Oedipus at Colonus: A Story of Refugee Identity, Space, and Mediating Relationships

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by

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To the countless brave who endure Odyssean journeys

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I would first like to express my gratitude to the UVa Classics Department for funding my first trip to Greece in the summer of 2016 through the Francis Lazenby Fellowship. The fellowship enabled me to travel for 50 days throughout the beautiful country of Greece, where I studied at both the College Year in Athens (CYA) and the Paideia Institute. As a double major in Classics and Politics Honors, I continued my passion and scholarly pursuit of ancient Greek and explored the phenomenon of irregular migration and asylum in modern-day Greece. To my pleasant surprise, I found that the stories and experiences of refugees are ripe for humanistic study at the intersection of Classics and political science.

I returned to Greece in the summer of 2017 with the support of the UVa Harrison Undergraduate Research Award. Prior to my second trip, I studied and read a number of ancient Greek texts with Professor Jon Mikalson, including speeches of Isocrates and Lysias, historical accounts of asylum seekers in Herodotus and Thucydides, as well as a number of tragedies. The conclusions of my field research inspired to rethink the way that I read and interpreted the classical texts. I am grateful to Dr. Angeliki Dimitriadi, my former professor at CYA and a research fellow at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, who served as my field research expert and primary contact in Greece. I want to give my sincere gratitude to the citizen-leaders and residents of City Plaza, KHORA, and Melissa Day Centre who welcomed me into their spaces to observe, interact, volunteer, and conduct research. I would also like to extend my thanks to the professionals at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and SolidarityNow who were open and generous in my interviews with them. I was humbled to be invited to Peania to celebrate both the "Home for Hope" program and the end of Ramadan at an event sponsored by SolidarityNow, UNHCR, and ECHO.

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In case I omitted to mention anyone here by name, I would like to express my deepest gratitude and thank you for your support. It has been a true joy to research and write this thesis. I hope to continue to advance my research and to engage others in a more open and cross-disciplinary dialogue in pursuit of a better world.

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Chapter I

Background

On a hot summer day in 2016, I visited the Castle of Mytilene with my peers on the island of Lesvos. The welcome center was pitch dark inside and the entrance seemingly attracted dust and silence given its grim lack of visitors. In a meeting with the governor of the municipality earlier that morning, we learned that the island had experienced a devastating 80% decrease in tourism in the last year as a result of the influx of refugees – this decline was obvious. We found our way into the castle by tiptoeing across rocks submerged in the Aegean Sea and rock-climbing up the side of the castle. We assumed that no one was watching until we heard a shout from above, "Hey!" Astonished, we looked up and saw two heads popping out from inside the castle. "Need a hand?" the men asked. They pulled us up into the castle, where we were surprised to find that they, along with others, had made their home. As we made acquaintances, they began to tell us their story: they were Afghan refugees who had registered in the camps but left in search of better living conditions; they had found the castle to be their safe haven and ventured out into the town of Mytilene for other necessities.[1]

Unbeknownst to them, the refugees had settled in a site that is reputed to have been an acropolis; excavations by the Canadian Institute also found the remains of an archaic sanctuary, specifically a *thesmophorion*, of the goddess Demeter and her daughter Persephone on the upper part of the Castle.[2] The museum labels with descriptions of the history of the Castle now witnessed the living experience of modern refugees who had found refuge in what had once been

[1] See Appendix A Figure 1 for an image I took of one of my classmates speaking to the two men as he climbed up the Castle of Mytilini.
[2] Williams 2012: The Mytilene Project.

a sanctuary. This striking experience of old living together with new left me wondering whether there were modern parallels to the ancient idea of a space of refuge: What was the experience of suppliants within a space of refuge in the ancient world like? Can understanding the experience of the ancient suppliant shed light on questions and issues for modern-day refugees seeking asylum?

An Eyewitness Account of the Situation of Refugee Reception in Greece

My trip to Mytilene, Lesvos, was a part of a course I took at the College Year in Athens in the summer of 2016 called "The Global Governance of Irregular Migration and Asylum". I had the unique opportunity to travel to the island of Lesvos where I visited and met refugees living in camps and on the outskirts of towns such as Mytilene. As part of the course, I also traveled to Brussels, Belgium, to speak with key policy makers who were responsible for migration management in the European Union (EU). Finally, I explored informal, non-governmental sites throughout Athens where refugees had found safe harbor. At the end of the course, I submitted a 'field diary', which was a kind of ethnographic logbook of personal impressions of discussions I had throughout the course, questions generated during meetings with key policy professionals, and observations from on-site visits. Throughout our field visits, I noticed that the notion of 'hospitality' had been used to describe the reception of refugees in multiple contexts, whether in the camps on the island of Lesvos or in the urban spaces of Athens.

"*This* is hospitality: φιλοξενία, as we say in Greek." The leader of operations at a refugee camp I visited on the island of Lesvos in the summer of 2016 explained this statement to me by placing both of his hands on his chest and saying, "I refer to myself as host and to the refugees as guests. We serve them and bring food to their doorstep." The tall man went on to tell me that Greece's flag was, indeed, two: "a flag of Greece and a flag of hospitality." His claim revealed

his understanding of hospitality as a guest-host relationship. However, people like the Afghan refugees we met at the Castle of Mytilene had left the camps in search of more hospitable spaces closer to the city.

In fact, data collected by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) show that 93% of the estimated two million refugees in Europe live *outside* camps, with a contingency plan established for less than a quarter of them.[3] Deemed a country of transit since the 1980s, Greece accommodated the more than 850,000 refugees who arrived in 2015 in camps, with the intention of providing a short-term stay. However, closed borders and an overloaded asylum-processing system—after three years, only 33% of the agreed 66,400 refugees have been relocated so far—have caused Greece to rethink the appropriateness of their reception facilities.[4] As the Greek government struggles to deal with a national financial crisis and international aid agencies face criticism for the unlivable conditions of the camps, alternative structures have been cropping up in Athens to provide for the influx of refugees seeking a life in the city. As refugees increasingly migrate to urban areas, local citizens are expanding *ad hoc* settlements to provide accommodation and services for refugees. I will refer to these settlements as "citizen-run spaces". At the same time, the UNHCR and Municipality of Athens have joined to co-sponsor a housing relocation project in Greece, beginning with Athens and Thessaloniki, that aims to provide up to 20,000 accommodation spaces for asylum seekers eligible for relocation. I will refer to the refugee spaces established under this scheme as "government-run spaces".

With the support of a UVa Harrison Award, I returned to Greece in the summer of 2017 to conduct research in Athens for three weeks, comparing the political arrangements of citizen-

[3] United Nations 2016.
[4] Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme 2018.

run spaces and government-run spaces. Particularly, I sought to investigate the competing visions of 'hospitality' held by the people charged with refugee reception in Greece. As we learn from Herodotus' *Histories*, the best way to acquire knowledge is through an eyewitness account. After this visit to Greece in the summer of 2017, I identified three types of refuge spaces operating in the country, each of which offers a different degree of permanence and functions differently with respect to integrating refugees into Greek society:

1. **Traditional refugee camps**, located on the outskirts of cities and on islands, are provisional and intended to function as transit centers.[5]

2. **Government-run spaces of refuge**, scattered throughout the mainland, offer temporary accommodation only for asylum seekers eligible for relocation.[6]

3. **Citizen-run spaces of refuge**, situated more centrally within local Greek communities, are semi-permanent; they offer opportunities for robust intermingling among refugees, migrants, and Greek citizens, and engage in efforts towards long-term social integration.[7]

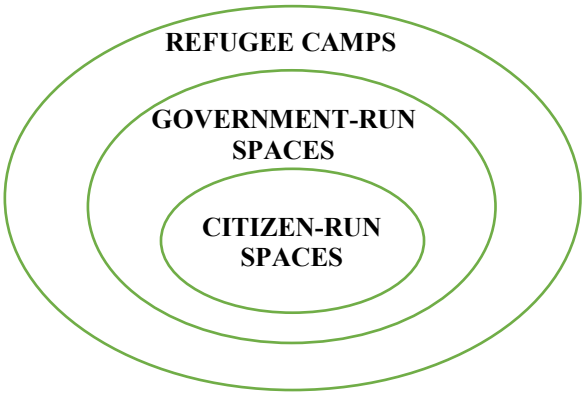

Figure 1: Venn-diagram of three types of spaces of refuge in Greece. Each concentric circle represents how the spaces are spatially located in Greece in relation to the urban center: the camps are often on the outskirts of a town or city; the government-run spaces are scattered in suburbs near a city; the citizen-run spaces are located more centrally within a city.

[5] See Figures 2 and 3 in Appendix A for images.
[6] See Figures 4 and 5 in Appendix A for images.
[7] See Figures 6 and 7 in Appendix A for images.

I intentionally excluded further research into the refugee camps during my second trip to Greece for two principal reasons: first, there was a practical difficulty in that access to the camps in Greece is limited; second, government, solidarian, and humanitarian workers alike have been working towards clearing out and shutting down the camps in response to numerous reports of inhumane and unsafe conditions inside.[8] In fact, when the UNHCR replaced its 1997 policy statement with a "Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas" in 2009, the rhetoric about camps changed: rather than rely on housing refugees in camps on the outskirts of cities, a *de facto* solution of containment, the UNHCR sought to better integrate refugees into urban areas of the country of asylum. This change in perspective was brought about by the fact that the majority of forcibly displaced people had, in seeking to escape the horrendous conditions of the camps, decided to live outside of the camps and move to urban areas or rural areas without the assistance of UNHCR. So far, about half of the camps on mainland Greece have closed, with thirty-three remaining.[9] These closures suggest that alternative options for accommodation, namely government-run and citizen-run spaces, will proliferate.

Thesis and Methodology

Now is a critical time for research into the institutions of refuge and hospitality, when across Greece, but especially in Athens, hospitality is increasingly on offer by non-governmental

[8] Smith (2004) introduced the concept of "warehousing" to describe the situation in refugee camps; rather than integrate refugees into the country of asylum while they waited for a permanent solution, Smith shows how refugees are often being "warehoused" in camps. Appalling conditions in camps in Greece are well-documented by Amnesty International ("Greece 2017/2018"). The appalling conditions at Moria camp in Lesvos are also well documented by organizations such as the Legal Centre of Lesbos (Thomas-Davis, "Free the Moria 35"). Even when camps close, there are a number of complications that arise from transferring refugees to a safe location, e.g. the Elliniko camp in Athens, Greece, that closed in June of 2017 (Amnesty International 2017).

[9] Google Maps 2018. The map includes updated information on empty/closed camps as well as camps that are still open and functioning throughout Greece.

actors and often exists outside the scope of governmental insight. The discourse of hospitality has thus revealed a third critical actor beyond the states and refugees: the citizens of the country of asylum themselves. When I visited the citizen-run spaces of refuge, I purposefully engaged in discussions with Greek citizen-leaders about how hospitality is understood, whether there is any continuity with the ancient Greek notion of hospitality (or φιλοξενία), and what the end result is of the hospitality on offer today. Although I aimed at first to understand these modern refugee spaces in light of their reception of various notions of refuge and hospitality from ancient Greek literature, I soon discovered that they also have much to tell us about the ancient world. My experiences during this field research ultimately prompted me to reexamine the way that I approach classical Greek 'suppliant' plays.

The research for my thesis was organized into two stages. First, I conducted an extensive review of ancient Greek literature, which provided me with important evidence for the ways that Greeks of the Classical period viewed and received refugees and asylum-seekers. Second, I engaged in field research under the guidance of Dr. Angeliki Dimitriadi, a research fellow at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, in Athens, Greece, where I described and analyzed two competing visions of 'hospitality' held by people involved in refugee reception. The first vision is focused on the government actors and non-government organizations that have joined to create temporary accommodation spaces for asylum-seekers; the second on the Greek citizens who have innovated alternative spaces of refuge at the grassroots-level. I performed purposive sampling by conducting roughly fifteen interviews with lead contacts in both types of spaces. The conclusions of my field research inspired me to rethink the way that I read and interpreted the classical texts.

Two conclusions in particular from my field research have informed my perspective: first, I found that the relationship between refugees and host citizens is one of **experimentation and evolution**; second, I saw how the particular space of refuge can play a **mediating role** between refugees and the host community. For many of the world's refugees, their odyssey continues well beyond the sea and the camp setting.[10] In light of the recent movement to create 'spaces of hospitality' that welcome refugees in urban areas, as in Athens, my research aims to re-examine a critical work of an ancient Greek tragedy, Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*, in order to elucidate the dynamics of the practice of hospitality and the relevance of an ancient perspective to the modern condition.

Why did I decide to focus on Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*? It is true that the question of how to properly welcome refugees has been central to the Greek imagination for centuries, as attested by the importance of ξενία and ἱκετεία as social principles and the recurrence of such themes in a range of genres, including epic (Homer's *Odyssey*), tragedy (suppliant plays), oratory (Lysias' *Orations*, Isocrates' *Panegyricus* and *Plataicus*), and history (Herodotus, Thucydides). However, I found that the classical Athenian tragedy, Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*, was particularly evocative of the fluidity of roles and the negotiation of relationships between citizens and non-citizens in a space of refuge. In the following paragraphs, I explain why Sophocles' *OC* provides a powerful lens through which we can understand hospitality and refuge in ancient Greece.

[10] Bermudez 2017. The report by Bermudez sheds light on the fact that over two-thirds of the world's refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) live in urban areas. In 2014, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) published a "Policy on Alternatives to Camps" with the objective of making camps "the exception, and, to the extent possible, a temporary measure" (6). While the UNHCR has been phasing out of the camps and arranging apartments as alternative housing arrangements, citizen-led actions to create 'spaces of hospitality' have offered competing visions of refugee reception.

The reception of a suppliant is a fundamentally political act. When I visited refugee spaces in Greece, I asked each of my interviewees whether they would describe themselves as political actors and, moreover, whether they would consider their organization to be a political entity. Each interviewee associated with the citizen-run spaces responded that they consider their actions to be political by the very fact that their organization's mission challenges our current understandings about how refugees should be treated within their host communities. In other words, the very existence of citizen-run spaces of refuge as loci for lateral, non-hierarchical relations among newcomers and Greeks problematizes the status quo. By displaying certain normative practices, the organization of citizen-run spaces is intended to be in a *dialogue* with the state.

The responses from my interviews prompted me to think more deeply about space, the organization of space, and how space itself can be used to engage in political discourse. Naturally, I gravitated towards tragedy because its use of a physical, performative space *explicitly* challenged boundaries of the political space in the same way that I had observed citizen-run refugee spaces do. The staging of tragedy at festivals like the Great Dionysia not only invited a discussion about what it meant to be a citizen of a democracy but also served as a public venue for debating the role of the non-citizen who stands at the gate or the threshold of the *polis* community.

I decided to further narrow my focus on refugee reception to Athenian tragedy for two reasons: first, I think that Dionysus, the god honored by the Athenians at the Great Dionysia festival, symbolizes the fluidity of roles which I consider so central to understanding the dynamics of 'suppliant' plays in tragedy.[11] Second, and more importantly, I think that Athens in

[11] Cartledge (2006: 8). Cartledge writes that the Greek god Dionysus had a singular association with "illusion, transgression, and metamorphosis"; Dionysus was "the quintessential outsider, he was entirely

the fifth century can serve as an interesting, contained case study for how a city both publicizes a national self-image as a welcoming space of refuge and actually receives refugees in practice. Refugee-host relations can thus not only be analyzed in a literary-critical study, as I have presented in my work here, but can also be scrutinized alongside Athens' policies and actions in history.

One example of the varied experience of hospitality at Athens is revealed by Isocrates. Isocrates' *Panegyricus* (380 B.C.) is an encomium of Athens that portrays the city as a champion of the weak; the speech highlights Athens' mythological stories, respect for the role of justice, and concern for societal values. By contrast, Isocrates' *Plataicus* presents the real-life case of the Plataeans, a group of asylum-seekers who appealed to the Athenians for help after their hometown was destroyed and achieved citizenship status in Athens. J. K. Davies writes of the Plataeans, "Though Thucydides [also] says they were given citizenship by Athens, they remained a separate community, brigaded separately and resettled as such in Skione in 420, while the use of the label 'Plataieus' in Aristophanes' *Frogs* 694 and in Lysias 23 seems to show that it came to denote some sort of favored metic status."[12] Interestingly, the status of the Plataeans seems to be no less disputed than the status of Oedipus at the end of the *OC.* The key to identifying the status of the Plataeans lies in the space where they resided: the Plataeans who decided to remain in the city center at Athens supposedly gathered each month at the cheese market in order to maintain a close community amongst each other and thus might be considered "metics" rather than integrated "citizens".[13] On the other hand, the Plataeans who were distributed among the

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appropriately worshipped in the form of a mask, which could both figure his absent presence and provide actors and chorus with the alibi and means of alienation required for the dramatic representation of others (and otherness)". For a further interesting discussion about Dionysus, see Vernant (1990:189-206) and Vernant (1999: 135-153).

[12] Davies (1977-1978: 107).

[13] Lamb (1930: 504-516).

demes in Athens were better integrated into the Athenian host community and potentially had more claim to be considered "citizens".[14] The Plataeans who traveled to Scione and lived apart from the Athenian community could in turn be considered neither "metics" nor "citizens" but "refugees". The experience of the Plataeans ultimately serves as an example of how the reception of refugees is not only portrayed in mythical stories but also in retellings of real events as described in orations and historical accounts; in myth as much as in history, the status of refugees relies on their social and political relations to the host citizens in the space of refuge.

Moving beyond the question of how tragedy in its historical context reshaped or asked its audience to reconsider their basic assumptions about their own practices and beliefs in civic society, I argue that the reception of Greek tragedy today can challenge us in the *modern* context to rethink relationships between citizens and refugees in political society. Thus, I make a comparison in this study between citizen-run spaces of refuge in modern-day Athens with the portrayal of spaces of refuge in an ancient Greek tragedy, Sophocles' *OC.* Sophocles' *OC* is one of the few plays where Athenian citizens themselves are represented on the tragic stage.[15] My aim is to take the notion of tragedy as a communal and self-reflective practice seriously. I argue that the representation of space in Sophocles' *OC* can shed new light on the dynamics of refugee-citizen relations as they exist in the emerging, contemporary citizen-run spaces of refuge. Thus, I hope that my research can function as a building block for further investigation of hospitality and the organization of space in the fields of both ancient Greek tragedy and refugee studies.

[14] Murray (1939: 350-451).
[15] The Chorus consisted of citizens from the ancient deme of Colonus to the northwest of Athens; King Theseus was the archetypal leader of Athens.

Chapter II

A Critical Analysis of Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*

Preamble

There are few tragedies that capture the hardship of social and political exclusion and the struggle to find a dignified place of rest, both central to the refugee experience, as profoundly as Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* (*OC*).[16] The *OC* is focused on a refugee, Oedipus, who has suffered an indescribable καταστροφή (catastrophe; down-turning). After discovering that he married his mother and killed his father, he has blinded himself and become an exile, wandering with his daughter Antigone in search of safe harbor. Oedipus has lost his sense of identity by the start of *OC*: having abdicated his role as king, he can no longer define himself as the protector and embodiment of Theban society. Thus, when he arrives at Colonus, he must reshape his identity in order to gain acceptance in a new community.

[16] During my fieldwork in Athens, Greece in the summer of 2017, I found that the leaders of the spaces of refuge that I visited conveyed their mission statements in a way that responds to the emotional concerns expressed by Oedipus. The following quotations will illustrate how the leaders described the mission of the spaces they help to coordinate:
1) A Greek co-founder/leader of Melissa Day Centre, a safe space for migrant and refugee women, related: "Give me a place to stand and I shall move the Earth. Our mission is to create the first solid ground of belonging, so that women can pick up the thread of their own lives." Curiously, she quoted Archimedes, showing that an ancient idea continues to be germane for her.
2) A Greek volunteer/leader of KHORA Community Centre, a social cooperative enterprise open to refugees, migrants, and locals, said, "Khora is a multifaceted word with many meanings. The meaning we take from it is, as Derrida defined it, 'a radical otherness that gives place for being'. I might say our mission can be encapsulated in the Greek verb, χωρέω, which I define as 'to give space for another'."
3) A Greek co-founder/leader of City Plaza, a refugee accommodation and solidarity space, responded, "We occupy this shut-down hotel to provide the necessary conditions for dignified housing for many refugee families, practical solidarity to refugees, and a counterexample to the camps, which only foster desperation and exclusion. At the same time, the location of this particular hotel, in an area where refugees gathered, carries the symbolism of our main idea, which is 'we struggle together, we will live together.'"

The action of *OC* takes place in a dynamic space of refuge where Oedipus' relations to others in the space change as he moves through Colonus and interacts with an anonymous ξένος, a Chorus of Colonan elders, king Theseus of Athens, and many others. In this chapter, I argue two related claims: first, that the space of Colonus is altered by Oedipus' visit and his experiences in it, shifting through six distinct meanings in the course of the play: "unknown", sacred, inviolable, ritual, burial, and protected; second, that these changes in space determine Oedipus' relationships with others in it as well as his future possibilities for refuge. Ultimately, I argue that Oedipus' arrival at Colonus demonstrates how the relationship between refugees and host community is shaped by the space of their encounter.

In order to support my analysis of the play, I have produced a number of figures and tables that help to demonstrate the complicated development of both space and relationships in the *OC*. Oedipus' movements both through the grove of Colonus and onstage at the theater of Dionysus are represented in Figures 1.1 and 1.2 respectively in the Appendix.[17] Figure 1.3 presents a web of relations to the word ξένος throughout the *OC* and Figure 1.4 depicts a web of societal relations surrounding Oedipus with all of the characters he interacts with in the play. Table 1.1 in the Appendix sets out the vocabulary of space in the *OC* and illustrates how the same words can describe multiple types of spaces. This table reinforces my argument that it is the *organization* of the space Oedipus occupies, rather than the language used to define it, that governs how his relationships evolve within it.

[17] In order to construct Figures 1.1 and 1.2, I consulted Rehm 2002: 20-21, Jebb 1889: xxxvii-xxxviii, Markantonatos 2007: 72-119, Rodighiero 2012: 69-80, and Saïd 2012: 91-95, but I largely used my own judgment from reading the *OC* text carefully.

Although the focus of this chapter is on the spatial dynamics of refuge, there are four other interrelated themes that I address which help to refine my analysis of the lived experience of Oedipus as a refugee:

1) time
2) power and prophecy
3) fate, identity, and the conditionality of hospitality
4) societal relations

As regards the first of these themes, Oedipus' advanced age is only one of several important ways that time is thematized in the play. Throughout the narrative, Oedipus makes use of his unique companionship with time to selectively reveal aspects of his past fate and future prophecy, in turn influencing how he is perceived by the 'host' citizens in their interactions.[18] (I place 'host' in quotations here because the word does not fully capture the citizens of Athens in their relation to Oedipus; as I will demonstrate later in this chapter, Oedipus himself can also take on characteristics more typical of a host. Nonetheless, I use the phrases 'host citizens' and 'host community' in reference to the Athenians for the sake of clarity). Thus, closely related to time is the second theme, that of prophecy and of the power that derives from it: after receiving confirmation of his prophecy from his daughter Ismene, Oedipus is able to successfully wield his prophecy both as an active bargaining chip to secure refuge in Athens and as a means of acquiring power over his situation in the ensuing spaces of Colonus that he will occupy.[19]

Although he does gain certain power from his *future* prophecy, Oedipus still continues to be a compromised refugee because of the *past* actions he committed in accordance with his fate. This fact highlights the continued importance of Oedipus' identity and of the conditionality of hospitality. Despite undergoing several transformations of roles, altering his relations to others,

[18] See pages 4, 21-23, 36 of chapter for references to 'time'.
[19] See pages 9, 12, 15-16, 19-20, 23-26, 29, 32, 39 and 41 of chapter for references to 'power' and 'prophecy'.

and moving through different spaces of Colonus in order to secure his future resting place, Oedipus cannot erase his particular personal history. Indeed, his identity as informed by his past actions plays an important role in the evolving dynamics of the space. At first, Oedipus' history acts as a burden because it challenges his efforts to persuade the host community to accept him; the conditionality of hospitality becomes evident when the host citizens reject Oedipus out of the fear that he might bring harm to their city. Oedipus' persevering nature, however, soon comes to save him: by stubbornly insisting on his own way, he has the endurance to survive the numerous trials he faces as a refugee.[20]

Finally, Oedipus' persistence in these trials allows him to make use of the fluidity of societal relations for his own advantage. Although his identity remains constant, his roles and relations necessarily change throughout. As I demonstrate in this chapter, Oedipus must negotiate several kinds of relationships in the six spaces of Colonus, including ξενία (guest-friendship), προξενία (proxeny), ἱκετεία (supplication), συγγένεια (kinship), and φιλία (friendship).[21] It is worth noting in this regard that ξένος can range in meaning from 'foreigner' or 'stranger' to 'guest-friend' or 'host,' so that one and the same word may simultaneously signify a relationship of distance or of proximity. As Herman puts it succinctly, "the perceptual boundaries drawn between the different categories of positive relationships were not as rigidly delineated as they are in modern societies."[22] The possible degrees of distances communicated by ξένος can be understood in terms of a spectrum:

Foreigner ------- Stranger ------- Friend ------- Guest-friend ------- Host

[20] See pages 12, 14-19, 21, 27, 30, 38-39 of chapter for references to 'fate', 'identity', and the 'conditionality of hospitality'.
[21] See pages 6-7, 16, 18, 22, 24, 26-32, 41 of chapter for references to the various 'societal relations'.
[22] Herman 1987: 19

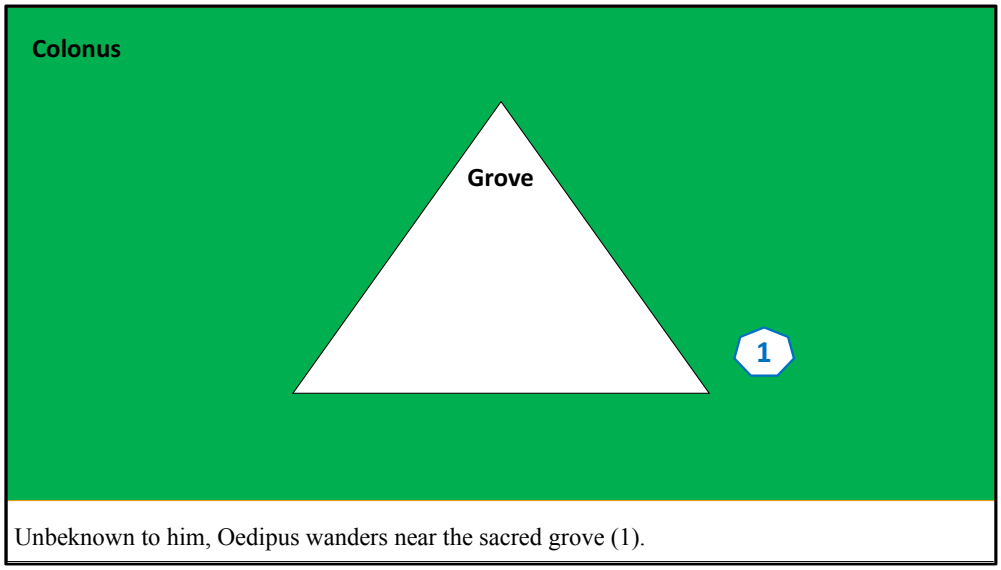
As shown in Figure 1.3 (Appendix), Oedipus and every person that interacts with him is at some time referred to as a ξένος. Only Oedipus and the host citizens of Athens forge a formal relation of ξενία, however, whereby they are defined as 'guest-friends' in the strictest sense (i.e. any citizen of a foreign state with whom one has a treaty of hospitality for self and heirs, confirmed by mutual presents and an appeal to Zeus Xenios[23]). The broad range of meanings that ξένος holds allows it to take a unifying central role in the *OC*: the changing roles of different ξένοι will influence how Oedipus is perceived as a ξένος in relation to the host community and will affect how he fits into the various spaces of Colonus.

[23] See concisely LSJ s.v. ξένος I.

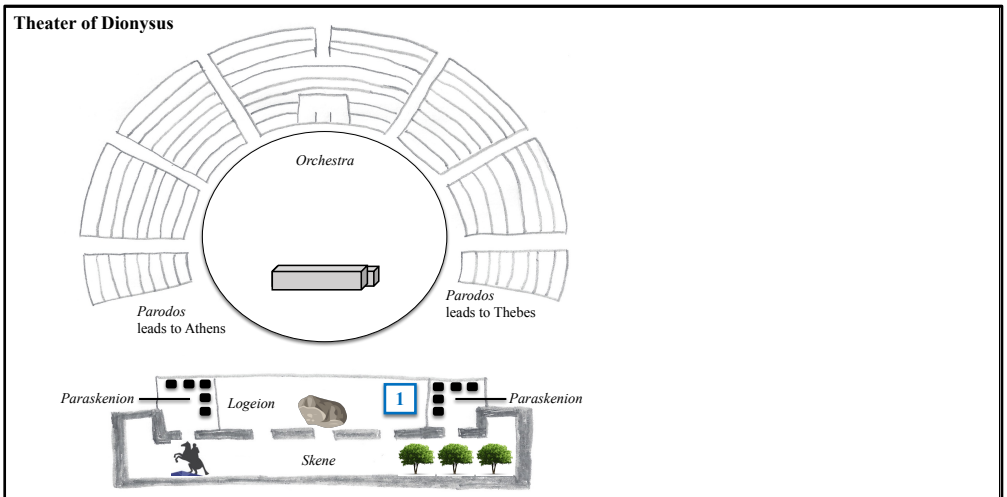
Stage 1: Outcast

Space #1 – "Unknown"

- Action: Wandering
- Transformation: Former king → Submissive exile



Unbeknown to him, Oedipus wanders near the sacred grove (1).



Oedipus most likely speaks in the *logeion* (1).

The opening scene of *OC* displays Oedipus, the former *basileus* of Thebes, at the nadir of his tragic journey—he is tired, old, and blind, in desperate search for a respite from his wandering. When Oedipus refers to himself as "τὸν πλανήτην Οἰδίπουν" in the opening lines

(3),[24] he has not only been wandering (πλανάω) through the forest to his present place at the grove of Eumenides but has also been wandering through life in a futile attempt to escape his fate. Oedipus makes plain that he has subsisted on little: "σμικρὸν μὲν ἐξαιτοῦντα, τοῦ σμικροῦ δ'ἔτι/ μεῖον φέροντα, καὶ τόδ' ἐξαρκοῦν ἐμοί" (5-6).[25] He has accustomed himself to a state of penury: "στέργειν γὰρ αἱ πάθαι με χὠ χρόνος ξυνὼν/ μακρὸς διδάσκει, καὶ τὸ γενναῖον τρίτον" (7-8).[26]

Oedipus' suggestive opening words foreshadow his future interactions with the people of Colonus. He uses ξυνών, the present participle of σύνειμι, meaning "to be joined or linked with," to characterize his relationship with χρόνος. He does not mention his daughter Antigone but rather notes that it is χρόνος that has been his long companion; as will be discussed further below, Oedipus utilizes his companionship with χρόνος throughout the play to stall his interlocutors until he can make his appeal to king Theseus.[27] Toward the end of the play, as Oedipus approaches his death—later described as "οὐ στενακτὸς οὐδὲ σὺν νόσοις/ ἀλγεινὸς"— he signals the future of Athens as "γήρως ἄλυπα" (1663-4, 1519).[28] The Chorus also later remarks that the deme Colonus does not age as mortals do, "καὶ γὰρ εἰ γέρων ἐγώ,/ τὸ τῆσδε χώρας οὐ γεγήρακε σθένος" (726-7).[29] It is not unusual that Colonus and Oedipus express similar characteristics: one explanation for Oedipus' death is that he was literally swallowed up by the ground below him

[24] "Oedipus the wanderer." All translations from the Greek are my own.
[25] "asking for little, and receiving even less, and this being sufficient for me"
[26] "for my sufferings, my long association with time, and, third, my nobility teach me to be content". Interestingly, these three factors that keep Oedipus content—sufferings, time, and nobility—parallel Oedipus' transformation of roles throughout the play from outcast → metamorphosis → hero.
[27] See pages 26-7 of chapter for further discussion on time. Although the play takes place in the fixed place of Colonus, Oedipus will make use of καιρός ("right moment" in time) to move through Colonus in pursuit of fulfilling his oracle and arriving at his eventual "heroization".
[28] "with no lamentations, and by no painful disease"; "without the pains of age"
[29] "For even if I am old, the strength of this land has not grown old." Knox (1964: 144) suggests that Oedipus, frail but soon to be powerful, might be understood as the embodiment of a hopeful vision of Athens in the final years of the Peloponnesian War.

(1661-2). Just as Oedipus embodied the benefit of the deme, the deme will come to personify Oedipus.

For now, Oedipus' exchange with Antigone highlights his unfamiliarity with the surrounding space. He enjoins Antigone to find a safe resting place (9-12)[30]:

> ἀλλ', ὦ τέκνον, θάκησιν εἴ τινα βλέπεις
> ἢ πρὸς βεβήλοις ἢ πρὸς ἄλσεσιν θεῶν,
> στῆσόν με κἀξίδρυσον, ὡς πυθώμεθα
> ὅπου ποτ' ἐσμέν.

Oedipus seeks a seat that is either on profane ground, permitted to human use, or by sacred precinct.[31] Antigone infers from her surroundings that the whole land is sacred territory, with the city walls being far off: "χῶρος δ' ὅδ' ἱρός, ὡς σάφ' εἰκάσαι, βρύων/ δάφνης, ἐλαίας, ἀμπέλου" (16-17).[32] She mistakenly presumes that the sacred land is also a permissible place for Oedipus to rest, but she and Oedipus will soon learn of the inviolability of the sacred ground they tread. She next tells Oedipus that she knows that they are in Athens but not what "χῶρος" (place) they stand in (24). In this "unknown" space, Oedipus assumes a prospective relationship with the citizens of Colonus as one similar to a student-teacher relationship: he says, "μανθάνειν γὰρ ἥκομεν/ ξένοι πρὸς ἀστῶν, ἂν δ' ἀκούσωμεν τελεῖν" (12-13).[33] Since the place Oedipus occupies is "unknown" to him and he is in desperate need of protection, he defines his role as ξένος in unfamiliar terrain as one of obedience to the locals of Colonus whom he will soon encounter.

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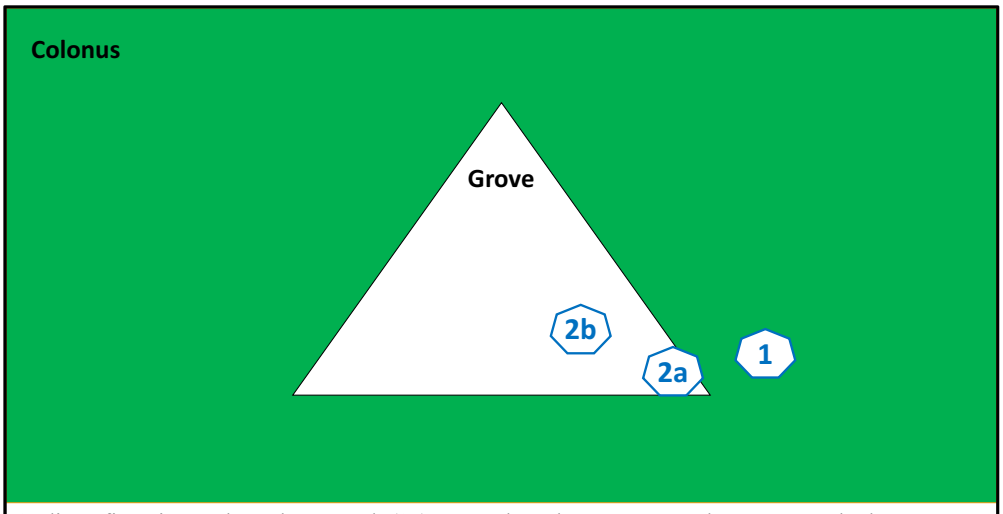
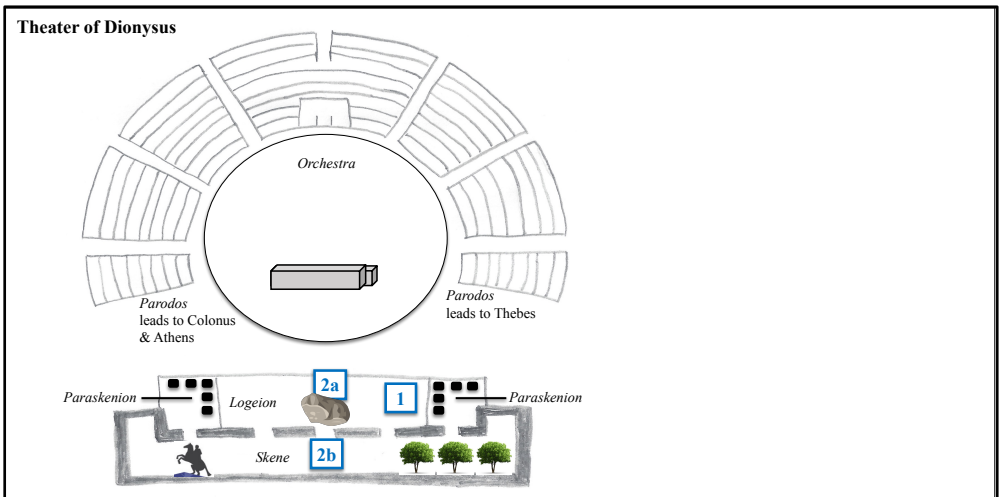
[30] "But, o child, if you see any sitting place, either near ground allowed to be trodden or near the groves of the gods, stop me and sit me down, so that we may learn wherever we are"
[31] The word for sanctuary or sacred precincts, τέμενος, literally refers to a place that is "cut off" or "marked off from common uses" (LSJ s.v.).
[32] "and this place is sacred, as you can clearly infer, being full of the bay laurel, olive tree, vine". The use of the verb, εἰκάζω, meaning "to infer from comparison or to represent by an image or likeness," suggests Antigone is utilizing her previous knowledge to approximate the nature of her surroundings.
[33] "For we, as ξένοι, come to learn from the citizens, and to accomplish that which we hear"

Space #2 – Sacred

- Action: Supplicating
- Transformation: Stranger who trespassed sacred property → Suppliant at sacred grove



Oedipus first sits on the unhewn rock (2a) to speak to the anonymous ξένος. Once the ξένος leaves, Oedipus goes further into the grove to hide (2b).



Oedipus first moves to the "unhewn rock" (2a) to sit and converse with the anonymous ξένος. When the ξένος leaves, he hides in the grove and may have stood in the door of the *skene* to do so (2b).

Oedipus and Antigone are soon confronted by a resident of Colonus; the local remains anonymous but is referred to as a ξένος throughout the exchange (36). We are now introduced to the first instance of wordplay on the dual meaning of ξένος: Oedipus as ξένος is a stranger in a

foreign land seeking refuge; the inhabitant of Colonus as ξένος is a stranger to Oedipus.[34] The meaning of ξένος will continue to change throughout the play depending on the nature of the space and Oedipus' relation with others in it.[35]

The first interaction of the ξένοι is tense: the local enjoins Oedipus, "ἐκ τῆσδ' ἕδρας/ ἔξελθ'" (36-7).[36] Unbeknownst to Oedipus, he has trodden inviolable land; Antigone's inference that the charming area of land is permissible is thus quickly proven wrong (28). The local inhabitant informs Oedipus, "ἄθικτος οὐδ'οἰκητός. αἱ γὰρ ἔμφοβοι/ θεαί σφ'ἔχουσι, Γῆς τε καὶ Σκότου κόραι" (39-40).[37] Now that the space has been identified as sacred, but forbidden, Oedipus' position in the space alters: he is no longer a stranger in an unknown land but a trespasser on sacred property.

Acknowledging his violation, Oedipus attempts to redefine his status in response to the changed space by declaring himself a ἱκέτης (suppliant) of the Eumenides (44).[38] Since he committed an illicit action by crossing into sacred territory, he adopts the language of supplication in order to remain in the space.[39] Oedipus indeed acquires a certain set of powers by participating in a ritual act of ἱκετεία (supplication)[40]: he is now under the protection of Zeus

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[34] See pages 4-5 of Preamble for the spectrum of meanings ξένος can acquire.
[35] See Figure 1.3 in the Appendix for a diagram of the multiplicity of characters referred to as ξένος in the *OC*.
[36] "leave this seat!"
[37] "It is not to be touched and not to be dwelled in. For it belongs to the terrible goddesses, daughters of both Earth and Darkness"
[38] Oedipus' identity as a 'criminal' who committed patricide and incest has not yet been revealed to the ξένος, but he is recognized as a criminal in a different sense by way of his violating sacred property.
[39] The sacred space for Oedipus is the "ξυμφορᾶς ξύνθημ' ἐμῆς" ("the token of my destiny," 46). He will later tell the Chorus that Apollo told him the grove of Eumenides should be his final respite, since it will bring advantage to those who receive him and ruin to those who exiled him (85-95).
[40] This portrayal of Oedipus enacting ritual supplication to the people of Colonus might bring to the minds of the theater audience the opening scene of *Oedipus Tyrannus (OT)*. However, as Van Erp Taalman Kip (2006: 49n20) notes, all spectators may not have registered references to *OT*, since it was performed at Dionysia some thirty years before the *OC* was performed. Nonetheless, Sophocles may have cast his own mind back to the *OT* when writing this scene of the *OC*. The *OT* begins with Oedipus, as king, stepping out of the royal palace of Thebes and being greeted by a crowd of suppliants. Thebes had

Hikesios, who threatens pollution if any breaches of the rites of supplication occur. Rather than force Oedipus from his place at the altar, the inhabitant now says that he cannot dare to turn Oedipus away without reporting him to the people of the deme (47-8) and agrees to answer his questions. By contrast, when Oedipus was a mere stranger, the inhabitant had stopped his questioning immediately (36). Oedipus now adds to his inquiry the asseveration, "πρός νυν θεῶν" (49);[41] he may be doing so as a pointed reminder to the local inhabitant of the divine protection he has entered into by virtue of his suppliant status. Perhaps in recognition of Oedipus' oath, the local graciously responds, "σήμαινε, κοὐκ ἄτιμος ἔκ γ' ἐμοῦ φανεῖ"[42] (51).

Oedipus asks the ξένος the identity of the place. The local answers with a tripartite classification: the whole place (χῶρος) is sacred, belonging to Poseidon and Prometheus; the spot (τόπος) where Oedipus treads is mythical, called the Brazen-footed Threshold (ὀδός) of the land and the safeguard of Athens[43]; and the nearby lands (πλησίοι γύαι) are a political community,

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been struck by a plague, and the citizens gathered around the palace with characteristic suppliant boughs to supplicate the king to save Thebes. After Oedipus' reversal of fortune, he is now the one in the position of a suppliant to the people of Colonus, although he seems to rely on his words rather than "perform[ing] a gesture or handl[ing] an appurtenance like a bough" in the act of supplication (Naiden 2009: 62). A gesture may be impossible because of his inability to see or to move competently; he also does not touch Theseus in the manner typical of a suppliant, for instance, because he considers himself too tainted with evil (1132-4): see further Naiden 2009: 62-9.

[41] "now in the name of the gods." According to LSJ, πρός can be used in supplication; in fact, as is probably the case here, the verb ἱκετεύω ("to supplicate") must often be inferred with the phrase πρός θεῶν.

[42] "tell me, and you will not be without honor from me"

[43] Later, the messenger will refer to this same spot where Oedipus stands as an entrance to Hades' underworld (1590-1591). The entrance is a hollow basin where the covenant of Theseus and his best friend, Peirithous, lies (1593-1594). It is perhaps puzzling that Sophocles decides to include this anachronistic detail about the spot, for Theseus' making of the covenant would have postdated the encounter with Oedipus related in the *OC*. Nonetheless, I give here some requisite background about the legend. When Theseus and Peirithous discovered that their wives died, they decided to marry the daughters of Zeus. Theseus chose Helen and with Peirithous' assistance kidnapped her; Peirithous chose Persephone, but, when he and Theseus wandered through the outskirts of the underworld, they sat down to rest on a rock and found themselves stuck to it. The Erinyes appeared and tortured them for their misdeeds. The rock where they sat is where Oedipus now finds his refuge. However, Oedipus addresses the Erinyes by their epithet "Eumenides," the "kindly ones," as a way of propitiating the goddesses and winning their good favor. The dual association of the Eumenides is reflected in Oedipus' own actions: he

boasting as their eponymous founder the horseman Colonus (54-61). The introduction of these multiple identities is significant in that they allow Oedipus to interact with the space in different ways while remaining in the single 'geographical' area of Colonus.[44] The recurrence throughout the play of the name 'Colonus' serves to unify its various identifications: it simultaneously describes the eponymous cult hero, the name of the sacred space, and the deme of Attica.

Oedipus next asks the inhabitant to summon king Theseus, "ὡς ἂν προσαρκῶν σμικρὰ κερδάνῃ μέγα"[45] (72). To the stranger's question, "καὶ τίς πρὸς ἀνδρὸς μὴ βλέποντος ἄρκεσις;"[46] Oedipus responds with a statement that synesthetically pairs sight with sound, "ὅσ' ἂν λέγωμεν πάνθ' ὁρῶντα λέξομεν"[47] (73-4). When the inhabitant leaves, Oedipus avails himself of the solitude (with only Antigone near) to supplicate the Eumenides. We now learn about the potential advantage that Oedipus brings to Athens (84-110), and which he had hinted in his conversation with the ξένος (72).[48] Oedipus reveals that, in the same Delphic oracle that told him that he would kill his father and marry his mother, Apollo had promised him that he would eventually find a seat at the place dedicated to the dread goddesses, the Eumenides; at this place of shelter, he would bring advantage by his settlement to those who received him, and ruin to those who sent him away. Apollo also promised that the sign of Oedipus' passing would come in

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brings protection with good intentions for the deme of Colonus that receives him, but also brings revenge, with bad intentions, to the city that exiled him, his former home of Thebes.

[44] The plurality of identities represented on stage mirrors the synthesis of meanings in the theater of Dionysus itself where the performance of this play would have been held. The theater simultaneously lies within a sacred space (i.e. sanctuary of Dionysus Eleuthereus), deep below a hill (i.e. Acropolis hill), and in a *polis* space (i.e. Athens).

[45] "so that by doing a small service he may make a great gain"

[46] "And what help can there be from one who sees not?"

[47] "All that I say shall be full of sight"

[48] Recall in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, Oedipus speaks as if he were the god, Apollo. At the start of the play, Oedipus calls upon Apollo, saying, "ὦναξ Ἄπολλον, εἰ γὰρ ἐν τύχῃ γέ τῳ/σωτῆρι βαίη λαμπρὸς" ("Lord Apollo, may he come to us in the brightness of saving fortune…" 80). However, by the end of the play, Oedipus is referred to as the σωτήρ of the city of Thebes. After his downfall, Oedipus claims it was Apollo who willed his ruinous destiny (1330). Oedipus might be more conscious here in the aftermath to avoid another instance of potential god-hero antagonism with the Eumenides.

the form of an earthquake, or of the thunder or the lightning of Zeus. With the knowledge of his destiny revealed to him, Oedipus was divinely guided to the sacred grove of the Eumenides; now, he appeals to the Eumenides to grant the fulfillment of his oracle so that he can find his deathbed and end his wandering.

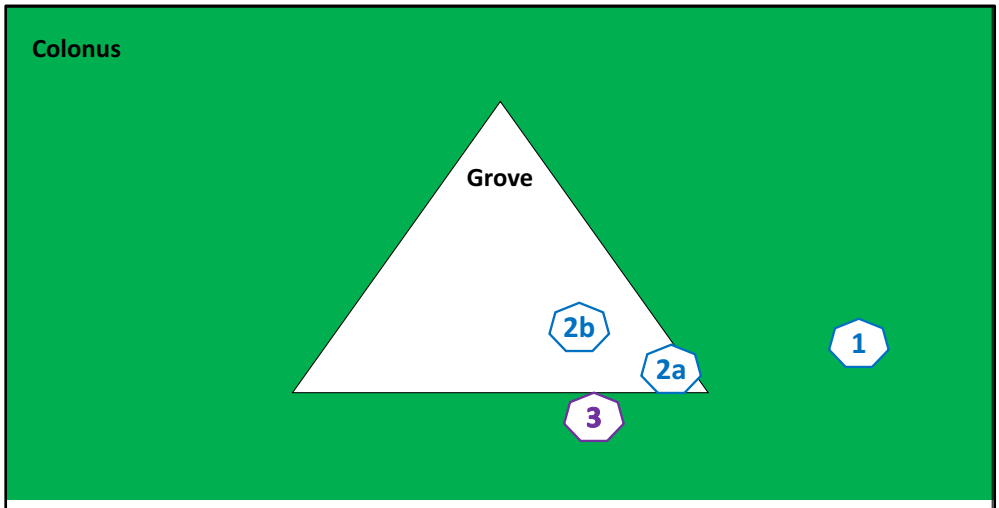
When the Chorus come to seek out the stranger, Antigone warns Oedipus to be silent, and he hides in the foliage of the grove (111-112). As the Chorus searches, they inquire aloud, "ποῦ ναίει;" (117).[49] Their use of the verb ναίω (to dwell in, settle) ostensibly asks a simply question about the location of the stranger, but also complements Oedipus' own recognition that he has arrived in his final resting place. Once the space that Oedipus occupies has been named and designated as sacred, he is no longer a wanderer but a trespasser; in order to gain protection from seizure, Oedipus appeals as a suppliant to the Eumenides in an attempt to re-define his standing.

[49] "Where does he dwell?"

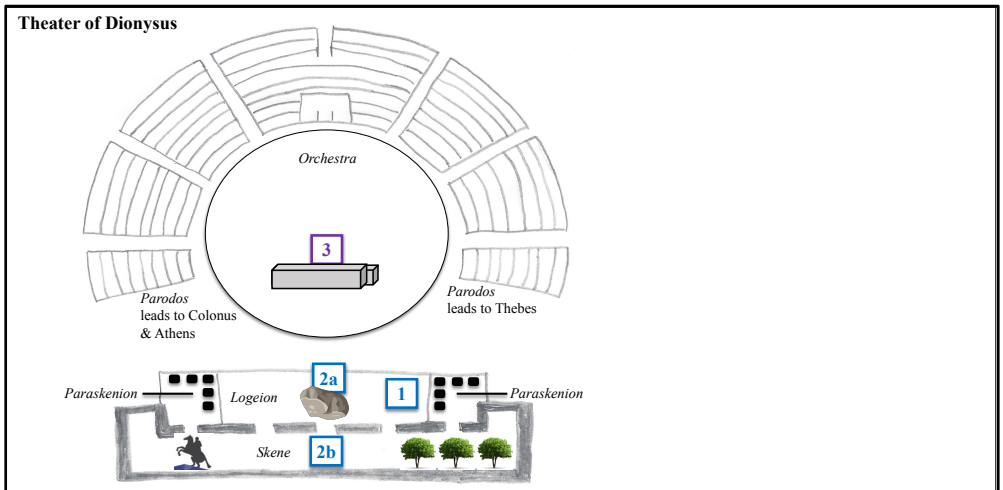
Stage 2: Metamorphosis

Space #3 – Inviolable

- Action: Negotiating
- Transformation: Dangerous suppliant → Pitiable, passive victim of ἄτη



The Chorus directs Oedipus to a "stony ledge" just outside of the grove, specifically at the threshold between sacred and profane ground (3).



The Chorus leads Oedipus to a second seat (3) -- a "stony ledge" in the orchestra – in order to converse with him. Oedipus remains on the ledge (3) while additional characters come onstage to interact with him (Ismene, Theseus, Creon, Polyneices).

The middle part of *Oedipus at Colonus* sees a rapid succession of encounters between Oedipus and other ξένοι in Colonus (the Chorus of Colonan elders, Ismene, Theseus, Creon, and Polyneices). These complex and dynamic interactions form a network of changing relations around Oedipus that ultimately determine his allegiance to Colonus. Given the intricacy of each

interaction, I have subdivided my analysis of space #3 into six sections. With each new person that Oedipus interacts in space #3 there comes a new test to the possibility of his future refuge in Athens.

A) Oedipus and the Chorus

Although Oedipus sequesters himself in the grove, he will soon again be deemed a transgressor who has violated sacred space—this time, however, he will be accused by the Chorus. Echoing Oedipus' own "τὸν πλανήτην Οἰδίπουν,"[50] the Chorus exclaims, "πλανάτας/ πλανάτας τις ὁ πρέσβυς, οὐδ' ἔγχωρος"[51] as they search for the man who violated the shrine of the Eumenides (3, 123-4). Relegated to the role of a wanderer once again, Oedipus is interrupted and forbidden to speak when he comes out into the open. He seemingly has to repeat with the Chorus the cycle of interaction he had beforehand with the ξένος.

The Chorus recognize that Oedipus is protected by the sacred grove but order him to stand away from the sacred ground in order to speak (161-9, 176-7). They lead Oedipus away from inside the sanctuary of the Eumenides to the ἔσχατα[52] beyond the sacred precinct in order to converse (217).[53] The Chorus thus demonstrate that they are aware that power depends on physical location: they separate him from the altar within the sacred grove since sustained contact with the altar would enable a flow of power from the goddesses to Oedipus as suppliant.[54] They direct Oedipus to the outermost bounds in order to diminish the strength of his divine protection, but also assure him that they will not take advantage of his blindness to

[50] "Oedipus the wanderer"
[51] "The old man is some wanderer, wanderer, and not an inhabitant!"
[52] "uttermost [space]"
[53] Cf. Jebb 1889: xiv and Markantonatos 2007: 82 for commentary on Oedipus' positioning in the space of Colonus.
[54] Cf. Gould 1973: 97.

remove him from the ground outside the grove against his will (176-7). Following the Chorus' precise instructions, Antigone leads her father to the ledge of rock beyond the sacred territory: "ἔπε' ὦδ' ἀμαυρῷ κώλῳ, πάτερ" (183).[55] In spite of his infirmity and lame foot, Oedipus lurches over to edge of the rock, crying out in pain, "ὤμοι δύσφρονος ἄτας" (202).[56] In this scene, the Chorus' interjections are also plain stage directions to move Oedipus into the center of the acting arena (see the location of space #3 in the figure of the theater above).[57]

The Chorus apostrophize Oedipus, seeking to know his identity. The conditional nature of hospitality is evident: justice must first be calculated and deliberated within the spatial arena before refuge can be granted. Oedipus is reluctant to reveal his identity, but the Chorus seem ever more eager. Antigone finally exclaims, "λέγ', ἐπείπερ ἐπ' ἔσχατα βαίνεις"[58] and Oedipus capitulates to the inquiries of the Chorus (217). When they learn that the name of the stranger is Oedipus, they order him out of the country (226).[59] Antigone intervenes to plead on behalf of Oedipus: she invokes pity, attempts flattery, and defends her father's odious acts as a consequence of his predestined fate (236-54). The Chorus pity him, but they also fear that the gods will bring misfortune upon the land for harboring a criminal such as Oedipus. The concerns of the Chorus are not unwarranted: Oedipus' acts of killing his father and incest with his mother are μιάσματα (pollutants).

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[55] "Follow me this way with your sightless steps, father"
[56] "Alas for my sorrowful ruin"
[57] Cf. Markantonatos 2007: 82.
[58] "Speak, since you are walking on the outermost bounds." Just as Oedipus breaks the boundary between the sacred precinct and profane ground, he also reaches a breaking point in conversation with the Chorus.
[59] Jebb's plausible narration of the action at this point captures the force of the Chorus' response: "The Chorus drown his [Oedipus'] voice with a great shout of execration, half turning away, and holding their mantles before their eyes" (45). In the scene immediately before, the Chorus search with their eyes in great anticipation to see the stranger; by contrast, now that they have learned the identity of the stranger, they conceal their eyes in fear of him.

Ironically, Oedipus next asks the Chorus how they can expel him "ὄνομα μόνον δείσαντες;" (265).[60] In fact, Oedipus' name precisely encapsulates his ruin. The name means literally "he whose foot is swollen" (from οἰδέω, to swell, and πούς, foot).[61] Oedipus' inability to walk in a straight line and to see where his feet lead him symbolize his meandering journey as a wanderer and his failure, as king, to guide the city of Thebes straight.[62] He endeavors to separate his σῶμα (person) from his ἔργα (actions), saying "οὐ γὰρ δὴ τό γε/ σῶμ᾽ οὐδὲ τἄργα τἄμ᾽· ἐπεὶ τά γ᾽ἔργα μου/ πεπονθότ᾽ ἐστὶ μᾶλλον ἢ δεδρακότα" (265-7).[63] Oedipus continues his defense, "νῦν δ᾽οὐδὲν εἰδὼς ἰκόμην ἵν᾽ ἰκόμην" (273).[64] Oedipus' words again highlight the irony of his god-given name: as a pun, Οἰδίπους (Oedipus) also closely resembles a conjoining of the words οἶδα (to know) and πούς (foot). He demonstrated his knowledge of feet, literally, through solving the riddle of the Sphinx.[65] Despite attaining his previous position of power in Thebes through his cleverness and knowledge, Oedipus must now appeal to his *lack* of knowledge as an excuse for

[60] "fearing only my name?"
[61] In some versions of the story, Oedipus' mother had pierced his foot with the brooch of her hair that she used to hang herself. Oedipus used this same brooch (περόνη) to prick his eye out and blind himself (*OT* 1268-1274).
[62] In *Oedipus Tyrannus*, Creon says Laius ruled Thebes before Oedipus "τήνδ᾽ἀπευθύνειν πόλιν" ("made straight again this city"; 104). Creon uses the verb ἀπευθύνω to describe Oedipus' role as king of Thebes: his duty is both "to set [the city] on a straight path again" and "to guide [the city] aright".
[63] "For surely it is not my person nor my actions [that you fear], since my acts, at least, have been in suffering rather than in doing"
[64] "but as it was I went knowing not where I went"
[65] The correct answer Oedipus gives to the riddle of the Sphinx was that a human being is the animal which goes on four feet as an infant, on two as an adult, and on three in old age with a cane. Vernant (1990: 215) adds a novel insight: "Oedipus, *Oidipous*, guesses the riddle; he himself is the dipous, the man with two feet. But his error, or rather the effect of the curse that affects his lame lineage, is that, through solving the riddle, supplying the question with its answer, he also returns to his place of origin, his father's throne and his mother's bed. Instead of rendering him like a man who walks straight in life, following on directly in his lineage, his success identifies him with the monster evoked by the Sphinx's words." Instead, he at the same time has two feet, three feet, and four feet: Oedipus is the adult with two feet, who takes his old father's place, the old man with a cane who walks on three feet, and even finds himself in Jocasta's bed, as the children who crawl on all fours. He is all three terms of the riddle simultaneously.

the actions he committed if he is to maintain his place in the sacred space of Colonus.[66] Thus, in response to the Chorus' redefinition of the sacred space as inviolable and their worries that the gods will punish them for harboring a criminal, Oedipus attempts to shift their opinion: he argues that he is an ignorant, but pious individual, who committed evil acts unwittingly; the gods will, on the contrary, punish the Chorus for sending him away. Although Oedipus was at the mercy of the Chorus, by altering their perception of him he is able to secure protection within the space.

Oedipus suggests to the Chorus that, although his fate initially brought him ruin, now it will bring him and the city that protects him good fortune (287-288). This good fortune will come from the benefit (ὄνησις) Oedipus brings to the city that receives him and gives him proper refuge, in accordance with his prophecy.[67] Oedipus' words are sufficient for the Chorus to allow him to remain in the sacred space until king Theseus, ruler of the land, arrives. Through this interchange with the Chorus, Oedipus is able to shift his standing in the inviolable space: although first deemed dangerous by the Chorus, after claiming qualities of "ἱερὸς εὐσεβής"[68] he is able to recast himself as a passive victim of his fate in relation to the Chorus as adjudicators (287). Oedipus' shift in standing earns him time to remain in the sacred space until king Theseus' arrival: Oedipus' notoriety will prompt the king to come quickly, say the Chorus (305-7).

[66] Oedipus does not make a comprehensive suppliant request to either the ξένος or the Chorus because he awaits king Theseus' arrival. In a sense, he keeps his interlocutors "blind" to the extent of his power until after he dies.
[67] Naiden 2009: 79-84 shows that not all suppliants are in an inferior position in every respect, and thus some, like Oedipus, can utilize an argument of reciprocity (suppliant will aid the *supplicandus* in the future once his request is granted) in their appeal.
[68] "sacred [and] pious"

B) Oedipus and Ismene

Antigone interrupts the conversation between Oedipus and the Chorus to announce that a woman riding on horseback is approaching them; Antigone recognizes the woman as her own sister by her smile. Because we have seen that Antigone's perception of her surroundings has been wrong before,[69] the appearance of the rider teases us with the potential of Theseus' arrival: the association she makes between the stranger and horses might recall the image of the horseman Colonus, the eponym of the deme, and thus suggest the advent of another famous founder-hero, Theseus.[70] In this case, however, Antigone is correct. It is her sister, Ismene, who arrives with news of the chaos ensuing in Thebes: Eteocles, Oedipus' younger son, has driven out his elder brother Polyneices and claimed the throne for himself; meanwhile, the exiled Polyneices has found refuge at Argos and raised an army which he plans to use to attack Thebes and restore himself to kingship (365-381).

Ismene now reports to Oedipus that the latest oracles have pronounced that the people of Thebes will seek him out for their own preservation (389-90). She also confirms that the location of his tomb has the power to save or destroy Thebes.[71] The people of Thebes, from whom he was forced to flee, now "[…] σε προσθέσθαι πέλας/ χώρας θέλουσι, μηδ' ἵν' ἂν σαυτοῦ κρατοῖς" (404-5).[72] That is, although the Thebans will prohibit Oedipus from returning to Thebes out of fear that he will cause another plague, they nevertheless want his body to remain close enough to

[69] Antigone's inference, at the start of the play, that she and Oedipus were in *permissible* sacred territory because it was seemingly inhabited was incorrect: they soon discovered they were in inviolable sacred land.
[70] Rehm (2002: 58) notes that "[…] the mythological hero Theseus [is] the closest Athens got to a founding hero and the representative of Athens in tragedy…"
[71] Beforehand, when Oedipus supplicated to the Eumenides, he recounted the Apollonian oracle given to him at Delphi that claimed he would bring advantage to those who received him and ruin to those who sent him away (92-3). Ismene now brings the most recent oracles, which confirm Oedipus' destiny.
[72] "wish to make you an ally near their land, but not where you would have power over yourself"

the borders of the city such that he does not bestow advantage upon another city at Thebes' expense.[73] Ismene's explicit description of the oracle and its consequences reiterate that Oedipus' power in relation to others lies in the locus of space that he occupies. The recent news also emphasizes the extraordinary nature of Oedipus' suppliant status as one of prophetic significance: the Thebans want Oedipus θύρασι[74] in order to wield his power over their territory for their benefit, reenacting the Chorus' attempt to move Oedipus outside of the central grove of Eumenides in order to shift the balance of power in their favor (401). The news of the Delphic oracle that Ismene brings further strengthens Oedipus' cause in his negotiation with the Chorus to remain in the sacred grove, since he contends that he can confer great benefit on Athens rather than on Thebes.

Oedipus refuses to play the role of passive victim in the oracle and instead makes active use of the power he derives from the oracle to enact retribution on the inhabitants of Thebes. After learning that his sons were informed of the prophecy but did not lift a hand to help summon him back, Oedipus grows furious; he recalls how his sons had earlier refused to help him when he was uprooted and exiled from Thebes, greedy as they both were to secure power after his abdication (441-444). He thus decides to take revenge on the people of Thebes, especially his sons, who deserted him in his hour of need, by giving his protection to the people of Athens instead (457-460). His willingness to become "σωτήρ" (savior) of Athens recalls his former status as "σωτήρ" of Thebes when the Thebans had honored him for liberating them from the Sphinx.

[73] This portrayal of the Thebans wanting control over the location of an unburied body is repeated in Sophocles' *Antigone* [chronologically the third of the Theban plays, but the first written].
[74] "outside" or "at the door"

The Chorus, who have remained on stage for the duration of Ismene's interaction with Oedipus, hear of the advantage that Oedipus' burial in their deme will bring. Accordingly, they now advise Oedipus to purify himself of his pollutions in order to transform himself into a viable protector of the deme. Oedipus warmly accepts their advice, exclaiming, "ὦ φίλταθ', ὥς νυν πᾶν τελοῦντι προξένει" (465).[75] πρόξενος literally means "one who represents a ξένος". The duty of the πρόξενος traditionally entailed advocating for a policy of cooperation and preventing war between two city-states. In view of the potential for war between Thebes and Athens as the two city-states vie for control over his burial place, perhaps Oedipus intentionally assigns the role of προξένοι to the Chorus in order to establish them as potential peacemakers.[76]

Although the revelation that his body will bring Colonus advantage increases Oedipus' power, he remains subordinate, for he does not have the means to yield this benefit alone: he must first be cleansed of his pollution before he can offer the deme his protection. Thus, when the Chorus describe the ritual purification to Oedipus, he complies in an acknowledgment of their superior status, as he also did earlier when they directed him to his position at the edge of the grove. The Chorus tell Oedipus exactly how he should perform the ritual: he must bring, from a stream, sacred libations of pure water mixed with honey and pour them from κρατῆρες (basins).[77] Oedipus assigns the task of conducting the ritual to one of his daughters,
"οὐ γὰρ ἂν σθένοι τοὐμὸν δέμας/ ἔρημον ἕρπειν οὐδ' ὑφηγητοῦ δίχα" (501-2).[78] We are reminded again that, in this inviolable space, Oedipus is in a position of helplessness. Ismene takes up the role of conducting the ritual, and the Chorus direct her "τοὐκεῖθεν ἄλσους, ὦ ξένη, τοῦδ'"

[75] "Dearest, be my *proxenoi*, so that I may now bring everything to completion"
[76] Looking ahead in the play, when Creon enters the grove to steal Antigone and Oedipus away, the Chorus come to their protection by grabbing hold of Creon and calling upon Theseus and the people of Athens for help (857).
[77] I will return to the significance of these ritual elements in my subsequent analysis of space #4 (ritual).
[78] "for my body would not have the strength to move alone and not without a guide"

(505).[79] Although Oedipus remains in space #3 onstage, the movement of Ismene indicates that the ritual purification will begin offstage. As we will see, Oedipus' purification is delayed by the subsequent trials he must face in space #3; only when he has been purified can he can complete his transformation from a beneficiary into a benefactor of Athens.

C) Oedipus and Chorus

Alone with Oedipus (Antigone stands nearby), the Chorus, eager to verify the rumors that he married his mother and murdered his father, inquire further into Oedipus' past. Oedipus pleads the Chorus, "μὴ πρὸς ξενίας ἀνοίξῃς/ τᾶς σᾶς ἃ πέπονθ' ἀναιδῆ" (515-16).[80] He again tries to appeal to the unconditional nature of hospitality, as he had first done when the Chorus demanded that he reveal his identity, but he is forced to yield to the will of the host citizens. His inability to receive welcome passage into Colonus without unveiling his identity and past history in fact demonstrates the conditionality of hospitality. Mustafa Dikec et al. base this conditional in the distinction between the "ethics" and "politics" of hospitality: they define the "ethics" of hospitality as "the scene for *unconditional* obligation to welcome the Other without question," and the "politics" of hospitality as "the realm in which hospitality is *conditionally* extended as a right to certain categories of person."[81] The normative principle of unlimited responsibility towards protecting ξένοι, sanctioned by Zeus Xenios, is contravened by the calculation and balancing of interests as exhibited by the Chorus of elders, whose choices are dictated by the circumstances of

[79] "on the further side of this grove"
[80] "In the name of hospitality, do not open up the shameful things which I have suffered". Cf. LSJ s.v. ἀναιδής AII. Jebb notes in his commentary that "the address πέπον occurs 18 times in Homer and the hymns, and always marks familiarity; there is a touch of household intimacy in it ... It is absurdly out of place here" (89). However, I contend that the sense of increased familiarity Oedipus feels with the Chorus is not entirely inappropriate here. Oedipus has now developed a relation with the Chorus, even prior to the anticipated entrance of Theseus, by virtue of offering himself as a human talisman for Athens.
[81] Dikec et al. 2009: 12.

the space of the *polis*.[82] Oedipus stands literally at the threshold between the sacred and political space; he has become a suppliant of the Eumenides but still needs to be accepted as a suppliant of Athens. He struggles to find acceptance in the space of the *polis*, alternating between appeals to the "ethical" and the "political" aspects of hospitality: his ethical claim parallels his invocation of ξενία, such that he solicits the citizens of Athens for protection without question (unconditionally) in exchange for his offer to be a great preserver for the city ("μέγας σωτήρ"); whereas his political claim parallels his claim to ἱκετεία, such that he presents himself at the discretion of the king and citizens of Athens (conditionally) in order to receive protection under the city.

Oedipus knows that, if his appeal is to be successful, he must comply with the inquiries of the host citizens. Therefore, he hesitantly confirms the rumors of incest and patricide but recasts himself as an undeserving victim of his fate, placing the Chorus in a position to judge. He explains that he received Jocasta as a "δῶρον" (gift)—a destructive one that he regrets ever accepting. Oedipus' former position as a receiver of gifts, when he was king of Thebes, stands in contrast to his current position as a provider of gifts, when he is now found at the nadir of his tragedy as a suppliant of Athens. He evokes the potential for a gift to be ruinous for a city and thus, perhaps unintentionally, calls attention to the risk that the people of Colonus would be taking on by

[82] The conditionality of hospitality offered in a space of refuge is expressed foremost by Immanuel Kant in his essay, *Perpetual Peace*. In the 'Third Definitive Article For A Perpetual Peace' (Kant 2010: 101), he writes of the right to hospitality, "But this natural right of hospitality, i.e. the right of strangers, does not extend beyond those conditions which make it possible for them to *attempt* to enter into relations with the native inhabitants." In other words, although hospitality is founded on the natural finitude of the Earth's surface, the conditions of the time and space offered to the refugee is necessarily delimited by the laws and boundaries of states. Derrida (2000: 27-29) continues this line of thought by posing the question, "Where does hospitality begin? […] Does it begin with a question addressed to the newcomer or does it begin with an unquestioning welcome?" The address with a question signals "conditional hospitality," and a welcome without question signals "unconditional hospitality".

accepting his offer. Regardless, he defends himself to the Chorus by giving "πρὸς δίκας τι,"[83] as he did when they first learned of his identity (548): he blames the crimes he committed on his ignorance (550). As before, the Chorus relent and leave the matter up to king Theseus.

D) Oedipus and Theseus

King Theseus, eagerly awaited, finally enters the grove. He recognizes Oedipus right away by the state of his clothing and sight of his mutilated face[84] (555). In contrast to his encounters with the native ξένος and the Chorus, Oedipus evokes Theseus' pity (οἶκτος) merely from his appearance. Theseus says to Oedipus, "δίδασκε,"[85] hinting at the future reversal of power between him and Oedipus (560). In fact, throughout this interchange Theseus puts himself on an equal level with Oedipus: Theseus says he would never turn away a ξένος such as Oedipus, "ἐπεὶ / ἔξοιδ' ἀνὴρ ὢν, χὤτι τῆς ἐς αὔριον/ οὐδὲν πλέον μοι σοῦ μέτεστιν ἡμέρας" (566-8).[86] Theseus reveals the reasoning for his immediate compassion: he remembers his own exile and shares in solidarity with the struggles that Oedipus has suffered (562-564). Oedipus is pleased by Theseus' sympathy in spite of his dreadful past and advances towards making his official suppliant request.[87] Oedipus uses the same word, δῶρον, to describe his "ἄθλιον δέμας,"[88] as he used to describe

[83] "a plea of *dike*." Oedipus argues that he has 'justice' on his side, since he killed against his will (ἄκων) and was a victim of ἄτη. Oedipus reiterates this point in his defense against Creon's spurious claims (962-968). Cf. Naiden 2009: 94.
[84] Van Erp Taalman Kip (2006: 43). As Van Erp Taalman Kip notes, we cannot be sure whether Oedipus' mask would show the scars from his self-mutilation, but we can deduce from Theseus' first lines that he has heard the tale of Oedipus' self-blinding and, seeing his face, knows it must be him; Oedipus himself said earlier that his "face is a horror to behold" (κάρα τὸ δυσπρόσοπτον; 285-6).
[85] "teach me!"
[86] "Since I know well that I am a man, and that my portion of tomorrow is no greater than yours"
[87] Oedipus' appeal consists of two primary elements: solidarity among *xenoi*, and reciprocity (Theseus will end Oedipus' exile in return for the protection Oedipus' corpse will confer over the city). Unlike the traditional appeals of a suppliant: religious obligation, kinship, friendship, justice.
[88] "wretched body"

Jocasta's body; rather than bring ruin to a city, however, this gift will confer great benefits (576-8). The exact nature of these benefits is not revealed to Theseus; Oedipus says the benefit, though not evident now, will be revealed when he dies and is given proper burial. To a certain extent, Oedipus himself seems ignorant of the nature of his own power—he is guided by the gods' will. Nevertheless, he wields what knowledge of his prophecy that he does have as a means of preserving himself. Oedipus draws upon what he knows to selectively divulge aspects of his fate: he reveals the power that his dead body will have for the protection of the city that buries him but does not disclose any details yet about how exactly this power will be made manifest.[89]

Theseus remarks, with puzzlement, that Oedipus' request for refuge only touches upon the last things in life and not on protection *during* his lifetime. Oedipus responds in the affirmative with the explanation, "ἐνταῦθα γάρ μοι κεῖνα συγκομίζεται" (585).[90] In other words, as Jebb notes, Oedipus is saying that if Theseus grants his request to be eventually buried in Athens, he cannot at the same time allow him to be forcibly removed to the Theban frontier in the meanwhile. Oedipus thus foreshadows the future threats to his stay in Athens by both Creon and Polyneices; by securing his stay at Athens under Theseus' protection, Oedipus in a sense also "brings together" the middle part of the play, the action of which serves as a bridge to the inevitable ending of Oedipus' burial at Colonus, hinted at from the beginning of the play.[91]

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[89] Recall Oedipus' wielding of his prophecy beforehand (Oedipus reveals to the anonymous ξένος merely that "[…] by doing a small service he [Theseus] may make a great gain" (72) (passage analyzed on page 13 of this chapter) and he tells the Chorus just as much, that he will bring advantage to the citizens of Athens (287) (passage analyzed on page 19 of this chapter). Now that king Theseus has arrived, he will learn "in time" (χρόνῳ) what benefits will come from the gift of Oedipus' body (580) – I will analyze the passage where Oedipus reveals more detail about the benefits he brings in the section on ritual space #4 (refer to page 52).

[90] "Yes, for those things (sc. τὰ ἐν μέσῳ) are both gained at once for me there." For context, "those things" refers to the middle part of life (τὰ ἐν μέσῳ).

[91] This reading is comparable with Reinhardt's comment on Sophocles' *OC*, "the beginning is closest to the ending, but the middle part moves away" (Reinhardt 1979: 194).

Theseus at first asks Oedipus why conflict with Thebes would concern him and his city. In spite of his immediate sympathy for Oedipus, he wants to know before establishing a formal relationship of ξενία how Oedipus' stay will personally benefit him and Athens. Oedipus responds to Theseus' inquiry with a series of gnomic expressions (γνῶμαι). I digress here to analyze Oedipus' response because it is illustrative of larger themes that recur throughout the narrative.[92] Oedipus begins his speech by saying, "μόνοις οὐ γίγνεται/ θεοῖσι γῆρας οὐδὲ κατθανεῖν ποτε,/ τὰ δ' ἄλλα συγχεῖ πάνθ' ὁ παγκρατὴς χρόνος" (607-609).[93] As long as he remains outside the shrine of the Eumenides with their divine power, Oedipus is unable to achieve immortalization. As we will see, he must re-enter the grove in order to complete his final transformation into a protector of Athens. Oedipus continues his speech, commenting on the nature of time and change for mortals, in contrast to the gods: he maintains that the strength of land and of the body perishes, loyalty dies and disloyalty arises, friendships turn bitter and friendships are restored to happy relations (610-615). He forewarns that, although relations between Thebes and Athens are harmonious now, they will inevitably fall into discord, given the nature of time. His body, however, could bring permanent victory to the Athenians and defeat to the Thebans if it were buried in Athenian soil.[94] Oedipus mentioned at the start of the play his companionship with χρόνος (7), and, in this passage, he not only demonstrates his authoritative knowledge of time but also makes use of a dialogue on

[92] Cf. De Romilly 1968: 87-111. De Romilly writes, "Time has become the cause of all the ups and downs in life, which have no reason in themselves" (93). She shows how the same view of time expressed by Oedipus, namely as the cause of mutability and suggestion of violent changes, recurs in Sophocles' other plays too; she also traces the opposition between gods and men with regard to time in works of other authors, including Pindar, Herodotus, and Heraclitus. Budelmann (2000: 74-80) presents an interesting discussion of how Oedipus' gnomic statements in *OC* compare to Creon's in the *OT*.

[93] "for the gods alone there is no old age and no death ever, but all other things are confounded by all-powerful time."

[94] Oedipus speaks in an intense, and quite unsettling manner here, indicating his strong desire to exact revenge against the Thebans: "ἵν' οὑμὸς εὕδων καὶ κεκρυμμένος νέκυς/ ψυχρός ποτ' αὐτῶν θερμὸν αἷμα πίεται" ("in order that my dead body, slumbering and secret, cold [as it is], shall sometime drink their warm blood"; 621-22). Cf. LSJ κρύπτω s.v. I 3.

time in order to persuade Theseus to grant him refuge. Throughout the play, we can observe how Oedipus uses time—past, present, and future—again and again to his advantage. In the present, he deliberately unveils aspects of his past and anticipates the future at certain points of the narrative. In his conversations with the ξένος and the Chorus, he has been stalling for time in order to make his final appeal; here, when Theseus finally arrives, Oedipus' relations with time culminate in this highly dramatic, gnomic speech. Oedipus' remarks serve as a reminder that hospitality is conditioned not only by the spatial but also by the temporal.[95] Oedipus' calculated changes in space and time alter his relations with others in Colonus.

Oedipus ends his speech by saying that he will never be an "ἀχρεῖον οἰκητῆρα"[96] for Athens (627); in this way, he also indicates his desire to be a resident within the sacred space of Colonus. The Chorus support Oedipus' claims, vouching that he will fulfill his promise and serve as an asset for the city. Theseus is also convinced that Oedipus brings "εὐμένειαν"[97] with him, partly in recognition of Oedipus' 'suppliant' (ἱκέτης) status under the Eumenides (goddesses of 'goodwill') (487). In accepting Oedipus into Athens, Theseus gives two reasons for doing so (632-635)[98]:

ὅτῳ πρῶτον μὲν ἡ δορύξενος

[95] Cf. Dikec (2009: 11-12): "'Time' is what the arrival of the other opens up. It is what is given in the process of welcoming the other. Attending to the temporization of hospitality…brings us to the issue of hospitality as a moment or an instant, but also the extended temporality of patience, postponing and deferring…Every act of hospitality gives space, just as it gives time." Interestingly, Dikec in this passage, summarizing the theories on hospitality by Kant, Derrida, and Levinas, speaks of the "host" determining the proper time of offering hospitality to the suppliant. However, Oedipus, as suppliant, unusually controls the time in which he *asks* for hospitality and does not remain at the behest of the host citizens who *give* the hospitality.

[96] "unprofitable inhabitant"

[97] "favor of the gods" or simply "goodwill"

[98] "To whom, first, the hearth of an ally [δορύξενος] is always common among us; and then he has come as a suppliant of the gods, and is paying no small reward to this country and to me." Note that δορύξενος literally means "spear-friend" (i.e. "an ally in war," one with whom one has a tie of ξενία in war). Sophocles' use of the word δορύξενος perhaps foreshadows the Athenians support of Oedipus when faced with the threat of war by Creon.

κοινὴ παρ᾽ ἡμῖν αἰέν ἐστιν ἑστία,

ἔπειτα δ᾽ ἱκέτης δαιμόνων ἀφιγμένος

γῇ τῇδε κἀμοὶ δασμὸν οὐ σμικρὸν τίνει.

Theseus' response reinforces the simultaneous "ethical" (i.e. man's natural right to the hearth) and "political" (i.e. host citizens' right to determining the conditions upon which a foreigner can reside in their land) dimensions of hospitality. It is furthermore significant that king Theseus' acceptance of Oedipus into Athens takes place at the same time as Ismene's performance of the rites of purification on behalf of Oedipus. Ismene's rites take place offstage beyond the visible tableau (see space #4a in Figure 1.2 in the Appendix). Yet, her actions seemingly affect Oedipus onstage in his interaction with Theseus (see space #3 in Figure 1.2 in the Appendix), for rather than rejecting Oedipus when he meets him, Theseus immediately welcomes him with generosity. It may be owing to the effect of Ismene's purification rites that Theseus shows so little anxiety over Oedipus' pollution, in contrast to the Chorus—but we must not forget, of course, the promise of collective well-being for the city of Athens that Oedipus holds out to him.[99]

We can be certain that Theseus welcomes Oedipus into the city of Athens, but in what capacity Oedipus will reside in the *polis* is not entirely clear and indeed remains a matter of considerable debate today.[100] Theseus' declaration in the Greek reads as follows: "ἀγὼ σέβας θεὶς

[99] Meinel takes my analysis a step further by arguing that Theseus does not even regard Oedipus as polluted: the distinct ritual categories of "pure" and "polluted" are insignificant to the king. Meinel (2015: 211) writes, "[…] whatever his [Theseus'] 'real' assessment of Oedipus' ritual state, to Theseus (ritual) labels mean very little. The Athenian king, that is, also allows Oedipus to occupy an indeterminate space between, or beyond, ritual categories…Colonus accommodates an Oedipus whose position vis-à-vis the city is as vague as his ritual status." However, Oedipus must still complete the ritual purification in order to propitiate the Eumenides, whose shrine has trespassed, and remain safely in Colonus. According to Knox (1968: 152), "The ceremony of purification will restore him [Oedipus] to proper contact with the goddesses [Eumenides] on whom he will later call for strength and words to curse Creon and his own sons; it is in no sense a ritual absolution from the pollution of his past actions."

[100] Cf. Wilson 1997: 63-90.

οὔποτ᾽ ἐκβαλῶ χάριν/ τὴν τοῦδε, χώρᾳ δ᾽ ἔμπολιν κατοικιῶ" (636-7). Controversy lies in whether the true reading is "ἔμπολιν" (according to Musgraves's emendation[101]) or "ἔμπαλιν," as transmitted. If it is "ἔμπαλιν," the rendering of Theseus' declaration would be: "Never will I, being a reverent man, cast the favor of this man [Oedipus] out, but, on the contrary [ἔμπαλιν], I will establish it [his favor] in this land" (636-7). The χάρις (favor) that Oedipus bestows on Athens is the gift of his own body, which can be understood as a metonym for the person of Oedipus himself.[102] In other words, Theseus acknowledges that he will never cast Oedipus out of Athens, but will rather allow him to stay in the city under his protection. On the other hand, if we read "ἔμπολιν," Theseus would be saying: "Never will I, being a reverent man, cast the favor of this man [Oedipus] out, but I will establish him as a citizen [ἔμπολιν] in the land" (636-7).

As Wilson argues in *The Hero and the City,* the use of the noun χώρα suggests that "Sophocles wished to emphasize that his hero was more integrally a part of the land than a part of the city,"[103] thereby substantiating the reading of ἔμπαλιν ("on the contrary"). Theseus' use of the verb, κατοικίζω, meaning "to establish an *oikos* (home)," might suggest the proper use of the noun ἔμπολις (in or belonging to the city), but one should note that a resident in Athens did not necessarily have to be a citizen. To put it simply, I think the title of the play encapsulates Oedipus' status: he is Οἰδίπους ἐπὶ Κολώνῳ (Oedipus at Colonus) not Οἰδίπους Κολώναθεν (Oedipus of Colonus).[104] Regardless, Theseus next gives Oedipus two options for residing in Athens: he may stay in the grove with an appointed guard or he can accompany Theseus to his home (638-9). Oedipus decides to stay in the grove, and, by granting the favor of his tomb, Theseus also sanctions his burial. Oedipus does not bind Theseus with an oath, nor does the king offer a

[101] Cf. Musgrave 1800.
[102] For this metonymy of χάρις, cf. Vidal-Naquet 1990: 343-344.
[103] Wilson 1997: 87.
[104] Vidal-Naquet 1990: 352-353.

formal pledge or oath, declaring instead that Oedipus will receive nothing more than his word (650-1).

Oedipus is hesitant to trust that Theseus will act upon his word to protect him—perhaps ironically, considering that Oedipus has offered only his own word to Theseus about protecting Athens after his burial. Oedipus begins to advise Theseus on how he can offer care even while away, but Theseus interrupts him, "μὴ δίδασχ᾽ ἃ χρή με δρᾶν" (654).[105] Theseus' rejection of Oedipus' counsel stands in direct contrast to how he first greeted Oedipus, when he used the imperative of the same verb (διδάσκω, 560) to ask Oedipus to make his complete suppliant request. Although Oedipus has earned residence in Athens, he is here reminded of the superior status that Theseus holds in the situation. There may be an exchange of benefit for benefit, but until Oedipus has conferred his benefit on the city, Theseus maintains his position of strength. The subsequent entrances of ξένοι from Thebes, who will try to solicit Oedipus' body as a boon to their city, will test the strength of his relationship with Theseus and the host citizens.

Theseus now departs and Oedipus is again left with the Chorus. The Chorus sing a beautiful, lyrical ode to the deme Colonus, which complements Antigone's tentative description to Oedipus at the start of the play (14-18) as well as the description given by the ξένος (54-61). It seems as if all divine forces are present in the land: Dionysus treads the sacred ground with his Maenads (679-80); Demeter and Persephone are symbolized in the flourishing narcissus flower (682-84); the space is beloved by the choruses of the Muses and Aphrodite (692-4); a *sui generis* olive tree, self-created, is looked upon favorably by Zeus Morios and Athena (705-6); lord Poseidon, god of horses, accompanied by the Nereids, brought fame to the deme by creating the bridle that tames horses and by bestowing the gift of seamanship (713-719). Since Oedipus has

[105] "Do not teach me what I ought to do!"

recently been proclaimed a resident of Athens, the Chorus now share their full knowledge about the special historical and mythical significance of Colonus. Oedipus evidently no longer treads in an unknown or inviolable space: having joined the community, he will now consider the space of Colonus as his own.

E) Oedipus and Creon

Antigone forewarns Oedipus that Creon is drawing near the grove of Colonus and not without escorts (722-723). While awaiting the impending entrance of Creon, Oedipus worries that his safety in the space of refuge will be violated. The Chorus now assure him, "θάρσει, παρέσται" (726).[106] Apparently, the Chorus of elders have taken over from Theseus the role of Oedipus' guardian; they pledge to protect him within the space of Colonus. In the following section, I explore how the challenge posed by Creon's entrance puts Oedipus' relationship with the host citizens of Colonus, including the Chorus and Theseus, to the test: is he still considered a transgressor by the host community, or has he 'officially' gained admittance into the deme of Colonus?

When Creon first arrives, he addresses the Chorus "ἄνδρες χθονὸς τῆσδ' εὐγενεῖς οἰκήτορες" (728)[107] and immediately attempts to forestall any hostile or fearful reactions by insisting that he is an old man. He even goes so far as to praise Athens as a city of great power (730-4).[108] To Oedipus, he says that the whole citizenry of Thebes grieves for his sorrows in exile and wishes him to return home. He further insinuates that Oedipus, in his stubbornness to remain at Athens, has brought misfortune upon his daughter Antigone by compelling her to

[106] "Take courage, it [i.e. your safety] will be present!"
[107] "Men who are the noble dwellers in this land"
[108] In a way similar to Oedipus' own anticipation of the hostile reaction of the Chorus when they encounter him in the grove of Colonus (258-291).

wander in misery like a beggar and to remain unwed (747-752). He defends this reproach against Oedipus as one necessary to expose, even if cruel.[109] Although Athens is a city deserving of praise, Creon insists that Thebes, Oedipus' home city, justly deserves more respect (758-760). Through a mixture of persuasion and flattery, he attempts to draw Oedipus out of Athens.

Oedipus remains unconvinced and, indeed, is incensed by Creon's appeal: Oedipus reminds Creon that he had been the one to send Oedipus into exile against his wishes; Creon's novel show of "χάρις" (grace, favor) comes far too late (766-779). In light of Ismene's report of the Apollonian prophecy, Oedipus also suspects that Creon's offer to reincorporate Oedipus into his home city at Thebes is a lie; he knows that Creon will leave him at the gates of Thebes ("ἥκεις ἔμ' ἄξων, οὐχ ἵν' ἐς δόμους ἄγῃς,/ ἀλλ' ὡς πάραυλον οἰκίσῃς"[110]) and will not bury him within the city (784-785). Oedipus will have none of it. He dismisses Creon abruptly, "ἴθι·/ ἡμᾶς δ' ἔα ζῆν ἐνθάδ'· οὐ γὰρ ἂν κακῶς/ οὐδ' ὧδ' ἔχοντες ζῷμεν, εἰ τερποίμεθα" (797-799).[111] Now that he has obtained permanent residency in Colonus, Oedipus rejects Creon in the same way that he was initially repudiated by the ξένος and Chorus upon his arrival in the deme. In fact, Oedipus has so quickly assimilated into the space of Colonus that he now thinks of it as his own, and he says on behalf of the Chorus: "ἄπελθ', ἐρῶ γὰρ καὶ πρὸ τῶνδε, μηδέ με/ φύλασσ' ἐφορμῶν ἔνθα χρὴ ναίειν ἐμέ" (811-12).[112]

Creon recognizes that Oedipus has overestimated his authority in this space and makes clear that he addresses not Oedipus but the Chorus in his entreaty; he even refers to the Chorus as

[109] As it happens, Oedipus does not explicitly include Antigone's woes in his laments or appeals, and it seems as if Antigone accompanies Oedipus on *his* own journey of hardship and wandering. Creon uses the same word for beggar ("πτωχός") to describe Antigone that Oedipus used to describe himself (444).
[110] "you have come to fetch me, not that you may lead me home, but that you may settle me on the borders"
[111] "Go, let me live in this land, for I shall not live badly, even as I am, if I am to enjoy myself."
[112] "Go, for I will speak for these men too, and do not lie by and keep watch over me in the place where I must live"

"τοὺς φίλους" (friends) in an attempt to establish solidarity in power against Oedipus (813). The Chorus remain silent until they are called upon by Oedipus to make a choice between betraying him or staying faithful to him.[113] When Oedipus learns that Creon has captured Ismene while she was attending to the propitiatory sacrifice in Oedipus' name, he calls out to the Chorus as his ξένοι (guest-friends): "ἰὼ ξένοι. τί δράσετ'; ἦ προδώσετε,/ κοὐκ ἐξελᾶτε τὸν ἀσεβῆ τῆσδε χθονός;" (822-3).[114] Here is the test of the refugee-host relation: has Oedipus been fully accepted and recognized by the Chorus as a fellow resident of Colonus? Has he earned, in the eyes of the Chorus, a rightful place in the community? Perhaps the uncertainty about the nature of the relation between the Chorus and Oedipus stems from him straddling the line between suppliant (ἱκέτης) and guest-friend (ξένος). Oedipus' identity at the threshold between two categories of social relation mirrors his physical position at the boundary between the sacred and political space (for reference, Oedipus still lies at space #3 in Figure 1.1 in Appendix). He is at once both a suppliant of the gods and a ξένος of Theseus and the people of Athens.[115] With his anxious question, Oedipus seeks to clarify his relationship with the Chorus, who stand in for the people

[113] Oedipus has pledged his loyalty to his fellow Athenians over his kin (Creon). He addresses both the Chorus of Colonean elders and Theseus with "ὦ φίλταθ'" (465, 607, 724). On the other hand, he rejects Creon's professed φιλία of kinship since Creon has failed time and again to promote Oedipus' own interests and to help satisfy his own wishes (cf. Blundell 1989: 234). Quite explicitly, Oedipus condemns Creon, "οὐδέ σοι/ τὸ συγγενὲς τοῦτ' οὐδαμῶς τότ' ἦν φίλον" ("and this kinship was in no way dear [φίλον] to you then"; 770-1). It is now up to the Chorus to decide whether they will support Oedipus as their fellow φίλος or whether they still consider him as a ξένος, in the sense of a stranger to whom no duty is owed.

[114] "Ah, my guest-friends. What shall you do? Shall you betray me, and not drive the impious man away from this land?"

[115] King Theseus alludes to this dual role of Oedipus, as suppliant and ξένος, in the speech in which he formally accepts Oedipus into Athens (636-7, quoted and discussed on pages 20-21). Cf. Gould for a potential explanation of the distinction between relations in a situation of guest-friendship and relations in a situation of supplication. Gould (1973: 88) contends that the relationship among guest-friends is one of "mutual conferment of honor and esteem: both men treat one another as peers, and both are proud and confident, and emphasis on feelings of inhibition is correspondingly less"; on the other hand, in a relationship between suppliant and host, "consciousness of the great imbalance of status and honor brings into play feelings of constraint and a less self-confident pattern of demeanor and behavior, accompanied at times by an atmosphere of strain and embarrassment."

of Athens.[116] Although the Chorus was present for Theseus' acceptance of Oedipus, they have so far has remained silent on the matter.

The Chorus answer Oedipus by echoing his dismissal of Creon: "χώρει, ξέν', ἔξω θᾶσσον· οὔτε γὰρ τὰ νῦν / δίκαια πράσσεις οὔθ' ἃ πρόσθεν εἴργασαι" (824-825).[117] The arrival of Creon thus makes explicit a shift in Oedipus' status in relation to the Chorus and highlights the flexibility of the term ξένος, which can adopt a range of meanings, including both "stranger" and "guest-friend": although both Oedipus and Creon are called ξένοι, they adopt different postures in relation to the host community. When applied to Oedipus, ξένος should no longer be understood in the sense of a stranger but in the sense of a guest-friend through the compact of ξενία; when applied to Creon, ξένος should be understood as a mere stranger.[118] By claiming the deme of Colonus in Athens as his designated space of residence, rather than Thebes as Creon desires, Oedipus pledges his allegiance to Athens and confirms his relation of ξενία with the host citizens. Thus, Oedipus' status as ξένος, meaning guest-friend, *derives* from his formal relationship of ξενία, whereas Creon is a ξένος only in the sense of a stranger because he lacks any formal societal relation with the Athenians.

The suggestion that Oedipus has secured a relationship of ξενία with the people of Colonus is corroborated by the way that the Chorus and Theseus defend him and his daughters when they are in danger at the hands of Creon. Having abducted Ismene, Creon now tells his escort it is the right moment (καιρός) to seize Antigone (825-826). Creon says he will not touch

[116] Budelmann (2000: 203) makes the case for arguing that, although the Chorus in *OC* are noblemen and not ordinary citizens, "they are at the same time part of the large group and speak for the city of Athens."
[117] "Go away, stranger, make haste! For neither the things you do now nor that which you did before have been just." The Chorus has sided with Oedipus. Creon later interjects to retort that Oedipus is the one who has been unrighteous in the past and in the present, wishing for victory over his country (Thebes) and his friends (Thebans) (852-855).
[118] For the range of meanings of ξένος see pages 5-6.

Oedipus, but Antigone rightly belongs to him. The Chorus rebuke Creon, warning him that his actions are unjust (832). Oedipus calls upon the πόλις ("city") of Athens for help (834). This sets in motion a number of actions on stage around the sightless Oedipus. Creon orders the Chorus, "εἴργου" ("stand back!"), since they have presumably moved forward to guard Antigone (836). The Chorus refuse and stand their ground even at the threat of war with Thebes (837-9). They demand that Creon let go of Antigone, but he scoffs at their claim to authority: "μὴ ᾽πίτασσ᾽ ἃ μὴ κρατεῖς" (839).[119] Creon considers not only Oedipus inferior to him but also the Chorus who has allied with him. The Chorus of elders now enjoin the people of Athens to advance toward Colonus, chanting "πρόβαθ᾽ ὧδε, βᾶτε βᾶτ᾽, ἔντοποι" (841).[120] Antigone invokes the protection afforded by the bond of ξενία in her cry for help as she is being dragged away (844). In the midst of this chaotic movement, Oedipus is seemingly at a standstill. Old, feeble, and blind, he can only hear the shuffling around him. He desperately asks Antigone to stretch out her hands towards him, and when she is not able, he cries out in utter helplessness (847-850). On the one hand, Oedipus has returned to the state of dependency in which he was found at start of the play; but on the other hand, his fellow residents of Colonus now compensate for his immobility. Oedipus' newly fostered relations of ξενία have transformed the space around him from an occupation by Creon to a battleground between Creon and the people of Colonus.

The Chorus next advance towards Creon, prompting him to warn them not to touch him (856-857). The Chorus is unwilling to let him go, as they accuse him of abducting Ismene and Antigone (858). At this point in the narrative, it is clear that the Chorus have accepted Oedipus into their community; indeed, they make physical contact with Creon, despite their feeble age, to protect Oedipus' two daughters, although Oedipus himself has not been touched. It is worth

[119] "Do not impose commands where you have no power"
[120] "Step forward this way, step, step, men of the place!"

noting here that Oedipus' two daughters have not yet formally declared relations of ξενία with the people of Colonus, yet, as the two "supports" (σκῆπτρα) of Oedipus,[121] they have fallen within the protection offered by the Chorus. Now that he has been seized, Creon in turn threatens to seize Oedipus (861). The Chorus is shocked, because Creon's threat would be an overt violation of ritual propriety in the treatment of suppliant. As Gould (1973: 82) notes, "to remove them [the suppliants] by force […] is construed by the actors as a challenge to the power of the god whose protection they have sought." Oedipus, too, is incredulous as he hears Creon's threat, "ὦ φθέγμ' ἀναιδές, ἦ σὺ γὰρ ψαύσεις ἐμοῦ;" (863).[122] It is not clear whether Creon does actually touch Oedipus—if so, it may have been at the moment when the Chorus cried out for help to the people of Athens (884-886). In response to the calls for aid, Theseus breaks off his sacrifice to Poseidon, the protector of Colonus, to rush to their aid with his retainers (887-890). By defending Oedipus and sending his attendants to bring Ismene and Antigone back to the grove at Colonus, he fulfills his earlier promise to protect Oedipus, his ξένος (932-933). Theseus rebukes Creon for his violent actions: he has disgraced Thebes, Athens, and both cities' laws (913-918); he has violated suppliant rights and sacred property (921-923); he has improperly conducted himself with the Athenian citizens as a ξένος (927-928).

Creon responds to Theseus' reproach with a final attempt to steal Oedipus away to Thebes: he recalls Oedipus' pollution, patricide, and incest in an effort to sabotage Oedipus' relations with the host citizens (944-949).[123] How could Athens permit such wanderers (τοιούσδ' ἀλήτας) to commingle with its citizens? By drawing Oedipus' past life into the present, Creon

[121] Cf. 848-849 (Creon's speech).
[122] "Oh shameless voice, will you really touch me?". Oedipus uses the negative adjective, "ἀναιδής," to describe Creon, since Creon is acting in the exact opposite way that one treats a suppliant. For an interesting discussion on the importance of "αἰδώς" (respect/reverence) in a supplication encounter, cf. Gould (1973: 85-90).
[123] Burian 1974: 420-1.

attempts to return Oedipus to his original status as a wanderer in the space of Colonus (see space #1)—a wanderer who must be forcibly restored to his 'home' city. Although Creon addresses Theseus, Oedipus responds in his own defense. Once more, Oedipus recounts his past grievances and explains his wrongdoings by appealing to his ignorance (974-977). Because his hard-won suppliant status in the sacred space is again challenged, he invokes the Eumenides in supplication to ensure their protection and reminds the host citizens, standing nearby, that he remains a suppliant (ἱκέτης) of the gods (1008-1013). The Chorus stand in solidarity with Oedipus, reiterating that his fortune was ruinous but that he does not bring harm to Athens (1014-1015). It is significant that in his call for action, Theseus adopts the plural "οἱ παθόντες" in order to include himself and the citizens of Athens, not only Oedipus and his daughters, among those who are "suffering."[124] He nobly acts upon his confident pronouncement earlier to protect Oedipus from danger if and when men from Thebes come to Athens to seek him out (656-667). He now leads Creon away from Colonus to recover Oedipus' kidnapped daughters, despite having already sent his attendants to attend to this task. With these actions Theseus risks his own life for the sake of fulfilling the duties required by ξενία (1038-1041); ξενία customarily comes with guardianship if the suppliant fears for his safety.[125] Clearly, Creon's attempt to drive a wedge between Oedipus and the host citizens has failed, and the interaction between Creon and

[124] This scene depicts a test of Theseus' solidarity with Oedipus under the threat of Creon's violence. It is interesting to observe that, during my field visit to Greece, I visited a social solidarity space called City Plaza which similarly defined solidarity as an "act of responsibility," that is, standing with others in especially the most difficult of situations. The motto of City Plaza, as I mentioned in the first footnote of the thesis, is "We struggle together, we will live together." This sentiment can perhaps best be captured in the ancient and modern Greek word, "ἀλληλεγύη," meaning "solidarity" or "mutual security". When I visited City Plaza, I attended a number of protests that the solidarity space held, with refugees, solidarians, and international activists alike, against the eviction notice of their refugee space. Since the refugees and solidarians "occupied" the hotel space (some refer to City Plaza as a "κατάληψις" – seizing), the continued existence of the space is constantly under threat.

[125] Cf. Herman 1987: 22-29. Herman (1987: 28) puts it succinctly, "In crisis or in extreme adversity, a ritualized friend acted as a haven of refuge for his unfortunate partner"

the Athenians has ultimately confirmed and reinforced the Athenians' relationship of ξενία with Oedipus.

We do not hear of the battle between Theseus and the Athenians against Creon and the Thebans during the play. While the fighting rages, the Chorus sing an ode reminiscent of their lyrical ode to Colonus with its rich geographic description and send a prayer to the gods in the hope of an Athenian victory (1044-1095). Immediately thereafter, the Chorus, acting as Oedipus' eyes,[126] inform him of his daughters' approach (1096-1098). As before, he asks Antigone to embrace him, relying on touch, not sight, to gain a sense of his surroundings (1104-1105). He is more hesitant to touch Theseus. In the manner typical of a suppliant, Oedipus at first asks Theseus to stretch out his right hand so that he may touch it and kiss his face (1130-1131).[127] But he quickly recants on the gesture because he considers himself too tainted with evil (1132-1134).[128] It is unusual that Oedipus addresses Theseus with the gestures of supplication after his request has already been fulfilled. Despite the fact that Theseus earlier granted Oedipus residence in Athens, incorporating him into the community,[129] Oedipus deliberately signals to Theseus here that he remains in a subordinate position. Although Oedipus communicates his status in the space of Colonus primarily through words, Theseus on the other hand relies on his own actions (1143-1144). As the next Theban approaches, Oedipus' son Polyneices, we will witness Oedipus

[126] Oedipus earlier lamented that, when Creon had snatched Antigone, he had stolen his "ψιλὸν ὄμμ'" ("bare eye") (866). With Antigone stolen, the Chorus becomes Oedipus' resident watchman.
[127] Cf. Naiden (2009: 44-62) on "gestures" in situations of supplication. Naiden writes that the typical suppliant gesture, usually upon the first meeting of the suppliant and *supplicandus*, is the clasping of the knee and touching of the chin, hand, or feet (44). Oedipus' movement in this scene is the most visible gesture of supplication that Oedipus has shown to the host citizens of Colonus thus far. He gestures to Theseus to give thanks to him for saving his daughters (the opposite of scene in in Book 24 of the Iliad, in which Priam kisses the hands of Achilles, who had in fact slain many of his sons).
[128] As Markantonatos (2007: 100n41) suggests, Oedipus' consciousness of his pollution should not be interpreted as *evidence* of defilement, but rather should speak to his innocence since he is horrified by the crimes he has committed.
[129] Cf. Naiden 2009: 118.

confront another suppliant, thereby catalyzing his own transformation from a suppliant to a host and even guardian of Athens.

F) Oedipus and Polyneices

When Polyneices approaches the space of Colonus as a suppliant, sitting at the same altar of Poseidon at which Theseus earlier sacrificed, Oedipus' dual status as a ξένος and ἱκέτης finally comes to a critical juncture: whether Oedipus stands in solidarity with Polyneices as suppliant (ἱκέτης) or distances himself from him will determine Oedipus' own status in relation to the host community in the space of Colonus. Oedipus' questions preceding his recognition of Polyneices as suppliant mirror the Chorus' earlier questions to him in the grove of the Eumenides: who is he, where is he from, and for what reason does he seek supplication? (1160-1166; cf. 204-206).[130] In a move that mirrors the Chorus' initial reaction to his identity, Oedipus refuses to consider Polyneices' pleas as suppliant.

To Theseus' astonishment, Oedipus flatly rejects even giving Polyneices a hearing, violating the customs of receiving a suppliant. Oedipus' reaction to Polyneices stands in stark contrast to Theseus' welcoming of and sympathy for Oedipus as a suppliant (562-564), prompting Theseus now to remind Oedipus of his duty to the suppliant and the gods (1179-1180), just as Oedipus had reminded the elders of Colonus (275-280). Antigone again has to plead on behalf of a suppliant (1181-1203), but this time *to* Oedipus rather than *for* him (cf. 236-253).[131] Ironically, she must remind her father of the sufferings he has endured, and which he often called upon in his own appeals, in order to elicit compassion for his own son who now comes as a suppliant. Antigone even asks that Oedipus offer χάρις (grace, favor) to Polyneices,

[130] Burian 1974: 422.
[131] Ibid.

just as he had himself asked of Theseus (1183; cf. 586). Thus, whereas Oedipus had earlier himself occupied the role of suppliant, he now is the one who has the power to grant a suppliant's request. Following the confirmation of the potential benefit that he brings Athens in accordance with his prophecy and of his status as resident of Athens, he has taken on the role of judging "host". Here ξένος takes on yet another dimension in reference to Oedipus, as he himself becomes a sort of "host" with the power to decide whether to receive or turn away Polyneices.[132]

Oedipus is reluctant to offer the same treatment to Polyneices as he wished to receive as suppliant and to welcome him warmly. He shares with Theseus his fears for his own life with the impending arrival of Polyneices, just as the Chorus feared for the wellbeing of their city with Oedipus' arrival (1206-1207; cf. 233-236). Oedipus appeals to Theseus, "μηδεὶς κρατείτω τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς ποτε" (1207).[133] Naturally, the recent violent encroachment of Creon has caused him to worry about the stability of his position in the space of Colonus. He is apprehensive about hearing his son's voice, conflicted in his feelings of sorrow for and anger towards him (1173-1174; 1177-1178). Yet when Theseus again assures Oedipus that he will be safe and secure (657-667; cf. 724-725), Oedipus finally relents. Theseus afterwards exits the stage to fetch Polyneices from the altar of Poseidon, where he waits.

In the meantime, the Chorus seemingly endeavor to diffuse the tension of the situation by singing a sorrowful lyric song about the inevitable hardships and misery that come with old age

[132] See page 5 for a summary of the transitions Oedipus has undergone in the role of ξένος (foreigner --- stranger --- friend --- guest-friend --- host). It is remarkable that, during my visits to the citizen-run solidarity spaces in Athens, Greece, I found that refugees often took on leadership roles in the spaces as "hosts" who led decision-making processes in the community and helped to determine who would be permitted to join the community. Although many of the refugees at first came to the citizen-run solidarity spaces in search for services for their own benefit, they soon became accustomed to the community and took charge to help run and manage the spaces. The example of the citizen-run solidarity spaces in Athens shows that an ancient idea (i.e. the fluid role of a refugee in a space of refuge) continues to be germane today.

[133] "Let no one ever have power over my life!"

(1211-1248). The Chorus' aphorisms on age are reminiscent of Oedipus' earlier gnomic expressions on time (608-623). After finally achieving tranquility in the space again with Creon's departure, Oedipus must face another trial; the Chorus sympathize with his pain through this plangent and lyrical song. They even depict Oedipus as a battered man, like a cape buffeted by strong winds and grim waves (1239-1248). Their broader pessimistic gloom about life provides a special contrast to the ensuing action of the play, when Oedipus will display his vigor and power of spirit as he grows to heroic stature.[134] Oedipus is unique among old men, in that, in the end, he is not ἀκρατής (powerless), ἀπροσόμιλος (unable to associate with), and ἄφιλος (friendless); these adjectives better describe Creon at the conclusion of the last episode. Rather, Oedipus concludes his life, powerful, noble, and in association with his daughters, the city of Athens, and the gods. For now, however, Oedipus does not yet know when he will die and achieve this "heroization."

Antigone, returning to her role as watchman, now forewarns Oedipus that a ξένος (i.e. stranger) approaches the stage (1249). She does not at first identify the ξένος as Polyneices, providing instead a description that explicitly distances him from Creon in his approach: Creon was accompanied by guards, but Polyneices comes without companions and with tears streaming down his face. However, Oedipus asks, "τίς οὗτος;"[135] and Antigone is obliged to answer that it is Polyneices (1252-1254). Polyneices finally enters, at a loss whether to cry first for his own sorrows or those of his aged father (1254-1256). He does not begin to expound upon his own misery and make his suppliant appeal but rather expresses pity for the misfortunes that his father has suffered; in self-reproach, he blames himself for having neglected his father in his hour of

[134] Cf. Markantonatos 2007: 102; Kirkwood 1994: 201-202. Kirkwood also points out interesting patterns in multiple Sophoclean odes that produce such a narrative contrast.
[135] "Who is this?"

need (1264-1266). Polyneices calls upon Αἰδώς (Reverence or Shame), a sharer with Zeus on his throne, to stand by his father as he judges him. Unlike Creon, Polyneices appeals to αἰδώς in a manner typical of a suppliant. However, the feeling of αἰδώς is not mutual between the two parties in the encounter, and this imbalance foreshadows the subsequent failure of Polyneices' supplication.[136]

Oedipus reacts to Polyneices' imploring with stony silence and averts his gaze from his son (1271-1272). Although he is already blind to his surroundings, Oedipus deliberately turns his body away, either communicating his unwillingness to hear his son's distress[137] or concealing his own pain,[138] or both (1272). Oedipus had said to the ξένος at the start of the play that "all that I say shall be full of sight" (73-4); thus, Oedipus now hides himself from Polyneices with his silence.

Polyneices seeks advice from his sisters on how he can induce Oedipus to speak. Antigone suggests that he no longer wait to be asked his request but share what he comes to seek (1280). Polyneices heeds his sister's advice and first calls upon the god Poseidon as his helper, just as Oedipus prayed to the Eumenides for help (1285; cf. 84-110). In his plea, he distinguishes Theseus and the citizens of Colonus, whom he addresses as ξένοι, from his sisters and father (1289-1290). In a way, he is already trying to dissociate his family members from the host citizens who have given them residence. He tells his father how he has been unjustly exiled by his younger brother Eteocles; the chief cause of his troubles, the Erinys, was in fact brought upon him by his own father's curse (1298-1299).[139] In his appeal, Polyneices invokes his suppliant

[136] Cf. Gould 1973: 87-88 for a discussion on the association between αἰδώς and ἱκετεία
[137] From Polyneices' point of view, Oedipus is angry with him
[138] Oedipus expresses earlier that his son's speech would be more painful (ἀλγίων) for him to hear than any other man's (1173-1174).
[139] Jebb points out that Sophocles varied the traditional account by making Polyneices the older brother to Eteocles. This change makes Polyneices' case to Oedipus against Eteocles justified (Jebb 1889: 67n375).

status (1309), claims ties to kinship (1323-1324), and reminds Oedipus of his solidarity as a "πτωχός"[140] and "ξένος"[141] (1335). Polyneices reemphasizes to Oedipus, "ἐπεὶ/ πτωχοὶ μὲν ἡμεῖς καὶ ξένοι, ξένος δὲ σύ" (1334-1335).[142] Polyneices makes a rhetorical attempt here in his appeal to identify himself with and gain sympathy from Oedipus as ξένος. His appeal challenges whether Oedipus has moved beyond his status in Athens as ξένος in the sense of a stranger. He tries to detach Oedipus' ties to Athens and find solidarity with Oedipus, reminding him of his need to "θωπεύει" (flatter, fawn on) every new person that he has met in Colonus in order to gain acceptance into the community (1336). Rather than pity Oedipus for his beggarly ways, as Creon did (744-747), Polyneices finds fraternity in their δαίμων (fortune) and tries to establish Eteocles as their common enemy (1336-1339). In the manner of a suppliant, he attempts to remove the distance between him and the *supplicandus*: he says that he wants to rectify Oedipus' situation by settling him in a house of his own in Thebes. Yet at the same time Polyneices does not disguise the selfish purpose of his mission (as Creon had), admitting that he needs Oedipus' support against his brother Eteocles in order to claim the throne of Thebes for himself (1340-1343).

Oedipus' response to Polyneices is indicative of his status as ξένος and exploits the full range of meanings that the word can possess: by not aligning himself with Polyneices as ξένος (foreigner/stranger), he affirms his alternative status as ξένος (guest-friend/host) in Athens. At the instigation of the Chorus, Oedipus breaks his silence and delivers a scalding rebuke against Polyneices. He blames Polyneices for his own predicament: when Polyneices was king of Thebes, he drove away Oedipus, making him ἄπολις ("without a city") (1357). He repents only

[140] "beggar"
[141] In this case, ξένος means "stranger".
[142] "for we are beggars and strangers, and you are a stranger too"

now that he is in the same predicament as his father (1358-1359). Oedipus goes so far as to disown both of his sons, remarking that his daughters are the true "men" (ἄνδρες) because they aided him in his hour of need (1367-1369). He will only remember Polyneices as his φονεύς ("murderer") (1361). After this harsh response, Oedipus continues by repeating past curses against Polyneices: he declares that Polyneices will never destroy Thebes but will first be killed by his own brother in the fight for his inheritance (1370-1374). Rather than align himself with Polyneices in battle, Oedipus summons his curses to fight beside him as his allies (1376). The curse is not part of Apollo's prophecy but is Oedipus' personal wish. The Chorus support Oedipus in his rejection of the suppliant plea and banish Polyneices from Athens (1397-1398). Polyneices accepts Oedipus' rejection on its authority and does not turn to force as Creon did. Instead, he turns again to his two sisters and begs them to offer him the proper burial rites if his father's curses are to be fulfilled. Rather than resenting his sisters for having earned their father's praise, he appeals to their compassion so that they may serve him too. His character is pitiable enough that Antigone embraces him as he decides to march towards his ill fate (1437).

The outcome of Oedipus' interaction with Polyneices affirms that he has in fact distanced himself from Thebes and fully commited himself to the community of Colonus as a 'permanent resident'. Although Oedipus has earned a stable position in Athens, with the support of king Theseus and the citizens, his present circumstances do not erase his past sufferings. Oedipus' response to Polyneices is one of retaliation, not vindictiveness; in his mind, he justly returns the same wrong to his son as his son had done to him. Perhaps Oedipus' cursing is unnecessary—now that he has reached his own final resting place, why must he doom his two sons to further misery? Recalling the former lyrical song of the Chorus, one might ask of Oedipus, "Why must he desire a greater share of life than he needs, when death is the ultimate end for all mortals?"

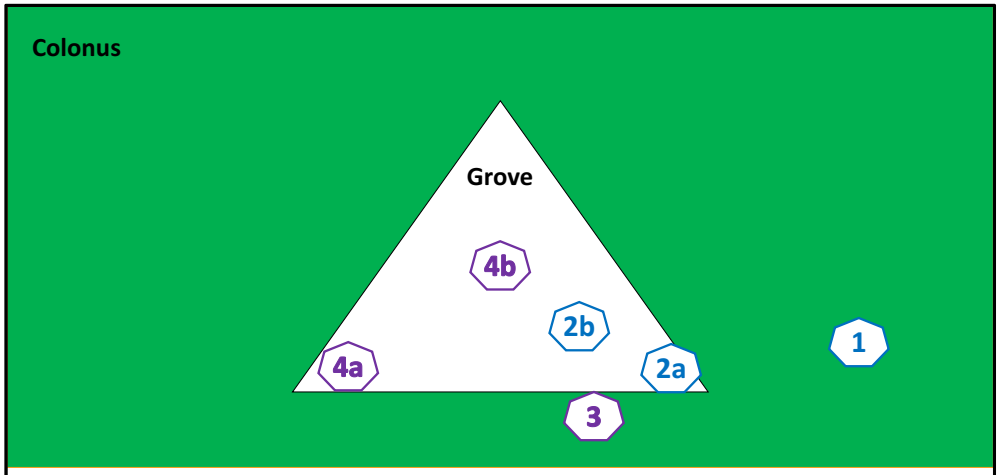
(1211-1223). But Oedipus' choice to curse his fellow suppliant and son, Polyneices, is ultimately of a piece with the transformation of his character throughout the play: although Oedipus has altered his role and status within the space of Colonus, his fundamental character has not changed.[143] Oedipus remains as stubborn, intransigent, and imperious as he was when he sat on the throne as king of Thebes, as depicted in the *OT*. Although he has been welcomed and incorporated into Athens as a resident, he has not forgotten his old feuds; rather, he carries the memory of his past injustices with him until the bitter end. Oedipus maintains the integrity of his character throughout the *OC*, defending himself against instances of disrespect or dishonor and resisting efforts to destabilize his ultimate mission to die at the place sacred to the Eumenides. In a more general way, we can draw the conclusion that, despite the changes in his status and his relations in the space of refuge, Oedipus' fundamental identity remains the same.

[143] Cf. Knox 1968: 25-27. Knox argues that all that can be hoped for heroes is that, in time, they will be taught *by* time; however, this hope is never fulfilled, and the hero remains unchanged. He cites two instances in *OC*: Creon is dumbfounded that Oedipus has not acquired sense with years (804-805); Antigone too, when she speaks to Oedipus after he refuses to address Polyneices, says that she knows he will, in time, realize how evil is the result of evil passion (1197-1198). Although Oedipus is persuaded by Antigone to give Polyneices a soapbox, he soon after dismisses and curses him. I might imagine Oedipus' theme song throughout the *OC* might be Frank Sinatra's classic song, "My Way" – a few verses from Ol' Blue Eyes capture Oedipus' sentiment as he nears the end of his life:

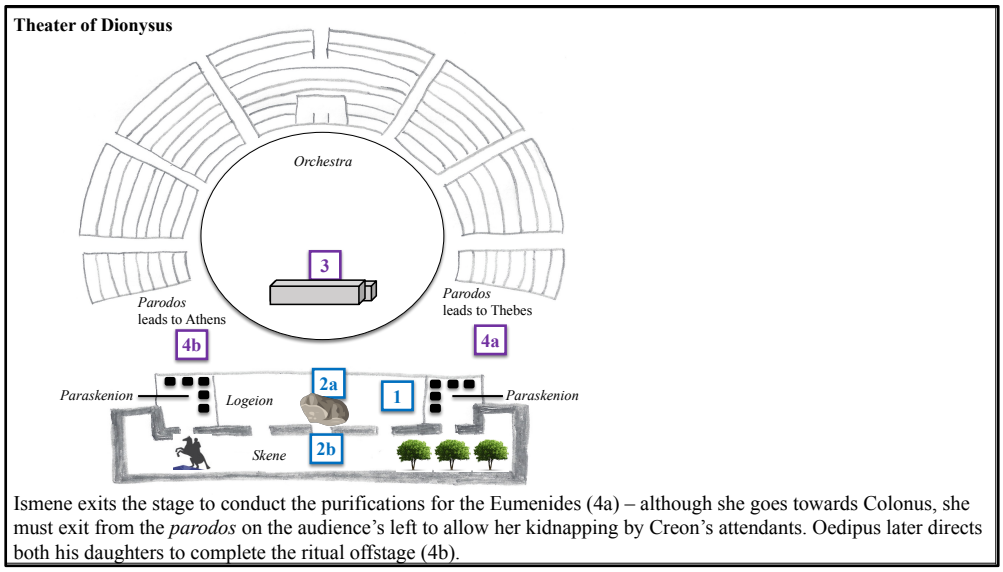
> "Regrets, I've had a few
> But then again, too few to mention
> I did what I had to do
> And saw it through without exemption
>
> I planned each charted course
> Each careful step along the byway
> And more, much more than this
> I did it my way"

Space #4 – Ritual

- Action: Purification
- Transformation: Dependent → Director



The Chorus directs Ismene to the "other side of the grove" (4a) in order to conduct the purification rites for Oedipus. Oedipus then later leads both his daughters (and Theseus) into the inner part of the sacred grove (4b) in order to direct them to complete the purification ritual.



Ismene exits the stage to conduct the purifications for the Eumenides (4a) – although she goes towards Colonus, she must exit from the *parodos* on the audience's left to allow her kidnapping by Creon's attendants. Oedipus later directs both his daughters to complete the ritual offstage (4b).

After Polyneices leaves Athens, Oedipus is left onstage with the Chorus in a moment of apparent calm. But then thunder strikes. Oedipus recognizes the thunder as a sign from Zeus of his impending death;[144] he calls upon the Chorus to summon Theseus (1460-1461). Now that

[144] Refer to page 16: Oedipus knew from the earlier Apollonian prophecy that he would only die when there were thunder and lightning from Zeus (95).

Oedipus has passed through this series of challenging interactions and been admitted as a resident of Colonus, he prepares for his death and anticipates becoming a permanent and benevolent protector of the deme. Yet, the Chorus are in a different mindset: they are panic-stricken by the thunder, and they begin to doubt that Oedipus will fulfill his promise of bringing advantage to Athens, fearing harm from him instead; Oedipus' status thus remains a variable, not a constant, even as he approaches his heroization (1482-1485). The Chorus now act as a foil to Oedipus: whereas they react to the divine signs with initial helplessness, Oedipus understands the significance of the signs with an insight far surpassing human perception.[145] In a reversal of roles, the blind man now sees more clearly than those who have sight; in a sense, Oedipus regains his sight through divine, prophetic vision.[146]

The Chorus finally assent to Oedipus' interpretation of the thunder after his assurances, and they call upon Theseus to come to the grove so that Oedipus may give "δικαίαν χάριν"[147] for the hospitality that Theseus had shown him (1498). Theseus is interrupted once again from making his sacrifices to Poseidon in order to attend to Oedipus' shouts; the religious backdrop frames the ensuing action, in which Oedipus will lead his daughters in performing a ritual to the gods for his safe departure. Oedipus recognizes that he is on the brink of death, in time for his last transformation, signaling this with the words "ῥοπὴ βίου μοι" (1508).[148] Theseus believes Oedipus interprets the divine signs correctly and entrusts him with arranging the proper response for the situation at hand.

Oedipus delivers a lengthy speech with a prescribed set of orders to Theseus on how he should act: he must keep Oedipus' burial place a secret for himself and his successors and must

[145] Cf. Markantonatos 2007: 109
[146] Knox 1968: 148.
[147] "just requital"
[148] "The turning point of my life"

guard Oedipus' daughters (1518-1538). In addition, Oedipus finally reveals to Theseus alone, with more exactness, what advantage his burial in Athens will bring to the city: he instructs Theseus to keep his burial place a secret "[…] ὥς σοι πρὸ πολλῶν ἀσπίδων ἀλκὴν ὅδε/ δορός τ᾽ ἐπακτοῦ γειτόνων ἀεὶ τιθῇ" (1524-1525).[149] In other words, the grave of Oedipus will keep Athens safe from invasion or destruction and especially from Theban violence. The manner in which Oedipus delivers instructions to Theseus is reminiscent of how the Chorus had directed him, twice before, about where to sit to converse with them and how to properly conduct the ritual purification rites (172-202). Oedipus now is finally able to fulfill Theseus' first command, "δίδασκε" ("teach me!"; 560): he tells Theseus, "τὰ μὲν τοιαῦτ᾽ οὖν εἰδότ᾽ ἐκδιδάσκομεν" (1539).[150] Although Theseus has the knowledge within him, it is necessary for Oedipus to supervise him, just as Oedipus has in turn required the assistance of the host citizens in order to fulfill his destiny and find his resting place at Athens.

The demeanor of Oedipus at the time of his death is noticeably distinct from his manner at the start of the play. He speaks with confidence and conviction; the divine spirit, which will lead him to his burial place, has reinvigorated him from his former posture as a weak, faltering old man. Now that he is in a position of final clarity and knowledge, rather than troubled ignorance, he is confidently assertive in his relations with others in Colonus: with the power of the god hurrying him on, he orders his daughters and Theseus to follow him (1540-1542). The messenger takes on the role as narrator to relate to the Chorus how Oedipus arrived at his death.[151] First, when Oedipus arrived at the ὀδός (threshold) that plunges down into the earth

[149] "[…] thus may this (spot) forever arrange for you a defence better than many shields and better than the spear brought in from neighboring (people)." As I noted on page 28 (n74), Oedipus foretold that he would reveal the particulars of the advantage of his burial in due time.
[150] "then the sort of things that I am teaching you well, you know"
[151] Refer to Figure 1.3 in the Appendix: the Messenger is the only character in the *OC* who is not referred to as ξένος; he is also curiously the only character that Oedipus does not interact with onstage. Identifying

with brazen steps, he stopped near one of the branching paths at a hollow κρατήρ ("basin") (1590-1594). Interestingly, the κρατήρ that Ismene had used to bring libations (472) is replicated here with the idea of the "hollow basin," where Oedipus now leads his daughters to perform the ritual (1593). Recall that the ritual action, by which Oedipus would be purified of his pollution, began with Ismene volunteering herself to conduct the rites on her father's behalf; she was directed by the Chorus to perform the rites "on the other side of the grove" (503-505; see space #4a in Figure 1.1 in the Appendix). However, she was interrupted by Creon and his men who kidnapped her (818-819). I place ritual space #4a in the *parodos* on the audience's left side in the setting of the theater (Figure 1.2 in Appendix) to allow Ismene's kidnapping offstage by Creon's attendants.

Now, when Ismene has returned, Oedipus is no longer a mere suppliant but a confirmed ξένος and οἰκητής Ἀθηναῖος and soon to be a cult-hero.[152] On the cusp of death, Oedipus recalls the need to complete the ritual; in order to transform himself into a boon to Athens, he must rid himself of his 'stain of evils' (κηλὶς κακῶν; 1134).[153] Although his daughters still perform the rites, Oedipus now directs them to collect and prepare the libations for the ritual in the same manner as the Chorus had previously acted as director for him (1598-1604; cf. 469-492). Beforehand, Oedipus said he would not be able to conduct the ritual without a guide (501-502), but he has now become his own guide (1588-1589; 1540-1545). He is no longer dependent on the host citizens for directions or on his daughters as his two crutches (σκῆπτρα) but rather directs the operation and execution of his own purification rites.

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any particular societal relation between the messenger and the Chorus thus becomes inconsequential without Oedipus as a reference point.

[152] Although there is some debate as to what status Oedipus took on after his death, I will accept here the widely supported argument that he transforms into a cult hero. My principle source is Nagy 2013.

[153] With a caveat: the ritual this time is performed as a burial preparation too, not simply as a sacrificial rite to the Eumenides. Cf. Markantonatos 2007: 135.

Not only does Oedipus repeat the Chorus' stipulation that elements of honey (μέλι) and water (ὕδωρ) are needed for his complete purification ritual, but he also situates the ritual in a place formerly described to him by the Chorus as "κάθυδρος οὗ/ κρατὴρ μειλιχίων ποτῶν/ ῥεύματι συντρέχει" (158-160).[154] In an emphatic reversal of fortune, Oedipus now stands within the sacred grove, a space that was formerly forbidden to him as a trespasser and here conducts a ritual with elements that signify the place itself. As his daughters purify him by pouring libations of water mixed with honey, he too earns the license to stand within the sacred space. It is tenable that Oedipus led his daughters and Theseus far into the sacred grove, since he is depicted as rushing and worrying that he might not be able to reach his burial place in time, even with the gods aiding him: thus, I place Oedipus in the inner part of the grove in ritual space #4b in Figure 1.1 in the Appendix. I also place ritual space #4b in the *parodos* on the audience's right side in the setting of the theater (see Figure 1.2 in the Appendix), since Oedipus' actions have taken place offstage in the grove of Colonus, although the messenger gives a *post hoc* narration onstage. In both ritual spaces #4a and #4b, Oedipus gains in confidence as he acquires superhuman vision; the same place where he was forbidden now welcomes him in his full authority. In a position of leadership, Oedipus is no longer reliant on his host citizens, but rather they are dependent on his direction.

After performing the ritual, Oedipus embraces his daughters, and they cling together closely in tears. Again, there is silence, as when Oedipus refused to speak to Polyneices; yet, this time, love fills the silence rather than hatred (1615-1616). A sudden and awesome voice, which Oedipus recognizes as that of a god, urges him onward towards his death (1623-1630). As eager as he was before to die, he now delays, overwhelmed with great affection for his daughters.

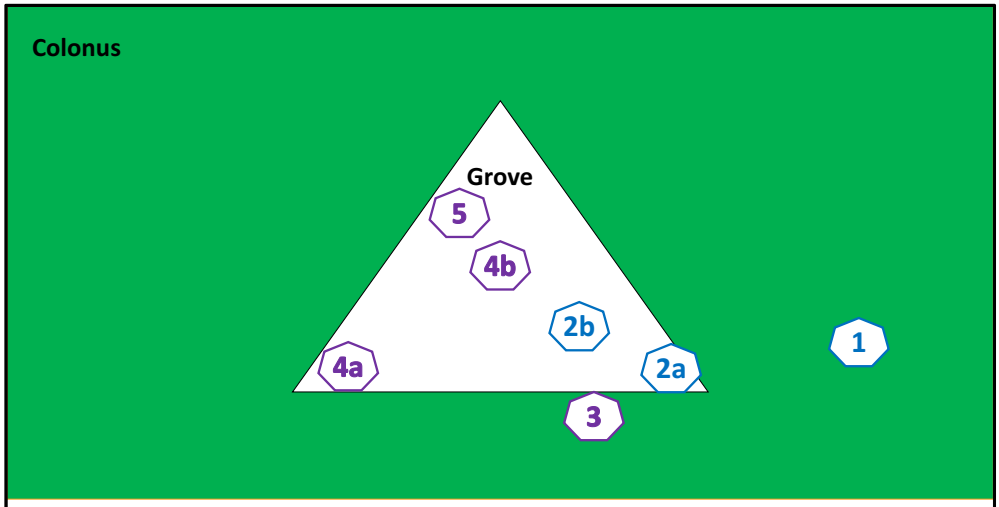
[154] "Where the bowl filled with water runs together with the stream of honeyed liquid"

Oedipus takes action in assent with the god's command and instructs Theseus to come to him and exchange with his daughters a "χερὸς σῆς πίστιν ὁρκίαν" (1632).[155] Although Oedipus himself was not bound to Theseus by oath, he does ensure that the king will protect his daughters after his death. With "ἀμαυραῖς χερσὶν," Oedipus bids his daughters farewell (1639).[156]

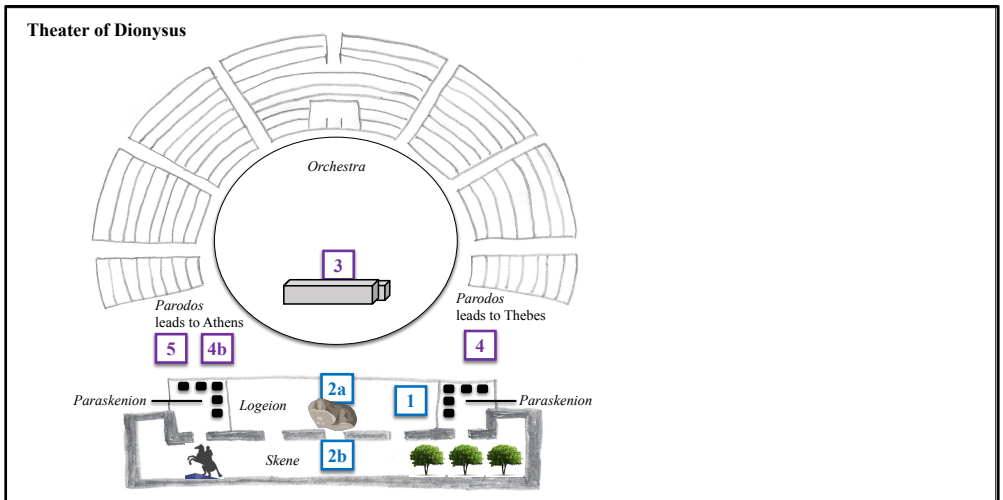
[155] "pledge of your handclasp bound by oath"
[156] "blind hands"

Space #5 – Burial

- Action: Leading
- Transformation: Sufferer → Benefactor



Oedipus most likely leads Theseus further into the grove (5) to find his spot to die and be buried.



Although the Messenger narrates onstage, the action of Oedipus leading Theseus to his burial space in the sacred grove of Colonus (5) takes place offstage.

By crossing the threshold of the grove to reach his burial site (from space #3 to #4b to #5), Oedipus makes manifest the change in role that will soon follow, from being passively protected by the grove to actively protecting it. As Oedipus demonstrated earlier by leading his daughters in the ritual purification rites, he alone has divine foresight; it is he alone who can lead Theseus to his burial space (#5). According to the messenger, when Oedipus disappeared, the

messenger saw king Theseus holding his hand before his face to cover his eyes, as if some terrifying sight were before him; Theseus blinds himself to the sight of Oedipus' vanishing. Thus, although he was present at the moment of Oedipus' death, Theseus cannot say with certainty how Oedipus left the earth. Possible occurrences include an escort from the gods taking him away, or the earth below yawning open to engulf him (1661-1662). As the mother of the Eumenides, Γῆ (goddess of the earth) has the power to transform Oedipus into a cult hero (40).[157] The messenger adds in his account that, after Oedipus' disappearance, Theseus had silently saluted the earth and sky (1653-1655). Theseus' motion could signify Oedipus' change in position from the earth to the heavens, or act as a salute to the Mother Earth who led Oedipus away. Whichever way he departed, Oedipus has become permanently linked to the land that belongs to the *polis* of Athens. His burial place remains a lasting monument for Athens, like the olive tree that flourishes in the land of Colonus, never to be destroyed because it is looked upon by the ever-seeing gods (704-710).[158]

Oedipus at Colonus concludes with Theseus and the Chorus of elders fulfilling their roles as ξένοι after Oedipus' death. As Herman (1987: 22, 69) emphasizes, the relationship of ξενία is not abrogated when one or the other ξένος dies: "Above all, ξένοι were expected to show a measure of protective concern for each other's offspring," such that "the person could die but the role of ξένος could not." When Oedipus' grieving daughters, Antigone and Ismene, prostrate themselves before Theseus ("προσπίτνομέν σοι") and ask him to take them to their father's tomb (1754-1758),[159] he refuses in accordance with Oedipus' instructions. The daughters consequently

[157] Cf. Nagy 2013, Hour 18 Text H.
[158] Sophocles emphasizes the permanence of Oedipus' tomb: cf. 1555, 1707, 1765.
[159] Although the exact location of Oedipus' burial is not known, we can presume that it was not in the very same spot where the ritual took place. If the daughters were present for the ritual, and the burial occurred in the same place, they would not need Theseus' assistance. Thus, I placed space #5 further from space #4 and outside of the central grove of Colonus in the figure introducing this section.

ask Theseus to instead send them home to their ancient Thebes; the king, as their designated πρόξενος (patron), accedes to their request (1773-1776)[160]:

> δράσω καὶ τάδε καὶ πάνθ᾽ ὁπόσ᾽ ἂν
> μέλλω πράσσειν πρόσφορά θ᾽ ὑμῖν
> καὶ τῷ κατὰ γῆς, ὃς νέον ἔρρει,
> πρὸς χάριν, οὐ δεῖ μ᾽ ἀποκάμνειν.

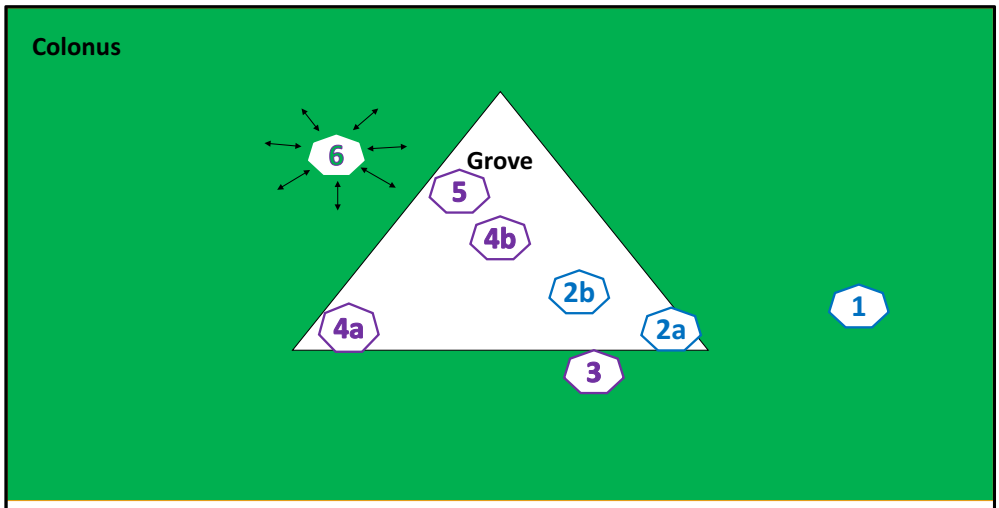
The daughters complete the traditional cycle of the journey of a ξένος: travel into foreign lands, receive succor by a friendly host, return home (νόστος). Their journey is quite unlike that of Oedipus, who participates in myriad roles in the host community, including those of a ἱκέτης, ξένος, φίλος, οἰκητής, and eventually σωτήρ and ἥρως of Athens. Uniquely, Oedipus captures the multiplicity of meanings inherent in the concept of a ξένος: at first, he is a stranger and a foreigner, but he negotiates his way into becoming a guest-friend and even a host of sorts in Athens. His νόστος, or 'homecoming', is as peculiar as his journey—he is immortalized as a ἥρως of Athens, and, in his death, returns to Mother Earth.[161] In the end, Oedipus is able to transcend the social and political strife that marked his exile and settle into his enduring role as protector of Athens.

[160] "I will do this and all things which I intend to do will be for your advantage and to the gratification of one below the earth, who is lately departed; I must not wax weary!
[161] Cf. Nagy 2013: Hour 18 Text K

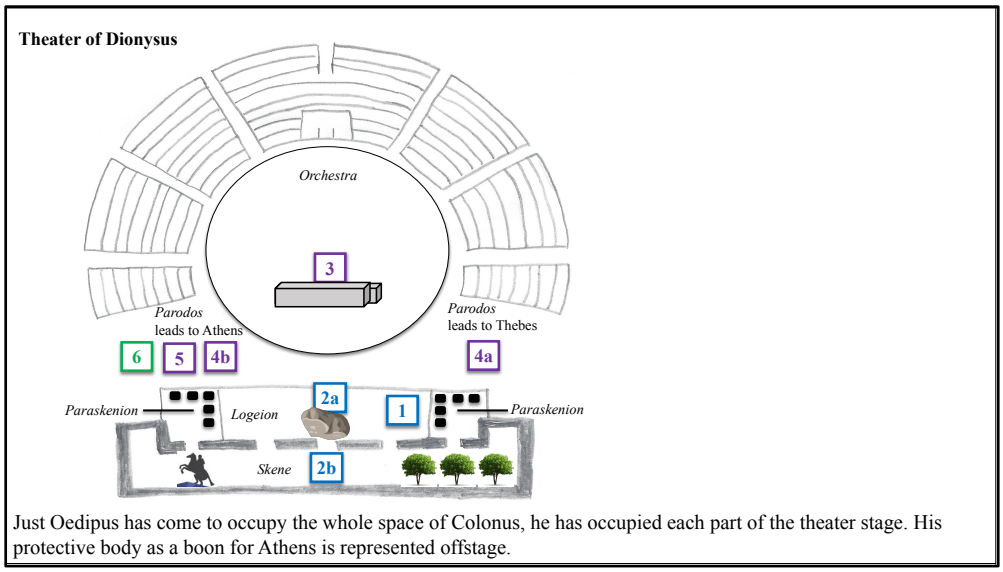
Stage 3: Hero

Space #6 – Protected

- Action: Heroized
- Transformation: Refugee → Protector



Oedipus has transformed into Athens' resident cult hero and has come to occupy and protect the whole space of Colonus (6 represents the entire rectangle).



Just Oedipus has come to occupy the whole space of Colonus, he has occupied each part of the theater stage. His protective body as a boon for Athens is represented offstage.

When Oedipus transforms into a cult hero, he fulfills his promise as a ξένος (guest-friend) to protect the city of Athens. He has finally 'occupied' the entire space of Colonus. He arrived in Colonus as a blind, wandering old man, unaware of his surroundings, both feared and

pitied by the inhabitants of the land, but he leaves a prophetic and powerful hero, worth marveling at (ἀποθαυμάζω) (1586).

Oedipus maintains his independence throughout his journey in Colonus. He reacts to his plight with defiant persistence, not compliance: in his first encounter with the anonymous ξένος, Oedipus boldly exclaims, "ὡς οὐχ ἕδρας γῆς τῆσδ' ἂν ἐξέλθοιμ' ἔτι" (45).[162] His strong sense of agency bolsters him as he alters his movements and relations through the six spaces of Colonus to reach his final destiny. He maintains this consistency of character amidst the inevitability of change: it is the space of Colonus which acquires its meaning and reality from Oedipus' occupation.

Now that we have seen how the space of Colonus changes in reaction to Oedipus' interactions with others, it may be useful in conclusion to recapitulate the strategies that we saw him employing in order to obtain his final refuge at Athens. At first, he expects his relationship with the host community to be one of obeying them. However, in his first interaction with an anonymous inhabitant of Colonus, he is met with the threat of expulsion; he in turn responds with characteristically bold resistance. After surviving his first trial, he appeals to the Eumenides, who reign over Colonus, in the manner of a suppliant. When he meets the Chorus of elders, he is met with a second threat of expulsion, but this time he is forced to respond with cooperation and reveal his identity, including his personal history. Rather than exercise resistance, he employs a strategy of negotiation with both the Chorus of elders and king Theseus, in the hopes that the advantage he brings their community will compensate for the baggage he carries with him from his troubled past. He wields the power of his prophecy to his own advantage until he reaches the ultimate position of power as an immortalized cult hero of Colonus.

[162] "For I shall never depart from this seat of the land"

Oedipus' relationship with the host citizens of Colonus is constantly evolving throughout the tragedy as he is forced to employ different strategies (obedience, resistance, supplication, cooperation, negotiation) in an attempt to gain asylum. Oedipus' dynamic relations with the host citizens mirror his movement through Colonus: his relation to the host community changes as he moves through the six spaces of Colonus. Thus, the spaces of Colonus that Oedipus visits can be understood as loci for his experimenting with different relationships with the host citizens, but, despite undergoing a metamorphosis in his relation to others, Oedipus' strong sense of his own individual identity throughout remains unchanged, playing an important role in his transition from refugee to resident cult hero.

Chapter III

Conclusion

Δαναὸς δὲ πατὴρ καὶ βούλαρχος
καὶ στασίαρχος τάδε πεσσονομῶν
κύδιστ᾽ ἀχέων ἐπέκρανεν,
φεύγειν ἀνέδην διὰ κῦμ᾽ ἅλιον,
κέλσαι δ᾽ Ἄργους γαῖαν […]

(Aesch. *Suppl.* 11-15)[163]

In the opening scene of Aeschylus' *Supplices*, Danaus, the father of the fifty Danaids, is described by his daughters as πεσσονομῶν, someone playing a board game. Throughout the play, Danaus cleverly plays a game of *pessoi*, making and directing spatial movements with purpose at certain points in the play in order to shift his relations with the Argives and achieve a safe space of asylum for himself and his daughters in Argos. The game of *pessoi* was traditionally not only a recreational activity but also a politically charged game. Bakewell (2013: 44) suggests that we might think of Danaus' actions in contrast to the Argives' actions as two different games of *pessoi*: on the one hand, Danaus plays a game of '*pente grammai*' ("five lines") as he ventures forth to move from the "holy line" and gain dominion in the *polis* center of Argos; on the other hand, King Pelasgus plays a game of '*polis*' by casting himself as an equal citizen to the Argives and awaiting a battle against the Egyptians aggressing against Argos. While Pelasgus seeks to protect his own land, Danaus tries to secure a place for himself and his daughters in the territory.

[163] "Danaus, our father and the originator of our plan,
and the leader of our band, surveying the situation like a gameboard,
ordained this as the most honorable of painful options,
to flee headlong over the waves of the sea,
and put in to the land of Argos […]"

Although simplistic, the game of *pessoi* can serve as a useful motif for understanding the dynamic nature of relationships between refugees and citizens interacting within a space of refuge, with the hopeful result that the refugee can finally find a safe place of asylum in the host community. In contrast to ordinary "system-beneficiary" or "guest-host" perspectives on refugee relations, we can re-imagine spaces of refuge as potential spaces for experimenting with refugee-citizen relations, just as the Athenian citizen-run spaces do in practice.

My detailed analysis of movements and changing social relations in Sophocles' *OC* establishes an interpretive framework which can be applied to additional 'suppliant' plays and developed further in light of the idiosyncrasies of each play. Rather than analyze a set of plays in comparison, I decided to analyze a single whole play, Sophocles' *OC*, in great detail. It is important to consider the play in its entirety, for as Oliver Taplin writes, "It is the preparation which creates expectation and which puts the event into its dramatic context and hence gives it work to do in the play."[164] The whole of *OC* can be understood as preparation for the success of Oedipus' appeal to Athens as a final resting place; similarly, in related suppliant plays such as Aeschylus' *Suppliants* and Euripides' *Heraclidae*, the whole play acts as preparation for the successful completion of the supplicant plea at the end.

In the previous chapter on the *OC*, I explored how Colonus comes to hold different meanings as Oedipus moves through the deme. I argued that Oedipus' identity can be understood in three stages, and I tracked his evolution in relation to the host community throughout the play by dividing Colonus into six different spaces. The three stages of his identity are outcast, metamorphosis, and hero; the six spaces of refuge at Colonus are "unknown," sacred, inviolable, ritual, burial, and protected. In order to support my analysis of the play, I produced a set of

[164] Taplin 1977: 10.

diagrams that serve as visual aids for each movement of Oedipus in the space of Colonus. Below, I present potential patterns of "spaces" in two alternative suppliant plays: Aeschylus' *Suppliants* (Aesch. *Suppl.*) and Euripides' *Heraclidae* (Eur. *Heracl*.). Although I would need to conduct additional research in order to expand and modify my conclusions in light of additional evidence, the model I have developed from *OC* puts me on a strong footing to establish equivalences between the three 'suppliant' plays.

Despite the differences in time, context, and place, each of the three 'suppliant' plays portrays how the space of refuge can inflect the experiences of refugees and host and serve as a nexus for an evolving relationship between them. In the following table, I map the section headings of *OC* onto the two other suppliant plays, specifying the suppliants' stage of identity, the type of space they occupy, and their primary mode of action within the space. Throughout the three plays, we can track a transformation of the suppliants' status in relation to their host community while in the space of refuge.

Sophocles' *OC*	**Aesch. *Suppl.***	**Eur. *Heracl.***
Stage 1: Outcast Space #1 – Unknown – Wandering Space #2 – Sacred – Trespassing	Stage 1: Outcasts Space #1 - Known – Wandering Space #2 - Sacred – Supplicating	Stage 1: Outcasts Space #1 - Known & Sacred – Wandering & Supplicating Space #2 - Inviolable – Negotiating
Stage 2: Metamorphosis Space #3 – Inviolable – Negotiating Space #4 – Ritual – Cleansing Space #5 – Burial – Leading	Stage 2: Threats Space #3 - Inviolable – Negotiating Space #4 – Unconsecrated – Anticipating	Stage 2: Defenders Space #3 – Ritual – Sacrificing Space #4 – Combat - Leading
Stage 3: Hero Space #6 — Deme of Colonus – Protecting	Stage 3: Metics Space #5 – Ritual – Cleansing Space #6 – *Polis* of Argos – Following	Stage 3: Victors Space #5 – *Polis* of Athens – Honoring

The spaces of Colonus, Argos, and Athens in each of the three suppliant plays alters its meaning in relation to how the suppliants relate to their host community. I hope that my juxtaposition of refugee-citizen relations in ancient Greek tragedy and the dynamics of emerging spaces of refuge in Athens, Greece will help to fill an existing void of scholarship and will encourage dialogue about how the ways in which a space of refuge is organized can deeply inform how a refugee finds a place for himself in a host community.

Appendix A: Visual Figures from Athens, Greece

Figure 1: My classmate, Hunter Zhao, speaks to two men, whom we later learned were Afghani refugees living in the Castle of Mytilini.

Figure 2: Outside of Moria camp on island of Lesvos. Photos taken inside the camp are not permitted. Take note of the barbed wire encircling the camp. Scholars, Linda Briskman and Alison Mountz, in their 2012 paper, cite Jude McCulloch's argument that the island is a well-used metaphor for prison: "The geography of the island, cut off from the mainland and by implication the mainstream of life, captures the radical separation of prisoners and prisons from outside society."[165]

[165] Mountz, A. and Briskman L. (2012). "Introducing Island Detentions: The placement of asylum seekers and migrants on islands". Shima: the international journal of research into island cultures, 6(2), Page 21.

Figure 3: Kiosk at entrance to Kara Tepe camp on island of Lesvos. Photos taken inside the camp are not permitted.

Figure 4: Temporary accommodation space in Paiania, Athens.

Figure 5: Outside Athens Solidarity Center, which offers services to both vulnerable Greek citizens and refugees.

Figure 6: Entrance to Hotel City Plaza in Exarcheia, Athens.

Figure 7: Taken from the garden patio at Melissa Day Centre in Exarcheia, Athens

Appendix B: Textual Figures, Maps, and Tables

Envisioning Oedipus' Movement at Colonus

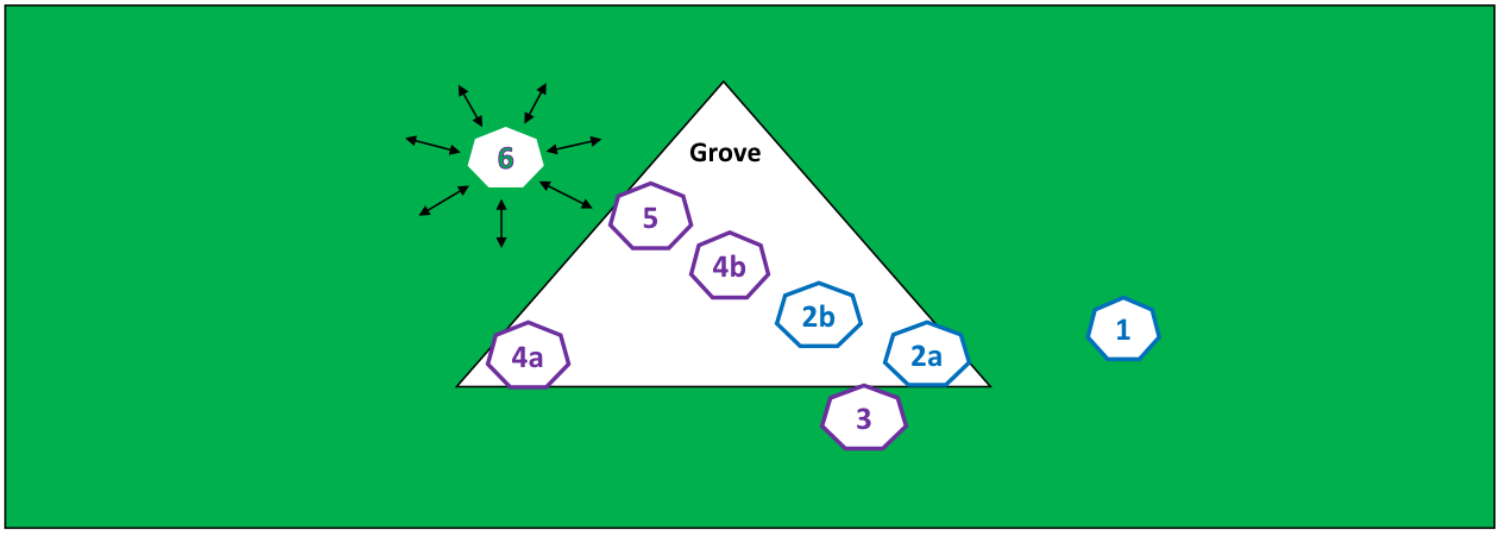


Figure 1.1: Visualizes six key moments of Oedipus' movement at Colonus. The triangle represents the "Grove of Eumenides". The arrows emanating from space #6 indicate that Oedipus' guardian spirit occupies the entire deme of Colonus (represented by the green-colored rectangle).

Key: **Blue = Outcast** **Purple = Metamorphosis** **Green = Hero**

1. **"Unknown"**
2a, 2b. **Sacred**
3. **Inviolable**
4a, 4b. **Ritual**
5. **Burial**
6. **Protected**

Envisioning Oedipus' Movement at Theater of Dionysus

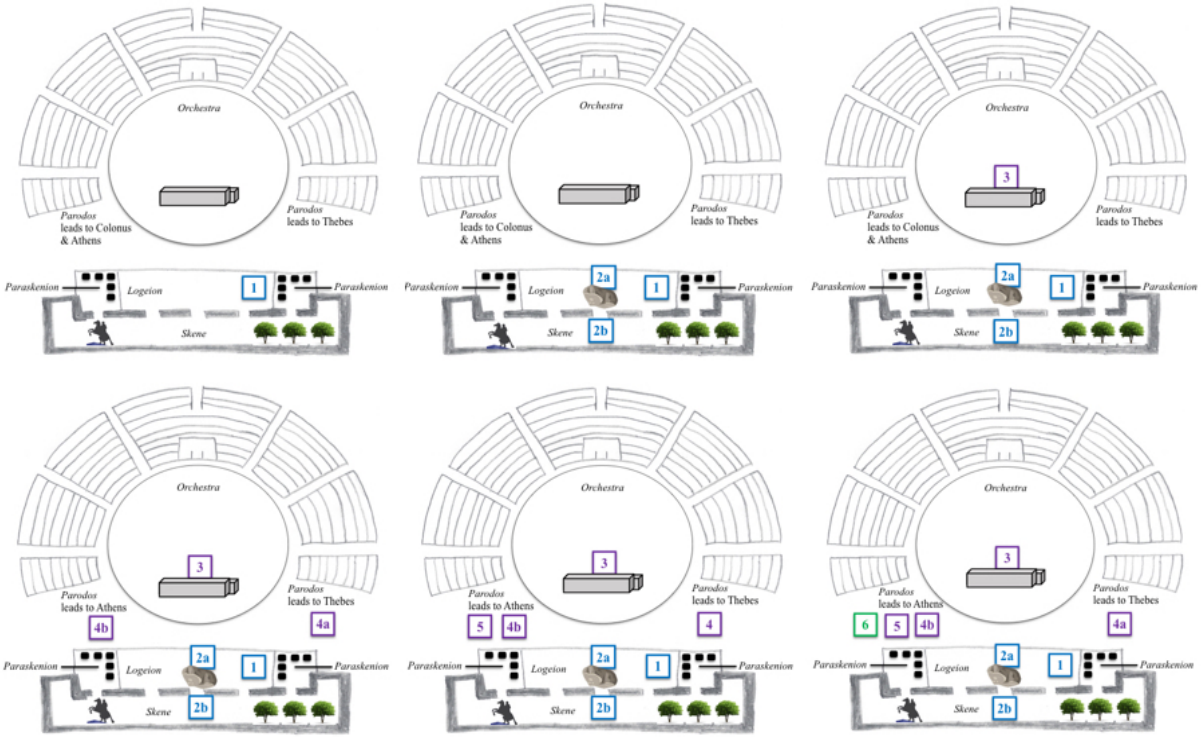


Figure 1.2: Visualizes six key moments of Oedipus' movement on stage at Theater of Dionysus.
Key: **Blue = Outcast** **Purple = Metamorphosis** **Green = Hero**

1. "Unknown" space
2a, 2b. Sacred space
3. Inviolable space
4a, 4b. Ritual space
5. Burial space
6. Protected space

Image source:
From "Bronze Horseman Statue", by RedlineVector, Shutterstock, https://www.shutterstock.com/image-vector/bronze-horseman-statue-653860117?src=jgekynPL9NbavEleT82aNA-1-15
From "Tree", by Nascar, http://green.nascar.com/join-nascars-clean-air-tree-planting-program/

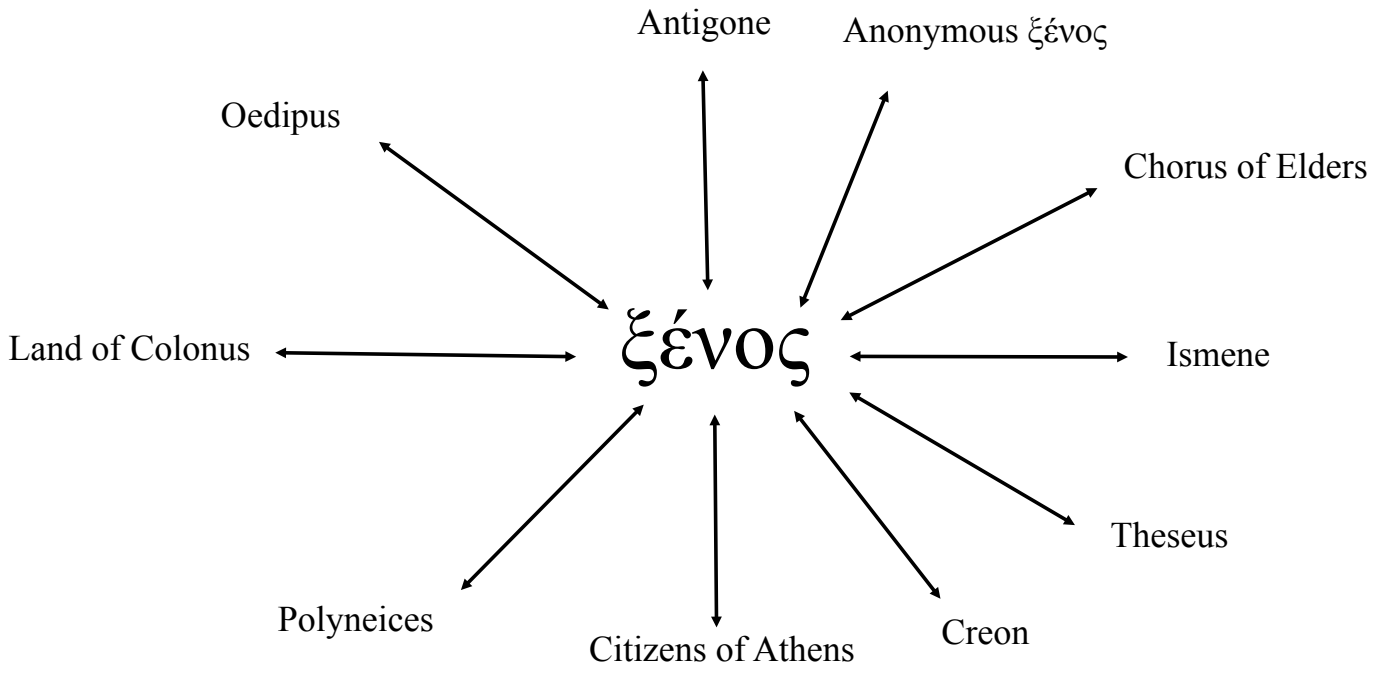


Figure 1.3: All Dramatis Personae in *Oedipus at Colonus* are referred to as ξένοι, with one exception, the Messenger. Interestingly, the Messenger is also the only character with whom Oedipus does not interact.

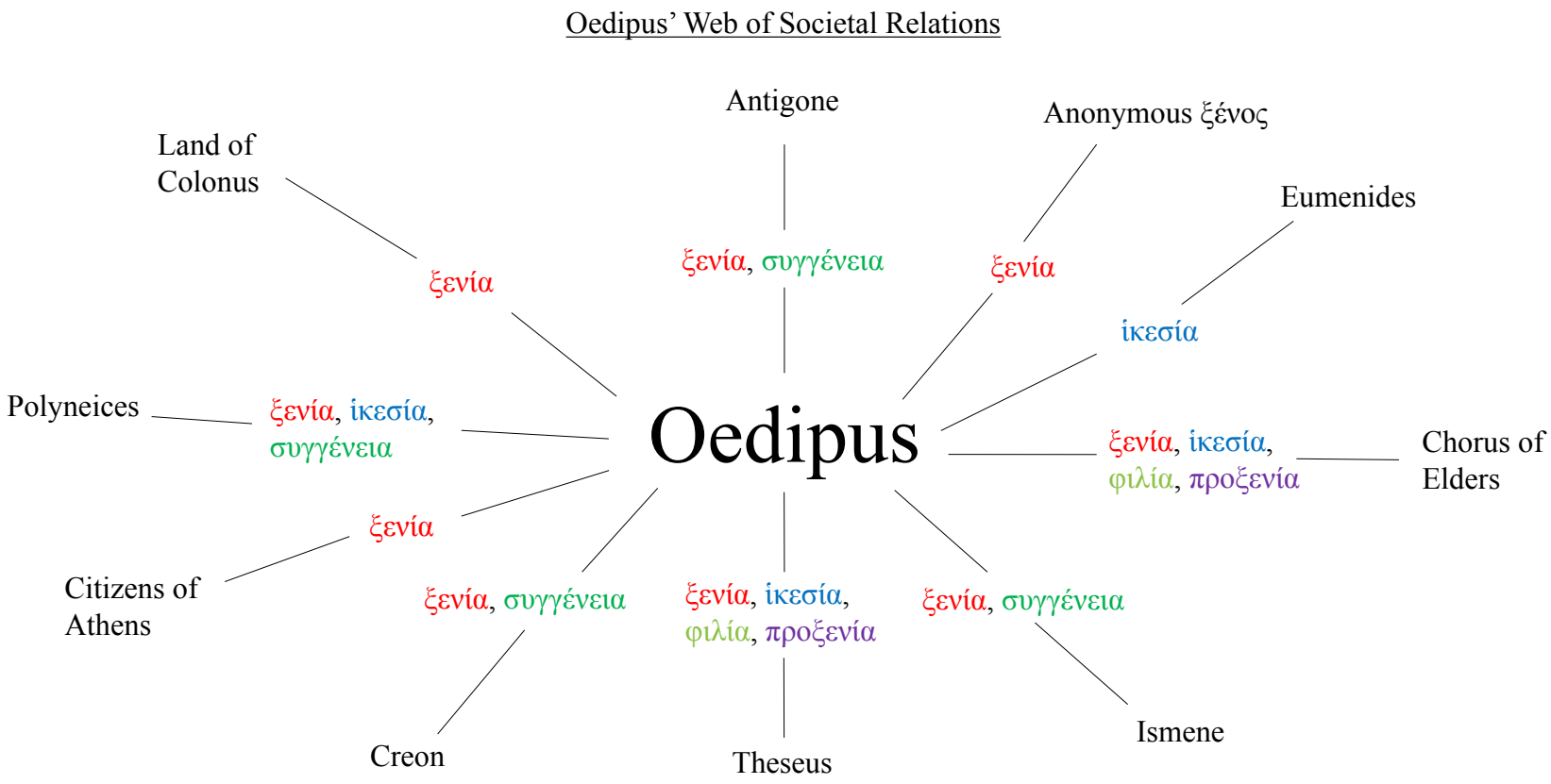


Figure 1.4: If you start with Antigone and go clockwise, the characters are in chronological order according to whom Oedipus interacts with in the *OC*.

Variation in meaning: the designation of "space"

Variable	"Unknown"	Sacred	Inviolable	Ritual	Burial	Native Colonus
χώρα (15)	89				405	145, 226, 296, 637, 700, 727, 788, 909, 934, 1024, 1476, 1553, 1765
χῶρος (13)	2, 24, 38, 52	16, 54	37		644	125, 493, 871, 1065
χθών	1256	57, 691, 823				233, 449, 766, 790
ἕδρα (10)		45, 84, 90, 112, 1163, 1166, 1382	36, 176, 232			
τόπος (8)	26	56, 1457	232	504	1020, 1523	842
χώρεω (6)	747		824, 1038	507	1020, 1641	
οἶκος/οἰκέω	28		39, 1533			343, 352, 358, 741, 759, 785
ὁδὸς	20, 113	57, 1590		1590		

Table 1.1: The independent variable is a word commonly used to describe a 'space' in the *OC* text. The dependent variable is the meaning of the 'space'. The numbers are lines of the *OC* text.
I include five of the six types of space that are defined by their relation to Oedipus--"unknown", sacred, inviolable, ritual, and burial. I exclude the sixth, which I refer to as a "protected space," since any meaningful description of it is purposefully left out of the text by Sophocles. Instead, I include native Colonus as a type of space, because it stands in relation to Oedipus as a space he is unable to inhabit (at least in the active sense).

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