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SILENCE IN SOPHOCLES' TRAGEDIES

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Corrections

38 (Line 368) read ‘μή ... beseeches’.
40 r. 50 for ‘an’ read ‘any’.
41 n. 52: for ‘codices’ read ‘codices’.
79 second paragraph l. 5: for ‘being’ read ‘be’.
99 l. 2: for ‘committed’ read ‘committed’.
120 l. 5: the Greek has not come out: ‘κενός’.
138 n. 15: for ‘τῶν θεῶν’ read ‘τῶν θεῶν’.
166 n. 5: for ‘numerical’ read ‘unmetrical’.
167 l. 3: this implies that attendants are ‘executed’.
179 n. 2: Heinz is not in the bibliography.
181f. what is to prevent Delaneira being accompanied by attendants at the beginning of Trach.
235 n. 7: ‘read κοινολ’.
265 n. 2: read ‘Bain (1977) 78 who points out’.
279 l. 5: for ‘utter loud’ read ‘utter out loud’.
280 second last line of first paragraph: for ‘ὄδε’ read ‘ἔδε’.
282 bis: for ‘Γάλων’ read ‘Γάλων’.
286 5 lines from top: for ‘nonetheless’ read ‘nonetheless’.
300 l. 4: for ‘behavioral’ read ‘behavioural’.
304 bibliography passim: for Antichthon read Antichthon: Erbse’s ICS article
322 (Alt): for ‘Shiksa’ read ‘Shicksal’.
324 (Bain, 1979): for ‘139-42’ read ‘132-45’
332 (Joerden): for ‘Bedeutung’ read ‘Bedeutung’.
333 (Tarrant): for ‘antecedants’ read ‘antecedents’.
334 (Ley): for ‘Scholcs’ read ‘Sophocles’.
340 Schadewaldt: for ‘Formgeschichte’ read ‘Formgeschichte’.
340 (Scullion): for ‘Altertumskunde’ read ‘Altertumskunde’.
343 (id. (Todd): for ‘Τριτογνωστής’ read ‘Τριτογνωστής’.

To my Family
εστι δ' οὗ σιγή λόγου
κρείσσων γένοιτ' ἄν. εστι δ' οὗ σιγῆς λόγος.

*Euripides' Orestes* 638-639
ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

SILENCE IN SOPHOCLES' TRAGEDIES

The introduction of the thesis presents the poetics of silence in tragedy, the framework of the thesis, parallel aspects of silence, silent persons within the light of the three-actor rule and a review of previous scholarship. The study of silence in Sophocles' plays is divided into two parts, each of which explores silence as a feature of characterization and as a structural element in Sophocles' extant plays.

a) Speakers and Mute Performers: Part I deals with mute named characters, speakers who turn into mute characters, extras in crowd-scenes, and mute attendants. The roles of mutes in relation to speakers are classified according to their dramatic importance.

b) Speakers and Silence: in Part II emphasis is given to silence in the structure of the dialogue with particular reference to the mechanism which generates the position of a silent witness in a dialogue-scene and the transition of speech from one speaker to another. The technique related to the change of speakers refers to the entry of a new character, the verbal interferences and the short interventions of silent witnesses in the dialogue.

The contribution of this research is that it reverses the focus from speech to silence and investigates the dramatic procedures or conventions, which motivate the various manifestations of silence. The orchestration of silence on stage implies that the form and meaning of silence are defined in relation to the speaking parts. The silent persons follow the speeches in a closer or a more distant contact with the speakers, and they perform dramatic actions which are often not precisely indicated in the words. By following at close range their reactions, their reasons for being silent in the scenes and the breaking of their silences, we explore the rhythm of silence in the shifts of dialogue and the fluctuation of the meaning of silence in the interaction of characters in the context of the Sophoclean drama.
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I would especially like to express my gratitude and deepest thanks to Professor P.E. Easterling, under whose supervision the thesis was conducted. Her selfless support and patient teaching throughout the years of my research gave me invaluable knowledge and unshaken belief in ethos, both in drama and life for the years to come.

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INTRODUCTION
i. THE POETICS OF SILENCE IN TRAGEDY

Silence is a concept which can be given different meanings and applied in various situations. A systematic approach to the analysis and interpretation of silence ought to take into account the features of flexibility and wide applicability of uses of this notion. In order to distinguish between patterns of silence, it is important to define the specific environment where silence takes its substance and meaning.\(^1\) The notion of silence has justifiably been the subject of theoretical analysis in the fields of sociology, psychology, philosophy, linguistics as well as an important issue of reference in art\(^2\) and literature.\(^3\) Each field on its own deserves and, naturally, provides a wide spectrum of interpretations in the study of silence. The following analysis does not aim to contribute to the discussion of silence in any particular discipline of the above; its focus is rather on silence in ancient Greek, particularly Sophoclean drama.\(^4\) However, the method of research that is pursued in the thesis has taken advantage of the interdisciplinary

\(^1\) Saville-Troike (1985) 16-17 points out that ‘silence is more context-embedded than speech, that is, more dependent on context for its interpretation.’ She has elaborated a broad classification of the different types of silence ‘within the framework for the ethnography of communication.’ Yet she also makes the point that this classification will need to be amplified and tested in relation with the uses of silence in a particular society or a given setting.

\(^2\) Cf. e.g. Ingmar Bergman’s film *The Silence.*


\(^4\) Tannen and Saville-Troike (1985) present exemplary discussions in their book *Perspectives on Silence* with extensive bibliography.
approach and methodology in the study of silence. The aim has been to establish
common points of reference on the complex issue of silence as well as to spell out the
distinguishing features of silence in ancient Greek drama. My research has profited a lot
from the following general assumptions: silence is defined as absence or lack of speech
and sometimes serves as a substitute for speech. The pausing of speech, the hesitation
in answering a question, the distance from the dialogue and the reluctance to
communicate with words are all demonstrations of silence. In the language of a text,
silence is implied in ‘aposiopesis’, and silence has its own vocabulary and phraseology
in a number of expressions, orders and questions. Whenever speech is absent, silence
can be manifested in various visual signs, like gestures, movement and facial
expression. These signs constitute by themselves codes of non-verbal communication
which will vary from one cultural context to another. Therefore, the main interest of the
thesis centres on the effort to deal with the question ‘what is silence in Greek drama’,
and explore the dramatic silences in tragedy with special reference to Sophocles’ plays.

In the study of drama we are invited to focus our attention on the spoken word and the
verbal action, while it is easy to ignore the dramatic events which distance themselves
from speech, unless they bear a strong visual element. Therefore it is quite natural to

5 Saville-Troike (as above) 4 distinguishes between communicative silences and ‘the
absence of sound when no communication is going on’. The present analysis intends
to study silence as part of communication and, in many ways, in contrast to speech.

6 Aposiopesis: ‘A speaker’s abrupt halt midway in a sentence, accountable to his
being too excited or distraught to give further articulation to his thought’. The New

7 See Hess-Lüttich (1979) 105-120 for the function of non-verbal actions in drama
and the ‘body-language’ in Hauptmann’s theatre.
deal with the problem as to who takes part in the dialogues of a play and how the speeches are divided between the characters. However, it seems to be less obvious who is silent on stage and what is the share of silence among the characters of a play. Yet the meaning of drama does not only entail nor does it only refer to the verbal interaction between the speaking characters but it also refers to the interaction between verbal and non-verbal elements of the play, which both contribute to the shaping of the dramatic dialogue. Registering silence thus forms an integral part of the process of witnessing, either as readers of a dramatic text or as spectators of a play, the verbal behavior of speakers and interlocutors. This method of looking at and interpreting silence presupposes that silence is worth being considered as a distinct element in the multi-dimensional structure of drama.

The structure of a play is primarily based on the organization of the various types of speeches which create the dramatic dialogue. The verbal complexities and various meanings of each individual speech compose the texture of the dialogue. An audience or a reader of drama staying outside the zone of dramatic speech is allowed to share with the characters a common knowledge of the plot and, even more, to have a better understanding of the situation than the characters themselves. Therefore, the latter may get involved in a situation that concerns them and yet be unable to see clearly the ‘full significance of the total situation’. From this point, dramatic irony seems to emerge in the language of dialogue. The continuity of dialogue in a particular scene is interrupted

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when it sounds like being non-coherent to the speakers of the play, while this non-coherent speech may be quite intelligible for the audience who follow the coherence of the dialogue of the entire play. For instance, Cassandra's incomprehensible silence, her cries and inarticulate speech in *Agamemnon*, form reactions which sound non-coherent to Clytaemnestra and the Chorus, but the audience, knowing the context of the myth, are able to follow the speeches in a coherent way. Therefore, the non-coherent speech of a character does not allow him 'to enter into a dialogue' with the other persons on the same stage. Characters who tend to face each other and respond to speech with speech, seem to keep a positive attitude in the dialogue. On the contrary, characters who avoid the dialogue and turn away from the other speaker seeking a silent position seem to demonstrate a negative attitude. Dramatic dialogue proceeds with shifts from a limited to a more enlarged area of communication or the other way round. In the modern theatre the tendency to limit the area of communication in dramatic dialogue tends towards the elimination of the word as the main factor in the development of the action. The dramatic events are intimated as visual scenes in space, with possibilities of 'extension beyond words', a practice which creates the idea of 'wordless drama'.

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11 See George (1980) 82 and 85 for the rhythm in dialogue.

12 Cf. Stein (1970) 423-431, especially 424: 'Total silence would be death to drama.'

13 Artaud (1964) 136 argues for an anti-verbal theatre: 'expansion hors des mots.'

14 Kennedy (1975) 8. In absurd drama, Beckett and Pinter use silence in their plays to portray the alienation of modern man and the disintegration of language itself. Silent and speaking characters stand in opposition, the ones covered with a silence which signals a threat against the others. Beckett's dialogues are interspersed with silent action and pauses. His monologues create a language which breaks communication and concludes in silence. Cp. *Waiting for Godot, Krapp's Last Tape, Embers, Happy Days*. Pinter
In the study of Greek drama the shift of attention from speech to silence seems to follow a theoretical approach borrowed from the semiotics of modern theatre.\(^{15}\) It is challenging to treat silence as a distinct subject in the study of ancient drama particularly because ancient Greek drama has been associated with the dominance of speech and word in the plays. The present approach to the interpretation of silence in Sophocles' plays attempts to perceive and analyze the meanings hovering in silent attitudes and to compensate for our general tendency as readers to disregard silence in favour of speech.\(^{16}\)

To quite a large extent, silence in ancient drama is interwoven in the alternations of speakers and the shifts of dialogue. The very close contact and relationship between speech and silence makes it more difficult to explore the meaning of silence in the network where speakers and silent persons are in constant interaction. While speaking actors are interacting with silent persons, both parties seem to contribute to the texture of the dialogue with their verbal and non-verbal conduct. Non-verbal behaviour and any action which aligns with a visual rather than an aural context should be considered in relation to silence. Silent action refers to the movement of a non-speaking person, the silent

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\(^{14}\) "Hatte [das Schweigen] im klassischen Drama vor allem die rhetorische Funktion eines beredten Schweigens mit dem Ziel der Emphase, der Retardation, der Erzeugung von Spannung oder Provokation von Rezipientenreaktionen, so wird es im modernen Drama zum bewussten Manifest expressiver Funktionen, die metakommunikativ auf das Problematischwerden von Kommunikation verweisen' Hess-Lüttich (1978) 31-64, especially 32.

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\(^{16}\) Cp. also Saville Troike (1985) 10 who points out that "while [the] meaning [of silence] ... can usually be achieved only in contrast with the meaning of sound, the time-spaces occupied by silence constitute an active presence (not absence) in communication".
entrances and exits of the characters, the composition of a silent tableau, the marching of a silent procession, a silent prayer or a silent supplication, silent gestures, the silent presence of an actor. In this study, the emphasis is primarily placed on the lack of speech, and vision is put on a secondary level, though of course acknowledging the interrelation between words and images in the structure of drama itself.

In the study of speech and silence critics have inclined to distinguish between noticeable and unnoticed silences in ancient Greek drama. The most significant contribution in this field has been provided by Taplin in the description of silence in Aeschylus. Taplin points out that scholars working on Greek tragedy have not paid enough attention to the distinction between significant and not-significant silences. He briefly criticizes the argument for the idle actor described by Dignan who first put forward some interesting preliminary points on the treatment of silences in tragedy. However, Dignan failed to engage in a systematic research on the methods by which silence operates in different patterns of dialogue. Taplin’s argument goes further and engages itself in the

17 Taplin (1972) 81 thinks that "some of these silences are merely instances of necessary and unnoticed not-speaking brought about by the plain fact of dramatic technique that not everyone can talk at once". He also acknowledges technical silences in Aeschylus which "may be instructive" but they are "empty and meaningless" (p. 85). Cf. also Taplin (1995) 103, and n. 27. However we are reluctant to adopt the notion of significant and not-significant silences in the present thesis because we consider that, apart from the simple logic of the technical necessity that not everybody on stage can talk all the time, the interaction between speakers and silent persons has a dynamic of its own in the structure of the dialogue, which relates speech and silence in the methods of communicating the meanings of drama.

18 In Dignan's thesis we find short comments on the silence of bystanders, e.g. "an interested listener" for the Priest in O.T. while Creon reports the oracle (85-134), a "brilliantly effective" silence for Iocasta witnessing the conversation between Oedipus and the Corinthian Messenger in O.T. 989-1053.
examination of the silent characters of Niobe and Achilles in Aeschylus’ lost plays *Niobe* and *Myrmidones*. These silent figures had evidently been the centre of prolonged dramatic attention for quite long and their words, when spoken at last, gave meaning to the preceding silence. Taplin goes on to argue that silences in the surviving plays of Aeschylus, though not as long as those of Niobe and Achilles, have different meanings and are placed in different dramatic contexts. They are dramatically important because they become the object of attention or their breaking is of interest. Cassandra in *Agamemnon* keeps a long and unexplained silence and Prometheus in the prologue of *Prometheus Bound* keeps a long silence until Hephaestus, Kratos and Bia have gone; Pylades’ silence in *Choephori* becomes significant because he speaks while he has never spoken before. Atossa in the *Persians* falls silent before the Messenger and the Chorus at the hearing of disastrous news; in *Hiketides*, while the Chorus of Danaids try to persuade Pelasgus to protect them, Danaus’ long silence goes by unnoticed, and no attention is paid to him; the silence of Antigone and Ismene at *Seven Against Thebes* 870-961 cannot be considered as an ‘Aeschylean’ silence because it presents problems relating to the authenticity of the text and the distribution of the parts in the laments of 874-1004. Clytaemnestra’s silences in *Agamemnon* are usually left ambiguous and unexplained while her powerful appearances shape the action of the play. Finally, Taplin thinks that noticeable silences in Sophocles are those of Oedipus in *O.C.* 1254ff., Neoptolemus in *Philoctetes*, Iole in *Trachinia* while in Euripides, the same could be said for Phaedra’s silence in *Hippolytus*, Heracles’ silence in the final scene of *Heracles* and Eurydice’s silence in *Hypsipyle*. In an earlier work Prescott has analyzed silence in
Roman comedy on the basis of their length and the distinction of significant and awkward silences.\textsuperscript{19} In the present research the effort has been made to avoid the distinction between important and less important silences. The reason is that I have wished to draw attention to the rhythm of silence in the shifts of dialogue and the fluctuation of the meaning of silence in the interaction of characters in the context of the Sophoclean drama.

In this study, the definition of a 'speaker' or a 'speaking person' refers to any actor with a speaking part. Speakers can be silent for a longer or shorter period of time. 'Silent persons' can be the performers of a play who remain silent all the time, i.e. mute performers. Yet a silent person can also be an actor with a speaking part who, however, ceases talking for some time. In this case, we are dealing with the silence for a while of an otherwise speaking actor. Therefore, speaking actors can become silent persons. However, the definition of a 'silent person' when it refers to a speaker who remains silent for some time, has to be clearly distinguished from the silence of a non-speaker. This distinction can be maintained by means of defining the dramatic importance and the duration of a speaking actor's silence. Therefore, while we are looking for silence in ancient drama we have to combine two modes of approach: attention both to the speeches of the actors and to the presence and significance of the silent persons. Whereas dialogue is taken over in turns by the speaking actors, silence emerges as a situation which exists and establishes itself in relation with the speaking parts.

\textsuperscript{19} Prescott (1937) 196 also discusses the awkwardness in long periods of silence and he says that 'we have no means of knowing just how long a period of silence proved awkward to the audience or trying to the stage manager'.

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interest here is to examine the points of transition of dialogue between the speakers and explore the techniques which bring out the silences of the persons who distance themselves from speech. The dramatic technique in the alternation of speakers and the exploitation of the mute figures in relation to the surrounding verbal activities can provide us with a lot of information about the function of silence in Greek drama.

Dealing with the question who is involved in the speeches of drama and who remains silent, we cannot avoid associating this matter with the arrangement of dialogue between the three actors. Not only speeches but also silences are greatly affected by the convention of the three-actor rule in Greek drama. The limitations of this convention seem to allow the dramatists develop a variety of non-speaking parts and, by consequence, elaborate effective dramatic silences in their plays. What is important here is to draw attention to the dynamic of the dialogue which is shaped between three speakers in the presence of a mute, as well as between two speakers and a silent witness. The common pattern in the dialogues of tragedy is that two speakers converse between themselves, while another actor remains silent. The pattern of duologue and a silent witness does not however stay invariable, because speakers often alternate in the position of silent bystanders. The technique of dialogue that turns the speaker into a silent person and defines his silence in the conversation is a pointer to the extent of communication between speakers and silent persons. A silent person can keep a closer or a more distant contact with the dialogue. He can be an interested listener to the

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20 See below, Introduction (iv).
speeches or a more passive bystander in the exchanges of two interlocutors.\textsuperscript{21} In scenes where two speakers are on stage and converse, silence can be defined by the attentive listening to each other’s speeches. When two speakers address and respond to each other they are engaged in close dialogue-contact. The dialogue-contact becomes uneven when a speaker excludes another speaker from the speeches by prohibiting an utterance from him. For example in Sophocles’ \textit{Philoctetes}, the Merchant does not enter into dialogue-contact with Philoctetes, and in \textit{Electra}, Clytaemnestra excludes Electra from the dialogue with the Paedagogus. The Messengers’ narrative speeches and the actors’ soliloquies are also uttered in the presence of silent witnesses. In Sophocles’ \textit{Trachiniae} Deianeira’s long speech in lines 436-469 is delivered in the presence of the Old Messenger and Lichas. The long narrative speech of the Paedagogus in \textit{Electra} lines 680-763 is witnessed by Clytaemnestra and Electra. Ajax’s three monologues in \textit{Ajax} 430-480, 545-582, 646-692 are delivered in front of various persons who follow them silently. In the present study particular attention is drawn to Ajax’s speech in lines 545-582 in relation to Eurysaces, who is a mute character in the play.\textsuperscript{22}

Dramatically, any silent person in tragedy could be considered as an active participant in the dialogue as long as he is referred to or addressed in the words of the speakers. Whenever a speaker points to a silent person, the addressee either responds and breaks his silence or continues being silent. Instances where the silence is broken, signal the fact that the silent person has been following the conversation attentively, and, at an

\textsuperscript{21} Prescott (1937) 196: ‘A character who is silent and aloof from the action is much more difficult to handle than a silent character who is an attentive listener’.

\textsuperscript{22} Cf. Part I, ch. 1.b.
opportune moment, he thrusts himself into dialogue-contact. The breaking of a silence not only introduces a silent person into the dialogue, but also emphasizes the meaning of his silence. The well-timed and opportune breaking of a silence or the momentous effect of intervening in the dialogue are signs which declare that a silent person communicates with the speakers through a meaningful silence, and he plunges into action as soon as the time seems convenient.^^ The stichomythia is a form of dialogue which brings two speakers very close and intensifies the presence of a silent witness. The breaking of stichomythia might also signal the breaking of a silence. That may well be the case of an alert witness who, after keeping silent for some time, interferes and changes the dialogue by introducing himself as a new speaker. Pauses between utterances underline the active participation of a silent person. In many cases they can signal the delay in giving an answer or they might fill the temporal space before the entrance or after the exit of a character. However, we should not be tempted to assume that pauses are designed to give scope to individualized acting so much as to emphasize the junctures between turns of dialogue.^^ Besides, the text needs to be followed at close range in order to trace unregistered reactions on the part of the silent persons, which might be profitable in a sensitively directed stage performance. That is so since the spoken word is more vivid and therefore attracts more attention, at the likely expense of the non-verbal action.

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23 Cf. the remarks by Philips (1985) 208 on the interaction structured through talk and silence: "silences can function as junctions or boundary markers units in the flow of interaction structured through talk".

24 See also Rehm (1992) 51.

25 In the Greek theatre words are needed to guide the very large audience (in an open-air setting in daylight) to turn their attention to what is dramatically important.
Sporadic attempts can be detected at shaping a dialogue according to the pattern, in which three interlocutors exchange words in close dialogue. The following instances convey an idea of three-cornered dialogues in Sophocles' plays. They represent small scenes which could probably suggest that the three actors come close to a three-cornered dialogue:

(i) in *Antigone* 531-539, Creon, Ismene and Antigone interlock in very close dialogue by responding to each other's remarks. Creon addresses Ismene, Ismene replies by referring to Antigone, and Antigone interferes to deny her sister's claims. This small three-actor dialogue provides a momentary effect of triangular interaction, which, however, does not last for too long. (ii) *Oedipus Tyrannus* lines 634-638 is a notorious scene of a three-sided dialogue between Iocasta, Creon and Oedipus. Iocasta addresses her short speech to the two men. Creon answers Iocasta with reference to Oedipus. Oedipus responds with a reply, which points both to Creon and Iocasta. Creon gives a short answer to Oedipus, and Iocasta closes the scene with a final plea to Oedipus. (iii) In *Oedipus Tyrannus* lines 950-963 there is a short dialogue between Oedipus, Iocasta and the Corinthian Messenger. In this scene the change of speakers takes place in between two short dialogues, which seem to bring the three actors in close contact.

In the three-cornered dialogues, three speakers are in close verbal contact when long silences do not occur in the verbal exchanges. The silences are short because there is no

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27 See Part II, ch. 6.d.
time space to distinguish the actors who remain silent. The three-cornered dialogues should be considered in a different light from the scenes with three actors in which two actors speak and a third actor is silent.\footnote{The examples from the three-cornered dialogues are used only to provide material to contrast with the dialogues of two speakers and a silent witness, which are thoroughly investigated in the thesis.}
ii. FRAMEWORK OF THE THESIS

The purpose of the present study is to explore the possibilities of performance in Sophocles' plays by reversing the focus from speech to silence. The present thesis is divided into two parts, each of which explores silence as a feature of characterization and as a structural element in Sophocles' extant plays. A considerable selection of characteristic incidents in Sophocles' plays are surveyed attempting a multi-layered depiction of how silence operates with different persons and various situations. Part I deals with the activities of mute performers and their relationship with the speaking actors in a variety of scenes. Part II examines the manifestations of silence in dialogue with special reference to the interaction between speakers. The chapters on the mutes cover all the available material provided in Sophocles' plays. In the chapters on speakers and silence an effort has been made to work on a broad selection of scenes out of the total number of possible instances where the three actors meet on stage. In the process of the present investigation I have been inclined to believe that the plays could be given wider readings were we able to broaden our perspective of drama by including silence as a systematic potential in the dramatic structure. A guiding principle that permeates the

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29 Three-actor scenes, which provide interesting silences and which are not discussed at length in the thesis, are as follows: (i) after the entrance of a speaker: *Ajax* 1318-1373. (ii) With the interference of a silent witness: *Electra* 1326-1375, *Oedipus at Colonus* 1096-1210. (iii) With short interventions of a silent witness: *Oedipus at Colonus* 820-847 with particular reference to Antigone's silence in lines 723-847. (iv) *Oedipus at Colonus* 1254-1446 is a scene with three actors, in which Oedipus utters a long speech which emphasizes his stubborn reluctance to communicate with Polyneices. Oedipus does not come into dialogue-contact with Antigone and Polyneices, who go on talking after Oedipus completes his speech.
study is that silence, and not only words, determines in a very substantial way the meanings of drama.

**Part I. Speakers and Mute Performers:** The general definition of 'mute performers' is used in what follows to indicate the persons who are not given speaking parts, by contrast with the actors who are assigned a speaking activity. This distinction is primarily technical and draws attention to the availability of people who constitute the human resources of an ancient stage production. The absence of speech in these performers must be considered as another aspect of the communication of dramatic meanings in the conversational environment of the plays. Mute performers can assume a wide range of silent activities, which distinguish mute characters with dramatic importance from mute attendants with an ostensibly auxiliary role in the dramatic action. Taplin speaks about two principal classes of mutes, the named independent characters and the mute attendants. He prefers to reserve the Greek terms κωφὸν πρόσωπον for the first group, and πορείασαγόμενα πρόσωπα for the second group.

According to the dramatic importance of the mutes, my classification in the chapters of Part I is as follows: Chapter One deals with mute characters with dramatic importance (i.e. Taplin's κωφά πρόσωπα). Chapters Two and Three explore variations of the categories of mute characters and attendants (see below). The definition of 'extras' is reserved for the group scenes in which the entrance of mute performers implies their

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30 Taplin (1977a) 80.
participation in an assembly. Chapter Four deals with mute attendants (i.e. Taplin's παρευσαγόμενα πρόσωπα), who have the least interaction with the characters.

Mutes who are used in crowd scenes probably constitute a representative small number of extras rather than a realistically large one, because the congregation of a great crowd of non-speakers on stage risks distracting attention from the main action and might bring confusion as to who speaks and who attends in silence. Sometimes it is hard to define at first appearance that a new person on stage is played by a mute. His silence may attract the speakers' attention, and references or addresses to the mutes often raise questions about their importance in the play. The use of mutes is so diversified that we see them combining with the speakers in many possibilities of performance. Speakers and mutes are frequently interacting in a close way, particularly when a mute becomes prominent in the dramatic action. We should not imagine them having an extended stage-action that would confuse the spectacle of the speaking actors but neither can they be supposed to stay inactive. To some extent it is necessary to rely on the words of the speakers in order to track down entrances and exits, gestures and attitudes of non-speakers.

\[\text{Wherever we adopt the term 'supernumeraries' it is simply used as a variant for performers who exceed the number of the three speaking actors.}\]

\[\text{Walton (1980) 144 argues that "non-speaking actors did not exist until they were addressed".}\]

\[\text{Cf. Chancellor (1979) 147: "It is [...] possible, by following the direction of address within the discourse, to reconstruct the intended spatial interrelations of the characters on stage. This technique could provide only limited information on the relation of the characters to the setting or to non-speaking figures".}\]

25
a) Mute characters.

Chapter One considers the non-speaking parts of named mute characters: Iole is the silent captive in *Trachiniae* who behaves in a complicated way before Deianeira, and raises questions about her distinguished presence among the undistinguished crowd of the Oechalian captives. Eurysaces in *Ajax* is the named child who takes part in the silent tableau centred on his father's corpse and in the closing funeral procession. Antigone and Ismene enter weeping at the end of *Oedipus Tyrannus* and enhance with their fragility the emotional impact of the last scenes. Pylades is another silent figure, who has less involvement in the play of *Electra* in comparison with the other mute characters, and recalls to the audience a different treatment of his role in Aeschylus' *Choephori*.

b) Divided parts between a mute and a speaker.

Chapter Two presents the roles which are split between a speaker and a mute. Here I distinguish differentiated patterns in the division of the roles: (i) a speaker changes into a mute, like Tecmessa who turns into a silent person after she discovers the dead Ajax. (ii) A mute changes into a speaker, like the seaman in *Philoctetes* who returns as the Merchant with a speaking part. (iii) A speaker changes into a mute, but the mute seems to sing a few lines at the end of the play. This is the case of Ismene in *O.C.*, who enters as a speaker but changes into a mute in scenes with three speakers and (probably) sings the final kommos with Antigone. While treating the impact of this silence on stage I discuss the possibilities of using a fourth actor who would take over for a few lines or a mute performer exceptionally given a few lines to speak (or sing).
c) Speakers and extras.

Chapter Three continues the treatment of silence with respect to mute extras who contribute to the spectacle of a crowd scene. At this point, the term 'extras' is being employed in contrast with the speakers, in order to underscore a differentiated assembly of people with specific function related to the events of the play. They proceed in parallel with the speakers to broaden the visual meanings of the scene. The suppliants at the beginning of O. T. open the play with a spectacle that presents serious difficulty in the text. This is given detailed discussion, particularly in relation to the status of the suppliants and the impact of their silent supplication on the speakers. The persons in the procession at the end of Ajax become part of a more complicated process of gathering people on stage and manoeuvring their movements and exits to a final destination. The persons who participate in the procession along with Heracles at the end of Trachiniae form another type of a crowd scene at the end of a play. The identity of the participants who join the silent marching of Heracles' bearers is discussed, and their slow movements are studied into the context of the speakers' utterances. The last lines of the play reconstruct the image of the procession which, after a long halt, starts to move off. At the same time, the parting lines raise difficulties in defining the speaker and the addressees of the commands which motivate the movement of the departure.

d) Mute attendants.

Chapter Four presents a comprehensive account of mute attendants, which includes single attendants and children. These persons have the least dramatic involvement in the
plays, but they facilitate the action by executing orders and escorting their superiors. They are bodyguards, handmaids and child guides of blind people. It is not easy to follow their entrances and exits but we assume that they follow their masters unless there is indication of the opposite. Though they perform auxiliary functions on stage, sometimes their presence is treated as a means of intensifying scenes of violence. Often their gestures are not easy to distinguish from those of their superiors or of the Chorus. However, it is not advisable to assume that the Chorus comes into regular physical contact with the speakers on stage, although this may happen from time to time.

Part II. Speakers and Silence: In Part II emphasis is given to silence in the structure of the dialogue, with particular reference to the mechanism which generates the position of a silent witness in a conversation and the transition of speech from one speaker to another. Though it seems unrealistic to draw a separate line between speakers and silent witnesses since the two categories exchange positions in the course of dialogue, we have to call attention to the technique which makes the speakers fall silent. In the verbal action any speaker potentially assumes a silent activity, which needs to be explained by means of the words of the interlocutors. The main focus is on the interaction of speech and silence between the speaking characters in three-sided dialogues. I also discuss two-actor dialogues with the intention of keeping together the sequence of the scenes while investigating the environment which brings the silences into existence. The investigation does not follow the chronological order of the plays or the order of action within the plays. It is accommodated to the analytical arrangement which follows the technique relating to the change of speakers. An attempt is made to use the conventional patterns which permeate the plays as the basis for the methodology of the analysis, which
examines the change of speakers. This sort of classification provided the material for chapters in Part II, arranged under the following headings:

a) The entrance of a new speaker.

Chapter Five examines the silences that occur in relation to the entrance of a third speaker: when a third speaker is introduced into the action, one of the interlocutors falls silent, and the dialogue turns to a new pair of speakers. When we see a new entrant we need to be aware that the entrance signifies the change of dialogue, and in most cases the change of a speaker into a silent witness. The silenced person takes over speech as soon as the third speaking character makes his exit. This is the simplest form of dialogue change in which a silent attitude depends on the entrance of a new speaker. Entrances which regulate the flow of speech can be subject to a differentiated range of dramatic devices. At the beginning of *Trachiniae* the Nurse remains silent on stage after the entrance of Hyllus. She has only a short speaking part, and she is soon to be ignored after she has offered her piece of advice to Deianeira. (But she will reappear to tell the news of Deianeira’s death). In *Ajax* there is a more complicated manner of introducing a new speaker in a three-actor scene. Odysseus falls silent when Ajax comes out of his tent, but the audience experiences an unusual effect: Odysseus' silence is combined with invisibility manipulated by Athena. This is a strange device on stage, which emphasizes that Odysseus is the silent witness of Ajax's madness. In *Oedipus at Colonus*, Antigone stops talking when the Stranger enters. After he has left, Antigone speaks again. I discuss the nature of her silence in the conversation between her father and the local inhabitant. By following her as a silent witness in the conversation I attempt to trace the
degree of her dramatic involvement in action at the beginning of the play. In *Philoctetes* 974 and 1293 Odysseus makes two successive sudden entrances which produce a striking effect on Neoptolemus. In the first entrance Neoptolemus holds back from the dialogue despite Philoctetes' appeals, while in the second entrance Neoptolemus stops talking as soon as Odysseus enters. But now his silence is short because his involvement in the action is far less complicated than his hesitations at the first surprising entrance of Odysseus. In each of these cases a different reason is given for justifying the silent presence of a character in the verbal exchanges of a three-actor dialogue.

b) The interference of a silent witness.

Chapter Six extends the pattern of Chapter Five to include entrances of speakers and interferences of silent witnesses. The change between speakers can happen by means of a silent witness who interferes without interrupting the flow of the dialogue but makes one of the speakers cease talking. This is the case of *Antigone* lines 384-581, where the transition from one interlocutor to another recasts the dialogue among speakers by assigning silent activity to them. When a silent witness interferes unexpectedly, the change of speakers interrupts the dialogue abruptly with the effect of silencing one of them. The most characteristic example is *Trachiniae* 225-496, where we follow the stages which make prominent the silence of the Old Messenger up to the point where he interferes in the dialogue and silences Deianeira. A more elaborate form of stichomythic dialogue with three actors is found in the scenes in *Oedipus Tyrannus* 911-1085 and 1110-1185 in which the continuous interferences of silent witnesses bring home to us the close relation of speech and silence. We conclude this chapter with a short dialogue.
in *Electra* 766-803, which gives the idea that Electra reluctantly comes into dialogue contact with Clytaemnestra, but as soon as contact is established between the two women the dialogue stops and the Paedagogus does not become the silent witness of a new altercation between the two women.

c) Short interventions in dialogue.

Chapter Seven deals with interventions of silent witnesses, which, when they occur, do not end up by shifting the dialogue to another speaker. These short interventions give the initial impression that the dialogue is about to move to a new pair of speakers, but this is not what really happens. The rare interventions of a silent witness help create the effect of his silence rather than his verbal participation in the dialogue of the two others. In *Electra*, the first part of the long scene between Electra, Clytaemnestra and the Paedagogus provides a very characteristic example in which Electra attends silently the verbal exchanges despite her short interventions, which come as a reaction to the news of Orestes' death. We need to consider her silent position before the entrance of the Paedagogus because her silence makes sense as long as it is combined with Clytaemnestra's presence. At the end of the play, Electra makes another short intervention which comes in the dialogue between Orestes and Aegisthus. I juxtapose the two incidents in order to follow Electra's silence as a continuous feature of characterization in the play. The Merchant scene in *Philoctetes* provides another instance, in which the efforts of Philoctetes to establish contact with Neoptolemus and the false Merchant fall short, while Philoctetes' silent attendance emphasizes the fact
that he receives the impact of the verbal action between the two men, although he does not really join in the dialogue.
iii. MORE ON ASPECTS OF SILENCE IN TRAGEDY

In this study I felt rather reluctant to proceed to a clear-cut distinction between the aspects of silence in tragedy because I came to realize that one might adequately estimate how silence operates in the plays by looking into the structure of dramatic dialogue and by shifting the focus from speakers to silent persons. Therefore, I did not attempt to categorize silence into different types and pursue its study in accordance with a specific type. This method provided my approach of the notion of silence with a broader basis for interrelating material and helped effect the treatment of the various manifestations of silence in relation to the overall design of the speeches in the plays. In the following chapters, silence is elaborated as a multi-dimensional phenomenon in the dramatic composition, and its complexities are followed in the context of dramatic speech and characters. In these terms, dramatic pauses are considered to be a form of silence which provides characteristic examples related to the performance of the mutes. Iole’s meaningful silence in Trachiniae is probably stressed by pauses, when she delays an answer to Deianeira’s appeals, or when she reacts with a gesture of distress. A pause is assumed when the mute child Eurysaces in Ajax is about to appear. It is also likely that a sort of unsignalled stage action might suggest the possibility of dumb-show for the performance of the mutes who, sometimes, seem to behave more actively than with conventional gestures. Iole is the best candidate for the dumb-show, by means of which she conveys her discomfort in front of Deianeira, and this discomfort might have been rendered on stage through a very subtle way of acting. A certain amount of stage action might also be enacted without being explicitly referred to in the words of the play. So in
the last scene of *O.C.*, Creon gives a silent sign to attendants to fetch Antigone and Ismene, confirms their protection with a handshake as he is requested to by Oedipus, and, finally, gives a sign to the attendants to lead the girls away.\(^{34}\) In *Philoctetes*, Neoptolemus might have expressed his mental turmoil more actively (1011) than what we read in the text, at the moment when he has to take a decision whether to stay in allegiance with Ajax or follow Odysseus to Troy.\(^{35}\)

The alleged *limitation of normal speech* might also suggest a relative idea of silence in the plays. The ‘low-voice’ utterances are, however, hypothetical, because everybody on stage is supposed to be heard by the audience. For example, in *Electra*, Clytaemnestra utters her prayer to Apollo in a ‘low voice’ because she is afraid of Electra’s reactions.\(^{36}\) In *Philoctetes*, the Merchant pretends to report news in a hidden way because he wishes to deceive Philoctetes.\(^{37}\)

Moreover, important material can be traced regarding such matters as *religious silences*, the *Choral silence*, and the *vocabulary of silence* in the language of the text. These subjects cannot receive an extensive discussion in the following chapters, unless the instances are directly linked with the selected scenes. I devote a short comment here to

\(^{34}\) See Part I, ch. 1.d.

\(^{35}\) See Part II, ch. 5.e.

\(^{36}\) See Part II, ch. 7.b.

\(^{37}\) See Part II, ch. 7.d.
these special matters, which would reward a more detailed investigation if space allowed.

a) Religious silences: silence may achieve a religious meaning when it becomes part of a prayer or when it is involved in a supplication-scene. Thus, Clytaemnестра’s prayer in Electra is marked as dramatically important because it is supposed to be said in a secretive language, and also because it contains parts which must not be said at all. The avoidance of an open expression of mind suggests that Clytaemnестра wishes evil for her enemies who are her own children. This is religious silence with a sinister twist. In O.C 488-9, the Chorus-leader urges Oedipus to supplicate the Eumenides for salvation with a prayer that has to be uttered voicelessly (ἐποστα νοντον 489) because the goddesses should be invoked with a reverent silence. In the mysterious disappearance of Oedipus, a moment of absolute stillness interferes before the terrible cry of a god summons Oedipus to his final departure (1622-1625).

38 See Jebb for the scholion on 489 which refers to Ἡσυχία the priests of Eumenides. Cp. lines 129-133 where the Chorus of the Colonans keep a reverent silence (ἐφορμέγια) regarding the Cthonian goddesses of Colonus. Cp. also passages 128-133 and 256-7.

39 Cp. the Messenger’s speech about Pentheus’ death in Bacchae 1084-5: a kind of supernatural silence follows after the voice of Dionysus is heard, and fills the air before the maenads attack Pentheus. See Dodds’ commentary ad hoc: ‘Stillness is the traditional response of nature to a divine epiphany’.
b) The Silence of the Chorus: in the third epeisodion of O.T. (950-1053), the Chorus follow silently the exchanges between Iocasta, Oedipus and the Corinthian Messenger. They interfere with an answer to Oedipus after he has asked them to identify Laius’ shepherd (1047-1053). This is a characteristic incident of the silence of the Chorus during an epeisodion, which is broken at a decisive moment of Oedipus’ investigation of the past. The Chorus are in a better position than Oedipus to understand how the facts are related together, and they suggest that Iocasta possesses a sound knowledge of what happened to Laius’ shepherd. Here, the Chorus’ silence and the subsequent breaking of their silence are themes to be treated in the context of the actors’ speeches. This reference suggests that the Choral silence can become a wider subject of investigation on its own. For example, in Antigone 988-1090, the Chorus are silent witnesses of the conflict between Creon and Teiresias. However, after Teiresias’ departure, they resume the dialogue with Creon and persuade him to free Antigone from her stony prison (1092ff.). In Philoctetes, the Chorus announce the arrival of the Merchant and, then, they follow silently the verbal exchanges between Neoptolemus, Philoctetes and the Merchant, without adding a final word after the departure of the latter. In other cases, the Chorus are committed by a speaking character to keep a conspiratorial silence regarding a matter which must be kept secret. So, in Trachiniae, Deianeira asks the Trachinian women to conceal her true intentions about the magic philtre because she wants to avoid the shame of her action (596-7). In Electra, Chrysothemis bids the Chorus to keep secret that Electra changed Clytaemnestra’s libations to Agamemnon’s

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40 See Part II, ch. 6.d.

41 See Part II, ch. 7.d.
tomb with her own offerings because she is afraid of Clytaemnestra (469). In *Antigone*, Antigone claims that the Chorus of Theban citizens keep their mouth shut out of fear for Creon (504-5). In short, the silence of the Chorus can often imply that the Chorus assume the role of a silent witness in a conversation, or that they have to stay silent because they are sworn to secrecy by a speaking character. The example from *Antigone* shows how flexible the treatment of the Chorus’ silence can be.

c) The Vocabulary of Silence: in the language of the text silence has its own vocabulary, which mainly consists of appeals to other persons to break their silence or, by contrast, to refrain from speech. The following examples are again taken from Sophocles’ plays and constitute orders for silence or they explain somebody’s silence.

In *Ajax*, there are the following appeals for silence addressed to different persons for various reasons:

**Lines 75/785:** oi σίγα ἀνέξη, μηδὲ δείλιον ἄρη; // σίγα νυν ἐστῶς καὶ μέν’ ὁς κυρεῖς ἔχων. Athena asks Odysseus to stay silent and dare to face Ajax.

**Lines 362/386:** εὐφημα φῶνει // μηδὲν μέγείπης οὐχ ὀρξὶς ἵν’ ἐι κακοῦ; The Chorus dissuades Ajax from making an outrageous utterance. *Εὐφημα* emphasises the danger of attracting divine displeasure.

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42 See also Part II, ch. 7.c.

43 For the complicity of the Chorus in Greek tragedy cf. Barrett on *Hippolytus* 710-12.

44 Cp. 591.
Line 368: μη, δέσποτ' Αἴας, λίσσομαι σ', αὖδα τάδε. Tecmessa besseches Ajax to cease speaking.

Line 483: παύσαι γε μέντοι καὶ δὸς ἀνδράσιν φίλοις γνώμης κρατήσαι τάδε φροντίδας μεθ' εἰς. The Chorus urge Ajax to cease speaking and listen to their advice.

Line 975: σίγησον' αὖδην γὰρ δοκῶ Τεύκρου κλύειν. The Chorus orders Tecmessa to be silent because Teucer is about to arrive. At this point, Tecmessa remains silent up to the end of the play.

In Trachiniae, the Chorus repeatedly commands Deianeira to stop talking because a new person is about to enter.

Lines 178-9: εὐφημίαν νῦν ἵσχ' ἐπεὶ καταστεφῇ / στείχονθ' ὅρῳ τιν' ἀνδρα πρὸς χάριν λόγων. At the end of Deianeira’s long rhesis, the Chorus asks her to be silent while they announce the arrival of a Messenger who comes to report good news.

The appeal for ritual silence means that it may be dangerous to speak in the context of this message from the oracular shrine.

Line 731: σιγάν ἐν ἄρμοζει σὲ τὸν πλείω λόγων. The Chorus orders Deinaira to be silent because Hyllus is about to enter.

Lines 974/976-7: σίγα, τέκνον

// ἄλλαν ἵσχε δακών / στόμα σὸν. The Old Man urges Hyllus to be silent in order not to wake up Heracles in his painful sleep.45

45 Cf. 968 ‘ἄνωθεντος’ Jebb: ‘without speech’ either from his own lips, or those of his bearers. See also lines 1259-63 for the heroic silence that Heracles enjoins on himself.
In *Oedipus Tyrannus* line 631 παῦσασθ’ ἀνακτεῖ, the Chorus orders Oedipus and Creon to stop arguing and announce Iocesta’s arrival.

Line 1146: Οὐκ εἰς ὅλεθρον; οὐ σιωπήσας ἐστι; The Old Shepherd blocks any further utterance of the Corinthian Messenger in a desperate attempt to avoid the revelation of Oedipus’ origin.46

In *Antigone* line 280 παῦσατι, πρὶν ὀργῆς καὶ με μεστόσαι λέγων, Creon angrily silences the Chorus who warn about the divine laws. This play draws attention to the silence/speech of the Chorus, who could represent some sort of guide to the audience’s reaction to Antigone.

In *Electra*, the greatest part of appeals for silence are addressed by the Chorus to Electra herself.

Line 324: μὴ νῦν ἔτ’ ἐπὶς μηδέν. The Chorus asks Electra to speak no more because Chrysothemis is about to appear.

Line 830: μηδέν μέγ’ ἀδυνατεῖ. The Chorus prevent Electra from uttering cries of grief and despair.47

Line 1211: εὐφημοι φῶνετ. Orestes warns Electra to be careful not to say something about death which is not ‘on the side of justice’.48

46 See Part II, ch. 6.e.

47 Cp. Ajax 386.

48 Kells on 1211; cp. Ajax 362.
In lines 1232-1322, Electra explodes in joyful cries for the recognition of her brother. Orestes tries to refrain her from an exaggerated reaction of happiness and commands her to be silent.

**Line 1236**: πάροσμεν· ἀλλὰ σιγ' ἔχουσα πρόσμενε. This is the first command to Electra to be silent.⁴⁹ In her question for the reason of this silence (τί δ' ἔστιν; 1237), Orestes answers with a second request for silence, because somebody might hear them in the palace: σιγᾶν ἄμεινον, μη τις ἐνδοθεν κλύη (1238). Electra insists that she has nothing to be afraid of from the women in the house (1239), and Orestes proceeds to his third appeal for silence: οὗ μὴ 'στι κατιρός μη μακρὰν βούλου λέγειν (1259).

**Line 1288**: τὰ μὲν περισσεύοντα τῶν λόγων ἄφες. Once more Orestes orders Electra to dispense with further justifications and initiates immediate action as he did in his speech in the prologue (23ff.).

**Line 1322-3**: σιγῶν ἐπηνεστ' ὡς ἐπ' ἐξόδῳ κλώω / τῶν ἐνδοθεν χωροῦντος. Orestes commands Electra to stay silent because he heard somebody coming from the palace.⁵⁰

The Paedagogus enters and reproaches brother and sister for delaying the execution of the revenge-act, while at the same time he expresses his contempt for their superfluous words and his preference for action.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Cp. line 1399: ἄλλαν σιγὰ πρόσμενε. Clytaemnestra is being executed inside the palace, and Electra orders the Chorus to be silent.

⁵⁰ See Lloyd-Jones & Wilson (1990) who think that the attribution of lines 1322-5 to the Chorus, according to a scholion, cannot be sustained by evidence.

⁵¹ The contrast between words and deeds is very emphatic. Cf. the parallelism between 1335-8 and the prologue, especially line 22 and the Paedagogus' refusal to let Orestes and Pylades stay and listen to the laments of Electra. Her cries are her only weapon against Aegisthus.
Line 1428: παῦσασθε, λεύσσω γάρ Αἰγισθον ἐκ προδήλου. Clytaemnestra is dead and the Chorus orders silence because they see Aegisthus arriving.

Line 1458: σίγαν ἀνωγα κάνονεικόνυναι πῦλας. Aegisthus orders the gathered people, presumably Electra and the Chorus, to be silent and the gates to be opened for everybody to see the corpse of Orestes.

Line 1483: Electra denies Aegisthus the right to defend himself.

Speech and silence are important dramatic issues in this play, particularly because Electra's words are all she has.

In *Philoctetes* line 201, εὐστομὶ ἔχε, παῖ, Νε. Τι τόδε; Χο. προύφανη κτύπος, the Chorus command Neoptolemus to stop talking because they heard a noise. This is Philoctetes coming out from the cave.

Line 865: σιγάν κελεύω, μὴ δ' ἀφεστόνοι φρενών. Philoctetes is awaking from his painful sleep and Neoptolemus commands the Chorus to be silent and 'not lose his mind' (Jebb).

In lines 1267-1290, Neoptolemus attempts to reestablish confidence with Philoctetes and persuade him to sail to Troy with him. Here there is an interplay between speech and silence in the dialogue between Neoptolemus and Philoctetes. In line 1267 Neoptolemus asks Philoctetes to listen to what he has to say: θάρσετ' λόγους δ' ἀκουσον οὔς ἕκω φέρον. Philoctetes does not accept Neoptolemus' words of

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52 This is the reading in the codices, followed by Pearson. Kells on 1458 ff. points out that 'by a general silence Aegisthus wants the full effect of Orestes' death to be felt.' Lloyd-Jones & Wilson read οἴγειν πῦλας ἀνωγα κάνονεικόνυναι, following Wilamowitz. The idea of a general silence prepares the revelation of a dead corpse and seems to suit the silent attitude of Electra in the final scene of the play.
persuasion and orders him to speak no more: παρε, μὴ λέξης / πέρα (1275).

Neoptolemus does not seem to give up his effort but he concedes to say nothing else if he speaks 'not in season' (Jebb): εἰ δὲ μὴ τι πρὸς κατρόν λέγων / κυρώ, πέπαυματι (1279-80). Philoctetes insists that he will say all in vain: πάντα γὰρ φρόνεις μότην (1280), and he goes on launching curses against the Atreidae, Odysseus and Neoptolemus. The latter prevents Philoctetes from uttering further curses (μὴ πεῦξῃ πέρα) and returns him the bow (1286-7).

In Oedipus at Colonus lines 111-12, Antigone commands Oedipus to be silent because she sees the elders of Colonus approaching.

In the violent scene between Creon, Oedipus and his daughters, Creon prevents Oedipus from uttering a curse (αὐδῶ σωπάων, 864), but Oedipus proceeds to a new curse against Creon asking the permission of the Goddesses of Colonus (864ff.).

At the end of the play, Theseus commands Antigone and Ismene to cease the lament for Oedipus' death (παρετε θρηνον, ποιδείς 1751) and a similar command is reiterated in the choral coda (ἄλλα ἀποσαυτεῖ μὴ ἐπὶ πλείω / θρηνον ἐγείρετε 1777-8).

Cp. Electra 796.

Cf. also line 1395: ὥρα ἑτεροί μὲν τῶν λόγων λήξατι. Neoptolemus' words have failed to persuade Philoctetes to come to Troy with him. For the very strong emphasis on words in the play see Podlecki (1966) 233-250

53 Cp. Part II, ch. 5.d. For the important passages about Eumenides, see above n. 38.

54 The power of the Eumenides to become agents of cursing rather than blessing is very strongly felt in the play. Note Oedipus' likeness to the Eumenides, whose holy place he is going to share.

See Easterling (1996) 173-181, esp. 175-176 for the importance of stopping the lament.
In sum, the Chorus command a character to be silent or cease speaking when a new character makes his entrance. In *Electra* it is very likely that it is Orestes who gives a similar command to Electra before the entrance of the Paedagogus (1326). A character (or the Chorus) may also order silence in the following cases: when they want to restrain somebody from making an outrageous utterance, talking in excess, uttering a curse or defending himself. The idea of breaking or keeping silence can signify different things in the plays: the danger of Ajax’s utterances, the sinister nature of silence, or of being silenced, in *Electra*, the revelation of Oedipus’ origin in *O.T.*, the importance of keeping silence in *O.C.* in the presence of forces as dangerous as the Eumenides. In *Trachiniae* and *Philoctetes* similar commands for silence prepare the awakening of the sick Heracles and Philoctetes (974ff./865). Moreover, in *Philoctetes* the interplay between speech and silence signals the failure of words in the communication between the characters of the play.

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58 Proverbial expressions and maxims may also refer to silence in various situations. In *Ajax*, Tecmessa has to be silent because this is the right attitude for a woman: γύναι, γυναιξί κόσμον ἢ σιγή φέρει (293). In *Antigone*, the heroine says that her dead brother is not able to speak for himself: οὐ μαρτυρήσει ταύτ’ ὀ κατθανὼν νέκυς (515) This is analogous with *Electra* 548 where Clytaemnestra says that her dead daughter would agree with her if she was able to speak (φωνή δ’ ὡς ἡ θεονοῦσα γ’ἐι φωνὴν λάβει). Also in *Antigone*, after Eurydice’s silent exit the Chorus conclude with a short opinion: ἐμοὶ δ’ οὖν ἢ τ’ ὡς σιγὴ βαρύ / δοκεῖ προςεῖνοι χὴ μᾶτην πολλὴ βοὴ (1251-2) For ‘Unspeakable Words in Greek Tragedy’, see Clay (1982) 277-298.
iv. SILENT PERSONS AND THE THREE-ACTOR RULE IN SOPHOCLES' PLAYS.

As far as the three-actor rule in tragedy is concerned, the performance of silence seems to be associated, to some extent, with the distribution of parts in the plays and the limitation in the number of the actors. In the analysis of silence in tragedy I will try to show how the speeches are distributed among the three actors in Sophocles' plays. At this point, I wish to draw a contrast between two possible assumptions in relation to the division of roles: on the one hand, it can be argued that the dramatist was obliged to confine the roles of his plays to the combination of the three available actors, with the result that he was sometimes forced to give characters unusually long silences, while on the opposite view the dramatist need not have been hampered by the restriction in the number of the actors, and silences should always be expected to carry dramatic meaning.

According to some ancient testimonies Sophocles introduced the third actor in tragedy. This innovation enlarged the possibilities of drama and produced a new dramatic effect: three speaking actors were brought on stage and more complicated dialogues could be

59 Cf. Prescott (1937) 209, n.42: 'Students of Greek tragedy are rightly interested in the relation of the silent actor to the distribution of roles and to the development of stage of theater...'

60 Aristot. Poet. 1449a15ff., Vita Soph. 4, Diog. Laert. 3.56, the Suda (T TrGrFr IV). The present introduction does not intend to treat in detail the matter of attribution of the third actor to Sophocles (or according to Vita Aesch. 15 and Themistius Orat. 26.316d to Aeschylus). Discussions on this point can be found in Else (1945) 1-10, Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 126-135, Else (1959) 75-108. Cf. also O’Connor (1908) and Ghiron-Bistagne (1976) for a terminology on actors in antiquity.
elaborated between them.\(^{61}\) The triangular effect in the dialogue brought about scenes balanced between three speakers with richly varied dramatic impact,\(^{62}\) while (so far as we know) there was no restriction in the number of the mute performers. To some extent, the so-called three-actor rule might have been an aesthetic principle, which was based on artistic and practical considerations in the shaping of speeches in drama.\(^{63}\) This principle, however, must have been somehow related to the allotment of equal number of actors by the city to each production, which ensured that the competition, both for plays and for actors, would be on equal terms.\(^{64}\) Artistic requirements and official practice might thus have combined to stabilize the use of three speaking actors.

The plays themselves are the best source to prove that they were composed for three speaking actors. It is not always clear, however, exactly how parts were distributed in the first productions. Pickard-Cambridge presents a comprehensive survey of possible distributions of parts in drama. At the same time, he takes into account the difficulties presented by the three-actor rule, namely the limitation of the number of actors, the sharing of roles in succession to the same actor, and the 'lightning changes' of costume in


\(^{62}\) Walton (1980) 143 argues that when three speaking actors are seen together at a distance of a hundred yards, "the speaker becomes less clear". And he goes on to suggest that "playwrights tend to meet this difficulty by balancing speeches in stichomythia, [...] or long rhetorical speeches".

\(^{63}\) For a discussion of 'the possible aesthetic basis of the three-actor rule' see Sifakis (1995) 13-24.

\(^{64}\) Pickard-Cambridge (1988) 136 argues that the city would have not provided three actors for one competitor and four for another in a contest to which great importance was attached by the city itself. For the allotment of actors by the State see Jouan (1981) 63-80, Slater (1990) 385-395, Kaimio (1993) 19-33.
a few plays after a very brief interval, which enabled an actor to return with a different role, and he proposes possible solutions to tackle these problems. It has also been suggested that the division of roles between three actors might have exploited the dramatic implications of this restriction, namely the vocal capacities of the actors and the contrasts or the similarities between characters. Pavlovskis attempts a distribution of parts on the basis of overlapping roles played by one and the same actor. She argues that the audience could not necessarily tell the actor in the disguise of mask and costume but they could recognize the individual voice behind the mask. The use of the same voice for two or more different characters could contribute to the highlighting of the ironic dimension of the plays. Damen proposes a reconstruction of role divisions by grouping the roles in three categories: parallel roles, contrasting roles, and less clear-cut divisions of roles, which might suggest subtle tones of irony to the ancient spectator. Kaimio surmises that the public might have expected that the assignment of roles followed some conventions in the ancient theatrical experience, i.e. servants were played by other actors rather than the protagonist and, according to Demosthenes, tyrants were played by the

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65 Pickard-Cambridge (as above) 136-156. Cf. Rees (1908) esp. 16-17, 23, who argues that the rule must refer to the aesthetic principle that not more than three speaking characters shall be present on the scene, but a 'manager' could use an unlimited number of actors.

66 Pavlovskis (1977) 113-123. Contra Sifakis (1995) 13-24, especially 21 who argues that 'the personal timbre of voice would be veiled to a large extent [...] by prolonged training and deliberate voice management.'

tritagonist.\textsuperscript{68} She also stresses the fact that there must be a connection between the establishment of contests in the 450s and the allotment of protagonists to the poets.\textsuperscript{69}

The exploitation of the actors' voice and the grouping of characters according to their function in the plot can provide some very interesting suggestions, which in some cases may lead to different views as to the possible distribution of parts in tragedy. These suggestions are based on the assumption that the audience were in a position to recognize the ironic undertones which could be conveyed by different characters speaking with the same voice. Also, they could, presumably, follow the purpose of the dramatist to highlight the possible connections and disconnections between two roles. However, these solutions are highly speculative and do not allow us to speak with certainty of how the roles of the actors were distributed in the ancient Greek theatre or how the audience perceived the distribution.

In this analysis of the function of silence in Sophocles' plays it seems to be important to see how the dynamic of dialogue is established between the three speakers and what is the involvement of silence in the distribution of the speaking parts, because the dialogues in tragedy are mostly confined to pairs from among the three actors, while the

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\textsuperscript{69} Kaimio (1993) 19-33, esp.27-33 thinks that before the contests it was not important by whom the roles were acted. And she continues that double roles or impressive roles in which the protagonist dominates the stage reflect the influence of the contest.
third one follows silently. When there are more than three actors, the additional roles are played by mute performers. Dramatic dialogue is therefore potentially affected by the presence of the mutes and the impact they exert on the speaking actors. Thus, in *Trachiniae*, the mute Iole seems to regulate the dialogue between Deianeira and Lichas with her enigmatic silence and, in *Ajax*, the mute child Eurysaces becomes the centre of attention in the encounter of Ajax and Tecmessa. Besides, it seems possible that a mute character can utter a few words in tragedy, like Pylades in Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* 900-2 (unless there is a quick change of the actor who plays the role of the Servant between lines 887-899), or a mute can be assigned singing parts like Ismene in *Oedipus at Colonus* 1670ff., who sings alongside Antigone the final lament. Ismene might not be the third actor, but a mute who sings a few lines, while the third actor plays the role of Theseus. On this reading, the first actor plays the role of the Messenger, who does not leave the stage after he finishes his report. This practice is exceptional in the existing evidence: it does not necessarily imply that the playwright uses a fourth actor, but it

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70 The restriction in the number of actors who are engaged in dialogue does not seem to be so strict in comedy as in tragedy. Pickard-Cambridge (1988) 149 points out that comedy had the freedom ‘to introduce additional performers for small parts’ because it ‘originated in a more or less disorderly revel’. Menander’s plays could largely be played by three actors, but some parts should be split between two or three actors in order to preserve the three-actor rule. See Sandbach (1975) 197-204 and Hourmouziades (1973) 179-188. In the comedies of Plautus and Terence the doubling of roles seems to reduce the big number of characters to a maximum of five or six actors. While Roman comedy presents a great number of characters, there is the tendency to restrict the dialogues in no more than between three speakers. See Duckworth (1994) 94-98.

71 See below, Part I, ch. 2.c.

72 The implications of this solution are discussed in Part I, ch.2.d. Kaimio (1993) 29 seems to share the same solution for Oedipus and the Messenger's role but she also argues that Oedipus and the Messenger were acted by the protagonist because the other
might suggest that he may have taken advantage of mutes who were being trained as actors and may have been allowed to speak a few words.\(^3\)

In a number of plays, roles need to be split between an actor and a mute if the three-actor rule is to be preserved. Therefore, a character who appears as a speaker in a part of a play, may keep a long silence in another part. This change of attitude suggests that the speaking actor has been substituted by a mute. But it does not follow that these silences are without dramatic meaning. Thus, Schlesinger believes that the silence of Tecmessa in the second part of \textit{Ajax} is to be explained by the fact that it is Teucer who defends Ajax's body, while Tecmessa becomes part of the visual effect. Likewise, Ismene in \textit{O.C.} 1096-1555 does not remain silent because there was no fourth actor, but because Antigone has the leading role in the action.\(^4\) The following discussion accepts that Tecmessa's role is matched with that of Ajax, while her mute attendance is needed to intensify the image of her mourning in the second half of the play. Similarly, Ismene in \textit{O.C.} 1096-1555 is played by a mute when the three actors are on stage, but she is also a mute in lines 1500-1555 where there are only two actors. Here I wish to show that two actors entered immediately after his report as Antigone and Ismene.

\(^3\) Kaimio (1993) 25 suggests that the assignment of the roles followed the acting experience of the performers, who might have started to play third roles as novice actors and "perhaps after having assisted first as mute performers". Cf. also Gredley (1984) 9, who suggests that mute performers might have been used in a transitional period between one actor and two. Gredley argues that "mutes in Greek tragedy are not as is often assumed, the flotsam of occasional technical difficulties but an integral part of the gradual development of the self-contained scene, independent of the Chorus". See also Handley (1965) 26: 'small parts in Comedy might be spoken by extras'. For apprenticeship in acting see Sifakis (1979b) 199-208 and Slater (1990) 391-2.

\(^4\) Also Iole's silence in \textit{Trachiniae} 'is due to the effect she produces on Deianeira'. Schlesinger (1930) 230-235, especially 231.
Sophocles was concerned to bring together on stage the silence of Antigone, which is the silence of a speaking actor, with the silence of Ismene, which is the silence of a mute, in a number of scenes with three actors. At the same time he did not feel constrained to keep a mute on stage when the scene is occupied with two actors.

In the present study an effort has been made to use the term 'actor' for the distribution of the parts and the term 'speaker' for the arrangement of the dialogues in the selected scenes.
iv. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

What follows should be regarded as a selective account of the main works which, in one way or another have been influential to the present study. The thesis owes a great deal to the innovative ideas found in the works of D. Mastronarde, D. Bain and O. Taplin. Mastronarde's study on Contact and Discontinuity deals with an extended range of scenes from the plays of the three tragedians. Mastronarde explores the dialogue-technique from the point of view of establishing contact between the speakers and the failure of communication between persons on stage. The arrangement of the material in my thesis differs from Mastronarde's classification and discussion of the dialogue in tragedy. However, many of his observations influenced the development of the argument which is presented in the second part of the thesis. In particular, Mastronarde's Chapter 2, which examines the establishment of contact after entrances (pp. 19-22), and Chapter 3, which deals with gradual and piecemeal answers (pp. 39-42) and stichomythic conventions producing gradual answers (pp. 43-44) have thrown light on the technique of entering into dialogue-contact and the continuity of dialogue in stichomythia. Chapter 5, which explores breaks in contact, has provided clarifying suggestions about the failure of communication and hearing (76-84). Finally, Mastronarde's comments on the intervention of a third party (pp. 92-97) stimulated me to justify my subject as regards the change in the course of the dialogue. The present thesis attempts to treat the question to what extent gesture or movement is included in the spectacle, and whether the text presents sufficient information on this subject. At this
Mastronarde's remarks on the presence of the mute lole in *Trachiniae* (pp. 76-77) enriched the investigation with useful hints.

Bain's study of *Masters, Servants and Orders in Greek Tragedy* offers an extensive discussion of various passages with mute persons in drama, in an attempt to investigate orders addressed to mutes on stage. Especially, Bain's introductory remarks on the dramatic technique involving different classes of mute people, his subsequent observations on scenes with mute attendants and children, as well as the treatment of the staging of Soph. *O.C.* 826-47 were influential to the conception of mutes and extras in the first part of the thesis. Bain's earlier book on *Actors and Audience* explores the meaning of dramatic illusion in the light of conventions in Greek drama. The chapter on asides in Sophocles (pp. 70-86) contributed to the understanding of dialogue-technique in *O.T.*, *Electra* and *Philoctetes*.

Taplin's 'Aeschylean Silences and Silences in Aeschylus' and *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* are a continuous source of reference throughout the thesis. The first work influenced my argument in relation to following points: significant and not significant silences, the meaning of long-lasting silences and the breaking of a silence. The second work is mentioned time and again in the references of the thesis with regard to a number of topics related to dramatic technique: entry-announcements, exits in silence, dumb-show, silent persons and stage resources. Taplin's article on 'Sophocles in his Theatre' presents a perceptive discussion of the use of *eisodoi* in Sophocles' plays. His approach to 'stage geography' helps us to realize how an audience might perceive the meaning of
the two side-entrances in the theatre. Taplin argues that the particular significance of the two *eisodoi* may be established within each play (p. 158).

In his book *Vision and Stagecraft in Sophocles* Seale offers a treatment of spectacle in Sophocles' plays. He attempts to explore the 'visual language' of what is seen on stage. His thorough examination of the visual action operates in parallel with the words of the text. At the same time Seale draws attention to stage business, which implies "a number of significant movements: kneeling, praying, supplication, prostration" (p. 20). Seale seems to be right to observe that "there is a natural tendency to visualize the two or three spoken parts and only to accept the presence of extras the moment they are mentioned" (p. 17). The present thesis adopts a similar idea, but puts the main emphasis on silence and not on vision. In the presentation of the argument about silence in Sophocles' tragedies, Seale's study threw light on the visual background, in which the silent persons perform their non-speaking parts.

Wilamowitz's book *Die dramatische Technik des Sophokles* has not been so extensively used in the present thesis. However, it has been repeatedly acknowledged at specific points in the treatment of dramatic technique. In particular, his views on the use of the ekkyklema in *Ajax* and *Electra*, and the structure of dialogue between Deianeira, Lichas and the Old Messenger in the presence of the mute Iole in *Trachiniae* are discussed in comparison with other critics' approaches to these scenes. Lloyd-Jones' account of the book does justice to the innovative spirit of Wilamowitz's critical approach to tragedy. As Lloyd-Jones points out, Wilamowitz's book on Sophocles' dramatic technique broke new ground in promoting the idea that "above all things a Greek tragedy is a play,
written to be acted in a theatre and designed to have a particular effect upon its audience". Wilamowitz formulated a critical attitude, which was different from the tendencies at the beginning of the nineteenth century. At that time, and even long afterwards, classical scholars looked primarily at character portrayal in dramatic art, paying emphasis to "a minute psychological analysis".

Reinhardt's book on Sophocles was a constant source of guidance in terms of relating a detailed analysis of the plays, scene by scene, with the emotional impact of each scene. Reinhardt attempts to explain the language and the structure of the scenes in each play on the basis of a relative chronology of the plays. Though the present thesis does not follow the differences between the plays from one period to another, it has profited much from Reinhardt's examination of Sophoclean 'situations'. In particular, Reinhardt points out the contrasts between behavioural attitudes in the persons of the plays: Ajax and Tecmessa speak without communicating, and Deianeira and Heracles never meet each other, while their fate determines the form of the scenes in Trachiniae. (Reinhardt thinks that the three actors never take part in a three-sided dialogue because this is an early play). In Electra, Clytaemnestra's 'silent' prayer is affected by "the silent but all

75 Lloyd-Jones (1972) 219.

76 Lloyd-Jones (as above) 215. Cf. Machin's book Cohérence et Continuité dans le Théâtre de Sophocle, which deals with what Wilamowitz treats as points of disconnectedness in Sophocles' plays, arguing that the technique is designed to achieve an effect of coherence and consistency.

77 Reinhardt (1979) 1.

78 Reinhardt (as above) 39-40, and p.242, n.7.
the more triumphant presence of the victorious Electra" (p.149). Reinhardt discusses Neoptolemus' silence in Philoctetes in the light of later plays and argues that in this play "instead of making a structured speech heavy with sound and significance, the speaker advances by fits and starts" (p. 173). Again his remarks on Neoptolemus' silence are very constructive for the understanding of the scenes, though I do not discuss them in the context of later productions. Part of the chapter on Oedipus at Colonus is devoted to exploring Oedipus' silence in the scene which involves Oedipus, Polyneices and Antigone. Reinhardt's presentation of the scene is elaborated with hints pointing to the meaning of silence in the characterization of a person.  

Winnington-Ingram's book Sophocles, An Interpretation has given much support to my understanding of various aspects of the plays. The structure of the book follows the chronology of the plays but this is not strictly a precondition of the author's interpretation. In particular, the present study has taken advantage of his interpretation of the following points: the balance between character and action, the influence of the epic tradition and the parallelism with other plays i.e. by Aeschylus or Euripides, the social and individual codes, the contrast between divine and human knowledge. 

Among other general books on Sophocles, Webster's An Introduction to Sophocles (2nd edition) offers useful remarks on character-drawing and discusses the three-actor scenes. Kirkwood's A Study of Sophoclean Drama provides some interesting suggestions in the  

79 For example cf. the following remarks in Reinhardt, p.217: "all the time the silence of Oedipus becomes deeper and deeper, more and more oppressive from sentence to sentence, undermines his speech and leaves it hanging in mid-air".
development of Sophocles' dramatic technique regarding the contrast between characters, the patterning of themes from one scene to another, the changes within an epeisodion, the dramatic tableaux and the arrival of Messengers. In his article 'Visual Symbolism and Visual Effects in Sophocles' Segal discusses the multiple meanings of a concrete object on the stage, i.e. the sword in Ajax, the poisoned robe in Trachiniae, the bow in Philoctetes and the urn in Electra. He also puts forward useful suggestions on the effect of "a silent third actor" in Sophocles' plays.

The Greek text used is the revised edition of Lloyd-Jones and Wilson Sophoclis Fabulae. Pearson's edition of Sophoclis Fabulae is also referred to in the thesis. The main source of commentaries is primarily Jebb's edition, and secondarily Kamerbeek's edition of Sophocles plays. Jebb's critical view on Sophocles' text has been an unfailing guidance in many particular discussions in the thesis. However, an effort has been made to keep track of the whole range of the critical editions and the commentaries on individual plays, and to annotate the thesis with a diversity of comments.

A list of abbreviations and works of reference featuring in the present study is provided along with a full bibliography at the end of the thesis.
PART I

SPEAKERS AND MUTE PERFORMERS
CHAPTER ONE
MUTE CHARACTERS

1.a. INTRODUCTION

This Chapter is divided into four sections, each one headed with the respective names of the mute characters in Sophocles' extant plays. Each section attempts to make specific observations on silence as it relates to the dramatic existence of the mute characters. What is interesting about these mute characters is that each bears a name, and this provides a basis for distinguishing them from the unnamed mutes in Sophocles, who have far less significant dramatic functions. The main reason for presenting the sections of this chapter in this order is the evaluation of the mute characters in respect to their dramatic importance in the plays.

Iole, the noble young captive in Trachiniae, is treated first because her silence is one of the most prominent in the Sophoclean oeuvre. The discussion in this section attempts to show that Iole, however enigmatic as a figure, behaves in a consistent manner by means of an unbroken silence. Whatever we come to know about her is provided by the descriptions of Deianeira, Lichas and the Old Messenger. These persons, through different levels of understanding, present their own reasons vis-à-vis Iole's silence, and these reasons are thoroughly investigated in the following discussion. In addition, the coordination on stage between a mute character and a crowd of mute extras is discussed.
in terms of size, attitude and visual presentation. That will make it easier to observe the
different images emerging in the spectacle of the first epeisodion. Interest turns here on
the possible use of dumb-show for Iole's non-speaking involvement in the scene. At this
point, I will try to elaborate further the argument whether dumb-show can take place in
tragedy. My intention is to relate this argument to the discussion of Iole's movement and
gestures, which although not specified in the explicit words of the speakers could
possibly be inferred from them. Pauses are considered as an aspect of silence associated
with Iole's mute performance. I will follow through and analyze the sequence of pauses,
which can be assumed after lines 306, 309 and 321 as they come after Deianeira's
appeals to Iole to break her silence. The intervention of Lichas at 321 is contrasted with
the intervention of the Old Messenger at 402. The latter signals Deianeira's distancing
from the ongoing dialogue with Lichas, while the former helps underline Iole's silence
after Deianeira's last appeal to the girl.

In the second section of the first chapter I examine the child role of Eurysaces in Ajax.
Here it is not my intention to engage in the wider argument on child roles and to ask
whether they are undertaken by mutes or, as is usually found in Euripides, by speaking
actors. Instead, what I wish to focus on is the fact that a child role can form an instance
of the wider category of mute performance. At this point, the objective is to examine
whether and how silence on the part of the mute Eurysaces gradually takes on meaning
in the progress of the play. In this connection, it is of particular interest to describe with
precision the exits and entrances of the child until the moment when he takes a fixed
position next to his father's corpse. The child never enters alone but is always escorted
by an attendant or his mother Tecmessa. Inevitably, this entails an extended discussion
of Tecmessa's movements while she proceeds back and forth with her son. The exit of
mother and child at 595 raises some difficulties relating to staging, and that is the case
with their re-entry at 646 too. At 809 there is unclear stage business with Eurysaces' exit
when Tecmessa leaves to search for Ajax. Finally, the staging of the silent tableau with
the dead Ajax, his son Eurysaces and Tecmessa, as well as the process which leads up to
it are explored in relation to Eurysaces' prominent position and its meaning within this
framework. Related subjects of discussion at this point include the question whether the
ekkyklema is used for the disclosure of the dead Ajax and whether the change of scenery
affects entrances and exits. At the end of the play, the processional exit draws particular
attention for two reasons: Eurysaces also participates in the silent procession for the
burial of Ajax; a mute crowd of auxiliaries and the Chorus are ordered by Teucer to
proceed to the funeral rites. The last point is explored in Chapter Three, which is
devoted to Speakers and Extras.

In the third section of the first chapter, I examine the mute roles of Antigone and
Ismene in O.T. The two girls bring an added emotional impact to the final scenes of the
play, which is already extremely intense because of the appearance of the blind Oedipus.
While the aim here is to elaborate on the silent presence of the two young daughters of
Oedipus, it is also significant to trace the meaning of the silence that accompanies their
tearful entrance and exit.

In the fourth section of this chapter, Pylades is the least important person among the
mute characters. Pylades' silent activity, while accompanying Orestes, is discussed in the
prologue, in the recognition scene and in the matricide of Electra. The argument at this
point focuses on a comparison between Pylades' insignificant role in *Electra* with his speaking part in *Choephoroi*. Naturally, in the latter play, his verbal contribution of three lines makes him assume a more prominent role, enough to associate him with the speaking actors. In *Electra*, he is presented as a figure associated with Orestes by tradition, but Sophocles makes no effort to attach particular dramatic importance to his role.
Iole is a figure whose silent presence in *Trachiniae* lines 228-334 raises a series of questions for the use of mute performers on stage:

i. The dramatic silence of a mute character.

ii. The impact of Iole's silence on the speakers of the scene.

iii. The possibility of a dumb-show behind the words.

iv. The treatment of the crowd of Oechalian slaves.

Lichas makes his first entrance at line 229 followed by a train of captives. So far the stage has been taken up by the presence of Deianeira, the Messenger and the Chorus. In a moment the scene opens wider by the addition of the official Herald, who becomes the third speaker in the first epeisodion, and the mutes who represent the silent crowd of women enslaved by Heracles after the capture of Oechalia.¹

This crowd-scene is to be regarded as a large tableau with people combining verbal and non-verbal activities on stage.² The number of extras might have been large enough to represent the size of the group of captives as it is reflected in Deianeira's reference σὺν πολλὰς στόλος (496) before she makes her exit.

¹ Cf. Part II, ch. 6.c.

The Oechalian girls provide a pitiable spectacle. Bain points out that "the effect of Deianeira singling out one of them as being particularly pitiable (312) would be diminished if there were not a good many visible to the audience".\(^3\) Melchinger broadens the scope of this spectacle by including supporting guards in the escort of the Oechalian slaves, but for this detail there is no specific indication in the text.\(^4\) This is one of the places in tragedy where we have to imagine the involvement of persons with no speaking activity, because the movements or the entrances of the extras are not always made clear in the text, unless they are addressed by a speaking actor, with instructions to carry out a command or to perform a task.

At line 229 Iole enters along with the other captives. However, she is explicitly noticed for the first time as late as line 307, when Deianeira comes to focus her attention on the girl's enigmatic behaviour. It is unlikely that Iole has a distinctive appearance only at the moment that she is treated by Deianeira separately from the group of slaves. I would rather believe that she conducts herself in a consistent manner throughout from the moment of her entrance, and this is the sort of behaviour which strikes Deianeira as more prominent than that of the rest of the assembly. Is it possible to think that Iole is marked from the rest of the captives by her elaborate costume?\(^5\) Or do we have to guess that Iole, as long as her silence is unmentioned (229-307), performs a sort of dumb-show behind the words of the speakers? And does this make her appearance different from the spectacle provided by the other captives?

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\(^3\) Bain (1987) 6.


\(^5\) See below, and n.12.
Before we turn our attention to the implications of the text we ought to add a comment on the views proposed for the performance of dumb-show in the Greek tragic theatre. According to an early theory suggested by Zielinski, stage action can be assumed when the text is not lucid enough to make sense of what is happening on stage.\(^6\) Tycho von Wilamowitz dismisses this idea and claims that only the words of the text lead an audience to the understanding of the action on stage.\(^7\)

Taplin argues further that "only if a play makes indisputable nonsense without an imagined stage action should we be willing to interpolate it".\(^8\) If such an extra action existed "it would either be performed in dumb-show without words or it would have to be acted out simultaneously with words which say nothing about it".\(^9\) Taplin goes on to argue that an important stage action is always signalled in the words of the text, whereas insignificant actions like the movements of mute attendants and commonplace gestures are commonly omitted in the text.\(^10\) This rule stresses the importance of words in our interpretation of the stage action; however, it does not prove that there cannot also be important gestures and movements which are undetectable in the text. These do not necessarily imply an extended mimic action, but in some cases they have to be assumed

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\(^6\) Zielinski (1905) 8.

\(^7\) T. von Wilamowitz (1917) 141.

\(^8\) Taplin (1977a) 29.

\(^9\) Taplin (1978) 18.

\(^10\) Taplin (1977a) 30, and n.1; cf. also (1977b) 130: "the meaning of Greek drama is in the open, not conveyed indirectly or to be read between the lines". But how can this 'rule' apply to all these silences which interlock with the speaking parts and form dramatic aspects which are not to be found only in the words, but also in the presence of mute performers and silent actors?
in the acting of the persons on stage. A stage-director is likely to bring them out in a theatrical production, and the reader is free to imagine acting possibilities associated with the words of the text. In this sense, the words do of course suggest the stage action, but they can also guide our sight selectively by means of a series of images which exist on stage; and, in particular, those images can become parts of a visual whole. Therefore, we must be ready, either as readers or as spectators, to focus on the images which the text brings into prominence, and the context in which they take shape.

Supposing that Iole's bearing is undetectable before line 307, because there is no instruction in the text about that, then we need to imagine or contrive some visual sign in order to be able to understand why Deianeira distinguishes her from the other captives. It would be possible to conjecture that Iole's costume reflects her royal status, and this is the obvious device for singling her out from the train. However, I do not think that this should be taken as the main reason for making Iole look different from the other captives. The text does not seem to rely on the decorative element of Iole's appearance and it is not actually Iole's elaborate clothing that attracts Deianeira's attention but her enigmatic behaviour. It seems that we can speculate on the following possibilities: on the one hand, if we think it is possible to have a dumb-show, we must be careful in assuming the existence of the dumb-show performed by a mute. As Easterling argues convincingly, in masked drama actors without a speaking part are not expected to perform an "elaborate action" because this would "lead to confusion" (specifically over

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12 Instead, Cassandra in Agamemnon could be noticed in her unusual costume of prophetess (cf. 1264-5, 1269-70), though at first the reason that makes her noticeable is that she stands alone in the chariot (cf. 1039).
the question of who is speaking) in the audience's understanding of the spectacle. On the other side, we can also conjecture an absence of movement on the part of Iole, which could make her look different in a crowd of lamenting women. The two arguments seem to stand in opposition and we have to follow the text for an appropriate answer.

At lines 240-1 Lichas draws Deianeira's attention to the captives from Oechalia. At line 283 of his report he once again stresses the sight of the captives with similar words. Deianeira is stirred with pity (243), but at the moment she manifests no further concern about them, being absorbed with her interest in getting to know details about Heracles' journey (246-247). When Lichas turns to the silent women, pointing out their misfortune, he reminds Deianeira of her husband's command to shelter them as slaves (285-6). Deianeira responds to his claim by repeating the pity she feels at the reversal of fortune inflicted upon these women (298-302). Her speech (293-313) is a compound of questions and reflexions prompted by the imagery of Lichas' speech on Heracles' homecoming and by the concrete vision of misfortune conveyed by the silent captives. In these lines Deianeira directs her utterance at a series of different addressees. She first addresses the Trachinian women, expressing her joy for Heracles' return but also calling them to share her feelings of pity and awe for the sudden upheavals of fortune. Lines 298-302 can be seen as a dramatic contrast between the women of Trachis who are free

13 Easterling on 313.

14 Iole's silence resembles the long silences of Niobe and Achilles in the Aeschylean fragments of Niobe and Myrmidones. These two figures remained seated and silent out of grief or indignation, and they were the centre of dramatic attention as long as their silence lasted; cf. Taplin (1972) 58-76.

15 For the demonstratives used for the captive women in the performance of the play see Ley (1994) esp. 32-33.
and the women of Oechalia who undergo unexpected slavery. Without averting her attention from the captives Deianeira prays to Zeus Tropaeus to protect her and her family from such a calamity (303-306).\(^6\)

So far the text gives no evidence of whether Lichas, the Old Messenger, and implicitly the audience could follow visually Iole's distinctive behaviour before line 307, where Deianeira prompts her to reveal her identity. Moreover, we have to bear in mind that the Old Messenger becomes a silent bystander and utters no word as long as Lichas and Deianeira converse in lines 225-334. In addition, the words of the text instruct an audience to keep their attention concentrated on the entire image of the captive women just as Lichas does in order to keep Deianeira's attention absorbed by this vision.

Deianeira first shows interest in Iole immediately after her prayer. The prayer stands in between, as a transitional passage between the sight of the captives and the singling out of the girl. We can probably assume a pause after line 306, which allows some time for Deianeira to bring into prominence the image of Iole.

There is a strong ambiguity concerning Iole's behaviour as it is asserted by Deianeira and Lichas. According to Deianeira, Iole looks inexperienced in such misfortune, yet self-controlled in her nobility (309). It is not clear whether πάντων ἀπειρος τώνδε (309) refers to the previous question ἀνανδρος, ἦ τεκνωσσα; (308) or to the following contrast, γενναία δὲ τις (309). The former combination implies that Iole has no

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\(^6\) This is the third appeal to Zeus; cp. also 26-27 and 126-131. Lawrence (1978) 294 compares this short prayer with Iocasta's prayer to Apollo followed by the appearance of the Corinthian Messenger in O.T. 911-923.
experience of marriage and motherhood.\textsuperscript{17} The latter contrast suggests that Iole has never before experienced such a calamity, yet she withstands the ordeal with courage. Mazon's translation of lines 308-9 aims at making obvious this antithesis.\textsuperscript{18} That interpretation is followed by Kamerbeek who makes a point by suggesting that "the combination of 'ignorant of misery' and 'of noble birth' is natural".\textsuperscript{19} The stress on nobility is further pursued in line 313 with the words φρονεὶν οἶδεν μόνη. Jebb explains that "φρονεὶν here denotes that fine intelligence which is formed by gentle breeding and which contributes to delicate propriety of behaviour".\textsuperscript{20} Moreover, Jebb believes that Iole makes manifest not only her "bitter grief", but also "shame and embarrassment", while the other women remain "callous". On the other hand, Kamerbeek argues that Iole is restrained in self-control and by contrast with the laments of the other captives.\textsuperscript{21} Easterling points out that whatever the explanation of Iole's enigmatic behaviour, Iole "looks noble" and this is probably all that was rendered on the Greek stage.\textsuperscript{22}

Mastronarde has treated the complexity of the scene, between lines 307-332, in the context of cases in tragedy where characters fail to communicate. He is not inclined to accept the interpretation that Iole stands "defiant and proud of her position", while the

\textsuperscript{17} So Jebb and Easterling on 308.

\textsuperscript{18} "Tout ton être répugne à pareille misère. Serais-tu pas de noble sang?". Dain-Mazon (1955).

\textsuperscript{19} Kamerbeek on 308, 309.

\textsuperscript{20} Jebb on 313.

\textsuperscript{21} Kamerbeek on 313.
other captives demonstrate their suffering. Further, Mastronarde argues that Iole's mask portrayed her grief, as is implied in lines 325-332, but a silent gesture rather than her lament might be more explicit of her suffering.\textsuperscript{23}

It could, however, be suggested that the subtle fluctuation in the presentation of Iole's behaviour between lines 307 and 328 has to do with Deianeira's attempts to establish contact with the girl and the manner in which she does that. Thereby, the dramatic significance of the scene is elaborated by exploiting the possibilities of communication between two speakers and a non-speaker. The structure of dialogue is shaped so as to involve Deianeira, Lichas and Iole, in very close interaction. The dynamic of this complex scene is brought out in different stages by means of spectacle, words and silence. They can be analyzed as follows: (a) at 307 Deianeira asks Iole about her identity. At 309 we have probably to assume a pause while Deianeira is waiting for Iole to answer the question, but there is no reply. We may think that Iole's silence at 309 betrays her unwillingness to respond to Deianeira's appeal.\textsuperscript{24} But there is no sign of resentment on the part of Iole, or any other sign which could give a clue why she does not respond. What is certain is Deianeira's impatience to discover the identity of the girl. (b) At 310 Deianeira turns to Lichas for an answer. This shift of address could be explained as a sign of respect for Iole's suffering.\textsuperscript{25} Kamerbeek notices the repetition of

\textsuperscript{22} Easterling on 313.

\textsuperscript{23} For a discussion of this matter see Mastronarde (1979) pp.76 and n.3, 77 and n.4, 94 and n.52.

\textsuperscript{24} Shisler (1945) 388 argues that "the captive maiden Iole in \textit{Trach.} 307-328 is made to show her grief by her refusal to speak".

\textsuperscript{25} Mastronarde (1979) 77. He also thinks that Iole keeps her head bowed in shame or
πνε' (307, 310) as a sign which underlines Deianeira's anxious desire to know. The questioning of Lichas proves to be ineffective. Lichas, while being quite explicit in talking about the captives, is apparently evasive in distinguishing Iole's identity among them. He feigns ignorance and insists that "he conducted the whole of his errand in silence". (d) Deianeira endeavours a last appeal to Iole, but she meets another failure of response on her part (320-1). (e) Instead, Lichas interferes, with an answer trying to apologize for Iole's silence (322-8).

Critics have differed in their opinions as to whether there is a moment of pause before Lichas utters lines 322ff. Mastronarde argues that Lichas could act quickly without allowing time for a pause, in order to forestall an eventual answer by Iole. Deianeira might not any longer be patient in response to such an extended silence, and Lichas does not take the risk of waiting for Iole's reply. The intervention of the Old Messenger at line 402 occurs without a pause and without prompting, and the repetition of this feature can probably urge a similar staging at line 321. However, the use of a pause between Deianeira's appeal and Lichas' intervention seems to be necessary, because it allows time for a slight movement which would make Iole's discomfort more explicit between 321

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performs some other gesture to reveal her grief. However there is no indication in the text like that in Antigone 441ff. where we are told that Antigone keeps her head bowed when she enters.

26 Kamerbeek on 310.

27 T. von Wilamowitz (1917) 142. Cf. also Part II, ch. 6.c., n.7.

28 Easterling on 319.

29 This case is listed by Mastronarde (1979) 94-95 together with other examples of a sudden intervention of a third party, when a person appeals to another person to break a long-lasting silence.
and 322, but would not alter drastically the spectacle of the speakers and the mute performer. Meanwhile, Lichas realizes that Iole may develop more openly her suffering and disclose her identity, so he interferes uninvited with a reply reassuring Deianeira (and the audience) that Iole will not open her mouth (322-3). Besides, Lichas provides a reason for Iole's silence: her grief overcomes her disposition to speak (324-5). At 326 the reading δακτυλοτεί means "she has been [and still is] weeping" according to Easterling, or "she is always weeping" according to Kamerbeek, who, otherwise, would prefer to read with the manuscripts δακτυλοτεί, because the imperfect would accord better with 313 referring to Iole's self-control. The reading δακτυλοτεί is adopted by most editors and we have to assume two visions on stage, which seem to contradict each other: Iole weeping in distress at 326, and Iole standing in silent forbearance as is implied in lines 309, 313.

On this matter critics have put forth different solutions. Kamerbeek thinks that "it is inconceivable that Iole stands weeping before Deianeira" and he suggests that Lichas speaks "without heeding Iole's real behaviour, now any more than in the past".

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30 Andrieu (1954) 202: "Ainsi, loin de considérer que le texte est un livre de scène préparé pour la lecture, nous sommes surtout sensible à toutes les omissions qu'il comporte de ce point de vue".


32 Kamerbeek on 326 assumes that "the missing augment could be excused by considering Lichas' words as part of a herald's speech". But it would be unlikely for an imperfect to be used in the same sentence as ἐξ ὀτου... λελοίπεν.

33 Kamerbeek on 326.
Easterling explains that Lichas "may not be a reliable witness". Anyhow, these interpretations do not make clear whether Lichas' words aim at giving a fair description of Iole's behaviour or attempt to keep secret Iole's identity from Deianeira. When Lichas describes Iole as weeping ever since she has been led away from her country (325-9), we may reasonably think that there is more truth than lie in his words: Iole remains silent but she must also be in great distress all this time, though her mask could not portray subtle variations in the expression of her grief. Presumably, the pause that occurs after 321 would be filled by a gesture of distress on the part of Iole. Lichas witnesses her reaction and says that "she will speak (if she does speak) not at all on a par with the past". With δοκεωντος, he probably implies that Iole, at this precise moment, emphasizes her grief with another flow of tears, which prohibits her from speaking, as it did in the past. Since tears cannot be seen in a masked face, anybody on stage or in the audience is invited to project the emotive reaction of Iole's distress in his mind. In conclusion, Iole is distinguished among the other captives because of her silent forbearance, but this behaviour does not preclude her from occasionally expressing her

34 Easterling on 313; cp. also Kamerbeek's remark on 322-3 that Lichas is a typical liar who insists that he has spoken the truth.

35 Cp. Deianeira's distress at 375, which may be accompanied by some gestural movement; see Ley (as above) 34.

36 Easterling on 322-4. Kamerbeek gives a similar interpretation on 322, 323: "<if she speaks at all> that will not be at all in conformity with her former behaviour".

37 Stanford (1983) 87 argues that "weeping and changes of facial expression could only be projected into the audience's minds, not exhibited visually".

38 Iole's mask might have portrayed the conventional expression of ritual mourning with torn hair. Consider also the distinction between 'face vivante' and 'face artificielle' by Frontisi-Ducroux (1987) 83-92. Ley (1994) 33 thinks that "reflection" and "feeling" (312/3) suggest "a distinction in the mask of the one figure (Iole) from the group" and "tearful grief" (325/6) "defines the mask further".
grief with tears, particularly when Deianeira insists on her inquiry about Iole's identity.

Yet the instance at 321 is different from the intervention of the Messenger at 402, in the sense that here the audience follow the three speaking actors on stage but they must wait with excitement for what Sophocles will do with Iole's role: will he keep her a mute or make her a fourth speaker? It is as if Sophocles had reached a point where he challenged the convention of the three speakers on stage and alluded to a plausible involvement of a fourth actor in the verbal action. During this short pause, Lichas must have grown anxious lest Iole should break her silence, and so an audience might have been, but for different reasons. The fifth-century audience were familiar with the norms and practices of current theatrical production, so that they might have been more sensitive in seizing upon the innovations or the risks taken by a dramatist. In modern reproductions of Greek tragedy, a modern audience, accustomed to disregard restrictions on speaking parts in the theatrical dialogue, will probably not enjoy this point of suspense as the ancient spectator did while wondering if a fourth actor would speak.

The point that I wish to advance is that if Iole must remain a silent character for the dramatist's purpose, we need to allow time for her silence to grow pregnant with meaning and this can be effective, provided that Iole shows reluctance to reply to

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39 Like Pylades in *Choephoroi* 89; see n. 42 below.

40 Dale (1969) 278 comments that "not only stage conventions but attitudes of mind, religious and moral beliefs, the prevailing notion of what is admirable or pitiable or funny, will vary from one generation to another and inevitably affect our reactions to drama that survives from a past age".
Deianeira's question.\textsuperscript{41} It is not fair, at this point and before the Messenger's testimony at 351ff., to dismiss Lichas as a liar who blocks Iole's utterance, particularly since Deianeira is present and she witnesses Iole's attitude on stage. If Iole makes a movement between 321 and 322, which makes more explicit her resentment or her mourning, Deianeira (and the audience) need not be estranged by Lichas' remark that Iole has been weeping since she was taken as a captive. His description of the girl must at least to some extent coincide with the spectacle Deianeira witnesses, and this spectacle shows Iole's noble behaviour and, at specific moments, emphasizes the demonstration of her grief. If we can assume pauses at 306, 309 and 321, these constitute a dramatic device which convincingly elaborates Iole's meaningful silence.\textsuperscript{42}

At 334 Lichas, Iole and the captives make their way off stage, and we ought not to infer that Iole followed Lichas back on stage in his second entry.\textsuperscript{43} We cannot fail to notice that the Messenger says nothing while Iole is on stage. As soon as Lichas and the silent assembly disappear out of sight, the Messenger emerges from his silent attendance to a full display of revelations (335ff.).

\textsuperscript{41} Cf. also Mazon after 321: "Iole demeure muette".

\textsuperscript{42} The suspense raised at line 321 must be tantamount to the effect of Orestes' question addressed to Pylades in \textit{Choephoroi} 899. Pylades is a mute character who follows Orestes everywhere and watches in silence. His single answer, reminding Orestes of Apollo's command, makes an unpredictable break in his silence. After this point Pylades drops out of the story unnoticed, whereas Iole remains a person of repeated reference even after her exit. See Kaffenberger (1911) 17-19, Taplin (1972) 79-80 and n.68, and (1977a) 353-354.

\textsuperscript{43} Jebb on 419: "the Messenger is calling up the recent scene (314-319) which is so fresh in their minds". Cf. also Jebb's careful remarks on Lichas' and the captives' slow movement into the house. They started to move away at 335 and ended at 345 after Deianeira dismissed them with a gesture and the words \textit{τούτους δ' ἔξα} at 344. For Iole's possible involvement in the parting lines at 1275ff. see Part I, ch. 3.e.
The shaping of the scene is powerfully brought out with the setting of the three speaking actors on stage and a mute character whose silence is dramatically provocative. The dramatist has placed side by side the two women, Deianeira and Iole, whose destinies turn out to be correlated by the working of Eros. The former is constantly speaking out and interrogating, the latter is firmly committed to speechlessness.

In her long speech 531ff. Deianeira speculates on the significance of Iole's presence in her marital life. After her visual confrontation with the girl and the truth she learnt about her identity, her mind becomes obsessed with the impossibility of coexisting with a rival under the same roof. Deianeira recognizes that Iole is young and beautiful while her own youth is fading away (547-8). In a subordinate position to these two women stand two diametrically opposed minor characters, Lichas and the Old Messenger, who manipulate their own speeches and silences according to the motives which urge them to reveal or to conceal.

The intrinsic problem remains, after all, unanswered. That is, whether Iole can be characterized as an individual in the play. Iole offers no intimations of her state of mind since she has not been given a speaking activity. As John Gould points out "for dramatic

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44 Cf. Beck (1953) 15: "Der Empfang des Herolds in der epischen Vorlage wird bei Sophokles zu einem Empfang der schönen Iole".

45 Cp. lines 141-150. Easterling (1968) 64: "[This] imagery recalls the contrast between the virgin and the wife that she made earlier to the Chorus".

46 Even in its smaller detail Trachiniae is "a play of opposites", Reinhardt (trans. 1979) 41.
persons, to be is to say a few words”. We cannot witness a particular ethos and dianoia in the presence of Iole, in order to define the qualities of her character, because she utters no word. But we can imagine that Iole is a noble woman in great suffering whose silence makes a striking impact on Deianeira as she gradually notices the distinctive presence of the girl.

Furthermore, Taplin in his argument on "how far the Greek tragic theatre was representational", distinguishes between an "active" and a "passive" staging. This is proposed by Taplin as a rough distinction between these parts which are more integral to the drama than others. "Active" staging involves the action handled by the speaking actors, while "passive" staging comprises impersonal involvement like machinery, scenery, non-human effects, props and crowds. According to this general categorization we are invited to think whether the mute performers of a play belong to the "active" or the "passive" aspects of the staging, or whether they belong to a third category with partly an active and partly an inactive involvement.

Iole's inactive involvement implies that she contributes with her silent presence to the poetic language and the imagery of the play. However, Iole could have been treated by the dramatist as a speaking character enhanced by suffering. She is a named legendary person associated with Heracles in mythological tradition, and this feature makes her exceptional in the uncharacterized company of the captives. As Taplin further remarks,


48 Dale (1969) 144.

49 Taplin (1977a) 38 and (1978) 57.
"characters cannot be brought on in groups in such a way that we ask no questions about the individual members who are simply in the company".\textsuperscript{50} Iole stands in the middle of the action to receive Deianeira's reactions.\textsuperscript{51} but she does not draw our attention from "Deianeira's state of mind" to "our estimation of hers".\textsuperscript{52} She is a symbol of suffering in captivity and incarnates the power of Eros which has stricken Heracles with an overwhelming passion and makes a forceful impact on Deianeira's action.\textsuperscript{53} In her entry Iole persistently remains anonymous,\textsuperscript{54} but after she has left the stage, she is given a full display of her name, origin and function in the identification by the Messenger. Her silence should not be characterized as a passive presence, but as a participation which facilitates two dramatic elements otherwise disconnected: (i) the personification of the impending danger upon Deianeira's house, in contrast with Deianeira's humane compassion for the suffering of the noble girl\textsuperscript{55} and (ii) the drawing of a dramatic

\textsuperscript{50} Taplin (1977a) 306.

\textsuperscript{51} Beck (1953) 16: "Iole hat Reiz und Zauber, aber sie hat kein Wesen und keine aktive Rolle; sie ist eben nicht persona".

\textsuperscript{52} Gellie (1972) 60: "Iole has only to exist to drive the drama forward". This is rather an extended idea of Schlesinger's statement (1930) 231: "Iole's place in the play is due to the effect she produces on Deianeira".

\textsuperscript{53} Cp. also the repetition of the Chorus of the power of Cypris in 497-8, 515-6 and 860-1 and her attribute as "a silent attendant" in 860. The adjective οὐκοῦδος alludes to Heracles secret love of Iole and also to Iole herself whose silence alludes to the disastrous effects of eros upon Deianeira’s house. See Jebb and Easterling on 860.

\textsuperscript{54} Cp. 377-379: οὐνόματος can be taken as 'without name' or 'without rank'; cf. Kamerbeek and Easterling on 377. For the attribution of line 379 either to Deianeira or to the Messenger see Kraus (1986) 95.

\textsuperscript{55} Segal (1977) 120: "Deianeira's compassion is closer to Odysseus’ stance in Ajax or Theseus' in O.C. and Euripides' Suppliants and Hercules"; cf. Beck (1953) 15. The negative image is given in contrast by Clytaemnestra in Agamemnon, who is completely aware of the facts and whose rough treatment of Cassandra reveals no pity for her; see Kamerbeek, Introduction, p.12-14 on lines 225-334.
character whose portrayal remains deliberately undeveloped. The very fact that it is undeveloped suggests the possibility that Iole represents something about eros that is beyond utterance or explanation. In the Chorus' insight, it is Aphrodite who has been revealed to work behind the silence of Iole and cause the passions of her victims (cp. 860-1). We have seen that Sophocles dramatically exploited this silent figure so that an ancient audience might have experienced a strong suspense while waiting for Iole to respond with an utterance. But it is hard to imagine anything Iole could be given to say that would be as powerful as her silence.

A close parallel to Iole's silence is Cassandra's silence in Agamemnon. Iole makes her entrance as a prize of war (245) in the same way as Cassandra entered in Agamemnon. Fraenkel (Ag. vol. II, p.370) finds 'fallacious' the argument that Cassandra entered in a chariot with Agamemnon, because "according to the rules of the early Greek Drama no notice should be taken of Cassandra before attention is drawn to her by some explicit phrase". Taplin (1972) 77 considers this rule as being "too rigidly formulated". Cassandra is alone in the chariot with Agamemnon and she must be clearly noticeable by the audience, but the text does not centre attention on her presence. Iole enters in a procession with slave women and her presence could be undifferentiated. However, Cassandra is playing the part of the third actor who breaks her long-lasting silence after repeated appeals by Clytaemnestra and the Chorus, and utters riddles and cries incomprehensible to those on stage and the theatre. Instead, Iole is a mute actor whose dramatic silence Sophocles has treated as if belonging to a speaking character. Cf. Mastronarde (1979) 76, n.3, and Jones (1962) 216: "Iole leaves an impression -even upon the reader- so strong and individual that one easily forgets she has not a single word to speak".

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1.c. EURYSACES IN AJAX

Eurysaces is Ajax's son and his role is being played by a mute child or young person.1 He is an important figure in the play who is given by Sophocles a stage prominence by means of his silent presence in a succession of scenes. He is a named mute character whose name distinguishes him from the nameless group of mute attendants. He is also a person closely linked with Ajax's worship as a hero in Athens where an altar was dedicated to Eurysaces and a statue of his father stood in the Agora.2

The following analysis entails some observations on Tecmessa's role in the scenes with Eurysaces, because her part is paired not only with Ajax but also with her son. From her movement we can also deduce Eurysaces' comings and goings, which would otherwise being hardly spotted in the text. Following this thought, though we are mainly preoccupied with the mute Eurysaces in the play, we felt that selective reference to Tecmessa's involvement in the relevant scenes of the play would throw light on her relationship with the child. More precisely, Eurysaces appears with Tecmessa in the following scenes of the play:

a) 544-692: At line 544 Eurysaces makes a delayed entrance accompanied by an

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1 The choice of persons who play child roles is presumably a matter of size, because 'children' must look young. So it is unlikely that children were played by adults or adolescents, "unless the latter were very short indeed", Sifakis (1979a) 67-80, esp.73.

2 See March (1991-93), esp.3; cf. also Kearns (1989) 133-134 where she comments on the making of a hero in relation to the community.
attendant. Ajax addresses a long speech to his son (544-582), which is followed by a short stichomythia concluding in half-lines, between Ajax and Tecmessa (585-595). It is not clearly specified at the end of the scene whether the child leaves before Tecmessa or along with her at line 595 and whether Tecmessa re-enters with Eurysaces at 646.

b) 787-814: Tecmessa is called outside by the Chorus to hear the messenger's news on Ajax's intending suicide. She comes out from the tent with Eurysaces and they leave separately, Tecmessa joining the Chorus in search of Ajax and Eurysaces left behind in the hut.

c) 1168-1184: At line 1168 Eurysaces and his mother make a long-expected entrance (cp. 985f.) while Teucer is on stage. The child together with Tecmessa takes part in the silent tableau at the centre of which Ajax lies dead. This tableau remains a fixed image throughout the rest of the play until 1402, when it is finally set in motion with the funeral procession of the hero (1402-1417).

Lines 544-595

At 544 Eurysaces arrives after a long preparation which started when Ajax called him from within the hut at 339. At lines 340-1 Tecmessa is at a loss as to how to respond to her husband's call. Her agitated reaction at this point can be taken as a premonition of fear which aims at the safety of her child. In the stichomythia at lines 530-544, Tecmessa stresses the point that she sent the boy away out of fear that he might die if he
encountered his father in his terrible state (531, 533, 535). Ajax approves of her precaution (536) and Tecmessa asks him how, in these circumstances, she could be of service to him: τί δὴ τ' ἄν ώς ἢ κ τῶν δ' ἄν ὡφελοίμη σε; (537). Her question is probably a last effort to divert Ajax's mind from her son and, by means of this, she expects him to abandon this demand in favour of a new request.

Tecmessa has committed herself to obeying Ajax in all things (529), and when Ajax insists on seeing his son (538, 540), she cannot resist anymore (539); she orders an attendant to lead the child outside close to his father (541-2). There must be a pause after 542 while Ajax is waiting for his son to appear. Eurysaces' slow approach makes Ajax impatient (543). At 544 Tecmessa announces the child's arrival and at 545 asks

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3 In Tecmessa's description of Ajax's state of mind (284-327), which points to the events before line 200, there must be a lapse of time in which Tecmessa, intimidated by Ajax's criminal behaviour, sends the boy away, while she herself has stayed all this time in the hut witnessing Ajax's madness. This incident is not referred to in her speech but, presumably, it must be imagined to have taken place sometime in the events described between lines 296 and 300. See also Jebb and Stanford on 341. The second-person address to the child (340) can be taken as apostrophising the absent Eurysaces in the same manner as the dead Ajax is apostrophised by the Chorus in 901-2 and by Teucer in 977-8; cf. also 944-5.

4 Stanford on 537: "Tecmessa delicately suggests that Ajax may not want to press his command to fetch Eurysaces". Heath (1987) 183, n.32 points to the evasive tone in Tecmessa's replies at 531, 537 and 539, and only "the impatient 540" makes her summon the child.

5 The child was sent by Tecmessa probably to another part of the hut or in a separate building in the custody of an attendant, and now he makes a side-entrance escorted by the attendant. Stanford emphasises that ἔρποντι (543) refers to προσπόλω τινι from 541. For the staging of the scene Heath (1987) 183, n.32 proposes: "the child is brought on from an eisodos by an attendant; since this means a 'long' entry there are 'some' covering lines, the child being visible before he reaches the group on stage (544)".

6 Stanford on 544: "Tecmessa can see over a wider area than Ajax, who is still presumably at the door of his hut".

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somebody to lift Eurysaces into his arms.\textsuperscript{7} The command "raise him up" (545) is probably addressed to the attendant. The rest of the line 545 τορησει γαρ o\textsuperscript{ù} is intended for Tecmessa as an answer to her fear of presenting Eurysaces in front of his blood-stained father. This command could be taken as an indication that Ajax stands on a raised platform which makes him face the others on stage from a slightly higher level. So the attendant needs to stretch up his hands in order to place Eurysaces in his father's arms.\textsuperscript{8} Ajax proceeds to deliver the farewell speech to his son, giving him instructions concerning his future and awarding him his shield (545-577). The child becomes the silent addressee of Ajax's speech and his association with his father seems to echo more

\textsuperscript{7} This scene (545ff.) has been paralleled with the famous scene between Hector and his son in \textit{Iliad} Z 466f. See Kirkwood (1965) 53-70, esp.56-59; Winnington-Ingram (1980) 16; Easterling (1984) 1-8.

\textsuperscript{8} This approach might favour the use of the ekkyklema to reveal Ajax inside the hut. At lines 344 and 346 the words 'ανοιξετε' and 'διοιχω' can signal that the ekkyklema is rolled out of the stage building following the conventional command 'open up'. As long as an interior scene is revealed, the distinction between interior and exterior space ceases to exist and the characters behave as if the dramatic events take place outdoors. Arnott (1962) 87 and 132. Taplin (1977a) 442-3 and (1978) 12 and 108. See also Jebb and Kamerbeek ad loc in favour of the ekkyklema, and Heath (1987) 178, n.23 following Taplin's view on the point. Cf. Dale (1969) 119-129.

Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 110, n.1 and generally 109-110 argues that in \textit{Ajax} 344f. the ekkyklema is not necessary. The central door might have been wide open and Ajax could easily have been standing in the middle of the slaughtered animals. The platform of the ekkyklema covered with dead animals would provoke "some absurdity" while rolled back.

Dale (1969) 122 denies that Ajax could be speaking and singing "from a distance of some feet inside the hut", but Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 110 seems to anticipate Dale's point suggesting that "probably at 1.430 [Ajax] comes outside for his long speech, and from 1.578 onwards gradually withdraws back into the tent, the door of which is closed at 595, Tecmessa going in with him".

Sommerstein (1987) 383-395, esp.386, n.11 attacks Pickard-Cambridge's rejection of the "macabre display of the animals" arguing that the ekkyklema was used to present Ajax in the midst of the slaughtered animals as a motionless tableau.
than the Homeric scene of Hektor and Andromache. As Goldhill suggests, the ideology of the fifth-century polis of Athens is being animated in this scene where Ajax wishes for his child a future brighter than his own. This heroic attitude evokes to the Athenian audience the 'preplay ceremony of the [war] orphans, state-educated and armed, professing their allegiance to the polis and taking their proper place in the hoplite rank.'

Apart from the dramatic significance of his presence conveyed in Tecmessa's and Ajax's words, the child, evidently, is not in a position to understand the present ills, as befits his immature age (cf. 552-3).

The real difficulty of the scene lies in the exits of Ajax, Tecmessa and Eurysaces. At 578 Ajax hands Eurysaces back but it is not obvious from the text whether it is Tecmessa or the attendant who receives the boy in her arms. The order at 578-582 is surely intended for Tecmessa, that she should hasten her exit and cease her lamentations in front of the hut (578-582). Tecmessa delays her departure, begging Ajax not to abandon her and his child (587-8). The sequence of dialogue between Ajax and Tecmessa and Tecmessa's reference to Eurysaces would seem more striking if the child is handed back to Tecmessa at 578 and not led away by the attendant at this point.

At 595 the ekkyklema with Ajax is rolled back (or Ajax makes his exit through the central door). If the child remains all the time with Tecmessa we can assume that they

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9 Goldhill (1990b) 118. Among other points which seem to prefigure the cult of Ajax, Goldhill (as above) p.130, n.121 refers to the importance of arms in the cult when Ajax gives Eurysaces his shield (574-7).

10 Cp. n.1 above. We could even imagine that, at some point, the child demonstrates his joy while he is held by his father (cf. 558-9).
exit together at 595. Yet in the text there is no clear sign whether Tecmessa and Eurysaces leave at this moment behind Ajax through the central door. Their exit becomes a complicated question of staging considered in relation with the unmotivated re-entry of Tecmessa at 646 or, possibly, at some later point.

Jebb points that at 595 «Tecmessa and her child retire by another door into the part of the dwelling which is supposed to represent the γυναικῶν». On lines 646-692, he continues: "Tecmessa who left the scene at 595, now returns, entering on the right of the spectators, and leading her child". If "the right of the spectators" corresponds to the side-door, then we have to assume the existence of a second door in the facade of the stage-building. But we cannot be certain that such an opening existed in the scenery of the play. The only certain thing is that at line 595 Tecmessa and Eurysaces must leave the stage by the same exit as that from which Tecmessa enters at 646f. If we exclude the existence of a side-door, the remaining possibilities for these exits are (a) through the central door together with Ajax, or (b) through the right eisodos while Ajax makes a solitary exit.

11 Jebb on 595.

12 Jebb on 646-692.

13 The use of side-doors is highly questionable for the production of the plays in the fifth century. In his edition of the Choephoroi (1986) 43, however, Garvie comments that "there is no a priori reason why we should not envisage two or three doors for Choephoroi (or any other tragedy) if that makes it easier to reconstruct the production". For a full discussion and references on the matter see also Garvie, Choephoroi, Introduction, pp. 47-52 and 47, n.111. Cf. also the discussion on side-entrances in Taplin (1977a) 449-451, and the schematic diagram of the Greek theatre suggested by Ley and Ewans (1985) 75-84, esp.78-9.
At 593 Ajax gives the command οὐ ξυνέρξεθ' ὡς τόχος; to the attendants. Ajax asks for the doors to be shut, and this recalls the preceding orders addressed to Tecmessa at 579 δόμα πάκτου and 581 πύκαζε θάσσον. We are given a different idea in the scholion on 593: τοῖς θεραπεύονσι κελεύει αὐτὴν ἀποκλείειν. Kamerbeek explains that "in that case it is to be supposed that Tecmessa wants to rush in after Ajax, who orders to keep her out".

If Ajax wants to stay alone in his decision to die we have to assume that the command οὐ ξυνέρξεθ' ὡς τόχος is addressed to the attendants with some impatience to avoid Tecmessa's appeals to save his life. Tecmessa has repeatedly expressed fears (587-8, 593) and shown resistance to Ajax's wild mind (585, 591, 592, 594), but she accepts Ajax's final reply "that in his opinion she has the mind of a fool if he imagines she can school his character at this late hour".

There are two main ways of interpreting what happens next:

a) Tecmessa might have followed Ajax inside the hut at 595. The couple can be imagined to have carried on discussing the matter inside and Ajax could have been influenced by his wife's admonitions to spare his life. When they come outside

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14 Text as in Γ.Α.Χριστοδουλού (1977) 142.

15 Kamerbeek on 593. Stanford takes line 593 as an order to Tecmessa and adopts the reading ξυνέρξεσθ' meaning "be shut in together" and "you" being Tecmessa, the child and attendants makes good sense. "But surely Ajax is ordering the attendants to shut him in, repeating the impatient order he gave Tecmessa at 579 (πάκτου)"; cf. the review of Stanford's Ajax by Knox (1979) 161-164, esp.163.

16 Stanford on 594-5.

together at 646, this sequence of events provides a motivation for Tecmessa's reappearance.\(^{18}\) The demonstration of Ajax's change into a milder frame of mind is conveyed in lines 650-653, which can be seen as bearing the influence of Tecmessa's strong appeals in her speech 485-524, her short fearful and imploring utterances between lines 585-595, and finally whatever she is imagined to say within the hut.

b) The impression that Ajax elaborates in solitude the plan of committing suicide becomes more striking if he makes a solitary exit at 595. His last words at 594-5 look like a protest against Tecmessa, resisting her pressing him further. At this point, he seems determined and mentally isolated, and we are left with the sense that the conflict cannot be resolved. Tecmessa's exit does not become the focal point of the scene, which must continue to stress Ajax's self-determination.

This second solution of the scene seems preferable for the following reasons: if Tecmessa is thought of as still keeping watch over Eurysaces, she and the child can leave together at 595 by the side-entrance. Tecmessa re-enters making a slightly retarded appearance after Ajax has started his speech, and at 652 she comes in full view, as is implied by Ajax's reference to her. In this case her entry at 646 is unmotivated. But we have to consider the fact that Tecmessa's exit was also undermined by Ajax's powerful retirement into the hut. Ajax reproaches her that she talks too much (591), nearly

\(^{18}\) Cf. Kamerbeek (1978) 134: "If 646 (or somewhat later) Tecmessa comes from another side, her reappearance is not motivated; nor is it satisfactory to imagine her on the scene during the choral song". Heath (1987) 184, n.38 wants Tecmessa to collapse "distraught after her rebuff at 595", but this would be an overstressed dumb-show probably causing confusion at the moment of Ajax's exit. Gellie (1972) 281 and Stanford want Ajax to make a solitary exit into the hut, which emphasizes his wish to stay alone.
silencing her. When she comes back at about line 646 she still bears the influence of the silence with which Ajax has imbued her. Now she has a passive and silent role to play as a witness of her husband's new expression of mind. In fact, Ajax's speech on Time gives the impression, as Knox has suggested, that "there are no others, not even the chorus. Ajax is alone on stage." Only at lines 684-5 he addresses Tecmessa, and at line 687 the Chorus, as if he has passed "from private reflection to direct communication".19

It is preferable to think that Tecmessa enters with the child, although there is no clear indication in the text that Eurysaces is present during Ajax's long speech (646-692). At 652-3 Ajax says that he feels pity to leave her behind as a widow and his child an orphan with his enemies and, as Jebb explains, "their [Tecmessa's and Eurysaces'] presence adds effect to v. 653".20 Another indication which makes us think that the child is with Tecmessa at 652, is that Tecmessa re-enters with Eurysaces from the central door at 787 (cp. 809), so she and the child must have withdrawn together at 692.21

**Lines 787-814**

At 719 the Messenger arrives carrying the news of the danger of Ajax's suicide.

At 809 Tecmessa, realising that she has been misled, asks the child how she should act: should she stay back or join the search for Ajax. The child remains silent, the answer is inferred by Tecmessa herself, but at any rate this is an indication that Eurysaces has

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19 Both quotations from Knox (1961) 1-37, esp.13.

20 Jebb on 646-692.

21 Cf. Jebb on 787f.
come out with his mother at 787 in response to the summons of the Chorus at 784. At 814 the Chorus and Tecmessa leave in search of Ajax and the stage becomes empty. Eurysaces must have been taken and remained off-stage, and when Teucer asks for Eurysaces (983-4) he receives the answer that the child is alone in the hut (985).

There must be a sort of stage-business at 809 which is not made obvious in the text. This refers to the taking of Eurysaces off-stage, while Tecmessa joins the search. Eurysaces is presumably left by Tecmessa in the central doorway and then led by an attendant inside the hut. When the scene changes to the seashore for the place of Ajax's death, Eurysaces' entrance by a side-route would help to mark the fact that the setting has changed.

22 Mastronarde (1979) 29: "Tecmessa hears the call for her to come out of the tent, but does not hear the details".

23 However, at this point, the movement of the child is not clear. He might be taken away by an attendant through the main door or by the side. The fact that Eurysaces reenters by the side entrance at 1168 enables a similar exit at 809ff. And of course there has been a scene change between 809ff. and 1168.

24 The play takes place in front of Ajax's hut on the Trojan coast between lines 1-814 and in a grove near the sea between lines 815-1420. Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 49 points to the word πόροςιος in line 892 suggesting that the grove was at the side of the stage (so Jebb) with symbols representing the grove which "may either have been present, but ignored, from the beginning of the play, or may have been introduced by attendants at line 814 during a brief pause". Yet Kamerbeek explains the word πόροςιος as "ill-sounding", "beside the flute-playing", "out of tune", and he is followed by Stanford who relates πόροςιος with a meaning of a lament to the accompaniment of αὐλός rather with locality: "we must try to imagine the deeply affecting tones of voice which actors would use in pronouncing words like τὸ and ἀμοι, the effect of their sorrowful postures and gestures and the melancholy accompaniment of the flute" (Stanford on 892). Derivation from either αὐλή or αὐλός makes sense in the context of line 892. Cf. the scholiast ad loc: πόροςιος. ἐγγὺς παρὰ τὴν αὐλῆν ἠ θρηνητική παρὰ τοὺς αὐλοὺς. The θρηνητική may be coming from a neighbouring place but it can also be an "exclamation of grief" (Stanford as above). I would not suggest though, that the emphasis on the αὐλός is needed to stress the idea of lament at this point which initiates the discovery of the dead Ajax (cf. also a similar
These lines constitute the outcome of the process by which a large tableau is set up in the second half of the play (866ff.), a tableau with the dead Ajax, the mute Eurysaces and Tecmessa. The staging of the tableau starts before 1168 and remains prominent until the end of the play. Then the participants of this tableau move off integrated in Ajax's funeral procession (1402-1417). The arrangement of these two scenes, the silent tableau with the display of the dead Ajax, and the funeral procession with Teucer, Eurysaces, Tecmessa, the crowd of extras and the Chorus turns out to be a more complicated process. That is made obvious if we consider the gradual integration of these two scenes within the dramatic action and the means which are used for the process of this effect in the disclosure of Ajax returning to consciousness at lines 333, 336, 339).

Pohlmann (1986) 20-32 offers an interesting discussion on the change of locality in Ajax. He argues in the favour of a two-door stage-building, each door corresponding to one of the two different localities, so that the spectator has both places before his eyes at the same time and he focuses alternately on each one when hints in the text allude to the move from one place to the other, as happens in lines 985-8. Pohlmann also adds an ekkyklema available behind each door. This staging means that the audience needs to refocus to a new location close to the tent. At this point, Scullion (1994) 116ff. argues that 'fluidity and refocusing are only possible in the flexible space of comedy, and are unparalleled in the concrete world of tragedy'. Scullion (as above) reaches an otherwise odd conclusion: no change of scene whatsoever (!) happens at 815 and action is held in front of the main door and the very close surroundings on the side.

I would rather accept that all principal actions in the play are located in front of the central door and, as Heath (1987) 193 suggests, following Pickard-Cambridge, there could be, presumably, a short pause between 814 and 815 to signal the change of place. Contra Brown (1984a) 1-17, esp.11, who says that "if a delay is not required for a physical change of set, there is no reason why the Chorus's exit should not be followed immediately by the beginning of Ajax's soliloquy". In support of the continuity of sound in Greek theatre cf. Taplin (1972) 57, who, however, allows, occasionally, a silence of "a few seconds". For the staging of the action in front of the central door Brown (as above p.10) provides a reason on the grounds of the acoustics in the theatre, e.g. Tecmessa's voice could not really be heard from the far end of an eisodos at 891 (as Jebb thought) and she more likely emerges from the scene-building; cf. also Hamilton (1978)
We have to begin by locating the first indication of this tableau, which may be set a few lines after Ajax has committed suicide and his dead body is revealed to the audience's view. The discussion again starts by tracing Tecmessa's movement. At line 891 Tecmessa's cry is heard from off-stage. At 892 the Chorus wonders who is shouting from inside the νότος. At line 894 Tecmessa is seen by the Chorus, but their remarks do not indicate that they can see the corpse too. Either she is standing in a position where she hides Ajax's corpse, or the Chorus are unable at once to see the corpse near the stage-building. At 897 the Chorus' question τι δ' εστίν; marks again the fact that they are not yet able to distinguish him. At 898 Tecmessa reveals to the Chorus that Ajax is lying dead, pierced with his own sword. But it is doubtful whether the Chorus

25 Whitehorne (1986) 59-72, esp.59-60: "the dead as spectacle, by which I mean not so much the static display of corpses upon the ekkyklema, [...], a feature common to many tragedies and one which is often remarked upon, as the use of a body or bodies not only as a momentary point of focus but also as a means of generating further dramatic action. The body's presentation provides the initial visual shock and its impact is then reinforced by other means -the actions and reactions of the actors, the grouping of the chorus and extras, the use of stage properties- as the dramatist works to arouse the tragic emotions"

26 Jebb explains that the words "ὤποιπέρ ἐν οπέτω" (810) imply that Tecmessa "has no strength to go far [...] because she is to find the body of Ajax near the tent (891), while the Chorus have been vainly seeking him further off". Therefore the νότος must be located near the tent, so we can accept Tecmessa appearing in front of the central door and not discovering the body at the side of the stage as Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 49, n.3, following the scholiast, implies for line 891. For Tecmessa entering from the left cf. also Jebb on 815 and 894.

27 Heath (1987) 193: "there was a conventional separation of the two parts of the acting area, and characters entering from an eisodos often fail to notice characters <at the scene>".

28 Amott (1962) 132 argues that "at 828 τῶδε πέρι νεορρόδνως ξύφετι suggests that [the sword] must be in sight of the audience" but Heath (1987) 193 remarks that "the
can yet see the corpse.

It is not clear how Ajax's corpse is presented on stage. Ajax's actor must have been substituted by a dummy (or by a mute) either after his suicide 866ff., or when Tecmessa covers the body with a cloak (915). The main arguments on the issue relate to the use of the ekkyklema for the death-scene and the disclosure of Ajax's body:

a) Pickard-Cambridge disbelieves in the existence of the ekkyklema for the fifth century and suggests that at 992 Teucer's men carry in a puppet representing the body of Ajax. Heath, though he adopts the use of the ekkyklema for 346ff., also dismisses its use for 815ff., by referring to the lack of preparation for the revelation of an interior scene. Moreover, he suggests that stage-hands bring on the corpse before the re-entry of the Chorus at 866. Scullion argues that it is an unparalleled phenomenon in tragedy for the ekkyklema to be used a second time in the same play. He proposes a concealed death and attendants bringing the corpse to the threshold of the tent in front of the central

repetition of the point about the sword -ἐστηκεν, πέπηγε, ἔπηξα- might perhaps be taken to indicate that Sophocles is anxious to make very clear to the audience something they have not witnessed."

29 Amott (1962) 131 argues that "the only time for the replacement with a dummy is before Tecmessa finds the body". The agitation of the Chorus searching for Ajax's body in their second-entry (866) may be fully exploited to hide the substitution of the actor with the dummy, see Burton (1980) 32; cf. also Pöhlmann (1986) 20-32. Contra Stanford who believes that the replacement of the actor with a dummy happens when Tecmessa covers the body at line 915; cf. also Flickinger (1936) 244 and Taplin (1978) 185, n.5.

30 Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 110.

31 Cp. also n.8 above.

b) Arnott accepts the use of the ekkyklema only for the discovery of the corpse and not for the death-scene of Ajax (815ff.). He thinks that "894-5 suggest themselves as covering lines for the mechanism to move into position".  

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c) Gardiner believes that Ajax walks back inside the skene to commit suicide and he is either revealed as an ekkyklema-tableau or disclosed by opening the doors.  

d) Mills follows Webster's view that the ekkyklema remained in full view of the audience from the suicide of Ajax to the disclosure of his body, and, moreover, it was pushed partway out in front of the open stage-door at the change of scene.  

In essence there are two main options for the staging of the scene:  

1. If the suicide scene occurs in front of the central door in view of the audience, then the ekkyklema is permanently set in position as early as line 815.  

2. If the suicide is unseen, then the following alternatives can be considered: (i) Ajax makes his exit at 865, and at 894 Tecmessa displays his body on the ekkyklema. (ii) The

33 Scullion (1994) 108, 125 and n.132.  

34 Arnott (1962) 132.  

35 Gardiner (1979) 10-14, esp.13 suggests that the use of the ekkyklema "depends [...] upon the direction in which the doors opened"; cp. also Dale (1969) 104 saying that the double door in the skene opened inwards like any usual door. For Gardiner's modified view of Arnott's theory on the death-scene see Gardiner (1979) 11-12 and Mills (1980-1) 129-135, esp.129.  

36 Mills (1980-81) 131, Webster (1956) 18. Moreover, Golder (1990) 13, n.17 evaluates the scene with the disclosure of the body as mirroring the earlier one where the central door is opened and the ekkyklema is rolled out with the spectacle of the insane Ajax.
use of the ekkyklema can be avoided, because stage-hands carry the corpse from inside in front of the door.

Considering the above solutions, I would put a preference on the second option [2(ii)], which entails the concealed death of Ajax and the use of the ekkyklema after 894. In this case, Tecmessa's voice is heard from inside when she finds the corpse lying there. Then she enters from the main door to announce that she has discovered Ajax's corpse in a grove near the tent. For this staging, it seems to me that the ekkyklema is more efficient for the revelation scene at the opening of the door. Thus, the ekkyklema becomes the place and the visual framework in which a succession of images leads to the fixed tableau with Ajax's corpse from which the final procession of the play will begin to move off (1402-1417).

Instead of a messenger-speech narrating the suicide we have here a mixed mode of mourning and question-and-answer display of the corpse. At lines 912-3 the Chorus have not still seen Ajax lying dead. At this very moment, Tecmessa intervenes to disrupt the expected disclosure with a gesture of covering the corpse. Ajax must not be seen by his friends in this disfigured condition, bleeding from his wound. So Tecmessa draws a cloak over his body, hiding a spectacle which has so long been expected. This seems

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37 Burton (1980) 33 argues in relation to the kommos 866-973, that the "alternations of song and speech reflect and sustain the tensions inherent in a scene which leads up to the discovery of the death on the stage and depicts its emotional aftermath".

38 Stanford on 915 talks about the emotional purpose of the covering of the body, which is that Tecmessa has "to hide the blood-drenched corpse of her husband, once so handsome and strong, from all other eyes." We may also contrast this gesture of covering a corpse with a similar gesture in Electra. When Orestes and Pylades step inside the house (1436) we guess that they cover Clytaemnestrás corpse with a shroud.

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to me to be the appropriate moment for the substitution of the dead Ajax with a dummy for the rest of the play.\textsuperscript{39}

Ajax's corpse is on stage at least from line 894, but its display is suspended until a more appropriate moment in the dramatic action. In fact the picture which shows Ajax lying dead starts to have its function in the background as soon as Tecmessa completes the covering of the body (924). Teucer appears at line 974 in order to take care of the dead Ajax. With Teucer's arrival the picture of the dead Ajax is brought into a new dramatic significance. It is possible that Teucer notices the covered corpse at lines 977-8. Another possibility is that Teucer apostrophizes Ajax in lines 977-8 and only catches sight of him at line 992.\textsuperscript{40} In this case these lines resemble lines 901-2 where the Chorus apostrophize Ajax but without necessarily seeing his dead body. Although it might be surprising that Teucer should address such an emotive outburst as lines 977-8 to the Chorus, it is not certain that Teucer faces the spectacle of the dead Ajax as soon as he makes his entrance. As we have assumed in the case of the Chorus, namely that they have a limited view of the space during their entry at 891, so we may also assume that Teucer entering from a side-entrance may fail to see the corpse lying near the stage-

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\textsuperscript{39} I would not favour the replacement of the actor with a mute. At 1003 Teucer commands his attendant to uncover the dead, but I agree with Scullion (as above p.126) that, after the removal of the sword, 'the shroud can be replaced'. It would be a hard thing for a mute to lie immobile under the cover for so long up to the end of the play.

\textsuperscript{40} Golder (1990) 33, n. 19 explains that "the apostrophe σύναμμεν ὄμμα (977) has, [in the view of the following spectacle], a proleptic \textit{dramatic} function", and Mills (1980-81) 133 makes Teucer look upon his brother's body at 992-3.
At 985ff. Teucer commands someone, presumably Tecmessa, to fetch Eurysaces from the tent. At 989 Tecmessa moves off silently, and at 992ff. Teucer delivers a long speech addressed to the dead Ajax. At line 1003 Teucer orders an attendant who has come in together with him to uncover the corpse. The next gesture over the body takes place when Teucer drags the sword away from Ajax's body (1024-5). At 1040-3 the Chorus urge Teucer to think about the burial of Ajax, because they see Menelaus entering with hostile intent. Teucer was presumably about to uplift the body with the aid of an assistant, or at least this is what Menelaus assumes when he comes out and faces Teucer in very close contact with the body (1047-8). Menelaus blocks Teucer's movement with the order not to lay hands on the dead. His order, reiterated in his subsequent threats (cp. 1080-90, 1140), proves to be ultimately unfulfilled. At line 1410

41 When the Chorus remark at 976 that they hear Teucer's ἐπίσκοπον μέλος, this can have the following meanings: Teucer's lament for his brother "aims" at his corpse in the literal sense of the word (Jebb) or his lament befits Ajax's misfortune (Kamerbeek paralleled by Stanford). Both meanings make good sense in the context but the figurative meaning would support the argument which makes Teucer focus his eyes on the covered corpse for the first time at 992.

42 Cf. Scullion (1994) 124, n.130 for a non-visible side of the tent, no further away than it was at 530ff.

43 There is a range of gestures undertaken over Ajax's body. Ajax is "wrapped around the sword" (κρυφάσω φοσγάνῳ περιπτυχῆς, Jebb on 899). Tecmessa veils him with a shroud (περιπτυχεῖ φάρει καλύψω, 914-5). Teucer orders a servant to unveil the body (1003). Then he removes the sword from it (1024-5). Gardiner (1979) believes that at 1409ff., Eurysaces and Teucer removed the sword from the corpse and placed it in a litter but what would be the point of lines 1024-5 if not accompanied by Teucer's gesture? The gestures over Ajax's body end up with the act of supplication which becomes the focal point in the staging of the ensuing silent tableau. See also Taplin (1978) 184, n.5, Segal (1980-81) 125-142, esp. 128 and Mills (1980-81), 133, n.16.
Teucer is seen to complete the gesture cancelled at lines 1047-8, but this time the removal of Ajax's body has acquired a broader dramatic significance through events occurring between the first attempt and the final action.

In the conflict between the two men Teucer grows determined to bury Ajax against the will of the Atreidae (1109-10, 1141). Tecmessa has already expressed the same wish that Teucer ought to take care of the burial (920-2), but it is in the process of this conflict that the issue is brought into prominence. So we re-read this tableau in the context of the images which converge: Ajax lying dead in the background, Menelaus and Teucer arguing strongly in a verbal contest. In the tableau Ajax's body is still the only point of interest; Tecmessa and Teucer approach it from different angles: Tecmessa to announce, mourn and cover the awful spectacle; Teucer to reveal, speculate and prepare the body for burial.

The arrival of Tecmessa with Eurysaces has already been prepared at lines 986-7 and Tecmessa is expected to enter with the child at any moment. At 1168 we could merely be hearing an announcement introducing new characters into the action. If this were all that was involved the text would have provided sufficient information in lines 1168 and 1169, with lines 1182-4 making clear Teucer's commitment to taking care of the burial. What occurs between lines 1170 and 1181 concentrates the attention on something new:

44 "The importance of burying the dead gradually dominates the action", Rehm (1994) 59.

45 Though I think that the real actor has been substituted by a dummy, it could be sustained that Ajax's corpse remains the focus of these scenes as if belonging to a new class of mutes.
a) The long-lasting spectacle of Ajax's corpse becomes a silent tableau enlarged with the presence of two mute actors: Eurysaces, a child who never speaks, and Tecmessa, who takes on a silent role after 973 and must have been replaced by a mute for her return at 1168.46

b) Eurysaces and Tecmessa are given the responsibility for taking care of the dead Ajax as long as Teucer is away supervising the digging of a grave (1170).

c) Eurysaces, as instructed by Teucer, kneels in very close contact with Ajax. He touches the body holding in his hands locks of his own hair, Tecmessa's and Teucer's as signs of supplication (1173-5) and hears the curse that Teucer casts upon Ajax's enemies (1175-1179).47

Teucer works like a stage-manager who arranges a scene by meticulously defining its components and its functions.48 This is a multi-layered tableau with dead Ajax, Eurysaces and Tecmessa which has an important visual impact. The child, who appeared in various stages in the process of the events, now becomes a firmly attached figure by

46 See also Part I, ch. 2.b.

47 For this scene of supplication with a strong ritual element and its connection with the procession scene in the end of the play there is an extended discussion in Burian (1972) 151-6; see also Winnington-Ingram (1980) 57-8, n.2 and Easterling (1991) 87-109, esp.91-99. Cf. also Blake Tyrell/Brown (1991) 95-96: "Sophocles transforms Ajax's corpse into something equivalent to the hero's tomb, so that his son Eurysaces and Tecmessa gain from the dead Ajax the protection denied them by the living". Henrichs (1993) 165-180 provides a new explanation of the ritual paradox which transforms Ajax' dead body into a powerful shelter for his suppliant child.

his dead father's body. The ritual of supplication is not only an image which starts operating at 1168. It ends up as the result of a succession of acts in which Eurysaces' silent involvement gains ample significance in the play. These acts imply a number of reasons for bringing Eurysaces on stage: (a) at 1040 the Chorus reminds Teucer that he has to think about Ajax's burial because an enemy, Menelaus, approaches and in lines 1164-1167 the Chorus resumes his admonition to Teucer for Ajax's burial with specific directions. At 1168-70 Teucer announces that Eurysaces and Tecmessa are coming in order to offer the funeral rites to the dead. (b) In lines 572-576 Ajax bestowed his broad shield on Eurysaces whose name is associated with the meaning of this weapon, and he anticipated a glorious future for his son, better than his own present (550ff.). Now, in the tableau at 1168ff. Eurysaces becomes the visual confirmation for the future, in which the audience can recall the heroization of Ajax and the heroic cults evolving Ajax and his son. (c) At 560-564 Ajax relied on Teucer for his son's safety threatened by his enemies. Now, Teucer fulfills not only his duty to his dead brother, but he also casts a curse on any of the Greeks who would dare to drag by force Eurysaces away from his suppliant position (1175-1179).

When Teucer leaves to "prepare a place of burial" for Ajax (1184), the setting of the silent tableau will stay there to remind the audience that the play cannot be over unless new dramatic events take place and set this static image in motion. At the end of the play

49 The choral intervention in lines 1162-1167 is important, because it constructs verbally the hero's tomb which will perpetuate Ajax's memory in the future. Henrichs (1993) 170: "the Athenian audience is being reminded of [Ajax] future tomb and of the prospect of cultic commemoration outside the dramatic boundaries of the play".

50 Jebb on 1183f.
there is a surprising turn of events. Ajax's corpse was displayed as the image of the isolated hero who committed suicide in a state of enmity with the Atreidae. In the process, the silent tableau changes its meaning into a powerful symbol of Ajax's triumph in his death. Odysseus approaches the dead Ajax with a sense of honour, whereas the Atreidae become now marginalized. Eurysaces takes part in the final procession which leads Ajax's corpse to his burial. There the child continues to hold his father's body together with Teucer and the supporting attendants (1409-1411).\textsuperscript{51} Up to the end of the play, Eurysaces' constant presence by the side of dead Ajax endorses the prospect of a heroic cult which honored jointly the two figures in Athens.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{51} See also Part I, ch. 3.c.

\textsuperscript{52} While Eurysaces has been introduced in the play as a figure who has common characteristics with Astyanax in the scene of \textit{Iliad Z} between Hector and Andromache, he ends up as a very different figure from him.
1.d. ANTIGONE AND ISMENE AT THE END OF OEDIPUS TYRANNUS

In the Appendix of his edition of Oedipus Tyrannus, Jebb gives a meticulous account of the action which might have accompanied the words of the actors in the last scenes of the play, particularly in the encounter between Oedipus and his daughters. The main points in Jebb's imaginative staging of the scenes can be summarized as follows: after Oedipus' request, Creon makes no verbal response while consenting to bring Antigone and Ismene before their father. He only gives a sign to his attendants to perform the task. While Oedipus is still speaking, the two girls are led by the attendants into Oedipus' arms and they look at their father with what must be taken as genuine sympathy. In the meantime, Creon retires to the right side of the stage and emerges only when Oedipus asks him to confirm with a handshake the protection of the two girls. This act must have been performed in silence while Oedipus continues to address his daughters. At this point, Creon intervenes to order Oedipus to cease the lament and move into the palace.

The concluding stage-business of the play becomes more problematic owing to doubts over the authenticity of the trochaic tailpiece (1524-1530). Even if this is genuine, still the question remains whether it should be assigned to the Chorus or to Oedipus himself. Jebb assigns the last trochaics to the Chorus and he imagines the closure of the play highlighted with some agitated movement: "So Oedipus tears himself away, the

1 Lines 1515-1523 are also suspected to be spurious. Some critics think that the whole of the final section has been reworked and that in the original version Oedipus went to exile at the end of the play. M. Davies (1991) 1-18 argues against the theory that the ending of O.T. is spurious (with a full bibliography); more recently, Hester (1992) 97-101 attempts to trace the extent of interpolation though he also accepts that 'the
attendants of Creon take the children by the hand, and Creon himself leads Oedipus up the steps and into the palace. [...] The children and the second messenger follow; the attendants of Oedipus enter last and gently close the doors."^1

Jebb's description of the last scenes involves a great deal of dumb-show which is not, in many respects, signalled in the words of the text. Presumably, Jebb is right, at least in principle, to assume movements and gestures otherwise unsigned in the text, because they are needed to clarify the reactions of Oedipus' silent daughters and Creon's lack of response to specific address. This is an assumption which is being taken into account in the following investigation of the silent presence of Antigone and Ismene.

In lines 1470-1523 the parts of Antigone and Ismene are played by mutes in child roles whose involvement with the speaking persons (Oedipus, Creon) stirs new emotions at the very last moment of the play. At 1459ff. Oedipus refers to his children for the first time in the play. He says that his sons do not need Creon to take care upon them because they are men (1459-1461), but he begs Creon to look after his pitiful daughters and requests to touch them for a farewell embrace (1466-7).

At 1467 we should possibly assume a short pause while Oedipus is waiting for Creon's answer and, as Jebb notices, there must be "a moment of agitated suspense" in Oedipus' evidence is inconclusive' (p.101).

^1 Jebb's commentary p.206.
short utterance ἵθεν δοξοξ, addressed to Creon. Since there is no response coming from Creon at 1467, Oedipus assumes a more yielding tone in his second appeal to Creon. His words are now softer while he awaits Creon's acquiescence to the request (1468-1470).

The entrance of the girls occurs without a verbal response to Oedipus' plea. While Oedipus is impatient to receive an answer, Creon must give a sign to his attendants to fetch the girls before their father. Jebb has the children enter after line 1470, while Dawe has them enter with Creon at 1422. Jebb's interpretation seems more tenable, because it takes into consideration a slow approach to the new entry marking stages in the change of the spectacle. The encounter between father and daughters provides a strongly emotive scene. First Oedipus hears them weeping. The stress is put on the sound rather than on the sight because Oedipus is blind, but he can realize his daughters' distress by hearing their cries (1472-3). The girls remain silent throughout the scene apart from weeping. The audience can visualize their tears and, moreover, they can probably hear their cries as Oedipus and the others on stage do.

3 See Jebb on 1468.

4 Now Oedipus looks different from his imperious behaviour towards Creon when he insisted on imposing his will in the matter of his punishment 1446ff.; see Davies (1982) 268-277, esp. 275.

5 Dawe (1973).


7 Jebb on the question τι φημί; 1471.

8 The girls might have accompanied their distress with appropriate gestures. Iole in Trachiniae 325-6 is also described as weeping, and the audience must visualize the tears on her face.
At 1480 Oedipus searches for his daughters. In Jebb's description, an attendant might have led them into Oedipus' arms. Yet the text leaves open to our imagination precisely how this movement happened. The next thing we hear from Oedipus is that he joined his daughters in weeping, and we guess that he keeps hold of them (1486). He anticipates their unfortunate future (1487-1502) and calls Creon to secure them marriage and social rehabilitation (1503-1509). Then he asks him to confirm this request with a gesture (1510). There is no mention in the text that a gesture was enacted, but there is no reason to omit it from the spectacle. Creon, presumably, confirms with a handshake, but still in silence, the protection of Oedipus' daughters. Oedipus resumes his speech with a last address to his daughters: they are too young to understand their father's advice, but they can still pray for a life better than their father's (1511-1514).

So far we have attempted to follow the spectacle of the silent girls at the end of O.T.: Antigone and Ismene are of tender age, stricken with a great misfortune and helpless to take care of their own lives. The ruin of their polluted home will inflict upon them disgrace and social isolation, but their immaturity makes them unable fully to comprehend the grim circumstances in which they find themselves. They are not

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10 It is noticeable that Creon maintains a discreet distance between lines 1478-1514, even though he is twice addressed by Oedipus (1478, 1503).

11 Cp. Ajax 550-553 for Ajax's similar words to his son Eurysaces. See also Part I, ch. 1.c.

12 Antigone and Ismene in O.T. seem to be identified with characteristics befitting the "typecasting of children in Tragedy"; cf. Sifakis (1979a) 67-80, esp. 68-69.

13 For the age of the girls see Ronnet (1969) 121, n.1, but I think that Gellie (1986) 42, n.15 is right to comment that their age should not concern us too much.
individually characterized and are addressed in the dual without reference to their names (1462, 1472, 1473, 1474, 1480, 1511). The information about them is conveyed through adjectives describing their present and future situation. Their contact with Oedipus takes place through touch and weeping. The two parties embrace each other and they lament together on their misfortune.

At 1515 Creon orders Oedipus to disentangle himself from this embrace and cease his lamentations. At the end of a last confrontation between the two men (1516-1523), in which the spectacle of the two lamenting girls intensifies the agitation of the scene, Creon orders Oedipus to leave hold of his daughters and move into the palace (1521-2). He must also make a sign, which is not mentioned in the text, to his attendants to lead the girls away from Oedipus. At least this is what is suggested in Oedipus' words μηδομως ταῦτας γε' ἐλη μου (1522). At this point we have to imagine that the girls are escorted by the attendants, while Oedipus is led by Creon into the palace. The text bears no clear trace of movement in the closure of the play and particularly in the disputed final words (1524-1530).

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14 As many as eight epithets for Antigone and Ismene: ἀθλίαν, οἰκτροῖν, κεκλωμέναι, χέρσους κἀγάμους, πτωχὰς, ἀνάνδρους, ἑρήμους from 1462 to 1509.

15 At the end of the play Oedipus is seen as an affectionate father who consloes and takes care of his children. His concern about his daughters recalls the prologue where Oedipus' first words are ὁ τέκνα, and where he also demonstrated his will to protect the citizens of his kingdom and to obey the suppliant children's requests; cf. Gellie (1986) 40.

16 Lines 1521-2 look like a miniature of a later scene, in Oedipus at Colonus, where Creon violently drags Antigone away from Oedipus (cp. O.C. 820-847). This is probably the same way that things happen here but with more dignity.
As it stands, the last scene of *O.T.* suggests a crowd-scene with speakers and non-speakers on stage. Oedipus and Creon, Antigone and Ismene, and Creon's attendants provide a tableau of people who have been gathered at the final stages of the play and they are making their closing departures.\(^{17}\) Though the final exits in *O.T.* have not the solemn character of the processions at the end of *Ajax* and *Trachiniae*, the silent presence of the daughters may have more significance than to serve the evocation of pathos and to embody the family that is destroyed by the events of the play.\(^{18}\) Just as in *Ajax* and *Trachiniae*, the gathering of people is related to implications for the future as well as to dealing with the past, so in *O.T.*, although there is no procession leading out to a funeral, there may be a reminder for the audience of a famous Sophoclean play, *Antigone*, which deals with Antigone and Ismene at a later stage in their lives.\(^{19}\)

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\(^{17}\) The gathering of speakers and mutes provides a repeated pattern of bringing together different groups of people at the end of a tragic play. See also Part I, ch.2.d., and n.9.

\(^{18}\) The two girls are depicted in the fourth-century Syracuse painting by the Capodarso painter (see also Part 2, Ch.6.d., n.15). Though the painting represents the scene at about *O.T.* 1042, the girls are brought in from the final scene. Cf. Taplin (1993) 28-29. This seems to be a detail in the picture which gives weigh to the disaster befallen the family.

\(^{19}\) Cf. Roberts (1987) 60, for the allusion in the final scenes in *Electra* and *O.C.* ‘that there is more suffering to come’.
I.e. PYLADES IN ELECTRA

Pylades in *Electra* is Orestes' silent companion, played by a mute person. In many instances, the text suggests that Pylades is always standing at Orestes' side and they form together a visual image as an inseparable pair of characters.¹

We can make the following assumptions about the alternatives which Sophocles could exploit to present Pylades in *Electra*:

1. Pylades is a mute character who remains speechless, but his silence could be dramatically exploited like the silence of other named mute characters in Sophocles' plays.
2. Pylades is a mute character, but he could utter a few words as he does in *Choephori*. This is a highly exceptional practice in tragedy and nowhere used in Sophocles' surviving plays.
3. Pylades is a mute person in the prologue, but he could be given a speaking part at a later stage (presumably in the recognition scene and the matricide).²

Sophocles opts for none of these solutions; Pylades' passive role raises the question why the dramatist was after all concerned to involve this person in the dramatic action: in *Electra*, Pylades keeps his traditional role, that is his name, his origin from Phocis, his friendship with Orestes, but he has the most limited dramatic involvement of any named

¹ Taplin (1977a) 334.

² In Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Tauris* and *Orestes*, Pylades is given a speaking part.
mute character in Sophocles' plays. In the following analysis I will try to show that Pylades, though involved in various stages of the play, remains on the periphery of the action.

In the prologue there are two ways in which we have to see the presentation of Orestes and Pylades. Orestes is shown to assume responsibility for the execution of the oracle and the planning of the revenge act, but he is also supposed to act side by side with Pylades. The two men enter together with the Paedagogus. At 16 the Paedagogus names Orestes and his friend Pylades, urging them to act immediately, and at 21-22 he repeats that they have to arrange things and to assume action without delay.\(^3\) In his answering speech (23-76), Orestes refers to Apollo's oracle (29-37) and his homecoming in order to recover his wealth and power over the palace of the Atreidae (59-73). At 75-76 the two men exit to pay respects to Agamemnon's tomb. Orestes addresses separately the Paedagogus, commanding him to leave, and then he uses the dual for himself and Pylades. The dual νῶ ἔξωτον (75) comes in contrast to the plurals which Orestes used throughout in the prologue and the ambiguous combination of plural and dual might suggest that Orestes is conscious of Pylades as a collaborator though he does not express it overtly.\(^4\)

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\(^3\) At line 21, Lloyd-Jones & Wilson think that the reading ξυνάπτειν λόγοις combines well with βουλευτεῖν and may be the right reading (though they do not print it), but Kamerbeek argues that the imperative dual ξυνάπτειν is "more clearly addressed to them both, a fact which renders the silence of Pylades the more awkward".

\(^4\) Bers (1984) 49-50 says that "the first-person plural verb and pronoun when uttered by a single person [...] can also suggest a journey, dangers, [...]. The best term for these plurals is 'sociative', for it expresses the unity of meaning that is obscured by two terms it replaces, namely, pluralis maiestatis and pluralis modestiae". I think that this interpretation defines better the plural in lines 24, 28, 38, 41, 51 than to regard the plural as simply poetic. The same thing must happen in lines 1098-9, 1114, in which Orestes
At this early stage of the play, we are not in a position to say whether the audience should be expected to notice Pylades' silence as a particularly distinct feature in the play, which ranks him in the mute persons of drama. The occasional addresses to him could be taken as attempts to involve Pylades in the dialogue. But this does not happen and the exchanges are confined to speech between Orestes and the Paedagogus. The audience can recall Pylades' silent role in Aechylus' Choephori and his three-line breaking of silence (900-2) and they might speculate about the manner in which Sophocles will handle Pylades' figure in his play.

Pylades' presence in the recognition scene between Orestes and Electra, and even in the murders of Clytaemnestra and Aegisthus, is only of minor importance. At 1098ff. Orestes introduces himself and Pylades to the Chorus as Phocian strangers. The recognition being over, Orestes orders silence because he hears someone coming out from the palace (1322). At 1323, attention is again drawn to the pair of newcomers when Electra addresses the two men ὑς ξένοι pretending that she is taking the 'Phocian strangers' in the palace. But the person who enters is the Paedagogus; at 1326ff., he reproaches Orestes and Electra for the delay and reminds them that there is no time for words. At 1367 he urges Orestes and Pylades addressing them in the dual (σφαν τοῖν παρεστῶτοιν) to move into action.

addresses the Chorus and tells Electra that 'they' bring her brother's ashes, and in lines 1424-1435 when Orestes and Pylades rush out from the palace after murdering Clytaemnestra. For the poetic plurals see Campbell (1871) vol.1, p.29 and Bers, pp. 24-34 as above.

5 Cf. Kells on 1322-1338.
At 1372-3 Orestes turns to Pylades with the words to hasten their entrance to the house. At 1374 he uses the dual προσκύνεσθ' for him and Pylades to salute the statues of the gods standing outside the door. At 1375 the two friends enter the house to carry out the murder of Clytaemnestra. The dual referring to the two men is continued in line 1376 with ἔλεος αὐτοῖν κλέε, spoken by Electra, who wishes to be associated with the prayer by turning to the statue of Apollo in front of the palace. At 1422 Orestes and Pylades have accomplished the matricide and enter from the house. The Chorus announces Aegisthus' arrival and the two men hasten off, once again, to arrange matters for Aegisthus' murder.

Aegisthus has been deceived by Electra into believing that Orestes lies dead inside the palace (1452ff.) and he orders the opening of the doors for everybody to see the spectacle of the dead (1458ff.). At 1465 Orestes and Pylades enter standing near a shrouded corpse. At 1468 Aegisthus, believing that these men are the Phocian strangers, orders them to uncover the corpse. When Orestes reveals Clytaemnestra's body, Aegisthus wonders in amazement who are the men who captured him in deceit (1476). With the exception of this remark, Pylades' presence as an accomplice of Orestes in the murder of Aegisthus is ignored in the last scene.

If it made sense in practical terms to keep Pylades rather than dispense with him, Sophocles could have made him the fellow-planner rather than the Paedagogus. Much seems to depend here on the fact that he chose to bring in this figure, who is an important guide to the understanding of the play (the Paedagogus) has a large part in the

6 See Jebb on 1374f.
planning and execution of the vengeance and he articulates some of the ethical issues in a way that some readers find quite disturbing). So there is not much left for Pylades to do. In comparison with his prompting role in Choephoroi, where he sustains Orestes in a moment of hesitation before he kills his mother, Pylades is an unobtrusive figure in Electra. His inactivity suggests that Orestes and Electra have been treated in a different manner from their counterparts in Aeschylus' play. In Choephoroi, the Nurse, following the Chorus’ command (770ff.), summons Aegisthus to come outside alone. The Chorus deceives Aegisthus who enters into the palace to be killed by Orestes (848ff.). Then follows the confrontation of Orestes and Clytaemnestra on stage, and her execution which takes place inside. At a decisive point, by recalling the divine command, Pylades sustains Orestes who hesitates in the killing of his mother (899ff.). From all these happenings, Electra is completely absent. She has been dismissed at 579 (cf. 554) and is never mentioned again in the rest of the play. In Electra, brother and sister carry out together the deception plan. Orestes never meets his mother on stage and there is no moment of hesitation for him. Electra is given a prominent role when she stands outside the palace witnessing Clytaemnestra's cries and urges Orestes to "strike twice as hard" (1415). She receives Aegisthus and deludes him with treacherous words (1442ff.). In the final scene Electra keeps an enigmatic silence, apart from lines 1483-1490, while Orestes engages in an agitated dialogue with Aegisthus as he takes him to die inside. In the presence of these two determined characters, Pylades remains completely on the outskirts of the action. The treatment of Pylades here is to be contrasted not only with

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7 Taplin (1977a) 340.
9 See Part II, ch. 7.c. for the last scene in Electra.
his role in *Choephoroi* but also with that of Electra, who is the prominent figure in the later play. The handling of his silence seems to be quite elegant and economical: the very opposite in effect of the treatment of Iole, when the question 'Will she speak?' is given dramatic importance.
In the First Epeisodion of *Trachiniae* the three speaking actors are on stage together with a crowd of mutes large enough to represent the Oechalian captives. The image of the crowd is reflected in the words of Deianeira and Lichas, who point to the captives' unhappy life. In this setting Iole's image is gradually brought into prominence to reinforce the overall impact of the scene. These images might exist before the verbal reference to them but they emerge as a new dramatic event at the moment they are spoken of, while the sight of the audience is selectively guided each time from a different angle. The transition from the image of the slaves to the image of Iole's distinct presence is largely included in the general spectacle by means of action which is not expressively referred to in the words of the text. My conclusion at this point is that though it is generally assumed that the principal actions are signalled in the words of the text, there must be an amount of unsignalled stage action which comprises the nuances of behaviour in the unspoken parts of a play. Following this argument, I assume that a subtle fluctuation in Iole's behaviour must occur in lines 307-328, which illustrates her grief, as we can assume from Deianeira's comment on the girl's distinguished presence. In her long-lasting silence Iole must have reacted with a gesture of discomfort, a sign that urges Deianeira to wonder about the girl's identity in an attempt to establish contact with her. As a result a powerful dialogue is enacted between Deianeira and Lichas, while Iole's silence continues to motivate Deianeira's impatient questions. Pauses might occur at 306 and 309 to allow time for Iole's silence to be meaningful of her situation. The pause at 321 is possibly filled with a slight movement on Iole's part. Lichas might have
taken this reaction as a sign that Iole is about to break her silence and interferes with an answer to Deianeira's insisting interrogation. By giving an exceptional performance to the mute Iole, Sophocles makes her silence comparable to Aeschylean silences. Here the difference is that Iole does not break her silence like Cassandra in *Agamemnon*, Pylades in *Choephoroi* or Prometheus in *Prometheus Bound*, but the dramatist challenges the three-actor rule in tragedy by alluding to the possibility that a mute performer could be a fourth speaker in this play. Since Iole is 'historically' important as spouse of Hyllus and ancestress of the Heraclidae there is some interest in her potentially being a speaking character. But Iole's silence may 'say' more than any words could.

The mute performance of Eurysaces in the play of *Ajax* establishes his child role in association with the dramatic roles of Ajax and Tecmessa. In the first part of the play, Eurysaces appears in a number of exits and entrances. The sequence of these entrances and exits is not easy to be followed up unless Eurysaces' movement is associated with Tecmessa, when she either escorts the child or coordinates his appearances. The child is detached from his mother when Tecmessa sends him away from Ajax's tent in order to protect him from his father's demented behaviour (cf. 531). We imagine the pair mother-child to be separated in an off-stage situation that entails Eurysaces' later entry from the side in the escort of an attendant at 545. A pause can be assumed at 542 to allow time for the slow approach of the child on stage. We also estimated that at 595 mother and child leave together through the side-parodos, while Ajax makes a solitary exit through the main door. This staging emphasizes Ajax's determination to commit suicide whereas Tecmessa and the child become of secondary importance in this scene. Tecmessa enters with Eurysaces from the side and they become silent witnesses of Ajax's soliloquy. The
three persons leave together inside the hut at 692. At 787 Tecmessa reenters with the child at the summons of the Chorus. When she rushes out in search of Ajax jointly with the Chorus, she abandons Eurysaces alone in front of the hut, probably in the care of an assistant (809-10). At 1168 Eurysaces makes a joint entry with Tecmessa from the side. I have also tried to locate the process which establishes the silent tableau with Ajax's corpse, Eurysaces and Tecmessa in the second part of the play. This process starts with the discovery of the dead Ajax by Tecmessa at 891 and ends up with the arrangement of the fixed image of the child kneeling next to his father at 1168ff. I also accepted that all principal action takes place in front of the main door and the ekkyklema is necessary for the disclosure of the dead Ajax. From this slightly raised position a chain of events take place mainly focusing on the dispute over the burial of Ajax. Teucer orchestrates the composition and the function of the silent tableau in which Eurysaces' close attachment to his dead father signifies their mutual protection and guarantees safety against the menace from the Greek army. This visual fact remains unchangeable up to the end of the play to suggest to the audience that Ajax's memory has been saved unspoilt and will be appropriately honoured in the heroic cults established in the city of Athens. In the heroization of Ajax, his son Eurysaces maintains a particular position which is reflected in the joint worship of the two figures by the Athenian society. So Eurysaces relates to the future and turns out to be a key figure for an Athenian audience's understanding of the play.

Antigone and Ismene are mute children in the final scene of \textit{O.T}. As happens with Iole, a number of gestures are not specifically implied in the words of the text but they are to be guessed at as real. These are signs given by Creon to his attendants to fetch the girls...
and, at the end, signs to take them out. The thesis accepts that Antigone and Ismene enter after a short pause at 1467 and they are noticed by Oedipus because of their cries. Oedipus hears their weeping but he is unable to see them. We can imagine that the girls move towards their father's arms at about 1480. Their embrace is broken at 1515 when Creon orders Oedipus to go indoors. We suppose that signs are given to attendants in order to lead the girls away from Oedipus. While the emphasis is put on the confrontation between Oedipus and Creon, the presence of the silent girls enhances the emotional effect of the scene at the end of the play and reminds the audience of the play of *Antigone*, which deals with Antigone and Ismene at a later stage in their lives.

In *Electra*, Pylades is a named mute character but Sophocles was not at all concerned to attach dramatic importance to the portrayal of this character. In fact, Pylades cannot be distinguished with specific characteristics in any particular action of the play, though he remains on stage all the time. His silence operates only in the traditional level of his relationship with Orestes, while Electra supports her brother in the matricide with her decisive mind and the Paedagogus assumes an important role in the deception plan and the execution of the vengeance.

The five named mute characters (Iole, Eurysaces, Antigone and Ismene, and Pylades) all have a function that is more meaningful than that of any unnamed figure, but in only Iole's case is the role extended to that of mute character who is asked to speak and whose silence is of major dramatic significance.
CHAPTER TWO
DIVIDED PARTS BETWEEN A MUTE AND A SPEAKER

2.a. INTRODUCTION

Chapter Two discusses three instances of persons with shared roles between an actor and a mute in Ajax, Philoctetes and Oedipus at Colonus. It is generally assumed that the change of a speaker into a person with a non-speaking part is due to the limitations of the three-actor rule in tragedy. Here the aim is to analyze the process by which a speaker is replaced by a mute or vice versa, to define the dramatic importance of the shared roles and, where it is appropriate, to relate the distribution of parts with the three-actor rule.¹

In the first section of this chapter I will elaborate on Tecmessa’s participation as a silent witness in the dialogue 974-989 between Teucer and the Chorus in Ajax. I will also discuss the point of transition to Tecmessa’s silent activity at line 985 and compare her role as a mute between line 1168 to the end of the play with her speaking activity in the first part of the play.

The second section deals with the Emporos in Philoctetes, who begins his activity as a mute attendant and changes into a speaker in a disguised form. The discussion attempts to draw the contrast between the dramatic importance of the Merchant and the non-

¹ See also Introduction (iv).
dramatic function of the mute sailor. The Merchant impresses with his half-true story of Odysseus' arrival in the island of Lemnos while the sailor remains an unimportant figure in the escort of Odysseus.

The third section deals with the role of Ismene in O.C. with particular interest in her mute performance and her subsequent change into a speaker for a few lines at the end of the play. Ismene is a speaker from 324 to 509, she turns into a mute from 1096 to 1555, and she takes again the role of a speaker in the final lament with Antigone. A first problem to encounter is how we can distinguish Antigone as a speaking actor and Ismene as a mute when they both keep silence in lines 1119-1180, 1284-1413 and 1500-1555. The second problem to tackle is how the distribution of parts is affected when Ismene is involved in the lyrics of the final lament at 1670ff.
2.b. TECMESSA IN AJAX

Tecmessa's role in *Ajax* is divided between a speaking actor and a mute. Her final words are in lines 961-973. At 974 Teucer is heard crying as he approaches the stage from a side entrance. At 975 the Chorus orders silence to Tecmessa because they hear Teucer's lament as he comes. So Tecmessa is silent, while the Chorus engage in a short but tense dialogue with Teucer (975-991). The structure of the dialogue is as follows: two lines of the Chorus are matched by another two by Teucer (975-6//977-8). The next two lines are paired in stichomythia (979-980) and the following three are divided lines between Teucer and the Chorus concluding with a single line by Teucer (981-984).

Line 985 is an answer given in a half-line, which offers ground for a short discussion about who replies to Teucer's question at 983-4. Teucer asks where is Ajax's son, Eurydamas. The answer, μόνος παρὰ σκηναίσιν, is supplied either by the Chorus or

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2 Taplin (1977a) 385, n.1 accepts Schoell's deletion of 971-3 on grounds of epirrhematic symmetry; contra Jebb, Appendix in *Ajax*, p. 233. Lloyd-Jones & Wilson (1990) consider the possibility that 969 is spurious because "the sentiment which it expresses is at variance with that of 961-2 not to mention 971". Cf. also Reeve (1970) 286 n.8. who accepts that there is a diversity of opinions without reaching a certain conclusion. But I think that the text can stand as it is without the deletion of verses. Jebb (as above) says that "there is no necessity that Tecmessa's speech of ten lines in 915-924 should be balanced by one of the same length here". Pearson (1922) 125 also thinks that the "additional lines beginning at 971 which follow another pause, [...] being transitional, serve as an opening to the next scene". In her last words Tecmessa repeats a contrast between her own distressful situation and the arrogance of Atreidae. She makes the prediction that Odysseus would demonstrate an arrogant behaviour against dead Ajax, but the audience know from the prologue that Odysseus shows sympathy for Ajax. At the end of the play Odysseus will support the issue of his burial against Agamemnon. Moreover, at 973 Tecmessa conveys the picture of a wife in mourning, a position which she will maintain for the rest of the play up to the end.
by Tecmessa.\(^3\) It is not clear which of these two is meant to receive it because Teucer makes no specific address and both candidates would be able to provide the answer. However, it is formally more likely that the Chorus will be the one continuing to answer Teucer's questions.

When Teucer asks this question he must probably look at Tecmessa and realize that she stands there alone without the child.\(^4\) We may recall that, earlier in the play, Tecmessa had left Eurysaces at the hut (809)\(^5\) in order to join the search for Ajax (810). The Chorus, who were present at that moment (809), are now in the position to inform Teucer where the child is. Their immediate reaction to his question finely matches their actual involvement in the events after 866. In this respect, it would be awkward to make Tecmessa interfere with a short answer in the continuity of the agitated conversation between Teucer and the Chorus.\(^6\)

Teucer's following request (985-989) is made in the second person and runs as follows:

a) Lines 985-987 include an appeal with the form of a question combined with a simile: Teucer asks Tecmessa to fetch Eurysaces and he compares the child with the young of a

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\(^3\) Jebb, Stanford and Lloyd-Jones & Wilson give the words to the Chorus, Dain to Tecmessa.

\(^4\) Tecmessa might have come nearer to the centre of the acting area away from the corpse after uttering her last speech (961-973) so that Teucer can face her as soon as he enters. But he does not yet see the corpse of Ajax; see also Part I, ch. 1.c.

\(^5\) Gardiner (1979) 12 and n.7 points out that παρα σκιναλιν means "by the tent rather than in it".

\(^6\) In Antigone, the disputed attribution of line 572 to Antigone interrupts the sequence of stichomythia between Creon and Ismene, but the line apostrophizes Haemon in his absence and by no means gives a response to a previous question as in Ajax 985.
lioness at the mercy of his hunters. The phrase \( \text{κενής} \oslash \text{σκύμων} \ \text{λεοντίς} \) may mean (i) the young of a lioness bereft of her lion or (ii) the lioness robbed of her young. The preference for the one or the other meaning relies on the interpretation of the adjective \( \text{τιθεντον} \). The comparison with the lioness helps to suggest that the request is addressed to Tecmessa.

b) Line 988: Teucer continues with an agitated order for Tecmessa to move off quickly.

c) Lines 988-9: Teucer rounds off his request with the general statement: "For to be sure all men love to laugh exultantly over the dead when they lie before them". At 989 Tecmessa leaves, to return as a \( \text{κοσμος} \ \text{πρόσωπον} \) with Eurysaces at 1168. Her exit to the side would be consistent with her later re-entry in a slow approach pinpointed by Teucer at 1168.

To sum up, Tecmessa is a speaking person from 201 to 973. Her speaking part is chiefly paired with the Chorus and Ajax: she starts with a lament involving the Chorus and she continues with description of Ajax's insane behaviour (201-332). She makes an attempt to dissuade Ajax from his suicidal thoughts (485ff.), but she is strongly opposed by him. At 719ff., the Messenger warns first the Chorus and then Tecmessa of the danger of Ajax dying that one day. Tecmessa is the person who discovers Ajax dead and laments together with the Chorus over his bleeding body (891ff.). She becomes a silent witness in lines 974-989 which constitute the short dialogue between Teucer and the Chorus.

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7 Kamerbeek on 986, 987.
8 Jebb on 985f.
9 Stanford on 988-9.
10 See Gardiner (1979) 13.
This spoken part could have occasioned her engagement in dialogue with Teucer had Sophocles contrived Tecmessa's role as paired not only with Ajax (and the Chorus) but also with his half-brother. But her dramatic involvement as a speaker ends up with the death of her husband and the discovery of his corpse. For the rest of the play after 1168 she takes part in framing together with Eurysaces the tableau with Ajax's dead body. In her mute role Tecmessa presents the audience with the image of grief and mourning (cf. 973) and this is more important than any verbal interaction on her part with Teucer.11

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11 See also Davies (1973) 66 and n.33 for the depiction of Tecmessa, and generally of women, as images of grief and suffering, in vase-paintings and in tragedy. Tecmessa's silent presence along with Eurysaces also serves as a reminder of Ajax's family - another aspect of the importance of women as lamenters and sufferers.
2.c. THE EMPOROS IN PHILOCTETES

In the prologue of Philoctetes Odysseus anticipates the arrival of an attendant (σκοπός 125) in the guise of a merchant sailor (ναυκλήρον τρόπος 128), who would be sent at the appropriate moment to assist Neoptolemus in his deceptive mission. At 542 the stranger accompanied by a member of Neoptolemus' crew makes his entrance and provides explanation of his unknown identity (αλλόθρους 540).

The attendant who was pointed out by Odysseus as the merchant seaman to appear later on is a mute in the prologue. At 542 the audience witness the replacement of a mute with the third actor.¹ He comes in to play the role of a false Messenger. The device seems to be a version of a form exploited by Sophocles in Electra. There the Paedagogus takes over the role of a false Messenger who reports the death of Orestes in a horse-race in Phocis. His aim is to deceive Clytaemnestra and Electra, so preparing the way for the arrival of Orestes, unsuspected by his enemies, and the recognition by Electra. The Paedagogus has an active part in the prologue. He identifies Mycenae and the palace of the Pelopidae for Orestes and urges immediate action. Orestes assigns the role of the deceiver to the Paedagogus, following Apollo's oracle who had ordained that revenge should be taken by means of deception (36-37). And he proceeds by defining the action to be undertaken by the Paedagogus.

¹ In the prologue the third actor is playing Odysseus himself.
In the prologue of *Philoctetes* Odysseus mentions that Neoptolemus must take advantage of the sailor's words, but he does not explain further what these words will be like (130-131). When the false Merchant enters, he reports events which will prove to be "half-truths": A delegation of the Greek army is pursuing Neoptolemus and another one, with Odysseus and Diomedes, is coming to fetch Philoctetes to Troy. For the first time, we hear about Helenus' prophecy for the capture of Troy with the aid of Philoctetes and about Odysseus' commitment in public to the task. An audience should wonder whether this is part of the deception or a real event. The false Merchant presents himself with the duty to warn Neoptolemus about the plans of the Greeks but the immediate purpose of this report is to produce an emotional impact on Philoctetes, specifically a desire to leave quickly, when he learns that Odysseus is about to arrive at the island.

The Merchant avoids any dialogue-contact with Philoctetes at 626-7. He feigns ignorance when Philoctetes bursting out that he will not surrender to the Greeks, and then he departs for his ship. The Paedagogus also abstains from a dialogue with Electra and feigns departure, but Clytaemnestra takes him with her into the house. The end of his deceptive role at 799 is very closely parallel to that of the Merchant in *Philoctetes* at 627. In *Electra*, the Paedagogus reappears, to precipitate the action when Orestes and Electra delay the recognition scene (1326). However, in *Philoctetes*, when the Merchant leaves, we are not in a position to know whether his part is over after he has executed the plan of deception. The Merchant must be seen as an agent for Odysseus' treacherous plans.\(^3\) While he tells his crafty story (542ff., cf. 130) and Neoptolemus feeds him

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\(^2\) Taplin (1977a) 83, n.2.

\(^3\) Cf. Blundell (1987) 307-329, esp.324: "The 'merchant' is a reflection of his creator and
appropriate questions (cf. 131), we tend to think that there is Odysseus lurking behind the words of the false Merchant. The two characters, Odysseus and the Merchant, are played by the third actor, and their appearances in the different stages of the play mark the change of action from deceit to violence as the means for hustling Philoctetes to the ship for Troy.

as such reflects poorly on him".

4 Jebb on 130ff.

5 See also Part II, ch. 7.d.

6 Cp. Odysseus' return at 974ff.

7 See also Part II, ch. 5.e. and 5.f.
2.d. ISMENE IN OEDIPUS AT COLONUS

Ismene's part in *Oedipus at Colonus* is divided between a speaking actor and a mute. She is a speaker in lines 324-509 and a mute in lines 1096-1555. She takes part in the lament in lines 1670-1779 together with Antigone and the Chorus. Ismene as a speaker has real dramatic importance: she announces the news from Thebes and performs the ritual of purification on her father's part.

Ismene is a mute character in the following scenes:

a) **1096-1210**: The three speakers are Antigone, Oedipus and Theseus. The mute Ismene with her sister Antigone, united with their father, provide a tableau of joy and relief.¹ This image operates as soon as the two girls enter at 1096ff. Oedipus wants to embrace his daughters (1105) and addresses both of them with affectionate words (cf. 1102, 1107-8, 1112-4). While he is engaged in a dialogue with Theseus, the two girls remain silent. Short references in the text point to their presence (1120, 1123, 1139-41, 1146-7). At 1181 Antigone breaks her silence in order to plead with her father to receive Polyneices.

b) **1249-1446**: The three speakers are Antigone, Polyneices and Oedipus. In the encounter with Polyneices the image of the two girls comes as a contrast to the two brothers. Antigone and Ismene have cared for their father, but Polyneices and his brother

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¹ Seale (1982) 133, and 127 suggests that the tableau of father and daughters starts with Ismene's arrival as a speaker and breaks up when she leaves to perform the rite.
sent him into exile (1362-1369). Oedipus curses his two sons who did not respect their blind father, and sets apart his daughters who did not behave in this way (1375-1379).

e) 1447-1499: The kommos is between Antigone, Oedipus and the Chorus. Ismene remains silent and Oedipus refers to his daughters as τέκνα (1457, παῖδες 1472, 1486). This kommos is in contrast to the final one where Ismene joins the lament for her dead father.

d) 1500-1555: The dialogue is between Theseus and Oedipus. Antigone is a silent witness together with the mute Ismene. At 1542ff. Oedipus asks his daughters to follow him. He will lead the way to the sacred tomb in which he will be buried.

Ismene and Antigone are silent witnesses in lines (i) 1119-1180 (Oedipus-Theseus), (ii) 1284-1413 (Polyneices-Oedipus) and (iii) 1500-1555 (Theseus-Oedipus). In these scenes we cannot really separate Antigone as a speaking actor and Ismene as a mute because the two girls form a pair of silent witnesses and are always addressed in the plural. The point of interest is whether we notice Ismene's silence as a mute. The principle that can be associated with this point is that by convention when there are three speaking actors on stage as in scenes (a) and (b), the fourth person is played by a mute. This is made obvious when Antigone emerges from her silence at 1181 and 1414, but Ismene remains silent throughout. Ismene's silence is emphasized and comes into contrast with Antigone's speaking part, when Antigone separates herself from the silent image of the two girls and engages in the dialogue, first with Oedipus and then with Polyneices. However, this distinction between Antigone's speaking role and Ismene's
non-speaking part is again blurred as long as the two girls remain silent as in the dialogue (d) 1500-1555 between Theseus and Oedipus.

In Ajax Tecmessa is also a speaker who transforms into a mute after 989, and she remains on stage up to the end as a mute. In Philoctetes a mute attendant changes into a speaker after 542 and then he makes no other appearance. In O.C. the pattern seems more complicated because Ismene comes as a speaker, turns into a mute at 1096 and returns as a speaker at 1670. ²

At 1669 the Messenger announces the entrance of Antigone and Ismene. As they approach they are heard lamenting. Antigone, Ismene and the Chorus engage in the lyrics of the kommos 1670-1750 as follows:

(a) In the first strophic pair 1670-1723 Ismene sings lines 1689-1693 and 1715-1719. ³

(b) In the second strophic pair 1724-1736 Antigone and Ismene share the exchanges in interrupted lines.⁴

² For parallels in Euripides cp. the nurse and tutor in Medea, Alkestis in her name-play, Hermione, Pylades, Electra and Helen in Orestes; see also Stanley-Porter (1973) 70.

³ The manuscript text is corrupt in the antistrophe 1715ff. There are syllables missing either after 1715 according to Jebb (Appendix p.293-4), or after 1717 according to Lloyd-Jones & Wilson.

⁴ Mastronarde (1979) 56-57 and n.14 includes lines 1725-1727, 1731-1732 and 1739-1740 in passages "in which speaker A's utterance is suspended while speaker B encourages A to finish what he has to say". Line 1741 can also be taken as an interruption if the meaning of φονδω is 'I think'; cf. Kamerbeek on 1741-1743 and Lloyd-Jones & Wilson, who assign an apophasis in the text after φονδω. Jebb argues that φονδω means "I know it well" -in quick and grateful response to [the Chorus'] allusion" that the girls already had found a refuge (1739-40). I think that the apophasis makes sense after φονδω as an expression of Antigone's feelings, who is torn between
(c) In the antistrophe 1737-1749 Ismene retires into the background, while Antigone and the Chorus continue the lament.  

Ismene's involvement in the lyrics of the kommos raises the following possibilities:

a) A mute person continues to be on stage and a concealed actor sings a few words behind the scene. This solution demands a complicated stage arrangement and is unlikely to have been practicable.

b) A mute person is replaced by a fourth actor for lines 1670-1750. The use of a fourth actor does not comply with the so-called three-actor rule, though it could provide a solution in the distribution of parts in O.C.  

c) A mute person is allowed to sing a few words at the end of the play. Ismene's part is all in lyric and the audience would not be estranged by the change of the voice from her distress for her father's death and desire to return to Thebes.

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5 Jebb (following Bergk) thinks that lines 1737-1750 were written for Ismene because the desire to return to Thebes is "in harmony with her character (cp. 1735)". However, it does not seem that the distinction on the basis of personality is convincing because Antigone is the dominant person in the final scenes; cf. also Burton (1980) 270-2. As a key to the shape of the whole sequence we should not be looking primarily at the character-drawing, and I think that Jebb's following remark on 1737-1750 is more representative of Ismene's non-speaking part: "If the part of Ismene, after v. 509, was ever taken by a κωρόν πρόσωπον, there may then have been a wish to keep her part in this scene as small as possible".

6 See Kamerbeek (Appendix, p.23) who rejects the assumption of a fourth actor from 1096 on the basis that Ismene's silence 1096-1555 remains strange. He also thinks that a possibility is a mute extra for Ismene 1096-1555 and a fourth actor for 1670-1750. Ceadel (1941) 139-147, esp. 145 argues that in such a case the 'parachoregema' is another name for a fourth actor. For "the meaning of parachoregema" see Rees (1907) 387-400, esp.596: "'parachoregema' had no application to mutes in dramatic productions of the classical period at Athens, when mute characters formed just as much a regular duty of the choregus as the furnishing of the chorus, but [...] at a later period, under a different system and under different conditions, to which the scholiasts evidently refer, a mute was regularly a 'parachoregema', an extra."
d) Kamerbeek explores another possibility: the second and third actor have the roles of Antigone and Ismene, and Theseus in this scene is played by the first actor. In this case, the Messenger leaves before the entrance of the girls at 1670, and so both roles of the Messenger and Theseus are played by the protagonist. His exit would be very quick in a pause occurring between 1669-70, while the girls approach lamenting.

However, a different distribution of parts can be chosen for the end of *O.C.* Had the mute Ismene sung in the final kommos, then the actor who plays the Messenger does not necessarily abandon the stage. The protagonist, who played the role of Oedipus, probably takes on the role of the Messenger, and Theseus' role is played by the third actor. This distribution of parts means that the protagonist remains on stage virtually all the time. The Messenger in *O.C.* can be a silent bystander in the final kommos, as happens with the Old Man in the *Trachiniae*, who also remains silent in the background, and he presumably follows the retinue in the final exit. Besides, it is relevant to think that tragedy uses an enlarged number of persons in the closure of plays, and quite often

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7 Cadel (1941) 147, also quoting Flickinger (1936) 178.

8 See also Introduction, (iv).

9 Nonetheless, this is not the practice in tragedy. Normally, messengers depart at the end of their speeches without necessarily providing a clear sign of their departures. An exception could be the Old Messenger in *Trachiniae*: at 199 he finishes his speaking part, and no attention is paid to him, when all of a sudden he breaks his silence and speaks to Deianeira stopping her to go inside (335ff.). Taplin (1971) 30 thinks that "for the audience he might as well have gone". But the Old Messenger has a reason to stay while he expects to be rewarded by Deianeira for bringing her the news for Heracles' safecoming (cf. *Trach.* 190-1). See also Part II, ch. 6.c. For possible exceptions in Sophocles' *Antigone* (1244ff.) and Euripides' *Hketides* 730ff., see Taplin (1977a) 88.
speakers, mutes and the Chorus combine together to give a mass character to the final departures. Likewise, the end of Ajax with the mute Eurysaces, Tecmessa and the crowd which prepares the funeral of Ajax, and the end of Trachiniae in which Hyllus, the Old Man and the crowd of bearers follow Heracles to Mt Oeta are the most obvious examples in Sophocles' plays. The Messenger's presence in the final scene seems to gain a particular importance for another reason too. The Messenger has told an amazing story to the community to which he belongs, and it makes sense for him to stay with this community on stage up to the final exits. As far as the role of the mute is concerned, this option has the advantage of enlarging the possibilities in the use of a mute person while making more appealing the solution according to which a mute performer is allowed to utter a few words.

The closing scene is undertaken between Theseus and Antigone. Ismene remains silent up to the end after she has finished her short contribution to the lyrics (1737-1776), and the Messenger probably assumes the role of one of Theseus' followers. Aeschylus' Persians, Seven against Thebes, Hiketides and Eumenides end with processional exits, while Euripides makes extensive use of crowds composed with speakers and mutes in the closure of his plays; characteristic examples in Euripides are Orestes' spectacular ending with speakers and mutes on high and on stage, and the congregation of speakers, the Chorus and groups of mutes in the closing scene of Troiades. See also Part I, ch.1.d.

Cf. Dignan (1905) 32: "If attention is not in some way called to him [a silent person], he blends with the attendants and other supernumeraries". For a criticism of Dignan's dissertation on "the idle actor", see Allen (1907) 268-272.
2.e. CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapter an extensive discussion has been presented of the shared roles of Tecmessa in *Ajax*, the Emporos in *Philoctetes* and Ismene in *O.C.* The division of roles between a speaker and a mute obeys to a variety of reasons. Thus, Tecmessa's speaking part has been shaped to be paired with Ajax in the first half of the play. In the second half, Tecmessa declines from the action because her speaking activity finishes with the death of Ajax. Her non-speaking part means that Sophocles has not opted for matching her with Teucer. We saw that the transition from speech to silence of the actor who plays Tecmessa occurs in the space between 975-989. In these lines Tecmessa remains silent but she is not replaced by a mute at this moment. Teucer's enquiry about Eurysaces at 983-4 is not likely to be pointed at Tecmessa, so the forthcoming answer does not spring from her but from the Chorus. The answer from the Chorus can be justified because they have a personal knowledge of the facts, so they continue providing Teucer with information about the child. At 1168 Tecmessa returns as a mute who takes part in the silent tableau with the dead Ajax and Eurysaces as a wife in mourning.

The Emporos in *Philoctetes* begins his activity as a mute sailor in the escort of Odysseus. In the prologue Odysseus anticipates the man's arrival in the guise of the Merchant. Sophocles has contrived this unique appearance of the Merchant to coincide with the third actor, who also plays Odysseus, in order to signal that the insidious plans of Odysseus are at work through the mouth of one of his men.
Particular attention has been paid to Ismene's shared role in order to reach the following conclusions: Ismene's silence as a mute can be occasionally confused with Antigone's silence, that is, the silence of a speaker. In order to clarify this ambiguous silence, I drew attention to the points of breaking Antigone's silence at 1181 and 1414. On the other side, Ismene's unbreakable silence is symptomatic of her mute role in lines 1191-1180 and 1284-1413. However, the distinction between Antigone's speaking part and Ismene's non-speaking part ceases to exist when they both keep a long silence in the dialogue of Theseus and Oedipus (1500-1555). The second conclusion refers to the applicability of the proposed scheme 'speaker-mute' for the performance of a person with a shared role. This scheme seems now to be extended to the scheme 'speaker-mute-speaker' which applies to the role of Ismene in O.C. This implies that Ismene's role is affected by the distribution of parts in this play, and a number of combinations can be proposed for the assignment of the singing lines to Ismene between 1670-1750. The present analysis accepts that Ismene can still be played by a mute who is allowed to sing a few lines in the final lament with Antigone. In this case, it is not necessary that the Messenger leaves at the end of his report, but hemingles with the people of his community who witnessed the narration of Oedipus' disappearance.
CHAPTER THREE
SPEAKERS AND EXTRAS

3.a. INTRODUCTION

Chapter Three deals with groups of extras in the prologue of *O.T.* and the final scenes in *Ajax* and *Trachiniai.* Mute extras are treated here as a specific category of mute performers in tragedy for the reason that they appear in crowd scenes to perform collective functions. The following analysis is aware of the fact that crowds like the suppliants in the prologue of *O.T.*, the group of attendants in the funeral procession of *Ajax*, the litter-bearers and followers of Heracles in the processional exit of *Trachiniai* have been the subject of considerable thought in previous scholarship. Nonetheless, I think it is important that these examples should be viewed afresh in the thesis, in order to draw attention to the symbolical meaning that is suggested by the silent presence of the mute crowds in their relationship with the speaking characters and the Chorus. Therefore, the discussion of the prologue of *O.T.* attempts to reconsider the issue of the composition of the suppliants and their role as representatives of the Theban community. In the procession at the end of *Ajax*, the aim is to show the connection of the auxiliary groups with the Chorus of Salaminians and to add in the argument for the division of tasks to the people who are commanded by Teucer to make preparations for Ajax's burial. The discussion of the exodos of *Trachiniai* is divided into two sections. First, I will comment on the contact that is acquired by the Chorus when they acknowledge the marching of the silent procession with the sick Heracles. I will also
attempt to show the dramatic implications when Hyllus is faced with the silent image of his sick father. Secondly, the discussion of lines 1252-1278 will consider the dramatic effect of the procession in its movement to Mount Oeta for the cremation of Heracles. Especially, the section of *Trachiniae* lines 1275-8 attempts to reconsider the question of who is the speaker and who is the addressee in the last four lines, with the aim to discuss the conjectured reappearance of the mute Iole at the very last minute of the play. The discussion concludes with suggestions for the exit of the mute participants and the Chorus under the guidance of Hyllus.
3.b. THE SUPPLIANTS AT THE BEGINNING OF OEDIPUS TYRANNUS

At the beginning of *Oedipus Tyrannus* a number of differentiated extras constitute with their silent presence a tableau of supplication and a motive for a constant reference to their position as suppliants. More clearly than in *Trachiniae*,¹ the prologue of *O.T.* makes a perceptible distinction between a first and a second scene:

a) Lines 1-86 is a two-actor scene with Oedipus and the Priest in the presence of the group of suppliants.

b) Lines 87-150 is a three-actor scene with Oedipus and Creon, and the Priest in silent attendance together with the crowd of suppliants. It is the Priest who closes the scene with the parting words of the delegation.²

The situation is set in the heroic time of Thebes where the plague devastates land and people. Oedipus is the dominant figure of the speeches, while the Priest and Creon play secondary roles. However, the roles of the two subordinate characters have no equivalent importance since the first makes no other appearance in the play, by contrast

¹ Cf. Part II, ch. 5.b.

² The first part of dialogue is constructed with long speeches on the part of Oedipus and the Priest, in contrast with the quick pace of the second part, where Oedipus and Creon converse in short dialogues and agitated stichomythias. Sophocles nowhere in his extant plays begins with immediate dialogue, but he rather makes a longer speech precede a dialogue. The technique is different in comedy where Aristophanes starts his plays by plunging them immediately in open dialogue, and it is unlike the Euripidean monologues which give necessary information at the outset of the plays. See Nestle (1930) 41: "Sophokles sucht die erzählende Expositionsrede äußerlich durch Dialogisierung, innerlich durch Erfüllung des Expositionsstoffes mit Ethos und Pathos zu überwinden".
with Creon who will be attacked by Oedipus in a strong argument later in the play and who will appear at the end to assume power.³

Apart from the parodos-song,⁴ the first scene of the prologue elucidates a theme which is soon to be forgotten in the play: the infliction of the plague upon the city. Oedipus is expected to perform as an omnipotent ruler who can rescue the city now, as in the past he had solved the riddle of the Sphinx. The delegation of the suppliants might seem purposeless, because Oedipus is already aware of the situation (58ff.), but their presence helps the audience understand the dramatic situation and the special significance of Oedipus' relation with his city.

The staging of the prologue has been interpreted in various ways as to the nature of the extras: some critics accept the existence of extras who enter before the play begins, and others dispense on the whole with the idea of a crowd-scene.

a) Pickard-Cambridge suggests that the Chorus make their entrance at the very beginning of the play in a mixed group with the extras, who leave separately from the Chorus at the end of the prologue.⁵ Burian, followed by Rehm,⁶ thinks that a group of

³ Webster (1936) 165 points to the fact that the arrival of Creon corresponds to Hyllus' arrival in the prologue of Trachiniae. After "Deianira and Oedipus have expounded the situation at home, Hyllus and Creon bring the news from outside which carries the play forward".

⁴ Cf. Burton (1980) 143: "the description of the [...] symptoms of plague, which appears first in the prologue, comes after the prayer in the lyric, [...] and the lyric opens with the message from Delphi with which the prologue closed".

⁵ Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 248, quoted by Calder (1959) 121-129, esp.123 and n.12 with remarks about the argument.

suppliant extras assemble at the altar before the entrance of the first speaker.\(^7\)

b) Calder excludes the likelihood of an abundance of extras on the stage of the fifth-century theatre and takes as plausible the address to the audience which would involve them "more intimately with the stage action". Furthermore, he accepts that a priest and two boys, who can be later used for the mute parts of Antigone and Ismene, enter from the right parodos, and Oedipus possibly with an attendant \(^8\) enters from the palace and addresses the audience as his children.\(^9\)

c) Bain and Taplin rule out the argument for audience address.\(^10\) Taplin contends that audience address is a prominent feature of Old Comedy as well as in Menander, whereas any similar case in the grammatical use of the second person in Tragedy seems to be explained as a paraenetic second person or a simple colloquial idiom.\(^11\) If we were to assume that no extras appear in the prologue of \textit{O.T.}, the effect produced by lines 78ff., 91\(^12\) and 142ff,\(^13\) would be strange. How can we imagine an audience giving the signal

\(^7\) Burian (1977) 83 argues that the ceremony of supplication brings a certain surprise at the beginning of the play because the audience would expect the leading priest of Zeus to make an opening speech and not Oedipus to enter and address the suppliants; Taplin (1977a) 134, 136 talks about the 'tableau' openings for the Theban defenders in \textit{Seven against Thebes} and \textit{O.T.}

\(^8\) Jebb on 144: "ἐκλλοῖς is one of the king's attendants".


\(^11\) Taplin (as above) n.7. Bain (1975) 20 and n.1 remarks that "in Tragedy the movement and the entrance of characters without speaking roles are not always clearly indicated in the text in the way those of the major characters are".

\(^12\) Bain (1975) 22, n.1.

\(^13\) Taplin (1977a) 130.
of Creon's arrival or as addressees of Creon's secrecy about the information from Delphi?¹⁴

Critics who accept a crowd-scene at the beginning of O.T. are at pains to define the number and the composition of the mute extras in the role of the suppliants. Children seem to be prominent among a company of young children (16-17) and aged priests (17-18). However, the essential question is whether there are two groups or three. With ἱππεῖς (codd.) and only a comma at the end of 17, there are three groups, but there is some lack of symmetry in that the ἡθεοὶ are not given a description in 16-17.¹⁵ Bentley's ἱππεῖς gives two groups, with 17-18 restating the contrast in 16-17.¹⁶ The only problem here is that one has to count the ἡθεοὶ as a suitable term for the children. The leading Priest speaks on behalf of this deputation (10, 18).¹⁷ Oedipus is addressing the mute children as if an answer was expected by them,¹⁸ yet he carries on a

¹⁴ The same problem of the staging of extras has been identified in the prologue of Aeschylus' Seven against Thebes, where an Athenian audience could hardly imagine themselves in the position of participating in the impending battle. Cf. Bain (1987) 6 and n.17, 18 with analogous arguments refutable of a crowd-scene in the Seven against Thebes. But in Eumenides Ἀττικὸς λεός at 681 might also include the audience as well as the assembled jurors; cf. Taplin (1977a) 394-5.

¹⁵ Henry suspects text corruption at 18 because ἡθεοὶ are mentioned only here, and he prefers to read τῶν ἱερών instead of ἡθεον eliminating the 'unmarried youths' from the text. Burian (1977/94 rightly answers that "it is natural to find them alongside the very young and the old in a delegation that represents the whole city".

¹⁶ See Lloyd-Jones & Wilson (1990) for the point that 31-2, 58 and 142 give prominence to the children.

¹⁷ Fitton-Brown (1952) 2-4 argues for a youthful delegation with three (!) aged priests; Henry (1967) 48-51 thinks that λεκτοὶ means that "a choice had been made from among the children of the more noble families and from among the more important priests", and especially p.51: "children are the central figures in this deputation".

¹⁸ Cp. lines 1, 6, 58, 142.
dialogue with their spokesman. At line 9 he makes a direct reference to the Priest by calling him ὁ γερατε, but he "begins his second speech in answer to the priest with the words ὁ παιδες οἱκτροί" (58). Besides, the Priest points to the ages of the suppliants, but at line 32 he gives prominence to the children. At the end of the scene the Priest matches Oedipus' dismissal of the children (142) with a similar command ὁ παιδες, ἱστώμεσθα (147).

It makes best sense to adopt the view that the suppliants have already taken position before Oedipus enters in a silent tableau of supplication. Jebb suggests that for a moment "Oedipus gazes silently on the groups at the altars and then speaks". In at least one case we are certain about the movement of the mutes before the entrance of the third speaker. They do not announce an entry as would happen with a speaking character, but they give a sign to the Priest to inform him about Creon's arrival (78-79). Creon arrives with news from Delphi, and an enhanced dialogue creates the suspense of a new issue: Phoebus has revealed that the city suffers because the murderer of Laius remains unpunished. Lines 91-92, presumably referring to the crowd of suppliants, bring a delay

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19 Dawe (1982) on 10: "πρέπειν γεφυς/πρὸ τῶνδε φωνεῖν is an unobtrusive example of Sophocles' ability to convey both primary and secondary meaning in the briefest phrase".

20 Henry (1967) 51.

21 Campbell (1924) on 15: "ἥλίκοι: ages most befitting supplication".

22 See Jebb on the setting of the opening scene. Kamerbeek, Introduction, p. 11-12, implies that by reference to τεκνα (1, 6) is stressed "the father-son relation between the good ruler and his subjects".

23 Kamerbeek on 78-79 argues that "some of the suppliants who are nearer to the stage entrance on the spectators left" made the sign to the Priest and not as Jebb suggests that "some of these had come near to the priest and had whispered the announcement in his ear".
in Creon's revelations, as he hesitates to speak openly in the presence of a crowd. Creon argues for a more confidential and exclusive handling of the issue, while Oedipus urges him to present in front of everybody what is the oracle from Delphi. The emphasis of the city in the words of the Priest (cf. 22, 28) defines the silent suppliants as members of the community, who appeal to their leader (14) with feelings of trust and solidarity (40-57). Oedipus responds to their plea with eagerness to have the news from Delphi delivered to him in their presence. The tragic irony is stressed at the end when Oedipus renews his commitment to the best action, this time, in order to discover and punish the murderer of Laius. At 150 the stage remains empty for the entrance of the Chorus after the indication that the Priest and the suppliants exit to the parodos. The departures of Oedipus and Creon are a debating point since indication of exact movement is rather unclear at the end of the scene.

The suppliants in the prologue and the Chorus in the parodos-song are parallel in their function, which is to stimulate the idea that the city works in unity: the Chorus recapitulate the Priest's description of the plague (15-30//168ff.), and they appeal to a trinity of deities as the Priest appeals to Oedipus explaining that he does not equate him with a god (31-53//159-167, 190ff.). This is an impressive opening in which Sophocles takes advantage of a group of mute extras, who represent the city as suppliants before the arrival of the Chorus. With their physical presence they provide a tableau, which comes into contrast with the image of Oedipus clinging together with his daughters at

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24 Mastronarde (1979) 38 (and n.7) summarizes the instance in a general remark that "surprise, precaution about potential listeners, and attempts to divert the dialogue from an unpleasant topic occasion other delaying counter-questions".

the closure of the play.²⁶

²⁶ See also Part I, ch. 1.d., n.14 for the connection of the opening mute 'children' and their exodos counterparts Antigone and Ismene.
In the verbal exchanges between Teucer, Agamemnon and Odysseus (Ajax 1226-1373), there are hints which point to Ajax lying dead in the background. In particular, lines 1304-1309 recall the impact of the silent tableau with dead Ajax, Eurysaces and Tecmessa, by relating it to the action in the foreground. The silent supplication scene, in which Eurysaces stands in close contact with his father's body, provides a contrast with the disputation scene between Teucer and Menelaus and remains unchanged throughout the quarrel between Teucer and Agamemnon.¹

At the end of the dispute between Odysseus and Agamemnon (1318-1373) attention is once more drawn to Ajax's corpse and the burial (1376-1401). Odysseus is not permitted to stay in close contact with dead Ajax, but he can attend the funeral together with any other man in the Greek army whom he is willing to bring with him (1393-1397). Odysseus leaves at 1401 and Teucer starts to set in motion the silent tableau, which was set up at 1168ff. First he divides the people on stage into three groups according to the tasks they have to undertake for the preparations of the funeral: some of them will dig the grave (1403-4), some others will arrange the holy ablutions (1404-6), and another band will bring Ajax's armour from the tent (1407-8).² Eurysaces is keeping in close

¹ Burian (1972) 155 and Bowra (1944) 50. Mastronarde (1979) 115 comments that "although the Greek tragedians did make use of pathetic and meaningful tableaux as background for dialogue, the audience cannot be expected to infer something important from a silent tableau that is not intimately related to what is being said".

contact with his father, continuing to hold him firmly on the side and contributing symbolically to the removal of the body.³

There is no specific indication in the text to define who are these people, the Chorus or attendants. They can probably be the Chorus together with a group of extras who represent soldiers from the Greek army.⁴ It is likely that Teucer addresses this group of extras when he urges anyone who is a friend of Ajax to join the procession of his funeral. When the Chorus recite the anapaestic coda (1418-20), the procession has already started to move. It has been suggested that (a) the departure is made in a form of funeral procession with all people leaving down one of the eisodoi⁵ or (b) there are separate exits in three groups and an exit through the central doorway.⁶ It is better to imagine that all people on stage make a processional exit "to create the impression of unity, rather than the division which the words of Teucer indicate".⁷ So I would rather accept that Teucer's orders point to the division of the tasks assigned to the participants in the burial than to their departures in three different directions.

In the final scene there is a solemnity equal to the ritual act of supplication presented in

³ See Mills (1980-81) 134, n.18 for a summary of Eurysaces' role in the play.

⁴ Melchinger (1974) 179: "Sie [die Pompe] ist kaum denkbar ohne die Kopha". Jebb 1402f. suggests "one or more πρόσπολοι to carry the body".

⁵ Jebb on 1403f., Stanford on 1418-20, Easterling (1993) 15; cf. also Kamerbeek on 1415 quoting the scholion ad 1418: "ταύτα δὲ ἔμα λέγοντες προσέπουσι τὸν νεκρὸν καὶ γίνεται ἕξοδος πρέπουσα τῷ λειψάνῳ".


the setting of this tableau at line 1168. Teucer's instructions are the means which first define the stillness of the silent tableau and then set off this "tableau in action". While Eurysaces departs holding his dead father in his funeral procession, this last image might have suggested to the audience the established cult which combined Ajax and Eurysaces as heroic figures of worship in Athens and Salamis. This is an effect which has totally vanished for a modern audience of the play.

The final procession gives a sense of the community publicly participating in the funeral of Ajax. The community, assembled by Teucer in the ritual of burial, brings together everybody who is a friend of Ajax: the Salaminian sailors, who are linked by loyalty to Ajax, and every one in the Greek army, excluding the Atreidae, who are cursed by Teucer (1389-92). This is a change of attitudes, which looks different from lines 843-844. In these lines, Ajax had cursed the whole Greek army as an enemy. At the end of the play, the dead Ajax seems to be accepted by the community and honoured by the Greek army, while the Atreidae become marginalised now; even Odysseus and the soldiers he chooses to bring with him are invited by Teucer to witness the funeral, but Odysseus is not allowed to touch Ajax's corpse (1393ff.). What might have been furtive

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8 The definition used by Mills (1980-81) 135.

9 The prominence of the child is also obvious to the fact that Eurysaces had his own place of worship in Athens, the Eurysakeion at Melite; see Kearns (1989) 141 and 164.

10 For the Chorus' relation with Ajax see Burton (1980) 6-7 and Gardiner (1987) 76-77.


12 Cf. Part I, ch. 1.c.
and almost private (cf. 1040) ends up by being a shared ceremony.13

To sum up, the ritualistic element at the end of the play combines two distinct elements in our understanding of the procession: (i) the performance of the crowd (Chorus and extras in unison) is orchestrated by Teucer in the shape of the community, which collaborates for the funeral of Ajax. (ii) Ajax's burial fulfils the expectations of the Athenian audience for the commemoration of the hero and his cultic status.14

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13 Cf. also Easterling (1988) 96. See also Rehm (1994) 81-82: "The oikos survives, insofar as the family's obligations to its dead kurios are fulfilled in a ritually appropriate way".

14 Cf. Henrichs (1993) 175, and n.40. March (1991-93) 25 suggests that the Athenians might have felt a sense of unity with Ajax, while they identified racially themselves with the Salaminians. Cf. also Seaford (1995) 130 who argues that "Teucer's general invitation may reflect public participation in the Attic cult".
3.d. THE PROCESSION IN THE EXODOS OF TRACHINIAE

In the second antistrophe of the fourth stasimon in Trachiniae (947-970), a procession bearing Heracles in a litter is seen to approach the stage. Before that, a gap intervenes between lines 820-970 in which neither Deianeira nor Heracles is present on stage. In the earlier stanzas of the stasimon, the Chorus anticipated the entrance of Heracles. Especially lines 960-1 refer to the report that Heracles is expected to arrive at any moment 'in front of the house'. At 962 the Chorus announce the arrival of the procession. Their words describe the suggestive stages in the approach of the litter. The litter-bearers are not Trachinians but unknown persons (964) bringing Heracles over from Euboea. They tread with "a heavy silent step" taking care not to disturb Heracles (965-7). The Chorus are puzzled by the silence which pervades this marching.

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1 For the differentiation of the scenes in the process of the play see Kane (1988) 208-211.
2 Cf. Jebb on 960: "The phrase is correct, though it would more naturally suggest a movement from within the house".
4 Jebb on 964, see also Burton (1980) 78.
5 See Easterling's commentary on 964.
6 See Easterling on 965-7 for the paradox in βαρείαν ἄψωκον βόσιν: "their tread is heavy, i.e. slow and sad, but at the same time silent"; cf. also Jebb for βαρείαν: heavy with sorrow, slow.
7 According to Jebb and Easterling, the meaning of line πᾶτι δ’ ὀξοφορεῖν (965) signifies the manner of the procession. Davies, quoting West, says that πᾶτι means "by which route" since the Chorus can see the answer to their question. The first interpretation comes closer to the mood conveyed in this procession. The Chorus really
centre of this watchful silence, Heracles is lying voiceless in a stillness which dismays
the Chorus: is he dead or alive?\(^8\) By following the slow movement of the litter-bearers
the Chorus acquire a "visual contact" which does not really result in "a verbal contact"
with the newly arrived persons on stage.\(^9\) In the overall view of the procession, the Old
Man is in the lead of the march while mute extras carry Heracles in the litter. Yet the
picture conveyed in the words of the Chorus is not complete until we hear the Old Man
answering Hyllus (974).

In order to define the silent procession in the context of the final scene we need to
examine whether Hyllus takes part in it. Opposite views have been expressed as to
whether Hyllus participates in the procession or whether he enters after it.\(^10\) At 971
Hyllus bursts into a short lament for his father. Before that, there is no mention in the
text that Hyllus is in any way involved in the procession. It would be odd to imagine that
Hyllus has been staying all this time (947ff.) by his father's side without an effort to
establish contact with him.\(^11\) His subsequent words with the Old Man contribute to the

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\(^8\) Easterling on 970: "the stasimon ends on a note of suspense"; cp. also the point by
Davies on 965 who characterizes the Chorus' mood of amazement as "not literal
requests for information but rather equivalent to an emotional exclamation".

\(^9\) Mastronarde (1979) 101 and n.17.

\(^10\) Hyllus has left the stage at 820 but at 927 he is still in the house.

\(^11\) A number of oddities which militate against the idea that Hyllus takes part in the
procession are set out by Winnington-Ingram (1969) 44-54. To this we can also add
Webster's remarks (1936) 175, e.g. the Chorus speak of "strangers", the Old Man has to
tell Hyllus to be silent, Hyllus has to ask whether Heracles is alive or dead. Webster
concludes that these points would not be valid if Hyllus came with the procession. Yet
he makes Hyllus come out of the house during the song of the Chorus; cf. also Burton
(1980) 78, who presupposes that Hyllus is waiting for his father outside when the
idea that Hyllus makes his entrance after Heracles has been set down in the middle of the stage. If he was with the procession he would not ask whether Heracles is dead or alive (977). Moreover, lines 1018-1022 where the Old Man asks Hyllus to help lift Heracles, and Hyllus takes hold of his father, would read more naturally, if he has come out from the house at 971. In the best case we can infer that Hyllus' entry happens immediately after the Chorus have announced the arrival of the procession.

Yet there is another point to consider in relation to Hyllus' action, which begins with the off-stage events in the narrative of the Nurse: the main part of the narration relates to Deianeira's suicide, but at a subordinate level of narration we follow Hyllus' involvement in his parents' suffering. He is expecting his dying father and he is engaged in preparing a bed for him (901-2), when the news of his mother's suicide catches up with him. Plunged into deep mourning for the death of his parents (936-942), Hyllus is not ready to receive his father before the arrival of the cortège on stage. The sequence of events leaves a gap, because we are ignorant of what happens after Hyllus has abandoned the preparations of his father's litter inside the palace and before the entry-announcement of the procession's arrival. But we may guess that Hyllus must be aware, although the text remains silent, about his father's arrival.

Up to this point, attention has only been drawn to the picture in motion provided by the marching of the procession. However, we no longer have the impression of a silent procession appears.

12 See Easterling on 1021-2 for possible interpretations.

13 See Taplin (1977a) 177 and n.1 who speaks about "a simultaneous and yet separate
procession when the moving picture stands fixed in front of the Chorus. It is now the stillness of a silent tableau which dominates the stage. The incident can make a better dramatic impact if Hyllus while entering, is not confronted by the silent procession but by the silent tableau. This change of attention is obvious in the outburst of Hyllus compared to the words of the Chorus (962-970/971-973). The Chorus stress the fact that they watch a silent procession. Hyllus sees a silent tableau in the middle of which Heracles lies senseless and covered with shrouds (cf. 1078). Hyllus must appear at the very moment when he catches sight of the most striking element of the whole setting and, in his horror, it is natural for him to ignore any other people around Heracles.

In Electra an extrinsic agent comes in and disrupts the stillness of the silent composition in the final scene. This is what happens with Aegisthus, a character newly introduced into the action, who animates with his questions the voiceless persons of the silent tableau. While he points at the shrouded corpse, he triggers the involvement of Orestes entries.

The breaking of a silence is a device which intensifies the dramatic significance of the scene. See Melchinger (1974) 221: "wie um das Schweigen noch mehr zu dramatisieren, lässt Sophokles den Sohn in den Wehruf ausbrechen und an der Bahne niedersinken: er glaubt, der Vater sei tot".

Easterling on 971-1003: "The dramatic effect of this little scene is much weakened if Hyllus, who has been silently accompanying the cortège, suddenly cries out and wakes Heracles. He must be responding at 971-3 to the shock of seeing the motionless form on the litter".

As in Electra so in Trachiniae we have an Exodos in the form of 'Handlungschluß' described by Kremer (1971) 121. At the end of the plays new persons can be introduced who can be either anonymous, like the Old Man in Trachiniae, or secondary in the plot, like Aegisthus in Electra. Kremer provides two general reasons for this: (i) no question must remain unanswered by the end of the play, (ii) the stage events gain in dramatic intensity with a large number of persons to contribute to the impact of the final scenes.
who has been staying silent for a while in the ekkyklema scene. In *Trachiniae* a similar role is played by Hyllus who, by challenging the silence around his father, instigates the Old Man's emergence from the frame of the picture and assumption of a speaking role. With his distressing reactions to the suffering of his father Hyllus breaks the silence, which surrounds the procession. He risks waking Heracles in his disease and he is instructed by the Old Man to "keep silent by biting his lips" (976, cf. 978-981).

The part which follows up to the end of the play can be divided in two sections: a) Lines 983-1042 constitute a scene with three speaking actors, namely Hyllus and the Old Man who form a two-sided dialogue, and Heracles who speaks without entering into contact with the other interlocutors. Hyllus' cries of lamentation awaken Heracles despite the Old Man's admonition to Hyllus to keep silent. The visual impact of the action which takes place around Heracles is strong: first the attendants (1003-1006), and then the Old Man (1007-1009) attempt to touch Heracles in order to comfort him in his pain. When both parties fail to establish contact with Heracles, the Old Man asks Hyllus to assume this task (1018). b) Lines 1043-1278 form a scene which is exclusively occupied with the relationship between father and son. In this context the Old Man has no reason to join the discussion and retires to the background together with the mute

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17 See also Part II, ch. 7.c.

18 Contrast the supplication tableau established by Teucer in *Ajax*. In this play people taking part in the silent pose remain in constant attachment with the body up to the point when the procession begins, while they also serve as witnesses to a series of verbal exchanges between different interlocutors.

19 Easterling on 976-7.

20 Biggs (1966) 223-235: "Heracles' first words in the play are to ask where he is and
In lines 1076-1080 there is again an indication of stage-action, which involves the presence of the crowd as witnesses: Heracles draws aside the wrappings which cover his sick body and reveals the miserable spectacle of his disease. His spectators here are Hyllus, the Old Man, the Chorus of Trachinian women and the litter-bearers. This gesture resembles the uncovering of Clytaemnestra’s corpse in *Electra* (1468) and the uncovering of Ajax’s corpse (1003) in *Ajax*. The dramatic significance of this gesture is differentiated each time by the importance of the agent who executes this action. In *Ajax*, Teucer orders an attendant to uncover the body of Ajax and then he bursts into a lengthy speech in which he recalls the consequences of Ajax’s death. In *Electra*, Aegisthus orders the uncovering of the corpse assuming that Orestes lies dead behind it, because by convention he wishes as a relative to mourn a relative and to be seen mourning. The order is disobeyed by Orestes, while it is assumed by Aegisthus himself.

In *Trachiniae*, Heracles himself removes his coverings because he wants Hyllus and his silent assistants to experience the sight of the terrible disease on his body. This does not necessarily mean that the audience too are able to catch immediate sight of Heracles’ who are the people standing around him (983ff.); his awareness is not for externals”.

Apart from the two lines expressing their fear (1045-6) and another two commenting on the grief all over Greece for Heracles’ death (1112-3), the Chorus keep absent in the happenings of the Exodos; cf. also Burton (1980) 79: "With Deianeira dead, the chorus’ task is done. They take no part in the anapaests or the lyrics which open the final scene. It would be inappropriate for these young girls to do so, overwhelmed as they are by her death and the sight of Heracles”.

Seale (1982) 205 suggests that "the group of foreigners [...] are themselves observers, there to gaze upon a figure who is from the beginning the unequivocal centre of attention", whereas “the group of captive women” are “part of the [tentative] process of observation” (sc. on Deianeira’s part). For the silent captives in relation to mute Iole see
diseased body. The important point of this scene in *Trachiniae* is that the audience witness the spectacle by means of the reactions of the crowd of people (Chorus and silent carriers) who watch silently Heracles' final defeat.

At the end of the play the components of the tableau are reassembled in order to start a new move with a procession leading Heracles to Mount Oeta. The text is full of stage-directions: first Heracles orders his assistants to lift the litter (1255-6). In the next two lines Hyllus gives the sign for the departure. While uttering the final anapaest Hyllus joins the procession with a last request for readiness to move. In the meanwhile, the impact of the scene remains strong as the fixed image of silent bystanders, who are waiting for orders, operates in the background of the verbal exchanges between the sick Heracles and his son.

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Part I, ch. 1.b.

23 See Easterling on 1076-1080.

24 The effect is the same as in *Ajax* where Tecmessa's description of the body alludes to such a terrible sight that an audience may rather imagine than actually see a realistic presentation of the wound in Ajax's body (915-919). The Chorus does not witness the spectacle, but they mourn over the dead body. In *Trachiniae*, the Chorus of Trachinians and the group of foreigners witness the sick body of Heracles, but they mourn in silence (cp. 1199-1200). Cf. Gardiner (1987) 133-135, who mainly speaks of the Chorus but her remarks can also point at the procession of foreigners. Different groups approach Heracles in his sickness "to show that the action is not private, but rather public" (cf. 1112-3).

25 Kaimio (1970) 146, n.1 for ἐγκοινέω "which occurs usually with another verb [...] does not in itself denote quick movements but only quickness in general".

26 Cf. Jebb on 1259-1263: "As Hyllus spoke the last two verses, he gave a sign to the bearers (964) to come forward and resume their places beside the litter. Those five anapaestic lines are spoken by Heracles while that order is being obeyed. Then the words of Hyllus' ἀνέπηρε', ὡσποδοί mark the procession is about to move".

27 See Part I, ch. 3.e.
In *Trachiniae* line 1255, Heracles gives the command to his attendants to raise his litter, and the funeral procession moves to depart from Trachis. Heracles, Hyllus, the Old Man who joins the mute crowd after line 1022, the attendants and the person(s) who is called with the vocative παράβας at line 1275, are the participants in the procession to the Mt Oeta. In order to define more clearly the persons of this procession, with specific reference to the mute participants, and its gradual movement up to the end of the play, we have to consider more carefully the final lines 1275-1278.

The last four lines in *Trachiniae* remain an unresolved crux as to who is the speaker and who is the addressee. The manuscripts assign the lines either to the Chorus or to Hyllus. Critics have considered different combinations between the speaker and the addressee:

i. Hyllus may be addressing Iole or the Chorus (or the Chorus-leader).

ii. The Chorus-leader may be addressing the other members of the Chorus or Iole.

The different opinions are presented as follows:

a) Jebb assumes that Hyllus addresses the Chorus. He thinks that the Chorus should maintain its silence in this last scene so that Hyllus is allowed "to sum up the lesson of his father's fate".

b) Kaimio points out that nowhere else occurs "a vocative singular addressed by the

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1 See Easterling' commentary for the scoliast on 1275-8: τοῦτο λέγει ὁ Ὑλόματος ὁ Ὀορος ἡ ὁ ὁ ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτοντο τε ὦτο

2 Jebb on 1275-1278.
Chorus-leader to the Chorus" and she also criticizes Jebb's assignment of line 1275 to Hyllus on the grounds that "there is no reason for Hyllus to take notice of the Chorus-leader, who has spoken the last time in 1112f."\(^3\)

c) Hoey suggests that Iole is addressed by Hyllus to join the movement.\(^4\)

d) Burton takes the Chorus as the speaker but Iole as the addressee, arguing that "a single individual is being addressed with pointed emphasis" rendered by the pronoun μηδε σο\.\(^5\)

e) Easterling, followed by Stinton,\(^6\) points to the neutrality of the last lines, which seems more appropriate to an utterance by the Chorus. The addressee is thereby most likely to be the Chorus of maidens, who "are par excellence the witnesses and they are therefore dramatically much more important here". Easterling also points out that the use of the second person plural is the commonest form of address to the Chorus, but "plural choruses often use the first person singular of themselves".\(^7\)

f) Davies remains undecided either for Hyllus or for the Chorus but he thinks that "the likeliest candidate" for παρθενις is the Chorus.\(^8\)

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\(^3\) Kaimio (1970) 190-1.

\(^4\) Hoey (1977) 2.


\(^6\) Stinton (1990) 454-492, esp.486.

\(^7\) Easterling (1981) 56-74, esp.71. Cf. also Vuorenjuuri (1969) 158: "From the fact that this form [vocative singular] does not appear when the actor is speaking with the whole chorus, we cannot draw the conclusion that it positively would not exist".

\(^8\) Davies (1991) on 1275.
g) W. Kraus defends Iole's reappearance at the end of the play. He assumes that the Chorus address Iole, who, nevertheless, remains inside the stage building. Only at the end of these lines does Iole emerge from inside after she has heard these words and joins the cortège. Kraus refers to a close parallel in Ajax's parodos where the Chorus of sailors address Ajax who remains inside the hut.9

Critics who argue that the vocative points at Iole rely on the fact that she has been a silent character throughout the play. The singular address could point at her with the name παρθένε with which she was addressed by Heracles at line 1219. However, Iole has not been on stage after her exit together with the other captives from Oechalia at line 334 and she has not been a close witness to the deaths and the calamities which have befallen the house (1276-7). She might have made a silent reappearance while Heracles and Hyllus were talking, but the text nowhere bears such an indication.10 It is true that the Chorus take no large part after line 870 apart from a couple of lines at 1044-5 and 1112-3. But these lines, compared with the last four lines of the play, suggest a consistent attitude on the part of the Chorus by pointing to the fact that the young maidens have been all the time the closest witnesses to the sufferings of the house. This is also obvious by what they utter in lines 947-952 of the last stasimon, especially 950-1 with the substitution of μένομεν for μελλομεν to mean: "one disaster is plain to see, one we are still awaiting".11

10 See Easterling (1981) 71, who refers to Hourmouziades' remark about the oddity of a silent entrance at this point.
The attribution of lines 1275-1278 to the Chorus would probably satisfy the requirements of dramatic convention according to which the parting words of the plays are normally assigned to the Chorus. As a result a neutral comment brings about a moderate mood at the end while signalling to the audience the borders of the play. If the lines are spoken by the Chorus, Hyllus' criticism of the cruelty of the gods (1266-7) and the ambiguity of κοτδέν τούτων δὲ μὴ Ζεὺς (1278) are perfectly compatible. If Hyllus is speaking the final lines, the point may be precisely to criticize Zeus. As Easterling argues "the final line adds comparatively little to what he has already said, though it has point and effectiveness in that at last it actually names Zeus".13

I would suggest that the end of Ajax provides a very close comparison with the end of Trachiniae and helps us to understand why we should opt for Hyllus as the person to speak the final lines. In these two plays a person actively involved in the happenings on stage undertakes the role of shaping the solemn character of the closing movement:

a) In Ajax, Teucer assumes the role of a stage-manager who (i) sets up the silent tableau with the dead Ajax, Eurysaces and Tecmessa in lines 1168-1184 and (ii) arranges the action before the final massed departure. Eurysaces, the mute child, is particularly called to perform a supportive action in the removal of the body (1409-1411). Tecmessa, who has also been on stage, is supposed to follow, though there is no special instruction or reference to her presence. The attendants are specifically ordered to perform a number of tasks (1403-1408). And the Chorus of sailors, who stand nearby, are addressed by Teucer with a singular ποζζ, continued by the explanation φιλάζος δὲ τις ἀνήρ, to join the

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12 Roberts (1987) 51-64.

procession.

b) At the end of *Trachiniae* there are commands and indications which prepare the closing movement of the cortège: in lines 1252-3 Heracles urges Hyllus to proceed fast to the execution of his father's last wishes. In lines 1255-6 Heracles turns to his attendants with the order to lift the litter because it is time for him to reach the end of his sufferings. After this order Hyllus feels constrained to consent to his father and, presumably, he makes a sign to the bearers to assume positions beside the litter (1257-8). In lines 1259-1263 Heracles addresses his 'unyielding soul' to impose silence on himself and to keep calm. At 1264 Hyllus repeats the order to the attendants. Up to this point the play takes on a slow rhythm which allows time for the procession to start. The indications in the text have shown that Heracles remains throughout at the centre of interest, and the final commands must refer to the coordination in the movement of the procession.

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14 In lines 1193-1202 and 1221-1229, Hyllus has been asked to light the pyre, and to marry Iole. But Hyllus is excused the actual lighting of pyre at 1211-1215.

15 Jebb on 1257-8.

16 Easterling (1982) on 1260. See also Introduction (iii).

17 At the very last moment of the play, the note of speculation, which Hyllus conveys in his speech, brings out a sort of detachment from the previous tone of preparation for the departure of the procession. Cf. Stinton (1990) 486: "Hyllus is the third most important character in the play, and his words at this point must carry weight. Indeed, if this speech continues to the end of the play, they have an even greater force". His anapaests assume an allusive tone where he accuses gods of being cruel to mortals. His reference to present and future (1270-1) probably alludes to the apotheosis of Heracles which is, otherwise, not clearly mentioned in the play. Cf. Mikalson (1986) 89-98, esp.92 and n.6 for a brief criticism on the principal views on the allusion to Heracles' apotheosis and his point on open-endedness as a familiar pattern in Sophocles' plays. For a more recent and thorough discussion on the end of the *Trachiniae* see Holt (1989) 69-80 who, apart from noticing small hints on the text (cf. 200, 436-7, 635, 1191-2, 1211 and 1270), pays
The following readings have been proposed for the movement at line 1275:

a) Most of the manuscripts read λείπων...ἀπε' οἰκῶν, which Mazon and Kamerbeek accept as meaning "stay away from your homes".

b) Dawe dismisses this interpretation as inadequate and he proposes the reading ἐπ' οἰκῶν with the meaning "don't be left behind, in tears". Easterling considers that Dawe's reading with the meaning "do not you, either, my dear, refrain from tears any longer" is "inappropriate" because the introduction of a threnos at the end of play is out of place for an ἀστένωντος κόσμοντος funeral (1200). Despite Davies' objections that this instruction concerns only Hyllus without engaging the Chorus in a similar attitude, Easterling's argument seems to provide a clear response at this point: "There is a sense of ritual prescription here which makes Heracles' words seem to extend to everyone present on this solemn occasion".

c) There is an ancient variant ἐπ' οἰκῶν. Easterling interprets "do not you be left behind at the house, either". This reading seems better because "οἰκῶν must surely refer to the house that has been the scene of the tragedy, not the dramatically unimportant houses of

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particular attention to the mention of the pyre as a very forceful motif to remind the audience of "Heracles' exaltation". He also thinks (p.76) that "[the] preparations [for the exaltation] serve two important functions. They show the inauguration of a religious rite, and they mark a change in Heracles".

18 Dawe (1978) on 1275-1276.


20 Davies (1991) on 1275.

To sum up, first the Chorus of Trachinians 'orchestrated' the silent approach as the bearers of the litter came slowly into view (cf. 959ff.). At the end of the scene Heracles gives the command to depart (1255), and Hyllus assumes the role of a stage-manager, who 'orchestrates' the different groups in the procession to Mt Oeta. Line 1275 thrusts upon the very ending of the play the fact that the principal action at this point is the funeral procession in which everybody on stage must take part. This public gathering for the cremation of Heracles is much more diverse than the homogeneous crowd of people, who escort Ajax's procession at the end of the play, or the community of Thebes, which is represented by the silent suppliants and the Chorus of Thebans at the beginning of *Oedipus Tyrannus*.

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22 See n.19 above.


24 As Holt (1989) 76 shows, the ritual of Heracles' cult "takes shape before our eyes". The imminence of this event is combined with the ambiguity of the final line on the omnipresence of Zeus; cp. Davies (1991) on 1278: "Zeus is present in everything that has happened".
3.f. CONCLUSION

In the prologue of *O.T.* a group of selected representatives of the Theban city enter before Oedipus and take supplicating positions around the altars. They consist of young children and aged priests with the speaker Priest at the head of the delegation. The mute extras suggest with their silent supplication that the city of Thebes is united in its petition for their leader's assistance in order to receive protection against the threat of destruction. This silent image of supplication operates as a framework in the exchanges between Oedipus, the Priest and Creon. The crowd of suppliants does not seem to get involved in elaborate action but they are obviously seen to give the sign to warn of Creon's arrival as it is attested by the Priest (78-9). The speakers are conscious of the fact that their words are spoken in front of the silent crowd, so the decision of Oedipus to undertake strict measures for the safety of the city has an immediate impact on the suppliants and is received with relief by them (147-8). The idea that the city works in unison starts with the silent suppliants and is accomplished by the Chorus of Theban Elders in their parodos-song.

In the last scene of *Ajax* Teucer orchestrates the ceremonial movement of the silent procession to its exit. Here the extras represent soldiers from the Greek army who join the Chorus of Salaminians and collaborate with specific tasks to the burial of Ajax. This feeling of togetherness is conveyed through a spirit of reconciliation and amity for Ajax. This is a new spirit that replaces the situation of conflict and hostility bred by Menelaus and Agamemnon, who, as a result, become isolated in their unmitigated hatred.
The Chorus in the exodos of *Trachiniae* describes the slow marching of a silent cortège, which carries the poisoned Heracles in front of the palace of Trachis. This group of people are strangers to the city, which means they are not homogeneous with the Chorus of Trachinian women. In this sense, they are differentiated from the consistent crowds in *Ajax* and *O.T*. It is better to assume that Hyllus arrives alone after the litter-bearers have placed Heracles on the ground in his bed of sickness, and not together with the cortège. At this point, the silent procession turns out to be a silent tableau with the sleeping Heracles and his attendants, while the Old Man emerges as a speaking character and converses with Hyllus. In lines 1252-1278 Hyllus undertakes the role of orchestrating the movement of the processional exit which includes Heracles in his litter, Hyllus, the Old Man, the attendants and the Chorus, who are invited to join their steps in lines 1275-1278. We have seen that Iole is unlikely to be addressed by Hyllus and told to take part in this massed departure because her role seems to have finished with her exit at line 334. This finale corresponds to the ending of *Ajax* where Teucer also works as a stage-manager who concentrates speakers and non-speakers in the departure of the silent procession with Ajax.

The use of silent extras does more than intensify emotional effects in the plays: it can alter meaning in significant ways. The contrast between the cortège bringing in Heracles and the procession taking him to Mt Oeta is a good example of such a shift.
4.a. INTRODUCTION

The examples in this Chapter register a list with single attendants in Sophocles' plays. They can be bodyguards, handmaids or child guides. Here I attempt to examine the frequency and nature of orders given to single attendants as well as their interaction with speakers and non-speakers. In *Philoctetes* the attendants are sailors in the escort of Odysseus and Neoptolemus. They perform violence against Philoctetes, when ordered so by Odysseus. Their action becomes of particular interest since we have to examine whether Odysseus' orders are also addressed to the Chorus of sailors. In *O.T. Oedipus'* bodyguards perform violence at his summons, and Iocasta's handmaid helps with offerings to Apollo. In *Oedipus Coloneus* 830-840 bodyguards in the escort of Creon intermingle with their master and the Chorus in a violent act against Antigone and Oedipus. In *Antigone*, Creon repeatedly gives orders to his bodyguards. *Ajax* and *Electra* entail a limited number of orders to attendants.

In Sophocles' extant plays, child roles are always played by mutes, either named children with dramatic importance or nameless children as attendants. We have already seen that

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1 Aeschylus seems to make no use of children, while Euripides gives them singing parts in several of his plays e.g. *Alcestes, Andromache* and the *Suppliant Women*. Cf. Sifakis (1979a) 73.
children are involved in the opening scene of *O.T.*, taking part in a crowd-scene of supplication.\(^2\) Children with an auxiliary role are of a standard type as guides to the seer Teiresias in *O.T.* and *Antigone*.

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\(^2\) For extras in the crowd-scene at the beginning of the play see Part I, ch. 3.b.
4.b. SINGLE ATTENDANTS

In *Antigone* there are a number of commands given by Creon to his bodyguards:

1. Line 491 καὶ νῦν καλεῖτ' : Creon orders his attendants to fetch Ismene on stage in a scene with Antigone.

2. Lines 577-8 νὺν/κομίζετ' ἐἴσω δὴμῶς: Creon's guards receive the order to arrest and drag Antigone and Ismene away. Lines 578-9 imply that the guards can practise violence against the two women.

3. Line 760 ἄγετε: in his dispute with Haemon, Creon orders his attendants to bring out Antigone in order to be executed on stage. The order is cancelled because Haemon hastens off, refusing to see such a horrible spectacle (762-765). Creon leaves the stage with his attendants after having delivered once again the death sentence against Antigone.

4. Lines 885 and 887 οὐκ’ ἀξέθ’ ἄφετε: after Antigone's participation in the lament with the Chorus, Creon makes his entrance and once again orders his guards to seize and drive her to her tomb. Antigone delivers a long speech (891-928) and the order is carried out after delay. Creon blames his attendants for this delay and threatens them with violence (931-2).

5. Lines 1108//1110 ἵτ’ ἵτ’ ὀπάνοντες//ὁρμᾶς: Creon commands his attendants to leave for Antigone's tomb. He includes those who are with him and others offstage (οἱ τ' ὀντες οἱ τ’ ἀπόντες 1109). This order is executed and reported by the Messenger as an offstage event while Creon's attendants open Antigone's rocky prison and find her
and Haemon dead.

6. Lines 1320-1 ἰὼ πρόσπολον ἐπόγετε μ’ ὅτι τάχος, ἐγετέ μ’ ἐκποδῶν: in this emphatic command, Creon, overwhelmed by the suicide of Haemon and Eurydice, orders his bodyguards to take him away. At 1339 Creon lamenting for his dead son, repeats the same order to his attendants. Up to this point Creon had repeatedly ordered his bodyguards to seize Antigone and practise violence against her. Now Creon orders his soldiers to carry him away. This is an impressive reversal in the commands that Creon had given to his bodyguards from the beginning of the play, which stresses the fact that, at the end of the play, things turned out to be devastating for Creon. His frequent recourse to violence earlier in the play must make this effect all the stronger.

In *Antigone* it is clear at entrance that the seer Teiresias is escorted by an attendant, a slave boy (989), and the order to exit is immediately executed when given to the boy (1087).

In *Philoctetes*, attendants assume a most elaborate mode of behaviour:

1. Line 45 τῶν οὖν παρόντα πέμψων ἐς κατασκοπήν: Odysseus asks Neoptolemus to send an attendant away for inspection of the place.

2. Line 125 καὶ τῶν σκοπῶν πρὸς νεῶν ἀποστελῶ πάλιν: in the prologue, Odysseus mentions a scout (cf. 45), who will be sent later disguised as the Merchant.

3. Line 542 ὁ μὲν νεῶς σῆς ναυβάτης: when the scout reappears as the Merchant with a speaking part, he is accompanied by a sailor from Neoptolemus' ship. The

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3 See Bain (1981) 24-25.

4 The instance is unique in Sophocles' extant plays and it is discussed in Part I, ch. 2.c.
Merchant says that the sailor was guarding the ship together with two other men.

4. Lines 983, 985 and 988 στείχειν ὃμ' αὐτοῖς, ἢ βία στελούσι σε/οἶδ' ἐκ βίας ἀξιωσίν; ἕ τ' ὁ τ' ὁ σ' ἀπάξεται βία; Odysseus makes his second entrance, and probably two escorts are coming along with him. The scene implies threatened violence against Philoctetes.

5. Lines 1003 and 1054-5 ξυλλάβετε γ' αὐτόν/ἴφετε γ' αὐτόν, μηδὲ προσψκόσητε ἐτι/ἐξῆτε μίμησιν: The threat of violence, which started in the previous lines of the scene, is now to be carried out by Odysseus' attendants. Philoctetes is seized by the bodyguards (1004-5, 1029) but Odysseus orders them to release him after a long speech which Philoctetes concludes with curses against the Greeks.6

The specific indications in the text can be combined in order to estimate the number of extras used in the play. Odysseus mentions a scout in the prologue to check around the place. This mute person will return as the Merchant later in the play, and the role of the Merchant will be taken by the third actor. The false Merchant appears escorted with a sailor and he says that two others are left behind in the ship.7 Neoptolemus is escorted by the Chorus of sailors, rather than any additional bodyguards, who are ordered to

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5 At 1003 Lloyd-Jones and Wilson (1990) read ξυλλάβετον (Bernhardy), which is a neat emendation of the numerical ξυλλάβετ' . Cp. below n.8.

6 Kaimio (1988) 71-72. Ley (1988) 102 argues that "it is not clear whether this is meant to be carried out by members of the chorus, or by supernumeraries whom Odysseus brings with him. But the group of people mentioned at 982/3 is most naturally understood as the chorus". I think it makes best sense to assign extra soldiers to Odysseus to perform the violent action in distinction with the Chorus of sailors, who assist Neoptolemus as "fellow-conspirators", cf. Burton (1980) 249.

7 Neoptolemus, listening to this, is probably meant to be thinking of Odysseus and a sailor, but this is also an allusion which alerts the audience to Odysseus' plan.
support Philoctetes (cf. 887, 890). Odysseus presumably enters with two bodyguards to take Philoctetes away by violence.8

In *Oedipus Tyrannus* there are attendants and orders to be executed in the following cases:

1. **Line 144 ἀλλος...ἀθροιζετω:** Oedipus enters with attendants and he sends one of them to gather the citizens.

1. **Lines 913 and 945:** Iocasta enters with a handmaid who holds offerings to Apollo. The same attendant is used to announce to Oedipus the arrival of the Messenger from Corinth (945-6).

2. **Line 1114 τοὺς ἄγοντας ὀσπερ οἰκέταις:** Oedipus' bodyguards arrive with the Herdsman (cp. 860 where Oedipus asks Iocasta to send somebody for the Herdsman).

3. **Line 1154 οὖχ ὡς τάχος τις τοῦδ' ἀποστρέψει χέρας:** In the scene between Oedipus, the Corinthian Messenger and the Herdsman, Oedipus threatens that violence will be performed by one of his attendants against the Herdsman, who refuses to speak. The order is not carried out, hindered by the Herdsman's "questioning of the command" (1155).9

4. **Line 1429 ἀλλ' ὡς τάχιστ' ἐς οἶκον ἐσκομίζετε:** attendants in Creon's escort are given the order to take the blind Oedipus into the palace. Oedipus resists and the order is delayed because a dialogue between the two persons and the meeting of Oedipus and his daughters interfere. Creon repeats his order at 1515 but this time it is directly addressed

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8 We assume that no more than two extras were used to accompany a superior. A more extended number of extras would bring confusion to the scenes and they are not needed.

9 Bain (1981) 9-10; Kaimio (1988) 70 n.52: "Oedipus' words are much more effective as a hint of the coming torture than as an accompaniment of a whizzing staff".
to Oedipus. In the last scenes of *O.T.*, Creon exerts pressure against Oedipus and the two men debate in strong argument but there is no actual threat of violence.\(^\text{10}\)

In *Oedipus Tyrannus* a mute attendant, probably a slave boy, serves as a guide for the blind Teiresias and stays by his side as long as the encounter lasts with the king. At 297 the Chorus points to the arrival of the seer escorted by attendants. The Chorus-leader uses the plural οἴδε as if the attendants are more than one. At 444 Teiresias addresses his escort with the singular καὶ σοῦ, παῖ while giving the order to lead him off. The execution of the order is delayed because Teiresias turns back and launches another speech against Oedipus (447-462).\(^\text{11}\)

In *Oedipus at Colonus* Creon and Theseus are escorted by bodyguards:

1. **Line 722-3** ἄσσου ἔρχεται/Κρέων δὲ ἧμιν οὐκ ἔνευ πομπῶν, πάτερ: Antigone announces Creon's arrival with attendants.\(^\text{12}\)

2. **Line 826** ὑμῖν ἐν εἶν τὴν ἁπαρός ἐξέγειν: in a violent scene which takes place between Creon, Oedipus and Antigone, Creon orders his attendants to drag Antigone away from her father.

It is difficult to trace the movement and gestures in the dialogue between 830-840 and to

\(^\text{10}\) See also Part I, ch. 1.d.

\(^\text{11}\) This is an exception to the conventional rule that orders to mute attendants must be carried out; see Bain (1981) 14 and 19, n.4.

\(^\text{12}\) Cp. 1019 πομπῶν for Theseus who will accompany Creon in searching the girls. Jebb thinks that the word "has here a touch of grim irony". For the transposition of 1028-1033 to follow 1019 see Lloyd-Jones & Wilson on 1019f.
decide whether it is Creon or his attendants who seize Antigone:

a) Jebb proposes that at 826 Creon addresses his guards with a command, at 830 he steps towards Antigone, at 832 he lays his hand on the girl and one of his guards steps up and places himself at her side. At 840 the Chorus-leader addresses Creon (σοί), as he did at 834 and 838, and, in an immediate reply, Creon orders the guard (σοί) to drag Antigone off.¹³

b) Bain thinks that 826, though addressed to the guards (ὑμῖν), is at this stage only a threat to Antigone. Creon "speaks as though he himself was going to lay hands on Antigone (830) and later he says 'τούς ἐμοὺς ἐγώ' (832)."¹⁴ So he steps towards Antigone and at 831 he seizes her "hence Oedipus' cry ὃ γῆς ἐνακτεῖς". At 834 and 838 the words of the Chorus (οὐκ ἐφησεις/μέθες) mark the fact that Creon holds Antigone and at 840 the dative σοί refers to Creon who is still holding Antigone. With σοί Creon addresses the Chorus, telling them to keep off in a similar command to 836. At 844 "Creon continues to drag Antigone away" and at 847 "he transfers her to his guards who take her off".¹⁵

The difference between the two interpretations is that the former lays emphasis on the attendants' action and the latter, on Creon's action. Bain argues that in the dialogue 829-

¹³ Jebb on 826, 830, 840.


¹⁵ Bain (1981) 53; Kamerbeek (p.129) suggests that in 834 ὃ ἔξεν as in 829 refers to Creon, not one of his attendants. Kamerbeek thinks that it would be better "to assume that no attendant is addressed either by the Chorus or by Creon" in the dialogue 834-840.
840 the second person singular address must be confined between the Chorus and Creon. Moreover, he finds no hint in the text that Creon makes a signal to his attendant to grasp Antigone. Jebb's interpretation gives advantage to the development of a climax in the practice of violence when Creon alone seizes Oedipus at 876ff.\(^{16}\) It also resembles the movement at the end of *O.T.*, where Creon leads Antigone and Ismene away from their father. Creon's attendants are supposed to perform the action in response to their master's gesture to lead the girls out. However, despite the sustainable reasons for either case, i.e. that Creon, or his attendants, seize Antigone, we cannot have a definite and precise idea of the gestures that happen on stage.

I would suggest that a combination of the staging proposed by Jebb and Bain can be as follows: the dialogue between 830-840 involves only Creon and the Chorus (with the exception of Oedipus' short interference at 831, 833 and 838). So, as Bain argues, the antithetical datives σον/σοि should point to each other, thus signalling the fact that this is a strong argument between opponents. According to Jebb, it is the guard who drags Antigone off in response to Creon's order. So while Creon and the Chorus address each other in the verbal action (like Bain), the physical action is performed by the attendants (like Jebb). Mute attendants are, by convention, the persons who perform the execution of orders on stage.\(^{17}\) In this way, a distinction can be drawn between two levels of performance: the speaking parts and the non-speaking parts, and this idea can be brought

\(^{16}\) Cf. Kaimio (1988) 76-77, who thinks that the conventional rule of the attendants' task to execute orders should be used to avoid repetition of a similar action by Creon at 876ff.

\(^{17}\) In this sense we should read something more than a threat at 826-7, and this entails the attendants' grasping of Antigone.
out in the staging of the play to denote that the two aspects of performance are interacting in the general spectacle. Finally at 844 Antigone is dragged by the attendants and at 847 Creon orders them to take her off.

3. Line 897 and 904 οἵκουν τις ὡς τάχιστα προσπόλων μολὼν//ἵθ', ὡς ἄναγγε, σὺν τάχει: Theseus sends his attendants to stop Creon's bodyguards, who are taking Antigone and Ismene to Thebes (cp.933). At 1098 the two girls are announced as entering, escorted by Theseus' soldiers (cp.1103).

In *Electra* there are the following indications for the presence of attendants:

1. Line 634 ἐπαιρε δὴ σὺ θύμωθ' ἡ παροῦσα μοι: Clytaemnestra is escorted by a handmaid who carries offerings for Apollo, and she orders her to lift them when she starts praying.

2. Line 1123 δόθ',... προσφέροντες: Orestes has entered with attendants and he orders them to hand the urn with his ashes over to Electra.

In *Ajax* there are the following single attendants:

1. Lines 541-2 and 545 δὲ τρο προσπόλων/θυγ' αὐτῶν δοπερ χερσίν εὐθόνων κυρεῖς/ἀὑρ' αὐτῶν, αἴρε δεῦρο: Tecmessa summons an attendant to bring Euryrates before his father. The instance is interesting since we have here a pair consisting of a

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18 Jebb on 899ff.: "ὁντιππον being added merely to give the notion of a pursuit *en masse*. Thus there is some formal resemblance to *Ant*. 1108 though there 'present and absent' is merely a colloquial phrase for every one".

19 The passive προσπολείσθαι is accepted by Lloyd-Jones & Wilson.

20 Cp. *O.T.* 913, and see Jebb ad loc.
named mute character, the child Eurysaces, who is given a certain dramatic exploitation in the play, and a mute extra with the conventional part of an attendant in tragedy.

2. Line 1003 ἐκκόλυψον: Teucer orders an attendant to uncover the dead Ajax.\(^{21}\)

\(^{21}\) For extras in crowd-scenes in \textit{Ajax} and \textit{Trachiniae} see also Part I, ch. 1.b., 3.c. and 3.d.
4.c. CONCLUSION

To sum up, mute single attendants are usually handmaids and, presumably armed, bodyguards. They are not allowed verbal comeback but they may support their presence with gestures, which are taken account of in the words of the speakers. They are usually addressed in the plural with the exception of Iocasta's and Clytaemnestra's handmaid, the attendant who escorts the child Eurysaces, and Teucer's guard who uncovers the dead Ajax. Thus, three possible attitudes can be assigned to the role of single attendants in Sophocles' plays:

a) They accompany persons of high social status in their comings and goings.

b) They receive orders and instructions which are expected to be carried out. In some circumstances the execution of an order is delayed or cancelled. Speeches or dialogues interfering between a command and its execution contrive a delay or a transformation of the command.

c) In some cases attendants are supposed to apply a certain amount of violence involving physical contact. Violent activity increases on stage when confrontation between superiors and prisoners raises anger and tension. The presence of attendants in Antigone and O.C. and Odysseus' attendants in Philoctetes reinforces the sense of the violent potential of these characters.

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Single attendants and children are included in the spectacle not only as part of the appropriate scene-setting, but also they may essentially contribute to the dramatic action, while they execute orders or perform tasks. The presence of soldiers or handmaids at the side of their masters emphasizes the status of the persons they escort. The presence of a young boy at the side of the old seer increases the tension between the prophet's authority and physical helplessness and supplies an image with a vivid and poignant impression of the blind prophet on stage.
PART II

SPEAKERS AND SILENCE
5.a. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the main focus is on the silences of the persons who take part in a three-sided dialogue as it is construed after the entrance of a third speaker. The entrance of a speaker constitutes the simplest technique which introduces a new speaker into the company of the two actors and brings about the change of dialogue between pairs of speakers. In a three-actor dialogue the person who does not speak becomes the silent witness of the verbal exchanges between the two speakers. While I concentrate my attention on silent witnesses in three-actor scenes, I also include, where it is appropriate, the investigation of two-actor scenes in which the silence of a person starts to show before the entrance of a third speaker. There is also discussion of instances where the reluctance of a person to speak openly inhibits the normal expression of speech. Appeals for breaking a silence or orders to keep silent are also considered as constitutive elements in the structure of the dialogue. The particular discussions are linked together in order to trace the silent behaviour of a character.

The first three examples are taken from the prologues of Trachiniae, Ajax and O.C. The last two, drawn from Philoctetes, involve characteristic cases of sudden appearances. The interest here and generally in the thesis is not to elaborate particularly on the nature
of entrances, but to make use of their dramatic technique in order to investigate the
effect of silence on the speakers of the scene, when the dialogue shifts direction at the
entrance of a new speaker. So in *Trachiniae* I will try to account for the Nurse's silence
during Deianeira's introductory speech and to compare this silence with her silent
activity after the entrance of Hyllus. In *Ajax* the aim is to elaborate how Odysseus
operates as a silent witness in the scene which starts with the entrance of Ajax. This
instance presents a unique interest since Odysseus' speechlessness during his silent
witnessing is connected with his invisibility, which is manoeuvred by the divine
intervention of Athena. Though it is not directly linked with my subject, I will attempt to
tackle the issue of Athena's appearance on the ground or on the roof. I draw attention to
this particular question of staging because I wish to show that the impact of the
triangular effect in dialogue would be enhanced had Athena appeared on the same level
with her interlocutors. In *O.C.* the aim is to observe Antigone's silence in the encounter
of Oedipus with the Stranger. In relation to that, I will try to define the verbal
environment from which this silence emerges and to bring together the transition from
two to three speakers at the entrance of the Colonan Stranger. In this scene, I will also
pursue the development of Oedipus' silent activity, which is demonstrated in his
reluctance to reveal more about his destiny.

In *Philoctetes*, Odysseus bursts into the scene as a surprise and his involvement in the
action makes a difference in the rhythm of dialogue. From this point onwards,
Neoptolemus falls into a deep silence, which is characterized by his unwillingness to
answer Philoctetes' appeals to speak. In this section my purpose is to trace back
Neoptolemus' silence before the entrance of Odysseus and relate it with the meaning it
takes when Odysseus engages in dialogue with Philoctetes. The second example in *Philoctetes* lines 1293-1298 serves as a foil to the first sudden entrance of Odysseus in the play. Here I will try to show that Neoptolemus falls into a silence parallel to the previous one, but different in spirit and duration.
The dominant figure in the prologue of *Trachiniae* is Deianeira, who presents herself in three stages: first she delivers a long speech, presumably in the presence of the Nurse (1-48), then she listens to the Nurse's short speech of advice without entering into dialogue-contact with her (49-60), and finally she indulges in a short dialogue with her son Hyllus (61-93). Deianeira's introductory speech matches and slightly exceeds the length of her verbal involvement with the Nurse and Hyllus (48/44 lines). The Nurse becomes the silent witness to the conversation between mother and son, and no attention is paid to her after line 63 up to the end of the scene. First, we have to explore possibilities of how to account for the Nurse's reply at line 49, since there is no obvious sign that Deianeira delivers her speech pointing to a silent addressee.

1 Martina (1980) 53, n.18 contrasts the division of this prologue with two parts from the division of the prologue in *Electra*, where the long rhesis of Orestes is followed by Electra's lyrical anapaests.

2 Heinz (1937) 285-6 has shown that this is not a monologue because the Nurse addresses her mistress calling her by name and comes up with advice for Deianeira, so that the introductory speech is not detached from the ensuing dialogue. She also argues that in Euripides' plays there is no scene with three speakers in the prologue where a third person joins in the dialogue with the other two interlocutors. Therefore, the prologue of *Trachiniae* has not been contrived in the Euripidean manner but seems to belong to an earlier type of technique, allegedly before *Oedipus Tyrannus* and after *Antigone*. On the grounds of dramatic technique, Schwinge (1962) 73-74 thinks that the successive dialogues between pairs of speakers, which are also found in *Ajax* and *Trachiniae*, are evidence for an early dating of these plays, probably earlier than *Antigone*: cf. the transition between pairs of speakers at 536 in *Antigone* and Ismene's reply to Creon at 563/4. Both instances implicate the three speakers as active participants in the dialogue. According to this assumption, the silence of the Nurse in the prologue can be seen as sign of an early contrivance, where the Nurse appears in order to put forward the plot and not to expose the facts like the Nurse in *Medea*. But since so few of Sophocles' plays survive, we can hardly draw any safe conclusions about dating from this evidence. Therefore, the focus of the discussion remains on the dramatic
Deianeira opens the play with an old saying about the subjection of human beings to perpetual reversals of fortune (1-3). Yet the general tone of the first three lines is soon dispelled when Deianeira refers to the reasons for her unhappiness based on events which work as a constant source of fear and anxiety. She had wished for salvation from her suitor, the river-god Achelous. Heracles came to her rescue, he overcame Achelous in a battle and he has taken Deianeira as his wife, but her marriage with Heracles has brought new causes of distress and worries. Heracles is absent all the time with a new labour to perform, while Deianeira is brooding in lonely anxiety waiting patiently for her husband's safe return.

Deianeira's mental journey through time in the landscape of her fears terminates with the disclosure of a new source of weariness, when she admits complete ignorance of the actual whereabouts of Heracles, who has been absent for fifteen months without a sign

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3 Deianeira gives the impression of a woman consumed by fear brought out of disappointed hopes; cp. the two parts in Deianeira's life, the first as a virgin, the second as a married woman. See Easterling (1968) 60, Martina (1980) 62.

4 The opening speech can be compared with Andromache's expository statement at the beginning of Euripides' Andromache. Though the similarities between the two women's lives are apparently close, the content of the rhesis is markedly different. Andromache expounds all the events since her marriage with Hector up to Neoptolemus' departure for Delphi, whereas Deianeira unfolds her emotional state and avoids stating more details about events; cp. Trachiniae 22, and see Martina (1980) 55 and n.23. Her speech is not expository in the manner of Euripidean prologues because she insists on the element of fear, which recurs time and again in the play. See also Easterling (1982) 72 on lines 6-35: "This part of D's speech could have been reduced to a very few words if its function had been one of simple exposition", and Davies (1991) 55: "The Nurse's opening words at 49ff. supply [...] much more in the way of practical information for the audience than does Deianeira's rhesis". Contra Segal (1992) 105-6: "Sophocles uses the expository dialogue only once in the extant plays, in Trachiniae, perhaps because the plot was less familiar to the audience". For Deianeira's emotional state cf. Easterling (1968) 60.
that he is alive, while his family dwells in Trachis in the house of a stranger (36-41).

Deianeira suspects that her husband might be trapped in dire circumstances (43). Before his last departure Heracles had given her a tablet the content of which she cannot understand (46-48).

The action that follows is suggested by the Nurse and executed by Hyllus. Nowhere, however, does Deianeira hint in her speech that the Nurse has been listening to her words and she gives no sign in her first speech that she is aware of the Nurse's presence. Normally we expect that a queen will enter accompanied by an attendant, and superior persons make similar entrances. When Deianeira enters escorted by a slave, the audience might assume that the slave is a mute servant. But the person next to Deianeira

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5 "In the circumstances she can only be referring to an intuition born of fear". Lawrence (1978) 290 where he argues for Deianeira's passivity.

6 Hester (1980) 2 thinks that even later Deianeira's speech of challenge to Lichas at 436-469, which is suggested by the Chorus earlier (387-388) supports the argument for her passivity because it "represents a reaction to events rather than an initiative of her own". But at this point, Deianeira is justified in her state of helplessness and her reaction sounds quite natural after the astonishment she experiences at hearing devastating news. Contrast Ryzman (1991) 388, n.10 where examples suggested by Kirkwood and Bowra align with the theory of Deianeira's passivity. Gellie (1972) 55 suggests that the involvement of the Nurse is necessary because Deianeira "lacks will and the Nurse is the only person supplied by the play to make good the lack". Yet lines 65-66 suggest that Deianeira is far from being a passive character since she gives a response which enhances her dignity and conveys "a sense of urgency", Easterling (1977) 139-140.

7 Easterling (1982) on 1-48. See also C.S. Kraus (1991) 82, n.17: "Deianeira does appear to speak to no one, an effect that is heightened if the Nurse enters with her but remains in the background" and Heiden (1989) 21: "a character, speaking not to another character but to no one in particular, delivers a speech that recounts some of the events forming the background of the play".

8 When we see attendants entering with their masters we should suppose that they are mutes by convention and we should not expect them to have any involvement in the action. Cp. e.g. the Queen's entry in Aeschylus' Persai 155 or Helen's entry in Euripides' Orestes 71.
turns out to be a second speaking character and, besides, she maintains a very specific role in the prologue. First she witnesses her mistress's exposition of sorrows (49-51), then she suggests to her a way to initiate action (54-57), and finally she announces the arrival of Hyllus (58-59). The Nurse's pointing to Deianeira's woes and sufferings and her subsequent advice to send Hyllus for news indicate that she has heard her mistress admitting ignorance about Heracles. When the Nurse finishes her short speech, Deianeira provides no immediate response to the Nurse's suggestion that she direct her words to Hyllus, but she does not fail to comment on "the slave's un-slave-like advice" (61-63).

Hyllus arrives at the opportune moment. The three instances from the prologues in *Trachiniae*, *Oedipus Tyrannus* and *Oedipus at Colonus* (respectively lines 61, 85, 33) belong to scenes where the respective entrances of Hyllus, Creon and the Stranger are first announced by a minor speaker, the Nurse (58-60), the Priest (78-9, 82-3) and Antigone (28-9, 31-2) and then the newcomer is addressed by the person who comes into dialogue-contact with him. Thus a scene of two speakers turns into a scene with

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9 Easterling (1982) on 61-63. Lines 65-66 are a paraphrased version of the Nurse's words 54-55. The Nurse's suggestion to send for Hyllus is prudently imbued with Deianeira's allusion to shame which would befall Hyllus in case he was slow to go and find out his father's fortune.

10 Mastronarde (1979) 20-26 gives examples of a commonplace practice in tragedy where an actor initiates dialogue with the newcomer after an announcement has been made by the Chorus, by another actor or by the actor who comes into dialogue-contact with the entrant.

11 The entrances of Creon in *O.T.* and the Stranger in *O.C.* are "long entry announcements"; cf. Taplin (1977a) 297. See also Part II, ch. 5.d.

12 In *O.C.* Antigone is more than 'minor' of course.
three actors where the minor character of the previous dialogue becomes a silent witness to the new dialogue between the two other interlocutors.

Two final lines by Deianeira (92-93) give Hyllus and the Nurse their cue to depart, leaving the space free for the entrance of the Chorus.\(^{13}\) It is alleged that Deianeira stays on during the parodos-song, but certainty is hardly possible here.\(^{14}\)

To sum up, the prologue scene provides the following information about the relation of speech and silence between speakers and a silent witness:

a) A character of low status speaks words not only fitting her humble origin but she also instructs the queen. It is not an unusual practice in tragedy for slaves to take initiatives in verbal action: the Nurse in Euripides' *Hippolytus* has an important role to play with her advice to Phaedra and her domineering character is outlined in her very first appearance. The Nurse in *Medea* also demonstrates loyalty to her mistress though she is unable to provide Medea with advice while the latter is in her state of mental turmoil. In

\(^{13}\) Both the Nurse and Hyllus have common points of behaviour. They speak with the voice of logic because they are not found in the same situation as Deianeira; cf. Léfevre (1990) 51, n.52. In the development of the play, they both reappear in the Messenger role. At lines 749-812, Hyllus describes the poisoning of Heracles at Cenaenum, and he is the interlocutor with Heracles in the final part of the play, summing up his attitude as the person who has been a witness of his parents' personal doom; see also Bremer (1976) 33. Thus, the oracle has been carried out, from the beginning to the end of the play, in the presence of Hyllus; cf. Martina (1980) 68-71. At lines 899-946 the Nurse narrates Deianeira's suicide off-stage, so her reappearance stresses her involvement in the prologue. Cp. also her involvement in the preceding Kommos. According to Maas' principle, a character of low social standing is not normally given lines in sung metres. The manuscripts attribute lyrical utterances to the Nurse but the text is probably corrupt between 878 and 882. With a small emendation in line 881 we have a complete iambic trimeter; cf. Easterling (1982) 183-185 and Henderson (1976) 19-24.

Trachiniae the result of the Nurse's involvement is that she pushes the action forward, and she causes her mistress to confess that from the mouth of a slave free words can also come, thus bringing out the theme of slavery, which is to be important later in the play (e.g. 367, 453-4). If we regard the prologue without the contribution of the Nurse, who first listens silently to Deianeira's speech and then breaks into with advice, we miss the contrast between Deianeira's complicated reflexions and the Nurse's reasonable mind. We should not suppose that the Nurse is cleverer than her mistress who is unable to act with logic because her intellect is blocked with fear. The Nurse's contribution to the prologue makes her speech describing Deianeira's death (899ff.) more significant because spoken by an individual we already 'know'.

b) Since most scholars agree on the fact that the Nurse enters along with Deianeira, the prologue in Trachiniae seems to be typical of three-actor scenes in which the entrance of the third speaker makes one of the speakers fall silent. The incentive which makes the right time for the Nurse to speak is given in the last part of Deianeira's monologue (36ff.). When Hyllus makes his entrance the Nurse's speaking part is over at this point of the play. As long as the discussion between mother and son lasts, the Nurse stays detached in her unnoticed silence, which denotes her limited scope in this part of the

15 Léfevre (1990) 53: "Wir wissen aus dem Oidipus Tyrannos, daß auch der Klügste dem Affect unterworfen ist. Gibt für Deianeira die Antithese von φόβος und γνώμη, gilt für Oidipus die Antithese von ὀργή und γνώμη". Easterling (1983) 148: "in any case it is more interesting for the audience if the action starts with someone else's response to Deianeira's account of her anxieties".

16 Deianeira motivates action not in the sense of proposing a solution but in the sense of pointing out the change of things through time; cf. Webster (1936) 165. The parallel Webster gives with Clytaemnestra is a useful one for the distance between the two characters. Clytaemnestra needs no Nurse to advise her for the arrangement of the beacons which would transmit the outcome of the events in Troy.
play, and her status as a minor figure who is used to "facilitate transitions" between scenes.\footnote{Reinhardt (1979) 40; cf. also Nestle (1967) 71: "In den Trach. ist die Rede der Amme (49/60), welche die folgende Szene inhaltlich durch ihren Rat und äußerlich durch die Ankündigung des Hyllos (58) vorbereitet".}

\footnote{Reinhardt (1979) 40; cf. also Nestle (1967) 71: "In den Trach. ist die Rede der Amme (49/60), welche die folgende Szene inhaltlich durch ihren Rat und äußerlich durch die Ankündigung des Hyllos (58) vorbereitet".}
The opening scene of Ajax introduces three speakers, one of them representing the goddess Athena. Before any speech is heard, silent activity has already begun with the visual fact of Odysseus' entrance from the spectators' right which, in this case, leads to the Greek camp. Odysseus is hunting Ajax's traces and he circles "mysteriously" about in the orchestra until his sight is sharply directed to the door of the stage-building which represents the military hut of Ajax on the coast of Troy. There he pauses, when the sound of a voice reaches him. He immediately recognizes the voice of Athena, which is clearly heard although she remains invisible to him. The goddess demonstrates herself before Odysseus as a voice but not as a vision (15-16). At line 36 the encounter continues with a vivid dialogue in a two-actor scene enhanced with tense stichomythia (38-50, 74-90) up to the moment when a third speaker, Ajax, enters the stage (91). At this point, Athena is exercising the same power as she previously used in order to make herself invisible, now for the benefit of Odysseus, by rendering him invisible to Ajax's sight. Odysseus, though still visible to the spectators, must be imagined to be the unseen

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1 Jebb's commentary, p.10. For the definition of the *eisodoi* in the Greek theatre see Taplin (1977a) 450-451, and n.4. Taplin argues that "in each particular play the dramatist may set up two separate areas of interest off-stage (besides the building), and so may establish two different and precise directions for the eisodoi. Their particular topographical significance is thus confined to one play, and has to be established afresh for each individual tragedy"; cf. also Taplin (1983) 157-8.

2 Calder (1965) 115.

3 Seale (1982) 144.

4 See below pp. 184-187 for the question whether Athena can be seen by the spectators.
onlooker of Ajax's madness.

As long as the encounter between Ajax and Athena lasts, Odysseus is not only invisible to Ajax but also a speechless figure in the scenic background. His 'invisibility' becomes part of the visual imagery but his silence is a real state of behaviour, which places him in the role of a silent witness of Ajax's madness. A closer examination of the way that invisibility and speechlessness are brought together and prepared in the words of the prologue would help us to understand them as dramatic devices which affect the shaping of the dialogue between the three acting persons.

However, problems arise when we come to explain Athena's position in the opening scene of the play. The text does not give information as to how the presence of Athena was enacted on the stage. The position in the theatre when she starts speaking, as well as her shifts in movement so long as she remains invisible to Odysseus, constitute an unresolved point of controversy. There can be two plausible explanations: (a) Athena appears on the roof of the skene-building or (b) she is standing on the ground.

a) In her opening words Athena repeats that she has kept a constant eye upon Odysseus (δεδορκός τι ε 1, ὅρω 3) and only after she has been recognized by her voice and addressed by him does she reply that she has been following him watchfully all along (36-37). Odysseus shows no consciousness of her presence either in his search or when he pauses before the door of Ajax's military hut. Even so, it would seem extravagant to think that a goddess is pursuing Odysseus' investigatory tracks step by step and that she has terminated her route where Odysseus stopped. Instead, we can speak with
confidence about Odysseus' restless wandering (κυνηγετοῦντα καὶ μετροϋμενον / ἰχνη 5-6, βάσιν κυκλοῦντα 19, ἰχνεύω 20, κατʼ ἰχνος ἄσσω 32), or, later, his slight displacement on stage (ἐπὶ σκηναῖς ναυτικαῖς 3, ἐξω τῆς δε παπταίνειν πύλης 11), and finally his careful retreat away from the main door alluded to in the phrases θαρσῶν δὲ μίμην (68), μηδαμῶς σφ' ἔξω κόλιε (74), μὴ παρόντ' ἵδῃ πέλας (83), σήχα νυν ἐστῶς (87) μένουμ' ὁν (88). Calder has also defended the existence of the theoloeion pointing out, among other arguments, that "the famous fear of Odysseus (74ff.) is reasonable if he is alone in the orchestra with Ajax". Mastronarde thinks that Athena appears on high because "the divine and human status" must be defined as operating on different levels.

b) Pickard-Cambridge argues that Athena appears on the ground concealed in the trees of the grove, and this is the reason why Odysseus is unable to discern her in the first instance. Apart from the indication in the text that Athena followed the same path as Odysseus, there is no suggestion that trees of a grove cover the view of her vision. Moreover, the fact that Athena is pronounced to be invisible to Odysseus does not imply

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5 Calder (1965) 115. In his article he takes over Jebb's position, pushing further the argument for Athena's appearance on the theoloeion. See also Jebb, Appendix on line 15.


7 Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 48, who suggests that these objects were there from the beginning of the play (or brought in by attendants at 1.814); see also Part I, ch. 1.c. for a discussion on locality in the play.
that the audience cannot see her. Stanford, Taplin, and Buxton also follow the view that Athena appears on the ground. The common standpoint in the views of Pickard-Cambridge and Stanford is that a long conversation after line 36 cannot be conducted between an actor on the theologeion and one on the ground.

I would also agree with the opinion that Athena is on the ground when she converses with Odysseus and Ajax. Divine activities are not by any means confined to the upper level in the Greek theatre. A number of Euripidean plays open with gods speaking on stage. The difference with the prologue of Ajax is that deities in Euripides' prologues do not initiate dialogue-contact with mortals, and they disappear before the parados-

8 Cp. the scholiast on 14 [quoted by Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 48]: "ἐστι μέντοι ἐπὶ τῇς σκηνῆς ἢ 'Ἀθηνᾶς' δεῖ γὰρ τὸ τοῦτο χαρίζεσθαι τοῖς θεοτοκῖς". See also Seale (1982) 176 n.3: "The fact that Odysseus claims not to see her is no reason to suppose that she is concealed or partially concealed from the audience", and Melchinger (1974) 197.

9 Stanford (1963) on 15.

10 Taplin argues that it is doubtful if there was any higher platform ('theologeion') in the theatre of the late fifth century: "The only place in surviving tragedy which may call for such a higher platform is the final scene of Euripides' Orestes", Taplin (1977a) 441. Textual references and the shaping of the plays have to be taken into account in the application of specific theatrical effects for the classical period.


12 Mastronarde (1990) 278 discards this argument on grounds of "the visual distinction of divine and human status"; see also ns.97, 98 as above.

13 Apollo and Thanatos in Alcestis 1-76, Hermes in Ion 1-81, possibly Aphrodite in Hippolytus 1-57, Poseidon and Athena in Troades 1-97, Dionysus in Bacchae 1-63. Cf. Taplin (1977a) 116, n.1 and Burian (1977) 86, n.19 for prologue-gods on stage. For the distinction between prologue-gods and epilogue-gods see Hourmouziades (1965) 156ff. The term deus ex machina corresponds to the sudden and unexpected appearance of a deity at the end of a play or (unusually) during the course of the action, as in Heracles. This applies to the Euripidean epiphanies and also to the epiphany in Sophocles' Philoctetes.
song and the arrival of human characters. Instead, Athena in Ajax keeps close interaction with the two mortals and possesses the power skilfully to master their sight. She can conceal herself from view if she so wishes and she can also conceal Odysseus from view so that he can stand by as a silent witness of Ajax's madness in order to publicize it to the Achaeans at a later stage. Odysseus admits that "a god can do anything" and this means that a god has the knowledge to devise things that a mortal could never do. In this case the importance of her τέχνη would have been diminished had Athena been stuck in an immovable position on the roof. She is down on the stage at the meeting point between the seen and the unseen and the audience is called to visualize this illusion.

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14 However, the closest parallel to Ajax is not to be found in a prologue but in the middle of action in Rhesus 595-674 where Athena's appearance is also made obscure by the darkness and Odysseus perceives that she is approaching by her voice. But vocabulary of movement, literally taken, suggests that Athena is acting at stage level; cp. καθ' ἡμίας 627 for Alexandros approaching the goddess and Odysseus, and παραστατεῖν 638 for Athena on the ground with Ajax ἔβην ἐς ὄλον 35/6 for Athena following Odysseus' pace. Ley (1988) 89 translates 36/6 "came on the path" and takes for granted that Athena is on the ground.

15 Buxton (1980) 23 on 86.

16 The point I suggest is that 'the demarcation of a separate space' for Athena on high, as Mastronarde (1990) 280 proposes, would not succeed in making the audience visualize the compelling effect of a goddess who intermingles with mortals in a powerful scheme of contrasting activities.

17 Cf. also Segal (1989-1990) 397-8 in his remarkable notes on "the illusionistic process itself, i.e. the paradoxical complex of Athena making herself visible and making Odysseus invisible to their common 'spectator' [Ajax]", though, he also claims that "Athena looks down all-knowingly from on high". See also Easterling (1993) 77-86, esp.80-83 where she elaborates the idea of Athena in the role of didaskalos, referring to gods who "are usually brought on stage to do a job like that of the dramatist himself". Athena controls the sight both of Odysseus and of Ajax; first Odysseus cannot see her, then Ajax cannot see Odysseus. The goddess acts as a stage-director who suggests to the audience what to see and what to take as invisible.
Assuming that Athena is on the ground, she remains invisible to Odysseus, and we may stick to the likelihood of her invisibility if we consider it by contrast to the words of clear "hearing". It would be theatrically more effective to imagine that Athena moves slowly in Odysseus' direction, so that she must have made herself visible to the audience by line 36 at the latest, for the following reasons: If Athena moves through the right eisodos forward to approach Odysseus who is perhaps close to the main door of the hut, then she may stop in a position on the stage where she keeps an equal distance from Odysseus while she engages in a conversation with him, and from Ajax when she calls him outside the hut. It is not necessary to stick to the image of a goddess who remains immobile, but we should be thinking of a goddess who gets in a more earthly involvement with whatever is happening in the acting area with the mortals. Then Odysseus might have stepped aside from the entrance of the hut when Athena summons Ajax to come out. The dialogue suggests that Odysseus retreats (68, 83), and this is easily explained by his fear of facing the enemy. When Ajax emerges from the hut his address to the goddess is so spontaneous and familiar that it leaves no time for a pause while turning his eyes to face her on the theologeion where, on the alternative view, she

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18 Buxton (1980) 22, n.1. As to the meaning of κατα Ἀποπρωμος ης we are provided with the following interpretations: (i) "seen from afar", (ii) "unseen" also on a par with the dim light of daybreak, Stanford (1963) on 15, and (iii) "even when she is not visible - unlike the present situation", Taplin (1977a) 116, n.1. I would exclude the third case on grounds that we need to keep up the impact of the successive stages which are inflicted upon Odysseus and Ajax. Either of the other two seems to be possible, though I would put a strong preference on the "unseen" option.

19 Stanford (1963) on 15 argues that Odysseus becomes able to see Athena by moving in her direction. But it is rather uncertain whether Odysseus is able to see Athena at all.

20 Calder (1965) 115: "if he [Odysseus] is close to the scenaes frons".

21 Cf. also Allen (1916) 279-289, who presumed that divinities, together with the other figures in the plays, were not presented in a superhuman stature or a statuesque manner.
would be allegedly standing.\textsuperscript{22}

So far, the first part of the dialogue between Athena and Odysseus is permeated with the uncertainty of vision which seems to cause problems for our understanding of the staging of the scene, but without functioning as an impediment in the sequence of an intense dialogue between the goddess and the mortal. The insistence on invisibility is so prominent that we have a clear depiction of how it works against Ajax, but we are left with gaps in the account of how it works for Odysseus when he faces Athena. The sort of stage action that happens between lines 14 and 36 has not been explicitly rendered in the words of the text.\textsuperscript{23} Alternative explanations can be a) Odysseus and the audience are able to see Athena at a certain point, perhaps 36, or b) the audience only can see her, but she remains totally invisible to Odysseus all the time. The second option would mark the contrast between Odysseus and the audience, suggesting that the audience 'is privileged to see more than Odysseus does'.\textsuperscript{24}

But the emphasis seems to lie elsewhere. The text notifies us clearly that Athena had interfered with Ajax's sight so that he had mistaken animals for men and slaughtered

\textsuperscript{22} Though Calder (1965) 115 reaches the opposite conclusion following the same path: "Ajax emerges from the hut, partially turns, and looks toward the roof, not Odysseus, who stands in the orchestra". And he continues that "if Athena is on the ground and Odysseus 'fairly close to her', the effect could only be absurd or magical if Ajax looked straight at Athena and Odysseus and saw only Athena". But in response to this cf. Taplin's persuasive suggestion (1977a) 116, n.1 that "characters in a play see what the playwright has them see, regardless of the realities of 'topics' ".

\textsuperscript{23} See Buxton's remark (1980), 22 n.1: "The problem is, rather, that the progress from invisibility to visibility is not charted in the text". Cf. the discussion on stage-action in Taplin (1977) 28-33 and Part I, ch. 1.b.

\textsuperscript{24} Cf. Easterling (1993) 81.
them in his rage to punish the Achaeans. This is the information that the goddess passes on to Odysseus, thus providing further evidence of her divine τεχνη (51-65). The madness of Ajax is then revealed as a visual distortion of reality prompted by Athena. The third demonstration of Athena's superiority in commanding vision is to divert Ajax's sight from Odysseus and to 'darken his eyes' (69-70, 85). It seems that what matters here is Ajax's lack of vision, and the progress from invisibility to visibility in relation to Odysseus' sight of Athena becomes a subordinate subject.

While Athena has no difficulty in commanding vision, her power, however, rests outside the realm of speech and silence. Her words in lines 85 and 87 seem to provide a contrast: Athena will darken Ajax's sight so that he cannot see Odysseus, but Odysseus must stay silent. Athena makes Odysseus invisible but she cannot inflict upon him speechlessness. It is his own responsibility to stay silent as long as Athena converses with Ajax. In fact, the encounter between Athena and Ajax splits in two parts the stream of the dialogue between her and Odysseus, which is to be terminated in lines 118-133.

My point here is that speech between Odysseus and the goddess can run normally in the prologue even if we suppose that one of the persons, by divine intervention, remains

25 Mastronarde (1990) 274 seems to imply that Ajax can see Athena in his distorted mind, but Odysseus' inability to see her is due to his normal mortal status. But the text is very clear to indicate that it is within Athena's masterly art to control who sees and who does not.

26 During the encounter between Athena and Ajax, another demonstration of the divine power to interfere with sight is when Tecmessa, who remains inside the hut during the conversation, misconceives the goddess as a shadow (301). See Jebb on 15 and Calder (1965) 115. Tecmessa also 'saw' Athena and she gives her own perception of this vision, that is, "some shadow" to which Ajax shouted; cf. also 243-244 and Easterling's remark (1993) 83: "A daimon: does she mean Athena?"
invisible to his interlocutor, a device which has been contrived only here in the extant tragedies of Sophocles. But the dialogue becomes obviously altered when one of the persons is pushed into a silent role, and it seems that this above all is what makes Odysseus unapproachable to Ajax. Twice in the text (75, 87) it is suggested that he must be silent if he wants to witness safely the madness of Ajax.²⁷ Athena urges him to stay quiet and to look at Ajax without cowardice (68-69).²⁸ She is to control sight but he is responsible for controlling speech. Apparently, Odysseus' silent presence is the main reason which sustains his invisibility to Ajax. Ajax's hallucination that Odysseus is his prisoner inside the tent would have been destroyed had Odysseus dared to break his steadfast silence outside the tent. Thus, by means of a motivated silence, the third actor is excluded from the dialogue of the two other actors. More precisely, the splitting of the dialogue into two parts at the entrance of a third person turns the setting of the prologue from a two-actor into a three-actor dialogue, where one of the actors utters no word, concealed in divine invisibility.

Odysseus becomes the silent witness of the dialogue between Athena and Ajax. In his invisible position he listens to Ajax's abuse and he witnesses his rage to take vengeance on his adversary, that is Odysseus, with death by torture. In this scene the two men stand

²⁷ Calder III (1971) 165 suggests that this is a comic device which is repeated in Odysseus' eavesdropping in Philoctetes 1258, where he believes that Odysseus does not exit in 1258 but remains in order to deceive Philoctetes with another trick together with Neoptolemus.

²⁸ Cp. the contrast between line 66 δείξω δ' ἄκαλον καὶ τὴν σύνθεσιν τοῦ ἀριστοκράτους and the preceding or the following lines, which abound with references to Ajax's distorted vision. See also Knox (1961) 5: "the madness affects his vision more than his mind" and Reinhardt (1979) 236, n.5: "in Sophocles the madness only begins with that veiling of the senses by which the goddess protects the Greeks". Further for Ajax's murder of animals as a form of ritual and sacrifice, see Blake Tyrell (1985) 155-185.
face to face but the dramatist does not allow any sort of communication between them. Odysseus' silence is pointed not only because he is committed to speechlessness but also because Athena makes him the object of the discussion (101-2). In this discussion, Ajax responds with vehement attacks against his enemy (cf. 103ff.). The exchanges between Athena and Ajax must have made a strong impact upon Odysseus when he breaks his silence and is summoned to reenter into the dialogue with the goddess. His last words are thoughts about the fate of the mortals, but he says nothing about how he is going to use the knowledge he has acquired in the light of the recent events. The orchestra becomes empty for a while and then the Chorus of the Salaminian sailors sing the parodos-song.

29 Cf. Seale (1982) 149: "they occupy separate worlds of existence".

30 For Athena's "merciless" attitude in the prologue see Knox (1961) 6-8.

31 Linforth (1954) 4: "After Ajax has disappeared, there is a moment of silence. Odysseus is overcome by what he has seen and heard". Cp. Athena's first word ὀρξε to Odysseus at 118; I would suggest that this not only signifies that "the visible display of divine power is over" (Seale, 1980, 148) but also that Odysseus can emerge from his silent witnessing and assume speech.

32 Odysseus can be seen as a model for the spectator. Cp. the evolution of his thought after Ajax's death, when he argues with Agamemnon in favor of the burial. Linforth (1954) 9: "He is in exactly the mood which will lead him at the end of the play, after Ajax's death, to offer Agamemnon the counsel that he does offer", i.e. to bury Ajax.

33 Knox (1961) 9: "But the [...] situation is not relaxed, because they [the audience] are aware that just behind the closed doors of the house Ajax is still engaged in his bloody work".
In the prologue of *Oedipus at Colonus* there is a movement from the state of ignorance to the state of recognition, in terms of Oedipus' attempt to identify a place in which he can shed the burden of his suffering. He has been following the signs of Apollo who disclosed to him that he would reach a final destination, the country which would accept Oedipus as a stranger, offering him a permanent dwelling among the semnai theai (87-90).\(^1\)

The opening lines convey a different mood from the concluding ones of the prologue. The first speech of Oedipus (1-13) has a tone of uncertainty in dealing with the uncodified signs of the unknown place.\(^2\) His final speech (84-110), a prayer to the Eumenides, is a declaration that he has attained knowledge and acquainted himself with the natural elements of the holy precinct. This is already stressed in Oedipus' determination to learn where he has come (1-2, 11-12), and his subsequent acknowledgement that his wanderings have driven him safely to this grove (96-98).

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\(^1\) "Im Eingang des Ôdipus auf Kolonos hat Sophokles völlig auf die Exposition der Vorgeschichte verzichtet; einzig daran, daß er ein Orakel erhalten hat, erinnert Ôdipus", Schmidt (1971) 29. But it is important to highlight the slight vagueness which hangs on the designation θεών σεμνῶν (89/90) when Oedipus recalls Apollo's oracle; the context signifies that this is the abode of Eumenides at Colonus (40, 42, 84ff.), but at his arrival, it is by a slow process of discovery that Oedipus identifies the holy place in which he will terminate his wanderings. Cp. also the vagueness in άλογοτιν θεών visualized by Oedipus in line 10 and his forthcoming question τοῦ θεῶν νομίζεται; in line 37. It is notable that Colonus is gradually revealed to Oedipus in response to his repetitive questions to the Stranger (38, 52), which makes Oedipus realize that he reached the right place. See also Brown (1984b) 260-281, esp. 276-278.

\(^2\) "The first encounter of Oedipus is with a place not with people". Seale (1982) 115.
Thereafter, the intervening encounters between Oedipus' first and last verbal appearance in the prologue are dramatically chosen in order to bring together, in a striking way, the involvement of two important elements featuring in the prologue: the complicated characterization of Oedipus, and the entanglement of Colonus with Oedipus' fate. Colonus becomes the central theme of Oedipus' first speech (1-13), which is followed by Antigone's detailed response to his impatient questioning (14-20). In the ensuing stichomythic dialogue (21-32) Oedipus and Antigone reveal their intention to find out the name of the region. This short stichomythia constructs an intermediate level which links the first scene between Oedipus and Antigone closely with the second scene of the prologue between Oedipus and the Stranger (33-80).

Antigone is in the same position as Oedipus with regard to her lack of knowledge about the place, apart from the fact that she possesses sight, so that her presence by her father's side is justified in order to describe to her father what she sees. Though we might say that things are presented in reverse order for Oedipus and Antigone: Oedipus cannot see but he seems to sense the place around him (9-10), and Antigone can see the place but

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3 "Die Bedeutung des Ortes spiegelt sich im Ethos der Personen", Nestle (1930) 45. Cp. a more general remark by Schmidt (1971) 31: "Eine wichtige Funktion des Eingangs aller Sophokleischen Dramen liegt daran, das Ethos der Personen zu exponieren". Moreover, Nestle points out that the holiness of Delphi in Eumenides is presented in an objective way whereas the persons of the prologue in O.C. are strongly characterized (p.45).

4 Mastronarde (1979) 36; cp. also Nestle (1930) 50.

5 Nestle (1930) 51: "Wenn Sophokles [...] diese Expositionsszenen durch regieartige Bemerkungen abschließt, so ist er andererseits bestrebt, die Verbindung mit der folgenden Szene durch kleine Zwischendialoge möglichst eng zu gestalten".
she cannot realize where she is. So the suburbs of Athens are described by Antigone, who can admire the beauty of the physical environment without knowing the name of the district. In a short speech with a twofold function she depicts in expressive colours the place whose deeper meaning for the action still remains concealed (16-18), and her tranquillity makes a contrast with Oedipus who is anxious to find out where his destiny is leading him.

In response to Oedipus' appeal to show him a seat (9ff.), Antigone indicates a stone where she leads her father to sit in repose. In the following dialogue the question of locality is pushed forward in the "impatient exchange" between Oedipus and his daughter. He is now seated on a rock, the "unpolished rock" which is "within the bounds of the grove". He asks Antigone to tell him more about the place (23). Antigone is unable to tell the place but she can recognize the city of Athens (24). In response to her father's admonition to find out the name of the place Antigone is about to leave when she is halted by the approach of a Stranger. So far in the surviving prologues with three actors, Sophocles has never shown signs of making a second speaker vanish from view.

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6 The point has been raised by Dunn (1992) 4 who continues that "and the audience can see the stage and its properties, but is unsure what they represent".

7 "This image of Oedipus sitting in repose, is to be the dominating external feature of the drama", Seale (1982) 115. For the significance of the seat see Allison (1984) 71-73 who stresses the symbolical meaning of the word (ἄξεστος πέτρος 19, ἔδρα 36, 45, 84, βάθρον ὠσκέπαρον 101, and later the second seat ἔδραν, στότοπτρον βῆμα 192), which is repeated and described in the text to signal "the suppliant's bond with the land and place that is to receive him". See also Burian (1974) 408-429, esp. 410-411 for the supplication-theme in _O.C._

8 Dunn (1992) 2 and also p.3 for the identity of the setting in the opening scenes.

9 For the stage arrangements of the prologue as far as v. 201 see Jebb, Introduction, xxxvii-xxxviii.
when a third one is introduced into action. This is the case for the Nurse in \textit{Trachiniae}, the Priest in \textit{Oedipus Tyrannus} and also Odysseus in \textit{Ajax}, despite the peculiarities at the prologue. So, in this play, instead of Antigone leaving on an errand, she remains on stage to see and announce the entrance of the Stranger. Here we have a peculiar announcement of a new entrant: Antigone sees the newcomer as he approaches, until the moment when he is close enough to speak and to be heard. When the new person comes into view Antigone urges her father to start talking (31-32). It is as if she offers her father the ultimate guidance in his blindness by administering the stream of his words to the new recipient. From this point on Antigone remains a silent bystander, who makes no effort to intervene in the dialogue between Oedipus and the Stranger. Her command to Oedipus to indulge in a dialogue with the Stranger marks the boundaries of her involvement in speech.

Oedipus expresses a benevolent disposition towards the man (33-35) but he is abruptly interrupted by the instruction to go away, which is combined with the justification that the place is sacred and untouchable.\textsuperscript{10} This point instigates a new sequence of investigation about the place. Now, the model of inquiry is enriched with questions pointing to the gods' possession of the region (38).\textsuperscript{11} Yet we have to wait for another question of a similar nature, the fourth from the beginning of the play, (52, cf.1-2, 23, 38) in order to have a full answer about the name and the history of Colonus.

\textsuperscript{10} Mastronarde (1979) 65: "The interruption immediately throws an effective emphasis on the sacredness of the ground upon which Oidipous surprisingly insists he will remain".

\textsuperscript{11} Nestle (1930) 45: "Nach dem Abtreter des Koloners stellt Oidipus aufs neue seine Fragen, die aber der religiösen Beteutung des Ortes gelten".

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Meanwhile, in the hearing of the Eumenides, Oedipus has defined himself as a suppliant of the holy grove, and he wishes to appeal to the inhabitants for a permanent residence there (44-45). Oedipus enters the precinct first as a wanderer, then he makes a plea as a suppliant. When he asks for a meeting with Theseus, the ruler of the city, he assumes an enigmatic stance as to the profit that he brings to the king (72). The place gains full importance in terms of sacredness and local cult, which reassures Oedipus that he has found the predicted spot to give rest to his wanderings. The Stranger leaves in order to summon the local demesfolk who will be entitled to judge whether Oedipus must stay or leave. His appearance was designed to furnish Oedipus with solid knowledge of the place before he is plunged into a series of confrontations with the Chorus and the arrivals of new persons.

12 Taplin (1977a) 193: "In A. Hik., Eum. and S. O.C. the entry of the suppliant is also his arrival at a particular holy place, and his approach on to the sacred ground is itself the beginning of the supplication". In the sequence of the events of the prologue Oedipus assumes the names of a blind man (1, 21), of a wanderer (3, 50), of a foreigner who, together with Antigone, is in search of a new land to reside in (12-13), of a suppliant in a sacred domain (44, and ἡπατα at 45: the stone can serve both as the seat on which Oedipus sits and rests and as the seat of the suppliant), of a noble person though possessed with an unhappy fate (8, 76), and finally he calls himself a 'miserable image' (109-110).

13 Winnington-Ingram (1980) 339 remarked that there is a shift of interest from the dwelling of the fearful goddesses to the identification of the local hero Colonus whose name is given to the region and to its people. For Colonus Hippios see also Jebb, Introduction, xxx-xxxii and Kirkwood (1986) 107-109 including the goddesses of Colonus. For the distinction between Eumenides and Erinyes in O.C. see Brown (1984b) 276-281.

14 The audience heard Oedipus' name as well as Antigone's in lines 1-3, but the Stranger did not ask for their names. Before he exits he addresses Oedipus with the vocative Ὁ Ἐνευν" 75; cf. also Kuntz (1993) 144 who would make Oedipus and Antigone belong to the "large, undifferentiated class of exiles" in tragedy. We may notice here that the Stranger distinguishes the local inhabitants from the Athenian citizens (78). The vision of Athens is "played down", "while attention shifts powerfully to the immediate locale of Kolonos itself"; cf. Allison (1984) 70.
It appears to be a usual technique in Sophocles that the second speaker becomes prominent when the third one leaves the stage after he finishes his part with the first speaker. This happens in Ajax and Oedipus Tyrannus where respectively Odysseus and the Priest reemerge from silence in the final words of the prologues. In Trachiniae, however, the Nurse makes no other verbal contribution at the end of the prologue, after she has finished her short speech before the entrance of Hyllus, so it is more difficult there to define to what extent the exchanges between the two speakers are also reflected in the response of a silent witness.

Oedipus proceeds to the prayer addressed to the Eumenides (84-110), where he recalls the oracle of Apollo and identifies his fate with the holy place. He recognizes himself as ἄθλιον εἰδωλόν who seeks mercy and protection from the awful goddesses (109-110). Antigone stands there as the sole witness of Oedipus' long prayer to Eumenides and, at an appropriate moment, she orders silence, to warn Oedipus of the arrival of the elders of Colonus (111-112). She expects that her father will meet the local inhabitants but she does not seem to know what he has in mind to do with these people. Oedipus agrees to stay silent but not to meet the people who arrive. He orders Antigone to lead him inside the grove and movement starts afresh. Father and daughter hasten out of sight in a cautious withdrawal behind the trees of the grove where Oedipus can overhear the

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15 Jebb says for εἰδωλόν: "a mere wraith (cp. 393), with the semblance and speech of the man but the living heart is not therein"; Kamerbeek gives for εἰδωλόν the same explanation as for Phil. 147: "fantôme".

16 Taplin (1977a) Appendix C, 455, n.2: "they may well have used the scene door"; see also Jebb, Introduction, 35-36 for the change of action from the "Brazen Threshold" (χαλκόπος ὁδός 57) to another side of the grove after the v. 117. Allison (1984) 87, following Jebb, identifies χαλκόπους ὁδός with καταρρόκτης ὁδός 1590, which was thought to give access to the Underworld.
words of the Chorus.  

I would argue that although Antigone is a careful witness to the dialogue between Oedipus and the Stranger, she is not in a position to comprehend the meaning of all these happenings. While she has arranged the frame of the dialogue between Oedipus and the Stranger, she has been totally excluded from it (cf. 31-32).  

When the Stranger departs she does not initiate dialogue- contact with Oedipus, but she remains silent until her father asks her whether the Stranger has left. In his summons she is once again instructing him to indulge in free speech because they are alone (82-83) in the same way as she instructed him to start speaking with the Stranger. It is true that Oedipus showed reluctance to speak freely in the incidental presence of a Stranger. He could have said his name, but he confined his words to the inquiry about the place. Antigone seems to realize that Oedipus could have revealed more than what he had said. This is at least the hint behind Antigone's reassurance to Oedipus that the space is empty for him to say what the Stranger should not hear.

At the beginning of the play Antigone assumes the role of the person who stands by

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17 The motif is also found in Sophocles' Electra 80-85 where Orestes and the Paedagogus withdraw to conceal themselves from Electra; cf. Mastronarde (1979) 23, n.19. In a peculiar form the motif of concealment appears in the prologue of Ajax where Odysseus is hiding in a veil of silence and invisibility.


19 Cf. line 41 in which Oedipus asks the Stranger: "Who may they be, whose awful name I am to hear and invoke?" (Jebb). When, later, Antigone says "he is gone, and so you can utter what you will, father, in quietness as knowing that I alone am near" (Jebb on 82-83) does she mean that Oedipus is free to start with his prayer to the goddesses of the precinct?" If so, then Antigone expects her father to proceed with the prayer which he suggested in line 41.
Oedipus' side and communicates to him what she sees. She guides her blind father's steps and, at different stages, informs him about the new entrants (cf. 310ff., 722f., 1249ff.). Moreover, Antigone guides Oedipus' words in the prologue. In the course of the play, at specific points, she continues to orchestrate the utterances of the speakers. She figures along with Oedipus in the lyrics of the following parodos, and she probably urges him to 'speak' at 217. In the summons of the Chorus to Oedipus in order to disclose his identity, he turns to Antigone with the questions τέκνον, ὡμοι, τί γεγόνος; (213) and τί πόθο, τέκνον ἔμοι; (216). Antigone instructs her father to reveal his name and origin, because "the full truth cannot long be withheld". Later, when Polyneices is confronted with his father's stubborn silence to his plea, Antigone interferes in order to urge her brother to tell Oedipus why he came, so that his words "somehow give a voice to the dumb".

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20 Jebb on 217. The manuscripts attribute line 217 to Antigone; Lloyd-Jones & Wilson (1990) assign line 217 to the Chorus, because "when she [Antigone] bursts into speech (237 f.), the effect will be all the more powerful for her having kept silence here [217] and after 225". We are inclined to follow the manuscripts, because if Antigone speaks 217, her role of orchestrating Oedipus' speech is emphasized at this point. Cf. also line 213, where Oedipus asks his daughter "what shall I say?"

21 Jebb's translation of line 1283.
Lines 974-1080 in *Philoctetes* involve a three-actor scene in which Neoptolemus becomes the silent witness in the verbal exchanges between Odysseus and Philoctetes. Here the interesting point is that the third speaker, namely Odysseus, is introduced into the dialogue by making a surprise entrance at 974, by which he holds Neoptolemus back from handing the bow over to Philoctetes. We shall try to follow Neoptolemus' long-lasting silence in lines 974-1073 and discuss the attempts at breaking this silence. For this reason it is necessary to trace the verbal environment of the three-actor scene as well as the impact of Odysseus' sudden entrance at 974.

Neoptolemus stands by Philoctetes' side when the latter wakes up from his painful sleep (865-6). At line 895 he vacillates as to whether he has to embark on the trip with Philoctetes. Neoptolemus is self-directing the question τι δὴν δὲν δρομὸν ἐγὼ τοῦνθέναι γε; (895) which, though it does not pass unnoticed, remains incomprehensible to Philoctetes (896). This causes a momentary disconnection from the dialogue between the two persons which is also traced further in lines 897 (οὐκ οἶδ' ὅποι χρή τὰπορον τρέπειν ἔπος) and 908-9 (ὁ Ζεῦ, τι δράσων; δεύτερον ληφθόω κακός/κρύπτων θ᾽ αὶ μὴ δὲι καὶ λέγων αἰσχυστ' ἐπάνω;). In these lines Neoptolemus speculates about the choice he has to make. At lines 915-916 he opens his true mind to Philoctetes, dropping any further attempt to deceive him, but he still holds the bow. Philoctetes responds with a long speech appealing to Neoptolemus for the return of his bow. He is faced with Neoptolemus' long silences referred to in lines 930-935 and 950-
of Philoctetes' speech (927-962). At the end of his speech Philoctetes is still confronted with Neoptolemus' indecisiveness, given expression with another self-directed question οἴμοι, τί δράσω; (969). As long as Neoptolemus' mind is bedevilled with his moral dilemma he is unable to maintain contact with Philoctetes. His final question τί δρῶμεν, ένδρες; at mid-line (974) is addressed to the Chorus and it has been foreshadowed by a similar question of the Chorus at line 963, where the sailors have declared their dependence on the decision which belongs only to Neoptolemus.

At 974 Odysseus interferes abruptly in the dialogue of Neoptolemus and Philoctetes. Neoptolemus speaks a half line, and Odysseus' intrusion provides an antilabe in the second half of 974. Neoptolemus' question in line 974 is the final expression of misgivings, which echoes earlier versions in lines 895, 908 and 969. All these points are stages in Neoptolemus' inability to decide whether to continue deceiving Philoctetes or to tell him the whole truth.

The text offers no hint for the staging of the scene so we cannot have a clear idea where Odysseus stands before he interrupts the speech in the middle of line 974. However, we

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1 "Whatever his feelings may be, [Neoptolemus] stands with his face turned away and makes no response" Linforth (1956) 132.

2 The breakdown of contact represents "the power of Neoptolemus' aidos", Mastronarde (1979) 77. See also Buxton (1982) 215, n.24 where he argues that Neoptolemus' aporia starts when he hears Philoctetes' cry for pity, and he answers back with the question τί δῆται δράσω; (757), echoed repeatedly in the subsequent lines.

3 Burton (1980) 244; cp. the same mood at lines 1072-3.

4 Taplin (1978) 132: "This is quite unlike the usually explicit plotting of Greek Tragedy".
tend to assume that Odysseus was eavesdropping somewhere nearby the acting area so
that he could follow the development of Neoptolemus' reactions without being seen.
Linforth believes that Odysseus entered seen only by the audience and concealed himself
behind the rock where he had hidden on his first entrance, and where he had been
listening to what has passed between Philoctetes and Neoptolemus.\(^5\) Still, it seems that
Odysseus' entrance in the prologue differs from his entrance in line 974. In the first case
he is seen by the audience to conduct a dialogue with Neoptolemus who is 'up' near the
mouth of the cave. In the second case we cannot say whether the audience watch
Odysseus approaching near the cave or whether he appears all of a sudden to stop
Neoptolemus. The usual way leading from the eisodos to the orchestra seems unlikely
because it would be too long for the effectiveness of his sudden appearance.\(^6\) The best
interpretation is that Odysseus comes out from his hiding-place behind Philoctetes and
as a complete surprise for the audience.\(^7\)

The contact between Neoptolemus and Philoctetes is completely broken when Odysseus
emerges with a reply to Neoptolemus' agonized question and obstructs him from

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\(^5\) Linforth (1956) 133. Cf. also Woodhouse (1912) 240 who says that "we have a cave
opening on steep rocks at some height above the beach". While Neoptolemus goes up to
examine the cave (26ff.) Odysseus stands on the beach and the entrance of the cave is
invisible to him. For the positioning of Odysseus and Neoptolemus in the prologue, and
"the two mouths of the cave" see also Davidson (1990) 307-315.

\(^6\) Taplin (1971) 25-44 and 29, n.10 contradicts Webster (commentary ad loc), who
believes that Odysseus approached up the eisodos because the other characters were so
involved that they would not notice Odysseus. The surprise would be spoiled if the
audience saw him several lines earlier.

\(^7\) Taplin (1978) 27 and (1977) 11. On the element of surprise which penetrates the play,
see Seale (1972) 94-102.
handing the bow back to Philoctetes. In fact there is no time for Neoptolemus to reveal what he has decided, to keep or return the bow, because Philoctetes blocks his response and turns to Odysseus. At line 977 Odysseus takes the lead in the dialogue with Philoctetes, while Neoptolemus falls into silence up to the point where he is summoned by Odysseus to depart without throwing a last glance at Philoctetes (1068-9).

This is the first time in ten years when Philoctetes faces the enemy, and the dialogue becomes a strong altercation between two determined persons. Philoctetes recognizes Odysseus' voice before he even sees his face. The same happens at line 1293 when Odysseus reappears and interrupts, for the second time, the dialogue between Neoptolemus and Philoctetes. This pattern of entrances where the new person is first heard and then seen is in contrast with entrances where the audience first sees a new person approaching silently and then they hear him speaking, as in the case of Antigone 376 and 526.

When Philoctetes asks once again for his bow (981, cf. 924, 932, 950, 973), Odysseus blocks any response from Neoptolemus. Once more Neoptolemus remains silent as Odysseus prevents action and interferes with threats against Philoctetes. We are not in a

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8 Mastronarde (1979) 93 defines the questions at 974-975 as epiplectic and imperatival, cp. the same p.13-14 for the rhetoric of questions and p.93 n.47 for the similar questions at Phil. 1293-1298.

9 See Alt (1961) 164: "Während Neoptolemos in der vorausgehenden Szene eher passiv war, [...] ist Odysseus der Aktive und Aggressive, in Wort wie Tat".

10 Cp. line 976 with Ajax 14-15 where Odysseus recognizes Athena by her voice. See also Taplin (1977a) 116, n.1.

11 See also Part II, ch. 6.b.
position to know what Neoptolemus would have done at this point (981) had Odysseus not blocked him (cf. 974). Odysseus threatens Philoctetes that he is going to take him by force (981-983) to Troy. Philoctetes answers back with the counter-threat to throw himself down to the shore from the rock where he is standing (1001-1002). With these forceful devices the dialogue stays very vivid and the words exchanged point at Neoptolemus' silent presence, as if he might enter the dialogue at any moment.

Odysseus orders his attendants to seize Philoctetes (1003). While the soldiers hold him fast (cf. 1016), Philoctetes utters a long speech. In this speech he denounces Odysseus and curses the Atreidae (1004-1044), praying for the destruction of the Greek army. In lines 1007-1012 Philoctetes refers to Neoptolemus: he explains that Neoptolemus was trapped by Odysseus into performing what he was ordered to do, and now he "shows remorse for his own errors and for my [Philoctetes'] wrongs". Seale suggests that there must be here "some kind of dumb-show by Neoptolemus to express the crucial change from his internal conflict to his suppression by the presence of Odysseus". The idea of a dumb-show is attractive, particularly since we have the indication in the text εστιν ἀλλειτϊνως φέρον (1011). Neoptolemus was captured by Odysseus on the brink of his hesitation. It is possible that, at this point, the following sharp dialogue might have

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12 Seale (1982) 41: "once again the action is frozen in indecision".

13 In the prologue Odysseus set out the possible alternatives to make Philoctetes come to Troy. He dismissed the method of βία because he thinks that it will be ineffective and "not because he thinks it will be wrong", Buxton (1980) 127.

14 Jebb on 1011-12.

15 Seale (1982) 41, and n. 41. Reinhardt (trans. 1979) 185 points out that "his [Neoptolemus'] silence means not a weakening but a strengthening of his presence".

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intensified his brooding feelings. However, we are not supposed to think that there is any sign in the text, which suggests that Neoptolemus shows sympathy for Philoctetes. This is what happened at line 915 when Neoptolemus broke his silence and demonstrated friendship to Philoctetes. But from lines 974ff., Neoptolemus remains silent again: the audience might desperately want to know what Neoptolemus is going to do now and they might grow impatient for the breaking of his silence.

The Chorus separates this speech from the following one by Odysseus (1047-1062), with two verses (1045-6) which pass a short judgment on Philoctetes' character. Odysseus remains unmoved by Philoctetes' statements but abandons any other attempt at violence. He changes his mind, and he chooses to keep the bow, leaving Philoctetes behind in the island. Philoctetes looks desperate and makes a self-directed question (1063) similar to Neoptolemus' question at 974. When Odysseus denies him any further communication (1065), Philoctetes turns to Neoptolemus seeking a word from him.

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16 "This judgment may explain the tone of remonstrance they adopt in parts of the ensuing kommos", Burton (1980) 244.

17 We cannot tell with certainty what causes this change. Critics can only speculate on various reasons which are not stated in the text: (i) it can be that Odysseus continues bluffing: after Philoctetes has countered with the threat to commit suicide, Odysseus changes his tactics and tries again with another tricky device, pretending that he needs only the bow and not Philoctetes. Then he expects that Philoctetes will respond with resentment to the implication that the Greek army will win the war with his weapons. Cf. Linforth (1956) 136; see also Hinds (1967) 169-180, esp.177-179 and 177, n.4 where he argues that Odysseus as "a man of stratagem" uses this bluff as another alternative for his plans. (ii) Odysseus is probably sincere because he has nothing to conceal at this stage when the plot has been uncovered; cf. Blundell (1987) 307-329, esp.317-8. Besides, the ensuing lament would not look so moving if the audience suspect that Odysseus' decision to abandon Philoctetes is false; cf. Robinson (1969) 45. There remains the possibility that (i) and (ii) are not strictly alternatives: Odysseus is not necessarily clear himself. He follows the course of the speech and, as he goes along, he plays the situation as best he can.
(1066-7). The answer is prevented by Odysseus (1068-9), who cuts any attempt at communication between Philoctetes and Neoptolemus for fear that it can turn against his plans.

Throughout the scene up to 1074 Neoptolemus has remained silent. The logic of his silence controls the equivocal direction of the dialogue. Neoptolemus stands between the two men Odysseus and Philoctetes, holding the bow in his hands. The control of the weapon puts the others in a position in which they cannot ignore Neoptolemus. His silence emphasizes the precariousness of the situation and determines the dynamic of the dialogue between the two speakers. Odysseus' intervention brings only a provisional solution to this ambivalent situation. But as long as Neoptolemus remains a silent witness, there is uncertainty as to how he responds to Odysseus. When Philoctetes tries to begin a dialogue with Neoptolemus, Odysseus blocks Neoptolemus' utterance. The first attempt is when Philoctetes asks Neoptolemus to give him back the bow (981). The second attempt is before Odysseus, and Neoptolemus' departures. Philoctetes is overwhelmed by Neoptolemus' refusal to speak (1067). Finally, this uncertainty is solved by Neoptolemus himself at the end of the scene. At last he emerges from his silence with a short speech (1074-1080). He says that his action will be interpreted as showing pity for Philoctetes but he complies with Odysseus (cf. 926-7). He does not return the bow to his owner but he appeals to the sailors to stay with Philoctetes until the

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18 For the 'bow' as a visual symbol, which changes its meaning at different stages in the play, see Segal (1980) 131-133.

19 For the dynamic of the dialogue between two speakers and a mute cp. Part I, ch. 1.b.
ship is ready to sail. He and Odysseus leave together to prepare the trip, and the
audience is left to wonder whether this is the expression of thoughts on which
Neoptolemus was brooding in his long silence.

20 The motive for the continued presence of the Chorus up to the end of the play is given in the naive hope that "Philoctetes may come to a better mind", Linforth (1956) 137.
At line 1222 Neoptolemus has changed his mind and is coming back resolved to return the bow to Philoctetes and re-establish trust with him. A line-by-line dialogue with Odysseus provides the reasons which made Neoptolemus opt for Philoctetes' friendship. In lines 974-1080, Neoptolemus has stood up as an ally of Odysseus. His decision has been balanced between two models of life, "the Odyssean and the Achillean life". Neoptolemus chooses now to disentangle his action from the Odyssean tactics and changes his previous false words into a true performance. Odysseus threatens that the Greek army will punish him for his disobedience. At line 1258 Odysseus makes his exit while Neoptolemus summons Philoctetes out of his cave.

It seems that during the encounter between Philoctetes and Neoptolemus (1263-1292), Odysseus was again eavesdropping so that he can reappear, in a move parallel to his appearance at line 974, to prevent Neoptolemus from returning the bow. At line 1293 Odysseus breaks the dialogue abruptly and forbids Neoptolemus to act against the Atreidae. The difference between this scene and the previous one at 974ff. is that


2 Taplin (1987) 70: "His past words are now a part of him and he must live with their consequences".

3 Taplin (1977a) 221: "Insults, threats and taunts provide the most common use of lines cast after a departing back".

4 Mastronarde (1979) 93, n.47.
Neoptolemus is now determined to stand by Philoctetes' side—which after all makes him intervene in the action. So Odysseus is weakened by being confronted with two strong minds. In response to his renewed threats, Philoctetes draws his bow to kill Odysseus. Without a last word, Odysseus runs away to save his life while Neoptolemus stops Philoctetes from using the bow. Odysseus' silent departure can be characterized as "the humiliating flight" of a character who has been defeated, but it is true that any man would have fled under the threat of a weapon, without having to be considered a coward (1306-1307).

Odysseus' last attempt to practise violence has failed. His threat is ineffective and futile because Philoctetes is powerful with the bow in his hands. He speaks only for five lines and his appearance is very short, probably covering ten lines, if Odysseus withdraws before line 1302. It is again remarkable that Neoptolemus does not interfere in the short dialogue. He responds neither to Odysseus' blocking of action (1293-4) nor to Philoctetes' question about Odysseus' voice (1295-6). His silence is very short but, in the view of these instances, it cannot pass unnoticed. His attitude is the same as that which

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5 Taplin (1978) 133.
6 Taplin (1977a) 205 believes that Odysseus exits at 1302. He compares this exit with Sophocles' Antigone 1243 and Trachiniae 812 (205, n.1) characterizing these silences as carrying a positive dramatic point.
7 Linforth (1956) 141.
8 Taplin (1978) 154: "The major characters of Greek Tragedy seldom make appearances of less than 40 lines and this is the briefest of all to survive". In addition, Sophocles uses an almost comic device when Odysseus follows silently from a hiding-place the conversation between Philoctetes and Neoptolemus and when "he runs for his life, like the Phrygian eunuch at Eur. Or. 1256", Calder III (1971) 153-174, esp.165-166; cf. Taplin (1971) 28.
he demonstrated in the first scene where he was reluctant and embarrassed to enter the
dialogue, but his mind is different now. It seems that in the presence of Odysseus,
Neoptolemus holds aloof from the spirit of violence which is brought forward each time
Odysseus meets Philoctetes. Neoptolemus decisively prohibits Philoctetes from drawing
his bow against Odysseus (1300, cf. 1304), and this marks the end of his short silence
and the beginning of new action in the spirit of (attempted) persuasion and friendship.
5.g. CONCLUSION

The previous discussions dealt with the silences of the persons who witness the conversation between two interlocutors after the entrance of a new speaker. In *Trachiniae* it is not obvious whether the Nurse is the silent addressee to Deianeira's speech, but it is reasonable to think that she must have listened to her mistress' account of sorrows. Her silent witnessing makes her able to come up with sound advice that satisfies Deianeira for the slave's free expression of mind. The Nurse says no more after the entrance of Hyllus and her silent attitude defines her limited involvement in the encounter between mother and son. But she is an important speaking character later in the play.

In *Ajax*, the play opens with Odysseus' wanderings in silence until he is halted on stage by the voice of Athena. In the subsequent encounter between Athena and Ajax, Odysseus falls silent obeying Athena's orders. He becomes the silent witness of Ajax's demented mind and the invisible receiver of vehement attacks from his opponent. His speechlessness is screened by the device of invisibility, which is imposed on him as a result of Athena's intervention. The goddess interacts with Odysseus and Ajax in a closely communicative way that emphasizes her earthly involvement with the mortals. It is better to imagine that she moves around on the same level with her interlocutors, so that the triangular effect of dialogue is strongly pointed in the presence of three speakers on stage, than to think of Athena as a divinity who appears on the roof level.
In *O.C.* Antigone develops an extensive speaking activity when she attempts to identify the city of Athens for her father's sake. Antigone's silent role begins with the arrival of the Stranger, who is the third speaker in the encounter with Oedipus. She follows the exchanges with interest, and this could be rendered in a theatrical production, but she does not seem to be in a position to understand everything. We can estimate the meaning of her silence when she reenters in dialogue-contact with Oedipus after the Stranger's departure. She acknowledges that her father has not proceeded to further revelations about himself and she thinks that he might be prone to say more now that he is alone with her. In the role of her father's guide, Antigone not only works as the person who shows the way to the blind Oedipus, but she is also the person who manages the timing of Oedipus' speaking or silent activity.

In *Philoctetes* we followed Neoptolemus' silence as a comprehensive element in his attitude towards Philoctetes. The young man's indecisiveness is indicative of his moral dilemma while he is caught between two principles: to help a friend who has been wronged by the Greek army or to stay loyal to the decrees of his superiors. Neoptolemus conveys his hesitation by repeatedly refusing to answer Philoctetes' appeals to him to consolidate their friendship with deeds. When Odysseus interferes with his sudden appearance at 974, the dialogue switches to an exchange between him and Philoctetes, while Neoptolemus becomes the silent witness. The dialogue between the two speakers is dramatically affected by the impact of this overwhelmed silence. In Odysseus' reproachful attacks, Philoctetes awaits support from Neoptolemus, but he is faced by the young man's reluctance to respond to his appeals. The continuation of this silence might have increased the curiosity of the audience, who would impatiently expect
Neoptolemus' reaction. When he finally speaks, Neoptolemus confesses his allegiance to Odysseus but his brief explanation allows ground for speculation as to whether this is Neoptolemus' true expression of mind. When Odysseus suddenly appears once more, Neoptolemus falls silent again. This time, this is only a short silence, but its brevity is considered in contrast with Neoptolemus' previous long-lasting silence. After a few seconds of silence in the quick exchanges between Odysseus and Philoctetes, Neoptolemus regains his voice in order to express a positive attitude towards Philoctetes. In all these cases a great variety of uses and effects are put to similar formal structures.
CHAPTER SIX
THE INTERFERENCE OF A SILENT WITNESS

6.a. INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Five I discussed the dramatic technique according to which the dialogue changes direction at the entrance of a new speaker. In this chapter, I discuss a number of scenes where not only new entrances affect the arrangement of speakers in dialogue, but also interferences of silent witnesses regulate the shifts of dialogue in a wide range of encounters between three speakers. Thereby, the ensuing survey attempts to define the points of transition of speech between interlocutors and relate them with the entrance of a new speaker and the interference of a silent witness in dialogue. The main focus is on the silences which are developed between the three speakers in the shifts of dialogue. However, while I assume that silences can be framed in a certain structure of dialogue, I also examine this frame in order to be able to work out other functions of silence in Sophoclean dramaturgy as they are exhibited in these specific scenes. So I particularly discuss silent entries and exits, the silence of the Chorus, delays or refusals to speak, and words of silence.

a) Antigone 384-581: in the second epeisodion of the play, the silent entrance of Antigone is discussed as an aspect of silence with dramatic significance, and it is compared with the analogous entrance of Ismene at 526. While keeping track of the
surrounding exchanges, we turn our attention to the silences of Antigone and Creon in the dialogues involving the Guard and Ismene. The breaking of Antigone's silence at 443 and Creon's interference in the confrontation between the two sisters at 561 interrupt the sequence of the dialogue. I will try to estimate the impact of these interferences in speech with the intention of exploring their logic within the framework of the preceding silences. I wish also to argue that the assignment of line 572 to Antigone, which allegedly breaks the continuity of stichomythia, emphasizes Antigone's silent attendance in the exchanges between Creon and Ismene.

b) Trachiniae 225-496: in the first episode of the play the discussion deals with the silences of the Old Messenger and Deianeira in the dialogues with Lichas. Here my aim is to show that the breakings of the Old Messenger's silence at 335 and 402 define his interferences in the dialogue which opens first with Deianeira and continues with Lichas. A type of silent attitude that is thoroughly analyzed is Lichas' reluctance to answer explicitly Deianeira's questions and disclose the identity of the mute Iole.

c) Oedipus Tyrannus 911-1085: in the third episode of O.T. Iocasta, the Corinthian Messenger and Oedipus enter in a successive order. In this section I discuss the double function of the dialogue, which is shaped partly with a close interaction between the three speakers, and partly with two interlocutors and a silent witness. In the first case silences cannot be noticed because the shifts of dialogue are continuous and the three speakers respond to each other's speeches. In the second case, the silence of a third party can be distinguished because the dialogue runs between two interlocutors. Here I refer to the silences of the Corinthian Messenger and Iocasta, which are investigated as a
dynamic constituent in the shaping of the dialogues with Oedipus. The Chorus' silent
attendance and Iocasta's exit are silent activities which are also examined as an inherent
part in the structure of this epeisodion.

d) Oedipus Tyrannus 1110-1185: in the fourth epeisodion of the play my intention is
to follow the silences of the Corinthian Messenger and Oedipus in the dialogue with the
Shepherd. I will also draw the comparison between the Messenger's silence at 1132ff.
and his silence at 989ff. The Shepherd's delays or refusals to speak are instances of a
silent attitude inclusive of the wider topic of silence in this epeisodion.

e) Electra 766-803: in the scene with Electra, Clytaemnestra and the Paedagogus I
intend to study lines 766ff. separately from lines 634-679. This means that I deal with
this part of the play in a reverse order from the normal sequence of the scene, with the
intention to show that Electra's interference in the dialogue enables the silence of the
Paedagogus to emerge with dramatic significance in the ensuing confrontation between
the two women. The interplay of words of speech and words of silence in the exchanges
between Electra and Clytaemnestra provides for further interpretation of silence within
this frame of dialogue.
6.b. ANTIGONE 384-581

The dialogues in the second epeisodion of Antigone are shaped as follows:

a) 376-445: The Chorus-leader announces the arrival of Antigone.

The Guard indulges in a dialogue with Creon while Antigone, who was brought as a prisoner, attends in silence. At line 441 the dialogue switches to Antigone, and Creon gives the Guard the command to leave (444-5).

b) 446-525: in these lines there is a confrontation between Creon and Antigone, where the two persons expose their antithetical minds.

c) 526-560: the Chorus announces a new arrival (526-530). The actor playing the part of the Guard returns to play the part of Ismene in her encounter with Creon. We are given the impression that the dialogue might continue between Creon and Ismene (531-537), but at 538 Antigone interferes and Creon is restricted to a silent position for as long as the stichomythic dialogue carries on between the two sisters.

d) 561-581: Creon interferes in the dialogue and the stichomythia continues between him and Ismene while Antigone stays silent, with the possible exception of line 572, which causes unexpected irregularity in the continuity of the stichomythia. The manuscripts attribute line 574 to Ismene, while most scholars give it to the Chorus.
It is remarkable that in these scenes when the three actors with speaking parts are on stage, one or other of them is, in turn, pushed into a silent position while the other two are conversing.

**Lines 376-445**

Lines 376-445 are shaped in the manner of a dialogue which is affected by the entrance of a new speaker. We examine this three-actor scene as part of an extended pattern of successive dialogues which involve entrances, exits and interferences.

The first ode ends up with the clause δις τόδε ἔρημον (374), which is the verbal expression of dramatic irony scenically portrayed in the immediate appearance of Antigone under guard. Antigone has been caught burying Polyneices, and thus acting against the decree of Creon. While the Chorus-leader announces the entrance of Antigone, he expresses amazement that he is looking at her as the revealed culprit. Normally the dramatist brings a new character on stage in order to make him speak immediately on entry. Instead, Antigone enters in silence and gives no answer to the questions of the Chorus-leader, who wants to know clearly if she is really the one who is to be blamed for acting against the laws of the ruler. As Mastronarde notes, there are two

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1 Burton (1980) 98, 103. Mastronarde (1979) 94 comments that "there is a natural pause after 375, during which visual contact is made and 376-378 (or 376-380) may cover the time during which Antigone is led along the parodos into range of dialogue-contact". Cf. Kamerbeek on 376-383: "introductory anapaests belonging to the epeisodion rather than to the stasimon".


3 Taplin (1972) 57-97 for similar instances in tragedy.
possible explanations of the intentions of the Chorus-leader when he makes his questions. Either he only apostrophizes Antigone emotionally, or he attempts to enter into dialogue with her. Whatever is the Chorus' motivation in assailing Antigone with such questions, "the Guard's words in 384-385 seem to answer the Chorus' question" with brief reference to the guilt of Antigone and the successful result of the mission. In response to the Guard's inquiry after Creon, the Chorus announces the arrival of the king (386). We notice that this announcement is short in contrast to the announcement of Antigone's arrival. Creon rushes into speech as soon as he enters, while Antigone is given a long enough description to draw the audience's attention to her silent demeanour.

With the three actors on stage we might expect to witness a verbal action with three different participants. Yet Antigone remains silent, "out of touch with the scene" while Creon and the Guard indulge in speeches, and the Guard makes his lengthy report of the off-stage capture of Antigone. We can approach the scene from the triangular effect that Antigone produces upon the Chorus, the Guard and Creon with her silent demeanour. Before she opens her mouth to utter her own defence of her act, reactions are raised around her which point to her silent presence: (i) the Chorus-leader shows his amazement with his impatient questions at her entrance. (ii) The Guard makes a speech giving evidence to prove Antigone's guilt (388-400). (iii) Creon, without entering into dialogue contact with Antigone, wants to learn more about her activity from the Guard

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4 Mastronarde (1979) 94; see also Seale (1982) 110, n.3.

5 Kitto (1961) 155.
while he keeps the silent girl within his sight (401).  

Antigone, a woman in custody, raises a similar effect to that of Iole in *Trachiniae*, a female mute character but very close to suggesting a speaking involvement in the play. Iole is a captive who enters together with other captive women from Oechalia. She attracts Deianeira's attention because she looks different from the rest of the captives (Tr. 307). We are not in a position to say whether her distinctive presence was noticed from the beginning of her entrance because the text does not help in this direction. The final outcome is that Iole remains a mute character whose silent presence introduces new perspectives in *Trachiniae*. By contrast, Antigone has spoken in the prologue and now she makes an astonishing silent appearance. She remains silent for 58 lines despite references to her presence (395, 398, 401, 404, 423, 426) and finally speaks only when Creon addresses her, unlike the captive Iole who gives no answer at all to Deianeira's repeated questions about her identity (Tr. 307ff.).

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7 Cp. Kamerbeek (1978) on 441. Cf. also the treatment of Cassandra in *Agamemnon*. Cassandra is another example matching the captive women in tragedy. She produces a similar effect to that of Iole's presence on stage, with her silence in response to the appeals made by Clytaemnestra and the Chorus (Ag. 1035-1071). See also Denniston-Page (1986) on Ag. 1060-1 and Knox (1972) 104-124. Unlike Iole, Cassandra breaks her silence, to the amazement of the audience who were not in a position to assess whether she was a mute or a third actor assigned an unexpectedly silent role (Ag. 1072ff.). According to the usage of the ancient theatre, Cassandra is the third actor, whereas Iole is a fourth person, in fact a mute par excellence in the company of the three actors, in a role which makes her a dramatic character behaving in silence. As for Antigone, she keeps some of the characteristics of her analogues in *Agamemnon* and *Trachiniae*, namely prolonged silence and identified references to her presence in the words of the two other interlocutors, but her prime involvement in the action necessitates Antigone's immediate response as soon as she is addressed by Creon. For the allusions to *Agamemnon* and *Choephoroi*, which point at the contrast between the poisonous robe in *Trachiniae* and the garment used by Clytaemnestra to kill her husband see Easterling's commentary p. 21-22.
During the encounter between Creon and the Guard, Antigone has not only uttered a single word but she has also stressed her silent position by keeping her head bowed all the time. Creon notices this attitude while turning to Antigone in order to ascertain the truth of the accusation in the presence of the Guard (441-2). At 443 Antigone emerges from her silence and takes responsibility for her action. By this device, Sophocles brings about a dramatic transition from the scene of the Guard's report to Creon to the scene of the conflict between Creon and Antigone.8

When Creon turns to Antigone we might think that the ensuing dialogue would happen in the presence of the Guard.10 However, the Guard becomes a silent witness for only a few verses (441-5) and then Creon sends him away.

Lines 446-525

In lines 446-525 there is a dialogue with two actors on stage, Creon, and Antigone, who is apparently guarded by two soldiers.11 To Creon's reproachful questions Antigone replies first with brief boldness (443, 448) and very soon with longer reflexions on the motives which caused her to act against the official orders to the citizens. Her long

8 Shisler (1945) 396 wrongly remarks that "mention of the bowed head and downcast eyes is given only by Euripides".

9 The transition of speech from the Guard to Antigone can be interpreted as an exchange "between one for whom life is everything and one for whom life is nothing", Seale (1982) 91.

10 Cf. the Old Messenger in Trachiniae 225ff., who stays on stage after he finishes his part; see also Part II, ch. 6.c.

11 Cf. line 491.
speech (450-470) is counter-balanced with a similarly long exposure of Creon's own mind. The confrontation is resumed in a line-by-line argument which makes harsher the opposition between Creon and Antigone.\textsuperscript{12}

Creon prepares the entrance of Ismene by sending his servants to fetch her from outside the palace (491) for a second round of investigation. While we wait for her to arrive, the dialogue between Creon and Antigone goes on up to the point when the Chorus announces Ismene, brought out with tears in her eyes (526-530). At 491 in Creon's words we visualize Ismene indoors in a frenzied state of mind. This image provides the visual preparation of her entry, which is again made by the Chorus in terms of a visual 'fact' which draws the audience's attention to seeing Ismene in distress\textsuperscript{13} rather than to hearing her voice. This scene can be viewed as a "visual doubling"\textsuperscript{14} of the scene with Antigone announced by the Chorus in her silent entry in lines 376-383. But again the two scenes show a considerable difference: it is easy to imagine Ismene's face covered

\textsuperscript{12} In this part of dialogue (446-525) we can notice the following features: (i) the stage action is intently focused on the clash between the main characters of the play. No other speaking person is present in this confrontation apart from the Chorus and the conventional presence of mute bodyguards in the escort of the king. (ii) Antigone expresses her resistance to the king with a change of attitude which passes from a silent negation of his authority to the intensity of a verbal conflict between them. (iii) The groundform of this agon is a rhesis balanced with another rhesis. The two speeches are separated by the Chorus' two-line contribution (471-2), and the dialogue culminates in stichomythia; cf. Taplin (1977a) 187 and n.2. Looking at the same form of speech from a different angle we realize that the length of time when a person listens silently is dramatically reduced in the stichomythic dialogue, where the rapid exchanges enhance the interaction of the speaking parts.

\textsuperscript{13} The description is so vivid to make us imagine a face moistened with tears represented by Ismene's mask. For the portrayal of grief in a masked face, cf. also Part I, ch. 1.b.

\textsuperscript{14} Taplin (1978) 131.
with tears, yet how can we imagine Antigone's face when no attempt is made to describe her?15 What else is there for an audience to 'see' apart from Antigone's silence before she launches into the demonstration of her disobedience to the ruler of the city?

**Lines 526-560**

The Chorus announces Ismene's arrival and the scene switches to a confrontation between three speaking characters. The entrance of the new person attracts the attention of Creon, who addresses Ismene with the same inquisitive tone about her involvement in the burial. We are left with the impression that they are going to start a new argument like the previous one with Antigone, but all of a sudden Antigone breaks in and undertakes the dialogue, prompted by Ismene's claim to have shared in the burial of Polynoeices (536). The dialogue seems to bring close the three persons on stage for a few lines (531-639), but soon this impression is dispelled when Creon abstains from further involvement up to line 560. With her interference at 538, Antigone no longer opts for a silent behaviour as happened with the Guard, but she begins a new stichomythic dialogue involved in a conflict with her sister, while Creon follows them silently. His silence is an example of the technique which keeps in speech only two persons on stage, and it can be interpreted as suggestive of Creon's incomprehension of the sisters' fight. This dispute is presumably the sequel of the conflict which took place between the two girls in the prologue. The spectator has been following the development of the scenes in which Ismene has first expressed unwillingness to collaborate with Antigone in the

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15 In the words ὀξιμόνιον τέρος and δύστηνος the Chorus express their amazement at seeing Antigone as the culprit but no other information is given as to her appearance.
burial but now confesses that she took part in the deed. Ismene wonders how she can bear life without her sister (548); Antigone replies: "Ask Creon; for you are on his side" (549). In these words Antigone demonstrates a harsh attitude towards Ismene and identifies her with Creon's camp. When she speaks about Creon we can imagine that this is a textual reference which gives prominence to Creon as a silent witness in the dialogue. He might enter the dialogue provided that Ismene is willing to address him with the question suggested by Antigone. We might think of Creon as an active listener, but he does not seem to understand the words exchanged between the girls, since he is unaware of their first encounter before the performance of the burial.

**Lines 561-581**

At lines 561-2 Creon breaks his silence and interferes in the dialogue between Antigone and Ismene stating that they are completely out of their minds (561-562). Dramatically his interference marks the beginning of another dispute, the third and shortest of this epeisodion, which makes Creon and Ismene stay in opposition while, on the other side, Antigone falls into silence.

The last part of the dialogue is the most disputable in the attribution of the lines which form the final stichomythia. The reason is that lines 572, 574 and 576 are assigned by editors to Ismene (572) or to Antigone (572, 574, 576) or alternatively to Antigone (572) and to the Chorus (574, 576). The distribution of the final lines in this dialogue is

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important because the meaning of the silence, and not only of the words, is affected according to the persons who are given these words to speak.

The manuscripts assign verse 572 ὀ φίλτοθ' Ἄμος, ὥς σ' ἀτμάζει πατήρ to Ismene. A number of critics put forward arguments in order to justify the belief that it is Ismene who utters this line. Antigone, they suggest, has no reason to enter in a dialogue with Creon and even more she has nothing to say after she realizes that she is very close to her impending death (560). Only the idea of a romantic sentiment would be a reason to make Antigone speak at this point but this is not what happens here. In the dialogue-technique the stichomythia would be interrupted if the line is assigned to Antigone and, as Mastronarde says, this apostrophe to Haemon is "not uttered in normal dialogue-contact with those on the stage". The argument by Winnington-Ingram is based on the

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19 Mastronarde (1979) 96 "after line 523, [...] she has nothing to say to him".

20 Schneidewin (1856) on 572: "Allein schon die strenge Gegenmäßigkeit des Dialogs spricht für Ismene, welche hier um, so gewisser redet, als Kreon zur Antigone, die von dem λέγος gar nicht gersprochen, seit 569 scheigt". Schneidewin reinforces his position arguing further that Ismene answers Creon back on the matter of Haemon's fate without the risk of indecent behaviour for a maiden since she was brought up under the same roof with her sister's bridegroom.

21 Letters (1953) 166: "it is clear the bias in favour of Antigone's claim is of romantic, not classical origin".

22 Mastronarde (1979) 95: "The apostrophe evokes an immediate reaction from Kreon, but the text is not such as to suggest a turning to a new addressee"; and he continues that "ἐγκατ" makes most sense if Ismene is still speaking on the same subject". This last point is taken up by Davies (1986) 22 and n.10, and accepted by Lloyd-Jones (1990) on
idea that it was Ismene who first raised the issue of Haemon, so she undertakes any utterance that concerns the love-theme.²³ Davies points to the linguistic context which (a) brings close two synonyms, the words νυμφεῖα and λέξος, spoken by the same person and (b) uses the word ἐγγάν to answer "a character who has been persistently contributing to the stichomythia so far".²⁴

The most prominent arguments in favour of Antigone's case cluster around the importance of the love-theme duly expressed by Antigone, who reacts in a state of emotion.²⁵

(a) Kitto does not believe that the interruption of the stichomythia is an argument worth considering for the assignment of the line to Ismene; the poet is free to handle

572. Both think that ἐγγάν implies an answer to the character, namely Ismene, who is still continuing to argue in the stichomymthic form.


²⁴ Davies (1986) 21-22. Besides, Davies (p.24) says that Antigone's silence can be compared with Prometheus Bound where the central hero keeps a "remorseless silence" in the opening scene tantamount to the "unyielding silence' which Antigone maintains in fron of Creon's insults. However, Prometheus is a silent figure in the prologue and no clues are given by the dramatist of how his silence should be interpreted. He stays silent for 87 lines and bursts into a monologue on an empty stage. For similar effects of this sort of silence in Aeschylus and the other tragedians see Griffith on 88-127. Antigone's silence after line 560 can be considered to convey a spirit of resistance against Creon. But it calls no particular attention on the part of the audience since it can be interpreted as the sequel of a strong confrontation.

²⁵ For Antigone on 572 : Wunder, who furthermore grants line 574 to the Chorus and not to Ismene, because she could not have said these words after what she had said in 568, Blaydes, Campbell, Jebb, Pearson, Dain-Mazon, Müller, Fitton-Brown (1970) 3-23, Kamerbeek, Dawe (1978), who also assigns lines 574, 576 to Antigone. Reinhardt and Schadewaldt in their translated texts also assign the line to Antigone. For the bibliographical references on the matter see also Davies (1986) 19, n.1.
techniques without being constrained in his intentions by presupposed rules. After keeping a long silence, which is really not so long as her previous clearly noticed silent position in the scene between Creon and the Guard, Antigone bursts out in indignation against Creon who speaks so contemptuously about Haemon's feelings for her. Campbell argues in the same tone, saying that Antigone breaks her silence because she resents Creon's words "not for herself but for Haemon". And he continues that Creon's answer expresses a much deeper feeling as addressed to Antigone.27

(b) Jebb argues that Antigone is rather thinking of Haemon than addressing Creon, and he points to the linguistic evidence which would support the view that the verse 573 referring to σῶν λέχος comes naturally to Antigone.28 Kamerbeek disputes the validity of this argument for attribution to Antigone, because τὸ σῶν λέχος can mean "that marriage of which you are speaking", though it would be better to have here only λέχος or a synonym. In addition, however, he provides the linguistic evidence suggesting that "Ismene can hardly be supposed to cry out ὃ φιλάταθ' Ἀμιον and that in the presence of Antigone. An expression of affection for Haemon coming from Ismene is irrelevant".29

Finally Dawe believes that the verses 572, 574, 576 are given to Antigone because "the Chorus have no standing in the matter of Antigone's death and Ismene is only on the

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26 Kitto (1956) 162.
27 Campbell on 572.
28 Jebb on 572: "the taunt κακῶς γυναῖκας ὑλέστι moves Antigone to break the silence she has kept since 560".
periphery". So line 577 is directed by Creon to her as an answer to her obstinacy in opting for death. Moreover, Dawe accepts that by the attribution of these lines to Antigone the language becomes indirect, but he argues that the continuity of the stichomythia between Creon and Antigone is preserved and that it would be unusual in an early play like Antigone to break it for the sake of the momentary triangular effect. He supports the point by referring to the previous uninterrupted stichomythias between Creon and Antigone, Ismene and Antigone, Creon and Ismene.

Kamerbeek finds fault with the codices' attribution of line 574 to Ismene and believes that lines 574 and 576 must be spoken by the Coryphaeus. West gives line 574 to Ismene because "she repeats herself in much the same way in 548/566" and he thinks that line 576 must also be given to Ismene who "only now abandons hope". With this solution the continuity of the stichomythia is maintained to the end of the scene.

I would suggest that Antigone may both have uttered line 572 and at the same time not have betrayed her silence towards Creon. That means that with her statement she is not addressing Creon directly when she refers to Haemon, so she does not communicate with him any longer from 523. However, she can still express aloud her indignation against the indirect insults of Creon (568, 571) by using a similarly indirect response

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30 Dawe (1978) on 571-577. Dawe thinks that the deictic pronouns τὴνδὲ and τὴνδὲ are indications that Antigone speaks lines 574 and 576.

31 Kamerbeek on 574 and 576.

32 West (1979) 108.

33 Seale (1982) 94-95, who all the same seems to accept Antigone's lasting silence up to the end of the epeisodion.
apostrophising Haemon. She is not entering the dialogue, but this open expression of her
thought generates Creon's direct expression of hate that he feels for the 'evil wives of his
sons' (571). The incident might be thought to recall Sophocles' *Electra* 674 and 677
where Electra's one-line intervention breaks the stichomythic lines between
Clytaemnestra and the Paedagogus without entering into dialogue-contact, but
Mastronarde has provided a strong argument against this assumption.34

Many scholars resent the idea of sentimentality in the assignment of line 572 to
Antigone, but Campbell seems to be right to notice a more personal tone in line 572,
which conveys a greater bitterness than any other speech by Ismene and matches Creon's
harsh answer on line 573. And then Antigone's silence at 560ff. is made more noticeable
by her one-line interference which breaks, but also accentuates, the density of this
silence. So I think that line 572 can be viewed not only as an interruption in the
continuity of speech and its relevant context, but also as the interruption of Antigone's
silence. Antigone is not a passive witness to the exchanges, and she has not taken a
decision about the attitude she has to maintain regardless of the outcome of the verbal
activity which continues in front of her.35 The glimpse of sentiment in line 572 makes us

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34 Mastronarde (1979) 95-96 says that in *Antigone* 572 the text is not such as to suggest
a turning to a new addressee (contrast the vocative in *Hkid* 101, the vocative and
demonstrative in *S.El.* 675, and the careful separation of οἱʹ s in *S.El.* 678). See also
Part II, ch. 7.β. As a parallel example could be cited *Hrkl* 962, which is also an unusual
technique of one-line intervention in Euripides; cf. Mastronarde as above p. 97 for the
defence of the Servant uttering the line in the dialogue 961-974 between the Chorus-
leader and Alkmene, "in terms of content and characterization".

35 Antigone is all the time the person who attracts attention with her determined
position, so the audience would have expected to 'see' a sign of involvement on her
behalf as long as they followed the exchanges between Creon and Ismene. At the right
time Antigone finds the opportunity to manifest that she is an active listener, and it is
she who gives the first hint of Creon's fate in wronging his son. See also Fitton Brown
think that her marriage with Haemon is not a thought which could not cross her mind. Antigone does not look ready to bow to Creon's decision for the death penalty without taking advantage of the preceding exchanges to launch another attack of contempt against Creon. She evokes Haemon, following the same line of thought as Ismene, but her apostrophising of Haemon contains a hint of emotional response, which cannot be detected in her sister's similar argument with Creon.\(^{36}\)

The last lines from 574 sound like a repetition of the theme which has already been stated at the beginning of the stichomythia between Creon and Ismene. So the emotional intensity of the lines lowers its tone to the more neutral question at 574 and the comment at 576, both inferred by the Chorus, who emphasize Creon's obstinacy in stopping the marriage of his son by executing Antigone.

To sum up, Antigone has kept the longest silences in comparison with Creon's extended contribution to these scenes. But although Antigone adopts a long silence up to the Guard's dismissal from the stage (445), her verbal contribution to the action of the following scenes gives her a considerable number of spoken verses, which is equivalent to the verses spoken by Creon up to 562 (Antigone 54 lines - Creon 53 lines). I would suggest that Antigone's silence is not necessarily in contrast with the quantity of lines spoken by Creon. Effectively, the impact of Antigone's silence is measured in the

\(^{36}\) This seems to me an arresting apostrophe attempted by Antigone for the absent Haemon, prompted by Ismene's sympathetic question at 568. At least this is a point which links together the two sisters before Creon and justifies their common death in his final accusations (580-1).
context of the verbal behaviour of all the speakers who take part in the dialogue. So we
should envisage this epeisodion as a succession of speakers who occupy the stage in a
varied pattern of speeches involving entrances and exits as well as interferences by the
silent persons. In this sequence of scenes the three actors build up the action with their
silences as much as with their speeches. The overall impact of this pattern is to give
special prominence to the central figure of Antigone. Antigone is also the most
constrained and powerless figure - a prisoner, whereas Ismene seems to come in of her
own choice to support Antigone. 37 So Antigone, through the stage action and the
special prominence given to both her words and her silences, is the most powerful stage
figure as a focus of dramatic attention, though at the same time the weakest.

37 Line 491 καὶ νῦν καλεῖτ' presumably implies that Ismene is to be summoned but
not necessarily that she will be brought in as a prisoner.
In the first epeisodion of the *Trachiniae* (141-496) the speakers appear in successive stages and interlock gradually in a complex design of speeches, dialogues and visual confrontation with mute persons. This pattern can be regarded as a more elaborate form of marking the changes of speech between three speakers in relation with the handling of entrances and exits. The overall design of the dialogues in the first epeisodion is as follows:

a) **180-205**: Deianeira converses with the Old Messenger.

b) **225-334**: Entrance of Lichas. Deianeira converses with Lichas while the Messenger is silent.

c) **335-392**: Deianeira converses with the Messenger after Lichas has made his exit.

d) **393-496**: Lichas, Deianeira and the Messenger converse in very close contact, with speeches which can be divided as follows:

   i. **393-401**: Entrance of Lichas. He converses with Deianeira, and the Messenger remains silent.

   ii. **402-435**: Lichas converses with the Messenger, and Deianeira remains silent.

   iii. **436-469**: Deianeira makes a long speech in the presence of Lichas and the Messenger.

   iv. **472-490**: Lichas makes a long speech in the presence of Deianeira and the Messenger.\(^1\)

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\(^1\) Cf. Listmann's (1910) 28-29 "Disposition" of the dialogues where the emphasis is rather given to the speaking pairs than to the comparison between speakers and silent
The dialogues with the three actors on stage are conducted between two speakers while the third one listens silently, a technique which resembles the confrontation of the three speakers in the duologues of the final scenes in Ajax, and the more elaborate form of the dialogues in the second epeisodion of Antigone.² With reference to the silence in three-actor scenes we shall examine passages 225-334 and 393-435. We shall also consider lines 335-392, which mark the breaking of the Messenger's silence in a two-actor scene, in order to trace the silence which is kept by the Messenger from line 225 to the point of his sudden interference at 402. By reversing the focus from speech to silence, the persons who fall into a silent status in the conversation of the two others are mainly the Messenger and Deianeira. Whenever Lichas is brought on stage he has an active speaking part, with the exception of his final reticence and unwillingness to answer Deianeira's appeal clearly.

At lines 178-9 the Chorus announces the arrival of the Messenger,³ who says that he was a witness when the crowd examined Lichas in order to learn about Heracles' return. Then he rushed ahead to anticipate the good news, in the hope of a reward from Deianeira. At this point, this information can explain why the Messenger reacts vehemently later at hearing the fabricated report of Lichas, when the latter conceals a persons.

² Schwinge (1962) 73 believes that Trachiniae is an early piece of work to be dated after Ajax and before Antigone because of the use of the three actors in duologues. But this seems to provide an unsafe methodology for the interpretation of the scenes involving three speakers. In all these cases it is important to point out the technique which is used by the dramatist for his handling of the plot. Cf. also Introduction, and n. 16 below.

³ Besides the short ode (205-224) the Chorus' contribution is restricted to the announcement of the Old Messenger, to a few remarks in between rheseis (291-2, 471-2) and to the lines surrounding Deianeira's indecisiveness (383-4, 387-8).
great many of the facts from Deianeira. The Messenger makes no use of a narrative speech, but he provides answers in an exchange of questions from Deianeira. This is the only moment of joy in the play, where Deianeira is temporarily released from the fear caused by Heracles' permanent absence. This joy turns out to be illusory since Deianeira is unaware of the real situation.

Lines 225-334

At his entrance Lichas is greeted by Deianeira, who now expects to hear the full version of the good news, partially told by the Messenger. As long as the dialogue between Lichas and Deianeira unfolds, the Messenger lurks in the background without any attempt to oppose Lichas' concealment of the truth. This silent presence is nowhere marked in the text and an audience ought hardly to expect any further involvement of the Messenger in the development of the speeches. He remains silent on the stage presumably lingering on the possibility of a reward for his service (cf. 191), instead of departing after he has supplied the news of Heracles' safecoming. At a certain moment

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5 Beck (1953) 10-21 characterizes the scene as the only instance where Deianeira really believes that her suffering is over and her house is at last safe. Yet Lawrence (1978) 10-21 believes that there are hints of disbelief in Deianeira's rejoicing response which make the Messenger repeat the news of Heracles' homecoming; cf. Easterling (as above) "even here the ironical echoes of the Parodos may cast a shadow for the audience" and Easterling (1968) 60-61.

6 Deianeira, who has presumably remained on stage during the parodos-song, retains the greatest share of the speeches: (a) she opens the episodion with a long exposure of her fears and premonition of Heracles' fate (141-177), (b) she gives a long response to Lichas' account of Heracles' homecoming (293-313), and (c) she makes a long appeal to Lichas to disclose the real facts of Heracles' activity (436-469).
there might be a turning point where the Messenger realizes that Lichas is not telling the truth. We can make the following alternative assumptions about the Messenger’s silence:

(a) The Messenger does not demonstrate any reaction but retrospectively it becomes clear that he understands that Lichas is lying. (b) A sort of uneasiness might have been registered in his reactions while he stands apart, although the text rests silent. In the spectacle an audience might have followed this stage-action and, presumably, they might have taken it as a warning that Lichas confuses the true facts. Lines 262-269 describe the reasons for the quarrel between Heracles and Eurytus, but the real reasons are revealed at 354ff. Lines 314-15, 317 and 319 could be taken as warnings that "Lichas has something to hide". The true report is given by the Messenger later, in lines 351-374, and repeated by Lichas in his second report in lines 472-489.

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7 Easterling on 314-15. Line 319 is also said in the same mood as lines 314-15 and the stress "in silence" (σιν) can be assumed to have an ambiguous meaning here, either for Lichas concealing things or for conducting his errand in silence. See also Davies (1984) 480-483 for Lichas’ tale at 260ff., who concludes that though we cannot have a definite answer as to the audience’s knowledge of the myths in Greek tragedy, "it does not seem impossible that several of the audience would be surprised, and even suspicious, at Iole’s convenient absence from Lichas’ narrative." Kraus (1991) 85 argues that "the whole speech is [...] designed to distract Deianeira from the questions that will turn out to be the most important -why did Heracles do these things? what led to this ending?- by providing her with a wealth of answers, none of them particularly relevant". For the inconsistencies in Lichas’ account cp. Davies (1991) xxvii-xxx who argues that Sophocles did not invent "the erroneous portions of Lichas’ narrative" but probably found these mythical events in an earlier epic. Cf. also Reinhardt (1979) 42: "it is not clear from the report itself whether or not it is true, whereas in the Electra and Philoctetes the deception can be seen to make more and more strenuous efforts to appear outwardly credible the further it moves from the truth."

8 There is a doubling of reports given by the Messenger and Lichas. The news the Messenger brings in lines 180-199 is in a symmetrical balance with lines 351-374, and Lichas’ report in lines 248-290 is balanced in his second report in lines 472-489. From the first stage of information given by the two messengers to the second phase of reports a great deal of progress has been made to the unravelling of the truth.
I would suggest that, apart from the audience's awareness of the mythological background of the facts, there is also a dramatic reason to believe that the audience grows suspicious about the truthfulness of Lichas' account: standing apart in silence, the Old Messenger might well have reacted in some way while hearing these lines which sound untrue, but we have no means of verifying this assumption from our surviving evidence. The irony of the scene is more prominent in the presence of the silent Iole, who declares visually what Lichas hides orally.

**Lines 335-392: the breaking of the Messenger's silence**

At line 335 the Messenger breaks in upon and stops Deianeira on her way into the house, holding her back from Lichas and the captive women of Oechalia. The intervention of the Messenger entails the breaking of his silence, a dramatic effect which retrospectively accentuates the significance of the silence. This instance gives evidence that not all unmarked silences pass implicitly unnoticed as Taplin suggests when he compares the Messenger's silent stay with the unnoticed exits of the Corinthian Messenger and the Old Shepherd in *O.T.* 1185.\(^9\) The Messenger is an active listener: he emerges all of a sudden from his silence, and his interference marks the turning point of the play with the termination of deception and the beginning of revelation. He obstructs Deianeira's exit in order to disclose Heracles' real motives in the sack of Oechalia.\(^10\) He

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\(^9\) Taplin (1977a) 89, n.2 and 91, with the objection by Seale (1982) 213, n.29.

\(^10\) Mastronarde (1979) 32 argues that lines 335ff. are a problematic passage which belongs to the conventional type of call to a departing back; Deianeira hears the lines 335-337, but she is in an imperfect form of contact because she fails to hear the details of the Messenger's summons, i.e. 336. See also Taplin (1977a) 221-2 for similar examples in tragedy and comedy. However, this is an exception to the conventional role
saying that Iole is the name of the captive for whose sake Heracles has invaded Oechalia (381-2). Line 382 refers back to 317 with δῆθεν ironically pointing to Lichas' remark that he made no enquiries about the origin of the girl. Deianeira, bewildered in her confrontation with this knowledge, turns to the Trachinian women to seek advice (385-6). This is a point of disconnection from her verbal contact with the Messenger, who seems to have finished his conversation with Deianeira. In their first encounter, the Messenger had anticipated Lichas' account with a half-truth. In their second encounter, he prepares the way for the disclosure of the whole truth of Lichas' full version of the facts.

At this crucial point (385-386) in which Deianeira, in a demonstration of indecisiveness, asks help from the Chorus, the Messenger is comparably at a loss whether to leave or stay (390). His momentary elusiveness at 390 cannot be taken as a warning sign that he will be soon performing a second intervention by interrupting the dialogue between Lichas and Deianeira. Yet we wonder whether this stichomythic line made up of two consecutive questions will be the last contribution of the Messenger now that the next encounter between Deianeira and Lichas is about to happen.

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Cf. Reinhardt (1979) 41: "This technique of staging side by side two Messengers to perform roles of deception and revelation within the same epeisodion is different from the confrontation of the Corinthian Messenger with the Herdsman in O.T. and from the short epeisodion of the self-concealment and the self-revelation in Ajax".
The last part of the epeisodion with three speakers moves in a twofold rhythm from stichomythia and closely linked dialogues to two long speeches (436-469, 472-489). Deianeira starts the interrogation of Lichas in a moderate tone. The Messenger, troubled by Lichas' insistence on pretending ignorance about Iole, interferes at line 402, but this time to steal the words from Deianeira in order to defend her interests.  

Between lines 402 and 409 a dispute starts in a rough tone, which involves the Old Messenger and Lichas. Deianeira does not enter in the confrontation of the two men but follows silently up to line 435. Though attention is drawn to her presence in lines 405-7, 409 and 411, the words of reprimand between the two men would have never been exchanged with Deianeira, who keeps dignity and reserve when she speaks. Her abstinence from the dialogue has been regarded as a sign of early technique, but this neglects the possibility that the dramatist has expressly contrived the scene to be performed in this way. Another assumption could be that Sophocles exploits to its fullest extent the device of the unconventional function of the Messenger, because he

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13 McCall (1972) 142-143. The Messenger's status is not really very clear. He isn't specifically identified as Deianeira's servant. See also Mastronarde (1979) 95 who thinks that 'the intervention may indeed have struck the audience as helpful rather than impolite'.

14 The stichomythia in lines 393-401 breaks the continuity of dialogue between two speakers when it shifts to a third speaker, namely from Deianeira to the Messenger at 402, a technique which is found in the alternation of the three speakers in the short stichomythia in Electra 673-679, and probably in Antigone 572.

15 Jebb on 401-404.


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wanted to "carry out the entrapment in the most lively fashion". So Deianeira's reserved behaviour is contrasted with the bold attitude of a character of inferior status. She makes no effort to join the Messenger in his reproachful interrogation of Lichas even later when Lichas appeals to her in order to evade the Messenger's interrogation (429-430). Only after a second request by Lichas (434-435) does she break her silence with a well-controlled speech which aims at convincing Lichas that he must speak the truth. Lichas is persuaded insofar as her appeal leads to a desired response. Deianeira succeeds where the Messenger has failed. Thereby she invites the two men inside the house where she is to prepare gifts for Heracles. Her last address is directed to Lichas whereas the Messenger fails to draw any further attention (490-496).

To sum up, there is a related correspondence in the function of the Old Messenger as a silent witness in the two scenes 225-334 and 393-496, despite the fact that different reasons motivate his silence in each scene: in lines 225-334 the Messenger has stayed silently in the background, ignored by the other two speakers, whereas in lines 393-496 he is ordered by Deianeira to stay as a witness of Lichas' interrogation (391-392). The Old Messenger is an active listener throughout. Moreover, his interferences in the

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17 Mastronarde (1979) 95.

18 Ryzman (1991) 385-398, esp.389: "Perhaps Deianeira is capable of controlling her emotions when necessary in which case her later action may not be inconsistent as sometimes held."

19 There is no further notice in the text about the Messenger after 435. As Seidensticker (1982) 78-79 points out, the involvement of the Old Messenger in the play has a comic aspect: "Seine Wichtigtuerei hat ihn um die erhoffte Belohnung gebracht. Das ist eine an die Komödie erinnernde dialektische Peripetie, und wir könnten über den enttäuscht davorschleichenden Alten lachen, wenn da nicht die tragischen Folgen seiner Einmischung in fremde Angelegenheiten wären."
dialogue are important stages in the disclosure of the truth about Heracles' activity. His first intervention in the scene with Deianeira signals the breaking of his silence (335ff.), which lasted for a considerable time in lines 225-334: the breaking of the Messenger's silence shifts the play in a new direction. His second interference at 402 in a three-actor scene marks the exclusion of Deianeira from the conversation. She becomes now the silent witness whose silence points toward to the forthcoming action, which releases the tension in the altercation between the official and the unofficial Messenger (cf. 436ff.).

The three actors have interacted closely, especially in lines 393-435, but they have not really reached a three-cornered dialogue. The exclusion of one or the other speaker from the dialogue keeps the verbal communication between two speakers, while the third speaker becomes a silent witness in a more distant contact with the speakers, like the Messenger in lines 225-335, or in closer contact, like the Messenger and Deianeira in lines 393-435.

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20 Easterling (1982) on 393-435: "Sophocles uses a three-cornered dialogue in this scene, but the pattern is less complex than in O.T. (1119-81)."
In the third and fourth epeisodion of *Oedipus Tyrannus* (911-1085 and 1110-1185), the scenes are mostly organised with stichomythic dialogues between three speakers. Here again the interest is in the silences which occur in the composition of stichomythia and the involvement of the speakers in this sort of dialogue. In this respect I intend to examine the silences of the Corinthian Messenger and Iocasta in the verbal exchanges with Oedipus. It is important to pay attention to the speeches which take place before the three actors meet on stage because these speeches seem to add gradually to the effect of stichomythia.

The third epeisodion (911-1185) begins with the unexpected arrival of Iocasta, who delivers a short prayer to the nearby statue of Lycean Apollo (911-923). Presumably, Iocasta comes forth along with a handmaid who holds the holy offerings. The maid's presence is notified later in the scene, where Iocasta orders her to call Oedipus outside the palace (945). As she finishes her prayer, a Messenger arrives, also unexpectedly, to report news from Corinth. The Messenger's arrival seems to come as an answer to Iocasta's prayer in the same way as the Paedagogus' arrival comes immediately after Clytaemnestra's prayer in *Electra* (660). At his entrance the Messenger addresses the

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1 Stichomythia occurs when two speakers exchange a line-by-line dialogue or two lines after two (Distichomythia) or when a half-line splits one verse between the two speakers (Antilabe). For recent surveys on stichomythia see Seidensticker (1971) 183-220 and Collard (1980) 77-85.

2 Nonetheless, the Paedagogus' appearance has previously been motivated in the instructions of the prologue and he also brings fictitious news, whereas in *Oedipus*
Chorus, asking them to confirm that he has reached Oedipus' palace (924-6). While asking for Oedipus, he receives a three-fold answer in a rather conventional manner which concerns the place, Oedipus who is inside the palace, and Iocasta who is introduced in a relatively long periphrasis as wife of Oedipus.

The third epeisodion can be divided in seven parts of dialogue as follows:

a) 929-949: The Messenger converses with Iocasta.


c) 957-963: A short dialogue between the Messenger and Oedipus. Iocasta is silent.

d) 964-988: A long dialogue between Oedipus and Iocasta. The Messenger is silent.

e) 989-1046: A long dialogue between Oedipus and the Messenger. Iocasta is silent. This part presents the most intense line-by-line dialogue of the whole epeisodion; the intensity in this stichomythia is tantamount to that in the stichomythic dialogue between Oedipus and the Old Servant in the fourth epeisodion which culminates in the strongest stichomythic exchange, the antilabe (1147-1177).

f) 1047-1053: The Chorus becomes involved in the verbal action with a short intervention called forth by Oedipus' demand for information.

g) 1054-1072: Iocasta's final conversation with Oedipus. The Messenger is silent.

Tyrannus no preparation whatsoever has paved the way for the Corinthian Messenger, who has a real piece of news to present.

3 Listmann (1910) 24-25 has similarly divided the dialogue according to the change of the speakers, but he has considered the part of the Chorus 1047-1053 together with the long stichomythic part between Oedipus and the Messenger (989-1046).
At lines 1073-1075 the Chorus draws attention to Locasta's hasty exit in silence. The third epeisodion concludes with Oedipus' short rhesis on Fortune and his determination to prove his origin (1076-1085).

**Lines 929-949**

This section consists of stichomythia, distichs and a short rhesis by Locasta. After the two speakers have been identified to one another by the Chorus' introduction, the Messenger keeps to a slow rhythm of bringing forth the news, following the trend of Locasta's questions. Locasta's stichomythic lines (935, 938, 941, 943) each consist of two questions, the first shorter than the second, to which the Messenger provides careful replies. He uses a chiastic sentence which delays the answer to Locasta's first question τὰ ποία τοῦτο; "by commenting on the possible effects of the answer" which, in turns, is resumed in Locasta's further question about the double meaning of the announcement.⁴

When Locasta learns of Polybus' death, she stops questioning the Messenger, who now becomes a silent person from 944 to 957. At 945 Locasta turns to the handmaid and commands her to go indoors and announce the news to Oedipus. In the meantime, Locasta continues her short speech challenging the prophecies of gods, which have been proved to be false (946-949). The deictic pronoun δὲ (948), τὸ δὲ (949) referring respectively to Polybus and Oedipus is used as if the persons were close enough to be witnessed. In fact, Oedipus must be making his entrance when Locasta refers to him with

⁴ Mastronarde (1979) 42 on 935-942.
Oedipus enters at 950 and this is, so far, the third entrance in the epeisodion. From now on the scene is divided between three speakers. Oedipus' immediate address to Locasta reveals ignorance of the reasons for bringing him out. We realize that the handmaid has performed only the conventional role of summoning Oedipus outside the palace without giving any report to him of the Messenger's arrival. Even though Locasta urges Oedipus to listen to the man and to account for the authority of the oracles, she continues with a short but full display of the facts by answering Oedipus' question "who is the man and what has he to announce" (954).

So far we have to notice the following points: The speakers enter the stage in rapid succession between lines 911 and 950. While Locasta and Oedipus are involved in the dialogue, they refer repeatedly to the Messenger (953, 954) who, for a short time, becomes the silent witness of the exchanges. His silence provokes the feeling that the Messenger is alert to the dialogue and he is ready to participate verbally as soon as he is given the chance.

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5 The most striking locution is πρὸς τῆς τύχης (949), which makes its first appearance here as a pattern of thought to be followed by Locasta at line 977, the Messenger at 1036, and Oedipus at 1080 in his final speech of the epeisodion.

6 Cp. the ironical tone in τὰ σεμνὰ μαντεύματα (953).
Lines 957-963

At 957 Oedipus questions the Messenger, and the news of Polybus' death is heard once again. Oedipus turns to the Messenger (957) in the same abrupt manner that locasta has turned to her maid after the Messenger ratified the death of Polybus. In the ensuing short stichomythic part between the two men (960-3), the Messenger passes on quick details on Polybus' death, while locasta follows silently up to the point where Oedipus addresses her again (964).

Lines 964-988

At 964 Oedipus turns to locasta with a short speech where he engages in sceptical thoughts about oracles and omens. In the four consecutive stichomythic lines (973-976), one speaker keeps very close contact in replies to the other. Again locasta makes a short speech (977-983) where she responds with her already familiar disregard of the vagaries of Fortune and tries to appease Oedipus' worries with general statements about the futility of dreams. Her attempts to convince Oedipus are unable to dissipate his fears of incest. The four lines of stichomythia in the middle of these speeches (973-6) have

7 Instead of a long narrated report, the news is given through a dialogue which mainly consists of stichomythia and distichs. The unfolding of the events is rendered in the question-answer form: three stichomythic lines (942, 943, 944) convey along with the announcement, the astonishment of locasta at the hearing of the news. A distich from locasta when she forestalls the Messenger's response to Oedipus (955-6). Another final distich from the Messenger to Oedipus confirming the fact of the death (958-9). The formation of a narrated report into a three-sided dialogue gives way to immediate verbal "reactions of the addressee"; see Bremer (1976) 45 who also points out that "Sophocles dissolves some messenger-speeches into dialogue, even into 'Dreigespräch': the addressee may conduct a dialogue with two messengers (Trach. 393-456, O.T. 1110-1185) or the messenger with two addressees (O.T. 945-1072)".
maintained the issue of incest as the point of interest. It is appropriate to assume that while the Messenger has been listening silently to the two speakers' exchanges, he has started to feel puzzled at the hearing of Oedipus' fears.

**Lines 989-1046**

The Messenger remained silent during the exchanges between Oedipus and Iocesta. At 989 he interferes in the dialogue in a way that recalls his initial entrance, seemingly in answer to Iocesta's prayer to Apollo. His involvement in the dialogue attempts to dispel Oedipus' fears by contributing the new element that Merope and Polybus are not his real parents.

The fifth part of the act consists of the longest stichomythic dialogue of the play (48 lines), punctuated by Oedipus' short narration of the oracle (994-999) and two distichs (1002-3, 1005-6). The structure of the stichomythia is made out of questions and answers in its largest part. The Messenger has eight questions in seven lines. The replies give information about Oedipus' adoption by Polybus and Merope, and the encounter of the Messenger with Laius' servant years ago when both were shepherds on mount Cithaeron. In lines 991-1016 the Messenger has posed eight questions in order to explore the reasons for Oedipus' fears. These lines bring about considerable delays in the Messenger's disclosures of Oedipus' past. The first delay occurs with the passage 1002-1006. Here two distichs are assigned to the Messenger who wonders whether he should release Oedipus from his fear (1002-3, 1005-6).
Lines 1008-1015 are the agitated repetition of Oedipus' already stated fears, which are answered by the Messenger's definitive reply that Polybus is not Oedipus' real father (1016). The passage from 1018 to 1046 runs mostly uninterrupted in the unfolding of the information apart from Oedipus' interjection in line 1035, which dislocates the continuous meaning of stichomythia between lines 1034-1036. The last evasive answer of the stichomythia is line 1046 where the Messenger turns to the Chorus to elicit a reply.

The interference of the Messenger at 989 is a turning-point for the scene as well as for the construction of the plot. The Messenger reveals a half-truth about Oedipus' origin and Sophocles shows an aspect of his dramatic technique: the Messenger's role proceeds beyond its conventional role of an announcement. He becomes a person with a unified off-stage action in the past and the present by furnishing knowledge that nobody else is in a position to deduce. The disclosing of this knowledge makes locasta fall into a long silence, which attains a sinister meaning each time a new line implies that the events of the past gradually become recognizable to the queen of Thebes. It is interesting to

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8 In another way Jebb considers that line 1036 is an interruption in the construction of the lines 1035-1037 with the remark that "the agitated speaker follows the train of his own thoughts, scarcely heeding the interposed remark. He is not thinking so much of his parents' possible cruelty, as of a fresh clue to their identity. Not: "was I so named by mother or father?" (see Jebb on 1037); contrast also Lloyd-Jones' translation (Loeb): "did my mother or my father name me?" Both considerations can be relevant if we look at the speakers as following their own thoughts which means that lines 1034,1036 and 1035,1037 are together associated. On the other hand, Sophocles makes us suspect that Oedipus, by evoking so impatiently his mother and father, has probably connected this thought with the memory of the previous lines where locasta described the exposure of her child on the mountain in order to avoid the oracle that Laius would be murdered by his son. This ambiguity is, for a moment, left in suspense until we realize that Oedipus has failed to make the connection.

9 Cf. Taplin (1978) 89. In relation to Taplin's point that "the act which began so
compare Iocasta's reactions on the authority of oracles before she hears the Corinthian's news with her reactions after she has secured it. Before the news, her ritual offering to Apollo seems contradictory to her previous disapproval of the oracles (705ff. 851ff.). After the news, her cheerful reaction at 946ff. is soon replaced by the silent distress she seems to experience while the Messenger indulges in further information.

**Lines 1047-1053**

There is a pause in the stichomythia from lines 1047 to 1053 when Oedipus turns to the Chorus in search of the means of identifying Laius' shepherd who gave the child to the Messenger. The leader of the Chorus indicates Iocasta as the appropriate person to speak about the identity of the man. This reference sends us back to lines 756ff., where Iocasta furnished information from the past about Laius' murder and the servant who asked her permission to remove to the mountains after he saw Oedipus becoming king of Thebes. By being addressed, the Chorus is again drawn into the action. Their answer reveals a clearer vision of the situation than that of Oedipus who cannot relate the shepherd with the man he was looking for all along (cp. 765, 836-7, 859-860). Of course, the Chorus do not realize the truth yet. They simply know which shepherd it was who used to pasture Laius' flocks on Cithaeron.

hopefully for Iocasta ends with her exit to death", we have to notice that in *Electra*, the Paedagogus has secured similar hopes for Clytaemnstra after her prayer, which, at this point "have not ended with her exit to death" due to the postponing effect of a long narrated false report. Instead, the stichomythia in *O.T.* brings forth genuine information with immediate effects. Cp. also Seidensticker's remark (1971) 208 for the function of Sophoclean stichomythia: "Zur Entfaltung der Charakter, zur Klärung der sich ständig verändernten Beziehungen zwischen den Akteuren, zur Bloßlegung der seelischen Konflikte und Spannungen benötigt Sophokles die Stichomythie."
Lines 1054-1072

At 1053 the Chorus-leader suggests that Iocasta can impart information about the shepherd of Laius. At 1054 Oedipus, complying with the Chorus' admonition, ceases to question the Corinthian Messenger and turns to Iocasta. With this shift of address, Iocasta, who has kept a noticeable silence from line 989 to 1053, is once again introduced into the dialogue. Concealing the guilty knowledge she "prohibits" Oedipus from searching further in the past. In this dialogue the presence of the Corinthian Messenger is completely ignored. No bodyguards need have followed Oedipus at his entrance, so when he asks for somebody (τις) to fetch him the shepherd, he turns to the Chorus (1069). Instead of a reply from them, Iocasta, who has meanwhile discovered the truth, rushes off the stage with a cry, an exit which preoccupies the Chorus, but leaves Oedipus unmoved in the search for his origin. Iocasta's exit is commented on by the Chorus as being imbued with a "silence", but she does not obviously make a silent exit, since she is the last person to speak at lines 1071-2. She herself points out that she will not have anything else to say to Oedipus, in fact she 'announces' her silence. By this reticence, it is probably suggested that Iocasta is at pains to bear the impact of the truth and, without further explanations, she turns away to disappear from view.

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10 See also below, n.15 for the Oedipus scene by the Capodarso painter on a Sicilian kalyx-krater in the third quarter of the fourth century.

11 Mastronarde (1979) 14 and 83, n.21.

12 This exit has been paralleled with Deianeira's slow and silent exit in Trachiniae (812ff.) and Euridice's silent exit in Antigone (1243). But these exits are really made without any utterance and come after a long speech by another person, whereas Iocasta utters cries of despair and then she rushes out. Cf. also Reinhardt (1979) 244, n.17 who marks the differences between the three exits.
The whole epeisodion is constructed so as to convey gradually the impact of events which connect the past with the present. The consecutive entrances at the beginning of the act seem to affect the stichomythic form by making the arrangement of lines more flexible. This means that irregularity in the stichomythic structure of the dialogue is also due to the extraneous peculiarities of the scene. But the concentration of the text on the pace of stichomythia is obvious in the way that speakers need each other's response in order to keep open the possibilities of close communication. This point is strengthened by the fact that the shift of speakers is frequent even though the stichomythic dialogue is irregular, interspersed with short speeches and distichs.¹³

The three speakers attentively follow the exchanged words and seem aware of the fact that they take an active part in the course of the dialogue. Concomitantly, the Messenger's silence in section (b) and Iocasta's silence in section (c) are not really made prominent. Iocasta's silence begins to show during the long stichomythia between Oedipus and the Messenger in section (e). Iocasta seems forgotten in her silent position until the Chorus points to her actual involvement in the resolution of the matter. The scene has a parallel in *Trachiniae* where Deianeira, after a long but watchful silence, is reintroduced into the dialogue by Lichas' remarks in her presence (430, 434-5). In *Oedipus Tyrannus* we can detect the significance of Iocasta's silence by the fact that when she hears about the infant on Cithaeron (1026-1032) she is the one "who makes the logical connection between lines 717-719 and 1026-1034", and not Oedipus himself, who is so much preoccupied with the investigation that he fails to hear and recognize the

¹³ Hancock (1917) 13: "-very irregular with frequent shifts of speakers until 1007-1046 where the Messenger reveals to Oedipus part of the mystery of his birth and 1054-1072, the impassioned scene between Oedipus and Iocasta".
previously stated facts. By accepting that Locasta is an active listener to this verbal exchange, we have to suppose that she has already realized who Oedipus is by line 1032. In this case we do not have to wait up to line 1042 for Locasta to secure this knowledge after she hears Laius' name.

So in the course of a long stichomythia which goes on without interruptions, the third speaker can stay aside to follow the intensity in the exchange of the words. This is a silent position which allows him to recognize the facts, as if he was able to read between the quick change of lines. This is rather difficult for the two interlocutors who are caught by the agitated tone of their words so that they allow no time to catch full meaning of the conversation.

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14 So Mastronarde (1979) 80 where he points out that by this "failure to hear", "Oedipus' realization is delayed for another 150 lines"; cf. also as above p.81, n.14.

15 See Jebb on 1060. Mastronarde (1979) 81, n.14 points to "the dramatic effect of the dialogue and resis on the silent bystander" which is also found in Iole, Trachiniae 298-332, and in Electra, Electra 678-787. Cp. also the Syracuse vase-painting 66557 by the Capodarso painter (n. 11 above) for a possible representation of this scene in O.T. While the Messenger from Corinth reveals to Oedipus his true origin from Polybus and Merope, Locasta stands apart touching with her hand her head slightly bowed, a position which portrays her discomfort when she realises the whole truth; for Antigone's and Ismene's participation in the painting, and a full discussion, see Taplin (1993) 28-29; cf. also Part I, ch.1.d., n.18.

16 Hancock (1917) 40: "Gnomic or epigrammatic verses, riddling or paradoxical statements, Sophoclean or tragic irony, the Yankee trait of question answering question and of clever evasion in general, sophistic quibbling, and very rarely, open sarcasm, occur in about that order of frequency. By means of these devices, and sometimes even without them, stichomythia furnishes much to be read into and between the lines. So swift and so constant is the change of speakers in this, as contrasted with an ordinary dialogue, that one has to be on the alert to catch secondary meanings and suggestions, which may determine the drift of the answer".
The same must be true for the Messenger's silent presence as long as Oedipus converses with Locasta in section (d). He seems to have come to the conclusion that Oedipus confuses his mother with Merope. Consequently, when Oedipus speaks of the fear of incest, the Messenger asks who is the woman that Oedipus is afraid of (989). From his interference we realize that he follows attentively but cannot recognize why the conversation has drifted to Oedipus' mother for he knows that Merope is not the real one.\(^\text{17}\)

Thus, by exchanging silent positions, the Corinthian Messenger and Locasta become the persons who can recognize the facts behind the words. Oedipus is found in the grip of the swift talk but, despite the persisting mystery for him, his questions drive the other speakers' minds to awake the knowledge of the past.

\(^{17}\text{Listmann (1910) 25 notices Locasta's silence from 989 to 1053 as well as the Messenger's silence from 1054 to 1072 but he seems to allow to pass unnoticed the silences in the exchange of the speakers between 950-988. Yet he finally points that "immer wechseln Dialoge ab, in dem einer der drei schweigt, mit harter Konsequenz den ganzen Akt hindurch".}\)
6.e. OEDIPUS TYRANNUS 1110-1185

The interrogatory tone of the stichomythia in the third epeisodion of Oedipus Tyrannus is continued in the stichomythia of the fourth epeisodion. In this stichomythia, it is as if the truth of Oedipus' origin is hanging on the exchange of a new couple of verses.\(^1\) The division of speeches can be given by pointing to the new entry and the interference of a speaker in the dialogue:\(^2\)

a) 1110-1120: At 1110 a short speech made by Oedipus and addressed to the Chorus introduces the arrival of the Shepherd. Distichs follow after the short speech combined with a momentary intervention of antilabe (1120) assigned to the Messenger, so that a sort of agitation keeps alive the stichomythic structure as long as the stage attention is focused on the entrance of a new person, who has been long and impatiently expected (δυνατο θαλατζ ξήποιμεν 1112).\(^3\) When attendants bring the Old Shepherd before Oedipus, he asks the Chorus to confirm that this is the man he was looking for. Oedipus

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\(^1\) Taplin (1978) 152 "a couple more and everything will be clear"; cp. also with line 1182.

\(^2\) Listmann (1910) 25 describes this epeisodion by pointing to its elaborate technique. He characterizes the introductory dialogue between Oedipus, the Chorus and the Messenger "frei und natürlich", which prompts first the Messenger's short speech to Oedipus and the Shepherd (1132-1140), then a short stichomythic exchange between the Messenger and the Shepherd (1141-1146) and, finally, a long stichomythia between Oedipus and the Shepherd concluding in antilabe (1147-1176) and two short symmetrical rheseis by the Shepherd and Oedipus; cp. Hancock (1917) 13 for similar observations.

seeks reassurance from the Corinthian Messenger as well, and finally he asks the Shepherd to speak of himself.

b) 1121-1131: Oedipus converses with the Shepherd. The Messenger is silent.

c) 1132-1146: The Messenger interferes with a short speech and gets involved in a short dialogue with the Shepherd. Oedipus falls silent.

d) 1147-1185: Oedipus interferes and converses with the Shepherd. The Messenger falls silent.

**Lines 1121-1131**

In a short passage of stichomythia the Shepherd gives his identity, replying to Oedipus' questions (1121-1127). At 1128 Oedipus asks the Shepherd whether he recognizes the Messenger, and he receives an evasive answer. Line 1129 is a double question spoken by the old man which interrupts the inquiry. The first question points at the Messenger and the second reveals the Shepherd's confusion as to the Messenger's presence. It is not clear whether the Shepherd is trying to avoid an answer or whether he is in a state of bewilderment, which Oedipus passes over quickly in line 1130. At 1131 the Shepherd evokes his possibly fading memory, which the Messenger tries to freshen by exposing

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4 Jebb on 1130: "Oedipus takes no more notice of the herdsman's nervous interruption than is necessary for the purpose of sternly keeping him to the point"; Cf. also Mastronarde (1979) 83, n.21: "It is possible that the herdsman is genuinely confused rather than concealing his knowledge". Yet in a previous discussion (as above p.38 and n.7), Mastronarde lists the passage 1128-1131 as an "attempt to divert the dialogue from an unpleasant topic [which] occasions other delaying counter-questions". I would suggest that both interpretations have a valid point which is brought out in the follow-up of stichomythia: at 1129 the Herdsman shows uncertainty when he encounters the Messenger, but he is presumably making a conscious delay at 1131, which by itself provides a motive to instigate the Messenger's intervention in the dialogue.
details of their acquaintance on mount Cithaeron years ago (1132-1140).

**Lines 1132-1146**

With the Messenger's short speech, the stichomythia is broken and this sudden intervention marks a swift change of speaker. However, the dialogue carries on in the same manner as happened in line 989 where the Messenger broke in with more information on the events of the past.⁵ We saw him there to be silent carefully following the discussion between Oedipus and Iocasta. Now, he interferes again in the dialogue with another fragment of the past. We ought not to fail to notice that the situation at line 1131 necessitates a long account of the past, whereas after line 989 the stichomythia carries on the report of the past events by a question-and-answer form of dialogue.

The stichomythic form of dialogue is reinstated when the Shepherd is compelled to acknowledge the Messenger's reminder. The rest of the dialogue leads not only to the revelation of the true events, but also contrives points of hesitation and delay which increase the length and the content of the stichomythic inquiry. In fact these delays have already started with line 1129. At 1144 the Shepherd, with a double question in reply to a distich question from the Messenger, tries to evade the claim that Oedipus is the child he had handed over to the Messenger. Yet, when the Corinthian Messenger becomes quite straightforward and declares Oedipus as the foundling on Cithaeron, the

⁵ Mastronarde (1979) 95, n.55: "in neither case does he delay the set course of the dialogue". The instance is tantamount to Trachiniae 402 where the Old Messenger breaks with his sudden intervention the stichomythic dialogue between Deianeira and Lichas. There we also had a case of investigation which involved three speakers in the report of new facts.
Herdsman, terrified, warns him to speak no more.⁶

There is the impression here that a three-sided dialogue advances without gaps. This is sustained by the fact that the Messenger involves both the other speakers in an eventual response to his short speech by addressing first Oedipus (1132) and then the Herdsman (1133, 1140). Indeed, this passage seems to provide an example of a genuinely three-cornered dialogue in Sophocles. Oedipus listens in very close contact with the other speakers so we might think that he is about to interfere at any moment. His short silence in lines 1132-1146 denotes a pause in his active participation in the agitated pace of the stichomythic dialogue.

**Lines 1147-1185**

At 1147 Oedipus interferes abruptly to block the Shepherd's warning which may have been accompanied by a threatening gesture.⁷ From this point of agitation, the Messenger takes no further verbal part and remains a silent witness to the exchange of words between Oedipus and the Shepherd. Oedipus points to the Messenger's presence at 1150 and 1156 but after that the Messenger is completely ignored by the interlocutors. His silence implies his disconnection from the dialogue. The incident recalls the end of dialogues in the third epeisodion where Oedipus and Iocasta converse in a spirit which might be considered as incomprehensible to the Messenger.

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⁶ Jebb on 1146: "The situation shows that this is not an 'aside'. The θεράπτων, while really terrified, could affect to resent the assertion that his master had been a foundling".

⁷ See Jebb on 1147 and Taplin (1978) 65.
Lines 1151-1155 trigger another delay where Oedipus launches threats against the Herdsman. After that Oedipus has to repeat the claim of line 1150 in the question of line 1156. Lines 1158-1160 also call for a new postponement of contextual continuity and Oedipus notices that the Shepherd tries to escape the interrogation. The meaning of line 1157 is taken over again in line 1161, in which the Shepherd confesses that somebody else gave him the child, but he avoids mentioning the name. The vagueness about the name of the giver urges Oedipus to ask precisely who was the man. Line 1165 is again an evasion on the part of the Herdsman, which prompts Oedipus to burst out with another threat.8

The name of Laius is mentioned but the Shepherd still eludes the disclosure that the child was Laius' son. Oedipus insists on the inquiry, yet a last delay in lines 1169-1170 withholds the clear answer.9 The full truth is revealed in a distich which gives way to antilabe in four consecutive lines and to two final rheseis.

To sum up, from the beginning of the act, the Herdsman's reluctance to speak the truth makes a contrast with the Messenger's promptness to elicit clear answers. When he fails, Oedipus takes over the inquiry by threatening violence. Each time there is a change of speaker in the dialogue, the interference of the speaker is so abrupt that it silences the previous speaker (1132, 1147). This state of silence leaves in suspense the involvement of the three actors in the dialogue, so we can guess that they are ready at any moment to

8 Cp. 1154//1166.

9 Line 1169 is "a deliberate postponement of the conveying of bad news" Mastronarde (1979) 78, also n.8; for similar cases of "hesitation before relating painful news" see also Mastronarde (as above) p.37, n.2.
occasion a new entrance into the complexities of the dialogue.

In these sections of dialogue there are no long rheseis 10 and the stichomythic structure relates the three speakers in close verbal communication.11 The silence of the Messenger in lines 1121-1131, and the silence of Oedipus in lines 1132-1146, are contingent on the normal sequence of the speeches between the three speakers, and they do not seem to imply any specific peculiarity in the structure of the dialogue. The interference of the Messenger at 1132 does not exclude Oedipus from the dialogue as happened with line 402 in *Trachiniae*, where the interference of the Old Messenger pushed Deianeira into a long silence, which implied her distance from the altercation between the two Messengers. However, when Oedipus interferes at 1147, the impact of the Corinthian Messenger as a silent witness of the exchanges between Oedipus and the Shepherd, apart from short references to his presence at 1147-8, 1150 and 1156, is gradually diminishing in its importance for the scene up to the end of the epeisodion.

10 "We no longer have a definite division between rhesis and line-dialogue; the one glides into the other through speeches of varying length, and two or three-line speeches crop out in the stichomythia and break up the formal symmetry". Hancock (1917) 10 draws this distinction by referring to the later plays of Sophocles, which manifest more freedom from the formal constraints of rheseis and stichomythias than the earlier plays.

11 The import is identical to the short dialogue between Oedipus-Creon-Iocasta at lines 634-648, where the three speakers follow rigidly one another's words by responding with replies which stimulate a reciprocal effect. Seidensticker (1971) 204 and n.47 mentions the following scenes as closely three-cornered dialogues: *O.T*. 634-648, 1110-1185, the "Verhör-Stichomythien" in *Trach*. 380-435, *Electra* 669-679 with the inference that "Es sprechen zwar auch in diesem Szenen immer nur jeweils zwei oder drei Personen miteinander, und die Zwiegespräche sind durch Versblöcke voneinander getrennt, aber die Epeisodia insgesamt bieten doch den Eindruck eines lebhaften Dreiergesprächs".

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Finally, the use of stichomythia enlarges the possibilities in the Messenger's role and enables interaction between the secondary figures of the play. The two minor figures are much more involved in the verbal action than they are conventionally expected to be in their role of reporting off-stage events. In the third epeisodion the Messenger's stichomythia has started as a dialogue which brings information, but it has turned out to be (989) a revelatory account of Oedipus' origin. Thus, the news from Corinth is subverted by the impact of the following disclosures which make the content of the fourth epeisodion. There is the impression that the action, after a certain point, not only deals with an announcement but also develops a new element for the construction of the plot.

12 Seidensticker (1971) 206 speaks about "Mischformen" and "Diskussions-Stichomythien" in Sophocles' stichomythic models; see also p.206-207, n.49, and the remark in the handling of stichomythia between Aeschylus and Sophocles: "Aischylos geht es in erster Linie um den factischen Inhalt des Gesprächs, Sophokles um die 'Charaktere'".
The scene in *Electra* lines 766-803 is the last part of the encounter between Clytaemnestra, Electra and the Paedagogus (660-803). This scene is treated separately and before lines 634-679 because the form of the dialogue seems to belong to the classification according to which the interference of a silent witness makes one of the speakers stop talking. Here the Paedagogus is silent in the short dialogue between Clytaemnestra and Electra.

Clytaemnestra dominates the stage from lines 633 to 803 with a range of verbal expressiveness and willingness to respond in dialogue, whereas Electra remains in total isolation. The latter keeps the longest silences, starting from Clytaemnestra's prayer up to the moment of the striking words τέθνηκε Ὠρέστης (673). In lines 680-763 the Paedagogus tells the false story of Orestes' death in Phocis. We should point out the importance of silence during the narrative speech with Clytaemnestra and Electra as witnesses, and the impact of the long rhesis on the audience.1 After a two-line comment by the Chorus, Clytaemnestra moves gradually from a confused reaction to the news of Orestes' death to a clearer expression of her contentment that she has no longer to fear

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1 Cf. also Mastronarde (1979) 81, n.14 when he says that only the audience "can feel the terrible effect of the dialogue and the rhesis on the silent bystander". This remark is made as a typical dramatic effect in Sophocles (Iole in *Trach.* 298-332 and Iocasta in *O.T.* 1032-1053) in comparison with the lines 656-660 in *Hippolytus*, where the speaker makes an oath to secrecy which seems to be ignored by Phaedra later (689-692). Mastronarde interprets this discontinuity as "imperfect contact" or as "an emotional cause" and, though we cannot be sure from the text whether Phaedra remained on stage or not during Hippolytos' long speech, he tends to believe that Phaedra is present to hear Hippolytos' speech. Cf. also Barrett (1978) on *Hippolytus* 616f.
for her life. She apostrophizes Zeus and seems to give expression to her private thoughts, caught as she is between maternal grief and a sense of gain (766-8, 770-1).²

The Paedagogus is astonished at seeing Clytaemnestra reacting with distress rather than joy at the news of Orestes' death. An audience can probably acknowledge that the Paedagogus is ironically checking Clytaemnestra's feelings at the announced death of her son (769), and they can see that the Paedagogus pretends to be disappointed that the news he brings does not make Clytaemnestra rejoice (cf. 772). His treacherous words at line 772 prompt the change in Clytaemnestra's mood and make her reveal her relief for the event of Orestes' death (773ff.).³

In her final words to the Paedagogus, Clytaemnestra refers to Electra (784, 787) who has kept silent after her last utterances in lines 674 and 677. Electra emerges from her silence only to reveal her brooding resentment for Clytaemnestra.⁴ The effect of her interference is that the continuity of dialogue between Clytaemnestra and the Paedagogus is disrupted.⁵ The Paedagogus falls silent without any attempt to enter into a three-actor conversation. The difference between Electra's interventions in 674, 677,

² Jebb on 766-8; cf. Bain (1977) 78 points out that the verses 766-8 "show little awareness of the presence of other people but it is hard to see why the poet should wish Clytaemnestra's feelings to be kept secret from the other people on stage. In fact what the paedagogue says next suggests that he is supposed to have heard her."

³ See Jebb on 772.

⁴ Webster (1969) 91 refers to these scenes where news have opposite effects on the hero and a minor character as a "report to two". "Electra's despair when she hears the report of Orestes' death is made more obvious by Clytaemnestra's joy".

⁵ Cp. Deianeira's reluctance to grasp the chance to involve in dialogue with Lichas and the Old Messenger in Trach. 405-411, and her delay to respond to appeals at 429-430 and 434.
and her interference in the dialogue at 788 is that Electra's lines at 674 and 677 did not intend to divert the dialogue between Clytaemnestra and the Paedagogus into a three-actor exchange, but were short interjections of distress when Electra heard that her brother was dead. Again, Electra seems to avoid opening a new confrontation with her mother despite Clytaemnestra's personal attacks. Lines 788-790 and 792 are more like an open expression of bitter thoughts provoked by Clytaemnestra's malevolence in lines 784-787 and 791 than an attempt at plunging into a new dialogue. Yet in the short dialogue 788-798 the ensuing lines seem to continue in a different mood. Electra addresses directly Clytaemnestra in lines 794 and 796 resuming the theme of her mother's victory over her and her brother.

At 797-8 Clytaemnestra suggests a generous recompense for the Paedagogus, if he silenced Electra. The Paedagogus makes to leave (799) but Clytaemnestra invites him inside the palace concluding with another demonstration of contempt for the defeated Electra (802-3). The interplay of words about loudness and the silencing of the evils at 796, 798, 802-3 is a theme which brings intensity at the end of the scene and recalls Clytaemnestra's sinister prayer and her fears for Electra's ποιλόγλωσσον βοήν. The news of Orestes' death has dismissed all these fears, and Electra's cries are now harmless. The scene concludes with Electra alone on stage making a bitter speech to the

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6 Mastronarde (1979) 95: "Electra utters two exclamatory laments which are basically self-addressed and not intended as a contribution to the dialogue; her interventions are noticed, however, by the interlocutors, for Clytaemnestra first tells the messenger not to pay attention to Electra and then tells Electra to mind her own business while she listens to the rhesis". See also Part II, ch. 7.b.

7 Cf. the Agon in lines 516-633.

8 Cp. the irony in Clytaemnestra's last words (802-3).
Chorus about her misfortune and the death of her brother. The short speech (804-822) marks the process of her mind, which has moved to a new decision. 9

The Paedagogus has shown no overt interest in the dialogue between the two women. He seems to allude to Clytaemnestra's words at 791 when he asks permission to leave if all is well. 10 We think that he follows with attention the words between mother and daughter but his silence is not made prominent because the dispute between the two women does not lead to a long altercation (cf. 516-633) in which he would stay as a witness. However, the Paedagogus not only manipulates Clytaemnestra's and Electra's reactions with his perfidious words but he also becomes the silent witness of the impact of his fallacious news on the two women between lines 772-803. This short period of silence seems dramatically designed to bring out the successful effect of deception. The success of the deception-plan must be the literal meaning of 799 which an audience can trace in the Paedagogus' ironical repetition of the idea that "these matters are settled satisfactorily". 11

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9 Cp. 947ff.

10 See Jebb on 799; The reiteration of καλάς at 790, 791, 793 seems to be echoed by the Paedagogus with εὖ κυρεῖ giving an ironical tone in the change of the speaker. Cf. also Lloyd-Jones & Wilson, who prefer to read line 799 with a question-mark which "adds a touch of liveliness".

11 See Kells on 799.
In this chapter I attempted to work out the meaning of silence assumed by those speakers who abstain from dialogue-contact as long as two interlocutors are engaged in conversation. In order to point out the shifts of dialogue between the speakers it was important to elaborate on the technique of interferences by the speaker who, for a period of time, does not take a speaking part in the dialogue, but comes back into dialogue-contact at an opportune moment. In dialogues where there is a close interaction between the three speakers, it is hard to notice the silence of a person who ceases to speak because the quick exchanges between the three speakers do not allow time for distinguishing between the silent from the speaking activity. This impression is stronger in parts of the dialogue of *O.T.* and less marked in *Antigone* and *Trachiniae*.

In *Antigone* 384-581, Antigone enters in silence at 384, an entry which is described with amazement by the Chorus when they see her approaching. In the ensuing dialogue between the Guard and Creon, Antigone remains silent. She emerges from her silence when she responds to Creon's appeal who asks her to assume responsibility for Polyneices' burial. At this point, the Guard falls silent, and his silence lasts for only a few lines because he is soon sent away by Creon. When Ismene enters in tears the description of her grief makes a visual contrast with Antigone's silent entry. With the three actors on stage the dialogue changes quickly from Creon and Ismene to Antigone and Ismene, thus giving the impression that a three-cornered conversation is about to take place. However, this close interaction between the three speakers takes place only
for a few lines. Soon the dialogue turns to Antigone and Ismene, while Creon follows silently. It is not likely that Creon realizes what really happens between the two girls. This is at least what we deduce from his interference at 561 where he plunges into the dialogue for a new sequence of exchanges with Ismene. His interference marks the breaking of his silence and, at the same time, entails the silencing of Antigone in the ensuing scene. Antigone keeps a long silence which (it is argued) is broken with an one-line interference at 572. With this utterance she seems to allow a glimpse of feeling for her relationship with Haemon. So Antigone’s previous silence becomes dramatically effective when it is unexpectedly broken. Antigone declares her irreconcilable mind by all means, that is, by her action on stage (bowed head), her verbal opposition, or her meaningful silence.

In *Trachiniae* 225-346, the Old Messenger remains silent in the background of the verbal action between Deianeira and Lichas. At a certain point in Lichas’ narrative speech, the Messenger might have realized that Lichas conceals the true facts of Heracles’ homecoming. At the hearing of the distorted news, the Messenger either reacts with a sort of movement so that the audience is allowed to interpret this as a sign that something is going wrong, or the Messenger remains completely motionless and no visual hint can help the audience to suspect Lichas’ story. Either way, Deianeira is not in the position to mistrust the reported news. Thus, the Messenger’s silence attains a specific meaning when he interferes at 335 and starts unravelling the true facts in front of Deianeira. When Lichas makes a second entry and engages in a new dialogue with Deianeira, the Messenger falls silent again. At 402 he interferes for a second time by anticipating a response from Deianeira. His interference signifies that the Messenger
exerts pressure on Lichas to speak out the identity of Iole but it also causes Deianeira’s silence as long as the two men exchange harsh words. At Lichas’ repeated appeals, Deianeira breaks her silence with a persuasive speech that makes Lichas reveal the truth. The handling of silence here has very different implications depending on whether it is the Messenger or Deianeira who is silent. This effect is complicated by the fact that in the scene with Iole attention is drawn to her silence and to Lichas’ refusal to speak her name.

In *O.T.* 911-1085 the arrival of the three actors on stage happens in successive stages between lines 911 and 950. The dialogue brings close the three interlocutors (Oedipus, Iocasta and the Corinthian Messenger) in lines 950-963 in a triangular communication. The silence of the Messenger is noticeable in the dialogue between Oedipus and Iocasta (lines 964-988). When this silence is broken at 989, we realize that the Messenger has been a silent witness filled with curiosity by the exchanges, and now his interference signifies that he is coming up with new information about the real parents of Oedipus. This is the starting point for Iocasta to develop a silence with a sinister meaning because she becomes able to recognize the events of the past and the origin of Oedipus. When the Chorus, who so far follow silently, are asked by Oedipus to identify the servant of Laius, their answer indicates that they are in a better position than the king to connect the Shepherd in Cithaeron with this man. Iocasta is again drawn in a new turn of dialogue, while the Messenger falls silent. This silence is nowhere given further implications because the man’s role seems to have reached its end at this stage of the action. Iocasta cannot bear the discovery of Oedipus’ origin and hastens to exit with cries of despair. Her departure is commented on by the Chorus for its reticence, though it is
not really silent as are the exit of Eurydice in *Antigone* 1243 and the exit of Deianeira in *Trachiniae* 812ff. The silence first of the Messenger then of Iocasta draws attention to their mental processes: the audience are encouraged to imagine three different vantage points (four, if you include that of the Chorus) from which to understand the events in which all turn out to have shared.

In *O.T.* 1110-1185 the arrival of the Shepherd produces a three-actor scene with the Corinthian Messenger and Oedipus. In lines 1121-1131 and 1132-1146 the three speakers converse in close communication, so their silent activity is short and no time is allowed for the silences of the Messenger and Oedipus to become prominent. The interference of the Messenger at 1132 resembles his previous one at 989 to the degree that both utterances refer to the disclosure of the past. The difference is that at 989 the report has been transmitted in a stichomythic dialogue with Oedipus in the presence of Iocasta, while at 1132 the Messenger utters a short speech addressing Oedipus and the Shepherd. Oedipus remains silent during the short exchanges between the Shepherd and the Messenger and his interference at 1147 marks the Messenger’s distancing from the dialogue as he withdraws in his unnoticed silence in the same way it happened at the end of the third epeisodion. In the ensuing dialogue between Oedipus and the Shepherd, delays or refusals to speak stress the Shepherd’s desperate desire to keep silence on the matter of Oedipus’ origin. The emphasis in the text on asking questions and speaking helps to draw attention to this desire.

In *Electra* 766-803 the interference of Electra at 787 marks the breaking of her silence and her gradual involvement in a strong dialogue with Clytaemnestra. Here the
Paedagogus falls silent and there is the impression that he is going to be the witness of a new argument between the two women. This does not happen because Clytaemnestra turns to the Paedagogus to invite him inside the palace, but this short wrangle between the two women allows the Paedagogus to reach the ambiguous conclusion that 'things have been properly worked out'. This is especially ratified by the fact that Electra and Orestes have been silenced, which alludes to the (supposed) defeat of Electra and the death of Orestes. Here, therefore, silence is essentially related to deception and its power to put an end to words and deeds (796-8).
7.a. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the aim is to show that Electra and Philoctetes in the same plays do not enter into normal dialogue-contact with the other speakers but provide short interventions which do not succeed in establishing communication with the other speakers. Normal dialogue-contact presupposes that the speakers keep communicating by addressing each other and responding to their speeches. This arrangement of dialogue does not seem to conform with the utterances of Electra and Philoctetes in these scenes. Their short interventions are limited in comparison with the exchanges of the two interlocutors, and they rather stress the silence of Electra and Philoctetes than encourage their verbal involvement in these dialogues. In the context of verbal action, Electra's silence tallies with the silence of Clytaemnestra's prayer. At the end of the play, Electra refuses Aegisthus the right to plead in defence of himself, which conjures up another instance of silence. In Philoctetes, at a certain point, the Merchant lowers the tone of his voice. There is a suggestion here that his utterances can hardly be heard because they are supposed to be spoken in a conspiratorial tone. This is another way of approaching the function of silence in this dialogue setting.

a) Electra 634-679: in this section the discussion opens with the silent element in
Clytaemnestra's prayer and the allusions to revenge that are implied in the secrecy of her words. I continue with the comparison between this prayer and Electra's prayer in lines 1376-1383 in order to contrast the unspoken parts between the two prayers. I will also try to show that Electra keeps a consistent silence first during Clytaemnestra's prayer and then, in the subsequent encounter between Clytaemnestra and the Paedagogus. Her short interventions at 675 and 677 emphasize her silence and cannot be taken as attempts to break into dialogue.

b) Electra 1466-1507: in the final scene of the play Electra's last contribution is a short speech (1483-1490) which does not seem to disconnect the dialogue between Orestes and Aegisthus. I attempt here to show that Electra's silence is the main characteristic of her presence in this dialogue and her short intervention does not mean that she enters into dialogue with the interlocutors. Electra refuses to allow Aegisthus to plead for his life, and Orestes orders him to speak no more. The implications of this attitude are discussed as another phenomenon of silent activity in this scene.

c) Philoctetes 542-647: in the Merchant scene I will investigate Philoctetes' breaking of silence at 578 and 622 in order to show that his short interventions in the dialogue between Neoptolemus and the Merchant do not constitute attempts to include him in the conversation but they restrict him to the role of a silent witness. The Merchant pretends to speak in a low voice and conceal his words from Philoctetes. In fact, his true intentions are that Philoctetes must hear what he has to say. However, Philoctetes does not enter into the dialogue and his silent attendance in this scene attains a dramatic significance for the rest of the play.
In order to follow Electra’s silence between lines 634 and 803 in *Electra* and to define the meaning of her interventions in lines 674 and 677, we need to include in our examination the framework in which this silence operates and to see the impact of Clytaemnestra’s prayer in connection with Electra’s silent witnessing. The short dialogue between Electra and Clytaemnestra in lines 788-796 has to be considered as another point at which Electra’s silence is broken; but this part has been treated as an instance where Electra, who has been silent, interferes with a short verbal involvement in the dialogues which follow the Paedagogus’ report, thus silencing one of the speakers, namely the Paedagogus.¹

At the end of the first Stasimon (516) Clytaemnestra makes her entrance attended by a handmaid with offerings for a sacrifice to Apollo. She immediately addresses Electra who stayed on stage during the ode and a long debate starts between the two women.² It

¹ See Part II, ch. 6.f.

² In short, the debate consists of a set of long speeches followed with a closer confrontation in shorter speeches. In the space between the long and short speeches (516-609//612-659), the Chorus intervenes with a two-line utterance which gives brief pause to the tension between the long rheseis and the following short verbal attacks. Burton (1980) 203, and also 187 suggests that this intervention "holds the balance between contestants in passionate debate [and] allows time to gather her [Clytaemnestra's] thoughts" and to answer back Electra's onslaught. It also provides Clytaemnestra with the word φοροντίδα to use in her reply to Electra. Cf. Lloyd-Jones & Wilson (1990) on 608-9 with discussion as to who is referred to in lines 610-11. They conclude that the lines are obscure and assume the omission of a line before them. See also Gardiner (1987) 149-151 for an extended survey of 610-11. The matter seems to have received no sufficient solution but it makes sense to believe with Gardiner (p.150) that "since the Chorus have hitherto been worried about Electra's well-being, it would
seems that this is an Agon in the Euripidean manner where Sophocles makes contestants not only display different opinions but, moreover, oppose arguments to the other's argumentation.³

Lines 634-659: Clytaemnestra's prayer

In her prayer Clytaemnestra alludes to the disaster of her enemies. She tries only to suggest and not to make obvious her true intentions because she is wary of Electra's hostile reaction on hearing the outrageous wish. It is important to see the scene in two aspects: a) in the context of religious practice and its reference to the dramatic occurrence of the prayer in the play, b) in the dramatic context of the scene, which involves a strong argument between mother and daughter.

a) With regard to the ancient rituals, the participants who attend a prayer must abstain from any ill-omened word before the prayer is uttered. The prayer must rise up as a pious act against a background of εὐφημία. Euphemia means not only the use of words of good omen which are counter to blasphemia, the words of bad omen, but also the silent attitude in making a prayer.⁴ Therefore, the threat from ominous words can be not be surprising if they should say that she seems to have lost all concern (φοβώτις) for whether she is behaving prudently or is courting punishment by this outburst in front of Clytaemnestra".

³ Johansen (1964) 20: "einen wirklichen Agon in mehr oder weniger euripideischem Sinne zwischen Held und Gegenspieler gibt es nur in der Elektra"; cf. Lloyd (1992) 12: "Sophocles does, however, use the agon in a characteristic fashion to point up the heroic obstinacy and isolation of Electra."

⁴ Burkert (trans. 1985) 73-75.
anticipated with a religious silence before the utterance of the prayer.

b) This is exactly what Clytaemnestra asks from Electra: to let her make her sacrifice in silence without interrupting her with cries. Electra responds positively to this petition though without concealing her anger. She will abide by her commitment to stand by as a silent witness of this prayer. But there is a subtle distinction to draw here: Electra not only commits herself to the ritual as a silent participant of the prayer but also becomes the silent witness of this half-clear, half-obscure prayer. From now on, with the arrival of the messenger Electra is characterized by a long silence rather than a consistently speaking involvement in the scene.

At 634 Clytaemnestra orders the maid-servant to raise the offerings so that she can start her prayer. We may guess that Clytaemnestra makes a move towards the place where the statue of Apollo stands. Still she is quite close to Electra, so she proceeds very cautiously in the revelation of her thoughts. Clytaemnestra calls Apollo to release her from her anxieties (635-6) using the epithets προστατήριος (637) and Λύκειος (645, 641), referring to Electra's expected reaction to the open expression of Clytaemnestra's thoughts. Βοή is an important word in relation to Clytaemnestra's and Electra's behaviour.

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5 οὐν εὐφήμου βοής; "with hushed clamour" Jebb on 630. This request to Electra comes into contrast with πολυγλώσσῳ βοή (641), referring to Electra's expected reaction to the open expression of Clytaemnestra's thoughts. Βοή is an important word in relation to Clytaemnestra's and Electra's behaviour.

6 Kamerbeek on 632-3: "Electra's answer is a very impressive because of the asyndeton ἐώ, κελεύω, the brief imperative θέε, the staccato of the whole wording, especially of her concluding line."


8 Jebb on προστατήριος: "Here Clytaemnestra is invoking him more especially as ἀλεξίκος, averter of evil."
She assumes that Apollo will be willing to hear her prayer (637), which must be kept in secrecy from anyone else. Especially, she is afraid that Electra may listen and spread abroad, with envy and outspokenness, her mother's true intentions. Κλάουτς ἄν is echoed by ἄκουε (643) and ἔλεως κλώον (655). The intriguing element of this prayer is that Clytaemnestra asks the god to hear a prayer which has no sound, or better, which is partly spoken and partly voiceless; κεκρυμμένην βάζειν points to the secret meaning of the prayer. But had Electra left the stage after 633 would Clytaemnestra still have been so reserved in her petition to the god?

We have to assume that the ambiguous words of the prayer correspond also to intentions hard to be understood by Electra, not only because of their manner of expression but also because of their content. Is it possible for Electra to believe that her mother prays for the death of her bad children when she distinguishes them from the good ones (653-654)? And if she realizes the dark side of the prayer can she avoid experiencing a sort of moral shock? If we guess correctly, the effect of the prayer for Electra must be one of great dramatic significance. Electra must be filled with puzzlement and confusion when she witnesses this secretive mood. In some way she must express a sort of interest in her mother's prayer, but we can only speculate on these reactions which are presumably comprehended in Electra's silence. Kells interprets κεκρυμμένην βάζειν as "not for all...

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9 Jebb on 644f.: "locasta too appeals to Apollo in this quality. Both as a god of light and as a destroyer of foes the Λύκειος is fitly invoked here." Cf. also Jebb's Appendix on Electra 6f., for the use of the epithet Λύκειος for Apollo, and Schachter (1981) 87. For Clytaemnestra's invocation λυπηροὺς / εὐχας ἀνάσχω δειμότων (635-6) cp. locasta's prayer in O.T. 921, λύστιν τιν' ἕμιν εὔσαρχη πόρης.

10 As Versnel (1981) 30 and 56 points out "the act of listening becomes granting [since] the element of exchange was fundamental to dealing with the deities".
the world to hear"; "secretive" and he comments on the prayer as follows: "When a person prayed for something improper, he prayed silently or murmured *sotto voce*, so that the public might not hear him and become aware of his evil intent."\(^{11}\) Bain translates κεκρυμμένην βόξιν as "hidden utterance" and continues: "hidden in the sense that she will not utter loud to Apollo all her wishes because of Electra's presence: the god is expected to guess her unexpressed wishes and see them to fruition. There is nothing in the prayer which is uttered aloud which could not be heard by Electra. If the speech really was concealed from Electra, one would expect it to contain a specific wish for the death of Orestes rather than the allusive generality of 648-9."\(^{12}\) The meaning also of the locution ὅσ... τῇδε (643) sends us back to the meaning of κεκρυμμένην βόξιν (638).\(^{13}\)

So I would rather accept that the prayer is uttered in a loud voice, i.e. loud enough to be heard by Electra, and certainly loud enough for the audience, though with a covert meaning, with words alluding to, but avoiding the expression of, true intentions, than that it is uttered sotto voce as it is explained by Kells.\(^{14}\) Therefore, there is no reason to assume that Electra cannot distinctly hear Clytaemnestra's words. Otherwise, how could

\(^{11}\) Kells (1973) on 634-659 and 638, and cf. the objection by Mikalson (1989) n.49.

\(^{12}\) Bain (1977) 77-78; cf. also Jebb on 638: κεκρυμμένην=αἴνιγματώδη, covert in meaning though spoken aloud.

\(^{13}\) So Jebb on 643.

\(^{14}\) Kells on 643. This is not the case for an aside and both Electra and the audience can clearly hear the prayer yet its understanding bears a distinct impact for each one. For a study on asides see Bain as above, and relevant references in Bain (1975) 13-25, (1987) 1-14 as well as the extended discussion on tragedy and comedy in Taplin (1986) 163-174.
we explain her presence on the stage during the prayer? In tragedy, it is rather unusual to keep an actor silent on stage without making use of his silence in contrast to the words of the exchanges of the other actors. I think that, at the centre of the play, Electra's commitment to silence is purposeful to the point of transforming her into an active agent of revenge after the experience of such a sinister prayer and the distressing Messenger's report.  

Clytaemnestra's nocturnal vision is already known from Chrysothemis' description at lines 417-425. In the prayer the only reference to the dream points to its ambiguity, and Clytaemnestra is uncertain as to whether the dream portends good or evil. The allusiveness is again stressed when she does not name her enemies who would dare to deprive her of her royal status (648-9). What makes us think that Clytaemnestra has specific persons in mind, namely Electra and Orestes, is the conjunction of τινες with δόλοισι  but this could also refer theoretically to other conspirators presumably involving Pylades. Clytaemnestra is frightened of a treacherous attempt against her present wealth and safety and she dares suggest that she might be captured with

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15 Cp. 947ff. where Electra comes up with new decisions for action.

16 See Jebb for δισοφα δευτερα at 645: "'dreams of two kinds' are here dreams which admit of two interpretations i.e. which may be either good or evil." Cp. also Horsley (1990) 18-29 and esp. 23, n. 19 where he argues that the dream's import is not ambiguous but Clytaemnestra "cannot admit that it presages her downfall". See also Fraenkel Ag. 122f. for the meaning of the omen with δισοφα Απείδας, and Bowra (1944) 225 for a comparison with Xerxes' dream in Persae.

17 Jebb on 646f.: "Even before the dream, this thought had haunted her." (293ff.)

18 Segal (1966): "Her reference to doloi echoes Orestes' words there (37)."
treachery but for Electra it is impossible to guess that δόλος is already in operation.

We reach the "truly silent part of her prayer" only four lines before the end when Clytemnestra confesses that she will be silent about the rest, and Apollo, being a god, is in a position to recognize the meaning of her silence (655-658). The prayer concludes with a general statement on the gods who are able to see everything (659).

To sum up, Clytemnestra's prayer preserves all the basic features of an ancient religious ritual: euphemia, sacrifice, the name of the deity heaped with epithets, invocation to the god, formulaic words of petition. On the other side, it is a dramatic act with a multi-sided treatment of silence beyond the conventionalized use of silence for evil prayers. Clytemnestra's prayer, in spite of its sinister undertones, is spoken aloud because the wicked thoughts are concealed in the allusion and the ambiguity. The short reference τὸ δ' ἄλλα πάντα καὶ σιωπώσες ἔμοι exemplifies the idea that an essential part of this prayer is left unspoken. Furthermore, this prayer is an efficient dramatic device to make Clytemnestra address the statue of Apollo while at the same time she projects a strong and cautious awareness of Electra's presence. On the other hand, Electra is the recipient of the prayer, despite the fact that Clytemnestra turns her eyes away from her. Electra

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19 Kells on δόλοις 649: "her intuition squares with the truth of the events."

20 Kells on 657.

21 Lloyd-Jones and Wilson on 659: "In fact δεκτιμόνες are not said to know everything but Apollo being a δεκτιμόν, is expected to know what Clytemnestra wishes without her telling him. Zeus is παντόπτως, and in this context the son of Zeus maybe said to have inherited that quality."

has promised not to interfere with her mother's prayer, but she is standing there to
witness Clytaemnestra's allusive words for the destruction of her enemies. Either she
recognises the allusion which points at the distinction of Clytaemnestra’s good and
bad children, or she indulges in speculation about its meaning; her thoughts are left in
the dark, because she makes no comment; but the audience is invited to imagine the
effect on her.

Before we proceed to examine the structure of dialogue which changes with the
introduction of the third speaker, we can make a short survey of Electra's prayer in lines
1376-1383, which seems to be relevant to the mood of secrecy in Clytaemnestra's
prayer. In his article on Electra, Segal presents a parallel between Clytaemnestra's prayer
and Electra's prayer at 1376-1383. As he points out "a mother's prayer for the death of
children is answered by a child's prayer for the death of a mother".23 The two prayers
show resemblances in their formal ritual but they are different in their requests and in the
manner of expression. Electra prays to Apollo Lykeios as Clytaemnestra did, she uses
almost the same invocation ἵλεως... κλύε 1376//ไฮלוב κλύων 655, and she claims to
have offered many gifts to the god, so that now she expects to be rewarded with his
assistance. Electra does not explicitly ask help for her mother's murder but this is what
we assume in lines 1380-1383. Lines 656 and 1380-81 seem also very common in a
prayer but here they refer to two opposite things. Especially the dative pronouns ἥμιν
(656) and ἥμὶν γενόν πρόφρον (1380) refer to two hostile parties who make a plea for
each other's extinction. But a striking difference is that Electra makes her prayer alone
on the stage and after the exit of Orestes, Pylades and the Paedagogus. In this context,

23 Segal (1966) 473-545, esp.525.
among other examples, Taplin summarizes the use of a dramatic device which became common in tragedy: "the avenger lures the victim inside, and then after he has gone stays on for a few lines of prayer and vengeful gloating."^24

Electra has nothing to conceal in her request, her words are straightforwardly addressed to Apollo. She entreats his divine help which will restore justice for the wrong-doing (δίκαιαν ἔργα). However, implying in her prayer her mother's death, her wish is as outrageous as was Clytaemnestra's implicit wish for her son's death. We wonder whether an audience would be more tolerant when they hear Electra praying for her mother's destruction than when they hear Clytaemnestra praying for the destruction of her enemies. I would suggest that the long-sought retribution for Agamemnon's murder demands the granting of Electra's prayer but the two women are presented with a dark aspect of character when they pray for each other's destruction. In lines 766-8 Clytaemnestra hesitates between maternal grief and personal gain and in spite of a glimpse of motherly feelings at lines 770-771, she retreats to the acceptance of "retaliatory morality" (783-787)^25 and welcomes the death of her son and expected avenger.

Lines 660-679

In the prologue the entrance of the Paedagogus has been prepared as part of Orestes' plans for the revenge of Agamemnon's murder (39ff.). As an 'answer' to Clytaemnestra's

^24 Taplin (1977a) 310, and n.1.

^25 Segal (1966) 498.
prayer the Paedagogus makes an unannounced entry, in the disguise of a Messenger, with news from Phocis about Orestes' death. An audience can consistently follow the trend of the action and relate Clytaemnestra's premonitions with the deceitful plans of Orestes and the Paedagogus. This sort of entrance comes as a surprise in the same way as the disguised Merchant enters with a deceptive story in Philoctetes 542. Both entrances are prepared in the prologue with reference to the appropriate time at which the two false Messengers must make their appearances on stage (El. 39//Phil. 125-6).

The following scene involves three persons, the Paedagogus, Clytaemnestra and Electra. The short dialogue between the Chorus and the Paedagogus (660-665) prepares the transition to sharp stichomythia between the three speakers in lines 666-679. The dialogue shifts to Clytaemnestra who asks the man about the purpose of his arrival. The Paedagogus reports the news of Orestes' death, to which Clytaemnestra and Electra react in different ways. Electra cries out in despair (674), whereas Clytaemnestra is excited at hearing that Orestes is dead and asks the 'Stranger' to repeat the information (675). At the reiteration of the words that Orestes is dead, Electra bursts out afresh in a new flow of lamentations (677), while Clytaemnestra continues the inquiry with agitated questions (678-9). Lines 673-675 are stressed and repeated in lines 676-679. Electra, deeply affected by the news, cannot really enter into the normal sequence of the dialogue with the other two persons. The surrounding context helps to isolate Electra from the dialogue: Clytaemnestra is afraid that Electra's interference can dissociate the 'Stranger'

26 See Mikalson (1989) 90.

27 See also Part II, ch. 7.d.

28 Listmann (1910) 30: "ein kurzes aber meisterhaftes Dreigesprächs".
from carrying on with the transmission of his report. She urges the Paedagogus to pay no attention to Electra's groans and to answer only her own questions. And the Paedagogus seems to ignore Electra's presence, trying to retain contact only with Clytaemnestra (676). In response to her insistence that he describe the details of Orestes' death (678-9), the Paedagogus unfolds his long fictitious speech (680-763).

Despite this two-line contribution by Electra in the stichomythia 673-679, her short interventions do not constitute a dialogue between three speakers because the verbal exchanges are really maintained between two speakers. Electra does not come into dialogue-contact with Clytaemnestra and the Paedagogus. Her desperate cries are heard, but they do not form a dialogue in which the three speakers are in close contact. Electra is rather a silent witness to the events which start with her mother's prayer and follow after line 660 with the news of Orestes' death than an interlocutor in a small three-cornered dialogue. The dialogue brings close Clytaemnestra and the Paedagogus while Electra's two-line intervention seems to be an open expression of her brooding in silence, which keeps her distant from the other speakers. After Clytaemnestra and the Paedagogus have gone, Electra delivers a long speech (804ff) in which she bursts into tears while realising that any hope for Orestes' safe return has vanished. Her decision is that she cannot any longer live in the palace along with the murderers but prefers to

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29 The false Messenger describes a fictitious event which will lead up to the display of the urn allegedly containing the fictitious remnants of Orestes. So in Phil. 603ff for the false Merchant whose report pretends to lead up to the arrival of Odysseus. See Taplin (1977a) 83 and n.2.

30 Cp. Minadeo (1967) 118: "Every character who appears on stage finds himself at one point or other bidding Electra to keep silent: the Chorus (324), Chrysothemis (468f.), Clytaemnestra (632f.), Orestes (1236 et seq.), the Paedagogue (1368), Aegisthus (1458)."
perish alone. Her sense of isolation and desolation is further developed in the lyric dialogue with the Chorus (823ff.). Despite Chrysothemis' discovery of Orestes' lock of hair on Agamemnon's tomb which might be taken as evidence of Orestes' return, Electra is, nonetheless, convinced that her brother is dead (871ff.). Now she conceives a new plan of revenge and calls her sister to perform it together with her. Chrysothemis refuses to collaborate to the vengeance and Electra decides to proceed to the killing by herself. In the recognition scene with Orestes, Electra laments her dead brother cradling the urn with his (supposed) ashes in her arms (1126ff.), and reaches a new decision: she desires to die because death will release her from despair for the loss of her brother (1168-70).
The last scene of *Electra* involves the three actors respectively for the role of Electra, Orestes and Aegisthus. Apart from the presence of the Chorus, the visual arrangement of the scene includes the mute Pylades and the corpse of Clytaemnestra. The three short scenes before 1466 entail a great deal of agitated stage action which characterizes the whole Exodos of *Electra* (1398-1510). These lines can be divided as follows:

a) 1398-1421: Electra and the Chorus are on stage. Clytaemnestra is murdered and her cries are heard from within the palace.

b) 1422-1441: Orestes appears to announce the results of his action to Electra and the Chorus but he hurries off before the coming of Aegisthus.

c) 1442-1465: Electra meets Aegisthus, who arrives to witness the dead Orestes. From that point on the Chorus are silent witnesses until they deliver the three closing lines of the play (1508-1510).

The scene in lines 1466-1507 is made up of short speeches (1466-1469, 1483-1490, 1503-1507), uneven stichomythia and a few split verses (1475, 1477, 1483, 1502, 1503). The main dialogue is confined to Aegisthus and Orestes. As regards Electra's contribution to the verbal action, it is her silence which prevails in the configuration of the three actors at the end of the play. Electra breaks her attentive silence in the middle of line 1483 in response to Aegisthus' prior utterance.

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1 See Introduction, (iii).
The final scene can be viewed in three parts each one separating different levels of action reflected in a continuous dialogue:

a) **1466-1474**: Orestes deceives Aegisthus. Electra is silent.

b) **1475-1490**: Aegisthus recognizes his avengers. At 1483 Electra interferes.

c) **1491-1507**: A short agon between the adversaries at the end of which Orestes leads Aegisthus off to the palace to murder him.

With reference to the silent components of the scene the following points arise:

i. How does Electra's silent behaviour fluctuate in relation to the other speakers at the last scene?

ii. To what extent is Electra's intervention effective in prohibiting Aegisthus from speaking in his own defence before his execution?

iii. What happens to Electra after 1491 and how can we characterize her silence in the final scene?

**Lines 1466-1474**

Following Aegisthus' command (1458ff.) Electra opens the door of the house (1464-5)^2 and the ekkyklema with Clytaemnestra's corpse is rolled out, or attendants carry out a bier.^4 An image is suddenly presented and we can visualize it in Aegisthus' reaction.

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^2 For a similar division Kells in his commentary ad loc.

^3 For Electra's reaction to the command cf. Steidle (1968) 94: "Elektra, scheinbar ganz Dienerin, kommt selbst dem Befehl nach und stellt auf diese Weise Aigisth der Leiche Klytaimnestras und seinen Mörder gegenüber".

^4 Taplin (1977a) Appendix B, 443, and Joerden (1971) Excurs III, 411, both stress the point that there is a sort of sign in the text which signals the use of the ekkyklema. Yet, as Taplin points out, not all instructions of the effect "the doors are open: now you can
Aegisthus stares at the veiled body and explodes in an apostrophe to Zeus, thinking that this is Orestes' corpse. His words (1466-7) are ambiguous and they suggest that the gods have probably inflicted punishment on Orestes out of envy or indignation. At 1468 he orders the 'Phocian strangers' who are standing by the sides of the bier to uncover the veiled body but neither of the two bystanders carries out the command. Instead, Orestes turns the command upon Aegisthus, so that what results is an exchange of commands between Orestes and Aegisthus.

At this moment (1472) before Aegisthus touches the shroud, he withdraws his attention from Orestes and the corpse to Electra, who stands nearby in silence, and tells her to go indoors to fetch Clytaemnestra out. No answer comes from Electra but it is Orestes who intervenes in the same imperative mood (1474). Electra becomes a silent person while Orestes assumes a speaking relation with Aegisthus. We see so far that each injunction of Aegisthus corresponds to an imperative reply from Orestes (%aXATE 1468//pdôxtaÇ' see inside" imply the use of the ekkyklema. Barrett on Hippolytus 811 points that "this, though physically outside, was by convention understood to be still inside the door". Contrast Rehm (1988) 295: "in later tragedy the exposed 'indoor space' gradually loses that identity".

Salmon (1961) 241-270: "une nouvelle série d' ambiguités, inconscients chez Égisthe, volontaires chez Oreste".

See Jebb on 1466ff. Kells on 1466ff. thinks that "this φθόνος has resulted in Orestes' supposed accident". However, Aegisthus will not dwell on this side of things, in case there might be a nemesis on himself, for appearing to scold or triumph over Orestes in his calamity."

"A simple bier, not any elaborate machinery" Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 110-111; contrast Jebb on 1465 for the ekkyklema and the position of Orestes and Pylades near it.

For the suggestion of death ritual in Aegisthus' desire to lament his kin see Seaford (1985) 321.
The effect would have been different had Electra replied at line 1474 in the place of Orestes. Would Electra have intervened with an abrupt command while Aegisthus is removing the veil? This would shatter the image she has given in the previous scene (1442-1465) where she has kept a deceitfully submissive attitude. The passage 1466-1474 is the last stage in the deception process which has started with Electra and it is now taken over by Orestes with his silent companion Pylades who is supposed to be one of the 'Phocian strangers'. There is here a play between the real and the fake Orestes, the dead and the alive, which must remain vivid for the audience up to the disclosure of the body. The audience not only attend the outcome of a deceptive plan but they also witness the beginning of a new recognition scene. Lines 1466-1474 are the boundary between the end of deception and the initiation of the recognition. Electra's involvement in the dialogue would destroy the balance between these two antithetical situations. Yet

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9 Aegisthus has arrived without attendants; cf. Kells on 1454: ἤμιν ἐμοὶ.

10 Calder III (1963) 213-216 discusses conveniently the change of the person addressed connecting σῷ with the antithetical δὲ. "Sophocles uses the device again in spirited dialogue at Trachiniae 431 where Lichas addressed a question to the queen Deianeira but the old man answers for her". This is a repeated feature in Sophocles, cf. also Trach. 402 in an abrupt change from Deianeira to the Old Messenger.

11 Kamerbeek on 1457: "Not probable that Orestes lifts the veil (as by Campbell)".


13 Cp. the plural address χαλέτε (1468) and the beginning of the question τίνον ποτ' ἄνδρον (1476).

14 Woodard (1966) 142: "Clytaemnestra's body under the sheet plays the same part as Orestes' urn: both serve as pivots for a reversal from delusion to truth".
the command addressed to her points to the fact that she still shares an active part in the company of the three actors. For now, there is nothing to make us question her silence as a sign of the change in her mood.

**Lines 1475-1490**

Aegisthus stares amazed at Clytaemnestra's corpse. The tension manifested in the previous lines is enhanced when he becomes abruptly aware of the deception. The passage 1475-1490 does not bring the two persons together in a close dialogue. In fact Orestes provides only questions in response to Aegisthus' questions \(^{15}\) when the latter desperately tries to work out what has happened. It is appropriate to note here that Orestes is not willing to enter into discussion with Aegisthus \(^{16}\) but continues to display the ironical mood which he demonstrated since his entry, imbuing his questions with a sarcastic tone which serves to intensify Aegisthus' agony. Aegisthus uses self-reference in all his sentences. In his state of disillusionment he explodes with exclamations of surprise and terror all expressed in the first person singular (1475, 1477, 1479, 1482).

What do all these self-referential sentences contribute to the building up of the dialogue?

We can remark that there is here a complexity of addresses in Aegisthus' verbal behaviour from the moment of his appearance on stage. With his arrival he addresses the

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\(^{15}\) Calder (1963): "A bit of unrecorded stage action may have made Orestes' questions at 1475 clearer. Aegisthus may have looked at Orestes (not the corpse) when he said 'Alas, what do I see?' Or he may have put his hand to his sword and so motivated the enquiry: 'Whom do you fear?'

\(^{16}\) Alexanderson (1966) 79-98 on 1491ff.: "Orestes does not really enter into discussion but answers mostly with peremptory words".
Chorus (1442) and a few lines further he turns over to Electra (1445). At the beginning of the last scene he appeals to Zeus, then he addresses the Phocian strangers' with a command, finally he turns back again to Electra. When he realizes his mistake, he swings to self-references which end up with an address to Orestes (1482-3). The impact of the self-references is that they dislocate the sequence of communication with Orestes. Aegisthus is at pains to keep a straight contact with Orestes. This notion is also reinforced by another instance in the text; it seems that lines 1477-8 can shed some light on the nature of this conversation even though its highly allusive manner inhibits a clear understanding of the whole. Particularly line 1478 is obscure with "the use of plural for singular and the ambiguous construction of ἴσος". There can be two possible readings for 1478:

(i) ἶσος is proposed by Tyrwhitt. It is accepted by Jebb, Kaibel and Pearson and refers to Orestes.

(ii) ἶσος is transmitted in the manuscripts and makes the point for Aegisthus. The following interpretations are given by commentators who follow this reading:

a) Longman construes ἓντοπία as dative dependent on ἴσος and translates ἴσος independently as "on equal terms".

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17 Cf. also the command without an object expressed by ἓνωγα and infinitives at 1458; see Kells ad loc.

18 By this I assume the intrinsic ambiguities evolved in the verbal interaction from the beginning of the scene in discussion. An analogous approach can be followed for the manoeuvre of the conversation between Aegisthus and Electra in the scene 1442-1465. There are stimulating remarks in the article by Salmon cited above (n.4).


20 Longman as above: "ἵσος is often used to suggest that something is not less than something else".
b) Dawe interprets ἵστα as "you are speaking in stichomythia with".

c) Lloyd-Jones and Wilson prefers the rendering "bandy words with".

The combination of these readings means that Aegisthus who is alive must contend face to face with the dead and on equal terms. The relation of line 1478 with the ensuing response suggests that Orestes' riddling question, though confusing, triggers Aegisthus' awareness of the return of his enemy.

Aegisthus turns to Orestes with a request to say something in self-defence only when he gains consciousness of the conspiracy against him (1482f.). He utters a cry of despair and attempts to plead with Orestes (1482-3). At the very moment, Electra blocks any answer coming from Orestes and refuses Aegisthus the right to speak in his own defence. Her short speech opens with a half-line and is addressed to her brother (1483ff.). She intervenes with the purpose either of interrupting Aegisthus' further words or of preventing Orestes from granting Aegisthus the right to speak.21 Her words reveal that she has given careful attention to the preceding exchanges. She finds no reason to permit further words to Aegisthus (1483-4) and desires the murder of Aegisthus who deserves immediate punishment (1487-8).

Electra's speech keeps close contact with Orestes in lines 1483-4 and 1487-8. It becomes detached in lines 1485-6 and 1489-1490 in which Electra keeps a distance of communication from the other two speakers. Especially lines 1485-6 are under suspicion as an interpolation by a later hand. Dindorf, Nauck, Dawe, Lloyd-Jones and Wilson delete the lines. In particular, Lloyd-Jones and Wilson contend that the sententious

21 See Alexanderson (1966) on 1483-1490.
meaning in them is irrelevant to the context. Jebb on the contrary keeps the lines and argues that the general thought they convey is appropriate to Electra's feeling of immediate revenge. He concludes that "such a general sentiment in an interrogative form is Sophoclean". Kaibel provides a comment which is rather useful for the understanding of these lines in their context. He thinks that they have been wrongly misunderstood as an interpolation and their manner betrays the poet speaking behind them. Furthermore, he relates the word κέρδος with λυτήριον (1490) providing the following explanation for lines 1486, 1489-90: "Aufschub bringt nicht nur keinen Gewinn, er würde mich auch um die einzige Genugtuung und Sühne bringen". Electra's behaviour seems to waver between a state of commitment and distant speculation.

At this point, the dialogue brings about another disconnection in the action of the interlocutors. Electra urges Orestes to kill Aegisthus as quickly as possible (1487), but she leaves no room for understanding that such a murder will take place inside the palace. There is a sort of suspense in that her admonition, if obeyed, will cause Aegisthus' murder to happen before the sight of the audience. This exhibition of cruelty

22 Jebb on 1485-6: "What gain, she asks, would such a respite be, even to the doomed wretch himself?" Cp. also κέρδος (61) in the prologue. Kells (1973) on 1485f. thinks that the dramatic irony in these lines can apply not only to Aegisthus' future but also to Orestes' and Electra's.

23 Kaibel (1911) on 1483f.

24 Cf. Segal (1966) 473-545, esp. on 1485-6: "While Orestes is totally involved in the act itself, Electra looks away to the mortal condition as a whole. Her final speech, then, seems to constitute a last and solitary tragic recognition which tempers her triumph, if not Orestes'." See also Johansen (1964) 8-32, esp. 28: "Diese Rede wird weder von Hass noch vom Triumph über den Sieg der Gerechtigkeit getragen, sondern vom Gefühl einer überwältigenden seelischen Erschöpfung".
is cancelled when Orestes starts moving off to the house. With this change of movement prominence is given to the palace where Agamemnon was murdered (1495-6); moreover, this is an incentive for a new phase in the dialogue. With the new run of exchanges the play by no means looks like stopping at this point.

Lines 1491-1507

Orestes complies with Electra's command, directing Aegisthus towards the palace, but he makes no response to her personal thoughts. The part 1491-1507 entails a short agon-like exchange: Orestes orders his opponent to keep silent and reminds him that time has come to struggle for his life (1491-2). Aegisthus infringes Orestes' order and ventures awkward questions, probably aimed at dissuading Orestes (1493-4). In turn, he receives Orestes' peremptory answers, which point at the reversal of his status from ruler to subordinate (1495-6). This new shift of conversation brings dramatic momentum at the very last minute retarding the final exits of the play. Two points are stressed in this ending: (a) the revenge for Agamemnon's murder is stated as the reason for Aegisthus' execution inside the house; (b) the reference to the inner world of the house links the crimes in the generations of Pelopidae throughout history (1497-8).

25 Cp. Stevens (1978) 111-120 on 1498: "a vague threat in the hope of disconcerting Orestes".

26 Wilamowitz (1917) 226 argues that this extended dialogue in lines 1491-1507 is a deliberate device by Sophocles to allow time for the ekkyklema to be pushed out. However, this approach diminishes the importance of the words which allude to the future evils in the house of Pelops (1498). The final exits probably occur along with the removing of the ekkyklema at line 1507; cf. Jebb on 1464f.

The wrangle breaks down into short imperative sentences in split lines (1502,1503). The dramatic impression changes when Orestes picks up again with a final short rhesis. The first two lines (1503-4) are a reply to Aegisthus. The last three (1505-1507) convey the belief that those who have done illegal deeds must be punished with murder. Aegisthus exits to the palace in custody of Orestes and the silent Pylades.

Throughout the last part of the scene Electra has remained silent. Orestes is the last speaker of the scene. Formally his last speech is the same as Electra's short speech, which began in the middle of a line. But Orestes' reply to Aegisthus does not come as an interruption or a prohibition of speech to another speaker. The intriguing aspect of Electra's intervention is that it motivates neither immediate execution nor Aegisthus' departure in silence, though it surely prepares for the execution of Aegisthus. Her short intervention does not divert the dialogue between Orestes and Aegisthus to her verbal involvement. Neither Orestes nor Aegisthus provides a reply to Electra's remarks, and she remains the silent witness with private thoughts rather than an interlocutor in the final scene of the play. The text gives no sign about her exit and two possibilities arise:


28 Critics have found lines 1505-7 spurious (Dindorf, Dawe). Lloyd-Jones & Wilson rightly think that "the general effect of the dialogue is to suggest that things are continuing as usual in the house of Atreus, and these lines make their contribution to that effect".

29 See Calder III (as above) on 1507 for Pylades' exit motivated by the speaking character's exit. Cf. Kremer (1971) 133: "Was zunächst wie ein Ecceschluß (1430f. εἰσορὸκτε) beginnt, endet als Handlungsschluß: Aigisth tritt hervor, wird ebenfalls in das Atridenshaus geführt und dort getötet".

30 Cp. line 1501.
she either leaves in the company of the three others after line 1507 or she watches in silence up to the end of the taglike anapaests of the Chorus and then she exits. If Electra makes a solitary exit, her silence at the end of the play emphasizes the irony of the situation. The energy of Electra's silent presence, which penetrated the dialogue between Orestes and Aegisthus, follows her silent exit.

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31 So Kaibel ad loc.

32 See Calder III as above. But Lloyd-Jones and Wilson object that he "is not necessarily right in insisting that Electra alone is addressed" in the parting words of the Chorus. To this end, Steidle's remark (1968) 94, n.170 applies to the idea of Electra as a heroine brooding in silence up to the last point of the play: "die letzten Worte des Chores (1508ff.) allein auf Elektra zu beziehen und diese noch etwas länger auf der Bühne zu belassen. Die Wendung ist aber doch allgemeiner, und daß jetzt der 'Same Agamemnons' den Leiden entronnen und frei ist, paßt besser auf das ganze Geschlecht".
The speakers in the first episodion of *Philoctetes* are Neoptolemus, Philoctetes and the false Merchant. At 539-541 the Chorus announces the arrival of a sailor who enters with an attendant. He is Odysseus' associate who is sent in the guise of a Merchant to bring news from Troy. At 542 the sailor enters and speaks immediately. His speaking part is the longest in the episodion with 57 lines, whereas Neoptolemus stands second in the conversation with 22 lines. They each share two verses in antilabe (589-590). Philoctetes covers only six spoken lines mostly marking his participation in the dialogue, with his silence and with the breaking of this silence at two points at 578 and 622 dramatically motivated by the sailor's words. These are only short interferences which are provoked by the previous speeches and they do not alter the stream of the dialogue which is carried on between Neoptolemus and the Merchant.

The Merchant conveys his report in three stages, the two first shaped in dialogues (542-572, 573-602), the last third in narrative (603-621):

a) After his introductory words (542-556) the Merchant produces sentences which lead Neoptolemus to a question-after-question enquiry about the 'facts'. The building up of the dialogue recalls Odysseus' instructions: he anticipated the invention of a tricky conversation (130-1). The Merchant warns Neoptolemus that a Greek expedition has left with orders to bring Neoptolemus to the battlefield. The audience know from the prologue that this is an unreal event but Philoctetes experiences this piece of news as a

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1 See Part I, ch. 2.c.
real event. He has already been told that Neoptolemus has left Troy out of rage against
the Atreidae, who awarded his father's weapons to Odysseus instead of him (360ff.)
Now the conversation tends to turn towards Odysseus, who would have sustainable
reasons for pursuing Neoptolemus. Odysseus' name is twice heard and we expect that
Philoctetes also can hear it, but he does not seem to be moved by that. The text does not
help us to see how Philoctetes reacted on hearing Odysseus' name and he does not
make any attempt to enter the dialogue at this stage. Meanwhile, the audience must have
recognized the allusion to Philoctetes in lines 570-573.

b) The second stage of the dialogues starts with line 573 when the Merchant interrupts
the normal utterance of his words and speaks aside, pretending that he wants to be heard
only by Neoptolemus. The Merchant acknowledges Philoctetes' presence for the first
time, feigning ignorance of the man who has been following silently throughout. This is
the point where the ensuing dialogue is covered with pretending secrecy, aiming to stir
further Philoctetes' curiosity and to prepare the ground for the narrative of the prophecy.
The Merchant asks Philoctetes' identity in a 'low' voice and he also appeals to
Neoptolemus for a reply in a 'low' voice. The Merchant shows his anxiety at the hearing
of Philoctetes' name and, feigning the same low tones of secrecy, he carries on
pretending to warn Neoptolemus about the forthcoming danger. Lines 576-7 also
continue in a low voice so that they should not be heard by Philoctetes.

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3 He simulates ignorance of Philoctetes 'in order to avoid any suspicion of deceit'.
Kamerbeek on 573-4.

4 Mastronarde (1979) 83, n.21: "Secrecy is maintained in order to accomplish some
stratagem or conceal guilty knowledge".
Lines 573-4 and 576-7 are spoken aside but the audience can still hear despite the stress on the 'low voice'. The setting of the dialogue where one of the interlocutors tries to avoid the involvement of a silent witness while, at the same time, he keeps conversing with the other interlocutor, provides an instance of "uneven contact between three persons on the stage". At present, the Merchant tries to keep Philoctetes from an involvement in the dialogue but he keeps Neoptolemus involved in the continuing conversation. Concerning these readings, we should not fail to stress the fact that this structure is shaped with two features: the alleged 'limitation' of normal speech, and the exclusion of a silent person from assuming a speaking activity in the dialogue already engaged in by the two other speakers.

The impact of these lines, which combine the low tones of the Merchant with one loudly spoken utterance of Neoptolemus (575), reinforces the curiosity of Philoctetes, who enters the dialogue questioning Neoptolemus about the meaning of the dark words which the sailor tries to hide from him (578-9). The point is of interest, because first we

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5 Bain (1977) 82: "It is only by convention that a third actor can be excluded from a conversation which the audience hears". Cp. Taplin (1977a) 131, n.1: "As to who hears, it must be assumed that everyone on stage hears, unless there is some clear indication to the contrary".

6 Mastronarde (as above) 83, n.35 where he compares a similar case in Euripides' Electra 552-563.

7 Tarrant (1978) 244 and n.129 contradicts Bain's interpretation of the scene "as a genuine attempt to converse aside": "The 'aside' is not meant to escape Philoctetes's notice, but to attract it and so to prepare him for the merchant's lying narrative. Philoctetes' awareness that he is being talked about by the other two characters on stage preserves dramatic time intact." Jebb on 578f. thinks that "Seyffert's change of τι κέ into τί δέ is no improvement. It is natural that Ph., the ἠνήρ ὑπόπτης (136), should suspect some design against himself". Lloyd-Jones & Wilson believe that "Seyffert's δέ is necessary" because "Philoctetes can hardly say that the 'merchant', who has only just learned who he is, is selling him". Jebb's interpretation makes sense since Philoctetes
are convinced that Philoctetes has been a silent witness throughout the preceding conversation, and now he plunges into the dialogue, picking up the last words citing his name, and the following words presumably concerning him. Philoctetes might have noticed the behavioral expression of the Merchant's whispering words but he does not seem to understand this mood of secrecy. So he seeks explanations from Neoptolemus who pretends ignorance but insists that the sailor must reveal all the evidence of his knowledge before the two men (580-1).

After his brief interference in lines 578-9, Philoctetes falls back into silence, while Neoptolemus turns his attention from him by addressing his speech to the Merchant. The secrecy is dispelled by another deceptive device. At 582-584 the Merchant pretends that he is afraid of the Atreidae if he reveals what he knows. Only after he has received the reassurance from Neoptolemus that he and Philoctetes are allies in their hatred of the Atreidae, does the Merchant agree to speak out about the plans of the Greeks. Again, the references to Philoctetes as an active listener to the discussion (585, 588) suggests that Philoctetes keeps a very meaningful silence.

c) The secrecy in the preceding dialogues prepares the atmosphere for the display of the prophecy of Helenus. This is a new element which takes further the statements of Odysseus in the prologue. There Odysseus claimed that Philoctetes must be brought at Troy by means of guile. Persuasion would be a feeble weapon to bend Philoctetes' stubbornness, and violence is impossible. So he instructed Neoptolemus how to use the most guileful words in order to convince Philoctetes to embark on his ship for a

heard Neoptolemus uttering his name at 575 and might have noticed the secretive manner of the Merchant at 576-7, which made him suspect the 'trafficking' of words.
simulated return to the homeland.

In the Merchant's report, the audience hears a new story for the first time,\(^8\) that it is predicted by divine authority that Troy will be taken with the help of Philoctetes.\(^9\) The speech being over, Philoctetes bursts out in indignation and declares himself determined to disregard any endeavour by his enemy to persuade him (622-625). Philoctetes' utterances start with a self-vocative in which he pities himself. Then he addresses a question to the Merchant seeking further confirmation for Odysseus' intentions. Finally, he repeats his firm commitment to resisting the Greeks. But the scene does not develop into a genuine three-way dialogue. He is answered back with the unwillingness of the Merchant to engage in a new dialogue with Philoctetes. As in the first instance Neoptolemus avoided the entanglement of Philoctetes in the conversation with the Merchant, so at the end of this encounter the Merchant shuns further words with Philoctetes, pretending ignorance of any relevant detail.\(^10\) He returns to his ship leaving

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\(^8\) On different stories in *Philoctetes* see Roberts (1989) 161-176.

\(^9\) The prophecy alters the knowledge of the audience with regard to Odysseus' previous statements, to the extent that it brings forward the element of persuasion and not of deceit to lure Philoctetes to Troy; cf. Linforth (1956) 115 and Garvie (1972) 213-226. Critics are in dispute when they have to answer whether the report of the prophecy is true or false, a part of Odysseus' stratagem of deception; cf. Robinson (1969) 34-56, esp.49. On the other hand the prophecy can be seen as a part of the progressive revelation of the truth that Philoctetes must learn gradually in order to be aware that Odysseus is on his track. So the requirements of the prophecy are expanded throughout the play providing different aspects of ambiguous statements up to the point of explicit indication of its terms confirmed by Heracles at the end; cf. Hinds (1967) 170. The audience follow this process, firstly in the Merchant's tale where they are expected to see his report as a false one, but to be uncertain to what extent this is another trick of Odysseus or a true revelation among the falsehood. On the element of 'surprise' see Seale (1972) 94-102 and Easterling (1983) 219.

\(^10\) Cp. οὐκ οἶδα πώς τι φησί 580/οὐκ οἶδεν ταῦτα 626.
Philoctetes brooding in his discontent. Philoctetes' short utterances emphasize his silent witnessing to the dialogue between Neoptolemus and the Merchant.

Lines 575-581 have similarities with lines 673-679 in Electra. There we have seen the impact of the false report of Orestes' death to Electra and Clytaemnestra. The contrast of their opposite reactions means for Clytaemnestra that she continues the dialogue with the Paedagogus, whereas Electra's outburst of grief is disconnected from any attempt to enter the dialogue. In Electra, both women are deceived by the Paedagogus, in Philoctetes the deception is carried out by the Merchant and Neoptolemus against Philoctetes. When the latter makes a single interference in the dialogue, this is a sign that he is trapped in the deceit which is controlled by the two men. On the other side, Electra is so lost in her grief that her sole utterances in 674 and 677 do not aim to promote the dialogue but to produce the emotional contrast between her and her mother. What we cannot find in the deception of Philoctetes is this contrast with another person who receives the import of the false report. In a sense Neoptolemus also hears for the first time what the false Merchant has to say because in the prologue Odysseus warned him that he has to use the sailor's words in the best way for the deceit (130-1). But we never quite know how much Neoptolemus knows. At the end of the narrative, Neoptolemus, who has been silent together with Philoctetes, is not meant to have any verbal reaction since he shares partnership with the Merchant in the deceit. Philoctetes bursts out in a way which reminds us of Electra's outburst after she has listened to the

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11 Odysseus and the Merchant are played by the same actor; cf. Pavloskis (1977) 113-123, esp.119 who argues "that the merchant's accents should remind us of Odysseus is strikingly appropriate, since both are deceivers, and since the merchant is a tool of Odysseus".

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narrative about Orestes' death (787-790). In both cases we find the same expression of pity for their misfortune (οἴμοι τάλαινα 788, οἴμοι τάλας 622) and a vehement tone for the wrong they have suffered. The interesting handling of the plot in Electra is that in the final conflict between Electra and Clytaemnestra, the Paedagogus remains silent, whereas in Philoctetes the Merchant, who is a substitute for Odysseus, completes his role immediately after the end of his report and returns to the point from which he has been sent. With this departure the Merchant has no other dramatic function in the play, although this cannot be obvious at this stage, whereas the Paedagogus, guided inside the palace, gives obvious evidence that his involvement in the plot is going to assume a broader action against those who live in this house.

The whole scene is constructed so as to exclude Philoctetes from the dialogues and to prepare him for the possibility that Odysseus will appear at any moment. Philoctetes is isolated from the verbal interaction because he must hear (though not fully understand) what the others speakers devised for him. The text emphasizes the function of hearing which passes knowledge seemingly acquired by the ears of the Merchant to the ears of Neoptolemus, but which really aims at impressing the hearing of Philoctetes. In the imaginative space of the off-stage events we can go on hearing another chain of words leading back to the happenings at Troy. The Atreidae have heard Odysseus' proposition to pursue Philoctetes (595) and they have consented to his enterprise. Beforehand, they all have heard the prophecy of Helenus and it was after this hearing that Odysseus

12 Note the repercussion in the repetitions of the words ἠκούσα 549, ἤκουσας 564, ἠκτήκοσα 588, κλέεις 591. But cf. Osterud (1973) 26 who thinks that the story of Helenus has also to be meant for Neoptolemus rather than for Philoctetes.
committed himself to lead Philoctetes to Troy.\textsuperscript{13} The false Messenger is supposed to transfer this information from ear to ear, by reaching the last hearer (620) of a knowledge which has travelled from the camp of Troy to the desert island of Lemnos. True and untrue facts seem to be linked now in a framework of openly heard sayings.

\textsuperscript{13} It is remarkable that Odysseus is referred to as the man \textit{δ' πόντ' ἄκούων αἰσχρὸν καὶ λαβήτ' ἔπη} (607); cf. Podlecki (1966) 238.
Chapter Seven presents a more elaborate design of silences than the preceding chapters in Part II. While I have continued to use the framework of the three-actor dialogue in which speech is divided between pairs of speakers so the third speaker remains a silent witness, in this chapter my focus has moved to the continuity of a silent behaviour which springs from appeals for silence or from the exclusion of a silent witness from the speech. In the scenes discussed, the short utterances of Electra and Philoctetes give the feeling that they break into dialogue so that the three speakers interact in close communication. I have tried to show that these interventions do not open up to a three-cornered dialogue, but, instead, they underline that Electra and Philoctetes remain silent quite long and for different dramatic reasons.

In *Electra* 634-679, Electra is asked by Clytaemnestra to attend in silence her prayer to Apollo. At this point, Electra remains speechless, with a silence filled with confusion and amazement regarding the meaning of the prayer. Clytaemnestra utters the prayer in a loud voice but her words allude to the disaster of her enemies, who are her own children. Clytaemnestra's prayer is parallel with Electra's prayer at 1376-1383 in its allusion to the disaster of enemies, which is embedded in their words. The main difference between the two prayers is that Electra is alone on stage when she utters her prayer to Apollo, while Clytaemnestra's prayer is imbued with Electra's silence. Electra continues to be silent in the ensuing scene with Clytaemnestra and the Paedagogus. Her short interventions at 674 and 677 cannot be seen as attempts to interfere with the dialogue. Electra's breaking
of silence at these points mark the distress she experiences at hearing the news of Orestes' death. All the time, Electra is veiled with a silence which anticipates her transformation into the avenger of her father's death.

Later, in lines 1466-1507, Electra remains silent again in the encounter between Orestes and Aegisthus up to line 1483. At this point, Electra prohibits Aegisthus from further words of pleading and urges Orestes to kill him immediately. Orestes does not seem to acquiesce in the immediate killing of Aegisthus but urges him to stop talking and enter into the palace. However, the dialogue continues for a while in the same harsh manner between the two men. Electra's short intervention emphasizes her distance from the final exchanges of the play. Her silence seems to follow her solitary exit at the end of the play.

In *Philoctetes* 542-627 the false Merchant announces that Odysseus is about to arrive in the island of Lemnos to take Philoctetes to Troy. The Merchant speaks in a conspiratorial tone when he announces the news to Neoptolemus, and this makes Philoctetes grow suspicious about the words of two men. Thus, he breaks twice his silence at 578 and 622 but his interventions do not mean that he achieves entry into dialogue-contact. He asks Neoptolemus to explain what is going on, but the latter declares his ignorance and shuns further explications. So Philoctetes remains the silent witness of the exchanges between Neoptolemus and the Merchant who, though they point to his presence, never address him directly. Philoctetes' short interventions stress his curiosity and helplessness when he learns that Odysseus is about to arrive. For the main part of the dialogue he remains a silent witness who, under the impact of
what he hears from Troy, will break out with strong reactions against Odysseus. The power of these scenes is greatly enhanced by the (visual) silence of the major figures. The effect is surely to elicit strong empathetic responses from the audience as they try to imagine the experiences of Electra and Philoctetes.
GENERAL CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis study has been to explore silence as a structural element in the formation of speeches and dialogues in tragedy with particular reference to Sophoclean dramaturgy, and to investigate the meanings of silence in the different contexts of the surviving plays of Sophocles. Silence is a flexible notion with wide applicability of uses in various environments. In relation to ancient Greek drama silence is an idea borrowed from the semiotics of modern theatre and emerges as an area worthy of close study, which makes possible a further reading of the texts. While speech is of course dominant in Greek drama, silence too can become a powerful tool for conveying dramatic meanings and explaining the attitudes of the characters. We need to follow at close range the words of the text in order to spell out the methods by which silence is created in tragedy, because silence is interwoven in the verbal exchanges and the alternation of the speakers. The interaction of speakers and silent persons creates the conditions in the dramatic space for the existence of silence in the plays.

In the context of this study a speaker or a speaking actor is any actor with a speaking part, while a silent person is considered to be a mute performer or an actor who ceases talking for some time in the plays. The conventions and the techniques which generate silence deal with the limitation of the number of the speaking actors in Greek tragedy and the arrangement of the dialogue between the speakers. In the preceding pages, I have tried to
show how the dramatists exploit a wide range of mute performers and handle their silences in different contexts. My argument has been based on the evaluation of their dramatic importance, and the significance of their silences has been compared with the activities of the speakers in particular settings. I have also discussed the techniques which introduce new speaking characters in the plays. These are the entrances of new speakers, the interferences of silent witnesses in the dialogue between two interlocutors, and the short interventions of silent witnesses which do not divert the dialogue into a new pair of speakers by silencing one of them. The construction of scenes which involve the three speaking actors seems to me to provide the most interesting cases of silence in the alternation of speech between speakers. This is because dialogues in Greek tragedy are mainly confined between two actors while the third one remains silent. By reversing the focus from the speech of the two interlocutors to the third speaker who remains silent I reached the conclusion that the dynamic of dialogue is being established by balancing speeches and silences in the encounters between the characters. The extension of the discussion of silence beyond the scheme of the three-actor dialogue rendered it possible to achieve a global view of the complex notion of silence in the design of the plays. So specific aspects of silence have been included in the discussion of the selected scenes, such as dramatic pauses, the use of dumb-show, the limitation of normal speech, and (more briefly) religious silences, the silence of the Chorus and the vocabulary of silence in the language of the text. In the vocabulary of silence special attention has been drawn to appeals or orders for silence which signify different things in the plays. More work in these fields would take advantage of challenging possibilities in the treatment of silence as a multi-dimensional element in the
structure of the ancient Greek plays.

Among the five named mute characters I have dealt with in Part I, Iole's silence in *Trachiniae* becomes the centre of attention because characters on stage ask her to speak and comment on the meaning of her silence. Iole might have responded with subtle nuances of behaviour which portray her suffering and distinguish her nobility in the undifferentiated group of captives with whom she enters. Short pauses might have stressed Iole's reluctance to break her silence when she is appealed to. As a silent character Iole symbolizes the power of eros and the doom of Deianeira's house but she also shapes the dynamic of dialogue between Deianeira and Lichas with her enigmatic silence. Iole could have been treated as a fourth speaker in this play, but her silence has more to 'say' than her words. Children like Eurysaces in *Ajax* and, Antigone and Ismene in *O.T.* embody with their silence the suffering which has befallen their parents. Eurysaces' silent entrances and exits are not easy to trace in isolation so they are examined in association with Tecmessa's movement. In the second half of the play I have argued for Ajax's concealed death and his disclosure on the ekkyclema. Eurysaces' silent presence by his dead father's body attains a symbolical meaning which reminds the audience of the heroization of Ajax and the joint worship of father and son by Athenian society. Antigone and Ismene, the young daughters of Oedipus, intensify with their silence the pathos of the final scene in *O.T.* and remind the audience of the later lives of the two sisters in the play of *Antigone*. Pylades in *Electra* remains on stage all the time but he has no significant dramatic importance. In *Choephoroi*, Pylades does have something crucial to say, whereas in Sophocles' play his silent presence suggests
unquestioning support for Orestes. He is less problematic than in Aeschylus, i.e. he does not challenge Orestes' view, but his silence possibly contributes all the more to the sinister atmosphere.

The split roles of Tecmessa in Ajax, the Emporos in Philoctetes and Ismene in O.C. belong to the category of roles played by a mute and an actor. The thesis accepts that, in many cases, one reason for the splitting of the roles could be the restrictions of the three-actor rule. However, it has been argued that Tecmessa's role is paired with Ajax but not with Teucer for dramatic reasons, and that this explains her mute role in the second part of the play. Tecmessa as a mute frames the silent tableau of Ajax's death alongside her son Eurysaces and conveys the image of a woman in mourning. The Emporos makes his first appearance in Philoctetes as a mute escort of Odysseus, who, later, comes back as the third actor to deceive Philoctetes. This role-changing contributes to the emphasis on deceptiveness of the play. Ismene is a more complicated case of a speaker who turns into a mute. She is a mute in lines 1096-1210, 1294-1446, 1500-1555 in which all three actors are on stage. Her silence as a mute coincides with Antigone's silence, in lines 1119-1180, 1284-1413 and 1500-1555, but whereas Antigone breaks her silence at 1181 and 1414 Ismene, being a mute, remains speechless. Antigone throughout has taken the lead, but Ismene is neither forgotten nor devalued. It has been argued in the thesis that Ismene as a mute could be given a few words in the final lament and this is an assumption which bears on the distribution of the parts. When the Messenger, who is played by the first actor, finishes his report, we may suppose that he does not exit but he stays on stage and mingles with the
people of his community.

Groups of extras are a third category of mutes which have common features of performance. They are suppliants in O.T., and members of processions in Ajax and Trachiniae. In O.T. they are supposed to consist of children and priests who presumably enter before the opening of the play. Though no particular attention is drawn to their silence, they perform a sort of stage action which is referred to by the words of the leading Priest. In Ajax, the crowd of extras represent soldiers from the Greek army who possibly intermingle with the Chorus of Salaminian sailors to prepare the funeral of Ajax under Teucer's orchestrating movement. In Trachiniae a silent retinue brings in the sick Heracles and the silence which surrounds their marching is marked by the Chorus. Hyllus orchestrates the marching of the cortège in the final departure to Mt Oeta while he is supposed to address the final lines to the Chorus thus uniting all people on stage in preparation for the cremation of Heracles. The groups in O.T. and Ajax belong to the same social environment as the Chorus, while the group of silent litter-bearers in Trachiniae is heterogeneous from the Chorus of Trachinian women. The fourth category of mutes refers to the single mute attendants who have the least dramatic importance in the plays. They escort characters of high social status and their physical action emphasizes the scenes of violence like in Philoctetes and O.C.

In Part II I have argued that the arrangement of dialogues between the three speakers produces the speaking and the silent activities of the characters. When speakers turn into silent persons their silence can be significant because they become witnesses to the verbal
exchanges in a closer or a more distant contact with the interlocutors. Speakers shift into the role of silent witnesses to other characters’ speeches, and their silence can be understood as to be part of the communication in dialogue. The Nurse’s silence in the prologue of *Trachiniae* means that she has possibly listened to Deianeira’s account of sorrows and she is able to advise her. At the entrance of Hyllus she falls silent but her active participation later in the play strengthens the connection between the scenes. Odysseus’ silence in Ajax combines with Athena’s device of making him invisible when she asks him to be the silent witness of Ajax’s madness. Here I have argued that the goddess and the mortals interact on the same stage in a powerful scheme of contrasting activities. In *O.C.* Antigone becomes the silent witness to her father’s exchanges with the Stranger. Antigone manages the timing of her father’s speaking and silent activity, although in the prologue her understanding of the facts is limited. This pattern is echoed at other points of the play: Antigone is both a taker of initiatives in relation to speech (as with Oedipus and Polyneices) and limited in her access to the knowledge that first Oedipus and then Theseus gains. This is brought out tragically when she asks to go back to Thebes at the end. In *Philoctetes* Neoptolemus’ silence conceals his moral dilemma: to be loyal to Philoctetes or deceive him. At the sudden entrance of Odysseus, Neoptolemus’ silence becomes heavy and its meaning seems to hover in his equivocal utterance when he finally decides to obey Odysseus. At the second unexpected entry of Odysseus, Neoptolemus is caught by surprise, but his short silence concludes in his decision to offer his unreserved commitment to Philoctetes.

In *Antigone* 384-581, Antigone makes a remarkable silent entrance which is commented on
by the Chorus. She remains silent with her head bowed during the exchanges between Creon and the Guard. Creon silently follows the dispute between Antigone and Ismene, who has entered weeping. At the breaking of his silence we realize that Creon cannot understand the logic of the two sisters' words. Antigone falls silent during the stichomythic dialogue between Creon and Ismene. The thesis argues that her one-line interference at 572 gives emphasis her previous silence and allows a glimpse of feeling for her relationship with Haemon. Antigone and Creon keep the longest silences in the scenes which involve the Guard and Ismene, but Antigone declares her opposition to Creon with her silence and visual attitude as much as her words. In Trachiniae 225-346, the Messenger keeps a meaningful silence while Deianeira converses with Lichas. The breaking of his silence enables the audience to realize that the Messenger has been following the conversation and recognizes that Lichas is lying in what he says about Heracles' arrival. In response to his second interference in the dialogue with Lichas, Deianeira keeps a long silence. The silences of the Messenger and Deianeira make a strong impact on the dialogue with Lichas, which is intensified by Iole's silence and Lichas' refusal to speak her name. In O.T. 911-1085, the silences of the Corinthian Messenger and Iocasta in the dialogues with Oedipus give them the opportunity to interfere with the speeches and provide a new piece of information. By relating speaking and silent positions between the three characters the audience can follow the development of the facts on the matter of Oedipus' origin. At this point, the Chorus break their silence to impart their own knowledge of the past, as they are asked to do by Oedipus. The short silence of the Paedagogus in Electra 766-803 suggests that his words have been designed to deceive Clytaemnestra about Orestes' death, while his
false story brings Electra into a desperate situation. When he is made certain of the success of his plan, he speaks no more. He is the man who urges action and discourages Electra and Orestes from indulging in further words in the recognition-scene. One could argue that in all these cases the interplay between speech and silence gives the action more power and subtlety than would have been achieved by a more even distribution of speech between the characters in these scenes.

Part II concludes with a chapter which elaborates a delicate pattern of silences referring to the failed attempts of Electra and Philoctetes to enter into the dialogue with the other speakers. In Electra 634-679, Electra is a silent witness to Clytaemnestra’s prayer which is spoken in a loud voice but it comprises unspoken parts alluding to the death of Clytaemnestra’s children. Electra continues to be silent in the scene with Clytaemnestra and the Paedagogus. Her short interventions with two stichomythic lines and her exclusion from the dialogue fill her silence with despair and feelings of revenge which are to be detected later in the play. Her short intervention in the final scene of the play is another instance of her dislocation from the dialogue of Orestes and Aegisthus. The solitary figure of Electra conveys a distinctive impression which is emphasized by her silence and continues up to the end of the play. Philoctetes is the silent witness of the dialogue between Neoptolemus and the false Merchant. Philoctetes attempts to interfere in the discussion, but the other two do not allow him to continue. Their conversation has the effect of drawing attention to the strong reactions of Philoctetes against Odysseus without involving him in their exchanges.
This discussion of the manifestations of silence in a large selection of instances leads to a
general conclusion which has much potential value for the study of Sophoclean drama.
Speech in all its forms is indeed the prime determinant of the action, but in order to
understand the full range of its impact we need to attend very closely to the way in which it
is shaped, punctuated and given resonance by silence. If speech is one aspect of drama, then
silence is its other facet. And this is a perspective which can open a new way to look at the
potential of drama.
<table>
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<td><strong>CalifUnivPublClPh</strong></td>
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| **C & M** | *Classica et Medievalia:* revue danoise d'histoire et de philologie publiée par la Société danoise pour les études anciennes et
médiévales, København, Glydenhal.


**CQ**  *Classical Quarterly*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.


**CW**  *The Classical World*. Pittsburgh, Pa., Duquesne University.


**GRBS**  *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*. Durham, N.C., Duke University.


**LCM**  *Liverpool Classical Monthly*. University of Liverpool, Department of Greek.

**LEC**  *Les Études Classiques*. Namur, Facultés N.-D.-de la-Paix.


**PBA**  *Proceedings of the British Academy*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.


WJA   Würzburger Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft. Würzburg, Schöningh.

YCS   Yale Classical Studies. New Haven, Conn., Yale University Press.

cp. parallel or comparison
cf. relevant reference
TEXTS AND COMMENTARIES

AESCHYLUS


EURIPIDES


SOPHOCLES


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