Chapter 7

Hegel, the Author and Authority in Sophocles' *Antigone*

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Introduction

In his study of Sophocles' *Antigone* in chapter 6 of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*,[1] Hegel concentrates upon the issue "what distinguishes human law from divine law?" In addressing this question, Hegel identifies four views of law. The first, the law of nature, ties individuals to institutions, not as a matter of morals or convention, but as a phenomenon arising from nature. Natural ties are fixed for eternity. Nature is believed, for example, to have set the feminine and masculine roles. Similarly, nature is considered to have tied the individual to the family. Hegel describes the family as "a *natural* Ethical community" of *immediate* determination (*P Sp* 450). The joining of the individual with the family is called a primitive *Sittlichkeit*. This ethical life is beautiful, coherent, and a unity of the one and the many.

Now, when Spirit passes from this natural unity to a consciousness of the individual in the actual world, philosophical or observing consciousness becomes concerned with the city culture (*P Sp* 441).[2] Spirit passes through a series of shapes which rend the former natural beautiful life asunder. In particular, natural harmony splits up into two further sets of laws: human law and divine law. Hegel suggests that the key to the split between human law and divine law lies in what consciousness understands as the natural difference between male and female. Nature assigns one gender to human law and another gender to divine law (*P Sp* 450). Male consciousness shifts from natural law to human law, whereas female consciousness moves from natural law to divine law.

Hegel makes this natural distinction within a wider thesis with which he introduces his discussion of ethical action in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (464). To begin with, the Greek world is structured by a finite consciousness in contrast to a modern world of infinite spirit where a subject who is self-conscious structures an infinite process of recognition of contradictions

between the subject and the object.[3] The finite spirit which works through both Creon and Antigone just cannot recognize them as contradictory. So, in paragraph 464, Hegel argues that individual and universal (state and family, nature and divinity, male and female) are opposites. Each proves to be "the non-reality, rather than the authentication, of itself and the other." In their opposition, they simply collapse into the absolute being-for-self of purely individual self-consciousness familiar to the modern world's *Recht*. *Recht* is Hegel's fourth view of law.

At the moment of consciousness when Sophocles' play, *Antigone*, is situated, neither human nor divine law recognizes the other as a superior authority.[4] Each knows that human laws involve divine laws, and vice versa. However, each takes itself to be the authoritative interpreter. For example, everyone knows that there is divine law.[5] Creon himself believes that divine law is in harmony with the city because the gods need the city as the locus of the divine laws and the city would dissolve if rebels were allowed to be buried. As Creon puts it when addressing the chorus for the first time, "[f]or I—be Zeus my witness, who sees all things always—would not be silent if I saw ruin, instead of safety, coming to the citizens" (192-93). However, Creon believes that he is the *authorized* interpreter of divine law because, being the head of the pyramid, he is closest to the intent of the author of the promulgated civil laws. According to Hegel, Creon and Antigone feel blindly and immediately obligated to his/her respective laws. Creon and Antigone fail to recognize that each is dependent upon the other for his/her very existence. As a consequence, the former beautiful harmony of natural ethical life collapses into strife. But when each consciousness, toward the end of the play, becomes conscious of its dependency upon the other, so too the reason for the existence of both human and divine law is undermined. An abstract universal world of legal status or *Recht* intervenes between the two, starting with Roman law as elaborated in the *Philosophy of Right*.

The important issue arising out of Hegel's background thesis, then, is why both Creon and Antigone consider their respective laws as authoritative to the exclusion of the other's view of authority? This issue does not suggest, by negative implication, that the critics of Hegel's difference thesis (namely, that the difference between human and divine laws lies in the natural difference of male and female) have been misdirected in their critique.[6] Nor do I wish to suggest that Hegel's own reading of *Antigone* is in error because, as Martin Donougho points out, one does not find a close reading of *Antigone* in any of Hegel's works. In this way, one cannot criticize Hegel for misreading the play.[7] Further, whether Hegel has misread the play is not important. By concentrating upon the issue of why both Creon and Antigone consider their laws as authoritative, I aim to complement the first aspect of

Hegel's general thesis: namely, that finite spirit which works through Creon and Antigone just cannot recognize itself as contradictory.[8]

Hegel supports his general thesis about human and divine laws by asking, in a sense, what makes human law *human* and what makes divine law *divine?* His answer, again, lies upon the acculturated gender difference of male and female. Instead of focusing upon the human and divine characteristics of law, I wish to ask what makes human law authoritative *as law* and what makes divine law authoritative *as law*? Taking my cue from Michel Foucault's "What Is an Author?"[9] I shall concentrate upon the relationship between the author and authority presupposed in the human laws. I shall argue that Antigone's divine law opposes Creon's human law in terms of its presupposed sense of authority. The tribe's members recognize divine laws as resting in an impersonal *Moira* or Fate, common to the Hellenes, as *experienced* through rituals and other personal experiences. The city-state's citizens recognize authoritativeness in terms of whether a law has its source in a juridical representer of an invisible author of the human laws. That invisible author dwells external to a hierarchical pyramid which vertically and horizontally links the author's representers together. The representers, of which the king is foremost, may interpret the human laws in an effort to reach closer to the intent of the invisible author. What becomes important, I shall show, is that philosophic consciousness observes how the characteristics of the two respective senses of authority clash.

The Immediacy of Written and Unwritten Laws

Philosophical consciousness observes a clash of legitimacy using a criterion of immediate acceptance by the ruled. Prior to *action*, a primitive *Sittlichkeit* permeates tribal society. The individual, as represented by Antigone, is unified in a beautiful harmony with the whole, as represented by Creon. Shared customary religious practices contribute to this primitive *Sittlichkeit*. The tribe or clan acts out the practices through rituals which rarely, if ever, need to be expressed, verbally or in writing. The individual immediately or intuitively knows the laws of action. This intuitive knowledge contrasts with a reflective *Sittlichkeit* of Plato's day where a citizen self-consciously exercises practical judgement or *phronesis* in arriving at action, much as Aristotle counsels in book 6 of the *Ethics*. Whether dwelling in a society bound by primitive *Sittlichkeit* or reflective *Sittlichkeit*, the individual is defined, not in terms of consciously posited rules as one observes in a Greek assembly, Roman or modern European law, but in terms of relationships, interactions, and expectations vis-à-vis the social group.

Hegel argues that these relationships support an identity of subject and object (*P Sp* 440, 441), individual and universal (*P Sp* 444). Through assimilation in a familial environment, individual conscience unites with community conscience. Loyalty to the social group makes physical force unnecessary. Such assimilation is exemplified when, faced with a sentence of banishment or death from the tribe's council of elders, an individual "voluntarily" leaves the community or eats the hemlock without ado.

Antigone's loyalty to the divine laws reflects this very sense of immediacy. She unhesitatingly abides by the divine laws, notwithstanding the risk that she will face death at the hands of Creon by doing so: "Die I must,—I knew well (how should I not?)—even without thy edicts," she admits to Creon (458-59). "So," she continues a moment later, "for me to meet this doom is trifling grief" (465). What she fears is not death but *the anguish* that would haunt her if she were to leave her brother's corpse to rot (458-70). In her words, "[n]ot through dread of any human pride would I answer to the gods for breaking *these*" (458).[10] To leave her brother's body unburied "would have grieved me" (468).

Creon experiences this same immediacy concerning the laws although, in his case, his immediacy lies with the city-state's posited or stipulated laws.[11] Creon sees himself as a representative of the city-state, the author of the human laws. He represents its laws. He is a representative because he has been duly appointed as king by the council of elders. The human laws, once formally promulgated in written form, exist "out there" beyond Creon, the representer of the laws. He *must* obey the laws just as all citizens *must* obey them. He possesses no choice in the matter. As a representative of the city-state, he identifies with the latter. It is not surprising that Creon would defend his action so vociferously in terms of the challenge that Antigone poses to everyone's immediate loyalty to the city-state. As Creon admonishes his son, Antigone had challenged that loyalty so necessary to the very existence of the city-state. Creon can say neither "yes" nor "no" to his law's commands any more than can Antigone to hers although this involuntary predicament exists for different reasons in respect to different laws. Creon and Antigone each live immediately under his/her laws. Neither recognizes the other's laws as playing a legitimate role in her/his own.

Again, Hegel explains the clash between Creon and Antigone in terms of the natural difference between the male's association with the city-state and the female's association with the family. The brother/son leaves the immediate, elemental, natural community of the extended family or tribe for the universal city. The mother, wife, and daughter remain at home in the family, whose members comprise the dead as well as the living. The woman of the family intuitively knows the divine laws. She is *not conscious* of them.

Rather, she has "the highest *intuitive* awareness of what is ethical" (*P Sp* 457).[12] The law of the family is an implicit, inner feeling which remains unexposed to the scrutiny of the daylight of consciousness, according to Hegel. Because human laws have evolved from the previous natural *Sittlichkeit* of the extended family or tribe, divine laws are prior in genesis. As such, divine laws belong to the world as a whole and not to any one city-state. Divine laws lie hidden in the background behind the city-state's human laws. Upon death, one is freed from the unrest of the accidents of one's sensuous or individual reality into "the calm of simple universality" (*P Sp* 451).

The fundamental issue, for Hegel, is his grounding of the distinction of human and divine law in nature. Male consciousness shifts from natural to human law, whereas the female consciousness rises from natural to divine law. As a result, the male separates himself from nature, and the woman remains embodied in nature. Furthermore, human law's genesis arises out of the natural world, just as life returns to the netherworld of divine spirit upon the death (a fact of nature) of an individual. Consciousness transforms nature in the real individual world in such a manner that each law complements and confirms the other (*P Sp* 462, 463). For Hegel, justice lies in an equilibrium between the two. When the divine spirit of a deceased body is not properly recognized by living family members, it wreaks vengeance upon the latter so as to restore the rightful place of the universals of the netherworld. The power of the netherworld is thereby integrated into the universal government of the nation. Peace (and justice) results.

Hegel is able to isolate the gender basis of human laws and divine laws because he focuses upon the question what makes human law *human* and what makes divine law *divine?* But my reading of *Antigone* suggests that the crucial issue for philosophic consciousness is the clash between the opposing senses of authority to which each of Creon and Antigone appeal, using Hegel's own criterion of immediacy for differentiation.

The Opposing Senses of Authority

Each of Creon and Antigone possesses an *internal* sense of obligation from *within* him/herself to obey his/her respective laws. Law is still *Gesetz* rather than *Recht*. The two sets of laws "command" each actor to proceed along irreconcilable lines. Neither actor conceives that the other's laws possess some legitimacy within his/her own. The question, then, is why does Creon consider human laws legitimate to the exclusion of the divine and

why does Antigone consider her divine laws legitimate to the exclusion of the human?

Creon is a king of a city into which the pre-political Theban tribes have been organized. He has been duly chosen by the council of elders in contrast to kings who, in an earlier day, inherited their thrones. Against a social/religious practice whereby after a battle, the conqueror is obligated to allow the vanquished to bury the latter's corpses,[13] Creon posits an edict which proscribes anyone from burying the corpse of Polyneices, a rebel against Thebes. Creon unhesitatingly proclaims the edict. He pleads with the chorus that the act of rebellion is evil. The chorus defers to his authority to proclaim the edict. After all, Creon *represents* the city-state, and he acts out of duty in the interest of the city-state. The laws are presumed to be enacted by an invisible author who dwells beyond and above the city-state's pyramidal hierarchy.

I now wish to suggest that Creon presupposed a royalty model of authority.[14] This model claims that legal authority is drawn from a pyramidal hierarchy, with the king at the pinnacle of the pyramid. The pyramid represents the whole city. At each level of the pyramid, there rests a juridical official whose authority to act is drawn directly from the level of the pyramid immediately above. Each level sets down boundaries within which each official may legitimately act. The pyramid is formal in the stoic sense that procedural form, independent of the substance or significations of a law, posits which officials are qualified to act in the name of the whole. The laws speak for the whole, and the duty of an official is to administer the laws. But what is important in this view of authority is the assumption that an invisible author, who stands above and behind the pyramid, has imposed the laws on citizen and official alike.

Creon finds himself playing a *role*, as king, in such a pyramid. Although he is the head of the pyramid, he merely represents the expression (through the laws) of an invisible author. He has been duly chosen by the council of elders. Creon's authority is an *author*-ity. Once he has been duly appointed a representer of the laws' author, his policies and actions cannot be challenged as illegal because, whatever the content of the act, he acts as the laws' author *(author*-itatively). Interestingly, the sentry, Haemon, Teiresias and the chorus all initially recognize Creon as a duly appointed representer of the laws, although one is left to speculate whether the author is god, the city-state, or the city-state as god. Both Haemon and Teiresias begin their pleading with Creon with deference to him as king of Thebes. Immediately after Creon announces his edict to the community, the chorus replies, "Such is thy pleasure, Creon, son of Menoeceus, touching this city's foe, and its friend; and thou hast power, I ween, to take what order thou wilt, both for the dead, and for all of us who live (211-14)." When a citizen recognizes the king's edict as an appropriate expression of an official in the hierarchical pyramid, the citizen reaffirms the sovereign pyramidal order as a whole. It is with deference to the pyramidal order that Creon justifies and then enforces his edict that Polyneices' corpse be left unburied on the battlefield. And when Creon initially defends his view of authority to Haemon (636-79), the chorus again recognizes the representative character of Creon's edict: "[t]o us, unless our years have stolen our wit, thou seemest to say wisely what thou sayest" (680). At one point, the chorus even scolds Antigone for having challenged Creon's throne "where Justice sits on high" (853).

As Creon lectures to his son, Haemon, "if anyone transgresses, and does violence to the laws, or thinks to dictate to his rulers, such an one can win no praise from me. No, *whomsoever the city may appoint*, that man must be obeyed, in little things and great, in just things and unjust" (662-65).[15] So long as a representer acts within the boundaries of action allocated in the pyramidal structure, one cannot offend justice according to Creon (743-44). Nor may any other representer of the author legitimately prescribe to Creon how he should rule (734). Once his representative role has been delineated, Creon reasons, "do I offend, when I respect mine own prerogatives?" (743).

Accordingly, when a citizen such as Antigone attacks his edict, she does more than attack Creon as a duly appointed representer in the pyramid. She attacks the pyramidal structure of *author*-ity itself. As Creon puts it to her, "disobedience is the worst of evils. This it is that ruins cities; this makes homes desolate; by this, the ranks of allies are broken into headlong rout . . . . Therefore we must support the cause of order . . ." (674-79).

Creon is a *representer* of the author of the human laws, not the author itself. He represents the laws and their source at the top of the pyramidal structure in three contexts. First, as a duly appointed representer, Creon's actions legitimate the source of his own appointment: namely, the council of elders who themselves are representers of the ultimate author. Secondly, Creon insists upon recalling the council of elders in order to proclaim the edict before the council. He thereby recognizes the need to seek authority for the edict in a pyramidal and hierarchical system of representers. I have just noted how the chorus reciprocated by acknowledging Creon's *author*-ity to proclaim the edict. This second context renders Creon's edict an official act, rather than a personal, arbitrary, *ad hoc* utterance of someone who speaks from outside of the pyramid. Thirdly, Creon represents the human laws in that he must en-*force* them. He does not possess the *author*-ity to overrule a law—to say "no" to its enforcement. If he did, one could consider him as acting in the role of an absolute author. Creon possesses no choice but to *represent* the law's author by enforcing its will.

Each of the antagonists in *Antigone* recognizes the representative role of Creon within the pyramidal structure of the Theban state—each, that is, except Antigone herself.[16] This is so because Antigone shares a radically different conception of authority from Creon's and, given this different sense of authority, she refuses to recognize Creon as an authorized interpreter of the laws. From Creon's viewpoint, Antigone speaks *outside* of the authoritative discourse of the pyramidal structure. She is an *out*-law. She challenged the city's very pyramidal structure so essential to the enforcement of the invisible author's laws. Creon describes Antigone's disobedience of his edict as "the worst of evils" because "it ruins cities" (669-70); that is, "She transgressed the laws that had been set forth" (479). He asks incredulously, "[a]nd thou didst indeed dare to transgress that law?" As further evidence of Creon's identification with the human laws, Creon uses the words "edict" and "law" interchangeably. Moreover, whereas Antigone portrays justice as dwelling in the netherworld (451), Creon understands justice solely in terms of the *polis* (610, 743). In the latter reference, for example, he rhetorically asks whether he can possibly offend justice "when I respect mine own prerogative?" (743).

Antigone means authority in a radically different sense. She understands the legitimate source of authority in words which Aristotle later takes up as support for the unchangeable laws of nature as opposed to posited laws:[17]

> Yes, for it was not Zeus that had published me that edict; not such are the laws set among men by the Justice who dwells with the gods below; nor deemed I that thy decrees were of such force, that a mortal could override the unwritten and unfailing statutes of heaven (450-55).

For Antigone, Creon's proclamation just is not law. Rather, she calls it an "edict" (455). Laws are associated with the justice of the netherworld. As Hegel explains, the living members of a family owe a duty to the deceased because, by burying the corpse, death is no longer simply biological: death becomes a matter of heaven rather than of nature (*P Sp* 452). The burial raises the dead to the universality of spirit and thereby brings meaning to death. Any edict which violates this law of the netherworld is non-law. As Antigone rhetorically asks, "and by what laws I pass to the rock-closed prison of my strange tomb?" (849).

Antigone's radically different understanding of authority is exhibited in further passages in the play. Although she knows that she has transgressed Creon's edict (459-62), for example, she does not feel "grieved" for doing so (478). Indeed, it was not sufficient for her to sprinkle dust symbolically upon the corpse during darkness. She returns to the battlefield in open daylight in an even more open defiance of Creon's edict, fully knowing that she will likely be caught. Moreover, her sentence of death by starvation has not been made pursuant to a law; to be law, Justice of the netherworld must ordain a sentence. Instead, the sentence is the action of Creon, a mere mortal human who acts on his own outside of the authority of the heavens. As she indignantly states, "nor deemed I that thy decrees were of such force, that a *mortal* could override the unwritten and unfailing statutes of heaven" (452-53).[18] She believes that she is "a captive of *his* hands" (916), not those of the law.[19] Again, during her last speeches, she acknowledges that she had held the city's laws "in honour" because they had allowed a survivor to bury the corpses of the vanquished. But "*Creon* [not the law] deemed me guilty of error therein, and of outrage, a brother mine!" (910-17).[20]

The *Author*-ity of Creon

Antigone suggests that four factors support and, therefore, undermine Creon's claim to be a duly recognized representer of a super-author, the Theban state.

To begin with, some formal proceeding must *identify* an official as a legitimate representer of the author. The representer is sanctioned as a juridical representer by another representer higher in the pyramidal structure. So, for example, the council of elders has appointed Creon as king, both the council and the king representing the state/author at different levels of the pyramid. Creon initially recognizes this derivative authority when he summons the "council of elders" in order to announce the edict. As with the appointment of the king, so too the king's edicts must be publicly promulgated. This procedure provides *indicia*, for a citizen, that the edict has been enacted by a duly appointed representer at a certain place and at a particular time. If Creon had not publicly announced the edict before the chorus (which also represented the city-state) (193-215), a citizen would not be able to recognize the edict as *author*-itative. And if the edict had not been so recognized, then Creon's edict and subsequent sentence would have been outside of his *author*-ity. It is not a minor consequence that Creon's very first question of Antigone, upon the guard's complaint, is "[n]ow, tell me thou—not in many words, but briefly—knewest thou that an edict had forbidden this?" (446-47). Had Antigone responded in the negative, Creon would have restrained himself in his actions, one would presume. But Antigone responds in the affirmative: "I knew it: could I help it? It was public" (447). The public character of Creon's edict sets the stage for the citizenry in the chorus to assess the legality of Creon's action against Antigone.

Antigone offers a second condition for the *author*-itativeness of a human law: namely, a representer's utterance must receive public support. As Jebb points out, the Athenians of Sophocles' day would have considered that the city-state did not even exist if a ruler ignored the unanimous opinion of the community.[21] Without public support, a ruler rules as a *tyrannus* without constitutional authority. One can assess the extent to which Creon's conduct received public support in terms of the two stages of the legal proceeding which he conducted.

During the first stage of the proceedings, Creon investigates the alleged crime (by making inquiries of the guard, Antigone, and Ismene, for example) (236-330, 383-444), prosecutes the alleged crime (446-552) and judges against Antigone (575-80). During this first stage, the chorus fully supports Creon. It has been noted above that when Creon publicly declares his edict to the chorus, the chorus supports Creon with "[s]uch is thy pleasure, Creon, son of Menoeceus, touching this city's foe, and its friend; and thou hast power, I ween, to take what order thou wilt, both for the dead, and for all us who live" (211-14). Even when Creon explains his view of the divine laws (636-79), after his judgment against Antigone, the chorus fully supports Creon: "[t]o us, unless our years have stolen our wit, thou seemest to say wisely what thou sayest" (680). Haemon too defers to his father's wisdom (634-36, 682-85). When Creon cross-examined her, Antigone notes the support which Creon's edict received amongst the general public: "[b]ut royalty, blest in so much besides, hath the power to do and say what it will" (505). All Thebans, she admits, shared in this deference to Creon's power. Against a background of a stipulated law ("whereby I held thee first in honour" [915]) with respect to the corpse of the deceased, Antigone presumably acknowledges that Creon was the legitimate representer of the author of the human laws even as she readies herself for the final trip to the cavern.

This public support for King Creon begins to collapse, though, when Creon announces his sentence of death by starvation to Antigone. Haemon is the first to document the public unrest: "but I can hear these murmurs in the dark, these moanings of the city for this maiden"; "no woman," they say, "ever merited her doom less,—none ever was to die so shamefully for deeds so glorious as hers; . . . deserves not she the reed of golden honour?" (692-97). Haemon describes this as "the darkling rumour that spreads in secret" (700). When Creon personalizes such a plea by claiming that Antigone is tainted with evil, Haemon again defers to the public's view: "[o]ur Theban folk, with one voice, denies it" (733). The dialogue—to the extent that it is a dialogue—deteriorates to the point where Haemon expresses a complete lack of confidence in his father: "[t]hat is no city, which belongs to one man" (737); and then, again referring to Creon's unpopular stance, "[t]hou wouldst make a good monarch of a desert." (739)

Upon Haemon's exit, Creon revises the sentence from death by public stoning, as he had earlier pronounced, to starvation in a cave where nature, rather than the city, will take its course and thereby save the city from "public stain" (775-76). At this point, the chorus lends its full support to Antigone: "[b]ut now at this sight I also am carried beyond the bounds of loyalty, and can no more keep back the streaming tears, when I see Antigone thus passing to the bridal chamber where all are laid to rest" (801-4). The chorus proceeds to describe Antigone's integrity as "[g]lorious, therefore, and with praise" (817). She shares the doom "of the godlike" (837). The chorus ultimately urges Creon to "[g]o thou, and free the maiden from her rocky chamber, and make a tomb for the unburied dead" (1100). Even Teiresias, the loyal counselor of the state, cautions Creon that his acts "hath brought this sickness on our state" (1015). The gods have wreaked vengeance upon the citizenry as a whole: "the gods no more accept prayer and sacrifice at our hands, or the flame of meat-offering" (1021-22). Against all this evidence of public opposition, Creon maintains his position (1034-64), insulting Haemon and Teiresias in the process.

Antigone demonstrates a third condition for the author-itativeness of a human law. A representer of the author/state must act within preexisting, clearly demarcated boundaries. Out of concern that the sentry might have exceeded his own boundaries as a representer of the author/state, Creon accuses him of having taken a bribe. So too does he accuse the prophet, Teiresias. When Haemon, the chorus, and Teiresias question whether Creon has rightly acted in sentencing Antigone to death by starvation, they do so in terms of the preestablished boundaries of conduct for a representer of the author of the human laws, not necessarily the preestablished boundaries of *Moira*. They remind Creon again and again that he is not the only representer of the author of the human laws. Further, as a mortal, Creon can make whatever utterances he wishes. As a ruler, however, the boundaries of his *author*-ity to proclaim his edicts must be traced up to the representer on the next level of the pyramidal hierarchy, and from there to the next, and the next. Creon's sentence of death by starvation is ultimately a *personal* act, not the juridical act of a representer within the prior established boundaries of his *author*-ity for interpreting human laws. Haemon recognizes this important distinction when, upon urging his father to reconsider the sentence of death by stoning, he exclaims "[t]hat is no city, which belongs to one man" (737). Creon reacts in a manner which exposes that he has, indeed, exceeded the boundaries of his *author*-ity: "[i]s not the city held to be the ruler's?" (738). Haemon concludes that Creon has exceeded the boundaries of his

author-ity, for Creon has left no room for any other representer, including the citizenry itself, in the state: "[t]hou wouldst make a good monarch of a desert" (739).

Ironically, Creon himself speaks as just another mortal with his own prejudices, feelings, insecurities and personal limitations—not as a duly *author*-ized representer of the author state. He turns to the chorus to call his son just a boy who is "the woman's champion" (740), a "woman's slave" (756). Haemon describes his father's judgments as "vain" and "unwise." With each challenge from Antigone, Haemon, the chorus, and Teiresias, Creon's initial, reasoned defense succumbs to a vindictive, emotional, polemical name-calling. What could be more out of character in a rational hierarchy than to have a juridical representer make vain, unwise, personalized, and prejudiced decisions? Even Teiresias confirms the personal character of Creon's sentence of starvation when, after unsuccessfully attempting to persuade Creon to withdraw his sentence, Teiresias remarks that Creon has openly forced violence against the gods (1072). By his own speech, Creon removes the royal cloak of his own being.

Creon's error, it seems, is to delude himself into believing that he is more than a representer of the author of the human laws; that he is the author itself. As an author, he could legitimately carry on a monologue. But as he was only one representer of several in the pyramidal hierarchy (the sentries being other representers, for example), each representer had to listen to the others.[22] Creon refuses to do so. He refuses to address the other representers—the sentries, Haemon, and Tireisius—in a dialogic and reasonable language shared among representers of the author of human laws. This would be required if he himself were only one of many officials in the hierarchical pyramid whose role it was to administer the author's laws. Haemon exasperatingly complains upon hearing his father call him a "woman's slave" who uses "wheedling speech," "[t]hou wouldst speak and then hear no reply?" (758). Creon is not the last representer to consider himself the author of the laws in Western culture. His own words remind one of Louis XIV: "*L'État, c'est moi.*" Creon erroneously believes that a monarchy with positive law has surpassed the authority of a clan hierarchy. Paradoxically, in her final appeal, Antigone addresses the chorus as the legitimate representer in the city's pyramid: "[s]ee me, *citizens of my fatherland*, setting forth on my last way, looking my last on the sunlight that is for me no more" (805).[23] From her point of view, the legitimate representer of civil society is the clan council which, in contrast to days past when the king did not have to listen to anyone, legitimates the king's very position in the hierarchy of *author*-ity. As the council's nominee, the king must start to listen.[24]

There remains one final characteristic of Creon's *author*-ity as a representer of the author of human laws. A representer can carry on a dialogic relation with other representers, as Haemon complained that Creon had failed to do. But, vis-à-vis a citizen subject to the human laws, the representer may speak in a monologic manner. As such, the citizen passively listens without an opportunity of reply.[25] There is a risk of a lack of consensus between ruler and addressee/citizen. In order for the addressee to understand the representer's utterance as representative of the author/state, it is not enough that the addressee be able to recognize the utterances as juridically promulgated from within the boundaries associated with its representer. Since the source of the human law is *external* to the addressee/citizen, something more is needed than its formal promulgation, its source in an appropriate representer and its enactment by that representer within the legitimate boundaries of *author*-ity. That something is *force*.

Antigone, Ismene, the sentries, the chorus, and Haemon realize that Creon may supplement his edict with physical force, just as Plato advises in the *Statesman*,[26] Aristotle counsels at the end of the *Ethics*,[27] and Derrida argues with respect to *Recht*.[28] At the very start of the play, Antigone realizes that "who so disobeys in aught, his doom is death by stoning before all the folk" (35). Ismene urges her sister to remember, "first, that we were born women, as who should not strive with men; next, that we are ruled of the stronger, so that we must obey in these things, and in things yet sorer" (60-63). Ismene admits that she has neither the physical nor the psychic strength to defy the city (79).

Creon too is quick to remind all concerned that physical force conserves the *author*-ity behind the human laws. For example, he promises at an early stage that whoever proves his loyalty to the state, the king will honor in death and life (220-22). Creon threatens his sentries with death unless they uncover who began to bury Polyneices' corpse (305-10). The threat of force is implied in Creon's lecture to Haemon: the orders of an *author*-ized representer "*must* be obeyed, in little things and great, in just things and unjust" (665). Creon does not need to go on to describe what will happen if a citizen does disobey an order. Haemon responds to Creon by describing how the fear of physical force lies behind the citizenry's dread of Creon's utterances: "[f]or the dread of thy frown forbids the citizen to speak such words as would offend thine ear" (690-91). Creon, in turn, watches whatever they say or do. Indeed, throughout the play, the chorus does not question that a representer may exercise force in order to en-*force* his otherwise legitimate edicts. The chorus emphasizes just how difficult it is for a citizen to oppose the representer's authority to use force: "[r]everent action claims a certain praise for reverence; but an offence against power cannot be brooked by him

who hath power in his keeping" (873-74). The eventual concern of the chorus is that Creon has exercised the wrong kind of force (death by starvation). As such, it believes that this, in turn, has taken Creon's action beyond the legitimate boundaries of his *author*-ity.

We are left, then, with the question of what Creon means when he exclaims that his "life is but as death" (1320). Creon is still Creon. He remains a mortal, just like other mortals. But he is no longer a juridical representer of an author in the pyramidal hierarchy. The formal trappings of *author*-ity have evaporated from him as evidenced in his loss of recognition in the eyes of the people as well as of other officials as a legitimate representer in the juridical hierarchy. A civil *Sittlichkeit* has collapsed. He is no longer *King* Creon in the sense of possessing the legitimacy which had earlier come with his crown as king. What is left is concrete particular as opposed to the universal form of juridical representer associated with the en(-forcement) of human laws. Creon's life is but as death because he had formerly identified his concrete particularity so deeply with his role as a juridical representer of the author/state that, once his role in the pyramidal hierarchy had been de-legitimized, spiritual death resulted. After all, he had been an official of Oedipus' court before his own,[29] although he had been king for only one and a half days. In playing a role as a representer in the pyramidal hierarchy, his being had been abstracted out of the immediacy of primitive *Sittlichkeit* to such an extent that he could not return to the former unity which he had shared in the natural community of the tribe/clan before the schism between the divine and human laws. He was reduced to particularity (less than citizenship). Put another way, the cloak of representer in the state's order had been withdrawn from him so as to leave him naked, reduced to particularity. But, because of his alienation from particularity as a representer in the hierarchy, Creon could no longer "find" himself as he had once been. Once the veneer of representer is removed, Creon dies spiritually.

The Authority of Antigone's Divine Laws

The problem is that Antigone's conception of authority simply does not recognize Creon's as having weight, as authority. The immediacy of her loyalty to the divine laws is so overbearing that she simply will not allow Creon to redefine her. She is, as the chorus put it, a "mistress of thine own fate" (819). She has pressed her own conception of authority to the point that "[t]hou hast rushed forward to the utmost verge of daring; and against that throne where Justice sits on high thou hast fallen, my daughter, with a

grievous fall" (853-55). Antigone has withstood the terror which the human laws have imposed upon her. She has retained a "self willed temper" (874), even though it has brought her physical ruin. To the very end, her sole concern is "what law of heaven have I transgressed?" (920).

How does the authority of the laws of heaven differ from the authority of human laws? At first sight, the characteristics of the former seem similar to the latter. Both seem to have a pyramidal hierarchy with a mythical author external to the pyramid. For human laws, who is the author of the laws is unclear: it may be the city-state, a transcendental god, or the city-state as god. For divine laws, one might consider Zeus as the author. The pyramids possess vertical layers with each representer possessing discretion to rule within the posited boundaries of its *author*-ity. When Zeus and his *comitatus* conquer and expel Cronos from beyond the horizon, Zeus remains a permanent superlord.[30] He delegates *author*-ity to his brothers, Hades and Poseidon. Various children and followers are delegated still lesser fiefdoms. Apollo ventures off to conquer Delphi, Athena to conquer Poseidon and to gain Athens. Each god/goddess rules alone under his/her jurisdiction. The presumed super-author, Zeus, possesses particularly great power in ousting or assimilating all foreign gods. Zeus dispenses fate and upholds the spheres of activity of all his subservient gods/goddesses.[31] With Homer's influence, the Olympian gods become international rulers, not the gods of a particular tribe or locality. They rule by enforcing an overbearing set of universally shared divine laws.

It is at this point that the authority of the divine laws departs from Creon's conception of the authority of the human laws. For, whereas the representers in the pyramidal hierarchy of the human laws represent a personal author—however invisible—of the laws, Zeus is *not* the invisible author of the divine laws. Indeed, Jean-Pierre Vernant suggests that Zeus and the other gods are "powers," not "persons."[32] Rather, the Greek gods are subordinate to an *impersonal* force called *Moira* or destiny.[33] *Moira* is authorless. *Moira* dwells beyond the gods. *Moira* is a remote power that neither Zeus nor any other god has created. Nor may Zeus and the Greek gods withstand the hold of *Moira*. *Moira* destines the jurisdictional boundaries of each god. If a god exceeds its limits, *Nemesis* will wreak havoc upon the Hellenes. Cornford points out that the primary meaning of *Moira* in the *Iliad* is the allotment of jurisdiction to each god.[34] The word "destiny" is derived from this meaning of *Moira*. *Moira* (destiny), *Nemesis* (avenging anger), and *Dikê* (justice) are grounded in the allotted place of a god in the cosmic order.

The Greek people are bonded through *Moira* as manifested in their living experiences. *Moira* works through the citizen in a manner that offers a place for the citizen in the cosmic order and in tribal society. Its emotive force is

felt as inevitable. Legal obligation (to the divine laws) is itself an aspect of this inevitability. As the one sentry admits to the other sentry before announcing to Creon the news of a violation of his edict, "for I come with a good grip on one hope,—that I can suffer nothing but what is my fate" (235). So too, Antigone continually speaks as if *Moira* leaves her no freedom of choice. She *must* follow the divine laws or *Nemesis* will wreak dread upon her. "My life," she resignedly encourages Ismene, "hath long been given to death, that so I might serve the dead" (560). And as Teiresias urges upon Creon, "[m]ark that now, once more, thou standest on fate's fine edge" (996). The chorus too acknowledges how *Moira* works through Antigone in that it suggests that Antigone did not even have personal responsibility for her actions. The chorus attributes the blameworthiness of her death sentence to her father's, Oedipus', crime of incest: "[t]hou hast rushed forward to the utmost verge of daring; and against that throne where Justice sits on high thou hast fallen, my daughter, with a grievous fall. But in this ordeal thou art paying, haply, for thy father's sin" (853-56). And a few minutes later, the chorus reminds the addressee that a Greek citizen simply cannot escape from the hold of *Moira*: "[b]ut dreadful is the mysterious power of fate; there is no deliverance from it by wealth or by war, by fenced city, or dark, sea-beaten ships" (952-55). Even Creon succumbs to the inevitable control of *Moira*. When the chorus urges him to free Antigone and to bury Polyneices, he finally agrees but with a resignation of the inevitable determination by *Moira*: "[a]h me, 'tis hard, but I resign my cherished resolve,—I obey. We must not wage a vain war with destiny" (1105). And, upon realizing that his own fate is death, he again defers to *Moira*: "[o]r, let it come, let it appear, that fairest of fates for me, that brings my last day—aye, best fate of all! Oh, let it come, that I may never look upon tomorrow's light!" (1328-29). And once more, "and yonder, again, a crushing fate hath leapt upon my head" (1346). The protagonist (Antigone) and the antagonist (Creon) recognize that the source of the authority of the divine laws is not an identifiable author as it was with the human laws. An *impersonal* power manifests itself in all godly and human experience.

Because the divine laws are authorless, it is impossible for a mortal being to identify the time and place when a particular law was enacted. Indeed, unlike the formal public procedure surrounding the promulgation of a human law, one cannot describe a divine law as having been promulgated. As Antigone emphasizes in her defence, "no one knows when they were first put forth" (457). And, as the chorus explains, "[t]hy power, O Zeus, . . . a ruler to whom time brings no old age, dwellest in the dazzling splendour of Olympus. And through the future, near and far, as through the past, shall this law hold good" (611-13). Indeed, the very conception of space and time

underlying divine laws contrasts with the quantitative and abstract conception of space/time presupposed in the promulgation of a human law, at least since Galileo. The Frankforts explain that Greek tribal thought cannot abstract a concept "space" from the very *experience* of space/time.[35] Experience incorporates concrete orientations which refer to localities with "an emotional colour." Space is not unambiguously fixed. And time does not have a uniform duration of qualitatively indifferent moments. Each phase of "time" is charged with a unique emotional value and significance. Thus, we cannot even describe divine laws as having been "enacted" or "promulgated." As Antigone describes in her defense, "[f]or their life is not of to-day or yesterday, but from all time, and no man knows when they were first put forth" (455-57). A mortal simply cannot recognize divine laws in terms of a quantitative and abstract space/time spectrum as we do today.

It is not surprising, then, that unlike human laws, divine laws are unwritten. For that matter, they may also be unspoken. For, they are without an author who might represent them in a code or in an utterance. How, then, are the divine laws discovered? They are "discovered" or, better, assimilated through lived experiences, not least the experiences shared through ceremony and ritual. In contrast to the Christian transcendental god and our modern metaphysical truths, the Greek gods are not independent of the social life of the Greeks.[36] The divine laws are transferred from one generation to the next through actions of the body rather than through conceptions of the mind. For example, after a battle, the survivors collect and bury the dead without discussion. And the initiated young men (*Kouroi*) become men through rites or sacred performances.[37] Indeed, the antagonists in Sophocles' play do not talk about whether a divine law exists concerning the burial of the dead. They do not debate, for example, whether it can be discovered unwritten in some code or remembered through an utterance of an elder wise man. Rather, the divine laws live through the presentative experiences of tribal members. Basically, Creon demands that Antigone be humiliated. It is *her* brother's body against which Creon's edict is directed. Her loyalty to the divine laws possesses a personal character: the divine laws address *her* experience just as she addresses the divine laws. Against this experiential background with Creon's conduct, Antigone just intuitively knows the divine laws without having to discover evidence of them in some textual "authority," written or verbal, coded or customary.

Antigone's addressive experience with the divine laws contrasts with Creon's interpretative act. Because Creon enunciates the signs of the human laws, the other representers in the pyramidal hierarchy go to the *enunciator's* interpretation of them. After all, Creon, who seems to be the external source of the posited signifiers, is closest to what the enunciated signifiers *mean*. As

such, the meaning of an edict is believed to be represented by what Creon says. That is, the edict is presumed to have an exact or literal signified associated with Creon's signifiers. This very association of meaning with Creon as the legitimate representer of the author of the human laws may well lie behind Creon's uncompromising insistence that his edict *must* be obeyed.

But any claim to a denotative character for *meaning* is absent in the context of divine laws. For, first, as argued above, there is no identifiable author of the signs of divine laws. Rather, there is a multiplicity of interrelated roles and jurisdictions associated with *Moira*. Secondly, the meaning of the divine laws is presentative.[38] The addressive experiences of the listeners count in the meaning-forming process of the divine laws. Antigone's addressive experiences with the divine laws is not idiosyncratic to *Antigone*. Socrates explains the origins of the charges against him in the *Apology*in terms of his addressive experience with the divine sign generated from his friend, Chaerephon's, journey to the Delphi. And Oedipus' driven and very personal search for the meaning of Phoebus' words to Creon in *Oedipus the King* reflects Oedipus' addressive experience with the divine laws.[39] As a tribe brings meaning into a sign, the divine sign system becomes alive. Antigone insightfully remarks that the divine laws are in fact *alive*, "[f]or their life is not of to-day or yesterday, but from all time" (457). *Moira* is not imposed upon Oedipus, Socrates, or Antigone. *Moira* brings the unconscious to consciousness. The divine laws are alive because the divine laws are manifested through the living experiences of tribal members.

It seems reasonable to conclude that divine laws reflect a different discourse from that of human laws. The divine laws are unwritten. They are sometimes not even communicated through spoken word. Rather, the meaning of the divine laws is left to addressees of a particular tribe in a particular era to experience divine laws. The discourse of human laws, focusing as it does upon formally promulgated edicts of an invisible author's representers in a pyramidal hierarchy, contrasts with the unwritten discourse of the divine laws. In her loyalty to her brother and to the unwritten discourse of the divine laws, Antigone withstands all efforts by Creon to assimilate her into the discourse of the human laws. But in the process, Antigone ceases to be a corporeal reality.

Conclusion

An addressee of Sophocles' *Antigone*, then, is left with two radically different senses of authority. Both Creon and Antigone felt immediately bound to their respective laws. But neither Creon nor Antigone recognized

the other's laws as authoritative. As such, each moment of consciousness was lacking in self-consciousness and, therefore, in infinite spirit. Hegel associated the distinction between human laws and divine laws in the respective social roles of male and female in civil society. I have argued that the distinction between the two sets of laws lies in the *cultural* difference between an *author*-ity of representers of an author of human laws and the authorless impersonal *Moira* of divine laws which is manifested through the addressive experiences of tribal members. This cultural difference represents a shift from a tribal discourse to the discourse of the city-state. The former concentrates upon the experiential meanings which a tribe brings into the signs "of a myth" as learned bodily through ritual and ceremony and through personal experiences. The discourse of a city-state seeks out legitimate conduct as posited within boundaries of different vertical stages in a pyramidal order. At each stage, there rests an identifiable representer of a super-author who is presupposed to exist external to the pyramid of juridical agents. If the conduct of a representer or other mortal lies within such boundaries, then such conduct is *author*-itative and, therefore, law in the sense of the authority of authored human laws. But if the conduct of a god or any mortal lies within the jurisdictional boundaries experienced as *Moira*, then it is authoritative in the sense of authority in divine laws. A mortal's action in the one sense directly contravenes the law in the other.

Another way of putting the distinction is to ask why Creon's interpretive acts, rather than Antigone's, should carry force. The answer, from the viewpoint of human laws, is that Creon is a representer whose own edicts are authoritative in three contexts: first, he is duly appointed as a representer of the author/state; second, his representativeness is legitimated by the public support which he achieves as reflected in the views of the chorus, his son's assessment of the views of the public, and the assessment of Teiresius; and third, he represents the laws in his en-*force*ment of them. In each context, one finds Creon in a hierarchical pyramid with a presumed author situated beyond the pinnacle. Four factors reinforce Creon's position. First, in order to be *author*-itative, his utterance must be formally and publicly promulgated. Secondly, in order for the *author*-ity to be efficacious, the public must do more than understand Creon's, the representer's, intent. The public must accept it as legitimate. I argued that the public accepted Creon's sentence of death by stoning as a legitimate sentence. However, the public's support deteriorated at the point when Creon changed the sentence to imprisonment in a cave with minimal food and water. Thirdly, as a representer, his conduct must lie within the preexisting boundaries of the sphere of action delegated to his representative position in the hierarchy. Finally, his ability to en-*force* his utterance ultimately ensures its *author*-itativeness. Creon's

sentence of death by stoning and, then, death by starvation lacked the second, third and fourth conditions of *author*-ity for human laws. With a sentence without public support and in excess of preexisting boundaries of action and with a "head" representer unable to en-*force* his edict, Creon became a king in name only. Creon could no longer legitimately represent the super-author dwelling behind the pyramid. As a result, his immediacy with the human laws was shed. What remained was a naked particularity.

The sense of authority in the human laws fundamentally differs from that of the divine laws. Whereas physical force constitutes and conserves the human laws, the divine laws are enforced through guilt and dread. The chorus, Antigone, and, toward the end, even Creon acknowledge this dread. Further, whereas the pyramidal hierarchy of the human laws presupposes that an author enacts the laws, the divine laws possess no such author—mythical or otherwise. Zeus himself is subject to *Moira*. *Moira* is a blind *impersonal* force beyond the control of gods or humans. Since there is no author of the divine laws, no god can act as a representer of a super-author. Nor can any ruler claim to possess denotative or exact meanings for the signs of the divine laws.

Most importantly, divine laws reflect a different discourse from that of human laws. The divine laws are unwritten. They are sometimes not even communicated through spoken word. Rather, they are transferred through ritual, though experienced as having a point. Creon effectively demanded that Antigone and her family be humiliated. It was *her* brother's body to which burial rites were not granted. Unlike the formally promulgated laws of the city-state, Antigone experiences the divine laws as possessing neither an identifiable beginning nor ending. Their legitimacy cannot be traced to an author external to human experience, as is the case with the human laws. Instead, it is left to addressees of a particular tribe in a particular era to interpret the divine laws through their living expereinces just as I, an addressee of *Antigone*, am left to interpret the legend of Antigone. The discourse of the human laws, focusing as it does upon formally promulgated edicts of representers in a pyramidal hierarchy, contrasts with the discourse of unwritten myths of the divine laws. In her loyalty to the discourse of the divine laws, Antigone withstands all effort by Creon to assimilate her into the discourse of the human laws.

Philosophical consciousness is left, then, with Hegel's thesis intact: namely, divine law and human law (universal and individual, divine and human) are opposites in which each proves to be the non-reality of itself and the other (*P Sp* 464). That is, neither authenticates the other. Rather than representing a clash of the natural difference between male and female, however, the contradiction rests in radically different conceptions of

authority. Neither sense of authority recognizes the other as playing any part in its own meaning. Neither authenticates the other. Each proves to be a non-reality. Philosophical consciousness is left, then, with Creon who cannot be, Antigone who ceases to be, and the city-state whose mythic authorship is saved. Only God can save the King.[40]

Notes

1. References to Hegel are to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, A. V. Miller, trans. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), cited hereafter by paragraph number as *P Sp*.

2. For the difference between philosophical consciousness and observed consciousness see generally Hans Georg Gadamer, "Hegel's Inverted World" in *Hegel's Dialectic: Five Hermeneutical Studies*, P. Christopher Smith, trans. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 36-37.

3. In the *Zusatz* to paragraph 433 of his *Philosophy of Mind* (William Wallace, trans. [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971], 174), Hegel remarks that the Greeks and Romans

> did not know that man as such, man as this universal "I," as rational self-consciousness, is entitled to freedom. On the contrary, with them man was held to be free only if he was born free. With them, therefore, freedom still had the character of a natural state. That is why slavery existed in their free states and bloody wars developed in which the slaves tried to free themselves, to obtain recognition of their eternal human rights.

4. References to Sophocles' *Antigone* are to the Richard C. Jebb translation (*Sophocles: The Plays and Fragments*, Part 3 [Amsterdam: Servio Publishers, 1962]).

I have also consulted the Elizabeth Wyckoff translation in *Sophocles I*, David Grene, trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press [Phoenix Books], 1984) and the Robert Fagles translation in Sophocles, *The Three Theban Plays* (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1982, 1984).

5. See, e.g., note 16 below.

6. This critique is set out in Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 214-26 and Patricia Jagentowicz Mills, "Hegel's *Antigone*" in *The Owl of Minerva* 17 (1986), 131-52. For a criticism of the latter see Heidi M. Ravven, "Has Hegel Anything to Say to Feminists?" in *The Owl of Minerva* 19 (1988), 149-68. The most comprehensive study of the issue is Martin Donougho, "The Woman in White: On the Reception of Hegel's *Antigone*" in *The Owl of Minerva*, 21 (1989-90), 65-89.

My argument poses the following issue for the above: "Is the author at the apex of the hierarchic pyramid in Creon's sense of authority the very male whose monologic language of sameness Irigaray critiques?" More generally, "is the pyramidal structure of *author*-ity reflective of a male dominated culture and, if so, how?"

7. Donougho, "Woman in White," 65-89.

8. It may well be that although Hegel's general thesis is applicable to the Greek world to the extent that neither law recognizes the other as authoritative, his claim that they collapse into a unified being-for-self under Roman law is in error.

9. See especially his essay "What Is an Author?" in *The Foucault Reader*, Paul Robinson, ed., (New York: Pantheon, 1984); "Two Lectures" in Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, Colin Gordon, trans., (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 78-108.

10. Jebb's emphasis.

11. Ravven also describes how the relationships of Antigone to the family and of Creon to the city-state possess a "natural" character in this sense of immediacy. "Has Hegel Anything to Say?" 149-68, especially 154-55.

12. Emphasis Hegel's.

13. This is the opinion of Jebb in the "Introduction" to his translation, Part 3, xxii-xxiii.

14. Foucault makes a reference to this in "Two Lectures," 94-95, and again in "Governmentality" in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller, eds. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 91-92.

15. Emphasis added.

16. This is not without ambiguity, however. At one point when all other arguments have failed to dissuade his father of the inappropriateness of his sentence, Haemon appeals to the supremacy of the divine laws (742-47). Similarly, although it scolds Antigone for having challenged Creon's throne "where Justice sits on high" (853), the chorus also acknowledged earlier that the divine laws are supreme: "[t]hy power, O Zeus, what trespass can limit?" (605). Moreover, toward the end of the play, the chorus suggests to Creon "how all too late thou seemest to see the right!" (1270) Wyckoff translates "the right" as "Justice."

17. In one of the three sets of passages where Aristotle is said to explicate a philosophy of natural law: *Rhetoric* I.13.1373b12-13 (*The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Jonathan Barnes, ed., 2 vols. [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984], II).

The other passages are in the *Nicomachean Ethics* V.7.1134b18-1135b and the *Politics* I.2.

18. Emphasis added.

19. Emphasis added.

20. Emphasis added.

21. Jebb, *Sophocles*, "Introduction," xxiv, n. 12.

22. In contrast to the city-state of Thebes, authority in clan thinking simply belonged to the father.

23. Emphasis added.

24. The theme of reasonableness is discussed by Martha Nussbaum in *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), ch. 3.

25. The distinction between a monologic and dialogic language is drawn from Mikhail Bakhtin, "Speech Genres and Other Essays" in, Vern W. McGee, trans. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980); and *The Dialogic Imagination*, Michael Holquist, ed., Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).

26. *Statesman*, 293d-297e.

27. *Ethics*, 1179b5-19.

28. Derrida, "Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority'" in *Cardozo Law Review* 11 (1990): 919-1045.

29. Indeed, Oedipus had trusted him enough to have him go to the Delphic Oracle for the purpose of learning what could be done to eradicate the plague.

30. This is discussed in Gilbert Murray, *Five Stages of Greek Religion*, 3rd ed. (NewYork: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1951), 45-50.

31. This point is discussed by F. M. Cornford in *From Religion to Philosophy: A Study in the Origins of Western Speculation* (NewYork: Harper & Bros., 1957), 26.

32. Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Myth and Society in Ancient Greece*, Janet Lloyd, trans. (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1974), 98.

33. Vernant, *Myth and Society*, 12. Also see the discussion in R. P. Winnington-Ingram, *Sophocles: An Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 150-55.

34. Vernant, *Myth and Society*, 16.

35. H. and H. A. Frankfort, "Myth and Reality" in H. and H. A. Frankfort, John A. Wilson, Thorkild Jacobsen, *Before Philosophy: The Intellectual Adventures of Ancient Man* (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1949), 29-36.

36. Vernant, *Myth and Society*, 100-1, 220-21. Also see generally, Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (Boston: Beacon, 1950), ch. 4.

37. Murray, *Greek Religion*, 29.

38. Heidegger distinguishes between the presentative experiences associated with *Moira* and the representative character of meaning since Plato, which grasps being under a concept. See "Moira" in Martin Heidegger, *Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, David Farell Krell and Frank A. Capuzzi, trans. (Cambridge: Harper & Row, 1975, 1984) ch.3.

Gilbert Murray misses the presentative character of the meaning-forming process of tribal myths when he suggests that the gods "are *only concepts*, exceedingly confused cloudy and changing concepts, *in the minds* of thousands of divine worshippers and non-worshippers. They change every time they are thought of, as a word changes every time it is pronounced." *Greek Religion*, 29 (emphasis added). So, too, does Roland Barthès miss the *presentative* experience in tribal myths when he argues that myths are connotative or second-level stories of the tribe. Connotative meaning is re-presentative. It does not honor the emotive experience of the listener who brings meaning to bear in his/her living experiences. "Myth Today" in *Mythologies* (Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1957).

39. Oedipus had sent Creon to Delphi in order to inquire as to how to rid Thebes of the plague. Upon his return, Oedipus asks Creon to repeat precisely the words of the oracle. Creon replies, "Phoebus our lord bids us plainly to drive out a defiling thing, which (he saith) hath been harboured in this land, and not to harbour it, so that it cannot be healed" (95-99). Oedipus, who is but "a stranger to this report" (220), demands to know the name of the murderer, even though Phoebus had made no mention of a murder. His demand is softened with the assurance that any informant will be allowed to leave the land unhurt. A leader of the chorus offers some information to the effect that certain travellers were said to have killed Oedipus' father, Laius, only to have Oedipus reject it as mere rumor. Oedipus cross-examines Teiresias' "dreadful" interpretation of the moral of the story: "Now, Phoebus—if indeed thou knowest it not from the messengers—sent answer to our question that the only riddance from this pest which could come what if we should learn aright the slayers of Laius, and slay them, or send them into exile from our land" (305-10).

Oedipus still drives on to understand the meaning of the Delphic oracle. He searches out evidence from his wife/mother, Iocasta, as well as from the shepherd who, in Oedipus' infancy, had refused to enforce Iocasta's order to drown Oedipus. Iocasta begs Oedipus to stop his search for the meaning of the sign: "[f]or the gods' sake, if thou hast any care for thine own life, forbear this search! My anguish is enough" (1060-62). Oedipus' search for meaning—"my origins face-to-face"—leads him to recount a further story which he had received as a youth (780).

40. Following my original presentation of this essay to the Society for Greek Political Thought, a draft was presented to the Canadian Philosophical Association Annual Meeting, Charlottetown, PEI, June 4, 1992, and as the Northrop Frye Lecture, Victoria College, University of Toronto, May 31, 1994. I am grateful to Walter Skakoon and H. S. Harris, who read and commented on earlier drafts.