

Sophokles' Political Tragedy, *Antigone*

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IT IS A PITY, as Wilamowitz once sagely observed,¹ that *Antigone* has been so often read and performed in schools and that the wrongly translated verse (*Ant.* 523) “nicht mitzuhassen, mitzulieben bin ich da” has become a false jewel of general education and the play itself a document in the history of feminism and the Religion of Love. It is the task of an historical critic to avoid the romantic, even Christian, sentimentalism that has collected about the interpretation of the play and to see it as what it was, a political drama, the last literary effort of a fifty-two year old citizen before he was elected by his people to the two highest political offices that his country could bestow. The task of my paper will be to strike a blow for this cause. First, to clear the way, a few words on chronology, titles and actors, and then I shall turn to the play itself.

Some seventy-five years ago Wilamowitz established the most reasonable date for *Antigone*.² The tradition—a *post hoc* become *propter hoc*—exists (*Antigone* hypothesis) that Sophokles in 441–440 was awarded a generalship for his play and implies a victory.³ In 441 Euripides indubitably won first prize,⁴ while in 443–2, a critical financial year, Sophokles was chairman of the *Hellēnotamiai*, that is Secretary of the Imperial Treasury (*IG I² 202.36*), and quite unable to devote

¹ See Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, “Die griechische Tragoedie und ihre drei Dichter,” *Griechische Tragoedien* IV (Berlin 1923) 340 (henceforth: *GrTr* IV).

² See U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Aristoteles und Athen* II (Berlin 1893) 298 n.14 (henceforth: *AuA*), and von Blumenthal, *RE* 3A (1927) 1082.62. Schmid-Stählin, I.2.325 n.10, underestimate the duties of a *Hellēnotamias* in a critical year when they prefer 442. Jacoby, *RE* Supp. 2 (1913) 237.3ff, supports 443 by suggesting a reference to Thurioi at *Ant.* 1115ff.

³ Thus Wilamowitz rightly, *AuA*, *loc.cit.* (*supra* n 2).

⁴ *FGH Hist* 239 F A60: *Marmor parium*. T. B. L. Webster, *An Introduction to Sophocles* (Oxford 1936) 2 with n.3, followed by G. M. Kirkwood, *A Study of Sophoclean Drama* (Cornell Stud. in Classical Philology 31, Ithaca 1958) 53 n.20 (see my note at *CP* 55 [1960] 215 n.4), wrongly holds that Euripides won in 442. This is demonstrably false. Other scholars ignore the Euripidean victory to put *Antigone* in 441 when it could at best have won but second prize: see Sir Arthur Pickard-Cambridge, *OCD*¹ s.v. SOPHOCLES, p.849B, and H. T. Wade-Gery, *Essays in Greek History* (Blackwell 1958) 258 n.1. This is improbable.

months to the composition, revision and production of four plays.⁵ Hence March 443. We shall revert later to the internal politics of Athens at this time.

Much criticism of Greek tragedies has been misdirected because critics have been misdirected by the titles of the tragedies. We must not assume that the poet himself titled all his dramas; perhaps a publisher, archivist or even a librarian on occasion did.⁶ Certainly titles, whatever their source, were chosen without much thought for their relevance. Sophoklean plays existed with several titles chosen at random from characters in the play.⁷ Antigone is merely the first character who happens to speak and her name would have headed an ancient roll. The title is by no means evidence of the importance allotted Antigone by the author. The title by modern standards would be *Kreon*, and for the anomaly compare *Agamemnon*, better *Clytemnestra*, and *Alcestis*, which Ivan Linforth called *The Husband of Alcestis*.⁸

And what about the actors? For a long time Kreon was thought tritagonist. This elderly and pernicious view grew from a misinterpretation of Demosthenes 19.246–7.⁹ It is not tenable, nor is the short-lived compromise that Kreon was deuteragonist.¹⁰ Kreon was protagonist, and his rôle was played by the leading actor of the trilogy.¹¹ If *Antigone*

⁵ Yet March 442 is the generally accepted modern dating: see Ernst-Richard Schwinge, "Die Stellung der Trachinierinnen im Werk des Sophokles," *Hypomnema* 1 (1962) 71 with n.12, to which add now G. Müller, *Sophokles Antigone* (Heidelberg 1967) 25. Victor Ehrenberg, *Sophocles and Pericles* (Blackwell 1954) 136, has the considerable merit of seeing the difficulties and draws the only consistent conclusion: "We can hardly help thinking that the burden of office must have weighed rather lightly on Sophocles' shoulders." If Sophocles had not served competently and conscientiously, the generalship would not have followed so soon.

⁶ For good general warnings on the vagueness of ancient titles, see B. A. van Groningen, *La Composition littéraire archaïque grecque: Procédés et Réalisations* (Amsterdam 1958) 65–66. The best discussion of the titles of Greek tragedies is still A. E. Haigh, *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks* (Oxford 1896) 395–402, although I am not convinced by his assurance (397) that titles "came originally from the poets themselves, and are as old as the plays to which they belong." Soph. OT is enough to refute him: see Schmid-Stählin, I.2.361 n.3.

⁷ Examples at GRBS 7 (1966) 50 n.103.

⁸ See I. M. Linforth, "The Husband of Alcestis," *Queens Quarterly* 53 (1947) 147–59.

⁹ Thus most harmfully: R. C. Jebb, *Sophocles: The Plays and Fragments, Part III: The Antigone*, ed.³ (Cambridge 1900) 7 (henceforth: Jebb, *Antigone*) and Schneidewin-Nauck-Bruhn, *Sophokles Antigone*, ed.¹¹ (Berlin 1913) 48 ("zu unserer Überraschung"!); The view is refuted by Kelley Rees, *The So-called Rule of Three Actors in the Classical Greek Drama* (Diss. Chicago 1908) 37ff.

¹⁰ Thus U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Euripides Herakles I*³ (Berlin 1895) 150 n.60: "die ökonomie des dramas lehrt, dass Kreon deuteragonist ist."

¹¹ It was the merit of Karl Frey first to have demonstrated this: see K. Frey, "Der Protagonist in der Antigone des Sophokles," *Njbb Abt. 1*, 117 (1878) 460–64. This was accepted by

won first prize, it was the actor who played Kreon who was entitled to compete again in the next year's festival.¹² Kreon is longest on stage and delivers most verses; and now we are done with the Sophoklean anomaly of a male chorus for a female protagonist. The structural unity of the play becomes clear when one understands this, and we have nothing more to do with a diptych, to use Professor Webster's popular archaeological term.¹³ As in *Philoctetes*, the protagonist does not appear in the prologue but is the center of conversation, and the audience grow eager to see him (the technique of Molière, *Tartuffe*). He opens the first *episodion*, appears in the following four, and dominates the *exodos*. Sophokles wrote no Haimon-Antigone scene. Romantic heterosexual love was an invention of the Alexandrine Age, and there were practical difficulties in staging an intimate love scene before twelve or fifteen onlookers. But more specifically, such a scene would have shifted the emphasis of the whole from the figure whom Sophokles intended to be central: hence a Haimon-Kreon scene.

Thus for title and protagonist; but, as Wilamowitz well remarked, the protagonist is the government, and the drama therefore is *ein politisches Drama*.¹⁴ What, we must ask, in purely political terms is the situation and what is the question that the situation poses? A transitional, war-time government—convinced of its own legitimacy and accepted by its citizens—passes legislation against enemies of the state. An agitator in high place without due process challenges the legitimacy of the legislation and denies the supremacy of the government. Question: how must the government deal with a challenge within the power élite that can be neither ignored nor quietly denied?

Let us turn now to the action itself. Like the start of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, Euripides' *Electra* and the whole action of his youthful *Rhesus*,¹⁵ Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae* and *Vespae*, not to speak of

Sir Arthur Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens* (Oxford 1953) 142. Because of Demosthenes his revisers waver but do not deny his view: see Sir Arthur Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, ed.² revised by John Gould and D. M. Lewis (Oxford 1968) 141 with n.2. I review the new edition in *DLZ* 90 (1969).

¹² On occasion the victorious actor had not acted the plays of the victorious poet: see Pickard-Cambridge, *op.cit.*² (*supra* n.11) 95.

¹³ T. B. L. Webster, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 102–03.

¹⁴ Wilamowitz, *GrTr* IV.345: “. . . und er (Kreon) die Regierung ist.”

¹⁵ I am convinced by W. Ritchie, *The Authenticity of the Rhesus of Euripides* (Cambridge 1964) in spite of Ed. Fraenkel, *Gnomon* 37 (1965) 228–41.

Plautus' *Amphitruo*,¹⁶ *Antigone* begins at night.¹⁷ We soon see why. Alone (*Ant.* 19) in the courtyard of the palace two members of the royal house are conspiring against the state. They speak in the open air to avoid eavesdroppers within.¹⁸ The first speaker, Antigone, is already determined to transgress the edict of the new king, Kreon, and bury her brother, a criminal, who has recently led an army against his own state and murdered its ruler.¹⁹ Antigone has no tragic dilemma. She appears from the first as a woman with an *idée fixe*. If she struggled earlier to reach her decision, we are told nothing of the struggle. It is *ἔξω τοῦ δράματος* and must not concern us. Her decision, therefore, is a *datum* existing only to elicit a reply from the government. The situation is peculiarly unpleasant for the government because it comes from a source that cannot be ignored or quietly denied, during a state of national emergency, and when the government is in transition.

We are told some important details of the legislation. It was a war-measure, promulgated on the battlefield in the form of an edict²⁰ by

¹⁶ See especially Plaut. *Amph.* 149: *a portu illic nunc <huc> cum laterna aduenit*; for his sources: *RE* 14 (1928) 100, presumably a comedy that parodied an ultimate tragic treatment, not impossibly Sophoklean (fragm. 122–25 P.) By the time Soph. *El.* begins, the sun has risen (*El.* 17–19).

¹⁷ Thus Wilamowitz, *GrTr* IV.346: "Nacht ist es noch." *Ant.* 16, *ἐν νυκτὶ τῇ νῦν*, is decisive and does not mean, as Jebb *ad loc.*, "last night": see recently A. T. v. S. Bradshaw, *CQ* 55 (1962) 203–04 and B. M. W. Knox, *The Heroic Temper: Studies in Sophoclean Tragedy* (Berkeley/London 1964) 180 n.43 (henceforth: Knox, *Temper*). More generally see U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Euripides Ion* (Berlin 1926) 89.

¹⁸ Soph. *Ant.* 18–19 ("I sought therefore to bring you out beyond the courtyard gates that you might hear alone") provide the motivation for the action of the prologue. G. Kaibel, *Sophokles Elektra* (Leipzig 1896) 65, was unjust in his famous condemnation of the prologue: "Die Schwestern kommen und reden nur, weil das Stück beginnt." R. C. Flickinger, *The Greek Theater and its Drama*, ed.⁴ (Chicago 1936) 240–41 has the matter right and recalls "that the interior of ancient houses was arranged differently than ours and was more favorable for eavesdropping" whilst citing Ter. *Phorm.* 862–69. *Ant.* 18–19 are not incompatible with the view of Wilamowitz (*GrTr* IV.346): "Antigone von der Seite, Ismene aus dem Hause kommt"; see earlier Tycho von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, "Die dramatische Technik des Sophokles," *PhilUnt* 22 (Berlin 1917) 17 n.1. Such a dual entrance stresses visually the sisters' difference and adds authority to the information Antigone brings. I prefer this to having both enter together from the *scaenae frons*.

¹⁹ We ought not to forget that Athenian law (Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.22) forbade the burial of traitors in native soil: see H. J. Mette, "Die Antigone des Sophokles," *Hermes* 84 (1956) 129–34, with the caveat of B. M. W. Knox, *Gnomon* 40 (1968).

²⁰ The Greek word is *κήρυγμα*: *Ant.* 8, 26–27, where we learn that it has been announced to the townsmen, that is, those on the battlefield (Jebb's "it hath been published to the town" is not accurate), etc.: for full references see Knox, *Temper* 183 n.18. The edict presumably is so called because it would have been announced by a herald who accompanied his general and king. Athenians would think of archons who had their herald: see Arist. *Ath.Pol.* 62.2 and Busolt/Swoboda, *Griech. Staatskunde* II³ (München 1926) 1058 n.6. For heralds in tragedy see Wilamowitz, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.10) 122 n.18. Ismene soon (*Ant.* 60) con-

Kreon as *stratēgos* (8). Kreon's edict to deny a traitor burial in his country and his penalty of death for its transgression would have been by no means extraordinary to Athenian ears. Although open hostilities had temporarily ceased, the invaders had fled (106–7) and Thebes claimed victory (148), no treaty had been concluded and a state of war continued to exist. Later in the day (1080–83) Teiresias hints to the government of a second invasion in the near future. An Athenian *stratēgos* in time of war held extraordinary judicial power and could put to death without trial any man under his command whose conduct he considered treasonous. Naturally (248) Kreon thought one of his men would be the culprit. Thus Lamachus in the Sicilian Expedition put to death on the plank a soldier caught signalling to the enemy (Lysias 13.65).²¹ Iphikrates likewise at Corinth speared (*transfixit cus-pide*) a sentinel whom he found asleep at his post with the remark, "I left him as I found him."²² Nor would Kreon's manner of execution for those caught violating the edict, death by stoning in the presence of the citizens (36), have seemed unduly harsh to an audience who within living memory had invoked in wartime the same punishment on one of their own *bouleutai*.²³ Visually Sophokles stresses the military office of Kreon by his arrangement of the protagonist's first entrance.²⁴ He does not enter from the central door of the *scaenae frons* but emerges (162) from the *parodos* on the spectators' left as though directly from the battlefield and in full panoply.²⁵ Kreon is General as well as King and in this dual capacity delivers his proclamation.

siders the edict a *ψῆφον* with the force of law, and to transgress it would be to do violence to the law (59) and indeed to the citizen body (79).

²¹ This was execution by *ἀποτυμπανισμός*, far crueller than crucifixion and thoroughly unworthy of the Athenians: see R. J. Bonner and G. Smith, *The Administration of Justice from Homer to Aristotle II* (Chicago 1938) 279ff; and K. Latte, *RE Supp.* 7 (1940) 1606, 9ff (= *Kleine Schriften* 400ff).

²² Frontin. *Str.* 3.12.2; for his *disciplina militaris* see Nepos 11.1.

²³ Lykidas in 479 because he argued capitulation with Persia: Hdt. 9.5. The women then brutally lynched his wife and children: see J. Miller, *RE* 13 (1927) 2292. For stoning in general see R. Hirzel, "Die Strafe der Steinigung," *AbhLeipzig* 27 (1909) 225ff; K. Latte, *RE* 3A (1929) 2294–95; A. S. Pease, *TAPA* 38 (1907) 5–18.

²⁴ *δεῦρο νεῖσθαι* is decisive (*Ant.* 33): see Lewis Campbell, *Sophocles I*² (Oxford 1879) 455, and M. L. Earle, *The Classical Papers of Mortimer Lamson Earle* (New York 1912) 48–49. Jebb (on *Ant.* 162–331) and Dain-Mazon, *Sophocle I* (Paris 1955) 78 ("Du seuil de son palais") are wrong. I should add to Earle that the prolonged anapaestic greeting (155ff) of the chorus, reminiscent of Aesch. *Ag.* 782ff, better fits the *parodos* than a rapid entrance through the *scaenae frons*. *ἄσποπος* therefore at *Ant.* 386 must mean 'back again' (cf. *OT* 431) and not, as Jebb, 'forth again'.

²⁵ Kreon is called and enters as *stratēgos* just to mitigate any charge of harshness that might otherwise attach to his edict. I think this refutes the dictum of V. Ehrenberg, *Sophocles and Pericles* (Blackwell 1954) 112: "there is no satisfactory answer to the question

The new king has composed a politic address (162–210) for the benefit of his cabinet. He cheers them: "Things were difficult for a while but we are in firm control again." Then he tells them of the change in government and seeks to legitimize his accession by nearness of kinship to the deceased ruler (174). In hasty words he commits himself, as a matter of policy, to set the welfare of the state before any friend (183), and concludes by presenting his first piece of legislation, justifying it on the amiable grounds of patriotism and piety. The effect of the whole is sensible and diplomatic; and the inclusion of occasional saws, a normal ingredient of such addresses, need not imply incompetence.²⁶

The entrance of the unwilling Phylax (223) to inform his king that an attempt has been made illegally to bury Polyneikes introduces a fundamental critical problem of the play,²⁷ the problem of the double burial. Indeed Polyneikes is thrice buried within the dramatic time of the play, but his last and official burial by the repentant Kreon (1196–1204) poses no crucial question.²⁸ The two earlier burials, on the contrary, have aroused much discussion and elicited a bibliography, especially among English-speaking scholars (Germans seem more concerned with the guilt of Antigone), that ought to discourage any humanitarian from adding to it. I do so reluctantly and only because I am convinced that error presently abounds and that a simple answer exists.²⁹

why Sophocles used the title of *strategos* for Creon, unless we find the reason outside of the play." See further H. Lloyd-Jones, *JHS* 76 (1956) 113.

²⁶ E.g. *Ant.* 175–77, a variation on "Office shows the man"; perhaps first Solonian; see Diogenian. *Cent.* 2.94 with von Leutsch and Schneidewin *ad loc.* A. H. M. Jones, *Athenian Democracy* (Blackwell 1957) 147 n.96, confidently calls Kreon's phrase "a democratic proverb." Cf. A. J. Podlecki, *TAPA* 97 (1966) 361 n.7.

²⁷ Nonetheless, H. F. Johansen, *Lustrum* 7 (1962) 186, can speak of "the uninteresting question of the double burial."

²⁸ A few words on the third burial: *νηλεές* (*Ant.* 1197, cf. *OT* 180) does not require a special passive meaning 'unpitied' (Jebb, after the scholiast) followed by *LSJ s.v.*; better, as regularly, 'pitiless' (cf. Ellendt-Genthe *s.v. miseratione non affectus* and Stephanus-Dindorf 6.1487A). The body remains a pitiless curse upon the city. There is also something of the transferred epithet: "the dog-torn body of pitiless Polyneikes." By this time the corpse is indeed dog-torn; and the poet assumes that bits were raked up, scrubbed and burned (see Jebb on *Ant.* 1201f); one recalls Theseus gathering up pieces of Hippolytus (*disiecta . . . membra laceri corporis*: Sen. *Phdr.* 1256). The "freshly torn branches" (*Ant.* 1201–02) must have been for decoration rather than fuel. G. Müller (*ad Ant.* 1197–1203) turns them into olive-branches and then detects a cultic function. Presumably the "high-topped mound of native earth" would only be erected over the ashes and so several hours at least are meant to be consumed in all.

²⁹ Jebb's note on *Ant.* 429 did much to stimulate controversy. For earlier views see M. K. Flickinger, "The 'AMAPTIA' of Sophocles' Antigone," *Iowa StClPhil* 2 (1935) 55ff; selected recent material is listed by Johansen, *loc.cit.* (*supra* n.27).

The problem is most rationally approached by posing it in the form of three questions: 1. Who performs the first burial? 2. If Antigone performs the first burial, why does she return a second time? 3. Why are there two burials?

First the first question: who performs the first burial? I know of three answers. The first is worthy of Verrall: Ismene did. Thus W. H. D. Rouse in a brilliant and witty *tour de force* which ought to delight all students of Sophoklean drama.³⁰ She admits it, twice (536, 558). This explains her suspect raving within the palace (492). She emerges certainly a more appealing character. Mr Rouse would probably prefer her to Antigone. He writes (p.40): "I think no one will forget how those who seem to be weakest often can be heroic for one beloved; what many a woman has done for her child, Ismene may do for her sister, in a sort of frenzy of devotion." He continues to conjecture about "the spiritual struggle" that led to her resolve and concludes (p.42) by comparing her to an affectionate dog who will brave any danger for love. The suggestion is wrong because no audience could possibly have guessed it unless Mr Rouse had earlier forewarned them. And it provides a splendid example of A. J. A. Waldock's documentary fallacy.³¹ In short, Ismene will not do.

A second candidate has been advanced: a god. So the late Professor S. M. Adams, who has been approved by two widely read English critics.³² The chorus suggest divinity (278), and divine intervention accounts for the mysterious circumstances. Its own cleverness defeats the theory. No audience would expect a god and everything depends on but a single word, *θειλατον* (278), spoken in rapid dialogue. The suggestion is presented by the coryphaeus simply to be refuted by Kreon.

Most of all Ismene and a god must be discarded because the third

³⁰ See W. H. D. Rouse, "The Two Burials in *Antigone*," *CR* 25 (1911) 40–42. Rouse's "solution" was accepted by Hugh Macnaghten, *The Antigone of Sophocles* (Cambridge 1926) xvi–xvii: "I accept as absolutely convincing the answer given by Dr Rouse." Rouse was justly attacked and with characteristic vehemence by A. J. A. Waldock, *Sophocles the Dramatist* (Cambridge 1951) 125–27, who oddly did not trace the theory to its originator.

³¹ See Waldock, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.30) 11–24, and R. P. Winnington-Ingram, *Gnomon* 25 (1953) 350.

³² See S. M. Adams, *CR* 45 (1931) 110–111; *Phoenix* 9 (1955) 52–54 with n.12; and "Sophocles the Playwright," *Phoenix* Suppl. III (Toronto 1957) 47–50. This suggestion was accepted by Sir John Sheppard, *The Wisdom of Sophocles* (London 1947) 51, and independently advanced by H. D. F. Kitto, *Form and Meaning in Drama* (London 1956) 156. See *contra* M. K. Flickinger, *PQ* 12 (1933) 130–36; my note at *CP* 53 (1958) 129 n.4; G. M. Kirkwood, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 71 n.34; and Knox, *Temper*, 176 n.3.

candidate is so obviously the right one. Antigone admits her guilt to the guards for both burials (434–36). This is the obvious deduction for any audience who can only judge from her frenzied exit down the left *parodos* at v.97 in contrast to Ismene, who exits into the palace.³³ For only a bit later (223) from the very left *parodos*, where Antigone had earlier disappeared, enters the perplexed Phylax with his dreadful news. To deduce otherwise an audience would have to contradict what it sees, and that is not what audiences do.

Therefore the answer to the first question is that Antigone performed the first burial as well as the second. Why then did she return a second time? The difficulty of providing a satisfactory answer to this question has long vexed Sophoklean scholars. Indeed it was because he had no satisfactory answer that Rouse put up Ismene.³⁴ The usual approach is to study Greek funerary practices, comparing them with what we are told in *Antigone*, to find some detail that has been left out, to establish that this is a *sine qua non* for any valid burial, and to assume that Antigone too realizes this and naturally returns to correct her carelessness. An early and influential specimen was Jebb, who believed that in her excitement Antigone forgot to bring pitchers with her on her first visit and so was prevented from making those libations which piety enjoined. She returned to remedy her omission.³⁵ A recent view that threatens to become influential (it has the blessing of both M. Pohlenz and certain scholars of Oxford) argues among other things that the girl was unable the first time to indulge in 'ritual wailing' (*κωκυτός*), a practice, we are assured, that has survived today in primitive parts of Greece. Back she comes for this, and quite naturally (425ff) the noise alerts the guards.³⁶ Critics less attracted to funer-

³³ Ismene bids her sister depart while herself remaining behind (98–99) and thus must turn and re-enter the *scaenae frons*. This requires that after exit the actor change his costume and mask, go out the rear of the stage building, and circle part of the theater in order to re-enter up through the left *parodos* as the Phylax at v.223. The entrance of the chorus and performance of the *parodos* and the entrance of the protagonist and performance of his proclamation scene would allow ample time. For the situation I should compare Soph. *Tr.* where at v.821 Hyllos exits into the *scaenae frons* but after a choral ode re-enters up the left *parodos* at v.971.

³⁴ See Rouse, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.30) 40: "I do not see why Antigone should come back. She has done her part, and I suppose she does not want to die; Haemon is evidence to the contrary . . ."

³⁵ See R. C. Jebb on *Ant.* 245ff and 429. Much of his argument grows from what amounts to a Sophoklean repetition of an Aeschylean tag: cf. *Ant.* 246–47, 429, and *Aesch. Ag.* 495. Recently Knox, *Temper*, 64 rather hesitantly revives this theory.

³⁶ See E. Struck, "Der zweimalige Gang der Antigone zur Leiche des Polyneikes," *Gymnasium* 60 (1953) 327–34, approved by M. Pohlenz, *Die griech. Tragödie, Erläuterungen*² (Göttingen 1954) 80, and especially the masterly article of Bradshaw, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.17)

ary antiquities try a psychological approach. Antigone "is rebellious and wishes to be known as such."³⁷ Rather like Xenophon's Sokrates, she has an unhealthy predilection for self-immolation. Or a critic may simply write an imaginative kind of historical novel. Errandonea,³⁸ always good at this sort of thing, provides a new chapter for the Antigone-saga. Before the prologue Antigone had covered Polyneikes with dust as a temporary measure, intending to return later with Ismene, picks and shovels. When Ismene refused her aid, Antigone sought to do as best she could alone and bungled the job. There is no need to multiply these fancies. They all involve to some degree Waldock's documentary fallacy. We are not told in the text why Antigone returned. Antigone as an historical character never existed. She is the fanciful creation of a poet's mind. Therefore, because no reason is given in the text, no reason exists, and the question is an irrelevant one that ought not to be posed and cannot be answered.³⁹

But two burials by Antigone certainly exist in the play, and every spectator is entitled to know why Sophokles put them there. Is there an answer within the terms of the play itself? I submit that the second burial is the first burial's only excuse for being.⁴⁰ The rage with which Kreon greets the Phylax' news of the first burial (he threatens the guards not only with execution but with cruel torture as well)⁴¹ and the irrationality of his accusations (the guard is a liar, disloyal and bribed) arouse audience interest in the unavoidable encounter of Antigone and Kreon. As they learned of the determination of Antigone in the prologue, they learn now of the equally stubborn resolution of the king. The encounter will be a ferocious one, with neither side giving quarter.

200-11, who thinks that further libations too ("the repeated offering of nourishment to the spirit of the departed") are not out of the question.

³⁷ Thus Johansen, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.27) 186, summarizes J. Cowser, "The Shaping of the Antigone," *PCA* (1939) 38-40, which I have not seen.

³⁸ See I. Errandonea, "La doble visita de Antígona al cadáver de su hermano Polinices," *EClás* 3 (1955) 111-20.

³⁹ Contrast Bradshaw, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.17) 206: "Why does Antigone return to the grave . . . ? This is a valid question and it deserves a reasonable answer."

⁴⁰ I find that this interpretation has been briefly argued by E. T. Owen, "Sophocles the Dramatist," *UTorontoQ* 5 (1935-36) 229-31. The article was never noticed in *L'Année philologique* and has thus escaped later scholars with the exception of his student, S. M. Adams, *Sophocles the Playwright* (Toronto 1957) 47 with n.7, who cites the view to discard it.

⁴¹ See *Ant.* 308-309 with Jebb *ad loc.*: "They are to be suspended by the hands or arms and flogged." The audience permitted the perpetration of such atrocities upon other human beings and could scarcely have criticized Kreon: see R. Turasiewicz, "De servis testibus in Atheniensium iudiciis saec. V et IV a. Chr. n. per tormenta cruciatis," *Polska Akademia*

Is there a parallel for this device of what I should call 'dramatic anticipation' in Sophokles? I think there is, although I have not seen others cite it in this context.⁴² In *Trachiniae*, after Deianeira has sent off the poisoned cloak to Herakles, she rushes out (*Tr.* 663) in agitation from the *scaenae frons* to report in the form of a messenger's speech the disintegration of the flock of wool with which she daubed the poison on the cloak (*Tr.* 672–722). The graphic description of the wool serves among other things as a dramatic anticipation of the horrible entrance of the dying and tortured Herakles in the *exodos*. *Trachiniae* is roughly contemporary with *Antigone*—that is the best we can say—and apparently Sophocles found the device congenial in one play and re-used it in the second. Returning to the larger theme of this paper, that *Antigone* is a political tragedy primarily concerned with Kreon, one may draw the conclusion that both burials are there to stress not the act of Antigone but the reaction of Kreon.

The encounter of Kreon and Antigone we cannot analyze in detail. First Antigone confesses to 'guilty as charged' (443; cf. Aesch. *PV* 266). In her famous speech of defense (450–470) pleading mitigating circumstances, she appeals to the unwritten laws (454–5). The chorus—if for a moment they may be considered jurors—demur (471–2): "The creature reveals herself an intractable child of an intractable father and does not know how to yield to adversity." In his retort (473–496) Kreon, presenting the government's case, ignores, as he must, any defense not argued from legislated law; but, with some gratuitous invective in the normal Greek forensic manner, he recalls her confession (481) and further condemns her insolence in exulting in her crime. We should call it 'contempt of court'. In the stichomythy that follows, never does Kreon allow the claims of 'higher law'. In fear of conspiracy he arrests Ismene. Antigone's reaction is instructive (538ff). She would exculpate Ismene not through affection for an innocent and generous relative, but because she does not wish her glory shared. She emerges, in short, a fanatic. The scene concludes with Kreon dismissing the accused pair under sentence of death.⁴³ The ode that follows

Nauk—Oddział w Krakowie Prace Komisji Filologii Klasycznej Nr. 4 (Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków 1963) *passim*, and E. W. Bushala, "Torture of Non-Citizens in Homicide Investigations," *GRBS* 9 (1968) 61–68, who shows that torture was not restricted to slaves.

⁴² I briefly drew the parallel at *CP* 54 (1959) 71.

⁴³ I assign v.572 (as well as 574 and 576) to Ismene; to give it to Antigone, as the British after the Aldine often do (Campbell, Jebb, Pearson, Kitto, Adams), is sheer sentimentalism and flies in the face of all we know of Sophoklean stichomythy. For the correct view see

(582–625) accepts Antigone's guilt and explains it as her unfortunate inheritance: bad seed. Kreon demonstrably remains on stage throughout this *stasimon*.⁴⁴ Presumably his presence encourages the chorus' approval.

The Haimon scene (625–780) provides the most formidable assault on Kreon's resolve, friendly but reasoned dissent. The chorus had approved and Antigone's objections were dispensable. Kreon (like all politicians he can be unscrupulous) seeks to disarm the young man and speaks first. There is a tendency to moralize. Clichés avoid thinking issues through. But the king's principal point is clear. "Whomsoever the city may appoint, he must be obeyed in both small and just matters and in their opposites" (666–7). A Solonian text is adduced,⁴⁵ as others might Lincoln or Karl Marx; and the virtue of hoplite discipline extolled.⁴⁶ The worst of evils is ἀναρχία, disobedience (672). This wrecks cities, homes and battlelines. The chorus predictably approve (681–2), and youthful Haimon ought to be safely intimidated. He is not.

The prince (683ff) presents a plea for clemency from a source friendly to the government based on intelligence (φρένας, 683) and expediency (701–2). There exists widespread discontent—the police report—among the populace (700), and the government would not lose prestige by yielding in season (710ff). Quite the converse. Here we have a strong case, far different from the hysteria of Antigone, and it

especially: Wilamowitz, *GrTr* IV.341 with n.1; Schmid-Stählin, I.2.352 n.2; M. Pohlenz, *Die griechische Tragödie* I² (Göttingen 1954) 187; W. Jens, "Antigone-Interpretationen," *Satura, Früchte aus der antiken Welt, O. Weinreich dargebracht* (Baden-Baden 1952) 43ff, and Ed. Fraenkel, "Zu den Phoenissen des Euripides," *SBAW* (1963) 114 n.2. Because Ismene delivers 572, Kreon's reply, "Ἄγαν γε λυπεῖς καὶ σὺ καὶ τὸ σὸν λέχος, refers to two people (σὺ= Ismene; σὸν= Antigone). I should render "You bother me too much and (with a turn and pointing) so does your marriage!" The pronouns need not in this case both refer to Ismene as Jebb (*ad loc.*) and E. Bruhn, *Sophokles: Anhang* (Berlin 1899; repr. 1963) 46 §80 ("der, vom dem Du redest"), presumably misled by an ignorant scholiast, hold. Emphasis and gesture could remove any ambiguity in delivery. For the second person pronoun referring to two persons in one verse I should compare Ar. *Plut.* 788, *Vesp.* 452 and Eur. *Tr.* 918 with the exegesis of D. Ebener, *Wiss. Zeitschr. der Martin Luther Univ. Halle-Wittenberg* 3 (1954) 712 n.78.

⁴⁴ In this I follow Jebb. There is no statement in the text that Kreon exits. Rather he angrily orders the guards to take the prisoners off and remains behind. Before the dialogue resumes, he is addressed as present (σὼν: 626). And Haimon enters from the *scenae frons* to meet his father and not with him. *Ergo* he has never left. Contrast 944ff; Kreon has exited at 928.

⁴⁵ Jebb on *Ant.* 666f has missed the Solonian source (frg. 27 D³). *Ant.* 668–9 echo another Solonian saw, ἀρχε πρώτων μαθὼν ἀρχεσθαι (Solon *ap.* Diog.Laert. 1.60; cf. Xen. *An.* 1.9.4).

⁴⁶ *Ant.* 670–71, and for the sentiment ("the obedient soldier must stand his ground") in oratory cf. Pl. *Ap.* 28D–E (from Gorg. *Pal.* 32) imitated at Dem. 15.32–33.

is not to Kreon's credit that he fails to deal with it on its own terms. He underestimates the opposition (740), and his plea that the government must rule through its own laws (736) and that by establishing a legitimate government the citizens resign to it the right to establish policy (738, 744) is under the circumstances short-sighted. His descent to irrelevant personal abuse and his suspicion of parricide⁴⁷ further indicate a general breakdown in competence. Haimon's plea has not been entirely without effect. Ismene is reprieved. Antigone's sentence will be commuted from stoning to immurement (771ff). This affords opportunity for pardon.⁴⁸

The pathetic fourth *epeisodion* (806–943), concerned with the departure of Antigone, need not detain us long. Rather a standard *captatio misericordiae*, the *Hadesbraut*, the scene shows in human terms the unpleasant side-effects of stern decrees. It is a re-write of an earlier exit of Polyxena, which itself was modelled on an exit of Iphigenia.

⁴⁷ Kreon misinterprets (see Jebb on *Ant.* 751) Haimon's threat: "Ἡδ' οὖν θανεῖται καὶ θανοῦσ' ἀλεῖ τινα (*Ant.* 751), where Haimon means by *τινα* himself, because such a *τινα* is not uncommon in threats (see Groeneboom on Aesch. *Sept.* 400–402; Rose on *Sept.* 402). The idea of threatened murder is revealing because it reflects an earlier version, the Neoptolemus-Agamemnon encounter in Soph. *Polyxena*, which ended in threats of mutual murder (*Sen. Tr.* 308–10, 349–51).

⁴⁸ H. D. F. Kitto, who has the merit of reading texts carefully, in *op.cit.* (*supra* n.32) 166, recently drew attention again (see *CP* 53 [1958] 129) to the change in sentence—lapidation to immurement—asserting, "The alteration serves half a dozen dramatic ends." In fact he gives us three and a half. The first, endorsed by Knox, *Temper*, 72, entails Waldo's documentary fallacy ("We are at liberty to reflect, after what Haemon has told us, that the people would refuse to stone one whom they thought worthy of a crown.") and a verbal inaccuracy (there is no crown: see Jebb on *Ant.* 699). The second clearly is valid ("death by slow starvation makes possible the catastrophe which Sophocles has in mind") but does not explain why stoning was there in the first place. The third is wrongheaded and unhistorical ("Creon's failure to understand anything is emphasised horribly by the pedantry, or cynicism, of his bread and water, which he says will avert pollution from the city"). Bread and water is not pedantry but prudence and quite in line with the Indo-European practice of avoiding pollution when executing maidens of the royal house. Cercyon adopted the practice when disposing of his adulterous daughter, the princess Alope (*Hyg. Fab.* 187.4 Rose: *filiam iussit ad necem includi*; probably ultimately Euripidean: frgg. 105ff N²), whose tomb Pausanias (1.39.3) still could see; and violated Vestals too were thus interred (*Plut. Vit. Num.* 10.4–7). On the whole matter see the sensible remarks of Carl Koch, *RE* 8A (1958) 1750.37ff. The same psychology of making the condemned a suicide rather than a victim survived behind ἀποτυμπανισμός: see Bonner and Smith, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.21) II.279ff; as well as hemlock (first *Ar. Ran.* 117ff; see R. J. Bonner, *HSCP* Supp. 1 [1940] 299–302). Tycho von Wilamowitz, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.18) 13 n.2, pertinently recalls that there is no word of stoning in Kreon's proclamation and the chorus note no inconsistency. It is mentioned only in Antigone's report (*Ant.* 36) of what Kreon allegedly said, and he suggests a trace of the epic source. I think that at first Sophokles in one word of swiftly spoken dialogue gave the normal penalty because he wishes the whole edict to appear normal at that point. Later, when the conflict has been sharpened, he silently slips in a change of sentence to allow the catastrophe of the Messenger's speech. There is a similar confusion of sentence in Eur. *Ion* (is Creusa to be stoned or flung from a cliff?): see Owen on *Ion* 1112.

The trope would have been varied again in *Andromeda*.⁴⁹ Exit wronged maiden to death in bridal array. But the music and singing, as well as an unexpected compliment to Herodotus (904–920),⁵⁰ were commendable, and one may recall that twice in the *kommos* the chorus remind Antigone that she has brought everything upon herself (853, 875).

The Kreon-Teiresias scene (988–1115), the fifth *epeisodion*, rewritten from an earlier Agamemnon-Calchas scene in *Polyxena*,⁵¹ serves the same dramatic function in the later play. A seer breaks a stubborn king's resolve. Kreon and Agamemnon in *Polyxena* held their own against mortal adversaries but dare not persevere against the stated purpose of the gods. Teiresias, in a graphic but polite speech (998–1032) that appealed later to imperial rhetorical taste,⁵² describes the unfavorable omens but concludes with an unfortunate ambiguity, which he learns later (1062) carefully to avoid:

τὸ μανθάνειν δ'
ἡδιστον εὖ λέγοντος, εἰ κέρδος λέγοι. (1031–32).

Teiresias naturally means 'for your gain'; but Kreon, unnerved and suspicious, thinks that he means his own. This mistake (*cf.* 1037, 1061) explains the ferocity of the king's reply.⁵³ Kreon would naturally interpret κέρδος as 'political profit, self-interest'. Thus he had himself used it earlier.⁵⁴ The charge of bribery too (1055) is easily leveled against seers. Oedipus once thought that Kreon himself had bribed Teiresias.⁵⁵ The slander angers the old man (1077–78), who reveals the worst⁵⁶ and exits without awaiting a reply. But the point has been made. Upon reflection (1095) and urged by his advisers (1100–01), whom he gently questions (1099), Kreon yields with the couplet that forms the climax of the action, "one cannot wage a losing war with the unavoidable" (1105–06), the *anagnorisis* in Aristotelean terms. Verses 1108–14 are important because they reveal Sophocles' favorable char-

⁴⁹ See *GRBS* 7 (1966) 48, and for the motif of the 'Hadesbraut' (the prototype was Persephone) see Schmid-Stählin, I.2.354 n.4 with the literature there cited.

⁵⁰ See Jacoby, *RE Suppl.* 2 (1913) 234.41ff.

⁵¹ See *GRBS* 7 (1966) 34–35, 48.

⁵² Together with *Ant.* 1006ff: see *Sen. Oed.* 314ff.

⁵³ See the good remarks of S. M. Adams, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.40) 55–56. Adams always read Sophocles with attention.

⁵⁴ See *Ant.* 222, and for the political meaning see K. Reinhardt, *Sophokles*³ (Frankfurt 1947) 263.

⁵⁵ See *Soph. OT* 387–89, and compare Accius, *Astyanax* 169–170 R, perhaps from *Soph. Captivae*. Euripides' characters share the view (*IA* 520, *Hel.* 755).

⁵⁶ *Ant.* 1065–90, a monologue later rewritten to end the scene at *OT* 447–62.

acterization of the protagonist. Once Kreon is convinced that he has erred (and he is convinced like Agamemnon earlier in *Polyxena* because he is a pious man), he devotes all his energy toward rectifying his error. No time is wasted in excusing or salvaging policy proven mistaken.⁵⁷ His first interest is the welfare of his country.

The *hyporchema* that follows (1115–54) is more rational than its desperate counterpart at *OT* 1086–1109. The State has yielded to the Church in its wisdom and immediately has turned new policy into action. For Antigone there is the matter of rolling away a stone; then the burial of Polyneikes.⁵⁸ The Chorus advise action in this order (1100–1101). Catastrophe would thus have been averted. Kreon reverses his duties. Disaster ensues. We never know why he changed his plans. He alleges (1273–74) a god swooped on him from above and “shook him into the paths of cruelty,” a *façon de parler*. The path led past the body first.

The *exodos* begins with the entrance of a Messenger and soon Eurydike. A paper Deianeira, like her she exits in silence to suicide; she and the ill-starred Megareus⁵⁹ strike me as a heavy-handed attempt to overwhelm Kreon, who really does not deserve so much affliction. One thinks of the slaughter that ends *Hamlet*.⁶⁰ But the splendid Messenger's speech deserves a royal audience and is of highest importance. After the protracted obsequies of Polyneikes, Kreon hurries to the rocky tomb. He finds the entrance broken into and his son prostrate over the girl's corpse. He believes that Haimon is insane and has murdered Antigone, a view never denied in the play.⁶¹ Indeed the Messenger refers to the crime as *φόνος*, *murder* (1177). Haimon spits at his father and lashes out at him with a sword, but the agile Kreon eludes him. The maddened boy then rather clumsily kills himself and, dying, throws himself on the girl, whom he had earlier cut

⁵⁷ Indeed Kreon even acknowledges, albeit a bit hesitantly with a subjunctive construction, the validity of Antigone's laws (1113–14, which recall 454f): see Jebb on 1113f; Adams, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.40) 56; and Kirkwood, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 239.

⁵⁸ See n.28 *supra*.

⁵⁹ See Jebb on *Ant.* 1303; Wilamowitz, *GrTr* IV.349 n.2; Kirkwood, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 66 with n.31; and Johanna Schmitt, *Freiwilliger Opfertod bei Euripides: ein Beitrag zu seiner dramatischen Technik* (Giessen 1921) 91f.

⁶⁰ In short I share Wilamowitz' disappointment with the last part of the play: see Wilamowitz, *GrTr* IV.348.

⁶¹ The crucial lines are *Ant.* 1219–30, and I must refer to my study of them at *GRBS* 3 (1960) 31–35.

down, coughing up blood, as the poet says, onto her white cheek.⁶² Pyramus and Thisbe, Romeo and Juliet, von Kleist and Henrietta Vogel, the pattern does grow tedious.

When we understand that Kreon—whether rightly or wrongly is irrelevant—believes that his son murdered Antigone, we see again how the author has given unity to his play through his central figure, Kreon. The death of Antigone is of no concern to Kreon. He does not even bother to bring her body home and never once mentions her in the *exodos*.⁶³ But that Kreon has driven his son to the murder of kin intensifies his own wretchedness. The tragedy concludes with the entrance of Kreon, attendants and bier through the *parodos*, a brief scene of hopeless lamentation with little choral comfort, and the protagonist exits into the *scaenae frons*, the chorus down the *parodos*. The play is done.

Was Kreon a villain—stubborn, vindictive, obtuse? I fail to see how.⁶⁴ His decree was severe, but it was wartime. His reaction to disobedience was adherence to the law. What else was feasible? The new government has been challenged on a major issue of policy. Yield and it would tumble. Yet an impasse was unavoidable. There was no means within the mechanism of the state to counter the challenge; but the challenge contained a kind of cogency that refused summary dismissal.⁶⁵ In Athenian terms a decree of the *ekklēsia* (or indeed with

⁶² The Aeschylean (see Fraenkel, *Agamemnon* III.655) verses (*Ant.* 1238–39) read:

καὶ φυσιῶν ὄξειαν ἐκβάλλει ῥοήν
λευκῇ παρειᾷ φοινίου σταλάγματος.

I should render: “And gasping he threw up (*LSJ s.v., m*) a bright (*cf. Ar. Pax* 1173) stream (*ῥοήν: pace G. Müller*) of bloody drops (the singular in a collective sense: Wolff-Bellermann) onto her white cheek (for the locative: Bruhn, *Anhang* §51 and *KG* I.406).” This does not mean that his pierced side falls upon her cheek. Rather the sword punctured his right lung and he is haemorrhaging through the mouth (*αἷμα ἐξέπνευσεν: schol. ad* 1239) with which he tries to kiss her dead and therefore pallid cheek. The cheek is Antigone’s and not Haimon’s, as P. Mazon held at *RevPhil* 3^o SER. 25 (1951) 14 and translated at Dain-Mazon, *Sophocle* I (Paris 1955) 117. We may disregard the tampering of S. G. Kapsomenos, *Sophokles’ Trachinierinnen und ihr Vorbild* (Athens 1963) 83 n.4.

⁶³ Jebb (on *Ant.* 1344f) was wrong to see a reference to Antigone in 1345. Only Haimon and Eurydike are meant, as is shown by the two pronouns in 1340–41. Kreon addresses his son with a vocative because the corpse is before him as he faces the audience. The body of his wife, who stabbed rather than hanged herself (1283), presumably lay in the doorway behind him: see Pickard-Cambridge, *The Theatre of Dionysus in Athens* (Oxford 1946) 110.

⁶⁴ Bradshaw, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.17) 209–10 is on the right track but does not go far enough.

⁶⁵ Lewis Campbell, *Sophocles* I³ (Oxford 1879) 446–47, simply by reading Thucydides, gathers occasions when “individuals must have been distracted between their obligations to the state and sentiments which seemed to have an ethical and religious sanction, and which, if not absolutely universal, had become deeply implanted in the heart of every Greek.”

rare exceptions a decision of the *Hēliaia* which functioned as a sub-committee of the *ekklēsia*) could not be appealed;⁶⁶ for no body could be superior to the assembled citizens who were the state. Sophokles discerned the weakness. The unwritten laws are a metaphor. We should require 'a court of judicial review', a body, remote, without political allegiance, that with cool indifference and sober reflection evaluates legislation whose justice is contested by a citizen and that possesses the power to render contested legislation ineffective.

A *caveat* for moderns. Professor Knox has recently and eloquently reminded us⁶⁷ that moderns inherently suspect the state in a way that Perikles' Athenians would never have done. They were too near their primitive origins; and orderly democratic government was a precious and recent discovery. In 1939 E. M. Forster wrote that "famous and scandalous sentence": "I hate the idea of causes, and if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the guts to betray my country." No Athenian democrat would have approved this. It was not the ancient way toward agitators. Cato the Elder described Sokrates as "a violent man and a revolutionist."⁶⁸ My point is that to side with Antigone implies an historical anachronism.

We possess the opinion of one of the most astute of Athenian politicians, himself a student of Thucydides,⁶⁹ upon Sophokles' *Antigone*—Demosthenes. At *De falsa legatione* 246–47, Demosthenes charges that Aeschines quotes scripture only to his purpose. He had cited Euripides' *Phoenix*; but he had omitted to quote relevant verses from *Antigone*, verses he had himself delivered when he played the rôle of Kreon and so verses which he knew well. Sir Arthur Pickard-Cambridge translates the passage thus:⁷⁰

Consider, then, these excellent lines, placed by the poet in the mouth of our Creon-Aeschines in this play—lines which he

⁶⁶ See the authoritative discussion of Bonner and Smith, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.21) II.253ff, on the power of the *ekklēsia* to grant pardon. The three known fifth-century cases, Alkibiades (Thuc. 8.97.3), Dorieus of Rhodes (Paus. 6.7.4–5; cf. *FGH Hist* 324 F 46 with Jacoby), and Sosias (Antiph. 5.69–70), all date well after 443.

⁶⁷ See Knox, *Temper*, 84ff, from where I have taken the quotation from Forster. I endorse as well the remark of Bradshaw, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.17) 210: "Critics show unwarranted readiness to assume that Athenian dramatists and spectators tended to think ill of autocrats and well of rebels."

⁶⁸ See Plut. *Cat.Maior* 23.1 with the remarks of B. L. Gildersleeve, *Essays and Studies*² (New York 1924) 240.

⁶⁹ See Arnold Schaefer, *Demosthenes und seine Zeit I*² (Leipzig 1885) 314ff.

⁷⁰ Pickard-Cambridge, *Demosthenes' Public Orations I* (London 1963) 229–30.

neither repeated to himself to guide him as an ambassador, nor yet quoted to the jury. (*To the clerk.*) Read the passage.

Verses from the 'Antigone' of Sophocles.

To learn aright the soul and heart and mind
 Of any man—for that, device is none,
 Till he be proved in government and law,
 And so revealed. For he who guides the State,
 Yet cleaves not in his counsels to the best,
 But from some fear in prison locks his tongue,
 Is in mine eyes, as he hath ever been,
 Vilest of men. And him, who sets his friend
 Before his land, I count of no esteem.
 For I—be it known to God's all-viewing eye—
 Would ne'er keep silence, seeing the march of doom
 Upon this city—doom in safety's stead,
 Nor ever take to me as mine own friend
 My country's foe. For this I know, that she,
 Our country, is the ship that bears us safe,
 And safe aboard her, while she sails erect,
 We make good friends.

None of these lines did Aeschines ever repeat to himself during his mission. Instead of preferring his country he thought that to be friend and guest-friend of Philip was much more important and profitable for himself, and bade a long farewell to the wise Sophocles.

The orator continues to censure Aeschines further in terms of phrases from the Sophoklean passage. Demosthenes has quoted *Ant.* 175–90, verses from the proclamation speech of Kreon, where the king is setting forth the program that will guide his action through most of the remaining play. Demosthenes equates Antigone with Philip and Kreon with the good statesman. His preference is clear.⁷¹ I assume that Perikles would have shared it.

⁷¹ “. . . seine (Kreons) erste Rede hat Demosthenes, dessen Literaturkenntnis bescheiden war, mit Beifall zitiert.” Wilamowitz, *GrTr* IV.345; cf. Knox, *Temper*, 181 n.52. Wilamowitz' earlier remark (*Herakles* I².150 n.60), “aber was ein redner demosthenischer zeit sagt, ist überhaupt unglaubwürdig, und wenn vollends der hass spricht, wie hier, ist die lüge an sich wahrscheinlicher,” may also be right but does not invalidate the presumption that Demosthenes considered that a good part of his audience would find his interpretation reasonable, whether or not he, Demosthenes, thought it correct.

The great political event at Athens in spring 443 was the ostracism of Kimon's political heir, Thucydides son of Melesias, the formidable leader of the aristocratic opposition.⁷² Perikles survived the crisis of his career, now unchallenged, to begin a fifteen year principate. Sophokles' subsequent election as Secretary of the Imperial Treasury (442) and then to the generalship (441) required Perikleian assent.⁷³ How would Perikles have assessed *Antigone*?⁷⁴ His sympathy would have been with the government, not the opposition. Agitators, especially high-placed ones, appear and obstruct. Thucydides would have been one.⁷⁵

In 449 the Persian threat ended but with no hope for specific indemnity. Demobilization, for the first time since before Salamis, could bring economic disaster. Were the revenues of the League to discontinue? The income provided livelihood for the lower class, loyal Perikleian supporters.⁷⁶ Divert the funds to a massive municipal building program and provide work for those no longer sailors (Plut. *Per.* 14.1–3). The *ekklēsia* approved the Perikleian program (probably, as Wade-Gery says, in early summer 449). A paradox emerged. In domestic policy a democrat, abroad Perikles advocated imperialism. Thucydides, contrarily, a spokesman of the aristocrats, charged misappropriation of allied funds. But the psephism was law and Perikles, like Kreon, persisted. Opposition would have been from principle. One cannot implement a decree that outrages morality. "Further," as

⁷² For chronology and other matters I follow here H. T. Wade-Gery, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 239ff.

⁷³ Ehrenberg, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5) 136, says the obvious: "The man who stood for the election as *hellenotamias* in 443 and was even elected chairman, cannot have been a partisan of Thucydides, son of Melesias."

⁷⁴ Naturally the question is a rhetorical one that can be answered only in the form of a supposition. There were 16,000 in the audience that day (if the theater were full). Among them men, I suggest, in the habit of ruling other men, would look on Kreon with sympathy and attention. I wish also to proclaim my view that it is unhistorical to assume that *the* interpretation of *Antigone* exists or ever did. From the moment of the first production, if analogy means anything, competing reactions arose. My reaction is only one possible one which may have been shared in some form by certain spectators in March 443. That is all I claim for it, not a jot more.

⁷⁵ Georg Kaibel, *De Sophoclis Antigona* (Göttingen 1897) 27, saw a reference to Thucydides son of Melesias at *Ant.* 370f.

⁷⁶ For Athenian seamen as the poorer citizens rather than largely slaves see recently M. Amit, *Athens and the Sea: A Study in Athenian Sea-Power* (Collection Latomus 74, Bruxelles 1965) 30ff.

Wade-Gery observes,⁷⁷ "it involved the question of taste, it could be called pretentious and hubristic." There are "unwritten laws."⁷⁸ The play engaged the interest of Perikles, who understood the issues and discerned the acuteness of Sophokles' analysis. The offices of *Hellēnotamias* and *Stratēgos* attest the degree of his approbation.⁷⁹

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⁷⁷ Wade-Gery, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 242. Perikles' omission at Thuc. 2.38.1 of any reference to the public buildings was intended. Steup's attempt (Classen-Steup-Stark, *Thukydides II* [Berlin 1966] 96a) to add what Perikles omitted is unfortunate and ought not to have been approved by A. W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides II* (Oxford 1956) 117, and J. T. Kakrides, "Der Thukydideische Epitaphios," *Zetemata* 26 (Munich 1961) 36-37. Thucydides son of Melesias had returned in 433 (Wade-Gery) and in 431 the issue was still too controversial to risk inclusion in an impartial public address. I owe this suggestion to my student, Mr Peter Pouncey.

⁷⁸ See Plut. *Vit.Per.* 12 for the tactics of the opposition, and W. S. Ferguson, "Historical Value of the Twelfth Chapter of Plutarch's Life of Pericles," *TAPA* 35 (1904) 5-20.

⁷⁹ An earlier German version of this paper was delivered at the Karl Marx University, Leipzig on 20 June 1967, at Rostock University on 15 May 1968, and at the Friedrich Schiller University, Jena on 24 May 1968; an English version at the Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington on 4 October 1968 and to the University Seminar in Classical Civilization at Columbia University on 17 October 1968. The subsequent discussion on all these occasions did much to clarify my thought. I am especially grateful to B. M. W. Knox, who does not believe me, and to Wolfgang Schindler, who does.