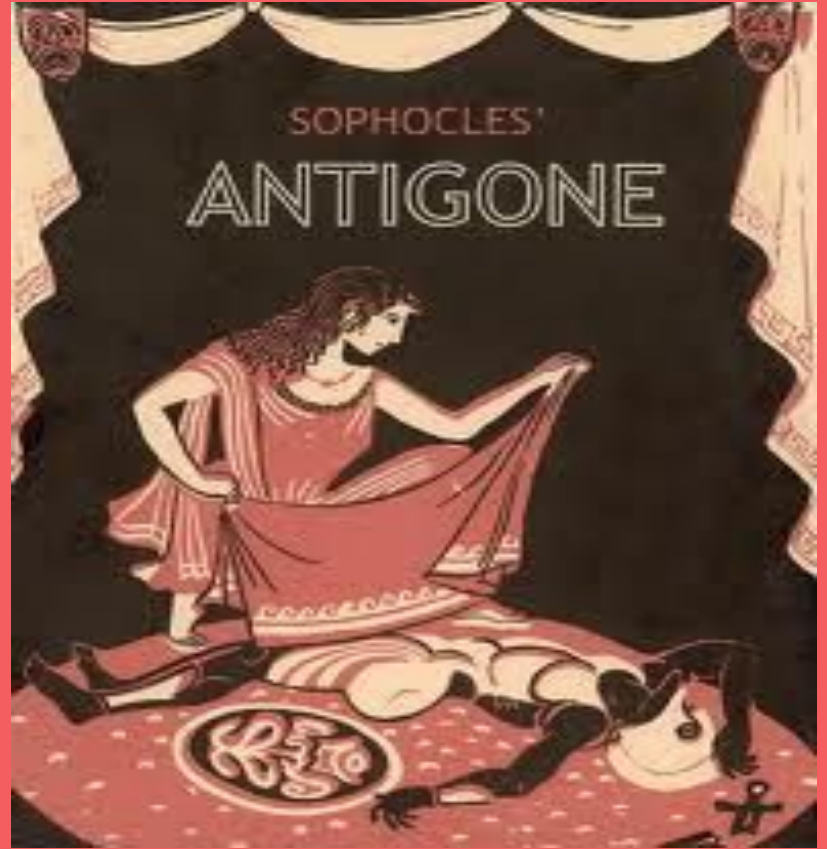


The Prologue, Parados, Scene 1 and Ode 1 of Antigone by Sophocles

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Key Terms

Ode

- Derived from Greek word aeidein
- Means chant or sing
- Lyric poem
- Address and celebrates a person, place thing, event or idea
- Formal and solemn tone
- Irregular rhyme patterns and lengths of lines

Freude, schöner Götterfunken	Joy, beautiful godly-spark
Tochter aus Elysium	Daughter of Elysium
Wir betreten feuertrunken	We enter fire-drunk
Himmlische, dein Heiligtum!	Heavenly [one], thy holydom!
Deine Zauber binden wieder	Thy magics bind once again
Was die Mode streng geteilt	What custom strictly divided
Alle Menschen werden Brüder	All men become brothers
Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt	Where thy gentle wing lingers.



Strophe



- Introductory part of the ancient Greek tragedy's ode
- Followed by antistrophe
- Derived from Greek word for "turning"
- Recited by chorus

♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩
str. A- ris- ton men hu- dor, ho de
Best (is) water, and
ant. the-mis-tei-on hos am- phe-pei
of law who wields
♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩
str. chru-sos ai- tho-me-non pur
gold, (like a) blazing fire
ant. skap-ton en po- lu- ma- loi
the scepter in (Sicily) of many flocks

Antistrophe

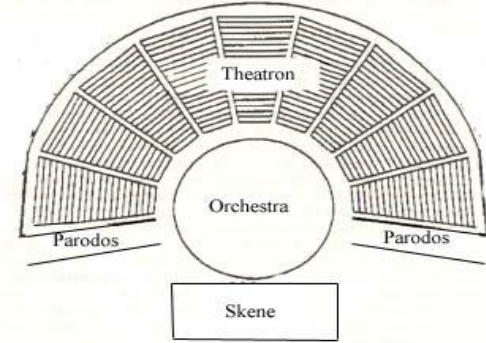
- Derived from a Greek word meaning “turning back”
- Comes after strophe
- “the second section of an ancient Greek choral ode”
- the repetition of the same words

Parts of the Ode:

Strophe:	Antistrophe:
■ Part of ode that the chorus chants as it moves from right to left across stage	■ Part of ode that chorus chants as it moves back across stage from left to right
	

Parodos

- Translates literally to “passageways”
- Physical feature of ancient Greek amphitheaters
- Chorus and other actors (e.g. messengers and people returning from journeys) enter and exit through
- Poetry: first song of chorus
- English: “entrance ode”



Parts of a Greek Theater



Role of chorus

- Advise or condemn the characters
- Present at events
- Comment on what's happening



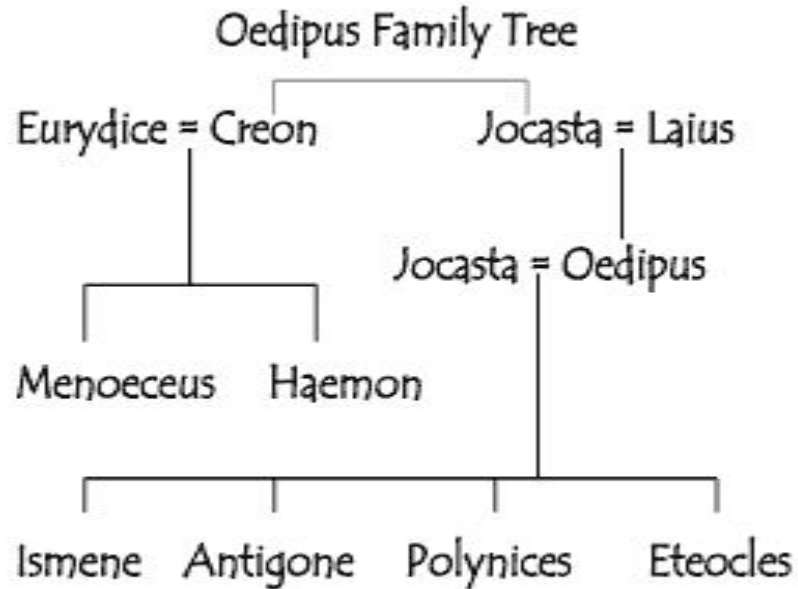
- Traditionally a group of 50 men—there were reforms
- They are average citizens

Part drama part play

- Drama : emotional and exaggerated
- Convey the story of Oedipus family and Creon's rule
- Play: the structure
- Written for performance in Greek theatre

Background & Analysis

Background on Oedipus Family

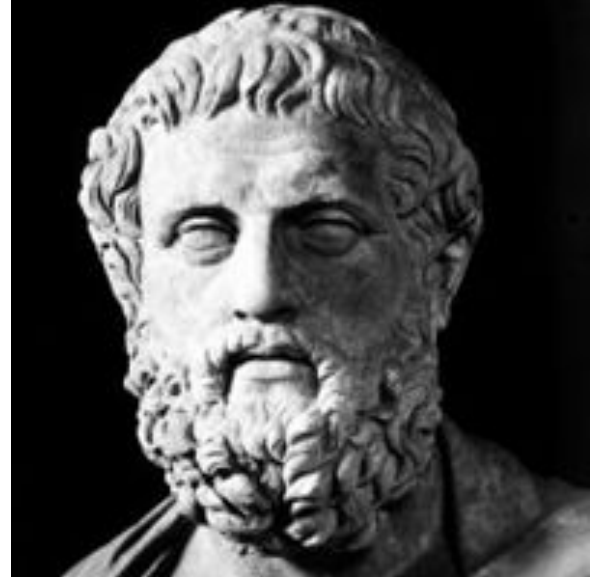


Curse on Oedipus and his Family

- Oedipus killed his father to marry his own mother
- Had 4 children
- Oedipus cursed himself for what he did
- Oedipus blinds himself
- Jocasta committed suicide
- Polyneices dies at the hands of his brother
- Eteocles dies at the hands of his brother
- Antigone commits suicide

Oedipus “eyes ripped out”

- Sees Jocasta’s corpse
- Takes her golden pins
- Stabs himself in the eyes
- Rips them out
- Blinding himself forever
- Goes into exile



Jocasta “twisted the cords that strangled her life”

- Hangs herself for various reasons:
- Married her long lost son
- Who killed her husband
- Had 4 kids with him
- Could not live with this truth

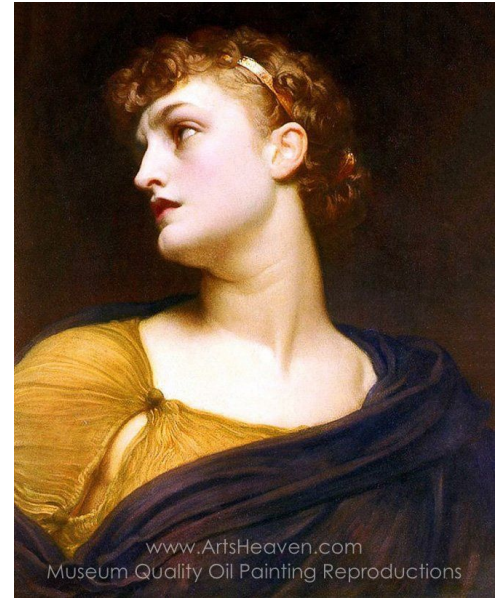


Antigone vs. Ismene (Family and loyalty)

- **Prologue:** Antigone and Ismene argue about Polyneices' burial
- Choice between Creon and Polyneices
- King Creon sets the law
- Conflict not only between law and family, but uncle and brother
- Allow each other to follow own course of action

Antigone

- Wants to bury Polyneices
- Asks for help for Ismene
- Loyal or traitor (posed to Ismene)
- Would accept death than be disloyal
- Not fearful but defiant
- Finds her sisters choice distasteful



Ismene

- Doesn't want to break the law
- Fears death
- Loyalty lies with King and the law
- Fears for her sister
- Willing to hide Antigone's plans
- Respects her decision although it seems "unwise"



Antigone “thought on dying”

- Not afraid
- Fears death with no honor over death itself
- Accepts it will happen
- It's her price for justice
- Gladly does to restore brother's honor
- “and if I must die, I say that this crime is holy. I shall lie down with him in death, and I shall be as dear to him as he to me. It is the dead, not the living, who make the greatest demands: we die forever...”

War on Thebes

- Oedipus' sons, Eteocles and Polyneices, cursed by him
- Fought for throne after father abdicated
- Aeschylus also gave an account : *Seven Against Thebes*
- Both die by the other's sword, "mirroring each other's death"



Polyneices

- Older brother
- Deserved to rule alongside Eteocles
- Eteocles: takes over and banishes him
- Angered by Eteocles' refusal to step down
- He gathers an army to take down his brother
- Labeled as a traitor
- Kills his brother in battle

Eteocles

- Younger brother
- Claimed the throne and overstayed his welcome
- “He was old enough”
- Angered his brother who ruled with him
- Banishes his brother
- In battle he kills his brother

Burial

- Premise of the play: Should Antigone bury Polyneices?
- Antigone believes burial means honor
- Ismene is sharply against, which is controversial
- Ancient Greek tradition says proper burial is necessary
- Process of three steps: prothesis, ekphora, interment
- Women had central role in funeral rites
- Unburied bodies = offenses to the gods



Honor(SJB)

- Dying with no honor
- Shameful in this culture
- Honor is dying doing justice
- Honor is also bestowed on people
- Received through proper burial/celebration

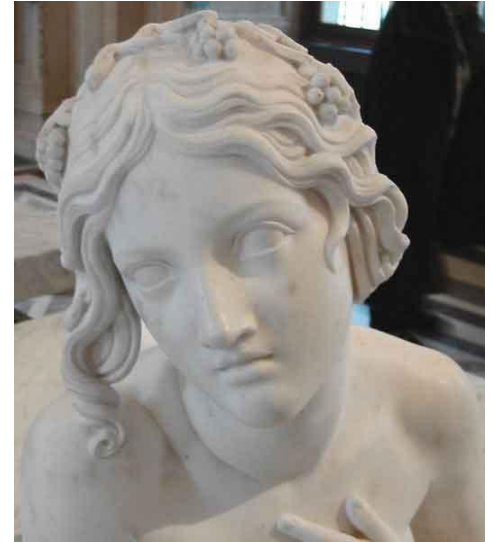
Parodos

“Thebes of the Seven Gates”

- Polyneices army of seven (Tydeus, Capaneus, Adrastus, Hippomedon, Parthenopaeus, Amphiaraus, and Polyneices himself)
- Approached the seven gates of Thebes
- The seven defenders that meet them (Melanippus, Polyphontes, Megareus, Hyperibus, Actor, Lasthenes and Eteocles)
- Just before Eteocles confronted his brother
- At the seventh gate he remembered his father’s curse
- “Kingdom will divide by the sword”
- “Seven captains at seven gates”

“Dirce’s stream”

- Wife of previous king of Thebes– Lycus
- Lycus enslaves Antiope, queens of the Amazons
- Antiope’s sons kills Dirce in revenge
- Small river near Thebes named after her
- Faithful worshipper of Dionysus, god of fruitfulness



Personification (SJB)

- “the long blade of the sun,”
- “lying Level east to west,”
- “touches with glory Thebes of the Seven Gates.I
- “Open, unlidded Eye of golden day!”
- “O marching light Across the eddy and rush of Dirce's stream”
- “Striking the white shields of the enemy”

Metaphor

Polyneices ...

“He the wild eagle screaming...

His wings their shields of snow,

His crest their marshalled helms”

Poem (relation to plot)

- Tells of the war on Thebes
- Reason why Antigone must face death
- Polyneices vs. Eteocles
- Brothers who kill each other

Poem (explanation)

- Shows joy of the people of Thebes over victory
- Significance of nature
- Involvement of the gods & their reverence
- “God hates utterly the braying of bragging tongues (the enemies’)... The frown of his thunder blasted their first man from our walls.”
- “Yielded... to the god that bend the battle-line and breaks it.”

Scene 1

Creon as “new king” of Thebes (Who ruled Thebes during previous decades?)

Kings Amphion and Zethus

King Laius

King Oedipus

King Creon

Kings Eteocles and Polyneices

King Creon

Creon's Decree

- Eteocles...is to be buried with full military honors, with all the ceremony that is usual when the greatest heroes die
- but his brother Polyneices... I say, is to have no burial, no man is to touch him or say the least prayer for him.



Law of the gods vs. law of man

- The gods superior to man
- Frequent honoring of them
- Theirs was law of the land
- Gods responded to acts of piety and worship
- Important not to anger them

The significance of gods

- People of Ancient Greece had many gods
- They were anthropomorphic
- Almost all aspects of Greek life related to gods
- Rituals, animal sacrifices, libations, myths (give gods human face), temples which dominated landscape



Creon v. Sentry

- Creon hears from the sentry, he becomes impatient
- Sentry has dramatic monologue
- “I'll not say that I'm out of breath from running, King...
- And all the time a voice kept saying, ‘You fool, don't you know you're walking straight into trouble?’...
- ‘Yes, but if you let somebody else get the news to Creon first, it will be even worse than that for you!’
- Sentry gives news of Polyneices “covered with dust”

Creon's multiple references to anarchy

- “No, from the very beginning there have been those who have whispered together, stiff-necked anarchists, putting their heads together, scheming against me in alleys.”
- Thinks people are against him
- Refuses to work with others

Creon's multiple references to "money" as the only imaginable cause for others to question his judgment

- Everyone against him does it for money
- "Money! There's nothing in the world so demoralizing as money. Down go your cities, homes gone, men gone, honest hearts corrupted, Crookedness of all kinds, and all for money!"
- Makes him look delusion
- "Sold your soul for some silver; that's all you've done."
- Money makes people do evil things

“A fortune won is often misfortune”

- Creon says this maxim
- Response to sentry’ “Yes, but if you let somebody else get the news to Creon first, it will be even worse than that for you!”
- Means that luck is temporary
- Stumbling upon success not honorable
- Creon thinks fortune not worth celebration

Ode 1

Man vs. Death

- Man represents the world's greatest wonder
- Creation to subject to him
- Man cannot conquer death
- Death as inevitable

Metaphor

“All are taken, tamed in the net of his mind”

- Man's mind compared to a net
- As something which captures
- A net which traps animals, making them inferior to him

Imagery

- “The light-boned birds and beasts that cling to cover,
- “The lithe fish lighting their reaches of dim water,
- “The lion on the hill, the wild horse windy-maned, Resign to him;
- “and his blunt yoke has broken The sultry shoulders of the mountain bull.”
- Detailed description that paints a picture

Explanation

- The wonders of the the world are many
- Mankind is more wonderful, dominates the wonders
- Death is even more powerful
- Man is subject to death

Relation to text

- Creon the new king
- He sets the law
- No laws=no kingdom
- Forgets he need humbleness
- Foreshadows to the future

Themes throughout the beginning

Loyalty vs. Betrayal

Defiance vs. Obedience

Laws vs. Justice



The Libation Bearers

- Orestes told by an oracle to avenge his father
- or face a life of eternal misery
- What the oracle says will always happen - fate
- The chorus impactful role is to feed ego's

Discussion Questions

- 1) Why would Ismene side with King Creon over Polyneices?
- 2) Under what conditions can someone be called a traitor? (Basis on Polyneices' case)
- 3) Why is honoring the dead so important? (Basis on Antigone's case)

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