

Patterns and Anomalies in the Opening Lines of Iliadic Dialogue

Much scholarly work has been devoted to the study of speech in the Homeric epics, which makes up approximately one-half of the *Iliad* and around two-thirds of the *Odyssey*. Alongside valuable analysis on the content and style of the speeches themselves (Martin 1989, Knudsen 2014), the verses and formulae introducing and concluding the speeches have been methodically categorized and analyzed (see Beck 2005). The opening lines of the speeches themselves, however, have received relatively little attention. In this paper I present an analysis of the opening lines of Iliadic dialogue, arguing that they exhibit clear patterns and discussing some anomalies that emerge against the background.

I begin with a statistical analysis of the types of words used to open speeches (imperatives, vocatives, and question words being the most common) and their correlation with different named speakers and different speech-categories (following Fingerle 1939's taxonomy of lament, supplication, prayer, commanding, insulting, and narrating from memory). I discuss how these patterns fit with the rhetorical 'styles' of prominent speakers (Martin 1989), as well as how speech openings differ between Achaeans, Trojans, and gods and how these distinctions reflect on the divergent characters of these groups. I then examine two unusual forms of conversation in the *Iliad*, self-addresses and one-line speeches. The epic's eleven self-addresses, which are vocalized despite not being addressed to a specific person, but rather spoken 'to one's own heart' (using three different Greek formulae), all interestingly begin with an expression of lament. One-line speeches, meanwhile, are extremely rare and are only assigned to speakers distinguished in the epic by their important speech-acts (Achilles, Odysseus, Iris, and Charis).

Next, I look at the forms of address used in the opening lines in order to attempt to construct a system of addresses in the *Iliad* between speakers of different stature in the socio-political hierarchy of the Homeric world. Dickey's 1996 monograph on Greek forms of address from Herodotus onward provides an important model for this investigation. Here I examine the usage of

various common vocatives, such as πέπον and δαιμόνιε, and the employment of names and epithets, with an eye towards the relationship between parties. In some instances, such as in conversations between Achilles and Agamemnon, positive epithets may be used in a sarcastic sense when the speaker intends to insult or demean the addressee. Finally, I conclude the paper with some potential avenues for future investigation.

Bibliography

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