WHO SPEAKS AT SOPHOCLES *ANTIGONE* 572?

Few, if any, disputes over the attribution of lines in a Greek drama are more momentous for the presentation of a major character, or, indeed, for the signification of the play as a whole, than the controversy referred to in this article's title (1). The facts are soon stated: all the available manuscripts give the line to Ismene, and the verse was first consigned to Antigone by Aldus Manutius in his edition of Sophocles. The ease with which change of speakers in manuscripts is omitted or misrepresented, however, is so great that the issue must be decided on internal evidence.

The bearing of the controversy upon Sophocles' characterisation of Antigone is best brought out by quoting the scholar who is perhaps the most eloquent advocate of her claim to the line. I refer to Jebb's note ad loc. (2): "To me it seems certain that the verse is Antigone's, and that one of the finest touches in the play is effaced by giving it to Ismene. The taunt, *κακὰς γυναῖκας υἱέσι*, moves Antigone to break the silence which she has kept since v. 560: in all this scene she has not spoken to Creon, nor does she now address him: she is thinking of Haemon – of the dishonour to *him* implied in the charge of having made such a choice – *ὡς αἰεὶ τὸν ὁμοῖον ἄγει θεὸς ὡς τὸν ὁμοῖον*. How little does his father know the heart which was in sympathy with her own. This solitary reference to her love heightens in a wonderful degree our sense of her unselfish devotion to a sacred duty".

Approaches to Greek literature develop and change. We now detect in these words that excessive idealisation of the play's heroine which

(1) I keep bibliographical references to a minimum. There is a characteristically full list of scholars who support either attribution of our line in Hester, "Mnemos." 24, 1971, 30 n. 1 (cfr. id., ibid. 34, 1981, 158); see too W. M. Calder III, "GRBS" 9, 1968, 398f. n. 42. According to the latter "to give [572] to Antigone, as the British after the Aldine often do... is sheer sentimentalism". The briefest glimpse of Hester's list will suffice to show that the attribution cannot be limited geographically in this way. But perhaps the present article may do a little to atone for the sins of my fellow countrymen.

(2) Sophocles Antigone. Cambridge 1900³. 110. Similar points had already been made of course: see, for instance, August Boeckh's edition and commentary, Berlin 1843, 244: "[Antigone] müsste gefühlloss sein, wenn sie hier schwiege".

became more and more prevalent in the nineteenth century and to which the best antidote is Perrotta's reference to "questa terribile eroina" (3). Inevitably a reaction began to set in, and it may not be coincidence that Friis Johansen (4) could accurately claim by 1963: "the majority of scholars now seems to accept the evidence of all the manuscripts that this line is spoken by Ismene". More recently, however, two attempts have been made to restate the case for Antigone, in terms considerably less fervid and emotional than those of Sir Richard Jebb (5). Both contributions were published in the same year (1978) and by the same printing house (Brill, Leiden), but they were obviously drawn up quite independently. I refer to Rodger Dawe's Studies in the Text of Sophocles, volume 3, and the relevant portion of Kamerbeek's commentary on the extant plays of Sophocles. Kamerbeek also refers to a treatment of the question by H. D. F. Kitto which in fact anticipates most of his own points in a considerably more coherent manner (6).

Some details, of course, are more important than others (so, for instance, the formal consideration that giving 572 to Antigone disrupts the symmetry of the stichomythia (7) is reasonably dismissed by Kitto

(3) G. Perrotta, Sofocle, Milan 1935, 113; cfr. H. Lloyd-Jones, The Justice of Zeus, London 1971, 116. Idealisation or sentimentalisation of the heroine is often assumed to be the motive behind attribution of 572 to Antigone (see e.g. Calder, sup. cit. n. 1), though it does not have to be: cfr. Ernst Howald, Die Griechische Tragödie, Berlin 1930, 106: "Der Vers... ist keine Liebeserklärung der Antigone, aber sie fühlt durch das Wort Kreons ihre Partei beleidigt". But when we hear from G. Müller in his commentary on this play (Heidelberg 1967, 111) that Jebb's argument is "unangreifbar" we recall that his heroine "is altogether perfect" (Lloyd-Jones, "CR" 19, 1969, 25; for a good refutation of Müller's views on the line see B. Knox, "Gnomon" 40, 1968, 755 = Word and Action, London 1979, 174) and there is much truth in H. Rohdich's observation (Antigone: Beitrag zu einer Theorie des sophokleischen Helden, Heidelberg 1980, 105f. n. 181): "In der Zuteilung von 572 an Antigone ist erneut das Bestreben spürbar, die Heldin im bürgerlichen Sinn sympatischer zu machen, und das Bild zu verwischen, das sie tatsächlich bietet: stumme Anwesende bei einem Gespräch zu sein, das ihr gleichgültig ist und in jeder Hinsicht an ihr vorbeigeht".

(4) Sophocles 1939-1959, "Lustrum" 7, 1963, 194.

(5) J. Kamerbeek, The Plays of Sophocles, III. The Antigone, Leiden 1978, 115. R. D. Dawe, Studies on the Text of Sophocles, volume III, Leiden 1978, 106ff. The line is given to Antigone in his Teubner edition. I do not intend to discuss here Dawe's further attribution of vv. 574 and 576 to Antigone. Ismene's claim to the first is adequately defended by M. L. West, "BICS" 26, 1979, 108; on 576 see H. Lloyd-Jones, "CR" 31, 1981, 172 (arguing for ascription to the chorus).

(6) Form and Meaning in Drama, London 1956, 162ff.

(7) This consideration has particularly impressed Schneidewin (see his commentary ad loc., Berlin 1856³. 87) and W. Jens, Antigone-Interpretationen, 'Satura.

with reference to the age-old adage of genius as the master not the slave of rules). No-one will deny, however, that the most obviously nagging of details in the present passage concerns whether *τὸ σὸν* λέχος, which would most naturally signify "your marriage", can somehow be used in a retort to a remark made by *Ismene*. Of the regularly quoted potential analogies, that in Eur., Hipp. 101-13 (*τὴν σὴν δὲ Κύπριν πόλλ' ἐγὼ χαίρειν λέγω*) particularly impresses, and Dawe's treatment of it is certainly wrong. He alleges that the line "means not 'Cypris of whom you speak' but 'Cypris whom you worship as I do not' ". But Hippolytus is here speaking to the *θεράπων*, who is specifically signalised by 114f. (*τοὺς νέους γὰρ οὐ μιμητέον | φρονοῦντας οὕτως*) as an old man. Why in the world should he be regarded as a devotee of Aphrodite? He has merely been cautiously advocating the playing by Aphrodite of a larger rôle in Hippolytus' life than she at present occupies.

Dawe is prepared to accept the stylistic device in question as exemplified by Eur., Hcld. 282ff. *μάτην γὰρ ἦβην ὧδέ γ' ἂν κεκτήμεθα / πολλὴν ἐν Ἄργει μή σε τιμωρούμενοι. // φθείρου· τὸ σὸν γὰρ Ἄργος οὐ δέδοικ' ἐγώ* but complains that "in our present passage λέχος does not follow closely on any previous mention of λέχος or a close synonym (8). 572 has only spoken of *ἀτιμία* to Haemon". Why credit the original audience with a memory so sieve-like that it was incapable of moving any further back than 572? The exchange between Creon and Ismene in the preceding lines is littered with references to marriage, for all that the specific word λέχος does not occur. Ismene turns the stichomythia in this direction at l. 568:

— *ἀλλὰ κτενεῖς νυμφεῖα τοῦ σαυτοῦ τέκνου;*
— *ἀρώσιμοι γὰρ χἀτέρων εἰσὶν γύαι.*
— *οὐχ ὥς γ' ἐκείνῳ τῇδέ τ' ἦν ἡρμοσμένα.*
— *κακὰς ἐγὼ γυναῖκας υἱέσι στυγῶ.*

νυμφεῖα is nothing if not "a close synonym" for λέχος (9), and memory of it is kept green and fresh by the content of the next two lines, and even more so by the *κακὰς... γυναῖκας* of 571. *τὸ σὸν* λέχος makes as

Früchte aus der antiken Welt. O. Weinreich... dargebracht', Baden-Baden 1952, 53 = Sophokles, (Wege der Forschung 95), Darmstadt 1967, 305 n. 23. But far and away the most intelligent argument on formal grounds of dialogue-technique is that advanced by D. J. Mastronarde, Contact and Discontinuity, University of California "Classical Studies" 21, 1979, 95f. (cfr. 104 n. 28) to which I have nothing to add.

(8) A point which also worries Kamerbeek (sup. cit. n. 5) 115 n. 4, as it did Boeckh (sup. cit. n. 2).

(9) For *νυμφεῖα* with this meaning see Barrett on Eur. Hipp. 552, Diggle on Eur. Phaeth. 231.

accurate a summary of these references together with 572 as ἡ σὴ Κύπρις does of the contents of Hipp. 101ff., provided that we bear in mind the overtones which even so common a word as σός can carry ("you and your...") in the mouth of so impatient a speaker as Creon or Hippolytus. The phrase, then, can mean what the scholion ad loc. (p. 245 Papageorgiou) alleges: τὸ σὸν τὸ ὑπὸ σοῦ ὀνομαζόμενον οἷον τὸ ὄνομα τῆς νύμφης ὃ σὺ προβάλλῃ. Furthermore, in spite of his impatience, Creon's use of the word ἄγαν most naturally implies that he is answering a character who has been persistently contributing to the stichomythia so far (10).

So much for details. What of the wider issues that are raised? If the line is given to Antigone, then, says Kitto, "Creon is assailed by protests, direct or veiled, by everyone present: Ismene, Antigone, and the Chorus; in the face of which he remains unmoved". But this effect is achieved anyway, even if Antigone preserves her silence: what more impressively veiled protest could be levelled against Creon? Kitto further believes that "it is important for us to know that these two young people really are in love with each other" (I presume the same notion underlies Kamerbeek's cryptic remark that "it is a gain in connection with the latter part of the play if Antigone may once be allowed to give utterance to her love for Haemon"). But *is* it so important? *Are* "these two young people" in fact in love? Haemon certainly, and his love for Antigone is a significant motif in the play. But as for Antigone's emotions I prefer the sterner and more austere verdict of Nauck (11) – which I think would also be the sterner and more austere verdict of Sophocles –: "[Antigone] ihres Verhältnisses zu Hämon im ganzen Drama mit keiner Silbe gedenkt". And the dramatically crucial isolation of Antigone is thereby exacerbated still further.

But these arguments are negative. Can they be supplemented by anything positive? "It is perverse to attribute the words 'Dearest Haemon' ", Dawe reasonably observes, "not to the fiancée but to a prospective sister-in-law, unless some positive gain accrues from so

(10) This consideration has been grasped by Knox (sup. cit. n. 3), Mastronarde (sup. cit. n. 7) 96 and Rohdich (sup. cit. n. 3) among others.

(11) Nauck's commentary ad loc. (Berlin 1880³, 86) quoted with approval by Ed. Fraenkel, Zu den Phoenissen des Euripides, "Sitzb. d. Bayer. Akad. d. Wiss. phil.-hist. Kl." 1963.1, 114 n. 2. In a sense this is "question-begging" (Lloyd-Jones, sup. cit. [n. 3] 29), but the automatic assumption that Antigone loves Haemon is no less of a 'petitio principii' (cfr. Johansen, sup. cit. [n. 4] 195). The consequences of an excessively romantic interpretation of Haemon and Antigone are now on display in George Steiner's Antigones, Oxford 1984: e.g. 152ff

doing". Let me try to specify that positive gain. And let me first quote another remark with which I can agree from another scholar who thinks 572 is Antigone's. According to Kitto, "being on the stage, Ismene is put to yet another use by this master of dramatic form". Sophocles has a "new theme", to whit "Creon's uncomprehending and brutal treatment of his son's love" and "Ismene is the most suitable character to announce it... the best person to present it as (Sophocles) wishes it to be presented". This is surely true, even truer than Kitto saw. Without wishing to answer Jebb's extremism by an equally extreme stance, I would suggest that "one of the finest touches in the play is effaced by giving" v. 572 to Antigone. Jebb himself finds significance in the silence Antigone has kept since v. 560. Her very failure to break it now would be no less significant for her unrelentingly heroic character. And it would be just as much in keeping with Ismene's more yielding and pragmatic personality to be (paradoxically) more concerned with the rôle of marriage in Antigone's life than Antigone herself. Seen in this light, even the superlative φίλτατε, which Kitto (12) finds "not quite natural coming from Ismene", has a specific point to make (13).

Ismene, as we now all know, is a "foil" to her more heroic and indomitable sister (14). The idea of such a balancing foil to the central figure was not invented by Sophocles. As Jasper Griffin has recently reminded us (15), analogous figures exist in the epic world of the Iliad. The relationship between Achilles and Odysseus in Books Nine and Eighteen of that poem strikes me as very similar to that of Antigone and Ismene within the scene under discussion. In both parts of the epic,

(12) Similarly Kamerbeck, sup. cit., 115.

(13) Opponents of 572's attribution to Antigone are sometimes eager to stress that ὦ φίλτατε "nicht 'der Aufschrei eines liebenden Herzens' zu sein braucht" (so Bruhn's revision of Schneidewin-Nauck's commentary, Berlin 1904, ad loc.). The phrase's occurrences in tragedy are helpfully listed and analyzed by D. B. Gregor, "CR" 7, 1957, 14f., whose unsurprising verdict is that "φίλτατος is an endearment of some strength... The phrase was probably a colloquialism and may perhaps be taken as a sign of a certain impulsiveness in the Greek character".

(14) On Ismene as a foil to Antigone see, for instance, Karl Reinhardt, Sophocles, Frankfurt 1947³, 76 (the English translation of Hazel and David Harvey, Oxford 1979, 67), R. P. Winnington-Ingram, Sophocles: an Interpretation, Cambridge 1980, 136 (cfr. 133), who is also good on the propriety of Ismene as the character who informs us of "the relationship of Haemon to Antigone". There are some interesting observations on the "foil-figure" in tragedy (particularly Shakespearian tragedy) from Maynard Mack in Stratford-upon-Avon Studies: Jacobean Theatre, ed. Brown and Harris, vol. 1, London 1960

(15) J. Griffin Homer on Life and Death, Oxford 1980, 15 f.

Odysseus' rational appeals come up against a blank wall, thwarted by the relentless resolve of Achilles' stubborn heroism. He will not re-enter battle to help his threatened comrades; he will not think of food and eating before rushing to the field of war to avenge Patroclus. Odysseus and Ismene occupy the same logical, rational and comfortable world of which food and loyalty to friends, like the prospects of love and marriage, are potent symbols. For Achilles and Antigone, such symbols have little meaning when set against the ideals they pursue with such obsessive and relentless heroic resolve. "It is important to remember", H. Lloyd-Jones has recently written (16), "that the technique of epic is not the same as that of tragedy". Here, I believe, is one case where the approaches of the two can be fruitfully compared.

Not that tragic analogies are altogether lacking. The Prometheus Bound, a play whose structure and technique have often been found "Sophoclean" (17), has one particularly close parallel near its beginning. The central hero's remorseless silence in the opening scene has often been remarked upon (18). What is no less striking is the way in which this silence is emphasized by Hephaestus' outburst at v. 66:

αἰαῖ, Προμηθεῦ, σῶν ὕπερ στένω πόνων.

Hephaestus, though far less directly involved, is moved to passionate exclamation by Kratos' taunts and Prometheus' suffering. Prometheus himself maintains an impregnable silence until his tormentors are gone. Just so, on the above interpretation, Antigone's impending death and Creon's insults wring an exclamation from the far less directly touched Ismene; the heroine herself maintains her unyielding silence (19), remorseless and unmovable (20).

St. John's College. Oxford MALCOLM DAVIES

(16) History and Imagination: Essays in Honour of H. R. Trevor-Roper, ed. H. Lloyd-Jones, V. Pearl and B. Worden, London 1981, 22.

(17) See, for instance, B. Knox, The Heroic Temper: Studies in Sophoclean Tragedy, Berkeley 1966, 45 ff.

(18) See, for instance, O. Taplin, "HSCP" 76, 1972, 78 f.: "His silence presumably shows his defiance of the superior powers, and his titanic resilience".

(19) For significant silences in Sophocles and Euripides cfr. Taplin, sup. cit. (n. 19) 94 ff.

(20) It follows that I cannot approve J. K. Mackinnon's attempt ("Rh. Mus." 127, 1984, 25 ff.) to assign v. 575 of our play to Antigone.