CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

CRITICAL STUDIES IN THE CANTICA OF SOPHOCLES III.

ELECTRA, PHILOCTETES, OEDIPUS AT COLONUS

ELECTRA

121–4

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ παῖ παῖ δυστανότατος

'Ηλέκτρα ματρός, τίν' ἀεὶ

†τάκεις †ὁδ' ἀκόρετον οἴμωγάν

tὸν ... Ἀγαμέμνονα ...

The third verse is indented in correspondence with 138–9 ... πατέρ' ἀν-/ετάσεις ... Its metre (gl sp, ending a tricolon similar to Ant. 814–16/831–3) was discussed in ch. 19 above, with a new proposal οὖτε γόοιν οὖτ' ἥττας (for οὖτε γ- οὖτε λέταις) in 139.3 There remains the

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1 CQ 53 (2003), 75–110. The first article (CS i = ch. 29 above) was concerned in the first instance with the cantica of Antigone, but touched on a number of issues of wider relevance. The second (CS ii = ch. 30) was on Ajax, Trachinia, Oedipus Tyrannus. On the chronology, especially the relative lateness of Electra, cf. p. 353 n. 19. For El. and Phil. we have the Cambridge editions of Kells (1973) and Webster (1970) respectively, for Phil. also R. G. Ussher (ed. Warminster 1990), and for O. C. we look forward to Professor Easterling’s edition in the Cambridge series.—Again, as in chs. 29–30 the siglum LJ/W embraces the Oxford Text of Lloyd-Jones/Wilson and their discussions in Sophoclea (1990); LJ/W2 refers to their Second Thoughts. For references to West (GM, AT), Stinton (CP), Parker (1966, etc.), Itsumi (1982, etc.) and others, see the Abbreviations at p. xvi above. As in comm. Or., to West’s metrical symbols I add ba (baccheus), sp (spondee), T(− − − − − − − −), A(− − − − − − − − − −) and : (diaeresis), and for his ‘gl’ and ‘gl’ I prefer respectively ch ia and wil (wilamowitzianus). ’Enoplian’ is used only in an adjectival sense (comm. Or. xx, cf. p. 351 n. 13). I am again indebted to Prof. C. Collard and the anonymous CQ referee for their criticisms and corrections; also to correspondence with Professor Diggle, Dr Dawe and Professor Easterling.

2 There are references in CS i to El. 153/173 (n. 64), 154/174 (n. 55), 202/223 (n. 64), 205/225 (n. 60), 225 (p. 357), 249 (n. 64), 472/489 (363 n. 49, 370, 373), 486–7/502–3 (363 with n. 51), 504 ff. (352), 510 (n. 64), 511 (n. 89), 829 ff./842 ff. (n. 49), 832/846 (n. 38); in CS ii to 125–6/141–2 (n. 77), 128/145 (407), 160–1/180–1 (407), 225 (422), 244 (422), 248 (394), 472/489 (n. 29), 479/495 (392), 487/503 (n. 58), 496 (405), 504–15 (390, 407), 512 (384 and n. 58), 828 ff./842 ff. (n. 29), 1066 (441), 1398 ff./1422 ff. (n. 90).

3 An alternative οὖτ' ἀχαίος was mentioned there (suggested by a reader). I now view it with more favour, while still preferring ἥττας.
controversial †τάκει† in the strophe, where Schwerdt’s λάκκεις, previously accepted by LJ/W, is abandoned in their Second Thoughts in favour of Kvicala’s τάκει c’ δ’ ἀκόρετος οἴμωγά (which also, of course, needs τίς for τίν’), still with a harsh construction for the following τὸν ... Ἀγαμέμνονα ...

I suggest τίν’ ἄεὶ γ’ ἀχεῖς ... Γ/Τ and K/X are frequent confusions, and the ancient text will have been divided as ... ΑΕΙ | ΓΑΧΕΙ ... The γε is appropriate for 'why perpetually ...?' (idiomatically with 'what' implying 'why').

The open-ended 6da verse expands the preceding run of 4da verses, followed (more Sophocleo) by a catalectic iambic verse. At the same

134–6

ἀλλ’ ὁ παντοῖας φιλότατος ἀμειβόμεναι χάριν,
ἐϊτε μ’ ὅδ’ ἀλώειν,
αἰαί, ἰκνούμαι.

~ 149–52

ι’ὸ παντλάμον Νιόβη, κε δ’ ἐγωγε νέμοι θεῶν,
ἄτ’ ἐν τάφῳ πετραίωι,
αἰαῖ, δακρύεις.

134 φιλότατος] -της codd. 150 παντλάμον CPG+: -τλάµων pler. 152 αἰέν V, ἄεὶ Zc; αἰεὶ Dawe

The open-ended 6da verse expands the preceding run of 4da verses, followed (more Sophocleo) by a catalectic iambic verse. At the same

4 ἄεὶ | γ’ (divided thus), cf. Zuntz 232. For the common error κ for χ (as at I. T. 166 κεταί) cf. Diggle, Euripidea 227–8.

5 Kells rightly explains 'What is this lamentation?' as a way of saying 'What is the meaning of it? Why do you do it?' (his italics), but he cites no parallel. Jebb saw no need to comment. In principle the question is in line with a frequent 'surprised' or 'expostulating' use of τίς, as in questions like 328 τίν’ αὐτ’ ο’ τίνδε ... φανεῖ ... φάτιν; and 388 τίν’, ὧν τάλαινα, τόνδ’ ἐπηράσκω λόγον; A reader points out that here, since the question is extended so as to include the queried utterance’s content, the initial 'what ...?' for 'why ...?' is slightly illogical (the questioner already knows the answer to 'what ...?'); but there is no call to suspect this feature of the text.

6 Mastronarde now allows that ἀχήσω may be right. The metrical argument for it is compelling: for the pattern of the verse, cf. exactly Or. 1364 (with ὅλομενον in the same place) and similarly El. 1170, Herc. 1212, Tro. 244, I. T. 871, Ba. 995/1015; S. O. C. 1464, Ar. Av. 951 (Parker (1968) 267–8).

7 Cf. West, GM 129–30. But it should be observed that the numerous Sophoclean instances are probably all subsequent to E. Alc. 462–6/472–6. There are no instances