

# Toil and Trouble: The Acquisition of Spoils in the *Iliad*\*

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SUMMARY: A warrior amasses spoils at (re)distributions, and the discrepancy over who allots the booty allows a speaker to focus on the group's or the individual leader's role as he sees fit. A warrior also garners spoils on his own by, for example, despoiling his enemies of armor. Seeing the two means of acquisition as modes of exchange elucidates the distinctions between them. Forms of individual acquisition immediately reward the warrior for his labor and exemplify what Maurice Bloch and Jonathan Parry call "short-term transactions." A warrior also performs a "long-term transaction" when he toils in battle with a view to participating in a (re)distribution that is intended to perpetuate the long-term social and cosmic order. Achilles posits a long-term transaction based on warriors' providing material for the (re)distribution from goods they have obtained through short-term transactions on the battlefield.

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE HOMERIC WARRIOR FIGHTS TO OBTAIN SPOILS, BECAUSE SUCH GOODS go a long way toward determining his status relative to that of his peers.<sup>1</sup> The two distinct ways in which he acquires these materials, however, have yet to be discussed in detail. Either the warrior is given them by his community or

\* Paul Allen Miller, John Havard, John Paul Russo, and *TAPA*'s two anonymous referees made this essay better.

<sup>1</sup> See Donlan 1980: 4; 1993: 160. The acquisition of material wealth is not the only way a warrior gains recognition and status: see Wilson 18–20 for a discussion of the component parts of *timê*. Odysseus presents a different rationale for embarking on raids: "But it is not possible in some way to make a secret of the eager belly, / a destructive thing, which gives many evils to men, / for the sake of which even ships with good oarsmen's benches cross / the barren sea, bringing evils to enemies" (*Od.* 17.286–89). See von Reden 66 for discussion of this passage. All translations are my own unless otherwise specified.

leader after a battle or the sack of a town, or he takes them for himself both during and after a battle.<sup>2</sup> Because the individual and the group are each involved in the acquisition of spoils, a speaker can exploit the relationships and connections between the two for his own rhetorical purposes. In the particular case of Achilles' references to the allotment of spoils after a battle, the challenges voiced therein expose his complex relationship to an activity vital to the heroic enterprise.

## II. THE PUBLIC (RE)DISTRIBUTION

The first means of acquisition, the (re)distribution of spoils after battle, especially after the sack of a town, is referred to repeatedly in the *Iliad*.<sup>3</sup> Hans van Wees illustrates the distinctions made among spoils publicly (re)distributed.<sup>4</sup> A *geras* is a specially marked war prize given to a fighter or leader of a community; most famously, Briseis is a *geras* as is Chryseis. The fighter and the chieftain also receive an *aisa* or *moira* "portion" of the captured booty. Van Wees also offers the following description of how spoils are doled out:

[W]e discern five phases of distribution.<sup>5</sup> First, when all the booty is brought together, the most prominent leader involved in the venture selects a *geras* for

<sup>2</sup>For passing mention of these different ways of acquiring spoils, see van Wees 1992: 35 with 328n36 and Donlan 1980: 184n6. For an example of the conflation of the two methods of prize acquisition, see Redfield 206 or Beidelman 231.

<sup>3</sup>See note 31 for citations. Seaford (e.g. 24, 39–40, 42, and 69) echoes Donlan 1982: 158–59, 166, and 172 in distinguishing the simple word 'distribution' (the people allot the spoils and the process is 'noncentralized') from the compound word 'redistribution' (a particular leader is said to allot them and the process is thus 'centralized'). Seaford's term '(re)distribution' can be applied both to the division of war booty more generally and to those moments in which it is not specified who doles out the spoils. In this essay I also use the term 'allotment' as a synonym for (re)distribution. See Tandy 101–11 for further comments on redistribution.

<sup>4</sup>A distribution takes place in public, because the people are the allotting agent. A redistribution is also public. Thus Nestor discusses the livestock rustled from Elis: "And they, the leading men of the Pylians, gathering together (*sunagromenoi*) made a division" (*Il.* 11.687–88); cf. *Il.* 24.802 for *sunageirō* as one component of a public activity and see Donlan 1982: 158n38 for this scene as a redistribution. Pace Seaford 46, *Il.* 9.332–33 does not show that Agamemnon doled out the collected spoils in private. The purpose of the (re)distribution is to demonstrate status—a goal best achieved by performing the allotment in public. In fact, we might also characterize the (re)distribution as public in so far as everyone knows (or perhaps comes to know) who gets what. Thus Agamemnon can complain about returning Chryseis, "for you all see it, that my prize (*geras*) goes elsewhere" (*Il.* 1.120). Everyone knows that Chryseis was Agamemnon's prize.

<sup>5</sup>The word "discerns" is important in this sentence, because there is never a complete and detailed description of the mechanisms of the (re)distribution of spoils in either epic; see Seaford 46.

himself. Second, he gives *gera* to “princes” and “best men”. Third, the dominant leader picks a portion for himself. Fourth, he assigns portions to subordinate leaders. Fifth, each leader distributes part of his portion to his followers. (1992: 304)

Van Wees intends his schema to provide a solution for the following crux. The Homeric poems seem to present contradictory claims as to who precisely is in charge of allotting the spoils of war, particularly the *gera*: is it the people as a collective, the leader of the expedition, or the ruler of the community? On the one hand, during the initial quarrel with Agamemnon, Achilles speaks of Briseis as a *geras* given to him by the Achaians:

ὃ ἔπι πολλὰ μόγησα, δόσαν δέ μοι υἱες Ἀχαιῶν.

for which I toiled much and which the sons of the Achaians gave to me. (*Il.* 1.162, cf. *Il.* 1.276, 1.392, 16.56, 18.444)<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, a leader can receive a prize from his people: Achilles says that the Achaians picked out Chryseis for Agamemnon (*Il.* 1.369), and the narrator says that the Phaiakians gave Eurymedousa to Alkinoos (*Od.* 7.10; cf. *Od.* 9.160). On the other hand, Achilles tells the emissaries in book 9 that Agamemnon gave him Briseis:

γέρας δέ μοι, ὅς περ ἔδωκεν,  
ἀντί τις ἐφρυβρίζων ἔλετο κρείων Ἀγαμέμνων

but my prize, the very man who gave it,  
committing an act of hubris lordly Agamemnon took back again (*Il.* 9.367–68)

Achilles has in fact a moment earlier positioned Agamemnon as routinely in charge of allocating spoils (*dasasketo*) (*Il.* 9.333). In Nestor’s story about rustling livestock from Elis, the leaders of the Pylians, if not simply Neleus himself, oversee the division (*Il.* 11.687–88 and 696–705, respectively; cf. *Od.* 14.229–33). For his part, van Wees contends that the leader is always in charge. In fact, even when the people are said to allot the prizes, the leader still operates as he sees fit. At such moments, the poet means either that the leader doles out the spoils with the blessing of and on behalf of the people or that they allow the leader to choose his own prize from the mass of spoils (1992: 301–2).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> All Greek quotations from the *Iliad* are taken from Monro and Allen 1920 and from the *Odyssey* from Allen 1917 and 1919.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Seaford 39, “it seems that the right to redistribute belongs nominally to the people but in fact to the leader.”

Taking a different approach, Walter Donlan ponders the “economic and political consequences” of the two differing descriptions of the allotment of spoils. The contention that the group doles out the spoils and the *gera*, an activity Donlan terms “distribution,” “is associated with the social organization of tribes.” Conversely, the leader’s control over the allotment, to which Donlan gives the name “redistribution,” is “characteristic of the centralized economies of chiefdoms” (1982: 158). Donlan represents his query as that of the historian<sup>8</sup> and suggests that the epics reflect a transitional stage in the movement towards the centralization of authority in the chief.<sup>9</sup> The poem points to the conflicts over the chief’s authority that will necessarily arise during such a transition (1982: e.g. 161–63).<sup>10</sup>

Donlan’s suggestion that both formulations are comprehensible allows one to add to these previous solutions. A speaker will frame his presentation of the (re)distribution of spoils in a particular way. He can emphasize the group’s or the leader’s role in the allotment, depending on his point.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup>E.g. “Historically, such a perception will have had its origin in a less complex stage of social organization...” (1982: 161).

<sup>9</sup>Compare “It is the group that normally ‘gives’ and ‘chooses’ the *geras*, ‘gives’ and ‘cuts out’ a *temenos* for the leader” (1982: 161) (cf. 1998: 60) with “[a]lthough there is a measure of ambiguity regarding the paramount chief’s role in the distribution of spoils, there is no doubt about his ultimate authority to enforce his will in these matters, even though it is universally recognized as an abuse of that authority, resulting in a socially dangerous distancing of the chief from his subordinates, stretching the limits of chiefly right” (1982: 162).

<sup>10</sup>Other solutions to this crux: Borecký suggests that in the case of redistribution by one person “[s]uch a person, authority, only carries out the will of the collective” (27); when Agamemnon “distributes the shares of booty entirely according to his own will” (28), he abuses his position. Rihll’s argument seems to be that the greater number of references to distribution by the group means that the references to a redistribution are not to be taken seriously: “The assembled army decides who, including Agamemnon, gets what” (44).

<sup>11</sup>For another example of one character speaking about the same subject in different ways for rhetorical purposes, see Wilson 88 on Achilles’ reference to Briseis as his wife. For examples of different characters purposefully speaking about the same subject in different ways, see Haubold 119–20 wherein he points to Odysseus’s insistence that the suitors are suitors in opposition to Eurymachus’s desire to cast the suitors as *laoi* and Beidelman 240–41 wherein he observes that Menelaos redefines as an act of supplication (*lissomenôî*) (*Il.* 23.609) Antilochos’s offer to give (*dôsô*) (*Il.* 23.592) him the mare he won in the chariot race. More generally, I note Wilson’s 7 attempt to address the warriors’ competing applications of the themes of recompense and ransom: “The problem is what Agamemnon, the embassy, and Achilles mean by the words they use and what the stakes in this tournament of definitions are.” For other phenomena that the narrator and

When a leader exhorts his men to fight by offering them a prize, he makes a stronger case if he positions himself as the agent of the redistribution.<sup>12</sup> Thus Agamemnon urges Teucer on by offering him a *presbèion*, the equivalent of a *geras* (*Il.* 8.287–91).<sup>13</sup> Rhetorical efficacy is also at stake when, throughout book 1, Achilles places the people in charge of the distribution.

It behooves Achilles during the initial moments of the quarrel to chastise Agamemnon in front of the assembled army for attempting to reverse what he characterizes as the whole army's decision to give Briseis to him as a prize (*Il.* 1.162). Yet once Agamemnon makes clear that he intends to take Briseis (*Il.* 1.184–85) and once Achilles determines that the people will not object (*Il.* 1.231–32), his subsequent references to the people's control over the division of spoils fit with his plan to punish the people for allowing Agamemnon to disregard how they allot prizes. In his later speech to Thetis, Achilles claims that after sacking Thebe, the Achaians brought the booty back to the camp and "the sons of the Achaians...selected out the beautiful-cheeked Chryseis for the son of Atreus" (*Il.* 1.368–69). After Agamemnon was forced to give Chryseis back, his heralds led away Briseis "whom the sons of the Achaians gave to me" (*Il.* 1.392). Achilles then hatches a plan: Thetis should urge Zeus to empower the Trojans to push the Achaians back to their ships. Two goals are desired: "that they all [the Achaians] may have enjoyment (*epaurôntai*) of their king" (*Il.* 1.410) and "that Agamemnon may realize his folly..." (*Il.* 1.411–12). Achilles suggests that not only Agamemnon but the Achaians as well deserve his wrath. The Achaians should be made to "feel what it is to have such a king" (*LSJ* s.v. *epaureô* IIb) who ignores, and just as importantly whom they allow to ignore, their decisions pertaining to the distribution of spoils.<sup>14</sup> Hammer's plebiscitary model of authority in the *Iliad*, whereby "the

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characters speak of in seemingly contradictory ways, see Bowden 52–53 for an analysis of the word *promachoi* and Donlan 1982: 147 on the crux surrounding bride price vs. dowry in the poems: "The discrepancies in marital prestations...far from indicating a conflation of practices from different periods, rather underlies the flexibility of the Homeric kinship system and the fluidity of hierarchical relationships." Von Reden 14–17 is also helpful on how to address seeming inconsistencies in the poems.

<sup>12</sup> Seaford 24 differentiates between prizes given at a (re)distribution and rewards offered for particular activities. But some of the rewards are to be collected at a later notional redistribution: thus Agamemnon claims that he will reward Teucer if the Achaians sack Troy (*Il.* 8.287–88) and Hektor promises a chariot and a pair of Achaian horses (ones that are currently in the Achaian camp [see 306 and Hainsworth *ad loc.*]) to whomever goes on a spying mission (*Il.* 10.303–12).

<sup>13</sup> See van Wees 1992: 300.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Rihll 42 on this passage: "The vengeance he [Achilles] seeks is against all those who allowed Agamemnon to appropriate Briseis by non-intervention."

decisions of leaders derive at least part of their legitimacy from the acclaim, or perceived acclaim, of the people” (147), is helpful here: if the decisions of leaders are “enacted in a public space and subject to community acclaim and sanction” (160), one can blame the people for a leader’s actions.<sup>15</sup>

Achilles’ strategies in book 1 contrast with his presentation in book 9 when he rejects Agamemnon’s attempts to entice him to return to the battle. Before the smaller audience of emissaries, he apparently finds it more efficacious to condemn Agamemnon’s greed and the fact that he reversed his previous decision by positioning the king as in charge of prize redistribution (*Il.* 9.333–34 and 367–68). Hainsworth perceives a “cutting rhetorical hyperbole” in Achilles’ presentation (*ad* 9.330–33). More specifically, one can connect Wilson’s analysis of Achilles’ spurning of Agamemnon’s offer with the decision to speak of the division of spoils in this way. Wilson suggests that Agamemnon wishes to cast himself in the role of a father figure as he attempts to ransom the safety of his army, currently held hostage by Achilles (75–81; esp. 79). The Myrmidon, however, perceives that the offer of material goods, as well as of one of Agamemnon’s daughters as wife, “are expressly designed to subordinate him [Achilles] to the father figure who offers them” (93). Achilles’ presentation of the procedures of redistribution gains point in light of Wilson’s reading. Just as Achilles objects to Agamemnon’s self-fashioning as an authoritative father figure in the current situation, so too he objects to the way Agamemnon imperiously handles the redistribution of spoils.

Agamemnon too makes use of the different ways one can speak about the (re)distribution when he enumerates the gifts he will give Achilles if the aggrieved Myrmidon returns to the fight:

εἰ δέ κεν αὖτε  
ἄστυ μέγα Πριάμοιο θεοὶ δώωσ’ ἀλαπάξαι,  
νῆα ἄλις χρυσοῦ καὶ χαλκοῦ νηησάσθω  
εἰσελθών, ὅτε κεν δατεώμεθα ληΐδ’ Ἀχαιοί,  
Τρωϊάδας δὲ γυναικας ἐείκοσιν αὐτὸς ἐλέσθω,  
αἷ κε μετ’ Ἀργείην Ἑλένην κάλλισται ἔωσιν.

But if again  
the gods give to sack the great city of Priam,  
let him heap his ship full of a great amount of gold and bronze  
going in, when we Achaians divide up the booty,

<sup>15</sup> Or for doing what the leader wants: Achilles threatens to become angry with Phoenix if the old counselor continues to participate in Agamemnon’s efforts to prompt Achilles’ return (*Il.* 9.612–15; cf. von Reden 24). Cf. Donlan 1997: 41 on “[t]he powerlessness of the leaders [*Homeric basileis*] in the face of mass opposition.”

and let him choose himself twenty Trojan women,  
who are the most beautiful after Argive Helen. (*Il.* 9.135–40)

If the whole quarrel rests on Achilles' taking umbrage at Agamemnon's intrusion into the (re)distribution of spoils, Agamemnon can be seen in these lines to efface his own role in that activity. Agamemnon's careful reference to the distribution goes hand in hand with his manipulative allusion in these verses to the third step in van Wees's schema, the "ruler's portion."<sup>16</sup> The leader of an expedition or of a community is often represented as acquiring his portion of the spoils first. Agamemnon speaks of this prerogative, for example, a few verses earlier:

δώσω δ' ἑπτὰ γυναῖκας ἀμύμονα ἔργα ἰδυίας,  
Λεσβίδας, ἃς ὅτε Λέσβον ἐϋκτιμένην ἔλεν αὐτὸς  
ἔξελόμην, αἱ κάλλει ἐνίκων φῦλα γυναικῶν.

I will give him seven women knowing blameless works,  
Lesbian women, whom when he himself took well-walled Lesbos  
I took out, [and] who excel the race of women in beauty. (*Il.* 9.128–30)<sup>17</sup>

At *Il.* 9.135–40 Agamemnon offers Achilles this option of picking his portion first from the choice spoils before the general allotment. Yet Agamemnon also reminds Achilles that he is the one who gets to determine who can do what. By granting first choice to Achilles, he implicitly positions himself as the one who gets to make that decision.<sup>18</sup> This component of his presentation, then, neatly encapsulates Agamemnon's desire to bring Achilles back but also to reassert his own authority.

Returning to the allotment of *gera*, one observes that two can play the game simultaneously. In the heated exchange between Agamemnon and Achilles in book 1, each manipulates the ambiguity inherent in the fact that both the group as a whole and the individual leader can be said to (re)distribute the spoils. Agamemnon first demands that the people compensate him for the loss of Chryseis:

<sup>16</sup> Van Wees 1992: 300–1 contends that the portions are assigned after the *gera* and that a *geras* can only be a single item. When reference is made to a warrior's or chieftain's receiving a plurality of goods, a portion, not a *geras*, must be involved.

<sup>17</sup> Odysseus repeats these lines to Achilles at *Il.* 9.270–72. Nestor says that Neleus took a portion for himself from the booty captured from the Epeians: ἐκ δ' ὁ γέρων ἀγέλην τε βοῶν καὶ πῶϋ μέγ' οἴων / εἵλετο, κρινάμενος τριηκόσι' ἠδὲ νομῆας (The old man [Neleus] a herd of cows and a great flock of rams / took out, separating out three hundred and their shepherds, *Il.* 11.696–97, cf. *Od.* 14.229–34).

<sup>18</sup> I thank one of *TAPA*'s anonymous referees for this observation.

αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γέρας αὐτίχ' ἐτοιμάσας, ὄφρα μὴ οἶος  
 Ἀργείων ἀγέραςτος ἔω, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ ἔοικε·  
 λεύσσετε γὰρ τό γε πάντες, ὅ μοι γέρας ἔρχεται ἄλλη.

But you make ready a prize for me immediately, in order that I alone  
 of the Argives may not be without a prize, because not even that is fitting;  
 for you all see it, that my prize goes elsewhere. (*Il.* 1.118–20)

Although we will see that Agamemnon soon changes tactics, he does not right away state that he will take someone else's prize in recompense. Instead he orders the people to find him a new *geras*—a task that could be taken to conform to the possibility of representing the people as in control of the initial distribution. Agamemnon most likely intends no such thing, but Achilles jumps at the opportunity to depict the people as in charge of the distribution and thereby blatantly challenges the authority of a man whom he has just called “most desirous for possessions of all” (*Il.* 1.122):

πῶς γάρ τοι δώσουσι γέρας μεγάθυμοι Ἀχαιοί;  
 .....  
 ..... αὐτὰρ Ἀχαιοὶ  
 τριπλῇ τετραπλῇ τ' ἀποτείσομεν, αἴ κε ποθὶ Ζεὺς  
 δῶσι πόλιν Τροίην εὐτείχεον ἐξαλαπάξει.

For how will the greathearted Achaians give a prize to you?  
 .....  
 ..... but we Achaians  
 will pay you back three and four fold, if ever Zeus  
 gives to us to sack the well-walled city of Troy. (*Il.* 1.123, 127–29)

In response to Achilles' insistence on the people's control over the distribution of spoils, Agamemnon makes reference to redistribution.<sup>19</sup> If the people will not give him a new prize, he will take one from someone else:

ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν δώσουσι γέρας μεγάθυμοι Ἀχαιοί,  
 ἄρσαντες κατὰ θυμόν, ὅπως ἀντάξιον ἔσται·  
 εἰ δέ κε μὴ δώωσιν, ἐγὼ δέ κεν αὐτὸς ἔλωμαι  
 ἢ τεὸν ἢ Αἴαντος ἰὼν γέρας, ἢ Ὀδυσῆος

But if the greathearted Achaians will give a prize,  
 making it suitable as they see fit, as shall be an equivalent;<sup>20</sup>  
 but if they do not give, I will take  
 either yours or Aias's prize, coming myself, or that of Odysseus (*Il.* 1.135–38)

<sup>19</sup> Wilson 56–57 suggests that Agamemnon must reject Achilles' offer here, because Achilles positions himself as the one who will allot the spoils of Troy and thereby renders Agamemnon dependent upon him.

<sup>20</sup> This translation of *antaxios* is Goodwin's s.v. 344.



The first and second verses quoted above (135–36) continue to solicit a new *geras* from the people. Noteworthy in this regard is the phrase *arsantes kata thumon* “making it suitable as they see fit” (*Il.* 1.136), which translators tend to get wrong. Lattimore offers “chosen according to my desire.” The Loeb (Murray and Wyatt) suggests “suiting it to my heart.” In all thirty-five occurrences of the phrase *kata thumon* in the epics (excluding the common phrase *kai phrena kai kata thumon* so as not to skew the sample), it is the *thumos* of the subject of the sentence or clause that is referred to.<sup>21</sup> Further, at *Il.* 13.86 *kata thumon* appears in reference to a group: “And pain came to them [the Achaeans] in their hearts (*kata thumon*) as they watched the Trojans.” Not only at *Il.* 1.135 but also at 136 Agamemnon leaves to the people the choice of what to give him in recompense for the loss of Chyrseis. Yet the *de* of verse 137 signals a shift in the argument. In the third and fourth verses (137–38), he goes on to contrast the ideal (as he sees it) scenario, wherein the Achaeans willingly give him a satisfactory replacement prize, with the notion that they may balk at his proposal. Faced with that possibility, he emphatically demands compensation. The verses are usually and correctly taken to indicate Agamemnon’s insistence on maintaining a fixed hierarchy among the Achaian chiefs, but seeing an additional citation of the practice whereby the leader can control the initial redistribution of spoils (and so any attempts to shift them around later) helps clarify the reasoning behind his brash statement. I thus endorse van Wees’s suggestion that “Agamemnon’s point of view... may be that he has as much right to take back a *geras* as he has to give it away in the first place” (1992: 309). In sum, a speaker portrays the mechanisms of (re)distribution to suit his rhetorical goals. Sometimes the group is said to hand out the prizes and sometimes the leader is depending on the speaker’s point.

Support for this analysis emerges in the poem’s representation of the *dais*.<sup>22</sup> The narrator tells us that Agamemnon gave a choice cut of meat (*gerairen*) to Aias at one feast (*Il.* 7.321–22).<sup>23</sup> By contrast, Menelaos shares with Telemachos

<sup>21</sup> I include in this assessment the following formula in which the referential dative functions like a dative of the possessor: ἦδε δέ μοι / οἱ κατὰ θυμὸν ἀρίστη φαίνεται βουλὴ (This plan appeared to me / to him in my / his mind to be best, *Od.* 9.318, 9.424, 11.230 and *Il.* 2.5, 10.17, 14.161, respectively). At *Il.* 9.645 Achilles says that Aias “seemed to me to speak nearly all these things *kata thumon*.” Pace Griffin *ad loc.* and Hainsworth *ad loc.*, I follow Martin 40 and 142 in translating *kata thumon* here as “in accordance with your desire.”

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Seaford 42 and 50; at 39–47 he offers a detailed discussion of the intersections between feasts at sacrifices and the (re)distribution of spoils. Donlan 1982: 158–65 discusses the redistribution of spoils and food.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *Od.* 3.39–41 and 14.435–38, and on the latter scene, see Donlan 1982: 155.

and Peisistratos the portion “that they [his fellow feasters] had given him as an honorific portion (*gera*)” (*Od.* 4.66). Just so, for rhetorical purposes a leader can claim that he doles out honors at the feast. During the Epipoleis, Agamemnon first addresses Idomeneus:

Ἴδομενεῦ, περὶ μὲν σε τίω Δαναῶν ταχυπάλων  
ἤμην ἐνὶ πτολέμῳ ἢ δ’ ἄλλοίῳ ἐπὶ ἔργῳ  
ἢ δ’ ἐν δαίθῳ, ὅτε πέρ τε γερούσιον αἶθοπα οἶνον  
Ἀργείων οἱ ἄριστοι ἐνὶ κρητῆρι κέρωνται.

Idomeneus, I honor you especially among the Danaans with their swift horses both in battle and in any other sort of event and in the feast, when the gleaming wine of the chiefs the best of the Argives mix in a krater. (*Il.* 4.257–60)

Agamemnon speaks literally here in positioning himself as the one to allot honors not only after battles but also during the *dais*. He implies thereby that Idomeneus ought to care about what Agamemnon thinks of him and fight well in the impending encounter (*Il.* 4.264). Conversely, characters will assert that the people as a whole distribute honors at the feast. Hektor reproves Diomedes for retreating:

Τυδείδη, περὶ μὲν σε τίον Δαναοὶ ταχύπῳλοι  
ἔδρη τε κρέασίν τε ἰδὲ πλείοις δεπάεσσιν·  
νῦν δέ σ’ ἀτιμήσουσι· γυναικὸς ἄρ’ ἀντὶ τέτυξο.

Son of Tydeus, the Danaans with their swift horses greatly honor you with a seat of honor and with meats and with full cups.

But now they will dishonor you: for you are just like a woman. (*Il.* 8.161–63)

Diomedes will be chastised by all the Achaians, Hektor suggests, not just some notional leader.<sup>24</sup> Sarpedon also refers to the hero’s preferential treatment by the people as a whole at the feast:

τίη δὴ νῶϊ τετιμήμεσθα μάλιστα  
ἔδρη τε κρέασίν τε ἰδὲ πλείοις δεπάεσσιν

why in fact are we honored especially  
with a seat of honor and with meats and with full cups (*Il.* 12.310–11)

<sup>24</sup> Agamemnon seems to split the difference when rebuking Odysseus and Menestheus: “For you two are the first to hear of the feast *from me*, whenever *we Achaians* prepare a feast for the leaders” (*Il.* 4.343–44). Odysseus cannot be subordinated to Agamemnon in quite the same way as Diomedes. Cf. Louden 98 on the different ways Agamemnon handles Odysseus and Achilles.

He goes on to claim that such treatment is part of the reciprocal agreement between kings and their people (*Il.* 12.315–16). The leader must seek the approbation of all by fighting in the front ranks (*Il.* 12.318–21).<sup>25</sup>

### III. INDIVIDUAL ACQUISITION

Besides waiting for the (re)distribution of spoils after the battle, the individual warrior has other means of getting spoils that mark his status. One often finds a warrior stripping the armor from a defeated foe. Most famously, Hektor takes the armor from the dead Patroklos (*Il.* 17.125). In a more routine moment Menelaos strips Peisander immediately after he kills him (*Il.* 12.640–42). Warriors also chase after their opponent's horses. Diomedes expresses to Sthenelos his desire to capture Aeneas's horses (*Il.* 5.259–73), and a moment later Sthenelos succeeds in doing so (*Il.* 5.319–27). Hector for his part hopes to capture Achilles' horses (*Il.* 16.864–67 and 17.75–78). Warriors may also ransom captives in exchange for goods, a practice to which suppliants routinely point as they beg for their lives (see Adrastos's plea at *Il.* 6.46–50).<sup>26</sup> Each successful acquisition increases a warrior's status. Hektor gives Patroklos's armor to some comrades to carry back to the city "to be a great glory (*megakleos*) to him" (*Il.* 17.131; cf. *Il.* 17.229–32). The victor in such duels does not need another set of armor. His action highlights his triumph over his enemy and the corresponding degradation of the corpse, now naked and subject to mutilation. Diomedes speaks of capturing Aeneas's horses: "if we should take them, we would win excellent glory (*kleon ethlon*)" (*Il.* 5.273). Wilson illustrates how the process of ransoming a captive allows a warrior to retain and augment his *timê* (e.g. 38). Goods obtained in these ways do not make it into the common pot for (re)distribution.

Hektor dons Patroklos's armor after slaying him (*Il.* 17.186–97). When Meriones comes looking for a new spear, Idomeneus invites him to take one of his:

δούρατα δ', αἵ κ' ἐθέλησθα, καὶ ἔν καὶ εἴκοσι δῆεις  
ἑσταότ' ἐν κλισίῃ πρὸς ἐνώπια παμφανόωντα,  
Τρώϊα, τὰ κατὰ μένων ἀποαίνυμαι

Spears, if you want, both one and twenty you will find  
standing in my hut near the shiny walls,  
Trojan spears, which *I take away* from the dead. (*Il.* 13.260–62)

<sup>25</sup> One must note that Sarpedon begins by talking about honors given at particular feasts (*Il.* 12.310–11) but moves on to the more general point that the people supply kings with the best sheep and wine (*Il.* 12.319–20); cf. von Reden 63.

<sup>26</sup> See Crotty 9 and Wilson 29.

Meriones responds by claiming that he too despoils his enemies. His encampment is just a bit too far away at the present moment:

καὶ τοὶ ἐμοὶ παρά τε κλισίῃ καὶ νηὶ μελαίνῃ  
πόλλ' ἔναρα Τρώων·

Know that *I too have* in my hut and black ship  
many arms of Trojans. (*Il.* 13.267–68)<sup>27</sup>

Horses also remain in the possession of the warrior who captures them. Remembering Diomedes' injunction, Sthenelos grabs Aeneas's horses and hands them over to his companion Deipylus to lead back to the ships (*Il.* 5.319–27). Later Diomedes is eager to show Nestor the quality of the horses "which I took from Aeneas" (*Il.* 8.108; cf. 23.290–92).<sup>28</sup> Odysseus and Diomedes make off with Rhesus's horses (*Il.* 10.487–514) and later lead them back to Diomedes' hut (*Il.* 10.566–69).<sup>29</sup> One delivers ransom directly to the warrior who has captured one's son or relative, as the formulaic plea of a suppliant reveals:

ζώγρει...σὺ δ' ἄξια δέξαι ἄποινα·  
.....  
τῶν κέν τοὶ χαρίσαιτο πατὴρ ἀπερείσι' ἄποινα

Take me alive...and *receive* worthy ransom:

.....  
from these things my father would readily give *to you* boundless ransom  
(*Il.* 6.46 and 49 = 11.131 and 134; cf. *Il.* 10.378 and 380)

<sup>27</sup> A near parody of the notion that a warrior keeps the armor and weapons he has stripped from his foes appears in Ćamil Kulenović's "Mustay Bey of the Lika Rescues Crnica Ali Agha's Sister Ajkuna," one of the songs in *Serbo-Croatian Heroic Poems: Epics from Bihać, Cazin, and Kulen Vakuf*: "At the column's flank rode Mujo on his white mount, / all aglitter with the breastplates of Mrkotić, / the golden buttons of Peter Bunijevac, / and the gold broderie of Radovan Stegić. / On his head he wore the gear of Vuk Mandušić, / at his side the German saber of Marko the Mighty, / and on his breast the braids of Niklas Jeroglavac. / His white mount was the charger of the Captain of Senj. / All this Mujo had won / with his saber and the strength of his own right arm." (570–79)

<sup>28</sup> Both the fact that Sthenelos, who actually rounded up the horses, does not get to keep them but must turn them over to Diomedes and that, in his words to Nestor, Diomedes glosses over Sthenelos's contribution show Sthenelos's subordinate position.

<sup>29</sup> "Diomedes apparently appropriates the horses, of which nothing further is heard, not even in the chariot race in book 23" (Hainsworth ad 10.567–8). Antilochos drives Asios's horses back among the Achaians (*Il.* 13.400–1); it is not clear whether Idomeneus who killed Asios is to keep his horses. The Myrmidons grab hold of Sarpedon's horses after Patroklos kills him (*Il.* 16.506–7); it is not clear if Patroklos is supposed to get the horses. But because a warrior keeps the armor of a fallen opponent, he most likely also keeps his horses.

When he comes into possession of an opponent's armor, weapons, horses, or even the man himself, the warrior is a one-man equivalent on the battlefield of the bands of raiders or pirates (*lêistêres*) mentioned in the *Odyssey* (*Od.* 3.73, 9.254, 15.427 [*lêistores*], 16.426, 17.425; cf. *h. Cer.* 124–25).<sup>30</sup> In each of these five references by characters to raiders, there is never any mention of a (re)distribution of the spoils they take. Such an omission need not mean that raiders did not engage in a later (re)distribution, but does signal that the speaker did not consider such an action vital to their characterization. The only thing one hears of these marauders doing after a successful expedition is selling captives. The Phoenician woman who abducts Eumaios claims to have been snatched up herself by Taphian *lêistêres* and sold to Eumaios's father (*Od.* 15.425–29; cf. *h. Cer.* 131–32). Like the raiders for whom the acquisition of spoils is represented as a one-time affair, the warrior can simply gather up his own booty on the battlefield. The parallel is reinforced when a warrior sells a captured opponent, as for instance Achilles sold Lykaon (*Il.* 21.40–41).<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> See van Wees 1992: 207–17 for discussion of *lêistêres*.

<sup>31</sup> Those who on occasion go out in search of booty (sometimes called *lêis*) are to be distinguished from those called *lêistêres*. The latter are raiders by profession (van Wees 1992: 208 and 210). Heroes can embark on raids (e.g. *Il.* 11.677 and *Od.* 3.106) but that does not make them *lêistêres* (see van Wees 1992: 390n92). Nor does the fact that Agamemnon imagines a day when the Achaians will divide up the booty (*lêid'*) of Troy (*Il.* 9.138) make the Achaians *lêistêres*. Supplementing van Wees's observations on the private nature of "freebooting" by *lêistêres* (e.g. 1992: 208) as well as his comment that in such cases "the role of taking booty cannot be quite the same as in the context of status conflict" (1992: 210), I suggest that the tendency of the heroes to engage subsequently in a public (re)distribution differentiates their raids from those of *lêistêres*. According to Achilles, such (re)distribution is routine (*Il.* 1.163–68, 9.328–33), and one hears about (re)distribution after raids against Elis (*Il.* 11.671–705), Ismaros (*Od.* 9.40–42), Lesbos (*Il.* 9.128–30), Lyrnessos (cf. *Il.* 1.162 with 2.689–91), Skyros (*Il.* 9.666–68), Tenedos (*Il.* 11.624–27), and Thebe (*Il.* 1.366–68).

Odysseus's creation, the Cretan son of Kastor, troubles this dichotomy. If van Wees correctly takes Odysseus to be speaking about raids by *lêistêres* at *Od.* 14.229–34, Odysseus's contention that the son of Kastor acquired so much wealth over the course of nine expeditions in which he was in charge of the redistribution with the result that he "became fearsome and revered among the Cretans" (*Od.* 14.234) contradicts the normal separation of *lêistêres* from an allotment. Perhaps the son of Kastor wants to align his freebooting activities, the proceeds from which allow him to move up the social ladder, with the means of acquisition employed by heroes (but see von Reden 63 for the noticeable absence of *kleos* in the son of Kastor's presentation). Conversely, van Wees may incorrectly assume that the son of Kastor has always engaged in professional freebooting just because he calls his companions during a failed attack on Egypt *lêistêres* (17.425). Perhaps the raid against the Egyptians is different from the raids mentioned at 14.229–34. Furthermore,

Thersites makes clear the difference between acquiring spoils from the group and on one's own when he chastises Agamemnon for taking his followers' spoils:

πλεῖαί τοι χαλκοῦ κλισίαι, πολλαὶ δὲ γυναῖκες  
 εἰσὶν ἐνὶ κλισίῃς ἐξαίρετοι, ἅς τοι Ἀχαιοὶ  
 πρωτίστῳ δίδομεν, εὖτ' ἂν πτολίεθρον ἔλωμεν.  
 ἦ ἔτι καὶ χρυσοῦ ἐπιδεύεαι, ὃν κέ τις οἴσει  
 Τρώων ἵπποδάμων ἐξ Ἰλίου υἱὸς ἄποινα,  
 ὃν κεν ἐγὼ δῆσας ἀγάγω ἢ ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν,  
 ἥ ἐ γυναῖκα νέην, ἵνα μίσγειαι ἐν φιλότητι

Your huts are full of bronze, and many women  
 selected out are in the huts, whom we Achaians give to you  
 as the very first whenever we take a town.  
 Or still are you in need also of gold, which someone  
 of the horse-breaking Trojans will bring from Ilium as ransom for his son,  
 whom I bind and lead away or some other of the Achaians,  
 or a new woman in order that you may mingle in love. (*Il.* 2.226–32)

Thersites juxtaposes women, a form of spoil obtained from the group, with gold that is obtained through the individual's own extracurricular pursuits.<sup>32</sup> The particle combination *ê eti kai* (*Il.* 2.229) strongly differentiates the two alternatives (cf. *Il.* 16.651). The spoils won by Odysseus and Diomedes during the *Doloneia* present a similar juxtaposition. On the one hand, Nestor says that whoever succeeds in the expedition will receive the following prizes: great glory and, more specifically, a ewe with a lamb from every leader of a contingent to enjoy at every feast (*Il.* 10.212–17). On the other hand, Odysseus

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in the first recounting of the Egyptian expedition (14.245–84), Odysseus speaks only of his “godlike companions” (14.247) (de Jong 428). The use of *lêistêres* in the second rendition of the story (17.426–43) might be intended to emphasize his own folly and bad luck in order to elicit sympathy from his addressee, Antinoos. As de Jong 327 notes, “Each time Odysseus carefully chooses his fictional identity, with an eye to his addressee.”

<sup>32</sup> A warrior can obtain gold and other precious metals in the (re)distribution of booty as well: see *Il.* 9.365–67 and van Wees 1992: 300. In addition, goods that a warrior could obtain on his own on the battlefield are offered as prizes at a subsequent allotment. Hektor promises to give “a chariot and two arched-necked horses whichever are the best by the swift ships of the Achaians” to whomever volunteers to spy on the Greeks (*Il.* 10.305–6). Yet it is generally the case that female captives, tripods, and other movable items taken from a city are handed out at the (re)distribution, while the warrior strips a defeated foe on the battlefield of his armor and chases after his horses.

and Diomedes also acquire spoils on their own and for themselves: Dolon's armor and Rhesus's horses, respectively (*Il.* 10.566–71).<sup>33</sup>

#### IV. THE PUBLIC (RE)DISTRIBUTION, INDIVIDUAL ACQUISITION, AND EXCHANGE

Although spoils acquired from the group and on one's own both contribute to a hero's status, one should not ignore the differences between the warrior's two methods of increasing his hoard. Applying a theoretical model that elucidates the distinctions necessitates the realization that one is dealing with two economies of exchange when it comes to spoils obtained in war. One can expand on von Reden's passing remark when she speaks of adopting "Redfield's view that funerary games are a ritual re-enactment of the reciprocities of combat, in so far as mourners and competitors exchange toil for prizes" (25; cf. 21).<sup>34</sup>

A warrior expends his energies and risks death in exchange both for prizes that are doled out at the end of the day and for spoils that he obtains on his own during the battle as well as after through transactions such as ransoming. Achilles describes the first economy in his complaint against Agamemnon:

καὶ δὴ μοι γέρας αὐτὸς ἀφαιρήσεσθαι ἀπειλείς,  
 ᾧ ἔπι πολλὰ μόγησα, δόσαν δέ μοι υἱες Ἀχαιῶν.  
 οὐ μὲν σοί ποτε ἴσον ἔχω γέρας, ὅππότε Ἀχαιοὶ  
 Τρώων ἐκπέρσωσ' εὖ ναιόμενον πολίεθρον·  
 ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν πλεῖον πολυαῖκος πολέμοιο  
 χεῖρες ἐμαὶ διέπουσ'· ἀτὰρ ἦν ποτε δασμὸς ἵκηται,  
 σοὶ τὸ γέρας πολὺ μείζον, ἐγὼ δ' ὀλίγον τε φίλον τε  
 ἔρχομ' ἔχων ἐπὶ νῆας, ἐπεὶ κε κάμω πολεμίζων.

And now my prize you threaten in person to strip from me,  
 for whom I laboured much, the gift of the sons of the Achaians.  
 Never, when the Achaians sack some well-founded citadel  
 of the Trojans, do I have a prize that is equal to your prize.  
*Always the greater part of the painful fighting is the work of  
 my hands;* but when the time comes to distribute the booty  
 yours is far the greater reward, and I with some small thing  
 yet dear to me go back to my ships *when I am weary with fighting.*

(*Il.* 1.161–68; trans. R. Lattimore)

<sup>33</sup> Donlan 1982: 168 conflates the two different sources of booty in this episode.

<sup>34</sup> Previous discussions of (re)distribution as a type of reciprocity also suggest thinking about spoils in terms of exchange; see e.g. Donlan 1982: 154 and Seaford 44 and 69.

As the underlined verses indicate, Achilles stresses the toil of battle and envies his *geras* as recompense for his labor.

The conversation between Meriones and Idomeneus exemplifies the workings of the second economy, because the pair portrays individual acquisition on the battlefield as recompense for fighting. Idomeneus claims that he has garnered many of his fallen foes' weapons:

δούρατα δ', αἵ κ' ἐθέλησθα, καὶ ἔν καὶ εἵκοσι δῆεις  
 ἔσταότ' ἐν κλισίῃ πρὸς ἐνώπια παμφανόωντα,  
 Τρώϊα, τὰ κταμένων ἀποαίνυμαι· οὐ γὰρ οἶω  
 ἀνδρῶν δυσμενέων ἐκὰς ἰστάμενος πολεμίζειν.

Spears, if you want, both one and twenty you will find  
 standing in my hut near the shiny walls,  
 Trojan spears, which I take away from the dead. For I do not think  
 that I fight standing far from my enemies. (*Il.* 13.260–63)

Meriones responds that he too has acquired numerous Trojan arms:

καί τοι ἐμοὶ παρά τε κλισίῃ καὶ νηὶ μελαίνῃ  
 πόλλ' ἔναρα Τρώων· ἀλλ' οὐ σχεδὸν ἐστὶν ἐλέσθαι.  
 οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδ' ἐμέ φημι λελασμένον ἔμμεναι ἀλκῆς,  
 ἀλλὰ μετὰ πρώτοισι μάχην ἀνὰ κυδιάνειραν  
 ἵσταμαι

Know that I too have in my hut and black ship  
 many arms of Trojans. But they are not close by for the taking.  
 For neither do I assert that I am forgetful of my battle strength,  
 but among the first in the battle that brings men honor  
 I stand. (*Il.* 13.267–71)

Toiling and risking their lives in the front ranks earns them the right to despoil their foes. In addition, as Wilson shows, receiving ransom compensates one for the loss of *timê* involved in handing back a captive. Such an equation relies on the notion that one toils in combat in exchange for the chance to earn *timê* by capturing one's opponent alive.<sup>35</sup>

Maurice Bloch and Jonathan Parry provide a socio-anthropological framework for addressing the distinctions between the two economies outlined above in their introduction to a series of essays concerned with "the moral evaluation of monetary and commercial exchanges" in several modern societies (23–28).<sup>36</sup> They posit two transactional orders in the sphere of exchange.

<sup>35</sup> See Seaford 23–25 for another presentation of the reciprocities of combat.

<sup>36</sup> For another summary of their discussion, see Kurke 1999: 14–15.



A short-term transaction is often conducted between strangers and is focused entirely on “individual appropriation, competition, sensuous enjoyment, luxury and youthful vitality” (24). By allowing for these activities, such as “commerce, wage-labour or brigandage” (24), a culture carves out “some ideological space within which individual acquisition is a legitimate and even laudable goal” (26). Yet a culture must also have ways of maintaining a particular “static and timeless order” by employing the gains of short-term transactions in the interest of so-called “long-term transactions.” A process of conversion directs some portion of the goods acquired in short-term transactions toward long-term transactions that aim at “the reproduction of the long-term social or cosmic order” (24). That is, certain entities are considered constitutive of the long-term social and/or cosmic order. In the cultures examined by the contributors to Parry and Bloch’s volume, the family or particular religious, political, or cultural entities are understood thus. Transactions by those entities or transactions that perpetuate those entities are thought to perpetuate the social and cosmic order. Long-term transactions and conversion then can take different forms. On the one hand, an individual can act to reaffirm a particular notionally eternal entity. For instance, Bloch analyses how among the Merina of Madagascar an individual’s expenditures on the upkeep of his ancestral tomb are thought to perpetuate the cosmic order (esp. 180–81). In this case, conversion is really a matter of a cognitive shift in how one thinks about the money at one’s disposal. One decides to spend one’s money in a way categorized by one’s native culture as a means of perpetuating the social and cosmic order. On the other hand, long-term transactions can be performed by the entities to which one hands over one’s resources. For instance, Janet Carsten documents how Malay fishermen turn over money they have earned to their wives, who are then thought of as directing that resource toward reproducing the household. In this case the conversion is the act of turning the money over, and the long-term transaction is the use made of the money by the wives. A long-term transaction, then, can involve (1) an individual directing resources towards a particular entity deemed constitutive of the social and cosmic order or (2) an individual entity itself (to which one has handed over resources) reproducing those orders. I will discuss in Section V the compulsion necessary to prompt conversions.

Table 1 summarizes the model outlined by Bloch and Parry. (1) and (2) differ in the nature of the conversion from short-term to long-term transactions and thus in the agents and nature of the long-term transactions.

Two scholars, Sitta von Reden and Leslie Kurke, have applied this concept of transactional orders to Ancient Greece in focusing on exchange in general and the introduction of coinage in particular. Kurke summarizes the initial components of von Reden’s discussion of the Homeric poems:

TABLE 1.

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(1)
Step 1: Short-term transaction: Compensation for labor
Step 2: Conversion: Decision to use of portion of compensation in a long-term transaction
Step 3: Long-term transaction: Portion of compensation devoted to family or religious/political/cultural entity
(2)
Step 1: Short-term transaction: Compensation for labor
Step 2: Conversion: Portion of compensation turned over to family or religious/political/cultural entity
Step 3: Long-term transaction: Transactions performed by family or religious/political/cultural entity

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As von Reden applies this model to the early Greek evidence, the articulation of long- and short-term transactional orders predates the introduction of coinage into the Greek world, corresponding roughly to the spheres of human-human and human-divine gift exchange (including agriculture), on the one hand, and trade, profit, and market exchange on the other. Thus in Homer, top-rank gift exchange between aristocratic heroes, or lavish offerings and sacrifices to the gods are always positively represented as perpetuating the long-term social and metaphysical order. But at the same time, the *Odyssey* especially reveals the coexistence of the short-term transactional order, the world of Phoenician traders and *prēkteres*, “mindful of their cargo and looking for gain” (*Od.* 8.162–64). (1999: 15–16)<sup>37</sup>

In seeking to apply this model to the rewards fighters get for joining battle, one can first address the equation between *kleos* ‘glory’ and combat resulting in death.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Seaford 13–15 and Lyons 94. For an application of Bloch and Parry’s terminology to Odysseus’s story-telling in the *Odyssey*, see Dougherty 38–60 (with which compare von Reden 70–74). Kurke 1999 is concerned with contests over what sorts of entities were to be considered constitutive of the social order (e.g. *poleis* vs. aristocratic *hetaireiai*) and so with contests over long-term transactions in sixth and fifth-century Greece (e.g. 17–19, 105, 245).

One of the essential equations of epic ideology is that the warrior fights and dies in exchange for the immortality conferred by being the subject of stories in the future. Hektor expresses the wish not to die “ingloriously (*akleîðs*) but doing something great and for men hereafter to learn about” (*Il.* 22.304–5). Achilles knows that if he returns home and does not fight at Troy his *kleos* will perish (*Il.* 9.415). Along with reminiscences prompted by tombs (see *Il.* 7.84–91), epic song is portrayed as a powerful means by which a warrior’s *kleos* becomes known (see *Od.* 1.336–37).<sup>38</sup> The striking meta-poetic discussion of Iapyx in the *Aeneid* also connects epic and glory. The smitten Apollo offered the Trojan physician “augury, the cithara and the swift arrows” but Iapyx “chose instead to know the power of herbs and the skill of healing and to practice silent skills without glory (*mutas agitare inglorius artes*)” (*A.* 12.394, 396–97). In rejecting the cithara (and to a lesser extent augury, which can be connected with song) Iapyx turns away from all song, including epic. Virgil thereupon asserts a causal relationship between Iapyx’s preference for a career marked by silence (*mutas*) over a career in song and the fact that he plies his craft in obscurity (*inglorius*).<sup>39</sup>

Epic positions itself as in the final instance recompensing the warrior for his toil and death with notionally everlasting glory. Epic thereby emerges as the agent behind a long-term transaction that perpetuates a social and cosmic order that prizes feats of valor in battle. Yet while alive, Homeric warriors also aim to acquire spoils and so augment their *timê* and *kleos* as recompense for their toil.<sup>40</sup> Adapting Bloch and Parry’s model a bit, one may extend its application to this other integral thematic component of the *Iliad*. The scheme mapped out in Table 1 will not fit precisely in all its particulars onto the systems of Homeric exchange described above. Nonetheless the categories of short- and long-term transactions will be especially helpful in differentiating between the two economies.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Murnaghan 149–50; Nagy 1999: 16 and 95; von Reden 18–19, 28–29, and 70; Wilson 95, 139 and 146; Graziosi and Haubold 101–2; Seaford 58–59. On *timê* and *kleos* as compensation for mortality, see Graziosi and Haubold 109 and 129–33.

<sup>39</sup> *Inglorius* is in the same semantic field as *kleos*. Elsewhere in the *Aeneid*, Arruns, the killer of Camilla, juxtaposes *laus* and *inglorius* (*A.* 11.790–93). Vergil uses the phrase *heroum laudes* (*Ecl.* 4.26), which Coleman *ad loc.* connects with the Homeric phrase *klea andrôn* (*Il.* 9.189, 9.524, and *Od.* 8.73).

<sup>40</sup> On differences between *timê* and *kleos*, see von Reden 18–19, 21, and 39n36 and Wilson 95 and 120.

<sup>41</sup> It bears repeating that Bloch and Parry’s model of transactional orders is concerned with the “moral evaluation” of transactions. Short-term transactions can be considered morally neutral or even negative whereas long-term transactions are positively valued. Such evaluations are not immediately relevant to the discussion below. For example, one

When a warrior seizes goods on his own and keeps them for himself, he engages in a short-term transaction. The warrior exchanges his toil or labor for spoils and so acts with a view to “individual appropriation, competition, [etc]”; furthermore, his opponent is at least notionally a stranger. As demonstrated above (see page 13), such activities, in so far as others witness them or come to learn of them, are deemed valuable contributions to a warrior’s status, and one must now add that these acquisitions are thereby thought integral to the creation and reaffirmation of the social order. Nevertheless they are not portrayed as contributing so explicitly and systematically to the perpetuation of the social and cosmic order as the (re)distribution.

Rewarding fighters at the (re)distribution for their efforts on the battlefield is an exchange that is to be classed as a long-term transaction. Although individual acquisition can be just as public as (re)distribution,<sup>42</sup> a greater contrast resides in the fact that both the narrator and the characters depict the allotment after a battle as expected and organized (e.g. *Il.* 1.166, 2.226–28, 11.625–27) and fittingly then as the primary site for establishing and ultimately reinscribing the social hierarchies and values of the “big-man” or chiefdom society that dominates Homeric epic.<sup>43</sup> First and foremost, we are told, it is during the (re)distribution that his peers recognize a warrior’s and leader’s prowess or already accepted status. One of the more conspicuous and well-known features of the allotment that demonstrates this principle is the leader’s (the *anax andrôn*) receiving rewards for which he might not have labored in battle, as Achilles says of Agamemnon (*Il.* 9.332–33). Odysseus’s men similarly grumble that he acquired a great amount of spoils at Troy while “we in turn who endured the same long road return home empty-handed” (*Od.* 10.41–42).<sup>44</sup> Critics have long perceived that the final allotment is understood

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of the activities labeled a short-term transaction below (taking the armor of a fallen opponent) provokes a rebuke in only one instance. Zeus says that Hektor stripped Patroklos *ou kata kosmon* “improperly” (*Il.* 17.205) (see Edwards ad 17.205–6). The text does not support Louden’s assertion that Patroklos “problematizes his slaying of Sarpedon by taking his armor” (107).

<sup>42</sup> The notion that individual acquisitions, such as despoiling an opponent or capturing his horses, will bring one *kleos* (see above page 13) is predicated on the public nature of the acquisition. For the public nature of the (re)distribution, see n4.

<sup>43</sup> For bibliography on the popular metaphors of the “big-man or chief” used by scholars to figure the political structures evident in the Homeric poems, see Hammer 233n5; his Chapter 6 proposes some alterations to this model. Van Wees 1998: 42–44 explores the distinctions between the “achieved” status of big-men and the “ascribed” status of chiefs; cf. Hammer 147, Donlan 1997: 43, and Thalmann 259–71.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Donlan 1982: 162, “the chief must insist on public affirmation of his superior due.” So Odysseus envisions that raids (*lêissomai*) will provide one mechanism for replacing

as a powerful mechanism for both social differentiation and reification of the social order. Donlan observes: "Besides being a means of enrichment for the group it [acquiring and distributing booty] is a unifying mechanism, for it structures the political hierarchy, creates or affirms leaders, and validates the dominant ideology of strength, courage, warcraft, and personal glory" (1982: 142; cf. 1998: 60–63). Van Wees contends that the (re)distribution of *gera* shows who "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" (1992: 309).<sup>45</sup> In addition, by reaffirming the social order the allotment at the (re)distribution is judged in an important sense to reaffirm the cosmic order as well. When the people, for example, allow Agamemnon to take a larger share of spoils, they recognize with Nestor that "not ever does he have an equal share of honor (*timê*) the scepter-bearing king, to whom Zeus gave glory (*kudos*)" (*Il.* 1.279–80). Agamemnon's *geras* and portion acknowledges (and constructs) Zeus's authorization of Agamemnon as the leader of the expedition.<sup>46</sup> To sum up: the poem offers the argument that the (re)distribution perpetuates the social and cosmic order.<sup>47</sup> The exchange of toil for a prize in the allotment therefore becomes a long-term transaction, because it results in the creation and reaffirmation of the social and cosmic order.

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the flocks decimated by the suitors (*Od.* 23.356–58). He will not conduct these raids by himself but anticipates receiving a heftier share of the booty.

<sup>45</sup> Theognis 677–78 connects the social order with allotment (perhaps of spoils if one follows Figueira 149–50 [cf. Borecký 73]); Nagy 1990: 269–72 argues for an allusion to the distribution of meat at a feast: "they snatch goods by force, and good order (*kosmos*) has perished, / and no longer is an equal division (*dasmos*) made in the common interest."

<sup>46</sup> See Donlan 1997: 42. Graziosi and Haubold 119 argue that the warriors' desires for *timê* align them with the gods and reflect the idea that "as sons of the gods they are caught in the logic of cosmogony which dictates that they secure for themselves a place of honour in the larger order of things." Achilles in particular seeks "the kind of permanent *timê* that Zeus can grant and which ensures a stable order to the divine universe in perpetuity" (130). This reading too presents the pursuit of *timê* as perpetuating the cosmic order.

<sup>47</sup> Disputes over *how* the (re)distribution is to be carried out (and so over what particular social and cosmic order is being perpetuated) are another matter; see Wilson. The false tale that Odysseus tells Athena when he encounters her on Ithaka shows the tensions that could arise between leader and subordinate over spoils. He claims to be an exile from Crete who refused to serve under (*therapeuon*) Idomeneus at Troy and instead led his own band of fighters there. He then killed Orsilochos, Idomeneus's son, who tried to take the former's spoils presumably to reassert his own family's dominance in Crete (*Od.* 13.258–66). In reference to this passage Haft 292 notes "the theme of offended honor, revenge and alienation so reminiscent of the Iliadic conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon."

Table 2 depicts the two exchanges detailed above wherein individual acquisition is one component of a short-term transaction and acquisition at the (re)distribution is one component of a long-term transaction.

It is worth comparing the schematizing of long-term transactions in Table 1 and Table 2 just to ensure that it makes sense to speak of a long-term transaction in Table 2. As Table 1 indicates, for Bloch and Parry a long-term transaction entails the use of money by a person in the interest of an institution or group or the use of such money by an institution or group after an individual has transferred it to said institution or group. Table 2 presents as a long-term transaction compensation for toil through the practice of the public (re)distribution. Four potential points of friction emerge. First, the practice of (re)distribution cannot be conceived of as “constitutive” of the social and cosmic order in precisely the same way as the institutions and groups mentioned in Table 1, because in that latter case the institutions and groups are ways in which a society organizes and divides itself. Yet a wide range of rituals, ceremonies, and activities, many not linked to any particular institution, support the social and cosmic order. In reference to the Homeric world one thinks of gift exchange as such a practice. Just so, the (re)distribution is seen as going a long way toward establishing and reestablishing the social and cosmic order every time it occurs. Second, the path of goods can differ in each case. In Table 1 an individual can spend money on a given entity (see option 1). Conversely, in Table 2 an individual receives goods at the (re)distribution. This contrast leads to a third point of difference. In Table 1 an individual need not receive something back right away, and appropriately an essential component of Bloch and Parry’s analysis is that the social and cosmic order is thought of as a supra-individual order. In Table 2 by contrast the individual warrior himself benefits straightaway from the (re)distribution. Yet the fact remains that the (re)distribution is thought to perpetuate the chiefdom society of Homeric epic and so a supra-individual order.<sup>48</sup> A warrior does not receive goods for toiling in battle in isolation but in a public and organized event in which many other warriors are compensated as well in such a fashion as to rank the kings and chiefs. Ultimately, in spite of these three differences, the applicability of the language of long-term transactions to the *Iliad* comes down to this simple point: the transaction designated as long-term in Table 2 warrants such an appellation, because it is intimately bound up with the reaffirmation of the social and cosmic order. A fourth point of difference between the two tables remains. In Table 1 short- and long-term transactions are dependent upon

<sup>48</sup> Again, gift exchange is another example of a long-term transaction in which the giver both gives and receives, even if at a later date (see von Reden 18).

TABLE 2.

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Short-term transaction: Compensation (spoils [e.g. *enara*]; ransom) for toil of fighting

Long-term transaction: Compensation in the (re)distribution (*geras* and *moira* from goods taken from sacked towns) for toil of fighting, resulting in the perpetuation of the social/cosmic order

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one another through a process of conversion while they are not represented in that manner in Table 2. To this discrepancy I now turn.

## V. CONVERSION

According to Bloch and Parry there is often a systematic conversion of at least some portion of goods obtained in short-term transactions to goods used in long-term transactions. In fact the long-term cycle depends on the output of the short-term cycle:

...the two cycles are presented as organically essential to each other...for the maintenance of the long-term order is both pragmatically and conceptually dependent on individual short-term acquisitive endeavours. Not only do the latter in fact provide much of the material wherewithal necessary for the reproduction of the encompassing order, but it also has to be acknowledged that this order can only perpetuate itself through the biological and economic activities of individuals. (25–26)

Kleiner's description of one way in which Romans were exposed to Greek art reveals a conversion at work:

When the Roman generals arrived in South Italy, Sicily, and Greece, they encountered not only country-sides of great beauty, but a wealth of artistic treasures. They expropriated many of these treasures and brought them back to Rome to display in triumphal processions. The plundered spoils included arms and armor, statues in bronze and marble, paintings, and gold and silver tableware. The triumphs in which these objects were displayed thus served as the vehicle for the introduction of Greek art to the Romans in the capital. The subsequent installation of the war booty in temples, theaters, porticoes, and other public structures constituted a permanent exhibition of Greek masterpieces for the Romans to study and emulate. (26)

Goods seized as prizes from defeated peoples and initially intended to signal the general's success were converted into the material necessary for a long-term transaction of dedication that had the added benefit of signaling the

notionally eternal dominance of Rome. Von Reden discusses liturgies in Classical Athens from the perspective of conversion. When directed toward public events, such as paying for choruses, wealth perhaps obtained through bribery or other “suspicious forms of personal enrichment” lost any stigma attached to it: “By paying liturgies a citizen converted private gain into public wealth and conspicuously re-integrated himself into the public domain. Whether the money under consideration was gained originally in fair or unfair dealings was then no longer relevant” (97).

Long-term transactions depend upon short-term ones, but the conversion of goods from one realm to the other is not a voluntary activity in any meaningful sense although it may be envisioned as such. The weight of convention, or “symbolic violence,” plays an essential role in prompting the transfer.<sup>49</sup> Bloch and Parry note that in many cultures “the strongest censure” is reserved for “the possibility that individual involvement in the short-term cycle will become an end in itself which is no longer subordinated to the reproduction of the larger cycle; or, more horrifying still, that grasping individuals will divert the resources of the long-term cycle for their own short-term transactions” (27). With reference to the Roman generals mentioned above, Cohen notes “the moral questions and public debates” that arose when such victors “divert[ed] the profits of administration and war primarily to their own benefit” (184). Similarly Caesar tells of one of the more scandalous acts a victorious Gaul could perform:

When they have decided to contend in battle, they generally vow to this one [Mars] the things that they will have captured in war; after victory they sacrifice the captured animals and form a pool of everything else. One sees trophies built of such material on consecrated grounds in many states; and it is not often that any one dares so far ignore the claims of Heaven as to conceal the spoils of war at home or to remove them from a trophy: the crime is punishable by death under hideous torture. (*Gal.* 6.17.3–5, trans. John Warrington, adapted)

An additional example of the compulsion towards conversion returns us to Ancient Greece. Xenophon’s Socrates observes the necessity placed upon wealthy Athenians to perform liturgies and other benefactions for the city: “And still I perceive that the city already has enjoined upon you (*prostatousan*) to spend a great amount of money, in the raising of horses and the funding of choruses and in the office of gymnasiarch and president” (*Oec.*

<sup>49</sup> Wilson 82–83 discusses Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence as it is exercised by the emissaries to Achilles’ tent in book 9 and defines it as “the common sense of conventional values and rules maintained and imposed as legitimate in the interest of a dominant group” (82).



2.6).<sup>50</sup> As Kurke notes, “the polis expects (if it does not compel) such public expenditure as the service of its wealthy citizens” (1991: 169).<sup>51</sup>

The *Iliad* too addresses these questions of conversion and compulsion. The poem’s dominant ideology of prize acquisition holds that the warrior is compensated for his toil during the (re)distribution. That the (re)distribution is a primary site of systematic social differentiation vests the allotted goods with value as status symbols “far exceeding their material value” (van Wees 1992: 308–9): only at the (re)distribution does a good become a *geras* or part of an *aïsa* or *moira* that signal a warrior’s position vis-à-vis his peers. So the argument goes.<sup>52</sup> To abet the movement of spoils to the (re)distribution, it is important that they not be thought of as belonging to someone prior to the allotment. Such mystification prevails throughout the text. Not only are the spoils represented as an undifferentiated mass but no one is said to possess them in any meaningful way before the allotment. Achilles says that “we led (*êgomen*) all the things [i.e. spoils]” from Thebe (*Il.* 1.367) and “I led (*êgon*)” captured women from Lyrnessos. The verb *agô* marks a simple transferal in, for instance, Achilles’ recounting of how Agamemnon’s heralds came to take Briseis: “Just now leading (*agontes*) her, they went from my hut” (*Il.* 1.391). Reminiscing about a raid on the Epeians’ livestock, Nestor says that they “drove together (*sunelassamen*) from the plane a great deal of booty (*lêida*)” (*Il.* 11.677), which was then divided up among the Pyliaans (*Il.* 11.687–705). Modern critics reinforce this idea that the individual soldier has no claim on the spoils he seizes. Borecký remarks, “Plunder was regarded as common property” (20). Van Wees notes, “Booty does not belong to the warriors who capture it” (1992: 310). Hainsworth comments on Achilles’ objecting to Agamemnon’s taking Briseis: “it is noteworthy that the rules for the distribution of booty (it went into a pool...) prevent him making a point of his being deprived

<sup>50</sup> Cf. *Is.* 7.35.3, πάνθ’ ὑμῖν τὰ προσταττόμενα ποιεῖν (to do all the things for you [i.e. the city] that you command).

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Christ 188, “rich men were under no illusion as to the ultimately compulsory nature of this.” On the problem of so-called “invisible” property, see Kurke 1991: 225–39 and Christ 191–194.

<sup>52</sup> For value as dependent upon an object’s ability to help distinguish its possessor from his peers, see Donlan 1980: 4–5 and von Reden 69. The narrator’s discussion of drinking cups owned by Nestor and Achilles provides a relevant analogue: only Nestor can easily lift his exceptionally beautiful (*perikalles*) cup that he brought from home (*Il.* 11.632–37); only Achilles uses a particular wrought (*tetugmenon*) cup to pour libations to Zeus (*Il.* 16.225–27). The narrator equates the value of the cups with the fact that only their owners use them. On the value of gifts also emerging “only in a social context,” see von Reden e.g. 18, 27, 31, and 73.

of what he had *personally* seized as his prize of war” (*ad* 9.343, emphasis in original). One even finds in the poem a complete erasure of the movement of goods from captured city to invaders’ common pot. Agamemnon refers to the redistribution of the spoils from Lesbos thus: “Lesbian women, whom when he himself attacked well-built Lesbos I selected out” (*Il.* 9.129–30). The narrator tells us about Nestor’s concubine Hekamede, “whom the old man won from Tenedos, when Achilles sacked it, the daughter of great-hearted Arsinoo, whom the Achaians selected out for him” (*Il.* 11.625–27). Even Achilles will speak in this fashion: “But never do I have an equal prize, when the Achaians sack a well-inhabited city of the Trojans” (*Il.* 1.163–64).<sup>53</sup>

Yet in some of Achilles’ formulations and occasionally elsewhere in the poem are hints of a two-step process in which individual warriors are thought of as at first gathering spoils up for themselves and only then turning them over for the (re)distribution. Akin to the schematization in Table 1, a conversion is argued to take place in which warriors provide the material necessary for the (re)distribution from their own store of spoils. The long-term transaction in which a fighter is rewarded for his toil at the (re)distribution is cast as dependant on short-term acquisitions.<sup>54</sup> Using Bloch and Parry’s model of conversion to explore these comments on the acquisition and (re)distribution of spoils can provide in particular a better sense of Achilles’ relationship to the system in which he operates. For the fact that he turns his goods over for (re)distribution can be taken to demonstrate the nature and force of the ideology to which he adheres.

There are scattered mentions of Achilles’ sacking of Thebe, Eetion’s city. Achilles makes no reference to his specific role in the destruction of the town and capture of spoils:

ῥχόμεθ’ ἐς Θήβην, ἱερὴν πόλιν Ἑτίωνος,  
τὴν δὲ διεπράθομέν τε καὶ ἤγομεν ἐνθάδε πάντα·  
καὶ τὰ μὲν εὖ δάσσαντο μετὰ σφίσιν υἱεὺς Ἀχαιῶν

we went into Thebe, the holy city of Eetion,  
and we sacked it and led everything here:  
and the sons of the Achaians divided up some things well among themselves  
(*Il.* 1.366–68)

<sup>53</sup> Similar language is used in reference to the captive Iphis with whom Patroklos sleeps: “whom divine Achilles gave to him having taken steep Skyros” (*Il.* 9.667–68); cf. *Od.* 11.533–34 on Neoptolemos’s acquisitions.

<sup>54</sup> Hammer’s contention that “[p]roperty taken in war is communalized, and then apportioned in public and on behalf of the people” (132) is intriguingly ambiguous, because it allows for the possibility that warriors turn over to the (re)distribution spoils at first considered their own property.

For her part Andromache insists that Achilles alone sacked the town, killed her father and brothers, and δεῦρ' ἤγαγ' ἅμ' ἄλλοισι κτεάτεσσιν “led to here along with other possessions” (*Il.* 6.426) her mother whom he ransomed (*Il.* 6.414–27). Her language echoes the narrator’s description of the object that Achilles sets out for the “shot-put” contest in the funeral games for Patroklos:

αὐτὰρ Πηλεΐδης θῆκεν σόλον αὐτοχόωνον,  
ὃν πρὶν μὲν ρίπτασκε μέγα σθένος Ἡετίωνος·  
ἀλλ' ἦτοι τὸν πέφνε ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς,  
τὸν δ' ἄγετ' ἐν νήεσσι σὺν ἄλλοισι κτεάτεσσι.

And then Achilles set out a mass of pig iron  
which before strong Eetion had thrown;  
but swift-footed divine Achilles killed him,  
and he brought it in the ships with other possessions. (*Il.* 23.826–29)

Commentators tend to translate \**ktear* in book 6 and 23 as booty or spoils, but although such a rendition catches the sense of the word, it obscures an important point by not presenting what is actually being said.<sup>55</sup> The normal meaning of \**ktear* as “possessions” works perfectly well in these two moments. In Homeric epic, possessions belong to the subject of the sentence (cf. *Il.* 5.154, 9.482 and *Od.* 1.218, 14.115).<sup>56</sup> Andromache and the narrator refer to goods taken from Eetion’s city as spoils that belong to Achilles.<sup>57</sup> The Myrmidon is thought to have some claim to “ownership” of the spoils prior to the general (re)distribution. Each speaks of either all the spoils from Thebe as being in Achilles’ possession before he brought them back to the Greek camp or a portion that he selected out from the spoils prior to his return. The latter possibility seems less likely, however, because *deur’ êgag’* at *Il.* 6.426 and *aget’* at *Il.* 23.829 strongly suggest that a (re)distribution of the goods took place.<sup>58</sup> Elsewhere Achilles himself exploits this notion that he first takes possession of the spoils.

<sup>55</sup> See Kirk *ad* 6.425–8 and Cunliffe s.v. \**ktear*.

<sup>56</sup> Lattimore inserts the possessive adjective “his” referring to Achilles into the translation of *Il.* 6.426 but not of 23.829; cf. Wilson 148.

<sup>57</sup> “*Ktear* (possession, 6.426), however, locates the captive woman among the booty and defines the path from the captor’s perspective as goods for goods. Andromachē’s use of the term *ktear* should thus probably be ascribed to tertiary focalization whereby her words reflect Achilleus’ earlier speech” (Wilson 149; cf. 26).

<sup>58</sup> See page 27 for comments on *agô* in this context. Two additional mentions of spoils won by Achilles after sacking Thebe make no specific reference to when Achilles got them. Achilles possesses a lyre that the narrator says “he won (*aret’*) out of the spoils

Achilles can position himself as obtaining in a series of short-term transactions the booty that Agamemnon then redistributes:

ὥς καὶ ἐγὼ πολλὰς μὲν ἀύπνους νύκτας ἴαυον,  
 ἥματα δ' αἰματόεντα διέπρησσον πολεμίζων,  
 ἀνδράσι μαρνάμενος ὁάρων ἔνεκα σφετεράων.  
 δώδεκα δὴ σὺν νηυσὶ πόλεις ἀλάπαξ' ἀνθρώπων,  
 πεζὸς δ' ἑνδεκά φημι κατὰ Τροίην ἐρίβωλον·  
 τῶν ἐκ πασέων κειμήλια πολλὰ καὶ ἐσθλὰ  
 ἐξελόμην, καὶ πάντα φέρων Ἀγαμέμνονι δόσκον

So even I passed many sleepless nights,  
 and endured many bloody days in fighting,  
 warring with men over their wives.

It was in fact twelve cities of mortals I destroyed with my ships,  
 and on foot eleven I assert in the rich Troad;  
 and from all of these many rich treasures

I took out, and bringing all these things, I would give them to Agamemnon  
 (*Il.* 9.325–31; cf. *Il.* 1.161–68)

The verb Achilles uses, *exaireô*, presents his understanding of the status of the goods he takes from the cities after he spends “sleepless nights” and “bloody days” fighting their inhabitants, a short-term exchange. When it comes to discussions of spoils in the poem, *exaireô* can be used in the middle voice in reference to the “ruler’s portion.”<sup>59</sup> Agamemnon speaks of selecting seven women from the spoils Achilles took from Lesbos:

Λεσβίδας, ὃς ὅτε Λέσβον εὐκτιμένην ἔλεν αὐτὸς  
 ἐξελόμην

after he sacked the city of Eetion” (*Il.* 9.188). Having taken Thebe, Achilles led away (*égag'*) Pedasos, the mortal horse who accompanies the immortal horses Xanthos and Balios (*Il.* 16.152–54). These passages probably refer to Achilles’ receiving these items during the distribution of spoils he mentions at *Il.* 1.366–68. This likelihood is reinforced at least in regard to the lyre by the appearance of the verb *arnumai* in a similar but more fleshed-out context: Nestor is said to have “won (*aret'*) her [Hekamede] from Tenedos” (*Il.* 11.625) and then in the next two verses to have received her from the Achaians who “selected her out (*exelon*) [sc. at the distribution] because he was the best of all in council” (*Il.* 11.626–27). Van Wees 1992: 305 puts all four of the passages under consideration here (*Il.* 6.426, 23.826–29, 9.188, and 16.152–54) in the category of the “prince’s portion,” meaning that Achilles received all four items at the (re)distribution.

<sup>59</sup> See Donlan 1982: 159n39 who makes no distinction, unlike van Wees, between *gera* and the “ruler’s portion.”

Lesbian women, whom when he himself took well-settled Lesbos  
I selected out (*Il.* 9.129–30)

Nestor tells Patroklos that Neleus “selected out” (*ek...heileto* and *exelet*) sheep and cattle from the livestock taken from the Epeians (*Il.* 11.696–97 and 704, respectively) (cf. *Od.* 14.232). Seen in this light, then, the verb points to an act of definitive acquisition. The verb also appears in the active voice (*exelon*) in reference to giving someone a *geras*. The Achaians select out Briseis as a *geras* for Achilles (*Il.* 16.56, 18.444) and Hekamede as a prize for Nestor (*Il.* 11.626–27); the Phaiakians select out Euredemousa as a *geras* for Alkinoos (*Od.* 7.10). In these cases the subject of the verb is thought to have control over the good to be given as a *geras*. A related use appears in Thersites’ lambasting of Agamemnon. Why does Agamemnon need more when he has countless “selected” (*exairetoi* [*Il.* 2.227]) goods and women that he is given first during the distribution of spoils? Whether in contexts of the ruler’s portion or of the people’s giving out *gera*, *exaireô* suggests some degree of ownership.<sup>60</sup>

Neither of these two categories applies to the passage under consideration (*Il.* 9.329–32). Achilles does not give out *gera* to Agamemnon, and Cunliffe’s initial definition of *exaireô* as “to pick out or select for oneself from the spoil,” which corresponds to the first category of the “ruler’s portion” discussed above, makes little sense in Achilles’ speech: he is not the “ruler” and he goes on in any event to say that he brought all (*panta*) of the spoils from these cities to Agamemnon.<sup>61</sup> Apparently to get around this problem Cunliffe offers the following addendum in parentheses with reference to *exaireô* “or perhaps, rather, took from the cities.” This second definition would align this passage with the use of the verb in contexts involving not spoils but moments of deprivation. One can take away another’s mind (e.g. *Il.* 19.137) or life (e.g. *Il.* 24.754). Achilles might be saying that he is depriving the cities of their wealth. But because Achilles is talking about spoils, it seems illogical to disregard the verb’s particular connections with the topic of spoils. The Myrmidon speaks metaphorically. Achilles suggests that he took the spoils from the cities in a manner usually reserved for one who asserts ownership of the spoils. He uses *exaireô* to stress his proprietary claim, however temporary, to these goods.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Kurke 1991: 145 on *exaireô* in Pindar *N.* 4.7–8 as “a very concrete verb” used in a description of the poet’s praising of a victor.

<sup>61</sup> See van Wees 1992: 299.

<sup>62</sup> Appropriating a term associated with the acquisition or (re)distribution of prizes is consistent with Achilles’ strategy in contesting with Agamemnon over how spoils are to be allotted.

At the same time Achilles makes clear in the rest of his speech in book 9 that only Agamemnon has the ability to convert the booty taken in war into *gera* for the fighters.

ὁ δ' ὅπισθε μένων παρὰ νηυσὶ θεῶσι  
 δεξάμενος διὰ παῦρα δασάσκετο, πολλὰ δ' ἔχεσκεν.  
 ἄλλα δ' ἀριστήεσσι δίδου γέρα καὶ βασιλεῦσι,  
 τοῖσι μὲν ἔμπεδα κείται, ἐμεῦ δ' ἀπὸ μούνου Ἀχαιῶν  
 εἴλετ'

And he remaining behind by the swift ships  
 would receive [the spoils] and would dole out a few, but keep many.  
 And still others he would give as prizes to the best men and chiefs.  
 For them they [their prizes] were secure, but from me alone of the Achaians  
 he took [it = my prize]. (*Il.* 9.332–36)

Whatever title Achilles may claim to the goods he takes from cities, he represents himself as begrudgingly (if not willingly) turning them over to Agamemnon so that he and the others may receive their prizes in the redistribution. Still, Achilles points to the dependence of the long-term transaction involving prize (re)distribution on the short-term acquisitions of individual warriors.<sup>63</sup>

Achilles' descriptions of Briseis, the *geras* around which the quarrel focuses, also urge the same point. In addressing the embassy, Achilles refers to Briseis first as being “acquired by the spear” and then in the next line as his *geras* or prize of honor:

ἐκ θυμοῦ φίλεον, δουρικτητὴν περ ἐοῦσαν.  
 νῦν δ' ἐπεὶ ἐκ χειρῶν γέρας εἴλετο καὶ μ' ἀπάτησε,  
 μή μεν πειράτω εὖ εἰδότος·

I loved her dearly although she was acquired by the spear.  
 But now after he [Agamemnon] took my prize of honor from my hands and  
 deceived me  
 let him not try me, because I know [him] well. (*Il.* 9.343–45)

A more purposeful juxtaposition of these terms appears in his later speech to Patroklos:

κούρην ἣν ἄρα μοι γέρας ἔξελον υἱες Ἀχαιῶν,  
 δουρὶ δ' ἐμῷ κτεάτισσα, πόλιν εὐτείχεα πέρσας

<sup>63</sup> See above page 17–18 for Achilles' presentation of the exchange of toil for prizes at the (re)distribution.

The girl whom then the sons of the Achaians selected out as a prize for me,  
and whom I acquired by my spear when I sacked the well-walled city (*Il.*  
16.56–57)

The phrase *δουρὶ δ' ἐμῷ κτεάτισσα* is, like so much of Achilles' language, a unique formulation in the *Iliad*. One might think Achilles means that he acquired Briseis as a prize in return for his excellent work with the spear. One would then paraphrase 16.57 as "because of my spear-fighting, I acquired her [as a *geras*], after I sacked the well-walled city." Yet such an interpretation renders the verse redundant after 16.56, and *douri* is in any case more easily taken as a literal dative of means or as a metonym for Achilles' war craft (as it is in *douriktêtên* at *Il.* 9.343).<sup>64</sup> It is more likely that Achilles draws a temporal distinction between the sack of the town and the later distribution of spoils. The acquisition referred to in 16.57 comes not in the distribution but in the initial seizure of Briseis. This second interpretation would allow for Achilles' point to be not only that the Achaians gave him Briseis as a *geras* but also that she was acquired initially through his fighting, if not by Achilles himself, as compensation for his toil (*persas*). However Briseis was captured, the very ability of the Achaians to allot *gera* rests on such initial short-term transactions.

If this temporal distinction holds, the original seizure becomes significant, and one notes that Achilles' diction stresses the acquisitive nature of the act. First, the verb *kteatizô* found in the aorist in 16.57 elsewhere marks a feat of individual procurement. The narrator speaks of Laertes' farm "which at some time he himself had acquired (*kteatissen*), because he toiled greatly for it" (*Od.* 24.206–7).<sup>65</sup> The verb imparts a strong sense of ownership. Second, the dative *douri* in the context of sacking a town appears in one other revealing instance, Achilles' lament over Patroklos:

ἀμφὶ δὲ σὲ Τρῳαὶ καὶ Δαρδανίδες βαθύκολποι  
κλαύσονται νύκτας τε καὶ ἡμέρας δάκρυ χέουσαι,  
τὰς αὐτοὶ καμόμεσθα βίηφί τε δουρί τε μακρῷ,  
πιείρας πέρθοντε πόλεις μερόπων ἀνθρώπων.

well, around you the Trojan and Dardanian deep-girdled women  
will lament weeping steadily during the nights and days,

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Sophocles *Tr.* 240–41. *douri* as a causal dative occurs only in the generic epithets *douri klutos* (9 times in the *Iliad*) and *dourikleitos* (5 times in the *Iliad*, 2 times in the *Odyssey*), each meaning "renowned because of his spear."

<sup>65</sup> Cf. *Od.* 2.102, 19.147, and 24.137 for Penelope's repeated references to Laertes as a man "who acquired much" (*polla kteatissas*).

whom we ourselves won by toil forcefully and with the great spear,  
sacking the rich towns of mortal men. (*Il.* 18.339–42)

Achilles couples the acquisition of captives with fighting with spears to sack a town.<sup>66</sup>

Achilles points to a two-step process in the acquisition of Briseis in book 16, but he offers a still more striking claim in book 19 when he speaks of Briseis's capture:

τὴν ὄφελ' ἐν νήεσσι κατακτάμεν ἿΑρτεμις ἰῶ,  
ἥματι τῷ ὅτ' ἐγὼν ἐλόμην Λυρνησσὸν ὀλέσσας·

Artemis ought to have killed her with an arrow by the ships  
on that day when I took her for myself having destroyed Lyrnessos. (*Il.* 19.59–60)

Achilles makes no reference to Agamemnon's or the Achaians' role in allotting her as his *geras* and instead emphasizes his individual acquisition using the paradigm of a short-term transaction: as compensation for his toil on the battlefield (*olessas*), he took (*helomên*) Briseis.<sup>67</sup> Yet Achilles surely refers to taking definitive possession of Briseis, as his use of *haireô* in the middle voice demonstrates (Cunliffe s.v. *haireô* II.1 and 2).<sup>68</sup> In these lines, then, when Achilles claims Briseis as his possession from the start in spite of the fact known to all that he received her as a *geras*, he collapses the initial seizure of Briseis in a short-term transaction and her subsequent allotment at the (re)distribution.<sup>69</sup> This conflation suggests not only that the material for the (re)distribution emerges from the short-term endeavors of individual warriors but also that the initial seizure of booty in a short-term transaction is an act of personal acquisition.

<sup>66</sup> In its two other occurrences in Homeric epic, the phrase *douri te makrôî* is a literal dative of means (*Il.* 5.297 and 7.140). Hes. *Fr.* 280 line 1 offers as a dative of means the whole hemistich βίηφίτε δουρί τε μακρῷ. Just like *douri* at *Il.* 16.57, therefore, the phrase at *Il.* 18.341 is not to be taken as "because of [= in return for] our strength and spear-fighting."

<sup>67</sup> The suggestion that one simply holds on to the women one captures in a town appears elsewhere. The narrator speaks of the women lamenting Patroklos as "female slaves whom Achilles and Patroklos took captive (*lêissato*)" (*Il.* 18.28). Male slaves can be spoken of in the same way. Telemachos assures Antinoos that he will hold on to the household and "slaves (*dmôôn*), whom divine Odysseus took captive (*lêissato*) for me" (*Od.* 1.398).

<sup>68</sup> *Contra* van Wees 1992: 413n7.

<sup>69</sup> We perhaps find the same suggestion in Briseis's lament over Patroklos in which she speaks first of Achilles' sack of her town and then turns immediately to Patroklos's assurances that Achilles would marry her (*Il.* 19.291–99); see von Reden 52.



In the Catalogue of Ships, the narrator speaks of Briseis's capture in a nearly identical fashion:

Βρισηΐδος ἠϋκόμοιο,  
τὴν ἐκ Λυρνησσοῦ ἐξείλετο πολλὰ μογήσας,  
Λυρνησσὸν διαπορθήσας καὶ τείχεα Θήβης

the fair-haired Briseis,  
whom he took out for himself from Lyrnessos after toiling greatly,  
sacking Lyrnessos and the walls of Thebe (*Il.* 2.689–91)

Again, the acquisition of Briseis is rendered in the individualistic language of short-term transactions: for his toil (*polla mogêsas...diaporthêsas*), Achilles took (*exeileto*) Briseis. And again, although there is no reference to a (re)distribution, the passage points to Achilles' gaining final possession of Briseis. Just like Achilles in book 19, the narrator collapses the precise sequence of events leading to Briseis's becoming Achilles' slave and so enables the assertion that warriors' initial acquisitions provide the goods necessary for the (re)distribution. Only the rather pedestrian translation used above for *exeileto* in verse 690 allows the passage to offer this argument in a clear manner and for that reason is preferable to the alternatives. First, Cunliffe's definition of *exaireô* as "or perh. rather, took from the cities" with its implication that a warrior then brought the goods to the camp for the (re)distribution can be dismissed right away, because the narrator points to the moment in which Achilles gained final possession of Briseis, not the moment in which he led her back to the camp.<sup>70</sup> Second, Cunliffe's other definition of *exaireô* ("to pick out or select for oneself from the spoil") does not prove relevant. Nowhere else can one find support for the hypothesis that the warriors (apart from Agamemnon) chose their *gera*,<sup>71</sup> and in any event, it is repeatedly stated that the Achaians or Agamemnon gave Briseis to Achilles. One can imagine a scenario wherein the (re)distribution took place in the town of Lyrnessos, and the idea that Achilles was given Briseis as a prize is to be supplied. This possibility finds support first of all in Zenodotus' reading of ἐκ Λυρνησσοῦ in verse 690 (in contrast to Monro and Allen's reading of ἐκ Λυρνησσοῦ), which suggests an allotment in the town. Further, the poet of the *Little Iliad*'s description of Neoptolemus's acquisition of Andromache after the sack of Troy connects *exaireô* with a warrior's receiving a prize from the people:

<sup>70</sup> See page 31 above for further reservations about this definition when applied to spoils.

<sup>71</sup> See van Wees 1992: 301–2.

And he [Neoptolemus] took out (*ek...helen*) Andromache, the well-girdled wife of Hektor, whom the chiefs of the Panachaïans gave (*dôkan*) him to have, repaying him with a pleasing prize (*geras*).  
(*Il. Parv. frag.* 19.6–8)

West's reading in his Loeb edition of the middle *ek...helet'* instead of *ek...helen* in line 6 of the passage strengthens the potential parallel with *Il.* 2.689–91. Yet an insurmountable obstacle to this interpretation remains: to entertain this option seriously would require ignoring all the evidence that elsewhere suggests that the Achaians bring booty back to the camp and only then dole it out.

Table 3 presents the vision, hinted at elsewhere in the poem but most prominently advocated by Achilles, according to which goods obtained in the short-term cycle are directed toward the (re)distribution and so enable a long-term transaction. The table therefore combines Tables 1 and 2.

Achilles argues for a process of conversion in which goods acquired in the realm of short-term transactions are handed over for (re)distribution. This portrayal is feasible because there are elsewhere in the Homeric poems examples of the explicit conversion of an object from the arena of short-term to that of long-term transactions. Although lack of space prevents launching a full-scale investigation into this phenomenon, a few examples bear mentioning.

Odysseus strips Dolon's armor, holds it up "to Athena who dispenses spoils," and offers them to her: "Delight, goddess, in these here" (*Il.* 10.460–62). When he returns to the Greek camp, he sets aside Dolon's armor with the intention of dedicating it to Athena: "And at the bottom of the ship Odysseus put the bloody despoiled armor of Dolon in order that they might make it ready as an offering for Athena" (*Il.* 10.570–71).<sup>72</sup> The spoils start as the product of individual acquisition, but are soon converted into the material for a long-term transaction, dedications in acknowledgement of or in return for the goddess's favor.<sup>73</sup> In the case of the Achaians in general, who get their meat

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Hektor's promise to dedicate the spoils of his victim to Apollo (*Il.* 7.81–83), but Seaford 54–56 points to "the relative marginality, in the Homeric perspective, of the practice of dedication" (56).

<sup>73</sup> As the quotation from Kurke above (see page 20) shows, scholars usually think of dedications and sacrifices as long-term transactions (cf. Seaford 14). One might note that such actions must be repeated to retain the favor of the dedicatee and so are in one sense quite short-term in their effects. Oineus only needed to omit Artemis from his sacrifices once, and she sent the boar to decimate Calydon (*Il.* 9.533–49) (cf. Seaford 49n2). Nonetheless, long-term and short-term transactions are not defined by the length of the transaction or the duration of its efficacy but by the relationship of the action to entities defined as constitutive of the long-term social and cosmic order.

TABLE 3.

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Step 1: Short-term transaction: Compensation (goods taken from sacked towns) for toil of fighting
Step 2: Conversion: Goods taken from sacked towns brought to center for (re)distribution
Step 3: Long-term transaction: Compensation in the (re)distribution ( <i>geras</i> and <i>moira</i> from goods taken from sacked towns) for toil of fighting, resulting in the perpetuation of the social/cosmic order

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through raids on cities in the Troad (*Il.* 6.421–23 and 20.88–92) (van Wees 1992: 211 and 244), any sacrifice will by definition entail such a conversion. An animal obtained through the short-term transaction of brigandage is the focal point of a ritual intended to reify the cosmic order. The narrator details a similar conversion in reference to the wine the Achaians drink and pour as libations to Zeus when they feast after building the wall around the camp: Agamemnon and Menelaos obtained it from Euneus;<sup>74</sup> the two leaders then exchanged it with the rest of the Achaians for a variety of goods (bronze, iron, hides, cattle, and slaves) (*Il.* 7.467–81).

The giving of prizes (*aethla*)<sup>75</sup> in the funeral games for Patroklos also entails conversion.<sup>76</sup> The narrator recounts the background of the silver bowl Achilles sets out as the first prize for the foot race:

<sup>74</sup> Why does Euneus send (*proeēken*) wine to the Atreidai (*Il.* 7.468)? If Seaford 25 correctly takes it as a gift, the Atreidai deploy the product of a long-term transaction (gift exchange) in a short-term transaction. Similarly in his lying tale to Eumaios, Odysseus claims to have given some Phoenicians *lêida* in exchange for a boat ride from Crete (*Od.* 13.272–75). Because *lêis* can be used of spoils acquired after a (re)distribution (e.g. *Il.* 9.138), perhaps Odysseus gives some particularly valuable object to the Phoenicians, or in more abstract terms, uses the product of a long-term transaction in a short-term one; see note 78. For another discussion of the source of the Achaians' wine, see Nestor's comments to Agamemnon at *Il.* 9.70–72.

<sup>75</sup> See Thalmann 134–36 on the vocabulary of Homeric athletic competitions.

<sup>76</sup> "Funeral games thus function as a kind of monument, an event by which the property of the dead man and his mourners *is converted* into memorials of his death" (Redfield 210) [emphasis mine]. Hammer 136 and 139 discusses the use of private property as prizes in the funeral games.

υἱὸς δὲ Πριάμοιο Λυκάονος ὄνον ἔδωκε  
 Πατρόκλῳ ἥρωϊ Ἰησονίδης Εὐνηος.  
 καί τὸν Ἀχιλλεὺς θῆκεν ἀέθλιόν οὐ ἑτάροιο

As a price for Lykaon the son of Priam  
 Euneus the son of Jason gave it to the hero Patroklos.  
 And Achilles set it out as a prize in honor of his companion

(*Il.* 23.746–48)

The armor that Patroklos stripped from Sarpedon and the sword Achilles took from Asteropeios are offered as prizes for the “gladiatorial” combat in full armor (*Il.* 23.798–810).<sup>77</sup> These items, initially acquired in short-term transactions, become the material for a prominent long-term transaction.<sup>78</sup> Winners in the prestigious athletic events exchange toil for a valuable gain in social capital.<sup>79</sup> Achilles for his part increases his prestige by distributing the prizes.<sup>80</sup> As the games wear on, he eclipses Agamemnon as the most prominent distributor of gifts and even renders Agamemnon “under obligation” to him when he gives him a prize in the aborted spear-throwing contest (Donlan 1993: 170).<sup>81</sup> Haubold correctly summarizes the importance of the contests “whose outcome determines the group’s social structure and future well-being” (116).<sup>82</sup>

The same analysis applies to the (re)distribution of meat at a feast as a reward for martial excellence. We have already noted how the meat and wine enjoyed at the feast are products of short-term transactions, such as trade and brigandage. Yet just like in funeral games, two important, long-term goals can be achieved during the repast. First, a fighter’s status increases when he

<sup>77</sup> See Redfield 206.

<sup>78</sup> To be sure the history of the bowl is a bit more complicated. The two lines before the passage quoted above read: “Phoenician men brought it over the misty sea and they put it down in the harbor and gave it to Thoas as a gift (*dōron*)” (*Il.* 23.744–45). The bowl first circulates by way of the long-term transaction of gift-exchange before it is employed in the short-term transaction of ransoming. Cf. von Reden 60 and 67–68 on the movement of a person or thing from gift to commodity and Wilson 87–88 on the different ways Achilles talks about Briseis. Anthropologists have noted that prestige goods can be exchanged for not only other prestige goods but also food (Halstead and O’Shea 93–94).

<sup>79</sup> See Redfield 206 and page 17 above.

<sup>80</sup> See Donlan 1982: 170n57.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. von Reden 26, Postlethwaite 100–1, and Wilson 124–25.

<sup>82</sup> The peaceful solution to the quarrel between Antilochos and Menelaos after the chariot race is another element in book 23 that “symbolizes harmonious restoration of the correct social order” (Donlan 1993: 162). See also Kurke 1991: 95 for funeral games as one form of gift exchange vital to the maintenance of a given social order.

receives an edible reward for exceptional military feats. Sarpedon lists being honored at feasts among the recompense given the brave leader by his community (*Il.* 12.310–11). Hektor provides the negative corollary of that equation in contending that the Achaeans will no longer reward Diomedes with the best meat and wine (*Il.* 8.161–62). Fittingly, the term used of the special cut of meat given to a warrior, *geras*, is the same as the word for the special prize given to a warrior in the (re)distribution of spoils. After dueling to a draw with Hektor, Aias receives an honorific portion of meat (*geras*) from Agamemnon (*Il.* 7.321–22). Second, when the chief allots the meat, he shows off and reasserts his own authority: “The *dais* is an occasion for rewards to subordinates, which displays the chief’s generosity, increases his prestige, and is a means of further integrating the group under the chief’s control” (Donlan 1982: 164).<sup>83</sup> Agamemnon, for example, not only rewards Aias’s efforts publicly but also sets himself up as the one to do the rewarding. Acts of largess that display and reproduce the host’s authority can play a vital role in the feast.<sup>84</sup> As a public forum for (re)distribution the *dais* allows for the reassertion of various social hierarchies.<sup>85</sup> In sum, examining the rituals of dedication, sacrifice, funeral games, and the feast suggests that in the Homeric poems goods at first obtained in the short-term cycle of acquisition can be converted into goods used in long-term transactions.<sup>86</sup> This background lends support to Achilles’ formulation that the long-term transaction involving (re)distribution of spoils relies upon such a conversion.

At the same time, by turning to the concept of conversion, the narrator and the characters, especially Achilles, complicate the prominent assertion that goods seized in battle do not belong to anyone until they are (re)distributed.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Rundin, Clay 107, Tandy 109 and 143–44, and Graziosi and Haubold 70. Van Wees 1995 argues that the feast not only draws attention to the party’s host but also to the elite group assembled.

<sup>84</sup> See Seaford 76. Donlan 1982: 156–57 and 168–71 offers comments on chiefly generosity.

<sup>85</sup> For an important discussion of the theme of the *dais* in the *Iliad*, see Nagy 1999: 127–41.

<sup>86</sup> Fabric also provides the material for a conversion. At Hektor’s urging, Hecuba dedicates a robe to Athena (*Il.* 6.288–311) (a long-term transaction). The narrator relates how the robe was the most beautiful of those made by the Sidonian women whom Paris had brought back with him to Troy from the same trip on which he had picked up Helen (*Il.* 6.289–92). The production of the robe, the typical work performed by women (slave, free, and even immortal [see Lyons 100]) in the Homeric household, involves a series of short-term transactions. If *tous* is read instead of *tas* at 6.290 (see Kirk ad 6.290–2), that is, if Paris brought back just the garments but not the women who make the garments,

The notion that the warrior's initial seizure of booty does count as an act of acquisition makes the idea of turning it in for (re)distribution far more fraught. Under this model, the transfer is no longer an inevitable next step in an almost magical movement of goods from captured town to the invaders' common pot (see pages 27–28 above). Rather it becomes a noticeable act of compliance with convention performed by those who believe that only the systematic allotment at the (re)distribution gives spoils their value. Given the meaning of *exaireô* in this context (see page 31), the pithiest demonstration of the power of symbolic violence to prompt this transfer is found in Achilles' own words:

τάων ἐκ πασέων κειμήλια πολλὰ καὶ ἐσθλὰ  
ἐξελόμην, καὶ πάντα φέρων Ἀγαμέμνονι δόσκειν

and from all of these [cities] many rich treasures

I took out, and bringing all these things, I would give them to Agamemnon  
(*Il.* 9.330–31)

The poem, then, offers one analysis of the acquisition of spoils that suggests a particularly forceful compulsion prompting the warriors to bring goods seized in battle to the center for (re)distribution.

Caution is in order when attempting to discern Achilles' own view about the symbolic violence one can detect in the above quotation. Just because Achilles argues that the redistribution of prizes relies on a conversion of goods does not mean that he also objects to the transfer. As noted above, Achilles himself agrees that goods acquire value only when (re)distributed after the battle (see *Il.* 9.332–36 discussed on page 32). He subscribes to the belief essential to the operation of a (re)distributive system: "the center (as a place) is good" (Tandy 104). In his lengthy speech in book 9 he even offers a simile that naturalizes handing over for redistribution goods acquired while fighting. For he likens this transfer to a mother-bird's feeding her young, the most natural and instinctive of acts (*Il.* 9.323–27). Achilles argues for a two-step process

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the concept of short-term transactions still applies to 6.289–92: Paris obtained the garments probably through trade, not as a gift (see Kirk *ad* 6.289). This observation brings to mind the moment in the *Odyssey* in which Helen gives Telemachos a robe, which she herself had made (15.105) as a parting gift (15.125–30). Initially the product of short-term transactions, the robe is converted into material used in the long-term transaction of human-to-human gift exchange. Cf. Morrell 145–46 for the use of goods produced in the household as gifts (cited at Lyons 108n83). On women as gift-givers in Homer, see Lyons 104–8.

in the system of prize acquisition but also endorses the inevitability of (and so the ideology behind) the conversion between the steps.<sup>87</sup>

## VI. CONCLUSION

(Re)distribution and individual acquisition represent the two different ways in which warriors obtain spoils in the *Iliad*. Bloch and Parry's model of exchange elucidates the distinctions, because the concepts of short- and long-term transactions pertain to the two means of acquisition. The warrior engages in a short-term transaction when, upon despoiling his enemy of armor and capturing his horses or capturing and then ransoming his foe, he garners immediate rewards for his exertions on the battlefield. Yet a warrior does not simply gather up and keep as many spoils as he can for himself, but participates in a (re)distribution of spoils that is intended to perpetuate the long-term social and cosmic order, a supra-individual order. In as much as it ends in such a reification, the exchange of prizes in the allotment for toil in battle becomes a long-term transaction.

That the individual and the group play a role in the acquisition of spoils allows a speaker to manipulate the intersections between the two entities. A warrior will focus on the group or the individual's role in the (re)distribution, and Achilles advocates for the notion that the allotment depends upon the contributions of individual warriors. In particular, he suggests that a process of conversion underlies the long-term transaction involving (re)distribution. Yet he also endorses the transfer and therefore the ideology that perpetuates the conversion. We profit from focusing on the ways in which characters portray the activities vital to their communities, because such structural components of Homeric epic are subject to the rhetorical manipulations of their actors.

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<sup>87</sup> Just so Wilson (e.g. 36–38) shows how Achilles does not object to the allotment of prizes, but to Agamemnon's prioritizing a "fixed" over a "fluid" system of ranking when he doles out the spoils.

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