

The Classical Quarterly

<http://journals.cambridge.org/CAQ>

Additional services for *The Classical Quarterly*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)



Sophoclea

Arthur Platt

The Classical Quarterly / Volume 15 / Issue 3-4 / July 1921, pp 126 - 130

DOI: 10.1017/S0009838800000598, Published online: 11 February 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009838800000598

How to cite this article:

Arthur Platt (1921). Sophoclea. The Classical Quarterly, 15, pp 126-130 doi:10.1017/S0009838800000598

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

SOPHOCLEA.

Ant. 2. ἄρ' οἶσθ' ὅτι Ζεὺς τῶν ἀπ' Οἰδίου κακῶν
ὅποιον οὐχὶ νῦν ἔτι ζώσαιν τελεῖ ;

I HAVE never been able to swallow the explanation that this means οἶσθ' ὅ τι ἔστι τῶν κακῶν ὅποιον κ.τ.λ. The order of words is dead against it, since Ζεὺς ought to be in the ὅποιον clause ; it may be safely said that there is no shadow of a parallel to such an order in Sophocles, and probably not in anyone else either. Look at line 2 by itself and consider whether any hearer could possibly suppose that ὅτι Ζεὺς could mean anything but 'that Zeus' is doing or will do something or other. So Aristophanes seems to have thought ; in a passage crammed with reminiscences of tragedy he declaims (*Birds* 1246) :

ἄρ' οἶσθ' ὅτι Ζεὺς εἴ με λυπήσει πέρα
μέλαθρα μὲν αὐτοῦ καὶ δόμους Ἀμφίουρος
καταιθαλώσω πυρφόροισιν ἀετοῖς ;

Moreover, I flatly deny that οἶσθ' ὅ τι κακῶν ὅποιον οὐ τελεῖ is possible Greek even when the order has been corrected. οὐκ οἶδα ὅστις τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὁποῖος οὐκ ἀπαρνοῖτ' ἂν τοῦτο μὴ οὐκ εἶναι ἀληθές. Just look at it !

But neither can ὅποιον here be a direct question. Jebb, after referring to three passages in Plato, *Lysis* 212C, *Euthyd.* 271A, *Rep.* 348B, where ὁπότερος, -ον, -ως are used as if they were direct interrogatives, goes on : 'Let it be assumed that the readings are sound in those places. Still there is at least no similar instance of ὁποῖος ; nor is ὅποιον here the *first word* of a direct question.' The last remark is acute and very much to the point. It is difficult to deny that the indirect form of an interrogative may be used for the direct occasionally¹ in even authors of the best period, but certainly the word could not stand where it does in our passage. There is a general tendency to confuse relatives and other pronouns, etc., in Greek ; one can say ἃ μὲν for τὰ μὲν, ὅτ' μὲν for τοτὲ μὲν, and so on. If then Plato could say ὁπότερος for πότερος, it does not seem surprising ; the explanation perhaps is that it comes of halting between πότερός ἐστι ; and ἐρωτῶ ὁπότερός ἐστι. If this be so it is plain that ὁπότερος would have to begin the sentence.

¹ Jebb understates the evidence : add *Alcib.* 110C, ὁποῖω (so much for there being no similar instance of ὁποῖος !), *Soph.* 236D, πῶς καὶ πρὸς ὅ τι, *Minos* 313A, ὅποιον again ; in [Demosth.] xlix. 51, ὁπόσον τινα καὶ ποδαπὸν καὶ πόθεν, Schäfer emends to πόσον, wrongly I think. If the speech were

by Demosthenes we might argue that he does not do such things, but as it is admittedly spurious we cannot tell what its author might not say. It is no great matter that Achilles Tattius (viii. 10) has ὁπότερα σε τούτων ἐωρήσατο ;

But there remains a third explanation of ἀρ' οἶσθ' ὅτι Ζεὺς ὅποιον οὐχὶ τελεῖ; It is not new, but it appears to me indubitably right. ποῖον οὐχὶ; = πάντα, and ὅποιον οὐχὶ is simply ποῖον οὐχὶ in *oratio obliqua*. Nothing can be imagined more like the tricks and manners of Sophocles than such a confusion of construction; as the whole sentence is in *oratio obliqua*, so the ποῖον is influenced by it; the οἶσθα still makes itself felt, though logically its force ought not to extend beyond ὅτι. Everybody knows the passage at *Phil.* 615:

εὐθέως ὑπέσχετο
τὸν ἄνδρ' Ἀχαιοῖς τόνδε δηλώσειν ἄγων·
οἷοιτο μὲν μάλισθ' ἐκούσιον λαβῶν . . .

and the parallel quoted by the editors from Lysias. Do you mean to say that the influence which produces οἷοιτο in the one passage could not produce ὅποιον in the other? Of course it could, and the only thing that puzzles me about these lines is that any tolerable scholar should have ever felt any difficulty about it.

A passage which may perhaps have been consciously or unconsciously in the mind of Sophocles is *Odyssey* xiv. 186:

καί μοι τοῦτ' ἀγόρευσον ἐτήτυμον ὄφρ' εὐ εἰδῶ·
τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν; πόθι τοι πόλις ἠδὲ τοκῆς;
ὅπποιης τ' ἐπὶ νηὸς ἀφίκεο· πῶς δέ σε ναῦται
ἤγαγον εἰς Ἰθάκην;

Here ὅπποιης seems to be due to a relapse into *oratio obliqua* after the direct questions τίς πόθεν, πόθι, and then πῶς reverts again to the direct. No one would hesitate to say that τίς was direct, I think, if ὅπποιης did not follow it. The lines thus illustrate the halting between two modes of interrogation spoken of above. The punctuation of the editors shows that they do not regard τίς as a dependent question; even if you do so regard it, we have at least the confusion between the direct and dependent *forms* of the interrogative pronouns.

Somewhat similar to ὅτι ὅποιον is: 'This makes me wonder more than all the rest; that at this time of the year . . . from whence you had these ripe grapes' (Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, Act V. Sc. i.).

Ant. 4. οὐδὲν γὰρ οὔτ' ἀλγεινὸν οὔτ' ἄτης ἄτερ.

It is again astonishing to find scholars of the highest repute, Porson himself among them, hesitating over this very simple superfluity of ἄτερ. The German editors have quoted similar superfluities from authors of note, including Lessing. We often hear in everyday English speech Greek idioms on which we should write elaborate notes if we read them in classical authors. A man once asked me at Lord's to give him a match, adding apologetically: 'I seldom forget to come *without* them.' Nothing can be easier than such confusion in negative sentences. Does not Andocides (iv. 15) say οὐ ταῦτα

μόνον ἐξήρκεσεν when he means either οὐδὲ ταῦτα ἐξήρκεσεν or οὐ ταῦτα μόνον ἐποίησεν? Does not Xenophon (*Hell.* iii. 2, 21) say in like manner οὐ μόνον ταῦτ' ἤρκει? Does not Lycurgus cry out (51) τοιούτους μὲν ἄνδρας οὐδ' ἐξ ἀπάσης τῆς Ἑλλάδος ὀλίγους εὐρέϊν ῥάδιον, when logic demands πολλοὺς, and Longinus, *de Sublim.* xxxii. 8, οὐδὲ ὀλίγου δεῖ for οὐδὲ πολλοῦ δεῖ? And this very phrase οὐδὲ πολλοῦ δεῖ is itself totally illogical.

'All those scornful eyes, without hardly any exception, were closed in death within a year' (H. Kingsley, *Mademoiselle Mathilde*, ch. 46).

Ant. 265. καὶ πῦρ διέρπειν.

Different editors have quoted on this Virgil *Aen.* xi. 787, Aristoph. *Lys.* 133, Demosth. liv. 40. Add Theophrastus frag. iii. 8 (Teubner ed., vol. iii., p. 67): διὸ καὶ οἱ διὰ τοῦ πυρὸς βαδίζοντες πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις οἷς παρασκευάζονται καὶ τοῦτό φασι δρᾶν. This may only refer to a conjuring exhibition, but may include ordeals too; at any rate such exhibitions probably grew out of the ordeal. Lucian *Philopseudes* 13, διὰ πυρὸς διεξιόντα, refers certainly to a display.

Ant. 466. ἄλλ' ἄν, εἰ τὸν ἐξ ἐμῆς
μητρὸς θανόντ' ἄθαπτον ἠισχόμην νέκυν,
κείνοις ἄν ἤλγουν.

Pallas seems to me to have made the best correction of this vexed passage by proposing ἐξανεσχόμην for ἠισχόμην νέκυν. It is mere ὑβρις to accuse this of being bad poetry; it is every bit as good as anyone can wish. ἄθαπτον ἀνέχομαι is unimpeachable Greek; νέκυν is clearly superfluous though unobjectionable in itself, and the reading is much superior to that of Semitelos, ἥσχυναν κύνες. Superior, for it does not matter whether dogs devour the body or not; what *does* matter is whether Antigone does her duty or not. By sprinkling earth on the body she has not delivered it from the power of the dog, but she has done her duty. Hence that reading only spoils the point, whereas that of Pallas keeps it bright and sharp.

In favour of it is to be noted, first, that the scholiast says ἠνεσχόμην, ὑπερείδον. Secondly, that the scholiast thought it worth while to explain ἐξανασχήσεσθε at *Phil.* 1355 by ἀνέξεσθε; thus here ἐξανεσχόμην might become ἀνεσχόμην or ἠνεσχόμην, whence the variants of L and A, which has ἠνεσχόμην, probably after νέκυν had been added because it was evident that the line was too short. Thirdly, that Weil's ἐξηνεσχόμην is much the most likely correction of οὐκ ἠνεσχόμην at *Eur. El.* 508. There also the ἐξ was dropped and οὐκ inserted to fill up.

Ant. 536. δέδρακα τοῦργον, εἴπερ ἦδ' ὀμορροθελί.

The logic of this looks strange, for if Ismene has done the deed she has done it whether Antigone agree or no. Poets are not always logical, and I would not mind this, but there is more behind. Ismene does not say that

she did it, which would be *ἔδρασα*, as Antigone confesses with the words *καὶ φημὶ δράσαι* at 443; what Ismene says is: 'I am guilty; I am in the position of one who has done it.' The peculiar use of the perfect is a frequent source of error to us, and it is important to observe it here; it implies being in a certain condition. No doubt Ismene strains the truth, but she does not go so far as to say *ἔδρασα*, she only represents herself as being equally guilty as if she had done it, using an equivocal tense which might naturally be taken to mean that she had actually buried the body but which just avoids positively saying so, because it may be subtly interpreted to signify 'guilty.' Thus the logic turns out to be correct. The distinction may indeed appear unduly subtle at first sight, but I believe that it will gain on consideration. Cf. Demosth. *contra Evergum et Mnesibulum* 69, *τοῖς δεδρακόσι δὲ καὶ κτείνασι*, 'those who are guilty, i.e. those who committed the murder.' *εἴπερ ἤδ' ὁμορροθεῖ* will then mean, I take it, 'if Antigone consents to let me share the guilt.'

Ant. 755. Accent *ἂν σ' οὐκ*, for the emphatic *σὲ* can be elided, and the emphasis is necessary.

Electra 698. *ἄλλης ἡμέρας*.

It is incorrect to say that this means 'on another day,' which would be ludicrous; it means 'next day,' for the article can be omitted in poetry: see *Ap. Rhod.* ii. 176. So in Spanish *otro día* without any article regularly means 'next day.'

It is true that at *Ajax* 516 there is an even more absurd use of *ἄλλη*, when Tecmessa says that Ajax laid waste her country and 'some other fate,' she really can't remember exactly what, slew her parents. But the best MSS. read *ἄλλ' ἤ*, and Schneidewin's *ἀμὴν* seems to be right since Sophocles is copying *Iliad* vi. 414, *πατέρ' ἀμὸν ἀπέκτανε δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς*. Can anyone considering the two passages doubt that it was Ajax himself and not 'another fate' which caused the death of her parents? Delicacy prevents her from putting it more plainly.

Ajax 410. *ὦ δυστάλαινα, τοιάδ' ἄνδρα χρήσιμον
φωνεῖν, ἃ πρόσθεν οὐκ ἔτλη ποτ' ἂν.*

The antithesis of *ἄνδρα* and *οὗτος* is the kind of thing which requires no comment, and accordingly does not receive any from the ordinary editors. What we want is an antithesis to *φωνεῖν*, and this Naber provides by his irresistible conjecture *ἃ πρόσθεν οὐκ ἔτλη ποτ' ἂν κλύειν*. The last word having been lost, *οὗτος* was inserted to fill up the scansion.

But we need, it seems to me, to strengthen *οὐκ* to *οὐδ'*. In English it is possible to lay a stress upon the two verbs, but Greek had no stress of the sort available, and therefore has to reach its goal by the aid of particles.

Oed. Col. 277. καὶ μὴ θεοὺς τιμῶντες εἶτα τοὺς θεοὺς
μοίραις ποιεῖσθε μηδαμῶς · ἡγείσθε δὲ
βλέπειν μὲν αὐτοὺς πρὸς τὸν εὐσεβῆ βροτῶν.

It is generally admitted that *μοίραις* is impossible and the variant *μοίρας* very unsatisfactory. The corrections proposed seem to me pretty bad, and perhaps mine will appear such to others; however, I propose *μῶρους ποιεῖσθε · μηδαμῶς, ἡγείσθε δὲ κ.τ.λ.* 'Professing to honour the gods, do not consider them so foolish that they cannot distinguish between the righteous and the impious.'

Oed. Col. 658. πολλὰ δ' ἀπειλαὶ πολλὰ δὲ μάτην ἔπη
θυμῷ κατηπέιλησαν, ἀλλ' ὁ νοὺς ὅταν
αὐτοῦ γένηται, φροῦδα τ' ἀπειλήματα.

The corrupt word is clearly *ἀπειλαὶ*; the subject of *κατηπέιλησαν ἔπη* must be a person, not a thing, and this is indicated also by *θυμῷ*. Read then *πολλοὶ δὲ κάλλοι*.

Schneidewin's *πολλοὶ δὲ πολλοῖς πολλὰ* is intolerable—at least to me. The scholiast says *πολλοὶ ἄνθρωποι*; this does not look as if he read *ἀπειλαὶ*. A conceivable explanation of his *ἄνθρωποι* is that *ἄλλοι* was mistaken for *ἄνοι*, but anyhow he clearly read *πολλοὶ*. A blush is visible on the face of all but very brazen defenders of *ἀπειλαὶ ἔπη κατηπέιλησαν*.

Oed. Tyr. 217. τῇ νόσφ' ὅ' ὑπηρετεῖν.

This phrase has been questioned, but cf. Xen. *Mem.* I. iv. 13, *νόσοις ἐπικουρήσαι*, Antipho *Tetr.* Γα fin., *τῇ ἀνομίᾳ τοῦ παθήματος ἀμύνοντας*, which means, however, 'helping him who has been illegally ill-treated,' and so is not exactly perhaps to the point; Aristotle *de Respir.* ix. 1, *βοήθειαν τῆς φθορᾶς*.

Phil. 852. οἶσθα γὰρ ὃν αὐδῶμαι,
εἰ ταῦτ' ἄν τούτῳ γινώμαν ἴσχεις,
μάλα τοι ἄπορα πυκνῶς ἐνιδεῖν πάθη.

ταῦτ' ἄν L, *ταυτ' ἄν* A, *ταύταν* Γ and editors. The obvious and best correction seems to me *ταῦτ' ἄν*. 'You know whom I mean (Odysseus): if you agree with him, great difficulties are in your way.' That *ὃν* is right seems to me clear; the Chorus naturally shrink from naming Odysseus, and *τούτῳ* is strange if referring to Philoctetes, who would be *τῷδε* (cf. *ὅδε* in 839). Metre also favours *ὃν*, especially if we consider the metre of the previous line: it is true that it involves reading *μένομεν* for *μενοῦμεν* in 836, but either 836 or 852 must be altered, and *μένομεν* appears to me slightly better in itself than *μενοῦμεν*. For *ταῦτ' ἄν* cf. Theocr. xv. 18, where also it was corrupted and had to be restored by Reiske.

ARTHUR PLATT.