

# SCIENZE DELL'ANTICHITÀ

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*La Rivista è organo del Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Antichità della Sapienza Università di Roma.*

*Nella sua veste attuale rispecchia l'articolazione, proposta da Enzo Lippolis, in tre fascicoli, il primo dei quali raccoglie studi e ricerche del Dipartimento, gli altri due sono dedicati a tematiche specifiche, con la prospettiva di promuovere una conoscenza complessiva dei vari aspetti delle società antiche.*

*Le espressioni culturali, sociali, politiche e artistiche, come le strutture economiche, tecnologiche e ambientali, sono considerate parti complementari e interagenti dei diversi sistemi insediativi di cui sono esaminate funzioni e dinamiche di trasformazione. Le differenti metodologie applicate e la pluralità degli ambiti presi in esame (storici, archeologici, filologici, epigrafici, ecologico-naturalistici) non possono che contribuire a sviluppare la qualità scientifica, il confronto e il dialogo, nella direzione di una sempre più proficua interazione reciproca. In questo senso si spiega anche l'ampio contesto considerato, sia dal punto di vista cronologico, dalla preistoria al medioevo, sia da quello geografico, con una particolare attenzione rivolta alle culture del Mediterraneo, del Medio e del Vicino Oriente.*

I prossimi fascicoli del volume 28 (2022) accoglieranno le seguenti tematiche:

1. Ricerche del Dipartimento.
2. Produrre per gli dei. L'economia per il sacro nell'Italia preromana (VII-II sec. a.C.).
3. Scrittura epigrafica e sacro in Italia dall'Antichità al Medioevo. Luoghi, oggetti e frequenzazioni.

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GIUSEPPE LENTINI

ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION IN HOMER:  
THE RECONCILIATION SCENE OF *ILIAD* 19 AS A CASE STUDY\*

Though often criticized by old “analysis”, the Reconciliation scene in *Iliad* 19 is a fundamental turning point in the plot of the poem: while it describes a formal re-integration of Achilles within the Achaean army, as he puts an end to the wrath against Agamemnon and rejoins the battle, it conveys very effectively, at the same time, Achilles’ exceptionality and the persistence of his isolation from the rest of the Achaeans<sup>1</sup>.

Some parts of the scene have attracted special attention: the so called ‘apology’ by Agamemnon, in particular, famously analyzed by E.R. Dodds in his Sather Lectures, has been regularly discussed in treatments of moral responsibility in archaic ethics<sup>2</sup>. The mythical narrative at the center of Agamemnon’s speech has been the point of departure for an investigation of myths about ‘being born’ in classical antiquity<sup>3</sup>. The remarkable insistence on eating and drinking, as well as Odysseus’ eccentric language at ll. 221-224, have also often been discussed by scholars, not always in positive terms<sup>4</sup>.

Such studies, however, have typically focused on specific sections of the single speeches in the scene, often analyzing them almost in isolation. As a consequence, they have rarely devoted adequate attention to the different aspects of communication emerging from the whole verbal exchange among Achilles, Agamemnon and Odysseus, which constitutes the central episode of Book 19<sup>5</sup>. After Achilles has summoned the assembly (l. 40), we have a series of seven speeches<sup>6</sup>. By adopting a method that combines linguistic pragmatics, (Im)politeness Theory, Discourse Analysis, and Pragmatics of Human Communication, I will approach the scene as if it were an example of *real* conversation<sup>7</sup>. I will seek to

\* I wish to thank Håkan Tell, for his helpful suggestions on an earlier draft of this paper, as well as the anonymous referees of the journal for their useful comments.

<sup>1</sup> For the analytic approach, cf. HENTZE 1883, pp. 5-6; LEAF 1900-02, II, pp. 317-318; PAGE 1959, pp. 315-318. Page’s approach is rightly criticized by EDWARDS 1991, p. 239. On the theme of Achilles’ isolation in this scene cf. for example HEATH 2005, pp. 127-128.

<sup>2</sup> DODDS 1951, ch. 1. In addition to Dodds, cf. also ADKINS 1960, pp. 51-52, and two other well-known books, again from the Sather Lectures series, LLOYD-JONES 1971, ch. 1; WILLIAMS 2008, ch. 3. Cf. also VERSNEL 2011, pp. 163-179. For further bibliography cf. CORAY 2016, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> BETTINI 1998.

<sup>4</sup> The insistence on the theme of eating and drinking has been harshly criticized by the analytic critics mentioned above; the relevance of that theme to the main action of the poem can be, however, very easily demonstrated: cf. GRETHLEIN 2005; LENTINI 2006, pp. 125-141. See below for Odysseus’ metaphor at ll. 221-224.

<sup>5</sup> The most notable exception is SCODEL 2008, pp. 117-124, whose views I will have occasion of discussing below; unlike the analysis I present here, however, her approach is more inspired by social psychology than by linguistic pragmatics. On the negotiation about the leadership within the Greek army emerging from the scene cf. also LENTINI 2006, pp. 101-108; for other treatments of the scene and the characterization of the heroes in it cf. WORMAN 2002, pp. 71-73; LOUDEN 2006, pp. 144-148; PORTER 2019, § 4.2.10.

<sup>6</sup> The succession of the speeches is the following: Achilles (I): ll. 56-75; Agamemnon (I): ll. 78-144; Achilles (II): ll. 146-153; Odysseus (I): ll. 155-183; Agamemnon (II): ll. 185-197; Achilles (III): ll. 199-214; Odysseus (II): ll. 216-237.

<sup>7</sup> Some basic knowledge of research done in the disciplines mentioned above is assumed: for a presentation of some relevant notions and their application to Homeric poetry cf. LENTINI 2013; 2018 and 2020. One of the consequences of

highlight the full pragmatic context of the speeches and the way they relate to each other, so as to gain a better appreciation of the characteristics of the language used by Achilles as well as by the other heroes involved in the verbal exchange.

### 1. ACHILLES' "APOLOGY"

If we look at the general context of the whole verbal exchange, we discover, for example, that the best known passage of the book, that is, Agamemnon's apology, is in fact preceded by a much shorter speech by Achilles, which is in itself a kind of apology (ll. 56-68); but the way Agamemnon's apology relates to Achilles' speech has often been neglected.

In a very stimulating discussion of apology as a case study in Discourse Analysis, R. Lakoff has shown that there are many different instantiations of the speech-act of apology in our culture, each denoting a different degree of the speaker's involvement in the event he/she apologizes for<sup>8</sup>. I am reproducing here Lakoff's sample of possible ways of apologizing (with speaker's attitudes briefly summarized in parentheses), not because I believe that the way Homeric heroes apologize is identical to ours<sup>9</sup>; but because it offers a useful frame of reference for our discussion:

- I'm sorry I Xed (speaker's regret).
- I guess I Xed (speaker's responsibility).
- I shouldn't have Xed (speaker's awareness that the act was wrong).
- You must be pretty mad that I Xed (speaker's awareness that the addressee was hurt).
- I was a real jerk to X (puts the speaker one-down).
- ... and I'll never X again (promise that it won't happen again)<sup>10</sup>.

In the first nine lines of Achilles' speech (56-64), we can see that Achilles certainly expresses regret for what happened. However, he assigns equal responsibility for the quarrel to Agamemnon (νότ̄ περ ἀχνημένω κῆρ | θυμοβόρω ἔριδι μενεΐναμεν εἵνεκα κούρης, ll. 57-58). He does this politely, by referring indirectly to Agamemnon's, as well as his own, fault (the rhetorical interrogative, l. 56 ἦ ἄρ τι τόδ' ἀμφοτέροισιν ἄρειον... ;).

Not unlike what happens in Agamemnon's apology, also in Achilles' "apology" there is a feminine figure onto whom all the blame is projected. Achilles re-interprets the quarrel as a fight for a girl, a κούρη (l. 58, εἵνεκα κούρης) a view already expressed by Ajax in the Embassy scene (Il. 9. 637-638). Achilles goes on to say that he wishes Briseis had died soon after being captured (ll. 59-60). From this we can conclude that for Achilles not even the act of quarreling in itself was wrong; he rather expresses the wish that the object of the quarrel did not exist at all.

my approach is that I will be engaged in "reading the minds" of the characters, by attributing to them intentions and communicative strategies not necessarily made explicit in the text (on this process of "mind-reading" as an important aspect of engagement with fiction cf., in general, ZUNSHINE 2006 and, for classical literature, BUDELMANN - EASTERLING 2010 and BATTEZZATO 2021, with the bibliography cited at p. 189 n. 18). This perspective explains why I often speak about the characters as if they were real persons making "choices".

<sup>8</sup> LAKOFF 2015. Apology has received much scholarly attention in sociology, social psychology, pragmatics, and political studies; the bibliography is, therefore, overwhelming: cf. at least GOFFMAN 1971, pp. 95-187; TAVUCHIS 1991; JUCKER - TAAVITSAINEN 2008; MIHAI - THALER 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. SCODEL 2008, pp. 122-123, who convincingly concludes her discussion by stating that "remedial exchange in Homer is not primarily directed at affecting private and unofficial evaluations [...] it is directed at public honor, and seeks to restore the victim's face at minimal face-cost to offenders".

<sup>10</sup> LAKOFF 2015, p. 301.

For Achilles, this half-apology is arguably only an unavoidable step to join the Greek army again and, thus, to avenge Patroclus. Indeed, the remaining five lines of his speech belong to a totally different speech genre than the first part: here Achilles bids Agamemnon to urge on (ἄτρυνον) the Achaeans to fight (ll. 67-73)<sup>11</sup>.

νῦν δ' ἤτοι μὲν ἐγὼ παύω χόλον· οὐδέ τί με χρὴ  
 ἀσκελέως αἰεὶ μενεαινέμεν. ἀλλ' ἄγε θᾶσσον  
 ἄτρυνον πόλεμόνδε κάρη κομόωντας Ἀχαιοὺς,  
 ὄφρ' ἔτι καὶ Τρώων πειρήσομαι ἀντίον ἐλθῶν  
 αἴ κ' ἐθέλωσ' ἐπὶ νηυσὶν ἰαυεῖν· ἀλλὰ τιν' οἴω  
 ἀσπασίως αὐτῶν γόνυ κάμψειν, ὅς κε φύγησιν  
 δηῖου ἐκ πολέμοιο ὑπ' ἔγχεος ἡμετέροιο

Now I am making an end of my anger. It does not become me unrelentingly to rage on. Come, then! The more quickly drive on the flowing-haired Achaeans into the fighting, so that I may go up against the Trojans, and find out if they still wish to sleep out beside the ships. I think rather they will be glad to rest where they are, whoever among them gets away with his life from the fury of our spears' onset

First, I need to draw attention to the word ἄτρυνον in line 69: this verb and related terms will play a fundamental role in the whole ensuing verbal exchange. Notice also that Achilles does not put in doubt the fact that Agamemnon should be in charge of the troops, an aspect that will become a matter of negotiation in the scene: he simply wants to be able to enter the battle as soon as possible (θᾶσσον, l. 68). The communicative modality of ll. 70-73, about the Trojans who will be terrified by Achilles' appearance, is especially interesting. These lines are characterized by ironic understatements, as is evident from expressions like πειρήσομαι... αἴ κ' ἐθέλωσ' (of course the Trojans will not want to sleep outside beside the ships) and οἴω ("I think", but Achilles has no real doubts about the fact that the Trojans will prefer to rest)<sup>12</sup>. This is the self-confident sarcasm typical of the brave hero on the battlefield. As often observed by scholars working on the pragmatics of irony, irony can strengthen social bonds between speaker and listeners *at the expenses of the target of irony*<sup>13</sup>. I believe that Achilles' sarcasm, being directed at the common enemy, functions precisely to bring Achilles and the Achaeans closer together again, now that the greatest hero is about to rejoin the battle.

## 2. AGAMEMNON'S APOLOGY

I will confine myself to only a few observations on Agamemnon's apology and will not dwell on the operation of blameshifting inherent in the mention of *Ate*, or on the characteristics of the long mythological paranarrative, two topics that, as we have seen, have already attracted much

<sup>11</sup> The translations of the Homeric passages are based on R. Lattimore's version (LATTIMORE 1951), with some adjustments.

<sup>12</sup> For the ironical and threatening use of οἴω cf. LfgreE s.v. ὄϊω οἴω ὄϊομαι οἴομαι 1αα.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. GIBBS - COLSTON 2002. Cf. also what S. Freud observed about the "psychical accord" between the creator of a joke and the hearer of a joke (FREUD 1905, pp. 150-151).

scholarly interest<sup>14</sup>. I will, however, point out that if we look at the speech within the context of the whole interaction described, we realize that Agamemnon does not “take up” Achilles’ (half-) apology; instead, he simply ignores it<sup>15</sup>. This is no doubt a significant move on Agamemnon’s part: though famously attaching all the blame to *Ate*, Agamemnon takes exclusive responsibility for what happened. In not accepting shared responsibility he manages to avoid presenting himself as on an equal footing with Achilles; at the same time, by shifting all the blame onto *Ate* and the gods, he can avoid putting himself one-down vis-à-vis Achilles: as the logic of the mythological exemplum demonstrates (Agamemnon, indirectly, equals himself to Zeus), he, even in the present situation, aims at presenting himself, in front of the army and the other leaders, as more powerful than Achilles.

A specific problem of Agamemnon’s speech has to do with the actual physical circumstances of his performance; that is, with those elements relating, broadly speaking, to what is technically called *proxemics*<sup>16</sup>. These are intriguingly problematized in our text: at ll. 75-76 we are told that Agamemnon started speaking among the Achaeans “from the place where he was sitting, without standing up in the middle” (αὐτόθεν ἐξ ἔδρης, οὐδ’ ἐν μέσσοισιν ἀναστάς). Despite his first words (l. 79: ἐσταότος μὲν καλὸν ἀκούμεν, “it is good to listen to a man *standing*”), Agamemnon, then, seems to deliver his speech from a seated position<sup>17</sup>. Why he does so has been a matter of dispute since ancient times. According to an Aristonicus scholion in ms. A (Schol. A T 77), Agamemnon remains seated because of his injury, on which Homer has dwelled at ll. 47-53. This alone cannot be a sufficient explanation: Agamemnon’s wound is located in his arm, and, judging from the text itself, he will be able to stand up to swear later on and will be even strong enough to sacrifice a goat at ll. 252-266<sup>18</sup>. There is no doubt that a communicative dimension is at play in Agamemnon’s position, even though it remains unclear whether this has to be considered the product of an intentional choice by him or not<sup>19</sup>. Following observations in the *scholia exegetica* (Schol. bT T 77), West and Elmer argue that Agamemnon remains seated in order to talk only to Achilles and the small circle of leaders (we will return to this interpretation later in the paper), even if from some passages in the speech it seems that Agamemnon is addressing all the Greeks<sup>20</sup>. J. Clay, who rightly dismisses A. Thornton’s idea that Agamemnon’s position expresses the suppliant’s self-abasement, thinks that, by remaining seated, Agamemnon is being deliberately rude to Achilles, and aims

<sup>14</sup> On the problem of blameshifting and human responsibility cf. the bibliography cited above. Updated bibliography on Agamemnon’s mythological paranarrative (a mythological paradigm, cf. WILLCOCK 1964, exceptionally used not to exhort someone to follow a specific course of action, but instead to justify a past action) can be found in CORAY 2016, pp. 58-59. On Agamemnon’s use of language interesting observations can be read in MARTIN 1989, pp. 63, 69-74, 113-119; TAPLIN 1990; GREENBERG 1993; PORTER 2019.

<sup>15</sup> SCODEL 2008, p. 119; cf. also EDWARDS 1991, p. 245. For the notion of “uptake” in speech-act theory cf. CLARK 1996, pp. 137-139 (the notion goes back to AUSTIN 1962).

<sup>16</sup> For the study of such aspects (broadly speaking, human use of space in communication), particularly in relation to Homer, cf. the seminal works by D. Lateiner (LATEINER 1992 and LATEINER 1995).

<sup>17</sup> For a full doxography of this problem, as old as Homeric exegesis itself, I refer readers to EDWARDS 1991, pp. 243-245; CORAY 2016, pp. 46-47. Some scholars (Erbse, Willcock, Ameis-Hentze, Leaf among them) think, however, that Agamemnon does stand up; he simply does not move to the middle. This is certainly a possible interpretation (though WEST 2001, p. 252, calls it “ridiculous”); but it does not explain adequately, in my view, the emphasis given to αὐτόθεν ἐξ ἔδρης at l. 77. Difficulties in interpreting the lines have given rise to textual variants: these are much more awkward than the vulgate, as both Edwards and West in the works just mentioned show.

<sup>18</sup> As observed by Alexander of Cotiaeum, cf. Schol. A T 79-80 (Porphyrius).

<sup>19</sup> In stating that there is no doubt a communicative dimension in Agamemnon’s gesture I am of course making reference to the first axiom of communication as expressed by WATZLAWICK *et al.* 1967, pp. 48-51: “One cannot *not* communicate”. However, following BARA 2010, I believe that the speaker’s intention cannot be dismissed in the analysis of interactions. BARA 2010 very usefully distinguishes between Communication (when reciprocal intentionality of the actors is involved) and Information Extraction (when one of the actors does not possess the intention to communicate).

<sup>20</sup> WEST 2001, pp. 252-253; ELMER 2013, pp. 127 and 261 n. 32.

at demonstrating his superior status<sup>21</sup>; it remains, in any case, debatable whether Agamemnon's stance was meant to convey *intentional* disrespect<sup>22</sup>. Another possibility is that Agamemnon's position betrays the chief's embarrassment over the situation, reflected also in the awkward incipit of his speech (M. Willcock in a famous article spoke of "nervous hesitation")<sup>23</sup>: it is interesting that scholars who in more recent times revive the old idea that Agamemnon's choice of remaining seated has to do with his injury (M. Edwards, for example) do not neglect the communicative dimension of Agamemnon's posture. According to Edwards, it is out of "uneasiness and resentment towards Achilles" that Agamemnon "remains seated partly so that all may contrast his wounded condition with Achilles' unscathed physique"<sup>24</sup>.

Uneasiness and embarrassment are certainly present (also) in the last part of Agamemnon's speech, in which, after the long self-exculpatory narrative, Agamemnon offers, once again, compensation to Achilles and leaves command of the army to him. I believe that Agamemnon is well aware that his gifts are of no importance to Achilles. Those gifts are for him more a way of saving face in front of the army: by offering them, Agamemnon can both show that he is a man of his word (a preoccupation that, in fact, was central in his narrative on Zeus and Ate)<sup>25</sup>; and that he is able to give generously, like a munificent king. At ll. 137-138 he repeats almost *verbatim* the lines he had spoken before the embassy in Book 9 on his willingness to offer compensation (ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ ἀασάμην καὶ μευ φρένας ἐξέλετο Ζεὺς, | ἄψ ἐθέλω ἀρέσαι, δόμεναί τ' ἀπερείσι' ἄποινα: cf. *Il.* 9. 119-120). But, after that, he abruptly changes topic, and urges Achilles to start the battle and take command of the army (l. 139); then, almost like an afterthought and with some polite circumspection, he asks Achilles to wait for the gifts to be handed over to him (139-144):

ἀλλ' ὄρσηο πόλεμόνδε καὶ ἄλλους ὄρνυθι λαούς·  
δῶρα δ' ἐγὼν ὅδε πάντα παρασχέμεν ὅσά τοι ἐλθῶν  
χθιζὸς ἐνὶ κλισίῃσιν ὑπέσχετο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.  
εἰ δ' ἐθέλεις, ἐπίμεινον ἐπειγόμενός περ Ἄρηος,  
δῶρα δέ τοι θεράποντες ἐμῆς παρὰ νηὸς ἐλόντες  
οἴσουσ', ὄφρα ἴδῃαι ὅ τοι μενοεικέα δώσω

Rise up, then, to the fighting and rouse the rest of the people;  
Here am I, to give you all those gifts, as many  
as brilliant Odysseus yesterday went to your shelter and promised.  
Or if you want, hold back, though you lean hard into the battle,  
while my followers take the gifts from my ship and bring them  
to you, so that you may see what I give to comfort your spirit

The indirectness of the nominal phrase δῶρα ... ἐγὼν ὅδε πάντα παρασχέμεν (l. 140, instead of the more direct: I am offering you etc.); the distancing operation of attributing the promise of the

<sup>21</sup> CLAY 1995; cf. LATEINER 1995, p. 55 n. 44. In this case, the gesture would be intentional, so an act of Communication proper according to Bara's fundamental distinction mentioned above.

<sup>22</sup> CORAY 2016, p. 62, observes that "sitting down as a sign of discourtesy would not be commensurate with the situation and would be directed at all those present"; however, given Agamemnon's notorious ungraciousness, this is not a sufficient consideration to dismiss entirely Clay's hypothesis.

<sup>23</sup> WILLCOCK 1992. In this case, in Bara's terms illustrated above, Agamemnon's position would allow the interlocutors (and us) to perform Information Extraction (he must have been embarrassed), but would not (necessarily) be an act of Communication proper.

<sup>24</sup> EDWARDS 1991, pp. 244. This interpretation is also accepted by CORAY 2016, p. 47.

<sup>25</sup> The whole mythological digression revolves around the theme of the correspondence of word and deed: cf. *Il.* 19. 107. For the importance of this aspect for heroic identity cf. MARTIN 1989, pp. 76-77; PIAZZA 2019, pp. 54-55.



gifts to Odysseus (l. 141); the conditional phrase εἰ ἐθέλεις at l. 142<sup>26</sup>: all these features are there to offer Agamemnon a possible way out to save face in case Achilles refuses (once again) to accept the gifts<sup>27</sup>.

### 3. ACHILLES' REPLY AND DIALOGIC SYNTAX

Achilles' brief answer (ll. 146-153) is well worth analyzing in detail. Punctuation and syntactical interpretation are controversial, but the text given in M.L. West's edition (which I quote and translate) is based on what seems to me to be the most reasonable interpretation of the passage<sup>28</sup>.

Ἀτρεΐδη κύδιστε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγάμεμνον  
 δῶρα μὲν αἶ κ' ἐθέλησθα παρασχέμεν, ὡς ἐπιεικές,  
 ἢ τ' ἐχέμεν παρὰ σοί. νῦν δὲ μνησώμεθα χάρις  
 αἶψα μάλ' –οὐ γὰρ χρὴ κλοτοπεύειν ἐνθάδ' ἐόντας  
 οὐδὲ διατρίβειν, ἔτι γὰρ μέγα ἔργον ἄρεκτον–  
 ὥς κέ τις αὐτ' Ἀχιλῆα μετὰ πρῶτοισιν ἴδηται  
 ἔγχει χαλκίῳ Τρώων ὀλέκοντα φάλαγγας·  
 ὥς δέ τις ὑμείων μεμνημένος ἀνδρὶ μαχέσθω

Son of Atreus, most lordly and king of men, Agamemnon,  
 Give the gifts if you wish, as it is proper,  
 or keep them with yourself. But now let us remember our joy in warcraft,  
 Immediately –it is not fitting to stay here and waste time  
 nor delay, there is still a big work to be done–  
 so that a man may see once more Achilles among the front fighters  
 with the bronze spear wrecking the Trojan battalions. And so  
 let each of you remember this and fight his antagonist

Achilles' impatience was already noticeable in his first speech. It becomes all the more manifest in this reply to Agamemnon's verbose apology that threatens to further delay the fighting. What appears to be especially significant in Achilles' answer is precisely the way it relates to Agamemnon's preceding words: attention to this aspect allows us to identify an important characteristic of Achilles' use of language in this scene.

<sup>26</sup> On the conditional, which offers the addressee a genuine choice between two different courses of actions, cf. WAKKER 1994, p. 264, n. 89.

<sup>27</sup> EDWARDS 1991, pp. 252-253, building on R. Martin's observation that Agamemnon has a tendency to add a gibe at the end of a speech (MARTIN 1989, pp. 115-117), perceives a contemptuous tone in the last sentence (ὄφρα ἴδηαι ὃ τοι μενοεικέα δώσω), that would have "enough of the tone of Agamemnon's καί μοι ὑποστήτω ὅσσον βασιλεύτερός εἰμι | ἢδ' ὅσσον γενεῇ προγενέστερος εὐχομαι εἶναι (9. 160-161)". But both the situation and Agamemnon's morale are now very different from those of *Iliad* 9, and what I have just observed about the polite circumspection of Agamemnon does not support, it seems to me, this hypothesis.

<sup>28</sup> WEST 1998-2000. For more thorough discussions of the interpretive problems of these lines cf. LEAF 1900-02, II, p. 329; EDWARDS 1991, p. 254; CORAY 2016, pp. 80-81. West's text assumes that παρὰ at line 148 should be read as the preposition παρὰ, not πάρα (= πάρεστι). Also, the punctuation given by West at ll. 149-150 assumes that οὐ γὰρ χρὴ κλοτοπεύειν... ἄρεκτον is parenthetical, while punctuation at the end of l. 152 implies that the two ὥς (the second read ὠδε in other editions) are not correlative. I will justify these textual choices in the discussion that follows.

The language of Achilles has been the object of several studies in the past, at least starting from the fascinating but extremely controversial paper by Adam Parry<sup>29</sup>. The main thesis of this paper – that due to the formulaic nature of his language, Achilles can express his disillusionment only by misusing the language he has at his disposal – has attracted a great deal of mostly justified criticism; nevertheless, Parry’s article has ensured that the uniqueness of the language of Achilles has remained a focus of later studies, and it has also established the long and angry speech of Achilles in *Iliad* 9. 308-429 as *the* speech to define the most distinct characteristics of Achilles’ language<sup>30</sup>.

The claim for the uniqueness of the language of Achilles has sometimes been made on the basis of his distinctive word choices: J. Griffin has made perceptive observations on the unique and idiosyncratic vocabulary of Achilles (in our very passage we find one of his many *hapax legomena*: the verb κλοτοπεύειν, whose etymology and actual meaning are not entirely clear)<sup>31</sup>. Given the approach to the Homeric text that I am advocating here, however, it will perhaps come as no surprise that I do not find this purely lexical method as fully satisfactory: it seems to me that such an approach cannot capture some very significant aspects of communication that can emerge only if we take into consideration the verbal interactions in their entirety. Both Redfield and Friedrich and Richard Martin offer reflections on some pragmatic aspects of Achilles’ language<sup>32</sup>. But even when they do, due to their preoccupation with showing Achilles’ uniqueness, they tend to analyze Achilles’ language and his speeches in isolation, as if they were conceived and performed in a vacuum. I believe we really need a *pragmatic* turn here, and take the whole interactional context into account.

A remarkable aspect of Achilles’ answer which, as far as I am aware, has not yet been adequately emphasized, is that it very closely echoes Agamemnon’s words. Line 147, for example, picks up l. 140 of Agamemnon’s speech:

140 δῶρα δ’ ἐγὼν ὄδε πάντα παρασχέμεν

147 δῶρα μὲν αἶ κ’ ἐθέλησθα παρασχέμεν

As is clear from the translation provided, I construe the sentence so that the two infinitives have the function of imperatives, and παρα is interpreted as the preposition παρά and not as πάρα, that is πάρεστι (“to you it is possible”), as is assumed in other interpretations<sup>33</sup>. The two words δῶρα... παρασχέμεν are repeated by Achilles in the same metrical position, making the echo particularly distinct. But that is not all. The actual elements of the compound παρασχέμεν (παρά and ἔχω) are, quite unexpectedly, re-used and manipulated in the second part of the sentence, l. 148 ἢ τ’ ἐχέμεν παρὰ σοί. Achilles, I believe, is here making a very effective pun: the use of the same “elements” (παρασχέμεν vs. ἐχέμεν παρὰ) to express the two alternatives (“hand over the gifts or keep them with yourself”) powerfully conveys Achilles’ total indifference to Agamemnon’s offer; the two alternatives sound really the same to him<sup>34</sup>!

<sup>29</sup> PARRY 1956.

<sup>30</sup> For an up-to-date list of works on the topic cf. ZANKER 2020, p. 99, that confirms, incidentally, that the long refusal in *Il.* 9 is the favorite place to look for the essence, as it were, of Achilles’ use of language.

<sup>31</sup> GRIFFIN 1986.

<sup>32</sup> FRIEDRICH - REDFIELD 1978; MARTIN 1989.

<sup>33</sup> EDWARDS 1991, p. 254 and CORAY 2016, p. 80 (cf. already the D scholia T 148 van Thiel), for example, prefer to read πάρα and they interpret the two infinitives as dependent on the phrase αἶ κ’ ἐθέλησθα: “whether you wish to hand over the gifts or keep them is up to you”. For reasons that will become clear soon, I prefer to interpret the conditional clause αἶ κ’ ἐθέλησθα as parenthetical.

<sup>34</sup> This powerful pun would be lost if we interpret the second παρα as πάρα, as advocated by some scholars (see previous footnote).

Similar echoes can be found elsewhere in Achilles' riposte. The conditional phrase αἶ κ' ἐθέλησθα, even if not identical, can be taken to echo the εἰ δ' ἐθέλεις in l. 142<sup>35</sup>. Finally, if we follow, as I think we should, M. West in taking ὥς κέ τις as a final clause dependent on νῶν δὲ μνησώμεθα χάρις (with οὐ γὰρ χρὴ κλοτοπεύειν... ἔτι γὰρ μέγα ἔργον ἄρεκτον at ll. 149-150 as parenthetic, and l. 153 as resumptive)<sup>36</sup>, another echo of Agamemnon's words can be identified, with ὥς κέ τις... ἴδεται picking up ὄφρα ἴδῃαι in line 144: the parallelism would imply that it is not important for Achilles to *see* the gifts, but for the Achaeans to *see* Achilles joining the battle again.

There is, then, a remarkable degree of echoing and repetition in Achilles' words. And this kind of repetition is on a wholly different plane than the ubiquitous repetition that we find in the Homeric poems, whose formulaic style involves frequent re-use of prepatterned material<sup>37</sup>.

The phenomenon in Homer of words being "picked up" by subsequent speakers in dialogues, sometimes called "catch-word technique", has been long identified<sup>38</sup>. But the discussion has been in general undertheorized and unsystematic, while special emphasis has been placed on the compositional skill of "Homer"<sup>39</sup>. As R. Martin has aptly pointed out, however, Homeric conversations are to be seen as imitations of real-life conversations, even if highly stylized; and, indeed, repetition is precisely a ubiquitous phenomenon in real-life conversations, even though its exact characteristics and functions may prove very elusive<sup>40</sup>.

D. Tannen, for example, has rightly focused on how pervasive repetition in everyday talk is<sup>41</sup>. But she seems to be mainly concerned with an affirmative function of repetition, while, as C. Bazzanella has rightly pointed out, repetition can be used to express both agreement and disagreement (as well as all the intermediate degrees in between those two poles)<sup>42</sup>: in Achilles' speech, the context of the repetition is evidently oppositive.

A promising approach to tackle parallelisms and repetitions abundant in Achilles' speech seems to be the notion of Dialogic Resonance elaborated by John Du Bois within the frame of his Dialogic Syntax<sup>43</sup>. Dialogic syntax, inspired, generally speaking, by the Bakhtinian idea of a fundamentally dialogic function of language, focuses on dialogic engagement across sections of discourse, both spoken and written, and (in conversation) both across turns of speaking and

<sup>35</sup> I prefer to interpret αἶ κ' ἐθέλησθα as a parenthetic conditional precisely because it clearly seems to pick up Agamemnon's words in the previous speech. I have already mentioned (and judged less likely) the possibility of taking the phrase as dependent on πάρα; another possibility, which EDWARDS 1991, p. 254 rightly considers "awkward", is that of taking the two infinitives as dependent on αἶ κ' ἐθέλησθα with ellipsis of the main clause ("if you wish to hand over the gifts <it is acceptable to me> or if you wish to keep them for yourself, <it is also acceptable>").

<sup>36</sup> The alternative is to interpret ll. 151-152 and 153 as correlatives: "just as each of you sees Achilles in the front line once again destroying Trojan ranks with his bronze spear, so let him each of you remember to fight against his opponent"; this is favored by many scholars (cf. the note by CORAY 2016, p. 81), especially on the grounds that μνησώμεθα χάρις would be too far off to govern a final clause at l. 151, but as HENTZE 1883, p. 34, observed, the logical connection implied by the correlatives is "ohne rechte Analogie".

<sup>37</sup> PARRY 1971, p. 273, rightly excluded cases like phrases echoed for "rhetorical" purposes from the study of formulas. The use of repetition in communication is the focus of the essays collected in BECK 2021, but the approaches there presented do not seem to be particularly helpful for my purposes in this paper.

<sup>38</sup> LOHMANN 1970, p. 145 (with reference to JENS 1955); MACLEOD 1982, pp. 52-53; RUTHERFORD 1992, p. 62; DE JONG 2001, *passim* (definition at p. xii: "when a character echoes, often at the beginning of his speech, a word or expression from his interlocutor's speech, often with a different tone or meaning").

<sup>39</sup> Cf. MACLEOD 1982, p. 53.

<sup>40</sup> MARTIN 1989, p. 45 in general, and cf. in particular pp. 174-175 for repetitions in cases of resposion similar to the ones we are discussing. Rightly, if rather incidentally, also RUTHERFORD 1992, p. 62, observes that this technique "artistically reproduces or heightens something natural in ordinary language".

<sup>41</sup> TANNEN 1987 (now also in TANNEN 2007, pp. 48-101). For an application of Tannen's views on repetition in everyday talk to Homeric conversation cf. MINCHIN 1999.

<sup>42</sup> BAZZANELLA 1992.

<sup>43</sup> DU BOIS 2014.

even within single turns, since “[w]hat is essential to dialogicality is not dialogue in the narrow sense, but engagement with prior words and structures”<sup>44</sup>. Du Bois observes that speakers often (but by no means always) pick up certain elements from previous utterances in order to achieve some pragmatic goal(s). Parallelism (structural similarity between utterances) and resonance (the activation of perceived similarities between utterances, through pairing of virtually any aspect of language: words, morphemes, prosodic structures, pragmatic functions etc.) produce, according to Du Bois, a higher-order, supra-sentential syntactic structure, which he refers to as *diagraph*, emerging through the “mapping of a structured array of resonance relations” between utterances. Diagraph indicates, informally, also the analyst’s schematic representation of such a structure<sup>45</sup>. Special attention should be given to the selective processes involved in the creation of dialogic resonance<sup>46</sup>; and also to whether (and how) the employed parallelisms and resonances are there to suggest a contrast with previous statements<sup>47</sup>.

Insights developed by Du Bois have been applied to different modern languages and ancient Greek texts too, in particular to the dialogue of Greek drama<sup>48</sup>. A forthcoming article by Anna Bonifazi convincingly applies Dialogic Syntax also to other genres of Ancient Greek Literature as well (epic poetry, Platonic dialogue, the novel)<sup>49</sup>.

In Diagraph 1 at the end of the paper I illustrate the dialogic engagement between Agamemnon’s and Achilles’s speeches. Not all the elements included in Agamemnon’s speech are picked up verbally in Achilles’ answer (I use italics to quote the parts that share the general theme, but show no precise verbal echoes). Column A compares Agamemnon’s mentions of compensation and the gifts offered with Achilles’ verbal echoes (δῶρα παρασχέμεν... ἐχέμεν παρά)<sup>50</sup>. The exhortation at l. 139 (“Rise up to the fighting and rouse the rest of the people”) shares the theme of joining the battle which occurs repeatedly in Achilles’ answer (see column B). Given Achilles’ indifference to the gifts, it is no surprise that Agamemnon’s words about the practical operations concerning the gifts (column C: ll. 140-141; 143-144) are not selected by Achilles for his reply, though the echo between τοι, thrice uttered by Agamemnon in these lines, and σοί (Achilles at l. 148) is well worth noticing. The conditional clause used by Agamemnon is echoed by Achilles, though with modification of the verbal mood (Column D). Agamemnon’s invitation to wait before starting the battle is inverted, with no specific verbal echo, in Achilles’ forceful expressions at ll. 149-150 (Column E). In Column F, the correspondence between the two final clauses with the verb ‘to see’ can be observed. Finally, in Column G, it is shown first how Agamemnon’s ὁ τοι μενοεικέα δώσω (l. 144) is echoed verbally by Achilles at l. 147 (ὡς ἐπιεικέες); then, how the object of the verb to ‘see’, instead of the gifts, becomes, in Achilles’ answer, Achilles himself fighting against the enemies.

Once we have analyzed in detail the parallelisms and resonances between the two speeches, we should ask: what pragmatic effects are obtained in Achilles’ reply through this kind of repetition? Achilles’ answer seems to have a defiant and sarcastic undertone, with the verbal parallels suggesting perhaps a mocking attitude towards Agamemnon’s views<sup>51</sup>. Paradoxically enough,

<sup>44</sup> DU BOIS 2014, p. 372.

<sup>45</sup> DU BOIS 2014, pp. 370-378.

<sup>46</sup> DU BOIS 2014, pp. 379-381.

<sup>47</sup> DU BOIS 2014, pp. 381-382.

<sup>48</sup> DRUMMEN 2016; she shows that resonance can be used both to enhance agreement between two speakers, or to mark opposition between them (there are some striking cases especially in tragic stichomythia); cf. also, though less specifically engaged with Du Bois’ ideas, HOF 2020, on the prologue of Sophocles’ *Ajax*.

<sup>49</sup> BONIFAZI forthcoming. I thank A. Bonifazi for giving me the opportunity of reading a first draft of this important work.

<sup>50</sup> I would add here that the use of the infinitives as imperatives may be due precisely to Achilles’ intention of creating resonance with Agamemnon’s words.

<sup>51</sup> In particular, the conditional used by Achilles αἴ κ’ ἐθέλησθα, more “polite”, more distancing compared to the one used by Agamemnon, can be interpreted as mock-polite. For mock-politeness cf. LENTINI 2018 and the contribution of M.

however, the repetitions attest also to Achilles' attentive participation in the verbal exchange: as C. Bazzanella has acutely pointed out, repetition, even when used to express disagreement, signals 'uptake' of the words of the previous speaker and indicates an attention towards the latter that is often absent in cases of conflict<sup>52</sup>.

This aggressive use of repetition had already been observed in other speeches by Achilles. A particularly significant case occurs at *Il.* 1. 295-296, where, again, the other person involved is Agamemnon, who is complaining to Nestor about Achilles' desire to command everyone (*Il.* 286-289):

ἀλλ' ὄδ' ἀνὴρ ἐθέλει περι πάντων ἔμμεναι ἄλλων,  
πάντων μὲν κρατέειν ἐθέλει, πάντεσσι δ' ἀνάσσειν,  
πάσι δὲ **σημαίνειν**, ἅ τιν' **οὐ πείσεσθαι ὄτω**

Yet this man wishes to be above all others,  
he wishes to hold power over all, and to be lord of  
all, and give them commands, yet I think no one will obey him

Achilles breaks in and concludes his reply with an unmistakable echo of Agamemnon's previous words (295-296):

μη γὰρ ἐμοί γε  
**σήμαιν'**· **οὐ** ἐγώ γ' ἔτι σοὶ **πείσεσθαι ὄτω**

give me no more  
commands, since I think I will not obey you

As R. Martin observes, Achilles "tosses back the very same phrase" to Agamemnon, no doubt contemptuously<sup>53</sup>.

#### 4. ODYSSEUS' FIRST SPEECH AND ACHILLES' PROTEST

We return to the Reconciliation scene: once Achilles has finished his speech, Odysseus abruptly intervenes, expressing the need for the army to eat before joining the battle: he develops at length this new topic. Odysseus' speech is dialogically engaged with both Achilles' and

Lloyd in this volume. The use of repetition we observe in this dialogue may partially overlap, I would suggest, with one of the possible mechanisms of *irony*. According to the echoic theory of irony as developed by D. Wilson and D. Sperber, irony is produced when the speaker's utterance is *echoic*, that is, it alludes to the thoughts or opinions of someone other than the speaker; the speaker's attitude is identified as one of disapproval or contempt for the thought or opinion of others (SPERBER - WILSON 1995, pp. 237-243; WILSON - SPERBER 2012, pp. 123-145; as recent studies have shown, this cannot be the only and universal mechanism of irony, but it certainly can be one of those mechanisms: SIMPSON 2011). The verbal echoes employed by Achilles, while not associated with a mismatch between literal meaning and speaker's intended meaning (as in a typical ironical statement), adds a dimension of sarcasm to his words, making the expression of disagreement much more pointed (I use sarcasm to indicate a more aggressive type of irony: for a recent overview on irony cf. GARMENDIA 2018, in particular pp. 126-146, for a discussion on the relationship between irony and sarcasm).

<sup>52</sup> BAZZANELLA 1992, p. 448.

<sup>53</sup> MARTIN 1989, p. 207. Also in the rather well-known (cf. already LOHMANN 1970, p. 145) case of *Il.* 18. 98, where Achilles picks up αὐτίκα previously uttered by his mother in the same initial position (*Il.* 96: αὐτίκα γάρ τοι ἔπειτα μεθ' Ἐκτορα πότης ἐτοῖμος ~ *Il.* 98 αὐτίκα τεθναίνῃ, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἄρ' ἔμελλον...), we should assume, I would argue, an indignant tone, though in this case the aggressivity is directed against Achilles himself (cf. MACLEOD 1982, p. 52).



Agamemnon's previous speeches. Odysseus says Achilles should not urge the Achaeans to fight before letting them eat: the troops will be unable to fight for a whole long day on an empty stomach (ll. 155-170). The imperative μή... ὄτρυνε (ll. 155-156) picks up Achilles' ὄτρυνον (l. 69) as well as Agamemnon's ὄρσοο πόλεμόνδε καὶ ἄλλους ὄρνυθι λαούς (l. 139), while Odysseus' portrayal of the long and tiring battle, which should not be entered before having a proper meal (ll. 156-159; 164-170), is in contrast to the brisk and self-assured description of the fight by Achilles at ll. 151-153. There are some evident verbal echoes between the two speeches (Τρώων φάλαγγας... ἀνδρὶ μαχέσθω, ll. 152-153 ~ Τρωσὶ μαχησομένους... φάλαγγες ἀνδρῶν ll. 156-159), but also some more subtle connections. Odysseus' insistence on μένος and related words at ll. 159, 161, 164 seems to pick up, through etymological reference (root \*men-), μνησώμεθα and μμνησκόμενος in Achilles' speech (ll. 148 and 153): the soldier, Odysseus argues, needs the μένος that comes from food; the one coming from "spirit" ("remembering") is not enough<sup>54</sup>.

Odysseus continues: Achilles should order that lunch be prepared (ἄνωχθι, l. 171, second occurrence after l. 160), and all the operations relating to Agamemnon's compensation should be carried out properly (ll. 170-183). Odysseus expands on Agamemnon's previous reference to the gifts. The mention of the gifts being "brought" (ll. 172-173: τὰ δὲ δῶρα... οἰσέτω) clearly echoes Agamemnon's speech (ll. 143-144: δῶρα... οἴσουσι); but now Odysseus specifies that these gifts should be brought "in the middle of the assembly" (l. 173, ἐς μέσσην ἀγορὴν), for it is not (only) Achilles who should "see" (cf. l. 144, ὄφρα ἴδῃαι, in Agamemnon's speech), but all the Achaeans (ll. 173-174, ἵνα πάντες Ἀχαιοὶ | ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἴδωσι): Odysseus censures Agamemnon for his attempt at putting an end to the quarrel in a private fashion, as if all the Achaeans were not involved<sup>55</sup>. The criticism of Agamemnon's previous behavior is even more pointed in what follows: Agamemnon will have to swear an oath "standing up before the Argives" (l. 175: ἐν Ἀργείοσιν ἀναστάς): Odysseus seems here to be criticizing Agamemnon for his seated position during his speech (cf. l. 77 αὐτόθεν ἐξ ἔδρης, οὐδ' ἐν μέσσοισιν ἀναστάς, with the discussion above): in this case, the dialogic resonance includes, as it were, aspects relating to non-verbal behavior, a feature that is worth emphasizing. The compensation (l. 179 ἀρεσάσθω, cf. 183 ἀπαρέσασθαι, picking up Agamemnon's ἄψ ἐθέλω ἀρέσαι, l. 138) should include the offering of a δαῖς to Achilles: in the future Agamemnon will be more respectful also of others (ll. 179-183).

Despite its reproachful tone, Odysseus' proposal is accepted enthusiastically by Agamemnon, perhaps because the king feels he has no other choice if he wants to keep Achilles in check: in the ensuing speech, he gives practical instructions on how to carry out all the operations envisaged by Odysseus (ll. 185-197).

Achilles intervenes again (ll. 199-214): it becomes soon clear that, while the speech is formally addressed to Agamemnon and while Odysseus is never explicitly mentioned, it is to Odysseus that he is really replying (ll. 199-208):

Ἀτρεΐδη κύδιστε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγάμεμνον  
 ἄλλοτέ περ καὶ μᾶλλον ὀφέλλετε ταῦτα πένεσθαι,  
 ὅππότε τις μεταπαυσωλὴ πολέμοιο γένηται  
 καὶ μένος οὐτόσον ἦσιν ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἔμοῖσι.  
 νῦν δ' οἱ μὲν κέαται δεδαίγμενοι, οὓς ἐδάμασσαν  
 Ἐκτωρ Πριαμίδης, ὅτε οἱ Ζεὺς κῦδος ἔδωκεν,

<sup>54</sup> Cf. LENTINI 2006, pp. 104-108, for the whole contrast between Achilles and Odysseus in this scene as revolving around a definition of μένος.

<sup>55</sup> This adds some support to the theory mentioned above that Agamemnon, among other things, has been trying to make the resolution of the quarrel a private affair.

ὄμεις δ' ἐς βρωτὸν ὀτρύνετον· ἦ τ' ἂν ἐγὼ γε  
 νῦν μὲν ἀνώγοιμι πτολεμίζειν υἱᾶς Ἀχαιῶν  
 νήστιας ἀκμήνους, ἄμα δ' ἠελίῳ καταδύντι  
 τεύξεσθαι μέγα δόρπον, ἐπὶν τεισαίμεθα λώβην

Son of Atreus, most lordly and king of men, Agamemnon,  
 at some other time rather you should prepare these things,  
 when there is some stopping point in the fighting, at some time  
 when there is not so much fury inside of my heart. But now  
 as things are they lie there torn whom the son of Priam  
 Hektor has beaten down, since Zeus was giving him glory,  
 and you urge a man to eating... No, but I would now  
 drive forward the sons of the Achaeans into the fighting  
 starving and unfed, and afterwards when the sun sets  
 make ready a great dinner, when we have paid off our defilement.

First, notice the significant incongruity in the use of the verb *πένεσθαι*, which Achilles employs to indicate all the procedures Odysseus and Agamemnon plan to carry out. *Πένεσθαι* means ‘trouble oneself with, be busy with’, and is regularly employed for the preparation of meals and other domestic tasks<sup>56</sup>. Achilles is then metonymically referring to the whole compensation ritual with a verb that normally indicates what is, at best, just one part of the whole sequence of events prospected by Odysseus<sup>57</sup>. Adopting P. Grice’s terminology, I suggest that Achilles is intentionally flouting the maxim of quality, in order to give an almost parodical presentation of what Odysseus and Agamemnon plan to do. In fact, he specifies that his *μένος* (l. 202, the fury of his spirit) is too big for him to wait: this *μένος* he is talking about is something completely different from the *μένος* Odysseus would like to obtain through food (l. 161).

The lines that follow have no doubt a defiant tone. First Achilles describes at length and with much *pathos* all those “lying torn apart having been killed by Hector, when Zeus was giving him glory” (a violation of Grice’s maxim of quantity, I would argue, the implicature being that, though the real facts must be well-known to everybody, Agamemnon and Odysseus are not giving them all the necessary importance); then Achilles adds: “but you two (*scil.* Agamemnon and Odysseus) urge people to eating” (l. 205)). The expression *ἐς βρωτὸν ὀτρύνετον* can be interpreted in the first place as an exaggeration (Odysseus and Agamemnon are not literally and simply urging the men to eat), and this is meant to convey bitter irony from Achilles. The very combination of the two words is in itself remarkable. *ὀτρύνω* is normally used of urging people to fight, and it was in this sense that Achilles had used the verb at l. 69 (*ὀτρυνον πόλεμόνδε*) in addressing Agamemnon. Odysseus had then picked up Achilles’ word at l. 156, to invite him *not* to urge the army to fight on an empty stomach; now Achilles, by saying *ἐς βρωτὸν ὀτρύνετον*, throws back to Odysseus a parodical description of his speech (an exhortation to eating, instead of what the army, according to Achilles, should receive now, that is, an exhortation to fight).

Achilles’ dialogic engagement with Odysseus’ previous speech becomes here particularly evident. The occurrence in these lines of words repeated from Odysseus’ speech has often been observed, but the full extent of the phenomenon has not been clearly acknowledged. Diagraph 2 illustrates the dialogic resonance between Odysseus’ ll. 156-172 and Achilles’ ll. 200-210, where I

<sup>56</sup> Cf. CORAY 2016, p. 96, but she seems to miss the point about the incongruity of the use of the verb here.

<sup>57</sup> The verb “prepare”, frequently used for cooking food, might be the best approximation to Achilles’ use of *πένεσθαι*.

highlight in bold the most significant verbal echoes within each column. Contrary to what Odysseus and Agamemnon would like to do<sup>58</sup>, Achilles explains that he would send the Achaeans to fight immediately. He does so by echoing with impressive precision expressions and words previously used by Odysseus, most notably in the four lines 205-208, made almost entirely of repeated material<sup>59</sup>. A particularly significant resonance, in my view, is the one identifiable in ἀνώγοιμι, which picks up ἄνωχθι, twice uttered by Odysseus in his speech, ll. 160 and 171. I would contend that the imperative ἄνωχθι, “order”, by Odysseus, in the specific context of the scene (remember that Agamemnon has basically handed over to Achilles the command of the army at l. 139), is a word capable of generating an effect similar to what is called ‘pragmatic paradox’ in the Pragmatics of Human Communication<sup>60</sup>: precisely when he has been given authority over the army (according to Odysseus, it is Achilles who must “give the order”), Achilles is told what to do (what to “order”) by Odysseus. I believe that Achilles seeks to get out of this kind of pragmatic paradox through an almost comic mimicry of the words of his interlocutor and through a paradoxical, ironical use of politeness: the potential optative ἀνώγοιμι is formally polite, as if Achilles’ words were a humble suggestion (I, for me, would order...)<sup>61</sup>; but we must assume that the tone is, again, bitterly sarcastic. As we have argued for Achilles’ previous speech, Achilles “steals” the words used by his interlocutors defiantly to express complete disagreement: as he puts it after a few lines, food and drink “mean nothing to me” (l. 213: τό μοι οὐ τι μετὰ φρεσὶ ταῦτα μέμηλεν), “but blood does, and slaughter, and the groaning of men in battle”.

A subtle link seems to exist between these last words by Achilles and Odysseus’ words in *Il.* 9. 225ff., during the Embassy scene. There Odysseus, after the δαίς in the tent of Achilles, had said (*Il.* 9. 225-229):

χαῖρ’ Ἀχιλεῦ· δαιτὸς μὲν εἴσης οὐκ ἐπιδευεῖς  
ἡμὲν ἐνὶ κλισίῃ Ἀγαμέμνονος Ἄτρεΐδαο  
ἡδὲ καὶ ἐνθάδε νῦν, πάρα γὰρ μενοεικέα πολλὰ  
δαίνυσθ’· ἀλλ’ οὐ δαιτὸς ἐπηράτου ἔργα μέμηλεν,  
ἀλλὰ λίην μέγα πῆμα...

Your health, Achilles. We have no lack of our equal meal  
either within the shelter of Atreus’ son, Agamemnon,  
nor here now in your own. We have good things in abundance  
to feast on; however, it is not the feast that we care of now,  
but a trouble all too great...

Both the theme of the δαίς and the verbal parallel between *Il.* 9. 228 (οὐ δαιτὸς ἐπηράτου ἔργα μέμηλεν) and *Il.* 19. 213 (ὄ μοι οὐ τι μετὰ φρεσὶ ταῦτα μέμηλεν) suggest significant analogies between the two passages, but a fundamental difference emerges as well: while Achilles refuses to accept the δαίς, Odysseus, despite the urgency of his task, waited until the end of the meal before discussing the proposal of compensation from Agamemnon: no violation of etiquette on his part<sup>62</sup>! I suggest

<sup>58</sup> For the strong contrast introduced by ἢ τ’ at l. cf. RUIJGH 1971, p. 798 (“On the contrary, I would...”).

<sup>59</sup> See in particular l. 205 ὄτρυνετον: cf. 156 ὄτρυνε; l. 206 ἀνώγοιμι: cf. ἄνωχθι 160 and 171; l. 206 πολεμιζέειν: cf. πολεμιζέειν 164; ll. 206-207: υἷας Ἀχαιῶν | νήστιας: cf. νήστιας... υἷας Ἀχαιῶν l. 156; l. 207: ἀκμήνους ἅμα δ’ ἠελίῳ καταδύντι: cf. ἐς ἠέλιον καταδύντα | ἄκμηνος ll. 162-163. As CORAY 2016, p. 99, observes, Achilles pointedly substitutes δόρπον, “dinner” (l. 208), for Odysseus’ δεῖπνον, “a meal during the day” (l. 171).

<sup>60</sup> On pragmatic paradoxes cf. WATZLAWICK *et al.* 1967, pp. 187-256.

<sup>61</sup> On the mitigating functions of the potential optative, though specifically in Greek drama, cf. DRUMMEN 2013.

<sup>62</sup> On this cf. also WORMAN 2002, pp. 71-72.



that this link be interpreted not only as an “intratextual” connection between two distant sections of the poem; but also as a significant intertextual link between two different moments of the ongoing dialogue between Achilles and Odysseus: we will observe another comparable case shortly<sup>63</sup>.

#### 5. ODYSSEUS’ SECOND SPEECH

Odysseus’ reply to Achilles’ protest puts an end to the conversation between the three heroes. The Achaeans, Odysseus says, cannot mourn a dead man “with their belly” (l. 225): he reaffirms the necessity for the soldiers to “remember food and drink” (μηνήσθαι πόσιος και ἐδητύος; contrast the use of the verb μινήσκω by Achilles at ll. 148 and 153) in order “to fight even more strongly against the enemies” (ll. 230-233). Dialogic engagement with previous speeches is evident also in the last lines, in which the theme of “urging” (ὀτρύνω: cf. ll. 69, 156, 205) is again picked up by Odysseus (ll. 233-237)<sup>64</sup>:

μηδέ τις ἄλλην  
λαῶν **ὀτρυντὺν** ποτιδέγμενος ἰσχαναάσθω,  
ἦδε γὰρ **ὀτρυντὺς**· κακὸν ἔσσεται, ὅς κε λίπηται  
νηυσὶν ἐπ’ Ἀργείων· ἀλλ’ ἀθρόοι ὀρμηθέντες  
Τρωσὶν ἐφ’ ἵπποδάμοισιν ἐγείρομεν ὄζυν Ἴαρη

So let none of you  
hold back and wait for any second call to action.  
This *is* the summons. There will be trouble for anyone left behind  
at the ships. Therefore let us drive on together  
and wake the bitter war god on the horse-taming Trojans

The twice repeated noun ὀτρυντός, “summons”, a very rare word perhaps even coined for this scene, picks up the expression ἐς βρωτὺν ὀτρύνετον by Achilles (l. 205), reversing the negative implications evident in Achilles’ phrase<sup>65</sup>: Odysseus’ summons is, indeed, both an order for the soldiers to have lunch and to join the battle soon afterwards<sup>66</sup>.

So far, I have on purpose refrained from dealing with the first part of Odysseus’ speech, which, as already mentioned, has been intensively studied in the past, particularly for Odysseus’ extended metaphor of ll. 221-224. In opposing Achilles again, Odysseus starts with a preamble redressing the Face Threatening Act (FTA) he is about to carry out<sup>67</sup>. He is ready to acknowledge Achilles’ superiority at fighting, but he politely (notice the potential optative, making his statement less direct) affirms that he far surpasses Achilles in intelligence (ll. 216-220)<sup>68</sup>:

<sup>63</sup> For this notion of intertextuality as applied to “dialogue”, intended as an ongoing process among actors beyond single sessions of conversation, cf. TANNEN 2007, pp. 8-24.

<sup>64</sup> I follow the punctuation of West’s text (WEST 1998-2000).

<sup>65</sup> The word does not occur elsewhere in Homer and later only in Antimachus of Colophon; on the very rare formations βρωτός and ὀτρυντός cf. CORAY 2016, pp. 98 and 109, with further bibliography. It is interesting that Odysseus’ ὀτρυντός might be seen as a “conflation” of Achilles’ βρωτὺν ὀτρύνετον.

<sup>66</sup> Achilles will endorse Odysseus’ order at l. 275: νῦν δ’ ἔρχεσθ’ ἐπὶ δεῖπνον, ἵνα ζυνάγωμεν Ἴαρη (on ancient, parodical, readings of this line, occurring also at *Il.* 2. 381, cf. TEODORSSON 1989-96, I, p. 47).

<sup>67</sup> I refer here to some very basic notions of (Im)politeness Theory; this is a classical example of what P. Brown and S. Levinson would call positive politeness. I refer readers to LENTINI 2013 for a methodological discussion concerning the application of these studies to Homeric poetry in particular.

<sup>68</sup> Since, as Du Bois convincingly argues (see above), syntactic constructions are a primary factor in dialogic resonance, we may identify an interesting echo between the potential optative κε... προβαλοίμην here and the previous

ὦ Ἀχιλεῦ Πηλῆος υἱὲ μέγα φέρτατ' Ἀχαιῶν,  
 κρείσσων εἰς ἐμέθεν καὶ φέρτερος οὐκ ὀλίγον περ  
 ἔγχει, ἐγὼ δέ κε σεῖο νοήματί γε προβαλοίμην  
 πολλόν, ἐπεὶ πρότερος γενόμεν καὶ πλείονα οἶδα.  
 τῷ τοι ἐπιτήτω κραδίη μύθοισιν ἔμοισιν

Son of Peleus, Achilles, far greatest of the Achaeans,  
 you are stronger than I am and greater by not a little  
 with the spear, yet I in turn might overpass you in intelligence  
 by far, since I was born before you and have learned more things  
 Therefore let your heart endure to listen to my words

After this preamble, but before articulating openly his position (ll. 225 ff., see above), Odysseus ventures on a complex, obscure, metaphor (ll. 221-224):

αἰψά τε φυλόπιδος πέλεται κόρος ἀνθρώποισιν,  
 ἦς τε πλείστην μὲν καλάμην χθονὶ χαλκὸς ἔχευεν,  
 ἀμητὸς δ' ὀλίγιστος, ἐπὶν κλίνησι τάλαντα  
 Ζεὺς, ὅς τ' ἀνθρώπων ταμίης πολέμοιο τέτυκται

When there is battle men have suddenly their fill of it  
 when the bronze scatters on the ground the straw in most numbers  
 and the harvest is most thin, when Zeus has poised his balance,  
 Zeus, who is administrator to men in their fighting

The translation given here (by R. Lattimore) assumes that the basic meaning of the image is that the soldiers profit little (the harvest is very small, ἀμητὸς... ὀλίγιστος) from hazarding their lives (much straw, πλείστην... καλάμην, falls to the ground; that is, many men die). Modern discussion about these lines has been dominated by the attempt at solving their many ambiguities<sup>69</sup>. But the question I would like to pose now, in line with the general approach of this paper, has rather to do with their pragmatic function: why does Odysseus choose to use these enigmatic lines (a blatant violation of Grice's maxim of manner) to make his point? It can certainly be argued that through his obscure words Odysseus aims at expressing indirectly (that is, *politely*) his disagreement with Achilles<sup>70</sup>. However, I would also emphasize the fact that this complex use of figurative language takes place immediately after Odysseus has boasted of his superiority in intelligence over Achilles. My suggestion is that Odysseus has chosen to employ this bravura piece to show off his intellectual ability and to impose his superiority on Achilles. As J. Ready has shown with special reference to the similes used by characters in the Homeric poems (but no doubt the point can be easily extended to metaphors, and in particular to Odysseus' extended metaphor), the use of figurative language can be part of a mechanism of verbal competition for the heroes<sup>71</sup>. The use of figurative language, as Ready shows also through comparative material, enables a performer of verbal art in a competitive arena to exhibit his/her distinctive degree of linguistic competence:

use of the same construction made by Achilles at l. 206: the pragmatic effect of such a resonance is perhaps hard to pin down.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. at least EDWARDS 1991, pp. 260-262; LENTINI 2006, pp. 141-157; CORAY 2016, pp. 103-106.

<sup>70</sup> This is the explanation basically put forward in the second essay on "figured speeches" contained in D. H. *Rh. IX* (USENER - RADERMACHER 1906, pp. 355-359); on this passage cf. DENTICE DI ACCADIA AMMONE 2012, pp. 234-237.

<sup>71</sup> READY 2011.

figurative language provides a way for them to distinguish themselves. Thanks to that impressive metaphor, Odysseus can give a concrete proof of his νόημα, his intelligence, and can thus more easily conclude his speech without allowing any possible reply, by giving the final, incontestable, order to the army.

There is another aspect of the strategy of Odysseus' reply that we need to take into account: the very opposition suggested by Odysseus (much toil and risking life vs. little gain) is a theme that emerges distinctly and famously in the angry speech by Achilles to Odysseus in the Embassy scene of *Il.* 9. There Achilles had protested that there is no gain for him from hazarding his own life (*Il.* 9. 316-322); he gave all the treasures conquered in battle to Agamemnon, but Agamemnon "waiting back beside the swift ships, having taken them, would distribute little, and keep many" (*Il.* 9. 332-333):

ὁ δ' ὄπισθε μένων παρά νηυσὶ θοῆσιν  
δεζόμενος διὰ πᾶρα δασάσκετο, πολλὰ δ' ἔχεσκεν

Quite ironically, it is now Odysseus who seems to toss back to Achilles something similar to the latter's preoccupation for a fair correspondence between risks and gratification, with a strong and significant contrast between Achilles' lofty expectation of honour and the purely bodily needs that Odysseus attributes to the soldiers<sup>72</sup>.

I have sought to highlight some of the communicative subtleties of this complex Homeric scene through a methodologically eclectic analysis, that I believe can be productively conducted also for other dialogues in Homer. A noteworthy aspect that has emerged is the high degree of dialogic engagement among the speeches. Almost paradoxically, it is Achilles, the hero with the most personal vocabulary, who appears to be extremely accurate in echoing the very words of his interlocutors: this allows him to express defiantly his disagreement, and is, perhaps, another mark of his exceptional use of language.

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<sup>72</sup> This contrast is at the heart of the opposition between Achilles and Odysseus, in this Iliadic scene as well as elsewhere: cf. LENTINI 2006, pp. 93-176.

Diagram 1 – Agamemnon – Achilles, *Il.* 19. 138-152 (l. 146 not included)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Agamemnon	<p><i>ἄψ' ἐθέλω ἀρέσαι, δόμηναι τ' ἀπερείσι' ἄποινα</i></p> <p>δῶρα δ' ἐγὼν ὄδε πάντα παρασχέμεν</p> <p>δῶρα δέ</p>	<p><i>ἀλλ' ὄρσοο πόλεμόνδε και ἄλλοις ὄρνυθι λαοῖς</i></p>	<p><i>ὅσα τοι ἐλθῶν χθιζὸς ἐνὶ κλισίῃσιν ὑπέσχετο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς</i></p> <p><i>τοὶ θεράποντες ἐμῆς παρὰ νηὸς ἐλόντες οἴσασσ'</i></p> <p><i>ὃ τοι</i></p>	εἰ δ' ἐθέλεις	<i>ἐπίμενον ἐπειγόμενός περ Ἄρηος</i>	ὄφρα ἴδηαι	μενοεικέα δώσω
Achilles	<p>δῶρα μὲν παρασχέμεν ἢ τ' ἐχέμεν παρὰ</p>	<p><i>νῶν δὲ μνησώμεθα χάρμησ αἴψα μάλ'</i></p> <p><i>ἔγχεϊ γαλακτῆ Τρώων ὀλέκοντα φάλαγγας· ὥς δέ τις ὑμείων μεμνημένος ἀνδρὶ μαχέσθω</i></p>	σοί	αἴ κ' ἐθέλησθα	<p><i>οὐ γὰρ χρὴ κλοτοπέειν ἐνθάδ' ἔοντας οὐδὲ διατρίβειν, ἔτι γὰρ μέγα ἔργον ἄρεκτον</i></p>	ὥς κέ τις αἰδέτ'  ἴδηται	ὥς ἐπεικῆς  Ἀχιλλῆα μετὰ πρώτοισιν

Diagraph 2 – Odysseus (Il. 156-172) – Achilles (Il. 200-210)

	A (order)	B (food)	C ( <i>menos</i> )	D (fight)	E (physiology)	F (time)
Odysseus	Μή... <b>ὄτρυνε</b>  <b>ἄνωχθι</b> θοῆς ἐπὶ νηυσὶν Ἀχαιοῶς	<b>νήστιας</b>  ἀλλὰ πάσασθαι σίτου καὶ οἴνοιο <b>ἄκμηνος</b> σίτοιο  δίψά τε καὶ λιμός  ὡς δέ κ' ἀνήρ οἴνοιο κορεσσάμενος καὶ ἐδωδῆς	τὸ γὰρ <b>μένος</b> ἐστὶ καὶ ἀλκὴ  εἴ περ γὰρ θυμῷ γε μενοινάα  ὡς δέ κ' ἀνήρ οἴνοιο κορεσσάμενος καὶ ἐδωδῆς	προτὶ Ἴλιον <b>υἴας Ἀχαιῶν</b> Τρωσὶ μαχησομένους  δυνήσεται ἅντα μάχεσθαι <b>πολεμίζειν</b>  ἀνδράσι δυσμενέεσσι πανημέριος <b>πολεμίζῃ</b>  πάντας ἐρωήσαι πολέμοιο	ἐπεὶ οὐκ ὀλίγον χρόνον ἔσται φύλοπις, εὐτ' ἂν πρῶτον ὁμιλήσωσι φάλαγγες ἀνδρῶν...  οὐ γὰρ ἀνήρ πρόπαν ἡμᾶρ <b>ἔς ἡέλιον καταδύντα</b>  ἀλλὰ τε λάθρη γυῖα βαρύνεται, ἡδὲ κίχαινε  βλάβεται δέ τε γούνατ' ἰόντι  θαρσαλέον νύ οἱ ἦτορ ἐνὶ φρεσίν, οὐδέ τι γυῖα πρὶν κάμνει πρὶν	ἀλλ' ἄγε λαὸν μὲν σκέδασον καὶ <b>ἄνωχθι</b>  δειπνον ὄπλεσθαι...
Achilles	ὕμεις δ' ἔς βρωτῶν <b>ὄτρύνετον</b> · ἢ τ' ἂν ἔγωγε νῶν μὲν <b>ἀνώγοιμι</b>	<b>νήστιας ἀκμήνους</b>  τεύξεσθαι μέγα δόρπον  φίλον κατὰ λαιμόν ἰεῖη οὐ πόσις οὐδὲ βρώσις	καὶ <b>μένος</b> οὐ τόσον ἦσιν ἐνὶ στήθεσιν ἔμοισι	<b>πολεμίζειν υἴας Ἀχαιῶν</b>  ἐπὶν τεισαίμεθα λῶβην	νῶν δ' οἱ μὲν κέαται δεδαϊγμένοι οὐδ' ἐδάμασσαν Ἴκτωρ Πριαμίδης  ἔταίρου τεθνηῶτος...	ὅπποτε τις μεταπαυσωλὴ πολέμοιο γένηται  ὄτε οἱ Ζεὺς κῆδος ἔδωκεν  <b>ἅμα δ' ἡέλιω καταδύντι</b>  πρὶν δ' οὐ πῶς ἂν ἔμοιγε

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#### ABSTRACT

L'articolo propone un'analisi metodologicamente eclettica (pragmatica linguistica, *(im)politeness* theory, analisi del discorso, pragmatica della comunicazione umana) dello scambio verbale tra Agamennone, Achille e Odisseo nel libro XIX dell'*Iliade*. La teoria della "sintassi dialogica" (*dialogic syntax*) di J. Du Bois consente di meglio apprezzare gli echi verbali tra un discorso e l'altro e di definire con maggior precisione gli effetti pragmatici di questi. L'analisi permette, inoltre, di affrontare, in una prospettiva squisitamente pragmatica, la questione, molto dibattuta, del linguaggio usato da Achille.