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LANGUAGE OUT OF CONTROL: AGAMEMNON'S SPEECH IN *ILIAD II*

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TO

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B) Panel 15: Greek and Roman Epic

C) Title: "Language Out of Control: Agamemnon's Speech In *Iliad II*"

D) Length: 20 minutes

E) Abstract: The purpose of my communication is to show that Agamemnon's speech in Book 2 of the *Iliad* (v. 110-141) – with his attempt of testing the army with words – can be better understood if we see in it two opposite aims combined together: 1. to point to the employment of lies and deception as part of a wise king's language; and 2. to point, on the other hand, to Agamemnon's lack of wisdom in this part of narrative, when instead of lies he says the truth about himself. To analyze this ironic contrast is important not only to elucidate his role up to this point in the poem, but also the apparent difficulties concerning his behaviour after the dream sent by Zeus. This interpretation will necessarily lead us to the character of Achilles and to a central notion in the poem – *áte*, "blindness" –, mentioned by both heroes in these initial books of the *Iliad*.