

ANTIGONE



Antigone

By Sophocles

Presentation by Bethany
Friedman

Background On Antigone

Antigone deals with the same family line as in *Oedipus*.

It is important to note that Oedipus went into exile because he killed his father and married his mother. His daughter, **Antigone**, buried him and her mother.

As this was happening, Oedipus' two sons fought for the crown of their dead father. Unfortunately, while fighting they killed each other (at the same time). Eteocles was considered a hero in defending Thebes, while Polyneices was considered a traitor because he was fighting for Argus.

Therefore, Creon was declared king (he is their uncle) and he made an edict declaring that Eteocles would receive a sacred burial, while Polyneices would not. Polyneices would receive nothing and be left outside for the animals to eat.

Creon declared that if anyone tries to bury Polyneices, they will be stoned to death.

Antigone's spiritual quest

Antigone is on the search for **justice!**

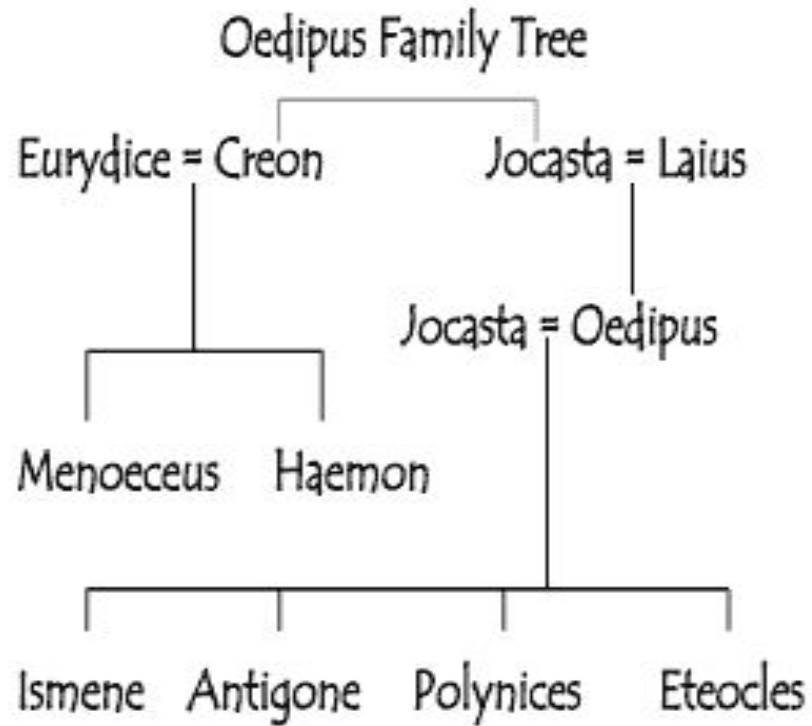
She believes that her brother, Polyneices, deserves a sacred burial.

Antigone's search for justice makes her realize the importance of spiritual existence.

Antigone greatly admires the gods and knows the importance of their divine law. She does not want to anger the gods, and therefore follows their laws.



Just in case there is confusion



Antigone's Dilemma

CIVIL LAW VS. DIVINE LAW

CIVIL LAW: King Creon has set forth an edict, therefore his subjects are expected to obey it. His edict is that Polyneices is a traitor and does not deserve to be buried.

Antigone sees a conflict between civil law and divine law!

DIVINE LAW: Justice is a goddess who resides in Hades and she will make a decision about what your fate is after death.



VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS IN CONNECTION AND CONTRAST WITH
ANTIGONE'S SPIRITUAL QUEST OF RESTORATION

- THE TRADITIONAL HEGELIAN PERSPECTIVE
- FEMINIST INTERPRETATION OF HEGEL'S *ANTIGONE*
- JOHN TRALAU'S PHILIAN PERSPECTIVE
- THE PSYCHOANALYTIC ANALYSIS OF *ANTIGONE*

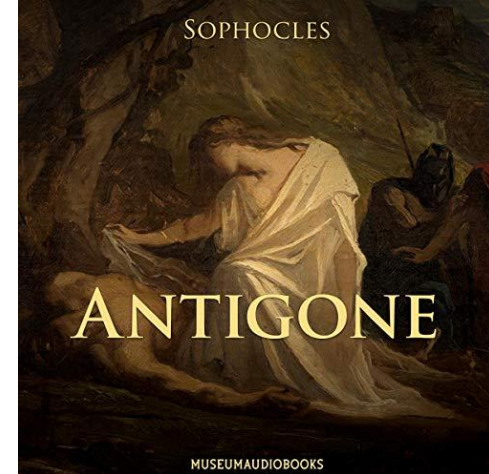
THE DESTRUCTION AND RESTORATION OF NATURAL ORDER

- The main theme throughout *Antigone* is the destruction and restoration of the natural order of the divine law.
- In going against Creon's edict and displaying civil disobedience, Antigone attempts to restore order in the divine plan - therefore being divinely obedient.
- Justice is a goddess who resides in Hades and she will make the decision of one's fate after death.
- King Creon destroys the natural order by disobeying the gods' laws and making his own.



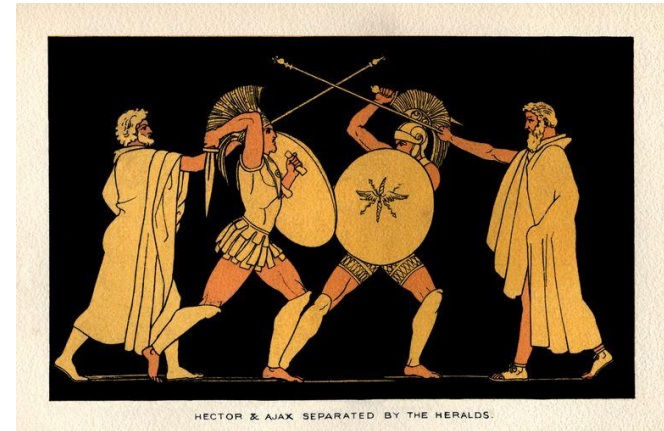
ANTIGONE: ON THE QUEST FOR DIVINE JUSTICE

- “Because it was not Zeus who ordered it, Nor Justice, dweller with the Nether Gods, Gave such a law to men; nor did I deem Your ordinance of so much binding force, As that a mortal man could overbear the unchangeable unwritten code of heaven...” (17) - Antigone
- “I duly performed the dues of piety!” - Antigone



KING CREON'S PRIDE AND HUBRIS: HIS DOWNFALL

- “In the right of kinship nearest to the dead, possess the throne and take the supreme power..”(8).
- In taking “supreme power”, Creon mimics the actions of a god. He decides that Polynices is a bad person and does not deserve a burial.
- When Antigone buries Polynices anyway, he declares that she should not be allowed to live along with the masses.



ANTIGONE'S MOTIVATION: DIVINE JUSTICE

- Antigone's motivation throughout the play is to find justice for her brother, Polynices.
- Antigone states, "All the same, these rites are due to the underworld"(20)
- "Death, so met, were honour; And for that capital crime of piety, Loving and loved I will lie by his side.

Far longer is there need I satisfy Those nether powers, than powers on earth; for For ever must I lie.

You, if you will, Hold up to scorn what is approved of Heaven!"(3)



Antigone's Solution

Because Antigone truly reveres the gods (ALL OF GREECE REVERES THE GODS), she feels that it is appropriate to bury her brother.

She breaks her uncle's man-made civil law. Because of this, Antigone ends up dying, but she dies for her cause. Antigone understands that every mortal who is creating laws can be overtaken by gods.

The gods are immortal and have full power

King Creon acted with too much pride and hubris, because even though the seer Teiresias, even praises her for giving the gods their due respect, Creon still does not change his edict. He has his niece killed.