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Paulo Alexandre Lima

> Above all, let us remember that every great stage-production, operatic version, literary variant, philosophic *reprise* (Hegel, Heidegger, Kojève) is a legitimate part of that collaborative hermeneutic process which extends from strictest philology, epigraphy, textual criticism on the one hand, to free *imitatio*, parody, pastiche, transmutation on the other. What must be done is to make productive the great middle ground between A. E. Housman's remark that a true scholar has no business having any opinion on the merits of the text which he is editing, and Brecht's contemptuous dismissal of philology at the outset of *Antigone 48*. We are all in the same (leaky) boat.[1]
> No approach to Sophocles is more important than through his religion. Whatever interpretation is given to any single aspect of his work, his art or his personality, none will hold good unless it is fully aware of the fundamental fact that Sophocles had a vision of life which we call religious.[2]

I

1 The *Antigone* of Sophocles puts into play a conflict between two human beings and the principles they embody. Sophocles scholars have interpreted the *Antigone* as a play about a conflict between the human and the divine, the state and the individual, the public and the private, secular and religious morals, and so on.[3] Consequently, along with the other themes in the *Antigone*, the human and the divine have been recognized by commentators

of Sophocles to be central to understanding the meaning of the play.[4] However, in maintaining that the *Antigone* has to do with a conflict between the human and the divine, commentators have seen the human and the divine as being the two poles of na opposition. In this study we intend to consider the human and the divine in Sophocles' *Antigone* in a new light. Like many other interpreters of the *Antigone*,[5] we argue that this Sophoclean tragedy tells of a *conflict*, although not one between the human and the divine but rather between *two different ways in which the human relates to and tries to embody the divine*. So while other commentators try to understand the conflict in the *Antigone* using a *logic of simplicity*, according to which the conflict is between a *purely human* pole and a *purely divine* pole, we will try to interpret the conflict from a *logic of complexity*; according to this *each* of the two conflicting poles *already involves a certain mixture of the human with the divine*.[6]

II

2 First of all, attention should be drawn to a few passages from the *Antigone* where it is clear that this Sophoclean tragedy stages a conflict between two *opposing* forms of human relationship to the divine; performing this task requires us to show that both Antigone's and Creon's attitude claim to have a *religious* character (to be sanctioned by the gods). With regard to Antigone's attitude, the passage of 71-7 clearly indicates that the decision to bury Polynices is an expression of her loyalty towards what she regards as being the fundamental *divine* requirements (namely those of the infernal gods). In 71-7 – which is part of the initial dialogue between Antigone and Ismene on the former's decision to bury Polynices – Antigone says to her sister:

> ἀλλ᾽ ἴσθ᾽ ὁποία σοι δοκεῖ, κεῖνον δ᾽ ἐγὼ
> θάψω. καλόν μοι τοῦτο ποιούσῃ θανεῖν.
> **φίλη** μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ κείσομαι, φίλου μέτα,
> ὅσια πανουργήσασ᾽· ἐπεὶ πλείων χρόνος
> ὃν δεῖ μ᾽ ἀρέσκειν **τοῖς κάτω** τῶν ἐνθάδε·
> ἐκεῖ γὰρ αἰεὶ κείσομαι. σὺ δ᾽ εἰ δοκεῖ
> **τὰ τῶν θεῶν ἔντιμ᾽** ἀτιμάσασ᾽ ἔχε.[7]
> Do you be the kind of person you have decided to be, but I shall bury him! It is honourable for me to do this and die. I am his own and I shall lie with him who is my own, having committed a crime that is *holy*, for there will be a longer span of time for me to please *those below* than there will be to please those here; for there I shall lie forever. As for you, if it is your pleasure, dishonour *what the gods honour*![8] (Our emphasis)

3 So for Antigone the act of burying Polynices, although it is a crime under Theban law,[9] is a pious and noble act in the eyes of the gods (at least in the eyes of the infernal gods).[10] However, Antigone's attitude is not the only one that has a religious character; in fact, Creon's attitude also appears in the play to be something *divinely sanctioned*. In 155-61, just before the proclamation of Creon's edict, the chorus herald the arrival on the scene of the new king of Thebes:

> ἀλλ᾽ ὅδε γὰρ δὴ βασιλεὺς χώρας,
> †Κρέων ὁ Μενοικέως,† ... νεοχμὸς
> νεαραῖσι **θεῶν** ἐπὶ συντυχίαις
> χωρεῖ τίνα δὴ μῆτιν ἐρέσσων,
> ὅτι σύγκλητον τήνδε γερόντων
> προὔθετο λέσχην,

> κοινῷ κηρύγματι πέμψας;
> But here comes the new king of the land, ... Creon, under the new conditions *given by the gods*; what plan is he turning over, that he has proposed this assembly of elders for discussion, summoning them by general proclamation? (Our emphasis)

4 It is thus evident through the chorus' words[11] that Creon is invested with his authority – and therefore with all his legal and political decisions, in particular the edict that he is about to proclaim – by the gods (especially Zeus).[12]

5 On the basis of the passages quoted above (71-7, 155-61) it is clear that the conflict between Antigone and Creon is one between two ways of relating to the gods.[13] However, it is still not plain what the nature of each of these ways of relating to the gods is; only after determining their nature will we be able to understand *what is in conflict* in the religious clash between Antigone and Creon. Let us first see what the nature of Antigone's relationship to the gods is; there are at least two passages that can help us in this regard. In 519 Antigone tells Creon[14] that, "Nonetheless, Hades demands these laws" (ὅμως ὅ γ' Ἅιδης τοὺς νόμους τούτους ποθεῖ); Antigone has in mind the Greek custom of burying the dead in their homeland, which she says is sanctioned by the god Hades. A few lines later (523) Antigone tells Creon,[15] "I have no enemies by birth, but I have friends by birth" (οὔτοι συνέχθειν, ἀλλὰ συμφιλεῖν ἔφυν); Antigone is saying that if the criterion for burying Polynices in Thebes is that he has to be considered a φίλος, then Polynices must be buried in Thebes, for he is her φίλος by nature (i.e. he is her brother and therefore someone she is attached to by birth).[16] The passages in 519 and 523 clearly show the nature of Antigone's relationship to the divine; they manifestly point to the fact that when burying Polynices Antigone acts out of *devotion* to Hades and out of *love* for her brother. Now, Antigone's devotion to Hades and her love for Polynices are very closely linked to one another; lines 519 and 523 clearly point to this intimate connection between Antigone's religious devotion and her love for her brother. Indeed, Antigone's devotion to Hades is manifested in the very act of granting a burial to Polynices. Conversely, Antigone's burial of Polynices out of her love for him can only be grasped in the light of its religious significance. The ancestral custom of burying the dead members of a family in their home soil is founded on a deep religious understanding of the world as a whole and the affective relationships within a family. Antigone's act of burying Polynices, and therefore Antigone's love for her brother, which is what makes her want to bury him, are thus founded on her religious devotion to Hades, which is the reason why she strives to fulfil the demands of the god of the underworld. In sum, Antigone's burial of Polynices reflects a *fundamental unity* between the *human custom* of burying family members in their homeland (which according to the *Antigone* is based on love) and the *relationship to the divine* that takes the form of religious devotion and obedience to Hades (or more generally to the gods below).[17]

6 Let us now consider the nature of Creon's relationship to the gods. In 178-91 Creon speaks as follows:[18]

> ἐμοὶ γὰρ ὅστις πᾶσαν εὐθύνων πόλιν
> μὴ τῶν ἀρίστων ἅπτεται βουλευμάτων,
> ἀλλ᾽ ἐκ φόβου του γλῶσσαν ἐγκλῄσας ἔχει,
> κάκιστος εἶναι νῦν τε καὶ πάλαι δοκεῖ·
> καὶ μείζον᾽ ὅστις ἀντὶ τῆς αὑτοῦ πάτρας
> φίλον νομίζει, τοῦτον οὐδαμοῦ λέγω.
> ἐγὼ γάρ, **ἴστω Ζεὺς ὁ πάνθ᾽ ὁρῶν ἀεί**,
> οὔτ᾽ ἂν σιωπήσαιμι τὴν ἄτην ὁρῶν

> στείχουσαν ἀστοῖς **ἀντὶ τῆς σωτηρίας**,
> οὔτ᾽ ἂν φίλον ποτ᾽ ἄνδρα δυσμενῆ χθονὸς
> θείμην ἐμαυτῷ, τοῦτο γιγνώσκων ὅτι
> **ἥδ᾽ ἐστὶν ἡ σῴζουσα** καὶ ταύτης ἔπι
> πλέοντες ὀρθῆς τοὺς φίλους ποιούμεθα.
> τοιοῖσδ᾽ ἐγὼ νόμοισι τήνδ᾽ αὔξω πόλιν.
> Yes, to me anyone who while guiding the whole city fails to set his hand to the best counsels, but keeps his mouth shut by reason of some fear seems now and has always seemed the worst of men; and him who rates a dear one higher than his native land, him I put nowhere. I would never be silent, *may Zeus who sees all things for ever know it*, when I saw ruin coming upon the citizens *instead of safety*, nor would I make a friend of the enemy of my country, knowing that *this is the ship that preserves us*, and that this is the ship on which we sail and only while she prospers can we make our friends. These are the rules by which I make our city great. (Our emphasis)

7 In this passage we can clearly see that Creon's proclamation of the edict arises out of his *protective instinct* towards the city of Thebes. Moreover, the passage also suggests that Creon's protective instinct towards the city is based on a certain relationship to the divine.[19] However, for us to be fully aware of everything that is involved in Creon's protective instinct (and therefore in the proclamation of the edict resulting from it), the passage in 178-91 has to be supplemented by another one, which occurs a few lines below (213-4); here the chorus say in response to Creon's edict, "... and you have power to observe every rule with regard to the dead and to us who are alive" (νόμῳ δὲ χρῆσθαι παντί, τοῦτ᾽ ἔνεστί σοι / καὶ τῶν θανόντων χὠπόσοι ζῶμεν πέρι). Through these words, we realize that the chorus, who represent the citizens of Thebes, recognize Creon's authority over the city and consequently the validity of the edict just proclaimed.[20] Of course, the authority granted to Creon by the people of Thebes[21] is not unrelated to the fact that his power over the city is invested in him by the gods, more precisely by Zeus; on the contrary, it is plain – from 155-61 and the passage now quoted – that *the people of Thebes recognize Creon's power because it has a divine origin* (more precisely because it derives from the highest authority of the king of the Olympian gods). Ultimately, the instinct of protection with respect to Thebes, which characterizes Creon's attitude when proclaiming his edict, results from the fact that he is seeking to execute a power entrusted to him by the people of the city, the legitimacy of which comes from the authority of Zeus; in this sense, the execution of Creon's power can be understood as a way of meeting the expectations the people of Thebes have of him and of fulfilling the political responsibility imposed on him by Zeus. So Creon's *edict*, which is a consequence of his preservation instinct regarding the city of Thebes, is *ultimately rooted in Creon's relationship to the divine*, more precisely to the god who gives mortal kings their legal and political authority over the surface of the earth.[22]

8 The analysis carried out so far makes even clearer what the nature of the conflict between Antigone and Creon is. We have already pointed out that it is a religious conflict (in other terms, a conflict between two forms of relationship between the human and the divine); but now we can determine more accurately the contours of this religious conflict. So, according to what we have just seen, the conflict between Antigone and Creon amounts to a *conflict* between, on the one hand, Antigone's *love* for Polynices and her *religious devotion* to Hades and, on the other hand, Creon's *instinct to protect the city* and his *political and religious duty* as a representative of the people which is invested in him by Zeus. In this sense, the conflict between Antigone and Creon amounts to a conflict

between two forms of relationship to two different gods (more precisely between a form of *relationship to Zeus* and a form of *relationship to Hades*). In other words, Sophocles' *Antigone* stages a conflict within Greek religion itself (within the context of the different types of relationship to different gods that Greek religion allows). Consequently, the conflict between Antigone and Creon is also a conflict between the *spatial regions of the world* dominated by each one of these gods (notably τὸ ἄνω or the world above, which is overseen by Zeus, and τὸ κάτω or the world below, ruled by Hades).[23] We do not mean by this that each one of the two protagonists of the play has no respect for the deity whom the other protagonist primarily relates to. Instead, we mean that each one of the protagonists has a different conception of the role of each one of the deities in the resolution of the conflict regarding the burial of Polynices. For Antigone, it is Hades' demand (namely that Polynices should have funeral rites) that should take precedence; for her the burial of the dead is a subject that concerns Hades.[24] For Creon, however, what should take precedence is the obligation that Zeus and the people of Thebes have imposed on him; in Creon's view, the problem of the burial of Polynices also concerns the world above, for it envolves honour issues (i.e. the deceased's behaviour when he was alive)[25] and aspects connected to the control of the political situation in Thebes.[26] Creon's behaviour towards Hades is less respectful than Antigone's attitude in relation to Zeus;[27] but that does not mean that Creon does not recognize that Hades has legitimate authority over the kingdom of the dead, for the hatred and the sarcasm that Creon shows in some passages in which he refers to Hades are addressed to Antigone (insofar as she is someone who unconditionally follows her devotion to this god) and not to the god of the underworld himself.[28]

III

9 So far, we have tried to show the religious character of the attitudes of both protagonists. However, we have yet to explain how and why the two protagonists are in conflict with one another. One thing is already clear from what we have seen up to this point, namely that the conflict between Antigone and Creon centres on the question of what the right religious stance regarding the burial of Polynices is. Now, one of the main factors causing the conflict over the burial of Polynices is that the positions of both protagonists are characterized by their *boldness* and *insolence*. The text of the *Antigone* points to this quite plainly in relation to both Antigone and Creon. In 480-3 the insolence of Antigone's act is strongly emphasized by Creon:

> αὕτη δ' **ὑβρίζειν** μὲν τότ' ἐξηπίστατο,
> νόμους ὑπερβαίνουσα τοὺς προκειμένους·
> **ὕβρις** δ', ἐπεὶ δέδρακεν, ἥδε δευτέρα,
> τούτοις ἐπαυχεῖν καὶ δεδρακυῖαν γελᾶν.
> This girl knew well how to be *insolent* then, transgressing the established laws; and after her action, this was a second *insolence*, to exult in this and to laugh at the thought of having done it. (Our emphasis)

10 We should note that Creon's reference to the twofold character of Antigone's insolence aims to emphasize how outrageous her act is for him; between the two levels of Antigone's insolence highlighted in the passage, the most fundamental one to the unfolding of the play's plot is undoubtedly the fact that she buried her brother.[29] In turn, the excessive nature of Creon's stubbornness and inflexibility is revealed in 705-11, when

his son Haemon – seeking to persuade him that Antigone does not deserve punishment – directs the following words to him:

> μή νυν ἓν ἦθος μοῦνον ἐν σαυτῷ φόρει,
> ὡς φὴς σύ, κοὐδὲν ἄλλο, τοῦτ᾽ ὀρθῶς ἔχειν.
> ὅστις γὰρ αὐτὸς ἢ φρονεῖν μόνος δοκεῖ,
> ἢ γλῶσσαν, ἣν οὐκ ἄλλος, ἢ ψυχὴν ἔχειν,
> οὗτοι διαπτυχθέντες ὤφθησαν κενοί.
> ἀλλ᾽ ἄνδρα, κεἴ τις ᾖ σοφός, τὸ μανθάνειν
> πόλλ᾽ αἰσχρὸν οὐδὲν καὶ τὸ μὴ τείνειν **ἄγαν**.
> Do not wear the garment of one mood only, thinking that your opinion and no other must be right! For whoever think that they themselves alone have sense, or have a power of speech or an intelligence that no other has, these people when they are laid open are found to be empty. It is not shameful for a man, even if he is wise, often to learn things and not to resist *excessively*. (Our emphasis)

11 The passage quoted is significant in many respects. In the present context, the passage is particularly important because it shows that, like Antigone, Creon is characterized by na excessive behaviour; while the excess of Antigone's attitude has to do with her *defiance of authority and the laws of the city*,[30] the excess of Creon's behaviour is related to the *inflexibility in the exercise of his political power and in the application of the edict that he himself has proclaimed*. Above all, in line with what we have seen, Antigone's and Creon's excess is that of their *attachment to the religious principles on which their behaviour is founded* (i.e. to the *deities* they are associated with).

12 Now, as a result of the excessive nature of the protagonists' behaviour, each one of them will seek to challenge the validity of the other's position; we could call this the protagonists' *mutual disavowal*. As we have seen, this mutual disavowal has a *religious character*, for each one of the protagonists wants to deny the legitimacy of the relationship that the other has established to divinity (to the extent that it is this relationship that is the basis of their opposing behaviours). Antigone's disavowal of Creon's religious stance and his behaviour's divine foundation is manifest in 450-60:

> **οὐ** γάρ τί μοι **Ζεὺς** ἦν ὁ κηρύξας τάδε,
> **οὐδ**᾽ ἡ ξύνοικος τῶν κάτω θεῶν **Δίκη**
> τοιούσδ᾽ ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ὥρισεν νόμους,
> οὐδὲ σθένειν τοσοῦτον ᾠόμην τὰ σὰ
> κηρύγμαθ᾽ ὥστ᾽ ἄγραπτα κἀσφαλῆ θεῶν
> νόμιμα δύνασθαι **θνητά γ᾽ ὄνθ**᾽ ὑπερδραμεῖν.
> οὐ γάρ τι νῦν γε κἀχθές, ἀλλ᾽ ἀεί ποτε
> ζῇ ταῦτα, κοὐδεὶς οἶδεν ἐξ ὅτου ᾽φάνη.
> τούτων ἐγὼ οὐκ ἔμελλον, **ἀνδρὸς** οὐδενὸς
> φρόνημα δείσασ᾽, ἐν θεοῖσι τὴν δίκην
> δώσειν ...
> Yes, for *it was not Zeus* who made this proclamation, *nor was it Justice* who lives with the gods below that established such laws among men, nor did I think your proclamations strong enough to have power to overrule, *mortal as they were*, the unwritten and unfailing ordinances of the gods. For these have life, not simply today and yesterday, but forever, and no one knows how long ago they were revealed. For this I did not intend to pay the penalty among the gods for fear of any *man's* pride. (Our emphasis)

13 Before commenting on this, let us first look at two passages where Creon seeks to disavow the piety of Antigone's act. In 514 Creon tells Antigone that her burial of Polynices is an impious act towards Eteocles; Creon asks Antigone, "Then how can you render the other

[sc. Polynices] a grace which is impious towards him [sc. Eteocles]?" (πῶς δῆτ᾽ ἐκείνῳ δυσσεβῆ τιμᾷς χάριν;) In 777-80, after the argument exchange between Haemon and his father, the latter tells the chorus,

> κἀκεῖ [sc. πετρώδει ... ἐν κατώρυχι] τὸν Ἅιδην, ὃν μόνον σέβει θεῶν,
> αἰτουμένη που τεύξεται τὸ μὴ θανεῖν,
> ἢ γνώσεται γοῦν ἀλλὰ τηνικαῦθ᾽ ὅτι
> **πόνος περισσός** ἐστι τἀν Ἅιδου σέβειν.
> And there [sc. in a rocky cavern] she can pray to Hades, the only one among the gods whom she respects, and perhaps be spared from death; or else she will learn, at that late stage, that it is *wasted effort* to show regard for things in Hades. (Our emphasis)

14 Let us look at the three passages (450-60, 514, 777-80) together, to better understand the nature and manner of execution of what we have termed the mutual disavowal of the play's protagonists. In 450-60 Antigone flatly denies that Creon's edict has *any divine legitimacy*. Indeed, Antigone says the edict proclaimed by Creon does not derive from Justice (inhabitant of the underworld)[31] or from Zeus (the ruler of the world above the ground). For Antigone, Creon's edict is equivalent to a *purely human law* (a mortal law);[32] according to her words, Creon's edict is just an expression of his individual pride (cf. 458-9) and has no objective basis in what is truly divine and should be recognized as legitimate by the community. Antigone maintains that the truly divine laws or customs (the unwritten and eternal laws or customs)[33] are those according to which the dead – especially the dead in the family – must be given funeral rites. We should make it clear that Antigone does not challenge the authority of Zeus,[34] the god on which Creon's political function and the legal validity of his edict are founded; instead, as we shall see more clearly, she calls into question the fact that Creon, by prohibiting the burial of Polynices, is correctly interpreting the role of political leader with which he is invested by Zeus (cf. 450). In turn, Creon accuses Antigone of impiety towards Eteocles because she has buried Polynices (cf. 514). However, Creon does not claim that Antigone's act is totally devoid of religiosity, since he recognizes that Antigone has followed her devotion and obedience to Hades and to custos relating to the burial of the dead in the family (cf. 777); yet Creon seeks to *downplay the importance of Antigone's religious attitude* as something doomed to failure.[35] As we can see, the two forms of disavowal are slightly different. On the one hand, Antigone suggests that Creon's position is only deceptively religious; on the other hand, Creon maintains that Antigone's behaviour is based on a minor and useless religiosity. However, in essence, both forms of disavowal are similar in that each one of them claims that the relationship to the divine it is grounded on is more truly religious.

15 According to the analysis made thus far, the disavowal is mutual. As we have suggested just now, in order for each protagonist to try to disavow the other, they must have the conviction that their religious point of view is the more correct one. The passages in the *Antigone* where mutual accusations of madness occur between the protagonists of the play are absolutely crucial for us here; they allow us to perceive not only a further development of the mutual disavowal between Antigone and Creon but also the fact that both protagonists claim to have the correct relationship with the divine (one which rests on their ability to see things as they really are).[36] In 469-70 Antigone addresses Creon in a way that implies that the conflict between their opposing religious attitudes amounts to a *clash between two forms of claim to religious truth*, leading to a *mutual accusation of religious foolishness*: "And if you think my actions foolish, that amounts to a charge of folly by a fool!" (σοὶ δ᾽ εἰ δοκῶ νῦν μῶρα δρῶσα τυγχάνειν, / σχεδόν τι μώρῳ μωρίαν

ὀφλισκάνω.) The lines now quoted, although spoken by Antigone, are enough to prove that the accusation of folly is mutual; in any case, in 561-2 Creon accuses Antigone – and also Ismene, though in a weaker fashion – of being mad: "I say that one of these girls has only now been revealed as mad, but the other has been so from birth." (τὼ παῖδέ φημι τώδε τὴν μὲν ἀρτίως / ἄνουν πεφάνθαι, τὴν δ᾽ ἀφ᾽ οὗ τὰ πρῶτ᾽ ἔφυ.) Creon accuses Ismene of madness since she wants to share the punishment of his sister (cf. 526-60); the one Creon refers to as mad from birth is undoubtedly Antigone.

16 The conflict between Antigone and Creon is therefore a clash between two forms of *religious intelligence*, each one denouncing the other as false and inadequate and implicitly asserting itself as the most true and suitable.[37] The fact that the conflict is between two forms of religious intelligence takes us to the text of the first stasimon, where the main character is human intelligence.[38] Indeed, there are several allusions to Antigone and Creon throughout the first stasimon; but it is with the content of the second antístrofe that the religious conflict between the two protagonists of the *Antigone* is more closely connected. When we look at the religious character of Antigone's and Creon's attitudes individually, their behaviour seems to correspond to a balanced form of reconciliation between human laws or customs and the justice of the gods (this reconciliation is expressed in lines 368-70).[39] However, now that we see more clearly that their attitude amounts to a conflict between two irreconcilable modes of religious intelligence, we realize that this balance is only apparent (otherwise the two forms of reconciliation between the human and the divine would not collide). Because both forms of reconciliation are excessive and claim to be true, each invades the other's territory and tries to expel or annihilate the other; there is no middle ground between prohibiting the burial of Polynices and burying him. In this sense, the religious conflict between Antigone and Creon is related instead to 370-1; in fact, the conflict between them results from an excess and intransigence (cf. 371: τόλμας χάριν) which can lead to the destruction of the city or to exile (cf. 370: ἄπολις); moreover, it is a conflict the excess or intransigence of which derives from human intelligence, and it is also from human intelligence (cf. 365-6: σοφόν τι τὸ μηχανόεν / τέχνας)[40] that evil (cf. 367: κακόν) and an eventual destruction of the city or a going into exile derive.

IV

17 The picture we are drawing of the religious conflict between Antigone and Creon is still incomplete, and to complete it we will have to examine what we could call the *resolution* of such a conflict. The resolution of the religious conflict will reveal fundamental aspects of the religious conflict *itself*.

18 The bulk of Sophocles' play is concerned with what we have defined as the religious conflict between its two protagonists (i.e. two opposing and irreconcilable forms of relating to and understanding the divine). However, near the end of the play, the religious conflict is resolved, namely when Antigone is condemned to isolation in the rocky cave and ends up dying by her own hands (cf. e.g. 885-6, 1220-5). The resolution of the conflict is uneven, for Antigone is punished and commits suicide, while Creon remains alive and apparently continues to rule the city (cf. 1334-5). Yet, such a resolution is negative in the sense that the protagonists' religious positions are not able to reach an agreement; instead, one of the conflicting protagonists (Antigone) is isolated and annihilates herself and the other one (Creon) gains an acute awareness of his failure and

realizes that he is guilty of his own misfortune (cf. 1261-9, 1317-25, 1339-42). In fact, neither of the protagonists emerges victorious from their religious conflict. On the one hand, Antigone is punished and the force of her belief in her religious conduct is not unshakable (cf. 921-8). On the other hand, despite being the person who punishes Antigone, Creon becomes desperate[41] and his future as ruler of the city is uncertain.

19 The resolution of the conflict between Antigone and Creon is uneven also in terms of the protagonists' degree of awareness with respect to the inadequacy of their understanding of the divine (viz. in terms of the extent of the protagonists' tragic learning). Let us first read the most relevant passages in this regard. There are several passages where Creon's tragic learning is expressed, but in none of them does this appear as intensely as in 1261-9:

> ἰὼ
> **φρενῶν δυσφρόνων ἁμαρτήματα**
> στερεὰ θανατόεντ᾽,
> ὦ κτανόντας τε καὶ
> θανόντας βλέποντες ἐμφυλίους.
> ὤμοι **ἐμῶν ἄνολβα βουλευμάτων**.
> ἰὼ παῖ, νέος νέῳ ξὺν μόρῳ,
> αἰαῖ αἰαῖ,
> ἔθανες, ἀπελύθης,
> **ἐμαῖς** οὐδὲ σαῖσι **δυσβουλίαις**.
> Woe for the *errors of my mistaken mind*, obstinate and fraught with death! You look on kindred that have done and suffered murder! Alas for the *disaster caused by my decisions*! Ah, my son, young and newly dead, alas, alas, you died, you were cut off, *through my folly*, not through your own![42] (Our emphasis)

20 As can be seen, Creon recognizes his mistakes (cf. 1261), guilt (cf. 1265) and madness (cf. 1269). He is aware that his decisions have led to divine punishment, to the death of his loved ones.[43] As to Antigone, she is in general quite convinced of her position and remains so almost to the end of her life, so that the tragic learning is less present in the passages that concern her than in those concerning Creon. However, there is an exception, which is enough for us to maintain that Antigone too learns something from her own misfortune; she asks (921-8):

> ποίαν **παρεξελθοῦσα** δαιμόνων δίκην;
> τί χρή με τὴν δύστηνον ἐς θεοὺς ἔτι
> βλέπειν; τίν᾽ αὐδᾶν ξυμμάχων; ἐπεί γε δὴ
> τὴν δυσσέβειαν εὐσεβοῦσ᾽ ἐκτησάμην.
> ἀλλ᾽ εἰ μὲν οὖν τάδ᾽ ἐστὶν **ἐν θεοῖς καλά**,
> παθόντες ἂν ξυγγνοῖμεν **ἡμαρτηκότες**·
> εἰ δ᾽ οἵδ᾽ ἁμαρτάνουσι, μὴ πλείω κακὰ
> πάθοιεν ἢ καὶ δρῶσιν ἐκδίκως ἐμέ.
> What justice of the gods *have I transgressed*? Why must I still look to the gods, unhappy one? Whom can I call on to protect me? For by acting piously I have been convicted of impiety. Well, if this is *approved among the gods*, I should forgive them for what I have suffered, *since I have done wrong*; but if they are the wrongdoers, may they not suffer worse evils than those they are unjustly inflicting upon me! (Our emphasis)

21 As we can see, Antigone admits the possibility of having transgressed divine justice (i.e. that her action may be founded on a poor comprehension of the divine). Antigone's words are almost impious, although paradoxically she wants to show her piety (cf. 923-4). The hopeless misery that assails Antigone makes her feel abandoned by men (cf. 914-20) and

even by the gods. Yet, in the second half of the passage (cf. 925-8) Antigone's speech changes from almost impiety to an extreme piety. Antigone is willing to accept Creon's punishment if it is approved by the gods.[44] At the same time, Antigone shows her conviction that Thebes' citizens (and therefore also Creon) will pay for the injustice they are committing against her, should they be the ones who are acting wrongly in the eyes of the gods.[45] We might think that Antigone's doubt in 925-6 about the correctness of her own attitude is no more than a small drop in a vast sea of certainty on her part as to the appropriateness of her action.[46] In any case, Antigone's doubt is genuine (albeit momentary) and that is enough for her to have a glimpse of tragic learning, that is, an insight into the fact that her action may be based on a misunderstanding of divine laws and that her punishment is therefore fair.

22 Consequently, both protagonists of Sophocles' *Antigone* end up admitting that their religious attitude is (in the case of Antigone: may be) *wrong*, that their relationship to the divine is (in the case of Antigone: may be) based on a *misunderstanding of divine laws* and that this is what leads (in the case of Antigone: may lead) to the misery of both. The resolution of the religious conflict between both protagonists thus reveals something decisive about how it arose. Based on what we have just seen, the conflict between Antigone and Creon takes place because the two misconceptions of the divine – and the two religious behaviours resulting from them – seek to annihilate each other.[47] We can now see better that the religious conflict between Antigone and Creon corresponds to a clash between two different forms of *relationship to* and *conception of* the divine – and not simply to a clash between two different divine laws or forms of divine justice, between two different types of gods and the regions of the world dominated by them.[48] In this sense, the inability to harmonize the two different divine principles (more precisely, the two different types of reconciliation between the laws of the land and the justice of the gods) – which is the cause of the generation of the conflict between Antigone and Creon – stems from the *limitations* or *narrowness* of each one of the protagonists' religious conception.[49]

V

23 Another important aspect should be stressed regarding the protagonists' tragic learning (i.e. the fact that they become aware of their error through their misfortunes). Recognition by Antigone and Creon of their mistake already involves the acceptance that they are guilty of what befalls them and the admission that the punishment they receive is just. However, the most important thing to determine at this point is who the agent of the protagonists' misfortune – i.e. the being from whom they receive their tragic learning – is. Lines 618-25 may provide an answer to this question:

> εἰδότι δ᾽ οὐδὲν ἕρπει,
> **πρὶν πυρὶ θερμῷ πόδα τις προσαύσῃ**.
> σοφίᾳ γὰρ ἔκ του
> κλεινὸν ἔπος πέφανται,
> **τὸ κακὸν δοκεῖν ποτ᾽ ἐσθλὸν**
> **τῷδ᾽ ἔμμεν ὅτῳ φρένας**
> **θεὸς ἄγει πρὸς ἄταν·**
> πράσσει δ᾽ ὀλίγος τὸν χρόνον ἐκτὸς ἄτας.

24 ... and a man knows nothing when it comes upon him, *until he scalds his foot in blazing fire*. For in wisdom someone has revealed the famous saying, that *evil seems good to him whose*

mind the god is driving towards disaster; but the small man fares throughout his time without disaster.[50] (Our emphasis)

25 The lines now quoted state that human learning is tragic in the sense that it only happens when human beings suffer and fall into disgrace (this is what seems to be implied in the image of 619).[51] In addition, the lines above maintain that what drives human beings to disaster is the fact that bad actions appear good to them (cf. 622-4). However, the most crucial point is that the same lines indicate that this disaster originating from the confusion between good and evil is actually *caused by a god* (viz. it is a god who makes human beings mix up evil with good and thus fall into disgrace).[52] Because it is the chorus who utter these lines, their content presents a conception of the causes of human misery that is shared by the Athenian community. As usually happens, the chorus' words correspond to a generalization of the meaning of the events in the play[53] – a generalization that allows us to place such events in the context of the Greek worldview and understand them in its light. At first glance, the chorus speak only of the cause of what is happening to Antigone, since lines 618-25 immediately follow the sentencing of Antigone to death.[54] Yet, due to the use of tragic irony[55] the chorus' words in 618-25 also anticipate the cause of what will happen to Creon later in the play. Indeed, the very sequence of the play shows quite clearly that Creon's misfortune also stems from a madness (cf. 1261-9) caused by a god (cf. 1271-6, 1284-92).

26 However, the question is which of the gods is the cause of the protagonists' disgrace. In Sophocles' *Antigone* no clear-cut answer to this question is provided. Throughout the play, many references are made to the gods. Nevertheless, there is no consistent stance as to which god is causing Antigone's and Creon's disgrace. In the *Antigone* the following gods are suggested as the cause of what befalls Antigone and/or Creon: Zeus (cf. 2, 127-6, 604-14), Hades (cf. 575, 1074-6, 1284-5)/Pluto (cf. 1199-200), the Erinyes (cf. 603, 1074-6)/ the Fates (cf. 986-7)/the Harms (cf. 1103-4), Justice (cf. 853-6), Ruin (cf. 1096-7) and Hecate (cf. 1119-200). In addition, other more imprecise formulas are used by Sophocles to allude to the divine causes of the protagonists' misfortunes: references to the gods in general (cf. 582-5, 925-6, 1349-50), the infernal gods in general (cf. 601-3, 1070-1) or the gods above in general (cf. 1072-3) and the use of the rather vague phrase θεῶν τις (cf. 594-7) or the noun θεός without a definite article (cf. 623-4, 1271-5). In 781-800 a reference is made to Eros and Aphrodite as divine causes of Haemon's anger and future misfortune. Twice the chorus evoke the Bacchic god (Dionysus) as the dispenser of joy for the victory against Polynices and his allies (cf. 150-4) or as the god who can purify the city from the pollution caused by the refusal to bury Polynices and the sentencing to death of Antigone (cf. 1115-52, and also 1091-114).

27 Now, this vagueness as to which god is responsible for the ruin of Antigone and Creon is quite revealing on many levels. First, it means that several gods are seen as responsible (or potentially responsible) for both protagonists' misery. Furthermore, it means that Antigone's and Creon's misfortune may be caused by a concerted action of many gods (cf. 1071-6, 1199-200).[56] Second, the vagueness referred to above indicates that the religious conflict between Antigone and Creon results in a form of *insolence towards the divine as a whole*.[57] Third, this cohesion (viz. absence of division) in the realm of the divine shows that the conflict between the two types of gods – i.e. the two regions of the world dominated by those different types of gods – comes about in the context of the *subjective relationship of each one of the protagonists to the divine and their respective clash*.[58] Finally, the vagueness about which of the gods is the cause of Antigone's and Creon's misfortune is

also *vagueness about the content of their tragic learning* (about the faults they have committed and what they should do to prevent new errors in the future). In fact, when Antigone momentarily admits the possibility of failure (cf. 925-6) her formulation is rather abstract – which reveals that she does not realize exactly where she has failed and what she could have done differently. In turn, Creon realizes that he was wrong (cf. e.g. 1261-9). However, no answer is given in the *Antigone* to the question of what would have happened if Creon had authorized the burial of Polynices. Could it be that this would have raised the wrath of Zeus, for Creon would then not have asserted the legal and political authority that had been invested in him by the god? Could it be that the lack of authority on the part of Creon would have encouraged disobedience on the part of other citizens and a takeover by internal forces that were hostile to Creon's leadership?[59] Haemon and Tiresias, who advise Creon to allow the burial of Polynices and not to imprison Antigone for trying to do it (cf. 631-765, 988-1090), do not seem to know the answers to these questions. In fact, Haemon and Tiresias do not even address these issues. However, their silence in this regard should not make us fail to raise these questions and become aware of the impossibility of answering them on the basis of the *Antigone*. Consequently, due to the vagueness as to the exact divine cause of Antigone's and Creon's misfortune, the learning of the two main characters of Sophocles' *Antigone* proves to be *tragic*, since it does not allow them to understand which god exactly makes them fall into disgrace or which particular course of action they should have followed in the past or (in the case of Creon only) should follow in the future.[60]

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NOTES

1. G. STEINER, "Variations sur Créon", in J. DE ROMILLY (Ed.), *Sophocle*, Vandoeuvres-Genève, Fondation Hardt, 1982, 103.
2. V. EHRENBERG, *Sophocles and Pericles*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1954, 24-5.
3. On the different types of conflict Sophocles' *Antigone* has been identified with, see EHRENBERG, *Sophocles*, 32-3; L. A. MACKAY, "Antigone, Coriolanus, and Hegel", *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 93 (1962), 166; P. RICOEUR, *Soi-même comme un autre*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1990, 283, 288 n. 1; M. H. ROCHA PEREIRA (Ed.), *Sófocles: Antígona*, Lisboa, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1992 (5th edn), 26-30; C. P. SEGAL, "Sophocles' Praise of Man and the Conflicts of the *Antigone*", *Arion: A Journal of the Humanities and the Classics* 3 (1964), 47; STEINER, "Créon", 83, 86 n. 15, 87-8.

4. Cf. C. M. BOWRA, *Sophoclean Tragedy*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1944, 366; A. BROWN (Ed.), *Sophocles: Antigone*, Warminster, Aris & Phillips, 1987, 6 n. 25; EHRENBERG, *Sophocles*, 24, 33 n. 2; G. M. KIRKWOOD, *A Study of Sophoclean Drama*, Ithaca NY, Cornell University Press, 1958, 126; ROCHA PEREIRA, *Sófocles*, 13, 18, 22-3 n. 30.

5. Cf. e.g. BROWN, *Sophocles*, 5; SEGAL, "Sophocles' Praise of Man", 46; "*Antigone*: Death and Love, Hades and Dionysus", in E. SEGAL (Ed.), *Oxford Readings in Greek Tragedy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1983, 173.

6. M. GRIFFITH (Ed.), *Sophocles: Antigone*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, 47 n. 131, and RICOEUR, *Soi-même*, 282, point to the fact that a religious conflict is at stake in the *Antigone*, but they do this merely in passing and do not attempt to determine the precise contours of it.

7. The text and translation of the *Antigone* are quoted from H. LLOYD-JONES (Ed.), *Sophocles*, Vol. II: *Antigone, Women of Trachis, Philoctetes, Oedipus at Colonus*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1994 (repr. with corrs 1998).

8. See also e.g. 89.

9. This will only become plain after the proclamation of Creon's edict in 162-210.

10. The fact that burial rites have a religious significance, although they are closely associated with honouring the family, is the common Greek view – see e.g. BROWN, *Sophocles*, 8 n. 32; EHRENBERG, *Sophocles*, 30; V. C. ROSIVACH, "On Creon, *Antigone* and Not Burying the Dead", *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 126 (1986), 209.

11. It should be noted that the chorus are, among other things, the spokesmen for the community's point of view – see notably R. W. B. BURTON, *The Chorus in Sophocles' Tragedies*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1980, 85; GRIFFITH, *Sophocles*, 11.

12. Cf. 184, 280-9, 304-5. On the religious character of Creon's legal and political authority, see especially GRIFFITH, *Sophocles*, 28-9, 32 n. 97, 39 n. 118, 47; B.-H. LÉVY, *Le testament de Dieu*, Paris, Éditions Grasset, 1979, 87; MACKAY, "Antigone", 166, 168; K. REINHARDT, *Sophocles*, trans. H. D. Harvey, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1947 (4th edn 1979), 77-8; STEINER, "Créon", 90. B. KNOX, "Sophocles and the Polis", in DE ROMILLY, *Sophocle*, 14-5 n. 14, maintains that Creon evolves from a religious stance to a non-religious one; and SEGAL, "Sophocles' Praise of Man", 61, completely denies Creon's religious dimension.

13. As we shall see better below, the gods worshiped by Antigone are distinct from those who legitimize Creon's political and legal authority.

14. Just before this Creon says to her that Polynices, as a traitor to the city, would not be buried in Theban soil (cf. 516, 518).

15. He has just said to her that an enemy of the city could never be considered a friend, not even at the time of his burial (cf. 522).

16. On φίλος and ἐχθρός in the *Antigone*, see notably GRIFFITH, *Sophocles*, 40 n. 122; SEGAL, "Sophocles' Praise of Man", 52.

17. Cf. 74-5, 521, 542, 1068, 1070-1, 1224.

18. Creon says this in the context of his proclamation of the edict prohibiting the burial of Polynices.

19. See his invocation of Zeus in 184.

20. Lines 213-4 reflect the absolute authority given to Creon by the people of Thebes: he is said to have legitimate power to legislate with respect to both the dead and the living.

21. Cf. also e.g. 78-9.

22. On the question of pollution, see 172, 776 and 1042-4. Creon's concern with this issue clearly shows that his mission as leader of Thebes has a religious character.

23. Cf. 74-5, 194-7, 450-5, 521, 542, 890, 1068-76, 1224. See also SEGAL, "*Antigone*", 175.

24. Cf. e.g. 519.

25. Cf. e.g. 516.

26. We should not forget that Creon's intransigence towards Antigone's behaviour is also intended to convey his strength as leader of the city to the members of Theban society and to show any potential rebels among Theban citizens that their attitude will not be tolerated by him (cf. 672-6). On this particular issue, see e.g. BURTON, *The Chorus*, 88, and also 89-90.
27. Cf. e.g. 450.
28. Cf. 575, 777-80.
29. When referring to Antigone's laughter, Creon is clearly exaggerating and wanting to show that her act is terribly defiant. He probably has her behaviour in 443 and 448 in mind, where it is obvious that she is proud of having buried Polynices. Nevertheless, she is not at all laughing at the fact of having done it.
30. Cf. 449, 473-6, 480-3.
31. Cf. 451-2.
32. Cf. 455.
33. Cf. 454-5, 456-7.
34. See notably MACKAY, "Antigone", 167; R. P. WINNINGTON-INGRAM, *Sophocles: An Interpretation*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1980, 169.
35. Antigone's attitude is doomed to failure when compared with Creon's own religious stance, which is the one that she should have adopted (cf. 777, 779-80).
36. In addition to the passages quoted below in this paragraph, cf. e.g. the use of φρονεῖν in 557 and that of ὀρθῶς in 685.
37. According to R. LAURIOLA, "Wisdom and Foolishness: A Further Point in the Interpretation of Sophocles' Antigone", *Hermes* 135 (2007), 391, a contrast is at stake in the *Antigone* between two different points of view concerning what having τὸ φρονεῖν means.
38. Cf. 347-8, 355-6, 360-1, 363, 365-6; see also 68, 99, 383, 557, 562, 683, 707, 710, 727, 754, 755, 904, 1026, 1050, 1051, 1090, 1098, 1242, 1261, 1269, 1348, 1353, where νοῦς, ἀφροσύνη, φρονεῖν, σοφός, ἀβουλία and its cognates are employed in connection with Antigone and Creon. See also GRIFFITH, *Sophocles*, 41-3.
39. On the meaning of 368-70, see especially GRIFFITH, *Sophocles*, 189, and KNOX, "Sophocles", 31. LLOYDJONES, *Sophocles*, 36, retains the lesson of the manuscripts (i.e. παρείρων instead of γεραίρων) against the majority of the other editors of the text – such as BROWN, *Sophocles*, 51, GRIFFITH, *Sophocles*, 189, R. C. JEBB (Ed.), *Sophocles: The Plays and Fragments*, Part 3: *The Antigone*, Cambridge, At the University Press, 1888, 76-7, J. C. KAMERBEEK, *The Plays of Sophocles*, Part III: *The Antigone*, Leiden, E. Brill, 1978, 85, and ROCHA PEREIRA, *Sófocles*, 103 n. 37 – which takes the interconnection between the laws of the land and the justice of the gods to a deeper level.
40. Cf. also 374: φρονῶν.
41. Cf. 1308-9, 1329-32, where Creon expresses his wish to die.
42. Cf. 1271-6, 1317-25, 1339-41, and also 710, 723, 725, 726, 1031, 1353, where other characters of the play speak of μανθάνειν when addressing Creon.
43. Lines 1261-9 concern the death of Creon's son Haemon, but the same holds true as regards the death of his wife Eurydice (cf. 1317-20).
44. It should be borne in mind that in 926 and 927 Antigone uses the plural, which means that she may be speaking on behalf of her brother too – in which case παθόντες ἂν ξυγγνοῖμεν ἡμαρτηκότες are not instances of the so-called poetic or tragic plural – and that she is saying that the punishment of both is at the hands of Thebes' citizens, who are represented by the city's king (cf. 907, where Antigone indicates that she acted βίᾳ πολιτῶν).
45. This is implied in 927; cf. 925.
46. ROCHA PEREIRA, *Sófocles*, 19-21, gives a survey of the different positions on this matter, but she ends up pointing to the fact that Antigone's last words before leaving the scene (cf. 943) emphasize the justice of the heroine's action.

47. Of course, it is not the fact that both protagonists admit their mistake, or the possibility thereof, which determines that such an error occurs, since their religious attitude would be wrong even if neither of them recognized it. However, the fact that both recognize at least the possibility of being mistaken not only reinforces the idea that there is an error but also shows the dramatic impact of this idea: that it is crucial in the unwinding of the events in the drama and in how these events determine the awareness of its main characters.

48. We are not saying that the conflict between the two different types of gods does not exist in reality but rather that in the *Antigone* this conflict is always presented from the particular perspective of each one of the characters in the drama.

49. RICOEUR, *Soi-même*, 284, referring to Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and also to his *Lectures on Aesthetics*, speaks of an "étroitesse de l'angle d'engagement de chacun des personnages" of the *Antigone*.

50. See also 278-9, 594-7, 601-3, 1271-6, 1284-92.

51. In this sense, 619 evokes the proverbial expression παθὼν δέ τε νήπιος ἔγνω (cf. HESIOD, *Works and Days* 218; SOLON Fr. 13, 33-5 West; AESCHYLUS, *Eumenides* 377). Cf. also 926, 928, where related proverbial expressions are echoed. For more details on this topic, see GRIFFITH, *Sophocles*, 229, 281.

52. Cf. 623-4.

53. See especially BURTON, *The Chorus*, 85-6; GRIFFITH, *Sophocles*, 21.

54. See the long exchange of arguments among Antigone, Creon and Ismene in 441-581.

55. On tragic irony in the *Antigone*, see notably S. BENARDETE, "A Reading of Sophocles' *Antigone* III", *Interpretation* 5 (1975), 166-7; GRIFFITH, *Sophocles*, 18-21.

56. See also 781-800, where Haemon's behaviour is said to be caused by both Eros and Aphrodite.

57. In 480-1 Creon refers to Antigone's behaviour as involving ὕβρις; by extension, we can say that Creon's behaviour also involves ὕβρις.

58. Cf. 323, 914. In 323 the double occurrence of δοκεῖν alludes to Creon's excessive confidence in his own point of view; see especially LAURIOLA, "Wisdom", 392. But such an excessive confidence is also one of Antigone's characteristic traits.

59. Cf. 659-60 and 672-6.

60. This vagueness about Creon's future is particularly important in the context of the *Antigone*, for he is the only one of the two protagonists in the play to stay alive at the end and it is he who seems to remain the leader of Thebes and who will have to take decisions on the future of the city. In the traditional form of tragedy, the emphasis is placed, among other things, on the fact that tragic events occur *contrary to human expectations* (cf. ARISTOTLE, *Poetics* 1452a3-4); this means that Greek tragedy aims to show that human beings have limitations when it comes to taking control of their lives and that they always learn too late and only through suffering of tragic events – see e.g. BROWN, *Sophocles*, 3; BURTON, *The Chorus*, 89; S. HALLIWELL (Ed.), *Aristotle*, Vol. XXIII: *Poetics*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1995 (repr. with corrs 1999), 16. In the *Antigone*, however, the learning itself is limited or flawed, for it remains unclear not only which god caused the events but also what one should do once one has learned from one's mistakes.

ABSTRACTS

In this study we argue that Sophocles' *Antigone* deals with a conflict between two different ways in which the human relates to the divine. One of the main factors causing this conflict is that the positions taken by the play's main characters are characterized by their boldness and insolence. The conflict between Antigone and Creon takes place because two misconceptions of the divine seek to annihilate each other. The limitations in both Antigone's and Creon's misconceptions are caused by a god. Due to the vagueness as to the exact divine cause of their misconceptions, the learning process of the two main characters in Sophocles' play proves to be tragic, since it does not lead them to understand which god has made them fall into disgrace or which particular course of action they should have followed in the past or should follow henceforth.

Neste estudo, sustentamos que a *Antígona* de Sófocles versa sobre um conflito entre duas diferentes formas de o humano se relacionar com o divino. Um dos principais factores deste conflito tem que ver com o facto de as posições tomadas pelos protagonistas da peça se caracterizarem pela sua insolência. O conflito entre Creonte e Antígona dá-se porque duas concepções inadequadas do divino se procuram anular reciprocamente. As limitações quer da concepção de Antígona quer da de Creonte são causadas por um deus. Em virtude da indeterminação sobre qual é exactamente a causa divina dessas limitações, a aprendizagem dos dois protagonistas da *Antígona* possui um carácter trágico, pois não os leva a compreender que deus os fez cair em desgraça nem como deveriam ter agido anteriormente ou deverão agir daí em diante.

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Palavras-chave: Antígona, conflito, religião, Sófocles, tragédia
Keywords: Antigone, conflict, religion, Sophocles, tragedy

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