

PHD DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Proposed title: TRAGIC FATHERS IN EYRIPIDES

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FATHERS AND CHILDREN IN TRAGEDIES
MEDEA, HIPPOLYTUS, HERACLES, IPHIGENIA AT AYLIS AND BACCHAE.

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Theoretical framework

The relationship between father and children is very important in the ancient world and it can already be traced in Homer, for example in the relationship between Odysseus and Telemachus in *Odyssey* and on the other hand in the relationship between Priam and Hector in *Iliad*. This relationship is connected indissolubly with the anthropological and sociological approach of tragedy. As for the anthropological approach, the consignees of ancient tragedies were citizens who were integrated sociably in the society, were activated in this and created an audience which was characterized by similar emotions, thoughts, concerns and problems. So, the connection of public life and ancient drama was clear. As for the sociological approach, the ancient greek drama was connected with the attribute of the Athenian, not only as a citizen but also as a spectator of ancient drama, who was activated in a society in a lot of ways, having different perceptions and abilities of awareness of the different plays which were showed up. These two approaches affect the relationship between father and children, which is developed in a society with special characteristics as for the interpersonal relationships and the meaning of *oikos*.

Relationship between father and children in tragedies *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Heracles*, *Iphigeneia at Aulis* and *Bacchae*

In *Medea* the relationship between father and child is very important. Whereas the emotions of father about his children are revealing, there is no emphasis in this, but scholars focus more on the maternal relation and the infanticide which follows. From the beginning of the drama to the *agon logon* between Jason and Medea, Jason is presented from the words of Medea or the nurturer as an indifferent father who does not love his children and does not care about his family. However, Jason overturns these elements with his speech, emphasizing the deep love for his children (expression of paternal love). In this way, a contrast between the characters as for the relationship between father and child is presented, which affects the tragedy. Medea is not convinced by the speech of Jason and in order to revenge him and despite her psychological alternations, decides to kill her children. Jason without knowing what has happened, goes to the palace to save them and makes it clear that he is actually interested in them. Informed that his children are dead, he cannot realize the terrible action of Medea (meaning of the impossible), who does not allow him neither to bury, not to touch them. The paternal love of Jason for his children, is culminated in the end of the drama, when he realizes his loneliness.

The relationship between father and children in the tragedy of *Hippolytus* is very important and it is connected with *eros-nosos* that the goddess Aphrodite put in the heart of Phaedra because of revenge. The relationship between father and child in this tragedy, is characterized by the conflict of pathos and logic. Theseus without examining the possibility of lying from the side of Phaedra and acting instinctively, because of love, develops a cruel behavior (he stands against his son and hopes his punishment), which has dolorous consequences for his innocent son. In this way, the contrast between Hippolytus who is characterized from shyness (*aidos*) and is dedicated to the goddess Artemis and the irrepressible wrath from his father Theseus is absolutely revealing. The confrontational relationship of Hippolytus and Theseus and the affectionate scene at the end of the drama with the repentance of Theseus and his expression of paternal love is very important and determines the whole drama.

In the tragedy of *Heracles*, the relationship between father and children is equally revealing. Heracles has left his family in Thebes in order to bring back Cerberus

from Ades. In the meanwhile, Lykos assassinates Creon, father of Megara, husband of Heracles and takes the authority threatening his family. Heracles comes back and kills Lykos. However, Hera sends him rabies, that makes him mad. The relationship between father and child was disturbed, when Heracles came to the point to kill his wife and his children, while he realizes what he has committed by his father's words. Being a father and a husband, he had created a family that he had protected all the time and now he became the culpable for their death. The dirge for the death of his children is big and his pain is inexpressible. His father Amphitryon shows his children to him and Heracles is inconsolable and wants to commit suicide (*pathos*). The uniqueness in this tragedy is the double relationship of father and child, because both the relationship of the father of Heracles Amphitryon with Heracles as much as the relationship of Heracles with his children is detected.

Important is also the relationship between father and child and in Iphigeneia at Aulis, since the relationship between Agamemnon and Iphigeneia is disturbed. Agamemnon is appeared at the beginning of the drama without having any other choice but to sacrifice his daughter to the goddess Artemis in order to travel with fair wind to Troy. His paternal love is so deep that he cannot accept the death of this daughter and he wants to nullify his decision with a new letter to Iphigeneia. However, Menelaus took this letter from the messenger using violence and Iphigeneia reaches Aulida full of happiness because she saw her father again (love of child to father). However, when she realizes that her sacrifice is about to happen, she speaks with affectionate words to her father and begs for mercy. When it too late, she accepts her fate. The psychological progress of father and daughter is very important in the drama with deep pathetic element (*pathos*), which is culminated at the end of the tragedy.

Although in Bacchae the centralization is more between Agave and Pentheus, the relationship between Cadmus and Agave also presents interest. Dionysus making the daughters of Cadmus act with madness and without logic, conducts her to kill her child Pentheus. Agave has not realized what happened, when she calls her father to admire her catch (not recognizing her child-*mania*). Her father reveals to her the truth through a lengthy dialogical scene, in which Agave brings back her logic and the tragic infanticide is revealed. The father cannot realize the action of his daughter, neither the daughter can realize her action. The sublime of the relationship between father and child, is that Cadmus abandons his daughter who is begging him to stay with her.

Methodology

With regard to the methodology of the present thesis, it's important to be presented in the theoretical analysis, the connection between the anthropological and sociological approach of the tragedy with the relationship between father and child and in the same time to clarify more analytically their important themes. Also, it's very important to make mention to the position of man in ancient Greece and his relation with *oikos* and his children and in the same time to the position of father and child in tragedy. Afterwards, thesis includes aliquot capitals, which will be focused and emphasized through the text-centric analysis in each of tragedies *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Heracles*, *Iphigeneia at Aulis* and *Bacchae* of Euripides. In the same time, the aim is to exhibit with clarity the different aspects, which characterize this relationship and it will also be attempted to search common elements or differences between them.

The study of this issue emphasizes first of all in protogenic sources (ancient text) with text-centric approach and secondarily in sources from books or articles-magazines or similar material. The aim of this thesis, is to exhibit the theme with clarity and create concerns, permitting to show up the relationships between father and children. Except for this relationship in the tragedies that have already been mentioned, other aspects will be analyzed, as well as the meaning of the family in the ancient world, the art of Euripides, the elements of the dramatic plot and the psychography of the father and the children as well as the characters who affect this relationship.

In conclusion, after examining methodologically the theme of the relationship between father and children in the tragedies mentioned above, with emphasis in the similarities and the differences concerning this relationship in each tragedy, conclusions will be extracted.