

Looking back in anger:  
The dynamics of remembering and forgetting in the Sophoklean '*polis*'

Christopher Edward Webb

Greek and Latin Department, University College London

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I, Christopher Edward Webb, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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With my own precious memories of love, family, and happiness, I am  
very proud to dedicate this thesis to my mother.

Galia Harrison

1949-2011

*J'ai tendu des cordes de clocher à clocher;  
Des guirlandes de fenêtre à fenêtre;  
Des chaînes d'or d'étoile à étoile,  
Et je danse.*

Rimbaud. *Fragments du Feuilleton XII.*

## Abstract

The objective of this thesis is to understand better the role that memory plays in Sophoklean tragedy. My approach interrogates the way memory shapes and underscores the dramatic narrative, taking into account both the personal and public perspective. The focus is on the representation of the πόλις and the inter-personal relationships found in the *Antigone*, the *Elektra*, and the *Oidipous at Kolonos*. The research project suggests that the driver behind characters' resentment, anger, and duty can usefully be explored by an examination based in memory. For example, it reveals the way control of memory emerges as the basis for the attack and defence of and in the tragic πόλις and family. However, we also find positive actions in the persistence of recollection. Commemoration and ritual, the provision of gifts, memorialisation, and the refusal to forget one's family all combine to recall those who are dead or absent. These underlying themes play a fundamental role in defining character and plot in Sophokles.

I first put forward a definition of memory before examining the conflicts and gaps within the scholarship, using this as a foundation to examine the tragic πόλεις. An examination of how the different πόλεις, and the individuals who inhabit them, embrace or reject both remembering and forgetting, forms the nucleus of this thesis. History and drama connect through examples of burial regulation and post-mortem control. In both settings, we find attempts to regulate the past, present, and future. Through a reconsideration of the role memory plays in Sophokles, I suggest a distinct way of reading tragedy and an original contribution to the field.

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### Abbreviations

<i>AJP</i>	<i>The American Journal of Philology</i> . The Johns Hopkins University Press.
<i>BICS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies</i> . John Wiley and Sons.
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i> . Classical Association of Great Britain.
<i>FGrHist</i>	<i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> . Jacoby, F. (1923). Berlin–Leiden.
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i> . The Hellenic Society, Cambridge University Press.
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> . (1873). Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften.
<i>LSJ</i>	<i>A Greek English Lexicon</i> . Liddell, H., Scott, R. and Mackenzie, R. (1949 rev. 1990). Oxford.
<i>SEG</i>	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i> . (1923). Leiden and Amsterdam. Brill Press.
<i>TLG</i>	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Graecae</i> . University of California.
<i>GHI</i>	<i>A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions</i> . Meiggs, R. and Lewis, D. (1988). Oxford University Press.
<i>TrGF</i>	<i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> . Vol.4, Radt, S (ed) (1999). Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

### Notes

- i. All dates are BCE unless signified.
- ii. I transliterate Greek names and places, however, some Latinised forms (Ajax, Attica, and Ithaca etc) remain for style and familiarity.
- iii. Greek text (Sophokles) is from the Oxford Classical Text: *Sophoclis Fabulae*. Translations follow those by Lloyd-Jones, H. (1994, reprinted 1997/1998), or are my own and are marked accordingly.
- iv. Greek text (Aiskhylos) is from Loeb Classical Library. Translations follow those by Sommerstein, A. (2008), or are my own and are marked accordingly.
- v. Other translations of Greek text (including fragments etc) are my own or otherwise indicated.

## 1 Introduction

An examination of the role memory plays in the context of Sophoklean tragedy drives this thesis and validates it as an original contribution to the field. The interconnected issues of remembrance and forgetting form an important part of the interpretative framework. The main body of research studies the management of individual/familial/civic memory (during or after conflict) within three test cases, the *Antigone*, the *Elektra*, and the *Oidipous at Kolonos*. Issues of control over who or what can, or cannot, be remembered or forgotten link with attempts to manage division in the family and the πόλις. The need for memory management fundamentally connects to conflict in tragedy. A critical reassessment of memory management and the preservation of commemoration have the potential to enrich our reading of the dramas.

Memory does not simply concern what has come before, but in the management of the present, future memory is also an important issue to consider. For example, Antigone and Elektra are both promised remembrance for their actions in life, but they approach the promise of on-going κλέος from different aspects. In the deme of Kolonos, future recollection underpins the integration of Oidipous and the exchange with Theseus/Athens. In each tragic case, the action to recall or forget takes the form of a power struggle. Clashes between spheres are self-perpetuating and often damaging to the city, family, and individual. Ironically, the force behind remembering and forgetting is often the cause of friction that generates the rift memory aims to negotiate.

However, there are positive sides to both remembering and forgetting. One is honourable when recalling one's duty to the house and city in the face of threat. Additionally, family members and comrades are recalled and avenged through burial with honour, civic ritual, and funeral narration. The act ties the individual and family to

the city, a form of dual recollection and recognition. We find a threat to this in the action of non-burial or exposure of the dead, which emphasises the need for ritual expressions of grief, found in lamentation and the act of burial. The act of forgetting is also frequently constructive, for instance in political history to form a collective defence against a common threat. The idea continues in tragedy, where in the *Oidipous at Kolonos* it underlines the benefaction of Athens and Theseus towards Oidipous as he pleads for inclusion and protection from the city. The action of forgetting and amnesty is guided by reciprocity and suppliancy.

The relationship between memory (remembering and forgetting) and conflict has an established precedent in epic; this forms the foundation of my approach.<sup>1</sup> The decoding of specific memory-based themes offers an innovative way of interrogating tragedy. To support this approach, I first examine the *Ajax* to provide evidence of posthumous punishment and commemoration, what the consequences of refusal to bury imply, and to assess the significance of lasting honour after death. The second chapter examines the *Antigone* and the fight for control and security that comes during conflict. The refusal to forget in the form of continuing resentment, the attempted suppression of personal and collective recollection through public/civic commemoration, and the presumed anger of the dead are fundamental. We find the withholding of burial and lamentation combine to deny ritual expression of grief for the relatives of the dead. The subsequent chapter examines the *Elektra*.

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<sup>1</sup> Memory and conflict connect as lawlessness and dispute threaten the civilised πόλις. Inextricably linked to human pain, λήθη cannot exist without discord. Hesiod presents the aetiology of Ἔρις and personifies memory loss as a manifestation of a negative entity, *Theogony*. 227f: “αὐτὰρ Ἔρις στυγερὴ τέκε μὲν Πόνον ἀλγινόεντα / Λήθην τε Λιμόν τε καὶ Ἄλγεα δακρυόεντα / Ὑσμίνας τε Μάχας τε Φόνους τ’ Ἀνδροκτασίας τε / Νεϊκέα τε ψευδέας τε Λόγους Ἀμφιλλογίας τε / Δυσνομίην τ’ Ἄτην τε, συνήθεας ἀλλήλησιν”. “And loathsome Strife bore painful Toil and Forgetfulness and Hunger and tearful Pains, and Combats and Murders and Slaughters, and Quarrels, Lies, and Disputes, and Lawlessness and Ruin, much like one another”. Translation; Most, G. (2008), amended. Paus. *Guide*. 9.39.8. Pucci, P. (1977), examines μνημοσύνη and λησμοσύνη in Hesiod. Clay, J. (2009).

Here, the emphasis on family burial and ritual surrounding tombs connects with the offering of symbolic gifts and memorial. The urn, the grave, and the presentation/presence of the dead in various forms, all link to the struggle for power, and lead onto an examination of the role of the city and chorus. In the *Elektra*, the sentience of the dead, and the memory of personal anger, drives the action through themes of negative and positive examples of resentment. Civic duty, the influence of those in authority, retaliation, and (often-warped) commemoration by family members underpin this section. The final chapter engages with the *Oidipous at Kolonos* and considers the power of past memory, the manipulation of the present, and the attempts to control future recollection. Managed by a city famous for accepting and protecting suppliants, there is a dramatic tradition surrounding Oidipous' identity, reputation and integration. The *Oidipous at Kolonos* engages with themes from the past (*Oidipous Tyrannos*) and future (*Antigone*) through self-awareness, hero-cult, and promises of exchange. Various divisions adopt a form of repeated vengeance and both negative and positive resentment in the city. Sophokles plays on inter-textual memory to nuance his representation of characters in both a theatrical and dramatic context.

### Background to research

Memory and its associated fields play vital roles in connecting the individual and the πόλις in the Greek lived experience. Current scholarship examines memory in the 5<sup>th</sup> century (elite) Athens through a political or historiographical lens.<sup>2</sup> However, there is a

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<sup>2</sup> Loraux, N. (2002). Loraux is an intellectual predecessor. She examines city-managed forgetting focusing on the amnesty (403). Tragedy forms a minor part of Loraux's research, marking a considerable variation in our respective studies, my research differs in breadth, scale, and depth. Loraux briefly engages with Sophokles using ὑπεράχθομαι from the *Elektra* (178f). Shrimpton, G. (2004), comments on Loraux's work on λήθη: "[It] celebrates the very idea that social cohesion and effective nation building come only through forgetfulness and

lacuna in the research, as these studies fail to address properly the topic within tragedy. In tragic scenes of conflict, characters use personal actions and expression in battles for control over remembering and forgetting. Through close literary analysis, this thesis considers memory control through words, action, inaction, speech, and silence, all read in a dramatic and cultural context. The determination to remember, and the fight to forget, saturates drama.

The doctoral dissertation of Popescu is one recent antecedent to this examination.<sup>3</sup> A main distinction between our analyses is in our respective approaches. Popescu builds her hypothesis on a foundation of psychoanalytical theory and applies this interpretative method to the actions and reactions of the character of Orestes, working across the three tragedians. Her focus is: “the topic of memory from the point of view of gender and social differentiation as part of the tragic crisis, [in an] attempt to reveal the mechanisms of divine arrangement of memory”.<sup>4</sup> As one of the rare (and welcome) ventures into this field, Popescu’s research provides a stimulating comparison to my own method of interrogation. Although I agree with Popescu who proposes that: “Memory is the liaison between the social body and the individual”; more significant to my study is the conflict found when the connection is tested or challenged.<sup>5</sup> Remarking on the lack of prominence of memory and recollection studies in tragic scholarship, Popescu rightly observes that: “Memory is always discussed in an ancillary position”.<sup>6</sup> A reading that engages with memory can offer an understanding of tragedy that helps bridge the gap between history, politics, and drama. It connects the tragic individual, group, and πόλις on a level not previously highlighted.

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concord”. p.359, Main works on the amnesty; Carawan, E. (2002). Dorjahn, A. (1946). Finley, M. (1962). Sakellariou, M. (1990). Shrimpton, G. (1997). Simondon, M. (1982). Sommerstein, A., and Fletcher, J. (eds). (2007). Strauss, B. (1986).

<sup>3</sup> Popescu, L. (2012). My thanks go to Dr Andreas Seraphim at Trinity College Dublin/UCL for bringing this study to my attention.

<sup>4</sup> Popescu, L. (2012), p.16.

<sup>5</sup> Popescu, L. (2012), p.16.

<sup>6</sup> Popescu, L. (2012), p.14.

It may seem paradoxical to choose Sophokles as the focus for a thesis, as his tragedies avoid direct engagement with contemporary issues. Although the connection between society and tragedy is more explicit, for instance, in Aiskhylos, testing and challenging these issues is part of the draw of this approach. Aiskhylos uses interconnecting topics between political history and tragedy to support his manipulation of the subject, drawing on remembering and forgetting to embed themes in his tragic plots, exploiting familiar subjects, characters and symbols to construct meaning. In addition, it is important to note that memory is not always lexical; we find it hidden in behaviours and symbol. Although exact references to the Athenian political collective would be difficult to extract, a raft of familiar themes traverse the distance between the tragedian, the text, and the performance. Easterling describes the relationship between Athens, the audience, and tragedy: "It certainly makes sense in general terms to look to the plays for some kind of refraction of the society that provided the context of production".<sup>7</sup> Contemporary issues are submerged within a heroic background; this situation gave the dramatist licence to explore the issues of the political environment.<sup>8</sup> We can identify this practice of memory manipulation and control in both the political world and the tragic. The background to Sophoklean tragedy, for Easterling, fixes these issues in a separate space from reality ("Heroic vagueness").<sup>9</sup> The civic life of the writers of drama shapes their production and performance. The conditioning and exposure enabled tragedians to remark upon, and challenge, political, and civic ideologies.

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<sup>7</sup> Easterling, P. (1997), p.21. "Identifiability, it seems, brings advantages". p.22.

<sup>8</sup> Gould, J. (after Henrichs, A), In Silk, M. (1996). Burian, P. (2011), links spectator and performance. Parker, R. (1983), writes: "When tragedy is asked to provide historical information on lower levels than this, its answers become ambiguous and hard to interpret, largely because of its setting in the mythical past". p.308.

<sup>9</sup> Easterling, P. (1997): "The fact that political, legal, and social issues are dealt with in a language carefully integrated into the heroic setting enables problematic questions to be addressed without overt divisiveness and thus to be open from the start to different interpretations", p.25. Ormand, B. (2012).

## 1.1 Definition of memory

The past is not a peaceful landscape lying there behind me...

As I was moving forward, so it was crumbling.<sup>10</sup>

Before commencing my assessment of tragedy, I outline the parameters of my use of 'memory' and the validity of using its related concepts to examine Greek drama. Memory is the subjective psychological process of storing and recalling the past in both positive and negative ways. Memory is an umbrella term that one views from a social, individual, or physical perspective.<sup>11</sup> It is a fluid notion, which may be contested or relocated and is both fallible and flexible. The past becomes a question of 'this is what we forget', an entity capable of change rather than an immobile fixed 'then'.

Recent scholarship examining individual, social and collective memory, forgetting and resentment, provides a foundation upon which to launch an investigation of these themes in Sophokles.<sup>12</sup> The analysis is introduced by an examination of current memory theories, which informs a tragic reading by interrogating the complex nature of remembering and forgetting. The latter stages of this chapter use examples taken from drama, speeches, political history, and epigraphy, to suggest that the Greek use of memory, its lexicon, context, and its related concepts, covers a similar scope (with appropriate modification) as its modern usage. The influential studies of Fentress and Wickham, and Assman, have shaped the modern definition of memory and its use. They advanced the theories of Halbwachs, who emphasised the group/collective over the individual's capacity to remember: "There are hence no perceptions without recollection. But, inversely, there are no recollections which can be said to be purely interior, that is, which can be preserved only

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<sup>10</sup> De Beauvoir, S. (1972), p.365.

<sup>11</sup> Popescu, L. (2012), p.13f.

<sup>12</sup> Collective memory studies: Erll, A., and Nünning, A. (eds) (2008). Fentress, J. and Wickham, C. (1992). Olick, J., Vinitzky-Seroussi, V., and Levy, D. (eds), (2011). Simondon, M. (1982).



within individual memory”.<sup>13</sup> Halbwachs goes on to suggest that the individual’s memory is intrinsically linked and shaped by the collective group in society. Fentress and Wickham propose a firmer separation of the individual from the group; countering Halbwachs’ method by arguing that:

[This neglects] how individual consciousness might relate to those of the collectivities those individuals actually made up. The result [is] a concept of collective consciousness curiously disconnected from the actual thought processes of any particular person.<sup>14</sup>

Although group-managed memory is important to this study, my approach takes into account Fentress and Wickham’s inclusion of, and focus on, the individual. The link between memory, the individual, and group creates and sustains identity. Assman looks towards this group/social connection: “Memory is the faculty that enables us to form an awareness of selfhood (identity), both on the personal and on the collective level”.<sup>15</sup> Fentress and Wickham expand on this idea of joint collectivity: “[It is] an expression of collective experience: social memory identifies a group, giving it a sense of its past and defining its aspirations for the future”.<sup>16</sup> In the case of tragedy, the detachment between the group (choral for example) and individual often accentuates the force of remembering. However, it would be reductive to suggest that one must take either a collective or individual perspective when analysing memory themes, as there are interconnecting concerns that shape our understanding.

Assman suggests that there are various levels of memory that are divided by the passing of time, he proposes that memory exists

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<sup>13</sup> Halbwachs, M. (1992), p.169f. Also, Durkheim, E. (1915), and more recently Alcock, S. (2002).

<sup>14</sup> Fentress, J., and Wickham, C. (1992), ix.

<sup>15</sup> Assman, J. (2008), p.109.

<sup>16</sup> Fentress, J., and Wickham, C. (1992), p.25.

between two axis, it is both “social and temporal”.<sup>17</sup> To clarify this theory, he applies the term ‘*communicative memory*’ to Halbwachs’ ideas of generations of individuals in their social context.<sup>18</sup> For Assman, three main points combine: “Memory (or reference to the past, identity (or political imagination), and cultural continuity (or the formation of tradition)”.<sup>19</sup> However, the links of memory that exist between group and individual can also be examined through Assman’s theory of what he terms ‘*cultural memory*’, which focuses on the symbols of recollection. Assman suggests: “Such aides-memoires are also the *lieux de memoire*, memory sites in which the memory of entire national or religious communities is concentrated, monuments, feast days and customs”.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, this idea of cultural memory, focused on the individual, can be used as key to decoding tragedy. Group memory relies on shared symbols of memory, for example, the monumentalisation of the honoured dead in, or by, the city.<sup>21</sup> We see in tragedy the conflict that underlines and distorts: “Rituals of collective and connective remembering”.<sup>22</sup> Symbolic markers to not remember create and reinforce memory. We come to a regulated ‘recreation’ of the past, an exertive force over recollection.

The focus on identity through shared experience and remembering is an important point to consider, for example, in the context of Greek public monuments, graves, and topographic markers. Alcock examines monuments, and outlines them as: “Places, structures, or objects deliberately designed, or later agreed, to provoke memories”.<sup>23</sup> Shear links this to link to the group perspective:

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<sup>17</sup> Assmann, J., (2011), p.2.

<sup>18</sup> Assmann, J., (2006), p.1.

<sup>19</sup> Assmann, J., (2011), p.2.

<sup>20</sup> Assmann, J., (2006), p.8. Also, Nora, P. (1989) on memory and location. Alcock, S. (2002), examines place, setting and how location change over time.

<sup>21</sup> For the group sharing remembering, see Alcock, S. (2002).

<sup>22</sup> Assmann, J., (2006), p.9.

<sup>23</sup> See Alcock, S. (2002), on the gap between monuments and landscapes.

Collective memory may be seen in the ways in which groups record and/or commemorate the past in public documents or monuments; for the Athenians, obvious examples include honorary decree and monuments celebrating victory in battle. These memories [are]... malleable and subject to (re) interpretation and (re) use.<sup>24</sup>

As discussed above, memory is in flux, particularly when scrutinised from a social perspective. Price links location to recollection, placing it within a structure of memory in the Greek world: "There are four crucial contexts in which networks of memories were constructed: first, objects and representations; second, places; third, ritual behaviour (and associated myths); and fourth, textual narratives".<sup>25</sup> Memory shapes these different, yet overlapping platforms.

Various topics define and shape group memory, for instance political propaganda, broadcasting through epigraphy, and what the collective decides not to memorialise.<sup>26</sup> We can analyse how this relates to individual memory through examples. In tragedy, the idea of group memory extends to the response and actions of the chorus who provide an insight into group or shared (and often mythic in nature, oracular prediction for instance) memory.<sup>27</sup> The social relationship with memory is multi-layered and complex, as Burke suggests:

Given the multiplicity of social identities, and the co-existence of rival memories... it is surely more fruitful to think in pluristic terms about the uses of memories to different social groups, who may well have different views about what is significant or 'worthy of memory'.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Shear, J. (2011), p.7. Also, Scodel, R. (2008).

<sup>25</sup> Price, S. (2012), p.17. For the connection between locations and memory, sites and remembrance, and the difference between memory and history, ritual and fact, see Nora, P. (1989). The difference between public and personal memory, see Assmann, A. (2010).

<sup>26</sup> Klytaimnestra's politics in *Elektra* and Kreon in *Antigone*.

<sup>27</sup> Teiresias in *Oidipous at Kolonos*.

<sup>28</sup> Burke, P. (1989).

The aspects of recollection discussed above are visibly in play in Sophoclean tragedy. Thus, diverse (and often opposing) groups in the social structure articulate the same past differently. For example, in the *Antigone*, Kreon attempts to regulate Polyneikes' burial, and Antigone recalls her brother as kin rather than a traitor. In the *Elektra*, revisionist approaches to memory and propaganda underline the drama, particularly in the actions of Klytaimnestra, as she endeavours to manipulate through civic festivals. Similarly, in the *Oidipous at Kolonos* Kreon and Oidipous reinterpret their shared past differently, as Kreon assumes to take ownership of Oidipous. These are all instances of the changing nature of subjective recollection in tragedy. Control of past memory is an attempt to secure metaphoric victory in the present. The flexible nature of recollection means the same person or action is vulnerable to manipulation.

Whitehead raises a key problem in the scholarship, examining the identification of forgetting and its planned implementation: "[Previous scholars] struggle with the uncomfortable but necessary distinctions between forgetting without amnesia, and forgiveness without erasing memory".<sup>29</sup> In any organised process of (forced) forgetting, rather than amnesia, there lies a modicum of recollection.<sup>30</sup> Assman expands on this idea of selective memory:

Our memory is highly selective. Memory capacity is limited by neutral and cultural constraints such as force and bias. Psychological pressures with the effect that painful or incongruent memories are hidden, displaced, overwritten and possibly effaced also limit it. On the level of cultural memory, there is a similar dynamic at work.<sup>31</sup>

In both the tragic and political worlds, we find an attempt at selectivism. Like recollection, forgetting is both conditional and

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<sup>29</sup> Whitehead, A. (2008), p.156.

<sup>30</sup> Plat. *Phaedros*. 275a.

<sup>31</sup> Assman, A. (2008), p.97.

biased, defined in the parameters of the use of memory. Assessing these issues in tragedy, Scodel engages with the past in the *Oresteia* she proposes that: "Different groups within a society constitute different memory communities, and they have their own versions of the past, which may contradict each other or compete for attention".<sup>32</sup> Although they concern the same original memory, archived memories often conflict when recalled.<sup>33</sup>

Although the process of recollection forms the basis of my enquiry, the act of forgetting is equally significant to both individual and society, as one must be able to move past resentment. Terdiman looks at the interrelation between memory and forgetting: "[It] becomes clear that the most constant element of recollection is forgetting, discarding the non-retained so that retention, remembrance can occur at all".<sup>34</sup> The process of remembering and its opposite intertwine. Price suggests: "Societies too need to forget. Forgetting prevents social paralysis".<sup>35</sup> For example, to defend the city, we see the adoption of measured, yet often forced, management of memory.<sup>36</sup> The failure to remember, ostensibly, ensures safety, which in itself is subjective. Kalaga proposes that: "The natural opposition to memory is forgetting... [Which] is inherently ambivalent".<sup>37</sup> We find a contradictory action in attempts to compartmentalise what one forgets. Conflict is here; any conscious effort to not recall is inherently artificial. Indeed, one cannot simply self-regulate or control the neurological process of forgetting. The paradox of remembering to forget is expressed through an examination of tangible indicators.

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<sup>32</sup> Scodel, R. (2008), p.118.

<sup>33</sup> Carruthers, M. (1998), suggests: "A location within a network, 'memory' distributed through a web of associations, some of which may involve physical space... Many of which are socially constructed and maintained conventions... And all of which only become active in the minds of people making such webs of association". p.54.

<sup>34</sup> Terdiman, R. (1993), p.22.

<sup>35</sup> Price, S. (2012), p.27.

<sup>36</sup> Kreon attempts this in the *Antigone*.

<sup>37</sup> Kalaga, W. (1999), p.38.

### Archived memory

Throughout the thesis, I suggest that tragic characters and collectives use ‘archives’ of memory. Indeed, the foundation of modern archival theory is to preserve memory, it endeavours to do this with reliability, authenticity, accuracy, and integrity.<sup>38</sup> As Assman suggests:

Both the collective and the individual turn to the archive of cultural traditions, the arsenal of symbolic forms, the ‘imaginary’ of myths and legends, of ‘great stories,’ sagas and legends, scenes and constellations that live or can be reactivated in the treasure troves of a people.<sup>39</sup>

However, the idea of a static archive of kept memory contains an element of subjectivity when recalling, this is crucial to the decoding of tragedy.<sup>40</sup> Fentress and Wickham suggest the idea of a variable archive; memories do not keep still, and this challenges the rigid structure of unchanging ‘files’. Kalaga extends this: “The idea of storage and retrieval [in the context of memory] has always formed its essential supposition”.<sup>41</sup> Assman expands on this idea of memory storage:

The act of storage counters time and oblivion, the effects of which are nullified by the use of particular techniques. The act of remembering occurs within time, which plays an active role in the process. In particular, part of the

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<sup>38</sup> For the theory of the process/practice of archiving, see Jenkinson, H. (1922, 1965) and Schellenberg, T. (1956). For a modern perspective, see Bettington, J. (ed.) et al, (2008), Brown, C. (ed.), (2014), Eastwood, T. and MacNeil, H. (eds.), International Council on Archives. Committee on Descriptive Standards, (1999), and Williams, C. (2006).

<sup>39</sup> Assmann, J. (2006), p.8.

<sup>40</sup> Thus for instance Klytaimnestra and Elektra recall Agamemnon and Orestes differently in *Elektra*.

<sup>41</sup> Kalaga, W. (1999), p.29. Prower, E. (1999).

psychological dynamism of memory consists in the fact that remembering and forgetting are always inextricably bound together.<sup>42</sup>

The vital observation here is that remembering and forgetting are ‘inextricably bound together’. They are not simply opposing sides, but paradoxically co-exist. The notion of remembering to forget, although contradictory, guides the analysis of both political history and tragedy.<sup>43</sup> Memory binds group and individual together, yet it is susceptible to change”.<sup>44</sup> Although neurological in origin, memory is not just a function of individual consciousness but is culturally, politically, and socially determined, shaped by both internal and external forces, experiences, and actions of the collective.<sup>45</sup>

It is the idea of the tragic character as guardian and protector of the past that is most valuable to this research. For example, the preservation of the uncorrupted past can be seen through instances of characters playing the role of figurative archive, safeguarding the past for the benefit of the future, the purest form of memory custodianship.<sup>46</sup> Antigone keeps the memory of Polyneikes safe from Kreon’s edict. She decides, not over which memory to keep, but which one to relate to others, exploit or defend. The control and manipulation of the past influences present actions.<sup>47</sup> There is equivalency in Elektra’s personal recollection of the past. Her refusal to forget her father and brother in the face of her mother’s attack sets her up as the archive of both the house and family: “δεινόν γέ σ’ οὔσαν πατρός οὔ σὺ παῖς ἔφυς, / κείνου λελῆσθαι, τῆς δὲ τικτούσης μέλειν”.<sup>48</sup> Berating her sister, Elektra summons the past memory of

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<sup>42</sup> Assman, A. (2011), p.20.

<sup>43</sup> cf. Ricoeur, P. (2004).

<sup>44</sup> Kalaga, W. (1999), “Cultural construct”, p.38.

<sup>45</sup> For group memory and the past see; Luraghi, N. (2007). Svenbro, J. (1993).

<sup>46</sup> *OK*. 91f, *OK*. 1551f.

<sup>47</sup> *Ant*. 74f. Polyneikes is not included in the city’s role-call of the honourable dead, *Ant*. 26f. Eteokles is honoured, *Ant*. 24f.

<sup>48</sup> *El*. 341f: “It is terrible that you, the daughter of your father, forget him and respect you mother”. Agamemnon leads the army, *El*. 1.

the father to challenge a different perspective, one she finds abhorrent.

An approach that focuses on kept and stored memory, favours the recollection of the protagonist. However, how do these 'archives' compare with other characters' own recollections? Whose authenticity can we trust? The conflict between recollections must be taken in context. In the *Antigone*, the validity of Polyneikes' burial is hinted at through metaphysical presence.<sup>49</sup> Context in a different sense guides us in *Oidipous at Kolonos*, where we know Kreon's take on the past and present is dishonest in the because of how Theseus reacts and Athens rewards.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, we find that Oidipous is the ultimate keeper of latent and explicit memory in the form of defence and protection for the city and people.

In the *Elektra*, Elektra's retained memory of father and brother clashes with those kept by Klytaimnestra.<sup>51</sup> The repeated attempts to control, marginalise, and manipulate Agamemnon's memory, combined with oppressive behaviour towards Elektra and the city supports the suggestion that Elektra's archived memory is the most accurate and honourable. The daughter does not forget, yet the mother not only twists what she remembers, but attempts to impress warped remembrance upon others.

### Tragedy and memory studies

There are elements of guardianship and responsibility over memory in each of these cases from tragedy. Ideas of past events and actions are kept and retrieved from stores of subjective remembrances and the cognition of past actions. However, questions of legitimacy arise when applying modern archive theory to drama.

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<sup>49</sup> *Ant.* 223f.

<sup>50</sup> *OK.* 1551f.

<sup>51</sup> *El.* 164f.



To be justified and vindicated, the adoption of concepts such as 'archive' and their application to tragedy must also take into account the context, surroundings, actions, and speech patterns of drama. The focus is not based solely on philological analysis, but towards contextual appreciation. Memory is the common denominator that drives and underlines recollection and forgetting in diverse actions and situations, not just in the tragic world which forms the subject of my thesis but in the larger world of Athens which sustains the festival and generates the tragic performance. The role of remembering and forgetting in Sophokles has parallels in the modern world, and can be described using a comparable vocabulary. However, this focus on understanding tragedy through a lens of memory studies has its own challenges and limitations. For example, the application of modern labels to define and study characters and action risks classification under current terms and conditions, rather than in the original context. Any potential loss of meaning or understanding is nuanced in this project by a complementary approach; one that also focuses on the setting, intertextuality, surrounding evidence, lexical analysis, and the staging of the dramas.

My research combines a modern understanding of lexical evidence in individual dramatic moments and scenes from Sophoklean drama, the study of characters' actions and reactions, and the tragic interaction with the past. The fundamental elements found in collective/individual memory, monumentalisation, ritual, thematically-related intertextual examples, lament, burial, and (Oidipous') hero-cult all reveal themselves to be driven by a common and interconnected need to control, manipulate, embrace and/or keep memory. There are, however, limitations to an examination that incorporates such diverse topics under a single distinct concept. There is a danger of integrating every theme as a memory theme, and also of imposing a pattern on the material which ignores the subtleties of each individual case. As to the latter, the method can go some way to minimising the

risk of generalising down to common memory and oversimplifying the role memory plays. As discussed above, a more nuanced approach must be taken, one that considers the individual context and the surrounding character actions and reactions. As to the former, this thesis does not suggest that a memory-focused approach is the sole focus of these plays, nor is it the only aspect of tragedy. It argues that the depth and scope of our understanding of memory in these dramas develops when read against the backdrop of social and cultural perceptions. There are parallels between the way historiographical and epigraphic sources use and abuse memory. For an example of this, we shift the analytical focus to conflict and division in the Greek πόλις where we can examine the differences and similarities of memory when compared to tragedy, in primarily, a political context.

## 1.2 Control after conflict

The desire to regulate memory radiates not simply from enmity and resentment, but from the want, or need, to control remembrance. A strong relationship exists between forgetting and recollection, and the management of conflict and hostility. However, there exists a constructive side to remembering, one that lauds, commemorates, and ensures memorialisation protection, and social inclusion. To be sure, forgetting is often beneficial to group and individual. For instance, amnesty forms a collective defence against a common threat.

In this section, the control of memory is examined in its political context. An analysis of inter- and intra-state agreements, and the public decrees of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, demonstrates the pattern and frequency of memory regulation in the form of amnesty and resentment. The study does not consist simply of highlighting instances of memory control but rather interrogates how they are used. Thematic similarities between the Athenian social and political value systems and tragedy permit us to map the use and abuse of memory. We find subjective recollection is a familiar tool in personal and group contexts, and on an institutional level. Confirmation of this is found through an analysis of the closely related themes of (often-temporary) reconciliation and amnesty.

In the account of the preparations to provide a shield against the Persian advance, Herodotos describes how the cities of Hellas implemented a type of amnesty for the greater good.<sup>52</sup> A form of absolution guides the reaction to defend the country, established

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<sup>52</sup> The opening of Herodotos' *Histories* demonstrates resentment between the Persians and the Athenians. There are different versions of the past and memory: "οὕτω μὲν Ἰοῦν ἐς Αἴγυπτον ἀπικέσθαι λέγουσι Πέρσαι, οὐκ ὡς Ἕλληνες, καὶ τῶν ἀδικημάτων πρῶτον τοῦτο ἄρξαι". Hdt. *Histories*. 1.2.1: "In this way, the Persians say (and not as the Hellenes), was how Io came to Egypt, and this, according to them, was the first wrong that was done." Hdt. 1.2.3. Use of the Greek account, 2.118.1. Dewald, C and Marincola, J. (eds). (2006). Thucydides notes the difficulty of remembering speeches. 1.22f.

through agreements to forget personal enmity in the shadow of a greater danger.<sup>53</sup> As the shadow of war approaches, conflict necessitates a recognisable structured procedure of memory control. Division between the sides drives instability. In turn, this exposes them to the risk of defeat and death. Herodotos refers to the accords that the cities agreed in the face of conflict. The assorted states and the vanguard of Athens and Sparta complete a pledge to defend:

συλληγομένων δὲ ἐς τώυτὸ τῶν περὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα Ἑλλήνων τῶν τὰ ἀμείνω φρονεόντων καὶ διδόντων σφίσι λόγον καὶ πίστιν, ἐνθαῦτα ἐδόκεε βουλευομένοισι αὐτοῖσι πρῶτον μὲν χρημάτων πάντων καταλλάσσεσθαι τάς τε ἔχθρας καὶ τοὺς κατ' ἀλλήλους ἐόντας πολέμους: ἦσαν δὲ πρὸς τινὰς καὶ ἄλλους ἐγκεκρημένοι, ὁ δὲ ὢν μέγιστος Ἀθηναίοισι τε καὶ Αἰγινήτησι.<sup>54</sup>

A temporary unity bridges the gap of resentment as each group manages their enmity.<sup>55</sup> As the threat spreads, the allied states under Athens and Sparta bury political hostility. The amnesty is Hellas-wide and employed for the collective good of the assorted πόλεις. It is in their combined interest to control past misfortunes and defend together. Here, forgetting means an agreement, however impermanent; to put the common need before the individual. The

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<sup>53</sup> Hdt. 5.105.2. establishes commonalty with memory control, the power of resentment, and the politics of regulating memories: “ὦ Ζεῦ, ἐκγενέσθαι μοι Ἀθηναίους τίσασθαι,” εἶπαντα δὲ ταῦτα προστάξαι ἐνὶ τῶν θεραπόντων δειπνίου προκειμένου αὐτῷ ἐς τρίς ἐκάστοτε εἰπεῖν “δέσποτα, μέμνεο τῶν Ἀθηναίων”. “O Zeus, grant me vengeance on the Athenians. Then he ordered one of his servants to say to him three times whenever dinner was set before him, “Master, remember the Athenians”. Recollection is conditional upon context, and memory is essential to revenge; we see personal hostility driving resentment.

<sup>54</sup> Hdt. 7.145.1f: “All the Hellenes were apprehensive about the common welfare of Hellas and they met in conference to exchange assurances. They resolved to conclude their wars and disputes against one another, from whatever cause they arose from; at that time among other [conflicts] that were going on, the greatest was the fighting involving the Athenians and the Aeginetans”. The reference to Aegina and Athens is striking as Aegina takes the side of the Peloponnesians.

<sup>55</sup> Reconsidering anger surrounds the Mytilene debate, Thou. 3.36-49.

management of recollection in this context proves itself as a protective device, which in turn, generates coherence and stability.<sup>56</sup>

The matter of internal division also affects the individual political figure. Themistokles and his political rival Aristeides, when facing an imminent strike by the Persian force, put aside personal feelings for the good of Athens and the defence of Attica. Herodotos expands on the way the political enemies utilised a type of private reprieve for the good of the group: “ὑπὸ δὲ μέγαθος τῶν παρεόντων κακῶν λήθην ἐκείνων ποιούμενος ἔξεκαλέετο, θέλων αὐτῷ συμμῖξαι”.<sup>57</sup> Although the amnesty was not strictly personal, the conscious non-recollection (λήθην) of ills between bitter enemies underpins the contract. Aristeides however, reminds Themistokles to remember to be enemies in the future.<sup>58</sup> The decision to forget conflict against a political foe suggests the Athenian state was familiar with conditional and constructed forgetting. The move to regulate memory in the face of a common enemy, hinges on the management of internal conflict.

### Amnesty in the city

A study of memory in post-403 Athens is on one level anachronistic as it post-dates the death of Sophokles. However, the social and political background of the amnesty of 403 reinforces the evidence from other sources that memory regulation was a familiar tool.<sup>59</sup> The fallout from the rule of *The Thirty* leads to amnesty in Athens.<sup>60</sup> Aristotle reports on its scope:

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<sup>56</sup> Figueira, T. (1981).

<sup>57</sup> Hdt. 8.79.2f: “Because of the great scale of the existing despair, he purposely forgot everything and called him out, wishing to converse with him”.

<sup>58</sup> Hdt. 8.79.1. Part of a larger recall. See Burstein, S. (1971). Hignett, C. (1963).

<sup>59</sup> Xen. *Hellenika*. 2.4.20: “Κλιόκριτος ἀνδρες πολῖται, τί ἡμᾶς ἐξελαύνετε; τί ἀποκτεῖναι βούλεσθε;”. “Fellow citizens, why do you drive us out of the city? Why do you desire to kill us?” Lysias. 18.18f, provides motivation to forget. Also Edmunds, L. (1996). Nemeth, G. (1983). Loraux, N. (2002A).

<sup>60</sup> Wolpert, A. (2002A), p.75f. Highlights other cases of amnesty in 424, 422, 411 and 405. Dorjahn, A. (1946) suggests the 403/1 amnesties in Athens, was the fifth one: “Instituted in 403... and then reaffirmed in 401...” p.5. Also, Shear, J. (2011).

τῶν δὲ παρεληλυθότων μηδενὶ πρὸς μηδένα μνησικακεῖν  
ἐξεῖναι, πλὴν πρὸς τοὺς τριάκοντα καὶ τοὺς δέκα καὶ τοὺς  
ἑνδεκα καὶ τοὺς τοῦ Πειραιέως ἄρξαντας, μηδὲ πρὸς  
τούτους, ἐὰν διδῶσιν εὐθύνας.<sup>61</sup>

Although the vocabulary points to a system of forgetting, τῶν δὲ παρεληλυθότων μηδενὶ πρὸς μηδένα μνησικακεῖν ἐξεῖναι, there are subjective conditions attached to the procedure. The list indicates who is included; we find compartmentalisation for the good of the city.<sup>62</sup> However, an all-encompassing reprieve this was not. There were some who were ineligible, their previous acts deemed too serious to forget.<sup>63</sup> Andokides examines the amnesty:

ἐπειδὴ δ' ἐπανήλθετε ἐκ Πειραιῶς, γενόμενον ἐφ' ὑμῖν  
τιμωρεῖσθαι ἔγνωτε ἔαν τὰ γεγενημένα, καὶ περὶ πλείονος  
ἐποιήσασθε σῶζειν τὴν πόλιν ἢ τὰς ἰδίας τιμωρίας, καὶ  
ἔδοξε μὴ μνησικακεῖν ἀλλήλοις τῶν γεγενημένων.<sup>64</sup>

The repeated allusion to revenge demonstrates retribution through resentment, until managed appropriately, καὶ ἔδοξε μὴ μνησικακεῖν ἀλλήλοις τῶν γεγενημένων. Andokides, himself a beneficiary of the amnesty, uses vocabulary that demonstrates his familiarity with adopting forgiveness.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Aristotle. *Constitution of the Athenians*. 39.6: "And that there will be a universal amnesty for past events, covering everybody except the Thirty, the Ten, the Eleven, and those that have been governors of Piraeus, and that these also be covered by the amnesty if they render account". Translation; Rackman, H. (1996).

<sup>62</sup> Loaning, T. (1987).

<sup>63</sup> See Lysias, 18.

<sup>64</sup> Andokides. *On the mysteries*. 1.81f: "After your return from Piraeus you resolved to let the past be the past, in spite of the opportunity for revenge. You considered the safety of the city of more importance than the settlement of private scores; so both sides, you decided, were to forget the past". Translation; Maidment, K. (1968).

<sup>65</sup> The Patrokleides decree suggests (μὴ) μνησικακεῖν. Andokides. *On the mysteries*. 1.76-1.90. Maidment, K. (1968), comments: "The decree reinstates (A) public debtors whose names were still on the official registers in June-July 405, (B) political offenders who had suffered ἀτιμία in 410 after the downfall of the Four Hundred and the restoration of the full democracy. These include members of the Four Hundred and their supporters. An exception is made, however, of those oligarchs who fled to Decelea (e.g. Peisander and Charicles), and of persons in exile for homicide, massacre, or attempted tyranny...". The use of ἀτιμία is an important prelude to tragedy. Wolpert, A. (2002A), p.84. Suggests that: "μὴ

The idea of exoneration continues as Xenophon describes the amnesty of 403/1 as the men of Eleusis agree to be reconciled with the Athenians: “καὶ ὁμόσαντες ὅρκους ἧ μὴν μὴ μνησικακήσιν, ἔτι καὶ νῦν ὁμοῦ τε πολιτεύονται καὶ τοῖς ὅρκοις ἐμμένει ὁ δῆμος”.<sup>66</sup> They officially bind themselves together through the strength of the pledge to forget as a collective, καὶ ὁμόσαντες ὅρκους ἧ μὴν μὴ μνησικακήσιν, and to manage the past. The example demonstrates an example of artificial group implemented forgetting.<sup>67</sup> The pattern of two opposing groups agreeing to forget (however temporarily); can be expanded to include inter-state alliances.

The treaty between the Bottiaeans and Athens of 422 bridges enmity and contains an oath not to recall the past. The cessation of hostilities using regulated memory and the vocabulary found on this στήλη hints to a frequency of the practice.<sup>68</sup> The guarantee of Athens regulates memory:

ἀμυνό[τοῖς] Βοττι[αίοις τοῖς] χσυντιθεμέ[νοις] [τὲν  
 χσυμμαχίαν, κ]αὶ τὲν  
 χσ[υμμαχία]-  
 ν πιστός καὶ [ἀδ]όλο[ς φυλάχσο Βοττι]αίοις προ[θυμόμε]-  
 [ν]ος κατὰ τὰ χ[συ]νκε[ίμενα· καὶ οὐ μνε]σικακέσο τῶν  
 παρ]-  
 οιχομένον ἔ[νε]κα<sup>69</sup>

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μνησικακήσιν was... a kind of erasure of the past from civic memory”. Loraux, N. (2002A), p.29, looks at the themes of amnesia and amnesty. See also Dorjahn, A. (1946), p1. Also: “Reunite warring factions”. Wolpert, A. (2002A), p.77.

<sup>66</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 2.4.43: “And, pledged as they were under oath, that in very truth, they would not remember past grievances, the two parties even to this day live together as fellow-citizens and the commons abide by their oaths”. Translation by Bronson, C. (1997). Also, Andokides. *On the mysteries*. 1.90. Carawan, E. (2002), p.6.

<sup>67</sup> See Loraux, N. (2002A): “Political authority can establish itself as the censor of memory, alone authorised to decide what is and what must not be, and the use to be made of”. p.169. Finley, M. (1962). Sommerstein, A., and Fletcher, J. (2007). Wolpert, A. (2002A).

<sup>68</sup> Carawan, E. (2002), p.5.

<sup>69</sup> *IG.I<sup>3</sup>*.76. Line 12f: “They would defend the Bottiaeans in an alliance without guile and zealously according to the agreed terms and would bear no malice on account of the past”. Translation (modified) by Sommerstein, A., & Bayliss, A. (eds) (2012). Also Tod, M. (1933): “The extant portion of the decree deals with (a) assessments

The Athenians suppress and control memory through the reliance on *μη μνησικακεῖν*. Manipulation of the past ensures present political accord through the management of conflict. Sommerstein suggests that: “The good will of the Athenians depended upon the Bottiaean keeping their oath. The Athenians were clearly attempting to use oaths to ensure their allies toed the line”.<sup>70</sup> In each case, (*μη*) *μνησικακεῖν* is synonymous with restrictions and agreements on memory. Carawan assess its role: “In treaties and negotiated settlements the oath *μη μνησικακήσειν* functions as a seal or closing device, a reciprocal pledge that the inevitable disputes are resolved in the manner prescribed by the covenants of that government”.<sup>71</sup> The formalisation lends authority to the arrangement and brings it into the public sphere.

Repeated uses of *μη μνησικακεῖν* run prominently through Greek political life.<sup>72</sup> In 425 Megara employed a structure of forgetting for the good of the *πόλις* to overlook enmities with the Athenians, and their own internal conflict.<sup>73</sup> Thucydides focuses on a similar conclusion on Samos in 411 in the aftermath of an oligarchic coup d'état.<sup>74</sup> He examines similar concepts in the context of the uprising: “καὶ τριάκοντα μὲν τινὰς ἀπέκτειναν τῶν τριακοσίων, τρεῖς δὲ τοὺς αἰτιωτάτους φυγῇ ἐζημίωσαν: τοῖς δ' ἄλλοις οὐ μνησικακοῦντες δημοκρατούμενοι τὸ λοιπὸν ξυνεπολίτευον”.<sup>75</sup> Both cities take steps

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(presumably of tribute) and law suits (1-8), (b) the oaths to be exchanged by the contracting states (8-21), (c) the publication of the treaty (21-30”).

<sup>70</sup> Sommerstein, A., & Bayliss, A. (eds), (2012). p.209.

<sup>71</sup> Carawan, E. (2001), p.21. Also Gagarin, M. (2008).

<sup>72</sup> I take (*μη*) *μνησικακεῖν* as ‘(not) to recall misfortunes’, rather than to forget. Markantonatos, A. (2007), argues that “It is important to realize that *μη μνησικακεῖν* applies to all disasters. It is by not by any means restricted to civil war”. p.170.

<sup>73</sup> Thou. 4.74.2. Legon, R. (1968). Thucydides describes the civil unrest in Kerkira as being the first example of *στάσις* of the Arkhidamian War. Thou, 3.82.1. Botteri, P. (1989), “In the Greek world, or better, in Attica, the term *stasis* has covered both the concept of conflict between brothers, discord in the family and political sedition among people”. p.88.

<sup>74</sup> Nielson, T. and Hansen, M. (2004), p.128.

<sup>75</sup> Thou. 8.73.6: “And they put to death of the three hundred some thirty, who were chiefly responsible for the plot, and three they punished with banishment; as for the rest they declared an amnesty, and enjoying a democratic government lived together henceforth as fellow citizens”. Translation by Smith, C. (1980).



to manipulate memory in order to defend themselves from the repercussions of στάσις.<sup>76</sup> There are two distinct actions here. The initial idea of not remembering (οὐ μνησικακοῦντες) is a controlled exercise that conflicts with forgetting. We find censorship and restoration. The main body of people have a chance of reintegration into society. Those who cannot be integrated are removed from the city, τρεῖς δὲ τοὺς αἰτιωτάτους φυγῇ ἐξημίωσαν. After a period of internal factionalism, an imposed regulation of memory manages division. These examples demonstrate earlier awareness and experiences of internal conflict and the attempts, political or otherwise, to overcome through a process of managed forgetting.

#### Forgetting in the theatre and city

Further instances support the hypothesis that memory-based procedures were used in the latter stages of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. For an example of forgetting in a more personal context, we can turn to the city's reaction to the drama of Phrynikhos. In this case, the city regulated memory, which meant evasion and punishment in the form of censorship, rather than a means of reconciliation. The reception of *The Capture of Miletos* in 494 provides evidence of an early tragedy engaging with near-contemporary political history in the context of regulating memory.<sup>77</sup> A collective reluctance over recollection manifests as an attempt to compartmentalise by raising a specific ban. The tragedy provoked a reaction through group response. Herodotos reports their attempt to manage a painful memory:

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<sup>76</sup> Στάσις essentially radiates from the human condition and cannot be divorced from the πόλις, it is organic, a product of human nature. Edmunds, L. (1975). Bruce, A. (1971). Internal political conflict: "Στάσις: 1) Esp. Party formed. *Greek-English Lexicon*. Main works on στάσις: Berent, M. (1998), (2000 for seditious purposes. 2) Faction, sedition, discord 3) Division, dissent". Liddell-Scott). Bloedow, E. (1992). Botteri, P. (1989). Carawan, E. (2002). Fuks, A. (1971). Krentz, P. (1982). Lintott, A. (1992). Loening, T. (1987). Nielson, T., and Hansen, M. (2004). Price, J. (2001). Sakellariou, M. (1990). Shrimpton, G. (1997). Simondon, M. (1982). Strauss, B. (1986). Wolpert, A. (2002A).

<sup>77</sup> Loraux, N. (2001), calls this example: "the very day when the city of Athens began to restrict the expression of mourning in tragedy". p.43.

Ἀθηναῖοι μὲν γὰρ δῆλον ἐποίησαν ὑπεραχθεσθέντες τῇ  
Μιλήτου ἀλώσει τῇ τε ἄλλῃ πολλαχῇ, καὶ δὴ καὶ ποιήσαντι  
Φρυνίχῳ δρᾶμα Μιλήτου ἄλωσιν καὶ διδάξαντι ἐς δάκρυά  
τε ἔπεσε τὸ θέητρον, καὶ ἐζημίωσάν μιν ὡς ἀναμνήσαντα  
οἰκία κακὰ χιλίησι δραχμῇσι, καὶ ἐπέταξαν μηδὲνα  
χρᾶσθαι τούτῳ τῷ δράματι.<sup>78</sup>

Herodotos focuses on recalling a distressing past, particularly with ἀναμνήσαντα οἰκία κακὰ.<sup>79</sup> We find an effort to suppress.<sup>80</sup> Rosenbloom suggests that it is with οἰκία κακὰ that we find the trigger for Athens's reaction.<sup>81</sup> Related ethnicity pulls memory into sharp focus. The reaction to the play is framed by state-controlled memory regulation, a collective and civic desire to forget, and the way individuals dealt with those who attempted to remind.<sup>82</sup> The Athenians (successfully) compartmentalise memory and a raise a ban on remembrance. The consequences of using/abusing these powers are significant when examining the topic of burial management. Athens could control the permanent records of forgetting, this becomes more evident as we approach the function of memorial.

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<sup>78</sup> Hdt. 6.21.2: "The Athenians made their deep sorrow obvious for the loss of Miletos in a variety of ways, but in particular this; when Phrynikhos wrote, and produced a play called '*The Fall of Miletos*', the entire theatre fell to lamenting; they fined Phrynikhos a thousand drachmas for recalling a misfortune that affected them so personally and banned forever that play's performance".

<sup>79</sup> The suggestion remains that this attack was motivated by political reasons. For Themistokles' archonship and political affiliations, see Plutarch. Rehm, R. (1992). Sommerstein, A. (1996).

<sup>80</sup> Roisman, J. (1988).

<sup>81</sup> Rosenbloom, D. (1993).

<sup>82</sup> Cartledge, P. (1997).

### 1.3 Remembering through memorial

In the πόλις, the shift from forgetting to remembering is announced through physical symbols that mark the failure to forget in a very public way.<sup>83</sup> The range of memory apparatus that the group uses to control forgetting includes the use of στήλαι. They are, both figuratively and physically, concrete accords, and function as the foundation of official authority and sanction. A physical marker is a tool to formalise memory. Thomas makes a case for the symbolic power inherent in the στήλαι as they stand for an agreement, a visible monument and a written record.<sup>84</sup> The use of στήλαι to officiate memory also underlines the idea of artificial forgetting. We find a paradox; as they preserve memory in a formal, civic context, they permanently record forgetting.<sup>85</sup>

#### Burial and the city

The way the city regulated burial and future remembrance supports the crossover between themes of memory and forgetting in tragedy. Before examining this topic in literature, this section uses the contrast between remembering and forgetting in the context of regulating entombment to frame the discussion of good and bad recollection of the dead. Although Greek burial is not just Athenian, for reasons of succinctness, an Athens-focused study of family control and private monuments is appropriate.

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<sup>83</sup> Thomas, R. (1989), suggests: "If *stelai* (or other documents) are symbolic memorials or actually are the enactment, then their obliteration destroys the enactment that the writing records". p.52, n123.

<sup>84</sup> Thomas, R. (1989): "Not only do *stelai* provide an authoritative text; they symbolize the friendship so strongly that they actually are the friendship... It is the material symbol which is being referred to, not so much the document or the writing itself". p.50. Phillips, D. (2008).

<sup>85</sup> Esposito, E. (2008), considers an episode in Cicero, concerning Simonides: "Already Themistocles replied to those who offered him the wonders of mnemotechnics that he was instead interested in lethotechnics, an art that would allow him to learn and practice forgetting". p.181. Cicero, *de Oratore*. 2.74.299.

The duty to bury falls to the family.<sup>86</sup> Rohde suggests: “The next of kin owe to the departed the ceremonious burial that is the first expression of their pious solicitude for his soul’s welfare”.<sup>87</sup> Kurtz and Boardman expand on this issue: “It was essential that the dead receive the customary rites of burial, but it was equally important that they receive them from the proper hands”.<sup>88</sup> The dual fundamentals of ritual interment are here in the action of committal, and equally, the family’s lamentation. Kurtz and Boardman continue with the theme of ritual remembrance and include a claim of recollection:

For the people of Attica burial in their native land was greatly prized, and perhaps for this reason denial of burial in Attica was considered one of the greatest penalties that the state could impose. [Indicated by] the Athenians’ concern to bring home their war dead.<sup>89</sup>

The *Antigone* sets this against a backdrop of conflicted duty, family loyalty, and future memory. Perikles promotes a link to the fatherland as central to Athenian identity.<sup>90</sup> He emphasises the cycle of life, linking the future οἶκος to the unborn children of the city and the past of the πόλις to the dead through honour and burial.<sup>91</sup> The city controls memory in order to preserve reputation and recall through visual aids:

τιθέασιν οὖν ἐς τὸ δημόσιον σῆμα, ὃ ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τοῦ  
καλλίστου προαστείου τῆς πόλεως, καὶ αἰεὶ ἐν αὐτῷ  
θάπτουσι τοὺς ἐκ τῶν πολέμων, πλήν γε τοὺς ἐν

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<sup>86</sup> Family sacrifice together: Isaeus 8.15. For an analysis of the terms associated with family, burial, sacrifice, and ritual, Ekroth, G. (2002).

<sup>87</sup> Rohde, E. (1925), p.430.

<sup>88</sup> Kurtz, D., and Boardman, J. (1971), p.142. Holt, P. (1999). Challenges Tyrrell and Bennett who: “Draw heavily for their history on Athenian funerary discourse (I think misapplied) [and] women’s supposed resentment against state control of funerals (undocumented)”. p.659, n.4. Also, Roselli, D. (2006).

<sup>89</sup> Kurtz, D., and Boardman, J. (1971), p.143. Steinboch, B. (2013). Patterson, C. (2006),

<sup>90</sup> Low, P. (2010).

<sup>91</sup> Steinboch, B. (2013), p.49f. I return to the ἐπιτάφιος λόγος in both the *Elektra* and *Oidipous at Kolonos* chapters.

Μαραθῶνι: ἐκείνων δὲ διαπρεπῇ τὴν ἀρετὴν κρίναντες  
αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸν τάφον ἐποίησαν.<sup>92</sup>

Those who died have a public burial in the view of the city; this perpetuates their memory and on-going commemoration. By highlighting this connection in society and burial, enhanced memorial and burial practices are utilised as glorification by the city.<sup>93</sup> We see this expressed with καὶ αἰεὶ ἐν αὐτῷ θάπτουσι τοὺς ἐκ τῶν πολέμων, πλὴν γε τοὺς ἐν Μαραθῶνι. The case of the Marathon dead links the importance of burial with honour and reverence, as they are due special attention. Once more, memorial provides a connection between individual honour, post-mortem public/civic memory, and political control.<sup>94</sup> The dead attain burial in Attic soil; this maintains the identity of both the city and family.<sup>95</sup> The example also shows a reward culture attached to honourable death. Epigraphic narrative promotes their glory, as the deceased are praised publically. The future is secure for the dead, and this combines the honour of the city with the (military) tribute of the individual and group.<sup>96</sup> However, this type of recalling was not exclusive to Athens.

The epigraphic marker honouring those who fell at the battle of Thermopylae remembers through a combination of permanent memorial and stimulating continued dialogue. Memory, in the form of not forgetting, takes shape in the function of inscribed commemoration. It links public remembrance with the perpetuation of

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<sup>92</sup> Thou. 2.34.5: "The coffins are laid in the public sepulchre which is situated in the most beautiful suburb of the city; there they always bury those fallen in war, except indeed those who fell at Marathon; for their valour the Athenians judged to be preeminent and they buried them on the spot where they fell". Translation by Smith, C. (1980). Also see Paus. 1.29.4. Higbie, C. (1997).

<sup>93</sup> Patterson, C. (2006), examines the town planning and burial outside the city, and the public roads approaching Athens (Kerameikos), and the regulations and responsibilities of surrounding family members and ritual burial in Athens. Also, see city's attitude to those who deserve burial in 414. Aristophanes. *Birds* 394f. Klytaimnesta twists this in the *Elektra*.

<sup>94</sup> Whitley, J. (1994).

<sup>95</sup> See Thomas, R. (1989). For oral tradition and funeral games.

<sup>96</sup> The Μαραθωνομάχοι are an extreme example of folk memory, an exception to the δημόσιον σῆμα, retention of memory in word and action borders on hero-cult.

κλέος. The epitaph of Simonides both records and extends honourable recollection: “ὦ ξεῖν’, ἀγγέλλειν Λακεδαιμονίοις ὅτι τῇδε κείμεθα τοῖς κείνων ῥήμασι πειθόμενοι”.<sup>97</sup> Memory is sustained by re-enacting its communication to those who may not have seen the marker. The honour of those not buried in the city is orally perpetuated. Assman proposes that: “Living memory thus gives way to a cultural memory that is underpinned by media – by material carriers such as memorials, [and] monuments”.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, remembrance of the Spartan generals Pausanias and Leonidas is repeated every year: “καὶ λόγους κατὰ ἔτος ἕκαστον ἔπ’ αὐτοῖς λέγουσι καὶ τιθέασιν ἀγῶνα, ἐν ᾧ πλὴν Σπαρτιατῶν ἄλλω γε οὐκ ἔστιν ἀγωνίζεσθαι—... κεῖται δὲ καὶ στήλη πατρόθεν τὰ ὀνόματα ἔχουσα οἱ πρὸς Μήδους τὸν ἐν Θερμοπύλαις ἀγῶνα ὑπέμειναν”.<sup>99</sup> An exclusive public honour is given to a certain group, ἐν ᾧ πλὴν Σπαρτιατῶν ἄλλω γε οὐκ ἔστιν ἀγωνίζεσθαι—... With the emphasis on physical signs of remembrance, the Spartans provide an example of ever-lasting memorial, reengaging with the past through topography.<sup>100</sup> As in Athens, recollection perpetuates honour. Assman suggests that: “Relic-monuments have the task of linking the events of a wonderful past to the real present”.<sup>101</sup> The action of memorial secures future remembering through past arrangement, as individuals and groups seek to create memorials and sustain memories of themselves and others.<sup>102</sup> The attempt at securing this type of forward commemoration (κλέος ἄφθιτον) is relevant to both the *Elektra* and the *Antigone*. The respective protagonist acquires, or

<sup>97</sup> Hdt. 7.228.2: “Stranger, tell those in Lakedaimonia that here we lie according to our orders”. Bremmer, J. (2006).

<sup>98</sup> Assman, A. (2011), p.6.

<sup>99</sup> Pausanias. 3.14f: “Every year they deliver speeches over them, and hold a contest in which none may compete except Spartans... There is set up a slab with the names, and their fathers' names, of those who endured the fight at Thermopylae against the Persians”.

<sup>100</sup> Permanent memorial to Tyrannoktonoi. Thou. 6.54.1f.

<sup>101</sup> Assman, A. (2011), p.46.

<sup>102</sup> The opposite is recorded in Hdt. 8.29.2. The Thessalians offer an accord to the men of Phokis. Their proposal of μνησικακέω was rejected and the punishment was destruction. Alcock, S. (2002). Steinboch, B. (2013), p. 70f.

is assured of, on-going glory and honour after death by the chorus. The idea continues in the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, as Oidipous becomes the future protection of city through the memory of the city and Theseus.

We find a counterpoint to the action of remembering in monumentalisation, as the Athenians were content to use the denial of burial as punishment. Xenophon states the law that guides this: “ἐάν τις ἢ τὴν πόλιν προδιδῶ ἢ τὰ ἱερὰ κλέπτῃ, κριθέντα ἐν δικαστηρίῳ, ἂν καταγνωσθῇ, μὴ ταφῆναι ἐν τῇ Ἀττικῇ, τὰ δὲ χρήματα αὐτοῦ δημόσια εἶναι”.<sup>103</sup> The regulations apply to those who steal from temples and traitors. A justified civic action of non-restorative justice exists alongside a regulation of committal, μὴ ταφῆναι ἐν τῇ Ἀττικῇ. The dishonourable dead are punished posthumously through civic resentment. In the aftermath of 411, the treatment of the oligarch Phrynikhos is a direct reaction to his role as conspirator.<sup>104</sup> The action of being expelled from Attica continues in death, this is highlighted with τοὺς τε ζῶντας ἐλαύνοντες καὶ τῶν τεθνεώτων τὰ ὀστέα ἀνελόντες ἐξέβαλον; even one’s remains may be punished. Rohde highlights the severity of the sentence:

Condemned criminals, indeed, are thrown by the state, unburied, into a pit; the sacrilegious and traitors to their country are denied burial in the ground of that country. This is a formidable punishment, for even though the outlaw is buried in a foreign country, his soul cannot be permanently tended there. Only the family of the dead in their own home can give their departed kinsman the

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<sup>103</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.22: “If anyone shall be a traitor to the state or shall steal sacred property, he shall be tried before a court, and if he is convicted, he shall not be buried in Attika, and his property shall be confiscated”. Translation by Brownson, C. (1997).

<sup>104</sup> Lykourgos, *Against Leokrates*. 113. See Edwards, M. (1998). Jacoby, F. (1923), Krateros 342. F17. For recording oblivion: Plutarch, *Lives*. Antiphon. For context of Antiphon see Lysias, *Against Eratosthenes*. Thou. 8.68.1. cf, Fornara, C. (1977).

honour due to him in the cult of the souls, and only they at the spot where his remains lie buried.<sup>105</sup>

The censure takes the form of a *Damnatio Memoriae*.<sup>106</sup> Those condemned, after judgement, face further penalty. One may assume that the denial of correct funerary practice, the lack of forgiveness, traditional lamentation, and entombment for the impious and those deemed a traitor is one of the most severe sentences.<sup>107</sup>

The examples demonstrate that attacks on the status and reputation of the individual through the destruction or censoring of memories are anchored in semi-permanent records. The actual and metaphorical wiping of a memory, ἐξαλείφω, “plaster or wash over, wipe out, obliterate”, constitutes a repression of memory.<sup>108</sup> Thomas describes the στήλαι as: “Visible memorials as well as precise written documents”, the destruction of which is an attempt to regulate recollection.<sup>109</sup> The threat remains that natural erosion will compromise the physical symbol; this type of media is temporary. The actual removal of these symbols can be political, and both corrupt and impious, depending on context.<sup>110</sup> For example, having set boundaries of inclusion (and exclusion) for the amnesty of 403, Andokides expands on the decree of Patrokleides.<sup>111</sup> The main issue concerns the policy of cancelling names and ‘wiping the slate clean’ for the good of the Athenians. The record is eradicated. *Damnatio*

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<sup>105</sup> Rohde, E. (1925). p.163. The *Oidipous at Kolonos* uses this to confuse hero-cult.

<sup>106</sup> Polyneikes falls victim to this.

<sup>107</sup> They obliterate the house. Diod. 12.78.5. Hdt. 6.72. Isok.16.26. Lyk 112. Thou. 5.63.2. Connor, W. (1985).

<sup>108</sup> Liddell-Scott. *Greek-English Lexicon*. Carawan, E. (2002), p.8: “We are to understand ‘erasure’ ἐξαλείφω, metaphorically: they swore to forgive past offences and thus erased them from memory. But whenever *Athenian Politeia* speaks of ‘erasure’, he means literally to delete the actual records”.

<sup>109</sup> Thomas, R. (1989), p.51. Loraux, N. (2002A).

<sup>110</sup> Rhodes, P. (2006), examines the laws of παραγραφή: “Under which a defendant could plead for a prosecution in breach of the amnesty to be disallowed”, allow for a certain amount of legal protection in this respect, p.260. For legal protection see Carawan, E. (2002), and Flower, H. (2006).

<sup>111</sup> He recalls examples of deletion with references to erasure. *On the Mysteries*. 1.79. And describes the power of punishment coming from the Areiopagos.



*Memoriae* in these cases involved the specific creation of a visible empty space. The case of Athens' treatment of individual traitors highlights the action of remembering to forget. The Athenian world remembered, and to a degree commemorated, imposed forgetting. For instance, Lykourgos discusses the treatment Hipparkhos received after his non-attendance at his own trial for treason. The city passes the sentence of death and moves to regulate with no prospect of reprieve:

ἐπειδὴ τῆς ἀδικίας οὐκ ἔλαβον τὸ σῶμα ὄμηρον, τὴν εἰκόνα αὐτοῦ ἐξ ἀκροπόλεως καθελόντες καὶ συγχωνεύσαντες καὶ ποιήσαντες στήλην, ἐψηφίσαντο εἰς ταύτην ἀναγράφειν τοὺς ἀλιτηρίους καὶ τοὺς προδότας· καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Ἱππαρχος ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ στήλῃ ἀναγέγραπται.<sup>112</sup>

The removal of his image both records him as a traitor and by including him in a list makes notorious. Charged *in absentia*, the πόλις broadcast the memory of Hipparkhos in a negative way, this permanent marker is public humiliation by also depriving him of a monument. Memory regulation is a substitute for the physical presence of the guilty man; καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Ἱππαρχος ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ στήλῃ ἀναγέγραπται, this marks the limitations of punishment. The vocabulary surrounding the organisation of a decree indicates that this was a political and public act of managed memory, preserved in a formal, civic context.

The punishment through the control of memory continues as the city takes revenge. In Thukydides, the followers of Kylon take refuge, and were then cut down, after attempting a coup. An offence to Athena, the city punished those guilty of defiling the god's altar, rather than the treacherous party:

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<sup>112</sup> Lykourgos, *Against Leokrates*. 117: "Then, as they did not secure his person to answer for the crime, they took down his statue from the Akropolis and, melting it down, made a pillar of it, on which they decreed that the names of sinners and traitors should be inscribed. Hipparkhos himself has his name recorded on this pillar and all other traitors too". Translation by Burt, J. (1962).

ἤλασαν μὲν οὖν καὶ οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι τοὺς ἐναγεῖς τούτους,  
ἤλασε δὲ καὶ Κλεομένης ὁ Λακεδαιμόνιος ὕστερον μετὰ  
Ἀθηναίων στασιαζόντων, τοὺς τε ζῶντας ἐλαύνοντες καὶ  
τῶν τεθνεώτων τὰ ὅστ᾽ ἀνελόντες ἐξέβαλον.<sup>113</sup>

Sentenced to exile in life and death, the removal of bones from the soil of Attica is a continuation of the sentence imposed on the dead.<sup>114</sup> The incentive for this action was ostensibly in defence of the god's honour.<sup>115</sup> The management of memory counteracts the threat of pollution or factionalism. Conflict emerges in the struggle to control burial and memory before and after death.<sup>116</sup> Managed resentment, temporary forgetting, the danger of (μὴ) μνησικακεῖν, the careful avoidance of στάσις in the πόλις, and the withholding of restoration, all combine to provide a foundation from which to approach tragedy.

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<sup>113</sup> Thou. 1.126.12: "Accordingly the cursed persons were driven out not only by the Athenians, but also at a later time by Kleomenes the Lakedaimonian, with the help of a faction of the Athenians during a civil strife, when they drove out the living and disinterred and cast out the bones of the dead". Translation by Smith, C. (1980).

<sup>114</sup> MacDowell, D. (1978), p.176f. The example has parallels in tragedy; of non-burial is central to the *Antigone*. Also, Lysias, *Against Eratosthenes*, deals with the prohibition of burial in the context of post-thirty Athens, 12.18, 12.87, 12.96

<sup>115</sup> Thou. 1.127.1. Political motivation of the Lakedaimonians.

<sup>116</sup> Thou. 1.138.6. Focus is on the illegality of burial for a traitor in Attica. Negative commemoration links to eradicating physical existence. See Hdt. 1.67. for bones of Orestes. Also Jacoby, F. (1923). *Idomeneus*. *FGrHist* 338. F1. Pausanias 1.29.15, locates Harmodios and Aristogeiton in close proximity to Ephialtes, a position of honour. Also, the transference of Leonidas' bones strengthens the link between physical symbols and commemoration.

#### 1.4 Tragedy and the πόλις

The concept of memory-based punishment and positive recollection in the political world of Athens can be transferred and applied to tragedy. The presence of στάσις in the tragic γένος and πόλις, gives licence to study tragedy through close textual analysis to determine the role that memory and forgetting play in drama. A connection in the vocabulary and practices associated with memory control links politics with Aiskhylean, and in turn Sophoklean, drama.<sup>117</sup>

Before commencing an examination of tragedy, I begin with an overview of the appropriate scholarship on the relationship between the text, politics and the author. The New Humanism method of literary criticism looked to examine literature through traditionalist moral and philosophical teachings.<sup>118</sup> The technique declined in popularity with the advent of New Criticism, which promoted a more close-reading approach to interpreting the text.<sup>119</sup> The method sought to address the text in and of itself, and move away from social aspects, separating it from the writer.<sup>120</sup> The dramatist bridges gaps between text and reader through the manipulation of recognisable themes in vocabulary and language to which the audience would respond. The latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a reaction to the dehistoricising tendency of New Criticism, prompting a renaissance in a more historically based approach, often referred to as New Historicism.<sup>121</sup> With its concentration on the historical context of literature, this type of examination has proved influential in classical scholarship as in other areas of literary studies. The inclusion of the surrounding cultural and social environment is a particularly

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<sup>117</sup> Post, L. (1950). For a performance-based perspective see Hall, E. (1995).

<sup>118</sup> Sarton, G. (1931) coined the phrase in *The History of Science and the New Humanism*. The idea had been developing since More, P., and Babbitt, I. (1908) and Foerster, N. (1930).

<sup>119</sup> New Criticism developed in the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>120</sup> Authoritative voices of New Criticism include; Eliot, T.S. (1928). Also, Iser, W. (1974), (1978). p.15. Jancovich, M. (1993). Ransom, J. (1941). Wellek, R. (1978).

<sup>121</sup> Harrison, S. (ed) (2001). Veese, H. (1989).

important consideration for my research. My approach is mindful that there is no text without background, and is sympathetic to the idea of the impact of the original environment of production. Despite the upsurge in interest in the 'location' of tragedy, in a political, social, or temporal context, there are aspects of the political dimension of tragedy that are still underexplored. The question of defining the contemporary political climate of the time is not a core issue for this thesis. However, an approach that considers the civic environment can provide a guide to drama's place in Athens. The text operates with the political through its link with πόλις and society. I suggest that the issue is not if the political environment affected tragedy, but to what degree.<sup>122</sup>

### Athens and tragedy

The relationship between the contemporary Athenian political experience and tragedy has been the subject of considerable debate, from which a consensus has yet to emerge.<sup>123</sup> Although one must be mindful of not over-emphasising drama's links with politics, the prevailing atmosphere in which these dramas were composed and performed must be taken into account.<sup>124</sup> Additionally, one should not

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<sup>122</sup> Historicizing readings of drama have gained momentum. For Aiskhylos and history see: Cameron, H. (1971). Goldhill, S. (1986). Griffith, M. (1995). Favoring, A. (2003). Lesky, A. (1966). Lloyd-Jones, H. (1959). Pelling, C. (1997). Podlecki, A. (1966). Post, L. (1950). Samons, L. (1999). For instance, Favorini, A. (2003), suggests that: "The pairing of memory and history invites us to consider *The Persians* both as a theatrical example of the politics of commemoration... and as a case study in the origins of historiography", p.102. Tragedy itself is a monument. See Pelling, C. (1997). Rehm, R. (1992). Hall, E. (1989).

<sup>123</sup> Calame, C. (2005). Carter, D. (2005). Easterling, P. (1997). Finley, M. (1962). Foley, H. (2001). Goldhill, S. (1990A), (1990B). Gould, J. (1996). Grethlein, J. (2008). Griffin, J. (1990). Pelling, C. (2000). Rhodes, P. (2003). Seaford, R. (1994). Seidensticker, B. (1995). Vernant, J-P., and Vidal-Naquet, P. (1988).

<sup>124</sup> Rhodes, P. (2003). Rhodes concedes: "There are no doubt things which are said in the *Antigone* which would not have been said in exactly the same way if Sophokles had not been writing in and for democratic Athens". p.123. Also Jameson, M. (1971). Griffin, J. (1999), challenges a 'Athenian democratic ideology' reading and argues against an over-politicised reading of the *Antigone*. p.92.

ignore altogether the question of democracy when placing tragedy in a 5<sup>th</sup> century context, nor role of civic festivals.<sup>125</sup>

Athenian tragedy, in the form in which we meet it, is a product of open discourse. It requires a favourable culture for the poets to be able to express themselves in a society that is tolerant of disagreement. Vernant comments on the circumstances that allowed tragedy to challenge Athenian politics, and suggests a democratic centre of drama: "Tragedy was one of the forms through which the new democratic city established its identity".<sup>126</sup> The statement is partly true; tragedy was present both before and after democracy, rather than simply being one of its products.<sup>127</sup> Podlecki is rightly cautious in his approach when assimilating history and tragedy, as he inclines towards a pro-democratic reading as opposed to a 'generic' civic one.<sup>128</sup> The method is symptomatic of a group of scholars who take a democratic approach. For example, Goldhill draws links between pre-festival ritual and performance, taking an encompassing view of tragedy, and emphasises the links between πόλις and citizen through the city Dionysia, contextualising Aiskhylos in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>129</sup>

It is within Aiskhylos that we find the most explicit evidence of tragedy's potential link to contemporary political events in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Griffith suggests: "It is Aiskhylos who seems to address himself the most directly... to the issues of democracy, to the rule of

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<sup>125</sup> Macleod, C. (1983), links between Aiskhylos and contemporary politics. Sommerstein, A. (1996), challenges the conclusions. Finley, M. (1962).

<sup>126</sup> Vernant, J-P., and Vidal-Naquet, P. (1988), p.257. Vernant suggests the new democratic city established its identity through tragedy. Macleod, C. (1983). Emphasises Δίκη and τιμή to interpret the city. Most, G. (2000). Finley, M. (1962).

<sup>127</sup> Seaford, R. (2000), considers the political spectrum, suggesting that social practices, i.e. tyranny, influence tragedy. Osborne, R. (2010).

<sup>128</sup> Podlecki, A. (1966).

<sup>129</sup> Goldhill, S. (2000). For criticism see Scullion, S. (2002A). For democracy and tragedy see: Burian, P (2011). Cartledge, P. (1997). Carter, D. (2005). Gellrich, M. (1988). Hall, E. (1997). Podlecki, A. (1966). Post, L. (1950). Quincey, J. (1964). Samons, L. (1999). Taplin, O. (1978). Wallace, R. (1995). Wilson, P. (2000). For Athenian democratic ideology see; Rhodes, P. (2003). Beer, J. (2004). Blundell, M. (1990A). Bowra, M. (1944). Budelmann, F. (1999). Bushnell, R. (1988). Jameson, M. (1971). Kirkwood, G. (1967). Knox, B. (1964), (1983). Longo, O. (1990). Markantonatos, A. (2012). Mills, S. (1997). Scodel, R. (2005). Segal, C. (1981). Wiles, D. (1997).

law and the courts, and to the enduring achievements of his city”.<sup>130</sup> For example, the contemporary allusions to the Areiopagos and the political alliance of Ephialtes and Perikles both recall a specific set of circumstances in Athens. The connection sits at the top end of engaging with contemporary politics and sets a precedent for following dramatists. Indeed, an explicit directness and engagement with the political manoeuvrings of the time in Aiskhylos, does make it more likely that the political environment of the late-5th century also affected the spectrum of other dramatists.<sup>131</sup>

The *Oresteia* is a test case for political readings between tragedy and political history as it interacts with the political intrigues of the 460s. We can establish a direct connection with civic history as Aiskhylos alludes to the accord between the Athenians and Argives in the *Eumenides*.<sup>132</sup> Orestes, as a pious suppliant, summons the divine presence of Athena to witness his offer of potential usefulness.<sup>133</sup> The unique feature of the *Eumenides* is the precision of its direct engagement with a very specific historical moment. It is a chronological marker, one that is embedded in the function of memory.<sup>134</sup> The drama plays on conflict thorough its use of the Areiopagos; this affects Athens both politically and culturally.<sup>135</sup> To assess this properly, we must consider the choice of the geographical setting of the *Eumenides*, at the very heart of civic Athens.<sup>136</sup> Ephialtes and Perikles modified the function of the

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<sup>130</sup> Griffith, M. (1995), p.63.

<sup>131</sup> Other consistencies in the political and religious spheres are found in Thou. 10.2.4. Recounts the agreement after siege of Ithome. Paus. *Guide*. 4.24.6.

<sup>132</sup> Aiskhylos. *Eum*. 287f, 667f, 762f.

<sup>133</sup> *Eum*. 287f. Tzanetou, A. (2012), sees this general point as: “[A strengthening of] Athens’ image as a hegemonic city... and affirms Athens’ reputation for helping those in need”. p.31. As we will see in the *Oidipous at Kolonos* chapter.

<sup>134</sup> Also, Projection onto Thebes and suppliant rights to sanctuary. Aiskhylos, *Hiketides*. Argos. Ostwald, M. (1987). Else, G. (1976). Flower, M. (2008).

<sup>135</sup> Quincey, J. (1964): “Tragic allusions to contemporary events are not, as a rule, taken on trust, but the *Eumenides* of Aiskhylos provides... exceptions. The view that the Athenian-Argive alliance of 462 B.c. (Thu. I. 102. 4, Paus. 4. 24. 6-7) is reflected in *Eum*. 287-91, 667-73, and 762-74 has won wide acceptance”. p.190.

<sup>136</sup> A contrast exists in Aiskhylos’s choice of Argos for his setting of both the Agamemnon and Khoephoroi. For an expansion see Macleod, C. (1983).

Areiopagos changing it from old conservatism to something approaching a consolidating democracy.<sup>137</sup> The reduction in power of the Areiopagos to that of simply a homicide court had a considerable influence on the drama of the time. When we link this with the Argive alliance, this locates the play very firmly in a contemporary context. The city is “represented by its eponymous goddess”.<sup>138</sup> Athens expands on the form of conflict in the city: “τὸ μήτ’ ἀναρχὸν μήτε δεσποτούμενον / ἀστοῖς περιστέλλουσι βουλευώ σέβειν, / καὶ μὴ τὸ δεινὸν πᾶν πόλεως ἔξω βαλεῖν”.<sup>139</sup> The goddess aligns future success with political stability. Marr suggests Aiskhylos is unambiguous in utilising these events in near-contemporary tragedy:

No Athenian in that first audience in 458 could have failed to realize that Aeschylus was at the very least calling attention to one of the bitterest political issues of recent times – Ephialtes’ reform of the Areopagus... Aeschylus indicates approval of the Athenian alliance with Argos made in 461.<sup>140</sup>

Evidence of the reform and the Argive alliance place the play in a contemporary context.<sup>141</sup> The reforms represented the clash between old and new powers.<sup>142</sup> A lasting concord between parties is set

<sup>137</sup> For Perikles/Atreidae curse comparisons: Samons, L. (1999).

<sup>138</sup> Vernant, J-P. Vidal-Naquet, P. (1988), p.259. Murnaghan, S. (2011).

<sup>139</sup> *Eum.* 696f: “I counsel my citizens to maintain, and practice reverently, a system that is neither anarchic or despotic, and to not cast fear completely out of the city; for what mortal respects justice if he fears nothing?”

<sup>140</sup> Marr, J. (1993), p.14f.

<sup>141</sup> Bloedow, E. (1992), points out that: “Other, by no means insignificant, events during the Pentacontaetia and the Peloponnesian War which also receive no notice by Thucydides are Cimon’s ostracism, the Congress Decree, the transfer of the league Treasury from Delos to Athens, the Peace of Callias, details of the Thirty Years’ Peace, the specifics of the Megarian Decree, the Peace of Epilycus, support of Amorgos and the siege of Doriscus”. p.85, n1. Aristotle. *Ath Con.* 25.2. Also, 27.1, 41.1. Plutarch. *Lives.* Pericles, Kimon. Rihll, T. (1995): “Most scholars believe that the Areiopagos was the earliest established body of Athenian government, its origins seeming to lie in a ‘tribal’ or pre-state council of elders... Wallace... Argues that originally it was only a homicide court... Our knowledge of the Areiopagos’ powers before Ephialtes’ reforms is sufficiently poor that such contrary views can co-exist”. p.88. Wallace, R. (1995).

<sup>142</sup> *Eum.* 778f. Scodel, R. (2008), suggests that the: “*Eumenides* creates a very remote past in order to provide a narrative through which recent events are to be

within a complex dialogue between the world of politics and tragedy.<sup>143</sup> Quincey remarks on this offer of peace: “The acquittal of Orestes rather than his gesture of gratitude to Athens is the natural climax of this part of the drama, 1-777, and yet the gesture has been considered important enough to be heralded twice before it is actually made in 762-74”.<sup>144</sup> In the city, reliance on the regulation of past events and future promise shapes and guides amnesty.<sup>145</sup> The connections with the *Oresteia* permit us to work under the same set of assumptions when approaching other tragedians, and gives licence to an examination of Sophokles for implicit and explicit hints and allusion.

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interpreted”, p.138. Also Vernant, J-P. Vidal-Naquet, P. (1988), p.260: “[The] *Oresteia* trilogy is punctuated by the clash of the young political gods against the old deities of kindred blood, just as it is by the struggles of the lineage of Agamemnon and Klytaemnestra”.

<sup>143</sup> *Eum.* 762f. In his commentary, Weir Smyth, H. (1926), suggests: “The passage points to the league between Athens and Argos, formed after Kimon was ostracized 461 B.C. and the treaty with Sparta denounced”. For a modern view see Sommerstein, A. (2008). Samons, L. (1999) compares Perikles to Orestes.

<sup>144</sup> Quincey, J. (1964), adds: “Orestes’ declaration is not limited in duration but binding on his successors in perpetuity; it seems, therefore, to have been deliberately formulated in order to react upon historical fact”. p.190

<sup>145</sup> Griffith, M. (1995).



### 1.4.1 Conflict and forgetting in tragedy

The choice of the test cases, the *Antigone*, the *Elektra*, and the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, supposes that tragic Thebes, Argos, and Athens are diverse in their respective presentations of memory.<sup>146</sup> The cities' differences play out against a backdrop of interconnected themes of anger, exile, loyalty, identity, and the presentation of one's past, resentment, and reputation. These topics drive Sophokles' dramas and support the value of a memory-based analysis.

Modern scholarship has extensively discussed the place Athens and Thebes occupy in tragedy. Recent studies have tended to focus on strict oppositions separating the cities. For example, Zeitlin proposes: "Thebes... provides the negative model to Athens' manifest image of itself with regard to its notions of the proper management of city, society and self".<sup>147</sup> However, this interpretation is too rigid to be applied without qualification. Blundell raises the issue of an over reliance of structural interpretation when examining, specifically, the *Oidipous at Kolonos*.<sup>148</sup> Pelling draws a similar conclusion: "We must beware of regarding the other as a straightforward foil to an idealized Athens".<sup>149</sup> Indeed, Theseus defends Thebes, as he detaches man from city.<sup>150</sup> The king argues that the city does not deserve Kreon's malevolent actions; it does not cultivate evil men. Indeed, this could be any city. Hilton rightly discounts a reliance on a tragic Thebes-

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<sup>146</sup> Goldhill, S. In Silk, M. (1996): "Nearly all-extant tragedies are not about Athenians or even based in Athens". p.253.

<sup>147</sup> Zeitlin, F. (1990): "Thebes... provides the negative model to Athens' manifest image of itself with regard to its notions of the proper management of city, society and self". p.131. Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1989), considers the geography of πόλις conflict through a 'zooming' technique. Vernant, J-P, and Vidal-Naquet, P. (1988): "Thebes functions as the paradigm of a divided city". p.335. See Foley, H. (1995). Hilton, I. (2011), argues against Zeitlin. Holt, P. (1999), does not find conflict: "The Athenian stereotype of nasty Thebans (pertinent, but of doubtful use in judging a conflict between two Thebans, and too heavily imposed upon the text of the play)". p.659, n4. For historical context; Holt, P. (1999). Tyrell, W. and Bennett, L. (1998). For cultural perspective see Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1989).

<sup>148</sup> Blundell, M. (2010). Review of Winkler, J. and Zeitlin, F. (eds), (1990). Also Gould, J. (2001), p. 263f.

<sup>149</sup> Pelling, C. (1997), p.228.

<sup>150</sup> Athens furthers its positive reputation as place of suppliancy. OK. 919f.

Athens dichotomy, claiming that the general representation of Thebes was not 'only' negative.<sup>151</sup>

Outside of tragedy, a history of antagonism underlines Thebes as a contrast to honourable Athens.<sup>152</sup> Thebes consorted with the Persians; this may have influenced the city's reception and its depiction in tragedy. Thebes' portrayal is as a place of uncivilised danger, yet remains structured and cultured. Although a hint to Athens accepting Thebes remains in the vocabulary of Theseus in *Oidipous at Kolonos*, I accept a historicizing approach based on a subtle underlying hostility between Athens and Thebes. Sophokles draws on a dramatic tradition of recognisable conflict that permeates the πόλις, citizens, and ruling families. In the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, Thebes considers itself post-conflict; this is exaggerated and used to contrast. The city already hints to latent or forgotten violence, internal στάσις, fratricide, and suicide.<sup>153</sup> The examination leads us to question the role of Athens. As presented, Athens is a place of sanctuary and justice. The *Oidipous at Kolonos* emphasises the city's power to protect suppliants and the weak.<sup>154</sup> However, in the drama, this is not triumphalism; Athens is contrasted with Thebes, yet is not an exact opposition. Thebes shows characteristics that are not

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<sup>151</sup> Hilton, I. (2011). Easterling, P. (1997), argues Thebes is neither positive nor negative. Hilton, I. (2011), proposes: "Easterling's thesis errs in countering the opposing view with one equally monolithic: she answers Zeitlin in Zeitlin's own terms in offering a reading which is equally inflexible". p.127.

<sup>152</sup> Hdt. 7.132, 9.13, 9.32-67. Diodorus Siculus, *Library*. 11.4.7. Isokrates *Plataikos*. 14.30-62, calls the Thebans as "Betrayers of all Greece", for leaning toward Sparta. See also Xen. *Hell.* 6.3.20. Demosthenes, *For the Megalopolitans*, 16.24, *Against Neaera*, 59.95. For view of the Thebes in Athenian memory see Demosthenes, *On the False Embassy*. 19.20. *Philippik* 2, 6.11, *On the Navy*, 14.33. Euripides' *Suppliants* demonstrates anti-Theban rhetoric, as they withhold burial. cf Hall, E. (1989). Steinboch suggests: "Thebes's collaboration with the Persians in 480-479, the mythical story of the burial of the Seven against Thebes, the Theban help for the Athenian democrats in 404/3, and the Theban proposal to eradicate Athens at the end of the Peloponnesian war... The Persian wars [are] critical for the formation of Athens self-image". p.100. See Thebes and the Persian war (and as leaders of the Boeotian league c.550). Thou. 3.61.2, Hdt. 6.108.

<sup>153</sup> Pindar, *Isthmian*. I.31. Aiskhylos, *Sev.* 407, 474. Apollodorus, *Lib* 3.4f. Also Eur. *Phoenissae*, Teiresias explains conflict, 865f. Aetiology of Thebes in *Seven* see; 1, 40, 120, Ampheion 528. Also, Lloyd-Jones, H. (1959). Berman, D. (2004).

<sup>154</sup> Discussed in the final chapter.

negative. In this city, problems can be resolved. Athens is the superlative πόλις, guided by Theseus, and it enjoys closeness to the gods. Loyal, pious, and honourable, Athens is not the only city under scrutiny.

In the context of memory, Argos in the *Elektra* provides a balance to the *Antigone* and the *Oidipous at Kolonos* with its issues surrounding recollection control and manipulation. The resentment of the family and the attempts to control (rather than forget) contrasts with the defence of the family and πόλις. Patterns of behaviour reveal themselves concerning remembrance and its suppression. Setting the *Elektra* in Argos indirectly plays on near-contemporary memory of the Athenians. The relationship was not always positive, particularly with their loyalties during and after the Persian war.<sup>155</sup> Argos has balance; it has the capacity for redemption after a time of division and conflict. The model clashes with the representation of Thebes, even if it is not uniformly negative.<sup>156</sup> Conflict in the city exists alongside as positive forces in the *Elektra*, and this suggests that the city is not as blessed as Athens.<sup>157</sup> To understand Thebes' place in the conflict over memory, I begin by analysing memory, control, and duty in the *Antigone*.

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<sup>155</sup> Hornblower, S. (2011). For historical influences see Pelling, C. (2000). For tragic references see Macleod, L. (2001). Also Zeitlin, F. (1990), who does not use Sophokles' *Elektra* in her assessment of Argos.

<sup>156</sup> Ringer, M. (1998).

<sup>157</sup> Hilton, I. (2011). Shows that Argos is presented differently in plays.

## 2 The πόλις and the dead

A common and necessary tool in the Greek lived experience and tragic πόλις, the control of memory proves essential. Conflict over remembering and forgetting is evident in the *Antigone*; yet here emphasis is on the consequences of control and division in the family and city through the actions of the individual. The outcome of resentment survives death and motivates each character in their attempts to exert power over the dead and living. They do this to secure control, to contest, or to regulate the right to burial and lamentation. Antigone and Kreon take seemingly opposing sides of recollection as conflict drives the struggle to remember, and the contest to forget. Antigone's duty to the πόλις conflicts with duty to the family. The characters each contradict themselves as they practice what they protest about.

### Homer and control

The issues surrounding the exposure of the dead and the denial of burial echo down through Homeric epic and saturate tragedy.<sup>158</sup> Homer provides a filter through which to read specific issues (of memory and burial) in Sophokles. There are shared perspectives

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<sup>158</sup> Hame, K. (2008). p.8, n. 32: "The refusal of burial in one's homeland for traitors and temple robbers was a known Attic custom (Thou. 1.138.6; Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.22; [Plut.] *Mor.* 834B; Lycurg. *Leoc.* 113–14). The sources for this practice, however, stress more the refusal of burial in Attic soil (i.e., the traitor's homeland), not the refusal of burial altogether or the prevention of others from performing burial rites in a non-homeland area (see, especially, the story of Phokion's cremation outside of Attica in Plut. *Phok.* 37.3–5)". Holt, P. (1999), examines non-burial 5<sup>th</sup> century historical worlds: "Denial of burial was an early practice, descended from the epic warrior's exposure of enemy corpses. The developing *polis* took over corpse-abuse... institutionalized it and regulated it, it did not invent it... It has been pointed out that in Homer the exposure of corpses is often threatened but rarely carried out and generally condemned". p.664. Also, Thou. 1.126. Rohde, E. (1921). Garland, R. (1985). Glotz, G. (1904). Loraux, N. (1981). Vermeule, E. (1979). Hom. *Il.* 24.22f. Although none are punished for not burying, disapproval of Akhilleus' actions is clear through the gods' vocabulary, *Il.* 23.18f. For funeral practices in Homer, see Andronikos, M (1968), pp. 21-22. Mylonas, G. (1962), pp. 478-88. Also, Grethlein, J. (2008). Havelock, H. (1986), especially pp. 70-73. Kottman, P. (2003), Lord, L. (1991). Vernant, J-P and Vidal-Naquet, P. (1988).

between the sources that rely on the expectations of audience and author. These are not just shaped by civic experience but also by shared experience of the poetic tradition. In each case, those who guide the city or lead the group attempt non-burial as a (implicit and explicit) method of memory regulation, pressing for penalty.<sup>159</sup>

Characters in the *Iliad* use the threat of exposure as a weapon to attack their enemies. Posthumous punishment, revenge and retaliation guide behaviour towards the deceased.<sup>160</sup> These actions on the battlefield are interconnected and demonstrate a method of control that aims to attack and negate present and future status and reputation.<sup>161</sup> To protect from insult, and to ensure the dead cross safely over to the underworld, characters rely on correct funeral processes. A relationship is found between the procedure to bury and the traditional process of lamentation. These two pillars guide commemoration in epic and tragedy, and underline the importance of individual and group ritual remembering. For example, the dead Patroklos laments his own non-burial in a dream, as he seeks to secure a memory of himself: “εὖδεις, αὐτὰρ ἐμεῖο λελασμένος ἔπλευ Ἀχιλλεῦ. / οὐ μὲν μευ ζώντος ἀκήδεις, ἀλλὰ θανόντος: / θάπτε με ὅτι τάχιστα πύλας Αἴδαο περήσω”.<sup>162</sup> Procedures govern the covenant between living and dead. The self-aware and sentient Patroklos requires Akhilleus’ action to accomplish his own, πύλας Αἴδαο περήσω. One facilitates one’s comrades in crossing over. Patroklos also presses the need for recollection and underlines the importance of honour and remembrance in death, while charging Akhilleus with forgetting. The preservation of memory and the role of amnesty in the *Iliad* culminate with Priam’s appeal to Akhilleus.

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<sup>159</sup> Rohde, E. (1925), pp. 162-216.

<sup>160</sup> Threats to expose the dead are common in Homer, and although the act is implicitly bad, it is only temporary.

<sup>161</sup> Contrast Ajax and Hektor’s promise to return the body. *Il.* 7f. Nagy, G. (1979).

<sup>162</sup> *Il.* 23. 69f: “You sleep now and have forgotten me Akhilleus. When I was living you were not unmindful of me, but only now in my death! Quickly bury me so I may pass through Hades’ gates”. In the *Odyssey*, Elpenor comes in a dream. The presence of Orestes also uses this medium to haunt Klytaimnestra in the *Elektra*.

Lamentation relies on a mutual, tacit, repeated pattern of recalling through a shared humanity.<sup>163</sup> Memory stirs and is vocalised through dual lamentation.<sup>164</sup> The scene focuses on managing resentment and conditional reconciliation, set against a background of martial violence. Amnesty (albeit an artificial one) can be achieved.<sup>165</sup> Here, the two parties reach an accord, one that allows Akhilleus to permit something approaching a reprieve for the dead Hektor.

Punishment and resentment of the dead frames the negative actions that surround corpse abuse.<sup>166</sup> Although various individuals threaten the body with becoming carrion, in the *Iliad*, an extended period of exposure is rare as one's allies drag the corpse back into the protective folds of the allied forces.<sup>167</sup> For example, the Argives rescue the dead body of Patroklos at great cost and commit him to burial after proper cremation and ritual.<sup>168</sup> In contrast, Akhilleus threatens to leave the body of Hektor exposed as food for animals; in his exceptional anger, he exaggerates punishment: “σὲ μὲν κύνες ἢ δ’ οἴωνοι / ἐλκήσουσ’ αἰκῶς, τὸν δὲ κτεριοῦσιν Ἀχαιοί”.<sup>169</sup> The sentence encapsulates the two opposing sides of recalling the dead, non-burial and honourable interment. Akhilleus pushes his hatred further than necessary (a precursor to *Antigone*’s Kreon), and his anger becomes unheroic. He attacks the present and future Hektor. Through an act of individual hostility, stubborn resentment, and revenge, Akhilleus assumes ownership and control over the dead body.<sup>170</sup> As the victor, he wields power in both life and death over the fallen enemy:

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<sup>163</sup> *Il.* 24.507f.

<sup>164</sup> Arist. *Lysistrata*. 591, has a memory quietly sleeping: “σίγα, μὴ μνησικακήσης”.

<sup>165</sup> The two agree on a truce for burial and approve a time scale to manage when they will fight again. Hom. *Il.* 24.665f.

<sup>166</sup> Akhilleus does this to Lykaon 21.120f, and Asteropaios 21.201f.

<sup>167</sup> *Il.* 9.477, *Il.* 11.251, *Il.* 12.390, *Il.* 13.560, *Il.* 15.541, *Il.* 22.191, *Il.* 23.323f, *Il.* 24.680f.

<sup>168</sup> *Il.* 17.1f.

<sup>169</sup> *Il.* 22.335f: “Dogs and birds shall rend you unseemly, but the Akhaeans shall give him burial”.

<sup>170</sup> Shapiro, H. (2006), argues that: “In giving one warrior (Patroklos) honourable burial while abusing the corpse of the other (Hektor), Akhilleus has assumed for

ἦ ῥα, καὶ ἐκ νεκροῖο ἐρύσσατο χάλκεον ἔγχος,  
καὶ τό γ' ἄνευθεν ἔθηχ', ὃ δ' ἀπ' ὤμων τεύχε' ἐσύλα  
αἱματόεντ': ἄλλοι δὲ περίδραμον υἷες Ἀχαιῶν,  
οἳ καὶ θηήσαντο φυὴν καὶ εἶδος ἀγητὸν  
Ἕκτορος: οὐδ' ἄρα οἳ τις ἀνουτητί γε παρέστη.<sup>171</sup>

No soldier fails to punish further the corpse; each one leaves his mark, οὐδ' ἄρα οἳ τις ἀνουτητί γε παρέστη. The deed is collective and communal, a shared repetition of the kill, and validation of the victory. Violence and anger control the man, the name, and his status. The act was anticipated by Priam, who wished that Akhilleus be left unburied as carrion for the dogs and birds.<sup>172</sup> Posthumous retribution against the dead foregrounds the argument and punishments of Polyneikes in Sophokles.

The *Little Iliad* takes into account a more political perspective. Here, authoritative figures act against the dead, and impose control over the body of Ajax as penalty. These actions constitute a different view of the collective from that in the *Iliad*. The deed raises issues of not just punishment or violence in war, but also political justification in the context of power.

Significantly, the regulation of commemoration and future reputation is a device to reprimand: “ὁ τὴν Μικρὰν Ἰλιάδα γράψας ἱστορεῖ μηδὲ καυθῆναι συνήθως τὸν Αἴαντα, τεθῆναι δὲ οὕτως ἐν

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himself an authority that no human can rightfully claim” p.120. Shapiro compares Akhilleus’ actions with those of Kreon in the *Antigone*.

<sup>171</sup> *Il.* 22.367f: “He spoke, and drew his bronze spear out from the corpse and put it down, and stripped from the shoulders the blood-stained armour. And the other sons of the Achaeans ran up from all sides, and gazed upon the physique and marvellous form of Hektor, and no man failed to inflict a wound”.

<sup>172</sup> *Il.* 22.38f. The importance behind the deed to punish heightens when we consider the gods’ behaviour towards different individuals. *Il.* 19.28f. Thetis protects Patroklos. Hom. *Il.* 24.15f. Apollo protects Hektor.

σορῶι διὰ τὴν ὀργὴν τοῦ βασιλέως”.<sup>173</sup> The leader of the army drives punishment through resentment, identified here as τὴν ὀργὴν τοῦ βασιλέως. Retribution continues post-mortem and demonstrates one’s power and influence over the dead.<sup>174</sup> The inferior funeral on the grounds of a perceived betrayal demeans the corpse and memory of Ajax.<sup>175</sup> The mistreatment of a dead body is akin to social relegation, a posthumous disgrace.

### Sophokles, resentment and amnesty

The issues surrounding the control of memory and the denial of burial continues in Sophokles, these are both thematic pillars of the *Ajax*. They are framed by the triumph of moderation and the success of calls for fairness in burial. These themes permit us to read the *Antigone* within a similar context of control, burial, and resentment. Sophokles plays on the issues that surround the funerary procedure, and the perpetuation of a positive reputation, to explore the value of one’s past life and interment. A consideration of the subtleties of Menelaus’ refusal in the *Ajax* leads to a study of the arguments for burial through power struggles. The problems link to the repercussions of a decision to regulate or deny burial in a public context.

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<sup>173</sup> Eustathios. 285.34f: “The writer of the *Little Iliad* tells us that Ajax was buried not in the usual way, but just buried in a coffin, because of the anger of the king”. Also see Allen, W., and Monro, D. (1982).

<sup>174</sup> The *Odyssey* develops the subject of non-burial through underlying issues of remembrance and honour. Withholding lamentation in the context of a warped burial in Aiskhylos as Elektra’s lament directly charges her mother with this outrage, Ais. *Kho*. 429f. Alexidou, M. (2002). *Od.* 12.11f. There are various ways to regulate recollection in the *Odyssey*, the drugs of Kirke (*Od.* 10.234f), the lotus-eaters (*Od.* 9.94f), and the drugs of Helen (*Od.* 4.220f). The recalling of Odysseus is detrimental to the suitors’ (*Od.* 22.1f), Polyphemos, (*Od.* 9.526f), and the hound Argos (*Od.* 17.330f). In the first νέκυια, *Od.* 11.541f, memory and anger link as Ajax demonstrates his enmity. Menelaus considers post-burial remembrance. *Od.* 4.584f. Garland, R. (1985). The fear of (divine) recriminations stimulates Odysseus to bury and commemorate, avoiding the anger of the gods, Finley, M. (1965).

<sup>175</sup> Holt, P. (1992), remarks on the abnormality of this burial. pp. 319-331.



Both the *Ajax* and the *Antigone* are set against a background of political violence.<sup>176</sup> Teukros assumes the duty of committal, foreshadowing the role of Antigone.<sup>177</sup> In contrast, Menelaus' anger drives him to withhold burial. The king retains wrath and drives resentment onto the dead: "οὗτος, σὲ φωνῶ τόνδε τὸν νεκρὸν χεροῖν / μὴ συγκομίζειν, ἀλλ' ἔαν ὅπως ἔχει... δοκοῦντ' ἐμοί, δοκοῦντα δ' ὃς κραίνει στρατοῦ".<sup>178</sup> He is obligated to defend against those who intend to harm. Following the suicide of Ajax, Menelaus proclaims his punishment: "ὦν εἴνεκ' αὐτὸν οὔτις ἔστ' ἀνὴρ σθένων / τοσοῦτον ὥστε σῶμα τυμβεῦσαι τάφῳ, / ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ χλωρὰν ψάμαθον ἐκβεβλημένος / ὄρνισι φορβὴ παραλίοις γενήσεται".<sup>179</sup> There are separate parts to this threat; the first regulates the interment of the dead by negating burial. Menelaus explicitly demands the exposure of the dead body.<sup>180</sup> He expands on his position: "εἰ γὰρ βλέποντος μὴ 'δυνήθημεν κρατεῖν, / πάντως θανόντος γ' ἄρξομεν, κἂν μὴ θέλῃς, / χερσὶν παρευθύνοντες: οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπου / λόγων γ' ἀκοῦσαι ζῶν ποτ' ἠθέλησ' ἐμῶν".<sup>181</sup> For his insubordination, Ajax has dropped down the ranks to the level of outcast, an example of control through action (χερσὶν παρευθύνοντες). As Menelaus judges the dead, he claims both moral and societal authority as the king and leader. However, personal enmity clouds his ruling and pushes the agenda for excessive punishment. Upon pain of death, he decrees non-burial.<sup>182</sup> There are echoes of Kreon's actions here, as he will also

<sup>176</sup> Cf. Knox, B. (1964). March, J. (1993).

<sup>177</sup> Teukros refuses aid on the principal of Ajax's imagined anger. *Ajax*. 1394f.

<sup>178</sup> *Ajax*. 1048f: "You there, I order you not to lift this body, leave it as it is!... It is my decision, and the decision of the ruler of the army". Barker, E. (2004). Bowra, M. (1944). Easterling, P. (1988). Seaford, R. (1994).

<sup>179</sup> *Ajax*. 1062f: "For this reason there is no man mighty enough to bury this body, but he shall be cast out upon on the pale sand and become prey for the birds along the coast".

<sup>180</sup> Holt, P. (1992).

<sup>181</sup> *Ajax*. 1067f: "Why, if we could not rule him whilst he was alive, at least we shall rule him now he is dead, even if you do not wish it, controlling with our hands; for while he lived, he never obeyed my words".

<sup>182</sup> *Ajax*. 1089f.

press resentment too far. Although factually correct, (Ajax plotted to kill the allies) Menelaus goes too far with retaliation.<sup>183</sup>

The recalling of a similar memory in different ways is a persistent dramatic device in Sophokles. For instance, Odysseus evokes the previous conduct of the dead to defend Ajax's honour: "ἄνδρα δ' οὐ δίκαιον, εἰ θάνοι, / βλάπτειν τὸν ἐσθλόν, οὐδ' ἔαν μισῶν κυρῆς".<sup>184</sup> Odysseus hinges the argument on fairness, and presses the perceived injustice of Ajax's punishment, ἄνδρα δ' οὐ δίκαιον. He shifts the focus onto the gods' involvement: "ὥστ' οὐκ ἂν ἐνδίκως γ' ἀτιμάζοιτό σοι: / οὐ γάρ τι τοῦτον, ἀλλὰ τοὺς θεῶν νόμους / φθείροις ἄν".<sup>185</sup> An allusion to a predetermined set of laws that should not be transgressed guides the world of the living, ἀλλὰ τοὺς θεῶν νόμους / φθείροις ἄν. Odysseus includes human morality alongside divine agreement in the reaction to non-burial. A precursor to the *Antigone* is found in the way Antigone will recall Polyneikes (as a brother) and Kreon (as a traitor). However, in opposition to Polyneikes, there are benefits to the recollection of Ajax. An ally in life, Odysseus argues that Ajax is worthy enough to warrant ritual burial and lamentation. The main action surrounds the threat of disgrace (ἀτιμάζοιτό), which stresses Ajax's lowly position. The man deserves correct burial; any punishment needs to be sensitive to context and to take account of mitigating factors like historic reputation. Odysseus pleads for flexibility: "ἄκουέ νυν. τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδε πρὸς θεῶν / μὴ τλῆς ἄθαπτον ὧδ' ἀναλγήτως βαλεῖν: / μὴδ' ἡ βία σε μηδαμῶς νικησάτω / τοσόνδε μισεῖν ὥστε τὴν δίκην πατεῖν".<sup>186</sup> For the sake of δίκη, they must manage their enmity. He appeals to the Atreidae, ἄκουέ νυν, to put aside personal anger and realise that their action (leaving Ajax

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<sup>183</sup> *Ajax*. 1052f.

<sup>184</sup> *Ajax*. 1344f: "It is unjust to injure a noble man, if he is dead, even if it happens that you hate him".

<sup>185</sup> *Ajax*. 1342: "It would not be just, then, that he should be dishonoured by you. It is not he, but the laws given by the gods that you would damage".

<sup>186</sup> *Ajax*. 1332f: "Listen, then! By the gods, I beg you not to venture to cast this man out ruthlessly, unburied. Violence must not so overcome that you trample justice under foot". (Amended)

ἄθαρπτον) would be baseless and inexcusable. It is remarkable that we find Odysseus successfully managing to argue for burial, through something approaching an amnesty.

The theme of giving up one's anger is also evident in the actions of Teukros. We find a similar prophetic appeal to one found in the *Antigone*, as Teukros advises Menelaus not to kick out at the dead.<sup>187</sup> With no small amount of irony, Teukros curses any who would attempt to take the corpse.<sup>188</sup> The saviour uses comparable threats as the aggressor. Teukros' threat makes a difference; the cause behind his motivation lies in the defence of the family memory. As in the *Antigone*, the power dynamic in the *Ajax* focuses on the prohibition of death and burial: "ἔσται μεγάλης ἔριδός τις ἀγών. / ἄλλ' ὥς δύνασαι, Τεῦκρε, ταχύνας / σπεῦσον κοίλην κάπετόν τιν' ἰδεῖν / τῷδ', ἔνθα βροτοῖς τὸν ἀείμνηστον / τάφον εὐρώεντα καθέξει".<sup>189</sup> The action does not simply focus on the memory and presence of Ajax; the tribute perpetuates honour. Although the memorial is not spectacular or extravagant, it constitutes an enduring marker, one designed to be forever remembered through a hint to heroic cult (ἀείμνηστον).<sup>190</sup> In the *Ajax* and the *Antigone*, conflict arises over the control of the dead amid issues of power and authority.

In these examples from tragedy and epic, we find connected issues such as resentment, bitterness in war, individual duty, comradeship, family relations, and placating the divine as incentives to control remembering and forgetting. There are agreements to manage one's resentment or anger, or to correct a wrong because of the fear of retribution. In Homer, Akhilleus returns Hektor's body back to Priam for burial (on a funerary pyre and period of mourning), and Patroklos

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<sup>187</sup> *Ajax*. 1108f.

<sup>188</sup> *Ajax*. 1175f.

<sup>189</sup> *Ajax*. 1163f: "There will be struggle arising from a great dispute! Come, as quickly as you can, Teukros, hasten to find a hollow trench for this man, where he shall occupy the dank tomb that shall ever be remembered by mortals".

<sup>190</sup> We find a hint to the *Elektra*, and Elektra's small, but honourable, gifts. For the conditions that guide whether Ajax becomes a hero or not, see Finglass, P. (2011). Kearns. E. (1989). Ajax is an eponymous hero under Kleisthenes.

is buried, commemorated with games. Absolute and on-going non-burial is something hateful that may incur divine penalty; the dead themselves lament any disruption to this process. We find an antecedent to the refusal of ritual in the *Antigone* that suggests non-burial is both problematic and dangerous.

## 2.1 Membership of the city in the *Antigone*

Each character adapts remembrance to best suit their present argument, self-interest, or future aim. These dual and often inconsistent actions raise the question of conditional memory and subjective forgetting, as the character chooses who and how to recall or forget. There exists an opportunity to underline the conflicting compulsions between characters and their respective views on the regulation of commemoration. An important contradiction drives these exploits, one demonstrated in the characters' holding of a grudge.<sup>191</sup> As previously suggested, the construct μὴ μνησικακεῖν is a tool that facilitates artificial forgetting. The *Antigone* explores man's authority when punishing through burial, and his actions to banish in death or commemorate with lamentation. It adjusts this conflict, and sets it against divisions within post-war Thebes and its ruling family.

The nature of burial is public and inclusive, binding man and family to city; absorbing them into the πόλις. Before examining this dynamic in tragedy, this section measures the depth and importance of this bond. Recollection and forgetting make up the background to the city's attempts to move forward. Demosthenes suggests the idea of state appropriation/control of memorials in Athens: “πρῶτον μὲν μόνοι τῶν πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἐπὶ τοῖς τελευτήσασι δημοσία καὶ ταῖς ταφαῖς ταῖς δημοσίαις ποιεῖτε λόγους ἐπιταφίους, ἐν οἷς κοσμεῖτε τὰ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν ἔργα”.<sup>192</sup> The city laments their dead with honour in public space. Indeed, as Morris suggests: “The *polis* used the tomb to create a communal ideal”.<sup>193</sup> The action confirms the city as mindful and praiseworthy, commemorating those who have died in

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<sup>191</sup> Cf. Kreon in both *Antigone* and the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, Elektra and Klytaimnestra in *Elektra*. Knox, B. (1964).

<sup>192</sup> Dem. *Against Leptines*. 141f: “Firstly, you alone of all mankind pronounce publicly over your dead and the funeral orations, in which you praise the actions of the brave”. Morris, I. (1989). Osbourne, R. (2010).

<sup>193</sup> Morris, I. (1992), p.131. Greek political history has examples of individuals being driven out and returning. Hippias 490, Hdt. 6.102, Alkibiades, see Plutarch, the Oligarchic collaboration of 457, and Kimon 461.

her defence. Once more, recollection is a positive force. In tragedy, as punishment for his attack on the city, Kreon deprives Polyneikes of both shared burial and civic funerary procedures of *epitaph*, regulating physical memory through exposing his dead body. The action warps traditional memorialisation.

Tensions surrounding commemoration are potentially reconcilable. However, in the *Antigone*, Kreon's resentment against Polyneikes negates any type of forgiveness; history and passion override any familial relationship. The violent behaviour of both Kreon and Polyneikes jeopardises Thebes and its inhabitants. Easterling comments on the issue of non-burial in Thebes and the lack of proper response by those in power, which in contaminate the city:

The problem [in the *Antigone*] is made even more acute here because no mention is made of the possibility of throwing the body out beyond the boundaries of Theban territory and so avoiding the danger of pollution that an unburied corpse would bring on the city.<sup>194</sup>

Easterling raises a significant point; conflict in Thebes could be resolved by taking Polyneikes for burial outside the territory. The play ignores this simple solution, and hardens the antithesis between being ritually buried and impiously exposed. The actions of the leader of the city curse the πόλις and set in motion a pathway to retaliation. Kreon's unyielding bitterness towards Polyneikes and Antigone, he twists his obligation of protection towards the πόλις and relatives. The dual acts of punishing the dead and the unnatural burial of Antigone challenge the order of commemoration in a public sphere. The force of his personal anger and his duty to the city are marked in his introduction.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> Easterling, P. (1997), p.27.

<sup>195</sup> Kreon opposes other issuers of amnesty in the city, for example Theseus.

Although Kreon's actions reveal themselves as misguided, the chorus first accept his leadership as he tries to defend the πόλις. Kreon's motives are understandable. He has inherited a city that has come to the end of a war. Kreon is now king, the political leader, and the one who must guide the city out of the shadow of division and conflict. However, he places the decision in their hands while he commands; the displacement suggests he is not confident in his own actions.<sup>196</sup> These have been dangerous times in Thebes, a source of relief mixes with a promise of stability for the city: "ἄνδρες, τὰ μὲν δὴ πόλεος ἀσφαλῶς θεοὶ / πολλῶ σάλῳ σείσαντες ὥρθωσαν πάλιν".<sup>197</sup> The city finds itself post-conflict, yet peril lurks underneath the surface. Kreon's post-war function is the secure management of the πόλις, and the collective good. Represented by old men, the inhabitants of Thebes express their relief and trust in the leader:

ἀλλ' ὅδε γὰρ δὴ βασιλεὺς χώρας,  
 Κρέων ὁ Μενοικέως ... νεοχμὸς  
 νεαραῖσι θεῶν ἐπὶ συντυχίαις  
 χωρεῖ, τίνα δὴ μῆτιν ἐρέσσω,  
 ὅτι σύγκλητον τήνδε γερόντων  
 προὔθετο λέσχην,  
 κοινῶ κηρύγματι πέμψας;<sup>198</sup>

Kreon is, for the citizens, βασιλεὺς, and the sole individual in charge of the city's fortunes. He alone has the power to call (σύγκλητον) upon the populace, κοινῶ κηρύγματι πέμψας, and to be obeyed. The

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<sup>196</sup> Jebb parallels *Antigone* and *Oidipous Tyrannos*, "In each case a Theban king addresses Theban elders, announcing a stern decree, adopted in reliance on his own wisdom, and promulgated with haughty consciousness of power; the elders receive the decree with a submissive deference under which we can perceive traces of misgiving; and as the drama proceeds, the elders become spectators of calamities occasioned by the decree, while its author turns to them for comfort".

<sup>197</sup> *Ant.* 162f: "Sirs, the gods have shaken the city's fortunes with a heavy shaking, but now they have set them right in safety".

<sup>198</sup> *Ant.* 155f: "But here comes the new king of the land, ... Kreon, under the new conditions given by the gods; what plan is he turning over, that he has proposed this assembly of elders for discussion, summoning them by general proclamation?"

situation stresses Kreon's role. The chorus say he is in power, and they submissively put their trust in him to do the right thing.

The chorus' actions and speech highlight what is at stake, they recall the Argive army in a post-war setting. They respond to the threat of war in their first song, contextualising Kreon's decision. For the audience, this emphasises that conflict (for them) has passed and they look forward to peace, setting up the mistake. The chorus see the past as the past. However, for the audience, who have already have seen the character of Antigone, the threat remains. After the fear of losing their collective life subsides, the chorus celebrate and report on the emotional situation. They emphasise the magnitude of the threat and report on how people responded to the triumph:

ξύν θ' ἵπποκόμοις κορύθεσσιν.  
στάς δ' ὑπὲρ μελάθρων φονώ  
σαισιν ἀμφιχανῶν κύκλω  
λόγχαις ἐπτάπυλον στόμα  
ἔβα, πρίν ποθ' ἀμετέρων  
αἰμάτων γένυσιν πλησθῆ-  
ναί <τε> καὶ στεφάνωμα πύργων  
πευκάενθ' Ἥφαιστον ἐλεῖν.  
τοῖος ἀμφὶ νῶτ' ἐτάθη  
πάταγος Ἄρεος, ἀντιπάλω  
δυσχείρωμα δράκοντος.<sup>199</sup>

An imbalance in power frames the attack on Thebes; a larger beast (the dragon of Kadmos) thwarts the invaders. The chorus use hunting metaphor to articulate this savage attack on the city. The animal violently attempts to devour the city, φονώσαισιν ἀμφιχανῶν κύκλω / λόγχαις, before being consumed itself, ἀντιπάλω

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<sup>199</sup> *Ant.* 117f: "He paused above our houses, ringing round the seven gates with spears that longed for blood; but he went, before his jaws had been glutted with our gore and the fire-god's pine-fed flame had taken the walls that crown our city. Such was the din of battle stretched about his back, hard for the dragon's adversary to vanquish". Aiskhylos uses animal metaphor to describe the attack. *Sev.* 145f.



δυσχείρωμα δράκοντος. The attack is likened to a bird of prey, στὰς δ' ὑπὲρ μελάθρων, the imagery emphasises the aggression and speed of the violence done to the city. The middle section of this passage stresses the effects of the attack; just before the Eagle consumed the city, he was pursued and defeated. The impression here is that the Thebes, in the face of defeat to Argos, calls upon a stronger power to defend the city and its people.<sup>200</sup> The city emerges in the morning after liberation from a real and violent threat.

The dawning of the new day brings a sense of relief, a feeling of hope contrasts with the forthcoming implicit failure. Kreon's rise to the throne relies on Eteokles' death. Leadership becomes a test, and he ironically suggests that he will prove himself through actions:

ἐγὼ κράτη δὴ πάντα καὶ θρόνους ἔχω  
γένους κατ' ἀγχιστεῖα τῶν ὀλωλότων.  
ἀμήχανον δὲ παντὸς ἀνδρὸς ἐκμαθεῖν  
ψυχὴν τε καὶ φρόνημα καὶ γνώμην, πρὶν ἂν  
ἀρχαῖς τε καὶ νόμοισιν ἐντριβῆς φανῇ.<sup>201</sup>

His rule depends on family ties and conflict, and Kreon now controls the civic action to regulate bereavement and commemoration. He acquires power through death, and attempts to sustain his rule through the dictating and control of remembrance through burial and ritual. Antigone first notes the discrepancy in burials for her brothers, demonstrating Kreon's partisan approach to both honour and memory:

τὸν δ' ἀθλίως θανόντα Πολυνείκους νέκυν  
ἀστοῖσιν φασιν ἐκκεκηρῦχθαι τὸ μὴ  
τάφῳ καλύψαι μηδὲ κωκυσαί τινα,  
ἔαν δ' ἄκλαυτον, ἄταφον, οἴωνοις γλυκὺν

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<sup>200</sup> Samian oligarchs appeal to Persia, Thou. 1.115. Mytilene and Lesbos hire mercenaries, Thou. 4.52. Epidamnos, Thou 1.24.

<sup>201</sup> *Ant.* 173f: "I hold the power and the throne by reason of my kinship with the dead. There is no way of getting to know a man's spirit and thought and judgement, until he has been seen to be versed in government and in the laws".

θησαυρὸν εἰσορῶσι πρὸς χάριν βορᾶς.<sup>202</sup>

We find the repetition of language that emphasises ostracism in death. The leader of the city does not just withhold Polyneikes from both earth and city, but from death itself (denying ritual commemoration). Indeed, Kreon regulates by withholding fundamental procedures, threatening the corpse with becoming ἄταφος and ἄκλαυστος. With νέκυν ἄστοῖσί φασιν ἐκκεκηρῦχθαι τὸ μὴ τάφῳ καλύψαι, the leader banishes through public proclamation. The action is striking, as the role Polyneikes takes as outsider or as brother influences how those in the city recall him. Kreon detaches the dead man from the city to underline that Polyneikes is seen as an invading exile.

The messenger gives an impression of the state of the body, as he emphasises this separation. The dead are flung out: “ἐγὼ δὲ σῶ ποδαγὸς ἐσπόμεν πτόσει / πεδίον ἐπ’ ἄκρον, ἔνθ’ ἔκειτο νηλεὲς / κυνοσπάρακτον σῶμα Πολυνείκου ἔτι.”<sup>203</sup> He describes the abuse the corpse receives, and with πεδίον ἐπ’ ἄκρον, focuses on marginalisation through secluded location. The messenger describes Polyneikes’ corpse as κυνοσπάρακτος, the dishonour of which is reminiscent of similar scenes in the *Iliad*. Kreon’s sentence is more than just separation, but is a *Damnatio Memoriae*, a negation of social status alive or dead.<sup>204</sup>

Kreon’s action is a steadfast refusal to forget, he extends his rage to those who oppose him in the city. In a direct comparison to the separation of Polyneikes, and in order to keep the city safe, Kreon imposes physical separation on the condemned Antigone from the πόλις. He extends his anger from Polyneikes to anyone who pays

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<sup>202</sup> *Ant.* 26f: “But as for the unhappy corpse of Polyneikes, they say it has been proclaimed to the citizens that no one shall conceal it in a grave or lament for it, but that they should leave it unwept for, unburied, a rich treasure house for birds as they look out for food”.

<sup>203</sup> *Ant.* 1195f: “I attended your husband on foot to the edge of the plain, where the unpitied body of Polyneikes still lay, torn by the dogs”.

<sup>204</sup> *Ant.* 84f. For contemporary Athens see introductory chapter.

him respect. Kreon demonstrates the power of his resentment as he gives in to anger. He charges Antigone with disrespecting the laws of the city: “ὅστις δ’ ὑπερβὰς ἢ νόμους βιάζεται / ἢ τοῦπιτάσσειν τοῖς κρατύνουσιν νοεῖ, / οὐκ ἔστ’ ἐπαίνου τοῦτον ἐξ ἑμοῦ τυχεῖν”.<sup>205</sup> As he articulates a general threat, Kreon speaks of the punishment due to those who contravene (ὑπερβὰς) boundaries, whilst ironically committing the same. He expands on his position, lamenting any action that challenges his strength. Kreon focuses on those who should remain loyal to the laws of the city, withholding any positive status from transgressors. Yet, as he separates Antigone and Polyneikes, he isolates himself further from the city. The argument for power rests on collective safety: “οὐ τοῦ κρατοῦντος ἡ πόλις νομίζεται;”.<sup>206</sup> However, by enforcing silence through an edict he gradually divorces himself from the people and city.

Like her brother’s fate, Kreon ensures her burial and unmarked grave is far from its boundaries. The banishment of the ‘living corpse’ outside the city assures his safety and supports his claim of guiltlessness:

ἄγων ἔρημος ἔνθ’ ἂν ἦ βροτῶν στίβος  
 κρύψω πετρῶδει ζῶσαν ἐν κατώρυχι,  
 φορβῆς τοσοῦτον ὅσον ἄγος φεύγειν προθείς,  
 ὅπως μῖασμα πᾶσ’ ὑπεκφύγῃ πόλις.  
 κάκεῖ τὸν Ἄιδην, ὃν μόνον σέβει θεῶν,  
 αἰτουμένη που τεύξεται τὸ μὴ θανεῖν,  
 ἢ γνώσεται γοῦν ἀλλὰ τηνικαῦθ’ ὅτι  
 πόνος περισσός ἐστι τὰν Ἄιδου σέβειν.<sup>207</sup>

<sup>205</sup> *Ant.* 663f: “But whoever transgresses or does violence to the laws, or is minded to dictate to those in power, that man shall never receive praise from me”.

<sup>206</sup> *Ant.* 738: “Is not the city thought to belong to its ruler?”

<sup>207</sup> *Ant.* 773f: “I shall take her to where there is a path which no man treads, and hide her, still living, in a rocky cavern, putting out enough food, to escape pollution, so that the city may escape contagion. And there she can pray to Hades, the only one among the gods whom she respects, and perhaps be spared from death, or else she will learn, at that late stage, that it is wasted effort to show regard for things in Hades”.

The tone of this passage stresses exclusion through a form of forgetting and oblivion. Dismissed from the city and hidden in the wilderness, the location is away from sight (κρύψω); this is censorship of remembrance and lamentation, the opposite of publically honoured. He designs the punishment to ensure she is not remembered or lamented. Indeed, the only audience for Antigone's death and burial would be Hades himself, ὃν μόνον σέβει θεῶν. The tone of this passage stresses exclusion. Antigone's removal from the πόλις echoes the position of Polyneikes.<sup>208</sup> Kreon attempts to negotiate a way to avoid punishment through control, this is not a binary choice. He describes the location as ἐρῆμος using vocabulary that is both defiant and fearful. With ὅπως μίασμα πᾶσ' ὑπεκφύγη πόλις, we see a hint to optimism that these actions are enough to avoid pollution. Kreon mocks Antigone with the suggestion that she may pray to the chthonic god at her leisure with a warped charge, αἰτουμένη που τεύξεται τὸ μὴ θανεῖν. An undercurrent of hubris and irony exists here as Kreon wishes for Antigone to learn her lesson; once more, he does not see he is wrong. As he separates Antigone and Polyneikes, he isolates himself further from the city. As we press further the idea of separation, Kreon also attempts to detach Antigone from the city through a denial of public commemoration:

καὶ κατηρεφεῖ  
τύμβῳ περιπτύξαντες, ὡς εἶρηκ' ἐγώ,  
ἄφετε μόνην ἔρημον, εἴτε χρῆ θανεῖν  
εἴτ' ἐν τοιαύτῃ ζῶσα τυμβεύειν στέγη:  
ἡμεῖς γὰρ ἄγνοι τοῦπὶ τήνδε τὴν κόρην  
μετοικίας δ' οὖν τῆς ἄνω στερήσεται.<sup>209</sup>

Kreon punishes, mixing death with life, Antigone lives as a corpse. He describes her detachment with ἐρῆμος and highlights her

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<sup>208</sup> *Ant.* 1195f.

<sup>209</sup> *Ant.* 885f: "And when you have enclosed her in the encompassing tomb, as I have ordered, leave her alone, isolated, whether she wishes to die or be entombed living in such a dwelling. For we are guiltless where this girl is concerned; but she shall be deprived of residence with us here above the ground".

remoteness, specifically using ζῶσα τυμβεύειν, to ensure she is effectively forgotten, and that she does not fall under the city's responsibility. Kreon oversteps the force of resentment in order to ensure control. He thrusts Antigone underground in this warped entombment, shifting the choice of life or death to her, yet ultimately controlling her fate. Kreon imposes marginalisation upon both. The statement presses seclusion, finality, death, and punishment. His tone implies offence in reference to her exploits. The pleasure, with which he describes her burial, and that of Polyneikes, demonstrates a degree of personal hostility. Kreon is pushing his own agenda of forgetting upon Antigone and her memory with his censorship of recollection. The crucial point here surrounds his use of ἀγνός; he attempts to protect Thebes from pollution through a defence of moral and ethical transparency. Yet, here we see Kreon clinging to the past, a refusal to forget, and his inability to see the past as a lesson. For example, his own punishment of Antigone replicates his treatment of Polyneikes. Kreon has not yielded or given amnesty, but perpetuates the horrors of the house with his own actions.

To evaluate properly the risk Polyneikes poses (both alive and dead) to Thebes we must assess what is endangered. To measure what value Kreon places on membership and obligation to the city, we can interrogate the motivations to preserve or deny memory. Indeed, one may pose the question; what is it that makes the characters willing to risk their lives to defend or attack? Each perspective, public and private, dead and alive, exile and citizen, suggests a different way of viewing recollection. The question of how Thebes is threatened guides the next section; first, I underline the importance attached to membership of the πόλις.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Aristotle proposes: “ἐκ τούτων οὖν φανερόν ὅτι τῶν φύσει ἡ πόλις ἐστὶ, καὶ ὅτι ὁ ἄνθρωπος φύσει πολιτικὸν ζῷον, καὶ ὁ ἄπολις διὰ φύσιν καὶ οὐ διὰ τύχην ἥτοι φαῦλός ἐστιν, ἢ κρείττων ἢ ἄνθρωπος...”. “From these things therefore it is clear that the city-state is a natural growth, and that man is by nature a political animal, and a man that is by nature and not merely by fortune citiless is either low in the

Sophokles uses the transgressing of the boundary between city and individual as a base to interrogate the motivations behind withholding burial in the *Antigone*. As the chorus rejoice in the preservation of Thebes, they link the membership of the πόλις to personal and group duty, security, welfare, and status.<sup>211</sup> The connection between man and city reverberates with both positive and negative repercussions. Involuntary banishment out of the πόλις equates to an artificial death. Being ἄπολις affects not just those who are living, but extends to the corpses of those who have died. The chorus demonstrate their value of citizenship as they contrast exile with residency, expressing the link between the two through the ode to Man:

σοφόν τι τὸ μηχανόεν  
 τέχνας ὑπὲρ ἐλπίδ' ἔχων  
 τοτὲ μὲν κακόν, ἄλλοτ' ἐπ' ἐσθλὸν ἔρπει,  
 νόμους γεραίρων χθονὸς  
 θεῶν τ' ἔνορκον δίκαν,  
 ὑψίπολις: ἄπολις ὅτῳ τὸ μὴ καλὸν  
 ξύνεστι τόλμας χάριν.  
 μήτ' ἐμοὶ παρέστιος  
 γένοιτο μήτ' ἴσον φρονῶν  
 ὃς τάδ' ἔρδοι.<sup>212</sup>

The threat of being ostracised (if not abiding by common values, ἴσον φρονῶν) contrasts with membership of the city. Honour and duty to the πόλις and obedience to its laws drive the song. Speech, piety, and belonging, these make one civilised. Without them, one is an

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scale of humanity or above it...". Aristot. *Pol.* 1.1253a. The use of ἄπολις heightens the city's significance through the consequence of its loss.

<sup>211</sup> Nielson, T., and Hansen, M. (2004), "The polis provided its citizens with a feeling of common identity based on traditions, culture, ceremonies, symbols and sometimes (presumed) common descent. For a Greek citizen the polis was his fatherland (patris), for which he was expected, if necessary, to die..." p.124.

<sup>212</sup> *Ant.* 365f: "Skilful beyond hope is the contrivance of his art, and he advances sometimes to evil, at other times to good. When he applies the laws of the earth and the justice the gods have sworn to uphold he is high in the city; outcast from the city is he whom the ignoble consorts for the sake of gain. May he who does such things never sit by my hearth or share my thoughts". Crane, G. (1989). Kirkwood, G. (1991). Tyrell, W., and Bennett, L. (1998).

outsider. The πόλις is the pinnacle of human endeavour; intrinsically linked to the fortune of its citizens. With θεῶν τ' ἔνορκον δίκαν, man is prosperous when he adheres to the laws of the gods. In opposition, man does not flourish when he overstretches or crosses boundaries. In sympathy with Aristotle, quoted above, in the *Antigone*, the loss of city equates to the loss of identity.<sup>213</sup> With no civic, religious, or public social structure to remember, there remains the danger of becoming citiless. One becomes, effectively, dead. No future is gained if one does not have a 'πόλις'; one loses any remembrance or commemoration, and misses the potential for laying down future memory. The forfeiture of city and identity threatens the very fabric of recalling personal history, as one's place in linear time is destroyed.<sup>214</sup>

### Internal conflict and memory

In the previous section, I assessed the threat of στάσις through the song of the chorus as they report on what the city has avoided.<sup>215</sup> Here, recollection shifts to focus on physical symbols of memorial. The attacking army routed, they raise a commemorative trophy: “ἔπτα λοχαγοὶ γὰρ ἐφ’ ἔπτα πύλαις / ταχθέντες ἴσοι πρὸς ἴσους

<sup>213</sup> Aristot. *Pol.* 1.1253a. Unless one is lower than humanity, or a higher being.

<sup>214</sup> See Perikles' funeral oration quoted in introduction.

<sup>215</sup> *Agamemnon* (34f) juxtaposes internal στάσις with the conflict of Troy: “γένοιτο δ’ οὖν μολόντος εὐφιλῆ χέρα / ἄνακτος οἴκων τῇδε βαστάσαι χερί. / τὰ δ’ ἄλλα σιγῶ: βοῦς ἐπὶ γλώσση μέγας / βέβηκεν: οἶκος δ’ αὐτός, εἰ φθογγὴν λάβοι, / σαφέστατ’ ἂν λέξειεν: ὡς ἐκὼν ἐγὼ / μαθοῦσιν αὐδῶ κού μαθοῦσι λήθομαι”. “Well, anyway, may it come to pass that the master of the house comes home and that I clasp his well-loved hand in this hand of mine. About other matters, I say nothing; a great ox has stepped upon my tongue. The house itself, were it to find voice, might speak very plainly; as far as I am concerned, I am deliberately speaking to those who know – and for those who do not know, I am deliberately forgetting”. The guard draws attention to memory (λήθομαι) and immediately dismisses it; it is dangerous to recall (also Cassandra's lament *Ag.* 1090f). Scodel, R. (2008), suggests that: “*Agamemnon*... is pervasively concerned with social memory and the ways power can be and cannot control it. The most powerful force of memory seems to be quiet, private speech; public proclamations and rituals attempt to manipulate it, but only partially succeed. Public memory is unstable”. p.132.

ἔλιπον / Ζηνὶ τροπαίῳ πάγχθαλκα τέλη”.<sup>216</sup> The memory of success and salvation deserves preservation with an honorific gesture to Ζηνὶ τροπαίῳ.<sup>217</sup> They display collective relief and recall this reprieve through a marker for the future. A visible indicator, it is set in contrast to the controlled, invisible recollection of Polyneikes. The sign marks the turn of external battle and the beginning of a different type of conflict that centres on the family. Not fully understanding the threat, Kreon moves to deny any rebellious influence and to promote victory over a traitor; ignorant as to the different levels of risk, and implications, attached to Polyneikes’ dead body. Conflict moves inside the city walls. Kreon’s own reaction to this hazard, and the divisions this exposes, combine to threaten the city from both an individual and group perspective. The conflict in the πόλις now arises through discord found in the οἶκος. It emanates from it and then by a cyclical process exacerbates it. The text uses individual clashes in order to underline the repeating pattern of division, and the requirement for memory to manage this.

In their parodos, the chorus pull recollection into sharp focus as they report on the war, and its outcome and consequences for Thebes. The city finds itself in a situation that is more than just a post-war context. The chorus’s cries of victory and rescue express the external nature of the war. It is ironic that with this triumph, discord becomes an internal city issue with equally dire consequences for the ruling family; public conflict has now become private division, στάσις moves into a more internalised issue, focused on the family. In victory, the chorus convey a sense of relief and recall the story of the city’s rescue after the enemy onslaught.

<sup>216</sup> *Ant.* 141f: “For seven captains, posted against seven gates, man against man, left behind their brazen arms for Zeus the god of trophies”.

<sup>217</sup> Also; *Eur. El.* 671, *Her.* 867, *Phon.* 1473, 1250. *Ais. Ag.* 577, *Sev.* 276f. *Isok.* 5.112, a trophy commemorates victory and defines a border. *Paus.* 3.10.6, 3.12.9, 3.14.7. *Pindar. Olympian.* 10.78. *Thou.* 2.924, 12-14, 4.97. *Soph. Trakh.* 303, 750f. *Xen. Hell.* 7.4.14. Burkhardt, W. (1985).



Although their perception of conflict is not wrong, they put too much faith in the idea that στάσις has been overcome. Their misguided ideas on resolution contrast with newly drawn battle-lines. The night has been a world of darkness and danger. Panic and an impending sense of destruction ensued. We find not an old recollection, but a memory that is both past and yet defines the present:

ἄκτις ἀελίου, τὸ κάλ-  
 λιστον ἑπταπύλῳ φανέν  
 Θήβα τῶν προτέρων φάος,  
 ἐφάνθης ποτ', ὧ χρυσέας  
 ἀμέρας βλέφαρον, Διρκαί-  
 ων ὑπὲρ ῥεέθρων μολοῦσα,  
 τὸν λεύκασπιν Ἀργόθεν  
 φῶτα βάντα πανσαγία  
 φυγάδα πρόδρομον ὄξυτέρῳ  
 κινήσασα χαλινῶ.<sup>218</sup>

The clash between light and dark is one that features heavily in the speeches of the *Antigone*. In the shadow of relief and fear, the chorus' song oscillates between life and death. They face the morning with hope and give thanks to their saviour.<sup>219</sup> They do not lament or praise a long-past war, but pray to the sun, ἄκτις ἀελίου, on the first day in Thebes, τῶν προτέρων. The implications for defeat for the chorus and city would be devastation, death, and slavery. Although they drive away those who threatened, a member of the invading force remains in the form of Polyneikes.<sup>220</sup> The chorus invoke memory with the end of (external) hostilities while setting the

<sup>218</sup> *Ant.* 100f: "Beam of the sun, fairer than all that have shone before for seven-gated Thebes, finally you shone forth, eye of golden day, coming over the streams of Dirke, you who moved off in headlong flight the man with white shield that came from Argos in his panoply, with a bridle of constraint that pierced him sharply".

<sup>219</sup> Winnington-Ingram, R. (1980), p.116.

<sup>220</sup> A pattern of an exile going to an external power; Alkibiades in *Thou* 11.18f and also at 1.112, Peisistratos in *Hdt* 1.59, other examples include; 6.39.0f, Aristiedes in *Hdt*, 8.79. Aristotle, *Ath Pol.* 13; Kimon in *Ath Pol.* 25.1f, Carawan, E. (2013). Hornblower, S. (2013). Piérart, M. (1992).

scene for Kreon's arrival. As they remember their victory, the chorus call to Dionysos and collective memory loss:

ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἃ μεγαλῶνυμος ἦλθε Νίκα  
τᾷ πολυαρμάτῳ ἀντιχαρεῖσα Θήβα,  
ἐκ μὲν δὴ πολέμων  
τῶν νῦν θέσθαι λησμοσύναν,  
θεῶν δὲ ναοὺς χοροῖς  
παννυχίοις πάντας ἐπέλ-  
θωμεν, ὃ Θήβας δ' ἐλελί-  
χθων Βάκχιος ἄρχοι.<sup>221</sup>

As they dance to forget, the lines between hymn, psychosis, and the divine blur, the chorus offer a song praising the god of delusional ecstasy.<sup>222</sup> It is significant that the chorus call for self-imposed forgetting, ἐκ μὲν δὴ πολέμων / τῶν νῦν θέσθαι λησμοσύναν. They adopt a strategy of group memory control in order to manage the city appropriately in victory.<sup>223</sup> However, a post-war Thebes still faces the potential for division. A contradiction lies here, as the city looks to a process of forgetting to assist in the post-war restoration. They pray for forgetfulness and sing of their elation, yet make a mistake, as the god they supplicate is one of mania and madness. The chorus reinforce their allusion to forgetting with their further call to Dionysos.<sup>224</sup> Scullion rightly suggests that: "Dionysos is the focus of Sophokles' portrait of the very human anxiety and delusion of the chorus".<sup>225</sup> Fear has passed for the chorus; their sense of freedom

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<sup>221</sup> *Ant.* 148f: "But since Victory whose name is glorious has come, her joy responding to the joy of Thebes with many chariots, after the recent wars be forgetful, and let us visit all the temples of the gods with all-night dances, and may the Bakkhik god who shakes the land of Thebes, be ruler!" *Ant.* 1146f. Oudemans, T. and. Lardinois, A. (1987), p.157. They also expand on the division of the chorus under Dionysos. Steiner, G. (1984), p.101.

<sup>222</sup> The chorus attach a form of psychosis to the house. *Ant.* 599f. Else, G. (1976).

<sup>223</sup> Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1989), p.141.

<sup>224</sup> *Ant.* 1146f. Arist. *Frogs*, 341.

<sup>225</sup> Scullion, S. (1998), p.122.

heightens as they view Polyneikes as a peripheral figure. Dionysos is petitioned to cleanse the city.<sup>226</sup>

The chorus' failure to flag the internal dimension of conflict matters for a variety of reasons. Firstly, the ambiguity acts as a dramatic mechanism to set Kreon up for his fall, it emphasises the irony of the situation. It also highlights Antigone's actions as a form of honourable recollection as it reflects on her personal, honourable, future. The chorus first attempt to manage the recollection of στάσις by manipulating and regulating their own memory.<sup>227</sup> They bring the city together with the fame of victory, ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἃ μεγαλῶνυμος ἦλθε Νίκα / τῇ πολυαρμάτῳ ἀντιχαρεῖσα Θήβα. As discussed above, the chorus see the past conflict as one fought with external adversaries, misinterpreting what type of conflict manifests itself at Thebes, and name Polyneikes as an invader. Their ideas on forgetting create a different kind of internal tension, one based in unresolved hostilities. The failure to think in terms of conflict and forgiveness affects how the chorus reacts to violence and success. In the context of conflict in the city, there must be a process of forgetting, amnesty, or agreement in place to overcome division or war. The leader of the city has a duty to steer away from war, yet here, Kreon does not recognise his tragic mistakes.

The chorus emphasise that punishment is due for disobedience towards city and family duty.<sup>228</sup> They recall selectively, downplaying the domestic dimension by detaching Polyneikes, and fail to grasp fully the nature of the conflict. The chorus ignore the relationship and his personal attachments to Thebes. Tralau suggests that: "The chorus may in fact already be oblivious, forgetting the past of the city

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<sup>226</sup> *Ant.* 1137f.

<sup>227</sup> Vernant, J-P. and Vidal-Naquet, P. (1988): "In Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes*, the beginning stresses the *stasis* between Eteocles and the chorus of women, and the end (whether authentic or not) shows that, with the division of the chorus into the supporters of Antigone on the one hand and those of Ismene on the other, we have moved from warfare against foreigners to civil war". p.334.

<sup>228</sup> *Ant.* 105f.

that never learns from its history”.<sup>229</sup> The cyclic repetition of death, punishment, and resentment once more affects the individual, house, and city. Loraux comments: “The war is over, and with it ends the *stasis* between enemy brothers, of which the war was only a consequence”.<sup>230</sup> As noted above with the example of the Eagles from Argos, there is a pattern for an exile to bring in a larger foreign power. As they report on the city, they set the scene for a deeply ironic action. The chorus misunderstand the situation and location of conflict, which affects Kreon’s own actions. They deliver their *parodos* after Antigone’s *prologos*, which has conveyed a report that focuses on the state of affairs in the city. The chorus already remember and recall incorrectly. Antigone’s report sets the emotional context of the impending drama. The action frames Kreon’s opening speech with irony, as he also misinterprets and assumes an incorrect action. It is Kreon’s duty to serve the city, yet his reaction endorses an overly harsh sentence on the dead body of the invader.

### Control of the dead

The move to regulate burial for traitors as a punishment has a basis outside of the text. There are examples that point to a tradition in Athens of regulation and punishing the dead through restricting burial and lamentation. Xenophon highlights the issue of burying those who have gone against the state.<sup>231</sup> Aristotle also illustrates this issue: “καταγνωσθέντος δὲ τοῦ ἄγους, αὐτοὶ μὲν ἐκ τῶν τάφων ἐξεβλήθησαν, τὸ δὲ γένος αὐτῶν ἔφυγεν ἀειφυγίαν. Ἐπμενίδης δ’ ὁ

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<sup>229</sup> Tralau, J. (2008), p.253.

<sup>230</sup> Loraux, N. (2002), p.193. Knox, B. (1964), suggests: “Ismene uses the dual: for Antigone (13, 50, 58, 61-62, 488-489, 558) or a couple of his brothers (12-14, 55-57): Antigone uses the dual at the beginning about her relationship with Ismene (21) and at the end to denote its parent (911). She does not use it on his brothers, who have not in his eyes the same status; the chorus uses it once for the brothers (144, 147) and once for sisters (769). Kreon does not employ it for the brothers, even if, in 170, he will recognize up to the existence of διπλὴ μοῖρα but he was pleased the deals with the two as a pair (488-489, 561, 770)”. p.80.

<sup>231</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.22. Quoted in introduction.

Κρῆς ἐπὶ τούτοις ἐκάθηρε τὴν πόλιν”.<sup>232</sup> After a judicial process, the guilty are banished in death. It is important to note this is not a complete denial burial, but more a restriction in a specific location. The conflict between duty, family and city, and post-war security, honour and burial, forms the base of the story in the *Antigone*. In a post-threat context, one’s membership of the city morphs into duty to defend. Kreon sets down certain principles:

ἔμοι γὰρ ὅστις πᾶσαν εὐθύνων πόλιν  
μὴ τῶν ἀρίστων ἄπτεται βουλευμάτων  
ἀλλ’ ἐκ φόβου τοῦ γλῶσσαν ἐγκλήσας ἔχει  
κάκιστος εἶναι νῦν τε καὶ πάλοι δοκεῖ:

Kreon highlights his own motivation to defend the city and punish those who would destroy the city. However, he frames his ideas on an argument that emphasises the dangers of taking no action. We find motivation to protect the city and, ironically, a call to listen to counsel. He continues: “καὶ μείζον ὅστις ἀντὶ τῆς αὐτοῦ πάτρας / φίλον νομίζει, τοῦτον οὐδαμοῦ λέγω.”<sup>233</sup> The city comes first. His resentment towards Polyneikes is steadfast throughout much of the play, manifested through an acute refusal of correct memorialisation in post-war Thebes. We find a contradiction here; he holds onto a grievance for past wrongs through the continuing punishment of the dead, this turns to anger.<sup>234</sup> Kreon relies on the wielding of retribution and revenge. His insistence upon μνησικακεῖν is to his own detriment and that of his family. Kreon imposes forgetting through the regulation of burial. Here, the power of recollection exacerbates progressively desperate attempts to control. He ignores both advice

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<sup>232</sup> Aristot. *Const. Ath.* 1: “The charge of sacrilege having been confirmed by the verdict, the bodies of the guilty men themselves were cast out of their tombs, and their family was sentenced to everlasting banishment. Thereupon Epimenides of Krete purified the city.” Rackham, H. (1952).

<sup>233</sup> *Ant.* 179f: “Yes, to me anyone who while guiding the whole city fails to set his hand to the best counsels, but keeps his mouth shut by some reason of some fear seems now and has always seemed the worst of men; and him who rates a dear one higher than his native land, him I put nowhere”.

<sup>234</sup> *Ant.* 21f.

and warnings, holding onto the past he fails and falls. Kreon is author of his own downfall through the denial of ritual in the form of correct, pious funerals for both siblings.<sup>235</sup> His action perpetuates a war that seemed at an end as the play began. The misguided attempt to put an end to the dispute by Kreon generates yet another set of family disputes, as demonstrated through his intent and desire to separate both siblings from the city. In performing one service of defence, Kreon abandons the other. Residual danger arises from the failure to forget past crimes and unyielding resentment creating a new kind of hazard. Ultimately, the situation reproduces the fragmentation of the past that the chorus call to manage. Kreon shows his resentment, and goes too far with his withholding of correct procedure, forbidding of ritual expression of grief and honour, and no burnt or buried offerings (κτερίζειν).<sup>236</sup> As he delivers this report, he advertises his insistence on holding a grudge. Kreon decides on the path for the city when punishing one who threatened the group, and makes this sentence public (ἐκκεκήρυκται). We see further penalty as the dead are termed ἔδεστος and absorbed into animals, further negating formal committal and lamentation.

The action to prohibit denies the performance of lamentation and curtails commemoration; it constitutes a very public type of condemnation. The king demonstrates his power with his first general act as ruler and a manoeuvre to punish for violence against the community and city:

τὸν δ' αὖ ξύναιμον τοῦδε, Πολυνείκη λέγω,  
ὃς γῆν πατρώαν καὶ θεοὺς τοὺς ἐγγενεῖς  
φυγὰς κατελθὼν ἠθέλησε μὲν πυρὶ  
πρῆσαι κατ' ἄκρας, ἠθέλησε δ' αἵματος

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<sup>235</sup> *Ant.* 773f. Goff, B. (2004B). Foley, H. (1995). Patterson, C. (2006): "Kreon's extreme solution – keeping a body unburied within the polis territory – was at no time in accord with Athenian law or Greek custom". p.34.

<sup>236</sup> *Ant.* 203f.

κοινοῦ πάσασθαι, τοὺς δὲ δουλώσας ἄγειν,<sup>237</sup>

Kreon notes that Polyneikes came to destroy his ancestral home, breaking fundamental values by dishonouring the gods. For this shameful act, he must be punished. There are no generalities here; Kreon specifically names Polyneikes as the danger. In contrast to the chorus, Kreon understands this was not ordinary invasion force, but a traitor who returned from exile to burn and subjugate, τοὺς δὲ δουλώσας ἄγειν.<sup>238</sup> The leader uses ἠθέλησε δ' αἵματος κοινοῦ πάσασθαι to emphasise that not only would the city be devastated but also the invader would literally consume them with an inhuman consumption of blood. The vocabulary here links to the *parodos*, as the chorus also spoke of the defence and rescue of the city taking on an animalistic feature. The act of remembering here is helpful when defending the city. An action that began with a reasonable move to defend the city turns into a refusal to give up the immediate past, which will fester and turn into resentment. Kreon eventually undermines both civic authority (elevating himself above the collective will) and religious practice (ignoring dues to the gods).

Haimon notes the escalation and widening of conflict through the breakdown of his relationship with Kreon. The collapse of power in the city parallels the fragmentation of their relationship. Haimon supports his father's authority (both politically and paternally), before challenging his role. An examination of their relationship supports the idea that Kreon has gone too far with his resentment, and introduces Antigone's future commemoration. In response to Kreon's anger Haimon pushes back, arguing that the city is a group of individuals. Thebes is not an autocracy, nor does the city belong to Kreon. The disagreement is summarised in his assertion: "πόλις γὰρ οὐκ ἔσθ'

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<sup>237</sup> *Ant.* 199f: "But his brother, I mean Polyneikes, who came back from exile meaning to burn to the ground his native city and the gods of his race, and meaning to drink the people's blood and enslave its people".

<sup>238</sup> 'Man of much strife', conflicts with Eteokles, 'Truly glorious'. *Ais. Sev.* 658f.

ἥτις ἀνδρός ἐσθ' ἐνός".<sup>239</sup> He doubts Thebes' support for the punishment of Antigone, suggesting the people only follow through fear: "τὸ γὰρ σὸν ὄμμα δεινὸν, ἀνδρὶ δημότῃ / λόγοις τοιούτοις, οἷς σὺ μὴ τέρψει κλύων".<sup>240</sup> The inhabitants of the city (δημότης) suffer in silence. A prohibition on speech, this translates into a fear of Kreon retaliating if challenged yet people question the edict.<sup>241</sup> He holds a reputation for resentment and anger, λόγοις τοιούτοις. Kreon presses obedience, asserting that he could rule alone. Haimon charges his father over this claim: "καλῶς ἐρήμης γ' ἂν σὺ γῆς ἄρχοις μόνος".<sup>242</sup> In victory, he would find himself μόνος, a monarch over nothing. We find the culmination of the argument for Kreon's authority and a challenge to his rule. Kreon relies on his rightful place as king: "ἄλλω γὰρ ἢ 'μοὶ χρή με τῆσδ' ἄρχειν χθονός,"<sup>243</sup> He goes too far; his tone, coupled with the action of ἄρχειν, emphasises his claim of possession of the city. Their respective inability to manage resentment seals their dual fates; this highlights a consistency between father and son. Their closeness resonates as Haimon submits himself as a spokesperson for the city, echoing the actions of his father and refusing to forgive. The underlying antagonism of Kreon and Haimon has dramatic repercussions for their present and future memory of their family line. The son does not marry Antigone and they both die, no heir appears to continue the bloodline, and with the death of Eurydike, the line of Kreon falls.<sup>244</sup>

<sup>239</sup> *Ant.* 737: "Yes, there is no city that belongs to a single man!" Also, Aristot. *Pol.* 3.1287a.

<sup>240</sup> *Ant.* 690f: "For your countenance is alarming to a subject when he speaks words that give you no pleasure". Jebb has: "For dread of your glance forbids the ordinary citizen to speak such words as would offend your ear". The issue is one bordering of fear and tyranny that forces the public to regulate their speech.

<sup>241</sup> Kreon alludes to this secrecy, *Ant.* 289f.

<sup>242</sup> *Ant.* 739: "You would make a good king in a desert". (Amended)

<sup>243</sup> *Ant.* 736: "Must I rule this land for another and not for myself?"

<sup>244</sup> *Ant.* 1293. *Ant.* 1192f. An error follows as he attempts to regulate punishment, losing his family by bringing death upon his own wife and child, as they become, in effect, sacrificial victims. *Ant.* 1339f.



### 2.2.1 The pain and division of the house

The recent past inclines the family and city towards division and discord. We find inter-familial fighting within the play as a recrudescence of the inherited strife generated by Kreon. His vocabulary permits us to identify how he develops his view of the conflict in the family unit. His failure both to remember (the role and location of conflict in the family) and to forget (the resentment of the immediate past) ensures that the past is re-enacted. His attitude towards the brothers crystallises his warped approach to remembering and forgetting.

The punishment of Polyneikes comes immediately after a persuasive statement of what one owes the city. The proclamation is appropriate, yet the action of exposure is an act of resentment that will be penalised. Kreon aims to defend the city through his plans to honour publically the dead defender and to punish and humiliate the other. Those in Thebes confirm this: “σοὶ ταῦτ’ ἀρέσκει, παῖ Μενοικέως, ποεῖν / τὸν τῇδε δύσνουν καὶ τὸν εὐμενῇ πόλει”.<sup>245</sup> Here, the chorus recognise his right, σοὶ ταῦτ’ ἀρέσκει, to impose any sentence.<sup>246</sup> In honour of his position, the city affords him choice. The ruler of the city has placed the respective burials of the brothers at opposing ends of the commemorative spectrum. Kreon makes public his decree, ensuring that the city remembers, and judges the brothers in terms of the present: “Ἐτεοκλέα μὲν, ὃς πόλεως ὑπερμαχῶν / ὄλωλε τῇσδε, πάντ’ ἀριστεύσας δόρει, / τάφῳ τε κρύψαι καὶ τὰ πάντ’ ἐφαγνίσαι / ἃ τοῖς ἀρίστοις ἔρχεται κάτω νεκροῖς”.<sup>247</sup> His praise is complete with his evocation to Eteokles; ὃς

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<sup>245</sup> *Ant.* 211f: “It is your pleasure, son of Menoikeus, to do this to the man who is hostile and to the man who is loyal to the city”.

<sup>246</sup> The chorus are bound to the king; there is parallel in *Oidipous Tyrannos*, 276f: “ὥσπερ μ’ ἀραῖον ἔλαβες, ὦδ’, ἄναξ, ἐρῶ. / οὐτ’ ἔκτανον γὰρ οὔτε τὸν κτανόντ’ ἔχω / δεῖξαι”. “As you have put me upon oath, so, my lord, shall I speak”.

<sup>247</sup> *Ant.* 194f: “Eteokles, who died fighting for this city, having excelled in battle, we shall hide in the tomb and we shall render to him all the rites that come to the noblest of the dead below”.

πόλεως ὑπερμαχῶν / ὅλωλε τῆσδε, his death, or martyrdom, is a sacrifice for the good of the city, a public commemoration of the best heroic defender (πάντ' ἀριστεύσας δόρει). The dead benefit from τὰ πάντ' ἐφαγνίσαι, this suggests ritual treatment; his consecration is antithetical to his brother. They commemorate Eteokles with τάφος, yet here they are not burying an ordinary citizen of the πόλις. The city remembers Eteokles as one of the privileged dead (τοῖς ἀρίστοις). Kreon's vocabulary focuses on promoting his own form of sanctioned memorial. The argument for Eteokles' positive remembrance centres on honourable burial, sacred offerings, and the entitlement of a prominent, physical tomb. Kreon controls which individual to recall and to what extent they are remembered. We see a notable parallel to the shining glory of the individual held by the city in Tyrtaeus:

καὶ τύμβος καὶ παῖδες ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀρίσημοι  
καὶ παίδων παῖδες καὶ γένος ἐξοπίσω:  
οὐδέποτε κλέος ἐσθλὸν ἀπόλλυται οὐδ' ὄνομ' αὐτοῦ,  
ἀλλ' ὑπὸ γῆς περ ἔων γίγνεται ἀθάνατος,  
ὄντιν' ἀριστεύοντα μένοντά τε μαρνάμενόν τε  
γῆς πέρι καὶ παίδων θοῦρος Ἄρης ὀλέση:<sup>248</sup>

We find an exchange for the life of fallen man who died in a noble way defending the city and the people, on-going commemoration in a public sphere and honour in death. A civic-based system of recollection promotes commemoration. The family and the city pay tribute to the dead. Κλέος coupled with ἀριστεία stress the provision and perpetuation of valour. Gender-specific masculine honour is also applicable to Antigone, discussed below.

<sup>248</sup> Tyrtaeus. Fragment 12: "His grave and his children are conspicuous among men, as are his children's and his line following them; nor does his name and good fame ever perish, and though he is underground he lives on forever, because his deed was noble and he fought for his country's and his children's sake when violent Ares pulled him down". Campbell, D. (ed.) (1982), Fuqua, C. (1981), pp. 215-26, Johnson, S. (1999). Mirto, M. (2012). West, M. (ed), (1971), Vernant, J-P. (1982), p.65.

Kreon has those who are deemed virtuous, remembered: “τοιόνδ’ ἐμὸν φρόνημα, κοῦπτοτ’ ἔκ γ’ ἐμοῦ / τιμῇ προέξουσ’ οἱ κακοὶ τῶν ἐνδίκων. / ἀλλ’ ὅστις εὖνους τῇδε τῇ πόλει, θανὼν / καὶ ζῶν ὁμοίως ἐξ γ’ ἐμοῦ τιμήσεται”.<sup>249</sup> He assures an official lasting memory of the protector, defined as ἔνδικος. The repeated allusions to honour are significant; if one is loyal to Thebes, he receives tribute by the city and in the city after death.<sup>250</sup> Antigone does not argue against Eteokles being buried or remembered with honour: “Ἐτεοκλέα μὲν, ὡς λέγουσι, σὺν δίκης / χρήσει δικαίᾳ καὶ νόμῳ, κατὰ χθονὸς / ἔκρυσσε τοῖς ἔνερθεν ἔντιμον νεκροῖς”.<sup>251</sup> As pious defender, Eteokles gains (as the people report, ὡς λέγουσι) a privileged and revered burial and memorialisation, as the ruling of the city, σὺν δίκης / χρήσει δικαίᾳ καὶ νόμῳ. However, this is Kreon’s prerogative. The defence of Thebes was Eteokles’ objective. The action confirms his suitability for ritual commemoration by the city.

Kreon’s anger has an end. As he realises his error, he reveals his personal apprehension as funerary arrangements are hastily put into place. Kreon makes another mistake in recalling correct behaviour, endeavouring to first bury Polyneikes rather than freeing Antigone: “καὶ τύμβον ὀρθόκρανον οἰκείας χθονὸς / χῶσαντες αὖθις πρὸς λιθόστρωτον κόρης / νυμφεῖον Ἰδίου κοῖλον εἰσεβαίνομεν”.<sup>252</sup> A form of ritual burial for both of Oidipous’ children is realised, they finally reside in a τύμβον ὀρθόκρανον. The display of the memorial of the traitor is both prominent and public. Roselli examines the location of the grave and focuses on the type of burial given: “The description indicates that the funeral monument of Polyneikes is intended to be

<sup>249</sup> *Ant.* 207f: “This is my way of thinking, and never by my will shall bad men exceed good men in honour. No, whoever is loyal to the city in death and life alike shall from me have honour”.

<sup>250</sup> Compare with the argument of Menelaus and Odysseus in the *Ajax*.

<sup>251</sup> *Ant.* 24f: “Eteokles, they say, in accordance with justice and with custom, he has hidden beneath the earth, honoured among the dead below”.

<sup>252</sup> *Ant.* 1202f: “And we heaped up a tall burial mound of our own earth, and after that approached the maiden’s hollow bridal chamber of death with its stony floor”. The allusion to warped marriage, κόρης νυμφεῖον Ἰδίου, pulls into focus what Kreon has taken from Antigone, and how he threatens the lineage.

conspicuous”.<sup>253</sup> The committal of Polyneikes is in his homeland, finally performed using specifically Theban earth. The recent past shapes present actions, as Kreon relies on the chorus for support:

ὕμᾱς δ’ ἐγὼ πομποῖσιν ἐκ πάντων δίχα  
ἔστειλ’ ἰκέσθαι τοῦτο μὲν τὰ Λαΐου  
σέβοντας εἰδὼς εὖ θρόνων ἀεὶ κράτη,  
τοῦτ’ αὖθις, ἥνικ’ Οἰδίπους ὥρθου πόλιν,  
\*\*\*\*\*  
κάπεῖ διώλετ’, ἀμφὶ τοὺς κείνων ἔτι  
παῖδας μένοντας ἐμπέδοις φρονήμασιν.<sup>254</sup>

Kreon does not allow anyone to influence his decisions, yet emphasises historical loyalty to the house. He ignores the chorus’s initial lukewarm support, dismissing the proposal that the gods might be at work. As he describes their previous devotion, ἥνικ’ Οἰδίπους ὥρθου πόλιν, Kreon relies on past allegiances, ἐμπέδοις φρονήμασιν. Throughout this section, Kreon repeatedly fails to negotiate the gap between family and city. There are boundaries that men should adhere to in the context of post-mortem punishment. He does not recognise the opportunities to forget, forgive, or to learn from previous mistakes. Kreon depends on through the collective memory of Laius, Oidipous, and the children.

### Antigone’s act of defiance

The refusal to forget is paradoxical. A powerful awareness of obligation influences Antigone; like Elektra, she is an archive, in that her devoted insistence on performing burial rites is fundamental to

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<sup>253</sup> Roselli, D. (2006), p.153. For location: *Ant.* 232, 411-12, 1108-10, 1197-1214.

<sup>254</sup> *Ant.* 164f: “And, I have summoned you out of all the people by emissaries, knowing well first that you have always revered the power of the throne of Laius, second that when Oidipous guided the city <with my sister as his wife, you always served them faithfully,> and when he perished you persisted in loyalty towards their children”.

her role of warden of memory.<sup>255</sup> Antigone chooses to forget the treason of her brother, yet elects to remember her duty to kin as she takes responsibility for Polyneikes' burial: "ἐπεὶ πλείων χρόνος / ὄν δ' εἴ μ' ἀρέσκειν τοῖς κάτω τῶν ἐνθάδε. / ἐκεῖ γὰρ αἰεὶ κείσομαι: σοὶ δ', εἰ δοκεῖ, / τὰ τῶν θεῶν ἔντιμ' ἀτιμάσας' ἔχε".<sup>256</sup> She infers that Kreon's punishment goes too far, breaking sacred laws governing burial. To avoid retribution, Kreon attempts to displace any responsibility and by extension, accept any blame for her demise: "σὺ δ' εἶπέ μοι μὴ μῆκος, ἀλλὰ συντόμως, / ἥδησθα κηρυχθέντα μὴ πράσσειν τάδε;"<sup>257</sup> He deems Antigone disobedient.<sup>258</sup> In post-war Thebes, Kreon justifies the imposing of this type of sentence of death and exile upon her.<sup>259</sup> The decree punishes the traitorous dead. Antigone knew that burial and lamentation was against the law, yet moved against the edict. It was a public address (κηρυχθέντα), all the citizens would have been aware of it. Kreon sets her up to be liable to punishment: "καὶ δῆτ' ἐτόλμας τοῦσδ' ὑπερβαίνειν νόμους;"<sup>260</sup> As the defender of commemoration, Antigone confirms her crime, effectively signing her own death warrant. Kreon uses the verb ὑπερβαίνειν to charge that she has broken the laws protecting the people and πόλις, yet he is guilty. The exchange places Antigone against the city. There are, however, severe implications and consequences for her insistence on remembering. As she refuses to

<sup>255</sup> Women perform the main role for both the burial and the lamentation. The lament for Patroklos *Il.* 18.339f, and for Hektor, *Il.* 24.717f. Demosthenes. *Against Makartatos*. 43.65. See also the repeated iconography on lekythoi and other funerary vases depicting *prothesis* and *ekphora*; Ahlberg, G. (1971). Garland, R. (1985). Kurtz, D. & Boardman, J. (1971). Mikalson, J. (2006).

<sup>256</sup> *Ant.* 74f. "For the time is greater that I must serve the dead than the living, since in that world I will rest forever. But if you so choose, continue to dishonor what the gods in honor have established".

<sup>257</sup> *Ant.* 446f: "But do tell me, not at length, but briefly; did you know of the proclamation forbidding this?"

<sup>258</sup> Nielson, T., and Hansen, M. (2004), suggest disloyalty toward Thebes is a punishable offence: "In the case of conflict between loyalties, belonging to one's social group often mattered more than belonging to one's *polis*. That is undoubtedly treason, but it would have counted as treason for the losing faction only". p.125.

<sup>259</sup> For historical context, see MacDowell, D. (1963).

<sup>260</sup> *Ant.* 450f: "And yet you dared to transgress these laws?"

forget, she crosses the boundary of civil obedience, and moves to oppose Thebes and Kreon. As her parents are dead, Antigone ultimately chooses to remember one relationship over others: “οὐ γάρ ποτ’ οὔτ’ ἄν, εἰ τέκνων μήτηρ ἔφυν, / οὔτ’ εἰ πόσις μοι καθανῶν ἐτήκετο, / βία πολιτῶν τόνδ’ ἄν ἠρόμην πόνον”.<sup>261</sup> Her planned action would only recall a family member that cannot be substituted or replaced.

Antigone’s act of defiance continues through her request to Ismene, a plea to recall allegiance and duty to Polyneikes, and assist in his correct burial: “εἰ τὸν νεκρὸν ξὺν τῇδε κουφιῖς χερί”.<sup>262</sup> Duty and internal conflict bind together. The overcoming of division is either through an agreement of amnesty or through victory.<sup>263</sup> By laying this foundation, Antigone demonstrates the harmony between them, before challenging their unity. Domestic factionism undermines the relationship as clashes arise as traditional gender spaces distort, roles reverse, and individuals transgress boundaries. The king’s previous force of anger is causal to this division in now found in the family. Ismene resists the attempt to bring her into prohibited space; as females, they belong inside the house.<sup>264</sup> Space and masculine honour in protecting the city and family entwine to create a set of circumstances in which issues of gender become unavoidable.<sup>265</sup>

Although their choices and actions differ, as sisters, Antigone and Ismene share a past of pain and suffering.<sup>266</sup> Indeed, with her first lines, Antigone remarks on their relationship, stressing the importance of family bonds.<sup>267</sup> Antigone charges that she has forgotten which side she should take: “ἢ σε λανθάνει / πρὸς τοὺς

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<sup>261</sup> *Ant.* 905f. “Never, if I had been a mother of children, or if a husband had been rotting after death, would I have taken that burden upon myself in violation of the citizens’ will”.

<sup>262</sup> *Ant.* 43: “Will you bury the dead man, together with this hand of mine?”

<sup>263</sup> Rehm, R. (2006).

<sup>264</sup> *Ant.* 18f. Also, Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1989).

<sup>265</sup> Popescu, L. (2012), p.16f.

<sup>266</sup> *Ant.* 1f.

<sup>267</sup> Willink, C. (2000).

φίλους στείχοντα τῶν ἐχθρῶν κακά;”.<sup>268</sup> She immediately highlights the danger of being disloyal to one’s kin. A determination survives to remember (λανθάνει) one’s enemies, friends, and family. Recollection and a warning of fate attach themselves to the cursed family, which impact on present behaviour and amplify the severity of the situation: “νῦν γὰρ ἐσχάτας ὕπερ / ρίζας ἐτέτατο φάος ἐν Οἰδῖπου δόμοις, / κατ’ αὖ νιν φοινία / θεῶν τῶν νερτέρων ἀμᾶ κοπίς, / λόγου τ’ ἄνοια καὶ φρενῶν ἐρινύς”.<sup>269</sup> The chorus infer the historical offences of Oidipous pollute his daughters and the house. They refer to the repetition of mania in the family with λόγου τ’ ἄνοια and φρενῶν ἐρινύς; the haunting memory of disaster has the potential to destroy the family. Tragic misfortune and events repeat down through generations and now mark Antigone, κατ’ αὖ νιν φοινία / θεῶν τῶν νερτέρων ἀμᾶ κοπίς. She comes from a polluted house and family, the past influences her present decisions.

The chorus begin to realise that their thoughts in the beginning of the drama (the *parados*), were not correct, and that this is the continuing of conflict, not the end. They cannot just forget the past pain of the city. As an almost contradiction to their previous statement on the end of conflict, they highlight that evil has always existed in the house: “προβᾶς’ ἐπ’ ἔσχατον θράσους / ὑψηλὸν ἐς Δίκας βάθρον / προσέπεσες, ὦ τέκνον, ποδί. / πατρῶον δ’ ἐκτίνεις τιν’ ἄθλον”.<sup>270</sup> Their vocabulary indicates a shift from πόλις-wide general comment to a more family-orientated (noted with ὦ τέκνον) issue; Antigone is partly to blame through her lack of restraint. The use of πατρῶον δ’ ἐκτίνεις τιν’ ἄθλον alludes to this fate; it holds an unavoidable, linear conclusion. Antigone has also fallen foul of the actions of ancestors.

<sup>268</sup> *Ant.* 9f: “Or have you failed to notice the evils from our enemies as they come against our friends”.

<sup>269</sup> *Ant.* 599f: “For lately the light spread out above the last root in the house of Oidipous; it too is mown down by the bloody chopper of the infernal gods, folly in speech and the Erinys in the mind”. Else, G. (1976).

<sup>270</sup> *Ant.* 853f: “Advancing to the extreme of daring, you stumbled against the lofty alter of Justice you have fallen, my child! And you are paying for some crime of your fathers”.

Family guilt projects forward. The chorus sing of the pain in the family drawing on a memory of the past: “ἀρχαῖα τὰ Λαβδακιδᾶν οἴκων ὀρῶμαι / πῆματα φθιτῶν ἐπὶ πῆμασι πίπτοντ’, / οὐδ’ ἀπαλλάσσει γενεὰν γένος, ἀλλ’ ἐρείπει / θεῶν τις, οὐδ’ ἔχει λύσιν”.<sup>271</sup> They use ἀρχαῖος to identify specifically sorrows found in ancestry. The chorus also recognise the recurring pain that invades the family, οὐδ’ ἀπαλλάσσει γενεὰν γένος, which they use this to express the lack of escape from fate, οὐδ’ ἔχει λύσιν. The repetition of evil in the house threatens each new generation.

### Familial division and memory

We find a clear disparity between the sisters in their respective relationships with recalling the dead. Ismene’s response to Kreon’s edict is in contrast to Antigone’s duty. Ismene requests forgiveness for not remembering her brother in pious ritual. She asks for an excuse from recollection, calling to her family: “ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν αἰτοῦσα τοὺς ὑπὸ χθονὸς / ξύγγονιαν ἴσχειν, ὡς βιάζομαι τάδε, / τοῖς ἐν τέλει βεβῶσι πείσομαι· τὸ γὰρ / περισσὰ πράσσειν οὐκ ἔχει νοῦν οὐδένα”.<sup>272</sup> Ismene requires a form of forgiveness.<sup>273</sup> The attempt to placate the dead, τοὺς ὑπὸ χθονὸς, has the effect of angering the living. As she pleads for leniency, Ismene claims ὡς βιάζομαι τάδε, she is under the power of rule, τοῖς ἐν τέλει βεβῶσι, and has decided to obey the edict and refuses to recall. Ismene insists on following the decree: “ἢ γὰρ νοεῖς θάπτειν σφ’, ἀπόρρητον πόλει;”.<sup>274</sup> She

<sup>271</sup> *Ant.* 593f: “From ancient times I see the troubles of the dead of the Labdakid house falling hard upon one another, no does one generation release another, but some one of the gods shatters them, and they have no means of deliverance”.

<sup>272</sup> *Ant.* 65f: “I shall beg those beneath the earth to be understanding, since I act under constraint, but I shall obey those in authority; for there is no sense in actions that exceed our powers”.

<sup>273</sup> Possession of memory by the dead in the *Elektra* and *Oidipous at Kolonos*.

<sup>274</sup> *Ant.* 44f: “You are thinking of burying him, when it has been forbidden to the city”.



questions her sister on her intentions in connection with the ritual burial of Polyneikes.<sup>275</sup>

Ismene chooses to evoke the authority of Kreon, and recall her own place: “ἀλλ’ ἐννοεῖν χρή τοῦτο μὲν γυναῖχ’ ὅτι / ἔφουμεν, ὡς πρὸς ἄνδρας οὐ μαχουμένα. / ἔπειτα δ’ οὔνεκ’ ἀρχόμεσθ’ ἐκ κρεισσόνων, / καὶ ταῦτ’ ἀκούειν κάτι τῶνδ’ ἀλγίονα”.<sup>276</sup> In defence of her non-action, Ismene relies on the idea of the sisters’ position. She establishes herself as one who seeks an unobtrusive existence with the verb ἐννοεῖν. Ismene advises that the sisters should be wary of any conflict with those in power, ἔπειτα δ’ οὔνεκ’ ἀρχόμεσθ’ ἐκ κρεισσόνων. Past loyalties guide present division.<sup>277</sup> However, Ismene suggests the enforcing of a specific type of conditional remembering: “ἀλλ’ οὔν προμηνύσης γε τοῦτο μηδενὶ / τοῦργον, κρυφῇ δὲ κεῖθε, σὺν δ’ αὖτως ἐγώ”.<sup>278</sup> She highlights the benefits of concealment with κρυφῇ δὲ κεῖθε, and bases her suggestion in preservation with an allusion to secrecy, yet proposes this is a joint venture, σὺν δ’ αὖτως ἐγώ. The action contradicts the recognition for Polyneikes that Antigone covets. Ismene becomes an adversary to both the dead and Antigone who is solely punished for taking responsibility: “οἴμοι, καταύδα πολλὸν ἐχθίων ἔση / σιγῶς, ἐὰν μὴ πᾶσι κηρύξης τάδε”.<sup>279</sup> Despised for her indecision, hiding the burial directly contradicts the public nature of funerals and commemoration by the family and group. The deed must be a public one. Ismene’s refusal to speak out shows that silence, or non-action, is as dishonourable as taking the opposing side. Ismene makes a family

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<sup>275</sup> Sophokles does not say the body should be buried. cf. Easterling, P. (1997).

<sup>276</sup> *Ant.* 61f: “Why, we must remember that we are women, who cannot fight against men; and then that we are ruled by those whose power is greater, so that we must consent to this and to other things even more painful”.

<sup>277</sup> The chrous assimilate Antigone with her father. *Ant.* 471f.

<sup>278</sup> *Ant.* 84f: “Tell no one of this act beforehand, but keep it secret and so shall I”.

<sup>279</sup> *Ant.* 86f: “Ah, tell them all! I shall hate you far more if you remain silent and do not proclaim this to all”.

connection through her focus on dual fratricide.<sup>280</sup> In parallel to this, Kitzinger stresses the division that exists between Antigone and Ismene: “The initial marking of the two different categories of people in the opening lines”.<sup>281</sup> Antigone provides a catalyst for change; mediating her account of the king’s post-war edict, one sister recalls, as the other forgets. She bases her vocabulary and argument for correct burial in the conflict surrounding reputation, contrasting the honour given to Eteokles with Polyneikes’ sentence: “οὐ γὰρ τάφου νῶν τῷ κασιγνήτῳ Κρέων / τὸν μὲν προτίσας, τὸν δ’ ἀτιμάσας ἔχει;”.<sup>282</sup> We see tribute for one, and with τὸν δ’ ἀτιμάσας ἔχει, dishonour for the other. Even in death and recollection, Kreon has the brothers divided.

### The dangers connected with ignorance

The repercussions of fratricide and regulation of burial consume Thebes as Kreon refuses to concede his anger, even as he is faced with the threat of punishment and hardship. To highlight the dangers connected with his improper remembrance, and to assess the move to forgive and build bridges, we can assess the role of Teiresias before examining Kreon’s contrition. The seer presents us with a counterpoint to Kreon’s posthumous punishment promoting submission and obedience. Memory appears in the form of listening and acting on the past: “ἐγὼ διδάξω, καὶ σὺ τῷ μάντει πιθοῦ”.<sup>283</sup> The story (and Kreon’s fate) hinges on learning through one’s mistakes. Kreon must learn and yield as the prophet advises, ἐγὼ διδάξω. Teiresias warns of the dangers of resentment, in this case, on-going anger towards the dead: “τίς ἀλκὴ τὸν θανόντ’ ἐπικτανεῖν; / εὖ σοι

<sup>280</sup> *Ant.* 11f: “To me, Antigone, no word about our friends has come, either agreeable or painful, since we two were robbed of two brothers who perished on one day at the other’s hand”.

<sup>281</sup> Kitzinger, R. (2008), p.33.

<sup>282</sup> *Ant.* 21f: “Why, has not Kreon honoured one of our brothers and dishonoured the other in the matter of their burial?”

<sup>283</sup> *Ant.* 992: “I will teach you, and you obey the prophet”. (Amended)

φρονήσας εὖ λέγω. τὸ μανθάνειν δ' / ἥδιστον εὖ λέγοντος, εἰ κέρδος λέγοι".<sup>284</sup> Once more, as with Haimon and the chorus, Kreon ignores a past relationship, and he fails to recall previous encounters and lessons. Kreon's action is the very opposite of bravery and heroism. To his detriment, he is once more, preoccupied with posthumous punishment seen with τίς ἀλκή τὸν θανόντ' ἐπικτανεῖν; this juxtaposes aggression against the dead with military prowess and post-war continuation of hostility, with fighting on the battlefield. It also emphasises a form of resentment that not subject to boundaries like death. Kreon attacks the dead in an attempt to punish further. We find a significant point in the use of μανθάνειν. The verb represents the driving force behind this section, and is presented here as a warning for Kreon. The positive action of memory (through correct burial) is a lesson, one that contrasts with stubbornness. Listening to advice secures return, εἰ κέρδος λέγοι. As Kreon hesitates, he refers back to this divination: "δέδοικα γὰρ μὴ τοὺς καθεστῶτας νόμους / ἄριστον ἢ σώζοντα τὸν βίον τελεῖν".<sup>285</sup> The breaking of τοὺς καθεστῶτας νόμους invites wrath. Ironically, the transgression parallels Polyneikes' own punishment for disregarding one's duty to the city, noted above.<sup>286</sup>

Teiresias warns that the pollution spreads to the people, this is what happens when memory and burial are not respected: "καὶ ταῦτα τῆς σῆς ἐκ φρενὸς νοσεῖ πόλις. / βωμοὶ γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐσχάραι τε παντελεῖς / πλήρεις ὑπ' οἰωνῶν τε καὶ κυνῶν βορᾶς / τοῦ δυσμόρου πεπτῶτος Οἰδίπου γόνου".<sup>287</sup> Marked as παντελής, the corruption of the dead

<sup>284</sup> *Ant.* 1030f: "What is the bravery of killing a dead man over again? I am well disposed to you, and my advice is good; and it is a pleasure to learn from a good advisor if his advice brings profit". Also, *Il.* 22.371.

<sup>285</sup> *Ant.* 1113f: "I am afraid that it is best to end one's life in obedience to the established laws!"

<sup>286</sup> Kreon acknowledges the difficulty between right and wrong. *Ant.* 1105f.

<sup>287</sup> *Ant.* 1015f: "And it is your will that has put this plague upon the city; for our altars and our hearths, one and all, are filled with carrion brought by birds and dogs from the unhappy son of Oidipous who fell". Jebb has: "ἐσχάραι, portable braziers, used in private houses either for sacrifice to household deities (esp. "Ἑστία"), or for purposes of cooking".

consumes the city. The flesh of Polyneikes, described as δῦσμορος, infects through sickness:

ἔχθρα δὲ πᾶσαι συνταράσσονται πόλεις,  
\*\*\*\*\*  
ὄσων σπαράγματ' ἦ κύνες καθήγνισαν  
ἦ θῆρες ἢ τις πτηνὸς οἰωνός, φέρων  
άνόσιον ὁσμὴν ἐστιοῦχον ἐς πόλιν.<sup>288</sup>

Misery pours into the πόλις through this ignorance of recollection and commemoration. Teiresias labels the exposure as being άνόσιος as it threatens infection. He speaks with irony as dogs now spread the dead across the cities using ἔχθρα δὲ πᾶσαι συνταράσσονται πόλεις to define the widespread struggle. He charges that Kreon should listen and act in accordance with his teachings; this highlights his failure to recognise the seer's veracity, and provides another example of failure to use past experience to guide the present.

To learn in Thebes is to compromise: “πολλῷ τὸ φρονεῖν εὐδαιμονίας / πρῶτον ὑπάρχει. χρὴ δὲ τὰ γ' εἰς θεοὺς / μηδὲν άσεπτεῖν. μεγάλοι δὲ λόγοι / μεγάλας πληγὰς τῶν ὑπεραύχων / άποτίσαντες / γῆρα τὸ φρονεῖν ἐδίδαξαν”.<sup>289</sup> Knowledge and piety (μηδὲν άσεπτεῖν) combine to benefit one's happiness and life, πολλῷ τὸ φρονεῖν εὐδαιμονίας / πρῶτον ὑπάρχει.<sup>290</sup> The chorus encourage learning (ἐδίδαξαν) and offer a warning against arrogance, τὰ γ' εἰς θεοὺς.<sup>291</sup> Kreon ignores these opportunities, he is preoccupied with posthumous punishment, and his inflexibility leads to his downfall. His action through resentment and ignorance generates a sequence of emotions,

<sup>288</sup> *Ant.* 1080f: “All the cities are stirred up by enmity... (corpses) of such fragments have been consecrated by dogs or beasts, or some winged bird, carrying the unholy scent to the city with its hearths”.

<sup>289</sup> *Ant.* 1347f: “Wisdom is by far as the chief part of happiness, and we must not in any way be impious towards the gods. The great words of arrogant men have to be always punished with great blows, and as they grow old teach them wisdom”. (Amended). These lines confirm the charge and punishment against Kreon.

<sup>290</sup> Griffith, M. commentary on *Antigone*: “An indirect vindication of Antigone”.

<sup>291</sup> Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1989), remarks on the teaching of lesson through hardship: “It is thus significant that the play ends with the chorus' comments concerning learning through past mistakes in vv. 1350-3. *Edidaxan* (teach, [literally 'taught', gnomic aorist]) is the last word of the play”. p.148.

actions, and reactions that allows the resurgence of conflict after the battle for Thebes. Teiresias comments on the obstinacy of Kreon:

ἀνθρώποισι γὰρ  
τοῖς πᾶσι κοινόν ἐστι τοῦ ξαμαρτάνειν·  
ἐπεὶ δ' ἁμάρτη, κείνος οὐκέτ' ἔστ' ἀνὴρ  
ἄβουλος οὐδ' ἄνολβος, ὅστις ἐς κακὸν  
πεσὼν ἀκῆται μὴδ' ἀκίνητος πέλη.  
αὐθαδία τοι σκαιότητ' ὀφλισκάνει.<sup>292</sup>

Teiresias argues that Kreon's decision and failure to act in the face of this action is his fault, he uses the verb *ἐξαμαρτάνειν* in recognition of his negative actions. He holds onto resentment, described as *ἄβουλος*. The section is preoccupied with wrath and insistence of denying burial, the consequences of not learning a lesson, and an insistence on subjective remembering, the repercussions of which condemn Kreon and his family. He does not permit the past to colour his judgement. Punished for his inflexibility, Kreon is guilty of being *ἀκίνητος*. Indeed, this is how he previously viewed Antigone as she vowed to recall. Neither of the individuals yield, but continue on their path of resentment. Easterling looks towards this misguided form of loyalty to the city to find motivation for action: "Kreon's gods, like Kreon, treat burial as a reward for public service. Like him they execute retaliatory justice based on loyalty to their city and laws".<sup>293</sup> He projects his own expectation of punishment upon the gods. As noted above, in Kreon's version of death there is honour for Eteokles in Hades. His gods punish, hold resentment, and retaliate, in contrast with Antigone's view, which honours Polyneikes. Her gods forgive, recall life, and ensure family bonds stay intact.

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<sup>292</sup> *Ant.* 1023f: "All men are liable to make mistakes; and when a man does this, he who after getting into trouble tried to repair the damage and does not remain immovable is not foolish or miserable".

<sup>293</sup> Easterling, P. (1997), p.29.

The seer possesses the power to warn.<sup>294</sup> As Kreon ignores his advice, the text invites us to anticipate the negative consequence of Kreon's actions. His *volte-face* confirms not only that Teiresias is correct, but also that the prophet's power and foresight should be trusted and heeded. Capitulation and acceptance now guide Kreon's actions. His submission in light of Tiresias' advice gradually becomes apparent, as he comprehends the potential for disaster: "ἔγνωκα καὐτὸς καὶ ταράσσομαι φρένας. / τό τ' εἰκαθεῖν γὰρ δεινόν, ἀντιστάντα δὲ / Ἄτης πατάξαι θυμὸν ἐν λίνῳ πάρα".<sup>295</sup> The chorus are correct in their acceptance of the seer's prophecy, yet Kreon fears to yield, τό τ' εἰκαθεῖν γὰρ δεινόν. Pride and arrogance punish him, Ἄτης πατάξαι θυμὸν. Kreon places his trust in their advice, they reply by attempting to move him to action: "ἐλθὼν κόρην μὲν ἐκ κατώρυχος στέγης / ἄνεις, κτίσον δὲ τῷ προκειμένῳ, τάφον".<sup>296</sup> Their advice begins with a recommendation as they stress ἐκ κατώρυχος στέγης, free Antigone from her burial chamber. The chorus attempt to restore balance by bestowing proper memorial for Polyneikes.

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<sup>294</sup> Flower, M. (2008). Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1989).

<sup>295</sup> *Ant.* 1095f: "I know it myself, and my mind is disturbed! For to yield would be terrible, but if I resist, my will may run into the fowler's net of disaster".

<sup>296</sup> *Ant.* 1100f: "Go and release the girl from the subterranean dwelling, and make a tomb for him who lies there!"

### 2.3 Prophecy and punishment

Kreon's refusal to let go of the past ultimately brings him into conflict with the gods. He persists in his intention to punish for past wrongs remembered, but fails at the same time to remember the basis of Teiresias's authority. The gods, present (if invisible) and vocal in the play through their representative Teiresias do not support Kreon. The seer is their agent and he focuses on Kreon's liability, but what gives the prophet his authority? The cost of retribution comes not for Kreon but his progeny in payment of a debt.<sup>297</sup> The link Teiresias has with the divine goes some way to securing his authenticity and credentials as one who can teach. Advice comes in the form of signs:

γνώση, τέχνης σημεία τῆς ἐμῆς κλύων.  
εἰς γὰρ παλαιὸν θᾶκον ὀρνιθοσκόπον  
ἵζων, ἔν' ἦν μοι παντὸς οἴωνοῦ λιμήν,  
ἀγνώτ' ἀκούω φθόγγον ὀρνίθων, κακῶ  
κλάζοντας οἷστρω καὶ βεβαρβαρωμένῳ.  
καὶ σπῶντας ἐν χηλαῖσιν ἀλλήλους φοναῖς  
ἔγνω: πτερῶν γὰρ ῥοῖβδος οὐκ ἄσημος ἦν.<sup>298</sup>

Kreon attempts to control something no man has power over, interrupting the flow of χάρις. Kreon's resistance to the divine laws dishonours the gods and is the most destructive part of his behaviour. He also labels the prophet a fraud, becoming defensive and angry; challenging Teiresias that he is avaricious, alleging the dishonourable nature of pious divination in an attempt to discredit.<sup>299</sup> Kreon argues that the seer's advice is somehow tainted. Driven by anger and deluded self-belief in his own truth, he ignores past mistakes until too late, refusing to remember. The emphasis is on the

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<sup>297</sup> *Ant.* 1071f.

<sup>298</sup> *Ant.* 999f: "You shall learn when you hear the indications of my art! As I took my place on my ancient seat for observing birds where I can mark every omen, I heard a strange sound among them: since they were screeching with dire, incoherent frenzy; and I knew that they were tearing each other with bloody claws, for there was a whirring of wings that made it clear".

<sup>299</sup> *Ant.* 1036f.

past role of Teiresias and the failure to shape present actions. As the voice of moderation, Teiresias tries to convince him of his mistake. Mortals cannot silence the gods, like the bird signs, ἀγνῶτ' ἀκούω φθόγγον ὀρνίθων. He fails in this endeavour and Kreon poisons the city with ignorance. Teiresias appeals to Kreon to learn: “ἀλλ' εἴκε τῷ θανόντι, μηδ' ὀλωλότα / κέντει”, a petition to manage emotions.<sup>300</sup> Both he and the city incur penalty if he does not compromise. The plea of εἴκε τῷ θανόντι highlights the need to let go. The victimisation of the dead (μηδ' ὀλωλότα / κέντει) is a punishable crime.<sup>301</sup> The king dishonourably exposes a corpse, ignores prophetic advice, and challenges the natural order of remembrance by denying ritual.<sup>302</sup> The chorus lament the situation, as the city is caught.<sup>303</sup>

In his attempt to convince Kreon to relent, Teiresias invokes the divine. He warns that the gods lack pious worship: “καὶ τ' οὐ δέχονται θυστάδας λιπὰς ἔτι / θεοὶ παρ' ἡμῶν οὐδὲ μηρίων φλόγα, / οὐδ' ὄρνις εὐσήμους ἀπορροιβδεῖ βοάς, / ἀνδροφθόρου βεβρωῖτες αἵματος λίπος”.<sup>304</sup> The gods do not accept contaminated prayers, and the situation becomes dangerous for the city. In turn, this affects the way Teiresias reads bird signs; they are no longer εὐσημος; flesh taints the process of divination. Once more, we find Kreon's failure to shape present actions through recalling past actions. He resists the call to amnesty; Teiresias progressively becomes more threatening as his own learning process (divination) is curbed and polluted. With foresight, he explicitly tells Kreon how he has failed:

ἀλλ' εὖ γέ τοι κάτισθι μὴ πολλοὺς ἔτι

<sup>300</sup> *Ant.* 1029f: “Give way to the dead man, and do not continue to stab him as he lies dead”.

<sup>301</sup> *Il.* 22.371.

<sup>302</sup> *Ant.* 1039f. *Il.* 24.310. Zeus' eagle in Homer.

<sup>303</sup> *Ant.* 1141f: “And now, since the whole city is gripped by the assault of plague, come with cleansing movement over the slope of Parnasios, or the resounding strait!”

<sup>304</sup> *Ant.* 1018f: “And so the gods are no more accepting the prayers that accompany sacrifice or the flame that consumes the thigh bones, and the cries screamed out by the birds no longer give me signs... for they have eaten fat compounded with a dead man's blood”.



τρόχους ἀμιλλητῆρας ἡλίου τελεῖν,  
ἐν οἷσι τῶν σῶν αὐτὸς ἐκ σπλάγχνων ἓνα  
νέκυν νεκρῶν ἀμοιβὸν ἀντιδοῦς ἔση,  
ἀνθ' ὧν ἔχεις μὲν τῶν ἄνω βαλὼν κάτω,  
ψυχὴν γ' ἀτίμως ἐν τάφῳ κατώκισας,  
ἔχεις δὲ τῶν κάτωθεν ἐνθάδ' αὖ θεῶν  
ἄμοιρον, ἀκτέριστον, ἀνόσιον νέκυν  
ὧν οὔτε σοὶ μέτεστιν οὔτε τοῖς ἄνω  
θεοῖσιν, ἀλλ' ἐκ σοῦ βιάζονται τάδε.<sup>305</sup>

We find a prophetic warning here with ἀλλ' εὔ γέ τοι κάτισθι. Teiresias' primary function is to teach Kreon in the role of warner and religious authority. The ruler has offended both chthonic and Olympian gods, ἔχεις μὲν τῶν ἄνω βαλὼν κάτω.<sup>306</sup> Teiresias connects being impious and unholy to the decision to deny burial, describing the corpse with ἄμοιρος, ἀκτέριστος, and ἀνόσιος. Teiresias underlines that the impious mixing of living and dead, νέκυν νεκρῶν, is part of Kreon's mistake, ἀλλ' ἐκ σοῦ βιάζονται τάδε. Kreon's dishonourable actions concerning appropriate τάφος have blurred the boundaries between death and life, another example of the negative exchange of χάρις.<sup>307</sup>

Kreon is too obstinate to be taught. His ignorance of warnings connects with his general dismissive attitude towards the prophet Teiresias and his previous record. We may ask, why should Teiresias be trusted, and what makes him right? He is a friend to Thebes having previously prophesised for city and Kreon, his approach and

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<sup>305</sup> *Ant.* 1064f: "Then know well that you shall not accomplish many racing courses of the sun, and in that lapse of time you shall give in exchange for corpses the corpse of one from your own loins, in return for having hurled below one of those above, blasphemously lodging a living person in a tomb, and you have kept here something belonging to the gods below, a corpse deprived, unburied, unholy. Neither you nor the gods above have any part in this, but you have inflicted it upon them".

<sup>306</sup> Rohde, E. (1925).

<sup>307</sup> His last line contrasts with Antigone's own lament at being unentombed, unwept, and unlamented. *Ant.* 876.

conduct reflect the record of accomplishment he has in Thebes.<sup>308</sup> Teiresias gives the predictions power and relevance: “οὐκουν πάρος γε σῆς ἀπεστάτουν φρενός”.<sup>309</sup> Once more, we discover a lesson to be learned. We know he speaks the truth because Kreon tells us so: “ἔχω πεπονθὼς μαρτυρεῖν ὀνήσιμα”, he comes as a common model of prophet.<sup>310</sup> As one who gives sound advice, he uses μαρτυρεῖν to stress the past knowledge of which the king has previously benefited. We can draw a parallel with Kreon’s earlier dealings with the chorus, whose previous value he also acknowledges and then dismisses. The refusal to learn frames Kreon’s interaction with Teiresias. Although prophecy is not quite memory, Teiresias provides the link between past actions, present deeds, and future consequences. He comes with advice concerning the right form of action in the context of commemoration, exposing the risk and consequences of refusing to heed warnings. A familiarity marks the relationship between Teiresias and Kreon, made discernible through their conversations, yet their bond is fragile. The chorus identify Teiresias’ authority through their reference to prophecy, which also contrasts with Kreon’s present stubbornness: “ἄνῆρ, ἄναξ, βέβηκε δεινὰ θεσπίσας. / ἐπιστάμεσθα δ’, ἐξ ὅτου λευκὴν ἐγὼ / τήνδ’ ἐκ μελαίνης ἀμφιβάλλομαι τρίχα, / μή πώ ποτ’ αὐτὸν ψεῦδος ἐς πόλιν λακεῖν”.<sup>311</sup> The chorus reference the past as a guide against which to assess his present convictions. They express the long duration of time that the seer has guided the city and how this relationship with the future can be trusted. The prophet has always been a friend and as noted with ψεῦδος, he is not one who lies, nor has he been wrong in the past.

<sup>308</sup> Reflects Haimon and the chorus, who both initially support Kreon.

<sup>309</sup> *Ant.* 993: “In the past I have not been used to depart from your counsel”.

<sup>310</sup> *Ant.* 995: “I can testify from experience that it was profitable”. Beerden, K. (2013). Bowden, H. (2005). Flower, M. (2008). Johnston, S. (2008). Mikalson, J. (2009). For prophets in pre-tragic literature, see Bushnell, R. (1988). A metatheatrical dimension; he both belongs to an established type (the warning prophet) and appears to be the regular source of ignored warnings in Theban plays.

<sup>311</sup> *Ant.* 1091f: “The man is gone, king, after uttering a fearful prophecy; and I know that since this hair, once black, now white, has clothed my head, he has never spoken a falsehood to our city”.

The chorus believe his divinations (βέβηκε δεινὰ θεσπίσας), which develops trust. The situation marks Kreon's refusal to remember against an opportunity, through Teiresias, for redemption.

## 2.4 The cost of memory for Antigone

Antigone does not forgive or forget, she remembers Polyneikes through a responsibility to uphold familial laws: “σὺ μὲν τάδ’ ἂν προὔχοι· ἐγὼ δὲ δὴ τάφον / χώσουσ’ ἀδελφῷ φιλτάτῳ πορεύσομαι”.<sup>312</sup> Antigone is aware of the implications of discovery, yet deliberately disregards the order by providing burial. She uses τάδ’ ἂν προὔχοι’ to underline that she makes no excuses for her action. Antigone separates herself from the family through not letting her participate when requested, this results in Ismene’s isolation: “ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἔάσει τοῦτό γ’ ἡ δίκη σ’, ἐπεὶ / οὔτ’ ἠθέλησας οὔτ’ ἐγὼ ‘κοινωσάμην’”.<sup>313</sup> Through her complacency, Ismene becomes an enemy. The resentment Antigone feels is not subject to compromise, nor hidden: “εἰ ταῦτα λέξεις, ἐχθαρεῖ μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ, / ἐχθρὰ δὲ τῷ θανόντι προσκείσει δίκη”.<sup>314</sup> Hatred is here, demonstrated with the repetition of ἐχθαρεῖ... ἐχθρὰ, and a promise of bitterness and continuing resentment towards her sister from Antigone and their dead father. Antigone comes to embody unconcealed memory and unhidden memorial in her actions towards Polyneikes. She charges Ismene that keeping burial/funerary rites hidden reflect more negatively on the sisters than attempts to stop the exposure. She continues to begrudge, ἐξ ἐμοῦ, throughout the play, it manifests in her sister’s exclusion from punishment. As Antigone is recalled in the future with bravery and courage, her memory marks a departure from traditional female roles.

Antigone attacks Kreon; he pushed her to act in accordance with the god’s laws over that of man’s: “οὐ γάρ τι νῦν γε κάχθές, ἀλλ’ αἰεί ποτε / ζῆ ταῦτα, κούδεις οἶδεν ἐξ ὅτου ᾿φάνη. / τούτων ἐγὼ οὐκ ἔμελλον,

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<sup>312</sup> *Ant.* 80f: “You may offer that excuse; but I shall go to heap up a tomb for my dearest brother”.

<sup>313</sup> *Ant.* 538f: “Why, justice will not allow you this, since you refused and I was not your associate”.

<sup>314</sup> *Ant.* 93f: “If you say that, you will be hatred by me, and you will justly incur the hatred of the dead man”.

ἄνδρὸς οὐδενὸς / φρόνημα δείσας', ἐν θεοῖσι τὴν δίκην / δώσειν:". <sup>315</sup>

The speech indicates towards the temporary and linear nature of mortality (we see the past, present and future, οὐ γάρ τι νῦν γε κάχθές, ἀλλ' αἰεί ποτε / ζῆ ταῦτα), this is set in contrast to the eternal lives and laws of the gods. Antigone claims her nature shares in love rather than hatred: "οὔτοι συνέχθειν, ἀλλὰ συμφιλεῖν ἔφυν". <sup>316</sup> The ruler does not have the position to dictate how remembrance should, or should not be, applied. Although Antigone values certain members of her family over other, she offers her motivation and defence:

οὕτως ἔμοιγε τοῦδε τοῦ μόρου τυχεῖν  
παρ' οὐδὲν ἄλγος· ἀλλ' ἄν, εἰ τὸν ἐξ ἐμῆς  
μητρὸς θανόντ' ἄθαρπτον <δόντ'> ἡνσχόμην,  
κείνοις ἂν ἤλγουν· τοῖσδε δ' οὐκ ἀλγύνομαι.  
σοὶ δ' εἰ δοκῶ νῦν μῶρα δρῶσα τυγχάνειν,  
σχεδόν τι μῶρῳ μωρίαν ὀφλισκάνω. <sup>317</sup>

Antigone asserts that she is more threatened by Polyneikes' exposure than her own death. The focus here is on recollection and the value of burial and commemoration outweigh the threat of losing her own life. Antigone's final cry links themes of cursed ancestry, genealogy, spatial awareness, and piety:

ὦ γῆς Θήβης ἄστρ' πατρῶον  
καὶ θεοὶ προγενεῖς,  
ἄγομαι δὴ γὼ κούκέτι μέλλω.  
λεύσσετε, Θήβης οἱ κοιρανίδαι  
τὴν βασιλειδᾶν μούνην λοιπήν,  
οἷα πρὸς οἴων ἄνδρῶν πάσχω,  
τὴν εὐσεβίαν σεβίσασα. <sup>318</sup>

<sup>315</sup> *Ant.* 456f: "For these have life, not simply today and yesterday, but for ever, and no one knows how long ago they were revealed. For this I did not intend to pay the penalty among the gods for fear of any man's pride".

<sup>316</sup> *Ant.* 523f: "My nature is not to join in hate, but in love". (Amended)

<sup>317</sup> *Ant.* 465f: "So it is in no way painful for me to meet with this death; if I had endured that the son of my own mother should die and remain unburied, that would have given me pain, but this gives me none. And if you think actions foolish, that amounts to a charge of folly by a fool".

Antigone calls back to her ancestors to witness her present misfortunes. Alongside her piety, she confirms her royal credentials to Θήβης οἱ κοιρανίδαι. Antigone uses this to juxtapose how far she has fallen. The theme of exclusion extends as Antigone stresses that she is the only one left of the royal house. The isolation of Antigone amplifies through the behaviour of those who perhaps were supposed to support her.

Antigone relies on the pattern of contrasting darkness with the light to emphasise her point. She faces the cost, or rather consequence, of holding onto memory:

ἄκλαυτος, ἄφιλος, ἀνυμέναι-  
ος <ἄ> ταλαίφρων ἄγομαι  
τὰν πυμάταν ὁδόν.  
οὐκέτι μοι τόδε λαμπάδος ἱερὸν  
ὄμμα θέμις ὄρᾶν ταλαίνα  
τὸν δ' ἔμὸν πότμον ἀδάκρυτον  
οὐδεὶς φίλων στενάζει.<sup>319</sup>

Antigone focuses on life as she approaches death, ἄγομαι / τὰν πυμάταν ὁδόν, using ἄκλαυτος to emphasise her own fate. She does not receive the correct procedure of ritual that accompanies burial. The specific use of ἄφιλος locates Antigone's isolation within a backdrop of grief and victimisation. Her vocabulary focuses on loss and lamentation, for this is the price of recollection and of accountability. As her life ends with the removal from the sun, there is a hint to piety. Griffith suggests: "θέμις usually carries connotations of divine or traditional sanction".<sup>320</sup> To enhance the wretchedness of the present she projects forward. Antigone weeps for the future of

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<sup>318</sup> *Ant.* 937f: "Ancestral city of the land of Thebes and gods of my forebears, I am led away and there and there is delay no longer! Look, rulers of Thebes, upon the last of the royal house, what things I am suffering from what men, for having shown reverence for reverence!"

<sup>319</sup> *Ant.* 876f: "Unwept, friendless, unwedded, I am conducted unhappy one, along the way that lies before me! No longer may I, poor creature, look upon the sacred eye of the shining sun; and my fate unwept for, is lamented by no friend". Also 915.

<sup>320</sup> Griffith, M. (1999), commentary on the *Antigone*.

the house and juxtaposes it with her own fate, which she calls ἀδάκρυτος; emphasising the lack of care. She delivers her last line: “ἰὼ δύστανος, βροτοῖς / οὔτε <νεκρὸς> νεκροῖσιν / μέτοικος, οὐ ζῶσιν, οὐ θανοῦσιν”.<sup>321</sup> Antigone uses the contrast to lament that she has a form of regulated forgetting thrust upon her.<sup>322</sup> Lattimore comments on this: “[A] Familiar figure to describe death is the removal from the sun... Light was life, and the world of the living was the world of sunlight... The light is abandoned with regret”.<sup>323</sup> As they pray to the sun, renewal and the forgetting of past misfortunes, Antigone becomes victim of the opposite.<sup>324</sup> The ode reinforces distinction; triumph in day is light, as defeat and death are the dark.

Antigone exists in warped opposition with the dead Polyneikes, yet is present in the land of the living. The siblings’ parallel destinies reveal that they become victims of long-term resentment. With her fate and future cursed by Kreon, Antigone bridges the gap between the citizens of the city and the space in which she finds herself:

ὦ πόλις, ὦ πόλεως  
πολυκτήμονες ἄνδρες  
ἰὼ Διρκαῖαι κρῆναι Θή-  
βας τ’ εὐαρμάτου ἄλσος, ἔμ-  
πας ξυμμάρτυρας ὕμ’ ἐπικτῶμαι,  
οἷα φίλων ἄκλαυτος, οἷοις νόμοις  
πρὸς ἔργμα τυμβόχωστον ἔρ-  
χομαι τάφου ποταινίου.<sup>325</sup>

<sup>321</sup> *Ant.* 850f: “Ah, unhappy one, living neither among mortals nor as a shade among the shades, neither with the living nor with the dead!”

<sup>322</sup> *Ant.* 806f. Her wedding and burial is compared to Danae by the chorus at 944f. For *parthenos* death of Antigone, see Lattimore, R. (1942). Rehm, R. (1994).

<sup>323</sup> Lattimore, R. (1942), p.161.

<sup>324</sup> The theme of sunlight has come full circle from the choral lament at the opening to the beginning of Antigone’s cry at 809: “νέατον δὲ φέγγος λεύσσουσαν ἀελίου”.

<sup>325</sup> *Ant.* 841f: “O city, Oh rich men of the city! Ah, fountains of Dirke and holy grove of Thebes of the fine chariots, you at least I can call witness how unwept by friends, under what laws I come to the heaped-up mound of my unexpected tomb”. (amended)

Antigone laments that nobody weeps for her, here she expresses her isolation and remote she is from city and people.<sup>326</sup> Recollection carries with it a price to pay. Antigone moves to her ἔργμα τυμβόχωστον, as she laments that there is no memorial, or τάφος. The suppression extends to include the end of the family line. Antigone connects the forfeiture of commemoration to the failure of heritage and familial future; a misguided cry as the chorus tells us that this is not true. She laments possessing no home, identifying the πολυκτήμονες ἄνδρες to contrast herself as one who has slipped down in social status.<sup>327</sup> She cries to the inanimate objects in the grove; she is isolated, φίλων ἄκλαυτος.<sup>328</sup>

### Future memory

The importance of future memory in the context of the chorus is highlighted through two separate functions. The dual aspects of burial introduce a sense of conflict surrounding the different perspectives of remembering Polyneikes. The first is to participate in the funeral. As Antigone goes to her burial, there is an element of concealing her physical state.<sup>329</sup> The second is to remember the dead in a social context through song and lamentation. For taking responsibility for remembering, Antigone invites penalty. However, the chorus eventually speak of the rewards she will receive for her actions: “σέβειν μὲν εὐσέβειά τις, / κράτος δ’ ὅτῳ κράτος μέλει, / παραβατὸν οὐδαμᾶ πέλει, / σὲ δ’ αὐτόγνωτος ὤλεσ’ ὀργά”.<sup>330</sup> The chorus see something exemplary in her conduct. Yet, we can identify a warning against pushing against law and those in authority, κράτος δ’ ὅτῳ κράτος μέλει. They support Kreon’s position and action.

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<sup>326</sup> *Ant.* 876f, 891f, 915f.

<sup>327</sup> *Ant.* 921f.

<sup>328</sup> The Sophoklean hero. Knox, B. (1964).

<sup>329</sup> This has changed from being publically stoned, (δημόλευστος). *Ant.* 36.

<sup>330</sup> *Ant.* 872f: “The respect you showed is a noble kind of respect; but power, in the hands of him to whom it belongs, is in no way to be flouted, and you were destroyed by your self-willed anger”. (amended)



Antigone's memory of Polyneikes frames her resentment towards Kreon, and her unrelenting anger, σὲ δ' αὐτόγνωτος ὤλεσ' ὀργά, that drives her to death. The chorus make no plea for amnesty in their song. However, as Antigone laments death, she does not regret or withdraw her decision to bury; there is no repentance of her deeds.<sup>331</sup> For this action, the chorus praise Antigone for not yielding as she approaches death:

οὐκοῦν κλεινὴ καὶ ἔπαινον ἔχουσ'  
ἐς τόδ' ἀπέρχῃ κεῦθος νεκύων;  
οὔτε φθινάσιν πληγεῖσα νόσοις  
οὔτε ξιφέων ἐπίχειρα λαχοῦσ',  
ἀλλ' αὐτόνομος ζῶσα μόνη δὴ  
θνητῶν Ἴδιον καταβήσῃ.<sup>332</sup>

The use of κλεινὴ καὶ ἔπαινον expresses a vital concept. The chorus project into the future, and emphasise how the people of Thebes consider Antigone. Even as her downfall was threatened, Antigone did not break. She goes to Hades unyielding. The recollection of honour is in stark contrast to what Kreon receives; sterility and a future denied through his own ignorance. We can identify a hint to war and martial valour, οὔτε φθινάσιν πληγεῖσα νόσοις / οὔτε ξιφέων ἐπίχειρα λαχοῦσ', this links Antigone to being recalled in a masculine role in life and death. Ideas of heroic courage and glory purchased for the price of death play out within a civic context. Death becomes exclusive for Antigone; confirmed with the use of θνητός to highlight her uniqueness. Indeed, honour does not extend to Ismene. The separation of Antigone from normality is marked as the chorus use the adjective αὐτόνομος to describe her. They commend her fortitude and strength in spirit.

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<sup>331</sup> See *Ajax*, examined above, and *Elektra*. 973f. Elektra tells of the fame that she and Khrysthemis would gain if they were to be victorious in the struggle to recall. Also, *Oidipous at Kolonos*, adheres to a similar value of remembrance.

<sup>332</sup> *Ant.* 817f: "Is it not with glory and praise that you depart to this cavern of the dead? Not smitten by wasting maladies nor paid the wages of the sword, of your own will you alone of mortals while yet alive descend to Hades".

Haimon represents those who lament the fate of Antigone. Like Teiresias, he arrives with honour, a result of previous conduct in the city. His idea of Antigone's fate, at first, seems to be one that interconnects with the view of the chorus. As he reports, the city remembers her and the outstanding honour she has gained:

έμοι δ' άκούειν έσθ' ύπὸ σκότου τάδε,  
τήν παῖδα ταύτην οἷ' ὀδύρεται πόλις,  
πασῶν γυναικῶν ὡς άναξιωτάτη  
κάκιστ' άπ' έργων εύκλεεστάτων φθίνει.  
ήτις τὸν αὐτῆς αὐτάδελφον έν φοναῖς  
πεπτῶτ' άθαπτον μήθ' ύπ' ὠμηστῶν κυνῶν  
εἶασ' ὀλέσθαι μήθ' ύπ' οἰωνῶν τινος.  
οὐχ ἤδε χρυσῆς άξία τιμῆς λαχεῖν;<sup>333</sup>

The people and city wish for Antigone to be revered, τήν παῖδα ταύτην οἷ' ὀδύρεται πόλις. Remembrance in memory and death loom nearer. As they lament, they promise to herald her fame, πασῶν γυναικῶν ὡς άναξιωτάτη / κάκιστ' άπ' έργων εύκλεεστάτων φθίνει. The chorus do not suggest Antigone be spared, or that she does not deserve punishment, yet they echo the sentiment of her receiving a reward. The sympathy expressed by the chorus does not stretch to attempting to convince Kreon that he is wrong up to this point. Haimon defends her, as the chorus do not. He describes the city as not just sympathetic towards Antigone, but it laments her life and the manner of her death. Haimon's stress on τιμή suggests she is deserving of high honour for her devoted loyalty towards her brother. He emphasises the shining virtue that Antigone should receive, οὐχ ἤδε χρυσῆς άξία τιμῆς λαχεῖν, underlining that she is unworthy of this sentence.<sup>334</sup> We find both civic duty and warrior values in the speech

<sup>333</sup> *Ant.* 693f: "But for me it is possible, under cover, to hear how the city is lamenting for this girl, saying that no woman ever deserved it less, but that she is to perish miserably for actions that are glorious, she who did not allow her own brother who had fallen in the slaughter to remain unburied or to be destroyed by savage dogs or birds. Does she not deserve to receive golden honour?"

<sup>334</sup> *Lys.* 2.79. Examines those who die for a worthy cause.

of Haimon. His speech explicitly marks the positive recollection and honourable commemoration Antigone receives after death. His argument includes a view of a honourable future for Antigone, the chorus and city aware of her impending glory.

### Antigone and her future

The value of κλέος is one that is open to interpretation. Tension exists between the price of glory and the cost one pays for it.<sup>335</sup> The chorus's collective emotional response to her downfall is one of compassion for their beloved daughter, who is also, paradoxically, the polluter of Thebes.<sup>336</sup> They show respect for the authority of Kreon and his duty until this power turns out to be misguided. They utilise memory and forgetting when it is necessary or appropriate. There are different perceptions of Antigone and her fate. The chorus and Haimon recognise the cost for this obligation of remembrance, and both perceive memory and memorialisation differently to Antigone. Her sadness provides a contrast to what will happen to her memory in the future. The chorus highlight what Antigone achieves in the eyes of the people: "καίτοι φθιμένη μέγα κάκοῦσαι / τοῖς ἰσοθέοις σύγκληρα λαχεῖν / ζῶσαν καὶ ἔπειτα θανοῦσαν".<sup>337</sup> Recollection goes against Kreon's enforced forgetting, as Antigone secures future fame. She receives tribute from the city after death, τοῖς ἰσοθέοις σύγκληρα; this is comparable to those who are equal to the divine. The king, having sought to hide Antigone away, fails to influence Thebes in its positive and collective recollection. Their high praises shape and guides the commemoration of Antigone as she faces death and concealment.

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<sup>335</sup> This reminds us of Tyrtaeus. *Praise of valour*. Fragment 12.

<sup>336</sup> *Ant.* 801f. *Ant.* 855: "ὦ τέκνον". *Ant.* 162f, 216 f, 1191f.

<sup>337</sup> *Ant.* 836f: "Yet it is a great thing for the departed to have the credit of a fate like that of those equal to gods, both in life and later in death". In life and death, this recalls Tyrtaeus. Fragment 12.

The notion of everlasting fame (κλέος ἄφθιτον, hinted at, but not explicit) is applicable to Antigone; although individuals seek to create memorials and memories of themselves, here the action is twisted.<sup>338</sup> There is a contradiction in her bravery, as she believes herself to be lost and forgotten, κλέος is not comforting or reassuring. Emotional conflict frames Antigone's everlasting fame and her of life. An important point, this goes some way to contradict Antigone's own assessment of posthumous punishment and her future recollection. She values personal remembrance, however lofty, less than the chorus does.<sup>339</sup> We come to another way of looking at in the shape of recollection and honour. The *Antigone* draws together key themes of reputation and the securing of commemoration. As Antigone's lament prompts the chorus to compare her situation with an example taken from myth, they extol the virtues of praise after death.<sup>340</sup>

The case of Niobe offers a precedent to Antigone's lament; this underlines her honour in lamentation, and steadfast determination to remember in the face of adversity.<sup>341</sup> The chorus remind Antigone that she is indeed a mortal and subject to very human consequences, Niobe was a goddess: “ἀλλὰ θεός τοι καὶ θεογεννῆς, / ἡμεῖς δὲ βροτοὶ καὶ θνητογενεῖς”.<sup>342</sup> The chorus impress the notion of mortality upon Antigone. Once more, an example from Homer provides background to the Sophoklean reference.<sup>343</sup> Akhilleus tells the story of Niobe to Priam, attempting to convince him to eat after intolerable sufferings. Having offended the gods, they take revenge:

οἱ μὲν ἄρ' ἐννήμαρ κέατ' ἐν φόνῳ, οὐδέ τις ἦεν  
καθάψαι, λαοὺς δὲ λίθους ποίησε Κρονίων:

<sup>338</sup> *Il.* 9.413. Finkelburg, M. (2007). Nagy, G. (1990).

<sup>339</sup> Loraux, N. (1986), highlights the conflict that will require managing, suggesting: “Analysis of compound words [that are] particularly numerous in *Antigone*... self-affection of *genos* itself, manifested in the many faces of self-destruction: infighting, domestic murders, *stasis*, self-mutilation [and] suicide”. p.165.

<sup>340</sup> *Ant.* 836f.

<sup>341</sup> Repeated from *Ant.* 815. *Ant.* 943, Antigone's last spoken line.

<sup>342</sup> *Ant.* 834f: “But she was a goddess, and we are mortal and the children of mortals”.

<sup>343</sup> *El.* 145f. Here is the value of the reference to Niobe used in the *Elektra*.

τοὺς δ' ἄρα τῇ δεκάτῃ θάψαν θεοὶ Οὐρανίωνες.

ἢ δ' ἄρα σίτου μνήσατ', ἐπεὶ κάμε δάκρυ χέουσα.<sup>344</sup>

Akhilleus indicates that the bodies were unburied for nine days, victims of not receiving funeral rites. They eventually gained burial, and Niobe relented, ἐπεὶ κάμε δάκρυ χέουσα. We find divine interference in both the case of exposure and in the motivation to bury. The example links Niobe to Antigone both explicitly in relation to mourning and implicitly in her final fate. The death of relatives and ceaseless memory with grief all permeate the myth of Niobe, making this a powerful comparison for Antigone.<sup>345</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> // 24.610f: "For nine days did they lie in their blood, and there was no one to bury them, for the son of Kronos turned the people into stones; but on the tenth day the gods in heaven buried them; and she [Niobe] then thought of food, for she was worn out with the shedding of tears".

<sup>345</sup> The observation makes for an appealing connection, as Niobe was the wife of the founder of Thebes, Amphion, and used as the exceptional example of everlasting grief.

## 2.5 Conclusion

The conflict in Thebes endures after Polyneikes attacks and dies. It overflows in the city as Antigone battles for remembrance in a physical and ritual sense. To ensure collective unity, the king fights to impose sanctions on commemoration and burial. A complex relationship with memory marks Kreon's connection with his own family and the city. A corpse belongs to the underworld and the living above ground, yet Kreon dishonours both these rules.<sup>346</sup> His refusal to learn or to recall previous conduct in the context of amnesty marks his behaviour as negative. As he leads, he becomes more isolated, metaphorically mirroring both Polyneikes and Antigone.

The threat to withhold burial, particularly in the dramatic tradition, is something transgressive, even in defence of the πόλις.<sup>347</sup> Both Kreon and Antigone take their respective compulsions too far. The leader of Thebes controls memory by sentencing the living to burial, and the dead punished through exposure. The impious action is recognisably negative enough for the dramatist to use to explore other themes such as revenge and resentment, kinship and hostility. The manifestation of resentment is a damaging control method designed to regulate and punish the dead, yet harms the individual concerned and by proxy, the city.

The repetition of vocabulary connected to burial and memory such as ἄκλαυτος, ἄθαπτος, and ἄταφος underscore the actions and motivations of the characters; Kreon learns too late to be flexible, and to save his family, as Antigone is punished also for being unyielding. At its core, the defence of the city drives Kreon's actions; he moves to protect boundaries after narrowly avoiding civil war. The connection of the individual to the group and city is an important

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<sup>346</sup> *Ant.* 203f, 1039f, 1195f.

<sup>347</sup> The benefits of relenting one's anger and resentment are clear, as we saw Akhilleus in the *Iliad*, Odysseus in the *Odyssey*, and Menelaus in the *Ajax*, all yield to the correct form of burial procedure.

dynamic to consider. Indeed, considerable danger is attached to becoming ἄπολις.

Antigone refuses to cease her own recollection as Kreon imposes his power upon both of the perceived traitors. He attempts to avoid having a physical memorial to Polyneikes and the perpetual reminder of his subversion. The king submits Antigone to the same fate as Polyneikes, forcing her into a state of isolation for her civil disobedience. Kreon attempts to compartmentalise memory, refusing μή μνησικακεῖν even after Teiresias has warned him to give way to resentment. If we view this through the lens of memory, the conflict between recollection and forgetting alters traditional burial, recollection, memorialisation, and resentment. One must not deny the will of the divine. Unentombed and unlamented, the exposure of Polyneikes' body has dire consequence.

### 3 πένθος ἄλαστον: Non-forgetting in the *Elektra*

The previous chapters studied punishment and reward through the regulation of memory. In the *Antigone*, the living protect the dead from oblivion and non-burial to the detriment of their own life in a city that would not recover. The *Elektra* places the story of memory in the context of conflict in the family, and importantly, the return to 'life' of a brother, son, and an heir. The *Elektra* exists in a world overshadowed by conflict in the disconnected family, division, oppression, and revenge, the story driven by brooding resentment and a final victory. Recollection of the dead takes form through warped remembrance procedures, physical objects, and the fear of those who are absent returning to take revenge. Memories compete and clash as characters attempt to dominate the present through different types of recollection. Klytaimnestra recasts Agamemnon's rule as she seeks to recreate the past. The protagonists adopt conflicting strategies to ensure survival and/or vengeance through subjective remembrance. Both Klytaimnestra and Elektra push against a force of continuous, inescapable memory, both haunted and driven by recollection.

The first section of this chapter examines civic memory in the form of memorialisation, location, and the urn of Orestes. It connects symbols of death and life to the processes of recollection and commemoration and links tangible proofs of memory to public remembrance. For example, Klytaimnestra uses redacted memory in the form of monumentalisation when seeking to manipulate the death of Agamemnon, presenting her victory to the city as one over an oppressor. Her anger becomes a focal point in the public sphere. Furthermore, Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos attempt to restrict the lamentation of those who remain loyal.<sup>1</sup> Klytaimnestra attacks the house through impious civic commemoration and warped

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<sup>1</sup> Scodel, R. (2008).



memorialisation. In comparison, both Elektra and Orestes reject the principle of *μὴ μνησικακεῖν*, insisting on retaining and recalling past memory. We may read this conflict against the action of giving offerings, as this brings the dead back into a sphere of interaction with the living. Characters perform physical acts of remembering without speaking, as memory is externalised. The dynamic is an important consideration as we interrogate to what degree Agamemnon influences the action. The middle section of this chapter turns from a civic perspective of recollection to a more personal viewpoint. It uses this to frame the isolation and intransience of both Elektra and Orestes. At stake, or rather the prize, in the struggle is the ownership and control of memory. The homecoming of Orestes marks a shift in the power dynamic of the city, house, and the family. He returns from outside the πόλις, completing his restoration at Argos through various stages. In a parallel announced in the *Odyssey*, Orestes' νόστος brings justice. Incrementally, in true Odyssean style, he regains his identity through a process of recollection and recognition, a series of events designed to reintegrate him into Argos. As with the death of the suitors in Ithaca, the reincorporation climaxes with the purging of those who have dishonoured house. In the latter stages of this chapter, I examine Klytaimnestra's position in Argos with reference to the chorus's views on the regime. The location of the chorus is significant as they define the political situation in Argos. Their advice to give up anger through drawing mythical comparisons and their sympathetic disposition towards Elektra strengthens the bond between the child of Agamemnon and Argos.<sup>2</sup> We find a paradox, as the conflicting nature of resentment not only saves the house but also threatens to destroy the family.

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Vernant, J-P. (1988). Also, Reinhardt, K. (1933), Segal, C. (1974).

### 3.1 The tomb of Agamemnon: The trophy of Klytaimnestra

The introduction to this thesis used the ἐπιτάφιος λόγος to highlight the role of civic commemoration in respect to the war dead in Athens. The chosen location for its delivery, the δημόσιον σῆμα, reinforced the communal nature of this oration-recollection.<sup>3</sup> In this section, I examine the connection between public and private memory. The power in physical tokens affects the relationship between the living and dead, the mechanics of which influence the function of commemoration and communication. The platform provides an opportunity from which to analyse Klytaimnestra's manipulation, as she attempts to impose her own narrative on Agamemnon through a familial-based approach to memory regulation. Johnston examines this in the context of repetition: "[It] protect[s] not only the individual citizen but the vitality of the whole citizenry from damage that might be done by the dead".<sup>4</sup> The memorial is a powerful and tangible point of recollection.

Examples from outside tragedy establish the importance of family memory within the public sphere.<sup>5</sup> The intersection between οἶκος and πόλις focuses on family tombs and civic memory that act as a barometer to test those wishing to become Archons: "μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα εἰ ἔστιν αὐτῷ Ἀπόλλων Πατρῶος καὶ Ζεὺς Ἑρκείος, καὶ ποῦ ταῦτα τὰ ἱερά ἐστιν, εἴτα ἡρία εἰ ἔστιν καὶ ποῦ ταῦτα".<sup>6</sup> The focus is on identity and remembrance of lineage and piety through the identification of burial and tombs. The questions test the suitability of the candidate and his family's connection with the πόλις. In addition, the speaker in Demosthenes supports the claim of belonging, as the references to death, family graves and public tombs prove a claim of citizenship:

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<sup>3</sup> Thou. 2.34f. Pausanias. 1.29.1f. Also, Low, P. (2010).

<sup>4</sup> Johnston, S. (1999), p.70. Lifted curse in a dying breath. Eur. *Hippolytos*, 1449.

<sup>5</sup> Davies, J. (1971), (1981).

<sup>6</sup> Aristot. *Const. Ath.* 55.3: "Then whether he has a Family Apollo and Homestead Zeus, and where these shrines are; then whether he has family tombs and where they are". Translation Rackham, H. (1961).

“ἔτι τοίνυν παίδων αὐτῷ τεττάρων γενομένων ὁμομητρίων ἐμοὶ καὶ τελευτησάντων, ἔθαψε τούτους εἰς τὰ πατρῷα μνήματα, ὣν ὅσοιπὲρ εἰσιν τοῦ γένους κοινωνοῦσιν”.<sup>7</sup> The specific inclusion of ἔθαψε τούτους εἰς τὰ πατρῷα μνήματα reveals that commemoration becomes a permanent, tangible record. With the use of γένος, the family are bonded to the city as an intermediary link.<sup>8</sup> The memorial is a tool to secure membership of the city and to preserve one’s identity. Morris rightly suggests that: “The *polis* used the tomb to create a communal ideal”.<sup>9</sup> The procedures that govern commemoration underpin burial as an activity that encompasses the dual spheres of living and dead. Alongside state-remembrance there is also forgetting in civic rituals.<sup>10</sup> Collective and civic memories become a tool of the city; it is the recalling of wrongs that guides revenge. The system of recollection, however, can be both manipulated and distorted.

As discussed above, the bond between deme and πόλις solidifies through public remembrance and lamentation. Garland links physical memory to topography through ritual:

The regular visiting of the tombs of one’s dead relatives was... an act of almost comparable importance to that of the interment itself... It was of vital concern to an Athenian that he should leave someone behind him who would not

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<sup>7</sup> Dem. *Against Eubulides*. 57.28f: “Furthermore, my father had four sons born of the same mother as myself, and when they died he buried them in our ancestral tomb, which belongs in common to all members of the gens”. Translation Murray, A. (1956). Family memory, see Dem, *On the Crown*. 18.288f. Bers, V. (2011).

<sup>8</sup> Humphreys, S. (1980), suggests: “Paying visits to the tombs of famous ancestors was not a pious duty, but a way of reminding contemporaries of the glory of one’s own family”. p.123. Also, Rouse, W. (1902). For a modern view see Low, P. (2010).

<sup>9</sup> Morris, I. (1992). p.131.

<sup>10</sup> The son of the tyrant Hippias, Pisistratos’ inscription fell victim to censure by the civic body. Thou. 6.54.6-7: “καὶ τῷ μὲν ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ προσοικοδομήσας ὕστερον ὁ δῆμος Ἀθηναίων μεῖζον μῆκος τοῦ βωμοῦ ἠφάνισε τοῦπίγγραμμα”. “The Athenian people afterwards built on to and lengthened the altar in the market-place, and obliterated the inscription;”.

only attend his burial but also perform the customary rites at this grave.<sup>11</sup>

The repetition of linking commemoration with offerings in a public context focuses on ancestry. Inheritance and reiteration; these are the dual pillars of the remembrance procedure. Isaios connects the continuation of family and correct commemoration for the dead through this relationship:

πάντες γὰρ οἱ τελευτήσειν μέλλοντες πρόνοιαν ποιοῦνται σφῶν αὐτῶν, ὅπως μὴ ἐξερημώσουσι τοὺς σφετέρους αὐτῶν οἴκους, ἀλλ' ἔσται τις [καὶ] ὁ ἐναγιῶν καὶ πάντα τὰ νομιζόμενα αὐτοῖς ποιήσων: διὸ κἂν ἄπαιδες τελευτήσωσιν, ἀλλ' οὖν ποιησάμενοι καταλείπουσι. καὶ οὐ μόνον ἰδίᾳ ταῦτα γινώσκουσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ δημοσίᾳ τὸ κοινὸν τῆς πόλεως οὕτω ταῦτ' ἔγνωκε: νόμῳ γὰρ τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν οἴκων, ὅπως ἂν μὴ ἐξερημῶνται, προστάττει τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν.<sup>12</sup>

The dead are the recipients of customary rites (πάντα τὰ νομιζόμενα αὐτοῖς ποιήσων), and through ὁ ἐναγιῶν, of cult.<sup>13</sup> Memories attach themselves to the tomb. In the context of the Athenian dead, the Kerameikos monuments are physical reminders of private active memory placed in a prominent, public place.<sup>14</sup> Once more, the city collective looks after its own in death, ἀλλὰ καὶ δημοσίᾳ τὸ κοινὸν τῆς

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<sup>11</sup> Garland, R. (1985), p104f. Also examines the iconography of the myth of Elektra.

<sup>12</sup> Isaios, *On the estate of Apollodoros*. 7.30: "All men, when they are near their end, take measures of precaution on their own behalf to prevent their families from becoming extinct and to secure that there shall be someone to perform sacrifices and carry out the customary rites over them. And so, even if they die without issue, they at any rate adopt children and leave them behind. And there is not merely a personal feeling in favour of this course, but the state has taken public measures to secure that it shall be followed, since by law it entrusts the archon with the duty of preventing families from being extinguished". Translation Forster, E. (1943).

<sup>13</sup> For repetition of the rites, see Griffith-Williams, B. (2013), Hame, K. (2008). Kurtz, D., and Boardman, J. (1971).

<sup>14</sup> Konstan, D. (2008), suggests: "If 410, or perhaps even 409, was the year in which *Elektra* was produced, then it was in the immediate aftermath of the overthrow of the brutal oligarchy of the Four Hundred and the restoration of the democracy in Athens". p.79. Seaford, R. (2013).

πόλεως οὕτω ταῦτ' ἔγνωκε, and those the deceased leave behind. If the children perish, the family line also dies. A linear duty of care exists, νόμῳ γὰρ τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν οἴκων, ὅπως ἂν μὴ ἐξερημῶνται, προστάττει τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν. The city has an interest in keeping and perpetuating family survival.

### Family memory in the tragic πόλις

As a tragic precedent to Sophokles' *Elektra*, the link between tomb, ritual and memory is expressed in the *Oresteia*. It provides an underlying substrate of perverted memory and controlled recollection of death in the πόλις.<sup>15</sup> Aiskhylos uses the regulation of memory in a tragic context. The procedure to bury and recall underscores the *Agamemnon*: “οὐ σὲ προσήκει τὸ μέλημ' ἀλέγειν / τοῦτο: πρὸς ἡμῶν / κάππεσε, κάθανε, καὶ καταθάψομεν, / οὐχ ὑπὸ κλαυθμῶν τῶν ἐξ οἴκων”.<sup>16</sup> Various internal conflicts surround correct tribute and permeate characters' actions, for example, the warped remembrance of a vanquished enemy. In the *Khoephoroi*, Orestes (alongside the Sophoklean Orestes and Oidipous, and the Aiskhylean Eumenides rescuers of the city) suggests a relationship between donor and recipient based in remembrance. The dead have a need to be recalled honourably through ritual, this is expressed through threat: “οὕτω γὰρ ἂν σοι δαῖτες ἔννομοι βροτῶν / κτιζοίατ': εἰ δὲ μή, παρ' εὐδείπνοις ἔσῃ / ἄτιμος ἐμπύροισι κνισωτοῖς χθονός”.<sup>17</sup> Orestes warns his dead father that future tribute depends on victory and therefore on Agamemnon's aid.<sup>18</sup> Ritual commemoration (δαῖτες) within the family unit links to the public sphere and recollection.

<sup>15</sup> *Kho.* 10f, Orestes identifies Elektra and the chorus remembering Agamemnon.

<sup>16</sup> *Ag.* 1551f: “It is not your business to trouble yourself with that concern. At our hand he died, and our hand will bury him, not to the accompaniment of grieving by those outside the family-”. Also, Hame, K. (2008).

<sup>17</sup> *Kho.* 483f: “For in this way the feasts that are customary among men will be made for you; otherwise, you will be dishonoured, while others dine well, on the days when Earth receives savoury burnt sacrifices”. *Iliad* 1.467.

<sup>18</sup> cf. Parker, R. (2011).

Repeated, communal banquets are tangible ways of remembering.<sup>19</sup> An example taken from *Isaios* raises the concern connected to the giver of rites: “ἡγεῖτο γὰρ δεινὸν εἶναι τὸν ἔχθιστον τῶν οἰκείων ἐπίτροπον καὶ κύριον τῶν αὐτοῦ καταλιπεῖν, καὶ ποιεῖν αὐτῷ τὰ νομιζόμενα τοῦτον, ἕως ἡμεῖς ἡβήσαιμεν, ὃ ζῶν διάφορος ἦν.”<sup>20</sup> The example reveals that the dead individual cares who honours them. *Isaios* continues, writing of the great dishonour that comes from one’s enemies celebrating a victory and death: “πρῶτον μὲν τοὺς ἐχθίστους Ἀστυφίλου ἐπὶ τε τὰ μνήματα εἶναι καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἔαρ <τὰ> ἐκείνου ποιήσετε.”<sup>21</sup> In the context of burial and post-mortem procedures there is a risk of suffering the consequences of deeply offending the dead through the actions of the living.

In the *Elektra*, *Klytaimnestra* forces libations upon the person whom she killed, which pervert the relationship between giver and recipient at tombs. The negative nature of the act is emphasised, as this was not an arbitrary enemy, but a husband, and father to her children. As we approach communal memory in public space, the actions surrounding the tomb highlight a shared culture of rites and rituals and suggest that memorial offerings can divide as well as unite: “μὴ νῦν ἔτ’ εἴπῃς μηδέν· ὥς δόμων ὄρῳ / τὴν σὴν ὄμαιμον ἐκ πατρὸς ταύτοῦ φύσιν, / Χρυσόθεμιν, ἕκ τε μητρός, ἐντάφια χεροῖν / φέρουσιν, οἷα τοῖς κάτω νομίζεται.”<sup>22</sup> There are two significant points here. The first identifies the arrival of the potentially infecting gifts, οἷα τοῖς κάτω νομίζεται. The second corroborates that the chorus and *Elektra* have something to hide from the other sibling. References

<sup>19</sup> Garvie, A. (1969, repr. 2006).

<sup>20</sup> *Isaios* 1.10: “For he could not bear to think of leaving his bitterest enemy as the guardian of his relatives and in control of his property, and of the customary rites being performed over him, until we grew up, by one with whom he had been at variance in his lifetime”. Translation Forster, E. (1962).

<sup>21</sup> *Isaios* 9.36: “First, you will send the bitterest enemies of *Astyphilos* to his tomb to celebrate the rites over him;” Translation Forster, E. (1962). *Isaios* 2.46 considers denial of family performing annual rites.

<sup>22</sup> *El.* 324f: “Say no more now, since I see your sister coming from the house, *Khrysothemis*, offspring of the same father and mother. In her hands are sepulchral offerings, such as are customary for those in the world below”.

and signs allude to the attendance of a non-present family member. Elektra believes she is the only repository of an alternative version of the past in Argos for Agamemnon and Orestes; however, there are others that recall through symbol and ritual.

Klytaimnestra's actions exacerbate tensions between the living and dead through her attempted control.<sup>23</sup> We find irony here; these polluted gifts are no gifts at all; the offerings sustain her destructive conspiracy. Elektra pushes for the recollection of Agamemnon through lament: "ἀρχὴν δ' ἄν, εἰ μὴ τλημονεστάτη γυνὴ / πασῶν ἔβλαστε, τάσδε δυσμενεῖς χοὰς / οὐκ ἄν ποθ' ὄν γ' ἔκτεινε, τῷδ' ἐπέστεφε".<sup>24</sup> She attempts to invalidate the presentation of Klytaimnestra's stained offerings. Ritual gifts demonstrate an effort to sway favour and to honour. In contrast, Elektra also relies on gift-giving and commemoration to strengthen her own relationship with the city: "κάγῳ χοὰς σοι τῆς ἐμῆς παγκληρίας / οἴσω πατρῶων ἐκ δόμων γαμηλίου: / πάντων δὲ πρῶτον τόνδε πρεσβεύσω τάφον".<sup>25</sup> She maintains her argument to ancestral rights and on-going inheritance (through γαμήλιος). Her claim differs from her mother; this is not a control mechanism, but both a statement of allegiance to the memory of the house, father and family, and on a more personal level, loyalty to a loved one. Elektra drives the defence of memory, membership to the deme and city, identity and belonging, and the dead's bond to the living. These issues expand outward from the conflicted family unit. Her subjective recalling of clashes with those in power in the city. Individual recollection of Agamemnon demonstrates how those in Argos interpret the past, as characters rewrite civic and personal history.

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<sup>23</sup> For the Athenian view on grave gifts see Plat. *Laws*. 4.717, 12.947f. Also, Garland, R. (1985). Kurtz, D., and Boardman, J. (1971). Alexiou, M. (2002).

<sup>24</sup> *El.* 439f: "Had she not been the most shameless of all women, she would never had placed these hateful libations offerings on the tomb of him whom she murdered".

<sup>25</sup> *Kho.* 486f: "And I will bring you drink-offerings from the full portion I receive from my father's house at the time of my wedding; and I will honour this tomb above all else".

Klytaimnestra's behaviour towards the tomb of Agamemnon is similar to her approach to the festivals. A propensity to both control and to neutralise exists in the public and private areas. Her appropriation of death and the past lends self-justification to her actions; memory is present in the form of retrospective control. A significant point, Klytaimnestra attempts to exert political power in the present and consolidate it for the future. She does this by seizing jurisdiction over the family's past, using collective memorialisation as a means of rewriting personal and civic history. As she confuses remembrance with the improper naming and use of a public festival, she appropriates recollection in a civic context. Klytaimnestra offers a dramatization of the past; the details redacted to suit her needs and motivations. However, we can identify another way to read Klytaimnestra's actions. The move to separate king from city, and the inclusion of his memory under her patronage, base themselves on the notion of liberty from both a hated husband and a flawed king.

Elektra confirms that Klytaimnestra commemorates victory with symbols of recollection. The killers of Agamemnon offer a different version of past events:

ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐγγελῶσα τοῖς ποιουμένοις,  
εὐροῦσ' ἐκείνην ἡμέραν, ἐν ᾗ τότε  
πατέρα τὸν ἄμὸν ἐκ δόλου κατέκτανεν,  
ταύτη χοροὺς ἴστησι καὶ μηλοσφαγεῖ  
θεοῖσιν ἔμμην' ἱερὰ τοῖς σωτηρίοις.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *El.* 277f: "But as if she is gloating over what she has done, she finds the day on which she treacherously killed my father and on it sets up dances and slaughters cattle, sacrificing monthly victims to the gods that have preserved her". Jebb has; "εὐροῦς", if sound, means simply, 'having ascertained.' We may suppose that at least some interval had elapsed between the murder and the institution of these rites. The usurper could not at first feel secure. Having resolved to institute such a festival, Clytaemnestra was careful to see that the day of the month chosen should be precisely that on which the crime was committed. The word τότε, implying some lapse of time, confirms this view". In addition, Kamerbeek has: "Some time after the murder she ascertained the exact day of the month in order to institute the ritual at that day".



The use of τοῖς σωτηρίοις marks Elektra's displeasure and flags a twisted sense of the need for protection from evil actions. Klytaimnestra celebrates as if an oppressive rule has been overthrown (ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐγγελῶσα τοῖς ποιουμένοις), pushing her own narrative of control in its place. Klytaimnestra asserts power in the city by using publicly fêted celebration. It becomes part of the festival, civic calendar, and repeated, ἔμμην' ἱερὰ.<sup>27</sup> An important point, the usurper institutionalises celebration through recollection, framed by propaganda and public misinformation. The sacrifice adds to the celebration's expense and prestige.<sup>28</sup> Elektra laments that they praise the gods with these monthly rituals of public feasts (μηλοσφαγεῖ); power lies in repetition. The religious nature of pious recollection is morally confused as she appropriates a central means of celebration and claims the civic voice for her own, rejoicing over a dishonourable murder. Klytaimnestra attempts to displace Agamemnon with her own regime. We may interpret Klytaimnestra's actions through two perspectives; they are both a personal victory, and a monument for communal consumption. She purposefully uses a very public symbol of collective recollection. The rewriting of Agamemnon's political past has an effect on the city and family.<sup>29</sup> The reality is that she and Aigisthos now rule through fear, this reinforces the objective of control for Klytaimnestra. Her remembrance process includes a public display; this is not clandestine or secretive, nor is her appropriation of *soteria* unusual. *Soteria*, in the context of political freedom and liberation, has a foundation in Pindar, whose ode highlights the relationship: "λίσσομαι, παῖ Ζηνὸς Ἐλευθερίου, /

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<sup>27</sup> Jebb has: "Every month, on the date of Agamemnon's death, choruses sang paeans, victims were sacrificed to the saving gods, and a banquet (284) followed. Monthly celebrations were frequent in Greece". Herodotos on ritual remembrance. 4.26.2f. Also: 6.47. 8.41. Kurtz, D., and Boardman, J. (1971), lists 10 different annual festivals. p.147f. Goette, H. (2007).

<sup>28</sup> cf. Easterling, P. (1997). Seaford, R. (1994). Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1989). Rouse, W. (1902).

<sup>29</sup> Thou. 3.58.4, Iso 14.61, Her 9.85.1, Pau 5.13.2, Diod 11.33.3, IG 13.3. Finglass, P. (2005), p. 205.

Ἰμέραν εὐρυσθενέ' ἀμφιπόλει, σῶτειρα Τύχα".<sup>30</sup> Raaflaub links the two: "Reference to Tyche Soteria as the daughter of Zeus Eleutherios once again establishes a close relationship between the deity of deliverance and deity of freedom".<sup>31</sup> The festivals provide a link between *soteria* and political liberty. Although the formalised celebration of the Delphic *Soteria* post-dates tragedy, the festival demonstrates how well known and revered the concept became.<sup>32</sup> Kotlinska-Toma illustrates that: "The festival was established to commemorate the saving of the Delphic Oracle from the Gallic invasion in 278 BC. The Delphic Amphictyonic Council instituted the festival to be held annually during the autumn equinox... They included musical contests... Comedies... Tragedies...".<sup>33</sup> In tragedy, the ritual festival provides Klytaimnestra with an opportunity to strengthen her control over the city, using a familiar and powerful tool. She confuses this approach with notions of ritual sacrifice.

Deliverance from oppression is linked to the cult of *soteria*, yet this is also about control and reshaping the past.<sup>34</sup> A celebration of

<sup>30</sup> Pindar. *Olympian* 12: "I entreat you, child of Zeus the Deliverer, saving Fortune, keep protecting Himera, and make her powerful". Translation Race, W. (1997). It is noteworthy that Ergoteles of Himera was an exile. The lack of knowledge of 5<sup>th</sup> century uses leads to a possibility of proliferation Greek of religious/cultural expectations.

<sup>31</sup> Raaflaub, K. (2004), p.106. Konstan, D. (2008). Hdt. 3.142. *SEG* xxvii. 65.21-2. Diod. 11.72.2. The chorus use *eleutherios* at El. 1509. to describe the house's freedom, examined below in 3.4.1.

<sup>32</sup> Xenophon provides an example of the relationship between the gods, *soteria* and sacrifice, Xen. *Anabasis*. 3.2.9f. The Aitolians move to appropriate Delphi and the *Soteria* celebration for self-promotion, inscription *FD* III 3:215. Pausanias. 10.21.5. Also, MacDowell, D. (1963): "The festival of *Soteria*... [was] established at Delphi by the Aetolians to commemorate the saving of Greece from the Gallic attack in 279". p.311. Nachtergaele, G. (1977). Raaflaub, K. (2004). Sabin, P., van Wees, H., and Whitby, M. (eds) (2007). Thomas, R. (1992). The *Oxford Classical Dictionary* describes *Soteria* as a festival or sacrifice specifically celebrating a "deliverance from danger on behalf of individuals or a community".

<sup>33</sup> Kotlinska-Toma, A. (2014). p.266. See also Sifakis, G (1967). Parker, P. (1996).

<sup>34</sup> On the *Soteria* festival at Delphi, 246/5. *S/G* 3 402, and 250/49; *IG* II2 680. For the epigraphic evidence, Champion, C. (1995): "Inscriptions... [of] recognition decrees for the Aetolian penteteric festival of the *Soteria* are cited as in Nachtergaele, Galates 435-47, henceforth referred to as Actes, nos. 21-27. These inscriptions are E.M. 7400 = *IG* II/III2 680 = Syll.3 408 = Actes 21 (Athens); Delph. Inv. 2275 = *IG* IX.12 194b = *FD* III.3 215 = Syll.3 402 = Actes 22 (Chios); Delph. Inv. 688 = *IG* XII suppl. 309 = *FD* III.1 482 = Actes 23 (Tenos); Delph. Inv. 2158, 2159 = *FD* III.1 481 = Actes 24 (Cyclades); Delph. Inv. 697, 698, 699 = *FD* III.1 483

liberation provides the conceptual background to Klytaimnestra's actions of control. For example, in the context of political freedom the chorus confirms loyalties as they close the drama, resistant to Klytaimnestra's machinations: "ὦ σπέρμ' Ἀτρέως, ὡς πολλὰ παθὼν / δι' ἐλευθερίας μόλις ἐξῆλθες / τῇ νῦν ὀρμῇ τελεωθέν".<sup>35</sup> It is striking that these last lines link to a re-establishment after political and familial turmoil in the family line, ὦ σπέρμ' Ἀτρέως.<sup>36</sup> Argos is freed (ἐλευθερία) of the impious rule. Konstan suggests: "The abstract noun *eleutheria* is not common in tragedy, and here would appear to be employed not only in the metaphorical sense of liberation from hardships, which is relatively frequent, but also in the political sense of freedom from tyranny".<sup>37</sup> Finglass suggests (after Griffin): "There is no mention of delivering the community from usurpation or tyranny, only a personal act of heroism for family motives".<sup>38</sup> The statement is not quite accurate, as the chorus approve the motivation to avenge the king. In the context of the civic aspect of the dispute and the attempt of the regime to control the memory of the past, the chorus support the children of Agamemnon. As they receive news of Orestes' death, they lament the end of the house.<sup>39</sup> They pray for justice, understanding the horrors the impious couple have brought: "ὥς ὁ τάδε πορῶν / ὅλοιτ', εἴ μοι θέμις τάδ' αὐδᾶν".<sup>40</sup> The chorus wish for punishment through death, regardless of status. Once more, we find evidence of a strong political action (ὥς ὁ τάδε πορῶν /

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= Actes 25 (Smyrna) (see now Petzl I. Smyrna 574); Delph. Inv. 6377, 2872 = Actes 26 (Abdera); Delph. Inv. 6203 = Actes 27 (unknown origin). Because of their fragmentary nature Actes 26 (Abdera) and Actes 27 (unknown origin) defy meaningful analysis". p.213, n.3.

<sup>35</sup> *El.* 1509f: "Seed of Atreus, after many sufferings you have at last emerged in freedom, made complete by this day's enterprise!" See Konstan, D. (2008).

<sup>36</sup> Also *El.* 764.

<sup>37</sup> Konstan, D. (2008). p.80. Also, Plat. *Menex.* 239a.

<sup>38</sup> Finglass, P. (2005), p.204. n18, After Griffin, J. (1999), p.79, n19. Finglass rightly warns against applying certain terms: "*Aidos*, *sophrosyne*, and *eusebeia* are too fundamental to have been felt as specifically associated with any particular form of social organisation". p.200. Also Henrichs, A. (1994), p.58. For a pro-πόλις argument, MacLeod, L. (2001). Kyriakou, P. (2011), *Elektra* as Tyrannicide, p.326.

<sup>39</sup> *El.* 764f.

<sup>40</sup> *El.* 126: "May the doer perish, if it is right for me to speak the word".

ὄλοιτ). However, they understand that speech is impeded. They link the city with the family, and the public with the private as the dual threat to the house of Agamemnon is cut down: “ὦ πόλις, ὦ γενεὰ τάλαινα, νῦν σοι / μοῖρα καθαμερία φθίνει φθίνει”.<sup>41</sup> We find a release from an on-going curse, the constancy of which is described with καθημέριος. The finality of the action repeats with φθίνει φθίνει. Although they apply this to the dying Klytaimnestra, it once more emphasises freedom and liberation for the house. Each side claims deliverance Elektra from her mother’s oppressive force, and Klytaimnestra from the recollection of Agamemnon.

Another dimension underlines the chorus’ support. They cautiously support Elektra and Orestes’ actions against the leaders of the city:

θάρσει μοι, θάρσει,  
τέκνον. ἔτι μέγας οὐρανῶ  
Ζεὺς, ὃς ἐφορᾷ πάντα καὶ κρατύνει  
ὦ τὸν ὑπεραλγῇ χόλον νέμουσα  
μήθ’ οἷς ἐχθαίρεις ὑπεράχθεο μήτ’ ἐπιλάθου  
χρόνος γὰρ εὐμαρῆς θεός.<sup>42</sup>

In order to resolve conflict, the chorus emphasise the giving over of one’s anger to the gods; they underline the plea for moderation (ὑπεράχθεο), pushing forgetting (ἐπιλάθου) over stability in the face of adversity.<sup>43</sup> They instruct Elektra to be brave (with the repetition of θάρσει), and to trust the gods to take revenge for past actions. They challenge Elektra to manage her vendetta with ὦ τὸν ὑπεραλγῇ χόλον. The chorus suggest that she leaves anger and retribution to the gods, described with εὐμαρῆς θεός, an affirmation of their power to bring alleviation of pain.

<sup>41</sup> *El.* 1413f: “O city, O unhappy race, now the fate that was yours from day by day is dying, dying!” Finglass, P. (2005).

<sup>42</sup> *El.* 174f: “Have courage, my child, courage! Zeus is still great in heaven, he who surveys all things and rules over them; make over to him your grievous anger; do not be angry in excess against your enemies, yet do not forget; time is a god that brings relief”.

<sup>43</sup> The supervision recollection suggests that memory holds a fundamental place in the world of mortals. For ὑπεράχθομαι, see Loraux, N. (2002), 159f.

Even if formal civic cults cannot be taken back to the classical period, the concept of formal sacrifice for salvation can, and one may assume that this is a familiar one from an earlier period.<sup>44</sup> We can study the concept and terminology of controlling of memory, the supposed intervention of a god, and the associative, collective celebration. For some, the city is generous and provides for the people: “θύουσιν οὖν δημοσίᾳ μὲν ἡ πόλις ἱερεῖα πολλά: ἔστι δὲ ὁ δῆμος ὁ εὐωχούμενος καὶ διαλαγχάνων τὰ ἱερεῖα”.<sup>45</sup> There are also examples in tragedy that inform an examination of ritual sacrifice in Sophokles.<sup>46</sup> Another consideration in the repeated celebration for Klytaimnestra is her presentation and control of these issues. These links strengthen further her manipulation of the civic and public body. The adoption of a chorus would be a powerful symbol to a late 5<sup>th</sup> century Athenian audience.<sup>47</sup> As Swift rightly suggests: “Choral performance permeated every aspect of Greek life, whether private or public, religious or secular”.<sup>48</sup> Pindar expresses the divine nature of choral dancing, and its close relationship to Greek ritual, religion, festivals, and society:

οὐδὲ γὰρ θεοὶ σεμνᾶν Χαρίτων ἄτερ  
κοιρανέοισιν χοροὺς οὔτε δαΐτας: ἀλλὰ πάντων ταμίαι

<sup>44</sup> The sacrificial victim as prize in an *agon* occurs as early as the *Iliad* (22.159), The most elaborate descriptions of sacrifice are in Homer, *Il.* 1.447ff, *Od.* 3.429ff, 14.414ff; Hes. *Th.* 535ff. Burkert suggests: “The memory of sacrifice stands in the center of the Dionysiac performance”. p.102

<sup>45</sup> Ps. Xen. *Const. Ath.* 2.9. “The city sacrifices at public expense many victims, but it is the people who enjoy the feasts and to whom the victims are allotted”.

<sup>46</sup> Aiskhylos uses the action to set ritual against a backdrop of twisted civic action. *Aga.* 135, 150, 218f, 258f. Klytaimnestra sacrifices Agamemnon 1433f. Cassandra is a sacrificial victim, as an animal, 1295f. Orestes is the sacrifice, *Eum.* 328.

<sup>47</sup> cf. Batchelder, A. (1995), p.31f. Also, Calame, C. (1997), discusses the chorus and their function in religious and political systems of the city. Seaford, R. (2013), remarks: “Tragedy is frequently set at the point of confrontation between the private space of the household and the public space of choral dance”, p.279. Cebrian, R. (2006). For Greek society, dance and song, see Athanassaki, L. & Bowie, E. (2011). Budelmann, F. (1999), (ed). Burton, R. (1980). Constantakopoulou, C. (2007). Easterling, P (1988). Edmunds, L. (1996). Gould, J. (1996). Kowalzig, B. (2007). Paulsen, T. (1989). Pickard-Cambridge, A. (1953). Seaford, R. (2013). Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (2003). Wiles, D. (1997), Wilson, P. (2000).

<sup>48</sup> Swift, L. (2010), p.36.

ἔργων ἐν οὐρανῷ, χρυσότοξον θέμεναι παρὰ  
Πύθιον Ἀπόλλωνα θρόνους,  
ἀέναον σέβοντι πατρὸς Ὀλυμπίοιο τιμάν.<sup>49</sup>

Dances and feasts are the holy preserve of the Graces. The gods are at the centre of these celebrations, participating in the civic festivals.<sup>50</sup> They ensure remembrance of the victory. Xenophon also captures the sacred aspect of the chorus: “καὶ ἐν τοῖς Διονυσίοις δὲ οἱ χοροὶ προσεπιχαρίζονται ἄλλοις τε θεοῖς καὶ τοῖς δώδεκα χορεύοντες”.<sup>51</sup> A religious link always exists between the Διονύσια, οἱ χοροὶ, and the people of the city. However, it is important to note that these are repeated festivals, and inherently connect with the civic populace.<sup>52</sup> With her inclusion of a chorus, Klytaimnestra’s actions create an important tension in the *Elektra*. The chorus hold an important position for educating and teaching the city; Klytaimnestra twists this feature to reinforce her authority. She commandeers the chorus’s ritual and religious function and uses it to support, transmit, and publicise her own iteration of ritual, propaganda on a public stage. The public manipulation and control of Agamemnon and his memory, has its foundation in private anger and resentment. Internal familial division underlines Klytaimnestra’s public outlook.

Klytaimnestra’s rule blurs rituals of remembrance and death, shaping past to suit her present needs. As Elektra defends the memory of her father against the insidious threat, she comes into conflict with Klytaimnestra who also has not forgotten. Elektra remembers

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<sup>49</sup> Pindar. *Olympian*. 14f: “Yes, not even the gods arrange choruses or feasts without the august Graces; but as stewards of all works in heaven, they have their thrones beside Pythian Apollo of the golden bow, and worship the Olympian father’s ever flowing majesty”. Translation Race, W. (1997).

<sup>50</sup> Also Pindar’s Victory ode / *Epinikion*. Carey, C. (1991), (2012), Goldhill, S. (1991), Steiner, D. (2010), Swift, L. (2010).

<sup>51</sup> Xen. *Hipparkhos*. 3.2: “So at the Great Dionysia the dance of the choruses forms part of the homage offered to the Twelve and to other gods”. Translation Bowersock, G. (1984).

<sup>52</sup> Aristoph. *Lys*. 608: “ἀλλ’ ἐς τρίτην γοῦν ἡμέραν σοὶ πρῶ πάνυ / ἥξει παρ’ ἡμῶν τὰ τρίτ’ ἐπεσκευασμένα”. “Assure yourself we’ll not forget to make. The third day offering early for your sake”. Alexiou, M. (2002), on ninth day, τὰ ἑνάτα, p.7f.

differently. She laments the distorted public ritual: “ἐγὼ δ’ ὀρῶσ’ ἡ δύσμορος κατὰ στέγας / κλαίω, τέτηκα, κάπικωκύω πατὼς / τὴν δυστάλαιναν δαῖτ’ ἐπωνομασμένην / αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτήν”.<sup>53</sup> Elektra talks of staying in the home, grieving for the feast; this presents us with a picture of social, civic, and religious exclusion. Elektra focuses on the issue of commemoration and links this to the city and its impious festival; this is not a simple civic or public repeated feast in honour of the gods. Elektra describes the ironic (for both her and her mother) celebration, named for Agamemnon (ἐπωνομασμένην). Klytaimnestra brings murder in from the familial into the sphere of communication with the gods, separating the old king from the city through the manipulation of banquets, integrating the death into the civic structure. Ritual feasting should be used in honour of the gods, to bring the divine closer.<sup>54</sup> Like the setting up of a chorus, the banquet would be in the view of the collective of the πόλις, a public event. From the tomb to the feast, she tries to (as Parker suggests) “ritualize” the murder and bring it under her control.<sup>55</sup>

Individuals use self-defined memory to interpret the present and to facilitate their own goals. An additional perspective from which to interpret the behaviour and action of Klytaimnestra is established as she defends her deed and attempt at regulation: “ἐπεὶ πατὴρ οὗτος σὸς, ὃν θρηνεῖς αἰεὶ, / τὴν σὴν ὄμαιμον μοῦνος Ἑλλήνων ἔτλη / θῦσαι θεοῖσιν, οὐκ ἴσον καμῶν ἐμοὶ / λύπης, ὅς ἔσπειρ’, ὥσπερ ἡ τίκτουσ’ ἐγώ”.<sup>56</sup> She recalls and honours Iphigenia through retaliatory

<sup>53</sup> *El.* 282f: “But I, poor creature, in the house weep, and pine away, and lament alone and to myself the abominable feast that bears my father’s name”.

<sup>54</sup> Parker, R. (2011), focuses on blurring of boundaries: “The gods live apart from us and contact needs to be established; the dead must be separate from the living, and then kept separate... An offering made to the dead... might be described as a ‘feast’, but one in which no human would care to participate”. p.149.

<sup>55</sup> Parker, R. (2011), p.129. See Demosthenes, *Against Makartatos*, 43.64f for the role of women and what form burial should take. Also, Alexiou, M. (2002).

<sup>56</sup> *El.* 530f: “Why that father of yours, whom you are always lamenting, alone among the Greeks brought himself to sacrifice your sister to the gods, thought he felt less pain when he begot her than I did when I bore hers”.

murder.<sup>57</sup> We find another example of moral confusion surrounding Elektra's decision to defend Agamemnon's role in sacrificing her sister.<sup>58</sup> Elektra is incredulous: "ἄρα μὴ δοκεῖς / λυτήρι' αὐτῇ ταῦτα τοῦ φόνου φέρειν;".<sup>59</sup> However, Klytaimnestra puts forward a defence relating to the anger of Artemis, who demanded compensation in the form of a sacrifice: "ὥδ' ἦν τὰ κείνης θύματ': οὐ γὰρ ἦν λύσις / ἄλλη στρατῷ πρὸς οἶκον οὐδ' εἰς Ἴλιον. / ἀνθ' ὧν, βιασθεῖς πολλὰ κἀντιβάς, μόλις / ἔθυσεν αὐτήν, οὐχὶ Μενέλεω χάριν".<sup>60</sup> Elektra suggests that Agamemnon sacrificed for the greater good, with more concern for the safety of the Argive fleet than the personal security of the daughter. In warped comparison, Klytaimnestra honours the memory of her sacrificed daughter; Elektra does the same for her dead father. The viewpoints clash, and aggravate the familial conflict in the house. The contest to recall correctly becomes an ἀγών between mother and daughter.

The mother continually takes a different version of past events and focuses on the revenge over Agamemnon. As she shields herself from accusations, Klytaimnestra suggests their relationship is asymmetrical, claiming she holds no animosity and responds only when insulted.<sup>61</sup> Popescu rightly proposes that: "Elektra prefers to 'forget' about her father's murderous past, as much as Klytaimnestra chooses to compartmentalise her relationship with Aigisthos, the root of the plot against Agamemnon".<sup>62</sup> We find another version of the past, as Klytaimnestra perceives herself as rememberer, yet she alters the details. Memory is preserved. As Elektra insists on revenge, Klytaimnestra avenges the memory of her daughter:

πατήρ γάρ, οὐδέν ἄλλο, σοὶ πρόσχημ' αἶ

<sup>57</sup> *El.* 516f.

<sup>58</sup> *El.* 558f. Elektra argues for Agamemnon's lack of choice.

<sup>59</sup> *El.* 446f: "Can you believe that these offerings will absolve her of the murder?"

<sup>60</sup> *El.* 573f: "So it was that she was sacrificed, since the fleet had no other release, neither homeward nor to Troy. For that reason, under fierce constraint and with much resistance, at last he sacrificed her - but it was not for the sake of Menelaus".

<sup>61</sup> *El.* 522f.

<sup>62</sup> Popescu, L. (2012), p.241.



ὥς ἐξ ἑμοῦ τέθνηκεν. ἐξ ἑμοῦ: καλῶς  
ἔξοιδα: τῶνδ' ἄρνησις οὐκ ἔνεστί μοι:  
ἡ γὰρ Δίκη νιν εἴλεν, οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνη,  
ἢ χρῆν σ' ἀρήγειν, εἰ φρονοῦς' ἐτύγχανες.<sup>63</sup>

Klytaimnestra does not deny the act of killing. However, her defence rests on the argument that it was fair, she acted with justice, ἡ γὰρ Δίκη νιν εἴλεν, οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνη. Klytaimnestra contradicts herself, arguing against subjective recollection if Elektra must persist in recalling Agamemnon and wanting revenge, then equally, the same line of reasoning applies to Iphigenia: “ἐπεὶ πατὴρ σὸς οὗτος, ὃν θρηνεῖς ἀεὶ, / τὴν σὴν ὄμαιμον μοῦνος Ἑλλήνων ἔτλη / θῦσαι θεοῖσιν, οὐκ ἴσον καμῶν ἑμοὶ / λύπης, ὅτ' ἔσπειρ', ὥσπερ ἡ τίκτους' ἐγώ”.<sup>64</sup> Klytaimnestra charges that Elektra chooses to forget her sister; described as ὄμαιμος, yet she laments the father, ὃν θρηνεῖς ἀεὶ. The consciousness of the dead continues through Klytaimnestra's defence of her actions. She frames her own life through the attitude of the dead: “οὐ ταῦτ' ἀβούλου καὶ κακοῦ γνώμην πατρός; / δοκῶ μέν, εἰ καὶ σῆς δίχα γνώμης λέγω: / φαίη δ' ἂν ἡ θανοῦσά γ', εἰ φωνὴν λάβοι”.<sup>65</sup> Klytaimnestra claims she acts in the best interests for her sacrificed daughter, Iphigenia would absolve any offence, εἰ φωνὴν λάβοι. Khrysothemis, verging on an alliance, uses a similar style of rhetoric in her attempt to free oneself from guilt: “πατὴρ δὲ τούτων, οἶδα, συγγνώμην ἔχει”.<sup>66</sup> As she makes an assertion about what her father might excuse, her speech shows that the consciousness of the dead is conceptualised by the living according

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<sup>63</sup> *El.* 525f: “Your father, and nothing else, is always your pretext, because I killed him. I know it well; I cannot deny it. Yes, Justice was his killer, not I alone, and you would take her side, if you happened to have sense”.

<sup>64</sup> *El.* 530f: “Why, that father of yours, whom you are always lamenting, alone among the Hellenes brought himself to sacrifice your sister to the gods, though he felt less pain when he begot her than I did when I bore her”.

<sup>65</sup> *El.* 546f: “Is that not like a father who was foolish and lacking judgement? I think so, even if I differ from your judgment. She who died would say so, if she could acquire a voice”.

<sup>66</sup> *El.* 400: “But our father, I know, excuses this”. This echoes the *Antigone*, 65f.

to their own agenda. The dead make allowances for her wishes; they possess a degree of sentient thought.<sup>67</sup>

An ironic subtext underlines this conditional recollection; characters attack each other for controlling memory; both parties claim to act in the city's interest. Elektra chooses whom to remember, how, and to what degree. When defending her actions, Klytaimnestra is also capable of discriminatory memory: “ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὐκ εἰμὶ τοῖς πεπραγμένοις / δύσθυμος: εἰ δὲ σοὶ δοκῶ φρονεῖν κακῶς, / γνώμην δικάϊαν σχοῦσα τοὺς πέλας ψέγε”.<sup>68</sup> Klytaimnestra claims her conscience is clear.<sup>69</sup> Once more, the text invites us to take a different perspective of each case.<sup>70</sup> Recollections compete, and without Orestes, Elektra is powerless. The characters apply filters to their own recollection of the dead; this idea extends to include the physical memory of the dead at their tomb.

Khrysothemis highlights Klytaimnestra's attempts at controlling memorialisation in both the public and private spheres through ritual:

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<sup>67</sup> Agamemnon's support is relied upon; *El.* 137. 180, 480, 1064.

<sup>68</sup> *El.* 549f: “For I for my part feel no regret at what was done; and if I seem to you to think wrongly, do you acquire a just judgement before fault with others”.

<sup>69</sup> Lysias, *On the Murder of Eratosthenes*, focuses on the honour of the family: “ἐγὼ δ’ εἶπον ὅτι ‘οὐκ ἐγὼ σε ἀποκτενῶ, ‘ ἄλλ’ ὁ τῆς πόλεως νόμος, ὃν σὺ παραβαίνων περὶ ἐλάττονος τῶν ἡδονῶν ἐποιήσω, καὶ μᾶλλον εἴλου τοιοῦτον ἀμάρτημα ἐξαμαρτάνειν εἰς τὴν γυναῖκα τὴν ἐμὴν καὶ εἰς τοὺς παῖδας τοὺς ἐμούς ἢ τοῖς νόμοις πείθεσθαι καὶ κόσμιος εἶναι”, 1.26 – 1.50, “To this I replied, “It is not I who am going to kill you, but our city's law, which you have transgressed and regarded as of less account than your pleasures, choosing rather to commit this foul offence against my wife and my children than to obey the laws like a decent person”. Translation Lamb, W. (1943). MacDowell, D. (1963). Wolpert, A. (2001), suggests: “Without choice, he was able to deny any and all responsibility for the murder... Excessive anger could lead to excessive retribution. Euphiletus... emphasized his adherence to the laws rather than his anger...”. p.418. n10. Carey, C. (1995), “The law on *moicheia* is given pride of place, while the homicide law is cited by Euphiletus only as a supplementary proof of his right to kill, and to emphasize the seriousness of *moicheia*”. p.413. Also Foxhall, L. (2013). Gagarin, M. (ed), (2011) suggests that: “What is striking is the atmosphere of terrible calm in which Euphiletus represents himself not as outraged individual but as quasi-judicial representative of the city”. p.78. Also Carey, C. (1989). Todd, S. (2007). Wolpert, A. (2001), suggests: “It was about outrage and honor, but most of all the laws of the *polis*, the very fabric that protected the Athenian democracy and the rights of all its citizens”. p.422.

<sup>70</sup> cf. Popescu, L. (2012), p.241f.

“μήτηρ με πέμπει πατρὶ τυμβεῦσαι χοάς”.<sup>71</sup> The procedure she follows is a conventional one, specifically with πατρὶ τυμβεῦσαι χοάς, yet the mother warps it with her own agenda of control and manipulation. For the dead, there is conflict with an unwanted presence. The key point here is that Agamemnon’s tomb becomes a contested locus of affiliation and control and as a register of power. The confusion over the gifts of Orestes parallels the division in the relationship between the sisters as they approach the subject of Agamemnon’s tomb. The initial reaction of Khrysothemis is one of disbelief: “οἴμοι τάλαινα: τοῦ γὰρ ἀνθρώπων ποτ’ ἦν / τὰ πολλὰ πατρὸς πρὸς τάφον κτερίσματα;”.<sup>72</sup> Recollection is acted out at a specific location, she effectively asks; who else recalls Agamemnon? Khrysothemis relies on these pious offerings (κτερίσματα) as a connection between the living and deceased to reiterate how isolated the sisters are. Before the recognition of Orestes in Argos, physical symbols of recollection broadcasted his presence:

ἀλλ’ ἔστ’ Ὀρέστου ταῦτα τὰπιτύμβια.  
 ἀλλ’, ὦ φίλη, θάρσυνε: τοῖς αὐτοῖσί τοι  
 οὐχ αὐτὸς αἰεὶ δαιμόνων παραστατεῖ.  
 νῶν δ’ ἦν ὁ πρόσθε στυγνός: ἡ δὲ νῦν ἴσως  
 πολλῶν ὑπάρξει κῦρος ἡμέρα καλῶν.<sup>73</sup>

The tomb acts as a mark of memory and a focus point for those in Argos to direct their emotions and commemoration. As Orestes sustains his lingering memory in Argos, and Elektra presses the recognition of her father and brother, both challenge the agenda of Klytaimnestra. In the *Elektra*, we find this power and significance attached to tangible representations of death and return

<sup>71</sup> *El.* 405f: “My mother is sending me to offer libations at my father’s tomb”.

<sup>72</sup> *El.* 930f: “Ah me! Then from what man did the many offerings to my father’s tomb come?”

<sup>73</sup> *El.* 915f: “No, these offerings at the tomb come from Orestes. Come, my dear, take courage! The same fortune does not attend the same person, and our fortune in the past was hateful; but perhaps this day shall confirm our possession of much good”.

### Offerings as a reflection of power.

The value and size of the separate physical offerings presented at Agamemnon's tomb are set in contrast to one another. The text invites us to see a problem; good gifts reflect a positive perspective of memory of the dead, bad contributions perpetuate fragmentation of the οἶκος, demonstrated in the conflict within the family. Khrysothemis becomes an agent of Klytaimnestra. The sisters underline the action to recall the dead through gifts and memorial: "ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἦλθον πατρὸς ἀρχαῖον τάφον, / ὁρῶ κολώνης ἐξ ἄκρας νεορρύτους / πηγὰς γάλακτος καὶ περιστεφῇ κύκλῳ / πάντων ὅσ' ἐστὶν ἀνθέων θήκην πατρός".<sup>74</sup> Khrysothemis sees the tomb newly bedecked with pious offerings, an attempt to claim memory.<sup>75</sup> By implication, Orestes' returning gifts contest the tomb and the recollection of the dead king.<sup>76</sup> However, she laments they are all she possesses. The offerings now become a reflection of those who have power, and those who do not: "σὺ δὲ / τεμοῦσα κρατὸς βοστρύχων ἄκρας φόβας / κάμοῦ ταλαίνης, σμικρὰ μὲν τάδ', ἀλλ' ὅμως / ἄχῳ, δὸς αὐτῷ, τήνδε λιπαρῇ τρίχα / καὶ ζῶμα τούμῳ οὐ χλιδαῖς ἡσκημένον".<sup>77</sup> These instances highlight that good intentions, or rather positive memory, are more important than physical size in the context of offering gifts to the dead. Elektra's gifts are considered and humble, and although described as μικρός, they signify a sincere bond of *philia* with the dead, and an appreciation and adherence to religious and civic rituals. Rather than any attempt to control or

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<sup>74</sup> *El.* 892f: "When I approached our Father's ancestral tomb, I saw on top of the mound freshly flowing streams of milk, and my father's urn crowned with a ring of every kind of flower".

<sup>75</sup> Kampourelli, V. (2002). Imagined/narrated space: "There is a clear distinction between near and far locations: the palace and the city form the narrative spaces which are imagined to be adjacent to the visible dramatic space". p.105.

<sup>76</sup> Kurtz, D., and Boardman, J. (1971). Alexiou, M. (2002), considers funeral legislation, p.7f.

<sup>77</sup> *El.* 448f: "Abandon these and cut locks from your hair and from that of this unhappy person – a small gift, but all that I possess – and give them to him, this hair denoting supplication and my girdle, decorated with no ornaments".

manipulate his memory, we see a supplication to her dead father. Her actions confirm her humility in direct contrast to her mother's offerings; Elektra deems these inappropriate and dishonourable. She imagines how Agamemnon would react, this has bearing on how welcome the different gifts are: "σκέψαι γὰρ εἴ σοι προσφιλῶς αὐτῇ δοκεῖ / γέρα τάδ' οὖν τάφοισι δέξεσθαι νέκυς, / ὑφ' ἧς θανῶν ἄτιμος, ὥστε δυσμενής, / ἐμασχαλίσθη, κάπῃ λουτροῖσιν κάρα / κηλίδας ἐξέμαξεν".<sup>78</sup> Elektra had adopted a warped form of ritual cleansing; both physical (κάπῃ λουτροῖσιν) and metaphorical. With the inclusion of κηλὶς and θανῶν ἄτιμος, the mutilation of the corpse (μασχαλίζω), and her use of γέρας, Elektra makes a vital point concerning ritual offerings of honour; this changes as Orestes approaches.

#### Distorted offerings/commemoration

As the king's murderer, Klytaimnestra is inherently unwelcome at the tomb recollection. Elektra appeals to her sister to abandon the gifts and her mission. Elektra feels a need to interrupt Klytaimnestra's communication with Agamemnon. Elektra believes that the influence of Klytaimnestra poisons the offerings. In defence of her father, she pleads with her sister that these bad gifts should be lost. Her move to guard ends with a threat to the mother's future, as protection turns to anger: "ἀλλ' ἢ πνοαῖσιν ἢ βαθυσκαφεῖ κόνει / κρύψον νιν, ἔνθα μή ποτ' εἰς εὐνὴν πατρὸς / τούτων πρόσσεισι μηδέν: ἀλλ' ὅταν θάνῃ /

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<sup>78</sup> *El.* 442f: "Yes, see if you think the dead man in his tomb will receive these honours in a manner favourable to her, to her who killed him without honour like an enemy, mutilated his corpse and by way of ablution wiped off the bloodstains on his head!" A parallel occurs in *Od.* 22.474. Jebb writes: "Two different motives are assigned... (1) desire to render the dead incapable of wreaking vengeance... (2) desire to make an atonement... The idea may have been that of offering the severed portions to the gods below, - as a victim was devoted to death by cutting off a lock of hair... 'And, for ablution, she wiped off the blood-stains (from her sword) on his head'... The action was a symbolical way of saying, 'on thy head, not mine, be the guilt,' - as though the victim had provoked his own fate (thus Klytaemnestra claimed to be the avenger of Iphigenia)". Also, Johnston, S. (1999), Seaford, R. (1985).

κειμήλι' αὐτῇ ταῦτα σωζέσθω κάτω".<sup>79</sup> We find an element of irony here, Elektra specifically uses κειμήλιος to indicate that these gifts be kept safe, literally a treasure lying in wait, a distortion of the saviour theme (σωζέσθω), as they mean death for Klytaimnestra. The hostile gifts to Agamemnon become poisoned offering to Klytaimnestra. The separation of these gifts is important as a defence mechanism, ἔνθα μή ποτ' εἰς εὐνὴν πατρὸς / τούτων πρόσσεισι μηδέν, they will be cast out.<sup>80</sup> Each character attaches value to the presentation of ritual gifts to the dead. The size of the offerings given by each person is inversely proportionate, giving an idea of the measure of control by the respective party. Elektra attempts to realign the gifts to her father, to protect in the face of a distorted action. She rejects her mother's attempts to rewrite and claim the past, ordering Khrysothemis: "ἀλλ', ὦ φίλη, τούτων μὲν ὧν ἔχεις χερσὶν / τύμβῳ προσάψης μηδέν:". <sup>81</sup> Elektra urges that the tomb not be exposed to these toxic gifts. A distinct point, her defence rests on attacking Klytaimnestra.

The influence found in mourning gifts ties with Orestes' own actions, confirms how disempowered he is. In the current situation, the rulers have all the control and wealth; we find an imbalance demonstrated in the value of offerings and fortunes. The situation is thematised both visually and verbally. We find an important parallel with the above use of μικρός when used to describe the size of Orestes' remains. For Elektra, his movement (προύπεμψεν) towards Argos hints towards a funeral:

κοῦτ' ἐν φίλαισι χερσὶν ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγὼ  
λουτροῖς σ' ἐκόσμησ' οὔτε παμφλέκτου πυρὸς

<sup>79</sup> *El.* 435f: "Throw them to the winds, or hide them in the deep dust, where none of them will approach my father's place of rest; but let them be preserved down below as possessions for her when comes to dies". Jebb, in his commentary, suggests: "in a place where they will have no access' to his tomb, i.e., where they will be remote from it". Kamerbeek writes: "The idea that they will remain hidden *somewhere* is more important than the idea that they will not be able *from there* to approach Agamemnon's resting-place".

<sup>80</sup> Jebb calls these: "Witnesses to her conscious guilt".

<sup>81</sup> *El.* 431f: "My dear do not place on the tomb any of the things you are carrying".

ἀνειλόμην, ὥς εἰκός, ἄθλιον βάρος,  
ἀλλ' ἐν ξέναισι χερσὶ κηδευθεὶς τάλας  
σμικρὸς προσήκεις ὄγκος ἐν σμικρῷ κύτει.<sup>82</sup>

Elektra's reiteration of μικρός reinforces the concern of just how little of Orestes has returned. Orestes' arrival is distorted; his memorial has shrunk in contrast to her expectations. Elektra laments the disparity between a burial by loved ones and one performed by strangers juxtaposing ἐν φίλαισι χερσὶν with ἐν ξέναισι χερσὶ. The recalling of the past, however, is subject to reinterpretation. Elektra believes that the death of Orestes is also her own and she solicits a shared burial, desirous of the same fate.<sup>83</sup> To further support the importance of physical objects, we can examine the focus on other symbols of remembrance.

Orestes' own journey to victory in Argos commences with proper offerings, as opposed to those from Klytaimnestra, discussed above. His recollection of their father mirrors that of Elektra and hints towards the contestation of Agamemnon's memory and memorialisation:

ἡμεῖς δὲ πατρὸς τύμβον, ὥς ἐφίετο,  
λοιβαῖσι πρῶτον καὶ κατατόμοις χλιδαῖς  
στέφαντες εἴτ' ἄψορρον ἥξομεν πάλιν,  
τύπωμα χαλκόπλευρον ἡρμένοι χεροῖν,  
ὃ καὶ σὺ θάμνοις οἷσθ' αὖτις κεκρυμμένον,  
ὅπως λόγῳ κλέπτοντες ἠδεῖαν φάτιν  
φέρωμεν αὐτοῖς, τοῦμὸν ὥς ἔρρει δέμας  
φλογιστὸν ἤδη καὶ κατηνθρακωμένον.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> *El.* 1138f: "And I, unhappy one, did not wash you with loving hands or take up the sad burden, as is proper, from the blazing fire, but you were given burial, miserable one, by foreign hands, and come as a little substance in a little urn".

<sup>83</sup> *El.* 1167f.

<sup>84</sup> *El.* 51f: "And we will first honour my father's tomb as the god commanded, with libations and with a tribute of luxuriant hair; then we will return once more, carrying in our hands the bronze urn which as you know is hidden in the bushes, so that we

Orestes gradually integrates into the city and family, moving towards revenge and retaliation for the harm done to the house. His gifts underscore his attachment to the house, his loyalty, and family ties. Orestes reaffirms religious piety and his movement towards life. The very earth of Argos aids him in his quest, hiding his plot. A reliance on false memorial underlines his strategy in concealment. Orestes' return contrasts with the isolated state Elektra finds herself in at the beginning of the tragedy, city-less, and father-less. The physical symbols of memory frame the introduction to his home, his family, and story.

### The metaphorical return of Orestes

Alongside the symbols of memorials and the offerings given to the tomb, the physical sign of memory is crystallised in the symbol of the urn. The bronze urn becomes both the illusory tomb of Orestes and the locus of commemoration. His memorialisation, however, comes at price. It develops as part of a corpus of imagery for Elektra with which to recall the pain and grief of losing Orestes, her father, and the house. The vessel represents the dead or missing, it is, paradoxically, both a non-marker and proof of death. The sign of the urn uses concealment, death, and trickery to open up ideas of burial and future memory through the continuation of the family line. It continues the contestation of the nature of tomb and memorial. The pattern of using μικρός repeats with the recollection of Orestes: “φέροντες αὐτοῦ σμικρὰ λείψαν’ ἐν βραχεῖ / τεύχει θανόντος, ὡς ὀρᾶς, κομίζομεν”.<sup>85</sup> Although the remnants are small in nature, they are important as a focus point for Elektra to mourn and by extension grieve for her own life and the house.

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can deceive them with our story and bring them happy news, that my body has already been burned to ashes”.

<sup>85</sup> *El.* 1113f: “He is dead, and we are carrying in a small urn the little that remains of him to bring it here”. Kamerbeek commentary includes: “A veil, or wreaths, or both”.



The text places high importance on the character's recognition of correct burial procedure. However, an element of prohibition remains on what family members may offer in the way of lamentation. Elektra cries that Orestes remains absent: “ἀλλὰ ταῦθ' ὁ δυστυχῆς / δαίμων ὁ σός τε κάμὸς ἐξαφείλετο, / ὅς σ' ᾤδε μοι προύπεμψεν ἀντὶ φιλότητος / μορφῆς σποδὸν τε καὶ σκιὰν ἀνωφελῆ”.<sup>86</sup> Once more, the realisation of how little has returned arouses a feeling of futility and nothingness.<sup>87</sup> We find comparable notions of remembering through objects, symbols, and offerings. The urn combines with the physicality of commemoration focused on the tomb as memorialisation. The control of his memory through the control of his burial mirrors the conflict over control of Agamemnon's commemoration. Tangible proofs of memory fit into the larger pattern and serve as an inadequate return for the heir, and a reminder to the family and house of what is missing (Orestes). However, in one form, the absent Orestes does indeed receive a return from exile; this is what the marginalised Elektra desires. Klytaimnestra provides Orestes with committal: “ἡ μὲν ἐς τάφον / λέβητα κοσμεῖ, τῷ δ' ἐφέστατον πέλας”.<sup>88</sup> The vessel becomes Orestes in a literal sense, as his family receive him. Klytaimnestra takes charge of memory by facilitating the burial of one who may threaten her rule. Although this is allegory, both believe his remains have returned.

Elektra uses the urn as a focal point for her recollection: “ὦ ξεῖνε, δὸς νυν, πρὸς θεῶν, εἵπερ τόδε / κέκευθεν αὐτὸν τεῦχος, εἰς χεῖρας λαβεῖν, / ὅπως ἐμαυτὴν καὶ γένος τὸ πᾶν ὁμοῦ / ξὺν τῇδε κλαύσω κάποδύρωμαι σποδῶ”.<sup>89</sup> The vessel represents everything and nothing as she highlights that Orestes returns as σποδός. The

<sup>86</sup> *El.* 1156f: “But your unhappy fate and mine has taken this away, sending me instead of your dearest form ashes and a useless shadow”. Seaford, R. (1994).

<sup>87</sup> Also *Ais. Kho.* 42, 315, 961.

<sup>88</sup> *El.* 1401: “She is preparing the urn for burial, and those two are standing by her”.

<sup>89</sup> *El.* 1119f: “Stranger, I beg you, give it to me to hold, if this casket really contains him, so I may weep and lament for myself and my whole family together with these ashes!”

attention on the urn is complimentary to the previous focus on the tomb, it becomes central to her existence and that of the γένος, the custody of which is now of the utmost importance. It is a paradox that the urn embodies Orestes' movement from exile outside the city to his integration back into the house of his ancestors, and equally, his passage from life to death and back to life.<sup>90</sup> As it takes centre stage in the deception, the pot becomes the unsurpassed visual instrument of false memorial. Each character reacts differently to the news of Orestes' death, and the proof of this.<sup>91</sup>

To be sure, for Elektra, the σῆμα of the urn signifies both Orestes' failed homecoming and their shared defeat.<sup>92</sup> Elektra articulates her emotional responses with reference to loss and pain. The return and death of Orestes highlights what she has lost: "οἱ γὰρ τάλαινα, ὅλωλα τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ", abject sorrow and lamentation continue: "ἀπωλόμην δούστηνος, οὐδὲν εἰμ' ἔτι".<sup>93</sup> In response to receiving the urn, Elektra emphasises her constant recollection, framing it with her continuous grieving. She thrice recalls Orestes in Argos, firstly in the report of his downfall, here in the present as ashes, and lastly as future saviour. She attempts to correct funeral arrangements, lamenting: "πῶς γὰρ οὔκ; εἰ ξένος / ἄτερ ἐμῶν χερῶν-". As she recognises the threat that improper burial poses, the guarding of memory takes on significance. Elektra articulates her own responsibility towards the dead through what Orestes has lost: "κέκευθεν, οὔτε τοῦ τάφου ἀντιάσας / οὔτε γόων παρ' ἡμῶν".<sup>94</sup> Through her grief, Elektra claims that Orestes is denied traditional procedure of memorial with restrictions on τάφος and γόος. However, she does not grasp what has happened. She claims that Orestes lies in foreign soil, a victim of dishonour through

<sup>90</sup> A bronze weapon kills the king; *El.* 193f, 480f, and kills Aigisthos; *El.* 756f.

<sup>91</sup> *El.* 1126f.

<sup>92</sup> cf. Ringer, M. (1998).

<sup>93</sup> *El.* 674: "Oh, miserable me! My ruin comes today!... This is my wretched end! I am no more!"

<sup>94</sup> *El.* 865f: "Surely it is so; if in a foreign land, without my touch... He is buried, having had no funeral or lament from us".

not securing burial or lamented by family: “καί νιν πυρᾷ κέαντες εὐθύς ἐν βραχεῖ / χαλκῷ μέγιστον σῶμα δειλαίας σποδοῦ / φέρουσιν ἄνδρες Φωκέων τεταγμένοι, / ὅπως πατρώας τύμβον ἐκλάχη χθονός”.<sup>95</sup> Orestes’ ashes return to Argos to be recalled in ritual alongside his father. As the son represents the future of the family in a way that Elektra never can, his small monument becomes an expression of the depths of misery to which the family has fallen and the meagre hopes for its future. Elektra laments, physical signs of recollection are vulnerable and prone to misinterpretation, misuse, and abuse: “καὶ παῖδ’ Ὀρέστην ἐξ ὑπερτέρας χερὸς / ἐχθροῖσιν αὐτοῦ ζῶντ’ ἐπεμβῆναι ποδί, / ὅπως τὸ λοιπὸν αὐτὸν ἀφνεωτέραις / χερσὶν στέφωμεν ἢ τανῦν δωρούμεθα”.<sup>96</sup> As with the death of Agamemnon, Elektra is deprived of burial and family, she laments the loss of correct procedure: “ὦ τάλαιν’ ἐγὼ σέθεν, / Ὀρέστα, τῆς σῆς εἰ στερήσομαι ταφῆς”.<sup>97</sup> Elektra associates the memory of her brother to a tangible dedication: “ὦ φιλτάτου μνημεῖον ἀνθρώπων ἐμοὶ / ψυχῆς Ὀρέστου λοιπόν”.<sup>98</sup> Elektra and Khrysothemis’ roles are to defend the memory of both the brother and their father. However, in contrast to her conformist sister, Elektra is secluded in her recollection. The performances surrounding the presentation of the gifts to the dead may test one’s loyalty to memory. Khrysothemis fails this trial. Her attitude is based in disposable recollection, believing memory is negotiable. For example, when charged by the chorus to recall, she makes a promise: “δράσω: τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον οὐχ ἔχει λόγον / δυοῖν

<sup>95</sup> *El.* 757f: “Men appeared from among the Phokians burned him on a pyre, and at once carried in a small urn of bronze his mighty form, now miserable dust, so that he should be accorded burial in the land of his fathers”.

<sup>96</sup> *El.* 454f: “And pray that his son Orestes may get the upper hand and may trample, alive and well, upon his enemies, so that in the future we may honour him with hands richer than those with which we bring him gifts”. For perverted ritual funerary rites, meals and gifts, see Seaford, R. (1985).

<sup>97</sup> *El.* 1209f: “I am unhappy, Orestes, if I am cheated of the power to give you burial!”

<sup>98</sup> *El.* 1128f: “O remaining memorial of the life of the dearest of men to me Orestes!”

ἐρίζειν, ἀλλ' ἐπισπεύδει τὸ δρᾶν".<sup>99</sup> Her loyalty falters as she speaks a mistruth. The test over remembrance teases apart the sisters through their respective loyalties. However, their roles are confused once more when they discover the symbols that evoke the memory of Orestes. Elektra challenges that he left mementos, there is no trust in his alleged presence: "τέθνηκεν, ὦ τάλαινα, τὰκ κείνου δέ σοι / σωτήρι' ἔρρει: μηδὲν εἰς κεῖνόν γ' ὄρα".<sup>100</sup> Elektra laments the loss of hope for salvation, as Orestes dies, he forgets and is (eventually), like his father, forgotten.

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<sup>99</sup> *El.* 466f: "I will; for when an act is right, reason demands that two people should not contend, but hastens on the deed."

<sup>100</sup> *El.* 924f: "He is dead, poor creature. Your chance of salvation by him is lost; do not look to him!"

### 3.2 Communicating with the dead

Although the perpetrator's influence on the victim is in the past, retribution and bitterness drive the dead's compulsion to retaliate.<sup>101</sup> Haunted and hunted, the deceased punish the guilty. Not only can they hear, but also they take revenge through an intermediary. Xenophon identifies those who pursue the accountable:

τὰς δὲ τῶν ἄδικα παθόντων ψυχὰς οὕτω κατενόησατε  
οἷους μὲν φόβους τοῖς μαιφόνοις ἐμβάλλουσιν, οἷους δὲ  
παλαμναίους τοῖς ἀνοσίοις ἐπιπέμπουσι; τοῖς δὲ φθιμένοις  
τὰς τιμὰς διαμένειν ἔτι ἂν δοκεῖτε, εἰ μηδενὸς αὐτῶν αἱ  
ψυχαὶ κύριαι ἦσαν;<sup>102</sup>

Those who have met a premature demise disturb the guilty party. Xenophon hints towards a widespread belief in the afterlife, noting the power the dead retain.<sup>103</sup> The driving force behind revenge and resentment lies with φόβος, murder incites retaliation. The criminal is also potentially contaminating, seen with μαιφονος and ἀνόσιος; this emphasises the role Aigisthos takes in the *Elektra*. If those who inhabit the underworld do not feel or hear, any offering by the living is redundant. Wraiths avenge on behalf of those killed. We come to an image close to the Aiskhylean furies that chase and punish.<sup>104</sup>

A persistent pattern of calling to the dead for aid and support occurs in both Aiskhylos and Sophokles. Anger and resentment guide pursuit in the *Oresteia*, and the deceased are explicitly involved. The agency of Agamemnon, recognised through a vision, sets down an

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<sup>101</sup> Plato examines resentment as motivation for the dead. *Laws*. 9.865d.

<sup>102</sup> Xen. *Kyrop.* 8.7.18: "Have you never yet observed what terror the souls of those who have been foully dealt with strike into the hearts of those who have shed their blood, and what avenging deities they send upon the track of the wicked? And do you think that the honours paid to the dead would continue, if their souls had no part in any of them?" Translation Miller, W. (1979).

<sup>103</sup> Ogden, D. (2001), examines ritual from Selinos, *SEG* 43:630: "[It] provides directions for the purification of murderers under attack from vengeful ghosts, stipulates that the ghost 'may be addressed' after the performance of some initial rites..." p.233.

<sup>104</sup> *Kho.* 32f. Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos as Furies, 1080f. *Elektra*, after aiding the revenge killing for Ringer, M. (1998), "Attains parity with the Furies". p.180.

intertextual precedent. In the *Khoephoroi*, the portent descends upon the living as a terrifying nightmare. The dead are active, they use visions as a channel of communication to guide, warn, or threaten. Dreams take on a power similar to that of prophecy; this is the god's agenda and the sheer force of resentment disturbs the living.<sup>105</sup> Aiskhylos stresses the involvement of Agamemnon. The chorus call the dead king: "ἄκουσον ἐς φάος μολών, / ξὺν δὲ γενοῦ πρὸς ἐχθρούς".<sup>106</sup> The children seek to draw the dead into their affairs by recalling crimes against the family. The lament-account of the death aims to stimulate Agamemnon's desire for revenge.<sup>107</sup> A call to arms to the sentient dead with the command, ἄκουσον ἐς φάος μολών; saves the house and secures the future; the father returns for, and lives through, his children.<sup>108</sup> Orestes also presses Agamemnon to recall fully the crimes committed: "μέμνησο λουτρῶν οἷς ἐνοσφίσθης, πάτερ".<sup>109</sup> He draws attention to the impiety and dishonour attached to Agamemnon's demise, contrasting bath and battlefield. Elektra echoes the sentiment of recollection with her own cry: "μέμνησο δ' ἀμφίβληστρον ὡς ἐκαίνισαν".<sup>110</sup> The siblings' dual vocabulary laments the fall of the father, and aims to drive his imagined presence to anger. The specific use of ἀμφίβληστρον emphasises his unheroic death, trapped by a web of treachery and deceit. The demand for recollection (μέμνησο) reinforces the importance of not forgetting misfortunes through anger and resentment.

The theme of communication continues in the *Eumenides* as Klytaimnestra urges the Erinyes to hunt Orestes: "ἀκούσαθ' ὡς ἔλεξα

<sup>105</sup> Anger of the dead, Ais. *Pers.* 568.

<sup>106</sup> *Kho.* 459f: "Hear us! Come to the light! Side with us against the enemy!"

<sup>107</sup> *Kho.* 439f: "ἐμασχαλίσθη δὲ γ', ὡς τόδ' εἰδῆς: / ἔπρασσε δ', ἅπέρ νιν ὤδε θάπτει, / μόρον κτίσαι μωμένα / ἄφερτον αἰῶνι σῶ. / κλύεις πατρώους δῦας ἀτίμους". The chorus: "And – so you may know this – he was mutilated as well; and the perpetrator was she who buried him thus, striving to make his death unbearable for you to live with. Do you hear these degrading sufferings of your father". We find ἐμασχαλίσθη at *El.* 442f.

<sup>108</sup> Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1995).

<sup>109</sup> *Kho.* 490: "Remember the bath where you were robbed of life, father".

<sup>110</sup> *Kho.* 491: "Remember how they devised a strange net to cast upon you". The chorus remind the children of Agamemnon of his fate *Kho.* 437f.

τῆς ἐμῆς περὶ / ψυχῆς, φρονήσατ', ὧ κατὰ χθονὸς θεαί. / ὄναρ γὰρ  
 ὑμᾶς νῦν Κλυταιμῆστρα καλῶ".<sup>111</sup> Her use of ἀκούσαθ' parallels the  
 chorus's previous demand to be heard. They are spurred into action  
 by Klytaimnestra's lamentation. She recalls death as motivation and  
 urges violence and punishment through anger. She attempts to force  
 retaliation through those who inhabit the underworld. Klytaimnestra  
 does not simply call upon agents of revenge, but compels them with  
 orders, φρονήσατ', ὧ κατὰ χθονὸς.<sup>112</sup> Indeed, a vague process blurs  
 the gap between living and dead. As Orestes closes in on victory, he  
 conflates the two spheres: "οὐ γὰρ αἰσθάνει πάλαι / ζῶν τοῖς  
 θανοῦσιν οὐνέκ' ἀνταυδᾶς ἴσα;".<sup>113</sup> These examples demonstrate no  
 clear way of assessing the relationship between the dead and living.

The chorus indicate that the dead have a power to recall, claiming  
 the king does not forget: "οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἀμναστεῖ γ' ὁ φύ - / σας σ'  
 Ἑλλάνων ἄναξ, / οὐδ' ἅ παλαιὰ χαλκόπλη- / κτος ἀμφάκης γένυς, / ἅ  
 νιν κατέπεφνεν αἰσχίσταις ἐν αἰκίαις".<sup>114</sup> They bring the siblings  
 together under a banner of revenge, proclaiming: "τελοῦσ' ἀραί:  
 ζῶσιν οἱ / γᾶς ὑπαὶ κείμενοι. / παλὶρρυτον γὰρ αἶμ' ὑπεξαιροῦσι τῶν /  
 κτανόντων / οἱ πάλαι θανόντες".<sup>115</sup> The chorus believe that  
 Agamemnon is conscious and has power. They describe the lifeless  
 as orchestrating revenge, through the paradox of ζῶσιν οἱ / γᾶς ὑπαὶ  
 κείμενοι, they assume the sentience of the dead, and are not  
 challenged in this belief. The chorus are proved correct in their  
 judgement in the closing stages of the drama, as the couple are  
 punished. Aware and active, Agamemnon remembers the violence

<sup>111</sup> *Eum*, 114f: "Listen to me, for I have been speaking to save my very soul. Take heed, you goddesses from below the earth: I who now call you in your dream, I am Klytaimnestra".

<sup>112</sup> A ghost sets the scene *Eur. Hek.* 1f. *Per*, 744, 826 - 840.

<sup>113</sup> *El.* 1477f: "Do you not see that for some time you, still living, have been bandying words with the dead?"

<sup>114</sup> *El.* 480f: "For the lord of the Hellenes, who begot you will never be unmindful, and neither will the ancient brazen axe with double edge that slew him in a shameful outrage".

<sup>115</sup> *El.* 1418f: "The curses are at work! Those who lie beneath the ground are living, for the blood of the killers' flows in turn, drained by those who perished long ago!"

done to him; the use of ἀμνηστέω demonstrates his mindfulness of the crime. They report; ἅ νιν κατέπεφνεν αἰσχίσταις ἐν αἰκίαις, describing the wrongdoings, which give licence to revenge.<sup>116</sup> The idea goes beyond simple tribute; this is a two-way relationship. We find a connection between living and dead, one based on mutual regard and support. There are examples outside the text of communication between lifeless citizens and those who remember them that fit into a larger pattern of Greek belief. Pindar recalls a victory and a sporting honour of the departed: “ἔστι δὲ καὶ τι θανόντεσσιν μέρος / κὰν νόμον ἔρδομένων: / κατακρύπτει δ’ οὐ κόνις / συγγόνων κεδνὰν χάριν”.<sup>117</sup> The dead get traditional offerings and honour in the present. As those who live are able to speak, the deceased may listen and they have not forgotten. The description of the death recalls glory, κατακρύπτει δ’ οὐ κόνις / συγγόνων κεδνὰν χάριν, honour is well known.

Although there are no direct messages between the realms of the dead and the living in Sophokles, opaque lines of recollection and communication between the two establish themselves through hint and allusion. The world of the tragic dead is not set in religious dogma, but susceptible to ambiguity, and prone to reinterpretation. Elektra appeals to the dead for revenge and remembrance: “ἔλθετ’, ἀρήξατε, τίσασθε πατρός / φόνον ἡμετέρου, / καὶ μοι τὸν ἐμὸν πέμψατ’ ἀδελφόν”.<sup>118</sup> In the context of praying directly for aid, Elektra hints towards a relationship between the living and dead as she recalls the memory of her father: “αἰτοῦ δὲ προσπίτνουσα γῆθεν

<sup>116</sup> From Jones, J (1980): “[In the context of *Agamemnon*]. House (the Greek *oikos* and its synonyms) is at once houses and household, building and family, land and chattels, slaves and domestic animals, hearth and ancestral grave: a psycho-physical community of the living and the dead and the unborn”. 83f.

<sup>117</sup> Pindar. *Olympian*. 8.77f: “And for those who have died there is also some share in ritual observances, nor does the dust bury the cherished glory of kinsmen”. Translation Race, W. (1997), Also *Pythian*. 5.96f.

<sup>118</sup> *El*. 115f: “Bring help, avenge the murder of our father, and send to me my brother!” cf. Adkins, A. (1960).



εὐμενῇ / ἡμῖν ἄρωγόν αὐτὸν εἰς ἐχθροὺς μολεῖν”.<sup>119</sup> Although Agamemnon is dark and hidden, his memory has the potential to assist.

The bridge between death and life is hinted at in the real world in Elektra’s acceptance of a substitute in the form of the *paidagogos*. As she welcomes him, Elektra hints to the memory and presence of her father in the revenge plot: “χαῖρ’, ὦ πάτερ: πατέρα γὰρ εἰσορᾷν δοκῶ: / χαῖρ’: ἴσθι δ’ ὡς μάλιστά σ’ ἀνθρώπων ἐγὼ / ἤχθηρα κάφίλῃσ’ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ”.<sup>120</sup> Metaphor perhaps, but the repetition of πάτερ is striking as it parallels Orestes’ own identification with Agamemnon. The use of the word is not accidental, the children are fatherless orphans, and the *paidagogos* becomes a surrogate. He becomes the protector and nurturer of the young and his presence reminds us of the absent Agamemnon. The age of the tutor is noteworthy; he takes a position of authority, and brings justice (in the form of Orestes).<sup>121</sup>

The arrival of Orestes is announced as a possible future through metaphor in a dream. In line with Sophokles’ general blurring of supernatural involvement, the fear of active participation or intervention of the dead exists through dream rather than any sustained invocation. With the focus on Agamemnon’s anger, Sophokles indirectly hints at sentience of dead. Khrysothemis reports on her mother’s predictive vision, as the dead king, or rather his alternative form of Orestes, returns from the world of darkness:

λόγος τις αὐτήν ἐστιν εἰσιδεῖν πατρός  
τοῦ σοῦ τε κάμοῦ δευτέραν ὁμιλίαν  
ἐλθόντος ἐς φῶς: εἴτα τόνδ’ ἐφέστιον  
πῆξαι λαβόντα σκῆπτρον οὐφόρει ποτέ

<sup>119</sup> *El.* 452f: “Kneel and pray him to come in kindness from below the earth to help us against our enemies”. Rohde, E. (1925), p.430. Seaford, R. (1994).

<sup>120</sup> *El.* 1361f: “Hail, Father – for I think I see a father. Welcome, and know that in one day I have hated you and loved you as no man ever before!”.

<sup>121</sup> An analogous role to Phoenix in the *Iliad*, (9.434-605). It underscores the isolation of the younger generation and their struggle.

αὐτός, τανῦν δ' Αἴγισθος: ἐκ δὲ τοῦδ' ἄνω  
βλαστεῖν βρύοντα θαλλόν, ὧ κατάσκιον  
πᾶσαν γενέσθαι τὴν Μυκηναίων χθόνα.<sup>122</sup>

Klytaimnestra is haunted by fear of recognition that she is an evil usurper. The dream signals communication between dead and living. Here, the dead both retain their memory and desire revenge. There exists the fear of Orestes as a continuation of Agamemnon. In comparison, the living remember their own crimes and are aware that the dead remember.<sup>123</sup> Agamemnon is recalled, he metaphorically takes back his house and position, restoring the seat of power through the dream. The key image that frames Khrysothemis' message is identified with σκῆπτρον, as this marks the symbol of power and rule, yet here it is non-sprouting and sterile, denoting the king's absence.<sup>124</sup> However, the dream marks the re-growth of the king's power with the verb βλαστεῖν. Although an obscure process, dreams and portents have a relationship to memory. They are a sign to the past, a guide in the present, and a link to the future.<sup>125</sup> No more does Agamemnon inhabit the oblivion of Hades, his influence and presence gradually moves into the realm of the living, a memory anchored in the recollection of his daughter.

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<sup>122</sup> *El.* 418f: "They said that she was once more in company with your father and mine, who had come to the world of light; and then he took the staff which he used to carry, and which Aigisthos carries now, and planted it beside the hearth; and from it grew up a fruitful bough, which overshadowed all the land of the Mykenaians".

<sup>123</sup> The actions may hold an apotropaic function. Johnston, S. (1999): "Offerings that are intended to stop the angry ghosts from sending trouble-some dreams are identical to those used at funerals and some civic festivals that honour the dead – the line between peaceful dead and the angry dead is very slender". p.46.

<sup>124</sup> *Iliad* 1.234f. Akhilleus swears on the staff.

<sup>125</sup> Bowman, L. (1997).

### 3.3 The intransigence and isolation of Elektra

Elektra is a repository of memory. It is through her recollection that the house of Pelops still stands; she is the link to the past, and hope for the future. Elektra laments those who do not recall the old king and father: “νήπιος ὅς τῶν οἰκτρῶς / οἰχομένων γονέων ἐπιλάθεται”.<sup>126</sup> As the nightingale eternally laments, so does Elektra, she uses οἰκτρός to describe remembering improperly (ἐπιλάθεται) the father’s downfall. Others have neglected memory, this crystallises Elektra’s own position within the house. Khrysothemis appears disloyal, and Orestes has not yet appeared. In this section, I examine the inconsistency that memory, although it sustains her anger and recollection, also forces her out of the family unit into isolation as the only link between the family and the past. To be sure, Elektra allies herself to her father and house and keeps hold of the memory of Orestes as she rebukes her sister. An important point, Elektra selects on own terms what, who, and how to remember: “δεινόν γέ σ’ οὔσαν πατρὸς οὗ σὺ παῖς ἔφυς, / κείνου λελησθαι, τῆς δὲ τικτούσης μέλειν”.<sup>127</sup> Elektra wields recollection (λελησθαι) as a tool of revenge:

ἔπει γ’ ἐλοῦ σὺ θάτερ’, ἢ φρονεῖν κακῶς  
ἢ τῶν φίλων φρονοῦσα μὴ μνήμην ἔχειν:  
ἥτις λέγεις μὲν ἀρτίως ὥς, εἰ λάβοις  
σθένος, τὸ τούτων μῖσος ἐκδείξιας ἄν,  
ἐμοῦ δὲ πατρὶ πάντα τιμωρομένης  
οὔτε ξυνέρδεις τήν τε δρῶσαν ἐκτρέπεις.<sup>128</sup>

Elektra disowns any who do not support her. She uses ἢ φρονεῖν κακῶς / ἢ τῶν φίλων φρονοῦσα μὴ μνήμην ἔχειν: to demonstrate how disloyalty connects with the incorrect level of recollection. The

<sup>126</sup> *El.* 144: “Foolish is he who forgets the piteous end of parents!”

<sup>127</sup> *El.* 341f: “It is terrible that you, the daughter of your father, forget him and respect you mother”. Agamemnon leads the army, *El.* 1.

<sup>128</sup> *El.* 344f: “Why, choose one or the other, either to be foolish or to be wise but forgetful of your own, you that said just now that if you had power you would show how much you hate them, but when I do all I can to honour my father, do not act with me and try to deter me from my action!”

motivation for revenge (τιμωρομένης) should drive both sisters. The compulsion to remember and lament drives Elektra onward; it pushes Elektra towards disobedience as she plots the downfall of the leaders of the city. Elektra laments, demonstrating the depth of her unhappiness: “ὦ γενέθλα γενναίων, / ἤκετ’ ἐμῶν καμάτων παραμύθιον. / οἶδ’ αὖτε καὶ ξυνήμι τάδ’, οὐ τί με / φυγγάνει, οὐδ’ ἐθέλω προλιπεῖν τόδε, / μὴ οὐ τὸν ἐμὸν στενάχειν πατέρ’ ἄθλιον”.<sup>129</sup> She underlines that grief (κάματος) cannot take flight from her. Although comfort is here, παραμύθιον, she will not abandon (προλιπεῖν) lamentation. Elektra pleads to continue: “ἀλλ’ ὦ παντοίας φιλότητος ἀμειβόμεναι χάριν, / ἐᾶτέ μ’ ὥδ’ ἀλύειν, / αἰαῖ, ἰκνοῦμαι”.<sup>130</sup> We find both divergence and reciprocity between the chorus and Elektra, marked with ἀμειβόμεναι χάριν. Her mourning becomes compulsive, ἐᾶτέ μ’ ὥδ’ ἀλύειν.<sup>131</sup> Elektra continually expresses her lack of ability to forget: “πόθεν δ’ ἂν εὔροις τῶν ἐμῶν σὺ πημάτων / ἄρηξιν, οἷς ἴασις οὐκ ἔνεστ’ ἔτι;”.<sup>132</sup> She speaks of pain as a disease, necessitating a cure. As she questions the chorus on negotiating through suffering, we find an inconsistency in Elektra’s resistance to abandoning this narrative. The force of her anger does not subside, she challenges the chorus: “καὶ τί μέτρον κακώτατος ἔφυ; φέρε, / πῶς ἐπὶ τοῖς φθιμένοις ἀμελεῖν καλόν;”.<sup>133</sup> Elektra charges others with crimes against the dead, noting a lack of care (ἀμελεῖν), drawing a contrast with her own constant recollection.

Elektra laments her abject conditions while constantly recalling: “ἀλλ’ ἐμέ γ’ ἂ σπονόεσσ’ ἄραρεν φρένας, / ἂ ἴτυν, αἰὲν ἴτυν ὀλοφύρεται, / ὄρνις ἀτυζομένα, Διὸς ἄγγελος / ἰὼ παντλάμων Νιόβα, σὲ δ’ ἐγωγε

<sup>129</sup> *El.* 129f: “O race of noble ones, you have come to comfort me in my sorrows; I know and understand, and it does not escape me, yet I am unwilling to give over and not to lament for my unhappy father”.

<sup>130</sup> *El.* 134f: “You who repay every kindness in every sort of friendship, allow me thus to wander, alas, I beg you!”

<sup>131</sup> Jebb has: “ἀλύειν... to ‘wander’ in mind; to be wild with grief”.

<sup>132</sup> *El.* 875f: “And from where could you find help for my sufferings, when no cure for them can be imagined?”

<sup>133</sup> *El.* 236f: “And what limit is there to my torment? Come, how can it be honourable to have no thought for the dead?”

νέμω θεόν / ἅτ' ἐν τάφῳ πετραίῳ / αἰαῖ δακρύεις".<sup>134</sup> Elektra focuses on the fate of two mythic women to draw out the comparisons with her own present. Prokne keeps the lasting memory of her lost son, αἰὲν Ἴτυν ὀλοφύρεται. Additionally, Elektra focuses on the fate of Niobe. These examples form the parts of her own compulsion and demonstrate her extreme lamentations. She is aware of this excess but makes little effort to curb this anger. We find an example of this as she laments the pain of (both the false and genuine) homecoming(s) of Orestes:

ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ.  
 Ὅρεστα φίλταθ', ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας θανών.  
 ἀποσπάσας γὰρ τῆς ἐμῆς οἴχει φρενὸς  
 αἶ μοι μόναι παρῆσαν ἐλπίδων ἔτι,  
 σὲ πατρὸς ἥξειν ζῶντα τιμωρόν ποτε  
 κάμοῦ ταλαίνης.<sup>135</sup>

Orestes' death defines her isolation and grief, ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας θανών. Remembrance comes at a cost. The pain of seclusion (ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ), links her to her brother and father in their own excluded states. Indeed, Elektra is emotionally broken. Orestes' demise cheats her out of salvation and destroys the house. Memory becomes excessive, inescapable, a fixed object in her emotional self. The force of recollection, however, threatens to overcome. Like the goddess, unforgettable anger drives her recollection: "ἐν δεινοῖς δεῖν' ἠναγκάσθην: / ἔξοιδ', οὐ λάθει μ' ὀργά. / ἀλλ' ἐν γὰρ δεινοῖς οὐ σχήσω / ταύτας ἄτας, / ὄφρα με βίος ἔχῃ".<sup>136</sup> With her cry of ἐν δεινοῖς δεῖν' ἠναγκάσθην: / ἔξοιδ', Elektra confirms her excess of her grief;

<sup>134</sup> *El.* 146f: "Ever in my mind is the lamenting one, she who mourns always for Itys, for Itys, she the bird distraught, the messenger of Zeus! Ah, Niobe, who endured every sorrow, I regard you as a goddess, you who in your rocky tomb, alas, lament!"

<sup>135</sup> *El.* 808f: "Misery me! Dearest Orestes, how you have killed me by your death! You have carried away with you, out of my mind, the only hopes I still possessed, that you would one day come to avenge our father and my wretched self".

<sup>136</sup> *El.* 221f: "Dreadful actions were forced on me by dreadful things; I know it well, my passion does not escape me! But amid these dreadful things I shall not hold back from this ruinous action, so long as life maintains me!"

claiming she cannot control her own actions. In an attempt to encapsulate her combination of grief and rage, Elektra turns to a range of images: “εἰ γὰρ ὁ μὲν θανῶν γὰρ τε καὶ οὐδὲν ὦν / κείσεται τάλας, / οἱ δὲ μὴ πάλιν / δώσουσ’ ἀντιφόνους δίκας, / ἔρροι τ’ ἂν αἰδῶς / ἀπάντων τ’ εὐσέβεια θνατῶν”.<sup>137</sup> She resists the chorus, claiming no reprieve will come: “ἄνετέ μ’ ἄνετε, παράγοροι: / τάδε γὰρ ἄλυτα κεκλήσεται, / οὐδέ ποτ’ ἐκ καμάτων ἀποπαύσομαι / ἀνάριθμος ὧδε θρήνων”.<sup>138</sup> Regardless of others and their offers to soothe, noted with παρήγορος, Elektra constantly reminds herself of her duty, her steadfastness described as ἄλυτος. A contradiction occurs as she asks for both freedom from θρήνος, and the continuation of memory. Lamentation is more than grief; Elektra uses it to recall and to defend.<sup>139</sup> She wishes for a victory that would bestow upon her a reputation of being noble:

μῖσός τε γὰρ παλαιὸν ἐντέτηκέ μοι,  
 κάπεί σ’ ἐσεῖδον, οὐ ποτ’ ἐκλήξω χαρᾶ  
 δακρυρροοῦσα:  
 πῶς γὰρ ἂν λήξαιμ’ ἐγώ,  
 ἥτις μιᾶ σε τῇδ’ ὀδῶ θανόντα τε  
 καὶ ζῶντ’ ἐσεῖδον;<sup>140</sup>

The force of excess pushes Elektra, hatred and anger saturate her very being. She constantly weeps in pain or happiness, οὐ ποτ’

<sup>137</sup> *El.* 244f: “For if the dead man is to lie there as earth and nothingness, unhappy one, and they are not to pay the penalty, murdered in their turn, that would be the end of reverence and of the piety of all mortals!”

<sup>138</sup> *El.* 228f: “Leave me, leave me you who would console me! For this shall be called insoluble and I shall never have respite from my sorrows, with my numberless laments!”

<sup>139</sup> Foley, H. (2001), explores women’s role in revenge and the link between lamentation and revenge, through keeping alive the memory of Agamemnon in speech. Specifically for Elektra (who adopts “a strategy of open resistance”, p.145), and also points out that Elektra does not “question whether to avenge her father, but how”, p.148.

<sup>140</sup> *El.* 1311f: “For long since hatred for her has been poured into me, and now I have seen you, I will never cease to weep for joy. How could I cease to do, when on this occasion I have seen you dead and living?” (Amended)

ἐκλήξω χαρᾶ / δακρυρροοῦσα. A similar metaphor of excessive resentment is found in the *Iliad*:

ὥς ἔρις ἔκ τε θεῶν ἔκ τ' ἀνθρώπων ἀπόλοιτο / καὶ  
χόλος, ὅς τ' ἐφέηκε πολύφρονά περ χαλεπῆναι, / ὅς τε  
πολὺ γλυκίων μέλιτος καταλειβομένοιο / ἀνδρῶν ἐν  
στήθεσσιν ἀέξεται ἥϊτε καπνός.<sup>141</sup>

Like Elektra, Akhilleus describes his rage using evocative imagery; smoke invades the soul and drives resentment, it saturates one's being. For Elektra, the recalling of love and hate inextricably bind together. The importance Elektra places on remembering her father intensifies through her belief that no one else can or will provide the service of remembrance.<sup>142</sup> Her lament extends to include her brother. They are reunited: “νῦν δ' ἔχω σε: προυφάνης δὲ / φιλτάταν ἔχων πρόσοψιν, / ἅς ἐγὼ οὐδ' ἂν ἐν κακοῖς λαθοίμαν”.<sup>143</sup> Elektra claims that she would not forget him (λαθοίμαν), even if she attempted to; for this is her role. Resolute in her sadness, Elektra occupies the place where these temporal axes meet, and she becomes more secluded. Elektra's sense of loss links to a desire for Orestes' reappearance. Loyalty and anger frame her actions as grief shapes her identity. The on-going theme of seclusion continues in Elektra's response to the exile of Orestes (and Agamemnon), through signs of anger and remoteness. Her isolation and emotional pain is set within a background of inflexibility and resentment. To her detriment, Elektra's sees herself as solitary rememberer against forces that conspire not to forget. The underlying message throughout this section implies that Elektra is so removed from the

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<sup>141</sup> Hom. *Il.* 18.107f: “May strife perish from among gods and men, and anger that sets a man on to rage, though he be very wise, and that, sweeter far than trickling honey, increases like smoke in the breasts of men”.

<sup>142</sup> Foley, H. (2001). Esp. 152f.

<sup>143</sup> *El.* 1285f: “But now I have you; you have appeared, with your dear aspect, which I can never forget even in times of trouble”.

house she is no longer royal. Memory comes at a price, as grief physically and metaphorically ostracises her.<sup>144</sup>

Elektra occupies a space between resident and exile. Klytaimnestra thematises this social dimension and confirms her marginalisation, keeping Elektra in the house: “άνειμένη μέν, ώς ξοικας, αὖ στρέφη. / οὐ γάρ πάρεστ’ Αἴγισθος, ὅς σ’ ἐπέιχ’ ἀεὶ / μή τοι θυραίαν γ’ οὔσαν αἰσχύνειν φίλους:”.<sup>145</sup> As previously suggested through the analysis of the dream, Orestes is simultaneously both present and absent in Argos. Elektra uses this paradox to emphasis her own isolation. The action underlines the idea of Elektra as the house’s memory. The non-presence of Orestes becomes tiresome; Elektra loses patience, and charges her brother that he has forgotten. The theme combines with mourning for Orestes and Elektra’s frustration at his inaction. The absence of messages sharpens her isolation:

ὄν γ’ ἐγὼ ἀκάματα προσμένουσ’ ἄτεκνος,  
τάλαιν’ ἀνύμφευτος αἰέν οἶχνῳ,  
δάκρυσι μυδαλέα, τὸν ἀνήνυτον  
οἶτον ἔχουσα κακῶν: ὁ δὲ λάθεται  
ῶν τ’ ἔπαθ’ ῶν τ’ ἐδάη. τί γὰρ οὐκ ἐμοὶ  
ἔρχεται ἀγγελίας ἀπατώμενον;  
ἀεὶ μὲν γὰρ ποθεῖ,  
ποθῶν δ’ οὐκ ἀξιοῖ φανῆναι.<sup>146</sup>

Elektra specifically uses knowledge of the past to articulate her sadness. Elektra frames remembering with specific aspects of her brother’s exile, it is her responsibility to mourn him in Argos. Elektra projects what Orestes may feel, having done similar to the memory of

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<sup>144</sup> Kampourelli, V. (2002).

<sup>145</sup> *El.* 516f, “You are ranging about once more, it seems, at large; because Aigisthos is not here, he who always used to prevent you from shaming your family at least outside the house”.

<sup>146</sup> *El.* 164f: “Yes, he whom I unwearyingly await, lost, without child or bridegroom, drenched in tears, with my never-ending fate of sorrows! But he forgets what he has suffered and what he has learned. Why, which of his messages does not end in disappointment? Always he feels the longing, but for all his longing he does not think fit to appear”.



their father. As the death of her brother envelops her, the future becomes another source of painful recollection. With her use of ἀνύμφευτος, she expresses an apprehension that she should be a wife and mother, not just a daughter; her future identity is threatened.<sup>147</sup> Elektra is only half-correct. Orestes is alive, yet he lives in parallel exclusion, a state Elektra envies. Her existence rests on his return. As Elektra laments, ὁ δὲ λάθεται / ὧν τ' ἔπαθ' ὧν τ' ἐδάη, the same compulsion to recall is not realised by her brother. Any communication they have seems doomed to fail. Her question of τί γὰρ οὐκ ἐμοὶ / ἔρχεται ἀγγελίας ἀπατώμενον; betrays a feeling of being deceived. The further communication between the siblings further underscores Elektra's role as the archive of the house.

Once more, we find an indication that the two are in contact throughout his exile. The situation emphasises Elektra's lament of remoteness, reinforces the malevolent actions of Klytaimnestra, and focuses the chorus's support. The chorus challenge the claims of isolation suggesting that the son does not forget: “οὔτε γὰρ ὁ τὰν Κρίσαν / βούνομον ἔχων ἀκτὰν / παῖς Ἀγαμεμνονίδας ἀπερίτροπος / οὔθ' ὁ παρὰ τὸν Ἀχέροντα θεὸς ἀνάσσων”.<sup>148</sup> They reference ἀπερίτροπος to support a claim that neither Hades nor Orestes has forgotten. Elektra is not alone. Her brother grew up with knowledge of his past and the fate of his father, this promotes the idea of a lasting plan of return and revenge. However, the exile is for such an extended period that Elektra begins to question whether Orestes will ever return. As the chorus enquire about Orestes' plan, she speaks explicitly of this interaction: “φησὶν γε: φάσκων δ' οὐδὲν ὧν λέγει ποῖ”.<sup>149</sup> His nonappearance and unreliability trigger doubt. Elektra

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<sup>147</sup> Popescu, L. (2012).

<sup>148</sup> *El.* 180f: “He who occupies the pastures of Kriasa on the coast, the son of Agamemnon, is not remiss, neither is the god who rules beside Akheron”.

<sup>149</sup> *El.* 319f: “He says that he will come; but though he says so, he does none of the things he says he will do”. Also 1154f.

challenges her absent brother by claiming she did not pause when saving her brother.<sup>150</sup>

Although Orestes' allies in Argos start (and end) with Elektra, the chorus go some way to facilitating retribution. Their position in society links to an ability to comment on the present situation.<sup>151</sup> However, in a wider context here, their role is to counsel Elektra and Orestes on measured remembrance and revenge.<sup>152</sup> The chorus inhabit a place unchallenged by other characters; usually accepted as speaking the truth. For the audience and characters, they exist to be the voice of reason. Although they are sympathetic to the οἶκος of Agamemnon, there is ambiguity.<sup>153</sup> The chorus advise moderation, control over one's emotions, not being excessively hateful is the way to succeed:

ὦ παῖ, παῖ δυστανοτάτας  
Ἥλέκτρα ματρός, τίς αἰ  
τάκει σ' ὥδ' ἀκόρεστος οἰμωγὰ  
τὸν πάλαι ἐκ δολερᾶς ἀθεώτατα  
ματρός ἀλόντ' ἀπάταις Ἀγαμέμνονα  
κακᾶ τε χειρὶ πρόδοτον; ὥς ὁ τάδε πορῶν  
ὅλοιτ', εἴ μοι θέμις τάδ' αὐθᾶν.<sup>154</sup>

Although the chorus side with revenge in the end, here they advise that she restrains her relentless crying, noted with οἰμωγή. A force of grief forms Elektra's character, identified as ἀκόρεστος. We find anti-Klytaimnestra rhetoric as the chorus use δύστηνος to describe her, and her guilt with κακᾶ τε χειρὶ πρόδοτον. They extend this by calling

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<sup>150</sup> *El.* 331.

<sup>151</sup> Foley, H. (2003). After Silk, M. (1998). Calame, C. (2005), suggests they possess a hermeneutic quality. Goldhill, S. (1996). Halliwell, S. (1988).

<sup>152</sup> Wilson, P. (2000). Choral odes; Budelmann, F. (2009).

<sup>153</sup> Gardiner, C. (1987). Burton, R. (1980), Seaford, R. (2000). Rhodes, P. (2003).

<sup>154</sup> *El.* 121f: "Elektra, daughter of a wretched mother, what is this lament that wastes you away, never content to cease, over Agamemnon, long since brought down in unholy fashion by a plot through your mother's cunning, and sent to his doom by her cruel hand? May the doer perish, if it is right for me to speak this word".

her act δολερός, and observing ἀπάτη. Her actions are ἄθεος; impiety warrants her punishment and revenge.

### Conflict and recollection in the family

As the foremost rememberer within the house, Elektra brings herself into conflict with members of her own family. Fundamental differences transpire between Elektra and Khrysothemis in the context of sharing the memory of the family. The sister keeps a similar recollection pattern alongside Elektra's narrative, but crucially, she elects to forget as a defence mechanism. In contrast to Elektra, Khrysothemis refuses to value her future reputation over her present personal safety. Khrysothemis adopts a middle position, yet the text gives evidence that her version of the past agrees with Elektra rather than Klytaimnestra. She shares Elektra's memory but submits to Klytaimnestra's control by implication through failing to challenge her version. Khrysothemis can seal off her memories from themselves and the πόλις. The suppression of her own memory juxtaposes with Elektra's insistence on her own independent recollection:

ἀλλ' ἐξερῶ σοι πᾶν ὅσον κάτοιδ' ἐγώ.  
μέλλουσι γάρ σ', εἰ τῶνδε μὴ λήξεις γόων,  
ἐνταῦθα πέμψειν ἔνθα μὴ ποθ' ἡλίου  
φέγγος προσόψει, ζῶσα δ' ἐν κατηρεφεῖ  
στέγη χθονὸς τῆσδ' ἐκτὸς ὑμνήσεις κακά.  
πρὸς ταῦτα φράζου καί με μὴ ποθ' ὕστερον  
παθοῦσα μέμψη:<sup>155</sup>

For her crime of remembering, Khrysothemis reports that Elektra has the opportunity to continue lamenting in her tomb, removed from the

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<sup>155</sup> *El.* 378f: "Well, I will tell you all that I know. If you do not leave off these lamentations, they plan to send you to where you shall no longer see the light of the sun, but while still alive in a dungeon, outside of this country, you shall bewail your troubles. In the face of that take thought, and do not blame me later, after you have suffered".

city, ζῶσα δ' ἐν κατηρεφεῖ / στέγη χθονὸς τῇσδ' ἐκτὸς ὑμνήσεις κακά,  
her memory diminished to the status of exile. There are different  
ways of restricting and diminishing Elektra. However, Khrysothemis  
and the chorus both attempt to intervene to protect Elektra, here  
presuming to give her sister advice: “νῦν γὰρ ἐν καλῷ φρονεῖν”.<sup>156</sup>  
She appeals to Elektra to cease her lamentation; her defence rests  
on the actions of Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos:

ἀλλ' ἀντιάζω, πρὶν πανωλέθρους τὸ πᾶν  
ἡμᾶς τ' ὀλέσθαι κάξερημῶσαι γένος,  
κατάσχεσ ὀργήν. καὶ τὰ μὲν λελεγμένα  
ἄρρητ' ἐγὼ σοι κάτελῃ φυλάξομαι,  
αὐτὴ δὲ νοῦν σχῆς ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ ποτέ,  
σθένουσα μηδὲν τοῖς κρατοῦσιν εἰκαθεῖν.<sup>157</sup>

A plea is found, one that verges on supplication (ἀντιάζω) for Elektra  
to avoid punishment, and an appeal to yield, if not immediately, but  
with χρόνος and her general tone, in the future. Khrysothemis  
promises to preserve a secret; keeping silent to protect her sister yet  
refuses to take action, sensing danger. We can identify a split in  
loyalty as Khrysothemis advises: “καὶ πρὶν γε φωνεῖν, ὧ γυναῖκες, εἰ  
φρενῶν / ἐτύγχαν' αὕτη μὴ κακῶν, ἐσώζετ' ἄν / τὴν εὐλάβειαν,  
ὥσπερ οὐχὶ σῶζεται”.<sup>158</sup> They ought not to confront those in power. In  
the context of remembering and retreat, there are two perspectives  
here. Elektra symbolises relentless grieving as recollection through  
her refusal to forget. In contrast, her sister manages her emotions,  
charging Elektra that she is not of sound mind, ἐσώζετ' ἄν / τὴν  
εὐλάβειαν. The self-imposed forgetting by Khrysothemis borders on

<sup>156</sup> *El.* 384f: “Now you have the chance to show good sense”.

<sup>157</sup> *El.* 1009f: “I beseech you, before we perish altogether and wipe out our family, restrain your passion! I will guard your words unspoken and realised, and do you in the end at least acquire the sense to yield to those in power when you have no strength”.

<sup>158</sup> *El.* 992f: “Before she spoke, women, she would have preserved caution, if she had good sense, but she does not preserve it!”. (Amended)

the artificial, she acknowledges the loss of the father and Orestes yet fear stops her from giving aid.

The obedient sister also considers the memory of Orestes. When faced with the perceived return of Orestes at the tomb of Agamemnon, she briefly becomes a collaborator with her sister. As Khrysothemis discovers the lock of hair, she recalls: “κεῦθ’ ὅς τ’ ἀλαιν’ ὥς εἶδον, ἐμπαίει τί μοι / ψυχῇ σύνηθες ὄμμα, φιλτάτου βροτῶν / πάντων Ὀρέστου τοῦθ’ ὄραν τεκμήριον.”<sup>159</sup> The use of τεκμήριον provides a locus for Khrysothemis’ notion of Orestes’ return. Tangible symbols of memory reinforce belief. Khrysothemis forced herself to neglect her brother; however, this has not always been the case. We can assume the intimidation felt by Elektra extended to Khrysothemis, who yielded, time, threats and a toxic environment having taken their toll. Adaptability pervades Khrysothemis’ character, a survival instinct that is missing from Elektra. Subservience and the forgetting of revenge and family duty are anathema to Elektra: “οὐδ’ ἂν σύ, σώφρων γ’ οὔσα. νῦν δ’ ἐξὸν / πατρός / πάντων ἀρίστου παῖδα κεκλησθαι, καλοῦ / τῆς μητρός: οὔτω γὰρ φανῇ πλείστοις κακῇ, / θανόντα πατέρα καὶ φίλους προδοῦσα σοῦς”.<sup>160</sup> Her verbal attack demonstrates how the individual daughters recall; this is about past loyalty and future reputation, οὔτω γὰρ φανῇ πλείστοις κακῇ. Elektra claims to be the offspring of the best man (ἄριστος). Memory would fall into disrepute if they supported the morally corrupt Klytaimnestra. We find a veiled threat as Elektra urges Khrysothemis to keep clear of the reprisal. As she charges her with betrayal, a two-fold dishonour: “οὐ ταῦτα πρὸς κακοῖσι δειλίαν ἔχει;”.<sup>161</sup> Elektra presses the intolerable situation. Her

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<sup>159</sup> *El.* 902f: “And the moment I saw it - ah! - a familiar image source of light struck me; I beheld a token of him among mortals whom I love the most, Orestes”.

<sup>160</sup> *El.* 365f: “Neither would you, if you thought rightly; but as things are, when you could be called the daughter of the noblest of me, be called the child of your mother! In that way you will seem to most people a traitor, who have betrayed your dead father and those who are your own”.

<sup>161</sup> *El.* 345f: “Why, choose one or the other, either to be foolish or to be wise but forgetful of your own, you that said just now that if you had power you would show

will is not broken, yet some in Argos continue to counsel moderation. Indeed, Elektra compares herself to paradigms of non-forgetting. She does this in the shadow of her mother subjective forgetting, with the chorus pressing to forget.

Khrysothemis' behaviour shows her yielding to the leaders' commands. Fear guides her attempts to make Elektra see reason.<sup>162</sup> She agrees to aid the memory of her father by hiding the offerings:

δράσω: τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον οὐχ ἔχει λόγον  
δυοῖν ἐρίζειν, ἀλλ' ἐπισπεύδειν τὸ δρᾶν.  
πειρωμένη δὲ τῶνδε τῶν ἔργων ἐμοὶ  
σιγὴ παρ' ὑμῶν, πρὸς θεῶν, ἔστω, φίλαι:  
ὥς εἰ τάδ' ἡ τεκοῦσα πεύσεται, πικρὰν  
δοκῶ με πείραν τήνδε τολμήσειν ἔτι.<sup>163</sup>

The agreement is conditional. Khrysothemis adheres to Elektra's wishes; yet betrays anxiety over the reaction of their mother. Her reliance on δίκαιος suggests agreement in principle with the legality and morality of Elektra's action; yet her tone is obedient.<sup>164</sup> Her insistence on σιγὴ, demonstrates her fears of retribution by their mother for her treachery. With this imagined betrayal, Elektra charges Khrysothemis as an enemy of the dead. She prophesies an unhappy future for her sister if she does not follow: "καὶ τῶνδε μέντοι μηκέτ' ἐλπίσης ὅπως / τεύξει ποτ': οὐ γὰρ ὧδ' ἄβουλός ἐστ' ἀνὴρ / Αἰγισθος ὥστε σὸν ποτ' ἢ κάμὸν γένος / βλαστεῖν ἔἶσαι, πημονὴν αὐτῷ σαφῆ".<sup>165</sup> Khrysothemis' collaboration and compliance buys her

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how much you hate them, but when I do all I can to honour my father, do not act with me and try and deter me from my action! ... Does this not add to our woes the reproach of being a coward?"

<sup>162</sup> *El.* 384, 390, 394, 429.

<sup>163</sup> *El.* 466f: "I will; for when an act is right, reason demands that two voices should not contend, but hastens on the deed. But when I attempt the task, dear friends, do you, I beg you, keep silent for if my mother hears of this, I think I shall have reason to regret my daring venture".

<sup>164</sup> *El.* 384, 390, 396, 429.

<sup>165</sup> *El.* 963f: "And think no longer that you will ever get these things; Aigisthos is not so stupid a man as to allow your children or mine to come into being, bringing obvious trouble for himself".

security and freedom from persecution. However, Aigisthos' repressive control prohibits both daughters from reproducing (βλαστεῖν), and strengthening Agamemnon's line. A child will remember and avenge. He pre-empts this threat, ensuring that neither Elektra nor Khrysothemis have a future. Punishment is designed to attack lineage. The importance of preserving one's ancestry becomes clear as Elektra takes the role of daughter of Agamemnon, once more, opposing her sister.

Elektra's behaviour is far from moderate. The gaps between present and lost, alive and dead, home and away surround her sadness at Orestes' demise and their shared segregation. We find an example of her unreasonableness in her laments at the loss of salvation for the house of Atreus, she is desirous of the darkness:

ὦ δεινστάτας, οἴμοι μοι,  
πεμφθεῖς κελεύθους, φίλταθ', ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας:  
ἀπώλεσας δῆτ', ὦ κασίγνητον κάρα.  
τοιγὰρ σὺ δέξαι μ' ἐς τὸ σὸν τόδε στέγος,  
τὴν μηδὲν εἰς τὸ μηδέν, ὥς σὺν σοὶ κάτω  
ναίω τὸ λοιπόν: καὶ γὰρ ἡνίκ' ἦσθ' ἄνω,<sup>166</sup>

Expiry and exile by proxy through death, Elektra charges Orestes that he has destroyed them both. Her pain approaches full circle as she asks to follow him.<sup>167</sup> Elektra's immoderation oscillates between domains, recalling painful fate in both personal and social demise. The feeling of nothingness reflects her physical state; she lives in a state of loss.

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<sup>166</sup> *El.* 1160f: "You who have travelled on a terrible path, dearest one, how you have destroyed me! Yes, you have destroyed me, my brother! Therefore do you receive me into this mansion of yours receive me who am nothing into nothingness, so that in future I may live with you below".

<sup>167</sup> Alexiou, M. (2002), examines parallels to the wish to die: "Helen and Andromache lament at *Iliad* 22.481, 24.764. Ais *Persians* 915-917, *Pr* 747-51, *Soph Ajax* 1192, *OK* 1689, *Eurip Supp* 786, 821, 829, *Hipp* 839, *Andro* 523, 861, *Helen* 169, *Orestes* 982". p.178.

Elektra's emotional range sits uneasily next to the chorus's temperate tone. Her slow-burning anger, manifested as unrelenting remembering, cannot simply be compartmentalised as the people of the city do. Her vocabulary turns to the toxicity of the house: "ἤδη δεῖ με δουλεύειν πάλιν / ἐν τοῖσιν ἐχθίστοισιν ἀνθρώπων ἐμοὶ / φονεῦσι πατρός. ἄρά μοι καλῶς ἔχει;"<sup>168</sup> With her hostile vocabulary, Elektra demonstrates how overwhelmed she feels as she lives with those who betrayed her father. Her outburst emphasises why she cannot simply compartmentalise. However, a cost exists for this memory, she is punished for recalling. Elektra's social status is negated, and she uses δουλεύειν to describe her lowly position under the regime. The sentiment is repeated as she laments to Orestes: "τοῖς πατρός: εἶτα τοῖσδε δουλεύω βίᾳ".<sup>169</sup> A pattern emerges of Elektra emphasising her deprived social position within the family house. Her fall from royalty and her sense of injustice are highlighted with εἶτα τοῖσδε δουλεύω βίᾳ. Elektra focuses on becoming a slave; this reinforces the hardships of her life and the need for deliverance. Her vocabulary contains a lament over her exclusion from the family, and she sings of her lowly position in the house to underline her bondage: "ἀλλ' ἄπερεί τις ἔποικος ἀναξία / οἰκονομῷ θαλάμους πατρός, ὧδε μὲν / ἀεικεῖ σὺν στολᾷ, / κεναῖς δ' ἀμφίσταμαι τραπέζαις".<sup>170</sup> She imagines that the nonexistence of consciousness in death equates to the absence of painful recollection, contradicting her previous ideas on communication with Agamemnon. Elektra is the self-perceived solitary representative of the house. Her fate entwines with her brother, "ξὺν σοὶ μετεῖχον τῶν ἴσων", as she gives herself over to death.<sup>171</sup> Elektra represents the last hope for the continuation of the house of Pelops. Her speech culminates with: "καὶ

<sup>168</sup> *El.* 814f: "Now once more must I be a slave among the mortals I hate most, my father's murderers. Are things well with me?"

<sup>169</sup> *El.* 1192f: "My father's [murderers]; and then they have enslaved me by force".

<sup>170</sup> *El.* 189f: "But like some despised foreign slave, I serve in the halls of my father, wrapped in shabby garments and standing to eat scanty meals".

<sup>171</sup> *El.* 1168f: "For when you were above, I shared your fate". *El.* 1131 wish to die.



νῦν ποθῶ / τοῦ σοῦ θανοῦσα μὴ ἀπολείπεσθαι τάφου. / τοὺς γὰρ  
θανόντας οὐχ ὀρῶ λυπουμενούς”.<sup>172</sup> She underscores the isolation of  
the younger generation and their struggle. Elektra hopes for a  
release from life; ambiguity pervades her attitude to remembrance,  
indicated with the negation of λυπέω. From the outset of the tragedy,  
ceaseless pain is a focus, the sense of loss frames Elektra’s position.  
Emotional anguish and lamentation are evident in her recollection as  
she bewails the toll of her pain: “μούνῃ γὰρ ἄγειν οὐκέτι σωκῶ /  
λύπης ἀντίρροπον ἄχθος”.<sup>173</sup> With the use of ἄχθος, Elektra bewails  
the weight that forces itself upon her; this is intemperance at its peak.

The pressure for Elektra to forget comes from various external  
sources. The chorus push the idea of forgetting through Elektra  
abandoning her memory of the past: “θνητοῦ πέφυκας πατρός,  
Ἥλέκτρα, φρόνει, / θνητὸς δ’ Ὀρέστης. ὥστε μὴ λίαν στένε / πᾶσιν  
γὰρ ἡμῖν τοῦτ’ ὀφείλεται παθεῖν”.<sup>174</sup> The drive to remember one’s  
humanity crystallises their hopes of restraint. They repeat θνητός to  
remind (φρόνει) Elektra of her father, and Orestes, that only death is  
certain for mortal man.<sup>175</sup> They speak of fragility; one should accept  
one’s lot without extreme resentment or lamentation. Elektra recalls  
the grief over the killing of her father as the recognition scene ends:  
“ὅπποτοῖ, ὅπποτοῖ / ἀνέφελον ἐνέβαλες οὔ ποτε καταλύσιμον / οὐδέ  
ποτε λησόμενον ἀμέτερον / οἷον ἔφυ κακόν”.<sup>176</sup> The sharp recollection  
of lasting emotional pain haunts her, this particular memory will not  
disappear; οὔ ποτε καταλύσιμον. Sorrow is continuous and  
inescapable. Elektra laments that the evil nature of some memories  
defy forgetting, οὐδέ ποτε λησόμενον.

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<sup>172</sup> *El.* 1169f: “And now I desire to die and not to be excluded from your tomb; for I see that the dead suffer no pain”.

<sup>173</sup> *El.* 118f: “For I have no longer strength to bear alone the burden of grief that weighs me down”.

<sup>174</sup> *El.* 1171f: “You are the child of a mortal father, Elektra, remember, and Orestes was mortal; so do not grieve too much. This is a debt which all of us must pay”.

<sup>175</sup> Echoes the ‘ode to man’ in the *Antigone*, 332f.

<sup>176</sup> *El.* 1245f: “Alas, Alas! You have brought to mind the nature of our sorrow, never to be veiled, never to be undone, never to forget!”

The chorus underscore their abhorrence at the present situation, and stress contamination: “ὅτι σφὶν ἤδη τὰ μὲν ἐκ δόμων νοσεῖται, / τὰ δὲ πρὸς τέκνων διπλῇ φύ -/ λοπις οὐκέτ’ ἐξισοῦται / φιλοτασίῳ διαίτῃ”.<sup>177</sup> The two sisters are now in conflict, διπλῇ φύλοπις. The corrupting power of strife becomes part of the price of remembering. However, Elektra will gain honour for her current position in the future. A major part of the chorus’s role is to advise moderation to Elektra. A paradox lies here, as the chorus argue against retaliation, they also highlight what Elektra may gain in the future by referring to the past. To demonstrate these sympathetic leanings, we can examine their introduction: “ἐγὼ μὲν, ὦ παῖ, καὶ τὸ σὸν σπεύδουσ’ ἅμα / καὶ τούμὸν αὐτῆς ἦλθον: εἰ δὲ μὴ καλῶς / λέγω, σὺ νίκα: σοὶ γὰρ ἐψόμεσθ’ ἅμα”.<sup>178</sup> Their civic allegiance is established with a promise of loyalty to the child (and house) of Agamemnon. The chorus reveal their compassion for the family when they are informed of Orestes’ (false) death: “φεῦ φεῦ: τὸ πᾶν δὴ δεσπότηισι τοῖς πάλοι / πρόρριζον, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἔφθαρται γένος”.<sup>179</sup> They express horror for the γένος. We see significant emphasis on the annihilation of the family and its line as the chorus use πρόρριζος to describe the situation and threat. The chorus possess right-mindedness yet they do not persuade Elektra to relent.<sup>180</sup> Elektra allies them to the individual and house: “ὦ φίλταται γυναῖκες, ὦ πολίτιδες”.<sup>181</sup> The chorus take issue with Elektra overstepping of the boundaries of moderation:

ἀλλ’ οὔτοι τόν γ’ ἐξ Αἴδα  
παγκοίνου λίμνας πατέρ’ ἀν-  
στάσεις οὔτε γόοισιν οὐ λιταῖς.

<sup>177</sup> *El.* 1070f: “Tell them that their house suffers from a plague, and that the strife between their children is no longer levelled out in loving life together”.

<sup>178</sup> *El.* 251f: “I have come, daughter, in your interest and also in my own. But if what I say is wrong, have your own way, because we shall follow you”.

<sup>179</sup> *El.* 764f: “Alas, alas! The whole family of our ancient masters, it seems is destroyed root and branch”.

<sup>180</sup> For the chorus’s moral position, see Burton, R. (1980). Davison, J. (1986). Calame, C. (1999). Esposito, S. (1996). Gould, J. (1996). Foley, H. (2003). Gardiner, C. (1987). Vernant, J-P. (1988).

<sup>181</sup> *El.* 1227f: “Dearest women, fellow townswomen”. Finglass, P. (2005)

ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῶν μετρίων ἐπ' ἀμήχανον  
ἄλγος ἀεὶ στενάχουσα διόλλυσαι,  
ἐν οἷς ἀνάλυσίς ἐστιν οὐδεμία κακῶν  
τί μοι τῶν δυσφόρων ἐφίει;<sup>182</sup>

The concern is for Elektra's emotional wellbeing; the chorus do not waiver in support. She labels her pain as ἀμήχανος, an irresistible lack of choice. Her painful memory does not simply overtake her; but threatens her very existence (διόλλυσαι). Elektra verges on the impious with her lack of restraint, ἀπὸ τῶν μετρίων. The chorus note that she wishes for the dead to return to life, they remind her that the mortal Agamemnon belongs to Hades. As they use explicit maternal vocabulary, the chorus embrace the role of surrogate mother, naming the other two daughters and their inaction.<sup>183</sup> An important point, they do not forget who Elektra is. Gardiner suggests that they: "Represent ordinary women with the usual human instinct for caution and reasonableness, in contrast to Elektra's heroic stature and capacity for suffering".<sup>184</sup> The 'human instinct for caution' manifests in their protective nature.

The chorus link recollection and the family to argue a case for restraint and resolution: "οὔτοι σοὶ μούνα, / τέκνον, ἄχος ἐφάνη βροτῶν, / πρὸς ὃ τι σὺ τῶν ἔνδον εἶ περισσά, / οἷς ὁμόθεν εἶ καὶ γονᾶ ξύναιμος, / οἷα Χρυσόθεμις ζῶει καὶ Ἰφιάνασσα".<sup>185</sup> Elektra's self-destructive action separates her from the group. The chorus insist that her grief is shared, yet she is the only one who dares to voice it. Elektra's feelings of ἄχος are not uncommon to the human condition. She wails with no self-control, remembering with unchecked grief. To

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<sup>182</sup> *El.* 137f: "But you will never raise up your father from the lake of Hades, to which all must come, by weeping or by prayers! No, leaving moderation aside and plunging into grief irresistible you lament ever, to your ruin. In this there is no way of undoing evil; why are you set on misery".

<sup>183</sup> *El.* 154f. Instances of παῖς and τέκνον at *El.* 121, 154, 174, 234, 251, 825f.

<sup>184</sup> Gardiner, C. (1987), p.140. Elektra as outcast hero. Vernant, J-P. (1988). Challenged by Gould, J. (1996).

<sup>185</sup> *El.* 154f: "Not to you alone among mortals, my child, has sorrow been made manifest, a sorrow that you suffer beyond others in the house with whom you share your lineage and your blood, such as Khrysothemis and Iphianassa".

placate loneliness, the chorus plead with Elektra and Khrysothemis to find a common ground: “ὥς τοῖς λόγοις / ἔνεστιν ἀμφοῖν κέρδος, εἰ σὺ μὲν μάθοις / τοῖς τῆσδε χρῆσθαι, τοῖς δὲ σοῖς αὕτη πάλιν”.<sup>186</sup> They profess a logical and rational viewpoint, emphasising the benefits of learning, μανθάνω; we find gain in λόγος. They argue that Elektra should relent, yet make the case for on-going remembrance and honourable recollection of the king and Orestes. The chorus’s outlook is conflicting, yet not contradictory, as they urge concession: “μηδὲν πρὸς ὀργήν, πρὸς θεῶν.” and suggest to Khrysothemis that she follow Elektra’s lead.<sup>187</sup> The drive to allow oneself to be flexible and open to advice, impresses the need to move forward emotionally from constant sorrow. The chorus warn against ὀργή, noting its destructive nature. As they hope for victory, their loyalty is evident:

ζῶης μοι καθύπερθεν  
χειρὶ καὶ πλούτῳ τεῶν ἐχθρῶν ὅσον  
νῦν ὑπὸ χειρὶ ναίεις:  
ἐπεὶ σ’ ἐφηύρηκα μοί-  
ρα μὲν οὐκ ἐν ἐσθλᾷ  
βεβῶσαν, ἃ δὲ μέγιστ’ ἔβλα-  
στε νόμιμα, τῶνδε φερομένην  
ἄριστα τᾷ Ζηνὸς εὐσεβείᾳ.<sup>188</sup>

We find a plea to both family and allies for a reversal of fortune. The chorus praise Elektra, describing her as ἐσθλός. She abides by the highest and most divine laws. They commend her for following pious decrees, τῶνδε φερομένην ἄριστα. If we incorporate this into a wider perspective, the chorus express support for the children in their

<sup>186</sup> *El.* 370f: “There is profit in the words of both, if you would learn to make use of hers and she in turn of yours”. Jebb commentary has “Elektra is in need of caution, and Khrysothemis of loyalty”.

<sup>187</sup> *El.* 369f: “I beg you, say nothing in anger!” Khrysothemis follows Elektra *El.* 464f.

<sup>188</sup> *El.* 1090f: “May you live as much above your enemies in strength and wealth as now you are below them! For I have found you enjoying no happy fate, and yet winning the highest prize in observance of the greatest laws, by your piety towards Zeus”.

endeavour.<sup>189</sup> The idea of disapproval extends to the culmination of the revenge plan, and serves to reinforce motivation for punishment.<sup>190</sup> The king was defeated through falsehood and corrupted action.<sup>191</sup> The chorus's tone argues this position by describing Elektra's actions as εὐσέβεια. We find dissimilar sides of the chorus drawing together; the voice of the many speaks for the honour of Elektra. Their sympathetic nature takes precedent over the cautious, more moderate side of their character.

### Memory in the future

Elektra's loyalty and duty towards Agamemnon ensures that the city forgets neither of them. Indeed, the chorus pledge lasting renown as they connect Elektra's honour to on-going lamentation: “οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀγαθῶν <ἄν> / ζῶν κακῶς εὐκλειαν αἰσχῦναι θέλοι / νώνυμος, ὃ παῖ ὢ παῖ. / ὥς καὶ σὺ πάγκλαυτον αἰ- / ῶνα κλεινὸν εἴλου, / ἄκος καλὸν καθοπλίσα- / σα, δύο φέρειν <έν> ἐνὶ λόγῳ, / σοφὰ τ' ἀρίστα τε παῖς κεκλησθαι”.<sup>192</sup> The chorus's speech recalls the bravery of the daughter, a persistent theme in the latter stages of the *Elektra*. They support Elektra; and become an audience for specifically female εὐκλεία. They compare the honour that Elektra has with her father, explicitly stating a connection with posthumous fame. The push by the chorus to avoid becoming νώνυμος, emphasises the heroic code of pursuing glory for the living and dead. A peerless expression of remembering, her action is a weapon, noted with ὥς καὶ σὺ πάγκλαυτον αἰ- / ῶνα κλεινὸν εἴλου, / ἄκος καλὸν καθοπλίσα- / σα. The chorus use overt military language to praise her fortitude.

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<sup>189</sup> *El.* 121f.

<sup>190</sup> *El.* 1439f. Choral hostility.

<sup>191</sup> *El.* 1070.

<sup>192</sup> *El.* 1082f: “No one who is noble consents to sully his fame by a miserable life without glory, my child, my child! Thus have you chosen a glorious life bathed in tears, giving a weapon to a noble remedy, so that you win on one score twofold praise, being called a daughter wise and noble”.

As Elektra anticipates what their actions could achieve, she assimilates women with men and heroes: “τίς γάρ ποτ’ ἀστῶν ἢ ξένων ἡμᾶς ἰδὼν / τοιοῖσδ’ ἐπαίνοις οὐχὶ δεξιῶσεται”.<sup>193</sup> She raises the topic of honourable recognition by the city including those outside Argos.<sup>194</sup> Her action sets a precedent for the anticipated reaction by the chorus, in the form of future κλέος and remembering.<sup>195</sup> Renown would be far-reaching; she imagines what the people would say:

ἴδεσθε τῷδε τῷ κασιγνήτῳ, φίλοι,  
 ὦ τὸν πατρῷον οἶκον ἐξεσωσάτην,  
 ὦ τοῖσιν ἐχθροῖς εὖ βεβηκόσιν ποτὲ  
 ψυχῆς ἀφειδήσαντε προύστητην φόνου:  
 τοῦτῳ φιλεῖν χρή, τῷδε χρή πάντας σέβειν,  
 τῷδ’ ἔν θ’ ἐορταῖς ἔν τε πανδήμῳ πόλει  
 τιμᾶν ἅπαντας οὐνεκ’ ἀνδρείας χρεών.<sup>196</sup>

With her specific naming of ἐορτή, these celebrations are in sharp contrast to Klytaimnestra’s previous impious commemoration. Elektra takes a civic-focused view and follows a pattern of assimilation to a particular model of courage and civic service. The repetition of κλέος and τιμή, and connects to the male members of society who traditionally take the role of defender. She becomes the rememberer in the face of others who press to forget. Indeed, their deed has wider implications for the πόλις, the chorus note τοῦτῳ φιλεῖν χρή, τῷδε χρή πάντας σέβειν.<sup>197</sup> As they speak of courage, τῷδ’ ἔν θ’ ἐορταῖς ἔν τε πανδήμῳ πόλει / τιμᾶν ἅπαντας οὐνεκ’ ἀνδρείας

<sup>193</sup> *El.* 975f: “Which of the citizens or strangers when he sees us will not greet us with praise?” Jebb. *Commentary*: “The poet is thinking of festivals or spectacles at which Athenian women could appear in public, when many visitors from other cities were present”.

<sup>194</sup> Finglass, P. (2005), examines ἀστός and ξένος.

<sup>195</sup> See also this theme in *Antigone*. *Ant.* 817f.

<sup>196</sup> *El.* 977f: “Look on these sisters, friends, who preserved their father's house, and when their enemies were firmly based, took no thought of their own lives, but stood forth to avenge murder! All should love them, all should reverence them; all honour them at feasts and among the assembled citizenry for their courage!”

<sup>197</sup> We find a parallel in Tyrtaeus. *Praise of valour*. Quoted in previous chapter. Popescu, L. (2012), suggests that Elektra is: “Fully aware of the brewing hatred among her fellow citizens... These lines [101] speak both of her pre-existent knowledge of the crisis and of her active role in transforming memory”. p.124.

χρεών, the chorus not only demonstrate the high regard that Elektra receives, but that the sisters obtain public tribute for the defence of their household.

Elektra proposes to achieve what Orestes has thus far failed to do, as she attempts to persuade Khrysothemis into helping: “ἐγὼ δ’ ἔως μὲν τὸν κασίγνητον βίω / θάλλοντ’ ἔτ’ εἰσήκουον, εἶχον ἐλπίδας / φόνου ποτ’ αὐτὸν πράκτορ’ ἴξεσθαι πατρός.”<sup>198</sup> With her focus on lineage, she fears the end, yet she is prepared to sacrifice the present and even her life for future memory. As Elektra attempts to convince what might be achieved together if successful: “ἀλλ’ ἦν ἐπίσπη τοῖς ἐμοῖς βουλευμασιν, / πρῶτον μὲν εὐσέβειαν ἐκ πατρὸς κάτω / θανόντος οἴση τοῦ κασιγνήτου θ’ ἅμα.”<sup>199</sup> Fame links to honourable remembrance, as Elektra endeavours to convince Khrysothemis that the dead may bestow future honour. The use of εὐσέβεια suggests the pious nature of their actions; shared κλέος takes the form of public memory.

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<sup>198</sup> *El.* 951f: “So long as I still heard that my brother was alive and well, I had hopes that he would one day come to avenge his father’s murder”.

<sup>199</sup> *El.* 967f: “But if you fall in with my counsels, first you will earn credit for piety from our dead father below, and also from our brother”.

### 3.4 The shadow of Orestes

The physical non-attendance of Orestes only partially negates his absence.<sup>200</sup> His return is heralded through allusion, hint and allegory. Orestes had previously cast himself as dead: “ἄγγελλε δ’ ὄρκον προστιθεὶς ὀθούνεκα / τέθνηκ’ Ὀρέστης ἐξ ἀναγκαίας τύχης, / ἄθλοισι Πυθικοῖσιν ἐκ τροχηλάτων / δίφρων κυλισθεὶς: ὣδ’ ὁ μῦθος ἐστάτω”.<sup>201</sup> False speech and trickery frame Orestes’ vocabulary, ὣδ’ ὁ μῦθος ἐστάτω. His approach is marked with an assurance of ὄρκος, which secures entrance to the house and an audience with Klytaimnestra.

As we learn, he has been in contact with Elektra throughout his exile, his approach is formed by the constant reminder of the deeds of those in the house: “γελῶσι δ’ ἐχθροί: μαίνεται δ’ ὑφ’ ἡδονῆς μήτηρ ἀμήτωρ, / ἧς ἐμοὶ σὺ πολλάκις / φήμας λάθρα προύπεμπες ὡς φανούμενος / τιμωρὸς αὐτός”.<sup>202</sup> Elektra’s lament at his non-return re-confirms this idea of communication and highlights its regularity. Indeed, she was the one who protected the future of the house through a strategy of concealment: “ὄθεν σε πατὴρ ἐκ φονῶν ἐγώ ποτε / πρὸς σῆς ὀμαίμου καὶ κασιγνήτης λαβὼν / ἦνεγκα κάξέσωσα κάξεθρεψάμην / τοσόνδ’ ἐς ἡβης, πατρὶ τιμωρὸν φόνου”.<sup>203</sup> Elektra remembers the tutor as one who preserved the family, πατρὶ τιμωρὸν φόνου. The previous (and continuous) action of sanctuary towards Orestes confirms the tutor’s allegiance to Agamemnon and the family, and suggests the siblings are not as isolated as they believe.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Elektra as nemesis, Budelmann, F. (1999), p.84f.

<sup>201</sup> *El.* 46f: “Tell them, speaking an oath, that Orestes is dead by accident, having fallen from his moving chariot in the Pythian games; let that be your tale!”

<sup>202</sup> *El.* 1152: “Our enemies are laughing; and our evil mother is mad with delight, she whom you often said, in secret messages, that you yourself would come and punish.”

<sup>203</sup> *El.* 11f: “[From Mykenae] from which I carried you, after your father’s murder, receiving you from your own sister, and kept you safe and raised you up to this stage of youthful vigour, to avenge your father’s murder”.

<sup>204</sup> *El.* 23f.



As the messenger reports the death of the exiled son, the mother reacts. Like her revision of the death of Agamemnon, Klytaimnestra attempts to rewrite the absence of Orestes. She charges Elektra: “οὐ σύ μοι τῶνδ’ αἰτία; / οὐ σὸν τόδ’ ἐστὶ τοῦργον, ἥτις ἐκ χερῶν / κλέψας’ Ὀρέστην τῶν ἐμῶν ὑπεξέθου; / ἀλλ’ ἴσθι τοι τείσουσά γ’ ἀξίαν δίκην”.<sup>205</sup> Elektra’s action was in response to Klytaimnestra’s threats over the safety of the child Orestes, necessitating intervention.<sup>206</sup> The suggestion here is that Klytaimnestra has been kept informed of Orestes’ life since he fled from Argos. She contradicts herself, having revised the reasons why Orestes left Argos, she now vocalises the threat that he represents in order to set up a contrast between outcast and ongoing presence. The way she feels about the absent Orestes centres on her claims that the bond goes beyond the recollection of pain: “δεινὸν τὸ τίκτειν ἐστίν: οὐδὲ γὰρ κακῶς / πάσχοντι μῖσος ὧν τέκη προσγίγνεται”.<sup>207</sup> Her tone forces the idea of motherhood, yet once more, she contradicts herself by giving thanks that her son no longer constitutes a danger. Klytaimnestra externalises her personal struggle between happiness and sadness. An indication towards salvation after danger, she believed Orestes to be a threat; her son causes both fear and relief:

καί μ’, ἐπεὶ τῆσδε χθονὸς  
ἐξηλθεν, οὐκέτ’ εἶδεν,  
ἐγκαλῶν δέ μοι  
φόνους πατρώους δεῖν’ ἐπηπεῖλει τελεῖν;  
ᾧστ’ οὔτε νυκτὸς ὕπνον οὔτ’ ἐξ ἡμέρας  
ἐμὲ στεγάζειν ἠδύν, ἀλλ’ ὁ προστατῶν

<sup>205</sup> *El.* 295f: “Are you not the cause of this? Is this not your work, you who stole Orestes out of my arms and smuggled him away? Well, know that you will pay the penalty you deserve”. Kamerbeek proposes that: “The wording is suggestive of the sinister idea that the mother had been prevented from murdering her own son”.

<sup>206</sup> *El.* 1127f.

<sup>207</sup> *El.* 770f: “There is a terrible power in motherhood; even when they treat one badly, one does not hate one’s children”. (Amended)

χρόνος διῆγέ μ' αἰὲν ὥς θανουμένην.<sup>208</sup>

Klytaimnestra continues with the contradictions, claiming Orestes an exile that departed (καί μ', ἐπεὶ τῆσδε χθονὸς / ἐξῆλθεν), rather than was forced out; she asserts no responsibility for his absence. Once more, the issue of rewriting the past guides Klytaimnestra's vocabulary. Here, the son and the validity of his threats are questioned. As a defence to Orestes' promises of retribution, Klytaimnestra's language here is of guiltlessness, as she claims not to have pushed him. She is culpable for the conflict in the house and city. With φόνος and πατρώιος, we identify Orestes' foremost dispute in the death of Agamemnon. However, the key point here concerns what Oidipous means to her, and why she cannot forget him. Her use of the verb στεγάζειν suggests vulnerability and a fear of retribution. Klytaimnestra's trepidation dominates her actions and behaviour. We believe her response, as his return would most certainly result in her death. Orestes is aware of her behaviour; this strengthens the case for retribution. As he drives the revenge plot forward, recalling evil memories at the zenith of the action: "ἔξοιδα, καὶ ταῦτ': ἀλλ' ὅταν παρουσία / φράζῃ, τότε ἔργων τῶνδε μεμνήσθαι χρεών".<sup>209</sup> Orestes uses personal recollection (μεμνήσθαι) to evoke the crimes of Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos, drawing strength from them.

The news of his death initiates diverse feelings: "ὦ Ζεῦ, τί ταῦτα, πότερον εὐτυχῇ λέγω, / ἢ δεινὰ μέν, κέρδη δέ; λυπηρῶς δ' ἔχει, / εἰ τοῖς ἑμαυτῆς τὸν βίον σῶζω κακοῖς".<sup>210</sup> The text suggests that she has something to feel guilty about. Klytaimnestra's actions go against her previous declaration that a mother's love is unbreakable. These feelings are recognised Elektra, who laments: "τάδ' ἐξυβρίζει: πλὴν

<sup>208</sup> *El.* 776f: "After he left this land he never saw me, but he reproached me with his father's murder and swore to do terrible things, so that neither by night nor day sweet sleep would cover me, but from one moment to another I lived like one about to die".

<sup>209</sup> *El.* 1252f: "I know that also! But when their presence prompts us that will be the moment to recall these deeds".

<sup>210</sup> *El.* 766f: "O Zeus, what is this? Am I to call it fortunate, or terrible, but beneficial? It is painful, if I preserve my life by means of my own calamities".

ὅταν κλύη τινὸς / ἤξοντ' Ὀρέστην:". <sup>211</sup> Maternal love here is subjective and conditional. She continues, half lamenting, half celebrating her release:

νῦν δ'—ἡμέρα γὰρ τῇδ' ἀπήλλαγμαί φόβου  
πρὸς τῆσδ' ἐκείνου θ': ἦδε γὰρ μείζων βλάβη  
ξύνοικος ἦν μοι, τοῦμὸν ἐκπίνουσ' ἀεὶ  
ψυχῆς ἄκρατον αἷμα—νῦν δ' ἔκκληά που  
τῶν τῆσδ' ἀπειλῶν οὐνεχ' ἡμερεύσομεν. <sup>212</sup>

Klytaimnestra has no escape from remembrance; she presses deliverance (ἀπήλλαγμαί). With his downfall, her future is without fear. Neither Klytaimnestra nor Elektra, with their conditional memories, forget Orestes and the role he may still play:

οὔτοι μάτην γε: πῶς γὰρ ἂν μάτην λέγοις,  
εἴ μοι θανόντος πίστ' ἔχων τεκμήρια  
προσῆλθες, ὅστις τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς γεγώς,  
μαστῶν ἀποστὰς καὶ τροφῆς ἐμῆς, φυγὰς  
ἀπεξενοῦτο. <sup>213</sup>

In her response, Klytaimnestra rejoices at the end of danger (οὔτοι μάτην γε:), her initial reaction sends a signal, that she is glad of her son's demise, thankful for the news. However, Klytaimnestra wants proof of his death, highlighted with τεκμήριον. The constant repetition of symbols marks each step of Orestes' return, and here they point to ruin. Klytaimnestra's vocabulary once more highlights that her son was pushed out, φυγὰς ἀπεξενοῦτο. Although exiled, he still lives, and is identified by the chorus: "κρυπτᾷ τ' ἀχέων ἐν ἥβᾳ ὄλβιος, ὃν ἄ

<sup>211</sup> *El.* 293f: "These are her insults; only when she hears anyone say that Orestes will come".

<sup>212</sup> *El.* 783f: "But now – for on this day I have been freed from the fear inspired by this woman here and him – yes she was a worse mischief, living with me and all the time sucking my very life–blood – now we shall spend our days, I think, securely, for any threats of hers". Kamerbeek suggests that: "The murderess is shown to have lived, up to now, under the reign of fear; Elektra has been felt as an Erinys at her side – and indeed Elektra is the embodied Erinys of the Atridae".

<sup>213</sup> *El.* 773f: "Never in vain! How can you say 'in vain' if you have come bringing sure proof of the death of one who, though sprung from my life, turned away from the nurture of my breast, and became a foreigner in exile".

κλεινὰ / γὰ ποτε Μυκηναίων / δέξεται εὐπατρίδαν, Διὸς εὖφρονι /  
βήματι μολόντα τάνδε γὰν Ὀρέσταν.<sup>214</sup> Budelmann focuses on  
εὐπατρίδαν, suggesting that: “Since *hoi Eupatrides* can refer to the  
aristocrats of early Athens (‘of good fathers’), this puts Orestes into a  
political context”.<sup>215</sup> Klytaimnestra continually contradicts herself. Her  
relief at Orestes’ reported death, anger with Elektra, and her  
maternal bond, mix together in a complex contextual background to  
recollection, which focuses on the fear of the present and future  
Orestes.

### Orestes arrives

Orestes has grown up in exile, his recognition and recollection of  
begins as he approaches his fatherland. Orestes does not just return  
for personal, individual, and familial vengeance, but moves into the  
sphere of civic reprisal. Familiar relationships guide and support his  
homecoming and the recollection of his own land. Here, the section  
explores how various characters in Argos, through contrasting  
memories and emotions, articulate his return. Orestes achieves  
success through a combination of adherence to divine prophecy, and  
the regaining of his house from invaders. As the shadow of Orestes  
reaches Argos, the *paidagogos* alludes to the arrival through the  
metaphor of a new day. He assimilates the new day with the  
commencement of revenge, identifying internal στάσις and  
suggesting resolution.<sup>216</sup> He draws a comparison between the saviour  
Orestes and the dawn:

νῦν οὖν, Ὀρέστα καὶ σὺ φίλτατε ξένων  
Πυλάδῃ, τί χρὴ δρᾶν ἐν τάχει βουλευτέον:

<sup>214</sup> *El.* 159f: “And Orestes, he who is happy in his youth concealed from painful things, he whom the famous land of the Mykenaeans shall receive, glorious in his ancestry, when he comes to this land, brought by the kindly aid of Zeus”. Jebb has: “So that he shall be once more a noble of the land, instead of an exile”.

<sup>215</sup> Budelmann, F. (1999), p.253.

<sup>216</sup> Also 1065f. *Cf.* Batchelder, A. (1995).

ὥς ἡμῖν ἤδη λαμπρὸν ἡλίου σέλας  
ἔῴα κινεῖ φθέγματ' ὀρνίθων σαφῇ  
μέλαινά τ' ἄστρον ἐκλέλοιπεν εὐφρόνη.<sup>217</sup>

As day breaks, the heir of Agamemnon arrives. In contrast to this metaphor, the chorus use the concept of darkness to impress secrecy: “ὁ Μαΐας δὲ παῖς / Ἑρμῆς σφ' ἄγει δόλον σκότῳ / κρύψας πρὸς αὐτὸ τέρμα κούκέτ' ἀμμένει”.<sup>218</sup> The scheme is unseen, covered and shadowy; a strategy based in δόλος, the chorus underline this with σκότος and κρύπτω. As Popescu remarks: “Night... represents the time of conspiracy, the nemesis, or the intense memory of the grudging dead”.<sup>219</sup> We discover a definite malevolent threat that exists in the house to challenge and ultimately overcome. Indeed, Klytaimnestra's reputation and behaviour is no surprise for Orestes: “ὄρα γε μὲν δὴ κὰν γυναῖξιν ὥς Ἄρης / ἔνεστιν: εὖ δ' ἔξοισθα πειραθεῖσά που”.<sup>220</sup> His understanding leads to a plot based in subterfuge and duplicity.

Orestes returns as both victim and avenger. He is reintroduced to the native land he has not seen which introduces memory-inducing topography. His introduction focuses on the existence of familiar physical and public monuments to facilitate recognition. It also relies on his previous relationship with his native land and its traditions. The tutor links the city with the successor as he gives an overview of the landscape:

τὸ γὰρ παλαιὸν Ἄργος οὐπόθεις τόδε,  
τῆς οἰστοπλήγος ἄλσος Ἰνάχου κόρης:

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<sup>217</sup> *El.* 15f: “So now Orestes, and you, dearest of hosts, Pylades you must speedily decide what you must do; for already we hear the morning voices of the birds whom the bright beam of the sun is arousing, and the black night of stars has departed”.

<sup>218</sup> *El.* 1395f: “And Maia's son Hermes, hides the plot in darkness and brings him to the very end, nor does he delay!” Also at *El.* 111.

<sup>219</sup> Popescu, L. (2012), p.275.

<sup>220</sup> *El.* 1243f: “But remember that women too have martial valour; and you know it well, I think, from experience”. *El.* 329. Orestes knows the troubles of the house *El.* 1288f.

αὕτη δ', Ὀρέστα, τοῦ λυκοκτόνου θεοῦ  
ἀγορὰ Λύκειος: οὐξ ἀριστερᾶς δ' ὅδε  
Ἥρας ὁ κλεινὸς ναός.<sup>221</sup>

Dual acknowledgement occurs here; as Orestes arrives, the city presents itself to him. He is at once native and outsider, exile and citizen to a city he has not seen since a child. He approaches as a paradox, both lost and found, dead and alive, forgotten and remembered, man and child, saviour and victim. These contradictions mark his return to Argos, and the transitional position he first inhabits. The tutor must first create memory by describing Argos, acknowledging the ἀγορά, a place of public assembly; this is ostensibly a civilised city. He provides a religious link, describing Hera's temple, and alerts Orestes to the glorious tradition of the city using κλεινός and παλαιός, reminding him of previous expressions of yearning (οὐπόθεις). The teacher tells Orestes of the status of the household, drawing a distinction between the public and private: “φάσκειν Μυκήνας τὰς πολυχρύσους ὄρᾱν / πολύφθορόν τε δῶμα Πελοπιδῶν τόδε”.<sup>222</sup> Discord and death are perpetual in the house of Pelops; the tutor references Orestes's lineage, reinforcing what is at stake, emphasising duty. Aware of the recent past, he juxtaposes πολύχρυσος with πολύφθορος to contrast the misfortunes that have befallen the house with the reputation Mykenae holds. The report ties Orestes to lineage, obligation, honour, and with δῶμα Πελοπιδῶν τόδε, a horrifying legacy.

The text emphasises the family line and ancestral heritage as the city and Orestes meet, military prowess bonds father and son together. The position of Orestes, his very identity, recalls Agamemnon: “ὦ τοῦ στρατηγήσαντος ἐν Τροίᾳ ποτὲ / Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖ”.<sup>223</sup> Their family

<sup>221</sup> *El.* 4f: “This is the ancient Argos of which you used to long, the precinct of the daughter of Inachus whom the gadfly stung; and this Orestes, is the Lykean marketplace of the wolf-killing god; this to the left is the famous temple of Hera”.

<sup>222</sup> *El.* 9f: “You may say that you see Mykenae, rich in gold, and the house of the sons of Pelops, rich in disasters”.

<sup>223</sup> *El.* 1f: “Son of Agamemnon who once led the army before Troy”

name is synonymous with the famous triumph. The herald at Delphi confirms this reputation: “ὄνομα δ’ Ὀρέστης, τοῦ τὸ κλεινὸν Ἑλλάδος / Ἀγαμέμνονος στράτευμ’ ἀγείραντός ποτε”.<sup>224</sup> The report ensures continuing remembrance and status for both the father and son; the link is strengthened through κλεινός, connecting Orestes to the victory. The repetition of the identification process, ὄνομα δ’ Ὀρέστης, and the use of the patronymic, confirm the importance of one’s name as a symbol of reputation. Orestes focuses on Argos: “ἀλλ’, ὦ πατρώα γῆ θεοί τ’ ἐγχώριοι, / δέξασθέ μ’ εὐτυχοῦντα ταῖσδε ταῖς ὁδοῖς, / σύ τ’, ὦ πατρῶον δῶμα: σοῦ γὰρ ἔρχομαι / δίκη καθαρτῆς πρὸς θεῶν ὠρμημένος”.<sup>225</sup> He emphasises inherited history to highlight past generations, returning to his native land to recall and kill the killers. Alongside revenge, Orestes relies on the action of purification as a motivation, reiterating his aim, σοῦ γὰρ ἔρχομαι / δίκη καθαρτῆς πρὸς θεῶν ὠρμημένος. His reappearance cleanses the house and he comes as liberator: “καὶ μὴ μ’ ἄτιμον τῆσδ’ ἀποστείλητε γῆς, / ἀλλ’ ἀρχέπλουτον καὶ καταστάτην δόμων”.<sup>226</sup> Orestes re-establishes his house and possessions. He reminds the house of his identity.

Physical symbols of family and wealth support his presence; this is the son of a king. Orestes’ motivation crystallises through a fear of ἄτιμος. He evokes accepted procedure before entering Argos: “οὐκ ἂν μακρῶν ἔθ’ ἡμῖν οὐδὲν ἂν λόγων, / Πυλάδῃ, τόδ’ εἶη τοῦργον, ἀλλ’ ὅσον τάχος / χωρεῖν ἔσω, πατρώα προσκύσανθ’ ἔδη / θεῶν, ὅσοιπερ πρόπυλα ναίουσιν τάδε”.<sup>227</sup> We find Orestes at a boundary, πρόπυλον, and his location as neither inside or outside the house.

<sup>224</sup> *El.* 694f: “Orestes, son of Agamemnon, who once gathered the famous armament of Hellas”.

<sup>225</sup> *El.* 69f: “But do you my native land, and you, gods of the place, receive me in good fortune on this mission, and you, house of my fathers! For I come in justice to cleanse you, sped on my way by the gods”.

<sup>226</sup> *El.* 71f: “And do not send me from the land dishonoured, but let me control my riches and set my house upon its feet!”

<sup>227</sup> *El.* 1372f: “Pylades, our work requires no further long speeches, but we must go inside at once, when we have saluted the seats of my father’s gods, all that live in this porch”. Orestes does this at *El.* 51f.

As he completes his νόστος, he integrates back into society, the family, and rescues a conflicted house.



### 3.4.1 Political conflict

The tragedy focuses on the needs of both the group and the individual in a civic context. It does this to accentuate the fall from grace under the leadership of the impious couple. The danger that Klytaimnestra poses to the city, and her impious rule alongside Aigisthos, permits us to view the πόλις as one that needs salvation from the present. We find relevancy to the issue of memory here, as Klytaimnestra has been seeking to rewrite the past in order to confirm her position in the present.

Freedom from something approaching a tyranny is the τέλος for Argos.<sup>228</sup> The situation emphasises a need for Orestes to be recalled and return to liberate the πόλις.<sup>229</sup> However, no firm institution exists, 'πόλις' is vague and does not capture all the city embodies, or lacks.<sup>230</sup> The absence of explicit definition means that in the *Elektra*, we must study it through the actions and speech of those who defend or attack the city and its social structures. As representatives of the people of Argos, the chorus take sides against the regime. They resist Klytaimnestra's narrative of the past and ultimately collaborate with Elektra and Orestes despite their earlier advice to Elektra that she should cease. The chorus underline their own resentment at Agamemnon's murder by framing his death as one caused by a contaminated force: "ἄλεκτρ' ἄνυμφα γὰρ ἐπέβα μαιφόνων / γάμων ἀμιλλήμαθ' οἷσιν οὐ θέμις".<sup>231</sup> They charge Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos with having a polluted, or rather with μαιφονος, polluting union and killing with lust. We find recollection of

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<sup>228</sup> A direct allusion is in *Khoephoroi*, 302, 942f, 961f, 973, and 1046. For a contrast to Sophokles' avoidance of the term πόλις, see Griffith, M. (1995), who catalogues examples in the *Agamemnon*. Finglass, P. (2005), Konstan, D. (2008).

<sup>229</sup> Easterling, P. (1997).

<sup>230</sup> For instance no Argive assembly, like Ais. *Supp.* 605f.

<sup>231</sup> *El.* 493f: "For the drive to a polluting marriage, that brought an accursed bed, an accursed bridal, came upon those for whom it was forbidden". With sympathy, the chorus make a play on her name, ἄλεκτρα, bed-less, confirming the unmarried, isolated state of the daughter of Agamemnon. *El.* 492. Repeated by Elektra at 962.

internal conflict, seen here with θέμις and ἀμίλλημα. We note the cause of this division as the chorus contrast an ostensibly happy union; γάμος clashes with something sinful, illustrated with ἄνυμφος and ἄλεκτρος. Their vocabulary alludes to the breaking of divine law and they lament Klytaimnestra's relationship and position.

### Aigisthos, Klytaimnestra, and power

Faced with death, Aigisthos predicts conflict: “ἢ πᾶσ’ ἀνάγκη τήνδε τὴν στέγην ἰδεῖν / τὰ τ’ ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα Πελοπιδῶν κακά;”.<sup>232</sup> His speech encapsulates the guilt that runs through the lineage.<sup>233</sup> Aigisthos contrasts the contemporary situation; the house has a compulsion (ἀνάγκη) to perpetuate sorrow. Its destiny and the perpetual, cyclical nature of the curse are on-going (μέλλοντα). The chorus also allude to a mythic memory of evil within the house, placing the blame with Pelops: “εὗτε γὰρ ὁ ποντισθεὶς / Μυρτίλος ἐκοιμάθη, / παγχρύσων δίφρων / δυστάνοις αἰκίαις / πρόρριζος ἐκριφθεὶς, / οὗ τί πω / ἔλειπεν ἐκ τοῦδ’ οἴκου / πολύπρονος αἰκεία”.<sup>234</sup> A history of brutality exists; the use of πολύπρονος αἰκεία establishes permanency.<sup>235</sup> Past misfortunes and calamities occupy the house and impact on the present.

Evidence of Aigisthos' malevolence is found in his actions towards the dead Orestes. As the (false) body lies on the bier for presentation, Aigisthos proclaims that the dead exile be displayed to the public in an attempt to manipulate any past influence Orestes

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<sup>232</sup> *El.* 1496f: “Is it needful that this house should witness the present and the future woes of the Pelopids?”

<sup>233</sup> *cf.* Sewell-Rutter, N. (2007).

<sup>234</sup> *El.* 505f: “For since Myrtilos fell asleep, plunged into the sea, hurled headlong from the golden chariot with cruel torment, never yet has the torment of many troubles departed from the house”. It is ironic and a cyclic repetition of the past that Orestes uses a false tale of a chariot race to facilitate revenge.

<sup>235</sup> Winnington-Ingram, R. (1980), rightly argues that: “Sophocles is laying a great deal of stress on the notion that evil in the past sets up a process compulsive and inevitable determining evil in the future”. p.224.

may have had. The proposed audience for this action extends to those in Argos and the surrounding region:

σιγαῖν πύλας ἄνωγα κἀναδεικνύναι  
παῖσιν Μυκηναίοισιν Ἀργείοις θ' ὄραν,  
ὥς εἴ τις αὐτῶν ἐλπίσιν κεναῖς πάρος  
ἐξήρετ' ἄνδρὸς τοῦδε, νῦν ὁρῶν νεκρὸν  
στόμια δέχεται τὰμὰ μηδὲ πρὸς βίαν  
ἐμοῦ κολαστοῦ προστυχῶν φύσῃ φρένας.<sup>236</sup>

The section is profoundly political. By exhibiting the body, Aigisthos announces victory over the enemy and combines this with an expression of post-death control. The explicit and very public action echoes Klytaimnestra's warped civic festivals.<sup>237</sup> Aigisthos' actions include a threat and a promise; he moves to regulate speech and impose a form of exposure onto the dead body with the action κἀναδεικνύναι. The ruler of the πόλις offers proof in recollection of his victory over the house of Agamemnon. However, this is not a case of subtle persuasion. The people of the town and deme (noted with Μυκηναίοισιν and Ἀργείοις) are forced to accept the legitimacy of the rule. Aigisthos takes the opportunity to turn Orestes' death into a tool of propaganda, an exemplary punishment and create a memory that serves as a deterrent, one that extends into the future. All who desired revenge for Agamemnon and the return of Orestes are defeated with the heir's apparent death. Finglass suggests that: "Aigisthos implies that the death of Orestes will ensure the subjugation of a people who up until now have refused to acquiesce in his rule".<sup>238</sup> His is an attempt at overwriting and overwhelming both the potential saviour, and those who may have followed him. Aigisthos impresses his authority in the public sphere confirming that

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<sup>236</sup> *El.* 1458f: "I tell you to open the doors and to reveal the sight to all the Mykenaeans and the Argives, so that if anyone was previously buoyed up by vain hopes centred on this man, he may now see him a corpse and accept my bridle, and not need violent chastisement from me to teach him sense".

<sup>237</sup> Echoes *Agamemnon*, as Aigisthos threatens to suppress dissent. *Aga.* 1576f.

<sup>238</sup> Finglass, P. (2005), p.205.

he has control. He aims to redact Agamemnon's memory, to rewrite the past, and claim power over memory and status by assuming his persona and position.

The effort to control, and the forum in which Aigisthos attempts this action, is paralleled by Klytaimnestra, as she also tries to legitimise publicly her own status and identity. The political dimension in Argos is emphasised as Klytaimnestra, who claims people are misinformed about her: “καίτοι πολλὰ πρὸς πολλοὺς με δὴ / ἐξεῖπας ὡς θρασεῖα καὶ πέρα δίκης / ἄρχω, καθυβρίζουσα καὶ σὲ καὶ τὰ σά:”.<sup>239</sup> The play encourages us to see political conflict in the house reflected in both personal interactions and the πόλις. Indeed, as she expands her own outlook, Klytaimnestra recognises that the inhabitants of the city may not be allies:

ἔπαιρε δὴ σὺ θύμαθ' ἢ παροῦσά μοι  
πάγκαρπ', ἄνακτι τῷδ' ὅπως λυτηρίου  
εὐχὰς ἀνάσχω δειμάτων, ἃ νῦν ἔχω.  
κλύοις ἂν ἤδη, Φοῖβε προστατήριε,  
κεκρυμμένην μου βάζιν: οὐ γὰρ ἐν φίλοις  
ὁ μῦθος, οὐδὲ πᾶν ἀναπτύξαι πρέπει  
πρὸς φῶς παρούσης τῆσδε πλησίας ἐμοί,  
μὴ σὺν φθόνῳ τε καὶ πολυγλώσσῳ βοῇ  
σπεῖρη ματαίαν βάζιν εἰς πᾶσαν πόλιν.<sup>240</sup>

Klytaimnestra's tribute recalls as she attempts to sacrifice in order to supplicate a divinity, asking for liberation from memory at the altar of Apollo, ἄνακτι τῷδ' ὅπως λυτηρίου / εὐχὰς ἀνάσχω δειμάτων. Klytaimnestra completes this secretly, hiding her speech; κλύοις ἂν ἤδη, Φοῖβε προστατήριε, / κεκρυμμένην μου βάζιν: we can detect a

<sup>239</sup> *El.* 520f: “And you have declared often and to many people that I am insolent and rule unjustly, doing violence to you and what is yours”.

<sup>240</sup> *El.* 634f: “Raise up the offerings of many fruits, you who are with me, so that I may lift up to the lord here prayers for release from the fears I now suffer. Listen, Phoibos our protector, to my secret words; for I do not speak among friends, nor is it proper for me to unfold all to the light while she stands near me, in case in her hatred and in the shouting of her clamorous tongue she should spread vain rumours through the whole city”. (Amended)

sense of apprehension in case her insecurities become public knowledge rumour may compromise her position.

The discord between the ruling regime, the chorus, and Elektra, is in a sense, the πόλις in microcosm.<sup>241</sup> The division found in the family radiates outward to the πόλις.<sup>242</sup> It is both domestic and political, affecting both the private and public:

ἔπειτα ποίας ἡμέρας δοκεῖς μ' ἄγειν,  
ὅταν θρόνοις Αἴγισθον ἐνθακοῦντ' ἴδω  
τοῖσιν πατρώοις, εἰσίδω δ' ἐσθήματα  
φοροῦντ' ἐκείνῳ ταῦτ' αἰ παρεστίους  
σπένδοντα λοιβὰς ἐνθ' ἐκεῖνον ὤλεσεν,  
ἴδω δὲ τούτων τὴν τελευταίαν ὕβριν,  
τὸν αὐτοέντην ἡμῖν ἐν κοίτῃ πατρὸς  
ξὺν τῇ ταλαίνῃ μητρί, μητέρ' εἰ χρεῶν  
ταύτην προσσαυδᾶν τῷδε συγκοιμωμένην:<sup>243</sup>

Aigisthos' own attempt to assert control is described in terms of distorted remembrance with political overtones. In comparison with Klytaimnestra's earlier manipulation of chorus and festivals, Aigisthos revels in self-glorification over the usurpation of the old king. The couple appropriate Agamemnon's civic and personal identity in order to broadcast and sustain their own rule, a continuation of the attempt to eradicate completely his memory by taking his place.<sup>244</sup> Elektra

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<sup>241</sup> Easterling, P. (1997) : "The fact that political, legal, and social issues are dealt with in a language carefully integrated into the heroic setting enables problematic questions to be addressed without overt divisiveness and thus to be open from the start to different interpretations". p.25.

<sup>242</sup> MacLeod, L. (2001), emphasises a central role of the πόλις. Contra to this is Griffin, J. (1998), who argues for a lesser role. My approach generally agrees with Finglass, P. (2005), who takes a balanced view, neither discounting nor over-emphasising the city's role.

<sup>243</sup> *El.* 266f: "And then what kind of days do you think I pass when I see Aigisthos sitting on my father's throne, and when I see him wearing the same clothes he wore, and pouring libations at the same hearth at which he murdered him; and when I see their final outrage, the murderer in my father's bed with my miserable mother, if she be called mother when she sleeps with him man". He carried Agamemnon's sceptre at *El.* 420.

<sup>244</sup> Also in Euripides, *El.* 10f. Aiskhylos promotes Aigisthos's actions as revenge for the past, rather than usurpation. *Ag.* 1577f.

underlines Aigisthos' guilty presence as he wears the royal attire of the king, demonstrating the literal and figurative position he has taken. The couple attempt to control not just the religious aspects connected to the death of Agamemnon, but his role as king. Klytaimnestra publically rewrites memory through ritual, and Aigisthos erases Agamemnon's memory and takes his place. He commandeers the king's position, and the ancestral (πατρῷος) seat of power, yet is controlled himself by Klytaimnestra: "τοιαῦθ' ὕλακτεῖ, σὺν δ' ἐποτρύνει πέλας / ὁ κλεινὸς αὐτῇ ταῦτ' αὖτις παρών, / ὁ πάντ' ἀναλκίς οὔτος, ἢ πᾶσα βλάβη, / ὁ σὺν γυναιξὶ τὰς μάχας ποιοῦμενος".<sup>245</sup> Role and station are twisted; he performs ritual commemoration in a place of death, παρέστιος, and this alludes to the ceremonial and civic role Aigisthos takes.<sup>246</sup> The idea of ungodliness extends as Elektra uses σπένδω and λοιβή, to note that although Aigisthos makes offerings he does so impiously. His actions emphasise the usurpation of ritual status. Aigisthos is a living reminder of the evil misfortunes to have befallen the house.

The crescendo found in Elektra's speech reaches a climax as she describes the occupying of the bed of Agamemnon and the intimate relationship with his wife, κοίτη συγκοιμωμένην. The bed is a metonymy for Aigisthos' usurpation of Agamemnon's sexual role, which connotes both physical pleasure and the substitution of the old οἶκος for a new one. The situation horrifies Elektra and is symbolic of all that is wrong in Argos. Aigisthos' presence continually insults the house through the killing of the host and reminds us of the taking of the king's place. The act finds equivalency as the usurper pours libations at the same spot Agamemnon died, polluting the house.<sup>247</sup> Ironically, the hearth is where Aigisthos meets the axe; the

<sup>245</sup> *El.* 299f: "She barks out words like these, and her noble husband stands by her to encourage her, this utter coward, this total plague, this man who fights his battles with womens' aid".

<sup>246</sup> Seaford, R. (1994).

<sup>247</sup> *El.* 558f. Elektra identifies Agamemnon's past fault that required Iphigenia's sacrifice.

victim/killer dynamic is confused here, the returning Orestes bestows upon him a corresponding death in the identical setting.<sup>248</sup>

Orestes and Elektra, after assuring the correct procedure for their father, uphold the opposite for his assassin: “ἀλλ’ ὥς τάχιστα κτεῖνε καὶ κτανῶν πρόθεξ / ταφεῦσιν ὧν τόνδ’ εἰκός ἐστι τυγχάνειν, / ἄποπτον ἡμῶν ὥς ἐμοὶ τόδ’ ἂν κακῶν / μόνον γένοιτο τῶν πάλαι λυτήριον”.<sup>249</sup> Elektra insists on punishment beyond death, exposing the body as carrion outside the city, far from sight, ἄποπτον ἡμῶν. The action disenfranchises Aigisthos’ memory in the city, reinstating the rule of Agamemnon’s kin.<sup>250</sup> Elektra focuses on liberation from recalling past grief as a cure for present woes: “ἡ δ’ ὥδε τλήμων ὥστε τῷ μιάστορι / ξύνεστ’, ἐρινὺν οὔτιν’ ἐκφοβουμένη”.<sup>251</sup> Elektra stresses the impious relationship to describe their bond, ἡ δ’ ὥδε τλήμων ὥστε τῷ μιάστορι ξύνεστ’, she charges Aigisthos and her own mother with contaminating the house. The homicide of Aigisthos has dual cyclic effect, to liberate and assume control over the regime and to install the heir to the throne.

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<sup>248</sup> *El.* 1495f. Khrysothemis swears upon the hearth, *El.* 881.

<sup>249</sup> *El.* 1487f: “No, kill him at once and then set him before those who should properly give him burial, out of sight, since for me this would be the only release from ancient woes!”

<sup>250</sup> Konstan, D. (2008), places this action within the political framework of the drama: “Sophocles divert[s] attention from the pollution associated with the killing of kin and... highlight[s] the political character of the murders”. p.78.

<sup>251</sup> *El.* 275f: “But she is so abandoned that she lives with the polluter, having no fear of any Erinyes;”

### 3.5 Conclusion

In the *Elektra*, the endeavour to influence the memory and recollection of the dead reveals an attempt to control the present and future by (re)writing the past. The forces of recollection and forgetting are both destructive and self-destructive. A network of complex, interchangeable oppositions such as exile/citizen, hidden/shown, inside/outside, victim/killer, and alive/dead, drive the drama. The internal struggle is realised on both personal and public, external levels. There are real ambiguities to memory in this play. The tragedy is future shaped by requital, retaliation, and revenge. Ideas of justice and honour frame Elektra and Klytaimnestra's personal and public commemoration. Klytaimnestra ostensibly remembers and takes revenge for the killing of Iphigenia. She mounts a defence, based on the *Lex Talionis*, and combines this with attempts at redacting Agamemnon's memory in order to cement her power. Elektra and Klytaimnestra are morally diverse as Elektra remembers for her family, and her mother recalls and manipulates for her own gain.

The conflict in Argos relies on subjective memory to vindicate respective actions towards either revenge or remembering. A distinct point, no restoration is found if one forgets, but this comes at a price. Klytaimnestra, Elektra, and Orestes all use different methods of recalling the house and the father to take revenge or stamp authority. Klytaimnestra forces forgetting and battles against the return of the heir by impressing a need to forget. We find a source of legitimisation of authority and at the same time, destabilisation. In turn, Elektra contests the negative impact of impious remembering through distorted recollection. She pushes against the situation. Elektra lives in the past. She takes no real action against those who rule Argos, even upon her brother's return. Her duty is to archive memory to safeguard the household of Agamemnon and Orestes. The defence and security of the γένος lies with her ability to recall and her refusal



to forget. Elektra highlights the need for continuous remembrance in a positive way as she speaks of the glory the city would give them if victorious in recollection. A political tool to sway opinion and favour; memory is adopted by both protagonists in order to assume and keep power; a high cost attaches itself to both remembering and forgetting. The control, manipulation and public display through the iteration of Agamemnon's commemoration is a key point and demonstrates her desire for ownership of his legacy.

Remembrance is oppressive, ever-present, and unavoidable in the *Elektra*, no one escapes from past memories and their respective fates. These are constructed in a positive or negative fashion, guided by underlying themes of ancestry and familial recollection. Orestes is recalled progressively through his continued presence for both Elektra and Klytaimnestra. He returns to his fatherland using recognisable offerings and a story of death. Elektra's insistence on correct memorial for both her father and brother contrasts with her appeal for non-burial to Aigisthos.<sup>252</sup> Memory extends to the dead through correct ritual remembrance performed by the children that Agamemnon gains presence. Elektra's endless lamentation juxtaposes throughout the drama with her lasting anger. The presentation and analysis of Orestes as a vehicle for recollection provides a strong transitional point to the next chapter. As I have shown, the dynamic of memory and its attempted control in the *Elektra* happens within a range of motivations. In the next chapter, similar themes guide the journey of Oidipous and his incorporation into Athens. The study of control and ownership are significant to understanding and interpreting recollection. It is with these themes in mind that I turn to the *Oidipous at Kolonos*.

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<sup>252</sup> *El.* 1486f.

#### 4 The *Oidipous at Kolonos* in its historical context

We find a consistent pattern throughout Sophokles; previous actions are constantly reinterpreted to suit present and future. However, upon reaching the deme of Kolonos we find no obvious state of internal discord to pacify or regulate. The threat of war emanates from a divided family and a conflicted city in the form of Thebes, and by proxy, Argos. In the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, those who rule (Theseus) and those who support (the group) manage commemoration. In the deme, we find memory has the power to be traded and manipulated to shape the reputations of both man and city. As Oidipous approaches Kolonos, the shadow of pain and conflict transforms into a struggle for integration into the city and the realisation of on-going memory. The story here is not just one of forgiveness (Oidipous refuses to forgive even after death and protects Athens in the process), but of selective remembering and forgetting. Managed memory exists in the form of resentment, recollection of the past, exchange, and ritual remembrance for the future to benefit man and city. The focus is on an exchange of protective power for membership of the πόλις. Recollection (often in the form of reinterpreted and redacted memory) constructs the past and defines the characters.

The *Oidipous at Kolonos* approaches the issue of memory in a number of ways, each with their own respective positive and negative attributes. For instance, the play can be considered as a plea for resolution, and a warning of the dangers of resentment and anger. Each of these approaches can support a memory-based analysis. We may also read the *Oidipous at Kolonos* through a part-biographical lens. Sophokles wrote it in the latter stages of his life, and the play itself stands as a note of remembrance. It is a memorial to his creative output in Athens. Furthermore, the culmination of the narrative arc of Oidipous, as he comes to the end of his story,

parallels that of Sophokles. Set in the dramatist's own deme of Kolonos, we cannot fail to note both poet (through the text) and hero (in the text) reflecting on their life and career. Sophokles relies on an implicit familiarity to nuance the relationship that Oidipous has with memory. Sophokles differs from other tragedians as he uses the interplay between familiar corpuses of mythic recognition to nuance his portrayal. He engages with, and builds on, fundamental themes from the *Oidipous Tyrannos* and the *Antigone* to construct meaning in *Oidipous at Kolonos*. The previous dramas are a stimulus for action, and a basis for argument through this unconventional trilogy. Tragedy relies on audience memory to construct its meaning. The *Oidipous at Kolonos* does this to an unprecedented degree, it is distinctive from the other tragedies, as we need memory to decode and fully understand it. The first section of this chapter considers the biographical life of Oidipous. Although Greek tragedy draws on a degree of awareness of the myth, the *Oidipous at Kolonos* goes further. Sophokles augments his presentation of the character with an explicit degree of awareness. The reliance on the recollection and reception of Oidipous to shape his entrance and integration into Athens is a fundamental feature.

For Antiphanes, it is impossible to isolate the character from the inextricable torment of his previous actions. His outlook highlights the general reliance on audience familiarity and mythic content that support a similar approach to the *Oidipous at Kolonos*:

μακάριόν ἐστιν ἡ τραγωδία  
ποίημα κατὰ πάντ', εἴ γε πρῶτον οἱ λόγοι  
ὑπὸ τῶν θεατῶν εἰσιν ἐγνωρισμένοι,  
πρὶν καὶ τιν' εἰπεῖν ὥστ' ὑπομνησαι μόνον  
δεῖ τὸν ποιητήν. Οἰδίπουν γὰρ φω,  
τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντ' ἴσασιν ὁ πατήρ Λάιος,  
μήτηρ Ἰοκάστη, θυγατέρες, παῖδες τίνες,

τί πείσεθ' οὔτος, τί πεποίηκεν.<sup>1</sup>

Memory plays out over multiple levels. Oidipous is a figure loaded with presupposition in the dramatic tradition. We require an understanding of past narrative to comprehend fully what is happening in Kolonos. In the context of performance, recollection of actions forms the background to the tragic plot. Common familiarity (with the verb ὑπομνῆσαι) shapes the identity of Oidipous. The dramatic recognition of characters is essential to constructing tragic lives through implicit and explicit symbols and allegory.

The middle section of this chapter considers Oidipous through his relationship with exile from Thebes, and sanctuary at Athens. Oidipous' assertion of being guiltless, and his relationship with suppliancy, drives integration. He attempts to protect and control his own remembrance after death; his personal resentment provides security for the many. He does this figuratively and topographically in the shadow of Athens. The city and deme's respective position(s) provide a very specific location from which to examine the defensive role that Oidipous comes to embody. The latter stages of this chapter examine individual and group memory and resentment from a positive perspective. His projected remembrance is problematic; memory is in the form of resentment and curse, yet it holds a beneficial outcome for the people, πόλις, and region of Attica. One finds in the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, a tragedy preoccupied with restoration, resentment, and future security for the city and collective.

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<sup>1</sup> Antiphanes quoted in Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists*. 6.1f: "Tragedy is a cushy art altogether, since first of all the spectators know the plots already, before anyone speaks – all the poet has to do is remind them. All I need to do is say 'Oidipous' and they know the rest – his father Laius, his mother Jokasta, his daughters, sons, what will happen to him, what he has done". Antiphanes fragment 189. Translated by Kassel-Austin (1983). (amended). Kelly, A. (2009).

#### 4.1. The creation of the *Oidipous at Kolonos*

The immediate context and staging of *Oidipous at Kolonos* provides a unique window into the world of contemporary political Athens.<sup>2</sup> I do not mean to examine the text as a historical document; however, I do intend to contextualise the production and performance through a consideration of texts from outside the drama. Memory is not simply a text-internal dynamic, but can be read meta-theatrically. I aim to show the drama and its place at the end of the fifth century hold continuing relevance to the themes of acceptance and recollection.<sup>3</sup> The politically turbulent gap between the creation and performance affected the way the *Oidipous at Kolonos* was received.<sup>4</sup>

The period between 411, the oligarchic coup, and the rule of *The Thirty* was a period of factionalism and division.<sup>5</sup> We find Athens on the defensive in the Ionian war, still reeling from the Sicilian debacle.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> This includes styles of rhetoric. I agree with Jebb who suggests: "The natural rhetoric of debate, such as we find in *Ajax* and the *Coloneus*, was as congenial to Greeks in the days of Homer as it was in the day of Protagoras". XLIV

<sup>3</sup> Jebb, XXXIX: "In a time of public excitement any drama bearing on the past of one's country is pretty sure to furnish some words that will seem fraught with a present meaning". Musurillo, H. (1967). Edmunds, L. (1996), suggests: "The tragedy provides various models of acceptance and reconciliation pertinent to Athens in the aftermath of the revolution of the Four Hundred... These models were no less relevant at the time of the tragedy's production, again a period of recriminations under a restored democracy". p.88f. Kamerbeek, J. *Commentary*. Also, Eur. *Orestes*. 866-95.

<sup>4</sup> Questions remain of re-enactment and performance of *Oidipous at Kolonos* in Athens and Thebes, and how this affects reception. Tension with Thebes is documented. Xen. *Hel.* 1.1.33. Demosthenes attests to the mythical/historical past of Athens and Thebes, and references Oidipous. 18.186. Diod. 13.72.3. *FGrHist* 324 F63. Bowie, A. (1997). Blundell, M. (1990B). Birge, D. (1984). Easterling, P. (1997): "[The play] could even have been understood as allowing a new and more tolerant view of old enmities", p.36. Edmunds, L. (1996). Kearns, E. (1989). Lardinois A. (1993). Markantonatos, A. (2007). Mikalson, J. (1991), suggests the tragedy has a: "Highly influential message of civic unity and political agreement", p.170. Tzanetou, A. (2012). Zeitlin, F. (1990). Jebb writes: "... all these touches must have been inserted by Sophokles the grandson, because in the poet's time Athens and Thebes were not usually on the best terms". (Commentary line 919).

<sup>5</sup> Easterling, P. (1997), (after Blundell): "The extreme vulnerability of the polis is strongly marked, particularly for spectators who had participated in varying ways in the events of 411". For Sophokles' involvement in 411 see Kelly, A. (2009). Trivigno, F. (2009). Markantonatos, A. (2007).

<sup>6</sup> In 413. Kelly, A. (2009), examines the environment through conflict: "In a series of battles (Cynossema 411 BC, Abydos 410 BC, Cyzicus 410 BC, Arginusae 406

These details provide background to the staging of *Oidipous at Kolonos*. The specific use of Kolonos as a setting has historical significance, direct meaning, and the potential for both danger and forgiveness.<sup>7</sup> As Thουκυδίδης notes, the location of Kolonos resounds with contemporary implications: “ξυνέκλησαν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἐς τὸν Κολωνόν (ἔστι δὲ ἱερὸν Ποσειδῶνος ἔξω πόλεως ἀπέχον σταδίους μάλιστα δέκα)... ἦν δὲ ὁ μὲν τὴν γνώμην ταύτην εἰπὼν Πείσανδρος, καὶ τᾶλλα ἐκ τοῦ προφανοῦς προθυμότατα συγκαταλύσας τὸν δῆμον.”<sup>8</sup> Kolonos was used as base upon which Peisander organised the oligarchy.

Further evidence of existing political suspicion and resentment is found in speech 20 in the Lysiac corpus, and the defence of Polystratos against being linked to the oligarchy of 411:

οὐ μοι δοκεῖ χρῆναι ὀργίζεσθαι ὑμᾶς τῷ ὀνόματι τῷ τῶν τετρακοσίων, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἔργοις ἐνίων. οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐπιβουλεύσαντες ἦσαν αὐτῶν, οἱ δ' ἵνα μήτε τὴν πόλιν μηδὲν κακὸν ἐργάσαιντο μήθ' ὑμῶν μηδένα, ἀλλ' εὖνοι ὄντες εἰσῆθον εἰς τὸ βουλευτήριον, ὧν εἷς ὢν οὕτοσι τυγχάνει Πολύστρατος.<sup>9</sup>

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BC), the Athenians actually defeated the Peloponnesian fleets, but the instabilities of domestic politics undermined their successes”. p.17. Also Nemeth, G. (1983).

<sup>7</sup> Kolonos is a meeting place for the Assembly in 411, Thou. 8.67.2. Edmunds, L. (1996): “The tragedy provides various models of acceptance and reconciliation pertinent to Athens in the aftermath of the revolution of the Four Hundred”, p.88. Ehrenburg, V. (1953). Jameson, M. (1971). Kelly, A. (2009). Loraux, N. (1986B). Markantonatos, A. (2007). Vickers, M. (2014). Wilson, J. (1997).

<sup>8</sup> Thou. 8.67.2-68.1: “The conspirators enclosed the assembly in Kolonos, (a temple of Poseidon, a little more than a mile outside the city;...) The man who moved this resolution was Peisander, who was throughout the chief ostensible agent in putting down the democracy”. Sophokles includes positive cultural references to the god Poseidon *OK*. 54f: “χῶρος μὲν ἱερὸς πᾶς ὅδ' ἔστι: ἔχει δὲ νιν / σεμνὸς Ποσειδῶν.”. “This whole place is sacred; august Poseidon holds it”. Markantonatos, A. (2007). There are continuing references to Poseidon in Apollod. 3.14.1. Bakkhylides 17. Hdt. 8.55.1f. Paus. 1.24.5, 1.26.5, 1.30.4.

<sup>9</sup> Lysias, *For Polystratos*. 20.1: “In my opinion it is not the name of the Four Hundred that should incense you, but the actions of some of their number. For there were some who had insidious designs: but the rest were resolved to do no harm either to the city or to any amongst you; they entered the Council-chamber with loyal thoughts, and the defendant, Polystratos, is one of that section”. Translation; Lamb, W. (1943). Edmunds, L. (1996): “Lysias 20, dated to 409,

The defendant is described as loyal to Athens and having the interest of the πόλις at heart. Within the group, there are factions that deserve varying degrees of retribution. Lysias argues that only some of the Four Hundred deserve punishment for past offences.<sup>10</sup> After a period of turmoil, there is urgency to reconciliation. The practice of subjective forgiveness has a parallel in near-contemporary comedy. Once more, we find a section of the guilty faction forgiven by the city.

Aristophanes' *Frogs* was performed in 405.<sup>11</sup> The *parabasis* focuses on choral authority and links it to a civic function: “τὸν ἱερὸν χορὸν δίκαιόν ἐστι χρηστὰ τῇ πόλει / ξυμπαινεῖν καὶ διδάσκειν”.<sup>12</sup> The chorus are associated with a pious, divine purpose. They impart guidance (ξυμπαινεῖν) and teach (διδάσκειν) the populace to forgive. Past errors may be expunged:

πρῶτον οὖν ἡμῖν δοκεῖ  
 ἐξιῶσαι τοὺς πολίτας κάφελεῖν τὰ δέγματα,  
 κεῖ τις ἤμαρτε σφαλεῖς τι Φρυνίχου παλαίσμασιν,  
 ἐγγενέσθαι φημὶ χρῆναι τοῖς ὀλισθοῦσιν τότε  
 αἰτίαν ἐκθεῖσι λῦσαι τὰς πρότερον ἀμαρτίας...  
 ἀλλὰ τῆς ὀργῆς ἀνέντες.<sup>13</sup>

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provides a starting point for a discussion of Athenian politics under the restored democracy. This speech... shows the mood and conditions in Athens after the revolution”, p.88. Edmunds also suggests that: “The heated ‘trial’ scene from Euripides’ *Orestes* (Feb/Mar. 408 B.C.) can be taken as a dramatisation of typical types, attitudes, and rhetoric (866-956)”. p.90. Roisman, J. (2007).

<sup>10</sup> Hall, E. (1993). There are examples of contemporary events informing tragedy, for example Hall (1990), suggests the events of 411 impacted on the 408 *Orestes*: “The historical backdrop is one therefore of a heightened political awareness and intense factional antagonism”. p.265. We can extend this to Aiskhylos. *Persians*, just after the Persian invasion. Also, the Delion war (Thou 4.97), and its effect on Eur. *Supp.* see Bowie, A. (1997); and Milos (Thou. 5.84) and Eur. *Trojan women*.

<sup>11</sup> Edmunds, L. (1996): “Sophokles had died in 406 sometime between Feb/Mar (the Dionysia), when he and his chorus had appeared in mourning for Euripides at the Proagon to the tragic performances, and Jan/Feb. (the Lenaea) 405, when Aristophanes’ *Frogs* locates him in the underworld”. p.87f. After Nemeth, G. (1983). Also, Beer, J. (2004). Dover, K. (1997).

<sup>12</sup> Aristophanes. *Frogs*. 686f: “It is right and proper for the sacred chorus to help give good advice and instruction to the city”. Translation Henderson, J. (2002).

<sup>13</sup> *Frogs*. 687f: “First then we think that all the citizens should be made equal, and their fears removed, and if anyone was tripped up by Phrynikhos’ holds, I say that those who slipped up at that time should be permitted to dispose of their liability

We can ask; who benefitted from this call for moderation and clemency? They were Athenian citizens who had supported oligarchic control and as a result had their status threatened.<sup>14</sup> The fundamental point lies in ἀλλὰ τῆς ὀργῆς ἀνέντες, resentment gives way to a plea to relent. Beer proposes that: “[From] *Frogs*, it is clear that Athens was in a state of political crisis”.<sup>15</sup> Those guilty of more heinous crimes against the city and people are excluded from the appeal, σφαλείς τι Φρυνίχου παλαίσμασιν.<sup>16</sup> For some, a mistake, or rather a fall is forgivable:

εἴτ' ἄτιμόν φημι χρῆναι μηδέν' εἶν' ἐν τῇ πόλει:  
καὶ γὰρ αἰσχρόν ἐστι τοὺς μὲν ναυμαχήσαντας μίαν  
καὶ Πλαταιᾶς εὐθύς εἶναι κἀντὶ δούλων δεσπότης...  
πρὸς δὲ τοῦτοις εἰκὸς ὑμᾶς, οἳ μεθ' ὑμῶν πολλὰ δὴ  
χοὶ πατέρες ἐναυμάχησαν καὶ προσήκουσιν γένει,  
τὴν μίαν ταύτην παρεῖναι ξυμφορὰν αἰτουμένοις.<sup>17</sup>

Selective exoneration and clemency was granted for those who defended the city. We find an invitation to the audience to view an offer of reintegration to the disenfranchised; those who have committed mistakes are presented as victims to forgive. For the πόλις to recover, one must manage ὀργή. The political past is susceptible to retrospective control. The *Frogs* permits an attempt to view managed remembering in a context close to the production of the *Oidipous at Kolonos* (401), within a similar frame of memory management, produced against a backdrop of guarded amnesty, and with the cautious optimism of restoration.<sup>18</sup>

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and put right their earlier mistakes... Now relax your anger”. Translation Henderson, J. (2002).

<sup>14</sup> cf. Robson, J. (2009).

<sup>15</sup> Beer, J. (2004), p.153.

<sup>16</sup> Lysias' defence of Polystratos 20.1. Conditions at Athens after the revolution

<sup>17</sup> *Frogs*. 692f: “Because it's disgraceful that those who fought just once at sea should suddenly be Plataians and masters instead of slaves... But it's also fair, for people who've fought so much at sea with you, as did their fathers, people who are related to your race that you let pass their one misfortune, as they request”.

<sup>18</sup> Wilson, J. (1997), advises caution: “We should resist assigning too much prophetic capacity to the playwright”, p.8. For restaging the play see Edmunds, L.



#### 4.1.1 Oidipous and his mythopoetic background

To understand fully the character of Oidipous in the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, we must consider two narratives that collide. In the context of memory, these are the mythopoetic/biographical and the topographical. Separate (yet interconnected) pasts alongside intertextual gestures create a foundation of understanding for the audience. Oidipous' entrance to Kolonos is loaded with implicit message and a subtle engagement of the past. His entrance demonstrates a reliance to manage memory, rather than totally forget. Set upon a background of exchange with Athens, each individual who engages with Oidipous utilises remembrance to fit their personal agenda, driven by a compulsion to control, either with the blessing of Oidipous or in conflict with him. One typically approaches the famous Oidipous with knowledge of his dramatic background; this gives licence to reconstructing a narrative of events. The play relies on remembrance and recollection for audience engagement.<sup>19</sup>

The prologue to the *Oidipous Tyrannos* provides a biographical reference point from which to explore Oidipous' entrance into Kolonos. Both the *Oidipous at Kolonos* and the *Oidipous Tyrannos* are about past, present, and future identity.<sup>20</sup> The earlier drama dominates Oidipous' later reception and recollection. In his previous life in Thebes, Oidipous had presented himself: “Ὁ πᾶσι κλεινὸς

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(1996). Kamerbeek, J. (1984), Markantonatos, A. (2007), Robson, J. (2009). Those (re)watching the *Oidipous at Kolonos* at the Dionysia could not miss the references to amnesty. Kelly, A. (2009), suggests: “This... resounded even more powerfully for the same citizens [of 411 and earlier] in 401 BC, as they were coming to terms with defeat and its aftermath, and looking for the reassurance which the OC's larger view of Athens provides”. p.18. Kitzinger, R. (2008), explores the audience.

<sup>19</sup> Markantonatos, A. (2007), chapter 5. For intertextuality see Wiles, D. (2000). The *Oresteia* presupposes the plot of the *Oidipous at Kolonos*. For dramatic tradition of the *Eumenides*, see Lardinois, A. (1993). Also, Scodel, R. (2006), does not link Oidipous with *Eumenides*. Supplication themes; Edmunds, L. (1996). Travis, R. (1999). Winnington-Ingram, R. (1954). (1980). Vidal-Naquet, P., and Vernant, J-P. (1988). Orestes claims he is not a suppliant, *Eum.* 237, 445. Orestes stands trial, Oidipous (as a suppliant) does not. Cf. Walker, H. (1995).

<sup>20</sup> Oidipous in; *Il.* 23.677-80. *Od.* 11.271-80. Hesiod. *Works.* 163. Pind. *Oly.* 2.38.

Οἰδίπους καλούμενος”.<sup>21</sup> The announcement underlines Oidipous’ own ideas about his reputation, and sets up his fall. He is the leader of Thebes, one who is being petitioned: “ὦ τέκνα, Κάδμου τοῦ πάλαι νέα τροφή, / τίνας ποθ’ ἔδρας τάσδε μοι θαάζετε / ἱκτηρίοις κλάδοισιν ἐξεστεμμένοι; / πόλις δ’ ὁμοῦ μὲν θυμιαμάτων γέμει, / ὁμοῦ δὲ παιάνων τε καὶ στεναγμάτων:”.<sup>22</sup> His indication to ὦ τέκνα refers to the collective representatives of the πόλις; this means he takes benevolent leadership of the city and people. These are his own subjects supplicating him. He confirms his paternal role as king and protector.<sup>23</sup> Oidipous uses the vocative plural to question Thebes. Their physical positioning and offerings emphasise his power and their dependency. Thebes as a group is under siege from μῖσμα.

Recollection activates at the opening of the *Oidipous at Kolonos* with the outcast arriving at the deme: “τέκνον τυφλοῦ γέροντος Ἀντιγόνη, τίνας / χώρους ἀφίγμεθ’ ἢ τίνων ἀνδρῶν πόλιν; / τίς τὸν πλανήτην Οἰδίπουν καθ’ ἡμέραν / τὴν νῦν σπανιστοῖς δέξεται δωρήμασιν;”.<sup>24</sup> Oidipous addresses his child with the genitive τέκνον τυφλοῦ γέροντος; the main point is that these are his own kin rather than subjects supplicating him. We can draw a contrast with the *Oidipous Tyrannos*, as Oidipous is now itinerant, lost, without a city; reliant on a guide, a vagrant wanderer. The text reflects on his former glory. His own pain haunts Oidipous; this is the present (τὴν νῦν). His broken physical form compounds his need for suppliance and aid; this is not the entrance of a king, but an isolated, broken man, yet it also hints at something of a restoration. The two entrances rely on Oidipous’

<sup>21</sup> OT. 8: “I, Oidipous renowned by all”.

<sup>22</sup> OT. 1f: “Children, late to be reared from the stock of Kadmos, why do you sit like this before me, with boughs of supplication wreathed in chaplets? And why is the city filled at the same time with incense, and with the sound of paeans and lamentations?” Edmunds, L. (1996).

<sup>23</sup> Jebb, commentary: “It is by the word τέκνα that Oedipus expresses his own fatherly care. Oedipus asks why they are suppliants. The Priest of Zeus, speaking for the rest, prays him to save them, with the gods’ help, from the blight and the plague”. Budelmann, F. (1999).

<sup>24</sup> OK. 1f: “Child of a blind old man, Antigone, to what regions or to what city of men have we come? Who on this day shall receive Oidipous the wanderer with scanty gifts?”

past life in Thebes to articulate the present of the man. The restorative arc that his life (and death) follows is one based on the transition of power from king to the status of a wanderer and then back to a position of power in the role of protector. The narrative is based on a double reversal, from high to low. The play invites the audience to not just consider the past, but to rely on it as a vital and necessary interpretative tool to understand the present drama. The dynamic is not simply text-internal, but references both intra-dramatic subjects and meta-theatrical themes.<sup>25</sup> Oidipous' past, character, and actions are expressed with full reference and understanding of the *Oidipous Tyrannos*. The type of recollection is particularly relevant to the question of guilt, as the *Oidipous at Kolonos* reinterprets Oidipous' innocence and sets various conflicts around it.

Oidipous' relationship with the chorus in the *Oidipous Tyrannos* also points to a pattern of remembrance: “ὦ δεινὸν ἰδεῖν πάθος ἀνθρώποις, / ὦ δεινότατον πάντων ὅσ' ἐγὼ / προσέκυρσ' ἤδη. τίς σ', ὦ τλήμων, / προσέβη μανία;”.<sup>26</sup> The old men of Thebes narrate a sequence of recognition as they lament the downfall of the king. The repetition of ὦ δεινὸν stresses their horror. They recoil at the sight of Oidipous in Kolonos and view him through negative eyes: “ἔξω πόρῳ βαίνετε χώρας”.<sup>27</sup> The ill-fated Oidipous reconstructs his own life and provides a background from his time in Thebes:

καίτοι πῶς ἐγὼ κακὸς φύσιν,  
 ὅστις παθὼν μὲν ἀντέδρων, ὥστ' εἰ φρονῶν  
 ἔπρασσον, οὐδ' ἂν ὥδ' ἐγινόμην κακός;  
 νῦν δ' οὐδὲν εἰδὼς ἰκόμην ἴν' ἰκόμην,

<sup>25</sup> Markantonatos, A. (2000), particularly pp.195-230. Carey, C. (2009).

<sup>26</sup> OT. 1297f: “O grief terrible for men to see, O grief most terrible of any I have yet encountered! What madness has come upon you, unhappy one?”

<sup>27</sup> OK. 226: “Go far away, out of the country!” Also Detienne, M. (2003). Markantonatos, A. (2000), suggests that we find analeptic epithets (ἄθλιον Οἰδιπόδαν; OK. 222, and δύσμορος OK. 224) here. The scorn Oidipous feels in Thebes is not replicated in Athens, p.33; Oidipous journeys from fragmented story to story-teller, p.32.

ὕφ' ὧν δ' ἔπασχον, εἰδόντων ἀπωλλύμην.<sup>28</sup>

Echoes of the hero's past life guide the present. A prominent theme, the tragic action of retaliation demonstrates a cycle of knowledge, interaction, and influence of the past. Both Sophokles and Oidipous use memory to amplify interconnected memory themes. Oidipous' broken form highlights the pain and discomfort of his past and present life: “ἀλλ', ὦ τέκνον, θάκησιν εἴ τινα βλέπεις / ἧ πρὸς βεβήλοις ἧ πρὸς ἄλσεσιν θεῶν, / στήσόν με κἀξίδρυσον, ὡς πυθώμεθα / ὅπου ποτ' ἐσμέν: μανθάνειν γὰρ ἤκομεν / ξένοι πρὸς ἀστῶν, ἃν δ' ἀκούσωμεν τελεῖν”.<sup>29</sup> He comes to learn (μανθάνειν) more of the present situation and the men who inhabit the location

### Oidipous and the *Antigone*

The *Oidipous at Kolonos* draws heavily on the tragic memory and audience knowledge of the *Antigone* for both its irony and narrative.<sup>30</sup> The future story of Oidipous and his children casts a shadow over his movement towards Kolonos and Athens. The emphasis on Antigone's protective devotion to her father prefigures the devotion that will destroy her in *Antigone*. She takes responsibility for his wellbeing in contrast to her brothers. As in the *Antigone*, in the *Oidipous at Kolonos* she gets a stronger role than Ismene, underlining her importance to plot and action. Linearity guides Antigone's life; her actions in the deme of Kolonos are positioned to prefigure her fate in Thebes.

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<sup>28</sup> OK. 270f: “Yet in my nature how am I evil, I who struck back when I had been struck, so that if I had acted knowingly, not even then would I have been evil? But as it is I got to where I came to in all ignorance; but those who have ill-used me knowledge destroyed me”.

<sup>29</sup> OK. 9f: “But come, my child, if you see any seat, either on ground unconsecrated or near the precincts of the gods, stop me and let me sit, so that we may find out where we are; for we have come as strangers, and must learn from the citizens and do as they tell us”.

<sup>30</sup> Carey, C. (2009): “The echo of the *Antigone*... [c.441] locates Oedipus' unrelenting suffering within the larger fate of his family and points to its ineluctable and destructive continuation in the next generation in the past/future of *Antigone*”. p.129. Also, Markantonatos, A. (2000).

Significantly, no arbitrary aide guides him, Oidipous is instructing, and is instructed by, Antigone.<sup>31</sup> Immediately this draws the attention; the daughter leads the father, not the (absent) son. Antigone takes the place of the heir as she assumes responsibility for her father. The example shows the fragmentation of the house and family, and a twisted legacy. The daughter's duty is doubly confirmed as she also represents her father's eyes, emphasising both Oidipous' broken appearance and Antigone's obligation. The daughter's attitude in the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, while looking (performatively speaking) backwards, is comparable with the (mythologically) future drama. Irony projects forward as Oidipous' last wishes cost Antigone an opportunity to bury, remember, and commemorate through traditional memorial. Antigone believes her father is a victim of improper burial processes, a fate that will consume both her and Polyneikes. She is disturbed by the way the family burial is appropriated and usurped by the city. The withholding of ritual surrounding lamentation is prohibited for each character. We find an example of this as Antigone beseeches the king: "ὦ τέκνον Αἰγέως, προσπίτνομέν σοι".<sup>32</sup> Antigone turns to the theme of Oidipous' permanent commemoration, focusing on the τύμβος, linking memory to a specific location. The order of this exchange focuses on the 'correct' procedure to mourn Oidipous, as it also provides an opportunity to abide with the gods' wishes.<sup>33</sup> As Theseus responds, he advises her (ironically, considering who her father is) to forget her line of questioning about remembering.<sup>34</sup> The acquisition of public commemoration is at the cost of personal/family memorialisation for Antigone; this becomes a main issue in the *Antigone*. We note that if Antigone were to succeed

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<sup>31</sup> For *Oidipous at Kolonos* as a suppliant play see Walker, H. (1995). This reminds us of the entrances of *OK* and *OT*.

<sup>32</sup> *OK*. 1754: "Son of Aegeus, we supplicate you!"

<sup>33</sup> Jebb's commentary suggests: "That is:—"By the death of Oedipus, the Powers below have given him the everlasting rest which he desired, and us the abiding safeguard which he promised"" (i.e. his grave). To mourn here would be to provoke the deities who have ordered all things well for him and for us".

<sup>34</sup> *OK*. 1757.

with her appeal to Theseus, it would negate her father's wishes concerning his memory. In a corresponding future action in the *Antigone*, her request for burial leads to a denial.<sup>35</sup> However, these examples differ with her level of success and tenacity to act. In Kolonos, Oidipous is absorbed into the city rather than buried and commemorated.

Theseus manages this assimilation of Oidipous. He recalls the contract to support his decision: “ὦ παῖδες, ἀπεῖπεν ἐμοὶ κείνος / μήτε πελάζειν ἐς τούσδε τόπους / μήτ’ ἐπιφωνεῖν μηδένα θνητῶν / θήκην ἱεράν, ἣν κείνος ἔχει. / καὶ ταῦτά μ’ ἔφη πράσσοντα καλῶν / χώραν ἔξιν αἰὲν ἄλυτον”.<sup>36</sup> The reliance on secrecy imitates the burial of Polyneikes in the *Antigone*.<sup>37</sup> The pious, permanent memorial of Oidipous is to be kept veiled, unknown, and private. Oidipous notes the censure of the action with the verb ἐπιφωνεῖν. The concealment of the grave negates customary burial practices, yet the city benefits from being ἄλυτος. The defence of the πόλις and wider region is paramount, but memory is conditional, hidden and denied to some members of the family.

In opposition to traditional practice, the grave of Oidipous has no marker on which to offer gifts. Ismene describes the placement of her father's tomb: “ἄταφος ἔπιτνε δίχα τε παντός”.<sup>38</sup> Antigone and Ismene have no body to bury. The concern becomes a focal point for their lament, and demonstrates a pattern of distorted burial patterns (ἄταφος) and memory a tragic reflection of the *Antigone*. Protection of the dead and the burial procedure are both fundamental issues. Polyneikes' attempt at obtaining burial and proper ritual explicitly marks these themes. The action sets up a narrative of action through

<sup>35</sup> *Ant.* 21f.

<sup>36</sup> *OK.* 1765f: “Girls, that man instructed me never go near to those regions and not to tell any among mortals of the sacred tomb that holds him. And he said that if I did this I would keep my country always free from pain”. *OK.* 1103, 1117.

<sup>37</sup> *Ant.* 26f.

<sup>38</sup> *OK.* 1732: “He descended with no burial, apart from all”. Markantonatos, A. (2000) labels the conflict between Antigone and Ismene: “a proleptic mirror-scene” to the *Antigone*. p.162.

the repercussions of the life and death of Oidipous and his family. Polyneikes endeavours to secure correct funerary rites and commemoration before he dies, appealing for ritual honour and lasting tribute from a family member:

ὦ τοῦδ' ὄμαιμοι παῖδες, ἀλλ' ὑμεῖς, ἐπεὶ  
τὰ σκληρὰ πατρὸς κλύετε ταῦτ' ἄρωμένου,  
μή τοί με πρὸς θεῶν σφῶ γ', ἐὰν αἱ τοῦδ' ἀραι  
πατρὸς τελῶνται καὶ τις ὑμῖν ἐς δόμους  
νόστος γένηται, μή μ' ἀτιμάσητέ γε,  
ἀλλ' ἐν τάφοισι θέσθε κἄν κτερίσμασιν.<sup>39</sup>

It is ironic that Polyneikes pleads to Antigone, ἀλλ' ἐν τάφοισι θέσθε κἄν κτερίσμασιν, should he fall.<sup>40</sup> His wish is join them in Thebes and complete his νόστος. Once more, we find an echo of the *Antigone*, 'theatrical' memory is remarkably significant for this play. However, here the request is loaded with ironic menace for both, as it pushes future action. Antigone commits to burying her kin. Polyneikes faces banishment in life and death, recognising the threat with μή μ' ἀτιμάσητέ γε;. Antigone foreshadows his fate, as Polyneikes contrasts with Oidipous, who ultimately finds sanctuary in death. The combination of his request to his sister with her own lament to return to Thebes amounts to her death sentence, she calls upon Theseus: "Θήβας δ' ἡμᾶς / τὰς ὠγυγίους πέμψον, ἐάν πως / διακωλύσωμεν ἰόντα φόνον / τοῖσιν ὀμαίμοις".<sup>41</sup> Her call to stop bloodshed, in the city she herself will die in, brings a sense of linearity and unstoppable fate to the action. Indeed, a continuous connection occurs between

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<sup>39</sup> OK. 1405f: "But you, daughters of this man and my sisters, since you hear these hard curses of a father, do not - if this father's curses be fulfilled and you find some way of return to Thebes - do not, I beg you by the gods, leave me dishonoured, but give me burial and due funeral rites".

<sup>40</sup> Jebb: "The poet's allusion to his own *Antigone* is lightly and happily made. Polyneikes here naturally prays for regular funeral rites. That prayer was doomed to disappointment. And yet the 'κτερίσματα' for which he asks are represented by the 'χοαὶ τρίσπονδοι' which, in the *Antigone*, his sister pours, after the symbolic rite of scattering dust on the unburied corpse".

<sup>41</sup> OK. 1769f: "But send us to ancient Thebes, in the hope that we may somehow prevent the slaughter that is coming to our brothers".

the conflict that surrounds hidden burial, the need to bury, and personal determination to ensure commemoration. Sophokles engages on a fundamental level with the narrative of the past and the repeated patterns of fate, memory, and emotional pain. We find echoes of the self-blinding, exiled, and resentful Oidipous and his fate projected forward into the *Antigone*, influencing his children's lives and deaths.



## 4.2 Kolonos and topography

On arrival at Kolonos, Oidipous laments earlier times as he seeks respite and protection in a location holy to the Eumenides, a transitional place, he appears with the knowledge and awareness of what his past deeds symbolise.<sup>42</sup> The foundation of the past will contort and twist as he attempts entry in Kolonos. His arrival leads to an examination of the topography that surrounds the deme. He presents a version of the past, one based on his previous actions, his reputation, name, and his current predicament. His approach builds on the power of a localised, mythical past, supported by the deme's setting and manifested in the grove. Kolonos is a space of recollection and memory. Rodighiero suggests that: "This landscape, a *Kulturlandschaft*, is understood as a massive receptacle of memories, a sort of 'living museum' under the roof of the Attic sky".<sup>43</sup> Perhaps an archive is a more accurate description, but it is clear that Oidipous arrives as the narrator, or rather biographer of the past *par excellence*, fully conscious of his past and reputation. Kolonos acts as a stage upon which Oidipous tells his story and performs his laments.

The status of the deme itself must be considered, as it provides the framework upon which Oidipous and the city build a symbiotic relationship based on memory. Kolonos is a transitional place (geographically) between city and countryside. Kolonos and the honourable Athens are viewed (primarily, but not exclusively) as places that admit suppliants.<sup>44</sup> Their respective positions not only add to our understanding of the location, but also drive the narrative behind Oidipous' approach and integration. The deme imitates the physical and metaphorical location of Oidipous; it lies between πόλις

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<sup>42</sup> *OK*. 139-149f.

<sup>43</sup> Rodighiero, A. (2012). p.58.

<sup>44</sup> Kampourelli, V. (2002, p.70: "The grove and rocks are referred to in *OK*. by Antigone (16-28), by the stranger (54-65), by Oidipous (96-101) and by the chorus (125-37,156-201)".

and isolation. The first man of Kolonos establishes their significance: “ὄν δ’ ἐπιστεῖβεις τόπον, / χθονὸς καλεῖται τῆσδε χαλκόπους ὁδός, / ἔρισμ’ Ἀθηνῶν”.<sup>45</sup> The deme functions as a literal and metaphorical threshold.<sup>46</sup> Its geographical location is important in the context of plot as it foreshadows the role of Oidipous as guardian of the city. Kolonos is a protective boundary, ἔρισμ’ Ἀθηνῶν.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, Antigone separates the two settings, noting that they are not quite in Athens: “τὰς γοῦν Ἀθήνας οἶδα, τὸν δὲ χῶρον οὔ”.<sup>48</sup> A vital point, both Oidipous and Kolonos are first presented in intermediary positions. The chorus use a combination of mythological landscape and the past to construct the present reputation and identity of Kolonos: “εὐίππου, ξένε, τᾷσδε χώ-/ ρας ἴκου τὰ κράτιστα γᾶς ἔπαυλα, / τὸν ἀργῆτα Κολωνόν”.<sup>49</sup> They emphasise the deme’s unmatched status of belonging to Attica with κράτιστος.<sup>50</sup> Kolonos is Athens, and yet simultaneously, a separate location.<sup>51</sup>

An Athenian tradition exists of the city as a refuge expounded in multiple genres.<sup>52</sup> The *epitaphian* tradition advertises the honourable glory of Athens and connects this ‘live memory’ to the individual to city in the context of a public funeral. The role of protector of suppliants is constantly tested, it is not static, and can be lost. Through recollection and praise, the lament synchronises the

<sup>45</sup> OK. 56f: “And the spot where you are treading is called the Brazen-footed Threshold of this land, the bulwark of Athens”. Also Ais. *Eum*, 700f. Kamerbeek proposes that this section contains: “a fine expression of the poet’s fond attachment to his birthplace”.

<sup>46</sup> Also, Travis, R. (1999), p.69f.

<sup>47</sup> Pindar, fr. 76: “ὦ ταῖ λιπαραὶ καὶ ἰοστέφανιον καὶ ἀοίδιμοι, / Ἑλλάδος ἔρει- / Σμα, κλειναὶ Ἀθᾶναι, δαιμόνιον πτολίεθρον”. “O shining and violet-crowned and celebrated in song, bulwark of Hellas, Famous Athens, divine citadel”. Markantonatos, A. (2012).

<sup>48</sup> OK. 24: “I know that it is Athens, but I do not know what place”.

<sup>49</sup> OK. 668f: “In this country of fine horses, stranger, you have come to the choicest rural dwellings, to shining Kolonos”. (Amended). Jebb has: “The first word εὐίππου strikes a note which connects Kolonos ἵππιος with the fame of Attica... You have come to earth’s best abodes”.

<sup>50</sup> Steinbock, B. (2013): “Core value of Athens’ hegemonic ideology”. p.199.

<sup>51</sup> The scout speaks of the district not city, OK. 75. Kolonos named at OK. 842, 884.

<sup>52</sup> Hanink, J. (2013).

individual's past and city's honour. For instance, Lykourgos demonstrates that the Athenians recognise those deserving of tribute, even for incomers: “ὦ Ἀθηναῖοι, μόνοι τῶν Ἑλλήνων τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας τιμᾶν”.<sup>53</sup> The status of Athens itself increases through its respect for venerable men.<sup>54</sup> Lysias praises those who are not Athenian, yet there are resident metics who fought for the city who deserve tribute in burial. Athens and the dead are celebrated and preserved together:

ἄξιον δὲ καὶ τοὺς ξένους τοὺς ἐνθάδε κειμένους  
ἐπαινέσαι, οἳ τῷ πλήθει βοηθήσαντες καὶ περὶ τῆς  
ἡμετέρας σωτηρίας μαχόμενοι, πατρίδα τὴν ἀρετὴν  
ἡγησάμενοι, τοιαύτην τοῦ βίου τελευτὴν ἐποίησαντο:  
ἀνθ' ὧν ἡ πόλις αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐπένθησε καὶ ἔθαψε  
δημοσίᾳ, καὶ ἔδωκεν ἔχειν αὐτοῖς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον  
τὰς αὐτὰς τιμὰς τοῖς ἀστοῖς.<sup>55</sup>

The ξένοι are not generic foreigners, they gave their lives to aid Athens in war and receive honourable treatment. The dead secure refuge and high esteem in recognition of their duty. We find on-going tribute and salvation (σωτηρίας) in their sacrifice, καὶ ἔδωκεν ἔχειν αὐτοῖς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον τὰς αὐτὰς τιμὰς τοῖς ἀστοῖς. Themes of death and public recognition pervade civic space, and particularly, the Kerameikos. We find a suggestion of the transactional nature of remembrance with the line: ἀνθ' ὧν ἡ πόλις αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐπένθησε καὶ ἔθαψε δημοσίᾳ. An identifiable action of memory is found in the

<sup>53</sup> Lyk. *Against Leokrates*. 1.51: “Since you, Athenians, alone among Hellenes know how to honour valiant men”.

<sup>54</sup> Tradition of Athens as safe haven in Isok. 4.54: “γνοίη δ' ἂν τις καὶ τὸν τρόπον καὶ τὴν ῥώμην τὴν τῆς πόλεως ἐκ τῶν ἱκετειῶν, ὥς ἤδη τινὲς ἡμῖν ἐποίησαντο”. “The character and power of Athens may be judged from the appeals which sundry people have in times past made to us for our help”. Isok. 12.168, Lys. 2.3, 2.7–10; Argive dead buried in Eleusis, 2.10.

<sup>55</sup> Lys. *Funeral Oration*. 2.66f: “But it is right that we should also praise the strangers who lie here: they came to the support of the people, and fought for our salvation; they regarded valour as their native land, and with this noble end they closed their lives. In return the city has not only mourned them but given them a public funeral, and has granted them forever the same honours as it gives to its own people”. Translation; Lamb, W. (1943). Loraux, N. (2006).

commemoration and ritual lamentation by the city and its inhabitants. The dead are incorporated into the πόλις on an equal standing; embraced, integrated, and remembered.

Demosthenes extolls the virtue of commemoration, explicitly showing that Athens, above all others, honours its dead. He highlights a specifically Athenian practice, one that elevates the city over the rest of humankind: “πρῶτον μὲν μόνοι τῶν πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἐπὶ τοῖς τελευτήσασι δημοσίᾳ καὶ ταῖς ταφαῖς ταῖς δημοσίαις ποιεῖτε λόγους ἐπιταφίους, ἐν οἷς κοσμεῖτε τὰ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν ἔργα”.<sup>56</sup> These descriptions of Athens concern obligations and emphasise the significant need for constant renewal (λόγους ἐπιταφίους) in a civic context. Athens sees itself as the only city to recall the brave (ἀγαθῶν), after having performed an honourable service, and to extend protection to those who come as suppliants.<sup>57</sup> There are examples of this role of the city found in Thucydides as he notes Perikles’ speech: “τῶν τε αἰεὶ ἐν ἀρχῇ ὄντων ἀκροάσει καὶ τῶν νόμων, καὶ μάλιστα αὐτῶν ὅσοι τε ἐπ’ ὠφελίᾳ τῶν ἀδικουμένων κεῖνται καὶ ὅσοι ἄγραφοι ὄντες αἰσχύνην ὁμολογουμένην φέρουσιν”.<sup>58</sup> Athens is famous for defending the weak.<sup>59</sup> Thucydides’ Perikles expands on this important characteristic of the city: “καλῶς μὲν γὰρ φερόμενος ἀνὴρ τὸ καθ’ ἑαυτὸν διαφθειρομένης τῆς πατρίδος οὐδὲν ἧσσον ξυναπόλλυται, κακοτυχῶν δὲ ἐν εὐτυχούσῃ πολλῶ μᾶλλον

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<sup>56</sup> Dem. *Against Leptines*. 20.141: “First of all, it is you alone of all mankind that publicly pronounce over your dead in funeral orations, in which you praise the deeds of the brave”.

<sup>57</sup> Tragic instances include; Ais, *Eum*, 234f. Euripides, *Trojan Women*, 197f. *Medea*, 824f. *Hiketides*, 334f. See Hall, E. (1989). Goldhill, S. (1990B). Loraux, N. (1986B). Rabinowitz, N. (2008), lists the examples of Athens’ praise through tragedy, p.51f. For historical context of suppliant dramas see; Tzanetou, A. (2011). Also, Van Hook, L. (1934). Walker, H. (1995).

<sup>58</sup> Thou. 2.37.3: “Against this fear is our chief safeguard, teaching us to obey the magistrates and the laws, particularly such as regard the protection of the injured, whether they are actually on the statute book, or belong to that code which, although unwritten, yet cannot be broken without acknowledged disgrace”. Thou. 1.140-144, on Athens’ skill at war.

<sup>59</sup> Mytilene debates non-amnesty. See Andrewes, A. (1962). Justice for self-interest see Heath, M. (1990). For a study of funeral oration see Loraux, N. (2006).

διασώζεται”.<sup>60</sup> The focus is on the possibility of preservation for suppliants.<sup>61</sup>

### Tragic Athens as a refuge

The analysis of characters’ ideas of the past is pivotal when examining the constant re-enactment of a tragic tradition of Athens as a refuge.<sup>62</sup> Rehearsed mythic memory recalls Athens as a city above all others that protects. A parallel occurs here with the character of Oidipous; it is not enough to survive on the memory of past successes, achievement must be repeated. The Aiskhylean narrative surrounding Athens constantly re-enacts the tragic tradition of the protector city. Aiskhylos provides a precedent to a successful appeal by a suppliant, which allows us to examine similar themes of the city as a refuge in Sophokles. In the *Eumenides*, the Areiopagos marks the location for conditional reprieve for a pollutant approaching the city.<sup>63</sup> Athena promises profit for citizen, land, and πόλις, as Aiskhylos places the σεμναὶ θεαί at the foot of the Areiopagos to recall past crimes.<sup>64</sup> Paradoxically, the city both remembers the deed of Orestes and acquits him.<sup>65</sup> As a backwards reference to Oidipous’ future role, the Erinyes, themselves displaced outsiders who find a

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<sup>60</sup> Thou. 2.60.3f: “A man may be personally ever so well off, and yet if his country be ruined he must be ruined with it; whereas a flourishing commonwealth always affords chances of salvation to unfortunate individuals”.

<sup>61</sup> Defence in Lysias 2.11. Sanctuary in Athens gave exiles an opportunity to retaliate against Thebes. Protection of the Heraklidae; Dem. 60.

<sup>62</sup> Isok. 10.31: “τὴν δ’ εὐσέβειαν τὴν πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς ἔν τε ταῖς Ἀδράστου καὶ ταῖς τῶν παίδων τῶν Ἡρακλέους ἱκετείαις, τοὺς μὲν γὰρ μάχη νικήσας Πελοποννησίους διέσωσε, τῷ δὲ τοὺς ὑπὸ τῇ Καδμείᾳ τελευτήσαντας βίᾳ Θηβαίων θάψαι παρέδωκε, τὴν δ’ ἄλλην ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν σωφροσύνην ἔν τε τοῖς προειρημένοις καὶ μάλιστα ἔν οἷς τὴν πόλιν διώκησεν”. “His piety toward the gods in connexion with the supplications of Adrastus and the children of Herakles when, by defeating the Peloponnesians in battle, he saved the lives of the children, and to Adrastus he restored for burial, despite the Thebans, the bodies of those who had died beneath the walls of the Kadmeia; and finally, he revealed his other virtues and his prudence, not only in the deeds already recited, but especially in the manner in which he governed our city”.

<sup>63</sup> Ais. *Eum.* 858f. Athena focuses on internal conflict and external πόλεμος.

<sup>64</sup> *Eum.* 990f. Scodel, R. (2008), suggests that: “*Eumenides* ... are an attempt at defining future public memory of the past”. p.119.

<sup>65</sup> *Eum.* 1006f.

home in Athens, never forget those who are accountable, yet they receive suppliants: “μένει γάρ. Εὐμήχανοί / τε καὶ τέλειοι, κακῶν / τε μνήμονες σεμναὶ / καὶ δυσπαρήγοροι βροτοῖς, / ἄτιμ’ ἀτίετα διόμεναι / λάχη θεῶν διχοστατοῦντ’ ἀνηλίω / λάμπα δυσοδοπαίπαλα / δερκομένοισι καὶ δυσομμάτοις ὁμῶς”.<sup>66</sup> They are the manifestation of kept memory (μνήμονες), in this case, specifically patricide.<sup>67</sup> The dramatic use of the motif continues in Euripides’ *Hiketides* (423). Theseus is greeted by the city: “ὦ καλλίνικε γῆς Ἀθηναίων ἄναξ, / Θησεῦ, σὸς ἰκέτης καὶ πόλεως ἤκω σέθεν”.<sup>68</sup> The idea of suppliance is expressed in the earlier *Heraklidae* (430) as Demophon gives three reasons of the city’s, and his own, acceptance: “τὸ μὲν μέγιστον Ζεὺς ἐφ’ οὗ σὺ βώμιος / θακεῖς νεοσσῶν τήνδ’ ἔχων πανήγυριν: / τὸ συγγενές τε καὶ τὸ προυφείλιν καλῶς / πράσσειν παρ’ ἡμῶν τούσδε πατρώαν χάριν: / τό τ’ αἰσχρόν, οὐπὲρ δεῖ μάλιστα φροντίσαι”.<sup>69</sup> The allusion to Zeus notes the divine association with suppliants, and by extension, brings pious blessing to the city for its honourable standing and its inclusion of suppliants.

Throughout the *Oidipous Kolonos*, constant emphasis is on the proud Athenian tradition of Athens as refuge.<sup>70</sup> Antigone confirms its position as a blessed land: “ὦ πλεῖστ’ ἐπαίνοις εὐλογούμενον πέδον,

<sup>66</sup> *Eum.* 381f: “It stands fast: resourceful, effective, remembering wrongs, awesome, unappeasable by mortals, we carry out our despised function, far away from the gods, in the sunless slime, making a rough and rocky path for the seeing and the eyeless alike”.

<sup>67</sup> Wolpert, A. (2002A).

<sup>68</sup> *Eur. Hik.* 113: “Victorious prince of the Athenian realm, Theseus, I have come a suppliant to you and to your city”. Also, the mothers of the Seven, *Hik.* 273.

<sup>69</sup> *Eur. Heraklid.* 238f: “Most important is Zeus, at whose altar you sit with this assembly of fledglings; second, kinship and the debt long-standing that these children should for their father’s sake be well treated at our hands; and last, fear of disgrace, the thing I must be most concerned about”.

<sup>70</sup> The role is manipulated to accommodate those fleeing from punishment from law-breaking, Athens is consistently presented as a refuge. For instance, Medea: “αὐτὴ δὲ γαῖαν εἶμι τὴν Ἐρεχθέως, / Αἰγεῖ συνοικήσουσα τῷ Πανδίωνος”. *Eur. Med.* 1384. “As for myself, I shall go to the land of Erekhtheus to live with Aegeus, son of Pandion”. The Sophoklean Theseus also offers sanctuary to Antigone in Athens.

/ νῦν σὸν τὰ λαμπρὰ ταῦτα δεῖ φαίνειν ἔπη”.<sup>71</sup> We see explicit praise for the city here. The use of ἐπαίνοις εὐλογούμενον invites the 5<sup>th</sup> century audience of the need for constant renew of honour in protection, and is a bitter reminder of past glories and power. We continually find the πόλις renowned as somewhere victims of injustice seek defence while singing the high praises of the city that protects them. Importantly, the challenge continues for Athens to prove this status. The city is a place where one may also secure an impartial hearing. It gains standing through the repetition of this act. Oidipous has heard of Athens and its prominence: “ἴτ’, ὦ μεγίστης Παλλάδος καλούμεναι / πασῶν Ἀθῆναι τιμιωτάτη πόλις”.<sup>72</sup> The exile reaches the most famous (described with the superlative, τιμιωτάτη) city of them all. Athens’ reputation, however, is tested by both Oidipous’ faith and Kreon’s attack. It is uniquely capable of saving and remembering; yet this obligation must be reinvigorated.<sup>73</sup>

The chorus acknowledge that the temporary position in which Oidipous resides is holy: “χῶρος μὲν ἱερὸς πᾶς ὃδ’ ἔστ’: ἔχει δέ νιν / σεμνὸς Ποσειδῶν: ἐν δ’ ὁ πυρφόρος θεὸς / Τιτὰν Προμηθεύς”.<sup>74</sup> They continue, emphasising the link between the olive and the gods to

<sup>71</sup> OK. 720f: “O Land most of all others eulogised with praise, now you must show that these shining words are true!” Eur. *Supp.* 925. Aristotle on *Antigone*: Arist. *Po.* 1453b-1454a; *Rhet.* 1.1373b, 3.1417a-b, 1418b. Loraux, N. (1986), pp.74-108.

<sup>72</sup> OK. 107f: “Come, Athens, called the city of greatest Pallas, city most honoured of them all!” Heath, M. (1987): “The commonplaces of rhetorical encomium of Athens frequently recur in fifth-century tragedy... the poets were engaged in deliberate glorifications of the city”, p.64f.

<sup>73</sup> Isokrates. *Plataikos*. 14.1f. The city as saviour: “εἰδότες ὑμᾶς, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, καὶ τοῖς ἀδικουμένοις / προθύμως βοηθεῖν εἰθισμένους καὶ τοῖς εὐεργέταις μεγίστην / χάριν ἀποδιδόντας, ἥκομεν ἱκετεύσοντες μὴ περιοδεῖν ἡμᾶς / εἰρήνης οὐσης ἀναστάτους ὑπὸ Θηβαίων γεγεννημένους”. “Since we know, men of Athens, that it is your custom not only zealously to come to the rescue of victims of injustice, but also to requite your benefactors with the utmost gratitude, we have come as suppliants to beg you not to remain indifferent to our having been driven from our homes in time of peace by the Thebans”. Translation Norlin, G. (1980). Also Isok. 14.52. Diod. 15.46: “οἱ δὲ Πλαταιεῖς εἰς Ἀθήνας / μετὰ τέκνων καὶ γυναικῶν φυγόντες τῆς ἰσοπολιτείας / ἔτυχον διὰ τὴν χρηστότητα τοῦ δήμου”. “The Plataians with their wives and children, having fled to Athens, received equality of civic rights as a mark of favour from the Athenian people”. Translation Oldfather, C. (1989).

<sup>74</sup> OK. 54f: “All of this place is sacred, and it belongs to the dread Poseidon; and the fire-bearing god, the Titan Prometheus too is here”.

further this ideal of Athens as protector. They draw the attention to the city's protective abilities through metaphor:

ἔστιν δ' οἷον ἐγὼ γὰρ Ἀσίας οὐκ ἐπακούω  
οὐδ' ἐν τῇ μεγάλῃ Δωρίδι νάσῃ Πέλοπος πώποτε  
βλαστὸν  
φύτευμ' ἀχείρωτον αὐτόποιον,  
ἐγγέων φόβημα δαΐων,  
ὃ τῇδε θάλλει μέγιστα χώρα,  
γλαυκᾶς παιδοτρόφου φύλλον ἐλαίας.<sup>75</sup>

The merits of Attica are expressed through contrast with both Greece (here represented by the Peloponnese) and Asia. The branch is unconquered (ἀχείρωτος), while αὐτόποιος, specifically emphasises self-regeneration and hints at Athenian *autochthony*.<sup>76</sup> Once more, the city takes the role as nurturer and guardian, made explicit with the use of παιδοτρόφος.<sup>77</sup> A link is made to the land of Attica with φύτευμα and ἐλαία. Antigone identifies the olive recalling Athena and revival:

πάτερ ταλαίπωρ' Οἰδίπους, πύργοι μέν, οἱ  
πόλιν στέγουσιν, ὥς ἀπ' ὀμμάτων, πρόσω:  
χῶρος δ' ὅδ' ἱερός, ὥς ἀπεικᾶσαι, βρύων  
δάφνης, ἐλαίας, ἀμπέλου: πυκνόπτεροι δ'  
εἴσω κατ' αὐτὸν εὐστομοῦσ' ἀηδόνες.<sup>78</sup>

Athens is a place of security with defensive qualities; this impression strengthens with οἱ πόλιν στέγουσιν. It is a shelter for those who

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<sup>75</sup> OK. 694f: "And there is something I have not heard to grow ever in the land of Asia, or in the great Dorian island of Pelops, a tree not planted by men's hands, but self-created, a terror to the spears of enemies, that flourishes most greatly in this land, the leaf of the gray-green nurturer of *children*, the olive". Compare Antigone's vocabulary OK. 14f. Euripides describes the immortality of the olive. *Ion*. 1432.

<sup>76</sup> This might remind the audience of the restored Akropolis olive. Hdt. 8.55.1.

<sup>77</sup> Loraux, N. (1986B).

<sup>78</sup> OK. 14f: "Unhappy father, Oidipous, the walls that surround the city look to be far off; and this place is sacred, one can easily guess, with the bay, the olive, and the vine growing everywhere; and inside it many feathered nightingales make their music". Markantonatos, A. (2007): "Poseidon's gifts of the bit and the oar vividly depict the Athenian belief in divine favour". p.189.



have been unfortunate. Significantly, we note Oidipous' first use of the recurring epithet *ταλαίπωρος*; this is the label of recognition.<sup>79</sup> The identification of sacred flora; *ἐλαία*, *ἄμπελος*, and *δάφνη*, alludes to Kolonos' relationship to the gods, underlined with *χῶρος δ' ὄδ' ἱερός*. In the attendance of exiles, the chorus speak of the proximity to the gods that the deme and Athens enjoy: "τὸ μὲν τις οὐ νεαρὸς οὐδὲ γήρᾳ / συνναίων ἀλιώσει χερὶ πέρσας: ὁ γὰρ αἰὲν ὀρῶν κύκλος / λεύσσει νιν μορίου Διὸς / χά γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνα".<sup>80</sup> The presence of the olive underscores the theme of lasting protection, under the eyes of Zeus *μόριος* and Athena.<sup>81</sup>

Athens is beloved by both Athena and Poseidon, who afford it divine favour as they rule across land and sea. Both gods have investment and involvement in the city; however, the chorus refer to another divine presence: "ἴν' ὁ βακχίῳ / τας ἀεὶ Διόνυσος ἐμβατεύει / θεαῖς ἀμφιπολῶν τιθήναις".<sup>82</sup> Imagery perhaps, but we note the presence of Dionysos as he occupies the grove in Kolonos. The chorus continue: "οὐδὲ Μουσᾶν / χοροὶ νιν ἀπεστύγησαν οὐδ' ἅ / χρυσάνιος Ἀφροδίτα".<sup>83</sup> The close relationship with the gods emphasises the high status of the city. The chorus of the *Oidipous at Kolonos* explicitly recall the divine past. As they sing, they focus on the initial establishment by Poseidon. The recollection of the foundation song

<sup>79</sup> Oidipous is continually describes as miserable and wretched, by Antigone *OK*. 14, 1280, Kreon *OK*. 740, and himself *OK*. 91. This is now his life and reputation.

<sup>80</sup> *OK*. 703f: "This shall no young man nor any that dwells with old age destroy and bring to nothing; for it is looked upon by the ever-seeing eye of Zeus Morios and by gray-eyed Athena". Markantonatos, A. (2007). p.92f.

<sup>81</sup> References to the olive suggest a ceremonial use, *OK*. 484f. *Ais. Eum.* 34f. Herodotos demonstrates its ritual use with burials, 4.34f. Jebb has: "They were called *moriae*... they had been propagated from the original olive which Athena herself had caused to spring up on the Acropolis. This theory was convenient for their conservation as State property, since, by giving them a sacred character, it placed them directly under the care of the Areiopagos". Lysias risks exile, charged with destroying an olive tree. *On the Olive Stump*. 7.41f.

<sup>82</sup> *OK*. 678f: "Where the reveller Dionysos ever treads the ground, in company with his divine muses".

<sup>83</sup> *OK*. 690f: "Nor have the dancing Muses shunned this place, nor Aphrodite of the golden rein".

provides an idea of the importance of the city, and its closeness to the gods:

ἄλλον δ' αἶνον ἔχω ματροπόλει τᾷδε  
κράτιστον,  
δῶρον τοῦ μεγάλου δαίμονος, εἰπεῖν, <χθονὸς>  
αὔχημα μέγιστον,  
εὐῖππον, εὐπωλον, εὐθάλασσον.  
ὦ παῖ Κρόνου, σὺ γάρ νιν ἔς  
τόδ' εἶσας αὔχημ', ἄναξ Ποσειδάν,  
ἵπποισιν τὸν ἀκεστήρα χαλινὸν  
πρώταισι ταῖσδε κτίσας ἀγυιαῖς.<sup>84</sup>

By specifically using μητρόπολις they describe themselves as the city's children.<sup>85</sup> The idea of nurture underlines the deme's qualities of protecting and salvation. The chorus use the language of recollection to impress godlike credentials with νιν ἔς τόδ' εἶσας αὔχημ', showing an intimacy with Zeus. The mention of εὐῖππος, εὐθάλασσο, and εὐπωλος, underline Poseidon's association. Sharp focus is placed on the fact that Athens was created by divinities, and is blessed. The sentiment is echoed and perpetuated by its leader. Theseus is inextricably tied to the πόλις: "καί σ' οἰκτίσας / θέλω 'περέσθαι, δύσμορ' Οἰδῖπους, τίνα / πόλεως ἐπέστης προστροπὴν ἐμοῦ τ' ἔχων, / αὐτός τε χή σὴ δύσμορος παραστάτις".<sup>86</sup> We see a distinction as the king challenges Kreon and his attitude towards Athens, Theseus suggests the city of Thebes is not responsible for corrupt behaviour.<sup>87</sup> He contrasts Kreon's character with his own recalling of ancestral traditions. The actions of Kreon contradict the

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<sup>84</sup> OK. 707f: "And I can utter another great word of praise for this my mother city, a gift of the great god, a pride of the land supreme, the might of horses, the might of colts, the might of the sea. Son of Kronos, it was you who enthroned the city in this pride, Lord Poseidon, creating first in these roads the bridle that tames horses". cf. Jebb, commentary. Markantonatos, A. (2002).

<sup>85</sup> See Pindar. *Nem.* 5.

<sup>86</sup> OK. 556f: "And in pity for you, Oidipous, I wish to ask you what request of the city and of me you have come to make, you and your unfortunate companion".

<sup>87</sup> OK. 919f.

reputation Thebes currently holds. Further, the king claims the city would disown its inhabitants if they show themselves to be disreputable: “σὺ δ’ ἀξίαν οὐκ οὔσαν αἰσχύνεις πόλιν / τὴν αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ σ’ ὁ πληθύων χρόνος / γέρονθ’ ὁμοῦ τίθησι καὶ τοῦ νοῦ κενόν”.<sup>88</sup> Theseus focuses on Kreon’s reputation and deceit, separating man from city and isolating him. The integration of Oidipous stands in contrast to this action.

#### Oidipous approaches the city

The function of offering protection to suppliants is systematically recalled and repeated over time; there is value in re-enactment. Oidipous connects reputation and location with the duty of protection, in the context of exchange, to develop his offer: “ἀνθ’ ὧν ἱκνοῦμαι πρὸς θεῶν ὑμᾶς, ξένοι, / ὥσπερ με κάνεστήσαθ’, ὧδε σώσατε, / καὶ μὴ θεοὺς τιμῶντες εἶτα τοὺς θεοὺς / ποιεῖθ’ ἀμαυροὺς μηδαμῶς”.<sup>89</sup> He speaks directly to the king of Athens as defence and shelter underline Oidipous’ pleas for sanctuary and membership of the city.<sup>90</sup> Indeed, memory, choice, and fate become fundamental to the exile’s admission. Oidipous relies on this to support his offer of protection after death. Part of Oidipous’ role and function in the *Oidipous at Kolonos* is to give the city and Theseus an opportunity to prove them worthy of unmatched honour. Oidipous pays for on-going commemoration with a promise of defence. Oidipous focuses on the role of the city as a protector: “ἀνθ’ ὧν ἐγὼ νῦν τάσδε τὰς θεὰς ἐμοὶ / καλῶν ἱκνοῦμαι καὶ κατασκήπτω λιταῖς / ἐλθεῖν ἄρωγους ξυμμάχους

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<sup>88</sup> OK. 929f: “But you are disgracing your own city which does not deserve it, and despite the fullness of your years, as they make you old, also deprive you of sense”. (amended)

<sup>89</sup> OK. 275f: “Because of this I implore you by the god, strangers; just as you raised me up, even so preserve me, and in no wise honour the gods, but then consign them to darkness”.

<sup>90</sup> Also OK. 725, 1210. Burian, P. (1974), identifies a key ambiguity: “The central paradox of the play is that the term suppliant is destined to be saviour”. pp.410-418. Also Hall, E. (1993): “The term [*soteria*] had a contemporary political resonance, the alleged need for *soteria* having been used to legitimise the oligarchy”. p.268.

θ', ἴν' ἐκμάθῃς / οἷων ὑπ' ἀνδρῶν ἥδε φρουρεῖται πόλις".<sup>91</sup> He appeals for sanctuary and challenges that the true positive nature of Athens is both revealed and beneficial to him.<sup>92</sup> Oidipous' implicit point in the appeal is that memory exists in renewal. Oidipous appeals to the tradition for which Athens is renowned. His on-going memory increasingly becoming a πόλις issue:

τί δῆτα δόξης, ἢ τί κληδόνος καλῆς  
 μάτην ρεούσης ὠφέλημα γίγνεται,  
 εἰ τάς γ' Ἀθήνας φασὶ θεοσεβεστάτας  
 εἶναι, μόνας δὲ τὸν κακούμενον ξένον  
 σῶζειν οἷας τε καὶ μόνας ἀρκεῖν ἔχειν;<sup>93</sup>

The tradition of the saviour city is not inert, but as with the reputation of Oidipous, must be repeated through tests and challenges. Once more, we find Oidipous offering his life and death to the city. The standing of the city links to protective (σῶζειν) strength. Oidipous questions the validity of the city's pious reputation towards the gods with a challenge, describing himself as τὸν κακούμενον ξένον. Oidipous must be correctly managed in order for the πόλις to minimise any risk of pollution.<sup>94</sup>

Ismene stresses the question of liability as she informs him of the prohibition of burial: "ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔῃ τοῦμφυλον αἵμά σ', ὦ πάτερ".<sup>95</sup> As this was no ordinary killing, admittance is a process of integration

<sup>91</sup> OK. 1010f: "On account of this I now call on these goddesses in supplication and charge them with prayers to come as my helpers and allies, so that you may learn the nature of the men who guard this city".

<sup>92</sup> In the *Eumenides*, judgement and justice guides the speech by Athena at 566f. Also, a reliance on fairness: 681f, "κλύοιτ' ἂν ἤδη θεσμόν, Ἀττικὸς λεῶς, / πρῶτας δίκας κρίνοντες αἵματος χυτοῦ. / ἔσται δὲ καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν Αἰγέως στρατῶ / αἰεὶ δίκαστῶν τοῦτο βουλευτήριον". "Hear my decree, people of Attika, as you judge the first trial for bloodshed. In the future, as now, this court of judges will forever exist for the people of Aegeus". The creation of the first democratic court is significant.

<sup>93</sup> OK. 258f: "What help comes from fame, or from a fine reputation that flows away in vain, seeing that Athens, they say, has most reverence for the gods, and alone can protect the afflicted stranger, and alone can give him aid?"

<sup>94</sup> The chorus fear pollution OK. 235, 256. Oidipous is referred to as ξένος confirming his status and the journey he takes: OK. 161, 184, 492, 510, 518, 831, 834, 1014, 1096, 1119, 1449, 1561, 1577, and 1637. See also Wilson, J. (1997).

<sup>95</sup> OK. 407: "But the shedding of kindred blood does not allow it, father!"

and amnesty, set against a backdrop of reputation and identity. Oidipous frames his request for sanctuary with a version of the story that admits to the deed, yet does not acknowledge culpability. He claims that his previous actions were not of his own volition: “ὦ λῆμ’άναιδές, τοῦ καθυβρίζειν δοκεῖς, / πότερον ἐμοῦ γέροντος ἢ σαυτοῦ, τόδε; / ὅστις φόνους μοι καὶ γάμους καὶ συμφορὰς / τοῦ σοῦ διῆκας στόματος, ἅς ἐγὼ τάλας / ἤνεγκον ἄκων.”<sup>96</sup> Oidipous suggests that any affront is misguided.<sup>97</sup> He uses ἄκων to mark his lack of choice. Indeed, he claims that guilt lies with the previous generation: “θεοῖς γὰρ ἦν οὕτω φίλον, / τάχ’ ἂν τι μηνίουσιν εἰς γένος πάλαι, / ἐπεὶ κατ’ αὐτόν γ’ οὐκ ἂν ἐξεύροις ἐμὲ / ἁμαρτίας ὄνειδος οὐδέν, ἀνθ’ ὅτου / τάδ’ εἰς ἑμαυτὸν τοὺς ἐμούς θ’ ἡμάρτανον.”<sup>98</sup> We find personal subjective reporting, ἐπεὶ κατ’ αὐτόν γ’, of the past as the self-aware Oidipous refers back to this core denial of guilt.<sup>99</sup> He recounts his life in order to promote his innocence in the present. The chorus recognise this: “ὁ ξείνος, ὦναξ, χρηστός· αἱ δὲ συμφοραὶ / αὐτοῦ πανώλεις, ἄξια δ’ ἀμυναθεῖν.”<sup>100</sup> The crucial point is ἄξια δ’ ἀμυναθεῖν. The protection of the individual suggests Oidipous’ future role. The guilt he carries is not as significant in the context of acquiring sanctuary; he cannot be separated from his actions. Fate and prophecy hold a duopoly over Oidipous’ life. His focus on resentment, τάχ’ ἂν τι μηνίουσιν εἰς γένος πάλαι, stresses a long-standing perverted pleasure through bitterness of the gods, θεοῖς γὰρ

<sup>96</sup> OK. 962f: “O shameless insolence, do you think you are doing outrage against my old age, or your own, you who have prated of killings and marriages and disasters which I have endured unwittingly”.

<sup>97</sup> Oidipous’ innocence; OK. 228-40, 252-4, 267-73, 523, 539, 548, 969-73, 983-87, 997-99.

<sup>98</sup> OK. 965f: “For it was the pleasure of the gods, who perhaps, had long felt anger against my family. For in myself, you could not find any fault to reproach me with, on account of which I committed these sins against myself and my family”. Visser, M. (1982): “Oidipous is terrible because he is innocent”. p.421. Paradox of ‘Enemy hero’. See Edmunds, L. (1981).

<sup>99</sup> Markantonatos, A. (2002): “Oidipous exercises maximum narratorial control over the past”. p.29.

<sup>100</sup> OK. 1014f: “The stranger is a good man, lord. His fate has been accursed, but he is worthy of our aid”. (Amended)

ἦν οὕτω φίλον. It is ironic that Oidipous now must rely on similar divine links to ensure suppliancy and integration into Athens.

The name arrives before the man: “πολὺ γάρ, ὦ γέρον, τὸ σὸν / ὄνομα διήκει πάντας, ὥστε κεί βραδὺς / εὖδει, κλύων σοῦ δεῦρ’ ἀφίξεται ταχύς”.<sup>101</sup> Significantly, this denotes how widely known Oidipous is. He has a reputation and is defined by the collective memory of his past. As they continue, the chorus recall Oidipous’ past misfortunes and subject him to urgent examination. They react to Oidipous after he requests they do not speak or search for answers. The attempt at suppression animates the chorus’ questioning: “τί τόδ’ ἀπεννέπεις, γέρον... τί δέ;... αὖδα... τίνος εἴ σπέρματος, <ὦ> / ξένε, φώνει, πατρόθεν;... μακρὰ μέλλεται, ἀλλὰ τάχυνε”.<sup>102</sup> They push for Oidipous to identify himself. He moves to calm their fears by arguing against his own presumed status: “κάμοιγε ποῦ τοῦτ’ ἐστίν, οἵτινες βάθρων / ἐκ τῶνδ’ ἐξάραντες εἴτ’ ἐλαύνετε, / ὄνομα μόνον δείσαντες;”.<sup>103</sup> Oidipous asserts that the chorus should not be fearful ὄνομα μόνον δείσαντες. Oidipous uses the position of both man and city to gain what he desires. Athens’ reputation is uncertain throughout the Kolonians’ preliminary evaluation, as Oidipous represents the ultimate test of the capacity of the city to receive the suppliant.<sup>104</sup> They do not converse with Oidipous until he has removed his stained self from the grove:

μετάσταθ’ ἀπόβαθι. πολ-  
λὰ κέλευθος ἐρατύοι:  
κλύεις, ὦ πολύμοχθ’ ἀλᾶτα;  
λόγον εἴ τιν’ οἴσεις

<sup>101</sup> OK. 306f: “For your name, aged man, has spread greatly to all, so that even if he sleeps and moves slowly, when he hears of you he will be quick to arrive”.

<sup>102</sup> OK. 208f: “What are you forbidding us to say, old man?... Why?... Speak!... Tell us from what seed you come, stranger, on your father’s side?... The delay is long, make haste...!”

<sup>103</sup> OK. 263f: “How is the case with me, when you have made me rise up from these ledges and are driving me away, simply from fear of my name?”

<sup>104</sup> Timarkhos possesses such a bad reputation he should not be heard. *Against Timarkhos* 1.3f. 1.127f.

πρὸς ἐμὴν λέσχαν, ἀβάτων ἀποβάς,  
ἵνα πᾶσι νόμος,  
φώνει: πρόσθεν δ' ἀπερύκου.<sup>105</sup>

A caveat is found in Oidipous' acceptance into the deme. Although a suppliant, he comes with a reputation that hints at a future problem. He occupies a position of outsider; underlined by the chorus as they instruct him to move from holy ground, λόγον εἴ τιν' οἴσεις / πρὸς ἐμὴν λέσχαν, ἀβάτων ἀποβάς, / ἵνα πᾶσι νόμος. The order underlines how removed Oidipous is from the city and civilisation, as Bremer suggests: "He is a parricide and incestuous lover but also ennobled by long years of suffering".<sup>106</sup> His real power (and at this point, his identity) is hidden. The chorus confirm his appearance: "δυσαίων / μακραίων θ', ὅσ' ἐπείκασαι".<sup>107</sup> The polluted Oidipous approaches, humble in his innocence, and with a promise of future gain for the city and its people.

In Athens, there are different ways of approaching and using the past. Although the old king must first supplicate himself to the people of the deme, his recognisability pushes against integration, as his previous life influences the present. The chorus quickly move to banish.<sup>108</sup> Oidipous' response takes the form of an argument that hinges on the belief that he is inherently malevolent; he connects memory to choice and fate:

οὐ γὰρ δὴ τό γε  
σῶμ' οὐδὲ τάργα τᾶμ': ἐπεὶ τά γ' ἔργα με  
πεπονθότ' ἴσθι μᾶλλον ἢ δεδρακότα,

<sup>105</sup> OK. 164f: "Stand away, depart! Let a great distance separate you. Do you hear me, long-suffering wanderer? If you have any word to say in converse with us, stand away from the forbidden ground, and speak where it is lawful for all. But, till then, refrain".

<sup>106</sup> Bremer, H. (1969), p.172. Also suggests: "His assertion of his innocence enables him to live with his *hamartia*". Zaidman and Pantel. (1992), Religion, by Cartledge: "Pollution... may conceal a positive religious quality within the framework of the ritual system and the prescriptions which govern the functioning of rituals in the world of men". p.10.

<sup>107</sup> OK. 150f: "Yours has been a sad life, and a long one it would seem".

<sup>108</sup> OK. 226f.

εἴ σοι τὰ μητρὸς καὶ πατρὸς χρείη λέγειν,  
 ὣν οὔνεκ' ἐκφοβεῖ με: τοῦτ' ἐγὼ καλῶς  
 ἔξοιδα. καίτοι πῶς ἐγὼ κακὸς φύσιν.  
 ὅστις παθῶν μὲν ἀντέδρων, ὥστ' εἰ φρονῶν  
 ἔπρασσον, οὐδ' ἂν ὥδ' ἐγινόμην κακός;  
 νῦν δ' οὐδὲν εἰδῶς ἰκόμην ἴν' ἰκόμην,  
 ὑφ' ὧν δ' ἔπασχον, εἰδότες ἀπωλλύμην.<sup>109</sup>

Oidipous speaks of the guilt of an earlier crime, offering his own reconstruction, review, and revision of the past. Markantonatos suggests: "The ability to reconstruct his past life in narrative terms and instruct the Colonians in the true circumstance of his doings strengthens the force of his defence... His intention is not to dispute the events themselves, but to place them in a larger temporal perspective, which is unavailable to the chorus".<sup>110</sup> Oidipous claims to have acted in ignorance using φρονέω to push self-defence yet this may not be of major consequence. His plea matters as although his plea of victimisation does not influence his induction into Athens and the civic memory, it frames his acceptability. To reconcile Oidipous' views of blame and the need for pity, we can evaluate his defence.<sup>111</sup> Name, reputation, and supliancy all link together behind a smokescreen of self-interest and culpability.

The past crime of patricide and incest does not change. Oidipous claims innocence, yet still carries the mark of guilt. It is despite this paradox that the city admits him; this is a unique case. His biographical past gives present issues their significance, and stimulates recognition.<sup>112</sup> Oidipous' previous personal actions

<sup>109</sup> OK. 265f: "For it is not my person or my actions that you fear; why, know that my actions consisted in suffering rather than in doing, if I must speak of the matter of my mother and my father, on account of which you are afraid of me! This I know for sure! Yet my nature how am I evil? I who struck back when had been struck. So if I had acted knowingly; not even then would I have been evil?"

<sup>110</sup> Markantonatos, A. (2002). p.40.

<sup>111</sup> For affirmative see Harris, E. (2010). For rebuttal see Sommerstein, A. (2011).

<sup>112</sup> OK. 130. Also OT. 1214f. Markantonatos, A. (2007). After Winnington-Ingram, R. (1980). Burian, P. (1974).



resonate in Kolonos.<sup>113</sup> His sightlessness and the cause behind this past violence of this action become a *leitmotif* that reaches far into his reputation and identity.<sup>114</sup> Oidipous builds an argument, hinged on recognition, against the charges put to him by the chorus: “ἐγὼ φράσω. / ἅτα ἀλοὺς ἐφόνευσ’, ἀπὸ τ’ ὧ λεσαν: / νόμῳ δὲ καθαρός, αἰῶρις εἰς τόδ’ ἦλθον”.<sup>115</sup> He laments the misfortunes that have happened to him and the house; notoriety unfairly attaches itself. Oidipous claims innocence both legally and morally, νόμῳ δὲ καθαρός, he killed in self-defence.<sup>116</sup> He attempts to redirect culpability: “ἔτικτε γάρ μ’ ἔτικτεν, ὦμοι μοι κακῶν, / οὐκ εἰδὼτ’ οὐκ εἰδυῖα, καὶ τεκοῦσά με, / αὐτῆς ὄνειδος παῖδας ἐξέφυσέ μοι”.<sup>117</sup> Oidipous includes Jokasta in his argument as he speaks of αὐτῆς ὄνειδος. He highlights the unnatural family dynamic, expanding on the unintentional nature of his crimes to win a place in the city:

ἀλλ’ ἐν γὰρ οὖν ἔξοιδα, σὲ μὲν ἐκόντ’ ἐμὲ  
 κείνην τε ταῦτα δυσστομεῖν: ἐγὼ δὲ νιν  
 ἄκων ἔγημα φθέγγομαί τ’ ἄκων τάδε  
 ἀλλ’ οὐ γὰρ οὕτ’ ἐν τοῖσδ’ ἀλώσομαι κακὸς  
 γάμοισιν οὔθ’ οὖς αἰὲν ἐμφορεῖς σύ μοι  
 φόνους πατρώους ἐξονειδίζων πικρῶς.<sup>118</sup>

Oidipous presses the construction of the past, but shifts guilt away from individual responsibility.<sup>119</sup> The implication is that his story is so terrible that only a verdict that it was completely unwilling (making him

<sup>113</sup> OT. 1275f. Beer, J. (2004). Bernidaki-Aldous, A. (1990).

<sup>114</sup> OK. 149f. Blindness is inherently evil. Bernidaki-Aldous, A. (1990). Shields, M. (1961).

<sup>115</sup> OK. 548f: “I will explain! I murdered and slaughtered as the victim of the power that sent me mad, but accordingly to the law I am clean! It was in ignorance that I came to this!”

<sup>116</sup> OK. 765f.

<sup>117</sup> OK. 982f: “Yes, she bore me, she bore me, alas for my sorrows, and neither of us knew it, and after she had borne me she brought forth children for me to my shame”.

<sup>118</sup> OK. 984f: “But one thing I know for certain, that your abuse of her and me is uttered deliberately; but my marriage with her and my present words about it were not willed by me. No, neither this marriage, nor the killing of my father, which you never cease to cast in my teeth with bitter reproaches, shall prove to be evil”.

<sup>119</sup> Harris, E. (2010). MacDowell, D. (1978).

subjectively blameless) makes it possible to admit him. He must first secure entry and minimise any potential risk. It is essential that Oidipous present what previously happened in such way that makes protection and integration possible.

### Theseus and the exile

The Athenian king and the deeds of a temperate Athens marshal Oidipous' entry into the city. The attitude of Theseus, his duty to deliver protection, and the agreement to protect, confirm his role as leader of a city with the reputation for fairness.<sup>120</sup> Although Theseus represents Athens, Oidipous has not heard of him, yet memory becomes essential to admittance into the city. In contrast to the exile, whose memory precedes him, Theseus has no prior reputation against which to be judged. Oidipous questions the scout of the leader's identity: "οὗτος δὲ τίς λόγῳ τε καὶ σθένει κρατεῖ;".<sup>121</sup> His enquiry places the location before the man; Oidipous knows the reputation of the city as he in turn is recognised. Dual recollection is essential to forming a reciprocal agreement.<sup>122</sup> Theseus promises, and delivers, safety without hesitation: "θαρσεῖν μὲν οὖν ἔγωγε κἄνευ τῆς ἐμῆς / γνώμης ἐπαινῶ, Φοῖβος εἰ προὔπεμψε σε: / ὅμως δὲ κάμοῦ μὴ παρόντος οἶδ' ὅτι / τούμὸν φυλάξει σ' ὄνομα μὴ πάσχειν κακῶς".<sup>123</sup> Theseus, like Oidipous, is motivated by both principle and the memory of personal experience. The source of his confidence is in the power attached to ὄνομα. The king trusts that his suppliant/guest is not harmed, advising Oidipous θαρσεῖν μὲν οὖν. The instruction is particularly striking when Theseus links it to protection, a promise that his name guards Oidipous when he is not

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<sup>120</sup> OK. 559f.

<sup>121</sup> OK. 68, "And who has power by his speech and by his strength?" A man of words and deeds, OT. 884.

<sup>122</sup> OK. 108f.

<sup>123</sup> OK. 664f: "So I would advise you to be confident, even apart from my decision, if it was Phoibos who sent you; and none the less, I know that even when I am absent my name will; guard you from ill treatment".

present. In contrast to the reputation and name of Oidipous as it (initially) invites attacks, Theseus' name is a shielding device.

The benevolent king of Athens is aware of what Oidipous represents, yet admits him: “πολλῶν ἀκούων ἔν τε τῷ πάρος χρόνῳ / τὰς αἱματηρὰς ὀμμάτων διαφθορὰς / ἔγνωκά σ', ὦ παῖ Λαΐου, τανῦν θ' ὁδοῖς / ἐν ταῖσδ' ἀκούων μᾶλλον ἐξεπίσταμαι”.<sup>124</sup> Recollection plays its own distinctive role in guiding integration. Theseus does not speak of blame, yet recalls the self-blinding. He describes the particular horror of the act and highlights the downfall of Oidipous.<sup>125</sup> Theseus recalls similar circumstances as part of his acceptance; recollection of both the mythology and biography (ὦ παῖ Λαΐου) of Oidipous shapes his attitude:

δίδασκε· δεινὴν γάρ τιν' ἂν πράξιν τύχοις  
λέξας ὁποίας ἐξαφισταίμην ἐγώ,  
ὅς οἱδ' αὐτὸς ὥς ἐπαιδεύθην ξένος,  
ὥσπερ σύ, χῶς εἷς πλεῖστ' ἀνὴρ ἐπὶ ξένης  
ἦθλησα κινδυνεύματ' ἐν τῷμῳ κάρῃ.<sup>126</sup>

The king understands Oidipous' wretched present state. Theseus extends his sympathy through recalling a similar recollection of past narrative. The emphasis here is on Oidipous remembering suffering, ὅς οἱδ' αὐτὸς ὥς ἐπαιδεύθην ξένος. The two men share a past, though Theseus' suffering is now over while Oidipous' extends into the present. The repeated use of ξένος bonds the two together. Unlike Oidipous, Theseus has always been aware of his own identity, a key difference in their shared pasts. Theseus is motivated not only by considerations of similar principle, but also by his own memory.

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<sup>124</sup> OK. 551f: “Having heard from many in time past of your bloody destruction of your eyes, I have recognised you, son of Laius, and now that I see you after this journey I am yet more certain;”.

<sup>125</sup> Burian, P. (1974).

<sup>126</sup> OK. 559f: “Tell me! For you would need to speak of a terrible fortune indeed for me turn away from it! I have not forgotten that I myself was brought up in exile, as you were, and that in my exile I struggled against such dangers to my life as no other man has met with”. For Oidipous as stranger/suppliant, see Wilson, J. (1997).

He was exposed to no ordinary hardship, and as Theseus notes with ἐν τῷ μῶ κάρα, it had threatened his life. The wanderer's previous actions and story guarantee recognition as blindness and pain is inherent to the man and his myth. The suspicions that Theseus holds are confirmed, ironically, with visual recognition. To establish a link with the past Theseus uses the patronymic ὦ παῖ Λαΐου, to refer to the importance of ancestry; however, Oidipous is not the only one judged on his past or present actions.

Theseus's actions embody the city as a place that protects suppliants: “εἶπον μὲν οὖν καὶ πρόσθεν, ἐννέπω δὲ νῦν, / τὰς παῖδας ὥς τάχιστα δεῦρ’ ἄγειν τινά, / εἰ μὴ μέτοικος τῆσδε τῆς χώρας θέλεις / εἶναι βία τε κούχ ἐκών.”.<sup>127</sup> In this example, a show of authority, or rather βία, from the king shows what kind of people keeps the city. Theseus meets the threat to the suppliants with a defensive measure. It is ironic that he threatens Kreon with becoming an enforced resident, a μέτοικος of Athens in response to Oidipous and his daughters being attacked.<sup>128</sup> The background to this conflict between Theseus and Kreon lies in the idea of Athens as a refuge. Markantonatos examines the acceptance of Oidipous by Athens: “The compassionate treatment of Oidipous [by Theseus] within Attic borders serves as another shining paradigm of Athenian grandeur in the face of senseless cruelty and abysmal brutality”.<sup>129</sup> Indeed, Theseus challenges Kreon that he underestimates Athens' adherence to legal process:

ὅστις δίκαι’ ἀσκοῦσαν εἰσελθὼν πόλιν  
 κᾶνευ νόμου κραίνουσιν οὐδέν, εἴτ’ ἀφείδω  
 τὰ τῆσδε τῆς γῆς κύρι’, ὣδ’ ἐπεισπесῶν  
 ἄγεις θ’ ἃ χρήξεις καὶ παρίστασαι βία,

<sup>127</sup> OK. 932f: “I said earlier and I say now that someone must at once bring the girls here, unless you wish to become a resident here by force and against your will”. Also, OK. 909f.

<sup>128</sup> Also Ais. Kho. 683.

<sup>129</sup> Markantonatos, A. (2007), p.100.

καί μοι πόλιν κένανδρον ἢ δούλην τινὰ  
ἔδοξας εἶναι κάμ' ἴσον τῷ μηδενί.<sup>130</sup>

As he resorts to threaten with brute force, Kreon assumed that the city would not, or rather could not, defend itself.<sup>131</sup> The ways in which Athens reacts to victim and to aggressor are aspects of Athens' reputation that must be constantly tested and reaffirmed.<sup>132</sup> Theseus uses κένανδρος to mock him as Kreon imagined the city metaphorically empty. The action defines the Athenian tradition of courageous resistance to threats and demonstrates a response to Kreon's neglect. The play invites the reader to think about competing regimes and the connections between man and city.

We see this dynamic in the conduct of Kreon as he provokes a different reaction from Theseus: “ὥς ἀφ' ὧν μὲν εἶ / φαίνει δίκαιος, δρῶν δ' ἐφευρίσκει κακά”.<sup>133</sup> He describes Thebes as law abiding; the deeds of the man reveal his true nature.<sup>134</sup> Throughout this section, Thebes is seen as positive and worthy of protecting. Its position and rank, like Athens, it is not only dependant on reputation and current actions, but on the re-enactment of honourable virtue.

### Kreon and the city

Kreon insists the city adheres to its own laws and refuse to assist the guilty, he offers a different vision of the Athenian tradition. His

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<sup>130</sup> OK. 914f: “Seeing that you have come to a city that abides by justice and decides everything according to the law and then flouted this land's authorities when you made your incursion to take away all that you wished and subjugate it by force. You thought my had no men or was enslaved, and I counted for nothing”.

<sup>131</sup> Markantonatos, A. (2007), suggests: “Theseus engages in a fierce argument with Kreon... [A] re-enacted courtroom scene”. p.212.

<sup>132</sup> The *epitaphios logos* also cultivated friendships with aggressors. Thou 2.14, Lysias 2.51. Walters, K. (1980).

<sup>133</sup> OK. 937f: “Your ancestry makes you seem honest, but you are caught out doing wrong!”

<sup>134</sup> A parallel is found in Euripides, *Herakleidae*. 130f. “καὶ μὴν στολήν γ' Ἑλλήνα καὶ ρυθμὸν πέπλων / ἔχει, τὰ δ' ἔργα βαρβάρου χερὸς τάδε”. “And yet the clothing he wears and the shape of his garments is Hellene, but these deeds are those of a barbarian hand”.

unforgiving, resentful view clashes with Oidipous' vision and that of Theseus. Kreon challenges Athens to act according to its reputation. His view of the Athenian tradition is the issue. Kreon approaches Athens in a similar (yet negative) way to Oidipous. Although the text and the city decide against him, Kreon first rises to test the protection of the weak: "ἤδη δ' ὀθούνεκ' ἄνδρα καὶ πατροκτόνον / κᾶναγνον οὐ δεξοίαιτ', οὐδ' ὅτῳ γάμοι / ξυνόντ' ἐφηυρέθησαν ἀνόσιοι τέκνα".<sup>135</sup> He wants the city to punish Oidipous in order to benefit Thebes, basing his challenge upon a seemingly legitimate claim.<sup>136</sup> Kreon's contrasting view is a redacted version of the Athenian custom. He uses past traditions of the city differently, offering his own account of legal traditions to justify his actions.<sup>137</sup> It is an unsatisfactory version as Kreon assumes Athens would take his side by releasing Oidipous into his custody.

Like Oidipous, Kreon appeals to a particular aspect of Athens' status. He shifts focus onto the role to punish, stressing Athenian inflexibility towards the law. The issue here is not whether Oidipous killed, but

<sup>135</sup> OK. 944f: "I knew, too, that they would not receive a parricide and a man impure, nor one in whose company were found the children of an unholy marriage". Returning harm to one's enemies is bad, see Blundell, M. (1990A). Edmunds, L. (1996), notes: "A general resemblance between Oidipous' situation in Athens and the provisions for pardon can be noted... Unintentional homicide... involves a pattern of exile and return". p.136. In 5<sup>th</sup> century Greece, MacDowell, D. (1986), proposes: "For unintentional murder the penalty was exile: the offender had to keep out of Attika and also to avoid the great religious festivals and games attended by people from all parts of Greece, but he could retain his property and live a free life abroad". p.120. Markantonatos, A. (2002), argues: "The audience are invited to view the past through a fifth-century legal filter p.45. n.21. Wilson, P. (1997), (2000).

<sup>136</sup> The charge of defending those who should not be protected is in Diodorus Siculus, *Library*. 14.6.1. Kleon punishes those who committed crime in Mytilene, he relies on the laws of Athenian hegemony with no clemency for traitors; Thou. 3.40.2. They discount weakness; 3.40.4. Vengeance upon Mytilene; 3.39.6. Fallout from Aegospotami raises issues of social segregation and reintegration; see Wolpert, A. (2002a). Munn, M. (2002).

<sup>137</sup> Jebb examines the political state: "If the Council of the Areiopagos (Kreon assumes) became aware that a polluted person, such as Oidipous, was in Attica, it would take steps for his expulsion. Such a proceeding would doubtless have come within the limits of the general moral censorship actually possessed by the Areiopagos, at least in the earlier days of the Athenian democracy". For a modern assessment, see Hall, E. (1995). Kreon argues that Oidipous' previous actions were against the law and he is escaping justice rather than an exiled suppliant. cf. Walker, H. (1995).

concerns who he killed, the charge is patricide, rather than homicide in self-defence.<sup>138</sup> However, he does this after Theseus has decided to admit Oidipous. Kreon links the heart of political Athens, the Areiopagos, to the theme of reputation. Numerous texts confirm the city's standing for legal equality.<sup>139</sup> However, Kreon's response to Oidipous is one based in oppression: “φράσω δὲ καὶ τοῖσδ’, ὥς σε δηλώσω κακόν. / ἤκεις ἔμ’ ἄξων, οὐχ’ ἴν’ ἐς δόμους ἄγῃς, / ἀλλ’ ὥς πάραυλον οἰκίσῃς, πόλις δέ σοι / κακῶν ἄνατος τῆσδ’ ἀπαλλαχθῇ χθονός”.<sup>140</sup> He uses terms of punishment that would strike a chord with the contemporary Athenian audience.<sup>141</sup> Kreon argues in tandem with the city's traditional role, yet he misses humanity. He relies upon familiar themes to ensure that his argument is heard. Kreon ignorantly misreads what Athens stands for; this is the pre-eminent city of law and justice, protective of the weak.<sup>142</sup> Kreon arrives to reinforce his power in the city, bringing the threat of violence: “πόλει μαχεῖ γάρ, εἴ τι πημανεῖς ἐμέ”.<sup>143</sup> His intention marks a dubious future as he faces an enforced return to Thebes: “οὐδὲν σὺ μεμπτόν ἐνθάδ’

<sup>138</sup> Cf. Gagarin, M. (1978). Harris, E. (2010). MacDowell, D. (1963).

<sup>139</sup> OK. 947f. Also, Aiskhines. *Against Timarkhos*. 1.92. The Areiopagos is unique within Athenian politics, tradition, and mythical beginning; Dem. *Against Aristokrates*. 23.66. Lysias. 1.30, 20.1f. Lykourgos. *Against Leokrates*. 1.12: “καὶ ταῦτα κάλλιστον ἔχοντες τῶν Ἑλλήνων παράδειγμα τὸ ἐν Ἀρείῳ πάγῳ συνέδριον, ὃ τοσοῦτον διαφέρει τῶν ἄλλων δικαστηρίων ὥστε καὶ παρ’ αὐτοῖς ὁμολογεῖσθαι τοῖς ἀλικομένοις δικαίαν ποιεῖσθαι τὴν κρίσιν”. “Although you have, in the council of the Areiopagos, the finest model in Hellas: a court so superior to others that even the men convicted in it admit that its judgements are just”. Translation Burt, J. (1962). Hardwick, L. (2003). Holub, R. (1984). Iser, W. (1978). Jauss, H. (1982). Lanni, A. (2006). MacDowell, D. (1978). Rhodes, P. (2010).

<sup>140</sup> OK. 783f: “You have come to get me, not to bring me home, but to plant me near your borders, so that your city might escape uninjured by evils from this land”.

<sup>141</sup> MacDowell, D. (1963). Carawan, E. (1998).

<sup>142</sup> Athens creates laws for the Hellenes. Isok. 4.39. Dem. 23.69. Severity of the proceedings, and limitations, of the law: “ἀλλ’ ἐκείνου μὲν οἱ νόμοι κύριοι κολάσαι καὶ οἷς προστέτακται, τῷ δ’ ἐπιθεῖν διδόντα δίκην ἐξεστίν, ἣν ἔταξ’ ὁ νόμος, τὸν ἀλόντα, πέρα δ’ οὐδὲν τούτου”. “Only the laws and the appointed officers have power over the man for punishment. The prosecutor is permitted to see him suffering the penalty awarded by law, and that is all”. Includes the Areiopagos itself, Dem. 59.80: “οὐ γὰρ αὐτοκράτορές εἰσιν, ὥς ἂν βούλωνται, Ἀθηναίων τινὰ κολάσαι”. “For they have not the power to punish any of the Athenians as they see fit”. Translation DeWitt, N. (1949). Parker, R. (1983).

<sup>143</sup> OK. 837: “Yes, you will be fighting with my city, if you do me any harm”.

ὦν ἔρεϊς ἐμοί: / οἴκοι δὲ χήμεϊς εἰσόμεσθ' ἃ χρὴ ποεῖν".<sup>144</sup> His language is explicitly intimidating. In contrast to Oidipous, this is a form of negative exchange. The duplicity shows him to be morally corrupt and reliant on force. Oidipous counters Kreon's argument using the reputation of the city, focusing on piety:

κᾷθ' ὥδ' ἐπαινῶν πολλὰ τοῦδ' ἐκλανθάνη,  
 ὁθούνεκ' εἴ τις γῆ θεοὺς ἐπίσταται  
 τιμαῖς σεβίζειν, ἥδε τῷδ' ὑπερφέρει,  
 ἀφ' ἧς σὺ κλέψας τὸν ἰκέτην γέροντ' ἐμὲ  
 αὐτόν τ' ἐχειροῦ τὰς κόρας τ' οἶχην λαβών.<sup>145</sup>

He accuses Kreon that he does not appreciate where he is, κᾷθ' ὥδ' ἐπαινῶν πολλὰ τοῦδ' ἐκλανθάνη. Kreon purposefully misunderstands Athens through his attempts to influence the city. Oidipous himself recalls divine and honourable credentials with εἴ τις γῆ θεοὺς, and the verb σεβίζειν. The city is recalled as one that is immune to manipulations. Kreon's inflexible approach lends a judicial dimension to this section of text; yet the city is not a vindictive, resentful place.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>144</sup> OK. 1036f: "While you are here nothing that you say to me can be faulted; but at home we too know what we must do!"

<sup>145</sup> OK. 1005f: "And then amid all these praises you forgot this, that if any country knows how to reverence the gods with honours, this one excels in that respect; and it is from that country that you snatch me, an aged man, a suppliant, and have mistreated me and carried off my daughters".

<sup>146</sup> The second speaker in the ἀγών usually wins. See Plato, *Krito*. For the theme in Euripides; see Lloyd, M. (1992).



### 4.3 Resentment in Athens

#### Kreon's view of the past of Oidipous

Anger links both Oidipous and Kreon to the manipulation of their shared history in Thebes. Kreon refers to the past to sway judgement: “χρόνῳ γάρ, οἷδ’ ἐγώ, γνώσει τάδε, / ὀθούνεκ’ αὐτὸς αὐτὸν οὔτε νῦν καλὰ / ὄρᾳς οὔτε πρόσθεν εἰργάσω βίᾳ φίλων, / ὄργῃ χάριν δούς, ἢ σ’ ἀεὶ λυμαίνεται”.<sup>147</sup> The main point emphasises Oidipous’ not managing his temper. Anger overtook him, ὄργῃ χάριν δούς, and Kreon aims to exploit this using ἢ σ’ ἀεὶ λυμαίνεται to note that Oidipous has the propensity to rage. Kreon immediately claims: “οὔτοι καθέξω θυμόν”.<sup>148</sup> We also find a warning here, and an accumulation of his argument; Kreon refuses to concede and he makes an error of judgement: “θυμοῦ γὰρ οὐδὲν γῆρας ἐστὶν ἄλλο πλὴν / θανεῖν: θανόντων δ’ οὐδὲν ἄλγος ἄπτεται”.<sup>149</sup> Kreon’s grudge is presented as a legal challenge.<sup>150</sup> There are echoes of this style of argument in Lysias who links duty to exile and the principles of the πόλις: “εὖ γὰρ ἐπίστασθε, ὧ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ὅτι οὐχ οἷόν τε ὑμῖν ἐστὶν ἅμα τοῖς τε νόμοις τοῖς πατρίοις καὶ Ἀνδοκίδῃ χρῆσθαι, ἀλλὰ δυοῖν θάτερον, ἢ τοὺς νόμους ἐξαλειπτέον ἐστὶν ἢ ἀπαλλακτέον τοῦ ἀνδρός”.<sup>151</sup> We find an ultimatum; give up the law or the man. Almost contemporary to the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, there are thematic

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<sup>147</sup> OK. 852f: “For in time, I know it, you shall realise this, that neither what you are doing now, nor what you did before was right, since you yielded to your anger, which has always been your ruin”. Kreon invokes the *Oidipous Tyrannos*.

<sup>148</sup> OK. 874: “I shall no longer restrain my anger”.

<sup>149</sup> OK. 954f: “For anger knows no old age, til death; and no pain affects the dead”.

<sup>150</sup> OK. 990f. Also Lysias, 4, ‘*For Polystratos*’. OK. 437f. The charge to Kreon, 765f. Oidipous as φαρμακός, see Seaford, R. (1994). Echoes the attack on Polyneikes, 437f. cf. Burian, P. (1974), p.419.

<sup>151</sup> Lysias. 6.8, ‘*Against Andokides*’: “For you are well aware, men of Athens, that it is not possible for you to live with our ancestral laws and with Andokides at the same time: it must be one of two things, either you must wipe out the laws, or you must get rid of the man”. Translation Lamb, W. (1943). The city must comply with its laws and banish the man. Also Andokides. 1.1. ‘*On the Mysteries*’. For dating and parallels with the trial of Sokrates see Todd, S. (2010). Confidence in justice at Athens in Dem. 18.2, ‘*On the crown*’.

similarities surrounding the importance of the city as judge, with the reliance on νόμος. The rescue of Oidipous is the most severe test of Athens, a city where anger festers through resentment, and a situation that has both positive and negative repercussions.<sup>152</sup> The contrast between approaches to the city continues as Kreon compares himself to the old men. He appeals to their sympathetic side, yet his speech contains half-truths and subterfuge.<sup>153</sup>

Kreon conceals the true motivation for wanting Oidipous' return to Thebes, arguing that the city wishes it.<sup>154</sup> Initially, he does not pose a threat, appealing to family heritage and bonds of friendship. However, he is a representative of Eteokles (Theseus maintains that Kreon would not have come unless supported by someone outside the city).<sup>155</sup> Kreon refers to those in Thebes that drive him. The ruse to take Oidipous back by subtle means fails and the exile responds: “νῦν τ’ αὖθις ἡνίκ’ εἰσορᾷς πόλιν τέ μοι / ξυνοῦσαν εὖνουν τήνδε καὶ γένος τὸ πᾶν, / πειρᾷ μετασπᾶν, σκληρὰ μαλθακῶς λέγων”.<sup>156</sup> The anxiety of being pulled back to Thebes is evident as Oidipous emphasises movement to articulate his fears. He fears the underlying malevolence in Kreon's speech with his subtle presentation, σκληρὰ μαλθακῶς λέγων, recognising Kreon's intention and his lasting resentment. Kreon bases his attack on retaliation against curses: “καὶ ταῦτ’ ἂν οὐκ ἔπρασσον, εἰ μὴ μοι πικρὰς / αὐτῷ τ’ ἀρὰς ἡρᾶτο καὶ

<sup>152</sup> The courage of Athens on the face of Persian assault is seen in Herodotos 7.139.5-6, 8.142.3: “οἵτινες αἰεὶ καὶ τὸ πάλαι φαίνεσθε πολλοὺς ἐλευθερώσαντες ἀνθρώπων”. Athens, “Who have always been known as givers of freedom to many”. Hdt 9.27. Dem. 60.7. Shows how Athens' glory and reputation passes through the generations. Lys. 2.9. Athens fights for correct memory. See Isok. 14.53f.

<sup>153</sup> Kreon's argument is set out in Walker, H. (1995).

<sup>154</sup> For a cultural reference we can turn to Aiskhines as he relies on the integrity of the Athenian system: “ἐγὼ δὲ πεπιστευκῶς ἤκω πρῶτον μὲν τοῖς θεοῖς, ἔπειτα τοῖς νόμοις καὶ ὑμῖν, ἡγούμενος οὐδεμίαν παρασκευὴν μείζον ἰσχύειν παρ’ ὑμῖν τῶν νόμων καὶ τῶν δικαίων”. Aiskhines. *‘Against Ktesiphon’* 3.1f: “But I have come trusting first in the gods, then in the laws and in you, believing that with you no scheming preparation can override law and justice”. Also, Lysias, 4. *‘For Polystratos’*. Todd, S. (2010).

<sup>155</sup> OK. 1028f.

<sup>156</sup> OK. 772f: “And now once more, when you see the city and all its people kindly to me as a resident, you try to tear me away, saying hard things in soft words”.

τῷμῳ γένει: / ἀνθ' ὧν πεπονθῶς ἡξιούν τάδ' ἀντιδρᾶν".<sup>157</sup> He is arguing about the past, focusing on εἰ μή μοι πικρὰς / αὐτῷ τ' ἀρὰς ἡρᾶτο καὶ τῷμῳ γένει: an attempt to persuade in the face of what he perceived as a previous attack. He claims his family suffered first, and now is due revenge and reparation (ἀντιδρᾶν), this he combines with prophecy as motivation and justification. The polluted Oidipous should not be sheltered. Anger manifests in a physical threat to Oidipous: "μαρτύρομαι τούσδ', οὐ σέ: πρὸς δὲ τοὺς φίλους / οἳ' ἀνταμείβει ῥήματ', ἦν δ' ἔλω ποτέ... / ἧ μὴν σὺ κᾶνευ τοῦδε λυπηθεῖς ἔσῃ".<sup>158</sup> Kreon refuses to forget, and moves to exploit Oidipous. Kreon presents an argument that suggests those at Thebes want him to return: "οὐκ ἐξ ἐνὸς στείλαντος, ἀλλ' ἀνδρῶν ὑπὸ / πάντων κελευσθεῖς, οὔνεχ' ἥκέ μοι γένει / τὰ τοῦδε πενθεῖν πῆματ' εἰς πλεῖστον πόλεως".<sup>159</sup> He claims he is there for the good of the πόλις, and that the bond of family compels him to act. The tone here is one of insincerity and duplicity, and it frames the conflict between the two men. Kreon shows no honour to *epitaphios logos*, and threatens only punishment. In response, Oidipous curses:

μὴ γὰρ αἶδε δαίμονες  
 θεῖέν μ' ἄφωνον τῆσδε τῆς ἀρᾶς ἔτι,  
 ὅς μ', ὧ κάκιστε, φίλον ὄμμ' ἀποσπάσας  
 πρὸς ὄμμασιν τοῖς πρόσθεν ἐξοίχει βίᾳ.  
 τοιγὰρ σέ καὶ τὸν καὶ γένος τὸ σὸν θεῶν  
 ὃ πάντα λεύσσω· Ἥλιος δοίῃ βίον  
 τοιοῦτον οἶον κάμῃ γηρᾶναί ποτε.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>157</sup> OK. 951f: "And I would not have done so, had he not called down bitter curses on me and on my family. For this treatment I thought it right to make this return".

<sup>158</sup> OK. 812f: "I call on these men, not on you, and also on my friends here, to be witness of your answers: and if I ever catch you... I swear that even without that happening you shall suffer pain!"

<sup>159</sup> OK. 737f: "It is not one man only who has sent me, but all the citizens who commanded me, because family ties caused me to mourn his sorrows most in the city".

<sup>160</sup> OK. 864f: "No may the goddesses here no longer check the curse that is on my lips, on you, you villain, who have snatched from me by violence the beloved eye I

As he looks back, Oidipous wishes Kreon, named as ὦ κάκιστε, a future of darkness and pain. The Eumenides of the holy grove witness and substantiate this threat. We find inexorable resentment, μὴ γὰρ αἶδε δαίμονες / θεῖέν μ' ἄφωνον τῆσδε τῆς ἀρᾶς ἔτι. With the removal of Antigone, Kreon invites recrimination for past wrongs. For this and other crimes, Oidipous curses the whole γένος. Kreon is compared indirectly to Polyneikes.

### Polyneikes and anger

The unrelenting bitterness between father and son is a fundamental force in the *Oidipous at Kolonos*. Animosity and curse guide the motivations and action of Oidipous and his son(s); anger transcends both life and death. We find a significant paradox in the context of memory. It is within this cycle of resentment they both become victim and agent through their respective attempts at reclaiming identity, status, and power. There are multiple reasons for resentment that include duty to one's own father, being deprived of honour, the humiliation of exile, and displacement through being ἄπολις. These disputes are causal to the resentment of both Oidipous and Polyneikes. In this section, I examine the impact of the father's refusal to forget and the impasse with his son. As they approach the city, similar actions link Oidipous and Polyneikes together, the connection heightens the gap between them.

The metaphorical and geographical position of Polyneikes confirms his standing as an external enemy. His willingness to destroy the πόλις because of his resentment at his brother highlights a case of memory-related anger and bitterness. As Polyneikes approaches with his army, Ismene highlights his separation and foreignness: “τὸ κοῖλον Ἄργος βὰς φυγὰς προσλαμβάνει / κῆδός τε καινὸν καὶ

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had, gone like the eyes I had already lost! Therefore may the all-seeing Sun grant that your old-age is like mine!”

ξυνασπιστὰς φίλους / ὥς αὐτίκ' Ἄργος ἢ τὸ Καδμείων πέδον / τιμῇ  
καθέξον ἢ πρὸς οὐρανὸν βιβῶν".<sup>161</sup> Ismene more than hints to  
betrayal as she focuses on Polyneikes' new alliance, and contrasts it  
with her own broken family. The division spreads to civil war. The  
sons of Oidipous prepare for battle; either Argos will take Thebes, τὸ  
Καδμείων πέδον, or send it to the heavens, πρὸς οὐρανὸν βιβῶν.  
These new family ties aid his attack and substantiate his place as a  
traitor. Personal anger drives the conflict between the brothers,  
leaving no chance for amnesty. Polyneikes has his location and  
status further confirmed with the use of φυγάς, his entrance as  
wandering exile recalls that of his father. Although this position is not  
always negative, yet here it accentuates Polyneikes' isolation and  
disloyalty:

ὦ σπέρματ' ἀνδρὸς τοῦδ', ἐμαὶ δ' ὁμαίμονες,  
πειράσατ' ἄλλ' ὑμεῖς γε κινῆσαι πατρὸς  
τὸ δυσπρόσοιστον κάπρυσήγορον στόμα,  
ὥς μή μ' ἄτιμον, τοῦ θεοῦ γε προστάτην,  
οὕτως ἀφῇ με μηδὲν ἀντειπῶν ἔπος.<sup>162</sup>

In this section of dialogue, Polyneikes reacts to his father's silence. It  
is striking that Oidipous does not speak directly to his son, nor does  
he name him. Because of his incandescent rage, he denies any type  
of defence for his actions, effectively disallowing a hearing to the  
exile.<sup>163</sup> The disregard Oidipous holds is palpable; Polyneikes  
describes his father with ἀπρὸςήγορος and δυσπρόσοιστος. Silence  
speaks volumes as the son deems Oidipous immovable in his

<sup>161</sup> OK. 378f: "[He] has gone in exile to low-lying Argos and has acquired a new marriage and friends who will bear arms with him, resolved either to occupy hold the Kadmean earth in honour, or to mount up to heaven".

<sup>162</sup> OK. 1275f: "Children of this man and sisters of mine, do you at least try to move our father's lips, hard to approach and to address, so that he may not send off without honour me who am protected by the god, without speaking any word in answer".

<sup>163</sup> Kampourelli, V. (2002), p.74.

grudging hatred.<sup>164</sup> Oidipous addresses the chorus and they deliver the order for Polyneikes to depart.<sup>165</sup> The ban on speech aims to punish through negating his place in the city and family.

Polyneikes pushes against this enforced segregation and isolation, petitioning Oidipous to recall their familial link; he is the first-born, and deserving of the throne. Both focus solely on their own advantage: “ἄ δ’ ἦλθον, ἥδη σοι θέλω λέξαι, πάτερ. / γῆς ἐκ πατρώας ἐξελήλαμαι φυγὰς, / τοῖς σοῖς πανάρχοις οὔνεκ’ ἐνθακεῖν θρόνοις / γονῇ πεφυκῶς ἡξίουں γεραίτερά”.<sup>166</sup> Driven by personal hate, Polyneikes’ defence turns to anger and bitterness; he intends to retaliate by invading and taking the throne by force, γῆς ἐκ πατρώας ἐξελήλαμαι φυγὰς. Polyneikes continues, speaking of the intolerable position he finds himself in.<sup>167</sup> The denial of kingship motivates Polyneikes’ revenge plot, coupled with the injustice he feels. The brothers were meant to share, and he is the eldest son; these issues push his excessive fury. We find a familiar pattern of an exile is thrust from power; this is represented by Polyneikes who uses an external force to restore himself.<sup>168</sup> Unlike many of the previous tragic examples, this is clear civil war. Polyneikes stresses resentment, attaching his plot to revenge upon an element of truth:

οἶ σ’ ἀντὶ παίδων τῶνδε καὶ ψυχῆς, πάτερ,  
ἵκετεύομεν ξύμπαντες ἐξαιτούμενοι  
μῆνιν βαρεῖαν εἰκαθεῖν ὀρμωμένῳ

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<sup>164</sup> Goff, B. (2004): “Oidipous wins; he is the 'master story teller' with unparalleled access to past and future... everything must be narrated to him... The *agon* between Oidipous and Polyneikes is decided entirely in Oidipous' favour; because he controls the narrative of the past as well as the prophecies and curses of the future”. p.33. Jebb: “Hard for one to hold intercourse with... The epithet refers to his sullen silence”.

<sup>165</sup> OK. 1348f.

<sup>166</sup> OK. 1291f: “But now I wish to tell you why I came, father! I have been driven from my native land and into exile, because I claimed that by the right of the first-born I should sit upon the throne and exercise full power”.

<sup>167</sup> OK. 1422f: “To run away is shameful, and it is shameful for me, the senior to be mocked like this by my brother!”

<sup>168</sup> The exile returns with a greater power. Pisistratidae at Marathon, Thou. 6.59.4. Alkibiades is exiled in 406 and returns. Thou. 8.45.1. Xen. *Hell.* 2.1.25.

τῷδ' ἀνδρὶ τοῦμοῦ πρὸς κασιγνήτου τίσιν,  
ὅς μ' ἐξέωσε κάπεσύλησεν πάτρας.<sup>169</sup>

The internal power structure at Thebes now frames the action in Kolonos. Polyneikes is blinkered and stubborn, he asks Oidipous that he relinquishes his bitterness, not seeing his own fault.<sup>170</sup> The rationale behind this contrast lies in their different futures.<sup>171</sup> Both arrive as suppliants yet only Oidipous successfully obtains shelter and support, while Polyneikes leaves the city, fated to die. The recognition of Polyneikes by a third party extends our understanding of his position, as Theseus links him to a foreign city. The example matters as he separates Polyneikes from Oidipous: “φασὶν τιν' ἡμῖν ἄνδρα, σοὶ μὲν ἔμπολιν / οὐκ ὄντα, συγγενῇ δέ, προσπεσόντα πῶς / βωμῷ καθῆσθαι τῷ Ποσειδῶνος”.<sup>172</sup> Theseus stresses that Polyneikes is a member of another city (ἔμπολις), once more drawing a contrast with Oidipous.

As Polyneikes prepares himself for retaliation against Thebes, Antigone attempts to save him: “στρέψαι στράτευμ' ἐς Ἄργος ὡς τάχιστ' ἄγε, / καὶ μὴ σέ τ' αὐτὸν καὶ πόλιν διεργάσῃ”.<sup>173</sup> Fate and death loom as he ignores this counsel to concede. We find a warning of future devastation for him and the city. Antigone raises the theme of failure to honour exchange: “ἀλλ' ἡμῖν εἶκε: λιπαρεῖν γὰρ οὐ καλὸν / δίκαια προσχρήζουσιν, οὐδ' αὐτὸν μὲν εὖ / πάσχειν, παθόντα δ' οὐκ ἐπίστασθαι τίνειν”.<sup>174</sup> She frames her plea with an appeal for flexibility and the management of passion; one must not hold a

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<sup>169</sup> OK. 1326f: “We all now beseech you in supplication, by your daughters and by your life, father, to renounce your grievous anger in favour of myself, as I set out to take vengeance on my brother, who drove me out and robbed me of my country”.

<sup>170</sup> This is Heroic anger. *Iliad*. 1.1.

<sup>171</sup> OK. 1254f.

<sup>172</sup> OK. 1156f: “They tell me that a man, not an inhabitant of your city, but a relation, has come as a suppliant, and is sitting by the altar of Poseidon”.

<sup>173</sup> OK. 1416f: “Turn your army at once to Argos, and do not destroy yourself and your city!”

<sup>174</sup> OK. 1202f: “Come yield to us! It is not right that those whose wish is good, should have to implore, nor to fail to make return for the kindness one has received”.

grudge or be destroyed. The past is a lesson to be learnt and applied to the present, παθόντα δ' οὐκ ἐπίστασθαι τίνειν. Antigone's request has a force to it, ἀλλ' ἡμῖν εἶκε, a plea based in reciprocal kindness to relent, and an ironic projection of her own future refusal to bend. Antigone continues: "τί δ' αὖθις, ὦ παῖ, δεῖ σε θυμοῦσθαι; τί σοι πάτρην / κατασκάψαντι κέρδος ἔρχεται;".<sup>175</sup> The indication to κέρδος juxtaposes with the profit brought to Athens by Oidipous; Polyneikes brings only destruction and strife.

If we draw the two perspectives of Polyneikes' and Oidipous' resentment together, we find a definite link between father and son based on bitterness and their different ways of using memory. As Polyneikes begrudges his brother for taking power and exiling him, Oidipous acts in a similar way. Sons are responsible for a father's wellbeing, yet neither brother sought to defend or stop him from being exiled. Resentment is found as the father attacks Polyneikes for his negative action:

ὅς γ', ὦ κάκιστε, σκῆπτρα καὶ θρόνους ἔχων,  
 ἃ νῦν ὁ σὸς ξύναιμος ἐν Θήβαις ἔχει,  
 τὸν αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ πατέρα τόνδ' ἀπήλασας  
 κάθηκας ἄπολιν καὶ στολὰς ταύτας φορεῖν,  
 ἃς νῦν δακρύεις εἰσορῶν, ὅτ' ἐν πόνῳ  
 ταύτῳ βεβηκῶς τυγχάνεις κακῶν ἐμοί.  
 οὐ κλαυστὰ δ' ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ μὲν οἰστέα  
 τάδ', ἕωσπερ ἂν ζῷ, σοῦ φονέως μεμνημένος.<sup>176</sup>

<sup>175</sup> OK. 1420f: "But why, my brother, must your anger rise again? What profit will come to you from destroying your native land?"

<sup>176</sup> OK. 1354f: "You are the one villain, who when you held the sceptre and the throne, that are now held by your brother in Thebes, drove away your own father here, and made him city less, wearing such clothes as these, which now you weep when you behold, now that you stand in the same turmoil and troubles as I. There is no cause for tears, but I must bear this while I live, remembering you as a murderer". Jebb: "Oedipus first explains to the Chorus why he deigns a reply at all, and then suddenly turns on his son... whether my remaining life be less, or even more, wretched than now. Clearly, however, the sense wanted is not this, but, 'as long as I live'". Kamerbeek argues: "according to these words, Polynices was King before Eteocles and that he, while King, actually drove Oedipus out".



Oidipous underlines the pain over his exile; he laments being ἄπολις, and frames this with an account of the denial of the kingship.<sup>177</sup> Like Polyneikes, he catalogues his abuse under a number of aspects including being driven out, and the dishonour to one's father. Oidipous extends his fury with οὐ κλαυστὰ δ' ἐστίν; lamentation turns to anger as he presses the past to continue his resentment towards Polyneikes. The move is justified by the treacherous behaviour of his son, who forgets his own transgressions, ὅτ' ἐν πόνῳ / ταύτῳ βεβηκῶς τυγχάνεις κακῶν ἐμοί. Oidipous does not name his son directly, nor does he take into account the denial of kingship. Recollection of his treatment is made clear through ὅς γ', ὦ κάκιστε, and σοῦ φονέως μεμνημένος, the drive towards retaliation is completed with a very specific grievance.

The comparisons linger as Oidipous pushes his son away, reacting against Polyneikes' previous abuse against him. History repeats itself, and paternal conflict continues. To validate further his conduct, Oidipous focuses on previous wrongs:

ὥς οὐτ' ἂν ὅς νῦν σκῆπτρα καὶ θρόνους ἔχει  
 μένειεν οὐτ' ἂν οὐξεληλυθὼς πάλιν  
 ἔλθοι ποτ' αὖθις: οἳ γε τὸν φύσαντ' ἐμὲ  
 οὕτως ἀτίμως πατρίδος ἐξωθούμενον  
 οὐκ ἔσχον οὐδ' ἤμυναν, ἀλλ' ἀνάστατος  
 αὐτοῖς ἐπέμφθην κάξεκηρύχθην φυγᾶς.<sup>178</sup>

Oidipous both revisits past harm and uses the resentment to curse, cataloguing the heinous personal crimes committed. He stresses paternity (τὸν φύσαντ') to highlight the great dishonour (ἀτίμως) he

<sup>177</sup> OT. 1436f. Banishment of Oidipous is in Aiskhylos. *Kho.* 1034f. Euripides has Oidipous buried in Athens/Kolonos. *Phoenissae.* 1705f. Segal, C. (1980).

<sup>178</sup> OK. 425f: "So that he who now holds the sceptre and the throne may not remain, and he who has gone away may never return, seeing that when I their father was so shamefully extruded from the land they did not prevent it or defend me, but I was uprooted and sent away by them and was proclaimed an exile!"

has felt.<sup>179</sup> The sons, the outcast, and the present king of Argos once more highlight authority through holding symbols of power and kingship, σκήπτρα καὶ θρόνους. Oidipous parallels the current position of his children.<sup>180</sup> He blames them for his exile; their disloyalty is clear, οὐκ ἔσχον. Oidipous' lamentations focus on the action of banishment; ἀλλ' ἀνάστατος / αὐτοῖς ἐπέμφθην κάδεκηρύχθην φυγὰς, this was public condemnation by Kreon.<sup>181</sup>

Father and son constantly find themselves in analogous positions. Oidipous recalls the evil Polyneikes carries with him: “σὺ δ' ἔρρ' ἀπόπτυστός τε κάπᾶτῳ ἐμοῦ, / κακῶν κάκιστε, τάσδε συλλαβὼν ἀράς, / ἅς σοι καλοῦμαι, μήτε γῆς ἐμφυλίου / δόρει κρατῆσαι μήτε νοστήσαι ποτε / τὸ κοῖλον Ἄργος”.<sup>182</sup> The curse is a product of past anger and manifested in present reprisal. Oidipous renounces his hateful son describing him as κακῶν κάκιστε, pushing him further away. Polyneikes moves outside the family and city, from brother to would-be invader.<sup>183</sup> Significantly, Oidipous recognises and marks his son as ἀπᾶτῳ; hinting to the past and his own troubles with patricide. Mastrangelo highlights this: “Without a father, without a city, and without access to social-religious institutions, Polyneikes

<sup>179</sup> Jebb: “Soph. has this adv. [ἀτίμως] thrice elsewhere of ignominious or ruthless treatment”. Kamerbeek suggests that: “We should remember that the word [ἀτίμως] is extremely strong”. Polyneikes uses ἀτίμως to emphasise similar wrongdoings.

<sup>180</sup> Laws support positive treatment of one's parent. Demosthenes, *Against Timokrates*. 24.60. We find a backdrop of prosecuting for contradictory laws and debt; dishonourable actions towards one's father are an offence. The protection afforded to parents by the city is also in Aiskhines, *Against Timarkhos*. 1.28. The crime is so serious that one's right to speak is removed. Injury to the father is in Lysias. *Against Agoratos*. 13.91. Reinhold, M. (1976).

<sup>181</sup> Jebb: “made to rise up and quit one's abode, ‘driven from house and home,’”. Statius. *The Thebaid*. 1.2. The curse of the sons is late in the tradition, this is Oidipous finally getting revenge. Ancestry with reference to Kadmos. Edmunds, L. (1996). Examines the literary history of the curse from Homer onwards, suggesting: “[Sophokles] dramatizes a well-known motif”. p.73f.

<sup>182</sup> OK. 1383f: “Be off spat upon me who am no more your father, villain of villains, taking with you these curses which I call down upon you, so that you shall never conquer in war your native land nor ever return to low-lying Argos”. Divine rage OK. 965. Zeus, OK. 1620.

<sup>183</sup> Also OK. 1326f.

does not exist”.<sup>184</sup> The son is cut off from the family, and therefore, the city and is punished. Yet, Polyneikes knows his father, and has even heard of his high value: “εἰ γάρ τι πιστόν ἐστιν ἐκ χρηστηρίων, / οἷς ἂν σὺ προσθῇ, τοῖσδ’ ἔφασκ’ εἶναι κράτος”.<sup>185</sup> Oidipous promises an attack on his own native soil will end in destruction for the aggressor. We find the driving force that guides his attitude in his response to the brothers’ actions: “κᾶθ’ οἱ κάκιστοι τῶνδ’ ἀκούσαντες, πάρος / τοῦμοῦ πόθου προύθεντο τὴν τυραννίδα;”.<sup>186</sup> The response to this enquiry demonstrates Oidipous’ resentment. The sons have proved themselves malevolent, confirming Oidipous’ fears; this connects with his anger concerning exile, humiliation, displacement and dishonour. Each curse takes a long time to work out, and is present even after death.<sup>187</sup> A different relationship exists, yet one still framed by resentment in the city, with his daughters.

In the face of anger within her own family, Antigone plays mediator, inviting her father and brother to converse. She pleads that they be merciful in their conduct, and highlights the crimes that have affected the house:

λόγων δ’ ἀκοῦσαι τίς βλάβη; τά τοι κακῶς  
 ηὔρημέν’ ἔργα τῷ λόγῳ μηνύεται.  
 ἔφυσας αὐτόν: ὥστε μηδὲ δρῶντά σε  
 τὰ τῶν κακίστων δυσσεβέστατ’, ὦ πάτερ,  
 θέμις σέ γ’ εἶναι κείνον ἀντιδρᾶν κακῶς.  
 αἰδοῦ νιν: εἰσὶ χᾶτέροις γοναὶ κακαὶ  
 καὶ θυμὸς ὀξύς, ἀλλὰ νοουθετούμενοι  
 φίλων ἐπωδαῖς ἐξεπάδονται φύσιν.<sup>188</sup>

<sup>184</sup> Mastrangelo, M. (2000), p.60.

<sup>185</sup> OK. 1331f: “For if any credit can be given to oracles, they said that whichever side you joined would prevail”.

<sup>186</sup> OK. 419f: “And then after they had heard this, did the villains prefer the kingship before the wish to be me?” (amended) Inheritance; OK. 1290f.

<sup>187</sup> Oidipous’ family name curses and destroys Antigone.

<sup>188</sup> OK. 1187f: “And what harm is there in listening to what he says? Actions evilly devised are exposed by words! You are his father, so that even if he had

The irony of addressing Oidipous with λόγων δ' ἀκοῦσαι τίς βλάβη; is not lost. The threat of truthful dialogue, which underlined Oidipous' time and exile from Thebes, now guides bitterness. Speech frames his lasting resentment after death. It is Antigone's role to curb this; she implores (θέμις σέ γ' εἶναι κεῖνον ἀντιδρᾶν κακῶς. / ἀλλ' ἔασον) to make her father forget. Her advice hinges on the ability to listen to good counsel; Oidipous must be adaptable and receptive, ἐξεπάρδονται φύσιν. The petition, however, is ignored. Oidipous has made his stance clear: "θυμοῦ γὰρ οὐδὲν γῆρας ἐστὶν ἄλλο πλὴν / θανεῖν: θανόντων δ' οὐδὲν ἄλγος ἄπτεται".<sup>189</sup> Death and inflexible resentment frame his vocabulary. He notes that the dead feel no ἄλγος. Antigone argues that her father should relent: "σὺ δ' εἰς ἐκεῖνα, μὴ τὰ νῦν, ἀποσκόπει / πατρῶα καὶ μητρῶα πῆμαθ' ἄπαθες".<sup>190</sup> She uses shared brooding hatred as a base for her reasoning. Antigone recalls the past to inform the present, σὺ δ' εἰς ἐκεῖνα, μὴ τὰ νῦν, pressing her father to negotiate as he looks to a future promise of security. Although Athens' reputation is one of redemption, the transactional nature of Oidipous' offer adds another dimension to the city, as it transforms the action of remembering. Oidipous follows the behaviour of a normal suppliant, yet he is recognised as exceptional, and treated as such. He arrives in Kolonos so cursed that because of their benevolence in accepting him, Athens receives greater praise.

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committed against you the most impious crimes of any villain, it would not be right for you to return evil for evil. Show him mercy! Other men also have evil children and swift temper, but they let themselves be charmed by the admonition of their friends".

<sup>189</sup> OK. 954f: "For anger knows no old age, till death comes; and no pain afflicts the dead". Jebb has; "Theseus had said that Creon's violence disgraced his years (931). Creon replies, "There is no old age for anger, except death"; i.e., "anger, under gross insult, ceases to be felt only when a man is dead, and can feel nothing".

<sup>190</sup> OK. 1196f: "Think not of the present, but of the past, of the sufferings you endured because of your father and your mother".

#### 4.4 Hero without a cult?

##### Reactions to the prophecy and reciprocity

As they react to the prophecy that guides their father's life, Oidipous' sons' behaviour impresses a deep wound on him, one that is compounded by the circumstances surrounding his previous banishment. Oidipous punishes his sons with a curse for their attempts to control him:

ἀλλ' οὐ τι μὴ λάχωσι τοῦδε συμμάχου,  
οὐδέ σφιν ἀρχῆς τῆσδε Καδμείας ποτὲ  
ὄνησις ἔξει: τοῦτ' ἐγῶδα, τῆσδέ τε /  
μαντεῖ' ἀκούων συννοῶν τε θέσφατα /  
παλαίφαθ' ἄμοι Φοῖβος ἤνυσέν ποτε.<sup>191</sup>

Oidipous frames his own understanding of the past and future through prophecies, οὐδέ σφιν ἀρχῆς τῆσδε Καδμείας ποτὲ / ὄνησις ἔξει. A backward reference provides context through an element of recollection. Oidipous holds the power to influence lives after death, through the cyclic nature of memory. He takes the role of messenger and observes that time is subject to flux:

φθίνει μὲν ἰσχύς γῆς, φθίνει δὲ σώματος,  
θνήσκει δὲ πίστις, βλαστάνει δ' ἀπιστία,  
καὶ πνεῦμα ταῦτόν οὔ ποτ' οὔτ' ἐν ἀνδράσιν  
φίλοις βέβηκεν οὔτε πρὸς πόλιν πόλει.  
τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ἤδη, τοῖς δ' ἐν ὑστέρω χρόνῳ  
τὰ τερπνὰ πικρὰ γίγνεται καὶ φίλις φίλα.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> OK. 450f: "But they shall get nothing from me as an ally, neither shall they ever have benefit from this Kadmean kingship; that I know, from hearing this girl's prophecies, and from interpreting the ancient oracles which Phoibos has at last fulfilled".

<sup>192</sup> OK. 607f: "The strength of the country perishes, so does the strength of the body, loyalty dies and disloyalty comes into being, and the same spirit never remains between friends or between cities, since for some people and for others in

Curse, anger, and prophecy frame his life. These dual actions form the narrative of Oidipous' ideas on the past and present.<sup>193</sup> Although we only possess mediated reports, the recalling of oracular predictions that surround the fate of Oidipous guide his journey. There are stages to recognition; each step Oidipous takes confirms the predicted future. Prophecy, and the way this shapes his resentment, thus becomes a way to illuminate future memory.

The seer's foresight gains credibility as the truth reveals itself. As Easterling suggests: "By their very nature, oracular pronouncements require progressive interpretation over time in the light of previously unforeseeable events".<sup>194</sup> The ancient past finally comes full circle, as Oidipous foretold: "σημεῖα δ' ἤξιν τῶνδ' μοι παρηγγύα, / ἢ σεισμὸν ἢ βροντὴν τιν' ἢ Διὸς σέλας".<sup>195</sup> Easterling considers this final forecast: "It is becoming clear that all the prophecies we have heard have related to the same mysterious outcome".<sup>196</sup> He predicts anger, and ruin for those who expelled him from Thebes, contrasting his positive aid to Athens. Oidipous promises vengeance, allied with divine chthonic power, upon those who hoped to control his memory:

πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ Κρέοντα πεμπόντων ἔμοῦ  
 μαστῆρα, κεί τις ἄλλος ἐν πόλει σθένει.  
 ἐὰν γὰρ ὑμεῖς, ὦ ξένοι, θέλητ' ἐμοὶ  
 σ ταῖσδε ταῖς σεμναῖσι δημόχοις θεαῖς  
 ἀλκὴν ποεῖσθαι, τῇδε μὲν πόλει μέγαν

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the future happy relations turn bitter, and again friendship is restored". Budelmann, F. (1999), p.78.

<sup>193</sup> Oidipous articulates his present, arguing that it was Apollo who sent him helplessly drifting; memory of prophecy is used (and blamed) as a guiding force. Also *OK*. 84f, 337-360, 421-460, 761-796, 1348-1396. *OT*. 786f. Apollo's prophecy from *OT* has linear progression. His crime; *OT*. 806f.

<sup>194</sup> Easterling, P. (2012), p.1f. Also: "The central role of interpreter [of the prophecy] is played by Oidipous himself". Budelmann, F. (1999).

<sup>195</sup> *OK*. 94f: "And he promised that signs of this things would come, an earthquake or thunder, or the lightning of Zeus".

<sup>196</sup> Easterling, P. (2012), p.1f.

σωτήρ' ἀρεῖσθε, τοῖς δ' ἑμοῖς ἐχθροῖς πόνους.<sup>197</sup>

Oidipous asks for shelter from the Eumenides, whose protective guise will mirror in his new form.<sup>198</sup> The essential idea is found in τῇδε τῇ πόλει μέγαν / σωτήρ' ἀρεῖσθε, Oidipous knows that people desire his presence and what defence he can offer, described as δημοῦχος and with ἀλκὴν ποιεῖσθαι. The pattern of anger continues as Oidipous moves progressively closer, τοῖς δ' ἑμοῖς ἐχθροῖς πόνους. We find reciprocity here; Oidipous exchanges future memory and defence with beneficial rewards for himself and the city. Oidipous' contradictory action is neither self-serving nor altruistic. He remembers misdeeds, pain, yet also recalls benefactions. Future memory means security, peace, nobility, yet also destruction for Thebes, anger, resentment and revenge.<sup>199</sup>

The correct interpretation of prophecy secures protection, promotes resentment, and demonstrates both another step in the recognition of Oidipous, and the confirmation of the prophecy as future memory. Oidipous questions his daughter to understand who has the information: “καὶ ταῦτ' ἐφ' ἡμῖν Φοῖβος εἰρηκῶς κυρεῖ;... παῖδων τις οὖν ἤκουσε τῶν ἐμῶν τάδε;”.<sup>200</sup> The oracle's story gradually reveals itself as correct, as there are further steps of recognition and recollection, and Oidipous increasingly places more faith in the narrative. Here, memory takes the form of retrospective recollection. Further extensions of the original prophecy by Ismene provide new information and add further interpretative levels, confirming the first prediction. Separate from Ismene and her father, there are others who have heard the oracles forecast and covet Oidipous. Predictions

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<sup>197</sup> OK. 455f: “In the face of that let them send Kreon to look for me, and any other who is powerful in the city! For if you, strangers, are willing with the aid of these awesome goddesses of your deme to give me protection, you will acquire a great preserver for this city, and cause troubles for my enemies!” For Oidipous' function, see Edmunds, L. (1981).

<sup>198</sup> cf. Birge, D. (1984).

<sup>199</sup> Aristotle and gratitude/generosity as weakness, *Nikomachean Ethics*. 1136b. Also, Konstan, D. (2006)

<sup>200</sup> OK. 414f: “And did Phoibos really say this regarding me?... Then did either of my sons hear this?” Easterling, P. (2012), p.1f.

from the past have a progressive arc from the *Oidipous Tyrannos*, through the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, and culminate in the *Antigone*.<sup>201</sup> Kreon is marked in his desire to carry Oidipous back to Thebes. He is aware of the power Oidipous' tomb will hold.<sup>202</sup> There are competing narratives; this is an ἀγών that Oidipous ultimately wins. As representative of Thebes, the tragedy uses Kreon as a foil to Theseus and Athens, as they preserve in memory ancestral traditions. The question of temporality is thematised in the actions and dialogue of oracles and the form of Oidipous' curse. He describes the enduring riches and benefits that through correct remembrance and commemoration after death he may bestow for the city's good turn. Provoked by those who attempt control, Oidipous assures Kreon that he will lose: "οὐκ ἔστι σοι ταῦτ', ἀλλὰ σοι τάδ' ἔστ', ἐκεῖ / χώρας ἀλάστωρ οὐμὸς ἐνναίων ἀεὶ: / ἔστιν δὲ παισὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖσι τῆς ἐμῆς / χθονὸς λαχεῖν τοσοῦτον, ἐνθανεῖν μόνον".<sup>203</sup> He foretells the future; a lasting malevolent presence looms over Thebes. Oidipous' power as ἀλάστωρ lives on after death.<sup>204</sup> We find a mocking promise for being deprived of burial. He assures his sons that their future heirloom is enough of Thebes' earth to perish in. However, there are others from the past that intend to control Oidipous in life and death.

In contrast to the actions of the king of Athens, Kreon reaction is to keep Oidipous far enough from Thebes so as not to constitute a risk, fearing his prophesied role: "ὥς σ' ἄγχι γῆς στήσωσι Καδμείας, ὅπως

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<sup>201</sup> Staged thirty years before.

<sup>202</sup> OK. 396f.

<sup>203</sup> OK. 787f: "You shall not have that, but you shall have this, my vengeful spirit ever dwelling here; and my sons can inherit this much only of my country, enough to die in!"

<sup>204</sup> Jebb has: "χώρας with ἀλάστωρ, my scourge of the land, the avenging spirit which, through my curse, will ever haunt the land... Remark that ἐνθανεῖν can mean only "to die in," not "to lie dead in": but the sense is, "just enough ground, with a view to dying (instead of reigning) on Theban soil"; i.e., as much as a dead man will need". Kamerbeek links the curse on the sons to a curse on Thebes.



/ κρατῶσι μὲν σοῦ, γῆς δὲ μὴ 'μβαίνης ὄρων".<sup>205</sup> An intermediate presence, Oidipous is to protect the threshold of Thebes, yet in contrast to Athens, not permitted into the land. We find different dynamics between city and man. Oidipous finds himself barred from Thebes in life and death; he is cursed to be worth more dead than alive, a wretched indictment of his painful life. The low position of Oidipous as he approaches the city emphasises his request of sanctuary. Subjective and objective exchange governs his integration. Oidipous, unlike his errant son, has something to offer the city in exchange for his security and remembrance. As he prophesises destruction for those who wronged him in the past, he expands his story in order to acquire inclusion: "ἐνταῦθα κάμψειν τὸν ταλαίπωρον βίον, / κέρδη μὲν οἰκήσαντα τοῖς δεδεγμένοις, / ἄτην δὲ τοῖς πέμψασιν, οἳ μ' ἀπήλασαν:". <sup>206</sup> Paradoxically, as he recalls his suffering, τὸν ταλαίπωρον βίον, his end constitutes a beginning of enduring protection.<sup>207</sup> Oidipous does not require external power to remember his own anger, and who has mistreated him. He comes resentful, yet self-aware, carrying a promise, κέρδη μὲν οἰκήσαντα τοῖς δεδεγμένοις; his vocabulary is firmly set in reciprocity.<sup>208</sup> He connects a request for shelter at Kolonos to the profit gained if the deme acquiesces: "ὥς ἂν προσαρκῶν σμικρὰ κερδάνη μέγα".<sup>209</sup> Significantly, Oidipous attempts to persuade Theseus with the promise of a not insignificant transaction, κερδάνη μέγα, and the reference to profit contrasts with the 'gift' of punishment for those who have wronged him.

Oidipous' final speech reiterates the covenant made with Theseus that confirms this exchange: "ἤδη γὰρ ἔρπω τὸν τελευταῖον βίον /

<sup>205</sup> OK. 399f: "So they can establish you near the Kadmean land, where they can control you without entering its bounds".

<sup>206</sup> OK. 91f: "I should there reach the goal of my long-suffering life, bringing advantage by my settlement to those who had received me, and ruin to those who had sent me, who had driven me away".

<sup>207</sup> Ehrenburg, V. (1953): "Survival by death". p.24.

<sup>208</sup> Seaford, R. (1994).

<sup>209</sup> OK. 72: "So that by doing a small service he may make a great gain". OK. 259f.

κρύψων παρ' Ἀιδην. ἀλλά, φίλτατε ξένων, / αὐτός τε χώρα θ' ἦδε  
 πρόσπολοί τε σοὶ / εὐδαίμονες γένοισθε, κάπ' εὐπραξία / μέμνησθε  
 μου θανόντος εὐτυχεῖς αἰεῖ".<sup>210</sup> Oidipous is prophetic and self-aware,  
 yet he is also, perhaps conflictingly, conscious of death, τὸν  
 τελευταῖον βίον, and future worth. His function changes, and as he  
 departs the mortal life, he leaves the city in a positive way, κάπ'  
 εὐπραξία. Although Oidipous' terrible past merits consideration, there  
 is a more prosaic gain for the city. He comes with a rare and most  
 excellent ξενία offering, his own life.<sup>211</sup> Yet, there is no sentimentality  
 here, just a return to the consistent theme of exchange for lasting  
 protection, εὐτυχεῖς αἰεῖ, and memory. It is notable that he leaves life  
 with these words. Oidipous relies on the imperative μέμνησθε to  
 press what he requires; there lies significant force behind his  
 demand for remembrance. We assume that the family of Theseus, as  
 φίλτατε ξένων, iterates and recalls Oidipous honourably. He  
 becomes one with the city, a reciprocal defensive barricade for the  
 δῆμος, and an atypical process for remembering an uncommon  
 individual. Resentment becomes beneficial, and contains within it the  
 memory of the hero's gratitude and pain.

The process of hero-cult is entrenched in piety, secret locations, and  
 promises of hidden future commemoration. It matters here as  
 Oidipous comes offering memory after death in exchange for  
 memorial in gratitude to Athens; this is evidence of the underlying  
 positive force of resentment. Oidipous expands on the gift in  
 exchange for remembrance of a good turn. His offer is based in  
 reciprocity, memory for protection and commemoration: "ἀλλ' ὥσπερ  
 ἔλαβες τὸν ἰκέτην ἐχέγγυον, / ῥύου με κάκφύλασσε: μηδέ μου κάρα /  
 τὸ δυσπρόσοπτον εἰσορῶν ἀτιμάσης, / ἦκω γὰρ ἱερὸς εὐσεβῆς τε καὶ

<sup>210</sup> OK. 1551f: "For now I am setting off to conceal in Hades the finish of my life. Come, dearest of strangers, may you have good fortune, yourself and this land, and your attendants, and in your prosperity remember me when I am dead for your success for ever!"

<sup>211</sup> For ξενία between Theseus and Oidipous, see Edmunds, L. (1996), chap. 3.

φέρων / ὄνησιν ἀστοῖς τοῖσδ'".<sup>212</sup> Oidipous requires integration to the city, recounting himself as τὸν ἰκέτην and εὐσεβῆς to claim protection of the gods. He expands on the benefit (ὄνησις) which his presence brings: "ἅ σοι / γήρως ἄλυπα τῇδε κείσεται πόλει. / χῶρον μὲν αὐτὸς αὐτίκ' ἐξηγήσομαι / ἄθικτος ἡγητῆρος, οὗ με χρὴ θανεῖν".<sup>213</sup> We find reciprocity and oaths based upon a background of recollection ritual and a promise to protect. However, a contradiction underlines the burial of Oidipous as he is absorbed into the city; hero-cult is in opposition to being hidden and unburied.<sup>214</sup> Although there is more than a hint of ambiguity about the fate of Oidipous, his case is unique, as he does not follow the traditional road to cult. The central idea that frames the topic of hero-cult and remembrance is that Oidipous' personal resentment will come to be the salvation of Athens. Constant anger, post-mortem resentment, securing the city, and the promise of action and success after death, these are all prominent themes that guide his passing. Oidipous wishes to be both remembered and forgotten in his future state. I examine the two parts of this paradox before considering how this relates to hero-cult.

Past and present connect to remember Oidipous in the future through oracular prediction. Oidipous is recalled by Ismene as an uncommon man as she articulates a power in remembrance: "κείνοις ὁ τύμβος δυστυχῶν ὁ σὸς βαρύς".<sup>215</sup> Oidipous is isolated in his elevation to hero after death. The specific location of the τύμβος conceals latent power. He becomes a posthumous power manifested source of destruction and on-going pain for those who abuse him, yet exists posthumously as a benefactor. Ismene identifies the force of

<sup>212</sup> OK. 284f: "But as you received the suppliant under a pledge, so protect and guard me, and do not dishonour me when you behold my unsightly face! For I have come sacred and reverent, and I bring advantage to the citizens here". For the significance of ἱερὸς εὐσεβῆς τε see Birge, D. (1984). p.15f.

<sup>213</sup> OK. 1518f: "What things are laid up for your city, invulnerable to passing time. I myself with no guide to lay a hand on me, shall now show you the place where I must die".

<sup>214</sup> Note both *Elektra* and *Antigone*.

<sup>215</sup> OK. 402f: "If thing go wrong with it, your tomb will cause them trouble".

desire behind the challenge to possess/control Oidipous: “σὲ τοῖς ἐκεῖ ζητητὸν ἀνθρώποις ποτὲ / θανόντ’ ἔσεσθαι ζῶντά τ’ εὐσοίας χάριν”.<sup>216</sup> Oidipous’ body means protection of the land. His family wrongly assume that resentment can be contained, as Ismene reports: “τῆς σῆς ὑπ’ ὀργῆς, σοῖς ὅτ’ ἀντῶσιν τάφοις”.<sup>217</sup> She links ὀργή and vendetta to protective memory; this is post-death reciprocity wrapped around posthumous resentment.

The question of what precisely makes a hero has been answered extensively elsewhere.<sup>218</sup> More appropriate to this section is interrogating how those in Athens remember Oidipous, and how his heroic credentials are validated.<sup>219</sup> As Ekroth suggests, the distinction between the normal world and that of heroes lies in the treatment of the individual after death: “The difference between a hero and an ordinary dead person lies in their respective relationship with the living. The ordinary dead have a connection with those tending the grave and presenting offerings, while heroes were worshipped on a more official level... a local phenomenon... connected with one location”.<sup>220</sup> To this relationship, we can add the difference between a hero and a god. Although the focus is on social status, position, and

<sup>216</sup> OK. 389f: “That you shall one day be sought by the people there in death and in life for their preservation’s sake”. Also OK. 619f.

<sup>217</sup> OK. 411f: “Through your anger, when they come up against your tomb”.

<sup>218</sup> Birge, D. (1984). Burian, P. (1974). Easterling, P. (1997). Edmunds, L. (1981). Ekroth, G. (2007). Garland, R. (1985). Gould, J. (2001). Henrichs, A. (1983), (1993). Kearns, E. (1989). For Knox, B. (1964), Oidipous has: “an unearthly quality, a daemonic wrath”. p.153. Expanded in Due, C., and Nagy, G. (2004). Kowalzig, B. (2006), assesses the scholarship surrounding the hero-cult of Oidipous: “[They demonstrate] how the process of hero-creation is expressed in almost formulaic manner, focussing on the essential ‘props’ of hero-cult, which form the link between the mythical and ritual worlds: the tomb and the memory that goes with it”. p.81. Kurtz, D., and Boardman, J. (1971). Lardinois, A. (1993). Nagy, G. (1979). Parker, R. (1988). Rohde, E. (1925). Walker, H. (1995). Whitley, J. (1994).

<sup>219</sup> Non-tragic hero-cult, when innocence is not necessary; Kleomedes disappears after killing children, Pausanias. 6.9.6f. Onesilos honoured with burial and yearly offerings having attempted to destroy Amathous; Herodotos 5.114.1f. Also 7.117.2, King Xerxes hero-worships Artakhaes. Kimon was exiled, recalled and killed in Cyprus, remembered in Athens with monuments; Plutarch. *Kimon*. 19.4. For cult-hero see Rehm, R (2002). Rose, P. (1995). Seaford, R (1994).

<sup>220</sup> Ekroth, G. (2007). p.100.

continuous memory, it is with anger that we find the driving force.<sup>221</sup> The play uses inflexible rage to elevate Oidipous to protector of Athens. We can draw a comparison with the unremitting resentment of Akhilleus, as Patroklos laments: “νηλεές, οὐκ ἄρα σοί γε πατήρ ἦν ἱππότα Πηλεύς, / οὐδὲ Θέτις μήτηρ· γλαυκὴ δὲ σε τίκτε θάλασσα / πέτραι τ’ ἠλίβατοι, ὅτι τοι νόος ἐστὶν ἀπηνής”.<sup>222</sup> In the context of the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, this is the foundation of Oidipous’ future role, and the safety and protection of Athens. Oidipous is founder and saviour hero, driven by resentment anger.<sup>223</sup> The key point concerns extraordinary death and burial; this is not customary, nor standard.<sup>224</sup> It stands out because of the unusual nature of Oidipous’ demise and guilt. From arriving as a suppliant, wrath and resentment become positive forces rather than threats to pollute. Barker examines the aspect of enduring rage: “The hero’s anger is an important feature of cult: by observing ritual, one hopes to redirect the hero’s anger against one’s enemies”.<sup>225</sup> The unusual transmutation from outcast to

<sup>221</sup> A close parallel occurs in the location and function of Oidipous’ burial and remembrance in Euripides. *IT*. 1462f: “σὲ δ’ ἀμφὶ σεμνάς, Ἰφιγένεια, κλίμακας / Βραυρωνίας δεῖ τῇδε κληδουχεῖν θεᾶ: / οὐ καὶ τεθάψῃ κατθανοῦσα, καὶ πέπλων / ἄγαλμ’ αἱ θήσουσιν εὐπῆνους ὑφάς, / ἃς ἂν γυναῖκες ἐν τόκοις ψυχόραγες / λίπωσ’ ἐν οἴκοις”. “Iphigenia, you must be the key-holder for this goddess on the sacred set of steps of Brauron, and there you will die and be buried; and they will dedicate adornment to you, finely-woven robes which women who have perished in childbirth leave at their homes”. Kearns, E. (1989).

<sup>222</sup> *Il*.16.33f: “Pitiless one, your father, it appears, was not the horseman Peleus, nor was Thetis your mother, but the grey sea bore you, and the sheer cliffs, since your mind is unbending.” Knox, B. (1964), Carey, C. (2009).

<sup>223</sup> The dead protect in *Ajax* (1171f). Henrichs, A. (1993), suggests that Ajax does not belong to the ordinary dead. By holding onto his father’s corpse, Eurysakes’ safety links through suppliance to the departed. Tragic Ajax was not a hero that protected the city, but the individual, as Miralles, C (1997), comments: “*E la morte di Aiace non istituisce, chiaramente, per gli Ateniesi un culto eroico che protegga la città?*” p. 40f. Hero-cult of Ajax in Athens perpetuated with gifts and memorial, Hds. 8.121, 8.64. Pausanias sees how the Athenian agora remembers Ajax, 1.35.3. Barker, E. (2004). Bowra, M. (1944). Burian, P. (1974). Currie, B. (2012). Edmunds, L (1981), (1996). Garland, R. (1985), “Tragedy... draws more from hero-cult than from the cult of the ordinary dead”. p.xi. Henrichs, A. (1993). Holt, P. (1992). Rehm (2002): “After his death, the hero who divided the Greek camp is honoured in a public (*polis*) cult, a process that effectively converts kin-based funeral ritual (signalled in the play by Odysseus’ exclusion) into a communal rite celebrating *polis* solidarity”. p.137. Rohde, E. (1925). Shapiro, H. (1989). Wallace, N. (1979). Wilson, J. (1997).

<sup>224</sup> Tzanetou, A. (2012).

<sup>225</sup> Barker, E. (2004), p.18. n.54.

city-saviour reinforces Oidipous' unique journey to hero and protector. The refusal to relinquish resentment after death links to the creation of hero-cult as this is not an ordinary mortal crossing over to commemoration.<sup>226</sup>

The location for integration is important. Defined as both a citizen, and equally as a protective external entity, an extraordinary set of circumstances awaits Oidipous, his death, burial, and tribute. Kolonos commemorates Oidipous under the direction of Theseus who officiates over his concealed, private memory. Oidipous is unseen and hidden, yet present and potent; the resentment and anger of the past now become positive qualities of protection and defence. Theseus manages this preservation-sanctuary exchange and integration process.<sup>227</sup> He promises to guard if the gods protect him.<sup>228</sup> As Oidipous offers his body and memory, he transfers control of his future to Theseus.

### The hero and the city

The stranger from Kolonos establishes a connection to the earth, darkness, and the inhabitants of the grove.<sup>229</sup> Chthonic and all-seeing, the Eumenides provide refuge as Oidipous occupies their holy ground, pleading for aid: "ἀλλ' ἵλεω μὲν τὸν ἱκέτην δεξαίατο:" He requests safety, and becomes a permanent resident: "ὥς οὐχ ἔδρας γε τῆσδ' ἂν ἐξέλθοιμ' ἔτι".<sup>230</sup> Oidipous projects his lasting memory forward, binding it to a specific location.<sup>231</sup> Theseus extends this

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<sup>226</sup> Seaford, R. (1994).

<sup>227</sup> The way Antigone remembers her father almost succeeds in obscuring the burial upon which Oidipous has insisted. Tension is here between the public and the private in the context of burial and commemoration.

<sup>228</sup> Protection; OK. 1209f. Salvation; OK. 1117f.

<sup>229</sup> OK. 39f.

<sup>230</sup> OK. 44f: "May they receive a suppliant graciously, for I shall never again leave this seat". cf. Travis, R. (1999), p.72.

<sup>231</sup> The burial at Kolonos and Areiopagos is in Kearns, E. (1989).

bridge and conveys the benefits that await the city with Oidipous. He approaches Kolonos as a suppliant, but with the knowledge of what his presence as a hidden memorial offers. No trivial gift, this is equal to the honour of integration into Athens:

τίς δῆτ' ἂν ἀνδρὸς εὐμένειαν ἐκβάλῃ  
τοιοῦδ', ὅτῳ πρῶτον μὲν ἡ δορύξενος  
κοινή παρ' ἡμῖν αἰέν ἐστιν ἐστία;  
ἔπειτα δ' ἰκέτης δαιμόνων ἀφιγμένος  
γῇ τῇδε κάμοι δασμόν οὐ σμικρὸν τίνει.  
ἀγὼ σέβας θεῖς οὔποτ' ἐκβαλῶ χάριν  
τὴν τοῦδε, χώρα δ' ἔμπολιν κατοικιῶ.<sup>232</sup>

The agreement is not simply between friends, but with a δορύξενος, an ally in war. Oidipous becomes an official resident, ἔμπολις, and receives burial in the earth of Attica.<sup>233</sup> The trade is guided by an allowance of choice offered to Oidipous; whether or not he wishes to reside in the city.<sup>234</sup> Exchange guides his actions and worth, this is noted by the chorus: “ἐναισίουδὲ σοῦ τύχοιμι, μηδ' ἄλαστον ἄνδρ' ἰδὼν / ἀκερδῇ χάριν μετάσχοιμί πως”.<sup>235</sup> They project the future onto the present form of Oidipous. A call to Theseus underlines this theme, as Oidipous also relies on χάρις for commemoration: “ἀνθ' ὧν ἔπασχον εὔ, τελεσφόρον χάριν / δοῦναί σφιν, ἥνπερ τυγχάνων ὑπεσχόμεν”.<sup>236</sup> We find recompense here in τελεσφόρον χάριν; the exile has value.

<sup>232</sup> OK. 631f: “Who could reject the good will of such a man? First, the hearth of a spear-friend is always open to him, by natural right, with us; and, second, he has come as a suppliant of the gods, and is paying no small reward to this country as a dweller in the city. For these things I have respect, and I will shall never reject his kindness but shall settle him in the country as a dweller in the city”.

<sup>233</sup> Linked to OK. 947. Also OK. 1606. Chthonic Zeus. Wallace, N. (1979), looks at the integration of Oidipous, p.44. For *empolin/empolan* see Wilson, J. (1997). Also; Tzanetou, A. (2012). Vidal-Naquet, P. and Vernant, J-P. (1988).

<sup>234</sup> OK. 638f.

<sup>235</sup> OK. 1482f: “May I encounter you in an auspicious mood, and may my seeing of an accursed man not bring me a return that is no gain!”

<sup>236</sup> OK. 1489f: “In return for my kind treatment I wish to make him the requital that I promised when I received them”.

Athens' attitude towards Oidipous shows the positive nature of Theseus' rule, yet the king here is negating correct burial.<sup>237</sup> He determines the form of memory needed to secure this protection, expanding on the conditions attached to his commitment to defend: “τοῦτον δὲ φράζε μήποτ’ ἀνθρώπων τινί, / μήθ’ οὔ κέκευθε μήτ’ ἐν οἷς κεῖται τόποις: / ὥς σοι πρὸ πολλῶν ἀσπίδων ἀλκὴν ὅδε / δορός τ’ ἐπακτοῦ γειτονῶν ἀεὶ τιθῆῃ”.<sup>238</sup> We can identify an explicitly military tone to his speech. Oidipous' resentment is the salvation of Athens, illustrating the personal nature of his anger. Throughout this section, Oidipous displays a striking inconsistency, one that is fundamental to his integration into Athens. He will constitute a public role, but not have a public presence. Always a paradox, Oidipous is remembered and forgotten, public and private, dead and alive, at once wanderer and pious protector, suppliant and defender. Indeed, this is the physical legacy of his death. There are no tangible signs to mark his memorial; the site is secret (μήθ’ οὔ κέκευθε), and there is no ritual pattern for Theseus to follow. Oidipous becomes an ἀσπίς used by the city under its leader as an eternal defence, yet he remains both an individual and incorporated into the city collective. The emphasis is on δορός τ’ ἐπακτοῦ; this infers a metaphysical power, bordering on the divine. He requires no lamentations or collective remembrances in public. Oidipous transcends normal funerary procedure and commemoration.

Those who rule Athens in the present and future are charged with the function to remember, pulling the issue of legacy into focus. Theseus is to keep his burial hidden until he passes the knowledge

<sup>237</sup> He rules alone rather than consulting an assembly. The first man of Kolonos knows the decision lies with Theseus *OK.* 48, 67. As does the chorus 295, 304, 549. Theseus commands 639, 897f.

<sup>238</sup> *OK.* 1522f: “Do not ever reveal to any other human being either where it is concealed, or the region in which it lies; for its perpetual nearness renders to you a protection stronger than many shields or spears brought in from outside”. Jebb has: “τοῦτον” refers to ‘χῶρον’, the place where he was to ‘die,’... It was the grave (1545) that was to remain secret... Soph. uses the vagueness of the local legend as to the grave. Secrecy was imposed by the dying breath of Oidipous himself”.



on; inherited memory passes down through the royal line: “ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς αἰεὶ σῶζε, χῶταν εἰς τέλος / τοῦ ζῆν ἀφικνῆ, τῷ προφερτάτῳ μόνῳ / σήμαιν’, ὃ δ’ αἰεὶ τῷπιόντι δεικνύτω”.<sup>239</sup> Oidipous ensures that those in power at Athens, τῷ προφερτάτῳ μόνῳ, save his remembrance and burial securely.<sup>240</sup> The perpetual motivation for secrecy may partly lie in a defensive strategy to guard the bones and burial from enemies. Kreon’s aggression suggests a risk of appropriation of the physical memory of Oidipous.<sup>241</sup> The messenger reports on the location: “πλὴν ὁ κύριος / Θησεὺς παρέστω μανθάνειν τὰ δρώμενα”.<sup>242</sup> The knowledge of Oidipous’ tomb is separate from the city. Conflict exists between public (Theseus) and private (Antigone), the effect of which is a denial of memorialisation. Few learn (repeated, as above, with μανθάνειν) of the burial. The act of semi-concealment is a protecting one. A danger remains that the enemy will offer ritual gifts and sacrifices to control.<sup>243</sup> Recollection and physical symbols of recollection must remain intact.

Oidipous’ unusual burial marks his departure and future memory as distinctive. There are further examples of withheld entombment that point to a tradition outside the text. The practice has a parallel in Euripides: “ἄβατον δὲ τέμενος παισὶ ταῖσδ’ εἶναι χρεών, / εἶργειν τε μή τις πολεμίων θύσῃ λαθών / νίκην μὲν αὐτοῖς, γῇ δὲ τῇδε πημονήν”.<sup>244</sup> Athena provides instruction safeguarding the dead, ensuring the enemy cannot claim victory. Pausanias describes the graves of Sisyphus and Neleus.<sup>245</sup> The tone of Pausanias’s account focuses on

<sup>239</sup> OK. 1530f: “But do you always guard them, and when you come to the end of life, indicate only to him who is foremost, and let that man reveal them each time to his successor!”

<sup>240</sup> For προφερής as leaders of Athens, see Wilson, J. (1997).

<sup>241</sup> See Edmunds, L. (1996). Knox, B. (1983). Kowalzig, B. (2006).

<sup>242</sup> OK. 1643f: “Only let him who is responsible, Theseus, be here to learn what is being done!”

<sup>243</sup> *El.* 435f. cf. Markantonatos, A. (2007). Slatkin, L. (1986). Ekroth, G. (2007).

<sup>244</sup> Fragment of Euripides’ *Erechtheus*. Fragment 370, lines 77-89: “These maidens should have a sanctuary that is untrodden, and no enemy should be allowed to make covert offerings there, getting victory for them and affliction for this land.” Translation Collard, C., and Cropp, K. (1995).

<sup>245</sup> Pausanias. 2.2.2.

the hidden nature of burial. The scope of secrecy attached to the location extends to cover the view of the public. Plutarch also promotes a concealment of burial.<sup>246</sup> It is said (coincidentally, given the focus on the *Oidipous at Kolonos*) that only select Thebans know its location; it remains unknown except by those high in society. There are no markers or physical memorial in any of these examples, a paradox of hiding places of remembrance. The move to conceal both negates the visual aspect of the burial and emphasises the personal status and importance of those buried. Rohde suggests of Oidipous that: “Divine power elevates him to the state of immortal Hero less almost for the sake of the satisfaction and bliss to himself as in order that he may be the saviour of the Attic land, the country of humanity and kindness”.<sup>247</sup> Oidipous approaches Athens with a binary quality, he is at once altruistic saviour and suppliant, yet at the end of his life and narrative. He gains a cult at Athens, inextricably recalled as the city’s protector and defender.

The establishment of hero-cult for Oidipous is created by allusion. The presence of prophecy and foresight throughout the drama, Apollo’s instructions, Oidipous’ present and future location in Athens, and the anger he carries after death, all combine to provide a framework for interpretation. A thunderclap from Zeus marks the time he must depart.<sup>248</sup> The instance supports Oidipous’ special nature through his understanding of Zeus’ will and the original oracular prediction through σημεία. His memory survives, protected by the rulers of Athens. The messenger confirms an intimate relationship: “καλεῖ γὰρ αὐτὸν πολλὰ πολλαχῇ θεός: / ὧ οὔτος, Οἰδίπους, τί μέλλομεν / χωρεῖν; πάλαι δὴ τὰπὸ σοῦ βραδύνεται”.<sup>249</sup> Not simply (repeated, πολλὰ πολλαχῇ) dialogue between common people, Oidipous moves closer to the gods, closer to death, and closer to

<sup>246</sup> Plutarch. *De Genio Socratis*, 5.

<sup>247</sup> Rohde, E. (1925), p.431. Burian, P. (1974). Ekroth, G. (2007).

<sup>248</sup> *OK*. 1472f. Segal, C. (1980).

<sup>249</sup> *OK*. 1626f: “The god called to him often and from many places: “You there Oidipous, why do we wait to go? You have delayed too long”.

becoming an everlasting defence for the city. As Oidipous disappears, the king of Athens connects him to the divine: “ἔπειτα μέντοι βαιὸν οὐδὲ σὺν λόγῳ / ὀρώμεν αὐτὸν γῆν τε προσκυνοῦνθ’ ἄμα / καὶ τὸν θεῶν Ὀλυμπον ἐν ταύτῳ χρόνῳ”.<sup>250</sup> Theseus links the Olympian gods to the chthonic nature of Oidipous’s hero-cult, noting the salute to earth and sky. The messenger corroborates the metaphysical circumstances surrounding the departure: “ἀλλ’ ἢ τις ἐκ θεῶν πομπὸς ἢ τὸ νερτέρων / εὖνουν διαστὰν γῆς ἀλύπητον βάθρον”.<sup>251</sup> The protector moves under the earth (νέρτερος), and takes up his prophesised position of defence. The chorus have already petitioned the lord of the underworld to ensure that he is free from strife in his journey, describing Oidipous as ἀλύπητος.<sup>252</sup>

Throughout this section, the chorus, messenger, and Theseus each link Oidipous to an important role in his post-mortem existence. Divine influence, the close position to the gods that he occupies, and his role as hero-protector after death, combine to shape his life after death. Oidipous understands what will happen: “ἴν’ οὐμὸς εὖδων καὶ κεκρυμμένος νέκυς / ψυχρὸς ποτ’ αὐτῶν θερμὸν αἶμα πίεται, / εἰ Ζεὺς ἔτι Ζεὺς χῶ Διὸς Φοῖβος σαφής”.<sup>253</sup> He contrasts his cold death with life; divine connections are noted with the repetition of Ζεὺς. Anger and resentment drive hero-cult.<sup>254</sup> The focus placed on θερμὸν αἶμα πίεται alludes to the shield Oidipous offers as gift for Athens.<sup>255</sup>

<sup>250</sup> OK. 1655f: “But then after a moment, with no word spoken, we saw him salute the earth and the sky, home of the gods, in the same moment”. See OK. 1605. Ζεὺς χθόνιος. Antigone explains where Oidipous has gone OK. 1725: “τὰν χθόνιον ἐστίαν ἰδεῖν”, “To the neither world home”.

<sup>251</sup> OK. 1661f: “But either some escort come from the gods, or the unlighted foundation of the earth that belongs to those below opening in kindness”.

<sup>252</sup> OK. 1556f.

<sup>253</sup> OK. 621f: “Then shall my dead body, sleeping and buried, cold as it is, drink their warm blood, if Zeus is still Zeus, and his son Phoibos speaks the truth”. Kamerbeek suggests a comparison with; “blood sucking Erinys”. Edmunds, L. (1981).

<sup>254</sup> Rohde, E. (1925).

<sup>255</sup> We find this in the *Oresteia*. The focus is on positive recollection; burning anger turns to defending the city and its people. *Eum.* 767f: “αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς ὄντες ἐν τάφοις τότε / τοῖς τὰμὰ παρβαίνουσι νῦν ὀρκώματα / ἀμηχάνοισι πράξομεν δυσπραξίαις, / ὁδοὺς ἀθύμους καὶ παρόρνιθας πόρους / τιθέντες, ὡς αὐτοῖσι μεταμέλη πόνος:”. “For we ourself, being then in our tomb, will act against those

The drinking of blood after death hints that Oidipous becomes a sentient protector through his resolute anger. Although this is only allusive of a hero-cult, it further demonstrates the unforgiving role that Oidipous takes through personal resentment.<sup>256</sup> Oidipous is an unpalatable outsiders requesting sanctuary. An intertextual link marks the reinforcement of hero-cult, an example of the dead protecting the city and harming its enemies.

The analogous themes between the exceptional Oidipous and the eponymous hero Kolonos offer a further suggestion of cult remembrance in the future. The chorus expand on their ideas on commemoration of their original hero: “οἱ δὲ πλησίοι γύαι / τόνδ’ ἵππότην Κολωνὸν εὖχονται σφίσιν / ἀρχηγὸν εἶναι καὶ φέρουσι τοῦνομα / τὸ τοῦδε κοινὸν πάντες ὠνομασμένοι / τοιαῦτά σοι ταῦτ’ ἐστίν, ὦ ξέν’, οὐ λόγοις / τιμῶμεν, ἀλλὰ τῇ ξυνουσίᾳ πλέον”.<sup>257</sup> They emphasise the importance of Kolonos the man and equate him with a founding ruler described with ἀρχηγός. Equally, his presence is a current influence, τῇ ξυνουσίᾳ, not a thing of the past, but common to all, noted as κοινός. Emphasis is placed on personal identification, and the continuing positive remembrance with honour through the people. We find a similar form of recollection in the commemoration of Oidipous.<sup>258</sup> The people in the city assume complementary roles, as they permanently honour both city and man; they are bound to the soil.<sup>259</sup> The constant allusions to Oidipous’ close relationship to the

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who violate my present oath, inflicting hopeless misfortunes upon them, making their ways dispirited and their paths ill-omened till they repent in their effort”. Lardinois, A. (1993). Lardinois suggests that: “The pacification of the Erinyes in the Eumenides may have functioned as a model for the successful incorporation of Oidipous in the city”. p.327. Loraux, N. (2002), suggests: “An entire trilogy is necessary to domesticate the memory of murder and assign it a place from which it will not overflow”. p.42. Also, Herodotos has Oidipous as an Erinys, 4.149.

<sup>256</sup> Easterling, P. (1997). Currie, B. (2012).

<sup>257</sup> OK. 59f: “And the neighbouring acres boast that their founder is the horse-man Kolonos here, whose name is borne by the community. That is the story, stranger; it has no honour in legend, but rather in the minds of us who live with it”. Kolonos is a hero, OK. 681f, 886f.

<sup>258</sup> Hero remembered through the people. Thou. 2.43.3.

<sup>259</sup> OK. 1700f. Easterling, P. (1997). Henrichs, A. (1993); “The cult hero is thus seen *in statu nascendi* against the implicit but unmarked background of existing

earth culminate with concealed entombment. Oidipous finds himself in exalted company, housed with another famous, permanent, physical memorial, accentuating his exceptional status. His intimacy with the earth of Attica is re-emphasised as he travels down bronze steps to lie close to the memorial of another accord. With: “οὐτὶ τὰ Θησέως / Περίθου τε κεῖται πίστ’ ἀεὶ ξυνθήματα”, shared memory is used to mark an eternal bond of friendship.<sup>260</sup> Both Theseus and Athens support the lasting pledge.<sup>261</sup> The πόλις, physically and metaphorically, adopts Oidipous in a state-approved union of remembrance. From the marker of the threshold at the start of his induction, to these steps of honoured memorial, the bronze theme bookmarks the journey Oidipous takes.<sup>262</sup> Arriving as a suppliant, coming from obscurity to this place of high respect, the recurring signs mark the start and finish of a journey to remembrance.

Remembrance and protective anger underscore the move of Oidipous to cult. Each of these topics is vital to the *Oidipous at Kolonos*. We witness the power of the (continually) angry dead as Oidipous offers a gift of memory-protection in order to secure the safety of city. These themes can be drawn together, the forgiveness of past crimes, the paradox of the suppliant, divine influence, and themes of resentment, memory and retribution all drive Oidipous’ passage from exile to protector.

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hero cult in the audience's present”, p.165. Also: “Like heroic deaths, heroic tombs are ideal constructs that are more tangibly located in an imaginary religious landscape than in the Attic country side. The Athenian tomb of Oidipous was surrounded by secrecy... Oidipous [was a] recipient of hero cult in Attica... Sophokles did not fail to integrate the cultic dimension centrally into the fabric of his play. What constitutes a cultic hero, in tragedy even more emphatically than in real life, is the ineluctable experience of death, the concept of the tomb, and the prospect of cult”. p.177.

<sup>260</sup> OK. 1590f: “Where lies the covenant of Peirithous and Theseus, ever to be trusted”. Segal, C. (1981) : “Mythical emblems of death and life [Thoronian rock and pear tree], sterility and fertility, descent and return, thus mark the place of Oidipous’ last passage”. p.369.

<sup>261</sup> Markantonatos, A. (2007).

<sup>262</sup> OK. 57. Edmunds, L. (1981), occurrence of bronze. Also, Vidal-Naquet, P., and Vernant, J-P. (1988).

#### 4.5 Conclusion

The story at the heart of the *Oidipous at Kolonos* is one that connects themes of anger and resentment with reputation and future identity. Although there are different ideas of the protective quality of Athens and its role, it protects the weak driven by loyalty and benefaction. Its past and reputation frame the city's extension to Oidipous. He approaches as a paradoxical suppliant, yet his inherent worth is not questioned, his actions underpin the play's relationship with memory and forgetting, exchange and security. A refusal to forget wrongs is found in a promise to defend the city and people after death. Anger and resentment have a different bearing for each of the characters on their respective past, present, and future lives. For Oidipous, resentment both morphs into a protective gift of exchange for Athens and, in retaliation for dishonour, is retained through the curse of his sons and Kreon.<sup>263</sup> In the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, both mythopoetic and biographical memory is utilised for the reputation of the man, the people and the πόλις. Oidipous is an ambiguous presentation of remembering and forgetting, yet his motivation is personal anger and assuring sanctuary.<sup>264</sup>

The play highlights the displacement of Oidipous until Theseus and the chorus accept him. Oidipous has come, old, broken, weary and vulnerable, bearing the weight of the past.<sup>265</sup> His movement denotes the start of a narrative arc that culminates in being offered honour and a form of moral restitution through remembrance by the city. Both Athens and Theseus are protectors; the city is a sanctuary, a place of preservation for those in need of aid. In contrast to the positive nature of Oidipous and his eventual integration and elevation, Kreon and Polyneikes embody the threat of familial στάσις and external war. Each makes errors in the arena of memory.

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<sup>263</sup> OK. 421f.

<sup>264</sup> OK. 406f. The guilt of killing Laius forbids his burial at Thebes.

<sup>265</sup> Edmunds, L. (1996).

Kreon's challenge to Athens and its reputation towards suppliants are flawed.

By manipulating the link between topography and memory, the *Oidipous at Kolonos* ensures a lasting security for Athens from internal or external strife, as Oidipous becomes a benevolent force. He gains what Polyneikes covets, integration into the deme and city. A symbiotic relationship, the city arranges hero-cult with his burial and lasting remembrance in exchange in return for sanctuary, Oidipous is honoured as he in turn honours. The reputation of Oidipous turns from a negative one associated with parricide, incest and exile, to one aligned with the positive repute of Athens, his memory remains. Remembrance regulates, protects, and accepts in the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, it also punishes and curses. With his incomparable ξενία gift, Oidipous provides this link. Divine prophecy decides the fate of Oidipous; human intervention in the control of memory cannot change his destiny. His future not only lies with his integration into the earth of Athens, but through the memory of the people, and their ruler. The dramatic tradition, or rather the trajectory of memories, which follow Oidipous and his journey into Athens, began in *Oidipous Tyrannos* and finishes in the *Antigone* as Antigone dies as a result of Oidipous' actions. We see the conclusion of his own story in Kolonos through the interplay with memory and forgetting in the city, deme, king, and family. His name and status secured, by giving himself for the good of the city, Oidipous becomes a lasting, positive force for Kolonos, Athens, and Attica.

## 5. Looking back in anger

In this thesis, I have suggested that an approach using memory as a hermeneutic filter is an effective tool for interrogating and understanding tragedy in a way not previously attempted. My principal hypothesis unites and exploits the past, present, and future of the characters, their family history, family duty, and their relationship to the πόλις. My approach engages with the political, and questioning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century historical and political Athens, using contemporary memory studies to formulate an interdisciplinary method of interpreting Greek tragedy.<sup>1</sup>

As the introduction stated, the individual, group, and the πόλις struggle to control memory, which in turn creates and perpetuates στάσις, managed by manipulating and preserving memory. The story throughout is one of controlling anger, and conflict resentment, which interconnects with strands of fate, duty, anger and resentment. In contrast, memory is also about redemption, family loyalty, and remembrance against odds. The subjective nature of individual and social memories have at their core an inherent ambiguity, this leaves the archive of memory open to interpretation and manipulation. Memory is not simply a neurological function. The repeated patterns of political and historical μή μνησικακεῖν proved a familiarity with memory. As demonstrated in both tragedy and the Greek lived experience, division surrounds any attempt of mortals to control remembering and forgetting.

Memory is enacted in various ways. The absence of direct and explicit memory vocabulary in the texts studied presents a challenge to the researcher. The issue is one of proving the existence of memory and forgetting as theme, factor or motive, when it is not obvious in the text. As Sophokles is rarely specific, there are limitations of an approach that demands the presence of a word for

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<sup>1</sup> Loraux, N. (2002). Popescu, L. (2012).



the concept or experience to be present. The enduring presence of language, sign, symbol, and allegory of recollection, control, and of resentment, illustrate the importance of the role played by memory in the Greek lived experience, and how this permeated drama. To combat the absence of explicit mention, one can use the larger cultural context to interrogate the texts, working within the horizon of expectation of the first audience.<sup>2</sup> The combination of individual and group regulation with public manipulation introduced the paradox of remembering to forget. Evidence from Homer introduced the idea of individuals holding onto resentment as being both negative to the character and damaging to the group. A study of the *Ajax* demonstrated the employment of memory themes in earlier texts that anticipated similar uses in Sophokles concerning the struggle to control and manipulate memory and forgetting.

We find that memory as an issue is not just invoked by verbal reference. It is present in a variety of acts that are associated with recollection or its suppression within the culture shared by writer and audience. The contexts, objects, monuments, rituals to generate or suppress all combine to formulate a foundation of interpretation to non-explicit (verbal) memory use. However, there does exist the potential for error in that one may introduce what one is looking for, or apply a theory onto tragedies and characters that do not expressly vocalise it, leading to over-analysis. A method of research that practices this is prone to mistakes though shaping the evidence to fit the theory rather using the vocabulary. Memory is a flexible archive; this is a truism for much of Sophoklean tragedy. The construction of memories is apparent in the compartmentalisation of specific recollection. The management of personal and group anger links to the theme of artificial and temporary forgetfulness, and recollection. The regulation of commemoration becomes a public order centred on the δημόσιον σῆμα. In order to illustrate this type of social, collective

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<sup>2</sup> Iser, W. (1978).

control of remembrance, the research focused on examples from an Athenian perspective and identified varying uses of memory in a civic context. The study suggested that remembering is not a fixed, linear, place in time; it is a past susceptible to change, prone to manipulation, and vulnerable to redaction.

The link to the family is threatened for Polyneikes in the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, as he becomes ἀπάτωρ (paralleling his father) for his anger. Indeed, a type of conditional memory is present here, as Antigone chooses to forget the treason of her brother and his attack on Thebes. She does however; elect to remember her responsibility and obligation to bury. She bases her refusal to obey in duty and anger towards the king this leads to her death. However, the holding onto resentment is not always bad. The refusal to give up anger protects Athens in the *Oidipous at Kolonos* and presents Oidipous with the honour of hero cult; he remains κλεινὸς forever.

The importance of remembering underlines the research into tragedy. Justice is served through a reliance on remembering and forgetting in each of the test cases. The drive for revenge is underlined by a duty to remember, especially in relation to the family (*Antigone*, *Elektra*). Tragedy needs this action to ensure the annulment of retribution, divine or otherwise. We find tangible evidence for this in the withholding of burial and the regulation of τάφος, which affects the city and γένος. The type of bitterness and fury that drives Klytaimnestra and (both portrayals of) Kreon is also present in the other protagonists, and is a significant compulsion for those who fight for memory and remembrance. In the *Elektra*, this brooding resentment goes some way to securing revenge, and regaining the house of Agamemnon. In both dramas, the power of ὄνομα presents those who are exiled or isolated with the force of recollection. Neither Orestes in his νόστος, nor Elektra forgets their θυμός drives their resolve to protect the γένος. The persistence of recollection, reliance on divine δίκη, and continuous lamentation

constantly threatens Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos. Also applicable to the πολύμοχθος Electra, here it borders on the self-destructive. The *Antigone* emphasises the role that post-mortem retribution holds with its demonstration of the power and influence over Polyneikes' body. The play used the conflict over burial to explore the importance of membership and duty to the city and the commemoration of the heroic female in the city (εὐκλεία). Echoes of this are found in the *Elektra*, post-death memorisation comes as Agamemnon orchestrates revenge. The influence of the dead and their commemoration established a pattern of manipulation in the context of civic memory, with emphasis on the use of a chorus and feasts. It also looked at the separation of the protagonist; the isolation of the hero extends to the dead. Their influence on the world of the living, provided examples of unyielding resentment, both Agamemnon and Elektra hold onto their anger. We find this even in the case of subjective recollection, characters recall Iphigenia differently, conditional remembering.

The *Oidipous at Kolonos* warps this process of burial in order to twist memory themes, resulting in hero-cult, and ongoing commemoration, one is included and integrated into the city. Oidipous himself becomes a lasting defence, in the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, for the city, and a symbol of animosity for any who attack. The tragedy plays on the link between biographical/mythopoetic and topographic pasts in order to impart the power of recognition upon Oidipous. The character's resentment also has future impact on his sons, as his impending role and fate twist together. The reputation and status of Oidipous establishes a pattern of remembrance and the power attached to one's name. The paradox of guilt and suppliance, the refusal to forget and the reputation of Athens as protector, all offered clues to the negative side to κέρδος and χάρις. Oidipous' future role as defender through hero-cult and unrelenting anger emphasises his relationship with prophecy and curse. Although the theme of burial

and posthumous revenge and punishment synthesises across the tragedies, we can identify different approaches as Thebes, Argos and Kolonos engage with remembrance and commemoration. The characters of Kreon, Polyneikes, and Oidipous in *Oidipous at Kolonos*, as their respective motivations for control of the past and future, clash. Their individual bitterness is often the cause of their downfall, unless they adopt specific lessons of (self) managed forgetfulness in time. The theme also resonates with Elektra and Klytaimnestra in the *Elektra*, as they quarrel over the remembrance of Agamemnon. The contradiction of remembering to forget, or raising a permanent reminder of what not to remember, is present throughout. Physical symbols of remembrance (often distorted) permeate each tragedy. We see this through monumentalisation, a significant point when assessing the memorial and repeated public festivals which links to symbols, both true and false remembrance.

In contrast, the need to forget underlines a case for stability after conflict in both the *Antigone* and *Oidipous at Kolonos*. In the *Elektra*, we found the commemoration of the dead takes form through δαίτη and the setting up of a χορός, which in itself is open to manipulations and susceptible to pressure, as Klytaimnestra pushes to forget the old king. Warped *soteria* themes and the denial of εὐκλεία and κλέος drive this control. The result is set against a backdrop of μῖασμα, which penetrates πόλις and family. These conflicts and inconsistencies surround the correct procedures and rituals of burial, and link to society, an exchange of χάρις guides this interaction. The fear of exile and becoming ἄπολις (in opposition to ἔμπολις) is a clear and present danger for both the living and dead. In the *Antigone*, the control of the dead (Polyneikes by Kreon) and the living yet isolated (Antigone by Kreon, Orestes by Klytaimnestra, and Oidipous by Kreon), by those in power, as we see with the continuous mentions of βία and ἀνάγκη, is causal to the internal conflict found in the tragic πόλις. The positive commemoration of

those deemed worthy by the city proved a useful contrast to those threatened with exposure. Indeed, the dynamic between this type of posthumous punishment, and the honouring of the victorious dead, was fundamental to the examination of political uses of memory. We find an over-stepping of boundaries; the situation must be rectified in order for the individual, or city, to progress.

High value occurs in securing physical burial in one's fatherland, and the accompanying lamentation that the dead require; these traditional actions mark burial procedure. There is also an elevated cost of both remembering and forgetting for Antigone, Elektra and Oidipous. In both the *Ajax* and *Antigone*, burial is used as punishment particularly of those deemed traitors, and reward for those who in some way preserve the city. We see the threat to this dynamic throughout tragedy with the use of ἄκλαυστος and ἄθαρπτος, and becoming ἄφιλος. The situation is causal to the conflict found tragedy; the human withholding of correct burial procedure is subject to punishment. The gods swiftly deal with any variance, challenge or distortion to the traditional procedure.

The subjective uses of memory in the political world highlighted that posthumous punishment was present as an identifiable pattern and familiarity of use of remembering and forgetting. The location, power, and descriptions applied to the various cities reinforce the significance of a memory-based reading. Public remembrance connects to memorial; and civic influence found in the iteration of commemoration confirms this. For instance, the reputation of Athens throughout these test cases is a positive one. The traditions surrounding the ἐπιτάφιος λόγος reveal the fundamental connection of memory to the πόλις. We find positive tribute towards the city in the deeds of Theseus, Oidipous, Elektra, and Orestes. There are however, examples where the city, or rather those in power who represent it, attempt to censure, distort, or control remembrance. There are situations in which characters offer contrasting or

contradictory recollections of the same people and events. We find comparable vocabulary in the narrative describing the actions of those who rule. Both κράτος and τύραννος define the various regimes in Argos and Thebes. The concept of ἄτιμος connects to the actions of Klytaimnestra in the *Elektra*, as she endeavours to both compartmentalise Orestes and his memory, and to take, redact, and regulate the commemoration of Agamemnon for her own civic requirements. Kreon in both the *Antigone* and the *Oidipous at Kolonos* also endeavoured to censor remembrance through control of the past. These characters face punishment, particularly as they attempted to disobey. Their actions allow us to explore what censoring memory and remembrance means for the individual and city. Control and mismanagement of the dead and living drive their actions. Here, we find the fundamental paradox guiding the tragedies, in the attempts to impose forgetting by force in order to suppress memory. However, at the same time they constantly recall feuds and resentment.

There stands a paradox in the *Oidipous at Kolonos*, as the burial, and commemoration, of Oidipous has no permanent marker, official location or σῆμα. These themes combined to demonstrate not only the conflict surrounding the control of the dead, but also a problematic lack of tangible symbols connected with the burial of Oidipous. No physical proof or σῶμα remains, as there is no μνημεῖον. The situation means no locus exists for γόος or τὰ νομιζόμενα, negating traditional ritual and commemoration procedure. However, in this context, the value and future function of Oidipous is emphasised as his death and apotheosis transcend the typical mortal procedure. Once more, we find ὀργή driving memory, but here continuing resentment becomes a positive force for remembrance, as it holds a constructive result for the people and πόλις. An exchange of χάρις and giving of κέρδος manages the commemoration of the dead, and the honour of the city.

The outcome of this research can be generalised to cover other Sophoklean plays or the plays of the other dramatists. For example, scholarship on the *Oidipous Tyrannos* would benefit from an in-depth study of memory in that focuses on the past, present and future of Oidipous would be valuable. Some extant works of Euripides would also make attractive research proposition, as both the *Hiketides* and *Herakleidai* are underlined by themes of supliancy and memory. Indeed, the interconnection between memory control, character, and πόλις is transferable to any tragedy threatened by conflict. Although anger and resentment frame this thesis, there is no clear Sophoklean position on memory. It can be good or bad, restorative or destructive. The use of memory changes according to plot situation and sometimes a single play can see and use memory from contrasting perspectives according to context and character. Throughout this thesis we see that memory is weaponised for revenge, correct burial, and appropriate recollection lamentation. We can argue that the inhabitants perpetuate conflict through anger and resentment in the πόλις as they fight to remember and struggle to forget. Through the act or denial of μνησικακεῖν, memory becomes an essential filter through which to view the response to conflict and resentment in the tragic πόλις.

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