Several points of text and metre merit further attention in this short amoiabaion, which somewhat unusually has two interlocutors (at first only the Old Man, but later also the Chorus-leader) in dialogue variously with the singer (Creusa) and with each other. The structure is notably taut, and falls conveniently into three sections (763–75, 776–88, 789–803), all of which begin with chant (Kr.) and end with two pairs of spoken trimeters (Pr. Xo.), while also including other symmetrical features. Characteristically the monodist’s metre is partly (here mainly) iambo-dochmiac, partly enoplian (D/e).  

763–75

Kr. ὃμοι, θάνοιμι.  763
Pr. ὑγατέρ …  764
Kr. ὃ τάλαιν’ ἔγω συμφορᾶς:  765
 ἔλαβον ἐπαθον ἄχος ἄβιτον, φίλαι:  766
dοιοχόμεθα.  766a
Pr. τέκνον …  767
Kr. αἰαιαί, διανταῖος ἔτυνον ὃδύνα με πλευμόνων τόνδ’ ἔσω.  769 
Pr. μῆπο στενάξῃς …  770
Kr. ἀλλὰ πάρει τις.  771
Pr. πρὶν ἄν μάθωμεν …  771
Kr. ἄγγελιαν τίνα μοι;  772
Pr. εἰ ταῦτα πράσσων δεσπότης τῆς συμφορᾶς κοινονώς ἔστιν ὃ μόνη σὺ δυστυχεῖς.  773
Xo. κείνωι μέν, ὃ γεραιέ, παῖδα Λοξίας ἐδοκεῖ, ὕδαι δὲ εὐτυχεῖ ταύτης δίχα.  775


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2 Cf. my discussion of the Helen Duo (625–97) in ch. 9, especially the second half (661–97) which belongs to the category defined on p. 133 as ‘punctuated monody’. For my metrical terms and notations, see also p. 505 n. 4 above.
The vulgate line-numeration is irrational, with ομι ... φιλαί as ‘763–4’ and διοιχόμεθα ... ἕκῳ (the same length) as ‘765–8’; then either ‘769–71’ for the two iambelegi (and 772–5 for the four trimeters) or 769–70 for the iambelegi and ‘771–5’ for the trimeters. I have ventured to re-number in line with the following discussion.

763–71. L has the speaker-assignations wrong in 763–5 (absurdly so, in giving τάλαιν’ ἕγῳ to the Old Man), and is otherwise in need of corrections. But it is no longer (or should not be) controversial that the amoibaion begins with two symmetrical exchanges, the first iambo–dochmiac, the second enoplian; both with antilabe which permits the Old Man, as a non-singing interlocutor, to contribute to a lyric sequence with a metrical fragment consistent with spoken utterance. Within the symmetrical structure, Creusa laments extravagantly with death-wishes, and the Old Man’s ‘calming’ interventions ingeniously constitute a repeatedly interrupted sentence (θυγατερ ... τέκνον ... μήπω στενάξης ... πρὶν ἄν μάθομεν ... εἶ ...). Antilabe with more than one speaker-change within a verse is a predominantly late-style feature.

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3 Both Murray and Diggle refer in their apparatus to the first trimeter as ‘771’, thus tacitly treating the other three trimeters as 772–774–775!

4 (i) The interpolated repetition of 759 after ἕγῳ in 765 confused the lineation (if not already confused), and gave Wilamowitz an excuse for excising συμφοράς (implausibly: for the idiom here, cf. Hel. 139, 240, with Kannicht’s note, A. Pers. 445, 517, etc.). (ii) The wrong βιοτόν has caused trouble, otherwise variously ‘corrected’ to ἀβιοτόν (Musgrave) and ἀβιον (Hermann). (iii) For the routinely interpolated ω before φιλαί, cf. Or. 186 etc. (iv) For L’s false doubling of ἐτυπεν, cf. Diggle, Euripidea 381 and 460 n. 83 (on instances in Orestes): ‘dittography is a less common fault than haplography, but is commoner than may generally be supposed’. (v) The virtually unique (but not uncharacteristic) form ἐτυπεν has attracted some negligible emendations.

5 For such quasi-strophic symmetries in what is essentially non-strophic composition, cf. Hipp. 571–6/577–854/90 (all 5δ :: two trimeters), Herc. 1028–30/1031–3 (exclamation | ∆ 1: D | ∆ – twice), 1185/1186/1187 (|= e – ∆ – thrice), etc.

6 Cf. Lee’s discussion. Diggle has the assignments right (with Murray and others, after Boissonade); but his line-divisions are unsymmetrical (ὁμι θάνοιμι | ... τάλαιν’ | ... ἄχος | ... φιλαί | | then ... τέκνον | αἰαί αἰαί | ... πλευ ... ἕκῳ). Kovacs lineates symmetrically, but surprisingly has the assignments wrong, giving ὁμι θάνοιμι, ἄβιοτον and διοιχόμεθα, τέκνον to the Old Man. ‘Punctuated monody’ properly begins with sung utterance by the monodist; and we cannot here have the musical scene beginning with suicidal lamentation by the Old Man, inconsistently with 768 ff. (μήπω στενάξης ...). Diggle (followed by Lee) rightly rejects Hipp. 353 ff. as affording support for that. Cf. also M. Huys (Hermes 121 (1993), 428–32), against W. Kraus (WS 102 (1989), 68).