

EURIPIDES, *SUPPLICES* 42–70

In a previous article I discussed some textual and metrical issues in the lyric-iambic stanzas *Supplices* 71–8/79–86, and the problematic *persona* and constitution of the Chorus.¹ The preceding maternal *ἰκεσία* in four ionic stanzas presents fewer textual problems; but here too there is a challenging crux, at 45(–6) in the first strophe; and there is more to be said about the ode's metrical structure. I begin with a metrical re-appraisal, which will prove to have a bearing on the textual problem. Unless otherwise stated, the text given is identical with those of both Diggle and Collard,² except in lineation.

42–7 ~ 48–53³

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰκετεύω σε, γεραία,
γεραιῶν ἐκ στομάτων πρὸς
γόνυ πίπτουσα τὸ σόν·
† ἄνομοι τέκνα λῦσαι
φθιμένων νεκῶν οἶτ'
καταλείπουνι μέλη
θανάτῳ λυσιμελεῖ θηρ-
σὶν ὀρέοις βοράν·

ἐσιδούς' οἰκτρὰ μὲν ὄσων
δάκρυ' ἀμφὶ βλεφάροις, ῥυ-
κά δὲ σαρκῶν πολιᾶν
καταδρῦμματα χειρῶν·
τί γάρ; ἃ φθιμένους παῖ-
δας ἐμούς οὔτε δόμοις
προθέμαν οὔτε τάφων χώ-
ματα γαίας ἐσοῶ.

The metre of this first stanza-pair is properly interpreted as a system of ionic dimeters,⁴ with word-end at verse-end except where synartesis (word-overlap) in one or both stanzas creates a run of four metra, such runs all ending catalectic with the rhythm ... υ υ – – υ υ – – \wedge .⁵

The fourth dimeter is a short colon between double-length cola (or dicola);⁶ a unit which follows a period-end, but also ends the first half of the stanza, the period-end

¹ Euripides, *Supplices* 71–86 and the Chorus of “Attendants”, *CQ* 40 (1990), 340–8. I am again indebted to Dr Diggle for his helpful criticisms of my first draft, and further suggestions.

² J. Diggle, *Euripidis fabulae*, ii (Oxford, 1981); C. Collard, *Euripides Supplices* (Groningen, 1975), cf. also his Teubner edition (1984).

³ In 45f. Collard obelizes only the first three words. In 51 I prefer his colon after *χειρῶν*; however the syntax is interpreted (n. 22 below), the structure of this stanza-pair favours internal punctuation lighter than Diggle's full-stop.

⁴ Modern editors have rightly rejected the mixed iono-choriambic interpretation attested by L: *2ion* | *2ion* \wedge | *2ch* || *3ion* \wedge | *3ion* \wedge | *2ion* \wedge | *2ch* (presumably favoured as avoiding word-overlaps). But their lineations have been oddly varied: Dale (*Lyric Metres*², 123) has dimeters apart from a concluding tetrameter (though she calls the first three dimeters a ‘hexameter’). Diggle and Collard both lineate so as to show a tripartite pattern of six, six and four metra. The former subdivides both the *6ion* runs as tetrameter plus dimeter, despite the more natural 2 | 4 division, both having diaeresis thus in both stanzas; Collard follows Murray and others in dividing the first as three dimeters, the second (see further in n. 7 below) as two trimeters. The ionics here replace the anapaestic dimeters with which choruses often begin in other plays; cf. also the iambic dimeters in 71–86 (art. cit. 342–5).

⁵ On catalexis in relation to period-end, see L. P. E. Parker, *CQ* 26 (1976), 14–28.

⁶ For my definition of ‘colon’ (not synonymous with ‘verse’), see my commentary on *Orestes*, p. xx. In a ‘dicolon’ (often but not necessarily printed as a ‘distich’) the diaeresis between the constituent lengths can either shift or disappear.

being more evident in the strophe, the stanza-halves more evident in the antistrophe. Both this colon and the next begin with a syncopated metron (υυ-υυ--| υυ-υυ--...);⁷ the same sequence as A. *Pers.* 70–1/77–8.⁸

54–62 ~ 63–70⁹

ἔτεκες καὶ κύ ποτ', ὦ πότ-
νια, κούρον φίλα ποιη-
σαμένα λέκτρα πόσει cώι·
μετά νυν δὸς ἐμοὶ cās
διανοίας, μετάδος δ' ὅς-
con ἐπαλγῶ μελέα (<'γῶ>
φθιμένων οὖς ἔτεκον·
παράπεισον δὲ cὸν ὦ, λίσ-
σομαι, ἔλθειν τέκνον Ἴcμη-
νὸν ἐμάν τ' ἐς χέρα θείναι
νεκύων θαλερῶν cώ-
ματ' ἀλαίνοντ' ἀταφα.

όςίως οὐχ, ὑπ' ἀνάγκας
δὲ προπίπτουσα προσαιτου-
c' ἔμολον δεξιπύρους θεῶν
θυμέλας· ἔχομεν δ' ἐν-
δικα, καὶ coί τι πάρεστι
cθένος ὥστ' εὐτεκνίαι δυσ-
τυχίαν τὰν παρ' ἐμοὶ
καθελεῖν· οἰκτρά δὲ πάσχου-
c' ἱκετεύω cὸν ἐμοὶ παῖ-
δα ταλαῖναι ἔν χειρὶ θείναι
νέκυν, ἀμφιβαλεῖν λυ-
γρὰ μέλη παιδὸς ἐμοῦ.

Here the ancient tradition attested by L is superior to the colometry adopted (with variations) by all modern editors.¹⁰ My re-arrangement in dimeters differs from the former only superficially:

1–3: <i>6ion</i>	(L: <i>3ion</i> <i>3ion</i>)
4–7: <i>8ion</i> _Λ	(L: <i>3ion</i> <i>3ion</i> <i>2ion</i> _Λ)
8–10: <i>6ion</i>	(L: <i>3ion</i> <i>3ion</i>)
11–12: <i>4ion</i> _Λ	(L: <i>4ion</i> _Λ uno versu)

This is the essence of the pattern, whether 1–3, 4–6 and 8–10 are presented on the page as two trimeters or three dimeters. Dimeters are preferred here partly for the sake of presenting the stanzas side by side.¹¹

⁷ It may be difficult to distinguish between syncopated and catalectic ionic metra of the form υυ-. But there can be no doubt here about catalexis in the sixth and sixteenth metra; and the pattern favours similar interpretation of the twelfth (...-ci μέλη ~ ...-τε δόμοις; the 'overrun' in the antistrophe at ...οὔτε δόμοις|προθέμαν is like similar overruns in the second antistrophe, see below). By contrast, the seventh metron (ἴανομοι† ~ καταδρύμ-) is certainly syncopated within the period, and we should not wish to suggest catalexis in both the ninth and twelfth by dividing at φθιμένων|νεκύν ~ τί γάρ; ἀ|φθιμένους (giving *3ion*_Λ|*3ion*_Λ).

⁸ A similarity unlikely to be fortuitous in a metrical sequence otherwise apparently modelled on the Parodos of the *Persae*; cf. *CQ* 40 (1990), 340, and further on 69–70 below.

⁹ Ἴcμηνόν (not Ἴcμ-), see Mastronarde, ed. *Phoenissae* (Teubn. 1988), xxiif. For the text of 58–9 (ὅccον Tr²) and 60–2 (where Collard prefers λiccόμeθ) see Diggle, *Studies on the Text of Euripides* (1981), 2–3. As to punctuation, I have removed the usual but superfluous comma preceding ὦ in 60; for ὦ or ὦ following an imperative, cf. *CQ* *ibid.*, 345 with nn. 34–5.

¹⁰ Both Diggle and Collard, after Wilamowitz, Dale and others, treat the stanza as *7ion*_Λ || *7ion*_Λ || *10ion*_Λ. This is only superficially attractive, since (a) the *7ion*_Λ lengths, apart from their overall equality, are in other respects amorphous (divided by Diggle as 4+3|4+3, and by Collard, again following Murray, as 3+2+2|2+3+2); (b) the division after *7ion*_Λ is presumably intended to give symmetrical periods with catalectic close, but there can be no period-end at μετά νυν|δὸς (an indivisible unit) in the strophe. [Diggle further contrives to get the υυ- metra at verse-end in all three places, by dividing the *10ion*_Λ sequences as 4+3+3, rather than 3+3+4; thus further obscuring the difference between catalexis and syncopation (cf. n. 7 above).]

¹¹ L's divisions match the phrase-lengths in the strophe, and give another eight-verse stanza. But there is still an overlap at δυσ-|τυχίαν in the antistrophe; and the dimeter-arrangement with indentations arguably shows more clearly the structure of *both* stanzas and their relationship with 42–7/48–53. Since the *3ion* lengths occur in pairs, it is likely that Euripides was himself conscious of the ambivalence (3 × 2 = 2 × 3). Cf. the *3an* phrase-lengths which frequently occur in anapaestic systems, where the dimeter is the fundamental, but not sacrosanct, unit; M. L. West, *BICS* 24 (1977), 89–94.

Metrical and rhetorical lengths (longer in these stanzas) again correspond in the strophe, which thus establishes the colometric pattern. The syntax of the antistrophe then repeatedly *overrides* the metrical divisions (...|θυμέλας...|καθελείν...|νέκυν,...), in a way similar to, but more pronounced than, the overrides at 50f. (...|καταδρύμματα χειρῶν') and 52f. (...|προθέμαν...); a surely deliberate use of 'period-end without pause' in the antistrophes,¹³ giving an effect of enhanced urgency as the supplication surges to a climax.

The crux in the first strophe (where the metre, however, is well preserved) has been most recently discussed by Diggle in *GRBS* 14 (1973), 241–4, and subsequently by Collard in his commentary. It is common ground that 45(–6) is unintelligible as transmitted, and that ἀνομοι (at least) is certainly corrupt.¹⁵ Diggle proposes ἄνα μοι (Brodaeus) τέκνα λῦσαι <’κ> (Page) φθιμένων νεκῶν ὧν (for οἱ) καταλείπουνι μέλει κτλ. Collard, though implying that he would have preferred to save the words τέκνα λῦσαι, commends Campbell’s ἀνόμους κατάπαισαι.

Collard's principal objections to Diggle are, first, that 'it would be "παρὰ τὸ ἦθος" for the Cho. to ask recovery for their sons while the other Argive dead remain unburied: distinction between the Seven and the rest is made only in the place of their burial (754ff.)'; and that 'the absence of a definite subject for καταλείπουνι is a real difficulty' (sc. 'they, the Thebans'). His first objection can be put rather differently and more strongly: it is surely intolerable that the whole second half of the first strophe should be concerned with the non-burial, not of the Mothers' sons, but of ill-defined 'dead corpses' from which the sons are to be released or ransomed. The blurred focus introduces a wholly irrelevant complication and misdirected emphasis, instead of a simple, specific and straightforward focus on the grievous denial of burial to the τέκνα; cf. the résumé in 284–5 below: *περὶ κοῖσιν|γούνασιν ὧδε πίτνω τέκνον τάφον ἐξανύσασθαι*.

There are other, if less forceful, objections that can be raised against this line of emendation. The prodelision $\lambda\upsilon\kappa\alpha\iota$ 'κ is doubtful in itself,¹⁶ and the more unlikely in the light of the above metrical discussion, falling as it does at colon-end, at the mid-

¹² For such *initial* syncope, Dr Diggle reminds me of *Ba.* 64 'Αciác ἀπό γὰc (Hermann γαίác) and 69.

¹³ i.e. rhetorical 'pause', as defined and analysed in relation to period-end by Stinton in *CQ* 27 (1977), 27–66; or we may prefer simply to speak of 'enjambment'.

¹⁴ See n. 8 above.

¹⁵ Against Murray, who unconvincingly defended the text as 'clamores confusos'. We agree also in rejecting all proposals that give a text in which the dead corpses are leaving their own limbs unburied.

¹⁸ The only other Euripidean instances claimed by Diggle of prodelision after *-ai* (both conjectural, though probable) are of (ἐ)γώ following *-ομαι*: *Hel.* 953, *I.A.* 1396 and (he now adds) *I.A.* 900 (Markland). [The position is different if the *ι* is adscript, as at 69 *ταλαίναί ν' χερί*, for which see Diggle, *Studies*, 33.]

point of the stanza, where the antistrophe has its main syntactical division. As to the popular *ἄνα μοι*, it may well be that *-μοι* conceals *μοι*; but *ἄνα* (surge!) is more questionable. Aethra's situation, immobilised by the Suppliants (32ff.), is quite different from that of the inertly recumbent or seated persons exhorted to rise in *Alc.* 277, *Tro.* 98, *S. Aj.* 193 and *Il.* 9.247 (none of which has an associated *μοι*). 'Arise!' is odd at the beginning of this extended *ἱκεσία*, the more so as what the Mothers want from Aethra is not physical action, but advocacy on their behalf *when Theseus comes* (cf. 24ff., 36–41, and 60ff. *παράπειρον* ...).

Against Collard (and Campbell) it suffices to say that the postulated corruption *ανομοΥΚΚΑΤΑΠΑΥσαι* → *ανομοΙΤΕΚΝΑΛΥσαι* cannot properly be explained as an 'anagrammatic' error; that transitive *καταπαύεσθαι* is attested elsewhere only at *Hel.* 1153, in a corrupt passage;¹⁷ and that 'put a stop to lawless persons who leave corpses unburied...' is scarcely the sense to be looked for. Aethra is not a Chief of Police, and the corpses need to be identified *in this sentence*.

Breaking new ground, my first suggestion is that the corrupt *ἄνομοι* may conceal, not *ἄνα μοι*, but *ἄνε μοι* ('effice mihi', cf. 285 *ἐξανύσαςθαι*). Rare words are the more likely to be corrupted. *ε* and *ο* are often confused; and a copyist here might well have judged that *ἄνομοι* 'lawless men' made better sense than *ἄνεμοι* 'winds'.¹⁸

'I beseech you ... | accomplish for me the release of my (our) sons | ...'. Given *ἄνε*, the metrical and rhetorical colon following *ἱκετεύω* *σε ... πρὸς γόνυ πίπτουσα τὸ κόιν* (and ending the first half of the stanza) economically enunciates the essence of the appeal. If *ἄνε* had been transmitted, we should be happy to accept it as a rare poetical verb¹⁹ appropriately elevated in tone and flattering in implication (in line with *πότνια* 54), with some conative force (= *ἄννε*, rather than *ἄνυσον*), and as the appropriate syntactical peg for all that follows, including the participial antistrophe (*ἐκιδούς* ...); *μοι* is neatly *ἀπὸ κοινοῦ*, and also equivalent to *ἡμῖν* with the plural *τέκνα*; and *λύσαι*, now active infinitive (not middle imperative) with accusative and dative, is *vox propria* in line with a famous Iliadic precedent, viz. the release to Priam of his son's unburied body (*Il.* 24.560–1 *νόσῳ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς | Ἑκτορά τοι λύσαι*); cf. LSJ *λύω* I.2. c. For the infinitive construction after *ἄνε* 'effice', we may compare *S. O.T.* 720–2 *Ἀπόλλων οὔτ' ἐκείνον ἦννε | φονέα γενέσθαι πατρός, οὔτε Λαίον ... πρὸς παιδὸς παθεῖν*.

If we are on the right lines so far, the problem now is whether we need something like

ἄνε μοι τέκνα λύσαι
<χητλίους>, φθιμένων [νεκύων] οἱ
καταλείπουνι μέλη κτλ.

in order to link the so far subjectless infinitive *λύσαι* with the subject developed in the relative clause, or whether the sentence is already sufficiently intelligible, needing only a comma after *λύσαι* (matching *χειρῶν* in the antistrophe) to show where the relative clause begins. Omission of *ἐκείνους* (vel sim.) is possible in itself, since we quite often

¹⁷ The seriously disturbed text of *Hel.* 1152–4 (a passage which I hope to discuss elsewhere) may well involve some corruption in the relevant words (*πόνους ... καταπαυόμενοι*); and in any case *ἀνόμους* and *πόνους* are different kinds of object.

¹⁸ Professor West has drawn my attention to the corruption of *ἀνομον* to *ἀνεμον* at *Hes. Th.* 307, where allegorical interpretation was a factor.

¹⁹ The imperative *ἀνέτω* occurs at *S. Ichn.* 70. The participle occurs in *Ar. Vesp.* 369 (*ἄνοντος*), and possibly in *S. O.C.* 523 (*ἄνων* Hermann, for *ἄκων*; a conjecture meriting more attention than it has received); cf. also *A. Ch.* 798 (*ἀνόμενον* Emperius, *-νων* M). The optative *ἄνοις* is plausibly restored in *A. fr.* 161.2 (Dobree; *Stob. ναοῖς, λάβοις* Σ *Hom. I* 158 et *Eust.*). For Euripides we have at present only *Andr.* 1132 *ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἦεν (ἦνον* Borthwick), but that suffices to show that *ἄνω*, equivalent to *ἀνύω*, was not a verb alien to his vocabulary.

find the subject of an infinitive left unexpressed if it can be easily supplied;²⁰ and Greek commonly omits the pronominal antecedent of relative clauses.²¹ But undeniably the position of *φθιμένων νεκύων* before the relative pronoun is an obstacle here, liable to be mistaken as the antecedent if no other antecedent has been expressed. The antistrophe ends similarly with a relative clause whose antecedent is merely implicit;²² but it is doubtful whether ‘symmetry’ can be held to justify a more obscurely implicit antecedent in the strophe.

The compound suggestion of a supplement before *φθιμένων* and excision of *νεκύων* is bold, but potentially remedial,²³ with the additional good effect of bringing *φθιμένων* into responsion with *φθιμένους* 52. *νεκύων*, though the pleonasm is unexceptionable,²⁴ is a superfluous word here (featuring more pointedly later, in the responsion at 61/69), which could have entered the tradition as an isometric variant.

The passage should doubtless remain obelized as not remediable with a sufficient degree of certainty. *ἄνε μοι* can, I think, properly claim a place in the apparatus criticus as the most plausible available correction of *ἄνομοι*. But for acceptance into the text we really need a supporting attestation of this second person imperative; and the associated infinitive construction is virtually another *ad hoc* postulate, supported only by a single parallel (with *ἦνυε*) in Sophocles.

Highgate, London

C. W. WILLINK

²⁰ Especially after verbs like *κελεύω*; often also after *ᾧστε*, as in 204 etc. (PCPS 36 (1990), 199 n. 37).

²¹ Kühner–Gerth ii.402; for omission in particular of the accusative antecedent of a clause with nominative relative pronoun, cf. *Alc.* 338 *στυγῶ μὲν ἦ μ’ ἔτικτεν*. Relative pronoun plus finite verb is commonly equivalent to article plus participle, and vice versa. So here *οὐ καταλείπουσι* can (in theory at least) be understood as *τοὺς καταλείποντας*.

²² The antecedent of *ἃ* may be either the first person variously implicit in the context as a whole (including the extended object of *ἐσιδοῦσα*), or specifically the ‘I’ implicit in the elliptical *τί γάρ*; (sc. *πάθω*).

²³ The suggestion offered is ex. gr. (some may prefer to look for a suitable noun denoting the Thebans). For *σχεῖλιος* ‘hard-hearted, merciless’ (LSJ s.v. I.2) followed by a relative clause, cf. *Od.* 5.118ff., etc.; it is a word that naturally begins a colon, as at *Alc.* 470 *σχετλίω, πολὺν ἔχοντε χαίταν* (followed by an ionic sequence).

²⁴ Cf. Kannicht on *Hel.* 176–8.