a physical attempt to wrest back these material tokens. So Achilles succinctly describes the goal of the Trojan war itself as "winning back honour (*timē* = Helen) for Menelaos and you [Agamemnon] against the

Trojans" (τιμὴν ἀρνυμενοι Μενελάῳ σοί τε . . . πρὸς Τρώων, *Il.* 1.159-60). *Timē* here is to be understood in the first instance as that physical substance which *embodies* one's status, position and worth. The word conveyed this sense long before it could abstractly be conceived as 'honour'. One consequence of such an act of public devaluation is the explicit expectation of service from the weaker party. The hirer of paid labour will "oversee and order" tasks for which workers will receive their "agreed wage" (. . . μισθῷ ἔπι ῥητῷ· ὁ δὲ σημαίνων ἐπέτελλεν. *Il.* 21.445); it is striking that the same sequence of verbs is used in Achilles' rejection of Agamemnon's authority to command him: "direct other men to do these things but do not order me" (ἄλλοισιν δὴ ταῦτ' ἐπιτέλλεο, μὴ γὰρ ἔμοιγε σήμαινε, *Il.*1.295-6). Achilles makes it clear that this aspect of Agamemnon's threat – an explicit relation of service and payment – is anathema to the warrior ethos: "Indeed I would be called a coward and a nobody if I were to perform every bit of work that you uttered" (ἦ γάρ κεν δειλός τε καὶ οὐτιδανὸς καλεοίμην, εἰ δὴ σοὶ πᾶν ἔργον ὑπείξομαι ὅττι κεν εἴπῃς, *Il.* 1.293-4).[83]

However, authorization of individual status by the collective will of the group in a proto-political institution like the *dasmos* results in a corresponding shift from *personal* to *impersonal* relations between individuals. Significantly, the *laos* begins to function as a third party with an adjudicatory role. This is pertinent to the way in *Iliad* 9 Achilles appears unimpressed by Agamemnon's attempt at rapprochement through symbolic exchanges aimed at building *personal* relationships (*Il.* 9.388-92). Indeed, in his reply to Odysseus, Achilles expresses a desire to escape from the obligations of reciprocity altogether ("I hate his gifts" *Il.* 9.378). Instead he gropes for an adjudicatory framework in which the expectation of *kharis* (*Il.* 9.316-21) is replaced by the warranty of a social worth derived from impartial public structures. Towards this end at *Il.* 9.420-6 Achilles redirects his message away from Agamemnon to a consultative executive, "the leading men of the Akhaians," whose politically-conferred *geras* is the right to deliberate in council on behalf of the group: to think of a "better plan to save the *laos* of the Akhaians and their ships."

To be the unavenged victim of spoliation is a form of exclusion. The warrior peer (*homoios*) understands his position in the group via his relation to particular gestures, objects and spaces. Forcefully depriving him of his entitled share strips him of his membership and sense of belonging – he is ἄτιμος, "without worth" (*Il.* 1.171). In the classical *polis* this adjective denotes one who has been stripped by the city of what by then has become a publicly-instituted bundle of rights and obligations formally defining a man's political worth – 'citizenship'. *Atimos* cannot be simply translated as 'dishonoured' because it is a rendering too vague and abstract for the practical world of the city. Rather it means that a man so defined is

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[83] οὐτιδανὸς could be regarded as a synonym of ἀτιμάω in its sense of *persona non grata*. cf. *LfGrE* s.v. οὐτιδανὸς.

literally 'worthless', physically cut off from the tokens of his membership of the participatory community that together make up his τιμή: access to the public hearth, a share of the sacrifice at public cults (δαίς ἐΐση), a share of spoil, of civic power and land, a place in the phalanx and the right to be heard in the assembly. When Achilles asserts that his treatment by Agamemnon has transformed him into a "worthless exile" (ἀτίμητος μετανάστης, *Il.* 9.648 = 16.59), it is a precise comparison involving a proto-legal expression of *civic* exclusion and marginality. This is clear from the lines where this phrase occurs. In response to Patroklos' plea that he renounce his wrath and return to battle, Achilles rearticulates his dishonour in strict institutional terms:

> ἀλλὰ τόδ' αἰνὸν ἄχος κραδίην καὶ θυμὸν ἱκάνει,
> **ὁππότε δὴ τὸν ὁμοῖον ἀνὴρ ἐθέλῃσιν ἀμέρσαι**
> **καὶ γέρας ἂψ ἀφελέσθαι, ὅ τε κράτεϊ προβεβήκῃ·**
> αἰνὸν ἄχος τό μοί ἐστιν, ἐπεὶ πάθον ἄλγεα θυμῷ.
> κούρην ἣν ἄρα μοι γέρας ἔξελον υἷες Ἀχαιῶν
> δουρὶ δ' ἐμῷ κτεάτισσα, πόλιν εὐτείχεα πέρσας,
> τὴν ἂψ ἐκ χειρῶν ἕλετο κρείων Ἀγαμέμνον
> Ἀτρεΐδης ὡς εἴ τιν' ἀτίμητον μετανάστην.
>
> *Il.* 16.52-9
>
> But this, a bitter sorrow, comes to my heart and spirit,
> *whenever a man wishes to plunder his peer*
> *and strip his geras back off him, because he surpasses in kratos;*
> This is my bitter sorrow since I have endured suffering in my soul.
> That girl whom the sons of the Akhaians chose out for me as a *geras*,
> who became my possession by the spear when I stormed the well-walled city,
> lord Agamemnon son of Atreus took her back out of my hands
> as though I were some worthless exile.

This is a direct statement of the social implications of Agamemnon's mistreatment expressed in terms echoing the early civic terminology of the Greek *polis*.[84] The community of warriors is a community of *homoioi* – an expression of isomorphic social value – defined by warrior's geometric relation to common space and commonly held goods. A man exercising his greater *kratos* against his peer disrupts their isomorphic relationship. Ceasing to be *homoios* the victim is redefined along a different axis of social worth in which emerge new relations dictated by degrees of dependence upon superior *kratos*. The worst abuse of *kratos* for any hero is that directed against precious objects forming his visible tokens of institutional recognition. In this passage, Achilles emphasizes the word *geras* and the double legitimacy of his ownership: strength of arms (personal worth demonstrated by *aretē*)[85] and public conferral by the community (proto-legal definition of property). This *geras* is the most important part of Achilles' *timē* signifying his fundamental place in the group as "best of the

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[84] See Vleminck 1981. Manville 1980 and 1990, 147-8 argues (drawing on *Ath. Pol.* 8.5) that it was at the time of Solon that *atimia* began specifically to denote *loss of citizen rights*.

[85] Briseis is δουρικτητή at *Il.* 9.343, see Janko 1992, 323.

Akhaians." Agamemnon's *kratos* threatens all of this value through acts of violent seizure, stripping away, and taking "out of one's hands" in a dramatic reversal of the gesture of conferral.[86] The result transforms Achilles from *homoios* into worthless exile, a man without *timē* because of his exclusion and excluded because he cannot protect what he has. The ring composition hinges on the *dasmos* as the key institution: Achilles is τὸν ὁμοῖον [87] as a consequence of the public conferral of the *geras* (γέρας **ἔξελον** υἷες Ἀχαιῶν); with the abrogation of the process (note the punning ἂψ **ἐκ** χειρῶν **ἕλετο**) Achilles becomes a "worthless exile." Broken down more schematically a closer reading illustrates what is at stake in this passage:

A (general case)	ἀλλὰ τόδ' **αἰνὸν ἄχος** κραδίην καὶ θυμὸν ἱκάνει,
B (positive)	ὁππότε δὴ **τὸν ὁμοῖον ἀνὴρ** ἐθέλῃσιν ἀμέρσαι
C (negative)	καὶ **γέρας ἂψ ἀφελέσθαι, ὅ τε κράτεϊ** προβεβήκῃ·
a (specific case)	**αἰνὸν ἄχος τό μοί ἐστιν**, ἐπεὶ πάθον ἄλγεα θυμῷ.
b (positive)	κούρην ἣν ἄρα μοι **γέρας ἔξελον υἷες Ἀχαιῶν**
c (positive form of C)	δουρὶ δ' ἐμῷ κτεάτισσα, **πόλιν εὐτείχεα πέρσας**,
C (negative)	**τὴν ἂψ ἐκ χειρῶν ἕλετο κρείων** Ἀγαμέμνον
B (negative form of B)	**Ἀτρεΐδης** ὡς εἴ τιν' **ἀτίμητον μετανάστην**

Alternately, the passage can be rendered:

	In general it is shameful
(Socio-political disenfranchisement	whenever a man wants to rob his social equal
via an extra-political threat of force from	and strip the token of that social equality from
a powerful individual . . .	him, because he is enabled by an excess of power;
	In my case it is both shameful and causes personal hurt. . .
the polis has made a judgment . . .	The 'sons of the Akhaians' [*political descent*] selected a girl to be my *geras* [at the *dasmos*]
confirming function and status . . .	and she became my 'spear-possession' after I'd stormed the well-walled city,
but a powerful figure has been allowed	but lord Agamemnon rescinded that selection,
to reverse that judgment.)	the son of Atreus [*personal descent*], as though I were some worthless exile.

Thus Achilles' broader trajectory throughout the *Iliad* is triggered by social consequences ensuing from a crisis posed by the narrative in specifically political terms.[88]

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86 "ἂψ (= Latin *abs*) stresses his high-handedness – the booty had already been distributed." Janko 1992 323.

87 Janko draws attention the 'late' usage of the generalizing article: 1992 323.

88 As argued above in chapter 1, this language echoes the notion found in the late sixth century that the only legitimate use of *kratos* is that which emanates from the centre. Ultimately, Agamemnon's act unilaterally disregards the sovereignty of the 'sons of the Akhaians'. It is worth recalling again that when Maiandrios sought to "put *kratos* in the middle" of the Samian citizen body after the death of Polykrates it was to proclaim simultaneously that a man ought not to be master over those who are his equals and that a principle of equal access to the laws of the *polis* ought to prevail: Hdt. 3.142.3. Conversely, when there is no "equal *dasmos* in the middle" (Theognis 678), the *polis* will begin to disintegrate. The remainder of the story in Herodotus, in spite of the tyrant's default on the deal, indicates that the Samians

The language expressed in this passage (*Il.* 16.52-9) reiterates the context of another dispute between the divine brothers Zeus and Poseidon (*Il.* 15.157-217). In this latter instance Zeus threatens to use his superior *kratos* (*Il.* 15.164) to prevent Poseidon from assisting the Akhaians echoing the words of Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1 and 9:

> ἐπεί ἑο φημὶ βίῃ πολὺ φέρτερος εἶναι
> καὶ γενεῇ πρότερος· τοῦ δ' οὐκ ὄθεται φίλον ἦτορ
> ἶσον ἐμοὶ φάσθαι, τόν τε στυγέουσι καὶ ἄλλοι.
>
> *Il.* 15.165-7
>
> since I declare that I am greater than him in force
> and the former in birth; but his own heart does not shrink
> from asserting equality with me, one before whom even others shudder.

> ...ὄφρα ἐὺ εἰδῇς
> ὅσσον φέρτερός εἰμι σέθεν, στυγέῃ δὲ καὶ ἄλλος
> ἶσον ἐμοί φασθαι καὶ ὁμοιωθήμεναι ἄντην.
>
> *Il.* 1.185-7
>
> . . . so that [Achilles] might well know
> by what degree I am greater than him and that even another man may well
> shudder to declare himself my equal and liken himself before me.

> καί μοι ὑποστήτω, ὅσσον βασιλεύτερός εἰμι
> ἠδ' ὅσσον γενεῇ προγενέστερος εὔχομαι εἶναι.
>
> *Il.* 9.160-1
>
> and let [Achilles] concede to me by how much I am more of a *basileus*
> and can claim to be the elder in birth.

Just as Achilles has been outraged by Agamemnon's attempt at forcing his will on a peer, so Poseidon rages against what he sees as a subversion of the relations established at the primordial *dasmos*.[89] It is beyond the pale, he claims,

> εἴ μ' ὁμότιμον ἐόντα βίῃ ἀέκοντα καθέξει,
>
> *Il.* 15.186
>
> if Zeus would suppress me with force unwillingly,
> I who am his equal in *timē*.[90]

This equality of *timē* ought to exist independently of coercion and instead establish parity in relations between the two gods. Poseidon explains that his *timē* does not subsist in a nebulous 'regard' or as an abstract notion of honour; on the contrary, it derives from the equality of portions (*Il.* 15.209) received by the three brothers, Zeus,

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wanted something more tangible, like accountability, rather than simply a basic principle of citizenship. Note that Maiandrios asked for the priesthood of Zeus Eleutherios (and six talents from Polykrates' fortune) as his *geras*. See also Hdt. 4.161, 7.164 and the comments on these passages by Vernant 2005, 208-9.

89 So it is explicitly designated in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 85-6: ἀμφὶ δὲ τιμήν, ἔλλαχεν ὡς τὰ πρῶτα διάτριχα δασμὸς ἐτύχθη· "as far as his [Hades'] *time* is concerned, he was allotted a third when the first *dasmos* took place". The underworld is simultaneously Hades' *moira* and the substance of his standing among the gods, his *timē*.

90 Compare the expression τὴν ῥα βίῃ ἀέκοντος ἀπηύρων, *Il.* 1.430

Poseidon and Hades at the first distribution of the world (so too *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 85-6):

> τρεῖς γὰρ τ' ἐκ Κρόνου εἰμὲν ἀδελφοί, οὓς τεκετο Ῥέα,
> Ζεὺς γὰρ ἐγώ, τρίτατος δ' Ἀΐδης, ἐνέροισιν ἀνάσσων.
> τριχθὰ δὲ πάντα δέδασται, ἕκαστος δ' ἔμμορε τιμῆς·
>
> *Il.* 15.187-9
>
> For we are three brothers, sons of Kronos whom Rhea bore,
> Zeus and I and Hades, who rules the dead, is the third.
> All was divided three ways and each one of us was apportioned our stake.

Homotimos is therefore synonymous with *homoios* – to be peers is a social state founded on equal access to the distribution of goods held in common, that is, to have an equivalent portion of honour.[91] Poseidon adds that, though each brother was allotted a territory (ἔλαχεν, *Il.* 15.190-2), the earth and Olympos were to remain common to all (γαῖα δ' ἔτι **ξυνὴ** πάντων καὶ μακρὸς Ὄλυμπος, *Il.* 15.193). In other words, the social relations of exchange are made clear through an unambiguous articulation of a *system of objects*. The *dasmos* in this instance functions, as it does elsewhere, to give substance to the relations arising out of succession to an inheritance. Each god has his own *moira*, which is delimited respectively by the presence of common space. The act of distribution in this episode creates a homology between the dominant economic relations of the poem and the cosmic order itself. In a similar way the question of legitimacy impresses itself and with it the impact of force on peer relations. Poseidon acknowledges the greater *kratos* of Zeus (*Il.* 15.195) but demands that the outcome of the *dasmos* be respected. To violate the spirit of this exchange would transform their relations. Thus Poseidon is obliged to declare that he will not be intimidated "as though I were inferior" (κακὸν, *Il.* 15.196). In her reply, Iris notes the preference of the Erinyes for hierarchy – they will always follow the elder (*Il.* 15.204); Poseidon duly notes her appeal to an archaic form of justice and her response echoes that of Nestor who affirms that institutionalized *kratos* permits no equal. The sea-god nevertheless rejects this advice since it imparts legitimacy to the use of violence in overthrowing pacts of exchange. Poseidon's position derives from his receipt of a social object – the sea – via gestures peculiar to an act preserving the absence of a permanent social hierarchy.

In this regard, the sentiments expressed by Achilles in *Iliad* 16 speak to the underlying anxiety in the *Iliad's* exploration of the problem of authenticity in social value. Echoing Achilles reaction in *Iliad* 16, Poseidon is outraged:

> ἀλλὰ τοδ' αἰνὸν ἄχος κραδίην καὶ θυμὸν ἱκάνει
> **ὁππότ' ἂν ἰσόμορον καὶ ὁμῇ πεπρομένον αἴσῃ**
> νεικείειν ἐθέλῃσι χολωτοῖσιν ἐπέεσσιν.
>
> *Il.* 15.208-10

[91] It is of particular interest that Poseidon employs the expression in a way that contradicts Nestor's declaration at *Il.* 1.278.

> But this, a bitter sorrow, comes to my heart and spirit (= *Il.* 16.52)
> whenever he [Zeus] wishes to upbraid with angry words
> *one who has an equal portion and is allotted the same measure.*

The realities of dishonour are somewhat different in detail since it is near impossible for the poet to map the conflict of the poem on to the divine without implying a breakdown in the cosmic order; thus, violent robbery (ἀμέρσαι, *Il.* 16.53-4) is expressed in this passage as a scolding from the king of the gods. Nevertheless, the language and thought are the same: a man who has an equal share is a peer to whom portions of material goods held in common accrue in the same mathematical proportion to oneself. Moreover, with respect to social value, to be *isomoros* is a public announcement of equal *timē* and, as a consequence, of an equal right to speak in the middle. The legitimacy of one's voice is thus directly linked to the public recognition of one's "equal measure" with others and flows from the declaration of parity authenticated by the *dasmos*. Indeed, contrary to what Agamemnon (and Zeus) claim, participation in the *dasmos* confers the quasi-legal right "to claim to be equal and to be a peer" (ἶσον ἐμοί φασθαι καὶ ὁμοιωθήμεναι, *Il.* 1.187).[92]

But for the intervention of Athene, all Agamemnon's words may well have been, as Achilles proclaims (and Thersites will echo, *Il.* 2.242), his last outrage.[93] Achilles is persuaded by the goddess to resist the temptation to kill Agamemnon on the spot, venting his rage instead on the group as a whole. In the first instance, he casts Agamemnon as a violent glutton, a pillager of other men's gifts who devours his own people (δημοβόρος, *Il.* 1.231) because he is too cowardly to take part in battle.[94] Achilles casts Agamemnon as the epitome of the shirker who claims too much of a share without participating in valuable effort.[95]

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92 See the gloss in the scholia *ad loc.*: schol. BL ἀναιρεῖ τήν ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις ἰσηγορίαν.

93 ὕβρις (and its cognates), generally rare in the *Iliad* (as opposed to the *Odyssey*), is here found twice in close proximity, spoken by Athene in reference to Agamemnon's behaviour (*Il.* 1.203, 214, with ὑπεροπλίῃσι, at *Il.* 1.205). Achilles uses ἐφυβρίζω of his treatment at *Il.* 9.368 (a *hapax*); elsewhere ὕβρις refers to spoliation and transgression of appropriate boundaries (cf. *Il.* 11.695; *Od.*) and is germane to the sphere of excessive violence and the treatment of the defeated. On ὕβρις in the Homeric poems, see Cantarella 1983.

94 Part of Agamemnon's subversion of the economy of honour is to make the security of common goods that have been distributed dependent upon service to him. Achilles earlier claimed that he would not stay simply to be the dishonoured lackey of Agamemnon (*Il.* 1.170-1). The dishonour arises from the threat of the use of invasive force against tokens of social value, that is, an action that would violate the spirit of the original transaction. In this penultimate attack on Agamemnon, he recalls this sentiment indicating that Atreides prefers to scour the *laos* in order to strip the gifts from any man who would speak against him (δῶρ' ἀποαιρεῖσθαι ὅς τις σέθεν ἀντίον εἴπῃ·, *Il.* 1.230); a little later, Achilles puts it in a way more germane to the question of social worth: "I would therefore be a coward and a nobody if I were to undertake every job you demand" (*Il.* 1.293-4).

95 It is important to emphasize that in early Greek thought valuable effort, τὸ ἐργάζεσθαι, is a strictly delimited field of action which cannot be expressed in the terms of modern political economy, such as labour, work or production

This analogy recalls the early Greek association of moral failure with excessive bodily behaviour and of the physical materiality of honour, in that Achilles expresses Agamemnon's relation to him as an eater of that which he, Achilles, has toiled to produce. It further echoes similes illustrating unrewarded hardship and toil, the benefits of which are consumed by those who take no part – the mother-bird and her chicks (*Il.* 9.323-7), the worker bees and the drones (Hes. *Th.* 594f.; *Op.* 304-6), and so on[96] – as well as simple moral reproach directed toward the ἀεργὸς ἀνήρ. In *Iliad* 9, Achilles rails at an economy of honour ranking as equals the bad man with the noble and its failure to differentiate the active man from the "lazy" (*Il.* 9.318-20).[97] In Hesiod, the shirker will starve or else eat into the substance of others like drones (*Op.* 302-13); *basileis* who abuse their juridical responsibilities are "devourers of gifts" (δωροφάγοι, Hes. *Op.* 39) in contrast to the *gerontes* in the ideal trial emblazoned on Achilles' shield for whom proper action (proclaiming the straightest *dikē*, *Il.* 18.508) is a source of competition. Nagy has also drawn attention to the presentation of the blame poet in archaic Greek poetry as an insatiate glutton demonstrating how poetic derision is understood as a parallel to the mutilation of the corpse by wild beasts.[98] Animals in general and dogs in particular are derided as perpetrators of shameless acts apposite to this theme of moral degradation (*Il.* 22.354): orderly division – feasting, distribution of spoil, land or inheritance – is, at the extreme, inverted and will eventually be performed (δάσονται) indiscriminately by dogs upon the corpse of Hektor.[99] So Achilles likens Agamemnon to a dog as much for his shameless disregard for normative practice as for his sly and cunning attitude (*Il.* 1.159, 225). Thersites also describes Agamemnon as a wanton glutton who ought to be left at Troy "to

(Vernant 2005, chs.10-12). When Hesiod speaks positively about 'work' he means agriculture; in the *Iliad*, the efforts of Achilles consistently overlooked (he maintains) are those performed on the battlefield. Naturally, in the *Männerbund* the effort expended in war, as well as speech in the *agora* (see for example *Il.* 1.258, 490-2), bring *kudos* and are the fields that demonstrate excellence (*aretē*), even though Achilles' critique must necessarily draw attention to the economic link between war and the circulation of those prestige goods by which innate excellence can be made apparent: "you lay claim to being the 'best of the Akhaians' because you are the more powerful but in fact you seize far more than the part you play would justify".

96 The repetition of this analogy in the *Works and Days* describe the ἀεργὸς ἀνήρ who, by extension with the more elaborate simile in the *Theogony*, is like in temper to woman, herself characterized as a voracious stomach which takes but never gives. On woman as *gaster* in Hesiod's myth of Prometheus, see Vernant 1988, ch.8.

97 There is an echo here of the moral outrage directed toward the trader which seems also to lie beneath Achilles' words at *Il.* 9.312-3. Noble toil 'discloses' on two levels. It yields the crop which divine agency brings forth (it makes the corn present for all to see) and it tests the commitment of the farmer just as war will test the warrior. Trade and the trades rely on hidden knowledge and conceal the true nature of their action. Deception is therefore necessary. To be *aergos* implies not simply inaction but the opposite to *ponos* that demonstrates *aretē*.

98 Nagy 1979, 225-6.

99 Achilles has just expressed a willingness to eat Hektor (*Il.* 22.346-7) in effect likening himself to that which Hektor has implored him to keep away (*Il.* 22.338-9).

digest his *gera*" (γέρα πεσσέμεν, *Il.* 2.237). Thersites uses the rare plural, γέρα, implying that Agamemnon has "overfed." There is a sense here that a man who has more than one *geras* is by definition excessive, thus further developing the theme that the alienation of honour from socially valuable effort amounts to a violent and perverse attitude to normal (bodily) practice.

The oath, which Achilles swears immediately after his tirade against Agamemnon, is, however, now directed toward the entire group. The son of Atreus has challenged the *fiat* of the *dasmos*, which in turn derives its efficacy from the public legitimacy conferred on the division by a complex of gestures and dispositions to objects held in common. Achilles therefore makes the *skeptron* the centerpiece of his oath, not only swearing in its name but also using its embodiment of sovereign legitimacy to draw attention to the impotence of the *laos* in preventing Agamemnon's encroachment on its sphere of action. In general, as Gernet points out, even though its collective voice has a juridical authority co-extensive with the conferral of objects like the *geras* and acts of communal sovereignty such as the *dasmos*, the *laos* is a passive institution. Its voice has been heard already in the approval given to Khryses' original offer of ransom (*Il.* 1.22) and, as asserted by Nestor, its voice was tacitly assumed to have grumbled at Achilles' dishonour at the hands of Agamemnon (*Il.* 9.108-9). There is a sense, albeit faintly and half-heartedly, that all the warriors are sympathetic with Achilles' plight to one degree or another; behind καὶ ἀχνύμενοί περ (*Il.* 2.270) seems to lie at least some general agreement with Thersites' words which sometimes borrows heavily from Achilles' own language (for example, *Il.* 1.232 = *Il.* 2.242), though they laugh at his treatment by Odysseus. It should be noted that Odysseus acts only in the interests of restoring proper deference, his chief claim against Thersites being no more than that he behaved οὐ κατὰ κόσμον (*Il.* 2.214); as far as the *content* of Thersites' arguments is concerned, however, Odysseus says nothing. Other *basileis* too stay silent with the exception of Nestor who acts like the mouthpiece of sober sentiment. Thus there is heavy irony when Achilles swears by that *skeptron* which "the sons of the Akhaians who dispense justice carry in their hands, those who maintain the ordinances of Zeus" (*Il.* 1.237-9) – these words bring into sharp relief both Agamemnon's arrogations and the *laos'* failure to act. The irony is heightened by the repetition of υἷας Ἀχαιῶν with σύμπαντας in strong enjambment (*Il.* 1.240-1) and Achilles' prophecy that without him Agamemnon will be unable to prevent disaster. Although it is grammatically directed at Agamemnon alone Achilles' final pronouncement that "you will tear out your heart in anguish that you valued the best of the Akhaians at nothing" (σὺ δ' ἔνδοθι θυμὸν ἀμύξεις χωόμενος ὅ τ' ἄριστον Ἀχαιῶν οὐδὲν ἔτεισας, *Il.* 1.243-4) can be assumed to include the whole warrior band (as it certainly does at *Il.* 1.299).

The further implications of this oath and its intepretation will be the subject of chapter 6.

Conclusion

Iliad 1 exposes fissures in nascent political exchanges that as yet lack formality and institutional force. But it does so nonetheless in terms that are already quite precisely delineated. *Iliad* 1 draws on these terms in crafting a scenario where tensions are incited and a *stasis* is precipitated, replete with the spectre of the *hubris*, *biē* and asymmetrical *kratos* of the archaic *tyrannos*. It displays a particular anxiety about the content and reference points of a man's stake in the warrior society, as well as a concern for the durability of *timē* in the face of those whose claims are founded on fundamentally different exchanges lying outside the political framework of the *dasmos*.[100] In chapter 6 below it will be argued more closely that the oath sworn by Achilles (*Il.* 1.234-9) begins unraveling assumptions about the nature of value especially as it circulates in a heroic economy as symbolic exchange. The basis for this problematization of value is laid down in *Iliad* 1 by the way it firmly poses the problem of a man's social worth as an explicitly *political* problem.[101] The centrality of nascent political institutions to this problematic cannot be overstressed. The pivotal role of the *dasmos* and its objects, the debate in assembly about the ethics of exchange and the misuse of power, Achilles' reaching into uncharted terrain for a way to express his social and political identity as a rational and autonomous artifact, are flashpoints of crises in the developing *polis* rather than instances of a simple dispute between tribal chieftains.

It is, moreover, signally important that, from the perspective of the *Iliad's* occasion of performance, the hero, for whom the narrative and its performance is a *geras* in requital for paradigmatic suffering, has become a *political hero*. While Hammer has demonstrated beyond question the *Iliad's* unique place in Greek political thinking about ethics and social relations, his observations disinter the performance from its ritual occasion where hero-cult is specifically linked to the foundation of institutions and civic practices. As a consequence specific characteristics of the *Iliad's* agency and 'eventfulness' in the distillation of Greek political thought can be overlooked. Viewed in hindsight from the

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100 See the remarks of Rose 1992, 63-4.

101 A Marxist may even go so far as to suggest that, for Achilles, the superstructure has failed to keep pace with the base. Is the *Iliad* a vanguard performance of the 'political revolution'? Such a view would have to counter those, following Morris 1996, who would see in Homeric epic the distillation of *elite* ideology and the antagonist of 'middling' *polis* ideology. At the very least, this study should go some way in that direction. The best Marxist reading of the *Iliad's* central themes, and one which has had a strong influence on this study, is that of Peter Rose (1992) especially its theoretical overview (ch.1) and its study of the *Iliad*, 43-91. This approach has been developed further in Rose 2012. He argues that the *Iliad* can be interpreted occupying the gap between the work of art as reinforcing the dominant ideology, and the work of art as a vehicle for expressing that ideology's contradictions. He does not, however, tackle the question of performative agency, that is, of how our *Iliad* is the trace of the passage of a performative act with consequences for the event at which it takes place.

perspective of the framework that will be sketched out in the next chapter, the scenario of *Iliad* 1 is a 'real potentiality' evoked, precipitated and contained within the boundaries of its ritual performance.[102] The consequences impact on Achilles who expresses his suffering in a precise political formulation: "there is bitter anguish (*akhos*) whenever a man wants to reduce a *homoios* because his *kratos* permits it – this is *my* bitter anguish!" (*Il.* 16.52-5). If, broadly following the seminal analyses of Gregory Nagy, it is accepted that *akhos* operates conceptually on both narrative and cult levels (and programmatically in the hero's name: * ʼΑχί-λαϝος, "anguish of the *laos*")[103] then it can be further argued that the *Iliad* is implicated in a redefinition of that *akhos* in the contex of emerging crises in the formalization of civic identity and institutions. Put differently, can the conclusions of Nagy's *Best of the Achaeans* be dovetailed with Hammer's *The* Iliad *as Politics*? The historical task, the outlines of which we have sought to sharpen, would then be to examine how and under what circumstances a traditional poetics embedded in cult occasions and an Indo-European past is appropriated at a precise historical moment by the representational will of the Greek *polis* – thereby transforming the hero's paradigmatic ordeal into the aetiology of politics itself.

[102] Hammer hints at this without locating the *Iliad* in a historically specific ritual framework: 2002, 194-7.
[103] Nagy 1979, 69-93 with Palmer 1963, 79 for the etymology.

CHAPTER 3

Beyond the *dasmos*: Succession

Spoil and Inheritance

Later in this study (chapter 6) we will interpret the death of Patroklos as a sacrificial process drawing Achilles back into ritual circulation and restoring the value commensurate with his reinstatement as 'best of the Akhaians', hero of epic and cult. Achilles' alienation from the intimacy of *kleos* is nonetheless represented in the *Iliad* as stemming not from the divine but from a crisis of identity founded in *political* rites. In chapter 6 we will chart Achilles' reconciliation with his destiny on the symbolic level; in this chapter, however, we shall explore how the *Iliad* tackles the institutional vacuum left behind by the structural failure of the *dasmos-geras* system for according value to a man. Though Achilles is inducted into a new status through what appears to be a reflex of an Indo-European rite of investiture (*Il.*18.202-231), the broader future for the social economy of the *Männerbund* has yet to be resolved and the content of words used in transmitting durable expressions of social worth such as γέρας, δατέομαι, λαγχάνω remains uncertain.

So far Achilles' dramatic trajectory in the *Iliad* has been sacrificial. The wager of *kleos* requires that Achilles stake his life as a condition of being readmitted into social exchange (value) and narrative memory (meaning). Once intimacy with this singular destiny has been restored, the intensity of Achilles' encounter with Hektor sets him on a collision course with the divine, a course already 'indicated' to him in the path taken by Patroklos. Just as the hero's own identity is recovered through his readmission into ritual society (the *raison d'etre* of the occasion and the performance itself) the broader problem of social worth underlying the hero's struggle also demands an institutional resolution. For the wider community of warriors, value as an alienated and theoretical form requires symbolic re-anchoring in more durable and effective rituals of exchange.

So far in this study, chapter 1 has mapped a set of practices on the syntagmatic level that are central to the *Iliad,* while chapter 2 has described how these practices are subverted by unilateral power. Chapter 6 will resume by considering the *Iliad* more broadly a critique of the sanctioning of aristocratic value in practice. This chapter, however, compares intersecting similarities between the ideology of the *dasmos* and other archaic forms of distribution, and compares these similarities with the semantic field of distributive thought central to the social concerns of the *Iliad*.

It is argued in this and the following chapter that two points of practical contact – succession and funeral contests – are brought to the fore in the *Iliad* as a revolutionary means of rejuvenating symbolic relations within the system of political exchanges peculiar to the warrior band. It is proposed that the vacuum left by the evaporation of confidence in the *dasmos* – understood *as a political rite*, with its apparent lack of formal process, ambivalent points of reference in a symbolic framework for exchange, uncertain architecture of rules and adjudication and, not least, its inability to resist arrogation by the powerful – is filled by two closely connected forms of exchange. These two forms, while structurally homologous to the *dasmos*, have the added advantage of powerful symbolic frameworks within which to articulate a ritualized expression of legitimate status. The virtue of these different forms of exchange derives especially from their *practical concern with legitimacy and its durable expression*. In sum, the key objects of succession and contest – patrimony and the prize – are presented in the *Iliad* as solutions to the proto-civic impasse objectified both in the *geras* in particular (*Iliad* 1) and the heroic economy in general (*Iliad* 9).[1]

This chapter tackles the mode of exchange in the succession of heirs to property. It has been argued above that discrete fields of action characterizing the circulation of symbolic goods in the *Iliad's* community of heroes overlap with respect to land, the apportioning of the sacrificial meal or the allocation of spoil, and so on. It is significant that these include the forms of exchange involved in the succession of heirs to patrimony prior to testamentary disposal.[2] A clear homology exists in the relations expressed between these two fields because both articulate a type of human community based on the distribution of goods held in common. On one level, there is a free intersection of language in these fields that allows us to see that a community of warrior peers articulates its relations along precisely the same lines, as, for example, next-of-kin at *Il.* 5.158: " . . . and distant relatives *distributed* his possessions" (χηρωσταὶ δὲ διὰ κτῆσι **δατέοντο**). On another level, however, there are inheritance contexts that offer different approaches to the resolution of questions about legitimacy and authenticity. At or after a funeral, for example, questions arise concerning the transfer of objects that bestow authenticity on participants. These questions are not only resolved through particular distributive practices and the allocation of goods, but also via the formal intercession and institutionalization of an active third party – witnesses. Acts of succession can therefore provide what in the *Iliad* the *geras* and spoil division specifically cannot, namely, *a more rigorous and less arbitrary system for the adjudication of claims to status and the evaluation of the group's members*. Any precise semantic homology between early Greek thinking about the authentication of succession to an inheritance and the way prestige is

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1 Taken together these two chapters draw upon, and complement, Brown 2003.

2 This is not a novel observation, for example see Borecký 1963, 60 and 1965, *passim.*

circulated among the warrior band has important implications for this study. It permits interpretation of funerals as critical meta-ritual nexuses within which practices cohere to authenticate social identity and fix social value by authorizing legitimate succession both politically and symbolically. Seaford has shown that funerals provide a focal point for the emergence of a community identity of key importance in the formation of the early *polis*.[3] It can be added that funerals provide contexts which are simultaneously juridical and ritual, contexts which facilitate the proper public disposal of objects and establish symbolic relations generally with the community at large and specifically with the dead man. The funereal context of succession delineates status unequivocally via the transmission of objects and in settling disputes by recourse to effective modes of proof and determination. The funeral therefore provides us with a point of contact in the *Iliad* between a crisis in one mode of social evaluation – the *dasmos* presupposed by *Iliad* 1 – and the installation of another, the funeral *agon* of *Iliad* 23.

The relation between the semantic fields of spoil distribution and successions to inheritances is clarified in *Iliad* 15 by Zeus' dispute with Poseidon over the latter's intervention on behalf of the Trojans. Zeus angrily dispatches Iris to convey his concern to the sea-god with an order to desist. The message announces his greater capacity for coercion and explicitly reminds Poseidon not to seek to be the peer of the king of the gods. The language of the quarrel deliberately echoes that of Achilles and Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1 (for example, *Il.* 15.165-7). In his rejoinder Poseidon reminds Zeus that, after the fall of the Titans, the cosmos devolved onto the three sons of Kronos and Rhea, making them all *homotimos*, "equal in status". This special relationship between brothers is established by a procedure that is, in effect, the succession of next-of-kin to an inheritance, which is described as allocation of equal shares with the proviso that the remaining territory – earth and Olympos – be held in common (*xunē*):

> τρεῖς γὰρ τ' ἐκ Κρόνου εἰμεν ἀδελφεοί, οὓς τέκετο Ῥέα,
> Ζεὺς καὶ ἐγώ, τρίτατος δ' Ἀΐδης, ἐνέροισιν ἀνάσσων.
> **τριχθὰ δὲ πάντα δέδασται, ἕκαστος δ' ἔμμορε τιμῆς**
> ἤτοι ἐγὼν ἔλαχον πολιὴν ἅλα ναιέμεν αἰεὶ
> παλλομένων, Ἀΐδης δ' ἔλαχε ζόφον ἠερόεντα,
> Ζεὺς δ' ἔλαχ' οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἐν αἰθέρι καὶ νεφέλῃσι·
> γαῖα δ' ἔτι **ξυνὴ** πάντων καὶ μακρὸς Ὄλυμπος.
>
> *Il.* 15.187-93

> For we three are brothers from Kronos, whom Rhea bore,
> Zeus and I, and the third is Hades who is lord of the dead.
> *Everything was distributed into thirds and each had his portion of status:*
> I drew the grey sea to be my dwelling forever
> among those shaking lots, and Hades drew the misty gloom,
> while Zeus drew the broad heavens in the air and clouds;
> Earth and great Olympos are common to us all.

[3] Seaford 1994, 106-43.

Significantly, this episode is recounted differently in the *Theogony*.[4] There, Hesiod narrates how, after the Titans were overthrown (understood as a resolution by force of questions surrounding *timai*), the gods co-opted Zeus as their *basileus* and *anax* on the oracular advice of Gaia (*Th.* 881-5). Hesiod's version places Earth in a mediating role functionally parallel to her role in *Iliad* 15. Zeus, however, is represented quite differently in that his position continues to be derived from a ritual of succession that confers upon the heir the legitimate right to dispose of patrimony.[5] Central to this rite of succession is presidency over a distribution of patrimony to participants whose acceptance of a share in turn legitimates this succession. Thus it is no surprise that Zeus' first act in this role is the *proper* distribution of *timai* amongst the gods (ὁ δὲ τοῖσιν ἐὺ διεδάσσατο τιμάς, *Th.* 885) including the confirmation of existing status and the recognition of those not acknowledged by Kronos (*Th.* 392-6).

By contrast, the *Iliad's* version is made all the more striking by a decision at this point in the narrative to represent cosmic partition as the collective act of equals (brothers) disposing of patrimony held in common and, moreover, by its enactment within common spaces in which Earth and Olympos are formed into a type of *meson*. As told in the *Iliad* the gestures employed are the same as those directed toward spoil held in common by the community of warriors. Where communal goods are distributed and the preservation of relations of equal status among the group is necessary to the reproduction of the group, the *dasmos* will consist of the "allotment of (equal) shares". Reiterating the discussion above, the practices configuring members of the group in respect to the distribution of goods held in common create precise relations. Poseidon complains bitterly (as Achilles does: *Il.* 15.208-10 = 16.52-4) that by bringing force into this deliberative environment Zeus is violating the unambiguous ethical principles on which it is founded.[6] Peers are not created by these gestures in the *Iliad* as an indirect reflex. Rather the most effective and lasting ideological statement for a community of equals lies in locating goods in common space (ξυνήϊα κείμενα, *Il.* 1.124) and the performed devolution of objects from the centre to the individual. Poseidon makes this abundantly clear to his brother:

> ἦ ῥ' ἀγαθός περ ἐὼν ὑπέροπλον ἔειπεν,
> εἴ μ' **ὁμότιμος** ἔόντα βίῃ ἀέκοντα καθέξει.
>
> *Il.* 15.185-6

> although strong, he has overreached in speaking like this
> if he would force me with violence unwillingly, because I am his equal in *timē*.

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4 Follwing Janko 1992, 247, who also surveys the figure of casting lots in early cosmology.

5 Even though the succession is imagined to be violent insofar as Kronos attempts to thwart intergenerational transmission and is overthrown.

6 For the intertextual possibilities connecting the *Theogony* with the *Iliad* here, see Muellner 1996, 52-93.

And again a few lines further on:

> ἀλλὰ τόδ' αἰνὸν ἄχος κραδίην καὶ θυμὸν ἱκάνει
> **ὁππότ' ἂν ἰσόμορον καὶ ὁμῇ πεπρωμένον αἴσῃ**
> νεικείειν ἐθέλῃσι χολωτοῖσιν ἐπέεσσιν.
>
> *Il.* 15.208-10
>
> But this, a bitter sorrow, comes to my heart and spirit (= *Il.* 16.52)
> whenever he [Zeus] wishes to upbraid with angry words
> *one who has an equal portion and is allotted the same measure.*

For this reason Poseidon has very good grounds for understanding himself as having "the same *timē*" as Zeus because the devolution of goods held in common has made the three brothers *isomoroi* and each to be regarded "in the same degree". Ἰσόμορος, ὁμότιμος, ὁμῇ πεπρωμένον αἴσῃ are expressions linked to a specifically delimited category of objects. These passages illustrate intersecting fields of practice in which the distribution of spoil amongst a warrior group establishes the same pattern of relations as those practices which bring about the succession of the next-of-kin to an inheritance.

This observation does not, however, warrant the general assumption that a descent group (like the Attic phratry for example) had at some point 'borrowed' from practices of familial succession, imagined to be historically prior, in order to articulate their peer relations (so-called 'fictive kinship'). This issue raises a separate problem that cannot be properly examined here.[7] It may equally hold true, for example, that *poleis* later formalized succession practices by analogy with the distributive mechanisms that operated in other spheres. Suffice to say it is difficult to establish (nor is it perhaps even necessary to establish) whether either set of relations for the devolution of property can be said to have preceded the other. The solution is rather to regard both these fields – the *dasmos* of spoil and the *daisis* of an inheritance[8] – as relatively undifferentiated for the reason that both describe a movement of goods that perform homologous social functions, namely, the production and reproduction of a framework of equal relations via the partition of communal goods into shares.

It is important to add that the Homeric evidence reveals a lack of enforceability with respect to succession parallel to that observed in relation to the distribution of spoil in the *Männerbund*. Poseidon lacks the *institutional power* to compel Zeus to accord him an equal status. Odysseus, in his Cretan guise, also recounts how as the son of a *pallakis* he was entirely dependent on his father's goodwill for his ongoing status: "he regarded me equal to his straight-born sons" (ἀλλά με ἶσον ἰθαγενέεσσιν ἔτιμα, *Od.* 14.203); but the status bestowed on Odysseus lacks an enforceable legal character. After his father's death the legitimate sons exclude him from the division. What he does receive from his brothers takes the form of gifts (*Od.* 14.210) putting him instead under an obligation. The enforceability of inheritance division will be considered further below.

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7 See in general the discussion in Lambert 1993, 7-21.

8 *Daisis* is the legal term for inheritance division in the Gortyn *Code* (*IC* 4.72, IV 25). See further discussion below.

Further evidence confirms the homology between the distribution of spoil and inheritance more broadly. The verbs δατέομαι and λαγχάνω are used just as frequently in the archaic and early classical period to refer to the partition of patrimony as to the division of spoil.[9] Moreover, in both cases τιμή denotes the relative value of the recipient of goods transmitted in this way. For example, in the *Homeric hymn to Demeter* the establishment of the cosmic order is also represented as a primordial *dasmos* between the sons of Kronos (86). The *Hymn to Poseidon* describes two of Poseidon's divine identities, horse-tamer and the saviour of ships, as *timē* distributed to him by the gods (θεοὶ τιμὴν ἐδάσαντο, 22.4).[10] The succession of Hesiod and Perses to their father's property is the "distribution of an allotment" (κλῆρον ἐδασσάμεθα, *Op.* 37). The notion of an equal division of a father's property is used by Pindar to explain the choice offered to Polydeukes: the fate of the Dioskouroi is an inheritance, a *lakhos* (*Nem.* 10.85), which, divided equally, gives them the "same fate" (πότμον . . . ὁμοῖον, *Nem.* 10.57).[11] When given the choice between succeeding alone to the immortality which Zeus offers or else sharing it with the mortally wounded Kastor, Polydeukes, without thinking, "divided the whole lot equally" (πάντων . . . ἀποδάσσασθαι ἴσον, *Nem.* 10.86). The expression τῶν χρεμάτον τὸ λάχος is attested with the precise meaning "the inheritance of (patrimonial) property" in a Mantinean judgment on temple murder from the middle of the fifth century BCE.[12] Demokritos, in advice about the proper training of children, especially advocates the distribution of property (δατεῖσθαι τὰ χρηματα) to sons in advance of death (B 279 D-K). In the event that a man dies without children, his property, though it passes to more distant kin groups, is nonetheless expressed as a distribution with the verb δατέομαι. In the *Iliad* (5.158) and Hesiod's *Theogony* (606-7) the childless man must add to his worries the future dispersion of his *ktemata* among *kherostai*, heirs by default to a vacant estate; his household disappears by being assimilated into those of distant

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9 For δατέομαι see pp.80-1 above. Λαγχάνω for allocations of spoil: *Il.* 9.367, 18.327, *Od.* 5.40 = 13.138, 9.159-60, 14.233; inheritance allocations: *Il.* 15.190-2; see also *Od.* 14.209: ἐπὶ κλήρους ἐβάλοντο. funeral rites: *Il.* 7.80, 15.350, 22.343, 23.76, *Od.* 5.311.

10 Compare the expression "allotted *timē* equal to the gods" (τιμὴν δὲ λελόγχασιν ἶσα θεοῖσι, *Od.* 11.304)

11 The function of the Dioskouroi as divine overseers of fair division is also expressed in this ode by two other crucial roles: as recipients of a Theoxenic sacrifice and as ταμίαι Σπάρτας: those who supervise contests at which prizes are awarded for *aretē*.

12 *Nomima* II 2.20 = *IGT* 34 = *IG* V 2.262. See also comments by *IPArk* 8, p.83 n.12, 85 n.17. It is interesting that in this document the use of δατέομαι (l.17) fits ambiguously into this pattern. On the one hand, confiscated property (houses) is distributed by the city as though it were spoil; on the other it is possible that public seizure of goods – in effect, the official reconfiguration of objects as common property – is distributed in a manner that is construed as the succession of the *polis* to its own patrimony. The ambivalence confirms the constant overlapping of these fields in early Greek thought: consider the way Laureion silver was conceived by the Athenian assembly, Hdt 7.144.1, *Ath. Pol.* 22.7, Plut. *Them.* 4.1.

relatives.[13] Similarly, a household unclaimed in the absence of legitimate successors is easily represented metaphorically as a type of spoil to be divided up among claimants of lesser degree (*Od.* 16.385, 17.80, 20.216). This is a possibility about which Telemakhos is constantly warned (*Od.* 2.368, 3.316, 15.13). Under such circumstances, Penelope becomes a virtual *patroukhos*, an heiress and bearer of the property to the man that marries her (*Od.* 2.335-6). The treatment of patrimonial property as plunder in these contexts is logical in a system of thinking in which spoil division and partition of the deceased estate belong to the same semantic field. For the same reason plundering and carrying off property can be construed as the complement as well as the opposite of proper distribution. In classical Athens δατέομαι acquired a precise legal definition, referring almost exclusively to the division of inheritances. This is found in the official titles of certain magistrates, such as the *datetai* at Athens, who were appointed to arbitrate succession disputes.[14] The same is true also for λαγχάνω, which by Demosthenes' day had become formulaic in such expressions as τὴν τοῦ πάτρος μοῖραν λαγχάνειν (for example, Dem. 43.51).[15]

These pertinent but isolated examples, however, provide insufficient broader detail for drawing conclusions about the link between the practical devolution of material objects and symbolic capital such as status and honour in archaic society. The explanation is better sought in the comparative data of a more complete set of institutions. One such source of data can be found in the archaic laws of Gortyn in Crete.

The juridical framework: evidence from late archaic Gortyn

The law code from Gortyn (*IC* 4. 72, hereafter 'Code') is especially rich in the vocabulary of inheritance.[16] It furnishes enough material to begin establishing points of contact between one mode of social evaluation – the unregulated distribution of communal property – and another, the publicly supervised allocation of communal property.

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[13] On this category of kin, who are in effect true heirs in the absence of testamentary disposal, see Benveniste 1973, 68 and Chantraine *DELG* 1258. The advent of the will removes this problem (see Plut. *Solon* 21.3); adoption less so. In general, see Asheri 1963. On the parallel semantic development of Latin *heres*, see Walde-Hofmann 1982, 641-2.

[14] *Ath. Pol.* 56.6, where the archon appoints "distributors, should anyone object to the allotment of common property" (εἰς δατητῶν αἵρεσιν, ἐάν τις μὴ θέλῃ τὰ κοινὰ ὄντα νέμεσθαι), on which see Rhodes 1981, *ad loc.*; see also Harpokration s.v. δατεῖσθαι; Suda s.v. δατεῖσθαι καὶ δατηταί; *Lexicon Rhetoricorum Cantabrigense* (ed. Houtsma) s.v. εἰς δατητῶν αἵρεσιν, with Lipsius 1905-15, vol. 2. 576-7.

[15] See, for example, Isaios 8.1, 9.24 or 11.9 for the expression λαγχάνω τοῦ κλήρου. Compare also Eur. *Tr.* 1192.

[16] On inheritance regulations in the Gortyn *code* (*IC* 4.72), see Willets 1967, *passim*, Büchler and Zitelmann 1885, Rönnberg 1888, Kohler and Ziebarth 1912, 63-72, Maffi 1991, *IGT* 169, Gagarin 1994, *Nomima* II 48 and 49, Ogden 1996, 263-71, Brixhe and Bile 1999, Davies 2005, 319-22. On the function of the *Code* in general see the useful remarks in Willetts 1967, 1-34, *Nomima* II 3-18 and Davies 1996. References to the *Code* will be to *IC* 4.72, by column and lines number only.

First of all, it provides a repetition of key concepts. As discussed above, Poseidon's struggle for equality of status with Zeus follows the same disposition to objects held in common including an equality of *timē* and the possession of equal portions. To be "the recipient of an equal share" (*isomoros*) is the political and economic definition of "having the same status" (*homotimos*). To be allotted one's portion automatically announces one's *timē* in terms of the degree of one's *moira*. So at Gortyn, the status of the widow, for example, is clearly delimited in terms of the portion she receives: "of the produce in the house she shall be allotted a portion commensurate with that of lawful heirs" (πεδὰ τὸν ἐπιβαλλόντον μοῖραν λακέν, III 27-9).[17] Her social position is therefore explicitly formulated as a precise quantitative equivalence with "those to whom the property falls", the literal translation of *epiballontes*, that category legally defined as the next-of-kin.[18] That this relation is also denoted by *isomoiria* is shown when the *Code* sets aside a share of the patrimony for the adopted son in the event that legitimate sons survive. That share is to be precisely equivalent (ϝισϝόμοιρος, X 53, see also IV 39-43) to that received by legitimate daughters – the adoptee will receive a daughter's one share as opposed to the two portions allotted to legitimate sons.[19] Thus, in order to establish that this category of kin cannot claim to be *homotimos* with legitimate sons, the *polis* has explicitly made clear a specific social relation by devolving symbolic goods in a precise way.[20] These relations are, furthermore, made clearer by the way the vocabulary of distribution discussed above acquires a legal specificity[21] in the Gortynian regulations for succession set out from line 23 of column IV:

IV 23-31: The father, while alive, is to have control over any division of the property (τὸν κρεμάτον καρτερὸν ἔμεν τᾶδ δαίσιος, IV 24-5). There is no necessity for him to divide (δατεῖϑϑαι, IV 28-9) the property while alive unless a son is fined, for whom partial division of the inheritance (ἀποδάτταϑϑαι, IV 29-30) can be made.

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17 See Willetts' comments 1967, 62.

18 On which, see Willetts 1966, Van Effenterre 1982, and Avramovic 1990.

19 One might assume by extension that the adopted son had no special claim over that of the heiress in the event that only legitimate daughters remain.

20 The term *isomoiros* appears in a very fragmentary inscription from Gortyn from around the middle of the sixth century (*Nomima* II 37 = *IC* 4.20) referring to what appears to be the legal status of the adoptee. In a fragment of Solon (fr.34 West), the subordinate position of the *kakoi* in relation to the *esthloi* is expressed by their unequal *moirai*. Referring to the problem of land, Solon expresses a distaste for the redistribution of land into equal holdings, which would effectively "make the nobles *isomoiroi* with the bad" (9). Solon here offers a proto-legal definition of belonging to the political community in terms of "having an equal share" (on the development of which see Walter 1993, 17-22, 176-210). It is pertinent that this word acquires precise definition at Gortyn in a parallel semantic field, namely the fixing of civic prerogativesvia distributive practices in the context of legitimate succession (rather than redrawing the boundaries of belonging via the redistribution of land). In 4th century Athens, as at Gortyn, it denotes having an equal share of an inheritance: Is. 1.2, 35; 6.25; 7.19, 22.

21 As opposed to the personal guarantee made by a *basileus* that cannot, if renounced, be made enforceable: see Hektor's promise at *Il.* 17.229-32 or the scenario of 'Cretan' Odysseus', *Od.* 14.200-213.

IV 31-46: Upon the death of the father, (a) houses along with contents and livestock shall automatically become the property of the sons (ἐπὶ τοῖς υἱάσι ἔμεν, IV 37) while (b) "all other property" (τὰ ἄλλα κρέματα, IV 37-8)[22] is to be "properly distributed" (δατεῖθθαι καλῶς, IV 38-9). This institutional development, missing in the impasse of *Iliad* 1, has a precise legal definition: the "allotment of two shares to each son and one share to each daughter" (λανκάνεν τὸς υἱύνς . . . δύο μοίρανς ϝέκαστον, τᾶδ δὲ θυγατέρανς, . . . μίαν μοῖραν ϝεκάσταν, IV 39-43). The mother's property (τὰ ματρῶια) is to be treated in the same way (IV 43-6).

IV 46-V.9: a father's gifts and pledges (in association with betrothal or marriage) shall be taken into account but women who have no property from either gift, pledge or inheritance (ἀπολανκάνεν, V 1) shall have the right "to claim their inheritance" (ἀπολανκάνεν, V 7).

V 9-28: Order of succession (that is, those who have the legitimate right "to possess the property" [ἔκεν τὰ κρέματα, V 12-13]):

(a) direct descent from the father in three degrees;
(b) the father's brother(s) and direct descent from him in two degrees;
(c) the father's sister and direct descent from her in two degrees;
(d) the *epiballontes* – "those to whom the property may fall" beyond cases (a)-(c);
(e) "And if there are no *epiballontes* those of the household comprising the *klaros* [that is, the dependent inhabitants of the estate] are to have the property."[23]

Even though these terms have begun to acquire a delimited meaning, the language is still preoccupied with fixing relations between members of the family with respect to one another via the allocation of goods held in common, in this case patrimony (and to a lesser extent maternal property). Unlike the distribution of spoil in epic or the cosmic division between the Kronidai, the succession regulations of archaic Gortyn show *a concern for institutional clarity through quantitative precision*. This concern also manifests itself in the emergence of a more specific legal vocabulary with which to describe the non-reciprocal movement of communal objects:[24]

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22 Unspecified although this probably refers to the types of property stated at V 39-41.

23 Willetts' translation. For a discussion of the interpretation of these lines, see Willetts 1967, 15 and 66.

24 It has been argued previously that the devolution of objects expressed by these words is especially non-reciprocal in character. This is explicit at V.1-9. Here the *Code* makes reference to the three possible ways in which a woman might receive patrimonial property: gift, pledge (on which, see Willetts' commentary, 1967, 21) or inheritance. In contrast to the first two, and, by definition, opposed to them, the movement of goods in an inheritance context is unambiguously unidirectional in precisely the same way as the *geras* of distributed spoil.

1. δατεῖθθαι and δαῖσις. As with the allocation of spoil, words from this root[25] refer to collective acts of distribution. The expression "proper division" (δατεῖθθαι καλῶς, IV 38-9) describes the devolution of objects which aims at reproducing the normative socio-political order of the *polis*.[26] δαῖσις here is the precise term for the formally witnessed division of an inheritance among successors. By the later archaic period the word *dasmos*, although used of an inheritance in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 86 (and more generally at Theognis 678), has become more confined in meaning to contexts of land distribution.[27] The root nevertheless denotes a very precise mode for the transmission of objects, one that is differentiated from reciprocal gestures.

2. ἀποδάτταθθαι. In the *Code* this verb has retained the sense of *partial distribution* found in the *Iliad*.[28] It occurs twice: (a) if a child is fined while the father is still alive, then the father can advance the amount of the fine from the anticipated inheritance (IV 29-30); (b) in the event that an heiress does not wish to marry the appropriate successor (*epiballon*, "groom-elect" in Willetts' translation), she must "portion out" as compensation to him part of the inheritance that she bears with her (VIII 7).

3. λανκάνεν μοῖραν.[29] This is an elaboration of what is intimated by δατεῖθθαι καλῶς (IV 38-9) and refers especially to the *allocation of divided shares*.[30] It is clear that this expression implies the allocation of *equal* shares since the process envisaged at IV 39-43 presupposes first the division of property into equal portions (*moirai*) and only then are individuals allocated their proper amount (for example, two for each son, one for each daughter, and so on). If a particular equivalence is stressed then this is made explicit by the expression of a "share equal to" another status (ϝισϝόμοιρος, III 27-9 or X 53).

4. ἀπολανκάνεν. This is the precise legal expression denoting receipt of one's portion of the inheritance, or simply "to inherit". At V 1, 4, and 7 it exclusively refers to a woman's entitled portion of her father's property as opposed to gift or (marriage) pledge and therefore expresses status via a definition based on property relations. Again, at VI 6 and 9 this verb denotes inheritance as opposed to general acquisition (indicated by *πάομαι, VI 5-6, 8-9). Finally, at VII 34, it is used in the sense of a lawful devolution of property. Here a rightful claimant to an heiress is to "inherit" half the revenue from the property which she holds, if either the claimant or the heiress are below marriageable age, until such time as they can be wedded. To this can be added διαλανκάνεν, "distribute amongst", used of shares quantified by sale (V 50).

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25 See above pp.80-2.

26 Compare the expression εὖ δατεῖσθαι, *Il.* 1.368, Hes. *Th.* 885, and δατεῖσθαι κατὰ μοῖραν, *Od.* 16.385.

27 If it is to be restored in *ML* 42, B 5-6. On these contexts, see above p.80-1.

28 *Il.* 17.231, 22.118, 24.595.

29 See Willetts 1967, 62.

30 So Willetts 1961, 46.

5. (a) ἔμεν ἐπὶ; (b) ἔκεν τὰ κρέματα; (c) ἀναιλῆϑ(ϑ)αι. Expressions for entering into property and ownership. Throughout the *Code* (a) denotes usufruct, while (b) full ownership and right of disposal. Where succession is transparent the successor will "hold the property" immediately. On the other hand (c) has a quasi-ritual connotation (discussed further in chapter 4 below); the *Code* uses this term with a more precise legal meaning to refer to the ritual-performative gesture of "taking up" the inherited goods by *epiballontes*, those next-of-kin whose claim subsists in the absence of direct successors (V 24-5 [property][31]), or the succession of the adopted son in the absence of *gnesioi*. (X 40-1, 44). It is contrasted with (b), for example at VII 4-10 where, if there are free and slave offspring born to the same mother and property exists upon her death, the free offspring are to "possess it" (ἔκεν) while if only slaves exist the *epiballontes* shall "take it up" (ἀναιλῆϑαι).

The more precise institutional meaning of these words does not obscure their basic denotative sense; rather the city's law code merely concretizes the semantic homology by clarifying and regulating the links between social relations and material goods. In the development of the early *polis*, what seems important is not only that citizen relations are founded on symbolic links to ancestors but that these relations are reproduced periodically in procedurally transparent distributions of shared goods. By recognizing this semantic link between warrior groups and familial units in the political definition of the kin-group, it is possible to detect a move away from privileging notions of kinship and monopolies of symbolic power. It may be an error to assume that descent groups, like the Attic phratries, were necessarily *fictive* in their understanding of their shared kin-relations if the practices which defined the two groups were in fact barely differentiated. In other words, if, for example, syssitic groups distribute their communal property among one another in the same way that sons dispose of their father's property, then this represents a form of shared practical logic sufficient for the effective establishment of 'real' kin relations. It is a truism that descent groups borrowed kinship's symbolic language and practices of legitimacy – such as, for example that warrior 'fraternities' were 'familial' in their disposition to objects.[32] It is equally possible, however, in the context of the developing city that the family was remodelled after the corporate practices of warrior *hetaireiai* especially given the fact that the formal acknowledgement of kin status was often overseen by such corporate warrior 'companions'.[33] Both familial and political succession were

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31 On this controversial passage see the various attempts to render it: Willetts 1967, 43 and 66, *GD* p.326, *ML* pp. 96-7, *IGT* p.497 and pp.501-6, *Nomima* II p.174 with further comments, Fornara 1977, 87.

32 Roussel 1976, 93-157, Murray 1990.

33 Benveniste 1973, 172-3. On the Cretan *hetaireia*, see Willetts 1967, 11: "a basis of the whole political organization at Gortyn . . . since as witnesses of the presentation of sons of their fellow citizens, the members of the *hetaireia* guaranteed the legitimacy of their birth". The basic similarity between the function of the *hetaireia* and the Attic phratry is given by Arist. *Pol.* 1264ᵃ9. Dosiadas' description of the Lyttian *andreia* is suggestive (*FGrH* 458 F2 = Ath. 4.143a-d). Traditional patterns of

ideologically interconnected in the early city, not because blood descent conferred a privileged relation of exclusivity, but, on the contrary, because they both shared in a political ideology of witnessed distribution and status (*timē*) conferred by receipt of an adjudicated *moira*.[34]

Thus, the story about 'Cretan' Odysseus (*Od.*14.200-10) makes it clear that he lacks a proper share not because he cannot demonstrate a tie by blood but rather because his mother was a *pallakis*, not recognized as a legitimate wife with respect to the production of heirs. The legitimacy of his half-brothers therefore derives from an institutional recognition not mentioned in the *Odyssey* but perhaps half-glimpsed in Nestor's oblique reference to phratries at *Il.* 9.63. Lambert is surely right when he says "the phratry was a structure *par excellence* for the formation and maintenance of the *natural relations* that existed among persons connected to each other by kinship or proximity of abode, the relations among citizens".[35] Where this formulation needs qualification is in the concept of 'natural relations'. The phratry was crucial rather in the "formation and maintenance" of relations created by *practices of legitimation and the regulation of property transmission*. Rather than structured by 'natural relations' the phratry is the institution that determines what in fact constitutes 'naturalness' as part of its most important function, the determination and establishment of legitimacy. This has little to do with 'real' kinship; rather the phratry (or *hetaireia* in Gortyn) offers a *political process of determination* with which to bypass impasses that frequently arise in a world where biological relationships cannot ever be definitively established. Legitimacy is therefore the product of quite political practices which confer or deny social legitimacy, rather than the result of accumulating evidence of a 'natural' relation understood anachronistically in biological terms. 'Kinship' and 'proximity of abode' are in any case meaningless without being thoroughly enmeshed within "all the practical and symbolic work" that transforms social relations into bodily *hexis*.[36] Put differently, because all practices and exchanges dealing with social belonging take place under the aegis of this institution, then the phratry acquires the capacity to confer legitimacy for all contexts – which is why citizenship (i.e. political belonging) in Athens was practically impossible without phratry membership (i.e. social belonging). The name of the institution makes this clear: *phratry* preserves an archaic expression for brotherhood that has nothing to do with "brother" in the sense of biological consanguinity and everything to do with an exclusive group that defines and regulates "brotherness" in the context of warrior associations.[37] We may even go so far as to locate

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kinship and marriage were radically restructured by the advent of the developing city: Vernant 1988, 55-77.

34 For the terms of the debate about the origin of the phratry, see Lambert 1993, 269 n.112.

35 Lambert 1993, 42-3, emphasis added.

36 Bourdieu 1998, 68, cited fully below on p.159.

37 Again, see especially Benveniste 1973, 172-3.

the earliest intersection of the semantics of spoil and inheritance distribution in precisely these kinds of proto-civic groups, formal associations who regulated membership of kin groups and warrior fraternities simultaneously within a single structure of practices and ideologies. Nothing in the development of this institution obliges us to assume the priority of the "family" as the template for political belonging. On the contrary, as Bourdieu points out, the family is an institution founded on the misrecognition of exchanges calculated to define and produce "natural relations".[38] In a homologous way, the *polis* is a meta-institution regulating the exchanges that produce 'political relations', i.e. citizenship.

These observations are further illustrated by considering the term designating "next-of-kin" in the *Code*, the *epiballontes*, "those upon whom the property devolves". Perhaps, as Benveniste suggests, they are to be understood as the true 'heirs': "heirs were only those who inherited in default of a son".[39] In the broadest sense, *epiballontes* form that group which has some ultimate claim on a deceased estate even though they might be differently constituted with respect to certain types of property.[40] Significantly then next-of-kin and heirs at Gortyn are defined by their disposition to property rather than via a relation of kinship or 'blood'. This is further illustrated by the fact that in the final instance non-kin household dependents are accorded succession rights in the event of a vacant estate (V 28). Moreover, as with 'Cretan' Odysseus, direct kinship tends in practice to be secondary or subordinate to the condition of having been formally recognized as a successor or *epiballon*. Proof of descent is acquired chiefly via political ritual, a witnessed acknowledgement by the corporate group. The situation of the adopted son is a good example: he may be a bastard child, thereby indicating, at least biologically, direct descent. But biological descent is never a requirement: "adoption [lit. "a showing-forth"] shall come from wherever one wishes" (**ἄνπανσιν** ἔμεν ὄπο κά τιλ λῆι, X 33-4). Without accompanying proof of formal recognition, however, *any* claim is worthless. In archaic Gortyn legitimacy is confirmed via a *political rite* involving both *polis* and *hetaireia*:[41]

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38 Bourdieu 1998, 64-74.

39 Benveniste 1973, 68. Be that as it may, it remains the case that the precise meaning of *epiballontes* in the *Code* is to be derived from the narrow regulations at each instance. It is clear, for example, that the *epiballontes* of V 23 and 25-6 are roughly equivalent to the epic χηρωσταί of *Il.* 5.158 and Hes. *Th.* 606-7, but a few lines later at V 29 must include all inheritors, including sons. On this instance, see the translation in *ML* p.97. On the shared morphology and semantics of Latin *heres* and χηρωσταί designating those who take up a *vacant* estate, see Walde-Hofmann 1982, 641-2.

40 For example, the *epiballontes* at V 28-9, which seem to include all possible claimants listed from V.9 on, are not equivalent to those mentioned at V 22 and 25,"the remaining kin"; both of these are, furthermore, distinct from the *epiballontes* defined as those who have a claim to marry an heiress.

41 The inverse of this rite – renunciation of the adoptee – follows the same procedure: XI 10-14. The ritual process – introduction before the citizen body accompanied

ἀμπαίνεθαι δὲ κατ' ἀγορὰν
καταϝελμένον τῶμ πολιατᾶ-
ν ἀπὸ τῶ λάο ὃ ἀπαγορεύοντι.
vac. ὁ δ' ἀμπανάμενος δότο τᾶ-
ι ἑταιρείαι τᾶι ϝᾶι αὐτῶ ἰαρέ
ιον καὶ πρόκοον ϝοίνο.

X 34-9

the showing-forth [adoption] shall take place in the *agora*
when the citizens are assembled
from the stone where proclamations are made.
And let the one who is making the adoption give to
his *hetaireia* a sacrificial victim
and a measure of wine.

Though there is a preference in the order of succession for immediate kin-relations, even the legitimacy of their claims must rest on having first been recognized (ἀμπαίνεθαι).[42] This process, if satisfied, can nevertheless legitimate *non-kin* just as effectively. The Gortynians are much more concerned with *legitimate* claims than with blood relations and, therefore, to a large extent, with the ongoing maintenance of the commitment of a household unit (*oikos*) to wider socio-political obligations, especially when the political community is articulated as a community of shared social and cosmic obligations such as cults. For example, the first task of the adoptee upon taking up the property is the fulfilment of his adoptive father's responsibilities toward gods and men (τέλλεμ μὲν τὰ θῖνα κὰι τὰ ἀντρόπινα τὰ τῶ ἀνπαναμένο, X 42-5). For this reason the institutional gap separating peer-relations between citizens or warriors from those of next-of-kin is very narrow. Everything at Gortyn points to what is known a little better from Athens, that authentic blood succession is not mystified (as in an aristocracy of birth) but defined as a function of political recognition subject to ongoing scrutiny.

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by symbolic exchanges and scrutiny – maps in broad outline onto what is known of phratry introduction at the Apatouria: see Lambert 1993, 143-89.

42 The procedure for the recognition of legitimate children is not specified in the *Code* but by analogy with its adoption procedure and what is known of Attic practice at the Apatouria (on which the best overview is Lambert 1993, 170-8), it must also have involved some kind of 'formalization' before the *hetaireia*. Isaios 7.16 shows that at least in 4th century Athens there was no substantive difference between introducing to the phratry a son from a legitimate marriage and introducing an adoptee. On this passage, see the comments by Griffith-Williams 2013, 58 and Lambert 1993, 176-7. The use of the verb ἀναφαίνομαι in the Gortynian regulations makes the link between public witnessing and formal recognition (compare *Od.* 6.288: ἀμφάδιον γάμον "formal marriage") that, if capable of legitimating adoption, *a fortiori* applies in the definition of a *gnesios*. The *gnesios* is the son born of a legitimately recognized marriage. The key here is not the biological fact of having being born but that the child comes from the formally contracted union ("straight-born" *Od.* 14.203) where the legitimacy derives from having fulfilled a witnessed process of induction. Legitimacy is thus a socio-political status. The situation in Homeric epic is given by *Od.* 14.200-13: there the illegitimate child must depend on his father's goodwill if he is to be "held in the same regard as the straight-born", that is, he cannot demand rights stemming from formal recognition. See Ogden 1996, 21-25. On the whole question of bastardy and legitimacy, see Ogden 1996, 1-28.

The case of Perikles Perikleou, Perikles' son by Aspasia, is instructive here: his bastard status (*nothos*) was effaced by a decree of the assembly which effectively transformed him "into Perikles" in order to prevent the desolation of his household (Plut. *Per.* 37.5). The thought behind the process, which can be gleaned from a helpful *Suda* entry (s.v. δημοποίητος: "one made into a citizen by the *demos*"), is apposite to the themes under discussion even though space does not permit the situation in classical Athens to be fully explored here. It must suffice simply to observe that as a *demopoietos* Perikles' son was "adopted by the *demos*" (ὁ ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου εἰσποιηθείς, *Suda* s.v. δημοποίητος). The strategy effected a symbolic cloning such that the nameless bastard *became Perikles*. Citizenship and succession are so closely intertwined that such impasses demand a political determination before any of the symbolic demands (such as cults tended within the *oikos*) can be met. From the point of view of this study what is significant is the political sovereignty of the *demos* over what is fundamentally the symbolic transmission of identity across generations.

It is possible that the object-relations defining the warrior group as "those upon whom equal shares of spoil devolve" influence the way *poleis* clarify succession procedure and model the structural relations between non-kin. If, as Bourdieu suggests, the claims of kin-groups to authentic origins are ultimately *economic* (i.e. rooted in the structure of the way they transmit goods, including symbolic goods such as the 'family name') then the claims of the *oikos* are just as 'fictive' as those of corporate descent-groups. Bourdieu in fact describes the notion of "family" as a "well-founded fiction":

> the family as an objective social category (a structuring structure) is the basis of the family as a subjective social category (a structured structure), a mental category which is the matrix of countless representations and actions (such as marriages) which help to reproduce the objective social category.

Conceiving of the familial unit as natural and basic both supports, and is supported by, practices which continuously act to reproduce the 'reality' of that unit:

> [w]e tacitly admit that the reality to which we give the name "family", and which we place in the category of "real" families, is a family in reality.

To this extent, the family and the fictive descent group are social constructions at precisely the same moment as they constitute real familial units; for this reason both groups enjoy "a symbolic profit of normality". Without this constant exchange of symbolic and material goods genetic and biological links are insufficient to maintain practical relations. The underlying basis for the authorization of claims to legitimacy based on blood descent is therefore the corporate misrecognition of the role played by clearly defined material exchanges in establishing and maintaining familial cohesion and, as a consequence, the inextricable blurring of kin and property relations. The objectification of these misrecognized relations fosters their gradual adoption as natural and inherent.[43]

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[43] Bourdieu 1998, 64-74, quoted passages from 66-9.

Our modern concern with tracing descent and establishing biological authenticity derive from two related modes of thought. On the one hand, modern economic inquiry deliberately overlooks the way familial units structure their "economy" outside the impersonal monetary model of economic activity. Feelings of obligation, 'family' loyalty and even affection, Bourdieu argues, are misrecognized consequences of unique types of transmission of material objects, which problematizes the monopoly held by biological descent in modern notions of legitimacy. On the other hand, the project of modern scientific inquiry has allowed personal identity to become objectified in the discovery of DNA sequences. The effect of objectifying familial identity is twofold: it reifies biological descent (in concepts like 'blood' and 'race') and it diminishes to vanishing point the role of collective sovereignty in the authorization of legitimate status within a society. For example, the modern adoptee is obliged to seek out a meeting with their 'biological parent' in order to complete a sense of identity causally linked to a series of independent criteria.[44] The *Code* of Gortyn, however, does not recognize our distinction between "real" and "adoptive" parents because the question of legitimate succession is exclusively political, which is to say that the public process of adoption in Gortyn, far from being at odds with concepts of kinship, is the very means by which one becomes a 'real' parent.[45] Gortynian legitimacy therefore depends on a system of confirmation that is *deliberative and adjudicated* rather than objective and scientific. Bourdieu's general remarks on the social category of the family are relevant here:

> To understand how the family turns from a nominal fiction into a real group whose members are united by intense affective bonds, one has to take account of all the practical and symbolic work that transforms the obligation to love into a loving disposition and tends to endow each member of the family with a "family feeling" that generates devotion, generosity and solidarity. This means both the countless ordinary and continuous exchanges of daily existence . . . and the extraordinary and

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44 The symbolic vacuum is, however, impossible to fill in these discourses. In a recent revealing incident, two 12 year old Russian girls were found to have been mistakenly given to the wrong parents at birth, one growing up in a Christian family, the other raised a Muslim (http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-15432846). The disclosure of the error created a scandal in the public media and all parties hastened to take action and remedy the situation. The girls themselves, however, for whom their 'real' (i.e. biological) families were simply 'other people', wanted to stay with their existing parents. Family is a *relation* that cannot be objectified but is rather formed over time through countless symbolic and material exchanges. Any discourse privileging biological descent is therefore an *ideology* for which a historical explanation must be sought.

45 This needs to be qualified: in cases where both legitimate and adopted children are left, the *Code* (at X 53) privileges the *gnesioi* (2 shares each) over the adopted son who is to be *isomoros* with legitimate daughters (1 share). This, however, hardly invalidates the broad points being made here. *Gnesioi* are privileged for a range of reasons, not least because they are the offspring of the formally witnessed marriage ("the ones who have been (properly) born" if the derivation from γίγνομαι is correct, on which see Chantraine *DELG* 223). Both parties to the marriage contract will have a vested interest in the succession of these children.

> solemn exchanges of family occasions . . . The structures of kinship and families as *bodies* can be perpetuated only through a continuous creation of a family feeling, *a cognitive principle of vision and division that is at the same time an affective principle of cohesion*, that is, the adhesion that is vital to the existence of a family group and its interests.[46]

In early Greece then the necessary link between the *dasmos* of the warrior group and the *daisis* of the successors depends upon preserving and reproducing the structure of *peer* relations. An economy is therefore maintained in which objects devolve upon members of the group in one direction only. Membership itself is defined, tautologously, as participation in this economy at the same time as the economy exists as a function of the circulation of goods by its members. Common property, to which no reciprocal obligation is attached, is distributed and allocated in equal portions thereby establishing the reversibility of the social value, the *timē*, of each member. Sons, like Zeus, Poseidon and Hades, are equal in *timē* because they have been allotted an equal portion, just as the receipt of a *moira* and *geras* is the sign of the *homoios* in the warrior band, *phratry* or *hetaireia*.

The important differences between these two economies (*dasmos* and *daisis*) lie firstly, in the stability and legitimacy of the social capital that is exchanged, and secondly, in the presence of practices that are able to mediate and resolve the possibilities of dispute that can arise. In the *dasmos* of spoil, the movement of goods asserts one principle for membership of the group – the absence of hierarchy. The idea of an honorific portion, however, differentiates an elite understood to be equal to one another in terms of an (inherited) will and ability to fulfil elite action (*aretē*). This equality is reflected in the *equivalence* of *gera*, that is, in the fact that one man's right to an extra portion is equivalent to that of another.[47] As a consequence, the possibility of being recognized as the "best of the Akhaians" must be because of a link made between a demonstration of innate *aretē* and a publicly recognized *value* objectified in the *geras* that takes place at the *dasmos*. The absence of this link is one of Achilles' central criticisms of spoil distribution.[48]

What remains unclear in *Iliad* 1 in the wake of the dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles is the process by which the devolution of goods has taken place to mark each man as "equal in their disposition to tokens of worth" (*homotimoi*). Agamemnon's claim to greater *timē* is a consequence of his greater *kratos* that, as has been shown, in its exercise annuls the relations put into effect by the precise

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46 Bourdieu 1998, 68, emphasis added.

47 Note for instance that Agamemnon implies the equivalence in value of the *gera* of Odysseus, Aias and Achilles (*Il.* 1.135-9). To repeat earlier conclusions, their value, despite the fact we are not told what the *geras* of Odysseus and Aias consists of materially, is equivalent because they each devolve onto their possessor via the same political exchange. Agamemnon's statement of personal preference (135-6) does not affect the calculation of social value.

48 As it probably was for Aias in the context of the decision about the arms of Achilles, a theme in *Od.* 11.543-67 and still relevant for Pindar (e.g. *Nem.* 8).

circulation of goods effected by the *dasmos*. Achilles' critique in *Iliad* 9 highlights the absence of any explicit basis for the devolution of honorific goods and exposes the lack of any institutional framework for adjudicating either a claim to a *geras* or how its 'worth' ought be determined. So the Iliadic question remains: by the fulfilment of what criteria is one entitled to a mark of some particular degree of *timē*? In chapters 1 and 2 above it has been argued, following Vernant, that the disappearance of the warrior *as a social function* after the collapse of the Mycenaean palaces problematized the *geras* as a marker of status, causing it to become instead a marker of worth. The difficulties represented by the absence of frameworks for adjudicating performance are a theme of the *Iliad* (as they may indeed have been in the epic that contained the *hoplon krisis*).[49] This is so even though the poem is conscious of an emerging ethical scenario at which the conferral of an honorific portion can take place before (and perhaps be authorized by) the assembled *laos*. To this extent, the *laos* is present at the *dasmos* in the form of the witness that verifies and validates the devolution of goods taking place under its *fiat*. It becomes very difficult, however, to produce witnesses who can testify to the authenticity of one's claim or right to a *geras*. Indeed, the right to a *geras* typically rests on the claimant's ability to offer an *ad hoc* catalogue of descent rather than positive peer scrutiny. In other words, in the context of the Homeric *dasmos*, the *timē* that the honorific portion confers cannot have the same durable basis that might derive from practices that authorize status through the fulfilment of publicly arbitrated conditions. Publicly arbitrated practices will have the added advantage of both authorizing one's *timē* while putting it beyond the influence of any one man's *kratos* and *bia*. At no time is any *right* to a *geras* questioned in the *Iliad*, with the significant exception of Achilles' challenges to Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1 and 9. There is only an individual responsibility to maintain one's status by claiming one. Claims are not subjected to scrutiny nor are we privy to a process for the verification of such a claim. Herein lies the point: were such scrutiny to exist it would presuppose the referentiality of social value and its abstract expression, the precise emergence of which, as will be argued in chapter 6, is dramatized by the *Iliad*. Indeed, it is this fact which motivates and impels the practical changes to the *Iliad's* expression of the economy of honour.

By contrast, within the practices for succession to an inheritance the basis of the division and allocation of goods held in common is established by recourse to *verifiable proofs*. This takes the form of kin-relations authenticated by witnesses who are, or represent, the political community, and the resulting concept of the *gnesios*.[50] At the *dasmos* it is not enough that the allocation and seizure

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49 Proclus, *Chrest*. p.52 Davies = *Ilias Parva* Arg. 1a West.

50 This does not amount to uncovering the 'truth' of the basis of any particular claim, rather that processes and tokens fulfil the conditions of legitimacy: Sealey 1994, 102, "[p]erhaps sometimes ascertaining factual truth may help toward resolving a

of a *geras* be authorized by the *laos*: the *basis* of that allocation must also be publicly witnessed and this is absent in the relations of the warrior peers of the *Iliad*. This fact can partly find its explanation in the difference between the expression of the symbolic capital in question. In succession practices the heirs seek a confirmation of legitimacy in the flow of patrimonial objects (*ta patroia*) to them. Transmission of the name and perpetuation of the household are the effects of the legitimate transmission of property. Disputes over partition can then be settled with reference to the initial moments of status determination, such as, for instance, the summoning of qualified witnesses and judges.[51] In the place of the recited genealogy of epic is an official account of the precise events at which induction into the socio-political order took place.[52] From the perspective of *Iliad* 1 such an account of proper process is impossible to offer. In direct contrast to the Gortynian situation, where "proper distribution" is precisely defined, there is simply (and deliberately) no clarity in the *Iliad* on just what "well-distributed" (*Il.* 1.368) means, in spite of Achilles' vague descriptions at *Il.* 1.125-6 and *Il.* 1.366-9.

In the distribution of spoil and especially the allocation of a *geras*, there is no practical infrastructure by which any one token can be justified. On the other hand, the emphasis on personal and individual responsibility over claims to the social objects that constitute one's *timē* mean that any degree of challenge can only be met with the (potentially violent) intervention of self-help – witness Achilles' natural inclination to respond to Agamemnon's threat with immediate retaliation. Nevertheless, and in spite of this, the symbolic capital of the *geras* is clearly enormous – it is the material objectification of one's social identity in the community of warrior peers. The implications of challenges to its legitimacy are therefore considerably more far-reaching, with the potential, as vivified in the *Iliad*, for destabilizing the entire ordering principle of the heroic community. For this reason, it is possible to see in practices of succession a far more stable model for the devolution of common goods into special portions. Insofar as its modes of proof and questions of legitimacy are far less arbitrary than the ambivalent processes of the *dasmos*, settlement of inheritance disputes has greater scope for procedural development while at the same time still closely concerned with the determination of relative social value and relationships via modes of object transmission in the same way as

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dispute, but it is no necessary part of *dikē*". Truth in any case has an equivocal content in early Greek thought and, on a significant level against Sealey's suggestion, truth as efficacious pronouncement is coterminous with *dikē* itself: Detienne 1996, ch.3-4.

51 In the Athenian procedure of *diamartyria*, as well as a majority of 4th century inheritance disputes, being able to attest the proper fulfilment of *practices* of succession immediately following a death is the key factor in securing a favourable outcome. See further discussion below.

52 Hekataios' experience (Hdt 2.143) echoes this shift *in nuce* and encourages further exploration of the intersection of genealogy, succession and the early development of Greek historiography.

spoil distribution and *geras*-allocations. The difference is that in inheritance contexts a system intervenes for the resolution of competing claims. Although clearly well advanced and politically regulated in Gortyn, it need not be a novel development. The archaic quality of the practices involved is confirmed by the hints dropped about similar practices elsewhere in the epics themselves.

The difference between the contexts of *dasmos* and *daisis* therefore emerges as a difference in the stability of the social value – the *timē* – which the distribution of goods sets out to establish in each instance. Both of these exchange contexts deal with *timē* and the confirmation of a social position – the material articulation of inclusion – via the distribution of portions of goods held in common. But in the Homeric *dasmos* social belonging is a matter of honorific portions that devolve without clear legitimacy and are demanded by virtue of a prior right which is both difficult to verify and dangerous to assert. In the settlement of an inheritance, however, social value arises as a function of paternal succession that is built upon a framework of verification and proof. As a consequence of this difference the argument here is that what is absent in the political economy of honour among warriors is supplied from a structurally parallel and homologous model for the devolution of communal property, namely, *succession*. It remains therefore to consider the resolution of disputes and the way legitimacy is resolved within evidence for such a model supplied by the *Code of Gortyn*.

As discussed above, the *Code* clarifies succession on two levels. In the first instance it defines a "proper distribution" of patrimonial property upon the death of the father (δατε̃θθαι καλõς, IV 38-9); in the second, it prescribes the order of succession from immediate children onward. As far as the *Code* is concerned these two levels constitute normative inheritance procedure. Immediately after these provisions, at V 28-54, the process for resolving anomalies in the division of the inheritance (*daisis*) is laid out. The process consists of five main clauses:

[28][clause 1] αἰ δὲ κ' οἰ
ἐπιβάλλοντες οἰ μὲν λεί-
[30] οντι δατε̃θθαι τὰ κρέματ-
α, οἰ δὲ μέ, δικάκσαι τὸν δι-
καστὰν ἐπὶ τοῖλ λείονσι δ-
ατε̃θθαι ἔμεν τὰ κρέματα π-
άντα πρίν κα δάττονται. vac.
[35][clause 2] αἰ δέ κα δικάκσαντος τõ δ-
ικαστã κάρτει ἐνσείει ἐ ἄ-
γει ἐ πέρει, δέκα στατε̃ραν-
ς καταστασεῖ καὶ τõ κρέι-
ος διπλεῖ. vac. [clause 3] τνατõν δὲ καὶ καρ-
[40] πõ καὶ ϝέμας κἀνπιδέμας κ-
ἐπιπολαίον κρεμάτον αἴ κα μ-
ὲ λείοντι δατέθ̣[θαι, τὸ]ν δ̣-
ικαστ]ὰν ὀμνύντα κρῖνα-
ι πορτὶ τὰ μολιόμενα. vac. [clause 4] [α]ἰ [δ-
[45] έ κα κρέματα δατιόμενοι
μὲ συνγιγνόσκοντι ἀν-
πὶ τὰν δαῖσιν, ὀνε̃ν τὰ κρέμ-

ατα· κὄς κα πλεῖστον διδ-
ῖι ἀποδόμενοι τᾶν τιμᾶν
[50] δια[λ]ακόντον τὰν ἐπαβο-
λὰν ϝέκαστος. palmula [clause 5] δατιομέ-
νοιδ δὲ κρέματα μαίτυρα-
νς παρέμεν δρομέανς ἐλε-
υθέρονς τρίινς ἔ πλίανς

V 28-54

Clause 1. V.28-34: And if there are *epiballontes* who wish to divide the property and some who do not, the judge shall rule that, until they divide, use of all the property shall belong to those who wish to divide.
Clause 2. V.35-9: If, after the judge has ruled, anyone enters with force, leads anything off or carries anything away, he shall pay ten *staters* and the value of the item in double.
Clause 3. V.39-44: With respect to livestock, produce, clothing, ornaments and movable property, if they do not wish to divide then the judge shall himself decide under oath with reference to the claims advanced.
Clause 4. V.44-54: And if while dividing the property, they do not agree about the division, they shall sell the property. Whoever gives the most, let the sellers allot the values (*timai*), each having a share.
Clause 5. V 51-4: While they are dividing the property, let three or more free adult witnesses be present.

Clauses 1-3 outline the process in the event that some of the heirs oppose division of the property. The law has previously made it clear that where there are multiple claimants, division is compulsory. These clauses will therefore apply in situations where the law has left the process of partition ambiguous. Clearly in some situations it was considered advantageous to leave certain types of property undivided.[53] Even though it is a speculative question, since the law itself is silent, it is nonetheless pertinent to ask why division is pressed and why those who desire full partition of all the property are favoured in the law. In columns IV and V the *Code* is concerned with clarifying membership of the community in terms of the devolution of patrimonial property with the broader goal of ensuring that familial units are preserved as best as possible. This entails the delineation of individual (citizen) parties rather than facilitating the corporatization of familial units, which would potentially undermine the priority of citizen belonging. To this extent, the Gortynian *polis* finds it desirable to convert all the property into quantifiable monetary values including land and houses (τὰ κρέματα πάντα, V.33-4). A conscious effort is made to avoid the creation of pools of corporate property as well as to define each member of the political community quite precisely in terms of the property that he (or she) holds.[54] One possible example follows from the succession of sons to

[53] The point is made by Koerner in *IGT* p.503.
[54] Sealey 1994 in particular argues that it is a peculiarity of Greek law in the Archaic and Classical periods to assert the rights and obligations of the individual citizen over those of the family. At Rome the *gens* found an institutionalized place in the legal and political framework of the city-state in which the *paterfamilias* played a far

houses and land (laid down at IV 37): if any son does not wish to divide up the estate then, as far as the political community is concerned, his status in terms of the *timē* that he holds becomes equivocal. As with the "store of common goods" (ξυνήϊα κείμενα), partition allows the determination of *timē* in terms of a visible material store of value. The point is that the goal of such division – in the *Iliad* as much as in the *Code* – is the allocation of "a share of the values to each member". To this extent, there is here a continuity with the expression ἔμμορε τιμῆς, a phrase that explicitly refers to the clarification of social worth via the allocation of *moirai* (*Il.* 1.278, 9.616, 15.189 [an inheritance context], *Od.* 5.335, 11.338). Indeed, the desire for clarity in the *Code* is so central that the law will allow complete alienation of the estate in a cash sale in order to confirm *quantitatively* the social worth of each heir.

Furthermore, continuity exists in the meaning of *timē* in these two contexts. This continuity arises from the relationship between *timē* and the objects to which the community refers as indices of worth. Just as a *geras* confers *timē* as a function of one's disposition to the distributive practices of the warrior band, so *timē* within the body of inheritors arises with reference to one's portion of the inheritance. If necessary, this can be abstracted by means of a monetary exchange under which the term *timē* will acquire the more quantitative definition, "price, value" (V 49). It may even be anachronistic to insist on too much legal precision and thus deny the polysemy of the word. In the Gortynian regulations, a concrete distinction between *timē* as "honour, esteem" and *timē* as an expression of a purely economic value may only be relatively recent. Koerner has suggested that the introduction of a provision enabling cash sale in order to ensure the equality of shares might have been only recently introduced into the body of law at Gortyn.[55] Nor can it be overlooked that, in archaic Gortyn generally, economic equivalences, usually for the purpose of expressing fines, were often stated in amounts of proto-monetary precious goods (tripods and *lebetes*) which constituted the very items

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more significant role in the social relations of both sexes under his authority (74). In Greek cities, on the other hand, "thought on social relations was guided by a concept of the fully privileged member of the community" (88). In Sealey's view, such a common thread seems to "amount to a degree of unity in Greek law", a view taken in opposition to the negative position maintained by Finley 1975, 134-46. Sealey's belief that "one should look beyond the rules on the surface of the law" and attempt to isolate a system of thought which informs similarities rather than over-stress the radical differences of bodies of law in different poleis (69-70) does not seem to be the "waste of time" which Finley claims it is (144); on the contrary, it would appear that the recurring pattern of language with which we are here concerned suggests that Greek cities were at least preoccupied with the same questions arising from their locally different attempts at the practical differentiation of the "citizen". The answer lies in the archaeology of precisely that thought which Finley regards as a "will o' the wisp".

55 *IGT* pp.505-6·. Willetts comments too on the archaic character of the provisions in the *Code*. As Davies (1996, 46-56) has argued, the *Code* cobbles together a spectrum of Gortynian regulations that may stretch back to the middle of the 6th century BCE.

chosen out in other contexts as *moirai*, *gera* and, of course, prizes, all objects which in parallel contexts articulate both a man's *symbolic and material worth*.[56] The community and the individual in both contexts are thus anxious to facilitate the transmission of those objects whose proper receipt confers value on members of the community. Because succession to patrimonial property at Gortyn (most likely overseen by the *hetaireia*) serves as a significant (but not the only)[57] indicator of legitimate membership of the political community, it is necessary to ensure there is *isomoiria*, that is, equality in the distribution of shares at least among the parties involved. The provision in clause 4 above acts as a declaration of the *homotimia* of the heirs, similar to the way the Kronidai act in ensuring the reversibility of their *moirai* as the basis of their equal status (at least as far as Poseidon understood it).

Fundamental to the operation of this resolution process is the institutionalization of a framework for the arbitration of claims and adjudication. This consists of five parts:

> (1) the appointment of a judge to adjudicate contested division;
> (2) the fixing of the value of shares with reference to external standards;
> (3) the penalization of offences, enforceable by the political community;
> (4) the formal representation of competing claims (τὰ μολιόμενα, V.44);
> (5) the production of witnesses.

Let us examine each separately:

(1) *The appointment of an adjudicator*.[58] In the first clause, the law interposes between the two parties a judge (*dikastas*) who is directed to place the property into the hands of those who wish to divide. The function of the Gortynian *dikastas* is indicated by two competencies illustrated here, and set out in principle at XI 26-31:[59]

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56 *IC* 4.1, lines 1(f), 3(a); *IC* 4.5; *IC* 4.6; *IC* 4.7; *IC* 4.8; *IC* 4.10; *IC* 4.11 *IC* 4.14 (g-p); *IC* 4.21, line 8. All span the first half of the sixth century BCE. On this and other early Greek forms of proto-money, see especially Strøm 1992, Von Reden 1997, Seaford 2004, Papalexandrou 2005, 61 n.100, 215 n.73.

57 Space prevents proper discussion of commensality and *syssitia* as rituals rehearsing the isomorphic relationships between citizens of Cretan cities, but Dosiadas' account of the civic banquets of the Lyttians is very revealing: *FGrHist* 458 F2 = Athen. 4.143a-d, especially 143c. See further Schmitt-Pantel 1990, 14-26 and 1992, 53-113: "les banquets sont des pratiques du *koinon* archaïques qui, avec d'autres, délimitent le champ du politique" (113).

58 Space does not permit a fuller discussion of the juridical process in archaic Crete, even though an up-to-date treatment in English is a desideratum (It is with considerable regret that I have not been able to consult the forthcoming publication of a comprehensive commentary on the laws of archaic Crete by M. Gagarin and P. Perlman). The best recent overviews are Davies 1996, Carawan 1998, 58-61, Gagarin 2001, 2008, 122-75, Perlman 2000, 2002, and the excellent documentary commentaries in *Nomima* II 3-8 and *IGT* 144, 181, 129, 163, 179, 157 and 156, with further bibliography.

59 On which generally, see Willetts 1967, 33-4, 78, Thür 1989, *Nomima* II 4, p.36-7 and *IGT* 181, p.554-5.

τὸν δικαστάν, [a] ὅτι μὲν κατὰ
μαίτυρανς ἔγρατται δικάδδ-
εν ἔ ἀπόμοτον, δικάδδεν ἆι ἔ-
γρατται, [b] τῶν δ' ἀλλῶν ὀμνύντ-
α κρῖνεν πορτὶ τὰ μολιόμενα.

XI 26-31

(a) Whatever has been written down for him to give a ruling on (δικάδδεν) either by witnesses or by oath of repudiation, the *dikastas* is to make the ruling according to what has been written; (b) in other matters he is to decide under oath (ὀμνύντα κρῖνεν) with reference to the claims put forward (τὰ μολιόμενα).

The first competency (a) is the enforcement of a ruling (*dikē*) already laid down in the *Code* as the prescribed path of action. The second (b) is the pronouncement of a judgment handed down by the *dikastas* to meet the particular exigencies of a situation for which the *Code* has not offered a rule. Following Headlam, Willetts argues that two distinct stages of procedure, attested in Attic and Roman law (clarification [*anakrisis/in iure*] and judgment [*krisis/in iudicio* or *apud iudicem*]), are collapsed at Gortyn into the province of one magistrate.[60] The *dikastas* is an adjudicator in two respects. Firstly, where the community has already established the path of resolution – the "mode of proof" or *Beweisfahren* (*dikē*)[61] – then his duty is to oversee its application and pursue violations as they arise. Two such modes are described, the testimony of witnesses and the oath of denial. Secondly, where the specifics of the case are anomalous the *dikastas* is to offer an *ad hoc* solution through his own sworn judgment. The difference between this judicial function and that presupposed, for example, by the circle of elders in the trial scene on the shield of Achilles (*Il.* 18.503-8) is that, in the developed *polis* of Gortyn, the political community imposes its *dikai* on the judge via the monumentalization of its rules.[62] During the *Iliad's* trial scene, the appropriate *dikē* is not made available as a predetermined outcome via a body of published regulations. On the contrary, it is arrived at during each situation in the form of an *ad hoc* contest to find the straightest *dikē*, that is, the "mode of proof" most capable "of bringing the dispute to an end without violence."[63] However, in the Gortynian regulations concerning the resolution of a dispute

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60 Willetts 1967, 33-4, Headlam 1892-3 and Sealey 1994, 105.

61 Thür 1970, who builds on the arguments of Wolff 1946. For a definition of δικάζειν that is more discretionary, see Talamanca 1979. See also Sealey 1994, 101-5, especially 101-2 who answers the objections raised by Gagarin 1986, 29-30. See now also Farenga 2006 and Gagarin 2008, 16-9. Palmer 1950 and Benveniste 1973, 385-8 both connect *dikē* to δείκνυμι. Indicating or pointing out boundaries and making a ruling on them are the most important ritual functions of the sovereign. For a different approach to law in archaic Greece, see Humphreys 1988, 466-7, who avoids this debate.

62 On this monumentalization of law in early Greece, see Hölkeskamp 1992. Note too the emphatic repetition of ἔγρατται.

63 Sealey 1994, 102. " . . . the function of *dikē* at its basic level is not the exalted one of applying an ideal rule. The essential function of *dikē* is the humbler one of resolving a dispute without violence".

over the division of an inheritance the community has already prescribed that the (straightest) *dikē* will be 'to divide'. It is the *dikastas'* role therefore simply to apply the rule in favour of those who wish to divide and enforce their right to use the property until the distribution occurs. The *dikastas* is required to use his discretion only in achieving the end understood in the phrase δατεῖϑϑαι καλῶς (IV.38-9): the conversion of the patrimony into numerically precise *moirai* (via monetary sale) ensuring that each heir receives his or her rightful share of the *timai*.

Thus, the key difference between Gortynian thinking about the distribution of common goods and the Homeric *dasmos* is the intercession of a communally-appointed[64] adjudicator on behalf of those who ought to receive a share and to make sure that the division proceeds such that each receives their *timē*. It could be objected that the Gortynian context is a more developed juridical situation that, in spite of the shared thought on the devolution of goods, would be dangerous to compare anachronistically with an earlier context of object-relations. The trial scene in the *Iliad*, however, offers evidence that the institutional infrastructure as well as the intellectual framework were developed enough for disputants to desire and obtain a *peirar*, literally a "ruling" (*Il.* 18.501), on even the most equivocal of quarrels. This moreover quite clearly includes those disputes which involved a perceived failure in the proper transmission of precious objects (in this case, a *poine*).[65] The poetic function of the trial scene only emphasizes this fact.[66]

A reading of Hesiod's proposal for a solution to the *neikos* between himself and his brother Perses (*Op.* 35-9) suggests that such juridical arbitration was available in archaic Ascra for precisely the kind of inheritance dispute envisaged in the *Code*.[67] There Hesiod and

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64 This is a plausible assumption, but the *Code* does not disclose how the *dikastas* is appointed. At the very least, however, he must be acting in the name of the *politai* given that efficacious pronouncements are ones made "in the *agora* when the citizens are assembled" (X 34-5, XI 11-14: ἀποϝειπάϑϑο). One can provisionally assume that the Gortynian *dikastas* deputizes for the whole political community. For a clearer parallel, see *Ath. Pol.* 56.6, where one of the archon's responsibilities is to appoint "distributors" to oversee partitions of common property under dispute.

65 So Gagarin 1986, 31-3. The point is that the dispute concerns the transfer of goods which would, if accepted, bring the problem to an end. The dispute arises however because one of the parties refuses to accept the exchange that would establish a certain relation. Needless to say, it is not a homicide trial.

66 Gagarin problematically asserts that "the relatives of homicide victims seldom seem ready even to consider a settlement" 1986, 32. It is rarely noted that Aias' response to Achilles (*Il.* 9.632-6) looks forward to the dispute of the trial scene itself. We ought not think that the poet is suggesting simply that Aias' statement should apply generally, rather it is perhaps to the means of resolving intractable positions that the poet wishes to draw his audiences' attention. To that extent, the poet is projecting the dispute between Achilles and Agamemnon onto a juridical context and it is for that reason no coincidence that the disputants on the shield bear a resemblance to the poem's protagonists. Gagarin omits the implications of this on the interpretation of such passages.

67 On which, see Gagarin 1974.

his brother willingly divide the patrimonial lot (κλῆρον ἐδασσάμεθα . . ., *Op.* 37). However, in contravention of the proper division Perses has "kept on carrying off and plundering many other things" (. . . ἄλλά τε πολλὰ ἁρπάζων ἐφόρεις, *Op.* 37-8). This passage reminds us that the language of violent seizure directly inverts that of proper distribution and in so doing precisely echoes the very violations preempted in the *Code*: "if, after the judge has ruled, anyone *enters with force, leads anything off or carries anything away* [he shall be fined . . .]" (αἰ δέ κα δικάκσαντος τõ δικαστã **κάρτει ἐνσείει ἔ ἄγει ἔ πέρει**, V 35-7). Hesiod's "gift-devouring *basileis*" have given their ruling (but it is not a "straight *dikē*" in contrast with *Op.* 35-6) and Hesiod now demands that a resolution be determined by a ruling that is satisfactory to both parties (διακρινώμεθα νεῖκος ἰθείῃσι δίκῃς, *Op.* 35-6). Although Hesiod does not provide the procedural details that might make the analogy more precise, the broad lines of that process are sufficiently clear. Dispute over division is accompanied by a desire for arbitration and a moral injunction against forcible self-help for which a juridical apparatus is presupposed. It is therefore possible to argue that the partition of goods held in common among heirs is an institutional context in which mechanisms of juridical ruling were in demand and well formulated at a relatively early stage. Although we cannot retroject all of the developments peculiar to archaic Gortyn back into the age of Hesiod, let alone into the city of heroes of the *Iliad*, it must nevertheless be observed that contexts of inheritance division disclose the development of a juridical apparatus in a way unthinkable in the distribution of honorific portions among the warrior band that form the backdrop to the *neikos* of *Iliad* 1.

(2) *The mediation of external standards*. As noted above, fines and penalties in Archaic Crete are prescribed in proto-monetary forms reflecting a need for precise quantification.[68] This need is shared by inheritance division. Reduction of goods to publicly determined standards of value permits the *dikastas* to give concrete numerical form to the *polis'* demand for *isomoiria* among its members. Just as written legislation gives monumental substance to collective sovereignty and lays down procedural rules independent of the parties to a dispute, the *stater* in the *Code* functions as a *dikē* determining relative social worth (*timē*) enabling disagreement over portions, and therefore status, to be resolved by reference to an autonomized value derived from the collective acknowledgement of the *politai*. As Gernet observed,

> when the law recognizes a distinction in status like the one consecrated by the Gortynian Code, it resolves the distinction by means of quantitative differences. It is precisely in law that an abstract idea of the person is affirmed.[69]

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[68] See n.56 above with Davies 1996, 41-2.

[69] Gernet 1981b, 200. On the *stater* broadly, see the discussion in Seaford 2004, 88-95, 136-46 with archaic evidence summarized at 89 n.7. Seaford notes its original meaning as a measure of weight.

(3) *The penalization of offences*. Once they have been laid down, rulings are followed by a prohibition against forcible entry and seizure. It is striking how the law conceives of actions against this injunction in the language of plunder. It was earlier observed that Agamemnon sought to secure his *timē* by means of an excessive *kratos* which involved, in the eyes of Achilles, the entry of a dwelling and the leading off of movable property (Briseis) without the consent of the owner. Moreover, such actions reverse relations that the proper *dasmos* puts into effect. At Gortyn the inverse of a proper resolution of the *daisis* is conceived as forcible entry and illegitimate removal of animate and inanimate goods (αἰ δέ κα . . . κάρτει ἐνσείει ἢ ἄγει ἢ πέρει, V 35-7).[70] The difference at Gortyn is that the community has interceded via the appointment of a judge and the inscription of the *Code* itself to ensure against violations of the division. While in the *Iliad* Agamemnon's actions render Achilles *atimetos* by stripping him of the material object which embodies his *timē*, in the *Code* the political community outlaws similar behaviour in order to preserve the notion of an (ostensibly) equal *timē* which defines each and every member of the group. At Gortyn, Agamemnon would be subject to a fine and owe twice the value of the object taken. The validity of using this comparative scenario is justified by the homologous pattern of language and thought with regard to the division of goods held in common in the *Iliad* and archaic Crete.[71]

(4) *The formal representation of 'competing claims'* (τὰ μολιόμενα, V 44). The verb μωλέω, used almost exclusively in Gortynian inscriptions, is a technical legal expression for "contending at law" otherwise attested only in Hesychius (μολεῖ· μάχεται, μωλήσεται· μαχήσεται, πικρανθήσεται) and the epic form μῶλος (*Il.* 2.401, 7.147, 16.245, 18.134, 188; *Od.* 18.233), as a more general expression for "mêlée".[72]

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70 Note too that at Athens, recourse was available to recover property illegitimately taken from the estate of the deceased: Is. 6.42, with Wyse 1904, 528-30 who discusses further evidence (*Schol.* Ar. *Nub.* 498) for the procedure called φωρᾶν, on which, see also Harrison 1968, 207 n.2.

71 For an example of the improper conduct of a *dasmos* that is simultaneously an inheritance *and* spoil, Badian's analysis of Tiberius Gracchus' attitude to the estate bequeathed to the Roman people by Attalus III of Pergamum is apt: "The Roman aristocrat using – for the first time on record – inherited *clientelae* to seize this vast treasure left to Rome; to seize it, practically for himself and then distribute it to the People, in some form, as his personal bounty – that was a picture sufficient to frighten anyone who had read any history, Greek or Roman. It was an act characteristic of the aspiring tyrant" 1972, 713.

72 *IC* 4.1 (= *Nomima* II 22 = *IGT* 116) shows that the term has already acquired its legal specificity by the end of the 7th century BCE; *IC* 4.42 (=*Nomima* II 5, *IGT* 129 with useful commentary), which outlines procedural rules governing disputed land holdings, also attests the expression πορτὶ τὰ μολιόμενα "[deciding] with respect to the positions taken" found in the *Code* at V 44, VI 54-5 and XI 30-1. For μωλέω in the *Code*, see I 15, 18, 49-50, 53; VI 26; VII 43; IX 23; X 21-2; ἀνπιμολέν (ἀμφιμωλέω, "to contend about") I 2-3, VI 27, IX 19-20 (on which see Willetts 1967, 53); ἀπομολέν ("counter-contend, disavow" [of a defendant]) VI 26, IX 18; ἐπιμολέν (to bring a suit against") IX 28-32 (on which see Willetts 1967, 74); and in other Gortynian regulations, for example, *IC* 4.21 (=*Nomima* II 38 [mid 6th century], *IGT* 123), *IC* 4.47 (=*Nomima* II 26 [early 5th century], *IGT* 138), *IC* 4.75D (=*Nomima* II 46) attests an adverbial *hapax*, ἀμολεί "sans action en justice", *IC* 4.81 (*Nomima* II 47, *IGT* 155). ἀντίμολος refers to the defendant in cases against an individual in the

Such "contentions at law" will have consisted of assertions of rights to action and seizure based on legitimate title in turn stemming from formal status. Such assertions of entitlement (for example, that one is an *epiballon* or had been adopted) required witnesses. Where a status provided such title to succession, an early inscription (*IC* 4.21 line 5) has the term ἀνκεμολία, "the right to assert kinship at law(?)."[73] If this interpretation can be accepted, then it suggests that the Gortynian city acted to formulate and limit in advance the range of what might constitute a legitimate claim as well as establish the process under which opposing claims could be resolved.

(5) *The production of witnesses*. The importance of witnesses to transactions and formal undertakings in the *Code* cannot be underestimated. The limited aims of this chapter prevent general discussion of the role and function of the witness in succession. It suffices to note that in addition to the provision for judges to be able to decide on the basis of the relative merits of various claims put forward (πορτὶ τὰ μολιόμενα) provision exists in other cases of other kinds, such as recovering damages from a deceased (IX 24-31) or contributions to a business partner (IX 43-54), for judges to decide on the basis of witness deposition (πορτὶ τὰ ἀποπονίομενα, IX 30-1, IX 50-1).[74] As Willetts rightly argues, following Headlam once again, witnesses attest to "the proper performance of processual acts."[75] Their testimony is not a source of judgment but rather only an attestation that ritual propriety has taken place and hence that a set of relationships in the community had been legitimately established.[76]

Juridical parallels in the funeral agon *for Patroklos*

A juridical apparatus for overseeing the division of communally held goods and adjudicating disputes is absent from the *dasmos* of *Iliad* 1. There are, however, good grounds for arguing that the funeral contests instituted by Achilles for Patroklos in *Iliad* 23 anticipate such an apparatus. While a fuller exploration of the role played by funeral contests will follow in chapter 4 below, it is important here to explore the *Iliad's* consciousness of the desirability of such an adjudicatory apparatus in nascent political communities.[77]

Code, VI 25-6, IX 18 for which there is earlier archaic evidence in *IC* 4.13. For an attempt to explain the transition of μωλέω from Homeric "mêlée" to Gortynian *Prozeß*, see Trümpy 1950, 160-2.

73 On the basis of a link assumed between ἀγχιμωλία and ἀγχιστεία. The interpretation is not straightforward partly because the inscription is fragmentary and partly because the word is a *hapax*, but the overall sense is to deny the adoptee the right to put forward a claim to an estate on the basis of kinship. See the discussions in *Nomima* II p.138, *IGT* p.372 n.2, *SEG* xxxiii 1612.

74 On the expression and the verb (= ἀποφωνέω), see Willetts 1967, 54.

75 Willetts 1967, 33, Headlam 1892-3, 59-63. See also Sealey 1994, 102 and Carawan 1998, 61-4.

76 For a different interpretation of the role of witnesses in Gortynian law, see Gagarin 1984 and 1989.

77 It must be added that the relationship between status and *agon* is a key theme in the *Odyssey's* account of contests in Phaiakia; discussion of this will be addressed elsewhere.

Adjudication via the formal representation of competing claims (1 and 4 above) is especially well-represented. As *agonothetes*, Achilles must make judgments about victory according to procedures that are already established by the rules of the contest. These rules are presupposed not by a written body of substantive regulations but by imputation from events in the narrative, for example, in the fact that Nestor and Antilokhos exploit a lack of procedural clarity in the underlying governance of the chariot race as a way of seeking an advantage. In addition, that Achilles sets Phoinix by the *terma* as a *histor* in order to witness that participants properly completed the turn (*Il.* 23.359-61) suggests that the practices of a chariot-race were widely known and did not have to be spelled out before the event. Therefore, when Achilles denies Antilokhos second prize and bestows it upon Eumelos instead, he makes a judgment in violation of the outcome of the ordeal of the race. This ordeal itself constitutes a *dikē*, that is, that to all present Antilokhos ran second and Eumelos last.

Indeed, the entire complex of early Greek athletic contests sits on the cusp of the transition from *prédroit* to law. On the one hand, victory in a contest is an oracular pronouncement and therefore "the testimony constitutes the verdict".[78] This understanding of the pre-juridical nature of competition suffuses the ideology of epinikian poetry, where victory is not an adjudicated outcome but the result of an ordeal for which the poet claims a monopoly of authentic testimony. On the other hand, contests are volatile and tense events, full of potential for crisis because claims to eliteness and legitimacy are at stake. As a result they are the contexts which see the earliest emergence of procedural rules and adjudicatory practices in *poleis*, often well before they are expressed in what we might call strictly "political" contexts.[79]

Achilles' unilateral judgment (κρίνειν)[80] contravenes the procedure – the *agon* itself – that both precedes his *agonothesis* and is independent of his determination. It should be noted that Achilles receives 'approval' from the Akhaians for this violation (*Il.* 23.539). This detail nevertheless emphasizes that even though the gesture is

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78 Gernet 1981b, 190. In this classic discussion of law and prelaw, Gernet overlooks athletic competition as a key site for the very transitions he attempts to explain, especially the transition in the meaning of δικάζω (discussed at 187-93). It ought also to be noted how *agon* is central to early Greek mythical narratives concerning investiture, marriage as well as succession, for example, at *Od.* 21.113-7 and in Euripides' *Alexandros.* For a survey, see Weiler 1974. On the problems accompanying the characterization of early Greek law, and the beginnings of written law, see Cantarella 1984, 1987, Cohen 1989, Burchfiel 1994 and Gagarin 2008, 13-38.

79 The pentathlon is an excellent example. Its procedure for scoring and determining victory was mathematically complex (and controversial), and yet even on a conservative reading of the evidence was a well-established part of the Olympic programme by the end of the 7th century BCE: see Ebert 1963, 1974, Merkelbach 1973, Ebert and Golden 1998, 69-73 with further literature.

80 Achilles "stands among the Argives and announces" (*Il.* 23.535), gestures of rendering a verdict. Since Antilokhos is soon to point out that this is a personal judgment that violates the rules (*Il.* 23.547-8) one can argue that Achilles, from a Gortynian perspective, has inappropriately κρίνειν where he ought to have δικάζειν. That *agon* is a kind of *dikē* is suggested in the poem by verse echoes, for example, between *Il.* 18.507 and *Il.* 23.269-73.

popular and perhaps done in good faith, the act itself is completely inappropriate for an adjudicator. As a unilateral personal gesture on the part of Achilles this arbitrary ruling invites the indignation of the participant whose claim (δίκη, *Il.* 23.542) meets the standard of the ordeal: "I shall be very angry should your utterance be fulfilled" (*Il.* 23.543-4).[81] The ensuing exchange between Achilles and Antilokhos, as commentators have long noted, plays out and resolves anxieties that consciously echo the *neikos* of *Iliad* 1 between Achilles and Agamemnon, which, as has been argued above, stem directly from a vacuum of procedural clarity.[82] The episode is very significant: Achilles is compelled by an appeal to process in *Iliad* 23 in a way that inversely mirrors his own frustration at Agamemnon's refusal to follow *dasmos* procedure (*Il.* 1.123-6).[83] When his rulings, however, do win the approval of all parties concerned, as it does in the cases of the wrestling bout, single combat and spear-contest, then it is allowed to stand (*Il.* 23.735-7, 809, 822-5, 884-96). What is apparent from these instances is that any objection made from appeal to the correct procedure must be taken into consideration. In the relationship between Achilles and the *agon*, there are intimations of the *dikastas* at Gortyn, who must enforce rulings inscribed on the public stele but in exceptional circumstances resorts to his own judgment after assessing claims.

Richardson notes in his commentary the doubt surrounding Achilles' decision to give Diomedes the prize in the single combat. Nevertheless, the instance supports our interpretation because a public desire to split the prizes evenly is overruled by the *agonothetes*, who must be imagined to have the right to determine a victor in situations where the rules alone provide no clear path. It must be assumed Aias accepted *this* ruling (as he famously does not in the *hoplon krisis* where another ordeal failed to confirm that he was "equal to Achilles": *Od.* 11.547-8). Judgment in the sense of *interpreting* the rules or the facts of each claim is not yet part of justice in the Homeric poems and the semantic field of epic κρίνω does not reveal the sense it has in later legal thought. The dispute over the arms of Achilles is called a *krisis* by Proclus in his summary of the *Little Iliad* but the *Odyssey's* account has the resolution as the outcome of a *dikē* (*Od.* 11.547).[84]

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81 Achilles' unilateral act invokes the spectre of the *tyrannos* and the topos that the just tyrant is one who submits to the law. Aristotle mentions that Kleisthenes of Sikyon crowned the judge who ruled against him at a contest (τὸν ἀποκρίναντα τῆς νίκης αὐτόν): Arist. *Pol.* 1315b16-22.

82 Richardson 1993, 228-9. Farenga 2006, 145-59 provides an illuminating discussion of this and the following dispute but his emphasis falls on the way the performance of justice delineates and enacts the emergence of forms of selfhood and responsibility in a community of proto-citizens. The more modest aim here is simply to suggest that the funeral *agon* for Patroklos anticipates the juridical formulations found in the Gortynian *Code* with respect to the division of communally held property.

83 "Laws are only involved if the fulfilment they legitimate is impeded by the adversary . . . recourse to justice occurs only upon the protest of the adversary if he can plead rule violation", Gernet 1981, 176. It ought to be noted that nowhere in this brilliant essay does Gernet explore the procedural forms in athletic contests, even though in a later study he analyzed "games and law" (1955).

84 Proclus, *Chrest.* p.52 Davies.

Menelaos' challenge to Antilokhos, however, moves the scene beyond the orbit of what can strictly be regulated by the rules of the *agon*. Although Achilles must respect Antilokhos' claim to second prize, Menelaos brings forward a counter-claim that formally challenges Antilokhos' right to seize the prize. In his deployment of skill (*metis*),[85] Antilokhos has introduced an element that is to a large extent beyond regulation and must therefore fall under the scope of ethical and moral judgment.[86] In this anomalous situation, where a display of *aretē* has been outmaneuvered by *metis* (as opposed to being suppressed by *kratos* in *Iliad* 1), no *dikē* exists to satisfy the complainant. Unlike the Gortynian situation where the *dikastas* would either rule on the basis of what has been already prescribed or "decide under oath with reference to the claims advanced" in this circumstance, there is no adjudicative role for Achilles to play. This is because on the one hand there has been no violation of the procedure and on the other because such disputes are not matters of rational judgment:

> negatively, what defines prelaw in particular is that there is no possibility of an objective truth that would support a verdict. In this case, there is no place for a verdict, and the adversaries simply decide between themselves. Their testimony constitutes the verdict.[87]

In the same way the trial scene on the Shield of Achilles (*Il.* 18.497-508) depicts an anomalous situation where, following a homicide, one man has surrendered a *poinē* in full and made a declaration of the fact before the *demos* (presumably after an agreement by the deceased's relatives to accept one). The anomaly arises from the fact that the other man, while not disputing the payment, now refuses to accept anything. The disputants therefore look for a *histor* to make a definitive statement (πεῖραρ, *Il.* 18.501). The *histor* is a witness who can testify to agreements and provide an adjudicator with a basis on which to make a ruling. This conundrum is put first to the *laos* (*Il.* 18.502), who split along partisan lines, and then before a consecrated gathering of elders to which each man puts his desired solution (ἀμοιβηδὶς δὲ δίκαζον, *Il.* 18.506). In other words, this is not a hearing of the facts of the situation but the presentation of different paths to resolution. Thus the "straightest *dikē*" (*Il.* 18.508) will be the one that satisfies all parties and prevents the potential *stasis* hinted at by the partisan division in the *agora* (ἀμφὶς ἀρωγοί, *Il.* 18.502). Similarly the concept of *dikē* in the dispute between Menelaos and Antilokhos does not involve the notion of judgment but rather "allows settlement or ratification by sending one or both parties to another world, where their destinies are played out . . . it resolves the dispute not by making possible the discovery of a fact but through religious means".[88]

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85 On this episode as a paradigmatic display of *metis*, see Vernant and Detienne 1978, 11-26 with Gagarin 1983 and Dickie 1984.

86 It need hardly be emphasized that Antilokhos is not accused of cheating in any modern sense. If this were the case, Phoinix' testimony would be sufficient to deny him the prize.

87 Gernet 1981b, 189-90.

88 Gernet 1981, 190. On this scene in general, see Gernet 1981b, 174-7, Primmer 1970, Muellner 1976, 100-6, Gagarin 1986, 26-33, Westbrook 1992, Thür

Therefore, as both Gernet and Thür have established, the dispute between Antilokhos and Menelaos demands "the 'administration of proof' . . . addressed not to a judge who has to essay it but to an adversary whom the proof is designed to 'conquer'".[89] Menelaos, formally taking hold of the *skeptron*, first advances his claim (*Il.* 23.571-2): Antilokhos' actions have subverted what ought to have been the natural outcome of the ordeal, that Menelaos' horses are superior to those of the younger man. Menelaos then enjoins the leading men of the Argives to provide a public ruling without prejudice so that he may not later be charged with having obtained his end through intimidation:

> ἀλλ' ἄγετ', Ἀργείων ἡγήτορες ἠδὲ μέδοντες,
> **ἐς μέσον ἀμφοτέροισι δικάσσατε, μηδ' ἐπ' ἀρωγῇ,**
> μή ποτέ τις εἴπῃσιν Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων·
> Ἀντίλοχον ψεύδεσσι βιησάμενος Μενέλαος
> οἴχεται ἵππον ἄγων, ὅτι οἱ πολὺ χείρονες ἦσαν
> ἵπποι, αὐτὸς δὲ κρείσσων ἀρετῇ τε βίῃ τε.
>
> *Il.* 23.573-8
>
> But come leaders and chief men of the Argives,
> *render a dikē for both of us in the middle, without partisan favour*
> lest any of the bronze-clad Akhaians say
> "Menelaos came and led off the mare though his horses were worse
> by bullying Antilokhos with falsehoods
> and because he himself is greater in excellence and force."

At this point Menelaos suddenly insists on offering a *dikē* himself in the form of a ritual wager, formally challenging the young man to swear an oath:

> **εἰ δ' ἄγ' ἐγὼν αὐτὸς δικάσω,** καί μ' οὔ τινά φημι
> ἄλλον ἐπιπλήξειν Δαναῶν· ἰθεῖα γὰρ ἔσται.
> Ἀντίλοχ', εἰ δ' ἄγε δεῦρο, διοτρεφές, ἣ θέμις ἐστί,
> στὰς ἵππων προπάροιθε καὶ ἅρματος, αὐτὰρ ἱμάσθλην
> χερσὶν ἔχε ῥαδινήν, ᾗ περ τὸ πρόσθεν ἔλαυνες,
> ἵππων ἁψάμενος γαιήοχον ἐννοσίγαιον
> ὄμνυθι μὴ μὲν ἑκὼν τὸ ἐμὸν δόλῳ ἅρμα πεδῆσαι.
>
> *Il.* 23.579-85
>
> Or rather come! I myself will offer a *dikē*, and I deny that any
> other one of the Danaans will challenge me: for it will be straight.
> Antilokhos, come here, nurtured by Zeus, this is *themis* –
> stand before your horses and chariot and take
> in your hand the crop by which you drove them headlong
> and, while touching your horses by him who holds and shakes the earth
> swear that you did not willingly slow down my chariot with a trick.

This form of ordeal by oath, as Gernet emphasized, closely parallels the legal ritual at Athens required of the heir whose rights of succession have been challenged (*diamartyria*).[90] In the context of the

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1996, Carawan 1998, 49-68. Farenga 2006, 109-73 offers the most recent conceptualization of Homeric justice.

89 Gernet 1981b, 189 and Thür 1970.

90 Gernet's analysis of this passage is fundamental: 1981b, 187-93 = 1968, 90-102. See also Gagarin 1986, 36-8 and especially Thür 1996. It is unclear why

distribution of prizes, in which a notion of value inheres in a much more formalized way than in the portion of spoil (as chapter 4 below will show), the *Iliad's* presentation of the funerary *agon* is presented as a site with a heightened need for, and a more developed sense of, the institution of adjudicatory practices.

Gernet seminally read the dispute between Menelaos and Antilokhos as an illustration of *prédroit*, especially in describing how the oath does not guarantee the authenticity of testimony to come, but resolves the dispute immediately by challenging the defendant to risk the religious pollution of perjury. *Themis* (*Il.* 23.581) denotes an oracular form of juridical order in which parties do not interrogate an objective past in the search for the 'real' version of the events but rather seek the ritual formula which can confirm or abjure the character and legitimacy of the social relationship that, as a result of events not in dispute, now exists between them.[91] For Gernet, this is a particularly Homeric phenomenon to be contrasted with the political redefinition of justice explored in Attic drama, especially in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*.[92] Gernet does not, however, draw sufficient attention to the way in which the *Iliad* has already destabilized the ritual notion of truth by its poetic crafting of the circumstances of this dispute. The scenario sets the dispute between Menelaos and Antilokhos against the backdrop of an *agon* whose function is to disclose degrees of social worth. Although the juridical apparatus is uncertain *within the utterance,* in the context of the occasion of its performance the audience are drawn into a problematization of *aretē* by virtue of the fact that Menelaos' claim is falsified by the outcome of the race itself. Not only does the *agon* create narrative opportunities to represent ways to resolve elite disputes about the ascription of social value, it also spotlights that social value by inviting the audience to ask "what does a prize represent?" The variety of possible answers – witnessed victory, skilled horsemanship, inherited excellence, the approval of the *laos* or a mastery of juridical challenges – throws into sharp relief the absence of such considerations in *Iliad* 1 and the institutional failure of the *dasmos* and its objects to provide lasting and authentic tokens of elite identity.

The *Iliad* therefore anticipates three juridically significant institutions later found in the Gortynian regulations: 1. Settlement based on *dikē* (whether established in advance or in the moment with reference to ritual and divinatory practices); 2. Settlements based on the personal competence of the judge; 3. The formal presentation by disputants of their contending positions (first by Antilokhos to Achilles, then by Menelaos).

Gagarin insists on referring to the settlement of this dispute as "informal". The performance of a juridical challenge seems on the contrary to be highly formalized and well-established as a ritual procedure binding parties to oaths. On δικάζω in the Homeric poems, Thür 1970 and Talamanca 1979 are essential, now with Farenga 2006, 145-69 and Gagarin 2008, 13-38. For a positive retrospective of Gernet's approach to Greek law, see Maffi 1981.

91 On *themis*, see the summary of earlier analyses in Farenga 2006, 119-25.

92 Gernet 1981, 190-3 with the remarks on 199.

Funeral contests and the prize play a key role in the development of external standards in the emerging *polis* (see §2 on p.169 above). That the prize is proto-monetary in character has been argued in a previous essay.[93] At this point, however, it is sufficient to note two examples where the funeral contest shows evidence of that precise quantification of value in evidence in the *Code of Gortyn*. Firstly, prizes are not only items of symbolic value but on one occasion their value is described explicitly as originating from the consensus of the political community and with reference to an agreed-upon standard (*Il.* 23.703-5). Both victor and vanquished are ranked by an entitlement to seize objects from the middle with a precise numerical ratio vouched for by the "sons of the Akhaians". This degree of precision mirrors the juridical apparatus used at Gortyn for ensuring the proper division of goods such as those based on ordering, quantifying and partitioning according to explicit ratios. The second example comes from the same event. Achilles stops the wresting match between Odysseus and Aias and declares a draw:

> μηκέτ' ἐρείδεσθον, μηδὲ τρίβεσθε κακοῖσι·
> **νίκη δ' ἀμφοτέροισιν· ἀέθλια δ' ἶσ' ἀνελόντες**
> ἔρχεσθ', ὄφρα καὶ ἄλλοι ἀεθλεύωσιν Ἀχαιοί.
>
> *Il.* 23.735-7

> Strive no more nor press on painfully:
> *victory goes to both of you – take up the prizes in equal measure*
> and go back so that other Akhaians might enter the contests.

Kullmann has rightly suggested that this episode needs to be interpreted with reference to the bitter struggle between Odysseus and Aias for the armour of Achilles (either at the end of the *Aithiopis* [fr. 1 Davies] or beginning of the *Little Iliad* [frr. 2-3 Davies]).[94] In deliberate contrast, the *Iliad's* version has the still living Achilles preside over an idealized resolution in which the very different qualities of each man are recognized by the awarding of a shared victory. It is significant that the solution offered gives no further instruction on how these prizes can be split. It can be assumed therefore that a few verses earlier, the poem deliberately noted explicit numerical ratios for the prizes in this contest in anticipation of just such an outcome (*Il.* 23.703-5). Perhaps the intent is to imagine the heroes, like Gortynian disputants to an inheritance, converting each prize into their 'oxenworth' and then "allotting the values, each having a share".[95] If this episode in the *Iliad* has been consciously crafted with reference to the *hoplon krisis* then its outcome represents a desire to transcend those catastrophic results by representing a situation in which an adjudicator can intervene and declare the parties equal by means of a social evaluation determined in advance by the 'sons of the Akhaians'.[96]

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93 Brown 2003, reworked below as chapter 4.

94 Kullmann 1960, 81-2. Main sources: *Od.* 11.543-64 and Proclus' summaries (p.47 and 52-3 Davies) with Gantz 1993, 629-35 and West 2013, 163-77.

95 On 'oxenworth', see Macrakis 1984.

96 The episode is called a *stasis* in Proclus' summary of the *Aithopis* (p.47.30 Davies).

Ultimately, the link between succession, adjudication and the funerary *agon* of *Iliad* 23 rests on the fact that the funeral and its contests are established and overseen by the heir. Specifically why this connection between the distribution of communal goods, the ascription of social value, the affirmation of legitimate title and the adjudication of disputes arises within the context of funerary rites is the subject of the next chapter.

The symbolic framework: ritual strategies of succession in Isaios

> ἢ τίς οὐ μέλαν ἱματιον ἐφόησεν, ὡς δία τὸ πένθος κληρονόμησαν τῆς οὐσίας;
>
> Isaios 4.7
>
> Who indeed did not wear black clothes, as though the property could be inherited through grief?

Semantically, the field of thought that connects recipients of shares of spoil and successors to the deceased in early Greece is sufficiently undifferentiated to encourage the view that shared modalities of exchange generate an intersecting ideology of belonging. A key difference between these two fields, however, lies in the ideology of evaluation constructed at the heart of each exchange. As argued in chapter 1, in the *dasmos* of the *Iliad* the honorific share of spoil (*geras*) sits on a fault line, depending as heavily on a concept of what is due to a social figure as it does on a notion of reward for performance. As Ulf has rightly argued, a key criterion of 'positive social evaluation' (*Einschätzung*) in the *Iliad* is 'achievement' (*Leistung*) and the 'capacity to achieve' (*Leistungfähigkeit*).[97] We have further stressed that the failure of the *dasmos* to be able to convey this *Einschätzung* durably and securely reverberates throughout the poem. Ulf cannot, however, carry these observations into the heart of Achilles' dilemma, that is, into a fractured ideology of eliteness, which is founded firstly on misrecognizing the dependence that a notion of *aretē* has on practical schemas, and secondly on the substitution of a discourse of inherited virtue that suppresses the role of a collective institutional framework. While shares of spoil and portions of an inheritance serve to mark the status of the individual in relation to the group spatially (each receives his share of *timē*), *practices for the objectification of legitimate title to that status* – that is, proof that one is *owed* one's portion – are much more strongly developed in succession contexts. The social capital at stake in these contexts is reflected by the clarity and precision of the rules, and the amount of public space given over to the transparent regulation of legitimacy and naturalization. As the juridical institutions at Gortyn show, succession practices constitute a *dikē* that deals especially with

[97] Ulf 1990, 1-49, especially 12-15. Ulf is hamstrung by his desire to locate eliteness only in material conditions, rather than as a discourse wrought from a complex of economic practices and ideological claims. He therefore sees Homeric eliteness as an unstable historical *reality* passively reflected in the (8th century) poem rather than as an unstable *discourse* with which the *Iliad* actively engages and questions (this is the approach of critical theory taken by Rose 1992, ch.1).

the transmission of rights, status, social membership and the establishment of legitimacy. While the juridical apparatus is necessary to sort out disputes over title, what must precede that apparatus (and be the base upon which that apparatus is erected) is a symbolic framework within which the link between *aretē* and *Leistung* can be woven into a discourse of inherited 'natural' title. There is no better evidence for this desire than the entire ideology of Pindar's poetry, which almost entirely suppresses the practice-based nature of *agones* and casts athletic competition instead as a *rite of legitimate succession* in which the victor publicly "takes up" a familial legacy of *aretē*, solemnly witnessed by the poet.

Kurke, in a reading of *Nemean* 7.6-8, shows that succession is a significant metaphor for victory in Pindar's schemas. It should be noted that Kurke explores the way the motif of the funeral re-conceptualizes victory in the context of the integration of the victor back into structures of family and ancestors. For Kurke, the funeral is a symbolic context into which the victor can be introduced poetically in order to 'stabilize' his victory and minimize its disruption of social institutions. In her reading, victory is recast by Pindar as a rite of induction into a wider social unit rather than the event that sets the individual aristocrat apart from his peers. In this study, as proposed below in chapter 4, emphasis is also placed on the funeral as a symbolic crisis point whose rituals and contests are strategies for managing uncertainty about the transmission of legitimacy. Kurke's significant study overlooks, however, the link between the funeral and its practical imperatives, and *agon*. She therefore does not acknowledge the fact that athletic contests are a fundamental part of succession and funeral ritual. The omission is important because Pindar steeps athletic victory in the language of succession, casting himself as the witness to the fulfilment of a ritual ordeal, as demonstrated by Stoddart's study of Pindar's poetics and Greek family law.[98]

Funerals are simultaneously juridical and symbolic sites where the legitimate exchange of identity from the dead to the living is secured and resolved, not just for the direct claimants but for all participants. That this also describes the function of funerary *agon* will be the subject of the following chapter. Here it is necessary to illustrate that the significance of funerary ritual lies in its foundation of authentic succession via the witnessed demonstration of control over both symbolic and material patrimony.

It is impossible to dissociate the value of material objects in any succession from the ritual and symbolic elements responsible for authorizing effective transmission across generations. The Gortynian regulations demonstrate this when they make fulfilment of the dead man's ongoing ritual obligations to the divine and human spheres the

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[98] Kurke 1991, 62-82, especially 69-72 on *Nem.* 7.6-8, Stoddart 1990. At *Ol.* 10.88-93 Pindar's praise is both testimony and authentic successor (see also *Pyth.* 1. 89-96), while the poet's function as witness is remarkably illustrated at *Ol.* 13.96-100, on which see Stoddart 1990, 47-9.

chief duty of the adopted son (X 39-48).[99] The centrality of this injunction to an entire complex of thinking about succession is best shown by the continuity between the divine and material goods:

> if he (the adopted son) should take up all the property and there are no legitimate children then he is to fulfil the adopter's ritual obligations both divine and human (τὰ θῖνα καὶ τὰ ἀντρόπινα)[100] and then take up as it is written for legitimate children; should he not want to fulfil these rites as written the *epiballontes* shall have possession.
>
> X 39-48

This provision illustrates the political community's concern with the preservation of households and the priority of maintaining their ritual obligations to the whole community. Yet it is also the case that membership of a household is defined by participation in distributive and political exchanges illustrated, for example, by the explicit formulation in Isaios 7 of the role played by adoption in providing for the continuity of the childless household (Is. 7.30-32). The first part of the Gortynian expression τὰ θῖνα καὶ τὰ ἀντρόπινα encompasses the cult obligations of the heir. For a parallel, compare the list of household cults that must be properly tended and in evidence for one to pass the Athenian *dokimasia* (*Ath. Pol.* 55.3). Koerner, however, limits τὰ θῖνα to the observance of *Totenkult*.[101] If correct, the phrase would include the responsibility of the adopted son for ensuring that, in addition to the observance of ongoing ancestral rites, his adoptive father receive proper burial.

The evidence of Isaios from Athens of the 4th century BCE positions the funeral occasion as the central symbolic rite of succession and as fundamental in establishing legitimate title.[102] It is not only that public discharge of the successor's ritual obligations is the *sine qua non* for taking up the material inheritance, as the Gortynian regulations show. It is that the performance of the *sacra* in relation to the deceased of itself confers that symbolic legitimacy without which any transmission of inheritance across generations is impossible. In other words, to "take up the deceased" – that is, to oversee and execute the full spectrum of funerary and post-funerary ritual for the dead, and to be seen to be in confident control of the obligation to do so – is the essential performative 'alchemy' that transforms an heir into a successor who can rightfully assume the social position (name, property, status, obligations, and so on) made vacant by death.

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99 On these obligations and the sacral functions of the heir in the *Code*, see Rönnberg 1888, 38-41.

100 *Nomima* II p.142: "devoirs religieux et civils"; *IGT* p.548: "die Verpflichtung des Adoptierenden gegenüber Göttern und Menschen".

101 *IGT* p.550. It may be that the second part of the expression includes what might be termed *ta hosia* as opposed to *ta hiera*, parallel to similar contexts at Isaios 6.47 and 9.13 (on the distinction, see Connor 1983). If so then τὰ θῖνα would refer in the main to the household's cult responsibilities while τὰ ἀντρόπινα to the heir's obligation to the deceased more generally, including his immediate funerary demands as well as wider civic and private ones such as, for example, ongoing contributions to the *hetaireia* of the deceased or the payment of outstanding fines or debts.

102 Griffith-Williams 2013, 21-3.

Title at Athens is expressed in terms of kinship (*syngeneia*) and is authorized by the production of witnesses. Kinship in turn is formulated in terms of publicly performed formal belonging rather than natural filiation; such formal belonging is adduced by ritual access: "no male or female bastard has any right of succession with regard to familial ritual obligations (μὴ εἶναι ἀγχιστείαν μήθ' ἱερῶν καὶ ὁσίων, Is. 6.47)". As a consequence, furnishing witnesses to attest that one has fulfilled such obligations is a considerable proof of legitimacy. Ongoing observance of family cults is considered of paramount importance to the cohesion of the political community and is a key index of kin identification. Inclusion in rites conducted by the deceased while alive (for example, at Is. 8.15-6) and being introduced to the *sacra* of kin groups in the context of formal legitimation (especially clear at Is. 7.1, 15-7) are offered as the strongest proofs of kin status. The symbolic transformation into a 'son' therefore entails the fulfilment of ritual gestures and practices.[103] But the most often cited symbolic proof of the right to "stand in the place of the deceased as a participant in the *hiera kai hosia*" (καὶ ἱερῶν καὶ ὁσίων κοινωνὸν ἁνθ' αὑτοῦ εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον, Is. 9.13) is represented by witnessed performance of the funeral rites and continuing tomb cult.

The passages from Isaios listed below overwhelmingly demonstrate that, far from being simply a *topos* of forensic rhetoric, publicly witnessed performances of the *sacra*, which include the funeral rites for the deceased, are considered the decisive proof of authentic succession in the eyes of all concerned. Indeed any juridical claim to entitlement is dependent on publicly demonstrating one's right to succeed by controlling the funeral and its rituals.[104] In other words, *to be the heir means to be a master of the rituals of succession*, immersing oneself in the drama of kinship.

The symbolic capital of this mastery arises out of five interconnected ritual practices:[105]

(a) control of the funeral and post-burial rites, including the burdens of expense;
(b) conduct of annual sacrifices for the deceased and his ancestors;
(c) overseeing access to the tomb;
(d) ongoing observance of the deceased's household cults;

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[103] See also Dem. 57.54, 67, *Ath. Pol.* 55.3, Harpokration s.v. ἕρκειος Ζεύς.

[104] As well as a preparedness to undergo the oath-swearing ordeal of *diamartyria*, on which see Lipsius 1905-15, 854-6 n.30 with evidence and discussion, Gernet 1955, 83-102, Harrison 1971, 125-7 and Rubinstein 1993, 40ff. *Diamartyria* and its counter-suit (*episkepsis* followed by *dikē pseudomartyrion*, see Harrison 1971, 192-7) invite witnesses to risk perjury in order to attest a rightful claim and in a number of speeches Isaios' clients are defending or prosecuting witnesses rather than the claimant. On the frequency and importance of proper ritual as a forensic argument, see Hardcastle 1980.

[105] Carefully examined by Rubinstein 1993, 68-76. Their ritual significance in relation to legitimacy is established by Gernet 1981, 177-81.

(e) attested formal introduction to (adoptive) father's cults and phratry while still alive.[106]

The following passages broadly illustrate some or all of these practices:

(1) Isaios 1.10
ἡγεῖτο γὰρ δεινὸν εἶναι τὸν ἔχθιστον τῶν οἰκείων καὶ κύριον τῶν αὑτοῦ καταλιπεῖν, **και ποιεῖν αὐτῷ τὰ νομιζόμενα τοῦτον, ἕως ἡμεῖς ἡβήσαιμεν, ᾧ ζῶν διάφορος ἦν·**

for he thought it a terrible thing that his most hated enemy be left to become guardian of his relatives, master of his property and that *the customary rites for him be performed, until we came of age, by one with whom while alive he was so at odds*.[107]

(2) Isaios 6.51
ἐνθυμεῖσθαι τοίνυν χρή, ὦ ἄνδρες, πότερον δεῖ τὸν ἐκ ταύτης τῶν Φιλοκτήμονος εἶναι κληρονόμον καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ μνήματα ἰέναι χεόμενον και ἐναγιοῦντα . . .

You then must consider, gentlemen, whether this woman's son ought to be Philoktemon's successor and so attend the family tombs, pour the libations and make the chthonic sacrifices . . .

(3) Isaios 2.10
μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα χρόνου διαγενομένου ἐσκόπει ὁ Μενεκλῆς ὅπως μὴ ἔσοιτο ἄπαις, ἀλλ' ἔσοιτο αὐτῷ **ὅς τις ζῶντα γηροτροφήσοι καὶ τελευτήσαντα θάψοι αὐτὸν καὶ εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον τὰ νομιζόμενα αὐτῷ ποιήσοι.**

Some time later Menekles started to look into how he might end his childless state so that there might be *someone to tend him in old age while he yet lived, bury him when he had died and perform the customary rites for him for the future.*

(4) Isaios 7.30
πάντες γὰρ οἱ τελευτήσειν μέλλοντες πρόνοιαν ποιοῦνται σφῶν αὐτῶν, ὅπως μὴ ἐξερημώσουσι τοὺς σφετέρους αὐτῶν οἴκους, ἀλλ' ἔσται τις καὶ ὁ ἐναγιῶν καὶ πάντα τὰ νομιζόμενα αὐτοῖς ποιήσων.

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[106] Most of these five areas is covered by the general expression τὰ νομιζόμενα, which, as Wyse points out (1904, 243-4), refers to a constellation of rituals from the immediate funeral (the laying-out of the body [*prothesis*], properly performed by the women of the household [Is. 6.41], to the wake [*perideipnon*]), the third, ninth and thirty day rites or, more generally, the complex of tomb cult including the annual *enagismata* at the grave site (for these, in addition to the passages below, see also Dem. 18.243, 43.65, 48.12, Aisch. 3.225 with Wyse 1904, 269-71). The Athenian *polis* demanded under the law that children carry out these cult responsibilities. Those who did not could be subject to prosecution for mistreating parents (γραφὴ κακώσεως γονέων): see Is. 8.32, Aisch. 1.13-4, Xen. *Mem*. 2.2.13 with Harrison 1968, 77.

[107] The sentiment expressed here is echoed in Is. 9 where the speaker argues that the claimant belongs to a branch of the family hostile to the deceased. Witnesses attest to the fact that the deceased's funeral, customary rites and tomb (προὔθεντο, τὰ νομιζόμενα, τὸ μνῆμα, 9.4) were provided for by friends and comrades-in-arms (οἱ φιλοι καὶ οἱ συστρατιῶται) and that the claimant had no part in it (οὐ προὔθετο οὔδ' ἔθαψεν, 9.4, 5). Furthermore the father of the deceased had a sworn enmity with his collateral kin (9.19, 36). Entering into possession of the estate before having performed customary rites is therefore given as grounds for denial of kin rights to the defendant (9.32).

All those who are about to pass away give thought for themselves so that their own households do not become extinct, but also that there will be someone to perform the chthonic sacrifices and all the customary rites for them.

(5) Isaios 2.25
οὐκ ἄλλ' οὐδὲν εἰπεῖν ἢ ὅτι ἐποιήσατ' ἂν ὅς τις αὐτὸν ἔμελλε ζῶντα θεραπεύσειν καὶ τελευτήσαντα θάψσειν·

. . . he would have said nothing other than that he would have adopted someone who would care for him while alive and bury him after he'd died.

(6) Isaios 9.7
. . . καὶ τήν τε οὐσίαν, ὃν ἂν ἐκεῖνος εἰσποιήσηται, οὗτος ἕξει, καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς βωμοὺς τοὺς πατρῴους οὗτος βαδιεῖται, καὶ τελευτήσαντι αὐτῷ καὶ τοῖς ἐκείνου προγόνοις τὰ νομιζόμενα ποιήσει·

. . . and that whomsoever he adopted then will possess his property as well as attend the ancestral altars and perform for the deceased and his ancestors the customary rites.

(7) Isaios 2.36-7
καὶ ἐγω μὲν ὁ ποιητὸς ἐκεῖνόν τε ζῶντα ἐθεράπευον . . . καὶ τῷ ἐμῷ παιδίῳ ἐθέμην τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ἐκείνου, ἵνα μὴ ἀνώνυμος ὁ οἶκος αὐτοῦ γένηται, καὶ τελευτήσαντα ἔθαψα ἀξιως ἐκείνου τε καὶ ἐμαυτοῦ, καὶ ἐπίθημα καλὸν ἐπέθηκα, καὶ τὰ ἔνατα καὶ τἆλλα πάντα ἐποίησα τὰ περὶ τὴν ταφὴν ὡς οἷόν τε κάλλιστα, ὥστε τοὺς δημότας ἐπαινεῖν ἅπαντας . . . καὶ ὡς ἔθαψα τ' ἐγὼ αὐτὸν καὶ τὰ τρίτα καὶ τὰ ἔνατα ἐποίησα καὶ τἆλλα τὰ περὶ τὴν ταφὴν, τὰς μαρτυρίας ὑμῖν τῶν εἰδότων ἀναγνώσεται.

I, the adopted son, looked after him while he lived . . . and gave his name to my son that his household might not disappear (i.e. become nameless); and when he died I carried out a burial worthy of him and myself, set up a fine monument and performed the ninth day rites and everything else for the funeral so properly that all the demesmen praised me . . . and that I buried him, as well as performed the third and ninth day rites, and all other necessaries for the funeral, the testimony of those who can attest this will be read to you.

(8) Isaios 2.45-6
καὶ ἔτι πρὸς τούτοις ζῶντα τε φαίνομαι θεραπεύων αὐτὸν καὶ τελευτήσαντα θάψας. οὗτος δὲ νυνὶ ἄκληρον μὲν ἐμὲ ποιεῖν τοῦ κλήρου τοῦ πατρῴου, εἴτε μείζων ἐστὶν οὗτος εἴτε ἐλάττων, ἄπαιδα δὲ τὸν τελευτήσαντα καὶ ἀνώνυμον βούλεται καταστῆσαι, **ἵνα μήτε τὰ ἱερὰ τὰ πατρῷα ὑπὲρ ἐκείνου μηδεὶς τιμᾷ μήτ' ἐναγίζῃ αὐτῷ καθ' ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτόν, ἀλλὰ ἀφαιρῆται τᾶς τιμὰς τὰς ἐκείνου.**

In addition to this [proof of legal adoption] I am shown to have cared for him while he lived and buried him after he'd died. This man here wants to deprive me of my father's estate, whether great or small, and to condemn the deceased to oblivion, without children or name, *so that there might be no one to honour the ancestral cults on his behalf or perform the chthonic sacrifices for him every year, but to strip him of his social position* (*timai*).

(9) Isaios 4.19
ὅπου γὰρ τὸν αὑτὸν ποιησάμενον οὔτ' ἀποθανόντα ἀνείλετο οὔτ' ἔκαυσεν οὔτε ὠστολόγησεν, ἀλλὰ πάντα τοῖς μηδὲν προσήκουσι παρῆκε ποιῆσαι, **πῶς οὐκ ἂν ἀνοσιώτατος εἴη, ὃς τῷ τεθνεῶτι μηδὲν τῶν νομιζιμένων ποιήσας τῶν χρημάτων αὐτοῦ κληρονομεῖν ἀξιοῖ**;

Since he neither took up his own deceased adoptive father nor put him on the pyre nor collected the bones, but instead left all this to be performed by those with no connection to the man, *how is he not the most impious person in considering himself worthy to inherit his property when he has performed none of the customary rites for the dead?*

(10) Isaios 4.26
παρέσχοντο δ' ὑμῖν μάρτυρας . . . ἔτι δὲ καὶ ὡς ἔθαψαν Νικόστρατον.

They have provided witnesses to attest that . . . they buried Nikostratos . . .

Complementing these general statements, two speeches dwell specifically on the exercise of control over the capital of succession rituals.[108] In Isaios 6 (*On the estate of Philoktemon*)[109] the speaker describes a struggle for the symbolic capital of "taking up the body" immediately following the death of Euktemon, his friend's adoptive grandfather.[110] He alleges that Euktemon's immediate female kin were not informed of his death and then barred by the defendants from tending to his body "declaring that burying Euktemon was none of their business" (φάσκοντες οὐ προσήκειν αὐταῖς θάπτειν Εὐκτήμονα, Is. 6.40). The women were eventually admitted only because ritual propriety demanded the body be washed and laid out by the deceased's female relatives (Is. 6.41). Later in the same speech the speaker challenges the defendants to demonstrate that they are legitimate offspring of Euktemon by producing witnesses who might attest to either their own or Euktemon's performance of rites for their mother, which ought to have been expected for a legitimate wife:

οὐ γὰρ ἂν εἴπῃ μητρὸς ὄνομα, γνήσιοί εἰσιν, ἀλλ' ἐὰν ἐπιδεικνύῃ ὡς ἀληθῆ λέγει, τοὺς συγγενεῖς παρεχόμενος τοὺς εἰδότας συνοικοῦσαν τῷ Εὐκτήμονι καὶ τοὺς δημότας καὶ τοὺς φράτορας, εἴ τι ἀκηκόασι πώποτε ἢ ἴσασιν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς Εὐκτήμονα λητουργήσαντα, ἔτι δὲ ποῦ τέθαπται, ἐν ποίοις μνήμασι, καὶ τίς εἶδε τὰ νομιζόμενα ποιοῦντα Εὐκτήμονα· ποῖ δ' ἔτ' ἰόντες οἱ παῖδες ἐναγίζουσι καὶ χέονται, καὶ τίς εἶδε ταῦτα τῶν πολιτῶν ἢ τῶν οἰκετῶν τῶν Εὐκτήμονος. ταῦτα γὰρ ἐστιν ἔλεγχος ἅπαντα, καὶ οὐ λοιδορία.

Isaios 6.64-5

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[108] Space does not permit the inclusion of Demosthenes 43, *Against Makartatos*, though it is as equally useful here.

[109] A notoriously complex case that in reality concerns the estate of Philoktemon's father Euktemon whose sons predeceased him. The adopted son of Philoktemon, Khairestratos, is the litigant. See Wyse's overview: 1904, 483-8. These complexities do not affect the present argument.

[110] Khairestratos is both a direct grandson (the son of Euktemon's daughter) and adopted grandson (by his uncle, Philoktemon).

> Mention of a mother's name does not confer legitimacy, rather to demonstrate that he speaks the truth he must furnish kin who know she was married to Euktemon, as well as demesmen and phratrymen, if they ever heard or know that Euktemon performed the proper liturgies on her behalf [111], and where she is buried, in what kind of tomb, and who has seen Euktemon perform the customary rites there; where do her sons go to carry out the chthonic sacrifices and pour libations [*see above no.2*] and who among the citizens or Euktemon's slaves has seen these things? All these kinds of question, not just slanders, amount to a proper inquiry.

Witnesses must therefore be produced who can attest to the proper rituals authorizing kin status and transmission. This is a checklist of legitimacy where succession depends on being able to display (ἐπιδείκνυμι) proof via the public performance of a ritual narrative involving the body of the deceased, its rites and wider kin and civic groups concerned with the integrity of citizenship. This narrative, along with the modalities of exchange which accompany it, and public declarations of intimacy with the dead, are, as Bourdieu suggests, generative of kin identity and produce social legitimacy.

This is confirmed in Isaios 8 (*On the estate of Kiron*).[112] The speaker, whose case happens to be weak and thus entails a fair degree of special pleading, acknowledges that particular care must be taken to demonstrate as much participation and control over the funeral as possible. He recounts going to his grandfather's house accompanied by relatives and pall-bearers with the intention of removing the body to perform the funeral *from his own house* (ὡς θάψων ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας τῆς ἐμαυτοῦ, Is. 8.21). His compassion and concern for ritual propriety is demonstrated when he yields to a tearful request from his grandfather's widow to help with the preparation of the body and to hold the funeral from the house of the deceased. The speaker then furnishes witnesses to the fact that the location of the funeral reflected this special assent to her request. He goes on to describe an argument with one of his opponents, the brother-in-law of the deceased, over the costs of the funeral. This exchange is itself adduced as evidence that even his opponent acknowledged his claim:

> καίτοι εἰ μὴ ἦν θυγατριδοῦς Κίρωνος, οὐκ ἂν ταῦτα διωμολογεῖτο, ἀλλ' ἐκείνους ἂν τοὺς λόγους ἔλεγε "σὺ δὲ τίς εἶ; σοὶ δὲ τί προσήκει θάπτειν; οὐ γιγνώσκω σε· οὐ μὴ εἴσει εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν." ταῦτ' εἰπεῖν προσῆκεν, ἅ περ νῦν ἑτέρους πέπεικε λέγειν.
>
> Isaios 8.24

> If, however, I had not been the son of Kiron's daughter, he would not have entered into these agreements with me but instead would have said, "Who are you? What gives you the right to bury him? I don't know you – do not enter this house." These things, which are his right to say, now he suborns from others.

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[111] On whether this refers to the rite at which a new wife was introduced to the phratry, the *gamelia*, see Wyse 1904, 547. On the *gamelia*, see Lambert 1998, 182-6, with evidence at 182-3 nn.215 and 219.

[112] On this speech and its case, see Griffith-Williams 2013, 89-148.

Rituals of succession are therefore significant moments when claims to social identity are asserted and tested. Conducting and controlling the funeral rite is in itself an act of succession at which the question of one's claims to a degree of social value is confirmed by the affirmation of those in attendance. Here the speaker can claim ironically that since he was implicitly recognized by his opponents it is they who have inadvertently provided the best proof of his right to claim the inheritance.

Funerals ritually reinscribe social identity and reestablish the symbolic basis for ongoing claims made by participants. Indeed, Achilles makes this particularly clear in a rare generalization about funerary contests where he asserts with uncharacteristic confidence: "if we Akhaians were competing now over another, I would surely take first prize and carry it back to my tent" (*Il.* 23.274-5). The funeral *agon* of another imaginary hero is disarmingly made plain as a procedural context that would resolve beyond any doubt Achilles' claim to be the "best of the Akhaians". To make the point even clearer the *Iliad* also makes the *agon* the scene for the reestablishment of the ground of solidarity and harmony between Achilles and Agamemnon (*Il.* 23.890-4). Read in a self-reflexive way it is as though *Iliad* 23 says: "Had the problems of *Iliad* 1 arisen in the context of funerary contests, then both the symbolic and juridical frameworks for resolution would have averted the *stasis*."

Conclusion

When we return to the *dasmos* of the *Iliad* after this detour through two comparative bodies of evidence we become more sharply aware of two complementary vacuums – firstly, the procedural vacuum for resolving disputes about the *proper conduct* of material distribution (the development of which at Gortyn takes place between 650 and 450 BCE); secondly, the absence of a symbolic context, which would foster a ritual order legitimating the right to 'take up' corporate capital. These missing frameworks, however, are both found in the context of the *funeral* where title to 'inherited' capital – whether, for example, in the form of a claim to *aretē*, or an heiress, the 'family name', or land, houses or goods comprising a material inheritance – is transmitted legitimately under the authorizing signs of the assembled political community, its gods and founding heroes. Following Bourdieu's lead, it is possible to see the city and the familial unit as complementary ideological formations whose "structuring structures" mutually reinforce the fundamental role of each in the articulation of the other.[113] The *Iliad's* consciousness of the potential of funeral rituals and funereal practices in restructuring socio-political relations is the subject of the concluding chapter.

It is also possible that the persistently funereal form that hero-cult takes not only constructs the performance of the epic as the choice portion set aside for the illustrious dead (*geras*), but also casts the *audience of epic* in an equally fundamental role when they

[113] Bourdieu 1998, 35-74.

participate in the hero's *enagismata*, that is, *as the hero's legitimate successors*. Periodically, at performances of the hero's rites – which include, of course the *geras* of performance itself – authentic collective links are reestablished that in turn express the citizen community as the legitimate inheritors of a cultural and institutional legacy bequeathed by ancestral founders.[114] From this perspective it is possible to see why *Iliad* 23 contributes to a restoration of the socio-political balance via the *agonothesis* of funeral contests.

Rather than interpret this representational decision by the *Iliad* as evidence for some unconscious social evolution through which 'tribal' notions of collective distribution coalesced within the general context of the development of the Greek city, the view here holds that it was the determining force exercised by this civic context that consciously bound together homologous but lateral institutional forms, revolutionizing their meanings under the sign of political community. Roussel showed that the 'tribal' divisions of the archaic *polis* were radical reinventions of a sense of belonging along new axes, which thereby made a quantum leap into a rationally articulated civic imaginary.[115] So too the links between *dasmos*, *daisis*, funeral and, looking forward to *Iliad* 23, funerary *agon* are traces of a political consciousness rationally drawing upon existing frameworks in order to supply a revolutionary way of thinking about social evaluation and the expression of political belonging, rather than the survivals of a more primitive communal notion of property.[116] In a similar way the *Iliad* cannot be interpreted as a *passive* reflection of a stage in a naturalistic social evolution but instead ought to be regarded, like Roussel's civic tribes, as an *active* representational agency co-opting an imagined past at a specific historical moment, that is as a revolutionary *event*.[117] The link between the distribution of spoil and the transmission of symbolic goods at a funeral was not simply (if at all) an epiphenomenon of deep structures but one whose latent homologies were elicited and emphasized deliberately in performance to provide crucial narrative accompaniment to the socio-politically cohesive rituals of hero-cult. The transition made

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[114] See Antonaccio 1995, 245-68 on the politically specific origins of hero-cult as opposed to tomb-cult, as well as chapter 4 below. De Polignac 1995, 10-12, 18-9 has argued strongly that funerary practices transform themselves in the archaic period within the cultic contexts of sanctuaries and therefore that the emergence of hero-cult is the result of a fusion of funerary and cult practices under the sign of the political community.

[115] Roussel 1976. For the *polis*' conscious reworking of archaic forms into rationally organized expressions of political order, see especially the important article by Murray 1990 and the fascinating discussion of the development of the Spartan *polis* through the lens of Apollo's cults and their sudden transformation by Pettersson 1992, 109-23.

[116] As Borecký 1963 argued.

[117] De Polignac 1995, 8: "Les sociétés archaïques évoluaient en remodelant leur proper passé, et non en tendant vers un idéal abstrait present à leur esprit comme le but à atteindre."

in the *Iliad* as it moves from *dasmos* and *geras* (*Iliad* 1) to *agon* and *aethlon* (*Iliad* 23) is the result of a conscious narrative decision to map *a parallel transition from dasmos to funeral via the death of Patroklos*. This is not the footprint of authorial invention but the transformative ritual function of a performative mirror via whose agency the imaginary of self and society is evoked and represented to itself as real. The *Iliad*, therefore, provides *a generalized aetiology* for an occasion of funereal hero-cult and its *agones*, and encourages its audience to re-conceive institutions and social identity by intertwining parallel modes of thinking about distribution and value with a narrative about alienation, loss and reintegration.

Our debt to Richard Seaford's interpretation of the *Iliad* lies in this emphasis on the occasion of death-ritual (which includes hero-cult) as the lynch-pin of social transformation in the poem and the world of the occasion of performance.[118] For Seaford, death-ritual is integrative because it strengthens group solidarity and is for this reason appropriated ideologically by the early city. While his basic observation is surely right, our interpretation here realigns the emphasis. Firstly, the *Iliad's* central problematic is taken as historical and political from the outset of the poem. The solutions posed are distilled from *the immediate imperatives of the occasion of the poem's performance* rather than fossilized instances of an archaic society's evolution toward increasingly complex institutions, culminating in the *polis*. This latter teleology of *polis* evolution awaits proper critique. Secondly, funerals are important also because they are social rituals concerned with legitimacy *at that transitional moment when it is at its most fragile*. Therefore, if the funeral, with its concern for transmission, legitimacy, sorting out claims and validating succession – as well as with "solidarity-in-lamentation" – is deliberately juxtaposed at the other end of the poem to the catastrophic and symbolically barren *dasmos* of *Iliad* 1 and thereby provides institutional closure to the *menis* of Achilles, then one is entitled to ask whether this is in fact an organizing principle of the poem as a whole and whether this juxtaposition is reflective of its function in performance.

The *Iliad* occupies a blind spot whenever the attempt is made to view early performances, for example, from the structuralist perspective that brought to the interpretation of Attic tragedy its rich institutional and historical contexts. As Barbara Graziosi has argued, the close and early connection of the Homeric poems to an author is a marker of the degree to which these texts had slipped their 'occasional' moorings perhaps well before the end of the archaic period.[119] Homeric epic has remained historically anomalous because it lacks transparent internal evidence of a historical agency supplying a representational will, such as Attic drama's relationship with Athenian democracy, which prompted

[118] Seaford 1994, 106-90.
[119] Graziosi 2002, 13-50.

thinking about new civic and religious institutions against the backdrop of a consciously 'archaic' past. Homeric epic seems to evade such historicist entanglements. Yet scholars still summon Homeric evidence to testify to a *pre-political* Greek past which is nevertheless difficult to reconcile with epic's self-conscious modernity and political self-reflexivity. As has been argued so far, however, it is possible to locate points where the poem enters into a dialogue with institutional forms and then, as with so many discussions of drama, imagine the implications were that epic dialogue an integral part of the wider practices of its occasion.[120]

It is the task of the next chapter to link funerals to contests and to consider how the intertwining of succession with *agon* portrayed in the *Iliad* represents such a quantum leap in the emergence of the political community in early Greece.

[120] The pioneering Anglophone studies for interpreting text in relation to occasional context remains Goldhill 1987 for Attic drama and Nagy 1979 for Homeric epic, even though Nagy has never fully explored the historical implications of his commitment to a late 6th century key transformative stage involving the Peisistratidai and the Panathenaia.

CHAPTER 4

Funeral Contests and the beginnings of the Greek City

This chapter concludes the first part of an investigation into the role of epic as mirror by analyzing the athletic and equestrian competitions portrayed in the *Iliad,* the funeral games for Patroklos (*Il.* 23.257–897).[1] It reiterates earlier conclusions drawing them together to show how resolution of a social crisis sparked off in *Iliad* 1 mirrors the resolution of similar conflicts in the political development of early Greece by the instigation of funeral contests in *Iliad* 23. Justification for this conclusion is based on explanations derived from the conjoint conceptual frameworks elaborated at length below in Part Two, chapters 5 and 6, which bring together a theory of practice in the economy of exchange with epic conceived as a poetics of ritualized performance event.

Part One: a summary

In summary, value in the *Iliad* is understood as a magico-religious power inhering in precious objects that is released in the contexts of their exchange. Pervaded by the archaic notion that the value of precious objects becomes apposite to the social worth of a man by ritualized processes of exchange, the *Iliad* explores the impact on social status when the effectiveness of these exchanges is compromised and confidence in the value of the object is undermined. In particular, the *Iliad* questions the effectiveness of those special exchanges in the archaic world by which an emergent political society circulates honour and preserves a principle of equality. Although the value of the privileged share of spoil (*geras*) arises differently (as illustrated in chapter 1), there is, nevertheless, an expectation that the receipt of a *geras* will authorize the claims of its possessor to inherent worth. The power of the relationship between the physical object and the claims that it supports cannot be overemphasized. When Achilles is forced to surrender his *geras*, the effect is to negate his claim to be 'best of the Akhaians'. In his exile, which is intellectual as well as social, Achilles grapples with the failure of a public ritual to guarantee what he (and the audience) knows to be a divinely sanctioned truth. Consequently, the *Iliad* places a question mark over the notion of value itself. It asks, if rituals can be perverted, thereby undermining confidence in the inherent value of things, then how can an individual's claims to *aretē* ('inherited excellence') be reestablished?

The funeral contest is a solution to this crisis. If a significant part of the *Iliad* unfolds as an unsettling of the institutions by which elites structure their relations and accord each other rank then the strategies by which practices like funeral contests resolve the crisis and re-establish those relations need determining. Funeral contests provide a quasi-juridical context in which competing claims to rank and prestige are

[1] This chapter has been adapted from Brown 2003.

'sorted out' (*krisis*). The link between funerals and athletic competition are explained on this level. The role played by the funeral contest for the heir presiding at the grave parallels the role of the contest in legitimating the victor's claims to *aretē*.

This interpretation represents the prize as a historically-situated response to the problem of determining social worth. The athletic prize acts like a certificate of authenticity, one no longer resting upon the possession of a valuable object. Unlike the right to a privileged share of the distributed spoil (*geras*), the right to seize a prize is founded upon an explicit determination of inherent worth in the *agora* – the contest itself – and constitutes the *seal* of public adjudication. Thus the real value of the prize is decided in advance, existing in practices beyond the object. The prize constitutes a shift away from the archaic notion of a value thought of as a tangible essence within objects toward value considered as the abstract product of consensus and public agreement. In the *Iliad* the prize replaces the *geras* as a more durable expression of a man's worth within a society of equals.

Two questions arise: what is the organic link between funerary ritual and athletic contests, and what economic significance is to be ascribed to the prize and its particular value in an early Greek system of objects? These questions can only be answered when athletic competition is framed in the context of an archaic world of pre-monetary economic structures and oral culture, functioning within specific social, mental and historical conditions. The funeral of Patroklos and its famous contests take place in the second last book of the *Iliad* (*Il.* 23.257–897).[2] Two aspects of its athletic competition are striking. Firstly, it takes place in the context of funerary ritual. Secondly, the contests are not included as part of an overarching sacred act insofar as the festival framework for athletic competition, common in later practice is absent. How, then is the social ideology which manifests itself in these collective acts to be interpreted? What, moreover, is the value of its content for understanding the social and historical conditions under which athletic competition emerges in archaic and classical Greece?

The funeral of Patroklos cannot be disentangled from the complexities of the entire poem. In the words of James Redfield, the *Iliad* is a 'structured problematic' produced in a manner enabling it to disclose and rehearse the institutional anxieties of the archaic period.[3] Thus the meaning of Patroklos' funeral contests cannot be examined in isolation.

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2 For a general overview of Homeric athletics, see Richardson 1993, 201–3 with further literature. See also, the excellent remarks of Macleod 1982, 29–32. For recent studies of Homeric 'sport', see Kyle 1984, Dickie 1984 and, in depth, Laser 1987. For a study of competition terminology, see Scanlon 1983. Omitted here is the special case of the athletic contests on Phaiakia in *Odyssey* 8. The themes at work in that episode are related to the present discussion but require a separate study.

3 Redfield 1983, 219.

The *Iliad* narrates the collapse of an *economy*. It interrogates the content of archaic value and evaluation as a consequence of Achilles' rage. The breakdown of the mode by which elites acquire recognized social worth creates a crisis that is presented as a problematization of archaic value via the authority of the poet. The destabilization of value (*Iliad* 1) undermines confidence in the exchanges affirming *aretē* and in turn problematizes the practices providing the framework for the public expression of worth (*Iliad* 9). A return to these practices can only take place as a reversal, a playing-back of the crisis, a move that ultimately proves unsatisfactory (*Iliad* 19). A different crisis, the death of Patroklos (*Iliad* 16–18), draws an audience's attention to a number of the roles played by Achilles' *hetairos* ('companion') and in turn, following Seaford and Nagy, revealing how grief for Patroklos, its consequences (*Iliad* 18–22) and his subsequent funeral (*Iliad* 23) provide Achilles with the opportunity to rearticulate the way social worth is measured. The funerary contest, presided over by Achilles, represents a wholly different social economy to the one dominating the first book.

After Agamemnon's seizure of Briseis, Achilles' *geras*, there could be no return to the *dasmos* as a mode of evaluation. By his actions, the son of Atreus lays bare the stress points of an economy of equal social relations prompting Achilles' poetic critique: henceforth, what man's *geras* – that object which most articulates *timē* in a band of equal warriors – can truly claim to be a token of value independent of the arbitrary whims of superior violence?[4]

Even though the strife between Agamemnon and Achilles is temporarily allayed by the contrite *apoina* of *Iliad* 19, the audience know only too well that Achilles' return to the battlefield is motivated by the loss of a form of value which no object however precious can express. Achilles' declaration in *Iliad* 9 that no *kleos* is worth his life (*Il.* 9.400–20) is put to the test after *Iliad* 16 when he must endure the death of his double. In chapter 6 we will consider more closely how Patroklos can be regarded as a representation of Achilles. In a characteristically Homeric way, reality and representation merge in the telling: the apparition of Achilles on the battlefield is destined to share the same cinerary urn with Achilles (*Il.* 23.91–2; 23.243–4).[5] To this extent, the later funeral of

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4 See chapters 1 and 2 above.

5 At least three other instances deliberately blur the identities of Achilles and Patroklos. The first, at *Il.* 17.689–90, is Menelaos' message for Achilles: "the best of the Akhaians has fallen | *Patroklos* . . .' (πέφαται ὥριστος Ἀχαιῶν | **Πάτροκλος** . . . ; the second, *Il.* 18.51ff., is Thetis' lament for Achilles. Death here can be read on many levels: the death of Patroklos, the certain death of Achilles as a consequence, the imitation of death in grief, his social death at the hands of Agamemnon and so on. See also Seaford 1994, 166–7. Thirdly, *Il.* 19.323–4, where Achilles compares the potential grief for the loss of his father or son with the grief he feels for the loss of Patroklos. In this instance Peleus is pictured weeping for the loss of 'such a son' (τοιοῦδ' υἷος). Lattimore, in his translation, adds 'such a son, *for me*' (emphasis added) in an attempt to efface an essential ambiguity. The point must surely

Patroklos is, like the presence of Achilles' simulacrum on the battlefield, simultaneously a premonition of Achilles' funeral and the actual event. The identification of Patroklos as Achilles' double has often been made, in particular in Nagy's examination of Patroklos' thematic function in the *Iliad*.[6] For Nagy, Patroklos' death can be read as a projection of Achilles' symbolic death should he accept a return (*nostos*) without *kleos*, that is, a world without *Patro-kleos* ('ancestral *kleos*'). In other words, the death of Patroklos intimates Achilles' possible 'death' (forgotten in old age), but not his ultimate fate (*kleos*): it recalls other types of death, for instance, being deprived of the immortal glory of song. Henceforth, Achilles is prompted to exchange *menis* over the loss of one type of *timē* for the *timē* of *kleos*. As Nagy shows, this idea operates on the level of ritual practice in which cult, which includes ritual song, is the *timē* that averts the *menis* of the hero. This idea will be developed in chapter 6 where, following Vernant,[7] it is suggested that Patroklos functions in the epic as a *kolossos*, a double of Achilles' '*de facto*' *psyche* whose ritual immolation compels agents to fulfil oaths and undertakings. The death of Patroklos allows the poet, through Achilles, to develop his critique of the social economy by reorienting the hero back toward his *philoi hetairoi* and the unqualified value of his own shining *kleos*, described explicitly in the narrative as beyond articulation within the terms of the heroic economy (*Il.* 9.400–20). At the same time, it allows the 'best of the Akhaians' to preside at a vision of his *own* funeral,[8] a ritual context in which an institutional framework exists to express the social value of a man in a new way.

In the *Iliad* there is no return to the types of exchange governing *Iliad* 1 and 9. This is evident at the level of poetic diction used in the narrative, insofar as the language of spoil distribution is applied only once in the last four books of the poem (δάσονται, *Il.* 22.354) and then it is pointedly ironic. The word *geras,* so crucial to the meaning of value in *Iliad* 1 and the focal point of strife in the society of warriors, is no longer used after *Iliad* 19. *Iliad* 20–22 present a period of social *aporia* where questions about the proper determination of *timē* are in stasis. In his search for their resolution, Achilles must first descend into the hell of a second exile, endure the anguish of his own mortality, inseparable from his humiliation at the hands of Agamemnon, itself a kind of death, and suffer grief for his *hetairos* and reflected self – all of this manifesting itself in the rage of the warrior and an inversion of distributive exchange.

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be that Peleus would be weeping both for the simulated death of Achilles (Patroklos) and for the hero's real death inexorably activated by the actual death of Patroklos.

6 Nagy 1979, 94–117. For discussion of the semantics of Patroklos' name, see Nagy 1979, 102ff. See also the approaches to this developed by Loraux 1975.

7 Vernant 2005, 321-32.

8 A fascinating vase (Corinthian *olpe*, *c.* 570–550, Brussels inv. A4) ambiguously portrays Achilles (named) laid out and being mourned by Thetis while still very much alive.

Iliad 22 marks one of the lowest points in the poem, the point at which only violence prevails. Achilles' return to civilization and reintegration, as sketched by Seaford, is accomplished by means of death-ritual.[9] But any return to civilization must involve a real end to the strife between Achilles and Agamemnon that has left the economy of honour among the warrior peers in ruins. The funeral following in *Iliad* 23 provides the context within which the lines of a social economy of prestige are redrawn. This is not a coincidence, to the extent that the convergence of these two strands of thought in the narrative is deliberate and fundamental.

Funeral, contests, heirs and victors

The funeral is a context well suited to the consolidation and restatement of the group. Ritual lament and commensality around the tomb are powerful agents of group cohesion. Seaford's explanation for the presence of contests at a funeral is that they constitute "a controlled outlet for aggressive anger at [the deceased's] death", which may "serve to express the status, and reaffirm the strength, of a particular group owing loyalty to the dead man."[10] Like Nagy, for whom contests are "the specific Greek variant of the general anthropological category of competition *in honor of the dead*," and other earlier studies of funeral competitions, Seaford's view originates in Erwin Rohde's early anthropological discussion of funeral competition.[11] It is widely held that the relationship between the participants in the contest and the deceased is self-evident and easily explained as either honouring the dead or as a cult to appease them, that is, as a kind of *Totenkult*. However, these explanations tend to gloss the link between funerals and contests. No explanation is offered why both practices were regarded as institutionally apposite and intertwined.[12]

The explanation is found in the convergence of social practices and institutions. It is possible, following on from the conclusions of the preceeding chapter, to identify a mode of thought in which three analogous figures – the heir who succeeds a dead man at a funeral, the warrior who receives his share of spoil at a *dasmos* and the victor at an athletic contest – are understood all to be participating institutionally in the same act. A clear linguistic and semantic homology exists between the lexicon of booty distribution and the sharing out of goods amongst inheritors at an intestate succession. There is evidence in the *Iliad* indicating employment of the same vocabulary in each context and of similar modes of expression used in archaic law, in particular use of the words *moira* ('portion, lot') and *timē* to indicate shares parceled out to legitimate

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9 Seaford 1994, 159–80.

10 Seaford 1994, 122.

11 Nagy 1990a, 143, emphasis added. On funeral contests in general see, Malten 1923–4; Malten 1925; Andronikos 1968, 34–7, 121–6; Roller 1981 with Laser 1987, 21–5. Rohde 1925, 14–17.

12 For a general (and rather pessimistic) discussion of the various *Ursprungtheorien* for the Olympic Games and, by extension, athletic competition, see Ulf and Weiler 1980.

children in the *Code of Gortyn* (*IC* 4.72).[13] The idea of the equivalent share, so crucial to Achilles in *Iliad* 9 and 16, is employed just as frequently to articulate familial relations after a man's death, for example, where the adopted son at Gortyn is declared to be *isomoiros* ('having the same portion') with legitimate daughters.[14] A man displays the objects he has inherited to demonstrate the authenticity of his relationship to the dead man. He therefore confirms his social position in a way analogous to the warrior who receives a *moira* and a *geras* at the *dasmos* (cf. *Od.* 11.534). An equal share of the inheritance is the socio-economic definition of the *gnesios*, one whose legitimacy is indicated by the public validation of his birth.

It has been argued above in chapter 3 that legitimacy is also demonstrated by carrying out the *sacra* in relation to the body of the deceased: the *gnesioi* properly dispose of the body just as they dispose of the dead man's property.[15] But if a claim to an inheritance is challenged, what recourse is there? In early Greek legal thinking, a challenge to one's legitimacy requires the intercession of a *dikē*, simultaneously a mode of proof and a ruling in the presence of witnesses.[16] In the *Code of Gortyn* (*IC* 4.72) this mode of proof must be

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13 Repeating our earlier conclusions, a precise parallel is drawn between Achilles' dispute with Agamemnon over the *dasmos* of spoil and Poseidon's dispute with Zeus over the proper treatment of someone who is *homotimos*, 'equal in honour' (*Il.* 15.186): For example, compare *Il.* 1.185–7 and 9.160–1 with 15.165–7; *Il.* 15.187–9 and 15.208–10 with 16.52–9. Note that Poseidon's *isomoiria* (*Il.* 15.209) with Zeus arises from the *dasmos* of their inheritance, *Il.* 15.187–9. This division is explicitly called a *dasmos* in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, 85–6 (cf. also Hesiod's version: *Theogony*, 392–6, 881–5). For the division of an inheritance as *dasmos* generally, see Hesiod *Op.* 37. For the language of inheritance distribution in the *Code of Gortyn* (*IC* 4, 72), see IV 23–46 and V 9–54 *passim*; *moira* (IV 39–43); *timē* (V 49). It is interesting to note that the verb δατέομαι, which in the *Iliad* is so concerned with the non-reciprocal distribution of precious booty, survives at Athens in the title of magistrates (δατεταί) whose task was to oversee the distribution of common property, especially amongst relatives at an inheritance: *Ath. Pol.* 56.6. On this, see further in Rhodes 1981, 631 *ad loc.* with additional references.

14 X 53: ϝισϝόμοιρος.

15 To reiterate, the best evidence for the expected ritual strategies used by heirs are the speeches of Isaios: 'Since he (Chariades) neither took up (ἀνείλετο) the body of his adopted father, nor provided a pyre, nor gathered up the bones, but left everything to be done by those who had no relation to him, how is he not the most impious man in claiming to inherit the property of the dead man when he has fulfilled none of the sacred obligations (τὰ νομιζόμενα)?' (4.19); cf. also Isaios 2.10, 25, 36–7, 45–6; 4.26, 47; 6.40–1, 51, 63–5; 7.1, 19–22, 30, 32; 8.16–27, 38; 9.4–7, 19, 30, 32, 36; Dem. 43.11 f., 58, 65, 78 f.; 44.32 f.; 48.12. For the fulfilment of the *sacra* (τὰ νομιζόμενα) as part of demonstrating the legitimacy of an adoption at Athens, see Rubenstein 1993, 68–76, and for legitimacy in general, Harrison 1968, 123 with n. 2. At Gortyn (*IC* 4, 72, X 42, 46; XI 1–2) these sacred obligations are a major priority for the adoptee, the fulfilment of which authorizes the rights of adoptive succession. The interwoven nature of legitimacy and sacred obligations to the dead is nicely illustrated in Euripides *Herakleidai* 875–7: 'O Children . . . you will see the *polis* of your father, set foot upon your estates and sacrifice to your ancestral gods' (. . . πόλιν πατρὸς | ὄψεσθε, κλήρους δ' ἐμβατεύσετε χθονὸς | καὶ θεοῖς πατρῴοις θύσετε).

16 In general, see Gernet 1981b; Thür 1970; and Sealey 1994, 91–111. On the archaic challenge and defence of a right to inherit in Athens (*diamartyria*), see Harrison 1968, 156 and 1971, 124–31. See Harrison 1971, 124 n. 2 for further literature.

endorsed by the political community to which the adoptee has ultimate recourse via the public declaration made by his adoptive father before the *polis* and *hetaireia*. At Athens the *phratry* plays the same role.[17] Indeed, at Gortyn the very verb for adoption is ἀμπαίνεϑαι (= ἀναφαίνεσϑαι), 'to show forth, proclaim', indicating that public recognition and demonstration before authorized witnesses is embedded in the notion of legitimacy.[18] At Gortyn, if heirs fall out over the 'division of the patrimony' (δαῖσις), the city authorizes the intervention of an arbitrator (δικαστάς) whose function is twofold:[19] firstly, to enforce 'fair division' (δατεῖϑϑαι καλῶς, IV 38–9), which is laid down in the code as a *dikē*, the 'proper course of action'; secondly, 'to decide under oath with reference to the pleas' (ὀμνύντα κρῖναι πορτὶ τὰ μολιόμενα, V 43–4), a response available to the adjudicator in the event that an intractable dispute arises over the method of division. As a final recourse, the judge can sell all the property 'let each receive a share of the *timai*' (τᾶν τιμᾶν δι[λ]ακόντον τὰν ἐπαβολὰν ϝέκαστος, V 49–51) in the presence of witnesses.[20] To repeat, at archaic Gortyn the community decides legitimate succession *politically* through an adjudication process legally mandated via the intercession of the sovereign community, an arbitrator, and witnesses, as well as by reference to a recognized external standard of value. All of these elements are also present as the key institutional components of athletic competition in early Greece.

While this adjudicatory formulation is clearly the case in archaic Crete, it is also alluded to in epic in the practices that resolve social tensions in the emerging *polis*. Achilles' new shield in *Iliad* 18 carries as one of its heraldic devices the representation of an otherwise deadlocked quarrel (*neikos*) brought to resolution by a panel of adjudicators sitting in public (*Il.* 18.497–508). This image is emblematic of the *polis* at peace and hence the proper exercise of authority in the *Iliad*. In this scene, the whole community guarantees the finality of the *dikē* to be pronounced and therefore explicitly denies to either party the right of self-help. In the shield scene, just as at Gortyn, acts of hubristic seizure, such as Agamemnon's violent appropriation of Briseis, would be denied juridical legitimacy by a hostile community. Indeed, within the context of inheritance distribution (δαῖσις) under Gortynian legislation Agamemnon's

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17 Gortyn: *IC* 4, 72, X 34–9 (note the same gestures in the act of renunciation, XI 10–14). On the function of the *hetairia* in Crete and its analogy with the Athenian phratry, see Willetts' commentary on this passage in his edition, Willetts 1967, 77, and his remarks: '[the *hetairia* was] a basis for the whole organization at Gortyn . . . since, as witnesses of the presentation of sons of their fellow citizens, the members of the *hetairia* guaranteed the legitimacy of their birth' (Willetts 1967, 11). For this as the key role of the Athenian phratry, see Lambert 1993, ch. 4 *passim*, especially 161–89.

18 *IC* 4. 72, X 33–XI 23, *passim*.

19 For the entire procedure, see *IC* 4, 72, V 28–54.

20 Note that Hesiod's *Theogony* is conceived as the unfolding of the primordial distribution of an inheritance presided over by Zeus (112). The pattern of language closely parallels the Gortynian formulation (882–5): "the blessed gods sorted out the Titans' dues by force … and [Zeus] distributed these honours to them well" (Τιτήνεσσι δὲ **τιμάων κρίναντο** βίηφι . . . ὃ δὲ τοῖσιν ἐὺ διεδάσσατο τιμά).

triple violation of Achilles, his forcible entry into his dwelling (ἰὼν κλισίηνδε, *Il.* 1.185) and the leading and carrying off of property (ἄγω, *Il.* 1.184; φέρω, *Il.*1.301) would be a punishable offence: 'and after the *dikastas* has ruled, should anyone enter with force *or lead or carry anything off*, then he shall pay ten staters and double the value of the property' (αἰ δέ κα δικάσαντος τῶ δικαστᾶ κάρτει **ἐνσείει ἒ ἄγει ἒ πέρει**, δέκα στατῆρανς καταστασεῖ καὶ τῶ κρέιος διπλεῖ, V 35–9).

The funeral has the character of a proto-juridical context at which the public disposal of objects confirms new social relations both with respect to the community at large and with respect to the dead man. In this scenario, the settlement of disputes has greater recourse to concepts of proof and adjudication. It is because the funeral collocates the event both of succession and the determination of victory that it provides the *Iliad* with a context for an institutional bridge between a crisis in one mode of social evaluation and the installation of another. It is at Patroklos' funeral *agon* where we can finally exchange unverfiable claims to a *geras* among a community of equals for the determination of the prizewinner in a funeral contest.

The semantic field of ἀναιρέω

The relationship between funerary *agon* and funerary ritual as a whole is illustrated in the semantic field of the verb ἀναιρέω. In everyday speech, this verb means 'take/pick up', but it also has a narrower sense of 'take up in a special way' or 'take up proprietorially'. Thus, ἀναιρέω can either mean 'pull up, efface' (as in the annulment of a contract) or 'pick up' denoting the assertion of ownership and authoritative rights.[21] Significantly, the verb also refers to an act of oracular selection.[22] The semantic field of this word generally points to an analogous range of dispositions under which the object of the verb discards an old condition for a new one, a process described by Gernet as a kind of *immersion.* The transformation of the type of value inhering in the precious object is represented as the traversing of special spaces whereby objects 'go down and come up.'[23] This resignifying space is usually that of oracular legitimation. Inversely, legitimation always involves passing through this kind of symbolic reconfiguration. The quality of the space (which is never neutral or 'empty') leaves its mark by changing whatever moves through it, whether objects or humans, similar in function to an initiation. The case of Trophonios' cave is paradigmatic,[24] but any space in which confirmation, authentication or legitimation takes place has an equally oracular quality. When the

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[21] Or authoritative disavowal of legitimate rights: Solon fr. 36.6 West. This meaning is connected with another common meaning of the verb, 'uproot', 'efface', and hence 'kill', see *LSJ* A II s.v.

[22] Cf. Hdt. 1.31.1–2; 2.52.3; 2.139.3; 6.34.2; 6.52.5; 6.69.3; 7.148.3; 9.33.2; see also Burkert 1985, 116.

[23] Gernet 1981a, 131.

[24] On which, see Detienne 1996, 53–67.

individual reacquires such an object its former symbolic content has been altered. For example, when Kleisthenes presented a list of one hundred Attic *archagetai* to the Pythia at Delphi, she 'picked out' ten (οὓς ἀνεῖλεν ἡ Πυθία δέκα, *Ath. Pol.* 21.6). These ten would henceforth take on a new and different role: detached from any prior regional or parochial function they became the eponymous founder-heroes of the whole Athenian *polis*. With respect to matters that concern the citizen body, it is the *political assembly* that functions as that space of reconfiguration.[25] This assembly space corresponds to the abstract 'middle', the site that comes into existence whenever a political community gathers to resolve questions about itself and its common future. When the athlete 'picks up' his prize *from the middle* he confirms his claim via the force of the collective will underpinning the occasion. This is often accompanied by formal announcement, as when the herald speaks with *marked* speech. The use of marked speech carries with it transformative power, the power to effect ritual 'alchemy'.[26] The ritual act achieves the same end, whether it is the initiate who slips into the cave of Trophonios, the son who places his foot upon the grave of his father or the athlete who 'goes down' into the *agon* to have his *aretē* assessed.[27] Entry into these new states is very often what is meant by this verb.

This is why ἀναιρέω is used idiomatically in two special situations: firstly, it describes the action of an heir who, in public, 'takes up' his inheritance legitimately. It can therefore properly be translated in such contexts as 'inherit';[28] secondly, it is used of the victor who takes possession of his prize after an athletic competition, here usually translated 'won'.[29] The link is illustrated by the way prizes from early funeral contests are objects from the property of the dead man. These prizes most likely acquire a significant part of their value from this fact.

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25 We need only recall the transformation of Apsasia's son 'into Perikles' by decree of the *demos* (Plut. *Per.* 37.5).

26 Compare the ease with which the herald's efficacious proclamation can be converted into a poetic utterance: Simonides *ep.* XXIX, XXXI Page *FGE*; Timotheos fr. 802 *PMG*.

27 Compare Hdt. 5.22.2 where Alexander of Macedon 'proves' his Greekness (ἐκρίθη εἶναι Ἕλλην) in the context of the Olympic festival. For use of the linguistic concept of marked and unmarked, see Muellner 1976, 9–17 and Nagy 1990, 5–9.

28 The best example is *Od.* 21.113–17 which deserves its own separate treatment since its imagery is complex but precise; *IC* 4, 20 line 3 = *Nomima* II 37 (Gortyn, *c.* 550); *Nomima* II 39 line 6 (Phaistos, *c.* 500); *IC* 4, 72 (the code of Gortyn, *c.* 450), V 24, 25, VII 10, X 40–1, 44, XI 4, 34; the testament of Xouthias, *IPArk* 1 = *IG* V 2, 159, ll. 2, 11, 12, 15, 16, 18. Ἀναιρέω is used also of taking up the body or the bones of the deceased by heirs and relatives for the purposes of burial: e.g. Eur. *Supp.* 471, 1167; Soph. *Elec.* 1140; Hdt. 4.14.2; 9.22.3; 9.23.2; Isaios 4.19, 26.

29 Victors: *Il.* 23.551, 736, 823 (cf. *Il.* 1.301 for a parallel usage); Hdt. 5.102.3; 6.36.1; 6.70.3; 6.103.2–3; 6.122.1; 6.125.5; 9.33.2; 9.64.1. Pindar interestingly avoids the verb in either of these marked senses, with the possible exception of *Nem.* 7.56 and fr.169a.8 (only the tradition in the Aristeides scholia preserve the verb, probably erroneously). For completeness, see *Pyth.* 9.61, 11.18, fr.109.3. Bacchylides offers no attestation.

The victor enters into a legitimate ownership that is directly and literally analogous to that entered into by the successor of the dead man at precisely the same moment and in the same manner. At the same event both victor and heir both, so to speak, 'take up' their special status.[30] Prize and inheritance declare, reinforce and legitimate each other, embodying the possessor's publicly confirmed legitimacy. In setting down prizes ἐπὶ τάφῳ, that is, literally 'upon the grave' of the deceased, a son proclaims his right to dispose of his father's estate.[31] By agreeing to participate, athletes in the contest endorse the heir's right to offer precious objects from the estate as prizes and further confirm him by agreeing to his rules and adjudication. The *agonothesis* of the son is part of the process of legitimate succession. Finally, by striding to his prize and proprietorially picking it up, the victor confirms his *aretē* and *timē* while simultaneously recognizing the authenticity of the heir's right to oversee the determination of victory.

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30 It is interesting to compare certain mythical and dramatic narratives in which the central hero occupies one or more of the main roles in a funeral contest. In Euripides' lost play *Alexandros*, summarized by a surviving hypothesis (P. Oxy. 3650 col. 1 ed. Coles) and by Hyginus (*Fab.* 91), Priam holds funeral contests for Paris whom he believes to be dead. Paris, unaware of his identity and still very much alive, enters all the events and is victorious. In this version, Paris is simultaneously the deceased, the heir (the most authentic successor to oneself is oneself !) and victor. Another case where roles blur is at *Od.* 21.113 ff. In the contest for Penelope the patrimonial object (Odysseus' bow) in the hands of the rightful heir to Odysseus' household almost secures victory for Telemakhos (*Od.* 21.128–30). Both these examples draw their complexity and significance by drawing on different but analogous rituals concerning legitimacy. For further examples that represent display and disposal of patrimonial objects as rituals for authenticating royal succession, see Gernet 1981b, 177-9.

31 A case can be made, *pace* Nagy 1990, 120–1, for taking the use of ἐπί + dative literally (see *LSJ* s.v. ἐπί B.1) rather than more abstractly. *LSJ* s.v. ἐπί B.2 cites *Il.* 23.776 as an example for the sense 'in honour of ', even though the narrative of the funeral ritual is explicit about where the oxen were slaughtered: around and upon Patroklos' pyre and corpse, *Il.* 23.166–9. Some grave markers bear this formula (*DGE* 348, 452, 455, 456) which is best understood as declaring over whom the stele has been placed. In the same way, the expression, ἆθλα ἐπί + name in the dative (e.g. Stesikhoros' Ἆθλα ἐπὶ Πελίᾳ, 178–80 *PMG*) needs to be taken literally: 'prizes (set) up over the dead man'. For a further parallel, see *Il.* 23.679–80, where Mekisteus 'once went to the grave (ἦλθε . . . | ἐς τάφον) of the fallen Oidipous at Thebes where he was victor over all the Kadmeians.' By extension, any *agon* said to have taken place ἐπὶ τῷ δεῖνα (as for example, the *Epitaphia* in Athens, where the prizes are inscribed: ἆθλα ἐπί τοῖς τοῖ πολέμοι, *IG* I³ 523–5; cf. also *Il.* 23.274 [ἐπὶ ἄλλῳ ἀεθλεύειν] and *Od.* 24.89–91) should be conceived as taking place on the grave of the deceased where his goods are offered as the prizes, literally set up on the tomb (cf. Hesych. s.v. ἐπ' Εὐρυγύῃ ἀγών, where the formulation is ἐφ' ᾧ τὸν ἀγῶνα τίθεναι ἐπιτάφιον Ἀθήνησιν ἐν τῷ Κεραμεικῷ). If a series of marble *diskoi* from the late sixth century BCE (*IG* I³ 1394–5, 1397) were prizes at a funeral contest (at a funeral contest, as Roller argues, 1981, 3-5, a comparison with *IG* I³ 1396, Ὀέθεν ἆθλα could be suggested but would not be conclusive), then the inscribed phrase repeated on all three, ἐκ τῶν ἠρίων, 'from out of the grave-mound', is strongly reminiscent of Achilles' words to Nestor: 'let this [the unwon fifth prize of the chariot contest] be an object laid down | to be a memorial from out of Patroklos' grave' (κειμήλιον ἔστω, | Πατρόκλοιο τάφου μνῆμ' ἔμμεναι, *Il.* 23.618–19). Given the nature of Patroklos' identification with Achilles, all the prizes offered at Patroklos' funeral contests can be construed as 'issuing from the barrow' (cf. *Il.* 23.126) since they are all Achilles' possessions. On the other formulae for referring to prizes, see further below.

The larger the number of participating athletes the greater the affirmation of both the victor's claim to recognition and the heir's claim to succeed the deceased.[32] In other words, the way a funeral functions for the successors of the deceased is homologous to the functioning of the funerary contest for the *agonothetes* and participants. The fundamental connection, therefore, between funerary practices and athletic competition resides in the complementarity of gesture, language and material objects between the heir (*agonothetes*) and the victor, as well as between the inheritance (both symbolic and material) and the prize.

The semantic range of ἀναιρέω is decisive. It provides a stepping stone from one practice – the *dasmos* of communally held goods, where distribution and allocation take place without transparent rules or group oversight – to another in which the legitimate right of seizure is accompanied by an adjudicable claim. The verb connects prizes to succession, rather than to the proto-political *dasmos* or the symbolic gestures of gift-exchange.

The grave also plays a key role in rituals of legitimacy as the chief surviving physical point of contact – the *sema* – of the dead man. The heir must undertake most acts of succession either in the presence of, or literally on, the tomb itself. In Aeschylus' *Choephoroe*, the advent of Orestes is recognized by the placement of a lock of hair and footsteps on his father's gravesite.[33] The presence of footsteps recalls the need for the heir to step 'upon the grave' (ἐπὶ τάφω) in order to fufil his succession, while in the case of violent death one does so to make the formal declaration to pursue the slayer of dead kin.[34]

The funeral is therefore a turning point, not only in the life of the dead man, who enters the status of ancestor, but a critical *rite de passage* for those who succeed to his name. We have argued that legitimacy demands modes of proof. These will not be objective proofs: as Odysseus illustrates (*Od.* 14.199–210), there is nothing to be gained by proclaiming a blood relation alone. Legitimacy is established rather in the demonstration of control over ritual and material objects that have been publicly linked with the deceased in a process witnessed by the community. Some key passages in epic referring to other funeral contests than those for Patroklos indicate that they are organized and presided over by the son or sons of the dead man. In these passages the language that describes their *agonothesis* has a strong formulary character. The main instances are as follows:

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[32] Note Hesiod's emphasis: 'the widely-announced prizes' (τὰ προπεφραδμένα ἆθλα), *Op.* 655–6.

[33] Aeschylus, *Choephoroe* 165, 205ff.; note at line 200, where the lock of hair is described as 'this tomb's adornment and my father's *timē* (ἄγαλμα τύμβου τοῦδε καὶ τιμὴν πατρός).

[34] For this complex of gestures, see especially, Gernet 1981b, 177–181. For the proclamation of vengeance, see Harpokration s.v. ἐπενεγκεῖν δόρυ and Dem. 47.69: 'If there is a relative, they are to make a proclamation upon the tomb' (προαγορεύειν ἐπὶ τῷ μνήματι, εἴ τις προσήκων ἐστί). To this example should be added Telemachos' gestures in the bow contest as a precise parallel, *Od.* 21.113–7.

1. *Il.* 23.630–1: Nestor recounts his prowess at a funeral in the north-west Peloponnesos: 'when once the Epeans buried mighty Amarygkeus | at Bouprasion and his sons set out the *basileus'* prizes' (ὡς ὁπότε κρείοντ' Ἀμαρυγκέα θάπτον Ἐπειοὶ | Βουπρασίῳ παῖδες δὲ θέσαν βασιλῆος ἄεθλα).

2. *Il.* 22.163–4: During Achilles' duel with Hektor the simile of an equestrian contest is employed: 'and a great prize is laid down when a man has died, | either a tripod or a woman' (*or* 'and a great prize is laid down, | either a tripod or a woman which belonged to the dead man') (τὸ δὲ μέγα κεῖται ἄεθλον, | ἢ τρίπος ἠὲ γυνή, ἀνδρὸς κατατεθνηῶτος).

3. *Op.* 654–5: Hesiod boasts of his victory at Khalkis, when he travelled 'to the prizes of warlike Amphidamas… and many were the widely-announced prizes which his great-hearted sons set down' (ἐπ' ἄεθλα δαΐφρονος Ἀμφιδάμαντος . . . τὰ δὲ προπεφραδμένα πολλά | ἀέθλ' ἔθεσαν παῖδες μεγαλήτορες).

4. *Od.* 21.116–17: Telemachos declares that, should he meet the conditions of the bow contest, then 'I would be left here as one able to take up my father's beautiful prizes' (ἐγὼ κατόπισθε λιποίμην | οἷός τ' ἤδη πατρὸς ἀέθλια κάλ' ἀνελέσθαι).[35]

Taking the evidence altogether it is possible to discern a formulary pattern: ἆθλα τιθέναι with the genitive of the deceased describes the act of his successor(s). To these examples can be added a series of coins minted at Metapontion bearing the legend Αχελοιο αεθλον which may have been a special series of prizes for contests of the river god/hero Acheloos.[36] These constructions are paralleled by other formulae found inscribed on bronze prize vessels: παρά, ἐκ or ἀπό with the genitive indicating the origin or source of the prize.[37] Formulae of this kind form a complement to the more common usage involving ἐπί with dative of the deceased, insofar as they all evoke the gestures of an heir in claiming to dispose of patrimony within the context of performing the *sacra* at a funeral. These latter formulae make the fact explicit that these prizes originate from the property of the deceased; in the latter (ἐπί with the dative of the deceased), the emphasis is on the placement of prizes upon the tomb.[38]

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35 In (1) it could be argued that the genitive is better put with παῖδες; it could equally be argued that in (2) ἀνδρὸς κατατεθνηῶτος makes just as much sense as a genitive absolute or even, as Richardson suggests (1993, 125, *ad loc.*), that it means 'in honour of a man who has died' but comparison with other formulae points to a possessive sense.

36 Jeffery 1990, 260, no. 13. Note also that on a *dinos* by Sophilos (early sixth century BCE, N.M. 15499) is a depiction of the funeral contests for Patroklos identified by the words Πατροϙλυς ατλα, 'Patroklos' prizes' (= *CAVI* 907C), echoed at *Il.* 23.748.

37 Amandry 1971, 615–18, nos. 2, 3, 3A–C, 6 (= *IG* XII 9, 272), 8; Jeffery 1990, 444, H; 476, C.

38 One reason why the latter formula (ἐπί with the dative of the deceased) became more common may have been that the appropriation of funeral contests by the *polis* in the context of hero-cult required less personal emphasis on the actual person of the *athlothetes* as figurative heir and more emphasis on the hero's tomb as the site of

These examples illustrate expressions of ritual propriety in relation to legitimacy: in setting the terms under which the dead man's property can be seized as prizes, a man demonstrates his legitimate succession. The receipt of such goods by the victor is a public declaration of his acceptance that the disposal of the inheritance belonged by right to the *agonothetes*. Henceforth, by being able to refer to a properly conducted funeral and a public event at which the successors were *athlothetai* – 'setters-down of prizes' – a man gains a lasting proof of his authentic descent.[39] The nature of the relationship between Achilles and Patroklos (discussed below in chapter 6) becomes very significant in this respect. The funeral contest of Achilles' slain simulacrum serves as a context at which the still living 'best of the Akhaians' (cf. *Il.* 17.689–90) can establish his status afresh. This is hinted at when the hero proclaims that 'if we Akhaians were now contending for the sake of some other hero, I myself should take the first prize away to my shelter' (*Il.* 23.274–5). Since Achilles is effectively presiding over his own funeral it is not surprising to find that many of the prizes are in fact Achilles' own possessions (for example, *Il.* 23.259).

Thus what had been destabilized in *Iliad* 1 as a consequence of an institutional, procedural and symbolic vacuum could be refounded in the narrative artifice of the funeral of Patroklos and its contests: the hero re-founds himself via a succession ritual, and simultaneously founds new axes of social worth via his presidency of a primordial and paradigmatic *agon*.

The funeral contest for Patroklos represents a new way of marking out social value. A crisis in one mode of assigning worth to members of the group finds its resolution in a set of practices weaving together the juridical function of the funeral, at which succession is proclaimed, with practices for the adjudication of social value. These practices are intent upon the avoidance of arbitrary verdicts preferring instead to rely on a publicly recognized demonstration of *aretē* with reference to rules. When Achilles awards second prize to Eumelos in the chariot race even though he has run last, Antilokhos can rightly object in as much as the race rules have already decided the ranking and Achilles can no longer intervene. Achilles is forced explicitly to resort to different forms of exchange in

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legitimation. Indeed, the *polis* was only too aware of the tyrannical ambitions of those who instituted civic contests or claimed agonothetic rights over them: Pantaleon of Pisa (Olympia, Paus. 6.22.2), Pheidon of Argos (Olympia, Hdt. 6.127.3; Paus. 6.22.2), Kleisthenes of Sikyon (Pythia, *krisis* of the suitors, Hdt. 6.126); the Peisistratidai at Athens (Panathenaia). By immersing themselves in such effective ritual practices of legitimacy, tyrants could specifically claim to be the *inheritors* of heroic privileges.

[39] Note that at least two archaic depictions of the funeral games for Pelias named his son Akastos in the role of either *athlothetes* (the chest of Kypselos, Paus. 5.17.10: τούτῳ δὲ νικῶντι ὀρέγει τὸν στέφανον ὁ Ἄκαστος) or adjudicator (Amphiaraos vase, now lost, Berlin F1655). In addition, the later tradition records Amphidamas' son, Ganyktor, in the role of adjudicator at his father's funeral contest: *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi* 63.

order to demonstrate Eumelos' relationship to him. Participation in funeral contests is therefore of critical importance both for adjudicator and athlete. The enormous capital of the moment of victory confers, for victor and heir at the same time, nothing less than legitimate status itself. It guarantees an honour that can exist independently from other aristocratic exchange relations such as gift-exchange and spoil-distribution, both of which produce value that is unstable and contingent. Funeral contests of this kind finally provide the institutional framework enabling peers to pursue a more durable expression of their social worth.[40] By the public acknowledgement of Agamemnon as a man whose *aretē* is so self-evident he need not even compete (*Il.* 23.890–4), the *Iliad* displays the capacity of the formal contest to settle even the most intractable disputes about degrees of prestige. More generally, these conclusions demonstrate how the immense symbolic capital of an Olympic chariot victory, the possession of which allows a man like Kleisthenes of Sikyon the audacity to claim that he can judge the best man in Greece (Hdt. 6.126), arises out of rituals dealing with legitimacy and claims to authenticity central to the early Greek *polis*.[41]

The invention of the 'prize' (ἆεθλον)

What enables this process to succeed is the prize, a different type of precious object that derives uniquely from a non-reciprocal, publicly adjudicated transaction. Donald Kyle has argued that prizes in archaic society were not only regarded as gifts (*dora*) but also that "the ideology of early Greek prize giving was that of gift giving".[42] In reference to the contests at Patroklos' funeral, Kyle states unequivocally that "[t]he formalized announcement and awarding of athletic prizes, so prominent in Homer's narrative of the games, derive from gift-giving rituals".[43] Kyle's argument is very difficult to sustain in the face of strong evidence from epic that prizes in archaic

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40 In his study of *menis* 1996 Muellner develops the idea that in the *Iliad* the "fulfilment of the word's meaning is the teleology of the story"(Nagy's words in the foreword, vii). Might not final words – such as ἆεθλον ('prize') at *Il.* 23.897, which brings the funeral and contests of Patroklos to an end – play a similar role, perhaps deactivating *menis* and closing the story? If so then the dénouement contained in such a final utterance gives the *Iliad* the character of an aetiology for the institutions of a particular type of social organization – the *polis*.

41 Tyrants in the archaic period were particularly concerned to confer upon their claims to sovereignty an objective legitimacy. The *kudos* of victory therefore becomes powerful symbolic capital that is dangerous to the *polis*. On epinikian ode and other civic responses to the talismanic authority of athletic *kudos*, see Kurke 1991 and 1993. For the special place of an Olympic chariot victory in the repertoire of tyrants and aristocrats in the archaic period, see especially Hönle 1972, 45–66. On a somewhat different tack, see Lévêque 1982. It should be noted, however, that the currency of the Panhellenic victory first required that these contests achieve wider recognition outside of their immediate locales: see the instructive example of Kylon at Athens. For an example of the talismanic properties of a Panhellenic victor at Sparta, see Plut. *Lyc*. 22.4.

42 Kyle 1996, 107.

43 Kyle 1996, 110.

Greece emerged from an entirely different system of thought. Only through an analysis of the function of the prize in the context of a particular poetic performance, with all its lexical specificity, is it possible to avoid glossing over the importance of the prize as part of a complex pre-monetary economy.[44] That the prize is a fundamentally different type of object from the gift is strikingly illustrated by some uses of the word δίδωμι ('give') in the funeral contests of Patroklos. It ought to be apparent also that prizes deliberately represent the outcome of practices of evaluation in a quite radically different way from either exchanges establishing interpersonal relationships (such as gifts) or those establishing relationships between the individual and the group (such as the *dasmos*). We have seen that the latter both have their own specific verbal field to express the movement of objects. As we have argued, the evaluative content of the prize is more appropriately derived from the context of succession in which it found its meaning. In fact, in the *Iliad* the narrative quite deliberately transposes gestures of gift exchange into the context of taking prizes in order to make the distinction precise, drawing out the resulting implications as illustrated in the following salient examples.

After all the champions on the plain of Troy have thundered past the *terma* in the chariot race, we encounter the sorry sight of Eumelos limping home trailing the wreckage of his chariot, 'last of all' (πανύστατος ἄλλων, *Il.* 23.532). Standing up, Achilles announces his adjudication (ἀγόρευε):

> λοῖσθος ἀνὴρ ὥριστος ἐλαύνει μῶνυχας ἵππους·
> ἀλλ' ἄγε δή οἱ δῶμεν ἀέθλιον, ὡς ἐπιεικές,
> δεύτερ'· ἀτὰρ τὰ πρῶτα φερέσθω Τυδέους υἱός.
>
> *Il.* 23.535–8

> Last the best man drives his single-foot horses;
> but come let us give him a prize, as it is fitting,
> second prize; let Tydeus' son carry off the first.

The language here is clear. The unambiguous victory of Diomedes, the son of Tydeus, automatically guarantees him the right to 'carry off' the first prize, expressed clearly by φέρω, the standard verb for the proprietorial seizure of inanimate objects.[45] Achilles, however, declares that Eumelos is a man whose preeminent status (ἀνὴρ ὥριστος, *Il.* 23.536) *would* have been confirmed by the race had a deity not intervened, that is, had Eumelos not in fact been vying with Diomedes all the way. Nevertheless, according to the well-recognized rules of the contest Eumelos does not possess the right to carry off any prize but fifth. So Achilles summarily intervenes. In order to convey the special nature of this award Achilles clumsily transposes the prize into the language of personal gift-exchange and

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[44] To a large extent, what will follow has been elucidated, with different emphasis, long ago in the seminal article by Louis Gernet 1955, a surprising omission in Kyle's study. Kitchell 1998, who sees only the context of 'sport', is unhelpful.

[45] φέρω does not, however, exhaust the semantic field, on which see Gernet 1955, 10.

consequently, into a relation of obligation (underlined by πόρεν, *Il.* 23.540). Eumelos cannot exercise a proprietorial right over the object and so must accept it graciously from the magnanimity of Achilles. Like Agamemnon before him, who in *Iliad* 9 had sought to return Briseis as a gift instead of a *geras*, Achilles subverts the proper treatment of specific goods. But this object is unambiguously a prize and for an audience by now only too aware of the specificity of this heroic economy, the words ὡς ἐπιεικές ('as it is fitting') will jar. This object will resist being 'given' in such a way; yet the *laos*, the mass of spectators, significantly, roars its approval: 'they all cheered him' (πάντες ἐπῄνεον, *Il.* 23.539–40). Achilles' gesture demonstrates great generosity and he quickly wins the public authorization he needs.

Antilokhos, however, whose horses actually ran second, is outraged. He challenges Achilles' adjudication using the same language Achilles once employed in describing Agamemnon's behaviour: 'you mean to strip me of my prize . . . (ἀφαιρήσεσθαι ἄέθλον, *Il.* 23.544: the analogy with *geras* is decisive, cf. *Il.* 1.161; 16.54) . . . and offer it to this man because he is noble and your friend' (ἐσθλός, *Il.* 23.546, φίλος, *Il.* 23.548). Eumelos was punished, Antilokhos continues, for not having prayed to the immortals. Should you, Achilles, wish to indicate your regard for the man then cast it in the right terms:

> ἔστι τοι ἐν κλισίῃ χρυσὸς πολύς, ἔστι δὲ χαλκὸς
> καὶ πρόβατ', εἰσὶ δέ τοι δμῳαὶ καὶ μώνυχες ἵπποι·
> τῶν οἱ ἔπειτ' ἀνελὼν δόμεναι καὶ μεῖζον ἄεθλον,
> ἠὲ καὶ αὐτίκα νῦν, ἵνα σ' αἰνήσωσιν Ἀχαιοί.
> τὴν δ' ἐγὼ οὐ δώσω· περὶ δ' αὐτῆς πειρηθήτω
> ἀνδρῶν ὅς κ' ἐθέλῃσιν ἐμοὶ χείρεσσι μάχεσθαι.
>
> *Il.* 23.549–54

> There is plenty of gold in your tent as well as bronze
> and livestock and there are serving-girls and single-foot horses;
> take up from these later and give him an even greater prize,
> or even do so right now so that the Akhaians might praise you.
> But this mare [= second prize, *Il.* 23.265–6] *I will not give her*;
> Let him contend for her whomsoever amongst men wishes to fight me
> with his hands.

Antilokhos announces his proprietorial right over the second prize, expressed negatively as the right not to give. He rejects Achilles' gesture by pointedly differentiating the prize-object, a mare, from the domain of the gift. Antilokhos can do this because the mare was set down in the middle (cf. 'for the defeated man he put a woman in the middle', ἀνδρὶ δὲ νικηθέντι γυναῖκ' ἐς μέσσον ἔθηκε, *Il.* 23.704), the opposite pole to the space used for the exchange of gifts, the personal space of the home (ἐν κλισίῃ, *Il.* 23.549; οἴκοθεν, *Il.* 23.558). Antilokhos underlines his determination by his willingness to resort to self-help in order to defend his right. That Achilles acknowledges his *faux pas* and the validity of Antilokhos' grievance is reflected in his recognition of the young man's claim:

> ᾿Αντίλοχ᾿, εἰ μὲν δή με κελεύεις **οἴκοθεν ἄλλο**
> **Εὐμήλῳ ἐπιδοῦναι**, ἐγὼ δέ κε καὶ τὸ τελέσσω.
> δώσω οἱ θώρηκα, τὸν ᾿Αστεροπαῖον ἀπηύρων,
> χάλκεον, ᾧ πέρι χεῦμα φαεινοῦ κασσιτέποιο
> ἀμφιδεδίνηται· πολέος δέ οἱ ἄξιος ἔσται.
>
> *Il.* 23.558–62

> Antilokhos, if you demand of me that *something else from out of my house should be given as a compensation instead to Eumelos*, then I will fulfil even this.
> I will give him this corselet, the one I stripped from Asteropaios,
> a bronze one, around which there is overlaid a plate of shining tin;
> and it will be worth a lot to him.[46]

In other words, Achilles readily agrees to act in a way more appropriate to the gesture he had originally tried to make. The phrase emphasized above (οἴκοθεν ἄλλο . . . ἐπιδοῦναι, *Il.* 23.558–9) is an explicit acknowledgement that a public demonstration of Achilles' *philia* for Eumelos has dangerously manipulated the result of a contest in which Eumelos has clearly lost. Since the exchange amounts to a personal assessment of Eumelos as a peer and a *philos*, the transaction must consequently be couched in the language of reciprocity.[47] The act is then completed appropriately as Automedon, Achilles' retainer, physically places the object into Eumelos' hands (ἐν χερσὶ τίθει, *Il.* 23.565). This gesture is, as Gernet has argued, a precise analogue to διδόναι.[48] The episode illustrates the relative passivity and obligated condition of gift recipients in contrast to the unobligated proprietorial ownership victors assert over the *res nullius* set down 'in the middle'.

Yet another play on the categorical difference between the prize and the gift is witnessed in the immediately following scene. Antilokhos famously runs second by means of his father's (and his own) cunning skill (*metis*).[49] He manipulates the unevenness of the track to his advantage and forces Menelaos to come in a close third and thereby accept a lesser prize. Menelaos is furious since his horses were better and, in a situation not dissimilar to Eumelos', declares aloud his right to second prize:

> ἤσχυνας μὲν ἐμὴν ἀρετήν, βλάψας δέ μοι ἵππους,
> τοὺς σοὺς πρόσθε βαλών, οἵ τοι πολὺ χείρονες ἦσαν.
>
> *Il.* 23.571–2

> You have humiliated my *aretē*, and ruined my horses
> by throwing your horses, which were much more inferior, in my way.

In a famous case of *prédroit* dispute settlement, Menelaos skilfully demands Antilokhos swear by Poseidon that he did not use a trick (δόλος, *Il.* 23.585) to claim the better prize. Antilokhos appears

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46 It can be added that gifts are accompanied by a narrative of the object's history, while that history is often effaced when objects are 'set down in the middle' as prizes.

47 Ἐπιδοῦναι has the more precise meaning of 'give as a supplement' as well as 'to give a dowry', cf. *Il.* 9.148 = 9.290.

48 Gernet 1955, 11: 'c'est un don personnel qu'il lui fait, tout différent du prix qu'il allait lui attribuer et que l'opposition d'Antilokhos oblige à lui refuser'.

49 For a discussion of the cunning skill (*metis*) at work in this episode, see Vernant and Detienne 1978, 11–26.

temporarily outmaneuvered and at first seems to show contrition (*Il.* 23.587f.): I defer to you lord Menelaos since you are my better; you know how impetuous and foolish young men can be;

> . . . ἵππον δέ τοι αὐτὸς
> δώσω, τὴν ἀρόμην. εἰ καί νύ κεν **οἴκοθεν ἄλλο**
> **μεῖζον** ἐπαιτήσειας, ἄφαρ κέ τοι αὐτίκα δοῦναι
> βουλοίμην ἢ σοί γε, διοτρεφές, ἤματα πάντα
> ἐκ θυμοῦ πεσέειν καὶ δαίμοσιν εἶναι ἀλιτρός.
>
> *Il.* 23.591–5
>
> . . . so I myself will give to you
> the mare which I won. If for *something else of greater worth from my house* you should also ask, I would immediately give it to you, beloved of Zeus, rather than every day fall from your heart and be a wrong-doer in the eyes of the gods.

Antilokhos then rounds off his speech with a formulaic public gesture of gift exchange, leading the mare to Menelaos and placing it, literally, in his hands (ἐν χείρεσσι τίθει Μενελάου, *Il.* 23.597 which parallels 23.565). Antilokhos' speech-act is a masterpiece of practical *prédroit* strategy, again full of *metis* ('cunning intelligence'), but effective for its sincerity. In a bold stroke, Antilokhos carries off the object as a prize (ἀρόμην, *Il.* 23.593), solidifies his claim to the status that it signifies and, under the pressure of Menelaos' oath, relinquishes the object but *under a different sign*, that of the gift and its specific relations.[50] Menelaos is therefore cut off from the symbolic capital of the prize at precisely the same moment he is also woven by Antilokhos' *metis* into a relation of obligation. Antilokhos' material loss is insignificant when measured against the capital gained from the terms of this exchange. Menelaos cannot refuse since he has made a public claim to this particular object. But accepting it *as a gift* involves conceding the fact that Antilokhos had won it originally as second prize.

Menelaos can only respond by hastily deflecting the gesture back onto Antilokhos:

> τῷ τοι λισσομένῳ ἐπιπείσομαι, **ἠδὲ καὶ ἵππον**
> **δώσω ἐμήν περ ἐοῦσαν**, ἵνα γνώωσι καὶ οἵδε
> ὡς ἐμὸς οὔ ποτε θυμὸς ὑπερφίαλος καὶ ἀπηνής.
>
> *Il.* 23.609–11
>
> I will therefore be ruled by your supplication, and I will even
> give the mare to you though she is mine, so that these men may recognize
> that my heart is never arrogant or stubborn.

It is all Menelaos can do to avoid the net of obligation in which he has been enmeshed by Antilokhos. Subsequently Noemon, Antilokhos' retainer, leads the mare off in the opposite direction back to Antilokhos' tent and Menelaos takes third prize, which all in attendance recognize as the only object to which he is entitled to lay any claim in spite of his weak περ ἐοῦσαν (*Il.* 23.610) to the contrary.

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[50] εἰ καί νύ κεν οἴκοθεν ἄλλο | μεῖζον ἐπαιτήσειας, *Il.* 23.592–3, deliberately echoes οἴκοθεν ἄλλο . . . ἐπιδοῦναι, *Il.* 23.558–9 just as 596 parallels 565.

After Meriones carries off the prize to which he is entitled (fourth, *Il.* 23.614–15), we are reminded that the earlier situation with Eumelos has left the fifth prize, a two-handled phiale, unclaimed.[51] Again the language is subtle yet precise:

> . . . πέμπτον δ' ὑπελείπετ' ἄεθλον,
> ἀμφίθετος φιάλη· **τὴν Νέστορι δῶκεν' Αχιλλεὺς**
> **'Αργείων ἀν' ἀγῶνα φέρων**, καὶ ἔειπε παραστάς·
> τῇ νῦν, καὶ σοὶ τοῦτο, γέρον. κειμήλιον ἔστω,
> Πατρόκλοιο τάφου μνῆμ' ἔμμεναι· οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' αὐτὸν
> ὄψῃ ἐν 'Αργείοισι· **δίδωμι δέ τοι τόδ' ἄεθλον αὔτως**·
> οὐ γὰρ πύξ γε μαχήσεαι, οὐδὲ παλαίσεις,
> οὐδ' ἔτ' ἀκοντιστὺν ἐσδύσεαι, οὐδὲ πόδεσσι
> θεύσεαι ἤδη γὰρ χαλεπὸν κατὰ γῆρας ἐπείγει.
>
> *Il.* 23.615–23

> . . . and fifth prize was left behind,
> a two-handled jar; Achilles gave it to Nestor,
> carrying it through the Argive assembly, and standing by him spoke:
> 'There now elder, let this be for you, as an heirloom,
> to be a memorial of Patroklos' funeral; for you will no longer
> see him among the Argives. *But I give this prize to you*
> *unclaimed as it is*; for you will not fight with your fists, nor wrestle,
> nor take part in javelin throwing, nor race with your feet ever again;
> for already age sorely oppresses you.

Since the last prize remains unclaimed it is left for Achilles to decide its fate. He gives it to Nestor αὔτως – that is, 'as it stands', without a claimant and now a prize without a contest. Although an aberration, straddling as it does the fields of both gift-exchange and the prize, this *phiale* is cast as such deliberately. While it is a public gift from Achilles to Nestor, its actual function will always be to recall what it undoubtedly is – a keepsake, a memorial of the funeral for Patroklos, an un-won *aethlon* forever evoking its agonistic context. While the jar placed into Nestor's old hands is presented as a gift from Achilles (*Il.* 23.624), Achilles also presents it to Nestor as a *victor* of old whose venerable age has diminished a once great *aretē*. Only standing alone without a victor could the jar have been treated in this way as a prize that is simultaneously a gift, the gift of a prize. Here the *Iliad* shows deep awareness of the subtle difference between the prize and the gift and weaves the story from these different social threads to great dramatic effect – as indeed it has throughout its entire course.[52]

The prize, which draws its value from the adjudicatory practices of the contest and the public witnessing of the victory, can be thought of as a precursor to the emergence of coinage in the

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[51] Why has Eumelos not claimed it? Coming last appears to have attracted some degree of shame as Pindar later affirmed (*Ol.* 8.69, *Pyth.* 8.83-7). It may be that Achilles' earlier gesture deflected an ignominy now best left untouched.

[52] One other instance of δίδωμι in a prize context occurs at *Il.* 23.807, but the object given is clearly differentiated from the actual prize itself, as Gernet demonstrates: Gernet 1955,12 n.1.

sixth century. In this context, a precious object can be situated in such a way that its value, once limited to the context of its exchange, becomes transferable, that is, exchangeable beyond the confines of its immediate award. Given a precise and abstract value, the precious object no longer needs to be immersed in complex and context-specific personal transactions in order to realize a value. For the victor's status to be universally fixed so must the value of the physical token of his victory as certified by the public body. Henceforth, the exchange value of the precious object can be expressed as something distinct from its physical material. This is strikingly indicated in the *Iliad* by poetic employment of the verb τίω ('rate, value, assess') to make a *proto-monetary estimation*:[53]

> Πηλεΐδης δ' αἶψ' ἄλλα κατὰ τρίτα θήκεν ἄεθλα,
> δεικνύμενος Δαναοῖσι, παλαισμοσύνης ἀλεγεινῆς,
> τῷ μὲν νικήσαντι μέγαν τρίποδ' ἐμπυριβήτην,
> **τὸν δὲ δυωδεκάβοιον ἐνὶ σφίσι τῖον Ἀχαιοί·**
> ἀνδρὶ δὲ νικηθέντι γυναικ' ἐς μέσσον ἔθηκε,
> πολλὰ δ' ἐπίστατο ἔργα, **τίον δέ ἑ τεσσσαράβοιον**.
>
> *Il.* 23.700–5

> Now the son of Peleus set out the prizes for the third contest,
> showing them before the Danaans, that of painful wrestling;
> for the victor a great tripod to set over a fire,
> which the Akhaians valued among themselves at 12 oxen;
> for the defeated man, he placed a woman in the middle,
> and she knew the craft of many works, and they valued her at 4 oxen.

The verb (τίω), from which the concept of *timē* is derived, is used here in a way implying that a man's social value need not be dependent on a closed system of contingent exchanges, but rather find its expression through a political determination. What makes these precious things valuable now is not the waxing of some inherent value, or even the exchanges in which they have figured in the past, but rather their value is expressed as the consensus arrived at among a community of equal deliberators. For example, the expression of value '12 oxen' is an abstract equivalence that is arrived at 'among the Akhaians'. Moreover, this example suggests that, unlike the *dasmos* where a man's *geras* lacks the objective legitimacy of a strong authorizing body, the prize has its value and, by extension the social value of the victor, guaranteed by communal recognition of the *athlothetes*, and by the explicit *fiat* of the entire community (ἐνὶ σφίσι τῖον Ἀχαιοί, *Il.* 23.703).[54]

A significant part of the value of the prize lies therefore in its *reference* to victory whereby the object need only *refer* to the moment *kudos* graces the victor. A bronze tripod, once valuable for

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[53] On which, see p.115 n.40 with pp.165, 169, 177.

[54] Note the explicit reference to community authorization at *Il.* 23.660–2 when Achilles sets down the prizes for boxing: "let he to whom Apollo grants endurance and whom all the Akhaians recognize go back to his tent leading a hardworking mule" (ᾧ δέ κ' Ἀπόλλων | δώῃ καμμονίην, γνώωσι δὲ πάντες Ἀχαιοί, | ἡμίονον ταλαεργὸν ἄγων κλισίηνδε νεέσθω).

the role it might play as the medium of an aristocratic economy, now becomes a *sign* of value, as precious for its signification of victory and authentic adjudicatory processes as for its inherent material value. This fact is illustrated by the increasing prevalence of artistic depictions of the archetypal prize, the tripod, in evoking this form of adjudicated value.[55] Tripods and *lebetes* figure prominently among the first kinds of identifiable standard.[56] The best example is that of a tripod dedicated at Olympia in the eighth century BCE (Olympia B 1730) that bears a formulaic image of two athletes contending over a tripod, the so-called 'Dreifußkämpferbein'.[57] Von Reden draws attention to Syrakusan coins struck with the legend, ΑΘΛΑ, 'prizes'.[58] To this observation we can add coins that bear well-known prize signifiers as their stamp such as early Athenian coins with a vase device, possibly depicting the Panathenaic amphora.[59] As Von Reden observes, it would seem that for some time each expression of value evoked the other: prize-objects becoming currency, coins offered as prizes.[60]

At a certain stage, a supplementary object evoking the legitimate source of its value need only represent the value of the prize. Such is the nature of the crown or epinikian ode with its capacity to invoke again and again the moment of victory and the *kudos* of the victor. The crown, perhaps a funeral garland,[61] may have originated as an accessory to the prize or as the particular sign of the victor in early funeral contests, as it is in one early representation of the games for Pelias (Paus. 5.17.10–11).[62] The development of the idea of the prize in early Greek thought permits the worth of a thing to be construed in abstract terms that need only evoke the moment of original evaluation. Beyond the *Iliad* is the coin, a universal standard whose physical material value is guaranteed by the stamp proclaiming the civic body as the *political* source of its value. Aristotle was well aware that a coin's stamp (χάρακτηρ) also constituted its 'sign of value' (τοῦ ποσοῦ σημεῖον, *Politics* 1257ᵃ 41) guaranteeing the coin's metallic purity.

It must be recognized, however, that *poleis*, in minting coins bearing both a symbol and a written seal of the issuing authority, declared a multiplicity of potentially conflicting claims as to the source of their coins' value. On the one hand, a mythical scene on a coin may evoke an original and unique talisman of value (for

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55 Fittschen 1969, 29–30, section F, nos. 1–8, for a list of the earliest examples and, in general, Maass 1981 and the very important study by Papalexandrou 2005, 9-63, especially at 9-11, 28-30.

56 Particularly in Crete of the early sixth century BCE: *IC* 4, 1, l. 1(f), 3(a); *IC* 4, 5, l. 2; *IC* 4, 8 i+a–f ; *IC* 4, 14 (g–p); *IC* 4, 21, l. 8; *SEG* xxxv 991. See also Von Reden 1997, 157–61.

57 Fittschen 1969, 29, section F, no. 4; Maass 1978, 55–7.

58 Von Reden 1997, 165

59 For example, Neils 1992, 190, no. 67

60 Von Reden 1997, 168.

61 See n.66 below.

62 The absence, however, of victor crowns in *Iliad* 23 prevents generalization.

example, the golden sheaf on Metapontian coins) that the city trusts will be continually recalled in transactions through reproduction of its image. The coin bears the sign of a source of value other than itself, while suppressing the fact that its own value is not unequivocal and universal. On the other hand, the collective citizen body declares itself the source of a coin's value as effective guarantors of metallic purity, misrecognizing the fact that the value of coins is political in nature and not objective. Like prizes, coins appear to *refer* to a source of value other than the civic body or their metal, often to the talismanic object stamped on the coin.[63]

By this stage the psychological foundations are laid for the distillation of personal and social value from out of the contexts of pre-monetary exchange. *Timē* can now refer to an abstract idea – 'honour' – and, furthermore, suggest that a man may have a value even if he possesses no property, does not appear noble and takes no part in aristocratic exchange. To this extent, it is possible to see that the appearance of citizenship as an abstract politico-legal concept is built upon foundations laid in contexts of evaluation such as funerary athletic contests; the determination of who is and who is not a valuable member of the political community evolves from institutions deciding and distributing prestige. In this respect the remarks of Sitta Von Reden on the origins of coinage are especially apt:

> Less attention has been paid to the fact that such monies represent attempts to render value quantifiable and socially negotiable . . . The desire to assess value, to use standard units of value, and to render value comparable sprang from much wider concerns than trade and commercial exchange. If, then, coinage was the final stage of an increasing tendency to render value comparable, quantifiable and measureable, *we should seek the context of the development of coinage more generally in institutions where value needed to be measured, quantified and compared*.[64]

If read from this perspective, the *Iliad* illustrates a crucial historical moment in the development of early Greek thinking about value by narrating a series of differentiations emerging from an active inquiry into value undertaken through the figure of Achilles. On this level, the prize is representative of a transformation of social relations among the elite and prefaces the transformation inaugurated by the increased use of coinage in the latter half of the sixth century BCE. The resolution envisaged at the end of the funeral contests for Patroklos marks the triumph of transferable value, the end of a dialectical process at which a man's life and social worth ceases to be apposite to the great *agalma* and becomes, as Achilles argues, 'priceless' – an expression which can only have meaning in a monetary economy.

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63 On this see Gernet 1981a, 138 ff. and now generally Kurke 1999. For Aristotle's theory of coin value, see *Politics* 1257a 31–41 (intrinsic metal value) and 1257b 10–14 (conventional value), with Meikle 1995. On money and the "early Greek mind", see Seaford 2004.

64 Von Reden 1997, 160, emphasis added.

Beyond the performance: from funeral to festival

In the absence of permanent institutionalized mechanisms for grounding hierarchy and privilege in a guaranteed order, hundreds of early political communities in archaic Greece grappled with questions about the legitimacy of status and its expression through ritual spectacles. The *Iliad* portrays a system of exchanges functioning strategically in the circulation and legitimizing of social value as poetic performance. Epic performance, whether a narrative voice or the *menis* of Achilles, is not only inspired poetic and oracular speech, it is also the enactment of social possibilities through song. The funeral of Patroklos and its contests are an end point in this performance: through them Achilles activates rituals wherein legitimacy and social value are articulated afresh in the transformation of symbolic capital.

For epic audiences the funeral contest of the epic hero are a mirror that refracts the funeral contests for their local heroes that, as Nagy explains, unlike those of epic, are re-enacted every year.[65] The quality of symbolic capital produced in epic and at local festivals is also fundamentally the same. In a public festival, the *politai* oversee and adjudicate an *agon*; so they cast themselves collectively as legitimate successors to an institutional patrimony originally established by ancestral founder-heroes (*archagetai*). In turn, epic recounts this founding moment as a solution to a paradigmatic and potentially catastrophic crisis. In this way, they renew and seize once again an inheritance that is 'taken up' proprietorially by the entire community at the re-enacted funeral of the hero. It is important in this regard that some of the best-known athletic competitions of the archaic and classical periods were understood as funeral contests: "all ancient contests were established at the tombs of the dead".[66] At this public festival, the athletes, by their very willingness to participate, confirm the institutional right of the host *polis* to assess and rate their *aretē* and seal that ranking with a prize. This prize, with its transferable value certified by civic officials, can carry its value far beyond the *agon*,

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65 Nagy 1979, 116–17.

66 ἐτελοῦντο μὲν οἱ παλαιοὶ πάντες ἀγῶνες ἐπί τισι τετελευτηκόσιν, schol. Pind. *Hypoth. Isth. a*, Drachmann iii, 192. For the strong evidence that athletic crowns had funerary associations, see Rohde 1925, 141 n.22. Clement of Alexandria supports the statement of the Pindar scholion: *Protr.* II 34. The funereal garland set up at the funeral or on the tomb itself makes a strong visible chain of relations, victor > deceased > heir, which throws attention back on to the effective adjudication – a sign of authenticity – of the agonothetic heir. That hero-cult is essentially funerary in character and extends rituals of solidarity and legitimacy to a broader group conceived of as descendents of the dead hero, has been established on solid ground by Seaford 1994, chs. 3–5. For the entire *polis* represented as adjudicators, it is enough to note that athletic judges at Elis (Olympia) and Athens were drawn proportionally to the tribal organization of the city: *Hellanodikai*, Harpokration s.v. Ἑλλανοδίκαι = Aristotle *Eleion Politeia*, fr. 492 Rose, Hellanikos *FGrHist* 4 F113, Aristodemos *FGrHist* 414 F2; *Athlothetai*, *Ath. Pol.* 60. Note also Plutarch's story of the ease with which the ten *strategoi* at Athens could be made *ad hoc* judges of the tragic contest at the Dionysia: *Cimon* 8.7.

particularly back to the victor's home. The victor, in turn, strides into the middle of the assembly and proprietorially 'takes up' the objectified capital of his own legitimate victory. By doing this the victor also publicly proclaims the effectiveness of those institutions over which the *polis* lays the claim of inheritance.[67]

This relationship between *polis* and victor is strikingly illustrated at the Panathenaia where the relationship between heirs (the Athenians) and Panathenaic victor is materialized in the prize-amphora itself. In a dramatic gesture, the most coveted prizes at the Panathenaia are amphoras filled with a sacred olive oil that continues to flow from that original moment when Athens' autochthonous king-founder adjudicated a primordial *agon* between Poseidon and Athena, and found in favour of the goddess.[68] The token of a Panathenaic victory is therefore not only a materially valuable object for the victor, but also generates symbolic capital for the Athenian *polis* out of oil from trees which literally sprouted from Kekrops' judgment. In this way, a prize carries with it a *polis'* claims that its adjudications are *effective and authentic*, and confirms the city's effective ability to confer status as though *the inherited patrimony of its founding heroes*. As physical *semata* these prize-amphoras are then carried and dispersed throughout the inter-*polis* community of the archaic Greek world, advertising the effectiveness and authority of a city's entire institutional framework.

Archaic Greek athletic competition emerges out of practices central to the origin of the *polis* itself – the changing structure of elite relations, the emergence of standardized value, the power of adjudication and, not least, the assuaging of disturbing fears about authenticity and the legitimacy of claims. Athletic competition emerges in the *Iliad* not simply as part of a colourful episode but as an institution cut from the same cloth as the poet's speech. Like the *Iliad* itself, formal athletic and equestrian contests belong to a mode of thought that is historically interstitial, oscillating at varying points between symbolic forms of truth and authority and the autonomous public discourses of the *polis*. On the one hand, the tomb at the heart of the funeral, the focal point around which early athletic and equestrian contests orbit, is situated among sites that according to one principle are, by definition, *oracular*, that is the site of a speech-

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67 Note the anxious desire of the Elean *polis* for *international* recognition of their superlative institutional competence at Hdt. 2.160: we are the best athletic adjudicators in the world, aren't we?

68 Kekrops adjudicates, Xen. *Mem.* 3.5.10 (ἡ τῶν θεῶν κρισις, ἣν οἱ περὶ Κέκροπα δι' ἀρετὴν ἔκριναν) with Parker 1987, 198 and 210 n. 48 for further references. Pindar also draws on associations between Erechtheus and the Athenians in their capacity as *agonothetai* of the Panathenaia at *Isth.* 2.19–20: " . . . and when at shining Athens [Xenokrates of Akragas] was fitted out with the glorious favour of the sons of Erechtheus . . ." , καὶ τόθι κλεινιαῖς ‹τ'› Ἐρεχθειδᾶν χαρίτεσσιν ἀραρώς | ταῖς λιπαραῖς ἐν Ἀθάναις. See also Ἐρεχθέος ἀστοί, *Pyth.* 7.10. Although the use of Erechtheidai here need not be more than a poetic gloss for Athenians, it nevertheless tells us that the Athenians considered themselves collectively as the *descendants and successors* of one of their most important cult heroes.

act of legitimation, and strategies of succession via the transmission of efficacious objects. The pronouncements and gestures made at such a nexus are ritualized, pre-legal and irrevocable. For the heir presiding over a contest and the victor together, there is a performative magic in the mix of funeral and contest which confirms authenticity and legitimacy by 'making real' what is said and done, a function later inherited by the *Hellanodikas* at Olympia who, according to Pindar, 'puts into effect' the ordinances of Herakles in the act of placing the olive wreath upon the victor's head (κραίνων ἐφετμὰς Ἡρακλέος προτέρας, *Ol.* 3.11). On the other hand, the contest can succeed only through practices of adjudication and investigation that entail the cross-examination of both heir and victor by public appointees (like the *Hellanodikas*) who demand *proof* of claims and possess civic sanction to interrogate those proofs. The contest is still an ordeal but one from which the eerie and oracular quality of the victor – *kudos* – must now be acknowledged as deriving from a juridical determination of victory and the verdict of judges appointed by the *polis*. Henceforth the victor will owe his status to the sovereign will of the *politai*.

PART TWO

CHAPTER 5

Worlds of performance, worlds in performance

> We have completely forgotten the form of sovereignty that consists of the operation of simulacra as such. But culture has never been anything but that: the collective sharing of simulacra, as opposed to the compulsory sharing of the real and of meaning today. Sovereignty lies only in the mastery of appearances, and complicity lies only in the collective sharing of illusion and secret.
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> Baudrillard 1990a, 50

> Was it worth the trouble of going through the Encyclopédie, the Enlightenment, and the Revolution to be able to state that merely curving a mirror's surface can plunge a man into an imagined world?
>
> Eco 1989,13

How is the poet a 'master of reality'?

How do performed poetic utterances restructure the social relations that underlie early Greek performance occasions? What is the character of the social reality opened up at these occasions by the utterance of the singer? This chapter seeks answers to these questions in the links between the relations of the poetic occasion and the relations between the agents within the poetic utterance itself, and argues that these links are *a function of the same ritual terms*.

Although it provides the main point of departure for this study, Detienne's demonstration of the mantic character of poetic speech in his landmark *Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece* insufficiently explains the social authority of the poet and why a poetics of archaic poetry should place the speech of the poet alongside that of other figures whose utterances have socially effective force.[1] Elaborating on mantic or magico-religious speech, Detienne details how poetic speech shares similar properties with the speech of the seer and the dispenser of justice because of their shared social function. But Detienne does not establish conclusively whether these similarities are due to an inherent property of language or derive from a social relation, or both. The efficacy of the poet's performance and power to alter an audience's lived experience are likely to depend upon the

[1] Detienne 1996, first published in 1967. In general, however, what follows has been shaped by an engagement with a wide range of scholarship, especially that of Victor Turner 1980, Claude Calame 1995a, Gregory Nagy 1979, 1990, 1996, 2010, Andrew Ford 1992, the essays of Pietro Pucci 1998, Egbert Bakker 1997, 2005, John Miles Foley 1991, 1997, 1999, Ruth Scodel 1998, further developed in *Listening to Homer* (2002) and John D. Niles 1998, 1999. Ford 1992 must be considered *in toto* the best starting point from which to consider the following discussion, especially 90-130. For an overview in brief see *Oral Tradition* vol. 18/1 (2003) 52-81. González 2013 is now essential for the early history of the Homeric performer.

quality of its linguistic character as well as its basis in shared social conditions and systems of thought. But positioning the authority of poetic speech within a system of thought requires an understanding of how the background of formative relations supporting its performative efficacy are enacted within the occasion of its utterance.[2] Focusing on the social efficacy of poetic speech does not dismiss the experience of its magico-religiosity; on the contrary, it is the tacit *concealment* of social relations, as opposed simply to their mystification, within the oracular and eerie reality of performance that underpins the power of poetic speech. For this reason an explanation of poetic efficacy within the practice of poetic performance requires more than its historical positioning within a set of linguistic, semiological, and social relations; it also requires an explanation in terms of *a logic of practice*. Rather than relegate the claims of archaic poetics by reducing them to some local cause (such as, for instance, a rhetorical form of the poet's professional 'conceit'), an understanding is required of how speech-acts in archaic poetry are able to generate *real dispositions* in both poet and audience, dispositions that effect durable changes to a symbolic reality, in which the real occasion of the performance and the representational register of the narrative are inextricably linked.[3] Explanation of these links is developed in the following sections through the introduction of a conceptual framework combining semiological analysis with Bourdieu's theory of practice.[4]

A semiological model

Claude Calame, in a study first published in 1986, examined the status of poetic speech in early Greece using a system of semiological analysis developed by A. Greimas.[5] Calame's semiological analysis is concerned with the status of the subject, indicated in early Greek forms of poetic enunciation by a form of the expression 'I'. Analysis of expressions of poetic subjectivity in this manner helps clarify the

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2 Finkelberg 1998, 27-8 signals her intention (in an otherwise important study) to steer clear of considering whether "traditional poets saw their poetry as a message of something beyond poetry proper and as a means to an end." Like this study Finkelberg historicizes the break with a "poetics of truth" but does not see in this poetics the trace of an active ritual agency. Hence the break with performed truth for her occurs in new understandings about the relationship between art and nature rather than, as here, in the problematization of ritual by the emergence of political subjectivity.

3 Nagy 1979, 69-210 is the pioneering study, but it lacked a properly theoretical framework to account for the relationship between the present occasion and the sung past.

4 The narratological approach will not be discussed even though the findings of this chapter have a bearing on its claims about Homeric epic and its narrator. This impact will be discussed elsewhere. For the approach, see Genette 1980 with overviews of its application to Homer by De Jong 1997 and 2002. See further, Richardson 1990 with the criticisms of Lynn-George 1994, 241-2, and Rabel 1997, 8-21.

5 Calame 1995a. For further elaboration of his approach, see Calame 1995b.

social conditions under which the poet is able to act upon the world, not only by tracing the way the poetic subject is constituted in relation to the performance, its sponsors and the audience, but also by its relationship to the product of the linguistic speech-act. The terms of this analysis are precise and need defining.

Calame identifies three levels of poetic action corresponding to the framework developed in his semiological analysis.[6] The first level is the *uttered enunciation.* The uttered enunciation is the linguistic speech-act, the declaration in which enunciators reveal or conceal themselves as figures who say 'I'. The enunciation is thus the act of poetic authorization at which the *utterance,* the second level of poetic action, is introduced. The presence of an enunciation is revealed by *deixis*: personal pronouns, temporal and spatial markers (e.g. 'now' as opposed to 'once'), changes in verb tense, and so on.[7] The *utterance,* on the other hand, emerges as the consequence of the authorization extended by the protagonists, actors and action within the poem itself. The utterance, "the thing enunciated" to which the terms 'enunciate' or *énoncé* are sometimes applied, is differentiated from the *uttered enunciation* as uttered or performed, by means of *shifting-in* and *shifting-out*. To introduce the utterance proper, the enunciator will 'shift' it in by means of a grammatical change. The predicate of the enunciation, that is, the explicitly named object of the enunciation, will switch grammatical position to become the subject of the utterance.[8] The uttered enunciation and the product of enunciation (the utterance) are, in Greimas' schema, the two linguistic aspects of an extra-linguistic structure which are presupposed by the existence of the enunciation itself. This third level is referred to as the *communication situation*, the extra-discursive context of the enunciation which is, in turn, part of a general institutional framework of speaking. Put simply, the communication situation is the social-psychological environment in which the act of enunciating produces the utterance. Every discursive act can be presumed to refer to a communication situation, even though in early Greek poetry the communication situation is often "virtual and linguistically unexpressed."[9] One potential difficulty, particularly acute in the case of Homeric epic, is that the audience of the enunciation (the *enunciatee*) is linguistically almost completely invisible. Their presence must be inferred by the fact of a transmission in which the speech-act expresses an exchange of *modalities* – power, knowledge, will, obligation and so on – between a 'Sender' and a 'Receiver' in the communication situation.

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6 For further definitions, see Greimas and Courtes 1982 and Sebeok 1986.

7 On *deixis* more generally see the special edition of *Arethusa* 37.3 (2004) on the "poetics of deixis", especially the introductory essay (Felson 2004).

8 *Shifting* renders the French expression *embrayeur* (which also, incidentally, is the French word for a car's 'clutch', a nice analogue for the process described here).

9 Calame 1995a, 14.

Although Calame has sketched the pattern of this analysis for early Greek poetry, introduction of the following modifications to his system in this study add greater clarity for its application to the *Iliad*.[10] These modifications involve the addition of two significant concepts, *distance* and *autonomy,* relating to the character of the relationship between the communication situation (the occasion of the performance of the speech-act) and the act of enunciation (the way the narrating 'I' is installed). Between the enunciation and the communication situation lies a certain 'distance' which extends to an enunciation an 'autonomy' from the occasion of its enunciation. This means that there need not be a direct correspondence between the speaker/audience relationship created by the occasion of performance and the narrator/narratee relationship as it is explicitly declared in the uttered enunciation. Opening this distance causes the disappearance of the audience/enunciatee from the actual uttered enunciation and hence the difficulty of identifying, in the utterance itself, the audience to whom the enunciation is addressed. This distance can be thought of as a *concealment* in which the character of the relationship between poet and public is not specifically declared or made explicit in the uttered enunciation. Distance in this instance can be thought of as a function of the declared enunciation to introduce the speaking subject ('I') in relation to a 'you' that deliberately veers away from the relationships that exist in the context of performance. Calame puts it thus: "the utterance of the enunciation creates its own world, just as the story creates its own fiction."[11] The concept of distance serves to recast the linguistic exchange taking place on the occasion of poetic performance by installing a different set of players, the declared narrator/narratee relationship, composed of the explicitly declared 'I' that stands opposite an equally explicit 'you' in the uttered enunciation. This analysis highlights the significance of the practical processes that interpolate and thus transform relations established during the rituals of occasion, into a performed narrative representation.[12] These processes form an important consideration in historical interpretations of the relationship, for example, between poet and goddess in the surviving texts of early Greek poetic performance.[13]

What is the content of the subject, 'I', as it is declared in the enunciation? On one level the subject 'I' is the actor of this autonomous utterance, that is, the subject naming him- or herself in the uttered enunciation. This subject has, as Calame points out, the character of a simulacrum, an alternative or 'doubling' identity burdened with the role of mediating between the story told and the

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[10] For Calame's discussion of epic and lyric performance in the light of his semiological framework, see Calame 1995a, 27ff.

[11] Calame 1995a, 15.

[12] For this sense of "interpolation" as a description of the relationship between habitus and institution, see Bourdieu 1990, 52-65.

[13] Calame collects a representative sample of these texts from the archaic and early classical periods, 1995a, 202-12.

audience/enunciatee. The narrator/narratee relationship is not simply a linguistic construct, however, but a position firmly grounded in referents external to the utterance. Calame explains why:

> we must not forget that we already perceive the exterior or natural world as a series of significant images, and that it is the object of meaningful operations which, in turn, give it sociological shape. The speaking subject is thus a point of articulation between a semiotics which looks at the meanings of the world and one which the subject itself produces in discourse when faced with the *you*.[14]

Thus the enunciative context is not one in which a purely fictional subject arises in a vacuum and who is at liberty to speak any utterance at all. Rather, as Calame continues, there is an *exchange* at work between the socio-psychological reality of the communication situation and the subject of the narrated enunciation, which constantly circulates and reproduces "significant images" of that social reality:

> [w]e have, therefore, not only an exchange between the signifying context in which discourse is produced [= the ethnographic context or the space of the cultural production of meaning] and the discourse itself [= uttered enunciation + utterance] but also the mutual structuring of one by the other and of one within the other, with the speaking and uttering subject as go-between.[15]

The installation of the 'I' in the utterance, as well as its opposite in the form of a polyphonic 'you', has a profound ideological effect by becoming the *active* site of the articulation of a 'reality'. Far from being the passive mouthpiece of the dominant discourse of reality, who will serve only to reinforce its images before a passive audience/enunciatee, the appearance of a speaking subject within an uttered enunciation establishes a position of distance from which to actively shape epic discourse. The subject is, therefore, more than a channel through which a community is provided with a vision of itself – the subject becomes the negotiator between social reality and the plurality of its possible representations. Significantly, in an archaic world of symbolic relationships the speaking subject is *the trace of an authorized site* from which these relationships can be examined *in a symbolic fashion*.[16] This analytical framework enables the various enunciative moments of the *Iliad* to be viewed as strategic positions from which to evoke its potentially disturbing and unsettling vision of the "signifying context in which discourse is produced." In the broader context of Calame's work, the different forms in which the subject 'I' appears in early Greek literature is a history of the passage from the enunciation of a social and religious function, to the enunciation of a self-authorizing author who asserts his or her own competence to speak.[17]

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[14] Calame 1995a, 9-10.
[15] Calame 1995a, 10.
[16] On the sense of 'symbolic' here, see pp. 20-2 above.
[17] This thesis is accepted and developed by Graziozi 2002 in relation to the "invention" of Homer as author.

Through the use of performative verbs to invoke some form of action in the audience, the uttered enunciation is the speech-act *par excellence* because *it converts everything uttered by the subject into perlocutionary acts*.[18] These performatives are the verbal actions which call into play the authority of ritual action – "sing," "begin," "invoke" – which in turn connect the subject of the enunciation to the occasion of performance itself. By involving these "actors of the enunciation" ('I', 'you', etc.) in a concretely declared grammatical relationship, the enunciation becomes narrativized: "the discursive subject is constructed as if it were the protagonist of a narrative."[19] From realizing the discursive construction of the subject, it is a short step to identifying this speaking subject with other protagonists within the utterance, such as, for example, the character of Achilles.[20] Since the subject 'I' is every bit a product of the enunciative environment, the subject has an organic filiation with the actors of the utterance. Achilles is not only a poet, as Richard Martin has shown; he is also the ritual double of the enunciating subject on those occasions when his voice elides with that of the enunciating subject, for example at *Il.* 9.189. Insofar as the 'I' of any utterance is an identity dependent on the relations of the occasion of performance, Achilles can be experienced by the audience as real.

The appearance of the subject 'I' in the *Iliad* is of a special type. The 'I' of the narrator invokes the 'you' of the Muse semiologically as the *Sender*, while at the same time the subject 'I' subsumes and assimilates itself to the narratee as *Receivers* of the Muse's song. The narrator/narratee relationship is therefore not one in which knowledge is transmitted as a message from narrator to narratee, but is rather a relationship of declared ignorance and complicity in the face of an exterior source of poetic competence. The enunciation situation as it occurs in the *Iliad* reveals an 'other' which can confer "power-knowledge" upon the subject of the narrative, thereby authorizing the 'I' to speak the utterance proper. Calame illustrates this "micronarrative" diagrammatically.[21] Thus although there is no explicit trace of it in the enunciation, the utterance constitutes the knowledge which the subject has been empowered to utter and which allows the occasion of performance, that is, *the communication situation*, to be narrativized. Narrativization of the communication situation forms a meta-narrative to the enunciation whose presence can be indicated by the following modalities:

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18 For the expressions 'perlocutionary' and 'illocutionary', see Austin 1962.

19 Calame 1995a, 15. Along with Calame 1995a there has been significant work produced on the subject of the poet's 'I' in early Greek poetry: see Nagy 1979, 5ff., de Jong 1987, 31ff., Slings 1990, Gentili 1990, Lefkowitz 1991.

20 The very point made by Martin 1989, ch.4 but from a comparative ethnographic perspective.

21 Calame 1995a, 16.

> *power-knowledge* – the authorized competence to speak effectively.
>
> *will* – the choices of the subject in the content of the utterance as a function of being supplied with power-knowledge (or, the "subject's psychological reality").
>
> *duty* – "the action of an exterior Sender of a social nature."[22]

The presence of these three modalities reveals how "the will of the poet, by being projected onto a Sender with divine qualities, is transformed into power-knowledge."[23] At the level of the occasion, however, the 'duty' (*devoir*), the social obligation or prompting which causes the enunciator to enunciate, represents the pressure exerted upon the enunciating subject at the performance itself. This 'duty' is *incorporated* into the subject's competence to invoke the Muse with the effect of doubling the Sender: on the one hand, there is the goddess (the Muse as transmitter of power-knowledge), while on the other, the *Sponsor of the occasion* (transmitter of duty):

> The sponsor of the poem and of the poetic performance becomes the Sender of the Subject because of the material means he puts at the disposal of the author; *the sponsor manipulates the power the poet possesses and in this way defines the poet's duty*. The Sender/actant is thus doubled: on the plane of the uttered enunciation, the Sender is embodied in the figure of the Muses who confer power, while in the communication process that position is taken over by the sponsor, *a Homeric prince or member of an aristocratic family who formulates for the poet, in a financial contract, the poet's compositional duty*.[24]

This doubling of the Sender does not mean, however, that the Muse and the sponsor should be understood as simply propagandistic identities. The Muse is the source of the power-knowledge activated in the song, while the sponsor oversees the occasion itself, the social circumstances within which the poet is caused to speak. The utterance in the form of the song thus becomes the bridge between the institutional occasion of performance ('duty') and the invocation of the source of power-knowledge, the Muse:

> The illocutionary strength of the poetic utterance, appearing in the uttered enunciation as the power-knowledge conferred by the Muses on the narrator, is transformed into a perlocutionary act; and it makes a definitive appearance in the communication situation as the power-knowledge which the sponsor wants to put into effect and which the poet/enunciator effectively exercises over his public.[25]

The enunciating subject, the subject who says 'I', is the centripetal pivot about which the two contexts – the 'world *in* the utterance' and the 'world *of* the utterance' – revolve, bringing them together as a single vision. For Calame, this 'I', "causes the Muse to intervene in the uttered enunciation so as to *disguise* the social manipulation to

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22 Calame 1995a, 20.
23 Calame 1995a, 17.
24 Calame 1995a, 18, emphasis added.
25 ibid.

which it is subject."[26] Although Calame does not elaborate on this concept of 'disguise', it has particular significance for the analysis used in this study. Its further development in the following section will be used to extend Calame's basic framework in order to explain the way the poet is able to act upon the world via the medium of his speech. Modifications to Calame's framework are necessary. Firstly, it needs to be demonstrated how it is that the poet can affect the 'real world' in the way that he speaks; secondly, how the poet can compel a different vision of that world by acting upon and within it in the utterance. Before undertaking any further theoretical elaboration in this regard two questions need settling.

1. In identifying the enunciatee/audience of the communication situation in Homeric epic, is it possible to be as certain as Calame that the Sender of the communication situation is "a Homeric prince or member of an aristocratic family" and if so then how does the doubling of the Sender work to disguise "social manipulation" referred to above?

2. How does the predicate of the performative verb in the enunciation disclose itself as power-knowledge and how is it made into a concrete reality? And what *modality of will* is disclosed by the choice of utterance?

The Sender and Receiver in the communication situation of Homeric epic

In his explication of the meta-narrative that encompasses the communication situation, Calame describes a more or less linear transmission from Sender to Receiver. The question is raised, however, about the nature of the "social-psychological reality" that underlies the extra-discursive, extra-linguistic dimension presupposed by the existence of the utterance of the enunciating subject. Calame is not clear about either the identity of the sponsor or that of the receiving public of the performance. On the face of it, the linear transmission facilitated by the poet's utterance is expressed as a manipulation of the poet's effective power by a 'sponsor' and the underlying ideological concerns of his sponsorship. The "Homeric prince" to whom Calame obliquely refers is presumably a *basileus* who retains the poet via material obligations to serve as a conduit for the reinforcement of the sponsor's elite vision of the world.[27] This presumes that 'duty' refers to the imposition of a single authoritative discourse upon the singer, circumscribing his volition ('will') and imposing constraints on the form and content of his performance. However, the example of epinikian performance, about whose audience we know much more,

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[26] ibid. This statement betrays a Marxist interpretation of a type elaborated most forcefully by Peter Rose with regard to early Greek poetry (Rose 1992 and 2012), and the *Iliad* in particular (Rose 1997).

[27] For a description of the wider Indo-European context of poetic sponsorship, for which the Homeric situation has often been adduced, see Watkins 1982, 1996, 68-84 and (more idiosyncratically) West 2006, 26-74. It ought to be noted, however, that attempts to show that Homeric poetry functions in an uncomplicated way as elite ideology often insufficiently theorize their object of analysis as evidence, and consequently end up begging the question. For a more nuanced attempt, see Rose 1992, 43-91.

demonstrates that it would be incorrect to suggest that the victor had such monolithic control over the poetic utterance and its content, simply by virtue of payment and the expectation of an uncomplicated panegyric. As Leslie Kurke demonstrated, the epinikian enunciator serves as an intermediary between *laudandus* and audience; but it is, moreover, to the *expectations of the occasion of performance* that the poet more broadly responds, which, in addition to those of the victor himself, are spread through a constellation of stakeholders, including those of the immediate audience, participants in the *komos*, the citizen community of the victor's *polis*, and commissioning aristocratic family. Kurke further showed that the epinikian poet mediates between all these levels as they are discursively represented at the formal reception of the victor. Indeed, it is a central thesis of her work that the victor in an important sense 'surrendered' (*trado*) his victory to the poet in order that it might be transformed for civic and domestic consumption by being woven into well-worn networks of song (*traditio*). She has shown that Pindar's task was, so to speak, to 'initiate' the Panhellenic victory of any local aristocrat, which she shows could be potentially divisive and symbolically dangerous for political communities.[28] In particular, the poet reintegrates the victor into his family and civic life by transforming the potentially dangerous and anti-social aspects of athletic victory into praise and restraint. It is even possible to say that the poet 'initiates' victory itself, transforming it into acceptable forms for proper social consumption. Thus, even when the sponsor of the occasion might appear to exert considerable obligatory force on the surface, the transformation of that obligation via an enunciating subject does not produce a one-dimensional reinforcement of values. The analogy of the poetic subject as 'initiator' will be revisited in sections below.

The Homeric evidence represents a number of performance scenarios illustrating relationships between sponsors, poet and audience, such as the circumstances and ritualized nature of bardic performance in *Odyssey* 8. Richard Martin has, nevertheless, argued strongly that the *Odyssey* proves a "dead-end" in the search for evidence of the contexts of the *Iliad's* performance, especially in the figures of Demodokos and Phemios.[29] Focusing instead on the semantics of the word *muthos* and its cognates, Martin concludes that the building-blocks of Homeric performance throughout the *Iliad* can be found to a greater and lesser degree in the strategies of speaking deployed by all heroes. The Homeric performer produces his song by crafting a *muthos* out of the full spectrum of possible speech-types such as commands, boasts, feats of memory, laments, and so on. In Martin's view depictions of bardic performance in the epics are not to be found in the *modus operandi* of the oral poet; they are found

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[28] Kurke 1991 with 1993.

[29] Martin 1989, 9-10. On this question in general, see also Maehler 1963, 21-34, Kirk 1965, 192-7, Murray 1981, Goldhill 1991, 56-68, Taplin 1992, 22-44, Nagy 1996. Frame 2009, 515-620 and Nagy 2010, 79-102 and *passim* add substantial detail that each in their own way support the arguments here. These latter works represent the distillation of an entire generation of American Homerists; here space does not permit the close dialogue with their ideas that they deserve.

instead throughout these poems as orality in traces of all the different social-poetic genres of formal speech in traditional societies. Every hero thereby becomes a *performer*, with Achilles emerging as the preeminent master-performer and the heroic projection of the narrator's own poetic identity. Expressed as a semiological proposition, Achilles' voice is a doubling of the enunciating subject's own authorized speech. These observations capture the poetic strategies at work in the *Iliad* very well.

However, excluding the evidence of formal song performance found in the *Odyssey* altogether, especially in *Odyssey* 8, is unjustified. Martin reminds us that oral performance is the stuff of all speech-making in the *Iliad* and his focus upon the expressions for these types of heroic speech-acts provides a correction to the over-attention paid to scenes which depict bardic performance. It is necessary to keep in mind that the various performances of song in the *Odyssey* serve an important narratological function in the play of recognition and concealment into which Odysseus is insinuated and insinuates himself.[30] Yet it should not be overlooked that alongside heroes who possess varying degrees of mastery in oral performance, both epics provide evidence for a specific figure in the community who bears the performance of formal utterances as his social function.[31] When a singer is situated in a ritual context then the performance of his special utterances possesses a different character from those *muthoi* uttered under less formal circumstances. The speech-act produced by formally performed singing is indicated by a correspondingly different terminology such as, for example, οἴμη, "thread (of song)" and ἀοιδή, "song".[32] Reasserting this point does not invalidate Martin's conclusions; it rather complements his claim that poetic performances are constructed from a mastery of social-poetic genres of discourse. To be an *aoidos*, however, is to be a speaker of *muthoi* in a context of the formal weaving-together of different speech strategies, a different context from the one for which the various *muthoi* were perhaps originally envisioned. A boasting contest between two adult males in an oral-traditional society, can, for example, either take place (and be witnessed by an immediate audience) or be narrated by another (and be witnessed by the narrator's audience). This means that while an *aoidos* may be good at performing boasts, it does not necessarily follow that a good boaster will be a good *aoidos*.

The reason for this asymmetry in practical reasoning lies in *the constitution of the audience*. An utterance produced at a formal occasion, before a symbolically constituted audience that has already authorized the poet to recall the *muthoi* of others, constitutes the song-path of the singer. It presupposes, as the *muthoi* of heroes most often

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30 On which see Goldhill 1991, 1-56, Perradotto 1990, 94-142 and Pucci 1987, 13-30, 1998, 131-77. The context of Phemios' performance, although relevant, is more self-reflexively tied to the *Odyssey* and will be dealt elsewhere.

31 On the poet as 'social function', see Watkins 1982 and Detienne 1996, 39-52.

32 As shown by Scodel 1998.

do not, that on the part of the community present at the performance there is a submission, a surrendering of oneself to the efficacy of the speech of the poet. To reiterate, a master of poetic performance is a master of all *muthoi*, but not all speakers of *muthoi* are masters of poetic performance. Martin does in fact make this point since he sees in the type of speech uttered by Achilles a mastery of *muthoi* comparable only to that of the narrator. Yet it is also true that mastery of *muthoi* alone does not transform Achilles into the double of the narrator: when the hero takes up the lyre (*Il.* 9.186ff.) and sings a specially designated utterance – κλέα ἄνδρων, the specific phrase within epic that self-reflexively denotes epic performance[33] – the hero has crossed over into a domain where to sing is to make a formal claim to truth. At that moment, the hero ceases to μυθεῖσθαι and begins 'to sing' (ἀείδειν, *Il.* 9.189). As Martin concludes, Achilles becomes the simulacrum of the poetic narrator and correspondingly the poet becomes as monumental as his hero.[34] This is a poetic strategy which deliberately blurs the voices of the narrator and hero while at the same time maintaining a necessary distance between enunciating subject and the chief actor of the utterance.

Occasion, with its formal constitution of an audience, as illustrated in the idealized portrait of Phaiakian festival of *Odyssey* 8, provides the key to identifying the communication situation in Homeric performance.[35]

When Alkinoos first summons the singer Demodokos, it is to a formal banquet at his house. Alkinoos extends a specific invitation to those men recently called to the *agora* of the Phaiakians (*Od.* 8.5). These leaders of the Phaiakians are twelve sceptre-bearing *basilees* of the entire community (*Od.* 8.390-1) whose attendance is marked by their formal designation: κατὰ δῆμον (emphasized again at *Od.* 9.6). The use of this phrase is also extended to fifty-two additional invitees, young men who have been "selected by district" (κρινάσθων κατὰ δῆμον, *Od.* 8.36) in order to make provision for Odysseus' voyage home. The formality of the gathering is acknowledged by the provision of sacrifice for those attending (*Od.* 8.59-61, cf. *Il.* 18.559). The occasion is therefore *publically authorized* in at least three ways.

Firstly, it is symbolically representative of the entire elite community (elsewhere designated Φαιήκων ἄριστοι, *Od.* 8.91) because 13 districts are each represented by a *basileus* and four *kouroi* (those previously marked as *aristoi*, *Od.* 8.36). The emphasis on numbers (13 *basileis*, 4 *kouroi*, 9 *aisumnetai*) is especially redolent of

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33 Nagy 1974, 229-61.

34 Martin 1989, 146-205.

35 On the Phaiakian setting and the question of what is being represented there, see overviews in Hainsworth 1988, 341-6 (with further references) and Garvie 1994, 18-31, as well as Dickie 1984a and the more general remarks in Raaflaub 1997. On the 'oral traditional bard' see Scodel 1998 and Foley 1999. On the relationship portrayed here between performance, poet and audience, see the excellent discussion by Segal 1992. For the diachronic evolution of this figure into the rhapsode and beyond, see now González 2013.

rationalizing 'tribal' civic organization. This is confirmed by the fact that the adjudication of the dancing competition that takes place after the athletic contests is overseen by special magistrates, "nine *aisumnetai*, publically selected" (αἰσυμνῆται δὲ κριτοὶ ἐννέα . . . δήμιοι, *Od.* 8.258). The explicit mention of these magistrates mark Phaiakia out as a *polis*. The *aisumnetai* are here publically-appointed by district with a title very well attested in the archaic period.[36] The basic definition is Aristotle's who describes the *aisumneteia* as an "elected tyranny".[37] Examples were adduced from early tyrants (Pittakos of Mytilene, for example)[38] and Aristotle had noted in his *Kumaion Politeia* that tyrants in Aeolian Kyme were formerly known as *aisumnetai*.[39] Aristotle's definition points to the figure of the extraordinary arbiter appointed in many archaic cities in the wake of *stasis*.[40] As an archaic magistracy the function of *aisumnetai* is adjudication (schol. *Od.* 8.258) and presidency.[41] The etymology (derived from its magisterial function) connects the word with the idea of arbitration (from αἶσα and αἴσιμος < *αἴσυμνος)[42] but the word has a form with an meaning more synonymous with ἥρως.[43] In regulations from Teos of the early 5th century the *aisumnetes* is a senior magistrate with an executive function.[44] It is especially well-attested in colonial cities founded from Miletos (such as Olbia) and Megara.[45] The office is also attested in Hellenistic Naxos and Eretria.[46] Finally, the title appears as the epithet of Dionysos at Patrai in Akhaia in the

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36 Hainsworth, 1988, 362, counsels caution but see Garvie 1994 *ad loc.* Since Toepffer 1894 the best modern discussion, with a thorough reinvestigation of the title and its possible origins, is Faraguna 2005.

37 Arist. *Pol.* 1285a, 1295a; αἱρετὴ τυραννίς, *Pol.* 1285a31, followed by Theophrastos *ap.* Dion Hal. *AR* 5.73.3; Dionysios uses the term as a Greek approximation for the Roman *dictator.* On Aristotle's definition, see the discussion in Romer 1982.

38 *Pol.* 1285a35f., D.L. 1.74, Nikolaos of Damascus *FGrHist* 90 F 54.

39 fr. 524 Rose = Argum. Soph. *OT.* Diogenes' use of the word suggests that it was the specific term for 'tyrant' at Miletos (D.L. 1.44, 1.100, 2.5); this is strongly supported by attestations of the title as the president of the college of *molpoi* in 5th century Miletos (*LSAM* 50 = *SIG*3 57) as well as in its colonies (e.g. Olbia, *SEG* xxxiv 768, 769 = *I. Olbia* 56, 57).

40 So Redfield 1990, 131.

41 ἰδίως δέ φησιν Ἀριστοτέλης ὑπὸ Κυμαίων αἰσυμνήτην τὸν ἄρχοντα λέγεσθαι, Arist. fr. 524 Rose = schol. Eur. *Med.* 19. They were comparable to the archons or *prytaneis* at Athens (so Toepffer 1894, 1091); the *bouleuterion* at Megara was called the *Aisumnion* according to Paus. 1.43.4, but the connection is probably to the hero *Aisymnos*.

42 Frisk *GEW* 46.

43 αἰσυμνητήρ: *Il.* 24.347 with Suda s.v. αἰσυμνῆτις· ἡ δέσποινα, Eur. *Med.* 19 and the name of the Megarian hero *Aisymnos.* See also (more cautiously) Chantraine *DELG* 39-40 and Richardson 1993, 309.

44 *ML* 30.

45 Megara itself: *SIG*3 642 = *IG* VII 15 (Hellenistic); Selinous: *Inschriften von Olympia* 22 = *DGE* 165g (archaic), Khalkedon: *Inschriften von Khalkedon* 6, 7, 10, 11, 12 (Hellenistic). The last three (= *LSAM* 3-5) attest the form προαισυμνάω.

46 Naxos: *SIG*3 955; Eretria: *IG* XII 9 223. For the festival, see Nilsson 1906, 294-7 and Redfield 1990

context of aetiological stories and rites for Artemis Triklaria.[47] It is therefore appropriate to compare these Phaiakian officials with, for example, the *Hellanodikai* at Elis and the *athlothetai* at Athens, both boards of adjudication with wider executive functions and selected by tribe,[48] whose function was to oversee *agones* at Olympia and the Panathenaia respectively. A specifically *political* function is indicated by the actions of an *aisumnetes*. If the analogy can be pressed then explicit mention of these officials provides circumstantial evidence that *Odyssey* 8 describes stylized elements of a *polis* festival. To this we can add *Od.* 8.109-110, where the procession to contests is marked by formal gathering in the *agora*. The occasion of performance is therefore inhabited by a compositional duty emanating from its political will-to-representation. Little further detail is offered, however, that could shed institutional light on the dance *agon* that these officials will supervise (although it is tempting to read the Dipylon vase, *CEG* 432, alongside this episode).

Secondly, the feast is solemnized as a sacrificial gathering by the formality of a public division of meat (δαίς from δαίομαι, e.g. *Od.* 8.98) accepted as a display of status within the community.[49] As a ritual constitution of the community's aristocratic elite, this gathering provides the basic occasion for the poetic performance and the bard Demodokos is specially summoned to attend. Demodokos' function is reinforced by Alkinoos' triple designation, θεῖον ἀοιδόν . . . ἀοιδήν τέρπειν . . . ἀείδειν, "the singer who sings the song" (*Od.* 8.44-6). Read together, the details of this gathering suggest that Odysseus has stumbled upon a community that constitutes itself chiefly as a political community. The occasion of the performance at this particular feast strongly suggests an audience whose gathering is structured via civic-territorial self-representation, that is, constituted according to the organization of a *polis*.

Thirdly, although Alkinoos is the host and as such presides over the meal and the preceding sacrifice, it is unclear whether Alkinoos imposes any "compositional duty" upon this *aoidos*. More likely it is the formality of the occasion within which the bard makes his utterance that imposes the performative duty. Alkinoos is the son of Phaiakia's *ktistes*, Nausithoos, whose foundation of Phaiakia is summarized very precisely in a checklist of stereotypical colonial acts.[50] It is reasonable to assume that an audience of the *Odyssey* would connect Alkinoos' inherited role with the exercise of certain essential functions on behalf of the colonial community that were similarly the preserve of the founder's *genos* elsewhere in the archaic Greek world.[51] If this observation holds, then we can infer that Alkinoos' marshaling of the city's young men, his presidency of the

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47 Paus. 7.20.1.

48 The *aisumnetai* are tribally-appointed at Khalkedon: *Inschriften von Khalkedon* 6 & 7.

49 On the division of meat as a metonymic ritual for the *polis*, see Nagy 1990b, 269-75, Detienne and Svenbro 1989, 148-63, and now Bakker 2013.

50 *Od.* 6.6-10, on which, see Hainsworth 1988, 293, Garvie 1994, 83-4.

51 Malkin 1987 and Graham 1964, 29.

banquet and oversight of *agones* and pannychic song are a stylized representation of the duties of a civic magistracy such as *prytanis* or *archon*. Alkinoos should not be seen so much as a 'Homeric prince' but as occupying a formal office similar to that exercised by elite citizens, the privileged heirs of founder heroes, and tyrants (compare, for instance, the role of the Peisistratidai at Thuc. 6.57). There are strong indications that this and similar occasions are a regular context for oral performance by an *aoidos* accompanied by the *phorminx* (the lyre), that special token of the *aoidos* elsewhere referred to as "yoke-fellow of the (sacrificial) feast" (δαιτὶ συνήορος, *Od.* 8.99) and "the feast's companion" (δαιτὸς ἑταιρήν, *Od.* 17.271). With sacral overtones, song and dance are generally "ornaments of the feast" (ἀναθήματα δαιτός, *Od.* 1.152) and thus a significant part of any ritually constituted gathering at which an audience is assembled symbolically. The significance of the *aoidos* is reinforced by the centrality of his spatial location at such an occasion. Accompanied by the herald, Demodokos is seated with honour "in the middle of the feasters" (μέσσῳ δαιτυμόνων, *Od.* 8.66, 473) upon a special chair, the only chair in Alkinoos' house to be described in any detail. He is highly valued by the community at large indicating that his position is universally regarded beyond the boundaries of the feast.[52]

With its well-ordered and politically-constituted audience, it is the eventfulness of the occasion that triggers and activates the poetic utterance in the context of the communication situation. At any one occasion an audience may be representative of a greater or lesser block of the total community, from δῆμος (*Od.* 9.7 and the name Δημόδοκος) and λαός (implied at *Od.* 8.472), to the more restricted syssitic event with an audience made up of formally constituted elites: "the feasters listened to the singer throughout the house, sitting in rows." (δαιτυμόνες δ᾽ἀνὰ δώματ᾽ἀκουάζωνται ἀοιδοῦ ἥμενοι ἑξείης, *Od.* 9.7-8). This line makes explicit that the audience is composed of those who take a share of the meat, metonymy for those with full membership of the political community. A little further along (*Od.* 9.9-10) are added the accoutrements of the symposion, another microcosm of elite civic participation. Following the suggestion of West, Demodokos performs at an event bearing all the hallmarks of the ritual dining or festival occasion of the early city, encouraging comparison with the δαμώματα of Stesikhoros or Terpander's Spartan performances.[53]

In fact, Terpander offers a useful comparandum to Demodokos. Terpandrian testimonia frequently refer to the proverbial expression "after the Lesbian singer" or, simply, "the

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[52] "Demodokos [the name itself is programmatic: "received by the people"] honoured among the hosts," Δημόδοκον λαοῖσι τετιμένον, *Od.* 8.472.

[53] Stesikhoros fr. 212 *PMG* with the schol.: δαμώματα δὲ τὰ δημοσίαι αἰδόμενα; cf. Hesychius sv. δαμώματα. On Terpander, see T14a Gostoli = Philodemos, *de mus.* 1, fr.30.31-35, p.18 Kemke, and T14b Gostoli = Philodemos, *de mus.* 4.19.4-19, p.85-6 Kemke.

Lesbian singer."[54] The proverb refers to the institutionalization of an honour accorded to performers from Lesbos at Sparta: they perform first from any group of singers on any occasion. Eventually, "after the Lesbian singer" came to mean "to go second" in any contest. The occurrence of the word *aoidos* to describe Terpander generically and in the fossilized usage of the proverb attested as early as Sappho (T60a Gostoli = fr. 106 L-P.: "Preeminent like the Lesbian singer next to those from other lands") suggests that in the early archaic period the expression could cover a wide range of performative modes. *Aoidos* need not be confined only to the orthodox image of Phemios or Demodokos singing at banquet or even to the itinerant performer. "Singer" it seems meant "performer of any type of song" until later terminology was introduced to distinguish different styles or forms of accompaniment.[55] The stimulus for such differentiation was historical: the communal reorganization of the occasional function of performance, especially tying form and content to occasions whose underlying principle was political self-representation. This included, above all, the political regulation and adjudication of performance via the formalized and centrally organized *agon*: the Karneia is the earliest attested (although by no means the most prestigious).[56] That the Karneia at Sparta was the occasional site for one of the earliest political organizations of performance, and, as a consequence, a site for the formation of reciprocal relations between text and context in relation to Homeric epic, is attested by [Plut.] *de musica* 9.1134b (= T18 Gostoli), by Glaukos and Hellanikos in the late fifth century, and from various chronological reports (T1-6 Gostoli) that loosely put the formalization of the Karneia in the context of the resolution of internal conflict at Sparta, which culminated with the (re-)foundation of the city in the last generation of the seventh century (T12-21 Gostoli). In short, the foundation of the contest at the festival of Apollo Karneios was a structurally important part of the emergence of the archaic Spartan *polis* and the role played by the performances of local and invited singers (Terpander, Thaletas, Tyrtaios) paralleled the pronouncements of oracles, some of which had urged these invitations in the first place.[57] That Terpander sang 'Homeric songs' and composed his own *prooimia* for them is attested by important evidence.[58] It can be reasonably argued that traces of this seventh century formalization of musical performances overlap the

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54 T60a-i Gostoli: ἄοιδος ὁ Λέσβιος, Sappho fr. 106 L-P *vel sim*; μετὰ Λέσβιον ᾠδόν, Zenobius 5.9 p.118 Leutsch-Schneidewin (=Gostoli 60f).

55 In general, see Maslov 2009.

56 Hellanikos *FGrHist* 4 F85a with Athen. 4.141e-f .

57 T 12 Gostoli = schol. EQ *ad Odysseam* 3.267, T15 Gostoli = Diod. Sic. 8.28 (*ap.* J. Tzetes *Chiliades* 1.385-392), T18 Gostoli = [Plut.] *de mus.* 9.1134b, T19 = [Plut.] *de Mus.* 42.1146b.

58 [Plut.] *de Mus.* 3. 1131-33. cf. also T27 Gostoli = Herakleides Ponticus fr. 157 Wehrli (*ap.* [Plut.] *de Mus.* 3. 1131f-1132c) and T31 Gostoli = Alexander Polyhistor *FGrHist* 273 F77 (*ap.* [Plut.] *de Mus.* 5. 1132ef).

representation of the *Odyssey's* Phaiakian performance context along with certain institutional features this event shares with the organization of the Karneia. This overlap encourages the view that the form and content of the Phaiakian performance is less under the direction of a nebulous 'Homeric prince' and far more subject to institutions governing the assembly of a political community.

While Alkinoos plays a significant role as a master of ceremonies, introducing different phases of the occasion and terminating others, he does not direct the poet's utterance. If the content of the performance is under any direction at all the impetus comes from the *audience as actor* in the drama of the event. The audience are far from passive receivers of the poet's story; on the contrary they actively participate in his delivery in ways recalling the various ethnographic comparisons drawn by Martin.[59] During his first performance Demodokos is attentive to the audience's moods and attunes his delivery to their reactions accordingly. Odysseus, the object of the overall narrative and of Demodokos' first song, weeps as he is overcome by sorrow at the performance while the "best of the Phaiakians" take delight in the words and spur the singer on (*Od.* 8.87-91, cf. *Od.* 8.367). If we go one step further and examine the banquet performance meta-poetically, we can again apply more generally the evidence of Herodotus (5.67). We can identify Odysseus as cult-hero whose sufferings are narrated by the performance of song.[60] These songs cause the audience to suffer in the same way, but the pain is dramatized in *Odyssey* 8 as a duplication of the hero's own suffering – Odysseus must endure suffering both as cult/narrative hero and as audience to the story of that suffering, an audience which is, in turn, a doubling of the audience of the *geras*-song offered to him as compensation. However we might explain these meta-narrative possibilities, this peculiarly Odyssean identification of the cult-hero as the primary audience member, who then actively intervenes to direct shifts in the content of that narrative, creates a *mise en abîme* that doubles the communication situation of the *Odyssey's* performance itself. Again, it strongly suggests that the imperatives of the occasion itself generate a reciprocal process of authorization between performer and audience, where the latter identifies with a *past* cult founder-ancestor who is at the same time understood to be a *present* witness to the proper performance of key narratives.

Although these gestures from the audience serve narrative functions within the *Odyssey*, they are nevertheless depicted in the epic as though an expected part of any performance. Aware of these variations in audience response Demodokos pauses at key moments in his delivery to receive them (e.g. *Od.* 8.87). This poet-audience interaction results in a more direct involvement in the form of praise for the poetic performance. Praise for the poet's performance occurs in the context of Odysseus' overall praise for his hosts and in the form of the audience's public bestowal of gifts upon their guest. At this stage of

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59 Martin 1989, 231-9.
60 Nagy 1979.

the feast, Odysseus, as honoured guest and central audience member, explicitly recognizes the fundamental importance of the poet and poets in general (*Od.* 8.477-81) as well as the divine source of their competence. Special acknowledgement is reserved for Demodokos' mastery of the Muse's 'song-paths' (οἴμαι, *Od.* 8.480-1, the word denoting the content of the utterance). Just as the poet is about to begin his third performance, Odysseus interjects with further praise for Demodokos stating how well he handles one of these οἴμαι, entitled *The Fate of the Akhaians* (Ἀχαιῶν οἶτος, *Od.* 8.489). For Odysseus, as key audience member the competence of the performance is "very much as it should be" (λίην γὰρ κατὰ κόσμον, *Od.* 8.489) appropriately cataloguing deeds and sufferings "as though somehow you were present or *were in the audience* (ἀκούσας) of another who was" (*Od.* 8.491). The phrase κατὰ κόσμον, however, indicates that in this case it is the quality of narrative handling rather than realism which Odysseus endorses, the quality of a proper performance rather than fidelity to what actually happened. Odysseus encourages a new οἴμη: "come now, change tack and sing *The Artifice of the Wooden Horse,*" backing his request with a promise of formal praise: "if you recite these things in their due measure (κατὰ μοῖραν) I will straightaway declare (μυθήσομαι) to all men that the god really did bestow upon you divinely-uttered song (θέσπιν ἀοιδήν)" (*Od.* 8.492-8). Only when it looks as though Odysseus is being adversely affected by the narrative does the host intervene: "Let Demodokos hold off his clear-sounding lyre; for in some way he does not create *kharis* in everyone by singing these things" (*Od.* 8.537-8). Although this idealized image of the *aoidos* plays a narratological function by focusing attention in and out on Odysseus and his strategies of recognition and concealment, the scene nevertheless is a reminder that the singer is prompted by the entirety of the occasion. Narrative content is therefore determined by the same representational will of the audience that is simultaneously responsible for, so to speak, the occasion's own 'socio-ritual narrative', through which all participants in the performance understand the structure of their own relationships to each other as actors in the 'ritual text' of the occasion itself.[61]

That the performance has taken place at a formal occasion is made clear at the beginning of *Odyssey* 9, immediately before Odysseus embarks on his own narrative performance:

> οὐ γὰρ ἐγώ γέ τί φημι **τέλος χαριέστερον** εἶναι
> ἢ ὅτ' ἐϋφροσύνη μὲν ἔχῃ κατὰ δῆμον ἅπαντα,
> δαιτυμόνες δ' ἀνὰ δώματ' ἀκουάζωνται ἀοιδοῦ
> ἥμενοι ἑξείης, παρὰ δὲ πλήθωσι τράπεζαι
> σίτου καὶ κρειῶν, μέθυ δ' ἐκ κρητῆρος ἀφύσσων
> οἰνοχόος φορέῃσι καὶ ἐγχείῃ δεπάεσσι·
> τοῦτό τί μοι κάλλιστον ἐνὶ φρεσὶν εἴδεται εἶναι.
>
> *Od.* 9.5-11

[61] For another example of such a text-context relationship represented in performance, see Pind. *Nem.* 4.1-9.

> For I deny that there is a *telos* more filled with *kharis*
> than when joy holds sway throughout the *demos*,
> and those taking part in the division of meat are the audience of the singer
> along the halls
> sitting in rows, while beside them tables are full
> of bread and meat, and drawing from the mixing bowl
> the wine-pourer carries the liquor and fills up cups:
> This to my way of thinking is the finest thing to behold.

This description imagines something more than we might expect from what has often been called 'after-dinner story-telling'.[62] *Telos* signifies ritual as much as end or goal;[63] Lattimore is therefore quite right to translate *telos* by "occasion" with a mind to the event which disposes the community as a whole (κατὰ δῆμον) to gratitude and goodwill.[64] *Kharis* is the bodily disposition produced in rituals of solidarity and reciprocity, and in the fulfilment of mutual obligations. That song is part of the *kharis* of festival is made clear by this description as well as other explicit statements of the relationship such as Pindar *Nem.* 4, 1ff. A similar occasion is envisaged in the formal and idealized gathering of the community depicted on the Shield of Achilles (*Il.* 18. 558-9). In the city at peace a harvest festival is the context for a poetic performance accompanied by dancing. The singer performs the 'Linos' song "in the middle" of the participants (*Il.* 18.569-71) after heralds have sacrificed an ox for the feast (βοῦν δ' ἱερεύσαντες, *Il.* 18.559).[65] That audiences are ritually constituted in other early performance contexts is suggested by the funerary gathering at Khalkis (Hesiod, *Op.* 654) and is henceforth confirmed by what we know of early performances at religious festivals.[66]

This idealized epic portrait of bardic performance in Phaiakia therefore provides a strong clue to the identity of the audience/enunciatee in the archaic communication situation at its earliest traceable phases. Rather than locating the source of the poet's 'compositional duty' in a single member of the Homeric elite, Sender and Receiver in the communication situation are discovered to be the same entity: the ritually and politically constituted audience, who, after being formally summoned to assembly, bring about the occasion of performance. This tallies with what is known about the performance contexts of Homeric poetry in the archaic period. These contexts are typically festivals that self-reflexively define a cross-section of the community. A

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62 Unless by "after-dinner story-telling" we mean something like the songs performed after syssitic banquets in Lakonia and Crete. The rather literal translation provided attempts to emphasize the signs of formal civic dining in this image.

63 Waanders 1983, 232-6.

64 Lattimore 1965, 137.

65 On the 'Linos song', which points to the link between performance genre and occasion, see Edwards 1990, 225.

66 See the comprehensive collection of evidence in Herington 1985, 161-66 and Shapiro 1992.

significant function of these festivals is this ritual representation of all or part of the community to itself, modified according to the specified purpose of the festival. The most well-known case is the Panathenaia at Athens. The broader point is indeed acknowledged by Calame, but only in relation to lyric performances. Calame uses as his example the way in which Alkman positions an enunciating subject in relation to the sponsoring political community, the *polis*:

> The city delegates to this custodian of power-knowledge the function of preparing for the poetic performance those who will say *I*, but the poet does not intervene in the choral execution itself . . . [p]ossessing, however, like the Muses, the modality of power, he communicates it only partially to the *I*-narrator, who can be considered as much the Subject of the poetic performance as its Receiver: by singing the poems composed by Alcman, the young women become initiated and acquire knowledge, as does the public that is present at the choral performance.[67]

This model is invaluable for explaining the social function of poetry and the way in which self-knowledge is transmitted and authorized in archaic Greece; it is therefore odd that Calame should deny the possibility of applying a similar explanation to the performance of Homeric epic. In fact, he pointedly distinguishes the communication situation of epic from that of monody and lyric, excluding epic performances from that class of performance where the "enunciatee . . . is represented by the audience present at the ritual."[68] Calame has in mind performances that take place at an occasion circumscribed by cult and festival.[69] He suggests rather that the enunciatee of epic "is generally represented by the public gathered together for the performance of the song in a palace worthy of Homeric epic."[70] Undeclared in Calame's suggestion is his belief that epic performance was *ad hoc* and informal, and therefore of a non-ritual nature. Yet, as evidenced in the constitution of the audience at Demodokos' performance, there is quite clear evidence for the ritual nature of gatherings for epic performance. These gatherings can perhaps be understood as epic stylizations of civic festivals, which is unsurprising since they were indeed the typical performance context of Homeric poetry.[71]

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67 Calame 1995a, 23.

68 Calame 1995a, 33-4.

69 For instance, Calame 1995a, 22 with Nagy 1979, 17-8. See Wilson 2000, 61-5 for a discussion of the way the democratic *polis* delegated a publically appointed magistrate to select *didaskaloi* for dramatic festivals at Athens (with its complex juridical processes: see the analysis of Marshall and Van Willigenburg 2004).

70 Calame 1995a, 33.

71 Nagy, for instance, has noted the parallels between Odysseus' all-night narrative and pannychic festivals. It could be argued that *Odyssey* 8 self-reflexively stylizes the performance of an "Odysseian narrative" at the festival of a colonial *polis*. In such a reading the performance itself becomes an epic scene with the disguised Odysseus as narrator and audience alternately. The *Odyssey* would therefore be offering a meta-narrative of its own possible performance. The presence of other traditions of epic performance in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* has generated many studies and schools of analysis, most notably Neoanalysis and what might loosely be termed the 'Harvard school' of Gregory Nagy.

In sum, when the occasion of performance in epic is activated by a group that has been brought together ritually it suggests that the poet's compositional duty is transmitted by the very group that will at the same time become the Receiver of the communication situation. The manner in which the community of sponsors of the epic performance transmit 'duty' as Senders, and receive 'knowledge' as Receivers of the communication situation can be schematized in a circular fashion diagrammatically. A schematization of this kind would nevertheless represent a radical over-simplification because it fails to explain how the uttered enunciation and the formation of the enunciating subject 'I' enables an audience *to distance itself from itself* as authorizer of an occasion, an imperative present in all early Greek occasional poetry. Put another way, we need to identify the strategies at work which allow the occasion to reconstitute the circulation of group self-representations among participants as *a relationship of difference and distance*. It is not enough to note that the Sender and Receiver in the communication situation are one and the same social entity unless it is possible to show how this sameness is *disavowed and misrecognized*, that is, tacitly concealed by the group.

There is then a missing step in Calame's analysis of Homeric enunciation. While he is justified to conclude that to say 'I' is to declare oneself the medium between utterance and occasion, the fact remains that in such a declared enunciation the 'I' explicitly denies its own competence and defers to the Muse for the act of remembering. If this explicit enunciation is not to be dismissed as a disingenuous conceit of the poet, but to be regarded as the way the utterance is ritually repressed within the experience of a performance, then the artificiality of the concepts of distance and autonomy between Sender and Receiver requires the application of a theory of practice to language use.

'Authorized Language' and the social production of meaning

In an essay entitled "Authorized Language", Pierre Bourdieu applies a theory of practice to linguistic exchanges. There he addresses the way symbolic efficacy is invested in language and how legitimate speech-acts construct the reality of lived experience.[72] In his revision of J. L. Austin's speech-act theory, Bourdieu argues that:

> [t]he mystery of performative magic is . . . resolved in the mystery of ministry . . . i.e. in the alchemy of representation . . . through which *the representative creates the group which creates him*: the spokesperson endowed with the full power to speak and act on behalf of the group, and first of all to act on the group through the magic of the slogan, *is the substitute for the group, which exists solely through this procuration*. Group-made man, he personifies a fictitious person, which he lifts out of the state of a simple aggregate of separate individuals, enabling them to act and speak, through him, 'like a single person'. Conversely, he receives the right to speak and act in the name of the group, to 'take himself for' the group he incarnates, to identify with the function to which 'he gives his body and soul', thus giving a biological body to a constituted body.[73]

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72 In *Language and Symbolic Power* (Bourdieu 1991, 105-116) first published in 1975.
73 Bourdieu 1991, 106, emphasis added.

Bourdieu observes that Saussure's separation of the 'inner language' (*langue*) from the social uses of language (*parole*) results in the treatment of language as an 'autonomous object' distinct from the agents who speak. For Saussure, it is within the constraints of this autonomous structural framework that the meaning and efficacy of words and speech must be found. Meaning flows from this self-contained lexical corpus into the extra-discursive lexicon of everyday life. To Bourdieu this necessarily involves the "initial suspension of the question of the uses of language."[74] He argues further that "[i]t is only in exceptional cases (in the abstract and artificial situations created by experimentation) that symbolic exchanges are reduced to relations of pure communication."[75] Turning Saussure's distinction on its head Bourdieu argues that the social production of meaning is central to the question of language-use:

> [t]he power of words is nothing other than the *delegated power* of the spokesperson, and his speech – that is, the substance of his discourse and, inseparably, his way of speaking – is no more than a testimony, and one among others, of the *guarantee of delegation* which is vested in him.[76]

Turning to Austin's speech-act theory, Bourdieu points out that by locating the efficacy of speech in words themselves, Austin forgets that "authority comes to language from outside" and that "language at most *represents* this authority, manifests and symbolizes it."[77] The rhetoric of speech deployed in authorized contexts is not what lends these situations their symbolic power, rather

> the stylistic features which characterize the language of priests, teachers and, more generally, all institutions . . . all stem from the *position* occupied in a competitive field by these persons entrusted with delegated authority.[78]

Further, style and rhetoric do not create connotations in certain contexts since such uses of language are already entirely dependent on

> the social position of the speaker, which governs the access he can have to the language of the institution, that is, to the official, orthodox and legitimate speech. It is the access to the legitimate instruments of expression, and therefore the participation in the authority of the institution, which makes all the difference . . . between the straightforward imposture of masqueraders, who disguise a performative utterance as a descriptive or constative statement, and the authorized imposture of those who do the same thing with the authorization and the authority of an institution. *The spokesperson is an impostor endowed with the skeptron.*[79]

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74 Bourdieu 1991, 107.
75 ibid.
76 ibid.
77 Bourdieu 1991, 109.
78 ibid, emphasis added.
79 ibid, emphasis added.

Austin's observation that there are speech-acts which "execute an action" (i.e. perlocutionary speech-acts) cannot be explained as the release of some latent meaning from within words by an agent who simply utters them. There must at base be a *social relation* which authorizes meaning:

> the authorized spokesperson is only able to use words to act on other agents and, through their action, on things themselves, *because his speech concentrates within it the accumulated symbolic capital of the group which has delegated him and of which he is the authorized representative*."[80]

One is therefore able to see that the effective utterance (that is, in Austin's terms, a 'perlocutionary speech-act') induces dispositions in, and actions from, addressees by means of a performative 'magic' which is

> rooted in the capital which the group has accumulated through its effort and whose effective use is subordinated to a whole set of conditions, those which define the *rituals of social magic*.[81]

This magic hinges on the speaker appearing as though a *miraculous bodily incarnation* (the 'biological' form of the 'constituted body') of the institution by which the authority to speak has been invested – "a performative utterance is destined to fail each time that it is not pronounced by a person who has the 'power' to pronounce it."[82] Thus, investigating the symbolic power of language to create meaningful and *acceptable* representations of social reality requires that we understand the relationship between the epiphenomena of discourses (style, form, rhetorical strategies, and so on), the pronouncer of discourses, and "the institution which authorizes him to pronounce them."[83] For Bourdieu, the error was fundamental since Austin was not able to provide within his theory of speech-acts a theory of practical action. However, Bourdieu resists turning to a Marxist analysis that would simply substitute one form of structuralism for another. For Bourdieu, the practical agent does not unwittingly reproduce the objective conditions of the social order, but neither are they rational actors fully able to assess and control the structures that regulate social exchanges. Instead, the concept of practice focuses on the relationship between means (*modus operandi*) and ends (*opus operatum*) by which social agents pursue their multiform interests. Such a theory explains how agents dispose themselves toward the *opus operatum* (the product of ritual action) by *never making explicit* the generative principles of their *modus operandi*. By overlooking the specifically *social* production of meaning, Austin was not able to acknowledge that the "specific efficacy" of symbolic expressions and performative utterance "stems from the fact that *they seem to possess in themselves the source of a power which in reality resides in the institutional conditions of their production and reception*."[84] The implications of this

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80 Bourdieu 1991, 111, emphasis added.
81 ibid.
82 ibid.
83 ibid.
84 ibid, emphasis added.

observation cannot be over-emphasized for the question addressed by this study. It provides Bourdieu with the means of nuancing Austin's insights by introducing the social context for the production of meaning but, crucially, without "reduc[ing] historical agents to the role of 'supports' of the structure and . . . their actions to mere epiphenomenal manifestations."[85] The efficacy of a speech-act can therefore only arise via a universal complicity to locate the authorization and delegation of the speaker simultaneously in the body of the speaker and in the utterance itself. The purpose is to create the "real, well-founded fiction" of authorized speech as an experienced magical utterance

> by focusing exclusively on the formal conditions for the effectiveness of ritual, one overlooks the fact that the ritual conditions that must be fulfilled in order for ritual to function and for the sacrament to be both *valid* and *effective* are never sufficient *as long as the conditions which produce the recognition of this ritual are not met: the language of authority never governs without the collaboration of those it governs, without the help of the social mechanisms capable of producing this complicity, based on misrecognition, which is the basis of all authority*.[86]

Recognition of the authorized speaker, speaking authorized language, is thus the necessary condition of effective speech. An understanding of what is actually said on the part of participants, even the speaker, is far less important. Indeed, Bourdieu argues, many aspects of formal ritual are poorly understood, a fact which leads him to question the validity of the widespread assumption that ritual action should express anything at all.[87] This is not to say that ritual does not 'make sense'. This distinction between the transparent and rational 'sense' expected by theory and the 'practical sense' of agents is central to Bourdieu's theory of practice. Whereas scholars always feel the need to 'make sense' of ritual they do so in terms that would not make sense to participants (the so-called 'theorization effect'), while for participants the very essence of their rituals is that they implicitly make sense, that is, they 'feel right' and by definition need no explanation. The speculative point of view, which is that of all outsiders, is always alien to those who live "in the spirit of the event", those for whom formal reflection is a practical impossibility, whose very bodies are 'incorporated' into the logic of the rite:

> simply because he [the participant] is questioned, and questions himself about the reasons and the *raison d'etre* of his practice, he cannot communicate the essential point, which is that the very nature of practice is that it excludes this question.[88]

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85 Bourdieu 1990, 41.

86 Bourdieu 1991, 113, emphasis added. This approach provides the ethnographic and anthropological depth to compliment Antonio Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony, which, to some extent, surfaces in materialist readings of Homeric epic as in, for example, Morris 1986, Rose 1992, 1997 and 2012. On 'cultural hegemony', see Jackson Lears 1985 and Femia 1987, 23-60.

87 Bourdieu 1990, 11-41.

88 Bourdieu 1990, 91.

Although this ought not stop us from attempts at 'making sense' of practices, it sounds a strong note of warning before we attribute intention, function and interpretation to participants without considering the consequences for the object of our analysis (as, for example, in propositions such as 'religion is a way of coping with a chaotic world', or 'whatever cannot be resolved in reality is transposed into mythic narrative', and so on).[89] Indeed, the alienation presupposed by the scandal of ritual's 'senselessness' (such as gives rise to Hekataios' laughter, *FGrH* 1 F1, or Herodotus' response to the drama of Peisistratos' return to Athens, 1.60) is itself historically contingent. The need to isolate and expose meaning becomes an urgent intellectual operation at precisely the same moment that the *Iliad* finds its monumental fixity: the late 6th century. The birth of anthropological reason coincides with the *aporia* presented by the scandalous silence of participants as to the reasons for their actions.

The outside observer who applies a panoptic perspective to the totality of practical action will, however, mistake the model, the diagram and the adumbration of social 'rules', for the *principles* of practical action. Such modeling does little more than strip practices of that "uncertainty and 'fuzziness' resulting from the fact that they have as their principle not a set of conscious, constant rules, but *practical schemas, opaque to their possessors.*"[90] The constructs applied from the outside may account for relevant facts. But the relationship between these theoretical constructs and that "social orientation which makes possible the relation of immediate immanence to the world" is precisely parallel to the way a map, "an abstract model of all possible routes," corresponds to a "practical sense of space, linked unalterably to our bodies."[91] Ritual action, on the other hand, rather than specifically expressing something which must be left to the analyst to interpret is, instead, "sensible" because "it does not seem to occur to anyone to experience [ritual acts and discourses] as absurd, arbitrary or unmotivated" since "rites are practices that are ends in themselves, that are justified by their very performance."[92] Practices such as routines and rituals are thus experienced by people as part of the physical bodily fabric of the social world rather than as explicitly formulated or reified rules. Indeed, borrowing from Wittgenstein, Bourdieu argues that if one is asked to explain the *principle* by which one proceeds in day to day activities most people can state confidently little more than "this is simply what I do."[93] Even in cases where it can be attempted, interpretation always subsists over the horizon of the practice in question, a *post eventum* articulation that must resort to description and explanation quite alien to the experience of the practice itself.

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89 For example, "Making sense of Greek Religion": Gould 2001, 203-234, especially at 207-11 following C. Geertz.
90 Bourdieu 1990, 12, emphasis added.
91 Bourdieu 1990, 34-5.
92 Bourdieu 1990, 36-7
93 "So handle ich eben": Wittgenstein 2001³, § 217.

Bourdieu acknowledges this debt to Wittgenstein in the introduction to his most important work, *Logic of Practice*.[94] In Wittgenstein, the circularity of ascribing meaning to action is illustrated by the self-justifying urgency of any rule-bound activity. It is absurd to ask, for example, '*why* in chess does the bishop move diagonally?' The only possible answer is a tautology: 'because it would cease to be chess if it didn't.' The definition of chess lies in the sum of its rules; the arbitrariness of the game's rules, which causes anxiety in a rationalist search for meaning, is only apparent outside these rules.[95] But this should in no way be considered a reduction of human behaviour to an arbitrary code. In an essay on the IBM super-computer that was programmed to calculate the winning moves in any game of chess, Baudrillard explores what distinguishes artificial from human intelligence.[96] He suggests that "against the computer, man personifies, as it were, the infinity of complexity, which is not the infinity of calculation".[97] What the machine will always lack is the sense of urgency that rules supply, and therefore the necessity of a mastery of technique and the seriousness of play. In this way, human beings mark their presence ironically by relinquishing *thinking about*, or outside, the game for *playing inside* the game, and in the foundation of a network of social relationships. For the computer, however, there is no *chess*, no *game* as such, and hence no relationship with an *other* (the opponent) by which the self is articulated; there is only a series of "celibate" binary operations. Ultimately the computer is doomed to obsolescence since logically it is destined to destroy the game (and itself) by transcending it via pure calculation – which is to say through the application of superior violence.[98] In the end the computer causes stasis in the game by an over-accumulation of *kratos*, not unlike the way the *tyrannos* was imagined to stifle the circulation of symbolic and political goods upon which citizenship depended to be meaningfully exercised. Unlike humans the computer lacks this *sense of the game*, that is, that the end of the game lies not in transcending its operational limits but in the *play* which is the essence of all action: "to have access to that essence, the machine would have had to have invented [the game], would have had to have been able to invent the very arbitrariness of the rules, which is unimaginable".[99]

From this perspective, the hunt for meaning in ritual action is an attempt to replace play with a transcendent principle, which can only end by suppressing that which generates sincere dispositions in actors and participants. As a result, the computer, as Baudrillard wryly comments, is 'depressed' ('Deep Blue') because the machine can never *play* chess, *much less enjoy it*; it can only speed up the pace of its calculations with ever diminishing and increasingly banal results.

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94 Bourdieu 1990, 25

95 Wittgenstein 2001[3], § 205.

96 Entitled "Deep Blue or the Computer's Melancholia" in Baudrillard 2002, 160-5.

97 Baudrillard 2002, 164.

98 "This is the basic symbolic rule which states that no player can be bigger than the game itself", 163 with 2001, 151.

99 Baudrillard 2002, 164.

Ritual cannot have a 'meaning' based on functional operationality, that is, the reduction of ritual to an explicitly formulated goal-oriented action, or rational-actor driven activity expressed outside the logic of its rules (as, for example, in a statement like 'the *purpose* of initiation is to induct young men into adulthood . . .' as though that is what participants rationally imagine is taking place). To do so would be to think outside the game which serves precisely to be the sphere wherein meaning arises and is dispersed. Ritual can only be said to have an architecture of sense brought about by the rules of play and the play of rules. The utopian attempt to exchange a system for its imagined operational referent is further considered in a series of essays on what Baudrillard calls *Impossible Exchange*.[100]

Bourdieu argues for a shift in approach: a local interpretation of a practice is derived, as Wittgenstein seems to suggest, tautologically from its legitimating institution, that is, whatever authorizes one to act (*handeln*). Bourdieu famously coined the expression 'symbolic capital' to refer to the legitimating power of local interpretation over practice. Far from having only imaginary value, however, symbolic capital is highly prized and often violently contested within institutions for the advantages and authority it bestows. These struggles, however, in no way diminish the objective relation of practices to the natural world; on the contrary, they reinforce that relationship. For example, in the *Works and Days* Hesiod, by scoffing at the different *varieties* of calendrical and agricultural practice, tacitly positions himself as one in privileged possession of the truth. The poet's strategy illustrates how control over the capital of representations, used to criticize and 'make sense' of practical reality, is contested, and how much is at stake in the social production of meaning.

"Understanding" authorized speech, however is very different from recognizing it as "sensible," that is, as both "making sense" as well as being *appropriate*. A Latin Mass, for instance, is recognized by participants as right and proper not because the congregation can *interpret* the meaning in its utterances but because, with or without understanding, it is

> *uttered by the person legitimately licensed to do so* . . . known and recognized as being able and enabled to produce this particular class of discourse . . . uttered in a legitimate situation . . . in front of legitimate receivers . . . enunciated according to the legitimate forms.[101]

Bourdieu illustrates these observations by examining the flashpoints of a crisis in institutionalized religion in contemporary France, which he describes as a crisis in "the ritual discourse which [religion] upheld and which upheld it."[102] He cites two complaints from church-goers concerning the improper conduct of Church liturgy, one leveled against an unorthodox deviation of place, the other against a deviation from language use:

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[100] Baudrillard 2001.
[101] Bourdieu 1991, 113, emphasis added.
[102] Bourdieu 1991, 115.

> "My mother was horrified by the chaplain . . . who wanted to celebrate mass over the dining room table!"[103]
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> "In the past one used to say: 'Let us not fall into temptation,',but now one says: 'Submit us not' or 'Lead us not into temptation.' It's monstrous. I've never been able to make myself say it."[104]

Observing that it is the faithful rather than the church which constitutes the locus of authorization in these examples, Bourdieu adds that it is nevertheless only when the faithful locate this authorization in the body of the legitimate performer, the ordained minister, that such authorization can find its legitimate and effective use:

> What emerges from the enumeration of all the infringements of the traditional liturgy is a picture – a kind of photographic negative – of the set of institutional conditions which must be fulfilled in order for ritual discourse to be recognized, i.e. received and accepted as such. For ritual to function and operate it must first of all present itself and be perceived as legitimate, with stereotyped symbols serving precisely to show that *the agent does not act in his own name and on his own authority, but in his capacity as delegate*.[105]

The symbolic gestures, costumes, sacral spaces, formulae and words are not inherently or structurally effective; they succeed because they dramatically represent the authorization of the participating community which, in the very moment of authorization, disposes itself toward such gestures and words as though they *did* possess the capacity to transform reality *eo ipso*. For such a delegation of authority to be effective the community extends to words, gestures and to the one who enacts them, a monopoly of symbolic power:

> Rigorous observance of the code of the uniform liturgy, which governs the sacramental gestures and words, constitutes both the manifestation and the counterpart of the contract of delegation, which makes the priest the holder of 'a monopoly in the manipulation of the goods of salvation'. Conversely, the abdication of the symbolic attributes of authority, like the cassock, Latin, and consecrated objects and places, highlights a break with the *ancient contract of delegation* which united a priest with the faithful through the intermediary of the Church. The indignation of the faithful underlines the fact that the conditions which render ritual effective can be brought together only by an institution which is invested with the power to control its manipulation.[106]

This demonstrates how "the institution which authorizes and regulates the use of liturgy"[107] (or any other series of effective words or gestures) is coextensive with the body of participating practitioners when they are constituted as legitimate receivers. The "indignation of the faithful" in Bourdieu's examples above illustrates the fact that the body of the faithful constitutes the physical "embodiment" of the authorizing institution "which ensures [liturgical] uniformity through space and time by ensuring the conformity of those who are delegated to carry it out."[108] Embodied in this way, the exercise of

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[103] Bourdieu 1991, 108.
[104] Bourdieu 1991, 110.
[105] Bourdieu 1991, 115, emphasis added.
[106] ibid.
[107] ibid.
[108] ibid.

symbolic power takes place as an exchange of authorization for the effective fulfilment of ritual. Failure to carry out proper ritual amounts to the abrogation of delegated responsibility and results in the censure of the community of delegators.

However – and this is a key plank in Bourdieu's general theory of practice – the proper functioning of this exchange can only occur if the act of delegation, which carries with it all the *expectations* of a ritual community, is an *implicit* and not an *explicit* authorization: "[t]he 'conditions of felicity' which allow a set of agents engaged in a rite to accomplish it *felicitously* [i.e. such that it has its desired effect as a speech-act, that it *acts upon* . . .]" is that it is:

> based on *a total lack of awareness of these conditions*, a lack of awareness which, insofar as it defines the doxic relation to social rituals,[109] constitutes the most indispensable condition for their effective accomplishment. The performative magic of ritual functions fully only as long as the religious official who is responsible for carrying it out in the name of the group *acts as a kind of medium between the group and itself: it is the group which, through its intermediary, exercises on itself the magical efficacy contained in the performative utterance*."[110]

For us, here is Bourdieu's most important observation: social agents cannot explicitly acknowledge themselves as the authorizing institution of ritual utterances because to do so would short-circuit the performative magic which incorporates in the speaking subject all the implicit authorization of the group. It is this observation that enables us to adapt Calame's semiological model and add the necessary *sociological* framework for a historical interpretation of Homeric epic in a way that can begin to take greater account of its socially generative role.

Relations of performance: the 'world in the utterance' and the 'world of the utterance'

Integration of Bourdieu's theory of practice into the micro-narrative of the communication situation and the uttered enunciation of the *Iliad* has ramifications for historical explanation of the social production of meaning in Homeric epic. Other scholars have been approaching epic occasionality with the same interest. For example, a similar set of conclusions, but reached from the different perspectives of linguistic anthropology, are reached in an important essay by García.[111] García discusses the way Aristotle and Milman Parry each abstracted epic from the ritual contexts of its performance. He argues that a theory of poetics is consequently crafted in which the force of language in performance is considered unidirectional. This approach, he points out,

> leaves out the crucial dimensions of intention and action on the audience's part; it deprives the latter of *its* authority within the cultural dialogue, and it imputes to the poet an implausible usurpation of power to dictate cultural meaning unilaterally, even at communal gatherings . . . What this overlooks, however, is the creative role of the society in which the singer

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[109] This is further defined in Bourdieu 1990, 66ff., especially 68-9.
[110] Bourdieu 1991, 116, emphasis added.
[111] García 2002, especially at 46-50.

> lives and works. Our theory of ritual speech . . . must challenge such unidirectionality and advance beyond a 'sender-code-receiver' model of discourse, restoring a more detailed picture that sees the performance event as multi-dimensional, dialogic, 'emergent'.[112]

What follows here draws instead on Bourdieu's theory of practice, but in the same spirit attempts to describe the performative alchemy that produces the audience's "authority within the cultural dialogue".

The community's delegation of the poet as the singer of tales arises as an expectation of his liturgical fidelity to form, style, diction, as well as the rituals of the occasion, so as to preserve the efficacy of his utterance. Though it is argued below that the narrator of the *Iliad* takes a critical stance in relation to the social reality with which his utterance engages, this does not mean that the poet is at liberty to dispense with the symbolic attributes of authority.[113] Traditional form and the resulting 'functionality' of the epic need not be seen as limiting the poet's ability to adopt a critical stance, that is, his capacity to challenge and transform a vision of the occasion's broader social milieu. If anything, the traditional poses characteristic of the poet sustain the poem's critical potential. This is because liturgical fidelity to traditional forms of speech lend the utterance its compelling perlocutionary force, help sustain its efficacy and enhance its ability to conjure up representations of the audience's extra-discursive social reality.[114] Just as the Pythian oracle compels radical solutions to socio-political problems by adhering faithfully to an archaic mode of divinatory pronouncement, so too the oral bard projects his efficacy by preserving the traditional character of his speech. By conforming to the expectations of the sponsoring group, which in no way implies a desire on the part of the Sender to have its worldview simply reinforced, the poet's voice will maintain its symbolic power to objectify the background forces responsible for producing the uttered enunciation. Only then can the utterance function as critique, not explicitly, but as the invocation of a past reality into the here-and-now via divine agency.[115]

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112 García 2002, 47. The fundamental starting place for dialogism is Bakhtin 1981; the introductory comments by Holquist (Bakhtin 1981, xviii-xxi) are especially relevant.

113 *pace* Rose 1992, 57.

114 This is one of a number of possible explanations for the intensely competitive nature of early Greek poetic performances, as well as the latent hostility within epic toward other poetic traditions. Performance contests, such as the Delia (Hes. fr.357 M-W), those at Sikyon (Hdt. 5.67.1), and both the Panathenaia and Dionysia at Athens, suggest that the stakes of such contests were successful and widely-accepted narrative representations of an alternate reality in a world where *poleis* also competed on the level of institutional legitimacy and sovereignty. *Musikoi agones* were therefore an outlet for the same anxieties that underpinned athletic and equestrian contests (for intra-elite legitimacy) and hoplite *agon* (for inter-*polis* territorial integrity). Rather than resort to a romantic *agonale Geist* we can instead explain the formation of formal *agones* in the structuring and resolution of conflict in the context of a post-Mycenaean 'crisis of sovereignty', on which see Vernant 1982, 28-38. On funeral contest and its relationship to legitimate succession, see chapter 4 above.

115 On the Homeric notion of the 'past', see in general Ford 1992, 49-56, Taplin 1992, 83-109 and Bakker 1997. The latter especially treats the role of epic deixis in

In an attempt to map the territory of performance relations, I will introduce a notation, but one that can only hope to represent the situation in a crude and approximate way. In a ritually constituted community the role of *Sender* in the communication situation is designated here as A_1, and the *Receiver* designated A_2. The complex 'enunciating subject + the utterance' is an intermediary between the social reality of the group – 'the world of the utterance' – understood implicitly as the *Sender/sponsor* of the communication situation (A_1), and *the same group*, which explicitly imagines itself as the audience of the poet, that is, as the *Receivers* of the communication situation (A_2). On the one hand, A_1 designates the audience in its role as the *active* ideological guarantor or sponsor of content: a complex of representational expectations, concerns, and anxieties. This can also be expanded to refer to a community which demands occasions not only for ritualized self-representation but also as environments to articulate and resolve social crises. On the other hand, A_2 designates the audience as *passive* recipients of divine knowledge about a world that is differentiated from that of the present occasion but one which they nevertheless recognize. In their *misrecognized* role (A_1) the audience demand that the content of song address their collective congregational anxieties; in their *recognized* role (A_2), it expects the experience of that content to be an induction into a mystery.

One can also posit parallel roles for the performer. In the first instance, the singer is the surrogate of A_1, which we can designate B_1: the poet's utterance is authorized by the audience's *active* delegation of his social function to speak effectively. From the perspective of the second role (A_2), the poetics of performance mark him as a *prophetes*, that is, as one who speaks the truth but only through *passive* contact with unseen powers of memory (B_2). This doubling of the audience's identity, in the same body both Sender/sponsor (A_1) and Receiver (A_2), can only succeed if this double combination is narrativized, via the construction of a mediating enunciator ('I'), within the spatio-temporal dimensions of the song itself. Narrativization is essential if A_2 is to avoid recognizing itself as the source of the social production of meaning (A_1). Recognition of itself as A_1 would fatally expose the audience to the arbitrariness of a community's self-representations by wrenching beliefs from their practical relation to the natural world, a process Bourdieu, following Max Weber, describes as 'disenchantment' (*Entzauberung*).

The installation of the enunciating subject 'I' can thus be understood as clearing a physical space of transformation that enables A_2 to *misrecognize* that the ultimate source of its significant images is itself (A_1).[116] In this 'communication situation', misrecognition permits the subject to be praised for summoning events of long ago miraculously *appropriate* to the occasion into the here-and-now. This praise is a declaration of the felicitous presence

summoning the past into the present. On the relationship between the Homeric past and early Greek historiography, see especially Strasburger 1982, 1058-97.

[116] On the function of the narrator's 'I', see Nagy 1997, 177-89.

of the past at the occasion itself: "You sing as one who was himself present or in the audience of another who was" (ὥς τέ που ἢ αὐτὸς παρεὼν ἢ ἄλλου ἀκούσας, *Od.* 8.491). In fact, through misrecognition, what is being praised is the legitimation of the present world of the occasion as though it were the 'world in the utterance'.[117] The successful installation of a fictitious but necessary distance between A_1 and A_2 in the form of the subject who says 'I' ensures the reality of these invocations.

At the same time, we must tread carefully: when we expose this delegation of the poet to install an enunciating subject, it collapses the putative distance between the uttered enunciation and the communication situation, stripping the enunciation of its autonomy from the occasion, and disenchanting the fictions that invest it with authority. Put another way, the autonomy of the 'world *of* the utterance' (communication situation) from the 'world *in* the utterance' corresponds to an artificial distinction we impose, a distinction between an objective social reality and an imagined representation. This autonomy is experienced but it cannot be acknowledged by participants at the occasion of performance. It must be repressed in order to preserve the coherence of a symbolic universe. In this way, the enunciating subject materializes as an embodied site at which these two potentially different contexts are bound together in a different relationship, one of simultaneous *forgetting and remembering*. The undeclarable and fatal relation of *dependence* and *equivalence*, where A_1 equals A_2, which is implicit in the communication situation, is reconstituted in the uttered enunciation as an explicitly declared relationship of *autonomy* and *difference*. Thus the identities 'I' and 'we' (*narrator/narratee*) are rendered qualitatively different from 'you' (the goddess). The apparent 'autonomy' of these relations in the communication situation with respect to those of the uttered enunciation are thereby internalized in the enunciating subject as a 'bodily' strategy which effaces the relations of the occasion in the act of performance. This is the strategy found, for example, in the enunciation which opens the *Catalogue of Ships*, *Il.* 2.484-6.[118]

Poetic performance is therefore able to 're-presence' other epochs by binding an invoked past to its present occasion.[119] On performance occasions, a *pact* exists between all the actors contributing to the event. Present, past and future are assembled into an order presided over in the here-and-now by a meditating subject whose words and gestures bring divine forces into play. Narrative content delivered on these occasions does not refer to an autonomous reality for meaning, much to the chagrin of historians. The 'truth' of a sung past unfolds from the enactment of narrative within this 'pact of its occasion'. The role of the singer, from Homer to Simonides, is to prompt the daughters of Memory to assist in telling the "things that were aforetime" (τὰ πρὸ τ' ἐόντα). During the song the Muses hold

[117] On the *ainos* and its function, see Nagy 1990a, 146-98.
[118] Compare also García's discussion 2002, 49-50.
[119] See Crieelard 2002, 239-95 and Bakker 2008.

off oblivion by summoning the past into the audience's presence and making it happen once more. Again, to sing "as though one had been there or heard it from one who was" (*Od.* 8.491) is not praise for fidelity to some independently real version of events, but a statement that the poet properly fulfilled his role in causing "being-there-then" to become a property of "being-here-now". Odysseus' praise, as his language suggests, is properly understood in this way, that Demodokos has successfully intertwined his proximity to the past, delegated by the group, with the 'now' of the occasion (αὐτὸς παρεὼν . . . "as though you were *present*"), or had once been present in the audience of another who had done so (. . . ἢ ἄλλου ἀκούσας). The poet, ironically, is thus never very far from being the most important member *of the audience*, the one who transposes its will, expectations and social dilemmas into the register of a heroic past. The poet's memory, in fact a storehouse of real or potential ethico-political scenarios, is hypostatized in the Muses, who represent an immortal and total intimacy with all things past, reducing everyone else, including all potential performers and eyewitnesses, to the role of audience (*Il.* 2.485-6). The occasion looks to the poet to realize the truth of its own *eventfulness* in performance. Without his narrative the event of its historical present can not be counted to have occurred at all.[120]

To forget and to remember: the pact of occasion

The enunciating subject of the epic occasion is therefore *bodily incarnated* as the site of a simultaneous *forgetting and remembering* which narrativizes the implicit pact among participants to surrender the identity of their relations (A_1/A_2), thus confirming their tacit acceptance of the reality of the 'actors of the enunciation'. In its authorization of the poet's utterance, sponsor/audience (A_1/A_2) 'forget' their authorization of the occasion via their tacit acceptance of the enunciating subject's relationship with the goddess as the source of the enunciation and its authority. This entails, in the same instant, *forgetting the fact of authorization* for the duration of the utterance and permits the 'world in the utterance' to be experienced as independently real.[121]

In the performance of our social practices Bourdieu argues that:

> one cannot both believe *p* and believe that the belief that *p* stems from a decision to believe *p*; if the decision to believe *p* is to be carried out successfully, it must obliterate itself from the memory of the believer.[122]

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[120] Pind. *Nem.*7.12-13 and 61f. give both a general and specific example of this truth.

[121] These terms are used especially because they correspond to the poetics of performance in early Greece, on which see Detienne 1996, ch.2 and Vernant 2006, 115-38. They also illustrate that what for us is a 'poetics' is for participants a faithful account of their real experience of ritual. On the idea of *forgetting* as a necessary psychic operation in order for the present to be lived meaningfully, see Nietzsche *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Treatise 2, section 1.

[122] Bourdieu 1990, 49. These insights are drawn from Williams 1973, 136-50 on the impossible coincidence of belief and a decision to believe. See also Bourdieu 1990, 81: "the sense of the game is at once the realization of the theory of the game and its negation *qua* theory."

On the occasion of epic performance the enunciating subject, 'I', sublimates the actual social conditions of the production of meaning. The participant community self-represents unknowingly and re-expresses its representations as a drama on the enunciative level. This entails a forgetting of the *hinc et nunc* (whose trace is detected via deictic 'shifting-out') and a remembering of "that time when . . ." through divine assistance (a 'shifting-in' of the utterance, e.g. *Il.* 1.6).[123]

The circumstances underlying this misrecognised production of meaning are already inscribed in a cosmic genealogy which dramatizes poetic authorization as the intervention of religious powers. *Mousa*, the psychological function of poetic recall, is the daughter of Zeus and Mnemosyne, a genealogical articulation of the origins of efficacious speech. Her descent derives from a union between sovereign authority and memory as religious powers.[124] The presence of the Muse effaces all the underlying conditions of the occasion; she administers the forgetting of the present and thus clears the stage for the enunciating subject to recall with authority the fame of the gods or men of old. In this we can observe a hypostasis of the misrecogniton necessary for the proper ground of any *tradition*: for each performance to be successful it must enter into a dialectic with all prior performances and supplant them. This disavowal, however, cannot be explicit if any meaningful link with preexisting story paths is to be maintained. Each song must become paradoxically the newest instance of a timeless sequence, the one in itself most worthy of its own fame (ἐπικλείουσι, *Od.* 1.351). This very quality of being the 'most recent song' (ἀοιδὴν . . . ἥ τις νεωτάτη, *Od.* 1.351-2) nevertheless overcomes any antagonism with tradition by means of the sovereign function exercised by the Muse. The goddess 'cancels the debt' and in so doing transforms an act of usurpation and betrayal (*traditio*) into an act of succession, one that confers on the subject legitimate succession to the content (*traditio*). The figure is made more apt by repeating our earlier observations on the meanings of the verb ἀναιρέω, which approximates the meaning of *aufheben* in Hegelian usage. On the one hand, to 'take up' can refer to the cancellation of debts (ὅρους ἀνεῖλον, Solon fr.36.6 West); on the other, it denotes the transformation of a symbolic status via correctly performed ritual gestures and the affirmation of the god, as with social identities like the heir, the victor or the city-founder. The Muse wipes the slate, much as death prepares the ground for a new generation, by being invoked in a sovereign role. In this respect we can repeat Detienne's seminal observation about song's

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[123] For the operation of these narratological strategies, see Bakker 1997, and in general Bakker 2005, 71-91 and de Jong 1987. See also Bourdieu 1990, 56.

[124] Clearly stated, for instance, in Pindar *Paian* 6.50-8. On memory in early Greek thought, see Vernant 2006, 115-38. The Muse also assists *basileis* in making *effective* judgments and much of what is proposed here could be applied to early Greek juridical performances.

oracular effectiveness. The Muse, paired with Apollo, god of prophecy, extends sovereignty to speech causing the utterance to become part of the fabric of experienced reality, a felicitous 'event'. The duality of tradition, in which any act of transmission always has the potential to be a violent usurpation, is resolved by witnessing the delegated spokesman confer what amounts to the sovereignty of *the occasion itself* on the song he is about to sing.

The Olympian Muses are therefore crucial 'others', inscrutable, ever-present and omniscient deities who "know everything" (*Il.* 2.485). Insofar as their other-worldly speech "brings about what it utters", like the Bee-Women of the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* (κραίνουσιν ἕκαστα, 559), the contribution of Olympian Muses guarantees the total realization of their representations in the production of meaning.[125] The Muse is thus understood as a psycho-sociological entity that functions as the double or the *surrogate* of the Sender (A_1).[126] As a religious power presiding over both memory and oblivion, including the 'forgetting' of occasion, the acceptance of the Muse is a precondition of the effectiveness of epic remembering. The genealogies of omniscient deities are characteristic of the way archaic communities dramatize the sources of poetic authority as the intervention of unseen powers whose logic escapes human interpretation. The symbolic character of the archaic world springs from this double meaning, where the inexplicability of any event in the here-and-now is shadowed by a superabundance of meaning accessible only to the poet. This social function is vouchsafed by the progeny issuing from a union between Zeus and Mnemosyne, which genealogizes poetic enunciation by linking authorization with remembering. Everything takes place as if the poet's utterance was not authorized by the occasion, but rather hidden away, forgotten and then recalled via the agency of the one who helps men to see.[127] Nevertheless, barely concealed behind the imperative ἄειδε, "sing!" (*Il.* 1.1), lies the inaugurating injunction of the occasion, the narrator ('I') and narratee ('we') grouped together as one, the trace of the subject and its audience cast as initiands waiting to be helped to know, to call to mind what was previously only ever heard as a rumour, but never truly *known*:

> ἔσπετε νῦν **μοι**, Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι –
> **ὑμεις** γὰρ θεαί ἐστε, πάρεστέ τε, ἴστέ τε πάντα,
> **ἡμεις** δὲ κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν . . .
>
> *Il.* 2.484-6

> Tell *me* on this occasion, Muses who have Olympian houses –
> for *you* are goddesses, you are present and know all things,
> while *we* hear only the rumour but know nothing . . ."
> [. . . *we are only the audience of epic* (A_2)
> *and authorize no transmission of knowledge* (i.e. we deny being A_1)]

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125 On the Bee-Women, see Detienne 1996, 54, 73, Scheinberg 1979, Larson 1995 and Vergados 2013, 566-70. On the importance of the semantic field of κραίνω, see Benveniste 1973, 327-33.

126 So Calame 1995a, 40 and Bakker 1993, 14-5.

127 Compare Simonides' formulation in the 'Plataia Ode', fr.11 West, 21.

The grammatical ambiguity of the imperatival subject in the *Iliad's* first line obscures an authorization that *precedes* the summons of the goddess to song, disclosing the ritual mode of the intimacy and complicity between enunciating subject and narratee/audience. Put another way, who has issued the command to sing? For a split second we catch a glimpse of A_1 and its chain of causation. But to experience the vividness of the ritual encounter with the goddesses of memory as part of the texture of the here-and-now requires misrecognition, the trace of which finds its precise location in this injunction that initiates the song. Through Bourdieu's idea of misrecogniton we can add a *practical* dimension to the archaeology of *aletheia*.[128] For the past to take shape as *kleos*, that is, to be made present as epic song, it must be preceded by a forgetfulness of the fact that the poet is delegated by the group to be their agent of self-representation. The figure of an *aoidos*, for example, is an enunciating subject 'made flesh'. This does not necessarily mean that the poet as social persona identifies himself with the one who says 'I';[129] rather, the poet's function is to invoke a ritual utterer, 'I', who *sublates* (*aufheben*) the audience's immediate concerns, anxieties and social realities into a past-made-present (the space of the narrative utterance).[130] *Aletheia* is the product of a calling to mind where the utterance takes place as an *unveiling* (*a-lethē*) of the source of the social production of meaning *but in a different guise*. The ties between occasion and utterance are thus renewed, severed and reattached each time an utterance makes a claim to evoke a symbolic universe constituted in speech.[131]

The Muse is not a figure of an author's imagination but a centripetal point in the collective experience of social reality.[132] The uttered enunciation opens up a real spatio-temporal domain in which concrete actors of the occasion (A_1/A_2) relinquish their identities only to have them recast on the level of the enunciation of song (Muse/singer-audience). This is not to say that there are simple parallels or analogies to be found in the epic utterance; rather, there are many transformations that take place through the initiatory figure of the enunciating subject. What has been illustrated here is perhaps only the most obvious, that the occasion (A_1) collectively authorizes a representation which as audience (A_2) it has tacitly agreed to (mis-)recognize. This takes place only by being able to 'forget' the role of the occasion in making the representation

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128 The central subject of Detienne 1996.

129 Calame discusses this as a later development in relation to Hesiod and other archaic poets who do begin to proclaim their identity by using a signature (*sphragis*), 1996, 25, 49-50.

130 On the grammar and ontology of these points, see Bakker 1997. On *Aufheben* as the central process in Hegel's positive dialectics, see Kojève 1980, 3-30.

131 The architecture of this process is explored by Foley 1991 and 1997. On *aletheia*, see also Nagy's important essay on *sema* and *noesis* 1990b, 209-10 with n.22.

132 That the Muse presides over forgetting and memory equally is indicated by Hes. *Th.* 98-103.

possible. This forgetting is dramatized as the intercession of the sovereign goddess to whose authority A_1 submits. By this gesture all the actors of the occasion are transformed from sponsors who authorize (A_1) into the audience who receives knowledge (A_2). In this manner the *contemporary and historical here-and-now* (the world *of* the utterance) can be fitted 'sensibly' into the world found along the song-paths of the *aoidos*.

As touched upon above, the place occupied by the subject of the enunciation, 'I', is also an analogue of oracular space. Detienne emphasizes the close relationship between poetic and oracular speech, in particular the way the figures of the seer and the poet occupy homologous positions with respect to the type of speech they utter.[133] But the role of the seer and the poet are also homologous because their social function as masters of effective speech derives from the performative magic associated with the occasion of ritual. In the person of the seer and poet lies the corporealization of an authority to realize truths, but not as an occupation defined within an autonomous discipline. Poets do not consciously reflect on the types of action they undertake through the process of classifying and investigation. Theirs is a "practical learning" necessarily "excluded from the universe of objects of thought."[134] The effectiveness of the symbolic relationship between subject and Muse, discussed above, demands as its precondition the total and unreflective immersion of participants in the 'realities' of the ritual. It assumes that the implicit submission of participants to the speaking subject in epic is, paradoxically, what authorizes that subject to speak. The practical experience of a world imbued with symbolic relationships, operating simultaneously and at all levels, can only be sustained by the exclusion of explicit theorization. Any explicit mapping of symbolic relationships in practice (as conducted ironically in our analysis) may approximate the experience of participating agents and comprise a useful model, but will fall well short of approaching actual experience of them as bodily dispositions:

> Practical belief is not a 'state of mind', still less a kind of arbitrary adherence to a set of instituted dogmas and doctrines ('beliefs'), but rather *a state of the body.*[135]

The emergence of an enunciating subject in performative contexts is grounded in the practices of an occasion that

> roots the most fundamental structures of the group in the primary experiences of the body which, as is clearly seen in emotion, *takes metaphors seriously.*[136]

What Bourdieu calls "bodily *hexis*" – the way that the human body objectifies "the arbitrary content of a culture in seemingly innocuous

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133 Detienne 1996, 39-52.
134 Bourdieu 1990, 14. See also Lord 1960, 30-4, especially the elegant formulation at 32.
135 Bourdieu 1990, 68, emphasis added.
136 Bourdieu 1990, 71-2, emphasis added. Compare, for instance, the descriptions of rhapsodic performance given by Plato, *Ion* 534-7.

details of bearing or physical and verbal manners"[137] – is the inscription in the very person of the *aoidos* of all the authority and delegation bestowed upon him by the ritual nature of occasion such that "[t]he constraints of rhythm or metre are internalized at the same time as melody and meaning, without ever being perceived in their own right."[138] The body of the *aoidos* thus becomes the physical site of forgetting and remembering, where all the work of the community to objectify its arbitrary representations of social reality find their focus: "[b]odily *hexis* is political mythology, *em-bodied*, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking."[139] Consequently, our explanations of why epic poets and seers appear to archaic audiences as endowed with the ability to reveal hidden truths cannot be confined to extra-discursive evidence of their authority to do so. Such explanations must first acknowledge the way this authority is incorporated practically as a disposition, an inclination, a gesture – in short, all those "innocuous details" that "tend to transform instituted difference into natural distinction, produc[ing] real effects durably inscribed in the body and in belief."[140]

The poet is therefore a figure in whose person we find the physical site of community misrecogniton. He is a figure authorized to represent truths about the world, a world which is physically embodied as a relationship between a subject and inspired knowledge. Like an oracular site or space, the body of the *aoidos* becomes, so to speak, an 'initiatory location' during the time of the performance, a place of ritual transformation. The metaphor of 'initiation' is not an idle one.[141] Content that is, for example, conveyed through an oracle, an occasion of poetic performance or any similar site of transformation is altered irrevocably by the act. As the intermediary through which the relations of the communication situation are sublimated, the subject of the enunciation, 'I', transforms the obligations to which the poet is subjected at the occasion of performance and legitimates them. One is certainly entitled to view this operation as the reproduction of some authorized ideology ('social manipulation' as Calame puts it) or the expression of a power relation. To do so, however, would be to

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137 Bourdieu 1990, 69.
138 Bourdieu 1990, 74.
139 Bourdieu 1990, 69-70, author's emphasis.
140 Bourdieu 1990, 58.
141 Although by no means an unproblematic one. This has been shown by criticism of the usefulness of the idea of 'initiation' as a paradigmatic ritual process: see the essays in Dodd and Faraone 2003, especially those by Graf 2003 and Lincoln 2003. For this study the idea of initiation is considered very broadly as the passage through any marked space by which groups perform reconfigurations of people or things with respect to identities, meanings or value previously established by being in *ritual circulation*. For example, for a gold band to become a wedding-ring it must occupy and move through a space marked out by specific rules and practices (a marriage ceremony). For it then to cease having this meaning the ring must pass through some other space with its own processes (e.g. cash sale in a pawn shop). The designation of this 'circulation' as initiation must therefore be taken in the widest sense.

ignore or elide the practical scenario in which meaning is founded and the social relations produced are experienced as real. It also does not explain how power can be destabilized by a symbolic transformation wherein a socio-historical reality manifested in a ritual structure vanishes, only to reappear *in the utterance,* like Polykrates' ring miraculously found after having been cast into the sea. Indeed, archaic truth (*aletheia*) entails poetic initiation otherwise the reality of the world would remain mute and inaccessible. Occasions of performance are revealed as *symbolic* environments for the resolution of congregational anxieties, brought about by 'colliding' them (συμβάλλω) within a form of representation that is simultaneously descriptive and prescriptive.

The sea, the land of dreams, the incubatory cave of Trophonios, the person of the poet – these are all sites that transform in an initiatory manner, sites of simultaneous forgetting and remembering. In Pausanias' day a consultant of Trophonios' oracle had to "drink the water of *Lethe*, to forget everything in his mind until then, and then drink the water of *Mnemosyne* (Memory) by which he remembers the sights he sees in his descent . . . [and] when a man comes up from Trophonios the priests take him over again, and sit him on the throne of *Mnemosyne* . . ." (Paus. 9.39.8, 13). These acts of forgetting and remembering do not lend themselves to rational explanation if we are to account for the reality of these dispositions. A rational-instrumental explanation of practices cannot come to grips with the fiction of the drama or the labour of concealment – misrecognition – at work in ritual. Certainly, one who descends into the cave of Trophonios emerges precisely the same (physical, biological, psychological, social) individual as the one who went down. The observation, though rational, is banal from the standpoint of the ritual. Initiatory practices are practices of formal differentiation[142] that serve as a way of *reconstituting the same differently* via the bodily inscription of new identities in specially assigned spaces of transformation. In a world immersed in symbolic reference, successful resignification – that is, the *re-assigning* of different meaning to the same object in, say, adolescent rites of passage, adoptions, votive dedications, gift-exchanges, and so on – demands ritual immersion and the effacement of prior *subjectivity*: "this metamorphosis of its scattered members is equivalent to its death as such, to its annihilation."[143] Hence we find the well-known imagery of death that surrounds initiation and the poetics deployed representing passages from oblivion to realization, darkness into light and so on.

Let us say this again, this time with the approximate notation we have so far adopted: one of the outcomes of the uttered enunciation is $A_1 \neq A_2$. The audience is superficially the same congregation before and after the performance (they are both A), but voluntarily they have divested themselves of their agency and

[142] A point made by J.Z. Smith, cited by Bell 1992, 102.
[143] Baudrillard 1993, 199.

will-to-knowledge. This self-sacrifice of congregational *power* permits the experience of the performance to be initiatory and transforming. In turn, meanings are prevented from being tautologies that banally reflect sameness, but instead are catalyzed by the symbolic reconstitution that accompanies the shared consumption of the song, the very song triggered by the group's surrender of control. This essential point is made by Jean Baudrillard in his critique of Saussure's discussion of 'the poetic', which prefaces Baudrillard's deconstruction of the discourse of linguistics.[144] Baudrillard points out that linguistic analysis always seeks the reconstitution of the theme of poetry via interpretation, but overlooks how poetry *succeeds* only when its themes are dismembered, diffused and volatilized through poetic consumption.[145] For Baudrillard, an analogue for the operation of poetic language is ritual transformation:

> [t]he name of God, torn limb from limb, dispersed into its phonemic elements as the signifier, is put to death, haunts the poem and rearticulates it in the rhythm of its fragments, without ever being reconstituted in it as such.[146]

For Baudrillard, poetic meaning cannot be redeemed or recuperated by interpretation because poetry is the 'sacrificial' form taken by language, that is, its meaning is discharged by dismemberment rather than reconstitution. Meaning can no more be reconstituted than can the ox after its ritual murder:

> [t]he symbolic act is never in this 'return', in this retotalization that follows alienation, in this resurrection of an identity; on the contrary, it is always in the volatilization of the name, the signifier, in the *extermination of the term*, disappearance with no return.[147]

In modern linguistics, 'meaning' (like 'value' in political economy) is disclosed and extracted but ultimately coalesces *outside* the exchange of language that takes place in poetry or song. In Baudrillard's thought, 'meaning' is *residual*, the trace or 'remainder' left over in the wake of the poetic encounter or event. The solution is to rethink 'the poetic' in terms of *symbolic exchange*:

> [t]he poetic recreates the situation of primitive societies in linguistic material: *a restricted corpus of objects whose uninterrupted circulation in the gift-exchange creates an inexhaustible wealth, a feast of exchange*. Assessed by their volume or their value, primitive goods end up in absolute penury. Tirelessly consumed in feasting and exchange, they recount, through their minimal volume and number, the 'maximal energy of signs', of which Nietzsche spoke.[148]

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144 Baudrillard 1993, 195-213.

145 For a similar criticism directed at narratology, see Lynn-George 1994, 241-2.

146 Baudrillard 1993, 199.

147 Baudrillard 1993, 200. By describing art as the dismemberment of identities which challenges the 'identity relation' sought by enlightened reason, Baudrillard discloses his affinity with the aesthetics of Adorno, on which see in general the excellent introduction in Jarvis 1998, 148-92.

148 Baudrillard 1993, 203-4, emphasis added.

In rational analysis the attempt to recover original meaning reduces the poetic to a *supplement*, "a detour in the process of recognition".[149] For Baudrillard, however, the intensity of the poetic "never consists in the repetition of an identity, but in *the destruction of an identity*".[150] This destruction and dispersal of identity in poetic language described by Baudrillard further nuances the transformative properties of the occasion of poetic performance suggested above.

The ritual institution of the enunciating subject in epic performance can therefore be conceived as the foundation of an initiatory space.[151] The subject operates as a double or ritual surrogate of the enunciatee, an identity dramatized at a distance from the divine source of the utterance: '*we* only hear and know nothing . . . but *you* . . .' Although implicitly authorized by the audience the subject must be autonomous in relation to the audience. This doubling within the enunciating subject is experienced as the physical embodiment of a prophetic link to an objective source of meaning. For the duration of the performance – the ritual time of the enunciating subject – the entire *Weltanschauung* of the ritual community is suspended as though in the liminal space of initiation, as the enunciating subject conducts the 'world *of* the utterance' on a *katabasis* through the 'world *in* the utterance'. The meaning of the utterance – the song itself – stands in relation to its function as an alternate super-charged reality interpolated in the here-and-now. The utterance is a symbolic transformation of reality, the product of immersion since it "comes up" from the other world inhabited by the Muses, after having "gone down" at a time now long forgotten.[152] Hence the experience of the utterance by the audience is of something *recalled*, resembling something vaguely heard and yet *other* to the world inhabited by the participants of the occasion. Following Foley and Bakker, it is possible to see the early Greek epic tradition in the same way. Occasion is not only the site of transformation for the participants, but also for the song itself. Participants are fully aware that the present song belongs to the same tradition and form as others widely performed and well-known. But, at this particular moment, they are conscious of its differentiation from these other performances even though they misrecognize the role played by *this* occasion in authorizing the difference. The success of the song will depend on how well it dovetails with what I have been calling the 'socio-historical will-to-representation'.[153]

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149 Baudrillard 1993, 207.

150 Baudrillard 1993, 208.

151 For a similar proposal in relation to early Greek poetic performance, see Johnston's important essay (Johnston 2002) on the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* and the recent introduction to its commentary, Vergados 2013, 4-25.

152 The expression is taken from Louis Gernet's description of the way precious objects are transformed into talismans in Greek mythical thought: "tour à tour ils y descendent et ils en proviennent" 1968, 155.

153 Foley 1991 and Bakker 1997. See also especially Johnston 2002.

The complex 'enunciating-subject-plus-utterance' initiates a vision of the world by being the site of the transformation of symbolic reality and a ritual suspension of human time. The poet's voice seduces the audience into accepting the duality of this vision of the world through its simultaneous recognition and misrecognition. Experienced as the remembering of something forgotten, the poetic utterance is able to embody a universe of realizable possibilities, to play a central role in social praxis and foreshadow an idealist concept of the origins of knowledge.[154] To recast Baudrillard's expression quoted above: put to death as the source of the authority to speak, the occasion of performance, and especially the socio-historical imperatives that constitute it as such in its identity, haunt the poem in crises and tensions always threatening to spill back over into the occasion of hero-cult, without ever making explicit the complicity between their worlds.

These relationships link the sociological analysis provided by Bourdieu to the structuralist model offered by Detienne, the semiological model of Calame, as well as a linguistic one, such as that offered by Egbert Bakker. Bakker observes that

> [u]nlike written fiction, the activity of the performer does not draw the audience into the past; rather, the past is, conversely, drawn into the present through the nonfictional activity of the performer. *However, it never fills the present entirely*; just as in other rituals and performances, such as theater, *the performer and the public remain aware of a distance between themselves and the event*, no matter how vividly it is represented or with how much abandonment one participates in it [155]

Bourdieu's concept of misrecognition clarifies the means by which participants, despite the complexity of their involvement, maintain this distance between performed event and the occasion in epic production. Dramatic distance is an authentic relation that results from the necessary complicity of the actors of the occasion in misrecognizing their role in authorizing the utterance and its content. Although the events portrayed are perceived as remote from the world of the epic occasion the very possibility of participation betrays just how intensely the epic performance is shaped by audience demand and expectations. That the 'past' [the 'world *in* the utterance'] "never fills the present [the "world *of* the utterance"] entirely", is, from this perspective, precisely the effect of the *labour of concealment* described above. The will-to-representation, which binds the occasion together, suffusing the utterance and misrecognised by the audience, is sublimated in this way in order to reappear as an eventful distillation of the socio-historical concerns that animate the occasion of performance.

As a result of this sociological explanation, the concept of 'epic distance', which has often been considered a purely stylistic device, can be understood as a crucial tactic by which a society confronts its socio-

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[154] On this last point see Finkelberg 1998, an important study of the transition from a "poetics of truth" to a "poetics of fiction."

[155] Bakker 1997, 24-5, emphasis added.

historical present via performance. Foley has argued that "performance is the enabling event and tradition is the enabling referent."[156] This is right, but only so long as we understand what, in turn, 'enables' the event of performance and tradition respectively. It has been argued here that what enables the event is not the performance but the misrecognized delegation that authorizes performance. Furthermore, the enabling referent is not 'tradition' but the occasion and its motive, which demand content which is 'traditional', that is, caught up in a form that establishes the distance and autonomy of the utterance from the occasion itself. This also, perhaps more importantly, makes greater sense from the perspective of ritual for which the idea of a referent is fundamentally an anathema. By emphasizing the 'eventfulness' of performance, early Greek literature is opened up to historical analysis without reducing it to simple instances of ideology.

The utterance as a ritual narrative

Characterizing the utterance of the enunciating subject as a ritual practice requires reflection on the role of the body in ritual. This is because the oral performance, when envisaged in its entirety, is ritually *embodied*, that is, the occasion is corporealized via the bodies of participants. In addition, because ritual forms of representation are both prescriptive as well as reflective, ritual practice provides a useful guide in exploring the social functions of epic.[157]

Drawing upon Bourdieu, Catherine Bell argues that as a social strategy ritualization proceeds via the production of ritualized bodies. Such bodies are simultaneously social and physical, and invested with practical mastery.[158] Ritualized bodies incorporate cultural practices via bodily habits that have been naturalized within ritually structured environments. Throughout its course, ritual imprints upon physical bodies "schemes of privileged oppositions" described by Bell as:

> a circular process that tends to be misrecognized, if it is perceived at all, as values and experiences impressed upon the person and community from sources of power and order beyond it. Through the orchestration in time of loose but strategically organized oppositions, in which a few oppositions quietly come to dominate others, *the social body internalizes the principles of the environment being delineated*. Inscribed within the social body, these principles enable the ritualized person *to generate in turn strategic schemes that can appropriate and dominate other sociocultural situations*."[159]

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156 Foley 1997, 68.

157 For what might be regarded as a paradigm for approaching a performed oral narrative (*Beowulf*) as world-building ("cosmoplastic") ritual, see Niles 1998, 1999. Much of what follows intersects the line of thought adopted in chapters 3 and 4 of *Homo Narrans* (Niles 1999). See also Turner 1974, 1980 and White 1980.

158 Bell 1992. For other approaches to ritual, see Goody 1961, Berger 1969, Smith 1982, 1987, Kertzer 1991, Bloch 1992, Morris 1993, Pals 1996, and Rappaport 1999.

159 Bell 1992, 99, emphasis added.

Bodily action, according to Bell, does not simply communicate a set of relations but rather puts them into play as proper ways to act that are habituated to appear as if they were natural responses. Every gesture is a re-inscription of a ritual order that succeeds precisely because it defies conscious reflection of its own strategies. This is why Bourdieu and Bell see ritual environments as both 'structured' (by bodies) and 'structuring' (of bodies).

The broader social and cultural context unites many ritual environments raising issues concerning the relationship between the actions of ritualized bodies in ritual environments, as Bell says:

> The relationship between any instance of ritualization and its immediate social and historical situation is . . . *not one of reflected content but of a play of forms*. Indeed, ritualization is the strategic manipulation of 'context' in the very act of reproducing it.[160]

This 'play of forms' is expressed in ritualization by strategies of *reference*. Cultural oppositions are given bodily expression as schemes (for example, up-down, inside-outside, male-female, and so on). Within the ritualized environment these schemes are organized into hierarchical relations. However, Bell argues that these hierarchies are by no means fixed by rituals themselves. The process of integrating cultural assumptions into bodily dispositions (i.e. objectification) involves

> the generation of a loosely integrated whole in which each element 'defers' to another in an endlessly circular chain of reference.[161]

Ritual, therefore, only suggests reference without ever making any one reference explicit or final. In fact, oppositions and hierarchies are 'incorporated' so that ritual experiences are naturalized without ever having to be spelled out. For instance, the common injunction to 'stand up straight!' evokes a universe of marked oppositions (straight-bent, active-lazy, strong-weak, male-female, right-wrong, and so on) without ever appearing to be more than a passing statement containing innocuous details. Yet, none of these oppositions is ever made explicit or treated as necessarily privileged. Each time they are uttered, Bell claims, their injunction invokes an "endlessly, self-deferring circularity" in which one set of oppositions calls to mind another, setting off a chain reaction of reference throughout an entire series of cultural assumptions (e.g. standing-sitting, up-down, straight-crooked, healthy-sick, proper-improper, etc.).

These examples illustrate the 'embodied' nature of *practical logic*, which does not entail the exercise of explicit belief as opposed to non-belief. Rather, as Bourdieu argues, practical logic entails

> an immediate adherence, a doxical submission to the injunctions of the world which is achieved when the mental structures of the one to whom the injunction is addressed are in accordance with the structures inscribed in the injunction addressed to him. In this case, one says that it went without saying, that there was nothing else to do.[162]

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[160] Bell 1992, 100, emphasis added.
[161] Bell 1992, 101.
[162] Bourdieu 1998, 103.

One's practical mastery and valuation of these internalized dispositions in the world define *symbolic capital*: the strategic deployment of that 'sense of the game' in which the social rules are the unexpressed collective expectations of a community of ritualized persons. Bell continues:

> it is by means of these operations that ordinary physical movements generate homologies and hierarchies among diverse levels and areas of experience, setting up relations among symbols, values and social categories.[163]

The body, then, is the site of the ritual transformation of representation into reality. The 'embodiment' of actions such as speech, gestures and responses accord with what 'feels' naturally appropriate on each occasion: "ritual dynamics afford an experience of 'order' as well as the 'fit' between this taxonomic order and the real world of experience."[164] The body objectifies the symbolic universe of ritual and makes all arbitrary cultural phenomena into 'virtues of necessity'.

Going further than Bourdieu, Bell places emphasis on the ambiguity of reference within ritual. Turning to Derrida's critique of binary oppositions, she argues that the expression of difference between the conventional signifier and the signified (referred to by Derrida as *différance*) is not rigid but typically characterized by a *deferral* of meaning (also *différance*). Meaning, in other words, is never guaranteed and is always endlessly dispersed throughout a potentially infinite number of floating signifiers.[165] It may therefore be quite right to say that strategies of ritualization aim to create ritualized bodies as the products and producers of ritualized environments. But these strategies are unable to escape the 'shiftiness' of meaning, the mushrooming of other, potentially subversive, meanings alongside those privileged hierarchies of reference which strategies of socialization strive to corporealize in the bodies of agents. However, far from being a problem for ritual to overcome, this "orchestrated deferral of signification" is one of ritual's tactics in maintaining its 'fit' between its enactment and that of social reality:

> [o]ne is never confronted with 'the meaning' to accept or reject; one is always led into a redundant, circular and rhetorical universe of values and terms whose significance keeps flowing into other values and terms.[166]

From this perspective, the question of the *function* of ritual is deliberately and indefinitely eluded or postponed. Any attempt to find in ritualized practices a "dialectic of resolution", whereby ritual reconciles social contradictions via a representational dialectic between the 'world in the ritual' and the extra-ritual social context, are likely to be confounded by the strategies of reference within ritual itself. Bourdieu's analysis takes a similar approach. Even though it

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[163] Bell 1992, 104.
[164] ibid.
[165] The concept is developed in Derrida 1982, 3-27.
[166] Bell 1992, 106.

makes perfect *sense*, he says, ritual in fact has no meaning at all.[167] Thus, the injunction to 'stand up straight!' *makes sense* without needing to serve any overt function within its own world of incorporated oppositions and hierarchies. At the same time, the possibility of *différance* ensures that injunctions of this kind can never *absolutely* succeed in impressing upon its addressee all the oppositions and hierarchies which underlie it symbolically. The resultant semiological elasticity of *différance* leaves room for dissent, rejection, or disenchantment, thus enabling ritual to function just as effectively as a *mode of change* as an *instrument of tradition*. Bell therefore argues that

> the interaction of body and environment involves a *deferral of signification* that is not completed or resolved even in the emergence of the ritualized agent. On the contrary, *the process of signification is deferred beyond the rite itself, into the world at large*. Through the production of series of oppositions and the orchestration of these series into dominant and latent schemes, ritualization does not *resolve* a social contradiction. *Rather it catches up into itself all the experienced and conventional conflicts and oppositions of social life, juxtaposing and homologizing them into a loose and provisional systematicity*."[168]

Ritual bodies do not 'interpret' the practices within which they are formed and act, instead they carry their meanings into other contexts deferring the activation of their meaning until these encounters. In order to remain 'meaningful', ritual strategies build ambiguities of symbolic meaning into their very structures, putting at the disposal of social agents their performative magic, their symbolic alchemy, transformations and translations. But, as Bell suggests, it is not the function of ritual to resolve social dilemmas. She continues,

> [p]eople do not take a social problem to ritual for a solution. People generate *a ritualized environment that acts to shift the very status and nature of the problem into terms that are endlessly retranslated in strings of deferred schemes*. The multiplication and orchestration of such schemes do not produce a resolution; rather, they afford *a translation of immediate concerns into the dominant terms of the ritual*. The orchestration of schemes implies a resolution without ever defining one."[169]

Ritual can only succeed, however, by diverting its attention away from the strategies it uses. It reframes social problems and contradictions by posing them as the goals of performance and transforms them through ritual immersion. But ritual practice represses its overt function in this regard unaware of its simultaneous construction and transformation of the problematic in the act of resolving it. In responding to a social situation, rituals seem, as though by some other-worldly transformation, to find a 'match', a sensible correspondence in ritual gestures which harmonize with pertinent and localized collective expectations. Bell formulates this as what it is that ritualization does and does not *see*:

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[167] See p.238 above.
[168] Bell 1992, 105-6, emphasis added.
[169] Bell 1992, 106, emphasis added.

> [r]itualization sees its end, the rectification of a problematic. *It does not see what it does in the process of realizing this end, its transformation of the problematic itself.* And yet what ritualization does is actually quite simple: it temporally structures a space-time environment through a series of physical movements . . . thereby producing an arena which, by its molding of the actors, *both validates and extends the schemes they are internalizing.* Indeed, in seeing itself as responding to an environment, ritualization interprets its own schemes as impressed upon the actors from a more authoritative source, usually from well beyond the immediate human community itself.[170]

What ritualization prevents itself from seeing, or turns a blind eye to, is that its symbolic reconstitution of social and cultural phenomena into specifically ritual phenomena has a legitimating effect upon participants which prevents fortuitous and adverse phenomena from seeming entirely arbitrary. Ritual is at its most effective in response to crisis and quite often incorporates reflexive meta-ritual that serves an apotropaic function.[171] Thus ritualization helps avoid what Bourdieu, following Weber and Adorno, refers to as *disenchantment* (*Entzauberung*). The accession to ritual practice by participants is not an act of willful blindness (or "bad faith" as Bourdieu puts it)[172] in relation to the strategies of power in the ritual (even though power has a role for ritual to play). It is rather that the complicity of participants in ritual practice is the vital ingredient in a recipe for an ordered and meaningful experience of reality. The compelling force of ritual artifice and *the poetic performance understood as a ritual environment* lies in the amount of labour expended on the ancillary gestures and "innocuous detail" that ground the ritual act as an instance of reality.[173] This detail enables rituals to 'fit naturally' with other domains of lived experience. Ritual enlists its participants as co-conspirators in this pact and co-opts them as witnesses to the seamless match between the cultural universe of the ritual environment and that of the extra-ritual world.

Indeed, since socio-cultural reality is itself built from a plurality of daily ritualized events, we can see that the efficacy of ritual derives from its central role in the construction of reality. The broader social frame of reference (the so-called 'real world') is no more able to lay a claim to objectivity than that of ritual; on the contrary, the reality of ritualized environments enables participants in ritual to feel more securely grounded in authentic social and cosmic relationships. As a result, ritual and reality are enmeshed in a circular relationship of reference. Ritual both refers to and transforms social reality in one and the same action. In our terms, experience of the reality of ritual *mirrors* the reality of the world-at-large.

These perspectives question the viability of using literary terms such as 'fiction' and 'non-fiction' for the interpretation of the epic utterance. They also cause us to withdraw from insisting on the

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170 Bell 1992, 110, emphasis added.

171 For example, the juxtaposition of the perversion of sacrifice in tragic performance with the proper conduct of the festival at the Dionysia.

172 Bourdieu 1990, 50-1.

173 See, for example, Goldhill 1987.

impermeability of the boundary that separates the 'world *in* the utterance' from the 'world *of* the utterance'. The emergence of a criticism of poetry in the Classical period ended up by imposing precisely this boundary, extracting from the performance occasion the figure of the poet as artisan personally responsible for an (ultimately imperfect and suspect) mimesis of reality. The world ceases to be produced in the ritual of performance and begins to be autonomized as 'reality' to which a different intellectual relationship must be developed. This is the project of Plato and Aristotle, even though both have very different evaluations of poetry's worth. Poetry is henceforth doomed to be the *remainder*, the residue left over after the invention of 'reality' at the end of the 6th century.[174] It is more helpful to regard the relationship between epic representation and the epic performance occasion as a *meta-ritual* one wherein the performance is dialogic and, as Bell says, "catches up into itself all the experienced and conventional conflicts and oppositions of social life, juxtaposing and homologizing them into a loose and provisional systematicity."[175]

For these reasons a traditional poetics alone cannot explain why ritualized action precipitates and catalyzes reality and consequently why epic poetry is able to be regarded as *historical* evidence. Such an explanation would first have to make clear that a poetics is also an articulation of *real* relationships (just as mathematics, for instance, is a poetics of physics) and that to regard the epic poet, for example, as the *prophetes* of the Muse is not a literary conceit but a ritual truth. The epic utterance and its representations are never more a part of the fabric of reality than in the context of performance.[176]

How then are these relationships made into truths via ritual? Bell notes the frustration apparent in Maurice Bloch's similar question: "How does ritual do what we say it does?" But this question is too general. Different strategies of ritual present themselves under different circumstances and it is a matter of practical mastery for one to know when and why one path is more suited than another. So Bell asks instead a different question: "How is it that *ritual* activities are seen or judged to be the appropriate thing to do?" or, *mutatis mutandis*, how is it that the form and content of epic poems are judged (historically) apposite to the wider occasion of their performance?[177] Ritual, Bell says, succeeds by generating bodies whose dispositions have been nuanced by the structured and structuring properties of the rite. Within the rite, an endless symbolic exchange of references takes place between ritual environment and extra-ritual social context, which ritual bodies see

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[174] The (ongoing) attempt, begun in the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, to be liberated from the subjectivity of the deritualized image is examined by (among many others) Finkelberg 1998, 1-33, especially at 19ff., Ford 2002, Porter 2010 and Halliwell 2011.

[175] Bell, 1992, 106.

[176] This is the essential insight offered by Bakker's concept of 'activation': 1993, 10-18.

[177] Bell 1992, 115, author's emphasis.

not as circular or as self-authorizing but experience as the dovetailing of rite with collective social and cultural expectation – that is, the rite is 'meaningful' rather than has an exclusive meaning. Whether ritualization is the appropriate strategy to adopt depends, Bell suggests, on the nature of the power relations involved. When claims to power are indirect (that is, not solely founded on direct physical or economic compulsion), such claims require symbolic mediation. For any hegemonic order to be redeemed on a personal or social level, one would have to experience that order as part of the 'fit' which only ritualized environments can produce. As the relations of power shift, so ritual strategies shift with them. Ritualized environments are therefore not only the sites of the articulation and transformation of reality but also spaces within which *different visions of reality* contest in the hope of becoming symbolically dominant. A practical mastery of ritual is therefore *the sense of knowing how to immerse oneself in ritual in order to acquire its stakes*. Those stakes are the meaningful production of social reality as experienced 'everydayness' and the accumulated ritual power of symbolic capital.

Understanding the nature of these stakes in relation to the *Iliad* has been a goal in this study. Epic audiences' understanding of their world is mediated through ritual such that their *responses*, or 'counter-utterances', are suffused by "socially constituted schemes that organize perception."[178] Nevertheless, ritual is not predicated rigidly on these conditions. Instead, it defines those conditions in the act of expressing them through ritual practice. In the process of expressing a set of problems and narrating a pattern of responses to them, the performance of the epic utterance reacts to objective conditions that can only be perceived in the first instance via the ritual act of enunciation. The poet is not a problem-solver, but it is possible to say that the environment of the utterance is a problem-solving environment. In the act of posing its problems, the poetic performance represents for the first time the very terms of that problem and its underlying socio-historical conditions. Performative representation does not react to a social situation, it catalyzes the situation in the very act of transforming it into the potential invoked by its alternate scenario. Representation in archaic poetry is viewed in this light as the assertion of a will to seize control of unstable social conditions and to transform them. The 'interpolation' of the *habitus* described by Bourdieu guarantees the 'meaningfulness' of the utterance, but this should not be confused with the active interpretation, or the isolation of meaning, engaged in by criticism. The interpretation of the utterance takes place rather as a dispersal of meaning as ritualized bodies carry the performance into extra-discursive contexts 'after the poet has left off singing.' I have called this the 'counter-utterance', which is not an immediate audience

[178] Bourdieu 1990, 97.

response within the occasion but something akin to what Derrida called "iterability", that is, that the performance activates potentialities latent within the inscription of language as a social practice, potentialities that exist both in the utterance and over the horizon of the performance as *incorporated interpretation* – as *history*.[179]

The 'world *in* the utterance' of the enunciating subject offers a social scenario which is played out in the symbolic reality of the ritual occasion. Within this occasion real alternative social possibilities for the 'world *of* the utterance' come into view wearing the mask of a reality recovered from the Muse. The epic tradition is the accumulation of these alternate social pathways. It is worth repeating Bell's formulation, this time as if she had the performance contexts and archaic audiences of the *Iliad* specifically in mind:

> [p]eople do not take a social problem to ritual for a solution. People generate *a ritualized environment that acts to shift the very status and nature of the problem into terms that are endlessly retranslated in strings of deferred schemes*. The multiplication and orchestration of such schemes do not produce a resolution; rather, they afford *a translation of immediate concerns into the dominant terms of the ritual*. The orchestration of schemes implies a resolution without ever defining one.[180]

Bell's discussion of ritual defines the function of the epic utterance in relation to its socio-historical milieu, permitting us to see the *Iliad* as the trace of that moment of 'translation' and to understand its role as a mirror of archaic history. Indeed, it is entirely justified to describe the performance context of Homeric epic as "a ritualized environment that acts to shift the very status and nature of the problem into terms that are endlessly retranslated in strings of deferred schemes".[181] Part One of this study has tackled one dimension of that 'problem'; the final chapter will now turn to another.

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179 Bourdieu 1990, 57; Derrida 1982, 314-27.

180 Bell 1992, 106. Consider Johnston's formulation concerning the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*: "the poet endeavors to transform the listeners into virtual participants in the mythic drama that he narrates, virtual doublets of Hermes. Public recitation of myth, then almost functions as a ritual itself, as listeners negotiate the tensions that the myth expresses." 2002, 127. Carter 1995 also takes Homeric epic to be a trace of a ritual performance and makes a fascinating case for a Mycenaean context with many useful observations.

181 Compare the concluding remarks of Martin 1989, 238-9. A parallel conclusion about the role played by *Beowulf* in Anglo-Saxon England has been drawn by John D. Niles: "we can see [*Beowulf*] as both the result of a set of cultural transformations and a means by which such transformations took place" 1998, 160-1. See also the remarks of Kertzer 1991, who sees ritual more broadly as instrumental in new state-formation because it involves "defining a new *reality* for the subject population – the state – and a new self-conception as citizen" (87, emphasis added).

Endnote to Chapter 5: Reframing the 'Peisistratid question'?

What follows makes no claim to being exhaustive but has been appended to this chapter for the sake of completeness. It poses again a number of problems that continue to arouse controversy with the aim of submitting them to a different perspective, even if answers remain elusive.[182]

> It is very difficult to answer the following conclusively:
> (1) when rhapsodic performances were introduced into the Panathenaic program;
> (2) what form these performances took and how they changed over time;
> (3) at what point the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as we know them dominated that program and in what form.

A strong case can nevertheless be made that Hipparkhos formalized as a 'Panathenaic rule' what had no doubt been developing as *de facto* contest practice (perhaps already for a long time[183]), a process by which performances and narratives were regularized and emerged in the shape of our *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The will-to-representation for the formalization of a 'Panathenaic version' of the Homeric poems must therefore be sought in the civic transformations of post-Solonian Athens among which the foundation of the Greater Panathenaia and the tyranny of Peisistratos and his sons are central.[184]

Our interest here lies in the consequences of the generally uncontested assumption that the *Iliad* found its final monumental form within the context of its performance at the Panathenaia and that it did so as part of a deliberate 'policy' of the tyrants. If this assumption can be accepted, what then was at stake for the Peisistratids in connecting the content and performance of these epics *specifically to the Panathenaia*?[185] What made the Panathenaia and the formation of this particular narrative so apposite and urgent? One is entitled to ask, as for example Plutarch similarly did of tragedy, what had the *Iliad* to do with Athens? It is important also to determine if the *Iliad* achieved its *textual* monumentality as a consequence of the place it had assumed in the Panathenaia, and, if so, to ask what kind of symbolic capital this *written* monumentality represented for Athens under the Peisistratids. Thus, the

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[182] Space here does not permit close discussion of the trans-Atlantic divergences between the approaches of Martin West 1999, 2001, 2011 and Gregory Nagy (most recently in his epic syntheses, *Homer the Classic* 2009 and *Homer the Preclassic* 2010). The latter offers the most ambitious and meticulously documented synthesis of 'Homer' before the fifth century BCE in recent times. Rich and enormously suggestive, Nagy 2010 develops and expands his signature blend of structural linguistics, anthropology and comparative Indo-European studies (compare with Frame 2009). What it lacks, as does the work of West, is a sociological approach to complement it. On the figure of the rhapsode and its diachronic evolution, see González 2013.

[183] If the Panionia was the setting for an earlier form of what we call the 'Panathenaic rule', so Nagy 2010, ch.8.

[184] For a full survey of the evidence for the so-called 'Peisistratid recension' and further discussion see Merkelbach 1952, Davison 1958, Herington 1985, 79-99, Kotsidu 1991, Taplin 1992, 1-45, Shapiro 1993, Seaford 1994, 144-54, Cook 1995, ch.5, Nagy 1996, 99-111 and 2010, Ford 1997, Slings 2000 and West 2001, Shear 2001, 365-8, Frame 2009, 318-29.

[185] For possible different contexts of performance in Athens, see below, n.190.

question becomes what did the Peisistratids imagine the *Iliad* had to do with Athens, such that they demanded its form and content be fixed and be fixed with this particular technology (i.e. as written text)?[186]

In addition to considering briefly with what certainty answers can be found for the three problems raised above, it is necessary in addition for us to try and conceive:

(4) what role Homeric epic may have played in Athens before the tyranny;

(5) the role played by Peisistratos and his sons in the formation and development of the Panathenaia;

(6) Peisistratid attempts to develop a regional hegemony for Athens as Ionian metropolis;

(7) what kind of performative capital the 'Panathenaic rule' was attempting to produce beyond merely addressing " administrative difficulties" arising from the management of the *agon*.

The *agones* of the Greater Panathenaia were, according to Eusebius, established in 566 during the archonship of Hippokleides and celebrated every four years in addition to the annual festival in honour of Athena.[187] As Slings has noted, no testimony explicitly states that there were rhapsodic contests as part of the competition programme; even so, we are entitled to infer from [Plato] *Hipparchus* 228b that rhapsodes had been performing heroic narratives at the Panathenaia, perhaps offering discrete episodes but not in sequence, for some time before Hipparkhos brought 'Homer' (i.e. the Homeridai) to Athens and established the famous rule. Nothing obliges acceptance that rhapsodes competed for prizes from this date but at some point after 566 the Panathenaia supported rhapsodic performances and, by analogy with contemporary Sikyon (Hdt. 5.67), it is difficult to imagine that these performances were not in some way formally organized within the festival. That this should be in an *agon* (as at Sikyon) is quite feasible. It should be noted too that part of Hipparkhos' rule appears to aim at establishing a level field and therefore that it presumed an existing adjudicatory framework for contests.[188]

It is also difficult to determine the extent to which Peisistratos and his sons were involved in the evolution of the Panathenaia during the course of the second half of the 6th century. It could be argued, following Connor, that the tyrant wove his own claims to pre-eminence closely together with an emergent sense of Athenian civic identity and that the Panathenaia figured prominently in the staging of these claims.[189] Nevertheless, it is impossible to clarify what substantive alterations were made to the structure and programme of the

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[186] The Peisistratid motive offered by Nagy 2010 looks outside of Attika to challenge the thassalocratic ambitions of the Samian tyrant Polykrates to be hegemon of the Ionians. How the poems specifically catalyzed anxieties and concerns *within* the Athenian *polis* is less clear.

[187] The evidence is collected and assessed in Davison 1958 and thoroughly discussed in Shear 2001.

[188] *Pace* Slings 2000, 67. On this question see Shapiro 1992 and 1993.

[189] Connor 1987.

Panathenaic *agon* after 561/0. If the archon date is accepted then Peisistratos' involvement, although entirely possible (if not probable given his pre-tyrannical activities), will have taken place in the context of the unstable decades that followed Solon's *nomothesia*. The motivation for the initial institution of the pentateric festival should therefore be sought in civic efforts to counter regional stasis characterized by Herodotus and Aristotle as typical of post-Solonian Attika. That this re-organized festival should contain rhapsodic performances is not impossible (nor is it impossible that the pre-566 Lesser Panathenaia provided earlier opportunities for Homeric performance).[190] On the whole, however, the evidence strongly suggests that any major innovations in the programme of contests belong to the much later third tyranny and that of the tyrant's sons Hippias and Hipparkhos. It has been argued as well that the tradition attributing to Peisistratos the production of a written version of the poems better belongs to Hipparkhos who is credited with the major initiatives associated with the "Athenian poetic revolution."[191] One can therefore tentatively conclude that contests in the rhapsodic performance of Homeric epic at the Panathenaia were established during the tyranny even if it probably should not be ruled out that they might have been part of the contest programme from the beginning (i.e before Peisistratos' tyranny).

For the imperative of the performance of Homeric epic in archaic Athens one prominent context presents itself: the struggle between Athens and Megara over the island of Salamis. Plutarch narrates (*Solon* 10.1-2) that the Iliadic *Catalogue of Ships* was adduced in Solon's attempt to convince Spartan adjudicators of the legitimacy of Athens' claim to the island. John Wickersham has argued persuasively that this struggle was fought out ideologically on the terrain of myth and cult at least as much as it was fought militarily on the physical terrain of the island itself. He suggests that the tradition represented by the *Iliad* acted as a shared mediator of claims to cult and territorial sovereignty made by different cities. Since this tradition was in a constant state of flux depending on the degree to which other communities accepted the assertions made, what counted in making these claims was the prominence of the occasions for performance. By comparison, the prominence of the rhapsodic contests in Sikyon, which perennially rehearsed Argive regional hegemony in the northern Peloponnese through competitive performance of the *Thebaid* (which emphasized

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190 Performance contexts for Athenian familiarity (and 'interference') with the *Catalogue of Ships* need to be found for the seventh century at the very least. Kotsidu 1991, 27 and Herington 1985, 81ff. offer no suggestions. What other Athenian performance context might there have been? According to Hesychius s.v. Βραυρωνίοις there were rhapsodes performing the *Iliad* at Brauron, perhaps as part of the Brauronia festival: Parker 2005, 231. That this was in some way connected to a local, but well known, cult of Philaios could be argued given the prominence of the hero in the dispute over Salamis. Solon famously asserted Athens' ownership of Salamis by citing verses from the *Iliad* connecting Philaios' father Aias to Salamis (Plut. *Sol.* 10.1-2). An important discussion of this episode in relation to these questions is offered by González 2013, 148-55. Davison, 1958, 29, denies that Hesychius' notice is useful evidence.

191 Herington 1985, 92-7.

Adrastos' royal claim to Sikyon), was one of the chief obstacles to Kleisthenes' attempts to redefine Sikyonian civic identity.[192] If Solon could present performances of the *Catalogue of Ships* containing verses that supported Athens' claim to Salamis, then he must have done so with a view to their authoritative dissemination, especially since the competing verses cited by Megara (Strabo 9.1.10) presuppose an equally competitive occasion of performance.[193] It is possible to regard the arbitration reported in Plutarch (*Solon* 10.1) as a form of rhapsodic *agon* in which the Spartans act as an adjudicatory panel. What the episode provides is an insight into just what was at stake in securing wide acceptance of one version over others performed elsewhere. Whereas Kleisthenes of Sikyon had acted by completely transforming the *form* of major performances, exchanging Homer for 'Dionysiac choruses', Solon's strategy is to act on *content* within an existing performance form. Though the tradition was widely acknowledged to vary locally, all three parties involved (Sparta, Athens, Megara) are also aware that some narratives achieve acceptance while others disappear. Mastering this process brings with it regional authority and territorial integrity just as much as (if not more so than) military success. By such mastery Solon was able to situate other Athenian institutions in relation to the Homeric assertion that Erechtheus' people had been chosen by Aias and his sons, thereby extending sovereignty to Athenian practice as well as territory.

In this light, repeated performance of Homeric epic might already have been part of the occasion of the annual (Lesser) Panathenaia well before its reorganization in 566.[194] Furthermore, the performances in circulation here dovetailed to some degree with those being performed in Lakonia, to the extent that Aias' link with Athens was already known, and perhaps authoritative given the verdict of the Spartan arbitrators. But it was Peisistratos and his sons who elevated the local festival to a regional Panhellenic institution. To consider what form these contests presented Homeric epic one must work backward from what [Plato] tells us in the *Hipparchus*: Hipparkhos "compelled the rhapsodes to go through the epics, each taking up where the other left off, in order." The dialogue implies that performances before the 'rule' were less structured and perhaps more discretion was given to individual rhapsodes concerning choice of episode.[195] It would be very interesting to know what other 'Panathenaic rules' there might have been before Hipparkhos, for example, if performers were confined by the terms of the festival to perform from particular narrative traditions. The rule

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192 See Cingano 1985.

193 The notion that Solon (or Peisistratos) *interpolated* (ἐμβαλόντα) the lines is plainly anachronistic (Plut. *Sol.* 10.1; D.L. 1.46; Strabo 9.1.10; schol. Dem. 19.251; Quintillian 5.11.40). As Slings points out, 2000, 69, this notion presupposes something like a fixed text and so belongs to Megarian "irredentists" of the Hellenistic period.

194 If Diogenes' citation of Dieukhidas (1.57 = *FGrH* 485 F6) carries any weight then Solon himself may have been responsible for an earlier phase of development, but the notice does not mention the Panathenaia.

195 On this question, see the important scholion to Pindar *Nem.* 2.1 (Drachmann iii 28-32) with comments by Nagy 1996.

itself belongs to a wider pattern of musical organization in Athens beginning with the foundation of the tragic *agon* in the late 530s and continuing well past the expulsion of Hippias.[196] Richard Seaford has argued for a fluid phase in which there was a great deal of flexibility both in performance and in the formation of narratives out of both oral and written traditions.[197] Not only were there many other poems within the cycle; there may also have been multiple narrative versions of well-known 'Iliadic' passages. But to a large degree the shape of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* presented themselves at the end of the 6th century much as they would become in the 5th and 4th century; the task before the "editors at Athens" was less to do with innovation and more to do with "selection and combination." What was significant and lasting was the impression of authorial will that was left on these poems by the project of constructing a standard performance 'text' for the Panathenaia. As Seaford has argued, this authorial will is largely responsible for the persistent view that "the poems are best understood as the creation, at a specific point in time, of a single master-poet."[198]

The specific historical and social considerations that shaped our *Iliad* within the Panathenaia are obscure, and cannot be tackled here in any further depth.[199] Nevertheless, the coincidence in the sixth century BCE of these two events – Panathenaia and Homeric performance – is decisive in the formation of that text, and the apposition needs explaining.[200] The production of monumental texts woven equally from traditional episodes and the representational will of the Panathenaic occasion established an *Iliad* in which a specific social scenario – the failure of a political rite – is traced out.[201] This alone provides a justification for seeking thematic interpretation as much in the context of Athenian internal civic formation as in the international ambitions of its leading family. The 'Peisistratid question', therefore, needs to be reframed by explaining the apposition between occasion, content and form: (a) Pananthenaia, (b) sequential episodes that in combination produce the *Iliad* as we know it, and (c) telling that specific story in a particular way, that is, according to the rule for the *agon* laid out by Hipparkhos, perhaps following a tradition of performance established earlier by the Homeridai. Only by reconsidering the relationship between epic and festival can this explanation be achieved. Though steps toward such a thematic interpretation have been sketched in Part One, the relationship between the textual fixation of Homeric epic and the imperatives of the Panathenaic occasion needs a dedicated treatment.

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196 This too can be situated in an even wider pattern that had taken place in the Greek world over a century earlier: [Plut] *de mus*. 1134bff.
197 Seaford 1994, 144-54.
198 Seaford 1994, 151.
199 See Taplin 1992, 1-45 for a close consideration of the main problems.
200 Sauge 2000 and 2007 offer suggestions yet to be properly considered in Anglophone Homeric scholarship.
201 So Seaford 1994, 145.

CHAPTER 6

The Oath of Achilles: Symbolic Exchange in the *Iliad* and beyond

> . . . an alternative to taking the narrative's alleged values as self-evident is to interrogate it for the ways in which it represents political experience, as opposed to reproducing it, and to ask the reasons for the particular ways in which it does so.
>
> Thalmann 1998, 305

Introduction: genre and history

This chapter examines the *Iliad* from the perspectives of 'symbolic exchange' demonstrating how the psychology of meaning and value in the *Iliad,* conceived as a performance occasion, is both a reflection and critique of its underlying historical context.

Louis Gernet's analysis of the concept of value in myth and its transformation during the archaic period is widely acknowledged as a watershed in tracing the transition from "the symbol to the sign" at the beginning of Western thought. His essay "La Notion Mythique de la Valeur en Grèce" is a milestone in Greek economic and cultural studies, being amongst the first to approach the explanation of economic practices and myth from the multiple perspectives of structural linguistics, psychology and anthropology.[1] Borrowing from Mauss' study of the gift, Gernet provided new ways of imagining how the early Greeks conceptualized trade, commerce, and the precious objects or *agalmata* that formed the media of aristocratic relations.[2] In Richard Buxton's collection of essays on the development of Greek thought, Sitta Von Reden "re-evaluates" Gernet's essay, fifty years on.[3]

Von Reden argues that Gernet's hypothesis about the psychological motivations underlying the transition from the symbolic value of mythical objects to the sign value of coinage is sustainable because:

> [a]lready in myth . . . the idea of 'substitution' emerged, as precious objects appear both as objects and as the images of what they stand for. The golden fleece, a symbol of agrarian wealth and royal investiture, is in Pindar represented as a garment with golden tassels (*Pyth.* 4.231).[4]

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1 Gernet's article appeared originally in the *Journal de psychologie*, 41 (1948) 415-62. It was reprinted in a posthumous collection of his essays edited by J.-P. Vernant, (Gernet 1968), and since, in two translations: Gordon 1981 and Gernet 1981.

2 Mauss 1970. Gernet's debt to Durkheim and Mauss is not explicitly acknowledged in this essay but its approach is firmly rooted in that school.

3 Von Reden 1999. For a comprehensive assessment of Gernet's work, see Humphreys 1978, 76-106 and Maffi 1981. For further references, Von Reden 1999 51 n.2.

4 Von Reden 1999, 52.

These mythical representations of different communities were reiterated in mass-produced copies of talismans for dedication at sanctuaries, while their mythical narratives were alluded to in the representation of legendary objects stamped upon coins. Von Reden argues that for Gernet this was evidence of "a mythical way of thinking", a type of thought in archaic communities that sought to attach talismanic power to things by linking them umbilically to a symbolic image. This archaic ambivalence between the material worth of the coin and the stamped image for which it was a substitution, was for Gernet part of a transitional phase; the end of that phase would be marked eventually by the rational abstraction of value in the form of a 'signified' – 'value' – clearly differentiated from the signifier of the physical object. Rational thought about value, in which there was no longer any "play with the interchangeability of image and object, object and image", lay in the future in the form of a virtual value, namely, coined money.[5]

Von Reden then considers Gernet's intellectual debt to Meyerson's "historical psychology", from which Gernet developed his concepts of symbol and sign.[6] For Gernet the *symbol* constitutes the "affective sign" in which object and representation are seen as inseparable in a "mythico-magical world". Conversely, the *sign* is seen as an emancipation of the object by means of conscious reflection on its function and ontology. Deploying an innovative reading of myth, influenced by the work of Saussure and preempting Lévi-Strauss' structural anthropology, Gernet interpreted the process of transition from symbol to sign in myth as a *linguistic system*.[7] A single myth contained a universally shared organization of formal elements enabling the structure of its internal pattern to be discerned and related to the organization of similar elements across other myths. The availability of myth as evidence of attitudes and associations was thus enhanced by an increase in the range of mythical variants assembled from within different genres. This structural approach to myth as evidence of historical psychology would be central to the program developed in the 1960s by Gernet's protégé, Jean-Pierre Vernant, and his *équipe*.

It is at this point, however, that Von Reden raises her caveat with Gernet's approach. She argues that, by trawling indifferently the many very different genres in which myths are found, Gernet ignored the influence exercised on myth by genres themselves:

> [t]he inevitable question arises whether these genres simply 'preserve' myth, and whether – since they clearly do not – their reworking of mythical material preserves a particular historical image of value.[8]

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5 Von Reden 1999, 52.
6 Meyerson 1948.
7 On Gernet's proto-structuralism, see the remarks of Buxton 1981, xiii-xiv.
8 Von Reden 1999, 61.

Drawing special attention to the question of genre in the Homeric epics, which Gernet does not appear to have examined in detail,[9] Von Reden asks:

> in what ways did Homeric audiences engage with such images [of gift-exchange], and what function did they have at the time the epics were performed in their final version?[10]

The formation and function of myth, both of which take place in the occasion of its performance, cannot in turn be isolated from the social imperatives driving very different genres of narrative and performance. Von Reden therefore raises the important issue of the influential relationship between the *form* of genres, in which the problems of the symbol and sign are equally implicated, and their mythical *content*:[11]

> what was the function of these images *at the time the stories were used in any particular genre*? What were the politics behind these representations of value? Gernet's structural analysis seeks a *system* of symbols instead of looking at how the meaning of particular symbols was negotiated and renegotiated.[12]

So, genres are not fixed structural systems but unique context-bound sites at which very different ethical positions within an archaic community compete about the form value ought to take. Placing the form of genre in the context of institutional practice, Von Reden argues, avoids undermining the goal of historical explanation by the heavy-handed imposition of true but empty synchronic generalizations. She cites the instance of 'transactional orders', in which a tension is posited between images of exchange in a long-term moral order – for example, in the *kharis* of gift-exchange underpinning an *aristocratic* worldview – and how, by contrast, these orders might be negatively perceived in the *everyday* milieux of social relations.[13] Images of precious items or coins, for example, are always constructed within a genre and their meaning and value cannot be

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9 Gernet was convinced that the modernity of Homer made the epics unhelpful in the search for a specifically *mythical* notion of value. For this reason he turned to Attic tragedy, regarded as more grounded in a truly archaic mentality given its much greater epichoric level of engagement (on which generally see Sourvinou-Inwood 2003). Although Gernet barely supports this with further argument, the distinction he draws is surely right; but for precisely that reason the epics needed inclusion in his study. They offer evidence for a historically contingent shift in the expression of value and provide a critique of the very value Gernet sets out to taxonomize. Gernet did, however, address the *Iliad* in a later essay (Gernet 1955), but more specifically in relation to its evidence for juridical process.

10 Von Reden 1999, 61.

11 Such a question lies behind an interest in 'cultural poetics' during the last quarter century, for example, Dougherty's studies of colonial myth (1993 and 1995), to Kurke's reading of epinikian ode (1991), Wilson's contextualization of dithyramb in ritual and politics (2003), and Kowalzig 2008. One could also cite the many collections now appearing that deal with archaic poets 'in context' (e.g. Finglass and Kelly 2015). The Anglophone reception of Gernet's work, mostly conveyed through translations of Vernant's essays in the 1980s, played a central role in this scholarly trend.

12 Von Reden 1999, 61, author's emphasis.

13 Von Reden 1999, 62-4. On the "transactional orders" of such negotiations, see Kurke 1999, 3-37.

divorced from their extra-discursive and, especially, historical context. Thus the underlying ideology of a genre is implicated in social and political conflicts about 'value'. Our task, then, is to consider poetic discourse against the backdrop of a plurality of discourses where each one strives to monopolize authority over the social and political capital of mythical narratives. The upshot of Von Reden's criticism is that in order to be comprehensive in its explanation Gernet's structuralism must be extended to *form* as much as to content in archaic and early classical Greek poetry.[14]

Understanding the genres of Greek poetic discourse like this, as historically-situated ritual performances, inseparable from wider occasions such as hero-cult, funerary rites, and colonial foundations in early Greece, has been well-established.[15] In the context of her analysis of Gernet's essay, it prompts Von Reden to ask a question similar to one driving our inquiry in chapter 5: what social and historical relations connect performance to occasion? Furthermore, how ought mythical narratives be read as a function of this relationship? With these questions in mind the historical analysis of the transition "from symbol to sign" in Greek thought is also reframed. Shying away from linear evolutionary models, such as the transition from mythical schemas to positivist reason, thinking about genre as a historical artefact shifts attention on to the stakes in the representation of value held by different interest groups in the early Greek *polis*.[16] Rather than stating a fundamental difference between the symbol and the sign, Von Reden argues for a constantly negotiated terrain of value in which each term embodies different stakes in different contexts.[17] While saluting the trail blazed by Gernet as comparable to those pioneered by Karl Polanyi and Moses Finley,[18] Von Reden's essay valuably discloses the blind spot of Gernet's analysis. Understanding the rupture with mythical thought implied by the origins of a money

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14 Gernet can hardly be faulted for not being a post-structuralist even though his approach anticipates New Historicism and cultural poetics by more than a generation. More helpful would be an examination of Gernet's avoidance of materialist analysis. By leaning toward nascent structuralist anthropology for his explanations, Gernet's *synchronic* discussion of what are in essence *historical* shifts in the notion of value in early Greece clearly moves away from historicism and Marxism. The main consequence is Gernet's reluctance to broach the relationship between the objects of his inquiry and narrative ideology. For an introduction to a Marxist reading of classical genres, see Rose 1992, 1-42 and 2012, 1-55.

15 Nagy 1994, Ford 1997, 2002, 10-13, Calame 1998. This is a key plank of Nagy 1979, esp. part 2 where Nagy argues central themes in epic need to be read against the wider context of the ritual occasion of epic. Chapter 5 above has added a sociological perspective to the historical conditions surrounding the distillation of 'genre' from the two 'realities' of occasional performance: the world *in*, as opposed the world *of*, the utterance .

16 This has been the approach of many scholars in recent years, for example, in the debate sparked by Morris 1996.

17 An approach developed in her earlier book, Von Reden 1995 and developed in the important first half of Kurke 1999.

18 On which, see the assessment by Whittaker 1997 and Cartledge 1998; on Polanyi, see the essays collected in Polanyi et al. 1957 and the assessments by Meikle 1995 and Dale 2010, 137-87.

economy must, she insists, be approached by tackling the "politics that lie behind representations of value, gifts and money in ancient texts" and by examination of the discursive spaces in which that politics was institutionalized and played out.[19]

Nevertheless, by the same token it is important not to overlook that even to speak of "politics" and "representation" in the analysis of gift exchange also edges dangerously close to begging the question. One of the advantages of Gernet's study is the way it implicates the very terms 'politics' and 'representation' in this general transition from symbol to sign. Early Greek thought was shaped by a challenge to the symbolic order, initiated, as Vernant argued, by a "crisis of sovereignty", which played out in the social and cultural vacuum that followed the collapse of the Late Helladic palatial kingdoms.[20] Vernant's "crisis" permeated all those institutional and social forms resting on the existence of an immanent symbolic order, including legitimacy, eliteness, authenticity, stability of the cosmic order, and so on. Politics – that value laden activity defined by living in a *polis* – is, by contrast, symptomatic of the contestation of meaning and value emergent within an archaic society increasingly animated by disenchantment with a social order founded on ritualized exchange. In this sense, the inception of the *polis* is partly defined by the appearance of a "politics of representation" in which the bonds that bind objects to their value, words to their meaning and human beings to status and social hierarchy are loosened, becoming negotiable in a nascent public domain. Von Reden's focus on the way Homeric audiences engaged with the images of the world evoked by the poet's voice and how they understood the social role of those images is therefore not simply a focus on the historicity of the extra-discursive world outside the performance.[21] It is about the way 'the political' emerges out of the strategies of an epic practice which serve to problematize the very status of images in front of their (politicized) audiences.[22]

This changes the ontological status of the Homeric poems as evidence of historical reality. Homeric performance belongs, as it were, to an "historical moment of epic" in which the social reality of the audience – its self-representations – enters into a self-reflective dialogue within the ritual constraints of epic occasion and

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19 Von Reden 1999, 69.

20 Vernant 1982a, first published in 1962, the year of Gernet's death. For the idea of a "crisis of sovereignty", see 38-48. See also more broadly Vernant 2006, 371-97, Lloyd 1966, 226-67, 1987, 50-108, Lloyd 1990, 14-38. Vernant was also able to include the evidence offered by the decipherment of Linear B in 1952 in a way that Gernet obviously could not. The evidence of Linear B has yet to be examined for its impact on Gernet's questions and framework.

21 A point she explicitly acknowledges elsewhere, Von Reden 1995, 15-7.

22 This has been the substance of approaches to Homeric epic (drawn from similar approaches to other Greek poetic genres such as tragedy) which see, among other things, content and form linked fundamentally to the occasion of performance via a *poetics* of occasion: for example, Redfield 1975, Herington 1985, Nagy 1979, 1990a, 1990b, 1996, Sinos 1980, Lynn-George 1988, 81-152 and ch.3; Goldhill 1991, chs.1-2; Von Reden 1995, 13-44; Muellner 1996, Graziosi 2002. This is not an exhaustive list.

performance.[23] Under these terms, content is *activated* by form: mythical narratives are not passively conveyed by genre but are activated by the complexity of the performance occasion to be dispersed and consumed within and beyond the event.[24] The break with an archaic symbolic order must therefore be reconceived as a historical moment that actually takes place within the narrative space of epic. This space is opened up *within the Iliad* not only as a consequence of a narrated breakdown of those social practices upon which the effectiveness of the symbolic order depends, but also, more significantly, *as a consequence of the event of its ritual enactment by the enunciating subject of the epic performance*.[25]

It is important therefore to clarify the scope of 'value' in the *Iliad*. Analyses of the *Iliad* have paid insufficient attention to the *infrequency* of what is called 'gift-exchange' or reciprocal transactions, by comparison with the frequency of those forms of exchange generating value differently from the gift. As we have so far argued in Part One, the focal object in the *Iliad* is the *geras*, an object all too often elided with the gift, for instance in first part of Von Reden's *Exchange in Ancient Greece*.[26] The *geras*, however, belongs to a semantic field covering the distribution of spoil amongst a warrior band, quite different to the field covering the gift.[27] Honour, status, and, in particular, the formation of relations between warrior peers is shown time and again to be a function of the way distributions are conducted and of the order underpinning them. While the symbolic order of precious goods outlined by Gernet still applies to the *geras* it is restructured by emergent institutional discourses such as those relating to the incipient sovereignty of the whole warrior group (*laos*). The problem of the *geras* in the *Iliad* as a whole is not so much that of gift-exchange *per se*, but the underlying problem of social worth within a community whose relations are forged by the political distribution of objects held in common.

A tension is created in the *Iliad* where powerful objects of the symbolic order, such as the *skeptron* of *Il.* 2.100-8, are juxtaposed with objects that oscillate more ambiguously between symbolic value and consensual value. The principle of a sovereign warrior community embodied by the *dasmos* is profoundly unsettled by Agamemnon's subversion of the meaning-value of the *geras,* a subversion that throws into doubt the future effectiveness of any political determination of value. The political and dialectical character of Achilles' response to

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23 An expression and idea borrowed from Vernant's short but seminal article on the "historical moment of tragedy", Vernant 1988, 23-8, first published in 1968. The practical architecture of this 'dialogue' has been proposed in chapter 5 above.

24 On the activation of content by form, see White 1980 and Butler 1999.

25 The 'eventfulness' of the *Iliad* can be nuanced further by considering how, in the context of civic cults, performed narratives were more often than not concerned with foundational and inaugural moments (of institutions, communities, cities, cults, clans, and so on) and so therefore were self-reflexively conscious of articulating quantum breaks and ruptures with existing social and cultural orders.

26 Von Reden 1995.

27 See Chapter 1, pp.58-70.

Agamemnon problematizes the principle of symbolic power invested in precious objects and temporarily divests them of their value. Something like *stasis* ensues in the *Iliad* from this point, to be followed later by symbolic and political resolution, but only after these problems pass through Achilles' critique in *Iliad* 9.

On the one hand, Achilles himself will be restored to a symbolic intimacy through the immolation of Patroklos. The consequences for Achilles after his violent dismemberment of the foundations of symbolic power, discussed in depth below, are neutralized by the actions of his double, the only figure capable of negotiating terrain rendered impassable to Achilles by his alienation.[28] The *skeptron*, wrought by Hephaistos in the object's genealogy offered in *Iliad* 2, and stripped of its value in *Iliad* 1, disappears but finds its symbolic resurrection in *Iliad* 18 as a shield forged by the divine craftsman, just as Achilles himself is transformed on the battlements of the Akhaian camp.

On the other hand, the vacuum left by the failure of the *dasmos* in *Iliad* 1 is filled by new relations founded on consensus and formalized recognition. These have been already discussed extensively in Part One of this study. Like the *skeptron*, the *geras* also disappears only to be re-founded in the athletic prize (*aethlon*) of Patroklos' funeral contests in *Iliad* 23.[29] Drawn from the complex of archaic rituals forming part of the wider occasion, including the performance of epic, the institution of funerary competition draws its affective signs from its homology with rituals serving to legitimate heirs at funerals. There is an intimate link in practice between prize-objects and the patrimony claimed by heirs (and the way they devolve upon their recipients) shared by a similar link between inheritance distribution and the division of spoils by the *laos*.

While the *Iliad* problematizes exchange and narrativizes the emergence of new exchanges in response to social and ritual crisis, it is nevertheless argued in this study that a deeper understanding of the transformations negotiated across the *Iliad* necessitates a focus on symbolic exchanges like the gift. This study presupposes, following both Gernet and Von Reden, that the *Iliad* does not simply describe a simple progression from symbolic exchanges to the emancipated and rational exchanges of a money economy; the *Iliad* is also an 'archaeological' trace of the discharge of representational will at a key historical moment.[30] The *geras*, prizes and, beyond the *Iliad*, coins were often enmeshed in symbolic representations to bolster or disrupt claims made by different groups within the archaic *polis*.[31] It is, however, overly reductive to imagine gift-exchange as the only model of aristocratic relations or to imagine, like Morris, that elitist poetic discourses were somehow anti-*polis* because they sought to

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[28] This interpretation has been formulated via a number of important studies, especially Nagy 1979, Sinos 1980, Lowenstam 1981 and Muellner 1996.

[29] The trajectory from *geras* to *aethlon* has been traced out above in chapter 4.

[30] Kurke 1999 approaches Herodotus in the same way.

[31] See Kurke 1999, 3-37, Seaford 1994 and 2004, Von Reden 1995.

ground eliteness in a transcendent order.[32] The *polis* itself arose as an elite meta-practice for resolving dilemmas about the legitimacy of elite claims. At the heart of the *Iliad*, and at the heart of gatherings of aristocratic peers, lies the idea of *krisis*: simultaneously a 'historical' tipping point at which previously 'acceptable' contradictions give way to *aporia*, and the mode of their resolution through a communally recognized and public "sorting out" (κρίνω).

Stepping back from the matter of the "politics that lie behind the representation of value" this chapter proposes that the concept of value developed in the *Iliad* be considered as a dialectical notion produced by the way disenchantment with symbolic exchange is explicitly posed by the narrative event of its performance. The historical trace represented by the *Iliad* includes the fact that the epic treats 'value', both symbolic and abstract, *as a problem,* and it is this aspect that marks its performance as a specifically political event. From this point of view, the *Iliad* is a performance partially defined by its historically contingent ability to 'theorize' (*theoria*) value 'politically', that is, by approaching it as an problem whose ambivalence must be resolved by witnessing, reporting and public determination.[33] 'Value' becomes an operative concept of rational speculation when rituals fail to prevent objects being emancipated from the immanent meanings they acquire in symbolic circulation.[34] In this light, the narrative of the *Iliad* is seen as a narrative aetiology of politically determined 'value' and one that repeatedly enacts within the occasion of its performance *the conditions of symbolic disenchantment out of which a dialectics of value emerges*. Viewed from this perspective, the *Iliad* does far more than offer us a text in which we can observe the "politics that lie behind the representation of value". It inaugurates the founding moment of the "representation of value" not only as a traumatic rupture involving the outrage (*menis*) and alienation of the hero, but also in its mapping of new strategies of political resolution and closure.

What is 'symbolic exchange'?

> The simulacrum is never what hides the truth – it is truth that hides the fact that there is none. The simulacrum is true.
>
> Baudrillard 1994, 1.

To understand the character of the symbolic order in epic, it is necessary to see more clearly what is at stake both within the utterance of the enunciating subject as well as within the terms of the poetic performance occasion considered as a form of ritual. The power of epic lies in the way it raises the question of ritual, including the symbolic order founded on ritual, not only within but *as a part* of

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32 Morris 1996.

33 For this approach to the beginnings of rational speculation in Greece, see Vernant 2005, 371-408, Detienne 1996, 15-33, 89-106, Lloyd 1979, 1990, Lincoln 1997, Vernant 2001 and, especially, Nightingale 2004.

34 This conclusion, as will be developed below, marries the use made of Bourdieu in chapter 5 to Baudrillard's theses about the nature of value in symbolic environments, and the radical otherness of symbolic value in relation to post-Enlightenment political economy.

the context in which the political emerges as a historical break in thought. That context in the *Iliad* is found as a *performance environment* whose architecture has been broadly sketched in chapter 5 above. In this environment ritual creates the space for critique by allowing the audience to disappear into the reality brought into being by the social alchemy of the occasion. In turn, it is the *form* of such a reality that the epic poet contests within the *content* of the utterance itself. The *Iliad* then is a uniquely symbolic mode of self-reflexivity bridging the potentiality of crisis within that symbolic order – the order of immanence in word and object.[35]

As argued above in chapter 5, ritual is a lightning rod for immediate congregational concerns because it both conducts and transforms them. Ritual here has two meanings. Firstly, rituals are those practices that generally operate both to produce social reality and to be the mode of the transformation of that reality. Secondly, in the context of the occasion of performance, ritual is an environment defined by a triangular complex: enunciating subject ('I'), utterance, and audience. The eventful character of the relationship between these two aspects of ritual and its fluctuations can, furthermore, only be explained *historically*.[36]

Rituals are also actions that immerse social and cultural phenomena in an over-determined environment.[37] The experience of these phenomena is given greater meaning and significance through ritualization, while at the same time there is a deferral of interpretation indefinitely. Ritual never makes any one meaning explicit, preferring instead to set up a network of references that continually evoke other socio-cultural contexts. Ritual therefore has an authorizing effect by grounding relationships, oppositions and hierarchies in an objective order, smoothing over any gap between representation and reality. Social reality therefore finds its mode of representation in ritualized environments.

The ritual both produces and is produced by physical bodies that objectify the schemas of ritual in their dispositions. The ritualized nature of the social body permits cultural schemas to be experienced as truths about the world. The outcome of rituals is, therefore, taxonomic and this *circulation* of bodies and objects is experienced as the 'symbolic order'.

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35 An approach to the *Iliad* which is informed by the mode of interpretation established by Lynn-George 1988, especially various concluding remarks (e.g. 121-2, 150-152) and, more generally, his chapter 3, 153ff. Whereas his concerns are largely with Homeric criticism and the question of 'reading' the *Iliad*, the focus here ultimately aims at exploring epic as practice, that is, as an institution for the social production of reality, and therefore as an historical moment in the development of early Greek institutional practice. This aligns it more closely with part 2 of Nagy 1979 and Von Reden's desire (1999) to nuance Gernet's study of the notion of value by examining what is at stake in the traces of actual performances.

36 This assumption lies behind Nagy 1990, which adds a greater historical dimension to the key findings of Nagy 1979; see also Calame 1995.

37 What follows here recapitulates part of Chapter 5 above and summarizes aspects of ritual practice from Bourdieu's theory of practice, Bourdieu 1990, 52-98, 1977, 159-97, as well as Bell 1995.

The experience of the symbolic order is opaque to the theoretical or scholarly perspective. From the theoretical point of view, experiential empathy is brushed aside in the effort to theorize the social production of meaning. Theorization is intrinsically iconoclastic because a *theoria* of ritual action is dedicated to systematizing the contingent nature of the symbolic order. Theorization undoes the labour of concealment exerted by ritualized bodies to prevent unmasking the 'reality' of ritualized experience as arbitrary. A theoretical point of view overlooks the way in which ritualized practices normalize the arbitrary and violates the unspoken complicity of any congregation to regard their actions as though they were anything other that 'the only way to act.'

A break with this complicity (for example, through crisis or contact with radically different ritual worldviews) can be the impetus for catastrophic interrogation of ritual and result in what Bourdieu calls "disenchantment" (*Entzauberung*).[38] Disenchantment here refers to the traumatic disruption of social alchemy and performative magic that can follow upon the failure of ritual practices to create that 'fit' between collective cultural expectations and the products of ritual. A rite's ability to establish a vision of 'what is' as a function of 'what ought to be' depends on the faithful observance of ritual forms which will guarantee the turning of mere expectations into predictable truths. To be a master of ritual is to know how to immerse oneself in the forms of ritual and, following Bourdieu's formulation, to have an implicit grasp of the "logic of practice." Abuse, perversion or deviation from ritual is not the same as practical mastery of ritual. Violations destabilize the rite altogether and bring about a rupture in the very symbolic and social reality, the "realized myth" which rites produce.[39] Of course the historical record is not so simply polarized and portrays rather an infinite array of ritualized action ranging from pervasive disenchantment through to idealized ritualized practice. For example, the argument in this study, that the *Iliad* is the trace of a ritualized performance narrating the consequences of a disrupted political ritual, assumes that practical mastery in early Greek performance poetry included the expression and translation of latent social concerns (such as *stasis*, potential tyranny or shifting cultural identity) into the dominant terms of paradigmatic ritualized discourses (such as the disrupted feast or sacrifice).[40]

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38 For example, Bourdieu 1977, 167, 176. See also Butler 1999. Strictly speaking Bourdieu's use of 'disenchantment' is drawn from Marx (*Theses on Feuerbach*, cited at 1977, vi) who critiques the scientific objectification of social reality. Disenchantment refers primarily to the process by which theoretical schemas are imposed on practical ones: the "disenchantment of the world" is Bourdieu's shorthand for the labour of 'unconcealment' exerted by scholastic perspectives (e.g. 1977, 92 and 1979), but also by the intersection of symbolic environments with political ones, like, for example, when peasant societies collide with the modern state (described throughout Bourdieu 1977).

39 Bourdieu 1977, 163.

40 This has been a key finding of a number of studies into other performance genres and especially those associated with Dionysiac ritual such as dithyramb, tragedy and comedy (for example, Seaford 1994, Wilson 2003, Currie 2007, Kowalzig 2008). For

The performance occasion of early Greek epic is itself a ritual where audience and poet as *dramatis personae* function as ritualized bodies in a ritualized environment. For the duration of the ritual, the *aoidos* adopts the ritual persona of the enunciating subject (for example, the 'blind man of Chios' in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*) whose utterance, the authorized speech of the delegated utterer, is the central part. All involved, from the participants in the occasion of performance and the actors of the enunciation ("I", "we", "you"), to the actors of the utterance proper (Achilles, Odysseus, Agamemnon, and so on) are the products of a ritualized environment and are therefore implicated in the production of a meaningful social reality. The enunciation of this 'ritually constituted subject' brings about a suspension of time and space via a ritualized forgetting and remembering amongst the participants. Having cleared the stage, the utterance itself can be "shifted-in". The actors of the utterance (who are themselves in turn performers of *epos* and *mythos*, as well as being *aoidoi*)[41] thereby enact and conduct into the here-and-now visions of realizable possibilities, insofar as these possibilities are invoked by one delegated to call upon the deity who presides over memory.

By raising disenchantment within this *form*, the poet translates the problematic and its implications into the dominant terms of the ritual itself, thus orchestrating their transposition into a *different* form. The poetic intention is not to neutralize or rectify a problematic; ritual practices never precisely differentiate a 'real' solution (to be enacted for the benefit of a 'real' subject) from the symbolic terms played out in the ritual. The poetic utterance is not an explicit prescription for action although it is tacitly prescriptive in another way. Rather, as Nagy has put it, poetic performance is a *pharmakon* (for instance, *Od*. 4.220-1, 240-3) which converts heroic suffering experienced within the utterance (*penthos/akhos*) into the *kleos* of heroes of cult among the occasion's participants. The participants then carry that *kleos* over the horizon of the performance partly because they are implicated ritually in its production as audience.[42] This is what is meant by the "dominant terms of the ritual" – in the case of epic, those terms that arise within the specific space of the performance environment, an environment defined by the complex: enunciating subject ('I')/ enunciatee, utterance and audience. Here the spectre of crisis, *stasis* or the failure of the social effectiveness of any ritual is not transferred or suppressed, but rather projected into the centre of epic performance and played out at the centre of an exchange between subjects within the utterance. The problem posed is thus *both crystallized and precipitated by the poetic event*. The poet deliberately

the poetics of ritual as metonymic of the whole community the literature is vast: see the collection by Yatromanolakis and Roilos 2004.

41 Martin 1989.

42 Nagy 1979, 94-117, especially 99-100. The paradigm for the *geras* of performance that coverts sufferings (*pathea*) into *kleos* in the context of hero-cult is the cult of Adrastos at Sikyon: Hdt 5.67.4.

precipitates a crisis of disenchantment and the ritual efficacy of the relations between the ritualized bodies makes sure that audiences are confronted by nothing less than a real crisis. At stake in performance is the distillation of an alternate reality in which the potential for social collapse is not averted but catalyzed, precipitated and, in being translated into the terms of the performance, fundamentally transformed. In epic performance, potential crises are *presented* rather than conceptually *re-presented*, and led down potentially infinite paths of articulation and conclusion. The uniqueness of the *Iliad* therefore lies in its own particular problematic and especially the congregational concerns that are transposed into its dominant scenarios. This focus is all the more important because the kinds of resolutions it pursues mirror those that, in the context of the Panathenaia in the late sixth century, drove its monumentalization to become the exclusive form of epic performance.[43]

The foregoing account of the relation between epic and disenchantment is framed by two key theoretical conceptions of the 'symbolic'. The first is Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practical action, the *habitus* and misrecognition set out in chapter 5. The second draws upon the analysis of 'symbolic exchange' by Jean Baudrillard whose break with Marx in the 1970s helped define most recent cultural and critical theory.[44] The sociology of symbolic exchange developed by Baudrillard complements the concept of 'symbolic capital' advanced by Bourdieu. Their complementary approaches to the notion of the 'symbolic' provide the basis for a grounded re-conception of the nature of human action applied in this study.

Both Bourdieu and Baudrillard sought to counter the 'violence' perpetrated by theory in its quest to bring scientific explication and predictability to socio-cultural objects.[45] Both theorists deploy the notion of 'the symbolic' to mark out a 'territory' of human action within the context of practice. In this context, the value of things and the meanings of words are fragile, surviving only within the protection afforded by

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43 This historical process is an important part of the so-called 'Homeric Question(s)'. What is being presented here has obvious implications for how and why that process took the shape that it did, but the question of transmission and transformation (that is, from *aoidoi* to *rhapsoidoi* and beyond) is for the moment deferred for later study. The literature is vast and the issues controversial.

44 For an overall critical assessment of the shifting sands of Baudrillard's intellectual trajectory, see Kellner 1994, 1-23 and Gane 2000.

45 In Bourdieu 1990, 1-51, the grounds for his departure from the intellectual trends of structuralism and phenomenology are clearly traced. Such a statement from Baudrillard is dispersed throughout his two of his most densely argued works: *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (Baudrillard 1981, first published in 1972, on which see Levin 1981), in which he critiques Marx via post-structural linguistics; *Symbolic Exchange and Death* (Baudrillard 1993a, first published in 1976), his most important theoretical statement, in which the critique of political economy, psychology and linguistics is undertaken by juxtaposing them with (respectively) the radical absence of value, the unconscious and meaning in symbolic thought. For an assessment, see the translator's introduction (Gane 1993) and the author's later reflection on the conceptual path of this work, Baudrillard 2003.

being implicit and 'intimate' with their unique historical/cultural environments.[46] Structuralist and Marxist analyses, they argue, strip objects of meaning by reduction to polarities, societies, grids and concepts, producing dead objects bearing little resemblance to the reality of lived experience. While Bourdieu focuses upon practices in the production of social reality, Baudrillard directed his early work towards the *object*.[47] In a series of studies, Baudrillard broke with what he perceived as the failure of Marxism to theorize beyond the mechanisms of the political economy and look for causes beyond the horizon of the functions of the commodity and the law of equivalence in value.[48] Reflecting on this early work, Baudrillard describes how he revisited the object and its value via anthropology, in particular Mauss' essay on the gift, which, he argues:

> gives us access to societies and cultures in which the notion of value as we understand it is virtually non-existent, in which things are never exchanged directly one for another, but always through a mediating agency of a transcendence, an abstraction . . . [i]t was a question of attempting to strip the object . . . of its status as commodity, to restore to it an *immediacy*, a brute reality which would not have a price put on it.[49]

For Baudrillard, exchange became the focus, but not the forms of exchange of modern political economy with its 'real' objects "relegated to inert and indifferent objectivity".[50] Rather, those exchanges which Mauss described in his seminal work on the gift, *symbolic* exchanges in which the object transcends that inertia, behaving as an agency without indifference, and displaying instead evidence of an uncanny subjectivity.[51] Rather than pursuing a Marxist critique still trapped within capitalist assumptions about political economy, such as the fundamental relation of labour to value, Baudrillard abandoned the grand narratives of orthodox economic value in search of a 'non-economy'. A non-economy is one that shares systems of exchange before 'economic reason' separated the subject from the object and before the subject was burdened with the determination of value. Baudrillard retreated from modern colonial attempts by economic anthropologists to liberate value (and meaning) from 'primitive' exchanges such as the gift or the

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46 On 'intimacy', see Bataille 1989, 43-61. The work of Georges Bataille and his unique synthesis of Durkheim and Mauss – the theory of the "accursed share" – assisted Baudrillard's development of symbolic exchange. On the concepts of 'territory' and 'deterritorialization', see the essay *The Animals: Territory and Metamorphoses*, Baudrillard 1994 (first published in 1978), especially 140-1 n.3.

47 In addition to the works cited above, Baudrillard's early classic, a structural-Marxist taxonomy of "the flora and fauna" of the modern object, should be noted: *The System of Objects* (Baudrillard 1996, first published in 1968). For a later reflection on the concerns of this work, see Baudrillard 2003, 3-11. On a 'Homeric system of objects' see now Grethlein 2009 and Lyons 2003. See also the broad applicability of Appadurai 1988 and Taussig 1980.

48 The break is articulated in *The Mirror of Production*, Baudrillard 1975.

49 Baudrillard 2003, 9-10, emphasis added.

50 Baudrillard 1993a, 188 n.8.

51 Mauss 1966. For a recent useful summary of Mauss' ideas and their ongoing usefulness, see Carrier 1991.

Melanesian *kula*.[52] By transposing Saussure's work on the sign into the realm of *objects as signs*, Baudrillard compared symbolic exchanges like the *kula* to the role of the poetic in language:

> the exchange that can be effected operates on foundations that are no longer of the order of the contract – as in the usual system of value – but of the pact. There is a profound difference between the *contract*, which is an abstract convention between two terms or individuals, and the *pact*, which is a dual, collusive relation. We might see an image of this in certain modalities of poetic language in which exchanges between words – with *the intensity of pleasure* they afford – *are made outside the sphere of their mere decipherment, before or beyond their operation in terms of 'meaning value'*. It is the same for objects and individuals.[53]

Symbolic exchange, like the poetic in language, is a site for the generation of symbolic value. However, it differs radically from the quality of value when exchange is understood as a contract, which begins by declaring, isolating and projecting the value at stake in the exchange. "The intensity of pleasure" – the trace of value in symbolic exchanges and of meaning in poetic language – derives instead from the sublimation and dispersal of what political economy would make explicit as 'value', that is, from the disappearance of value into an immanent circulation that founds and maintains human relations. Baudrillard here confronts the *contract* – "which is an abstract convention between two terms or individuals" – with the *pact* (*sumbolē*), a relationship of symbolic reversibility in which every gesture is dependent on a counter-gesture.[54] The value of the gift, considered (in different ways) by both Bourdieu and Baudrillard to be the paradigm of symbolic exchange,[55] does not lie in any explicit expression of 'value', which would subordinate the object to some reified source of its effectiveness; rather, the gift-object instigates a relationship by discharging energy within the bounds of the exchange that it embodies. Moreover, to express a gift as an absolute value must ignore the fact that the transaction of symbolic exchange is incomplete while the *return-gift* is deferred. As a result a fundamental part of the gift's value is a *lack*, a potentially unrequited 'supplement' that, from the perspective of a political economy, places symbolic exchange outside the rational expression of 'value'.[56] In symbolic exchange, therefore, a symbolic object exists that cannot be *explicitly* evaluated without risking meaninglessness. The symbolic object exists precisely by preserving the integrity of what the outside observer would divide into *what only signifies*, reducing the object to an empty and inert materiality, and *what is signified by the object*, that is, its meaning, or value. The space of a symbolic exchange is therefore that in which signifier and signified are held together by *a gravity of circulation*. It is this *intimacy* ('being thrown-

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52 On the Melanisian *kula* exchange, see Malinowski 1920, 1921, 1922, 62-79; Mauss 1966, 17-31.

53 Baudrillard 2003, 10, emphasis added.

54 A survey of the semantic field of συμβάλλω in *LSJ* (including συμβόλαιον, σύμβολον, συμβολή), along with Herman 1987, 62-3 and Struck 2004, 77-110, is suggestive.

55 See Baudrillard's remarks on the 'effective' violence of symbolic exchange at 1993a, 36-7, and Bourdieu 1998, 93-8.

56 On the Derridean 'supplement', see the discussion in Norris 1987, 28-62.

together', *sumballein*) in gift exchange, Baudrillard argues, that makes the exchange *symbolic* and prevents the object from reaching escape velocity to become merely an arbitrary or 'imaginary' signifier as opposed to a signified of the 'real world'. This latter event would doom the signifier to be empty of its own inherent value and only ever able to convey meaning, that is, to *refer*:

> the arbitrariness of the sign begins when, instead of binding two persons in an inescapable reciprocity, *the signifier starts to refer to a disenchanted universe of the signified*, the common denominator of the real world, toward which no-one any longer has the least obligation . . . [t]he modern sign dreams of its predecessor, and would dearly love to discover an *obligation* in its reference to the real. It finds only a *reason*, a referential reason, a real and a 'natural' on which it will feed. This designatory bond, however, is only a simulacrum of symbolic obligation, producing nothing more than neutral values which are exchanged one for the other in an objective world . . . *[t]he modern sign then finds its value as the simulacrum of a nature*.[57]

Symbolic exchange averts and displaces the "brute fact" of objects as bare life or bare material.[58] Transforming the object into a mediating agent, symbolic exchange creates reversibility between the stakes of any human action and extends that reversibility to all fields (bestial, object, divine, and so on) creating a 'territory' circumscribed by its gestures.[59] In Baudrillard's terms, symbolic exchange "ex-*term*-inates" any opposition between the brute facts of the disenchanted world (the pole of the 'real') and the 'mythical' rituals and practices of social being that, by belonging to the imaginary realm, are aligned along the pole of the 'non-real'. Ritual, symbolic exchange *par excellence*, succeeds without attaching metaphorical significance to its functioning. Metaphor is the sign of the disappearance of symbolic exchange. For example, a ritual of initiation is not 'like' a rebirth, it is one. Or again: myths do not transpose the meaning of the world into the realm of the imaginary to behave as 'explanations' that parallel reality. For Baudrillard this was the error made by Lévi-Strauss who stated, "the function of the symbolic universe is to resolve on the ideal plane what is experienced as contradictory on the real plane."[60] The error,

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57 Baudrillard 1993a, 50-1, emphasis added.

58 Baudrillard 1993a, 132.

59 On this idea of 'territory' see also Gill 1998.

60 Cited in 1993a, 188, n.10. Gernet 1981, 138-9, adopts a very similar (structuralist) approach. In seeking the transition from 'pre-value' to properly economic value in early Greek thought, Gernet suggests that in some myths we see "a sort of projection of the ideal notion in the other world on to the plane of human life" (139). Gernet goes on to frame the transition as a substitution (*transfert*): a certain object may provoke awe but it nevertheless begins to be regarded chiefly as a *representation* of "a thing endowed with magical properties" and as a receptacle of economic value. What he does not do is explain why (and when) objects began only *to signify*. For Gernet this development establishes, rightly, the psychological foundations for the invention of money, but it remains unclear in his very important essay what social and historical forces triggered the disenchantment of the object even though he explores the process with ingenuity. Homeric epic is regarded as a site for the expression of this process (for instance, on p. 145), but as pointed out above, Gernet regards the milieu of epic

according to Baudrillard, is to reduce the symbolic to the realm of the imaginary, that is, to a *consciously* imagined world for which the idea of reality must be added as a supplement. The symbolic universe is understood by Lévi-Strauss as a mysticization of the real in an attempt to explain its contradictions. But this explanation presupposes a conscious dialectic of "imagined/real" as a space for the *reconciliation of opposites* when the space of the symbolic universe is characterized not at all by opposition (*diabolic* logic) but rather a fluid movement back and forth between imaginary and real (*symbolic* exchange). This reciprocating movement continues until a point is reached where the two become indistinguishable for the precise purpose of preventing a dialectic between the imaginary/real from emerging. Symbolic exchange does not privilege the imaginary over the real, let alone replace one term with its opposite; rather, it effaces both entirely (hence 'ex*term*ination' and the 'abolition of the real'). Thus the principle understanding of reality as the referent of all signs, which lies at the heart of theoretical reason, is irreconcilable with the principle of *reversibility* in symbolic exchange.[61] The potential rupture of the symbolic world into a logic of non-contradiction is held at bay. The 'question' posed by the intrusion of the real world (as Lévi-Strauss had put it) is answered in symbolic exchange by the sacrificial immersion of the real back into a territory of practices and rituals. This corresponds to the world of "unintelligible caprice" with which it is the function of sacrifice to make contact, as Georges

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as already 'modern' and the objects of the heroic economy as already "industrial product[s], on display for [their] market worth." (145). As a result, he rather cursorily oversimplifies the Homeric situation. Gernet, however, is more sophisticated in his approach than this implies and is quite prepared to acknowledge that the shift from a 'mythical notion of value' to a rationalized 'political' value is never fully realized, partly because 'value' is ultimately *always* a 'mythical notion'. On this latter point, the case study by Michael Taussig of a comparatively contemporary example of commodity fetishism and myth is illuminating (Taussig 1980).

61 A point also developed by Bourdieu 1990, 30ff. On 'reversibility' and 'metamorphosis' as mythic operations, see Baudrillard 1994, 133:

> the Bororos [a West African people] 'are' macaws. This is not of the prelogical or psychoanalytic order – nor of the mental order of classification, to which Lévi-Strauss reduced the animal effigy . . . – no, this signifies that Bororos and macaws are part of a cycle, and that the figure of the cycle excludes any division of species, any of the distinctive oppositions upon which we live.

Baudrillard goes on to oppose the *symbolic*, which is the "enchainment of forms" in a *total* environment ('territory'), with the *diabolic*, structural oppositions ('reason') that "divide and confront identities." Where psychoanalytic (or anthropological) theory would assert that the macaw (in this example) is a substitute for an unconscious or social meaning, signifying a psychological function, Baudrillard argues the symbolic consists in the *abolition of signification* altogether. The symbolic operation *par excellence* is therefore *metamorphosis*, the constant exchange of forms within a total system, wherein the intimacy of things is constantly in play. Metaphor, however, is the operation of diabolic opposition that poses both a radical difference between two terms and the privileged position of one over the other. This 'other' is thereby redefined as less than, or the absence of, its privileged opposite: one is always the 'real' and the other 'imagined', that is, *less real*. For a different view of metaphor, one in which simile, and so on, plays a symbolic role in disclosing hitherto unseen connections between different forms, see Ricoeur 1978.

Bataille argued.[62] For example, destruction of the 'name of God' (or the images of God in the case of the iconoclasts) is necessary because, in being named at all, God edges dangerously close to the precipice of becoming a sign. When God is equated with the sign the divine dissolves into mere representation. God is declared to be *only* a name and thus *only* an object stripped of a transcendent signified. The solution to this horror is a sacrificial one, the destruction of images:

> if [the iconoclasts] could have believed that these images only obfuscated or masked the Platonic idea of God, there would have been no reason to destroy them . . . But their metaphysical despair came from the idea that the image didn't conceal anything at all, and that these images were in essence not images, such as an original model would have made them, but perfect simulacra, forever radiant with their own fascination. Thus this death of the divine referential must be exorcised at all costs.[63]

Under the symbolic terms of ritual, however, the utterance of the name of God preserves the integrity of the signified because the utterance charges ritual with the poetic force of the performative occasion separating it from generalized discourse.

In his main work on the subject, Baudrillard put it thus:

> [t]he symbolic is neither a concept, an agency, a category, nor a 'structure', but an act of exchange and a social relation which puts an end to the real, which resolves the real, and, at the same time puts an end to the opposition between the real and the imaginary.[64]

However, if the real is posed as distinct, opposite and privileged with respect to the imaginary, then the latter ceases to be anything other than a *remainder* left over after the prioritization of 'reality'. Under these conditions the imaginary term acquires a phantasmic value that threatens to irrupt from the margins of the real and destabilize it. Baudrillard argues that the hegemony of the positive asserted by every privileged term is always undermined fatally and dialectically by the silent challenge from what is banished in the referential process: real by fiction, life by death, masculine by the feminine, human by the bestial, adult by the child, sanity by madness, and so on. On the other hand, the reciprocal metamorphoses of symbolic exchange reconcile terms with their opposites according to the *principle of the double*:

> [i]n the symbolic universe, life and death are *exchanged*. And, since there are no separate terms but, rather, reversibility, the idea of value is cast into question, requiring as it does distinctly opposed terms between which a dialectic can be established. Now, *there is no dialectic in the symbolic*.[65]

For example, the social transformation conducted in ritual initiation eliminates the stark dialectic of birth *versus* death that would otherwise confront non-initiates as the bleak inescapable terms of human existence. Initiation instigates different states of being without

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62 Bataille 1989a, 43-61, especially 43-4, 48-50.
63 Baudrillard 1994, 4-5.
64 Baudrillard 1993a, 133.
65 Baudrillard 2003, 15-6, emphasis added. The importance of this last observation cannot be overemphasized.

privileging one state over another, without denying either life or death its value as the double of the other. As a consequence, death is never allowed to become only that "natural, aleatory and irreversible" terminus that, Baudrillard argues, haunts the post-Enlightenment mind as the void opposed to life.[66] Death, rather than opposed to life, is exchanged for life and thereby transformed into life's double. Death is thus a state no less privileged than life, but instead a different state of being to life that requires a different response from the living. Baudrillard cites as an example the experience of a Polynesian brought to Australia as a cane-field labourer in the 19th century. When the man disembarked in Sydney he was initially overwhelmed by the sheer number of people he encountered in the city. He accounted for the large population size by realizing that here in this part of the world, unlike at home, the dead must be *visible*. In no sense, either in Sydney or the islands, had the dead ceased to exist. In ritual, the terminology of death coming closest to expressing the modern sense of the word is reserved for exclusion from the social group rather than physical death. In other words, ritual, by establishing the rule that life and death are states in a cycle of symbolic exchange, enables the dead to be experienced as present, yet invisible, transformations of the living into 'ancestors'. 'Death' *per se* is reserved only for rendering the barely expressible and extreme state of standing outside the meaningful umbrella of such exchanges. The privileging of one structural term over its other is, in the symbolic order, a 'crime' according to Baudrillard since it condemns the opposite term to a phantasmic state that nevertheless cannot be conjured away. The 'crime' of the privileged term is averted only when that term is "seized and destroyed, given and returned [to its opposite]."[67] By enacting rituals and practices in which both terms are immolated in the one exchange, symbolic acts enable opposites to coalesce into a seamless unity.

In initiatory rituals, entry into the social realm is enacted as the surrender of 'real' birth and death in exchange for a unity in which birth and death are recast as passages to yet other states valuable to the social order. If initiation takes place as a double of death, then it effaces 'biological' death, which instead becomes in its right time a passage to an ancestral identity that denotes a different order of social identity. The deceased leaves the living to become one of the dead, just

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66 Baudrillard 1993a, 132.

67 ibid: "Initiation effaces this crime by resolving the separate event of life and death in one and the same act of exchange." On the "effect of the real", Baudrillard continues: "[it] is only ever the structural effect of the disjunction between two terms, and our famous reality principle, with its normative and repressive implications, is only a generalization of this disjunctive code to all levels . . . [e]ach term of the disjunction excludes the other, which eventually becomes its imaginary." (133) Our world is therefore split into 'living', upon which is placed a positive value, and death for which there is only exclusion and negativity: "[f]or us, defined as living beings, death is our imaginary . . . [t]his is why, in whatever field of 'reality', every separate term for which the other is its imaginary is haunted by the latter as *its own death*." (ibid., author's emphasis). Hence 'death' in the title of this work (*Symbolic Exchange and Death*): the phantasmic irruption into the real of whatever 'reality' excludes as nonsense, madness, and impossibly 'other'.

as the child leaves the world of children to become an adult, and so on. This is not the instigation of radical otherness but the disclosure of otherness as an intimate part of a total symbolic order.[68] It is not a matter of neutralizing or eliminating death but a transformation of death into a figure or double with which one can enter into relations and establish reciprocal symbolic obligations.[69]

Baudrillard further expresses this 'crime' of privileging one term to the exclusion of its double as the crime of "surviving unilaterally".[70] In ritual, 'birth' threatens to become a dangerous privileging of the term 'life' unless it is symbolically harmonized by proper placement under the sign of mortality, that is, by being both a beginning *and an end*, without which the ultimate destiny of death would be irreconcilable. The idea of 'biological death' (as *opposed* to 'being alive' which, Baudrillard points out, is a distinctive opposition common to a rationalist point of view) therefore can exist only outside a symbolic order. Exclusion from the symbolic order is in fact often perceived as a void much worse than the body's passing, which ought to be no more than the proper transition to the world of the dead, so long as accompanying rites are properly conducted. Exclusion from the cycle of metamorphoses is instead "the situation

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68 In an essay that explores the discourse of difference in the late 20th century, Baudrillard argues that in a symbolic universe the child is not the 'other' for adults any more than women are the 'other' for men: 1993b, 124-38. On the one hand, the modern discourse of 'sexuality' posits the difference between men and women by reducing gender to a coded plenitude on a spectrum. For instance, more of one type of value, like a Y-chromosome, establishes more 'maleness'. In this way ambiguity can be normalized by reference to a sliding scale of 'sexualities' – XX, XXX, XXY, XY, XYY, and so on. But the social relations that men and women establish between each other are not determined by the formula of the code but by the rules of the game of seduction. They are opposites and yet, at the same time, they are "mutually reinforcing aspects of an immutable order." Baudrillard explains that

> [t]he way in which beings and things relate to each other is not a matter of structural difference. The symbolic order implies dual and complex forms that are not dependent on the distinction between ego and other. The Pariah is not the other to the Brahmin: rather, their destinies are different. The two are not differentiated along a single scale of values: rather they are mutually reinforcing aspects of an immutable order, parts of a reversible cycle like the cycle of day and night . . . [o]ne sex is thus never the other for the other sex, except within the context of a differentialistic theory of sexuality – which is basically nothing but a utopia. For difference itself is a utopia: the idea that such pairs of terms can be split up is a dream . . . [o]nly in the distinction-based perspective of our culture is it possible to speak of the Other in connection with sex. Genuine sexuality, for its part, is 'exotic': it resides in the radical incomparability of the sexes – otherwise seduction would never be possible, and there would be nothing but alienation of one sex by the other. (1993b, 127-8)

Put more simply, male identity, for example, is formed by the circulation of the signs of masculinity and the exchanges by which one puts one's masculinity in play. The modern discourse of 'sexuality' is therefore a virtual reality of sexual exchanges insofar as no one could ever experience one's desire for the other as the operation of chromosomal sequences. Instead, the outcome of desire is intimacy and metamorphosis, the constant play between masculine and feminine.

69 The elegance of Nagy's thesis in *Best of the Achaeans* (Nagy 1979) lies in its demonstration of how *kleos* – fame as conferred by epic poetry – refers to a constellation of such symbolic obligations both within 'the world in the utterance' and 'the world of the utterance'. See also the formulation in 2003, 72-87, at 86-7.

70 Baudrillard 1993a, 48-9 n.25, 131ff.

of the bewitched or cursed man who has been abandoned by his ancestors"; such a man "feels himself non-existent and suffers a veritable ruin. For him 'nothingness' is, at most, a social negation and is not part of the idea he has of death."[71]

Whatever "survives unilaterally", Baudrillard argues, achieves power without establishing symbolic exchange. In unilateral exchange, such as our own contemporary myth of the 'altruistic gift', exchange is conducted in a utopia of generosity insulated from obligation. In the symbolic process the threat posed by the presentation of a unidirectional transaction – such as the gift given in the actual hope that it will be beyond requital – is met by the counter-gesture, the gift *returned* which is both a fatal challenge and the recuperation of symbolic exchange. Unlimited stockpiling and accumulation of gifts, when treated as the *goal* of exchange, arrests the ritual flows of exchange upon which social relations rely to be meaningfully redrawn.[72] Exchange itself, the *raison d'etre* of all objects, is interrupted.[73] Value, which is necessarily an undeclared and immanent part of symbolic exchange, is "dislocated from the process and *autonomized*" in a law of equivalences "base[d] . . . on the possibility of separating two distinct poles of exchange and making them autonomous."[74] Value as it is understood in political economy – an abstract cumulative reality distinct from the objects that discharge it – can proliferate only outside the exchanges that properly it inhabits immanently. Like *meaning* in linguistic theory, *value* in political economy must become a *surplus*, a residue left over from the exchange-relation. The idea that objects possess a value that can be abstracted presupposes a (historically contingent) rupture of those exchanges in which the object was conceived, not as an inert repository of value, but as the visible corporealization of the forces triggered by exchanges themselves.[75] Value in ritualized communities, however, is volatilized

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71 ibid. 189, n.12.

72 The danger posed by 'what cannot re-enter the cycle of exchanges' and the responses to it is described in (and as) the *Accursed Share* (Bataille 1989b, 19-41).

73 Baudrillard had signaled his break with Marxism by inverting the latter's prioritization of use over exchange in his structuralist revision of a theory of value (Baudrillard 1981). He argued that 'use-value' was part of an attempt by the discourse of political economy to ground value in a transcendent, functional-instrumental, reality. By placing greater analytical emphasis on consumption over production, Baudrillard paved the way for a post-Marxist reading of economic activity in which objects play a structural role as socio-cultural signifiers in exchange. For instance, citing an advertisement of the 1950's he showed that the refrigerator is a reversible signifier in a grid of social and cultural associations; that it keeps food cold is at best only its secondary or tertiary function. See, generally, the ground-breaking analysis in *The System of Objects* (Baudrillard 1996).

74 Baudrillard 1993a, 49 n.25, emphasis added.

75 An important observation in Gernet's discussion of mythical value, but the Marxist would suspect that such a transformation is underpinned by a shift in the social relations of production. Further analysis of dependent labour in the Homeric poems would disclose historical motivations, for which see above all the excellent approach taken by Thalmann 1998, 13-48. See also Wickert-Micknat 1983, 63-78 for the *Iliad*, 150-184 for discussion of dependent labour in the *Odyssey*, and the remarks of Finley 1981, 150-66 and 213-32.

in the rituals of circulation and is comparable, for example, to the way portions of the sacrificial animal are consumed. The rationalization of value splits the materiality, use, and function of the symbolic object from the imaginary significance it derives by circulating. The true value of the gift lies in the always-delayed, always-uncertain, fulfilment of the counter-gift, which, rather than completing the transaction when it occurs, serves only to re-activate the cycle of reversibility in symbolic exchange that guarantees the meaning and continuity of community relationships:

> [we] must emphasize that [symbolic exchange] stands opposed to the entire liberal or Christian humanist ideology of the gift. The gift is the source and even the essence of power. Only the counter-gift, the reversibility of symbolic exchange, abolishes power.[76]

This immolation of power in symbolic exchange is the stake of myth and ritual.

The symbolic order in Herodotus: the example of Polykrates' Ring

Power so defined is the product of the transfer of obligation in only one direction. When the possibility of acquitting an obligation is denied, the bi-directional exchanges that define social relations are arrested. This is exemplified in Herodotus by Polykrates, the late archaic tyrant of Samos who monopolizes generosity in order to insulate himself from obligation.[77] The power possessed by Polykrates rests in his unnatural accumulation of wealth. Wealth in the archaic world is considered unnatural when it places itself outside the symbolic process by the unilateral refusal to relinquish objects. This "failure of success" which alarms Amasis, Polykrates' *xenos*, is a consequence of tyrannical privileging of one term of exchange to the exclusion of its double, the counter-gesture. Ironically, Polykrates, as the centre of accumulated wealth and power and as controller of giving, risks being politically decentred by an irruption of the very action, as tyrant, he rigorously excludes, that is, receiving the counter-gift. Amasis knows that, unless success alternates with failure, it will trigger divine jealousy (the guarantor of symbolic exchange) and objects will take matters into their own hands.[78] In apparent

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76 Baudrillard 1993a, 49 n.28.

77 Hdt. 3.40-43. On the 'ring of Polykrates' in Herodotus, Gernet's analysis, 1981, 123-31, is indispensible. More recently, see Seaford 1994, 231-2 and Kurke 1999, 101-29. The following discussions have also been useful: Versnel 1977 discusses the ring as *pharmakos* and Polykrates as a tragic figure, as does Diesner 1959. Van der Veen 1993 offers a very valuable discussion of the narrative structure of this episode in Herodotus. Koenig 1989 proposes a scenario in which to imagine a possible guest-friendship between a Samian tyrant and an Egyptian king. Rosenberger 1995 looks at magical papyri for ways to conceptualize the ring. Klingenberg 1986 tackles the episode from the perspective of Greek law. Much of the following discussion has consequences for the question of Herodotus' own historiographic imagination. These consequences, however, cannot be properly analyzed here, although see Flory 1987. On the tyranny at Samos, see De Libero 1995, 249-310 and now Carty 2015, (which has appeared too late to be considered properly here).

78 Aesch. *Ag.* 947: μή τις πρόσωθεν ὄμματος βάλοι φθόνος.

acceptance of Amasis' symbolic logic, Polykrates contrives an elaborate gesture to assuage the gods by sacrificing the thing he holds most dear, his signet ring (*sphragis*).[79]

However, Polykrates does not properly respect the symbolic role of the ring. Gernet describes the gesture as an act of reciprocity, but it lacks the surrender associated with the gift or true stake, though the act has the appearance of a wager. Polykrates' gesture fails, however, because on his return to Samos he continues to act as though the ring were still on his finger. The tyrant shows insufficient *aidos,* that is, proper awe and respect towards the precious object.[80] Polykrates returns to his throne in a way that suggests that he regards *himself* as the *sphragis* that authorizes. For early Greek historiography, the tyrant's actions in general defined transgression.[81] But more specifically, the tyrant typified a human subject who sought to overreach archaic limitations of agency by identifying his personal individuality, rather than the exercise of a delegated social function, as the discrete source of sovereignty. In his usurpation of the emerging political will of the city, the tyrant's *hubris* is to imagine that he is not subject to external forces and can therefore operate independently of social and symbolic exchange. As Nagy has argued, this is a historical motif that closely links the figure of the archaic tyrant with emerging notions of the self as the source of authority and authorship.[82] This attitude to the ring therefore extends outwardly to include the ritual, his peers and the community at large. The tyrant's autonomy, which in the archaic imaginary is a source of pollution and constitutes a social disturbance demanding expiation precisely because it is an interruption of symbolic exchange, nevertheless paves the way for the classical conception of the responsible agent (in tragedy) and the subject as author (Plato), including the artist as *poietes* whose presence is marked by the signature (*sphragis*) on his work.[83]

The ring, on the other hand, with the force of its presence embodies and compels all the claims made on its authority, which in turn derives from the symbolic crucible of its own formation, the ritual of investiture.[84] The ring does not 'symbolize' or 'represent' the

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79 Gernet captures the force of the gesture well: "a bet in an enormous wager in which all the power of its owner is at stake", 1981, 125, linking the ritual to other similar examples that suggest a well-defined, perhaps thassalocratic, ritual. The ring is wrought by an ominously named craftsman, *Theodoros*, 'god's gift' (Hdt. 3.41).

80 Cairns 1991, 210-1 n.129 with Aesch. *Ag*. 914-949, especially 947-9.

81 See Dewald 2003, Kurke 1999, Seaford 2003, Vernant 1982b.

82 Nagy 1990a, 146-98. On the *sphragis*, see Calame 1996, 49-50. On tyranny and subjectivity, see Vernant 1988, 237-47.

83 On the tyrant and agency, see Vernant 1988, 113-40.

84 In passing, it is probable that the narrative power of this theme has an Indo-European heritage that extends into the realm of artisanal activity. On early Greek thinking about the craftsman and his skill before the development of a theory of *techné*, see Frontisi-Ducroux 1975. Its enduring power is famously at work in Tolkien's adaptation of the themes of Germanic saga where the active agency of the ring virtually transforms the object into a character in its own right.

tyrant's sovereignty in a metaphorical operation. The ring *is* that sovereignty. By casting the ring into the sea, while at the same time returning to his throne, Polykrates makes of himself a dangerous anomaly and reduces the object to the role of 'symbolizing' as an empty signifier. Reducing ritual logic to such a meaning through interpretation the tyrant places himself outside the milieu of symbolic exchange and declares his political dominance over the process. In myth, however, one risks being undone by the very objects that effect social exchanges. This is because the singular property of a signet ring is the eerie power that it derives from its configuration within the ritual of investiture: to wear a *sphragis* is to *be* a sovereign.[85] The ring will defy the attempt to reduce it to a mere reference.

Polykrates destroys the symbolic object as signifier without realizing that the complementary gesture demanded by the act would be to return to his city without his signet ring and therefore *without his sovereignty*. Polykrates could thereby guarantee reentry into a cycle of exchange in the social realm (the *polis*) via an act of surrender to which his community would respond in *obligation*.[86] Instead, Polykrates has

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85 The ring of Gyges offers another example of the mythical pattern. In Plato (Pl. *Rep.* 359d-360c), the Lydian finds a ring in an underground cave that makes him invisible when the collet is turned to face inward. This ring becomes instrumental is his seizure of the throne. In Herodotus (1. 9-11), Gyges' legendary invisibility is rationalized along lines already found in Hekataios (for example, *FGrHist* 1 F26 and 27): instead of using a magical ring Gyges conceals himself in order to see the naked queen. Gernet overlooks a key aspect of Gyges' ring. For Gernet, the important part of the ring is the seal: "it signifies, or rather *marks*, ownership, and as such is endowed with a special aura that was originally magical" and therefore can be thought of as "the antecedent of the struck coin" 1981, 125. In addition to ownership, however, the seal links the bearer with a source or origin (in this case an underground tomb of an oracular type) to which the ring provides the contact point. Wearing the seal outwardly projects the bearer's claim to effective speech as well as identifies the bearer as one who has passed through the ordeal of investiture and carries its talisman. If it has similarities to the struck coin it is because early coins incorporated this 'sign of origin' into their attempts to distil value, a value they seek to resurrect in their representation of symbolic objects. Since social being is embodied in the active signification of the seal, the ring acts as the ritual double of the king. To turn the seal inward causes the disappearance of the double in a mythic operation akin to the loss of one's shadow or reflection in the mirror. Plato rationalizes Gyges' invisibility (which Gernet does not discuss) as a metaphor for the ability to act politically without being held personally responsible. This is interesting in itself: in his autonomy the tyrant's power puts him beyond social exchanges rendering him figuratively and literally invisible. But the language of the story suggests something more. When Gyges was present but unseen, others "conversed as though about one gone (dead/vanished)" (διαλέγεσθαι ὡς περὶ οἰχομένον, Pl. *Rep.* 360a). This alternation of presence and absence is a marker of consecration that suggests the bearer himself disappears into the seal and exists in the social present only when the ring is worn. Gyges has, so to speak, one foot in the sacred and this is coterminous with his claim to sovereignty. With regard to coined money, this suggests that the stamp on the coin is everything – not just a guarantee of purity but also a tether to a source of value upon which its claim to sovereignty is established.

86 His successor Maiandrios makes the same mistake. In surrendering the tyranny to the citizens of Samos, he demands as compensation honours that would place him outside the cycle of citizen exchanges. As his opponents remind him, however, what they want is for him to be "made accountable", that is, to become a citizen subject to

surrendered what he assumes to be only a trivial imaginary, an empty token, which in the end he believes has nothing really to do with the exercise of sovereign right. But the fatal error of this assumption lies in the tyrant's blindness to the fact that sovereignty is ritually constituted in tokens whose symbolic exchanges the sovereign must submit before his authority is considered valid. Polykrates' desire to insulate himself from all obligations thus extends even to the forms he depends upon for the exercise of his authority. Baudrillard has described the relegation of the imaginary as giving rise to the *problem of the remainder*, an anomaly that is fatal to power. By conceiving of sovereign power as a real content opposed to an empty form the tyrant risks the emptiness of this form being left behind as a residue toxic to the maintenance of his position.[87] And, as Herodotus tells us, the ring does *remain.* Baudrillard explains:

> [s]omewhere there is a 'remainder', which the subject cannot lay hold of, which he believes he can overcome by profusion, by accumulation, and which in the end merely puts more and more obstacles in the way of relating. In a first phase, one communicates through objects, then proliferation blocks that communication. The object has a dramatic role. It is a fully fledged actor in that it confounds any mere functionality.[88]

When the ring returns to Polykrates it takes all the ironic forms of symbolic reversal: the ring paradoxically contrives to 'remain in the sea' (metonymically in the belly of the fish) at precisely the same moment it comes back to his palace on Samos. The sea in myth is a zone of immolation in which things are restored to their intimate nature and are transformed, never to appear again before the eyes of men. In Bacchylides' *Dithyramb for the Keians* (17), both Theseus and the sea accept the wager of Minos, who overreaches himself and unwittingly exchanges his ring for Theseus' royal investiture in a turn of events beyond Minos' anticipation. Minos' ring disappears forever thereby restoring the balance beyond the intention of one who sought unilateral control over the forces of exchange. In Bacchylides' account, Minos' ring does not return to him enigmatically in a fish; instead it more dramatically transfers its sovereign power to the sea-god's acknowledged son who emerges from the ocean as a young king in the trappings of his consecrated investiture. In Herodotus, Polykrates' ring mirrors the tyrant's own anomalous state, remaining 'in the sea', embedded permanently beyond Polykrates' reach where in fact his ritual gesture had destined it to be all along.

These negative cases illustrate that the gesture of sacrifice derives its force from the obligations it activates and the relationships it consecrates, not from the individual's *inner desire* for renunciation.[89]

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the *politeia*, the rules of citizen transactions (ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ὅκως λόγον δώσεις τῶν μετεχείρισας χρημάτων, Hdt. 3.142.5).

87 On the 'content of the form' in narrative, see White 1987, chapters 1 and 2.

88 Baudrillard 2003, 5.

89 On the concept of the 'unsacrificeable' see Nancy 1991.

In Herodotus, the fish offers a ritual figuration of the ring destroyed (absent), but not annihilated (present), and of the sea's refusal to accept the sacrificial gesture. Ironically, the sea has its revenge, so to speak, 'from the sea'. The authority invested in the symbolic object and the exchanges upon which it depends, and from whose legitimating power Polykrates has exempted himself, now returns to him in the form of a counter-gesture from a humble fisherman. Ultimately, the fisherman's response is the only authentic act of symbolic exchange in Herodotus' story. The poor fisherman gives Polykrates the fish in a gesture that is sincere, grateful, and without coercion or calculation. It is the only proper response to the kingliness of Polykrates, an offering motivated entirely by *kharis*.

> Ὦ βασιλεῦ. ἐγὼ τόνδε ἑλὼν οὐκ ἐδικαίωσα **φέρειν ἐς ἀγορήν**, καίπερ γε ἐὼν ἀποχειροβίοτος, **ἀλλὰ μοι ἐδόκεε σεῦ τε εἶναι ἄξιος καὶ τῆς σῆς ἀρχῆς· σοὶ δή μιν φέρων δίδωμι**.
>
> Hdt. 3.42.2
>
> O *basileus*, in catching this fish I did not think it right *to take it to the agora*, though I am indeed a man who makes his living from his hands; *instead it seemed to me something more appropriate to you and your power. So bearing it here I give it to you.*

The irony in this passage defies translation. In a reading suggested by the political tone of the language the passage could be (rather awkwardly) rendered: "I deemed it wrong to trade the fish in the 'space of political and commercial exchanges', whose rules bind citizens like myself; rather, it seemed (to this citizen) to be a thing more akin to your value and your rule (which has put you beyond the constraints of citizen relations)." Instead of carrying the fish into an explicit contractual relationship (**φέρειν** ἐς ἀγορήν), the fisherman risks losing his possession in a symbolic pact with the greater man (σοὶ δή μιν φέρων **δίδωμι**). Without realizing it, the ring has taken matters into its own hands fulfilling the sacrificial destiny denied to it by Polykrates.

In such a gesture lies the foundation of symbolic power with its ingenuous challenge to the unilateral power of unlimited accumulation.[90] It transcends Polykrates' empty gesture by its *sincerity*, a

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90 This idea forms the basis of Baudrillard's critique of capitalism (1993, 6-49), as well as his explanation of what liberal democracy brands as 'terrorism', namely, the gesture for which the only effective counter-gesture is self-destruction. In his discussion of the 'problem' of the suicide-bomber, Baudrillard points out that all the dialectical power of a modern technological army cannot answer any challenge which obliges it to operate outside the game for which it was developed. The 'wager' of the suicide-bomber is to dare one's opponent to meet their challenge with an even more extravagant death, a response incapable of being conceived in the modern West: 1993a, 36-7. By escalating the potlatch of violence to its extreme, the terrorist achieves symbolic supremacy by denying a moral terrain (that of 'death or victory') to their opponent. The West is compelled to respond by 'becoming terrorist' in its turn, but a key tenet of post-war liberal democracy (the sacrosanctity of life and 'human rights') forces this terrorism inward onto its own citizens (the *Patriot Act*) or else outwardly via cinema toward imaginary enemies who are defeated by acts of selfless personal sacrifice (aping suicide-bombers, e.g. *Independence Day*). The *symbolic* strategy, Baudrillard concludes, is infinitely more powerful than the *diabolic* one because accumulation is immuno-deficient to whatever challenges it to surrender itself (which

poor man's uncoerced 'risk of generosity' even though to keep the fish would save his family from starvation.[91] Polykrates faces a dilemma: accept the gift and be under an obligation where the stakes are everything and risk being undone by the gift, or refuse the challenge and snub even this humblest gesture of the desire to honour him? In fact Polykrates has no choice but to respond to the "double obligation of word and gift" (χάρις διπλὴ τῶν τε λόγων καὶ τοῦ δώρου, Hdt. 3.42.2) and unwittingly completes the metamorphosis of forms: from signet ring to sacrificial dedication, oracular talisman to gift, the gift of his own power but given to him by the poorest citizen. Returned in this way, the ring becomes even more of a problem and with it Polykrates' *aporia* intensifies, foreshadowing his imminent end. This is the consequence of being acted upon by an object *as though it were the subject* demanding to be circulated and transmitted according to ritual propriety.[92] The tyrant's error was to imagine that his subjectivity was not reversible, that his gesture of dominance over the ring was not immediately shadowed in the same instant by its radical opposite, the object's coercive reaction and stubborn adherence to the destiny marked out for it by symbolic exchange. The exercise of sovereignty is impossible without the form that supports it, a 'material narrative' that must be approached with caution because to deploy it is to trigger consequences beyond the subject's attempt to control and dominate. Symbolic exchange, in which the real and the imagined continuously and ironically trade places, is illustrated in this story, where a fish is more than a fish, and the poorest man's generosity delivers the seal of doom to a mighty king. In this episode, taken from the cultural poetics of archaic Greek thought that still strongly inhabits the history of Herodotus, we have a vivid example of Baudrillard's conviction:

> [i]t seemed to me that the object was almost fired with passion, or at least that it could have a life of its own; that it could leave behind the passivity of its use to acquire a kind of autonomy, and perhaps even a capacity to avenge itself on a subject over-sure of controlling it. Objects have always been regarded as an inert, dumb world, which is ours to do with as we will, on the grounds that we produced it. But, for me, that world had something to say which exceeded its use. It was part of the realm of the sign, where nothing happens so simply, because the sign always effaces the thing. So the object designated the real world, but also its absence – and, in particular, the absence of the subject.[. . .] What excited me, and still does, is the way the object slips away, absents itself – all that it retains of the *Unheimlich*, the 'uncanny'. The object is, admittedly, mediatory, but at the same time, because it is immediate, immanent, it shatters that mediation. It is on both sides of the line, and it both gratifies and disappoints.[93]

Baudrillard ironically refers to as 'evil'). The symbolic strategy, as Euripides' *Bacchae* represents, is to dare one's opponent to enter into an exchange with you as well as to risk being transformed into one's opponent in order to defeat them.

91 Generosity is effective because it is a wager: the risk lies in the ever-present potential for being snubbed.

92 See especially Mauss 1966, 8-10 on the Maori *taonga*: "The thing given is not inert. It is alive and often personified, and strives to bring to its original clan and homeland some equivalent to take its place" (10).

93 Baudrillard 2003, 3-4.

The 'gifts' of Agamemnon

The concept of symbolic exchange sets into relief the problem posed by Agamemnon's gifts and his attempt at exercising unilateral power. Michael Lynn-George has shown that Agamemnon's proposal of recompense to Achilles (*Il.* 9.115-161) only amounts to a promise of words, sharing none of the risk of the wager constitutive of the gift.[94] Agamemnon's speech begins with his acknowledgement of a "catalogue of errors" (*Il.* 9.115) and a gesture of compensation (*apoina*), but eventually transforms into a coercive contractual demand into which Agamemnon hopes to bind Achilles as a dependent. Agamemnon's *apoina* is first of all presented as "without limit" and immediately reconfigured as *dora*, "gifts".[95] As Lynn-George makes clear, however, what begins as an expression of humility, which should entail the risk that Agamemnon might suffer humiliation before Achilles and the *laos*, soon changes into Agamemnon's assertion of authority. The limitless nature of the gifts Agamemnon bestows underscores the shift from a pact, binding the two men in the shared risk of an unrequited gesture, to that of a contract through which Agamemnon seeks to insure himself against a loss of privilege and power. A sincere *apoina* would supplicate the wronged man by its humility and admission of error. Moreover, it is by virtue of its sincerity that an *apoina* establishes an obligation on the recipient to accept the compensation or else risk the latter becoming the perpetrator of wrong.[96] A humble gesture thus has a different force but one no less compelling than a direct assertion of unilateral power. It is a wager, which dares the recipient to refuse the gesture, and its symbolic power derives from the risk of its possible failure – one must submit to the risk of absolute loss.

But Agamemnon's limitless gifts work to prevent Achilles' counter-gesture by attempting to enmesh him in an obligation beyond requital. This is all the more inappropriate since it seeks to add to the violation of Achilles' *geras* a unilateral generosity from which Achilles would be unable to escape. Furthermore, all these gifts are conditional:

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94 Lynn-George 1988, 81-92: it is difficult to match the subtlety and depth of this analysis. The study of compensation in the *Iliad* by D. F. Wilson (2002, 71-108, 135-46) is also very relevant. On archaic and classical Greek practices of gift-exchange, see the excellent survey by Herman 1987, 73-115 and the collection of essays in Gill et al. 1998.

95 The implications of "unlimited compensation" are incisively observed by D.F. Wilson 2002, 136-47.

96 Something like this is involved in the case at the centre of the trial scene on the Shield of Achilles (*Il.* 18.497-508). The dispute has arisen not because compensation for a slain man has been withheld by the perpetrator (it has in fact been surrendered in full, *Il.* 18.499) but that the victim's relatives are refusing to accept it. No doubt to take the compensation in one's hands would seal the pact and oblige the recipient to reliquish his claim. Aias describes the general ethical obligation to reciprocate a sincerely offered *poinē* by curbing one's desire for vengeance (*Il.* 9.632-6), even though he has altogether missed the point of Achilles' response to Agamemnon's gesture.

> ταῦτά κέ οἱ τελέσαιμι μεταλλήξαντι χόλοιο.
> **δμηθήτω** - Ἀΐδης τοι ἀμείλιχος ἠδ' ἀδάμαστος·
> τοὔνεκα καί τε βροτοῖσι θεῶν ἔχθιστος ἁπάντων -
> καί **μοι ὑποστήτω**, ὅσσον βασιλεύτερός εἰμι
> ἠδ' ὅσσον γενεῇ προγενέστερος εὔχομαι εἶναι.
>
> *Il.* 9.157-61
>
> all this I will fulfill for him if he changes from his anger.
> *Let him submit!* For Hades is pitiless and unbending;
> for this he is the most hated of the gods for mortals.
> So *let him yield place to me* inasmuch as I am more kingly
> and claim to be the elder in birth.

Agamemnon's demands convert what ought to be a humble gesture, the offer of compensation, into the terms of an explicit contract.[97] A humble gesture ought not declare its agenda and should dissipate tacitly throughout the process of the exchange. In seeking an explicit guarantee of what he wants from Achilles in advance, Agamemnon is thus asking for much more than that which an *apoina* is entitled to claim. He thereby imposes, as a condition of the receipt of these objects, precisely the same conditions of submission that he sought in seizing Achilles' *geras* in *Iliad* 1 (*Il.* 1.184-7). In the end, however, Agamemnon's gifts are just words, a promissory note extended to Achilles in return for his explicit services and dependence. Lynn-George draws out the significance of this speech by delineating the terms of Agamemnon's restitution – firstly, a refusal to address Achilles by name or to accord to him even the possibility of an equality of *timē* with the king. Instead, he offers Achilles a daughter, equality but only with his son ("I will rank him equally with Orestes", τείσω δέ μιν ἶσον Ὀρέστῃ, *Il.* 9.142) and the promise of subjects who will honour him like a god. Secondly, Agamemnon's 'gifts' can never be more than the promise of "sweet words" proposed by Nestor (*Il.* 9.113). The appropriate gesture here would have been to go in person, admit error, return Briseis and give the gifts all *without any hope or expectation of conciliation*.[98] Instead, Agamemnon's gesture is quite literally 'empty' and without sincerity, which is unwilling and unable to conceal the explicit relation of power it *really* craves:

> The king's list of gifts is a construct in language which bears anonymity, absence, silence, distance and even death. As such it is a reversible realm in which, just as relenting turns into demanding, every term includes the possibility of a passage into its opposite, in which the constitutive ambivalence of the gifts amounts to what is less a fixed static list than a mobile equivocal structure listing from one side to another. Boundless and binding, the gifts' voluntary aspect is inseparable from the obligatory, the

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97 δμηθήτω from δαμάζω, evokes δμώς and δμῳή, explicit terms for dependent and unfree servants, while the imperatival form adds emphasis. On these forms, see Wickert-Micknat 1983, 155-9.

98 The paradigm for such a risk in Greek thought is supplication, which is as effective in proportion to the risk the suppliant takes. Supplication ritually compels the supplicated to respond by activating powerful forces, which they will ignore at their own peril. For the suppliant it is a last resort with no guarantee of success, but this real wager, ironically, is precisely what makes it effective in triggering a response. On supplication, the essential studies are Gould 2001, 22-77 and Crotty 1994.

> constraint which constructs a realm of freedom as a field of force – where choice is the coercion of imperatives, honour an experience of submission, conferred kingship a position of subjection, and the acceptance of property means to be possessed, the gift a debt.[99]

By compelling the gift to 'behave' differently, Agamemnon misappropriates and thus undermines the tacit rules of symbolic exchange, laying bare the coercive will behind his gesture. That which is demanded of Achilles by Agamemnon is not in Agamemnon's power to elicit. Rather it is a power reserved for precious objects activated through the sincerity of their exchange within the gentle constraints of symbolic power. In sum, Agamemnon misuses symbolic objects to accumulate power and bind others into relations of domination, aligning him on the same pole as Polykrates.

Achilles exposes Agamemnon's strategy, but goes too far, excessively denying to *any* object the ability to signify an authentic value. Toward the end of his reply to Odysseus, Achilles places his own life instead at the heart of system of value (*Il.* 9.401-5). By splitting objects from their privileged role in symbolic exchange and replacing them with the 'higher' value of his own subjectivity, Achilles unilaterally challenges the foundations of the heroic economy. But ultimately Achilles, like Agamemnon, is unable to escape the constraints of the symbolic economy of which they are both products. Achilles ends up achieving little more than the transformation of his 'subjectivity' into yet another object destined to resolve itself in an exchange that he wilfully ignores – the death of his double.

The 'symbolic object'

The 'symbolic object', by contrast with the 'sign object', also acquires its efficacy by being a ritual *subject* and by the manner in which it oscillates back and forth in a play of presence and absence, of compliance and defiance, through the processes of exchange. However, the object is a ritual persona only insofar as it exists within a form of exchange in which ritual assigns it a role to play. Nevertheless, if ritualized exchange environments function within a symbolic universe, then a description of their role necessitates a semiotic analogy. The object works as an *actant* in an 'enunciative economy' by operating on a syntactic and grammatical level.[100] In a *symbolic exchange environment*, the opposition between subject and

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99 Lynn-George 1988, 90-1.

100 This analogy imagines exchange as a performance, which will imply in turn seeing the enunciative environment of performance as a set of 'transactions of utterance'. *Actant* is a Greimasian term that broadly refers to any "meaningful entity in a linguistic chain". They are "units of the narrative syntax, while actors belong to the discursive structures" (Zinna in Sebeok 1986, 7). If symbolic exchange can be even more broadly generalized to include a ritualized performance event, then the 'subjectivity' of the object can be explored in these terms. On the 'subject of semiotics', Eco 1976, 314-8, is very suggestive.

object dissolves because the object is believed to 'act' upon the subject the instant it is deployed. Caught up in the strategies of exchange, of which they are largely subconscious, agents are affected 'alchemically' by the object the moment they use it. To receive a gift, as much as to give one, involves being acted upon, not by the giver or the receiver, but by the same alchemy which assigns the object its power and its capacity to *found* relations within ritualized exchange.[101]

Baudrillard rejects Marx's claim that exchange is founded upon a base of needs and utility (the law of value in chapter 1 of *Kapital*), arguing instead that:

> the object does not assume meaning either in a symbolic relationship with the subject [that is, in a Freudian relation e.g. the collector's libidinous fixation on "the Object of desire"] or in an operational relation to the world (object-as-implement): it finds meaning with other objects, in difference, according to a hierarchical code of significations.[102]

In other words, a culturally embedded 'system of objects' *precedes any exchange.*[103] This system circumscribes the basis on which needs and uses of objects are consumed and establishes the basis on which the origin of needs and uses are experienced as natural. People do not consume objects in the manner of rational subjects making calculated decisions based on dialectical reference to values drawn from the principles of a liberal economy, as Marx suggests. Nor do they 'consume' objects, any more than they regard discourses (myths for example) or institutions (such as the division of labour between the sexes) as objects of consumption in which one consciously interprets a 'meaning-value' to be carried away. Rather, Baudrillard argues, people enter a "language of objects" that tacitly informs their values and impels their patterns of consumption. In symbolic exchange, however, value does not arise as a consequence of a Marxian dialectic between use-value and exchange-value. Value arises immanently in objects as a *habitus*. Thus, participants in an exchange do not consume objects *per se*; rather, they enter a system of discourses and institutions that are converted via behaviours, dispositions and inclinations into social action. The meaning of objects – their value – is thus dispersed into the exchange relations that form around them. Conversely, the social existence of objects is corporealized within them as a bodily *hexis*. The ontology of the symbolic object is only visible inside the framework of the exchange and reveals itself only in "the transferential pact that it seals between two persons."[104]

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[101] The starting-point for all these observations, for Baudrillard and Bataille as much as for this study, is the first half of Mauss' fundamental essay, 1966, 6-45.

[102] Baudrillard 1981, 64. The turn to structuralism here aligns with the priority he began to place on the consumption of signs over the Marxian priority placed on the production of use-values.

[103] Similarly, Lynn-George draws on Saussure and Derrida to show, *contra* A. Parry, that the language of Achilles is "plundered" from the "great field of words", 1988, 93-131.

[104] Baudrillard 1981, 64.

To speak explicitly of the exchange value of objects is to speak of 'value' as something distinct from the object and as a residue of the exchange:

> whereas the symbol refers to lack (to absence) as a virtual relation of desire, the sign object only refers to *the absence of relation* itself, and to isolated individual subjects.[105]

What Baudrillard means here is that symbolic relations demand that the precious object "abolishes itself in the relation it establishes";[106] symbolic value cannot be sought other than through voluntary dispossession of the object whose force is volatilized ('spent') in the formation of the relation itself. The exchange is a sacrificial act in the sense that it renders the object *sacer*, no longer operative in the world of men, *anathema* in both senses of the word. Such is the content of Amasis' injunction to Polykrates: "throw it away so that it will no longer come to be among men" (μηκέτι ἥξει ἐς ἀνθρώπους, Hdt 3.40). In regarding objects as signs independently of ritualized exchange environments, "the object becomes autonomous, intransitive, opaque, and so begins to signify *the abolition of the relationship.*"[107] The sign implies the redundancy of exchange relationships and implies their eventual disappearance. In the example of Polykrates, the tyrant's attitude to the ring – that is, his reduction of the precious object to a mere signifier of sovereignty – is an expression of the degree to which he desires to set himself apart from the cycle of exchanges that limit power and found civic life.[108] The ring, however, will unravel both the tyrant's refusal to submit to the risk of circulation and his assertion of authorship in relation to the sovereignty he wields. By contrast the symbolic object refers to its own volatilization in establishing exchange relations resulting from its sacrificial consecration.[109]

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105 Baudrillard 1981, 65.

106 ibid.

107 ibid.

108 Note that in Herodotus' story, Polykrates' power has begun to disturb his *xenia* with Amasis, which cannot survive the brinkmanship of potlatch.

109 Bataille builds an entire economic theory on the fundamental centrality of expenditure. Whatever accumulates to the point that its prodigality threatens the entire framework of exchange must be destroyed (the *accursed share*). The sign object becomes a signifier of a potential for establishing relations but vanishes as soon as that potential is exercised. Gold, for example, is valuable because it represents a hopeful guarantee of future exchangeability (so Arist. *Nic. Eth.* 5.5. 14, 1133^{b} 11f.); behind gold is imagined a utopia where pure value is liberated from exchange (note Aristotle's thesis that money emerges out of the need to exchange *outside of one's own community*: *Pol.* 1.9, 1257^{a}6ff.). Monetized value is therefore quite different from symbolic value, not least because its value rests on accumulated potential (that is, *power*) liberating the subject from the exchanges of self and object in social circulation. On the poetics of Greek anxiety about money and its dissolution of the social and political spheres, see Kurke 1999, and money in general, Seaford 2004, 147-72.

In symbolic exchange 'everything take place as if' the object's material (the 'real' object) and its meaning-value (the 'imaginary') are inextricably intermingled. Thus, *contra* Lévi-Strauss, in a ritualized universe the symbolic does not resolve the duality of the object *as though it were a problem*. Rather, as the result of the radical indeterminacy of these two terms the problem of duality between the real and the imaginary in symbolic exchange is forever deferred. For example, the ontology of the gift is not bi-polar, containing a tension between its abstract worth and the motives of the exchange. To be a gift, an object's material 'value' will be inaccessible outside the socially motivated dispositions that activate it as gift and must posit no other instrumentality than itself.

The wonder of the precious object derives as much from its inscrutable uncanniness as from the fetishization of its mediatory function.[110] It is this inscrutability, the object's immediacy, and particularly its *subjectivity* that baffles its functional *telos*. In his gesture of giving, the giver is given back in return as a product of the sincerity of his gesture, confounding any attempt to pinpoint agency. To cast a signet ring away as Polykrates does is not to *dispose of a representation* of legitimate authority but to *sacrifice one's own authority*:

> what constitutes the object as value in symbolic exchange is that *one separates himself from it in order to give it*, to throw it at the feet of the other, under the gaze of the other (*ob-jicere*); *one divests himself as if of a part of himself – an act which is significant in itself as the basis, simultaneously, of both the mutual presence of the terms of the relationship, and their mutual absence (their distance).*[111]

The object thus embodies the pact of exchange as a closure ('throwing-together', *sumbolē*) as well as a tacit recognition that putting one's self into circulation is a sacrifice and a wager that carries a *risk of loss*.

The *xeinion* ('guest-gift') is exemplary of this order of exchange. On one level, the preservation of the *xenic* relationship demands the total relinquishing of something dear. Such an object is *philon*, investing the possessor with *kudos* and *kharis* that are always manifested as physical dispositions and never as abstract qualities.[112] To describe an object as *philon* marks it as precious and dear. But it also marks it as something that ought to be surrendered in the circulation that creates *philia*. A reverential attitude towards *philia* carries a responsibility to let go of the object and to maintain a wary respect for the mysterious agency underlying its preciousness. The idea of *kharis* contains a similar obligation to match a sincerely generous gesture with a counter-gesture. *Kharis* designates the feeling of indebtedness, thankfulness and generosity that arises in the face of sincere actions. *Kharis* fits etymologically within an pattern of thought that describes the "state of

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110 *Unheimlich*: Baudrillard 2003, 4.

111 Baudrillard 1981, 65, emphasis added.

112 Benveniste 1973, 273-88: *philos* designates that to which obligations are due, something to be regarded with *aidos*, "reverential awe, respect." On the guest-gift, see Herman 1987, 60-1.

having been affected" by another's action. Frisk, for example, raises the possibility of parallel developments in the root of *kharis* that refer to notions of anger and resentment,[113] in one sense the inverse of its meaning in Greek, although even here the notion of *Reiz* ("charm, impulse") is clearly present.[114] So anger and resentment, appearing in the form of a negative compulsion, can be considered the mirror image of grace, a product of the snub. *Kharis* expresses the essence of symbolic exchange: the charm of the precious thing is shadowed by the anger and resentment it can trigger as a consequence of the receiver 'being compelled' (to act) when it is offered as a gift. Considered as something at once gladly received and an imposition, the object in exchange brings joy and catches one in a net of obligation. *Kharis* denotes the state of becoming the object of a another's action where the energy of the gesture is simultaneously located in the gift and released by it: everything takes place as though "this gift compels me . . ."[115] Although the complexity of the social relations surrounding the gift is conditional upon circumstances such as the elapse of time between gestures and the possibility of objects being unrequited and so on, the presence of the counter-gift, or its absence in deferral or suspension, is fundamental.[116] The value of the gift is always linked, over the horizon of its simple transaction, to the future counter-gift (whether offered or not) and it is within the space (or absence) circumscribed by this transaction that the *symbolic value* of men and things is volatilized.

Moreover, the *xeinion* is also a stake, a wager in an undeclared potlatch-war of obligation where its destruction in the generous exchange constitutes a challenge. As a consequence, the successful man whose good fortune allows him to amass a hoard of valuable things courts danger in failing to understand that these objects will pursue their own strategy if their circulation in exchange is arrested.[117] Amasis' advice to Polykrates stresses that their pact (ξεινίη, Hdt. 3.43) depends on avoiding a divine envy incited by the limitlessness of power and goods. The friend's advice is to put the ring, and therefore sovereignty itself, back into circulation, first by drowning power, then by returning *kratos* to the middle. Polykrates must somehow rid himself of this *limitlessness*, and the unilateral power founded upon it, by throwing his royal power away; but the advice is lost on tyrants.[118] So, when the signet ring returns from the

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113 Frisk *GEW* 1064-5.

114 Frisk *GEW* 1063.

115 Accepting the gift in this way is illustrated in Gernet's reading of the power of objects in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon,* and the necklace of Eriphyle: 1981, 121-3.

116 "The temporal interval of between the gift and the counter-gift" allows "two perfectly symmetrical acts to appear as unique and unrelated", Bourdieu 1998, 94. For this idea in Greek thought, compare Phokylides fr.6 Gentili-Prato on the concept of *kairos*: "Avoid being indebted to a vulgar man lest he create problems by demanding it back *at an inapproapriate time*" (χρήστης κακοῦ ἔμμεναι ἀνδρος φεύγειν, μή σέ γ' ἀιήσῃ **παρὰ καιρὸν** ἀπαιτέων).

117 Mauss 1966, 31-7.

118 Hence Baudrillard's emphasis on the etymology of 'object': an *objectum* is that which one has "cast down" (*obiecit*), 1981, 65.

sea to Polykrates and is delivered to him as a gift with all the compulsion of the unequal statuses involved – and so *sealing* the tyrant's doom with his own *sphragis* – is not the charm of the story that it was really the ring who threw Polykrates into the sea?[119] The false wager turns the destiny of the object back onto subject.

Baudrillard argues that the unilateral prioritization of one term ('value') over its double ('object') is tantamount to making 'value' the only reference point for reality and economy. Meanwhile, the other term ('object') is relegated under the sign of the imaginary, the 'non-real', to be regarded as whatever merely *refers* to the real as the source of its truth. In the process, the real extends its hegemony, remanding the opposite term to the ghetto of the imaginary through the language of the real. From there it can be compelled to 'make sense' and so be understood, explained and contained. As Foucault has shown, a discourse of this kind constitutes a form of repression that silences the imaginary and assures its non-disclosure.[120] So, for example, psychoanalysis must at all costs make the lunatic speak the 'language of reason' (the *logos* of the *psyche*) via the 'real' of the unconscious mind, which is "a logistical mechanism which permits us to think madness (and more generally all strange and anomalous formations) in a system of meaning opened to non-meaning."[121] The formulation can be expanded throughout post-Enlightenment thought: for example, a science of sexuality re-expresses femininity within a system of masculinity as 'non-masculinity'; zoology a system of humanity condescending to the bestial; political economy forces all objects into a system of value ('commodification') by ignoring or trivializing forms of non-value like the gift, as though they ought not to be regarded seriously as part of any 'real economy' – or worse, treats them as part of the corrupt 'black' economy of bribery, graft, nepotism and so on. All these historical forms – the Unconscious, political economy, sexuality, humanity, and so on – seek to contain the challenge of the relegated term – madness, the object, the feminine, animals, and so on – by forcing them speak the discourse of the dominant term. Ultimately, the relegated term is always represented negatively as a diversion or lack: the imaginary lacks reality and therefore threatens to divert priority away from the real. For Baudrillard, who follows Derrida (on the *supplement*) and Foucault (on *pouvoir/savoir*), this relegation is precisely the strategy of power. *Seduction*, on the other hand, is the counter-strategy of the relegated term, which never seeks to overthrow the privileged term in a antagonistic dialectic (as Marx desired, in new relations of *production*), but instead 'diverts' (*seduco*) the privileged term into a relationship of exchange and metamorphosis with its opposite:

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[119] With tragic echoes and realization: θεῖον . . . τὸ πρῆγμα, Hdt. 3.42.

[120] For example, the discontinuous path traced out in *Madness and Civilization* 1965, with White 1979, 95-104.

[121] Baudrillard 1981, 136.

subject becoming object, male female, sane mad, human animal, living dead and so on.[122] Symbolic exchange, by refusing to split terms in this way, co-opts metamorphosis as its strategy for averting the danger posed by the irruption of one term at the expense of the other – the trace of which can be found in myth and ritual. To preempt a key conclusion below, it is in this sense that one could say Patroklos *seduces* Achilles insofar as the desire for epic memory (*kleos*) present within the *Iliad* plays itself out in the role played by Patroklos. The strategy of epic is to seduce Achilles back into the pact of being the hero of this epic (that is, as "best of the Akhaians"), and therefore, from the perspective of the occasion, the restoration of the hero of cult in the here-and-now and for the future.

So, for example, the rambling nonsense of the insane, the incoherence of dreams, the opaque games of children, the silence of animals – as well as the world of inanimate objects – all throw down the symbolic gauntlet to discourses of the real by opening up the disconcerting possibility of an opaque counter-discourse in which there is no rational 'meaning' or 'value' to be taken away, or else they ensure that meaning remains beyond the horizon of the real. Baudrillard argues that for this reason the radical otherness of the opposite term remains intractable to theoretical interpretation.[123] For Baudrillard, the key to symbolic exchange is that its meaning is embodied in a 'system of objects' and not in the analytical sum of their references. A symbolic environment is one that never poses the 'other' as *problem* but is instead one that challenges 'otherness' to exchange itself via the pact, the wager or the gift.

This phantasmic threat of the excluded term and its stubborn meaninglessness in terms of disenchanted reality (or objective knowledge) is what Baudrillard refers to as the "fatal strategy" of the object: the irruption into the real of an "unintelligible caprice."[124] "Fatal" because the object takes its cue from death, that "form in which the determinacy of the subject and of value is lost."[125] In Baudrillard's *Symbolic Exchange and Death* (1993a) "death" does not refer to the irrevocable terminus of physical death in the form accepted by a contemporary disenchanted reality. Rather, the "fatal strategy" is the opposite of *de-term-ination* (prioritizing one term at the expense of the other) in *ex-term-ination* (the abolition of any distinction between terms), a sacrificial act in which the determinacy of the terms "real/imaginary" (represented by the "/") is dissolved and the pair are returned to their status as doubles locked in the "immediacy" of an unending cycle of exchanges. Ritual enacts the 'becoming other' of participants, as, for example, in Communion where the sacrificial consumption of the Host marks the 'becoming divine' of the

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122 Baudrillard 1990b.

123 Examples of 'radical otherness' and the impossible challenges it poses are considered in part 2 of Baudrillard 1993b.

124 Bataille 1989b, 44. On the meaning of 'fatal' and 'fatal strategy', see Baudrillard 1990a.

125 Baudrillard 1993a, 5 n.2.

congregation and the 'becoming mortal' of the god. The metamorphosis (rather than metaphor) brought about in Communion establishes a cosmic order in which human and god, while radically Other to one another, are thrown together by the force of their mutual exchanges. The excluded term (imaginary, object, woman, child, animal, madness, and so on), rather than threatening to call its 'other' into question is returned to the ambivalent indeterminacy in the mirror that completes the meaning of the self.

The mirror plays an important figural role here because it is, as Lacan argued, the primal scene of exchange. The mirror is what permits us in the first instance, so to speak, 'to go into circulation'. We are therefore circumscribed by agencies of doubling through which we enter the social realm and begin to 'transact' a social persona. The mirror, language and the system of objects are all sites in which our doubles take shape; this multiplicity of substitutions allows our participation in the social economy. In the modern discourse of selfhood one is alienated from the symbolic content of objects and images because the meaning and value of both are imagined to derive from the unique priority of a transcendent 'self' that precedes image and object (just as in Marx, for instance, reified needs precede the object). Lacan and Baudrillard both demonstrated, throughout an immense body of work, that the mirror-image was, contrary to this modern utopia, fundamentally ambivalent, offering in the reflection a simultaneously real and imagined self about which language must constantly be deployed (in narrative) in order to prevent split or fracture. Hence psychoanalysis, for Lacan, was fundamentally a matter of language and addressed the 'mirror of narrative'.

Drawing upon the ambivalence of death in rites of transition and initiation, Baudrillard argues that 'death' is coextensive with the state of entering into symbolic exchange and of metamorphosis in ritual. The figure of death is the indeterminacy to which the subject submits in order to prevent being isolated from the object which defines and shapes it; it is the indeterminacy of value which guarantees the effectiveness of the gift; it is the indeterminacy of the masculine which surrenders itself to the feminine in order to be redefined continually in seductive exchanges. The "fatal strategy" in symbolic exchange is to accord to the object and, in the end, any excluded and repressed term a subjectivity whose motives although obscure are gestures demanding acknowledgement in sincere counter-gestures. The object is restored to its mythical power only when it is accepted that participants in a symbolic universe do not understand themselves as mythical and that in their world there is no 'myth'.[126] Rather, a symbolic universe is a lived *habitus* whose trace is a poetics characterized by one term dissolving into its other, as an agency activated by exchange, charged with inexorable, opaque and 'seductive' energy.

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[126] A point brought out seminally by Detienne 1986, especially 1-21.

The Oath of Achilles

Handbooks on 'Homeric society' overlook the social praxis at work in epic performance. 'Handbook' refers loosely to a genre in which epic poems are presented as an inert reflection of archaic society and a literal source of historical data. While this has proven profitable for historians to a limited degree,[127] it can hardly be imagined by such synchronic syntheses that the *Iliad* may itself have been the first example of *their* genre. It is even less likely therefore that studies of Homeric epic as *historical evidence* think to reflect upon its meta-ritual (and meta-evidential) function.[128] For instance, the crisis of elite relations posed in *Iliad* 1 precipitates a crisis also on the level of meta-ritual because the anger of Achilles is motivated by a disruption to social exchange caused by the emerging conflict between representation and reality. As a consequence, caution is essential when adopting a sociological approach to historical explanation that, in its eagerness to disclose the mechanics that underlie the social production of meaning in Homeric society, may ignore the fact that the 'mechanisms' of disclosure are activated by Achilles' own response as a meta-narrative in the poem.

The *Iliad* is, however, more than simply a narrative of the crisis in social relations relating to ritualized exchange. As the performative insinuation of the enunciative utterance into the practical world of archaic Greece the *Iliad* helps establish the conditions that trigger the crisis. As argued above in chapter 5, reality is 'constructed' in epic (in both senses – artificial and artifactual) by the complicity of the audience, which is itself a ritual 'body' given shape in the occasion. The audience endorses the utterance of a poet and tacitly authorizes the truth of his speech. The performer is transformed, by misrecognized delegation, into an authentic witness, 'one who knows'. As argued in the introduction to this study, it is from this perspective that the role of epic as historical evidence is appropriately explored.

Guided by this assumption, we now come to analyse the oath sworn by Achilles after Agamemnon has stripped him of his *geras* (*Il.* 1.234-9), which we deferred at the end of chapter 2.[129] Achilles' oath initiates a *rational* critique of archaic reality, disenchanting the symbolic economy and isolating him from circulation within the social rituals founded on symbolic exchange. This section argues that the impact of the language prefacing Achilles' oath, both within and beyond the

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[127] For example, Finley 1954, Page 1959, Ulf 1990, Van Wees 1992, Morris & Powell 1997. There are of course many studies that concern themselves with the 'praxis of poetry' and, for that very reason, do not fall into this genre. On the reasons why meta-narrative and narrative have difficulty coinciding, see White 1980.

[128] There is as yet no historiographic analysis of the attempts that appear in each generation to disclose Homeric society, nor has there been any attempt to consider the implications of the possibility that of all the studies of Homeric society the *Iliad* was perhaps the *first handbook of Homeric society*.

[129] This analysis owes much to the following studies: Gernet 1981b, 187-93, Benveniste 1973, 323-6, Nagy 1979, 188, Easterling 1989, 112-5, and Muellner, 1996. Lynn-George 1988, 46-9 is especially relevant.

moment of epic performance disrupts the labour of misrecognition upon which participants, their objects and practices rely to be the foundation of lived experience. The lines containing Achilles' preface to his oath (*Il.* 1.234-9) are densely packed and ought to be read alongside the genealogy of the *skeptron* presented later at *Il.* 2.100-108:

> ναὶ μὰ τόδε σκῆπτρον, τὸ μὲν οὔ ποτε φύλλα καὶ ὄζους
> φύσει, ἐπεὶ δὴ πρῶτα **τομὴν** ἐν ὄρεσσι **λέλοιπεν**,
> οὐδ' **ἀναθηλήσει**· περὶ γάρ ῥα ἑ χαλκὸς **ἔλεψε**
> φύλλα τε καὶ **φλοιόν**· **νῦν αὖτέ** μιν υἷες Ἀχαιῶν
> ἐν παλάμῃς φορέουσι δικασπόλοι, οἵ τε θέμιστας
> πρὸς Διὸς εἰρύαται· ὁ δέ τοι μέγας ἔσσεται ὅρκος·
>
> *Il.* 1.234-9

> By this very *skeptron*, which will never bring leaves and offshoots
> into being, since it forever leaves behind a stump in the mountains,
> nor will it sprout forth; for the bronze stripped it round
> of leaves and bark. *And now hereafter* the sons of the Akhaians
> carry it in hand, dispensers of *dikai*, those who speak the *themistes*
> before Zeus. And this will be a mighty oath."[130]

By revealing the *skeptron* for 'what it is', nothing more than a piece of wood that is *essentially* empty of meaning, Achilles abolishes the ground for any practices enacted in its name. After these words the *skeptron* can, ironically, no longer be 'what it is', an object of royal power investing its possessor with the authority to speak. The wedge driven into social reality by Achilles' speech polarizes the image and the real and forms the stakes of the *Iliad*.

It is the poet's function to testify. Thus the poetic voice must above all propound the truth. Leonard Muellner showed that the *menis* of Achilles, activated inexorably in the enunciation of *Il.* 1.1, is an expression of moral outrage at the perversion of rituals that are relied upon to reproduce and reinforce the social order.[131] In the opening invocation, the goddess is asked to trigger a destabilization. Since the activation and unfolding of his *menis* is uttered in performance, it is the *Iliad* that propels Achilles down a narrative path that eventually sees him occupying a second role as the enunciating subject within the epic, presented as a singer "cut off", like the *skeptron*, from his own tradition (*Il.* 9.186-91). This gives Achilles two dimensions. Firstly, as the narrator's double, he is able to articulate a critical position problematizing his identity and his world. From his perspective within the narrative, *menis* takes the form, not of an inchoate divine rage, but of an all-too-human subjectivized inner reflection on the heroic world he inhabits.[132] Secondly, Achilles' *menis* is not negative but seeks a different ground on which to found social relations. In the funerary

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[130] Words in bold type indicate *hapax legomena*. λέλοιπεν is included a tense *hapax*, the only instance of λείπω in the perfect.

[131] Muellner 1996, 32-51 with Lynn-George's review and mini-survey of *menis* scholarship, 1997.

[132] Muellner 1996 argues that the *Iliad* consistently returns *menis* to the context of enforcing the social order and its human relationships (especially at 28-31), as opposed to Considine 1985 and 1986 for whom *menis* is a divine dread inexplicable in terms of morals or ethics.

ritual for Patroklos, situated before *Iliad* 24 as one of the two resolution phases of the *Iliad*, Achilles comes to acknowledge again that ritual invests objects with the capacity to transform human relations and, in so doing, allows objects to incarnate the value which agents place upon them objectively (that is, as though they were natural objects). On the other hand, Achilles' broader question, developed in his reply to Odysseus at *Iliad* 9 (and to which the funerary exchanges of *Iliad* 23 and 24 respond), asks anxiously: by what strategy and via what effective sign can his identity as 'best of the Akhaians' be confirmed *objectively*? Ironically, Achilles' anxiety is the disquiet of eliteness: how does one transcend the economy of ritual and object upon which honour is founded in order to express *innate worth* (*aretē*) as an objective social condition? The oath itself confirms that the *problem* for Achilles is the impossibility of *being* the 'best of the Akhaians', which is a status that must be *conferred* by participation in social exchanges. At the same time, however, those very social exchanges, whose function is to confirm what this warrior nevertheless experiences as a truth about his very identity, have failed to make this identity into an enduring social reality. The gap between mirror image and self, which it is the labour of symbolic exchange to keep closed, is thus opened up by Achilles with consequences for the whole group (ὖιας Ἀχαιῶν σύμπαντας, *Il.* 1.240-1) expressed by the hero as a quintessentially *inner* crisis: "you will tear out the heart within you, raging because you rated as nothing the best of the Akhaians" (σὺ δ' **ἔνδοθι** θυμὸν ἀμύξεις χωόμενος ὅ τ' ἄριστον Ἀχαιῶν οὐδὲν ἔτεισας. *Il.* 1.243-4). The significance of the *Iliad*, and its modernity, is that its narrative discloses a disjuncture between social identity and self-identity, posing the latter as a problem to be solved, rather than *resolved* through symbolic exchange.

Later Achilles will be obliged to stand apart from the funeral contest for Patroklos because he must not participate. This is partly because, as Neoanalysts would argue, the funeral is *his*, and partly because he has agonothetic duties to perform. But it is just as much because Achilles' *aretē* (and that of his horses) has become an objective fact that no longer needs demonstration (for reasons explored below). These then are the two dimensions of his speech-act. Firstly, a statement that elite rituals and the special objects upon which peer relations are specifically founded (especially the *geras*) do no more than *signify* worth, authority, legitimacy and so on, and do not incarnate these forces immanently. Secondly, that these forces will henceforth exist as objective, autonomous signifieds, independent of attempts by agents to realize them via some other exchange.

That Achilles should concentrate this critical energy on the *skeptron* of all objects is no accident. Benveniste points out that the *skeptron* is the symbol *par excellence* of the right to speak in the world of archaic elites.[133] To hold the *skeptron* is to command silence and to lend authority to one's utterance by virtue of the respect that this object

[133] Benveniste 1973, 323-6.

commands. Gernet explains the *skeptron* as a 'mythic operator', an object partaking of religious power that nevertheless delivers its force "by an act of social deputization".[134] These observations, however, require an explanation of how such a high level of social consensus is transferred to a symbolic object. Bourdieu again, I believe, provides the answer. Agents and participants establish real conditions through ritual – that is, lived and experienced as objective reality – by collapsing and misrecognizing the distance between signifier and signified, between image and reality.[135] This is illustrated in the mythic genealogy of the *skeptron* given at *Il.* 2.100-108:

> ἀνὰ δὲ κρείων Ἀγαμέμνων
> ἔστη σκῆπτρον ἔχων, τὸ μὲν Ἥφαιστος κάμε τεύχων.
> Ἥφαιστος μὲν δῶκε Διὶ Κρονίωνι ἄνακτι,
> αὐτὰρ ἄρα Ζεὺς δῶκε διακτόρῳ ἀργεϊφόντῃ·
> Ἑρμείας δὲ ἄναξ δῶκεν Πελοπι πληξίππῳ,
> αὐτὰρ ὁ αὖτε Πέλοψ δῶκ' Ἀτρέϊ, ποιμένι λαῶν,
> Ἀτρεὺς δὲ θνήσκων ἔλιπεν πολύαρνι Θυέστῃ,
> αὐτὰρ ὁ αὖτε Θυέστ' Ἀγαμέμνονι λεῖπε φορῆναι,
> πολλῇσιν νήσοισι καὶ Ἄργεϊ παντὶ ἀνάσσειν.
>
> *Il.* 2.100-108

> . . . and powerful Agamemnon stood up
> holding the *skeptron* which Hephaistos wrought with toil.
> Hephaistos gave it to Lord Zeus, son of Kronos,
> and then Zeus gave it to the guide, slayer of Argos,
> Lord Hermes who gave it to Pelops, driver of horses.
> Then in his turn Pelops gave it to Atreus, shepherd of the people
> and Atreus, when he was dying, left it to Thyestes, rich in sheep.
> Then in his turn Thyestes left it to Agamemnon to bear,
> to be the lord of many islands and all Argos.

Against the view held by Benveniste and Gernet, there is no *representation* of power in this passage. The *skeptron* is not a sign referring to the 'will' of an authority extrinsic to the object representing the real source of its power. As the divine genealogy makes clear, the authority of the *skeptron* resides within a unique and unified locus of symbolic relations. Thus to *carry* the *skeptron* is to *be* lord (φορῆναι . . . ἀνάσσειν, *Il.* 2.107-8). Bourdieu's notion of bodily *hexis* applies as well to the accoutrements of ritual because they are all objects that produce their meaning by being physically deployed in ritual environments.[136] The authority to speak, for example, is not "an act of social deputization" because to make explicit the object's power in such a way would undo the *labour of concealment* which allows subjective conditions to be experienced as objective ones.[137] Just as the enunciating subject in Homeric epic denies his own technical virtuosity as poet to ensure that the

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134 Gernet 1981b, 189.
135 Bourdieu 1990, 66-79, 135-41.
136 Bourdieu 1990, 66-79.
137 Ironically, Gernet recognizes this in his essay on law and 'pre-law' (*prédroit*) when he explores how oaths shift from being the testimony that decides a case to merely prefacing the testimony of eyewitnesses: 1981b, 187-93.

audience attributes his insights into the past to a religious power, so the symbolic object must efface its artificial origins in human manufacture to be accepted as part of a divinely instituted order. Crucially, the act of *misrecognition* captures the essential ambivalence in the role played by ritualized objects.

At the moment of its use in pronouncing a speech-act any critical inquiry into the object's real identity or origin must be forestalled. The ontology of the *skeptron* demands the preservation of a tautological definition, here dramatized as its entry into the world of men already fully realized as "what it is" by virtue of its other-worldly origin. Tautological symmetry (as opposed to the asymmetry of referential definition) is necessary to the identity of ritualized objects because the practices that employ them cannot be effective unless agents experience the embodied hexis of objects as natural. It is possible for us to say that social consensus and hierarchy are 'symbolized' by the *skeptron*, but one must then explain how its ritual efficacy occurs as an experienced reality. The only answer possible is that the *skeptron* actually is a talisman that magically transforms its bearer into an effective performer of legitimate speech-acts. Simply to maintain the first proposition – that it is a substitute or 'deputy' for an abstract 'power' located elsewhere – will ultimately fail to explain the *skeptron's* ontological unity as a symbolic object. In this unity lies the force of the tautology. As its genealogy precisely narrates, the object radiates authoritative power because it is its destiny as a *skeptron* to be a progenitor of felicitous utterances, an extension into the visible world of the invisible forces that guarantee themis. Zeus here is not the referent of a *human* artifact's claims to power; he is rather the divine energy that is volatilized whenever its bearer charges his words with the force of *muthos*. Only when we appreciate this do the implications of Achilles' startling oath become fully apparent.

At first Achilles invokes the *skeptron* solemnly (ναὶ μὰ τόδε σκῆπτρον . . .) but then moves immediately to expose it as a *sign* of royal power. As a sign the *skeptron* is immediately reduced to inert material incapable of self-generation. All the elements of flourishing genealogy, of healthy descent and the effective transmission of life and legitimacy via patrimonial legacy are inverted by Achilles' forceful description of the *skeptron* as 'dead wood'. Unlike Glaukos' simile, in which the generations of men are likened to the leaves of a living tree that fall only to germinate once more (φύλλων γενεή, *Il.* 6.146), Achilles' anti-genealogy is invaded by connotations of death and sterility. The *skeptron* is *in reality* an inanimate stick that will never put forth leaves (φύλλα), nor ὄζοι "twigs" (*Il.* 1.234-5), a word that refers both to the branches of a tree and those of a family tree, corresponding semantically to the English word *scion*. By contrast with the lineages of great families and living things, this is an object that cannot generate or reproduce itself or "ever bring into being" (οὔ ποτε . . . φύσει, *Il.* 1.234-5). The only thing that the *skeptron* "bequeaths" to future generations is the corpse of a living thing "cut off" in the middle of nowhere (τομὴν ἐν ὄρεσσι, *Il.* 1.235) which

will not sprout again (οὐδ' ἀναθηλήσει, *Il.* 1.236). The form λέλοιπεν at *Il.* 1.235 is also significant in this passage. λείπω has the sense "bequeath" in inheritance contexts, but here the tense is terminal, "it has left behind [permanently] . . ." This will ironize the force of the repeated aorists to come at *Il.* 2.102-7, where the string of verbs – δῶκε . . . δῶκε . . . δῶκεν . . . δῶκε . . . ἔλιπεν . . . λεῖπε – narrativizes ongoing legitimate succession and the transmission of a symbolic object across both divine and human generations. In dashing the *skeptron* to the ground, Achilles terminates succession and its narratives of exchange, such as genealogical recitations, complicating all claims made on such a basis, including the ideology of succession at the occasion of performance itself.[138]

Stripped of its potency, the *skeptron* can never be reunited with the network of symbolic relations responsible for its animation. Reduced to the crude aggregate of its raw material, the *skeptron* cannot return to what originally animated it. Just as the tree is animated by more than the simple sum of leaves, roots, branches and bark, that is, by more than its physical constituents, so the *skeptron*, to be just that – an efficacious object – was animated by symbolic relations that it focused, and which in turn configured it at the heart of the ritual strategies of power itself. Henceforth, *in this particular narrative*, the *skeptron* can only recall its authority *qua skeptron* in the form of a representation, deputizing for itself as a mere token of the talisman it was. Demoted to a representation, conscious of its status as a substitute, the presence of the *skeptron* creates an artificial situation within the archaic context. The *skeptron* can and will, of course, *refer* to political and social power located elsewhere (but where?) but it will never again be a *locus* of ritual power and will henceforth share the fate of all purely ceremonial objects, once their social alchemy has been disenchanted.

In this preface to the great oath he swears at *Il.*1.233-9 and as a consequence of his heroic *menis*, Achilles' disenchants ritualized claims to royal power. In this enunciation, it is Achilles who takes a first step toward a discourse of the 'real' by rejecting the ritual validity underlying the production of symbolic objects. Achilles divests the *skeptron* of its authority by explicating it as something wrought artificially by human *tekhnē,* a fake, and doing so during the ritual of oath-swearing, ironically the *skeptron's* most charged moment. Thus what Gernet and Benveniste regard as the 'essential' source of any object's power, is a fact uniquely (and violently) disclosed *by Achilles* in *Iliad* 1, and the rationality of his *elenkhos* has all the force of blame and derision that multiplies its effect. To expose ritual as empty and incapable of delivering meaning has ominous consequences with no solution at this point in the *Iliad*.

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[138] In royal generative magic and cult, the *skeptron* functions in a diametrically opposite way to that represented by Achilles: lucidly noted by Nagy 1990, 143. Compare Soph. *Electra* 420-3 and Paus 9.40.11-12 (where Agamemnon's *skeptron* is a cult talisman).

What happens to the authority of the *skeptron* in the *Iliad*? From this point in the narrative there are two roles open to the object. It can function either as an implicit locus of symbolic relations, or a sign of relations authorized *elsewhere*, outside the object, in a political consensus. Furthermore, any narrative told about the latter object would become self-consciously allegorical in complexion. This is not to say that the genealogy of the *skeptron* cannot be restated or even challenged. The *Iliad* is full of men and things whose genealogies proclaim lineages of worth and power.[139] However, for genealogies to preserve their worth as immanent and indivisible in the narrative, these men and things cannot be *interrogated* in relation to these implicit values. Narratives like the genealogy of the *skeptron* at *Il.* 2.100-108 *can only be challenged within the same terms that they function as speech-acts*. For instance, it is one thing to challenge a claim made by a protagonist in regard to a wager, inviting the other to a contest of practical mastery (for example, at *Il.* 23.581-5). It is an entirely different matter to challenge the ontology underlying that mastery. Thus, although a particular genealogy might be disputed, the genealogical principle underlying it cannot be overthrown if its narrative function is to be preserved. In his oath, however, Achilles invites us to regard this principle as universally false. If in their failure to confirm Achilles' status the "sons of the Akhaians" have exposed the ultimate ineffectiveness of the social exchanges by which honour and worth are determined, then it is made to follow here that speech-acts are also just "things said" without any implicit claim to authority. Read from this perspective, Achilles rationalizes all forms of performed speech and the claims such speech makes, including, potentially, even the *Iliad* itself. In the light of the preface to his oath, the genealogy proposed in *Il.* 2.100-108 already risks, *within the frame of the* Iliad, becoming subject to what will later irrupt as "the laughter of Hekataios", the scorn of Xenophanes and the allegorical interpretations of Theagenes of Rhegion.[140]

With its rationalizing voice this oath preempts an intellectual shift towards disclosing the 'true' nature of things (*a-letheia*) and the 'real' relationships that lie behind human action. Achilles' words show evidence of what Bourdieu calls the 'theorization effect', the disappearance of the ethnological object in the reduction of its practical logic to a forced coherence.[141] The oath marks the beginning of Achilles' social and intellectual liminality in the *Iliad* because Achilles refuses to acknowledge that his own identity as "best of the Akhaians" is just as much an 'ethnological' object as the *skeptron*. The audience, caught in the same ethnological net, is therefore obliged to share his alienation. It is possible to see here the craftiness of a poet who causes the audience to doubt a divine truth (Achilles is the "best of the Akhaians"), which is, in fact, already confirmed by the existence of the poetic narrative that as a

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139 See now Grethlein 2008.

140 On these three, see Detienne 1986, 63-81 and Ford 2002, 46-80. Ford's *Origins of Criticism* (2002) does not number the *Iliad* among the founding texts of criticism even though his discussion of allegory and interpretation is illuminating (67-89).

141 The theorization effect consists of "forced synchronization of the successive, fictitious totalization, neutralization of functions, substitution of the system of products for the system of principles of production, etc." Bourdieu 1977, 109-10.

whole constitutes the *kleos* of Achilles. In this way, both Achilles and the audience are led into an *aporia*: on the one hand, Agamemnon's actions have cut Achilles off from a network of ritualized practices by showing that ritual in itself confirms nothing if its perversion cannot be prevented by the will of the community who enact it. Agamemnon exposes the fragility of eliteness in its dependence on a system of symbolic objects and gestures. On the other hand, Achilles accelerates the collapse of the heroic economic order – the system for the circulation of value and evaluative practices – by asserting the emptiness of symbolic action. This is why Achilles cannot simply retrace his steps and why the restitution offered in *Iliad* 19 cannot miraculously rebuild the efficacy of a shattered *dasmos*.

Achilles seeks confirmation of what he already knows to be true – that he is himself a heroic talisman of immanent value. This will be confirmed in the narrative as the outcome of a traumatic "fatal strategy" in the sacrifice of his double Patroklos.[142] At *Il.*18.202-31, and in direct contrast to the oath-preface of *Iliad* 1, Achilles appears on the battlements of the Akhaian camp clothed in a form reminiscent of royal investiture, a rare moment in which the *Iliad* seems to reach into the magico-religious poetics of Indo-European rituals of sovereignty.[143] No longer an "object of scission", Achilles re-establishes his eliteness and his claim on a sacrificial foundation, a symbolic exchange *par excellence*. But until that moment, Achilles seeks *aretē* as an objective condition in an environment where the inscription of ritualized social reality in the natural world can no longer take place without being conscious of its artifice. The oath opens up the gap which the notion of *value* will now inhabit, that which is left over from any exchange and perhaps *not part of the exchange at all* – an unstable remainder like money, constantly subject to interrogation and negotiation on a public level, unable to be distilled alchemically out of ritual utterances, or in gestures and objects. In symbolic exchange there is no meaning to be pondered, only a structuring of relationships around an object whose 'value' begins and ends within the terms of the practice enacted.[144] Capital (whether symbolic or material)

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142 For the sacrificial typology of Patroklos' death, see Van Brock 1959, Lord 1960, 197, Sinos 1980, 29-38 and especially Lowenstam 1981, 1-31 and *passim*. Janko 1993 is more circumspect.

143 The gleam of fire that flashes from Achilles' head (σέλας, *Il.* 18.214), as well as the other fiery and bright accoutrements of divine selection, has been well discussed by Whitman 1958, 128-53, especially 137. It has not been noticed as often that the imagery is *royal*: compare Servius Tullius at Dion. Hal. *AR* 4.2.1-4, Livy 1.39, Plin. *HN* 36.204, Ovid *Fasti* 6.633-4 (with Dumézil 1943) and Nagy's remarks (1990b, 170-5) on the etymology of Hittite *hassu-* "king", which he links to words for *sun*, *sacrificial fireplace* and *begetting*. To this can be added that an important cognate of σέλας in Persian is *hᵛarəmah-*, which has the precise meaning of the "radiant glory of the king" in the Avestan texts (compare Skt. *svàrnara-* "éclat de la lumière"): Frisk *GEW* 690 ("Ruhmesglanz") and Chantraine *DELG* 995 ("éclat de la gloire"). For this reason, one could suggest that the representation of Achilles here contains a reflex of an inherited Indo-European poetics concerning fire-ritual and royal investiture, even though that conclusion must remain speculative and await fuller analysis elsewhere. On these reflexes and the basic methodology that such an analysis might take, see Watkins 1995.

144 See the remarks of Bourdieu 1998, 94-7.

exists only to be reinvested in the exchange, never to circulate freely. Beyond ritual there is no 'value' as such. The problem thus posed by Achilles' attack on the *skeptron* is also the problem posed by the emergence of speculative value out of the collapse of symbolic exchanges.

The value of the *skeptron* is now no longer ritually dispersed within the symbolic universe but specifically located by Achilles in one seat of power: "the sons of the Akhaians" (*Il.* 1.237-8). The *skeptron* is now a heraldic or ceremonial sign, where to employ it is to be conscious of a irremediable separation of its material substance from its alchemical agency. A key impact of this localization of power is a change in an understanding of the relation between value and truth, developed further by Achilles' speech in *Iliad* 9. In both his oath and reply to Odysseus in *Iliad* 9, Achilles advances the idea that the claims made by objects at the heart of symbolic relations are untruthful in terms of a disenchanted reality. Unless these objects are activated by the *kharis* – the 'will-to-value' – specific to those who exchange them then they are ineffective (invalid, cannot be trusted, untrue); and this *kharis* is no longer located in the object exchanged. Indeed, *kharis* itself has vanished (*Il.* 9.316). Out of the crisis of value that follows, a new foundation must be established in the *Iliad* that enables the emergence of an authority that is underpinned by 'real' sources of social and political value.

The 'skene' of Achilles

After the disenchantment of the *skeptron*, there is a movement from the *stasis* of *Iliad* 1 to Achilles' restatement of these events before his mother Thetis, during which Achilles is cut off from the object of his desire (*geras*-Briseis) and, in turn, from the desire of objects to circulate and create relations in exchange. The power of the *Iliad* as an expression of sociological awareness is exemplified in Achilles' alienation as a man reflecting on the seemingly arbitrary and unnecessary acts of social exchange upon which he is nevertheless completely dependant for social worth. This gives rise to a dialectical question: surely one is either *aristos* or one is not? Achilles engages in a theoretical reductionism (exemplified at *Il.* 9.401) that is ultimately impossible for him to sustain. Although the hero might imagine exiting the exchange of objects, he cannot withdraw from an exchange of words and still remain a social being.

In the gap that now opens between his denial of a selfhood founded on the circulation of images and doubles, and his pursuit of an impossible authenticity, Achilles' share of cosmic spoil, the *moira* allotted to him, is also split (*Il.* 9.411 ff.). There is sharp irony in Thetis' reply to his summation of events.[145] On the one hand, the destiny of a brief life is not balanced as it ought to be by the promise of imperishable glory, but is merely the remainder of a 'dire birth' (αἰνὰ τεκοῦσα, *Il.* 1.414) to be followed by death. This reduction of his life to an aleatory and capricious existence is given fuller expression in his reply to Odysseus and the simile of the mother bird (*Il.* 9.319-26). On the other hand, his own mother reminds him that his destiny is also an allotment (αἶσα), a portion parallel to the one meted out to him in the warrior distribution,

[145] On this scene, see Slatkin 1986.

the *dasmos*, about which he bitterly complains: "I with something small but precious go back to my shelter" (*Il.* 1.167). Here again his 'measure' is brief and evil, "a swift fate" (αἶσα . . . ὠκύμορος, *Il.* 1.416-7).

It is Thetis then who spurs Achilles along this path, reexamining the implications of being born outside symbolic exchange and without the hope of transformation, redefining mortal birth as the beginning of death and overshadowed by sorrow. Thus Achilles' alienation from the conditions of his own destiny also stimulates an attack on death as much as the social rituals that found honour. Death is stripped of its symbolic status as the double of life, of that state which opens one up to the transcendence of *kleos*. Once again, brutally, Achilles is separated from his 'portion' – first socially and politically by Agamemnon, and then again from access to the song that requites death. By successive distancing from the reversible order of symbolic exchange and a retreat into a world constituted by the finalities of abstract value and meaning, Achilles redefines death as a brute terminus. Once life and death are split from their symbolic exchange with one another as "mutually reinforcing aspects of an immutable order"[146] the promise of immortality offered by epic song becomes nothing more than a 'figure of speech', a narrative with no redemptive power. If the *skeptron* is reduced to empty signification, then *kleos* is empty too, nothing but the imaginary term left over in the wake of the 'real' legacy of any life, physical death. At *Il.* 9.398ff. Achilles claims to desire a homecoming, marriage and 'enjoyment' (τέρπεσθαι, *Il.* 9.400) of his father's possessions. Such enjoyment, however, programmatically describes the experience of hearing epic performance.[147] Here Achilles rails at the fact that one cannot enjoy one's own *kleos* because death is its precondition. This prefaces his following statement, that nothing matches the worth of life and that the *kleos* of this narrative has ambivalent value for him since it has no end or conclusion (τέκμωρ, *Il.* 9.418) that can be clearly seen.

Achilles' radical denial of death has its fullest expression in his reply to Odysseus (*Il.* 9.308 ff.). There Achilles repudiates a heroic order built upon the twin foundations of *dasmos* and *kleos* – the one dependant on the symbolic ambivalence of subject and object, the other of life and death. As Lynn-George argues, this tearing of the veil of the symbolic order complements the pronouncements of Thetis. Life, when faced with death as its radical other, is beyond compensation within a material economy that lacks *kharis*, and beyond recuperation in terms of a poetic memory claiming to transcend death.[148]

Agamemnon's unilateral assertion of his authority in terms of force and wealth is a 'catalogue' of dialectical power (*Il.* 9.262 ff.) – an attempt at coercion in which a seemingly contrite *apoina* barely conceals the impossibility of offering any gesture to counter his unlimited 'generosity'.[149] But as Achilles rightly observes there is no generosity here (*kharis*), only Agamemnon's attempt to insulate himself from

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146 Baudrillard 1993b, 127.
147 So Nagy 1979, 17, sect.4 n.1 and 1990a, 86 n.23
148 Lynn-George 1988, 153-74.
149 Lynn-George 1988, 140-52.

obligation. Achilles' response is naked repudiation (τὸν μῦθον ἀπηλεγέως ἀποειπεῖν, *Il.* 9.309): "I hate two things in equal measure; the man who speaks one thing but conceals his intention is like the gates of Hades." Agamemnon's lack of *kharis* is expressed in the narrative as his failure to be compelled by the gift of Achilles' own life in the toil of the battle (*Il.* 9.316-7). Agamemnon's words are given the lie by his threats, just as the real terminus of Hades' gate gives the lie to the alleged meaningfulness of the *kharis* of song. Death is treacherous like the *turannos*: one dies regardless of achievement, and when the *dasmos* – social or cosmic: *moira* designates both – that is supposed to give meaning and value to these actions is empty, one's allotted portion and social estimation in the here-and-now cannot be guaranteed. The pronouncements of the assemblies of men and "kings who wield the sceptre" are made suspect and, Achilles claims, "there is nothing *established* for me after having suffered pains in my heart, always staking my life in battle" (the object of περικείμαι ought to be something tangible and visible, *Il.* 9.321-2). Heroic action means nothing without *kharis,* that is, if it cannot compel social recognition and obligation arising through symbolic exchange. If the risk of loss is divested of meaning, then death itself becomes a terminus without redemption. Achilles' catalogue of achievements (*Il.* 9.345-363) thus mirrors Agamemnon's illegitimate assertion of control over distribution (*Il.* 9.367-8). Agamemnon's lack of *kharis* is underscored by the fact that, while he himself 'lies beside' the one thing which the *laos* allotted to Achilles as his token of honour, Achilles lies awake many nights with nothing. With the word τερπέσθω (*Il.* 9.337), Achilles recalls the function of the song he has only just sung before Patroklos, κλέα ἄνδρων, a catalogue of heroic action which 'delights the heart' as a reminder of the requital due for staking one's life in battle. His 'due' is violently transformed into the 'delight' Agamemnon will have in sleeping with what was won by Achilles in battle (δουρικτητήν, *Il.* 9.343) and authorized as his *geras* by the *laos*. In the imagined rape of this girl who corporealizes his politically determined worth, Achilles finds the violent antithesis of the delight one should find in the prospective compensation of *kleos*.

The perversity of these events shatters the poetic 'distance' of *the Iliad itself* and calls into question the meaning of this 'Trojan War' fought to avenge the rape of a wife and the transgression of bonds of hospitality. It is more than simply asking about the meaning of war in the face of empty stakes for heroic achievement – it is a self-reflexive question about the meaning of an epic tradition founded on the Trojan cycle. If the epic performance tradition is one that constantly intersects the wider world of the occasion, then the syntax of *Il.* 9.336-8 permits an ironical reading:

> . . . τῇ παριαύων
> **τερπέσθω**. τί δὲ **δεῖ** πολεμιζέμεναι Τρώεσσιν
> Ἀργείους; τί δὲ λαὸν ἀνήγαγεν **ἐνθάδ'** ἀγείρας
> Ἀτρεΐδης; ἦ οὐχ Ἑλένης ἕνεκ' ἠϋκόμοιο;
> ἦ μοῦνοι φιλέουσ' ἀλόχους μερόπων ἀνθρώπων
> Ἀτρεΐδαι;
>
> *Il.* 9.336-341

> . . . with her lying by his side,
> let him find *poetic delight* in this – why fight *the Trojan War*?[150]
> Why did Atreides bring the *laos here*?
> Surely not just for Helen's sake?
> Are the sons of Atreus really the only men who love their wives?

This series of questions, coming as they do after a verb whose marked sense denotes the audience's experience of poetic performance, spills over the edge of the narrative and interrupts the tradition. In other words, on the level of the occasion the reason for a 're-performance' of this sequence of events before the audience is not evident. The expression reveals a poetic consciousness of the need to disclose the will that drive representations. It poses the hypothetical self-reflexive question, "why bring the *laos* here *again on this occasion (of re-performance)*?"; indeed, it preempts an audience's unconscious query: "why is *this* story being told to us *now*?" Achilles, as the enunciating subject's double, asks the audience: what is the value of κλέα ἄνδρων if there is no *kharis* to motivate institutional honour among peers, both within this epic song (the *Iliad*) and, crucially, beyond it in the cult contexts at which epic finds its totalization? When the wager of one's life attracts no thanks through the exchanges of everyday life, there can be little hope that this wager will win imperishable fame in death.

If the performance of song in epic is a gesture that bestows *kleos* on the hero, what is the counter-gesture that completes the exchange? In the exchange between poet and audience, there must be *kharis* in the poetic utterance if it is to function as an object of symbolic exchange. In the utopia of Phaiakia, for example, *kharis* is intimated in the name of the poet – *Demodokos*, 'received by the *demos*'. The name hints at the desire for lasting communal memory behind *kleos*. The *kharis* then requited to Odysseus by his narrative audience(s) takes the multiple forms of a *nostos*, for example in the facilitation and fulfilment of the *Odyssey* by Odysseus' Phaiakian audience within the utterance (who gladly take him home to Ithaka), and also in the guarantee of the *Odyssey's* retelling at the occasion of its performance, which in turn ensures that the cult-hero will return home and receive his due with every telling of the story. Thus the counter-utterance is present *in the form of the audience's obligation to realize the song both within the narrative and over the horizon of its performance into the future*, as a guarantee perpetuated in the *geras* of cult. In the enigmatic song sung by Achilles (*Il.* 9.189-91), its audience (Patroklos) waits in silence "for that moment when the singer's performance left off" (ὁπότε λήξειειν ἀείδων, *Il.* 9.191) cueing a counter-response from the audience to provide a symbolic gesture of requital. The fulfilment of the *Iliad* therefore lies in Patroklos' counter-performance – the *Patrokleia* – that requites Achilles' own, the assenting nod to enter battle

[150] The occurrence of δεῖ in this passage is unique in Homeric epic. Hainsworth notes it, explaining its use here by the "untraditional" thought being expressed, 1993, 107. That the presence of this word self-reflexively refers to epic's consciousness of its own articfice is suggested by the parallel findings of Henrichs in an illuminating study of the expression "why should I dance?" in tragic choruses (Henrichs 1994/5).

now and trigger the forces that will restore Achilles over the horizon of this performance to imperishable glory, ensuring that 'end of Ilios' (τέκμωρ Ἰλίου, *Il.* 9.418-9) after which he must die, and with that the completion of the cycle once again.[151]

When the gesture of *kleos* risks being exposed as *only song and nothing more* (that is, split into an 'imaginary' and explicitly stated 'mythical past' as opposed to 'what really happened'), then an obligation is transferred to the audience, who must restore meaning beyond the song itself, so to speak, 'beyond the *skene* of Achilles' and his nihilistic rationality. The *Iliad* tells us that the emptiness of Achilles' *kleos* lays down a symbolic challenge to the audience that must be taken up 'after the song leaves off', not merely by the 'watching and judging' entailed in interpretation (that is, through *theoria* and *criticism*), but, like Patroklos, negotiating beyond the end of the song the terrain rendered impassable by the hero. From the end of *Iliad* 1, Achilles' critical paralysis ritually prompts the actions of Patroklos, whose gestures will be *semata* that compel Achilles, not as moral exempla, but because the sacrifice of the double activates the "fatal strategy" of symbolic exchange within and beyond the performance.[152]

'Patrok(o)l(oss)os': the path of the double

The *problem of reference* in the archaic period marks the beginning of an emerging Western need to locate identity, value and meaning in relation to some mediating factor outside of the object or utterance. The problem of reference in archaic Greece heralds a structural shift in the relationship between self and image expressed in questions such as: "to what outside myself do I refer for my status and social worth?" Answers to this and similar questions of representation are dominated by the concept of *mimesis* in which the image is understood to imitate the self in the form of a phantasmic substitute 'playing' at reality.[153] Plato denounced *mimesis* for establishing a false equivalence between self and representation, leading by the fourth century to a mistrust of the image as a true referent. However, in the symbolic order of epic thought, before the emergence of a theory of representation, the image is equated with the figure of the double. In the representational order, the relationship between self and image is contractual, explicit and based on declared equivalences. The simplest illustration is the mirror

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151 For a different interpretation of this scene (but a stimulant for this study), see Nagy 1996, 59-86, especially at 71-3.

152 From a Hegelian point of view the *Iliad* offers a paradigmatic example of *Aufhebung* 'sublation': Achilles overcomes his alienation by means of a split (not psychologically but symbolically in ritual, see the following section) which is then incorporated and preserved in the new identity (as embodied history). The meaning of totality contains all the traces and meanings entailed in overcoming fracture and dissolution. Put more directly, the hero of *Iliad* 23-4 deploys in his unity and action all the suffering and alienation experienced from *Iliad* 1 (social alienation), 9 (symbolic alienation), 18 (catastrophic loss), 20-22 (alienation from the human). Ultimately Achilles' *sema* will be the 'sign' of Achilles' return to Patroklos: *Il.* 23.91-2.

153 The following discussion draws heavily on Vernant's explorations of the "birth of images" in Ancient Greece: 1990, 75, 1991, 151-92, especially 2005, 321-332 and Steiner 2001, 3-26. On the place of *mimesis* in epic self-understanding and development, see Nagy 1996, 59-86.

in which the image is simply regarded as a reflection. The image is a prosthesis that overcomes the physiognomic inconvenience of being unable to see how one appears to others. As a linear and accumulative concept the relationship with the image is not reciprocal in that no gesture toward the image is demanded and none expected in return. As a result, a premium is placed on reality and the image is consigned to the world of imaginary objects that are presumed not to exist. If a relationship between self and image is deemed to exist at all, it is expressed through a psychological discourse positioning the self in the unconscious mind, and upon which can be projected irrational fears, fantasies and desires. The real activity of self and social identification takes place in the mind while the mirror image is regarded as a copy, perhaps even a fake. At best, the image 'supplements' the self.

This 'metaphysics of presence' is under revision. In the orthodoxy of representation the image is viewed as a *supplement* that is denied status because it is always negated by the simultaneous presence of the real self.[154] Without the image, however, the narrative of self is incomplete. Indeed, constant reference to the image suggests, on the contrary, that the image is the basic form of how we believe others perceive us. The image therefore dis-authenticates a discourse of selfhood that is founded upon the authenticity of being present to oneself. Derrida argued that Plato attacked "writing" in the *Phaedrus* because it destabilizes a discourse of meaning founded on the authenticating self-presence of speech.[155] In other words, a unified self is decentred by the image. Furthermore, the supplementarity of the image threatens to disclose selfhood as the *effect* of a narrative founded on images, rather than the authentic *cause* of a circulating social identity. The self then is not the source of a meaning that is "carried back" (*refero*) by the image but instead arises as a function of the circulation and exchange of images in symbolic environments. The image thus ends up threatening to invert the relation, making of the self an effect of representations and images, and disclosing personal identity to be founded on an economy of images (such as in social media platforms like *Facebook*).

In symbolic environments, then, the "self" is not the authentic site of a meaning "carried back" (*refero*) by the image but a social artifact arising as a function of a circulation and exchange of images that precede it. As Baudrillard has indicated, reference is not approached as a 'problem' in symbolic contexts because there an understanding of images is not referential, rather a relationship with images is ritually mediated through the figure of the double.[156] The double is not an image but an ambivalent entity that evokes the absence of the self while at the same time being bound to the self in a *reciprocal relationship*. Although the double 're-presences' the self outside itself, it is not in the form of a simulacrum but manifests the self as

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[154] On Derrida's notions of *supplementarity* and a "metaphysics of presence", see Norris 1987, 63-96.

[155] Derrida 1981, 61-171, on which see Norris 1987, 28-62.

[156] See above all Baudrillard 1993b, 113-74.

'another' and in so doing establishes the ground on which the self can enter the pacts of symbolic exchange.[157] Under these circumstances, one's mirror image, for example, rather than a mere reflection, materializes the presence of another, a double, that is bound, through a naming gesture (*ego/me*), to the self in a cycle of reciprocity and exchange. The double belongs to a liminal category at once both radically foreign and profoundly intimate. Crucially, exchanges bound in this way establish a basis for metamorphosis between the body and the image (as opposed to the metaphorical bond established by representation and interpretation). The double resolves tensions of identity and selfhood by being part of symbolic strategies such as the use of ritual surrogates, masks, image-centred myths (like those of Perseus), and in ritual forms where the mirror is presented as a mantic domain (for example, at Pausanias 7.21.12).[158]

The mirror is only one of many spaces in which the double appears. The double need not even resemble the self in appearance. What is important is that the double *act* on behalf of the self, and *represent* it, without in any way implying a priority of self over the double or acting in the form of a mediating abstraction. In this respect the double solicits an exchange in the process of its realization. Something of the self must cross over to seal the pact linking the self and the double even though they will have opposing destinies. In the *Nichomachean Ethics* Aristotle famously defines a *philos* as 'another self' that is different but bound by solemn oaths of exchange, separate but intimate, not equivalent yet sharing a secret affinity and, as Aristotle conjectures, evoking the things you love in yourself.[159] A sense of one's social self is formed in communities of *philoi*, among whom the ethics of exchange is acquired and preserved.[160]

Vernant's discussion of the funerary stele takes an alternate path to the double.[161] The mute headstone, for example, evokes the dead man by being present in his stead, speaking on his behalf: "I am the *sema*, the sign/tomb, of a man no longer under the sun". A clear sign of the double's presence is its deployment in territory forbidden to the self. At the same time, the coincidence of the double and the self is a portent of danger, as, for instance, when the shade's return to the light of day disrupts the economy of mortality founded upon the threshold of death. A sudden presence of the double foreshadows disaster.[162] When the double appears, one is in imminent danger of an irrevocable bifurcation of the self. This autonomy of the image in relation to the self is in turn an intimation of death as terminus.[163] Only by binding oneself

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157 For Vernant's definition of the double, see 1991, 187.

158 On masks and mirrors in Greek thought and culture, see Calame 1986, Vernant and Frontisi-Ducroux 1997, Frontisi-Ducroux 1989 and 1995, Vernant 1991, 141-50. Vernant's remarks on the mask of Gorgo 1991, 134-8 are especially relevant.

159 Arist. *NE* 1166^{a}31, 1170^{b}7.

160 On Patroklos as *philos* in this sense, see Sinos 1980, 39-48.

161 Vernant 1991 189, 2006, 321-332.

162 Baudrillard 1994, 147-8 n.1.

163 ibid. It ought to be added that the general semantics of ψυχή as insubstantial double in the Homeric poems (on which, see the critical views of Clarke 1999, 106-28 in relation to (for example) Vernant 1991, 186-9 and Bremmer 1983, 14-24, with

to it in a proper exchange can the balance be restored. Rituals in which the figure of the double plays a significant role take the form of symbolic dramas in which the possibility of alternate, potentially catastrophic, destinies is averted by sacralizing the double.

A good example of the double in early Greek ritual is found in the *kolossos* from the Cyrenaean foundation oath.[164] The *kolossos* is a wax figurine that plays an important ritual function during a critical period of social uncertainty.[165] In dire circumstances, the *polis* of Thera decided that a special draft of citizens was required to found a new city. From that moment the dual status of the colonists-elect put them in a liminal position, no longer citizens of Thera, nor yet citizens of their future city. By civic decree they were subject to involuntary exile and forced to set out to become citizens of a new *polis*. At this juncture two possible pathways are open to them: to put to sea swearing never to return (οἱ ἐμμένοι τούτοις τοῖς ὁρκίοις, *ML* 5. 49), or else to abrogate their oath by staying (τὸμ μὴ ἐμμένοντα, ML 5. 46). The inscription then lays down the oath formula which will sanction those among the chosen who might refuse to take part. The text of the pact prescribes that wax substitutes – *kolossoi* – were to be crafted and then put into the fire at the very moment the colonists swore that if they broke their pact then they too would liquefy "just like these *kolossoi*" (*ML* 5. 44-51). The path for oath-breakers is thus ritually laid out and then taken, but by a host of wax colonists. Two destinies then with two roads. The ritual circumscribes the proper course for those marked to go, leaving the taboo terrain to be traversed instead by doubles marked to vanish in the fire. It is not enough to ignore the consequences of refusal in such a matter as a civic foundation enjoined by the god, instead all the forces at work must be constrained: the colonist must be "brought under obligation through his "double"".[166] The proper path is defined, so to speak, in the mirror of the *kolossos*.

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additional literature at 14 n.1) are suspended in Achilles' reply to Odysseus in *Iliad* 9. At *Il.* 9.401 and 408, Achilles shifts toward referentiality, declaring (negatively) that nothing can be swapped for his ψυχή. In light of the surrounding context, Achilles must here mean his 'living *self*', which, once gone, cannot be recuperated. By identifying the self as coterminous with life and too precious to be exchanged, Achilles in turn rejects the promise of the epic tradition signified by the singularity of a symbolic destiny (that is, death requited by immortality in song), which he now reduces to death as opposed to life (which he equates with *nostos*). The epic poem alone, however, is the double through which Achilles' selfhood is encountered and will, after his death, speak forever on his behalf. For that to take place, however, his ψυχή must reenter circulation, and be swapped for the *kleos of the Iliad*. In these passages then the "life of a man" (*Il.* 9.408) is privileged in relation to its images and doubles, more precious since it is the authentic presencing of the self to the self. These passages seem consistent with other aspects of Achilles' stance and intimate later classical thinking. Homeric and Achillean ψυχή will be explored more fully elsewhere. On these lines, see also Hainsworth 1993, 115-6.

164 *ML* 5. This example is carefully analyzed by Vernant 2006, 321-332.

165 On the *kolossos* in Cyrene, and generally as ritual substitute and cult-image, see especially Benveniste 1932, Picard 1933, Roux 1960, Ducat 1976, Gernet 1981b, 170-1, Faraone 1991, Steiner 2001, 5-11 and Chantraine *DELG* 558: "statuette de bois ou d'argile représentant un absent dans un acte rituel."

166 Gernet 1981, 171.

Are not the *kolossoi* simply metaphors for the colonists? The ὥσπερ ("just like…") of the oath taken by the colonists is not a figure of speech but the marker of ritual metamorphosis.[167] To take the view that this is metaphorical operation demands that we first imagine selfhood here as an inner being circumscribed by its own self-presence autonomous in relation to the social circulation of the self via the image. The self, however, is not hermetically sealed off from the exchange of words, appearances and objects. The *kolossos* gives form (πλάσσαντες) to a dangerous aspect of the colonist: the *possibility* of his refusal. The wax figurine brings into existence a presence intolerable to the group, the possible presence of any oath-swearer's double: the oath-breaker who pollutes and damns the community through his perjury. The anomaly is solicited by the ritual homeopathically in order to banish the return of such doubles in the future. But these figurines must not be permitted to circulate without rupturing the symbolic exchange brought about by the ritual. Immolation of the *kolossos* makes these potentially dangerous doubles *sacer*, putting them "outside the world of men". But this does not entail annihilation; on the contrary, the melting *kolossos* arouses religious powers. The circumstances of oath-swearing summon and corporealize something of the self that is foreign and intolerable but nevertheless demands a gesture, similar to what Georges Bataille called the "accursed share".[168] The potentially dangerous 'other' colonist, the oath-breaker and refuser, is contained, not through destruction but by consecration – an act which determines what is appropriate for men by sacrificing its opposite. One pathway remains in the light of day, the other road leads to the invisible.

Vernant describes the corpse as a double. In appearance it undoubtedly resembles the person who was alive but without their presence, something is missing. A body without *psuche* cannot occupy the place once held by the living individual. Instead, funerary ritual spirits the body away by means of the funeral pyre and in its place erects an ambivalent grave-marker. The double without the self cannot remain any more than the self without its image. In myth, as in ritual, doubles must disappear into the world of the invisible through fire, the sea or under the earth. The immolation of the double is not a destructive act but a gesture that restores the symbolic order. It is no more destructive than the cremation that resolves the disturbing duality of the corpse (absence-in-presence) and, as Bataille suggested (quoted below), that restores the self to the intimacy of the symbolic order. Indeed, cremation of the corpse provides relief, for the dead as much as for the living, by 'pointing out' to each the proper pathway for a monstrous and insupportable presence.

That Patroklos is Achilles' double is, broadly speaking, no longer controversial. Nagy and others have analyzed the formal aspects of the relationship between the two heroes, with each *philtatos*

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[167] Picard 1933 makes this point. On *metamorphosis*, see pp. 302-4 above, with Baudrillard 1994, 129-42.

[168] Bataille 1991, 55-61, especially 58: "the consecrated offering cannot be restored to the *real* order."

to the other, destined to share the same cinerary urn (*Il.* 23.91-2). Patroklos is also Achilles' *therapon*, a word that has been linked to the Hittite word for 'ritual substitute'.[169] Patroklos' name, a shortened form of Πατροκλέης,[170] evokes the hero in his precise role as the subject of epic narrative performance. Nevertheless, the link between the practical function of the ritual double in symbolic exchange and the trajectory of Patroklos in the *Iliad* deserves more attention.

Patroklos in fact plays almost no role before *Iliad* 9.[171] He is first named when asked to conduct Briseis to the heralds at *Il.* 1.337, 345.[172] Foreshadowing the return of Achilles, Zeus states in passing that his return is fated to occur on the day when battle is fought over the fallen Patroklos (*Il.* 8.476). Eventually Patroklos is present in Achilles' tent when the Embassy arrives:

> τὸν δ' εὗρον φρένα τερπόμενον φόρμιγγι λιγείῃ
> καλῇ δαιδαλέῃ, ἐπὶ δ' ἀργύρεον ζυγὸν ἦεν
> τὴν ἄρετ' ἐξ ἐνάρων πόλιν Ἠετίωνος ὀλέσσας
> τῇ ὅ γε θυμὸν ἔτερπεν, **ἄειδε δ' ἄρα κλέα ἀνδρῶν.**
> **Πάτροκλος δέ οἱ οἶος ἐναντίος ἧστο σιωπῇ,**
> δέγμενος Αἰακίδην ὁπότε λήξειεν ἀείδων.
>
> *Il.* 9.186-191
>
> . . . and they discovered him delighting his mind with a clear lyre,
> craftily wrought; there was a silver bridge upon it.
> He had won it from the spoil after sacking Eëtion's city;
> with it now he delighted his heart *as a singer of epic tales.*
> *Patroklos sat across from him a silent audience of one*
> waiting for that moment when Aiakides would leave off being a singer.[173]

At that instant Achilles notices the ambassadors and the moment vanishes. But how are we to take this usurpation of the occasion's own relations of performer and audience?[174] As argued above, deep in his own *skene* Achilles has stepped outside the epic to

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169 Following Van Brock 1959. See also Nagy 1979, 94–117, Sinos 1980 *passim*, Lowenstam 1981. For discussion of the semantics of Patroklos' name, see Nagy 1979, 102 ff. and Bouvier 2002, ch.5 with different emphasis. Janko remains unconvinced: 1993, 339.

170 Janko 1993, 317.

171 On Patroklos in the *Iliad* generally, Janko's introduction to *Iliad* 16 is essential: 1993, 309-14, with enormous value to be found throughout his commentary on the *Patrokleia*, 314-421. See also Erbse 1983.

172 He is mentioned only by patronymic as one of Achilles' companions at *Il.* 1.307. Patroklos' special relationship to Briseis is clearly related to these themes but must await a dedicated study.

173 The minor liberties taken with translation are interpretative: in the context of sitting opposite a singer, σιωπῇ indicates the defining characteristic of an audience who listen, which justifies insertion of *audience*. Hainsworth imagines Patroklos taking up the song literally but notes that there is no precedent for such double performances, 1993, 88. The translation above hints that Patroklos is waiting for Achilles to stop singing, inviting consideration of how audiences react when the song ends. That *kleos* in the plural refers to epic performance has been forcefully demonstrated often by Nagy, for example 1990, 147-51. See also Pucci 1998, 37.

174 Hainsworth suggests "Akhilleus the hero sings of the heroic deeds that he is no longer allowing himself to perform" 1993, 88. See especially Nagy 1996, 71-3 with 1990a, 202. The passage is often overshadowed in scholarly treatments by the problem of the neighbouring duals.

become a performer of narratives celebrating other men. This expropriation of the place of the enunciating subject places in temporary suspension the current *Iliadic* performance that defines his symbolic identity. But the 'song' that Achilles will soon sing (*Il.* 9.307-429) is one that excoriates the social and symbolic order upon which epic is itself founded, including the destiny established for him by the tradition itself.[175] In his reply to Odysseus, Achilles sings a kind of *anti-kleos,* repudiating death as the indiscriminate fate of all men regardless of their deeds or status. Death's promise as the threshold to the immortality of song is false. Death has no status as an initiatory passageway; it is just the brute terminus of the self. *Kleos* is a sham so why risk precious life? By the end of *Iliad* 9 as a result of the crisis point of his *menis*, Achilles has become a narrative *aporia*: he is a hero with no determinate destiny precisely because he refuses to "stop being a singer". To the audience of the *Iliad* he is the *best of the Akhaians* destined to die and win imperishable *kleos* as his epic inheritance. To the audience of his own subversive song, he will swap *kleos* for *nostos*, threatening to confuse two traditions to become the hero of a 'return song'. Whereas *Iliad* 1 posed the problem of the social being cut-off from the mirror of symbolic exchanges, *Iliad* 9 poses an Achilles cut off from the narrative destiny of his own epic tradition. Outside these networks, in which the self must circulate to sustain itself, Achilles risks having no destiny at all and that is a more profound death.

Nagy has argued that Phoenix's story about Meleager points to the "most beloved" (*philtatos*) as the solution to Achilles' intractable *menis*.[176] This para-narrative, which attempts to counter Achilles' discourse with a performance of its own (κλέα ἀνδρῶν ἡρώων, *Il.* 9.524-5), opens up the doublet *Kleopatre-Patroklos* just as *klea andron* had been echoed earlier on at lines *Il.* 9.189-90 by suggestive enjambment with Patroklos' full name: "*klea andron / Patroklos*…"[177] Though Achilles refutes the comparison (just as Phoenix feared he would: μὴ σύ γε μῦθον ἐλέγξῃς, *Il.* 9.522), the successful intercession of *Kleopatre*, the one most *philos* to the hero, nevertheless, enigmatically points the way *for Patroklos*. When Patroklos appears again in *Iliad* 11, his fate is activated. Achilles, emerging from his tent to observe the Akhaian suffering, summons his *hetairos*: "and responding Patroklos came out from the tent, equal to Ares, and for him it was a beginning of evil" (ὁ δὲ κλισίηθεν ἀκούσας ἔκμολεν ἶσος Ἄρηϊ, κακοῦ δ' ἄρα οἱ πέλεν ἀρχή, *Il.* 11.603-4).[178] Achilles sends Patroklos on a theoric mission to Nestor to find out the name of the person the old horseman had pulled out of the battle. Nestor explains

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175 On Achilles' rhetorical strategies in this speech, see the analysis in Martin 1989, 146-205.

176 Nagy 1979, 100-6.

177 On *Kleopatre*, see Hainsworth 1993, 136. On para-narrative in Homer, see Alden 2000.

178 On the semantics of equivalence with the war-god, see Sinos 1980, 33-7 discussing this passage at 36. On this passage, see also Whitman 1958, 200 and Nagy 1979, 289-97.

to Patroklos that old age is a kind of death and like the dead all Nestor has left to him is the catalogue of his deeds. He reminds Patroklos to recall the role his father advised him to play on the day Achilles was summoned to join the sons of Atreus:

> ἀλλ᾽ εὖ οἱ φάσθαι πυκινὸν ἔπος ἠδ᾽ ὑποθέσθαι
> καί οἱ σημαίνειν· ὁ δὲ πείσεται εἰς ἀγαθόν περ.
>
> *Il.* 11.788-9

> you must perform for him a speech-act (*epos*) well-crafted, prompt him and give him a sign; and he will surely be persuaded the right way.

Patroklos' role here is delineated by the verb σημαίνειν, a word carefully chosen by Herakleitos to describe the *modus dicendi* of the god of prophecy: "the lord whose oracle is in Delphi does not discourse or conceal, he gives a sign" (B 93 D-K). What oracular portent does Patroklos give when he is himself the sign? He responds by willingly taking the ritual path barred to Achilles. For this ritual to be effective in returning Achilles to the unity of a single destiny, Patroklos, like a sacrificial victim or *kolossos*, must be crafted and summoned to his own death.[179] When a disrupted *kleos* threatens to become *only* song (that is, only an imaginary destiny played out in a private *skene*), then the double is obliged to sequester meaning beyond the song itself, beyond the *skene* of Achilles via some form of sacrificial gesture. The impossible duality of Achilles' identity inside the tent is balanced by the continuity of *Patro-klees* beyond it, one that is ritually recuperated by the sacrificial fulfilment of Patroklos.

Figure 1. The embassy to Achilles. Antikenmuseum Basel und Sammlung Ludwig.

[179] Patroklos' death itself ensues after he goes too far against Achilles' injunction to hold off from fighting Hektor himself. Since Achilles alone is destined to face Hektor, one could argue that Patroklos' death follows at that moment he edges too close to *being Achilles*. Since, as noted above, symbolic exchange acts to mark off two statuses by ritual separation, this violation threatens the indeterminacy of confusion between self and double. On the formal equivalence between Patroklos' and Achilles' death as disclosed by Neoanalysis, see the overview in Janko 1993 312-4 and Lowenstam 1981.

Patroklos disappears from narrative view until he returns in *Iliad* 16 in the guise of Achilles' completed double. The sacrificial typology of Patroklos' death is evidenced by an astonishing late archaic *stamnos* of the Triptolemos painter explicitly joining the Embassy scene of *Iliad* 9 to Patroklos' sacrificial function in *Iliad* 16.[180] In one panel the painter depicts Achilles alone in his tent though surrounded by the ambassadors (figure 1). Patroklos, however, is absent. In the other panel, a figure named *Patroklos* lies slain on the battlefield between Hektor and Aias, but *he is depicted as a sacrificial ram* (figure 2). Like the melting *kolossos*, Patroklos' sacrificial death binds Achilles, by means of a "fatal strategy" to choices beyond his own subjective intentionality, ones that will nevertheless reconnect him once more to a destiny in heroic death and thence to the (*Patro-*)*kleos* of epic song. Patroklos is therefore a variation on a ritual theme: the sacrifice of the double re-establishes a symbolic order disrupted by the irruption of critical interrogation.[181]

Figure 2. Warriors fighting over a dead ram. Antikenmuseum Basel und Sammlung Ludwig.

Self and double: a symbolic expression of Achilles' subjectivity

Studies applying Freudian and Jungian psychology to the interpretation of Achilles and the *Iliad* begin with the presupposition that human emotions and traumas are experienced in universally consistent ways.[182] While it may be useful to approach Achilles' trauma psychologically, it is important not to lose sight of the profound differences between the notion of the *psyche* in the *Iliad* and that

[180] Beazley, *ARV*[2] 361, 7; Basel Antikenmuseum BS 477. On this vase, see Schmidt 1969 with Griffiths 1985 and 1989. The inscribed names are catalogued in Immerwahr, *CAVI* no. 1999C.

[181] For an intimation of this function of the double, see Vernant 2005, 330-2.

[182] For example, in the application of psychoanalytic theory and German idealism to the interpretation of the *Iliad* by MacCary 1982, especially 55-65 and 93-6. MacCary argues that any historical question is preceded by a psychological one: "How and to what extent are we all Achilles?" (x). The emergence of subjectivity is therefore universalized without asking specifically what were the ideological stakes of such a psychological narrative for the occasion and *historical moment* of its performance. See also Van Nortwick 1996 39-61.

assumed in modern psychology. It is argued here, in agreement with Vernant, that the emergence of the "individual subject" is not only historically and culturally contingent, but also that it depends upon a break with the intimacy of symbolic exchange. This break opens up a space within which the self can be theorized as an entity autonomous from the world, its institutions, social forms, rituals and exchanges. Achilles' split from his social being is narrativized in ritual terms, which at the same time is deployed as the mode of resolution and laid out as the path of a return to the intimacy of symbolic exchange. Heroic ideology is dependent upon the *narrative circulation* of a "self" projected through performance. In this reading, Patroklos is also *Patroklees*: ancestral *kleos*, given autonomy as the externalized embodiment of the promise that lies over the horizon of every heroic risk.[183] Achilles' dilemma of the self is expressed in this alienation from Patroklos. Cut off from the ability to act in a social and symbolic universe, Achilles' inaction is inversely mirrored by a double whose task is to "indicate the way" (*Il.* 11.789) back towards heroic identity. Patroklos' ontology as a double focuses on this performative duality. At once intimate and other to Achilles, the narrative evokes Patroklos as the ritual substitute who can prepare a sacrificial path of return for the hero to the destiny demanded of him, not least by the context of the occasion of his narrative's performance.

The figure of Patroklos plots a symbolic strategy that restores a destination temporarily blocked from view by Achilles' critical examination of his own heroic identity. The *Iliad* itself is similarly strategic in that it opens up a performative space within the symbolic environment of an occasion wherein the historically contingent expression of a self alienated from symbolic exchange can find symbolic expression. As an artifice of narrative, Patroklos travels down the 'traditional' path that permits Achilles to remain alive in *this* performance in order to contemplate a counter-destiny, one that enacts a break with heroic destiny. The 'stage of the *Iliad*' becomes a containment of the consequences of his rupturing of the symbolic pact of occasion (the hero questions his central destiny in cult as the object of funerary veneration). In turn, out of this ritualized schizogenesis and substitution of the double comes a new figure, the referent of the self. Patroklos is not only the *alter ego* of Achilles who acts out Achilles' (deferred, traditional, 'Aithiopic') destiny within the space of the *Iliad*; he is also the narrative artifice that *enables Achilles to reflect on himself as other, to posit himself as a subject who acts*. In the 'mirror of Patroklos', Achilles passes, so to speak, through the 'mirror-stage' of the political subject in order to explore the role of ritual, image and, above all, narrative in the construction of the self. This expression, which is fundamentally historical and performative, is one of the central intellectual factors driving the innovations of the *Iliad* with respect to the wider epic tradition.

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[183] Compare Pindar's remarkable comparison of praise performance to the longed-for son who will continue the family name and destiny: *Ol.* 10.86-93.

This collusion between the *Iliad's* form and content supplies motives to the findings of Neoanalysis, which holds broadly that new epic narratives resulted from intertextual interaction between fluid performative traditions.[184] Neoanalysis has represented an *Iliad* locked in an intertextual dialogue with the *Aithiopis,* the epic that narrates, among other subjects, the death of Achilles. Proponents of Neoanalysis assume that the narrative dealing with Achilles' death (whose contents are known only from Proclus' late epitome) precedes our *Iliad*, an assumption also built into studies like Kullmann's *Die Quellen der Ilias*.[185] In regard to the plausibility of this assumption, Richard Seaford rightly insists that

> the theory has remained vulnerable to the question 'why?' Why invent a new version of a familiar theme? . . . A convincing answer must find some compensating quality unique to the *Iliad* sequence.[186]

Seaford rejects vague reductive explanations describing the *Iliad* as representing a mental shift from 'the heroic' to 'the human', in preference for one that understands the historical development of the *polis* as the key driver behind changes in the structure of epic narrative:

> From his wrathful withdrawal Achilles is reintegrated into the Greek community in the context of death ritual that replaces and is modeled on his own, but that also forms the context of his angry desire for revenge, an isolating anger ended only by reconciliation with Hektor's closest relative.[187]

Seaford argues that in the *Iliad* both the death-ritual for Patroklos (*Iliad* 23) and the reconciliation with Priam (*Iliad* 24) confirm

> the victory of the integrative over the disruptive power of death-ritual [which can be seen] diachronically as emerging from the transmission and development of the epic over the period in which the individual funeral was diminished and public death ritual [= hero-cult] enhanced in the developing *polis*.[188]

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184 For a recent and cautious acceptance of Neoanalysis, see West 2003 who is critical of the '*Memnonis* theory' proposed by Schadewaldt 1965, 155-202, with schematic summary at 173. See also Burgess 1997, 2001 and 2009. Especially important here is the discussion of Neoanalysis by Seaford 1994, 154-9, which attempts to "provide a historical explanation for the development of the narrative tradition" (155). See also the important speculations of Erbse 1983, Nickel 2002 and Allan 2005, 11-16. A thorough-going reassessment of Neoanalysis has been the object of recent studies, for example, Tsagalis 2008, Tsagalis 2011, Bird 2010 and the essays in Montanari, Rengakos and Tsagalis 2012.

185 Kullmann 1960, on which see the same author's multiple restatements of the theory and method of Neoanalysis: Kullmann 1981, 1984 and 2005. This had been an earlier assumption: see Pestalozzi 1945, 5-45, Kakridis 1949 and the surveys of proto- and early Neoanalysis in West 2003, 1-5, Clark 1986, Kullmann 1991 and Willcock 1997. Many of these pioneering interpretations treated these *Quellen* as residual. This assumption has obvious implications for the question of transmission, which must be explored elsewhere. For a recent critique of Neoanalysis, see Kelly 2006.

186 Seaford 1994, 157-8. As Seaford notes, this question had been posed earlier in Hölscher's review (1955) of Schadewaldt 1965.

187 Seaford 1994, 158.

188 Seaford 1994, 187.

Just as *polis* hero-cult publically appropriates funerary ritual as a strong foundation for the expression of collective political solidarity, so the return to Achilles' tent in *Iliad* 24 makes good Achilles' rejection of Phoenix' *muthos* in *Iliad* 9 and averts the spectre of reciprocal violence. According to Seaford, the reconciliation with Priam, in turn, expresses changing attitudes to revenge in the context of civic sovereignty over the determination of justice.

The role of Patroklos explored so far can be incorporated into Seaford's explanation. Patroklos is analogous both to the symbolic object in the act of exchange (for example, the ring of Polykrates), as well as to the enunciatee (audience) of the performance occasion. Patroklos' actions can therefore be interpreted as foundational *counter-gestures* that act to neutralize the destructive *aporia* to which Achilles *elenkhos* has given rise. Through a narrative problematization of symbolic exchange within the *Iliad's* performance, the poem offers a rupture of social reality, but one that is contained in, and by, the stage of its utterance. Achilles' oath threatens to supplant immanence, intimacy and reversibility with the alienating opposition 'real/imaginary'. Also, as the result of Agamemnon's violence toward the political rite of the *dasmos*, Achilles' rationalizing reflection upon the nature of objects and his stinging counter-attack on Agamemnon and the *laos* denies him the opportunity for symbolic exchange and thus threatens to obliterate the grounds of his social and narrative existence. The state to which Achilles has been reduced is one of alienation as a rational subject from the symbolic exchanges that establish binding relations. The responses of the Embassy to Achilles in *Iliad* 9 attempt to bully (Agamemnon), entice (Odysseus), or morally compel Achilles (Phoenix/Aias), back to some kind of normal relations. The rationalizing rejoinders of Achilles in the immediacy of his alienation, nevertheless, render these solutions impossible. Assaulting Agamemnon, and the *laos* as a whole, with an oath that casts doubt over the efficacy of all symbolic objects, Achilles also divests himself of the means by which to corporealize his own essentially symbolic identity. The rupture of value in the *dasmos* leads to the brinkmanship of an almost Parmenidean separation of the *skeptron* into an opposition between "what it is" and "what it is not", a stance that rebounds on Achilles' own claims to destiny and innate worth.

At that moment, Patroklos himself is called into being as the symbolic corporealization of Achilles' own split, dramatizing the historical emergence of the autonomous human subject. On the one hand, the Achilles who can only reflect and reduce the world to a system of polar and irreconcilable opposites (life/death, *kleos/nostos*, object/value, and so on) is opposed by the immanent and inherited glory of heroic identity (*Patro-klees*) as it arises in the exchange of symbolic objects (*timē* as cult) and symbolic speech (*epos*). This split is what must be resolved for Achilles' to return, a return which must be conceived as the disappearance of the "/". Life and death are reconciled in the sacrificial rite of passage willingly undertaken by the double, which will guarantee the meaningful fulfilment of *this* performance. The split destiny – *kleos radically opposed to nostos* – is restored over the horizon by *kleos through*

nostos (not the obscurity of old age but the fame of the *Odyssey*) and *nostos through kleos* (Achilles restored to Patroklos intermingled in the same cinerary urn, *Il.* 23.91-2). Achilles' destiny becomes his double or shadow, the image in the mirror with whom the self constantly interacts in the formation of social existence. For the Achilles of the 'tradition', there cannot be a separation such as he poses in *Iliad* 9: man sundered from destiny, *psuche* considered apart from heroic circulation. Each term in this opposition must be restored to its other in a relationship of reversibility. Only the sacrificial act can restore such symbolic integrity after the emergence of such brute facts. Here Bataille's description of sacrifice shows what is at stake in the removal of the object *qua* thing from the brute world of autonomized reality:

> [t]he principle of sacrifice is destruction, but though it sometimes goes so far as to destroy completely (as in a holocaust), the destruction that sacrifice is intended to bring about is not annihilation. *The thing – only the thing – is what sacrifice means to destroy in the victim. Sacrifice destroys an object's real ties of subordination*; it draws the victim out of the world of utility and restores it to that of unintelligible caprice. When the offered animal enters the circle in which the priest will immolate it, *it passes from the world of things which are closed to man and are nothing to him, which he knows from the outside – to the world that is immanent to it, intimate*, known as the wife is known in sexual consumption. This assumes that is has ceased to be separated from its own intimacy . . . *The sacrificer's prior separation from the world of things is necessary for the return to intimacy, of immanence between man and the world, between the subject and the object. The sacrificer needs the sacrifice in order to separate himself from the world of things* and the victim could not be separated from it in turn if the sacrificer was not already separated in advance. The sacrificer declares: 'Intimately, I belong to the sovereign world of the gods and myths, to the world of violent and uncalculated generosity . . . *I withdraw you, victim, from the world in which you were and could only be reduced to the condition of a thing, having a meaning that was foreign to you intimate nature*. I call you back to the intimacy of the divine world, of the profound immanence of all that is.'[189]

In the immediate wake of Patroklos' death as simulacrum of Achilles, Achilles himself appears on the battlements of the camp radiating the *selas* which embodies all the magical signs of an Indo-European notion of a legitimate and indivisible sovereignty, without that lack which typifies the anxiety of alienation from self in the symbolic order.[190] The ritual substitute in the symbolic order did not resolve the duality of the subject (deriving from a putative antagonism between the real and the imagined) but connected the subject to a terrain unable to be traversed by the living. The consignment of the king's double to the invisible is what attaches ongoing ritual efficacy to the speech and actions of the king. At the same time, however, there is an intimation also that Patroklos' actions resolve the *duality of subjectivity* itself, that is, the antagonism between acting (*praxis*) and reflecting (*theoria*). By his own critical

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[189] Bataille 1989, 43-4, emphasis added.
[190] *Il.* 18.202-31. On *selas* as evocative of royal investiture, see n.143 above.

discourse, Achilles poses the possibility of the hero's absence from the epic narrative in which his identity arises and takes shape, and, in turn, adopting the role, perhaps for the first time in Western thought, of the critic consigned forever to interpret a performance from the outside rather than woven into its fabric immanently.[191] Following Bataille's formulation, Patroklos' death is by no means his annihilation, but *the symbolic representation of the sublation of an autonomised kleos* – *kleos* as thing, epic performance apprehended as literary *object* – which properly Achilles must incarnate *intimately* in the totality of his being.[192] These events expose the failure of the strategies offered by the embassy: Agamemnon's attempt to seal his power by inappropriate exchanges (gifts for lost *geras*) as relayed by Odysseus; Phoinix' appeal to *philia* which is impossible so long as Achilles' own social existence is unsettled; Aias' glib reduction of the events to a quotidian matter to be resolved by compensation – he too will come later to understand the ultimate alienation that emanates from the failure of ritual to confirm succession. It is Patroklos who heeds the message of the song sung by Achilles "waiting for that moment when Achilles would leave off singing", waiting in effect for the time when the gift of song is requited through the counter-utterance of action and the immolation of the real/imaginary polarity in sacrificial death. It is, furthermore, in Achilles' "letting-go" of Patroklos, *in the risk of losing him*, that the symbolic strategy is triggered and the way is opened for his "return to intimacy, of immanence between man and the world, between the subject and the object".

The recuperation of a symbolic economy

The exchanges that fail – from the subversion of the *geras* in the violence of tyranny to the division of the *skeptron* from itself – can only be restored by the strategies of the symbolic order itself. In the wake of this failure a reflective subject is produced, that subject who stands apart from the world and interrogates from a distance the nature of his own meaning and value. Such value and meaning are, however, "what is left over", remainders, what is brought about when one regards these exchanges, as Bataille says, from outside, exchanges to which one no longer has a relation of intimacy. When Achilles is radically cut off from the cycle of distribution that comprises his social worth, his social worth becomes a *problem*, an autonomized *object* of reflection. Instead of intimacy and immersion there arises in the gap a dialectic and the separation of terms: object separated from value (in political economy); word from meaning (in language); self from image (in representation). From the perspective of cult, Achilles also cuts the occasion of performance off from the possibility of that

[191] This must have implications for an audience who are beginning to *interpret* the performances they attend rather than activate their injunctions within the cult occasions of those performances.

[192] On sublation, and the negation of the desired object through action, see Kojève 1980, 3-4, 6-7, 37-40.

immersion. The economy of aristocratic goods is destabilized further by his denial of symbolic power to the *skeptron*, which shatters the immanence of subject and object in all such mythical objects. This evokes an interpretative question: how can the *skeptron* any longer be an actor or agent in such an environment? In his powerful critique of the deceptive conciliation of Agamemnon as relayed by Odysseus in *Iliad* 9, Achilles rejects death as destiny by reducing death to its bare truth: natural death, aleatory and terminal, ultimately meaningless. The fate of objects is also implicated in his questioning – as inert and simple objects of utility, where does their force lie? As life is redefined as mutually exclusive of death, the subject becomes in turn redefined by a self-exclusion from the world of objects. Once articulated as crude value, objects have only quantitative value that cannot be guaranteed. "Why do I *need* a *geras*? Is my value dependent on such things?" Such a response is nihilistic and points ultimately to the impossibility of exiting the total economy – the arming scene of Patroklos will confirm that intimate objects do indeed make the man. This clarifies a consequence of conceiving meaning and value as separate from the ritual of exchange – the ritual itself is emptied of efficacy as long as value is deemed to lie beyond it. But the rituals of exchange generate value and meaning immanently. The meaning and value of the gift do not lie outside the object, but are constituted by the complicity and collusion of the object itself which *embodies* obligation, generosity, the feelings of *kharis* and joy, and the desire to return it. It, the thing itself, is the actor, and imposes a mutual order on participants. By positing the exclusivity of the terms under which his life exists, Achilles merely reiterates *about himself* the two terms under which he placed the *skeptron*, the unbridgeability of the real and the imaginary, the real and the not-real, the two nodes which it is precisely the function of sacrificial ritual to collapse and make intimate again. Just as the *skeptron* is split into two values in a logic of non-contradiction, so too is his own existence split into the irreconcilability of *nostos* and *kleos*, life and death, the Achilles of *Iliad* 9 and the Patroklos of *Iliad* 16. Achilles' speech and language play life off against the total economy and so split life off from social being, just as the totality of the *skeptron*, enumerated by cycles of exchange from the divine to the human, is relegated as imaginary next to the brute reality of its materiality.

For the *skeptron* to be recuperated, it must become again simultaneously subject and object, and evoke the indeterminacy of its agency. It must then be passed on (*trado*), transmitted, and surrendered (*trado*). It must be given back to the space in which it first acquired its undivided power. Considered in its duality, a way must be found to immolate this pure *objecticity* so that it can pass from being simply a thing separated from what it means. This could be considered an initiation – the symbolic object does momentarily disappear from the *Iliad*, but it reappears in a different guise from the hands of Hephaistos *as the shield of Achilles*, which is

the accoutrement of a reunified Achilles.[193] In a sense, the shield undoes the oath of Achilles in its recasting of the cosmic order emblazoned upon it. So, a symbolic reinvestment is made of the *skeptron* which corresponds to the sacrificial immolation of Patroklos. A parallel can be found in Bacchylides' *Dithyramb for the Keans* (17).[194] In the face of a wager that threatens to call into question the authenticity of Theseus' divine paternity, the hero must plunge into the sea to retrieve Minos' ring (a signet ring?) cast there by the Knossian king. Theseus dives after it, but is immediately conducted by Nereids to the seat of his father's kingdom and arrayed there in the purple garments of royalty.[195] It is in this state that he returns to the surface with his claims made legitimate, not by the retrieval of the ring but by the fact that the sea accepts this tyrant's unwitting sacrificial gesture in exchange for investiture. Theseus returns victorious by accepting the risk of loss that sacrifice entails. By itself, the ring proves nothing, but immersed in the conditions of the ritual it becomes the form of legitimate right. In one sense it was the destiny of the ring to be such an agent.

The *Odyssey* answers Achilles' act of disenchantment in what might be regarded as a restoration of a manufactured artifact to a position of symbolic power – Odysseus' description of the marriage bed: *Od.* 23.183-204. Foley has already analyzed this passage along similar lines but it is worth briefly drawing attention to some significant points of contact.[196] The bed, whose construction is recalled with remarkable precision, functions as the site of a ritual of unification after the hero's *nostos*. Recalling the inscription of a "great sign" (μέγα σῆμα, *Od.* 23.188) that will certify his identity, Odysseus locates the bed at the centre of the *oikos*, built by a mere man but crafted out of the trunk of a living olive tree. The contrasts with the *skeptron* are compelling: the bed begins as a *sema* but becomes a symbolic locus of the generative ritual of marriage; instead of divinely-wrought it is of mortal manufacture; the source of its construction still "flourishes with long leaves" (ἔφυ τανύφυλλος, *Od.* 23.190), a civilized tree "within the courtyard" (ἕρκειος ἐντός, *Od.* 23.190) rather than a dead stump in the wilderness. While Achilles takes a talisman and splits it, applying to it a disruptive skill that sterilizes the object, Odysseus takes living wood and crafts it into the sign of the exchanges that ensure human social continuity and found civilization.

Thus Baudrillard maintains that "the symbolic is an act of exchange and a social relation which puts an end to the real."[197] To stop the *skeptron* from becoming real in arbitrary terms or 'emancipated' by being redefined as partaking of a dual and

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193 Becker 1995 is especially important here, especially at 151-54.
194 On Bacchylides 17, see the remarks of Scodel 1984 and the analysis by Segal 1979.
195 Segal 1979 argues somewhat differently that the accoutrements received by Theseus are the markers of completed rites of passage to adulthood.
196 Foley 1997.
197 Baudrillard 1993a, 133.

irreconcilable nature, it must be exchanged for its double. If it is simply a thing, then it can be turned away from this by being exchanged for its imaginary term. In the rite of passage too, death becomes *ambivalent* in relation to life in order to prevent the brute fact of their dialectical antagonism from irrupting into social relations. The ritual death of initiands "becomes the stakes of a reciprocal-antagonistic exchange between the ancestors and the living."[198] This volatilizes the whole reality of death as terminus as the initiate passes "from natural, aleatory and irreversible death to a death that is given and received, and that is therefore reversible in the social exchange, *soluble* . . ." [199] The real is thus never allowed to irrupt into the formation of social relations formed around symbolic exchange: "[t]he initiated child has only been born biologically, he has only one 'real' father and one 'real' mother; in order to become a *social being* he must pass through the symbolic event of the initiatory birth/death."[200] The singularity of 'birth' must not be allowed to conjure up the singularity and finality of death otherwise social relationships risk becoming meaningless. Life and death both must be resituated in a social reality via ritual. For social being to be experienced as reality it must arise as the product of symbolic reinvestment. Initiation exchanges the horrific antagonism of "life/death" by recasting birth as a species of death and death as a species of birth in order to reconfigure the initiand as a continuation of the symbolic inheritance of the group, so to speak, "beyond birth and death." Initiation does not "play life off against death towards a rebirth" since this would amount to establishing a definitive separation of the two terms "life/death" in an antagonism, isolating the terms as absolute values. Rather, "it is the splitting of life and death that initiation conjures away *and with it the concomitant fatality which weighs down on life as soon as it is split in this way* . . ."[201] So initiation returns life to death by neutralizing not death but the antagonism "life/death"; it returns each term to the status of complementarity with the other.

Achilles must pass through this awareness in order to forestall becoming 'real' too, that is, becoming a living shell entirely cut off from the social production of meaning. He must reenter the total social economy. Achilles realizes that Agamemnon's action has polarized his value by isolating his subjectivity from the "objecticity" of his social identity, splitting his existence from the social rituals in which identity is cast and recast in exchange. Achilles reacts in the first instance by attacking the total economy and it is the ritualized and, so to speak, liturgical character of his poetic voice that makes of the performance occasion such a disturbing event. He further rejects the unidirectional accumulation of valuable objects upon which Agamemnon founds his power. The

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[198] Baudrillard 1993a, 131.
[199] Baudrillard 1993a, 132.
[200] ibid.
[201] ibid., emphasis added.

answer must lie in the sacrificial solution as Bataille formulates it: Achilles must match one loss with an even greater loss, by raising the stakes in the symbolic wager. First, the loss of *timē* (social definition of self in the *world of the utterance*, the extra-discursive environment of the performance occasion, the world of the audience as cult participants) must be matched by the loss of *Patroklees* (the social definition of self within the *world in the utterance*, the reality played out in the utterance as enacted ritual, the world of the participants in the utterance itself). Only the loss of Patroklos can reorient Achilles back toward death as that "form in which the determinacy of the subject and of value is lost",[202] that is, as the form in which Achilles can be released from occupying a position liminal to symbolic exchange, outside himself where he was "reduced to the condition of a thing, having a meaning that was foreign to [his] intimate nature."[203]

Symbolic value and political value

Achilles intimates that real authority lies with the *laos*. He makes it clear in his oath that it is the "sons of the Akhaians" who dispense justice and uphold the *themistes* even though he has contempt for their failure to recognize the force of their collective political will. At *Il.* 1.299 Achilles shifts the blame for his dishonour from Agamemnon to the warrior group, implying that it is the inaction of the *laos* that has led to his current situation. By these actions, value is liberated from its immanence in the circulation of objects and relocated in the *agora.* Henceforth, if objects are used to represent a type of value, such as, for instance, the authority of effective speech, it is because they have been explicitly delegated to do so by a political will.[204] Thus it is no longer the *skeptron* that bestows upon its bearer the right to speak but the *laos* who endow the *skeptron* with the sign-value of a right that is conferred by the sovereignty of their assembly.[205] Material objects become valuable only after having passed through a process of political evaluation. As we argued in Part One above, the archaic expression of a man's social value, his *timē*, detaches itself from the symbolic economy of precious objects and finds its meaning-in-circulation replaced by the explicit adjudication of the community of warriors. For instance, although coins may bear a token of a particular mythical antecedent they also carry a sign-value of at least equivalent force, the city's political heraldry underwriting a coin's value in the name (usually marked) of the citizen assembly.[206] The genealogy of social power underpinning the object of the coin runs counter to the

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202 Baudrillard 1993a, 5 n.2.
203 Bataille 1989, 44.
204 Gernet 1981a, 145-6.
205 In essence these conclusions are drawn by Gernet 1981b, 193-202 and Detienne 1996, 102-6.
206 These remarks on coinage draw heavily on the important observations of Seaford 2004, 147-72, especially at 136-46, with which this study concurs.

genealogy underpinning the authority of the *skeptron* (*Il.* 2.100-108) by "leaving out the god" as Herodotus would say: τοῦ θεοῦ ἀπεόντος (6.53.1). The coin and its claims to value are established by the emergent strategy of political and historical rationalization in archaic Greece that recognizes what is judged best by the *politai* as the only necessary grounds for legitimacy.

The transition to politically determined authority is neither evolutionary nor straightforwardly linear.[207] Commodity fetishism in the iconography of early coinage, expressed in the form of a talisman, suggests symbolic nostalgia for the beginnings of the genealogical tree, looking back to a point at which value inhered immanently in the object by virtue of is double existence both here and in the world of the gods. As Gernet argues, a coin's stamp recalls an original moment that is forever lost, which it evokes by means of a serial representation of some true *agalma* – such as, for example, the golden sheaf of Metapontum, the first olive sprig in Athena's city, or the bit and bridle of Bellerophon on the coins of Korinth – as though the coin sought to find its own golden fleece through the fetishistic circulation of an image of primordial symbolic worth. Aristotle, however, demurs (*Pol.* 1257ᵃ40f.) that the stamp (*charakter*) of a coin is a τοῦ ποσοῦ σημεῖον, "a sign of how much" – a value declared by consensus (hence, as Aristotle explains, *nomisma* from *nomos*, *Nic. Eth.* 5.5.12, 15, 1133ᵃ30f., 1133ᵇ20f.). Aristotle also emphasizes a coin's ephemeral value, implying that *to poson*, its worth, lies outside the coin itself (*Pol.* 1.9, 1257ᵇ10-17). The coin therefore radiates an ambiguous value. While retaining its umbilical reference to a talisman, the coin must come to terms with the tension created by the fluctuation of the *charakter's* capacity to maintain a guaranteed link between coin and its source of value.[208] The coin seeks to resolve the dilemma created by the fact that the real source of its economic power – the issuing body whose sovereignty vies with the symbolic object depicted on the coin – is unable to achieve universally applicable evaluation. Echoing Achilles' own disappointment (*Il.* 9.318-9), the coin is the product of a social world that also longs for the incarnation of value in things, while increasingly suspicious of the arbitrary nature of the emerging practices responsible for its determination (compare Arist. *Nic. Eth.* 5.5.14, 1133ᵃ11-21).

When coins begin to appear in Greece, the first mints were located in cult and civic spaces that functioned in the main for the resolution of public questions.[209] The value of the coin is, therefore, *political* rather than ritually symbolic in origin. In the *Iliad*, once Achilles disenchants the *skeptron* and turns his back on its supporting institutions, new forms of political discourse fill the resulting

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[207] Hence the section title avoids the formulation "*From* symbolic value *to* political value".

[208] Aristotle has trouble arguing this point away: money is a commodity too and so "cannot always be equal in value – but it tends to be" (*Nic. Eth.* 5.5.14, 1133ᵇ14-5).

[209] Seaford 2004, 75-124 surveys these spaces.

evaluative vacuum. Political discourse is rational in focus and the rules determining practice are under constant scrutiny and review. Value requires adjudication drawing upon crucial antecedents in the shape of formalized elite contests including the *aethlon,* the specialized object central to these activities.

In *Iliad* 9, Achilles' conclusion, that the value placed on his life (ψυχή, *Il.* 9.401) is incalculable (*Il.* 9.379-385, 401-5), is unnerved by the possibility that it could be reduced to a crude arithmetic. He generalizes: "cattle and sheep can be spoil, tripods and tawny horses can be possessions, but a man's life cannot return as a thing despoiled or taken" (*Il.* 9.406-9). The referentiality of these words is inconceivable within the domain of symbolic exchange and by the end of *Iliad* 9, Achilles places his own existence beyond any framework of evaluation. His restoration to social circulation as "best of the Akhaians" must, like the coin, take place on both the political and the symbolic levels.

There are parallels in the shift from 'pre-law' (*prédroit*) to law as explored by Gernet.[210] Achilles' words echo juridical contexts: the formulations of an oath, the attention drawn to the dispensation of justice and the *themistes* of Zeus (*Il.* 1.233-44).[211] The oath is above all a symbolic act that derives its compulsion from the object that it consecrates. The oath is a *dikē*, a ritual process whose endpoint is the determination of an archaic truth.[212] This truth, as Detienne showed, does not arise from the interrogation of evidence and witnesses; it lies in the concept of *themis*, an oracular dictate issuing from the invisible domain of the divine.[213] The act of oath swearing implies a willingness to surrender to a source of truth. Under these circumstances the judge searches for the right formulation and the truth is settled by virtue of the efficacy of words and objects emanating from the heart of the ritual.[214] It is the formulaic utterance itself that carries the authority since it sets in motion a whole series of practical responses compelled by a symbolic network of tacit dispositions. As we argued in chapter 5, it is misrecognition of the complicity engendered by these dispositions that make "what it says" real. This is evidenced by the Attic procedure of *diamatyria* whereby the challenged heir need only swear that he is the son of the dead man and the challenge is immediately nullified.[215] The oath is therefore one endpoint of a pre-law resolution process since as an efficacious pronouncement it binds parties to their claims and 'delimits' (*peirar*) the boundaries for dispute settlement. The acceptance of this intervention process is what constitutes 'proof' in a symbolic sense.

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210 Gernet 1981b.
211 Leaf 1900 *ad loc.*, notes the density of 'pre-law' forms.
212 Thür 1970 and 1996.
213 Detienne 1996, 61-2. On *themis*, see Benveniste 1973, 379-84, Gernet 1981b, 187-93 with further remarks on 199. See also the summary of earlier analyses in Farenga 2006, 119-25.
214 Gernet 1981b, 174-5.
215 Gernet 1955, 83-102, 1981b, 177-81.

Achilles' use of language in expressing his concern by *claiming* a certain degree of worth adds another level of complexity to his circumstances. In his investigation of Homeric εὔχομαι, Muellner concludes that it is the marked verb for speech-acts.[216] In the *Iliad*, εὔχομαι appears often as the word marking the assertion of a claim, especially in situations where legitimate right is subject to a degree of counter-claim. Whenever it is used, the verb εὔχομαι creates an atmosphere of tension as it brings into play symbolic strategies of legitimacy.[217] It is linked to Achilles by its juridical assertion of his superlative claim to worth – εὔχομαι ἄριστος εἶναι.[218] The verb precedes the display of signs and the recitation of formulaic genealogies (for example, *Il.* 6.211, 6.231) that constitute the ordeal proving a claim in a way that complements submission to an oath.

By the time the genealogy of Agamemnon's *skeptron* is recounted at *Il.* 2.100-8, the act of substantiating a claim by the deployment of a symbolic object has become destabilized. By 'refuting' the *skeptron*, the oath of Achilles also initiates the process of interrogating testimony and evidence. In 'pre-law' contexts, testimony is the declaration itself and its truth lies in its ritual propriety.[219] Achilles' reply to Odysseus in *Iliad* 9, however, takes the form of a *cross-examination* of Agamemnon's claims. Achilles does not demand of Agamemnon a reaffirmation of his status under oath, such as Menelaos will demand of Antilokhos in the aftermath of the chariot race at Patroklos' funeral (*Il.* 23.581-5). On this later occasion the *Iliad* deliberately reiterates, perhaps ironically, the central conflict of *Iliad* 1.[220] But this comparison overlooks a key difference. Achilles' response in *Iliad* 9 quickly moves beyond Agamemnon toward the interrogation of the claims made by the heroic economy as a whole, claims founded on spoil, distribution and public recognition via the circulation of precious objects. The form of this interrogation is different too. The 'truth' Achilles seeks, after a series of questions, is one that the ritual and institutional structures of this 'city of heroes' is not equipped to provide. It requires a system for the determination of measures of worth (that is, what constitutes an "equal portion" or "parity of worth", *Il.* 9.318-21) that can mark out the good man from the bad, the 'man of deeds' from the one without achievements (*Il.* 9.320), in a way that the outcome will reflect what is experienced by the individual subject to be 'really' the case. In short, Achilles seeks a solution through a *rhetorical* discourse that gives priority to a political subject's personal and critical *interpretation*:

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216 Muellner 1976, 98-9.

217 Muellner's analysis has shown that the verb is a formal declaration of identity with a large proportion of instances occurring in assertions of legitimate descent: Muellner 1976, 69-78.

218 This expression is used of Agamemnon in his usurpation of an identity bound up with that of Achilles: see *Il.* 1.91 and 2.82 as opposed to *Il.* 1.244 and 23.274-6. See the detailed examination in Muellner 1976, 79-83.

219 Gernet 1981b, 189-90.

220 So Richardson 1993, 228-9.

> **αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ἐρέω μοι δοκεῖ εἶναι ἄριστα·**
> οὔτ' **ἔμεγ'** Ἀτρεΐδην Ἀγαμέμνονα **πεισέμεν οἴω**
> οὔτ' ἄλλους Δαναούς.
>
> *Il.* 9.314-6
>
> *"But I myself will speak in a way that seems best to me;*
> and *I do not think* Atreides Agamemnon will *persuade me*
> nor any other Danaan."

The language of heroic claims and formal assertion analysed by Muellner has here given way to the individual subject's statement of his own point of view (μοι δοκεῖ εἶναι ἄριστα), which is in turn self-validating specifically in relation to the alternate views that might be held by his peers.

In the wake of this interrogation, a solution to the problem of Achilles' *timē* will eventually be sought in the collective agreement of the group, in an expression equivalent to "what seems best to the 'sons of the Akhaians'" (*Il.* 23.701, 703). Achilles gropes for practices of determination that have 'critical' force, institutions within which a *krisis* can be both circumscribed and solved. As argued in chapters 1 and 2 above, the underlying institution of *Iliad* 1, the *dasmos*, is vividly shown to lack an apparatus of scrutiny able to preempt a civic *dokimasia*. Furthermore, Agamemnon's arbitrary selection of the "best men" cannot prevent Achilles' refutation (*elenkhhos*) of their versions of events (or analogies, *Il.* 9.520-3). In this light, the *Iliad* seems to adumbrate the rational adjudications of the law against the backdrop of 'pre-law' *themis*, just as it explores forms of explicit value against the shadowy backdrop of symbolic exchanges. Autonomized justice, like value, is exterior to, and precedes, the rituals that purport to establish it, as well as independent of those who claim the territory of justice as a social function.

There are comparable similarities between these intimations of the juridical determination of social worth, and the problem of justice explored in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*.[221] In the *Eumenides* the crisis posed in the rendering of justice is located explicitly in the political sphere. In this aetiology of a citizen court, the goddess renounces her adjudicatory role (*Eum.* 470-89). Only the Athenian jurors on the Areopagos are authorized to make an assessment of the facts determining whether the murder of Klytaimnestra can be mitigated.[222] Similarly Achilles, in his anger, reaches out to his divine mother for Zeus' help, but ultimately he looks to the warrior group for the political will that would guarantee the truth-value of his claims. In the *Eumenides*, the Furies maintain their right of retributive justice as a *geras* (*Eum.* 209, 227-8, 393), that is, as an archaic prerogative. The pursuit of Orestes rests upon a symbolic legitimacy that demands blood for a slain mother

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[221] In general, see Goldhill 1986, 33-56 and Sommerstein 1989, 19-25.

[222] The clash, between justice as a ritual ordeal and justice as the practice of determining what is just, is dramatized at *Eum.* 415-435.

or an oath of denial. Instituting a political court abjures the act of retribution and prioritizes the *accurate* determination of guilt and culpability. Justice is to emerge from the practice of determining what is just (*Eum.* 430). This dramatization of a shift in juridical thought seeks to determine whether matricide can be rationalized by the demands of a son's duty to avenge his father and ensure political succession of the household. Athena's response is one that places a premium on the political solution because two symbolic obligations are juxtaposed dialectically: "a case of murder with such a sharp edge of *menis* is not for my *themis* to decide" (οὐδε μὴν ἐμοὶ θέμις φόνου δικάζειν ὀξυμηνίτους δίκας, *Eum.* 471-2). This in turn raises a question mark over the *geras* of the Furies and the proper resolution of the remaining 'problem' of vengeance (*Eum.* 490-565). The irrevocable split between a divine *themis* activated by symbolic exchange and a political process rationally expounded on the basis of an autonomous justice is resolved in this drama by the advent of a new public cult, by which the political process acknowledges and honours the symbolic forces embodied by the Furies. Symbolic exchange is therefore by no means excluded from the political domain. On the contrary, via a re-articulation of the Furies as guarantors of civic justice the Athenian *polis* recognizes the need to position the priority of citizen sovereignty over archaic justice within a framework of symbolic exchange that extends deference to ancient powers.

A similar compromise arises in the course of the *Iliad*. It has been argued in preceding chapters that the *geras* is re-expressed by the *Iliad* as an unstable form of value that draws its signification unevenly from the political will of the warrior *dasmos*. This results in a 'Eumenidean' outcome in which the symbolic exchange of the hero's funeral cult will henceforth be the site of the ongoing enactment of contests in which the *laos* assert their sovereignty in the adjudication of the social worth of their peers. The ancient prerogative (*geras*) is stabilized in cult (for example, Hdt. 5.67.5), but the evaluation of peers will be authorized by the award of prizes (*aethla*) whose only value is that expressed by the collective political will of the assembled group (*Il.* 23.701, 703).

The disenchantment of the past: the 'laughter of Hekataios' and the beginnings of historia

The investigation of epic as a source of historical evidence must be careful to avoid falsely projecting contemporary assumptions about history and concepts of historical evidence onto descriptions of the archaic world. Historical claims based on archaic actions and events are problematized by the fact that the motives underlying them are framed 'pre-historically' within a ritualized world in which the past is actively rather than transcendentally present. The theme of referentiality, and the narrative associated with the emergence of reflective thought in archaic Greece, present a

moment in archaic development in which, it has been argued, the *Iliad* is deeply complicit. Significant, then, for the *historical* interpretation of the *Iliad* is the relationship it shares with one precisely identifiable juncture in the temporal development of Greek thought – the invention of the historical past.[223]

What evidence marks the beginnings of historical consciousness in ancient Greece, that point when the past began to be thought of *historically* both as a *problem* to be solved and as *autonomous* in relation to the inquiring subject? To explore this question, let us focus on one of the earliest figures in the history of Greek historiography.[224]

The past in symbolic exchange

The style of Hekataios' thinking marks the beginnings of a post-Archaic consciousness in ancient Greece. It is the point when the past began to be thought of *historically*, that is, as both a *problem* to be solved and as *autonomous* in relation to the inquiring subject. 'Historical' ways of thinking about the past emerged experimentally in the century after the Persian conquest of Asia Minor. This mode of inquiry was part of an epistemological change that widened a gap between truths distilled in performance and from the exercise of ritual authority, and the emerging reality of reflective disengagement distilled within political discourse. Historical inquiry as a cognitive practice became possible only in the wake of this latter idea of *objective reality*, which included, among others, conceptions of the real underlying meaning of language or music, real value in exchange, anthropology, and discussions of how things really are (*logoi peri phuseos*).[225] From the perspective of the preceding sections it is therefore possible to discern a kinship between aspects of Achilles' identity, the emerging autonomy of social value, and the autonomization of the 'past' in Hekataios of Miletos.

Evidence of an 'anxiety of reference' – a concern for the underlying reality of especially human artefacts – is found in the *Genealogiai* of Hekataios at the end of the 6th century BCE. In the fragments of this work what appears on the surface to be a

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223 "Contemporaneous" from the perspective of the *Iliad's* monumentalization at Athens in the second half of the 6th century.

224 On this topic generally, see Jacoby 1956, 219-227, Pearson 1939, ch.2, Tozzi 1963, 1964, 1966, 1967, Lasserre 1976, Fornara 1983, 1-23, Detienne 1986, 63-81, Detienne 1988, 7-26, Dewald 1987, 147-70, Dewald 2006, Meier 1987, Meister 1990, 13-18, Fowler 1996, Hartog 2000, Bertelli 1998 and 2001, Seaford 2004, 175-315, Darbo-Peschanski 2007 and 2008. Of these the discussions of Jacoby 1956, Detienne 1986, Bertelli 1998 and 2001 have been particularly useful. What follows in this section will be developed further in an introductory essay to a commentary on Hekataios' *Genealogiai* that will focus especially on Hekataios' motives and methods for rationalizing epichoric narratives. Disagreements with the most recent explanation of Hekataios' rationalism (Bertelli 2001) will be expanded there.

225 The underlying meaning of language or music is pursued by Theagenes of Rhegion and Lasos of Hermione respectively; the question of the nature of value is a latent theme from the *Iliad* on, but is especially important during the appearance of coined money; anthropology (Xenophanes frr. 14-15 Gentili-Prato); on *logoi peri physeos* from Anaximander to Parmenides see Nightingale 2004, 40-71, and Seaford 2004, 175-291 for historicizing sociological explanations of the emergence of rational thought in Archaic Greece.

straightforward application of precocious Ionian reason to the interpretation of Greek mythical narratives is permeated at a deeper level by Hekataios' sense of doubt about the nature of the relationship between these narratives and the content they portray. Hekataios' concerns intersect questions central to the problem of the Archaic period. Firstly, how was the past framed in ritual events such as poetic performance occasions? Secondly, what is the status of the past once it has been objectified via a specifically 'historical' consciousness? With Hekataios, the passage from the 'archaic' to the 'post-archaic' can almost be pinpointed with precision: in the laughter of a Milesian intellectual who, in a curious inversion of Foucault's reaction to Borges, discovers *in his own logoi* the "stark impossibility of thinking *that*."[226]

Let us briefly consider the first question in order to understand the terrain that Hekataios had chosen to map: the form the past takes in symbolic contexts such as poetic performance. This will also expand what is meant here by the intimacy, immediacy and proximity of the past to those occasions during which the past plays a central role.

In symbolic contexts the part played by representation in art and ritual is *constitutive of* rather than merely referential to reality. In a purely political field, by contrast, a disinterred 'reality' provides the reference point for determining the meaning of human action and expression. Rituals and their narratives are discredited if they cannot be aligned with a reality that is independent of them. In symbolic contexts, however, there are no acts of reference that guarantee meaning or truth. As Pierre Bourdieu has shown, in a ritual environment, such as the Mass, specific reference to the transcendent existence of God is not the guarantee of ritual success. God is rather invoked and made present by the congregation in the act of performing the Mass. Much of the care and attention devoted to rituals derive from the key role they play in fabricating the social and cultural reality of their communities. Reality is therefore actively produced rather than passively responded to.

Thus, in symbolic fields the formalities underpinning ritualised processes of representation cause things and events to occur or be present.[227] Indeed, linguistic exchanges are commonly performed without interpretive reference to a hierarchical key, which would establish a relationship between words spoken in the here-and-now and 'meanings' located elsewhere. In fact, in the performance of language, meaning and interpretation always lie over the horizon of the occasion of speech. Interpretation on the other hand is an intellectual act that assumes the opacity of an object from which mastery will force hidden sense. As has been stressed above, however, participants neither 'make sense' of ritual nor do they engage in constant micro-acts of interpretation; instead, they are immersed in *relations* of performance that are always immanent and circulating.

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[226] Foucault 1972, xv.
[227] Vernant 1991, 151-185, Faraone 1991, Steiner 2001, 3-26.

These *relations of performance*, including speech acts, generate senses of intimacy between what might otherwise be considered distinct and incommensurable entities. Reality is what is constituted by, and within, the terms set down by ritual. The logic of its practice is that it creates its ends at the same moment it acts to pursue them – this establishes the 'fit' between ritual and the world.[228] 'Meaning' in performative ritual, if it exists at all, does so as Bataille has suggested, at the sacrificial level – it is circulated, consumed, and volatilized in the social relations of the group it authorizes.[229] Marcel Mauss' essay on the gift locates pre-monetary value in this same circulatory symbolic field.[230] Value, like meaning in language, is discharged and dissipates in the exchange itself. To *interpret* the gift and reconstruct it in terms of its 'real value' is to refer outside the gift to something else in an act that results in the termination of its symbolic identity. In short, the symbolic field does not need *referentiality* to generate lived realities; indeed, the spectre of reference often signals the onset of disenchantment, as reflected in the preface to Achilles' great oath.

Restating an earlier observation, rituals are contexts in which *metamorphosis* rather than *metaphor* applies.[231] For example, the meaning of the statue of a god is not the signifier of an idea nor is it a resemblance. In the earliest Greek rituals the statue was what caused the god to be present and fixed it to a particular site. God and statue are not the same thing but, on specified occasions and via the appropriate rite, they will momentarily coincide.[232] Poetic performance is similarly able to 're-presence' other epochs by binding an invoked past to its present occasion.[233] As we argued in chapter 5, collusion between a shared narrative past and a socially articulated present is impossible without the utterances of the *aoidos* being sanctioned by the pact entered into by participants of the occasion.[234] Following Detienne, a symbolic past belongs to the field of *aletheia* – not an external 'truth', but a word that signifies the truth-function of ritual speech. *Aletheia* is the reality called into being by specific figures who exercise a declarative social function, whose utterances are less interested in a fidelity to an independent reality than to narratives vouchsafed by religious powers quickened by the occasion. To this extent, the semantic field of archaic truth is the field of narrative authority arising within formal performance events.[235]

This symbolic exchange between performance and occasion gives rise to *relations of intimacy* with the past rather than the *logic of disclosure* that underwrites the truth claims of historical narrative. This concept of *intimacy*, borrowed from Georges Bataille's *Theory of Religion*,

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228 This reiterates what has been discussed above in chapter 1.
229 Bataille 1989, 43-61.
230 Mauss 1966.
231 For this idea of *metamorphosis*, see Baudrillard 1994, 129-42.
232 Vernant 1991, 151-63 with further important remarks on 138 and Steiner 2001, 5-11.
233 See Crieelard 2002, 239-95 and Bakker 2008.
234 On this misrecognized delegation of the poet by the occasion of performance, see chapter 5.
235 Detienne 1996, 39-52.

is apposite.[236] A past structured by ritual poetics 'makes sense' to an audience by having been seduced into playing by rules that were authorised within the performative occasion. This past is not strange or mysterious. Audiences are not alienated or mystified by its relations, hierarchies and customs. The sung past does not present itself as a foreign country whose inhabitants behave in ways inexplicable to the listener.[237] The meaning of the past in performance is never brought into opposition to, or contrasted with, a past *reality* but finds its symbolic value in and through its ritual occasion. The conception of a 'real past' required the development of very different discourses and occasions before it could challenge the reality evoked by song.[238] The context of this development was political as well as intellectual in character, and it was sufficient to begin rupturing the pact of intimacy between audience and performance. The emergent written prose historiography of this new intellectual context distanced and alienated itself from the pasts of song. Over the course of the 5th century BCE, that form of the past would increasingly be conceived as anomalous.

The notion of a symbolic field helps us to understand the formal background to which Hekataios applied his consciousness of the past. Hekataios and those who followed his lead encountered the past especially through the performance of catalogue poetry and the recitation of the lineages of aristocratic clans. The two surviving examples are the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* and the Homeric *Catalogue of Ships.*[239] These examples are monuments of poetic synthesis performed in the context of festival occasions at a time of increasing panhellenic circulation, no doubt under the patronage of great households.[240] Their function was simultaneously umbilical and juridical: to link audiences to ancestry, to confirm the legitimacy of present claims, to authorize and provide a charter – and to do all this in such a way that these narratives would become integral to the occasions of their performance and thereby translate into an enduring reality. These catalogues were performed alongside the presentation of colonial foundation narratives, praise poetry and, of course, epic, all of which in their separate ways served to assuage anxieties of origin and legitimacy, for cities as well as great men, by weaving their narratives into the texture of recurring ritual complexes such as the *Delia*, the *Panathenaia* or the cult of Adrastos at

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236 Bataille 1989, 43-44.

237 See Fowler 2001, 113-4.

238 This point is made by Goldhill 2002.

239 On catalogue poetry and the *Catalogue of Women*, see West 1985, 1-30, Fowler 1998,, Rutherford 2000, Bertelli 1996 and 2001, 73-6, Hirschberger 2004, Hunter 2005, 1-5 and Cingano 2005. On Hekataios and his relationship to previous genealogical traditions, see Jacoby 1956, 220-1. On aristocratic family traditions and genealogies in general, as well as on Hekataios, Thomas 1989, 155-96 is essential. The context of Hekataios' own genealogizing is also clearly agonistic, a *prima facie* case for thinking that ordeals of ancestry were a context for genealogical performance. On such ordeals, see *Il.* 6.145-211, 13.448-54, and especially 20.203-43, with Martin 1989, 85-6.

240 On this impetus, see Nagy 1990.

Sikyon.[241] These performances crafted the ritual poetics of tyrannical and dynastic legitimacy and shaped the mythic terrain over which early *poleis* fought their wars.[242]

The laughter of Hekataios

Both Herodotus and Felix Jacoby had the same opinion of this Milesian intellectual: Hekataios was a pioneer of historical technique (later regarded as one of the *historiae conditores*), a composer of narrative syntheses (*logopoios*, Hdt. 2.143.1, 5.36.1, 5.124.1) as well as a practical citizen (Hdt. 5.36.1);[243] his critical stance alone deserved recognition (Hekataios is first in Jacoby's *Sammlung*: *FGrHist* 1), but his habits of mind displayed too much archaic naivety to warrant the title *pater historiae*.[244] Herodotus' few grudging acknowledgements of Hekataios, jeering at his improved map of the world (Hdt. 4.36), belie the influence of the latter's method of critical synthesis upon the *Histories*. Hekataios' two works appear to dovetail.[245] The *Genealogiai* revised and vertically systematized lineages from performance traditions along rationalizing lines, and his motives for doing so lie at the heart of this study. The *Periodos Gēs*, on the other hand, imposed a new structure on the domain of geography by harmonizing geographical space with the rationalisations used in his genealogical research, linking names with places and demonstrating the limits of what was plausible to the practically minded. Like his famous map, abstract visual models offered by the different critical modalities of writing – geometry, the juxtaposition of *logoi*, decontextualization, and so on – were tested in two parallel projects, one on the fabric of lived human *time* via narratives of descent, and the other on the *spaces* of human life – *he oikoumene*.[246]

The preface to the *Genealogies* is extant:

> Ἑκαταῖος Μιλήσιος ὧδε μυθεῖται· τάδε γράφω, ὥς μοι δοκεῖ ἀληθέα εἶναι· οἱ γὰρ Ἑλλήνων λόγοι πολλοί τε καὶ γελοῖοι, ὡς ἐμοὶ φαίνονται, εἰσιν.
>
> *FGrH* 1 F1

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[241] On these contexts for Hekataios, see Nenci 1967, Lasserre 1976, who adds to *ktiseis*, elegy and lyric as sources, and Bertelli 2001, 73-6, and in general, see Bowie 1986, Dougherty 1994 and Giangiulio 2001.

[242] Wickersham 1991.

[243] On Hekataios of Miletos, see Jacoby 1956, 219-227, Von Fritz, 1967, 48-76, Pearson 1939, ch.2, Tozzi 1963, 1964, 1966, 1967, Lasserre 1976, Fornara 1983, 1-23, Detienne 1986, 63-81, Detienne 1988, 7-26, Dewald 1987, 147-70, Dewald 2006, Meier 1987, Meister 1990, 13-18, Fowler 1996, Hartog 2000, Bertelli 1998 and 2001, Seaford 2004, 175-315, Darbo-Peschanski 2007, 2008, Nenci 1956 and 1967, S.West 1991. Unless otherwise noted the fragments are cited from Jacoby's collection.

[244] Jacoby saw Hekataios as a proto-Herodotus and a pioneer rather than fully fledged 'historian'. This put Hekataios at the beginning of process of refinement that culminated with Thucydides: Jacoby 1956, 221-2. For an earlier view of the relationship between Herodotus and Hekataios, see Diels 1887. On Herodotus' characterization of Hekataios, see S.West 1991.

[245] Sensed by Strabo 1.1.11 (= *FGrHist* 1 T11b).

[246] *FGrHist* 1 T11b, 12a, b; F36a = Agathemerus, *Geog. hyp.* 1; F36b = Hdt. 4.36, on which see in general Jacob 1988, 273-304 and Jacoby 1923, 329. On the singularly human dimension to Hekataios' work, see Momigliano 1931.

> Hekataios of Miletos asserts the following: 'These things I write I think are true, because the narratives of the Greeks are profuse and, as far as I'm concerned, laughable.'

In a short fragment, this preface condenses Greek thought poised at a crossroads of uncertainty.[247] In using the language of poetic authority (μυθεῖται), Hekataios ironically heralds an utterance that immediately turns away from the poet's traditional métier: "I am *writing* down the things that seem to me to be true."[248] The influence of the *agora* is apparent. His language evokes habits of civic decision-making, already in evidence elsewhere.[249] It expresses a confidence in the plain everyday prose of the practical citizen acting according to *his* best judgment, echoing the public inscriptions that deploy writing to objectify civic utterances,[250] while also appropriating the authorial voice of the tyrant and the truth-function of the poet's voice (*aletheia*).[251] In short, Hekataios' language shows traces of the political and rhetorical arbitration in the *agora* concerning what ought, and ought not, be regarded as legitimately real. Recent work on the 6th century prose writers continues to assert that the political, juridical and monetary habits of the developing city find their intellectual distillate in these and similar kinds of treatise.[252]

Hekataios discloses his motives: "because the Greeks' narratives are many . . . " Variants, as Lévi-Strauss teaches us, are a property of myth.[253] The multiplicity of ritual contexts in which human identity is realized ensures the corresponding production of a multiplicity of realities out of which incommensurable versions proliferate. For Hekataios, as well as Thucydides a century later, the plurality and incommensurability of *logoi* is a problem. A number of the fragments illustrate that Hekataios was no mere "collector of old stories" as some suggested (μύθων ἀρχαίων συνθέτης, Aelian *NA* 9.23), but exercised a critical faculty in an effort to establish criteria for determining the *correct* version.

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247 On this preface, see Gitti 1952, Corcella 1996 and Bertelli 2001, 80-4.

248 That γράφω and μυθέομαι are opposed here is argued by Detienne 1986, 71ff. but rejected by Bertelli 2001, 83 n.46.

249 From the Dreros law (*ML* 2) on. So Detienne 1986, 63-81 and 1988, 29-81.

250 Svenbro 1993, 149-50 and Goldhill 2002. That Akousilaos is drawing on a similar authority seems indicated by the tradition that he compiled his *Genealogies* from bronze tablets his father discovered while digging on his property (*FGrHist* 2 T1). This may be the earliest reference to a documentary source, quite apart from the question of the authenticity of the tablets themselves, on which see now Pámias 2015.

251 This appropriation is considered violent by Simonides: 598 *PMG*: τὸ δοκεῖν καὶ τὰν ἀλάθειαν βιᾶται "Opinion violates even the truth". As Detienne has argued 1996, 107-16, Simonides occupies an historical moment when decision-making based on *to dokein* is still associated with the sage-tyrant whose personal wisdom challenges the monopolies of ritual social functions held by elite corporations such as the Eupatridai, Bakkhiadai and so on. On this figure, see Martin 1993.

252 For example, the essays in Luraghi 2001, Goldhill 2002, Detienne 1986, 1988, 1996, Meier 1987, Lloyd 1987, Seaford 1994, 2004, Nightingale 2004, Fowler 2006, Thomas 1989, 2006, Ford 2002, Dewald 2006.

253 Lévi-Strauss 1968, 206-32.

The main fragments that illustrate Hekataios' rationalization of mythic narrative are very briefly summarized as follows:

> F18: debate concerning the return route taken by the Argonauts;
> F19: recalculation of Hesiod's figures: there are only twenty children of Aigyptos, not fifty;
> F20: Danaos, not Kadmos, introduced letters to Greece;
> F24: (with Paus. 2.37.4) the Lernaean Hydra could have had only one head;
> F26: Geryon was not connected with Spain nor is there an island called Erytheia. Geryon was in all likelihood a local king from the coast of Ambrakia or Amphilokia;
> F27a = Paus. 3.25.5: "But Hekataios discovered a *plausible version* (λογόν εἰκότα), saying that a terrible snake was nurtured at Tainaron and was known as "Hades' Dog" because whoever was bitten died immediately from the venom; he says also that this was the serpent brought to Eurystheus by Herakles";
> F27b = *P. Mediol.* 17 col. ii 32, ed. Vogliano, frag. papyrus commentary on Antimachus of Colophon, 2nd cent. AD: "It seems to me that the snake was not so large and immense, rather it was more fearsome than other snakes and that it was on this account that Eurystheus admitted that it was an impossible task" (εἶναι δὲ τὸν ὄφιν δοκέω οὐ μέγαν οὕτως οὐδὲ πελώριον, ἀλλὰ δεινότερον τῶν ἄλλων ὀφίων, καὶ τούτου εἵνεκεν τόν Εὐρυσθέα ἐνδέξασθαι ὡς ἀμήχανον ἐόντα);
> F28: debate about the location of mythical Oikhalia, in Eretrian territory according to Hekataios;
> F29: Auge is not raped by Herakles at Tegea (as in the local tradition) but seduced with her consent;
> F119: the Peloponnesos was inhabited by barbarians before the Greeks;
> F127: Hekataios has it that the Pelasgians were unjustly expelled from Attika contrary to what the Athenians say.

In what particular form did Hekataios receive story variants that made their plurality and inconsistency so scandalous? It is probable that Hekataios came upon them in written form.[254] How they came to be written down is a linked but separate issue. Nevertheless, as Detienne argued in *Les savoirs de l'écriture*, increased public utilization of writing opened up new intellectual spaces.[255] By having *texts* before him Hekataios was able to imagine different *logoi* spatially. He could place the performances of catalogues and lineages, once only accessible in performance but now physical *objects* of inquiry, side-by-side for 'rational' comparison. Visualizing narratives in this way exposes their different structure and shape but it also decontextualizes their content

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[254] Pythagoras "of all men especially pursued inquiry after picking through these compositions" (ἱστορίην ἤσκησεν ἀνθρώπων μάλιστα πάντων καὶ ἐκλεξάμενος ταύτας τὰς συγγραφάς, Herakleitos 22 B129 D-K). Hekataios is tarred with the same brush in another fragment: Herakleitos 22 B40 D-K = *FGrH* 1 T21. This latter fragment suggests a lineage of 'readers': polymathy did not teach sense to Hesiod, and therefore it was not transmitted to those who "pick and choose from these compositions", the so-called *sophoi*. Note also the suggestiveness and problems thrown up by the comments of Dion. Hal. *Thuc.* 5.13-15, discussed by Bertelli 2001, 70-2 with further references at 70 n.10, 71 n.12.

[255] Detienne 1988, 7-26, 29-81, with Ruzé 1988 and Bertelli 2001, 68-70. On civic archives, see Georgoudi 1988.

by relegating their form.[256] Recurring patterns of style become properties of authorial choice and genre instead of markers of occasion.[257] Moreover, different story versions begin to be regarded as errors against the backdrop of a true narrative concealed by variation.

The same epistemological operation is at work in his geographical work. Hekataios' map (*FGrHist* 1 T11b, 12a, b; F36a and b) converted places into fixed coordinates on a concrete surface. It made of the earth a graphic reality, something quite different from its texture as a performed geography in an *Argonautika*, or the *Iliad's* Catalogue of Ships.[258] The graphic stemma and the map are part of the same project, aimed not simply at correction but in finding a point outside of narrative from which the subject can view the world. Like the dot on the map, the genealogical datum in a visually rationalized stemma escapes the 'fictions of earlier men' (Xenophanes fr.1.22 Gentili-Prato) to become part of a newly articulated realm independent of speech: reality.

With such a panoptic view comes *polymathiē*, a *multiplicity* of learning, which ironically regards narrative plurality as a problem, especially from a juridical and deliberative point of view.[259] In citizen inheritance disputes, for example, counter-claims require testing and adjudication. Hellen must be *either* the son of Deukalion (as he is in Hesiod, fr.2 and 4 MW) *or* his grandson (Hekataios); only a *histor* could resolve the competing claims (Ἑκαταῖος ἱστορεῖ ὅτι . . . Προνόου δὲ τὸν Ἕλληνά φησι γενέσθαι, *FGrHist* 1 F13 = Schol. Thuc. 1.3.2). Yet only as *texts* could two lineages, originally forged in quite distinct regional performance contexts, be stripped of the performative reasoning of their formative occasion and, exposed as mythical variants, thereby become a *problem*. Hekataios reaches a critical point where he loses sight of the reasons why different contexts created different genealogical content, primarily because his experience of heroic genealogies, such as the Hesiodic *Catalogue*,

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256 Akousilaos, a contemporary of Hekataios, seems to have deliberately recast performance narratives (Hesiod) with this end in mind: *FGrHist* 2 T5, 6. On Akousilaos, see Tozzi 1967 and Calame 2004. Fontana 2012 argues that Akousilaos is at least as important as Hekataios in the history of Greek historiography, especially in his approach to 'sources'; Fowler 2013, 624-5 is more skeptical. On writing and literacy at the beginnings of Greek historiography, see the pertinent observations of Fowler 2001.

257 Nagy 1994, Calame 1998, Graziozi 2002.

258 Hekataios was one of the first to subject epic geography to independent critique: F 18.

259 For the contemporary assessment of Hekataios' work as *polymathiē*, Herakleitos 22 B40 D-K = *FGrH* 1 T21: "*Polymathiē* does not teach understanding (*nous*) otherwise it would have taught Hesiod and then Pythagoras, Xenophanes and Hekataios in turn." He therefore lists Hekataios with Pythagoras among exempla of *polymathiē*; in fragment B129 DK, Herakleitos criticizes Pythagoras further and describes his activity in three ways: (a) the pursuit of personal investigation *(historiē)*; (b) selection from written compositions; (c) the fabrication of his own wisdom. On these two fragments of Herakleitos, see Granger 2004 who rightly draws attention to the 'political' nature of Herakleitos' criticism.

derives almost solely from reading texts.[260] For Hekataios the meanings of mythical narratives are cut off from their symbolic moorings by their textualization, and the veracity of their content can only be established by juxtaposition against 'other versions'. In the face of these *polloi logoi*, it seems, *poly-mathiē* encounters a blind spot.[261]

The written text is also autonomous. It conjures an utterance that is emancipated from, and exists outside of, social ritual. Inanimate entities, like the laws of the city, are thereby able speak with an authority independent of the surrogate who, by reading it out loud, lends a voice to it.[262] While this emancipation of speech is a positive step in the political field, it has a disenchanting effect on symbolic realities. The reader no longer approaches human artifacts via intermittent moments of performative intimacy but encounters them as indelible letters liberated from context. The product of speech is received without the density of occasion which regulates its meaning. On the contrary, in the absence of the immediate social context of the speech-act, the meaning of written words is uncertain and must be intuited at a distance from some unknown source. This in turn raises awkward questions about the origin and motive of different narrative pasts.

The second of Hekataios' motives is equally significant. He writes: "because the *logoi* of the Greeks are many and, as they appear to me, laughable". The scandal of these *logoi* is thus by no means limited to their multiple variations. There is also something amiss with them at their very core. What is Hekataios seeing *all at once* that causes him, at that specific moment, to laugh out loud?[263] The answer is found in a remarkable episode concerning Hekataios in Herodotus:

> The Egyptians and their priests recount the narrative (λόγου) to this point, giving a demonstration (ἀποδεικνύντες) that from the first king to this priest of Hephaistos (who was the last king [cf. 2.141]) there had been 341 generations of men . . .
>
> Hdt. 2.142.1

> . . . so, in the course of 11,340 years, they said (ἔλεγον), no god assumed human form (ἀνθρωποειδέα). Nor, they said (ἔλεγον), had this happened either before or later amongst those kings who have followed. Indeed during this time they said (ἔλεγον) that on 4 occasions the sun rose out of its usual place . . . and nothing changed . . . "
>
> Hdt. 2.142.3

> The priests of Zeus performed (ἐποίησαν) on me the same act they had on Hekataios the *logopoios* when, on an earlier occasion at Thebes, he had told the tale of his own descent (γενεηλογήσαντι ἑωυτόν) and linked his ancestry (πατριή) to a god in the 16th degree (although in my case I [sc.

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260 See previous note.

261 Did these written forms of myth efface their performative meaning in this process of decontextualization? Is performance a more authentic form for the transmission of mythic content? On Western philosophical privileging of speech over writing, see Norris' analysis of Derrida's critique of the "metaphysics of presence": 1987, 63-96. Hekataios certainly seems to have preferred the epistemological possibilities offered by writing against the poets' monopoly of speech.

262 The point is made variously by Camassa 1988, 130-55, Detienne 1988, 29-81, Svenbro 1993, 26-43, 109-22, Hölkeskamp 1992.

263 Detienne 1986, 63-81 asks a similar question with different conclusions.

> Herodotus] gave no such account). [2] Leading me into a hall (which was huge) they made the calculation (ἐξηρίθμεον) by indicating that the wooden *kolossoi* were of such a number as they had said. For each high-priest sets up an image of himself at the end of his life. [3] Therefore, in making a demonstration by calculation (ἀριθμέοντες καὶ δεικνύντες) the priests showed me (ἐμοὶ ἀπεδείκνυσαν) that each of them was his father's son, going through all of them from the man most recently dead, until they had exhibited (ἀπέδεξαν) every single one. [4] On the occasion when Hekataios recounted the tale of his own descent (γενεηλογήσαντι ἑωυτόν) and linked himself to a god in the 16th degree, the priests *challenged his version by means of mathematical calculation* (ἀντεγενεηλόγησαν ἐπὶ τῇ ἀριθμήσι) because they did not accept from him that a man was born from a god.
>
> Hdt. 2.143 = *FGrH* 1 F300 = T4 Fowler

> . . . the Egyptians claim to know these things precisely because they are always reckoning the years and writing them up.
>
> Hdt. 2.145.3

Fowler conservatively lists the central notice (Hdt. 2.143) among the testimonia (T4) while Jacoby places it among the fragments of the *Periodos* dealing with Egypt (F300).[264] However, following Bertelli's suggestion, it might be more appropriate to place it among the genealogical fragments.[265] He suggests that Hekataios' own account of this episode, which Herodotus is paraphrasing, may have followed immediately upon Hekataios' preface (F1).[266] It is tempting to link Hekataios' laughter to this episode directly and to the epiphany it seems to narrate. The scene as it is reported is both rhetorical and agonistic. However, it is also telling of Hekataios that he should represent his own genealogy as a *belief* now rendered capable of being interpreted, refuted and rejected independently of its confirmation by performance. Why then is Hekataios unable to recognize that both his own *logos* and that of the Egyptian priests respond to the imperatives of two quite distinct contexts? Both *logoi* should have been able to co-exist as part of a larger mythical fabric just like the *polloi logoi* of the Greeks. Logically, revelation of the fact that these particular priests had no discernable divine ancestor should not automatically invalidate Hekataios' own claim to divine ancestry. It was in fact part of the traditional elite claim to privileged status in their cities that their descent was of a higher order than other men. And yet, surprisingly, in Herodotus' account Hekataios has not just reported the challenge of the Egyptian *logos*, but concedes defeat to it. The story presents a stylized logical refutation in which the Ionian's claims are not only contested by these Egyptian sages but are also accepted by him to have been invalidated. Something in the victorious *apodeixis* of the priests of Zeus struck Hekataios with the *impossibility* of his own received genealogy. Hekataios, like his contemporary Xenophanes, was

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264 This notice has been extensively discussed: Jacoby 1923, 366, Heidel 1935 and 1943, Mitchel 1956, Lloyd 1988, S.West 1991, 106-11, Bertelli 2001, 91-4, Moyer 2002.

265 Bertelli 2001, 91, n.78 for further references.

266 One imagines something like " . . . for the tales of the Greeks are many and laughable, as they appear to me; [for even I was once certain about the *logos* of my own descent until I went to Egypt and wondered at what I found there. . .]."

shocked by what he began to see as poetic narrative's inherent fabrication (πλάσμα‹τα›, fr.1.22 Gentili-Prato).[267] Hekataios' insight and the ethical imperative it imposed on him represent a critical break with the tradition of performative truth and value. The *Genealogiai* set a revisionist tempo for the entire inherited tradition.

Hekataios laughed upon discovering that the *logos* of a quintessentially *intimate* past – the *logos* his very own genealogy – had all of a sudden become a *problem*. What is important here is not the accuracy of the representation of Egyptian facts but the way in which certain aspects of the Egyptian context are evaluated according to the universalizing civic touchstone of a particularly Greek political worldview.[268] It is irrelevant that Hekataios' cultural attitudes are projected anachronistically onto the Egyptians. What matters is that new thinking about the past was understood to have been provoked by an encounter with a culture imagined to be masters of public writing and mathematical calculation (Hdt. 2.145.3). Through the eyes of a citizen of a late 6th century Ionian *polis*, this Egyptian context has the appearance of a political utopia, a perfect *meson* in which all the acts and utterances of a city from its foundation are disclosed in the most transparent and public way. The Egyptian refutation is therefore ironically a product of Hekataios' own interpretation of the demonstration which was presented to him. By interpreting Egyptian rituals of memorialization and writing through a discourse of isonomic civic practices, Hekataios culturally re-imagined the Hall of Priests as an idealized public inscription containing a unified and totalizing *logos* of the past.

Thus, to the question "how did it happen?" the epic poet responds with oracular authority (*Il.* 1.1-10; 2.484-93). To ask the question "what *really* happened?" requires a past conceived to exist independently from the narratives transacting it. It also requires a critical attitude from auditors, who are no longer invested in the pact of occasion as audience. Liberated from the limits of performative occasion by texts, readers acquired the critical distance needed to interrogate narrative claims. Nevertheless, once disinterred from that recognizable landscape of song, which had sustained the intimacy of past and present, the 'actions of former men' were reduced to 'events' whose motives and causes grew increasingly more opaque and nonsensical. The past was transformed from being the guarantor of personal identity and future continuity into a source of explanatory anxiety. Like the awkward vacuum left behind by Hekataios' missing ancestral god, the past had to be methodically investigated. Explanation replaced the Muse in tackling uncertainty.[269] One no

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[267] On the possible connections between these contemporaries, see Heidel 1943.

[268] On the importance of the Egyptian context, see Tozzi 1966.

[269] In his well-known refutation of what the Athenians say about their own past (Thuc. 1.20.2-3), one can observe Thucydides' hostility to (local) narrative. For him the social imperatives underlying the form and content of existing narratives have no historical explanatory value whatsoever. For us, on the other hand, this wilful blindness to the way narrative structures the past and present as a potent causal agent proved difficult to shake and informed the entire Western historiographic

longer entered into a pact with the divine in order to inscribe the past on a special occasion. The *presence* that once existed in a relationship between deity and poet is now replaced by the *absence* of a relationship between inquirer and reality. There is irony in the fact that the presence of the author who seeks a *mastery over the past* through personal judgement struggles with the absence of an *intimacy with the past* that had once been guaranteed by the performer's anonymity.

Thucydides' rejection of 'canonical approaches' to the past (τὸ μὴ μυθῶδες, 1.22) already had its antecedents at least a century earlier. Xenophanes, in his vision of the ideal symposiastic occasion, morally objects to the violent stories he already considers to be "the fabrications of earlier men" (πλάσμα‹τα› τῶν προτέρων, fr. 1.22 Gentili-Prato). Hekataios' contemporary, Theagenes of Rhegion, was the first to treat the Homeric poems as allegorical representation, not to be taken literally but closely examined nevertheless in a search for their 'real meaning' (F1-2 D-K).[270] However, the primal scene of this break coincides with the point when political space came into its own, when the fracturing of ritual and authority in the archaic city threw up the problem of power in the form of the *tyrannos*. The political subject, formed in assemblies such as those described by Herodotus in Samos and abjuring the symbolic power monopolized by *basileis* (σκῆπτρον καὶ δύναμις, Hdt. 3.142.3), asserted his own competence to make judgments, in essence following Achilles' lead by snapping the *skeptron* and firmly fixing *kratos* at the centre of the *laos* (*Il.* 1.234-9).

Rationalization and its motives

There are two further problems that attend Hekataios' rationalization of the past. Firstly, the authentic past, even when it seems disclosed, requires ever more interpretation. Its simple disclosure does not solve the problem of its meaning. Once the truth is uncovered its very opacity only throws up more problems. Secondly, narrative is understood not only to be unrelated to, and disconnected from, the events it narrates; it also begins to be imagined as an obstacle to the truth of the event. Narrative, once the source of the past, is now mistrusted as the fiction that stands between us and the event's reality.[271]

A recurring technique in Hekataios is *arithmesis*, mathematical calculation. We are told that when he visited Egypt he was especially struck by the depth of their regard for order and visual detail (ἀριθμέοντες καὶ δεικνύντες, Hdt. 2.143.3). In fact, it is

approach to the past. Thucydides never asks *why* the Athenians held to their narratives because for him canonical narratives arising in performance (τὸ μυθῶδες, *pace* Flory 1990) only obfuscate the real forces that drive human action. By turning away from τὸ μυθῶδες Thucydides indicates rather his distance from traditional narrative shapes and genres than simply a rejection of "the excess of the marvellous": Bertelli 2001, 83.

[270] On Theagenes, see Rocca-Serra 1990, Ford 1999, Struck 2004, 26-9 and now González 2013, 156-67.

[271] On Hekataios' rationalization, see Momigliano 1931, Nenci 1951, Fertonani 1952, Corcella 1984, 48-54, and Bertelli 2001, 80-9.

specifically by rational arithmetic that Hekataios is outsmarted in his genealogical duel with the Egyptian priests of Zeus. The prominence of *arithmesis* as an organizing principle behind Hekataios' reshaping of catalogues and genealogies is motivated by a conviction that details must add up.[272] With this physically massive genealogical document (the Hall of Priests) on his left and his own descent written, mapped out and stemmatized on his right, it is the arithmetical discrepancy produced by his juxtaposition of the two documents that makes Hekataios smile. This much is clear also from his application of *arithmesis* to Hesiod in F19,[273] as well as in the story that Hekataios put the *numerical* resources of Persia and Miletos side by side in order to convince Aristagoras that revolt would be a grave error (καταλέγων τὰ ἔθνεα πάντα τῶν ἦρχε Δαρεῖος καὶ τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ, Hdt. 5.36.2-3). As part of an intellectual milieu in which political and mathematical speculation intersected, one can see how Hekataios adapted Egyptian ritual arithmetic to insure the public domain against the control of the past by great dynastic clans and tyrants.[274] *Arithmesis* not only delivers plausibility, it is a potent strategy for disenchanting the claims of others to title and privilege.[275]

Hekataios discovers in Egypt that the process of interpretation presents difficulties in resolving issues of narrative referentiality. His experience there brought to light a vast empty space of human time, filled at home by gods only 16 generations before. By contrast, as Herodotus' philological note underlines, in Egypt this empty space was populated by meticulously catalogued generations of men (*piromeis*). In the place of a god, there were now a host of interpretative questions thrown up by the *logoi* of the Greeks, made difficult by the fact that *logoi* clearly distort the past they purport to narrate. The task, therefore, was to disclose the actual referent obscured by impossibly contradictory lineages. In the surviving fragments of Hekataios' reductive readings of Greek *logoi*, there are traces of gods being systematically replaced by natural causation (F15), and figures endowed with divine ancestry exposed as men of merely mortal heritage by evidence unearthed in more plausible local narratives (F 26). The intimacy of the performed past to the present occasion is here replaced with a chasm of empty time. With the god 'left out', an approach Herodotus followed closely

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272 On Hekataios' chronological innovations, see Mitchel 1956 and Bertelli 2001, 89-94.

273 One must imagine Hekataios checking Hesiod's mathematics against other narrative traditions in the hope of producing an 'objective' figure, that is, one independent of narrative. That Hekataios' work included detailed arithmetic is illustrated by Hdt. 2.142-3, which Mitchel 1956 argues Herodotus included when he incorporated the account in his own work.

274 It has been argued that F 127, which criticizes Athenian treatment of the Pelasgians (placed by Jacoby among the fragments of the *Periegesis*, but considered a genealogical fragment by Nenci 1954, Bertelli 2001, 87 and Fowler 2000), was a deliberate attempt to refute justifications for the conquest of Lemnos by Miltiades. This fragment (on which, see Bertelli's astute remarks and further references, 2001 87-9) and the anti-tyrannical function of the *Genealogies* will be tackled in a dedicated study.

275 Fontana 2012, 393-5 argues that Akousilaos was just as interested in applying arithmetic to catalogues and genealogies.

(Hdt. 6.53.1-2, τοῦ θεοῦ ἀπεόντος), the symbolic function of the past was debunked. The content of the past now becomes completely quotidian, and, explicable as such, is revealed to be political and perspectival, belonging to a pure *spatium humanitum*. It is only a short step from there to 'propaganda', the historian's dismissal of myth and ritual as the opiate of the gullible.[276]

Hekataios' assertion of the legitimacy of his personal experience (ὥς μοι δοκεῖ) and superior perspective (ὡς ἐμοὶ φαίνονται) is an important moment in the history of the human subject.[277] Coupled with it is an emerging form of epistemological authority that vouches for the truthfulness of his interpretation. This authority takes the form of a 'plausible version' (λόγος εἰκός, F 27a). With a notion of plausibility one can reach consensus with an auditor whom one now imagines is a critical inquirer similar to oneself, and to whom an appeal can made on the basis of a ratio of plausibility. By locating the independent *reference point* whose existence precedes the inquirer and his narration, we find the common point of agreement upon which we can together act with confidence. Through this mechanism the inquirer establishes solidarity and complicity with an audience who share the same practical logic of culture and action. The distance of skill and delegated function, which separated song from mere listening (*Il.* 2.284-7) and created the space of *kleos*, has been closed almost completely. The explanatory scenario of citizen addressing fellow citizens is still persuasive.

This notion of the real ground of meaning, on which any statement must rest if it is to have a claim to truthfulness, is toxic to the intimacy created by occasion and performance. One negative result of the 'plausible version' is a breakdown in communication between *historia* and the narrative logic of the raw material of its research. For instance, the Egyptian priests cannot respond to Herodotus' demand to know why the Nile really floods – their response would irritate him: "why? There is no 'why': the Nile floods" (on which, see Hdt. 2.19). In the world of the late Archaic city, however, the stakes of genealogy are immense. Not only can it secure citizenship, the symbolic power it confers can also tip the civic balance by confirming or discrediting claims made by its leading citizens. Ethnicity also belongs in this category: the Macedonian king's performance of his descent at Olympia convinced the *Hellanodikai* that he was Greek (ἀπέδεξε ὡς εἴη Ἀργεῖος, Hdt. 5.22.2). For Herodotus, however, the performed claim and its ritual adjudication alone was insufficient to confer plausibility. Like Hekataios before him, the genealogy had to be confirmed independently before it could attain the status of fact. So the historian adds (5.22.1): "*I will also show* later in my narrative [cf. 8.137-9] that [the Macedonian kings] are Greeks." [278] And because the

[276] Herodotus' incredulity in his account of the return of Peisistratos is a classic example: 1.60.3.

[277] Claimed also for Akousilaos by Fontana 2012, 384.

[278] On the formation of the Hesiodic Catalogue in the context of ethnic identity, see Fowler 1998.

autonomy of this reference point, like a public inscription in the *agora*, could disenchant the claims of those who would usurp the sovereignty of the *politai*, the political potential of *historia* for citizen-states was enormous. Hekataios no doubt considered his work a desideratum precisely because there were no 'public accounts' of the past in Greek cities (δημόσιαι ἀναγραφαί, Josephus *Ap.* 1.20) that could parallel records of public enactments, whatever these might be, for which at least one Archaic Cretan city (Datala) appointed a special official (τὰ δαμόσια, *Nomima* I 22, line 4).[279] Egypt, on the other hand, offered the monumental template for establishing plausibility.

For Hekataios, the project of revising stemmas and making maps made a significant contribution to the cognitive re-figuration of the world. Anthropologists are mindful, however, that maps are not territories and *a fortiori* neither are stemmata or the concept of myth. Hekataios' projects were underpinned by a juridical cast of mind that led to the *deterritorialization* of personal experience from the symbolic environments in which meaning had condensed intimately.[280] In the earliest stages of a specifically historical consciousness a desire to subject the entire past to the transparent public rationale of calculation and disclosure does not so much entail a demythologization of the past as its deritualization and, so to speak, its *de-narrativization*.[281] It is therefore a question of asking why there was a need for a different epistemological authority beyond simply correcting traditions for its own sake. F26 and 27 are good examples of how 'rationalization' simply substitutes one discourse for another. Bertelli argues that converting Geryon into a local king (F 26) makes the story of Herakles' labour more "credible" and "reduce[s] it to a human dimension". But why should a

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[279] The so-called 'Spensithios contract', on which, see *SEG* xxvii 631, Jeffery and Morpurgo-Davies 1970, Koerner 1981 and Whitley 1997. For an illuminating discussions of this and references in Dion. Hal. *Thuc.* 5.13-15 to 'epichoric monuments' and 'writings laid down in sacred and secular places', see Nenci 1967, Detienne 1986, 76-81, Fornara 1983, 16-23, Fowler 1996.

[280] See Darbo-Peschanski 2007 for the juridical foundations of *historia*. Bertelli begs the question when he says "we have to admit that Hecataeus saw the ludicrousness of traditional tales in their implausibility *in relation to common experience*" 2001, 83, emphasis added. There is no evidence in the fragments that "common experience" was a reference point for what was plausible. If by this Bertelli means the "external principle" that these stories do not accord with Hekataios' own personal experience it must be shown historically why 'personal experience' has all of a sudden become authoritative in the late 6th century BCE. Clearly, the hidden and concealed quality of the true nature of things becomes a problem in the second half of the 6th century and no longer bridgeable by that ritual contact with the divine established in cult performances (cf. Alkmeon 24 B1 D-K). The emergence of this authorial voice is antagonistic to performance narrative (compare Herakleitos 22 B42 D-K) and implies a rupture with a past formed in 'intimate' contexts. On the relationship between tradition and innovation in archaic and classical Greece generally, see the important discussion in Lloyd 1987, especially at 50-108, and on Hekataios in particular, 59-61.

[281] So Bertelli 1998. Whether this made Hekataios ἀδεισιδαίμον, as Dodds 1951, 195-6 n.5 argued (with Bertelli 2001, 94), depends on how one interprets Herodotus' report that Hekataios urged the Milesians to plunder (καταιρεθείη) the treasures at Brankhidai to fund a fleet (5.36.3).

'human dimension' in itself confer credibility?[282] In fact, in both fragments (F26 and 27), Hekataios' rationalizations are gratuitous to the point of banality; in still other fragments 'believability' may not have been his aim at all (for example, F 15 and 17).[283] It may then instead be more productive to treat Hekataios' 'rationality' not as a wholesale reduction of the 'unbelievable' to the 'believable' but as part of an emerging public strategy that consciously differentiated itself from those discourses formed in cult and *genos* performances.[284]

On an epistemological level the story of Hekataios' visit to Egypt is a story of how the past became a problem. The motive for Hekataios' rationalization of heroic genealogies ought not to be sought in a truth-seeking voyage of intellectual discovery but is disclosed by the nervous laughter (γέλοιος, F1) of an Ionian aristocrat faced with a startling mathematical paradox. This interpretation imagines Hekataios straddling the fault-line between two social figures, one of which is firmly located in the Archaic period, the other self-consciously *post-Archaic*. As a political subject Hekataios is the latter figure, a leading citizen of Miletus, quite capable of pragmatically juxtaposing the monumental truth of documentary Egypt with his own shaky narrative of self-performed lineage. This follows precisely the same pattern of deliberation by which he was able to demonstrate the limits of any Milesian revolt by plotting it rationally against the infinite resources of the Persian Empire. But as the heir to an elite lineage, Hekataios also had a vested interest in the traditional performative environments of the symbolic past. In singing his own past before incredulous Egyptians, he disclosed what was at stake in rituals of legitimation: access for noble clans to privilege and monopolies of symbolic power through public reiterations of genealogical claim. In this light we can interpret his strategy as part of the development of the political subject, man the autonomous and responsible agent who must understand the world 'as it really is'.

What role should we assign Hekataios' immediate historical context to all this? Here I would venture some speculation. It is highly probable that Hekataios, as a prominent member of the Milesian elite, was, or had been, a member of the college of the *Molpoi*, Miletus' oligarchic college of civic officials.[285] This very ancient guild of 'singers'

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282 Bertelli 2001, 86. Fertonani 1952 offers no answers. The problem for Hekataios may have been that his *Periegesis* (which covered Spain: F38-52) may have found no trace of an Erytheia or an Iberian Geryon (although F76 makes this less certain). Arrian (2.16.4) concluded that this western Herakles was Tyrian (Melqart). Perhaps a parallel comparison of the written texts of Hesiod (*Theog.* 287f.) and Stesikhoros (fr.7, S7 Page) created a discrepancy. On this fragment, see Nenci 1955.

283 On these fragments, see Nenci 1951.

284 Solon may have led the charge: fr. 29 West. On the 'invention of prose' as a conscious epistemological appropriation of the speech of the *agora*, see Goldhill 2002, *passim*.

285 On this college, see now Herda 2006, and 2011 with a text and translation of the famous *Molpoi* Regulations (*SIG*^{3} 57) and references to the extensive earlier literature. Gorman 2001, 94-100 argues against the orthodoxy that the *Molpoi* had jurisdiction only in cult matters. One cannot imagine Ionia's (and by extension Miletos') official ambassador to Artaphernes (Diod. 10.25.4) not belonging to this college, but this evidence is isolated and the argument can only be circumstantial. Less so is the

superintended the city's main cult of Apollo Delphinios, but also appears to have played a not insignificant role in Miletos' archaic and early classical government. The link between governance and their name is found in their responsibility for performing the paian to the god. This took place in the Delphinion which, if we follow Herda's interpretation, also served as Miletus' Prytaneion as well as the official meeting place of the *Molpoi*. Hellenistic inscriptions in the Delphinion reveal the *Molpoi* as a court scrutinizing claims to citizenship and granting privileges to foreigners.[286] The link between the civic function of the *Molpoi* and the literal meaning of their name is obscure, but it ought to be significant that an individual's claim to Milesian citizenship was arbitrated by a guild whose identity originally derived from song performance. Like the *Hellanodikai* in Olympia, who mediated access to Zeus' ordeal by adjudicating Hellenic ethnic identity (Hdt. 5.22.2), the *Molpoi* regulated access to civic membership, at both the legal and cult levels, via their adjudication of an individual's claim to descent.

Hekataios was thus in two quite different ways an expert in genealogical song. In all likelihood, he also held offices with political responsibility at a time when Milesian politics was unstable and beset with tyrants.[287] This combination of symbolic and political power within one figure in late archaic Miletus cultivated a receptivity to the transformation of the former under the impact of the latter, one that had been developing since the middle of the 6th century BCE.[288] The short-term political solution had granted a newly minted economic elite civic control at the expense of others, a situation in which access to the *Molpoi* and their pronouncements was no doubt crucial. In the midst of this, Hekataios had travelled to Egypt and there pitted his lineage against its monumental touchstone of the past. To be sure, Hekataios cannot but have been disturbed by the overwhelming weight of *proof* supplied by his experience of the sheer mass of Egyptian

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important role played by the goddess Hekate in Milesian state cult with whom Hekataios, "he who belongs to Hekate", clearly has close connections (a theophoric name according to Herda 2006, 288 n.2043). Herda 2006, 287-9 points to a double pair at the centre of Milesian cult: altars of Apollo Delphinios and Hekate Phosphoros located in the Delphinion, while at Didyma Apollo Hekatos and Hekate were the cult pair of the oracle. In Herda's interpretation of the regulations, the *Molpoi* were responsible for the New Year's procession from the Delphinion to Didyma.

286 *Milet* 1, 3, 143 (late 3rd cent. BCE), lines 31-3: ἐὰν δέ τις πολιτεύηται παρὰ τόδε τὸ ψήφισμα, εἶναι αὐτὸν ὑπεύθυνον τῆι τε ἐμ μολποῖς ἐνστάσει καὶ τῆι δίκηι τῆς ξενίας κατὰ τοὺς νόμους. The formula recurs in *Milet* 1, 3, 146 lines 41-3 and with variation 1, 3, 150 lines 65-7 (ἐὰν δέ τινες . . . μετέχωσι τῆς πολιτείας). See Rehm's comments in *Milet* 1, 3, p.364-6 for discussion. On the possible 'pre-law' relationship between these official functions and the reference to singing (*molpē*) in the title of the magistrate, see the important observations of Faraguna 2005, 336-8 and the response from Bertrand 2005.

287 For a general statement of the character and instability of Milesian social and political life in the 6th century BCE, which culminated in the invitation of a Parian constitutional commission, see Hdt. 5.28-9. On the tyrants of Miletos, see de Libero 1995, 355-65 and Gorman 2001, 101-21 (on Thrasyboulos and his aftermath), 130-7 (on Histiaios and Aristagoras).

288 The intellectual and political environment of Miletos as the context for Anaximander's thinking is sensitively explained by García Quintela 1996, 40-8.

graphic documentation. But this in itself was not sufficient. What requires explaining is the degree of Hekataios' receptivity and susceptibility to a refutation in a sphere that must have been his own symbolic métier. The answer therefore lies in the imaginary role played by Egypt as the archetypal external reference point, or independent control, for Greek assessments of themselves. In the context of an increasingly self-reflexive public culture that was becoming more adept at the critical assessment of claims to authority made on the basis of inherited right or the mastery of song, Hekataios' laughter is as precise a historical turning point as we could ask for.

Hekataios returned from Egypt suspecting that whatever was being concocted in genealogical performances was somehow *originating in the performer's own subjectivity*, and, moreover, that this 'fiction' was an assertion of power. Disenchantment does not so much involve incredulity in the face of myth as an attempt to divest performative genres (and those who deployed them) of their monopoly over forms of knowledge.[289] Hekataios' innovation was therefore the invention of *the historical fact*, a pure datum liberated from speech and occasion.[290] From this moment on, the original marriage between narrative and event would become more and more estranged until Thucydides divorced them. However, in disinterring experience, and the world with it, from those narrative occasions in which it is distilled, Hekataios not only contributed to the 'autonomization' of the individual experience of the human subject but also accelerated the alienation of that subject from narrative identity. Until new narrative forms could fill that void, rationalization alone simply deferred the solution to the new *problem* of meaning – *why am I rationalizing myth at all?* [291] The solution found elsewhere lay in civic appropriation of symbolic occasions such as the Dionysia, as Goldhill and others have shown.[292] That rationalization in itself offered no explanatory satisfaction seems implied by the nihilism of Hekataios' self-critique. In Miletos his own genealogy would have asserted a claim to status and esteem in symbolic contexts. Rationalization, however, leaves nothing behind except, as Achilles had stated, "a dead stump in the wilderness" (*Il.* 1.235), a sterile emptiness where once there had been a living tradition.

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[289] This would be to consider the beginnings of Greek historiography a radical break in the *representation* of wisdom as much as in the determination of its content. The dialectic that arose between two styles of knowing, and representing that knowledge, was not so much a consequence of the discovery of the 'real' but rather the emergence of a 'discourse of the real' that self-consciously opposed itself to forms of symbolic authority, which, in the course of the 6th and early 5th centuries, were increasingly deployed to counteract civic discourses (for example, epinikia).

[290] And liberated from ethnicity: F119 dissolves the difference between Greeks and barbarians, not, as Bertelli argues, to oppose the Homeric tradition, but because one consequence of this detachment of facts from cultural nexuses is political pragmatism (as Hdt 5.36.2 illustrates). See, differently, de Sanctis 1933.

[291] Herodotus returned to epic *kleos* for narrative architecture (*Praef.*), although the question of genre was still in flux, on which see Boedeker 2000.

[292] For example, Dionysiac choruses: Goldhill 1987, Connor 1989 and Wilson 2003. Hdt. 5.67 shows how one tyrant attempted to free his city from the gravitational pull of another's hegemonic narrative tradition.

CONCLUSION

An 'Iliadic' moment'?

Jean-Pierre Vernant, in a series of seminal essays collected in a volume co-authored with Pierre Vidal-Naquet, set out grounds for reading Attic tragedy that established the historical moment of its formation as the most important point of departure for interpretation and criticism. Within these frameworks, Vernant considered the Athenian citizen's experience of rapid institutional change, both social and political, that came with the formation of the democratic city as the key driver in the development of tragic form and content. These changes took place radically in a socio-cultural milieu in which archaic modes of thought and 'pre-political' institutions maintained continuing validity. The "historical moment of tragedy in Greece" – which occurred between the Solonian reforms and the advent of Aristotle's *Poetics* (or even more narrowly, between the Kleisthenic reforms and the thought of the Attic orators) – was therefore marked by structural conflict arising from the emergence of 'the political' and the traumatic birth of 'man' as an independent and individual human subject. Although the *polis* was well established elsewhere in the Greek world (and produced yet other intellectual responses), it was at Athens that a revolutionary transformation took place accelerating the development of autonomous political institutions, especially in the spheres of justice and decision-making. Thrown quickly into a position of complete sovereignty over his city and fellow citizens, the democratic *polites* faced the daunting and terrifying loneliness of responsibility. Out of the intellectual and psychological challenges this posed, and in the face of a persistent older mentality that did not conceive of 'man' as an agent but rather located agency in religious forces outside the subject, emerges the tragic hero. This figure revisits the scenarios of mythic narrative but with a different sense of agency; tragedy plays out the consequences. Yet prior to this historical moment stands the hero of epic, against whom Vernant juxtaposes the tragic hero:

> . . . within the space of the stage and the framework of tragic representation, the hero is no longer put forward as a model, as he used to be in epic and lyric poetry. Now he has become a problem. Now, as the action unfolds and through the interplay of the dialogue, what used to praised as an ideal, the touchstone of excellence, is brought into question before the public. The hero becomes the subject of a debate and interrogation that, through his person, implicates the fifth-century spectator, the citizen of democratic Athens.[1]

[1] Vernant and Vidal-Naquet 1988, 242.

For us, such a strict line of demarcation between of epic performance and the tragic stage is not entirely warranted. Vernant is surely correct that the 'tragic subject' is, so to speak, post-Homeric and arises out of tragedy's dialogue with the wider heroic tradition. But though Vernant would strictly exclude epic from that body of texts in which he discerns the reception of the historical formation of the citizen in the socio-cultural imaginary, the interpretations of the actions of the *Iliad's* central hero offered here in preceding chapters should at least complicate that exclusion. Indeed, Homeric epic needs to be revisited with this in mind in order to determine where the differences between the 'epic subject' and the 'tragic subject' lie, but also at the same time to draw attention to their intersections and convergences. This is especially relevant if the Panathenaia under the tyrants at Athens during the sixth century BCE can be accepted as the context for the textual and performative transformation of the *Iliad* into more than the sum of its parts. Under these circumstances, the formative context of early tragedy coincides with one in which a socio-political will-to-representation is making itself felt in the production of a *Grossepos*. Taking this connection further, a pressing question is not so much the one of tragedy's origins but what social and political conditions in late 6th century BCE Athens drew civic attention away from the Panathenaic *Iliad* and onto Dionysiac drama.[2]

More pertinent to this study, however, is Vernant's exclusion of the epic hero from the scene of the problematization of human agency. Our preceding chapter has, at the very least, raised the possibility that before tragedy the *Iliad* explored the consequences of developing *polis* institutions – or, rather, the implications of their nascent formation – and thereby offered a performative model for the kind of critical discourse Vernant considered was later distilled only in Attic tragedy. This is not to say that the differences between tragic and epic consciousness should be disregarded; on the contrary, they are very instructive. Oedipus, for example, (as Vernant argues) suffers a specifically *internal* trauma where a claim to self-mastery over one's destiny is undone by fatal actions that, although beyond his reason to explain, nevertheless originate in him and for which he is objectively responsible. This splitting of the subject is not imagined in the *Oedipus Tyrannus* to necessitate a ritual surrogate who must take the 'fatal' path demanded by the tradition and the cult occasion of its performance. But Achilles does, however, aggressively assert the autonomy of his own worth against an 'aristocratic commerce' whose institutions fail to endorse the *inner* conviction he feels concerning his own *objective* value, and which the *kleos* of epic presupposes. Since the heroes of epic manifest themselves in a performance tradition encompassed by the term

[2] At least one near-contemporary noted as a parallel the ideological shift from epic to Dionysiac choruses in early 6th century BCE Sikyon: Hdt. 5.67.

kleos, their paths are circumscribed and defined by its necessities. The tragic hero escapes the gravity of epic *kleos* perhaps in the same way as the citizen escapes the gravity of 'pre-political' forms of social being. As a result, the alienation of the subject can be inscribed with greater freedom once it can be expressed on the political stage in tragic discourse. But the prototype of this kind of self-reflexive hero can be seen already in the *Iliad's* Achilles.

When Vernant quickly notes that Homeric epic displays less "religious archaism" than tragedy, he seems to hint that tragedy's real antagonist is not the 'modern' *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, which indeed consistently represent the heroic world as full of *human* conflicts; rather tragedy tilts at local mythic narratives connected aetiologically to ancient clans, cults and sites, those widely appropriated by *tyrannoi* and regional aristocratic *basileis* in struggles for control of their communities. Indeed one is hard-pressed to find in tragedy a parallel (with the exception of Sophokles' *Ajax*) for such a frank exploration as the *Iliad* of the social consequences of a breakdown in an essentially political institution. So rather than antagonism should we not pursue the organic links, as well as the differences, in their respective deep structure and historical psychology? The Iliadic hero is alienated by his experience of the failure of institutions that belong to an artificial but fundamentally *political society*, a *polis* of *basileis* on the Trojan shore. Achilles' responses problematize the effectiveness of these institutions, which, as argued in chapter 4 above, may trigger a traumatic return, but one that culminates in more durable and effective political institutions. From this perspective, the *Iliad* approaches an aetiological discourse that narrates the origin of present occasional institutions in a paradigmatic social crisis.

What is significant in this reading is that the problem of Achilles' self-worth is posed in terms that foreshadow Herakleitos' criticism of polymaths, sages and poets. It is important, as chapter 1 and 2 argued, that Achilles' *menis* follows upon the disruption of a political rite, the *dasmos*, which aims at distributing to each member of the warrior circle his portion from what is common to all. Granger has rightly demonstrated that Herakleitos rejected the "privileged epistemic position" claimed by polymaths and *histores* and argued that understanding is open to all because truth is public (B2, B50, B113, B116 D-K).[3] Private knowledge is hoarded information that restricts access to truth only to those few able to attain a great depth of learning. Granger concludes: "the elitist Heraclitus is an egalitarian when it comes to the estimation of the underlying capacity humans possess for the attainment of the truth. Each man is his own witness, and he requires no further authority than himself."[4] Such an assessment aligns *polymathiē* with the tyrant who claims to locate the source of knowledge and power in his own

[3] Granger 2004, 258.
[4] Granger 2004, 259.

person and intelligence.[5] *Polymathiē* is also evocative of the gifts of Agamemnon in its unilateral assertion of epistemological dominance. Herakleitos, however, combines a political concept of reasoning – that the capacity to comprehend is common property and cannot be monopolized (even by him: B50 D-K) – with a referential thinking that seeks outside the self for meaning, value and the objectively real. Herakleitos affirms the epistemological beginnings of referentiality by using the language of distribution: "many live as though knowing was a personal possession, when in fact the *logos* is communal (*xunos*)" (B2 D-K). The truth, like value, is not established in exchange (as private things are) but exists as an autonomous and equally accessible domain against which men and things will find their measure.

Self-identity is implicated in this too. Though the Homeric hero generally seeks after that which will define his place in the tradition (for example, "a sweet return home is what you seek, glorious Odysseus", **νόστον δίζημαι** μελιηδέα, φαίδιμ' Ὀδυσσεῦ, *Od.* 11.100) Achilles, in the temporal stasis of his tent, anticipates Herakleitos' referential understanding of selfhood: "I went in search of myself" (**ἐδιζησάμην ἐμεωυτόν**, B101 D-K). Achilles is thus the first to seek selfhood outside narrative, outside symbolic exchange, in this transcendent 'reality'.

Vernant does hint at this, but elsewhere in another important essay, in which he indirectly suggests a historical moment for the *Iliad* even though he did not pose the problem specifically in relation to the epic genre in the way that he does with Attic tragedy. In his introduction to a collection of essays concerning war and the warrior in ancient Greece, Vernant situates the *Iliad* in the historical transformation of 'la fonction guerrière' that resulted in the political identification of the citizen with the warrior.[6] Vernant imagines this ideological reconceptualization of the warrior in roughly four stages: (a) the disintegration of the Mycenaean kingdoms broke the symbolic exchanges that both bound the military elite to the sovereign but also served to keep the exercise of the warrior function distinct from sovereignty; (b) in the resulting vacuum of sovereignty, the warrior function was autonomized but lacked centralized will or organization; (c) the warrior's autonomy was institutionalized in the affirmation of a new notion of sovereignty – the collective will of the *Männerbund* – upon which (d) the *polis* was founded. Vernant concludes:

> Thus before the warrior function could become integrated into, and disappear within, the *polis*, it was necessary for it to affirm its own autonomy and free itself from its subjection to a centralized type of state that implied a hierarchical order of society and a "mystical" form of sovereign power.[7]

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5 Note the almost universal archaic association of sages, tyrants and lawgivers.
6 Vernant 1988 29-53 = Vernant 1968, 9-30.
7 Vernant 1988 52 = Vernant 1968, 29.

Though this proposed historical break is cast here in the form of the community's positive liberation from an archaic sovereignty, Vernant's studies of tragedy complicate such apparent simplicity. This autonomization of function and, as has been argued here, the consequent emergence of value, meaning and the self as *problems* can also be represented as symptoms of rupture, alienation and trauma in the context of institutional uncertainty, in the *Iliad* as much as, say, in the *Oedipus Rex*. Our reading of Achilles' disenchantment of the *skeptron* certainly fits the image of the proto-citizen freeing himself from "a 'mystical' form of sovereign power" but the picture is clearly more ambivalent and the context less clear. At the very least, the *Iliad* presents us with an anxious world groping for symbolic moorings, one in which the emergence of political forms was never straightforwardly conceptualized or went unchallenged by the irruption of symbolic exchange.[8]

If the *Iliad* is the victory-song of Max Weber's guild of warriors, it is not at all triumphal, but rather plays in a minor key. By dashing the *skeptron* to the ground, Achilles ultimately only achieved disclosure of the *arcanum imperii* that 'sovereign power' is by definition always 'mystical', since it is founded in the first instance on a mastery of symbolic forms. The warrior's autonomy from it, especially his alienation from the 'mystical' sovereignty of song (*kleos*) – on which his very identity subsisted – was a pyrrhic victory, traumatic, lonely and unsustainable. In this regard Vernant perhaps too quickly overlooked the degree to which the sovereignty of the *polis* intimately depended on 'mystical' forms of power, some of which at first glance ironically limit the untrammelled exercise of citizen authority. From this perspective, the epic hero is the prototype for the tragic subject precisely because his liberation from society, economy and narrative is driven by his dream of self-authorisation, a desire to be self-sovereign, a utopia that the *polis* also desired but could never be.

Are we entitled then to speak of an 'epic subject' and a 'historical moment of epic' in which the *Iliad* marks a narrative engagement with a particular formative stage of *polis* development, just as tragedy would after the full realization of citizen competence in the management of civic affairs? There is a risk of circularity in any answer because much depends on how we characterize and mark out the formative stages and dates of the *Iliad's* narrative development. Indeed, the exercise of finding a precise date for the *Iliad* is largely self-defeating since oral performance is a mutable artifact with a complex stratigraphy whose stakes at any moment

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8 On this characterization of early Greek thought and the concept of 'autonomy', see especially the work of Cornelius Castoriadis (for example, 1991, 81-123 and 143-74). It is hoped that in a future study the themes of this present study can be revisited in a dialogue with some of Castoriadis' more important conceptualizations, on which see the special edition of *Thesis Eleven* 49.1 (1997) devoted to his thought, and Curtis 1997, vii-xvii.

are irrecoverable and lost in the next transformation. The stakes of the last performance are swept up and redeployed to express the imperatives of the new song, which traditionally always says something different. For historians, in their encounter with the 'Homeric document' what ought to matter more is that to audiences and their occasions something was at stake in each performance, something urgent about their historical moment that each narrative expressed, distilled and activated in the immediate present on the occasion of its performance. If, however, we wish to frame the formation of our *Iliad's* narrative organization through an inquiry into the will behind its monumental textualization and the subsequent concretization of its narrative architecture, then a historical moment does suggest itself: Athens after Solon and the tyranny that preceded the isonomic revolution of 508/7 BCE. There the stakes of the last performance were swept up into an entirely different form, inscribed into a material permanence that would henceforth arrest further epic transformations. There, in Athens during the second half of the 6th century BCE, where of all possible cyclical epics it was this particular narrative that resonated strongly enough that rhapsodes should perform it – first in episodes, then as a whole – at the heart of a reorganized and self-consciously *civic* festival, the *Iliad* lay across, and sharpened, fault-lines opened by a nascent political consciousness focused and challenged in equal measure by the arrogations of tyrants. Out of a dialogue with an embryonic citizen identity coalescing at these Panathenaic gatherings, the figure of Achilles helped the autonomous subject make his traumatic historical entry between the intimacy of symbolic exchange and the alienated referentiality of the political sign.

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