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The Gift in the Iliad

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Abstract

In this thesis I challenge the dominant conception of gift giving in the *Iliad*. In Chapter 1 I show that the textual evidence does not support the idea that different categories of gift giving are denoted by word choice. In Chapter 2, I show that modern theories are not able to explain perfectly the instances of gift giving in the *Iliad*. Furthermore, I show that the use or avoidance of gift terms in the poem can carry meaning. In Chapter 3, I take the conclusions from the previous two chapters and apply them to a focused analysis of the exchange between Diomedes and Glaukos in *Iliad* 6, showing that the language of the scene can allow us to analyse the exchange as more than only an instance of gift giving.

Keywords: Gifts, *Iliad*, Homer, Epic, Diomedes, Glaukos

Summary for Lay Audience

This thesis is concerned with the act of gift giving in the epic poem the *Iliad,* the oldest surviving piece of 'Western' literature, which tells part of the story of the Trojan War.

Since the publication of Marcel Mauss' structuralist interpretation of gift giving in 1925, scenes of gift giving in the *Iliad* have been analysed in a reductionist manner, with some believing that every gift serves the purpose of negotiating status between donor and recipient. I argue, instead, that the language of the poem resists such a universalising interpretation.

Relying on a close reading of the text, I analyse the vocabulary associated with object exchange in a number of scenes in the *Iliad*. I focus in particular on the armour exchange between the Greek hero Diomedes and the Trojan hero Glaukos in Book 6. I show that the language of this scene differs from all other instances of gift exchange in the poem. This suggests, on the one hand, that the scene cannot uncritically be interpreted as that of gift giving, and, on the other hand, that this problematizes the universality of anthropological gift theory.

Contents

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A Note on the Text

All translations to be found in this thesis are the author's own, unless otherwise noted. The transliteration used throughout for Greek follows the Library of Congress system. The transliteration of Russian follows the Scientific transliteration of Cyrillic system.

In the majority of cases, the text of the original language is supplied in the body or footnotes along with the translation, and important elements of quoted passages are underlined in both the original and in English translation.

The Latin-based text of this thesis is set in Adobe Caslon Pro, a typeface designed by Carol Twombly for Adobe based on eighteenth century specimens originally designed by William Caslon.[*] Greek and Cyrillic text is set in Minion Pro, designed, also for Adobe, by Robert Slimbach and based on late Renaissance types. The sans-serif titling is set in Myriad Pro, a humanist typeface designed by both Twombly and Slimbach, once again for Adobe.

[*] For a brief overview of the history of Caslon, see Lawson 1990: ch.15.

Жизнь ведь тоже только миг,[†]
After all, life is but a moment too,
Только растворенье
Only dissolution
Нас самих во всех других
Of ourselves in everybody else
Как бы им в даренье.
Like the giving of a gift.[†]

Ты отдал мне не тот подарок,
You gave me not that gift,
Который издалека вез.
Which from far away you brought.
Казался он пустой забавой
To you, it seemed an empty amusement
В тот вечер огненный тебе.
On that fiery evening.
И стал он медленной отравой
And it became a slow poison
В моей загадочной судьбе.
In my mysterious destiny.
И он всех бед моих предтеча, —
And it was the precursor of all my misfortunes, —
Не будем вспоминать о нем!..
We will not think about it!...[§]

[†] The Cyrillic and interlinear Latin text of these epigraphs is set in Garamond Premier Pro, a typeface designed by Robert Slimbach for Adobe, based on the sixteenth century type designed by Claude Garamond (see Lawson 1990: ch.10 for a historical account).
[‡] *Doctor Zhivago*, ch.17 (from the poem "Свадьба", "Wedding"). The final line follows the translation in Pevear and Volokhonsky 2010.
[§] Anna Akhmatova 1956 (poem 9 in the cycle "шиповник цветет", "The Sweetbriar Blooms"). The poem's text is from Akhmatova 1990: 250.

Introduction

Since the publication of Mauss' influential article *L'essai sur le don*, gift theory has been heavily dependent on the conclusions drawn from his research.[1] Since then, succeeding anthropologists have been arguing against some of the conclusions reached by Mauss, but still ultimately focus on the politico-economic conclusions which are present in the *Essai*. Unfortunately, classicists have tended not to follow the trail of criticism of Mauss: following M. I. Finley's *The World of Odysseus*, scholars are seemingly content to assume Mauss' conclusions of obligation and reciprocity and total prestations. Nowhere else in Classics is this more evident than in Homeric studies. Indeed, many classicists go beyond simple theory and

[1] This is not to say, however, that before Mauss, the gift and gift giving were not a subject of concern for authors. Aristotle (*Nic. Eth.* 1136b5–10), as we will see below, had already begun to make some observations about the effects of giving on one's status or honour. In his *Notes from a Dead House* (1.10 [1860–2]), Dostoevsky too makes his own observations about the altered state of gift giving at Christmas in his prison: "Всё принималось с одинаковою благодарностью, без различия даров и даривших." ("All was accepted with identical gratitude, without the distinction of gifts and givers"). We also find in Pushkin's *The Captain's Daughter* a commentary on Slavic gift giving practices (Bethea 2009: ch.12). Even though these authors are engaging with important theoretical issues in gift giving, they lack the sense of sustained enquiry which we find in Mauss and his successors.

attempt to create not only 'Homeric' economies from the Homeric poems, but entire 'Homeric' anthropologies, a practice which goes back to antiquity. For, as Snodgrass writes, "the belief that the social system portrayed in the Homeric poems…[is] in large measure both unitary and historical…has been alive since Classical times."[2] This practice, I believe, fails on a number of levels. The creation of a full or partial anthropology for a society which we cannot observe—and even through observation there arise numerous problems: namely, as Levi-Strauss writes, the observer will only ever be able to understand the foreign practices subjectively[3]—is highly problematic, and all the more so for a society for which our data consists only of two poems and comparatively little archaeological remains.[4] The two pieces of writing (the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*) on which scholars, out of necessity, usually rely in their anthropologies, are also problematic. Composed traditionally from oral-poetic formulae and stories over centuries and in different regions, these writings cannot be assumed to reflect a 'society' or 'culture' that ever existed in one time or one place. This problem, however, does not stop

[2] Snodgrass 1974: 114.

[3] Levi-Strauss 1997: 49–51. See also Bourdieu 1977: ch.1.

[4] This is not to take a stand on the relative chronology of the Homeric epics and Hesiod, but rather only that the Hesiodic poems depict a world which is different from the Homeric *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. See West 2006 for an argument that dates Hesiod before the Homeric epics.

scholars from writing about the 'Homeric' economy, or even 'Homeric' culture in general. No one who sets out to write a comprehensive cultural study of 19th century Russia would be able to create an accurate cultural history using as their sources only Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and Gogol's *Dead Souls*: they are pieces of fiction, just like Homeric poetry: idealised, full of generic tropes, which is an even bigger problem for Homer than for Dostoevsky and Gogol given the limitations of oral composition. Indeed, this point is made especially clear in Auerbach's *Mimesis,* which shows that the modes by which an author represents reality are neither uniform nor do they necessarily portray an accurate representation of reality.[5] That is not to say that nothing in Homer reflects some society (or societies) which did in fact exist, even if not at the same time or same place.[6]

This study, then, will not claim to offer an account of 'Homeric' gift exchange reflecting some inauthentic society, nor even an account of

[5] Auerbach 2003. We find in Auerbach's selection reality being subservient to the goals of the author. Even though, arguably, reality is the same for Homer and Virginia Woolf, the way they both choose to represent it is extremely different. See, however, de Beauvoir 2011 for an existentialist account of realism in literature.

[6] e.g. Seaford 1994: 6, "although Homeric epic does not give us a photograph of an actual society, neither is it merely an ideological construction… The proportions in which it reflects reality or ideology are impossible to know;" Martindale 1993: 48, "…all texts are only texts, and that none gives us unmediated access to 'reality' or 'the truth'"; and Figes 2002: 104 "no novel is a direct window on to life and… we cannot take these observations as an accurate reflection of reality."

Iliadic gift exchange, as it obtains within the poem itself. For as we will see, the data from the poem itself makes this extremely difficult. Instead, my goal is to explore how the language used can convey nuances which seem to be lost in scholars' tendencies to abstract,[7] or in the reading of the poem with the assumption of some form of Maussian exchange being at work. Ultimately, I am pursuing an aesthetic reading of gifts in the *Iliad*. A word about this term 'aesthetic': in using this term I have in mind an approach to the text which is rooted in the poetic qualities of the text, such as the approach for which John Miles Foley advocates, discussed below. I do not use 'aesthetic' as a philosophical term here; thus 'aesthetic' can be read as equivalent to a term such as 'poetic'.

This thesis will aim to approach gift giving from a literary point-of-view. In recent decades there has been a trend to politicise literature, which is to say, to read literature not so much on aesthetic grounds, but on underlying political grounds.[8] I do not wish to argue against political readings, since works of art (regardless of in what medium they are composed) are part of a larger political culture, and no doubt do make use of political or ideological realities, but I do wish to illustrate the problems which arise from the sort of purely reductionist political

[7] By which I mean the tendency of theorists to abstract textual or observational evidence into an underlying theory.
[8] Aubry 2018: 1–9.

readings which seem to have been popular. For example, Donlan and van Wees both seem to believe that gifs in the *Iliad* (and more generally in Homer) serve political and/or economic ends.[9] Paradoxically, the recent trend of reading literature politically has resulted in less emphasis being placed upon the poem's words, for what is literature without language? Ultimately, I hope to advance novel readings of gift giving scenes which have heretofore been understood merely on political bases.

It will be beneficial here to briefly offer a justification and description of the methodological apparatus for the approach I will be taking, for it presupposes that the *Iliad* is a work of verbal art. This is not a universally accepted position. For example, in discussing to charge of mechanism in the Homeric poems, Foley writes that "many critics have voiced essentially the same objection: the attractive hypothesis of an oral poet's ready-made diction and narrative patterns simply leaves no room for verbal art."[10] This view seems to pose problems not just for the artistic consideration of poetry composed in oral traditions (regardless of language), but for art as a whole until very recently. Indeed, all forms of art have traditionally been bound to a series of rules restricting the 'freedom' of the artists' expression.[11] For example, in music, classical

[9] Donlan 1997: 663. van Wees 1992.
[10] Foley 1997: 164. See also Foley 1999: ch.1.
[11] Of course, there are problems when defining 'art' with a set of necessary conditions. Furthermore, the concept of 'art' as we use it today, so as to mean 'fine art(s)' is a

Western compositions were, until modern experiments of tonality, bound by strict rules of composition, but composers are and were able to create unique works of art within the ruleset imposed upon them. Similarly, traditional 'literature' was also bound to the rules of language and genre (until again the 20th century experimentalists such as James Joyce or Virginia Woolf began to deviate in terms of use of language and/or generic constraint). In effect, critics have argued that the Oral Theory of composition seems to reduce the entire work to a series of necessary formulaic *reči*.[12] In addition to the above defence of rule-governed art, I side with Foley, who argues that formulaic phrases, following his theory of traditional referentiality, are more than simply metrically-necessary stop-gaps.[13] Instead, formulae are used to refer not just to the exact lexical meaning of the formula, but to evoke "'the entire heroic portrayal, complete with its mythic history and contradictions, as

modern phenomenon, and whether or something can be retroactively declared art is debated. See, e.g. Crownther 2004; Wilson 2018.

[12] From a Slavic root bearing meaning associated with speech. Cf. Pr.Slav. **reč*ь, 'speech' which provides reflexes in all branches of Slavic (Derksen 2007: *s.v.* **reč*ь). For the meaning of it in the context of South Slavic orally-composed poetry, see Foley 1997: 151–159, who argues that *reči* are poetic morphemes, somewhat equivalent to linguistic morphemes, *i.e.* they are the smallest unit of meaning, and can range from single words to entire story patterns in the minds of the South Slavic *guslars*.

[13] In fact, Nagy (1974: ch.3) argues that the formulae helped to condition the epic metre (in particular the substitutions of dactyls and spondees), seeming to suggest that the argument of metrical necessity is perhaps backward.

known to the tradition and as signalled by this phrase.'"[14] Foley goes on to show that this interpretation of formulae is applicable not just to noun-epithet formulae, but "to the phraseology as a whole," meaning that formulaic descriptions and entire scene-types also bear this capacity of traditional referentiality.[15] This theory is enhanced when we consider Bakker's scale of interformularity, which he uses to argue for a more nuanced interpretation of formulaic phrases based on their rate of appearance, with lesser-used phrases being more highly imbued with meaning.[16] Ultimately, what these approaches to Homeric poetry allow us to do is interpret the poems (the epics and the hymns, and even later literature engaging in reception of these texts) as aesthetic compositions, allowing us to read the words and formulae as meaningful instead of merely being metrical necessities.

In approaching the text this way, I am not claiming that a political reading of the poem (or of any piece of literature or art more generally) is invaluable or secondary to an aesthetic reading of the text. In fact, the relationship between politics and aesthetics is well discussed in

[14] Foley 1997: 167–168. His quotation is referring specifically to the formulaic epithet "swift-footed Achilles", but is applicable to any epithet.
[15] Foley 1997: 168. Foley (1997: 168–169) discusses briefly the two descriptive formulae *hypodra idôn* ('looking darkly') and *pukinon epos* ('intimate word') as examples.
[16] See Bakker 2013: 157–169 for a full account of his theory.

philosophy.[17] What I do wish to do, however, is add another dimension to the interpretation of gifts in the *Iliad* (and I believe that such an approach will be beneficial to other literature as well), for the dominant approach in the scholarship is to read scenes of gift exchange as political or economic.[18] I draw attention away from the political aspect of the phenomenon of gift exchange and toward the language and poetic context of scenes of gift exchange in order to illustrate the added interpretive benefit of such an approach.

The focus of this research has been limited to the Homeric epic poem the *Iliad*. There are many reasons for limiting the study to only a single text. To begin, the poem itself provides us with an abundance of data for analysis: expanding the study even to both of the Homeric epics would prove to be too much material for the present study. (Although the *Odyssey*, along with other archaic poetry, and even later works of prose, will inevitably play a part in our discussion). Furthermore, based on the textual idiosyncrasies that exist between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* it seems best to treat only a single work in a study so heavily based on

[17] This relationship is especially present in the work of Jacques Rancière (e.g. Rancière 2011 and Rancière 2019). See also Bottici 2019 for a discussion of the imaginal nature of politics.

[18] There are some analyses of the Diomedes-Glaukos exchange which read the scene in a poetic context rather than strictly politically; these are discussed below (ch.3).

the language of the received text.[19] For following modern semantic theory, each speaker of a language will have certain variances in their internal understanding of what a certain word means, therefore including both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in this study would only serve to undermine the unity of the project.[20] To illustrate this point, we can consider the differing formulaic patterns between each of the poems, which to me is indicative of the works belonging to separate traditions.[21] We can add to this the argument that the word *mythos* has a different meaning in the *Odyssey* than in the *Iliad*,[22] suggesting that cross-poem semantic analyses are problematic if they aim at a universalising conclusion.

In Chapter One, following the work of Émile Benveniste, I will apply a strictly philological approach to the text.[23] Namely, I will examine individual gift terms used throughout the poem for what Benveniste claims to be different aspects of gift giving, and, in doing so, I aim to

[19] The fiercely debated 'Homeric Question' will largely be left to the side for the purposes of this study. For a sustained argument for the composition of the *Iliad* by a single poet over a prolonged period of time, see West 2011 (and West 2013 for an argument of the same style about the *Odyssey*). See Edmunds 2016: 5–7 for a very brief overview of Nagy's and West's disagreement.

[20] Martindale 1993: 88. "…no two users of the 'same' language use names, or words in general, identically, since the field of meaning will vary in each case."

[21] This problem of interpretation is further compounded if we assume that the poems have been composed by a number of bards over a long period of time.

[22] Clark 2001.

[23] Benveniste 1997.

illustrate the problems which arise when we begin to discuss the text with a preconceived notion of gift exchange theory. Instead, I will argue that the individual words which Benveniste chooses to discuss are, on etymological grounds, on oral-poetic grounds, and on contextual grounds, incapable of denoting specific types of gifts. Expanding beyond the handful of Greek nouns which Benveniste analyses, I include a selection of additional adjectives and verbs which further serve to show that analyses must be carried out with as little bias for a specific underlying structure of gift giving as possible.

My justification for spending so much time on the philological data of a typically theoretical or anthropological field is that the text being studied is itself dependant on language. The scholarship concerning the composition of the *Iliad* is voluminous, but, regardless of the original method of composition, the text we have and are working with is a fixed text. Thus, a great focus will be placed on the words which are preserved by the text.[24] Unlike Mauss' study, which was based upon data obtained from first-person observation by integrating into the target society, enquiring about, and participating in the society's practices, we must

[24] For various arguments concerning the composition of the *Iliad*, see: West 2011; Lord 1964; Turner 1997.

first be concerned with the language of the poem.[25] Only after establishing the nuances of language used for the various aspects of gift giving can we begin to approach the poem from a theoretic-anthropological position. An example to illustrate the necessity of having a sound philological grounding before considering the theoretical and practical aspects of gift giving can be found in Richmond Lattimore's English translation of the *Iliad*. Although generally considered to be a standard translation of the *Iliad*, there are numerous instances where Lattimore has translated the same Greek word with different English words, or where he has departed from the original Greek and supplied the word 'gift' where the Greek itself is silent: one example, for instance Lattimore translates the same word, *dôra* as both 'favours' and 'gifts' at *Il.* 3.64–65.[26] In order to avoid making the mistake of considering as a gift something that is not a gift, or the opposite, it is necessary to examine thoroughly the language of the text.

Following the philological investigation, we will concern ourselves with the practical nature of gift giving. That is to say, we will look at

[25] Although, as we will see below, Mauss is criticized by later scholars for his misunderstanding of textual data. See, e.g. Levi-Strauss 1997, Sahlins 2017: 134–167.
[26] For more examples (inexhaustive), see also Lattimore 2011: 9.261 (*dôra* as 'recompense'); 21.165 (*dôra* omitted); 23.559–562 (Lattimore writes 'gift' where Greek merely says 'something of great value' 'πολέος δέ οἱ ἄξιος ἔσται'); 24.502 (*apoina* 'ransom' translated as 'gifts').

selected instances of gift giving in the text of the poem, paying attention to both those things explicitly called gifts and those things which are merely said to have been given by someone to another. My hope in this section is to illustrate the aesthetic qualities which arise from reading the scenes of giving with an attention to the language used. Especially important for this section will be Donna Wilson's work on Book 9 of the *Iliad*, which provides us with an exceptional analysis of the poetic distinction between *poinê* and *apoina*, which ultimately shows, I believe, that the specific language used by the poet or characters in the poem is meaningful.[27] With respect to force terms, Stocking writes that ""The very fact of the multiplicity of force terms makes it such that the use of *biê* in Nestor's speech to designate "force" is itself marked. Metrical arguments aside, we must consider why *biê* is used in Nestor's speech and not one of the other many force terms."[28] I believe that the same logic may be used in our case here, since the gift terms are often used in place of another, perhaps more fitting, term such as *geras*, *apoina*, etc., which seems to suggest that the use of *dôra, xenêion,* or *dôtinê,* is marked. We will also see that the notion of a gift seems to be highly problematic in the poem: often things described as gifts do not conform to the

[27] Wilson 1999.

[28] Stocking (forthcoming). See Newton 2009 for a discussion of the guest-gift and *geras* being used in such a manner.

notions of what a gift is in modern theory, but many things which are clearly not gifts are nevertheless described as such. Ultimately, I argue that the very use (or disuse) of a word meaning gift is important in the interpretation of the scene in question.

Lastly, following the groundwork laid in the first two chapters, we will apply the methodology to the famous exchange between Diomedes and Glaukos in Book 6 of the *Iliad*. This chapter aims to make use of the approach taken in the first two chapters and offer a sustained argument and example of the benefits of pursuing a reading with close attention paid to the language of the scene. Therefore, this chapter puts forth a novel reading of the scene by approaching it from an altogether new angle and drawing linguistic comparisons to other scenes both within the *Iliad*, with other hexameter poetry, and with later Greek literature.

1
Philology

The *Iliad* survives as a text. The exact manner, however, in which the poem was composed remains a debate in the current scholarly literature.[29] It is out of the scope of this thesis to argue about the origins of the *Iliad* which we possess, but the fact that we are working with a piece of *literature* is important for the approach which will be undertaken.

In this section I aim to examine thoroughly the *language* of gift giving in the *Iliad.* In so doing, I am following the example of Benveniste in examining the semantic differences (if there be any) between the different words the poet uses to denote a 'gift'.[30] Although I will refer to a 'poet' of the *Iliad* here and elsewhere, it is necessary to keep in mind the large body of oral-formulaic traditional material out of which the

[29] The two general sides of this debate are between those who believe the poem to be orally composed from a long tradition with material coming from many bards, while the other end of the spectrum argues that a single poet composed the poem with the aid of writing. Ultimately, it seems to me that some combination of the two extremes is most likely. For the Oral school, see e.g. Lord 1964, Nagy 1996. For the other side, see West 2011.

[30] Benveniste 1948–49.

finalised *Iliad* was composed. This large body of traditional material is responsible for the various formulaic phrases which make up the poem.[31] In addition to the consideration afforded to the word choices made by the 'poet', discussion will also include consideration for how specific word choice might evoke for the audience a certain response. For as John Miles Foley argues, the audience is an important part of the performance of traditional, oral-derived works, and even in textual format the reader plays a participatory role in determining the meaning of the words, phrases, or scenes.[32]

In his article "Gift and Exchange in the Indo-European Vocabulary," Benveniste attempts to tease out different shades of meaning from five Greek words which all denote the basic meaning of 'gift': *dôs, dosis, dôron, dôrea, dôtinê*. He does this by examining the contexts in which the words appear in the Homeric epics, but does not examine the analogous contexts which use different nouns. Ultimately, he arrives at a conclusion which is merely description of the scene.

With the exception of *dôs*, (a Hesiodic *hapax*) and *dôrea* (for it does not appear in the *Iliad*), I will consider the usage of the remaining three,

[31] See e.g. Foley 1997. These formulaic phrases, if we can project modern Slavic oral poetic thought onto the ancient oral poets, have been described as having morphemic qualities (Parry Collection *6619,* cited in Foley 1997: 152).
[32] Foley 1991: 42–45.

as well as some additional nouns, in order to demonstrate that, except in one case, gift terms do not denote specific types of gifts. Following the discussion of nouns, we will then consider adjectives and verbs which appear alongside the nouns for 'gift'. In these two sections I aim to illustrate that the poem uses not only nouns, but the adjective and verbs connected with gift giving in a way which does not support such a nuanced structure of gift giving: there does not seem to be linguistic evidence for the division of gift giving into sub-types.

2.1 Nouns

2.1.1 Dosis

This word appears but once in the *Iliad* (10.213). On the meaning of the noun, Benveniste comments, "in *dosis* the notion is presented as an effective accomplishment; it is the act of giving susceptible of being realized in a gift."[33] In other words, *dosis* is taken to refer to a type of gift giving where the gift is promised in the future upon completion of a requested action. This word appears in Nestor's proposal of a nighttime reconnaissance mission to the Trojan camp. Nestor has just asked whether any of the Greeks are brave enough to carry out the mission, promising to whoever accepts the mission:

[33] Benveniste 1948: 35.

…καὶ ἄψ᾽ εἰς ἡμέας ἔλθοι
ἀσκηθής· μέγα κέν οἱ ὑπουράνιον κλέος εἴη
πάντας ἐπ᾽ ἀνθρώπους, καὶ οἱ δόσις ἔσσεται ἐσθλή·
Il. 10.211–213

"… [if] he comes back to us
unscathed, there would be great glory, far and wide,
for him among all men, and he will have an excellent gift."

It must be noted that this singular occurrence of *dosis* is found in a book which is typically believed to be a later addition to the text.[34] In addition to this being the only instance of the word itself in the *Iliad,* it is also the only example of the so-called 'dative of the possessor' grammatical construction being used in the context of gift giving in Homer. Could the isolated usage of this noun in this book merely be coincidental? Even if this occurrence of *dosis* be 'inauthentic' to the original text (i.e. a later interpolation by an author who is not responsible for the other twenty-three books of the *Iliad*),[35] it should still be profitable to examine its use

[34] See Dué and Ebbott 2010 for recent discussion concerning *Iliad* 10 as well as a survey of past scholarship.

[35] The placement of book-divisions in the *Iliad* (and *Odyssey*) has been a matter of debate. For discussion concerning the division of the *Iliad* into books, see Heiden 1998, 2000 for an argument in favour of the book divisions being "designed and textualized by the composer himself" (2000: 81).

here, and especially to compare it against the uses in other contemporary poems, *viz.* the *Odyssey* and the poems of Hesiod, in which the word appears with a relatively higher frequency. This examination will serve to illustrate that *dosis* is used in the hexameter tradition without the implication of having a nuance denoting a specific type of gift giving.

Benveniste notes that in the *Iliad*, *dosis* is used to denote a future recompense for a deed yet to be carried out.[36] Although Benveniste's interpretation of *dosis* accurately reflects the scene, I do not believe there is sufficient evidence for attributing such a specific semantic meaning to the word. Indeed, can one draw a conclusion about such a specific meaning of a word from only a single instance? Furthermore, each speaker of a language understands the same word differently, and a single speaker can also mean different things when using the same word.[37] Thus, we cannot with any certainty come to a conclusion about what specific shade of meaning *dosis* might carry in a larger sample size. My hopes here are to examine the etymology of *dosis* and then continue by examining the usage of the word in other authors, in order to demonstrate that *dosis* does not carry with it a specific meaning suggesting the anticipated reciprocity.

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[36] Benveniste 1948: 35.
[37] Evans 2009: 3.

Etymologically, the noun is formed from the verb-stem *do-* ('to give'),[38] to which is affixed the suffix *-sis*, which serves to substantivize the verb and create an action noun.[39] Based on the etymology, *dosis* seems to lack an intrinsic meaning of a gift which will be provided in the future upon completion of services rendered.[40] Thus, the noun seems to bear a rather generic meaning which might be expressed as 'the act of giving'.

When we compare the six occurrences of *dosis* in the *Odyssey* and in Hesiod against the lone use in the *Iliad*, we see that there is no evidence for such a specific meaning. For example, *dosis'* use in the *Odyssey* (4.651) contradicts the overly specific meaning Benveniste has imposed upon the word. In this instance, we read:

> τὸν δ᾽ αὖτ᾽ Ἀντίνοος προσέφη Εὐπείθεος υἱος
> αὐτος ἑκών οἱ δῶκα· τί κεν ῥέξειε καὶ ἄλλος,
> ὁππότ᾽ ἀνὴρ τοιοῦτος ἔχων μελεδήματα θυμῷ
> αἰτίζῃ; χαλεπόν κεν ἀνήνασθαι <u>δόσιν</u> εἴη.
>
> *Od.* 4.648–651

> And then Antinoös, son of Eupeitheos, addressed him,
> "I myself gave it willingly: what else could someone do,

[38] From the PIE root **deh$_3$-* 'give'.
[39] CGCG 23.27.
[40] Benveniste 1948: 35.

when such a man, having anxiety in his heart,
begs? It would be difficult to refuse giving."

We can see that the meaning of the word here is in line with its etymology. Rather than denoting a specific type of gift, we find that *dosis* is used only to refer to the act of giving in general. At *Od.* 18.287, the same sentiment is expressed with the noun *dosis*. When Penelope is being courted by suitors, Antinoös, a suitor, tells her that "it is not noble to refuse the act of giving" ("οὐ γὰρ καλὸν ἀνήνασθαι δόσιν ἐστίν").

The other instances of *dosis* simply bear the basic meaning of 'gift', which seems to indicate that the semantic field of the noun has widened from its strictly etymological definition, i.e. from the meaning of 'the act of giving'. There is no evidence, however, that the semantic field has narrowed with the result that it carries such a specific meaning conjectured by Benveniste. For instance, in Hesiod the word appears once in both the *Theogony* and the *Opera et Dies*. In the *Theogony* (93), Hesiod writes, in reference to the ability of a king to speak well: τοίη Μουσέων ἱερὴ δόσις ἀνθρώποισιν ("such is the sacred gift of the Muses to mankind"). In the *Opera*, he writes:

> μηδέ ποτ᾽ οὐλομένην πενίην θυμοφθόρον ἀνδρὶ
> τέτλαθ᾽ ὀνειδίζειν, μακάρων δόσιν αἰέν ἐόντων.
>
> Hes. *Opera* 717–718

> Do not ever allow [yourself] to reproach destructive, life-destroying poverty in a man, [it is] always a gift from the blessed ones.

Both of these Hesiodic examples, together with the examples from the *Odyssey*, illustrate the lack of intrinsic semantic specificity in the meaning of the word. Although the word may indeed diverge from its etymological meaning of 'the act of giving', and in some places bear the meaning 'gift', in none of these instances does *dosis* have any specific nuance in meaning.[41] Thus, the use of the word in the *Iliad*, as Benveniste argues, is used as evidence of a semantically narrowed type of 'gift'. Rather, it seems to me that the comparative evidence seems to favour a more general meaning, and that the use of the word in the *Iliad* has no relation to the type of reciprocity being offered.

In addition to examining uses of *dosis* outside of the *Iliad*, we will now examine passages in the *Iliad* which have a similar structure but employ different gift terms. Consideration of similar passages in the

[41] A widened semantic field is a completely normal linguistic process in natural languages.

Iliad itself which mirror the context of our original passage will help to demonstrate further that there is no inherent semantic nuance in the word. Later in Book 10, during the Trojan scene analogous to the one cited above, Hektor uses a different noun for the offering of a gift to the man who undertakes the reconnaissance mission:

> τίς κέν μοι τόδε ἔργον ὑποσχόμενος τελέσειε
> δώρῳ ἔπι μεγάλῳ; μισθὸς δε οἱ ἄρκιος ἔσται.
>
> *Il.* 10.303–304

> "Who would undergo and accomplish this deed
> For a great gift? The reward will be sufficient for him."

One would expect the same noun, *dosis*, to have been used here if it bore some significant meaning related to the reward of future deeds.[42] Instead, we find that the standard word for 'gift' (*doron*) is used.

I wish to consider a second passage which portrays an analogous situation of a gift being promised for the completion of an action:

> Ὕπνε, ἄναξ πάντων τε θεῶν πάντων τ᾽ ἀνθρώπων,
> ἠμὲν δή ποτ᾽ ἐμὸν ἔπος ἔκλυες, ἠδ᾽ ἔτι καὶ νῦν

[42] Throughout the poem the poet often uses the same lines verbatim (a feature of oral poetry), and it is interesting that here the poet would choose to use a different phrase if indeed *dosis* were an especial word for the context.

πείθευ· ἐγὼ δε κέ τοι ἰδέω χάριν ἤματα πάντα.
κοίμησόν μοι Ζηνὸς ὑπ᾽ ὀφρύσιν ὄσσε φαεινώ
αὐτίκ᾽ ἐπεί κεν ἐγὼ παραλέξομαι ἐν φιλότητι,
δῶρα δε τοι δώσω καλὸν θρόνον, ἄφθιτον αἰεί…

Il. 14.233–238

"Sleep, lord of all the gods and all the men,
if you ever listened to my word before, then now
obey, and I will know gratitude forever towards you.
put to sleep Zeus' shining eyes under his brows for me,
and then right away I will lay with him in love
and I will give you gifts: a beautiful throne, eternal…"

This role of the gift in this passage is also analogous to our original passage with *dosis*: it is the promise of a future gift upon completion of a request. It must be noted, however, that unlike in our original passage, the word used here is not *dosis,* but *dôron*. Taken together with Hektor's speech above, these two examples seem to show that *dosis* is not used in contexts which would favour the nuance of meaning denoting a promised reciprocity. Instead, we find in both analogous passages that the poet chooses to use the 'standard' noun for 'gift', *dôron*.

Why does *dosis* appear at *Il.* 10.213?[43] One possibility is the argument from metrical constraint, which argues that *dosis'* position in the line

[43] …καὶ ἄψ᾽ εἰς ἡμέας ἔλθοι

disallows the use of another gift term such as *dôron*. Certainly, *dôron* cannot have been used in this specific position due to its differing metrical shape from *dosis* (the former is trochaic while the latter is iambic). One must appreciate, however, that the argument cannot ignore that fact that it possible to formulate a line which did not require the noun to occur in the penultimate foot of the line. For an example of this, we need not look further than Hektor's Trojan exhort (*Il.* 10.303-304) for an example of the poet composing such a line.

Furthermore, the choice of a unique noun at *Il.* 10.213 certainly seems to imply some sort of marked use by the poet. Indeed, the scene (and the entire *Doloneia*) is a unique occurrence in the *Iliad*, modelled on the Indo-European night-raid motif.[44] The word, however, does not appear in the pseudo-Euripidean *Rhesus*, which shares the same story-motif as Book 10. If *dosis* were somehow traditionally linked to the story pattern, we might have expected the author of *Rhesus* to use it in his work. Furthermore, we might expect other authors who use *dosis* to employ it in situations which recall or allude to the Homeric example, which they do not. Hesiod's uses of the word, for instance, although slightly marked

ἀσκηθής· μέγα κέν οἱ ὑπουράνιον κλέος εἴη
πάντας ἐπ᾽ ἀνθρώπους, και οἱ δόσις ἔσσεται ἐσθλή·

[44] See Garbutt 2006; Fries 2016. See also Bakker 2013: 157–169 for his discussion on his scale of interformularity and how infrequent formulae are in a sense more meaningful.

in their appearances in gnomic phrases, seem not to allude to the Homeric passage, or to a night-raid story type.

We might benefit from approaching the question from the other side: namely, instead of asking what the word does signify, we might ask what the word does *not* signify. Following the theories of the Formalists and John Miles Foley, we can argue that the use of *dosis* would, instead of drawing the audience *away from* the song and to a network of traditional motifs, would have drawn them *into* the song and highlight the unique word and motif being presented.[45] In effect, the use of a word which is so rare in the corpus would have been defamiliarizing for the audience.[46]

2.1.2 Dôtinê

The second word to which we will turn our attention is *dôtinê*, which appears twice in the *Iliad*. It appears first in a speech by Agamemnon, in which he lists off all the compensation (*apoina*, *Il.* 9.120) he will give to Achilles in order to persuade the withdrawn fighter to re-enter the fight. The second use is in Odysseus' relay of this same message to Achilles.[47] Because *dôtinê,* like *dosis*, only appears in one unique instance

[45] On traditional referentiality see Foley 1997; Foley 1991. On Formalism see Schmitz 2007: ch.1; Erlich 1980.
[46] Shklovsky 2004.
[47] The importance of Agamemnon's use here of *apoina* is discussed in Wilson 2002: 75–83.

in the text, and must approach the problem with the same wariness as before.

In his speech to the assembled leaders of the Greek army, Agamemnon famously recounts the numerous compensations he wishes to give to Achilles in order to placate the discord sown between the two in the first book of the epic.[48] In this speech, in addition to a great number of other gifts, Agamemnon promises to give Achilles seven citadels which:

> πᾶσαι δ᾽ ἐγγὺς ἁλός, νέαται Πύλου ἠμαθόεντος·
> ἐν δ᾽ ἄνδρες ναίουσι πολύρρηνες πολυβοῦται,
> οἵ κέ ἑ <u>δωτίνῃσι</u> θεὸν ὥς τιμήσουσι…
>
> *Il.* 9.153–155; 295–297

> "are all near the salt-sea, all bordering sandy Pylos
> in which men, rich in sheep and rich in cattle, live,
> and they will honour him as a god with <u>gifts</u> …"

These same lines are then repeated by Odysseus verbatim when he delivers the offer to Achilles. Benveniste writes that "the *dôtinê*, in Homer, is the obligatory gift offered to a chief whom one wishes to

[48] The speech by Agamemnon will provide ample examples of gifts which will be featured throughout this study below.

honor … or the gift that is due to one as a guest."[49] Again, as with *dosis*, can one really claim that a word which has only a single appearance throughout the target text has a nuance of meaning so specific? A further problem for committing to this semantic nuance is that there occur no other instances in the *Iliad* of analogous type of giving, we have no other instance of subjects offering gifts to their lord. The giving featured elsewhere is among the élite or gods. That Agamemnon seems to imply that a *dôtinê* is a gift most appropriate for the gods is also problematic: for nowhere is someone said to give to a god *dôtinê*. We might read in Agamemnon's offer a sense of deception: he is making false promises to Achilles in order to convince him to accept the gifts (*dôr'*, *Il* 9.121) he offers:[50] he tries to elevate Achilles to the status of a god, even though accepting the offer will subordinate Achilles to Agamemnon.[51] In this reading, the offer is deceptive, but the use of *dôtinê* does not support the idea that it is a gift given to a chief by his subjects.

Before considering the use of *dôtinê* in the *Iliad*, let us first consider the uses in the *Odyssey*. *Dôtinê* appears twice in the *Odyssey* in separate

[49] Benveniste 1997: 36. The latter definition is only relevant to the *Odyssey*.
[50] Note that in the next line (*Il.* 9.121), Agamemnon calls the compensation *apoina*, blurring the lines between a gift and a ransom.
[51] On the subordination of Achilles by his offer, see Wilson 2002: ch.4.

contexts. First, it appears when Odysseus recounts to the Phaeacians his misadventures with Polyphemus:

> ἡμεῖς δ᾽ αὖτε κιχανόμενοι τὰ σὰ γοῦνα
> ἱκόμεθ᾽, εἴ τι πόροις ξεινήϊον ἠὲ καὶ ἄλλως
> δοίης δωτίνην, ἥ τε ξείνων θέμις ἐστιν.
>
> *Od.* 9.266–268

> "We, arriving, come to your knees,
> [to see] if you might offer some host-gift or else if you might
> give some other gift, which is the divine duty of hosts."

Here it is especially clear that *dôtinê* bears no specific meaning: for the poet has said "some other gift," in contrast to the explicitly mentioned host-gift in the line above (*xeinêion*). The meaning of the second occurrence of *dôtinê* in the *Odyssey* also lacks the specific nuance of a gift of honour for a chief. After Odysseus has finished recounting the story of his *katabasis* to the Phaeacians, Arete, the queen, urges them not to send Odysseus away hastily and without many gifts. Her husband Alcinoös then replies (*Od.* 11.336–340):

> ξεῖνος δὲ τλήτω μάλα περ νόστοιο χατίζων
> ἦμπης οὖν ἐπιμεῖναι ἐς αὔριον, εἰς ὅ κε πᾶσαν

δωτίνην τελέσω…

Od. 11.350–352

"But permit the guest, though he greatly longs for his return
home,
to stay until tomorrow, and the entire
gift I will procure…"

In her speech, Arete refers to Odysseus as her guest ("ξεῖνος δ᾽ αὖτ᾽ ἐμός ἐστιν", "he is my guest"; *Od.* 11.338) without the connotation of him being a chief whom they are honouring with gifts. Secondly, the noun which Arete uses for 'gift' is not the *dôtinê* that Alcinoös uses in his reply, but rather "*dôron*" (*Od.* 11.339). It is clear from both Arete's and Alcinoös' speeches that Odysseus is not considered to be a chief. Indeed, he is a shipwrecked man who is being offered hospitality for a brief period among them.

If we extend our scope chronologically and consider *dôtinê* in Herodotus, we do not find support for considering *dôtinê* as a gift specifically for a chief. Herodotus (1.69.4) tells us that when the Spartans asked to buy gold from the Lydians in order to make a statue, Croesus gave them the gold as a gift (Κροῖσος δὲ σφι ὠνεομέοισι ἔδωκε δωτίνην). Later, Herodotus (6.62.1) relates the story of Ariston, the childless king of Sparta, who contrived a deal in which his friend would give him one

thing of his possessions. Herodotus uses the noun *dôtinê* in this case to mean the thing Ariston will receive from his companion (*hetairos*). The use of *hetairos* makes it clear that the two are on relatively equal terms, versus if he had subordinated him through the use of a familial term such as son, which is what we would expect in a chief-subject relationship. These two Herodotean passages, therefore, do not support the idea that a *dôtinê* is a gift specifically for a chief.

I think we are left with no recourse but to argue that the noun, if it has any specific nuance, would lean only towards the gift given to a guest by a host. Ultimately, I think that without any analogous comparisons to the idea of it meaning a gift given by subjects to a chief, we cannot in good faith ascribe that meaning to the noun: instead one must take it, strictly semantically, as an alternative to the noun *dôron*.

Thus, these instances of *dôtinê* (*Il.* 9.155, 297) ought to be taken as marked in some way. We might explain the similarities between a gift given to a chief and a gift given to a guest by appealing to the status of a guest in the household of the host. Indeed, throughout the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* we are shown scenes of guests being attended well (e.g. *Il.* 9.197ff). Furthermore, in light of Agamemnon's implication that a *dôtinê* is fit for a god, we might wish to postulate that he could mean this in a roundabout way, since Zeus is the god of guest-host interactions and

failing to uphold the proper etiquette is at risk of incurring Zeus' wrath. Thus, giving the guest his due gift would in a way be giving to Zeus as well (e.g. *Od.* 9.268).

With this conclusion, we are left with the question of why the poet chose to use *dôtinê* for this specific gift Agamemnon is planning to give to Achilles, especially since any other word meaning gift would not have been out of place. One possibility, following Donna Wilson's work on *apoina* and *poinē* and their differences, is to examine the use of *dôtinê* as a tactic employed by Agamemnon.[52] As we will see below, *dôron* is a noun without any sort of intrinsic semantic nuance, and the entire episode in Book 9 deals with 'symbolic violence', whereby Agamemnon, in order to maintain his position in the social hierarchy and bring the war to an end, must appease Achilles' anger and convince him to rejoin the battle.[53] Agamemnon attempts to accomplish this by choosing words which both assert his dominance over Achilles, as well as by offering gifts which also act to establish his authority over Achilles, *e.g.* offering Achilles the hand of one of his daughters, which would effectively subordinate Achilles by the added familial relation. We can take Wilson's theory about Agamemnon's offer to Achilles and apply it

[52] Wilson 2002: 71–108; Wilson 1999.
[53] Wilson 1999: 143–144; Bourdieu 1990: 127.

fruitfully to the occurrence of the noun *dôtinê*: the occurrence of the noun indicates, I think, a further attempt by Agamemnon to elevate his own status. Indeed, where Agamemnon relates that the subjects of Achilles will bring him gifts and honour him as a god, Agamemnon especially avoids any further debasement of his own rank, as he will not offer Achilles any further gifts or honour him, instead others will bring Achilles gifts. Agamemnon thus avoids himself honouring Achilles as a god.

Although the use of *dôtinê* in Homer and Herodotus ultimately does not support it meaning a type of gift given by subjects to their chief, there is a broader unifying theme in its uses. In all of the cases cited above, the gifts in question are of exceptional value, far beyond the simple sword or cup that seems typical. Thus, if *dôtinê* were to bear a meaning which denoted a specific type of gift, it might be seen as signifying a gift of high value.[54]

2.1.3 Dôron

The commonest noun in the *Iliad* used for 'gift' is *dôron* (pl. *dôra*), with sixty-eight total occurrences in the poem. Thus, it will provide us with the most data to analyse and will be an important word when we come

[54] Valeria Logacheva, personal communication: 1 April, 2020.

to the discussion of both the practice and theory of gift giving in the *Iliad*. Unlike *dosis* and *dôtinê*, since there is more than a single occurrence of the word in the poem, our discussion will not be so focused on a strict meaning of the noun. Based on the wide variety in uses, *dôron* is used to mean 'gift' without any specialised connotation.[55] In direct conflict with Benveniste's claim that we see the emergence of specialised vocabulary already by Homer for different types of gift, we will see that the poem's use of the noun *dôron,* in a wide variety of contexts, suggests that the poem is far from having such nuanced views. In fact, *dôron* is used across of number of situations which can be analysed as non-gifts from the point of view of gift theorists.

Modern linguists generally agree that *dôron* comes from the PIE root **deh*$_3$*-ro-*, 'gift', a root it shares with the verb *didômi,* 'I give'.[56] In the vast majority of instances in the *Iliad* where a gift is given, received, or exchanged, there occurs a reflex of this PIE root, whether that be a noun,

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[55] LSJ^{9} s.v. *dôron*

[56] See Beekes 2009 s.v. *dôron*; Mallory and Addams (2009:273) give the PIE word as **deh*$_3$*r/n-*. See 2.3.1 of this thesis for treatment of the verb *didômi*. Compare also with other Indo-European languages and their own relation between 'to give' and 'gift': Eng. give/gift; Fr. donner/don, Russ. *darit'*/*dar*; Germ. geben/Gabe. It seems that in many languages the idea of a gift arises out of the verbal form meaning to give, seemingly without any implication about the type of giving being done (i.e. giving for free, *i.e.* alms, giving with expected repayment, giving aneconomically with expected reciprocation). Compare with the modern definition of a gift as something given both voluntarily and for free (*OED s.v.* gift; *CED s.v.* gift, which simply directs you to 'present', which is described as something freely given and without economic consideration).

verb, or both. There are, however, a few marked exceptions where this is not the case. Due to the ubiquity of the noun *dôron* in the *Iliad* (as well as in other texts), we cannot here quote and examine each instance of its use. In lieu of this, we will take a broad look at the different uses the poet makes of the noun. The noun *dôron* means not just what in English we would call 'gift, present', but is generally used to signify anything that is given. During the first council in the *Iliad*, when Agamemnon is threatening to take Briseis from Achilles, Athene comes and promises Achilles three times as many gifts (*dôra*) as have been taken away from him (*Il.* 1.213). Here *dôron* is used to mean roughly a prize awarded in battle, typically called a *geras* in Greek. The equivalence is clear since the original thing taken from Achilles was his *geras*, Briseis. Other occurrences throughout the poem range from what we may consider to be aligned with our general modern conception of a 'present' (at least in Western culture), to meaning a ransom (*e.g. Il.* 22.341). These may be corporeal (*e.g. Il.* 6.293; 8.203; 19.3) or incorporeal (*e.g. Il.* 3.54, 64, 65. All three of which refer to 'the gifts of Aphrodite'). The latter reflecting what we might consider to be blessings from the divine.

Ultimately, due to its wide semantic field, it is evident that *dôron* is the least specific gift term available to the poet, and in some cases even strays from what we might normally consider to be a gift. It bears no

inherent semantic nuance, and instead appears only to signify a gift or thing given. This wide semantic field will prove useful in the following section when we examine what exactly a gift *is* within the scope of the *Iliad*.

2.1.4 Xeinêion

Xeinêion occurs four times throughout the *Iliad*. Unlike the words which we have discussed above, *xeinêion* (pl. *xeinêia*) is perhaps the word most worthy of being treated as bearing a specific semantic nuance. Indeed, etymologically the word shares its root with the Greek word *xeinos* 'guest, host' (*xenos* in Attic).[57]

The first use of the noun in the *Iliad* is during Diomedes' speech to Glaukos, in which he recounts that their ancestors were guest-friends who exchanged gifts:

> Οἰνεὺς γάρ ποτε δῖος ἀμύμονα Βελλεροφόντην
> ξείνις᾽ ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἐείκοσιν ἤματ ἐρύξας·
> οἱ δὲ καὶ ἀλλήλοισι πόρον ξεινήϊα καλά.
>
> *Il.* 6.216–218

"For godlike Oineus received blameless Bellerophon

[57] *xeinêion* is a derivative of *xe*(*i*)*nos* 'host, guest' by means of the suffix *-ion* which forms a neuter noun from a nominal root with the resultant noun generally bearing a meaning which "denotes an object or action related to" the nominal root (CGCG 23.18).

as a guest in his halls, keeping him for twenty days.
And they gave to one another beautiful guest-gifts."

Here, and elsewhere in the *Iliad*, *xeinêion* is used specifically to signify customary gifts exchanged between host and guest (10.268, 11.20, 18.408). Due to the freedom of *xenos* to mean either 'guest' or 'host', the derivative *xeinêion* is able to fulfil the role of a gift given or received by either party in the guest-host exchange. The above example illustrates this by using the same noun to signify the gifts given by each party, instead of only referring to the gift given by one of the parties.

This ambiguity can cause problems with the understanding of who is who in an exchange, which is important for the theoretical considerations which will follow. For instance, concerning an intricately crafted leather-and-tusk helmet, the narrator tells us that:

Ἀμφιδάμας δὲ Μόλῳ δῶκε ξεινήϊον εἶναι,
αὐτὰρ ὁ Μηριόνῃ δῶκεν ᾧ παιδὶ φορῆναι·
δὴ τότ᾽ Ὀδυσσῆος πύκασεν κάρη ἀμφιτεθεῖσα.

Il. 10.269–271

Amphidamas gave it to Molos to be a guest-gift,
but he gave it to his son, Meriones to wear.
And now, having been put on, it covers closely the head of Odysseus.

This passage makes clear that the helmet Odysseus is wearing was once given as a guest-gift. We are not told, however, whether Amphidamas is the guest or the host. Although this might seem trivial, knowing the social standing of the one who gives the gift can allow one to speculate on the acceptability of certain gifts in various social scenarios. For instance, just as we have conventions about what is considered an acceptable (or even expected) gift in certain social situations (e.g. the convention for a guest to bring wine to the host of an evening party), could there be a distinguishable convention like this among the elite in Homeric poetry? Lastly, it is worth briefly noting that a *xeinêion* need not be given right away.

There is also no clear answer as to when it is appropriate to give *xeinêia*. Although in the first example between Bellerophon and Oineus the gifts are exchanged conterminously, in a later occurrence (*Il.* 18.407–409) we are presented with a scene in which Hephaistos is repaying Thetis with *xeinêia* for her hospitality when she raised him after he was thrown from Olympus.[58] This seeming ambivalence towards when one must give the *xeineion* suggests that there is a rather loose underlying structure in the practice of giving guest-gifts.

[58] See Slatkin 1991 for an account of Thetis and her importance to the plot of the *Iliad*.

Ultimately, both etymologically and in practice, it seems clear that *xeinêion* is a noun specific to the situation of a gift being given between a guest and host, without distinction of it being either a guest's gift to his host, or a host's gift to his guest.

2.2 Adjectives

2.2.1 Kakos

Having discussed the nouns which the poet of the *Iliad* uses to signify 'gift', we will now turn to the adjectives which he employs to qualify them. Notably, except in one case (*Il.* 24.528), the adjectives used with gift terms are never negative in terms of value judgement.[59] In light of there being only a single negative description of a gift, we will first consider the unique occurrence before analysing the usual positive descriptions. The sole instance of a negative description of a gift terms occurs in the final book of the *Iliad*. In this scene, Priam has covertly entered into the Greek camp in order to ransom the body of Hektor from Achilles. In his reply to Priam's supplication, Achilles begins his

[59] One might be tempted to argue that the lack of positive qualifying adjective is itself a negative comment on the gift, however I believe that unless there is an overt negative, it is impossible to know whether the speaker or narrator believes the gift to be somehow inappropriate.

reply with a parable about the nature of suffering in which he claims that:

> δοιοὶ γάρ τε πίθοι κατακείαται ἐν Διός οὔδει
> δώρων οἷα δίδωσι κακῶν, ἕτερος δὲ ἑάων.
>
> *Il.* 24.527–528

> There are two *pithoi* laying on Zeus' floor
> of gifts he gives, the one of evils, the other of good things."

Two things in this passage are important for our study. First is that the word *dôron* is used here with the implication that human fate is in some way a gift, and second, that this gift can sometimes be evil (i.e. woes, misfortune) itself.[60] This usage of *dôron* serves to illustrate the broad meaning of the word in the poem. It is important to note that in this context Achilles is not claiming that the gift Zeus gives is somehow inappropriate or against the established code of gift giving. Within the *Iliad*, then, we have no instance in the poem of a gift being given which is judged to be inappropriate to the occasion. What this passage does

[60] We can perhaps see in Achilles' statement the acknowledgement that everything is ultimately a gift from the gods, whether it be 'good' or bad', the gods are responsible for everything including the very existence of humanity (see Godelier 1999: 29–31).

tell us, however, is that not all gifts are desirable, but the point of the story is that one must accept whatever fate (gift) the gods mete out.[61]

2.2.2 Aglaos

One of the many positive adjectives which often modifies *dôron* in the *Iliad* is *aglaos*, "an epithet of commendations of somewhat indefinite meaning," which can mean approximately 'splendid', 'bright'.[62] When modifying *dôron,* the adjective only appears in the final two feet of the line. *Aglaos* is not only used to describe gifts. The poet uses it a number of times in other contexts to describe things such as ransom (*apoina,* e.g. *Il.* 1.23; 1.111), persons (e.g. *Il.* 2.736; 5.283; 10.196; 18.337), or even water (*Il.* 2.307). The commonest noun modified by *aglaos* is *huios* 'son'.

From its use alongside such diverse nouns, *aglaos* cannot be said to have a strong semantic nuance within the *Iliad.* When the adjective is used to refer to a gift, about half of the time it is used to describe unknown gifts (i.e. when we are not told what the gift is), and in the rest of its occurrences it refers to different types of gifts that share only a few similarities. The clearest similarity in use comes from the description of a number of gifts given to Peleus and his son Achilles by

[61] MacLeod 1982: *ad loc*. MacLeod contrasts Achilles' belief that evils can be from the gods with Plato's rejection that is this not possible (*Rep.* 379d).
[62] Cunliffe *s.v. aglaos*.

the gods. Peleus' horses (*Il.* 16.381) and armour (which is lost to Hektor by Patroklos; *Il.* 18.83) as well as Achilles' new panoply (*Il.* 18.64;19.18) are both described as *aglaos*. Apart from the shared divine origin of the gifts, though, there seems not to be any unifying factor in the usage of *aglaos*.[63] Similarly, during Achilles' speech on human fate, he describes the gifts given Peleus by the gods (both good and evil) as *aglaos* (24.534). Ultimately, the poet seems to use *aglaos* in context of god-given gifts most often when the gifts are named. There are, however, instances where a named gift is described as *aglaos* but not from a god: Alexander's gift of gold to bribe a Trojan to vote against giving Helen back (*Il.* 11.124) and the mules Priam had received from the Mysians (*Il.* 24.278). These occurrences suggest that *aglaos* is not used in specific contexts of gift giving but is instead a generally applicable positive adjective applied to a number of different things.

2.2.3 Axios

The adjective *axios*, meaning 'sufficient', 'suitable', 'worthy', has the implication of offering a value judgement on the gift it describes. By looking at the gifts so described, we might be able to learn what the poet or characters consider to be a suitable gift in certain circumstances.

[63] Although, as we saw above (n.55), all things can be conceived as a gift from the gods.

Problematically, however, the poem provides us with merely two instances of *axios* as a descriptor of a gift.

During the Embassy episode, Odysseus uses the adjective *axios* to describe the gifts Agamemnon is offering in order to persuade Achilles to lay aside his anger.[64] The social context of this use of *axios*, however, affects the way we interpret the meaning. This scene is filled with instances of careful word-choice when the characters speak of the gifts Agamemnon will offer. Odysseus, as Donna Wilson points out, knows that what Agamemnon has said is not what Achilles wants to hear. Just as he leaves a few lines out during his otherwise verbatim delivery of Agamemnon's offer, Odysseus chooses to describe the gifts as *axia* in an attempt to help persuade Achilles that what he is being offered is fair, even if Agamemnon is offering the wrong type of compensation.[65]

Although this scene does not present a typical instance of gift giving, due to the incredible number of gifts being offered, the use of *axios* makes it clear that the gifts being offered are thought of as suitable at least by Odysseus.

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[64] This fits well with Mauss' belief that the gift is never disinterested. Some theoretical frameworks for gifts (e.g. Derrida 1992: 1–33), however, argue that a gift must be exactly the opposite: always disinterested, or else it is no longer a gift, but merely something within the economy of a society. This is a matter of anachronism: for as Mauss mentions, this notion of freely given gifts is modern (Mauss 2016).

[65] Wilson 1999: 135ff.

The second usage of *axios* demonstrates that this adjective is also used to mean 'suitable' in a more typical social situation. During the funeral games of Patroklos, Achilles proposes to give Meriones second prize, even though he finished last (*Il.* 23.536–538). This proposal, although met with unanimous approval from the spectators (*Il.* 23.539 "οἱ δ᾽ ἄρα πάντες ἐπήνεον ὡς ἐκέλυε"),[66] is challenged by Antilochos, who placed second in the race (*Il.* 23.543–554). To Antilochos' complaint, Achilles replies:

> Ἀντίλοχ᾽, εἰ μὲν δή με κελεύεις οἴκοθεν ἄλλο
> Εὐμήλῳ ἐπιδοῦναι, ἐγὼ δέ κε καὶ τὸ τελέσσω.
> δώσω οἱ θώρηκα, τὸν Ἀστεροπαῖον ἀπηύρων,
> χάλκεον, ᾧ πέρι χεῦμα φαεινοῦ κασσιτέροιο
> ἀμφιδεδείνηται· πολέος δέ οἱ <u>ἄξιος</u> ἔσται.
>
> *Il.* 23.558–562

> "Antilochos, if you bid me to give something else
> from my house to Eumelos, I will do it.
> I will give him the bronze breastplate, taken from
> Asteropaios, around which a plating of shining tin
> runs. It will be of great <u>worth</u> for him."

[66] It is interesting to note that Achilles nearly commits the same folly as Agamemnon in Book 1 which gave way to Achilles' anger: Achilles intends here to strip the rightful recipient of their due prize.

This passage provides us with a much more typical gift giving scenario: a single gift is given to a dear friend for his efforts during a race. Although the two uses of *axios* to modify a gift occur in different circumstances, there is still a strong unifying link between both uses. In both instances, the person describing the gift is one who is trying to assuage a slight to another's honour. Odysseus describes Agamemnon's offered gifts as *axia* perhaps not because he truly believes them to be suitable, but in an attempt to persuade Achilles to accept them. Similarly, when Achilles decides to give Meriones a bronze breastplate, he too is trying to assuage the recipient's slighted honour.[67] Thus, when a gift is described as *axios*, it is perhaps not necessarily a commentary on the gift itself, but a persuasive technique. Indeed, as the only two uses of *axios* to describe a gift occur in ring composition, the poetic qualities of the adjective should be stressed more than the theoretical implications it may have on gift giving as a practice.

[67] On the pre-determined pacing of the participants in the Funeral Games episode, see Stocking (forthcoming).

2.3 Verbs

2.3.1 Didômi

Didômi is the commonest verb employed for the giving of gifts in the *Iliad*. As mentioned above, in the overwhelming majority of instances where a character in the *Iliad* gives a gift, the text uses at least one reflex of PIE *deh_3-ro-, and often both the verb and the noun will be from that same root. Of course, *didômi* is used in a number of different situations, not just in the giving of what we might consider a gift. For example, Diomedes gives his horse to a lackey to take back to camp (*Il.* 5.26). When used with gifts, *didômi* is used with gifts that are not only corporeal, one might give something incorporeal: Zeus gives pains to Agamemnon (*Il.* 2.375 *alge' edoken*), the gods give to Hektor the art of warcraft and to other men, different skills (*Il.* 13.727–734).

In addition to lacking any specificity in regard to what one may give, *didômi* is also unspecific in regard to who can give and to whom. There are numerous instances of men giving to men (e.g. *Il.* 7.299), men giving to gods (e.g. 20.299), gods giving to men (e.g. 16.381), and gods giving to gods (e.g. *Il.* 14.238). Like *dôron* above, *didômi* furnishes a number of examples for us to examine theoretically and practically in our formulation of a system of giving in the *Iliad*.

2.3.2 Dekhomai

It is also important to examine the instance of the use of *dekhomai* 'to receive,' 'accept'. As Mauss writes in his *Essai sur le don*, "Refuser de donner, négliger d'inviter, comme refuser de prendre, équivaut à declarer la guerre ; c'est refuser l'alliance et la communion."[68] Indeed, where characters do accept gifts (or something given them), it is described as something done "rejoicing" (e.g. *Il.* 23.647 "τοῦτο δ᾽ ἐγὼ πρόφρων δέχομαι, χαίρει δε μοι ἦτορ," "I accept it cheerfully, and my heart rejoices"; *Il* 23.797 "ὅ δ᾽ ἐδέξατο χαίρων" "rejoicing, he accepted it"). In the *Iliad*, to refuse a gift offered is a transgression. If a gift is refused, the social bond between giver and would-be recipient is destroyed. Indeed, the *Iliad* begins with Agamemnon rejecting an offer from the Trojan priest Chryses, who is trying to ransom his daughter from Agamemnon.

The consequences of a rejected gift are not easily reversed. In the *Iliad*, we see that after a gift has been rejected, it is likely that the gift will no longer be given, should the one who rejected it later change his mind. For instance, Agamemnon loses out on the ransom he would have received should he have accepted (*Il.* 1.98-99). Further evidence of this is found in the moral story Phoenix relates to Achilles in Book 9, when Agamemnon is offering to Achilles a plethora of gifts (*Il.* 9.598–599).

[68] Mauss 1923-4: 51.

Indeed, the rejection of an offering can be seen as a dishonour done unto the one who has offered (*Il.* 1.94).

2.4 Philological Conclusions

Although Benveniste's method of attempting to tease out nuances in meaning between the numerous Greek words for 'gift' which appear in the Homeric epics is in some ways a helpful tool, I believe that the underlying principles of his study are problematic. Many of the nouns he endows with narrow meanings occur only once or twice, and do not permit a thorough comparative analysis. Even when we consider the words outside of their Homeric context in later literature, we find that this specificity does not obtain. If there were some emerging specificity developing in the Homeric language, we would have expected that this specificity be more pronounced in the later authors.

The approach of assigning nouns to specific types of gift giving takes for granted that there is such a specific structural system of gift giving in operation in the *Iliad*, and I have shown that, both etymologically and contextually, there is very little support for gift terms being representative of a system of gift giving which differentiates types of gifts by vocabulary. Instead of using this structuralist approach, I believe that we must approach the terms from a more poetic point-of-view. For

instance, the Russian Formalist Viktor Slovskij's ideas of linguistic automation and John Miles Foley's theory of traditional referentiality are helpful here. Slovskij's approach to poetic language argues that "poetical language acts against automatization," the variant language used serves as a means by which the poet may attract the attention of the audience away from the banal language of the every-day.[69] Similarly, John Miles Foley's theory of traditional referentiality argues that the oral poet's use of certain words and scenes can evoke in the mind of the audience an entire mythic association.[70] Such marked uses of gift terms may then serve as a means by which the poet is able to draw the audience's attention to the scene.

Ultimately, the uses of the gift giving nouns do not support understanding them as words connected with specific structuralist types of gift giving. Rather, the words themselves I believe to be important for their being different. With the exception of the specific *xeineion*, the gift terms serve largely as synonyms of the banal *dôron*.

[69] Schmitz 2007: 23. Cf. Erlich 1980: 176–178.
[70] See Foley 1997.

2
Practice & Theory

In the previous chapter I showed that an approach which relies on vocabulary with the aim of discerning an underlying system of gift giving is problematic—namely, the approach presupposes that the Greeks had a conscious distinction and that this distinction is manifest in the language of the poetic tradition. Although this conjecture is not supported by the textual evidence, the basic idea, *viz.* paying close attention to the language used in scenes involving gift giving is profitable. By examining the passages which include gift terms, and those which do not, we find that the use of these terms lacks a universality which can be fully explained by sociological theories of gift giving.

First, we will look at the current theoretical conceptions of gift giving, arguing ultimately that these ideas cannot be applied to the *Iliad*, without either modifying theory or text. Following this theoretical discussion, we will take examples from the *Iliad* in order to illustrate that the use (or avoidance) of gift giving language in certain scenes is

meaningful. In these readings, we cannot unproblematically apply a universalising theory to the text.[71] We will also see that gift terms are used throughout the poem to describe exchanges which are far from freely given or distinct from other forms of giving, which I believe requires that we be attendant to the language used in the scenes which involve (or do not involve) gift terms. That gift terms are being used in situations identified by narrator or character as not being freely given is important. Conceptions of gift giving revolve around the true or feigned nature of a gift being given freely.

Gifts are things that are given freely, voluntarily. In English, this is axiomatic, the word 'gift' is defined as "a thing given willingly to someone without payment; a present."[72] As Mauss notes, however, this is a theoretical pretension which does not obtain in reality.[73] Gifts are economic, but participants must suspend their belief that this is the case. Bourdieu writes that:

> gift exchange is one of the social games which cannot be played unless the players refuse to acknowledge the objective truth of the game, the very truth that objective analysis brings to light, and unless they are predisposed to contribute, with their efforts,

[71] I have in mind here Donlan (1997: 663), whom I quote below.
[72] *OCED*[3] s.v. 'gift'.
[73] Mauss 2016: 57.

> their marks of care and attention, and their time, to the production of collective misrecognition.[74]

Similarly, Derrida writes that "the simple identification of a gift seems to destroy it."[75] These three theorists all hit upon the same idea: participants in gift giving must be able to suspend their belief that their actions are in actuality economic. As we will see in the analysis of passages below, this need to misrecognise economic transactions is missing from the Homeric instances of exchange.

As we saw in Chapter 1, attempts to divide gifts up based on language is generally problematic. Even the category of *xeinêia* is problematic in that there are some clear instances of gifts between people bound by *xenia* which are not called a *xeineion*. The exchange between Diomedes and Glaukos (which will be discussed at length in the following chapter) is an instance of this. So too are other forms of division. Indeed, when we try to divide gifts up by different criteria, we quickly learn that there are exceptions or overlap. Instead, this chapter will begin with a discussion of modern gift giving theory, showing how there are

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[74] Bourdieu 1992: 105–106.

[75] Derrida 1997: 130. Derrida 1997: 138 continues, writing that "one could go so far as to say that a work as monumental as Marcel Mauss's *The Gift* speaks of everything but the gift: It deals with economy, exchange, contract (*do et des*), it speaks of raising the stakes, sacrifice, gift *and* counter gift—in short. Everything that in the thing itself impels the gift *and* the annulment of the gift."

problems in the text which do not allow for these theories to be applied to the *Iliad*. Following this, I will introduce and compare a number of gift giving instances from the *Iliad* in order to illustrate that not only do modern theories fail to explain entirely the instances of gift terms, but also that the use of gift terms throughout the *Iliad* appears to be unsystematic. In many cases, for example, something described as a gift in one instance will be described as a part of economic exchange in another analogous scene. Furthermore, characters will sometimes cease to consider something a gift abruptly.

2.1 Theory

As we saw above, gift theory began with the publication of Mauss' "Essai sur le don" in 1924–25.[76] In his work, Mauss advanced the idea that no gift is disinterested, that is to say, no gift, regardless of what the participants believe, is given for free. For Mauss, gifts are a part of a system of total prestation, in which collectives exchange much more than simply moveable wealth. Mauss argues that "prestations and counterprestations are entered into somewhat more voluntarily, by way of presents (*cadeaux*), although ultimately they are strictly compulsory,

[76] See n.1.

on pain of private or public war."[77] In effect, Mauss believes that anything in a society can be exchanged: from ranks, to persons, to traditional moveable goods, and all of these things are interrelated. According to Marshall Sahlins and David Graeber, Mauss seems to believe that the gift was a form of Hobbesian social contract, one which served 'pre-political' societies, stopping them from all-out war with one another.[78] This is challenged by Graeber, however, who says that there is "no explanation of why members of different 'clans, tribes, and families' should feel inclined to kill each other in the first place."[79]

Perhaps Mauss' most famous (and most criticized) theoretical conjecture is that of the *hau,* a concept he developed from his interpretation of an explanation given by Tamati Ranaipiri, a Maori:

> I will now speak of the *hau*… The *hau* is not the *hau* that blows—not at all. I will carefully explain to you. Suppose that you possess a certain article, and you give that article to me, without price. We make no bargain over it. Now. I give that article to a third person, who, after some time has elapsed, decides to make some return for it (*utu*), and so he makes me a present of some article (*taonga*). Now, that article (*taonga*) that

[77] Mauss 2016: 61.
[78] Sahlins 2017: ch.4; Graeber 2001: 154.
[79] Graeber 2001: 154.

> he gives to me is the *hau* of the article I first received from you and then gave to him. The goods (*taonga*) that I received for that item I must hand over to you. It would not be right for me to keep such goods for myself, whether they be desirable (*rawe*) items or otherwise (*kino*). I must hand that item over to you, because they are a *hau* of the article (*taonga*) you gave me. Were I to keep such equivalent for myself, then some serious evil would befall me, even death. Such is the *hau*, the *hau* of personal property, or the forest *hau*.[80]

Mauss, in need of an explanation for why gifts must be reciprocated, appealed to the Maori concept of *hau*, which he interpreted as a sort of spirit of the thing given: a force with which the thing given is imbued and which compels a return to its original owner.[81] The latter claim has been subjected to criticism from not long after it appeared. Claude Levi-Strauss, for example, has criticized Mauss' methodological approach: "Mauss strives to reconstruct a whole out of parts; and as that is manifestly not possible, he has to add to the mixture an additional quantity which gives him the illusion of squaring the account. This

[80] Mauss 2016: 70. Hereafter I will refer to this text as the 'Ranaipiri text'.
[81] Mauss 2016: 70–73.

quantity is the *hau*."[82] Levi-Strauss here is arguing that, because Mauss had isolated three parts of the exchange: giving, receiving, and reciprocation, Mauss was in need of something to make reciprocation necessary, for otherwise, it would seem to be irrelevant to the account he had put forward. Why does one *need* to reciprocate? What has happened in Mauss' case is that he has fallen victim to "the explanatory value of Polynesian beliefs."[83] Mauss has taken the reason given by the Polynesians as a universal explanation, rather than as merely the reason in which the Polynesians believe.

Mauss' interpretation of the *hau* is also called into question by Marshall Sahlins in his *Stone Age Economy*, where he shows that Mauss misunderstands the Ranaipiri text. Sahlins argues that "the Maori was trying to explain a religious concept by an economic principle, which Mauss promptly understood the other way around."[84] The exchange of goods which Ranaipiri was attempting to describe was completely secular: "The meaning of *hau* one disengages from the exchange of *taonga* is as secular as the exchange itself."[85] The idea which was being illustrated by the example of the Ranaipiri text, Sahlins suggests, is the

[82] Levi-Strauss 1997: 55.
[83] Godelier 1999: 25.
[84] Sahlins 1997: 76–77.
[85] Sahlins 1997: 79.

unacceptability of profiting from the gift of another. The *hau* is best understood as that very profit, which must be yielded to the original giver.[86] This idea of *hau*, whether we follow Mauss' or Sahlins' interpretation of it is not found in the *Iliad*; we do not read of any such exchange which matches this Maori example. Gifts in the *Iliad* are given without the imperative from an underlying force.

The idea that there resides in an object the 'spirit' of the previous owner(s), however, is not completely alien to the *Iliad*. As Lilah Grace Canevaro argues, a 'spirit' of the past possessor(s) resides in epic objects, creating a biography which is largely made up of past owners and the maker of the item.[87] As she notes, however, this is predominantly related to male objects, which are retrospective, in contrast to female objects which are proleptic: "that is to say that male objects evoke stories from the past, giving the object potency in the present, whereas women's objects—and the women themselves—are focused less on recalling the past in the present and more on perpetuating memory of the present in the future."[88] Although the objects in epic seem to, in a way, retain a part of their former owner, the connection with the *hau* is problematic.

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[86] See Sahlins 2017: ch.4 for a full discussion.

[87] Canevaro 2018: ch.1.2 *passim*.

[88] Canevaro 2018: 44–45. For example, the exchange between Diomedes and Glaukos "is testament to the fact that the memory of a past gift exchange can have real power in the present" (Canevaro 2018: 47–48).

To begin, this connection to previous owners is not agentic: it does not *compel* the current possessor to reciprocate, it serves more as a means of memorialisation. Because this feature of memorialisation is limited to certain gifts only, it lacks a universality needed in a structuralist account of gift giving.[89]

We might here also briefly consider some of Bourdieu's thoughts on giving. What is most important for me here is Bourdieu's focus on time, something which is present in Mauss' work on the Maori, which was not used as much as it could have been.[90] Bourdieu's argument is that the act of giving is one which occupies time, and the analysis of the practice must take into account that time, for indeed time is even itself a *part* of the exchange, whereby parties may display inferiority or superiority by the intentional use of time in reciprocation.[91] Indeed, in the *Iliad*, we see heroes immediately reciprocate gifts, or else see only a single instant of a gift giving process. For example, we read that Kinyras has given to Agamemnon a corselet on account of the Trojan War (*Il.*

[89] cf. The opening paragraph of Godelier 1999:1 on the justification for "yet another analysis of gift-exchange…" He writes that his analysis is justified "because gift-giving exists everywhere, *even if it is not the same everywhere* [my italics]". If gift giving does not obtain in the same way for every society or culture in which it exists, can we be justified in applying universalising theories to the practice?

[90] In the Ranaipiri text, the issue is brought up with the line, "Now, I give that article to a third person, who, *after some time has elapsed*, decides to make some return for it…" (Mauss 1997: 70; emphasis my own)

[91] Bourdieu 1997: 190–198.

11.20). This passage illustrates the problematic nature of analysing gift giving in the text: we lose out on the entire temporal aspect of this instance. The examples of gift giving in the *Iliad* are all detotalized; we do not have access to the entire practice, but only a small part of it. As we have seen above, in order to fully appreciate and evaluate gift giving, we must have more than merely the instance of giving, for that action is only a small part of the entire practice.

3.2 Gifts

Categorising gifts in the *Iliad* is problematic. Not only are there myriad ways of categorising gifts, it is not always clear what exactly a gift being given is. Many instances of *dôron* do not tell us what is being given as a gift (*e*.g. *Il.* 1.213, 230; 9.113; 18.408; 24.77). One possibility of categorising is to classify the gift as relating to the martial or domestic sphere. The problems we run into when trying to categorise gifts as 'martial' or 'domestic' are that a gift itself may be related to one of these two social spheres but given in a different sphere (e.g. *Il.* 6.215–219, which narrates a domestic scene in which a martial item is given), or else, we might run into the problem of groups being too encompassing or too restrictive to be of any use at all. The best option for categorising gifts is to base the

categories on donor, where mortals and immortals have distinct gifts.[92] There is a marked distinction between what mortals give and what immortals give: the gods are able to give divine items such as immortal horses (*Il.* 16.381, 867). This section will read some scenes of gift giving from the *Iliad* which are clearly marked by the use of a gift term, but which pose problems for a straightforward interpretation of gift giving in the epic.

There are a small number of martial gifts which are given throughout the *Iliad*, which are either weapons or armour. Gifts of weapons consist of swords (*Il.* 7.307; 10.255; 23.807), spears (*Il.* 23.896–897), and a bow given by Apollo (*Il.* 2.827). Gifts of armour consist of war-belts (*Il.* 6.219; 7.305), helmets (*Il.* 10.268–270), corselets (*Il.* 11.20, 23; 15.532; 23.560), and a shield (*Il.* 10.255), and full panoplies (*Il.* 18.82, 85; 19.366). Not all of these are explicitly called a gift. Indeed, when we consider which of these are clearly marked as gifts, our list shrinks substantially: only two belts (*Il.* 6.219, 7.305), one sword (*Il.* 7.305), one helmet (*Il.* 10.268), one

[92] Sissa 2000:18, on the division between mortals and gods, writes, "The great cultural divide that cuts the world of the *Iliad* in two is not the separation between the Greeks and the Trojans, for the resemblance between the men on the two opposed sides is almost total… Compared to them, it is the Immortals who appear as a completely different nation. They have a language of their own, their own kind of food, and they use metals in their own idiosyncratic way."

corselet (*Il.* 11.20), and two sets of full armour (18.83, 19.367) are described as gifts.[93]

What is remarkable about these gifts is that not all are brought about by the same catalyst: and indeed, when we compare other gifts given which are brought about by the same catalyst (e.g. guest-host interaction, athletic prizes), we find that different types of gifts are given sometimes in the same interaction. For instance, the two occurrences of a war-belt (*zôstêr*) being given are markedly different. On the one hand, we have the episode between Oineus and Bellerophon, narrated by Diomedes:

> οἱ δὲ καὶ ἀλλήλοισι πόρον ξεινήϊα καλά·
> Οἰνεὺς μὲν ζωστῆρα δίδου φοίνικι φαεινόν…
>
> *Il.* 6.218–219

> And they gave each other beautiful guest-gifts:
> Oineus gave a shining-red war-belt…

Notably, this gift was brought about because Oineus hosted Bellerophon for twenty days. These specific gifts are seemingly irrelevant

[93] When Achilles fights in the armour Hephaistos makes him, individual pieces of the full panoply are said to be a gift of the god (e.g. *Il.* 20.265, 268; 21.165, 594). Because these are part of the set given, I choose not to count each piece as an individual gift.

to the narrative of the poem.[94] In another instance we have a *zôstêr* being exchanged at the end of combat: Hektor gives to Aias a silver-studded sword, and Aias gives to Hektor a shining-red war-belt (*Il.* 7.303–305). The catalyst for this exchange was the setting of the sun, causing them to put off their heart-consuming strife (*eridos thumoboroio*, *Il.* 7.301). The narrative of the poem, perhaps, complicates this gift. For the belt given by Aias, in spirit of their new friendship and end of hatred, is perhaps then used by Achilles to tie Hektor's corpse to his chariot in his attempt to defile the body (*Il* 22.396–400).[95] The belt, once a symbol of

[94] It is remarked (Gaisser 1969: 175) that from a narrative perspective these gifts allow for ring composition culminating in the exchange between Diomedes and Glaukos. This will be discussed below when the episode between Diomedes and Glaukos is given a thorough analysis.

[95] The idea of the belt itself being used is recorded in Sophocles' *Ajax* 1029–1031. de Jong (2012: *ad loc.*) and Finglass (2012: 431) comment that Homer may have supressed the version in which Hektor was dragged while alive. Cf. Soph. *Ajax* 1030–1031.

This reading of the defilement of the corpse is problematic. The passage in Soph. *Ajax* (1028–1039) from which the idea seems to originate is considered an interpolation by some (e.g. Finglass 2011: *ad loc*). He writes that the use of the belt to tie Hektor to the chariot "is not attested for a millennium (Leontius Scholasticus *A.P.* 7.151, 7.152), and is probably an innovation for this passage (thus West (1978) 117): such a detail is only relevant within the confines of this rhetorical juxtaposition." Furthermore, the scholia on the *Iliad* do not seem to mention that the leather with which Hektor was tied was the belt given him by Aias. West (1978:117) seems to believe that the passage is legitimate but is not strongly attached to the idea that the use of the belt is original: "the identification of this ligature with the belt which Ajax once gave Hektor in exchange for a sword (*Il.* 7.303ff.) *may* be an innovation [emphasis mine]." Jebb (1896: 235) suggests that the idea was an allusion to an earlier poem, "possibly in the *Aitheopis* or the *Little Iliad*. In any case, it is evident that the account of Hektor's death adopted by Sophocles cannot be regarded as his own invention ; his manner of referring to it clearly implies another source." If we are to follow Jebb, we can assume that this tradition of the use of the belt given by Aias was in circulation at an early date.

friendship, is made to illustrate the opposite feeling: Achilles' hatred of Hektor. In the same vein, the suicide of Ajax using the sword of Hektor is more established in the tradition: Alex Purves writes that "there is a suggestion in the *Iliad* that each of his appearances is backlit by our awareness of his approaching suicide."[96] West, following Jebb, suggests that's the tradition of Aias' suicide by Hektor's gift was present in the Epic Cycle.[97]

We may also take a moment here to bring to light the difference between this gift and the one between Oineus and Bellerophon: while the latter still exerts pressure on Diomedes and Glaukos not to fight, the gifts given between Aias and Hektor do not incur a long-lasting bond between the two: we find them once again in combat with one another later in the poem (e.g. *Il.* 13.188–194; 14.402–408; 18.155–158). It seems,

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If Homer did indeed suppress the scene of Hektor being dragged alive as too grotesque for the poem, it raises an interesting problem related to speech acts, for Homer certainly includes speeches which suggest especially heinous treatment of bodies. I am thinking specifically of Achilles' threat to eat Hektor's flesh raw (*Il.* 22.346–347). The lines draw out the difference between a speech act and an act itself: it would seem that the speech act is seen as a lesser offence than committing the act itself, that the desire to descend from humanity is acceptable (as poetic material, not as popular morality).

On the topic of abusing bodies, see, e.g. Vernant 1991.

[96] Purves 2015: 83.

[97] West 1978: 117; Jebb 1896: 235

then, that the gift is not a reliable method of creating a lasting social bond between two persons.[98]

One final example will serve to illustrate the diversity of situations in which characters in the *Iliad* give gifts of a military nature: Achilles' armour, which Patroklos will wear on his doomed attempt to boost Greek morale, was originally given as a wedding present:

> … τεύχεα δ᾽Ἕκτωρ
> δηώσας ἀπέδυσε πελώρια, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι,
> καλά· τὰ μὲν Πηλῆϊ θεοὶ ἀφλαὰ δῶρα
> ἤματι τῷ ὅτε σε βροτοῦ ἀνέρος ἔμβαλον εὐνῇ.
>
> *Il.* 18.82–85

> And Hektor, having killed
> him, stripped the mighty armour, a wonder to look at,
> and beautiful: which the gods gave to Peleus as a splendid gift
> on that day when they threw you to the marriage
> bed of a mortal man.

These instances illustrate that martial gifts are not confined only to the context of war. Certainly, gifts given in times of war are martial, but there is not much option otherwise, unless perhaps one of the

[98] See Mueller 2015: 24–25 on Hektor's linguistic manipulation of the exchange and the gifts' place not in a lasting friendship but as "a placeholder[s] for future conflict"

participants in the gift giving happened to be carrying with him a cup or other non-martial item.

Focusing now on domestic gifts, we notice first of all a distinctly smaller number of gifts given are of a domestic nature. The first instance belongs to the exchange between Oineus and Bellerophon. In return for the war-belt given him, Bellerophon gives to Oineus a golden double-cup (*Il.* 6.220). As another example we have a bowl given by the Phoenicians to Thoas (*Il.* 23.745). As a final example we might add the robe Hekabê took as a gift to Athene (*Il.* 6.293). This imbalance of gifts can be understood in a number of ways. First, we might explain it by appealing to the nature of the poem: the *Iliad* largely deals with war, and as such the social interactions which result in a domestic gift being given are, by necessity, underrepresented in the poem.

About these corporeal gifts, Donlan writes,

> "Gift giving among the Homeric elite…has maximum social and political purpose, but little economic purpose… All offers, acceptances, or exchanges of *dôra* are instrumental, either in establishing, maintaining, or repairing a relationship, or in minimising hostility, or validating or calibrating (and even creating) differences in rank."[99]

[99] Donlan 1997: 663.

This assertion is essentially Maussian: there is no disinterested gift. Problematically, however, the text with which we must work does not offer explicit commentary on gift giving: none of our textual evidence seems to indicate social dynamics in giving at a level more direct than observer, nor can we accurately determine the value of a gift (is a gold cup worth more than a dyed belt, a silver-studded sword?). Donlan continues by writing that, "the emphasis on competition and display in Homeric gift giving might seem exaggerated, had we not numerous parallels from big-man and chieftain societies world-wide."[100] Again, I argue, Donlan runs into problems. His assertion that competition is exaggerated in Homer lacks textual support: where do we read any notion of competitiveness in giving? Most, if not all gifts given in the *Iliad* are written without agonistic elements. One might argue that Agamemnon's offer in Book 9 and Priam's ransom for Hektor, are guilty of being competitive, but these are isolated cases: no other characters offer such gifts as these. If this emphasis is present in the *Odyssey*, it serves as an illustration of why a study of gift giving in Homer must necessarily take each text as separate: for what may be present in one of the texts is absent from the other, leaving a universalising conclusion

[100] Donlan 1997: 663.

impossible. Secondly, Donlan's limiting term is *dôra*, which does not cover all instances of gift giving in the *Iliad: xeineion,* for example, are perfectly valid gifts to include, especially since they are specific to certain situations. And indeed, many scholars will include as gifts those scenes which lack any gift term at all, and these will be examined in the following section.

Especially interesting for our discussion here is the use of *dôra* to describe some of the items offered by Agamemnon to Achilles, to which we will now turn, advancing the argument that since gift terms are used in situations where the thing given is clearly not a gift (*i.e.* a freely given thing, either truly or only imagined by the participants and/or observers), the use of gift terms must serve an aesthetic purpose. Throughout the *Iliad*, no fewer than nineteen (out of a total of seventy-three) instances of gift terms are used refer specifically to parts of Agamemnon's long list of 'gifts' which he wishes to offer Achilles.[101] As Donna Wilson has argued, the Embassy scene of Book 9 is highly dependent on the use of the words *apoina* and *poinê*; Agamemnon consciously "deploys none of the language typically associated with

[101] The count of seventy-three instances of gift terms includes the words *dôron, dosis,* and *xeineion*

poinê," and instead chooses to use the word *apoina* in order to frame the offerings in a certain way.[102] Indeed, as she writes later,

> Perhaps most telling, offers of *apoina* conventionally presuppose a situation of hostility; *apoina* are never in the discrete themes exchanged between *philoi*. By offering *apoina* to Achilleus, Agamemnon casts him in the thematic role of the enemy.[103]

This *apoina*, however, is referred to as a *dôra* by Agamemnon, Nestor, Odysseus, and Achilles (*Il.* 9.121, 164, 261, 378 respectively).[104] This seems to me to show one of two things (or even both). On the one hand, if we are to take Wilson's analysis of the difference between *apoina* and *poinê,* it would seem that a gift is equal to *apoina*. And this is not the only case in the poem where this seems to be the case: when Priam is gathering gifts (*dôra*; e.g. *Il.* 24.77, 119, 176) to bring to Achilles, these gifts are specifically thought of as a ransom (*apoina*; e.g. *Il.* 24.555, 579) for Hektor.[105]

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[102] Wilson 2002: 76.

[103] Wilson 2002: 78.

[104] Lattimore translates *axia dôra* (*Il.* 9.261) as 'worthy recompense', illustrating the desire to economise the gift.

[105] Up until Priam actually meets with Achilles, Priam refers to the things gathered as *dôra* (and indeed, when Zeus himself sets this plan in motion, he refers to the things Priam will offer to Achilles as gifts). Once Priam is in the presence of Achilles, however, he abandons the use of gift terms in order to employ the word *apoina*.

What this would mean, I believe, is that a gift is not freely given, for *apoina* are, by definition, not something that is freely given. The specific uses of the gift term, especially in Priam's ransom of Hektor's body, seem to suggest, however, that the use of the gift terms is highly meaningful. The context in the two ransom scenes seems to elicit a certain important distinction. On the one hand, Agamemnon and the others choose to call his offerings 'gifts' in order to conceal (ineffectually) the true nature of his offer, while Priam seems to switch away from using it to Achilles in order to express proper deference and etiquette given the situation.

It seems to me, then, that the category of 'gift' in the *Iliad* is more complicated than a reductionist political analysis would allow—the language of the gift giving scenes must be important in the understanding of the scene, and this transference between *dôra* and *apoina* illustrates that the gift in the epic is not understood as simply something perceived as freely-given.[106]

[106] This equation of gifts with another form of non-gift is investigated in Newton 2009, where he compares the *geras* with the guest-gift in an inter-poetic analysis between both of the Homeric epics, showing that such a transference was an oral-traditional feature that "allow[ed] the poet compositional flexibility." If Newton is right, this flexibility poses a problem for interpretations of Homeric gift giving as fully-formed social practices: essentially, if they are used as synonyms of other overtly economic modes of exchange, it might be nearly impossible to distinguish gifts from non-gifts.

3.2.3 Things Given

Following the logic of the previous section, we will now turn to exchanges which do not use a gift term in their description of the thing given, but which can still benefit from being read when attentive to the language of the scene.

The first instance of a definite object being given in the *Iliad* (2.102-107) is a genealogical account of how Agamemnon came to possess his sceptre which gives him power over the other Greeks. The poet traces its origins from Zeus, who gave it to Hermes, who then gave it to Pelops, from whom it was passed down within the family. In each case except two the verb *didômi* is used to signify the passing of the sceptre. The verb first changes when the sceptre goes from Atreus to Thyestes. Instead of the so-far customary *didômi*, the poet switches to the verb *leipô* 'to leave': Ἀτρεὺς δὲ θνήσκων ἔλιπεν πολύαρνι Θυέστῃ, "And Atreus, dying, left it to lamb-rich Thyestes" (*Il.* 2.106). In the following line the verb remains *leipô*: αὐτὰρ ὁ αὖτε Θυέστ᾽ Ἀγαμέμνονι λεῖπε φορῆναι…, "And moreover, Thyestes left it to Agamemnon to carry…" (*Il.* 2.107). In this change of verb, we can detect a subtle hint that the sceptre has gone from a willing gift to an unwilling one. One has to look no further than the mythical history of this family to see that between Atreus and Pelops it is unlikely that a gift of such power (the

consequence of the sceptre seems to be the right to rule the Greeks widely, *Il.* 2.108) would willingly be given from Atreus to Thyestes or from Thyestes to the sons of Atreus.[107] This idea of the scepter being given unwillingly has not gone unnoticed: a scholiast comments, "τὸ μὲν γὰρ δῶκε φιλίας τεκμήριον φησι, τὸ δὲ καταλειπεῖν ἀνάγκης" (for he [Homer] says 'gave' as a sign of friendship, but 'left behind' as a sign of necessity).[108] It can be no coincidence that the verb changes from one with active tones to one which is passive at precisely the moment of familial conflict.[109]

What are we to make of the scholiast's comment on the distinction between friendly giving and giving out of necessity? It is true that in these lines the distinction between willingly giving something and unwillingly leaving something to another is made clear through word choice. This distinction, however, does not necessarily hold for the rest of the poem. Agamemnon's returning of Chryseis illustrates this point. Although Agamemnon uses the verb *didômi*, the giving back of Chyseis,

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[107] On the implications of this unwilling bequeathal of Agamemnon's right to rule the Greeks, see Stocking (forthcoming).

[108] Σ *ad loc*. The scholiast misquotes the text in his exegesis, for in our version of Homer we have the non-prefixed form *leipô* where the scholiast uses a prefixed version.

[109] Unfortunately, there are no instances in the *Iliad* which use *leipô* to designate a gift which is left to another, although there are a number of instances of the incorporeal being left to someone: ἐμοὶ δὲ μάλιστα λελείψεται ἄλγεα λυγρά ("the greatest mournful pains have been left to me [Priam]", *Il.* 24.746). These usages, however, do not offer us a suitable comparison.

which is only brought about by necessity, is not one which can be described as friendly (*Il.* 1.116). Furthermore, during scenes of ransom, characters make use of that very word, which is supposed to imply friendliness or willingness, neither of which is present in such a situation: the parents are bound by necessity to give ransom (most famously at *Il.* 24.594, where Achilleus comments that Priam gave him worthy ransom for the body of Hektor, but also at *Il.* 1.95; 9.120; 19.138; 24.686). How can the account Mauss and Donlan put forward be squared to this example?

3.2.4 Miscellaneous

We can also briefly consider here the formulaic refrain "καὶ ὕπνου δῶρον ἔλοντο" (*Il.* 7.482, 9.713; *Od.* 16.481, 19.427: and they took the gift of sleep), which appears twice each in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. This adnominal genitive is itself not as problematic,[110] but the idea of sleep as something taken is. In Homer (and elsewhere), sleep is something with its own agency: it is what compels both man and god to sleep (e.g. *Il.*

[110] The use of the adnominal genitive has been used as evidence both for and against the interpolation of the end of Sophocles' *O.T.* See e.g. Dawe 2001: 6–7; Kovacs 2009: 56. See Nussbaum 1998: 126–127 for the view that the adnominal genitive was a late feature of the Homeric *Kunstsprache*.

2.2, 2.24, 10.4, 22.502; *Od.* 5.472, 7.286, 15.7).[111] Not only is this refrain the only instance of sleep not showing agency in Homer, we also have here the only instance of a gift being *taken* by someone in the *Iliad.* In the *Odyssey*, however, apart from the two refrains cited above, Odysseus says

> σὺ δέ με προΐεις καὶ πότνια μήτηρ
> ἐς πατέρ᾽ Αὐτόλυκον μητρὸς φίλον, ὄφρ᾽ ἂν <u>ἑλοίμην</u>
> <u>δῶρα</u>, τὰ δεῦρο μολών μοι ὑπέσχετο καὶ κατένευσεν.
>
> *Od.* 24.333–335

> "You and [my] mistress mother sent me
> to Autolykos, mother's dear father, so that I might <u>take</u>[112]
> <u>the gifts</u>, which, having come here, he promised to me."

In these examples, what is striking is the claim that gifts will be taken, something which goes against the very nature of a gift as something given.

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[111] Although I am using neuter pronouns in this section, it should be mentioned that sleep is also personified as Hypnos, a god (as in *Il.* 14.233 where Hera appeals to him directly).

[112] Lattimore (2007: *ad loc*) renders this verb, *aireô* in Greek, as "so that I could be given", though the verb, even in the middle voice, does not reflect the action of 'being given'.

3.3 Conclusion

In this section I have aimed to show that major theories of gift exchange do not perfectly fit the instances of gift giving in the *Iliad*. Furthermore, the lack of consistency throughout the *Iliad* in differentiating a gift from other forms of economic exchange causes problems for the rigid structuralist approaches that these theories require, and the examples with which we must work offer only a small instance of a durational practice between donor and recipient, which does not allow us to read the entire practice as is necessary. Furthermore, because there are so few instances of individual gifts in the poem, creating an accurate, universal theory of gift giving is impossible.

Instead, I argued that we should be attentive to the use or avoidance of gift terms in scenes of exchange. Reading scenes in this way can allow for new readings of gift giving scenes. This approach was illustrated by consideration of two major scenes of ransom which both feature the word *dôron* throughout, even though the offerings are clearly not what can be considered gifts. Furthermore, as the passing of the Atreid family scepter illustrates, reading scenes without gift terms in the same way is profitable—even the use of a different verb can signal the change in mood of a gift exchange. In these ways, our readings of these scenes

extend beyond the social, political, or economic realms—the use of gift giving can serve a poetical purpose.

In the following chapter, I will use this method of analysis in a focused case study in order to illustrate the benefits of reading gift giving scenes while being attendant to the language of the poem.

3
The Diomedes & Glaukos Exchange

In the previous chapters, I showed that reading gift giving scenes from an aesthetic point of view can offer profitable readings beyond or in addition to the reductive political readings of the scenes. In this final chapter, I aim to provide a detailed aesthetic reading of a single scene from the *Iliad* to show the benefits of this approach.

In Book 6 of the *Iliad* (119–236) there occurs a scene of great importance for our discussion. At the end of Diomedes' *aristeia*, the Lykian warrior Glaukos comes forward to challenge him in single combat. What ensues is a scene of recognition during which, on account of the genealogy offered by Glaukos, Diomedes recognizes that the two of them are connected through a two-generation-old bond of hospitality (*Il.* 6.119–211). Following this recognition comes the exchange in which Glaukos gives to Diomedes a golden panoply and in return receives a bronze panoply from Diomedes (*Il.* 6.230–236).

This exchange episode between Diomedes and Glaukos has caused problems of interpretation: the poet of the received text inserts his own explanation for the unequal exchange, a rare occurrence in both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, as well as the Homeric Hymns (*Il.* 6.234).[113] Calder remarks of this narratorial insertion that by the time Plato was writing, the expression *chrusea chalkeiôn* ("gold for the price of bronze") "had become an elegant reference to an unfair bargain."[114] Indeed, Plato makes Socrates quote from this episode in the *Symposium* (218e–219a) in order to reprimand Alcibiades for trying to obtain for himself the better side of a trade, notably a trade involving the non-corporeal exchange of an Ideal (*Symp.* 218d–e). Aristotle too takes it upon himself in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1136b5–10) to comment on the episode, writing that:

> ὁ δὲ τὰ αὑτοῦ διδούς, ὥσπερ Ὅμηρός φησι δοῦναι τὸν Γλαῦκον τῷ Διομήδει "χρύσεα χαλκείων, ἑκατόμβοι᾽ ἐννεαβοίων," οὐκ ἀδικεῖται: ἐπ᾽ αὐτῷ γάρ ἐστι τὸ διδόναι, τὸ δ᾽ ἀδικεῖσθαι οὐκ ἐπ᾽ αὐτῷ, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἀδικοῦντα δεῖ ὑπάρχειν. περὶ μὲν οὖν τοῦ ἀδικεῖσθαι, ὅτι οὐχ ἑκούσιον, δῆλον.[115]
>
> Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1136b

[113] See *ad loc.* in Graziosi and Haubold 2010; Fortson 2010: §2.12.

[114] Calder 1984: 31. This claim is complicated by the fact that the expression occurs nowhere else.

[115] Aristotle, in his discussion of the scene, uses the verb *didômi*, perhaps suggesting that he was thinking of the passage as representative of a typical scene of giving and avoids engaging with the problematic text.

> He who gives his own things, just as Homer says that Glaukos gave to Diomedes "gold for bronze, a hecatomb for nine oxen," does not suffer injustice: for giving is a personal choice, and suffering injustice is not self-inflicted, but it is necessary that someone undertake being unjust. Therefore, it is clear that, concerning being treated unjustly, it is not a willing thing.

In a note in *The Classical Review,* J. D. Craig argues that there is no problem with the exchange: Glaukos "was conscious of his inferiority in the presence of the overbearing Diomede... he was heartily glad to part from his new friend, even at the price of gold for bronze."[116] To Craig's reading, P. Walcot adds that Glaukos "is very willing to hand over to Diomede[s] armour, however valuable, in return for a gift infinitely more precious, his own life."[117] These two scholars, as Walcot puts it, "seek a human motive to explain Glaucos' action."[118] Although the appeal to human emotion as a solution holds a certain amount of empathetic reasoning, we might also here mention Willcocks' declaration that "it is not difficult to deduce that Glaucus is nervous," arguing that "we should not let the pathos of the parallel with leaves, and the fascination of the fable of Bellerophon, blind us to the fact that

[116] Craig 1967: 244.
[117] Walcot 1969: 12–13.
[118] Walcot 1969: 12.

Glaucus is maundering."[119] Even so, it is an established narrative feature of Homeric epic to diverge from the main narrative in such a descriptive fashion, as Auerbach's "The Scar of Odysseus" shows us.[120] I believe that looking for emotional reasons for Glaukos' unequal exchange departs too far from the textual evidence to be a defensible position. Nowhere in the text of the exchange do we have any evidence for Glaukos' emotional state being the motivating factor for his willingness to participate in the exchange. Indeed, if we are concerned with the emotional state of the participants, we might recall that Diomedes, right before the epiphany and offer, rejoiced (*gêthêthen Il.* 6.212) upon hearing the news which lead to their armistice. We could argue that Diomedes was glad he need not fight against the superior Glaukos. Furthermore, if, as Vernant argues, the hero faces dishonour by showing cowardice, we might find it hard to believe that Glaukos would take this path:[121] for Glaukos seems to have challenged Diomedes of his own accord (*Il.*

[119] Willcock 1992: 87. Cf. Alden 2000: 167, "The career of Bellerophon functions as a paradigmatic warning to Diomedes as he listens to it: Bellerophon enjoyed extraordinary favour from the gods, but this favour was suddenly withdrawn in an apparently arbitrary fashion, and the same thing might happen to Diomede, who has been achieving remarkable feats under the patronage of Athene just before he hears about Bellerophon." There does not seem to be any idea in Alden of Glaukos maundering out of fear, but as we will see below, the genealogy, and important part of heroic identification, served a deeper narrative purpose than merely Glaukos buying time. See also generally Alden 2000: 128–142.

[120] Auerbach 2003: ch. 1 *passim.*

[121] Vernant 1991: 51.

6.119-126) and takes seriously his honour (*Il.* 6.206–210). Indeed, throughout the *Iliad*, Diomedes is never said to be afraid, or depicted as acting unheroically.[122] Should we thus ascribe to Glaukos a feeling of inferiority in the face of Diomedes? In effect, the argument advanced by these scholars, I argue, is too dependent on appeals to emotions which are not mentioned in the text and which go against the received textual evidence concerning Glaukos' cowardice. In this vein de Jong argues that the exposition of Glaukos' genealogy serves two purposes: he claims to be equal to Diomedes in terms of heroic lineage and also reminds himself of the conduct by which he must abide, being a descendant in such a noble family.[123] This, she argues, shows that Glaukos is self-confident in his own equality to Diomedes, he is unafraid of the anticipated duel.

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[122] We are told of Glaukos that he is second-in-command to Sarpedon of the Lykians (*Il.* 2.876); that he had advanced to the 'no-man's land' of the idealised battlefield in which heroes seek single combat (*Il.* 6.119); that Sarpedon hand-picked Glaukos because he was "above all others the bravest" (*Il.* 12.103–104; "διακρὶδον εἶναι ἄριστοι / τῶν ἄλλων"); that the Lykians considered him to be, along with Sarpedon, the best of the Lykians (*Il.* 12.310–328); Sarpedon, dying, calls him a "fighter among men" (πολεμιστὰ μετ᾽ ἀνδράσι, *Il.* 16.492); he is the first of the Lykians to turn back toward the onslaught of Patroklos (*Il.* 16.593–594); he is able, unlike Thersites' attempt with Agamemnon, to reproach Hektor (*Il.* 17.140–168); and he is given the epithet 'blameless' (*Il.* 2.876, 14.426, perhaps inherited or projected backward onto his grandfather Bellerophon, *Il.* 6.155). The only time he retreats is after he has been injured, while scaling the Greek wall (*Il.* 12.387–391).

[123] de Jong 1987: 160–167

William M. Calder argues the opposite: "Diomedes, after hearing the glorious lineage and noble attainments of Glaucos…admits by his offer of the unequal exchange Glaucos' superiority."[124] Calder argues this by asserting that the giver of the superior gift is himself superior,[125] using Achilles' refusal of Agamemnon's offer and acceptance of Priam's offer as analogous examples, which supposedly illustrate this power dynamic.[126] Firstly, we must note that these two 'analogous' scenes lack the same linguistic features of the Diomedes-Glaukos scene: in our case we have an *exchange* of full armour, taken to be a *gift* compared against the payment of *apoina*, ransom, in the Achilles scenes (*Il.* 9.120; 24.502).[127] The difference is crucial: one may refuse to accept a ransom, as happens in the *Iliad*,[128] but nowhere do we find a gift rejected.[129] In fact, Walter Donlan writes that "giving is never meant to overawe or to display superiority,"[130] a fact, which apart from Agamemnon's offer, holds true throughout the *Iliad*.

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[124] Calder 1984: 34.
[125] Calder 1984: 34.
[126] Calder 1984: 34.
[127] See Wilson 1999 for a fuller discussion of *apoina* (and *poinê*) in the *Iliad.*
[128] In addition to Achilles' refusal, we might cite *Il.* 6.46ff in which *apoina* was offered by a captured Trojan, and it was rejected in favour of killing the man.
[129] Compare with Mauss 1970: 11, who argues that rejection of a gift was impossible without detrimental consequences.
[130] Donlan 1989: 9. This statement is contradicted in his 2011: 663 chapter, in which he claims that Homeric giving *is* competitive and exaggerated. If participants in gift giving are to remain equal, many of the approaches to this episode are misguided in their attempts to determine a 'winner' of the exchange.

Some have chosen to seek an explanation for the unequal exchange by recourse to potlatch societies.[131] The idea behind this comes, no doubt, from a misapplication of Mauss' research. Mauss' anthropological investigations dealt with a few American tribes who practiced potlatch, which Mauss describes as follows:

> But, in these two latter tribes of the American Northwest, and throughout this region, there appears to be a form of these total prestations that is characteristic, certainly, but more developed and relatively rare… But what is remarkable in these tribes is the principle of rivalry and antagonism that dominated all these practices. People go so far as to fight, even killing chiefs and nobles who confront each other in this way. Furthermore, they go so far as to destroy any accumulated wealth in a purely extravagant manner in order to outdo a chief, simultaneously a rival and a partner (usually a grandfather, father-in-law, or son-in-law).[132]

The characteristics of potlatch which Mauss notes are altogether absent both from this isolated exchange, as well as from all other instances of gift giving in the *Iliad*: there is no hint of rivalry in the language of our scene; no deliberate destruction of property—in fact the passage

[131] Calder 1984.
[132] Mauss 1925 [2016]: 62–63.

suggests that they will each keep and use the armour of the other; and instead of fighting one another, they abstain from doing so. Moreover, this "relatively rare" practice, described by Mauss, is rooted in ritual communal feasting which takes place during the winters in North American native tribes during the 19th and 20th centuries BC, a social engagement quite different from that of Diomedes and Glaukos. If indeed the potlatch was the mode of exchange which is represented in the *Iliad*, we might ask ourselves: why does Diomedes then propose the trade, knowing that under the social rules of potlatch, Glaukos' by far larger gift of reciprocation will dishonour him so much?

Other approaches to the episode read it more aesthetically. Gaisser argues that the two heroes are put against each other for the moral effect of their differing world-views.[133] For Gaisser, Diomedes represents an optimistic world-view in which mortals who appropriately honour the gods will never be punished, whereas Glaukos represents a pessimistic view, one in which mortals will, regardless of piety, fall victim to the gods.[134] Agreeing with Gaisser, Scodel concludes that the two speeches delivered by the heroes represent two competing views of the relationship between mortal and divine, concluding that Glaukos' "own

[133] Gaisser 1969: 175.
[134] Gaisser 1969: 175.

loss in the exchange of armor is a mild and almost funny proof of an important and usually tragic truth," *viz.* the mutability of the gods' favour for mortals.[135] Problematically, however, Scodel does not account for *why* Glaukos must come out the worse in this situation. At the time of the episode, he is not said to be in the gods' favour or to be receiving divine aid, and the mutability of the gods' favour would be better illustrated in Diomedes 'losing out', since he has been favoured by the gods for a long while at this point.

Although these two arguments are, in my opinion, excellent literary readings, we are left still with our original question: why do the two warriors exchange their armour? Gaisser, who believes that the episode between Diomedes and Glaukos should be read as part of a ring composition with the Achilles-Priam scene in Book 24, writes:

> At this point we are reminded of the remarks of Willcock and Kakridis on the story of Niobe. "Niobe eats because Priam must eat."[136] In the present context, then, Bellerophon and Oineus must exchange gifts because Diomedes and Glaucus are to exchange armor.[137]

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[135] Scodel 1992: 84.
[136] Willcock 1964: 141, citing Kakridis 1949: 99
[137] Gaisser 1969: 175.

Although the ring composition of these two episodes is quite nice, we are left with what seems to be a circular argument. For the pair (*viz.* Diomedes and Glaukos) do not need to give each other their armour in the same way that Priam, being a mortal beholden to biological needs, must eat. And further, the two can fulfil the ring composition by exchanging something else with one another. Although the connection between the episodes in Book 6 and 24 are literarily related, that fact alone does not fully explain the exchange between Diomedes and Glaukos. In order to expand the reading, we must analyse the scene's language, which the heretofore mentioned commenters all pass over.

My own approach to this scene will be based, much like the previous sections of this paper, heavily on the language of the episode. Namely, I will first examine closely the language of the scene and how it compares to the language of the other instances of gift giving in our text. This will allow us to consider the scene independently of modern theory, and how it relates to similar language elsewhere in the poem, putting the emphasis on the traditional use of words more than on the entire 'feeling' of the scene.

The scene is composed of two layers of narration: we have direct speech from the participants and narratorial comments. Furthermore, we might also divide the narratorial lines into 'early' and 'later', including

in the latter category the lines at 6.235–236 on the grounds that they were composed by a later poet who did not understand the scene.[138] Whether the scene is comprised of two or three levels of narration is a minor point, however, and will not affect our analysis. The important distinction is that we have, as Levi-Strauss and Bourdieu point out, a problem of objectivism: namely, the narratorial comments are akin to anthropological observation, the practices are seen from an outside perspective that can only offer an ultimately subjective account. In our case the comments about Zeus stealing Glaukos' *phrenas* and the problematic value discrepancy serve only to illustrate the subjective understanding of the exchange. That is, the participants and the narrator have differing views about the nature of the practice which has taken place: indeed, Diomedes claims that they will (ex)change (into) the armour of the other in order to boast their guest-friendship, and leaves out any notion of value, whilst the poet draws attention to the superior value.

"Homeric characters often invoke Zeus when they try to account for events they do not understand… Here it seems that the poet himself is

[138] See Calder 1984: 34, who argues that "the Geometric poet no longer understood the custom," with the implication being that the original passage entered the tradition at a much earlier point in time.

puzzled by the implications of the exchange."[139] Similarly, Benjamin Fortson writes that, "the narrator of the tale, interestingly, seems not to understand the proceedings, and claims that Glaukos' wits were addled." Fortson argues that the excessive value discrepancy is explained away as repayment of a debt incurred two generations ago when his grandfather was hosted by Oineus.[140] Problematically, the *Iliad* does not offer us any comparisons against which to judge the veracity of this explanation: nowhere are we told the values of each item given nor are we told by characters or by the narrator that Glaukos is repaying a debt to Diomedes. Instead, I think that Godelier's insightful comment about *mutual indebtedness* is especially applicable not only in this case, but in general consideration of gifts in the *Iliad*.[141] Godelier convincingly argues that giving is not an economic transaction, in that one party need not repay exactly what the other had given, but instead the goal is that each party will be bound to the other. If Fortson's suggestion were correct, it would effectively mean that gift giving played no prolonged role in social relations: once the recipient paid the donor an equivalent amount for the original gift, the two would revert to whatever state

[139] Graziosi and Haubold 2010, *ad loc.*

[140] Fortson 2010: 2.12. See also Calder 1984: 34 "the Geometric poet no longer understood the custom."

[141] Godelier 1999: 48.

existed between them before the original gift had been given and accepted.[142] Diomedes' claim that the two would continue to serve as guest-friends in the future serves as evidence of this *mutual* indebtedness rather than a simple repayment and assumed dissolution of bonds (*Il.* 6.225–226).[143] Furthermore, Fortson's main evidence for his interpretation is only linguistic: he has created a rule out of the implications of word-roots. Although Indo-European linguistics can be profitable in a number of cases (especially diachronic contexts), most of the time the data with which they work is not enough to allow full reconstruction of social practices.

Again, too, if we wish to evoke Mauss, we will find at once that this profit-driven mentality should not be taken into account: Mauss' research demonstrates that profit is something which is to be avoided.[144] And indeed, gift giving in the *Iliad* seems to work on the same premise. In Book 1, when Achilles and Agamemnon begin their strife, Achilles' insult to Agamemnon, calling him *philoktêanôtate,* lover of gain, (*Il.* 1.122) can be seen as expressive of the norms: it was uncouth, at least for heroes, to desire the acquisition of physical goods for profit.

[142] Cf. Godelier 1999: 42–43, on counter-gifts not erasing the debt of the original gift.
[143] cf. the gifts given between Hektor and Aias which do not successfully establish a bond that transcends their status of war-time enemies.
[144] Sahlins 1997: 79–80.

Furthermore, apart from the sole line (*Il.* 6.236), inserted by a narrator, there is no mention of profitability or value made of gifts given by the participants; can we then apply modern economic values onto this text, simply because we now have a tendency to view things in such a way?

Furthermore, we must take into account the role played by time in gift giving. Firstly, we must note Mauss' work. When Mauss introduced the theory of the *hau*, relying on the Ranaipiri text, he failed to make notice of the specific line "après qu'un certain temps s'est écoulé…"[145] Indeed, the issue of time is taken up by Pierre Bourdieu in his *The Logic of Practice*:

> So long as one only considers practices which, like rituals, derive some of their most important properties from the fact that they are "detotalized" by their unfolding in succession, one is liable to neglect those properties of practice that detemporalizing science has least chance of reconstituting, namely the properties it owes to the fact that it is constructed in time, that time gives it its form…"[146]

How are we to reconcile this exchange (and others) in the *Iliad* where the reciprocation is immediate? Do these not go against the idea Bourdieu has in mind when he talks about the importance of time in

[145] Mauss 1950: 158.
[146] Bourdieu 1990: 98.

gift giving, the power dynamics that result from an early reciprocation or a late one? Furthermore, we have also to contend with the fact that the majority of gifts given in the *Iliad* are entirely 'totalised' as single instances: we do not have access to the practice's full history, so to speak.

The problem arises that no single theory of gift giving accurately reflects all of the instances: the very thing which a theory ought to do, whether it be mathematical or anthropological. And indeed, in this passage there is something strikingly unmathematical, something to which we ought to pay attention, but which has been passed over without comment by scholars thus far: namely the language the poet uses in this scene.

The passage is notable for its multiple instances of idiosyncratic language. Though it is interpreted by readers to be a standard gift exchange, the passage lacks all sense of linguistic similarity to other gift giving scenes in the *Iliad*. Of these, two scenes provide exact structural analogues to the scene which we will be considering: namely, they both involve one hero giving a gift to another, and then the immediate reciprocation of that gift. Before we turn to these two analogous scenes, let us first introduce the one on which we will be focused. It comes after the above-mentioned exposition of lineage delivered by Glaukos' and Diomedes' recognition-scene speech:

Ὣς ἄρα φωνήσαντε καθ᾽ ἵππων ἀΐξαντε
χεῖράς τ᾽ ἀλλήλων λαβέτην καὶ πιστώσαντο·[147]
ἔνθ᾽ αὖτε Γλαύκῳ Κρονίδης φρένας ἐξέλετο Ζεύς,
ὃς πρὸς Τυδεΐδην Διομήδεα τεύχε᾽ ἄμειβε
χρύσεα χαλκείων, ἑκατόμβοι᾽ ἐννεαβοίων

Il. 6.230–236

"But let us exchange panoplies with one another, so that they might
know that we boast to be paternal guest-friends."
And so, the two having spoken, jumped down from their horses
and took the hands of the other and trusted each other.
And then Zeus, son of Kronos, stole away the mind from Glaukos,
he exchanged panoplies with Diomedes, son of Tydeus,
gold for the price of bronze, a hecatomb for nine oxen.[148]

The first instance (both earliest in terms of the internal chronology of the story as well as being the first to appear in the poem) which provides us with a structural analogue occurs in an embedded speech. Diomedes,

[147] On the word *pistôsanto* see Graziosi and Haubold *ad loc*. Cf. *FlgrE* s.v. *pistôsasthai;* cf. also *Il.* 19.191 where Agamemnon says that they will *orkia pista tamômen* "let us make faithful oaths."

[148] Interestingly, the translation in Stoevesandt 2008: *ad loc*. renders the Gk. *teuchea* with Germ. Waffen, 'weapons'.

after hearing Glaukos' noble lineage, rejoices (*gêthêsen*, *Il.* 6.212) and says:

> ἦ ῥά νύ μοι ξεῖνος πατρώϊός ἐσσι παλαιός·
> Οἰνεὺς γάρ ποτε δῖος ἀμύμονα Βελλεροφόντην
> ξείνισ᾽ ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἐείκοσιν ἤματ᾽ ἐρύξας·
> οἳ δὲ καὶ ἀλλήλοισι πόρον ξεινήϊα καλά·
> Οἰνεὺς μὲν ζωστῆρα δίδου φοίνικι φαεινόν,
> Βελλεροφόντης δὲ χρύσεον δέπας ἀμφικύπελλον
> καί μιν ἐγὼ κατέλειπον ἰὼν ἐν δώμασ᾽ ἐμοῖσι.
>
> *Il.* 6.214–221

> "It seems that you are my old paternal guest-friend;
> For divine Oineus once hosted blameless Bellerophon
> in his halls, having kept him for twenty days.
> And they gave each other beautiful guest-gifts.
> Oineus gave a war-belt, shining red,
> and Bellerophon a golden two-handed cup,[149]
> and coming [here], I left it behind at my house."

The second analogue occurs in the following book, between Aias and Hektor after their duel has been cut short by Zeus, who sent messengers

[149] For a recent discussion of this cup type in the archaeological records, see Bloedow 2007.

and night to stop the fight so that neither hero would die (*Il.* 7.273–282). At the end of their duel, Hektor says:

> δῶρα δ᾽ ἄγ᾽ ἀλλήλοισι περικλυτὰ δώομεν ἄμφω...
> Ὣς ἄρα φωνήσας δῶκε ξίφος ἀργυρόηλον
> σὺν κολεῷ τε φέρων καὶ ἐϋτμήτῳ τελαμῶνι·
> Αἴας δὲ ζωστῆρα δίδου φοίνικι φαεινόν
>
> *Il.* 7.299; 303–305

> "But come, let us both give glorious gifts to each other..."
> And, so, having spoken, he gave a silver-studded sword
> with both the sheath and well-cut belt.
> And Aias gave a war-belt, shining red.

Right away we notice the dissimilarity of language between the original passage and the two analogues. In the two analogous scenes the nouns and verbs used by the poet are expressly related both to gifts and to the act of giving. We find *xeineion* (*Il.* 6.216), *didômi* (*Il.* 6.216, 7.299, 7.303, 7.305), *dôron* (*Il.* 7.299). The first, as we noted above is the only noun to which we can safely ascribe a specific type of gift giving: it is etymologically connected to the guest-host relationship. The latter words, though not intrinsically connected to some specific type of gift giving, are both etymologically related to the act of giving in general. Both come from the same root, **deh$_3$*(*r/n*)-, which has been

reconstructed as meaning in its verbal form as "to give" and in its nominal form as "gift".[150] When considering other, non-analogous, exchanges (in which the gift is not immediately reciprocated), we also find in each case the use of one or both reflexes of the **deh$_3$(r/n)-* root.

This, however, does not hold true for the famous exchange between Diomedes and Glaukos. Instead, we find the verb (*ep*)*ameibô* and then object-noun *teuchea*. Given that the institution is commonly called 'gift exchange', this use of *ameibô* ("to exchange") seems not to pose any real issues in our interpretation of the passage as one of regular gift giving.[151] Under further scrutiny, however, we find that this verb is problematic. Etymologically we are on uncertain footing with this verb: modern etymologies reconstruct the root as PIE **h$_2$meig^{w}* ("to exchange").[152] This root is not unproblematic, however, for it is constructed on the basis of a single reflex in the daughter languages (*viz.* Gk. *ameibô*) and lacks any cognates against which one might compare the meaning.[153] The strength of the comparative method depends on just that: comparison. The

[150] Mallory and Addams 2006: 270, 273. Benveniste (1973: 54) gives the root of both as **do*.

[151] To add to this problem of understanding, it does not help that our word 'exchange' comes not from Greek, but from a Latin root, *cambire* (perhaps itself of Celtic origin), meaning 'to barter', which has clear economic implications.

[152] On the etymology see Beekes and van Beek 2009: *s.v.* ἀμείβω; Rix 1998 *s.v.* ἀμείβω

[153] The merit of these reconstructions has been rightly questioned by e.g. Seebold 1999 (with specific reference to Rix).

problems which result from reconstruction from only a single reflex are evident when we consider the wide semantic fields of reflexes in a number of daughter languages.[154] With only one reflex for the proposed root of *ameibô,* etymologies reconstruct the PIE root as meaning the same thing as the Greek reflex. Problematically, however, the definition of 'exchange (of corporeal objects)' is rooted in use much later than Homer.[155]

Ameibô appears throughout the *Iliad*, occurring no fewer than 170 times (including prefixed forms such as *epameibô*). Instead of predominantly occurring in exchange scenarios of physical items, be they gifts or otherwise, 125 (73.5%) of these instances are the narrator introducing a verbal reply with a handful of formulaic phrases which seem not to bear any relation to the nature of the reply or to the speech

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[154] To take an example of a word we have already come across, PrSlav. *rečь 'speech' survives in various Slavic daughters as meaning 'speech' (OCS, Ru.), 'word' (SCr.), 'language' (Bulg., USrb.), and 'thing' (Sln., Pl.). Although all these reflexes are somewhat related, they vary enough to illustrate the problems which might arise: if, for instance, only Slovene and Polish survived, the PrSlav. root would have been reconstructed with a different meaning.

[155] In some circumstances *ameibô* can mean 'to repay' (*e.g. Od.* 24.285; Pindar *Pyth.* 7.19; Aesch. *Ag.* 729, *Ch.* 793–794; Eur. *Cyc.* 312), but the verb is never used in a context analogous to ours until, at the earliest, Eur. *Alc.* 46 (438 BCE):

> Θα. πῶς οὖν ὑπὲρ γῆς ἐστι κοὐ κάτω χθονός;
> Απ. δάμαρτ' <u>ἀμείψας</u>, ἣν σὺ νῦν ἥκεις μέτα.
>
> THA: How is he above the earth, and not under the ground?
> AP: He gave his wife <u>in</u> <u>exchange</u> [sc. for his life], she is now coming to you below.

to which the reply is made.[156] Indeed, speech, especially in the *Iliad,* plays an important role in defining power relations between people.[157] Many of the remaining uses of *ameibô* are related not to corporeal objects being exchanged, but to instances where the essential meaning of something like 'passing back and forth' is required, without the exchange of an object.[158]

When we consider the instances during which *ameibô* is used of corporeal objects we see that it is used exclusively with panoplies (*teuchea, entea*). In Book 14 we encounter a scene describing the exchange of armour among the Greeks:

Ὣς ἔφαθ', οἳ δ' ἄρα τοῦ μάλα μὲν κλύον ἠδὲ πίθοντο·
τοὺς δ' αὐτοὶ βασιλῆες ἐκόσμεον οὐτάμενοί περ
Τυδεΐδης Ὀδυσεύς τε καὶ Ἀτρεΐδης Ἀγαμέμνων·
οἰχόμενοι δ' ἐπὶ πάντας ἀρήϊα τεύχε' ἄμειβον·
ἐσθλὰ μὲν ἐσθλὸς ἔδυνε, χέρεια δὲ χείρονι δόσκεν.[159]

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[156] For example, the same formulaic phrase may introduce either a positive or negative response, either a superior or inferior replying to the other, etc. Similarly, different formulae may also be used for the same response-type.

[157] Bourdieu 1991: 37; Martin 1989 : 22–26; Stocking (forthcoming).

[158] See, e.g. *Il.* 1.604 where it is used of antiphonal singing; 6.339 where it is used to describe how victory passes back and forth between men; 9.409 where the word means 'to leave, quit', with reference to the soul (*psyche*) leaving the body of a slain hero, perhaps returning whence it came in a cyclical conception of the soul.

[159] The idea that one must fight in armour equal to their skill is illustrated by Achilles, who cannot fight without armour (*Il.* 18.188), even though presumably he must have access to Patroklos' armour, or would have been able to, like the Greeks in this scene, acquire from the camp a set of armour.

Il. 14.378–382

So, he spoke, and they listened to him well and obeyed.
The kings themselves marshalled the men, though
they were wounded, Tydeus' son, Odysseus, and Atreus' son
Agamemnon.
Going through all the men, they exchanged war panoplies:
Good men wore good arms, and they gave the worse armour to
the worse men.

This exchange is brought about because many of the heroes have been injured and cannot fight. The implications of this changing-of-armour will be discussed below. Later in the poem, after Hektor has slain Patroklos and stripped him of Achilles' armour, we read that:

οἳ προτὶ ἄστυ φέρον κλυτὰ τεύχεα Πηλεΐωνος.
στὰς δ' ἀπάνευθε μάχης πολυδακρύου ἔντε' ἄμειβεν·

Il. 17.190–191

He was carrying the glorious armour of Peleus' son to the city.
Standing apart from tearful battle he changed armour.

What both of these passages show, I argue, is that *ameibô* is not a word connected to gift giving. Indeed, its only uses with a corporeal object in the entire poem are connected to exchanging (and, especially, the idea

of changing into) the armour of someone else, and especially connected with the idea of changing into better armour (i.e. the armour of a better fighter). Indeed, this reading of the use of (*ep*)*ameibô* is not only rooted in the textual use of the verb elsewhere, as shown above, but also the most sensical given the situation. The two must wear the armour of the other for the lines proclaiming that they will show off their bond to make sense (*Il.* 6.230–231): without wearing the other's armour, they cannot boast to others of their inherited friendship, for nobody would see the evidence of it.

When we look outside of the poem for evidence of this reading of *ameibô*, we find much the same: in the Homeric *Hymns,* Hesiod, and the early Greek poets, there is no use of *ameibô* to mean the exchange of corporeal goods between parties participating in gift giving. Apart from its use in the standard formulaic response-phrase, it occurs only once in poetry of the early hexameter tradition with a deviant meaning, in a line stressing a change of ontological sorts:

> Ὣς εἰποῦσα θεὰ μέγεθος καὶ εἶδος ἄμειψε
> γῆρας ἀπωσαμένη, περί τ᾽ ἀμφί τε κάλλος ἄητο.
>
> *H.H. Ceres* 275–276

> So, having spoken, the goddess changed [her] stature and form, driving away old age, and beauty breathed all around [her].

To this we can add that in the Lyric poets we find much the same use of *ameibô*. Solon (*ca.* 640–560),[160] for instance, provides two examples of non-responsive usages. In fr. 2 (1–2) he writes:

εἴην δὴ τότ᾽ ἐγὼ Φολεγάνδριος ἢ Σικινήτης
ἀντί γ᾽ Ἀθηναίου πατρίδ᾽ ἀμειψάμενος·

"Would that I were a Pholegandrian or Skinite
instead of an Athenian, changing [my] nationality."

While in fr. 27 (5–6) he writes:

τῇ τριτάτῃ δὲ γένειον ἀεξομένων ἔτι γυίων
λαχνοῦται, χροιῆς ἄνθος ἀμειβομένης.

"In the third, with this body still growing, his chin
grows hair, and with skin changing brightness."

In these later examples we can see that the idea of a mutational change is tied up in the meaning of *ameibô*. Without this meaning of change, the lines would lose meaning.

[160] Dates from Allan 2019: 130.

My contention, then, based on these representative examples, is that the word *ameibô* and its prefixed forms, in the early Greek hexameter tradition and in lyric, does not semantically mean 'to exchange physical goods' as both ancient and contemporary critics have interpreted. Instead, it seems to me that the traditional meaning of the word, when used outside of formulaic-response phrases, is one related to ontological change, whether or not that be physical or 'true' ontological change as Malabou classifies it.[161] And so, we have, I think, two options for our interpretation of this passage at *Il.* 6.230–236. On the one hand, we might argue that the passage is a later interpolation from a time during which *ameibô* was commonly used in scenarios of exchange between two (or more) parties. Indeed, since there are no external quotations of this line from before the composition of Plato's *Symposium* (which is argued to have been composed somewhere between 384–379 BC),[162] or mentions of Diomedes and Glaukos together before Aristotle, it is tempting to

[161] Malabou 2012, *passim*. In her essay Malabou (14–18) cites examples from Ovid and Kafka as non-total examples of metamorphoses, or ontological change: her argument, that the person changed still retains their inner life, is convincing, and in our example of Demeter above, is clearly applicable as Demeter does not lose her inner life during either change. The concept of possession does, however, I think, pose problems for the interpretation Malabou offers: she considers merely instances of trauma which result in permanent change, a change from which there is no return, but in instances of possession in the *Iliad*, the characters seem to suffer no characterological change afterward, but during the possession do lose control of both their body (and mind, if we read this from a dualist perspective).

[162] Dover 1980: 10.

speculate that the passage crept into the poem at a later date.[163] Of course, since there is no sustained tradition of referencing the line or characters after Plato and Aristotle, it is not implausible that the scene was simply not mentioned in literature in general.[164] Our second recourse is to explain the passage's deviant language with an appeal to internal poetic aesthetics, on the assumption that the lines are part of a traditional story and have meaning within the poem. This approach, I think, allows us for a profitable re-reading of the scene.

The recent work of both Derek Collins and Alex Purves provides readings of other scenes which highlight the ontological change resultant from the use of armour. In *Immortal Armor,* Collins advances the argument that the wearing of armour, especially in the passage cited above (*Il.* 17.190–191) in which Hektor equips himself with the armour of the slain Patroklos (the armour is, of course, genealogically connected to the gods: it was fashioned by Hephaistos, given to Peleus on his

[163] See, e.g. Seaford (1994: 338–344), who discusses the relatively later composition of Book 9, and a potential Athenian origin of Book 9, which shares language with Aeschylus. Aeschylus, however, does not use *ameibô* in the same way our passage does, but this is of course not proof that the verb was not used by that time to mean an exchange of goods between persons. It seems, however, clumsy to depart so far from the standard terminology of gifts and giving on behalf of a later poet. Furthermore, it could be argued that Aeschylus shares language with Homer, instead of the other way around.

[164] This lack of literary trace seems to call into question Calder's (1984: 31) quote from above implying that the expression was common or current. Of course, the passage might have been cited in works which do not survive, but if it were common, we might expect it to appear more than twice in the extant sources.

wedding day as a gift, and then given by Peleus to Achilles, before it is lent to Patroklos), results in a religious possession, and in Hektor's case, possession by Ares:

> …δῦ δε μιν Ἄρης
> Δεινὸς ἐνυάλιος, πλῆσθεν δ᾽ ἄρα οἱ μέλε᾽ ἐντὸς
> ἀλκῆς καὶ σθένεος.
>
> *Il.* 17.210–212

> …and Ares entered him,
> The terrible war-like one, and inside him, his limbs were filled
> With *alkê* and *sthenos*.[165]

As Collins continues, "once a divinity is inside a person, he is thought to lose consciousness of self, his self-awareness, and the divinity is believed to work through him."[166] This possession-by-armour is precisely an ontological change—the 'host', in this case Hektor, is no longer himself. Collins believes that this phenomenon of possession-by-armour is implicit in instances during which it is not narrated, and that it was a common cultic acceptance in Archaic Greece. He argues that

[165] Both Greek terms, *alkê* and *sthenos*, are left untranslated here, as they both mean 'force', but each term has a slightly different meaning: Benveniste 2016: 361 defines *alkê* as spiritual force' and *sthenos* as 'physical force'. See in general Benveniste 2016: 361–371 and Stocking (forthcoming) for discussion of force-terms in Homer.
[166] Collins 1998: 17.

Patroklos disobeys the warning Achilles gives[167] because in putting on Achilles' armour, he is possessed and undergoes the same sort of ontological change as is explicitly narrated of Hektor (*Il.* 17.210ff).[168] Thus, for Collins, donning armour is an act which is equal to an ontological change of the self in the poetics of Homeric epic (and also perhaps in the real world): one becomes possessed and acted *through*.

In addition to this possession proposed by Collins, we can argue that the equipping of armour results in another sort of ontological change: one where the person and armour become a unified whole, rather than merely conjoined subject and an object. Alex Purves, in her recent article "Ajax and Other Objects: Homer's Vibrant Materialism", writes "that for Homeric heroes, and for Ajax in particular, there is a special sense in which arms and body can merge, allowing for a moving boundary between inner and outer self, as well as between human and nonhuman materials."[169] Melissa Mueller, in discussing the epic hero "as a perfectly blended person-weapon," cites Geometric vase painters' tendency to depict warriors' bodies as shields as visual evidence of this blending of person and arms, whereby "warriors *are* their weapons."[170] In these

[167] At *Il.* 16.83–87 Achilles tells Patroklos only to drive the Trojans from the Greek ships and not to pursue combat after that is accomplished.
[168] Collins 1998: 36.
[169] Purves 2015: 83–84.
[170] Mueller 2016: 34–35; her italics.

views, when a Homeric warrior puts on his armour, he undergoes a change which results in his body and arms becoming part of one another in a unified whole. In essence, he becomes something else.

Furthermore, putting on armour can result in another type of change in the person: one in which they effectively become someone else. This change of identity is most clearly visible in Patroklos, who asks for Achilles' armour so that the "Trojans imagine me to be you" (*Il.* 16.41–42 "ἐμέ σοὶ ἴσκοντες… | Τρῶες"),[171] thereby evincing fear in the Trojans and hope in the Greeks, upon whom a great "grief has fallen" (*Il.* 16.22 "τοῖον γὰρ ἄχος βεβίηκεν Ἀχαιούς"). This impersonation is even able to result in Achilles receiving the *timê* (honour in the form of goods) and *kudos* (glory) for Patroklos' deeds while in the armour (*Il.* 16.83–85), suggesting that for this purpose Patroklos does not just impersonate Achilles, but *becomes* him in the sense that Patroklos' actions will be considered to be Achilles'. As Yamagata writes, "the idea of clothing as means of distinguishing different groups of people or individuals from one another is deeply embedded in Homer's poetry."[172] Indeed, in the *Odyssey*, Odysseus' clothing reflects his changing identity throughout

[171] The Greek *iskontes* is a participle, but due to the infelicities of English I have used a finite verb form. The original Greek includes a main verb (*aposchontai* 'let them be kept at bay') which is omitted here.
[172] Yamagata 2005: 539.

the poem.[173] And in the *Iliad*, "the warrior's identity is inseparably bound up with his armour," suggesting that when Patroklos dons Achilles' armour, he undergoes an identity shift. So, the use of (*ep*)*aimebô* in the Diomedes and Glaukos episode can be read as implying some sort of impending change in the participants.

When we direct our attention away from the verb and onto the object of exchange in the episode, we are faced with a second problem. We are told that Diomedes and Glaukos exchange with one another full panoplies of armour (*Il.* 6.235). When we consider all gifts given between mortals, we realise that the repertoire of martial gifts given does not include panoplies. As Donlan writes, in addition to belts, martial gifts given by mortals consist "of swords, breastplates, spears, or bows."[174] The only instances of full panoplies being given as gifts are from the gods. Achilles' original set of armour, in which Patroklos went to his death, was given by the gods to Peleus on the occasion of his marriage to Thetis (*Il.* 18.82–85). Achilles refers to the set of armour explicitly as a gift (*dôra, Il.* 18.84) in this passage.[175] The second instance of a set of armour being given as a gift is at the opening of Book 19: Thetis herself comes bearing

[173] Yamagata 2005: 540.
[174] Donlan 1989: 11.
[175] Interestingly at *Il.* 17.192–197, the narrator does not explicitly call the armour a gift given to Peleus nor mention the occasion on which it was given.

the gifts of the god (ἵκανε θεοῦ πάρα δῶρα φέρουσα, *Il.* 18.3), by which the panoply made by Hephaistos in the previous Book is meant.[176] Furthermore, whenever the poet refers to a set of armour as a gift, either in embedded speech or in narratorial voice, the referent is only ever god-given panoplies (*Il.* 19.368; 20.268).[177] Not only does the passage lack a traditional gift giving verb, but also a traditional gift!

Having shown that the episode between Diomedes and Glaukos is, *contra* current interpretations, not simply an instance of gift giving, the question remains: what, then, is the scene supposed to be? I believe we might look to instances of armour changing hands between mortals for an answer: the practice of stripping a defeated opponent's armour, which is by far the most common method in the *Iliad* by which panoplies change hands. This practice is essentially one of exchange: the victor of the fight, as a token of the *timê* he has earned by virtue of besting his

[176] Canevaro (2018: 53) writes, "notably, though Hephaistos creates gifts, he is never emphasized as the giver." She notes (2018:53) that it is Thetis who gives Achilles the armour he has made and Hera who offers to give Hypnos a throne made by Hephaistos.

[177] Graziosi and Haubold (2010: *ad loc.*) comment that this gold panoply might be the reason for Diomedes' asking whether he was addressing a god or not; for gold armour is divine and thus perhaps a gift from Hephaistos (following the scholia, which calls the armour of Glaukos Ἡφαιστότευκτα: ΣΤ *ad* 6.234[b1]). Problematic for this theory is that when the poem makes mention of Achilles' armour, its divine origins are recorded (*e.g. Il.* 18.83–84; 19.3, 18, 367; 20.265, 268; 21.165, 594). One would think that the divinity of the armour would have likewise been recorded in this instance if it were true. Thus, I believe that the armour only seems to be divine, rather than being actually divine.

opponent, is afforded the right to strip the slain enemy of his armour. In so doing, the victor is able both to increase his material possessions and his honour. It is understood that the victor will abide by the ethical expectations of a hero (within the poem, at least—for there is no evidence that this heroic 'ideal' was universally accepted by all Greeks living at some point during the formation of the *Iliad*) and allow the slain opponent to be afforded the proper funeral rites. This ethical custom is made explicit by Hektor:

> ἀλλ᾽ ἄγε δεῦρο θεοὺς ἐπιδώμεθα: τοὶ γὰρ ἄριστοι
> μάρτυροι ἔσσονται καὶ ἐπίσκοποι ἁρμονιάων·
> οὐ γὰρ ἐγώ σ᾽ ἔκπαγλον ἀεικιῶ, αἴ κεν ἐμοὶ Ζεὺς
> δώῃ καμμονίην, σὴν δὲ ψυχὴν ἀφέλωμαι·
> ἀλλ᾽ ἐπεὶ ἄρ κέ σε συλήσω κλυτὰ τεύχε᾽ Ἀχιλλεῦ
> νεκρὸν Ἀχαιοῖσιν δώσω πάλιν· ὣς δὲ σὺ ῥέζειν.
>
> *Il.* 22.254–259

> "but come, let us take as witnesses the gods here: for they will be
> The best witnesses and observers of [our] agreements.
> For I will not treat you, violent one, unjustly, if Zeus gives
> Me victory and I take away your life-force.
> But after I strip you of your famous armour, Achilles,

> I will give back your corpse to the Achaeans. Do you promise likewise?"[178]

This passage, spoken between the bitterest of enemies (at least from Achilles' point of view; Hektor does not bear the same anger toward Achilles) makes it clear that there is an accepted ethical obligation between opposing combatants. And indeed, this ethical custom is observed throughout the *Iliad*, except in the notable instance of this passage, in which Achilles, shortly before killing and defiling Hektor's body (*Il.* 22.367–404), rejects the offer extended by Hektor (*Il.* 22.261–272).[179]

To be sure, the scene does affirm and exemplify the duty, which those bound by *xenia* must obey, of friendship and its hierarchical place in a scale of ethics: the bond clearly is superior to the dissolution of bonds

[178] One also thinks of *Il.* 17.201ff where Zeus makes a comment that Hektor should not have taken (*Il.* 17.205, *ou kata kosmon*) the armour of slain Patroklos. But this instance, however, is exceptional since the armour is a divine possession which did not belong to Patroklos, and so is technically not his to lose. Furthermore, in this scene we can read that the implication of stripping one's enemy's armour is perhaps something based in merit. In this case, Hektor gains possession of Achilles' armour, the armour of a man whom he did not best, and therefore, armour which he does not merit.

[179] Achilles' rejection of this custom is likely rooted in his rejection of humanity brought about by the death of Patroklos. Not long before this, the narrator employs an animalistic simile to describe Achilles, likening him to a dog (*Il.* 22.189–193), and in his response to Hektor's request (*Il.* 22.254–259), Achilles himself employs an animalistic simile (*Il.* 22.260–265). This descent into the animalistic is most expressed in Achilles' desire to eat Hektor's flesh raw (*Il.* 22.346–347).

brought about by war.[180] Of course, this does not explain the language of the passage, but merely reduces it to its socio-political function. I argue that what seems to be happening in this passage is a deception—a deception which takes place on two levels. On the one hand, the poet of the text structures the episode so that it mimics, though not exactly, the conventional literary representation of guest-host type-scenes. When the two heroes meet, "what ensues…is a dialogue that seems perhaps more fitting in a hospitality scene. For Diomedes' inquiry after Glaukos' name is the first question a host asks of his guest."[181] Especially troubling, however, for a literal interpretation of the episode as a banal hospitality scene transplanted from the home to the battlefield,[182] is that these type-scenes, "including… gift giving" are "all composed in highly formulaic diction."[183] What this means, I believe, is that, on the one

[180] We might compare this episode to the gifts of Hektor and Aias, who exchange with one another gifts at the end of their duel and part in friendship, "*en philotêti*" (*Il.* 7.299–302). Notably, however, Aias and Hektor return to fighting one another after they give gifts to one another (see Ch. 2)

[181] Newton 2009: 59–60. Reece 1993: ch.1 discusses at length the conventions of Homeric hospitality scenes.

[182] Newton 2009: 61 describes the battlefield as a metaphorical house of Diomedes: "Glaukos has entered Diomedes' house, identified here as the space between the armies in which Diomedes has been freely ranging. Exceptionally eager for a fight, Glaukos has burst into this zone and stands at the threshold of Diomedes' domain." Writing on Virginia Woolf, Simone (2017: 95) writes that "as a guest requires as host, which in turn implies some sense of ownership of place," further suggesting that the battlefield can be conceived as being symbolically (or really) owned by Diomedes during his *aristeia*.

[183] Reece 1993: 5. Even though Reece argues for the highly formulaic language of these type-scenes, he includes *teuchea,* illustrated by our deviant scene, as an example of a

hand, the loose adherence to the literary conventions, and on the other hand, the unformulaic language which appears at precisely the height of this scene signal that we are not in fact dealing with a transposed-but-conventional hospitality scene. Instead, Diomedes, by exploiting the accidental (to him, but surely not to the poet) encounter with and recognition of an enemy with whom he shares a two-generation-old bond of *xenia*, is able to initiate a symbolic procedure of armour stripping.

This process of symbolic armour stripping is brought about by a number of factors. As mentioned above, full panoplies are only given as gifts by gods and described as gifts by characters and narrator if they were god-given. The most common method by which panoplies change hands between mortals in the *Iliad* is by stripping a defeated enemy in battle. Since this practice of armour stripping is economic,[184] the narrator's comments at *Il.* 6.234 can be understood as the reaction to the solely real (i.e. not symbolic) economic side of this episode.

That the superior warrior wins the armour of his opponent suggests that Diomedes and Glaukos part as equals, given that they each get to

guest-gift (Reece 1993: 36). Furthermore, it should be noted that even though Reece cites this example as a guest-gift, he does not include this scene itself as a metaphorical guest-host scene.

[184] Armour stripping participates in both real and symbolic economy: the victor wins a valuable metal, as well as the symbolic capital attendant to his being victorious in battle.

participate in the symbolic stripping of the other. Indeed, as we have seen, it is made clear in the text that warriors will only use armour that reflects their own martial ability (i.e. good warriors will not use armour that is beneath their status). In changing into the armour of the other, Diomedes and Glaukos admit non-verbally that they are at least equals, or that they view each other as better than themselves.

In this case, contrary to critics' fixation upon who came out the symbolic victor of this exchange, we are left with a stalemate. (Or else, each participant believes the other to be better, suggesting a subjective hierarchy rather than the objective one needed to assert that one of the two is the 'victor'). Both participants in the episode leave with *timê*, they each obtain the armour of their enemy-turned-friend, which can be seen as a declaration of martial equality, as well, given that the wearing of armour, as we saw above, seems to be linked with a sense of merit. Does Diomedes have more *timê* simply because the armour he stripped is more monetarily valuable? Does Glaukos 'win' because his prize is from one of the foremost Greek warriors, one who was able to wound a god? Indeed, Diomedes is the Greek who is most active, killing the highest number of men in the poem. Ultimately, I believe that this reading of the scene adds to the understanding of the episode: we should not argue

that it is only a gift giving scene. Rather, through a close reading of the scene's language, we are able to add dimension to our reading.

Conclusion

What I hope to have shown in the three chapters above is that the study of the gift in the *Iliad* (and in Homeric poetry in general) does not support the current structuralist theories or does not allow for a strict structuralist interpretation. In the first chapter, I illustrated how an approach which aims to show that the language of the poem is reflective of the idea that gifts given in certain situations were marked by language. I introduced the argument that the specific words were not indicative of a solidified idea of different forms of gift, but rather were aesthetic, used to highlight a significant scene. For instance, when the poet uses a non-standard word (i.e. another word than *dôron*) for a gift, the effect, as the Russian Formalists argued, would serve to draw the audience toward the scene for being different.

In the second chapter, I showed that the idea of a universal understanding of the gift in the *Iliad* seems to be incompatible with the standard theories of the gift, which argues either that gifts are truly freely given or at least believed to be freely given by the participants of the

exchange, which differentiates gifts from outright economic transactions.

In the final chapter, I applied the conclusions from the previous chapters in a close reading of the Diomedes and Glaukos episode in Book 6. By being attendant to the language of the scene, I showed that it is different from every other instance of gift giving in the *Iliad*. By comparing the scene's language with other similar language, I argued for a novel reading of the scene which adds to the interpretation of the problematic exchange.

Bibliography

Abbreviations of Journals

BICS: Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies

BJA: British Journal of Aesthetics

CP: Classical Philology

CR: The Classical Review

CW: Classical World

JHS: Journal of Hellenic Studies

JIES: The Journal of Indo-European Studies

RhM: Rheinisches Museum

TAPA: Transactions of the American Philological Association

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