

The generations of Sophocles

Analyses of generational awareness, generation relations and generation conflicts within the Sophoclean tragedies

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The Tragedy of Old Age is not that one is old, but that one is young.”

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, 1891



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1. Methodological Introduction

1.1. Main question, goal and justification of ‘generational research’

In what way could such an explicit reproduction of generation relations contribute to the construction of tension within the tragedy and in what way does Sophocles functionilize these relations in order to serve this purpose?

In order to get to a valuable scholarly contribution on the interpretation of generation relations in Sophoclean tragedies, my main question for this thesis is focussed on texts itself, rather than on the possible influence on it's public. However, this is an historical thesis and throughout the examination the relation with historical reality will be shown; in my conclusion I will evaluate the generational relations within the Sophoclean tragedies within its historical timeframe.

Examining sources in order to awnser the main question, I came across three issues: 1) Although MEIER has shown that the tragic genre had a clear purpose in society –democracy possibly supported on it; tragedies were fictional.¹ However, fragments from Greek tragedies have, more than once, been interpreted as a mere representation of the society and resulted in assumptions of uncertain, parallels. Furthermore, 2) assumptions about the Athenian society were often substantiated with quotations and passages from *different tragedies*; from different tragedies of *several authors* or even with quotations and passages form works of *different genres*. This resulted in a irrational search for coherence between tragedies, which ironically, could also be detected this way; leaving aside whether this coherence is in fact truly useful or not. And last but not least, 3) tragic passages are also regularly taken out of their context. As a result, the actual meaning of a passage is very hard to define. Concomitantly, it is necessary to determine to what extent a certain passage was of influence on the plot or the story of a

¹ MEIER, C. [1988] 10 ff.

tragedy and, moreover, if this passage may even have been crucial within the context of the myth on which the tragedy was based, in order to rightly estimate the value of the text.²

To tackle the first issue: This work does not represent an overview on tragic passages serving to underline historical assumptions. In order to extract relevant facts from these tragedies, we must, above all, bear in mind that theatre is and was an art-form, representing in many ways the epoch, in which it came into existence, but it did not mirror the society one on one.

Secondly: I emphasise that for this research *one* tragedy will be considered the *smallest* and the *largest* part being analysed, concerning my hypothesis: not merely one passage nor Sophocles' oeuvre as a whole have been examined as such, in search of other meanings of the texts than would appear to one, when considering -at least or just- the tragic context in which it must be viewed. Another consideration supporting this method, is the way I treated the relation between myth and tragedy in this research.

Thirdly: in her summary of the use of exactly this relation in modern scholarly findings, FÖLLINGER, for her research on Aeschylus' tragedies, rightly chose to consider tragedies to be myths themselves and not to recede into a search for an 'Urmythos'.³ Her twofold nuances of BURKERT's definition of myth, is therefore also considered to be applicable on this research: (...) traditionelle Erzählungen, die –auf biologisch oder kulturell vorgegebenen Aktionsprogrammen beruhende- Sinnstrukturen bilden und eine komplexe, überindividuelle Wirklichkeitserfahrung verbalisieren. (...) To which "...von individuellen Autoren erfundene oder gestaltete Erzählungen durch Tradierung zu Mythen werden." And with regard to 'überindividuell': "Ein Mythos stellt also nicht die Widerspiegelung von Wirklichkeit dar, sondern Mythen werden angewandt im Sinne von Exempla oder Sinnangeboten (...)." ⁴

Although I do not want to alter this definition in any way, however, the remark I made above, that a poet had limited possibilities for adaptation of a myth into a tragic trilogy, needs clarification. Also in this research, I will not make an attempt to compare the tragic context

² In order to trace these myths: ed. TRZASKOMA, M., SCOTT SMITH, R., BRUNET, S., PALAIMA, T.G. *Anthology of classical myth* Cambridge 2004. I will come back to the relation between myth and tragedy in this research below.

³ FÖLLINGER, S. *Genosdependenzen, Studien zur Arbeit am Mythos bei Aischylos*, Göttingen 2003, Einleitung (hier p. 14) BURKERT, W. „Myth –Begriff, Struktur, Funktionen“ in *Mythos in mythenloser Gesellschaft. Das Paradigma Rom*. Ed. GRAF, F., Leipzig 1993, 9-24. FÖLLINGER summarizes the most important literature on this theme.

⁴ FÖLLINGER [2003] 13-14.

with a possible basic, or first myth. Though I do consider the balance between tradition and innovation, as FÖLLINGER comes to describe the relation between myth and tragedy, too important to be left out of the analyses completely. Exactly the collective interest, which must also have been applicable to the myths orally handed down, leads to believe that the so frequently cultivated collectively known stories, must have caused limitations as well.⁵ The poets –mainly- based their tragedies on these originally oral, traditional narrations, of which the audience at the beginning of a play, must at least have known a main part of the plot, the premises or the results. Too radical derivations of ‘the known’ –for instance *Elektra* not containing matricide- would cause risks considering the judging public in this contest.⁶

These considerations result in the fact that I will not analyze the relations between the figures in the Sophoclean tragedies as being framed by possible mythological structures. On the contrary *one* tragedy being considered a whole, analyzed concerning my hypothesis, cause fragments not be taken into consideration in this work, in contrary to FÖLLINGER’s research. Nonetheless, with this thesis I aim to find out the function of generation relations in these diversely interpretable and widely interpreted Sophoclean tragedies, in order to understand these pieces in a more detailed way, within the frame of the Athenian society in the 5th century BC.⁷

In order to serve this goal, three questions are at the centre of this thesis and have determined the structure of this work: 1) In what way are generations defined: how is generation-consciousness constructed and reproduced in the tragedies? 2) How are people (characters) of different generations related to each other? 3) In which tragedies can we establish a conflict of generations and what is the influence of this conflict on the tragic context, the course of action and the plot of the play?

⁵ Cf. § 2.3 p. 21: The (re-)introduction of the satyrplay supports that assumption.

⁶ As FLASHAR, H., ‘Familie, Mythos, Drama am Beispiel des Oedipous’, in *CH* 19, 1994, 51-74. however did show with the Oedipous mythology, we have to bear in mind that most of what we know about Greek mythology is Ovidian and that we are largely influenced by the tragic poets. I do therefore not argue which details could or could not have been altered and to what extent this could have been done; what exactly too radical would mean. This, in my opinion, is the again not of influence on the point I want to make here.

⁷ In my conclusion I will discuss how one, in following research, could elaborate this goal for a better understanding of history and the Athenian society.

1.2. The term ‘Generation’

1.2.1 *Definition*

Generation: a modern, sociological concept causing quite some commotion in the world of science, is used in this research for fictive stories from classical antiquity. As describes above, generation relationships shape large parts of remaining Sophoclean tragedies in text size as well as in content. Furthermore Sophocles has recited these relationships in great detail, as this research will show. Researching generations will give a more detailed insight in large parts of the text, with that comes a more detailed insight in the structure, the course of deeds and plot of the tragedies.

Preceding this research I presumed that the concept generation to be a currently well known and commonly used phenomena which would vindicate itself as research subject for classical Greek tragedies, no explanation needed:

“Jeder scheint zu wissen, was eine Generation ist, und kann mithilfe dieser Bezeichnung seine eigene Stellung als Individuum in sozialen Zusammenhängen angeben, ohne dass etwa die semantische Dopplung von Generationen familialer Abstammung einerseits und Generationen gesellschaftlicher Gleichzeitigkeit anderseits dabei stören müsste.“⁸

Furthermore:

“(…) our most secure standard for defining a generation rests on the Greek root of the word *genos*, whose basic meaning is reflected in the verb *genesthai* ‘to come into existence (...) –procreation. That moment when a child is born simultaneously produces a new generation separating parent and offspring -*genos ergo genos*- and the very concept educes the paradox of an ever shifting threshold in time.”⁹

Nevertheless these were assumptions were premature due to the following three reasons. Firstly the concept “generation” is –scientifically- frequently up for discussion these days and covers more than one at first might expect. In practise material conveyance and inheritance

⁸ PARNES, O. (ed.), *Das Konzept der Generation. Eine Wissenschafts- und Kulturgeschichte*, Frankfurt a.M. 2008. Problematic with this book is the lack of reference to to generational relations in Antiquity., which, as also will be shown in this work, is should be considered a deficiency.

⁹ NASH, L. L. „Greek origins of generational thought” in *Daedalus* 107, 1978, p. 1-21, hier 2.

combined with the continuity of genetically determined characteristics are closely related to the use of the concept “generation.” Naturally the extent to which one of these aspects of –the definition of– the concept is valued depends on the cultural, political and social facets of a society in which or in relation to which the concept is used.

Besides that scientific attempts to conclude a historical-social rhythm from generation succession have been made for ages.¹⁰ In sociological science the concept “generation” is commonly used in three contexts: (1) the genealogical generation concept, (2) the pedagogical generation concept and the (3) historical-social generation concept.¹¹ “Der genealogische Generationenbegriff ist vergleichsweise eindeutig, da er sich auf eine leicht feststellbare Abfolge von Familienangehörigen bezieht. (...) Der pädagogische Generationenbegriff spricht das Verhältnis zwischen vermittelnder und aneignender Generation an. (red. Vermittlung von Normen, Kenntnissen und Fertigkeiten von der älteren Generation an die neue Generation ihrer Kinder) (...) In gesellschafts-und sozialpolitischen Diskussionen wird meist ein allgemeiner, von familialen Zusammenhängen losgelöster Generationenbegriff verwendet, der sich auf Gruppierungen bezieht, denen historisch, kulturell oder sozial spezifische Gemeinsamkeiten zugeordnet werden.”¹² Therefore the phenomena “generation” is at most only commonly known and unambiguous in spoken language.

Secondly the modern concept ‘generation’ is not directly applicable to -fictive- Sophoclean tragedies: as mentioned above I do not see the classical tragedies as accurate reflections of life in ancient Greece. The small number of actors and roles also make it impossible to recognize

¹⁰ Cf. MANNHEIM, K. *Wissenssoziologie, Auswahl aus dem Werk*, ed. WOLFF, K.H., Berlin 1970, 509-564. Mannheim categorises the scientists by two methods: de positivistic -quantitative- and de historical-romantic -de qualitative- approach. The first approach is based on measurable facets of life and death: time. According to both methods generations are formed by experiences they have had. Mannheim is inclined towards the last methodology and mentions PINDER, W. thought: *Das Problem der Generation in der Kunstgeschichte Europas*, Berlin 1926: “Ungleichzeitigkeit der Gleichzeitigen” brilliantly. However: “Es ist überhaupt ein Fehlgiff, den die meisten Forscher begehen, zu meinen ein wirkliches Generationsproblem gebe nur dann wenn man eine Generations rhythmik mit ein für allemal fixierbaren zeitlichen Intervallen aufzuweisen imstande ist.“ As will become clear MANNHEIM’s –and also Pinder’s- initiatives are clear and of value but have obsolete theoretical viewpoints.

¹¹ Cf. HÖPFLINGER, F. „Generationenfrage –Konzepte, theoretische Ansätze und Beobachtungen zu Generationenbeziehungen in späteren Lebensphasen” in *Realités Sociales*, Lausanne 1999. Here HÖPFLINGER comes with a suitable solution for a problem MANNHEIM already acknowledged: MANNHEIM saw the positivistic - quantifiable- approach of the generation problem and historical-romantic -qualifying- approach of the problem as well as combinations of both methods. MANNHEIM however did not come up with a solution to the overlapping meanings of the concept ‘generation’.

¹² HÖPFLINGER [1999]

social groups within the tragedy's context.¹³ As a result of these methodical choices I assumed, without any in-depth considerations, that this work would have a genealogical generation concept as foundation.

This assumption too was premature. Historical-Social generations may not be likely to expect. However, in the tragedies the main families and other family relations are not as easily distinguishable as one would want them to be in modern times. Guardianship, concubines and illegitimate children, not to mention marriages within the family were common practice then but are at odds with our moral standards which are inextricably bound with the generation concept.¹⁴ Genealogical and pedagogical generations are therefore hardly distinguishable from each other in the society in which the tragedies originated let alone within the context of one tragedy. In short, for researching generation relationships in Sophoclean tragedies the sociological differentiation of the 'generation' concept –necessary for research in modern societies as described by HÖPFLINGER- is not sufficient.

Thirdly, supplementary to the complexity of the modern concept: even with the etymologically traceable Greek origin of the word generation, which NASH tried to reduce with an explanation for the development and diversity of the modern concept in 1978, and the importance of succession and generations in Athenian society, the ancient Greeks did not have an equivalent that covered the entire meaning to the modern concept of the word. NASCH inverted the conventional philosophical method and started searching for all modern meanings of the concept in order to find out to what extent they were related *genos*, *genethai* or other related words. From this research NASCH eventually concludes: "Greek conceptions of the word *genos* view generation as a life sign. But even our ultimate touchstone of generational definition -the birth of sons and daughters- has become insecure: we are refusing to have children. Far more stable is the perception of generations of computers than generations of humankind. The generational concept on which the Western world grew up, and which until quite recently were still familiar, may have lost their validity in 1978 –or at best generation has lost its reference point."¹⁵ Obviously a direct comparison between the

¹³ Almost impossible because for example in *Antigone* the two sisters and Haemon, on a genealogical level can practically be seen as one generation. The same can be said for Elektra, Chrysothemis and Orestes in *Elektra*. Even though all these people are not the same age there is no sociological grouping.

¹⁴ Cf. Chapter 3.2; 3.3; 4.1

¹⁵ NASH, [1978] p. 18-19

Greek word *genos* and the modern concept generation, which concomitantly has been subject to the fast development of western society, is essentially irrelevant.

1.2.2 *Research Equivalent*

The branch of sociological science that busies itself with researching generation relationships in modern society did provide a methodology, which overcame the three part problem mentioned above.

“ (...) there has been a tendency to interpret intergenerational relationships within the limited frameworks that emphasize either intergenerational solidarity or conflict. In contrast we propose that ambivalence is a more useful organizing concept for understanding intergenerational relations.”¹⁶

Conflict versus solidarity is the most obvious aid for interpreting generation relationships, it however clouds the research's objectivity. LUESCHER and PILLEMER offer more continuity and unambiguity in the research methodology with 'ambivalence'.

Ambivalence is, as basic assumption of the methodology, more applicable to researching fictive texts from Greek antiquity because it is free of judgement when it comes to conflict of solidarity. A choice between 'conflict' and 'solidarity' within an tragedy and – especially the judgement of the impact of either, not to mention both, can be crucial for the interpretation and course of deeds of the plot. Another influence is the choice whether to regard solidarity or conflict as the background of a generation relationship. “The vacillation between images of mistreatment and abandonment, on the one hand, and comforting images of solidarity, on the other, are not two sides of an academic argument that will ultimately be resolved in favor of one viewpoint. Rather, we hold that societies and the individuals within them are ambivalent about relationships between parents and children in adulthood.”

According to LUESCHER and PILLEMER 'Intergenerational ambivalence', exists in two dimensions: “(...) (a) contradictions at the level of social structure, evidenced in institutional resources and requirements, such as statuses, roles, and norms and (b) contradictions at the subjective level, in terms of cognitions, emotions, and motivations.”¹⁷ This methodology was

¹⁶ LUESCHER, K and PILLEMER, K. „A new approach tot he study of parent-child relation in later life” in *Journal of marriage and the Family*, vol. 60, nr. 2 1998, p. 413-425

¹⁷ LUESCHER, K and PILLEMER, K.[1998] p. 416

also created for research in modern societies and real situations. In tragedies both dimensions are present, but hardly distinguishable. This could be a bottleneck in the research of underlying motivation or concrete reason of ambivalence within generation relationships.

However, as it concerns fictive, ancient tragedies, a sharp dividing line between both dimensions is not needed as my goal is to get a better insight in the text, not research the ancient society. Researching the background of the ambivalence would mean researching either the poets' intentions or a society mirrored by the poet, as discussed above, neither are the purpose of this research.

1.2.3 *Summarizing*

For this research I focused on a *genealogical generation concept*. This means I researched generation awareness, generation relationships and generation conflicts that come up in relation to a genealogical context. In this research genealogy has a wider meaning than it does in modern, western sociology; all familial relations including situations in which the members did –originally– not belong to the same main family, such as for instance with Creon and Antigone, are included in this analysis. The pedagogical generation concept partly grants genealogical generation concept her contents in this research. In some relations which will be discussed in detail it, with a strongly comparable genealogical context, will mainly exist of a “...Grundverhältnis der Erziehung, das Verhältnis zwischen vermittelnder und aneignender Generation (...)”, as with for example Odysseus and Neoptolemos in *Philoktetes*.¹⁸

As I will discuss more elaborately in the last chapter, in my opinion the difference in generation should directly form the basis of a conflict if it is to be called a generation conflict. The assumption that the relationships between people of different generations is ambivalent prevents, supplementary to the strict definition of a generation conflict, biased and subjective analyses of generation relations in which either conflict or solidarity are expected.

Last but not least the classification of this work is related to the problems that come with the concept generation and its application to fictive, ancient texts. Even though it has been described elaborately earlier here is the rough classification of this work again specially in order to overcome ‘generation problems’: To analyse the way in which Sophocles depicts generations in his tragedies as accurately as possible I researched, per tragedy, how to recognise personages from different generations. Subsequently I researched how the

¹⁸ HÖPPFLINGER [1999]

generation relationships are given form. Finally I researched in which tragedies a generation conflict actually takes place and how this affects the tragedy's course of deeds and the plot.

1.3. Methods

In order to find out to what extent the historical perspective supports close examination of generation relations in Sophoclean tragedies, in the first chapter (Chapter 2) I have placed my main question of research in a historical perspective. I overview the socio-political developments of the city-state of Athens, as well as the developments Greek theatre and the tragic genre went through. Concomitantly, I discuss the most important contemporary opinions on the Sophoclean tragedies, also to some extent in regard to the other great poets of the century: Aeschylus and Euripides.

Subsequently, even though I consider one tragedy to be the largest and smallest subject of my examinations, I have divided this work into three more chapters by subjects, necessary to be discussed in order to answer the main question: (Chapter 3) The way in which generations were defined and can be distinguished from one another within the tragic context; (Chapter 4) the relations between figures of different generations and (Chapter 5) generational conflicts, which, in my opinion, are only displayed in *Antigone* and *Elektra*. These last three chapters are built up in the following way:

Chapter 3: In order to be able to conclude if and to what extent generations are clearly defined in the Sophoclean tragedies, I analysed:

- The importance of inheritance: not only material inheritance, but moreover immaterial fame and even disgrace, which were passed on to a family or kin by a father or an ancestor, are often mentioned.
- The way in which the young and the old(er) address each other and which choice of words is made. Choice of words is in some cases not only fatherly or teaching, but even seems to be consciously hurtful and shocking, to emphasize the fact that the own generation is in some way considered the better one. 'Older' could for instance be synonym for 'wiser' but also for 'senile'.
- The mutual pattern of expectations between figures of different generations: not only between parents and children of contemporary times, but also in the tragedies of Sophocles, a mutual pattern of expectations can be determined.

Chapter 4: In order to examine in what way figures of different generations are related to one another I analysed:

- differences and concurrences in treatment and forms of addressee can be determined for figures belonging to one and the same *oikos* or between people of different *oikoi* (*philia* and *xenia*) or surrogate family members, like bastard-children or concubines.
- the influence of other positions of power, like men as opposed to women or king as opposed to subject.
- Whether it can be determined from the text that it is actually plausible that figures in Sophoclean tragedies represent social groups of the Athenian society in the 5th century B.C.

Chapter 5: Based on the second and third chapter and my definition of a generational conflict, it was not hard to determine, that in *Antigone* and *Elektra* such a conflict is displayed, which does not underlie another position of power or any other crucial difference between the arguing figures than the differences in generation between Haemon and Creon and Clythemnestra and Elektra. In this last chapter I have elaborately analysed these conflicts within both tragedies.

1.4. Accountability

Firstly, it is necessary to comment the absence of an elaborate examination of the tragedy about a generation conflict par excellence: Oedipus Colonus. Cicero as well as Plutarch told us about Sophocles: “Sophocles wrote tragedies to extreme old age; and as, owing to this pursuit, he was thought to neglect his property, he was brought by his sons before a court of law, in order that the judges might declare him incapable of managing his affairs, ...” Sophocles was said to have quoted Oedipus Colonus in then “...he was acquitted by the verdict of the court.”¹⁹ Although the tragedy is the story ‘Old Age’ and according to the ancient sources a reflection of the poets’ own generation conflict; and even the storyline

¹⁹ Cic. *Cato maior De Sen.* 7.22. cf. Plut. *Mor.* 785 B; Lucian *Macrob.* 24; Apleius *De Magia* 289; Valerius Maximus I 7.12 Commented by JEBB, R.C. *Sophocles The Plays and Fragments Part II The Oedipus Coloneus* Cambridge 1886 (here 1900), Introduction xI.

leading up to the setting of this tragedy contains a generation conflict, no conflict can be determined within the text of this one tragedy itself.

In addition: the translations of the Sophoclean tragedies used in this work are all derived from *The Loeb Classical Library, Sophocles I and II*, transl. and ed. Lloyd-Jones, H., Cambridge and London 1998, unless clearly mentioned otherwise. JEBB and KAMERBEEK were used as critical comments on the translations and only mentioned if their contribution –possibly- changed any of my results.²⁰

²⁰ Jebb [1900] en KAMERBEEK, J.C. *The plays of Sophocles, commentaries*. Leiden 1953 Vol I t/m XII

2. General Introduction

In this chapter I will try to shed a light on several developments leading up to the time and place of the Sophoclean tragedies, in order to clarify the use of examining generations within these pieces. First of all I will discuss the development of the Athenian citystate into its 5th century magnitude; secondly I will discuss the development of Greek theatre; thirdly I will focuss on the developments of the tragic genre and last but not least, I will shortly discuss Sophocles as a representative poet of his age.

2.1. Social developments due to political decision-making en demographical change

Ach, die griechische Geschichte läuft so rasch! Es ist nie wieder so verschwenderisch, so maßlos gelebt worden.²¹

Although ‘Verschwenderisch’ and ‘maßlos’ may not be well-chosen, NIETZSCHE was right otherwise: the ancient Greek society developed at a miraculously high speed. Then again can we doubtlessly assume there was ‘wasteful and excessive living’ and was it this fast pace of living that formed the weakest link and constituted the true cause of the growth as well as the downfall of this society?²² To answer this question it is necessary to review the roots of the Greek polis and her development until the Classical Period more extensively: the Cleisthenic Phylenreform.

The Greek polis already came into existence in the 8th century B.C. The organisation of society, however, was still largely determined by tribes and families: phratties and gene.²³ After the Cleisthenic Phylenreformation in the 6th century B.C., the polis slowly adapted to its, nowadays recognisable, form of the Classical Period. This reformation changes society over all, in many ways and is today seen as one of the most crucial milestones of the development of Athenian democracy. The geographical reorganisation naturally resulted not

²¹ NIETZSCHE, F., ‘Werke’, *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches I, Die Tyrannen des Geistes*. 261

²² MEIER [1988] 7ff. Asked this question and came to a conclusion ex negativo: “Oder waltete auch hier eine Ökonomie, wonach Gesellschaften vor allem einmal das hervorbringen, was sie brauchten? Brauchten die Athener die Traödie? (...)”

²³ Although after the reformation they were re-divided, the Greeks had Genè and Phratties before the Cleisthenic reformation as well. Cf. ANDREWES, A., *The Greeks* London 1967, 82: “The general impression remains that clans and phratties had already ceased to play much part, as such, in Athenian politics, well before the reform of Cleisthenes in 507” For a detailed overview of the origin and development of Genè and Phratties I refer to: BOURRIOT, F., *Recherches sur la nature du génos*. Paris 1976 en ROUSELL, D., *Tribu et cité*, Paris 1976.

only in a new compilation of the Boulè; the constitutional life was largely restructured, which produced radical military and social-economic effects.²⁴

By re-dividing the Attica, Cleisthenes had broken the ties within and between the noble families, possibly to safeguard and strengthen his own authority within the aristocratic struggle for power occurring at that time.²⁵ The division of new heroes, with their own, new cults must have been one of the most radical changes of the whole reformation with widely ranging consequences for the Attic society. Prior to the reformation in 508 B.C. Attica was divided into four Ionic phylen, based on the connections between the aristocratic families within different tribes, which according to tradition all had a different mythological ancestor, who was honoured as a hero and as a patron. The genetic distance of this ancestor determined the position and rank of a male within the phyle. Since time immemorial families of distinction with authority have been dethroned, without having even a chance to influence their situation. Familiar ranking, the overview, religion, beliefs and cultural heritage in general were put aside and replaced: there was no time left for historical development or even the slightest adjustment.²⁶

Cleisthenes' phylonreformation has unmistakably had enormous consequences for various aspects of society and probably for the Attic population as a whole, irrespective of personal status and ranking, exact habitat, prosperity and authority. Standards and values were being tested, moral and ethics were being newly defined. Combining this phylonreform with

²⁴ We are in the dark about Cleisthenes' intentions. BLEICKEN, J. *Die Athenische Demokratie*, Paderborn 1995; Herodot. VI 131, points out that Cleisthenes was already being honoured as ancestor of the Athenian democracy. This is confirmed by Paus. I 29.6, telling about Cleisthenes being honoured with a state-grave which was restored after the Persians had left Athens; MEIER, Ch., *Die Entstehung des Politischen bei den Griechen*, Frankfurt 1980, 91-143. MEIER defends the thesis that Cleisthenes was striving for democracy or an equal state-form. Mostly however it is assumed that development of democracy was a direct result of the reformation, nevertheless it is also supposed not to be deliberately initiated. Cf. RAAFLAUB, K., *Die Entdeckung der Freiheit. Zur historischen Semantik und Gesellschaftsgeschichte eines politischen Grundbegriffes der Griechen*, München 1985, 120; Cf. BLICKNELL, P.J., *PP* 24, Napoli 1969, 34-37; EFFENTERRE, H. van, 'Clisthène et les mesures de mobilisation.' In *REG* 89, Paris 1976, 1-17; SIEWERT, P., *Die Trittyn Attikas und die Heeresreform des Cleisthenes*, München 1982.

²⁵ Cf. SCHAEFER, H., *Staatsform und Politik. Untersuchungen zur Griechischen Geschichte des 6. und 5. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig 1932; MACKENDRICK, P., 'An aristocrat reformer: Cleisthenes and after.' In RIGSBY, K.J., *Stud. pres. to Sterling Dow*, Durham 1984, 193-202; KIENAST, D., 'Die innenpolitischen Entwicklung Athens im 6. Jahrhundert und die Reformen von 508.' In *HZ* 200, München 1965, 265-283; LEWIS, D.M., 'Cleisthenes and Attica.' In *Historia* 12, Stuttgart 1963, 22-40. Against this idea: cf. RHODES, P.J., *The Athenian Boulè*, Oxford 1972, 17, 200, 209f.

²⁶ HARTMANN, E., 'Heirat, Hetärentum und Konkubinat im klassischen Athen, Frankfurt/New York 2002, adds to these changes: Zwar erfüllte auch in klassischer Zeit ein Haus primär den Zweck, seinen Insassen sozialen Zusammenhalt, Schutz und Zuflucht zu gewähren. Sinnbild dieser Funktion war nach wie vor das häusliche Herdfeuer. Aber als sich die demokratischen Strukturen verfestigten, erfuhr der Lebensbereich außerhalb des Hauses eine neue Wertung: die Männer kamen ihren Bürgerpflichten nun vorwiegend in den politischen Institutionen auf der Agora, auf der Pnyx und dem Areopag nach.' Cf. Xen. oik. VII 3

the fact that the absolute sovereignty was now based at the Ekklesiā and Athens –next to Sparta- being the most powerful citystate of the Archaic, the citizens of Athens rapidly had to go through a major change of mindset. “In kürzer Zeit war die attische Bürgerschaft völlig verwandelt, und zwar auf Dauer. Sie konnte sich damit auf einmal Ihre ganze Macht empfinden und zur Geltung bringen.”²⁷

So in the 5th century B.C. the Archaic individual heroism was replaced by the political struggle for collective interest. In the Old Comedy of Aristophanes conflicts between generations were very common. According to EHRENBURG, he actually displayed the social developments of his time as such conflicts: “From our evidence with all its ridiculous exaggerations there emerges as a real fact a change of outlook between one generation and the next, a change, above all, in the methods of instruction, in the nature of education, and in the ethics of political life.”²⁸ MEIER convincingly suggested that Tragedy too had an important function in the changes social and political life in Athens went through: tragedies could have very well been a remedy for the Athenian people to prevent an inevitable identity crisis. “Vielleicht haben wir hier ein ganz besondere Beispiel dafür vor uns, daß sich die Arbeit eines Gemeinwesens an seiner mentalen Infrastruktur in alle Öffentlichkeit vollzieht.”²⁹ True or false: cultural life was susceptible to the drastic changes. “Die demokratische Staatsform Athens hat das Theater zwar nicht geschaffen, jedoch seine äußeren Formen und seinen Inhalt wesentlich bestimmt.”³⁰

2.2. Greek theatre

Along with the several drastic political and social changes in Athens, towards the end of the 6th and the in beginning of the 5th century B.C., theatre developed as well. The number of festivals in honour of the god of the theatre, Dionysus, increased and they were more and more being celebrated as panhellenic festivals. Since the end of the 6th century Dionysus had permanently marked the state-calendar with several occasions throughout the year. “... the

²⁷ MEIER [1988] 31

²⁸ EHRENBURG, V., *The people of Aristophanes, a sociology of Old Comedy*, 1956, 211

²⁹ MEIER [1988] 10

³⁰ KOLB, F. “Polis und Theater” in *Das Griechische drama*. (ed. SEECK, G.A.) Darmstadt 1979, 504-544. here 516. And concomitantly (LEFÈVRE, E., *Die Unfähigkeit, sich zu erkennen: Sophokles Tragödien* Leiden [2001] p. 266) “es ist kaum vorstellbar, daß Sophokles’ Tragödien nicht auf ihr politisch-gesellschaftliches Umfeld Bezug nähmen. Ihr Verfasser ist nicht ein lebensferner Dichter, sondern ebenso –zeitweise hoher- Politiker. “Was er in seinen Tragödien zu sagen hatte, war nicht das Wort des Poeten an das geneigte Publikum, sondern das Wort des Bürgers an seine Mitbürger.” ” Quotation: LATACZ, J. *Einführung in die Griechische Tragödie*, Göttingen 1993 p. 162 Cf. BOUVRIE, S. DES, *Women in Greek tragedy, an antropolgical appraoch*, Oslo 1990, p. 127

deity who above all others belongs both to the heart of the savage universe and to the centre of the town and whose cult contained mass exits from the town, (...) namely Dionysos.”³¹ With this quotation SEAFORD inimitably expressed the important position the god occupied in the Athenian society.

Five festivals were organised annually for the deity, all concerning different features of Dionysus with different cults. The Citydionysia formed the largest and most important event, organised in honour of Dionysus Eleuthereus. This festival was held in the month of Elaphebolion, towards the end of March and at the beginning of April, and usually lasted seven days. Theatre productions were performed not only during the Citydionysia, but also during several other, smaller festivals. Mythology, descriptions of the festivals and some tragedies trigger the assumption that the link between the deity and the theatre came into existence because in being the god of ‘ἔκστασις’, Dionysus ordered people to let go of their own identity and let somebody else, the god himself, take possession of their bodies.

During the festival, not only all citizens of Athens, but also people from outside the district were allowed to visit the theatre; prisoners were set free, forced pawning and judicial decision-making was postponed. From the beginning of Peisistratus’ reign in the 6th century B.C. the importance of the festival increased even more.³² The polis forced its interference upon the organisation, justifying this by referring to the fact that theatre productions were part of the statecult of the deity, and should therefore be controlled by government.³³

Theatre traditionally was mostly a religious phenomenon. However, as HARRISON already described, religion in Ancient times was not about doctrines or rational moral codes, but about observation, specific rites and symbolic deeds, based on fear and a lack of self-confidence.³⁴ The stage, the reversal and the dramatic personage taking control of one’s body were all symbols within the cult. As of the first scientific research on Greek theatre, the bond between art and religion turned out to be confusing. According to HARRISON theatre evolved from religion and was therefore never really placed in another context. WISE, however, does see theatre outside of its ‘religious straitjacket’ and attributes the increasing importance of

³¹ SEAFORD, R., *Reciprocity and Ritual, Homer and tragedy in the developing city-state*, Oxford, 1994, p. 237

³² Cf. PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE, A.W., *The dramatic festivals of Athens*, Oxford 1953, vooral 55-56.

³³ Cf. KOLB [1979] 518 ff. The fact, that the Archon Eponymos was responsible for the course of the festival since the 6th century B.C. shows the importance of the role of the state at these festivals. Cf. PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE [1953] 56. This, however, does not tell us anything about the political influence on the contents of plays, which will be discussed further on in this chapter.

³⁴ HARRISON, J.E., *Prolegomena to the study of Greek religion*, Princeton 1991 (1903) 7; 586

theatre to the rising alphabetism.³⁵ According to her it is no coincidence that only this form of art developed so strongly in Attica in the 6th century B.C., whereas other forms of cultural expression, even closely related to theatrical performances, already existed for many centuries.³⁶

WISE rightly stresses the fact that theatre should not only be considered within a religious context, as for instance HARRISON observed. As time went by, the theatre and the dramatic genre developed in several aspects and the festivals developed accordingly. In 534 B.C., as far as can be traced back nowadays, the competition between tragic poetic was first held. Around 486 this competition was completed with a competition between comic poets and in 449 with a competition between tragic actors. Actors were added to expand the possibilities of performance: Aeschylus put a second actor on stage for the first time, and Sophocles a third. Attributes like the *ekklesia* were invented and tragedies were, with success, performed even a second time at another festival.³⁷

These developments show that the theatre was not a sudden new phenomenon, nor was it bound to strict religious rules, but in course of time it was affected by the changes society went through.³⁸ The Cleisthenic phylenreformation possibly did not leave clearly traceable marks on the festival. The contents of the performed tragedies, however, did adjust themselves to the political, cultural and religious changes of society.

The influences of the development of the Athenian polis and society can be recognised on all different aspects of society and on the festivals, but were also recognisable within the contents of tragedies: “Vor allem ist die unbedingte Hinwendung der Tragödie zu den grundlegenden Fragen des Polislebens (...) einzig in eine Atmosphäre einer relativ ‘offenen’ Gesellschaft denkbar (...)”³⁹ After the Peloponnesian War –the start of downfall of the Athenian hegemony- tragedy’s content changed: “Die polis war fortan nicht mehr Zentrum

³⁵ WISE [1998] 1-14

³⁶ WISE’s explanation of the interest in the dramatic genre is rather farfetched. She declares that Dionysus only guided the theatre because he was already able to read and write. According to her a reversed causal connection can be recognised between alphabetism, cultural developments and intellectual ‘improvements’ of theatre-performances. “Theatre was to oral epic, what writing was to speech.” WISE [1998] 4.

³⁷ *Inscriptiones Graecae*. ii².3106 Cf. PICKARD-CAMEBRIDGE, A., *The Dramatic festivals of Athens*, p. 103-126

³⁸ Remarkably the celebrations of these festivals were adapted to the political circumstances of the moment. At the 2nd day, the 9th Elaphebolion, comedies were performed, at least before the Peloponnesian War (431-404 V. Chr.). During this war the festival lasted one day less and at the 10th, 11th and 12th Elaphebolion three tragedies, one satyrplay and one comedy, were performed. Therewith the amount of comedies was reduced from five to three. Cf Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, iv.118; Aristophanes, *Birds*, 786ff

³⁹ KOLB [1979] 516. In comedy daily life and politics were even more clearly displayed and mocked. See above p. 19 en note 33.

des Interesses und Quelle der Inspiration.”⁴⁰ Tragedies at first sight however, still displayed myths: to what extent were they so different from the genre before? There is one aspect, mentioned by several ancient sources, concerning the development of the contents of tragedies, which should be considered when trying to answer this question and which is in my opinion more closely related to the developments of society than what is mostly recognised: at a certain point the performances were no longer inextricably bound up with Dionysus; reason to (re-)introduce the satyr play.⁴¹

2.3. Tragedy's development and the introduction of the satyrplay

“...οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον...”

As shown above: the socio-political changes society went through and the development of Greek theatre both contribute to the intention to thoroughly examine generations within the Sophoclean tragedies. To what extent did the -development of- the tragic genre itself and the introduction of the satyrplay ‘legitimise’ this examination? In literary historical sources, that mention the development of the tragic genre in the 5th century B.C. we often discover the quotation above.

These words are, according to the tradition, assigned to Chamaileon, who probably was a student of Aristotle and has written a treatise about satyr plays, which unfortunately has not been preserved.⁴² “...οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον...” is supposed to explain the introduction of satyr plays in the 5th century B.C. It was an exclamation of the audience reacting to a play

⁴⁰ KOLB [1979] 516.

⁴¹ According to the famous utterance of the poet Chamaeleon to whom I will come back later on in this chapter. Exact quotation cf. underneath. The sources date from the end of the sixth century onwards.

⁴² Zenobius 5.40; Apostolios 13.42; Photios (s.v.); Plutarch 615a; Suda (s.v.). Because a treatise called ‘περὶ ἡδονῆς’ is ascribed to Theophrast as well as to Chamaileon, KÖPKE, J. *De Chamaeleonte Hercleota*, Berlin 1856 supposes Chamaileon to have been a student of Theophrast. For the same reason ZELLER, E., *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, Leipzig 1920, II 2; 899; 3, assumes him to have been a fellow student of Theophrast; cf. WELLMANN, M., RE 3, 2103-2104 and Suppl. XI, 368-372, s.v. Chamaileon. Because of the titles of the other works assigned to him we may assume that Chamaileon treated all parts of Greek poetry, epic, lyric and drama separately. (περὶ κωμωδίας - Athen. 9.406e, περὶ Ὀμήρου - Diog. Laert. 5.93, περὶ Ἡσιόδου - Diog. Laert. 5.92, περὶ Στρεψιχόρου - Athen. 14.620c, περὶ Σαπφοῦς - Athen. 13.599c, περὶ Ἀνακρέοντος - Athen. 12.533e, περὶ Λάσου - Athen. 8.338b, περὶ Σιμωνίδου - Athen. 10.456c, περὶ Πινδάρου - Athen. 8.573c, περὶ Θέσπιδος - Phot. Lex. s. ‘οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον’, περὶ Αἰσχύλου - Athen. 9.375f.). He might have also written a treatise on Sophocles and Euripides (Suda s.v. Chamaileon).

written by Epigenes. Tragedy had apparently lost its indispensable ‘satyric quality’ and Epigenes’ plays had “nothing (to do) with Dionysus anymore”.⁴³ Satyr plays would have therefore been added to the theatrical competition, in order to bring the performances back -or at least closer- to their original form and purpose honouring Dionysus. Tetralogies were therefore introduced, probably in 502-501 BC.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, the sources mentioning Chamaeleon’s statement about the complaint are rather ambiguous.⁴⁵ They particularly differ from each other regarding their explanation of the differences between Epigenes’ pieces and earlier plays and therefore of the exact causes of the tumult within the audience. For example: the eldest source on Chamaeleon’s statement is Plutarchus. He does not name Epigenes in relation to the exclamation of the audience, as some of the other sources do. However, interestingly, he *does* relate the development of the tragic genre to the introduction of the satyr plays and mentions the plays of Phrynichus and Aeschylus, mythical stories and stories of suffering which had ‘nothing to do anymore with Dionysos’:

Plutarchus *Quaest. Conviv.* 615a

ὥσπερ οὖν, Φρυνίχου καὶ Αἰσχύλου τὴν τραγῳδίαν εἰς μύθους καὶ πάθη προαγόντων, ἐλέχθη τὸ τί ταῦτα πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον; οὕτως ἔμοιγε πολλάκις εἰπεῖν παρέστη πρὸς τοὺς ἑλκοντας εἰς τὰ συμπόσια τὸν Κυριεύοντα ὦ ἄνθρωπε, τί ταῦτα πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον;

As when Phrynichus and Aeschylus changed tragedy into the presentation of mythical stories and stories of suffering, people said: “What have these to do with Dionysus?”

Thus I was tempted to say to the people, who dragged Kurieon to the symposia. “What has this to do with Dionysos?”

The differences Aeschylus made at the end of the 6th –beginning of the 5th century by introducing the deutagonist; reducing the lyric parts and introducing the titrologie do not seem

⁴³ The audience is said to have complained about the relation to Dionysus as a result of a performance of a play by Epigenes.

⁴⁴ The tetralogy was probably introduced in 502/501 B.C.; cf. PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE, A. / WEBSTER, T.B.L., *Dithyramb, tragedy and comedy*, Oxford 1962, 102 ff.; cf. BLUMENTHAL, A. VON, RE 5A, 9. Halbband, 1077-1083, s.v. Tetralogie (Trilogie).

⁴⁵ Zenob. Paroem. I, V.40.; Apostolios 13.42; Photios (s.v.); Plutarch 615a; Suda (s.v.). The Suda, the fourth and youngest source, reports that Epigenes was considered the fifteenth predecessor of Thespis and the actual inventor of the tragedy, because of local Sicynian patriotism. This story accordingly has to be related to Herodotus 5.76, where he tells about the Sekyonian cult of Heros Adrastus in which tragikoˆ coroˆ appeared. Suda s.v. Thespis. The Suda corresponds with Photios and Apostolios, it is therefore unnecessary to mention them separately. Cf. POHLENZ, M., *Das Satyrspiel und Pratinas von Phleius*, in: *Satyrspiel*, ed. B. SEIDENSTICKER, Darmstadt 1989, 29-57.

to be applicable on ‘tragedy changing’. Could there have been a change of contents Chamaileon was referring to? Zenobius, the source on Chamaileon being the most similar to Aristotle’s description of the origins of the tragic genre, does mention the contents of the tragic genre having changed:

Zenobius Paroem. I, V 40

Οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον· ἐπὶ τῶν τὰ μὴ προσήκοντα τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις λεγόντων ἢ παροιμία εἴπεται. ἐπειδὴ τῶν χορῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς εἰθισμένων διθύραμβιν ᾄδειν εἰς τὸν Διόνυσον, οἱ ποιηταὶ ὕστερον ἐκβάντες τὴν συνήθειαν ταύτην, Αἶαντας καὶ Κενταύρους γράφειν ἐπεχείρουν. ὅθεν οἱ θεώμενοι σκώπτοντες ἔλεγον, Οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον. Διὰ γοῦν τοῦτο τοὺς Σατύρους ὕστερον ἔδοξεν αὐτοῖς προεισάγειν, ἵνα μὴ δωκῶσιν ἐπιλανθάνεσθαι τοῦ θεοῦ.

Nothing to do with Dionysus anymore: The saying is expressed with regard to people saying inappropriate things regarding the themes. After the choruses at the beginning, which were used to sing dithyrambs in honour of Dionysus, the poets later, giving up this habit, turned to writing tragedies about Ajax and the Centaurs. Therefore the audience, while watching, jokingly said [This has] nothing [to do] anymore with Dionysus. Later, as a result, they decided to introduce the satyr plays, so that they would not seem to have forgotten the god.⁴⁶

Compared to:

Aristotle Poetica 1449 a9 ff.

...γενομένη δ’ οὖν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς αὐτοσχεδιαστικῆς καὶ αὐτὴ καὶ ἡ κωμωδία, καὶ ἡ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐξαρχόντων τὸν διθύραμβον, ἡ δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν τὰ φαλλικὰ ἅ ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἐν πολλαῖς τῶν πόλεων διαμένει νομιζόμενα, κατὰ μικρὸν ἠϋξήθη, ...

...after having developed from an improvised origin, the tragedy as well as the comedy: the first [tragedy] starting from the τῶν ἐξαρχόντων of the dithyramb and the second

⁴⁶ Zenob. Paroem. I, V.40. This explanation is probably derived from the parts on the origins of tragedy in Aristotle’s *Poetics*, which will be elaborately discussed below. Zenobius may have combined Aristotle’s treatise with Chamaileon’s statement on the reasons for the introduction of satyr plays.

[comedy] from the lead-singers of the Phallica, that up to our time, which are still customary in many cities, it grew gradually, (...) ⁴⁷

And:

καὶ πολλὰς μεταβολὰς μεταβαλοῦσα ἡ τραγωδία ἐπαύσατο, ἐπεὶ ἔσχε τὴν αὐτῆς φύσιν.

Tragedy, after undergoing many changes, stopped when it arrived at its proper nature. ⁴⁸

(...)

ἔτι δὲ τὸ μέγεθος· ἐκ μικρῶν μύθων καὶ λέξεως γελοίας διὰ τὸ ἐκ σατυρικοῦ μεταβαλεῖν ὅψε ἀπεσεμνύνθη, τό τε μέτρον ἐκ τετραμέτρου ἱαμβεῖον ἐγένετο. τὸ μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον τετραμέτρῳ ἔχρωντο διὰ τὸ σατυρικὴν καὶ ὀρχηστικωτέραν εἶναι τὴν ποίησιν, λέξεως δὲ γενομένης αὐτὴ ἡ φύσις τὸ οἰκεῖον μέτρον εὔρε· μάλιστα γὰρ λεκτικὸν τῶν μέτρων τὸ ἱαμβεῖον ἐστίν·

With regard to dimension, it lately evolved into seriousness from small myths and ridiculous diction, since it grew from a ‘satyr play-like’ form. And it changed from the [trochaic] tetrametre to the iambic trimetre, for at first poets used the tetrametre, as their poetry was satyric and more dance-like. But as it became a spoken genre, it found its proper metre. For iambic is the most colloquial of metres.

⁴⁷ Translation by SUTTON, D. F., *The Greek satyr play*, Hain 1980, 1ff., with personal addition and changes. On dithyramps as part of the early Dionysic competitions cf. PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE [1927], 5-10, 47-53., WASER, O., RE 5, 9. Halbband, 1204-1229, s.v. Dithyrambos. The name ‘cyclic dithyramb’ is derived from the name of the members of a dithyramb chorus: κύκλιοι. (Xenoph. Oecon. 8.20) This name was related to the circle-formed dance place, the fenced-off κύκλος, around the old offering-altar. Cf. ZIMMERMAN, B., *Dithyrambos, Geschichte einer Gattung*, Göttingen 1992, particularly 129-133. On the development of the tragic genre form the dithyramb cf. SCHMID, W., *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur*, in: *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft I. Teil*, 2 München 1934, 26-42; FLICKINGER R.C., *The Greek theatre and its drama*, Chicago 1936, 3; HOORN, H. VAN, *Satyrspiele*, in: *BaBesch* 17, 1942. CRUSIUS, O., RE 2, 3. und 4. Halbband, 835-841, s.v. Arion; Cf. JÜLIGER, A., RE 2, 3. und 4. Halbband, 2793-2801, s.v. Bakchylides, who himself testified (fr. 48,4) to have come from Iulis in Keos. According to the Suda he was the nephew of Simonides of Keos. Born around 505 B.C. and probably died around 432. LESKY, A., *Die tragische Dichtung der Hellenen*, in: *Studienhefte zur Altertumswissenschaften* 2, Wien 1956. He presents the discussion about the fact that τῶν ἐξαρχόντων actually cannot be derived from the word ἄρχοι, but should be seen as a nominalized verb, from ἐξάρχειν; this verb can not only be translated with ‘lead-singing’, but also with ‘starting off’ and ‘taking initiative’. τῶν ἐξαρχόντων could therefore also have been the poets, changing their genre. For this treatise, however, it is not of importance which of the translations is used, because they merely differ in emphasizing the possibility of a development, also in short time, from dithyramb into tragedy.

⁴⁸ Aristot. Poet. 1449a 19-25. Translation of the following texts of Aristotle by SUTTON [1980] 1, with personal changes and additions, unless mentioned otherwise. The Suda’s positive connotation concerning the development of tragedy could very well be based on Aristotle’s words ἐπεὶ ἔσχε τὴν αὐτῆς φύσιν

Although the sources on Chamaeleon are somewhat ambivalent, let's assume a change of the contents of the tragic genre was reason to add the satyrplay to the competition.⁴⁹ Bearing in mind that the first tetralogies were probably staged in 502-501 BC, the possible influence of a changing society –as elaborately discussed above- can hardly be ignored. In 534 the first Dionysia were held; in 510 Peisistratos and tyranny fell; 507 Cleisthenes introduced his reforms; in 502 the satyrplay was added to the theatrical competition in the Dionysia, in 500 Athens was considered the most powerful citystate of the Archaic. What was the result of this addition? KRUMREICH, PECHSTEIN und SEIDENSTICKER who extensively examined the genre, concluded: “Mit den Satyrn und ihren Eigenschaften und Werten wird dem Zuschauer eine Gegenwelt präsentiert, die, wie Lasserre, Lissarraque u.a. betont haben, die Ideale der Polis und ihrer Mitglieder zugleich in Frage stellt und –ex negativo- bestätigt.”⁵⁰

A causal relation can be established between politically-social developments in 5th century Athens and the event occurring before this time, especially the Cleisthenic reforms. So not just from examining the tragic genre but even from the addition of the satyrplay and ancient sources commenting on that, we can conclude as MEIER did: “Tragedy [tetralogy ed.] will thus have existed in order to play out the new within the framework of the old, to bring the two together, and so at once to keep alive the old doubts, the darker aspects of reality, and to introduce the old into the new world in new forms.”⁵¹ Tragedies, which had nothing to do with Dionysus, could no longer serve as ‘the framework of the old’. Satyrplays prevented such a deviation from its functions –old and new- within society.

2.4. Sophoclean tragedies

Born second in line of the three best known and therefore most important tragic poets of the 5th century, Sophocles is considered the middle one of the three –Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides-, not only chronologically but also characteristically. “...wie etwa Aristoteles die ‘Tugend’ (ἀρετή) als eine ‘Ausgeglichenheit’ (μεσότης τις) zwischen ‘Übermaß’ und

⁴⁹ The discussion on how to interpret Aristotle's words here: cf. LESKY [1956] 10-13 a.o. on ‘satyrikon’; LLOYD JONES. H., *Problems of early Greek tragedy*, in: *Estudios sobre la tragedia Griega. Cuadernos de la “Fundación Pastor”* 13, Madrid 1966, 11-33, related pages 13-14.; SEAFORD, R., *On the origins of satyric drama*, in: *Maia* 28, 1976, 209-221, related page 211, note 19.; SUTTON [1980] 3; LASSERRE, F., *Das Satyrspiel*, in: *Satyrspiel*, ed. SEIDENSTICKER, B., 1989, 252-286, here 285. LESKY refers to BIEBER (RE 14, 2070-2120, s.v. Maske) who named the cult of Artemis Despoina, in which animal dances were common.

⁵⁰ KRUMREICH, R., PECHSTEIN, N., SEIDENSTICKER, B., *Das Griechische Satyrspiel*, Darmstadt 1999, 38-39

⁵¹ MEIER, CH. *The Greek Discovery of Politics* [1990] 142-143 (in German 1980)

‘Mangel’ (ὑπερβολή - ἔλλειψις) definiert (so in der Nikomachischen Ethik B5. 1106 b 27).”⁵² As mentioned above, Sophocles introduced a third actor on stage, and in addition as the poet he also was (one of) the first not to participate in the stage-action anymore and furthermore he increased the number of chorusmembers from 12 to 15. Aristotle:

...οἶον καὶ Σοφοκλῆς ἔφη αὐτὸς μὲν οἷους δεῖ ποιεῖν, Εὐριπίδην δὲ οἷοι εἶσιν, τὰύτῃ λυτέον.

...just as Sophocles said, he created characters as they ought to be, Euripides as they really are.⁵³

These seemingly superficial changes Sophocles made, resulted in clear differences between his tragedies and those of Aeschylus. These changes did not go unnoticed, not even in ancient times. Even the contents of the tragedies of both poets were drastically affected by it. The introduction of this third actor caused that, for instance, not only dialogues on human acting, divine intervention or the unforeseeable fate of dramatic figures could be discussed, but that the narrative situation and impact of the plot were intensified by a third opinion.⁵⁴

The possible consequences of the extension of the chorus are put forward by MELCHINGER: “...so wie gleichzeitig auch die Ersterhöhung der Choreutenzahl von 12 auf 15 = 2 mal 7 + 1 (Chorführer) Symmetrie des Arrangements [der Bühne] herstellen ließ, wenn man sie wollte oder brauchte, und das heißt weiter, dass der Held nun nicht mehr nur der Antagonist des Chors war oder später seinen möglicherweise antagonistischen Partner hatte, sondern in der dialektischen Mitte des Antagonismus stehen konnte (...).”⁵⁵ Sophocles did not involve his chorus in the dramatic action as much as Aeschylus did. Furthermore, with Sophocles the chorus is almost always in dialogue and action in regards to a superior.⁵⁶ Yet, as with Aeschylus, the chorus in Sophoclean tragedies, in most situations forms the link between the audience and the plot, between the action and the figures, and it utters the voice of the all-knowing audience to the protagonists.

⁵² DILLER, H., “Sophokles: die Tragödien“ in *Das Griechische Drama*. (ed. SEECK, G.A.) Darmstadt 1979, 51-104. hier 51

⁵³ Aristot. Poetica 1460 b 33-35

⁵⁴ DILLER [1979] points out, that in all tragedies except *Antigone* and *Philoktetes* even in the prologue the third actor was already being brought on stage to cause this effect.

⁵⁵ MELCHINGER, S., *Das Theater der Tragödie*, München 1974, 55

⁵⁶ Cf. RODE, J., *Untersuchungen zur Form des aischyleischen Chorliedes*, Tübingen 1965 and BURTON, *The chorus in Sophoclean tragedies*, Oxford 1980

Unlike his predecessors, or at least more pronounced, Sophocles built up the plots of his tragedies, not only based on divine sovereignty or involvement of the principle that all human beings are responsible for their own deeds, but from the relations between the divine, the human and fate, *tychè*. It was this trinity that caused the dramatics of the plot of all remaining Sophoclean tragedies and which bridged mythology, on which tragedies were based, and the perception of the environment of the audience.⁵⁷ The Sophoclean tragedies are not dividable either in interpretable pieces only preaching human moral and ethics, or in pieces that fill the audience with awe of the almighty will of the gods. The diverse divine and human facets of these Greek tragedies are therefore not to be contemplated or examined separately.⁵⁸ As LEFÈVRE put it: “Nicht den Aufklärer, der alle Werte relativiert, stellt Sophokles in das Zentrum seines Werks, sondern den sittlich gefestigten Verfechter derselben. Aber auch dieser scheint nicht ihm gefährdet.”⁵⁹

However, the spectrum within which a poet could adjust a myth so as to put it on stage illustratively, was obviously limited. The fate of the protagonist as well as the course of the action and also its outcome were determined by mythology and therefore presupposed by the judging audience. The plot of a play was very often known, even before the first actors came on stage.⁶⁰ The details of the tragic story had to be worked out precisely in order to keep the tension, without doing major damage to the myth the tragedy was based on. For this purpose Sophocles availed himself of the unknown possibilities, offered by inter-human relationships. He played with the daily confrontations of city-life as if they had already existed since

⁵⁷ This trinity and especially the concept of *tychè* I do not wish to elaborately discuss with this treatise. However, the function of *tychè* in Greek tragedies, in my opinion, need much more attention, than provided until now in modern science. In this, I agree with KITTO H.D.F., *Sophocles. Dramatist and Philosopher*, Oxford 1958. His criticism on the one-sided research on the role of divine intervention or human influence is correct and should be supported. The diverse divine and human facets of Greek tragedy are not to be separately viewed. KITTO however treats *tychè* unsatisfactory. For a more elaborate account on the many facets of *tychè*: cf. DRACHMAN, *Atheism in Pagan Antiquity*, London 1977, 91. and RE, col. 1642-1698, *Tychè* and Little and Scott, p. 1839, *Tychè*. A specific literary study of the word *tychè* cf.: ALLÈGRE, F., *Étude sur la déesse grecque Tyché*, Paris 1889.

⁵⁸ I will leave aside a possible theme of contemporary political, social, or cultural problems. Even if these performances would serve no other goal than an artificial or religious one, it is precisely the dramatic adaptation, which Sophocles created, that appeals to one's imagination because of this balance between god, mankind and *tychè*, which is applicable to all human problems even 2500 years later. The many -scientific- interpretations of Sophoclean tragedies are, without judging or even evaluating them, the evidence of the possibilities these tragedies offer and had to offer to cause their audience to empathize and sympathize.

⁵⁹ LEFÈVRE, E. *Die Unfähigkeit sich zu erkennen: Sophokles' Tragödien*, Leiden/Boston/Köln 2001, 1. Cf. p. 4/5: “Sophokles stellt in seinem Werk unablässig Geschehnisse dar, in denen es um die Selbsterkenntnis geht, die Fähigkeit, seine Grenzen, d. h. sich zu erkennen. Hierin folgt er dem delphischen Gebot, einerseits der Beschränktheit des Menschen im Vergleich mit dem Göttlichen innezuwerden und sie zu betrachten, andererseits die Verantwortung des Individuums im Verkehr mit der Gesellschaft zu sehen und zu berücksichtigen.”

⁶⁰ Cf. KAMERBEEK, J.C., ‘Individuum und Norm bei Sophokles’, in *Sophokles*, ed. DILLER, H. 1967 p. 79-90

eternity in every possible society, offering his audience clues to empathize. Because of the fact that the Sophoclean tragedies caused empathy and emotion, it is, in my opinion, not only justified but even necessary to examine -any part of- the human aspect, without losing sight of the divine aspect, without taking into account the function fate had within the tragic context.⁶¹

At the heart of this thesis lie the relations between people of different generations. Especially, in the Sophoclean tragedies these relations catch our attention. Although the Greeks did not know a word equalling the modern concept of 'generation', the distinguishing features we nowadays ascribe to this concept, are explicitly pointed out. Differences in age and therefore -seemingly- in experience and wisdom are brought up in every tragedy and, particularly in conflict situations, often constitute *the* supporting argument.

Due to these remarkable recognitions, the two main questions for this research arose: 1) In what way could such an explicit reproduction of *these* relations contribute to the construction of tension within the tragedy and 2) in what way does Sophocles functionilize these relations in order to serve this purpose? The answer to both questions, however contradictory this may sound, can be found in the simplicity and accessibility of the relations between people of different generations. *These* aspects denote the complexity and seriousness of the dramatized moral: the consequences of the predominantly familiar generational relations are recognizable and provide the people, the audience, a connection through which the attention is not distracted of the essential.

Concomitantly, the most important characteristic of relations between humans of different generations is that the relations are continuously discussed and brought up for discussion. Conflict situations are demonstrated in the Sophoclean tragedies by means of the generation relations and the everlasting discussion about this matter and through this the pressure on the course of action is increased, which an audience, modern and antique, almost fully unaware occupies. This pressure came into existence as a direct result of the different visions, which were created in the tragedies and summoned by the people, as no objective perception is possible in relation to generation relations and emotions increased: all are either

⁶¹ In addition I want to underline that I cannot empathize with KNOX' interpretation on this matter.: "This dramatic method, the presentation of the tragic dilemma in the figure of a single dominating character, seems in fact to be an invention of Sophocles. It is at any rate so characteristic of his technique that we may fairly and without exaggeration call the mainstream of European tragedy since his time Sophoclean. It is Sophocles who presented us with what we know (though the Greeks of course did not use this term) as 'the tragic hero'. KNOX, B.M.W., *The heroic temper. Studies in Sophoclean tragedy*, Berkely 1963, p. 1. In my opinion, as stated above, that it is not so much the fate of the one tragic hero, taking the breath of the audience away when watching Sophoclean tragedies, but moreover the multitude and diversity of very well thought-out factors, of which the trinity as mentioned above is the most important one.

a son, a daughter or have been young. Sophocles experiments with all phases of life and the thereto connected characteristic features, which are for this reason probably not to be described, also not in the modern way and sociological generation, and he puts this actively and passively in order to increase the tension.

3. Generational Awareness

“Greek society was (and is) patriarchal: the master of the *oikos* was the head of the family, its *kyrios*, as its governor, governing the slaves as a master, the children as a sort of king, because of their affection for him and his greater age, his wife like a political leader, differing from normal political leadership only in that this relationship does not involve change of leaders, as self-governing states normally change their leaders, but the husband is always the head of the family.”⁶²

The life of Athenian citizens, as a growing, expansive and also pride society, consisted mainly out of a domestic and a public aspect in the last quarter of the 5th century B.C.. Polis and *oikos* hardly seem to be connected and the discrepancy between both appears insurmountable in several facets. In the polis on the one hand political equality of all male citizens was embraced as a principle, on the other hand, the ranking within the *oikos* had to be maintained and kept in motion so as to secure the existence of the *oikos*.⁶³ Nonetheless, it is exactly this division between polis and *oikos* that made the balanced political, economical, cultural structure of the citystate possible. The necessary uniformity as a society, as well as individual glory - of great importance through (personal) background and history, but within the polis subordinated to collectivity by democracy- had found their place in society. In no way I would argue that the both aspects of life were always and in every way equally compatible, I am however of the opinion that it is *this* discrepancy which, at least partly, caused the balance between and therewith the strength of existence of the Athenian society. As NEVETT argues

⁶² Pol. I, 5, 1-2 (1259 A-B) This is obviously a very short summary of Aristoteles' *Politics* Book 1 and 2.

⁶³ Cf. MEIER, C., *The political art of Greek Tragedy*, Oxford 1993, p. 21 ff. “As so much attention, ambition and jealous energy were concentrated upon this public space, it stood at the centre of life in the polis. This led to a split between the two spheres, domestic and political, in which the normal citizens moved. At home they were masters but in public they were all equal. At home they had various private interests, but in public they were principally citizens, and they had to be so, not only because of the ongoing need to present a united front to the nobility, but also because there was such a clear boundary between their public and home lives. For their existence as citizens sprang from a strong emphasis on common identity. This did not by any means exclude egoism, vested interest and contrast of all kind, but it did modify them.” I do not completely agree with MEIER's explanation of ‘masters at home’, because in my opinion the participation of women within the *oikos* is sincerely underated by MEIER, hisview on the discrepancy between political equality and domestic inequality -with which the position of metoikoi is not even evaluated yet- seems to the point. For an overview on the different and diverse scientific opinions on the divison between state and private matters I recommend STRAUSS, B.S., *Fathers and Sons in Athens. Ideology and Society in the era of the Peloponnesian war*. Princeton 1993 36-37.

also tragedy "...hints repeatedly at an uneasy balance struck between the powers of the *polis*, on the one hand, and the welfare and responsibilities of the *oikos* on the other."⁶⁴

The gap between equality and division in times of war and loss could be replaced by the importance of succession within the *oikos* and the continuance of the *genos*, the lineage, its fame, glory and the recognizability and identification that it offered. The importance of continuance of the *oikos* from generation to generation was regularly underlined in Attic rhetorics.⁶⁵ To maintain this continuance, it was necessary for a man to recognize the point to hand over his *oikos* to the next generation: a father, in time, had to step down and divide his belongings between his heirs, if he had not died beforehand.⁶⁶

The result was a -forced up- generation-awareness within the *oikos*, with which especially boys were being raised in domestic life, supported by the development the polis as a whole went through on a political level. Although democracy in Athens prescribed equality, supported by the measures taken to enable even the poorest citizen in the most distant *demos* to take part in the political activities in the city, the male population of Athens, during the Peloponnesian war was brought back from 36.000 to nearly 21.000. So even though many of them were involved, the attrition of decision-making citizens was very high. The age differences in the Boulè were remarkable, although the representation of every age-category or even generation during these times of pride, expansion and wars could not have been proportional.

In a society, in which respect for the preceding generations was expected and exacted in many different ways, and where, at the same time, the younger generation was almost obligated to excel their ancestors (or parents) in every way possible, Sophocles developed his strong tragic characters. In his works, or at least in the ones that survived up until now, his personages of different generations can be clearly distinguished from one another. The figures seem to be conscious of generation-differences and the consequences of those differences on their mutual relationships, which in some cases seem to be very obvious and recognisable.

⁶⁴ NEVETT, L.C. *House and society in the Ancient Greek world* Cambridge 1999, 5

⁶⁵ For example: Isaïos 7.30 en Dem. 43.75, 83-84) Cf. STRAUSS [1993] 34 en LACEY, W. *The family in Classical* London 1968, 97 – 99. Cf. for the importance of succession and survival of the *oikos*: SPAHN, P. "*Oikos* und Polis Beobachtungen zum Prozess der Polisbildung bei Hesoid, Solon und Aischylos." In *Historische Zeitschrift* 231 1980, p. 529-564, here concerning the importance of the *oikos* in archaic times, p 539: "Der Verlust des *Oikos* bedeutet in dieser Gesellschaft völliger Deklassierung."

⁶⁶ In Chapter 3 Pattern of expectations I will more elaborately discuss the law of inheritance and the consequences of this law on the relation between a father and his children.

Alongside the naturalness of generation-consciousness a strong connection can be determined between people of different generations, which even tends towards mutual dependency. This intensive, interactive relationship between young and old(er) manifests itself in various ways within the tragic context. Firstly, most probably to be connected to the importance of succession within the *oikos*, parents (ancestors) are spoken of, being praised or even offended. The purpose of these praising words or of the infliction of an insult is that they -mostly- affect the addressee, not the absent parent (ancestor). Secondly, the attitude of personages of different generations towards each other is recognisable, through standardised forms of address, such as “ὦ τέκνον” and “ὦ πατήρ”, which define the differences of generations even more precisely and with a sharper contrast, as do a -possibly deliberately failing- respectful treatment and on the opposite an often arrogant and depriving attitude. Thirdly, in several tragedies a pattern of expectations between younger and older generations is prevalent, through which their relationships are clearly defined and bordered. In the following paragraphs I will evaluate these three indications of generation-differences and generation-consciousness in Sophoclean tragedies, if possible based on the historical context of contemporary society.

3.1. Ancestors: the name, fame and glory of the family

The existence and preservation of the glorification of family is not an unknown phenomenon in Greek literature. In the Homeric epics parents and ancestors are regularly mentioned, worshipped, honoured, exemplified and similar to epitheta, used to characterize the figures and the persons they are speaking to.⁶⁷ The interaction between figures in Sophoclean tragedies shows that a typical glorification did not just serve to typify the figures, but also to clarify their mutual relationships. A negative utterance on a father or calling a father dishonourable was conceived as an insult and consciously used as such.

In *Philoctetes* for instance, the repeated references to the characteristics of different figures, the disposition and fame of parents attract attention. These features are obviously inheritable

⁶⁷ Examples of indirectly glorifying and words serving as a description of parents, grandparents and ancestors, which can be compared to the way this is done in Sophoclean tragedies: Hom. *Il.* III.314; IV.512; V.704; VI.119; VII.13; VIII.333; VIII.377; X.435; X.497; Hom. *Od.* I.399; II.177; III.489; VIII.118,130,132,143,419 (repetition) XI.553; XIV.174; XVI.345. With *Il.* V.800; VI.245 en *Od.* VIII.488; XI.620 the same comparison can be made, note that here the parents are divine.

but have to be preserved by the next generation.⁶⁸ All three of them: Odysseus, Philoctetes and Neoptolemus regularly mention the characteristics of their own father, but also bring up the virtues of the father of the person they are talking to.⁶⁹ Mostly this is done in a positive way, to glorify the other. Philoctetes however, once dares to hatefully doubt Odysseus descent by calling Sisyphus, who would have seduced his mother to commit adultery, his biological father instead of Laertes, of whom Odysseus would only be a bastard-son.⁷⁰

Philoctetes [416-418]

<p>ΦΙ. Οἷμοι τάλαις. Ἄλλ' οὐχ ὁ Τυδέως γόνος, οὐδ' οὐμπολητὸς Σισύφου Λαερτίῳ, οὐ μὴ θάνωσι· τοῦσδε γὰρ μὴ ζῆν ἔδει.</p>	<p>Ph. Alas for me! But the son of Tydeus, and he who was palmed off on Laertius by Sisyphus, they will never die! For they ought not to be alive!</p>
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The importance of the fame of a father and the pressure put on the life of the succeeding son, becomes very clear by this negative reversal of a well-known literary scheme. Apparently one could, at least in this tragedy, not only glorify, honour or be honoured, but also insult and be insulted by something said about the achievements of parents and ancestors or of one's descent.

Another noteworthy passage, in which the lived life of a father is mentioned, can be found in the *Antigone*. In this tragedy the chorus points out to Antigone, that she's undergoing Creon's punishment, as a penalty for her father's deeds.

Antigone [853-856]

<p>ΧΟ. Προβᾶς' ἐπ' ἔσχατον θράσους ὑψηλὸν ἐς Δίκας βάθρον προσέπεσες, ὦ τέκνον, πολὺ <u>πατρῶον δ' ἐκτίνεις τιν' ἄθλον.</u></p>	<p>KO Advancing the extreme of daring, you stumbled against the lofty altar of Justice, my child! <u>And you are paying for some crime of your fathers.</u></p>
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⁶⁸ Cf. *Philoctetes* [88-89]; [96]; compare *Ajax*: in this tragedy the discussion between Menelaus, Achamemnon and Teucer about Ajax at a funeral only really gets started when Agamemnon, in his blind rage unsuitedly points out to Teucer his origins. Teucer offends Agamemnon by openly doubting his noble birth. [1288-1297]

⁶⁹ Compare *Trach.* 513, 566, 644, 825, 956, where Heracles is being referred to as 'son of Zeus'. More majestic or powerful can one's father nor one's origins hardly be..

⁷⁰ On the inferior status of a bastardson compare in *Ajax* Teucer, which will be discussed more elaborately in chapter 4.

Whereas in other passages eulogies or insults contributed to the speaker or the person spoken to are clearly recognisable, these words of the chorus almost seem to be a mere establishment of facts.⁷¹ The chorus obviously tries to show that Creon's punishment is justified, according to her; maybe not regarding Antigone's deed, but at least for the mistakes her father made and the trouble he caused. Creon's emotions of anger and shame towards Oedipus are not literally expressed here, everybody though, the audience as well as the protagonists, suspects that these feelings at least partly the cause of Creon's judgement. In this part, the chorus underlines this suspicion. Antigone confirms this 'background-conversation' to all of those present, with her answer:

Antigone [857-871]

AN. Ἐψαυσας ἀλγει-
νοτάτας ἐμοὶ μερίμνας,
πατὴρ τριπόλιστον οἶκτον,
τοῦ τε πρόπαντος
ἀμετέρου πότμου
κλεινοῖς Λαβδακίδαισιν.

Ἰὼ ματρῶναι λέκτρων ἄ-
ται κοιμήματ' ἅ τ' αὐτογέν-
νητ' ἐμῷ πατρὶ δυσμόρου ματρός,

οἷων ἐγὼ ποθ' ἅ ταλαίφρων ἔφυν
πρὸς οὓς ἀραῖος, ἄγαμος, ἅδ'
ἐγὼ μέτοικος ἔρχομαι.
Ἰὼ δυσπότημων κασί-
γνητε, γάμων κυρήσας,
θανὼν ἔτ' οὔσαν κατήναρές με.

AN. You have touched on
a thought most painful for me,
the fate of my father,
thrice renewed,
and the whole of our destiny,
that of the famous Labdacids.
Ah, the disaster of marriage with his mother, and
my father's incestuous couplings with his ill-fated
mother!

From what parents was I born,
miserable one! To them
I go, to live with them, accursed, unmarried!
Ah, brother who made
a disastrous marriage,
in your death you have destroyed my life!

⁷¹ Compare Elektra [502 -515] Cf. FINGLASS, P.J., "Is there a polis in Sophocles' Elektra?" in *Phoenix* vol. 59, 2005, 199-209, here: 207-208. "The care with which these references to the *genos* are handled is evident in account of Myrtilus at 502-515. Sophocles does not mention the curse uttered by Myrtilus as he perished (...) since he might place to great notion of hereditary evil in the *genos* (...) and thus mitigate the crime of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus. Rather: "...emphasis lies not on the idea of crime and punishment but simply on the continuity of trouble since that time." PARKER, R.C.T., "Through a glass darkly: Sophocles and the divine." In *Sophocles revisited: Essays presented to Sir Hugh Lloyd Jones*, Oxford 1999, (11-30) ed. GRIFFIN J.

She accuses her brother Polyneices of causing her miserable existence and her upcoming death: Adrastus' support to the attack on Eteocles was, according to the tradition, a result of Polyneices' marriage to Adrastus' daughter Argeia. However, the slips made by her father and brothers will not only haunt her, but the whole following family of Labdacids. Although in several tragedies a similar -psychological- heritage is displayed, nowhere else there has been, on forehand, put so much pressure on the consequences of the actions of one man on the entire lineage succeeding him. From the passage above we can conclude the importance of lineage; however in Ajax the titlehero concretizes the importance of the fame, honour and glory through self-reflection.

Ajax plays a double-role as a son and a father, through which he, from both points of view, sheds a light on the same issues. Not only respect, but also fanaticism and even the fear of a son for his father and his fame are to be deduced from this tragedy. In particular this perfect double-role, in the frame of this research, stresses Ajax' perseverance and clarity of mind, when he utters his emotions and his final decision to commit suicide. He acts in good conscience and, in the same state of mind, shares his reasons with his son.

In despair after the slaughter, almost the first thing Ajax thinks about is his father. Thoughts he later holds accountable for the suicide. He repeats three times, that the loss of face and the disgrace he would impose on his old, famous father by coming home without the spoils of war would be insurmountable.⁷²

Ajax [462-480]

Καὶ ποῖον ὄμμα πατρὶ δηλώσω φανείς
Τελαμῶνι; πῶς με τλήσεται ποτ' εἰσιδεῖν
γυμνὸν φανέντα τῶν ἀριστείων ἄτερ,
ὦν αὐτὸς ἔσχε στέφανον εὐκλείας μέγαν;

And what kind of face shall I show to my father
Telamon when I appear empty-handed, without
the prize of victory, when he himself won a great
crown of fame?

⁷² SRAUSS, [1993] 80-81, STRAUSS's interpretation of this matter is, in my opinion, somewhat weak: coming home emptyhanded to father Telemon is not "one of the reasons Ajax gives for deciding on suicide..." STRAUSS however did correctly notice, that Teucer fears his father too in this tragic context. Nevertheless his fear is based on very different reasons, which will be discussed in chapter 4.1.3 of this thesis. The fact that Telemon himself may have had completely different ideas and expectations, will be discussed in chapter 3.3. Similar scenes in other Sophoclean tragedies (especially *Ajax* 462-465), where such a sense of shame can be clearly determined: *Phil.* 110, 929, 1354; *OT* 1371. Cf. KAMERBEEK [1970] *Ajax* ad loc. en JEBB, R.C. *Sophocles: The plays and fragments, with critical notes, commentary, and translation in English prose*. Cambridge 1907-1932. 7dl. ad loc. Archaic heroism however, as f.i. MEIER [1993] especially 184-187 (as in Achaic as opposed to Classical) interprets the choices of Ajax seems to be, regarding these passages improbable: In *Ilias* (24.485 – 516) Achilles is after all rather emotional (pity and *aidos*) thinking of his old father.

Οὐκ ἔστι τοῦργον τλητόν. Ἄλλα δῆτ' ἰὼν
πρὸς ἔρυμα Τρώων, ξυμπεσὼν μόνος μόνοις
καὶ δρῶν τι χρηστόν, εἴτα λοίσθιον θάνω;

Ἄλλ' ὧδέ γ' Ἀτρείδας ἄν εὐφράναιμί που.

Οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτα· πεῖρά τις ζητητέα
τοιάδ' ἀφ' ἧς γέροντι δηλώσω πατρὶ
μή τοι φύσιν γ' ἄσπλαγχνος ἐκ κείνου γεγώς.
Αἰσχροὺν γὰρ ἄνδρα τοῦ μακροῦ χρήζειν βίου,
κακοῖσιν ὅστις μηδὲν ἐξאלλάσσεται.
Τί γὰρ παρ' ἡμᾶρ ἡμέρα τέρπειν ἔχει
προσθεῖσα κἀναθεῖσα τοῦ γε κατθανεῖν;
Οὐκ ἂν πριαίμην οὐδενὸς λόγου βροτὸν
ὅστις κεναῖσιν ἐλπίσιν θερμαίνεται·
ἀλλ' ἢ καλῶς ζῆν ἢ καλῶς τεθνηκέναι
τὸν εὐγενῆ χρή. Πάντ' ἀκῆκοας λόγον.

The thing is not to be endured! But I am to go to
the Trojan wall, challenge them all single-
handed, achieve some feat, and at last perish?

No, in that way I would give pleasure, I think, to
the sons of Atreus.

That cannot be! I must think of some action that
will prove to my aged father that I his son was
born no coward.

When a man has no relief from troubles, it is
shameful for him to desire long life.

What pleasure comes from day following day,
bringing us near to and taking us back from
death? I would not set any value upon a man who
is warmed by false hopes.

The noble man must live with honour or be
honourably dead: you have heard all I have to
say.

In the monologue he then utters with his young son on his lap, he emphasizes the expectations he has from his own son, which stresses his own convincement; however, regarding Telemons actual expectations of Ajax, we are left in the dark. [545-582]⁷³

In this tragedy aspects of a father-son relationship are not only viewed from Ajax' point of view; Tecmessa and Teucer, Ajax' half-brother, are contributing from their perspectives on the importance of a parent-child relationship as well.

Tecmessa's plea for pity on behalf of his parents, who would only want to see him back alive do not cause Ajax to change his mind at all. Ajax is so convinced of his decision that he does not take notice of her words. Even when the chorus emphasizes this plea again, he sends her away without the slightest answer.

Ajax [506-513]

TEK Ἄλλ' αἶδεσαι μὲν πατέρα τὸν σὸν ἐν Come, show regard to your father, whom you

⁷³ The pattern of expectations of a father towards his son is more elaborately discussed in the next paragraph.

λυγρῷ
γῆρα προλείπων, αἶδεσαι δὲ μητέρα
πολλῶν ἐτῶν κληροῦχον, ἥ σε πολλάκις
θεοῖς ἄρᾱται ζῶντα πρὸς δόμους μολεῖν·
οἴκτιρε δ', ὦναξ, παῖδα τὸν σόν, εἰ νέας
τροφῆς στερηθεὶς σοῦ διοίσεται μόνος
ὑπ' ὀρφανιστῶν μὴ φίλων, ὅσον κακὸν
κείνω τε κάμοι τοῦθ', ὅταν θάνῃς, νεμεῖς.

are deserting in bitter old age, and for your
mother, heiress of many years, who often prays
to the gods that you may return home alive.

And pity your son, my lord, thinking how
much harm you will cause to him and to me by
your death, if he is robbed of his early
sustenance and must live bereft of you, placed
under unfriendly guardians.

Tecmessa's plea, however, does not become less important within the tragic context, by Ajax' disdainful reaction; more so it could even be accentuated by it.⁷⁴ Tecmessa starts off by lamenting her own fate following his death and then she pities that of his parents and son. Her point of view is even for us, as modern readers, with a completely different worldview, understandable. Tecmessa is a concubine, part of the spoils of war and will, after Ajax' death, she will be passed on to one of the other officers.⁷⁵ She, however, reasons as a mother and a daughter as well: in this way she is obviously able to empathise with Ajax' mother and is very concerned about her own son's future and also starts her plea by naming her own father, as a rich and free man.⁷⁶

The respect Ajax shows for his father, could very well be supported by Tecmessa's plea, as she sheds light on the matter from another point of view: Tecmessa uses her descent and the fact that she is now his slave to convince Ajax of the necessity of him being alive. The fame and honour of his father and himself, which Ajax thinks to protect through suicide, will only come at the expense of another form of honour: "To Ajax it is disgraceful to stay alive [473]. But the glory or shame of the individual reflects on the family, as Ajax himself

⁷⁴ KIRKWOOD, G.M., *A study of Sophoclean Drama*, Ithaca/New York 1958, 103-107. The present scene is no more a rejection of a woman's plea for pity, and if we are willing to take it as such we will see less than what Sophocles intends us to see. It is an outlining of two different ways of thought. Tecmessa's way is unheroic, impossible for a warrior to accept; but we have no right therefore to close our eyes to its logic and its moral force." BLUNDELL, M.W., *Helping friends and harming enemies* Cambridge 1989 "Given Ajax's anxiety for paternal approval, Tecmessa should be on strong ground when she reminds him of his parents. She suggests that he should feel shame (aidos) at leaving him to a miserable old age (506-509), thus violating the bond of filial pity." (...) Tecmessa dwells on Ajax's mother and the 'feminine' emotion of pity, but he himself is anxious not to betray his father's masculine honour." In chapter 3.1.3. I will discuss her function within the play as a concubine

⁷⁵ Tecmessa is not Ajax's legal wife, as STANFORD, W.B. [1963] 211-212 refers to her. For a more accurate judgement on her status: EASTERLING, P. E., [1984] (BICS 31) 'Homer' 3.

⁷⁶ STANFORD, W.B., *Sophocles, Ajax*, London 1963: „Tecmessa combines this appeal to heroic standards of conduct with many personal touches intended to evoke his pity: here she refers to the proverbial misery of old age and adds a glimpse of a mother's prayers."

implies by the reaction he expects from Telamon. If Tecmessa and Eurysaces suffer ignominy, his honour will be clouded. More significant, however, is the suggestion that by abandoning them to enemies [495], Ajax has failed in his duties as a *philos*, and that *this* is a cause of disgrace. Note that they are in the first instance his enemies: any hostility Tecmessa and her son suffer will be by association with him. He is therefore doubly responsible for their fate. Despite his isolated stance, his personal honour remains bound up with his treatment of *philoï*.⁷⁷ Tecmessa's statements on all generations of his and her family, her plea on behalf of her son, his father, mentioning her own father's wealth: although Heracles does not react on it, she obviously thinks she has a chance to change his mind. Tecmessa's words strongly modify his convictions and make us realise his ideas are -in Classical Athens- not sanctifying.

Teucer, Ajax' half-brother, is the third figure to mention his father. Teucer speaks honourably about Telemon, however, his image if his father seems embittered and terrified. Although his fear seems to be partly similar to Ajax' fear of disgracing his father's honour, Teucer can also relate to Tecmessa's plea, even though he wasn't present when she expressed it. His function within the play is, in my opinion, largely connected to the fact that he is supposed to be 'just' the bastardson. In chapter 3.1.1 I will therefore examine his role and that of Tecmessa as a concubine more elaborately.

Within the tragic context a known -mostly mythological - figure could be brought on stage and would be easily recognisable to the audience, similar to epitheta in Homeric epics. As shown above this is, however, not the sole or even main effect of the different ways in which to parents and ancestors are referred to. The obvious importance of consistency of the *genos*, also mentioned by other sources, clearly caused the desire for approval and even the fear of discrediting a father, as shown in the passages of *Ajax*. Telemon was mentioned by three different figures in this tragedy, although he was never brought on stage himself.⁷⁸ The image created of him remains very controversial and is largely dependant on the expressions of the figure concerned. From this tragedy it can be shown that safeguarding the fame and honour of the family was of great importance. Concomitantly it illustrates that honouring -or even fearing- a father could cause a father to become a legend himself. This honouring was always

⁷⁷ Compare *O.C.* 1530, when Oedipous asks Theseus to take care of his unmarried daughters, for whom Theseus would then be responsible until the day of their wedding.

⁷⁸ Cf chapter 2.2.2, where I will discuss the passage of Teucer, fearing his old father again, regarding the image created here of this old man and, as often assumed, 'Old Men' in general.

done in favour of the speaker or the person spoken to, not to be sincere -for a distance- to the father himself.

Apart from the fact that the judgement on a father largely depended on the speaker, it becomes clear in *Philoctetes* that the mentioning of a father or an ancestor could, if required, also be used as an insult. In *Antigone* even a child is able to indirectly receive punishment for the unconscious mistakes her father made. The punishment itself may be less noteworthy than the fact that Creon's reasons were presented as a socially accepted phenomenon. Even when in the discussion between father and son, Haemon points out the unbalanced 'weight' of the punishment in comparison to Antigone's actions, thereby stressing the fact that he is supported by the people of Athens, Creon is not reasonable.⁷⁹ Not only heroism but also tarnishing of the *genos* would leave its mark and could therefore cause irreparable damage.

We may conclude that all of this could not have been brought onto the stage so naturally intriguing, in so many different ways, by several figures all with their own purposes, if an Athenian audience would not have been able to identify itself with these matters. Within the tragic context the importance of succession and preservation of the *genos*, its fame and honour was not only presented as part of an unwritten law of inter-human relationships: through the utmost conscious self-reflection of Ajax this even becomes a vital part of the borders between life and death. The *genos* 'lived' in people's minds and in their daily actions towards the end of the 5th century B.C. and must therefore be considered separately from a mythological past, an Archaic ideology or even from references made to other citystates in the tragedies which were also extensively explored by modern science.

3.2. The relation between young and old

A week after the birth of the child the *amphidromia* was celebrated in the Athenian *oikos*, organised by the father of the child.⁸⁰ He carried the child around the fireplace which formed the centre of the house. This initiation ritual was probably followed by sacrifices and festivities and meant the acceptance of the child by the father as his. During the *dekate*, celebrated at the tenth day after birth, the child became legitimate and received a name. The alternative was brutal but real: before these feasts took place the father was allowed by law

⁷⁹ Compare Elektra in the last chapter of this thesis.

⁸⁰ Cf. BRUIT ZAIDMAN, L. "Die Töchter der Pandora." In *Geschichte der Frauen. I Antike*. (ed. SCHMITT PANTEL, P.) Frankfurt a.M. 1993.

not to accept a child and abandon it to die or sell it into slavery.⁸¹ Although the relation between a father and a child was therefore based on inequality from the beginning on, , mutual responsibility and even dependence developed after the acceptance.⁸² At the age of sixty the roles were reversed: a father was supposed to turn over the government of his *oikos* to his heir and had to accept the heir's superiority within the *oikos*, although he would regularly have kept on living in the house until his death.⁸³

In the young, dazzling war-state Athens, there seemed to be little room for 'old, conventional advises'. However, several historical sources mention how society more than once fell back on the wisdom of the old wise men. According to Aristotle the authority of the Areopagus, only existing of former *archonts*, who had achieved a respectable age, was largely restored after the Persian wars.⁸⁴ Thucydides wrote about the support on which Alcibiades relied for his plea in favour of the expedition to Sicily in 415 B.C.⁸⁵ This backup, according to Thucydides, mainly came from the younger generation of Athenian men, who were also held responsible for the catastrophical result. As the following military-political decisions had to be made the elderly were therefore carefully consulted and taken seriously again.⁸⁶ As far as we know, there has never been an official Counsel of Elderly or *Gerousia* in Athens. The relations between 'old' and 'young' in Athens in the 5th century B.C. were tense. The preceding history of the polis, the wars, the triumphs and defeats, the political changes and discrepancies, and the dependence between *oikos* and polis contributed to this tense atmosphere between people of different generations.

3.2.1 Youth

In Sophoclean tragedies the interaction and very often also the tension between young and old can, amongst other things, be extracted from forms of address and attitude of young towards old and vice versa. In Ancient Greek the words “ὦ τέκνον” and “ὦ πατήρ” both seemed to be

⁸¹ Cf. PATTERSON, C., “‘Not worth the Rearing’: The cause of infant exposure in Ancient Greece.” *TAPA* 115, 1985, 103-213. And REEDER, E.D., “Behälter und Textilien als Metaphern für Frauen” in *Pandora Frauen im Klassischen Griechenland, Ausstellungskatalog Antikensammlung Basel und Sammlung Ludwig*, Basel 1996, (ed. REEDER, E.D.) P. 195-198; GOLDEN, M., *Children and Childhood in Athens*, Baltimore 1990, p. 23.

⁸² In chapter 3.3 I also discussed the legal basis of the parent-child-relationship and the variations on this relationship.

⁸³ Cf. chapter 3.3, here I will also go in to the process against Sophocles himself.

⁸⁴ Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 23.1; 25.1. The comparison between Alcibiades and Philoctetes in *Philoctetes* by Sophocles which I will discuss in chapter 4.3

⁸⁵ Thuc., 6.12.2-6.13.1; 6.18.6, cf. LEPPIN, H., *Thucydides und die Verfassung der Polis: ein Betrag zur politischen Ideengeschichte des 5. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 1999.

⁸⁶ Cf. Plut. *Alc.* 22.4, 19.1-3; STRAUSS [1993] 148 -153. ; ELLIS, W.M., *Alcibiades*, New York 1989.

used for the same purpose: addressing speech at a younger person. Although in modern science opinions are still very diverse and divided, DICKEY states that, regarding the tragic genre we are not able to determine with certainty to what extent different words and groups of words are bound to certain situations or to the relationship between two persons speaking to each other.⁸⁷ Nonetheless in her research on many texts, excluding the tragic genre, DICKEY concludes this possible hypothesis: “All of these differences in usage can be explained by the hypothesis that the vocative τέκνον is purely and emphatically a kinship-term, while παῖ can indicate both youth and kinship. Thus speakers other than the addressee’s parents use τέκνον only when they want to indicate a special bond with the addressee, and parents prefer τέκνον in emotional scenes where their relationship with their children is particularly emphasised. The age-term implications of παῖ prevent its use to full adults (except by parents), but there are no such restrictions on the use of τέκνον.”

DICKEY also stated that, in Sophoclean tragedies, the word παῖ is more common than τέκνον. If we apply her hypothesis on these tragedies, two tragedies instantly attract attention because of the frequency of the usage of τέκνον. In *Oedipous Colonos* τέκνον is used fifteen times by Oedipous to address both of his daughters and once by Ismene to address Antigone. Given that most of the interaction between father and daughters, thus blood-related, forms the largest part of the play’s contents this conclusion is not so unexpected. Yet, the second tragedy in which τέκνον and παῖ are used so frequently is *Philoctetes*. In this tragedy not one real kinship blood-relationship is shown between the protagonists, who address each other frequently with τέκνον and παῖ.

Both words τέκνον and παῖ are almost equally frequently used as forms of address. Surprisingly, Philoctetes addresses Neoptolemus more often with τέκνον than with παῖ, and παῖ is used more often as a description in the sense of ‘son of ...’⁸⁸ Odysseus addresses Neoptolemos only twice with τέκνον, despite his constant fatherly treatment, through which we might have expected this form of addressee more often. It may be considered remarkable that these two ‘fatherly utterances’ occur at the end of the discussion between Odysseus and

⁸⁷ DICKEY, E., *Greek forms of address: from Herodotus to Lucian*, Oxford 1996 Hier vooral p. 65-72. DICKEY does not specifically conduct research on the forms of address in the tragic genre, nor does she explicitly exclude them from her conclusions either. For more detailed and genre-pecific research on forms of address I can only refer to the treatise of WENDEL, T., *Die Gesprächsanrede im Griechischen Epos und Drama der Blütezeit*, Tübingen 1929.

⁸⁸ With this indication, I mean the reference to fathers and ancestors directly in a form of address. This has been discussed in the previous paragraph.

Neoptolemus on the way the bow was to be gained. Odysseus did use τέκνον when referring to Neoptolemus' father Achilles. As shown in the previous chapter this is usually positively phrased and expressed as a sign of respect towards the person talked to. However, in *Philoctetes*, Odysseus pays Achilles the emphasized respect at very specific moments in the dialogue; he does not only want to convince Neoptolemus, of his own inheritable capacities by glorifying his father's, but thereby also seems to put psychological pressure on the boy not to disgrace Achilles' honour and to do as he has been told.

The first time Odysseus mentions Achilles he does so very elaborately at the beginning of the tragedy. The audience must be clearly reminded of Neoptolemus' descent and therefore the inheritable obligation to preserve the family honour.

Philoctetes [1-4]

ΟΔ Ἀκτὴ μὲν ἦδε τῆς περιρρύτου χθονὸς
Λήμνου, βροτοῖς ἄστιπτος οὐδ' οἰκουμένη,
ἔνθ' ὧ κρατίστου πατρὸς Ἑλλήνων τραφεῖς
Ἀχιλλέως παῖ Νεοπτόλεμε, (...)

OD This is the shore of the seagirt land of Lemnos, untrodden by mortals, not inhabited. Here it was, you who were reared as the son of the noblest father among Greeks, son of Achilles, Neoptolemos

This abundant introduction of Neoptolemus enables him to achieve the same effect with the audience by just mentioning the name and fame of Achilles in the following scenes / fragments. For instance:

Philoctetes [50-53]

ΟΔ Ἀχιλλέως παῖ, δεῖ σ' ἐφ' οἷς ἐλήλυθας
γενναῖον εἶναι, μὴ μόνον τῷ σώματι,
ἀλλ' ἢν τι καινὸν ὦν πρὶν οὐκ ἀκήκοας
κλύης, ὑπουργεῖν, ὥς ὑπέρτης πάρει.

OD Son of Achilles, the mission you have come on demands that show your nobility; not only with your body, but if you are told something new, such as you have not heard earlier, you must give your help, since you are here to help me.

In this fragment Odysseus mentions his marvellous descent, the name -and therewith again the fame- of the father, regarding Neoptolemus in one sentence. This immediately causes a

forceful undertone, moreover because this tone is continued in his reproachful order following.⁸⁹

It is noteworthy that later on [57] the exact same usage of words is proposed by Odysseus to deceive Philoctetes: Neoptolemus has to introduce himself as ‘son of Achilleus’ in order to gain confidence, the same way it puts pressure on the boy in the verses before: the name of his father alone speaks volumes.

The context of and intention behind a form of address like ‘my child’ will nowadays be, in practically all cases, be teaching or even pedantic, comforting or supportive: the child is cared for with the words. This can also be said about similar words in the Sophoclean tragedies. Often words as “ὦ τέκνον” and “ὦ παῖ” occur as a form of address and as the distinction between generations, within the tragic context, by the figures themselves. When a father turns to his son immediately, as Ajax does with his son to explain to the boy his decisions and obviously to convince himself as well, these kind of words are spoken. In *Antigone* Creon clearly addresses Haemon with ‘son’. Much more striking however are those passages, in which there is no parent-child relationship present, and in which the expected pedantic supportive goals are absent.

The motives behind the different forms of address towards Neoptolemus and the attitude underlying them makes *Philoctetes* especially interesting for this research, again mostly because there is no kinship-relation at all. Odysseus makes it very clear from the beginning of the tragedy why Neoptolemos has to obey him: he is not only his superior, but mostly he is older and therefore wiser in his opinion, which he points out several times in a slightly belittling or even arrogant manner.⁹⁰

In one passage this generation-difference is intriguingly tapered. Odysseus argues why Philoctetes’ bow should be confiscated by deceiving him, by comparing Neoptolemus to himself as he once was as ‘young’, ‘inexperienced’ and ‘naive’.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Cf. For instance [96] where Odysseus uses Achilleus’ nobility as a form of address towards Neoptolemos as well.

⁹⁰ This difference of age and generation is mostly important for the research on a possible conflict of generations, because the difference of generation should underlie this conflict. The definition and preconditions of a conflict of generations will be more elaborately discussed in chapter 4 of this thesis. Odysseus’ arrogance is even more striking, considering the fact that his plan, of which he wanted to convince Neoptolemos, did not succeed in the end and even almost cost the whole expedition to fail.

⁹¹ [96-99] Philoctetes addresses Neoptolemos in the same way, which points out the age-difference between the two men, but also puts pressure on the agreement between Philoctetes and Odysseus. I will come back to this agreement later on in this chapter, referring to the article of Zimmermann [1998].

Philoctetes [79-85]

ΟΔ. Ἐξοῖδα καὶ φύσει σε μὴ πεφυκότα
τοιαῦτα φωνεῖν μηδὲ τεχνᾶσθαι κακά·
ἀλλ' ἡδὺ γάρ τοι κτῆμα τῆς νίκης λαβεῖν,
τόλμα· δίκαιοι δ' αὖθις ἐκφανούμεθα·
νῦν δ' εἰς ἀναιδὲς ἡμέρας μέρος βραχὺ
δός μοι σεαυτὸν, κᾶτα τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον
κέκλησο πάντων εὐσεβέστατος βροτῶν.

ΝΕ. Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖς ἂν τῶν λόγων ἀλγῶ κλύων,
Λαερτίου παῖ, τούσδε καὶ πράσσειν στυγῶ·
ἔφυν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἐκ τέχνης πράσσειν κακῆς,
οὔτ' αὐτὸς οὔθ', ὥς φασιν, οὐκφύσας ἐμέ.
Ἄλλ' εἴμ' ἔτοιμος πρὸς βίαν τὸν ἄνδρ' ἄγειν
καὶ μὴ δόλοισιν· οὐ γὰρ ἐξ ἐνὸς ποδὸς
ἡμᾶς τοσούσδε πρὸς βίαν χειρώσεται.
Πεμφθεῖς γε μέντοι σοὶ ξυνεργάτης ὀκνῶ
προδότης καλεῖσθαι· βούλομαι δ', ἄναξ, καλῶς
δρῶν ἐξαμαρτεῖν μάλλον ἢ νικᾶν κακῶς.

ΟΔ. Ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς παῖ, καὐτὸς ὢν νέος ποτὲ
γλῶσσαν μὲν ἄργον, χεῖρα δ' εἶχον ἐργάτιν·
νῦν δ' εἰς ἔλεγχον ἐξιὼν ὁρῶ βροτοῖς
τὴν γλῶσσαν, οὐχὶ τᾶργα, πάνθ' ἡγομένην.

Od. I know that by nature you are not the sort of man to speak such words or to plot to harm others. But –it is pleasure to acquire a possession by a victory- bring yourself to do it, and in due course we will show ourselves again being righteous.⁹² Now, give yourself to me for a few hours of shamelessness, and later for the rest of the time be called the most dutiful of mortals.

NE. Son of Laertius, things which it distresses me to hear spoken of are things which I hate to do! It is my nature to do nothing by treacherous plotting; that is my nature, and it was also my father's nature. But I am ready to take the man by force and not by cunning; with only one foot he will not get the better of us who are so many. I was sent to help you, but I am unwilling to be called a traitor; I had rather come to grief, my lord, while acting honestly than triumph by treachery.

Od. Son of a noble father, I as well, when I was young, had an inactive tongue, and an active hand. But now, as I will prove this⁹³, I see, that it is the tongue, not the actions, ruling everything for mortals.

The most striking part of this scene, in my opinion, is the way Odysseus tries to win over Neoptolemus' trust. It makes him come across as a father-figure: almost sincere and sympathetic. This is not the only occurrence in Sophoclean tragedies of such a fatherly tone, although Odysseus is not even a relative of Neoptolemus. However the fact that Odysseus' tone is merely to convince Neoptolemus of his own plan, is a new phenomenon: in similar

⁹² Translation is deviated from Loeb Classical Library, which says: "we shall be shown to have been righteous."

⁹³ Translation is deviated from Loeb Classical Library, which says: "when I come to put it to the proof."

scenes in other tragedies, this fatherly -or even motherly- tone was on behalf of the figure spoken to.⁹⁴

An important detail of this particular scene is the fact that Neoptolemus is not short of good advice of the wise elderly. He knows the moral standards of the Greeks: he is therefore very willing to courageously fight a fair fight and confiscate the bow of Philoctetes in this way, a deceit however, he considers immoral. Odysseus' counsel is forced upon him and, although later on Odysseus' deceit turns out not to have been in accordance with the wishes of the gods, and his plans would therefore have failed anyway.⁹⁵ As well Odysseus' choice of words, as Neoptolemus' reaction shows, that with his pedantic treatment Odysseus is only acting out of self-interest, to achieve his own goals: confiscating Philoctetes' bow to enable the Greeks to triumph in Troy. Educating Neoptolemus, the alleged life-lesson of an older, wiser man does not serve the created pupil any other goal than to be convinced against his will. Odysseus does not intend, in any way, to help or support the younger, more inexperienced Neoptolemus deliberately.⁹⁶

The reason why Odysseus treats Neoptolemus this confidently can now be determined from the answers of Neoptolemus. His arguments namely, are not only valid to Odysseus; they were also expected and anticipated on by the latter. Before Neoptolemus even gets the opportunity to react Odysseus feels compelled to try to convince him in a trustworthy manner, because he needs him. He cannot afford to put Neoptolemus' back up: another approach than winning him over, could become fatal.

Less explicit and plausible than in *Philoctetes*, is the substituting mother-role, the chorus in *Elektra* plays. The women address Elektra and her sister with τέκνον. This form of address only occurs four times in this tragedy, of which it is used by chorus three times. Especially at the beginning of the tragedy, where Elektra's lamenting forms the central part of the tragic action, the function of the chorus in this role is remarkably explicit. On the one hand it acts like

⁹⁴ Neither regarding Odysseus as a person: Compare *Ajax*: good-natured Odysseus: cf. KAMERBEEK *Philoctetes* p. 20-21; nor a motherly or father treatment in general serving an egoistic goal. Remarkably this -provided image of- Odysseus in *Philoctetes* is not comparable with Odysseus in the Homeric epics or even in other tragedies of Sophocles at all. Compare Odysseus in *Ajax*. Cf KAMERBEEK, *Philoctetes* ad loc.

⁹⁵ In chapter 3 of this thesis I will more elaborately discuss Neoptolemos' function within the play, which in my opinion is marginal, but according to ZIMMERMANN (1998) can be compared to a Sophists-pupil. The fact that the way Odysseus wanted to grasp the bow of Philoctetes was not in accordance with the will of the gods, will also be discussed in the abovementioned chapter, referring to a treatise of VISSER (1998).

⁹⁶ On the conflict of generations itself and what, in my opinion, Sophocles tried to achieve by using the relation between people of different generations so extensively.

an all-knowing audience, yet on the other hand it acts like a comforting mother, expressing this literally.

Elektra [233-235]

ΧΟ. Ἄλλ' οὖν εὐνοίᾳ γ' αὐδῶ,
μάτηρ ὥσεί τις πιστά,
μὴ τίκτειν σ' ἅταν ἄταις.

KO Well, I speak as a well-wisher, like a mother
in whom you can have trust, telling you not to
create misery by means of misery !

Concomitantly the women reprimand Elektra in this role constantly.⁹⁷

Elektra [153 – 163]

ΧΟ. Οὗτοι σοὶ μούνα, τέκνον,
ἄχος ἐφάνη βροτῶν,
πρὸς ὃ τι σὺ τῶν ἔνδον εἶ περισσά,
οἷς ὁμόθεν εἶ καὶ γονᾶ ξύναιμος,
οἷα Χρυσόθεμις ζῶει καὶ Ἰφιάνασσα,
κρυπτᾷ τ' ἀχέων ἐν ἡβᾷ
ὄλβιος, ὃν ἅ κλεινὰ
γὰ ποτε Μυκηναίων
δέξεται εὐπατρίδαν, Διὸς εὖφρονι
λήματι μολόντα τάνδε γὰρ Ὀρέσταν.

KO Not to you alone among mortals, my child,
has sorrow been made manifest, a sorrow that
you suffer beyond others in the house with whom
you share your lineage and your blood, such as
Chrysothemis and Iphianassa –and Orestes, he
who is happy in his youth concealed from painful
things, he whom the famous land of the
Mycenaeans shall receive, glorious in his
ancestry, when he comes to this land, brought by
kindly aid of Zeus.

Elektra finally takes their criticism seriously, although she did not even seem to take notice of their words before: Αἰσχύνομαι μέν, ὦ γυναῖκες, εἰ δοκῶ πολλοῖσι θρήνοις δυσφορεῖν ὑμῖν ἄγαν· Only now she seems to realise that her complaint is not changing and that she irritates not only the chorus but maybe even the audience.⁹⁸

Elektra [254-255]

ΗΛ. Αἰσχύνομαι μέν, ὦ γυναῖκες, εἰ δοκῶ
πολλοῖσι θρήνοις δυσφορεῖν ὑμῖν ἄγαν·

El. I am ashamed, women, if you think I grieve
too much with my numerous laments:

⁹⁷ Cf. 137-139; 213-220; 233-235 BURTON, *The chorus in Sophoclean tragedies*, Oxford 1980. In chapter 4.2 I will discuss the function of this mother-role of the chorus within a generation-conflict between Elektra and her mother Clythaimnestra.

⁹⁸ BURTON, (1980), here p186-187.

3.2.2 In Old Age

The form of addressee γέρον for an older man would have been very polite in the Homeric epics. In Sophoclean tragedies however it hardly occurs. From the context we can determine that the chorus in several tragedies exists of older women or old wise men. However they are mostly addressed as ‘women’ or ‘men’. In the “Tragödie des Alters schlechthin”, *Oedipous Colonos*, the form of address γέρον still occurs frequently. However, used as an insult by Creon, as well as in a different context by the respectful chorus, the word has lost its politeness.⁹⁹

Sophocles was sued by his son at the age of ninety for mental incapability and a state of diminished responsibility ‘γραφή παρανοίας’, so he had to turn over his *oikos* to his son. Sophocles, in defence, was said to have cited the *Oedipous Colonos*, at which point the case was dismissed. The status of the elderly in Athens is very hard to determine: on the one hand there was an enormous amount of respect and they were consulted on military and political matters, on the other hand Athens was a young war-society in which they did not seem to fit. The frequency with which ‘γραφή παρανοίας’ was invoked, shows that this discrepancy of social status on an individual level caused severe indifferences: “Die Häufigkeit der Entmündigungsversuche erklärt sich daraus, dass es zwar üblich war, den Jüngeren vorzeitig den Besitz zu überschreiben, dies aber keineswegs eine gesetzliche Vorschrift war.”¹⁰⁰

In Sophoclean tragedies the image of the elderly is not unequivocal in a similar way. In *Oedipous Colonos* melancholy, regret, shortcomings and the longing for the approaching end are represented as Old-Age itself within the protagonist and in contrast to the younger generation, they cause the dramatic, pitiful effect of the tragedy. Not only does this tragedy inform us about the hoarse reality of growing old, it possibly also shows us the importance of the relationship with ones children in this last phase of life. Sophocles let Oedipous, who was guided by his daughter until the end, as well as Antigone and Ismene make utterances on the expectation-pattern and the relation between a father and his children. Striking, is the generalisation with which the figures speak about these matters and which emphasizes the utterance.

Besides these explicit remarks, the course of action and the premises provide a lot of information about the relations between people of different generations within this tragedy.

⁹⁹ Cf. DICKEY (1996) 82 -84.

¹⁰⁰ BALTRUSCH, E., „An den Rand gedrängt. Altersbilder im Klassischen Athen“ in *Am Schlimmen Rand des Lebens? Altersbilder in der Antike*. (Ed. SCHMITZ, W., GUTSCHFELD, A.) Köln 2003, 57-86. hier 77. On the story of the charge against Sophocles: Apuleius, *Apologia* 37, 1-3

From the outset and maybe even before, Oedipous clearly leans completely on his daughter, as he is not even able to do otherwise (laatste zinsdeel lijkt dubbelop). Although this dependency is at first based upon Oedipous' blindness, this handicap is no longer broached as a subject after the outset of the play. The dependency and the anticipation on this dependency does not seem very abnormal to either of them, Oedipous however points out the injustice of the matter in several ways.¹⁰¹ Antigone and Ismene always describe the care for their father as their indiscussable duty.

Generation-consciousness is explicitly expressed elsewhere in *Oedipous Colonus*; in a discussion two men, apparently more or less from the same generation, use their progressing age and according attitude and behaviour as an argument in their dispute. Creon accuses Oedipous not to have become wiser with years, but to have become a disgrace to his high age.¹⁰² Old age and the expected decline of a clear sense of mind –as used against by his own son- are displayed by Sophocles: the scepticism with which he let Creon express himself, indicates the ambiguousness of getting older in the Athenian society in the 5th century B.C.

Oedipous Colonus [804-808]

KP. ὦ δύσμορ', οὐδὲ τῷ χρόνῳ φύσας φανῆ
φρένας ποτ', ἀλλὰ λῦμα τῷ γήρᾳ τρέφει;

OI. Γλώσση σὺ δεινός· ἄνδρα δ' οὐδέν' οἶδ' ἐγὼ
δίκαιον ὅστις ἐξ ἄπαντος εὖ λέγει.

KR. Unhappy man, shall you never be seen to
have acquired sense with years, but does your
old age sustain you as a blight?

You are clever with your tongue; but I know no
righteous man who speaks well in every cause.

Astonishingly, in [930-931] Theseus utters the same accusation in other words and Oedipous proudly defends himself mentioning his 'grey hair', in reaction to Creon's threats [958-959]. The inner battle between glory and defeat, wisdom and senility, strong or weak, stubborn or perseverant seems to be fought either with or between people of the same generation to dramatically make the *termini contradictio* of old age publicly. Old age and the clichés bound to it, from discomforts to life-wisdom, serve as the main guideline of the plot and the course of action. Fate, choices made and the will of the gods come, at the end of this tragedy, at the end of a life, to the conclusion of approaching death. Remarkably in this phase of life the tragedy is about, not the inevitable fate, nor are the unrelenting gods put up for discussion, but

¹⁰¹ This will be discussed more elaborately in the next paragraph of this chapter: *The pattern of expectations*.

¹⁰² String here is KAMERBEEK's remark on τῷ γήρᾳ which could indicate a generalisation of Old Age and does not refer to Oedipous' own, personal high age. This would underline the expectation and cliché on Old Age.

rather the inter-human relationships are largely represented on a state-level, as well as based on family and friendship¹⁰³

In *Ajax* the generalized notion of older people is not very positive if we base our judgement on how Teucer speaks about his father Telemon: „That old age is a constitutionally unsociable and disagreeable (...) is a frequent theme in Tragedy. Sophocles draws upon it in *Ajax*, where the grief that the hero's aged parents will feel at the news of his death is set against the anger. Telemon will vent on the hero's brother.”¹⁰⁴ FALKNER however, takes these words out of their context, and therefore changes their meaning and nuances the passage wrongly.

Ajax [1006-1020]

Ποῖ γὰρ μολεῖν μοι δυνατόν, εἰς ποίους
βροτούς,
τοῖς σοῖς ἀρήξαντ' ἐν πόνοισι μηδαμοῦ;
Ἦ πού <με> Τελαμών, σὸς πατὴρ ἐμός θ'
ἄμα,
δέξαιτ' ἂν εὐπρόσωπος ἰλεώς τ' ἴσως
χωροῦντ' ἄνευ σοῦ· πῶς γὰρ οὔχ; ὅτῳ
πάρῃ
μηδ' εὐτυχοῦντι μηδὲν ἥδιον γελᾶν.

Οὗτος τί κρύψει; ποῖον οὐκ ἔρεῖ κακόν,
τὸν ἐκ δορὸς γεγῶτα πολέμιου νόθον,
τὸν δειλίᾳ προδόντα καὶ κακανδρίᾳ
σέ, φίλτατ' Αἴας, ἢ δόλοισιν, ὥς τὰ σὰ
κράτη θανόντος καὶ δόμους νέμοιμι σοῦς.
Τοιαῦτ' ἀνὴρ δύσσοργος, ἐν γήρᾳ βαρύς,
ἔρεῖ, πρὸς οὐδὲν εἰς ἔριν θυμούμενος·

Where can I go among what mortals,

I who was not there to help you in your troubles?

Smiling and kindly, I imagine, will be my welcome from Telamon, your father and also mine, when I come there without you! Of course, seeing that even when fortune is good it is not this way to smile more graciously!

What will he keep back? What evil will he not speak of me, the bastard born of the prize he won in battle, the betrayer, in my cowardice and weakness, of you, dearest Aias, or in my cunning, so that with you dead I might control you lordship and your house? Such words will be uttered by a man who is irascible, fierce in old age and quick to quarrel angrily over nothing.

From this passage we can only conclude that the image of one's father can be completely different for two different sons, which then again emphasises the mutual dependence between utterance and uttering figure within the tragic context, as I stressed in the introduction of this

¹⁰³ Cf. BRANDT, H. *Wird auch silbern mein Haar. Eine Geschichte des Alters in der Antike*. München 2002, here 69-71.

¹⁰⁴ FALKNER, T.M., *The Poetics of old age in Greek epic, lyric and tragedy*, Oklahoma 1995, p. 248.

chapter. Ajax does not comment on the way his father will react, but only on the disgrace he will cause his father and therefore himself.¹⁰⁵ He thinks very highly of his father: not a man who would harm one of his sons out of blind rage and poor mental health because of old age.

Ajax [432-440]

ΑΙ. νῦν γὰρ πάρεστι καὶ δις αἰάζειν ἐμοὶ,
[καὶ τρίς· τοιούτοις γὰρ κακοῖς ἐντυγχάνω·]
ὅτου πατὴρ μὲν τῆσδ' ἀπ' Ἰδαίας χθονὸς
τὰ πρῶτα καλλιστεῖ ἄριστεύσας στρατοῦ
πρὸς οἶκον ἦλθε πᾶσαν εὐκλειαν φέρων·

ἐγὼ δ' ὁ κείνου παῖς, τὸν αὐτὸν ἐς τόπον
Τροίας ἐπελθὼν οὐκ ἐλάσσονι σθένει,
οὐδ' ἔργα μείω χειρὸς ἀρκέσας ἐμῆς,
ἄτιμος Ἀργείοισιν ᾧδ' ἀπόλλυμαι.

AI. For I know can say 'Alas' a second time,
[and a third; such are the sorrows I am
encountering] I whose father came home from this
land of Ida having won the army's first prize for
valour, and bringing home every kind of fame.

But I his son having come to the same place, Troy,
with no less a force and having performed with my
own hand no lesser deeds, am thus perishing,
dishonoured by the Argives

The relation between young and old in the Sophoclean tragedies is hard to define, but surely is tense, as it probably was in the Athenian society as well. Young and Old(er) can be clearly distinguished and are created as separate generations. This, however, does not prove that Sophocles provides us, or even his ancient audience, with an unambiguous image of 'Youth' or 'Old Age', although it is tempting to assume so, especially given the story about his own high age and the fact that he was sued because of it: merely based on the tragic texts, we are not able to draw this conclusion.

3.3. Pattern of expectations

By law mutual dependence between parents and children -mostly a father and his children- was depicted. A father could refuse or accept his child in the first week after birth and have it put up for adoption or even abandonment on the street or sell it. After this week, the initiation and official acceptance of child within the home, the *oikos*, there really was no way back: from that moment on a father was obligated to teach a son skills and initiate him into his *phratries* and *deme*, so the child would be recognised as an Athenian citizen.

¹⁰⁵ In chapter 3 of this dissertation I will discuss these passages and the impact of the differences in addressing their father, between Ajax and his halfbrother Teucer, who is a bastard-son, more elaborately.

A son was under his father's custody until his eighteenth birthday, before officially being a grown-up and a daughter remained under custody until she got married. The father was their *kyrios*, which basically meant being their legal guardian -boys too could not sign any contract by themselves until they were 18 years old, but a father could also force his children to labour in and around his *oikos*, the farm or the family shop, even with violence if necessary.

A father, as opposed to Roman times, also had the duty to govern his belongings, facing the possibility of being charged by his children for having wasted the property and not leaving enough behind as an inheritance or bridal-gift. Children, however, were obligated to take care of their parent's provision for Old Age and guarantee a proper funeral with all the necessary religious rituals. Disinheritance was a legal threat, but was probably hardly ever practised.

As STRAUSS determined, "When a boy reached adolescence, he might begin to anticipate his eventual coming into his patrimony: a delightful thought if 'the old man' was 'loaded', a burden to shoulder or escape if he was poor."¹⁰⁶ The fact, that fathers were relatively old, usually differing about 10 years of age with mom, when a son reached the age of adolescence, tempts us to assume that conflicts of generations within the family were almost inevitable. Even as in real (modern) life though, in the Sophoclean tragedies young and old are not quarrelling over minorities or major issues just because of the superficial difference in age, the tension within the tragic context is mainly triggered by their mutual pattern of expectations. I will more elaborately discuss the importance of children to their parents in Chapter 3. In this paragraph I will mainly examine the result of a pattern of expectations

In *Ajax*, the double role the titlehero plays can be seen as a 'role model' of a pattern of expectations a father has of his child, because he fulfils both parts himself. The pattern of expectations is not so much connected to actual physical action, but is no less impressive, because of the psychological pressure Ajax puts on his -unknowing and very young- son and through him on himself. Given that keeping up the family-name and fame can be seen as a psychological inheritance, this pattern of expectations can be compared to the duty of proving for a good funeral and a parents' provision for Old Age.

¹⁰⁶ STRAUSS [1993] 80-81

The titlehero speaks and acts from two different angles/perspectives: as a son and as a father. Besides the high expectations he puts on himself as a son, he changes sides and utters the same expectations to his son. In a way he mainly seems to try to convince himself of the rightness of his intended suicide, for instance based on the fact that the child seems to be so young he does not understand a word his father is saying.

Ajax [545-557]

ΑΙ. Αἶρ' αὐτόν, αἶρε δεῦρο· ταραβήσει γὰρ
οὐ, νεοσφαγῇ που τόνδε προσλεύσσω
φόνον,
εἵπερ δικαίως ἔστ' ἐμὸς τὰ πατρόθεν.
Ἄλλ' αὐτίκ' ὥμοις αὐτόν ἐν νόμοις πατρὸς
δεῖ πωλοδαμνεῖν κάξομοιοῦσθαι φύσιν.
ᾠ παῖ, γένοιο πατρὸς εὐτυχέστερος,
τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ὅμοιος, καὶ γένοι' ἄν οὐ κακός.
Καίτοι σε καὶ νῦν τοῦτό γε ζηλοῦν ἔχω,
ὁθούνεκ' οὐδὲν τῶνδ' ἐπαισθάνη κακῶν·
ἐν τῷ φρονεῖν γὰρ μηδὲν ἥδιστος βίος,
ἔ ως τὸ χαίρειν καὶ τὸ λυπεῖσθαι μάθης.

Ὅταν δ' ἴκη πρὸς τοῦτο, δεῖ σ' ὅπως
πατρὸς
δείξεις ἐν ἐχθροῖς οἷος ἐξ οἴου ἑτράφης.

Lift him up, lift him up here! He will not be
frightened to look on this newly spilled blood, if he
is truly my son.

You must begin now to break him in by his father's
harsh rules and make his nature like mine. Boy may
you be luckier than your father, but in all other ways
resemble him! Then you will be now coward. Yet
even now I can envy you at least for this, that you
can sense nothing of these troubles; because the
happiest life is lived while one understands nothing,
before one learns delight or pain. But when you
come to that, you will have to show in the presence
of enemies what kind of son of what kind of father
you are.

In *Oedipous Colonos* Oedipous concretizes his expectations of his children much more than Ajax did. One of the most revealing scenes on this matter is Oedipous' complaint about his sons, who let his daughters, so to say, do their dirty jobs.

Oed. Col. [337-345]

ΟΙ. ᾠ πάντ' ἐκείνω τοῖς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ νόμοις
φύσιν κατεικασθέντε καὶ βίου τροφάς·
ἐκεῖ γὰρ οἱ μὲν ἄρσενες κατὰ στέγας
θακοῦσιν ἰστουργοῦντες, αἱ δὲ σύννομοι
τάξω βίου τροφεία πορσύνουσ' ἀεὶ.

Σφῶν δ', ὦ τέκν', οὓς μὲν εἰκὸς ἦν πονεῖν τάδε,

ΟΕ. These two conform altogether to the
customs that prevail in Egypt in their nature and
the nurture of their lives! For there males sit in
their houses working at the loom, and their
consorts provide the necessities of life out of
doors.

And in your case, my children, those who ought

κατ' οἶκον οἰκουροῦσιν ὥστε παρθένοι,
σφῶ δ' ἄντ' ἐκείνων τὰμὰ δυστήνου κακὰ
ὑπερπονείτον.

to perform this labour sit at home and keep the
house like maidens, and you two in their place
bear the burdens of your unhappy father's
sorrows.

Oedipous' comparison between his sons and the moral standards and social relations of Egypt in this passage is emotionally charged and obviously disapproving. Besides the possible (in-) correctness of these utterances, the passage shows us in what way Sophocles uses the relations, standards and moral values of his own society. First of all, the existing standards and values in Athens, concerning men and their duties, had to be and were -as we know from other sources- the opposite of those in Egypt, as described by Oedipous.¹⁰⁷ Without trying to explore the Egyptian way of living and their culture, we may conclude that Oedipous describes the Egyptians this explicitly in order to confirm either presumptions or facts that the audience might have or know about the Egyptian culture. In another case, namely if his goal of criticizing his own sons by his utterances would not have been supported by his statements: Oedipous' emotional comparison had to be revealing and recognisable to the audience and would otherwise only have been confusing. Evidently we should take the dramatic effect of exaggeration into consideration. The spill of the comparison, however, is based on contemporary society: his sons should have guided and supported Oedipous in old age, even though *his* Old Age is spent in a somewhat uncustomary manner.¹⁰⁸

Oed. Col. [441-449]

οἱ δ' ἐπωφελεῖν,
οἱ τοῦ πατρὸς τῷ πατρὶ δυνάμενοι τὸ δρᾶν
οὐκ ἠθέλησαν, ἀλλ' ἔπους μικροῦ χάριν
φυγὰς σφιν ἔξω πτωχὸς ἠλώμην αἰεὶ.
Ἐκ ταῖνδε δ' οὔσαιν παρθένοιν, ὅσον φύσις
δίδωσιν αὐταῖν, καὶ τροφὰς ἔχω βίου
καὶ γῆς ἄδειαν καὶ γένους ἐπάρκεσιν·
τῷ δ' ἄντ' τοῦ φύσαντος εἰλέσθην θρόνους
καὶ σκῆπτρα κραίνειν καὶ τυραννεύειν

And my sons, who could have helped their father,
refused to act, but for the want of a brief word I went
into exile, wandering for ever.

And it is from these two, who are maidens, that so
far as their nature allows

I have sustenance and a safe place to live
and help from my family. But those two chose

¹⁰⁷ NB: It should be noted that I do not want to discuss the historical (in-)correctness of the statements on the Egyptian culture or society at all. My starting point and mere point of view is that of Oedipous himself.

¹⁰⁸ In chapter 3 I will further discuss the role of women in Sophoclean tragedies; for that purpose the emphasis will be on Oedipous' expectations of his sons, and not so much on the fact that his daughters fulfil the role of the sons here. It is however notable that towards the end of the tragedy Oedipous asks Theseus to take care of his daughters until they get married, only then will Oedipous's duty as their father really be fulfilled. [1530-1532]

χθονός.

instead of their father to wield the sceptre and to be monarchs of the land!

Oedipous' daughters are clearly aware of their duties and responsibilities towards their father: when Ismene leaves her father to prepare the sacrificial rites for the Eumenides, she emphasises Antigone's duties to stay and care for her father remarkably explicitly.

Oed. Col. [507-509]

ΙΣ. Χωροῖμ' ἄν ἐς τόδ' Ἀντιγόνη, σὺ δ' ἐνθάδε
φύλασσε πατέρα τόνδε· τοῖς τεκοῦσι γὰρ
οὐδ' εἰ πονεῖ τις, δεῖ πόνου μνήμην ἔχειν.

IS. I will go and do it! Antigone, stay here and guard our father; when one takes trouble for a parent, one must not remember that it is trouble.

Reading this passage, which was torn out of its context, yet keeping the tragic action in mind, one may question Sophocles' goal or the purpose behind these lines. Antigone already took care of her father; Ismene was the one who showed up later. Neither our image of Antigone, nor that of Ismene is changed or even influenced by it. Oedipous is not taken better care of after this passage; nor can evidence be found for the presence of any -impressionable- figure, other than the sisters, at the time of the statement. Still the last sentence of this passage 'οὐδ' εἰ πονεῖ τις, δεῖ πόνου μνήμην ἔχειν' seems to be correctly translated as a generality.

Reading K changes πονεῖ into πονῇ and adds ὅταν.¹⁰⁹ Taking this change seriously, as KAMERBEEK and CAMBELL suggest, would support the generality of Ismene's statement: Although in my opinion there is no compulsory reason to change the text, it is therefore, as far as I am concerned, worth the consideration. As mentioned above, I do not recognise any dramatic influence of these verses on the text, nor on the tragic action or on the plot. Categorizing this passage as a generality is supported by the textual addition of Σ, followed by KAMERBEEK and CAMBELL. Moreover, I personally think that, considering the context and its unrecognisable dramatic function, these verses could be characterised as a saying and could even be understood to be one of the unwritten moral codes of the Athenian society of the 5th century BC; a statement of the author, wanting to emphasise the importance -at least

¹⁰⁹ KAMERBEEK, *Antigone* ad loc en CAMBELL, L., *Sophocles*, vol. 1, ad loc.

within the tragic context- of this moral code and the duties of children have towards their parents.¹¹⁰

In the *Women of Trachis* the pattern of expectations of parents towards their son constitutes an important part of the tragic plot. Although the tragedy is based on the Heracles mythology, Deianeira seems to be the actual protagonist of the play. Her expectations towards her son Hyllus are therefore, remarkably, at least as present as his father's.¹¹¹ Her life and fate cause the audience to *feel* sympathy, which does not decrease even when she finally, driven by jealousy, though not intentionally, kills Heracles.

From the start of play, Deianeira's weak characteristics are unmistakably displayed: only when her slave encourages her, she realises that the seriousness of Heracles' absence becomes clear. Only then does she turn to Hyllus, almost accusingly, and sends him away to search for his father. Hyllus however, concerned by his mother's story about the oracle and her worries, is obviously being told all this for the first time and leaves immediately. Her ingeniousness becomes even clearer when, before his return, she realises that the cloak she made for Hyllus to take with him for Heracles, will not cause the desired effect and she still remains to play ignorance when Hyllus comes home accusing her. At this occasion Hyllus reports the events as a messenger, thus possibly providing, as he actually is the son of Heracles, the incidents with an even larger dramatic effect.¹¹² Immediately after his report Deianeira commits suicide, without even trying to defend herself, to save what is left, or to wait for Heracles or his corpse to arrive home.

Besides his mother's expectations, Hyllus has been assigned to the most difficult tasks by Heracles himself. First, Heracles asks his son to release him out of his misery and burn him alive. Next he is ordered to marry the woman, who caused his mother's despair and therefore indirectly the death of both of his parents: his father's concubine, daughter of

¹¹⁰ Vgl. LARNINOIS, A., "Characterization through gnomai in Homer's Iliad", in *Mnemosyne* : tijdschrift voor klassieke litteratuur, vol. 53 (2000), afl. 6, pag. 641-661 (21)

¹¹¹ Cf. KAMERBEEK, J.C., *The plays of Sophocles, commentaries, II The Trachiniae*, (Leiden 1970) p. 2, note 2.

¹¹² Cf. KAMERBEEK, J.C., [1970] p. 17.

Eurytus, Iole. The pressure put on Hyllus throughout the tragedy by both his father and his mother, is practically unbearable, but often also inappropriate.¹¹³

Trachin. [61-67]

ΔΗ. ὦ τέκνον, ὦ παῖ, κάξ ἄγεννήτων ἄρα
μῦθοι καλῶς πίπτουσιν· ἦδε γὰρ γυνή
δούλη μέν, εἴρηκεν δ' ἐλεύθερον λόγον.

ΥΛ. Ποῖον; δίδαξον, μήτερ, εἰ διδακτά μοι.

ΔΗ. Σὲ πατὴρ οὕτω δαρὸν ἐξενωμένου
τὸ μὴ πυθέσθαι ποῦ ἔστιν αἰσχύνην φέρειν.

ΥΛ. Ἄλλ' οἶδα, μύθοις εἴ τι πιστεύειν χρεών.

DE. My child, my son, so even words from those
of lowly birth can fall out well; this woman is a
slave, but the word she has spoken is that of a
free person.

HY. What word? Explain it to me, mother, if you
can!

DE. She says that when your father has been
absent for so long, it is shameful that you do not
require as to his whereabouts!

HY. Why, I know if we can believe what people
say!

Hyllus however continuously acts with the best intentions and does not consider his actions to be wrong. The expectations of both parents, and Hyllus' submission to them, almost make him a pitiful figure, whom at the end of the story has nobody else left but his future wife, who he despises. Hyllus, however, also disobeys his parents: he accuses his mother of murdering his father, without leaving her a chance to defend herself. He even wishes the same agony upon her, thus supporting her suicide. When Heracles curses his wife, Hyllus conversely defends her by explaining her deed and therewith his suffering. Hyllus even refuses to kill his father, in order to release him. In both cases Heracles accepts his son's protest without an argument.

The relationships between young and old in Sophoclean tragedies were tense and hard to define precisely, as was probably similar to the Athenian 5th century society. Young and Old could be clearly distinguished and were created as generations very recognisably. This,

¹¹³ Cf. scene 1) 61-93: Hyllus is accused of not having gone after his father sooner, although there could not have been any reason for him to consider this: his father had ordered him to accept his fate. Only after Deianeira tells Hyllus about her reasons for concern and fear, the oracle, she actually *asks* the boy to go, which Hyllus does without hesitation. Scene 2) The last wishes of Heracles are almost impossible and improper. Still he accuses his son of not caring enough for his own father, when Hyllus hesitates. Cf. KITTO [1961] 297 "The 'lesson' that Hyllus must learn is one he finds wholly baffling: his deepest sense of what is right and holy must be overridden by his filial duty." LEFÈVRE [2001] 31 judges Heracles' expectations to come from his egocentric character.

however, does not mean that Sophocles provided us with an unequivocal image of ‘the Youth’ or of ‘Old Age’, even though this tempting to assume for some tragedies based on Sophocles’ own high age and the story about his defence in court citing Oedipous Colonos, while charged by his son of not being mentally capable of ruling his *oikos* anymore. However, based on the evidence the texts of the tragedies provide us with, this conclusion may not be drawn.

4. Generation Relations

4.1. Familiar, interfamiliar and surrogate

Until now, I have mainly emphasised the differences and discrepancies between generations, displayed in several ways in Sophoclean tragedies, defining the social relationships between the characters of different generations.¹¹⁴ These social relationships could of course not have been distinguishable to us, or to an Athenian audience, if very close relations and even mutual dependences between the members of an *oikos*, would not have been an important part of real life. In this chapter I will elaborately discuss these relationships and compare the Athenian society to the situations presented in the tragedies; not in order to find resemblances, but to be able to rate the value of the use of clearly discerned generations and the relationships between them in Sophoclean tragedies.

4.1.1 *Family connections: emotionally or merely social-economically?*

Focussing on 5th century Athens, the modern word *family* should be considered as a very broad concept: the lineage into which one was born, and the name one carried, existed from several families, *oikoi*.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, an *oikos* was a family, also in the broadest sense of the modern word. Not only a father, mother and their children belonged to this unit, but also the slaves of the household, and according to Aristotle even their belongings were covered by this concept.¹¹⁶ As mentioned in the previous chapter, a newborn child had to make its official entrance into the family and there was an actual chance that the father would not accept the child. It was of great importance to an Athenian man to secure his heritage and make sure his heirs were legitimate and definitely his.¹¹⁷ For the same purpose, the eldest son was strictly obligated to get married and provide the family with new heirs. Only in this way could an *oikos* live on and would the family cult preserved. “Ein *oikos* war daher ein lebender Organismus, der zu seinem Fortbestehen in jeder Generation erneuert werden musste; für die lebenden Mitglieder deckte er das Bedürfnis nach Nahrung, für die Verstorbenen das

¹¹⁴ Cf. chapter 1 and my conclusion.

¹¹⁵ Cf. ROUSELL, D., *Tribu et cité*, Paris 1976

¹¹⁶ Aristoteles, *Politika*, I.2.2 (1253B)

¹¹⁷ In the following paragraph the role of women in the Athenian society will be discussed, together with the restraints exercised upon them. These restrictions are, according to many scholars, due to fact that in no other way could men be certain that women did not cheat on their husbands, which would jeopardise the forthcoming of legitimate heirs.

(Bedürfnis) nach Vollzug der Kult-Rituale. Ein kinderloser *oikos* war sichtbar am Sterben (...).”¹¹⁸

Safeguarding the existence of an *oikos* was not the only reason why a son was of great importance. Children in 5th century Athens were legally obligated to take care of their parents’ provision for old age.¹¹⁹ At approximately the age of sixty a father was thought to turn over the reign of his *oikos* to his son. The relationship of Athenian citizens with the elderly was ambivalent, probably at least partly due to this –as far as we know unwritten- rule.¹²⁰ Several testimonies show that a father, because of proven senility, was denied power over his *oikos* and was forced to turn it over to his heirs. Women’s provision of old age was taken care of by the man in charge of her dowry. A widow would continue living in her late husband’s *oikos* and the eldest son or his guardian or, at their absence, the closest male relative of the late husband would become the new patriarch: the *kyrios*. Producing legitimate heirs was therefore in several ways, to all members of an *oikos*, of great importance. Adoption was also considered a reasonable solution for this purpose when children remained absent.¹²¹

Although the relationship and connection between parents and children from the passages above mainly seems to be based on social-economic necessity, CHARLIER and RAEPSEAT tried to prove from an enormous variety of literary and archaeological sources, that we may also

¹¹⁸ LACEY, W. K., *The family in ancient Greece*, London 1968. Here: translation by U. WINTER, Mainz am Rein 1983, 14. Although LACEY considers the figures in ancient tragedies to be unrealistic and therefore uninteresting in every kind of way to his treatise, this book will form the basis of the information on family-life in 5th century Athens as presented in this treatise, which will be discussed in this chapter in particular.

¹¹⁹ Cf. HARTMANN [2002] p. 101. “Kinder zeugen war das entscheidende Motiv für eine Heirat, wobei versorgungstechnische Überlegungen im Vordergrund standen. Denn die Altersversorgung lag in den Händen der Kinder: Söhne und Töchter waren dazu verpflichtet, die Eltern im Alter zu ernähren und zu pflegen, sie nach den Tod zu bestatten und den Totenkult am Grab auszuüben.” Cf. Millet, P. *Lending and borrowing in ancient Athens*, Cambridge 1991, 127-139. And RUBINSTEIN, L. *Adoption in IV century Athens*, Kopenhagen 1993, p. 65. “Darüber hinaus war es ein Anliegen der Familien, ihre Kontinuität zu sichern und ihren Besitz zu erhalten.” HARTMANN [2002] 101. Cf. Lys. 651; Ekk1. 229-235.

¹²⁰ Cf. BRANDT, H., *Wird auch silbern mein Haar, eine Geschichte des Alters in der Antike*, München 2002, 41-50 and 55-63. en GUTSCHFELD, A., SCHMITZ, W., *Am schlimmen Rand des Lebens? Altersbilder in der Antike*, Köln 2003. Here p. 57-86: BALTRUSCH, E., “An den Rand gedrängt. Altersbilder im Klassischen Athen”

¹²¹ Cf. HS 3.1.2 regarding the adoption of bastard children. Cf. for an elaborate description RUBINSTEIN [1993], and HARTMANN [2002] p. 102-103.

assume an affectionate relationship existed between parents and children.¹²² In the Sophoclean tragedies an emotional affection is rarely shown separated from the earlier mentioned pattern of expectations.¹²³

One of the most striking exemplifying scenes can be found in *Oedipous Colonus*: Oedipus' words towards Theseus, sensing his own approaching death.

Oed. Col. [1518 – 1532]

ΟΙ. Ἐγὼ διδάξω, τέκνον Αἰγέως, ἃ σοὶ
γῆρως ἄλυπα σῇ τε κείσεται πόλει.
Χῶρον μὲν αὐτὸς αὐτίκ' ἐξηγήσομαι,
ἄθικτος ἡγητῆρος, οὗ με χρὴ θανεῖν.
Τοῦτον δὲ φράζε μή ποτ' ἀνθρώπων τινὶ
μήθ' οὐδέ κεκευθε μήτ' ἐν οἷς κεῖται τόποις,
ὥς σοι πρὸ πολλῶν ἀσπίδων ἀλκὴν ὅδε
δορός τ' ἐπακτοῦ γειτόνων ἀεὶ τιθῇ.

Ἄδ' ἐξάγιστα μηδὲ κινεῖται λόγῳ
αὐτὸς μαθήσῃ, κεῖσ' ὅταν μόλῃς, μόνος·
ὥς οὔτ' ἂν ἀστῶν τῶνδ' ἂν ἐξείποιμί τω,
οὔτ' ἂν τέκνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς στέργων ὅμως.
Ἄλλ' αὐτὸς αἰεὶ σῶζε, χῶταν εἰς τέλος
τοῦ ζῆν ἀφικνῇ, τῷ προφερτάτῳ μόνῳ
σήμαιν', ὃ δ' αἰεὶ τῷπιόντι δεικνύτω.

I will explain, son of Aegeus, what things are laid
up for your city, invulnerable to passing time! I
myself, with no guide to lay a hand on me. Shall
now show you the place where I must die. O not
ever reveal to any human being either where it is
concealed or the region in which it lies; for its
perpetual nearness renders to you a protection
stronger than many shields or spears brought in
from outside. But the things that are taboo and that
speech must not disturb you yourself shall learn,
when you go there alone; for I would not reveal
them to any of these citizens, nor to my children,
much though I love them. But do you always guard
them, and when you come to the end of life,
indicate them only to him who is foremost, and let

¹²² CHARLIER, M.-Th. et RAEPSEAT, G., “Étude d'un comportement social” in *L'Antiquité Classique* 40, 1971, 589-606. Although their argumentation can be considered to be based on a rather confusing and rash collection of evidence, it is an interesting article, which motivates to another ‘point of view’. For another opposite opinion cf. GLOTZ, G., *La cité grecque: le développement des institutions*, Paris 1968, p. 306. RAEPSEAT, G. “Les motivations de la natalité à Athènes aux Ve et IVe siècles avant notre ère.” in *L'Antiquité Classique* 40, 1971 81-110. RAEPSEAT provides us with six different motivations for Athenians to want and have children. Next to the above mentioned motives, he also discusses the religious aspect, and especially the funeral ritual. Concomitantly he mentions the importance of descent and the family name patriotic motive; raising children was of great importance to the citystate. In his last paragraph he mentions the philosophical movements to form the basis for these motives. I described the economical motives, because for this thesis it does not seem necessary to study these more in-depth. Although RAEPSEAT uses a variety of sources, which I would more clearly separate from one another and would ascribe a different value to in order to create a sociological judgement, I do consider his thesis very valuable. The social necessity cf. Diog. Laert. VI 22f52.

¹²³ This same use of words for the love between a parent and a child is once more recognisable in the Sophoclean tragedies, in *Oedipous Tyrannos*. [1023]: AG. Δωρόν ποτ', ἴσθι, τῶν ἐμῶν χειρῶν λαβών. ΟΙ. Κᾶθ' ᾧδ' ἀπ' ἄλλης χειρὸς ἔστερξεν μέγα; ΑΓ. Ἢ γὰρ πρὶν αὐτὸν ἐξέπεισ' ἀπαιδία. Concomitantly στεργω is used in the tragedies to express the love between husband and wife. (Ant. 292) Cf. LIDDELL- SCOTT ad loc.

(...)

that man reveal them each time to his successor!

Oedipous' utterance "Α δ' ἐξάγιστα μηδὲ κινεῖται λόγῳ αὐτὸς μαθήσῃ, κεῖσ' ὅταν μόλῃς, μόνος· ὡς οὐτ' ἂν ἀσπῶν τῶνδ' ἂν ἐξείποιμί τῳ, (...)" has value attributed to it by an explanation: Not even my children I would tell this to, even though I love them so much. This single sentence that he dedicates to his children in this monologue is short and concerning its content only results in the increase of emotional pressure.

Another remarkable example concerning a parent's love for a child is Elektra's comparison to a nightingale which has lost its youngsters: [107] λήξω θρήνων στυγερῶν τε γόων, (...) μὴ οὐ τεκνολέτειρ' ὥς τις ἀηδῶν. The power of the love of a mother for her children is and what it rectifies, she seems to have forgotten when she does not consider Clythemnestra's love for Elektra's sister Iphigeneia, being sacrificed by their father, as a legitimate reason for killing father Agamenon. On the other hand: later on in the tragedy, to kill her mother out of love for her deceased father *does* seem to be justifiable.

Elektra [584 – 594]

Ἄλλ' εἰσόρα μὴ σκῆψιν οὐκ οὔσαν τίθης·
εἰ γὰρ θέλεις, δίδαξον ἄνθ' ὅτου τανῦν
αἵσχιστα πάντων ἔργα δρῶσα τυγχάνεις,
ἥτις ξυνεύδεις τῷ παλαμναίῳ μεθ' οὐ
πατέρα τὸν ἄμὸν πρόσθεν ἐξαπώλεσας,
καὶ παιδοποιεῖς, τοὺς δὲ πρόσθεν εὐσεβεῖς
κάξ εὐσεβῶν βλαστόντας ἐκβαλοῦς' ἔχεις.
Πῶς ταῦτ' ἐπαινέσαιμ' ἄν; ἢ καὶ τοῦτ' ἐρεῖς,
ὡς τῆς θυγατρὸς ἀντίποινα λαμβάνεις;
Αἰσχροῦς δ', ἐάν περ καὶ λέγῃς· οὐ γὰρ
καλὸν
ἐχθροῖς γαμεῖσθαι τῆς θυγατρὸς οὔνεκα.

For come, pray explain why you are doing the most shameful thing of all, you who are sleeping with the guilty one, with whom in time past you killed my father, and getting children by him. While you have cast out your earlier children who are god-fearing and born of a god-fearing father! How could you I approve of this? Or will you say that this too is taken in payment for your daughter? If you do say it, it will be a shameful thing to say; for it is not honourable to mate with enemies for your daughter's sake!

Elektra's lamenting over the own fate and the fact that she was not given away as a bride by her father before he died, points out the pattern of expectations between daughter and father, and not so much the love felt for each other, or an emotional bond.¹²⁴

Elektra [185-192]

ΗΛ. Ἄλλ' ἐμὲ μὲν ὁ πολὺς ἀπολέλοιπεν ἤδη
βίος ἀνέλπιστος, οὐδ' ἔτ' ἄρκω·
ἄτις ἄνευ τοκέων κατατάκομαι,
ἅς φίλος οὐτις ἀνὴρ ὑπερίσταται,
ἀλλ' ἀπερεὶ τις ἔποικος ἀναξία
οἰκονομῶ θαλάμους πατρός, ὧδε μὲν
ἄεικεῖ σὺν στολῶ,
κεναῖς δ' ἀμφίσταμαι τραπέζαις.

EL. But much of my life has already abandoned
me without hope, and my strength is failing!
Yes, I melt away without offspring,
I who have no husband to protect me,
But like a lowborn slave serve in the
chambers of my father, in such
mean attire as this,
and stand at empty tables!

Clythemnestra *does* refer to the non-negotiable love of a mother for her children, which may be considered as honestly meant, given the circumstances of the moment -the realisation that Orestes is still alive- under which she utters these emotions and the threatening mortal danger,:

Elektra [766 – 771]

ΚΛ. ὦ Ζεῦ, τί ταῦτα; πότερον εὐτυχῇ λέγω
ἢ δεινὰ μὲν, κέρδη δέ; λυπηρῶς δ' ἔχει,
εἰ τοῖς ἐμαυτῆς τὸν βίον σφῶς κακοῖς.

ΠΑ. Τί δ' ὧδ' ἄθυμεις, ὦ γύναι, τῷ νῦν λόγῳ;

ΚΛ. Δεινὸν τὸ τίκτειν ἐστίν· οὐδὲ γὰρ κακῶς
πάσχοντι μῖσος ὦν τέκη προσγίγνεται.

KL. O Zeus! What of this? Am I to call it
fortunate, or terrible, but beneficial? It is painful,
if I preserve my life by means of my own
calamities.

SL. Why are you thus despondent, lady, at the
news?

KL. Giving birth is strange thing; even when they
treat one badly, one does not hate one's children

As shown, in the scenes of the Sophoclean tragedies discussed above, the emotional affection of parents towards their children is displayed to provide the play or the scene with an even more emotionally charged atmosphere. Although we cannot derive much more information on

¹²⁴ The pattern of expectations between people of different generations –especially parents towards children and vice versa- is elaborately discussed in chapter 2.3.

affectionate relationships between parents and children from other sources, in my opinion based on the way these relations affect their context or even the moral of these plays, we can assume that also in historical classical Athens not only social-economic considerations underlie these relationships.

Still, the assumption that children only served this social-economic interest of their parents is supported by those sources mentioning the abandonment of children, mainly girls. Scholars on this subject, like BOLKESTEIN and CAMERON recorded inordinate and inhuman practices; where father and mother lacked every kind of emotional connection with their children, raising, abandoning or killing them as it best suited their own lives.¹²⁵ As LACEY noticed however, in the speeches of the clientele of the rhetoric orators, on material possession and the division of it between heirs, eviction, abandonment or a difference between boys or girls being abandoned as infants is not even once mentioned. Furthermore LACEY adds: „Darüber hinaus scheint es merkwürdig, wenn Aussetzung offen geübt wurde, dass eine solche Art, über die Kinder zu verfügen, niemals Gegenstand jener Tirade geworden ist, die von weiblichen Quellen unserer literarischen Quellen, etwa der *Medea* des Euripides oder der *Lysistra* des Aristophanes und anderen den Männern entgegengeschleudert worden sind.“¹²⁶

In order to attribute value to this quotation an example of the tragedies discussed in this thesis will be given: Of all Sophoclean tragedies, *Oedipous Tyrannus*, is the only one, in which the abandonment of a child is brought up.¹²⁷ Remarkably, the moment, when the shepherd tells how Iocaste gave him the child so as to get rid of it, Oedipous shows pity for this child and the shepherd too and explains that he gave the child to strangers out of compassion. As LA RUE-VAN HOOK describes the effect of exposing this child could not have been this dramatic if the exposure or abandonment of children was daily practice in Athens.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ CAMERON, A. „The exposure of children and Greek ethics“ in *CR* 46, 1932, 105–114; BOLKESTEIN, H., „The exposure of children at Athens and the ἐγχυτρίστροι“ in *CP* 17 1922 223-239.

¹²⁶ LACEY [1968] 155-156.

¹²⁷ In the O.T. the abandonement of a child already took place before the actual tragedy starts off; it is brought up when Oedipous discovers who he actually is and how his life has been, because of the shepherd explaining his actions.

¹²⁸ In addition to this thesis cf. LA RUE-VAN HOOK, „The exposure of Infants at Athens“ in *TAPhA* 51, 1920 134-145, hier 140-141: „Few dramatic situations have greater possibilities for arousing suspense and sustaining interest in the dénouement, than this of the abandoned child, its miraculous rescue, its identification by mean of tokens, and its eventual fulfilment of an amazing destiny which results in woe indescribable, as in *Oedipus* or general joy, as in the New Comedy.“ I do not share LA RUE-VAN HOOK’s opinion when it comes to his ideas on the representation of daily life in ancient tragedies. He does however, rightly point out that the dramatic effect of the abandonment of a child could not have been very striking, if it was such a common habit and almost a normality in Athens: then it would not have raised pity or at least sympathy with the audience.

4.1.2 Friend or Stranger: *Philia* and *Xenia*

“ὅταν δ’ ἐν ταῖς φιλίαις ἐγγένηται τὰ πάθη, οἷον ἢ ἀδελφὸς ἀδελφὸν ἢ υἱὸς πατέρα ἢ μήτηρ υἱὸν ἢ υἱὸς μητέρα ἀποκτείνει ἢ μέλλῃ ἢ τι ἄλλο τοιοῦτον δοῦναι, ταῦτα ζητητέον.”

“What tragedy must seek are cases where the sufferings occur within relationships, such as brother and brother, son and father, mother and son, son and mother –when the one kills (or is about to kill) the other, or commits some other such deed.”¹²⁹

The contact between *filoi* in tragedies is not just negatively charged. With reference to Aristoteles’ consideration on the, according to him most important subjects of Attic tragedy, SLATER concludes that the direct contact between people of different generations is frequently used, much more than in the works of the other tragic poets and that these moments of contact are mainly of a positive -or at least neutral - nature.¹³⁰

However, as BELFIORE mentioned, substantiating Aristotle’s thesis not too long ago by thoroughly analysing all remaining tragic sources, the plot of most tragedies is about hurting or disturbing *filoi* by *filoi*. Although, until now, not everybody was convinced of the necessity of precisely defining the terms *philia* and *filoi*, BELFIORE, in my opinion, truly succeeded to provide us with an accurate description and clear definition of these words. “To include formal reciprocal relationships [ed. marriage, *xenia* and suppliance] as well as biological kinship [ed. “...a wide range of blood relationships”] is not only useful for a study of Greek tragedy, it is also consistent with Greek ideas about *philia*.¹³¹

Philia covered more than just the nearest family members in antique tragedies and *xenia* diverges from the modern concept of friendship. I will, contrary to BELFIORE, but still using her research as a basis, try to determine the differences between these two concepts. Precise analyses of *philia* and *xenia* based on the tragic texts can, in my opinion, support the diversion of inter-human relationships. In this chapter, I will emphasise on the difference between *philia* and *xenia*, referring to BELFIORE’s work, and the *Philoctetes*, in which, as

¹²⁹ Aristoteles *Poetics* 1453b19 - 22

¹³⁰ SLATER, P.E., *The Glory of Hera, Greek mythology and the Greek family*, 1968.

¹³¹ BLUNDELL, M.W., *Helping friends and harming enemies, a study in Sophocles and Greek ethics.*, Cambridge 1989. (especially 39-49) partly preceded BELFIORE summarised the values and virtues, connected to the several different forms of *philia* in 5th century Athens, based on differentiated sources. However, she did not very clearly describe to what extent these ethics also applied to tragedies. Her work is therefore very accurately complemented by BELFIORE, E.S., *Murder among friends, Violation of philia in Greek tragedy*, Oxford 2000. Cf. HERMAN, G., *Ritualized friendship and the Greek city* Cambridge 1987 on *xenia* and connected preliminaries. 41-58.

mentioned before there is no blood relation between the characters at all. This way I will study my findings, as mentioned in chapter 2.2, on forms of address in the communication between characters of different generations in depth.

Moreover I will relate the Greek terms of *philia* and *xenia* to the modern concept of generation, in order to demonstrate, from a different angle, that a genetic relationship does not without doubt underlie the impact of relations between people from different generations within the tragic context.

BELFIORE determines that, considering *philia* and *xenia* and the supplicants, based on Aristotle's findings: "It is fruitful to adopt broader concepts of *philia* and tragic recognition than the text of the *Poetics* explicitly warrants."¹³² In the end, in BELFIORE'S opinion, supplicants, inlaws -being the closest to blood-related- and *xenia* could be seen as *philia*. Her theory is based on the resemblances between the treatment and the emotion cause with *pathos* of these groups of people.¹³³ It seems noticeable that all of these 'categories of *filoi*' are very close to the main family members: *Xenia*, means ritualised friendship and the role of supplicants seems to be evident.¹³⁴ Although *pathos* is not so much the subject of my research, the possible differences in contact -positively as well as negatively- between the *filoi* among themselves and *filoi* dealing with *xenoi*, could be very interesting for this study. An explicit example will be given by an elaborate discussion of *Philoctetes* in which Sophocles included several relationships between people of different generations, which were actually based on *xenia* but appear to be on *philia*.

¹³² BELFIORE [2000] p. 7. *Philia* was mainly considered to be an emotional concept, but not always just that Cf. HARTMANN [2002] "Gerade in der Fühzeit sind diese Freundschaften nicht allein Ausdruck emotionaler Anziehung, sondern haben den Character von Treuebündnissen, in denen man sich gegenseitige Rechte und Pflichten gewährleistet."cf. FERGUSON, J. *Morals and Values in ancient Greece*, Bristol 1989, p 38 ff.

¹³³ ELSE, G. [1957], discusses *philia*. He, however, assumes that Aristotle completely excludes non-bloodrelated family members from this sort of relationship. I share BELFIORE'S opinion on this matter, moreover because, as she shows, Aristotle prefers a clear differentiation of the concept regarding the historical reality in his other works and there is no reason to assume that he thinks otherwise for this work. Cf. BELFIORE (2000) 5-6. Especially her reference to *Ethica Nicomachea* with its explicit separation into three segments, is in my opinion crucial for this discussion and raises the question as to why Aristotle would have deviated from his own point of view, although he does not explicitly show nor explain this. HARTMANN [2002] p. 126 shows that the marriage between a man and a woman was in general also considered to be a friendship (*philia*) by referring to texts on tombstones.

¹³⁴ The mutual dependence and influence of these last two forms of a relation actually need no further explanation. Still, they have to be clearly separated from one another. BELFIORE [2000] rightly and accurately makes this separation. 7-8.

In *Philoctetes*, as mentioned above and discussed more extensively below, there is no genetic relation between any of the main characters of the play at all. Still, these characters seem to address one another as if they were related as parent and child and vice versa. In chapter 3.2.2 I discussed the contact between Odysseus and Neoptolemos. Here I want to focus on the often underexposed moments of contact between Neoptolemos and Philoctetes. Philoctetes, like Odysseus, calls Neoptolemos “ὦ τέκνον” [f.e. 249, 284, 327] and (f.e. 578) “ὦ παῖ”. Still, his attitude towards Neoptolemos is by far not as moralising and fatherly as Odysseus’ attitude is.¹³⁵ BELFIORE argues fairly persuasively, that Sophocles consciously uses the typical characteristics of a *xenia* relationship.¹³⁶

In the following scenes it becomes clear, that Neoptolemos, under the authority of Odysseus, in order to win the stranger’s trust. After his introduction, making no secret of his own origins, he acts ignorant and lets Philoctetes tell his story. He even manages to completely agree and feel with the hatred Philoctetes utters against the sons of Atreus and Odysseus. Neoptolemos’ story on how his father’s weapons were taken from him after his death seems remarkably convenient, considering Philoctetes’ own weapon, which he is bound to steal from him. It is this story, which causes a man whose only chance of survival is his weapon, to trust him. After the introduction, mutual friends and even enemies are mentioned so that they would be mourned and pitied for their deaths. Confidentiality is *created* and roles are reversed: from this moment on it is not Neoptolemos who tries his very best to get in contact with the embittered man, but Philoctetes who begs not to left behind; Neoptolemos appears to be susceptible:

Philoctetes [524 – 529]

NE. Ἄλλ’ αἰσχρὰ μέντοι σοῦ γέ μ’
ἐνδεέστερον
ξένω φανῆναι πρὸς τὸ καίριον πονεῖν.
Ἄλλ’ εἰ δοκεῖ, πλέωμεν, ὁρμάσθω ταχύς,
χῆ νῆος γὰρ ἄξει κούκ ἀπαρνηθήσεται.
Μόνον θεοὶ σῶζοιεν ἔκ τε τῆσδε γῆς

NE Well, it is shameful for me to seem to the
stranger less ready than you are to work to serve
his need. If you are agreeable. Let us sail. Let him
set off in haste; the ship will carry him and will

¹³⁵ Cf. chapter 3.4

¹³⁶ BELFIORE [2000] 63-80. I, however, do not agree with her statement that Philoctetes treats Neoptolemos like his son: this actually is the clearest distinction between the treatment of Neoptolemos by Odysseus, clearly and consciously doing this, and by Philoctetes. On p. 64 Belfiore herewith supports her argumentation of a clear connection between the treatment of bloodrelated relatives, *philia* and that of *xenia*. In my opinion this argument is not convincing at all. The fatherly tone of Odysseus and his intentions are elaborately discussed in chapter 3.3. Her justification of a recognisable ritual of initiation I would consider, as shown below, to be less plausible.

ἡμᾶς ὅποι τ' ἐνθένδε βουλοίμεσθα πλεῖν.

not refuse! Only may the gods convey us safely
out of this land the wherever we may desire to
sail!

This scene, in which Neoptolemos answers to the chorus that persuades him to not leave Philoctetes behind, and particularly in the first verses, where Neoptolemos explicitly calls Philoctetes a *xenos*, shows - in my opinion - that the concept of *philia* goes beyond bloodrelation or even friendship in this tragedy. Neoptolemos and Philoctetes are strangers to each other, but depend on one another as if they were the closest friends. “Suppliancy and *xenia* are initiated and maintained by reciprocation of favours, and family relationships, while based on blood kinship or marriage, are also characterized by reciprocation of favours or benefits. In tragedy, the norm is that ‘favour always produces favour.’”¹³⁷

Calling Philoctetes a *xenos* therefore confirms the actual status of their acknowledgement. However, Neoptolemos, following the chorus, explicitly mentions that leaving Philoctetes behind would be immoral and therefore practically impossible. He grants the stranger a favour and to expect something in return is not an option, not even outside the scope of the story. The reason for this course of action is again revealed by the chorus: pity for a man who hates the same sons of Atreus as he himself does: the common denominator, making the two *xeniai*, *filoi*. However, neither BELFIORE nor BLUNDELL has taken into account that, although the plot of this play is hung up on this matter, amicable contact and the created trustworthiness between the two men is feigned and fake. Naturally, these are the details that make the difference between myth and tragedy. In my opinion therefore we may assume, that Sophocles consciously chose to use the confidentiality bound to the relationship of *filoi* in order to enlarge the dramatic effect within the play.

Ἔστιν μὲν οὖν τὸ φοβερὸν καὶ ἐλεεινὸν ἐκ τῆς ὀψεως γίγνεσθαι, ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς συστάσεως τῶν πραγμάτων, ὅπερ ἐστὶ πρότερον καὶ ποιητοῦ ἀμείνονος. δεῖ γὰρ καὶ ἄνευ τοῦ ὁρᾶν οὕτω συνεστάναι τὸν μῦθον ὥστε τὸν ἀκούοντα τὰ πράγματα γινόμενα καὶ φρίττειν καὶ ἐλεεῖν ἐκ τῶν συμβαινόντων.¹³⁸

¹³⁷ BELFIORE [2000] xvi This is almost literally stated in *Ajax* 521 ff, “Think of me also; a man should remember, should some pleasure come his way; for it is always one kindness that begets another, (...)”

¹³⁸ Aristoteles *Poetica* 1453b 1-6.

Now, what is fearful and pitiable can result from spectacle, but also from the actual structure of events, which is the higher priority and the aim of a superior poet. For the plot should be so structured, that even without seeing it performed, the person who hears the events that occur experiences horror and pity at what comes about.

The unreal friendship, the unjustified trust and especially the way, in which this is created within the tragic context, affects the fear and pity of the audience, later recognised by Aristotle as one of the most important features of an appreciated tragedy: *Xenia* approximating to *philia*, in order to make dramatics accumulate.

In her urge to understand and explain the relation between the two *xeniai*, BELFIORE has, in my opinion, gone too far. Her indication to consider "...xen-words in the first part of the play" as an indication of the importance of the concept *xenia* within the tragic context, is, in my opinion, far-fetched. Furthermore, the identification of possible historical formalities in a phase of encountering of *xeniai* is disputable; moreover I do not consider a discussion on any directive instructions, like Neoptolemos' curtseying to Philoctetes to be useful.¹³⁹ Also the ritual of initiation of *xenia* is not displayed in the tragedy, although BELFIORE recognises a strongly corrupted version of this ritual and blames this on poetic license. The question arises why Sophocles would have displayed something as bound to -unwritten- rules and regulations as a ritual, when these features are not clearly recognisable to his audience and in this case have the famous bow of Heracles stand for "...a powerful symbol of the instability of friendship, in large part because of its associations with *xenia* ritual."¹⁴⁰

I am, however, convinced that BELFIORE was right: the two men, not knowing each other, develop a bond of trust, comparable at last to a friendship. I would not, though, pin this special relationship down to a strict pattern of a ritual of initiation nor to any facets of it. With reference to chapter 3.1, this seems to be a matter of glorifying -their own- parents as an introduction to break the ice: being one of the mythological 'upper-crust' seems to assure positive treatment by your opponent, in the Sophoclean tragedies. Generations within the tragic context are considered to cover more than one family and are, regarding this tragedy,

¹³⁹ BELFIORE [2000]: successively p. 65-67 and 67.

¹⁴⁰ BELFIORE [2000] 65 and 68 She tries to convince the reader, that the bow is -more or less- part of a ritual of initiation of *xenia*, like the exchange of *pista*.

deployed to reduce the distance between the figures of the story and therewith enlarge the dramatic effect of the plot.¹⁴¹

4.1.3 *Concubines and bastardchildren*

In the 5th century B.C. an Athenian citizen was legally allowed to marry a lawful wife and have a concubine, with or without the citizen status, as well; marriage between citizens and non-citizens -for instance *metoikoi* or slaves- was forbidden. However, it becomes clear from two of Demosthenes' orations that from the relation between a citizen and a non-citizen, legal, freeborn children could be born.¹⁴² This, contrary to children born from the sexual intercourse between master and slaves, the latter being merely property.¹⁴³ We may assume that these children from a concubine had a certain relationship to their father, but one of lower status within the family, than the status of the children a man had with his lawful wife.¹⁴⁴

In the *Women of Trachis* the arrival of the acquired concubine of Heracles, Iole, is the actual cause of his death and finally the death of his wife, Deianeira. In this tragedy, the Demosthenes text seems to be recognisable, but not by far acceptable to all parties: "...we have hookers (*hetairai*) for physical excitement, mistresses (*pallakai*) to look after our day-to-day bodily comfort, and wives in order to procreate legitimate children and have a trustworthy custodian for the household."¹⁴⁵ In *Ajax*, Tecmessa is the concubine, she addresses herself as such and even openly realises the consequences of this status for her future, if Ajax would die. Still, Iole, as a concubine, seems to be more recognisable and relatable to other literary

¹⁴¹ This will be more elaborately discussed in chapter 3.4.

¹⁴² Cf. Dem. LIX 16-17, id. XXIII, 53-56. Here Draco's law of legitimate murder is cited. Whether this part of the law, which cannot be found in the remaining law-texts, was later added to the law or if it belonged to another part, which is not handed down, is not discussed in this work. Cf. GAGARIN, M., *Drakon and Early Athenian Homicide law*. New Haven 1981, 27; STROUD, R.S., *Drakon's homicide law*. Berkely 1968, 38, 60-64.

¹⁴³ There is still a lot of scholarly discussion on this theme though: HARTMANN [2002], 218: "Uneinigkeit besteht allerdings im Hinblick auf den rechtlichen Status der Kinder der Konkubine: BUERMAN (H., 'Drei Studien auf dem Gebiet des Attischen Rechts' in *Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum*, 1877/1878 vol. 9, p. 567-646 hier 570) etwa meint selbst wenn die *pallake* eine Sklavin sei, könnten die Kinder durch einen Legitimationsakt den Status von legitimen Kindern erhalten, d.h. Anteil an Erb- und Bürgerrecht bekommen. Andere bezweifeln (z.B. ERDMANN, W. *Die Ehe im Antiken Griechenland* in *Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung* XX, München 1934, p. 110) dies: Zwar sei die Konkubine >fast eine Ehefrau<, eine Sklavin-Konkubine könne jedoch nur illegitime Kinder hervorbringen." Cf. PATTERSON, C.B. 'Response to Claude Mossé' in *Symposion 1990 Vorträge zur griechischen und hellenistischen Rechtsgeschichte*, ed. CARGARIN, M., Köln 1991, p. 285

¹⁴⁴ Cf. HARTMANN [2002] p. 219 rightly criticizes SEALY, R., "On lawful concubinage in Athens." In *CA* 3, 1984, p. 111-133, for being very speculative on this subject, as does MOSSÉ C., "La place de la *pallake* dans la famille athénienne." In *Symposion 1990, Vorträge zur griechischen und hellenistischen Rechtsgeschichte*. (ed. GAGARIN, M.) Köln/Weimar/Wien 1991, p. 273-279.

¹⁴⁵ Demosthenes lix 122.

sources: only because of the fact that she is expected to live within Heracles' household with his legitimate wife, whereas Deianeira seems to have the status of legal wife as long as she is with Ajax, for the want of someone better.

It is striking that the arrival of a concubine, won in battle by Heracles, is covered by the people in order to protect Deianeira, who speaks to them, about the girl that is suddenly brought into her home, while her husband is still absent. This detail, to spare Deianeira and to provide her jealousy as a dramatic explanation, could be Sophocles' own idea: not one other source has provided us the reason for the emotional reaction of the woman and doubt on her husband's sexual faithfulness. The arrival of the concubine seems to be a plausible explanation for the emotional reaction of Deianeira in our modern minds, but if concubines were so common in Athens, the dramatic effect on the audience should have been very little. Deianeira's action would not have raised sympathy and would not even have been accepted by any –male- watcher of the play.¹⁴⁶

Sophocles however, clearly depends on this sympathy: When Deianeira tells Lichas that neither her husband, nor the concubine would have to fear her anger, because Eros even rules the gods themselves, Lichas has to admit, that he lied about the girl in order to save Deianeira.

Trachin. [472-489]

ΛΙ. Ἄλλ', ὦ φίλη δέσποιν', ἐπεὶ σε μανθάνω
θνητὴν φρονοῦσαν θνητὰ κοῦκ ἀγνώμονα,
πάν σοι φράσω τάληθές οὐδὲ κρύψομαι.
Ἔστιν γὰρ οὕτως ὥσπερ οἶτος ἐννέπει·
ταύτης ὁ δεινὸς ἱμερὸς ποθ' Ἡρακλῆ
διήλθε, καὶ τῆσδ' οὐνεχ' ἡ πολύφθορος
καθηρέθη πατρῶος Οἰχαλία δορί.
Καὶ ταῦτα, δεῖ γὰρ καὶ τὸ πρὸς κείνου
λέγειν,
οὔτ' εἶπε κρύπτειν οὔτ' ἀπηρνέθη ποτέ·
ἀλλ' αὐτός, ὦ δέσποινα, δειμαίνων τὸ σὸν
μὴ στέρνον ἀλγύνοιμι τοῖσδε τοῖς λόγοις,

LI. Well, dear mistress, since I can see that you,
being mortal, think like a mortal and not
unreasonably, I will tell you the whole truth, and
will not conceal it. Yes, it is just as this man says ;
a fearsome passion for this girl one day came over
Heracles, and it was for her sake that her
unfortunate native city of Oechalia was conquered
with the spear. And – for I must give him to his
due – he did not tell me
to conceal this or deny it, but I myself, mistress,

¹⁴⁶ Whether a concubine in classical Athens actually lived in the *oikos* of a man with his legitimate wife and to what extent she was depending on her lover is not sure. Cf. JUST, R., *Women in Athenian law and life*, London/New York 1989, 143-144. And PATTERSON [1991] p. 282. HARTMANN [2002] 216-217 obviously does think living with concubines and a legitimate wife was generally accepted in Athens. Her argumentation is however not very convincing and the limitations of this living arrangement, she mentions, do not seem to show much of a 'general acception'.

ἥμαρτον, εἴ τι τήνδ' ἁμαρτίαν νέμεις.
 Ἐπεὶ γε μὲν δὴ πάντ' ἐπίστασαι λόγον
 κείνου τε καὶ σὴν ἐξ ἴσου κοινὴν χάριν,
 καὶ στέργε τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ βούλου λόγους
 οὓς εἶπας ἐς τήνδ' ἐμπέδως εἰρηκέναι·
 ὥς τ' ἄλλ' ἐκείνος πάντ' ἀριστεύων χεροῖν
 τοῦ τῆσδ' ἔρωτος εἰς ἅπανθ' ἥσσω ἔφυ.

afraid I might wound your heart by telling you this
 story, did wrong, if you count any of this as wrong.

But since you know the whole story, both for his
 sake and your own show kindness to the woman,
 and wish the things you said regarding her not to
 have been said in vain. For he who in all other
 matters has excelled in might has been altogether
 vanquished by his passion for this girl.

If it is true, that concubines were so common in Athens that they were actually protected by law, as BOWRA stated, and if the relation between husband and wife was regularly so little affectionate that a woman would have never complained if a man would have a concubine, the question arises why Sophocles would make this jealousy the main and leading subject of this tragedy.¹⁴⁷ A theory about standards and values from a more distant past seems to be inappropriate: in the epics, trouble because of a concubine brought home by men -as treasures of war-, was already narrated of.¹⁴⁸ In my opinion the subject of the play should be considered in a broader, but more reserved sense, regarding not only drama but also society and therefore, again, Sophocles' audience. I therefore, agree with ALTMAYER and NICOLAI: "Sophokles' Einstellung zum Freiheits- und Rechtsanspruch des Mannes": "daß er einerseits den traditionell gewährten außerhäuslichen Spielraum (den auch Deianeira nicht in Frage stellt) 'natürlich' unangetastet lässt, andererseits jedoch die Demütigung der Ehefrau durch Aufnahme einer Konkubine ins Haus als Rücksichtslosigkeit verurteilt (...)"¹⁴⁹

When Pericles introduced his citizen laws in 451 BC, a major change of the legal interpretation of the status of bastardchildren occurred. Before, a strong discrepancy existed between the interpretations of the *genes* and those of the *phrattries* on the status of children born from Athenian male citizens and non-Athenian -metroxenic- women: *phrattries*

¹⁴⁷ BOWRA, C. M., *Sophoclean Tragedy*, Oxford 1967, 127 Cf. HARTMANN [2002] p. 234: "Während in den homerischen Epen häufiger davon Rede ist, dass der Herr eines Hauses nicht nur mit seiner Gattin, sondern noch mit einer zweiten Frau, seiner <Nebenfrau>, zusammenlebte, war es im Athen klassischer Zeit für einen Mann gänzlich verpönt, sexuelle Beziehungen zu mehreren Frauen, die in einem Haus lebten, zu unterhalten."

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Hom II 9, 446 ff.

¹⁴⁹ ALTMAYER, M., *Unzeitgemäßes Denken bei Sophokles* Stuttgart 2001, here 60. NICOLAI, W. *Zu Sophokles' Wirkungsabsichten*, Heidelberg 1992, 41.

acknowledged citizenship of these children, *genè* did not. The Periclean law agreed with the *phrattries*.

Athenian citizens could, from then on, only be born from an Athenian citizen and his, one, legal wife with citizen-status. In 413, after the Sicilian defeat, the Athenians obviously partly abandoned these strict regulations until 403 –the ordinance of Nicomenes. The loss of manpower caused them to grant children of parents who were not -yet- legally married, the citizen-status. Even children for instance born from adulterous contact between Athenian citizens and women with a citizen-status could become official citizens.

The most common words used in Greek literature on ‘concubine’ and ‘bastard’ are *παλλακη* and *νοθος*.¹⁵⁰ In the Sophoclean tragedies both words are only used once. In the *Women of Trachis*, Iole is being referred to as *παλλακη*. In *Ajax* Teucer calls himself a *νοθος*, Tecmessa however, says she will be a *όμεντις*, when Ajax dies and she is then left to be divided as warproperty between the generals. Still, these tragedies are the only ones of surviving plays, in which the status of the concubines and bastard is important for the course of the play or at least for the tragic context of the tragedy.

Unfortunately, no unequivocal image on the rights and status of concubines and bastardchildren is provided by all three tragedies. In *Ajax* there is not even a consistent image drawn within the tragedy itself. The following should be pointed out on forehand: As I explained in chapter 2.1, the mentioning of one’s descent and one’s parents or ancestors was used, in the tragic genre, in order to praise or insult the opponent. Regarding this particular tragedy the tragic context, with the different figures and their function within the course of action of this play, is of great importance to the interpretation of the mentioned parents and ancestors. Eurysaces is Ajax’ bastardson, because his mother is a concubine won in war -as is the mother of Teucer, Ajax’ halfbrother-. As was also mentioned before, the legal status of the child does not change the expectations the father has of his son. The expectations Ajax has of his son are the same as he thinks his father has of him. Furthermore, we should keep in

¹⁵⁰ As the opposite of these words we often may find *κασιγνήτος* as a description of legitimate heirs. Most of my information on concubines and bastardchildren is based on LACEY [1968]; OGDEN, D. *Greek Bastardy, in the classical and Hellenistic periods* (Oxford 1996); PATTERSON, C., ‘Those Athenian bastards’ in *Class. Ant.* 9/1 39-73 (1990). For an elaborate discussion of the variety of opinions expressed on certain matters related to this subject, I will refer to the authors per page. Here: PATTERSON argues, that the word *νοθος* is only used to describe ‘fatherless’ children. In my opinion OGDEN (p. 1-28) convincingly shows, that this is not the case and that this word could refer to all children which were born outside the legal marriage. To what extent this marriage had to be between two Athenian citizens, will be more elaborately discussed in the next chapter.

mind that the idea of Teucer being an inferior brother does not come to Ajax' mind when he first of all promises his son Teucer will take care of bringing him to Telemon and further on, when he flees Zeus, shortly before his death, to assure that Teucer will find his lifeless body, because he is obligated, as a brother, to grant him an honourable funeral.

Why does Ajax not explicitly acknowledge this difference between a legitimate child and a bastardson? Are values from the -mythological- past displayed here, or is it an anachronism to even determine 'differences'? Firstly we should keep in mind the fact that Ajax did not have any other son: nobody else to pass on his -emotional- legacy, nor a comparable other for us. Still, the difference *is* made, not by Ajax, but by the furious Agamemnon against Teucer, when he is preparing the funeral Ajax wished for. At the sight of Ajax lifeless body, Teucer realises as well that their father will be less happy seeing him coming home, than he would have been if roles had been reversed and he would have died: he has failed to protect his loved brother. Furthermore Tecmessa, as mentioned before, realises very adequately that she, being part of the spoils of war, will be handed over to another general of the Greek army, when Ajax dies.

Ajax [1006-1020]

Ποῖ γὰρ μολεῖν μοι δυνατόν, εἰς ποίους
βροτούς,
τοῖς σοῖς ἀρήξαντ' ἐν πόνοισι μηδαμοῦ;
Ἦ πού <με> Τελαμών, σὸς πατὴρ ἐμός θ'
ἄμα,
δέξαιτ' ἂν εὐπρόσωπος ἰλεώς τ' ἴσως
χωροῦντ' ἄνευ σοῦ· πῶς γὰρ οὔχ; ὅτῳ
πάρῃ
μηδ' εὐτυχοῦντι μηδὲν ἥδιον γελᾶν.

Οὗτος τί κρύψει; ποῖον οὐκ ἐρεῖ κακόν,
τὸν ἐκ δορὸς γεγῶτα πολεμίου νόθον,
τὸν δειλίᾳ προδόντα καὶ κακανδρίᾳ
σέ, φίλτατ' Αἴας, ἢ δόλοισιν, ὥς τὰ σὰ
κράτη θανόντος καὶ δόμους νέμοιμι σούς.

Τοιαῦτ' ἀνὴρ δύσσοργος, ἐν γήρᾳ βαρύς,
ἐρεῖ, πρὸς οὐδὲν εἰς ἔριν θυμούμενος:

Where can I go among what mortals,

I who was not there to help you in your troubles?

Smiling and kindly, I imagine, will be my welcome
from Telamon, your father and also mine, when I
come there without you! Of course, seeing that even
when fortune is good it is not this way to smile more
graciously!

What will he keep back? What evil will he not speak
of me, the bastard born of the prize he won in battle,
the betrayer, in my cowardice and weakness, of you,
dearest Ajax, or in my cunning, so that with you
dead I might control you lordship and your house?
Such words will be uttered by a man who is
irascible, fierce in old age, and quick to quarrel
angrily over nothing.

As discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis, this passage reveals the fact that the image of a father and his expectations can be seen completely different by two sons. This, naturally, underlines the mutual dependence of an outing within a tragedy and the figure expressing it, as argued in the introduction of this thesis. Concomitantly it seems to be an opportunity to try to view the difference between the two brothers from the angle of the bastardson as well.

As described above, children, according to Athenian law, could only be Athenian citizens, when born out of the marriage between two Athenian citizens. Basically *nothoi* did not have any right to their father's legacy, but in return they did not have the obligation to take care of their father in old age. However, when there was no other heir in the family, which meant: not one family member genetically related to this father, a *nothos* could inherit his property.¹⁵¹ This situation was therefore merely precluded. Adoption however formed another possibility. In the absence of a legitimate heir a father of a *nothos* could decide to adopt his illegitimate son to be his successor and to leave him his property and the family name.¹⁵²

From this point of view Ajax was not only Telemon's firstborn son, but also his only legitimate son with all rights, duties and obligations related to this 'status'. Teucer would, even after Ajax' death, not be able to claim the inheritance of Telemon, unless the old man would adopt him as his legitimate son.¹⁵³ Teucer's fear is understandable for the audience watching the play, even though Ajax himself does provide us with another image of his father. The fact that both Tecmessa and Teucer, separately, emphasise the differences between a bastard and a legitimate child and between a legitimate wife and a concubine, even though Ajax himself ignores these facts completely, dramatizes his death even more. The fact that Ajax' dubblerole is not at all disturbed in its perfection can be connected to the absence of legitimate children: Eurysaces is his only son and can therefore be accepted as his lawful heir, assuming that he would adopt the child. His monologue towards the young child is not a testimony of insanity or of outrage, nor does it show thoughtlessness of his action to come. As

¹⁵¹ Cf. Arist. *Birds* 1661-6 Cf.; HARTMANN [2001] 218, Plut. *Them. 1*

¹⁵² With which the *nothos* would obtain the duty to take care of his father and stepmother in old age and fulfil his (religious) duties after their death. The bastardson was officially adopted into the family of his father and therewith broke all boundaries with the family of his biological mother.

¹⁵³ Cf. LACEY (1968) 94; 106-107 and OGDEN (1996) 33-37 regarding *epikleroi* and Draco's and Solon's law on this.

mentioned above this monologue, mirroring Ajax as two generations, emphasises how measured and altruistic his suicide actually is.¹⁵⁴

4.2. The influence of other positions of power within the tragic context

4.2.1 *Gender*

The image, which generally is provided by Greek literature on the position of women in 5th century Athens, makes most modern feminists' flesh creep: "The woman's place is in the home, the man's place is outside."¹⁵⁵; "The greatest glory is hers whose is least talked about by men, whether in praise or in blame."¹⁵⁶ In all Greek tragedies women tend to exceed their 'authority' obviously only because of the fact that none of the tragedies actually takes place within the *oikos*, and because in most of the Sophoclean tragedies heroines are displayed.¹⁵⁷

Explanations for this discrepancy between descriptions of the position of Greek females in the Athenian society and the way they were put on stage in the tragedies are very divers, but can be summarized into main lines: (1) the limitations imposed on women in daily life causes tragedy to present the opposite.¹⁵⁸ Tragedy would in this case actually present

¹⁵⁴ If children of concubines could be legitimate or/and have civil status can not be determined for sure. Cf. HARTMANN [2002], p. 218.

¹⁵⁵ Xenophon *Oeconomicos* 7.30

¹⁵⁶ Thuc. II 45.2.

¹⁵⁷ POMEROY, S.B. *Godesses, whores, wives and slaves* (New York 1975) sees the fact, that most women in tragedies in any case deviate from the (ideal) historical standards: their actions and conversations mostly take place outside of their *oikos*. Cf. HARTMANN [2002] on the division of tasks between man and women in classical Athens. Hartmann shows that women were, in some circumstances, active outside the house.(cf. SCHMITT PANTEL, P. "Die Differenz der Geschlechter, Geschichtswissenschaft, Ethnologie und die griechische Stadt der Antike" in *Geschlecht und Geschichte. Ist eine weibliche Geschichtsschreibung möglich?* (ed. PERROT, M.) Frankfurt a.M. 1989, 199-252.) And (HARTMANN [2002] 119): "Die beispielsweise von Xenophon empfohlene Aufgabenverteilung, die für die Männer Tätigkeiten außerhalb, für Frauen diejenigen innerhalb des Hauses vorsieht, hat demnach wenig mit einer realen Arbeitsverteilung zu tun." Xen. *Oik.* 7, 22-25. NB. Futheron in her monography, HARTMANN [2002] 122 states that "In der Tragödie ist die Metapher des Joches (ed. Concerning 'Jochgemeinschaft der Ehe') in anderen Zusammenhängen mitunter durchaus negative besetzt, wenn beispielsweise vom >Joch der Sklaverei< die Rede ist." I do not consider this comparison to be right: the reference to Ai. 944 Oid. T. 826. In these plays no reference can be found to the so called 'yoke' of marriage and the words here are taken out of their context.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. SEIDENSTICKER B., "Women on the tragic stage" in *History, tragedy, theory* ed. By GOFF, B., Austin 1995, hier 151: "Despite the manifold problems presented by the grave limitations of our material and by the nature of the available sources, the combined efforts of historians, philologists, philosophers, anthropologists, archaeologists, historians of medicine, and others have established a general picture that is basically clear and widely accepted, even if many details are still controversial." SEIDENSTICKER, in his article summarises the life of the Athenian woman and lists the most important scholarly work on this subject. NB. SEIDENSTICKER in this article, has another opinion. More on this in the next chapter.

reality; other literary sources show an ideal image.¹⁵⁹ (2) Drama is fiction and is for this reason not comparable to Athenian society in any way.¹⁶⁰

It cannot be determined to what extent the position and role of women is presented according to reality in any Greek literary source, nor is it possible to conclude such from the quotations, mentioned above. These quotations of Xenophon, Thucydides and Demosthenes should be reviewed within their original context in order to pass any judgement on them. Furthermore: "...we have to keep in mind that the archaeological and literary sources provide us with a set of rules but do not show us how the game was played in reality." In his article SEIDENSTICKER strongly reduced the possible differences between historical reality and the image displayed of women in the tragic genre: "As a rule the action takes place in the immediate vicinity of the private domain, (...) Part of the public space with which Greek theatre presents, can pretend to be private. It is therefore quite wrong to assume the public quality of an action or a situation simply on the basis of its being performed or happening outside the stage-building. (...) In many tragedies, in which women play the central part, the choruses consist of close confidantes of the heroine (friends, slaves, or fellow-sufferers). This establishes a rather private public that comes close to social reality."¹⁶¹

Although the role of women in Sophoclean tragedies is not part of the central theme of my research, and moreover the judgement of historicity on this role is not necessary for this thesis either, it is important to be able to estimate the importance of the interaction with or the influence on several relationships between people of different generations within the tragic context. SEIDENSTICKER's contribution to the scientific discussion on this subject is, in my opinion, very convincing and supported by the image of women's roles in Sophoclean tragedies.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. GOMME, A.W. *The position of women in Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.* in "Essays in Greek History and Literature" (Oxford 1937) 89-115. KITTO, H.D.F., *The Greeks*, Harmondsworth 1958, 219-236. RICHTER, D.C. "Women in Classical Athens" in *CJ* LXVII (1971) 1-8.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. SLATER (1968) GOMME (1937) nuances this, by explaining that women in the Attic tragedies are derived from the epic model and insofar can not be related to the Athenian society, a possibility, which he himself denies for that matter in the following. POMEROY (1975) remarks that poets were largely bound to the mythology the tragedies were based on: in order to have acts of heroism take place, nothing else remained than bringing the women into action to serve this tragic goal. Herewith she seems to declare that these 'tragic' women could only act like this because of the fictional background of the stories told.

¹⁶¹ SEIDENSTICKER's argumentation is clearly much more elaborate than mine and is based on several factualities and general aspects of Greek drama, substantiated by numerous examples from Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*; Sophocles' *Trachiniae* and Euripides' *Medea*. His basic assumption is that the historical image of women and their position in society in 5th century Athens is actually very easily comparable to the image displayed in tragedies.

Women in the Sophoclean tragedies are not completely unrecognisable, as some scholars tend to state. Their position in relation to men for instance, is more than once emphasised and even pointed out to be the actual cause of their rebellious actions.¹⁶² As a reader, and probably as a viewer of the play as well, one is put to test several times.¹⁶³ In *Elektra* for example Chrysothemis seems to come close to Thucydides' image: she submissively accepts her fate, does not object to her new guardian and even judges Elektra for her actions in the dialogue between the sisters about revenge. In Chrysothemis' opinion Elektra brought her trouble down on herself: living her life as a slave in her own house, although being born a noble woman. She too, regrets the situation, but acts as she is supposed to, so as to be able to live in freedom.

Elektra [328-340]

Τίν' αὖ σὺ τήνδε πρὸς θυρῶνος ἐξόδοις
ἐλθοῦσα φωνεῖς, ὦ κασιγνήτη, φάτιν,
κοῦδ' ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ διδαχθῆναι θέλεις
θυμῷ ματαίῳ μὴ χαρίζεσθαι κενά;
Καίτοι τοσοῦτόν γ' οἶδα κάμαντὴν ὅτι
ἀλγῶ πῖ τοῖς παροῦσιν· ὥστ' ἄν, εἰ σθένος
λάβοιμι, δηλώσαιμ' ἂν οἷ' αὐτοῖς φρονῶ·
νῦν δ' ἐν κακοῖς μοι πλεῖν ὑφειμένη δοκεῖ,
καὶ μὴ δοκεῖν μὲν δρᾶν τι, πημαίνειν δὲ μή·
τοιαῦτα δ' ἄλλα καὶ σὲ βούλομαι ποεῖν.
Καίτοι τὸ μὲν δίκαιον οὐχ ἦ γὰρ λέγω,
ἀλλ' ἦ σὺ κρίνεις· εἰ δ' ἐλευθέραν με δεῖ
ζῆν, τῶν κρατούντων ἐστὶ πάντ' ἀκουστέα·

What are these things that you have come out to say by the door we leave the house by, my sister? And will you not learn, after so long, not to indulge in futile fashion your useless anger? Why, I know this much about myself, that the present situation grieves me; so that if I had the power I should show them what are my feelings towards them. But as things are I think that in time of trouble I must lower my sails, and not seem to perform some deed, but do them no harm; and I would like you to follow suit. I know, justice lies not in what I say, but in what you judge; but if I am to live in freedom, I must obey those in power in everything.

The last verse of the passage above needs to be paid some more attention, in my opinion.¹⁶⁴ Through the pressure that is put on both pronouns, Chrysothemis points out to Elektra, that she does not expect her sister to listen to her, nor understand her words, but that she herself *has* to act this way. This sentence could be read retrospectively. To the Athenian public, or

¹⁶² Cf. SEIDENSTICKER (1995)

¹⁶³ The female role of Deianeira in *Trachinierinnen* is elaborately discussed by SEIDENSTICKER. Of the other tragedies, *Elektra* and *Antigone* are the most appealing ones for this thesis. This, of course, does not entail that I consider the roles of females in other tragedies to be of less importance to the plot or to the theme of the play.

¹⁶⁴ The scholarly discussion on a Sophistic undertone of Chrysothemis' utterances following this sentence, are irrelevant here. In this regard see: KELLS, J.H., *Sophocles Elektra*, Cambridge 1973.

the modern reader, this shortly but strongly indicates that the history of Elektra's mourning, has only been shown from her point of view up until now. Καίτοι designates emphasis motivated by contrast here. This contrast can be found in the preceding: Chrysothemis would have wanted Elektra to take her advice. Chrysothemis does *not* admit that her way of handling the situation is unjust and Elektra's way is just, as many scholars assume.¹⁶⁵ She does however, point out that Elektra considers her acts to be just (κρίνεις) and that she cannot get through to her.

So, on the one hand we may conclude from this that Chrysothemis was not as submissive as she seemed at first sight. On the other hand, their position of unmarried women without a father, although explicitly mentioned by Elektra before, becomes really vivid because of the fact that Chrysothemis seems to adapt to the role, which would be expected of a woman in this situation. Elektra accuses her sister of being a coward, which is easy for an audience to agree with, comparing Chrysothemis attitude to Elektra's planning in order to take control of her life. However, Chrysothemis' reservation, is not based on fear, but on well-considered stratagems to achieve the best out of the worst situation, knowing that anything else will make her unable to do anything anymore. Is it Elektra being thoughtlessly stubborn or would a 5th century audience consider Chrysothemis to be disrespectful to her father?

This apparent antithesis did not even over centuries deprive the protagonist of her heroic character; to the contrary: Sophocles, in my opinion, enlarged the effect by pointing their fate out to the public, not only through words but also through consequences and through Elektra's opponent being her opposite, when she is actually her alter ego. Elektra could, as a heroine, not voice the standards and values of society without reducing the strength of her role and therewith damaging the plot of the play. Chrysothemis, as the pitying background-figure was ideal in order to explicitly express the social aspects of being a woman, without a husband, whose father died. On close analysis, the attitude of both women towards their father, their mother and her lover is the same and is actually confirmed by these seeming contradictions in their utterances.

¹⁶⁵ KELLS [1973] and KAMERBEEK [1974] do not pay enough attention to the word καίτοι in this regard, which inevitably contains a contradiction with the preceding text. Kamerbeek interprets after Denniston καίτοι as "an objection of the speakers own". In principle this is correct; one should however complete this with the fact that the objection consists out of the words Chrysothemis said about Elektra.

The position of the two women in *Elektra* strengthens the bond between the figures of one generation: the children. Within the complex familiar situation of the *Antigone*, this seems to be different. Creon is not only Antigone's guardian, but also represents her future father in law and king. The conflict of interests (of bedoel je conflicts of interest?), standards and values between polis and *oikos* is covered by the relationship between these two figures, and forms the largest part of the plot of this play and is possibly the most discussed theme of the tragic genre amongst modern scholars. However, the fact that Antigone acts against a man though being a woman, is mostly left undiscussed. The question arises to what extent it is necessary to review Creon's position of power separately from the other facets of their relation.

Why does Antigone, a woman, violate a law forced upon her by a man? Creon could not rewrite the divine laws with his own human regulations, as he said himself. Because of the genetic relation between Antigone and Creon, her divine obligation to bury *both* of her brothers concerns him too: why does Creon say not to be willing to accept the rules of a woman?¹⁶⁶ Creon and Antigone both seem to be convinced of themselves, doing what is right, doing what is just. They do not show any consideration for their opponent and the audience must have been confused: did the laws of the polis or the ones of the *oikos* rule this situation? Were both divinely evenly supported?

Without the necessity, the place, the plot or even the moral of this tragedy within the historical context or dramatic perspective to gain this insight, it becomes clear that Antigone represents the *oikos* and Creon the polis. Although her moral struggle against Creon is not particularly feminine, Antigone's motives are. As SEIDENSTICKER emphasises: "In drama as in life, women live, above all, for the family, as wife or mother, as daughter or sister. The girls wait impatiently for their wedding day or lament the loss of their dreams. The women are concerned for their marriage, their husbands and their children for whom they would fight and sacrifice themselves for and grieve their fates. (...)”¹⁶⁷

Although Sophocles was bound to the left over children of Oedipous, Antigone and Ismene, as Eteocles and Polyneikes killed each other, again, he managed to benefit from this predestined mythic situation:¹⁶⁸ Only woman could have promoted the affairs of the *oikos* within this plot; no other than Antigone, being close enough and far away enough from king

¹⁶⁶ As he himself puts under words in his dialogue with Haimon 676-678. The political position of power of Creon will be more elaborately discussed in the next chapter.

¹⁶⁷ SEIDENSTICKER, (1995), 157

¹⁶⁸ POMEROY (1975) 93-93

and crown could have initiated this struggle with him. Remarkably, Antigone does not have to continue her fight to the end. Her position as a woman completely suits her motives and actions within the tragic context until the moment she has to defend herself before Creon. Her defence of course is her motive and Creon punishes her for her disobedience as a citizen. She undergoes her punishment as a woman: submissively. Haemon continues her plea.

Haemon, in my opinion, voices Antigone's masculinity: with Haemon at her side, the discussion on gender and the male position of power perishes. (bedoel je dat de discussie "dood" gaat of juist nieuw leven krijgt? (flourishes)). He can substantiate her arguments which also matter to Creon as king of the polis, for example by telling him, that the people support Antigone. The fact that Creon even now stubbornly sticks to his regime and his own rules and regulations, causes the actual conflict of generations. In chapter 4.1 I will more elaborately discuss this cause, the origins and character of this conflict.

4.2.2 *Political positions of power*

In Sophoclean tragedies many figures besides gender-aspect, are classified by positions of power. In *Antigone* and *Oedipous Tyrannus* the plot of the tragedies is mainly centred around political leaders: Creon and Oedipous. In other tragedies the political leaders are shown to be more moderate and play a less egocentric role like Theseus in *Oedious Colonos*. In *Philoctetes* Odysseus commands the fleet. In *Ajax* several generals play a part in the tragedy: Menelaos, Agamemnon, Odysseus and Ajax himself. The underlying question within this tragedy is who would have the greatest power of them all. In *Elektra* and *Antigone* Aegisthos and Creon -also- develop into tyrants in domestic surroundings. Surprisingly these men themselves hardly speak compared to the other figures in the tragedies: we as contemporary readers can only judge 'their tyranny' as it was experienced by those other figures. In the following chapter I will determine to what extent -political- leadership was of influence on the generation-relationships and vice versa within the tragic context where this can be expected.

EHRENBERG, in the context of his actual aims, considered Oedipous and Creon to be clearly separated from all the other rulers, generals and leaders, in order to compare the two of them in his later work, to Pericles.¹⁶⁹ "A very brief survey will confirm that none of Sophocles' characters but Creon in *Antigone* and Oedipus in *Oedipus Tyrannus* can claim a

¹⁶⁹ EHRENBERG, V. *Sophocles and Pericles*, Oxford 1953, 51-73 en 105 – 113. In the next chapter I will more elaborately discuss this comparison with history

similar ‘political’ significance.” Obviously this observation strongly depends on the interpretation of ‘political’. To start of with Creon: I have already mentioned that Sophocles made him divide polis and *oikos* on one hand by making him indicate both as separate institutes. On the other hand Sophocles lets him overrule this division, because Creon believes his political credibility depends on his behaviour in the *oikos*.

In my opinion, Sophocles again chose a timeless theme: private life of public people is never private. They serve, in everyone’s centre of interest, whether they want to or not, as an example for the rest of society. Creon was right, in a way: Polyneikes was punished by him as he would have punished any other person committing the same crime. His action and determination -stubbornness- however did *not* turn out to be right, as is shown when Haemon tell him the People of Thebes do not consider the punishment of Antigone to be justified. According to many scholars, Creon was being led (= werd geleid, bedoel je “Creon was leading both as a tyrant...” as a tyrant and as a father by his, in his eyes ‘natural’ authority, and doing so put his own authority above that of the gods, which made the tragic conflict evolve.¹⁷⁰ Striking is the fact that his actions, determination and wrong choices have no political but therefore very large personal consequences on his private life and *oikos*. In my opinion, the tragic plot is probably created the opposite way and the basics are to be sought in the conflict of generations between Creon and Haemon. As announced before, I will discuss this conflict more elaborately in chapter 4.1. Here I will try to clarify why the discrepancy between polis and *oikos*, combined with the discussion on the highest power, is not so much the actual cause of this conflict, but moreover a -possibly consciously chosen- inducement of the tragic conflict.

Firstly the question should be asked why the consequences of Creon’s actions and choices effect his *oikos* but not at all the polis, nor his subjects, when this tragedy based on a conflict between *oikos* and polis, Antigone versus Creon, should actively show that tyranny is not preferable and was supposed to be staged as a bad example for the audience. That a polis could very well be punished for the wrongs of the head of state becomes clear in *Oedipous Tyrannus*. Creon is only ‘punished’ in a personal way.

Furthermore Creon’s decision to leave Polyneikes unburied was known and permitted before as well. From the Homeric epics we know the punishment for the dead and their family not allowing them a proper burial. In *Ajax* too we recognise the fear for this punishment when

¹⁷⁰ In the next chapter the comparison with Pericles will become more clear.

Ajax flees Zeus to make sure his brother finds his body first. The fact that Creon, as a family member of the wrongdoer, finds himself in a difficult situation is obvious. But was he in a position to handle this any other way? That Creon was a godless figure and had positioned his power above the power of the gods is directly at variance with his acts: why otherwise would he have denied Polyneikes a funeral? Creon has already made a separation between his acts as a statesman and his acts as head of his *oikos* at the very beginning of the tragedy. His decisions are based on the events: Polyneikes seized power over the state and had to be appropriately punished. The most effective way to punish the dead is by denying him the crossover from Styx into Hades. A struggle for the highest power, always won by the gods and by those at their side, is out of the question here.

As mentioned above, Antigone is the obvious figure to be the personification of the domestic, the *oikos*. Remarkably, in his rage of anger about Antigone's actions, Creon himself accuses her of acting like a man as if she has political power before even mentioning the familiar relationship between them.

Antigone [484-489]

Ἦ νῦν ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἀνὴρ, αὕτη δ' ἀνὴρ,
εἰ ταῦτ' ἀνατὶ τῆδε κείσεται κράτη.
'Αλλ' εἴτ' ἀδελφῆς εἴθ' ὁμαιμονεστέρα
τοῦ παντὸς ἡμῖν Ζηνὸς Ἐρκείου κυρεῖ,
αὕτη τε χὶ ξύναιμος οὐκ ἀλύξετον
μόρου κακίστου·

Indeed, now I am no man, but she is a man, if she is to enjoy such power as this with impunity.

But whether she is my sister's child or closer in affinity than our whole family linked by Zeus of the hearth, she and her sister shall not escape a dreadful death.

Mostly Creon's honour is injured: for now there does not seem reason to change his judgement nor to doubt his own decisions.

When Antigone disappears from stage and Haemon takes over her defence, a comparison to Romeo and Juliet is almost inevitable. Defending his future wife, Haemon however does not call on his love for her as an argument to save her. He says to voice the opinion of the people of Thebes and emphasises his loyalty to his father over and over again. This does not alter the fact that he, as his son now feels obliged to point out to his father the mistakes he is bound to make. Although Haemon is being supported by the chorus Creon disregards his warnings arguing that the boy could never know better than a man of his age. It is only in this fight that Creon uses his power over Antigone, as a man over a woman, his

power as head of the state and his power over Haemon as a father over his son. The cause of his decision lies not in his tyranny, nor in his godlessness and at the very most it ends in foolishness form of inability.

Not only examining *Antigone* the question rises to what extent political power overrules, underlies or otherwise influences the relations between figures of different generations within the tragic context. Let us start of by studying *Oedipus Tyrannus*: The tragic plot of this tragedy exists out of Oedipus finding out that his wife is his mother and his children are his siblings; that he killed his own father trying to avoid just that. Still he seems to make a difference between his duties as a statesman and his obligations as head of his *oikos* –even when he realises the complicity and overlap of these two roles.

The most remarkable about this tragedy, which tells the most dramatic ‘conflict of generations’ ever, is the fact, that there is no contact between people of different generations at all. Although Oedipus’ position of power is annulled by his own passion and drive finally to uncover himself as his father’s murderer, this is the only result of his political power. The interaction between political power and the conflict of generations within the tragic context is of great importance to the play’s plot. This interaction however, does not have any influence on the relation between figures of different generations within the tragic context, as was the case in *Antigone*.

In *Oedipus Colonus* Creon and Theseus deploy their power in struggle for Oedipus’ heirs. Also in this tragedy the contact between the rulers and people of another generation is hardly displayed. Both parties however realise that his children are of great importance to Oedipus. As a confirmation of the bad intentions which Oedipus accuses him of, Creon admits having captured Ismene and is planning on taking Antigone with him in order to force the old man back to Thebes. Theseus however, making grand slam, gets both the girls back to Oedipus promising him to fulfil his last wish as a father to take care of them, protect them when Oedipus dies and eventually marry them off. This interaction between generation-relations, specifically the father daughter relation, and political power, functions as metaphor in this tragedy: an example of good and bad and using and *misusing* one’s power.

Odysseus can be found as an army general twice in the Sophoclean tragedies in *Ajax* and in *Philoctetes*. In this last tragedy he converts his powers as captain of the fleet into the fatherly

treatment of Neoptolemos. In the following chapter I will elaborately discuss the well-considered underlying thoughts behind and consequences of this treatment. For now, the question rises to what extent Odysseus actually has military power. Choosing this approach: was this a purely strategic choice, or was he forced to this choice somehow? Neoptolemos is king and captain of a fleet himself. He is less experienced -a given fact, which Odysseus will exploit- but he has his family-name and the inheritable fame of his ancestors and father. This was not unknown to Sophocles' audience and it was mentioned explicitly several times in the tragedy. Rather troublesome, as in so many cases examining tragedy, is the mythic character of the figures: they are not historic people, although we sometimes tend to forget this. If they would have been historic, Neoptolemos' ancestors would probably have made him at least equal Odysseus on a military level.

Still, concerning this tragedy, it could be doubted if it was his status what made Odysseus intimidate Neoptolemos. In my opinion the difference of age, even the difference of generation between the two men is the decisive, not Odysseus' military power or status. Neoptolemos himself however, also plays the part provided to him by Odysseus: he is the inexperienced young man wanting to achieve fame who gets carried away. In the next chapter I will expound the crucial importance for the course of this tragic plot.

4.3. Sociological Political Generations

In the course of history tragedies have been studied minimised carefully, objectively and daringly radically as well, punctuated with modern interpretation. Historical celebrities were found in displayed mythological heroes and daily concerns on stage were thought to be mirroring 5th century society. In the same line of thoughts, conflicts between people of different generations within the tragic context have been read as reflections of social conflicts between several social groups or even historical people.

Very interesting examples are the comparisons between statesman Pericles and tragic figures such as Creon, Oedipus and Ajax. Especially EHRENBURG in his works has emphasised the similar interests of Sophocles and Pericles and their mutual influence. STRAUSS describes Creon, in his leadership acting and even feeling like a father who by doing so therefore mixes up his roles as *kyrios* and tyrant. To me it seems opposite: Creon points out that he could not be taken seriously as a political leader if he would allow any protests as a *kyrios*. According to Strauss, the similarity between Pericles and Creon would be that both men have to

recognise that: "... the adoption of a stern paternal tone in public is no guarantee of obedience by his son. Kreon's failure was greater, but neither man was able to ensure either *philia* obedience or the survival of the tightly controlled rule which both advocated (...)." ¹⁷¹

EHRENBURG's work on Pericles adds, that Creon "...lives in a world in which the gods have no say, a world of purely human and political standards." ¹⁷² His comparison between the two men is mostly concluded from Thucydides' funeral speech for Pericles. EHRENBURG however does not encounter the fact that, in all probability, the *Antigone* was written somewhere between 440 and 450 BC, because Pericles died in 429 and the historical correctness of the Thucydides' work is often doubted. That the words used in the funeral-speech show some similarities to Sophocles' tragedies is only in advantage of a recognisable dramatic recurrence of the tragic text instead of the other way around. EHRENBURG says to, "...have tried to show that Sophocles, when he created the great figures of his kings Creon and Oedipus was, consciously or unconsciously, under the impact of Pericles' leadership of the State." ¹⁷³ This however, could only prove that the *Antigone*, only twenty years after its first performance, was just as appreciated as it is today.

Another Sophoclean tragedy has possibly been examined even more by modern scholars and considered to be a 'translation' of the historical truth: *Philoctetes*. The theme of this play could have its origins in political-social generation-conflicts in Athens at the time the play was performed. The figures in the play do not reflect specific historical figures but moreover voice, at least partly, the opinion of social and political groups of the society. In the following I will discuss the diverse scholarly views on this and examine to what extent a comparison between tragedy and society is justified or maybe even necessary.

An analysis of *Philoctetes* based on generation-relations and generation-conflicts is not easy. In *Philoctetes*, the only remaining Sophoclean tragedy, none of the figures is related genetically or familiarly. ¹⁷⁴ Also in this tragedy however, allusions are regularly made on the relations between young and old, through which generations were defined and can be clearly

¹⁷¹ STRAUSS (1993) 136.

¹⁷² EHRENBURG [1956]

¹⁷³ EHRENBURG [1956]

¹⁷⁴ Therefore the concept 'generation' will not be used in the genealogical sense of the word, but only be based on the difference in age between the figures, which, among other things, is expressed within the tragic context through forms of address.

separated from each other. Concomitantly, Odysseus' utterances and attitude towards Neoptolemos make us suspect the basis for a generation-conflict. At the beginning of the play, even before the course of action has actually started, Odysseus presupposes that Neoptolemos' rejection of his plans is due to his naivety and lack of experience [96-99]. This presumption seems to make the difference in generation between the two men responsible for their 'other differences' and therewith the fact that the mission almost fails to succeed.

Another dimension is added to the examination of the functionality of generation-relations if this discussion on the possible reflection of society would be taken into account. Why would Sophocles have consciously staged his figures voicing social or political groups of society?¹⁷⁵ His own political relations in the eventful times of a citystate at war and the rising Sophistic movements in the Athenian polis made scholars search for elementary similarities between tragedy and reality. As ROSE rightly noticed however, observing these tragedies it is of great importance to note that "Sophocles was a poet, a dramatist –not a philosopher, political scholar, or a pamphleteer." But, "...adequate consideration of the text itself must include the poet's use of and departures from traditional material known to his audience. It must also include the connotations for a contemporary audience of the word- and image-clusters he uses. Such considerations in turn involve awareness of the social and political realities shared by the poet and his audience."¹⁷⁶

Nobody will doubt that, if Sophocles or one of his colleague poets was influenced by the time and space they lived in, they wrote their pieces and put them on stage. Nonetheless it can not be emphasised enough that our lack of comments from the authentic audience, the people of Athens, as well as the list of which tragedy won what prize at the festival, make any judgement on the emotions caused by tragedies impossible. Without passing over many interpretations of the last century, I do think Sophocles had more in mind than illustrating a myth on stage. SEGAL presented the theme of the play and rightly dissociated: "... the conflict between individual and society. This is clearly an important theme in the play, as are related themes of the search for heroic identity, the nature of heroism, language and communication,

¹⁷⁵ Further on in this chapter I will discuss the characterisation of the different figures as representatives of social generations and the secondary literature, examining this subject. Cf. ZIMMERMANN, B. 'Generationenkonflikt im Griechisch-Römischen Drama' in *WJA* 22 (1998) 21-32; VISSER, T., *Untersuchungen zum Sophokleischen Philoktet*, Stuttgart und Leipzig 1998; SEGAL, *Sophocles' tragic world*, Cambridge 1995; WINNINGTON-INGRAM, R.P., *Sophocles: an interpretation*, Cambridge 1994.

¹⁷⁶ The conclusion, that ROSE, P.W., *Sons of the Gods, Children of the Earth. Ideology and Literary Form in Ancient Greece*, London 1992, drew from this, I do not completely agree with. Details concerning my opinion will be discussed in the last chapter.

the role of friendship and cooperation in society, the origins of human civilization, the Sophistic question of inborn nature versus education, and the tensions between traditional aristocratic ideals and the Athenian democracy.”¹⁷⁷ Again without wanting to advance the meaning of this fact to a central question, we may conclude that these themes were frequently brought up in this tragedy in various ways.

Obviously a conflict of generations is mainly based on the difference in generation between the two arguing figures: Odysseus and Neoptolemos. As shown above different generations can be clearly separated from each other within the tragic context. Furthermore the importance of the recognition of these different generations becomes clear from the insinuations on familiar relations within the mythical context. All this however still does not assure us that generational differences definitely underlie the tragic conflict in *Philoctetes* between Oysseus and Neoptolemos.¹⁷⁸ Odysseus considers himself to be the older and wiser than Neoptolemos; in the course of this tragedy however it can be doubted whether Neoptolemos actually acts from naivety or inexperience, as Odysseus makes it appear. In this paragraph I will examine the possibilities of generation-conflict within the tragic context as well as a reflection of society.¹⁷⁹

During the story of the tragedy virtues, values and standards are put on a scale. Already in the beginning of the tragedy, in the dialogue between Odysseus and Neoptolemos and in the preceding monologue, these are defined. One should notice that at The start of the discussion between the two men about the tactics for this mission, Neoptolemos’ initial doubts on the expedition and the pity he develops for Philoctetes are detached from one another. This pity, with which we would nowadays tend to feel with Philoctetes, does not keep Neoptolemos from wanting to steel his bow -nor to return it later- although the chorus urges him not to.¹⁸⁰ The virtue, which does make Neoptolemos doubt Odysseus’ plan, is honesty, not to be confused with humanity, nor with justice from modern perspective.

¹⁷⁷ SEGAL (1995) 96

¹⁷⁸ The conflict preceding the tragedy between Neoptolemos and Odysseus as captain of the Greek army, abandoning Philoctetes on the island after a snake bit him and his wounds were festering and stinking, is not a subject of this thesis. It is important to focuss on the conflict concerning the way in which Philoctetes and his bow are brought back. The main point here is the conflict over how Philoctetes and the bow should be returned, the precious conflict is only of minor importance.

¹⁷⁹ Compare: ZIMMERMANN (1998)

¹⁸⁰ Neoptolemos as he explains in his dialogue with Odysseus, does want to conquer the bow by an honest fight. He considers a trick to be immoral.[86-95]

Odysseus recognises, even before Neoptolemos had the chance to react, that his plan to take the bow with a trick will not honour this virtue. However, in order to convince Neoptolemos to perform his act, he comes up with two arguments. Firstly: the end justifies the means. The bow cannot be captured with physical violence but it is crucial to get it, so honesty should give way. Secondly: bravery, courage and intelligence are superior to honesty: his own personal gain, obtained by this expedition -which means he will be immortalized as being brave, courageous and intelligent- will eventually be more important than having been honest without achieving it all.

Which arguments would Sophocles have used in this dialogue, in which Odysseus tries to convince Neoptolemos? Possible answers to this question can be found in the characteristics of the figures and the development of the plot. Considering the determined generation-difference between Odysseus and Neoptolemos, it should be examined to what extent the arguments of both men, regarding their contents, can be specifically related to this generation-difference.

Several considerations can be made, with artistic creativity in the back of our mind and the knowledge that in classical Athens it would have been outrageous to deprive someone of their belongings by a trick. Athens was a young war-society, obtaining her gain by sly but fair fights. It is therefore remarkable with what preciseness Sophocles created this dialogue. It would not have been necessary to fill in these details, in order to illustratively bring a myth stage. Even the end of the story is not affected by it.

The plot of most tragedies is largely fixed by the myth the tragedy is based on. With this tragedy, in contrary to the most, not the plot nor the exact course of action is fixed, but the outcome is: Philoctetes will come to Troy with the Greeks, to help them conquer the city with his bow.¹⁸¹ However, how this is going to happen, how it will be achieved, or how he came to his decision to join the Greeks can not be determined from the Homeric epics. These details can and should be filled in by the poet.¹⁸² The fact that Philoctetes was probably very angry at the Greeks who left him behind on the island because of his festering wound can

¹⁸¹ The remark of Dio Chrysotemos in his 'ΠΕΡΙ ΑΙΣΧΥΛΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΣΟΦΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΥΡΙΠΙΔΟΥ Η ΠΕΡΙ ΤΩΝ ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΟΥ ΤΟΞΩΝ' (52) is worth quoting in this context: *σχεδὸν δὲ ἦσαν ἄκρων ἀνδρῶν, Αἰσχύλου καὶ Σοφοκλέους καὶ Εὐριπίδου, πάντων περὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ὑπόθεσιν. ἦν γὰρ ἡ τῶν Φιλοκτῆτου τόξων εἴτε κλοπῇ εἴτε ἀρπαγὴν δεῖ λέγειν.*

¹⁸² Greek tragedies are mostly based on the mythological cycles. To what extent these were closely knit or even based on the Homeric epics, is, in my opinion, not traceable anymore nowadays.

assumed to be *communis opinio*. Sophocles therefore built up the tension within the play by filling in the plot of the play and not, as he did with other plays, by creating a detailed end.¹⁸³

This filling-in of the plot is largely determined by the first dialogue between Odysseus and Neoptolemos mentioned above. The choice made about the tactics that Odysseus forces upon Neoptolemos, who eventually accepts, is the foundation of the tragic action. We therefore may assume that the dialogue is of crucial importance for the course and plot of the play. In order to extract the dramatic elements and deduce other functionalities to animate the audience without wanting to judge on Sophocles' intentions or the possible moral, we are obliged to examine it accurately. Based on this analysis it will become clear whether or not mainly the arguments used in this dialogue by Odysseus and Neoptolemos will make this a generation-conflict.

The interaction between the man following Odysseus' pronounced plan, goes as follows:

Philoctetes [86-122]

NE. Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖς ἂν τῶν λόγων ἀλγῶ κλύων,

Λαερτίου παῖ, τούσδε καὶ πράσσειν στυγῶ·

ἔφυν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἐκ τέχνης πράσσειν κακῆς,

οὔτ' αὐτὸς οὔθ', ὥς φασιν, οὐκφύσας ἐμέ.

Ἄλλ' εἴμ' ἔτοιμος πρὸς βίαν τὸν ἄνδρ' ἄγειν

καὶ μὴ δόλοισιν· οὐ γὰρ ἐξ ἐνὸς ποδὸς

ἡμᾶς τοσούσδε πρὸς βίαν χειρώσεται.

Πεμφθεῖς γε μέντοι σοὶ ξυνεργάτης ὀκνῶ

προδότης καλεῖσθαι· βούλομαι δ', ἄναξ,

καλῶς

δρῶν ἐξαμαρτεῖν μάλλον ἢ νικᾶν κακῶς.

ΟΔ. Ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς παῖ, καὐτὸς ὦν νέος ποτὲ

γλῶσσαν μὲν ἄργόν, χεῖρα δ' εἶχον ἐργάτιν·

νῦν δ' εἰς ἔλεγχον ἐξιὼν ὀρῶ βροτοῖς

τὴν γλῶσσαν, οὐχὶ τᾶργα, πάνθ' ἡγουμένην.

NE Son of Laertius, things which it distresses

me to hear spoken of are things which I hate to

do! It is my nature to do nothing by treacherous

plotting; that is my nature, and it was also my

father's nature. But I am ready to take the man

by force and not by cunning; with only one foot

he will not get the better of us who are so many.

I was sent to help you, but I am unwilling to be

called a traitor; I had rather come to grief, my

lord, while acting honestly than triumph by

treachery.

OD Son of a noble father, I too when I was

young had a tongue that was inactive but an arm

that was active; but when I come to put it to the

proof I see that is the tongue, not actions, that

rules in all things for mortals.

NE. Τί οὖν μ' ἄνωγας ἄλλο πλὴν ψευδῇ λέγειν;

NE Then what are you telling me to say except

¹⁸³ For example in *Antigone* or *Ajax* the end of the story, not to be confused with the plot, had to have been closely knit to mythology: cf. the Methodological Introduction of this thesis.

ΟΔ. Λέγω σ' ἐγὼ δόλῳ Φιλοκτήτην λαβεῖν.

NE. Τί δ' ἐν δόλῳ δεῖ μᾶλλον ἢ πείσαντ' ἄγειν;

ΟΔ. Οὐ μὴ πίθηται· πρὸς βίαν δ' οὐκ ἂν λάβοις.

NE. Οὕτως ἔχει τι δεινὸν ἰσχύος θράσος;

ΟΔ. Ἴοὺς ἀφύκτους καὶ προπέμποντας φόνον.

NE. Οὐκ ἂρ' ἐκείνῳ γ' οὐδὲ προσμεῖξαι θρασύ;

ΟΔ. Οὐ, μὴ δόλῳ λαβόντα γ', ὥς ἐγὼ λέγω.

NE. Οὐκ αἰσχρὸν ἡγῇ δῆτα τὸ ψευδῇ λέγειν;

ΟΔ. Οὐκ, εἰ τὸ σωθῆναί γε τὸ ψεῦδος φέρει.

NE. Πῶς οὖν βλέπων τις ταῦτα τολμήσει λακεῖν;

ΟΔ. Ὅταν τι δρᾷς εἰς κέρδος, οὐκ ὀκνεῖν πρέπει.

NE. Κέρδος δ' ἐμοὶ τί τοῦτον ἐς Τροίαν μολεῖν;

ΟΔ. Αἶρεῖ τὰ τόξα ταῦτα τὴν Τροίαν μόνα.

NE. Οὐκ ἂρ' ὁ πέρσων, ὥς ἐφάσκετ', εἴμ' ἐγώ;

ΟΔ. Οὐτ' ἂν σὺ κείνων χωρὶς οὐτ' ἐκεῖνα σοῦ.

NE. Θηρατέ' ἄ<ρα> γίγνοιτ' ἂν, εἴπερ ᾧδ' ἔχει.

ΟΔ. Ὡς τοῦτό γ' ἔρξας δύο φέρη δωρήματα.

NE. Ποίω; μαθὼν γὰρ οὐκ ἂν ἀρνοίμην τὸ δρᾶν.

ΟΔ. Σοφός τ' ἂν αὐτὸς κάγαθὸς κεκλῇ ἅμα.

NE. Ἴτω· ποήσω, πᾶσαν αἰσχύνην ἀφείς.

lies?

OD I am telling you to take Philoctetes by a trick.

NE But why must I take him by a trick?

OD He will never be persuaded, and you could not take him by force.

NE Has he such wonderful confidence in strength?

OD Yes, inescapable arrows that convey death.

NE Then can one not dare even to approach him?

OD No, unless you take him by a trick, as I am telling you to do.

NE Do you not think it disgraceful to tell lies?

OD Not if the lie brings us salvation!

NE With what kind of a face will one be able to utter such words?

OD When you are doing something to gain advantage, it is wrong to hesitate.

NE But what advantage is it for me if he should come to Troy?

OD This bow is the one thing that takes Troy.

NE Then am I not the one who is to capture it, as you said?

OD You cannot capture it without the bow, nor the bow without you.

NE It would be worth trying to get it, if that is the case.

OD Yes, since if you do that you win two prices.

NE What prices? If you tell me, I shall not refuse to act.

OD You would be called clever, and at the same time valiant.

NE Let it be! I will do it, casting off all shame!

ΟΔ. Ἡ μνημονεύεις οὖν ἅ σοι παρήνεσα;
ΝΕ. Σάφ' ἴσθ', ἐπείπερ εἰσάπαξ συνήνεσα.

OD Then do you remember my instruction?

NE Be sure I do, now that I have once consented.

Summarized:

- Neoptolemos rejects Odysseus' plan and calls it dishonourable to take Philoctetes' bow with a lie. Remarkable about this rejection is the fact that he does not only base his opinion on his own discretion but also appeals to the character of his father in order to substantiate his arguments.
- Odysseus, in a slightly patronizing manner, points out the difference of age between the both of them by comparing Neoptolemos with himself as he was Neoptolemos' age and portrays the boy being naive.¹⁸⁴
- Neoptolemos is impressed and backs out: he tries to save his virtues by proposing to conquer the bow of Philoctetes by physical enforcement, but is overruled by Odysseus with the following arguments:
 - The end justifies the means; a white lie.
 - Other virtues are (to the outside world) less important than (shame because of dis-) honesty.

From this interaction it becomes clear that Odysseus is consciously aware of the fact Neoptolemos will not be willing to steal Philoctetes' bow with a trick straight away. He even asks him to put his shame aside, to live decently again after this expedition is well brought to an end [79-85]. Concomitantly he is aware of the importance of honesty to Neoptolemos. Therefore it may be assumed that honesty was expected of Odysseus himself, he also was expected to attach the same value to it. Neoptolemos does react as he is expected to and does not give in easily either after Odysseus' answer that 'a white lie' is not really scandalous. Philoctetes, later on in the tragedy, also refers to the virtue of honesty. The pressure put on this virtue by all of these passages makes one assume, that it was of importance in the Athenian society as well and therefore had a great attraction to the audience. Neoptolemos made converts among play's audience; Odysseus however, had to change his tactics and convince Neoptolemos of the importance of this mission some other way.

¹⁸⁴ In the following alinea of this paragraph the fatherly advice of Odysseus vs. the own concern, playing a part here and bringing up one's own father or the father of the person talked to will be more elaborately discussed.

Odysseus than makes a rhetorical mistake: he tries to talk Neoptolemos in to it by telling him that honesty is overrated and dishonesty soon forgotten by outsiders, should he cause the Greeks to win the war at Troy. His bravery, courage and intelligence, necessary to achieve this, combined by the result will cause him to be held in such high regard by the Greeks that the lie, underlying this all, will be unimportant. Odysseus however, forgets that honesty is a virtue, which may be less important to the collective, than it is to the individual, a mistake that almost causes the mission to fail completely. Neoptolemos realises [1234], that he will not be able to live after taking Philoctetes' bow in a disrespectful way.¹⁸⁵ When he tries to convince Philoctetes that he should still to come to Troy with him and help the Greeks triumph, not the collective, nor his expected fame forced him to make this decision but moreover his inner piece mind did.

This conflict does not particularly seem to be an argument between people of different generations but is due to a difficult reconciliation between the individual and the collective.¹⁸⁶ Moreover, all three figures do recognise that the virtue of honesty is to be strived for by every individual, but not appreciated by the collective as much as the virtues of courage and bravery are. Other than that, Odysseus *is* older and does have much more experience than Neoptolemos; Philoctetes however is of an older generation than Neoptolemos as well. Still the moral of Odysseus and Philoctetes is incompatible.

ZIMMERMANN, in this matter, blames their diverse values on the difference between the life of Philoctetes who spent ten years in isolation, and the life of Odysseus in war against Troy.¹⁸⁷ ZIMMERMANN, with his analysis, attempts to prove the relation between historical Athens and the story of the tragedy. With his interpretation of this play, he claims a mirror of society, in which the different figures represent social groups. ZIMMERMANN sees in Odysseus a „...reiner Sophist. Gerechtigkeit, anständiges Verhalten, Ehrlichkeit sind für ihn keine Werte, alles ist relativ, dem Zwang der augenblickliche Lage (*Kairos*) unterworfen.“

Firstly it is noteworthy, that the negative connotation on Sophists, which ZIMMERMANN bases a part of his analysis and judgement on, is only explicitly found in Plato's work; not any earlier. Naturally every prominent Athenian or *metoikos* was made a fool of by Aristophanes, once in a while. But true condemnation of this movement was only

¹⁸⁵ Cf. SEGAL, 101-102: "...in his invitation to Neoptolemos to *be called* not *to be* the most pious of mortals" (119-93-94)

¹⁸⁶ The intervenience and turning the story (and therewith fate?) of the tragedy to end well by a *Deus ex Magina* proves, in my opinion, the importance of -at least to the author- of striving for individual decency next to the collective interest, as a reward for Neoptolemos actions.

¹⁸⁷ ZIMMERMANN, B., 'Generationenkonflikt im Griechisch-Römischen Drama' in WJA 22 1998, p. 21-32

expressed in younger literary sources. Scepticism existed doubtlessly, but our knowledge on sharp judgement is based on literature dating after the origins of the Sophoclean tragedies. Therefore we have to let go of our -unconscious- expectations of Sophocles' possible intentions to pone this possible social criticism in the form of a tragedy as a public point of discussion and clearly separate this from the developments the Sophistic movement went through during the decennia after *Philoctetes*.

In every conflict moral and actions of one's opponent are criticised, even judged. Neither differences of generation nor differences of, for instance, social circumstances never ever? (Bedoel je nooit of ooit? Zo als het nu staat krijg je" Nog verschil in generatie, nog andere verschillen zogen nooit alleen voor conflict") form an exclusive cause of a conflict. So, because of the fact that within the tragic context no indication can be found which lead us to the cause of the conflict between Odysseus and Philoctetes, there is also no reason to assume that the military camp of the Greeks formed Odysseus' ethics, but that Philoctetes' ethical development stopped the minute the Greeks left him deserted on an island. This caused him to be old-fashioned or even underdeveloped. The argument that Philoctetes, having lead a hermit's life, represented the older generation of Athenians, is thereby disposed unless ZIMMERMANN would have used the Greek military camp to be a metaphor for the cultural, social and political developed life in 5th century Athens.¹⁸⁸

ZIMMERMANN is not the only scholar trying to discover historical reality in *Philoctetes*. Especially the growing power of the Sophistical movement, the mentioned literary criticism and the intentions of a poet are subject to the interpretations of many ancient tragedies. His constructive comparison is less explicit than ZIMMERMANN's, but ROSE also considers the Sophistic movement to be represented in *Philoctetes*.¹⁸⁹ ROSE does not consider certain figures to be representatives of one or another social group, but regards to the whole story to contain a Sophistic undertone. The philosophy of the Sophists, related to our cultural anthropology, recognises three phases of humanism as well as of humans as individuals. In *Philoctetes* these three phases are recognisable and, according to ROSE, used consciously and built in through minimal changes of the plot.

The first phase is pre-social: "The first stage is concentrated in the full presentation of Philoktetes' battle to survive on Lemnos in total isolation with the sole aid of his bow and the

¹⁸⁸ This does not seem to be plausible to me; concomitantly ZIMMERMANN does not express himself on this, in his article.

¹⁸⁹ ROSE, (1992) 280 ff.

knowledge of fire making.”¹⁹⁰ During the second phase humans start to realise the advantages of bonds with humans of the same kind. “The second stage is dramatised in the bonds –both real and feigned- established between Philoktetes and, chiefly, Neoptolemos, but also, more ambivalently, the chorus.”¹⁹¹ The third phase is the phase which among scholars is discussed the most and from which also ZIMMERMANN derives his interpretation of this tragedy. This phase is the educational relationship between a sophist and his pupil. “The third stage, the only one for which relation to sophistic thought has received much critical attention, is focussed in the figure of Odysseus and emerges in the educational relationship to Neoptolemos and in his role of spokesman for the state in his dealings with Philoktetes.”¹⁹²

According to ROSE two ‘renewals’ can be recognised in the tragedy compared to the myth on which Aeschylus did and Euripides would base a tragedy, this made a representation of the Sophistic thought possible. Firstly: the presentation of Lemnos as a desert island and secondly the involvement of Neoptolemos in the tragic context. The third ‘deviation’ is the Deus ex Machina at the end of the play, which however, according to ROSE, is the inevitable result of the first two changes.¹⁹³ Although, in my opinion a justified consideration based on Proclus’ *Little Iliad* and Dio Chrysotemos’ *Discourse 52*, these innovations do not directly indicate a clear intention of Sophocles to teach Sophistic anthropology through this tragedy.

Dio Chrysotemos’ remark at the end of his treatise on the three productions of *Philoktetes*: ‘The lyrics of Sophocles do not contain the didactic element to any great extent, nor any incentive to virtue such as we find in the lyrics of Euripides, but a marvellous sweetness and magnificence...’¹⁹⁴ is the subjective judgement of a reader commenting on the plays a few centuries after Sophocles’ death. This reader however did have the three tragedies to compare. The question rises why Sophocles, of whom we might actually expect a critical note on the Sophistic way of thinking as we may conclude from contemporary literary sources on his life, would have put a plea for the Sophistic movement on stage through this tragedy.¹⁹⁵ Concomitantly one can ask why, if Sophocles *did* have the intention to ‘preach’ Sophistics carrying out their apprenticeship through the interaction between Odysseus and Neoptolemos,

¹⁹⁰ ROSE [1992] 280 ff

¹⁹¹ ROSE [1992] 280 ff

¹⁹² ROSE [1992] 280 ff

¹⁹³ ROSE (1992) here consciously deviates from the point of view of SCHLESINGER, E. ‘Die Intrige im Aufbau von Sophokles *Philoktet.*’ RhM 111, 97-156. especially: 101-102.

¹⁹⁴ Diochrysotemos Discourses 52, 17.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. EHRENBURG (1954), o.a. p. 35, 37, 41. “ When the Sophists discovered ‘natural law’, they denied the traditional (and Sophocles’) divine order. For Sophocles there was only Oneness, unity: nature was divine, *physis* was *nomos*.”

this education turns out so badly. Neoptolemos does not agree with Odysseus and lets himself be overruled and at the end reversing his decision. To trust his own instincts again: his way of handling the situation turns out to be the only right and reasonable way. However, making a pact and therefore re-entering the civilised world, as it shows from his reaction, is not good enough a reason for Philoctetes to set aside his anger and join Neoptolemos. A *Deus ex Machina* is needed in order to convince the man of the best choice: as a popular method of teaching the Sophistic apprenticeship, this tragedy does not seem to be very convincing. WHITMAN's reaction to the fact that Heracles, who enters the scene to convince Philoctetes, is in fact Philoctetes' unconsciousness telling him his best option, seems rather farfetched and a redundant addition to the text in my opinion: there is no textual reason to assume this.¹⁹⁶

Outlining the figures, let alone making a precise characterisation is not as easy as it may seem at first. As VISSER realised, the interpretation of the oracle preceding the voyage to Lemnos where Philoctetes entrenches himself, is crucial in this matter, both for the development of the story and the evaluation of the different individual figures.¹⁹⁷ She concludes that this prognostication, which only firstly becomes clear to the audience or the reader in the 'Emporos scene', foresees Philoctetes coming along with the fleet out of his own free will, is crucial for the mission to succeed. Odysseus therefore, either misunderstood the oracle or deliberately misinterprets its words, ordering Neoptolemos to deprive Philoctetes of his bow with a trick. As VISSER rightly noticed, the way Odysseus wants to get his hands on the bow is scrupulous and his interpretation of the announcement of the oracle tends to be Sophistic, trying to twist its words into his own advantage. To Odysseus it is about: "die Auslegung und Verdrehung von Wörtern, nicht aber um deren Sinn (...) denn natürlich hätte das Götterwort, sofern es die Freiwilligkeit Philoktets gewünscht hätte, Überredung und Überzeugt-Werden und nicht List und Nachgeben gegenüber Erpressung gemeint."¹⁹⁸ Still we may not forget, that Odysseus does not act nor think this way in order to enrich himself: he acts out of loyalty to Greeks and their mission in Troy and, as mentioned above, he does not

¹⁹⁶ WHITMAN, *Sophocles, a study of heroic humanism* Cambridge 1951, 187. „Everything he (Heracles ed.) said was said before by Neoptolemos in his long appeal – the promised victory, the curing of the wound, even the reverence of the gods. But now Philoctetes himself has resolved on these things, and the resolution is like a god awakening in him. (...) To regard to Heracles as an external emissary from Olympus who enters and arbitrarily overrides the hero's hard-won victory of endurance is to obliterate the whole paradox, the whole meaning of the play and reduce it to a platitude. (...) It is not the 'will of the gods' that operates. It is the will of Philoctetes that suddenly operates divinely."

¹⁹⁷ VISSER (1998) 15-20, especially 16 and 18.

¹⁹⁸ VISSER [1998] 18

act as the teaching father-figure, wanting to tutor his pupil to try to achieve the best for himself.¹⁹⁹

Furthermore for his way of handling the situation, interpreting the oracle and ordering Neoptolemos to steel the bow with a trick, Odysseus is not punished in any way. Although Neoptolemos, because of his righteous nature and conscience, eventually makes Odysseus plans unsuccessful, not once is referred to the immoral character of his plans being the actual cause of the failure. As a matter of fact, in course of time Neoptolemos is the only one living up to the -correct interpretation of- the prognostication as it is mentioned in the 'Emporos scene'.²⁰⁰ Odysseus' plan to take the bow with a trick would not have sufficed: Philoctetes had to have been convinced to go and help the Greeks conquer Troy. Still, as VISSER remarks, it is not Odysseus' indecency nor his moral irresponsibility nor even the intelligence behind the plan, which cause it to fail; it is Neoptolemos' decency. An actually negative, or even purely Sophistic representation of Odysseus' character in this play, can hardly be deliberate.

Neoptolemos as a pupil, as ZIMMERMANN contiguously to his thesis on the Sophistic Odysseus recognises and also ROSE considers to be a necessary cause of Sophistic teachings brought on stage with this tragedy, can only be interpreted this way *in combination* with Odysseus as a Sophist. As mentioned above, this does not seem to be a very likely goal of the poet. Neoptolemos is not at all convinced about the way Odysseus plans to get his hands on Philoctetes' bow and does not at all want to learn the apparent lesson Odysseus wants to teach him. He actually retorts and refuses to be available when this trick is to be pulled: not quite a typology of the ideal Sophistic pupil. The only concrete clue to assume that teacher and pupil are displayed here, as representation of social groups in 5th century Athens is the difference of ages between the two men.

In order to compile my findings on Philoctetes as discussed above, the following can be said: Generations are, both explicitly and implicitly clearly separated from one and another. Concrete indications showing a true conflict of generations within the tragic context, can, in my opinion, not be found, since none of the conflicts displayed is actually based on the difference of generation between the figures. A reflection of sociological relations within the contemporary society through a representation of a Sophist and his pupil seems very unlikely, with which a conflict of -a reflection of- generations is ruled out.

¹⁹⁹ De 'reine Sophist', which ZIMMERMANN recognises in Odysseus is therefore in my opinion somewhat excessive.

²⁰⁰ Cf. VISSER [1998]

Then it only remains for me to ... what the difference in generation, taking on such a prominent role, in *Philoctetes* did cause and produce. It exerts pressure on the conflict: standards and values of the Athenian society, on one hand being very consistent and on the other hand -sometimes-impossible to comply with at the same time, are intensified in this play. They are voiced and distinguished by people -figures- of different generations and the difference of age between these characters is explicitly mentioned to be the cause of the conflict. However, as mentioned above, there is no reason to assume that these different virtues, within the tragic context connected to certain figures, are specific for their generation -in reality- as well, or to form a reflection on social details of Athenian society in the 5th century BC.

Still it seems plausible that Sophocles dramatised this myth because of the moral discussion covered by this story. The question why the strong enforcement of the Greeks would not have been capable of conquering Troy without the bow of Philoctetes and concomitantly why this bow had to be taken by a trick or given by free will, is asked by Sophocles in a much broader sense and as a vital philosophical question directed to his audience. The poet however does not, as we might hope, provide us an answer to this question with his tragedy. With his knowledge the details of the -mythological- lives of his figures, he was able to intensify the detailed features of their characters in order to pose this moral question without undermining the clichés the audience had to hold on to.

Like VERNANT I would like to conclude this chapter with "...tragedy did not reflect reality but rather problematized it."²⁰¹ And as Ehrenberg said, even though it not quite fits into his own context: Sophocles was definitely a man of his time, the time of Pericles and Alcibiades, of wars and prosperity, preceding the losses and the search for a scapegoat. Sophocles, in my opinion, did not willingly produce any political pieces, nor did he try to make propaganda or try to write history.

²⁰¹ VERNANT, J.P., VIDAL-NAQUET, P., *Myth and Tragedy in ancient Greece* (trans. J. Lloyd) Atlantic Highlands –NJ 1988 (1972)

5. Generation Conflicts in Antigone and Elektra

As I mentioned in the first chapter of this work: The most important characteristic of relations between persons of different generations is that these relations are continuously discussed and put to discussion. Sophocles availed himself richly of the unprecedented possibilities of inter-human relationships and relations. He consciously used everyday confrontations as if they existed in all eternity and every society. By treating these relations this way he offered people, his audience, a lead for their empathy watching tragedies with cruel premises and horrifying deeds.

Although the relationships between persons -of different generations- usually do not differ largely from the same relationships in mythology, the detailed contents and results of the mutual contact and relations are presented to us as spectators and readers in every single detail in the all of the remaining Sophoclean tragedies. Examination of the importance of these inter-human relations in the tragedies becomes more concrete when we realize that not only in the contents of the plays but also in text-volume passages containing direct contact between two or more figures of different generations form a considerable part of all of the Sophoclean tragedies.

Generation, generation relations and generation conflicts are modern concepts which possibly, at first sight, do not seem suitable to apply to the Athenian society of the 5th century B.C. As shown in the former chapters of this work though, it appears that these concepts are not so much time-related. Remarkably even within the passages concerned, despite of the fact that although the Greeks did not know a word equalling the modern concept 'generation', the characteristics we nowadays relate to this concept are explicitly used in the examined tragedies. Differences in age -and therefore- in experience and also wisdom appear in every tragedy and even in conflict situations constitute *the* supporting argument. Sophocles functionalised the relations between humans of different generations so that the simplicity and accessibility of the relationships between figures of different generations denote the complexity and seriousness of the dramatized moral: the consequences of the mostly familiar generation relations are recognisable and provide the audience clarity, through which the attention is not being distracted of the essential part of the play.

Conflict situations in the Sophoclean tragedies provide an almost graphic representation, through relations between figures of different generations and through the everlasting discussion on these relations. Concomitantly pressure is put on the course of actions, that, as a spectator, ancient or modern, one almost unconsciously experiences. This pressure is produced by the different points of view created in the tragedies and evoked in the audience since there is no objective perception possible regarding generation relations and emotions will rise: everybody is either a son, daughter, father or mother. Sophocles experimented with all varying phases of life and their characteristics -which therefore can probably not be described as sociological generations in the modern sense of the word- and functionalises them actively and passively in order to increase the dramatic tension of his plays.

By definition a conflict should then only be called a generation conflict when the difference in generation between the struggling parties directly underlies the rising conflict. This means that subjects can differ of opinion per generation conflict as long as the difference in opinion exists due to a difference in generation. Reason and occasion for a conflict are therefore not to be misplaced with the actual, mostly underlying cause. It is not necessary that the battling parties always show characteristic features of the social group to which they belong and by which they, as a generation, should be recognizable: one person can form one generation in a conflict, if he has another opinion than the other party because of fact that they both differ in generation from one another. It is not easy to recognize these kinds of conflicts, since the battling parties are not always aware of the fact that a generation difference is the foundation of their problem themselves.²⁰²

A tragic conflict in most cases, if not all, forms in the antique tragedies the essence of the plot. Relations between for example mankind and the divine; between *oikos* and polis; between man and women or parent and child are being tested and subordinated to inhuman, unbearable situations in which main characters can either perform their influence or not. It is mostly because of the created dramatic effect of the conflicts arising from this and because of the influence came into existence and the influence of our modern time-spirit, that extraction of the moral of underlying thoughts has occupied scholars for decades. Besides this, our modern term generation conflict can be interpreted in many ways and at the same time, as

²⁰² I realize that the term generation conflict can be interpreted in several ways and here I only show my definition for this research to prevent confusion over for example generation as social groups in the Athenian community. As I have argued in Chapter 3, in none of the Sophoclean tragedies, a reflection of the contemporary society, nor of the former political or social conflicts can be clearly determined.


discussed above, can possibly be difficult to apply directly to these ancient texts. Based on the definition and the precondition that I have formulated before, I will explain in the following paragraphs why there are two Sophoclean tragedies in which an actual generation conflict can be determined: *Antigone and Elektra*.

By no means I will also argue in this chapter that the conflicts, which in my opinion can be determined as being generation conflicts, represent society or could be transferred on the Athenian society. Not only the empathy of the audience was triggered but in this society the theatre also functioned as a vent for both exceptional and trivial happenings in the lives of citizens, in which the generation-conflicts must have had an enormous influence. Therefore, in this chapter as well, I will discuss the conflicts, the causes, outcome, result and consequences within the tragic context, and if possible, with the utmost discretion, relate it to the ancient Athenian society.

5.1. Generation conflict in Antigone

The preceding family-affair and the therewith connected, tragic end of the *Antigone* nowadays still triggers our imagination. In the tragedy understandings as justice, moral and ethics form the centre of the plot. The problem of the highest power at the different social, religious and politic levels of society becomes a matter of discussion in the *Antigone* and through this the subjectivity of many values is being stressed. The sovereignty of the gods and the supreme of the head of state are united *and* brought in conflict, just as family and state: *oikos* versus polis.²⁰³

An extra contribution to the representation of the *Antigone* is provided by the fact that the conflicts take place between members of one family. The social problems, which in fact could be applied on every society throughout history, is therefore presented small-scaled and can actually affect every figure in this tragedy, regardless their social or political status, age or gender. Despite, or maybe even because of, this the family-ties between the characteristic figures their points of view and actions become clearly distinguishable within this tragic

²⁰³ EHRENBURG, V. *Sophokles und Perikles*, München 1956, Chapter 3 63-91 „Wie schon betont, liegen die tiefsten Wurzeln des Konflikts zwischen Antigone und Kreon in der völligen Unvereinbarkeit ihrer geistigen Welten.“ MEIER [1993] 187-203.  What is certain is that Sophocles' *Antigone*, like *Ajax*, is saturated with politics from beginning to end. It provides the context for the main conflict distinguishes the different parties and figures largely in all the arguments and motivations. We can only assume that this pervasive political content is largely based on the specific issues of the day.” (202)

context. Sophocles did not only explicitly make the discrepancy between them dependant on gender and status within the polis or *oikos*, but also on the generation-differences.

Noteworthy is, that generations also bind some figures together: when figures somehow agree, they mostly more or less seem to belong to the same genealogical generation. The fact that differences in generations play an important role in the examination underlying this thesis is clear. However, therewith is not yet determined to what extent the most confronting situation of conflicts, the dialogue between Haemon and Creon, factually exists due to the difference in generation between the two men. In this chapter I will therefore firstly consider the distinguishable generations being presented in this tragedy. Concomitantly I will discuss the introduction, the occasion, the contents, the cause and the consequences of the dialogue between these two men in order to show that this conflict can be rightly referred to as a generational conflict.

5.1.1 *Three different generations*

The generations naturally stand out most clearly within families at genealogical level. Who belonged to which genealogical generation in the kingdom of Thebes is already determined by the myth and known with the audience before the beginning of the performance of the tragedy.²⁰⁴ The largest group of figures of *one* generation within this tragic context is formed by Antigone, Haemon and Ismene, who also in mythological genealogy are at the same level in their family tree. Although all of them separately express their own motivation for acting and talking as they do, and they therefore are recognisable as separate, independent figures, indispensable within the complete tragic context, they do share an opinion of which Antigone

²⁰⁴ The Theban kingdom already only appears in three remaining Sophoclean tragedies: *Antigone*, *Oedipus Colonos* and *Oedipus Tyrannus*. Fragments and titles of the winning tragedies at the Dionysia however show many more tragedies in which this Royal family was brought on stage. For an overview of all of these Sophoclean fragments and titles Cf. RADT, S. *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta (TrGF)*, volume IV, 1977; corr. ed.1999. Cf. WHITMAN *Sophocles, a study of heroic humanism*, Cambridge 1951, 82: "The house of Oedipus was, to some sense, what the house Atrous had been to Aeschylus. The latter's trilogy, composed at the end of his life is a rich paean of progressive humankind, evolving in its personal and political morality under the imperious pressure of time and suffering (...) The Theban plays of Sophocles form no such trilogy, but in a sense Sophocles begins where Aeschylus ended. The process of evolution is complete."

excerpts her actions: one is responsible for the proper burial of a direct family member, due to the divine law of the gods.²⁰⁵

Most of all their -active or less active- resistance against Creon and therewith against the ‘older generation’ and in several ways to the ruling authority -as a *kyrios* and a tyrant- bonds the three figures. All three of them agree on the fact that Creon at least acts unjustly, only the way in which they all react to this and deal with this fact distinguishes them from one another. However, exactly by colouring the figures with their individual reaction, Sophocles not only made the figures recognisable and interesting, through which the tragic conflict of the play is brought to an interhuman level, but also provided the plot with its seriousness.

Ismene, Antigone and Haemon belong to the same genealogical generation, as do Polyneikes and Eteocles, but they do not originally belong to the same family. Because of the fact that the girls are under custody of Creon, since Oedipus was banned from Thebes, Haemon is not only Antigone’s half-cousin and fiancé but also her stepbrother. From our modern point of view this family situation would be considered at least extremely complicated and possibly even unnatural: As I however argued in the Introduction and in chapter 3 of this work, we should try to bear the Athenian values in mind. Creon was a logical *kyrios*: both brother had died and, although from their mother’s family, he was the closest male relative they had. Also a marriage, as the one between Antigone and Haemon, within a family, but not within the original household, was not unusual. The intricate structure of relations between the figures, does not make the plot more complicated, as a modern reader

²⁰⁵ [449-470] Cf. GELLIE [1972] 31 „Ismene displays more than a convenient conformity: her love for Antigone and for her dead brother is allowed to be as strong as any of Antigone’s affections. (...) Ismene’s primary reason for not supporting her sister is an avowed temperamental incapacity to disobey the edicts of rulers, but having dissociated herself from the action, her fears for her sister in the dangerous and futile gesture she is making convey a love and loyalty that ring true. By comparison Antigone’s tough-minded rejoinders begin to sound false.” The last part of this quotation I will more elaborately discuss later. Haemon’s opinion on this is more difficult to determine, because of the fact that he says to voices the opinion of the people of Thebes en does not speak about his personal ideas on the funeral of his brother. [692-700] To me however, there is no reason to assume that he did not meant what he voiced and I therefore assume that he only, rightly or not, uses the name of the people in order to easily bring about his doubt on his father’s actions and substantiate them at the same time. WHITMAN *Sophocles, a study of heroic humanism*, Cambridge 1951, 86: exaggerates in his opinion on Ismene: “Ismene is as passive and obedient as a world of men could wish her to be; she is too sane to join in such a reckless and defiant plan.” In my opinion Ismene’s attitude shows more wisdom than WHITMAN recognises. LEFÈVRE [2001] 110 calls her acting: “Eine Person stellt Sophokles in das harte Spiel der Tragödie, die fähig ist ihre Grenzen zu erkennen: Ismene, die gleichen Bluts wie Antigone ist.”

may expect it to, but in my opinion, it even becomes more graphic.²⁰⁶ The family-members are tightly connected and even mutually depending on one another. This, on the one hand, causes the different facets of independent points of view to possibly be interpreted in several ways, leading to an enormous amount of scholarly opinions on the matter. On the other hand the tragic unity, in genealogical as well as in emotional sense, is maintained by this mutual dependence between the figures.²⁰⁷

Creon is clearly a generation older than Antigone, Haemon and Ismene. He is not only *kyrios* of both girls, but moreover Haemon's father. As well as being a *kyrios*, as within the generation of parent, he actually performs double-roles in the play. The choices he makes when doing the figurative splits of all his different capacities and functions are not always to be explicitly linked to one of the facets of a role, however in modern research such an assumption has turned out to be very tempting.²⁰⁸

As I described: Antigone, Haemon and Ismene seem to be generally unanimous in their opinions on Creon's actions, therefore a generational conflict seems likely. Nevertheless it is important to exclude other leverages on the relationship and therewith achieve certainty about the actual cause of the conflict, being a difference of generation or something else. Firstly: as discussed in the preceding chapters of this work, the fact that Haemon steps into the breach for Antigone and consciously enters the conflict with his father, by substantiating

²⁰⁶ I do not want to elaborately discuss the discussion about if this is 'normal' or not within the Athenian society. As described in Chapter... custody over a daughter, whose father died before she got married was granted to the closest male relative in Athens. Because of the fact that both of her brothers died, Antigone's most logical *kyrios* is her uncle. Also marriage within the extended family is not uncommon in the Athenian society. Cf.: LACEY [1968]

²⁰⁷ With 'to possibly be interpreted in several ways ...' is meant with regard to the antique world and audience, but also -partially- the various modern, scholarly interpretations of one of the most discussed Sophoclean tragedies. As an example of a modern interpretation of Antigone's actions: Cf.: SEGAL, C. [1995] 122-123. SEGAL draws a line between the role of the city-state Athens in the tragedy of the Seven against Thebes and Antigone's part in this play. "In the play's subtext then, Antigone is the voice of Athenian heroism defying Theban aggression and impiety." Comparable are the interpretations of LORAUX, N. *The invention of Athen*, vert. Sheridan, A., Cambridge 1986, p. 48f. and 65f. In the paragraphs below, I will discuss this subject more elaborately: The fact that Haemon defends his future wife against his father makes an enormous difference for the nature of this conflict, which automatically is much more emotionally charged than when he would have tried to defend her to non-relatives or even an unrelated father in law, being the enemy. Cf. Chapter 4.1.2. Compare for other interpretations of Antigone's actions and her intentions: WHITMAN (1951) 84: "More than any other ancient drama, apparently, the *Antigone* roused the great spirits of the *Klassik*; from its sharp antitheses and its white-hot debates Hegel evolved his famous interpretation that the conflict is between the family right and the state right and that neither can be said to be wrong or entirely justified." Cf. For an interpretation of Megaloyuc...a vs. swfrosÚnh: REINHARDT, K., *Sophokles* (Frankfurt am Main 1933) 75,88,97, saying the complete opposite. Nowadays the ruling opinion lies somewhere in between. Cf. LEFÈVRE [2001]

²⁰⁸ Creon as a tyrant voicing human law, opposite to Antigone voicing and acting according to divine law or Creon as tyrant vs. Creon as a *kyrios* (polis vs *oikos*)

her point of view, disqualifies gender to be underlying issue of the conflict. Concomitantly we may assume that Creon and Haemon, father and son from the same royal household, more or less had the same social status. That his father was also his king is therefore in fact of subsidiary significance for the argument commencing between them.

Another indication for this conflict to be based on a difference in generation is the fact that in this tragedy, except from genealogical generations, a third active generation is brought on stage.²⁰⁹ Tiresias is clearly the oldest man in the tragedy. He is addressed by Creon with all negative, hurtful imaginable features and therewith fits the characteristic tragic image of an old man, which can also be recognised in *Oedipus on Colonos* tragedy about old age prominently.²¹⁰ He is blind and old and therefore almost seems to be Wisdom himself.

Tiresias is not a stranger in Sophoclean tragedies. In this tragedy however, he plays a much more prominent role as an old man than he does in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, although in both tragedies, he is the same man characterized by his blindness and foresight. His age is mentioned only once in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, although Tiresias' vision about the ending of the tragedy has a much larger impact on the figures in *Oedipus Tyrannus*.²¹¹ In this last tragedy Tiresias voices the all-knowing spectator as an amplification of the stasima of the chorus. Still, his vision, in *Antigone* is much less unexpected to Creon as they were to Oedipus. Concurrently the prophet in *Antigone*, becomes much more recognizable as 'the old, wise man', as will be shown in the fragments following.

The moment Tiresias is lead in, he is referred to by Creon as “ὦ γεραῖε Τειρεσίᾳ” [991], Creon, at that point, is still open to what Tiresias' has to tell him. Also his following words to address Tiresias do not suggest any misuse of Tiresias' age in order to gain his own

²⁰⁹ Compare Elektra in the second part of this chapter.

²¹⁰ Cf. BRANDT [2002] p. 59

²¹¹ Cf. 402-403: old age is being referred to negatively and old almost seems to be used as an invective. Compare my discussion on this in Chapter 3.2.2. The findings of TYRRELL & BENNETT [1998] 128 on Creon, “He is being played by either of the actors not playing Creon.” Are mainly interesting because of the conclusions they draw from this: “If he is the actor who spoke Antigone, then Tiresias would seem to be the instrument of her vengeance. Joining Tiresias with Ismene and Haemon reinforces the stability and loyalty of the woman and the epebe with authority of the seer.” Although I want to emphasize again that a interpretation based on theatre science is not the aim of this work, the findings of both scholars are correct. The conclusions drawn from them however reach too far in my opinion to base an argument upon. The authority though, which Tiresias would add according to TYRRELL & BENNETT, does fit my vision about his place in the tragedy as an old wise man. His function as a seer is substantiated by his recognizable appearances and looks, to which the figures literally relate regularly. I therefore agree with the conclusion that the actor playing Antigone, playing the part of Tiresias would, because of his similar voice, alter this authority of the old man, although I would not ascribe him the function of the instrument of her revenge because of his tone of voice. In my opinion, such an utterance would grant the actors very little honour.

right. He only seems to mention his age as a characteristic, a feature or even as a form of respect, despite of the fact that he is disputing his warnings.

Antigone [1033-1037 (...) 1045-1047]

ΚΡ. ὦ πρέσβυ, πάντες ὥστε τοξόται σκοποῦ
τοξεύετ' ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε, κοῦδὲ μαντικῆς
ἄπρακτος ὑμῖν εἰμι, τῶν δ' ὑπαὶ γένους
ἐξημπόλημαι κάμπεφόρτισμαι πάλαι. (ί)
Πίπτουσι δ', ὦ γεραῖε Τειρεσία, βροτῶν
χοῖ πολλὰ δεινοὶ πτόματ' αἴσχρ', ὅταν
λόγους
αἰσχροὺς καλῶς λέγωσι τοῦ κέρδους χάριν.

Aged man, all of you shoot at me like archers
aiming at a target, and I am not unscathed by
your prophetic art; long since I have been sold
and exported by your tribe.

(...)

And even men who are clever at many things fall
shamefully, aged Tiresias, when the skilfully
speak

shameful words in the pursuit of gain.

This respect is remarkable, exactly in combination with the difference of age and generation between the two men. Shortly before Tiresias gets on stage namely Creon reacted very differently to Haemon, his son who also disputed him. This difference in reaction, substantiated by the use of the words 'old' -respectful towards Tiresias- and 'young', used very negatively towards Haemon, strengthens the rising suspicion of a generation conflict between Creon and Haemon.²¹²

5.1.2 *The conflict: Introduction and Escort*

In order to exclude the possibility that other factors than the father-son relation between Haemon and Creon form the basis or are in any other way of influence to the conflict, I have already shown in the last chapters that the political power of Creon, nor the complicated familiar relationships are in the way of calling the conflict between Creon and Haemon a generational conflict.²¹³ What, however, truly makes this discussion between father and son a generational conflict?

²¹² To the negative charge of the word 'young' I come back later, with the discussion of the contents of the dialogue and struggle between father and son.

²¹³ Cf. my discussion in HS 4.2.2.

At the start of the dialogue the cause of the conflict seems to be drawn from a complete different angle: the chorus escorts Haemon in by a stasimon and does not seem to be very sure about the mood of figures in this setting and the reason for Haemon to be there. She introduces him with a question:

Antigone [626-630]

Ὅδε μὲν Αἴμων, παίδων τῶν σῶν
νέατον γέννημ'· ἄρ' ἀχνόμενος
[τῆς μελλογάμου νύμφης]
τάλιδος ἦκει μόρον Ἀντιγόνης,
ἀπάτας λεχέων ὑπεραλγῶν; .

There is Haemon, the latest born among your
sons! Is he angry at the fate
of his affianced one,
Antigone, grieving
at the baffled hope of marriage?

Obviously, he sees his expectations of an upcoming discussion proven: shortly after both men separate he sings Eros an ode. This could be considered rather strange since the conflict between father and son to which he relates was not about love at all:

Antigone [781-806]

ΧΟ. Ἔρωσ ἀνίκατε μάχαν,
Ἔρωσ, ὃς ἐν κτήμασι πίπτεις,
ὃς ἐν μαλακαῖς παρειαῖς
νεάνιδος ἐννυχεύεις,
φοιτᾷς δ' ὑπερπόντιος ἐν τ'
ἀγρονόμοις αὐλαῖς·
καί σ' οὔτ' ἀθανάτων φύξιμος οὐδεὶς
οὔθ' ἀμερίων ἐπ' ἀν-
θρώπων, ὃ δ' ἔχων μέμνηεν.
Σὺ καὶ δικαίων ἀδίκους
φρένας παρασπᾷς ἐπὶ λῶβα·
σὺ καὶ τόδε νεῖκος ἀνδρῶν
ξύναιμον ἔχεις ταραξας·
νικᾷ δ' ἐναργῆς βλεφάρων

ἥμερος εὐλέκτρον
νύμφας, τῶν μεγάλων πάρεδρος ἐν ἀρχαῖς
θεσμῶν· ἄμαχος γὰρ ἐμ-
παίζει θεὸς Ἀφροδίτα.

KO. Love, invincible in battle,
Love who falls upon men's property,
you would spend the night upon the soft cheeks of
a girl, and travel over the sea
and through the huts of dwellers in the wild!
None among mortals can escape you,
nor any among mortal
men, and he who has you is mad.

You wrench just men's minds aside from justice,
doing the violence;
it is you who have stirred up this quarrel
between men of the same blood.

Victory goes to the visible desire that
comes from the eyes of the beautiful bride, a desire
that has its throne beside those of the mighty laws;
for irresistible in her sporting is the goddess

Νῦν δ' ἤδη ᾗ καὶ τὸς θεσμῶν
ἔξω φέρομαι τάδ' ὁρῶν, ἴσχειν δ'
οὐκέτι πηγὰς δύναμαι δακρύων,
τὸν παγκοίτην ὅθ' ὁρῶ θάλαμον
τήνδ' Ἀντιγόνην ἀνύτουσαν.

Aphrodite.

But now I myself am carried beyond the laws at
this sight, and can
no longer restrain the stream of tears
when I see Antigone here passing to the bridal
chamber where all come to rest.

“But -and scholars sometimes notice the obvious- the debate between father and son is not about love at all: it is about politics, and about wisdom as manifested in the political field.”²¹⁴

WINNINGTON-INGRAM correctly asked himself, as many others did, if the chorus was wrong.²¹⁵ The fact that Haemon threatened to commit suicide and later actually does is, according to him, the reason to assume that the discussion between father and son was so emotionally loaded by Haemon’s love for Antigone and he argues his interpretation of the background of this discussion as follows: “If he did not expatiate upon his passion for Antigone, this [suicide because his father was behaving as a bad king] was forbidden, thought not so much by the conventions of Greek tragedy, as by the requirements of the situation, by the fact that must serve and not frustrate his cause, as it would surely have been frustrated by a passionate rhapsody or an emotional appeal; forbidden equally by the fact that the political theme, and the revelation of Creon’s mind in the political context, are important themes which must be developed here.”²¹⁶

WINNINGTON-INGRAM is, in my opinion, partly right, but he overlooks an important detail: The chorus holds the conflict against Love (Eros), possibly substantiated by the passion of committing suicide and the threat to do so. In fact however, love is only an inducement: Haemon’s love is not mentioned once in this discussion. Although I, as noted before, and more elaborately considered below, would describe the theme of the tragedy as a ‘political theme’ as WINNINGTON-INGRAM does, the discussion *is* about power; about maintaining the law, written and unwritten; about the interpretation of law and about carrying out the law. Creon carries out the written laws, Antigone maintains the unwritten laws and Haemon is searching for the golden compromise in accosting and arguing. This however, does not mean the chorus is incorrectly appointing Love.

²¹⁴ WINNINGTON-INGRAM [1994] 92.

²¹⁵ Cf. FRITZ, VON, K., „Haemons Liebe zu Antigone“ in *Antike und moderne Tragödie*, Berlin 1962, 227-240 and MÜLLER, G., *Sophokles. Antigone*, Heidelberg 1967, 171ff. Both of the authors do assume that the chorus voices a misunderstanding of the mental wellbeing of Haemon.

²¹⁶ WINNINGTON-INGRAM [1994] 92-93.

In the following strophe Love seems to be underlined as a cause of the discussion, as ‘Desire’, originating from ‘Love’ (Eros) is being dedicated similar power to as the ‘mighty laws’ [797].²¹⁷ MÜLLER however, suggested the possibility that the chorus does not refer to Haemon, but to Creon: “Übrigens lässt sich mit anderer Syntax auch noch dies aus dem Satz heraushören: Eros verleitet Kreons ungerechten Sinn zur Misshandlung von Gerechten. Dies tut er wirklich, sofern er eine Situation herbeiführt, die vom ungerechten Kreon so arg missdeutet und zum Anlass einer verhängnisvollen Reaktion genommen wird. – ξύναμιον steht nicht bloß aus Konvention, die sich vielfach belegen lässt, bei νεῖκος statt bei ἀνδρῶν, das eingerahmt wird, sondern weil es so stilistisch ausdrucksvoller ist. Denn Blutsverwandtenstreit ist das Bedauerliche und Verwerfliche an der Situation.”²¹⁸

Although it is tempting to use this as an addition to my own interpretation of the conflict between Haemon and Creon, I do consider this interpretation of the stasimon improbable regarding the following verses in which θεσμῶν is mentioned again. Assuming the same ‘mighty laws’ are meant here:²¹⁹ Should the chorus truly refer to Creon and the ‘righteous ones’, whom he mistreats under the influence of Eros, then θεσμῶν should here be the law according to Creon, not the law Antigone lives by. An inconsistency of θεσμῶν however seems unlikely, because of the charge of the word in this passage, as MÜLLER did correctly notice.

JEBB’s translation of and commentary on this passage: “I leave these words [πᾶρεδρος ἐν ἀρχαῖς] in the text without marking them corrupt because the case against them is not decisive, while no emendation is certain. But I strongly suspect them. If sound, they mean that the love inspired by the maiden's eyes is a power ‘enthroned in sway by the side of the great laws.’ The great laws are those ‘unwritten’ moral laws that most men feel and acknowledge;

²¹⁷ GRIFFITH, M., *Sophocles Antigone*, Cambridge 1999, ad loc. lists the three most mentioned reasons put forward until then to interpret the passage as corrupt: „i) (...) gives a resolved longum in one choriamb (UU UU –) responding to (...) in the strophe (786 – UU –), a freedom occasionally found in Pindar, but never in S. (though cf. 970 –In.); ii) Love is hardly a ‘partner among’, but rather a *destroyer* of Thesmoi (hence 800 gar); iii) the Chorus’ words at 801-2 refer unmistakably back to 797-8 (...) and indicate that the Elders resemble Haimon in being ‘carried beyond/outside <the bonds off> the laws’“ So emendation seems to be required. In my opinion these arguments can be considered conclusive, though not sufficient: as JEBB puts it under words, no arguments can be distracted from the text, which forcibly prove this, so we should assume these words to actually belong to original text.

²¹⁸ MÜLLER [1967] ad loc

²¹⁹ Cf. JEBB, R., *Sophocles: The Plays and Fragments, with critical notes, commentary, and translation in English prose. Part III: The Antigone*. Cambridge 1907-1932, ad. loc. More elaborately discussed below.

here especially, the law of loyalty to country and the law of obedience to parents. In Haemon's case, love has shown that it is at least of equal force as these *thesmoi*.²²⁰

Exactly because of the pressure of the word and, in my opinion, because of the specific interpretation of θεσμῶν I would strongly spin the term ‘mighty laws’ as described by JEBB and restrict the description to ‘human law’, by which I mean political law –as a contrast to divine law.²²¹ The diverse themes of the conflict are hereby being expressed: polis versus *oikos*, the struggle for the highest power and maybe even man versus woman.

As I argued in chapter 3.2.2, the cause of this conflict is not only to be looked for in the discrepancy between polis and *oikos*, in which Creon would represent the polis. As I will elaborately discuss in the following paragraph, Haemon namely perfectly understands the choices of his father, despite of the fact that he tries to convince him that he is wrong: the conflict between father and son is only battled out on a level where Creon says to base his arguments for his choices upon the polis, *not* the *oikos*. Creon’s political position of power is however the only difference between him and Haemon, other than the difference of generation or age. The arguments Haemon brings up to prove him right, concern Creon’s leadership, which he criticizes.

5.1.3 *The conflict: Argumentation and Contents*

After the chorus has announced Haemon, the upcoming discussion between him and his father can already be felt when his father almost contritely but at least expectantly asks him whether he chooses his, or Antigone’s side in this matter and Haemon answers the following:

Antigone [635-638]

Πάτερ, σός εἰμι, καὶ σύ μοι γνώμας ἔχων
χρηστὰς ἀπορθοῖς, αἷς ἔγωγ’ ἐφέψομαι.
Ἔμοι γὰρ οὐδεὶς ἀξιώσεται γάμος
μείζων φέρεσθαι σοῦ καλῶς ἡγουμένου.

Father, I belong to you, and you keep me straight
with your good judgements, which I shall follow.
Yes, in my eyes no marriage shall be more highly
valued than your right guidance.

In this passage Haemon states to his father without beating about the bush, that it is not his goal to defend his fiancée, but that he does consider her to be right and his father wrong.

²²⁰ JEBB [1907-1932] ad. loc.

²²¹ Cf. LIDDELL & SCOTT ad loc; WHITMAN [1951] 82-83 suggests a contradiction between politics and human: an interpretation with a modern touch.

Remarkably, Haemon explicitly excludes all familiar boundaries and relations from this discussion, as Creon wished to do when he sentenced Polyneikes' body to remain unburied. Creon though, at first seems to misunderstand his son -“But we must wait for the end of the scene. Haemon's self-control cannot stand the strain.”²²²-

Antigone [639-651]

ΚΡ. Οὕτω γάρ, ὦ παῖ, χρὴ διὰ στέρνων ἔχειν,
γνώμης πατρώας πάντ' ὀπισθεν ἐστάναι·
τούτου γὰρ οὐνεκ' ἄνδρες εὐχονται γονᾶς
κατηκόους φύσαντες ἐν δόμοις ἔχειν,
ὥς καὶ τὸν ἐχθρὸν ἀνταμύνωνται κακοῖς,
καὶ τὸν φίλον τιμῶσιν ἐξ ἴσου πατρί.

“Οστις δ' ἀνωφέλητα φιτεύει τέκνα,
τί τόνδ' ἂν εἴποις ἄλλο πλὴν αὐτῷ πόνους
φῦσαι, πολὺν δὲ τοῖσιν ἐχθροῖσιν γέλων;

Μή νύν ποτ', ὦ παῖ, τὰς φρένας <γ> ὑφ'
ἡδονῆς
γυναικὸς οὐνεκ' ἐκβάλλης, εἰδὼς ὅτι
ψυχρὸν παραγκάλισμα τοῦτο γίγνεται,
γυνὴ κακὴ ξύνευνος ἐν δόμοις; τί γὰρ
γένοιτ' ἂν ἔλκος μεῖζον ἢ φίλος κακός;

Yes, my son, that is how your mind should be, thinking that your all things rank second to your fathers judgement. This is why men pray that they may beget and keep in their houses obedient offspring, so that they may requite the enemy with evil and honour the friend as they honour their father.

But as for the man who fathers children who give him no help, what can you say that he begets but trouble for himself, and much delight for his enemies?

Never let go your good sense, my son, for sake of the pleasure that a woman gives, knowing that this thing is an armful that grows cold, an evil woman sharing your bed in your house.

For what wound could be deeper, than a dear one who is evil?

As GRIFFITH resolutely summarized, Creon's argumentations consists out of three essential assumptions: “i) Sons are extensions of their fathers; ii) women are a danger and a distraction to men; iii) the key to domestic and military-political order is ‘obedience’ (...) to the rule of the father/leader” (...).²²³ Still, in this passage Creon mainly generalizes exactly that with which he wants to emphasise the support he longs from his son in these circumstances: a man prays to the gods, hoping for obedient descendants! He struggles with lonesome despair and maybe even a feeling of guilt, when he points his son to his responsibilities.

²²² WINNINGTON-INGRAM [1994] 94

²²³ Compare the values Creon utters here with the *Trachinerinnen* 1174-1180. Cf. GRIFFITH, M., „The King and Eye: the rule of the father in Greek tragedy. *PCPhS* 44 1985, 20-84.

After ten verses of generalisations the essence of Creon's argumentation finally comes out: a son has to fight with and next to his father against his enemies. The fact that Antigone is Creon's enemy more or less becomes a side-issue, although in the same context of the argument she is painted to be the worst bride for a good son: a loved one being so evil is the worst that can happen to a man. Haemon could not choose her side for pleasure, over the wellbeing of his father. The love between Antigone and Haemon is, as mentioned above, no subject, nor a valid argument for either one of the participants of this discussion.

The chorus provides a remarkable intervention as in many tragedies he acts like a judge.²²⁴ Interestingly however, is the way in which he chooses Creon's side:

Antigone [681-682]

XO. Ἡμῖν μὲν, εἰ μὴ τῷ χρόνῳ κεκλέμμεθα,
λέγειν φρονούντως ὧν λέγεις δοκεῖς πέρι.

KO To us, if we are not led astray by our old
age, you seem to speak sensibly about the things
you speak of.

According to MÜLLER the chorus only acts from spurious politeness: "Die resümierenden beiden Trimeter des Chorführers 681f. knüpfen die höfliche Zustimmung zur Rede des Herrschers an die Bedingung, dass nicht Altersschwäche das Urteil trübt. Es liegt in Wahrheit eine nicht an das Alter gebundene Verdrehung des Urteils vor."²²⁵ GRIFFITH read a sincere and continuous support of their leader: „... their seems no trace of irony or equivocation."²²⁶ At the moment, the nature of the discussion between both men becomes clear, Sophocles relates to the politeness of the chorus, sincere or false, to time which flew by, and therewith to the age of members of the chorus. In my opinion, through this, he functionalizes the difference of age between the two fighting men and this intervention is our first clue to recognize the importance of age and difference in age in this tragedy: a foresight to the generation conflict being battled out here.

²²⁴ Cf. BURTON, *The chorus in Sophoclean tragedies*, Oxford 1980 186-187. In the next part of this chapter I will more elaborately discuss the mother-role, which the chorus in *Elektra* adapts.

²²⁵ MÜLLER [1967] 154 Interesting about MÜLLER's opinion is also, that he determines the „stage setting“, although I do not see any textual clue to support his ideas about the obvious difference of age between Creon and Haemon. MÜLLER namely, thinks that „Differences in their ages must be visible in their appearances as a way of visualizing the other conflicts that erupt between them.“

²²⁶ GRIFFITH, M. *Sophocles Antigone*, Cambridge 1999, ad loc.

5.1.4 *The conflict: Cause and Consequences*

As an answer Haemon defends himself by announcing that familiar relations are beyond dispute and that his father's wellbeing is the most important to him but that he nonetheless disagrees with him on this matter. In his argument Haemon mentions the opinion of the people of Thebes about Antigone's punishment. The negative attitude towards Creon and his actions and the fact that Haemon uses this to substantiate his argument strengthen his actual message to his father. The second part of his monologue namely consists of a lesson he wants to teach his father: do not think you know it all; it is not too late to learn and restore your mistakes.

Antigone [683-723]

ΑΙ. Πάτερ, θεοὶ φύουσιν ἀνθρώποις φρένας
πάντων ὅς' ἐστὶ κτημάτων ὑπέρτατον·
Ἐγὼ δ' ὅπως σὺ μὴ λέγεις ὀρθῶς τάδε,
οὔτ' ἂν δυνάμην μήτ' ἐπισταίμην λέγειν·
[γένοιτο μεντὰν χᾶτέρῳ καλῶς ἔχον.]
Σοῦ δ' οὖν πέφυκα πάντα προσκοπεῖν ὅσα
λέγει τις ἢ πράσσει τις ἢ ψέγειν ἔχει·
τὸ γὰρ σὸν ὄμμα δεινὸν ἀνδρὶ δημότῃ
λόγοις τοιούτοις οἷς σὺ μὴ τέρψῃ κλύων.

Ἐμοὶ δ' ἀκούειν ἔσθ' ὑπὸ σκότου τάδε,
τὴν παῖδα ταύτην οἷ' ὀδύρεται πόλις,
πασῶν γυναικῶν ὡς ἀναξιώτατη
κάκιστ' ἀπ' ἔργων εὐκλεεστάτων φθίνει,
ἥτις τὸν αὐτῆς αὐτάδελφον ἐν φοναῖς
πεπτῶτ' ἄθαπτον μήθ' ὑπ' ὠμιστῶν κυνῶν
εἶας' ὀλέσθαι μήθ' ὑπ' οἰωνῶν τινος·
οὐχ ἥδε χρυσῆς ἀξία τιμῆς λαχεῖν;
τοιᾶδ' ἐρεμνὴ σίγ' ἐπέρχεται φάτις.

Ἐμοὶ δὲ σοῦ πρόσσοντος εὐτυχῶς, πάτερ,
οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν κτῆμα τιμιώτερον·
τί γὰρ πατρὸς θάλλοντος εὐκλείας τέκνοις
ἄγαλμα μεῖζον ἢ τί πρὸς παίδων πατρί;

HA. Father, it is the gods, who give men intelligence, the most precious of all possessions, and I could never say, and may I never know how to say, that what you say is wrong.

[But a different view might be correct]

But it is not in your nature to foresee people's words or actions or the objects of their censure; for your countenance is alarming to a subject when he speaks words that give you no pleasure.

But for me it is possible to hear under cover this, how the city is lamenting for this girl, saying that no woman ever deserved it less, but that she is to perish miserably for actions that are glorious, she who did not allow her own brother who had fallen in the slaughter to remain unburied or to be destroyed by savage dogs or birds. Does not she deserve, they ask, to be honoured with a golden prize? Such is the dark saying that is silently advancing.

For me, father, nothing is more precious than your good fortune: for what distinction can be greater for children than a father who flourishes in high repute, or greater for a father than sons

Μή νυν ἕν ἦθος μοῦνον ἐν σαυτῷ φόρει,
ὡς φῆς σύ, κοῦδὲν ἄλλο, τοῦτ' ὀρθῶς ἔχειν·
ὅστις γὰρ αὐτὸς ἢ φρονεῖν μόνος δοκεῖ,
ἢ γλῶσσαν ἦν οὐκ ἄλλος ἢ ψυχὴν ἔχειν,
οὔτοι διαπτυχθέντες ὠφθησαν κενοί.

Ἄλλ' ἄνδρα, κεῖ τις ἢ σοφός, τὸ μανθάνειν
πόλλ' αἰσχροὺς οὐδὲν καὶ τὸ μὴ τείνειν ἄγαν.
Ὅρῳ παρὰ ρεῖθοισι χειμάρροις ὅσα
δένδρων ὑπέκει, κλώνας ὡς ἐκσώζεται,
τὰ δ' ἀντιτείνοντ' αὐτόπρεμν' ἀπόλλυται.

Αὐτως δὲ ναὸς ὅστις ἐγκρατὴς πόδα
τείνας ὑπέκει μηδέν, ὑπτίοις κάτω
στρέψας τὸ λοιπὸν σέλμασιν ναυτίλλεται.
Ἄλλ' εἶκε, θυμῷ καὶ μετάστασιν δίδου.
Γνώμη γὰρ εἴ τις κἀπ' ἐμοῦ νεωτέρου
πρόσεστι, φήμ' ἔγωγε πρεσβεύειν πολὺ
φῶναι τὸν ἄνδρα πάντ' ἐπιστήμης πλέων·
εἰ δ' οὔν, φιλεῖ γὰρ τοῦτο μὴ ταύτη ρέπειν,
καὶ τῶν λεγόντων εὖ καλὸν τὸ μανθάνειν.

This lesson taught by Haemon enrages Creon: not only does Haemon not join his father's side as Creon expected from him, he also doubts his capability of judgment and his wisdom. Haemon's monologue has the opposite effect on Creon: he does not let himself be ruled by his son and certainly not by the people of Thebes, whose opinion Haemon brings up in the next part of the dialogue when he notices his arguments are not achieving what he wished for:

Antigone [724-734]

XO. Ἄναξ, σέ τ' εἰκός, εἴ τι καίριον λέγει,
μαθεῖν, σέ τ' αὖ τοῦδ'· εὖ γὰρ εἴρηται διπλῶ.

who do so?

Do not wear the garment of one mood only, thinking that your opinion and no other must be right. For however things that they themselves alone have sense, or have a power of speech or an intelligence that no other has, these people when laid to be open are found to be empty.

It is not shameful for a man, even is he I wise, often to learn things and not to resist too much. You see how when rivers are swollen in winter those trees that yield to the flood retain their branches, but those that offer resistance perish, trunk and all.

Just so whoever in command of a ship keeps the sheet taut, and never slackens it, is overturned and thereafter sails with his oarsmen's benches upside down. Now, retreat from your anger and allow yourself to change; for if I too, young as I am, have some judgement, I say that is best by far if a man is altogether full of knowledge; but that, since things are not accustomed to go that way, it is also good to learn from those who give good counsel.

King, it is proper, if he says anything that is to the point, that you should learn from him, and you Haemon, from Creon; for true things have been said on both sides.

KP. Οἱ τηλικοῖδε καὶ διδαζόμεσθα δὴ φρονεῖν ὑπ' ἀνδρὸς τηλικοῦδε τὴν φύσιν;	<u>So men of my age are taught sense by a man of your age?</u> <u>Nothing but what is right! If I am young, one must not consider my age rather than my merits.</u>
AI. Μηδὲν τὸ μὴ δίκαιον· εἰ δ' ἐγὼ νέος, οὐ τὸν χρόνον χρὴ μάλλον ἢ τάργα σκοπεῖν.	
KP. Ἔργον γάρ ἐστι τοὺς ἀκοσμοῦντας σέβειν;	Is it a merit to show regard for those who cause disorder?
AI. Οὐδ' ἂν κελεύσαιμ' εὐσεβεῖν εἰς τοὺς κακοὺς.	It is not that I ask you to show regard for evildoers.
KP. Οὐχ ἦδε γὰρ τοιᾶδ' ἐπείληπται νόσῳ;	Is not she afflicted with this malady?
AI. Οὐ φησι Θήβης τῆσδ' ὁμόπολις λεώς.	The people of Thebes that shares our city does not say so.
KP. Πόλις γὰρ ἡμῖν ἀμὲ χρὴ τάσσειν ἐρεῖ;	Is the city to tell me what orders I shall give?

Haemon seems to lose control over his emotions when he calls Creon's words those of a very young man: Haemon namely knows, and with him so does every spectator and reader of the play, that he will provoke Creon by saying that. Creon however, reacts with another argument Haemon can easily refute.

Antigone [735-741]

AI. Ὅρας τόδ' ὥς εἴρηκας ὥς ἄγαν νέος;	<u>Do you not notice what you have said is spoken like a very young man?</u>
KP. Ἄλλω γὰρ ἢ μοι χρὴ με τῆσδ' ἄρχειν χθονός;	Must I rule this land for another and not for myself?
AI. Πόλις γὰρ οὐκ ἔσθ' ἣτις ἀνδρὸς ἐσθ' ένός.	Yes, there is no city that belongs to a single man.
KP. Οὐ τοῦ κρατοῦντος ἡ πόλις νομίζεται;	Is not the city thought to belong to its ruler?
AI. Καλῶς ἐρήμης γ' ἂν σὺ γῆς ἄρχοις μόνος.	You would be a fine ruler over a deserted city.
KP. Ὅδ', ὥς ἔοικε, τῇ γυναικὶ συμμαχεῖ.	This man, it seems, is fighting on a woman's side.
AI. Εἴπερ γυνὴ σὺ· σοῦ γὰρ οὖν προκήδομαι.	If you are a woman; because it is you for whom I feel concern.

When Creon then blames Haemon to be fighting on a woman's side, Haemon again answers out of emotion, but very sharply this time: If you are a woman; because it is you for whom I feel concern [741]. The part of the discussion following concretizes the central problem of the plot of this tragedy: the three levels at which legitimacy can be contemplated.

Significant about this following scene is the fact that Creon on the one hand is invincible, something he explicitly expresses by punishing Haemon for his insubordination and brutality, with Antigone's intended death. On the other hand Creon seems to have lost the discussion because he comes back to irrelevant arguments, he already mentioned before: Antigone's death now almost does not seem to be a punishment for her deeds, as much as a leading issue between father and son. Naturally Haemon answers, that he as well will die then, Creon takes this as a threat, something that turns out to be valid. Direct results of the discussion between father and son namely are firstly, right after Antigone's death, Haemon's death, followed by the death of Eurydice, Haemon's mother and Creon's wife. Creon's stubbornness has far fetching consequences for him. Although he chooses not to listen to Tiresias' advice nor to that of his son speaking in name of the people of Thebes, his fate seems to have been destined, also because of Tiresias' warning. The doubt about balance between divine intervention and human responsibility for one's own deeds, which is indecisively discussed concerning many Sophoclean tragedies by many scholars, is also raked up here.

Antigone [741-765]

KP. ὦ παγκάκιστε, διὰ δίκης ἰὼν πατρί;

You villain, by disputing against your father!

AI. Οὐ γὰρ δίκαιά σ' ἐξαμαρτάνωνθ' ὀρώ.

Because I see that you are offending against justice.

KP. Ἀμαρτάνω γὰρ τὰς ἐμὰς ἀρχὰς σέβων;

Am I offending when I show regard for my own office?

AI. Οὐ γὰρ σέβεις, τιμάς γε τὰς θεῶν πατῶν.

You show no regards when you trample on the honours due to the gods.

KP. ὦ μιαιφόνος ἥθος καὶ γυναικὸς ὕστερον.

Contemptible character, inferior to a woman!

AI. Οὐ τὰν ἔλοις ἥσσω γε τῶν αἰσχρῶν ἐμέ.

You will not find me vanquished by what is shameful.

KP. Ὅ γοῦν λόγος σοι πᾶς ὑπὲρ κείνης ὄδε.

Well, everything you say is on behalf of her.

AI. Καὶ σοῦ γε κάμοῦ, καὶ θεῶν τῶν νεπτέρων.

And of you and of me, and of the infernal gods.

KP. Ταύτην ποτ' οὐκ ἔσθ' ὥς ἔτι ζῶσαν
γαμεῖς.

AI. Ἦδ' οὖν θανεῖται καὶ θανοῦσ' ὀλεῖ τινα.

KP. Ἦ κάπαπειλῶν ᾧδ' ἐπεξέρχη θρασύς;

AI. Τίς δ' ἔστ' ἀπειλὴ πρὸς κενὰς γνώμας
λέγειν;

KP. Κλαίων φρενώσεις, ὣν φρενῶν αὐτὸς
κενός.

AI. Εἰ μὴ πατὴρ ἦσθ', εἶπον ἄν σ' οὐκ εὖ
φρονεῖν.

KP. Γυναικὸς ὣν δούλευμα, μὴ κώτιλλέ με.

AI. Βούλει λέγειν τι καὶ λέγων μηδὲν
κλύειν;

KP. Ἀληθες; ἀλλ' οὐ τόνδ' Ὀλυμπον, ἴσθ'
ὅτι,

χαίρων ἐπὶ ψόγοισι δειννάσεις ἐμέ.

Ἀγαγε τὸ μῖσος, ὥς κατ' ὄμματ' αὐτίκα
παρόντι θνήσκη πλησία τῷ νυμφίῳ.

AI. Οὐ δῆτ' ἔμοιγε, τοῦτο μὴ δόξης ποτέ,
οὔθ' ἢδ' ὀλεῖται πλησία, σύ τ' οὐδαμῶ
τοῦμὸν προσόψει κρᾶτ' ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ὄρων,
ὥς τοῖς θέλουσι τῶν φίλων μαίνῃ ξυνών.

You shall never marry this woman while she is
alive.

Then she will die and by her death she will
destroy another.

Have you the insolence to come out against me
with threats?

What kind of threat it is to me to tell you my
decisions?

You will regret your lecturing for me, when you
yourself understand nothing.

If you were not my father, I would say you had
no sense

Slave of a woman that you are, do not try to
cajole me!

Do you wish to speak but not to listen to him you
speak to?

Do you say that? Why, by that Olympus which
we see, be sure of it, you shall not continue to
abuse me with your reproaches with impunity!
Bring the hateful creature, so that she may die at
once close at hand, in the sight of her
bridegroom.

She shall not die close to me, never imagine it,
and you shall never more set eyes upon my face,
so that you can rave on in the company of those
friends who will endure it!

In this emotional dialogue TYRRELL and BENNETT not only recognize the utterances of a father and a son, but also from a hoplite and an ephebe: "Convinced his sons favours Antigone, he [Creon] wants Haemon at his side. The issue for him is filial allegiance claimed above Haemon's standing as a citizen and as a betrothed. He uses language appropriate to his own status as a hoplite. Haemon continues his father's idiom but modifies it to his status as an

ephebe.”²²⁷ Although I can not relate to the military order examining the Greek text which was read by TYRRELL and BENNETT in this tragedy, I do agree that the reference to ‘young’, [Γνώμη γὰρ εἴ τις καὶ ἐμοῦ νεωτέρου πρόσσεστι] and further on in the discussion by Creon to ‘old’, can lead to the assumption that the respect Haemon shows for Creon is not only based on this father son relation. The attitude, the -mutual respect and confidence- and maybe even their choice of words on which TYRRELL and BENNETT base their assumption, could possibly be related to the military order of the city-state Athens. However I do think that if Sophocles used it consciously, it would only have been to serve as a recognizable feature for the public and in order to substantiate the bipolarity within the discussion; not to mirror society nor to put them on stage as hoplite and ephebe.

Concomitantly a connection with the possible military status of the two men is not necessary to conclude that the conflict is in fact based on difference of generation. Between the two men, as is supported by the treatise of TYRRELL and BENNETT, who were right but could only trace parts of the mutual argumentation. “To maintain the contest, he [Creon] attacks his advisor for his youth, the ephebe’s most treasured quality. In the ensuing stichomythic battle, Creon’s claim to an elder’s wisdom claims to be invalid.”²²⁸ Not the invalid wisdom of an old man however is important in order to judge and interpret this conflict, but actually the fact that Creon seems to think to be able to assure his right and being right by his old age.

MÜLLER suggested that neither the love of Haemon for Antigone, nor of Creon for Haemon, , should be considered the cause of this conflict between father and son. The -modern- division of opinions as a choice between the divine laws and human laws; the general morally ruling laws or created independences between *oikos* and polis are in my opinion the result of an escalated situation of conflict between Creon and Antigone and form a part of the -figurative- argumentation of Creon’s monologue. Haemon turns out to be capable of declining these arguments, after which even the chorus does not seem to be sure about who’s right to what extent [724-725]. Creon’s power towards his subjects and family members and his position as a man towards the women around him, especially towards Antigone, is only being used to underline the argumentation. The fact that this also does in fact not belong to the actual

²²⁷ TYRRELL & BENNETT [1998] 88. The following passage, regarding the conclusion about Haemon language as an ephebe [688-689, 692]

²²⁸ TYRRELL & BENNETT [1998] 90

conflict can be determined from the context, the structure of this addition and the reaction to it.

The basis of the discussion can be found in the only, essential difference between Creon and Haemon causing their dispute: the difference in generation. This difference of generation is concretised by Creon calling 'young' (Haemon) and 'old' (Tiresias), which bears a strong negative undertone and in its context even forms a reproach. By doing this Creon directly relates superior wisdom to 'old', wisdom he remarkably does not adopt from Tiresias but does accredit himself facing Haemon. Naturally the older party within a discussion can only apply this superiority as a justification. Provided that there was no difference of generation within this tragedy, Creon would have had a much less prominent expectation of Haemon's support as his son. This way Haemon's advice, emulating Tiresias' words, voicing the people of Thebes, would have a larger chance to succeed. It is however proven that Creon's age does not provide him wisdom, let alone superiority.

It may be concluded that the conflict between Haemon and Creon *is* a generational conflict, because of the fact that the actual difference between these struggling parties is the difference of generation, outlining the basis of the conflict and therewith can be assumed to form the actual cause.

5.2. Generation conflict in *Elektra*

The conflict displayed in *Elektra*, ends, among other things with matricide, which at the beginning of the tragedy was already determined by the underlying myth. Despite this brutal premises from the spectator of this tragedy, through *Elektra*'s part, empathy is acquired and received: matricide is against human nature and extremely brutal but in this context it may be justified.²²⁹ *Elektra*'s continuous wining causes an emotional fluctuation that on the one hand is distracting from the intensity of murder and on the other hand is not satisfactory enough to make the deed acceptable. As a reader or spectator, like with many of Sophocles' tragedies, one is almost unconsciously forced to accept the role of an arbiter, even fancying to be in the

²²⁹ The most recent and the most well-considered interpretations of the matricide in this tragedy and even of Sophocles' own opinion on the matter can be found in BLUNDELL [1989] 183; WINNINGTON-INGRAM [1980] 246; WOODARD, T., "Elektra by Sophocles: The Dialectical design. (Part I)" *HSCPh* 68 (1964) and WOODARD, T., "Elektra by Sophocles: The Dialectical design. (Part II)" *HSCPh* 70 (1965); SEGAL, C. "The Elektra of Sophocles." *TAPhA* 97 (1964); WALDOCK, A.J.A., *Sophocles the dramatist*. (Cambridge 1951) 169-195

Athenian Boulè.²³⁰ Truly convincing, Elektra is not however: “Although the ‘evils’ that she must accomplish are technically just, they weaken her moral fibre and leave her embittered and vindictive at the end. We respect her and sympathize with her, but we do not like her.”²³¹

As shown in the former paragraphs, in *Antigone* the gender conflict is kept out of the tragic plot. Concomitantly the protagonists -Creon and Haemon- seem to almost try to hard to ‘ignore’ familyties. Among other things, this denial of the familiar aspect of the conflict causes the term conflict of generations to seem not so obvious as it seems in *Elektra*. In this tragedy precisely these relations make the plot what it is: a family drama. The question about the cause of the main conflict of this drama gets bogged down in the discussion on human responsibility for one’s own deeds and divine interaction, as well within the tragic conflict as in modern science.²³²

Even with a lot of empathy for Elektra’s suffering and for that of her brother and sisters the known and to be expected matricide almost attaches the stigma ‘conflict of generations’ on the theme in advance, it almost immediately puts the stigma *generation conflict* on the plot of this tragedy. Although the title of this chapter already presupposes this, from the former chapters can also be determined to what extent this assumption is justified. In the following paragraphs I will show why, in my opinion, also in *Elektra* one can speak of a conflict of generations. Despite the fact that the drama exists out of family ties, relations, missteps and revenge of the next generation, my definition of a conflict of generations can not unconditionally be applied to the tragedy. Neither the tragic conflict, nor the matricide is directly derived from the differences in generation; nevertheless a precise analysis of the relation between mother and daughter, Elektra and Clythemnestra will illustrate that their conflict is actually based on this difference.

²³⁰ Mainly at the dialogue between Elektra and Clythemnestra this is the case. I will more elaborately discuss this when I discuss the relevant passages.

²³¹ GARDINER, C.P., *The Sophoclean Chorus, a study of character and function*. (Iowa 1987) p.140. Cf. GELLIE [1972] 106 “The play has been censured for being ‘a mixture of matricide and good spirits’. Many critics have found in it something disturbing to the moral sense. A hundred lines before its end Clythemnestra is killed by her son Orestes, and much of the play is concerned with the planning of that killing by Orestes and his sister Elektra.” Cf. LEFÈVRE [2001] p. 4, “Von der Überlieferung sind gerade solche Tragödien bewahrt, deren Helden trotz ihren Fehlern berühren.” And p. 155 “Offenbar ist die Elektra als eine Tragödie über angemessenes menschliches Verhalten zu verstehen. Es ist daher die Frage nach der Verantwortlichkeit des Menschen für sein Handeln zu stellen –auch wenn er positive Ziele verfolgt.”

²³² An interesting and noteworthy interpretation of this fact, related to Sophocles’ own development, which I however do not wish to discuss in this work, can be found in WHITMAN [1951] 150, “His inward divinity brings him closer to the gods themselves, or -since that phrase is perhaps meaningless- to a larger transcendent idea of the divine and eternal, which ratifies and seals the striving divinity of the human, or at least of the heroic sphere.”

5.1.1 Family relations: Elektra, daughter, stepdaughter and sister

The Homeric epics tell that Agamemnon sacrificed his daughter Iphigeneia. Herewith he gained the grief and anger of his wife and her mother Clythemnestra. Although the actual leading part of the play is granted to Orestes, he accomplishes the deed of revenge and commits matricide; Elektra is the protagonist of the play.²³³ She voices the emotions, surrounding the murder: rage, hatred, powerlessness, but also respect for her father and fear of a life as an unmarried, fatherless woman, now that her father is dead. Elektra's motives are of selfinterest, but probably recognisable and even justifiable for an Athenian audience. For the benefit of the subtlety of the consideration between good and evil, Sophocles, as shortly mentioned above, made Elektra undergo an emotional development, within which in clearly separable phases within the tragic context, she becomes conscious of her fate, her position in life and her possibilities.

At first Elektra falls into pitiful complaining, in which she mainly adapts the role of a victim and is not as full of revenge and hatred towards her mother nor as pitying for her father as she later becomes: her own fate and future form the red wire in her lamenting towards the chorus. The second phase of her complaint starts with the entering of Chrysothemis, whom Elektra seems to hold for an accomplice and a companion. Only when she does not turn out to share Elektra's need for revenge Elektra actually gets angry. Her rage is kept under control by the chorus and her self-control in the fourth phase somehow strikes us, as the audience, to be very controlled in the dialogue with Clythemnestra in which she tells us the strongly substantiated argumentation of her being right.

The acquainted death of Orestes and the relief it brings to Clythemnestra make Elektra go off into emotional, unbalanced illusions of her own power, possibilities and moral obligations. Through this phase Elektra ends up making an appeal to Chrysothemis again. The relief and the emotional discharge following the exposure of Orestes form the sixth phase of her emotional development within the tragic context.²³⁴

The persons Elektra talks to, Chrysothemis, Clythemnestra, Orestes and -last but not least- the chorus, actually form a catalyst of her emotions: the way in which she utters herself

²³³ Cf. GRIFFIN, J., „Sophocles and the democratic city.“ In *Sophocles Revisited: essays presented to Sir Hugh Lloyd-Jones*. (Oxford 1999), 73-94: „...the real subject of the play is the emotions of the heroine.“ Following SCHADEWALT, W., *Monolog und Selbstgespräch*, Neue philologische Untersuchungen 2. (Berlin 1928), 57; CAMBELL, L., *Sophocles*, (Oxford 1879-1881) Vol. 2, 129. Cf. MARCH, J. Sophocles, *Elektra* (Warminster 2001) 11: „[Elektra] expresses the heights and depths of emotion, from bitter hatred to most tender love, from the deepest sorrow to the most exalted joy.“

²³⁴ In the paragraph underneath I will discuss the different phases more elaborately.

toward these people is characteristic for her part within the family tradition. Chrysothemis is her younger sister of whom she has nothing to fear, to whom she, without hesitation utters her opinion, but from whom she also does not accept any protest [c.f. 328 – 471]. Her mother Clythemnestra Elektra addresses, despite her hatred, with much more respect [c.f. 554 – 555]. KITZINGER: “In the scenes between Elektra and the chorus, Elektra and Chrysothemis, and Elektra and Clytaemnestra, there is no motion toward the completion of the action of the play. Instead the audience witnesses a series of verbal *agones* in which the active force of Elektra’s words, shapes the form and the texture of the dramatic experience. As each scene ends with Elektra’s victory over her opponent, she creates a harmony, however painful, between word, thought, feeling, and deed that constitutes order and justice in the first half of the play.”²³⁵ Her brother Orestes is also her closest male relative, which means he is her legal guardian. Elektra depended, until she would marry, on her father. Not only would he have determined the course and content of her life, such as her future husband, but he would have also protected her, though mainly in his own interest, to safeguard the honour of the family. Aegisthus however, would have no interest at all in protecting the daughters of another man, or even in treating them correctly± in his family they would only be bastard children from another father. Her brother therefore is Elektra’s only chance to live an honourable life. Concomitantly she very well realises that she, on her own and as a woman, would stand no chance, taking revenge on her mother and her lover for killing her father.

Without wanting or being able to judge Elektra’s joy over seeing her -thought to be dead- brother, the scene of recognition between Elektra and Orestes, often mentioned to be one of the most poignant passages of literary history, contains in my opinion, a calculating smack, which is often not taken into account. It is because of Elektra’s emotions on the death and life of Orestes, but also that of Agamemnon, which cause us nowadays to not simply have a mere positive image of Elektra within this tragic context and therefore keeps us from approving the revenge of matricide.²³⁶ This egoism is however of great importance to our

²³⁵ KITZINGER, R.. “Why mourning becomes Elektra” in *CA* vol. 10, 1991, afl. 2, 298-327, here 305-306 In my opinion is “... not motion toward the completion of the action of the play.” Exaggeratingly expressed: also this part of the tragic context contributes to the completion of the plot, which stands or falls with the insights of Elektra. Though, as I will discuss below, the harmony between word, thought, feeling and deeds, does form the basis of that what Sophocles emerged with his public.

²³⁶ The scholarly discussion about Sophocles’ intentions to take on a view regarding the justification of matricide through a tragedy may be tempting, though irrelevant for this research since the discussion is not about Sophocles’ judgement of the social manners between mother and child but about the possible legal justification of matricide. A summary of different theories on Sophocles’ intentions with this tragedy can be found in KELLS, J.H., *Sophocles Elektra*, Cambridge 1973, p. 1-17 especially 3-7

empathy for the relations between all members, male as well as female of an Athenian family.²³⁷

5.1.2 *Elektra's complaining and the mother-role of the chorus*

The first phase of Elektra's lamenting over what happened, exists of her monologue and the following dialogue with the chorus [c.f. 86 – 325]. Elektra is in a state of intense grief, mainly lamenting over her father's death, resigning in her own suffering. Remarkable here is her comparison with a nightingale, having lost its youngsters:

Elektra [86-121]

ΕΛ ὦ φάος ἄγνόν

καὶ γῆς ἰσόμοιρ' ἀήρ, ὥς μοι
πολλὰς μὲν θρήνων ᾠδάς,
πολλὰς δ' ἀντήρεις ἥσθου
στέρνων πλαγὰς αἵμασσομένων,
ὅποταν δνοφερὰ νύξ ὑπολειφθῇ·
τὰ δὲ παννυχίδων κῆδη στυγεραὶ
ξυνίσασ' εὐναὶ μογερῶν οἴκων,
ὅσα τὸν δύστηνον ἐμὸν θρηνῶ
πατέρ', ὃν κατὰ μὲν βάρβαρον αἶαν
φοίνιος Ἄρης οὐκ ἐξένισεν,
μήτηρ δ' ἡμὴ χῶ κοινολεχῆς
Αἴγισθος, ὅπως δρῦν ὑλοτόμοι,
σχίζουσι κάρα φονίῳ πελέκει·
κοῦδεὶς τούτων οἶκτος ἀπ' ἄλλης
ἢ μοῦ φέρεται, σοῦ, πάτερ, οὕτως
ἀδίκως οἰκτρῶς τε θανόντος.

Ἄλλ' οὐ μὲν δὴ
λήξω θρήνων στυγερῶν τε γόων,
ἔστ' ἂν παμφεγγεῖς ἄστρων
ρίπας, λεύσσω δὲ τόδ' ἥμαρ,
μὴ οὐ τεκνολέτειρ' ὥς τις ἀηδὼν
ἐπὶ κωκυτῷ τῶνδε πατρώων
πρὸ θυρῶν ἡχῶ πᾶσι προφωνεῖν·
ὦ δῶμ' Ἀΐδου καὶ Περσεφόνης,

El. O holy light

and air that has an equal share of earth,
how many dirges have you heard me sing and
how many blows have you heard me aim
against my bleeding breast, when
dusky night has been left behind!

And my hateful bed in
the miserable house knows of the sorrows of my
sleepless nights, how often I lament for my unhappy
father, whom the bloody
war-god did not make his guest in a barbarian land,
but my mother and her bedfellow,
Aegisthos, split his head with a murderous axe,
as woodmen split an oak.

And from none but me does your due of lamentation
come, father, though your
death was so dreadful and so pitiful!

But I shall not
cease from my dirges and miserable lamentations,
so long as I look upon the sparkling of the bright stars
and upon this light of day like the nightingale,

²³⁷ The gender-relations are bridged by the relations between the people of different generations: When a father died, the care and responsibility for his daughter passed on to the closest male relative, in many cases a brother of his or of his wife. Cf. POMEROY, S., *Godesses, whores, wives and slaves, Women in Classical Antiquity*, New York 1976, p. 62-65

ὦ χθόνι' Ἑρμῇ καὶ πότνι' Ἀρά,
 σεμναί τε θεῶν παῖδες Ἑρινύες,
 αἵ τοὺς ἀδίκως θνήσκοντας ὀράθ',
 αἵ τοὺς εὐνὰς ὑποκλεπτομένους,
 ἔλθετ', ἀρήξατε, τείσασθε πατρός
 φόνον ἡμετέρου,
καί μοι τὸν ἐμὸν πέμψατ' ἀδελφόν·
μούνη γὰρ ἄγειν οὐκέτι σωκῶ
λύπης ἀντίρροπον ἄχθος.

slayer of her young, crying out loud and
 making loud proclamation to all
 before my father's doors.
 O house of Hades and Persephone,
 O Hermes of the underworld and powerful Curse,
 and Erinyes, revered children of the gods
 who look upon those wrongfully done to death,
 who look upon those who dishonour the marriage bed
 in secret, come, bring help, avenge the murder of our
 father
 and send to me my bother!
 For I have no longer strength to bear alone
 the burden of grief that weighs me down.

In [145 – 152] Elektra again refers to a bird, but this time in a comparison of her suffering with that of Procne and Niobe: mothers who both, directly and indirectly, caused the death of their own children.

Elektra [136-150]

ΧΟ. Ἄλλ' οὐτοὶ τὸν γ' ἐξ Ἀΐδα
 παγκοίνου λίμνας πατέρ' ἀν-
 στάσεις οὔτε γόοισιν οὔτ' ἄνταις.
 Ἄλλ' ἀπὸ τῶν μετρίων ἐπ' ἀμήχανον
 ἄλγος ἀεὶ στενάχουσα διόλλυσαι
 ἐν οἷς ἀνάλυσίς ἐστιν οὐδεμία κακῶν·
 τί μοι τῶν δυσφόρων ἐφίη;
 ΗΛ. Νήπιος ὃς τῶν οἰκτρῶς
 οἰχομένων γονέων ἐπιλάθεται·
 ἀλλ' ἐμέ γ' ἅ στονόεσσ' ἄραρεν φρένας,
 ἃ Ἴτυν, αἰὲν Ἴτυν ὀλοφύρεται,
 ὄρνις ἀτυζομένα, Διὸς ἄγγελος.
 Ἰὼ παντλάμων Νιόβα, σὲ δ' ἔγωγε νέμω θεόν,
 ἅτ' ἐν τάφῳ πετραίῳ,
 αἰαῖ, δακρύεις.

KO. But you will never raise up your father
 from the lake of Hades, to which all must
 come, by weeping or by prayers! No leaving
 moderation aside and plundering into grief
 irresistible you lament ever, to your ruin.
 In this there is no way of undoing evil;
 why are you set on misery?
 EL. Foolish is he who forgets
 the piteous end of parents!
 Ever in my mind is the lamenting one,
 she who mourns always for Itys, for Itys, she
 the bird distraught, the messenger of Zeus! Ah,
 Niobe who endured every sorrow, I regard you
 as a goddess, you who in your rocky tomb,
 alas, lament!

The nightingale strongly reminds us of the myth of Procne, who took on the shape of a bird. As KAMERBEEK rightly remarks here however, the use of τις should be taken under consideration: "...the 'mythic example' will recur twice (147-149, 1077), but as appears from τις it is less a case of mythic example here than of an emotional comparison with allusion to a myth. (...) τεκνολέτειρ²³⁸: ambiguous; if we think of the myth 'having killed its young', if not, rather 'having lost its young'.²³⁸ JEBB combines both passages and both interpretations, without further consideration and therewith assumes that already in [107] a reference is made to the myth. I agree with KAMERBEEK, that we should doubt this assumption because I do not see any textual reason to adjust the translation of τεκνολέτειρ'.

Within this context the remark of WINNINGTON-INGRAM, who however does interpret both passages similarly, on the story preceding this tragedy is important: "Elektra compares herself, her state of mind, to two great legendary types of lamentation: Procne and Niobe. Elektra laments a parent (γονέων), Procne and Niobe their children. (...) There is little to pin down and we should not say at this stage that there is any thought of Agamemnon who killed his child (and Clythemnestra has not yet prayed for the death of hers), but the passage hints to the web of the parent-child relationships and so leads into the next half-stanza of the chorus: about Elektra, her sisters and her brother."²³⁹

As a first remark: it seems more likely that with γονέων both parents are meant, not 'a parent'.²⁴⁰ This taken under consideration reading the passage, it at first seems striking that Agamemnon's death seems to be lamented: Elektra, with verse [107] answers the almost rhetorical question of the chorus: "In this there is no undoing of evil; why are you set on misery?" When the chorus points out to her that her father will not come to life again, Elektra gets angry and despises everyone who would ever forget the pitiful death of one's parents. She does not only refer to her father's death, but she mentions the fate of both parents: [145-146] Νήπιος δς τῶν οἰκτρῶς οἰχομένων γονέων ἐπιλάθεται. The contradiction which this sentence recalls in combination with the following matricide, planned by Elektra and Orestes, show the emotionality with which she commits her actions: she is not so much convinced of the legitimacy of her revenge, although this forms her main argument, but purely acts out of hatred and rage. She seems to have forgotten in her judgment of Clythemnestra and her love for and lamenting over Iphigeneia how strong the love of a parent for its children can be and

²³⁸ KAMERBEEK ad loc., JEBB (1973) ad loc.

²³⁹ WINNINGTON-INGRAM (1980) 335-336. Cf. SEGAL, C.P., "The Elektra of Sophocles", *TAPA* 97, 1964, 473-545, hier 495.

²⁴⁰ Cf. LIDDELL EN SCOTT s.v.

what this justifies. These to Elektra do not seem to be a legitimate reason for killing Agamemnon out of revenge, although she bases her revenge on practically the same love, announcing and planning the revenge on her mother for killing her father.²⁴¹

The ambiguity of her argumentation aside, Elektra's emotions do not merely come from respect and the love for her father, as is shown in the second phase of her lamentation [164 – 327]. She, in this phase, she mourns for her own fate as a stepchild of Aegisthus, treated like a slave. Although she once in a while comes back to her father's fate the insecurity of her own future, even though she was born as a noblewoman, is definitely predominate. In the two passages, which are only separated by one stasimon, she complains about her life without children or a husband to protect her [164 – 167; 185 – 192] These words only describe the indirect consequences of the absence of a father, not the grief over missing a person. In fact the grief is truly caused by the status that she should have reached before her father died: that of wife and mother.

Furthermore Elektra's complaint from [254] onwards, is not about her future anymore but moreover about the relation with her mother and about what problems Clythemnestra caused her, by killing her father. Elektra describes her suffering again very amply and then, out of all matters firstly explicitly names the fact that she is living in dissension with the mother who gave birth to her and that she, on top of that, has to live under one roof with the murderers of her father.²⁴² Through the division into two parts of the complaint -164 ff.- and the accusation -261 ff.- the dramatic component is added to Elektra's lamenting and we are distracted from the upcoming matricide. Her accusation towards her mother gains an almost excessive sentimental load when Elektra not only vindictively but even pitifully, though disdainfully, addresses her.

Elektra [164-172; 185-192; 261-265; 275-276]

ΗΛ. Ὅν γ' ἐγὼ ἀκάματα προσμένουσ', ἄτεκνος,
τάλαιν', ἀνύμφευτος, αἰὲν οἰχνῶ,
δάκρυσι μυδαλέα, τὸν ἀνήνυτον
οἶτον ἔχουσα κακῶν· ὁ δὲ λάθεται
ὦν τ' ἔπαθ' ὦν τ' ἐδάη· τί γὰρ οὐκ ἐμοὶ
ἔρχεται ἀγγελίας ἀπατόμενον;

El. Yes, he whom I unwearingly await, lost
without child or bridegroom, drenched in tears,
with my never –ending fate of sorrows! But he
forgets what he has suffered and what he has
learned. Why, which of his messages does not

²⁴¹ More to this at the discussion of the relevant scene between Elektra and Clythemnestra, where the argument is explicitly put aside.

²⁴² The passage mentioned above, in my opinion provides an insight in the tone of the described phase of Elektra's lamenting.

ἀεὶ μὲν γὰρ ποθεῖ,
ποθῶν δ' οὐκ ἀξιοῖ φανῆναι.

(...)

ΗΛ. Ἄλλ' ἐμὲ μὲν ὁ πολὺς ἀπολέλοιπεν ἤδη

βίος ἀνέλπιστος, οὐδ' ἔτ' ἀρκῶ·
ἄτις ἄνευ τοκέων κατατάκομαι,
ἅς φίλος οὔτις ἀνὴρ ὑπερίσταται,
ἀλλ' ἀπερεῖ τις ἔποικος ἀναξία
οἰκονομῶ θαλάμους πατρός, ὧδε μὲν
ἀεικεῖ σὺν στολᾷ,
κεναῖς δ' ἀμφίσταμαι τραπέζαις.

(i)

ἦ πρῶτα μὲν τὰ μητρὸς ἢ μ' ἐγείνατο
ἔχθιστα συμβέβηκεν· εἶτα δώμασιν
ἐν τοῖς ἐμαυτῆς τοῖς φονεῦσι τοῦ πατρὸς
ζύνειμι, κακ τῶνδ' ἄρχομαι, κακ τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ
λαβεῖν θ' ὁμοίως καὶ τὸ τητᾶσθαι πέλει.

(i)

Ἦ δ' ὧδε τλήμων ὥστε τῷ μιάστορι
ζύνεσθ', Ἐρινὺν οὔτιν' ἐκφοβουμένη·

end in disappointment?

Always he feels the longing, but for ll his
longing he does not think fit to appear!

But much of my life has already abandoned me
without hope, and my strength is failing! Yes, I
melt away without offspring,

I who have no husband to protect me,
but like a lowborn slave

serve in the chambers of my father, in such mean
attire as this,

and stand at empty tables!

(...)

First, my relation with the mother who bore me
is one of bitter enmity; next I'm living
in my own home with my father's murderess;
they are my rulers, and it rests with them
whether I receive or go without.

(...)

But she is so abandoned that she lives with the
polluter, having no fear of the Erynīs.

In this phase, but mainly between the scenes mentioned above, the chorus plays a remarkable role: he forms the ideal spectator -and later clearly the jury- but most of all he adopts the role of a comforting mother-figure, which he literally describes:²⁴³

²⁴³ Burton, R. *The chorus in Sophocles' tragedies* (Oxford 1980) 200-201, shows how the choral odes are restricted in their content to observations about the action of the play without Sophocles' more normal opening-out to broader perspectives. Cf. KITZINGER, R., "Why mourning becomes Elektra" in *CA* vol. 10, 1991, afl. 2, 298-327, here 301: "... coupled with the limited contribution of the choros, denies to the audience any other voice to replace or continue Elektra's; and so, silence and deceit cast their shadow upon the final act of the play." In my opinion actually the opposite of the described is the case: Through the strongly guiding mother-role of the chorus Sophocles' public is not forced into silence and misguided, but merely forced to empathize through which Elektra's emotion can become the thread throughout the tragedy, with which matricide can be accepted.

Elektra [233-235]

ΧΟ. Ἄλλ' οὖν εὐνοία γ' αὐδῶ,
μάτηρ ὡσεὶ τις πιστά,
μὴ τίκτειν σ' ἅταν ἄταις.

KO. Well, I speak as a well-wisher,
like a mother in whom you can have trust,
telling you not to create misery by means of misery!

Within this role they constantly reprimand Elektra [137–139; 153–163; 213–220; 233–235]. Elektra eventually accepts their criticism although before then she does not even seem to have heard what they said: Αἰσχύνομαι μὲν, ὦ γυναῖκες, εἰ δοκῶ πολλοῖσι θρήνοις δυσφορεῖν ὑμῖν ἄγαν.²⁴⁴

The explicitly mentioned mother-role of the chorus is substantiated by the use of the form of addressee of *παι* in the interruption of the chorus following the passage mentioned above [251]. As discussed in chapter 2.2.1, regarding DICKEY's research: "The age-term implications of *παι* prevent its use for adults (except by parents) but there are no such restrictions on the use of *τέκνον*."²⁴⁵ *Παι* as a form of addressee is only used by the chorus twice more in this tragedy [827; 1230] and not once in the text before the passage in which she so explicitly confirms her mother-role. These three scenes may be called the most moving scenes of the entire tragedy: in [187] it is the reaction of the chorus on Elektra's tears about the message of Orestes' death, in [1230] the chorus witnesses the message about him being alive being brought. (wat bedoel je met being brought?)

In no other Sophoclean tragedy the role of the chorus in relation to the protagonist is so clearly and explicitly expressed, nor has it ever been so closely connected to the emotions of the protagonist. Remarkably, as discussed above, , the course of the tragedy is mainly based exactly on these emotions and through those the spectator is guided towards the horrifying plot of the play. Taking over the mother-role the chorus also outlines the contrast in the argument between Elektra and her birthmother and therewith maybe even the matricide is granted some supporting sympathy.

²⁴⁴ Burton, *The chorus in Sophocles' tragedies*, (Oxford 1980) 186-187 Only here she seems to realize that she does not achieve anything by lamenting, with which she does not only annoy the chorus but also her audience.

²⁴⁵ DICKEY (1996) 69, As discussed in chapter 2.2.1 Dickey's theory cannot always be applied to tragedies, which were not part of her scope of research, but in this case in the Sophoclean tragedies nowhere the opposite can be proven as well, through which this exception, the mother-role, adapted by the chorus, is being confirmed.

5.1.3 *Improper argumentation? The dialogue with Chrysothemis*

At the time Chrysothemis gets on stage again [328], the third phase of Elektra's complaint is recognizable. In her attempt to convince Chrysothemis to pick her side and take revenge, Elektra does not exactly act as a loving, understanding sister. As discussed above, Elektra knows no scruples towards her sister, telling her about her unsatisfactory life and her cruel intentions. Noteworthy however is the fact that it is not Elektra judging Chrysothemis, but that it is the other way around: Chrysothemis lectures Elektra because of her thoughtless deeds. The complaint of Elektra about her life as a slave in her own house, although she was born a noblewoman, is due to her own attitude according to Chrysothemis. She too grieves over their situation and does as she is told, so she can live relatively peacefully.

Elektra [328-340]

ΞΡ. Τίν' αὖ σὺ τήνδε πρὸς θυρῶνος ἐξόδοις
ἐλθοῦσα φωνεῖς, ὦ κασιγνήτη, φάτιν,
κοῦδ' ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ διδαχθῆναι θέλεις
θυμῷ ματαίῳ μὴ χαρίζεσθαι κενά;
Καίτοι τοσοῦτόν γ' οἶδα κάμανυτήν ὅτι ἀλγῶ
ἔπι τοῖς παροῦσιν· ὥστ' ἄν, εἰ σθένης
λάβοιμι, δηλώσαιμ' ἂν οἷ' αὐτοῖς φρονῶ·

νῦν δ' ἐν κακοῖς μοι πλεῖν ὑφειμένη δοκεῖ,
καὶ μὴ δοκεῖν μὲν δρᾶν τι, πημαίνειν δὲ μή·

τοιαῦτα δ' ἄλλα καὶ σὲ βούλομαι ποεῖν.
Καίτοι τὸ μὲν δίκαιον οὐχ ἢ γὰρ λέγω,

ἀλλ' ἢ σὺ κρίνεις· εἰ δ' ἐλευθέραν με δεῖ
ζῆν, τῶν κρατούντων ἐστὶ πάντ' ἀκουστέα·

Chr. What are these things that you have come out
to say by the door we leave the house by, my sister?

And will you not learn, after so long, not to indulge
in futile fashion your useless anger?

Why; I know this much about myself, that the
present situation grieves me; so that if I had the
power I should show them what are my feelings
towards them.

But as things are I think that in time of trouble I
must lower my sails, and not seem to perform some
deed, but do them no harm;

and I would like you to follow suit.

I know, justice lies not in what I say, but in what
you judge;

but if I am to live in freedom, I must obey those
in power in everything.

One of the last sentences of the passage in my opinion needs some extra attention. (Καίτοι ff.) With the emphasis put on both pronouns (τὸ μὲν ... εἰ δ'), Chrysothemis points out to Elektra, that she does not expect her sister to listen to her, nor understand her words, but that she herself has to act the way she does. This sentence could be read retrospectively: the reader namely stated, briefly but to the point, that the history of Elektra's mourning is only shown

from her point of view. Καίτοι points out emphasis, motivated by a contradiction. This contradiction can be found in the preceding: Chrysothemis actually wants her sister to accept her advice and act like her. She does however not admit that her way of handling the situation does not show righteousness and Elektra's does, as is mostly assumed.²⁴⁶ On the other hand she does show that she knows that Elektra thinks her own way to be righteous (κρίνεις) and that her opinion does not get through to her.

The image of Chrysothemis in this tragedy, which is created in many translations and interpretations, is that of weak personality with very little backbone. For instance KITZINGER: "We may understand and sympathize with Chrysothemis's compromises, but we must also admit her powerlessness and feel the need for the fierce clarity that Elektra gives to the situation."²⁴⁷ In my opinion however, especially this passage shows her decisiveness and thoughtful action.²⁴⁸ "Wenn aber Elektra's Unberherrschtheit das Ziel des Handelns gefährdet, muß man fragen, ob Chrysothemis' Beherrschtheit nicht im Gegenteil erstrebenswert ist. Der Chor stellt jedenfalls ihr und Orestes' Verhalten demjenigen Elektras positiv gegenüber, so daß man die jüngere Schwester nicht zu schnell verurteilen sollte."²⁴⁹

Further on in the tragedy, nothing shows the fact that Chrysothemis would be coward less. Though Chrysothemis, under pressure of the chorus eventually gives in and takes her sister's side, she does not do this because she has been convinced by Elektra that her plans are righteous and right, but because she realizes that she wants to save her sisters life although to do so she has to act against her mother and her lover: [466-467] XP. Δράσω· τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον οὐκ ἔχει λόγον δυοῖν ἐρίζειν, ἀλλ' ἐπισπεύδειν τὸ δρᾶν. In the discussion which she has with Elektra and partly with the chorus, before she comes to her decision she defends her point of view in a very level-headed way, though with a lot of persuasiveness which also

²⁴⁶ NB: The scholarly discussion regarding the Sophistic undertone of Chrysothemis' utterances following this verse are irrelevant in this context, for this cf. KELLs, J.H., *Sophocles Elektra*, Cambridge 1973, introduction.

²⁴⁷ KITZINGER, R.. "Why mourning becomes Elektra" in *CA* vol. 10, 1991, afl. 2, 298-327, here 310. KITZINGER refers to SEALE, D. *Vision and stagecraft in Sophocles* (Chicago 1980), 56-80 for the discussion on the clarity of Elektra's vision. In my opinion this clarity is mainly substained by Chrysothemis vision on matters, as discussed above.

²⁴⁸ Cf. KELLs, J.H. *Sophocles Elektra*, Cambridge 1973, p. 105 [337]: "I wish you pattern of behaviour too to be another of the same kind as mine." – not the remark of an underdog." KELLs' opinion on these features of Chrysothemis' character are not consistent throughout his interpretation of the whole tragedy: (p. 241) "The 'ordinary' citizens (Chrysothemis and the Chorus) certainly repudiate heroic idealism throughout the play, but they do so somewhat shamefacedly; what they advocate is not merely 'expedient' but 'good' as well. They do not try to get the best of both possible worlds (though it is true that Chrysothemis does say at 398 Καλὸν γε μᾶντοι μᾶ' ἅ' x εἰδὲν...aj pese(n).). But, since hardly anyone likes to go on 'not feeling well' all the time, there must have been a great temptation to do that ..." Chrysothemis' words in 398, however together with several other passages, needs, as can be read in the following argumentation, more attention, than KELLs provides it here.

²⁴⁹ LEFÈVRE [2001] 175

shows that she is neither cowardly nor naive.²⁵⁰ Notable is the way in which Chrysothemis mentions their father. In her opinion their father would have forgiven them both for not being able to avenge his death, which is the complete opposite of what Elektra seems to think:

Elektra [399-400]

ΗΛ. Πεσούμεθ', εἰ χρή, πατρὶ τιμωρούμενοι.

ΧΡ. Πατὴρ δὲ τούτων, οἶδα, συγγνώμην ἔχει.

El. I shall come to grief, if I must, defending the honour of my father.

Xr. But our father, I know, excuses this.

This utterance leads to the importance of the discussion about the characterization of the figure Chrysothemis within this tragedy. Elektra bases her argumentation for the justification of the revenge on her mother and Aegisthus, later executed by Orestes, on a sense of duty towards her killed father. Through the role of Chrysothemis, and especially through the passage mentioned above, it becomes clear, that Elektra's attitude may not be so admirable or heroic, it could even be considered thoughtless and naive. Chrysothemis is not cowardly, as her sister tries to convince us, but shows that it is not their duty as women, as daughters, to save and defend the honour of their father, nor to avenge his death: their father would not have expected that.

However, after Chrysothemis hears about the death of Orestes and Elektra suggests to take control, not as women but as heirs, Chrysothemis' reactions show even more decisiveness. Elektra's answer to Chrysothemis' judgment of her action, forms a defence in which Elektra finally accuses her sister of being a coward and of disrespecting her father. Chrysothemis' reservation though, is not based on fear but on a thoughtful manoeuvre, one to make the best of a bad situation knowing that she will otherwise only cause more trouble and problems for herself and her sister. Their position, as unmarried women without a father, although explicitly described by Elektra, is becomes even more clear because Chrysothemis is takes up the role we could have expected from any woman in this situation at the time the tragedy was performed.²⁵¹ Elektra's perseverance in her lamenting however does not get more heroic, she even seems to be stubborn and blinded by emotions through the fact that

²⁵⁰ Cf. [372-375; 383-384; 396; 398] Mainly in the last passage, Chrysothemis expresses her opinion regarding Elektra's attitude very strongly. Therefore there seems to be no reason to assume that Chrysothemis, as KELL'S [1973, p. 241] puts it: "...repudiate heroic idealism throughout the play, but they do so somewhat shamedfully, what they advocate is not merely 'expedient' but 'good' as well."

²⁵¹ Cf. Chapter 1 of this work, where I elaborately discussed the role of women as it is used in the Sophoclean tragedies.

Chrysothemis attacks Elektra on her attitude first as well as on the content of her argumentation and Elektra's answer to this.

Elektra [992-1014]

XP. Καὶ πρὶν γε φωνεῖν, ὦ γυναῖκες, εἰ φρενῶν
ἐτύγχαν' αὕτη μὴ κακῶν, ἐσφύζετ' ἄν
τὴν εὐλάβειαν, ὥσπερ οὐχὶ σφύζεται.
Ποῖ γάρ ποτ' ἐμβλέψασα τοιοῦτον θράσος
αὐτὴ θ' ὀπλίζη καὶ μὴ ὑπηρετεῖν καλεῖς;
Οὐκ εἰσορῶς; γυνὴ μὲν οὐδ' ἀνὴρ ἔφυς.
σθένεις δ' ἔλασσον τῶν ἐναντίων χερί.
Δαίμων δὲ τοῖς μὲν εὐτυχῆς καθ' ἡμέραν.
ἡμῖν δ' ἀπορρεῖ κάπῃ μηδὲν ἔρχεται.
Τίς οὖν τοιοῦτον ἄνδρα βουλεύων ἐλεῖν
ἄλυπος ἄτης ἐξαπαλλαχθήσεται;
Ὅρα κακῶς πράσσοντε μὴ μείζω κακὰ
κτησώμεθ', εἴ τις τούσδ' ἀκούσεται λόγους.
Λύει γὰρ ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν οὐδ' ἐπωφελεῖ
βάξιν καλὴν λαβόντε δυσκλεῶς θανεῖν·
[οὐ γὰρ θανεῖν ἔχθιστον, ἀλλ' ὅταν θανεῖν
χρήζων τις εἴτα μὴδὲ τοῦτ' ἔχη λαβεῖν.]
Ἄλλ' ἀντιάζω, πρὶν πανωλέθρους τὸ πᾶν
ἡμᾶς τ' ὀλέσθαι κάξερημῶσαι γένος,
κατάσχεσ ὀργήν. Καὶ τὰ μὲν λελεγμένα
ἄρρητ' ἐγὼ σοι κάτελῇ φυλάξομαι,
αὐτὴ δὲ νοῦν σχῆς ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ ποτέ,
σθένουσα μὴδὲν τοῖς κρατοῦσιν εἰκαθεῖν.

Ch. Before giving tongue, women, she would have preserved caution, if she had good sense, but she does not preserve it!

Why with what aim in view do you arm yourself with such rashness and call on me to second you?

Do you not see? You are a woman, not a man, and your strength is less than that of your adversaries, Their fortune prospers day by day, and ours ebbs away and comes to nothing. Who, then shall plan to kill such a man and emerge unscathed by disaster? Take care that not in our ill fortune we do not get for ourselves yet more trouble, if anybody hears these words!

We get no help and no profit if we acquire fair fame, but an ignoble death. [it is not death that is the most hateful thing, but wish for death and have not even that in one's power.]

I beseech you, before we perish altogether and wipe out our family, restrain your passion!

I will guard your words unspoken and unrealised, and do you in the end at least acquire the sense to yield to those in power,

When you have no strength.!

In most modern commentaries the consistence of Chrysothemis' reasoning is detected, her vigorousness is, in my opinion, mainly emphasised by the fact that she, here as well where every possible chance of help for a better future is taken away, is able to realise that it is not

worth it to jeopardise their own lives even for the honour of the family.²⁵² By doing that namely, her family could be completely destroyed. The chorus supports her way of thinking and summarizing speaks of: “...ἄμεινον, οὐδὲ νοῦ σοφοῦ.” Elektra designates her reaction to be cowardice.

From a combination of the arguments of both girls, their situation even becomes clearer than it was described by Elektra: her never ending complaint corrodes her trustworthiness. Chrysothemis affirms their suffering, but also voices why nothing can in fact be done about their situation. Her strength is remarkably substantiated by a passage further on in the tragedy, where the roles seem to be reversed and Elektra asks Chrysothemis to tell her about her mother’s fear and begs her sister not to perform the task she was given to put the offerings at her father’s grave: a tactic supported by the chorus through which Chrysothemis finally gives in.

5.1.4 *Elektra and Clythemnestra: the confrontation*

When Clythemnestra enters the stage, the roles seem to be reversed as well: not Elektra utters her rage towards her mother, but Clythemnestra starts off with her argumentation: an attack on Elektra’s attitude.

Elektra [530-551]

ἐπεὶ πατὴρ οὗτος σὸς ὃν θρηνεῖς ἀεὶ
τὴν σὴν ὀμαιμον μοῦνος Ἑλλήνων ἔτλη
θῦσαι θεοῖσιν, οὐκ ἴσον καμῶν ἐμοὶ
λύπης, ὅτ’ ἔσπειρ’, ὥσπερ ἡ τίκτουσ’ ἐγώ.

Εἶεν, δίδαξον δὴ με τοῦ χάριν τίνων
ἔθυσεν αὐτήν. Πότερον Ἀργείων ἐρεῖς;
ἀλλ’ οὐ μετὴν αὐτοῖσι τὴν γ’ ἐμὴν κτανεῖν,
ἀλλ’ ἀντ’ ἀδελφοῦ δῆτα Μενέλεω κτανὼν
τᾶμ’ οὐκ ἔμελλεν τῶνδ’ ἐμοὶ δώσειν δίκην;
Πότερον ἐκείνῳ παῖδες οὐκ ἦσαν διπλοῖ,
οὓς τῆσδε μᾶλλον εἰκὸς ἦν θνήσκειν, πατρός

KL. Why, that father of yours, whom you are always lamenting, alone among the Greeks brought himself to sacrifice your sister to the gods, though he felt less pain when he begot her than I did when I bore her.

So, explain this! For whose sake did he sacrifice her? Will you say for that of the Argives?

But they had no right to kill her who was mine. But if he killed her who was mine for his brother Menelaus, was he not to pay the penalty to me? Had not Menelaus two children, who ought to have

²⁵² Cf. KAMERBEEK [1974] ad loc. “Chrysothemis’ portraiture remains perfectly consistent. She is unable to grasp the absolute norm by which Elektra is driven; she remains within the ordinary human framework of fears and calculations.” Opposite to this view: KELLS [1973] ad loc.: The predominant sense left in the mind by Elektra’s speech is one of unreality. She has no practical proposals for the attempt upon Aegisthus.”

καὶ μητρὸς ὄντας ἧς ὁ πλοῦς ὅδ' ἦν χάριν;

died in preference to her, since it was for the sake of their father and mother that the voyage took place?

Ἦ τῶν ἐμῶν Ἄιδης τιν' ἔμερον τέκνων
ἢ τῶν ἐκείνης ἔσχε δαίσασθαι πλέον;
Ἦ τῷ πανώλει πατρὶ τῶν μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ
παίδων πόθος παρεῖτο, Μενέλεω δ' ἐνῆν;

Had Hades a desire to feast on my children rather on hers? Or did your accursed father feel sorrow for the children of Menelaus, but none for mine?

Οὐ ταῦτ' ἀβούλου καὶ κακοῦ γνώμην πατρός;
δοκῶ μὲν, εἰ καὶ σῆς δίχα γνώμης λέγῳ·
φαίη δ' ἂν ἡ θανοῦσά γ', εἰ φωνὴν λάβοι.

Is that not like a father who was foolish and lacked judgement? I think so, even if I differ from your judgement. She who died would say so, if she would acquire a voice.

Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὐκ εἰμὶ τοῖς πεπραγμένοις
δύσθυμος· εἰ δὲ σοὶ δοκῶ φρονεῖν κακῶς,
γνώμην δικαίαν σχοῦσα τοὺς πέλας ψέγε.

I for my part feel no regret at what was done; and if I seem to you to think wrongly, do you acquire a just judgement before finding fault with others!

Clythemnestra brings up the reason for the murder, the sacrifice of their daughter Iphigeneia, by Agamemnon. Precisely because of Elektra's lamenting until then, Clythemnestra's emotions connected to the death of her daughter are recognisable and understandable. Interesting is the justification: she appropriates as a mother, that her suffering at the birth of this child could never have been comparable to the suffering of the father killing her and therewith the lack of understanding for his duty to the gods. Clythemnestra even reproaches both of them, Agamemnon in the past and Elektra in the present, with a lack of judgement.²⁵³ Although in its true context already recognizable, the nightingale losing her youngsters to which Elektra compares her grief at the beginning of the tragedy, here actually becomes suitable for Clythemnestra who really saw her child die at the hands of her own husband.

Elektra's answer mainly deviates through the respect she pays her mother at the beginning of her own argumentation. She even asks permission to voice the meaning of the dead, also Iphigeneia. Her tone of voice also surprises Clythemnestra, who allows her to speak. Elektra then actually questions 'δικαίαν' from the last sentence of Clythemnestra's argumentation, which she, halfway through her own argumentation, also relates to the law morally and even according to the state.

²⁵³ According to LONG, A.A., *language and Thought in Sophocles* (London 1968) 158, elements of early Attic rhetoric can be recognised here. The tone is, according to him: "...personal and particular. It gives much more attention to assesment of the character and motives of those concerned and makes little appeal to general principles."

Elektra [577-591]

Εἰ δ' οὖν, ἐρῶ γὰρ καὶ τὸ σόν, κείνον θέλων
ἐπωφελῆσαι ταῦτ' ἔδρα, τούτου θανεῖν
χρῆν αὐτὸν οὐνεκ' ἐκ σέθεν; ποίῳ νόμῳ;

Ὅρα, τιθεῖσα τόνδε τὸν νόμον βροτοῖς
μὴ πῆμα σαυτῇ καὶ μετ' ἀγνοίαν τιθῆς·

εἰ γὰρ κτενοῦμεν ἄλλον ἀντ' ἄλλου, σὺ τοι

πρώτῃ θάνοις ἄν, εἰ δίκης γε τυγχάνοις.
Ἄλλ' εἰσόρα μὴ σκῆψιν οὐκ οὔσαν τίθης·

εἰ γὰρ θέλεις, δίδαξον ἀνθ' ὅτου τανῦν
αἵσχιστα πάντων ἔργα δρώσα τυγχάνεις,
ἥτις ξυνεύδεις τῷ παλαμναίῳ μεθ' οὐ
πατέρα τὸν ἀμὸν πρόσθεν ἐξαπώλεσας,
καὶ παιδοποιεῖς, τοὺς δὲ πρόσθεν εὖσεβεῖς
κάξ εὖσεβῶν βλαστόντας ἐκβαλοῦς' ἔχεις.

Πῶς ταῦτ' ἐπαινέσαιμ' ἄν; ἢ καὶ τοῦτ' ἐρεῖς,
ὥς τῆς θυγατρὸς ἀντίποινα λαμβάνεις; (...)

But even if he had done so to help him, for I will state your version also, was that a reason for him to die at your hands? According to what law?

Take care that in laying down this law for mortals you are not laying down pain and repentance for yourself!

For if we are to take a life for a life, you should die first, of you were to get what you deserve.

But take care you are not putting forward an excuse that has no substance!

For come, pray explain why you are doing the most shameful thing of all, you who are sleeping with the guilty one, with whom in time past you killed my father, and getting children by him, while you have cast out your earlier children who are god-fearing and born of a god-fearing father!

How could I approve of this? Or will you say that this too is taken in payment for your daughter? (...)

The structure of Elektra's argumentation is in many ways comparable to a speech in the Athenian court.²⁵⁴ She not only defends Agamemnon, but also explains why he, hunting one of Artemis' deers, caused himself to have to sacrifice his own daughter. Following this defense she almost rhetorically answers, by asking according to what law Clythemnestra was allowed to kill her husband. Although she does take Clythemnestra's words into account, Elektra does not want to empathize with her reasons for the murder. On top of that: not only the murder but even more the fact that her mother is now living, sleeping and producing children with the man who committed this murder is a fact she considers highly improper and distasteful. Furthermore she considers her mother to be responsible for the security of the

²⁵⁴ Cf. KELLS (1973) ad loc. and KAMERBEEK (1974) ad loc.; KELLS 566ff: "ὥς ἐγὼ κλύω 'as I am told' Doesn't she *know* why her father sacrificed her sister? (Notice that hearsay evidence was not admitted in an Athenian court. Cf. BONNER, R.J. and SMITH, G., *The administration of justice from Homer to Aristotle* Chicago 1930-1938, here II, p. 130.) There is something curiously legalistic and unreal about Elektra's 'pleading' on behalf of Agamemnon in these lines."

wellbeing of her children, also in the future. KITZINGER: “Elektra allows the possibility of an informed and complex judgement of human action that would be impossible without her self-consciousness and understanding of Clythaemnestra. At the same time the archaic justification of bloodvengeance becomes inadequate if divorced from an examination of motive and character; the question of justice is removed from the sphere of the divinely sanctioned and unchallengeable system to a context limited by the capabilities of human thought, feeling, and language.”²⁵⁵

In my opinion KITZINGER is partially right, the fact that the difference of opinion is mainly caused by the difference of perspective between mother and daughter should however be added. More clearly shown by the words at the beginning of this passage; one of the most discussed verses of Elektra, throughout history: “εἰ γὰρ κτενοῦμεν ἄλλον ἄντ' ἄλλου, σὺ τοι πρώτη θάνοις ἄν, εἰ δίκης γε τυγχάνοις.”²⁵⁶ Although many scholars have interpreted this verse as an illogical, rhetorically irresponsibly move in the strategic structure of Elektra’s argumentation, in my opinion she shows here that also the expected murder of Clythemnetsra cannot be approved, nor justified by human law. “It is clear however from what precedes and follows this section of her speech that Elektra does not bring up the law to condemn her mother’s action but rather to expose her mother’s opportunistic evocation of it in her defence. The straightforward but sparse articulation of νόμον - κτενοῦμεν ἄλλον ἄντ' ἄλλου- defines neither why Clythaemnestra killed Agamemnon nor why Elektra is bent on killing Clythaemnestra.”²⁵⁷ Precisely the plural, used in Elektra’s argumentation, refers to the words with which she finally ends this argumentation and with which she demonstrates the comparison between her and her mother:

Elektra [605-609]

(...) Τοῦδέ γ' οὐνεκα
κήρυσσέ μ' εἰς ἅπαντας, εἴτε χρὴ κακὴν,
εἴτε στόμαργον, εἴτ' ἀναιδεΐας πλέαν·
εἰ γὰρ πέφυκα τῶνδε τῶν ἔργων ἴδρις,

(...) So far as that goes,
proclaim me to all, whether you like to call me
bad or loud-mouthed or full of shamelessness;
for if I'm expert in such behaviour,

²⁵⁵ KITZINGER [1991] 315

²⁵⁶ KELLS [1973] ad loc. thinks this passage to be of great importance: “In these lines we have the crux of the whole ethical situation of the play: if retributive killing is wrong (dike in that sense), then Elektra’s and Orestes’ killing of their other is going to be just as wrong as was Clythaemnestra’s killing of Agamemnon. Elektra condemns herself out of her own mouth (...)”. Cf. GELLIE [1972] 114-115; WIINIGTON-INGRAM [1980] 221

²⁵⁷ KITZINGER [1991] 315

σχεδόν τι τήν σὴν οὐ καταισχύνω φύσιν.

I think I am no unworthy child of yours!

“Of course the words are not meant to convey that she thinks of herself as by nature ἀναιδής etc. (cf. 616-620). But the wording is such, that apart from the nasty hit at Clythaemnestra, it is strikingly expressive of Elektra’s tragic condition.”²⁵⁸ Next to the fact that these verses contain the most emotional part of Elektra’s oration, they also show, in combination with the passage mentioned above, that it is not so much the act of murder creating the dispute between both women, nor is it revengefulness, nor the pain suffered because of the loss of their loved ones, but moreover it is their ability of judgement and the way in which they experienced what happened.²⁵⁹

Both of them, in different ways, seem to have legitimate reasons for their feelings and even the murder of Agamemnon as the soon to be matricide is made plausible and even acceptable. Both of their ending pleas would win over more or less souls than the other with one or the other public. That these two extremes are both acceptably represented in one tragedy is made possible by the difference in generation between the two women, which therefore forms the foundation of their struggle. Not so much does this difference in *Elektra* cause the tragic conflict; it does however provide Sophocles the opportunity to create an open ending to this tragedy without getting bogged down in moral solution whilst preserving the matricide as the premises of the tragedy.

The answer of Clythemnestra and the following short, but painful reproaches from one to the other show us the emotional charge of the discussion and concretize the bearing factor of their argumentation: the difference in generation:

Elektra [612-621]

ΚΛ. Ποίας δ’ ἐμοὶ δεῖ πρὸς γε τήνδε φροντίδος,
ἥτις τοιαῦτα τὴν τεκοῦσαν ὕβρισεν,
καὶ ταῦτα τηλικούτος; ἄρα σοι δοκεῖ
χωρεῖν ἄν εἰς πᾶν ἔργον αἰσχύνῃς ἄτερ;

ΗΛ. Εὖ νῦν ἐπίστω τῶνδ’ ἐμ’ αἰσχύνῃν ἔχειν,
κεῖ μὴ δοκῶ σοι· μανθάνω δ’ ὁθόυνεκα
ἔξωρα πράσσω· κούκ ἐμοὶ προσεικότα.
Ἄλλ’ ἢ γὰρ ἐκ σοῦ δυσμένεια καὶ τὰ σὰ

ΚΙ. And what sort of consideration do I need to have
for her, who has insulted her mother in such fashion,
and that at such an age? Do you not think she would
go as far as any action, without shame?

ΕΙ. You may know that I feel shame at this,
even if you do not think so, and I am aware that my
actions are wrong for my age and unlike my nature.

²⁵⁸ KAMERBEEK [1974] ad loc. Cf. KIRKWOOD, A., *A study of Sophoclean drama*, 1958, 140.

²⁵⁹ Cf. JOHANSEN, F. “Die Elektra des Sophocles. Versuch einer neuen Deutung” *C&M* 25 (1964) 8-32

ἔργ' ἐξαναγκάζει με ταῦτα δρᾶν βίᾳ·
αἰσχροῖς γὰρ αἰσχροῖα πράγματ'
ἐκδιδάσκειται.

But it is the hostility that comes from you and your
actions that force me to act thus against my will;
for shocking behaviour is taught by shocking things.

Although the choice of words of both women is very personal and accusing, in their dialogue they do voice the actual reason for not being able to show understanding for one another's arguments. Elektra as a daughter without a husband and without children cannot put herself in Clythemnestra's position as a mother losing a child.²⁶⁰ Clythemnestra does not realize, as a married and therefore protected woman, to what extent the lack of a male relative has an impact on an unmarried woman without a father,. She explicitly underlines this in her explanation for her lukewarm response to Orestes' death.

Elektra [770-771]

ΚΛ. Δεινὸν τὸ τίκτειν ἐστίν· οὐδὲ γὰρ κακῶς
πάσχοντι μῖσος ὦν τέκῃ προσγίγνεται.

Cl. Giving birth is a strange thing; even when
they treat one badly, one does not hate one's
children

Substantiated with arguments, related to our common, but minimal knowledge of the daily life of the citizens in Athens in the 5th century B.C., we, as conscious readers can empathize with both women, as probably the audience of the original performance could too. Both of them are right from their point of view and through the different phases of the tragedy Sophocles was able to make his spectators move along with the wave-like motion of their dialogues. The tragedy contains a conflict of generations between mother and daughter that does not determine the course of action or the plot of the play, but is seized as an opportunity to make the audience of this play emphatically accept the cruel premises of the matricide the play bears through the underlying myth.

²⁶⁰ Here, by the way, the proposition on the importance of children, besides out of the economical interest which was related to having children within the *oikos*, examined by CHARLIER, M.-Th. et RAEPSEAT, G. [1971] is an interesting fact. An Athenian audience could have never empathized with Clythemnestra, if as is thought by some scholars, the relation between parents and children in the Athenian society contained no emotional component not at all.

6. Summary

6.1. Results

The general goal of this dissertation was obtaining a better insight in Sophocles' tragedies. The main question of this research was: "To what extent could the representation of generations, generational relations and conflicts of generation contribute to the construction of tension within the tragedy and in what way does Sophocles functionalize them in order to serve this purpose?" At first sight the application of the modern concept *generation* to the ancient fictive texts in order to achieve this goal, might not seem the most logical methodology. However the magnitude of what takes place in the tragedies between characters of different generations created a different suspicion. This work's first chapter formed a scientific framework that supported this hypothesis in three ways:

The social-political developments in the city-state during the end of the 5th century BC had a big impact on Athens' society, especially concerning generations. An elaboration of the tragic genre can not be left out: Tragedies "(...) existed to play out the new within the framework of the old."²⁶¹ Sophocles has, even with the limited freedom he has within the mythological context of his tragedies, created room for a detailed rendering of generations, intergenerational relationships and generation conflicts. The way in which different generations are recognised and defined is found in the second chapter of this work. Sophocles used three ways to form difference in generation: (1) parents and ancestors are praised and honoured as well as insulted and treated with contempt in a direct connection to their offspring. Apparently one could call someone to account for crimes committed by his ancestors or praise someone for his ancestors' heroic deeds.

(2) Forms of address between young and old(er) demonstrate the acknowledgement of difference in generation between characters within the tragic context. DICKEY's monograph *Greek forms of address*, is used to research which words are used as form of address in the Sophoclean tragedies.²⁶² Even though her findings were not directly applicable to the tragic genre –which actually is not a part of her analysis, from "...the vocative τέκνον is purely and emphatically a kinship-term, while παῖ can indicate both youth and kinship..."²⁶³, it does become clear that generations should be researched in a manner exceeding the nuclear family.

²⁶¹ MEIER (1980) 142-143

²⁶² DICKEY (1996)

²⁶³ DICKEY (1996) 65-72

The generational difference appears to be a lot less related to genealogy in tragedies than it does in other literate genres of the time. The difference in use of both address forms does however seem to be linked to the emotion that DICKEY supposes is connected to the words. The most pregnant example of this is found in *Philoctetes* where there is no genealogical relationship between characters what so ever, τέκνον and παί, in combination with the emotional load DICKEY recognised in the words, are most frequently used.

The insinuations towards old age in the Sophoclean tragedies readily show the ambivalence between the expected wisdom that comes with age and the limitations one has to cope with. This is expressed most explicitly in *Oedipous Colonos*. Analyzing the definition of “older generation” it becomes clear that besides ambivalence getting a clear picture is very dependent on the tragic context. An example is the scène in which Teucer depicts *Ajax* as a senile, anti-social old man with surreal expectations. Nowadays many see his scène as exemplary for the Athenian thoughts on old age and the elderly. Earlier in the tragedy however *Ajax* depicts the opposite image of his father *Telemon*.

(3) In Sophoclean tragedies generations are also defined by a pattern of expectation. In *Ajax* the main character plays a double role and by doing so shows the expectations in a role of a father and a son. *Ajax* speaks about the same expectations from two different points of view that, even though no actual physical action is involved, are still impressive due to the immense psychological pressure *Ajax* puts on both his young, not understanding son and himself: Keeping the name and honour of his family high.

In the *Women of Trachis* both parents have high expectations of their son *Hyllus* who honoured their expectations but on the other hand does nothing with them as soon as they become contradictory. At first his mother is disappointed that he did not think of looking for and helping his father himself, even though he was not aware of any danger. When he sees his father fall to the poison in the cloak *Deineira* made for her husband *Hyllus* has to promise his father to marry his concubine, the woman who got his mother to make the cloak and eventually made her to commit suicide.

A clear definition of young and old or how Sophocles judges these phases of life is untraceable. Young and old are clearly separated in the Sophoclean tragedies and the relationships between generations appear ambiguous.²⁶⁴

²⁶⁴ With regard to ambivalence as a basic assumption for the different analyses on generations within the tragedies: the Methodological Introduction § 4.

In the third chapter similarities and relationships between characters in Sophoclean tragedies are discussed instead of the differences and discrepancies between generations. In the 5th century BC the familiar relations in Athens and the moral values and norms connected, differ from nowadays. Contact with concubines, adoption, bastard children and even the acceptance ritual of one's own children seem almost pragmatic. Of course there was a social-economic necessity for having and raising children: the provision for old age and existence of the *oikos* depended on it. However CHARLIER and RAEPSEAT have convincingly proved that there definitely was an emotional bond between parents and children that cannot be denied even in Sophoclean tragedies.

Then again, the Athenian *oikos* did not only exist of people who formed a nuclear family: slaves and concubines also were part of this almost autarkic economical unit. This research's basis, concerning the group mentioned above as well as other (house-) friends, *filoi*, and ritualized friendships, *xeniai*, is found in BELFIORE's work.²⁶⁵ In *Philoctetes*, where the relationships between both Odysseus and Neoptolemos and between Philoctetes and Neoptolemos are often subject to scholarly discussion, the rituals recognized by BELFIORE must be so deformed compared to normal life that it is quite unlikely that they were depicted deliberately. BELFIORE is right that both men develop an emotional bond that very much looks like friendship. This friendship can however, in my opinion, not be pinned down to -aspects of- an initiation ritual. This tragedy and especially the 'friendship' does however show that generations within the tragic context should be considered to cover more than one –nuclear-family and are, regarding this tragedy, deployed to reduce the distance between the figures of the story and therewith enlarge the dramatic effect of the plot.

Concubines were legal next to marriage with a lawful wife. They often did not have a civil status making marriage with an Athenian citizen impossible. The children of concubines however could be legitimate unlike those of a slave and master who were considered property. Both ancient and modern scholarly literature indicates that concubines were generally accepted in the Athenian society. On the other hand it is interesting to note that in *Women of Trachis* a plea goes out to the housewife who has to cope with the arrival of a concubine. If the concept of concubines would be as generally accepted as is often thought then this plea would not only be worthless but it would even be presumptuous.

²⁶⁵ BELFIORE and BLUNDELL

The tragedies do not make an obvious difference between legitimate and bastard children. In *Ajax* two so-called bastard children are depicted in a different, even conflicting, manner. Eurysaces is named by Ajax as his legitimate heir who shall continue the good name and fame of the family. Teucer calls himself a bastard son, subordinate to Telemon's real legitimate son, Ajax himself.

We can conclude from this that for both concubines and bastard children their statuses hardly have any influence, if they have any influence at all, on the generation relationships within the tragic context in this research. As mentioned above they actually even accentuate the relations' contrasts as for instance in *Women of Trachis* through the pattern of expectation or in *Ajax* through the depiction of the personal experiences of the characters, which are inconsistent with those of other characters.

The positions of power such as in the relationship between man and woman or a king and his subjects may cloud the picture of relations between characters of different generations. This chapter also elaborates on this matter keeping in mind the main goal of this research, which is why these elaborations may not be quite as extensive as they could have been. In Sophoclean tragedies women seem to have the opposite role to the one they had in every day life in Athens according to many sources. The female protagonists do heroic deeds and usually are not afraid of arguing with men. Still Antigone and Elektra are less of an exception to the picture of Athenian women than one at first might expect. The tragic actions usually take place around their own *oikos* and are in favour of their own family. Sophocles surely has taken the borders of their actual role and possible influence in the Athenian society into account. An example of these boards can be found in the *Antigone*. Haemon does the honours of doing of justice when Antigone in her position as woman is beaten by Creon. By doing so Haemon represents Antigone's manliness so that her discussion with Creon can continue on equal grounds: where the relation between a man and a woman could influence a relation between generations it is now of no importance.

Besides the gender aspect the characters in Sophoclean tragedies are also classified by political positions of power. In *Philoctetes* Odysseus commands the fleet, in *Oedipous Tyrannus* Oedipus is king as in *Oedipous Colonos* Theseus is. In *Ajax* there are even four army commanders and in *Elektra* and *Antigone* Aegisthos and Creon, at least in the homely environment, develop into tyrants. Various scholars have compared the kings of Sophoclean tragedies to Pericles. Odysseus seems to be depicted as two different characters and two different leaders in *Ajax* and *Philoctetes*. Sophocles has however exploited much more than

just the representation of one statesman or the recognition of that same leader in various tragedies, he also exploited the dramatic effect of the exemplary position of political leaders: private life of public people is never private. They serve, in the centre of interest of all, wanted or unwanted, as an example for the rest of society. Political positions of power also only marginally influence the relations between people in Sophoclean tragedies when it comes to the course of events and the plot and have no deep impact on the generation relations within the tragic context.

The third and last aspect that could influence our picture of generation relations in tragedies could be a reflection of historical reality. The concept 'generation' could be put in another daylight for this research with an undeniable presentation of historic facts; representation of groups, generations from Athens in the 5th century BC. There are however no concrete textual clues that Sophocles intended to mirror society nor are there sources about circumstances in society or even in the Dionysia that indicate this. According to some scientists there is in *Philoctetes* almost certainly a hidden representation of historical generation conflict in the Athenian society. It is very probable that Sophocles brought the myth under attention due to the moral conflict it contains. Though, in the first place their disagreement is not based on the difference in generation between Odysseus and Neoptolemos, this would be necessary for the conflict to be a 'historic' conflict of generations. In the second place, Odysseus, as sophist representative, would have cut a sorry figure teaching his 'pupil' Neoptolemos.

As shortly mentioned before: the cause of a generation conflict is per definition based on the difference in generation between the arguing parties. Such a conflict takes place in two of the remaining Sophoclean tragedies. The reasons, cause and consequences of these conflicts are analyzed in the fourth chapter of this work in content and plot of the tragedies

The first generation conflict is visible in *Antigone*: the discussion between Creon and Haemon. This discussion's cause can only be brought back to the difference in generation between both men. The discussion that causes their dispute is only founded on one essential difference between Haemon and Creon: the difference between their generations. This difference in generation can be detected by the designation of 'young' (Haemon) and 'old' by Creon that has a strong negative tone and, in context, can be seen as a reproach. By doing this Creon derives superior wisdom from 'old', which he strangely enough does not accept from Tiresias but does grant himself towards Haemon. This superiority can obviously only be used

by the older party as a justification. Should there not have been a difference in generation in this conflict Creon would have had no or much lesser expectations of support from his son. This way Haemon's advice, following Tiresias' prediction and given in the name of the people of Thebes –Creon's subjects, would have had a better chance to succeed. However it is proved that his age neither grants him wisdom or superiority. We may conclude that the conflict between Haemon and Creon is a generation conflict because it is the only difference that really forms the core of their discord causing it to be the conflicts real cause.

The second generation conflict, set in *Elektra*, is between Elektra and her mother Clythemnestra. With our general, be it minimal, knowledge of Athenian life in the 5th century BC we, as modern readers, can emphasize with both women's situation, as could the crowd in ancient time probably. Both women are right from their point of view. Sophocles achieved getting his audience to move with the wave of dialogues in various phases of the play. This tragedy contains a generation conflict between mother and daughter that does not matter to the course of actions nor change the plot. It has been chosen to make the horrible premise of a mother-murder, definitely sustained in the story, imaginable and acceptable to the audience.

6.2. Assessment of the results

This research's main question is answered in the first place by its simple and somewhat careful methodology and structure. Generations are indeed unmistakably defined and distinguishable: generation relationships are depicted with the utmost detail and are hardly, if at all, influenced by other positions of power or characters' statuses. In two of the seven tragedies a generation conflict takes place. This demonstrates that the most important hypotheses concerning the textual significance of what takes place between characters of different generations was right: Generations are qualifying and have deliberately been applied and deepened in the remaining Sophoclean tragedies.

It is evident that every audience can identify itself with the generations brought on stage. As determined earlier: everyone in the audience has been the child of a parent and probably knows both sides to the story. Putting 'generations' into themes naturally causes a high level of excitement. For the Athenian public in the 5th century BC the subject 'generations' had an extra dimension due to the political-social developments of the time. Even though Sophocles had the choice between a lot of subjects that would have appealed to his audience it were the generations that immortalized his plays which even today appeal to

the imagination. This is because generations create recognition, empathy and most importantly, doubt. After all:

Δεινὸν τὸ τίκτειν ἐστίν· οὐδὲ γὰρ κακῶς
πάσχοντι μῖσος ὦν τέκη προσγίγνεται.²⁶⁶

Giving birth is strange thing; even when they treat one badly,
one does not hate one's children

Every human lives in various generations: memories of the past and expectations of the future evoke a continuous scale of emotions for every phase of life. By putting the tragic-mythological -and possibly at the time current- themes into a detailed picture of inter human relations Sophocles succeeded in giving audiences hold and expression of these emotions throughout the centuries. That is what theatre, with or without competition, is all about in the end: the audience's emotion, as Aristotle already recognised:²⁶⁷

ἐπεὶ δὲ τὴν ἀπὸ ἐλέου καὶ φόβου διὰ μιμήσεως δεῖ ἡδονὴν παρασκευάζειν
τὸν ποιητὴν, φανερόν ὡς τοῦτο ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν ἐμποιητέον.

And since the poet should create the pleasure, which comes from pity and fear through mimesis, obviously this should be built into events.

This research contains a scientific textual analysis. Insecurities such as the possible intentions of the poet, the audience's probably emotionally loaded state of mind in a time of political instability and the social pressure involved with the presented theme serve as background information and have not interfered with the analysis of the results. The main question was however always intended to -for itself to be answered and especially for the entirety of the objective that was to be achieved- create room for the artistic nature of the researched texts.

Due to the simplicity and caution with which this research is given shape it is possible to research a modern concept, a modern theme, in ancient fictive texts. Various facets of the involved (supporting) sciences have created a suitable research framework, without violating the scientific sociological definition of the concept 'generation' nor without interpreting Sophocles' tragedies to modern standards.

²⁶⁶ Sophocles, *Elektra* [770-771]

²⁶⁷ Cf. 6 1449b24 ff and FÖLLINGER [2003] 304, Arist. *Poetica* 14 1453b11 ff.

6.3. Preview

I have briefly stated in the methodical introduction that ambivalence was considered a basic assumption for analysis of the tragedy instead of conflict versus solidarity. The most important reason for this choice was an empirical research by COHLER and GRUNEBAUM in 1981, conducted in four Italian-American families concerning mother-daughter relationships among adults. Adult daughters looked for support and care even when they themselves had the status of mother. At the same time they wanted to be independent women who could look after themselves. The mothers wanted to be solidary without giving up the autonomy they had acquired.²⁶⁸

HÖPFLINGER, with his article „Generationenfrage –Konzepte, theoretische Ansätze und Beobachtungen zu Generationenbeziehungen in späteren Lebensphasen” initially researches intergenerational relations based on ambivalence.²⁶⁹ He indicates that the research methods that analyze solidarity but undervalue conflict situations were insufficient at the time. Participants of the research were asked questions that intentionally leaned towards the positive aspects of a intergenerational relation neglecting its negative aspects. VAN GAALEN most recently, successfully anticipated this initiative in his study on changes in intergenerational relation in the Netherlands between 1850 and 2000 AD.²⁷⁰ “We consider the co-occurrence of solidarity and conflict as a behavioural manifestation of intergenerational ambivalence.”²⁷¹

When it comes to ancient Greece it is regrettably impossible to question those involved. There are however some advantages that come with the objectivity that ambivalence can have, as basic assumption of an analyses of generational relations, also in retrospective or historical research. In the first place it recommends researching ambivalence with focus on an entire life circle instead of an analysis of given moments, be they conflicting or solidary. Naturally this is problematic when researching ancient classics. The essence of this recommendation is that concerns the fact that the transitions in life cause ambivalence: “changing from one status position to another, conformity with the requirements of one of

²⁶⁸ COHLER, B.J. & GRUNEBAUM, H. *Mothers, grandmothers and daughters. Personality and childcare in three-generation families*. New York 1981

²⁶⁹ HÖPFLINGER [1999]

²⁷⁰ GAALEN, VAN, R. *Solidarity and ambivalence in parent-child relationships*, Utrecht 2007

²⁷¹ VAN GAALEN here refers to former studies on ambivalence in parent-child relationships: CONNIDIS, I.A. & MCMULLIN, J.A., “Sociological ambivalence and family ties, a critical perspective.” *Journal of marriage and family* 64(3) p. 558-567, 2002

these positions implies nonconformity with the requirements of another.”²⁷² From that point of view analysis of the abundant generation conflicts as found in many the non-fictive speeches and even Homeric exposes in combination with the explicitly depicted rites of passage can shed a new light on our insight of the frameworks of inter familiar relations within the literature’s context and maybe even in historical reality.

In the second place ambivalence could simplify an analysis of the depiction of historical generations in the tragic genre. Ambivalence as basic assumption of an analysis prevents the presumption that a research of conflict versus solidarity automatically would cause. A mirrored image of social groups within a tragedy, the historical generations, from ancient Athens could be researched if tragic representatives of those generations would be analyzed individually and not as opposed to possible other representatives of other generations. Naturally differences between depicted historic generations will have to surface earlier or later, but the representative of a certain generation should in the first place be recognisable as representing this certain generation to the audience. By leaving aside how historic generations -and with them their representatives within the tragic genre- were related to each other -concerning historical reality there usually is no clarity on this anyway- the objectivity of the research and plausibility of the results could, in my opinion, be substantially increased. In any case, analyzing the Sophoclean tragedies, we should indeed keep in mind as LURJE recently voiced: “Vielleicht wäre es auch grundsätzlich verfehlt, von einer Tragödie eindeutige Antworten zu erwarten. Vielleicht war es von den attischen Tragikern in der Tat nicht beabsichtigt, konkrete Antworten zu geben, oder bestimmte Aussagen zu vermitteln, sondern Fragen aufzuwerfen und das Publikum durch Vielschichtigkeit und Ambivalenz der tragischen Handlung und ihrer Konflikte zum Nachdenken anzuregen.”²⁷³

²⁷² COSER, R.L., ‘Role distance, sociological ambivalence and transitional status systems.’ in *American Journal of Sociology*, 72, 1966, p. 173-187

²⁷³ LURJE, M., *Die Suche nach der Schuld*, München/Leipzig 2004, p. 393-394

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