When You Can't Go Home Again:
The Destruction of the *oikos* in Greek Tragedy

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Dedication

To Evangeline Marian and Zelie Rose
τῷ ἀγάλματι τῶν ἐμῶν οἰκῶν

Introduction

Consider a scene in Euripides' *Supplices* (performed in 423 BC at the City Dionysia): Iphis has lost his son Eteocles and son-in-law Capaneus in the war against Thebes. Now he watches his daughter Evadne throw herself onto the pyre of her husband. Iphis exclaims to the chorus an extreme wish: he wishes he had never started a family:

> ἐγὼ γὰρ ἄλλους εἰσορῶν τεκνουμένους
> παίδων ἐραστὴς ἦ πόθῳ τ᾽ ἀπωλλύμην.
> εἰ δ᾽ εὖ τόδ᾽ ἤδη κἀξεπειράθην †τέκνων†
> οἷον στέρεσθαι πατέρα γίγνεται τέκνων,
> οὐκ ἄν ποτ᾽ ἐς τόδ᾽ ἦλθον εἰς ὃ νῦν κακόν.
> ….
> εἶεν · τί δὴ χρὴ τὸν ταλαίπωρόν με δρᾶν;
> στείχειν πρὸς οἴκους; κᾆτ᾽ ἐρημίαν ἴδω
> πολλὴν μελάθρων, ἀπορίαν τ᾽ ἐμῷ βίῳ;[1] 1087-91, 1094-6
>
> For watching others having children, I desired children and I was ruined by that longing. If I had at that time known well from experience about †children† what it is for a father to lose children, I would not have come to the evil fate I now have. … Well, what then must I, miserable, do? Go home? And then should I behold the great emptiness of my house and the dearth of resources for my life?[2]

Iphis leaves the stage to starve himself to death. By demonstrating the susceptibility of Iphis' family to disaster in war, Euripides elicits pity and fear for Iphis. This pathos extends also to the widows and orphans of the other deceased warriors in the play. With Iphis they display their suffering to an internal Attic audience, Theseus, and to the external Athenian audience in the theater. Central to Euripides' drama is how the Athenian king Theseus and the Athenian *polis* empathize with the familial distress of these neighbors.

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[1] I cite the text of Kovacs 1998.

[2] All translations are my own.

Iphis' tragic expression finds a close parallel in a separate genre outside the fictive, dramatic realm: in a speech written in the genre of a public eulogy (*epitaphios logos)* and attributed to Lysias, the (probably hypothetical) speaker asks his audience to imagine a scenario very like Iphis':

> τί γὰρ ἂν τούτων ἀνιαρότερον γένοιτο, ἢ τεκεῖν μὲν καὶ θρέψαι καὶ θάψαι τοὺς αὑτῶν, ἐν δὲ τῷ γήρᾳ ἀδυνάτους μὲν εἶναι τῷ σώματι, πασῶν δ' ἀπεστερημένους τῶν ἐλπίδων ἀφίλους καὶ ἀπόρους γεγονέναι, ὑπὲρ δὲ τῶν αὐτῶν πρότερον ζηλοῦσθαι καὶ νῦν ἐλεεῖσθαι, ποθεινότερον δ' αὐτοῖς εἶναι τὸν θάνατον τοῦ βίου;
>
> Lysias 2.72-3

> For what could be more painful than to bring forth and nurture and bury their own [children], and then in old age to be powerless in body and, having been deprived of all hopes, to find themselves without family or friends and resources; and to be pitied now because of the same things for which they were formerly envied, and for death to be for these more desirable than life?

Iphis recounted familial suffering in the same terms as this eulogy, which describes what should be a relatable scenario for its audience. The speaker's focus on the suffering of a household destroyed finds numerous parallels throughout Athenian oratory. My project sets out to explore correspondences like this between the way tragedy describes familial suffering and the way fifth-century Athenians experienced vulnerability in their households. In this dissertation, I will investigate how tragedy's depictions of familial destruction draw upon a Classical Athenian view of this experience.

There is plentiful evidence that Attic tragedians are interested in depicting families suffering; it is harder to assess how, precisely, dramas engage the audience's experiences of the *oikos* in Athens. Aristotle in *Poetics* indicates that familial suffering is a key component in the genre, suggesting in a frequently cited passage:

> ὅταν δ᾽ ἐν ταῖς φιλίαις ἐγγένηται τὰ πάθη, οἷον ἢ ἀδελφὸς ἀδελφὸν ἢ υἱὸς πατέρα ἢ μήτηρ υἱὸν ἢ υἱὸς μητέρα ἀποκτείνῃ ἢ μέλλῃ, … ταῦτα ζητητέον.
>
> *Poetics* 1453b.19-22

> When sufferings occur among family members, such as either when a brother kills a brother, a son a father, a mother a son or a son a mother, or is about to kill … these sorts of scenarios ought to be sought after.[3]

It is reasonable to infer that the family violence Aristotle describes in this passage fulfills another suggestion he makes in *Poetics*: that tragedy's plot, the most significant component of tragedy, be "mimēsis, imitation, not of humans but of action and life" (μίμησίς … οὐκ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλὰ πράξεως καὶ βίου 1450a.15).[4]

The plays themselves support Aristotle's description. Belfiore 2000's calculations suggest that significantly over half of extant and fragmentary tragedies centered on violence between family members, either blood-kin or spouses.[5] In addition, more plays focus on other forms of destruction to the family including war (eg. *Troades*) death of a critical member (*Alcestis, Ajax*) or family strife (*Andromache, Oedipus at Colonus*). The endangered status of the household in tragedy provides a larger context for Aristotle's suggestion that violence between kin especially elicits tragic pity and fear. Greek tragedy also shows a distinctive view of the family in comparison to the genre of epic. The tragic perspective on the home emphasizes alternative

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[3] Aristotle also comments that tragedians commonly gravitate to the same families for the sake of plot, 1453a17-23.

[4] Aristotle describes *mimēsis* at 1450a14-19. Both here and at 1450a39, Aristotle defines plot as the most important element of tragedy: μέγιστον δὲ τούτων ἐστὶν ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων σύστασις. (1450a14-15). In interpreting the Aristotelian view of tragedy, Jones 1962 emphasizes on Aristotle's depiction of tragedy as describing action, rather than focusing on the individual hero.

[5] Belfiore 2000 calculates that 19 out of 32 extant plays feature inter-member violence, pp. 123-4, and 81 out of 141 fragmentary plays by the major tragedians, pp. 202-3. She conjectures that 67 tragedies by the 'minor' tragedians, known only by name, featured such violence, pp. 205-9.

concerns to those in epic poetry where "homecoming is both fervently desired and persistently deferred."[6] Tragedy often reorients the same stories from epic poetry towards home, where disaster occurs.

The question remains: does violence to the family in tragedy imitate contemporary experiences in order to elicit the tragic emotions of pity of fear? These emotions, after all, require that the audience on some level understand the situation a tragic character experiences. Tragedy certainly appeals to a universal experience of family, as is apparent, for instance, from modern receptions of Athenian tragedy that concentrate on familial pathos in these plays.[7] Did Greek tragedians draw upon specific familial experiences in fifth-century Athens as well? Where could we look for this?

The category of harm to an individual household is accessible both in tragedy and from a variety of other Athenian sources: this subject, I suggest, can connect tragic families to Athenian ones. The lived experience of the Athenian family unit, the *oikos,* provides social context for the imitative function and tragic emotions which drama engages.[8] Tragedy's dire family situations present the same type of images of family destruction which Athenians produced in art, history, and speeches. As I will show, the last category, public speeches, reveal a particularly Athenian perspective on the *oikos* and its relationship to the *polis*. The correspondences between these

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[6] Bassi 1999, 416.

[7] For instance, the *Theater of War* project, 2009-present, performs Sophocles' *Ajax* on the assumption that a modern audience, particularly American military, can relate to how Ajax' PTSD affects his own family. The *Queens of Syria* tour, 2015-present, reinterperets Euripides' *Trojan Women* through the perspective of Syrian refugee women, who have lost their homes.

[8] Jones 1962, 58 describes Aristotle's insight as "growing out the deep-set facts, corporate and psycho-physical, of Greek life," among which Jones includes the *oikos*.

sources and tragic depictions of *oikos* destruction suggests one way we can consider tragic families in terms of the *oikos* in fifth-century Athens.

In this project, I will describe the pathos of the *oikos'* destruction in tragedy and show how it is a significant theme in individual dramas. Whether threatened, effected, or avoided in the theater, the demise of a household presents the ultimate object of fifth-century anxieties about the individual household's stability. By frequently depicting households being obliterated, tragedy points towards the experience of its Athenian audience who had a unique set of worries they emphasized regarding their households. In modern America we discuss poverty, geographic fragmentation, abuse, divorce, and incarceration as some factors that threaten family units. We recognize when modern writers and politicians engage these topics, and are also aware that depicting family destruction can reveal a speaker's aims and opinions. "Family values" can be a powerful rhetorical tool. I identify a corresponding set of Athenian anxieties about household demise that includes warfare, punishment by the state, 'extinction' through morbidity and sterility, and disruption through family dysfunction, including female misbehavior. When tragic families experienced these sorts of demise, I will argue, they can elicit a culturally specific pity and fear in their Athenian audience who was able on some level to transfer the pathos of the scenario to their own experiences in an *oikos*.

To understand how the threatened *oikos* contributes integrally to the meaning of tragedies, I will closely read four plays: *Agamemnon*, *Antigone*, *Heracles*, and *Ion*. I use these case studies because I am examining how tragedy engages with the Attic *oikos* on the level of imagery and vocabulary and of plot and character development. In each play, I analyze the relationship of a main character to his or her respective household, the type of threat which affects the household, and how this relates to significant aspects of the interpretation of the play.

Family destruction appears differently in each of the plays. In Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* the destruction of the household is threatened; Sophocles' *Antigone* presents the aftermath of a household's destruction; in Euripides' *Heracles* a household is destroyed; and in his *Ion* a household returns from the brink of destruction.

By examining plays by all three tragedians, I will emphasize continuities between their depictions of the household. While it is beyond the scope of the project to conclusively relate the *oikos* and the genre of tragedy, the plays I have chosen represent important points in the Classical tragic tradition. *Agamemnon*, performed in 458 as the first play in the *Oresteia* trilogy, seems to have impacted the dramatic tradition particularly strongly, since numerous tragedies, especially Euripides', show engagement with how Aeschylus dramatized the doomed Labdacid family.[9] *Ion* appeared towards the end of Euripides' career, and several critics have sensed that it departs from the tragic genre. I will contribute to this discussion by describing how *Ion* continues or diverges from earlier tragic representations of households. The two Euripidean plays *Heracles* and *Ion* permit us to observe the priorities of this playwright, who frequently shows special emphasis on family relations.[10] I have also included the two extant tragedies that explicitly use the image of house-razing, *kataskaphē*: *Agamemnon* and *Heracles*. I will argue that Sophocles' Antigone uses the term also in reference to her family. I analyze how this image and public punishment relate to the meaning of each play as a whole. Finally, my case studies will compare how gender affects individuals' relationships to their households: *Agamemnon* and *Heracles*

[9] We cannot answer the question of whether the *Oresteia* was re-performed in the Fifth Century. Easterling 2005b looks at evidence of its classic status from the Fourth Century and after. Bain 1977 suggests *Agamemnon* was performed shortly before Euripides' *Electra*.
[10] Zeitlin 2008 reflects on this observation.

emphasize the relation of a male protagonist to his *oikos* while females and their households hold the center in *Antigone* and *Ion*.

In Chapter One I examine how Aeschylus uses the *skēnē* to represent Agamemnon's *oikos,* and I relate this to the image of house-razing in the play. I connect Agamemnon's violence towards his own *oikos* with how Agamemnon relates to the larger Argive community. Finally, I will compare this triangular relationship, individual-*oikos*-*polis*, with the corresponding relationship of Paris, his *oikos*, and Troy. I will demonstrate the ways Troy's demise provides a parallel for the destruction of Agamemnon's *oikos*.

In Chapter Two I examine how Sophocles depicts the family situation of Antigone. I will present evidence for a new interpretation: that Sophocles describes Antigone's view of her family as extinct and that Antigone chooses not to act as an *epiklēros*. I will show how such a picture of complete household destruction affects Antigone's characterization. I also contrast Antigone's view of her *oikos'* situation to Creon's view of it: I argue this difference is significant to the drama's negative depiction of Creon's orders.

In Chapter Three I analyze the relationship of Euripides' Heracles to his household in Argos. Euripides depicts this connection as *Heracles* progresses: before Heracles arrives from abroad, upon his homecoming, and in the wake of Heracles' manic destruction of his own *oikos*. I pay special attention to how Theseus' offer, to bring Heracles to Athens as a hero receiving cult, contrasts with the hero's previous situation within an *oikos* at Argos.

Finally, in Chapter Four I will show how *Ion* depicts Apollo's rape as causing Creusa to suffer in relation to her *oikos* particularly. I will examine how the drama situates Creusa's act of exposing her son within a recurring family pattern. How do these family problems relate to *Ion*'s resonant patriotic theme? To address this question, I analyze how Euripides alternates public and

private perspectives toward the plight of Creusa's *oikos* in this play. Finally, I consider each off-stage space that the drama represents – the cave in Athens, the Acropolis, Ion's tent, and Apollo's temple – and how these relate to the space of a house.

1. The *Oikos'* Destruction and its Pathos

In this introduction, I will describe the Athenian *oikos* from the perspective of its potential demise. For the purposes of my project, I define the *oikos* as the household, one of its important meanings: this encompassed a home, the people who lived in it, and the family's possessions.[11] The individual household held an important position among broader family relationships including the intergenerational line of a household and the extended family (*genos),* and among networks of friendship.[12] I will draw attention to how texts and artworks suggest their audiences' anxieties and feelings by depicting various threats to the household. Concern about household destruction points towards the significance of the *oikos* in Attic society. My portrait will highlight the qualities that define the Attic *oikos;* increased scholarship on the Greek family in the past three decades now reveals these more clearly.

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[11] *Oikos* can also refer separately to specific parts of the household: the physical house in which a family lives and the family's inheritable possessions, *ktēmata*, which included land and slaves. On definitions of *oikos* see MacDowell 1989, Roy 1999, 1-3, as well as Pomeroy 1997, 17-36. MacDowell shows that, in legal contexts, *oikos* usually refers to property or the house and *oikia* is used to refer to the persons. Pomeroy 1997, 20 n.4 suggests that *oikos* and *oikia* have little difference. These definitions highlight two fundamental purposes of the *oikos*: to support its members and to continue itself (and sustain the *polis*) by producing children.

[12] Roy 1999, 1-3 and Cox 1998, 132-5 emphasize that the term *oikos* can also encompass relationships beyond the members of an individual household. Throughout her monograph on the Greek family, Patterson 1998, emphasizes that, 2, "the household, though not the only significant form of family, was the most enduring, and stood aIt the moral center of both family and state in Ancient Greece."

Understanding the classical *oikos*' influential position at Athens can counter-balance a common focus on the individual tragic character. Sorum 1982 suggests that "focus on this emerging individual, the hero, …so appealing to critics schooled in the traditions of Western individualism, has caused the still pervasive sense of an enduring collective unit, the family, to be neglected [in reading tragedy]."[13] In Classical Athens the *oikos* had a strong mutually dependent relationship with the larger *polis* and was enormously significant to the individual. As Aristotle puts it, it is not individual citizens who made up the *polis*, but the *polis* was the total of its household units, *oikoi*: "for every *polis* is put together from households" (πᾶσα γὰρ σύγκειται πόλις ἐξ οἰκιῶν. *Politics* 1.1253b2-3).[14] Many or most Greek tragedies, I argue, reflect this significance of the family.

While threats to the individual household in ancient Athens do not differ in *quantity* from those facing a modern family or families in other time periods, the manner in which they describe this suffering reveals the unique set of anxieties the Athenians held regarding the vulnerability of the *oikos*.[15] Since the *oikos* was central in Athens, it is unsurprising that the sadness of a family destroyed in war is frequently depicted in Athenian tragedy, vase-painting, historical writing, and speeches. In war Athenian families lost their sons; war also produced anxiety that at any time an invading enemy might destroy a family's physical house and possessions. War combined with more local threats confronting households: an individual house

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[13] Sorum 1982, 203. She continues "Furthermore, the emphasis on the individual and his character has not only taken precedence over but indeed prevented to a large degree significant consideration of the tension generated between the demands of the family and those of the individual and contemporary society."

[14] Nagle 2006 focuses on this relationship as Aristotle describes it. Most modern scholars and the latest monographs on the Greek family, Pomeroy 1997 and Patterson 1998, emphasize this characterization of the relationship of *oikos* and *polis*.

[15] Rehm 2003, 54-8 argues that tragedy engages a specific Athenian set of anxieties regarding family.

might be destroyed when it was overwhelmed by mortalities and ran out of heirs, was unable to pay a public debt, or was punished for a serious crime of one of its members. I will consider depictions of each of these scenarios.

1a. Destruction in War

Oikos-destruction in the form of house destruction in war was far from hypothetical for fifth-century Athenians, who themselves or whose parents or grandparents had witnessed the sack of Athenian houses alongside public buildings in the Persian Wars.[16] Spartan invasions during the Archidamean phase of the Peloponnesian War destroyed many houses in the Attic countryside. Taking their turn as aggressor, the Athenians demolished all the *oikoi* on the island of Melos in 416, destroying houses, killing all the men, and enslaving women and children.[17] Ongoing warfare in the late Fifth Century inflicted continuing casualties upon Athenian *oikoi*. As I will discuss, state funeral orations and the ceremonial parade of war orphans at the City Dionysia regularly commemorated the familial cost of war.

Classical Greek art and literature frequently represent war's toll on the individual household. In particular, the sack of Troy provides an icon of destruction at the levels both of city and family.[18] Troy's frequent depiction in vase painting, in the *Iliad,* and in the *Ilioupersis* of

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[16] Herodotus 9.13.2 describes the destruction of houses in Athens. Shear 1993 discusses how archaeological evidence confirms the destruction of houses in the sack.

[17] In a speech against Alcibiades attributed to Andocides, the speaker compares pathetic familial situations in tragedy to one episode of *oikos*-suffering in Melos' fate, when Alcibiades impregnated a Melian captive (the enslavement of whose island he had argued for). The speaker says the child "was so much more lawlessly begotten than the son of Aegisthus, because he was born to parents who were the greatest enemies to each other… when you watch such things in tragedies you consider them terrible." (τοσούτῳ παρανομωτέρως Αἰγίσθου γέγονεν, ὥστ᾽ ἐκ τῶν ἐχθίστων ἀλλήλοις πέφυκε,… ὑμεῖς ἐν μὲν ταῖς τραγῳδίαις τοιαῦτα θεωροῦντες δεινὰ νομίζετε. 4.22-3)

[18] Zeitlin 2009, 71 emphasizes that Troy in art and poetry becomes equated with its utter destruction and its fate "to become a nowhere."

the epic cycle (as indicated by Proclus' summary) accentuated the pathos of the familial suffering of Priam's *oikos* at the city's sack.[19] In *Iliad* Book 22, Priam beseeches Hector not to engage Achilles. The old man points to the children he has lost and foresees the destruction of his house in Troy's sack, including daughters dragged away and sons killed (63), treasure looted (63), and children dashed to death (63-4). Finally, he imagines that his own dogs will eat him on the doorstep of his house (66-71). Similarly, both on vases and in the *Ilioupersis* of the epic cycle Priam is slaughtered on the altar of Zeus Herkeios (a symbol of the *oikos*),[20] the baby Astyanax is hurled from the Trojan ramparts,[21] and Priam's daughters Cassandra and Polyxena are raped and sacrificed, respectively.[22]

Although Troy was Athens' enemy in the Trojan war, Troy's suffering corresponds to Athens' experience when Persia sacked her in the Fifth Century (Athens had, however, evacuated its people). Attic tragedies depicting events in the Trojan war, for instance Euripides' *Hecuba* and *Troades*, seem to exploit the possibility that Greece could suffer the same fate as Troy, as Froma Zeitlin suggests, "compromis[ing] any firm line of demarcation between the opposing sides."[23] In *Persians* (472) Aeschylus focalizes the defeat of one of Athens' great enemies, Darius, through his city and especially his family at home.[24] Athens certainly might

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[19] This view of Troy as victim characterizes the Greeks as excessively violent. See Castriota 1992, 97-100; Anderson 1997, 180–265; Ferrari 2000; Zeitlin 2009, 712-713 and n. 13; and Shapiro 2015. Unlike representations of this conflict in terms of civilized versus uncivilized, as on some Attic public monuments (e.g. the Stoa Poikile and Parthenon metopes, see Zeitlin 2009, 712), the iconography of vase painting generally follows the *Ilioupersis* accounts of atrocities by the Greeks that emphasize their sacrilege and brutal excess.

[20] Described by Proclus in his summary, arg. 13-14. Also [Apollod.] *Epit.* 5.21.

[21] Procl. arg. 20-21. Astyanax' death also is depicted in *Little Iliad* fr. 21.1-5.

[22] Procl. arg. 23-4.

[23] Zeitlin 2009, 713.

[24] For instance, the chorus of elders describe the desire (*pothos*) of the parents and wives waiting for soldiers fighting in Greece, Aesch. *Pers*. 61-4. The homecoming of the king, whose fate his

have seen a reflection of her experience in other *poleis'* sufferings dramatized in theater. Phrynichus' *Sack of Miletus* (performed after 494) displayed to an Athenian audience the destruction of a contemporary city (here one not an enemy of Athens and one which Athens perhaps ought to have protected).[25] The legendary war at Thebes also created numerous victim *oikoi*: Euripides' *Suppliant Women*, discussed in the opening passage of this chapter, portrays the families destroyed by the expedition against Thebes, and Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes* and Sophocles' *Antigone* depict the familial suffering of the Thebans themselves in that war.

Not only poets explore this pathos; historians and orators of Athens also mine the event of family destruction in war. In history, a memorable example is Thucydides' account of the Thracian sack of the small *polis* Mycalessus (7.29), where the historian vividly describes the destruction of its temples and *oikia*, its young and old members, and, especially awful, the slaughter of a schoolhouse full of boys.[26] Thucydides states that there was no worse misfortune (*sumphora*) than this city's (7.29.5). Likewise, his famous description of the stasis of Corycra highlights the dissolution of family ties (3.81.5 and 3.82.6) and reveals familial suffering as an ultimate consequence of war.

Unlike Troy or Mycalessus, Athens was never wiped out, but Attic families suffered substantial loss of homes and family members several times in the Fifth Century. As I will discuss when I describe the *polis*' punishment of house razing, the destruction of an Athenian house undermined the *oikos* significantly since the physical structure played an important role in

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mother awaits, is the play's central focus. In his presentation of this defeat from a Persian perspective, Aeschylus probably imitated his predecessor Phrynichus, who depicted the same event in his lost *Phoenician Women*.

[25] Rosenbloom 1993 discusses the audience's ability to empathize with the Milesians' suffering in this play.

[26] Herodotus 6.27.7 describes a scene at Chios like that at Mycalessus.

defining the household. In this way, the physical destruction of Attic homes in the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars relate to images of family destruction enacted on stage.

In addition to praising fallen individuals, Athenian funeral orations pay special notice to the sacrifice of bereaved families in war.[27] An example is the passage discussed earlier, taken from a speech attributed to Lysias and composed in the genre of a state eulogy (Lys. 2.72-73). Here, as in other funeral orations, the speaker acknowledged the suffering of bereaved parents. Eulogists often address surviving wives and children and pledge care for them.[28] One way Athens fulfilled such promises was by supporting boys orphaned in war, a program that culminated when the young men who reached majority were given a set of armor and paraded publicly in the theater before tragedies were performed.[29] This performance at the City Dionysia demonstrated the state's support, as well as their fathers' sacrifices, to the audience of citizens ready to watch unfolding family dramas.

Deliberative and judicial speeches also show speakers exploiting family pathos for rhetorical purpose. For example, Aeschines uses a description of family demise in war in his public suit against his enemy Ctesiphon. The speaker vividly paints the picture for his fourth-century audience of how Philip sacked Thebes and destroyed its families:

> ἀλλ᾽ ἐπειδὴ τοῖς σώμασιν οὐ παρεγένεσθε, ἀλλὰ ταῖς γε διανοίαις ἀποβλέψατ᾽ αὐτῶν εἰς τὰς συμφοράς, καὶ νομίσαθ᾽ ὁρᾶν ἁλισκομένην τὴν πόλιν, τειχῶν κατασκαφάς, ἐμπρήσεις οἰκιῶν, ἀγομένας γυναῖκας καὶ παῖδας εἰς δουλείαν, πρεσβύτας ἀνθρώπους, πρεσβύτιδας γυναῖκας ὀψὲ μεταμανθάνοντας τὴν ἐλευθερίαν, κλαίοντας…
>
> *Against Ctesiphon* 3.156-7

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[27] For instance, Lys. 2.73 and Thuc. 2.44.2-3. See Lacey 1968, 79 and 81 and Strauss 1993, 39.
[28] Lacey 1968, 271-2 and n. 200 notes several examples, including: Thuc. 2.46; Hyp. 27 and 42; Lys. 2.70-76; Dem. 60, 32-7, Pl. *Menex*. 246b-247c (comments on children), 247c-248d (parents), 248d-249c (the *polis* will care for parents and children).
[29] Aeschines describes this procession, *In Ctes.* 154. See Pickard-Cambridge 1968, 59 and Csapo-Slater 1995, 117-9. Cudjoe 2010, 69-72 points out that the state did not regularly support the war widows. See Chapter Three, pp. 166-7 on how Euripides evokes this practice in *Heracles*.

> But since you were not there in body, at least with your imaginations consider their calamities: and envision that you see their city conquered, the razing of the walls, the arson of their homes; women and children led into slavery; old men, old women, late in life unlearning freedom; crying…

The speaker lingers over the details of the demise of the Theban families in order to generate anger toward his opponent. Such powerful portraits of familial destruction in war – including the loss of husbands, fathers, and sons in battle; the slaughter or sale of women and children; the razing of houses and temples; and even the destruction of tombs – are also frequently found as the scenario of tragic drama.

1b. Destruction of the Household as a Punishment

Apart from war, we frequently find an image of *oikos*-destruction in Greek oaths from the early Archaic period and after. A citizen called down complete destruction, *exōleia,* upon his own family if he violated his oath.[30] Antiphon gives a typical formulation: "it is necessary that you swear the greatest and strongest oath, cursing destruction upon yourself and your *genos* and *oikos*" (τοῦτο δὲ δέον σε διομόσασθαι ὅρκον τὸν μέγιστον καὶ ἰσχυρότατον, ἐξώλειαν σαυτῷ καὶ γένει καὶ οἰκίᾳ τῇ σῇ ἐπαρώμενον 5.11). This sort of family destruction was a common curse invoked publicly as part of oaths such, for example the Amphictyonic oath.[31] On a regular basis

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[30] For a good discussion of the earliest examples of *exōleia* in Homer and Hesiod, see Gagné 2013, 159-205.

[31] Aeschin. 3.111. See Parker 1983, 191 n. 3 and Connor 1985 88 n. 27 for further references. The formula for this demand is that an individual "be destroyed himself and his family." It is also used in private oaths: see Connor 1985, 87 n. 25 for examples including And. 1.126 where Callias is described swearing in this way to his son's legitimacy. *Exōleia* in curses and oaths is also found in tragedy, including Soph. *OT* 269-72 and a fragment of Eupolis' comedy *Demes*, fr. 31 [Page, *GLP* 208]. Such a curse is parodied in Ar. *Thesm*. 349-50.

Athenian officials and jurors also called down *exōleia* upon their family and property, including their houses, in inaugural oaths.[32]

In fact, Greek *poleis* including Athens did enact the violence that these oaths describe, destroying the whole *oikos* of an individual who had done significant harm to the state. In addition to execution (usually by stoning) or exile, the *polis* might confiscate a family's property, or dig up the tombs of a family's ancestors from where they were buried.[33] Such punishments represent the community addressing an individual's transgression through his family. A final punishment that often accompanied the others targeting the *oikos* was *kataskaphē*, when the *polis* razed a criminal's house to the ground. All these penalties highlight the collectivity of *oikos*-members, all of who are punished for the act of an individual member. Their severity underscores the significance of the *oikos* to the welfare of the larger *polis*.[34]

The punishment of an entire family points to the way members of an Athenian household lived as a collective. On a fundamental level, members inhabiting one house shared that space intimately. Contact in the common space of a house meant that its inhabitants often shared physical ritual pollution – a common cause was death in the family. In response to pollution the whole house and family required purification. In an extension of the concept of normal physical pollution, Athenians also envisioned the possibility that a criminal who incurred metaphysical pollution, shared his guilt with his household as he endangered the *polis*.[35] Shared domestic

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[32] Examples includes the Heliastic oath, the oath at the Palladion, at the Areopagus, at the Ecclesia and at the Boule. See Connor 1985, 87 n. 26 for full references.

[33] Parker 1983, 45 n. 47 lists attested cases of the withholding of burial.

[34] Parker 1983, 194-5 suggests that these extreme punishments developed to suppress crimes that especially threatened the community.

[35] Parker 1983 discusses three major categories of physical pollution: death (32-48), birth (49-73), and justified bloodshed (104-143). Like Parker 1983, 8-9 and 144-190, Petrovic and Petrovic 2016, 29-32 emphasize how the dangers of physical pollution differ from those of "metaphysical

space may explain why the community punished the whole family for an individual's offense: the *polis* might that expect all family members knew about the plans of a criminal. Thus, the *polis* might extrapolate from a criminal's offense that his entire *oikos* was a threat.

Throughout the classical period there are examples where the Athenian *polis* punished an entire household for the offense of an individual member.[36] Herodotus tells the story of an Athenian, Lycides, who was stoned for advocating a Persian position to the Athenians at Samos. In Athens, women found Lycides' house and killed his wife and children.[37] Lysias 20 offers another example of collective punishment. The defendant addresses the charge that his father helped overthrow Athenian democracy during the reign of the Four Hundred. The speaker draws attention to his own plight and his brothers': if the jury condemns their father, he says, they all will be disenfranchised from citizenship.[38] In light of the sons' military service to the democracy, which the speaker emphasizes, this consequence from the father's action appears harsh but reflects the bond of individual to a household.

Public punishments of the family express how the *oikos* was a real and special concern of the larger *polis*. This does not, however, mean that the *polis* generally interfered with the *oikos*. It is now commonly acknowledged that mutual interconnection defined the relationship of the

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pollution," whether minor (violation of a ritual) or major, a "fundamental transgression against a ritual or divine authority," 31, including oaths. Major metaphysical pollution incurs a divine attention, *agos*, usually angry, that can threaten the broader family and community as collateral damage. I am grateful to Ivana Petrovic for sharing her new book and discussing this topic with me.

[36] On the collective punishment of the family, see Glotz 1904, 566-73 and Connor 1985, 93-6. On the related issue of ancestral guilt and punishment (inherited over generations) see Parker 1983, 198-206; Sewell-Rutter 2007, 15-48 on tragedy; and Gagné 2013 who argues against a "doctrine of inherited guilt." Pp. 153-8 give a good overview of his argument.

[37] Hdt. 9.5. Patterson 1994, 201-1 discusses this passage.

[38] Lys. 20.35. This despite the recent military service of the sons, 24-5, 28, and 29-31.

Classical Athenian *oikos* and *polis*, and not, as earlier influential nineteenth-century models suggested, their opposition.[39] On a fundamental level the *polis* depended upon *oikoi* to produce and support an army of citizen-soldiers. For this reason, it regulated the *oikos* through citizenship and inheritance laws.[40] But in many other areas the *polis* left the sphere of the household to be managed informally. Perhaps most strikingly the *polis* kept no central registries of marriages or *oikoi,* and the meaning of *oikos* as "household" seems to have had no formal legal definition.[41]

In addition to the personal loss it caused, a household's demise was devastating to an Athenianian man because of how the *oikos* defined civic participation. On a pragmatic level, to prove citizenship an Athenian had to show that he was a legitimate son from a legitimate *oikos*. Confirmation of this identity rested not only on a phratry registry but upon the physical and personal constituents of the *oikos* into which he was born:[42] the *dokimasia* of a public official included a string of questions about an individual's family including the names of its members,

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[39] Patterson 1998, 5-43 gives a detailed account of this change in paradigms, and describes what is now a current consensus that Pomeroy 1997 and Strauss 1993 emphasize as well.

[40] In regards to procreation the *polis* could and did make laws to regulate the *oikos*, such as the Periclean citizenship law of 451 and rules regarding inheritance. Harrison 1968, 122-62 discusses inheritance laws.

[41] Scafuro 1994 and Sickinger 1999. Roy 1999, 7 suggests there was no legal definition of an *oikos*. Closest to a record of *oikoi* were the decentralized and pseudo-familial groups of the phratry and deme, before whom a father would introduce and register his legitimate sons; cf. Pomeroy 1997, 75-82 on the phratry and deme. While civil courts did decide cases of family strife, speakers in these cases commonly claim that these a isresues which should be dealt with by individuals, not publicly, as Humphreys 1983, 5-7 n. 22 points out. Humphreys 1986, 74 also notes the relatively low apparent interference by the *polis* on behalf of underage wards.

[42] Scafuro 1994; Patterson 1994; and Yunis 2003, 85. For a discussion of the process of the legitimation of citizens, understood as a series of acts of a family to which witnesses might later attest, see Ogden, 1996, 83-135 and Scafuro 1994. The regularity of home life was a crucial element of the ability to prove legitimacy. Patterson 1994, especially 210-211 shows how Apollodorus' case against Neaira reveals this burden of proof.

the location of its altar to Zeus Herkeios (within the house) and family tombs, and how a man treated his parents.[43]

In an extension of the *oikos'* role defining who was a citizen, Athenians used the vocabulary and depiction of their households to convey shared civic values. In this way the *polis*' interest in having vigorous *oikoi* lent itself to speakers who made rhetorical use of the *oikos* in the public sphere.[44] Such strategies helped construct a public ideology of the *oikos,* as Humphreys 1983 defines it, "idealising statements about the nature and foundations of the *oikos* and the norms of behavior within the household."[45] A familiar connection public speakers make is that a good guardian of a well-functioning *oikos* is also a good citizen.[46] Orators also frequently express affection for children, *philoteknia,* and appeal to it as a common bond with the jury, a source of sympathy, and a mark of character.[47] Finally, speakers often refer to

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[43] *Ath. Pol.* 55.2-3.

[44] Aristotle suggests that the good *polis* depends upon good *oikoi*, *Pol*. 1. 1253b2-3 and 1260b8-20. He also suggests that the *oikos* should foster citizenship, friendship, and justice (*Eth. Eud.* 1242a40-b1; cf. 1242a22-27).

[45] Humphreys 1983, 5. In her recent dissertation, Lehmann 2016 focuses on *oikos* ideology following Humphreys' definition. Strauss 1993 also discusses Athenian ideology related to the *oikos,* emphasizing that the overlap of an Athenian's *oikos*- and *polis*- identities caused not only the *polis* to be "familialized" but "the family [to be] politicized," 12.

[46] Pericles comments (Thuc. 2.44.3): "For it is not possible that men decide anything fair or just, who dare things [politically] without risking the lives of [their own] children, on equal terms [with their peers]" (οὐ γὰρ οἷόν τε ἴσον τι ἢ δίκαιον βουλεύεσθαι οἷ ἂν μὴ καὶ παῖδας ἐκ τοῦ ὁμοίου παραβαλλόμενοι κινδυνεύωσιν). Other similar expressions of the relation of citizenship and family include Aesch. 1.28 and 1.30, Aesch. 3.77, Lys. 30.23, Ant. 661-1. 672-74, Dem. 25.88. Strauss 1993, 36-52 discusses the overlap of family membership and citizenship in these examples.

[47] Golden 1990, 91-92 points out how orators commonly refer to love of children as a sentiment which binds citizens and validates their credibility. For example, Lys. 4.20, Dem 28.2, and Dem. 50.62. See my discussion in Chapter Three on Euripides' *Heracles*, pp. 157-9. See Zeitlin 2008 on the many expressions of sentiment for children in Euripides.

observable aspects of an individual household, including the domestic activities of its inhabitants and the physical house, in order to express the quality of the *oikos* and its male leader.[48]

A decorous household contributed to the *polis,* but a dysfunctional *oikos* might threaten the community. We can observe this in the way even a natural disruption for a household like normal physical pollution, for instance from the death of a member, was a concern in the neighboring community: the family would place a bowl of water and other tokens outside the house's entrance, notifying their neighbors of the household's pollution.[49] As I noted (15-16), a criminal's family could be conceived as a major threat to the *polis.* The *dēmos* also exhibited concern for appropriate behavior in the *oikos* as a public concern. Thus a law, which [Demosthenes] cites, allowed anyone to assault an adulteress who participated in *polis* sacrifices.[50] In Lysias 1, Euphiletus exploits this relation of the *oikos* and the *polis* when he frames Eratosthenes' seduction of his wife as an attack not just on his *oikos* but on the *polis,* compelling him to kill Eratosthenes.[51]

In Athens' political arena and on her tragic stage, we observe how a family's dysfunction, even from generations back, could transform a leading citizen into a religious danger to the *polis*.[52] For rhetorical purposes, speakers frequently exploited the guilt of certain prominent *genē*

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[48] On the physical house, see below, pp. 21-3.
[49] Parker 1983, 35. Parker, 49-73, suggests that death was a more contagious pollution for a house than birth, but birth also created household pollution.
[50] [Dem.] 59.86.
[51] For instance, Euphiletus says that he killed Eratosthenes because he broke the laws of the *polis* (1.26). Throughout the speech, Euphiletus describes the affairs of his *oikos* as a matter of concern to the larger community, as Wolpert 2001, 422, for instance, discusses.
[52] Pollution could be used to frame an individual as a danger to the *dēmos*. For instance, Petrovic and Petrovic 2016, 218-9 point out how the speaker in *Against Androtion* describes the pollution of his opponent (he claims he prostituted himself and committed sacrilege) to disqualify him from participation in public leadership.

(extended families), framing them as a concern to the *polis*: prominent examples are the Alcmeonids and Peisistratids. Aristophanes parodies such political discourse in *Knights*: Cleon's character threatens a suit, accusing the Sausage-Seller of being tainted by sacrilege as a member of the Alcmeonid family, while the other rejoins by condemning Cleon as a Peisistratid, whose tyranny was offensive to the *dēmos*.[53] Conversely, to defend themselves Attic speakers commonly point to the friendship of their families towards the *dēmos*.[54] Thus Athenian politics frequently drew not just individuals but families into the contest of accumulating honor, *timē,* and inflicting shame, *atimia*.[55]

Classical tragedy often considers the *polis'* worry about the families of its leading members, usually its ruling family. The second stasimon of Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* vividly links the dysfunction within the Labdacid family to the suffering of Thebes: Thebes is a ship in danger of capsizing because of its leaders (758-771). The chorus recount how Laius resisted Apollo's warning not to conceive a child (743-757), Oedipus' fearful marriage to his mother and murder of his father, and Oedipus' curse upon his sons (723 and 785-790).[56] Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* also depicts Oedipus endangering Thebes through these pollutions, acquired through his awfully dysfunctional behavior towards his mother (and wife) and father. Aeschylus' *Oresteia* provides another example: here violence within the Atreid

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[53] Cleon threatens a lawsuit, asserting that his opponent, the Sausage-Seller is "from the family of those who sinned against the goddess" (ἐκ τῶν ἀλιτηρίων σέ φημι γεγονέναι τῶν τῆς θεοῦ, 445). The Sausage-Seller returns the attack, 446-8, by claiming that Cleon's grandfather was one of the bodyguards of the Peisistratids, specifically Hippias' mother Byrsina.

[54] Pleading to be recalled from exile, Andocides refers to the friendship of his family towards the *dēmos*, And. 1.146-8.

[55] When used about an Athenian family, *atimia* refers to loss of citizen rights. Sewell-Rutter 2007, 19 n. 16 emphasizes that in Athens both benefits and punishments were conferred on progeny.

[56] Gagné 2013, 351-362, discusses these passages with respect to Aeschylus' depiction of ancestral fault.

family threatens the Argive *polis*. By instituting the Areopagus council in *Eumenides*, Athena highlights the importance of settling family dysfunctions for the community's sake.[57]

1c. House-Razing, *kataskaphē*

The phenomenon of *kataskaphē* – destroying a family's physical house – deserves special discussion in this introduction because of how impressively it targeted the family and because several Attic tragedies use house destruction or the explicit vocabulary of *kataskaphē* to reflect the theme of family destruction. *Kataskaphē* was a spectacle of a punishment the *dēmos* meted out for serious crimes that threatened the community, such as tyranny and treason. Based on the eleven prose sources from various Greek city-states which Connor 1985 adduced, it appears that *kataskaphē* entailed the physical destruction of an individual's house, probably to the level of its foundation.[58] House-razing generally accompanies other punishments with similar familial targets, for instance, withholding of burial and digging up of ancestral graves.[59]

Kataskaphē targets the family's physical house, which was an important part of the definition of the *oikos*. For an individual to prove his citizenship to the *dēmos,* he had to show membership in an *oikos* which was formed by a legitimate marriage and which performed the normal economic, social, and religious activities of a household, many of which revolved around the physical structure of the house. The practice of razing a family's house has numerous cross-

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[57] Aeschylus does not, by this event, so much emphasize a departure from a family-emphasis to a *polis*-emphasis. Instead he brings into focus the relation of *polis* and *oikos*. As Gagné 2013, 416 describes, "the Eumenides are to be the defenders of the family in the city and its perpetuation."
[58] Connor 1985, 80-83 gives brief summaries, excerpts, and discussion of his eleven examples which I discuss in the following pages: Plut. *Mor*. 162bff; Nic. Dam. *FGrHist* 90 fr. 60 (=*Exc. De insidiis* 22.4); Meiggs-Lewis 13 (an inscribed Locrian Law); Isoc. 16.26, Hdt. 6.72; Thuc. 5.63; Diod. Sic. 12.78.5; Craterus *FGrHist* 342 frr. 5 and 17; and Plut. *Tim*. 22.103; schol. Ar. *Lys.* 273.
[59] Connor 1985, 84.

cultural analogies, including in Ancient Rome,[60] in medieval and early modern Europe,[61] and, in recent decades, in Israel as a method of (once sanctioned, now vigilante) deterrence and retribution used against families of Palestinian terrorists.[62]

The target of house-razing – the physical house – not only provided shelter and security for an Athenian family's possessions, it also encapsulated their family's identity. Domestic life identified an individual as a member of an *oikos*. Athenian orators also use the image of the physical house to reflect the values of its members. For instance, to acquit himself Andocides tells his jury that, "there is not one of you who on passing my house remembered having suffered injury either publicly or in private" (οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ὅστις πώποτε ὑμῶν παριὼν τὴν οἰκίαν τὴν ἡμετέραν ἀνεμνήσθη ἢ ἰδίᾳ τι ἢ δημοσίᾳ κακὸν παθών, And. 1.146.5-147.2).[63] Demosthenes asks his fourth-century audience to examine the houses of prominent Athenians of the earlier classical period (such as Themistocles, Cimon, and Aristides) and suggests that, on their own, the appearances of those houses reflect values consistent with a democratic citizen.[64]

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[60] Roller 2010 traces the discourse of house demolition in sources describing the Roman republican era through the empire. He argues this shows that the practice in Rome was used against the elite houses of men who aimed at seizing tyrannical power. Here, he suggests, house-razing was a method of public appropriation the threatening power represented by the elite house.

[61] van der Steen 2015, 31, for instance, cites example from the Netherlands. On Medieval Germany, see Fischer 1957. Jutte 2016, 659 cites an example in Fourteenth Century Venice. Christopher Friedrichs at the University of British Columbia is currently writing a book on house-razing as punishment for serious crimes in early modern Europe and has presented several papers on this topic.

[62] For instance, see a recent article by Ruth Eglash in the January 17, 2016 *Washington Post.*

[63] Cf. And. 1.146.3-4, where he tells his audience that his "the house (*oikia*) of Andocides and Leogorus is not a cause of reproach for you," οὐκ ὄνειδος ὑμῖν ἐστιν ἡ Ἀνδοκίδου καὶ Λεωγόρου οἰκία.

[64] Dem. 3.25-6 and 23.207-8. The speaker makes a similar claim in [Dem.] 13. 29-31. Demosthenes states that some of his audience will know the houses by sight or memory: "if any of you know of what sort they are," εἴ τις ἄρ᾽ ὑμῶν οἶδεν ὁποία ποτ᾽ ἐστίν in Dem. 3.26.3. The speaker of

Passages such as these show how the physical house could represent the family to the wider community. Because the house could signify its member's values, the privacy of a house's inside space also had significance to a public audience. Orators describe the invitation to share a man's roof as guest, ὁμωρόφιος, as evidence of a close relationship;[65] similarly, when speakers narrate the invasion of an *oikos,* they appear to be trying to elicit the audience's indignation.[66] Ideology of the house also produces a related, vexing problem of how to relate the frequently idealized representations of women's seclusion to actual social practice.[67]

Descriptions of *kataskaphē* show that the reason for inflicting this punishment in ancient Greece was a citizen's serious harm to the community, eliciting public outrage. Two Spartan examples involve the community censuring a leader's offense. Thucydides tells us that the Spartan people were on the verge of razing king Agis' house for his poor conduct in Argos (they eventually forgive him). His offense was that he made a truce with the Argives without

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[Dem.] 13 claims the houses of such men are "consistent with the name of the government [that is, democracy]" τῷ τῆς πολιτείας ὀνόματι ἀκολούθους, 29. Nevett 1999, 38 discusses these passages.

[65] Examples of sharing a roof as a sign of intimacy include Ant. 5.11 and Dem. 18.287. MacDowell 1963, 145 discusses these, as does Lehman 2016, 23-4.

[66] Lehmann 2016, 28-34 discusses how speakers use narration of house invasions as an oratorical topos.

[67] In brief, textual evidence, particularly references to *gunaikonitis,* suggests that one aim of domestic architecture was the privacy and seclusion of female family members from outsiders: Xen. *Oec*. 9.5; Ar. *Thesm*. 414-17; *Eccl*. 693, 961; Lys 1.9 and 3.6; and Eur. *Phoen*. 89-100. Classical archaeologists do not agree on the general social practice. Probably sleeping arrangements were separate and certain parts of the house (including the *andrōn,* the "men's quarters") were reserved for male family members, the public face of the *oikos*. It seems likely that a household space was often mixed-use among the genders. Recent scholarship has emphasized that family members' use of the space was more flexible, especially when we consider work inside the *oikos* as Nevett 1995, 374 and Tsakirgis 1999, 79 discuss. For different archaeological accounts which all challenge the ideal presented in texts, see Jameson 1990, Nevett 1998, and Antonaccio 2000. Lehmann 2016, 8-15 provides a useful overview of the scholarship on this issue.

consulting anyone, although the historian tells us that the Spartans believed they had a good chance of winning.[68] In Herodotus, Leutychides is caught red handed taking a bribe, a particularly offensive crime to Spartans, shortly after seizing power by falsely testifying that king Demaratus was a bastard.[69] The Spartans raze his house.

Tyranny was one significant public offense which warranted *kataskaphē*. The Augustan historian Nicolaus of Damascus describes how the Corinthians killed the seventh-century tyrant Cypselus and razed his house.[70] In Plutarch's Life, Timoleon led the Syracusans in demolishing the public buildings, houses, and tombs of their tyrants, despite the cost and beauty of the architecture.[71]

Supporting political measures and regimes that harmed the *dēmos* similarly warranted house-razing. Two fragments of Craterus cite Athenian votes to raze the houses of Phrynichus as well as of Archeptolemus and Antiphon, each because of the individual's involvement with the oligarchic coup of the Four Hundred in 411.[72] A possible third fragment of Craterus, found in the scholia to *Lysistrata,* reports that the Athenian people razed the houses of citizens who had supported the Spartan king Cleomenes in 506, while these families were exiled in Eleusis.[73]

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[68] Thucydides 5.60 details the making of the truce; at 5.63 he describes the people's anger and reaction.

[69] Hdt. 6.72.

[70] Nic. Dam., *FGrH* 90 fr. 60 (= *Exc. de insidiis* 22.4).

[71] Plut. *Tim*. 22.1. "he did not spare the place on account of its beauty and the great expense of its construction" οὐδ᾽ ἐφείσατο τοῦ τόπου διὰ τὸ κάλλος καὶ τὴν πολυτέλειαν τῆς κατασκευῆς. Plutarch describes the *kataskaphē* of the Syracusan tyrants' houses, bulwarks and tombs at 22.2, and again at 39.1, in the context of Timoleon's funeral procession. At 24.1 he describes Timoleon continuing to attempt to root out tyranny from Sicily, forcing Hiketas to inflict *kataskaphē* on his "citadels" (ἀκροπόλεις) in Leontini.

[72] Craterus frr. 17 and 5.

[73] This can be found in the scholia to *Lysistrata* 273, edited by Hangard 1996. Wilamowitz-Möllendorff 1880, 171 argued that Craterus was the source for this decree. Connor 1985, 81-2 n. 7 discusses other descriptions of the treatment of these Spartan cooperators in Attica.

Likewise an inscription of a late-sixth-century Locrian law threatens with *kataskaphē* the home of any citizen who proposes what must be meant as a treasonous proposition before the council.[74]

A final category of harm to the *dēmos* which receives house-razing is a citizen's sacrilege. Thus, in the earliest example, which Plutarch relates, the Locrian people find, kill, and raze the houses of Locrians who entrapped and killed the poet Hesiod "near the temple of Nemean Zeus at Locris" (περὶ τὸ Λοκρικὸν Νέμειον *Moralia* 162D or *Deipnosophistai* 19). It seems possible that this final detail is meant to suggest that the act was sacrilegious, taking place within the *temenos*. Likewise, the famous sacrilege Alcmeonid family members committed to end the Cylonian conspiracy in the late Seventh Century seems to have given the Peisistratid tyrants a pretense to raze the homes of the Alcmeonid family, an event the speaker in Isocrates 16 asserts.[75]

Based on these examples, one characteristic of punitive house-razing is popular outrage in responding to serious crimes.[76] Thucydides describes that on discovering Agis' failure to take Argos, the "Lacedaemonians … became much more angered; and out of anger they immediately decided, contrary to their own custom, to raze his house," (Λακεδαιμόνιοι …. πολλῷ δὴ μᾶλλον ἐχαλέπαινον καὶ ἐβούλευον εὐθὺς ὑπ᾽ ὀργῆς παρὰ τὸν τρόπον τὸν ἑαυτῶν ὡς χρὴ τήν τε οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ κατασκάψαι, 5.63). In Plutarch's narrative of Hesiod's murder in Locris, when the Locrians recognized Hesiod's body carried ashore, they "made all else secondary to investigating the murder" (ἅπαντα δεύτερα τοῦ ζητεῖν τὸν φόνον ἐποιοῦντο. *Moralia* 162E or *Deipnosophistai*

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[74] Meiggs-Lewis 13.
[75] Isoc. 16.26. "On the Team of Horses."
[76] The Peisistratid razing of the Alcmaeonid homes, Isoc. 16. 26, just above, is an exception to *kataskaphē* being performed by the *dēmos.* Rather in this example a powerful individual family exploited the pretense of the Alcmaeonid sacrilege.

19). These descriptions convey the responsibility felt by the people generally to address a crime which might endanger the whole community. The orator Lycurgus in *Against Leocrates* (330 BC) urges his jury to inflict a harsh sentence and reminds them of the public anger against Phrynichus.[77] Craterus states that in addition to Phrynichus' punishment, the *polis* also executed and refused burial to all the men who had previously defended Phrynichus, a response which suggests the *polis* perceived it as a great threat.

The razings of the Corinthian and Syracusan tyrants' houses are similarly depicted as part of spirited democratic uprisings: in Syracuse Plutarch describes Timoleon inviting the people to "bring their own implements of iron and help in the demolition of the tyrant's breast-works" (ἐκήρυξε τῶν Συρακοσίων τὸν βουλόμενον παρεῖναι μετὰ σιδήρου καὶ συνεφάπτεσθαι κατασκαπτομένων τῶν τυραννικῶν ἐρυμάτων, 22.1). Plutarch contrasts Timoleon's initiative against the tyrant with the earlier, less democratically spirited, Dion, who chose not to destroy the tyrant's house and stopped people from trying to dig up his bones.[78]

These passages emphasize ritual *kataskaphē* as a public spectacle. This display conveyed the *polis'* liberation from the Syracusan and Corinthian tyrants. In other cases, including those at Athens, razing a house expresses popular fervor against an individual citizen's threat. In razing a citizen's house, the community made a public example of the institution that buttressed an individual's identity in the *polis*, his *oikos*. It is easy to see how this punishment could convey a deterring message to other *oikoi* in the *polis*.

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[77] Lycurg. 1.112-115. Connor 1985, 82 n.10 cites this.

[78] Plut. *Dion* 53.1 describes Heracleides criticizing Dion specifically for not inflicting *kataskaphē*.

In several descriptions those who raze a house further memorialized this act, expanding the punishment's potential for civic spectacle.[79] Plutarch describes how the space of the Syracusan tyrant's former palace became law-courts under the democracy.[80] In addition, the public funeral procession for Timoleon carried his bier through the place where the tyrant's palace, which Timoleon had razed, once stood.[81] Public stelai announced the *kataskaphē* of the homes of Spartan Cleomenes' supporters in 506 BC, as well as the destruction of the homes of the Athenians Phrynichus, Antiphon, and Archeptolemus. The Athenians additionally erected *horoi*, boundary stones, on the foundations of the razed houses of Antiphon and Archeptolemus.[82] Memorials like this could extend the immediate visual impact of a razing – rubble and the house's void. A stelē could continue to demonstrate to passersby how that family's members lost their place in the community.

Since the destruction of the house hurt all family members, *kataskaphē* exposes a strong concept of the household as a collective. While there are indications that the late Classical and Hellenistic periods brought some resistance to distributing guilt among family members, there is also evidence that family guilt and punishment persisted conceptually in this period. Gagné 2013 has recently argued that in this era Greek authors continued to use the concept of ancestral guilt (or "ancestral fault") when it was useful to their literary goal.[83] As discussed above, the image of

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[79] Roller 2010 172, n. 136 notes that the reuse of the space of a destroyed house is much more prevalent in ancient Rome.
[80] Plut. *Tim*. 22.1-3.
[81] Plut. *Tim*. 39.1. "And they carried his bier ...through the tyrant's dwelling place which had already been destroyed." (καὶ τὸ λέχος ... ἔφερον διὰ τῶν Διονυσίου τυραννείων τότε κατεσκαμμένων).
[82] Craterus *FGrHist* 342 fr. 5 ὅρους θεῖναι τοῖν οἰκοπέδοιν.
[83] This is the central argument of Gagné 2013, who suggests there is no "doctrine" of ancestral family fault that becomes extinct.

familial destruction continued as an invocation in the public curses of various *poleis* and in personal oaths in Athens. Both Euripides and Aristophanes in the late Fifth Century dramatize the razing of a house. In *Clouds*, Strepsiades and his slaves enter at the end of the play to burn down Socrates' school while in Euripides' *Orestes*, Orestes and Pylades threaten to do the same to the house of Atreus.[84] These dramatic scenes illustrate the potency of this image and its aptness for use on the dramatic stage.

Kataskaphē may also be understood as a symbolic purification for the community,[85] however, as Parker emphasizes, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between purification and its use as metaphor for other pragmatic goals, such as ridding the community of a dangerous person and his sphere of influence.[86] Treasonous activity, in addition to sacrilege or murder, could still be conceived of as pollution or curse for the wider community. Both Solon and Plato refer to tyranny as a sickness for the city, and the razing of tyrants' houses, discussed above, are described as providing a purgative, liberating effect.[87] The curse of *exōleia* that Athenian officials invoked in their inaugural oaths also reveals a political purpose in the metaphor of familial pollution and curse: the community exerts control over the individual's action through his family.

Because the punishment of *kataskaphē* struck at the individual through his relationship to his family, its image shows the importance of the family for individuals' positions in society. It

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[84] Ar. *Nub*. 1485-1492. In *Orestes* Orestes and Pylades appear on the roof of the house (1554). Orestes states his intention to burn down the house (1590) and gives the order (1617-20), before Apollo appears to stop this destruction. Orestes frames Menelaus as a a public as well as personal threat.

[85] Connor 1985, 92-3.

[86] Parker 1983, 104-143.

[87] Solon frr. 4.17 and 27 (Diehl *Anth. Lyr. Graec.* = Plut. *Solon* 14.8) and Plat. *Rep*. 8.544c. Connor 1985, 92 cites these.

also emphasizes the collectivity of the family unit and the communal suffering of its members. Finally, because razing a house is the punishment of the outraged *dēmos*, the figure of *kataskaphē*, the spectacle of the *polis'* retaliation, conveys how the actions of one family are a concern to the greater community.

Kataskaphē provides the tragic poet with an arresting physical representation for the destruction of a family. Several extant tragedies explicitly refer to the *kataskaphē* of a family's home: the chorus of Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* uses this word to refer what has happened to the king's house in the preceding *Agamemnon,* 48-53. The word and its close approximation arise several times in Euripides' *Heracles* (566-7, 864, 904, 943-6, and 1307) and is used by Hecuba in *Hecuba* to describe her father's hearth (πατρῴα θ' ἑστία κατεσκάφη 22). Antigone uses it to describe the pit where she dies and her family's tomb in Sophocles' drama (891-6 and 919-20); I argue these references suggest the image of Antigone's house that has been razed into the ground, even under the ground. Related to these uses, *kataskaphē* can also refer to a city's destruction; in tragedy the description of Troy's sack as a *kataskaphē* often highlights the familial suffering of Priam's *oikos*.[88] As I will discuss in the context of their respective dramas, these tragic uses of *kataskaphē* highlight the relation of *oikos,* individual, and *polis*.

In several tragedies, the playwright includes the image of a physical house falling without the aspect of public agency or *kataskaphē*. At the end of *Agamemnon* the chorus describes the physical house of the king falling to the ground (1530-4). The chorus in *Antigone* describes a

[88] See Connor 1985, 96-99. See also Steinbock 2012, 313 and Gaignerot- Dresson 2013 on the relation of the spectacles of city- and house- razings. In tragedy, the word *kataskaphē* frequently describes Troy' sack (often synonymous with the *oikos* of Priam): Aesch. *Ag*. 525; Eur. *Hel*. 196; *Tro*. 1263; *IA* 64, 92, 535, and 1379; and *Rhes*. 603. Of other cities in tragedy: Eur. *Phoen*. 1155 and 1196; *Supp*. 544; Soph. *OC* 1318 and 1421; and *Phil*. 998.

storm destroying a family's house, signifying the ancestral woes of the Labdacids (584-592). Sophocles' depiction here shares similar language to the storm imagery in the second stasimon of Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes,* which represents the afflictions of the Labdacid family.[89] In *Bacchae,* Dionysus describes how he has shaken and set fire to Pentheus' house (623-633). Euripides' *Troades* and fragmentary *Erechtheus* describe whole cities falling in a vast demise. The dramatists focalize these events through the central dramatic characters, the family members of the ruling *oikoi* at Troy and Athens, respectively (*Troades* 1325-7 and *Erechtheus* fr. 370 ll. 49 and 51 [Nauck]). In these passages the reasons for family destruction are a complex of many sources including war and punishment, *tuchē*, ancestral fault, pollution, and inter-kin violence: *kataskaphē* presents an additional, evocative threat with which to portray an *oikos* in jeopardy before an Athenian audience.

1d. Family Extinction and Inner Strife

An important example of a more local threat to the individual household was family extinction, the situation when an *oikos* became "empty," *erēmos,* because the male head of the family died and there were no male heirs to continue his role. Hesiod gives an early description of this scenario when he describes the aftermath of Pandora's advent in *Theogony*:

> ὅς κε γάμον φεύγων καὶ μέρμερα ἔργα γυναικῶν
> μὴ γῆμαι ἐθέλῃ, ὀλοὸν δ' ἐπὶ γῆρας ἵκηται
> χήτει γηροκόμοιο· ὁ δ' οὐ βιότου γ' ἐπιδευὴς
> ζώει, ἀποφθιμένου δὲ διὰ ζωὴν δατέονται
> χηρωσταί. 603-607
>
> The man who flees marriage and the baneful works of women and does not want to marry comes upon deadly old age without any care for him in seniority; he is not in need of means while he lives but when he has perished his far-off relatives divide for themselves his property.

[89] Gagné 2013, 373 suggests the relation between the plays of Sophocles and Aeschylus is not as direct as Else 1976 suggests.

At Athens the *oikos erēmos* was a legal predicament which concerned the *polis* and caused anxiety for the *oikos*.[90]

At Classical Athens family extinction was a risk whenever an *oikos* lost its male *kyrios* and there was an obstacle to his succession.[91] When a household became extinct or fell into danger of this, the *polis* became responsible for the care of extinct *oikoi,* pregnant widows,[92] *epiklēroi,* and orphans without guardians.[93] Two legal strategies aimed at preventing households' extinctions: the adoption of a male heir, including adoption *inter vivos* (after the decease of the head of the family),[94] and the marriage of a family's daughter, an *epiklēros*, within the family's closest relations, the *anchisteia tou genous*.[95] If a man died leaving sons as minors*, kyrioi* (guardians) designated by him governed the interests of the *oikos* in the interim.[96]

Civil court cases show that adoption was not always a satisfactory solution for a family facing extinction since the successors of a deceased male might not actually care about continuing his *oikos* but exploit it for their own interests.[97] Greedy heirs and suitors of *epiklēroi* might present similar issues. One plaintiff describes how he watched two siblings destroy their deceased brother's estate: they did not designate any of their sons as his heir but instead sold his

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[90] On laws attributed to Solon which addressed families selling off themselves and *oikia*, see Lacey 1968, 125.
[91] MacDowell 1989, 19-20 n. 6.
[92] A widow who was not pregnant would regularly either marry or return to her natal family, in either case leaving behind her husband's *oikos*. A pregnant widow however could not do this, and so fell into a legally complicated category. See Cudjoe 2012, 123-139.
[93] Law quoted by [Dem.] 43.75.
[94] On adoption, Griffith-Williams 2012, 146 and Rubinstein 1993, 25-8 on the family chosing an heir after the *kyrios* is deceased.
[95] On the *epiklēros* see Harrison 1968, 132-8 and MadDowell 1978, 95-108.
[96] Cudjoe 2012, 166-190.
[97] Griffith-Williams 2012, 147. Consider the plight of Demosthenes, who brought suit against his guardians when he came of age, Dem. 27.

land and property for five talents which they used themselves (Isae. 7.31-2). The speaker in this case mourns Apollodorus' *oikos* as "thus shamefully and disgracefully made to go extinct [lit. 'emptied']" (τὸν δὲ οἶκον αἰσχρῶς οὕτω καὶ δεινῶς ἐξηρημωμένον, Isae. 7.31). Even when an heir more successfully continued an *oikos,* the individual household might be significantly disrupted: a widow who was still young enough to remarry would normally do so, leaving any children in her deceased husband's *oikos*. Considering such complications, it appears that complete extinction was not the only fear for Athenian *oikos*: the process and threat of *going* extinct was a significant and larger category. Any significant disruption in the individual household could cause major upheaval, even if the *oikos* skirted complete extinction.

As these excerpts from oratory suggest, rivaling the *polis'* aversion to *oikos*-extinction was the worry this threatening event caused for individual households. Any given generation of a household was likely to face the threat of extinction based on several factors: men married later (probably in their thirties), increasing the likelihood that a father of an *oikos* would die before his sons became adults; infant and maternal mortality were also high; and by probability many couples experienced infertility or did not conceive male children.[98] Casualties in war exacerbated these odds. A family's public debt or the crime of its head could force all its members into *atimia* or extinction.[99] While the anguish of familial extinction appears frequently in speeches before an Athenian audience, this anxiety was not merely rhetorical. It disrupted the commemoration of the deceased members and left wives and female children vulnerable, the former needing to return to their natal families or marry again.

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[98] Pomeroy 1997 suggests, using a very simple demographic model, that out of ten couples, four would probably require recourse to adoption or *epiklēros*.
[99] Pomeroy 1997, 85.

The suffering of families facing extinction provides a strategy of rhetorical appeal for speechwriters and tragic playwrights alike.[100] Addressing juries in civil court, Attic speakers appeal for pathos on behalf of families who were vulnerable to extinction because of a lack of heirs.[101] The speaker in Isaeus 7 provokes pity for the *oikos* that is a victim of greedy siblings. Andocides similarly asks the audience to pity his own *oikos*, reminding them: "if you destroy me now, there will be no remaining member of our *genos* for you, but it will be ruined entirely, at the roots" (ἐάν με νυνὶ διαφθείρητε, οὐκ ἔστιν ὑμῖν ἔτι λοιπὸς τοῦ γένους τοῦ ἡμετέρου οὐδείς, ἀλλ᾽ οἴχεται πᾶν πρόρριζον. 1.146). Andocides' is not a unique appeal; the speaker in Lysias 7 ("On the Olive Stump"), for instance, makes a very similar argument.[102] Such pathetic descriptions were echoed in the tragic theater. Notably in Euripides' dramas, the vocabulary of the *oikos erēmos* arises with some frequency.[103] For instance in *Andromache*, Peleus bemoans his empty *oikos* after the death of Neoptolemus: "I am destroyed, I no longer have a family, no children are left in my house (οἴκοις) …Oh dear one, you have left my house empty (δόμον … ἔρημον), you have left me behind a childless old man" (οἰχόμεθ᾽· οὐκέτι μοι γένος, οὐ τέκνα

[100] Although less directly, familial extinction is an implicit subject also in Greek lyric poetry. In Sappho's "Brothers Poem," recently discovered in the papyrus P. Sapph. Obbink and first published in Obbink 2014, the speaker relates her (and her addressee's) wellbeing to the fate of her (their) brothers suggesting that the brothers are guardians of her family and that their jeopardy threatens the *oikos*. Solon's description of his *seisachtheia* in Solon 36 implies the restoration of poor Athenian *oikoi*.

[101] Griffith-Williams 2012, 146-8. This is found especially in speeches to do with adoption.

[102] Lys. 7.41. See Griffith-Williams 2012, 147 who discusses [Dem.] 43.75 and 43.11, Isae. 2.15 and 2.35, Isae. 6.5, Isae. 7.30 and 7.31, Isoc. 19.3, and Lys. 7.41.

[103] Griffith-Williams 2012, 148 discusses Eur. *And*. 1173-6 and 1204-6, *Hipp*. 847-5, and *Supp*. 1132-5. Cf. related images at Eur. *And*. 307 (λέχη … ἔρημ' …ἐξελείπετο), *Hec*. 1076 (τέκν' ἔρημα λιπὼν), *Her*. 430 (στέγαι δ᾽ ἔρημοι φίλων), and *Supp*. 1095-6 (… οἴκους; κᾆτ᾽ ἐρημίαν ἴδω πολλὴν μελάθρων, discussed at the start of this chapter, pg. 1).

λείπεται οἴκοις· … ὦ φίλος, δόμον ἔλιπες ἔρημον,… γέροντ᾽ ἄπαιδα νοσφίσας. 1177, 1205, and 1207).

A final threat to the *oikos* is from within: strife between the members themselves. Even if this did not directly destroy an *oikos*, family conflict could exacerbate other dangers. Tragic playwrights and myth are attracted to these situations. Tension between a father and son could undermine the *oikos* by disrupting the line of succession. One scenario is that a father cursed his own sons. For instance, in myth and tragedy Theseus does this to Hippolytus (Eur. *Hipp*. 885-898) and Oedipus curses his two sons (Soph. *OC* 1358-1374). Strauss 1993 discusses evidence that conflict of fathers and sons was a growing problem in later Classical Athens.[104] A wife's infidelity, or even the danger of this, threatened the legitimacy of the offspring of an *oikos*. Divorce or death left a household without a mother until a man remarried. Remarriage introduced a stepmother to the family: Greek literature and oratory usually depict the stepmother as malicious to the previous children from the household.[105] Any of these events might destabilize an individual *oikos* and leave it more vulnerable to other threats.

As we have now seen, tragic poets depicting distressed families on the Attic stage had many culturally relevant threats with which to create their drama. Frequently plays combine several of the many threats to the *oikos* to convey anxiety surrounding the family unit. A drama can depict war or the the *polis'* anger as exacerbating internal strife and ancestral fault, for instance. At the beginning of *Iphigenia at Tauris* Euripides depicts the threat of family extinction through the imagery of a house being destroyed. Stranded far from her family's *oikos* in Argos because of events in the Trojan war, Iphigenia recounts her dream of a house falling:

…χθονὸς δὲ νῶτα σεισθῆναι σάλῳ,

[104] Strauss 1993.
[105] Watson 1995.

> φεύγειν δὲ κἄξω στᾶσα θριγκὸν εἰσιδεῖν
> δόμων πίτνοντα, πᾶν δ᾽ ἐρείψιμον στέγος
> βεβλημένον πρὸς οὖδας ἐξ ἄκρων σταθμῶν.
> μόνος δ᾽ ἐλείφθη στῦλος, ὡς ἔδοξέ μοι,
> δόμων πατρῴων, ἐκ δ᾽ ἐπικράνων κόμας
> ξανθὰς καθεῖναι, φθέγμα δ᾽ ἀνθρώπου λαβεῖν,
>
> 46-52
>
> [I dreamt that] the surface of the earth was shaken with a tossing motion. I fled and when I stood outside I saw the cornice of the house topple and the whole building in ruins, stricken to the ground from the tops of its pillars. Only one pillar of my ancestral home was left, it appeared to me, and from its capital blond hair grew down and it took a human voice.

Iphigenia interprets the fall of the column in her dream as a portent of her brother Orestes' death. Her vision of the demise of the physical house, an event often associated with war or the public punishment of *kataskaphē*, here provides an image of the extinction of her personal family. Like other tragedians, Euripides combines external and internal threats to Iphigenia's *oikos* and involves more than one threat to the *oikos* which his Athenian audience could understand. Many tragedies interweave war, family strife, and ancestral fault into a conglomerate threat to a central household. This is the way tragedy refracts the Athenian experience of the *oikos* through its mythological subjects. One *mimēsis* tragedy performs is that of the Classical family by the assortment of threats to the individual household that it evokes in the theater.

2. Literature Review

While the social context and meaning of Attic tragedy have received increased attention in recent decades,[106] relatively less attention has been paid to the social unit of the household.

[106] Social readings of drama have replaced earlier historicist approaches with the social concerns of new-historicism, seeking to set tragedy within its specific cultural moment. Historicist readings include intentionalist and biographic interpretations (which Lefkowitz 1981, 67-104 discusses) as well as identifying characters in drama with contemporary figures (for instance Delebecque 1951) as Hall 1997, 94 discusses.

Some of the most significant social lenses applied include women and gender, religion and ritual, and democratic ideology.[107] Many of these approaches involve the family. For instance, interest in gender and tragedy has provided a useful way of understanding theatrical space in terms of the binaries of male and female, public and private, seen and unseen, *polis* and *oikos*. Female scholars have profoundly impacted this discussion, which in turn has sparked an increased interest in the domestic spaces drama describes.[108] Considerable attention has also been paid to the civic and political ideology in tragedy, topics that relate implicitly to the *oikos*.[109]

While these social approaches to tragedy involve the family on various levels, to date there has much less work on tragedy's engagement with the *oikos* itself. Other social studies of tragedy have laid the ground work for this. But one reason for the delay in the literary discussion of the *oikos* is that social historical study of the ancient family has been slow. This is particularly true for the family in Greece. When Lacey wrote his history of the Greek family in 1968, he remarked that "the family in Greek history is a subject which has hitherto not found favour among historians."[110] Perhaps reflecting this dearth of studies of the Athenian family and its

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[107] On women and gender see Foley 1981 and 2001, Loraux 1987, Zeitlin 1990, Maitland 1992, Rabinowitz 1993, Katz 1994, Wohl 1998, and McClure 1999. For religion and ritual, see for instance Sourvinou-Inwood 2003. For political readings, see Pelling, ed. 1997, Silk, ed. 1996, Seaford 1994, Sommerstein 1993, and Winkler and Zeitlin, eds. 1990.

[108] As Wiles 1997, 166 points out, two female classicists especially, Dale 1956 and Zeitlin 1985, have provided impetus for studying the inside/outside binary. Female scholars' interest in women and gender, e.g. Cynthia Patterson and Sarah Pomeroy, has also led to research on the social history of the Greek family. Female scholars have also played a key role in interpreting domestic archaeology.

[109] Markantonatos and Zimmerman 2011b, X-XI discuss the scholarly debate on the socio-political function of tragedy. After Pickard-Cambridge 1953 started this discussion, Goldhill 1987 emphasized the relationship between the plays and the other ceremonies of the City Dionysia and its civic ideology. Goldhill 2000 and Seaford, 1994, 1996, and 2000 have defended the political function of tragedy. They have o critics including Griffin 1998 and Rhodes 2003.

[110] Lacey 1968, 9.

integral relationship to *polis,* Sally Humphreys in her 1978 book, *Anthropology and the Greeks,* remarked with surprise that, "the exceptionally important part played by kinship and family in Attic drama is unexpected in view of the dominance of public life in Athens."[111] Such surprise now seems unwarranted given the recent recognition of the large role the *oikos* played in both public and private spheres at Athens.

Interest in Roman and Greek families has grown recently, following a rise in studies on women and gender in ancient literature and society. Since the 1990's there have been many monographs on various aspects of the family unit in Ancient Greece: Pomeroy 1997 and Patterson 1998 have offered provocative syntheses on the Greek family that define a modern consensus view of the development and relationship of the Greek *oikos* and *polis*, challenging earlier models of the Greek family. Nevett 1999 and Cox 1998, in their respective areas of domestic architecture and the marriage strategies evident from orations, have used these data to re-examine the often-idealizing literary descriptions of the Classical household. At the same time a number of specialized Hellenist studies have emerged on childhood (Golden 1996), fathers and sons (Strauss 1994), motherhood (Demand 1994), the wedding (Oakley and Sinos 1993), stepmothers (Watson 1994), and bastardy (Ogden 1996).[112] In a dissertation appearing just before this project, Lehmann 2016 has addressed the ideology of the *oikos* and its *topoi* in the discourse of Attic oratory.

The recent attention to the Greek family from a social angle, not just a legal perspective, provides the description of the Athenian *oikos* necessary to distinguish modern and ancient notions of the relationship of individuals and families. For instance, focus on the Athenian

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[111] Humphreys 1978, 202.

[112] There have been several international conferences on the ancient family recently, including in Gothenburg in 2009 and in Copenhagen in 2003.

household in tragedy controls the modern impulse to focus too strongly on tragic characters as individuated. Although tragedy highlights individual characters, the drama usually situates them within a family structure. Relating the Athenian *oikos* to the families tragedy depicts will impact our interpretation of the dramas, sometimes expanding upon the insight of other approaches, sometimes correcting their assumptions.

By considering tragic families in terms of the household unit in fifth-century Athens, one is immediately disposed to see where tragedy's depiction of dire family situations relates to the audience member's experience of family. Attention to the shared *oikos* unit complicates the related dichotomies of private and public, *oikos* and *polis*, and female and male which structuralist and feminist studies have highlighted in tragedy.[113] Scholars of the Athenian family – Patterson 1998 is a good example – submit that it is misleading to identify the *oikos* as an exclusively female domain, even if it is often gendered in this way, since men as well as women played important roles within it.[114] The dichotomy of male: *polis*::female: *oikos* is especially evident as an interpretative strategy in earlier structuralist readings of tragedy focused on gender, but has been questioned in its application to tragedy since it conflicts with the observed social reality.[115]

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[113] Vernant 1983 uses Hermes and Hestia to define the binary of inside:domestic::outside:public in his analysis of Greek art and thought. Wiles 1997 is a good example of a structuralist studying tragedy who emphasizes these oppositions.

[114] See for instance Patterson 1994 and 1997, Pomeroy 1998, and Cox 1998.

[115] Foley 1981 and 2002, 8-10 warns against too heavy an application of such structuralist binaries in reading Greek tragedies. She believes these polarities are significant in the genre, but that they should not be insisted upon too strictly in regard to genders. Foley 1982 replies to Shaw 1975's application of such a binary to tragedy, though she finds his article provocative. Strauss 1993, 33-41 and Blondell 1999, 61-2 make similar remarks to Foley's. Zeitlin, 1978 and 1996, applies many of these binaries, but focuses on how tragedy plays with them and blurs their distinctions.

As an example, one observation complicating this male:female::public:private binary is that despite the female connection with the hearth, the father was the priest of his family and directed the family rituals which took place at the hearth, the center of the physical *oikos*. Patterson 1994 goes further to demonstrate the potential for female significance in the *polis* sphere. Such observations do not contradict the assertion that Athens was patriarchal or that spaces and roles were highly gendered. Tragedy highlights such contrasts. For instance, women seem to express the values of the *oikos* more vociferously than men in tragedy.[116] In addition to these patterns of depiction in tragedy, study of the Athenian family shows that gendered roles cannot be neatly divided along *oikos* - *polis* lines.

Fixing on the conflict of *oikos* and *polis* in tragedy can obfuscate how the tragic family relates to the audience's personal experience of *oikos.*[117] For instance, to interpret tragedy *via* an *oikos-versus-polis* opposition suggests the influence of previously influential but now questionable models for the Greek family in which the primitive tribal *genos* came into conflict with the rising democratic *polis*.[118] For this reason, dealing with the related binaries of male:female and *polis:oikos*, it is important also to investigate how tragedy transgresses these

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[116] Humphreys 1983 and Mastronarde 2010, 255 point out the greater female concern and sacrifice for the *oikos*.

[117] For instance, Gould 1980 and Humphreys 1983 each emphasize this conflict in tragedy. As discussed above, many scholars for instance Pomeroy 1997, 17-66 and Patterson 1998, 4-43 criticize emphasis on a tension of *polis* against *oikos*, instead highlighting the creative relationship between *oikos* and *polis*. Their arguments draw upon the work of two French scholars in the 1970s, Bourriot 1976 and Roussel 1976, who undercut the earlier model of an archaic-clan origin for the Classical *oikos* which came to stand in opposition to the democratic *polis*.

[118] Proponents of the earlier paradigm of the *oikos* include Bachofen, Fustel De Coulanges, Maine, Morgan, and Engels. This view developed under the influence of concepts of the Roman family. See Patterson 1997, 8-28, for a discussion of the development of this paradigm.

boundaries. By doing this we find the shared institution of Athenian *oikos* most visible in tragedy.

Viewing the tragic family in terms of the dramas' contemporary society runs contrary to a view sometimes expressed that the tragic family chiefly represents the threat of the aristocratic family to the *polis*.[119] Although in tragedy the family generally consists of mythical elites of the monstrously doomed variety, the experience of these families in the theater implies more universal anxieties concerning the family.[120]

Two approaches in particular have highlighted the role of the *oikos* in tragedy: Freudian theory and the study of theatrical performance. Simon 1988, a psychologist impressed by Freud's theory and Greek tragedy, studied tragedy in psychological terms of the experience of family. More recently Pedrick 2003 has demonstrated that Euripides' *Ion* reflects a deep-seated trauma related to the infant abandonment practiced in Ancient Athens. Performance studies of tragedy, notably those by Wiles 1997and Rehm 2002, have contributed significant observations about the tragic representation of the family by noticing how dramatists use their theatrical space.

Aristotle's statement about family-centered plots in tragedy (*Poetics* 1453b 19-22), mentioned aove, has provided a starting point for several studies which touch upon the family. Belfiore 2000 most directly engages Aristotle's claim. Her object, in *Murder Among Friends,* is to show that the universal subject of tragedy is the harm between not kin, but more broadly defined *philoi*, a designation including friendships. In his interpretation of tragedy through an

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[119] Seaford 1994, 344-69 and 1993 emphasizes this interpretation. See also Rose 1992, 185-265; Vernant 1988; and Vidal-Naquet 1988.

[120] Rehm 2003, 58 suggests that the mythic families featured in tragedy are not just "reflecting democratic fears that elites might lead Athens astray or undermine its radical form of government, ..." but "seem to focus on the tragedy implicit in all human generations, reminding us that the past is never the past."

Aristotelian lens, Jones 1962 recognizes the family's prominence, which enriches his discussion of *Agamemnon,* where he offers a particularly insightful discussion of the theme of family-wounding.[121]

Euripides' representations of the family have attracted special attention: while Burnett 1971 in *Catastrophe Survived* is primarily interested in the plot form of the family reunion, Ioanna Karamanou has recently suggested that some of Euripides' later plays reflect the contemporary relationship of the family unit to the distressed *polis.*[122] Mastronarde 2010 pays considerable attention to comparing and relating categories of family members, young, old, male, and female, in his recent monograph on Euripides.[123] Most recently Papadēmētropoulos 2016 has examined how Euripides focuses on "replacement" in marriage bond, whether by death (*Alcestis*), or second wife (*Medea*, *Hippolytus*) as a source of *oikos* demise. He sees this as an element in all Euripides' plays, but, similarly to my project, investigates the way this image operates at the level of plot and the dramas' meaning in three case studies of *Alcestis, Medea*, and *Hippolytus*.[124]

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[121] Jones 1962, 82-110.

[122] Karamanou 2012.

[123] Mastronarde 2010.

[124] Papadēmētropoulos 2016 suggests that a replacement in the marriage, involving some type of third party, threatens each Euripidean *oikos*. He discusses this feature in each Euripidean drama, briefly, 16-36, before discussing his three main plays. In *Alcestis* for instance, he suggests that death replaces Alcestis in her marriage to Admetus, transforming the household into a "tomb." Papadēmētropoulos does consider the social context of Euripides' *oikos*- situations, for instance emphasizing, 41-2, that Admetus was reasonable to allow Alcestis to die since the *oikos* will be destroyed if he dies, but not if she does. Similarly, he highlights Jason's practical intentions in maintaining his *oikos* through a new marriage. Papadēmētropoulos highlights the vital connection of the married couple to the *oikos* and that this a way the tragic woman can exert power. His observation of this feature supports my emphasis on how the stability of this family unit is central theme in tragedy.

My project complements these studies by focusing on tragedy's images of *oikos*-destruction, which I use to relate tragedy and its fifth-century Athenian audience. My aim is not to derive a portrait of social reality from tragedy, but to highlight suggestions of contemporary anxieties regarding the *oikos* as they appear in this genre. Here Tolstoy's opening sentence of *Anna Karenina* is apt: "all happy families resemble one another; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." The number of problems which may beset a family are plentiful. Over times and cultures, the possibilities multiply. This project will explore the "palette" of familial griefs with which Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides fill their canvases in order to examine the presentation of the threatened *oikos* and its role in the drama's action.

Chapter One: The Image of the House's Destruction in *Agamemnon*

Just before that infamous moment in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* when gthe king steps on the household textiles his wife Clytemnestra cunningly has set before him, he articulates concern for what he is going to do: "I feel greatly ashamed to destroy [this, my] house with my feet, ruining its wealth and the weaving bought with silver" (πολλὴ … αἰδὼς δωματοφθορεῖν ποσὶν/ φθείροντα πλοῦτον ἀργυρωνήτους θ' ὑφάς· 948-9). Δωματοφθορεῖν, "to destroy-the-house," is how Agamemnon describes the offense he worries about committing if he walks upon Clytemnestra's tapestry, which he makes into a symbol of the material component of the *oikos*. It is significant that Aeschylus in his *Agamemnon* chooses that Agamemnon should construe his fateful step upon the tapestry as an offense to his house and family[125] since this highlights a theme in the drama of household destruction brought about by an individual.

Aeschylus creates a play not just about the downfall of a man but the collapse of a household, which initiates a chain of familial suffering in the next two plays. This chapter begins with the physical presence of the staged house of Agamemnon because it provides an icon of the *oikos* upon which other poetic images, representations and perspectives on the *oikos* center. Aeschylus' stagecraft reflects a domestic focus, as characters continually refer to the *skēnē* that represents the house. Poetic imagery of the physical house also pervades the play, though this rich figure has not yet received an individual study.[126]

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[125] Agamemnon here articulates a problem in his act that is additional to the *hubris* often recognized in his step upon the luxurious textile.

[126] Taplin 1977, 452-9 points out this lack of scholarship. Wiles 1993, 168-9 points out a number of these and Jones 1962, 82-4 discusses the importance of the *oikos* and its personification, to

The signal use of the physical *oikos* in Aeschylus' play is to dramatize the destruction of the household of Agamemnon. The image of *kataskaphē*, discussed in the introduction, provides Aeschylus as a poet with a striking image for the destruction of Agamemnon's family. Because this punishment struck at the individual through his relationship to his family, it conveys the importance of the family for individuals' positions in society. House-razing also emphasizes the collectivity of the family unit, especially in suffering. The figure of *kataskaphē* conveys how the actions of one family are a concern to the greater society.

Agamemnon relates the demise of Agamemnon's *oikos* to two other groups: Agamemnon's larger community of Argos and the house and city of Priam at Troy. The chorus of Argive elders articulate how the public feels the consequences of the dysfunction in Agamemnon's household. Priam's *oikos*, razed in the war, provides an important analogy for the demise of Agamemnon's and prefigures the events at Argos. Aeschylus suggests this analogy by applying the image of *kataskaphē* not only to Agamemnon's *oikos* but also to the destruction of Troy (525-6). The relationships of the individual Agamemnon, his *oikos*, and the Argive *polis* are mirrored by Paris, the *oikos* of his father Priam, and the Trojan *polis*. Thus Aeschylus' connection of the Trojan and Argive *oikoi* extends to their relationships within the wider communities and develops this relationship as a significant theme of his play.

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which he returns frequently in his discussion of *Agamemnon* and the whole *Oresteia*, 82-110. Examples of specialist studies of other motifs include Zeitlin 1965 on sacrificial imagery, Peradotto 1964 on nature imagery (including winds), Hughes 1955 on the robe and on other images, and Knox 1952 on the lion. See Lattimore 1953, Finley 1955, Lebeck 1971 and Goheen 1955 for discussion of Aeschylus' use of imagery and symbol in the *Oresteia*.

1. Domestic Stagecraft and Imagery

In its first lines, *Agamemnon* focuses attention on the physical house: the watchman refers to the theater's *skēnē*, portraying the wall and doors of Agamemnon's house, as he describes his position, "at the house of the Atreidae,[127] on my arms like a dog" (στέγαις Ἀτρειδῶν ἄγκαθεν, κυνὸς δίκην, 3).[128] It is possible that, enacting his words, the watchman actually crouched on top of the *skēnē*.[129] But even if he did not, by referring to the house's façade that the *skēnē* represents, he draws attention to its strong presence which will continue through the play.[130] After cryptically referring to the poor state of affairs within the house (16-19, 36-7), the watchman suggests the audience imagine what the house "knows." He strikingly personifies the house, stating at the end of speech: "The house itself, were it to take a voice, would speak most plainly..." (οἶκος δ' αὐτός, εἰ φθογγὴν λάβοι, /σαφέστατ' ἂν λέξειεν, 37-8).

The watchman's direction to the audience that they pay attention to the house is even more striking if the use of the *skēnē* to represent a house was a theatrical innovation for Aeschylus. Careful examination of Aeschylus' other plays by Wilamowitz-Möllendorff and Taplin suggests that it could be: in no other Aeschylean play is there evidence of a permanent set building, or indications of the setting of a house.[131] While the *skēnē* commonly represents homes, palaces, and other domestic architecture in the later tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides, the

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[127] Fraenkel 1950, 3 explains why we must translate this "at the house" and not "on the house."
[128] All Greek of Aeschylus is taken from Page 1972.
[129] Taplin 1977, 276-7, Raeburn and Thomas 2011, 65, Sommerstein 2010, 155, Mastronarde 1990, 281. Arnott 1962, 118ff. disagrees.
[130] Taplin 1977, 277 emphasizes this as well.
[131] Wilamowitz-Möllendorff 1886, especially 606-611 first, then Taplin 1977, 452-9, argue *Agamemnon* is the first to use the *skēnē*. Rehm 2002, 315 n. 14 expresses disagreement, pointing to Hamilton 1987, 595-9. See Garvie 2009, xlvii for an overview of arguments about this issue.

other extant tragedies of Aeschylus previous to *Agamemnon* suggest that Aeschylus had not used a *skēnē*, or used it in this way, previously.[132]

Characters in *Agamemnon* sustain this focus on the physical presence of the house represented by the *skēnē*. Thus, Clytemnestra ends her detailed narrative of the path of the fire-signals by describing the house as the final recipient of the fire-signal message from Troy (310-11).[133] When the herald enters (503), he responds to the sight of the doorway of Agamemnon, and specifically to shrines near to the door which could have been represented on stage (519).[134] These may include a column for Apollo Aguieos, a common element near the door of a home. This was likely represented in the orchestra as it is in several other dramas.[135] Cassandra later calls upon Apollo Aguieos (1085-6), and this appeal would be more meaningful if she can see Apollo's shrine. Agamemnon also refers to the physical house soon after he prepares to go inside the house (844-54) and when he goes in (957).

As she enters the house of Agamemnon through the *skēnē* door; Cassandra stops, probably because she sees the column of Apollo Aguieos (1080-2 and 1085-7), before she begins to describe gruesome visions she encounters as she gazes at the *skēnē* or house of Agamemnon:

> ὤπολλον, ὤπολλον
> ἀγυιᾶτ', ὤπόλλων ἐμός.

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[132] Rehm 2002, 315 n.14 points out that this argument is based on a small number of extant tragedies and believes we should not extrapolate from these.

[133] 310-311: "and then this light, not unfathered by the Idaean fire, falls upon this roof of the Atreidae." κἄπειτ' Ἀτρειδῶν ἐς τόδε σκήπτει στέγος / φάος τόδ' οὐκ ἄπαπτον Ἰδαίου πυρός.

[134] Rehm 2002, 332-3 n. 37 also notes that characters in this play draw attention to the house at their entrances.

[135] Denniston and Page 1960, 167: "the function of "Apollo of the Street" seems to have been to protect the passage to and from men's houses. Originally his symbol was a block of stone, cone-shaped or with a rounded top; its representation on the scene of Attic Tragedy is quite often attested, cf. Soph. *El.* 637, 645, 1376, *OT* 919, Eur. *Ph*. 631, Ar. *Vesp*. 875 with scholia." Raeburn and Thomas 2011, 186 suggest that Apollo Aguieos is appropriate for Cassandra "because as her guardian he has led her to destruction in Argos." See also Faraone 1992, 6-7; Poe 1989, 130–37; Mikalson 1983, 137– 38 n. 27; and Fraenkel 1950, 491-2.

ἆ, ποῖ ποτ᾽ ἤγαγες με; πρὸς ποίαν στέγην; 1085-7

"Apollo, Apollo, of the streets, my destroyer. Ah, where ever did you lead me, to what sort of a house?"

She continues to envision, as though she can see into the house, the violence that occurred within it (1090-2) and, twice, the slaughter of Thyestes' children (1096-7 and 1217-22). She imagines the violence that is about to occur inside and refers to the physical presence of the house as a living being, which "breathes blood-dripping murder (φόνον δόμοι πνέουσιν αἱματοσταγῆ, 1309). Cassandra also sees the palace infested with a "chorus" of the Erinyes (1186-7). Finally, as she enters the *skēnē* door, she states that "I address these gates here as the gates of Hades" (Ἅιδου πύλας δὲ τάσδ᾽ἐγὼ προσεννέπω 1291). As Ewan suggests, Cassandra "gives the house, so to speak, the voice it has been craving."[136]

The house's personification, begun in the herald's opening monologue (37-8), reoccurs several more times. The chorus applies a type of personification to the hearth when they call it "entirely miserable" (ἰὼ πάνοιζυς ἑστία 49) in the parodos of *Choephoroi*. Cassandra personifies the house twice; she first calls the physical house (στέγην, 1088) "god-hating," and "knowing of many kin-slaying evils" (μισόθεον, 1090 πολλὰ συνίστορα /αὐτόφονα, κακὰ … 1090-1091) and later suggests the image of a breathing house (1309, cited above).

Clytemnestra reverses the metaphor of house-for-human several times describing Agamemnon in terms of the physical house. She calls Agamemnon "a firm-footed pillar of the lofty roof" (ὑψηλῆς στέγης / στῦλον ποδήρη, … 897-8), describing his role in terms of work of beam bearing the weight of a house's roof.[137] Shortly after this Clytemnestra describes

[136] Ewans 1982, 5. Rehm 2002, 79 and Padel 1990 also comment on the house's personification.
[137] Rehm 2002, 331 n. 17 translates the phrase as "the central pillar of a great hall," re-emphasizing the critical role it portrays Agamemnon in.

Agamemnon as a piece of the physical landscape surrounding the house: a tree which shades the house cool in the summer heat (966-7). Subsequently she says that Agamemnon brings warmth to family hearth in the winter (968-972) as though he offered insulation or heat to the structure. Clytemnestra's images associate (sarcastically) Agamemnon with a principal concern of domestic architecture: seasonal heating and cooling in a climate that fluctuated greatly.[138]

There are more domestic characterizations of Clytemnestra and Agamemnon related to the physical house. Thus Clytemnestra calls her husband "this [watch-]dog of the farmstead (or "stables")," (τόνδε τῶν σταθμῶν κύνα 896), emphasizing the physical structure of the house in terms of a stable and associating Agamemnon with it in a protector's role.[139] Agamemnon identifies Clytemnestra similarly, as "guardian of my household" (δωμάτων ἐμῶν φύλαξ, 914). Clytemnestra in her famous *double entendre* regarding her "hearth" (1484-5) exploits this part of a house to refer to herself. The chorus in *Choephoroi* picks up on the same image when they state that a good woman's hearth should not be hot (629), like Clytemnestra.

This verbal emphasis on the house reinforces the play's action, which makes great use of the staged domestic space to dramatize the homecoming of Agamemnon.[140] From the beginning of the play, Clytemnestra exerts control over the inner, off-stage space of the house, making numerous entrances and exits from the *skēnē*.[141] In the first half of the play, her actions within

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[138] Nevett 1999, 36.

[139] Denniston and Page 1960, 147: "τῶν σταθμῶν: probably 'of our stables' (or more broadly, 'farm-steads'). It is unlikely that σταθμῶν here is merely a synonym for 'house', since it is the practice of Tragedy not to add the definite article to δόμος, δῶμα, οἰκός, στέγη etc. unless there is a particular reason for doing so."

[140] See Rehm 2002, 77-99 for the dramatic space for homecoming in *Agamemnon*.

[141] Clytemnestra's entrances and exits are a subject of some controversy. Following the suggestions in Taplin 1997 they can be summarized as follows: Clytemnestra first enters with chorus at line 40, sometime during the parodos, or, most likely after it at 258. She exits at 350. Her appearances after this are: 587-614, 855-974, 1035-1068 and 1372-the end of the play.

the *skēnē* pique the curiosity of the chorus, who imagine the domestic source of the sacrifices of which they have caught wind: "treated with the soft, guileless persuasion of pure oil, a *pelanos* (mixture offered to the gods) from the recesses of the palace," (φαρμασσομένη χρίματος ἀγνοῦ / μαλακαῖς ἀδόλοισι παρηγορίαις,/ πελάνῳ μυχόθεν βασιλείῳ. 94-6).[142] In the second half of the play, Clytemnestra maintains control over the threshold of the *skēnē* and house, entering to prevent herald (587), Agamemnon (855), and finally the chorus (1372) from entering the *skēnē*.[143] At the play's climax, the queen draws first Agamemnon and then Cassandra inside the *skēnē*.[144] Clytemnestra describes the physical house as she invites each one in.[145] She also brings the inside of the house out into the theater twice. The first time is when she lays the tapestry before Agamemnon (855). Later she reenters the stage (1372) in an impressive tableau, perhaps using the *ekkuklēma*, along with the corpses of Agamemnon and Cassandra (1372).[146] While Clytemnestra is offstage within the *skēnē*, Cassandra's vision of the *oikos* generates anxiety about what is happening inside the house as Cassandra herself remains in the orchestra for a long time before going in.

As we've seen *Agamemnon* is a house-obsessed play in its set, imagery, and action. Jones 1962 emphasizes this in his reading, interpreting the "carpet"-scene as the climax of this central

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[142] Taplin 1977, 279. References for chorus' curiosity in *Agamemnon* include: 84-7; 258-263; 272; 274- 276; 278; 280.

[143] Taplin 1977, 299-300.

[144] Rehm 2002, 78 comments on Clytemnestra and her control of the extra-scenic household space. He points out, 79-80, as have others, that Aeschylus makes Cassandra's entrance into the house the climax of the play, not Agamemnon's.

[145] She describes Agamemnon as a shade tree for the house when he is entering, 966-7, and uses the hearth and domestic altar to Cassandra to lure her inside (1036-8 and 1056-8).

[146] On the *ekkuklēma* see Raeburn and Thomas 2011 who, xlv-xlvi and 213, posit some sort of *ekkuklēma*, as well as Csapo-Slater 1995, 410-411. Taplin 1977, 325-7 and 442-443 is doubtful about this invention at the time of *Agamemnon* as are Denniston and Page 1960, 195-6 and Pickard-Cambridge 1946, 100-122. Nonetheless, the tableau must have been impressive.

theme.[147] The house also infuses the abstract imagery of the chorus in its second stasimon (681-781, central in the play), which refers to the image of a house repeatedly: there is a lion who wreaks havoc on a house (732-6), the description of a chain of *hybris* bringing *atē* for the house (771), and the comparison of how *Dikē* behaves towards poor ("smoke-filled") houses (δυσκάπνοις δώμασιν, 774) and rich ones ("shot with gold" τὰ χρυσόπαστα, 776). The play's preoccupation with the house is fitting for its *nostos* theme, but since it is a disastrous homecoming the preponderance of images of the physical house develops an image of its physical destruction.

2. The Destruction of Agamemnon's House

The prominent figure of the physical home in *Agamemnon* helps the audience imagine the destruction of Agamemnon's house as a spectacle, that is, in its physical dynamic. Since the physical *oikos* was a significant component of the Athenian family, its destruction made an impressive punishment in *kataskaphē*, (discussed pp. 21-30). *Agamemnon* also conveys household destruction through the image of its pollution, *miasma.* As I noted in the introduction, a Greek household's shared space meant its members easily contracted normal, physical pollutions and suffered if a member incurred major metaphysical pollution through a crime against the gods or an important social norm.[148] It is the highly contagious and physical aspects of pollution that connect it with *kataskaphē*. Like *kataskaphē*, individual family members bring about *pollution*; however, both types of destruction can be understood to adhere to the physical house and are thus directed at the entire family as a collective, even multi-generational, unit. In

[147] Jones 1962, 85-90.
[148] See Introduction, pp. 15-6 and n. 35 and pg. 28.

addition to the language of *kataskaphē* and the chorus' description of Agamemnon's house falling down, Aeschylus uses the vocabulary of its physical corruption.

Within *Agamemnon*, the most literal description of the house demolished is by the chorus at the end of the play. They depict the physical collapse of the house:

> ἀμηχανῶ φροντίδος στερηθεὶς
> εὐπάλαμον μέριμναν
> ὅπᾳ τράπωμαι, πίτνοντος οἴκου.
> δέδοικα δ' ὄμβρου κτύπον δομοσφαλῆ
> τὸν αἱματηρόν. ... 1530-1534
>
> bereft of the inventive thoughts of my mind, I do not know in what direction I should turn, with the house itself is falling. I fear the house-destroying blow of the rainstorm, bloodstained. ...

The chorus involve themselves in the image of the falling house (1530-1532). They also include a specific agent of destruction: a "house-destroying blow of the rainstorm" (ὄμβρου κτύπον δομοσφαλῆ 1533). Coming near the end of the play, the chorus' words convey an impressive realistic image of the fall of the physical house.

The chorus at the start of the *Choephoroi* most clearly expresses the destruction of Agamemnon's house in the physical terms of a *kataskaphē*.[149] This poetic image connects powerfully with how Aeschylus staged the *oikos* and the action of the preceding play. After the end of *Agamemnon,* the chorus, who now represent Agamemnon's serving women, re-enter through the *skēnē* and soon begin to describe the outcome of the preceding drama's action in terms of the destruction of Agamemnon's *oikos*:

> τί γὰρ λύτρον πεσόντος αἵματος πέδοι;
> ἰὼ πάνοιζυς ἑστία,
> ἰὼ κατασκαφαὶ δόμων.

[149] Connor 1985, 90 cites this passage. He does not discuss it, however, stating "The literary significance of the theme of the destruction of the house in the *Oresteia* is beyond the scope of this essay, although we may hope that a better understanding the practice of *kataskaphē* will be helpful in the interpretation of several Greek tragedies."

ἀνήλιοι βροτοστυγεῖς
δνόφοι καλύπτουσι δόμους
δεσποτᾶν θανάτοισι. 48-53

For how [will there be] a cleansing of the blood fallen on the ground? Alas, the hearth entirely unhappy, alas, the razing of the house. Sunless, hateful-to-men gloom covers the house on account of the deaths of its rulers.

The chorus highlights the physical house, which the *skēnē* continues to represent, and describes it as demolished. They specifically mention that the hearth of the house is ruined (49). The sustained significance of the physical house reflects its importance in *Agamemnon* as a location for the collective suffering of its members and to visually represent the *oikos* to an internal audience of the Argive elders and an external Athenian audience.

The chorus links the house's razing with its pollution when they refer to cleansing blood (λύτρον ...αἵματος 48). The death of Agamemnon, a family member, could by itself pollute a house. Attaching further pollution to this *oikos* are Clytemnestra's murder of Agamemnon and Cassandra, her adultery and plotting with Aegisthus, and her seizure of power. The pollution of Agamemnon's death, with these other household injuries, frames the beginning of *Choephoroi.* The chorus of mourning serving women evokes the female lament which accompanied several stages of Greek funerary ritual.[150] Soon after the chorus' threnodic introductory song, Electra describes the libation Clytemnestra sent her to make, emphasizing the theme of pollution from Agamemnon's death (96-99). As *Choephoroi* continues, and throughout *Eumenides*, the further layers of pollution from the family's violence emerge.

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[150] For women as performers of preparatory funeral rites, see Sourvinou-Inwood 1989, 140; Shapiro 1991, 629, 634-5; and Garland 2001, 24. Also, Hame 2008, 1-3. Sourvinou-Inwood remarks on the funeral rituals overseen by women as "dominated by ritual disorder and pollution." Parker 1983, 35-9 discusses the pollution involved in funerary ritual. See also Shapiro 1991, 659; Hame 2008, 2; and Just 1989, 110-111.

The house holds significance as a container for pollution, since, to the Greek mind, pollution adheres to physical things.[151] The house as a object of physical destruction links *kataskaphē* with familial- and and house- pollution. Because houses were understood to be pure or polluted as a physical unit, they required purification under regular circumstances including natural death.[152] Agamemnon's house has a history not only of normal physical pollution but metaphysical pollution reaching back to Tantalus' murder of his son Pelops, Pelops' murder of Myrtilus, and when his son Atreus served Thyestes his brother Thyestes' own children to eat. In *Agamemnon* current sources of pollution for the house are the murders of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra and perhaps also the adultery of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra.[153] The image of infesting furies conveys how the pollution inheres in the physical house.[154] Cassandra's vision of slaughter within the house's façade also emphasizes the house's ability to hold pollution.[155] Recurring images of spilt blood continue to remind the audience of the house's pollution throughout the *Oresteia* triology.[156]

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[151] Connor 1985, 91.

[152] Garvie 1986, 314 suggests other tragic passages describing polluted houses: Aesch. *Eum.* 63, Soph. *El* 69, *OT* 1228, Eur. *IT* 1216. On house purification, see Moulinier 1952, 92-3, and 233. Euripides' *Heracles* features the hero purifying his *oikos* on account of his justified murder of the tyrant Lycus (920-32).

[153] Clytemnestra suggests she reinstantiates Atreus' pollution, 1497-1504.

[154] The Furies are described at *Choe.* 566 and *Ag*. 1468, 1481, 1500-4 and 1508. Connor 1985, 91 n. 33 and 34 discusses the portrayal of their infestation. For further reading related to infestation and daimons, see F. Pfister s.v. *Daimonismos*, RE Suppl. 7 (194) 107. Fraenkel 1950, 711-12 and Glotz 1973, 61 n. 4 discuss the term ἀλάστωϱ with regards to families

[155] Cassandra's visions of bloodshed are 1090-2, 1096-7, 1186-7, 1217-22, 1291, and 1309.

[156] Descriptions of blood dramatically increase in frequency at the end of *Agamemnon*: 698, 732-6, 1067, 1092, 1096, 1072, 1189, 1278, 1309, 1389-90, 1428, 1460, 1478, 1510, 1533-4, 1589, 1592, and 1656.

In *Agamemnon* Aeschylus focuses the image of house-pollution on the destruction of the hearth, a central feature in a Greek house.[157] The hearth, *hestia*, was such an important physical identification of a Greek home that it was often used synonymously for "home."[158] In Euripides' *Heracles* the protagonist sets out to purify his home at the hearth (920-932), demonstrating its significance. The hearth also is connected with the father's defining role in the household, since the hearth often seems to convey a family's patrilineal succession and is described as the "paternal hearth" (πατρῴα ἑστία).[159] In *Agamemnon*, Clytemnestra describes Agamemnon's arrival at the hearth as bringing warmth to the house in the winter (καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματῖτιν ἑστίαν, 968). Euripides' *Hecuba* offers evidence that destruction of the hearth might be part of a house's *kataskaphē*: the ghost of Polydorus at the play's beginning describes the hearth of his father Priam as having experienced *kataskaphē* ("my paternal hearth was razed" πατρῴα … ἑστία κατεσκάφη, 22). Connected with the hearth were other domestic cults including Zeus Herkeios and Ktesios.[160]

Agamemnon suggests that Clytemnestra pollutes the house, through adultery and murder, and especially pollutes its hearth. Images of polluting the hearth suggests a serious harm to the house and family since the hearth was a central and religious part of the house. Clytemnestra suggests to the audience that she will commit the murder at the family hearth. First Clytemnestra

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[157] Fixed stone hearths are rare in the (few) excavated houses at Athen, however the importance of their physical presence is attested by prose sources. On the other hand, Mycenaean and Bronze age architecture show clear evidence of fixed and monumental hearths. On evidence for domestic hearths, see Tsakirgis 2007, 225 and Morgan 2010, 151-2.

[158] Tsakirgis 2007, 225.

[159] Soph. *Aj*. 859-60 and Eur. *Hec*. 22.

[160] The chorus address some of these gods at *Choephoroi* 800-2 "and you who take care from inside of the inner room which rejoices in wealth, listen, sympathetic gods" (οἵ τ' ἔσω δωμάτων πλουτογα- / -θῆ μυχὸν νομίζετε, / κλῦτε, σύμφρονες θεοί·). Garvie's 1986 commentary, 261 discusses this identification as well as the possibility that these lines refer to the furies.

deceptively suggests to Cassandra that Cassandra is going to partake in a positive expression of family ritual. Clytemnestra's friendly demeanor seems aimed at convincing the reluctant Cassandra to come into the house:

> ἐπεί σ᾽ ἔθηκε Ζεὺς ἀμηνίτως δόμοις
> κοινωνὸν εἶναι χερνίβων, πολλῶν μέτα
> δούλων σταθεῖσαν κτησίου βωμοῦ πέλας: 1036-8
>
> For Zeus, without anger, has ordained that you should share the chernips with the household, standing near the altar of Zeus Ktesios with the many slaves.

Clytemnestra here refers to a physical household shrine, the altar of Zeus Ktesios.[161] Zeus Ktesios was a domestic divinity, the guardian of the house's possessions. Clytemnestra's mention of the *chernips* (1037) is ironic, because this is a water basin used for purifying the hands of those involved in ritual; what Clytemnestra is actually planning will pollute the family and altar. Clytemnestra's description of the scene at the altar also suggests the *katachusmata*, an initiatory ritual for brides and slaves, in which both, as new members of the *oikos,* were welcomed near the hearth or central altar of the house, while being showered with nuts and fruits.[162] The hearth was the location of this initiatory ritual, which emphasizes it as the center of the *oikos*. Clytemnestra describes a ritual that would promote household unity and incorporation but which actually demonstrates, ironically, her destructive designs towards Agamemnon's house.

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[161] Raeburn and Thomas 2011, 182.

[162] I am grateful to Jon Mikalson who suggested to me how this scene evokes the *katachusmata*. For descriptions of this ceremony see Mikalson 2010, 129; Oakley-Sinos 1993, 34; Mikalson 1983, 84; Lacey 1968, 3. Ancient testimonia include: [Dem.] 40.28, Is. 8.20, Phot. Lex sv. *Katachusmata*, Theopompus fr. 15 PCG VII, 716= fr. 14 CAF I, 736., Schol. to Ar. *Pl* 768, Dem. 45.7. See also Vernant 1983 132-4, 155-8, 163 and Paradiso 1988. Both Vernant and Paradiso link this hearth-side initiatory ritual with the *amphidromia*. Zeitlin 1965 does not discuss this depiction of ritual in the play.

When Cassandra does not respond to her first invitation, Clytemnestra continues to describe her planned violence as though it were a family ritual:

> ... τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἑστίας μεσομφάλου
> ἕστηκεν ἤδη μῆλα †πρὸς σφαγὰς† πυρός,
> ὡς οὔποτ᾽ ἐλπίσασι τήνδ᾽ ἕξειν χάριν. 1056-8
>
> for the sheep stand already near the hearth at the naval [of the house], for the slaughter; as for ones who never hoped to have this boon.

Instead of Clytemnestra's "sheep" (μῆλα 1057), the audience knows that Agamemnon, the *paterfamilias,* stands at the house's hearth. Clytemnestra describes the hearth as the "navel" (μεσομφάλου 1056), emphasizing its centrality to the household.[163] In line 1058,[164] Clytemnestra describes the tone of the sacrifice as one of domestic rejoicing, in ironic terms. The χάριν ("boon" 1058) Clytemnestra hoped for is the opportunity to kill her husband and destroy his house, *not* to celebrate a reunited household in a unifying ritual sacrifice.[165] Her words therefore focus the audience on a scene of domestic order, only to show how she will subvert it by sacrificing the *kyrios* of the house, who should be the one making the sacrifice.

Aeschylus continues to draw attention to the destruction of the hearth in *Agamemnon* and *Choephoroi*. The chorus decodes Clytemnestra's description of sacrifice, identifying Cassandra as the sacrificial victim: "How is it that you are walking to the altar courageously, like a cow that is driven by the gods?" (πῶς θεηλάτου / βοὸς δίκην πρὸς βωμὸν εὐτόλμως πατεῖς; 1297-8). At the end of the play, when she brazenly owns murdering Agamemnon, Clytemnestra refers to

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[163] Raeburn and Thomas 2011, 184 suggest, "The idea that a house's altar should be at its 'navel' derives from the religious space of Delphi, where a large stone was supposed to be the Navel of the Earth."

[164] Fraenkel 1950 deletes this line on account of its repetition of certain words from lines 1043-4.

[165] Clytemnestra refers to an ironic *charis* for Agamemnon several times in the *Agamemmnon* and *Choephoroi*.

Aegisthus as "lighting the fire on my hearth" (αἴθῃ πῦρ ἐφ' ἑστίας ἐμῆς / Αἴγισθος... 1434-5), *double entendre.* Here Clytemnestra expresses how she has dismantled Agamemnon's household not only by murdering him but by replacing him in their marriage bed and domestic ritual.[166] Reference to Agamemnon's hearth recurs in *Choephoroi.* Near the beginning of the play, the chorus refers to Orestes and Electra as "saviors of your father's hearth" (σωτῆρες ἑστίας πατρός, 264). Later in the same play, the chorus suggests that the pollution of Agamemnon's house attached especially to the hearth, when they predict a time in the future when something or someone, perhaps "Time," "will drive out all the pollution from the hearth by purifications which drive out *atē*" (ὅταν ἀφ' ἑστίας / μύσος ἅπαν ἐλάθῃ/ καθαρμοῖσιν ἀτᾶν ἐλατηρίοις, 966-8).[167] The chorus also call the hearth "entirely miserable" (ἰὼ πάνοιζυς ἑστία, 49) in their opening song.

Clytemnestra claims she wants to restore the *oikos*, but the end of *Agamemnon* and the whole of *Choephoroi* present her project as deeply flawed and motivated by impure intentions. Hame 2004 characterizes Clytemnestra as trying to appropriate leadership of the household, which is a perverse attempt as her improper execution of funeral rites (among other things) demonstrates.[168] In *Agamemnon*, Clytemnestra expresses an interest in managing the house, most memorably when she refers to Aegisthus "burning the fire" on her hearth:

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[166] Raeburn and Thomas 2011, 220 emphasize that this description focuses on Aegisthus' performance of family sacrifices. Fraenkel 1950, 827 notes how this line communicates Aegisthus' substitution for Agamemnon as "legitimate lord of the house." Parker 1983, 76-8 discusses the particular separation implied in the Greek mind between the hearth and sex; this would make Clytemnestra's suggestion here an even greater violation.

[167] Connor 1985, 86 n. 20 also connects this passage with the chorus' description of the polluted hearth (49).

[168] Hame 2004, 522. "By taking over the funeral rites for Agamemnon, she has taken over the male leadership of the *oikos*, which would have been traditionally responsible for the rites."

οὔ μοι φόβου μέλαθρον ἐλπὶς ἐμπατεῖ,
ἕως ἂν αἴθῃ πῦρ ἐφ᾽ ἑστίας ἐμῆς
Αἴγισθος, ὡς τὸ πρόσθεν εὖ φρονῶν ἐμοί. 1434-1436

No fearful worry treads in my house, as long as Aegisthus burns the fire on my hearth, well-disposed to me as before.

Shortly after, Clytemnestra expresses willingness to let go of further desire for revenge or wealth, in order to free the house from its curse and pollution.[169] The statement demonstrates Clytemnestra's disregard for the harm she has done to the house. She restates her myopic intention in the last lines of the plays: "You and <I>, holding sway over this house, will set it <in order>." (...<ἐγὼ>/ καὶ σὺ θήσομεν κρατοῦντε τῶνδε δωμάτων <καλῶς>. 1671-2).

By developing the image of the physical destruction of the house along two lines of house-razing and pollution, *Agamemnon* uses frequent references to the house's structure to convey household demise. The walls of the house, represented by the *skēnē*, and the buildings' public façade connect to the more private interior, including the hearth. The crumbling exterior thus connects to the infected inside space.

3. The *kataskaphē* of Troy

The messenger describes Agamemnon's sack of Troy as a *kataskaphē,* a razing. Agamemnon's destruction of Troy thus shares the same description as the chorus' portrayal of Agamemnon's *oikos* as κατασκαφαί (*Choephoroi* 48-53), an event which the chorus also vividly envisioned on stage (1530-4). On its face, Troy's *kataskaphē* is not a house-razing but the more general destruction of a city which this term often describes.[170] In tragedy *kataskaphē* frequently

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Hame argues that Clytemnestra forces Electra to join her household and treat Agamemnon's household as alien. See also Hame 2008.

[169] 1568-1576. Clytemnestra promises to swear to the Pleisthenid *daimon* that she will be happy with the state of affairs and accept a reduction in the house's wealth, if it will leave the house and the house will be freed from the mutual slaughter.

[170] See above, pg. 29 n. 88.

describes Troy's sack. However, Aeschylus constructs a correspondence between the two razings, suggesting that we should view the image of Troy's destruction in *Agamemnon* in terms of a household's ruin. Since the pathos of a city's sack centers naturally on the suffering of its families, it is easy to see how city and house razings overlap. Furthermore, as Connor 1985 discusses, the *kataskaphē* of a city can replicate the same ritual punishment as a house-razing, rather than simply being a synonym for "destruction."[171]

Aeschylus uses Troy's sack to provide a counterpart to Agamemnon's ruined *oikos*. I will first suggest that the herald's description of Troy's *kataskaphē* suggests the comparison with a house's ritual destruction. The drama develops this comparison when it describes the destruction of Priam's household and broader familial suffering in Troy. The connection between Troy and Agamemnon's household also creates important interpretative clues for the eagle-and-hare omen in the chorus' parodos and relates the two sets of *oikoi*, their individual members, and the wider *poleis*.

In recounting Agamemnon's sack of his enemy Troy, the herald describes Zeus as the agent of destruction. This detail of divine sanction suggests how Troy's razing relates to the ritual punishment of *kataskaphē*:

> Τροίαν κατασκάψαντα τοῦ δικηφόρου
> Διὸς μακέλλῃ, τῇ κατείργασται πέδον.
> βωμοὶ δ' ἄιστοι καὶ θεῶν ἱδρύματα,[172]
> καὶ σπέρμα πάσης ἐξαπόλλυται χθονός. 525-528
>
> ...having razed Troy with the mattock of Zeus the bringer of justice, with which the plain has been worked over. The altars and temples of the gods are annihilated, and the seed of the whole land is destroyed.

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[171] Connor 1985, 96-99 who deals mostly with ancient historians' uses of the term to describe city-razings in war.

[172] While Page 1972 allows this line, Sommerstein 2008, 61 n. 112; Fraenkel 1950; and others delete this line as an interpolation.

In combination with Zeus, the god's *makella* in line 526 suggests a ritual punishment. Iris uses a *makella,* a pick-like agricultural tool used for breaking ground, when she warns that Zeus will inflict *kataskaphē* upon a family in Aristophanes' *Birds* (1240).[173] On this line a scholiast comments that Aristophanes is paroding a Sophoclean description of a *kataskaphē*, fr. 727, in a mock-tragic tone.[174] In both Aristophanes and Aeschylus (and seemingly in Sophocles), Zeus' *makella* conveys the divine justice in the punishment of a razing. The related *dikella* (something like a pitch-fork) is also found in the *kataskaphē* of Troy in *Phoenissae* 1155, and in the razing of Heracles' house by Hera's orders in *Heracles* 944.[175] Thus the herald's description of Zeus' instrument indicates that he is using κατασκάψαντα (525) in a sense related to the ritual punishment of houses.[176]

Troy's ruin also evokes the image of a household's razing through the herald's farming image. He describes Troy as "worked over" (κατείργασται 525) with the *makella*. His image suggests that after the razing the city could be farmed, which emphasizes the structure's entire annihilation. The herald's focus on the space's transformation is like the spectacle in a house's *kataskaphē*. Next, by depicting the destruction of the "seed of the whole land" (σπέρμα πάσης ἐξαπόλλυται χθονός 528), the messenger highlights the collective destruction of the family as a generative unit, the same aim as the punishment of a house-razing. The mention of "seed"

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[173] Ar. *Av.* 1239-42 ...ὅπως μή σου γένος πανώλεθρον/ Διὸς μακέλλῃ πᾶν ἀναστρέψῃ Δίκη, / λιγνὺς δὲ σῶμα καὶ δόμων περιπτυχὰς / καταιθαλώσῃ σου Λικυμνίαις βολαῖς.
[174] The scholiast quotes a fragment, attributed to *Chryses,* that describes something – possibly Troy – as "turned up by the *makella* of Zeus" (μακέλλῃ Ζηνὸς ἐξαναστραφῆ fr. 727). Connor 1985, 85 n. 17 cites the example in Aristophanes and Sophocles.
[175] Connor 1985, 85 n. 17.
[176] Connor 1985, 96-99 is aware of the need for this distinction and identifies this passage of *Agamemnon* as an example of the more specialized meaning.

conveys that the razing erases not just the current group but the potential for future generations also. This corresponds with other depictions of collective familial suffering in *Agamemnon*, as I will show.

If line 527 is genuine, then we can see its reference to altars (βωμοὶ) and temples relating to the destruction of the sacred hearth of a home.[177] In *kataskaphē*, a house's hearth, the center of its domestic cult, might have been a particularly pathetic part of its destruction. In *Agamemnon*, the king's hearth is similarly a focus of the house's destruction, as I have shown. Polydorus' ghost at the beginning of *Hecuba* provides a *comparandum* when he describes his father Priam's hearth as having been razed (πατρῴα θ᾽ ἑστία κατεσκάφη, 22).

In addition to the herald's use of the term *kataskaphē,* his depiction connects with other passages in *Agamemnon* which emphasize that Troy's destruction is total, encompassing women and children. The idea of collective suffering in Troy relates to the image of collective suffering of the family-unit, the household, in *Agamemnon*. Thus the eagle-and-hare omen, which I will discuss in the next section, focuses the destruction of Troy on the image of the destroyed family, mother and children. Calchas, as the chorus recount, foretold Troy's destruction as a ruin encompassing even all of Troy's livestock (127-130).[178] The chorus reiterate this image in its first stasimon after meeting with Clytemnestra, describing Troy as captured in a net from which even the young will not escape (357-361). The image of destruction encompassing women and children focuses the image of destruction on the family unit. Violence towards young children

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[177] This line disrupts the agricultural imagery of the lines before and after, and has been interpreted as an interpolation from *Persians* 812: βωμοὶ δ᾽ ἀιστοι, δαιμόνων θ᾽ ἱδρύματα.
[178] See the note of Denniston and Page 1960, 80 for the issues connected with these lines. Raeburn and Thomas 2011, 81 interpret this as the livestock sacrificed outside the walls, but acknowledge it also as a depiction of the mass of Trojans as well.

suggests an exceptional circumstance. When Thucydides describes the slaughter of schoolboys at Mycalessus, the historian depicts killing children in war as an atrocity.[179] Even in hunting, Xenophon describes killing young animals as cruel.[180] However, young victims convey the same collective, familial target as for *kataskaphē*.

Agricultural terminology continues in the herald's narration of Troy's sack: he describes Paris as having "mowed down," or "reaped," his father's house, "down to the ground" (ἔθρισεν, αὐτόχθονον, 536), a passage which I will discuss below as it relates to Paris' guilt. The herald's presentation develops the image of razing in connection with Priam's house specifically. In this way, the herald's account concentrates on how Paris' individual guilt justifies the Agamemnon's destruction of the house; guilt justifies *kataskaphē*. Through imagery that evokes *kataskaphē*, Priam, Paris, and their house and city, become analogues for Agamemnon and his.[181] The iconic suffering of Troy, imagined here in *oikos*-centered terms, becomes a clue for understanding how Aeschylus means us to interpret Agamemnon's suffering and responsibility at Argos.

4. The Omen of the Eagle and Hare

Perhaps the most powerful image of the destroyed *oikos* in *Agamemnon* is the enigmatic description of the slain pregnant hare which the chorus presents in its parodos (109-137). This image links Agamemnon's Argive *oikos* to Troy, because the hare is doubly symbolic of the slaughter of Iphigenia (and perhaps Thyestes' children) and the destruction of Troy. It thus reinforces the correspondence of the two *kataskaphē* descriptions.

Artemis' anger at the eagle-and-hare omen, the cause of which is perhaps the most opaque point for interpreting this passage, ties together the two identifications. In recounting the

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[179] Thuc. 7.29.4. Discussed above, pg. 12.
[180] Xen. *Cyn*. 5.14. See Peradotto 1969, 248.
[181] Lloyd-Jones 1962, 192 points out the complementary positions of Troy and Argos.

departure of the Greeks in the play's parodos, the chorus describe how Zeus sent eagles as an omen for Agamemnon's fleet: two of these birds ate a pregnant hare in the sight of the troops (112-120).[182] Artemis, seeing the birds preying upon the rabbit mother and children, grew angered and caused contrary sea winds to blow (134-155). If the goddess' anger at the birds' violence is literal, it is a puzzling reason to be angered at Agamemnon. Likewise, if she was angered at the Achaeans' future sack of Troy or Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia, her reaction is anachronistic, since these events had not yet happened.[183] A simple answer is that Artemis' anger encompasses all these causes. While not completely logical,[184] the chorus clearly suggest this interpretation by saying that Artemis is offended at violence against the young and vulnerable.[185] Whether her anger literally connects to the future murder of Iphigenia and sack of Troy, it does so figuratively, in the poetic imagination.[186] In the eagle-and-hare omen, Artemis' protective feelings towards multiple victims – the mother and children rabbits, the Trojan

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[182] *Ag*. 112-120: θούριος ὄρνις … / οἰνῶν βασιλεὺς βασιλεῦσι νε-/ ῶν. ὁ κελαινὸς ὅ τ'ἐξόπιν ἀργᾶς,/ φανέντες ἴκταρ μελάθρων χερὸς ἐκ δορυπάλτου / παμπρέπτοις ἐν ἕδραισι, βοσκόμενοι λαγίναν, ἐρικύμονα φέρματα, γένναν,/ βλαβέντα λοισθίων δρόμων. "the furious bird … the king of birds to the kings of ships / one black and one white in the rear, appearing close to the house and on the side of the spear-wielding hand/ in positions/seats visible to all, / eating a pregnant hare, source of birth for those being carried, deprived of a final run."

[183] See Heath 1999, Perradotto 1969, Lloyd-Jones 1962, Whallon 1961 and Denniston and Page 1960, xxiii-xxix, all of whom deal with the reason for Artemis' anger.

[184] It is anachronistic or somewhat hypocritical that Artemis both gets mad beforehand and indirectly brings about the slaughter of an innocent young thing, Iphigenia, which she should oppose. I agree, mostly, with the explanation of Perradotto 1969. My interpretation creates slight differences with his solution, however.

[185] Aesch. *Ag*. 134-144.

[186] This is the belief of Perradotto 1969, 237-9 as well. See Lebeck 1971, 1-4 on the ambiguity of images. Her project in her book is to relate connected images that recur through the play. She identifies the chorus' parodos as an especially important location for images that are analeptic, that is, look forward to images later in the play that will pick them up and develop them, sometimes in unexpected directions.

mothers and children subjected to violence, and Iphigenia (perhaps also the violated mother, Clytemnestra) – suggest an image of destruction to the household through its children.

Perradotto argues that Aeschylus depicts the Achaeans as preying indiscriminately upon Troy in *Agamemnon*.[187] He believes this to reflect the *ethos* of Agamemnon, which affronts Artemis when the king preys upon it the vulnerable at Aulis as well as at Troy.[188] I agree with how Perradotto relates the eagles' and Agamemnon's predation upon the vulnerable. I suggest an added layer: Aeschylus not only asks us to consider how the vulnerable are victims, but how an individual inflicts suffering on the vulnerable *oikos,* or household unit. My reading is less focused on interpreting Agamemnon's character as ferocious and focuses instead upon how an individual, Agamemnon, is able to bring destruction upon his family and house. In my interpretation of the eagle-and-hare image, Artemis' anger still stems from the predation upon the vulnerable, but also conveys how the family experiences this fate as a consequence of an individual member's transgression.

The chorus' description of the pregnant hare suggests a vulnerable *oikos* since it encompasses both mother and children. Like the physical house, the pregnant hare is a physical container of the next generation. The hare is first described as the "pregnant hare, a γέννα (source of descent) for offspring, deprived of a final running" (…λαγίναν ἐρικύμονα φέρματι γένναν, / βλάψαντε λοισθίων δρόμων· 119-120).[189] The description of λαγίναν… γέννα, a "source of

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[187] Perradotto 1969, 247-8.

[188] Perradotto 1969, 255-8.

[189] The text and interpretation are uncertain. Denniston and Page 1960, 78 argue about γένναν meaning "bearer" and not "birth": "βοσκόμενοι λαγίναν ἐρικύμονα has been said to mean *vescentes leporino genere*, where 'family of hares,' stands for 'hare' simply: but this is intolerable in a context which is dealing with 'the hare's family' in a very different sense ('offspring'). Presumably γέννα here means not 'birth' but bearer', and anomaly parallel in *PB* 850, where γέννημα elsewhere always thing begotten means begetting; and to Alcaeus fr. 129.7 …" Nonetheless, I believe the death of the whole group is what is being stressed with this image.

descent of the hare," is not only a periphrasis for "hare," since producing future generations is significant for the meaning of the omen and Artemis' anger. Denniston and Page worry about how γέννα describes the pregnant hare, since she is properly the "bearer" and not the "offspring." Yet taken as a pregnant whole with her children and potential children, the hare seems correctly described as a "source of descent," or even "family." The chorus again suggests this understanding of the hare as a collective when several lines later they describe Calchas' premonition of how Artemis will react to the birds. He indicates that the birds will kill "a wretched hare, children and all, before the time of birth" (αὐτότοκον πρὸ λόχου μογερὰν πτάκα 136).

Aeschylus' choice of the hare is significant since the Ancient Greeks recognized the rabbit as an exceptionally fertile animal, as Herodotus, for instance, attests.[190] As well as being known as fertile, hares are also generally prey for other animals. The hare thus conveys especially well both the fertility and vulnerability of the household. The chorus' hare image conveys the *oikos* in terms of a living thing, a recurring category for imagining the family in Greek literature. Two examples of this are the imagery of a household as a plant with roots and depictions of the house-structure as living, or composed of living members. As we can see in the chorus' pregnant hare, describing the family as a living thing highlights how the collective family-unit is vulnerable. The chorus' image of the slaughtered mother and children rabbits in this way reinforces the image of *kataskaphē*: it is the destruction of a collective household*, both* individual members and as a whole group.

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[190] See Herodotus 3.108 who discusses the rabbit's fecundity and identity as prey as Peradotto 1969, 245 n. 27 notes.

Since Aeschylus' eagle and hare corresponds to the *Iliad'*s simile of a snake and sparrows (2.308-319), Aeschylus' alternative choice of animals is more significant.[191] In the *Iliad* Book Two Odysseus describes an omen where a serpent ate a sparrow and her eight babies. Calchas, he recounts, interpreted this as a symbol of the nine years it would take the Achaeans to sack Troy (2.326-9). The context for the omens in both the *Iliad* and *Agamemnon* is the moment when the Greeks are preparing to sail for Troy from Aulis. This implies that Aeschylus' omen responds to his Homeric predecessor, as has been suggested many times.[192] *Agamemnon*'s version of the omen includes the same destruction of mother and children, but b they adding the element of the hare's pregnancy Aeschylus draws greater emphasis to the mother's fertility and thus to her significance in continuing the family. Since the pregnant hare has her young inside her, she also better conveys the collectivity of a Greek household.

Calchas is the first to identify the meaning of the hare in *Agamemnon*, describing it as an omen of the utter destruction of Troy (126-134). His interpretation is supported by another Iliadic resonance of the slain hare: Agamemnon boasts in *Iliad* Book Six that he will bring about a destruction from which "not even the male that a mother carries in the womb" will escape (μηδ' ὅντινα γαστέρι μήτηρ / κοῦρον ἐόντα φέροι, 6.58-9). In *Agamemnon*, Calchas' identification of the hare with Troy focuses the audience on the many Trojan *oikoi* that the Achaeans destroy, and upon Priam's particularly fecund *oikos*. Other passages, which I discussed above in terms of Troy's *kataskaphē* (59-64), also develop this description and emphasize the

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[191] Perradotto 1969, 243 also points this out.

[192] There is a slight difference in the location of the two omens. In *Agamemnon*, the omen is described as taking place near the palace, while at Aulis in the *Iliad*. However, in *Agamemnon*, the context suggests that the army is soon heading for Aulis. For the scholarship, Heath 1999 and Perradotto 1969 are among the more recent and discuss earlier scholarship. Lloyd-Jones 1983 believes that Aeschylus is drawing from a folk fable, and not directly from the *Iliad*.

destruction of all of Troy's inhabitants.

While Calchas identifies the image of the slain pregnant hare with Troy, the chorus suggest that the hare's slaughter also signifies Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia. They hint at this by the vocabulary they use to describe of the eagles' devouring the hare: πτάκα θυομένοισιν, 136. The participle here, θυομένοισιν, most commonly means "to sacrifice." This word calls to mind Agamemnon's sacrifice of his young daughter Iphigenia, an act which the chorus narrates soon after: the chorus first describe Calchas' prediction of these events (150-159) and then narrate the sacrifice at lines 206-247.

Since the eagle-and-hare image seems to refer two sets of human sufferers – both the children in Trojan households and those in Agamemnon's *oikos* – it relates the vulnerable family-units. The hare image also represents the whole family-unit as a living being: Agamemnon's sack of Troy and sacrifice of Iphigenia not only kill individuals but also destroy families.

5. Individuals and the *oikos:* Agamemnon and Paris

Chief among the similarities of Agamemnon and Paris in *Agamemnon* is that both have unwittingly destroyed their own *oikoi*. The chorus relate these two individuals in additional details. For instance, both men are pursued by a delayed *mēnis* (for Agamemnon, παλίνορτος / οἰκονόμος … Μῆνις τεκνόποινος. 154-5; for Paris, Μῆνις …ὑστέρῳ χρόνῳ 700, 702). The chorus also relate Agamemnon and Paris by a fable they tell about a lion raised in a human house and family (717-36). Scholars have connected the lion to several figures pertinent to

Agamemnon. Most frequently discussed are Helen[193] and Agamemnon, whom the lion's unavoidable, inherited, and predatory character suggests.[194] However in antiquity a principal identification of the lion seems to have been Paris; Nappa 1994 has recently argued that this ancient interpretation is particularly apt.[195] By viewing Paris as the most direct referent of the lion image, the lion connects the Trojan prince with Agamemnon in connection with the destruction of one's own *oikos*.[196] The chorus' presentation of Paris in the play does far more than provide the background of the Trojan war, justifying Agamemnon's mission: it presents Paris as an important comparandum for Agamemnon. Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia is like Paris' destruction of Troy: each harms his own family.

By stealing Helen, Paris provoked the Atreidae's vengeance (56-61) and brought destruction upon his whole family. Pointing to Paris as a source of grief for her family, his sister Cassandra exclaims, "Alas, the weddings, the weddings of Paris, deadly for dear ones" (ἰὼ γάμοι γάμοι Πάριδος ὀλέθριοι φίλων· 1156). The herald similarly describes Paris as culpable in his account of the Trojan war:

> ὀφλὼν γὰρ ἁρπαγῆς τε καὶ κλοπῆς δίκην
> τοῦ ῥυσίου θ' ἥμαρτε καὶ πανώλεθρον
> αὐτόχθονον πατρῷον ἔθρισεν δόμον.
> διπλᾶ δ' ἔτεισαν Πριαμίδαι θἀμάρτια. 534-7

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[193] Knox 1952, 18 stresses that the passage is "a complex knot of suggestions which evoke simultaneously all the principal human figures of the *Oresteia*." Nonetheless, he, 17, takes it for granted that Helen is the surface referent. Nappa 1994, 85-6 n. 2 explains this standard view.

[194] Peradotto 1969, 256-7 shows how the lion captures Agamemnon's *ethos*. Knox 1952, 22 connects Agamemnon with the lion through two other descriptions of him as a lion in the *Oresteia*.

[195] Nappa 1994, refers to the scholion to line 717 by Demetrius Triclinius, whose interpretation the Isaac Casaubon followed.

[196] Paris destroys his own family and city, while Helen brings destruction on Troy, principally. Thus the identification of the lion with Paris conveys much more strongly the image of one destroying one's own *oikos*, as Nappa 1994, 85 concludes.

> Having been found guilty of snatching [women] and stealing, he lost what he stole and mowed down his father's house to the ground, completely destroyed: Priam's family has paid double their crimes.

The messenger describes Paris' destruction of his father's house concretely: he "mowed down to the ground" (αὐτόχθονον … ἔθρισεν 536), completely (535-6). The herald does not question the harshness of this consequence for Paris' act, but rather emphasizes the individual's fault and the penalty on the family and country. In similar terms, the chorus clearly describe Ilium's destruction as a "*Mēnis"* that "exacts revenge"[197] (Μῆνις …/… πρασσομένα, 701 and 705) for Paris' crime. Paris is punished as one of "those dishonoring the host's table and Zeus of the hearth" (...τραπέζας ἀτί-/μωσιν ... / καὶ ξυνεστίου Διὸς, 702-4). Paris' punishment, the destruction of his oikos, fits his crime when described in this way, as an affront to another household. Paris not only offended the hospitality of Menelaus' *oikos,* he upset the marriage of Menelaus and Helen, the *sine qua non* of the *oikos*.

Corresponding to Paris' responsibility for the demise of his family is the way Agamemnon characterizes his own central offense in the play. Δωματοφθορεῖν, "to destroy-the-house," is how the king describes the offense he worries about committing if he walks upon Clytemnestra's tapestry. [198] This act also reprises his offense against Iphigenia, which harmed his family, and his sack of Troy, in whose destruction Agamemnon inflicted familial suffering. Aeschylus in this develops a correspondence between Agamemnon's actions as bringing destruction on a family throughout the drama.

Seen in light of this characterization of Agamemnon, Clytemnestra's murders continue a string of family-destroying acts. Aeschylus does not depict Clytemnestra alone as hurting the

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[197] LSJ s.v. πράσσω A.VI.

[198] πολλὴ γὰρ αἰδὼς δωματοφθορεῖν ποσὶν /φύροντα πλοῦτον ἀργυρωνήτους θ' ὑφάς, 948-9.

oikos, but shows that Agamemnon harmed it first. Agamemnon's household has a history of inter-familial strife, the so-called "curse of Atreus": Tantalus slaughtered his son Pelops (as food for the gods), Thyestes slept with his sister-in-law Aerope, and Atreus killed his brother Thyestes' sons and served them to Thyestes. This background remains remote in the play but does not go unnoted; Aeschylus reminds his audience of this pattern several times.[199] Agamemnon's climactic step upon the crimson tapestry, as Jones 1962 has argued, symbolizes the abuse of his family, specifically through the exploitation of its material goods, its "*oikos*-substance."[200]

The cloth that Agamemnon tramples recalls the robe of Iphigenia at her sacrifice, Agamemnon's greatest act of family-violence.[201] As the chorus narrate this act in their parodos, they describe how Agamemnon anticipated that, through his sacrifice of Iphigenia, he would destroy the "glory of the house" (δόμων ἄγαλμα, 207), and would bring pollution to his household: "staining with the rivers of maiden's blood my fatherly hands near the altar" (μιαίνων παρθενοσφάγοισιν / ῥείθροις πατρῴους χέρας πέλας βω- / μοῦ· 209-11). The chorus also describe how Iphigenia was prevented from crying out to prevent any "(any) noise which would be a curse to the house" (κατασχεῖν / φθόγγον ἀραῖον οἴκοις, 236-237). These details draw attention to how Agamemnon himself realizes that he is hurting his *oikos*.

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[199] For instance, Clytemnestra refers to a "*daimon* of this family gorged three times," τριπάχυντον / δαίμονα γέννης τῆσδε 1476-7. Gagné 2013, 394-416 discusses the repetition of violence in the oikos in *Agamemnon* and discusses the many references to it. Against those who suggest the family's history is not active in the play, Gagné, 400, states "it would be perverse to deny, as some have done, that the notion of punishment through generations occupies a central place in the architecture of the tragedy."

[200] Jones 1962, 92. Jones 84-93 discusses the carpet scene as a waste of the household's resources as does Taplin 1977, 313-4. Lebeck 1971, 74-9 emphasizes the language of "trampling underfoot" as it connects the tapestry scene with other actions of Agamemnon.

[201] For discussion of the connection of the carpet scene with Iphigenia's sacrifice, see Lebeck 1964 and Lebeck 1971, 80-86. See also Rehm 2002, 81; Finley 1955, 260; and Kitto 1950, 108.

Clytemnestra expresses in harsher terms the same evaluation of her husband's sacrifice as an offense against the family. To defend her murder, she describes how, "this man, having filled such a great *kratēr* of cursed evils in the house, he, on coming back, is draining it dry" (τοσῶνδε κρατῆρ' ἐν δόμοις κακῶν ὅδε / πλήσας ἀραίων αὐτὸς ἐκπίνει μολών. 1397-1398). The queen also asks rhetorically, "For did he not make deceitful destruction for the house" (οὐδὲ γὰρ οὗτος δολίαν ἄτην / οἴκοισιν ἔθηκ'; 1523-4)? In both Sophocles' and Euripides' *Electra* plays, Clytemnestra uses similar arguments to justify murdering Agamemnon.[202]

Calchas also indicates Agamemnon's guilt towards his family when he predicts Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia and Clytemnestra's murder in revenge, a "housewife" (οἰκονόμος) and "child-avenging *Mēnis*" (μῆνις τεκνόποινος):

> .... μίμνει γὰρ φοβερὰ παλίνορτος
> οἰκονόμος δολία, μνάμων Μῆνις τεκνόποινος. 154-5
>
> ...for there awaits a frightening and guileful housekeeper to come, a child-avenging *Mēnis*.

The chorus' Μῆνις (155) is most easily identified as Clytemnestra and her future reaction to Agamemnon's slaughter of Iphigenia. By describing the avenger as a care-taker of the *oikos* (οἰκονόμος), the chorus cast Agamemnon as a guilty party whose act requires vengeance. The aggrieved victim in this image is the family: his wife and the children.

Clytemnestra is the primary referent of Μῆνις, but given its textual location, it is striking how well this *Mēnis* could also fit Artemis, angry not only on behalf of the hare family but

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[202] Clytemnestra defends herself on the basis of Agamemnon's wrongs to the family in Euripides' *Electra* at 1024-1029 and 1042-45 and in Sophocles' *Electra* 530-548. Zeitlin 1965, 490-1, discusses the fact that Clytemnestra does not make this argument in the *Choephoroi*. Zeitlin suggests that Aeschylus creates a shift of character for Clytemnestra, no longer wishing to characterize her as a "self-righteous wife and mother." See Foley 2001, 201-242 on the contrast between Aeschylus' and Euripides' Clytemnestras' defense.

because of the human child Iphigenia. The context and content of the chorus' description of the *Mēnis* relates it to Artemis' reaction to the portent. Calchas describes Artemis' anger as directed at the omen sent by Zeus, here cited as controller of the birds: "the winged hounds of her father" (πτανοῖσιν κυσὶ πατρὸς 135). The suggestion that Artemis is angry with the action of her father's birds against vulnerable victims parallels how Agamemnon used paternal power against his child: the chorus earlier compared him to another raptorial bird, a vulture (49-50). The chorus also relate Zeus' eagles to Agamemnon's raptorial acts when they state that in demanding the slaughter of Iphigenia, Artemis requires something in "correspondence to these things" (τούτων αἰτεῖ ξύμβολα, 144), meaning in correspondence to the slaughter of the hares.

Acting like the chorus' lion in the house, Paris and Agamemnon each commits a crime which strikes directly against the *oikos.* Each man experiences the destruction, or near-destruction, of his *oikos*. Troy and Priam's household are completely annihilated. Clytemnestra tries to annihilate Agamemnon's household and replace it with her own (Orestes' survival, however, allows the continuance of Agamemnon's *oikos*). Aeschylus provides his audience ample cause to blame Agamemnon for his household's destruction, and Paris' comparative figure in the play emphasizes the fact that Clytemnestra's act of destroying Agamemnon's household responds to the king' own crime.[203]

6. The "Curse" of the *astoi*

The chorus expand Agamemnon's guilt within his family by describing the public condemnation of Agamemnon and his brother Menelaus. The chorus describes the Argive *dēmos*' anger toward Agamemnon as rooted in many families' suffering in a war that

[203] As Nappa 1994, 85 and Knox 1952, 21-2 point out, Clytemnestra is also described as a lion in the play at 1258, as is her accomplice Aegisthus at 1224.

Agamemnon's (and Menelaus') decisions caused. This increases the number of family-based victims for Agamemnon beyond his own *oikos*. The misery of the Argive families turns into public outrage towards the king as the chorus depicts it. Public anger shifts to Clytemnestra at the end of the play, when she murders Agamemnon and seizes leadership of the house. The chorus' public criticism of Clytemnestra is similar: they describe the behavior of both husband and wife as polluting and destructive to the family and harmful to the wider community. The consequences of their actions extend beyond the ruling family's *oikos* to affect the *dēmos.* Agamemnon sends many *astoi* to war, Clytemnestra creates a tyranny by usurping the legitimate ruler.[204] Both husband and wife become targets of public fervor.

Aeschylus characterizes the expedition of the Atreidae several times in the play as a sacrifice of many households for one. For instance, very early in their parodos the chorus describe how Zeus Soter, when he determined destruction for Paris and Troy, sent many men to their grave in "preliminary sacrifices" ("with shaft being splintered in preliminary sacrifices" διακναιομένης τ' ἐν προτελείοις / κάμακος 65-6): it is unclear to what *telos* the προτελείοις refer. Because προτέλεια usually refer to the rituals preceding a marriage, suggestions have included the marriage of Helen and Paris, though anachronistic.[205] Regardless, the description of the mens' lives as a sacrifice emphasizes the contrast of the breakup of many homes for the sake of an individual household. In Antistrophe B in the first stasimon (following their interview with

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[204] Zeitlin 1965, *passim* demonstrates how these acts of violence share the representation in the play as sacrifices. On Clytemnestra's dynastic pursuits, see the discussion of Maitland 1992, 29-31.

[205] Denniston and Page 1960, 74 emphasize the marital association of the term and suggest that the marriage of Helen and Paris is the only viable interpretation. Raeburn and Thomas 2011, 75 gives several suggestions, including the sack of Troy as a general τελος. Fraenkel 1950, 40-41 suggests that the reference is to the preliminary spear-throwing before battle turns to hand-to-hand combat, but emphasizes that Aeschylus makes a sinister inversion of the usually happy marital association of προτελείοι.

Clytemnestra) the chorus describes the grief of many bereaved *oikoi* who sent warriors to Troy: "these are the griefs for the households around the hearths, and things worse than these" (τὰ μὲν κατ' οἴκους ἐφ' ἑστίας ἄχη / τάδ' ἐστὶ καὶ τῶνδ ὑπερβατώτερα 427-8). The chorus presents this suffering in contrast with Menelaus, whom they described just earlier as grieving by himself at home over losing Helen (412-422). The chorus describes both sufferings, those caused by Helen's loss and by the loss of soldiers, in the home.

In this first stasimon the chorus continue to describe households suffering in war:

> τὸ πᾶν δ' ἀφ' Ἕλλανος αἴας συνορμένοισι πέν-
> θεια τλησικάρδιος
> δόμῳ 'ν ἑκάστου πρέπει.
> πολλὰ γοῦν θιγγάνει πρὸς ἦπαρ·
> οὓς μὲν γάρ <τις> ἔπεμψεν
> οἶδεν, ἀντὶ δὲ φωτῶν
> τεύχη καὶ σποδὸς εἰς ἑκά-
> στου δόμους ἀφικνεῖται 429-436
>
> But for each of those who together set out from the land of Hellas, there is conspicuous a stubborn-hearted grief in the house of each. Much, at least, touches the heart (lit. 'liver'). For one knows the men he sent [to war], but in the place of men return armor and ashes into the house of each.

The chorus focus closely on the domestic aspect of war in the homecoming of the dead warrior. They twice emphasize how the experience is repeated separately in the *oikos* of each man (δόμῳ 'ν ἑκάστου, 431 and, εἰς ἑκά-/ στου δόμους, 434-5) and narrate the experience vividly and pathetically, as though a generally understood suffering. The chorus' depiction of private domestic anguish in war is echoed by the herald, who bemoans the "single wound of the *dēmos*" (ἕλκος ἓν τὸ δήμιον 640), and calls the public and private woes in war the "double whip which Ares loves" (διπλῇ μάστιγι, τὴν Ἄρης φιλεῖ, 642).

The herald conveys his perspective as an Argive soldier focused on his own home as well. On arriving on stage, he expresses gratitude for his family tomb: "for I was not confident

that in the land of Argos I would ever, having died, share a portion of the most beloved tomb" (οὐ γάρ ποτ' ηὔχουν τῇδ' ἐν Ἀργείᾳ χθονὶ / θανὼν μεθέξειν φιλτάτου τάφου μέρος, 506-7). When he describes what the Argive soldiers suffered during the Trojan expedition, the herald does not depict the horrors of combat. Instead he points out their "wretched lodgings" (δυσαυλίας, 555) and miserable bedding: "and narrow gangways spread (as a bed) miserably" (σπαρνὰς παρήξεις καὶ κακοστρώτους 556). He specially emphasizes details which express the soldiers' longing for their homes and experience of separation.

The chorus narrates how the people's suffering, which has been described in relation to their families, escalates into resentment against Agamemnon:

> στένουσι δ' εὖ λέγοντες ἄν-
> δρα τὸν μὲν ὡς μάχης ἴδρις,
> τὸν δ' ἐν φοναῖς καλῶς πεσόντ',
> ἀλλοτρίας διαὶ γυναι-
> κός· τάδε σῖγά τις βαΰ-
> ζει, φθονερὸν δ' ὑπ' ἄλγος ἕρ-
> πει προδίκοις Ἀτρείδαις. [206] 445-451
>
> They groan, praising one man for skill in battle, another who fell nobly amid the slaughter – "for the sake of another man's wife." Someone snarls these things in a whisper. Grief with resentment spreads [over the people] against the Atreidae, the head prosecutors.

In these lines the people resent losing men so that Menelaus' could reclaim Helen. The chorus goes further to describe this resentful talk of the *dēmos* through the figure of a curse (ἀρᾶς 457): "the talk of the citizens is grave with ill-will, it is equivalent (literally "pays the due of") of a curse ratified by the *dēmos*" (βαρεῖα δ' ἀστῶν φάτις σὺν κότῳ· δημοκράντου δ' ἀρᾶς τίνει χρέος. 456-457). By making Agamemnon the object of public anger, Aeschylus highlights a public

[206] There is some debate as to how to translate lines 450-451, but the sense is not at issue. See Denniston and Page 1960, 110.

perspective on Agamemnon's choice to go to war, which also involved violence to his own *oikos* and Iphigenia.[207]

The chorus and Cassandra both suggest another cause for this public outrage toward Agamemnon when they tie Agamemnon's ruin to his sack of Troy. Shortly after they narrate the anger of the *dēmos,* the chorus hints at Agamemnon's fate, stating gnomically that,

> τῶν πολυκτόνων γὰρ οὐκ
> ἄσκοποι θεοί, κελαι-
> ναὶ δ' Ἐρινύες χρόνῳ
> τυχηρὸν ὄντ' ἄνευ δίκας
> παλιντυχεῖ τριβᾷ βίου
> τιθεῖσ' ἀμαυρόν, ... 461-466
>
> the gods are not unmindful of men who have killed many, and in time, with a wasting away of life which reverses fortunes, the black Furies make the man vanish who is fortunate without justice,

The chorus' words imply that despite Zeus' approval of the expedition to Troy, which is mentioned several times in the play (55-72, 362, and 748), Agamemnon bears some responsibility for the many lives lost.[208] The chorus conclude their comment by asking: "may I not be a sacker of cities" (μήτ' εἴην πτολιπόρθης, 471). In light of their preceeding depiction of the men's suffering in war, the chorus seem to criticize Agamemnon's expedition and suggest that the king has drawn a doom upon himself.

Cassandra certainly sees the gods' complementary justice in the destruction of Agamemnon's house: "since I have now seen the city of Ilium suffer as it suffered, and the ones who took the city are getting in turn this kind of judgement from the gods, I will go, leading the

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[207] The chorus describe Agamemnon trying to avoid Iphigenia's cry which could curse the house, φθόγγον ἀραῖον οἴκοις, 237.

[208] Denniston and Page 1960, 111, "but if many lives are lost, as of course they must be, Zeus, will visit his displeasure on the killers' heads." See also on this point, Whallon 1962, 84; Lloyd-Jones 1962, 191; and Kitto 1956, 71-84.

way, I will take courage to die." (ἐπεὶ τὸ πρῶτον εἶδον Ἰλίου πόλιν / πράξασαν ὡς ἔπραξεν, οἳ δ' εἷλον πόλιν / οὕτως ἀπαλλάσσουσιν ἐν θεῶν κρίσει, / ἰοῦσ' ἀπάρξω, τλήσομαι τὸ κατθανεῖν. 1287-1290). Here she characterizes Agamemnon's sack of Troy as the ruin of *oikoi,* for which he now pays with Agamemnon's *oikos*.

Despite the chorus' decision to forgive Agamemnon in light of his victorious homecoming (805-6), the chorus recounts their previous blame towards him in going to war:

> σὺ δέ μοι τότε μὲν στέλλων στρατιὰν
> Ἑλένης ἕνεκ', οὐκ ἐπικεύσω,
> κάρτ' ἀπομούσως ἦσθα γεγραμμένος,
> οὐδ' εὖ πραπίδων οἴακα νέμων. 799-802
>
> When you were gathering the army for Helen's sake – I will not conceal it– you were not painted flatteringly at all, nor did you seem a man in control of his wits.

The text of the next two lines (803-4) is uncertain and highly debated. In overall thrust however, the chorus certainly refer to the entire Trojan expedition as the reason for their earlier disapproval of Agamemnon. The pathos in the chorus' previous narration of Iphigenia's sacrifice (218-247) also conveys the chorus' disapproval. At the end of the drama, chorus and audience see a reaction to Agamemnon's actions, Clytemnestra's violence, bringing a fresh cycle of blame and guilt for the house.[209] Like Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia and of the lives of many men, Clytemnestra's vengeance upon her husband corrupts the house and offends the *dēmos* since she attempts to seize power over Argos.

Aeschylus suggests that Agamemnon's fault in the war is broader than his eventual overreach in destroying Trojan altars and sanctuaries (cited twice in the play, 338-42 and 527).[210]

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[209] As I discuss, pp. 80-1.

[210] Lloyd-Jones 1962, 195 cites this as one cause for guilt. The two references to these are Clytemnestra's suggestion of danger for the Argives if they violate holy places, perhaps a reference also to Ajax the Lesser, 338-42 and the description of that by the chorus at 527.

Peradotto 1969 argues that Aeschylus includes not only Iphigenia's fate but the lives of Argive and Trojan citizens among the repercussions of Agamemnon's choice to sail against Troy despite Artemis' winds.[211] Aeschylus focuses especially on the familial repercussions of the Agamemnon's choice. *Agamemnon* depicts how the Trojan war caused suffering for households, as the chorus and Cassandra highlight. I have suggested that the herald's description of Troy's sack and the chorus' narration of the eagle-and-the-hare omen, while refering most directly to Agamemnon's Trojan victims, also suggest the familial victims of Agamemnon's choice in Argos.

On a general level, the chorus' image of a public curse (δημοκράντου δ' ἀρᾶς 457) in connection with Agamemnon suggests an Athenian view of the relation of the public towards private individuals.[212] Δημοκράντου expresses the collective public perspective that was important in the Athenian democracy. As I discussed in the introduction, Attic speakers often describe the individual household as the interest and business of their public audiences. Public oaths in Athens also commonly demanded the destruction of the family if the swearer did not fulfil his promise of public service.[213] The chorus' image of a popular animosity highlights the public concern towards the individual *oikos* and suggests the *dēmos'* ability to take collective action towards offending individuals and their *oikoi*.

Fraenkel 1950 obelizes the latter line, arguing, 266-7, that it this act is too objectionable for Aeschylus to include, and also implies that scholas who defended the line were looking for ways to cast Agamemnon as a "godless villain." Fraenkel's opinion, as Lloyd-Jones points out, is convenient for Fraenkel's own interpretation of Agamemnon's character. Denniston and Page 1960, 120 is of the same opinion as Lloyd-Jones, especially in light of Clytemnestra's ominous warning.

[211] Perradotto 1969, 255.

[212] Griffith 1995, 76-7 emphasizes the focus in Agamemnon on the *demos* in relation to the dynastic rulers. See also Dodds 1960.

[213] See above, pp. 14-15.

Paris provides an analogue for Agamemnon's public blame and brings into focus Agamemnon's relationship to the Argive *polis*. Like Agamemnon, Paris is depicted as destroying not only his family but his country. The chorus describes the bitter feelings of the Trojan citizens (πολιτᾶν, 715), as the marriage hymn of Paris and Helen (705-6) turns into a public *thrēnos*:

> μεταμανθάνουσα δ' ὕμνον
> Πριάμου πόλις γεραιὰ
> πολύθρηνον μέγα που στένει, κικλήσκου-
> σα Πάριν τὸν αἰνόλεκτρον,
> ….
> μέλεον αἶμ' ἀνατλᾶσα. 709-712, 716
>
> But now, learning late a new hymn, the aged city of Priam groans it greatly with much lament; calling Paris "of the fatal marriage," … after it [the city] endured miserable bloodshed.

The chorus here describe the Trojan citizens as angry at the royal *oikos* because its affairs have caused widespread suffering.[214] Hector voices the same public perspective in *Iliad* Book Three, when he tells Paris that the Trojans should have placed a "stone tunic" on him for the affliction he has brought on his homeland ("but the Trojans are completely cowardly, or else already a stone tunic would have been put upon [you] on account of all the wrongs you have committed," ἀλλὰ μάλα Τρῶες δειδήμονες· ἦ τέ κεν ἤδη / λάϊνον ἕσσο χιτῶνα κακῶν ἕνεχ' ὅσσα ἔοργας, 3.56-7).[215] Paris' violation of Menelaus' *oikos* (clearly described in connection with Troy's sufferings at 700-706, discussed above) affects not only Priam's house but also the Trojan people, whose wrath it incites.

Clytemnestra becomes a third character in the play noxious to the *dēmos,* by murdering Agamemnon. The chorus' attention shifts to Clytemnestra after Agamemnon's murder. The

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[214] The city is described as enjoying both the "wedding morning," which becomes "mourning, truly" (a play on the two meanings of κῆδος). 700-702.
[215] Parker 1983, 195. He notes this in connection with a discussion of public curses.

chorus indicated public disapproval of Agamemnon's leadership of the people to war in Troy; Clytemnestra is an even more problematic public leader as the female murderer of the king of Argos. In both instances the act that the public blames – her murder of Agamemnon and his costly expedition against Troy – also evokes the image of violence in the family: Agamemnon's polluting sacrifice of Iphigenia.[216] Cassandra, in a prophetic ecstasy, anticipates Clytemnestra's deed as "sacrifice that calls for stoning" (θύματος λευσίμου 1118), that is, it is a public offense. After they hear evidence of Agamemnon's murder, the chorus take council among themselves. They identify the actions of Clytemnestra as unbearable and as "the part of a tyrant" (μοῖρα τῆς τυραννίδος, 1365).[217] When Clytemnestra comes on stage and own the murder (1371), the chorus describe her as bringing upon herself public curses (δημοθρόους τ' ἀράς 1409) and bluntly voices a public condemnation of Clytemnestra: "You threw off [the public], you cut [them off]; you shall be an exile from the *polis*, an object of strong hate for the citizens" (ἀπέδικες ἀπέταμες, ἀπόπολις δ' ἔσῃ, / μῖσος ὄβριμον ἀστοῖς 1410-1411).

Clytemnestra's murder of Agamemnon revives the category of violence which included Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia and the victims of the Trojan war. Clytemnestra herself compares her act to Agamemnon's, arguing to the chorus accusing her:

> νῦν μὲν δικάζεις ἐκ πόλεως φυγὴν ἐμοί,
> καὶ μῖσος ἀστῶν δημόθρους τ' ἔχειν ἀράς,
> οὐδὲν τότ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδ' ἐναντίον φέρων,
> ὃς οὐ προτιμῶν, ὡσπερεὶ βοτοῦ μόρον,
> …

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[216] Clytemnestra murders Agamemnon on an altar and Agamemnon's sack of Troy is connected to Iphigenia's sacrifice by the eagle-and-hare omen.

[217] 1362-1365. "**Chorus Member 8**: And are we really in this way going to prolong our lives and give way to these people who have defiled the house thoroughly and taken power? **Chorus Member 9**: No, it is unbearable, rather it is better to die. For that fate is more That's a milder fate than tyranny." **8:** ἦ καὶ βίον τείνοντες ὧδ' ὑπείξομεν/ δόμων καταισχυντῆρσι τοῖσδ' ἡγουμένοις; / **9:** ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀνεκτόν, ἀλλὰ κατθανεῖν κρατεῖ· / πεπαιτέρα γὰρ μοῖρα τῆς τυραννίδος.

ἔθυσεν αὐτοῦ παῖδα, φιλτάτην ἐμοὶ
ὠδῖν', ἐπῳδὸν Θρῃκίων ἀημάτων.
οὐ τοῦτον ἐκ γῆς τῆσδε χρῆν σ' ἀνδρηλατεῖν,
μιασμάτων ἄποιν'; … 1412-1415, 1417-1420

> Now you decree as a punishment for me exile from the city, the hatred of the community, and loud public curses; but you didn't show any opposition at all to this man at that time, when placing no special stock in her, as though the death of a beast…. he sacrificed his child, the dearest product of my labor, to enchant the Thracian winds. Did you not have an obligation to drive this man from this land in atonement for these pollutions?

Clytemnestra here compares the pollution of her own deed with that of Agamemnon's sacrifice, recalling the chorus' previous negative presentation of Agamemnon's actions at Aulis. When she accuses Agamemnon of destroying his house (1397-8 and 1523-9, discussed above, pg. 71) she argues that the public should be outraged at his polluting crime, reminding the audience of this public perspective.

By highlighting the community's outrage against Agamemnon, Paris, and Clytemnestra, Aeschylus hints at a public enthusiasm underlying the destruction of Agamemnon's and Paris' households. This public perspective relates to the image of house-razing which, as I discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the drama depicts for both houses. Parallel public condemnations of Paris and Agamemnon thus reinforce how the *kataskaphai* of Troy and Agamemnon's house correspond. Aeschylus' pairing emphasizes how the *dēmos* sees the threatening individual in combination with his *oikos,* which suffers collective punishment with him.

Conclusions

Understanding the significance of the image of *kataskaphē* as it reflects both *oikos*- and *polis*- values reveals how *Agamemnon*'s significant verbal and scenic emphasis on the house contributes to the drama's deeper themes. The presentation of the physical house in the play is both literal – the punishment of house-razing has a definite familial target – and also figurative, representing the household's members' dysfunction. By describing the destructions both of

Agamemnon's house and of Troy as *kataskaphai*, Aeschylus uses the image of the house to convey themes of individual, familial, and public import. The *kataskaphē* image draws attention to the structural integrity of the familial unit and what threatens it. The house-razing motif also highlights the position of the *oikos* vis-à-vis the community, as an object for public surveillance and condemnation.

Aeschylus' uses of *kataskaphē* intensify the imprecise parallel he constructs between the destruction of Agamemnon's house and the physical destruction of Troy. The correspondence of the two houses helps characterize the morality of the individuals Paris and Agamemnon in relation to their *oikoi*, emphasizing individual responsibility for familial destruction. The image of a house-razing despicts an entire household punished collectively on account of an individual's transgression.

The parallel of Paris and Agamemnon also emphasizes how Aeschylus promotes the public perspective on each individual and *oikos*. A house's destruction at Athens would not only have caused private pain, it also created a public spectacle. The concern the chorus, watchman, and herald express about Agamemnon's *oikos* reflects the Attic *demos'* concern about public ramifications for what happens inside the household. While Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia is primarily destructive to his family, it is bound up with the parallel decision to continue to sail to war with an army of Argive men. Likewise, the chorus express great concern for the propriety of Clytemnestra's rectorship of the *oikos* because of how this threatens the citizens. The chorus' unease highlights the potential for one family to destabilize other families and emit ripples into the wider community. Public criticism of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra is expressed as a curse, a sentence of exile from the community. Thus, when the chorus at the beginning of the *Choephoroi* use the image of the *kataskaphē* of Agamemnon's house, the audience can imagine

the rubble of the family's ancestral megaron as conveying the memorable spectacle of Agamemnon's family collapsing before a public audience in the previous play.

My reading of *Agamemnon* suggests further correspondences between individual members of the two families in Troy and Argos, a full discussion of which lies beyond the scope of this project.[218] These parallels generate insights about individual characters in *Agamemnon*, especially with respect to their roles towards their households. The pair of Paris and Agamemnon has already been discussed, but there are also Helen and Clytemnestra, Priam and Agamemnon, and Iphigenia and Cassandra.

For Agamemnon's and Priam's houses respectively, the sisters Clytemnestra and Helen are the most memorable sources of destruction; their parallel lurks behind much of *Agamemnon*. But they are not the ultimate source of the destruction. Male individuals in both families first transgress the bounds of an *oikos:* Agamemnon's harm to his household emerges more emphatically by comparison with the chorus' depiction of how Menelaus' *oikos* and Paris' own family suffer on account of Paris stealing Menelaus' wife. In order to convince Agamemnon to step upon the carpet, Clytemnestra suggests we compare the male guardians of these two *oikoi,* asking Agamemnon, "what do you think Priam [would have done]?" (τί δ' ἂν δοκεῖ σοι Πρίαμος, 935). That this question would lead Agamemnon to walk on the textiles suggests how Agamemnon mirrors his Trojan counterpart's fate in losing his *oikos*.

The related situations of Cassandra and Iphigenia express the experience of the destroyed *oikos*. Both young women are portrayed as symbols of a household's prosperity. Corresponding to the chorus' description of Iphigenia as the "glory of the house" (δόμων ἄγαλμα, 208), Agamemnon calls Cassandra the "choice flower of much wealth" (πολλῶν χρημάτων ἐξαίρετον /

[218] For instance, Lloyd-Jones 1962, 192-3, remarks on the parallel of their two houses.

ἄνθος, 954-5), reflecting on her previous place in Priam's household. Cassandra also reminds us of this as she bemoans her lost father and brothers (1305) and ominously remarks: "instead of my father's altar, what awaits me is a butcher's block, bloody with the warm sacrifice of me, cut down" (βωμοῦ πατρῴου δ' ἀντ' ἐπίξηνον μένει / θερμῷ κοπείσης φοίνιον προσφάγματι. 1277-8). The Trojan prophetess' remark strikingly rehearses the image of Iphigenia, whose father's altar turned into her butcher's block and whose sacrifice was called a "preliminary sacrifice" (προτελείοις, 65), also the meaning of προσφάγματι (1278). By delivering a reproach Iphigenia would also make, Cassandra emphasizes what Iphigenia suffered when Agamemnon injured their *oikos*, as he now finishes destroying Cassandra's family.[219]

In addition to offering a comparison for Iphigenia's experience, Cassandra brings Troy to Argos, and in so doing, brings the image of Troy's *kataskaphē* into close proximity to the destruction of Agamemnon's house. As Rehm 2002 points out, by killing Cassandra, Clytemnestra completes the demolition of Troy.[220] *Agamemnon* thus ties together not only the demise of Agamemnon and Cassandra, whom Clytemnestra kills together, but also the destructions of the two opposing *oikoi*. By causing the destruction of Agamemnon's *oikos* to coincide with that of Priam's the play creates a grand spectacle of family destruction.

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[219] Zeitlin 1965, 471 discusses this connection between Cassandra and Iphigenia: "The father's altar, however, is a still richer allusion, referring to another death at a father's altar (Iphigenia) and perhaps even to the tradition that Neoptolemus slew Priam on his own altar. But *prosphagma* is the most important word for it is another technical ritual term of a preliminary sacrifice."

[220] Rehm 2002, 83-4.

Chapter Two: Beating a Dead Family: Death of the *oikos* in *Antigone*

The conflict between Antigone and Creon in Sophocles' *Antigone* results in the demise of both their households, confirmed as the corpses pile up: Antigone's, Haemon's, and Jocasta's. The terms of this conflict have caused modern audiences to disagree drastically; perhaps most influentially, Hegel viewed the conflict as expressing a stalemate between the family and the state. While, as this interpretation suggests, Antigone's fierce loyalty to her *oikos* does indeed conflict with Creon's *polis*-centered values,[221] I will argue that Sophocles does not present Antigone's and Creon's encounter as an inevitable clash of two opposite characters or institutions. Rather, Sophocles emphasizes how the two characters conflict as each deals with an extreme circumstance: family extinction. Tiresias' criticism of Creon reflects the stumbling-block that the Labdacid family presents to the new leader: "… yield to the dead, do not goad the man who has been destroyed. For what strength is it to kill the dead again?" (… εἶκε τῷ θανόντι, μηδ' ὀλωλότα / κέντει· τίς ἀλκὴ τὸν θανόντ' ἐπικτανεῖν; 1029-1030). Tiresias exhorts Creon to see not only Polynices but the whole family in a different way. While Antigone considers her family dead, defunct; Creon, in his treatment of Polynices' burial, views the family as a continuing threat to the community.

The differences between how Antigone and Creon each view the Labdacid family emerge at the start of the play. Polynices and Eteocles have just slaughtered one another, making the

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[221] See Foley 2001 176-7, n. 15 for bibliography: Antigone has been criticized for ignoring the interests of the city both by characters inside the play and generations of critics. The views of Knox 1964, pp. 75-6 and 83 are typical. For exceptions, see Blundell 1989: 146, Lane and Lane 1986, Whitman 1951, 85-88 who sees Antigone as the ideal citizen, and Bennett and Tyrrell 1990, who think Antigone's words and acts reflect typical themes in public, democratic rhetoric.

issue of Polynices' burial central in the drama. Antigone's self-fulfilling belief, that she is connected to an already defunct *oikos,* provides a particularized basis for her moral reasoning in this play and especially for her argument prioritizing her brother over a hypothetical child or husband.

Sophocles does not undermine Antigone's evaluation of her family's position or question her tacit rejection to act as an *epiklēros*, a female who could continue her deceased father's *oikos*. But because Antigone's perspective on her family is self-fulfilling, by ignoring the role of *epiklēros* Sophocles' Antigone does indeed face an extinct family. Sophocles leaves room in the play to see Antigone's view as irrational or maddened.[222] However, I will suggest that Sophocles' main interest is to depict how an individual might behave in the circumstance of family extinction. The situation of the death of the *oikos* also creates a unique hurdle for the new ruler Creon, who does not exercise prudent restraint towards Antigone and Polynices in light of the spectacular ruin of the Labdacid family.

One way Sophocles suggests that Creon has misunderstood Antigone's and her family's position is through the fate that Creon meets at the play's end. Creon's last son Haemon and his wife Eurydice kill themselves and destroy Creon's own household. At this point Creon comes to understand the fragility of his own family and his dependence on it. As I will show, Creon's desperate situation at the end of the drama evokes Antigone's position earlier. By this

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[222] David Kovacs has pointed out to me (and argued in an unpublished paper) evidence that Sophocles means his audience to realize the gods are driving Antigone and her family to destruction by making her mad. It is possible that the gods drive Antigone to view her family in the extreme way that she does, although Sophocles does not draw attention to her view as mistaken. Kovacs suggests two indications of divine interference in Antigone's behavior: the dust storm accompanying Antigone when she buries her brother, causing her to be caught, and Creon's exclamation over the dead bodies, 1228-9, which, Kovacs suggests, addresses Antigone's maddened choice to kill herself.

correspondence Sophocles relates Antigone and Creon in the destruction of their respective *oikoi*. By personal familial suffering Creon learns where he erred as leader of the *polis*.

In this chapter I discuss several images the chorus use to describe the Labdacid *oikos* and show how these allow Antigone to interpret her father's *oikos* as already completely extinct, without the possibility of her acting as *epiklēros*. I will next demonstrate how Antigone's interpretation explains her behavior. Finally, I will address the attitude of Creon towards the extinct Labdacid *oikos* and the resulting demise of Creon's own *oikos* and dynasty.

1. Familial Demise in the Second Stasimon

The first major depiction of the destroyed Labdacid family – following Antigone's and Ismene's references to their familial woes in the drama's opening (1-17 and 49-57) – occurs in the first strophe and antistrophe of the second stasimon. Here the chorus develop a sensual image of the destroyed family of Oedipus (583-603). Their song follows the exit of Antigone and Ismene (581) who have just been condemned to death by Creon (575). The chorus emphasizes the finality of the family's extinction, although their language does not make it clear whether they view Antigone as capable of saving her family or not. I will show that the chorus' bleak picture offers support for Antigone's completely hopeless assessment. This is significant because Antigone's view of the play's circumstances is the basis for her behavior and shapes her tragic fate.

The chorus introduce the depiction of a physical house as an image of the destroyed family in the initial strophe. They describe a god shaking the physical house of the Labdacids:

> οἷς γὰρ ἂν σεισθῇ θεόθεν δόμος, ἄτας
> οὐδὲν ἐλλείπει γενεᾶς ἐπὶ πλῆθος ἕρπον· 584-5
>
> For those whose house is shaken up by a god, nothing of ruin is lacking which creeps over the whole multitude of the family.

House destruction in this passage signifies the family's curse and ruin, and its structural disintegration suggests the effects of familial destruction over multiple generations. More specifically, by suggesting a divine agent (θεόθεν 584) the chorus bring to mind the curse upon Laius and the Labdacids that follow.[223] The chorus' image of a house's destruction shares with the image of *kataskaphē* in *Agamemnon* a focus on structural insecurity.

The chorus' next image is one of natural forces which destroy the house:

ὥστε ποντίας
οἶδμα, δυσπνόοις ὅταν
Θρῄσσῃσιν ἔρεβος ὕφαλον ἐπιδράμῃ πνοαῖς,
κυλίνδει βυσσόθεν
κελαινὰν θῖνα καὶ δυσάνεμοι
στόνῳ βρέμουσιν ἀντιπλῆγες ἀκταί. 586-592

As the swell of the sea, when the darkness of the deep runs over the surface because of the violent Thracian winds, it turns up from the bottom black sand and the headlands, hurt by the winds and beaten by the waves, roar with a groan.

Both the sandy depths constantly upturned (κυλίνδει βυσσόθεν 589) and the beaten headlands (ἀκταί 592) convey the family's instability and so combine with the previous image of the shaken house. The winds and the stormy tides disrupt both the sea floor and headlands.[224] Unlike the image of the shaken house, the disruption of these natural powers is not so much one of tearing down as an upturning (of the sand) and perhaps covering (of the headlands). Oudemans-Lardinois 1987 connect the sand (θῖνα) which the sea picks up with the "dust" (κόνις 602, the reading of the manuscripts which Oudemans and Lardinois accept) which the chorus later describe as "hewing down" (κατ'… ἀμᾷ 601-2) the root of the Labdacid family in the following

[223] See Bryson-Bongie 1972; Coleman 1972, 12; and Lloyd-Jones 1971, 113. Easterling 1978, 142 cautions against viewing the chorus' meaning too narrowly and suggests that they may just be describing a familial "susceptibility to misfortune."

[224] It is significant that the chorus invert the power dynamic of their first stasimon (332-375), which described man's mastery over nature through agriculture and sailing.

antistrophe A. By extension it also suggests the dust which Antigone scatters over Polynices. The chorus' physical interpretation of the destruction of the Labdacid *oikos* thus relates to a significant image which describes this family in the play: dust and digging.

Antistrophe A reemphasizes the figures of Strophe A, bringing these images to bear more specifically on the Labdacid family, while venturing into more abstract images:

> ἀρχαῖα τὰ Λαβδακιδᾶν οἴκων ὁρῶμαι
> πήματα φθιτῶν ἐπὶ πήμασι πίπτοντ',
> οὐδ' ἀπαλλάσσει γενεὰν γένος, ἀλλ' ἐρείπει
> θεῶν τις, οὐδ' ἔχει λύσιν.
> Νῦν γὰρ ἐσχάτας ὑπὲρ
> ῥίζας ἐτέτατο φάος ἐν Οἰδίπου δόμοις,
> κατ' αὖ νιν φοινία
> θεῶν τῶν νερτέρων ἀμᾷ κονίς,[225]
> λόγου τ' ἄνοια καὶ φρενῶν Ἐρινύς. 594-603
>
> I see the ancient sufferings falling upon sufferings, of the dead house of the Labdacids, nor does generation release generation, but one of the gods throws [it] down, and it has no release. For just now a light of salvation had stretched over the last root of the house of Oedipus, bloody dust of the gods below brings it down, a senselessness of speech and Erinys of the mind.

Though it is debated which noun φθιτῶν modifies, in my translation the chorus first describe the *oikos* of the Labdacids as "dead" (φθιτῶν 595).[226] In this way the chorus' words support how

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[225] I have replaced κονίς for κόπις. Lloyd-Jones and Wilson accept the conjecture of Jortin, κοπίς, for the manuscripts' reading κονίς. I am inclined to accept the reading of the manuscripts, as I will later discuss, pg. 99.

[226] Lloyd-Jones and Wilson 1990a print Hermann's conjecture of φθιτῶν for φθιμένων. Lloyd-Jones 1957, 17 notes the possibility of φθιτῶν as modifying Λαβδακιδᾶν: "Adjectives and participles sometimes follow their nouns at no less a distance." However, he offers the objection: "but here the interposition of another noun in the genitive (οἴκων) complicates the problem." My interpretation overcomes this problem, since I take φθιτῶν with the more proximate οἴκων. The main objection which might be made to my translation is the unique collocation of "dead *oikos*." However the phrase's sense certainly fits the situation, where all the male Labdacids have died.
The relationships of πήματα and πήμασι as well as the three genitives Λαβδακιδᾶν, οἴκων and φθιτῶν have been much debated. Thus for instance, Jebb 1900 (and Griffith 1999, 224-5) takes Λαβδακιδᾶν and οἴκων as dependent on πήματα and φθιτῶν πήμασι, contriving two separate

Antigone construes her *oikos'* extinction, an event of finality for a family often used rhetorically for pathos.[227] In this interpretation, the Labdacid family, now extinct, is the source and location of generational suffering which has occurred frequently (πήματα … ἐπὶ πήμασι πίπτοντ' 595) from the distant past (ἀρχαῖα 594) up to the present moment, as indicated by the present tense the chorus use to describe their autopsy of the destruction (ὁρῶμαι 594). By juxtaposing the remote past and present, the chorus fail to give a precise assessment of the current status of the family and therefore allow Antigone opportunity to promote her own view in the play.

The description of "sufferings falling upon sufferings" (πήματα … ἐπὶ πήμασι πίπτοντ' 595) connects with both images of the preceding strophe, the repeated upheaval of the sea (586-92) and the demolition of a house (σεισθῇ θεόθεν δόμος 584). The next phrase supplies an agent for the previously impersonal event: "some god throws [it] down" (ἐρείπει θεῶν τις 596-7). This description further emphasizes the image of the destroyed house; the verb ἐρείπω most commonly means "throw down" and is extremely commonly used with regards to walls.[228] Thus by concentrating their vivid metaphors upon the *oikos* of Oedipus in this first half of the antistrophe, the chorus present the *oikos*-destruction as a spectacle.

The chorus' description of the destroyed *oikos* conveys a finality that Antigone seizes upon as she assesses her situation in the play. Another suggestion that the family's fate is decided is the strong intertextual relationship between the second stasimon in *Antigone* and that

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sets of sufferings for the living Labdacid *oikos* and the dead. On the other hand, Lloyd-Jones 1957, 16-17 takes πήμασι as an identical referent to πήματα (οἴκων and φθιτῶν both depending πήματα and Λαβδακιδᾶν depending on οἴκων), arguing that the most logical sense which we hope for in this line is of both πήματα being the same ones following on each other.

[227] I discuss the image of the extinct *oikos* in my introduction, pp. 30-4, and return to its image in *Antigone*, on page 98.

[228] LSJ s.v. ἐρείπω A.

of Aeschylus' *Septem* (720-791).[229] In addition to numerous individual phrases, the chorus in *Antigone* mirror the *Septem*'s image of a Labdacid family doomed by divinely sent *atē* (*Ant*. 583, 614, and 625; *Sept*. 742-71) which reaches back far into the past.[230] The "folly" (603) and "bloody dust" (601-2 which appear in the final lines of *Antigone* Antistrophe A are also suggested in *Septem*.[231]

Antigone's connection with *Septem,* which is concentrated especially in *Antigone's* second stasimon, suggests that Sophocles is drawing upon Aeschylus' interpretation of the Labdacid family in *Septem.* Of course, the dramatic action of *Antigone* picks up after that of *Septem*. The end of *Septem* emphasized the Labdacid's final destruction through numerous statements which characterized the doom of the family as finished, such as: "the *daimon* has conquered the two boys and *left off*" (δυοῖν κρατήσας ἔληξε δαίμων 959-60).[232] When the chorus evoke *Septem* and the way that play left the Labdacid family, they may suggest Antigone's

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[229] See also *Sept*. 677-719 and 875-1004. Those who comment on this relationship between these two plays include Easterling 1978, 142; Else 1975, 16; and Oudemans-Lardinois 1987, 138-9.

[230] Especially similar to the opening of *Antigone's* second stasimon, Antistrophe A is *Septem* 739-741: τίς ἄν σφε λούσειεν; ὦ / πόνοι δόμων νέοι παλαι-/ οῖσι συμμιγεῖς κακοῖς.

[231] In *Septem* also, folly and madness play a role in the destruction of the family (725, 750, and 781). Aeschylus' chorus also use the image of a "bloody root" (ῥίζαν αἱματόεσσαν, 755) and describe the family as destroyed "root and branch" (πρυμνόθεν, 1061), which both relate to the Sophoclean chorus' image of the ἐσχάτας ῥίζας (*Ant*. 599-600).

[232] Additional similar statements in *Septem* include: Ἀπόλλων … κραίνων (801-2); δαίμων … ἀναλοῖ (814-5); ἐξέπραξεν (840); ἐπέκρανεν (886); ἐτελεύτασαν (931). κῦμα Κωκυτοῦ λαχόν, (690); and ὀλομένων (703). Both Eteocles and the chorus also repeat vocabulary of "ending," *telos-,* in reference to the family's fate: τελεσφόροι (724), τελέσαι (724); τέλειαι (766), μὴ τελέσῃ (791); τελεία ἀρά (832-3); ἐτελεύτασαν (930); τελευτᾷ (936); τελευταῖαι (953) as well as the related πέπαυται (937). These are all gathered by Else 1975, 26-7. Else's argument is that *Antigone* modifies this attitude of *Septem* and that in *Antigone* the Labdacid doom is continuing to work in the case of Antigone. On the other hand, I suggest that the finality of destruction evoked by Sophocles' Aeschylean resonances is meant to apply in his play.

perspective on her situation: that at the drama's start she stands in the rubble of her completely destroyed family.

The chorus suggest a final family demise in another way: their last image in Antistrophe A is that of a root either cut down or covered over by bloody dust or a cleaver (599-603). These lines are very much debated in their text, metaphor, and meaning. The issue of greatest significance to my argument is the identification of the root in this image; I argue that ἐσχάτας ῥίζας (599-600) should refer to Polynices and Eteocles although generally it has been identified as Antigone and Ismene. Several independent pieces of evidence support this and bolster my interpretation that the chorus's image gives a basis for Antigone's view that the extinction of Oedipus' house is a precondition, not a threatened event, in Sophocles' drama.

The first issue is the identification of the root. The chorus describe how "just now (νῦν + pluperfect tense ἐτέτατο) a light had stretched over the last root of the house of Oedipus." Scholars nearly always identify ἐσχάτας ῥίζας as Antigone (and possibly also Ismene), no doubt because these girls have just exited, condemned to death, before the chorus begin to sing their second stasimon.[233] However, since the context of the play is the immediately previous mutual killing of Polynices and Eteocles, this event could fit just as well as the chorus' reference in time.

An important evidence for identifying the root with the son Polynices or both sons Eteocles and Polynices is that when ῥίζη is used in literature to refer to a person who can continue a family, it is consistently used of males, not females; seven examples in addition to

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[233] Thus Jebb 1900, 114: "The ἐσχάτη ῥίζα of the family is the last remaining means of propagating it. A light of hope was 'spread above' this 'last root,' – as sunshine above a plant, -- because it was hoped that the sisters would continue the race." Among the majority who identify the root with the girls are Goheen 1951, 60-1; Else 1975, 75; Winnington-Ingram 1980, Oudemans-Lardinois 1983, 136, and Griffith 1999, 225. The latter does parenthetically note: "(and their brothers too?)."

Antigone are found in Aeschylean plays, Sophocles' *Electra,* and Pindar.[234] In only one of these instances has there been an argument that the metaphor refers to a woman. This passage is of added importance to *Antigone*'s root-image since it comes in the second stasimon of Aeschylus' *Septem*, which, as discussed, influenced Sophocles in *Antigone,* especially in the second stasimon. My analysis of Aeschylus' passage will show that the person Aeschylus refers to with the root is not only more than likely male, but also the same person, Polynices, to whom I argue Sophocles' root-image refers.

> ἐγείνατο μὲν μόρον αὑτῷ,
> πατροκτόνον Οἰδιπόδαν,
> ὅστε ματρὸς ἁγνὰν
> σπείρας ἄρουραν,
> ἵν' ἐτράφη, ῥίζαν αἱματόεσσαν
> ἔτλα·… 750-5
>
> he [Laius] begat doom for himself, the father-slayer Oedipus, who sowed the field of his mother which was not to be touched, where he was bred, and suffered the bloody root.

In my translation it is easy to identify the "bloody root," ῥίζαν αἱματόεσσαν (754), with Polynices and Eteocles.[235] Hutchinson in his commentary objects to taking ἔτλα as governing ῥίζαν since he does not believe the noun can be a *nomen actionis*, that is, stand in for an

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[234] Aesch. *Ag*. 966: Clytemnestra refers to Agamemnon as a root (ῥίζης); Aesch. *Supp*. 105-6: πυθμήν, "root" or "stalk" is used metaphorically of generation of thought; Aesch. *Cho*. 260: Orestes refers to himself as last "stock" or "root" (πυθμήν); in *Cho.* 203-4 Electra states in hope "…but if there must be found salvation, a great stock (or "root") may come about from a small seed," εἰ δὲ χρὴ τυχεῖν σωτηρίας, / σμικροῦ γένοιτ' ἂν σπέρματος μέγας πυθμήν, and at 236 refers to Orestes as a "cried-over hope of a saving seed" δακρυτὸς ἐλπὶς σπέρματος σωτηρίου; Aesch. *Sept*. 754 refers to a "bloody root" (ῥίζαν αἱματόεσσαν) and is discussed below; Pind. *Ol.* 2.46 refers to Aenesidamus as the root (ῥίζην) which continued Polynices' line (43-7); Soph. *El.*765: Electra refers to Orestes as destroyed at the root (πρόρριζον), after she hears that he has died. A related metaphor is used at Soph. *El.* 419-24, where Chrysothemis describes in Clytemnestra's dream Agamemnon's staff generating sprouts.

[235] Torrance 2007, 116 interprets the syntax in this way, as does Sommerstein 2008, 231 in his translation: "…and suffered a bloodstained progeny."

action.[236] Weighed in comparison with the objections one should raise regarding other interpretations of these lines' syntax, I believe this one objection is minor, since ῥίζαν does imply an action: it suggests the consequences of begetting a child (i.e. "to take root" or "to make to grow" or "to beget").[237]

On the other hand, if σπείρας (753) is taken as the supplementary participle with ἔτλα (755), there are two possible ways to construe ῥίζαν: as an object, along with ἄρουραν, of σπείρας, or in apposition with ματρὸς … ἄρουραν.[238] In the former case, which numerous translations suggest but Hutchinson rejects, ῥίζαν would refer to the *offspring* of Jocasta. In the latter case, it would refer to Jocasta herself.[239] The sense of the latter interpretation breaks down when we consider that in this case Jocasta would be envisioned in close succession as plough-land and a root, a confusing contradiction of agricultural metaphors.[240] Further, Oedipus' sons are much more easily envisioned as "bloody." With the final support of the observation that all the other instances of the generative metaphor of the root are male, I believe this interpretation is convincing. In this case, Aeschylus' *Septem* offers an important parallel for the image of the root in reference to the Labdacid brothers, not the Antigone and Ismene.

The major implication of interpreting the chorus' root as Antigone and Ismene, as is usually done, is to frame them as holding hope for the continuation of Oedipus' family.

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[236] Hutchinson 1985, 167-8. An example of a *nomen actionis* with τλάω which Hutchinson accepts is Eur. *HF* 1184: φόνιον αἷμα τλάς.

[237] For instance, ῥίζαν seems to imply action to a similar extent as ὀϊστόν, "arrow" at *Il.* 5.395. Here governed by τλῆ, ὀϊστόν implies the action-consequence of the arrow: τλῆ δ' Ἀΐδης ἐν τοῖσι πελώριος ὠκὺν ὀϊστόν.

[238] Clarke 2001, 370-1, for instance, is one scholar who suggests the former interpretation of both nouns as objects of σπείρας.

[239] Griffith 1999, 225-6 identifies ῥίζαν as a reference to Jocasta's womb.

[240] Note that Hutchinson 1985, 168 is not satisfied with his own interpretation, since he suggests a change of text to ῥίζαις αἱματοέσσαις.

However, nowhere else in the play is it explicitly indicated that we must regard them in such an *epiklēros*-like role, though Foley 1993 and 2001 and Ormand 1999 argue for such an identification.[241] Foley points to lines 940-3 of a speech by Antigone as the main evidence for identifying Antigone with the epiklerate:[242]

> Λεύσσετε, Θήβης οἱ κοιρανίδαι,
> τὴν βασιλειδῶν μούνην λοιπήν,
> οἷα πρὸς οἵων ἀνδρῶν πάσχω,
> τὴν εὐσεβίαν σεβίσασα. 940-3
>
> See, members of the ruling house, the last remaining one [female] of the princes, see what sorts of thing I suffer at the hands of what sorts of men, I who honored *eusebia*.

Foley argues "[t]he Athenian audience would have had no obvious way of interpreting her emphasis that she is the last of her royal line and that Creon is preventing her marriage by his punishment other than through the Attic institution of the *epiklēros*."[243] Likewise Ormand, to interpret Antigone's status as *epiklēros,* points to her strong relationship to her paternal family, which "the endogamous model of marriage requires of an *epiklēros*" but which also, Ormand suggests, renders Antigone unwilling or unable to marry into another family (even to continue her own line).[244]

While an audience member might have supplied the *epiklēros* interpretration, it is unnecessary to introduce the epiklerate institution to explain Antigone's attachment to her natal

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[241] Foley 1993, 32 and 112; Foley 2001, 198, n. 89; and Ormand 1999, 92-98.
[242] Foley 1993, 32 also cites Antigone's description at 895-6: "being last I go down…" (ὧν λοισθία 'γὼ … κάτειμι…).
[243] Foley 1993, 112.
[244] Ormand 1999, 96. A form of marriage to which Ormand has frequent recourse is that of the epiklerate. For him, Electra (*Electra*), Antigone, and even Jocasta (*Oedipus Tyranus*) take on at least some features of the *epiklēros*. Although at times strained, this line of argument opens up the issue of the ambiguous relationship of women to their own patriline in many of these plays.

family and Sophocles resists offering this explanation for her situation.[245] In contrast, other plays such as Euripides' *Ion* or Sophocles' *Electra* do clearly suggest the contemporary epiklerate system.

Sophocles does not directly indicate an *epiklēros*-role for Antigone by showing her attachment to her family since this is the type of allegiance that would have been expected not only of an *epiklēros* but of any unmarried girl in Athens.[246] Furthermore, Creon is never accused in the play of bringing Oedipus' family to extinction. When Creon formally announces that Antigone and Haemon will not marry (569-75), there is no comment on the ramifications of this decision for the Labdacid *oikos*. Only at her final appearance on the way to her death will Antigone draw attention to being unmarried. The play's emphasis on how Antigone remains fixed in her unmarried state communicates not her refusal to continue her father's line, but the combined circumstances of Creon's decree and that fact that she believes her family is extinct. Antigone's interpretation of her situation, I argue, turns her into a dramatic symbol of her defunct natal family. Her references to her lost hopes of marriage and her desire to be joined with her family in death expose the exigencies of her familial situation rather than adverting to the fifth-century epiklerate institution.

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[245] Identifying Antigone as an *epiklēros* would have significant implications for the meaning of the drama (as Hölderlin's translation shows) so I do not believe we can make such an inference. For instance, how would such an interpretation affect Ismene? Are we to view her as an *epiklēros* to replace Antigone? Is Creon's line really so close to being drawn into the *oikos* of Oedipus through Haemon's and Antigone's marriage?

[246] Foley 2001, 175; 178; and 181 n. 30 remarks on the expected identification of an unmarried girl with her natal *oikos*. See Foley 181 n. 30 and Bremmer 1997, 93-9, who discusses the strong relationship between a sister and brother evidenced in Greek myth and literature, as well as comparative Eastern evidence. Foley points out that the brother "was often the family member most likely to defend a married woman's interests if she faced difficulties."

If the chorus' image of the root symbolizes the young men Polynices and Eteocles, this description coheres with the rest of the antistrophe to express the whole Labdacid family's demise as the immediate context of the play. The image of destroying a plant at its root emphasizes the organic unity of the family unit. The image of generative roots also implies the dependence of the family unit upon the male line. In this way, the root's destruction expresses the how Eteocles' and Polynices' deaths prevent their *oikos* from continuing. A similar image of the family's destruction is found in Aeschylus' *Septem*, where the chorus, in order to depict how the mutual destruction of the brothers has ruined the family, refer to Erinyes who "destroyed the *genos* of Oedipus 'from-the-base' or 'root and branch [πρυμνόθεν]'" (Οἰδιπόδα γένος ὠλέσατε πρυμνόθεν, 1055-6). In both *Antigone* and *Septem*, then, the deaths of the two sons seal the family's fate.

An example from fifth-century Attic oratory, which I discussed in my introduction, demonstrates the specific force and finality of the image of the extinct family. Andocides, the speaker, uses the figure of the root to depict the potential extinction of his family if the jury chose to execute him: "if you destroy me, there will be no remaining member of our *genos* for you, but it will be destroyed entirely, at the roots" (ἐάν με νυνὶ διαφθείρητε, οὐκ ἔστιν ὑμῖν ἔτι λοιπὸς τοῦ γένους τοῦ ἡμετέρου οὐδείς, ἀλλ' οἴχεται πᾶν πρόρριζον. 1.146). It is worth noting that Andocides elsewhere indicates he had a (well-) married sister (1.50); his depiction of the threat of extinction rests on the loss of his brother and himself.[247] As I discussed in the introduction, other speakers make similar appeals of pity for a family threatened by extinction.[248]

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[247] This sister was married by the year 415 to Callias of the tribe Pandionis. See Davies 1971, 30 and 253-4. Andocides clearly states that the family is extinct because his father and brother are dead, and he has no children.

[248] See pp. 30-34.

Identifying ῥίζας as the sons (or son) rather than daughters of Oedipus does not solve the question of what word should be read as the subject of the verb κατ'… ἀμᾷ (601-2), which most commonly means to "cut down," as in reaping. The manuscripts read κόνις "dust," which I prefer, but many (including Loyd-Jones and Wilson) have accepted Jortin's conjecture κόπις, "cleaver," because the combination of the roots (ῥίζας) and the verb κατ'… ἀμᾷ (601-2) suggests an agricultural metaphor.[249] The conjecture of κόπις has received criticism[250] while the strongest argument against the manuscript reading κόνις is that it creates a loose metaphor. However, given the pastiche of metaphors for the destruction of the house in the preceding strophe – tearing down, turning up, covering over—perhaps the loose combination of κόνις and κατ'… ἀμᾷ is not so worrisome.[251] Easterling and others have expressed confidence that Sophocles is capable of such a bold and mixed metaphor.[252] Even so, I will discuss the family imagery that each reading suggests, beginning with κόνις.

If κόνις is correct, it is a significant recurrence of the image of dust in the play, which before the second stasimon has already been mentioned previously at 247, 256, 409, 429, and also at 418 in the form of a "dust storm," σκῆπτον. The κόνις of the chorus' image cannot refer to the specific dust which Antigone sprinkled over Polynices' body, as Jebb suggests, if we take

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[249] Jebb 1900 (a change from his first edition); Easterling 1978, 148-149; Griffith 1999, 226; and Oudemans-Lardinois 1987 reject κόπις and accept κόνις. Lloyd-Jones 1957, 17-19 supports κόπις.

[250] See Easterling 1978, 148-149 who presents a good argument against κόπις.

[251] The meaning of κατ'… ἀμᾷ is likely "cut down" or "harvest," though a scholiast suggests "cover," which Griffith 1999, 226 does not accept. Also important may be the word order, which places the subject after the object and verb. The sense could be: "the roots have been destroyed (mowed down), and now burial dust smothers them," though the actual expression is that the dust has destroyed the roots.

[252] See Easterling 1978, 146 who mentions this instinct as expressed quite early by Hermann and Tyrrell 1888, 139-40 (in his review of Jebb's first edition of *Antigone),* both in reaction to Jortin's conjecture.

the root to symbolize Polynices and Eteocles, rather than the sisters.[253] Given that the root describes not the girls but the sons, the image of "the bloody dust of the gods below" (φοινία θεῶν τῶν νερτέρων … κόνις, 601-2) could refer to the burial dust which has been given to the violently slain Polynices and Eteocles who also join the fate of their father Oedipus, their grandfather Laius, and the rest of the male Labdacid line. Such an image of a family completely buried down to the last male heir connects to Antigone's later description of the pit where Creon confines her as the tomb and dwelling place of her deceased family (891-4).

The alternative conjecture κόπις presents an even more explicitly agricultural image, although, as Easterling 1978 points out, a κόπις is not usually so much an agricultural knife, as a weapon for fighting.[254] A similar combination of divine destruction with agricultural imagery can be found in *Agamemnon* 525-6, where Zeus destroys Troy (in a *kataskaphē*) with a mattock (μακέλλῃ 525), "with which the plain has been worked over" (τῇ κατείργασται πέδον. 525-6).[255] Sophocles' Fragment 727 (attributed to *Chryses*) and Aristophanes' *Birds* 1240 also present Zeus' *makella* as an instrument of *kataskaphē* for a city or population (though the synonymous verb ἀναστρέφω is used for κατασκάπτω).[256] By highlighting the destructive connotations of agricultural digging of some sort, the reading of κόπις would contribute more clearly to the image of destructive digging and ploughing *Antigone* develops (discussed later, pp. 106-111).

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[253] Jebb 1900, 113 summarizes his interpretation of the antistrophe in this way: "She, too – the last hope of the race—is now to die, –for a handful of blood-stained dust (i.e., for a slight, yet obligatory, act of piety towards her slain brother – and for those rash words to Creon, – the expression of her frenzied resolve." Oudemans-Lardinois 1987, 137 identifies the dust here with the dust Antigone lays on Polynices.

[254] Easterling 1978, 148.

[255] The messenger also describes the "seed of the whole land" as destroyed, σπέρμα πάσης ἐξαπόλλυται χθονός 528. This image is discussed in Chapter One, pp. 59-60.

[256] Both Easterling 1978, 149 and Connor 1985, 85 n. 17 refer to these passages. The Sophocles fragment is cited in by a scholiast commenting on Aristophanes' play.

This image of the destructive cleaver in the hands of a divine agents of the netherworld (θεῶν τῶν νερτέρων) would more closely align with the appositive φρενῶν Ἐρινύς in the next line (603), which refers to a chthonic avenging deity.[257]

With either reading, κόνις or κόπις, the chorus' agricultural image of destruction contributes to how Sophocles develops an imagery of destructive actions related to ploughing and digging. These relate to Antigone's death underground and also the location of her deceased, destroyed family who is housed under the ground. As I will discuss in the next section, as she approaches her pit, Antigone's vocabulary enlarges the way the play associates digging with destruction in order to characterize the shared fate of Antigone and her family.

The final line in Antistrophe A describes a "senselessness of speech and Erinys of the mind" (λόγου τ' ἄνοια καὶ φρενῶν Ἐρινύς 603) which should be understood in apposition with the κόνις or κόπις.[258] Jebb and Griffith suggest that the Erinys must refer to either Antigone's or Creon's actions, or to both.[259] Most often, the Erinys is identified with Antigone. This interpretation has caused consternation for those, like Müller, who do not wish to see Antigone identified with her "cursed" family.[260] However, if the destruction of the root refers to the destruction of the family that took place just before the play, and not to the condemnation of

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[257] Winnington-Ingram 1980, 205-216 discusses Furies in Sophocles, and, 208, describes them as chthonic. Note, however, Winnington-Ingram's hesitance regarding the manuscript reading of φρενῶν Ἐρινύς, discussed below.

[258] Griffith 1999, 226. However, Long 1974, 213-214 has challenged the view that the two must be viewed in apposition. Winnington-Ingram 1980, 168 n. 46 finds the phrase φρενῶν Ἐρινύς questionable in Sophocles' text, because it suggests an over "psychologized" concept of the Aeschylean Erinys. I wonder however, whether Winnington-Ingram would object if the Erinys were not identified with a person, Antigone, but more the family generally.

[259] Jebb 1900, 115 and Griffith 1999, 226.

[260] Müller 1967, 137. See discussion of Müller by Else 1975, 18 and Oudemans-Lardinois 1987, 136.

Antigone and Ismene in the previous scene, this Erinys and folly must be understood as a more general curse or plague upon the family. Such an idea of a familial Erinys is quite Aeschylean and therefore consistent with the Aeschylean tone of the whole second stasimon.[261] In *Septem* Aeschylus depicts Oedipus' curse generally as an Erinys (70, 623, 699-70, 792, 886-7, 977, and 988). Winnington-Ingram notes, "it is in the light of the *Oresteia* that we must view the second stasimon of *Antigone*, the role played in it by Zeus and an Erinys."[262] The most recent "senselessness" and "Erinys of wits," in this interpretation, would be the violent dispute of Eteocles and Polynices, brothers cursed by their father.

I have shown that in describing the Labdacid family's "last root" (ἐσχάτας ῥίζας 599-600) the chorus emphasize the significance of Eteocles and Polynices: the brothers' mutual destruction has dashed the for continuing the Labdacid family. In my reading of Strophe A and Antistrophe A, the chorus do not highlight Antigone's and Ismene's current crisis in the play as decisive for the fate of the family, but primarily look back to the brothers. Admittedly a fifth-century audience might supply the idea that Antigone, as an *epiklēros,* would be able to continue Oedipus' household. Nonetheless, the chorus' imagery of the "last root" conveys a finality which does not encourage the audience to hope for the family's future through the living sisters. My interpretation of the chorus' image in the second stasimon is new in these respects, and I will argue that this insight suggests a reading of the play that reflects Antigone's perspective on her family extinction.

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[261] Oudemans-Lardinois 1987, 138-9 and Winnington-Ingram 1980, 119 on the Aeschylean notes of the second stasimon and 205-216 on Aeschylean Erinyes in Sophocles.
[262] Winnington-Ingram 1980, 119.

2. Antigone's Characterization: Oedipus' Defunct *oikos*

The chorus leave room for Antigone's desperate point of view on her family through their depiction of familial destruction in the second stasimon. As I will show, Antigone's perspective is that her family is extinct and that she cannot continue it through her marriage to Haemon. This belief contextualizes her behavior and moral reasoning throughout the play. It especially illuminates her reasoning in her final speech where Antigone asserts the priority of her brother (891-928), which I first address. Antigone's view of her family as extinct makes sense of the famously confusing argument when she addresses the chorus for the last time before she dies. Here, Antigone explains that she would not contradict the law of the *polis* to bury a hypothetical husband or child, as she did for her brother:

> οὐ γάρ ποτ' οὔτ' ἂν εἰ τέκν' ὤν μήτηρ ἔφυν
> οὔτ' εἰ πόσις μοι κατθανὼν ἐτήκετο,
> βίᾳ πολιτῶν τόνδ' ἂν ᾐρόμην πόνον.
> …
> πόσις μὲν ἄν μοι κατθανόντος ἄλλος ἦν,
> καὶ παῖς ἀπ' ἄλλου φωτός, εἰ τοῦδ' ἤμπλακον·
> μητρὸς δ' ἐν Ἅιδου καὶ πατρὸς κεκευθότοιν
> οὐκ ἔστ' ἀδελφὸς ὅστις ἂν βλάστοι ποτέ. 905-7, 909-12
>
> For neither if my children or husband died and were wasting away would I take up such a labor against the will of the citizens. … For if my husband were dead there would be another one, and a child from another man, if I had lost this one. But since my mother and father have been laid in Hades, there is no brother who could spring forth ever.

Criticism of this passage has focused on Antigone's inconsistent moral reasoning because she suggests that she would apply unequally the "unwritten laws" (ἄγραπτα … νόμιμα, 454-5) which she expounded earlier in the play. Ancient and earlier modern critics have judged Antigone inconsistent, sophistic, or lacking emotion in the passage and even have cast doubt upon the text itself.[263]

[263] See Neuberg 1990, 54-61 for an overview of readers who have found Antigone inconsistent.

I can resolve some of the passage's perceived inconsistency by looking to the particular situation of family-extinction that Antigone envisions in the play. Recently there has been increased interest in explaining how the passage is consistent with Antigone's moral stance in the play. One suggestion has been that Sophocles points to Antigone's negative view of marriage as an institution.[264] However, nowhere in the play does Antigone reject marriage *per se* and she receives no criticism because she gives up the opportunity to marry as a consequence of her decision to bury Polynices.[265] As I have shown also, the chorus' description of the Labdacid family's situation does not undermine Antigone's interpretation of the household as extinct.

Neuberg 1990 is correct, I believe, in suggesting we focus on the situation Antigone faces. Neuberg views Antigone (and all Sophocles' characters) primarily as "the loc[us] of social stances and relationships, brought into relief… by the socially problematic nature of [her] situation."[266] As the play develops these family problems, Antigone adapts her explanations for her burial based on her differing audiences (Ismene, Creon, and the chorus). Using a similar angle to Neuberg's, but paying greater attention to Antigone's individual psychology, Foley 2001 argues that Antigone's moral reasoning from how she varies her argument. The unique context and situation which Antigone encounters, Foley emphasizes, are keys to characterizing

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[264] Antigone's name emphasizes her unmarried state, which becomes emphasized in the latter part of the play. See Foley 2001, 175 n. 11 who summarizes the scholars characterizing Antigone as opposed to marriage. Murnaghan 1986 argues that in her final speech Antigone tries to justify her choice by contrasting blood-ties with ties of marriage which she depicts as artificial, replaceable human constructs. Neuberg 1990, 69-76 also sees this as the comparison Antigone emphasizes after Haemon's existence is introduced (568) in the play.

[265] Foley 2001, 175 and Neuberg 1990, 75, who argues that Creon forces Antigone to choose between marriage- and blood-ties. Antigone, to Neuberg, makes the choice, but is forced into it.

[266] Neuberg 1990, 66.

Antigone's moral wrestling.[267] Foley focuses predominantly on Antigone's moral agency as a female who must act outside the bounds of normal female behavior because of an irregular familial situation.

Oikos extinction is an exceptional circumstance (which Foley does not herself discuss) that explains why Antigone prioritizes her brother in her final speech. Polynices and Eteocles were critical to continuing Antigone's *oikos,* an assessment that the chorus' root image emphasized in the second stasimon, as I argued. Antigone points clearly to the concern of extinction when she compares a husband or child with a brother, whom she places in the same class as mother or father: it is because her parents are deceased (911) that her brother was so important. Evoking the chorus' vegetative image of the family, Antigone describes the replacement brother who will never "spring forth" (βλάστοι 912). At the point in the drama when Antigone gives this speech, Creon has called off her marriage to Haemon, so the possibility that she could through this marriage act as an *epiklēros* is gone. However, as I will show, Antigone never envisions herself in this capacity. Rather, Antigone's strong connection to a defunct *oikos* provides a particularized basis for her moral reasoning here and throughout this play.

In the same speech Antigone also deploys several figures that develop the image of the destroyed family: twice she uses the vocabulary of *kataskaphē* (891-2 and 920), just before and after her argument for burying her brother (905-915). I will argue that this image, which Antigone uses to describe her and her family's tomb, also suggests the destruction of the Labdacid household. When she describes her family's misery as τριπόλιστον (859), most literally

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[267] Bryson-Bongie 1972 considers how *Antigone* characterizes Antigone as a member of a doomed family who is under the curse of the Labdacids from the opening of the play. This is a significant contribution because there is a sense in many interpretations of this play that the curse somehow does not affect Antigone directly. Müller 1967 is a drastic example of this.

translated "thrice plowed up," Antigone emphasizes a related image: both use digging and plowing to convey the family's destruction. Such vocabulary is especially significant in a play which, as Gibbons 2003 points out, is full of the vocabulary and wordplay of digging and burial, and in which the question of what should be buried and what left unburied is centrally at stake: principally, Polynices should be buried, and Antigone should not.[268]

Antigone first refers to *kataskaphē* as she opens her final speech to Creon with a tricolon crescendo:

> Ὦ τύμβος, ὦ νυμφεῖον, ὦ κατασκαφὴς
> οἴκησις αἰείφρουρος, οἷ πορεύομαι
> πρὸς τοὺς ἐμαυτῆς, ὧν ἀριθμὸν ἐν νεκροῖς
> πλεῖστον δέδεκται Φερσέφασσ' ὀλωλότων,
> ὧν λοισθία 'γὼ καὶ κάκιστα δὴ μακρῷ
> κάτειμι, πρίν μοι μοῖραν ἐξήκειν βίου. 891-6
>
> Oh tomb, oh bridal chamber, oh "dug-down" dwelling, watching forever, where I approach towards my own ones, a great number of whom, perished, Persephone has received among the corpses, of whom I go down as the last and most wretchedly by far, before my portion of life ran out.

The tricolon culminates in the phrase κατασκαφὴς οἴκησις (891-2); κατασκαφὴς is here an adjective modifying οἴκησις and is the only occurrence of this adjective we have. It is generally translated most literally as "deep-dug," or along these lines, although Griffith 1999 suggests both this and "destructive."[269] Griffith's note seems to suggest the more specific meaning indicated on analogy with the verb-form κατασκάπτω or noun-form *kataskaphē*, which almost always refers to the punitive destruction of a family's house. Both the literal and more specific meaning have significance in this passage. Certainly, a reference to the fact that Antigone's new dwelling has been cut out of the earth makes sense since she is headed to the pit in which Creon has ordered

[268] Gibbons 2003, 46.
[269] Griffith 1999, 276 n. 891-2.

her to be interred. However, κατασκαφὴς could at the same time convey the more specific family-related experience of a house's razing which Aeschylus used in reference to Agamemnon's household.

Reading κατασκαφὴς οἴκησις as a more specific reference to the destruction of a family's house is warranted given both Antigone's particular collocation of the adjective and οἴκησις, "house," or "dwelling place," and the fact that Antigone immediately follows her description by addressing the family members, already buried, whom she will meet: father (898), mother (898-9), brother Eteocles (899), and perhaps Polynices (902-3), whom she addresses directly just after the others.

A more specific meaning of κατασκαφὴς as razing is accentuated by Antigone's additional reference to *kataskaphē* twenty lines later, near the end of her speech: "thus abandoned of *philoi,* ill-fated*,* I go living to the κατασκαφάς of the dead." (ἀλλ' ὧδ' ἔρημος πρὸς φίλων ἡ δύσμορος / ζῶσ' εἰς θανόντων ἔρχομαι κατασκαφάς 919-20). Most translations of this phrase translate θανόντων … κατασκαφάς as "the cave or cavern of the dead." This is also what the LSJ (s.v. κατασκαφή II) suggests. But this entry refers to only three instances of such a meaning of *kataskaphē*: this same passage in *Antigone* and two uses in the final scene of Aeschylus' *Septem* (1013 and 1042). That scene has been judged by a consensus of scholars to be spurious.[270] Since a second author seems to have added new material to connect a later performance of Aeschylus' play to Sophocles' *Antigone*, his use of the term would reflect how he understood the term. Thus, the use of the word *kataskaphē* to mean "burial place" or just a "dug- / hollowed- out place" is attested elsewhere only in a later interpolation which reflects one interpretation of *Antigone's* usage. It seems very possible then that Sophocles uses *kataskaphē* to

[270] For instance, see Dawe 1967, 16-28; Sommerstein 1996; Torrance 2007, 19-20; and Barrett 2007.

convey the more specific meaning of *oikos*-destruction, but that a later reader caught only the literal meaning.

Antigone describes her family's destruction in terms of ploughing when she calls her family's misery τριπόλιστον (859), "thrice plowed up:"

> Ἔψαυσας ἀλγει-
> νοτάτας ἐμοὶ μερίμνας,
> πατρὸς τριπόλιστου οἶτου
> τοῦ τε πρόπαντος
> ἀμετέρου πότμου
> κλεινοῖς Λαβδακίδαισιν. 857-860
>
> You have touched upon the most painful worry of mine, the three times ploughed up doom of my father and the whole fate for us, the noble Labdacids.

Because translators often do not render the agricultural figure in τριπόλιστου, it frequently has gone unnoticed how this term contributes to the digging imagery of the family's physical dissolution. In a discussion of his own translation, Gibbons 2003 notes that three is the number of generations of Oedipus' *oikos* which have been cursed (Laius and Jocasta, Oedipus, and his children); this further suggests we should interpret the word's meaning literally.[271] The combination of plowing- and destruction- imagery is found in *Agamemnon*, where the herald combines the image of the destruction (*kataskaphē*) of Troy with that of plowing up the city: "...having razed Troy with the mattock of Zeus the bringer of justice, with which the plain has been worked over" (Τροίαν κατασκάψαντα τοῦ δικηφόρου / Διὸς μακέλλῃ, τῇ κατείργασται πέδον. 525-6). Thus Antigone's adjective τριπόλιστου is particularly apt for the type of situation she describes.

Within *Antigone* there are two other similar uses of plowing as an image of destruction or wearing away; both refer to the image of a female as the object of plowing. The first is when

[271] Gibbons 2003, 44-47.

Creon bluntly tells Haemon, in front of both Antigone and Ismene, that "there are other wives fit for sowing" (Ἀρώσιμοι … χἀτέρων εἰσὶν γύαι. 569)." Creon uses the same sowing metaphor as Attic marriage contracts, but his callous statement frames this figure as distinctly hostile.[272] The second example comes in the chorus' opening of their first stasimon, the so-called "Ode to Man," where they describe man's achievement in learning to plow and cultivate the earth:

> … θεῶν
> τε τὰν ὑπερτάταν, Γᾶν
> ἄφθιτον, ἀκαμάταν, ἀποτρύεται,
> ἰλλομένων ἀρότρων ἔτος εἰς ἔτος,
> ἱππείῳ γένει πολεύων. 336-40
>
> he wears away the eldest, the imperishable Earth, inexhaustible, as his ploughs go back and forth, year after year, turning up the soil with the race of horses [mules].

While the chorus here present ploughing, along with sailing (333-6) and animal domestication (347-52), as triumphs for mankind, they also indicate that these achievements have a negative significance.[273] Thus, in depicting the farmer's ploughing the chorus emphasize a wearing, incessant motion that hurts the "inexhaustible earth."[274] The negative connotations of this action of ploughing, and of Creon's sowing metaphor, provide a deeper resonance for Antigone's word τριπόλιστου.

Τριπόλιστου also reverberates with Aeschylean imagery, evoking the image of the city-destroying "three-crested wave" (κῦμα …τρίχαλον 758-60) in *Septem,* which the chorus

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[272] The metaphor of male ploughing and planting is common, eg. Aesch. *Eum*. 658-61 and Soph. *OT* 1256, 1485, and 1487. Men. *Dysk*. 842-43 offers the marriage formula in which a woman is given "for sowing legitimate children. For further references, see Rehm 1994, 181 n. 7. On the image of female as furrow, see the discussion of duBois 1988, 65-78.

[273] Oudemans-Lardinois 1987, 126-31. They write, 126, "That instituting civilization by imposing order on nature is a dangerous use of power, always on the verge of turning transcendence to excess, is not explicitly stated in the stasimon, but the hints are too numerous to overlook."

[274] Barié 1971-4, 28 suggests that this expresses the violation of the earth goddess. See Clarke 2001, 371 on this passage too.

compared (in their second stasimon) to the ruin of the house of the Labdacids. Sophocles' chorus adapt Aeschylus' destructive sea-image (586-92), but Sophocles makes Antigone describe the element of thrice-repeated destruction, with τριπόλιστου.[275] The ploughing metaphor of τριπόλιστου relates in further ways to the earlier imagery of *Antigone'*s second stasimon: first, it connects to the chorus' image of the destroyed root (599-600). In turn, the root image reiterates the destructive imagery of the wind and sea figure in the strophe of the same stasimon. Goheen and Oudemans-Lardinois suggest that the sea's sediment (89 and 91) also prefigures the later image of dust which destroys the root (if we accept κόνις). [276] Furthermore, the chorus' second stasimon depicts nature overcoming man, reversing the power relationship of man-over-nature from the first stasimon. This reversal exposes negative connotations present in the images of civilization in the first stasimon, including the image of ploughing.[277]

The repeated figure of digging and ploughing in *Antigone* nearly always expresses destruction. Especially as she approaches her "dug-down dwelling (κατασκαφὴς / οἴκησις, 891-2) Antigone exploits the nexus of digging-, ploughing-, and destruction imagery. When she describes the pit in which she will be interred as a familial *kataskaphē* in her final speech to Creon (920), Antigone emphasizes the spectacle of her family's destruction, and links their situation to her own approaching death through the image of destructive digging. Antigone draws attention to how she becomes a symbol of the family and its destruction.

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[275] Else 1975, 17-18.
[276] Goheen 1951, 61 and Oudeman-Lardinois 1987, 136.
[277] Oudemans-Lardinois 1987, 133-4.

3. **Antigone as Last of the Labdacids**

In addition to these descriptions of her battered *oikos*, Antigone most clearly expresses her view of her family by the way she talks about herself. Sophocles develops Antigone's identity as a family member who, since she is powerless (or chooses to be) to continue the household, becomes a symbol of its death. Antigone's sustained affinity to death and to her dead family members is a strong indication that she views the Labdacid *oikos* as extinct from the beginning of the play.

Antigone's attraction to death reflects a combination of circumstances: first, she is primarily attached to her natal family – engaged but not yet married to Haemon – and second, at least from her perspective, Antigone's family is defunct and she is unable to continue it. Throughout the play Antigone emphasizes relationships of *philia*, the attachment which characterizes familial relationships. This is especially marked in contrast to Creon, who criticizes the individual who prioritizes a *philos* over his *polis* (182-3).[278] As Jones 1968 and Else 1967 emphasize, however, Antigone's concept of *philia* is not only an emotion which one could translate as "love." Rather *philia* for Antigone expresses natural bonds of kinship, an almost organic connection.[279] This is most evident in the way Antigone speaks about her situation. She does not primarily emphasize love towards her family-members nor does she express the weight of duty towards her family owing to social expectations for her as an *oikos*-member. Instead

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[278] καὶ μείζον' ὅστις ἀντὶ τῆς αὑτοῦ πάτρας / φίλον νομίζει, τοῦτον οὐδαμοῦ λέγω. Knox 1964, 80-97; Blundell 1989, 106-30; and Nussbaum 1986, 51-87. Blundell 1989, 118, notes, highlighting that Creon and Antigone define the same categories *philos* and *echthros* differently: "for him [Creon] *philoi* are made not born."

[279] Jones 1962, 58; Else 1967, 349: "*philia* is not 'friendship' or 'love' or any other feeling, but the objective state of being *philoi*, 'dear ones' by virtue of blood ties."

Antigone expresses her connection to her household as at the core of her being and what impels her willingly to accept death.

Antigone expresses closeness to death with insistence. This attraction, due to the status of her dead family members, portends that Antigone will join her family's destruction. In her initial response to Creon's accusation, Antigone explains that death is certainly not her greatest fear:

> …θανουμένη γὰρ ἐξῄδη —τί δ' οὔ; —
> κεἰ μὴ σὺ προὐκήρυξας. εἰ δὲ τοῦ χρόνου
> πρόσθεν θανοῦμαι, κέρδος αὔτ' ἐγὼ λέγω·
> ὅστις γὰρ ἐν πολλοῖσιν ὡς ἐγὼ κακοῖς
> ζῇ, πῶς ὅδ' οὐχὶ κατθανὼν κέρδος φέρει; 460-4
>
> For I knew I would die – how could it not be so? – even if you had not made your edict. But if I die before my time, I call it a gain. For whoever lives as I do amid many evils, how does he not gain a profit if he dies?

Antigone explains to Creon not only that eventual death is inevitable, but explains that she accepts death more easily because she is conditioned by experiencing so many familial evils πολλοῖσιν … κακοῖς, 463). Antigone draws attention to these circumstances at the very opening of the play when she stresses to Ismene that there is no torment which they had not encountered because they are children of Oedipus:

> ἆρ' οἶσθ' ὅ τι Ζεὺς τῶν ἀπ' Οἰδίπου κακῶν --
> ἆ, ποῖον οὐχὶ νῷν ἔτι ζώσαιν τελεῖ;
> Οὐδὲν γὰρ οὔτ' ἀλγεινὸν οὔτ' †ἄτης ἄτερ†
> οὔτ' αἰσχρὸν οὔτ' ἄτιμόν ἐσθ', ὁποῖον οὐ
> τῶν σῶν τε κἀμῶν οὐκ ὄπωπ' ἐγὼ κακῶν. 2-6
>
> Do you know of any evils from the source of Oedipus, of the sort which Zeus is not bringing to pass for us two who are still living? For there is nothing, neither pain, nor [anything] without doom, nor shame, nor disgrace which I have not seen among our evils, yours and mine.

Even at the very start of the play Antigone describes herself as having experienced complete suffering at such a level as will explain why she later counts death a "gain" (κέρδος, 462 and

464). In her opening statement, Antigone also draws attention to the paradox in sharing the suffering of her dead family members, "while yet living" (νῷν ἔτι ζώσαιν 3). Antigone repeats this comment when, in a final debate with Creon, she addresses her dead brother Polynices, accusing him because, "by dying you killed me, who am still living" (θανὼν ἔτ᾽ οὖσαν κατήναρές με 871).

It seems clear that Antigone's dead family members are the source of Antigone's attraction to death. I suggest that the power these dead kin exert over Antigone suggests how she views herself as separated not just from her kin, but from her household, which is no longer in the living realm, but beneath the ground. During her confrontation with Creon, Antigone comments to her sister Ismene,

> …· σὺ μὲν ζῇς, ἡ δ᾽ ἐμὴ ψυχὴ πάλαι
> τέθνηκεν, ὥστε τοῖς θανοῦσιν ὠφελεῖν. 559-60
>
> …You live, but my soul has died long ago so that [with the result that] it is of service to the dead.

Many scholars translate the construction ὥστε + the infinitive ὠφελεῖν in line 560 as a purpose clause, with the implication that Antigone confirmed her own death (thereby her "soul died") when she chose to serve Polynices by burying him in contravention of Creon's edict.[280] However, ὥστε + infinitive regularly expresses, of course, natural result.[281] I suggest that an assumption that a purpose clause creates a better meaning here has led readers to misinterpret the proper meaning and natural syntax of these lines. The death of Antigone's soul occurred "long ago" (πάλαι 559) with the ruin of her family and shapes her position *vis-à-vis* this *oikos*.

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[280] For instance, Gibbons 2003, 78. Griffith 1999, 215 also suggests this interpretation. ὥστε + the infinitive may express intended result, Smyth § 2267, "especially after a verb of effecting, as ποιῶ, διαπράττομαι, etc."

[281] Smyth § 2260.

Antigone's situation of familial loss, which she has not chosen, has the natural result that she sees her identity as one in relation to those who are deceased.

Since I propose that Antigone sees herself as unable to continue her father's *oikos*, it is necessary to raise the question of whether it is appropriate to view Antigone as an *epiklēros*.[282] I have already argued (pp. 94-6) that the play does not compel us to see her in this way and that the chorus' description of the Labdacid family is ambiguous, allowing Antigone to dismiss this possibility. Projecting the contemporary legal position of *epiklēros* on Antigone is problematic because it would have drastic implications for a scenario which Sophocles never suggests. For instance, are we to suppose that Haemon will be adopted into Oedipus' family and that King Creon is merely an intermediate placeholder? Is Ismene also a potential *epiklēros?* When Creon declares Haemon's and Antigone's engagement off (569-575), there is no indication of remorse for the family of Oedipus, but only for Haemon (which Ismene expresses at 570, 572, and 574). Since the drama nowhere identifies Antigone as an *epiklēros*, I suggest that Sophocles wants to focus on Antigone's perspective: she appears to reject the idea that her family can continue.

If Antigone will not play the *epiklēros*, then because she is female Antigone as a female is in a unique position: she is a living member of a dead family. This is a poignant dramatic construction on Sophocles' part, as Antigone becomes frozen in this state through Creon's edict. Antigone does not reject a marriage to Haemon but it is Creon who forbids this from

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[282] There is also a debate about whether the epiklerate system was meant to provide for the care of the orphaned daughter or for the continuation of her natal *oikos*. Schaps 1979, 40-41 argues for the former, but there have been numerous objections to this, including Katz 1992, 700; Todd 1993, 230; and Foley 2001 68-70. Foley and Ormand 1999 (92-98) who are the main proponents of identifying Antigone as an *epiklēros*, see her as a potential continuator of her father's *oikos*, which is what I find problematic because it lacks basis in the drama itself. Viewing her engagement to Haemon as a strategy to take care of the orphaned Antigone would is not problematic in the same way, but it does not have same great implications for the interpretation of the drama.

happening.[283] A key basis for Antigone's choices to bury her brother and to stand by her action is her identification with a family that is dead from the beginning of the play. Creon's edict only makes a further public spectacle of this situation and places Antigone in personal jeopardy.

It is important to distinguish between Antigone's view of her own family and her prospect in Haemon's household. Antigone's connection to her natal family does not entail opposition *in principle* to a marriage. Such is the suggestion of Murnaghan 1986 and Neuberg 1990 who argue that Antigone's loyalty to her natal family causes Antigone to prioritize her natal family over a household she marries into, and, further, that Antigone expresses a preference for the completely "natural" bonds of blood-relations over the institutional bonds of marriage, placing *physis* over the human *nomos* that directs marriages.[284] Antigone's final speech characterizes her specific position as a remaining member of an extinct family and describes why she, an unmarried woman, has taken such a public position.[285] Not only is Antigone's family in crisis, a familiar context in tragedy for women "acting out," but the depiction of Antigone's family's prior extinction heightens the exceptional circumstance even further. Antigone then does not embody a priority of natural bonds over institutional ones. Rather, in the wake of the extinction of her natal family and as a virgin having not yet acquired a new family through marriage, she becomes an emblem of that extinct family.

It is the dramatist's choice to make Antigone a living symbol of her family by designing Antigone's exceptional situation: Sophocles combines her family's extinction with Creon's edict.

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[283] Foley 2001, 175 n. 11 and Neuberg 1990, 75 both emphasize that Antigone's choice, which deprives her of marriage, is one forced upon her by Creon's actions.

[284] Murnaghan 1986, passim. and Neuberg 1990, 69-76. Both identify the replaceability of a relationship as "for Antigone the difference between the blood-family and the marriage-family" (Neuberg 1990, 69).

[285] This is a central point for Foley 2001, 176-180.

The fact that Antigone is unattached to another family through marriage allows her to become a living emblem of the fate of the Labdacid family. It is in this light, I argue, that we should interpret Antigone's exhortation to the chorus, "Look … on [me,] all that it is left of the princes [or "the royal family"] (λεύσσετε, … τὴν βασιλειδῶν μούνην λοιπήν, 940 and 942) and the way she describes herself as, "being the last I will go down, the worst off by far" (ὧν λοισθία ᾽γὼ … κάκιστα δὴ μακρῷ κάτειμι 895-6). However, while Antigone characterizes herself as last, she does not frame herself as a hope for her family among the living.

Further accentuating how Antigone symbolizes the extinct Labdacid *oikos* is her description of herself as *erēmos*, "bereft," of family ("But isolated in this way from friends, I ill-fated go to the dug-out dwelling of the dead while I am yet living" ἀλλ᾽ ὧδ᾽ ἔρημος πρὸς φίλων ἡ δύσμορος / ζῶσ᾽ εἰς θανόντων ἔρχομαι κατασκαφάς 919-20). Antigone's choice of the adjective *erēmos* may evoke the image of the *oikos erēmos,* a phrase Attic orators use to describe an extinct family (along with the related verb ἐξερημόω).[286] If we consider the implications of this correspondence, Antigone has lost her family just as her family's *oikos* has lost its members.

In describing herself as last, Antigone noticeably discounts Ismene as a member of the family. This choice shows how Antigone's perspective shapes her position. For instance, Antigone tells her sister to go on living, but that her own "spirit" died long ago (σὺ μὲν ζῇς, ἡ δ᾽ ἐμὴ ψυχὴ πάλαι / τέθνηκεν, ὥστε τοῖς θανοῦσιν ὠφελεῖν. 559-60). Antigone's orientation is fixed toward her natal family, unlike Ismene's.

Antigone compares her view of her situation to the transformation of the Tantalid Niobe into rock. She describes this story in her final engagement with the chorus and Creon, to answer the chorus' comment that Antigone's death is both unnecessary and unnatural (817-22).

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[286] As I discussed in my Introduction, pp. 33-4 and n. 102.

Antigone does not fully narrate Niobe's boast about her children and the resulting punishment by Artemis and Apollo, but focuses rather on the aftermath of Niobe's punishment.[287] Niobe's lamentation for her children had become an example of extreme sorrow, as we can see as early as Homer.[288] This is what Antigone emphasizes: she describes how Niobe transformed into a rock formation in the wake of the loss of her numerous children:

> Ἤκουσα δὴ λυγροτάταν ὀλέσθαι
> τὰν Φρυγίαν ξέναν
> Ταντάλου Σιπύλῳ πρὸς ἄ-
> κρῳ, τὰν κισσὸς ὡς ἀτενὴς
> πετραία βλάστα δάμασεν,
> καί νιν ὄμβρῳ τακομέναν,
> ὡς φάτις ἀνδρῶν,
> χιών τ᾽ οὐδαμὰ λείπει,
> τέγγει θ᾽ ὑπ᾽ ὀφρύσι παγ-
> κλαύτοις δειράδας· ᾧ με δαί-
> μων ὁμοιοτάταν κατευνάζει. 823-833
>
> I heard how the foreign Phrygian, daughter of Tantalus, died most lamentably on the peak of Sipylus, whom a stony growth, as though unbending ivy, overpowered, and she is melted away by the rains, as goes the saying of men, nor does the snow leave her be in any place, and she wets the ridges beneath her all-lamenting eyebrows. A *daimon* puts to sleep me, who is most like to her.

Antigone's lyric depiction of Niobe emphasizes that Niobe died in an unusual way, not from normal causes, like violence or disease, but because of familial demise which caused her to lose her human form. Similarly, Antigone views her family's destruction as part of the cause of her

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[287] Critics have suggested that Antigone unintentionally implies a comparison of the two females in relation to the more famous story of Niobe's boast of children and resulting punishment by Artemis and Apollo, which is left untold here. See Griffith 1999, 269. Suggestions include that on analogy with Niobe we are to see Antigone as impious, arrogant, a victim of the gods or defined by extreme *philia*.

[288] Kornarou 2010, 265-6. In *Iliad* 24, Achilles relates Niobe to the situation of the overwraught Priam, 601-619. Both Aeschylus and Sophocles wrote tragedies about Niobe. In a fragment (*TrGF* 154a) of Aeschylus' *Niobe*, Niobe is described brooding at her children's tomb for days on end.

own death. Niobe's death in rock also evokes Antigone's own subterranean fate since Creon encloses Antigone alive in the earth's cavity.

By using Niobe's story Antigone suggests Niobe's grief for her lost children, although she does not explicitly mention the children. The analogy of Niobe and Antigone highlights how each woman transforms because of losing her family. Antigone focuses on how Niobe's transformation makes her a monument of her lost family. In Antigone's depiction, Niobe lost her life for the same reason that Antigone inclines toward death, because of her connection to her dead family.[289] Thus, in my interpretation of Antigone's Niobe story, Antigone illustrates her own familial situation which has led her while living to identify with the dead and with death.[290]

A further expression of Antigone's relationship to her defunct family is the repetition of the word μέτοικος to describe Antigone – and to describe what she is not – during her engagements with the chorus and Creon on the way to her death.[291] She uses the term twice (850-2 and 867-8) and Creon once (890). When used with a negative connotation the word can

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[289] Gilby 1996, 153-154, remarks "The loss of family becomes a loss of identity, of the will to live or produce and reduces Niobe to helplessness. A woman without a family is not a woman, she is more like a stone or other inanimate object."

[290] The chorus' reaction to Antigone's comparison shows that it does not understand the situation which she is trying to convey. The chorus see Antigone's comparison as a suggestion that she is seeking immortal glory (834-8). Antigone feels mocked (839-41). Foley 2001 suggests that it is this gulf between the chorus and Antigone which she address in her final speech (904-20).

[291] See Whitehead 1977, 6 who argues throughout that *metoikos* at root means "home-changer" and was used with this meaning and a negative connotation in prose and in several tragic passages, including *Ant.* 867-8. Brown 1991, 334-5 argues that the word has the same, bland meaning of, "coresident" in all three clauses. Kennedy 2014, 39-40 argues against such a translation which "elides" the social implications of the metaphoric use of the word. Griffith 1999, 273 takes *metoikos* in 868 as simply "coresident," pointing out "an unmarried woman would normally 'reside' with her parents or guardian." However he also notes, 272, "Ant.'s 'in-between' status, not truly 'resident' among the dead yet disenfranchised from the upper world, creates added distress."

emphasize the unestablished position of a family and individual within a *polis*. Kennedy 2014, who has examined the ideology of the metic woman, shows that for a woman in Athens, the metic title reflected her lack of a legitimate guardian, *kyrios,* from a citizen family.[292] This term in Sophocles' play may emphasize how Antigone has lost the men who would have been her guardians until marriage, her father and two brothers (Creon also rejects the role of *kyrios*).[293]

Antigone describes herself by the term μέτοικος with a distinct negative connotation as, "cursed, unmarried, I as a metic go there [underworld]." (… ἀραῖος, ἄγαμος, ἆδ'/ ἐγὼ μέτοικος ἔρχομαι 867-8), emphasizing that she does not have a settled place in a household. Just earlier, she used the term to describe the residence-position that she is *deprived* of, suggesting that she has even less standing than a metic:

> ἰώ δύστανος, βροτοῖς
> οὔτε <νεκρὸς> νεκροῖσιν
> μέτοικος, οὐ ζῶσιν, οὐ θανοῦσιν. 850-852
>
> Oh, wretched me, dwelling neither (as a mortal) among mortals nor as a corpse among the corpses, neither among the living nor the dead

Here μέτοικος (852) suggests Antigone's in-between status and indicating that the cause for this is that Antigone is separated from her deceased family members and household. Creon's hostile attitude to Antigone also contributes to her floating position *vis-à-vis* an oikos, since he should be her new *kyrios* after her father and brothers died.[294] But Creon describes even Antigone's metic status as something that he can revoke, announcing that, "in any case she will be deprived of residence, *metoikia*, up above" (μετοικίας δ' οὖν τῆς ἄνω στερήσεται 890).[295] Tiresias uses

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[292] Kennedy 2014, 27.
[293] On guardianship of the *epiklēros*, see Cudjoe 2012, 203-218.
[294] I am grateful to Rebecca Kennedy, who pointed out to me that Creon's relation to Antigone as *kyrios*, and his subsequent abnegation of this role, contribute to the concept of *metoikia* for Antigone.
[295] Kennedy 2014, 40.

similar language later to criticize Creon for "settling" (κατῴκισας) Antigone in her tomb: "and you settled a living spirit in a tomb shamefully" (ψυχήν τ' ἀτίμως ἐν τάφῳ κατῴκισας, 1069). These descriptions highlight how Creon, by rejecting his role as Antigone's *kyrios,* has further unsettled her already disturbed family situation.

Electra is a similar figure who can help interpret Antigone's bind between life and death because of her family's suffering. Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* and Sophocles' *Electra* each combine a focus on Agamemnon's tomb, which symbolizes the destruction of his household by Clytemnestra, and Electra's hope that her brother Orestes will return and renew the household.[296] This creates a tense ambiguity between the possibilities of life and death for the *oikos* of Agamemnon as well as for Electra as an individual. For both Antigone and Electra, hope attaches to brothers. But unlike Antigone, who sees the possibility of regeneration as lost before the start of the play, Electra sees her hope fulfilled when Orestes returns to reestablish the family.

Like Antigone, Electra has a strong relationship to her natal family, which both Aeschylus' and Sophocles' plays convey through how she attends the tomb of her father.[297] Sophocles' Electra expresses attachment to family by comparing herself to Niobe like Antigone does:

> Νήπιος ὃς τῶν οἰκτρῶς
> οἰχομένων γονέων ἐπιλάθεται
> ….
> Ἰὼ παντλάμων Νιόβα, σὲ δ' ἔγωγε νέμω θεόν,
> ἄτ' ἐν τάφῳ πετραίῳ,
> αἰαῖ, δακρύεις. 145-6, 150-3

[296] Electra speculates about the restoration both of Agamemnon himself and in the person of Orestes. See for instance the chorus' suggestion, 137-9, that she is trying to resurrect her father.
[297] The relationship between the continuance of the family unit and the tomb is significant because the perpetuation of family cult and making sacrifices on behalf of the departed was a strong reason for a family to avoid extinction.

> Foolish is the one who ignores parents dying piteously…. Oh, all-suffering Niobe, you I consider divine, since in a rocky tomb, ah me, you weep.

An affinity to the dead characterizes Electra in similar way to Antigone. The possibility that Orestes is dead crushes Electra, and the chorus give voice to her grief, describing her family as extinct: "Alas, alas, the whole *genos* for our rulers of old, as it seems, has been destroyed to the roots" (φεῦ φεῦ. τὸ πᾶν δὴ δεσπόταισι τοῖς πάλαι / πρόρριζον, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἔφθαρται γένος. 764-5). Later in the play, holding what she believes to be Orestes' ashes, Electra bemoans her brother as having "snatched away" everything with him:

> ... πάντα γὰρ συναρπάσας,
> θύελλ᾽ ὅπως, βέβηκας. οἴχεται πατήρ:
> τέθνηκ᾽ ἐγὼ σοί: φροῦδος αὐτὸς εἶ θανών. 1150-1152
>
> ... you have gone off and snatched away everything like a great storm. Our father is gone: I am dead where you are concerned; you yourself are gone, having died.

Electra's words frame Orestes as the last hope of the house of Agamemnon. With him (supposedly) gone, her hopes for the restoration of her father's house are ruined and she describes herself as "dead" (τέθνηκ᾽ 1153).[298] Electra at this point is very similar to Antigone (cf. especially *Ant*. 871). Antigone and Electra are both unmarried daughters who do not look forward to a married future because their families have, actually or supposedly, been ruined. As Sorum 1982 demonstrates, a combination of familial extinction and human antagonists force each woman into a "double bind … the conflicting demands that she both mourn her father and marry."[299] Sophocles' Electra expresses her problem: "I am wasting away without parents and

[298] Electra makes a similar statement at 808: "dearest Orestes, how you have destroyed me by dying yourself." Ὀρέστα φίλταθ', ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας θανών.
[299] Sorum 1982, 209. Sorum focuses on how this limbo-like position is problematic in both plays.

have no loving husband to protect me" (ἄνευ τοκέων κατατάκομαι, / ἇς φίλος οὔτις ἀνὴρ ὑπερίσταται, 187-8).[300]

However, Electra and Antigone do diverge in regards to an *epiklēros* identity. For the majority of *Electra*, there is no suggestion that Electra could continue her family's line along the lines of the epiklerate institution.[301] However, when Electra suggests to her sister Chrysothemis that they murder Aegisthus, she indicates that Aegisthus fears the offspring of her potential marriage (959-966) and that she and her sister might save her paternal *oikos* by overthrowing Aegisthus and themselves marrying (975-983).[302] Ormand suggests that along with Electra's concern for her father's *oikos* throughout the play, these passages characterize Electra as an *epiklēros*. However, as has been noted by several scholars, these comments mark a shift in Electra's character which suggests a dangerous development of female aggression and sexual mobility akin to her mother Clytemnestra's.[303] Further, as Ormand notes, Orestes' return stops this characterization of Electra. Electra's brief experiment with an *epiklēros*-like role also brings into relief how Sophocles more strongly characterizes her as a victim of her family's demise.

In contrast to Electra's isolated suggestions that she would marry to continue her father's *oikos*, no character broaches such an idea in *Antigone*. Antigone's engagement to Haemon is not framed as a means to continue Oedipus' *oikos*. Up to the point when Electra and her family are

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[300] Cf. Soph. *El.* 164-6.

[301] In Euripides' play, Electra may be considered an *epiklēros*, since it seems as though Clytemnestra has married Electra off to a poor peasant so that Electra will not make a marriage which could threaten her throne.

[302] Ormand 1999, 73-5. Juffras 1991 interprets the consequence of Electra's design to kill Clytemnestra in political terms but does not identify Electra as an *epiklēros*.

[303] Segal 1981, 285 "Electra moves from the perpetually lamenting *mater dolorosa*, Procne or Niobe, to a different mythic paradigm: the destructive, vengeful female, the Clytemnestra of the *Agamemnon*, whose act she here symbolically repeats." Winnington Ingram 1980, 246 and Ormand 1999, 75.

saved by the return of her brother, Sophocles' *Electra* offers a striking parallel to Antigone's situation, as my brief survey shows. In both plays the protagonists are depicted as unwed maidens closely connected to families which (truly or supposedly) have been destroyed, and which they do not have an ability to restore themselves. Affinity to death expresses this relationship and circumstance for both women. Electra's situation thus shows similarities to Antigone's while also demonstrating an alternative to how Sophocles presents Antigone since he indicates that Electra could take on the identity of an *epiklēros* which is absent from *Antigone.*

Antigone behaves consistently with the context of familial extinction. I have argued that Sophocles uses this interpretation of her circumstance as a central pathos in his play, making Antigone a living symbol of her family's demise. Because Creon views the Labdacid family differently, his edict forces Antigone to ensure her interpretation of her family's death. As I will show next, Sophocles presents Creon's perspective on this family as problematic not only for Antigone but for Creon himself.

4. Creon's Edict and the extinction of the Labdacid *oikos*

Creon's edict preventing Polynices' burial reveals the ruler's understanding of the situation of the Labdacid family. While the drama provides a hazy explanation of the legal basis for Creon's edict, Creon appears to treat Polynices as a traitor whose punishment is meant to be a community spectacle. Forbidding burial is a punishment which disturbs the whole family and could be accompanied by other punishments of the household. But while there was considerable precedent in Greece and Athens for holding an entire family responsible for a serious offense to the community, in the case of Polynices' family in Sophocles' play there is little remaining Labdacid threat if the *oikos* becomes extinct. At the end of the play, Teiresias' criticism of Creon (1029-1030) identifies this miscalculation: the family is already gone. Antigone's presence and

position throughout the play emphasizes that her family is already extinct. Sophocles further highlights Creon's mistake through the outcome: to suffer the loss of his own family.

It is hard to answer the questions that arise: first, on exactly what basis did Creon order Polynices' punishment, and, next, in what way was this a mistake? The answer to the first query is either that Creon punished Polynices as a traitor or as an enemy. While it is true that Polynices is not explicitly called a traitor by Creon, I do not agree with Robert Parker that "nothing encourages us to view Polynices in this light [as a traitor]."[304] Rather, the form of Creon's punishment of Polynices characterizes Polynices as a traitor. In addition, Tiresias' and Antigone's characterization of Creon's punishment support this interpretation.

While Creon treats Polynices as a traitor, and the drama suggests criticism of Creon's treatment, the play does not censure Creon for harshly punishing Polynices *qua* traitor.[305] Polynices has committed an action of serious harm against the Theban *polis,* and Athenians believed acts like these deserved harsh punishment.[306] As I discussed in the introduction, the punishment of treason often extended beyond the individual to an entire family in a spectacle before the community. Prohibiting burial disrupted a family's funeral rituals and so is in a similar category as exhuming a family's bones, exile, and house-razing: all are punishments for treason that hurt the whole household.[307]

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[304] Parker 1983, 48.

[305] Allowing a body to decompose for a prolonged period is harsh in comparison with normal Athenian treatment of a traitor. However, as Parker 1983, 47 argues, the play indicates by the gods' reaction that, "the particular mode of humiliation … is [only] an aggravating factor" and that the root issue is the denial of burial *per se*.

[306] Parker 1983, 47-8 does not persuade me that Polynices is not a traitor. Many scholars do view Polynices as a traitor, for instance Sourvinou-Inwood 1989, 139 n. 25; Cerri 1982, 121-31; and Sordi 1981, 63-72.

[307] Connor 1985, 84 lists punishments which were combined with *kataskaphē*: one with *katapontismos*, two with no burial in the *polis*, three with destruction of family tombs, six with

Creon's choice of punishment indicates that the king is reacting to what he views as Polynices' serious crime against his own community. While it was not regular practice to deny burial to an enemy's corpse, it was typical for those of traitors, whose bodies were normally taken outside the city.[308] Since Creon compels a body to rot within the public eye (in the plain outside the city walls), Sophocles suggests that Creon means the punishment to be a spectacle for the community, against whom Polynices is understood to have offended.[309]

What then is the issue with Creon's punishment? I suggest that Creon does not respond properly to the crime *in the exceptional circumstance of Polynices' family's extinction*. Creon's choice to deny Polynices burial is excessive because he, Eteocles, and their parents have already destroyed themselves so pathetically. From Antigone's view, and hers is a self-fulfilling perspective, the family's demise is complete. According to this evaluation, which Creon does not appreciate, Creon's punishment of Polynices is inappropriate.

Considered under hypothetically different circumstances, Creon would be right to penalize the family of Polynices: in addition to Polynices' guilt extending to his family, the Labdacid family has brought copious harm to Thebes. The punishment of *kataskaphē*, as

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confiscation of property, one with exile, and one with a curse. Parker 1983, 45 n. 47 and 194-5 emphasizes the role of popular fury in motivating such punishments.

[308] Refusing burial to traitors in Attica was regular, see Xen. *Hel*. 1.7.22; Lyc. *Ag. Leocr*. 113-115; and Thuc 1.138.6 as well as Parker 1983, 44-6 (who, 45 n. 47 lists and categorizes instances where burial was denied); Rosivach 1983, 193-4; Griffith 1999, 29-31; and Harris 2006, 67. However, generally these bodies were cast out of Attica, or possible into a pit, see Parker 1983, 46-7. However I cannot accept the suggestion of, for instance, Sourvinou-Inwood 1989, 146-7 that Creon only needed to have found a pit for the body. See the discussion of Griffith 1999, 31.

[309] There is some argument over exactly how public the punishment is: Griffith 1999, 330 translates πεδίον ἐπ' ἄκρον (1197) as "height of the plain" as opposed to traditional interpretation suggested by the LSJ (s.v. ἄκρος , α, ον A.I.2) "the furthest edge of the plain." Meinel 2015, 95 n. 85 agrees with LSJ and thus argues that the body is outside the city, though the birds bring the flesh into the city, creating pollution (1016-22, 1081-3).

discussed in the introduction, reveals how a Greek community could view an individual's crime against the *polis* as caused by his whole family:[310] familial guilt and pollution affect the larger *polis*-community.[311] For instance in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* the Argive community blames Agamemnon and Clytemnestra successively for harm to the *polis*.[312] Even before Polynices' treason, the Labdacid house has certainly been a source of suffering for the community of Thebes; most famously Oedipus brought disease to Thebes by killing his father and marrying his mother.[313] In *Antigone* Creon appears preoccupied to rectify the chaos and pollution the Labacid *oikos* has incurred, including the pollution from the mutual fratricide that is the immediate context of the play[314] and an act Aeschylus' *Septem* depicted distinctly as polluting.[315]

Despite the fraught relationship between the family of Oedipus and Thebes, Creon's punishment goes amiss because the family has already suffered so much: the Labdacid family is extinct, or nearly so. Further complicating Creon's punishment is the fact that Thebes' leader Eteocles and Creon's future daughter-in-law Antigone are also part of this family (to which Creon himself is related). The brothers' mutual destruction of the Labdacid house has already created a spectacle of familial ruin for the Theban community. Not only has the family suffered publicly, it also does not present a current danger to the community since it is extinct, as Antigone's presentation of her position emphasizes.

Tiresias offers the most specific criticism of Creon's misstep when he offers the insight that Creon should not goad the dead:

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[310] As I discussed in my Introduction, pp. 15-18.
[311] Connor 1985, 90-94.
[312] Discussed in Chapter One, pp. 72-81.
[313] As depicted in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyranus.* Winnington-Ingram 1980, 120 discusses the threat from this *oikos* to the *polis* in *Septem.*
[314] Meinel 2015, 85-95 describes Creon's concern to rectify the Labdacid pollution.
[315] Aesch. *Sept*. 679-80: αἷμα γὰρ καθάρσιον / ἀνδροῖν δ' ὁμαίμοιν θάνατος ὧδ' αὐτοκτόνος.

> … εἶκε τῷ θανόντι, μηδ’ ὀλωλότα
> κέντει· τίς ἀλκὴ τὸν θανόντ’ ἐπικτανεῖν; 1029-1030
>
> … yield to the dead, do not goad the man who has been destroyed. For what strength is it to kill the dead again?

Tiresias’ image first suggests the Homeric scene where Achilles abuses Hector’s body, and thus Achilles’ retributive but excessive anger in denying burial. However, overwhelming anger is not the most apt diagnosis of Creon’s attitude in the play. Tiresias’ words suggest that Creon’s fault is not to recognize the futility of making a spectacle of Polynices’ punishment. This critique applies to Creon’s approach to the whole Labdacid family, including his punishment of Antigone, who describes herself as already dead because of her family. Tiresias’ point that “killing again” is not strength (ἀλκὴ 1030) conveys how Creon’s treatment of Polynices is a futile show.

By emphasizing her family’s extinction, Antigone makes Creon’s treatment of Polynices seem wrong. She shows that Creon’s decision makes an example of a family which has already presented a spectacle of destruction. One specific way Antigone conveys this is through her use of the vocabulary of *kataskaphē* and of ploughing (τριπόλιστον “thrice plowed up” 859), as she approaches her own dug out tomb. While she does not refer to Creon in these passages, Antigone’s images negatively frame Creon’s digging- and burial- related choices, including the decision to leave Polynices’ body to rot and to inter Antigone in a pit. With these Creon has made a show of an extinct family’s destruction. By taking on the character of her dead family, most of which is buried under the earth, Antigone draws attention to the inappropriateness of Creon’s punishment of her and Polynices.

5. Creon and Antigone

At the end of Antigone Creon experiences an analogous fate to Antigone's: the loss of his whole family. The chorus, Antigone, and Tiresias link the tragedies of these two. Creon's fate exposes his lack of understanding of Antigone's situation in her defunct family, the context for her behavior in the play. Creon should be able to understand the impact of Polynices' death on Antigone's oikos since Creon too lost his son Megareus in the battle with the Seven, leaving Haemon as his only son. Haemon's appearance in the play draws attention to Creon's oikos; the young man's death is not only an emotional blow to his father but also to Creon's household. Eurydice's appearance at the end of the play and her subsequent suicide develop the demise of the *oikos*.

The chorus first link Antigone's and Creon's misfortunes, indicating some foreboding as they announce the approach Haemon's entrance in the play:

> Ὅδε μὴν Αἵμων, παίδων τῶν σῶν
> νέατον γέννημ'· ἦρ' ἀχνύμενος
> [τῆς μελλογάμου νύμφης]
> τάλιδος ἥκει μόρον Ἀντιγόνης,
> ἀπάτας λεχέων ὑπεραλγῶν; 626-630
>
> Here is Haemon, last begotten of your children. Is he then come, grieving for the fate of his fiancé Antigone, and mourning that he has been cheated of his marriage?

The chorus' language ties Haemon to their earlier description of Oedipus' sons in the second stasimon. The chorus' description of Haemon as νέατον γέννημ' (627) frames him as also the last of Creon's line since νέατον suggests how Creon's house now depends on the youngest son, who has recently become Creon's only – final – heir. The chorus' characterization is similar to their description of Oedipus' sons as a "last root" (ἐσχάτας ῥίζας 599), just lines before.[316]

[316] Griffith 1999, 225 notes the overlap in terminology. A related vegetative depiction of Creon's children is found in the messenger's speech, 1164-5: θάλλων εὐγενεῖ τέκνων σπορᾷ· / καὶ νῦν ἀφεῖται πάντα.

Because the chorus' lines accompany Haemon's first entrance, they reemphasize his importance as Creon's last child. This depiction of Haemon's role for Creon's *oikos* is ominous since, as the chorus has already described, his counterparts in Oedipus' *oikos,* Eteocles and Polynices, were violently destroyed.

Antigone and Tiresias more explicitly predict that Creon will experience a fate akin to Antigone's. Thus Antigone concludes her final speech by suggestively relating her fate with the future punishment of her enemies: "if these ones are the wrongdoers, may they suffer evils no more than the injustice they are doing to me" (εἰ δ' οἵδ' ἁμαρτάνουσι, μὴ πλείω κακὰ πάθοιεν ἢ καὶ δρῶσιν ἐκδίκως ἐμέ. 927-8). Soon after Tiresias tells Creon that he will have to relinquish a child in exchange for what he has done to Polynices and Antigone: "you yourself will give up a corpse from your own loins (lit. "entrails") in exchange for corpses." (τῶν σῶν αὐτὸς ἐκ σπλάγχνων ἕνα / νέκυν νεκρῶν ἀμοιβὸν ἀντιδοὺς ἔσῃ, 1066-7).

Haemon's presence in *Antigone* is likely to be Sophocles' innovation since, in the *Oidipodeia*, followed by Apollodorus, Haemon is killed by the Sphinx and his brother outlives him, only to die in the battle against the Seven.[317] Sophocles, on the other hand, has Haemon survive both his brother Menoiceus and the battle. The dramatist thus provides a surviving stock for Creon's house who will be destroyed in consequence of Creon's stubbornness. Haemon not only links Antigone and Creon, his death causes the same extinction for Creon's *oikos* which Antigone's paternal *oikos* just suffered.

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[317] *Oidipodeia* fr. 2, in scholia ad Eur. *Phoen.* 1760, and Apollodorus 3.5.8. This son's name is either Menoikeus, as Eur. *Phoen.*, or Megareus. See Griffith 1999, 5-7 and Mastronarde 1994, 28-30. In *Phoenecian Women*, Haemon and Antigone are betrothed.

When Eurydice emerges from Creon's *oikos,* the *skēnē,* for a short moment – only long enough to hear of Antigone's and Haemon's deaths[318] – she centers the audience's attention completely on Creon's *oikos,* where it remains for the rest of the play.[319] Sophocles' design is apparent since Eurydice is even less in evidence in the poetic tradition than is Haemon. The subsequent depiction of her suicide completes the destruction of their *oikos*. As the chorus and messenger wonder at Eurydice's disappearance inside (1244-5 and 1246-60) the *skēnē-oikos*, they draw attention to this domestic space and create a sense of foreboding.[320] While the messenger describes the suicide to Creon, Eurydice is conveyed onto the stage either on an *ekkuklema* or carried by servants.[321] The messenger narrates the tableau, emphasizing how the stage now depicts what had been inside the house: "You can see her. For she is no longer inside (lit."in the recesses")" (Ὁρᾶν πάρεστιν. οὐ γὰρ ἐν μυχοῖς. 1293).

Eurydice's death expresses the death of Creon's *oikos* by exposing the inner space of the house. When dead Eurydice is brought onto stage, the messenger describes that she killed herself upon an altar in the house (βωμία 1300).[322] If the *ekkuklema* was used, it is very possible that she is still draped over this domestic altar.[323] The altar is probably that of Zeus in the courtyard

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[318] Griffith 1999, 9 suggests, "[Eurydike's] role is entirely that of victim, as she arrives only to learn of her son's death, and immediately departs to commit suicide herself, thus capping Creon's series of calamities." See also Brown 1987 and Rehm 1994, 67.

[319] The messenger at his arrival on stage establishes that events will now center on Creon's *oikos* by repeatedly referring to this *oikos* at 1155; 1164-5; and 1168.

[320] Messenger hopes she's confining her sorrow within her house;

[321] The use of the *ekkuklēma* would emphasize the inner tableau. Most commentators opt for the *ekkuklēma*, but Griffith 1999, 349-350 points out, there is no reference to opening doors, as with the use of *ekkuklēma* in *Aj*. 344 and *El*. 1458. Rehm 1994, 183 n. 25 reminds us that Proclus in his *Chrestomathia* describes Priam as slain at the altar of Zeus Herkeios at the sack of Troy, "the locus classicus for the destruction of a family."

[322] The text of line 1300 is uncertain and is followed by a missing line but it seems clear that the messenger is describing Eurydice killing herself on the altar.

[323] Rehm 1994, 183 n. 30 also suggests this.

(*Herkeios*), a prominent altar in the center of the *oikos* (as it is depicted, for example, in *Heracles).*[324] In an earlier speech to Antigone Creon brushed off concerns about Zeus *Herkeios*, stating that he would not let her escape even "if she were even closer in blood than all those who worship Zeus of the Courtyard in my house" (εἴθ' ὁμαιμονεστέρα / τοῦ παντὸς ἡμῖν Ζηνὸς Ἑρκείου κυρεῖ, 486-7). This statement suggests Creon's lack of concern for the *oikos* which is particularly inappropriate for Creon because, as father of a house, he is responsible for the cult at that altar of Zeus Herkeios.

Eurydice's suicide further exploits the altar's significance because the manner of her death suggests sacrifice, as afterwards Creon himself characterizes it (σφάγιον 1291).[325] Creon also takes responsibility for killing his wife (ἐγώ σ' ἔκανον, 1319, and son, 1340-3). Thus Eurydice's death suggests that Creon not only neglects the concerns of his *oikos* but destroyed it himself. As Eurydice curses Creon on the family altar (1304) and pollutes the altar (by extension the family) with her blood, she completes the symbolic and personal destruction of the *oikos*.

The scene of Eurydice's suicide pulls Creon, who for most of the drama has been characterized as fixed on *polis* concerns, entirely into the sphere of the *oikos*. This is the sphere which Antigone occupied for most of the play, often in opposition to Creon. At the drama's end Creon more and more resembles the character and situation of Antigone earlier in the play.

Antigone and Creon share the experience of losing family. While Creon's family cannot be fully extinguished without his own death, Eurydice's suicide brings Creon as close as he can come, while living, to Antigone's fate. Calling Eurydice the "all-mother" of the dead Haemon

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[324] Jebb 1900, 229; Taplin 1984, 15; Oudemans-Lardinois 1987, 195; Rehm 1994, 66 Griffith 1999, 350. Griffith notes that the altar of Zeus Herkeios was "in the inner courtyard, symbolizing the integrity of the family."

[325] σφάγιον, 1291. Oudemans-Lardinois 1987, 195.

(τοῦδε παμμήτωρ νεκροῦ 1282), the messenger emphasizes that Haemon was her last son and all his mother had. The messenger also recounts Eurydice's reference to the previous death of Creon's other son Megareus (1302), further suggesting that by losing Haemon, Creon lost his last son. The messenger prefaces his report by presaging how Creon will lose his *oikos* through dead children. Looking to the past, he describes Creon's house as previously "growing with noble sowing of children" (θάλλων εὐγενεῖ τέκνων σπορᾷ· 1164-5). With the suicide of his wife, Creon cannot have any more children to continue his *oikos*.

Creon at the end of the play is a man completely broken: Sophocles characterizes this brokenness as parallel to the previous situation of Antigone. For instance, Creon responds to the messenger who announced Eurydice's suicide by exclaiming that he "destroyed again a man [Creon] having been destroyed" (ὀλωλότ' ἄνδρ' ἐπεξειργάσω 1288). This phrase echoes Tiresias' earlier admonition to Creon: "do not goad a man destroyed. What strength is it to kill again a dead man?" (μηδ' ὀλωλότα / κέντει· τίς ἀλκὴ τὸν θανόντ' ἐπικτανεῖν; 1029-1030).[326] As I suggested, Tiresias' description of Creon's treatment of Polynices also applies more broadly to that of Polynices' family, including Antigone. Both passages include the same participle ὀλωλότα and a verb compounded with ἐπι-.

Creon also imitates Antigone's earlier repeated self-characterization as dead or fated for death while yet living, which she articulated famously to Ismene: "my soul died long ago," (ἡ δ' ἐμὴ ψυχὴ πάλαι / τέθνηκεν 559-60).[327] Creon describes himself as "one who exists no more than

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[326] Consider also the chorus' description in the second stasimon of "sufferings falling upon sufferings" πήματα … ἐπὶ πήμασι πίπτοντ', 595, and Creon's exclamation "what new doom again do you speak of, that the sacrifice of a woman, piles upon [Haemon's] death/destruction?" τίν' αὖ λέγεις μοι νέον,….σφάγιον ἐπ' ὀλέθρῳ / γυναικεῖον ἀμφικεῖσθαι μόρον; 1289, 1290-1. Compare also ll. 1295-9.

[327] Discussed above, 112-3.

someone who does not exist" (τὸν οὐκ ὄντα μᾶλλον ἢ μηδένα 1325). His statement also resonates with the messenger's assessment of Creon's fate: "I do not consider this man to be alive but I consider him a living corpse" (οὐ τίθημ' ἐγὼ / ζῆν τοῦτον, ἀλλ' ἔμψυχον ἡγοῦμαι νεκρόν. 1167).[328]

Finally, Creon reenacts Antigone's earlier situation on stage as a solitary lamenter for not only his own desperate circumstance, but his dead family. Like Antigone in her final scene with the chorus, Creon stands isolated on stage and expresses to the onlooking chorus how he is powerlessness to change his circumstance.[329] Creon also bears responsibility for his family members' funeral rites. He first reminds the audience of this when he enters the stage with Haemon's body in his arms (1258). This calls to mind a funeral procession as does his reference to Haemon's corpse as a μνῆμα, which can mean "tomb."[330] When Eurydice's corpse is also brought on stage, Creon is left with two bodies to bury; his mourning from this point on sounds like funeral lamentations.[331] Likewise Antigone's earlier, mourning, exit in front of the chorus suggested a funeral procession. Creon reminds the audience of Antigone as he draws attention to how he is both alone and laden with the task of caring for his dead family.

The parallels through which Creon evokes Antigone and her relationship to her family demonstrate the situation Antigone has been dealing with in the play: family loss. This suggests what specific lesson Creon learns through his ultimate suffering. Creon learns not only to recognize the concerns of an *oikos*, but also to understand the experience of the destroyed *oikos*.

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[328] Griffith 1999, 353 notes this intertext.

[329] When Creon asks to be taken into the house ("Please take me away, a foolish man!" Ἄγοιτ' ἂν μάταιον ἄνδρ' ἐκποδών 1339), the audience is reminded of Antigone's father, the blinded Oedipus asking Creon to be led off the stage at the end of *Oedipus Tyranus* (1521).

[330] Rehm 1994, 67.

[331] Brown 1987, 223 compares Creon's lamentations with Athenian funeral rites. Segal 1995, 127-131 characterizes them as female-type funereal lamentations.

Conclusion

Creon realizes his misunderstanding by facing the experience of another person in the tragedy, Antigone: by the way Creon's outcome corresponds to Antigone's situation Sophocles highlights what Creon learns. My analysis shows that familial extinction is a central theme which *Antigone* explores through the experiences of both Antigone and Creon. Tragedy often places its audience in a position to experience an extreme situation through the circumstance of a dramatic character. It is significant that familial extinction was not an unimaginable situation for an ancient audience, as it seems to the modern one. Although the Labdacid family is outrageously doomed and incestuous, the event of familial extinction was a real anxiety which Attic speakers frequently describe. In *Antigone* Sophocles conveys that this destruction could happen to anyone by destroying not only the incomparably doomed family of Antigone. Creon's family experiences something very close to extinction also.[332]

The strength of Antigone's relationship to her family calls into question our ability to view her as an independent individual.[333] There is a strong impulse for Sophocles' modern audience especially to view Antigone in isolation so that she becomes a voice for ideals, morals and conscience which oppose those of Creon, a view which Hester 1971 identifies as orthodox.[334] As Holt 1999 points out, such an "orthodox" view finds itself on shaky ground

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[332] Creon's family is related through Jocasta to the Labdacid family, but Creon is not Labdacid. See on the other hand Liapis 2012, 102-7 who views Creon and his family subsumed into the Labdacid family at the end of the play.

[333] Thus Sorum 1982, 203, "the focus on this emerging individual, the hero, who is so appealing to critics schooled in Western individualism has caused the still pervasive sense of an enduring collective unit, the family, to be neglected." Segal 1974, 307 (to whom Sorum refers) remarks, "the traditional approach may rest on assumptions about the centrality and strength of self which tragedy seeks to question rather than support."

[334] One alternative is the Hegelian view which suggests that both sides are theoretically correct but flawed. Oudemans-Lardinois 1987 tends this way as does Foley. Müller 1967 is a good

when it encounters fifth-century Greek beliefs regarding the individual, *polis* and *oikos*.[335] But from the beginning, Sophocles shows that Antigone views her family as extinguished. Understanding this causes us to view Antigone's moral reasoning not so much as idealistic but as as responding to a specific situation. The circumstances of Antigone's decisions do not preclude us from judging Antigone's choices. But while an Athenian audience member might criticize Antigone's response to her family's situation, he also would not find her response inexplicable.

By identifying the extinction of the family as an important and exceptional circumstance for Creon's moral reasoning as well as Antigone's, my interpretation nuances the understanding of *Antigone* as an opposition of *polis*- and *oikos*- concerns. It brings to the fore the interconnection of the *oikos*- and *polis*- structures at Athens that social historians have emphasized.[336] Accordingly, as leader of the *polis*-community Creon does have an interest in the family, since an individual can not be dealt with in isolation from his *oikos*. Athenians understood that families could threaten the *polis* by harboring dangerous individuals and they punished families accordingly. Since the *polis'* interest is based in an understanding of the relation between individual and *oikos*, closely linked with this concern should be the *polis'* sensitivity to the fact that disruption of the *oikos* structure creates instability and that the *oikos* is not replaceable. While these are two things of which Antigone is painfully aware, Creon sets his sights on making an example of the *oikos,* a motive that renders him unable to comprehend the

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example of the "orthodox view." See Hester 1971, 48-54 who gives a large list of scholars in both camps. For additional discussion of the alternative views, see also Oudemans-Lardinois 1987 107-8 and Holt 1999, 658-9.

[335] Holt 1999, 659-60. Creon especially becomes a sensible character when considered in this light. The interpretation of Sourvinou-Inwood 1990 presents the most extreme challenge to the orthodox view in the most contrary way possible, arguing that an Athenian audience would find Antigone dangerous and Creon almost entirely reasonable. See also Calder 1968.

[336] See Introduction, pp. 16-17, and n. 39 and pp. 39-40 and nn. 117 and 118.

pathos of Antigone's and her family's situation. In the end, Creon comes to recognize this when he experiences family loss himself.

Chapter Three:
Heracles' Attachment to his *oikos* in Euripides' *Heracles*.

Euripides' *Heracles* includes at least three major plot reversals with the result that its 'disunity' has caused consternation for many scholars and preoccupied most interpretations of the play.[337] There has, however, been a growing recognition that this unusual plot structure is not a formal mistake but Euripides' intentional use of form.[338] While scholars have suggested various topics which unify the play's plot – for instance, friendship (*philia,* Sheppard 1916), Heracles' two fathers (Gregory 1977), and *aretē* and *bia* (Chalk 1962 and Kamerbeek 1966) – Heracles' *oikos* attachment is also a theme which Euripides explores through the the various reversals of his plot. As I will show, Heracles' relation to his household conveys the centrality of this human institution for the individual.

A brief review of the plot will demonstrate how Euripides highlights this theme. To begin his play the poet uses anticipation of Heracles' return to generate expectations and questions about what role in his *oikos* and in the *polis* the hero will play. During his absence and after his

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[337] Readers have often felt the halves of the play to be disjointed, for instance Murray 1946, 112; Kitto 1961, 237; and Norwood 1964, 46-7. See Gregory 1977, 259-260; Bond 1981, xvii-xxvi; Foley 1985, 200-4; Barlow 1987, 115-116; and Papadopoulou 2005, 1-2 for synopses of the scholarly discussion of the disunity or unity of the play. Michelini 1987, 232-3 discusses manipulation of expectations through plot.

[338] After 1895, Arrowsmith 1956, Conacher 1967, and Cropp 1986 have all argued that Euripides' structure is an artistic choice and not oversight. Readings including those of Sheppard 1916, Chalk 1962, Kamerbeek 1966, and Gregory 1977 have identified various unifying themes.

return, which form a classic *nostos* pattern (1-636),[339] Heracles' commitment to his *oikos* rises above every conflicting possibility. However just when Heracles answers these questions by settling his affairs in his *oikos* and *polis* (701-814), Hera undermines them precisely, destroying Heracles' *oikos* and thereby severing him from his *polis*. After Heracles and his father mourn the loss of their family, Theseus arrives to recoup some of the hero's losses. He will bring Heracles to Athens to live in the society of that *polis*, but there is no replacement family. Each of these reversals develops the theme of Heracles' individual connection to his *oikos*. Even Hera's and Theseus' involvements reveal the situation of the family-attached hero when his *oikos* is ruined. The vicissitudes of Euripides' plot support the drama's exploration of male family values and the relation of the *oikos* and the *polis.*

Many interpretations of *Heracles* suggest that over its course Heracles matures from a less socially integrated human towards one who finally learns to depend upon his fellow humans, specifically his friend Theseus. However, when we pay attention to the development of Heracles' relationship to his family over the drama's course, we notice that his social attachment is evident from the beginning of the play. Nor does the family theme fade away after Heracles has destroyed his family: Theseus' bond of friendship does not take over the *oikos'* central status but reveals its significance.

1. Heracles *Philoteknos.*

To bring Heracles' family membership to the forefront of his drama, Euripides characterizes the hero principally by concern for his *oikos* and develops this attachment

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[339] I cite the text of Kovacs 1998. Cropp 1986, 190-3 emphasizes the *nostos* pattern in *Heracles* as a repetition of the pattern of the *Odyssey*, comparing it also with the similar plot of the *Electra*. Taplin 1977, 124 discusses the *nostos* pattern as well. Matthiessen 1964, 93-143 identified further plays which similarly feature Odyssean plot elements of return, recognition, and intrigue: *Choephoroi*, both *Electra* plays, *Cresphontes, Alexandros, Iphigenia at Tauris, Helen* and *Ion*.

especially through their anticipation of the absent hero in the play's first half. This family-centered portrayal of the protagonist contrasts with significant features of Heracles' figure as traditionally cast in his Panhellenic labors: super-human, antisocial, unfixed in human society, and violent.[340] Only in Euripides' play – and in contrast with the traditional order of events – Heracles returns from his labors in order to protect his family in Thebes who needs him.[341] Rather than framing Heracles' return to family as a change in values, Euripides indicates that Heracles' concern for family and community predates the emergency: Amphitryon describes Heracles as undertaking his labors in order to regain his Argive patrimony (12-18). Euripides also defines the hero in terms of his household to a degree that is surprising not only in comparison to his traditional heroic figure but also for a middle-aged male in tragedy.[342] Finally, Heracles' relation as *kyrios* of his own household family engages with the ambiguity of having two fathers – human and divine.

Euripides' audience faces a Heracles who departs from many of the most conspicuous depictions of the hero found elsewhere. An Athenian audience knew an array of characterizations of this hero from various sources, including epic, and Euripides' Heracles contrasts significantly with many of these attributes.[343] In his labors he is often characterized by extreme strength which is linked to superfluous outbursts of violence against the innocent (for instance against his

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[340] Michelini 1987, 233 characterizes Euripides' "revisionist view" of "…what would seem the most unlikely of subjects." Papadopolou 2008 emphasizes that the ambiguity of Heracles' figure continues throughout the play. See Loraux 1990, 22-6 on the many contradictions of Heracles including male versus female.

[341] As for instance Bond 1981, xxviii-xxx discusses.

[342] Mastronarde 2010, 254-6. Euripides' depiction appears to be a strong example of the exploration of male family attachment in Euripidean drama.

[343] Some of these characterizations conflict. Burkert 1977, 322: "the radiant hero is simultaneously slave, woman, and madman."

family, his host Iphitus, teacher Linus, and the friendly centaurs Pholus and Chiron).[344] Contrasting with the exertion involved in his labors, Heracles' fondness for pleasures is also widely celebrated, especially those of food and sex.[345] To express the latter, Athenaeus describes Heracles as *philogynēs* and attributes to Heracles the greatest number of wives of any Greek hero.[346] A hero known by such an extreme sex drive, as is widely attested, is hardly the same monogamous *paterfamilias* of Euripides' play.[347]

By suggesting that his Heracles might be a conscientious *kyrios* of his family in contrast these other, influential characterizations of the hero, Euripides forces the audience to pay close attention to how Euripides depicts Heracles within his household.[348] Allusions to the famous narrative of Heracles' labors keep the popular figure in the audience's mind as they weigh it

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[344] In *Iliad* 5.381-404 Heracles is denounced by Dione for wounding Hera and Hades, and in *Odyssey* 21.11-41 his murder of host Iphitus is told. See Foley 1985, 159-61 and 190-192 and Loraux 1990, 24-5. Nagy 1979, 318-9 emphasizes how Heracles' identity "embodies *biā* because it is part of his naming construct in Homer. Heracles is elsewhere a civilizing force, especially in art, where he is often depicted as *Alexikakos.* This is suggested in Euripides' play by the chorus' first stasimon (348-450). Galinsky 1962 traces the progress in the literary depiction of Heracles from wild to civilizer.

[345] See Loraux 1990, 24. Heracles' appetite seems to have been a common theme of Satyr plays (Galinsky 1972, 46) and is also mentioned in Aeschylus' *Heraclidae* fr. 74 [Nauck]. Sophocles portrays Heracles in *Trachiniae* motivated by lust to Oechale for Iole's sake.

[346] Ath. 12.556e-f. Heracles' deflowering of the fifty virgins is mentioned here as well as Paus. 9.27.5-7; Diod. Sic. 4.29; Apollod. *Biblio.* 2.4.10 and 2.7.8. Loraux 1990, 25.

[347] The lust which the hero displays in *Trachiniae* offers an example where Heracles' sex drive clashes tragically with family values.

[348] Another issue is whether any of these characterizations are included in the play. Wilamowitz-Möllendorff 1895, 128, offered a rationalizing and psychologizing interpretation of Heracles' "megalomania" which appeared to him evident in the play before the onset of Heracles' mania. Girard 1977, 39-41 suggested a similar psychologizing interpretation, that Heracles' violence is latent in the play and is indicated in the description of his mania. Dumézil 1971 views the hero's madness as linked to the violence of his warrior identity. Cropp 1986, 192 sees Heracles transformed into a more bestial figure which while only hinted at earlier in the play, was integral to his traditional nature. On this bestial depiction see Kirk 1974, 203-12.

against the possibility of a more domestic, socialized hero. The chorus' encomium for Heracles' labors in their first stasimon (348-429) is the most detailed portrayal but Amphitryon also refers to his son's labors (99-100, 181-187).[349] These references raise the audience's expectations regarding Heracles' relationship towards his *oikos* since they suggest that Heracles' absence from home (depicted by the *skēnē*) places him in the realm of his traditional narrative.

In addition to the expectations for Heracles that other literary accounts raise, Euripides generates anticipation regarding Heracles' role as father by acknowledging two other father figures in the play: Heracles' biological father Zeus and his foster father Amphitryon.[350] The first half of the play raises a serious question of whether Zeus will act to save his son's family. Although the family huddles in supplication at the altar of Zeus Soter (44-50), help seems uncertain until Heracles' return at line 513. Amphitryon expresses anxiety about this twice, first criticizing Zeus' *philia* (339-347) and later begging the god to save his family (498-50). The hostile tyrant Lycus attacks Zeus' paternity of Heracles as a lie of Amphitryon (148-50). Heracles' appearance with aid for his family seems to demonstrate Zeus' performance as father by bringing the hero to his family's aid. However Hera's immediate vengeance in by destroying Heracles' *oikos* undermines this interpretation of Zeus' role.[351]

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[349] There is some question as to whether they are stories. Lycus suggests they are largely embellished (153-5) and Megara characterizes her explanation of Heracles' whereabouts to her sons as "telling stories" (λόγοισι μυθεύουσα 77). Amphitryon tells her to continue to tell the stories to hold off their tears and "charm them with words" (παρευκήλει λόγοις 99) although "wretched frauds" (ἀθλίους κλοπὰς ὅμως. 100). These comments suggest traditional narratives of the hero may contrast with the real Heracles. Foley 1965, 178-80 discusses this tension.

[350] Gregory 1977; Cropp 1986; and Michelini 1987, 254-8 discuss the significance of Heracles' dual paternity in the play.

[351] See Mikalson 1986, who examines Zeus' betrayal of his paternal role as a central theme of both *Trachiniae* and *Heracles*. Golden 1990, 90 notes regarding Heracles' later statement attributing *philoteknia* to all men (634-6) that "[Heracles'] tragedy… is deepened by this abandonment by his own father, Zeus."

Heracles' other father Amphitryon is elderly and is not only unable to save Heracles' family but previously lost his patrimony, forcing his family into exile because he murdered his father-in-law Electryon (16-17 and 1258-60).[352] Heracles calls attention to the negative aspects of both his fathers at the end of the play (1258-1268), although he calls Amphitryon his true father (1265). The deficiencies of his two father figures create a comparison for Heracles' own desire and ability to preserve and provide for his family.

Euripides uses the visual and verbal representation of Heracles' *oikos* to reveal the threatened family's need for its father in his initial absence, further raising the audience's interest in Heracles' attitude towards his family. This portion of the play, though often viewed as simple, melodramatic, and unnecessary,[353] provides an important elaboration of the role of a family attachment which could pull Heracles away from his labors. As Amphitryon delivers his prologue (1-86), Heracles' three children lie on the ground in contact with the centrally located altar to Zeus Soter which their father erected (47-53). Children represent the greatest asset of a Greek *oikos,*[354] and Euripides' introduction of children to the stage in this and other plays conveys the threatened *oikos*.[355] Tragic display of the children outside the home in a public gesture of supplication communicates familial distress.[356] The audience might recognize this

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[352] Padilla 1994, 291-6 goes much further than I would to characterize Amphitryon as an "aging, cowardly foster father who manipulates his son's talents." Padilla interprets Amphitryon as manipulative because he makes it necessary for Heracles to reclaim Argos and, at the end of the play, tries to hold Heracles back from leaving (1405, 1419, and 1420).

[353] Kitto 1961, 239; Arnott 1978, 6; and Michelini 1987, 240-1 discuss this characterization.

[354] The chorus in *Ion* 472-491 expound upon children as the most important investment of an *oikos*. See Golden 1990, 93 and n. 63 on the important "relation of interest and affection" toward Greek children. See also Pedrick 2007, 135-140 who discusses the chorus' language of investment in *Ion*.

[355] See Zeitlin 2008, 318-319 on the significant use of children in Euripidean drama.

[356] Suppliant drama is visually arresting; the participation of much of the family as a suppliant character draws attention to familial distress. Consider the suppliant family in *Heraclidae.*

expression of vulnerability from a similar ploy by litigants in the Athenian court who brought wives and children before their jury to elicit familial sympathy, presumably an impressive tactic.[357] The composition of the suppliant party on Euripides' stage – aged father, wife and children – encapsulates the individual household.[358] Likewise over the play's course, the degree to which Euripides reveals the *oikos* to the view of the audience reflects the magnitude of its threatened state and destruction.[359]

Not only are the personal occupants of the *oikos* turned onto the stage for the audience to see, Euripides uses theatrical space and the characters' focus on the house to highlight the physical house and family possessions stored inside.[360] The chorus, Megara, and Amphitryon all draw attention to the fact that Lycus has locked Heracles' family out of their physical house which the *skēnē* behind them depicts (53-4, 330). In her determination to dress the family in the family's funeral garments stored within the house, Megara emphasizes this moveable property of the *oikos* as a part, if a measly portion, of her sons' patrimonies: "so that they may obtain these things, at least, as due [as a patrimony] from the *oikos* of their father" (ὡς … ταῦτά γ'

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[357] There are more references to this tactic than there is evidence of the actual practice, as Sternberg 2005, 46 notes. Comments on the practice include Ar. *Vesp.* 976, Pl. *Ap.* 34c, Lys. 20.34-5, Dem. 19.281-3, 19.310, 21.99, 21.182, 21.195, 25.84, 53.29, and Lycurg. 1.141.

[358] See pp. 28-9 for the procession of orphans during the City Dionysia, another comparandum for the children's visibility.

[359] Thus the messenger reveals the house to the audience in the most intimate verbal detail (922-1015) in a remarkable account of Heracles' mania. He provides a detailed topography (correlated to Heracles' imagined panhellenic travels) of the inner house including the courtyard altar of *Zeus* (922-927), the *andrōn* (954), the courtyard and porticos, and even the women's quarters (996-100). After this description Heracles appears on stage, rolled out on the *ekkuklēma* and tied to the central pillar of his house which has been smashed. The literal exposure of the inner *oikos* on the public stage expresses the destruction of the *oikos*.

[360] The number of references to the physical house in *Heracles* rivals the attention paid to the house in *Agamemnon*. See my discussion in Chapter One, pp. 45-50.

ἀπολάχωσ' οἴκων πατρός 331).[361] These references highlight physical and architectural elements which defined, in part, the *oikos*.

Further bringing the audience into the domestic sphere of the *oikos,* the play twice describes Amphitryon resting in the interior of the home and the violation of his private space. The entering chorus refer to Heracles' house, where they are headed, by synecdoche as "the old man's bed" (γεραιὰ δέμνι' 107-8). Megara further presents the jarring image of Amphitryon hurled out of his bed (πατὴρ μὲν ἐκπεσὼν στρωτοῦ λέχους 555) on account of Lycus. On his return, Heracles exhibits the same familiarity towards the space of his house. He greets his house, doorway, and hearth each, using the second person (σ' 524), even before he meets his family members (523-4).[362] The familiar use of scenic space by Heracles' family, followed by the hero himself, conveys the connection of each member to the *oikos*.

Euripides develops the hero's identity as a family man before he arrives on stage.[363] He rearranges the traditional narrative of events precipitating Heracles' labors so that, as Amphitryon tells us in the prologue, Heracles did not undertake his labors for Eurystheus in restitution for the murder of his children, who in this play are alive and wait for their father. Rather Amphitryon says that Heracles labors for Eurystheus in order to restore his family to their fatherland Argos (13-22). Amphitryon describes that he was "resettled" (κατῳκίσθην 13) after losing Argos because he murdered his father-in-law Electryon (16-17). He also describe his son's

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[361] Bond 1981, 142, points out that ἀπολάχωσ' "is a legal term for receiving one's proper patrimony." Cf. Hdt. 4.114.4. Megara also refers to the patrimony which has been stolen from her sons at 337-8.

[362] In tragedy it is regular to acknowledge the gods first on a homecoming, as Heracles' reference to his hearth here seems to do. E.g. Aesch. *Ag*. 518, Eur. *Or*. 356. See Bond 1981, 199-200 and Fraenkel 1950 on *Ag*. 503.

[363] It is thus clear that Heracles does not recognize the *oikos'* importance only because of Lycus' threat to his *oikos.*

desire to reclaim his father's lost patrimony: "he yearned to dwell in the Argive city walls and the Cyclopian city" (Ἀργεῖα τείχη καὶ Κυκλωπίαν πόλιν / ὠρέξατ' οἰκεῖν … 15-16) and was "wishing to dwell in his fatherland" (πάτραν οἰκεῖν θέλων 18). In order to achieve these familial and political desires, Heracles settled upon "a great price" (μισθὸν … μέγαν 19) with Eurystheus, his heroic labors. The details which Amphitryon provides in his prologue thus introduce the audience to a remarkably familial hero.

Heracles' concern to provide his own sons with a patrimony is also highlighted before his appearance by Megara who, reminiscing, recounts how the hero assigned a kingdom for each of his young sons to inherit (462-79). The passage reemphasizes Heracles' familial motivation in undertaking his labors, since Megara depicts him granting to one of his sons Argos (462-4), the patrimony which was described as the impetus for undertaking labors for Eurystheus. Megara peppers the account with details of family arrangements, including that one son was to dwell in Eurystheus' house (463) and that the next would inherit Thebes through Megara's dowry (ἔγκληρα 468). The third son, presumably youngest, was to inherit Oechalia (463, a smaller inheritance) which Heracles had conquered. Heracles' concern for placing his children in stable positions in society contrasts with the ambiguous patrimony he has been offered: his adopted human father Amphitryon jeopardized his claim to Argos and there is no indication in Euripides' play that Heracles will be divinized in the future on account of his divine father Zeus.

The intimacy of Megara's depiction, tinged with humor, suggests Heracles' sentimental attachment to his children from the wife's perspective.[364] Megara describes Heracles placing his

[364] To some readers this tenderness seemed to clash with tragic solemnity. Bond 1981, 184 characterizes the narrative at 462-79 as "written with a light touch which seems to have offended the gravity of some editors" such as Pflugk-Wecklein 1899 and Elmsley 1813. Michelini 1987, 250-4 discusses the mixture of low and high style in this and other domestic scenes.

lion skin (a symbol of Argos) on one son's head (465-6). She portrays her next son begging his father to inherit Thebes (ἐξέπειθες 469), perhaps encouraged by the patrimony promised to his brother. Heracles acquiesces, as Megara tells it, pretending that his son actually is king of Thebes: "you were (in imagination) king of Thebes, which loves chariots" (σὺ δ' ἦσθα Θηβῶν τῶν φιλαρμάτων ἄναξ, 467). Heracles plays along by handing the boy his club, a symbol of Thebes, as a "mock gift" (ψευδῆ δόσιν 471).[365] Although presented in third-person narrative, Megara's words conjure an effective display of the hero's family sentiment which will be found consistent with Heracles' actual performance on arrival.

Amid many implications that Heracles will express strong attachment to his family, one statement by Amphitryon before his son's appearance suggests the possibility that Heracles may not be a family-man. Amphitryon's comment joins with the barbs of his antagonist Lycus to suggest instead the isolated hero of traditional lore. The tyrant first deprecates Heracles' bow as a coward's form of fighting in contrast with the mutually dependent hoplite warfare (158-164), to which Amphitryon defends his son's weapon (188-203).[366] Amphitryon explains that the archer's tactic of standing outside the battle lines is practical:

> …· τοῦτο δ' ἐν μάχῃ
> σοφὸν μάλιστα, δρῶντα πολεμίους κακῶς
> σῴζειν τὸ σῶμα, μὴ 'κ τύχης ὡρμισμένον. 201-3
>
> This is most wise in battle, while hurting your enemy to preserve yourself without being dependent on chance.

[365] Bond 1981, 186-7 discusses and rejects the interpretation that the club is a false gift from Daedalus, suggested by the reading of manuscript L: Δαιδάλου ψευδῆ δόσιν.
[366] Michelini 1987, 244-6 characterizes Lycus' and Amphitryon's arguments as sophistic: Lycus argues in terms of traditional forms of heroism and Amphitryon offers a new type of hero.

Amphitryon's emphasis on the independence of the archer in combination with Lycus' criticism suggests the audience should examine Heracles' social identity. For example Gregory 1991 suggests that in their interchange Lycus and Amphitryon characterize Heracles as an aristocratic individual who also suffers the concomitant problem of integration in community.[367] Amphitryon's statement seems to agree with Lycus' depiction of his son's distance from the community. This is a problematic representation for Heracles especially when contrasted with the example of the hoplite, a recognizable part of the Athenian citizen's identity.

In addition to implying a problem in his son's relationship to the *polis,* Amphitryon's words strike a discordant note with the emphasis in the play's first section (and throughout) upon the necessity (as well as risk) of the interdependence of family members. Amphitryon's phrase [ἐ]κ τύχης ὡρμισμένον (203) is a nautical metaphor of mooring or anchoring a boat with ropes and participates in the play's recurring image of being yoked or tied to other people; elsewhere in the play this metaphor is used primarily of the ties of family members.[368] Amphitryon here touts the desirability of being *un*-yoked: this passage seems to suggest that Heracles' lack of attachment to others is a positive characteristic. Such a possibility heightens anticipation for Heracles' response on his return.

Amphitryon's statement engages and seems to counter the play's strong image of physical bonds within and to the family.[369] Megara describes herself, Amphitryon, and her children as driven like an "inglorious yoke of corpses, the old and young and mothers all together" (ζεῦγος οὐ καλὸν νεκρῶν, /ὁμοῦ γέροντες καὶ νέοι καὶ μητέρες. 454-5). The image

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[367] Gregory 1991, 130-147 attaches significance of aristocracy to Heracles' bow.
[368] Barlow 1996, 134 and Bond 1981, 120. ὁρμίζω, however, usually uses the preposition ἐπί instead of ἐκ, as discussed by Bond.
[369] Barlow 1971, 107 discusses the repeated imagery of mooring and yoking. See also Worman 1999 on the extended imagery of clothing and binding in the play.

highlights how individuals share in the destruction of the family to which they are commonly bound. Similarly, the chorus describes Megara leading her children as though she were a trace-horse drawing (ἕλκουσαν 445) a team by a tow rope (σειραίοις 444). Megara uses the image of family "ties" also to convey the family as a source of stability rather than destruction when she describes the marriage alliance she had arranged for her sons so that, "as though fastened on the sterns with ropes" (ὡς ἀνημμένοι κάλῳς / πρυμνησίοισι 478-9),[370] they might "enjoy a blessed life" (βίον ἔχοιτ' εὐδαίμονα 479). This repetition of the image of bonds builds a theme of interdependence within the family which is portrayed as necessary if sometimes painful.

A further engagement with this imagery is found in the entering chorus' song. The chorus enjoin one another not to wear out their feet and legs "like a yoked beast [i.e. "horse"] laboring" (ὥστε …ζυγηφόρος πονῶν 120-1) but to hold onto hands and garments to steady each other (λαβοῦ χερῶν καὶ πέπλων 124). The chorus conclude the ode remarking that by helping each other in this way they rehearse their performance as comrade hoplites, fighting in an interdependent manner (126-130). The image directly connects the mooring and yoking imagery with cooperation and hoplite warfare, which Lycus soon contrasts with Heracles' use of the bow (158-164).

Far from behaving as the lone hero who might have been suggested in Amphitryon's and Lycus' dialogue, when he actually arrives on stage Heracles embraces a role of great paternal responsibility which he expresses several times (574-82 and 634-6, discussed below) as well as joining in the play's recurrent verbal image of social "ties." Heracles' engagement with the metaphor of mooring and yoking is most dramatically enacted at the end of his homecoming scene as he prepares to enter his house with his family. Heracles confirms his identification with

[370] Medea, Eur. *Med*. 770, uses a similar expression in speaking to Aegeus. She refers to him as the harbor upon which she will tie her stern's cable: ἐκ τοῦδ᾽ ἀναψόμεσθα πρυμνήτην κάλων.

his family in his staged interactions with his children which emphasize family bonds and interdependence:

> …καὶ μέθεσθ' ἐμῶν πέπλων·
> οὐ γὰρ πτερωτὸς οὐδὲ φευξείω φίλους.
> ἆ,
> οἵδ' οὐκ ἀφιᾶσ', ἀλλ' ἀνάπτονται πέπλων
> τοσῷδε μᾶλλον· … 627-630
>
> and you [children] let go of my *peplos*. For I am not winged nor will I flee family. Ah, they do not let go, but they are holding all the more tightly to my *peplos*.

Heracles interacts directly and physically with his children on stage, twice commenting that they are clinging to his clothing (*peplos* 627 and 629); this portrayal connects to Megara's earlier use of images of tying and mooring the children.[371] In line 627 Heracles assures his children that he is not "winged" (πτερωτὸς) and will not flee his family (οὐδὲ φευξείω), emphasizing his embrace of literal and metaphoric family ties. These two descriptions of wings and flight, which Heracles *disavows*, relate to the depiction of Heracles the archer constructed by Lycus and Amphitryon. Heracles describes his own characteristic arrows as "winged" (πτερωτοῖς … τοξεύμασι 571) and Lycus earlier had characterized the archer hero as "ready for fleeing" (τῇ φυγῇ πρόχειρος ἦν 161).[372] By his explicit rejection of such characterizations, Heracles suggests that he prioritizes family interdependence over the independence of a more isolated position. He further conveys

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[371] Worman 1999, 98-102.

[372] At the end of the play Amphitryon says that family's hope has "winged away" or "taken wing" ("we are ruined, we are ruined, having taken wing" οἰχόμεθ᾽ οἰχόμεθα πτανοί. 1187). This shows Hercules has been forced [by Hera] to act in the way he disavowed, but not, I think, that the hero is inconsistent.

this when he describes his children as boats which he tows with ropes (ἐφολκίδας 631) a conspicuous connection to earlier yoking and mooring images.[373]

The image of Heracles' binding continues even at the end of the play when, after he kills his family members Heracles is literally tied to a pillar of his household.[374] The messenger describes Heracles as bound with ropes for trace-horses (δεσμὰ σειραίων βρόχων ἀνήπτομεν πρὸς κίον' 1009, 1011), evoking Megara's earlier use of such an image to describe her sons following her (σειραίοις 444). Heracles draws the audience's attention to his bonds as he himself recognizes his situation (1035-8). He describes himself as "anchored like ship" ("look, why am I anchored with bonds as a ship?" ἰδού, τί δεσμοῖς ναῦς ὅπως ὡρμισμένος 1094), repeating the exact participle ὡρμισμένος which his father used earlier to describe the dependency an archer would usefully *avoid* (μὴ 'κ τύχης ὡρμισμένον 203).[375] Realizing his familial loss, Heracles later feels "unyoked" in a bad way, exclaiming, "how wretchedly I have fared and am unyoked from my children and wife." (ὡς ἀθλίως πέπραγα κἀποζεύγνυμαι / τέκνων γυναικός τ'·1375-6).

These engagements with the image of binding, both equine and nautical, are a metaphoric expression of Heracles' attitude of strong attachment towards his family, which he clearly articulates upon his arrival. Thus he bluntly renounces the worth of his heroic labors if he cannot protect his family (574-82). Heracles' devaluation of heroic *kleos* in favor in familial responsibility contrasts with the chorus' recent emphasis on the individual accomplishments of the hero, upon whom they recently heaped humanity's praises (348-429). Heracles affirms his love of children, *philoteknia,* as a natural human attachment. This, his final statement before he

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[373] As Wilamowitz-Möllendorff 1895 142 (on l. 631) and 280 (on l. 1424) noted, Heracles repeats this image in different context at the end of the play (1424).
[374] Worman 1999, 101.
[375] Worman 1999 notes this use of binding wording by Heracles, but not Amphitryon's earlier use or the connection between the two.

leaves the stage and Hera sends mania, accentuates the assertion of his identity as a 'family man' (634-6).

Further preparation for Heracles' outlook towards his children comes in the attitudes of Megara and Amphitryon, both caretakers of Heracles' *oikos* in his absence, whose opinions conflict in how to care for Heracles' family in the face of Lycus' seemingly inevitable threat of death.[376] Much discussion of this disagreement between Megara and Amphitryon has centered on their definitions of *aretē* and *eugenia* and how it relates to Heracles' attitude.[377] The conflict also juxtaposes the different perspectives on family-attachment of the two. While both are clearly devoted to the family, Amphitryon is characterized as possibly over-attached to the children. He wishes them to continue waiting for Heracles as suppliants at the altar and asks Lycus to allow them to depart in exile (214). Megara disputes the rightfulness in delaying what seems to be inevitable execution (282-6) or in seeking inglorious exile (302-6) and stresses the role the children have in upholding their own *oikos* through a noble death (287-294). Since both Amphitryon and Megara stand in for the absent head of the house Heracles, the conflict in their approaches primes the audience's anticipation for the tenor of Heracles' own attitude to his family.

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[376] Scholars variously choose a winner in the conflict between Amphitryon and Megara. Thus Burnett 1971, 161-2 sees Megara violating the proper suppliant role, though Bond 1981, xix corrects this view. Gregory 1991, 123-8 (discussing the development of *eugenia*) chooses Amphitryon's as the more sensible position and finds Heracles' behavior validating Amphitryon's attitude. Adkins 1966 on the role of *aretē* prefers Megara's position while Chalk 1962 suggests that Amphitryon and Megara each embody a type of *aretē* which Heracles later picks up.

[377] Papadopoulou 2008, 130-7 reviews the discussion of these themes. Gregory 1991, 123-8 discusses the development of the concept of *eugenia*. Chalk 1962, 8-12 and Adkins 1966, 209-19 consider how the conflict develops a concept of *aretē* which Heracles' performance engages.

Amphitryon first raises the topic of his attachment to the children when he describes in his prologue that his son "leaves me at this house as nurse of the children and house-tender" (… λείπει … με τοῖσδ' ἐν δώμασιν / τροφὸν τέκνων οἰκουρόν … 44-45). Both titles τροφὸς "nurse" and οἰκουρός "house-watcher" (45) are regularly used of women. Οἰκουρός often refers to a woman at home during her husband's absence and is applied negatively to "stay-at-home-men" in Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* (343) and Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (1625).[378] Heracles will later praise his wife for "enduring a long house-tending [οἰκουρία] in the house" (μακρὰς διαντλοῦσ' ἐν δόμοις οἰκουρίας. 1373). Bond finds Amphitryon's use of the terms, along with the description of himself as a useless old man (γέροντ' ἀχρεῖον 42) "sardonic."[379] While Amphitryon's meaning may include a satiric reflection upon his old age, the import is broader. Because the middle-aged Heracles will later embrace a role similar to his older father's description,[380] Euripides suggests that his portrayal of Amphitryon is not only a stock characterization of old age. Rather Euripides seems to be exploring the topic of positive male attachment to the household which he develops through Amphitryon and further in Heracles.

The sentiment Amphitryon expresses towards Heracles' children reminds the audience of those more typically expressed by females but which also characterize many of the old men in Euripides. Strong love for children and willingness to sacrifice for them is a frequent attribute of women, also espoused by Euripides' older men.[381] While advocating to Megara that they

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[378] Bond 1981, 73. He discusses two possible exceptions where *trophos* is used of males and notes that "οἰκουρέω eventually developed the technical sense 'avoid military service' (LSJ s.v. II i).
[379] Bond 1981, 73 points out the contrast with Megara's depiction of his military service (60-61).
[380] Heracles emphasizes this with his statement at lines 633-4, οὐκ ἀναίνομαι θεράπευμα τέκνων, discussed on pg. 158.
[381] Mastronarde 2010, 255 observes greater female concern and sacrifice for the family in Euripidean tragedy, with the exception of older males such as Iolaus in *Heraclidae*, Amphitryon in *Heracles*, Cadmus in *Bacchae,* and Peleus in *Andromache*. This could be said also of Sophocles' Oedipus in *Oedipus Tyrannus* and *Oedipus at Colonus.*

forestall their deaths by continued supplication at the altar, Amphitryon explains his motivation in terms of emotion towards his grandchildren and his child:

> τὸ δειλὸν οὐδὲ τοῦ βίου πόθος
> θανεῖν ἐρύκει μ', ἀλλὰ παιδὶ βούλομαι
> σῶσαι τέκν'· ἄλλως δ' ἀδυνάτων ἔοικ' ἐρᾶν. 316-318
>
> Cowardice or longing for life does not hold me back from death, but I wish to save the children for my child. However, I seem to be in love with the impossible.

Amphitryon similarly expressed his hope in terms of love earlier when Megara asked him "are you so in love with the sun's light?" (φιλεῖς οὕτω φάος; 90) and he answered "I am in love with hopes" (φιλῶ τὰς ἐλπίδας. 91). The combination of the verb φιλεῖν with vocabulary of desire, πόθος and ἐρᾶν, conveys Amphitryon's strong emotion, *erōs*, for the children and the continuance of the *oikos*.[382] The concept of *erōs* for children is expressed elsewhere in Euripides by individuals, especially men, who face infertility.[383] While Amphitryon's attachment to the children is not depicted as cowardly and his delay in fact benefits the family, Megara's opposition to Amphitryon's delaying tactic highlights his emotional attachment to the children. Amphitryon reinforces this characterization when he grieves that his son Heracles must leave him at the end of the play.[384] This emphasis on Amphitryon's sentiment toward his child and

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[382] *erōs* is much stronger than the affection of *storgē* which often affects family relations, and certainly than *philia*. See Stanford 1983, 36-42 for discussion of these related emotions in tragedy. He notes, 37, that *erōs* affects women most of all in tragedy.

[383] It is used of Creusa's desire in Eur. *Ion* 67, and Xouthus in Eur. *Ion* 1227; of Aegeus, Eur. *Med*. 714-5; by Iphis of himself, Eur. *Supp*. 1087-8, of Archelaos, Eur. *Arch*. Fr. 2.19-21; and by Danae of herself in Eur. *Dan*. fr. 316 [Nauck], here expressed as a *pothos*. The monologue of Iphis in Eur. *Supp*. (1080-1113) relates well to Amphitryon's situation: Iphis regrets his desire for children since he now knows the pain of losing them and his hope for continuing his family. Zeitlin 2008, 322-3 and Golden 1990, 90 and n. 43 briefly discuss this language of desire for children. Golden suggests that the chorus in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* includes a possible other instance of *erōs* for children.

[384] 1409 and 1419-20.

grandchildren in the play is especially important because Heracles, a man in maturity but not aged, also embodies Amphitryon's attitude.

Megara provides a foil for Amphitryon's expressions of emotional attachment to the children. Megara argues that by dying nobly the boys' inevitable death will bring *kleos* to their *oikos*; in this, she states, she takes Heracles as her "model" (μίμημ' 294), who is εὐκλεὴς ("of good repute" or "famous" 288 and 290).[385] Megara presents an alternative dimension of *oikos*-concern to Amphitryon's: concern for the individual's responsibility to the *oikos* and its *kleos* in the eyes of the wider public. In similar terms at the end of the play Heracles regrets that his children were unable to enjoy the "good reputation" (εὔκλειαν 1370) for which he labored with his strength (ἐκμοχθῶν βίᾳ 1369). Megara's attitude is not lacking in *oikos*-concern: she is clearly depicted as a loving mother as she herself says: "I love [my] children, for how could I not love those whom I bore, whom I labored for?" (ἐγὼ φιλῶ μὲν τέκνα· πῶς γὰρ οὐ φιλῶ / ἅτικτον, ἀμόχθησα; 280-281).[386] With ἀμόχθησα (281) Megara frames her investment in the children, her "labor," to her husband's famous labors. In this description also, Megara emphasizes family members' roles in contributing to the family *kleos*.

Megara's desire for her sons' noble death reveals a pragmatic view of how to salvage the best "patrimony" for them: through building the *kleos* of the *oikos*. She tells her sons that although others "lay hold of the property (οὐσίας)" of their father's house, its name is still theirs

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[385] Chalk 1962, 12 praises Megara's brand of active *aretē* in this scene which she shares with her husband. Adkins 1966, 209-12 on the other hand disputes Chalk's suggestion that Megara demonstrates *aretē* (but believes nonetheless that her course of action is the one Euripides portrays as best). Gregory 1991, 123, 125-6 characterizes Megara's view about *eugenia* here as representing "unyeilding aristocratic" (126) ideals, which are overly stringent.

[386] Other expressions of Megara's love include 70-9 and 485-9 where she describes clasping and kissing her sons (485-7), and uses a simile of the bee to express the wish that she could collect her children's tears to give back "a single composite tear" (ἓν …ἀθρόον … δάκρυ; 489).

("[follow me] into your father's house, of whose property others lay hold, but whose name is still ours" πατρῷον ἐς μέλαθρον, οὗ τῆς οὐσίας / ἄλλοι κρατοῦσι, τὸ δ' ὄνομ' ἔσθ' ἡμῶν ἔτι 337-8). The difference between Amphitryon and Megara is accentuated by the final requests each character poses to Lycus: while Amphitryon asks to be spared the sight of the boys' deaths (322-5), Megara asks leave to adorn her children nobly in the family's store of funeral garments.

It is notable that it is Megara, the female, who embodies this more public view of the *oikos*, while Amphitryon expresses the more sentimental perspective.[387] At Heracles' arrival, Megara suggests a more typical gendered distinction when she apologizes for interrupting Amphitryon to describe the family's ordeal to her husband. She explains that women are more prone to the emotion of pity than men (τὸ θῆλυ γάρ πως μᾶλλον οἰκτρὸν ἀρσένων 536). This statement, one of Megara's last,[388] prompts consideration of the emotional responses of Amphitryon expressed both earlier and later in the play. Comparison of contrasting attitudes through the pair of older man with a spirited younger woman is a tactic Euripides utilizes in more than one play.[389] The contrast he creates in this way in *Heracles* anticipates the (perhaps unexpected) way Heracles will position himself in relation to his family and children.

Fragments of Euripides' *Erectheus* offer insight into how to interpret the conflict of Amphitryon and Megara with sensitivity to their respective genders and levels of family-

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[387] Michelini 1987, 246-50, on the other hand, thinks Megara is unusually deferential for a female character in a Euripidean play, and that her main role is to represent her husband's values until he returns.

[388] Megara's final line is 561.

[389] For example, Alcestis with Pheres in *Alcestis*, Macaria with Iolaus in *Heraclidae*, and Evadne with Iphis and Adrastus in *Suppliant Women*.

attachment.[390] This play features a mother ready to sacrifice a child for another value (in this case, patriotism) and places her attitude in dialogue with the category of more sentimental female attachments. In an extended fragment queen Praxithea argues, presumably to her husband Erechtheus, that they should obey the suggestion of the Delphic oracle to sacrifice their daughter in order to save Athens. The orator Lycurgus quoted a portion of this speech to praise the intensity of patriotism which would overcome a mother's attachment to her children.[391] The queen's argument is largely patriotic but, like Megara's in *Heracles,* it does emphasize *kleos* as a motivation for noble death (Fr. 360 l. 32-6).[392] Praxithea sharply condemns women who "feminize" (ἐθήλυν' 29) their sons by crying over them as they go to war, and states "I hate the women who prefer their children's lives to their honor or recommend baseness" (μισῶ γυναῖκας αἵτινες πρὸ τοῦ καλοῦ ζῆν παῖδας εἵλοντ' ἢ παρῆνεσαν κακά. 30-1). In a separate fragment King Erechtheus asks his son for only a slight touch of the hand as a farewell for decorum's sake: "Without excess I take leave of you, out of shame, for it is an unwise man who has a female-minded spirit" (ὑπ' αἰδοῦς δ' οὐ λίαν <σ'> ἀσπάζομαι·/ γυναικόφρων γὰρ θυμὸς ἀνδρὸς οὐ σοφοῦ. fr. 362 l. 33-4 [Nauck]).[393] Both Praxithea's and Erectheus' words suggest both that over-attachment to children is associated with females and that it is a weakness.

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[390] *Heracles* and *Erechtheus* were likely within about decade of one another. Based on resolutions, Cropp and Fick 1985 suggests the date of *Heracles* is between 422 and 413 and close to *Troades*. Cropp and Fick 1985, 78-80 and Cropp 1995, 155 place *Erechtheus* in 421 or before.

[391] Lycurg. *Leoc.* 98–101.

[392] To persuade that the child should be sacrificed, Praxithea compares the "common tomb and shared *kleos*" (τύμβον τε κοινὸν … εὔκλειάν τ᾽ ἴσην· 33) a son fallen in battle might receive with the even greater "single crown" which will be awarded to her daughter alone (στέφανος εἷς μιᾷ μόνῃ 34).

[393] In this fragment, Erechtheus seems to address his adopted male heir with advice for ruling and running a household.

Similarly to *Heracles,* the fragmentary *Erechtheus* seems to engage with the gendered categories it acknowledges by suggesting that the king struggles more greatly in emotional attachment than his female counterpart: it is Praxithea whose speech advocates the sacrifice of her child while Erechtheus suggests a desire to embrace his son with greater emotion than he will allow himself. Amphitryon's contrast with Megara is similar, though because he is an older man his family attachment is not unexpected: the elderly Iphis and Adrastus in *Supplices* and Iolaus in *Heraclidae* present positions on family which are very similar to Amphitryon's. However Euripides' method of pairing Amphitryon and Megara brings out the potential excess of Amphitryon's emotion, which in turn plays an important role in the depiction of the attachment of Heracles, at the height of manhood.

Heracles expresses attitudes toward his children which repeat the individual outlooks and language used earlier by Amphitryon and Megara. Heracles' repetition of Amphitryon's sentiment is especially striking since while older men express family feeling relatively frequently in tragedy, this is not true of their younger, mature counterparts. The clear rehearsal of some of Amphitryon's attachment by Heracles, a middle-aged man who is only a moment separated from the achievement of his heroic labors, invites more intense consideration by the audience.

As he exits the stage with his clinging children, Heracles reflects explicitly on his emotional attachment to his children. He suggests he anticipates a critical reception of this attachment when he states that he is "not ashamed" of giving "care," θεράπευμα, to his children (οὐκ ἀναίνομαι / θεράπευμα τέκνων 633-4).[394] This recalls Amphitryon's earlier characterization

[394] As Michelini 1987, 254-5 notes, the reference to θεράπευμα (complementing the theme of human weakness, see Kröker 1938) engages the theme of care and service in the play. Michelini 1987, 255 n. 103 offers the comparanda of Pylades' words in Euripides' *Iphigenia at Tauris* 314 and *Orestes* 791-803, whose description of offering care without shame is very similar to Heracles'.

of himself as "nurse" (τροφόν 45) of the children, a role which carried female connotations. Heracles thus confidently asserts the role which seemed to feminize and satirize Amphitryon's aged status.

The hero's embrace of care for family is accentuated at the scenic juncture where he exits into the *skēnē* with his children. In his final words before this Heracles reflects on the sentiment that all men are "child-loving" (φιλότεκνος, 636):

> φιλοῦσι παῖδας οἵ τ' ἀμείνονες βροτῶν
> οἵ τ' οὐδὲν ὄντες· χρήμασιν δὲ διάφοροι·
> ἔχουσιν, οἳ δ' οὔ· πᾶν δὲ φιλότεκνον γένος. 634-6
>
> Both the nobler of men love their children as well as those who are nothing; they are unlike in property – some have it and some do not – but the whole human race is child-loving.

These closing words are usually characterized as a gnome since the same sentiment – that all humans love children – is found in two other Euripidean tragedies.[395] Even if Heracles' maxim is generic, his own identification as φιλότεκνος articulates a distinctive trait, since it is women in tragedy (as well as older men) who express concern for children and family most vociferously and take risks on their behalf.[396] The attachment of mothers to children is a common characterization in tragedy and other Greek texts:[397] several ancient Greek writers note the

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[395] This is the characterization of Bond 1981, 227-8 and Barlow 1996. Parallels for Heracles' statement are Eur. *Phoen.* 965 and Eur. *Dictys* fr. 346 [Nauck]. In the latter, Perseus (possibly) expresses a "common law" (κοινὸς νόμος) for men and beasts "to love the children they bear" (τέκνˑ ἃ τίκτουσιν φιλεῖν). See also Arist. *Rh*. 1371b26.

[396] Mastronarde 2010, 255.

[397] Golden 1990, 97-99 gives some passages from outside tragedy which describe mothers' love for children. For example, Isae. 11.17, Xen. *Oec*. 7.24, and Xen. *Mem*. 1.4.7. Examples in tragedy include Andromache (Eur. *Tro*. 740-763) who, like Megara, expresses piteous lament over losing young children. Medea impressively laments over the children she kills (Eur. *Med.* 1021-1077).

superiority of the mother in the particular quality of being φιλότεκνος.[398] Euripidean plays provide at least one and possibly two instances in addition to *Heracles* where male characters profess this most commonly female feeling.[399] In addition to general human attachment to children (a theme in many of his dramas), male attachment to children is perhaps a subject of particular interest to Euripides.[400] The degree of family interest that Heracles expresses contrasts starkly with his more traditional and individual heroic figure. The difference is reemphasized visually: the children who trail and hold onto his *peplos* contributes to an unusual visual figure for the hero which suggests his family identity.

In assessing the implication of Heracles' statement of *philoteknia,* it is useful to consider similar expressions of feeling for children in Attic court-speeches, where speakers frequently appeal to the feeling as a common bond with the jury, both as a source of sympathy and a mark of character.[401] Since Heracles asserts this as a value for himself and other men, Heracles' *philoteknia* also defines him in common with other members of his *polis* community.[402] Such a

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[398] Golden 1990, 97 and Mastronarde 1994, 250 cite Eur. fr. 1015 [Nauck], Lyc. *Leocr*. 101 (following a quotation of Praxithea's speech from *Erectheus*) and Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1168a25-6.

[399] Creon in Eur. *Phoen.* 355-6 and possibly Perseus in Eur. *Dictys* Fr. 346, as Collard-Cropp 2008, 349 speculates. A male speaker for the *Dictys* fragment is further suggested by the previous *Dictys* fr. 345 [Nauck] also preserved by Stobaeus in a chapter on father-son relationships which specifically mentions a father's attachment to children: πατρὶ φίλτατον τέκνα. However, Karamanou 2006, 206-7 thinks it just as likely that fr. 346 [Nauck=Karamanou 12] is spoken by Danae of her love for Perseus.

[400] Euripides' interest in the attachment of older males to family and children also suggests this. A larger sample of his plays would help here. On attachment to children generally in Euripides, see Zeitlin 2008.

[401] Golden 1990, 91-92 points out the common use of orators to love of children as a sentiment which binds citizens and validates their credibility. For example, Lys. 4.20, Dem 28.2, and Dem. 50.62.

[402] The value of equality in this statement suggests political meaning. Bond 1981, 223-4 discusses the political and philosophical connotations of such natural equality, suggesting, 224, that "the philosophical origins of this theory predate the democracy at Athens."

political resonance of family values is noteworthy for the traditional Heracles, whose labors cast him as a panhellenic figure, not fixed in any one *polis*, who thus finds his place on the fringe. As we have seen, this is a type Euripides engages throughout the play. The articulation of *philoteknia* expresses not only Heracles' ties to family but, through these, his connection to the broader *polis* community.

Euripides continues to explore the depth of Heracles' family attachment at the points of his greatest suffering in the play. When Heracles returns on stage on the *ekkuklēma* (1029), bound to the single smashed pillar of his house, he expresses both visually and verbally a complete identification with his *oikos*. Heracles' immediate turn to suicide (1146-52) after his father explains to him what he has done demonstrates how much he has invested in his family and that he has not indeed buffered himself from harm through isolation.

Theseus' criticism of Heracles' family attachment at the end of the play reveals how similar Heracles' emotion of family attachment is to his father Amphitryon's. When Heracles, beginning to leave, asks Theseus to allow him to turn to look once more at his dead children, Theseus refers critically to what Heracles wishes as a *philtron*, literally a "love-charm," or something which produces affection: "Why ever? Having this *philtron* will you be easier?" (ὡς δὴ τί; φίλτρον τοῦτ' ἔχων ῥᾴων ἔσῃ; 1407).[403] Theseus' characterization of Heracles shares the vocabulary of desire used earlier to describe Amphitryon's attachment to his grandchildren's survival, which included φιλεῖν (90 and 91), πόθος (316), and ἐρᾶν (318). In response to Theseus' scolding characterization, Heracles honestly asserts his desire simply as a *pothos* (ποθῶ· 1408). Heracles adds that he wishes to embrace his father, at which point Amphitryon

[403] Barlow 1996, 183, explains *philtron* as "any means of producing affection." See Barrett 1964 on Eur. *Hipp.* 509-12, and for a non-sexual sense, Eur. *Tro.* 52.

ignores Theseus' reproof and embraces his son, commenting that this sentiment of attachment is shared by father and son: "for you seek the same things that are dear to me" (τἀμὰ γὰρ σπεύδεις φίλα 1409). Theseus continues to criticize Heracles for weeping for his family and tells the hero that he will appear "womanish" (εἴ σ' ὄψεταί τις θῆλυν ὄντ', οὐκ αἰνέσει. 1412), a characterization which relates to the potentially feminine aspects of Amphitryon's earlier portrayal. Theseus also questions if Heracles has forgotten his labors (1410) and tells him "you are not the famous Heracles while you are suffering" (ὁ κλεινὸς Ἡρακλῆς οὐκ εἶ νοσῶν. 1414). Heracles meets these criticisms defensively and upholds the familial attachment he shares with his father.[404]

The messenger's account of Heracles' domestic ritual (920-932) develops yet another perspective in Euripides' exploration of the family commitment of a mature male, Heracles. In this passage Heracles acts the chief role as father of the *oikos* in a purificatory sacrifice at the altar of Zeus Herkeios.[405] The focus on Heracles at the center of this ritual is notable because of the common association in tragedy between women and domestic religion, especially funerary ritual.[406] Tending the altar of Zeus Herkeios however, was, as far as we can tell, exclusively the role of the father of the house.[407] The messenger's description builds a picture of a religiously

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[404] 1411, 1413, 1415, and 1417.

[405] The altar is identified only as of Zeus (922) but easily understood as that of Zeus Herkeios. Philostratus in his *Imagines* (II.23.3) describes this scene at the altar of Zeus Herkeios, scattered in disarray. Rehm 2002, 106 and 351 n. 50 and Boedeker 2008, 232-4 point out that the location of the altar of Zeus Herkeios is the location for family annihilation not only in this play but also for Creon's family in the *Antigone*, and for Priam's in the *Iliad*. Boedeker discusses more generally the significance of the domestic cult of Zeus Herkeios as well.

[406] Foley 2001, 21-55 discusses female funerary ritual, especially lamentation, in tragedy as a political expression.

[407] Mikalson 2010, 13 in discussing the ritual role of the father notes that we know of no formal female religious ritual which took place *inside* the *oikos*. We often see female characters and choruses in tragedy involved in funeral ritual and domestic sacrifice (for instance, Electra,

correct and *kalos* sacrifice, where the family makes up a "beautifully formed circle" (χορὸς … καλλίμορφος 925) and holds the religiously correct silence (φθέγμα … ὅσιον εἴχομεν 927) in anticipation of Heracles' initiation of the sacrifice. Heracles was "about to bring a firebrand in his right hand so as to dip into the *chernips,*" (μέλλων δὲ δαλὸν χειρὶ δεξιᾷ φέρειν / ἐς χέρνιβ' ὡς βάψειεν 928-9) which he would use to sprinkle his family. This moment when Heracles' mania hits, captured by the messenger, focuses attention on the functioning *oikos* and Heracles' role as father and religious overseer. The scene pinpoints a moment at which Heracles epitomizes a male strongly attached to his family. Such a portrayal here in the drama suggests that the characterization of Heracles' relationship with his family as a male and father is a major theme.

In addition to Amphitryon's attachment, Heracles also reiterates Megara's brand of *kleos*- and reciprocal family values. In his initial renunciation of his heroic labors, Heracles suggests that his labors are insignificant if they are worth nothing to his *oikos*:

> τῷ γάρ μ' ἀμύνειν μᾶλλον ἢ δάμαρτι χρὴ
> καὶ παισὶ καὶ γέροντι; χαιρόντων πόνοι·
> μάτην γὰρ αὐτοὺς τῶνδε μᾶλλον ἤνυσα.
> καὶ δεῖ μ' ὑπὲρ τῶνδ', εἴπερ οἵδ' ὑπὲρ πατρός,
> θνήσκειν ἀμύνοντ'· ἢ τί φήσομεν καλὸν
> ὕδρᾳ μὲν ἐλθεῖν ἐς μάχην λέοντί τε
> Εὐρυσθέως πομπαῖσι, τῶν δ' ἐμῶν τέκνων
> οὐκ ἐκπονήσω θάνατον; οὐκ ἄρ' Ἡρακλῆς
> ὁ καλλίνικος ὡς πάροιθε λέξομαι. 574-582
>
> For whom is it more necessary that I defend than my wife and children and old man? Farewell labors, for I undertook them in vain rather than these labors here. And I must die on behalf of these ones, protecting them, if these ones did so for their father. What kind of a fine thing will we call going into combat with the Hydra and the lion on Eurystheus'

Clytemnestra, Antigone, and many lamenting choruses). While the family hearth is often connected with the female (see the discussion of Morgan 2007a, 301-3), it also has male and patrilineal association as do the domestic altars of Zeus Ktesios, Herkeios and Apollo Agyieos. For association of hearth and *herkeios* see Bond 1981, 215-6 and Fraenkel 1950 on *Ag*. 1056.

> missions, if I will not labor to prevent the death of my sons? For I will not be called Heracles *kallinikos* as before.

Heracles here suggests that he did his labors for Eurystheus primarily to support his family (this agrees with Amphitryon's earlier account, 13-22). Just as Megara related her and her sons' actions to her husband's labors (287-90), so Heracles feels the need to reciprocate his sons' bravery in facing death (577-8).[408] Heracles also attaches value to *kleos,* referring to his "fine" (καλὸν 578) deed and his reputation as καλλίνικος (582) similarly to Megara's reference to the "many fine things (καλά)" which she and her sons owe Heracles' *oikos* (ὀφείλομεν γὰρ πολλὰ δώμασιν καλά· 287). Like Megara's expression of responsibility to the *oikos*, Heracles places the importance of his achievements within the context of his family's support.

Far from forgetting his family at the end of the play, Heracles reemphasizes his former efforts to provide *kleos*, good reputation, and an inheritance for his sons and *oikos*:

> ὦ τέκν', ὁ φύσας καὶ τεκὼν ὑμᾶς πατὴρ
> ἀπώλεσ', οὐδ' ὤνασθε τῶν ἐμῶν καλῶν,
> ἀγὼ παρεσκεύαζον ἐκμοχθῶν βίᾳ
> εὔκλειαν ὑμῖν, πατρὸς ἀπόλαυσιν καλήν. 1367-1370
>
> O children, the father who produced and begot you destroyed you, nor did you enjoy the benefit of my fine deeds, which I prepared laboring by strength for a good reputation for you, which is the fine advantage from a father.

Heracles stresses his *kleos* in this passage by referring to his "fine deeds" (ἐμῶν καλῶν 1368) and good reputation (εὔκλειαν 1370) which Megara had mentioned twice (εὐκλεὴς 288 and 290). He emphatically frames these as intended for his family's benefit, voicing the same hopes for his children as his wife Megara had earlier expressed.

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[408] Becroft 1972, 108-130 emphasizes the language of reciprocity in the relationship of Heracles with his family.

As the last example from the end of the play shows, Euripides continues to establish Heracles' character as a family man by engaging with plot-based and larger literary expectations of his audience. Although the play presents a consistent view of Heracles as devoted to his family, he cannot altogether escape the expectations which the traditional description of him laboring and traveling alone suggest. Euripides' play frames this isolated heroic role in part as the legacy of the deficiencies of his own two fathers: his foster father Amphitryon, who has lost his son's patrimony, and his biological father Zeus, who does not prevent Hera's destruction of his son's family. Hera's punishment, forcing the hero back into the isolated heroic position, reemphasizes the hero's own clearly expressed priority of family.

2. Heracles and the *polis*

The attachment of Heracles to his *oikos* brings the Panhellenic hero into relationship with an individual *polis,* Thebes. Euripides shows that Heracles' relations with the *polis* are far from harmonious by indications of dysfunction that appear throughout the drama.[409] In the first half of the play the Theban community abandons Heracles by neglecting to protect his family against Lycus, a choice which is clearly condemned. By abandoning the hero, the *polis* shows it has ignored Heracles' connection with and service to the *polis* which his family, the chorus, and Heracles himself emphasize. After returning from his labors, Heracles seeks to rectify the situation by defending his family and punishing members of the Theban community who have harmed him and his family. Just as he is about to put straight his *oikos* and *polis* relations by

[409] One of the unstated issues for Heracles' relationship to Thebes may be the fact that Thebes is not Heracles' only *polis*: Euripides describes the hero as trying to reclaim Amphitryon's place in Argos.

purifying his whole family after Lycus' murder, Hera strikes him down.[410] When she destroys his *oikos*, Hera also severs the hero from the Theban *polis*, revealing the linking of the two institutions.[411]

Although the fault for Heracles' broken relations with the *polis* lies mainly with Thebes, there are suggestions in the play that Heracles' own character could contribute to a lack of integration into the community. These include hints at the unfixed and violent character of Heracles' traditional heroism, though the play does not develop these suggestions. For instance, Lycus and Amphitryon make comments about Heracles' archery (158-164, 188-203, discussed above pp. 9-11) that characterize Heracles as more isolated and independent from community. Some have interpreted these to indicate that Heracles is actually an antisocial hero.[412] For instance, Gregory 1991 interprets the bow as an aristocratic weapon and Heracles as an un-socialized aristocrat whom Theseus eventually brings into the democratic society of Athens.[413]

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[410] Foley 1985, 148-156 interprets Heracles' moment of sacrifice as a reintegration into community. She points out, 158, how Hera revives Lycus' position as the antagonist of Heracles' community relations.

[411] In his speech at 1258-1298, Heracles reflects on how first his parentage and now the pollution and shame from Hera's revenge have severed him from the Theban *polis* (1281-4), humanity (1285-90), and, he imagines, eventually from land, sea, and rivers (1295-8).

[412] Wilamowitz-Möllendorff 1895 saw Heracles' violent Dorianism developed throughout the play and emerging in his mania, specifically in the excess of Heracles' intended punishment of Lycus and the guilty Thebans as well as his satisfaction in the belief he was hurting Eurystheus and his family. However, as Foley 1985 160-1 n. 26 discusses, this has been refuted well by Kröker 1938, 114-24 and Heracles' mania is generally not viewed as evidence of his "real" nature in the play. Notably, all the characters in the play assume Hera's responsibility for the mania. Heracles, unlike Ajax, Sophocles' Heracles, or Orestes, does nothing to bring on the mania.

[413] Gregory 1991, 131; 135; and 144-9: "Heracles has turned away from the aristocratic value system with its emphasis on individual glory and solitary accomplishment. His projected residence in Athens is emblematic of a change in attitude" (148). Foley 1985, 169-175, while viewing the bow as not contradictory to the hoplite type of warfare, does see it in the play as hinting at an anachronistic heroism which must be better integrated into community service at

The play itself provides scanty basis for these characterizations: it does not develop Heracles as antisocial but rather firmly attached to his *oikos* and cheated of reciprocal favor for his help to *polis*, humanity, and the gods. This portrayal is developed in contrast with those other possibilities. Heracles states to Theseus that Thebes, which he is forced to leave, is dear to him (μαῖς φίλαις Θήβαις 1281). The play assigns the blame for Heracles' problematic relationship with Thebes to the Theban *polis,* not to Heracles. In this way Euripides contrasts evidence for Heracles' commitment to his family and *polis* with the failure of the *polis.*

The main cause indicated for the problematic relationship between Heracles and the Theban *polis* community is *stasis* and corruption in the city which caused it to succumb to Lycus' tyranny (34, 268-74, and 542-3) and abandon Heracles' *oikos*. In contrast to some other tragic families, such as those of Agamemnon and Oedipus, which bring pollution and danger to their *poleis*, Heracles has saved Thebes and purified Greece of many threats. Amphitryon describes his son as having brought freedom to Thebes through his fight against the Minyans (217-221) and refers to his "purifications of land and sea" (ποντίων καθαρμάτων / χέρσου τ', 225-6) for Greece generally.[414] Likewise the chorus in its encomium for Heracles (348-429) emphasizes him as a civilizing force who made the world safer for humanity.[415]

Euripides clearly delineates the responsibility of the *polis* towards Heracles' family and its failure in this. Early in the play, Amphitryon's defense of the bowman's self-sufficiency includes a sinister allusion to the betrayal of the Thebans: he comments that a hoplite soldier may

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Athens. To support the "antisocial" tradition of Heracles, Foley 1985, 171 notes the isolated figure of Heracles in the underworld in *Odyssey* 11.601-27.

[414] Lyssa similarly notes Heracles' contributions to the gods in preserving their cult, 851-2. Ironically, Hera causes Heracles to incur pollution on himself and the *polis,* as Foley 1985, 156 points out.

[415] Bond 1981, 157 stresses Heracles' role as civilizer in this song.

die because of the "cowardice of his neighbors" (δειλίᾳ τῇ τῶν πέλας. 192). Both Heracles and Amphitryon more explicitly rebuke the Thebans for ignoring Heracles' help in defeating the Minyans (217-221, 227-8, 560, implied at 569) when Lycus threatened Heracles' family. Heracles vows to kill all Thebans who sided with Lycus, filling the Ismenus River with corpses and turning red the spring of Dirce (572-3). His description of this large-scale act of retribution recalls Odysseus' slaughter of the wicked suitors, who not only trespassed against his family but also instigated political disorder in Ithaca.[416] While Heracles' threat has been viewed as extreme,[417] it also points out the real guilt of the *polis.*

The posture of Megara and the children at the play's opening expresses the *polis'* responsibility also: the family occupies the public altar which Heracles set up in remembrance of his service to the city (47-50). The pageant of this staging communicates the fault of the *polis* which disregarded the service of Heracles: his sons, presumed orphans by most characters in the play's first half, are visibly without protection.[418] The way this display of Heracles' boys communicates the *polis'* responsibility has a parallel in the festival of the Greater Dionysia, where *Heracles* was performed. As a preliminary event to the performance of the plays, ephebes

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[416] Giesecke 2003, 28-9 emphasizes Odysseus' slaughter as part of a political re-ordering. Bond 1981, 206 also mentions Odysseus' hanging of the faithless handmaidens (*Od*. 22.465ff.) as precedent for Heracles' threat, as well as the massacres in response to *stasis* at Plataea, Corcyra, and Melos (Mytilene was extreme because it was not selective punishment). Rehm 2000 suggests that this description in *Heracles* has Iliadic resonances, pointing to *Iliad* 1.4, 17.558, 21.214-21, and 22.336.

[417] Wilamowitz-Möllendorff 1895, 130-1 characterizes Heracles' threat as an exaggerated boast. In response to this interpretation, see Bond 1981, 206-7. I further discuss the justice of Heracles' threatened punishment, pp. 170-2.

[418] Megara assumes this (92), as do Lycus (145-6 and 245) and the chorus (262-3, 267, and 348-450, which is framed as a eulogy for the hero).

who had been orphaned by war were brought into the theater before the audience.[419] As Aeschines describes it, a herald reminded the audience of the fathers' service to their country, that the *dēmos* had supported the young men until that point, and that it had now outfitted them in the armor they wore. It seems that this display of orphans (of which we know little) was meant to remind the audience not only of "the duties of an individual to the *polis*," as Goldhill 1990 remarks, but also of the deceased fathers' service and of the community's (fulfilled) responsibility for the good treatment of their family.[420] The plight of Heracles' boys, staged at a monument of their father's benefit to the *dēmos,* demonstrates the Theban *polis'* corresponding failure.[421]

While reciprocal *philia* should be the function of a good relationship between the individual, *oikos,* and *polis,* Heracles and his family repeatedly draw attention to their lack of friends (55-6, 84-5, 430, 551, 558-9). For instance, Megara exclaims "the house is bereft of friends" (στέγαι δ' ἔρημοι φίλων 430). Heracles in the last part of the play stresses the need for friends as he experiences Theseus' help.[422] The chorus express how Heracles' friendship to society has been unreciprocated as they call Heracles the "flower of the *polis*" (ἄνθος πόλεος 876) which is cut off (ἀποκείρεται 875). They mourn Greece's loss of its benefactor (τὸν

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[419] The best evidence we have for this is Aeschines' *Against Ctesiphon* 154. See Pickard-Cambridge 1968, 59 and Csapo-Slater 1995, 117-9.

[420] Goldhill 1990, 114. "The libations of the ten generals, the display of tribute, the announcement of the city's benefactors the parade of state-educated boys [the war orphans], now men, in full military uniform, all stressed the power of the *polis,* the duties of an individual to the *polis."* Cudjoe 2010, 69-72 points out that the state did not, however, regularly support the war widows.

[421] Brillet-Dubois 2010-11 relates this orphan procession to how Euripides presents the orphan Astyanax in *Troades*. He suggests, 34-5, that Euripides inverts this procession as he presents Astyanax, the last male in the family and the key to Troy's future who the Greeks will kill in the drama's course, surrounded by the weapons of Hector and other Trojans (lines 568-576).

[422] For instance, 1425-6. Sheppard 1916 argues that friendship is the unifying theme of the play.

εὐεργέταν 877) when catastrophe strikes the hero and finally they mourn his departure in the closing lines of the play: "[we go] having lost the greatest of our friends" (τὰ μέγιστα φίλων ὀλέσαντες. 1428). Theseus also emphasizes Heracles' service to Greece and to humanity (1252, and 1334-5), further demonstrating by his own expression of *philia* what Heracles should receive.

The dysfunction of the Theban *polis*-community is central to the tragedy of *Heracles* because it builds tension in Heracles' relationships with family and community. Heracles' commitment to both *oikos* and *polis* makes Thebes' fault more tragic. Heracles' attachment to his family requires him to invest in the *polis*-community; his service against the Minyans shows he has done this. But Thebes fails in its reciprocal responsibility as a *polis* to care for its citizens in return for the citizen's service to his *polis*. Thus Heracles' investment in the *oikos*-*polis* situation fails him in the first half of the play.

It initially seems that Heracles, on his return, will be able to remedy the issues in his *oikos*- and *polis*- relations, as he sets out to reorganize the Theban *polis* by punishing Lycus and the bad Thebans. Like Odysseus, Heracles uses violence after his return in order to start over and reorganize the *oikos*- and *polis*- order.[423] This correspondence to Odysseus extends further to other shared elements of their *nostoi*: secrecy, hidden identity, and the bow.[424] Also like Heracles, Odysseus performs a purification in his house after the slaughter (*Od*. 22.481-4).[425]

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[423] Cropp 1986, 190-3 likens these two *nostoi*. Taplin 1977, 124 has a good note about this element of the *nostos* plot pattern in Aeschylus' *Persians*.

[424] Foley 1985, 170-2 notes how Odysseus saves his bow at home, a choice which she contrasts with Achilles' choice of *kleos* over *oikos*, which Achilles later regrets (*Od*. 11.488-91).

[425] Parker 1983, 114 n. 39 notes that Odysseus' purification by sulphur cleanses the physical house. Heracles' purification seems to be personal, and involved animal sacrifice.

The chorus hail Heracles as the legitimate king of Thebes and identifies Lycus as usurper (809-814). Heracles' punishments will clear the city of stasis and tyranny and save his personal *oikos*.

Euripides inserts an unexpected peripety at this moment of restoration, a last-minute spin on the *nostos* plot. Just after Heracles has accomplished his punishment of Lycus and prepares to purify his *oikos*, Hera strikes him in a way that severs him finally from both *oikos* and the Theban *polis*. By punishing Heracles through the linked institutions of *oikos* and *polis*, Hera's vengeance reopens the wound involved in the first half of the play. As will be seen in the following section, the image of *kataskaphē* reveals how Hera targets the hero's connected loyalties to family and community.

3. Images of *kataskaphē*

The image of house-razing, *kataskaphē*, arises several times in *Heracles.* As we have seen in discussion of *Agamemnon* and *Antigone*, this concept of punishment carries important implications regarding the relationship of individual, *polis,* and *oikos.* In Euripides' play it recurs in several separate contexts that relate through this image. Heracles first uses the term to describe the punishment he will inflict on the tyrant Lycus (566-7) in response to his community-harming act of unjust tyranny (though Amphitryon persuades him to pursue a stealthier punishment of the tyrant). The image of house-razing is evoked several more times after this. Lyssa describes her attack on Heracles as the destruction not only of his children but his physical house (864), and the chorus, observing the destruction from outside the *skēnē*, describes the event as a natural catastrophe, a hurricane or squall (θύελλα) causing the collapse of the roof (904).[426] The messenger's narrative portrays a manic Heracles suffering the delusion that he should go to

[426] Connor 1985, 89 first noted that this description picks up on Heracles' original threat of *kataskaphē*.

Mycenae and shatter the "foundations" (βάθρα 944) of Eurystheus' house with "crowbars and picks" (μοχλοὺς δικέλλας 946) (943-6), recognizable elements of *kataskaphē*. Finally, Heracles uses the adverb-participle phrase ἄνω κάτω στρέψασα (1307), which is close to ἀναστρέφω, a common synonym for κατασκάπτω, to describe Hera as having "overturned" him "foundations and all" (αὐτοῖσιν βάθροις).[427] The image of house-razing thus shifts in application to three different houses – Lycus', Eurystheus', and finally Heracles' – and turns Heracles from the inflictor to the victim of the punishment. Through the reversal of this image, Euripides conveys Hera's interference in regular individual-*polis*-*oikos* relations as the goddess continues Lycus' antagonism towards Heracles' social position.

When Heracles introduces *kataskaphē* as a punishment for Lycus, he highlights his own place in the Theban community and how Lycus has abused not only Heracles but Thebes. The context of Heracles' threat makes this clear since razing Lycus' house is the first element of Heracles' larger plan for punishing those in Thebes who hurt his *oikos*: he goes on to say that he will destroy those Thebans who, "having been treated well by me are ungrateful" (ὅσους / κακοὺς … εὖ παθόντας ἐξ ἐμοῦ 568-9) (568-73). Heracles describes his punishment of Lycus as a criminal against the community by adding details of how he will mutilate the body and refuse burial:

> πρῶτον μὲν εἶμι καὶ κατασκάψω δόμους
> καινῶν τυράννων, κρᾶτα δ' ἀνόσιον τεμὼν
> ῥίψω κυνῶν ἕλκημα. … 566-8
>
> First I will go and raze the house of the new tyrant, and then when I sever his unholy head, I will throw it as prey for the dogs….

[427] Connor 1985, 79, n.1.

As discussed in the introduction, *kataskaphē* was a punishment which often accompanied refusal of burial and even the exhumation of family tombs, all by a community which was injured by the guilty individual.[428] Thus Heracles' threat communicates not only personal vindication but communal punishment. Connor 1985 suggests Heracles goes beyond the bounds of regular *kataskaphē* by acting without the express support of the community and by envisioning excessive despoiling of the body beyond simple denial of burial.[429] While the hero's plan does suggest a more violent character, the play gives far greater emphasis to Lycus' need for punishment.

Lycus is consistently characterized as an unjust tyrant, which bolsters the interpretation of Heracles' punishment as performed on behalf of the Theban community.[430] The targets of historical *kataskaphē* discussed in the introduction include the Cypselid and Syracusan tyrants.[431] Lycus is framed unequivocally as harming the *polis* by his tyranny, as Amphitryon first notes in his prologue. He emphasizes Lycus' murder of Creon and "falling upon" (ἐπεσπεσὼν) Thebes when it was "sick with stasis" (στάσει νοσοῦσαν 34) (31-4).[432] Lycus himself mentions killing Creon and usurping the throne (166-9), and later threatens the chorus members and haughtily reminds them that they are "slaves" under his "tyranny" (δοῦλοι, τυραννίδος 250) (247-251).[433]

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[428] Connor 1985, 89.
[429] Connor 1985, 89.
[430] Wilamowitz-Möllendorff 1895, 118 terms Lycus a stock villain, "bühnenbösewicht." Connor 1985, 89 believes Heracles acts "on his own, not as a part of a civil resolve."
[431] Discussed in the introduction, pg. 24. Connor 1985, 89.
[432] Though τύραννος did not have the same negative connotation as our "tyrant," the negative traits of tyranny are often featured in tragedy, as Seaford 2003, 95-111 stresses. Lycus' characterization as τύραννος (250) certainly expresses Theseus' characterization of tyranny in *Supplices* 529: "There is nothing more hostile to a *polis* than a tyrant." Cf. Eur. *Phoen.* 560.
[433] Compare Pentheus' similarly haughty expression at *Bacchae* 803, referring to Dionysus as a slave.

At lines 252-274 the chorus leader speaks up against Lycus, explicitly calling for the use of force against the tyrant (252-263) and repeating Amphitryon's characterization of the city as sick with stasis (272-3). Megara repeats this depiction when she describes Lycus' crimes to Heracles (542-3). When Heracles does kill Lycus, the chorus celebrate the event, supporting Heracles as king and approving Lycus' slaughter.[434]

On Amphitryon's advice (585-6, 588-94, and 599-605), Heracles does not raze Lycus' house. Instead of proceeding to such a public act, Heracles enters his own home in order to entrap the tyrant. Amphitryon warns his son that the plan of a public move against Lycus is too dangerous since the tyrant holds support within the *polis* (588-594). He tells Heracles to try to go unnoticed and "not [to] agitate your *polis* before you set this straight here [in the *oikos*]." (πόλιν δὲ σὴν / μὴ πρὶν ταράξῃς πρὶν τόδ' εὖ θέσθαι 604-5). Despite the appropriateness of Heracles' proposed *kataskaphē*, what prevents the punishment is the possible lack of support from his *polis*-community, which has been repeatedly characterized as sick with *stasis*. By introducing this punishment and then having Heracles change his plans, Euripides sets up the reversal by which Heracles experiences the *kataskaphē* he originally planned for Lycus.

Euripides develops the image of house-razing with great poetic and dramatic vividness in application to Heracles' *oikos*. Lyssa first describes destruction which she will bring about as a punishment at Hera's command. When she at first resists Hera's command, which she finds inappropriate for Heracles, Lyssa highlights the nature of the punishment. She emphasizes the hero's fame among men and gods and his benefits to the gods specifically, the establishment of cult, which calls to mind also his civilizing favors to mankind.[435] Lyssa seems to argue that

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[434] The chorus leader suggests that the chorus go and check on how Heracles is faring against their enemy the tyrant, 747-8.
[435] 849-852.

Heracles has not committed an offense against the community, of gods or of men, which would justify the punishment she has been ordered to perform, but that he has done the opposite. Nonetheless she obeys Hera. Probably standing aloft the *oikos-skēnē*,[436] Lyssa describes her planned destruction of Heracles' physical house specifically: "I will both shatter the dwelling and throw the house down upon [Hercules/his family]" (καὶ καταρρήξω μέλαθρα καὶ δόμους ἐπεμβαλῶ, 864). This depiction evokes the act of house-razing through its violent imagery.

When Lyssa actually destroys Heracles' *oikos,* the chorus emphasize the spectacle of the punishment and provide important guidance to the audience in interpreting the event. They describe the simultaneous destruction of the house corresponding to Lyssa's threat: "Look, look, a hurricane is shaking the house, the roof is collapsing." (ἰδοὺ ἰδού, / θύελλα σείει δῶμα, συμπίπτει στέγη. 903-4). Characters are found in several tragedies describing their vision of the violent destruction of the *oikos-skēnē* in terms of an earthquake: these analogous scenes demonstrate the dramatic potential of such an event. In fragment 370 of Euripides' *Erechtheus*,[437] the chorus describe an earthquake hitting Athens and causing the roof of Erechtheus' (presumably) house to fall in: "Poseidon is throwing down [an earthquake] on the city, … the roof is falling in." (ἔνοσι]ν ἐμβάλλει Ποσειδῶν πόλει]/ …/... συμπίπτει στέγη · 49 and 51). Similarly, at the end of *Troades*, Hecuba and the chorus both describe their vision and hearing of Troy's fall:

Hecuba:	ἐμάθετ', ἐκλύετε;	
Chorus:	περγάμων <γε> κτύπον.	
Hecuba:	ἔνοσις ἅπασαν ἔνοσις . . .	1325-7

[436] Bond 1981, 280 assumes that Iris and Lyssa stand on a crane (μηχανή) or a platform protruding from the roof. The logistics of Lyssa's "invisible" (ἄφαντος) departure into Heracles' house (ἐς δόμους 873) is unclear since she is described as riding a chariot (δίφροισιν 880).

[437] This text here is that from Collard and Cropp 2008.

Hecuba: Did you notice it; did you hear it?
Chorus: <Yes,> the crash of the towers.
Hecuba: A shaking the whole [city]…, a shaking…

In these examples the characters on stage outside the *skēnē* structure lead the audience to experience the simulated structural collapse and destruction by their reactions.[438] It is possible that these scenes might have used a βροντεῖον or "thunder machine" (which a scholiast on *Clouds* 294 described as an amphora full of stones).[439] The house-destruction dramatized in *Heracles* is that of a single house, which emphasizes the position of the individual *oikos*.[440] The recurrence of building destruction as a dramatic display in tragedy suggests that the description of destruction of the house in *Heracles* is not only metaphorical (even though the *skēnē* does not actually fall to the ground), but that the audience is meant to experience it as a simulated event.[441]

The spectacular nature of Lyssa's house-destruction, which the goddess and chorus convey, suggests the image of *kataskaphē*. This correspondence is reinforced by the descriptions of the messenger and Heracles afterwards. The messenger recounts that Heracles began to tear

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[438] In *Agamemnon*, as discussed in Chapter One, the chorus describe the roof of Agamemnon's house as falling down (πίτνοντος οἴκου 1532) and mentions as the agent a "house destroying clap of a thunderstorm" (ὄμβρου κτύπον δομοσφαλῆ 1533) (1530-4), a description picked up by the chorus in the beginning of *Choephoroi* (48-53).

[439] Bond 1981, 303-4 and Barlow 1996, 164. Earthquakes are also indicated in Ar. *Av.* 1748-52, Ar. *Pax* 233-5, Aesch. *Prometheus* 1082 and Soph. *OC* 1456.

[440] Iris takes pains to emphasize this, telling the chorus: "Take courage … For we have not come as a threat to the *polis*, but we are attacking the house of a single man." (θαρσεῖτε …/ πόλει γὰρ οὐδὲν ἥκομεν βλάβος, / ἑνὸς δ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὸς σῶμα συστρατεύομεν, 822, 824-5).

[441] See Bond 1981, 303-4 who criticizes others' skepticism of a depicted earthquake even though Theseus later notes no damage to the house. Amphitryon also suggests that the house has not been completely destroyed when he expresses fear his son will completely destroy the house. Certainly, we have no evidence of any staging of the house's collapse, except for the pillar to which Heracles is later bound. Nonetheless the image is simulated for the audience.

down his own house because of a delusion that he was razing the house and city of Eurystheus. The messenger repeats Heracles' words as he planned to cut off Eurystheus' head (ἐνέγκω δεῦρο κρᾶτ' Εὐρυσθέως 939), the very same act Heracles had earlier described doing to Lycus. The messenger goes on quoting Heracles:

> πρὸς τὰς Μυκήνας εἶμι· λάζυσθαι χρεὼν
> μοχλοὺς δικέλλας θ', ὥστε Κυκλώπων βάθρα
> φοίνικι κανόνι καὶ τύκοις ἠρμοσμένα
> στρεπτῷ σιδήρῳ συντριαινῶσαι πάλιν. 943-6
>
> I am going to Mycenae. I need to take crowbars and mattocks, using hooked iron in order to shatter away[442] the Cyclopean foundations which have been fitted together with red mason's level and hammers.

Heracles' words here vividly portray him dismantling buildings in Eurystheus' city. While Heracles does not specifically isolate Eurystheus' house as his target, the messenger suggests this when he describes how Heracles murders his own family members believing he is killing Eurystheus' family. Heracles' explicit identification of his victim as Eurystheus' child (982-3), for instance, makes this clear. The vocabulary of building destruction in the messenger's narration invites the audience to visualize Heracles' activity as the misdirected razing of his own *oikos*.

In the messenger's account of events inside the house, he describes Heracles chasing Megara and his youngest son into a chamber of the home[443] and then digging under the door and prying out the posts (998-9). These narrated actions may correspond to the threat Heracles made earlier to dismantle Mycenae (943-6). Athena's intervention damages the physical house when,

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[442] "away," πάλιν (946), as Bond 1981, 313 comments "is exactly right for a process of leveling, i.e. restoring the components to their former state."

[443] Often identified with the women's quarters.

the messenger relates, she strikes Heracles with a rock (1102-9). This makes him fall and he breaks a column of the house that "in the collapse of the house lay broken in two upon the foundations" (ὃς πεσήμασι στέγης / διχορραγὴς ἔκειτο κρηπίδων ἔπι. 1007-8).[444] Heracles' scene of mania thus conveys destructions not only of Heracles' personal family but also of his physical *oikos*: throughout the messenger's vivid portrayal the hero rushes, spins, and races, an uncontrollable force, through one after another section of his home.

When Heracles later reflects on the disastrous event, he calls attention particularly to the destruction of the physical house. He describes Hera's destruction of his family with an image that strongly evokes *kataskaphē*: "she has accomplished the design she planned, who turned upside-down the first man of Greece foundations and all" (ἔπραξε γὰρ βούλησιν ἣν ἐβούλετο, / ἄνδρ' Ἑλλάδος τὸν πρῶτον αὐτοῖσιν βάθροις / ἄνω κάτω στρέψασα 1305-7). Heracles' phrase ἄνω κάτω στρέψασα (1307) nearly approximates ἀναστρέφω, a verb Connor notes as a synonym for κατασκάπτω (though it is found only in application to cities, not houses).[445] This evocation of building-razing combines with Heracles' reference to foundations (αὐτοῖσιν βάθροις 1306). The depiction further picks up on two architectural metaphors Heracles used just earlier to refer to his family: the metaphor of a family destabilized at its poorly laid "foundation" (1261-2) and Heracles' image of having "placed the capstone of disaster" on his house (δῶμα θριγκῶσαι

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[444] I take this description to mean that Heracles' fall broke the column and caused the "collapse." But possibly, the reference is to some violence of Lyssa's or Heracles' from earlier in the scene. The precise causes and types of destruction to the house is not clear in this play.

[445] Connor 1985, 79-80, n. 1 notes the analogous use of ἀναστρέφω and ἐξἀναστρέφω in Sophocles fr. 727 [Pearson], Aesch. *Per.* 813, and Ar. *Av.* 1240. These are all city destructions. ἀνατρέπω is used in the same way, for instance at Ar. *Vesp*. 671 and Eur. *Phoen*. 888 of city-razing. The chorus in *Eumenides* 355 uses ἀνατρέπω of houses. Outside of drama examples include Pl. *Prot.* 325c, Pl. *Rep.* 471b, Plut. *Tim.* 22.2 and Plut. *Moral.* 458c. Cf. Alcaeus 141 [LP] and Archilochus 130 [West].

κακοῖς 1280).[446] Heracles' depiction of the ruin combines with his earlier reference to *kataskaphē* and the descriptions by Lyssa and the messenger to suggest this image is not only an apt metaphor but a recognizable engagement with the theme of *kataskaphē* in the play.

The theme of *kataskaphē*, ultimately applied to Heracles, conveys the severing effect of this punishment upon the individual. By striking Heracles through his *oikos*, and in the most devastating way, Hera pinpoints the aspect of the protagonist which the drama most emphasized, against all expectations: his attachment to family. Heracles' displacement from Thebes swiftly follows upon the spectacle of the house-destruction and family slaughter.

The inversion of a house-razing which Heracles intended for Lycus into the razing of Heracles' own *oikos* reveals the injustice in Hera's use of the punishment: it emphasizes the fact that, unlike Lycus, Heracles does not merit the punishment. The goddess' vengeance upon the hero through this inappropriate application (by human standards) reveals a difference between mortal and divine experience. Divine justice is not explicable in human terms such as those of the community-sponsored penalty of *kataskaphē*. This is not to say Hera is not concerned with family: Heracles' existence as bastard son of Zeus is a significant slight to her as a wife and mother;[447] she is also patroness of human marriage. But despite obvious overlap between human and divine families in this myth, Euripides emphasizes throughout the play the disparity in how divine and human families function.[448] Since Hera's use of a punishment evokes a recognizable

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[446] "When the foundation of a family (*genos*) is not laid down straight, fate requires that the offspring suffer bad fortune." ὅταν δὲ κρηπὶς μὴ καταβληθῇ γένους / ὀρθῶς, ἀνάγκη δυστυχεῖν τοὺς ἐκγόνους. 1261-2, and "I, wretched, suffered this as [my] final labor, to slaughter my children and put the capstone of evils on my house," τὸν λοίσθιον δὲ τόνδ' ἔτλην τάλας πόνον, παιδοκτονήσας δῶμα θριγκῶσαι κακοῖς. 1279-1280.

[447] As Gregory 1977, 267 notes.

[448] Lefkowitz 2016, 63, 72-4 recognizes the divergence between human and divine participation in family relations. She comments, 73, "Euripides may be making the point that in certain

social practice of house- and family- punishment, Euripides explores the human bonds and experience of the family in contrast to their divine counterparts, a comparison which further demonstrates the significance and potential vulnerabilities of the *oikos*.

4. A Hero's Place in the *Polis*: Theseus' Offer to Heracles

On his arrival (1153) Theseus reverses Heracles' fate again and introduces an alternative way of seeing the formerly family-bound Heracles which focuses on his individual, heroic *aretē*. Theseus offers ties of reciprocal *philia* which would substitute for Heracles' loss of *oikos*[449] and presents Athens as an alternative *polis* to Thebes in which Heracles can participate. The degree of change involved in Theseus' proposal is highlighted by the friction in the heroes' interchange: while Heracles accepts Theseus' offer to seek refuge in Athens, it is not without significant regret regarding his lost family identity. There is a discernible tension between Theseus' forceful persuasion and Heracles' compelled transition as "slave of *tuchē*."[450]

The reciprocity of friendship, *philia,* which Theseus offers to Heracles, is the element that Heracles' relationship with the community of Thebes lacked.[451] Theseus expounds upon this relationship, commenting that friendship should function especially in adversity (1220-8, 1234, 1236). He explains that the reason he has come to help Heracles is to repay the *charis* of Heracles' saving him from the underworld earlier (1169-71, 1336-7). Panhellenic *charis* is also

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respects human morality is superior to that of the gods, if only because the inevitability of suffering and death in human existence makes humans better friends and parents." Chalk 1962, 15, comments that "Olympian gods lack all human qualities."

[449] Heracles emphasizes how his sufferings have disrupted his family and *polis* relations (1255-1310): first his fraught paternity undermined his identity (1258-68) and now his destruction of his *oikos* is a taint which severs him from all humanity (1279-93), and, he imagines, the very sea and earth which will shun him (1294-8).

[450] "One must be a slave of *tuchē*" τύχῃ δουλευτέον 1357.

[451] Sheppard 1916 emphasizes *philia* as the central and unifying theme of the play. See also Chalk 1962.

owed to Heracles, "benefactor and great friend to men" (εὐεργέτης βροτοῖσι καὶ μέγας φίλος 1252), as Theseus emphasizes more than once (1252 and 1334-5). But the Athenian king points out that Heracles has been repaid poorly for his favors: "I weep for your *charis,* [having fallen] upon misfortunes of the opposite kind" (κλαίω χάριν σὴν ἐφ' ἑτέραισι συμφοραῖς. 1238).[452] Here Theseus does not isolate the gods, Thebes, or humanity generally for criticism, but the play's earlier emphasis on the failure of the Theban *polis* reverberates in the reproach.

A result of Theseus' emphasis on repaying Heracles' *charis* is to draw attention to the hero's individual achievement, or *aretē*, and away from his currently dismal family situation. While Euripides adverted to this most famous dimension of Heracles' figure multiple times earlier in the play (perhaps most importantly in the chorus' song at 348-429), these panhellenic labors mainly contributed a backdrop for the hero's family- and *polis*- relationships. Among others, Gregory 1991 and Foley 1985 have viewed Theseus as socializing Heracles who is in some way unsocialized (Gregory sees him as aristocratic).[453] However the drama suggests instead that Theseus *re*socializes a man who has lost a well-earned link to society. Heracles' familial suffering, which precedes Hera's punishment in his problematic patrimonies, places him in isolation as he clearly expresses to Theseus (1279-93). Theseus grafts Heracles into the Athenian *polis* without recourse to the family unit, so forging a direct relationship between hero and *polis*. This aspect, like the cult observance Heracles will receive, shows that in Athens Heracles will enjoy a status that is less human than heroic and semidivine.

Theseus offers to reincorporate Heracles into human society through the relationship of friendship, in effect bypassing the normal intermediate institution of the family. Thus he offers to

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[452] See Bond 1981 377-8 on what ἑτέροισι refers to and the translation of the prepositional phrase. Kovacs 1998, 435 translates "I weep that your goodness is so ill repaid."
[453] Gregory 1991, 130-5. Foley 1985, 173.

insert Heracles into the Athenian *polis* as a friend of Theseus and of the Athenian citizens. After purifying the hero (1324), Theseus promises he will give him a house (δόμους) and wealth (χρημάτων τ' ἐμῶν μέρος, 1325), the two main elements of an *oikos* beyond its personal members.[454] Moreover, Theseus will bestow upon Heracles the gifts which the Athenian citizens gave him in thanks for his own heroic benefaction (1326-8). Along with these Theseus will pass on honorary land-naming originally intended for him (1328-1331) and promises Heracles cult after his death (1330-3). By transferring some of his own political or social capital to Heracles, Theseus proposes to join Heracles into a relationship of reciprocity with the Athenian *polis* community. This relationship, as the emphasis on cult and worship after death suggests, places Heracles into the position of the independent and individual hero rather than a family-member within the *polis*.

The last section of Euripides' play compares alternative bonds of *philia* – bonds between individual friends and bonds of family – in several ways. First, the vocabulary of ties and binding which previously expressed dependence within the family now describes extra-familial *philia*. Theseus eagerly tries to convince Heracles to depend on him physically so that Theseus can carry him off-stage. Theseus tells Heracles to give him his hand (1398), not to be ashamed to wipe his blood on Theseus' garment (1400), and and to place his hand on Theseus' neck (1402). Heracles calls attention to the intimacy of this contact when he worries that he will stain Theseus' clothing by grabbing onto him (1399).[455] Heracles also interprets his and Theseus' linked arrangement through the vocabulary of ties and binding, calling them a "yoke of friends"

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[454] δόμος is often used, especially in tragedy, to refer to a family or household of persons, but here there is no indication that Theseus means this.

[455] This is reminiscent of Heracles' own children who earlier grabbed tightly onto Heracles' garment (627-630).

(ζεῦγός γε φίλιον· 1403). At the close of the play he repeats his unusual nautical metaphor which he used at the end of the play's first section. He now refers to himself (in the royal we) as towed boats, ἐφολκίδες, which Theseus pulls behind him (1424). Earlier Heracles described his children grasping onto his *peplos* as ἐφολκίδας, boats which he towed (631). By using the identical image now to depict his connection of friendship to Theseus, Heracles draws attention to the painful change in circumstances that has turned him from "towing" his family members to being "towed" by his friend Theseus.

Theseus' expressive performance of the *philia* bond competes with the familial bonds which Heracles has difficulty leaving behind. Heracles draws a contrast between his "yoked" connection to Theseus (1403) and the description that he is "unyoked" from wife and children (1375). Further opposition between the ties of family and friendship is created by Amphitryon's presence, which after line 1404 creates a short but uncommon three-party dialogue. His supplication of his son, with its striking physical component (1205-1210), is set against Theseus' physical interactions with the hero. While Heracles' human father stands nearby, Theseus and Heracles descrive their non-familial relationship in familial terms. Heracles explicitly adopts Theseus as a son at one point (1401). Reversing the relationship image, Theseus' offer to Heracles of house, money, and land presents a striking parallel to the image of a father's patrimony.[456] In the same scene, Heracles must deal with Amphitryon's questions regarding the

[456] Earlier Heracles had told Amphitryon he regarded him as his true father (1265), as Barlow 1996, 183 reminds us. Padilla 1994, 296-7 sees Theseus rebuffing Heracles' attempt to adopt him and instead trying himself to be a father. Padilla interprets a paternalistic power struggle. While it may be interpreted as like a patrimony, Theseus' offer is not outside the norm for heroic friendship, see Homer *Il* 6.194, 9.576, 12.313, and 20.184. See also Barlow 1996, 180.

effective severing of their *oikos* relationship, the only one he has left: he tells his father to remain in Thebes and that he will bring Amphitryon to Athens only to bury him.

The competition of Amphitryon's and Theseus' claims upon Heracles is emphatically expressed when Amphitryon breaks into the two heroes' dialogue, initiating a brief *triloquium* format which Euripides normally eschews.[457] This takes place just after Heracles commends Theseus' friendship to his father. Amphitryon expresses a *makarismos* for Theseus with vocabulary that stresses family: "the fatherland which bore him is blest in children" (ἡ γὰρ τεκοῦσα τόνδε πατρὶς εὔτεκνος. 1405). Heracles immediately thinks of his dead children and asks Theseus to turn him around to view them once more (1406). As discussed above, Theseus criticizes Heracles' impulse here, censures his following request to embrace his father, and characterizes Heracles as diminished in stature and womanish for expressing such attachment (1407, 1409, 1410, and 1414).[458] Amphitryon on the other hand eagerly indulges his son's request to embrace, stating, "you wish things dear to me also" (τἀμὰ γὰρ σπεύδεις φίλα. 1409). While Amphitryon validates Heracles' feeling, Theseus tries to remind Heracles of his heroic standing with his contrasting criticism. Through his chiding, Theseus sets up an opposition between Heracles public heroic figure and his position in his family.[459]

Despite accepting Theseus' offer graciously (1351-2), it is notable that Heracles does not accept Theseus' outlook. Heracles gives a speech in which he emphasizes the compulsion which forces him to leave the family he has already lost and which he shows no desire to forget (1357-1361). In this circumstance, he explains, it is necessary that he be "slave" to fortune (1357).

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[457] Bond 1981, 410.

[458] Michelini 1987, 260-2 interprets Theseus here as gently teasing. I disagree with this characterization.

[459] Walsh 1979, 308 notes that "Theseus' tendency to see only public shame and public heroism makes him impatient of Heracles' grief, and blind to the personal side of his endurance."

Kissing the corpses of his family, Heracles describes this as a painfully sweet union (λυγραὶ φιλημάτων τέρψεις 1376-7) with his beloved dead. He relates his attachment to his family to the "painful companionship" of his familiar weapons (λυγραὶ δὲ τῶνδ' ὅπλων κοινωνίαι. 1377). These arms which he decides to take with him will, he imagines, "fall about [his] side" (ἃ πλευρὰ τἀμὰ προσπίτνοντ' 1379) and voice to him reminders of his family and their fate (1380-1).[460] The sentiment here conveys Heracles' desire to remain attached, rather than to leave behind his family. To Theseus' criticisms of his emotion Heracles gives no apology but questions the Athenian's low appraisal of his life as a whole (ζῶ σοι ταπεινός; ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν οὐ δοκῶ. 1417). He also suggests Theseus remember his own moment of vulnerability in the underworld (1415). In face of his new course, Heracles' persistence in his familial attachment continues to reveal the significance of the *oikos* to this hero.

Conclusion

Heracles' attachment to his family shapes and defines the particular type of *aretē* he expresses in the play which, as Wilamowitz-Möllendorff pointed out, is characterized by contrast with traditional modes of *aretē* based on violence.[461] Unlike Odysseus, Heracles is not able to achieve both individual *kleos* and the enjoyment of stable family life within a community, but he does strive to obtain success in both spheres. As long as Heracles' family survives, Euripides

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[460] Heracles' decision to reclaim his weapons certainly reflects his view of family, though it is not clear exactly how it should be interpreted. Thus Padilla 1994, 297 and Barlow 1996, 182 view his words representing a choice to replace his children with the accoutrements of his heroic labors. For an opposing view that Heracles' reclamation of the weapon as expressive of a "combined public and private enterprise," see Walsh 1979, 307-8. Taking up the weapons seems both to show how Heracles is forced to resign from his family and that his emotional attachment continues.

[461] Wilamowitz-Möllendorff 1895, 127-8, and developed and adapted by Chalk 1962. Michelini 1987, 233.

describes the hero's first desire as defending his family. Euripides even reorganizes events in the play so that Heracles completes his heroic labors in order to regain his ancestral home for his family. Also telling is how Heracles demonstrates intense regret for his lost family despite the opportunity to reintegrate into society offered by Theseus. Euripides presents a protagonist more intent on family values than any other middle-age or mature male in tragedy.[462] There is great irony in this since Euripides' Heracles is the direct agent of as horrible a scene of family destruction as can be found in extant tragedy. Heracles' final *aretē* of endurance and forbearance of his lot at the end of the play appears to be conditioned by the strength of his family values. This ability to be interdependent and accept human vulnerability is a social skill necessary for both family- and political- life. This skill, demonstrated in relation to his family in the first half of the play, enables Heracles to accept Theseus' offer and continue his life among humanity.

As in *Agamemnon* and *Antigone*, in *Heracles* the relationship of individual and *oikos* is set firmly in an added relation to the *polis* community. For Heracles in Euripides' play, heroic values of the individual compete with the value of family. The drama depicts this less as a natural opposition within society than a situation forced on Heracles by his human and divine enemies. The aggressions of Lycus and the complicity of a *stasis*-ridden *polis* compel Heracles to leave his labors to save his family. Euripides strongly indicates that in a well-functioning *polis*, Heracles' family would be protected as members in good standing. Hera's later destruction of Heracles' family directly disrupts the hero's restoration of familial and political order. The goddess leaves as Heracles' only option, short of suicide, a life in society that is based mainly

[462] Walsh 1979, 308 comments, "[Heracles] clings, as no other Euripidean character seems able, to his place in a human *oikos*."

upon his individual heroic contributions, and thus forces the hero out of an *oikos*-defined identity.

Many interpreters of *Heracles* seize upon a reading in which Euripides progressively develops the protagonist's humanity, culminating in the hero's accepting dependence upon Theseus and returning to community.[463] Certainly, Heracles' suffering and dependent human character contrasts with his heroic and semi divine figure. However, Euripides stresses Heracles' ties to the *oikos* from the beginning of the play and reemphasizes them upon the hero's arrival. The dramatist in this way characterizes Heracles as an engaged family member and suggests a different shape for the play's engagement with the dichotomy of semi-divine versus human than has often been suggested.

Although Heracles' absence in the first half of the play exposes him to the characterization of a solitary hero wandering from labor to labor, Heracles' strong relationship to his *oikos* is consistent throughout. It is only by Hera's intervention that these family ties are severed, much to Heracles' distress. Euripides does not depict Heracles coming to embrace human social relations through the events of the play. Instead these events test and reveal the tenacity of Heracles' familial ties already in place. Heracles' ambiguous identity, either human or semi divine creates a conundrum as Euripides explores the ability of a semi-divinity to participate in the human institutions of *oikos* and *polis*. Heracles experiences the human family, unlike Hera, but his incorporation into Athens after the loss of his family is a semi-divine hero's exception which proves the rule for normal humans: the family is vital for an individual's existence.

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[463] For instance, Gregory 1977, especially 274-5, and Wilamowitz-Möllendorff 1895.

Chapter Four:
Euripides' *Ion*: Familial Pathos in a Patriotic Play

Unlike the other dramas I have considered, Euripides' *Ion* does not immediately seem like a play about a destroyed household. *Ion* describes the rescue of the clan of Erechtheus, who provided the basis for Athenians to claim that they were born from the earth itself. The action does not take place at Athens, where the main characters live, but in Delphi, where the Erechtheid queen, Creusa, and her foreign husband Xouthus ask Apollo for a prophecy about how they can have children. The play's tensest moments, however, reveal that Euripides' interest is not only political drama but the drama within a household: Creusa attempts to kill Ion, unaware that he is her son, and Ion seeks her death in revenge. Creusa also recounts the trauma of her rape four times in the play, and Euripides draws attention to the ways this hurt her relationship to her family. I will show that Euripides' depiction of Creusa as a member of a household that is about to perish is a key to the drama's meaning.

The threat of familial destruction in the play also helps to assess the features that make *Ion* a peculiar tragedy that has been described as less tragic and more comic, melodramatic, or romantic.[464] Such features include the trajectory of the play, which inherently moves toward reunion, and the tenor of certain scenes that has been pereceived as less than tragic: for instance, Ion appears with a broom, cleaning bird dung in the *temenos* (102-6), and later Ion is extremely

[464] In a well-known article, Knox 1979 dubs *Ion* "full-fledged comedy" (257) and the birth of this genre. Other classifications include "romance" (Owen 1939), "tragicomedy" (Kitto 1961) and "romantic tragedy" (Conacher 1967). Seidensticker 1982, 211-41; Taplin 1986; Zacharia 1995; Segal 1995; and Taplin 1986 all discuss how the genres interact with one another in the drama.

confused when Xouthus embraces him as a son (517-65). In combination with the happy ending, scholars have viewed Ion as more like *A Comedy of Errors* than Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*.

However, I will demonstrate that Creusa's previous sufferings – her rape by Apollo and loss of her child – form a central concern in the play[465] and that the pain attached to these events undermines the happy ending.[466] While attention has been paid to Creusa's experience as a female[467] and to the political tension surrounding her family's situation, less has been paid to her personal experience of familial loss.[468]

At the drama's midpoint, Creusa is made to believe, although wrongly, that she can have no children, her only hope for family (760-2). Creusa offers not just the pathos of a raped woman, the mother of lost child, and a threatened autochthonous Erechtheid, but also the last individual in a family which is on the brink of extinction. This social circumstance is one which Euripides develops intensively in *Ion*. Creusa's experience endows the drama with a distinctly tragic tone through its depiction of familial emotions. It explores Creusa's situation in its household dimension with a depth comparable to the other dramas discussed. Creusa focuses the

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[465] Larue 1963 and Lee 1997, 37-8, who calls Creusa's monody the "emotional center" of the drama. Matthiesen 1990 emphasizes that Creusa's suffering are some most moving emotions in the play, situated ironically in the frame of a romantic comedy.

[466] A happy ending unlike the other plays discussed. Creusa's anguish, it has been suggested, presents a criticism of the god Apollo who devises the ultimate reunion. For instance, Wasserman 1941 and Rosenmeyer 1963, 113-27. For an overview of interpretations of the depiction of Apollo, see Segal 1999, 107 n. 74.

[467] Feminist readings highlight the tragedy in Creusa's rape, for instance, Scafuro 1990, who emphasizes that it is unique to hear a woman's perspective on rape, and Gamel 2001. Rabinowitz 1993, 189-222 suggests it is "naïve" to think "Euripides might have been writing Creusa's story" (220), that is, from a female perspective, and that the play depicts Creusa's rape and silent suffering as "what men want."

[468] Loraux 1993, 199-207 and 230-6 views Creusa's position in relation to Athenian autochthony as dominating the play. While Loraux sees Euripides' treatment as patriotic, discussions of autochthony by Saxonhouse 1986 and Rosivach 1977 highlight the negative aspects of Euripides' depiction of this theme. See also discussion of Zacharia 2003, 56-65.

audience on a situation which relates to the audience's anxieties regarding loss and separation from the family.

Most criticism of Creusa's figure has focused either upon her female experience of rape and bereaved motherhood or upon the Athenian claim to autochthony which rides upon Creusa's family. Loraux 1990b's reading of "Creusa the Autochthon" and Zeitlin 1989's "Mysteries of Identity and Designs of the Self in Euripides' *Ion*" are important examples of the latter of these focuses. In response to this strain of interpretation, Pedrick 2007 raises the concern that the critic may overemphasize the civic import of Creusa's and Ion's family at the expense of social anxieties which the play portrays directly (Pedrick's argument is that *Ion* draws upon lived experience of the exposure of children in Athens). While *Ion* no doubt engages with Athenian civic and political identity through the Erechtheid house, promoting this civic interpretation may also deemphasize the way the play depicts the household suffering in a way that is relatable to the audience's own experience. The modern critic must acknowledge that evaluating the relative importance of these themes is "a process of conversions … that we as readers and critics are heavily implicated in."[469] Separation from the culture of fifth-century Athens dampens our sensitivity to the contemporary social nerves at which tragedy strikes.[470] Although it is difficult to determine which meaning is more pronounced or how exactly the two relate, the importance and vulnerability of the household is a concern which Creusa's crisis engages.

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[469] Pedrick 2007, 235-6 n. 57.

[470] Pedrick 2007, 236, n. 57: "Although we don't think we need a foundling whose identity evokes desperate women and unwanted children, we would like to know more about the strange distant culture of fifth-century Athens. And thus we build in *Ion* the identities useful to this project relying on evidence in the play that others – gods and mortals—have converted the abandoned child into symbols before us."

Creusa's presentation of her rape, including a most poignant depiction in her lyric monody (859-922),[471] treats a violence which tragedy rarely presents from a female perspective and which seems meant to prompt an emotional reaction from Euripides' male audience.[472] I will show that in Creusa's monody Euripides binds up the trauma of rape with another experience, that of family extinction. The tragedy of this family's (perceived) destruction is not only pitiable but *relatable* in a significant way to Creusa's male-centered audience.

Euripides situates Creusa's decision to expose Ion within a pattern of harms to the household in previous generations of the Erechtheid family. This shapes the characterization of Creusa's situation and actions. This pattern provides a background for *Ion* similar to the dysfunctional "houses" of Atreus and Oedipus in *Agamemnon* and *Antigone*, where threats to the family structure resurface in recurring generations and threaten to reappear in the drama.

After I address this topic, I will discuss how Euripides juxtaposes personal and political views of the Labdacid household. In *Ion* the dramatist distinguishes the political perspective on the *oikos*, which the chorus and Old Tutor overzealously champion, from the personal perspective of Creusa (as well as Xouthus and Ion). The alternation between the private and the *polis'* perception of the household enhances the personal pathos of the family situation.

In this chapter's final section, I will examine how the drama describes certain spaces – the cave, Apollo's temple, and Ion's tent – in terms which approximate the physical *oikos.* These spaces serve as alternatives to the Erechtheid *oikos,* which Euripides leaves behind in Athens in

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[471] I cite the text of Kovacs 1999.

[472] Though women may have been present, I assume that Euripides' audience was predominantly male and that tragedy, acted by citizen males, also engages its audience as a group of citizens. Thus Podlecki 1990; Rabinowitz 1993, 1-2; and Goldhill 1997, 62-6. For a survey of the arguments see Henderson 1991, 133-147 and Goldhill 1994, 347-69. See Rabinowitz 1993 and article and Scafuro 1990 on the presentation of rape. Scafuro shows the uniqueness of Euripides' presentation of the rape from Creusa's perspective in *Ion.*

favor of a Delphic setting. Displacement from the Attic Erechtheid household is a significant theme in the drama since Creusa, Ion, and Xouthus are all alienated from it in different ways: Creusa's rape forces her to seclude herself in the cave, Apollo has removed Ion from Athens to Delphi, and Xouthus is a foreigner who has married into the Erechtheid line. Euripides, through characters who describe these several off-stage spaces, explores the way that the physical house provides a basis for individual identity through family membership. In light of these depictions I show that despite the fact that Euripides does not use the *skēnē* to depict the household that is at stake in his play (unlike most tragedies), he still draws great attention to domestic space.

1. Creusa's *oikos*

Creusa's family situation is communicated early in the play through the queen's interview with Ion. While the Erechtheid family was a familiar part of Athenian civic myth, featured in the Erechtheion building and Euripides' *Erechtheus,* we have little evidence that anyone before Euripides had Creusa marry Xouthus or give birth to Ion.[473] In *Ion* we find that Creusa is the only surviving child of King Erechtheus, who had sacrificed her sisters during a recent war.[474] The drama leaves the impression that either Erechtheus had no son or he did not survive,[475] and Ion reminds us that Erechtheus himself is dead, killed by Poseidon.[476] In *Ion* Euripides makes it clear that Creusa is in a position to continue her father's *oikos* through her

[473] See the discussions of Saxonhouse 1986, 260-1 and n. 18 and Lee 1997, 38-9. We do not have any of Sophocles' *Creusa* or *Ion*. The tradition of Euripides' *Erechtheus* appears to have been different since Creusa seems absent from it.
[474] The war and Erechtheus' sacrifice of his daughters was the subject of Euripides' *Erechtheus*.
[475] See Cropp 1995, 189 n. 362 on the ambiguous identification of Erechtheus' son in Euripides' *Erechtheus*. In any case, this son dies in that play.
[476] The play does not indicate whether Creusa's mother, Praxithea, is still alive. She becomes a priestess at the end of *Erechtheus* (fr. 370 l. 95-7 [Nauck]).

own children, just as a classical Athenian *epiklēros* would.[477] Even though for some time Creusa has been married to the foreign Xouthus – a regular inter-*polis* marriage alliance for the drama's archaic-mythic era – they have not had a child.

Ion depicts personal stress from familial instability to be just as strong as the political pressure on the family: desire for children is an emotion to which the drama returns repeatedly. Hermes first describes Creusa's and Xouthus' desire for children as the extreme emotion ἔρως (67), the same word which the Herald later uses describes Creusa's motivation, recounting that she "came to Phoebus out of passion for children" (παίδων … ἐλθοῦσ' εἰς ἔρον Φοίβου πάρα 1227).[478] By characterizing Creusa's and Xouthus' emotion in this way Euripides places the personal desire on the same level as, or perhaps prioritizes it above, the dynastic motivation leading the couple to *Ion*'s unusual tragic setting of Delphi. While dynastic concern was often a motivation for consulting the Delphic oracle about children,[479] Euripides also suggests in his depiction of Creusa's and Xouthus' journey a personal impulse which his audience might have been able to understand based on their own religious experiences. For example, the frequent depiction of children on Attic votive reliefs suggests that asking the gods' help with children was a real practice of individuals and families.[480] Euripides portrays something similar in his depiction of Aegeus in *Medea*, who describes his trip to the oracle in terms of *erōs* for children (714-715).

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[477] This means that Creusa's situation is different from Antigone's, who in Chapter Two I argued is not depicted by Sophocles in this social situation.

[478] I discuss this emotion later, pp. 215-7. See my previous discussion of Amphitryon's and Heracles' affection for children as *erōs* in Chapter Three, pp. 151-2 and 159-60.

[479] Parke and Wormell 1956, 393-415 and Fontenrose 1978, 39-41.

[480] Lawton 2007 discusses the very large presence of children of all ages on votive reliefs.

The female chorus devote a lengthy passage of their First Stasimon to describing the wish for children as a natural and largely personal desire (472-491). Here they emphasize the happiness and stability that children offer an *oikos* ("a defense amid evils" ἄλκαρ … ἐν κακοῖς 482). On their own behalf they entreat to be given "the careful raising of children" (τροφαὶ κήδειοι τεκέων 487) in preference to material wealth (485-7). Further they exclaim, "I abhor the life without children and fault the man who does not think this" (τὸν ἄπαιδα δ' ἀποστυγῶ / βίον, ᾧ τε δοκεῖ ψέγω· 488-9). The chorus' presentation of the love of children as a personal value which ought to be shared by individuals in a community resonates with the trope in Attic oratory of invoking *philoteknia* as a common value of citizens.[481] Xouthus embodies such personal desire when he embraces Ion in the false recognition scene (517-565), but Creusa's sadness and hope convey her desire just as strongly. *Ion*'s presentation of this family-centered emotion is emphatic: longing for children by the childless permeates the play and becomes a source of the audience's fear and pity as this desire is directly threatened.

In addition to Creusa's great desire for children, she is also responding to the threat of isolation from her family. Creusa has no members of her natal family to lean upon, and there are also obstacles to becoming part of her husband's *oikos*. First, her lack of children undermines her marriage to Xouthus.[482] Her position as queen and *epiklēros* also requires that she remain connected to her threatened natal family. Since the play repeatedly describes the Athenian *oikos* as Creusa's, not Xouthus', the audience realizes not only Creusa's crucial role in the family but

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[481] See above, pp. 157-9.

[482] See Patterson 2012, 384-5 on the role that *paidopoiia,* the creation of children, played in defining a legitimate marriage. The Old Tutor's analysis of Xouthus' situation (836-843) suggests that Xouthus would have been justified in finding another wife when he realized Creusa was not having children.

also how tightly bound she is to that *oikos*.[483] The tenuous position of Creusa's natal family, which depends on her alone,[484] reveals itself in Creusa's expressions of pain and loneliness. Thus early in the drama she reveals the distress she has experienced from the situation of her natal family: "my ancestry does not help me" (τὸ δὲ γένος μ᾽ οὐκ ὠφελεῖ. 268)!

The isolation and pain which surround Creusa's rape, a scene she recalls several times, magnify her familial loneliness.[485] Euripides depicts how Apollo's rape of Creusa and her subsequent pregnancy strained Creusa's relationship to her family, distancing her from her family through fear and shame. Creusa refers to this shame before telling her story to Ion (ἀλλ᾽ αἰδούμεθα. 338) and later to the tutor (αἰσχύνομαι μέν σ᾽, ὦ γέρον, λέξω δ᾽ ὅμως 934).[486] It is not difficult to infer what she fears or is ashamed of since it is a recurring pattern in tragedy for a royal girl, raped by a divinity, to encounter disbelief from her family and father with the result that he punishes both her and her child.[487] The potential for such doubt is raised by Ion who voices reservation regarding Creusa's story and suggests that she might have been impregnated

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[483] The chorus describe Xouthus "who came from abroad into the house, and into great wealth" …ὃς θυραῖος ἐλθὼν δόμους μέγαν ἐς ὄλβον 703-4. Hermes tells us that Ion will eventually return to his mother's house: μητρὸς ὡς ἐλθὼν δόμους 71.

[484] Loraux 1993, 208-213 stresses the weight placed on Creusa as *epiklēros*.

[485] Hermes recounts the event once (10-13) and Creusa recounts it four times: to Ion (338-356), though anonymously; in her emotional monody (889-901); in greater detail to the tutor in dialogue (934-947); and to Ion again after their reunion (1474-1487). Rabinowitz 1993, 202 points out the differences in the accounts.

[486] With respect to this event Creusa also expresses fear of shame before Xouthus' entrance at 395 and before revealing it in her monody at 861.

[487] Ion himself expresses such doubt. Scafuro 1990, 126-7 mentions Io in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*, Sophocles' *Danai* and two *Tyro's*, perhaps Auge in Sophocles' *Aleadae* and *Mysoi*; in Euripides' *Alope*, *Antiope, Auge, Danae, Melanippe Bound,* and *Melanippe the Wise*. Scafuro examines the language of rape in a selection of these. See Huys 1995, 147-152, 246-258 on the inclusion of the Creusa's anguish in exposing her child out of shame and fear which is also found in *Antiope* and *Melanippe Bound*.

by a human man (341 and 1524-5). As we may infer, an illegitimate son by a human would threaten Creusa's ability to marry and produce a legitimate heir for the Erechtheid family.[488] The responsibility of Creusa towards her threatened natal family lays even greater weight on this hope and thereby stress on the pregnant maiden.

Apollo's wish that Creusa's pregnancy go unknown to her family (Hermes says it was "unknown to her father, for this was the god's wish" ἀγνὼς δὲ πατρί [τῷ θεῷ γὰρ ἦν φίλον], 14), makes her relationship to her family more tense. Creusa says that she kept the event "in secret from [my] father" (λάθρᾳ πατρός. 340) and exposed the child "out of fear of [my] mother" (τὸν φρίκᾳ ματρὸς 898). Creusa conveys her feeling towards her mother with the word *phrikē*, which often describes a physical reaction connected with the emotions of fear and horror, often a "shudder."[489] As a physical response to a visual stimulus or visualization, *phrikē* communicates to the audience Creusa's perspective on her familial situation: it was her reaction as she imagined her mother finding her pregnant – the same mother to whom she cried out while Apollo seized her (Ὦ μᾶτέρ μ᾽ αὐδῶσαν 891-3). Creusa conveys that her suffering distanced her from her family through isolation by repeating the description that she gave birth "alone in the cave" (μόνη κατ᾽ ἄντρον 948-9).[490] The old tutor presents the ignorant perspective of Creusa's family when he remembers a time when Creusa "was groaning over a hidden illness in secret" (νόσον κρυφαίαν ἠνίκ᾽ ἔστενες λάθρᾳ 944).

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[488] This point is complicated by the fact that it is Creusa, a *epiklēros*, who passes on the family line. For this reason, the legitimacy of the child would seem less important.

[489] Cairns 2015 discusses tragic *phrikē* as an automatic physical response to sudden stimuli.

[490] Creusa repeats the characterization at 1487 (κρύφιον ὠδῖν᾽ ἔτεκον Φοίβῳ) and refers to the cave as "lonely cave" (ἀνὰ δ᾽ ἄντρον ἔρημον 1494). There is further emphasis on the remoteness of the cave in 1489, where on metrical grounds we must add two syllables, either urray's <λάθρᾳ> or Jackson's <ἑκὰς>. The latter supplement seems better since the omission is easily explained as haplography.

This is the chaotic family situation of Creusa before Apollo's plan starts to unravel, beginning when the chorus suggests to Creusa that she is barren and will not be given a child of her own (760-2).[491] Frustrating the god's intentions and disobeying Xouthus' directions, the chorus also leads Creusa to believe that Xouthus has a bastard son whom he intends to make his heir (774-5). The chorus and tutor clearly articulate how a child who is not Creusa's would threaten the autochthony of future Athenians. They urge Creusa to pursue violence against Ion in defense of the Erechtheid *oikos* and at one point frame Ion as an "invasion by a foreigner" (ξενικὸν ἐσβολάν· 722).

In contrast with the concern for the bloodline from the chorus and tutor, for Creusa the chorus' report prompts a wholly personal reaction. Her husband Xouthus' perceived betrayal compounds her childlessness and reopens the wound of her experience with Apollo. Creusa formulates her grievances against Apollo and Xouthus in similar terms of reciprocity and parity in family fortune. In fact, Creusa's conflates her criticisms of the two male figures in her attempt upon Ion's life, which takes aim at both males: Apollo for not returning her child and Xouthus for enjoying a child that is not shared. To Ion's hypothetical suggestion that Apollo has raised the child himself, Creusa retorts that the god, "enjoying things by himself which should be shared, acts unjustly" (τὰ κοινὰ χαίρων οὐ δίκαια δρᾷ μόνος. 358). The chorus hints at a similar criticism of Apollo, noting that in myth "neither on the loom nor in <corrupt> did I hear the saying that children from gods have a share the good fortune for mortals" (οὔτ' ἐπὶ κερκίσιν οὔτε †λόγοις† φάτιν ἄιον εὐτυχίας μετέχειν θεόθεν τέκνα θνατοῖς. 507-8). As Kovacs 1979 pointed out, this interpretation of the Greek suggests that the chorus means that mortal parents, especially

[491] There is no basis for the claim of barrenness and the suggestion that Creusa will not receive a child contradicts the oracle of Trophonius which Xouthus announced (408-9).

mothers, of a child with a god, do not usually experience good fortunes themselves.[492] Creusa groups Apollo and Xouthus together when she describes herself as "plotted against" by both the male husband and the god whom she calls "betrayers of my bed, devoid of *charis*" (κακοβουλευθεῖσ᾽ἔκ τ᾽ ἀνθρώπων ἔκ τ᾽ ἀθανάτων, **…** λέκτρων προδότας ἀχαρίστους. 878, 880). Creusa criticizes Apollo for letting their child die and neglecting the *charis* from their liaison (916-8). She also expresses desire that her threatened pollution of Apollo's altar will cause reciprocal grief against "one of those by whom we have been aggrieved" (λυπήσομέν τιν᾽ ὧν λελυπήμεσθ᾽ ὕπο 1311). In similar terms the chorus condemns Xouthus' lack of reciprocity toward Creusa as betrayal in their final two songs (697-705, 1099-1103, and 1104). The queen's experience of betrayal by both males exacerbates the extinction of her natal family by indicating that she does not have any spousal relation to rely on.

Betrayal is not the initial feeling which Creusa expresses in reaction to the chorus' report that the god reunited Xouthus and Ion. Rather, hopelessness in her family situation is what she first expresses and this despair points to the situation of family extinction Creusa envisions. Despondency fills her reaction to the chorus' statement that she is barren: "Woe, I, wretched, received sufferings, I suffered an *unlivable* grief, friends" (ὦ τάλαιν᾽ ἐγὼ συμφορᾶς, ἔλαβον ἔπαθον ἄχος ἀβίοτον, φίλαι. 763-4).[493] Creusa's words here suggest an embrace of death which she follows by describing her pain as though it were a mortal wound (766-7). This agrees with the description soon in her monody that her "hopes are gone" (φροῦδαι δ᾽ ἐλπίδες 866). When she

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[492] Kovacs 1979, 115-16. Kovacs discusses the unusual use of μετέχω for "a thing or circumstance possessing a share in some other thing or circumstance for someone else." He points out a similar construction appears in the same stasimon, 472-3.

[493] At lines 763 and 765 the tutor exclaims a wish to die. I think this creates a dissonance with Creusa's raw feelings. Although the servant empathizes with Creusa, he clearly frames his concern as political.

later looks back at this moment from the end of the play, Creusa remembers it as desperate; she tells Ion that she had "thrown away hope earlier" (τὰς γὰρ ἐλπίδας ἀπέβαλον πρόσω. 1453) and implies by contrast with her former fatalism that "but now, next to your cheeks, I am alive" (νῦν δὲ γενειάσιν παρὰ σέθεν πνέω 1460).

To convey the extinction of her family Creusa also uses the image of an empty house: "he declared my lifetime to be childless, childless; in isolation (ἐρημίᾳ); I will inhabit an orphaned home." (τὸν ἐμὸν ἄτεκνον ἄτεκνον ἔλακ᾽ / ἄρα βίοτον, ἐρημίᾳ δ᾽ ὀρφανοὺς / δόμους οἰκήσω. 790-2). Both ἐρημίᾳ and ὀρφανοὺς highlight the distress of the family unit which lacks a father or heir. ὀρφανοὺς indicates particularly the loss of a father by children who cannot themselves lead the family, and ἐρημίᾳ conveys a lack of heirs. The *oikos erēmos,* as has been noted, often designates a family facing extinction in oratory and tragedy.[494] Creusa imagines a similarly dismal future at home as does the chorus who describe Creusa's lack of children as permanent so that she will experience the misfortune as she "falls upon grey-old age" (πολιὸν ἐσπεσοῦσα γῆρας 700). Since Creusa also envisions that the house will remain heir-less for her entire, childless life, she communicates an image of unsalvageable family isolation.

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[494] Compare this with Antigone's description of herself as *erēmos* in Sophocles' play (*Ant*. 919-920). *Erēmos* often refers to an extinct house in oratory and tragedy, see Griffith-Williams 2012, 146-8 and my Introduction, pp. 31-4. *Erēmos* often describes situations where the transference of a household between generations is in jeopardy since orphaned children are under age. In *Alcestis* Admetus tells his old father Iphitus that if Iphitus died his would not be an "orphaned house" (δόμον …ὀρφανὸν 656-7). But if the younger Admetus died, since his children have not reached majority their successful succession is less sure. In Euripides' *Suppliants* the sons of the Seven (Against Thebes) use a similar collocation of *erēmos* and *orphanos*: "I, *erēmos*, wretched, will be orphaned of my pitiful father and take up an *oikos erēmos*" (ἐγὼ δ᾽ ἔρημος ἀθλίου πατρὸς τάλας / ἔρημον οἶκον ὀρφανεύσομαι λαβών 1131-2). The sons' words reflect the fact that they have not yet come of age (as the chorus indicate at 1214-1218 referring to the boys' coming of age in the future).

Desperation at this family situation drives Creusa to reveal Apollo's rape in an emotional monody (859-922) in which she reflects upon her own motivation to speak:

> ὦ ψυχά, πῶς σιγάσω;
> πῶς δὲ σκοτίας ἀναφήνω
> εὐνάς, αἰδοῦς δ' ἀπολειφθῶ;
> τί γὰρ ἐμπόδιον κώλυμ' ἔτι μοι;
> πρὸς τίν' ἀγῶνας τιθέμεσθ' ἀρετῆς; 859-863
>
> O spirit, how will I keep silent? But how will I bring to light that murky bedding, how will I leave behind shame? What obstacle is yet in my way? Against whom do I hold competition in *arēte*?

By acknowledging her hesitance to speak about her experience (860-1), Creusa calls attention to the obstacle which she says has been removed (862): since her family is no longer at stake, but rather gone, she can no longer do any harm by revealing the injustice she has undergone. She leaves behind her concern for "shame" (861) because she no longer has a reason for it. Creusa relates her loss of Ion and barrenness with dashed hopes for family as she exclaims: "I am deprived of *oikos,* I am deprived of children" (στέρομαι δ' οἴκων, στέρομαι παίδων 865-6)! The queen explains that she had kept silent her rape and her illegitimate child out of "hopes" which are now empty:

> φροῦδαι δ' ἐλπίδες ἃς διαθέσθαι
> χρήζουσα καλῶς οὐκ ἐδυνήθην,
> σιγῶσα γάμους,
> σιγῶσα τόκους πολυκλαύτους. 866-9
>
> Ruined are my hopes, which I was unable to attain though I mightily longed to, by keeping silent my unions, by keeping silent my much-bewailed offspring.

The "hopes" Creusa describes are understood to be personal ones for later children and family. Pain and emotion in the song communicate not only her rape but the impetus for throwing off the silence she had kept to protect her family and the sacrifice for her in having to keep this secret.

She speaks because she believes she no longer has, or will have, a family. Creusa's reflection on how she kept her pain silent out of hope for her family's future reveals a bitter irony that makes a poignant point: it was out of desire for family that Creusa exposed her son in secret, ultimately the heir of the family and safeguard of her interests.[495]

Creusa's swift turn to violence against Ion has struck many as inconsistent with the more pathetic figure she conveyed earlier in the play.[496] However, this change is presented as an effect of losing all her hope for family. Creusa believes that the Erechtheid *oikos* is extinct. Familial extinction is the same context in which Sophocles' Antigone acted without regard for death in a seemingly inexplicable way: the extreme behavior of both female figures follows an extreme familial circumstance.

The content of Creusa's monody – the inversion of the form of a hymn into the blame of a male – might suggest that individual betrayal is Creusa's sole motivation to violence.[497] Thus Owen describes her as "one of those women that Euripides is especially fond of drawing, who become completely unbalanced when they feel that they have been grievously wronged."[498] Creusa's character must be reassessed if the reproach in her monody reflects not only an experience of betrayal but also her distressed family situation. In this light, the hymn form which she exploits takes on added meaning. The form draws attention to the fact that the request which

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[495] By risking everything to kill Ion Creusa rehearses her earlier exposure of the boy. Both times Creusa jeopardizes her only son, first out of her desire for family, second in anger and disappointment.

[496] Thus Kitto 1967, 277-8 and Conacher 1967, 282-3 find her un-tragic; Kitto believes Euripides has little concern for character in contrast with crafting an ironic plot, Conacher believes that Creusa approaches a tragic figure before she turns violent and "melodramatic," 282.

[497] Larue 1963 shows how the monody inverts the hymnic form and interprets betrayal as the major theme in it.

[498] Owen 1939, xxvii. Zacharia 2003, 71-96 characterizes Creusa's monody as principally expressing betrayal by Apollo.

Creusa would in another circumstance have made at the end – for a child – is obviated.[499] Thus the missing request by Creusa points to what (she thinks) she has lost. By revealing her rape, she creates irony since her rape by Apollo stands in for, as Larue notices, the *hypomnesis*, or the typical mention of a past favor by the god.[500] Although Apollo's rape does in fact form part of the god's plan for Creusa's family, in her experience it has exacerbated her family troubles and has brought her no aid from Apollo. Creusa's expression of her traumatic experience points beyond itself to the family situation which now emboldens her to speak of her ironic betrayal.

Though Creusa has been misled in her understanding of the situation, she still reacts to the extinction of her family as real.[501] Creusa's response is not only the response from a woman's trauma of rape (horrible enough), but also a loss of *oikos*. This added aspect of her experience, perhaps, makes her emotion more comprehensible to a largely male audience than the experience of a female betrayed by her sexual partner. Although Creusa's character and behavior are described as feminine, since family loss could affect men as well, her situation might elicit a less remote type of pity and fear in Euripides' audience.[502]

Towards the end of the drama Creusa recognizes that Ion is her son and that hope remains for her family. She quickly switches to a significantly more positive account of Apollo's rape for

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[499] The Corinthian chorus of *Medea* express Medea's grievances in a hymn blaming men (410-445) which shares many similarities with Creusa's monody. Rynaerson 2015, 56-61 shows how like Creusa's palinode this chorus in *Medea* is an inversion of a hymn and includes blame of men.

[500] Larue 1963, 131-3.

[501] Lee 1997, 38 n. 112 emphasizes this point also: "cf. the situation in Soph. *El.* 660ff. where, although we know that the report of Orestes' death is false, we identify with the reactions of Clytemnestra and Electra to the news."

[502] Tragedy expects a mainly male audience. While the audience might certainly be able to feel pity for a raped woman, the circumstance of familial loss would have been understandable by either sex.

Ion and expresses to her son that she once again feels shame regarding the event (1471), the same shame which formerly she left behind in her distressed monody (αἰδοῦς δ' ἀπολειφθῶ 861).[503] The play ends with this new more optimistic understanding which Creusa finds for Apollo's rape as it has secured her family and provided an illustrious heir to the Erechtheid throne.

Creusa's revised story cannot rewrite the audience's memory, and returning to the event recalls to the audience her previous rendition delivered as a reaction to utter familial demise. Some of the negative emotions Creusa felt earlier reemerge at the end of the drama in her reunion with Ion. Thus after embracing him Creusa tells Ion "I still tremble with fear" (ἔτι φόβῳ τρέμω. 1452) and explains this emotion by bringing up her previous despair for her family "yes, I threw away all my hopes earlier" (τὰς γὰρ ἐλπίδας ἀπέβαλον πρόσω 1453). Creusa's comment suggests that the play's resolution does not resolve the tense feelings caused by the familial catastrophe experienced earlier in the play.

2. Endangered Children in the Erechtheid Family

While *Ion* promises its audience a happy conclusion, Euripides creates tension throughout play by lingering on the horror of Creusa's exposure of the infant Ion, the Erechtheid heir, and her near repetition of the same violence at Delphi. The play returns repeatedly not only to Creusa's act but also to past episodes in her family history that offer interesting parallels to Creusa's act.[504] Euripides' stories from previous generations of Creusa's family develop a

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[503] Scafuro 1990, 140-141 and 144-7 discusses how shame is depicted as holding Creusa back from expressing her perspective on her rape but that, "when she loses that [shame] her language will become explicit," 141. Scafuro, 147, notes that Creusa's final account of the rape "sugar-coats" it.

[504] Loraux 1993, 226 and n. 194 notes the parallels between the Cecropids and Creusa with regard to not caring for children and their ensuing fates. Pedrick 2007, 174-5 connects Creusa's sacrifice of Ion with her father Erechtheus' sacrifice.

pattern in which individuals' actions threaten to bring about the extinction of the Erechtheid *oikos* by effecting harm for its children. This mythical background elevates the scale of Creusa's family circumstance to the exposition of a great family's persistent suffering.

Repeated family endangerment in *Ion* might be compared to the repeated family violence in the Atreid house in *Oresteia,* a play to which, as has been noted, *Ion* responds.[505] An important difference is that instances in *Ion* are less aggressive than those in *Oresteia*. In a similar way to how Agamemnon, Clytemnestra, and Orestes each renews a model of inter-kin violence of Atreus and Thyestes, *Ion* sets Creusa in a position to revive a family strain of dysfunction on stage. In this way, Euripides draws the audience's attention to a shared aspect of endangerment of the family.

Euripides describes two previous generations of Creusa's family, the Cecropids and Erechtheus, whom he juxtaposes with Creusa's story as instances where individuals do not preserve children from harm. Creusa's suffering is magnified by the history of her family, to which the play alludes repeatedly and which bears a resemblance to Creusa's exposure of Ion. The Cecropids disobediently opened the basket containing the infant Erichthonius, and Erechtheus killed three of his daughters, and almost Creusa, to save Athens. *Ion* emphasizes the elements of these acts which suggest harming children and in this way shades how the audience interprets Creusa's decision to expose Ion. These stories in the play suggest a dangerous pattern within the family which threatens to include Creusa.[506] Creusa's father's sacrifice of her sisters which nearly missed Creusa conveys how directly Creusa has experienced violence within her

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[505] Segal 1999, 93-6; Fletcher 2009, 130; and Rynaerson 2014. Loraux 1993, 236 points to this relationship at the end of her chapter on *Ion*.

[506] Loraux 1993, 223-4 and Rosivach 1997 stress the gorgonic strain of violence in the Erechtheid family. The Cecropids share this chthonic and snake-y characterization.

family (even if Erechtheus' act can be excused). The idea that Erechtheus' act was a source of hurt for Creusa also deepens the trauma of her rape and decision to expose Ion. The drama threatens that Creusa will repeat this act once more by killing Ion at Delphi.

The daughters of King Cecrops and Aglauros repeatedly appear in the play and evoke Creusa's exposure of Ion by their foolish disregard of Athena's instructions for the care of the infant Erichthonius.[507] In their initial dialogue Ion and Creusa relate the narrative of the Cecropid disobedience. Athena received the baby Erichthonius after he sprang from earth (267 and 269)[508] and entrusted him to the Cecropids in a basket with the command not to look inside (271-2). When the maidens did look, they were compelled to jump from the cliffs of the Acropolis (the "Long Rocks" 273-4). The story connects with Creusa's on levels both of description and theme. In terms of the two episodes' details, both children are placed in baskets with the same accoutrements and both events involve the same location, the "Long Rocks." Thematically, both boy-children represent the next generation of the ruling *oikos* in Athens. While Athena entrusts Erichthonius to the Cecropid maidens, another divinity, Apollo, causes Ion to become the charge of the maiden Creusa. In both instances the young women do not guard the child. This choice in each case resists the divine "plan" for the Erechtheid *oikos* (and, by extension, for Athens) on some level. Euripides certainly suggests blame towards Creusa, even if we are not to suppose that Apollo ever envisaged that Creusa would raise Ion herself.

Linking the incidents are the location, the Long Rocks, and each infant's basket and golden snakes. The Cecropids jumped from the Long Rocks, which are adjacent to the cave of

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[507] Zacharia 2003, 87-88 compares the curiosity of the Cecropids with Creusa's desire to speak in her monody. Loraux 1993, 211-213 compares Creusa to the Cecropids with regard to their disobedience and danger.

[508] Gaia, having been impregnated by Hephaestus.

Pan (παραυλίζουσα πέτρα / μυχώδεσι Μακραῖς, 493-4) in which Creusa conceived, bore, and exposed Ion. When Ion mentions the cliffs by name, *Makrai* (283), he elicits an emotional response from Creusa who remembers her experience in the cave at that spot (284, 286, and 288). At the end of their Second Stasimon (492-502) the chorus links the two events clearly. First, they describe the cave of Pan and the Cecropids as haunting the area (453-4). Using the conjunction ἵνα ("where") the chorus immediately segues to the labor of Creusa and her exposure of Ion at the same location (503-6). Like the shared location, the golden snakes link the two stories. In his prologue Hermes describes Creusa exposing Ion with the snakes and includes a history of the snakes' institution (20-26) when Athena first gave such decorations to Erichthonius. The snakes take on an added meaning when Ion and Creusa later discuss the involvement of the Cecropids in Erichthonius' story. Ion here also depicts Athena putting Erichthonius in a vessel (τεῦχος 269-274) which the basket (ἀντίπηγ' 1339) revealed by the priestess at the end of the play will later evoke.

The similarity between the Cecropids' action and Creusa's allows the drama to explore their thematic connections. Central is the refusal to nurture and preserve a child. In describing the history of the pair of golden snakes, Hermes tells how Athena gave them as "guardians of the body" of Ion (φύλακε σώματος 22) and gave them along with infant Erichthonius to the Cecropids who were to "safeguard" him (δίδωσι σῴζειν· 24). In this passage Hermes uses the same verb, σώζω, to describe Creusa as "preserving the custom" (20) of Athena's snakes.[509] The repeated verb highlights how Creusa reverses Athena's act of preserving: Creusa exposes her infant in the wild while Athena took Erichthonius from the earth and gave him to the Cecropids' care. Both Creusa and the Cecropids are daughters in the ruling house of Athens who do *not* care

[509] Zeitlin 1989, 150-3 discusses the repetition of the word σώζω.

for the infant male heir to the throne whom a divinity gives them. In both cases there is an absence of a male heir in the royal *oikos* despite a surplus of daughters. Like Athena, Apollo introduces to the Athenian family, through a maiden, an heir who was not conceived within the *oikos* and who is the child of a god.

In this light Creusa conspicuously threatens the continuity of her own *oikos* as well as Apollo's plan to save it. In their First Stasimon the chorus insinuates this criticism of Creusa. First they state that they "blame" (ψέγω· 489) anyone who does not abhor a childless life (488-9). Without explicitly assigning an object of this criticism, the chorus quickly mention the Cecropids and Creusa. They shift their song to a description of the cave of Pan where the Cecropids, as if haunting it, tread (492-502) and then describe Creusa's situation (anonymously):

> ἵνα τεκοῦσά τις
> παρθένος μελέα βρέφος
> Φοίβῳ πτανοῖς ἐξόρισεν
> θοίναν θηρσί τε φοινίαν
> δαῖτα, πικρῶν γάμων ὕβριν· 503-7
>
> Where some unhappy maiden, after giving birth to a baby by Phoebus, cast it out as a feast for the birds and as bloody meal for the beasts, [her] insolence on account of bitter unions.

The chorus' depiction of the exposure reflects Creusa's perspective as victim but also highlights her violence by calling to mind a picture of carnage and wild beasts (506-7). The chorus connects the Cecropids and Creusa and suggests, without explicitly condemning Creusa, that the queen has revived a negative precedent.

Although Apollo has caused Creusa pain,[510] it is Creusa alone who has threatened Ion and the continuation of her family while the god has planned to save both. Creusa's accusation of

[510] Burnett 1971, 128-9 even admits that there are gaps in the god's understanding of human nature.

Apollo, because her criticism also applies to herself, draws attention to the fact that she exposed of Ion as a baby: "you did not save your own [son] who you ought to have saved" (…οὔτ' ἔσωσας τὸν σὸν ὃν σῶσαί σ' ἐχρῆν 386).[511] Creusa's criticism of Apollo as a neglectful parent emphasizes disregard of a caregiver as something which Creusa has witnessed in her own family (277-80) and seems to feel personally convicted of herself.[512] Thus when Creusa tells the Old Tutor that she exposed her son, he criticizes the cruelty of her act as does Creusa (951, 954, 958, 960, and 963). Ion (1375-7) and Creusa (1491-6) reflect similarly on the event at the end of the play.

The account of the mythographer Apollodorus suggests a further possible likeness between the stories of how Cecropids and Creusa each resisted a divine plan for a child. Apollodorus relates that Athena took back Erichthonius after the Cecropids opened the chest, and that the goddess raised the infant "in her precinct" (ἐν δὲ τῷ τεμένει 3.14.6), not unlike Apollo's care for Ion in his *temenos* at Delphi. The Pythia in *Ion* is the ideal cooperator with Apollo's plan and provides contrast for the pattern of human resistance. The Pythia is described as receiving (λαβοῦσα 49) and raising (49, 1359) the infant Ion, the acts which Creusa did not do. As Zeitlin notes, Apollo is given credit for motivating these actions of the Pythia.[513] As a result the priestess appears the ideal cooperator with Apollo and provides contrast for the resistance of the

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[511] If Heath's emendation of ἠμέλησα for ἠμέλησε is correct in line 1610 (which Kovacs accepts) Creusa recognizes at the end of the play that she has done what she earlier blamed Apollo for at the very end of the play, exclaiming "[I praise Apollo because] he returned to me the child I did not care for once (ἠμέλησα)" (ποτ᾽ ἠμέλησα παιδὸς ἀποδίδωσί μοι. 1610). See Lee 1997, 319, who is skeptical, on the debate on this issue.

[512] Gibert 1995, 171-3 suggests that Creusa feels guilty about exposing Ion. He believes in this play the assertion of guilt is justified, not just shame.

[513] 47-8, 1346-7, and 1357-60. Zeitlin 1996, 152 notes these.

Cecropids and Creusa.[514] In Apollo's quasi-*oikos* at Delphi[515] the Pythia safeguards Apollo's supposedly foster son Ion, something which could not be guaranteed at Athens because of human resistance.

Although ignorance mitigates the resistance against the gods by both the Cecropids and Creusa, each maiden endangers the next generation of the Athenian ruling family and by her disobedience threatens her own life.[516] Through Apollo's plan Creusa avoids the consequence of her initial exposure of Ion and also avoids killing him at Delphi.[517] She nonetheless comes very close to killing him, and the drama exploits this possibility: the Cecropids are ominously represented in the tent Ion constructs (1163-5), where his mother will make an attempt upon him through poison. Creusa nearly experiences the same fatal end as the Cecropids: Ion threatens to throw Creusa from the cliff because of her attempt on his life (1266-8), specifically because he is the ward of Apollo (1224-5). While Creusa's blame is lessened by her pathos and ignorance, the play does not shy from impugning her exposure of Ion. Her later attempt on Ion's life also confuses the divine plan for the new heir to the Athenian ruling *oikos*.[518] The projection of the Cecropid story upon Creusa's endows her situation with a mythical resonance that frames the queen's two acts as human resistance, albeit ignorant resistance, to Apollo with regards to her own *oikos*.

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[514] The gorgonic nature of both the Cecropids and Creusa creates a special tension with Athena, the gorgon slayer, depicted among the images of Olympian vs. monsters on the temple described by the chorus, 191-218. See, for instance, Loraux 1993, 223-4.

[515] I will discuss this identification later, pp. 225-7.

[516] Burnett 1971, 111-112 emphasizes the way in which Euripides characterizes Creusa's revenge as "blind."

[517] Although she says at one point that she expected Apollo to save Ion (965), Creusa is described as leaving him "to die" (ὡς θανουμένῳ 27).

[518] While Burnett 1971, 122 calls Creusa a *theomachos*, Mikalson 1991, 284-5 n.131 points out that she is not persistent enough to fall in this category, which he discusses, 158-61. Zacharia 2003, 71-96 emphasizes Creusa's transition to fighting against Apollo in her monody.

Ion draws Erechtheus into this nexus of stories of child endangerment on the Acropolis. In his interview with Creusa, Ion follows his first inquiry about the Cecropids and Erichthonius with a second regarding the story of Erechtheus' sacrifice of his daughters. Ion and Creusa establish the basic facts that Creusa's father sacrificed (ἔθυσε 277) his daughters in order to save Athens, "for the sake of the land" (πρὸ γαίας 278), only sparing Creusa because she was a "newborn baby in [her] mother's arms" (βρέφος νεογνὸν μητρὸς … ἐν ἀγκάλαις. 280) (275-80). The Long Rocks, the subject of Ion's third query, provides a further connection between the three generations of family narratives. Ion asks Creusa whether the *Makrai* is where Erechtheus died, referring to the myth of how Poseidon struck Erechtheus at this location with a thunder bolt because the king had killed the god's son Merops in war (281-5).

Erechtheus' act takes on a negative light in the context of the play which centers on the fate of an exposed infant and highlights the perspective of Creusa who nearly died with her sisters at the hand of her father.[519] The juxtaposition of Erechtheus' story with the Cecropids' emphasizes the vulnerability of an *oikos* and Erechtheus' endangerment of it. Like Cecrops before him, Erechtheus had only female children, all but one of whom he sacrificed (in *Erechtheus*, the king seems to have adopted a male heir who dies before the end of the play).[520]

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[519] Euripides' *Erechtheus* earlier depicted both Erechtheus' allowing his daughters' willing sacrifice and the king's demise, though its fragmented state prevents us from knowing how or whether the dramatist connected these events. Both plays focus on the *oikos* of Erechtheus, and focus on the location of the Acropolis. Continuity of the *oikos* is at issue in both. To assess Erechtheus' child sacrifice in that plays we have only Praxithea's words encouraging her husband to sacrifice their daughters (fr. 360, see above, pp. 155-6). The fragments do not indicate whether the decision constitutes a family offense like Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia in *Agamemnon.*

[520] Sources vary as to how many daughters he had and how many died. See Loraux 1993, 215 on how the surfeit of daughters and lack of sons for Cecrops and Erechtheus is suggestive of the problems in reproduction arising for autochthonous beings. Loraux suggests that Creusa's *apaidia* is "simply a displacement of childlessness that threatens any autochthonous being" such as the Spartoi, Giants, Kranaos and Cecrops.

The Cecropids' disobedience undermined Athena's provisions for the ruling Attic *oikos* and proved fatal to all the natural offspring of Cecrops. Similarly, by contributing to the deaths of all Creusa's sisters, Erechtheus has placed Creusa in a tense familial situation: as the only child of her deceased father Creusa bears responsibility for continuing the family (but her fertility is questioned). In *Erechtheus*, Euripides depicted the king's death, and it is tempting to see a connection between Erechtheus' choice to sacrifice his daughter and Poseidon's destruction of him and his adopted son, along the same lines as Agamemnon's destruction following his sacrifice of Iphigenia.[521] Euripides ties Erechtheus' act into the pattern of rejecting maternal nurture by Creusa and the Cecropids: the playwright contrasts Erechtheus' child sacrifice with his wife who safeguards Creusa "in her arms" (… ἐν ἀγκάλαις 280). Likewise, several times in the play it is mentioned that Creusa did not or will not hold her son Ion in her arms (761-2, 1375).

Erechtheus' name arises numerous times in the play in relation to the precarious situation of his *oikos*.[522] This reminds the audience not only of the significant political and etiological import of the play's subject, but also directs them to view Creusa in relation to a repetition of intra-familial violence. The genealogy for Creusa's situation encourages the audience to go

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[521] Calame 2012, 144 makes this suggestion also.

[522] Before the second stasimon: 281-8, 468-71, and 566. Explicit concern for the Erechtheid *oikos* intensifies in and after the chorus' Second Stasimon, which is finished by a reference to Erechtheus (725), though the verb is unclear. Lee 1997 and others have noted the significance of his name in connection with the immediate entrance of the Old Tutor who takes a political perspective and whom Creusa welcomes as the "*paidagogos* of my father Erechtheus" (παιδαγώγ᾽ Ἐρεχθέως πατρὸς 725). Creusa also tells him "I [care for] you just as you once cared for my father" (ἐγὼ δέ σ᾽, ὥσπερ καὶ σὺ πατέρ᾽ ἐμόν ποτε, 733-4), leading Loraux 1993, 208 to identify the servant with Erechtheus. Mentions of the house of Erechtheus after the tutor's entrance include 810-11, 968, 1293, and 1463-7.

beyond the strict action of the plot in order to understand the play. It hinders the audience from experiencing the play in a linear way and suggests against its interpretation as comedy.[523]

This use of myth situates the family's circumstance as a subject in the play in its own right. In all three stories – of the Cecropids, of Erechtheus, and of Creusa – there is a lack of male heirs in the royal *oikos*. In each a family member further threatens the *oikos* through acts which endangered its children. This builds a sense that Creusa is reviving a deep-rooted propensity. The continuation of familial self-wounding by the Cecropids and Erechtheids has a similar relation to the action of *Ion* as did the inter-kin murder which infected the house of Atreus and provided the context for Aeschylus' *Oresteia,* which threatened in that trilogy to continue indefinitely.[524]

Euripides' constellation of stories also draws attention to the fact that Creusa's attempts against Ion, which threaten her own family, are born of human ignorance. The need for significant divine intervention at the end of the play reemphasizes the difference between the divine and human perspectives on the human family. Creusa's resistance and suffering reflect a confusion of human affairs while Apollo's beneficence ultimately settles the family's distress. From the Olympian perspective, Apollo's plan for the Erechtheid family perfectly suits its formal needs for stability by making Erechtheus' heir an Erechtheid, endowing future generations with a divine pedigree, and allowing Ion to inherit the position in Athens legally with Xouthus' consent. Apollo's perspective on the human *oikos* implied in *Ion* is comparable to that in *Eumenides*

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[523] As Burnett notes in reference to the ecphrasis of the tent, there are several issues with a linear reading of the play. By disrupting, this myth suggests that it is not all about plot, but that the symbolism conveys meaning. On the other hand, Kitto 1961, 314-315 argues that in *Ion* and other "tragicomedies" the realistic human suffering of tragedy has been "cut away."

[524] In both *Eumenides* and the end of *Ion,* the goddess Athena steps in in order to break the tragic recurrence.

where the god explicitly offers his judgments not only on Orestes' fate but on the human institution of marriage (distinguishing the male and female contribution to the creation of children and deeming patricide a worse crime than matricide). The divine intervention in both plays points to the vulnerability of the human family to dysfunction.

3. Conflict of the Personal and Political concern for the *oikos*

Euripides presents Creusa's personal family crisis not only in a mythological context but also in relation to the concerns of the Athenian *polis*. Since Creusa's need for a child has ramifications for Athenians' claim of autochthony, her misfortune overlaps with the political concern of Athens.[525] However, the play does not always represent the personal and political concern for Creusa's *oikos* as always coinciding; rather Euripides inserts a tension between these two perspectives. Creusa does not herself express political motivation until the end of the play when she has been caught in her plot.[526] Before this, the chorus' and tutor's dismay at Ion's political threat to Athens presents a tone which clashes with Creusa's expression of personal emotion. Since the chorus and tutor convince Creusa to plan the murder of Ion, their political anger towards Ion and the misinformation they provide the queen bring it about that Creusa threatens the son she longs for and who secures her personal *oikos*.[527] While Creusa expresses personal betrayal and dismay, the chorus' and tutor's clamorous emphasis on Athens'

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[525] Ion also presents a figure of some significance to all Ionians and the relationship of Athens with other Ionian *poleis*. Hall 1997, 53-7 discusses Athens' apparent changing view towards the Ionian title between the Archaic and Late Classical periods, and the way that autochthony and Ionianism might convey opposite tendencies of exclusion and inclusion. See Zacharia 2003, 41-55 on *Ion* and the Ionians. See also Walsh 1978, 310-313 who views Euripides as addressing Athenians in his audience, not Ionian visitors through this theme.

[526] Owen 1939, xxviii: "what she [Creusa] emphasizes is the personal and not the public wrong, and it is only after the plot has failed that she tries to justify her crime on wider grounds (1291, etc.)."

[527] Walsh 1978, especially 299-301.

autochthony departs from her personal perspective. The divergence of public and private stakes in Creusa's *oikos* highlights the personal cost the queen experiences.

While Creusa has an important public role, her predominant tone is personal. At the play's beginning, in both Hermes' introduction and Creusa's initial interview with Ion political concerns are left implicit at most. Creusa expresses a mother's longing for her son, a wife's longing for a child in her marriage, and a daughter's desire for her natal family. These are individual, personal desires, and while they can be viewed in combination with the political needs of Creusa and her family, they are expressed in personal terms. Creusa's and Xouthus' *erōs* for children (67), already discussed, communicates that Xouthus and Creusa share this private feeling.

Ion and Xouthus provide important non-political perspectives on family which contrast with the political passion which characters surrounding Creusa voice. Some of this private perspective is conveyed through the language of pleasure and desire. Xouthus calls Ion's wish to find his mother a "desire" (πόθος 572) and approves of it with no reference to the political implications for Ion finding out who his mother is: indeed, Xouthus believes Ion is a bastard and that the mother is likely a Delphic girl who is unknown to him (551-5). Ion's thoughts about his unknown mother are similarly personal; thus he exclaims "Now I long to see you more than ever before, whoever you are" (νῦν ποθῶ σε μᾶλλον ἢ πρίν, ἥτις εἶ ποτ', εἰσιδεῖν. 564)! Ion does not describe his desire for family in primarily political terms either, separating personal happiness at having a father (587-9) from concerns about his reception at Athens (590-4). His anxiety about Attic politics, which strikes a notably Fifth-Century tone, expresses a critique of the political implications of being part of an (Athenian) *oikos* because it highlights the insistence on the

importance of legitimate birth.[528] Both Ion and Creusa express a feeling of *hēdonē* or "pleasure"[529] in reuniting at last, a primarily personal reaction to this resolution of the play.

Xouthus offers substantial contrast for Creusa since he exemplifies unalloyed personal desire for family and shows little or no concern – especially as a non-Athenian – for the political dimension of the family. Thus the chorus blames Xouthus for being thoughtless of the Erechtheid line (703-5), and the old tutor goes further to suggest that Xouthus meant to deceive Creusa (808-829). Though the audience realizes that the tutor's charges are false, Xouthus does come across as unconcerned for the position of his wife's family. Notably, he expresses to Ion disbelief in autochthony (542), the defining claim of the family. Xouthus further does not show concern for the consequences of bringing his bastard son into the *oikos* of his wife: it is Ion who first must voice this concern for Creusa's feelings (607-620) before Xouthus remembers it (657-8).

Xouthus' desire for offspring is clearly on display during the encounter with Ion outside the temple when he imagines the boy is his son. Here his delight in finding Ion creates comic potential and exaggerates realistic human emotions. Emphasis on Ion's misinterpretation of Xouthus' approach as sexual may,[530] I believe, distract from how Xouthus' unmoderated feeling

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[528] Ion's critique of Athenian politics undermines the political/patriotic interpretation of this play such as Gregoire 1933 proposes. Lee 1997 and Wolff 1965 point this out also.

[529] Creusa states that she has gotten the "most blessed pleasure" (μακαριωτάτας τυχοῦσ᾽ ἡδονᾶς. 1461). Ion asks his mother to invite Xouthus so that he can also enjoy the pleasure: "mother, being here with me let my father share this pleasure which I gave you" μῆτερ, παρών μοι καὶ πατὴρ μετασχέτω / τῆς ἡδονῆς τῆσδ᾽ ἧς ἔδωχ᾽ ὑμῖν ἐγώ. 1468-9.

[530] As Ion rebuffs Xouthus' attempt to embrace him, emphasis on physical touch creates substantial awkwardness with comic potential. As Segal 1995, 47 notes, the meter of the scene, troachaic tetrameter catalectic, is typical of comedy. See Zacharia 1995, 54 for a discussion of the innuendo here. Knox 1979, 260ff. relies on this scene for his comic diagnosis of the play.

contributes to the theme of familial desire and casts him as a "family man," like Euripides' Heracles, only more overzealous. Xouthus' demeanor thus parodies parental and personal feeling for family.[531]

Ion's initial rejection of Xouthus' advances joins a number of tragic and epic precedents where initial disbelief precedes an emotional family reunion emotion; for instance, in *Odyssey* 16, Telemachus rejects Odysseus' embrace and kiss, stating "you are not Odysseus my father" (οὐ σύ γ' Ὀδυσσεύς ἐσσι, πατὴρ ἐμός, (*Od* 16.194-5). In three other recognition scenes Euripides dramatizes the confusion where one character at first rejects another family member's embrace (*IT* 793ff, *Ion* 1395ff and *Helen* 557ff).[532] Thus Xouthus' scene belongs to a type which focuses on familial desire.

Xouthus' desire for children provides fodder for some humor. As the audience knows, he is incorrect in his assumption of paternity, and Ion's reaction shows he mistakes Xouthus' intent. The depiction of Xouthus' character also complicates his expression of serious family desire: he is male and less sympathetic in Euripides' presentation because he is not only foreign, but also intellectually obtuse and morally insensitive. He is also a husband unaware that another man has impregnated his wife and in this way he "strongly recalls comic situations where a man rears a child that is not his own."[533] Xouthus and Ion give hints to as to where the audience may have found comedy in this scene. The enthusiasm of the actor playing Xouthus – his gestures and

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[531] This does not strip away the comedy, but does make it less flamboyantly comic and increases the type of realism which Euripides elsewhere, for instance Megara's description of Heracles interacting with his sons, Eur. *Her*. 462-9.

[532] Kaimio 1988, 36-7 points how it is typical in Euripides' recognition scenes that such initial rejection precedes recognition.

[533] Zacharia 1995, 57. She, n. 54 compares Xouthus with Charisius' character in Menander's *Arbitrants* (*Epitrepontes*). Zacharia also, 50, suggests there are "high and low" characters in *Ion* and that Xouthus is low.

delivery – are likely what first confuse Ion since he reacts rather violently to Xouthus' simple greeting of him as "Oh son, hello" (ὦ τέκνον, χαῖρ'· 517).[534] Ion also makes a comment which suggests that Xouthus' attitude is laughable: "Is this not a joke for me to hear?" (ταῦτ' οὖν οὐ γέλως κλυεῖν ἐμοί; 528).[535] Ion's continued angry tone points to his misunderstanding of Xouthus' intention while Xouthus' language of love highlights his mistaken happiness at finding Ion.

Xouthus expands upon the description of his (and Creusa's) ἔρως (67) for children by repeatedly using the vocabulary of *philia* combined with the expression of desire for physical contact. Since the emotion *philia* encompasses bonds from friendship through sexual passion[536] the repetition of this vocabulary (φίλημα 519, φίλταθ' 521, φίλα 523, τὰ φίλτατα 525, οὐ φιλῶ 526) does not by itself convey innuendo and is in fact characteristic of recognition scenes in tragedy. Striking however is the physicality of Xouthus, who asks Ion for his hand to kiss (φίλημα) and for "embraces of [Ion's] body" (σῆς σώματός τ' ἀμφιπτυχάς 519).[537] The request for a kiss is unique in tragedy and unusually intimate.[538] Two lines later, Xouthus states "I desire to touch [the thing I love]" (θιγεῖν ἐφίεμαι; 521). Xouthus finally asserts forcefully "I will embrace you" (ἅψομαι· 523). The emphasis on love and physical touch suggests an extreme intensity for familial affection that is not *unlike* sexual desire and more unusual for a male

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[534] While Knox and others believe that Xouthus' greeting of Ion as "son" (ὦ τέκνον, χαῖρ'· 517) suggests the *erastes-eramenos* relationship, Lee points out that this word does not typify that context.

[535] Zacharia 1995, 54.

[536] Konstan 2006 and Stanford 1983, 39.

[537] On the female association with the body and touch as well as with *erōs*, see Zeitlin 1990, 73-5.

[538] Lee 1997, 217 objects to understanding *philēma* as "kiss" because it is a gesture without parallel in tragedy, citing Kaimio 1988, 38. However compare Odysseus kissing Telemachus (*Od.* 16.15 and 16.20 "he kissed him everywhere" πάντα κύσεν) and Heracles wishing to kiss the bodies of his family members, Eur. *Her*. 1366-7.

character. Ion's description of Xouthus as maddened (ἔμηνεν θεοῦ τις ... βλάβη; 520-1 and μεμηνότας 526) suggests the notion of *erōs* as a divine madness.[539]

The force of Xouthus' behavior and words suggests the way Euripides explores male family attachment elsewhere, where his characterization is in terms of potential excess and femininity. While male Xouthus' embrace of Ion is presented as an occasion for laughter, a similar scene of embrace is quite serious when the female Creusa reunites with Ion in an exchange of physical embraces and affectionate language. This depiction of male love of children is analogous to the presentation of Amphitryon and Heracles discussed in the last chapter. *Heracles* presented Amphitryon's love for his grandchildren as possibly extreme for an adult male, especially in contrast with Megara's concern for the *kleos* of her family. The middle-aged Heracles does not shy from his father's example but kisses his children's bodies (1376-7) and embraces his father on stage. He did this despite Theseus' criticism of his affective display which he described as "womanish" (θῆλυν 1412) and in terms of *erōs*.[540]

Even though Euripides explores these male feelings in relation to the excessive or feminine, he did not present only a satiric depiction of the desire of Heracles, a man in his prime, to have and care for a family. Xouthus, for all his comic potential, may also convey a realistic family attachment. A suggestion of this is his prompt attention to undertake sacrifices on behalf of his son.[541] Xouthus' emotion contributes to a larger theme of the play, and his recognition scene is reenacted without comedy by Ion and Creusa at the end of the play. His enthusiasm

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[539] Lee 1997, 217 suggests it could also be a more general reference to odd behavior.
[540] Also discussed in the previous Chapter Three, in *Erechtheus* (fr. 362 l. 33-4), Erechtheus describes shame (*aidos*) holding him back from giving his son more than a touch of the hand, implying his desire for more, while his wife Praxithea stoically argues against any female attachment to her daughters' lives.
[541] Owen 1939, xxix.

suggests that he does not feel the same patriotic or political concern which the chorus and Old Tutor will impress upon Creusa. Xouthus presents the same desire which Creusa feels through a comic lens. The unbridled joy of Xouthus only emphasizes Creusa's future suffering, and indeed, the false hope of Xouthus.

It is just after Xouthus' exuberant display of personal emotion that both the chorus and the Old Tutor quickly begin to project political anxieties onto Creusa, largely in response to Xouthus' plan to bring Ion to Athens. The change to this political register is marked in the play and draws attention to a divergence between the personal and political perspectives on the family in which the political does not appear wholly positive. Before the Ion-Xouthus scene, in their First Stasimon, the chorus sang mostly about personal desire for children (472-491) and briefly discussed the good children offer to the *polis* (481-4).[542] In their Second Stasimon they also dwell on Creusa's personal feeling of betrayal but begin to mount a patriotic objection to Ion, likening him to an invasion of foreigners (722). It is the Chorus' reference to "lord Erechtheus" at the song's (corrupt) close (724) which draws significant attention to the political importance of the family and introduces the entrance of the Old Tutor.

The old tutor is immediately forceful in projecting patriotic responsibility upon Creusa, expressing this in his very first lines upon entrance: "Daughter, you are preserving the worthy habits of worthy forebears and you have not brought shame to your family, descendants of ancient men born from the earth" (ὦ θύγατερ, ἄξι' ἀξίων γεννητόρων / ἤθη φυλάσσεις κοὐ καταισχύνασ' ἔχεις / τοὺς σούς, παλαιῶν ἐκγόνους αὐτοχθόνων. 735-7).[543] When the chorus

[542] After this the chorus also conclude the song on a personal note by alluding to Creusa's traumatic experience in the cave and to the hard experience of sharing children with divinities.
[543] The tutor's political focus contrasts with Creusa's address to the old man with familial tenderness (725-734).

delivers their report that Creusa will be childless and that Xouthus has a child, Creusa responds in emotional pain. But before the queen can begin to explain her reaction, the Old Tutor produces his own suppositious interpretation of the situation. Into Creusa's aggrieved "I" the tutor inserts himself and perhaps the chorus, stating "*we* are being cast out from the Erechtheid house" (810) by Xouthus who, he suggests, contrived the whole situation years before (808-831). The tutor continues to lay out Creusa's situation to her in a very political and impersonal manner. For instance, he locates Xouthus' offence in not choosing a nobler woman by whom to sire his bastard child. Though it is with sympathy that the tutor encourages Creusa to tell him the whole story of her rape and exposure, his questions are clearly pointed to determining where the child might be, and he expresses his greatest grief for Erechtheus' house (966 and 968). The chorus echoes the tutor's strain (832-5 ad 857-8).

Although Creusa will later accept the tutor's suggestion of violence, her immediate reaction reveals a different perspective. Notably she does not respond directly to the tutor's harangue regarding Ion's threat to the bloodline but instead expresses her personal experience in an emotional monody. The song lacks any explicit patriotic or political considerations. Creusa does accept the tutor's violent plan without hesitation, which has troubled many as an inconsistency, but she seems not to share the tutor's motivations. Although she shares the same goal, her central impulse is rooted in betrayal and the extinction of her *oikos*.

The Old Tutor and chorus foist upon Creusa their patriotic anxiety for the *oikos,* a forcefulness which is not depicted in an altogether favorable light.[544] Euripides undermines their patriotic strain through their false assumptions: the chorus assumes without basis that Creusa will

[544] Grégoire 1933 proposes a patriotic interpretation of the play, but critics have pointed out how the play undermines that interpretation, see above pg. 213, n. 530.

always be childless (contradicting the oracle which they have heard) while the tutor imagines Xouthus' motives and plotting.[545] Their repeated opposition to foreigners suggests that their Athenian pride in autochthony is ungenerous.[546] The nationalist patriotism of the chorus and tutor cause the ungainly violence in which they encourage Creusa and which frustrates Apollo's plan.

Only in her final standoff with Ion does Creusa describe her plot as a defense of her family and country (1291, 1293, 1297, 1299, and 1305).[547] Still, in this argument Ion and the Pythia, as well as Creusa herself, suggest that Creusa is driven primarily by personal feelings. For instance, Ion questions whether Creusa's patriotic apology (1292 and 1294) masks her personal feelings.[548] When Creusa recognizes Ion, she does celebrate for the sake of the Erechtheid family (1464-7), but the physical embrace and lyrical expressions focus the reunion scene primarily on personal emotion (1437-60). When at the very end of the drama Athena's arrival resolves Ion's paternity and approves him as the legitimate heir to the throne, it ends the play on a patriotic note which also eases the tension of patriotic and personal which Euripides has developed throughout the drama.

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[545] Burnett 1971, 111-2 emphasizes the blindness of the chorus and tutor.

[546] Especially in comparison to other tragedies which tout Athens as a refuge for foreigners. Walsh 1978, 301-15 and Saxonhouse 1986, 268-9 emphasize the ungenerosity of Attic autochthony in the play and Goff 1988, 198 points to the evidence of violence underlying autochthony. Wolff 1965, 174-6 also points to the unwelcoming tone of autochthony in *Ion* and contrasts it with what he sees as the true patriotism of *Erechtheus*. See also Loraux 1993, 184-5 and Matthiessen 1990, 278-9.

[547] Owen 1939, xxviii.

[548] Ion questions Creusa's patriotic defense (1292, 1294) and suggests that Creusa has a grudge against him as a stepmother (1302), a suggestion that Creusa does not deny (1303). The Pythia suggests to Ion also that Creusa's feelings should be understood, and sympathized with, as a stepmother's (1327 and 1329).

The contrast in perspectives and experiences of the characters in *Ion* reveal the difference between personal and political attachment to family. While the *polis'* interest in the Erechtheid house is obvious to the Athenian audience, the family's civic import is not presented in an unproblematic light: political fervor influences Creusa to kill her own child, ignorant of his identity. Here the mythic background reemerges: Creusa's situation may remind us that her father Erechtheus chose *polis* over *oikos.* Further, the tutor's and chorus' ungenerous championing of autochthony threatens Apollo's design that there be some admixture to the pure autochthonous strain of the family since Ion will be known as Xouthus' son and not Creusa's, by blood.[549] By showing how personal and public interest in Creusa's family may conflict, Euripides presents two ways to view Creusa's *oikos*: on a symbolic level as a representation of Athenian identity or in a social perspective as a relatable depiction of lived family experience. That the two perspectives compete in the drama reflects, perhaps, the stress of the *oikos*, a realm of intimate familial emotions, being an object of public interest.

4. The House in *Ion*

Despite *Ion's* focus on a specific household, on stage there is no *oikos*. Unlike the other plays discussed, this play does not use the *skēnē* to represent the façade of the house whose members are at the center of the action but instead the temple of Apollo at Delphi.[550] This absence emphasizes the distance between Creusa and Ion and their unsettled *oikos* in Athens.

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[549] On the blending of origins in Ion, see Walsh 1978, 306-7 and Loraux 1994, 234-6.

[550] The *skēnē* was probably not painted to depict individual sets, see Wiles 1997, 161 and Padel 1990, 336-65. Exceptions include *Ajax* and *Trojan Women* where the *skēnē* represents a tent. It depicts a cave in *Philoctetes* (147, 159, and 1453) and *Ichneutae* (281). *Oedipus at Colonus* is notable for using the *skēnē* to represent a natural scene. *Iphigenia at Tauris,* like *Ion,* has a temple. See Bieber 1961, 64–65, on the types of dwellings represented by the *skēnē* in the extant corpus of Greek drama. Taplin 1977, 452-9, followed by Wiles 1997, 161 argues that the *skēnē* was an innovation in the *Oresteia*, and therefore was not present in *Prometheus Bound*.

The fact that the *skēnē*, usually a domestic signifier, depicts Apollo's temple allows Euripides to describe this space in terms of an *oikos*. As critics have observed, along with the temple *Ion* depicts other enclosing structures, principally the cave[551] and Ion's tent, which share certain corresponding features.[552] Scholars have noted the similarities of these structures which convey related themes including the womb,[553] hiding and revelation,[554] the revelation of truth,[555] autochthony,[556] and danger.[557] In addition the cave, the temple, and the tent relate to and provide a type of alternative to the missing *oikos*.[558] Each enclosure, like the physical *oikos,* distinguishes outside space from a hidden inside (like the *muchos* of an *oikos*) and holds significance for the identity of the person related to it. Without a house to point to from the orchestra, these other spaces draw attention to the important identifying function of the *oikos* for the characters on stage.

While it is not the play's location, the drama certainly does not pass over the house of the Erechtheids. The house is cited numerous times, especially as a space which needs to be protected.[559] The unseen Erechtheid house is a symbol for the identity of the Erechtheids and all Athens, as well as security for Creusa. Although the house is not represented in the theater, the acropolis behind the theater of Dionysus would have prompted *Ion'*s audience to imagine the

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[551] And the baskets in which Ion and Erichthonius were exposed, respectively
[552] Loraux 1993, 221-2 and 228-234; and Goff 1988, 53 n. 14; and Zeitlin 1989, 168.
[553] Loraux 1993, 230-4 and Goff 1988, 53 n. 14: "the play abounds in womb-like enclosures: the cave, the cradle, the grove.... all present death..." Goff also includes Athena's shield, the Gorgon's vein, and the serpent bracelets.
[554] Zacharia 2003, 38-9.
[555] Goff 1988, 43 and 51.
[556] Zeitlin 1989, 220-30.
[557] Loraux 1993, 220-4.
[558] Loraux 1993, 221-2 notes the way the cave and tent represent especially the gorgonic aspects of the Erechtheid house. Zeitlin 1989 notes how Ion constructs a private space through the tent.
[559] 281-8, 468-71, 566, 810-11, 968, 1293, and 1463-7.

Athenian *oikos* of the Erechtheids which once sat on the height. The Erechtheion complex, though not visible on the opposite side of the hill, holds particular resonance with the Erechtheid house.[560] This building was located quite near to the Long Rocks to which the play frequently refers.[561] By removing his audience from this *oikos* which is most near at hand, Euripides shows the distance and obstacles between it and Creusa and Ion.

The cave provides the first alternate space to the Erechtheid *oikos* in the play. This cave of Pan, as Hermes informs the audience, is located near and just below the Erechtheid *oikos* on the side of the Acropolis.[562] In narrating her rape in the cave, Creusa stresses the alterity of this location to her *oikos*. Here Creusa experiences a lonely substitute to her father's house, where she as an *epiklēros* might otherwise have conceived and born her child its heir. As has been discussed, she describes giving birth to Ion in the cave alone and secretly out of shame and fear towards her family. Evident throughout the play are the absence from the cave of father, mother, husband (Apollo),[563] and an attendant at Creusa's labor. In the space of the cave the domestic events of conception, birth, and the father's recognition of the child occur, but the way they take place disrupts the Erechtheid *oikos* rather than bolsters it: Apollo rapes Creusa, she exposes Ion,

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[560] Most critics put *Ion* between 415 and 410, meaning that the Erechtheion was surely under construction if not finished at this time. See Zacharia 2003, 3-5 and n.11 for a summary of datings. As Walsh 1978 also notes, arguments regarding the date of the play are very much bound up in the political interpretation of the play. Cropp and Fick 1985 place *Ion* near *Troades* in or around 415. We do not know the precise relationship between the Erechtheion and the myth of Erechtheus on the Acropolis.

[561] See the labelled map Loraux 1993, 197 includes.

[562] Hermes describes the location of the cave in lines 10-19. The most direct implication that the Erechtheid *oikos* was on top of the Acropolis is in the chorus' song "the nurturing home of my rulers shares an oikos with Pallas," Παλλάδι σύνοικα τρόφιμα μέλα-/ θρα τῶν ἐμῶν τυράννων· 235-6.

[563] See Loraux 1993, 201 n 72 for discussion of references to Croeusa's *gamos* to Apollo: 10, 72, 437, 505, 868, 941, 949, and 1543. Loraux stresses that both the *lechos* (more related to marriage) and the *eunē* (sexual pleasure) are used in reference to both Apollo and Xouthus.

and Apollo subsequently removes the boy secretly to Delphi. The wrong way that these family events occur from the standpoint of the *oikos* points to the fact that the cave is not a truly domestic place, but a wild one.[564]

The objects which Creusa places in the cave and basket with Ion are a piece of her weaving, golden snakes, and a sprig of Athena's olive tree (1417, 1427-9, and 1433-6). These items communicate Ion's civic identity as an Athenian as well as his family identity when he reveals them.[565] The weaving and the snake amulets especially suggest the *oikos* as a conduit of linked personal and public identities. Textiles in literature frequently are tokens of familial recognition.[566] For instance, in *Choephoroi* Orestes identifies himself to Electra by a scrap of cloth woven by Electra herself (231-3).[567] In addition to Creusa's weaving in *Ion* (1141-6, 1417, 1418, 1424, 1394, 1425), the chorus twice refers to their own weaving (196-7 and 506-8). Textiles would have been made as well as stored also within the house, thus Megara asks for permission to retrieve the family funeral garments in *Heracles* (331). In *Ion* the cave and basket are each a proxy for the absent *oikos* as the place in which tokens of family identity are stored and from which they may be revealed.

Euripides' treatment of the temple of Apollo more directly invites the audience to consider the figure of the *oikos*. The temple was represented by the *skēnē*, the set building which typically depicts a human *oikos* and to which actors refer as a domestic structure – *domos*, *oikos*,

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564 The wildness of the cave is emphasized by the presence of beasts and birds as well as the fact that it is a cave associated with Pan. Loraux 1993, 221-2 describes the cave as "swallowing up the *oikos*" and suggests that Creusa's activities in the cave reflects her chthonic identity she has inherited from her gorgonic family.

565 Mueller 2010.

566 McClure 2015.

567 In the *Odyssey*, Penelope asks the "visitor" what her husband was wearing (19.218) so that she can ascertain his identity.

or *stegē* – even when it does not actually depict one.[568] Throughout *Ion* characters repeatedly refer to Apollo's temple as his *domos* rather than a *naos*.[569] This also reflects the relatively greater frequency with which Apollo's temple at Delphi was identified as *domos* of that god in relation to others.[570] Thus Maurizio points out the striking domestic identification of this space in *Eumenides* (35, 60, 179, 185, 207, and 577), whose order is "invaded from the outside and contrast[ed] with the house of Agamemnon, where threats to the house come from an unruly woman within."[571] In both *Eumenides* and *Ion* the Pythia is depicted as a domestic partner for Apollo who contrasts first with Clytemnestra and then with Creusa.[572] The identification of the *skēnē* wall as *oikos* defines the space behind as the domestic space of the god, where he and his plans for his "*oikos*" go unseen to the audience and characters on stage.

Like the comparison in *Eumenides* between Apollo's temple and Agamemnon's house, Euripides creates a symmetry between the space of Apollo's temple which Ion protects from pollution and the Erechtheid *oikos* which must be defended from outsiders but is also threatened by kin-violence. The pairing augments the identification of the temple as Apollo's *oikos*. The tutor, chorus, and Creusa refer to Erechtheus' house as a physical house to express what they protect. Thus Creusa tells Ion "you were going to set fire to the house of Erechtheus!"

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[568] For instance, Wiles 1997, 161 notes that in plays set before a cave, the text "refers... to a "house' or a 'roof,'" for instance *Philoctetes* 147, 159, and 1453. See also Arnott 1962, 99-101; Hourmouziadzs 1966, 13; Padel 1990, 336–65, esp. 348–49; and Bassi 1999, 426.

[569] References include 34-5; 47-8, 49, 129, 249, 319, 370, 424, 1197, and 1455. Also suggestive of this image of the god's *domos* is the chorus' depiction of Delphi as a "hearth" at the umbilical of the earth (ἔνθα γᾶς / μεσόμφαλος ἑστία 461-2).

[570] See Maurizio 2001, 46-7 and n. 37. Padel 1992, 72 n.85 discusses *muchos*, which usually refers to the recesses of house, perhaps women's quarters, as applied to the temple of Apollo in Aesch. *Eum*. 180, *Cho*. 954 and specifically the inner shrine: *Eum*. 39 and 170.

[571] Maurizio 2001, 46 n. 37.

[572] On the suggestion of a sexual relationship between Apollo and the Pythia, see Sissa 1990.

(κἀπίμπρης γ᾽ Ἐρεχθέως δόμους. 1293). Ion's protection of the god's *temenos* begins with him shooing away the birds (153-183) who threaten a type of pollution, probably defecation[573] and giving instructions for ritual purity[574] and continues in his warning the Athenian chorus not to step over the boundary of the *temenos* (219-21).

On her first entrance, Creusa explains to Ion that she weeps because of a memory prompted by seeing the "*domos* of Apollo" (249-50), perhaps remembering her own stake in his "house." Later when he suggests that Creusa burn down Apollo's temple and then that she kill Ion,[575] the old tutor's ideas for revenge frame his target as the closest equivalent to the god's *oikos*: Apollo's temple and "Apollo's young man" (Λοξίου νεανίας, 1218).[576] This connects to Creusa's blame of the god as an ungrateful lover and, indeed, when Creusa stands condemned to death it is because she attacked the god's property, Ion. Euripides expands upon Aeschylus' depiction of Apollo's *temenos* as a domestic sphere in the *Eumenides* by not only suggesting a domestic space, but also enacting domestic disorder from within the god's own *oikos*. In *Ion* the vulnerability of Creusa's *oikos* contrasts with the assurance in this play that Apollo has silent control over his space: though humans may suffer because of their own reactions, his plan will not be thwarted.

Ion views the temple and whole *temenos* as his proxy-*oikos*. The sight of Ion sweeping before the temple has a domestic tenor, especially his lyric address to his broom (112-124).[577]

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[573] Ion uses the verb βλάπτω twice to describe how the flock of birds will hurt Apollo's temple, 107 and 177-8.
[574] Ion instructs the servants of Apollo at Delphi to bathe for physical purity and to guard their mouths as well 94-99. At line 370 he states that Apollo shouldn't be attacked at his house.
[575] The tutor suggests burning Apollo's temple first (974), then killing Xouthus (976), and finally Ion (978).
[576] Cf. l. 311.
[577] Zacharia 1995, 49. Knox 1979, 254-6.

Ion describes the unconventional ways in which the sanctuary provides the *trophē* functions of an *oikos*, providing him with food from its altars (323) and shelter wherever he falls asleep (314). On this basis Ion dares to call Apollo his father (136),[578] an identification which reflects Ion's desire for a human family and highlights the areas in which Apollo's temple does *not* function like a human *oikos* for Ion. Principally, Ion lacks access to the *adyton* of the god's temple (414-6).[579] Ion cannot enter this nor can he know his divine father who stays hidden and inaccessible within the temple throughout the play. Ion has no knowledge of this parentage nor of the basket inside the temple which confirms his Athenian citizenship. Only at the end of the play does Ion get some contact with what is behind the *skēnē*, when the Pythia brings out Ion's baby basket.

Ion's creation of a proxy-*oikos* is given wider reign in the tent which he erects at Xouthus' suggestion and which the servant describes in an impressive ecphrasis (1132-1166). At first blush, the tent does not fit into the category of a house since it is a temporary structure outside of a *polis* and within the god's sanctuary, and rather than a dwelling place for a single family it is made big enough for all Delphians (1140).[580] However, Euripides' description of the tent emphasizes that it is an enclosing space, like a house,[581] which is constructed to celebrate, belatedly, Ion's birth. The herald describes that the tent is built with concern for protection against the heat of the day (1134-5), an important consideration of Greek house-building.[582] The

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[578] Ion also says he considers the Pythia "as a mother" (... μητέρ᾽ ὡς νομίζομεν. 321).
[579] See Zacharia 2003, 39.
[580] Zacharia 2003, 31-39 discusses the interpretation of the tent, especially in relation to Eastern practices and to the individual expenditures of powerful men in Athens such as Pericles and Alcibiades. Zacharia's discussion highlights that the tent is *thaumata* (1142) because it combines luxury and scale with an individual purpose.
[581] It is also worth noting that the word for tent, σκηναί (1129, σκηνώματα 1133) is the same, in the plural, word as the set building, the *skēnē*, which usually depicted an *oikos* (whose name points, it is likely, to its original construction).
[582] Xen. *Mem* 3.8.8-10, [Ar.] *Oik*. 1.6.7.

tent also hosts a birthday feast which is described like a symposium (1166-1194), both events associated with the house. The old tutor of Erechtheus serves as attendant at this feast (1166-1180), suggesting that the tent in some ways stands in the place of the Erechtheid house. This association becomes more sinister because the tent is also a proxy for Creusa's house at Athens and the domestic location where she attempts to entrap her supposed stepson.

The purpose of the tent imitates the *oikos*' function of producing citizens for the *polis* since its construction commemorates Ion's birth and his resulting place in the Athenian *polis*. Xouthus explicitly expresses this purpose to Ion (*genathlia* 653) and is depicted as going to make a sacrifice in place of Ion's missed *optēria* (1127).[583] As a space which Xouthus and Ion designate for a private and family-centered purpose, the tent is evocative of the *oikos* and *oikos*-centered ceremonies surrounding the birth of a child in Athens.[584] Just as the ceremonies marking a child's birth included private and public elements, the tent is also depicted with a joined public and private purpose.[585]

Lacking a house which would help provide a civic identity, Ion uses tapestries to reflect a complex identity which seems to relate to the *polis* he prepares to enter. Critics have pointed out that the tapestries depict subjects which hold meaning for the Athenian *polis* and its claim to

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[583] Xouthus' references to the *genathlia* and *optēria* do not have clear referents, as Lee 1997 points out. Lee suggests it is some combination of the fifth-or seventh day ceremonies, or the tenth day naming celebration. Hamilton 2011 suggests it is more of a generic birthday celebration. Golden 1990, 23-4 suggests that that the fifth- or seventh- day ceremony was more private and the tenth day ceremony included more outsiders. See also Zacharia 2003, 30 n. 103.

[584] Zeitlin 1996, 166-9 discusses the tent and emphasizes Ion's creation of it as a performance of identity. She remarks that the temple is "Ion's private space" (166). She also says, 168, that "[the tent] serves as the house (*doma*) which had always been denied to him (52-3, 314-5)."

[585] The term *optēria* reflects the community's first acknowledgement of the child. Some *oikoi* would have been decorated with olive branches to signal the child's birth to the community at this time.

autochthony.[586] The fact that Ion chooses the tapestries indicates that he is looking ahead to the civic identity he will accept at Athens and thus the tent suggests not only a child's membership in the community but the coming of age of the ephebe.[587]

The tent does not only engage with the general categories of the Athenian *oikos* but also conjures the specific Erechtheid *domos* of Creusa and her father. The tapestries suggest not only Athenian autochthony but hint at the chthonic and violent aspects of the Erechtheid origin.[588] Signaling the Erechtheid possession of the tent's space is the image of Cecrops and his daughters (1163-5) and the old tutor whom the herald describes at the center of the party pouring drinks (1171-7).[589] This old man, we are to understand, served as the tutor of Erechtheus himself and thus shares a long history with the house. The tutor's role of drink-pourer suggests that the tent is a proxy for the Erechtheid *oikos* and as such presents a danger for Ion.

The tent described evokes the frightening aspect which the dark and unseen inside of *oikos* often conveys in the theater. Behind the *skēnē* wall, tragedy frequently associates the domestic space behind with violence, especially that by females and against kin.[590] The tutor relates the tent to the Erechtheid *oikos* when he recommends the tent as an alternative to Creusa's idea of poisoning Ion at her house in Athens (982).[591] Similarly Ion, referring to the events in the

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[586] Immerwahr 1972 291-2; Mastronarde 1975, 169-170; Chalkia 1986, 105-6; Goff 1988, 42 (who finds that the tent's images engage Athenian identity specifically autochthony); Zacharia 2003, 31-9.

[587] Goff 1988, 43-4 suggests that the tent suggests both the Arrephoria (female) and Ephebia. Zacharia 2003, 37 n. 124 comments on the tent's suggestion of the Apatouria.

[588] Loraux 1993, 220-4.

[589] His role has repeatedly been characterized as evocative of the lame Hephaestus, especially since the servant's old age contrasts with the expected youthful cupbearer.

[590] For the inside:outside::female:male relationship, see Dale 1969, 119-129; Padel 1990, 346; Zeitlin 1990, 76-7; and Wiles 1997, 166-8. Padel and Zeitlin 1990 emphasize the danger evoked by the female association within the space of the house.

[591] This was probably depicted by Sophocles in his *Creusa.*

tent, reflects on how Creusa's plot might have succeeded at his stepmother's house at Athens (1269-74) where she would have killed him, "ensnaring" him "inside her house" (ἔσω γὰρ ἄν με περιβαλοῦσα δωμάτων. 1273). As a location for entrapment, the tent provides an off stage space which functions like the recesses of the *oikos*, behind the *skēnē*, often the location of murder, particularly of- and by family members.[592] Since the tent prefigures Ion's homecoming at Athens and presents a space to preview Ion's *nostos*, Creusa's violence in the tent complicates the hero's, Ion's, homecoming, as typifies this plot form: an heir returns to his house but does not find his affairs in order.[593] The tent then provides the murky *oikos* space for violence to take place which is an alternative for the god's house (represented by the *skēnē*) and the Erectheid house at Athens, which are both spared the pollution.

The tent's identification as both a public and private space allows Euripides to explore the significance of the Erechtheid *domos,* as he does also with the cave and temple. The tent is open to all Delphi and yet serves the purpose of a single *oikos*. Likewise, the birth and family membership of Ion is made public not only to many Delphian guests, but is also developed as a matter of significance to Euripides' Attic audience since their interests are conflated with Athens'. The tent's hidden, private space is at the same time public, and this duality highlights not only the public interest in the *oikos*[594] but the coexistence of two perspectives on the same object of the

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[592] For instance, Electra's murder of Clytemnestra in Sophocles' and Euripides' plays, Clytemnestra's of Agamemnon, Medea's of her children, and Heracles' of Lycus. Remember also Odysseus' entrapment of the suitors in his own house.

[593] The most prominent models are Odysseus and Agamemnon, other examples include Orestes and Oedipus. Burnett 1971 discusses the *nostos* plot in tragedy as does Taplin 1977, 124-5. Bassi 1999 relates the whole of tragedy in terms of *nostos*, with a focus on *Oedipus Tyranus* as an "anti-*nostos*."

[594] See Wiles 1997, 162 on his description of how tragedy through the *skēnē* and *ekkuklēma* restores the invisible interior to the sight of the democracy. His discussion of staging emphasizes the public interest in the theatrical *oikos*.

family. Like *Ion* as a whole, the tent brings the affairs of the *oikos* and of the *polis* extremely close. It is problematic that the affairs of the *polis* ride upon the *oikos* because the tent does not only generate bonds of shared identity but provides, like the conventionally depicted *oikos* in the Attic theater, a hidden space which allows familial conflict which may have disastrous results.

Conclusion

The escape from catastrophe for Creusa's family is an obvious difference between the story of the Erechtheid *oikos* in *Ion* and the depiction of many other tragic families. The shape of *Ion*'s plot has led many scholars to compare it to comedy (both old and new) or to call our play a melodrama, romance, tragicomedy, and comedy. This, however, ignores the fact that the tragic emotions of pity and fear are prominent. It also ignores Aristotle, whose treatment of *tragoidiai* that end happily makes it plain the he did not think this was a different genre. To separate this play essentially from tragedy is to imply that the principal emotions elicited by the play are not pity and fear or that the play's structure overshadows its ability to convey themes of a tragic quality. *Ion'*s serious treatment of an *oikos*-destruction theme offers a strong objection to any predominantly comic interpretation of it. Euripides' treatment of this family's crisis draws upon familiar themes and aspects of familial destruction which elicited emotional response of pity and fear in the other plays discussed. The conclusions of my analysis of *Ion* indicate the tragic continuity in *Ion's* theme of the *oikos*.

Ion highlights the extinction of the family as a central source of anxiety and emotion. This speaks against the sense of some critics that *Ion*'s plot moves too surely towards the happy resolution that Hermes' prologue guarantees; as Lee puts it, a sense that "pervading it all is irony, not productive of tragic tension."[595] I have shown that Creusa's realistic experience of family

[595] Lee 1997, 37.

extinction triggers lingering emotions and tensions which persist through the god's eventual resolution.[596] While it has been argued that Euripides makes his characters inconsistent, undermining their tragic figures in order to build the thrill of the plot, I have shown that Creusa's resort to violence is consistent with the social situation to which she responds and points back to the emotion which it provoked. Ion's theme of family-destruction provides a tragic center to the play which is not subordinated to the optimistic trajectory of the plot.[597]

Although the drama's overall form does not undermine its tragedy, we must also consider how *Ion* presents more comic subject matter at times. Based largely on a retrospective comparison with the later ("New") comic genre, critics have found the characters and situation in *Ion* to be less tragic.[598] Mastronarde 2000 makes a refreshing argument against applying this type of generic classification upon Euripides. At the same time as he offers moments of comedy, Euripides heightens the status of the family's crisis through myth and its interaction with the *polis*. [599] An effect of much of this "lower" register accentuates the personal emotions and relation to the *oikos*, a technique which Aristophanes' Euripides seems to characterize when he describes himself "drawing in everyday/domestic situations" into his drama (οἰκεῖα πράγματ' εἰσάγων 959). At the same time Euripides goes to considerable lengths in his drama to endow Creusa's domestic situation with a mythic pedigree which includes the Cecropids and

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[596] This undermines Knox 1979's proposition that *Ion* reaffirms societal values by its happy ending, which, Knox 266-7, suggests, is an index of its comic genre.
[597] On the effect of comedy in tragedy, see Seidensticker 1978, especially 310 and n. 98; and Zacharia 1995, 57-62.
[598] See the list of "elements of comedy" in Zacharia 1995, 46-7.
[599] Michelini 1987, 62-9 provides a useful general discussion of Euripides' integration of "lower" and "higher" registers, or the *geloion* and *spoudaion*, to use Aristotle's terms. Lower and more realistic scene in Ion include especially the domestic tenor of Ion's situation sweeping in front of the temple at the beginning of the play, Xouthus' embrace of Ion, Creusa's leading the old servant up the slope of Delphi.

Erechtheus. The significant engagement between Creusa's *oikos* and the Athenian *polis* further sets the domestic circumstance of the play apart from the exposition of family crises in New Comedy.

As in the other dramas discussed, in *Ion* the *polis* is interested in the situation of the ruling family which is prone to pollution from kin-murder and whose disorder may jeopardize the well-being of the *polis*.[600] Euripides expands on the frequent presence in tragedy of a familial pollution, usually caused by violence which threatens the *polis* as well. In *Ion* there is still the threat of family violence, but there is the added danger that Ion will contaminate the pure Erechtheid bloodline of Athens. Political dismay in this play is directed at potential threats to the ruling house. Euripides also develops a tension between the coinciding public and private interest in the *oikos* by suggesting that the two are separable and could possibly conflict. Thus the chorus' and tutor's anxieties for autochthony sound shrill in contrast to Creusa's personal grievances. The tension might perhaps suggest some level of conflict between the stringency of the Athenian idea of autochthony and her citizenship laws on the one hand and a more lived reality which depends on personal capacities for compromise, adoption, and forgiveness.[601]

The relationship between *Ion* and Aeschylus' *Oresteia,* mentioned throughout this chapter, illuminates Euripides' development of the emergency of the tragic *oikos*. A multitude of intersections are evidence that Euripides means to engage with this trilogy: the location of Delphi

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[600] Pollution inheres in the houses of Pelops and Labdacus where the current inhabitants also jeopardize the political wellbeing. By ordering Lyssa to drive Heracles through madness to kill his family, Hera causes Heracles to destroy his place in an *oikos* as well as *polis*.

[601] Zacharia 2003 suggests that in *Ion* Euripides emphasizes the positive relationship between his Athenian audience and the Ionians. Walsh 1978, 306-7 also suggests an interpretation of that Euripides highlights cooperative diplomatic values, arguing, "the poet makes this joyful event depend upon the hero's willingness to be basely born," and that, "the Athenians have gained a king whose experience and character subvert their racial exclusivity."

and relation to Athens, child sacrifice, matricide (actual or threatened), the final apparition of a god or gods and a role for both Athena and Apollo, a concluding resolution of violence, and the homecoming of young man in exile from his threatened *oikos*. Similarly to Ion at Delphi, the distance of Orestes from his *oikos* stresses the crisis experienced in his absence. Erechtheus' sacrifice of her sisters and the betrayal of Xouthus which Creusa interprets as violence to her family have an impact upon Creusa that is analogous to Clytemnestra's reference to the wound Agamemnon made to her family (1397-8, 1417-8, and 1523-9).[602] After experiencing familial distress both women act violently against their *oikos* and undergo violence from their children (Ion and Orestes).[603]

Characteristic of Euripides' creative engagement with Aeschylus is that he further promotes the emotions of the family: Creusa offers a more pathetic figure than Clytemnestra because of the trauma of her rape, the fact that her family has come to the point of extinction, and because Euripides does not allow her to succeed in her plot against Ion (likewise Ion's matricide is averted, unlike Orestes'). In Creusa Euripides concentrates on the female emotional connection to children and *oikos* which is not a consistent part of Aeschylus' characterization of Clytemnestra. Desire for children and family acts as strong a motivation in *Ion* just as sexual *erōs,* as is often noted, drives characters, especially women, in other of Euripides' plays.[604] It is significant that while Euripides avails himself of a particularly female perspective, he also presents a commonality between the genders in the desire for family which Ion and especially

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[602] As Rynaerson 2015, 64-7 also emphasizes, Euripides resurrects the unresolved tension between the sexes at the end of *Eumenides*.

[603] Segal 1999.

[604] For instance, *erōs* motivates Euripides' Phaedra, Stheneboea, Hermione, and Medea, but also Deianeira in Sophocles' *Trachiniae*. See Michelini 1987, 75 and n. 19 on Euripides' treatment of women and sexuality.

Xouthus express. In addition, the circumstance of family extinction is a threat which Creusa faces that is not so gendered in the way that her rape and perceived betrayal by Xouthus are. As a result, it depicts an anxiety male audience members can appreciate.

Euripides also expands upon Aeschylus' depiction of Apollo's *domos* in *Eumenides.* While Aeschylus' choice to describe the temple in terms of the god's *oikos* mainly draws attention to the polluted state of Orestes' house, prominent in the first two plays of the *Oresteia*, in *Ion* Euripides not only depicts the temple as a *domus* but also develops the action of the play as involving Apollo's domestic affairs: Creusa, the mother of his child who refers to their union as marriage (507 and 868), and his son. Indeed, the humans in the play embroil the god in what could make him an Agamemnon- like figure if he were human: Creusa wishes to destroy the god's *oikos* and his son tries to kill his mother on this account.[605] Euripides injects some irony in his presentation of Apollo's providence by showing that it also causes human suffering: Apollo's beneficence greatly exacerbates the humans' experience of family. If Euripides' Apollo represents the figure of Apollo Patrōos overseeing the relationship of Athens to her Ionian relations, he and his house are also caught up in a very human confusion.[606]

Through the providential surface of his plot Euripides points to the vulnerability of the *oikos.* The narrative of human desire for family, most fully explored through Creusa but encompassing Xouthus and Ion, counters the interpretation of *Ion* as a theodicy. The expression of this emotion also suggests that despite the frequent content which relates to the audience's Athenian civic identity (both as autochthonous and Ionian), the play does not only reinforce the

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[605] If we view Xouthus in an Agamemnon-like relationship to Creusa's Clytemnestra, Segal 1999 suggests that Apollo violates his wife as Aegisthus did to Agamemnon.

[606] Segal 1995, 95 asserts that "More like Apollo Patrōos, the god who sponsors the initiation of young Athenian males into their tribes, than the embattled Apollo of the *Eumenides*, he oversees Ion's final passage to adulthood."

audience's *polis*- identity but also appeals to their *oikos*-identities. Tension is created between the public and private perspectives since Creusa's pain is the cost not only of Apollo's plan but also of Athens' interests: this suggests that the eventual family reunion cannot neatly reinforce *polis* – values.[607] Euripides maintains the emotions in Creusa's story as both realistic and individualizing even as the drama engages with myth and the *polis*. If this play responds to the political and social climate at Athens in the later 410's, we should not overlook the *oikos* as part of this turmoil: a young man's separation from his *oikos* and a woman's war-torn *oikos* might be eminently relatable to the audience's experience of family and provide an *oikos*-centered source of emotions in Euripides' tragedy.

[607] Karamanou 2012 argues that this is the meaning of the family reunion motif in several of Euripides' later plays. She suggests, 49, "*Ion* is a typical case of the *oikos-polis* security nexus."

Conclusion

Most Athenian tragedies center on an individual household under threat.[608] Although Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides each draw tragic families from the realm of myth, they often depict these characters suffering as family members in ways that correspond to problems contemporary Athenians experienced in their households. As building blocks of the Athenian *polis*, individual *oikoi* not only defined who was a citizen but also shaped citizens' values. But Attic orators often present the *oikos* as vulnerable and needing protection: whether from mismanagement, an external seducer, raucous invader, greedy heir, or a lost male *kyrios*. These speakers give a particularly vivid description of the pathos of the destroyed family, which Greek art and literature also highlight. In this project I closely read four dramas with attention to how the playwright describes the threatened household, the imagery he uses, and how the situation of the *oikos* shapes the character and actions of the protagonists. Based on these observations, I have argued that in these plays Athenian tragedians frequently draw upon a Classical Athenian conception of the household in its destruction.

In my introduction I sketched a picture of the threats an individual household could face in Classical Athens, drawing upon the observations of recent social historical studies. The *oikos* unit accompanied the individual from the private sphere into the community: privacy was scarce, an individual member's actions reflected his family as a collective, and the household defined the individual in the wider community of the *polis*. Given the *oikos'* significance, it is not surprising that Athenians were anxious about threats to it. Greek and Athenian art and literature

[608] Discussed above, pg. 3 n. 5.

frequently depict family destruction, especially in war, as pathetic. Attic oratory shows how citizens used the household and its vulnerabilities as a means of expressing shared values in public discourse. I described several forms of demise: that in war, destruction as a punishment by the *polis*, and the legal scenario of a family's extinction.

In my first chapter, "The Fall of Agamemnon's House," I argued that Agamemnon's harm to his household is a central problem in Aeschylus' play. Despite the intervening years at Troy, the drama depicts the continuing impact of the blow Agamemnon inflicted on his household when he sacrificed his daughter Iphigenia. Aeschylus also juxtaposes Agamemnon's harm to his family with the broader familial suffering Troy and Argos experienced in the war. I showed an analogy between the figures of Paris and Agamemnon, first of several correspondences the drama constructs between the ruling *oikoi* of Troy and Argos. These parallels highlight how individually Paris and Agamemnon each cause a whole household to suffer; in turn, the *oikos'* dysfunction hurts the *polis*. *Agamemnon* is fixated on the physical house, which the *skēnē* represents and to which the drama refers over and over again, culminating when the chorus envisions the house's spectacular destruction (1530-4). The chorus here enacts the experience of watching a house-razing, *kataskaphē.* This is an image which Aeschylus elsewhere applies both to Troy and to Agamemnon's house at Argos (*Agamemnon* 525-8 and *Choephoroi* 48-53), emphasizing the wider community's perspective on the household's destruction.

In my second chapter, "Death of the *oikos* in *Antigone,*" I questioned an influential assumption which underpins many interpretations of the play: that Sophocles suggests Antigone is an *epiklēros*, able to continue her father's *oikos*. I argued that Sophocles emphasizes how Antigone's view of her family situation excludes that possibility: Antigone believes her family is

extinct and that she cannot continue it. The chorus' description of the Labdacids' spectacular sufferings in their second stasimon allows for Antigone's interpretation, even if the audience themselves might have supplied the interpretation that she is like a contemporary *epiklēros*. Antigone's assessment is self-fulfilling since her language and actions bring about her family's extinction, through which Antigone becomes a human symbol of her family's demise.

When Creon treats Antigone's family as a threat to his *polis*, I argued, Sophocles is emphasizing how Creon, as leader, does not recognize the family's demise and is in effect "beating a dead horse", or as Tiresias puts it, "killing the dead again" (τὸν θανόντ' ἐπικτανεῖν 1030). Antigone's characterizations of her own and her family's death as a *kataskaphē,* a razing, (891-2 and 920) point to the futility of Creon's proclamation against a destroyed family. Creon's loss of his own family at the play's end – through the suicides of Haemon and Jocasta and the killing of his other son – exposes Creon's error in overlooking the pathos of a family's extinction that Antigone felt so acutely. Through Creon's perspective in the play, Sophocles suggests the mutual dependence of *polis* and *oikos*. The *polis* does not only discipline the *oikos*, but relies on an understanding that the household is a vulnerability all citizens share.

In Chapter Three, "A Hero in the Family: Heracles' Attachment to his *Oikos* in Euripides' *Heracles*," I argued that Euripides develops Heracles' character as family-centered throughout this play. Before the hero appears, Euripides prompts the question of what attitude toward his *oikos* Heracles will display; he presents the interchange of his wife Megara and elderly father Amphitryon who each articulates a different attachment to Heracles' *oikos* and children. I showed how the plight of Heracles' family draws attention to the fact that the Theban *polis* failed in its responsibility to that *oikos*. That wrong is especially grievous since Heracles saved Thebes from its enemy, an event Euripides highlights by staging the hero's children

around a memorial of Heracles' war service. At the play's midpoint, Euripides depicts Heracles' destruction of his family members and physical house, again, through the image of house-razing, *kataskaphē.* Heracles intends to raze the *oikos* of the tyrant Lycus, but Hera turns Heracles' violence on his own household. This divinely compelled act of madness erases not only Heracles' *oikos* but his place in Thebes. At last, when Theseus offers a situation in Athens to Heracles as a hero, not as a regular mortal, he accentuates a reality Euripides seems keen to convey: that the normal citizen holds his place in the *polis* through his *oikos*.

By examining Creusa's household in Chapter Four, "Euripides' *Ion*: Familial Pathos in a Patriotic Play," I showed how Euripides describes the extinction of Creusa' family as a central source of anxiety for her and for the audience. When the drama repeatedly expresses Creusa's suffering as a rape victim – a perspective Greek literature largely ignores – her point of view also exposes the familial pain the rape caused. Creusa must hide her experience from her family, and I have identified several ways that Euripides highlights the resulting breach between Creusa and her household. I showed that references to Creusa's family history – the Cecropids' disobedient uncovering of baby Erichthonius and Erechtheus' sacrifice of Creusa's sisters – highlight how Creusa's decision to expose Ion harmed her *oikos* (though her culpability is mitigated by ignorance of Apollo's plan). In addition to these sources of *oikos*-anxiety in the drama, the news that Apollo will not grant her a child (760-2), meaning her family will be extinguished, prompts Creusa to reveal her rape in emotional terms and resort to violence. Even at the play's end Creusa remembers this unnerving experience. This is one way Euripides undermines the happy ending Apollo contrived since the familial pathos expresses a clearly tragic tone. I also suggest that Creusa's suffering demonstrates the human, familial, cost of how closely the Athenian *polis* is involved in her *oikos* because it ensures future Athenians will have

an autochthonous and divine lineage. By focusing on Creusa's experience as a family *member* in a household threatened by extinction, Euripides uses the mythic Erechtheid family to construct a scenario that engages audience members' own attachment to their families.

A distinctive category of imagery for household destruction which all three tragedians use is the household as a living thing. Iphigenia offers a striking example in a play I did not discuss, when she describes her house sprouting hair and talking (*Iphigenia at Tauris* 46-52). To describe Agamemnon's house Aeschylus uses the imagery of the house breathing (1309) and imagines it having a voice to express what it sees (37-8). I have argued that in *Antigone* the chorus' description of the severed root of the Labdacid family (601-2) relates to other tragic images of threatened roots which refer to male heirs in a threatened household. These images evoke common expressions of family extinction found elsewhere in tragedy and in Athenian oratory: family destruction "at the roots," πρόρριζον, or "root and branch," πρυμνόθεν. Another image of the family as a living being is the pregnant hare Aeschylus describes in *Agamemnon* (119-120 and 136) in order to evoke, I suggest, the family-unit.

Dramatists create a similar effect when they envision the physical house as composed of its living members. Thus Agamemnon is called a "firm-footed pillar" of his household (ὑψηλῆς στέγης 897). In *Heracles*, the hero is bound to broken pillar of his ruined house (1029), visually identifying the male *kyrios* with a central architectural element of the house. When Heracles describes the demise of his family members primarily, he uses the imagery of physical house-destruction: Hera has "turned upside-down" Heracles, "foundations and all" (αὐτοῖσιν βάθροις / ἄνω κάτω στρέψασα 1306-7). Both images – the family as a living thing and the house as made of living parts – convey how tightly its members are attached to one another, and accentuate the pathos of their suffering all together, collectively.

Each of the plays I discussed draws attention to the wider community's perspective towards the threatened *oikos*-unit and presents violence within a family as a problem that concerns the *polis*. Spectacular household destruction draws attention to the community as the internal audience of this event: the choruses of citizens in both *Agamemnon* and *Heracles* act out the experience of watching a physical house being destroyed with the sensation of shaking, the vision of falling, and the sound of crashing. The image of *kataskaphē* is one of public punishment. When the dramatists use it explicitly in *Agamemnon*, *Heracles*, and, I argued, in *Antigone*, they involve the *polis* in the destruction of a family endangering the community. Characters who represent the *polis'* perspective do not just observe the house's destruction, they also present the *polis'* concern about the household in question. As they observe the *oikos*' demise these internal public audiences express on stage the same perspective as Athenian public speakers, who frequently described an individual *oikos* to their audience as an interest of the whole *polis*.[609]

Heracles represents the *oikos-polis* bond in a way that goes beyond the *polis'* concern for its own safety: here Euripides additionally identifies the Theban *polis'* responsibility toward the individual household as important. I highlighted the egregious failure of the *polis* to protect the *oikos* of Heracles, who, the play emphasizes, has served the community well. Sophocles' perspective in *Antigone* is similar: this drama calls into question Creon's sensitivity to the possible extinction of the Labdacid *oikos*. Tragedy, I suggest, can describe the *oikos-polis* relationship both in terms of the needs of the household and of the community. By describing this reciprocal responsibility, these plays reflect the mutually interdependent relationship

[609] See Introduction, pp. 18-20.

between Athenian *oikos* and *polis,* which social historians have emphasized, and nuance the *oikos-polis* conflict that critics have often emphasized in tragedy.

In *Agamemnon* and *Heracles* male characters shape their identities within the larger *polis*-community by the way they relate to their household. King Agamemnon presents a bad example of *oikos*-leadership and this mismanagement harms his community: Aeschylus links Agamemnon's mistreatment of his family to the instability of his position as ruler which the chorus suggest by critically describing Agamemnon's leadership. On the other hand, Euripides presents Heracles' attachment to his household alongside his service to Thebes. *Heracles* depicts how the hero's positive behaviors in both these areas should merit the *polis'* support, a point Euripides accentuates by attaching shame to how the *polis* neglects its responsibilities toward Heracles.

Heracles is also a striking example among tragic middle-aged male characters since he expresses positive attachment to his household much more explicitly than his counterparts in Aeschylus or Sophocles.[610] *Heracles* confounds an apparent trend that only Euripides' old men, not his younger and middle-aged characters, express attachment to the *oikos.* When elderly men express emotions of love and fear for their children and grandchildren, critics often attribute it to their diminished status and feminized position at home.[611] In addition to Heracles, I suggest that in *Ion* the middle-aged Xouthus displays family-attachment that is not entirely farcical: the audience could have here identified his family-oriented behavior as characterizing the

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[610] An additional example might be Creon in *Phoenician Women* who begs Tiresias to withdraw a prophecy requiring his son's death, 923-9 and gives a short speech (962-976) in which he expresses inability to sacrifice his child, appealing to a universal love of children (965). However, his age category in the play is uncertain: Creon and his son characterize Creon as an old man (994-5 and 1318).

[611] For instance, Mastronarde 2010, 296.

respectable father of an *oikos*. Based on surviving fragments of *Erechtheus*, King Erechtheus seems to display a parallel emotional attachment to his son and daughters, and I have brought this to bear on both *Heracles* and *Ion*. These men's positive demonstrations of attachment to their *oikoi* correspond to other expressions of desire for children and family that both female and older male Euripidean characters express. My study suggests that although it is women in Greek literature who characteristically express emotion for their children and families, Euripides is also interested in describing men's emotions toward family, even in the strong terms of *pothos* or *erōs*. We should pay further attention, I believe, to how Euripides genders household attachment and domestic roles in his plays.

A helpful means to interpret the tragic depictions of men's attachment to the family is by comparison with how Athenian orators use *oikos*-attachment to signal shared civic values. As I observed in the introduction, speakers frequently used the house and home to identify themselves, or the men they were supporting, as good citizens. I propose that when male characters in tragedy acted out attachment, longing, and affection for their children and families in front of a (at least predominantly) male Athenian audience, this depiction engaged the same ideology that references to home and family did in public speaking. In the discourse of forensic, deliberative, and epideictic speeches at Athens, each man's attachment to an *oikos* links him to other citizens in a shared value of family.

Particularly resonant with such rhetorical tactics are Heracles' words in the moment before he enters his *oikos,* where he will experience disaster. Heracles declares himself unashamed of his care of children (θεράπευμα τέκνων, 633-4) and goes further to describe all men as naturally "child-loving" (φιλότεκνος, 636). Heracles' experience of unexpected domestic catastrophe illustrates the same vulnerability of a household which speakers at Athens

emphasize. For instance, when orators describe the pathetic scenario of a household facing extinction, they describe the *oikos* as a shared source of vulnerability among all citizens. From the perspective of tragedy's audience members, when a tragic household succumbs to a threat – be it the violence of war, strife from within, or something else – the drama portrays a susceptibility which all the spectators' *oikoi* share. In both tragedy and oratory, then, the individual household can communicate values the speaker shares with audience members as Athenian citizens. In this way, my study of the *oikos* in tragedy reveals an overlap in the performance of these two genres.[612]

My study began with Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* and ended with observations on how Euripides' portrayal of the *oikos* compares with that of his predecessors'. As I have discussed already, striking similarities between *Agamemnon* and *Ion* indicate how Euripides continues Aeschylus' manner of familial depiction. By numerous indications the *Oresteia* had a significant impact on subsequent drama, as later plays recombined different mythological material with elements of *Agamemnon*'s *nostos* plot and its use of theatric space, and echoed Aeschylus' language or reworked scenes (for instance, Euripides' *Electra* 520-46 reworks the recognition scene in *Choephoroi)*.[613] Although *Ion* reuses none of *Agamemnon*'s mythological material, *Ion* engages strongly with *Agamemnon* and its tradition. The elements *Ion* shares with *Agamemnon* particularly emphasize the situation of the *oikos*: for instance, I show how Euripides provides a similar history of the family's previous generations as in *Agamemnon*. This background highlights the way actions of family members, Creusa, her father, and her ancestors the

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[612] A relationship Ober and Strauss 1990 emphasize, for instance, 238, "the congruity between the political and theatrical arenas meant that the responses of Athenian citizens as jurors and Assemblymen were inevitably influenced by the fact of their having been members of theatrical audiences, and vice versa."

[613] Lowe 2000, 172-4 and Easterling 2005, 30-33.

Cecropids, acted in ways that endangered their own household when it was already under pressure, principally because of its lack of male heirs. Euripides also engages creatively with the conventional association between the *skēnē* and a house which *Agamemnon* seems to establish.

This study revealed two distinctive trends in how Euripides uniquely articulates tragedy's theme of the *oikos* in *Heracles* and *Ion.* The way male characters express attachment to their *oikoi*, mentioned above, is one special emphasis. In both plays Euripides uses experience in a household to distinguish human characters from divinities. Euripides portrays the *oikos* as a defining human experience and draws attention to how the gods are, by nature, unsuited to it. Recognizing this helps to interpret the role of Euripides' divinities. Their disparity from humans, I suggested, is often the dramatist's point, for instance when Euripides imagines the problems which would ensue were Apollo the *kyrios* of his own *oikos* at Delphi. Euripides depicts the gods in *Heracles* and *Ion* in such a way as to isolate particularly human vulnerabilities that relate to the household.[614]

Euripides' realistic treatment of the family sits at an interpretative crux: when his plays describe events surrounding the household and the emotions of family members, does Euripides depart from the tragic tradition and move in the direction of melodrama and comedy? Such arguments have been asserted repeatedly by modern critics, who sometimes point to the caricature Euripides' character provides in Aristophanes' *Frogs*. Aristophanes' 'Euripides' characterizes himself as "bringing [on stage] domestic affairs, to which we are accustomed, with

[614] Along with these vulnerabilities, Euripides depicts human virtues related to interdependency. Lefkowitz 2016, 23 notes "[Euripides'] dramas do not set out to undermine traditional theology, so much as use it to portray and affirm the virtues conferred on humans by the fact of their mortality: human compassion, endurance, and courage."

which we live, upon which I would have been refuted. For these spectators would have refuted my art" (οἰκεῖα πράγματ᾽ εἰσάγων, οἷς χρώμεθ᾽, οἷς ξύνεσμεν, / ἐξ ὧν γ᾽ ἂν ἐξηλεγχόμην· ξυνειδότες γὰρ οὗτοι / ἤλεγχον ἄν μου τὴν τέχνην· 959-961). Certainly in Aristophanes, Euripides' character is caricaturing how the dramatist favors scenarios that are domestic, such as Electra carrying water to her house in *Electra*, a scene Knox uses as an example of an Euripidean comedic take on a more solemn Aeschylean scene.[615] Still, Aristophanes does not question the tragic potential of realistic and domestic subjects. Euripides depicts events that are in and around the domestic sphere. His plays represent a greater diversity of ages and emphasize emotion: both lend themselves to the depiction of the *oikos*. Neither of these observations nor Aristophanes' characterization indicate that Euripides' οἰκεῖα πράγματα are un-tragic. My comparison of how Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides handle the relation of an individual character to the demise of his household has thus revealed significant continuity as well as innovation in Euripides' techniques.

The prominence of the threatened *oikos* in these four tragedies reveals a new way to approach the genre of tragedy at Athens. By relating Athenian experience in the household to tragic depictions, modern audiences can restore some of the social meaning of tragedy, which seems to have been lost soon after the original performances of these plays. Thus Aristotle, one of tragedy's first critics, is silent on the role of both *polis* and *oikos* when he defines tragedy.[616] While modern examples show that the demise of a family holds a power that can continue to

[615] Knox 1979, 252-4.

[616] For instance, Hall 1996 draws attention to the absence of the *polis* in Aristotle. Aristotle is writing in the different performance culture of the Fourth Century and attempting a universalizing definition of the genre.

enthrall, Greek tragic families can reflect the particularly Athenian experience of the *oikos*, its relationship to the *polis*, and its vulnerability to suffering.

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