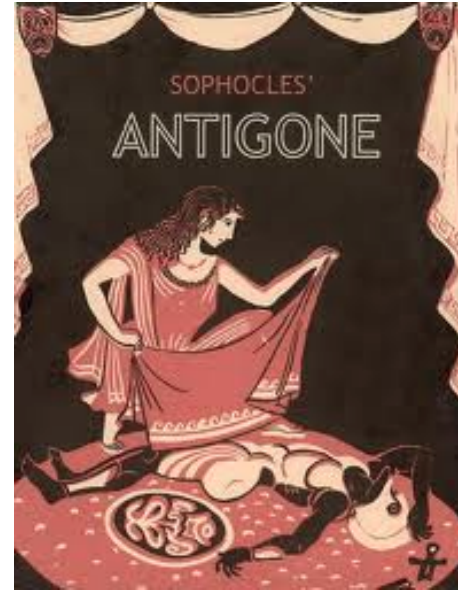

Archetypes in Antigone



Marissa Contreras
Katie TenHaken
Julia Boese
Brianna Steele
Kevin McFarland
Lora Kopp

What is an Archetype?

- There are three main groups of archetypes: character, situation, and symbolic
 - Archetypes are typical examples of a certain person or thing in a piece of literature
 - They usually help represent the overall theme through their recurrences throughout the work
 - Can be represented through people, animals, paintings, events, and more
-

List of Archetypes



Illustration by Carla DeMello,
IRIS Design Team, Cornell University Library

Character Archetypes:

The Hero: Definitions can vary based on the situation, but usually the protagonist who has a tragic childhood, but makes himself into a striking figure, such as Oedipus being left on a hill to die as an infant, but eventually becoming King

The Outcast: Figure banished from a social group for some crime against fellow man

The Temptress: A woman the protagonist is attracted to that brings his ultimate downfall

Unfaithful Wife: A woman married to a man she finds dull and is attracted to a more virile, interesting man

The Star-Crossed Lovers: Characters entangled in a love affair that is fated to end tragically

List of Archetypes Cont...

Situational Archetypes:

- **The Task:** To save the kingdom, to win the fair lady, to identify himself so that he may resume his rightful position, the hero must perform a seemingly impossible deed
 - **The Fall:** The fall from dignity and prestige
 - **Death and Rebirth:** The parallel between the cycle of nature and the cycle of life
 - **The Quest:** The search for someone or some talisman which, when found, will restore all that is wrong
 - **Nature vs Mechanistic World:** Nature is good while technology and society is often evil
-

List of Archetypes Cont...

Symbolic Archetypes

- **Light vs. Darkness:** Light usually suggests hope, renewal, or intellectual enlightenment, whereas darkness represents the unknown, ignorance or despair
 - **Water vs Desert:** With water being a necessity for life, it usually represents life, birth, or rebirth, while deserts are barren, representing infertility, a wasteland
 - **Heaven vs. Hell:** High peaks and unreachable locations usually represents heaven, (i.e. skies, mountains), whereas underground and below the bowels of earth represent hell
 - **Supernatural Intervention:** The gods intervene on the side of the hero or sometimes against him
 - **Fire vs Ice:** Fire represents knowledge, light, life, and rebirth (i.e. phoenix born out of the ashes), while ice implies ignorance, sterility, darkness, and death
-

Other works

- In *Oedipus*, he was an archetype for the outcast, because he was left alone to die away from his home/ in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Boo was the outcast because he was barely mentioned and no one wanted to be near him or even see him
 - In *Frankenstein*, the monster was an archetype for the evil figure with an ultimately good heart. He was a naive character with an innocent heart but was corrupted by circumstance and how the others viewed him through his actions
 - In *A Tale of Two Cities*, Lucie Mannett is an archetype for a damsel in distress
 - An archetype for the unhealable wound in *The Scarlet Letter* is the red A she must wear on her chest
 - In *Of Mice and Men*, Curley's wife is the temptress who tempts the other migrant workers, and through her going after Lenny, his downfall is brought
 - In *The Lord of the Rings*, Frodo needs to destroy the ring, which is his task, a situational archetype
 - In *The Great Gatsby*, Daisy is an archetype for the unfaithful wife
 - **AND OF COURSE**, the star crossed lovers in *Romeo and Juliet*
-

Video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HQLJWVr4og>

Common archetypes in Greek Literature

- **Light vs Darkness:** Light usually suggests hope, renewal, or intellectual enlightenment, whereas darkness represents the unknown, ignorance or despair
 - example: Oedipus is shrouded by darkness the entire time because of his ignorance, then as a symbol of his ultimate despair, he blinds himself to always be surrounded by darkness and remind him of what he has done
 - **Supernatural Intervention:** The gods intervene on the side of the hero or sometimes against him
 - With plays being a tribute to the gods in ancient Greece, the gods are often responsible for the conflict and can sometimes present a resolution or keep the hero from reaching a resolution
-

Archetypes in Greek Literature Cont..

- **The Hero:** Definitions can vary based on the situation, but is usually the protagonist who has a tragic childhood, but makes himself into a striking figure
 - example: such as Oedipus being left on a hill to die as an infant, but eventually becoming King
 - **The Fall:** The fall from dignity and prestige
 - example: Oedipus discovering the truth signifies his fall
 - **The Unhealable Wound:** Either a psychological or physical wound that is unhealable
 - example: For Antigone, her heritage is an unhealable wound that marring her life causing suffering, and Oedipus when he finds his mother dead and realizes he married his own mother
-

Character Archetypes in Antigone

The Hero: Antigone because she is the protagonist and proves herself against the wrongs of Creon and her family's past.

The Villain: Though not really an evil villain, Creon poses as a threat for all of what the Greeks stand for in their rituals and also gets caught up in the new position of power he was placed in.

The Elder: Teiresias plays the part of the elder because he is the person in which everyone goes to for advice even when they do not listen.

Character Archetypes in Antigone

Cont...

Martyrs: Antigone is one for she sacrifices herself in order to bury her brother in a respectful manner. “At least he is my brother...I will not deny him”(2075).

Haemon also is a martyr because he kills himself in order to show that the death of Antigone was wrong. “There is no reverence in trampling on God’s honor” (2091).

Eurydice also dies for her son’s honor even though not as strong an example.

Character Archetypes in Antigone

Cont...

The Coward: Ismene does not help her brother because she is afraid of dying. “We are only women not meant in nature to fight against men”(2075).

The Ordinary Man: The chorus plays this role because they represent the common opinion. Though they only represent the old men of the community.

The Penitent: Oedipus is the penitent though he is technically not alive in this play. He lives to be forgiven by the Gods.

Situational Archetypes in Antigone

The Fall: Mostly due to Oedipus' fall from grace. Continued when Polyneices turns on Thebes and kills his brother Eteocles. Dishonored due to family history.

The Unhealable Wound: Antigone's unhealable wound is the wound left from her family's dishonor. So her heritage, which she cannot change, restricts her and ultimately causes her pain and suffering and ultimately her strong womanhood. "Not at my side! Never think that! She will not die by my side"(2092).

Symbolic Archetypes in Antigone

Supernatural Intervention: Many times the Gods seem to act in favor of Antigone.

“We closed our eyes enduring the plague sent by the gods. When at long last we were quit of it, why, then we saw the girl”(2084).

The loss of Eurydice and Haemon through suicide.



Cultural Values of Ancient Greece

During Ancient Greece, which is when Antigone took place, there were a lot of cultural values that can be reflected and can be seen in the play.

- The government during this time and the social structure was split into two main classes of free people and the slaves. The women in this time period had no place in society and did not take place in public life.
- The archetype of man vs woman is very apparent in Antigone and can be seen through the struggles of the main character (the hero).



Cultural Values of Ancient Greece

Cont...

- In Antigone, the ordinary men (the Chorus), were the free people who were speaking out for their rights in the government.
- The belief in gods played a major role in the life styles and cultures of the time. The citizens would have their lives revolving around the gods, just like how the Chorus' concern was if the gods did not help them anymore in the play. This archetype of supernatural intervention was prominent in the play and also in Ancient Greece.



Cultural Values of Ancient Greece

Cont...

- A large part of the Ancient Greek culture were the epics, poetry and plays that were written in that time period. In this popular form of entertainment, the main character would always seem godly but with maybe a weakness. These types of heros are who the citizens of Ancient Greece would always look up to and common archetypes branched off of these values.
-

Quiz

<http://www.livebinders.com/play/play/748971>
