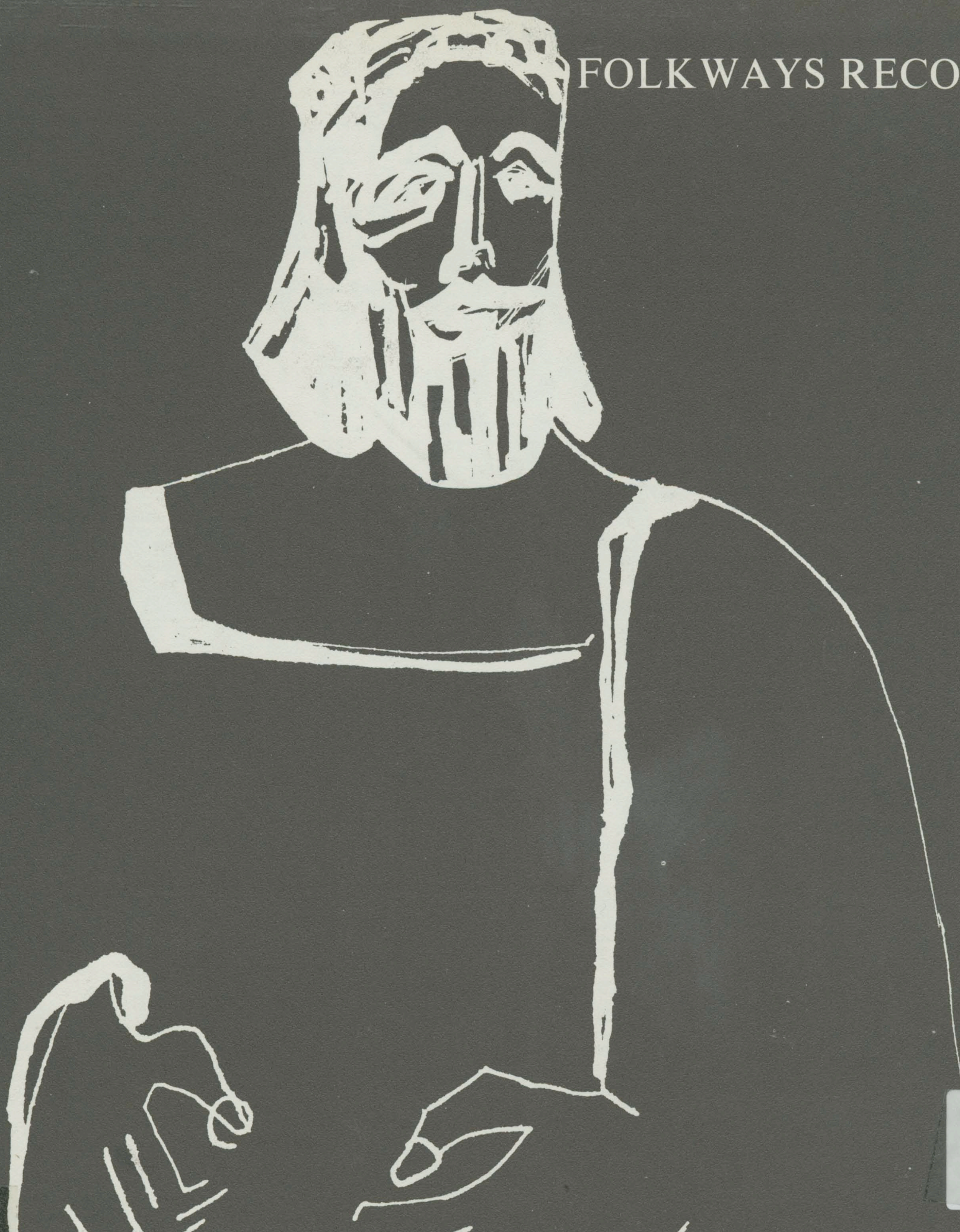


FOLKWAYS RECORDS FL 9861



CONTENTS:

1 LP
1 text (11 p.)

PA
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S66
1958
c.1

MUSIC LP

ANTIGONÉ

PERFORMED BY STUDENTS OF
McGILL UNIVERSITY, MONTREAL

DIRECTED BY JOHN SOMMERS

NOTES AND TEXT OF THE PLAY
ARE IN INSIDE POCKET

COVER: SUE SOMMERS

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FL 9861 FOLKWAYS
RECORDS N.Y.C., U.S.A.

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FL 9861

(IN ENGLISH)

Prologue
Parados
Scene I
Ode I
Scene II
Ode II
Scene III
Ode III
Scene IV
Ode IV
Scene V
Exodus

AMTIGONÉ

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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Distributed by Folkways/Scholastic Records, 906 Sylvan Ave., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 07632

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FOLKWAYS RECORDS Album No. FL 9861

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Descriptive notes inside pocket

SOPHOCLES

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Sophocles ANTI-GONE

THE BACKGROUND

The farmers of ancient Greece ground their grain on a large circular dirt floor, and it was within this same threshing circle that they held their seasonal ceremonies honouring Dionysos, the god of fertility. At the ceremonies, a priest of the cult and a group of his followers stood within the circles and the audience gathered around it to watch the performers dance and sing in praise of their god. In time, the performers assumed a ritual pattern and the songs and dances were organized as a part of the narrative sequence relating a story from the mythical life of Dionysos. The priest became a narrator, and his followers became a responsive chorus who enlarged upon the story which the priest related. When one of these priests, Thespis, added another person to the group who was to impersonate Dionysos himself, the art of drama was born and the rudimentary conversations of the Greek theatre were established.

By the time of Sophocles, the simple form of the Theban playlet had been greatly altered; Sophocles, in fact, had been the chief innovator. He increased the number of actors from one to three and placed greater emphasis on the actors than on the chorus. Yet, his theatre, like that of Thespis, was still conditioned by the old, rural practices. The singing and dancing chorus, while diminished in importance, was still present and its acting area was still a round dirt floor; the audience was still seated in a semi-circle around the chorus area; the god Dionysos, while no longer the subject of the plays, was still the patron of the theatre and a temple dedicated to him was erected just behind the chorus circle facing the audience.

The theatre at Athens, where Sophocles' plays were first performed, seated approximately twenty thousand people. The actors in order to be seen and heard, wore large, megaphoned masks and elevated shoes; and the acting was stylized into a series of oratorical gestures and intoned speeches.

These conventions of the Greek theatre are an integral part of Sophocles' dramaturgy. He, as every playwright must, wrote in terms of the theatre he had to work with. In ANTI-GONE Sophocles uses all the conventions of his theatre, but that is not remarkable; what is remarkable, and one of the qualities of greatness in the play, is that he created from those conventions the form which, conveyed the human realities he wished to examine.

THE PLAYWRIGHT

"Blessed was Sophocles, happy in his long life, his fortunes, his talent; happy to have written so many beautiful tragedies and made a fair end of a life which knew no misfortune." -Phrynichus.

Sophocles' life was the happy exception to the common picture of the struggling artist. He was born in wealth, was unusually handsome, possessed a fine, athletic body, was noted for his wit and social graces and maintained the full power of his talent to the time of his death in his 90th year. He wrote over one hundred plays, eighteen of them winning first prize at the Athenian dramatic festivals, and the rest never failing to take second prize. Only seven of his plays and scattered fragments have come down to us, and these, especially OEDIPUS REI, ANTI-GONE, and OEDIPUS AT COLONUS are among the greatest plays in all dramatic literature.

Sophocles was born in Colonus, a small city just outside of Athens, in 495 B.C. He was trained in music and philosophy; he twice served on the Board of Generals which governed the civil and military affairs of Athens and was at one time a director of the Treasury Department in the Delian Confederacy. Scant as our knowledge of the man may be, we know a great deal about him as an artist. The seven extant plays reveal a master of dramaturgical skill. His construction of plots, his creation of character, his poetic power and his ironic sense of the glory and fatality of human life are so powerful and so carefully combined in each of his plays that he has no equal in drama outside of Shakespeare. No other playwright has viewed man with such serenity and compassion at once detailing with great precision the passions which stir men to action and the limitations which their own natures and the circumstances of the world impose upon those actions. He realized the frailty of human happiness, but also recognized the greatness of man in his constant struggle with a fate he cannot master. He had, as Matthew Arnold observed, "an ever balanced soul", knowing both the joys and the grief of life, its beauty and ugliness, its moments of peace and its basic uncertainty.

Yet Sophocles is not a fatalist. His plays are paeans to the dignity, the contesting and aspiring soul of man. Though man is limited, he is still the noblest work of creation, and only in the time of severe trial does he rise to the full height of his power. It does not matter so much that he falls and falls, that he is not a god; what does matter is that in his fall he exhibits his full power which is the most god-like of all mortal beings. For Sophocles, the assault, not the victory, is important; to have been a great soul rather than a happy man is everything.

THE MYTH

ANTI-GONE represents the last phase of the ancient story concerning the house of Oedipus of Thebes. Before Oedipus' birth, Jocasta, the Queen of Thebes, was told by a seer that her son was fated to marry her and to kill his father. To avoid this fate, Jocasta gave the baby to a shepherd, instructing him to take the child out into the hills and to kill him. The shepherd, however, took pity on the child, and gave him to a fellow shepherd from distant Corinth. Oedipus grew to manhood in the royal court of Corinth, living there as the son of the king and queen.

From the Oracle of Delphi, Oedipus learned of the prophecy concerning him and fled from Corinth and the king and queen whom he believed to be his parents. He wandered toward Thebes and there encountered the Sphinx and succeeded in solving her riddle. As a reward, he was made king of Thebes, married Jocasta and, in the course of his reign, fathered four children. A plague descended upon Thebes and the Oracle of the gods announced that the city was being defiled by the presence of the murderer of the late King, Laius. Oedipus conducted the search only to learn that it was he who had killed the king in an encounter during his trek from Corinth to Thebes. The prophecy had been filled; Jocasta took her life and Oedipus blinded himself and left Thebes in self-banishment.

Eteocles, Oedipus' eldest son, assumed the throne of government. His brother, Polyneices, was angered by his brother's ascension to power,

and went to the kingdom of Argos to assemble an army to attack Thebes and dethrone Eteocles. In the ensuing battle, the two brothers met on the field and killed each other.

ANTI-GONE begins at this point in the story. Creon, as brother of Jocasta and the only surviving male in the family line, is installed as king. He orders that Eteocles shall be buried in honour but Polyneices is to be refused burial. Antigone, Oedipus' daughter, decides to give her dishonoured brother proper burial, and the action of the play grows from the consequences of that decision.

THE PLAY

Surely things should be what they seem and one could wish that Sophocles had remembered that when he came to choosing a title for ANTI-GONE. From the title it would seem that Antigone is meant to be the chief character in the play bearing the same relationship as Oedipus and Hamlet do to theirs. The fact that she is not, that she is the auxiliary and not the chief agent in the action, has not prevented critics from assuming that she is the heroine because the title makes it seem as though she ought to be.

Having read the title and then having read the play, they have found that their heroine has been drastically short-changed by the author. Her role is only half as long as that of her antagonist, Creon, her characterization tends to be less dynamic and less varied than that of other characters and, above all, she exits half way through the play and never appears again. The second half of the play following Antigone's exit is interesting and exciting, but in large measure, peripheral to the fate of the heroine. Thus, critics have found this play blemished by faulty construction, dealing, as it does, with the serious problems of Antigone for only half the play and shifting its emphasis to Creon and his son Haimon for the remainder.

There is yet another difficulty. ANTI-GONE does not fit the Aristotelian tragic mold. Aristotle defines tragedy as a play with a single unity having but one story, one hero and one action in the course of which the hero, having seriously and publically committed himself to follow the course of his own intuitive sense of justice, discovers the calamitous error of his judgement. Following Antigone as the ought-to-be heroine, the play has two stories and details two actions instead of one. And Antigone, even within the confines of her own half of the action, falls short of the Aristotelian ideal. Unquestionably, she has a strong will of her own, she openly declares her purpose and, with unusual fervor, defends her acts against the laws of the state as the products of her very personal sense of honour. Her death is sorrowful, yet it lacks the one element which Aristotle considered essential to the tragic experience. She has no moment of discovery, no parapetetic horror of dissolution. Antigone's purpose is as strong at the time of death as it was at the moment of its inception at the beginning of the play. She may suffer death, but, as she herself understands, she suffers no dishonour. Her death is a triumph, a tragic but firm vindication of her judgement. Sophocles, then, is accused of a second failure; bad as it may be to permit the heroine to have only half of the action in her own play, it is even worse to deny her full tragic stature in part where she does appear.

Antigone does not make a very convincing heroine even when she is assumed to be the heroine. Her appearance on stage is too short and her character is too limited. These should be sufficient reasons for assuming that she is, in fact, not the heroine, and that Sophocles, despite his title, never intended her to be one.

Creon is the tragic hero of the play and Antigone the tragic figure. The central focus of the action is on Creon; the chief instrument of the action is Antigone. Antigone defends her burial of her brother as the private and inner compulsion of her personal honour; Creon defends his condemnation of her as the public necessity to maintain the order of the state. Sophocles is not a propagandist; he is neither liberal nor conservative. He does not ask us to place personal freedom above conventional practice nor communal stability above anarchy. Creon and Antigone, placed as they are and believing what they do, represent the conflict which is present in any social order. The private citizen is concerned with his personal rights, the public administrator with his obligations to social harmony. This conflict is always potentially dramatic; it only reaches the point of tragedy when the antagonists refuse to compromise, are persistent and will not relent, forcing catastrophe on one another.

The course of the tragic movement of the play is the contest between Antigone and Creon. Yet, these antagonists are not of equal importance. They both meet a tragic end but their fate is not the same. Antigone's role is to act and to suffer and undergo martyrdom for her cause. She is vindicated by her death and, like a martyr, chastened and cleaned from her life of suffering. Her death is tragic to the extent that it was caused by willful and needless action, but that action is not entirely her own.

Before burial of her brother, Antigone knew that she faced death if she went through with her plan, but, driven by her own sense of honour, she performed the act. The burial completed, she lost all opportunity for further choice. She might argue with Creon, scold the chorus and berate her sister, Ismene, but the choice of life or death, punishment or forgiveness were all in the hands of Creon. Antigone initiated the circumstances which lead to her death, but only Creon can choose to direct the action toward that end.

Antigone's role is entirely directed toward Creon and, in a structural sense, she is fashioned to meet Creon's needs. Sophocles does not present a full length portrait of her, not because he was a poor Aristotelian, but because only certain aspects of her character are directly relevant to her purpose in the play. She is cold, tenacious, and determined in order that she may understandably commit her rebellion and her suicide thus powerfully challenging Creon's position on the supremacy of the state. The focal center of the play is Creon's reaction to that challenge, his judgement, his wisdom, his purpose, his decisions. Antigone is the pressure gauge of the play, constantly driving Creon toward the bursting point.

With Sophocles, form and content are indivisible and the structural prominence of Creon over Antigone indicates a moral predominance as well. Antigone opposes Creon and, in the final issue, the gods are on her side. Her tragedy is terrible, but it is forseen, it is swift and, to a degree, it is merciful. Creon's tragedy grows before our eyes and his destruction is absolute. Antigone's defiance is not single; it festers, discharging itself to his family, to the city and, ultimately, to the gods. His wife and son die cursing him, the elders of his kingdom desert him and the heavens mark him for vengeance. Antigone is opposed, but not like this. The world revolts against Creon, leaving him alone and barren. This is the posture of the tragic hero.

The tragedy of Creon has two faces; the complexity of his problems and

the nature of the man himself. Antigone and Creon are not arguing on the same basis. Antigone's justification for burying her brother is founded on the unwritten laws of family loyalty and personal honour. Her plea has only an impulsive, instinctive sense of justice. Creon cannot enter into this region of subjective piety and love. As ruler, he must judge only on objective fact and rely on reason to guide his hand, and both experience and tradition support his position. The tragedy, or part of it, is the fact that Antigone's instinct is right and Creon's logic is wrong. When reduced to her last argument, Antigone can only say that she knows that she is right and cannot rationalize beyond the strength of that conviction. Creon, in his turn, will admit no evidence except on the basis of the logical necessities of government. In this context, the contest is irreconcilable.

Creon is impetuous, stubborn, suspicious, quick to anger, and, as a new king still "young in authority", too inclined to relish the taste of power. Yet he is honest and resolute in his sense of responsibility and duty. His tragic failing is that his confident and violet nature misleads his virtue. Believing his position to be correct, he will admit of no other position. His belief is sound but it is also partial, and in the arrogance of his half-truth he blinds himself to the fearful implications of the whole. It is not that Creon is a stubborn fool, it is simply that he, like other men has limitations. Within his limits he works intelligently and conscientiously and in another situation he might have lived a full and happy life. But given the virtues and weaknesses of his character, coupled with Antigone's and the nature of their dispute, tragedy is the inevitable result.

Sophocles "tragic view of life" has nothing to do with a malignant fate or a decree of the gods. The tragedy of ANTIGONE is a natural tragedy; that is, it reflects the precarious balance which exists between happiness and misfortune in the world. Since life is uncertain, certainty can be a dangerous thing. The wise man will make the prudent judgement, but how can one be sure exactly what that will be? It is hard to tell. Decisions must be made, action must be taken, and each man must make his own reasonable assessment of what is wise. Creon judges accordingly, and it is his tragedy that he judges incorrectly. But what man could do more?

THE RECORDING

University and college theatres have become the storehouses of a large share of western drama. ANTIGONE has been recognized for centuries as one of the great plays, but it is seldom done on the commercial stage. The academic theatre, which now constitutes the largest body of active theatre on our continent, keeps alive the heritage of the dramatic past. This recording represents a part of that heritage and is a sampling of that kind of theatre.

In making this record, certain alterations had to be made in the play. Sophocles did not write with a long-playing record in mind. Large sections of the choral material had to be cut away together with a few speeches of the principal characters. These cuts are indicated by /- / signs. The major part of the play remains in tact, and I trust that the power and the beauty of the drama is still present in this slightly amended version.

John Sommers.



CREON and CHORUS

Sophocles ANTIGONE
Dudley Fitts and Robert Fitzgerald translation
Recording Directed by John Sommers

CAST

Antigone, Daughter of Oedipus.....	Valerie Jamieson
Ismene, Sister of Antigone.....	Jane Anders
Chorus Leader.....	Marvin Bartell
Creon, King of Thebes.....	Ted Brown
Sentry.....	Allan Ulrich
Haimon, Son of Creon.....	Paul Hecht
Tiresias, A Prophet.....	Edwin Foster
A Boy.....	Morrie Sacks
Messenger.....	Neil Madden
Eurydice, Wife of Creon.....	Judi Werenfels
Chorus.....	George Fisk Jim Henniger Lawrence Mallet Paul Ross Sydney Spiesel George Spelvin
Guards.....	Michael Budd Page Fairchild

The stage production of ANTIGONE was presented by the McGill Department of English on December 5, 6, & 7. It was:
Directed by.....John Sommers
Costumed by.....Althea Douglas
Lighted by.....Creighton Douglas

Photographs were taken by Geoffrey Leach
Recording supervised by Samuel Gasser
Production of record by Moses Asch



ANTIGONE and ISMENE

A N T I G O N E

Scene: Before the palace of Creon, King of Thebes. A central double door, and two lateral doors. A platform extends the length of the façade, and from this platform three steps lead down into the orchestra, or chorus-ground. Time: dawn of the day after the repulse of the Argive army from the assault on Thebes.

SIDE 1
BAND 1

PROLOGUE

(Antigoné and Isméné enter from the central door of the Palace.)

ANTIG. Isméné, dear sister,
You would think that we had already suffered enough
For the curse on Oedipus:
I cannot imagine any grief
That you and I have not gone through. And now -
Have they told you the new decree of our King Creon?

ISMENE I have heard nothing; I know
That two sister lost two brothers, a double death
In a single hour; and I know that the Argive army
Fled in the night; but beyond this nothing.

ANTIG. I thought so. And that is why I wanted you
to come out here with me. There is something we must do.

ISMENE Why do you speak so strangely?

ANTIG. Listen, Isméné:
Creon buried our brother Eteoclés
With military honours, gave him a soldier's funeral,
And it was right that he should: but Polyneicés,
Who fought as bravely and died as miserably,-
They say that Creon has sworn
No one shall bury him, no one mourn for him,
But his body must lie in the fields, a sweet treasure
For carrion birds to find as they search for food.
That is what they say, and our good Creon is coming here
To announce it publicly; and the penalty -
Stoning to death in the public square!

There it is,
And now you can prove what you are:
A true sister, or a traitor to your family.

ISMENE Antigoné, you are mad! What could I possibly do?

ANTIG. You must decide whether you will help me or not.

ISMENE I do not understand you. Help you in what?

ANTIG. Isméné, I am going to bury him. Will you come?

ISMENE Bury him! You have just said the new law forbids it.

ANTIG. He is my brother. And he is your brother too.

ISMENE But think of the danger! Think what Creon will do!

ANTIG. Creon is not strong enough to stand in my way.

ISMENE Ah sister!
Oedipus died, everyone hating him
For what his own search brought to light, his eyes
Ripped out by his own hand: and Iocasté died,
His mother and wife at once: she twisted the cords
That strangled her life; and our two brothers died,
Each killed by the other's sword. And we are left:
But oh, Antigoné,
Think how much more terrible than these
Our own death would be if we should go against Creon
And do what he has forbidden! We are only women,
We cannot fight with men, Antigoné!
The law is strong, we must give in to the law
In this thing and in worse. I beg the Dead
To forgive me, but I am helpless: I must yield
To those in authority. And I think it is dangerous business
To be always meddling.

ANTIG. If that is what you think,
I should not want you, even if you asked to come.
You have made your choice, you can be what you want to be.
But I will bury him; and if I must die,
I say that this crime is holy: I shall lie down
With him in death, and I shall be as dear
To him as he to me.

It is the dead,
Not the living, who make the longest demands:
We die for ever...

You may do as you like,
Since apparently the laws of the gods mean nothing to you.

ISMENE They mean a great deal to me; but I have no strength
To break laws that were made for the public good.

ANTIG. That must be your excuse, I suppose. But as for me,
I will bury the brother I love.

ISMENE Antigoné,
I am so afraid for you!

ANTIG. You need not be:
You have yourself to consider, after all.

ISMENE But no one must hear of this, you must tell no one!
I will keep it a secret, I promise!

ANTIG. Oh tell it! Tell everyone!
Think how they'll hate you when it all comes out
If they learn that you knew about it all the time!

ISMENE So fiery! You should be cold with fear.

ANTIG. Perhaps. But I am doing only what I must.

ISMENE But can you do it? I say that you cannot.

ANTIG. Very well: when my strength gives out, I shall do no more.

ISMENE Impossible things should not be tried at all.

ANTIG. Go away, Isméné:
I shall be hating you soon, and the dead will too,
For your words are hateful. Leave me my foolish plan:
I am not afraid of the danger; if it means death,
It will not be the worst of deaths - deaths without honour.

ISMENE Go then, if you feel you must.
You are unwise,
But a loyal friend indeed to those who love you.

(Exit into the Palace. Antigoné goes off, L. Enters the Chorus.)

SIDE 1
BAND 2

PARODOS

CHORUS Now the long blade of the sun, lying (strophe 1
Level east to west, touches with glory
Thebes of the Seven Gates. Open, unlidde
Eye of golden day! O marching light
Across the eddy and rush of Dirce's stream,
Striking the white shields of the enemy
Thrown headlong backward from the blaze of morning!

CHORAG. Polyneicés their commander
Roused them with windy phrases,
He the wild eagle screaming
Insults above our land,
His wings their shields of snow,
His crest their marshalled helms.

CHORUS Against our seven gates in a yawning ring (antistrophe 1
The famished spears came onward in the night;
But before his jaws were sated with our blood,
Or pinefire took the garland of our towers,
He was thrown back; and as he turned, great Thebes -
No tender victim for his noisy power -
Rose like a dragon behind him, shouting war.

CHORAG. For God hates utterly
The bray of bragging tongues;
And when he beheld their smiling,
Their swagger of golden helms,
The frown of his thunder blasted
Their first man from our walls.

CHORUS We heard his shout of triumph high in the air (strophe 2
Turn to a scream: far out in a flaming arc
He fell with his windy torch, and the earth struck him.
And others storming in fury no less than his
Found shock of death in the dusty joy of battle.

CHORAG. Seven captains at seven gates
Yielded their clanging arms to the god
That bends the battle-line and breaks it.
These two only, brothers in blood,
Face to face in matchless rage,
Mirroring each the other's death,
Clashed in long combat.

CHORUS But now in the beautiful morning of victory (antistrophe 2
Let Thebes of the many chariots sing for joy!
With hearts for dancing we'll take leave of war:
Our temples shall be sweet with hymns of praise,
And the long night shall echo with our chorus.

SIDE 1
BAND 3

SCENE I

CHORAG. But now at last our King is coming:
Creon of Thebes, Menoicéus' son.
In this auspicious dawn of his reign
What are the new complexities
That shifting Fate has woven for him?
What is his council? Why has he summoned
The old men to hear him?

(Enter Creon from the palace. He addresses the Chorus
from the top step.)

CREON Gentlemen: I have the honour to inform you that our Ship
of State, which recent storms have threatened to destroy,
has come safely to harbour at last, guided by the merciful
wisdom of Heaven. I have summoned you here this morning
because I know that I can depend upon you: your devotion
to King Laios was absolute; you never hesitated in your duty
to our late ruler Oedipus; and when Oedipus died, your
loyalty was transferred to his children. Unfortunately, as
you know, his two sons, the princes Eteoclés and Polyneicés,
have killed each other in battle; and I, as the next blood,
have succeeded to the full power of the throne.

CHORUS All hail, Creon!

CREON I am aware, of course, that no Ruler can expect complete
loyalty from his subjects until he has been tested in office.
Nevertheless, I say to you at the very outset that I have
nothing but contempt for the kind of Governor who is afraid,
for whatever reason, to follow the course that he knows is
best for the State; and as for the man who sets private friend-

ship above the public welfare, -I have no use for him either, /I call God to witness that if I saw my country headed for ruin, I should not be afraid to speak out plainly; and I need hardly remind you that I would never have any dealings with any enemy of the people. No one values friendship more highly than I; but we must remember that friends made at the risk of wrecking our Ship are not real friends at all./

These are my principles, at any rate, and that is why I have made the following decision concerning the sons of Oedipus: Eteoclés, who died as a man should die, fighting for his country, is to be buried with full military honours, with all the ceremony that is usual when the greatest heroes die; but his brother Polyneicés, who broke his exile to come back with fire and sword against his native city and the shrines of his blood and sell his own people into slavery -Polyneicés, I say is to have no burial: no man is to touch him or say the least prayer for him; he shall lie on the plain, unburied; and the birds and the scavenging dogs can do with him whatever they like.

This is my command, and you can see the wisdom behind it. As long as I am King, no traitor is going to be honoured with the loyal man. But whoever shows by word and deed that he is on the side of the State, -he shall have my respect while he is living, and my reverence when he is dead.

CHORAG. If that is your will, Creon son of Menoicéus, You have the right to enforce it: we are yours.

CREON That is my will. Take care that you do your part.

CHORAG. We are old men: let the younger ones carry it out.

CREON I do not mean that: the sentries have been appointed.

CHORAG. Then what is it that you would have us do?

CREON You will give no support to whoever breaks this law.

CHORAG. Only a crazy man is in love with death!

CREON And death it is; yet money talks, and the wisest Have sometimes been known to count a few coins too many.

But who is this?

CHORAG. A sentry Sire.

(Enter Sentry

SENTRY I'll not say that I'm out of breath from running, King, because every time I stopped to think about what I have to tell you, I felt like going back. And all the time a voice kept saying, 'You fool, don't you know you're walking straight into trouble?' and then another voice: 'Yes, but if you let somebody else get the news to Creon first, it will be even worse than that for you!' But good sense won out, at least I hope it was good sense, and here I am with a story that makes no sense at all; but I'll tell it anyhow, because, as they say, what's going to happen's going to happen, and -

CREON Come to the point. What have you to say?

SENTRY I did not do it. I did not see who did it. You must not punish me for what someone else has done.

CREON A comprehensive defence! More effective, perhaps, If I knew its purpose. Come: what is it?

SENTRY A dreadful thing...I don't know how to put it -

CREON Out with it!

SENTRY Well, then;
The dead man -
Polyneicés -

(Pause. The Sentry is overcome, fumbles for words. Creon wait impassively.

out there - someone, -

New dust on the slimy flesh!

(Pause. No sign from Creon.

Someone has given it burial that way, and Gone ...

(Long pause. Creon finally speaks with deadly control:

CREON And the man who dared do this?

SENTRY I swear I
Do not know! You must believe me!

Listen:
The ground was dry, not a sign of digging, no,
Not a wheeltrack in the dust, no trace of anyone.
It was when they relieved us this morning: and one of them,
The corporal, pointed to it.

There it was,
The strangest -

Look:
The body, just mounded over with light dust: you see?
Not buried really, but as if they'd covered it
Just enough for the ghost's peace. And no sign
Of dogs or any wild animal that had been there.

/And then what a scene there was! Every man of us
Accusing the other: we all proved the other man did it,
We all had proof that we could not have done it.
We were ready to take hot iron in our hands,

Walk through fire, swear by all the gods,
It was not I!
I do not know who it was, but it was not I!

(Creon's rage has been mounting steadily, but the Sentry is to intent upon his story to notice it.

And then, when this came to nothing, someone said
A thing that silenced us and made us stare
Down at the ground: you had to be told the news,
And one of us had to do it! We threw the dice,
And the bad luck fell to me. So here I am,
No happier to be here than you are to have me:
Nobody likes the man who brings bad news.

CHORAG. I have been wondering, / King: can it be that the gods have done this?

(Furiously.

CREON Stop!
Must you doddering wrecks
Go out of you heads entirely? "The gods!"
Intolerable!
The gods favour this corpse? Why? How had he served them?
Tried to loot their temples, burn their images,
Yes, and the whole State, and its laws with it!
Is it your senile opinion that the gods love to honour bad men?
A pious thought! -

No, from the very beginning
There have been those who have whispered together,
Stiff-necked anarchists, putting their heads together,
Scheming against me in alleys. These are the men,
And they have bribed my own guard to do this thing.

(Sententiously.

Money!
There's nothing in the world so demoralising as money.
Down go your cities,
Homes gone, men gone, honest hearts corrupted,
Crookedness of all kinds, and all for money!

(To Sentry:

But you -!

I swear by God and by the throne of God,
The man who has done this thing shall pay for it!
Find that man, bring him here to me, or your death
Will be the least of your problems: I'll string you up
Alive, and there will be certain ways to make you
Discover your employer before you die;
And the process may teach you a lesson you seem to have missed:
The dearest profit is somet mes all to dear.
That depends on the source. Do you understand me?
A fortune won is often misfortune.

SENTRY King, may I speak?

CREON Your very voice distresses me.

SENTRY Are you sure that it is my voice, and not your conscience?

CREON /By God, he wants to analyse me now!

SENTRY It is not what I say, but what has been done, that hurts you./

CREON You talk too much.

SENTRY Maybe; but I've done nothing.

CREON Sold your soul for some silver: that's all you've done

SENTRY How dreadful it is when the right judge judges wrong!

CREON Your figures of speech
May entertain you now; but unless you bring me the man,
You will get little profit from them in the end.

(Exit Creon into the Palace.

SENTRY 'Bring me the man' -!
I'd like nothing better than bringing him the man!
But bring him or not, you have seen the last of me here,
At any rate, I am safe!

(Exit Sentry.

SIDE 1
BAND 4

ODE 1

CHORUS /Numberless are the world's wonders, but none (strophe 1
More wonderful than man; the stormgrey sea
Yields to his prow, the huge crests bear him high;
Earth, holy and inexhaustible, is graven
With shining furrows where his plows have gone
Year after year, the timeless labour of stallions.

(antistrophe 1
The lightboned birds and beasts that cling to cover,
The little fish lighting their reaches of dim water,
All are taken, tamed in the net of his mind;
The lion on the hill, the wild horse windy-maned,
Resign to him; and his blunt yoke has broken
The sultry shoulders of the mountain bull.

Words also, and thought as rapid as air (strophe 2
He fashions to his good use; statercraft is his,
And his the skill that deflects the arrows of snow,
The spears of winter rain: from every wind

He has made himself secure - from all but one:
In the late wind of death he cannot stand./

O clear intelligence, force beyond all measure! (antistrophe 2
O fate of man, working both good and evil!
When the laws are kept, how proudly his city stands!
When the laws are broken, what of his cities then?
Never may the anarchic man find rest at my hearth,
Never be it said that my thoughts are his thoughts.

SIDE 1
BAND 5

SCENE II

(Re-enter Sentry leading Antigone.)

CHORAG. What does this mean? Surely this captive woman
Is the Princess Antigone. Why should she be taken?

SENTRY Here is the one who did it! We caught her
In the very act of burying him. - Where is Creon?

CHORAG. Just coming from the house.

(Enter Creon, C.

CREON What has happened?
Why have you come back so soon?

(Expansively.

SENTRY O King,
A man should never be too sure of anything;
I would have sworn
That you'd not see me here again: your anger
Frightened me so, and the things you threatened me with;
But how could I tell then
That I'd be able to solve the case so soon?

No dice-throwing this time: I was only to glad to come!

Here is the woman. She is the guilty one:
We found her trying to bury him.

Take her, then; question her; judge her as you will.
I am through with the whole thing now, and glad of it.

CREON But this is Antigone! Why have you brought her here?

SENTRY She was burying him, I tell you!

(Severely.

CREON Is this the truth?

SENTRY I saw her with my own eyes. Can I say more?

CREON /The details: come tell me quickly!

SENTRY It was like this:
After those terrible threats of yours, King,
We went back and brushed the dust away from the body.
The flesh was soft by now, and stinking,
So we sat on a hill to windward and kept guard.
No napping this time! We kept each other awake.
But nothing happened until the white round sun
Whirled in the centre of the round sky over us:
Then, suddenly,
A storm of dust roared up from the earth, and the sky
Went out, the plain vanished with all its trees
In the stinging dark. We closed our eyes and endured it.
The whirlwind lasted a long time, but it passed;
And then we looked, and there was Antigone!

I have seen
A mother bird come back to a stripped nest, heard
Her crying bitterly a broken note or two
For the young ones stolen. Just so, when this girl
Found the bare corpse, and all her love's work wasted,
She wept, and cried on heaven to damn the hands
That had done this thing

And then she brought more dust
And sprinkled wine three times for her brother's ghost.

We ran and took her at once. She was not afraid,
Not ever when we charged her with what she had done.
She denied nothing.

And this was a comfort to me,
And some uneasiness: for it is a good thing
To escape from death, but it is no great pleasure
To bring death to a friend.

Yet I always say
There is nothing so comfortable as your own safe skin!/
(Slowly, dangerously.

CREON And you Antigone,
You with your head hanging, - do you confess this thing?

ANTIG. I do. I deny nothing.

(To Sentry:

CREON You may go.

(Exit Sentry.

(To Antigone:

Tell me, tell me briefly:
Had you heard my proclamation touching this matter?

ANTIG. It was public. Could I help hearing it?

CREON And yet you dared defy the law.

ANTIG. I dared.
It was not God's proclamation. That final Justice
That rules the world below makes nosuch laws.

Your edict, King, was strong,
But all your strength is weakness itself against
The immortal unrecorded laws of God.
They are not merely now: they were, and shall be,
Operative for ever, beyond man utterly.

I knew I must die, even without your decree:
I am only mortal. And if I must die
Now before it is my time to die,
Surely this is no hardship: can anyone
Living, as I live, with evil all about me,
Think Death less than a friend? This death of mine
Is of no importance; but if I had left my brother
Lying in death unburied, I should have suffered.
Now I do not.

You smile at me. Ah Creon,
Think me a fool, if you like; but it may well be
That a fool convicts me of folly.

CHORAG. Like father, like daughter: both headstrong, deaf to reason!
She has never learned to yield.

CREON She has much to learn.
The inflexible heart breaks first, the toughest iron
Cracks first, and the wildest horses bend their necks
At the pull of the smallest curb.

Pride? In a slave?
This girl is guilty of a double insolence,
Breaking the given laws and boasting of it.
Who is the man here,
She or I, if this crime goes unpunished?
Sister's child, or more than sister's child,
Or closer yet in blood - she and her sister
Win bitter death for this!

(To servants:

Go, some of you,
Arrest Ismene. I accuse her equally.
Bring her: you will find her sniffing in the house there.

Her mind's a traitor: crimes kept in the dark
Cry for light, and the guardian brain shudders;
But how much worse than this
Is brazen boasting of barefaced anarchy!

ANTIG. Creon, what more do you want than my death?

CREON Nothing.
That gives me everything.

ANTIG. Then I beg you: kill me.
This talking is a great weariness: your words
Are distasteful to me, and I am sure that mine
Seem so to you. And yet they should not seem so:
I should have praise and honour for what I have done.
All these men here would praise me
Were their lips not frozen shut with fear of you.

(Bitterly.

Ah the good fortune of kings,
Licensed to say and do whatever they please!

CREON You are alone in that opinion.

ANTIG. No, they are with me. But they keep their tongues in leash.

CREON Maybe. But you are guilty, and they are not.

ANTIG. There is no guilt in reverence for the dead.

CREON But Eteocles - was he not your brother too?

ANTIG. My brother too.

CREON And you insult his memory?

(Softly.

ANTIG. The dead man would not say that I insult it.

CREON He would: for you honour a traitor as much as him.

ANTIG. His own brother, traitor or not, and equal in blood.

CREON He made war on his country. Eteocles defended it.

ANTIG. Nevertheless, there are honours due all the dead.

CREON But not the same for the wicked as for the just.

ANTIG. Ah Creon, Creon,
Which of us can say what the gods hold wicked?

CREON An enemy is an enemy, even dead.

ANTIG. It is my nature to join in love, not hate.

(Finally losing patience.

CREON Go join them, then; if you must have your love,
Find it in hell!

CHORAG. But see, Ismene comes:

(Enter Ismene, guarded.

Those tears are sisterly, the cloud
That shadows her eyes rains down gentle sorrow.

CREON You too, Ismené,
Shade in my ordered house, sucking my blood
Stealthily - and all the time I never knew
That these two sisters were aiming at my throne!
Ismené,
Do you confess your share in this crime, or deny it?
Answer me.

ISMENE Yes, if she will let me say so. I am guilty.
(Coldly.

ANTIG. No, Ismené. You have no right to say so.
You would not help me, and I will not have you help me.

ISMENE But now I know what you meant; and I am here
To join you, to take my share of punishment.

ANTIG. The dead man and the gods who rule the dead
Know whose act this was. Words are not friends.

ISMENE Do you refuse me, Antigone? I want to die with you:
I too have a duty that I must discharge to the dead.

ANTIG. You shall not lessen my death by sharing it.

ISMENE What do I care for life when you are dead?

ANTIG. Ask Creon. You're always hanging on his opinions.

ISMENE You are laughing at me. Why, Antigone?

ANTIG. It's a joyless laughter, Ismené.

ISMENE But can I do nothing?

ANTIG. Yes. Save yourself. I shall not envy you.
There are those who will praise you; I shall have honour, too.

ISMENE But we are equally guilty!

ANTIG. No, more, Ismené.
You are alive, but I belong to Death.

CREON (To the Chorus:
Gentlemen, I beg you to observe these girls:
One has just now lost her mind; the other
It seems, has never had a mind at all.

ISMENE Grief teaches the steadiest minds to waver, King.

CREON Yours certainly did, when you assumed guilt with the guilty!

ISMENE But how could I go on living without her?

CREON You are.
She is already dead.

ISMENE But your own son's bride!

CREON There are places enough for him to push his plow.
I want no wicked women for my sons!

ISMENE O dearest Haimon, how your father wrongs you!

CREON I've had enough of your childest talk of marriage!

CHORAG. Do you really intend to steal this girl from your son?

CREON No; Death will do that for me.

CHORAG. Then she must die?

CREON You dazzle me. - But enough of this talk!
(To Guards:
You, there, take them away and guard them well:
For they are but women, and even brave men run
When they see Death coming.
(Exeunt Ismené, Antigone, and Guards.

SIDE 1
BAND 6

ODE II

CHORUS Fortunate is the man who has never tasted God's vengeance!
Where once the anger of heaven has struck, that house is
shaken
For ever: damnation rises behind each child
Like a wave cresting out of the black northeast,
When the long darkness under sea roars up
And burst drumming death upon the windwhipped sand.
(antistrophe 1
I have seen this gathering sorrow from time long past
Loom upon Oedipus' children: generation from generation
Takes the compulsive rage of the enemy god.
So lately this last flower of Oedipus' line
Drank the sunlight! but now a passionate word
And a handful of dust have closed up all its beauty.
(strophe 2
/What mortal arrogance
Transcends the wrath of Zeus?
Sleep cannot lull him, nor the effortless long months
Of the timeless gods: but he is young for ever,
And his house is the shining day of high Olympos.
All that is and shall be,
And all the past, is his.
No pride on earth is free of the curse of heaven./

The straying dreams of men (antistrophe 2
May bring them ghosts of joy:
But as they drowse, the waking embers burn them;
Or they walk with fixed eyes, as blind men walk.
But the ancient wisdom speaks for our own time:
Fate works most for woe
With Folly's fairest show
Man's little pleasure is the spring of sorrow.

SIDE 2
BAND 1

SCENE III

CHORAG. But here is Haimon, King, the last of all your sons.
Is it grief for Antigone that brings him here,
And bitterness at being robbed of his bride?
(Enter Haimon.

CREON We shall soon see, and no need of diviners. - Son,
You have heard my final judgment on that girl:
Have you come here hating me, or have you come
With deference and with love, whatever I do?

HAIMON I am your son, father. You are my guide.
You make things clear for me, and I obey you.
No marriage means more to me than your continuing wisdom.

CREON Good. That is the way to behave: subordinate
Everything else, my son, to you father's will.
This is what a man prays for, that he may get
Sons attentive and dutiful in his house,
Each one hating his father's enemies,
Honouring his father's friends. But if his sons
Fail him, if they turn out unprofitably,
What has he fathered but trouble for himself
And amusement for the malicious?
So you are right
Not to lose your head over this woman.
Your pleasure with her would soon grow cold, Haimon,
And then you'd have a hellcat in bed and elsewhere:
Let her find her husband in Hell!
Of all the people in this city, only she
Has had contempt for my law and broken it.
Do you want me to show myself weak before the people?
Or to break my sworn word? No, and I will not.
The woman dies.
I suppose she'll plead 'family ties.' Well, let her.
If I permit my own family to rebel,
How shall I earn the world's obedience?
Show me the man who keeps house in hand,
He's fit for public authority./
I'll have no dealings
With law-breakers, critics of the government:
Whoever is chosen to govern should be obeyed -
Must be obeyed, in all things, great and small,
Just and unjust! O Haimon,
The man who knows how to obey, and that man only,
Knows how to give commands when the time comes.
You can depend on him, no matter how fast
The spears come: he's a good soldier, he'll stick it out.
Anarchy, anarchy! Show me a greater evil?
This is why cities tumble and the great houses rain down,
This is what scatters armies!
No, no: good lives are made so by discipline.
We keep the laws then, and the lawmakers,
And no woman shall seduce us. If we must lose,
Let's lose to a man, at least: Is a woman stronger than we?

CHORAG. Unless time has rusted my wits,
What you say, King, is said with point and dignity.
(Boyishly earnest.

HAIMON Father:
Reason is God's crowning gift to man, and you are right
To warn me against losing mine. I cannot say -
I hope that I shall never want to say! -that you
Have reasoned badly. Yet there are other men
Who can reason, too; and their opinions might be helpful.
You are not in a position to know everything
That people say or do, or what they feel:
Your temper terrifies them - everyone
Will tell you only what you like to hear.
But I, at any rate, can listen; and I have heard them
Muttering and whispering in the dark about this girl.
They say no woman has ever, so unreasonably,
Died so shameful a death for a generous act:
'She covered her brother's body. Is this indecent?
'She kept him from dogs and vultures. Is this a crime?
'Death? - She should have all the honour that we can give
her!'
This is the way they talk out there in the city.
You must believe me:
Nothing is closer to me than your happiness.
What could be closer? Must not any son
Value his father's fortune as his father does his?
I beg you, do not be unchangeable:
Do not believe that you alone can be right.
The man who thinks that,
The man who maintains that only he has the power
To reason correctly, the gift to speak, the soul -
A man like that, when you know him, turns out empty.
It is not reason never to yield to reason!

/In flood time you can see how some trees bend,
 And because they bend, even their twigs are safe,
 While stubborn trees are torn up, roots and all.
 And the same thing happens in sailing:
 Make your sheet fast, never slacken, -and over you go,
 Head over heels and under: and there's your voyage.
 Forget you are angry! Let yourself be moved!
 I know I am young; but please let me say this:
 The ideal condition
 Would be, I admit, that men should be right by instinct;
 But since we are all too likely to go astray,
 The reasonable thing is to learn those who can teach./

CHORAG. You will do well to listen to him, King,
 If what he says is sensible. And you, Haimon,
 Must listen to your father. -Both speak well.

CREON You consider it right for a man of my years and experience
 To go to school to a boy?

HAIMON It is not right
 If I am wrong. But if I am young, and right,
 What does my age matter?

CREON You think it right to stand up for an anarchist?

HAIMON Not at all. I pay no respect to criminals.

CREON Then she is not a criminal?

HAIMON The City would deny it, to a man.

CREON And the City proposes to teach me how to rule?

HAIMON Ah. Who is it that's talking like a boy now?

CREON My voice is the one voice giving orders in this City!

HAIMON It is no City if it takes orders from one voice.

CREON The State is the King!

HAIMON Yes, if the State is a desert.
 (Pause.)

CREON This boy, it seems, has sold out to a woman.

HAIMON If you are a woman: my concern is only for you.

CREON So? Your 'concern'! In a public brawl with your father!

HAIMON How about you, in a public brawl with justice?

CREON With justice, when all I do is within my rights?

HAIMON You have no right to trample on God's right.

CREON Fool, adolescent fool! Taken in by a woman!

HAIMON You'll never see me taken in by anything vile.

CREON Every word you say is for her!

HAIMON (Quietly, darkly. And for you.
 And for me. And for the gods under the earth.)

CREON You'll never marry her while she lives.

HAIMON Then she must die. -But her death will cause another.

CREON Another?
 Have you lost your senses? Is this an open threat?

HAIMON There is no threat in speaking to emptiness.

CREON I swear you'll regret this superior tone of yours!
 You are the empty one!

HAIMON If you were not my father,
 I'd say you were perverse.

CREON You girlstruck fool, don't play at words with me!

HAIMON I am sorry. You prefer silence.

CREON Now, by God -!
 I swear, by all the gods in heaven above us,
 You'll watch it, I swear you shall!
 (To the Servants. Bring her out!
 Bring the woman out! Let her die before his eyes,
 Here, this instant, with her bridegroom beside her!)

HAIMON Not here, no; she will not die here, King.
 And you will never see my face again.
 Go on raving as long as you've a friend to endure you.
 (Exit Haimon.)

CHORAG. Gone, gone.
 Creon, a young man in a rage is dangerous!

CREON Let him do, or dream to do, more than a man can.
 He shall not save these girls from death.

CHORAG. These girls?
 You have sentenced them both?

CREON No, you are right.
 I will not kill the one whose hands are clean.

CHORAG. But Antigone?

CREON I will carry her far away
 Out there in the wilderness, and lock her
 Living in a vault of stone. She shall have food,
 As the custom is, to absolve the State of her death,
 And there let her pray to the gods of Hell:
 They are her only gods:
 Perhaps they will show her an escape from death,
 Or she may learn, though late,
 That piety shown the dead is pity in vain.
 (Exit Creon.)

SIDE 2
 BAND 2 ODE III

CHORUS Love, unconquerable (strophe
 Master of rich men, keeper
 Of warm lights and all-night vigil
 In the soft face of a girl:
 Sea-wanderer, forest-visitor!
 Even the pure Immortals cannot escape you,
 And mortal man, in his one day's dusk,
 Trembles before your glory.
 /Surely you swerve upon ruin (antistrophe
 The just man's consenting heart,
 As here you have made bright anger
 Strike between father and son -
 And none has conquered but Love!
 A girl's glance working the will of heaven:
 Pleasure to her alone who mocks us,
 Merciless Aphrodite./

SIDE 2
 BAND 3 SCENE IV

(As Antigone enters guarded.)

CHORAG. But I can no longer stand in awe of this,
 Nor, seeing what I see, keep back my tears.
 Here is Antigone, passing to that chamber
 Where all find sleep at last.

ANTIG. Look upon me, friends, and pity me (strophe 1
 Turning back at the night's edge to say
 Good-bye to the sun that shines for me no longer;
 Now sleepy Death
 Summons me down to Acheron, that cold shore:
 There is no bridesong there, nor any music.

CHORUS Yet not unpraised, not without a kind honour,
 You walk at last into the underworld;
 Untouched by sickness, broken by no sword.
 What woman has ever found your way to death?

ANTIG. How often have heard the story of Niobe, (antistrophe 1
 Tantalos' wretched daughter, how the stone
 Clung fast about her, ivy-close: and they say
 The rain falls endlessly
 And sifting soft snow; her tears are never done.
 I feel the loneliness of her death in mine.

CHORUS But she was born of heaven, and you
 Are woman, woman-born. If her death is yours,
 A mortal woman's, is this not for you
 Glory in our world and in the world beyond?

ANTIG. You laugh at me. Ah, friends, (strophe 2
 Can you not wait until I am dead? O Thebes,
 O men many-charioted, in love with Fortune,
 Dear springs of Dirce, sacred Theban grove,
 Be witnesses for me, denied all pity,
 Unjustly judged! and think a word of love
 For her whose path turns
 Under dark earth, where there are no more tears.

CHORUS You have passed beyond human daring and come at last
 Into a place of stone where Justice sits.
 I cannot tell
 What shape of your father's guilt appears in this.

ANTIG. You have touched it at last: that bridal bed (antistrophe 2
 Unspeakable, horror of son and mother mingling:
 Their crime, infection of all our family!
 O Oedipus, father and brother!
 Your marriage strikes from the grave to murder mine.
 I have been a stranger here in my own land:
 All my life
 The blasphemy of my birth has followed me.

CHORUS Reverence is a virtue, but strength
 Lives in established law: that must prevail.
 You have made your choice,
 Your death is the doing of your conscious hand.

ANTIG. Then let me go, since all your words are bitter, (epode
 And the very light of the sun is cold to me.
 Lead me to my vigil, where I must have
 Neither love nor lamentation; no song, but silence.
 (Creon interrupts impatiently.)

CREON If dirges and planned lamentations could put off death,
 Men would be singing for ever.
 (To the Servants. Take her, go!
 You know your orders: take her to the vault
 And leave her alone there. And if she lives or dies,
 That's her affair, not ours: our hands are clean.)

ANTIG. /O tomb, vaulted bride-bed in eternal rock,
Soon I shall be with my own again
Where Persephone welcomes the thin ghosts underground:
And I shall see my father again, and you, mother,
And dearest Polyneices - dearest indeed
To me, since it was my hand
That washed him clean and poured the ritual wine:
And my reward is death before my time!

And yet, as men's hearts know, I have done no wrong,
I have not sinned before God. Or if I have,
I shall know the truth in death. But if the guilt
Lies upon Creon who judged me, the, I pray,
May his punishment equal my own.

CHORAG. O passionate heart,
Unyielding, tormented still by the same winds!

CREON Her guards shall have good cause to regret their delaying./

ANTIG. Ah! That voice is like the voice of death!

CREON I can give you no reason to think you are mistaken.

ANTIG. Thebes, and you my fathers' gods,
And rulers of Thebes, you see me now, the last
Unhappy daughter of a line of kings,
Your kings, led away to death. You will remember
What things I suffer, and at what men's hands,
Because I would not transgress the laws of heaven.

(To the Guards, simply.

Come: let us wait no longer.

(Exit Antigone, L., guarded.

SIDE 2

BAND 4

ODE IV

CHORUS All Danaë's beauty was locked away (strophe 1
In a brazen cell where the sunlight could not come:
A small room, still as any grave, enclosed her.
Yet she was a princess too,
And Zeus in a rain of gold poured love upon her.
O child, child,
No power in wealth or war
Or tough sea-blackened ships
Can prevail against untiring Destiny!

/And Dryas' son also, that furious king, (antistrophe 1
Bore the god's imprisoning anger for his pride:
Sealed up by Dionysos in deaf stone,
His madness died among echoes.
So at the last he learned what dreadful power
His tongue had mocked:
For he had profaned the revels,
And fired the wrath of the nine
Implacable Sisters that love the sound of the flute.

And old men tell a half-remembered tale (strophe 2
Of horror done where a dark ledge splits the sea
And a double surf beats on the grey shores:
How a king's new woman, sick
With hatred for the queen he had imprisoned,
Ripped out his two sons' eyes with her bloody hands
While grinning Arès watched the shuttle plunge
Four times: four blind wounds crying for revenge,

Crying, tears and blood mingled. -Piteously born, (antistrophe 2
Those sons whose mother was of heavenly birth!
Her father was the god of the North Wind
And she was cradled by gales,
She raced with young colts on the glittering hills
And walked untrammelled in the open light:
But in her marriage deathless Fate found means
To build a tomb like yours for all her joy./

SIDE 2

BAND 5

SCENE V

(Enter blind Teiresias, led by a boy. The opening speeches
of Teiresias should be in singsong contrast to the
realistic lines of Creon.

TEIRES. Gentlemen of Thebes; we greet you, my friend and I, who,
Share one pair of eyes on own journeys together;
For the blind man goes where his leader tells him to.

CREON You are welcome, father Teiresias. What news have you for us?

TEIRES. Ah, news you shall have; and advice, if you can heed it.

CREON I am not aware that I have ever failed to heed it.

TEIRES. And thus far, have steered a steady course.

CREON I admit my debt to you; but come, what news do you have?

TEIRES. This Creon; you stand once more on the edge of fate.

CREON Your words hint at disaster; speak on.

TEIRES. Listen Creon, and I will show you all that my skill reveals,
At my seat of divination, where I sit
These many years, reading the signs of heaven
An unfamiliar sound came to my ears;
Of birds in vicious combat; savage cries
In strange outlandish language, and the whirr of flapping wings
From which I well could picture, the gruesome warfare
Of their deadly talons.

Full of foreboding; I made the test of sacrifice on the
alter flame.

There was no answering flame.
Instead, rank juice oozed from the flesh,
And fell among the ashes, smouldering and sputtering,
The gall vanished in a puff
And the fat ran down and left the haunches bare.
And why?

The blight upon us, is your doing.
The blood that stains our alters and our shrines,
The blood that dogs and vultures have licked up
It is none other than the blood of Oedipus
Spilled from the viens of his ill-fated son.
Our fires, our sacrifices, our prayers,
The gods abominate. How should the birds
Give any other than ill omened voices
Gorged with the dregs of blood that man has shed?
These are no trifles my son.

All men fall into sin;
But sinning, he is not forever lost, hapless and helpless.
Who can make amends, and has not set his face against repentance
Only a fool is governed by self will
Pay to the dead his due, wound not the fallen
It is no glory to kill and kill again.
My words are for your good, as is my will,
And should be acceptable, being for your good.

CREON It seems that prophets have made me their special province.
All my life I have been a sort of butt,
For the dull arrows of doddering fortune tellers.
No Teiresias, if your eagles, if the eagles of the gods themselves
Should carry him stinking, bit by bit to heaven,
I would not yield.
A man cannot defile the gods.

Go into business, speculate in India gold,
Or that synthetic gold from Sardia.
Get rich otherwise than by my consent to bury him.
Ah Teiresias; it is a sad thing when a wise man sells out;
Or lets out his words for hire.

TEIRES. Ah, Creon; is there no man left in the world?

CREON What do.
Come let's have the aphorism.

TEIRES. No man who knows that wisdom outweighs any wealth -

CREON As surely as bushes are baser than -

TEIRES. You are sick Creon; you are deathly sick.

CREON As you say; it is not the place of a king to question a prophet.

TEIRES. And yet, you have said my prophecy is for sale.

CREON The generation of profets have always loved gold.

TEIRES. The generation of kings have always loved brass.

CREON You forget yourself; you are speaking to you king.

TEIRES. I do not. You are a king because of me.

CREON But you have sold out!

TEIRES. Must I reveal my unspoken mind?

CREON Speak: but expect no pay from it.

TEIRES. Does that still seem to you my - No you will find it too costly.

CREON Speak!

TEIRES. The hear this. And that it to heart.

Ere the chariot of the sun,
Has rounded once or twice his wheeling way
You will have given up a son of your own loins
To death - in payment for death.
Two debts to pay.
One for the life you have sent to death,
The life you have abominably entombed,
One for the dead still lying above the ground;
Unburied, unhonoured, unblest.

By the gods below:
You cannot alter this.
The gods themselves cannot undo it.
It follows of necessity from what you have done.
Even now, the avenging furies, the hunters of Hell
That follow and destroy, are lying in wait for you;
And will have their prey.
When the evil you have worked for others falls upon you
Do you still wish to buy me Creon?
The time will come, and soon, when you;
When your house will be filled
With lamentations of men and women, and every
Neighbouring city will be guarded in fury against you,
For upon them too, the pollution falls,
When dogs and vultures, bring the defilement of blood
To their alters and shrines.
I have done.
These are my arrows, and they are all for you.

Lead me home, my boy.

Let us leave him to vent his anger on younger ears;
Or school his tongue and his thoughts
To a milder mood than that which he now possesses:
Lead on.

(Exit Teiresias)

CHORAG. The old man has gone, King, but his words
Remain to plague us. I am old, too,
But I cannot remember that he was ever false.

CREON That is true....It troubles me.
Oh it is so hard to give in! but it is worse
To risk everything for stubborn pride.

CHORAG. Creon: take my advice.

CREON /What shall I do?/

CHORAG. Go quickly: free Antigone from her vault
And build a tomb for the body of Polyneices.

CREON You would have me do this?

CHORAG. /Creon, yes!
And it must be done at once:/ God moves
Swiftly to cancel the folly of stubborn men.

CREON It is hard to deny the heart! But I
Will do it: I will not fight with destiny.

CHORAG. You must go yourself, you cannot leave it to others.

CREON I will go.

/Bring axes,/ servants:
Come with me to the tomb. I buried her, I
Will set her free.

Oh quickly!
My mind misgives -
The laws of the gods are mighty, and a man must serve them
To the last day of his life!

(Exit Creon.)

SIDE 2
BAND 6

EXODOS

(Enter Messenger.)

MESS. Men of the line of Cadmos, you who live
Near Amphion's citadel:

I cannot say
Of any condition of human life 'This is fixed,
This is clearly good, or bad.' Fate raises up,
And Fate casts down the happy and unhappy alike:
No man can foretell his Fate.

/Take the case of Creon:
Creon was happy once, as I count happiness:
Victorious in battle, sole governor of the land,
Fortunate father of children nobly born.
And now it has all gone from him! Who can say
That a man is still alive when his life's joy fails?
He is a walking dead man. Grant him rich,
Let him live like a king in his great house:
If his pleasure is gone, I would not give
So much as the shadow of smoke for all he owns./

CHORAG. Your words hint at sorrow: what is your news for us?

MESS. They are dead. The living are guilty of their death.

CHORAG. Who is guilty? Who is dead? Speak!

MESS. Haimon.
Haimon is dead; and the hand that killed him
Is his own hand.

CHORAG. His father's? or his own?

MESS. His own, driven mad by the murder his father had done.

CHORAG. /Teiresias, Teiresias, how clearly you saw it all!

MESS. This is my news: you must draw what conclusions you can
from it./

CHORAG. But Look: Eurydice, our Queen:
Has she overheard us?

(Enter Eurydice from the Palace, C.)

EURYD. I have heard something, friends:
As I was unlocking the gate of Pallas' shrine,
For I needed her help today, I heard a voice
Telling of some new sorrow. And I fainted
There at the temple with all my maidens about me.
But speak again: whatever it is, I can bear it:
Grief and I are no strangers.

MESS. Dearest Lady,
I will tell you plainly all that I have seen.
I shall not try to comfort you: what is the use,
Since comfort could lie only in what is not true?
The truth is always best.

I went with Creon
To the outer plain where Polyneices was lying,
No friend to pity him, his body shredded by dogs.
We made our prayers in that place to Hecate

And Pluto, that they would be merciful. And we bathed
The corpse with holy water, and we brought
Fresh-broken branches to burn what was left of it,
And upon the urn we heaped up a towering barrow
Of the earth of his own land.

When we were done, we ran
To the vault where Antigone lay on her couch of stone.
One of the servants had gone ahead,
And while he was yet far off he heard a voice
Grieving within the chamber, and he came back
And told Creon. And as the King went closer,
The air was full of wailing, the words lost,
And he begged us to make all haste. 'Am I a prophet?'
He said, weeping, 'And must I walk this road,
'The saddest of all that I have gone before?
'My son's voice calls me on. Oh quickly, quickly!
'Look through the crevice there, and tell me
'If it is Haimon, or some deception of the gods!'

We obeyed; and in the cavern's farthest corner
We saw her lying:
She had made a noose of her fine linen veil
And hanged herself. Haimon lay beside her,
His arms about her waist, lamenting her,
His love lost under ground, crying out
That his father had stolen her away from him.

When Creon saw him the tears rushed to his eyes
And he called to him: 'What have you done, child? Speak to me.
'What are you thinking that makes your eyes so strange?
'O my son, my son, I come to you on my knees!'
But Haimon spat in his face. He said not a word,
Staring -
And suddenly drew his sword
And lunged. Creon shrank back, the blade missed; and the boy,
Desperate against himself, drove it half its length
Into his own side, and fell. And as he died
He gathered Antigone close in his arms again,
Choking, his blood bright red on her white cheek.
And now he lies dead with the dead, and she is his
At last, his bride in the houses of the dead.

(Exit Eurydice into the Palace.)

CHORAG. She has left us without a word. What can this mean?

MESS. It troubles me, too; yet she knows what is best,
Her grief is too great for public lamentation,
And doubtless she has gone to her chamber to weep
For her dead son, leading her maidens in his dirge.

CHORAG. It may be so: but I fear this deep silence.

(Pause.)

MESS. I will see what she is doing. I will go in.

(Exit Messenger into the Palace.)

(Enter Creon with attendants, bearing Haimon's body.)

CHORAG. But here is the King himself: oh look at him,
Bearing his own damnation in his arms.

CREON Nothing you say can touch me any more.
My own blind heart has brought me
From darkness to final darkness. Here you see
The father murdering, the murdered son -
And all my civic wisdom!
Haimon my son, so young, so young to die,
I was the fool, not you; but you were late in learning it.

CREON This truth is hard to bear. /Surely a god
Has crushed me beneath the hugest weight of heaven,
And driven me headlong a barbaric way
To trample out the thing I held most dear./

The pains that men will take to come to pain!

(Enter Messenger from the Palace.)

MESS. The burden you carry in your hands is heavy,
But it is not all: you will find more in your house.

CREON What burden worse than this shall I find there?

MESS. The Queen is dead.

CREON O port of death, deaf world,
Is there no pity for me? /And you, Angel of evil,
I was dead, and your words are death again.
Is it true, boy? Can it be true?
Is my wife dead? Has death bred death?

MESS. You can see for yourself.

(The doors are opened, and the body of Eurydice is disclosed
within.)

CREON Oh pity!/
All true, all true, and more than I can bear!
O my wife, my son!

MESS. /She stood before the altar, and her heart
Welcomed the knife her own hand guided,
And a great cry burst from her lips for Megareus dead,
And for Haimon dead, her sons; and her last breath
Was a curse for their father, the murderer of her sons.
And she fell, and the dark flowed in through her closing eyes.

CREON O God, I am sick with fear./
Are there no swords here? Has no one a blow for me?

MESS. Her curse is upon you for the deaths of both.

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CREON It is right that it should be. I alone am guilty.
I know it, and I say it. Lead me in,
Quickly, friends.
I have neither life nor substance. Lead me in.

CHORAG. You are right, if there can be right in so much wrong.
The briefest way is best in a world of sorrow.

CREON Let it come,
Let death come quickly, and be kind to me.
I would not ever see the sun again.

CHORAG. All that will come when it will; but we, meanwhile,
Have much to do. Leave the future to itself.

CREON All my heart was in that prayer!

CHORAG. Then do not pray any more: the sky is deaf.

CREON Lead me away. I have been rash and foolish.
I have killed my son and my wife.
I look for comfort; my comfort lies here dead.
Whatever my hands have touched has come to nothing.
Fate has brought all my pride to a thought of dust.

(as Creon is being led into the house, the Choragos
advances and speaks directly to the audience.)

CHORAG. There is no happiness where there is no wisdom;
No wisdom but submission to the gods.
Big words are always punished,
And proud men in old age learn to be wise.

