SOPHOCLES *ELECTRA* 1050–57
AND THE PRAGMATICS OF TRAGIC EXITS

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THE SCENES BETWEEN Electra and Chrysothemis in Sophocles' *Electra* end in all manuscripts with lines 1050–57:[1]

Χρ. ἄπειμι τοίνυν· οὔτε γὰρ σὺ τἄμ' ἔπη   1050
     τολμᾷς ἐπαινεῖν οὔτ' ἐγὼ τοὺς σοὺς τρόπους.
Ηλ. ἀλλ' εἴσιθ'. οὔ σοι μὴ μεθέψομαί ποτε,
     οὐδ' ἢν σφόδρ' ἱμείρουσα τυγχάνῃς· ἐπεὶ
     πολλῆς ἀνοίας καὶ τὸ θηρᾶσθαι κενά.
Χρ. ἀλλ' εἰ σεαυτῇ τυγχάνεις δοκοῦσά τι   1055
     φρονεῖν, φρόνει τοιαῦθ'· ὅταν γὰρ ἐν κακοῖς
     ἤδη βεβήκῃς, τἄμ' ἐπαινέσεις ἔπη.

1050–57 locus varie temptatus: 1050–51 Sophoclis Phaedrae trib. Stob. 3.2.28–29; 1050–54 del. Lloyd-Jones et Wilson; post 1052 lac. stat. et 1053–57 Chrysothemidi trib. Dawe; 1052–57 del. Morstadt; 1055–57, 1052–54, 1050–51 mutato ordine exhib. Bergk.

Chr. Then I'll depart; neither can you bring yourself to approve my words, nor can I approve your attitudes.
El. Well, go inside! I will never follow you, not even if you really want me to: it is a sign of great folly also to hunt for vain things!
Chr. Well, if you yourself suppose you are thinking wisely in any respect, think like that! When you are in trouble, you will approve of my words.

These lines have been frequently suspected by scholars and for many different reasons. In the Sophocles Oxford Classical Text by Hugh Lloyd-Jones and Nigel Wilson (hereafter L-J/W), 1050–54 are deleted, a choice which has gained favor among scholars,[2] including especially Patrick Finglass in his

commentary. Their reservations mostly concern the alleged inappropriateness of certain lines in the mouth of the speakers to whom they are given, suspicion being added by the fact that Stobaeus 3.2.28–29 assigns 1050–51, Chrysothemis' exit-statement, to Sophocles' *Phaedra*.

No defense of the passage has appeared in print since L-J/W's edition,[3] although perfunctory reservations against the deletion have been sporadically voiced by scholars.[4] This article contends that 1050–57 are genuine and correctly assigned in the manuscripts. The outline of the argument is as follows: section 1 refutes minor objections by earlier scholars; section 2 argues against L-J/W's deletion of 1050–54 and Finglass' support for it; section 3 deals with Stobaeus' attribution, suggesting that the passage in the *Anthologion* may be a clumsy addition and that this testimony is anyway irrelevant to the matter; section 4 defends the *paradosis* with two arguments, based on scenic grammar and conversation analysis respectively: the former (section 4.1) maintains it would be unjustifiably anomalous for Chrysothemis to go off unnoticed; the latter (section 4.2) shows that lines 1050–54 conform to a well-identifiable sequence widely used to close rapid dialogues.

1. EARLIER INTERVENTIONS

Minor issues about 1052–57 (but not 1050–51, those quoted by Stobaeus) were raised independently before the publication of L-J/W's edition.

Theodor Bergk prints the text in the order 1055–57, 1052–54, 1050–51.[5] Advantages are fanciful. Stylistically, unnecessary verbal repetition is restored between 1048 φρονεῖν and 1056 φρονεῖν and φρόνει as well as between 1049 δέδοκται and 1055 δοκοῦσα.[6] But with this text Chrysothemis gives two contradictory assessments of Electra's φρονεῖν in consecutive turns (1048: φρονεῖν ἔοικας οὐδὲν ὧν ἐγὼ λέγω; 1055–56: ἀλλ᾽ εἰ σεαυτῇ τυγχάνεις δοκοῦσά τι / φρονεῖν, φρόνει τοιαῦθ᾽) and Electra's utterance in between (1049: πάλαι δέδοκται ταῦτα κοὐ νεωστί μοι) cannot elicit the reply given at 1055–57. Moreover, Chrysothemis' exit would spring from Electra's insistence and not from an independent decision, but this conflicts with 1050–51 (now shifted to last position in the dialogue). Chrysothemis says, ἄπειμι τοίνυν, "then I'll depart": inferential τοίνυν is superfluous if she is responding to a request (1053: ἀλλ᾽ εἴσιθ᾽),[7] but well-placed if lines 1050–51 follow 1049. Finally, Chrysothemis would shift from diplomacy

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3. Except for Sabattini 2018. His main argument for retaining 1050–54 is the usage pattern of ἄπειμι (1050) in tragedy, which in his view consistently indicates the *final* exit of a character. But quite apart from the exceptions to this rule (acknowledged at 229–30), evidence of "tragic style" is no proof of genuineness: the interpolator might have imitated a genre with which he had familiarity. What we should ask is whether these lines are needed where they are and what is lost if they are removed.

4. See Saïd 1993, 324; Pfeiffer-Petersen 1996, 119–20 n. 42; March 2001, ad loc.; Medda 2007, 51 (= 2013, 91); Wallace 2016, 59 n. 7; and Dunn, Lomiento, and Gentili 2019, a most recent Italian edition and commentary of *Electra* where the authenticity is taken for granted without further critical discussion.

5. See Bergk in Jebb 1894, 144. I was unable to find the relevant discussion: in Bergk 1858, lines 1050–57 are retained.

6. The latter repetition would be lame: at 1055 δοκέω denotes a subjective opinion, at 1049 a decision that is taken for granted.

7. The only (apparent) exception in Attic drama occurs in the exchange between the Chorus-leader and the Speech of Right at Ar. *Nub.* 959–61 (Χο.) ἀλλ᾽ ὦ πολλοῖς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους ἤθεσι χρηστοῖς στεφανώσας, / ῥῆξον φωνὴν ἧτινι χαίρεις καὶ τὴν σαυτοῦ φύσιν εἰπέ. / (Κρ.) λέξω τοίνυν τὴν ἀρχαίαν παιδείαν. Yet the Chorus-leader's is not a

(1048) to menacing recommendations (1055–57) to, again, good temper (1050–51). But the recrimination of 1055–57 (marking Chrysothemis' resignation to Electra's stubbornness) is better placed after Electra's attack at 1052–54, and 1052–54 is in turn an effective riposte to Chrysothemis' exit-statement (1050–51).

Robert Morstadt deletes 1052–57, with four arguments.[8] (1) Electra's 1052 οὔ σοι μὴ μεθέψομαί ποτε would be superfluous after 1049. But 1049 only indicates that Electra's decision was taken long since, whereas 1052 is a spiteful response to Chrysothemis. (2) 1053 οὐδ' ἢν σφόδρ' ἱμείρουσα τυγχάνῃς would imply Electra did not take Chrysothemis' dissuasion seriously. Even if Morstadt were right, that would be no reason to delete 1052–54. But he is certainly wrong, as this contrasts with Electra's approach at 1015–49: she attacks Chrysothemis' choices and attitudes (1027, 1033, 1035, 1039, 1047) and resists her admonitions (1029, 1037, 1043, 1045, 1049). Thus, 1053 is another resentful dismissal of Chrysothemis now that she has decided to go out of Electra's sight. (3) Electra's allegation πολλῆς ἀνοίας to Chrysothemis at 1054 would be inconsistent with her earlier recognition of Chrysothemis' good judgment (1027: ζηλῶ σε τοῦ νοῦ). But 1027, *pace* Morstadt, is blatantly ironic (note τῆς δὲ δειλίας στυγῶ). (4) Chrysothemis' ἀλλ' εἰ σεαυτῇ τυγχάνεις δοκοῦσά τι / φρονεῖν, φρόνει τοιαῦθ' (1055–56) would oddly encourage Electra to believe she is acting sensibly. This is false: 1055–56 is only a polemical concession to Electra once Chrysothemis' dissuasion has failed. Chrysothemis says that Electra is *free to think* she is wise, but also that she will repent one day.

Roger Dawe finds fault with Electra's 1053–54,[9] feeling that ἐπεὶ / πολλῆς ἀνοίας καὶ τὸ θηρᾶσθαι κενά would be "*per se* suited to one thing above all others, namely the proposed act of revenge" (against this view, see section 2 below, on C). To assign 1053–57 to Chrysothemis, he then assumes a lacuna of two lines (one concluding Electra's utterance, the other beginning Chrysothemis' reply) between 1052 and 1053. Apart from the difficulty in reconstructing a plausible process of corruption (sidestepped by Dawe), this arrangement raises objections.[10] If spoken by Chrysothemis, 1053 οὐδ' ἢν σφόδρ' ἱμείρουσα τυγχάνῃς is out of place: Chrysothemis' rejection of Electra's offer was discussed earlier in the dialogue (1025–26), and by then the focus had moved to Electra's rejection of Chrysothemis. Moreover, Chrysothemis' hypothetically missing line before 1053 should include a negative, matching οὐδ' at 1053. Yet the only thing Chrysothemis might deny is her help with Electra's plan: such denial, if needed, however, is sufficiently conveyed at 1050–51 (judged genuine by Dawe), where Chrysothemis expresses disapproval of Electra's τρόποι. Finally, a plausible content for Electra's missing line after 1052 is hard to supply: since it must be preceded by a request plus

command, but an invitation for the Speech of Right to speak of his nature as he pleases: accordingly, the latter selects a topic of his choice (ancient education), so τοίνυν (a marker of polite agreement: see n. 79 below) is needed to redress the potential inconvenience of choosing an unwelcome topic (i.e., "since I am free to choose, I will talk about this"). No such marker is needed between 1050 ἄπειμι and 1052 ἀλλ' εἴσιθ'.

8. Morstadt 1864, 30–31.
9. Dawe 1973, 191–92.
10. Finglass (2007, ad loc.) objects that, with 1053–57 given to Chrysothemis, an equally long reply by Electra would be expected. Yet this symmetry-based argument is insubstantial: nothing prevented dialogues from being ended with a longer utterance by one of the speakers (see, e.g., Soph. *Aj.* 1370–73; *Ant.* 577–81; *El.* 1503b–7). Further criticism in Talboy and Sommerstein 2006, 304.

a denial (1052), this line could presumably include no request (e.g., of help with the revenge) that could be answered by Chrysothemis with οὐδ' ἢν σφόδρ' ἱμείρουσα τυγχάνῃς.[11]

2. L-J/W'S AND FINGLASS' DELETION OF 1050–54

Serious objections to the transmitted text, particularly to 1050–54, are raised by L-J/W.[12] Apart from Stobaeus' testimony (see section 3 below), they list four arguments: (A) at 1050–51, the contrast between Chrysothemis' ἔπη and Electra's τρόποι has very little point; (B) at 1052–53, there is no reason why Electra should say, "I will never follow you, however much you may want me to," nor can these lines be spoken by Chrysothemis; (C) 1053–54 ἐπεὶ / πολλῆς ἀνοίας καὶ τὸ θηρᾶσθαι κενά ("[for] even a futile hunt is a mark of great folly") is unsuitable to both Electra and (pace Dawe) Chrysothemis; (D) Chrysothemis' 1055–57 better replies to 1049.

To solve these problems, L-J/W delete both Chrysothemis' exit-lines at 1050–51 (assigned to the *Phaedra* by Stobaeus) and, consequently, Electra's reply at 1052–54, which Lloyd-Jones equally assigns to that play.[13] Finglass restates the case for the deletion,[14] but, contrary to L-J/W, rejects Stobaeus' testimony, regarding 1050–54 as not Sophoclean at all.

In what follows, the individual allegations against the lines are discussed and refuted separately in the order in which they appear in L-J/W's *Sophoclea* and Finglass' commentary.

(A) 1050–51 ἄπειμι τοίνυν· οὔτε γὰρ σὺ τἄμ' ἔπη / τολμᾷς ἐπαινεῖν οὔτ' ἐγὼ τοὺς σοὺς τρόπους. The contrast between Chrysothemis' "words" and Electra's "attitudes" is not so irrelevant as L-J/W claim. Chrysothemis' admission nicely encapsulates, with characteristic clarity and irony,[15] the core of their quarrels in the play: the keywords ἔπη and τρόποι appropriately designate what Electra and Chrysothemis cannot approve of each other respectively. Chrysothemis' role had been that of a wise counselor offering warnings, recommendations, and reminders: unsurprisingly, then, Electra's criticism was directed precisely against Chrysothemis' *words* (401 ταῦτ' ἐστὶ τἄπη πρὸς κακῶν ἐπαινέσαι, and also 343–44, 347–48, 357, 395, 1025, 1039). By contrast, what Chrysothemis found annoying about Electra was precisely her *attitude* to the situation (328–31, 337, 383–84, 392, 394, 396, 398, 402, 992–94, 997–98, 1009–11, 1013–14, 1021–22, 1024, 1032, 1038, 1042), what Chrysothemis unsuccessfully tried to change (cf. Electra's reaction at 397 σὺ ταῦτα θώπευ'· οὐκ ἐμοὺς τρόπους λέγεις). Finglass judges 1050–51 inelegant yet not intolerable, taking the repetition ἔπη / . . . ἐπαινεῖν (1050–51) ~ ἐπαινέσεις ἔπη (1057) as "another ground for suspicion." Yet repetitions occurring within the span of six or seven lines are not only tolerable

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11. Problems do not disappear by accepting Schmidt's inversion of 1047 and 1049 (printed by Dawe 1996, ad loc.) so as to make the dialogue end with an insult by Electra.

12. Lloyd-Jones and Wilson 1990, 62.

13. Lloyd-Jones 1994, 3: 330 (= frag. 693a), followed by Talboy and Sommerstein 2006, 303–5.

14. Finglass 2007, on 1050–54.

15. Dunn (in Dunn, Lomiento and Gentili 2019, ad loc.) notes the irony underlying τολμᾷς: in Chrysothemis' presentation, Electra dares propose a killing but dares not accept her sister's wise advice.

but indeed so frequent in tragedy (Sophocles being no exception) that they can hardly be suspicious.[16]

(B) 1052–53 ἀλλ' εἴσιθ'. οὔ σοι μὴ μεθέψομαί ποτε, / οὐδ' ἢν σφόδρ' ἱμείρουσα τυγχάνῃς. As correctly noted by scholars,[17] by οὔ σοι μὴ μεθέψομαί ποτε ("I will never follow you," 1052), Electra means she can neither accept advice coming from Chrysothemis nor adopt her code of behavior. The future μεθέψομαι[18] picks up the idea that the one of the two who thinks wisely should be the leader, and the other one her follower: compare 1037–38 (Ηλ.) τῷ σῷ δικαίῳ δῆτ' ἐπισπέσθαι με δεῖ· / (Χρ.) ὅταν γὰρ εὖ φρονῇς, τόθ' ἡγήσῃ σὺ νῷν.[19] Finglass defends 1052 with further arguments,[20] but (as Dawe) dismisses 1053 οὐδ' ἢν σφόδρ' ἱμείρουσα τυγχάνῃς ("intolerably weak").[21] Apart from being subjective, this evaluation is in itself questionable. By 1053 Electra fiercely confirms she will not follow Chrysothemis' advice *in any case*, no matter how strongly Chrysothemis may want it. Such emphasis is not misplaced given Chrysothemis' insistence and Electra's stubborn rejection of her sister: the latter echoes Antigone's rejection of Ismene at Sophocles *Antigone* 69–70 οὔτ' ἂν κελεύσαιμ' οὔτ' ἄν, εἰ θέλοις ἔτι / πράσσειν, ἐμοῦ γ' ἂν ἡδέως δρῴης μέτα.[22] Linguistically speaking, 1053 is not only blameless but also very much "Sophoclean." (a) σφόδρα, uncommon in high poetry,[23] is attested in tragedy only in Sophocles (*Aj.* 150: τοιούσδε λόγους ψιθύρους πλάσσων / εἰς ὦτα φέρει πᾶσιν Ὀδυσσεύς, / καὶ σφόδρα πείθει) and, as confirmed by its occurrences in comedy and prose, is apt to strengthen feelings and wishes.[24] (b) ἱμείρω, common in tragedy, introduces a wide range of wishes, always implying the subject's strenuous pursuit of some important goal.[25] (c) The formula "not even if *x* wanted," variously

16. For statistics, see Pickering 1999, 59; 2000, 99. Even if the phenomenon were inadmissible, the repetition would be less detrimental to 1050–51 than 1055–57, which rework the same linguistic material of the preceding lines (see below).

17. See Jebb 1894, ad loc.; Kaibel 1896, ad loc.; Kells 1973, ad loc.; March 2001, ad loc.

18. Cf. Schol. Soph. *El.* 1052 Xenis μεθέψομαι· ἀντὶ κοινωνήσω. Homeric and Pindaric parallels in the active and in the middle imply motion, something which cannot be proven for drama (*El.* 1052 is the sole attestation). Still, a significant pre-tragic attestation of μεθέπω = "be one's follower," "care for someone" (in the active) escaped notice, Sappho frag. 94.8 Voigt οἶσθα γὰρ ὥς σε πεδήπομεν, "you know how I care of you": there, μεθέπω occurs in a parting scene between Sappho and another leave-taking woman (the subject of πεδήπομεν is very likely "Sappho," not, *pace* many scholars, a plurality of women).

19. See Schneidewin 1853, ad loc. for the parallelism 1037 ἐπισπέσθαι ~ 1052 μεθέψομαι.

20. See Finglass 2007, ad loc.: "[s]uch a statement [= 1052] would act as a counterpart to her [= Electra's] words at the end of the previous episode, where she stresses her determination to remain outside until death (817–19). In this context it draws attention to how the physical separation of the sisters will match the irreconcilability of their beliefs" (Blundell 1989, 161 is cited in support).

21. The weakness is amplified by Finglass' translation, "I shall never follow you, not even if you *really*, *really* want me to" (his emphasis).

22. See Griffith 1999, ad loc. The comparison is frequent in scholarship: see Campbell 1881, ad loc.; Kaibel 1896, ad loc.; Kamerbeek 1973, ad loc.; Pfeiffer-Petersen 1996, 119 n. 42. There are of course differences between the two passages: at *Ant.* 69–70 the denial is expressed with the optative potential (κελεύσαιμ'), whereas at *El.* 1052 it is given in the future (μεθέψομαι), referring not to a hypothetical situation but to something that is assumed to happen.

23. Cf. only Pind. *Nem.* 4.37, with Henry 2005, ad loc.; on σφόδρα in Archaic and Classical texts, see Thesleff 1954, 92–111.

24. See Ar. *Ach.* 371, 509, 1059; *Av.* 592 (with ἐράω); *Thesm.* 466; *Ran.* 41; *Plut.* 645. Outside Old Comedy, see (with βούλομαι) Isae. 3.39.9; Pl. *Resp.* 516d5; *Thg.* 127b6; Dem. 7.32.8, 7.38.4; [Pl.] *Erx.* 397b7.

25. See Aesch. *Pers.* 233 (conquest of a city); *Ag.* 940 (verbal strife); Soph. *OT* 59 (support against a calamity), 386 (usurpation of power), 587 (tyranny); Eur. *IA* 486 and frag. 914 *TrGF* (marriage); Crit.? frag. 17.2 *TrGF* (noble birth).

expressed with οὐδ᾽ εἰ/ἐάν + βούλομαι (θέλω, ἐράω, etc.), is firmly attested in tragedy and Homer in contexts of excitement or exasperation.[26] Electra applies it to herself while rejecting her sister's opulent lifestyle in their first dialogue (359–61): ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἄν ποτ᾽, οὐδ᾽ εἴ μοι τὰ σὰ / μέλλοι τις οἴσειν δῶρ᾽, ἐφ᾽ οἷσι νῦν χλιδᾷς, / τούτοις ὑπεικάθοιμι.

(C) 1053–54 ἐπεὶ / πολλῆς ἀνοίας καὶ τὸ θηρᾶσθαι κενά. The supposed inappropriateness of this *gnōmē* in Electra's mouth seems the strongest argument in favor of the deletion.[27] According to Dawe and Finglass, it suits Electra's murderous appetites far better than Chrysothemis' futile persuasion of her sister, hence it could be spoken only by Chrysothemis—a possibility which L-J/W deny. One point in support might be Ismene's words at Sophocles *Antigone* 90 ἀμηχάνων ἐρᾷς and 92 ἀρχὴν δὲ θηρᾶν οὐ πρέπει τἀμήχανα, referring to Antigone's foolish desire to defy Creon's edict and bury Polynices. But the attribution to Chrysothemis on that ground is far from automatic.[28] In the *Antigone* passage, the goals pursued by Antigone are deemed by Ismene "impossible" (ἀμήχανα), while the speaker of the *Electra* passage calls them κενά: the latter can mean "idle," "foolish," "stupid," in which case it might better designate the pursuit of a challenging task such as a murder; or it can mean "vain," "futile," "vacuous," in which case it better describes Chrysothemis' unsuccessful attempts to make Electra change. Nothing forbids Electra to reproach Chrysothemis because she "hunts for futile things," that is, because she dreams of both sisters living peacefully and submissively with the murderers (something of which Electra cannot conceive). Looking at the sisters' confrontations, one finds that the pursuit of "foolish"/"futile" goals is alternatively reproached by each to the other: compare 331 θυμῷ ματαίῳ μὴ χαρίζεσθαι κενά (Chrysothemis blames Electra's excessive laments) and 403 μή πω νοῦ τοσόνδ᾽ εἴην κενή (Electra wishes not to be so foolish to follow Chrysothemis' advice). Therefore, the pursuit of κενά fits Chrysothemis no less than Electra. Similarly, θηράω, occurring at *Antigone* 90 and 92 quoted above, might seem more appropriate to Electra's bloody intents than Chrysothemis' persuasion. But θηράω is used in tragedy to designate achievements of different rank:[29] among the items that could be "hunted" there is "to impart a good mind to those that have no sense," to quote Theseus' protestation at Euripides *Hippolytus* 919–20 ἐν δ᾽ οὐκ ἐπίστασθ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἐθηράσασθέ πω, / φρονεῖν διδάσκειν οἷσιν οὐκ ἔνεστι νοῦς;.[30] To teach Electra good sense was precisely Chrysothemis' mission, so Electra may well call her sister's strenuous attempts "hunting" (θηρᾶσθαι) and her moral suasion "futile" or "foolish." That hunt is seen as a mark of "high folly" (πολλῆς ἀνοίας). Such boldness fits Electra rather than Chrysothemis: the only occurrence of ἄνοια in the play is Electra's allegation against Chrysothemis at 920 φεῦ, τῆς ἀνοίας ὥς σ᾽ ἐποικτίρω πάλαι. Finally, adverbial καί ("also")

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26. See *Od.* 3.228, 12.88; Soph. *Ant.* 1040; Eur. *Andr.* 595; *El.* 615; *Hel.* 434; and, for its similarity to 1053, [Pl.] *Erx.* 397b7 οὕτω γὰρ ἂν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἐξουσία εἴη ἐξαμαρτάνειν, οὐδ᾽ εἰ σφόδρα βούλοιτο.

27. Cf. Talboy and Sommerstein 2006, 304.

28. *Pace* Dawe 1973, 192.

29. See (list probably incomplete) Soph. *Aj.* 2 (putting traps on enemies); *OT* 542 (tyranny); Eur. *IT* 1311 (escape: cf. 1312–16); *Hel.* 63 (marriage); Eur. frags. 233, 419 (wealth), 428 (love), 1052 *TrGF* (a long life).

30. Quotation from Barrett 1964, on *Hipp.* 917–20, translating 920.

coheres with assigning 1052–54 to Electra:[31] it conveys that any attempt by Chryso-
themis to make Electra relent is *as foolish as* Electra's plan. On closer scrutiny, then,
the *gnōmē* is far more likely uttered by Electra than Chrysothemis. One might still
object that criticism on the pursuit of foolish goals[32] might suit the moderate
Chrysothemis urging restraint to the overbold interlocutor Electra better than the
other way round.[33] The impression disappears if one considers the style of 1052–54:
the uncompromising formulations (1052 οὔ σοι μὴ μεθέψομαί ποτε),[34] the cate-
gorical refusal to obey (1053 οὐδ' ἢν σφόδρ' ἱμείρουσα τυγχάνῃς),[35] the angry
tone (note the accumulation of negatives οὔ . . . μή . . . / οὐδ' at 1052–53, the in-
tensifying ποτε and σφόδρα at 1052–53, the insulting πολλῆς ἀνοίας and κενά at
1054)[36] and the fact that 1052–54 is replied to by an argument on moderation
(1055–57)[37] further confirm that the speaker of 1052–54 is nobody but Electra.[38]

    (D) 1055–57: ἀλλ' εἰ σεαυτῇ τυγχάνεις δοκοῦσά τι / φρονεῖν, φρόνει τοιαῦθ'·
ὅταν γὰρ ἐν κακοῖς / ἤδη βεβήκῃς, τἄμ' ἐπαινέσεις ἔπη. Apart from those
given in section 1, there are more reasons to place 1055–57 after 1052–54. First,
a reasoning along the lines "you are free to think as you want, but in time you
will praise my advice" implies that 1055–57 rebuts a charge previously issued
against Chrysothemis: 1055–57 is thus misplaced after 1049, but not after Elec-
tra's attack at 1052–54. Secondly, σεαυτῇ loses its contrastive force if it does not
reply to some assessment made by Electra in the preceding turn. Thirdly, some

    31. On adverbial καὶ as Focus-marker, see Crespo 2017.
    32. Cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 3.21–23 ἔστι δὲ φῦλον ἐν ἀνθρώποισι ματαιότατον, / ὅστις αἰσχύνων ἐπιχώρια παπταίνει
τὰ πόρσω, / μεταμώνια θηρεύων ἀκράντοις ἐλπίσιν: Asclepius' mother Coronis is executed by Artemis for her
affair with an Arcadian stranger while she was carrying a child by Apollo (58–62: cf. Hes. frag. 61 M-W = 240
Most νήπιος, ὃς τὰ ἑτοῖμα λιπὼν ἀνέτοιμα διώκει, quoted by Schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 3.38c Drachmann). Although
Pindar's and Hesiod's passages suggest one should better pursue what is near at hand and forget what is out
of reach (Young 1968, 36–38), discerning what is near and desirable from what is far and futile is difficult.
In Pindar, what is "far"/"futile"/"hopeless," namely the love affair with Ischys, is easier to pursue for Coronis,
while what is "near at hand" and desirable, namely sexual restraint and loyalty to Apollo, is harder. In Electra's
view, what is near at hand and worth pursuing for Chrysothemis is to keep loyal to her *philoi* and honor Aga-
memnon and the gods, whereas any cooperation with the murderers is futile and hopeless. The emphatic lan-
guage of *El.* 1054 (especially πολλῆς ἀνοίας and κενά) matches the condemnation of Coronis' sexual appetites
(*Pyth.* 3.21 ματαιότατον, 23 μεταμώνια).
    33. See Knox 1964, 21–26 on Sophoclean "heroes" as ill-counseled and overbold (leaving aside whether or
not "hero" is a legitimate terminology).
    34. Knox (1964, 10–11) lists examples with the future, often in the first person (Soph. *Aj.* 654, 690; *Ant.* 72,
73, 76, 81; *OT* 132), denials or negative formulations (*OT* 1065; *El.* 132, 223, 817–19; *Phil.* 999, 1197, 1392;
OC 45, 408, 450), statements of necessity with adjectives in –τέος (*Aj.* 470, 690, 853; *OT* 628, 1170; *Phil.*
1019), impersonal statements (*Aj.* 577; *Phil.* 1277). Electra uses both an impersonal statement (1049 δέδοκται)
and a negative first-person future (1052 οὔ σοι μὴ μεθέψομαί ποτε).
    35. See Knox 1964, 17–21 (on the unyielding nature of Sophoclean "heroes") and 14–17 (on urges to obe-
dience by others). In this play, see 328–31, 394, 396, 402, 1024, 1036, 1044, 1046 (Chrysothemis' appeals to
obedience and moderation); 343–44, 359–61 (see above), 395, 403, 1025, 1037, 1045, 1047 (Electra's refusals
to yield).
    36. See Knox 1964, 21, with parallels. Electra acknowledges her anger at 222 (οὐ λάθει μ' ὀργά) when re-
buked by the Chorus (217–20), and is twice urged to restrain it during her dialogues with Chrysothemis (369
μηδὲν πρὸς ὀργήν, by the Chorus; 1011 κατάσχες ὀργήν, by Chrysothemis).
    37. See 1028, 1030, 1044, and Knox 1964, 25–26.
    38. Dunn (in Dunn, Lomiento, and Gentili 2019, ad loc.) maintains that Electra refers the foolishness of
θηρᾶσθαι κενά to *herself* (not to Chrysothemis' failed persuasion), precisely to her efforts to enroll Chrysothemis
in her plan: the pointlessness in trying to convince Chrysothemis will lead Electra to face the hunt alone. But this
interpretation can hardly be correct: the focus of 1052–54 is Electra's absolute unwillingness to follow
Chrysothemis' advice, so the futile hunting mentioned at 1054 must concern Chrysothemis.

linguistic clues such as the repetition 1053 τυγχάνης ~ 1055 τυγχάνεις,[39] the anaphora of ἀλλά at 1052 and 1055, and the symmetrical length of 1052–54 and 1055–57 further encourage the conclusion that 1055–57 must reply to 1052–54.

3. STOBAEUS' ATTRIBUTION OF 1050–51 TO SOPHOCLES' PHAEDRA

The only argument against 1050–54 remains Stobaeus' attribution of 1050–51 to Sophocles' *Phaedra*. Although Stobaeus' testimony is variously undermined by L-J/W and Finglass, it is evident, especially from Lloyd-Jones' decision to assign 1050–51 and 1052–54 to Sophocles' *Phaedra*, that some trust is put in Stobaeus: no doubt, if this attribution were correct, the case against 1050–51 would become stronger, though in no way conclusive.

It is often repeated, even by the proponents of the excision, that Stobaeus is not a reliable source in matters of attributions. Although intuitively correct, the assertion needs to be verified to be brought to bear in any textual discussion. To this purpose, all Stobaeus' quotations of Sophocles (and large samples of the Euripidean material) were (re-)examined. There are of course intractable problems in this area: one cannot know if an alleged mistake should be imputed to the inadvertence of the compiler, the inaccuracy of the sources, or the caprices of textual transmission. Also, Stobaeus may not have had firsthand access to complete editions of the authors he cited, but probably collected materials from different sources with differing arrangements.[40]

Unsurprisingly, the investigation revealed the same kinds of inaccuracies found elsewhere in Stobaeus. Leaving aside the frequent cases in which the omission of one or more lemmata resulted in the conflation of quotations originally separate,[41] misattributions not due to textual transmission are quite rare. Within the Sophoclean corpus, one finds the isolated case of Stobaeus 4.49.7, where six lines from *Teucer* (frag. 576 *TrGF*) are assigned to an Oedipus-play; misattributions like this are not absent in quotations of Euripides: note especially Stobaeus 4.41.26a, where Euripides *Heraclidae* 865–66 is wrongly attributed to *Cretan Women*.[42]

In such cases, the standard remedy has been to assume lacunas encompassing the missing quotation originally attached to the misplaced lemma and the missing lemma originally attached to the misattributed quotation. But different circumstances may be envisaged, including the incompetent addition of new entries (lemma plus quotation) to an already complete series. That *Electra* 1050–51 might have been misattributed to the *Phaedra* as a result of this last scenario is suggested by three facts: (1) the author of the quotation is referred to with the nominative

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39. Dunn (in Dunn, Lomiento, and Gentili 2019, ad loc.) notes that Chrysothemis' εἰ σεαυτῇ τυγχάνεις δοκοῦσά τι / φρονεῖν closely picks up Electra's mocking οὐδ' ἢν σφόδρ' ἱμείρουσα τυγχάνης.

40. Piccione 1994, 203–4.

41. See, e.g., Stob. 1.3.36 (= Soph. *El.* 696–97, after Eur. *Archelaus* frag. 264 *TrGF*), 3.13.28 (= *Phil.* 96–99, after Soph. frag. 842 *TrGF*). Piccione (1999, 154–69) contends that the conflation could have been occasionally intentional.

42. See also Stob. 4.3.29 and 4.34.43 (= *Ion* 395–400 and 381–83 cited as from an Iphigenia-play), 4.8.4a (= frag. 850 *TrGF* as from *Electra*), 4.31a.29 (= *Danae* frag. 326 *TrGF* as from *Hecuba*, corrected at 4.31b.41), 4.31d.99 (= *El.* 943–44 as from *Phoenissae*), 4.50b.37 (= *Bacch.* 1251 as from *Andromache*). Outside tragedy, see, e.g., Stob. 3.10.75–76 (= Pl. *Leg.* 941b–c as from *Republic*).

ὁ αὐτός, a peculiarity nowhere found in the whole *Anthologion* (genitive is standard);[43] (2) 3.2.28–29, including *Electra* 1050–51, is not extant in MS S, Stobaeus' earliest manuscript; (3) the preceding quotation, *Ajax* 1159–60 (= 3.2.27), equally begins with ἄπειμι, which suggests a plausible motivation for the later addition of *Electra* 1050–51 to the series.[44]

To conclude with Stobaeus, the evidence seems not only indecisive but even misleading. Everything suggests that 3.2.28–29, attributing 1050–51 to the *Phaedra*, is an interpolation, but even if it could be proven that Stobaeus is correct (which seems hardly possible), that would not imply that these lines are spurious in the *Electra*. Greek dramatists occasionally repeated identical lines across different plays,[45] and the loss of the great majority of their works should make us alert to the possibility that the phenomenon was far more common than we can surmise. Consequently, Stobaeus' testimony can neither support the attribution of any of these lines, especially 1052–54 (on which Stobaeus is silent), to Sophocles' *Phaedra*, nor the excision of 1050–51 (let alone 1052–54) from *Electra*. Finglass does not accept the testimonial value of Stobaeus, but still deletes the entire passage 1050–54. However, as argued in section 2, no linguistic or dramatic argument justifies the excision.

4. ARGUMENTS FAVORING THE AUTHENTICITY OF 1050–54

Two hitherto unnoticed arguments can be advanced in support of the retention of 1050–51 and 1052–54. The former requires consideration for the "grammar of dramatic technique" advocated by Eduard Fraenkel,[46] particularly on the matter of actors' exits; the latter concerns the mechanics of tragic conversation, particularly how rapid dialogues are brought to an end. If 1050–54 were removed, two unacceptable anomalies would be introduced into the text: (1) Chrysothemis' exit would be unjustifiably passed over in silence (section 4.1); (2) there would be no adequate closure for the conversation (section 4.2).

4.1. Chrysothemis' Departure and the Convention of Tragic Exits

Starting from the subjective claim that the dialogue is virtually complete at 1049, Finglass suggests that 1050–54 are an actor's interpolation presumably motivated by "a desire to lengthen the *stichomythia* by supplying a clear exit-statement for Chrysothemis."[47] Against this view, one may start by quoting Denys Page's influential opinion that there would be very few histrionic interpolations in the text of Sophocles' extant plays, and perhaps none at all in Sophocles' *Electra*.[48] More

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43. On the patterns regularly used to form the lemmata, see Piccione 1999, 146–53; she notes this singularity (p. 144 n. 2), but does not draw any conclusion.

44. (2) and (3) might confirm the claim, discussed in Piccione 1994, that MS S, including less material than M and A, is not, as frequently claimed, an idiosyncratic epitome devised from a larger work (reflected in M and A). *Pace* Hense in Wachsmuth and Hense 1884–1912, 3: xlix–l, the additional material in M and A may have been the product of the gradual accretion of an original *syllogē* more closely reflected by S. However, even if the argument is rejected, Stob. 3.2.28–29 still remains a patent misattribution.

45. See Harsh 1937, 435 n. 1, with references.

46. Fraenkel 1950, 2: 305.

47. Finglass 2007, ad loc.

48. Page 1934, 91. The claim is contested by Reeve (1973, 145–46), but neither of the two deletions proposed for *Electra* (593 and 659: see at 162–63) is a histrionic interpolation, or an interpolation *tout court* (see

importantly, Finglass fails to list parallels, in Sophocles or elsewhere, for interpolations supplying the missing exit-statement of a character.[49]

A full survey of Sophocles' handling of actors' exits will reveal that the true anomaly in our passage would have been to get *no notice* of Chrysothemis' exit. The standard views on tragic exits are found in Oliver Taplin's *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*:[50]

> [m]ost of the major named characters of Greek tragedy are given an existence off-stage [. . .] So when they go off they generally motivate their exit and say where they are going, and the exit becomes a proper departure from the place where the play is set. On the other hand, the majority of unnamed lower-status characters [. . .] are given no proper departure: when their part is played, they simply go away.

However, later in the book, discussing Apollo's (allegedly) silent departure in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*,[51] Taplin concedes that "not even minor characters often disappear without any indication of exit."[52] This raises questions: How often do minor characters go off unnoticed? And what about major characters? Are their exits always signaled or motivated? In Taplin's view, when named characters go off unnoticed, they do so "either after their last words or in the company of another with whom they are connected."[53] In the former case, they behave no differently from nameless characters, but, again, one might ask how often this happens. More generally, one needs to know to what extent Taplin's trends are valid, and for which class(es) of characters. No less crucial is the question of what an indication of exit actually is: leaving aside unequivocal cases, such as statements including verbs of motion and farewells, Taplin mentions much diverse material not very connected with departures, for example, prayers, summarizing statements, generalizations, and threats. This involves some circularity: the "finality" of certain kinds of statements is stated only because these can occur as "last words." The overall picture remains obscure, hence no argument on the (in)authenticity of an exit-statement can be safely advocated unless credible generalizations about the frequency, type, and distribution of such statements are provided.[54]

Now reconsider Chrysothemis' exit in light of Taplin's assumptions. To begin with, since Chrysothemis is not an "unnamed lower-status" character, her exit will be more likely announced than not. Yet, since Chrysothemis' 1055–57 is judged sufficient by Finglass to mark the end of the dialogue, one may ask which kinds of statements can self-qualify as "very final" (Taplin's words) in the absence of unequivocal indications about a character's departure, or if additional factors other than "last words" are relevant.

Finglass 2007, ad locc.). Page's verdict is indirectly confirmed in Finglass' edition, where no histrionic interpolation is assumed (except 1050–54).

   49. An interpolation of this kind, if needed, could have been added more easily after, not before, 1055–57, since these words do not suggest departure.

   50. Taplin 1977, 8.

   51. See Most 2006 for an elegant solution to the problem.

   52. Taplin 1977, 403.

   53. Taplin 1977, 8.

   54. No such attempt will be made here, yet I am quite confident that the conclusions reached from the Sophoclean corpus could be confirmed for Aeschylus and Euripides.

Apart from our passage, there are eighty-three exit-movements in Sophocles' surviving plays.[55] I call exit-movement a successfully completed departure by one or more speaking characters[56] toward one of the conventional exit-areas: the *skēnē*-door, the *eisodoi*, or the high level.[57] No fewer than fifty-two out of eighty-three are explicitly announced, that is, there is unequivocal indication before the proper exit that the departing character will leave (or is intent on leaving) the stage, no matter if the leave-taker states this of her/his own accord or is invited to go off by others. I cannot deal here in detail with the multiple ways in which these exits are expressed: a verb of motion regularly occurs in most examples and, when this does not happen, the leave-taker refers to actions necessitating a prompt departure:[58]

Ajax 116 (Ajax), 593b (Ajax; door-closure urged), 654 (Ajax), 685 (Tecmessa), 804–6, 811, 813 (Messenger, Chorus), 810 (Tecmessa), 988 (Tecmessa), 1159, 1161 (Menelaus), 1183 (Teucer), 1401 (Odysseus), 1414 (Teucer, Chorus?); *Antigone* 80–81, 98 (Antigone), 329 (Guard: cf. 315), 444 (Guard), 578 (Antigone and Ismene), 773–76 (Creon), 939 (Antigone), 1087 (Tiresias), 1108 (Creon), 1255 (Messenger), 1339 (Creon); *Trachiniae* 86, 92 (Hyllus), 332–33 (Lichas; Deianira is halted by the Messenger), 492–93 (Deianira, Lichas), 624 (Lichas), 1255, 1259, 1264 (Heracles, Hyllus), 1275 (Chorus); *Oedipus Tyrannus* 142, 147 (Priest), 444, 445 (Tiresias), 460–61 (Oedipus), 676a, 676b (Creon), 861 (Jocasta, Oedipus), 1521a, 1521b (Oedipus, Creon); *Electra* 75 (Orestes, Pylades, the Tutor), 404, 466 (Chrysothemis), 802 (Clytemnestra, Tutor), 1373–74 (Orestes, Pylades), 1433, 1435b, 1436a (Orestes), 1502a, 1502b, 1502c (Aegisthus, Orestes); *Philoctetes* 124, 132 (Odysseus), 626–27 (False Merchant), 674a, 674b–75 (Neoptolemus, Philoctetes), 1068, 1079 (Odysseus, Neoptolemus), 1257–58 (Odysseus), 1449, 1452, 1469 (Philoctetes, Neoptolemus, Chorus); *Oedipus at Colonus* 77–79 (Peasant), 503–4, 507 (Ismene), 666 (Theseus), 845 (Antigone), 1019–20, 1025, 1038 (Creon, Theseus), 1544, 1549, 1551 (Oedipus, Antigone, Ismene, Theseus), 1668–72, 1773–76 (Antigone, Ismene, Theseus).[59]

When departure is not explicitly declared, it can nonetheless be logically inferred from the words of the characters on stage or from other contextual clues. In six instances, the leave-takers allude to their suicide or death, which may or may not occur. Given that suicide could not be staged in the sight of the

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55. Figures based on my counts; for a full list of exits in the three tragedians and Aristophanes, see Bodensteiner 1893 (not immune from slips and omissions).

56. I exclude from the counts the comings and goings of named and unnamed mutes (e.g., the servant sent indoors by Jocasta at *OT* 945–46), but I include the exits of speaking characters temporarily acting as mutes. The rule prescribing that orders given to mute extras are executed with little or no delay mostly determines the timing of these exits (see Bain 1982).

57. Accordingly, the simultaneous exits of two or more characters toward the *same* direction (e.g., Antigone and Ismene at *Ant.* 581) are counted as one; by contrast, the departures of two or more characters occurring roughly at the same time in *different* directions (e.g., Antigone and Ismene at *Ant.* 99) are counted as separate.

58. In the following list, line-numbers mark the occurrences of such verbs, with the leave-takers in parentheses.

59. This is a case of "foreshadowed" departure that cannot take place because the play ends: the sisters beg Theseus to be sent to Thebes (1668–72), and Theseus accepts the request (1773–76), so the three are supposed to leave together to make preparations for the travel of the sisters.

audience, all utterances alluding to it can be *ipso facto* regarded as explicit indications of exit:

> *Ajax* 852–53 (Ajax's suicide-speech), *Antigone* 762–65 (Haemon tells Creon he will not be seen again), *Oedipus Tyrannus* 1071–72 (Jocasta tells Oedipus she will speak no more), 1182–85 (Oedipus' final words after the discovery of the truth), *Philoctetes* 1205–6, 1210b, 1211b–12 (toward the end of his *amoibaion* with the Chorus, Philoctetes repeatedly wishes his death),[60]*Oedipus at Colonus* 1437b–38 (Polynices bids farewell to his sisters before meeting his fate at Thebes: cf. 1325, 1400–1401).

Similarly "inferable" are two further exits in which a character who has just arrived will have to leave the stage very soon:

> *Trachiniae* 820: Hyllus goes inside to make preparations (a litter: cf. 901–2) for his moribund father Heracles, having been so charged by his father (797–802).

> *Oedipus at Colonus* 1210: Theseus goes off silently to anticipate Polynices' entry. Earlier on, at his arrival (1156–59), he had reported of a suppliant sitting by the altar of Poseidon (where Theseus himself was making offerings), who wanted to talk with Oedipus: once Polynices' request is accepted by Oedipus (at 1204–7), it is clear that Theseus should go back to Poseidon's altar and allow Polynices to reach Oedipus.

Of the twenty-three remaining exit-movements, the majority can be inferred dramaturgically. In four cases—*Antigone* 1348–53, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 1524–30,[61]*Electra* 1508–10, and *Oedipus at Colonus* 1777–79, to which add perhaps *Ajax* 1418–20 (if unannounced)[62]—the chorus departs because the play ends: while explicit reference is sometimes made to that departure and/or to the destination supposedly to be reached (e.g., the chorus of *Philoctetes*), other times choruses simply deliver conventional tail-pieces including no exit indication: a safe return home (if only ἔξω τοῦ δράματος) should be assumed in such cases.

In seven further occurrences, the unannounced departure involves nameless characters. Taplin's rule might seem at work, as these go off silently after their last word, once their task is over:

> *Trachiniae* 93 and 946 (the Nurse), 496 (Messenger), *Oedipus Tyrannus* 1185 (2 × : Corinthian Messenger, Theban Shepherd), *Oedipus at Colonus* 1669 (Messenger), and probably *Antigone* 1316 (Messenger).[63]

In only one of these seven exits does the departure "take center stage," that is, it is isolated as the only significant action performed on stage at that moment.

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60. See Taplin 1971, 39–41.

61. If genuine (thus Lloyd-Jones and Wilson 1990, 114); *contra*, see Dawe 1973, 266–73; Finglass 2009, 59 n. 50, with references.

62. If attendants are charged by Teucer with carrying Ajax's corpse offstage (thus Finglass 2011, on "Conclusion"). But the task could be more suitably (and more significantly) absolved by the sailors forming the Chorus: in that case their exit should be classed along with the fifty-two announced departures.

63. But if he goes off at the very end of the play, joining Creon and his retinue in the procession to the palace (thus Griffith 1999, ad loc.), no independent exit-movement is detectable.

This is the exit of Deianira's Nurse via the *skēnē* at *Trachiniae* 946, after she reports Deianira's suicide: she should doubtless retreat inside after her *rhēsis*, but a departure is nowhere implied in her speech.[64] In the other six cases, by contrast, the exit of the nameless leave-taker is covered by the simultaneous exits or entrances of other characters.[65] Thus, while in principle Taplin is right that the departure of minor characters *could* be unnoticed without embarrassment (as often in Aeschylus and Euripides), as a matter of fact Sophocles tried to distract his audience's attention from these irrelevant exits by the simultaneous juxtaposition of other more important scenic movements.

Whether these silent exits can be accounted for by the lower status of the leave-takers (as suggested by Taplin) is questionable. Not least because the same happens with the exits of five *named* characters, which take place roughly at the same time than other more relevant movements by different characters (no matter their status):

> *Ajax* 133 (Odysseus via the *eisodos*, after Athena's disappearance); *Antigone* 99 (Ismene via the *skēnē*-door, while Antigone departs via the *eisodos*), 326 (Creon via the *skēnē*-door, once he has dismissed the Guard, who goes off via the *eisodos*), *Trachiniae* 632 (Deianira via the *skēnē*-door, after Lichas' departure via the *eisodos*), *Oedipus Tyrannus* 150 (Creon via one *eisodos*, while the Priest and the suppliants depart via the other one and the Chorus enter).

Whether or not their last words convey finality, the basic point is that these leave-takers do not need to remain on stage nor specify the very obvious direction or motivation of their exit. Moreover, the absence of interlocutors potentially interested in their exit (except for the omnipresent choruses) and the completion of the task that motivated their entrance concur to make the announcement of these exits unnecessary or even gratuitous.[66] So, both named and nameless characters can leave silently once their task is over: the only difference is that major characters have more chances to be seen again by the audience. Therefore, contrary to Taplin's view, the status of the leave-taker does not determine the uneven distribution of announced and unannounced exits and no clear-cut dichotomy exists between announced exits by named characters and unannounced exits by nameless figures: dramatic situation determines each time which exits will be announced and which will not. The conclusion is strengthened by the fact that the exits of the two gods featuring in Sophocles' extant plays, Athena at *Ajax* 133 and Heracles at *Philoctetes* 1444, occur silently and almost inconspicuously: true, both do address "final words" of warning and recommendation to their addressees,

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64. The speech ends before an act-dividing song of the Chorus, namely at a time usually reserved for exits.

65. *Trach.* 93: Deianira's Nurse goes inside while Hyllus is leaving via the *eisodos*; *Trach.* 496: the Messenger departs via the *eisodos* while Deianira and Lichas enter the house; *OT* 1185: the departures of the Corinthian Messenger and the Theban Shepherd via the *eisodoi* are overwhelmed by Oedipus' retreat inside; *OC* 1669: the Messenger disappears before the entrance of Antigone and Ismene; add the Messenger of *Antigone* if he goes off at the end of the play (n. 63 above).

66. *Aj.* 133: Odysseus leaves the stage, having collected enough information about the slaughter of the cattle; *Ant.* 99: Ismene reenters the palace after Antigone had summoned her to come out (18–19); *Ant.* 326: Creon reenters the palace to wait for news from the place of Polynices' burial; *Trach.* 632: Deianira retreats inside to wait for Heracles' reaction to her gift; *OT* 150: Creon returns to his quarters after he has come back from Delphi, no further task being in store for him at the moment.

yet none of their words provide the slightest indication of their departure. As before, it would be tempting to explain all this in terms of status: being unaccountable by definition, gods need not declare their movements. But the most economic explanation lies, once again, in the conventions of tragic staging. Like the *dei ex machina* of Euripides, Athena and Heracles come on stage to fulfill a specific task, at the beginning or at the end of the play: since the audience does not expect to see them again, any indication of their departure is superfluous.

There remain only five unannounced and unpredictable exits. From a quick survey, it appears that Sophocles wanted in each case to draw the audience's attention precisely to the fact that the leave-taker is going off without uttering a word.

(1) Agamemnon's exit at *Ajax* 1373. Although Agamemnon might be assumed to leave simply because he has nothing else to do onstage, there is great point in his silent departure. His last words at 1370–73 highlight that his compliance to Odysseus' request is coming as a personal favor made to a *philos*, yet he also points to the enmity persisting between the Atridae and Ajax's party, which includes Teucer. Any parting word on his part would sound inappropriate or dangerous: he can hardly address Odysseus since he is acquiescing to his proposal but cannot really approve of it; least of all can he address Teucer, either harshly (given Odysseus' previous defense) or kindly (given the Atridae's resentment against Ajax and his family).

(2) Electra's exit into the house at *Electra* 1383. This move has long puzzled scholars, especially because Electra suddenly reenters after a few lines (1398).[67] Her retreat inside is preceded by an elaborate prayer to Apollo Lykeios (1376–83),[68] which, *pace* Taplin, is not enough to mark an exit (she could pray to Apollo and remain outside, waiting for Orestes and Pylades to accomplish the murder of Clytemnestra). The Tutor had urged Orestes and Pylades to enter alone (1367–71: see the duals at 1367 and 1369), and so did Orestes understand his words (1372–75: note the summons to Pylades). Electra's reentry may well mark her reappropriation of the domestic space and her solidarity with the avengers,[69] yet it remains a self-willed act unsolicited by Orestes and the Tutor. When she unexpectedly reappears at 1398, she is hailed by the Chorus with the surprised question σὺ δ' ἐκτὸς ᾖξας πρὸς τί; (1402), to which she replies she must watch in case they all should fail to notice Aegisthus' arrival (1402–3 φρουρήσουσ' ὅπως / Αἴγισθος <ἡμᾶς> μὴ λάθῃ μολὼν ἔσω):[70] one is left to suppose that she was so instructed by the other males (perhaps because her intrusion was bothersome for the killers?).

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67. For the different opinions, see Mantziou 1995, 189–91 (with references); March 2001, ad loc.; Medda 2007, 52–53. March mentions three reasons, none of which are entirely convincing: (a) Electra can thus report to the Chorus what is happening inside, particularly Clytemnestra's decking of Orestes' urn (1400–1401; see Kaibel 1896, ad loc.), (b) with the stage empty, the Chorus is free to point to the justice of Clytemnestra's murder (but how could Electra's presence have discouraged them?), (c) Sophocles may allude to, and soon reject, Electra's participation in the murder of Clytemnestra as staged by Euripides in his *Electra* (Sommerstein 1997, 212; but the relative chronology is uncertain). Euripides or not, the intra-dramatic motivation for Electra's entry is surely her desire to assist in the murder of Clytemnestra (Dale 1969, 226).

68. Thus Taplin 1977, 306, with references.

69. Thus Mantziou 1995, 193–95; Finglass 2007, on 1382–83.

70. Ancient scholia already noted that Electra's silent departure could be deduced only from the Chorus' question (Schol. *El.* 1402 Xenis); perhaps for this reason, the question arose whether Electra could have spoken lines 1384–85 of the choral ode (Schol. *El.* 1384a Xenis).

In the three remaining examples, the character's departure takes place silently but is later commented upon as a strange, unexpected, or undesired event by the other people on stage.

(3) Eurydice's exit at *Antigone* 1243. She quietly reenters the house to take her life after the conclusion of the messenger-speech announcing the suicide of Haemon: the Messenger and the Chorus are left free to speculate about her dangerous silence (1244–55: see esp. 1252 and 1256).

(4) Deianira's exit at *Trachiniae* 812. She retreats inside after Hyllus' accusation speech: the concerns of the Chorus about her sudden departure (813–14) are harshly dismissed by Hyllus (815–20).

(5) Odysseus' exit at *Philoctetes* 1302. Odysseus escapes via the *eisodos*, after Philoctetes' threat to kill him with an arrow (1299, 1301), thwarted in time by Neoptolemus (1300, 1302a): the departure is subsequently made clear by Philoctetes' disappointed question to Neoptolemus (1302b–3).

As for the *Electra* passage under discussion, if the deletion of 1050–54 is accepted, Chrysothemis' unannounced exit does not comfortably fit any of the subcategories of unannounced exits discussed so far. Her departure cannot be inferred linguistically from 1055–57 alone; it is not dramaturgically obligatory, since no staging convention forces Chrysothemis to leave at this moment; it is not even comparable to the exits of the other (named or nameless) characters who go off once they have completed their task;[71] finally, no dramatic point or surprise effect is gained if Chrysothemis enters the palace unnoticed. So, from the viewpoint of theatrical convention, Chrysothemis' exit should be classed with the large subset of fifty-two announced exits explicitly marked with a verb of motion, which happens if 1050–54 are retained (see 1050 ἄπειμι).

4.2. The Chrysothemis–Electra Exchange and the Pragmatics of Conversational Closings

The previous argument elicited the conclusion that some exit-statement by Chrysothemis is needed to make the scene conform to tragic convention, but no answer was provided to the question whether 1050–54 is precisely what we need. From a survey of the exit-sequences concluding rapid dialogues in tragedy, it seems that it is. If lines 1050–54 are retained, the sequence leading to Chrysothemis' departure replicates a basic pattern for announced exits frequently attested in Sophocles as well as Aeschylus and Euripides. The pattern is very simple: the leave-taker (speaker A) explicitly announces her/his departure, her/his interlocutor (speaker B) promptly grants her/him the permission to leave.

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71. Since Chrysothemis originally came on stage only to bring offerings to Agamemnon's tomb, one might object that her silent exit is in fact not very different from those of the twelve (seven nameless + five named) characters who go off once their tasks are over. But: (1) her departure is not covered by other simultaneous exits or entries, as in eleven of the twelve parallels; (2) differently from the Nurse at *Trach.* 946 (the only minor character who goes off alone and silently), who delivers a *rhēsis* to the Chorus (a dispensable interlocutor in the iambic sections) in the fashion of a messenger, Chrysothemis would quit amid a rapid dialogue while speaking to a truly engaging interlocutor such as Electra; (3) that Chrysothemis has completed her task is questionable: although she has returned from Agamemnon's tomb, by the time of her reentry she has been unexpectedly involved in new business and conversations with Electra, which Chrysothemis simply cannot quit just because she has finished her earlier task.

This happens at 1050–54: Chrysothemis' ἄπειμι τοίνυν (1050) is replied to by Electra's ἀλλ' εἴσιθ' (1052). Borrowing the terminology of Conversation Analysis,[72] 1050–51 and 1052–54 are a classic example of the so-called farewell-farewell sequence, used across world languages as a routine procedure to bring verbal interactions to an end.[73]

Apart from 1050–54, the pattern occurs five times in Sophocles. The least interesting for the present discussion—because it occurs in a friendly, non-antagonistic context—is the exchange between Hyllus and Deianira at *Trachiniae* 86–93: following Deianira's instructions, Hyllus departs in search for Heracles (86–91, esp. 86 ἀλλ' εἶμι, μῆτερ), and Deianira encourages him to go (92–93, esp. 92 χώρει νυν, ὦ παῖ).

The four remaining examples occur on the edge of violent quarrels, as in *Electra* 1050–57.[74]

(1) *Ajax* 1159–62. Menelaus states his intention to return to his quarters after he failed to coerce Teucer (1159–60), with his opponent readily granting him permission to leave (1161–62):

> Με.   ἄπειμι· καὶ γὰρ αἰσχρόν, εἰ πύθοιτό τις
> λόγοις κολάζειν ᾧ βιάζεσθαι πάρα.   1160
> Τευ. ἄφερπέ νυν. κἀμοὶ γὰρ αἴσχιστον κλύειν
> ἀνδρὸς ματαίου φλαῦρ' ἔπη μυθουμένου.

> Me.   I'll depart: it would be disgraceful if someone learned I am punishing with words one
> whom I could punish with force.
> Teu. Be off then. For me, it would be utterly disgraceful to listen to a foolish man speaking
> foolish words.

The sequence ἄπειμι (*Ajax* 1159) ~ ἄφερπέ νυν (*Ajax* 1161) closely resembles ἄπειμι ~ ἀλλ' εἴσιθ' at *Electra* 1050 and 1052, and so does the capping added to the reciprocal insults (*Ajax* 1159 καὶ γὰρ αἰσχρόν, εἰ πύθοιτό τις ~ *Ajax* 1161 κἀμοὶ γὰρ αἴσχιστον κλύειν).

(2) *Oedipus Tyrannus* 444–46. To quit his quarrel with Oedipus, Tiresias announces his departure (444). As Teucer, Oedipus urges his opponent to leave (445–46), but his last insult temporarily dissuades Tiresias, giving a pretext for his shocking but cryptic revelations about Oedipus (447–62):

> Τε.   ἄπειμι τοίνυν· καὶ σύ, παῖ, κόμιζέ με.
> Οι.   κομιζέτω δῆθ'· ὡς παρὼν σύ γ' ἐμποδὼν   445
> ὀχλεῖς, συθείς τ' ἂν οὐκ ἂν ἀλγύναις πλέον.

> Tir.   I'll go then: and you, boy, take me away!
> Oed. Let him take you away. While being underfoot you're annoying, and having left you
> won't disturb any longer.

The permission given by Oedipus at 445–46 is formally identical to Teucer's dismissal of Menelaus in *Ajax*, but his answer is even more scornful and insulting, as Oedipus turns away from Tiresias, addressing instead his young attendant.

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72. For an introduction, see Schegloff 2007; for applications to Greek tragedy, see van Emde Boas 2017a; 2017b; Catrambone 2019.
73. See Stivers 2012, 192–93. A classic on closures is Schegloff and Sacks 1973.
74. Kaibel (1896, ad loc.) pointed to some of these passages, but his findings can be considerably expanded.

(3) *Philoctetes* 1257–60. Once the quarrel between Odysseus and Neoptolemus has escalated to physical threats, Odysseus suddenly changes his mind (out of cowardice?) and decides to entrust the punishment of Neoptolemus' disobedience to the Greek army:[75]

Οδ. καίτοι σ' ἐάσω· τῷ δὲ σύμπαντι στρατῷ
     λέξω τάδ' ἐλθών, ὅς σε τιμωρήσεται.
Νε. ἐσωφρόνησας· κἂν τὰ λοίφ' οὕτω φρονῇς,
     ἴσως ἂν ἐκτὸς κλαυμάτων ἔχοις πόδα.   1260

Od. Well, I'll let you be! Yet I shall go and tell everything to the whole army, and they will
     punish you.
Ne. You've come to your senses! If you showed sense even for the future, you might perhaps keep your foot out of trouble.

The usually blunt, quasi-procedural statements of departure are turned here into sarcasm and threats: Odysseus highlights the negative consequences that his departure will have on Neoptolemus, while the latter sarcastically commends his opponent's caution, suggesting that Odysseus would not have the upper hand in a hypothetical combat. Odysseus' καίτοι σ' ἐάσω (1257) unequivocally implies prompt departure (cf. 1258 ἐλθών), one not hindered but indeed encouraged by Neoptolemus' sarcastic ἐσωφρόνησας (1259).[76]

(4) *Antigone* 93–99. The separate departures of Antigone and Ismene at the end of the prologue of *Antigone* offer the clearest parallel to *Electra* 1050–54:

Αν. εἰ ταῦτα λέξεις, ἐχθαρῇ μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ,
     ἐχθρὰ δὲ τῷ θανόντι προσκείσῃ δίκῃ.
     ἀλλ' ἔα με καὶ τὴν ἐξ ἐμοῦ δυσβουλίαν   95
     παθεῖν τὸ δεινὸν τοῦτο· πείσομαι γὰρ οὖν
     τοσοῦτον οὐδὲν ὥστε μὴ οὐ καλῶς θανεῖν.
Ισ. ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ σοι, στεῖχε· τοῦτο δ' ἴσθ', ὅτι
     ἄνους μὲν ἔρχῃ, τοῖς φίλοις δ' ὀρθῶς φίλη.

An. If you'll say so, you'll be hated by me and justly remain an enemy to the dead. [95] But let me and my rashness suffer this awful thing! For I'll suffer nothing so dire as not to die nobly.
Is. Well, if you wish, go! But know this, that you are crazy to go, but rightly loved to your beloved ones.

Antigone already stated her intention to leave (81 πορεύσομαι): with ἀλλ' ἔα με . . . παθεῖν (95–96), she forces Ismene to let her go and at the same time proceeds to the *eisodos*. Ismene's reply (98–99), more polite than Teucer's, Oedipus', and Neoptolemus' reactions, somewhat echoes Chrysothemis' words at *El.* 1050–51. The comparison between Ismene and Chrysothemis has often been detrimental to the latter: it is she, the mild sister, not the bold Electra, that desists first (contrast Ismene's patience with Antigone). Partly, Chrysothemis desists because she has been violently dismissed by Electra earlier in the dialogue

75. For Odysseus' second thoughts, see Schein 2013, on *Phil.* 1257.
76. *Pace* Schein 2013, ad loc., 1259–60 must be uttered by Neoptolemus *as* Odysseus departs, not *after* he departs (for "words cast at a departing back," see Taplin 1977, 221–22), hence it must be heard by Odysseus.

(1031–32: see below). Partly, the different attitudes of the two pairs of sisters lie in the specifics of the two plays: Antigone has a plan which she can carry out independently, and since Ismene can foresee all the dangers involved in its ful-fillment, she has great interest in stopping Antigone; Electra has no plan she can bring about alone, so Chrysothemis' desistence has no costs for Electra's per-sonal safety.

Exit-sequences of the same kind, with speaker A announcing departure and speaker B granting (or not denying) her/him permission to leave, are frequently found in Euripides (and, occasionally, Aeschylus), in both friendly and unfriendly interactions:

> *Andromache* 88–90 + 91–93 (the Maidservant goes inside, allowed by An-dromache); *Electra* 74–76 + 77–79 (the separate exits of Electra into the house and of the Farmer via the *eisodos*), 669 + 670 (the simultaneous ex-its of Orestes and the Tutor), 1339 + 1340–41 (the final exit of Pylades with Electra, both greeted by Orestes); *Ion* 1616a + 1616b (Creusa departs in the company of Ion, Athena approves and offers herself as a guide); *Phoenissae* 631–35 + 636–37 (the separate exits of Polynices and Eteo-cles);, *Orestes* 629 + 630–31 (the exit of Tyndareus, granted by Orestes), *Bacchae* 1368–70 + 1371 (the exit of Agave, granted by Cadmus). The earliest attested instances in tragedy trace back to Aeschylus' *Oresteia*: see Cassandra's announced reentry into the house at *Agamemnon* 1313–14, answered by the Chorus' expression of pity at 1321,[77] and Orestes' de-parture at *Choephoroe* 1061–62, answered by the farewell words of the Chorus at 1063–64.

If *Electra* 1050–54 is genuine, with her exit-statement at 1050–51 Chryso-themis in fact renegotiates her earlier refusal to leave the stage at Electra's prompt-ing (1031–32):

Ηλ.   ἄπελθε· σοὶ γὰρ ὠφέλησις οὐκ ἔνι.
Χρ.   ἔνεστιν· ἀλλὰ σοὶ μάθησις οὐ πάρα.

El.   Go: no help comes from you!
Chr. It comes, but from you comes no understanding.

In conversation-analytic terms, Electra's 1031 is a request-"first pair part," which preferentially calls for a "second pair part" of acceptance by Chryso-themis. But the latter opts for the "dispreferred" choice of declining the request. In itself, 1031–32 is simply an aborted instance of another farewell-farewell se-quence frequently found in tragedy, opposite to the one discussed so far: speaker A urges (more or less forcefully) speaker B to leave, and B accepts (more or less promptly) A's request by announcing her/his departure.[78] Thus, at 1050–51

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77. That Cassandra feels compelled to justify her further speech at *Ag.* 1323–30 (see 1323–24 ἅπαξ ἔτ' εἰπεῖν ῥῆσιν ἢ θρῆνον θέλω / ἐμὸν τὸν αὐτῆς) is due to the fact that 1313–20 were originally intended as her last utterance, as suggested by the exit-statement at 1313–14 ἀλλ' εἶμι κἂν δόμοισι κωκύσουσ' ἐμὴν / Ἀγαμέμνονός τε μοῖραν. ἀρκείτω βίος. This provides another argument against Campbell's transposition of 1313–15 after 1305 (accepted by West 1998, ad loc.: see also West 1990, 216–17). Additional arguments in Di Benedetto 1992, 146–48 (= 2007, 3: 1226); Medda 2017, on *Ag.* 1313–15.
78. See *Aj.* 804–6 + 813–14 (Tecmessa urges the Chorus to go searching for Ajax, and she departs with half of them), 1414–17 + 1418–20 (Teucer summons the Chorus?); *OT* 142–46 + 147–50 (Oedipus urges the Priest and

Chrysothemis simply recycles the request made by Electra at 1031 which she had initially disregarded: note τοίνυν, a discourse marker which here triggers the (pseudo-)agreement[79] between the interlocutors on the termination of the dialogue (1031 ἄπελθε . . . 1050 ἄπειμι).

5. CONCLUSION

To sum up, the internal logic of Sophocles *Electra* 1050–57 appears unobjectionable: having tried all her best, Chrysothemis finally departs, acknowledging the irreparable divergences between the sisters (1050–51). Electra lets Chrysothemis go, but does not spare her one last insult (1052–54): in her view, Chrysothemis is no less fool than herself in her attempt to convince Electra to accept a life she cannot bear. Chrysothemis departs, warning her recalcitrant sister that she will have occasion to repent (1055–57). The excision of 1050–54 is not without consequences for the handling of the scene: the lack of an exit-sequence thus produced would create unjustifiable anomalies in terms of scenic grammar and conversational sequencing. Theoretically, this might be one of those interpolations which we can no longer discern:[80] the forger may have left none of the inconsistencies which typically help us to detect later insertions. If so, for the reasons given above, the passage could hardly have ended with 1055–57 directly following 1049, so the interpolated lines must have replaced some other exit-sequence now missing. However, this looks very much like an *ad hoc* hypothesis invented to explain away a difficulty for which evidence is null. Both Chrysothemis' exit-statement transmitted at 1050–51 and Electra's violent reply at 1052–54 are very apposite and theatrically effective to enact the final breakdown of their relationship.[81] Electra is now alone on stage, deserted by all her potential allies, yet still prepared to carry out her revenge: only the unexpected return of Orestes will provide her with the necessary assistance to fulfill her plan.

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the suppliants to depart), 676a + 676b–77 (Oedipus requests Creon's departure), 1521a + 1521b (Oedipus invites Creon to lead him inside); *El.* 1435b + 1436a (Electra urges Orestes to go inside); *Phil.* 674a + 674b–75 (Neoptolemus urges Philoctetes to depart with him), 1068–69 + 1079–80 (Odysseus urges departure to Neoptolemus), 1449–51 + 1452 (Heracles urges Philoctetes and Neoptolemus to depart). Cf. also Aesch. *Pers.* 832–34 + 849–50, 1069 + 1076; Aesch. *Supp.* 849–50 + 851; *Ag.* 905–6 + 956–57; *Cho.* 848–49 + 850–54; Eur. *Alc.* 729–30 + 731; *Med.* 180–83 + 184, 1393 + 1394; *Heracl.* 274 + 275, 572–73 + 574–76; *Hipp.* 1084–85 + 1098–99; *Hec.* 1288–92 + 1293–95; *HF* 1418a + 1418b; *Tro.* 1327–30 + 1331–32; *IT* 1482–83 + 1492–94; *Ion* 654–56 and 663–65 + 668, 1029–31 + 1039–40; *Hel.* 734–35 + 744, 1278 + 1288 and 1296–97; *Phoen.* 1710–12 + 1713–15; *Or.* 1337–39 + 1344–45; *Bacch.* 509–10 + 515, 841 + 845, 1371 + 1381–82.

79. Cf. *Aj.* 127; *Trach.* 71; *OT* 444, 1067, 1167; *OC* 404.

80. Finglass 2015, 273.

81. My defense of 1050–54 is endorsed in Cannizzaro, Fanucchi, Morosi, and Ozbek 2018, 14 (a recent Italian translation of *Electra*).

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