

**People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English**



Specialty: English Language

Option: Literature and Interdisciplinary Approaches

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Master's Degree in English**

Theme:

The Portrayal of Women in Sophocles's Antigone.

Gender Performativity

Presented by:

Ms. RABHI Sarah

Supervised by:

Dr. HATEM Youcef

Board of Examiners:

Chair: Ms. TABTI Kahina

Supervisor: Dr. HATEM Youcef

Examiner: Ms. BEDRANI Ghalia

Academic Year 2020/2021

Dedications

To :

My parents

My sister Sabrina

My brothers Yahya and Younes

My friends

Particularly Hayet Lounas

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank Allah for His help and grace. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. HATEM Youcef for his encouragement and support to accomplish this work. We would also like to thank the board of examiners who have accepted to evaluate and examine this research work. Finally, I am also profoundly thankful to my parents and friends for their help, advice, and generosity.

Contents

Acknowledgements.....	i
Dedications.....	ii
Contents	iii
Abstract.....	iv
I. Introduction	01
a. Literature Review	02
b. Issue and Working Hypothesis	04
c. Methodological Outline	05
II. Methods and Materials	
1. Methods	
Summary of Judith Butler’s Theory of Gender Performativity	06
2. Materials	
Summary of the Play ‘Antigone’	09
III. Results.....	11
IV. Discussion	12
Chapter One: The Interpretation of Gender Inequality within women	12
Chapter Two: Antigone’s Defiance.....	29
V. General Conclusion.....	48
VI. Bibliography.....	50

Abstract

*This research paper is a feminist study in Sophocles' play **Antigone** (441B.C.E). Our main objective is to shed light on the heroine's role inside the Greek patriarchal society. The present study relies on showing Antigone's deviation and rebellion against the king. To highlight the deeper meaning of Antigone's act we used some theoretical concepts from Butler's book of "Gender Trouble" focusing on 'gender performativity'. Our research includes two chapters. The first one deals with the interpretation of gender inequality within women, which includes the major differences and conflicts that occur between Antigone and Ismene. The second one discusses Antigone's defiance which basically focuses on showing the main character as a pure example of civil disobedience. As a major result this study affirms that there is a noticeable relation between Butler's definition of performativity and Antigone's reactions against the boundaries of the Greek patriarchal society. Her acts call for the instability of her gender. However, she serves to define and maintain her identity through the repetition of her acts.*

I. General Introduction

The ancient Greek world had been in a continuous development. People made great and different contributions to philosophy, mathematics and medicine. Some lyric poets as Sapho, Alcaeus and others were highly influenced by the Greek literature; they were responsible of shaping and introducing the culture and Greek traditions to the world. Athenian women had limited rights, therefore they were not considered to be full citizens. They are often viewed as dangerous and polluting, and have been understood to have only a relative existence that no one can understand them (Britannica, 2020: 01).

The role of women in ancient Greek life was insignificant compared to that of Greek men; thereby Greek writers did not found too much to write about them. As a result, it causes to the lack of women save in mythology and writings. Womanhood is a case or a deeper subject which has attracted a growing amount of attention in the different literary works that have been written by men to describe women of Greek society. Homer's *Odyssey* and the plays of the fifth century might be taken as an example of imaginative literary studies which are presented to highlight the real position of women who were obliged to submit to men's rules.

The Greek women did not have any political rights. Therefore, the position of being a woman does not allow discussing political subjects related to the state. Also, there are some fixed laws and rules which are based on how women should act and they were controlled by men at nearly every stage of their lives. Moreover, Athenian women are just subjects in their society with no freedom especially when they got married.

Sophocles is famous for his play *Antigone* (441 BCE), which mirrors the limitations that women had about their place in the Greek society and how Antigone struggles to put an end to these fixed realities of this ancient world. The main character is presented differently from the traditional Greek women, where she performed an unusual and awkward act for a

woman who defies the patriarchal and political sphere of her king, and at the same time adopting a special gender role that depicts her truly gender.

a. Literature Review

Sophocles' *Antigone* has received much criticism from different perspectives. For instance, Catherine A. Holland, in her essay entitled: '*After Antigone: Women, the Past, and the Future of Feminist Political Thought* (1998)' has tried to examine and identify Antigone's acts as a model for various types of feminist politics. She has shown that Antigone's difference and strangeness to the present days may be seen as a figure that can be transported from the past into daily researches, in order to present the ground of feminism to be a sort of critical value to the feminist nowadays thinkers. Antigone's behavior against the cursed city's rules that clarify the dispute between her and Creon also her speaking without authority led to open the political sphere of Thebes reordering this last's tradition (1998: 28). Therefore, she diminishes and changes the actual base of Creon's sacred rules (ibid).

Holland argues that her unwomanly acts are a special key for feminist writers to return to in focusing more on presenting the principles of Feminism. The writer's explanations and evaluations conveyed that Antigone's reactions are a response to the crises of her house and Creon, so this in turn reformulate the principles of feminism and show its different definitions. This is obviously seen that using past is not supposed to be included as a support to speak or act as feminists but it is rather to represent the present differently and put an end to those limited practices that make feminism to appear impossible (ibid: 40). However, the king's defeat may be considered to be an attempt to show a new order for Thebes, stating that her actions are a call for a new beginning. As a result, her unwomanly acts cannot simply be lost in the past corner but should be a call for a new future.

In her essay '*The Body of Antigone* (1995)', Adriana Cavarero states that, the political order of the classical Greece comes to be disordered by the dead body of Polyneices. As a

response to the play, she extremely goes with a view that centers on the fact that a city's order should not be changed because of a dead person. Since the whole story's conflict begin with the death of Polyneices. And his corpse brings an immense attention to be among the main causes that has diminished the Labdacus bloodline creating inflexible conflicts between the majority of the play's character (1998: 29).

This tragic event had a great impact of changing and tipping the scales of Creon's rules and much more the Theban people's thoughts due to Antigone's reactions about this. A body said to be a physical property to a living man or person with a subjective identity who deserves to call him an individual. From this we may understand that Cavarero is trying to put in our minds that a dead corpse do not really needs to fight for its rights. But, Sophocles has described this fact to be an important detail of someone's life. Moreover, the soul is absent, so it appears so strange to worry about a cadaver that won't bring benefits for its city as a normal person.

Another idea that Cavarero rewrite in her essay is that, this story is seen from a feminist perspective, where she portrays a set of principles which seeks to represent Antigone as a female body that has been excluded from the political compass of the state. From this point of view, Cavarero mentions that neither Creon nor Antigone tries to rely the word psyche of this dead man within their positions, but actually they were struggling to find out for arguments about what should be done with Polyneices's body (ibid: 47).

Another critic by Tina Chanter shows that Antigone is completely excluded from the political sphere of the city. As a woman she has none of the political rights. However, in Chanter's chapter '*The Performative Politics and Rebirth of Antigone in Ancient Greece and Modern South Africa (2010)*' points out that, Antigone's decision to bury the body of her brother Polynieces is an act that gives her brother's status its real importance and changes his previous image as a traitor and denied his human rights by the political sphere. Therefore,

Chanter's views are totally against those readings that focus more on classifying the character of Antigone as an object of adoration, neglecting the political significance of her position and the deeper meaning of her acts as a woman who cares much more about the rights of her dead brother.

Chanter tries to show that Antigone as a woman dares to speak with a political authority even though her act is totally against the principles of her Greek society that has classified the benefits of men before those of women. She dares to assume a claim of sovereignty that no one of the other characters has to do so, or has the courage to react against the decree of their king. Chanter focuses on two African appropriations of the play, namely *The Island* (1973) set in Apartheid Africa to explain the political logic according to which Antigone lends herself, using her as a vehicle to speak out about apartheid laws, and the conflicts occurred between whites and blacks (2010: 89). She adds that the play does not give a special sense to Antigone acting as a woman or in any gendered way, but it is an actual representation about the transformation of the city's system where her act is considered to be meaningless (ibid: 93).

b. Issues and Working Hypothesis

Our purpose in this dissertation is to reveal a feminist case through an ancient Greek woman who rebels against the standards rules of the state and her king. Antigone's acts introduce some new characteristics of gender that are far from her social role as a woman trying to be more assertive like men to claim her gender and identity.

So, to develop our topic, we borrow and share some theoretical concepts from Judith Butler 'Gender performativity'. This theory will help us to explain more about how ancient Greece supports the inequality of genders and how the protagonist fights for justice. It will serve us to show the way women are treated, and how Antigone highlights a different status within the majority of Greek women. She represents a different gender to go against an unjust decision. Indeed, all of these major points will be shown through this research study

c. Methodological outline

Our memoire shows the IMRAD method. It begins with an introduction that states the main purposes introducing the issue of women in ancient Greece in relation to gender in Sophocles' Antigone. It includes a review of literature on the theme. It is followed by the issue and working hypothesis. In the method and materials section we provided an overview of Judith Butler's theory of 'Gender performativity' that we apply in our analysis, and in materials a short summary of the play 'Antigone' is presented.

Then we explained our findings in a result section. The discussion will consist of two main chapters. In the first chapter we will compare the two female characters by demonstrating the hidden meaning of the play concerning the presentation of gender role within both Antigone and Ismene. In the second chapter, we will discuss Antigone's defiance showing that Sophocles 'play is a story of civil disobedience. Our dissertation ends with a general conclusion which aims to restate the key points of our work.

II. Methods and Materials

1. Method

▪ Judith Butler's Theory of 'Gender Performativity'

'Gender Performativity'(1956) is elaborated by the American philosopher; Judith Butler (1956). She states that gender is performative. From this point of view we may see that this process is actually inherently unstable. It can be implied on the acts of a specific individual, or sometimes it is used interchangeably with sex. She asserts:

Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being. A political genealogy of gender ontology's[...]will deconstruct the substantive appearance of gender into its constitutive acts and locate[...]Those acts within the compulsory frames set by the various forces that police the social appearance of gender.

(Butler, 1990:117)

Judith Butler thinks that gender and sex are not related. In other words, she reasons that there is an immense divergence that distinguishes gender from its identity. Gender is constructed through the repetitive performances that someone acts unconsciously on which we don't have a complete choice. Therefore, it is not about the idea that we could wake up the next day and decide to be a man or a woman, or something we are born with. But, as sex is socially raised, gender is constructed behind identities that are built through language (ibid).

The word sex is based on describing the biological means and characteristics of a person and gender represents both the masculine and the feminine behavior of an individual. We had grown up with those ideas which state that a person's gender is set on with sex and it is something immovable. For example, when a girl is born she is totally considered to be a future woman with her feminine acts regardless her gender that can be recognized throughout her behaviors and performances. However, the girl may change the social status given by her society, which is to conform to femininity through adopting a set of new acts which will

conform to a different gender far from the expectations of society's fixed roles. But, actually her identity will be recognized through a set of acts that she will perform to introduce her real gender (1990:34).

Butler makes a separation between the sexed body and the gendered behavior, stating that biological sex does not even need to be determined with gender. Moreover, she agrees with the reality which states that sex is socially built like gender so one can notice that these two concepts are on the same balance. Butler specifically asserts that, the body can be a full signification of gender, because it is possible to speak about man with a masculine attribute as it can be with a feminine attribute. From this, she set out that gender is not a noun but it asserts much more for free-floating attributes (1990: 33).

However, society affirms that gender roles are an outcome of biology and it is natural, it can be defined as a sort of cultural meaning that we attach to our biological sex (Salih, 2002:55). Butler does agree with this view. In fact, she argues that gender roles are represented by society. For her, femininity and masculinity are not inherent but it can be resulted through one's acts or behaviors in a particular community. She assumes that there can be no gender identity before the gendered acts because this is what creates the real identity of men and women. Actually, our attention will be on the major and central concept of "*Gender Performativity*" which is based on those actions performed repeatedly by both categories men and women, which become a fixed or habit role for them.

Butler claims that gender qualities are not expressive but performative (1990:09). For her, gender will be recognized by the habit acts or behaviors that one performs. So, in order to know the cultural existence of the body, one should focus more on the productive acts. For example that action or act of staying at home as a home keeper or housewife by women marks them as their legitimate role which is a reality spayed by society (ibid). Through this, we may deduce that the American philosopher gives a special attention to the difference that exists

between gender and sex that refers to the biological form of male and female, while sex is defined by the reproductive sexual organs, gender refers to socially created roles in which some behaviors are appropriate for women and others for men (ibid). Butler says that gender is not something we are, instead it is something that we do in our daily lives and it is possible for an individual to choose his/her gender.

Masculine or feminine identities said to be expressed by a set of forms that includes such different social action referring to the language they talk and their behaviors. Moreover, Butler defines gender as the cultural interpretation of sex (1990:07) and it is the repeated stylization of the body saying that it is a particular type of process “a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame” (Salih, 2002:55). However, to say gender is performative is simply to say how we grasp gender and how we position ourselves as gendered or sexual beings, it is achieved through the repetition and enactment of these activities that a person will separate the female from male and select their real gender (2002:56).

2. Materials

▪ Summary of Sophocles' *Antigone* (441 BCE)

Antigone is the subject of a story whose quest is to deliver the proper burial rites for her fallen brother Polyneices. The story takes place in Thebes, a city in Chaos. It begins with the invading army of Argos that has driven from Thebes. In the course of the battle of "*Seven against Thebes*", the two sons of Oedipus are died fighting against each other. Therefore, their uncle Creon becomes the king and orders of not burying the corpse of Polyneices because he fought against his native city. He was left as carrion, and anyone who tries to bury Polyneices will be punished with death.

As for Antigone, in spite of the strict warnings and alertness of her sister Ismene after she refuses to help her, she could not sit idly feeling that she is compelled to be moral and fight for the right of her brother. Her character is mainly classified as a defiant heroine since she defies the state law, despite all the impediments, she commits the deed regardless the command of the king. In fact, she is arrested and confesses to Creon without disdain, Through this the king wants to appear strong saying that state and politics are more important than family and no mere woman will defeat him. So, he condemns his niece in a cave walled up to death. As a consequence, he loses all his family members due to his unjust and irrevocable commands starting from his brother Oedipus until his wife Eurydice who slits her throat because of her son Haemon, Antigone's fiancé who committed suicide due to his helpless situation and the great lost of his love. Menoeceus's son Creon brings pollution to Thebes and realizes his errors but left alone in grief. Concerning the characters one can figure out that, a set of principles are related to reinforce and assert for gender roles that are most apparent in the play and embody the majority of the characters.

Sophocles' play is regarded as a role model for women and much precisely for modern feminists. It is a powerful representation of women's belonging to kingship; Antigone is

depicted as an independent woman who refuses to conform to the gender roles (Minglu, 2017: 01). Her forceful nature is shown throughout the play referring to her attitudes and actions regarding her brother. She challenges the most powerful unity in Thebes, Creon, although women's role in ancient Greece is limited and minimal (ibid).

III. Result

From our reading and studying of Sophocles' *Antigone*, we came to the conclusion that the writer portrays the main character's loyalty and decision to bury her brother sticking in her beliefs. However, her love and bravery for her family is a key factor for her determination to take a defiant position against Creon to save her brother's burial rites. As it is presented in this dissertation, we have chosen the theory of Judith Butler's Gender Performativity, which is shown in her book of *Gender Trouble* (1990), by leaning on her main concept "performativity".

Therefore, this allowed us to bring this work under the light of a study in relation to 'Gender performativity'. In the first chapter of this research paper, we have tried to shed light upon some major differences, that are founded between the sisters, Ismene versus Antigone. We noticed that both women went through similar experiences especially in terms of religion. In fact, the situation of this feminine relationship reveals a complete representation of gender performativity, where each one of them seeks to show a particular gender role under different circumstances.

In the second chapter, we have tried to develop some realities about the defiance of Antigone which is seen from the beginning of the play. This is due to her refusal to accept Creon's word as a law against her brother. However, we tried to focus more in this chapter on the fact that this play is a story of civil disobedience which shows some new principles about the Greek ancient world. Antigone's defiance somehow fits Judith Butler's thoughts that woman's gender is not a natural truth, but it reflects and mirrors the actions and the facts that are reduced due to the strict society's standards she lived within and the patriarchal values of the Greek society. In short, Sophocles goes with freedom of choice and individuality.

IV. Discussion

Chapter One: The Interpretation of Gender Inequality within women

The treatment of women has been an issue for hundred years in ancient civilizations. Greek women were seen as inferior beings who were denied of the social, political, or economic importance. They were considered to be secondary to men and could not be independent. They were entirely relied on men in their lives fearing to face physical abuse, angering the gods and sometimes death (Britannica, 2020: 01). According to Bernstein, Sophocles tends to explain a special scheme by using the language of conscience; he tries to accomplish this by isolating and singularizing the main character Antigone from the others especially from her sister, and then makes her more dramatic (Söderbäck 2010: 119).

This story represents the most powerful and grateful force of womanhood all over the world's history. It is a complete representation of gender performativity where character seeks to depict a special interpretation of his gender. From the beginning of the Oedipus myth, all the masculine relationships were based on reciprocal acts of violence (Blake .al, 2008: 01). It all began from the curse of Laius who badly corrupted his long line of his family (ibid: 01).

The author's first strategy is to separate Antigone fundamentally from Ismene through highlighting their different relations and views toward law. Both women are opposed to each other in what concerns their reaction to the decree of Creon. Ismene's deeper relation to Creon's law justifies her verbal act with her sister, in other words the acceptance to be inferior. Sophocles writes:

ANTIGONE: I will ask no more; indeed, even if you were willing,
I would not welcome such a fellowship.
Go your own way; I will bury him myself.
How sweet to die in such employ, to rest,
Sister and brother linked in sibling devotion,
A sinless sinner, banned awhile on earth,
But by the dead commended; and with them
I shall abide for ever. As for you,
Scorn, if you will, the eternal laws of Heaven.
ISMENE: I scorn them not, but to defy the State

Or break her ordinance I have no skill.
ANTIGONE: A specious pretext. I will go alone
To lay my dearest brother in the grave.
ISMENE: My poor, dear sister, how I fear for you!
ANTIGONE: Oh, waste no fears on me; look to yourself.
ISMENE: At least let no one learn of your intent,
But keep it secret, and so will I

(2013: 06)

If we look at the sisters in terms of their special individual characteristics, we can realize that they complete each other. In other words, when Antigone tries to honor her brother Polyneices in the same way Eteocles has been honored concerning his burial rites, her sense of familial duty is outraged and goes to achieve her last duty. However, when Creon interrogates his niece about this case or her act it seems that Antigone submits to the will of gods rather than to the laws of man. Justice for her is supposed to be taken by Zeus and his laws are much more sacred, important and have force than what the king's proclamation based on. However, Ismene looks at this situation from a logical and realistic angle having Greek woman's thoughts frighten to die horribly as her parents and brothers did.

Moreover, Antigone actually wants to honor both her brothers but she is more concerned with the previous history of her family wanting to protect both the life of her sister and hers. So, here we may see that Ismene takes an opposite side believing of the mortal decree over the gods. Creon's decrees destroyed the purity of both Antigone and Ismene to the divine law. Sophocles demonstrates the status of womanhood as a product of the oppression (Söderbäck, 2010: 124). Accordingly, the main character's acts against Creon's masculinity, describing her as a practitioner of language power that separates her gender from the other characters of the play, and depicts her social action as a whole change of not only her community but also the world.

Moreover, her stylized repetition and imitation of those defiant acts characterize her identity to be performatively constituted (Mambrol, 2016: 01). In other words, Antigone's social role is based on the cultural sphere within it is performed (ibid). Then through this, she

is acquiring new meanings with each repeated action refusing the actual imposed gender or identity that is fixed by the Greek society. However, Ismene is an entire depiction or an example of what Greek society calls a woman. Indeed, her complete refusal to help Antigone in bearing Polyneices may be seen as a complete submission to Creon's law, because she offers her loyalty to her king rather her family.

Hence, throughout all the indicated acts; differences are light up not only among the membership of the family but firmly across a whole community. The play demonstrates a sort of feminine relationship; it is the same duplication that characterizes the males that makes also women (Lukas, 2017: 01). This story includes a special conflict between Oedipus's two daughters Ismene and Antigone who differ in their entire attitudes toward Creon's proclamation.

The root behind the struggle between these two women reveals Antigone's faithfulness to her brother and her denouncement against the injustice, impiety and immorality of her king. However, her complete deviation mirrors an immense difference that occurs on her gender and identity (Honig, 2011: 15). Nevertheless, Ismene seems to be more afraid and fragile about the whole case, especially on what her sister's inflexibility and gender role may bring (ibid). But actually, Antigone's beliefs are based on the fact that the next world is better and more important than what she is experiencing in her current life. Thus, she does not give any consideration to her imposed gender position or the status of the state.

Ismene is not able to convince her sister to be discrete that is why both of them appear to be as competitors.

The reasonable woman said to be timid and obedient to the patriarchal state law, in contrast to her sister Antigone who is headstrong, spontaneous, moody and decidedly resistant to be a girl like the rest. That is why she is depicted to be as a character who carries new characteristics that are far from her status as a Greek woman. Sophocles writes:

ANTIGONE: Will you help me recover the corpse?
 ISMENE: You would bury him even when it is forbidden to the city?
 ANTIGONE: Yes. He is my brother and, even if you deny him, yours.
 No one will say that I betrayed my brother!
 ANTIGONE: What right has he to keep me from my own?
 ISMENE: Remind yourself, sister, of our father's fate,
 Abhorred, dishonoured, self-convinced of sin,
 Blinded, himself his executioner.
 Think of his mother-wife (ill-sorted names)
 Done by a noose herself had twined to death.
 And last, our hapless brethren in one day,
 Both in a mutual destiny involved,
 Self-slaughtered, both the slayer and the slain.
 Remind yourself, sister, we are left alone;
 Shall we not perish most wretched of all,
 If in defiance of the law we cross
 A monarch's will? Weak women, think of that
 Not framed by nature to contend with men.
 Remember this too that the stronger rules;
 We must obey his orders, these or worse.
 Therefore I plead compulsion and entreat
 The dead to pardon. I perforce obey
 The powers that be. It is foolishness, I believe,
 To overstep one's place in anything.

(2013: 06)

Indeed, Antigone's refusal to Haemon and her resistance to Creon capture an idea that she is different from her sister. She also brings a new and modern insight about her gender. Instead, of acting as a normal and natural woman with Greek values, she developed a new image about her gender that surprised every character in the play.

The familiar violence between Ismene and Antigone has gone so far to be unseen, because Greek women are not supposed to be compared with each other to diverge between them because they are considered to be at the same degree of judgments (Blake. al, 2008: 02). They are only characterized by those specific principles that distinguish them from the masculine figure. Greek women are not supposed to act with freedom or surpass the boundaries selected by their society, but in this play one can notice that there is an immense difference between Ismene and Antigone. Each one of them depicts a various social role than the other one. As the writer shows in his play, the great divergence between the two sisters is

really noticeable because each one of them seeks to present her thoughts differently from the other justifying their positions according to what they believe.

Sophocles, examine the issue of wrong versus right throughout these two female characters. Antigone highlights a set of extreme devotion, and her act of rebellion seems to be justifiable. It can be seen as a positive reaction, because, she seeks to achieve justice in burying her brother. And, since she is a character that acts before thinking too much, she goes with destroying the actual values of her Greek society about woman's social role. Antigone's rebellion shows a specific attention about the interaction between the will of the gods and the will of human beings.

Therefore, her personality seems to go with the fact that, 'Who is not with her is against her'. Antigone uses this idea with her sister after she refuses to help her that is why one can notice that there is a battle between the two sisters. Actually, both of them share the same ideas about this case, yet they only contradict about the way the reaction should be. That is to say, the main character wants everything to be public and visible without taking into consideration her social status or the decree of her king. In contrast to Ismene who wants to keep all in secret, Antigone already assumes her act and future consequences,

However, one can say that these women are presenting a special reality about woman's status. At the same time, this comparison is seen as a conflict inside a society where people do not care much about what is actually related to the case of womanhood. Sophocles writes:

ISMENE: My poor, dear sister, how I fear for you!

ANTIGONE: Oh, waste no fears on me; look to yourself.

ISMENE: At least let no one learn of your intent,
But keep it secret, and so will I.

ANTIGONE: No! Tell it, sister; you will be the more despised
If you fail to proclaim it to all the town.

ISMENE: Your heart is hot for cold work.

ANTIGONE: I please those whom it is most fitting to please.

ISMENE: If you succeed; but you are doomed to fail.

ANTIGONE: When strength fails me, yes, but not before. (2013:07)

This play depicts a mutual story that mirrors Antigone as an example which defines a rebellion against the king who is supposed to be the supreme male of the state and a special representation of gender performativity. Her reaction against Creon's proclamation explains her complete deviation from the traced line by the Greek society where women submit to male domination, and she mainly considers this step as unethical. And this can be seen throughout Ismene's feedbacks and reactions toward Antigone's decisions and acts.

Sophocles tends to adopt a narrative strategy referring to the Amazons, Persians and others to show some different myths in order to highlight the important characteristics that determine the activities of women to display their deep identities (ibid: 03). So, each time the writer comes to unite the two characters, he differentiates by comparing them regarding their acts. As for the opening scene in Sophocles' play, Ismene and Antigone's dialogue changes from love to hate. Hence, from this, one can notice that there is a strong contrast that characterizes the two sisters. Söderbäck asserts that Antigone is different from her sister Ismene who is afraid of Creon's power, and accepts her position. The stubborn daughter of Oedipus shows an order of justice. She goes with a claim which says that "woman laughs at the public order to which she will never have access." (Söderbäck, 2010: 74). That is to say, the heroine of the play is trying to create a new order that bounds the position and status of woman, through destroying the unconsciousness of Creon' and his plans to blind the Theban people with his useless laws which support the immoral and unjust principles of a prejudiced man.

The role of women in ancient Greece is typically limited. The divergence that characterizes the sisters is shown when Ismene states that Antigone's act is a sort of suicide and personal death by disobeying her king's command. Also, she is characterized to be an example of a Greek woman who cares much about men's thoughts concerning their femininity.

This play mirrors Ismene as an example of that oppressed and abused woman by masculinity whereas the character of Antigone refers to a defiant figure inside a patriarchal society, who is in strong contrast to the main character her sister. She is described as being the good girl of the family, but what makes her so different from Antigone is the acceptance and easily understanding of her place in the society. She even hesitates to try to help. From this point of view one can notice that Ismene bows to the king's order to deny the full burial rites of her brother. Even though moral justice and Greek people's faith is an argument for Antigone's act, Ismene seems to be paralyzed by her cultural identity as a woman. When Antigone tells Ismene about her plan to bury Polyneices, She tries to discourage her of doing so.

Antigone is defined in relation to men because she does an act which should be seen as men's behavior. This has violated the traditions of Thebes; she is a brave woman who speaks in the face of men, and not only a man, but a man of authority. She sacrifices herself and avoids compromising her honor and ethical choice. Creon attacks directly Antigone because she is a woman. In his mind, she does not own any right to go against him especially when the case rounds about his state. Yet, he is angry about Antigone's defiance against any kind of authority.

Born a male or a female does not determine someone's behavior, but the actual reality is that an individual is behaving and acting in ways to learn how to build his personality in order to fit into society. Accordingly, to express someone's gender identity, one should regards his complete performances. According to a specific society's social roles, when a person dresses men's clothes and acts in a masculine way he officially has a male gender expression. And when someone wears women's clothes and behaves in a feminine way he/she has a female gender expression (Çinar, 2015: 55).

Actually, this is only a sort of gender presentation, so one should look and search how these persons feel inside before judging any particular act. Judith Butler's ideas explain the

concept of gender performativity, describing those binary oppositions that are established in both gender norms and gender roles. It is actually seen in her book of 'Gender Trouble' (1990). Hence, according to this theorist it is necessary to evaluate someone's sexual practices in order to select his real gender role, because when a person centers on repeating a singular act without limitations, it will be a part of his personality or identity, then, this habit will construct man or a woman's gender roles (ibid).

Therefore, the play of Antigone discusses gender issues, and Sophocles deals with the women's issue. That is why he creates a strength and intelligent character like 'Antigone' who tries to prove herself in front of the other characters, with a strong and powerful new gender role. The play portrays a new adopted gender for Antigone as a woman. That is deviated and transformed from the old traditional gender roles to a defiant feminine who plays a complete different gender role than the other Greek women. Indeed, she is basically depicted as a special and a new model of woman who performs new gender roles. Moreover, her commonly deviation is not practically welcomed by the Greek society, especially her king who says that she is a lawbreaker of her position and the state.

CREON: Is it merit to reward lawbreakers?

HAEMON: I wouldn't plead for a lawbreaker.

CREON: Is not this woman an errant lawbreaker?

HAEMON: The Theban people, with one voice, say no.

CREON: Now you say that the mob dictates my policy?

HAEMON: It is you, I think, who talks like a boy.

CREON: Am I to rule for others, or myself?

HAEMON: A State for one man is no State at all.

CREON: By tradition, the State is his who rules it.

(2013: 28)

From what is mentioned above, one can conclude that Antigone is punished due to her deviation from her traditional Greek status as a dominated woman. She puts herself apart from her sister's thoughts and starts to care more about justice, expressing herself as a free individual and detached from the imposed and strict patriarchal rules. Antigone starts really to appreciate her act while claiming that she is not guilty of doing what supports moral justice.

Even though the character of Ismene is determined by Sophocles to remain in the shadows of her king, she tries to persuade her sister of not breaking the law of the state by assuming the deed of Antigone by taking the complete responsibility of the punishment and telling Creon that she buried Polyneices.

In the prologue, the author raises a question of which laws should be obeyed. The answer is given by the two sisters. From here, the main character reveals her stubbornness and inflexibility by assuming her deed and deviating from the principles of the Greek society. Butler affirms that a woman could become inferior due to the society's conventions. She argues that the concept of woman is only a term that will differentiate it from man. But, actually "gender is something that one becomes (1990: 141)". It can be considered as an activity or a kind of action that will characterize the body's sex. That is to say, Judith Butler raises a special attention to gender role; it appears to be defined as a transformation of the constructions of gender, while it is obviously related to the repetition of acts that focus on the influence of the society's traditional views on woman's gender roles.

As Simone De Beauvoir states "one is born but rather becomes a woman (Butler, 1990: 141)". For her, the human becomes a woman if this human wasn't a woman all along (ibid). From this, the individual will adopt his main gender throughout a set of acts that will not be imposed by society. Here in the play, Antigone comes to react and adopt a set of principles which show her complete deviation from the traditional beliefs of the Greek society and those attributed activities that are socially given trying to show that gender is not an inner feature but it is only through acting and doing some things repeatedly that someone will establish his/her gender. Judith Butler writes:

Because there is neither an 'essence' that gender expresses or externalize nor an objective ideal to which gender aspires, and because gender is not a fact, the various acts of gender create the idea of gender, and without those acts there would be no gender at all.

(1990: 190)

Ismene's acceptance and pride of her position in the patriarchal society is the quality which separates her from Antigone that goes against the rules of the society, in which she fails to understand the given imitations placed upon her. She expresses her opinions with no fear to be punished. The first act that mirrors her gender role and her entire deviation from her traditional role is when she rejects her fiancée, and this is seen as a highly aspect of rebellion against manhood by showing the opposite reflection of the imposed rules of the Greek society. Sophocles focuses on introducing the difference between the two sisters, claiming that Antigone disregards Creon's edicts hold on that reality which shows her act as a complete honor. Through this, she separates herself from her sister who has always stocked in mind of not being able to act by force in her nature against the citizens (Blake. al, 2008: 03).

Oedipus's daughters are locked in a combat; they can't share or act in a common way because violence is raised when they come together (ibid: 07). Yet, it is obviously seen that Ismene can never rise to take a part with Antigone in Polyneices burial because she represents a traditional Greek woman. Despite all this, the protagonist loves her sister and this is obviously seen when Antigone refuses to include Ismene in her deed, that's why her love and appreciation toward Ismene left unquestioned. The previous king of Thebes, Oedipus, considers that his daughters have entirely taken the place of their brothers, especially Antigone who holds a sort masculine gender along the way. That is why the gender construction and identity brings out Antigone real gender role when she draws a set of new performances which go against the social roles that the Greek society chooses to each membership.

Sophocles' play is all about choices, it shows the differences between being and choosing. The appearance of Ismene is not always in every version of the play but she comes to show a special ton where she reacts differently from her sister in a case where kinship should goes first before anything else. Both of them reveal the troubled figure of a Greek

woman. Their choices are fundamentally different on what concerns life and death (Honig, 2011: 33). Ismene accepts the conditions of Creon to stay alive, whereas Antigone refuses to obey and deviate from all what we call traditions and oppression in order to adopt a set of new principles which call for a new gender role far from Greek society's rules. That is why her reactions are defined as a whole defiance. Before the play begins, both of them are interpreted in a way that Ismene presents a sympathetic character and Antigone as heroic (ibid: 55). Creon's world is a home for each of the play's characters. He insists on saying that Antigone's act is a choice because women of the Greek society hold the second class citizen of Thebes. Sophocles writes:

CREON: Both women, I think, are crazed.
One suddenly has lost her wits, the other was born mad.
ISMENE: Yes, so it falls, sire, when misfortune comes,
The wisest even lose their mother wit.
CREON: Truly; your wits left you when you made
Your choice to join with criminals in crime.
ISMENE: What life for me without my sister here?
CREON: Your sister isn't here; she is already dead.
ISMENE: What, will you slay your own son's bride?
CREON: Why not, let him find other fields to plough

(2013: 23)

Sophocles explains Antigone's determination and struggle to bury her brother even though she is seen as a weak creature by the majority of the Theban people since she is a woman. But actually she dares to break an unfair law and deviate from society's imposed gender no matter what the consequences will be. She fights to bring back Polyneices rights of a proper burial. Judith Butler has always encouraged women to fight against passivity or imposed obedience.

Judith Butler's point of view about gender centers on the hidden reality of gender that comes into the appearance of been there all along his life, it can be a man inside a female body as it can be a woman inside a male body. For her, one can not only go out and adopt a new gender role, but this will be resulted throughout a set of principles and norms that will reveal the insight nature of gender. She also adds that its reality is only distinguished while

performing a set of particular acts. According to her the culturally constructed body will be then liberated from its natural post imposed by society and its originals to be a new person with a new future and cultural possibilities, because an individual's performances are becoming habits while repeating it each time. It will produce a series of acts that will distinguish his insight reality and gender (1990: 119). She claims, "Performativity is not a singular act, but a repetition and ritual, which achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of a body, understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration". (1990: 14).

The readers of this play classify Ismene and Antigone's actions to be far from the solidarity of sisterhood. Moreover she ties a complexity of gender, where the majority of the readings ignore Ismene's role as a character within the story. Ismene is a traditional woman, who is submissive to what man say. Concerning her refusal to help Antigone in the secret burial of her brother, she is trying to convince her sister to not fight against the masculine authority, because she is afraid of death. Ismene is represented as a stereotypical female.

Sophocles demonstrates in the play the main character to be the representation of kinship. She basically provides a new example that flourished inside the Greek patriarchal society against that passivity assigned for Greek women. Heroism is mainly attached to Antigone's character because she sacrifices her life and deviate from all what is imposed on her status as a woman to admire her brother. Indeed, she is a great model of disobedience. In other words, she defies not only the state and law in order to express her kinship, but she is also an example of the differences that are found in gender itself. She proved her real gender inside a patriarchal society and from being a confined woman.

Antigone owns some masculine principles. She expresses her thoughts through a set of stereotypes that represent female and male characteristics (Rawlinson, 2014: 102). Concerning Ismene, she has the ability of willingness to listen to her king's proclamations.

She is presented to be an extreme opposition to her sister Antigone. Throughout her acts, one can notice that she may be listening and collaborating with others to save the future. She presents a new model, or should we say a figure of women's concern beyond the gender logic.

Ismene's courage differs from Antigone heroism; it is based on doing things secretly to fulfill in some ways the promise of the dead brother. She cares more about life and she chooses to live portraying the norms of the feminine gender. The dispute between the two sisters present an opposite conflict, hence, they do share the same ideas but differ in the way they should react. Antigone is the one who performs everything in the open without fear and she dares to fight against men's authority. She is the voice of truth and a complete revealed character who acts against her king to mirror a rebel image.

The great conflict of the prologue shows an immense difference between the wise and unwise and life and death. The wise sister Ismene acts in ways that gets her to live and carry a burden and a shame for her family when she agrees on Creon's oppression whereas, the inflexible Antigone proves her point of view after dying to be an example of heroic death. The play presents a conflict between two important claims, which are the relation of the state to the individual obedience, and the claim of the individual to follow conscience (Dehart, 2006: 372). That is to say, when Antigone asked help from her sister about a plan that will violate Creon's edict, she goes against this rebellious action saying that women are not supposed to disobey men. Ismene supports a view which dictates that, in the world of force and violence, men's authority is stronger than an inflexible and unwise act (ibid: 374).

Ismene has good instincts, but she does not own the entire force to carry them due to her anti- political due to her lack of courage and imagination to act. Ismene is a flexible example of a traditional Greek woman who carries out all the instincts that a traditional woman has. Hegel's understanding of Sophocles' Antigone demonstrates the author's depiction of a traditional society, where individuals' relations to their societies are determined

by their social roles that will give social identities to understand their duties and rights in order to prove their participation in society (Söderbäck, 2010: 119). According to Hegel, Antigone's position built a certain and a new social role due to her negation of Creon's civil law (ibid: 118). Antigone confesses about her action and she is determined to be the breaker of the law. As a result, she becomes a singular individual. As for Ismene she keeps her silence and act wisely respecting Creon's decrees and the limits of her status as a woman. Antigone's action and negation of the king's law emerge as a new gender role which calls for modernity.

The play has been frequently read as a representative of the limits that are between life and death; it portrays a principle of feminine devotion to kinship. The images that are drawn while reading the play are about Antigone who yields namely to the curse and Ismene who fights, not only for herself but also for her sister. She always cares about family, in contrast to Antigone who goes with the individual sovereignty. Ismene's character shows her as a person who respects and cares much about law. The two female characters show a different discussion in the role and position of men and women. Hegel identifies the spirit of singularity as a consequence of repression. That is to say Antigone's appearance in this Greek tragedy is to show woman's bearer repressed singularity (Söderbäck, 2010: 124). Antigone adopts a new gender that led her to become singular and detached herself from Creon's sovereignty.

In the Greek society, womankind was seen as an empty concept that does not actually refer to humankind. Indeed, this is seen throughout the dialogue between Haemon and Creon to show the whole contrast between women as representatives of disorder through individualism and men as representatives of order by showing obedience and collectivism. Accordingly, this point of view mirrors an idea that a woman could not be powerful enough as man when she stays alone, but the case of Antigone differs in some points and that is what has characterized her to be a free individual who has transformed from her past beliefs. Creon's

thoughts about order focus and identify women to be a threat for the order of the state (ibid: 124). Ismene refuses to help Antigone, and like all the Thebans, she is afraid of breaking the law and facing death while she has chosen to live from the beginning of the play. She has always tried to remind Antigone about their place in the society. She seems indisputably a woman in her weakness, fear and submissive obedience (ibid: 103).

Men are strong and powerful, so they cannot be defeated by women; all of this is shown and clearly described by some of Ismene's characteristics. Sophocles compared the sisters as a pair, but he immediately separates them when Antigone departed herself from Ismene using 'your' and 'mine' instead of 'our' (Blake. al, 2008: 05). For Hegel, the two sisters are represented in two different ways, which are, master and slave. Antigone risks her entire life to prove her independence, like a master she struggles until she died. Here we can notice that she deviates and she is transformed from a stocked and imposed life to be free with a new gender role that is presented from the beginning of the play. Whereas, Ismene is portrayed to be the slave of the state and the king, since, she does not want to change her beliefs about her current life. Instead, she remains obedient and passive. She shows no fear of death when she tells Creon that the deed is shared with Antigone.

Antigone is the heroine of her story; she reversed the values and all the principles of the state, including the social order and Creon's authority. Sophocles' play is all about power, politics and those binary oppositions between the superiority and inferiority of the characters. The tool that may be characterized as a principle of a particular society is language. And here the Greek society divides its citizens into two binary opposite groups. The first one is the masculine power which is given the complete priority while the second one is the feminine power who is pushed to the margin. It imposes on them some particular boundaries on how they should act and react at all the levels including, the social, the personal, the sexual, the

political and the cultural. Ismene and Antigone embody this feminine power; these two women are totally victimized and silenced by several ways of oppression (Multani, 2020: 01).

This play is an image through which Sophocles mirrors the issues of authority and freedom in Antigone (ibid: 05). He also tries to highlight women's voice and claim against the rules of patriarchy. Although the Greek world was men dominated, Sophocles' Antigone depicts the subject of women with an empowered position. Even though most of literary works classifying women as obedient to the law and as weak creature, this tragic Greek play comes to push all these boundaries. From the beginning of the story, gender conflict is shown through Ismene and Antigone's views, thus one can notice that the traditional notion of gender is articulated (ibid: 06). While Ismene holds a traditional belief which states that women should not challenge men's laws, whereas Antigone represents a whole challenge to men's force, Sophocles writes:

ANTIGONE: Will you help me recover the corpse?

ISMENE: You would bury him even when it is forbidden to the city?

ANTIGONE: Yes. He is my brother and, even if you deny him, yours.

No one will say that I betrayed my brother!

ISMENE: Will you persist, though Creon has forbid?

ANTIGONE: What right has he to keep me from my own?

(2013: 05).

Actually, Creon sees this challenge as a double defiance and threat to his rule and manhood. He considers Antigone to be a man because she adopts some of men's principles while acting. Then through her actions, she transforms herself from familiar person to stranger (ibid: 08), and this can be seen when she defies those constraints and laws imposed by her society upon women. Accordingly, the heroine introduces a new generation to Thebes due to her deviation from the traditional female world and her unwomanly acts against the patriarchal society (ibid: 09).

Her great shift enables one to develop a better future far from society's complicated traditions. Antigone is an example or a model of female activism (Higgins, 2020: 01). That is

to say, her rejection of Ismene's help portrays a sort of a great change. Antigone prefers to stand alone against Creon's system and Ismene goes with the state's passivity. By the new performance, Antigone aims to escape her passivity and the oppression that is imposed on her, so by doing this, she seeks to be equal with men, and adopt a new gender role. In the similar context, Judith Butler has always argued that a woman should act freely and no one can impose rules on her. She shed light more on the fact that women should act in a different way because gender identity is not naturally determined, she states that the deviation from the imposed system and principles of the society will basically change the future of the individual and it will be a good change, she says "Subvert gender in the way that I say, and life will be good (1990: xxi)". Even if Antigone dies at the end of the play, she changes the life of the Theban people and puts a final end to the Oedipal family. Moreover, Antigone is obviously subverting from Greek patriarchal society and deviates from the imposed gender role. So from this we can say that, she has destroyed the boundaries and limits of this patriarchal society. This is in contrast to Ismene who accepts to be obedient to a rule that does not actually mirror her real gender role because she is totally afraid of Creon's authority. She is portrayed to be an extreme example of Greek oppressed women.

To sum up, Antigone's isolation is frequently shown while she rejects the solidarity of her wise sister Ismene. So, through this, one can deduce that the main protagonist character deviated and transformed from her imposed social norm. From this point of view, we may conclude that Antigone attacks the public morality of Creon and his state. This magnificent detachment and shift from her Greek political and social group differentiates her from Ismene who mainly articulates her place and understanding of her role in this social and political hierarchy. Moreover, this conflict of this obvious feminine power draws an immense interest for the readers to classify gender and its roles as the central theme of the story.

Chapter two: Antigone's Defiance

The tradition of Greek people point out that any human being must be given a suitable burial after his death. Since the beginning of the Greek culture, Athenians regarded and considered burial rites as one of the most sacred duties which are generally practiced by the female relatives that should not be neglected since it can imply an offence against the dead (Pereira,2017:09).

The protagonist of the play Antigone, justifies her act of burying her brother Polyneices which goes against her King Creon, pointing out that there are always standards and roles which distinguish right from wrong, putting into account its deep fundamental importance. It was and still a common theme of Greek literature, so the worst humiliation that a Greek person may have is to not be buried.

Indeed, burial is classified as the highest law of Greece that human right demands (Britannica, 2020: 01). When Creon destroys this divine law, Antigone rebels despite severe consequences, she performs her burial rights and defies the kingly law of Creon. Her maternal uncle has made a decree, that Polyneices is guilty of not only killing his brother but also of attacking the state, so like all the traitors he should be punished. Despite breaking the laws of the land, Antigone feels that her act is not a sign of guilt but it is much more a discussion of what is exactly a natural law. It is represented by a set of principles which are believed to have been revealed by God because the writer himself says that the supreme law can be only declared by Zeus. As a result, Creon's interdiction of the burial cannot be seen as a sacred role (Fletcher, 2008:88).

In this Greek tragic play, Antigone is classified among the stories of defiance and civil disobedience of doing what is morally right. Throughout the play, Sophocles mirrors Antigone's confidence who is totally convinced with her actions that are the best expression of loyalty and love for her family, particularly for her gods. In Consequence, the eternal

heroine mirrors some different angles of natural law also called, 'Unwritten Law' in which she marks a great turning point in what concerns the conflict between the Laws of Nature "God" and the law of "Human kind" (Tiefenburn, 1999:40) . These divine laws states for morality, and Antigone seems to be much moral than the other characters of the play in relation to the interment of Polyneices. As, for Creon, he effectively believes that obedience goes with manmade laws and no one should be moral in this midpoint which basically turns about a traitor of law itself. He asserts his command that no one will bury the corpse because of Polyneices' deception to his state (Dehart, 2006:378). Antigone, the Greek tragedy is basically based on more likely what we call dichotomies, that is to say one opposes one and two go on a confrontation.

Gender role is defined and linked with a set of behaviors including the tasks that are achieved by men and women within Greek society. In other words, masculinity and femininity are highly represented by a specific role which corresponds to men and women's abilities. It is mirrored with a fact that men' areas are located within outside areas and women's areas includes home and housewife's activities like childbearing. This is how Greek society has distributed the roles favoring men's authority due to the stereotyping of women's status as being weak and incomplete without the masculine power. That is why they are always eliminated from the outside sphere of economic and political domains.

Antigone is completely outside the law by committing the deed (2000:30). By defying the law, she brings her punishment on her own which is death. Her defiance is particularly heard but her words would be considered as deeds directly related to the vernacular of sovereign power that Creon has (ibid: 28).

Therefore, Antigones's action to bury her brother displays that there is no existing norms or rules given to women as those of men. That is to say, the protagonist's actions portray her gender differently from Greek women or even her sister. So through this, one can

notice that her behavior mirrors her real gender. It is worth mentioning that Antigone goes against the traditional roles which state for women to be inferior and with no voice. Her act is seen as a total rejection to her current position. According to Butler, gender is not actually a stable identity that society reinforces but rather an identity that will be built through repeated acts (ibid: 519). Antigone performs an act that is not hers, but she vindicates her real identity.

The body is understood to be an active process of embodying certain cultural and historical possibilities, a complicated process of appropriation which any phenomenological theory of embodiment needs to describe. In order to describe the gendered body, a phenomenological theory of constitution requires an expansion of the conventional view of acts to mean both that which constitutes meaning and that through which meaning is performed or enacted. In other words, the acts by which gender is constituted bear similarities to performative acts within theatrical contexts. My task, then, is to examine in what ways gender is constructed through specific corporeal acts, and what possibilities exist for the cultural transformation of gender through such acts.

(Butler, 1988:521)

Luce Irigaray confirms that the purpose of Antigone is basically a spiritual act because she cares more about her blood relatives. According to her, she tends to put light on the reality that goes behind each member of the city, that is to say every person has the right of living (Irigaray, 1985:100). From this point of view, the writer focuses more on showing Antigone's struggling to perform her supreme duty that the gods demand by showing the violent act and decree of her king. For Irigaray, she affirms that man is still a subject to natural death, claiming that the mind of a specific human is the strength of the whole (ibid). It reminds him that he is dependent on this totality and that he owes his own life until his time coming, than his family relatives will care about his corpse by performing all the burial rites needed. But in Sophocles' play, Creon violates the intimate life and the independence of Polyneices (ibid). Sophocles writes:

CREON: Elders, the gods have righted once again
Our storm-tossed ship of state, now safe in port.
But you by special summons I convened
As my most trusted councillors; first, because

I knew you loyal to Laius of old;
 Again, when Oedipus restored our State,
 Both while he ruled and when his rule was over,
 You still were constant to the royal line.
 Now that his two sons perished in one day,
 Both polluted by a brother's murder,
 By right of kinship to the Princes dead,
 I claim and hold the throne and sovereignty.
 Yet, it is no easy matter to discern
 The temper of a man, his mind and character,
 Till he be proved by exercise of power;
 And in my case, if one who reigns supreme
 Swerve from the highest policy, tongue-tied
 By fear of consequence, that man I hold,
 And ever held, the basest of the base.
 And I condemn the man who sets his friend
 This line was changed by the editor,
 Before his country. For myself, I call
 witness Zeus, whose eyes are everywhere,
 If I perceive some mischievous design
 To sap the State, I will not hold my tongue;
 Nor would I reckon as my private friend
 A public foe, well knowing that the State

(2013: 10)

Antigone mourns that loss taking the pace from the finishing line where she stopped her mourning. Following the Arendtian description of the Greek public sphere stating that it is different from the private field allows to read Antigone from another perspective which is not traditional and makes one mediate about the structural issues that come out (Söderbäck, 2010: 65). Arendt refers to the fact that power is not related to plurality but to strength, a point connected to the play of Antigone, focusing on king Creon whose name means a powerful ruler which he becomes and abuses of his strength to make people respect him and fear him. Arendt explains that political decisions are made with the power of being a good and convincing speaker, rather than violent; otherwise, the result would be tragic just as the end of Creon who found himself alone in a battlefield with the corpses of his beloved ones (ibid: 67).

Butler explains that gender is socially constructed. What is more important in performativity is the fact that some of these acts are done repeatedly. Through this, one can figure out that, this point of view defines instantly the actual meaning of gender is being performative. She adds that when something is performative it produces a series of effects,

and in this play Antigone performs some acts of defiance that highlight her real gender, by breaking the law of the state and the king, also rupturing the rules of the Greek society about her femininity. Butler says: “Gender is real only to the extent that is performed” (1988: 527). She agrees that gendered acts are important in emerging gender identity; therefore, from here we can notice that Antigone’s gender is not actually a stable identity.

Luce Irigaray agrees with a fact that an undefiled relationship relies and take place only within Polynecies and Antigone as a brother and sister whom are from the same blood. It is agreed that, they didn’t had any desire or personal connection between each other. Actually, they are free separated individualities, but the main idea is that, they do share the same blood and belong to the same lineage which is considered as a support for the heroine to react against the badness of Creon. “The cult of the dead would thus be the point where divine law and human law join” (Irigaray, 1985:101). From this belief, Antigone does not yield to the law of the city and the sovereignty of the king; still she cares more about her gods, asserting that it is better to die than refusing a service to the divine law. Antigone’s true motivation is to go with the principle that states blood relations comes first; she is identified as the great Sophoclean hero, who refuses to go with the limits imposed by an individual but agrees with the obedience to her gods (Mader, 2005: 156).

According to Jacques Lacan, if Antigone disobeys Creon’s law it is in purpose to obey another role, which is the unwritten laws, stating that her king’s laws are not true (ibid:158). She asserts to mirror her external loyalty to her gods by showing what is more significant than the roles of man, in front of her king maintaining her natural action that every human being can do. Genuinely for Butler, Antigone’s speaking to her king turns her to become manly (Butler, 2000: 10).

The play was written in a time when women did not own their complete rights. Sophocles introduced a new model of a Greek woman who challenged her king to regain her

brother's burial. Her act is obviously seen when she dares to bury the corpse of her brother. She assumes her performed action without feeling guilty and by doing this; she entirely goes against her position offered by the Greek society as a woman. In her theory of '*Gender Trouble*', Butler expresses that every individual has the full and complete right to perform his gender roles despite the social boundaries and imposed rules by the society. She claims that society has a strong impact on women's gendered identity. Additionally, she agrees that women's acts may not be a standard truth but rather a result of the social construction that determines their limits and how they should be. From here, we can see that Antigone's social protection is not a natural role but rather an imposed one and this can be resulted through her act of defiance that states for performativity. She writes:

That the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality. This also suggests that if that reality is fabricated as an interior essence, that very interiority is an effect and function of a decidedly public and social discourse, the public regulation of fantasy through the surface politics of the body. The gender border control that differentiates inner from outer.

(Butler, 1990: 173).

Sophocles' life in ancient Greece is rounded on various rituals and offerings of food and other things to gods. But the most important detail that the Greek gods didn't miss is their deep attention to death, burial and other specific performed tasks to ensure the after life of the deceased (Britannica, 2020: 01). Women played an important role in funeral rites they were taking responsibilities of preparing the body. The myth was that the dead must enter by crossing the river Styx By Ferry (ibid: 01). So, without those burials rituals, the dead will be doomed to suffer more in the river. That is why; Greek people should ensure their morality and protect the living from punishment and social condemnation (ibid). This is the only occasion for the Greek women to perform their religious rituals in public, and both sisters

Ismene and Antigone didn't have this opportunity to mourn over their brother. The heroine of the play feels like she is robbed of her duty to pay her last respects toward her fraternal.

Antigone herself is a tragic heroine of a story in which she risks her life. She has gone through many family tragedies. First, she loses her father, mother and now her two brothers. In her own story, she comes to react hoping that she will keep the complete safety of her family, but she also faced death in the end of the play. Even before mentioning the laws of god, one should respect and honor every one's wish to carry out a family member's burial, but here Creon does not fit to this claim. Despite the fact that in ancient Greece, religion is based on a fixed reality that burials are rituals that should be respected due their sacredness. Antigone is not afraid or confused if the Theban people will figure out that she goes against Creon's edict to bury Polyneices.

Her grateful motivation was her family. This brave character speaks up to protect her brother's rights knowing that she will reach the last degree of disobedience. Creon is not used to this type of woman power, that comes out from his own blood to defy him. Antigone's defiance of her kings puts an end to the unjust roles of the Theban king. Antigone has already put in our minds that a being a woman without the need of man to defend her is what actually marks this play to be a competition between masculine and feminine power. He feels himself weak throughout this she affirms her gender's identity. She admits that, she will face the harshest consequences that any breaker of Creon's law will experience. She is portrayed as an example of defiance to a point that no one dares to defend her when she is obliged to live her worst punishment declared by her king except her sister who tries to convince her to not go against her current position.

Fanny Söderbäck assumes some ambitious defiant acts about Antigone; he introduces her as a courageous woman who appears to find out where injustice take place. He portrays her as a lone individual fighting against state power; saying that the most interesting detail in

the play is her kinship burial rites and her status as a woman. Söderbäck asserts that Antigone is displayed and brought by Sophocles inside the play and offers her a special monologue in order to show the way she defends, religious, cultural and state oppressions (Söderbäck, 2010:03). He agrees that, the sexual differences that appear in the Sophoclean drama marks her act and her story as she is stubbornly revived (ibid: 04).

The defiance of Antigone is a reality that marks the play to be illustrated as an example about civil rights and gender roles. This particular case that the play embodies is a sort of inflection in which Antigone denies the law of Creon. The main concept of civil disobedience has flourished to be an image of justice that the heroine of the play seeks to achieve in order to accomplish her last duty. Moreover, the reality of Antigone's thoughts about this law stresses the unjust morality of Creon who goes contrary to the traditions of his society. Antigone produces a series of other actions which does not only perform the burial but also she defends her act verbally using a masculine sovereignty. This is the reason why Creon asserts that no woman will rule before his death. Butler assumes that there is a main political problem that the case of women encounters, claiming that the term women even in plural represents a set of principles that call for trouble and anxiety in some terms because it is not always establishing a coherent historical context and gender is basically recognized from race or regional identities that will mainly from the complete identity (1990: 06).

She argues that there is a binary relation between femininity and masculinity that separate woman politically from the constitution of class, race and other tribes of power (ibid: 07). For her, the distinction between sex and gender serves to show that whatever the biological appearance that sex has, gender comes to be culturally and socially constructed. That is to say when the construction of men and women will only refer to their bodies, gender is not well shown. As a result, masculinity and a man ought simply to show a female body, whereas femininity and woman will frequently refer to a male body. In this play, Antigone

poses a problematic figure about gender where she plays a role that is not hers, and acts in ways that go contrary to her biological position offered by her society. Her gender is interpreted to be culturally built. So here in the play, Antigone's defiance is a main key which supports gender performativity that states for gender is culturally and socially improved. Butler claims:

On the other hand, Simone de Beauvoir suggests in *The Second Sex* that "one is not born a woman, but, rather, becomes one." For Beauvoir, gender is "constructed", but implied in her formulation is an agent, a cogito, who somehow takes on or appropriates that gender and could, in principle, take on some other gender. Is gender as variable and volitional as Beauvoir's account seems to suggest? Can "construction" in such a case be reduced to a form of choice? Beauvoir is clear that one "becomes" a woman, but always under a cultural compulsion to become one. And clearly, the compulsion does not come from "sex."

(1990: 12)

Sophocles argues that, his play is an exact and direct allegory for today's political climate which teaches us the exact and deep meaning of disobedience Sophocles says:

ANTIGONE: Would you do more than slay your prisoner?
 CREON: Not I; your life is mine, and that's enough.
 ANTIGONE: Why dally then? To me no word of yours
 Is pleasant: God forbid it ever should please;
 Nor am I more acceptable to you.
 And yet how otherwise had I achieved
 A name so glorious as by burying A brother?
 So my townsmen all would say,
 Were they not gagged by terror. Manifold
 A king's prerogatives, and not the least
 That all his acts and all his words are law.
 CREON: Of all these Thebans none so thinks but you.
 ANTIGONE: Clearly they hold their tongues for fear of you.
 CREON: Have you no shame to differ from all these?
 ANTIGONE: To honour flesh and blood can bring no shame.
 CREON: Was his dead foeman not your kinsman too?
 ANTIGONE: One mother bore them and the same father.
 CREON: Why cast a slur on one by honouring one?
 ANTIGONE: The dead man will not bear you out in this.
 CREON: Surely, if good and evil fare alike.
 ANTIGONE: The slain man was no villain but a brother

(2013: 19)

In a very tragic way, one can notice that Creon forbids freedom of speech, refusing to acknowledge what is the perfect step that he should take concerning his edict since it is his first rule. His character demonstrates the play from being a perfect example of civil disobedience by representing his democratic order to support his statesmanlike voice (Honig, 2009: 09). All along the play, many eternal and external conflicts occurred between the characters because of the laws that have been broken (Segal, 1964: 59).

The pride of the king blinded him to see the appropriate decision that should be made. As a consequence this led him to live and struggle with his own conscious. He completely forgets the meaning of a family bound when it comes to the sacrifices which concerns his state and the safety of his family. Bernstein says that, Sophocles tries to depict through his written play, a sort of a traditional society in which the individuals' relation to himself or herself and to society is set on within their social roles. This last give social identities to those individuals that in turn determine how they are seen and valued by others including the duties and rights that should be practiced in their community (2010: 118).

Sophocles' first move to introduce the defiance of his main character Antigone, is her complete opposition to Creon' decree. The second one is when she commits her deed twice. Practically, this repetition does not inhere that it is an action performed by gods or nature, or even one of the sentries. Therefore, this duplication gives an honorable act and a pensive side. While, the third one is Antigone's individual confrontation with Creon, her first words are the confession that she does the deed, through this she takes a stand on her action, hence, those unequivocal words to Creon are a radical opposition to the king and the laws of the city (ibid: 119).

The act of Antigone is examined to be a sort of defiance to show her gender inside a patriarchal society where women where just subjects to specific and selected tribes. The limits are adopted in the play and we can distinguish it while relying on Creon's settlements about

his state and especially what goes around Polyneices interment. Her act surprises the whole city, including her uncle and the Chorus, that's why; she has the name of manly because of the multiplicity of her actions. She is adopting some characteristics of masculinity, she challenged her king's law, she is utterly drops her previous principles as a female.

Antigone violates personally all the decrees and commands which support the punishment of her brother to have an honorable burial. In fact, her actions mirror an eternal reality that is; the main character is acting through a set of principles that can be seen performed by a man. Moreover, she assumes the voice of the law throughout committing the deed without denying it. Antigone uses an unusual tone with her king, she supposed to be obedient but her performance is against her gender role that is attributed by her Greek patriarchal society. Judith Butler encourages all women to act and perform on their own wishes not according to their social norm. She says "woman needs not to be the cultural construction of the female body (1990: 142)".

The main character of the play performs a new gender role in contradiction to the other Greek women; she comes to act to accomplish her wish in achieving to realize her duty. Butler specifically asserts that, the body can be a full signification of gender, because it is possible to speak about man with a masculine attribute as it can be with a feminine attribute. From this, she set out that gender is not a noun but it asserts much more for free-floating attributes (1990: 33). She says:

Hence, within the inherited discourse of the metaphysics of substance, gender proves to be performative— that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed.

(1990: 33)

Creon considers Antigone's behavior as an open challenge not only for his royal power but also to his masculine power since she dares to go against his authority. Antigone is not convinced about the case that her brother died as a traitor. From this point of view, we can

recognize that both the characters do not refute each other's thoughts and qualities during their disagreement (Müller, 2012: 01). Their personal essentials are radically different to an extent that, Antigone is fulfilling her role as a pious sister and Creon must ensure the rule of law. Therefore, for Antigone, she gains sympathy and even admiration for her actions, because she just want to give her brother rest in the underworld. Even if both of them are opposite to each other, they still the main focus of the play's perspectives (ibid). The evaluation of Bernstein about Antigone's act stresses the fact that the heroine takes an amount responsibility for her action, throughout her obvious negation and the extreme refusal of manmade laws. (2010: 119).

For Sophocles view, it is never easy to accept and agree with a particular set of conditions. Yet, it seems that every human need to be strong in order to solve his problems. Actually, Antigone is an example of this strength; she stayed strong until she realized her last duty toward her family. The actual view of the king which is enemies of the state are mischievous and should not receive burial, he asserts this on Polyneices as well as for his friends. The author writes:

CREON: Speak, girl, with head bent low and downcast eyes,
Do you plead guilty or deny the deed?
ANTIGONE: Guilty. I did it, I deny it not.
CREON (to the Guard): You, sir, can go where you like, and thank
Your luck that your have escaped a heavy charge.
(to Antigone) Now answer this plain question, yes or no,
Did you know about my decree?
ANTIGONE: I knew. Everyone knew; how could I have?
CREON: And yet you were bold enough to break the law

(2013:18)

The defiant figure obeys to the divinity of her gods to highlight her main purpose to resolve her strange case by playing a new gender role. She felt that she is not obliged to heed Creon's immoral mandate because actually, it is not Zeus who has ordered the command of letting the corpse of Polyneices unburied, claiming that Zeus has the absolute authority than Creon. Her deed is questionable from the start because she assumes a new role that does not

belongs to her position; through this, the protagonist of the play has an ambiguous style in showing her defiant act. Though, she can perform it only through embodying the norms of the power she opposes. By defying the state, she appears to be manly; she affirms her loyalty to her brother and assumes manhood and masculinity.

Antigone is not only resisting to Creon's authority but also she confesses that she is proud of her deed in order to challenge her king's sovereignty. As a result, the character marks the failure of Creon's statements and sovereignty through admitting that she did the deed. Manhood is an essential conflict in this play, which characterizes the principles of a specific gender. Here, Antigone stands to have behaviors that are not hers that is what makes Creon wonder of her act. Butler affirms a person is born to become the gender that he wants to, than gender identities are constructed by a language that will create what we call in this context, femininity and masculinity of one's gender. She said that while reading Beauvoir she comes to result that a woman within a masculine culture and thought will raise a deepest troubled question by men. For her, in order to understand the gendered body it is obviously needs to recognize the performed acts by which gender is constituted. Butler writes:

The very complexity of the discursive map that constructs gender appears to hold out the promise of an inadvertent and generative convergence of these discursive and regulatory structures. If the regulatory fictions of sex and gender are themselves multiply contested sites of meaning, then the very multiplicity of their construction holds out the possibility of a disruption of their univocal posturing.

(1990: 43)

Bernstein claims "Antigone's action makes Polyneices a 'companion' of the 'community' of Thebes" (2010: 126). From this, he tries to explain that the individual's singularity is saved not only for Antigone or Creon, but for every person of the community, they rely the 'I' to the 'We' by guarantying the membership of the dead in the community (ibid). Antigone's love for the dead who is her brother in law, pushes her to break the role of

Creon defiantly by washing Polyneices' corpse and cover it with dust (ibid: 128) much of the story's popularity centers on the identification of the accounts that Antigone highlights. She is seen as the essential practitioner of civil disobedience, or maybe it can be named conscience which based on three fundamental aspects: her isolation, political nature and her autonomy (Wiltshire, 1976: 30). This principles or features are demonstrated from various perspectives that show the basic relations of Antigone to her city state. Much debated issues assert that the heroine is far and isolated as a woman in a man's world (ibid).

And this can be seen from the implications of her womanhood throughout the lines of the play, which has basically changed the previous structure of the city's political order (ibid). Her primitive detachment from politics mirrors her disconnection with the political domain unlike the other characters of the play (ibid). She does not care about the politics which goes with the unburied corpse of her brother. In addition her autonomy is forcibly understood by a fact which characterizes her as a woman, to an extent that, Sophocles writes the play of Antigone as an expression of his interest to the problem of how state is primarily a political discourse (ibid). Sophocles writes:

ANTIGONE (Strophe 2):
 Alack, alack! You mock me.
 Is it meet Thus to insult me living, to my face?
 Cease, by our country's altars I entreat,
 You lordly rulers of a lordly race.
 O fount of Dirce²⁰ wood-embowered plain
 Where Theban chariots to victory speed,
 Mark you the cruel laws that now have wrought my bane,
 The friends who show no pity in my need!
 Was ever fate like mine? O monstrous doom,
 Within a rock-built prison sepulchred,
 To fade and wither in a living tomb,
 An alien midst the living and the dead.

CHORUS (Strophe 3):
 Overstepping the bounds of daring
 You kicked the throne of Justice,
 And there you have fallen, child.
 But the price you pay is your father's debt.

(2013: 32)

From a feminist perspective, Antigone is not a traitor, but a woman. Put it differently, the character is clashing with a man who was her raiser since her childhood to become than her father in law. The point here is that, Antigone is not ruled or repressed only by the state, but also by her closest familial relationship. At the same time, Creon asserts that, no woman will rule. From this perspective, one can notice that, he has related masculinity only with victory and compromise with defeat on the same balance (Ruman, 2012: 04).

In ancient Greece, it was typically against the traditions for women to rebel against the male authority. This is basically, a significant reason which shows signs of early feminism. It is seen throughout woman rebellion and the definite acts of Antigone by following her beliefs and strongly ignoring those threats of higher power (Müller, 2012: 01). She took the complete responsibility of her actions without hiding her disobedience against Creon's thoughts. She defies his authority and position as a king by breaking his proclamation about her brother's corpse, and committing of doing the deed. For Sophocles, it is a complete stupidity for Antigone for not knowing her social status. As a result, the play is an example of early feminist works, because she holds the qualities and principles seen both in historic and modern day feminists.

Therefore, the main character defies a masculine rule to impose her gender. Thus, both of Antigone and Creon have been taken as examples by Sophocles to explore the theme of gender role from the perspectives of both male and female characters. From the first line of the play, we notice that, the Theban king imposes his command that is based on the solid decision of not burying the traitor of his state and mainly his position. Bernstein, argues that Hegel's readings of Antigone is a sort of image of the traditional Greek society, where male identity is realized in the political sphere and women are confined with family and private Arena. Gender is complementary with men who are a figure of nature (2010: 112).

The play displays the major divergences between the two protagonist characters, Antigone and Creon. Here, the woman opposes Creon's unconsciousness because he as a king is playing and holds on a legislative authority and has that particular individuality that embodies his social role. As for Irigary, Creon thinks that the order of the state is threatened by women since she has proved her real gender. She claims that there may be a sort of 'gender panic' in Creon's response to Antigone (ibid: 124). Bernstein asserts that, for the Theban king the disorder of the city can be caused by the females and money seekers through which he compared, this threat to the anarchy that might be between women and men (ibid: 125).

The rising lines of the play are a mirror of the fail of Antigone and Creon to find a common ground. For Antigone, Creon's edict is an act of disrespect and irreverence for her brother's corpse. Firstly, he belongs to his bloodline and secondly, it is wrongful to dismiss a burial for a particular person. The immense expectations of this play insist to portray gender roles inside the Greek patriarchal society. This is mainly seen when Antigone does her action proudly claiming responsibility for her behaviors. Indeed, for Söderbäck, Creon does not act like a man because at the end of the play the roles have been reversed that's why he stays alone in grief; whereas Antigone's deed is seen as a challenge to both masculinity and femininity. He also argues that, a political hero is a worthy name that must be held by someone who dares to risk his/her life (Söderbäck, 2010: 70). Sophocles claims:

CREON: Of all these Thebans none so thinks but you.
ANTIGONE: Clearly they hold their tongues for fear of you.
CREON: Have you no shame to differ from all these?
ANTIGONE: To honour flesh and blood can bring no shame.
CREON: Was his dead foeman not your kinsman too?
ANTIGONE: One mother bore them and the same father.
CREON: Why cast a slur on one by honouring one?
ANTIGONE: The dead man will not bear you out in this.
CREON: Surely, if good and evil fare alike.
ANTIGONE: The slain man was no villain but a brother.
CREON: The patriot perished by the outlaw's brand.
Antigone: Nonetheless, the realms below require the rites.
CREON: Not that the base should fare as do the brave.
ANTIGONE: Who knows if this world's crimes are virtues there?
CREON: Not even death can make a foe a friend.

ANTIGONE: My nature is for mutual love, not hate.

CREON: Die then, and love the dead if love you must; No woman shall be master while I live.

(2013: 20)

Creon asserts that a woman who defies the expectations of her role should be considered as a danger and threat to the order of the state (Roisman, 1996: 28). Antigone proved her real gender through her acting as a good member of her family by disobeying her king's law and making Creon's decree and rules useless. Thus, to avoid the whole rebellion of the Theban people, he is obliged to apply his punishment to his future daughter-in-law. Söderbäck claims that "Her heroic death simultaneously makes her a man and she becomes the founding principle of a political order where action is carried out by the many and no longer appropriated by the king alone (Söderbäck, 2010: 71)".

He affirms that the heroine reveals an aspect of political action and a special context of gender role which profoundly causes political consequences and changes the whole balance of the play. Antigone's gender has a great impact on her actions because it determines the actual structure of the social norms. Butler affirms that gender is a choice, that is to say, every person has the right to choose his gender. The theorist comes to convey that gendered acts are the main principles that constitute gender to be an identity to become unstable. She claims that, these two concepts do not have any value without each other. Antigone chooses to perform a gender which is far from the culture of her society. Butler argues that, Freud uses the oedipal complex to explain the choices which are presented by the mother for her boy or girl, than through this he aims to choose between the two sexual dispositions, masculinity and femininity. Butler writes:

If feminine and masculine dispositions are the result of the effective internalization of that taboo, and if the melancholic answer to the loss of the same-sexed object is to incorporate and, indeed, to become that object through the construction of the ego ideal, then gender identity appears primarily to be the internalization of a prohibition that proves to be formative of identity.

(1990:81).

“She transforms the inessential whims of a still sensible and material nature into universal will” (Irigary, 1985: 108). That is to say, the act of Antigone will be a cause to raise the forces of women to have the right to pleasure and successful actions. Greek women are not described with the word of citizenship as men, but they suffered with an inferior social status. They were not supposed to act as they want. Therefore, Antigone passes all this boundaries and acts differently. So, from this it can be seen that, the heroine turned the scales of the whole community. That’s why, when the king finds out that, his niece defies him and his political status, he feels that he is not powerful enough to defend her verbal and language actions.

The play focuses more on the individual act of gender and explores that the females and males only be separated through each one’s performed acts. The resulted claim from the story concerning gender and the act of Antigone portray a deeper reality which mirrors her as manly and with a masculine behavior. In other means, her action defies the principles of the king through showing her action as a weapon against his law and his political status. The heroine of the play speaks and acts in her mind; nobody asks or orders her to react against the decree of her king. For Butler, the reality of gender is performative. This means that, gender is only real when it is performed and constituted with performativity itself. For her, it is preferable to show simply a highlighted distinction between appearance and reality that will structure a good ideal for people to think about the real gender identity. In other words, gender should be understood as a performative act broadly constructed and comply to be real as a model of truth. For Butler, performing one’s gender wrong call for a set of punishments, whereas performing it well provides for gender identity’s essentialism to come first. Therefore, it does not stay the same overtime or varies with race or the region but there

several ways in which gender is regulated. That is to say, certain acts of people can be determined to create and express gender identity (1988: 528). She writes:

The act that one does, the act that one performs, is, in a sense, an act that has been going on before one arrived on the scene. Hence, gender is an act which has been rehearsed, much as a script survives the particular actors who make use of it, but which requires individual actors in order to be actualized and reproduced as reality once again. The complex components that go into an act must be distinguished in order to understand the kind of acting in concert and acting in accord which acting one's gender invariable.

(1988: 526)

All throughout the play, the choices and the personalities of characters help to shape the audience's perspectives on authority versus state and much more about gender roles. Many conflicting view points in the story let the audience realize that being morally current is better than following the laws.

The eventual tragedy of Antigone, and the end of the oedipal line of Theban kings, was ended by Creon. Who puts an end for the Labdacus blood causing the death of his entire family. Sophocles' Antigone is portrayed as a defiant heroine who has not wanted for attention. It is a Great example of heroism and fidelity. It can be read as a story of conflicts found between division and family and State, woman and man, ethics and politics, religion and law and gender roles. This tale exemplifies the fact that the protagonist is born to oppose injustice. When she committed the deed, her purpose is to gain right for a proper burial for her brother. Although she loses her entire family but at least she highlights some facts about her current act to the citizens of Thebes and precisely to Creon.

Conclusion

Sophocles' *Antigone* (441 B.C.E) is a play which highlights the deeper reality of women' status and gender role in Greek society. Through our analysis, we have shown that the roles and reactions performed by the female characters against Creon are different. We have also put on evidence the harsh struggling and challenging of the main character against the boundaries imposed on her by her patriarchal society and the immoral laws created by the king against her brother.

To shed light on the way this woman is portrayed in Sophocles' *Antigone*, we relied on the theory of ***Gender Performativity* (1990)**. This has allowed the examination of issues such as performativity and rebellion in relation to the traditional patriarchal gender shown in the play. This study of gender is classified to be a new model especially in analyzing the status of women. It might be parallel to Butler and her volition of how women should behave. It is mirrored throughout the acts of Antigone that defies the commands of the king. All in all, the play has represented the rebellion of the heroine to regain the honor of her brother to be buried. As a result, Antigone gained.

This story is a complete debate about gender roles. And it is specifically the tension between individual action and fate. Antigone explores a contrast between the behavior expected of a Greek woman and the reality of their role in society. Hence, men are said to be the primary citizens and women to take a subservient. However, the main character challenges these notions and takes the center stage to confront the male authority to meet her death after an action of defiance. Sophocles' play is relied more on the individuals' actions and much more on what each character believes. So, Antigone's decision to defy her king has put an attention in discussing the most critical and debatable subjects about the case of woman in relation to ancient Greece. Sophocles' play is a Greek inspiration about woman. Antigone's bride guides her to perform a positive act to preserve the burial religious rites of her society.

Therefore, the whole story centers on her devotion and blood kinship. The main character occupies an immense high moral ground from the beginning of the play until its end. Through our analysis, we have shown that the roles performed by women particularly, the main character of the play are not extremely natural, but a result of patriarchy and man's domination. As a result, Antigone gained her right but after she sacrifices herself to death.

We intended to present the play's important points; the range of this research dissertation prevents us to explore the whole issues related to Sophocles' Antigone. So, we invite students and researchers to deal with such interesting topics such as the position of women in patriarchal societies, and their cultural image within these communities.

VI. Bibliography

Primary Sources

- Garvin, E.E. (2013) Sophocles Antigone, the E. Storr translation (1912) for the Loeb classical library, [On line]. Available at www.Valberta.Ca . Last Accessed: 30thSeptember 2020.

Secondary Sources

- Bernstein, J.M. (1986) “The Celestial Antigone, the most Resplendent Figure ever to have appeared on earth”: Hegel’s Feminism, in F. Söderbäck, (ed) **Feminist Readings of Antigone**, New York: Oxford of University Press (2010). pp. 111-130.
- Blake, T.Larry, J. and Bennet, W. (2008) “Sophocles’ Enemy Sisters: Antigone and Ismene”, *Contagion: Journal of violence, Minesis, and culture*, 15/16: 01- 18.
- Butler, J (1988) ‘Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory’, The Jhons Hopkins University Press.
- Butler, J (1999) ‘review: Judith Butler and the Politics of the Performative’, *Political Theory*, vol. 27, No. 4, pp. 545-559.
- Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Butler. J. (2000) *Antigone’s Claim Kinship between Life and Death*, New York: Columbia University press.
- Catherine, A.H (1995) “After Antigone: Women, the Past, and the Future of Feminist Political Thought” ”, in F. Söderbäck, (ed) **Feminist Readings of Antigone**, New York: Oxford of University Press (2010). pp.27-43.
- Cavarero, A. (1998) “On the Body of Antigone”, in F. Söderbäck, (ed) **Feminist readings of Antigone**, New York: Oxford of University Press (2010). pp. 45-63.
-

- Chanter, T. (2010)“The Performative Politics and Rebirth of Antigone in Ancient Greece and Modern South Africa”, in F. Söderbäck, (ed) **Feminist Readings of Antigone**, New York: Oxford of university press (2010). pp. 83-98.
- Çınar, B. (2015). A Performative View of Gender Roles: Judith Butler. *International Journal of Media Culture and Literature*, 1 (1), 153-160. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/ijmcl/issue/31750/348013>
- Dehart, R.P. (2006) ‘The Dangerous Life: Natural Justice and the Rightful Subversion of the State Polity, vol. 38, No. 03, pp. 369 -394.
- Fletcher.J. (2008), ‘Citing the Law in Sophocles Antigone’, *Mosaic: an Interdisciplinary Critical Journal*, vol.41, No. 03, pp. 79-96.
- Honig, B. (2009) “Antigone’s Laments,Creon’s grief:Morning, Membership, and the Politics of Expection”, *Political Theory*, 37 (1): 05-43.
- Honig, B. (2011) “Ismene’s Forced Choice: Sacrifice and Sorority in Sophocles’ Antigone”, *Arethusa*, 44 (1): 29-68.
- Irigary, L. (1985) “The Eternal Irony of the Community”,in F. Söderbäck, (ed) **Feminist Readings of Antigone**, New York: Oxford of University Press (2010). pp. 99-110.
- Lauriola, R. (2007) ‘Wisdom and Foolishness: a Further Point in the Interpretation of Sophocles’ Antigone’, *Hermes*, 135. Jahrg, H.4, pp.389-405.
- Mader, B.W. (2005) “Antigone’s Line”, in F. Söderbäck, (ed) **Feminist Readings of Antigone**, New York: Oxford of University Press (2010). pp. 155- 172.
- Maclachlan, B. (2012). Women in Ancient Greece a Sourcebook, New York: Maiden Lane.
- Pereira, C. J. (2017) Athenian Women through the eyes of Sophocles (but not Oedipus), [online]. Available at http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/young_historians/2017/oralpres/21. Last accessed. 08th October 2020.

- Roisman, J. (1996) "Creon's Roles and Personality in Sophocles' Antigone", *Helios*, 23 (1): 21-42.
- Ruman, A.K. (2012) Antigone: A Tragedy of Human Conflicts and Divine Intervention, Soudia Arabia: University of Bisha.
- Salih, S. (2002) on Judith Butler and Performativity, Gender trouble, [online]. Available at [http:// www2.Kobe-u.ac.jp](http://www2.Kobe-u.ac.jp). Last accessed. 09th September 2020.
- Segal, P. C. (1964) "Sophocles' Praise of Man and Conflicts of Antigone", *Arion: A journal of Humanities and the Classics*, 3 (2): 46-66.
- Tiefenburn, S. (1999) 'On Civil Disobedience, Jurisprudence, feminism and the law in the Antigones of Sophocles and Anouilh', *Cardozo studies in law and literature*, vol. 11, No. 01, pp. 35-51.
- Wiltshire, F.S. (1976) "Antigone's Disobedience", *Arethusa*, 9 (1): 29-36.

Websites

- Britannica, Gaur, A. et al (2020) 'Seven against Thebes' [online]. Available at <https://www.britannica.com> Accessed: 05th August 2020.
- Lukas, V.D.B. (2017) Sophocles' Antigone and the Promise of Ethical life: Tragic ambiguity and the Pathologies of Reason Law and Humanities [online]. Available [https:// www. Tanafonline.com](https://www.Tanafonline.com). Last Accessed: 15th September 2020.
- Mambrol, N. (2016) Judith Butler's Concept of Performativity [online]. Available at <https://literariness.org/2016/10/10/judith-butlers-concept-of-performativity/>. Last Accessed: 20 September 2020.
- Minglu, G. L. (2017) 'The Fragility of gender, gender essentialism in Sophocles Antigone [online]. Available at [https:// artxi.wustl.edu](https://artxi.wustl.edu). Accessed: 05th October 2020.
- Müller, R. (2012) Different actions, Similar minds- Antigone and Creon [online]. Available at [https:// m.grin.com](https://m.grin.com). Last Accessed: 03rd September 2020.

- Multani, N. (2020) The Subaltern Speaks: Revising Sophocles' Antigone [online]. Available at:
https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.researchgate.net%2Fpublication%2F341985112_The_Subaltern_Speaks_Revisiting_Sophocles%27_Antigone%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR1Snue9vwZGQpzM6rn3l5WDswXwiZgTape0HWwWedNotmI6wDVEu6op5DU&h=AT12yPy7fyhJub4FRlu7UTdyG3wJ77Q8i1D-khsrln7Q93qna4K9gYF1EYif8XYStayDXpH_kYnSlwXRjKQbbKgqkpF2sqlNFVEcidGGi2UTBPmZHkOikobUX-UXBYsk9r5kzA. Last accessed: 20 December 2020.
- Higgins, C. (2020) Antigone Rising by Helen Morales Review-the Greek Myths Get Subversive [online] Available at :
Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/may/13/antigone-rising-by-helen-morales-review-the-greek-myths-get-subversive>. Last Accessed: 22 January 2021.
- Rawlinson, C, M. (2014) BEYOND ANTIGONE: Ismene, Gender, and the Right to life, The Returns of Antigone, [online] Available at :
https://www.academia.edu/43126541/BEYOND_ANTIGONE_Ismene_Gender_and_the_Right_to_Life. Last Accessed: 22 January 2021.