

SHORTER NOTES

SOPHOCLES, *ELECTRA* 610–11

Immediately after Electra has been fulminating against her mother:

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| 610 | Χο. ὀρώ μένος πνέουσας· εἰ δὲ σὺν δίκη |
| 611 | ξύνεστι, τοῦδε φροντίδ' οὐκέτ' εἰσορώ. |
| 612 ff. | Κλ. ποίας δ' ἐμοὶ δεῖ πρὸς γε τήνδε φροντίδος
ἥτις . . . [κτλ.]; |

There exist six mutually exclusive versions of lines 610–11:

- (1) πνέουσας, ξύνεστι both refer to Electra (Jebb).
- (2) They both refer to Clytemnestra (Gregor).¹
- (3) πνέουσας refers to E., ξύνεστι to C. (Bayfield).
- (4) ξύνεστι refers to E., πνέουσας to C. (Wecklein).
- (5) The two lines are spoken by Electra (Fitton-Brown).²
- (6) The two lines are spoken by Clytemnestra (Lilley).³

Jebb is right. The two lines are a comment by the Chorus; and they are a comment on the *apparent* shamelessness of the remarks which Electra has just been making about her mother. The dissentients have been deceived by two pseudo-problems, hitherto unexploded:

A. φροντίδ' in 611 appears to be taken up by Clytemnestra in the next line (612). This makes it look as if Clytemnestra feels that lines 610–11 are a comment on her own lack of regard for justice, and that in lines 612 ff. she is saying: 'How do you expect me to have much regard for justice, when I am dealing with some one who behaves like Electra?' But a moment's thought shows that this is a false analysis of 612 ff. What Clytemnestra says in 612 ff. is not: 'I am justified in having *little* regard for justice, in these circumstances.' It is rather: 'I ought to care *very much indeed* about Electra's injustice and shamelessness.' This is what ποίας implies. The sense is: 'Electra may not care whether she behaves justly or not, but you cannot expect *me* (Clytemnestra) not to care about it.' Subsequently Electra defends herself, saying that she is not without shame in behaving as she does, but her conduct is forced upon her by her mother's example of shameless injustice. There is thus no problem about the sequence of the dialogue from 610–11 to the lines which follow.

B. The other pseudo-problem arises because 'the Chorus is sympathetic towards Electra throughout the play' (Lilley), and it is thought to be unlikely that they would comment adversely on Electra's sense of justice at any point in the play. But Electra has been attacking a parent with apparent shamelessness, and such an attack on a parent would be considered unjust in Greek morality, unless fully justified by argument. The Chorus's comment in lines 610–11 is natural after Electra's outburst. The Chorus in Sophocles is apt to comment like some impartial judge during altercations about the rights and wrongs of a

¹ CR 64 (1950), 87–8, approved by Kells in his edition (Cambridge, 1972).
So also Campbell, Kaibel, Kamerbeek.

² CQ 50 (1956), 38–9.

³ CQ 69 (1975), 309–11. There is even more variation, since Blaydes suggested σοὶ δίκη for σὺν δίκη in 610.

situation. When in *O.T.* 404–5 the Chorus attributes *ὀργή* alike to Tiresias and to Oedipus, the audience know that Tiresias is entirely in the right; but at that point in the play the Chorus do not know, and they comment impartially on the basis of the things said on both sides at that time. During a later dialogue in the *Electra* itself (871–1057) it is not always clear whether the Chorus support Electra or Chrysothemis, although ultimately they appear to be on Electra's side.¹ Once again, the problem evaporates under examination.

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¹ See the latter part of my 'Sophocles *Electra* 1082–9', *RhMus* 119 (1976), 127–33.

ΒΩCECΘΕ AGAIN

βιώσεσθε? Or future of *βόσκεσθαι*? Professor Skutsch (*CQ* N.S. (1973), 60, 378), calling the contraction *βιω* → *βω* 'impossible' (but see Ardzizoni's note), insists on the latter; F. Vian in his *Budé Apollonius* (p.82) leaves the question open.

A.R.1.685 ~ 693 (Polyxo speaking; note the context of 683–8):

πῶς τῆμος βώσεσθε.;
. τάδε φράζεσθαι ἄνωγα.

Hom.h.Ap. 528 (–30), the Cretans newly arrived at Pytho:

πῶς καὶ νῦν βιώμεσθα; τό σε φράζεσθαι ἄνωγμεν.

This hymn is used elsewhere in the Lemnos episode: A.R.1.667–8: 345–6 + *Od.* 2.14, 5.3; 1.669:317; 765:153–4; 788–9:9 + *Il.* 9.200, *Od.* 10.233, *h.Cer.* 193; 831:38; 838:476–7.

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AN EMENDATION IN PLUTARCH CONFIRMED

Isidorus Pelusiotes, *Epistulae* 2.42 preserves an opinion of Plutarch on genuine Atticism:¹

Πλουτάρχῳ δὲ δοκεῖ τὸ σαφές καὶ λιτὸν γνήσιον εἶναι Ἀττικισμόν· οὕτω γάρ, φησὶν, ἐλάλησαν οἱ ῥήτορες. Γοργίας δ' ὁ Λεοντίνος πρῶτος τὴν νόσον ταύτην εἰς τοὺς πολιτικούς λόγους εἰσήγαγε, τὸ ὑψηλὸν καὶ τροπικόν ἀσπασάμενος καὶ τῇ σαφηνείᾳ λυμνήμενος.

The word *τροπικόν* is an emendation of Bernardakis for the manuscripts' reading *τυπικόν*.²

This emendation is confirmed by a fragment of Dionysius of Halicarnassus apparently overlooked by editors of Plutarch:³

¹ Plutarch, *Moralia*, ed. F. H. Sandbach (Leipzig, 1967), VII, fragm. 186.

² Plutarch, *Moralia*, ed. G. N. Bernardakis (Leipzig, 1896), VII, fragm. 138.

³ Dionysius Halicarnaseus, *Opuscula*, ed. H. Usener and L. Radermacher (reprint Leipzig, 1965) II.214–15.