

## Polyneices' Body and His Monument: Class, Social Status, and Funerary Commemoration in Sophocles' *Antigone*

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There has been no lack of debate over the significance of Antigone's reference to "unwritten laws" in her defense of Polyneices' burial. Whereas many scholars have attempted to distinguish between the laws of the family and those of the state, or between the laws of the gods and those of the land (with Antigone on the side of the family and the gods, Creon on the side of the state and the land), scholars have recently addressed these questions with a focus on Antigone either as a model citizen or as the embodiment of a "bad woman."<sup>1</sup> The complex issue of burial, in which the conflicting positions of Creon or Antigone can best be evaluated, has rightly played a major role in these discussions.<sup>2</sup> In this paper I consider the play's trajectory leading to the successful burial of Polyneices as a response to contemporaneous funerary practices in Athens. In my study of the social and political implications of Antigone's defense of Polyneices' burial, her support of the "unwritten laws" also reveals some of the social divisions in Athens based on class and civic status. This paper thus emphasizes the continuing role of social status in both Athenian burial practices and drama.

Dramatic production was intimately connected to the life of the polis. Although much recent work has emphasized the role of tragedy as a means of questioning or "problematizing" civic values, I think it would be remiss simply to stop there, that is, at claiming that tragedy was designed to *question* values, as if the plays (as well as their production and the festivals where they were performed) did not have an agenda beyond the rather vague notion of complicating the ways in which the Athenian theater audience viewed the world.<sup>3</sup> To understand better the relationship between the theater and the polis, I consider the questioning and affirming aspects of drama in terms of their appeal to the interests of different segments of the audience. This requires us to modify the view of tragedy as embodying the tensions of a heroic past and the civic present, an influential view inspired by the work of Jean-Pierre Vernant. This

model has the advantage of reflecting some of the tensions and ambiguities that formed part of the shift from an aristocratic to a democratic dominant in Athens, but it downplays contemporaneous struggle between different groups with opposed values.<sup>4</sup> Studies influenced by Vernant tend to view tragedy as a performance in which aristocratic values are reconciled with the democratic polis.<sup>5</sup> One problem with the notion of reconciliation or, more fashionably, negotiation is that different groups in society and their specific interests are left hopelessly vague and undefined. Instead of focusing exclusively on aspects of reconciliation or negotiation, this essay takes seriously the notion of ongoing struggle between social groups and analyzes the play's relationship with Athenian society in the 440s.

Changes in the ways in which the dead were commemorated in fifth-century Athens provide one way to approach this relationship. In section I, I briefly consider different forms of funerary monuments and, in particular, the increase in the use of images of women. I argue that the types of monuments that people erected conveyed specific social and political meanings. In particular, I draw attention to the new role played by images of women to represent the class and civic status of the family, by focusing on the social and political implications of this form of commemoration in comparison with archaic-style burial mounds (*tumuli*). Whereas images of women or men in a domestic setting allowed for more ambiguous messages concerning the status of the family, *tumuli*, which continued to be erected by a few families in fifth-century Athens, promoted an elite identity that drew on Homeric models. In section II, I bring together Sophocles' *Antigone* with the insights from changes in iconography and funerary practice. I first discuss the representation of Polyneices in the debate between Antigone and Creon, highlighting the emphasis placed on social status. The play defines Polyneices' class and status through a series of contrasting images (e.g., slave, lower-class male) and further emphasizes the outrage of Creon's edict by depicting the denial of burial as an attack on Polyneices' social standing. Then I analyze the representation of his burial and the references to the tools used to build his tomb. I argue that the play presents an aristocratic burial through the location and description of Creon's construction of the tomb. While the play provides clear support for Antigone and her defense of the unwritten laws in terms of the general right to burial, it also indicates an ongoing concern with social status and its contested role in Athenian society.

### I. Funerary Commemoration in Fifth-Century Athens

Fifth-century Athens experienced substantial cultural, political, and social change. With respect to material culture, some of the most profound changes occurred in funerary sculpture, and in particular with the representation of women. In sharp contrast with the archaic and early classical periods, when elite males were the focus of funerary sculpture, in the classical period the civic roles of men and women are emphasized, with female subjects coming to dominate funerary iconography in both sculpture and vase painting.<sup>6</sup> Both the dating and the iconography of classical funerary reliefs has been the subject of much debate. Here I wish to emphasize the aspect of continuity in material culture and sketch the different types of funerary monuments with which the audience of *Antigone* would have been familiar.<sup>7</sup>

Recent discussions of funerary monuments note that after an apparent absence, starting c. 480, of funerary statues or sculpted monuments in the archaeological record, Athenians began to use sculpted reliefs again later in the fifth century.<sup>8</sup> Although the standard dating for the reappearance of these reliefs is in the late 430s, Hans Diepolder (1931) and Karen Stears (1993, 1995, 2000) provide evidence for viewing this “reappearance” as rather part of an ongoing and complex relationship between the Athenian public and burial monuments throughout the fifth century.<sup>9</sup> There are about forty-five simple stone reliefs from c. 475–440, most of which commemorate foreigners; one fragmentary sculpted relief from c. 450 preserves part of a bearded man (Stears 2000, 31). There are also other sculpted stelae dating to the 430s, some of which depict women (Stears *ibid.*, 39–41). Vase painting provides additional evidence for funerary monuments. Representations of sculpted funerary stelae appear on six white-ground lekythoi made by the Tymbos Painter (Stears *ibid.*, 35 n. 16).<sup>10</sup> Painted in the third quarter of the fifth century, these lekythoi show women standing before or approaching funerary monuments, which for the most part are pedimental stelae. Depicted, in turn, on these stelae are images of women holding a mirror and seated on a *klismos*. We thus have sculpted funerary stelae with images of women painted on lekythoi. The iconography of women on these stelae parallels that found on actual funerary reliefs and on Attic red-figure vases.<sup>11</sup> Four other lekythoi, dating to the second and third quarters of the fifth century, depict stelae with freestanding sculpture (two with males, two with females) placed on top.<sup>12</sup> Other lekythoi depict scenes with large tumuli, stelae with inscriptions, or columns with

elaborate finials. Although these tall column monuments depicted on lekythoi are not preserved in the archaeological record, stelae with inscriptions represented on lekythoi do in fact replicate extant monuments (Stears *ibid.*, 35); lekythoi with images of tumuli also seem to imitate the kinds of monuments that were being erected in Attica. Sarah Humphreys (1980), who dates the reappearance of sculpted monuments to c. 431, interprets their emergence as representative of the “wishful thinking” of some families, who “hankered after impressive grave monuments of the type forbidden by law.”<sup>13</sup> Whereas such “wishful thinking” would appear to explain the depiction of freestanding columns with finials, lekythoi with representations of tumuli, stelae with inscriptions, and stelae with images of women seem to refer to something more tangible than fantasy.

The existence of sculpted reliefs from the mid-fifth century complicates the notion of the disappearance of funerary monuments and contributes to the argument that lekythoi with sculpted reliefs by the Tymbos Painter are also likely to depict real monuments.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, the stelae with seated women painted on white-ground lekythoi may be a response to or imitation of the erection of such stelae as funerary monuments in Athens (Stears 2000, 52). As Diepolder (1931) suggests, the building activity on the Acropolis in the age of Pericles and the resultant influx of craftsmen to Athens would have contributed to the conditions leading to the increase in sculpted monuments; but this was not the sole enabling factor, nor would it have determined the iconography of the reliefs in any case. Evidence for funerary monuments in the fifth century suggests a gradual development rather than an abrupt change involving the sudden introduction of sculpted reliefs after a period of fifty years in which there were no monuments.

In comparison with monuments from the archaic period, later sculpted reliefs promoted markedly different values. Archaic monuments focused on the world of aristocratic males. Single figures of elite males presented as warriors, often with elaborate armor or engaged in leisure pursuits, dominate the corpus; their heroic quality is often evoked by their monumental size.<sup>15</sup> By contrast, most classical stelae promoted the communal values of the polis and the *oikos*. The majority of men represented in reliefs are shown dressed in a *himation* and often carry a staff, which as Aristophanes suggests was associated with their civic role (*Eccl.* 149–50, 275–76); other well-represented social categories are soldiers and athletes (Bergemann 1997, 76–83). The stele of Eupheros, for example, shows the youth as an athlete dressed in *himation* and holding a

strigil; the stele of Chairedemos and Lyceas in Piraeus shows him as the ideal hoplite, so too that of Philoxenos and Philoumene in Malibu.<sup>16</sup> Sculpted funerary reliefs tend to emphasize men's roles in the public life of the city, whereas images of women tend to promote the ideal of the *oikos*. When stelae combine images of men and women (as they often do), the effect is to represent relations in the *oikos* as the building-blocks of the polis (Bergemann 1997).

While there is evidence for an increasing popularity of these sculpted reliefs throughout the fifth century, one of the most striking changes in funerary commemoration during this period was the shift in emphasis from men to women. The explanation for this may lie in part with the Periclean citizenship law of 451/0, which stated that those not born from two citizens (*astoi*) should not share in the polis ([Aristotle], *Ath. Pol.* 26.4). It is important to note that the term *astoi* refers not only to males but also to Athenian women. As Cynthia Patterson (1987, 2005) has shown, in Athens the concept of citizenship—"sharing in the *polis*"—extended to women as well as men. The increase in the images of women appearing on funerary reliefs after the passage of the citizenship law likely reflected and fostered an increased consciousness of this more inclusive notion of citizenship.<sup>17</sup> For Robin Osborne (1997), one effect of the law was that Athenian males began to secure "their own claims to citizen status by advertising that their wives and mothers conformed to the ideals of Athenian womanhood, and that their homes were models of domestic regularity"; and that by drawing attention to the household's civic purity, sculpted reliefs with images of women "might be seen to promote democracy, since such losses were paralleled in all households, poor as well as rich."<sup>18</sup> Many Athenians thus promoted a "civic" model of the family, and much of the iconography is indeed striking for its homogeneity.<sup>19</sup> As a means to memorialize the deceased and to promote an image of the family, funerary monuments were at the center of this change in Athenian ideas about civic status. By defining the citizen membership of Athenian women and making them central to men's enfranchised membership in the polis, the citizenship law created the conditions for Athenians to use images of women on white-ground lekythoi and funerary monuments as a means of expressing their "sharing in the *polis*." At the very least, these images could be viewed as conforming to this popular understanding of their function, for the process of determining civic status placed an increased value on these monuments: family tombs were often cited as proof of citizenship, with the women of the family now prominently displayed (sometimes to the exclusion of the

males, who were nonetheless listed on accompanying inscriptions). Thus candidates for the nine archonships had to point out their family tombs during their *dokimasia* ([Aristotle], *Ath. Pol.* 55.3).<sup>20</sup> As Isaeus (6.64–65) notes, the physical monument itself was also important in discussions of civic status: the location and what kind of tomb as well as the identity of those performing funerary rites were necessary to determine an individual's status. Fifth-century funerary monuments were increasingly used both to promote and to legitimize the civic status of women and men.<sup>21</sup>

Expressing civic allegiance was not the only function, however, of the iconography. Women were also used in the promotion of class distinction. In her study of Athenian reception of Persian culture, Margaret Miller (1997) has demonstrated how the diffusion of eastern luxury goods into Greece became one of the ways in which the elite signified their class position and represented themselves as a distinct social group; this phenomenon was part of a “qualitative expansion of the concept of a luxury culture.”<sup>22</sup> Eastern luxury items were readily adopted by Athenians, but the gender of the individual marked with distinction changed. In the east these luxury goods had been used by *men*, but in Athens they were used by *women*.<sup>23</sup> Consequently in the fifth century there was an expansion of the role played by images of women in the promotion of social distinction.<sup>24</sup>

In the context of funerary monuments, the stele of Hegeso (Athens NM 3624) is but the most famous example of the display of a wealthy family (see fig. 1). The stele formed part of the peribolos of Koroibos of Melite; two other monuments, an anthemion rosette stele and a stele with a relief *loutrophoros*, commemorate the male members of the family in inscriptions.<sup>25</sup> Hegeso, seated on a *klismos*, takes a piece of jewelry from a box held by a standing attendant, who wears a *khitôn kheirodotos*, an ankle-length sleeved chiton. The presence of the jewelry box as well as the *klismos* locates this scene in the *oikos*; the resultant emphasis on the idealized domestic setting suggests the propriety of the women of the family. In light of the emphasis placed on women's share in the polis by Pericles' citizenship law, such details as the jewelry box serve to promote not only an image of the family as wealthy but also the civic status of the family (both men and women) through reference to the *oikos*.<sup>26</sup> The *khitôn kheirodotos*, worn by the attendant (most likely a slave), was an eastern (luxury) garment adopted by fifth-century Athenians (Miller 1997, 156–65).<sup>27</sup> The attendant is engaged in a kind of activity performed by slaves in other scenes, yet her costume is eastern and exotic.<sup>28</sup> According

to Xenophon, “good” slaves are rewarded with superior clothing that would distinguish them from “bad” slaves (*Oec.* 13.10). The costume of Hegeso’s attendant (who thus wears “superior” clothing) and of Hegeso herself visually presents this family as wealthy.

The stele of Hegeso may conform to civic norms formally instituted in the citizenship law, but it also belonged to an elite family. Recent estimates of costs suggest, however, that many families with perhaps more modest incomes could also have afforded to set up sculpted reliefs.<sup>29</sup> To be sure, some literary sources attest exorbitant costs: Diogeiton claimed to have spent 5,000 drachmas on his brother’s tomb (though only 2,500 drachmas were spent: *Lysias* 32.21). Other sources, however, attest lower costs: Philon’s mother gave Antiphanes 300 drachmas for her burial (*Lysias* 31.21).<sup>30</sup> This kind of expenditure was likely beyond the reach of the average craftsman, whose annual income was around 150–300 drachmas.<sup>31</sup> Yet based on comparisons with the state’s costs for a figure on the frieze of the Erechtheum, a single stele might have cost significantly



*Fig. 1 The Stele of Hegeso.*

*Photograph: DAI-ATH-Kerameikos, Neg. 14624; all rights reserved.*

less: one with a modest relief would likely have cost between thirty and fifty drachmas. A working class family could have saved up their funds for such a simpler monument, the affordability of which is further suggested by the indirect evidence of the costs involved with documentary reliefs.<sup>32</sup> We must also remember that many monuments have not survived. Instead of sculpted reliefs, Athenian citizens (and residents of Attica) could also choose a less expensive painted monument without any relief (Posamentir 2001, 63).<sup>33</sup> It is also likely that monuments for the very poor were made out of more perishable material and do not appear in the archaeological record (Papaspyridi-Karusu 1956; Humphreys 1980).<sup>34</sup>

At the same time that images of women were on the increase in fifth-century Athenian funerary commemoration, monuments commemorating the elite male that were common in the archaic and early classical period became less popular. Furthermore, as noted above, most of the stelae from the classical period that depict men emphasize their roles in the polis and their relationship with the *oikos* rather than the prowess of the elite male.<sup>35</sup> The shift from archaic to classical burial practices not only emphasized images of women over those of men, but there was an effort to foreground the family group rather than “individual achievement” (Osborne 1997, 26). Other monuments, however, defied these trends and emulated archaic and Homeric practices of burial display.

In contrast to those families who purchased sculpted reliefs to commemorate the dead, a few families continued to erect large, archaic-style funerary mounds (*tumuli*). A series of mounds in the Kerameikos were built from about 500 to 425 near the massive Mound G, which was erected c. 550; the “Rundbau,” another monumental mound, was built in the seventh century and covered an older burial (Houby-Nielsen 1995, 153–55).<sup>36</sup> Classical *tumuli* erected in the Kerameikos display the considerable wealth of the family. One was framed by a large wall of polygonal masonry facing the street; the resultant architectural changes to the *tumuli*, now with a façade, likely reflect the increased emphasis on the orientation of classical monuments toward the street.<sup>37</sup> The monumentality of these *tumuli* not only underscores their expense but also recalls the use of the *tumulus* to commemorate the dead from Marathon and Salamis. Monumental *tumuli* with the combination of *tumbos* and stele, often mentioned in Homer, expressed the social standing of the warrior. Thus, for example, Sarpedon receives a *tumbos* and stele (*Il.* 16.457, 674–75), and Achilles is commemorated on a projecting headland so that his *tumbos* (with stele) will be visible from afar both now and in the future (*Od.* 24.80–84).<sup>38</sup> Not only were Homeric-style monuments erected in



Athens, but vase painting also preserves evidence for such tumuli in the fifth century.<sup>39</sup> These images of tumuli, as Alan Shapiro argues in this volume, were likely inspired by actual monuments in Athens. Ian Morris encapsulates the intended effect of such burial mounds: they “evoked a golden age or aristocratic freedom . . . On the one hand, they brought to mind men such as Kimon, aristocrat *par excellence* and triple Olympic chariot-race winner . . . On the other hand, they reached back still further to evoke figures like Patroklos and Hektor . . .”<sup>40</sup> In comparison with other kinds of monuments, the tumulus conveyed a particular message. As Wendy Closterman shows in her essay in this volume, unlike the tumulus with its particular shape and construction, the peribolos was the most visible way of elaborating relationships within the family unit. Furthermore, some tumuli (e.g., Mound G) seem to have commemorated groups based on elite social relations rather than family connections.<sup>41</sup> Tumuli may have looked back to Homeric heroes; they may equally have evoked the heroic burials of the fallen soldiers in the Persian War. But they also expressed the family’s economic superiority and social status.

In contrast with archaic funerary monuments, classical sculpted reliefs were designed to address civic as well as class concerns under a more democratic regime with a significant number of enfranchised working-class males and could thus be read in more than one way. There are three broad trends, as previously mentioned.<sup>42</sup> First, the use of images of women was expanded on funerary reliefs. These images could serve both civic and class interests, thereby signifying different ideas about the family—wealth, civic allegiance, or both. For some citizens in Athens, the ambiguity of these monuments would have enabled them to promote class distinctions while deflecting potential objections to such sentiments through the family’s apparent conformity with civic norms.<sup>43</sup> Second, males were also commemorated in classical reliefs, but the notable change in the imagery is the focus on the male’s relationship with the *oikos*. The ability of both types of sculpted reliefs to appeal to both citizenship and class contributed to their general usefulness to different groups with potentially conflicting interests. Finally, a small group of people continued to commemorate the dead with Homeric-style mounds. These tombs not only presented the deceased as a Homeric hero or as one of the civic heroes from the Battle of Marathon, but also bucked contemporaneous trends; these archaizing tombs point to an ongoing struggle within the polis concerning the representation of the deceased’s status (as well as the family’s) in burial. The multiple messages conveyed by funeral monuments of this period were likely due to

the mass audience viewing them. It is assumed, for example, that not only could prospective magistrates point out their family graves (and thus their citizenship), but other citizens (as well as the other residents of Attica) would also be able to inspect and view these monuments. Burial plots tended to be located in prominent spaces and thus were in the public view. Because access to them was unrestricted, they were visible to people from a broad spectrum of society; the trend in the fifth century was to address different sections of this divided audience at the same time.<sup>44</sup>

## II. Class, Social Status, and Burial in *Antigone*

In light of its focus on the burial of Polyneices, Sophocles' *Antigone* may be profitably viewed as an intervention in Athenian society, since the play's initial production (c. 442) in Athens is contemporaneous with these developments in funerary commemoration. In particular, the representation of Polyneices' body and his monument reveal the play's engagement with changes in funerary practices. In this section, I focus on the issues of class and status that inform both the debate between Creon and Antigone over Polyneices, and the funerary monument that Polyneices eventually is given.<sup>45</sup> For as discussed above, from Homer to Isaeus the existence, as well as the "kind" of monument, was an essential element in the definition of one's civic and social status.

### A. The Body of Polyneices

As the children of Oedipus, the previous ruler of Thebes (*Ant.* 165–66), Polyneices and Eteocles were the sons of a king. Creon's praise and commemoration of Eteocles provides some evidence for the social position of the royal sons: having shown himself best (*aristeusas*, 195) in battle, he will be buried and receive all the offerings that are owed to the "noblest" dead (*aristois*, 197). In contrast to the heroic and aristocratic commemoration given his brother, Polyneices, who returned as an exile to "drink the blood of his kin" (201–2), is to lie unburied for dogs and birds to eat. Creon then adds αἰκισθὲν τ' ἰδεῖν (and a foul outrage to see, 206). The participle αἰκισθὲν points to the form of (public) humiliation that Creon envisions. The term's common legal usage further suggests that a crime (i.e., αἰχρεία) has been committed (Griffith 1999, 162 ad 206). Creon argues that Polyneices has committed the crime, but according to Antigone and some of the citizens in Thebes, Creon himself is the guilty

party, for although Polyneices is the son of a king, Creon threatens to maltreat his body.<sup>46</sup> The representation of Polyneices and his body in the play involves issues of class and social status that lie at the heart of Athenian society.

When Antigone is brought by the Guard before Creon, she claims that it was not Zeus who made the proclamation, but Creon, who is only a general (*Ant.* 9) after all. Creon then pledges that Antigone will be punished by death (488–89). In response, Antigone proclaims the glory that she has won for burying her brother and suggests that the Chorus would voice their support for her if not for their fear of Creon (505; cf. 509). In the ensuing stichomythia, the views of Creon and Antigone are further clarified through the ways in which they define Polyneices' social status. First, Creon suggests that Antigone is “alone” among the Cadmeans in her beliefs (508) and asks whether she feels no shame for holding different views from the Chorus of Theban elders (510). Antigone responds that there is no shame (*aiskhron*) in showing proper respect for one's kin (511). When Creon attempts to define Eteocles and Polyneices in different terms, she insists on the family relationships: they had the same mother and father (513), whom the audience can further identify as royal. The language Creon uses to distinguish between the brothers is redolent of moral and ritual purity (514): “Why then do you render tribute that is impious in his [i.e., Eteocles'] judgment?” But Creon's language of honor and tribute (*τιμῶς χάριν*) also suggests a privilege of which Polyneices is deemed unworthy.

In his earlier outburst at the Chorus, in response to their suggestion that the burial of Polyneices was sent by the gods (*Ant.* 278), Creon sarcastically asked whether the gods honored Polyneices as a “benefactor” (*euergētês*, 284). Instead of one who honors the community and thereby demonstrates his favor/gratitude (*kharis*), Polyneices failed miserably to live up to these standards, according to Creon. Again, in addition to a moral obligation, there is a social component to Creon's choice of words, for fifth-century uses of the term *euergētês* usually refer to the elite (e.g., Pindar, *Pyth.* 2.24; Lysias 20.19).<sup>47</sup> In part, Creon attempts to present the discussion of the burial of Polyneices as a question of loyalty and moral character (cf. *Ant.* 209–10), but his language also evokes the question of Polyneices' social status.<sup>48</sup> This question is elaborated by the use of *isos* in this section of the play. For when Antigone challenges Creon's assertion that Eteocles will bear witness to the impiety of his brother's burial, Creon claims that Polyneices is not equal (*ex isou*, 516) to his brother with respect to honor. Antigone denies any distinction between the

brothers, yet the language she uses reveals some of the social divisions in the polis.<sup>49</sup> She asserts that it was not at all a slave (*doulos*) but a brother who perished (517). When Creon again defines Polyneices as a traitor and Eteocles as the city's "champion," Antigone claims that "Nevertheless, Hades desires these rites [νόμους τούτους]" (519). A scholiast preserves a variant, νόμους ἴσους (equal laws), which would further emphasize Antigone's position on the necessity of honoring the brothers equally.<sup>50</sup> Creon picks up on this theme of equality only to reaffirm his position: burial rites are not equally (*isos*, 520) available to the good and the bad alike. This contest over the categorization of Polyneices vis-à-vis Eteocles turns, in part, on Antigone's defense of Polyneices' nonservile and thus equal status.

Antigone's assertion that Polyneices was not a slave draws its force from some of the fundamental differences between the rights of slaves and citizens. Slaves were completely under the control of their masters. In the *Odyssey*, the fate of Melanthius provides an early example of the kind of abuse to which a slave was susceptible. His punishment for being a "bad" slave (siding with the suitors) is to be cut up and fed to the dogs (*Od.* 22.474–77). In the classical period there is evidence that slaves could be starved, fettered, and "have the laziness beaten out of them" (Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.1.16), or could be used as prostitutes ([Demosthenes] 59.18–23). Slave traders abandoned small children and the aged by the side of the road "to die of starvation and exposure, if not killed by dogs or wolves first" (Xenophon, *Ages.* 1.21–22). Money that slaves earned belonged to their owners (Andocides 1.38; Demosthenes 27.9; Theophrastus, *Char.* 30.15, Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1361a21). According to Herodotus, a Chian called Panionis made his living in a most "unholy" way—castrating and selling slaves (8.105).<sup>51</sup> But even in classical Athens, there is evidence that owning eunuchs was a symbol of wealth and extravagance (Miller 1997, 213–15). For legal testimony, slaves were subject to torture (*basanos*) before their statement was admitted (e.g., Lysias 4.14–17);<sup>52</sup> as Demosthenes states, the slave is answerable with his body for all offenses (22.55; cf. [Demosthenes] 53.16). Finally, a fourth-century lead tablet written by a slave and found in the Athenian agora reveals that "bad" slaves could be whipped, tied up, and "treated like dirt" by a "wicked" man; the slave in question, Lesis, writes that he is "perishing in the foundry" and seeks "something better."<sup>53</sup> In contrast with "bad" slaves, "good" ones could be rewarded for their loyalty and service (e.g., Xenophon, *Oec.* 12.6). It is clear that slaves were sometimes treated with kindness, but the point is that slaves, in contrast with citi-

zens, had no say in their treatment; it was up to the owners to punish, censure, or reward as they saw fit (Garland 1988, 149). An Athenian audience would have been understandably sensitive to the status boundaries between free and slave. With her mention of slavery in protesting Creon's demeaning treatment of her brother, Antigone helps to define the unusual and unacceptable behavior of the tyrant.<sup>54</sup>

Although her language resonates with the Athenian understanding of the status of slaves as chattel property, it is important to stress that the polis did require the burial of slaves.<sup>55</sup> While such behavior was not unknown in ancient Greece, Creon's treatment of Polyneices is clearly not the accepted treatment of the dead—be they slave or citizen—and his behavior in this sense can be understood as tyrannical. The fact that there was a law requiring the burial of the dead evokes something of the double bind I am describing here: the polis attempted to regulate behavior that, although it was widely accepted as normative, nonetheless was not recognized by everyone.<sup>56</sup> Sophocles appears to draw upon contested norms in order to characterize Creon's actions.

Antigone's remark, "It was not a slave that died, it was a brother," points to the perceived slight against Polyneices' social status (Citti 1978, 100), but it also serves to limit the sphere of her defiance. On the one hand, the plight of the slave does not require Antigone's intervention; it is not her concern.<sup>57</sup> On the other hand, whereas a slave would unlikely be treated as an equal of the heroized Eteocles, Antigone can be seen to reassert the social status of Polyneices in the face of Creon's assault on his social standing. Antigone emphasizes Polyneices' equality with Eteocles by calling attention to the contrasting status of a slave.<sup>58</sup> Thus, whereas Creon emphasizes the aspects of morality and loyalty, Antigone's defense of the social status of Polyneices is bound up with the differences between slaves and citizens.

Creon's tyrannical treatment of the corpse is given further resonance by reference to Polyneices' defeat in battle. Creon describes Polyneices as one who returned from exile to burn the city to the ground and enslave its population (*Ant.* 199–202); he is both the defeated enemy and a traitor (209–10). As in the case of slaves, the vanquished were vulnerable to whatever treatment the victors cared to extend to them (e.g., Xenophon, *Cyr.* 7.5.73; Aristotle, *Pol.* 1255a).<sup>59</sup> The image of Polyneices' body, rent into pieces and partially consumed by dogs, would likely have evoked the fate of the disloyal slave Melanthius in the *Odyssey* after the defeat of the suitors whom he had helped. The brutal treatment of a defeated enemy was not unknown to classical Greeks. Xenophon explains

how the Greeks “mutilated the bodies of the dead, in order that the sight of them might inspire the utmost terror in the enemy” (*Ant.* 3.4.5).<sup>60</sup> Like Xenophon’s reference to mutilation as a warning to the enemy, Creon turns the treatment of Polyneices and Eteocles (*Ant.* 191–93) into an example of his *nomoi*. A number of texts, nonetheless, refer to the Greek custom of allowing for the recovery of the dead on the battlefield.<sup>61</sup> Creon’s presentation of Polyneices as a defeated enemy may be an attempt to render his abusive behavior acceptable to some of the Thebans; however, the play clearly shows that Creon’s efforts to deny burial to Polyneices are shockingly unacceptable.<sup>62</sup> Such behavior contravened Attic as well as Greek custom, and even in the play, as a brother of Antigone and son of the former king, Polyneices is still respected by some of the Theban citizens, as evidenced by their support of Antigone’s attempts to bury him (e.g., 557, 688–700).<sup>63</sup> Creon’s attempt to defile the corpse is elaborated with the notion of the “answerability” of a slave or a defeated enemy. Either way, Creon violates both Polyneices’ civic status and Greek custom.

Creon’s use of moral and social terms also contributes to the discussion of the social and civic status of Oedipus’s dead sons. In defending his unequal treatment of Polyneices and Eteocles, Creon proclaims that *kakoi* (*Ant.* 208) will never surpass the just in honor (cf. 288). The Chorus of wealthy Theban elders (843, 940) respond by situating Creon’s use of the word in a moral context: *kakoi* are those who are hostile toward the city rather than being kindly disposed toward it (212).<sup>64</sup> Despite the Chorus’s solidarity with Creon in presenting his edict as a moral issue, the social force of the terms can still be felt, for *kakos* has a social-political thrust as well as a moral significance. Theognis and Pindar, as well as pseudo-Xenophon, fuse both of these meanings in their use of the term.<sup>65</sup> Creon further defines Eteocles as *khrestos*, Polyneices as *kakos*: the *khrestos* is not equal to the *kakos* in obtaining an equal portion of burial rites (520). *Khrestos* means useful and good, indeed often in a moral sense (e.g., Sophocles, *Phil.* 476; Plato, *Gorg.* 499E); it can also refer to the elite in contrast to the poor (e.g., [Xenophon], *Ath. Pol.* 1.4, 6).<sup>66</sup> The term is used in Aristophanes’ *Frogs* (*Ran.* 735, 1455) to describe the recently exiled oligarchs. At another point in the comedy, the same term describes a particular element of the theater audience presented as *oligos* (783), that segment that supports the conservative (i.e., oligarchic) character, Aeschylus.<sup>67</sup> Creon’s description of Eteocles as *khrestos* and Polyneices as *kakos* (520) thus serves to remove Polyneices from the ranks of the elite

(*khrestoi*). In light of Creon's earlier demeaning treatment of Polyneices (understood by Antigone as reducing her brother to a slave), Creon's view of him as lower class parallels the assimilation of slaves to lower-class citizens in oligarchic circles (e.g., [Xenophon], *Ath. Pol.* 1.10). The lower-class members of the audience could thus have had additional motivation for siding against Creon. Whereas Creon (supported by the Chorus) overtly attempts to promote his judgment of Polyneices on the basis of his immorality, the language he uses suggests that his view of the deceased is also based on class.

The attack on Polyneices' social status becomes even clearer when considered in the context of the earlier scene between the Guard and Creon, for the Guard is a lower-class character who is threatened with physical abuse. His lower social status is characterized in part by colloquial expressions and "comic" touches.<sup>68</sup> Such "individualization" was used in low genres and by Sophocles to mark vulgar and nonelite characters.<sup>69</sup> Creon's threats to have the Guard hanged for the insolence (*hubris*, *Ant.* 309) manifest in not preventing the burial of Polyneices certainly demonstrate his tyrannical behavior, but the Guard's answerability with his body also indicates his lower social status.<sup>70</sup> These threats to torture the Guard, if he does not "reveal" those who buried the corpse, are suggestive of the practice of inquiry by torture (*basanos*), a treatment reserved exclusively for slaves.<sup>71</sup> The lack of any explicit defense of the Guard in the play also suggests his lower social position: whereas Creon's threats to torture and kill the Guard pass without comment (306–9, 325–26), the play presents Antigone as making an impassioned defense of Polyneices in defiance of Creon's order. Antigone may be understood to restrict herself to the specific case of her brother, but in the process, the play sets up a series of contrasting social categories that reinforce Polyneices' elite status.<sup>72</sup> The implicit comparison of the Guard's treatment with that of Polyneices in the play reinforces the proper place of Antigone's brother in the city's social and political hierarchy.

In light of the play's representation of Polyneices' social status, the concept of hubris may shed additional light on the way in which an audience would have understood this debate. Hubris was most clearly defined by Aristotle as the deliberate and gratuitous attempt to lower the social status of another (*Rhet.* 1378b23–35). An exaggerated sense of oneself and the desire to demonstrate one's superiority are also central to the concept.<sup>73</sup> The wealthy are described as perhaps especially prone to hubris, leading them to commit such crimes as *aikēia* and adultery (*Rhet.*

1391a23; cf. *Ant.* 206). Honor (*timê*) and shame play a determinate role in hubristic behavior as, for example, Conon's attack on Ariston makes clear.<sup>74</sup> Beaten up by Conon and his sons, Ariston further defines Conon's hubris by claiming that Conon stood over his naked body on the ground and crowed like a cock (Demosthenes 54.7–9).<sup>75</sup> Pheres in Euripides' *Alcestis* nicely brings out some of the issues at stake with acts of hubris. Following Admetus's insulting and accusatory speech, Pheres asks him whether he thinks he is talking to a slave rather than a free citizen (*eleutheros*, 678) and claims that Admetus's insults are excessive (*agan hubrizeis*, 679).

In *Antigone*, the term hubris is used by Creon to describe both the burial of Polyneices in defiance of his order (*Ant.* 309) and Antigone's behavior (480, 482).<sup>76</sup> The same term is also used by Antigone as she is walking to her tomb and describing how the Chorus insult her (*hubrizeis*, 840). Although the word is not used to describe Creon's behavior in relation to Polyneices, the debate over the social status of Polyneices would likely have been understood in this way. A later, tragic example of the debate over Polyneices' burial in Euripides' *Phoenissae* suggests that hubris is a key concept in Creon's behavior and makes explicit the frame of reference hinted at in *Antigone*. In Euripides' play, Antigone describes the denial of burial as hubris (*Ant.* 1644) and asks why Creon legislates over a corpse; she defends her brother's right to burial with reference to the prohibition on outraging the dead (*ephubrizesthai*, 1663).<sup>77</sup> For Creon the refusal of burial is part of Polyneices' penalty (1654); he thus forbids her from honoring the corpse (*timêseis*, 1670). The references to hubris in *Antigone* and the subsequent elaboration in Euripides' *Phoenissae* of the issues at stake provide some indication that Creon's behavior would likely be understood by the audience as aiming to attack the *timê* of Polyneices and to diminish his social standing. As an act of hubris, Creon's treatment of the corpse reveals not only the exaggerated sense of his authority but also the important role of the Polyneices' social status.

If the issues of social class and citizen rights inform the debate over the treatment of Polyneices' body, it may not surprise that what happens with the body later in the play also draws on class relations. Indeed, the exchange between Antigone and Creon lays the essential foundation for understanding the significance of the representation of Polyneices' tomb, the details of which describe a kind of monument that resisted emerging trends of funerary commemoration in Athens. Polyneices' *tumbos* is the material expression of Antigone's defense of his social standing.



### B. The Monument of Polyneices

The play never loses sight of Polyneices' body. Creon, Antigone, Haemon, Ismene, the Chorus, and Teiresias all weigh in with their views on what should be done with it. In the end, the play's ultimate approval (at times qualified) of burial supports Antigone's outspoken stance against Creon.<sup>78</sup> In contrast with contemporaneous trends in funerary commemoration and the emphasis on images of women, the play works toward a final solution—the commemoration of Polyneices—that looks back to archaic burial practices that a few wealthy families in Athens continued to emulate. In this section, I discuss the tomb of Polyneices and propose that the play presents it as an aristocratic burial.

Although Antigone sets out to “lift” the corpse (presumably for the purpose of washing and burial: *Ant.* 43–45, 72) and then to heap up a mound (τάφρον χόσουσα, 80–81), it is clear that she herself does not succeed. In his first report to Creon, the Guard claims that someone buried the body (θάψας), sprinkled it with dust, and performed the necessary funerary rites (245–47). The Guard qualifies his statement somewhat, however, by then explaining how the body “disappeared”: it was not buried in a tomb, but covered with light dust (255–56). Creon's guards then removed the dust from the corpse (426), and for this reason Antigone covered it with dust a second time and poured libations (429–31).<sup>79</sup> When Teiresias comes on stage, he tells Creon that the altars have been polluted by carrion from the corpse (1016–18); Antigone's second attempt to “bury” Polyneices thus seems to have been as ineffectual as the first. The exposure of the corpse has cataclysmic effects. As Teiresias reveals to Creon, he has observed the screeching frenzy of the birds and a failed prophetic rite to the gods (999–1014). Teiresias is clear on the cause of this ill omen: the city suffers a disease on account of Creon's policy (1015). The birds have carried the carrion from the corpse of Polyneices to the altars, and as a result the gods are no longer accepting prayers from humans (1016–22). Although Teiresias (as well as the play) makes a clear assessment of Creon's responsibility for the city's illness, there is no explicit support of Antigone's action to be found here. It is apparent, however, that Creon has made a mistake (1024–25). Teiresias's subsequent injunctions to Creon to “yield to the dead man” and not to keep on “stabbing the man already dead” (1029–30), as well as his sarcastic question whether there is any “bravery” (*alkê*, 1030) in killing the dead man over and over again, leave little doubt in the mind of the Chorus at least that the blind prophet should be heeded (1091–94).

Indeed, the Chorus give concise advice to the troubled Creon: release Antigone and build a tomb for Polyneices (1100–1). The construction of the monument and final burial are thus postponed until the end of the play.

Creon reverses the advice given by the Chorus. He proceeds *first* to the corpse of Polyneices (1196–97) and *then* goes to Antigone’s tomb (1204–5). Jebb (1891, xix) considers Creon’s delay to be a “dramatic blemish,” yet he explains Sophocles’ dramaturgy through tragedy’s “occasional neglect of clearness” and the importance of the “rhetorical element.” For Jebb, Antigone’s demise is postponed as part of the rhetorical climax of the Messenger’s speech and indeed of the play itself.<sup>80</sup> Although this explanation has merit, I would also argue that the burial and thus the monument of Polyneices are prioritized: Creon’s decision to construct a tomb *first* (and to release Antigone second) underscores the importance of the monument and its significance to the audience. Although there are only a few references to the *tumbos* in the play, they nonetheless describe a very specific type of monument that would have had strong political overtones in Athens, for both its placement and its material form point to a specific form of commemoration readily recognizable to Athenians.

The play provides tantalizing details concerning the location of Polyneices’ body, as well as the description of the *tumbos* erected for it.<sup>81</sup> The body was located on the “topmost part of the plain” (πεδίον ἐπ’ ἄκρον, *Ant.* 1197).<sup>82</sup> Its proximity to the city is hinted at in the Guard’s claims that he has made the short trip a long one with his delaying (232). According to the Guard’s description in his exchange with Creon, the Guards sat down on the hilltop (ἄκρων ἐκ πάγων, 411), stationing themselves upwind (ὑπὴνεμοί, 411) so that the smell from the corpse would not reach them (412). Creon seems to suggest that the location is readily visible to those in the city when he orders the servants to take pickaxes in their hands and “rush to the spot in view” (εἰς ἐπόψιον τόπον, 1110), that is, the place where Polyneices’ corpse lies. The body may also lie by the roadside, judging from the Messenger’s report that Creon and the others offered a prayer to the “goddess of the crossroads” (1199) upon reaching it. It is likely that the spot “in view” was where the body was left after the battle. Polyneices and Eteocles traditionally were said to have fallen at the Seventh Gate (e.g., Aeschylus, *Sept.* 631–32), and the text only notes that he is to be “left” unburied (Sophocles, *Ant.* 29, 205). Although the description of the location is somewhat vague, I suggest that the audience would have understood the body (and eventually its

tomb) to be located by the Seventh Gate and close to the city. The construction of the tomb by the gate at the side of the road would further parallel contemporaneous practices in Athens as, for example, in the Kerameikos.<sup>83</sup>

The monument built by Creon's servants (*Ant.* 1108, 1214) is explicitly described as a burial mound with a lofty head consisting of native dirt (τύμβον ὀρθόκρανον οικείας / χθονὸς χώσαντες, 1203–4). The adjective ὀρθόκρανον (lofty-headed) and the participle χώσαντες (heaping up) make it clear that the play is concerned with more than *just a burial*.<sup>84</sup> The description indicates that the funeral monument of Polyneices is intended to be conspicuous: the reference to “heaping up a lofty-headed mound” describes the very shape of a tumulus. The essential aspect of visibility is presented as a function of both its location and its (epic) size. Such a description brings to mind “Homeric”-style monuments, which, though antiquated, nonetheless continued to be built in the Kerameikos throughout the fifth century. Burials with large mounds and stelae are the kinds of “heroic” or elite funerary monuments canonized in the *Iliad*; for example, the Greeks heaped up wood for the corpse of Patroclus, making a pyre 100 feet all around with their long-edged bronze (*Il.* 23.118) and axes (*pelekeas*, 23.114), while the body of Patroclus is set on the “topmost part” of the heaped-up pyre (23.120–30, 164–65). The fact that the remains of Polyneices' body were burned further evokes the Homeric model, while contrasting with the relative lack of cremations in fifth-century Athens (Houby-Nielsen 1995, 137).<sup>85</sup> Although burial mounds like Polyneices' were relatively rare in classical Athens, images of such tumuli on white-ground lekythoi in the fifth century provide further examples of the kind of monument described in the play.

Further evidence for Polyneices' monument is provided in the reference to the tools used to construct it. Creon calls for his servants to bring axe-heads (ἄξινας, *Ant.* 1109) with them to the site of Polyneices' body, presumably for the construction of the pyre (much like Patroclus's as described in Homer).<sup>86</sup> In Xenophon's *Anabasis* (1.5.12), we hear of one soldier using an axe-head to cut wood (and later throwing it at a commander who had recently beaten one of the soldiers). Additional references to the kinds of tools that could be used to build the monument surface in the Guard's first exchange with Creon. The Guard explains that there was no stroke of a pickaxe (γενῆδος πλήγμα, *Ant.* 249–50), no throwing up of earth by a mattock (δικέλλης ἐκβολή, 250), and the hard and unbroken ground was not traversed by wheels (ἐπημαξευμένη τροχοῖσιν, 251–52). In short, there was not a trace to be found of the

one who buried the body. Ostensibly the Guard is emphasizing the fact that it is not his fault that the one who buried the corpse has not been caught; the play may also be creating a contrasting image to Antigone's solitary, desperate efforts. But in light of the later emphasis on the construction of the tomb and the play's explicit references to its appearance, the Guard's listing of tools provides the audience with an image of a proper burial for Polyneices, the very thing that Creon denies.<sup>87</sup> I would suggest that the terms are introduced here in the play as a way of evoking the *kind* of monument one would expect for Polyneices, one requiring such tools. At the very least, from the perspective of the lower-class Guard, these tools, not unlike those used in Homer, would be necessary for the tomb.

The very fact that the play includes such details about the monument's description and location is itself worthy of note. Whereas other tragedies do refer to the *tumbos* or *taphos* of the deceased, the ways in which the details of location and physical description are represented seem to be determined by the demands of each play. Thus, for example, in *Ajax*, there is mention of Ajax's grave (*taphos*: *Aj.* 1170, 1394), and Teucer orders others to dig a trench, set up a tripod, and bring Ajax's armor from the hut (1403–8). There may be a reflection of "public participation in the Attic cult" of Ajax, but there is no description of his monument in the play.<sup>88</sup> In Sophocles' *Electra* there is again generic reference to the tomb of Agamemnon (*El.* 406, 432, 893, 900), but Chrysothemis also refers to the streams of milk flowing from the "top of the mound" as well as the tomb (*thêkê*) ringed with flowers (894–96). Although Chrysothemis's description does suggest a type of tumulus, there is no mention of the location of Agamemnon's *tumbos*. The absence of any description of its location and public visibility is perhaps a function of the play's focus on the domestic relations of the *oikos*.<sup>89</sup> Euripides' *Alcestis* provides a brief description of Alcestis's monument and its location. When Heracles asks where Admetus is burying the body of his wife, a servant tells him that "next to the straight road leading to Larisa you will see from the outskirts the tomb built of cut stone [τύμβος ξεστόν]" (*Alc.* 836).<sup>90</sup> The point I wish to stress is that Sophocles did not have to provide any details about the location and description of Polyneices' monument. That the play does refer to a Homeric-style monument located outside the city gate and not a sculpted relief conveys a particular message about the class and status of the deceased.<sup>91</sup>

### III. Conclusion

There was no *one* way to commemorate and articulate the identity of the deceased and the family in Athens, any more than there was *one* social group with one set of values. That Polyneices is ultimately buried and commemorated with a lofty mound in an unabashedly elitist and Homeric fashion underscores the play's position. While this outcome may serve in part to contrast and perhaps even redeem Creon's tyrannical behavior in denying Polyneices' burial, it also promotes a particular form of commemoration that had resonance in Athens during the 440s.

The competing political values associated with different types of funerary commemoration find expression in the play through its description of different opinions on the burial of Polyneices and the kind of monument he receives. In addition to the views of Creon and Antigone, the opinions of other Thebans are also voiced in the play. The Chorus remain a general source of support for Creon, despite their momentary feeling of sympathy for Antigone (*Ant.* 801–5) and her claims that they would approve her act if they were not in fear of Creon (504–7).<sup>92</sup> Ismene claims that she cannot bring herself to join with Antigone and act against the will of the citizens (79); in the heated exchange between Creon and Antigone, she states that some people support her, whereas others support him (557). Picking up on a theme expressed earlier by Antigone (504–5), Haemon describes a segment of the citizen population as afraid to express their support for Antigone (688–700);<sup>93</sup> indeed, some feel that she, who dies miserably for the most glorious acts (695), should be honored with a golden prize (699). This is likely the group to which Creon refers when he rails against those in opposition to him (289–92). The existence of groups with opposed values in the community—some who support and others who oppose the burial of Polyneices—should warn against focusing our attentions exclusively on Antigone. We should recognize that her position on the burial is shared by a sizable group in the polis but is nonetheless opposed by others.

Although there is opposition to the burial of Polyneices, there are nevertheless good reasons to believe that the audience was encouraged to favor his burial. Other treatments of the fate of Eteocles and Polyneices point to the expectation that the theater audience would not just sympathize with but also support the burial of both brothers. In the funeral oration ascribed to Lysias, Athens assumes the role Sophocles gives to Antigone, namely that of properly burying Polyneices (*Epitaph.* 2.7–10).<sup>94</sup> Although the oration was likely composed in the 390s,

Euripides' *Suppliants*, produced in the late 420s, also brings the issue of proper burial to the fore; and again Athens, represented by Theseus, takes on the role of Antigone. These examples of Athens' national image, as well as Teiresias's pronouncements on Creon as the cause of the ills of the polis, render it difficult not to understand the force of the drama as aimed at directing the audience's sympathies to the position of her character and against that of Creon.<sup>95</sup> That Creon's command is illegal according to the Athenian understanding of *nomos* would also have contributed to the audience's support for Antigone's position.<sup>96</sup> The burial and commemoration of Polyneices—championed by some Thebans—is presented in such a way as to reaffirm the unquestionable “rightness” of Polyneices' monument in the minds of the audience.

In its support of Antigone's goal of burying her brother and the construction of this monument, the play draws upon social division in the polis and current practices of funerary commemoration with which the theater audience would have been familiar.<sup>97</sup> The opposed views shared by different groups represented in the play concerning the status and burial of Polyneices seem to reflect contemporaneous divisions over funerary commemoration. If, as I have suggested, sculpted funerary reliefs were in the process of becoming more popular in the 440s after Pericles' citizenship law, Athenians would have been familiar with the different styles of funerary commemoration, thus refining their sense of the relationship between burial and social structure. Since images of women were used to express both civic status and class distinction, the iconography was ambiguous: Was it simply an expression of endorsing and conforming to civic norms, or was it a way to express economic superiority while also appearing to conform to civic norms?<sup>98</sup> Similar interpretations would have been possible in the case of stelae commemorating males: the emphasis on their place in the *oikos* affirms the concept of citizenship promulgated in the law of 451/0. Those who erected such sculpted funerary reliefs could both express their conformity with the ideals of civic identity and promote in a more muted fashion, particularly with stelae of women, an elitism that the radical demos may have otherwise found objectionable.<sup>99</sup> Yet a few families resisted this trend and built in the Kerameikos lofty monuments à la Homer.

In some respects, the struggle between Thucydides, son of Melesias, and Pericles offers a historical example of the kind of antagonism in which the production of *Antigone* was involved. The political stances taken by these two politicians attest the high degree of social unrest in Athens in the 440s. This unrest, as represented in our sources, dealt with

(among other issues) the proper use of public funds and, to put it rather schematically, expressed itself in a struggle between a conservative (Thucydides as leader of the *oligoi*) and a more progressive (Pericles as leader of the *demos*) political agenda (Plutarch, *Per.* 11.4). The fate of Thucydides, most likely ostracized in the late 440s, may have offered a sobering reminder to the conservative members of Athens that Pericles (and the radical *demos*) wielded much political power.<sup>100</sup> How Sophocles would have responded to this is, of course, unknowable.<sup>101</sup> But it is tempting to consider the rising level of the political authority of the radical *demos* in the late 440s as a trend that some like Thucydides (and perhaps Sophocles?) thought could and should be reversed (later in the fifth century it would be actively checked by more militant oligarchs). The increase of state subsidies under Pericles was frequently connected with the practices of the demagogues, for Pericles' populism in many ways was continued and further developed by these later politicians. In Plato's *Gorgias* (515E), the pro-Spartan (i.e., oligarchic) line is that with the introduction of *misthophoria* Pericles corrupted the population, making them worse where they were better before. Plutarch's discussion of Pericles as the originator of the *theôrikon*, as Jacoby noted (1954, 319), further drives home the perception of Pericles as progressive by contrasting the political style of Cimon, who "was liberal out of his own property," with that of Pericles, who under the influence of Damon "bribed the mob [*plêthos*] with *theôrika* jury pay, and other income and wages, using it against the Areopagus" (*Per.* 9.3). As Wohl (2002, 121) provocatively comments, "Pericles, but for a labor of repression, is Cleon." The hostility of the conservative elite to the demagogues is well known, but their broad appeal to the working-class residents of Athens should not be underestimated. The unrest focalized through Pericles and Thucydides suggests a polarized political community with different groups defined among other things by their views on the distribution of state money and the role of the *demos* in the administration of the city.

The social divisions I have traced in *Antigone* can be seen as actively intervening in the political life of Athens. The debate between Antigone and Creon over the social and civic status of Polyneices as well as the construction of a particular kind of Homeric monument serves to connect the play with contemporaneous social struggles in the polis. Different forms of funerary commemoration in fifth-century Athens were promoted and contested by different groups with opposed values that found expression in terms of class and social status. In the play the tyrant Creon is contrasted with Antigone, who supports broader communal

(even human) values; these characters are also, as noted above, backed by different social groups in the city. Creon's language of class warfare and his tyrannical treatment of Polyneices likely encouraged many of the lower-class members of the audience to side against him and his policy of refusing burial to Polyneices; to be sure, much like the Chorus, other members of the audience (e.g., the conservative elite such as the so-called Old Oligarch) may not have been as bothered by Creon's language and abusive treatment.<sup>102</sup> An audience comprised of different social groups with opposed values helps to clarify how Creon's attacks on the status and class of Polyneices may have seemed acceptable to a minority, while the play at the same time critiques his attacks.<sup>103</sup> These contradictions were designed to meet the demands of the divided audience, but the play does more than simply negotiate or mediate tensions. As a result of the utter rejection of Creon's refusal of burial at the end of the play, the value of proper burial appears all the more sanctioned. Indeed, the thrust of the play encourages the entire audience (rich and poor, conservative and progressive) to rally behind the burial of Polyneices. But despite its apparent advocacy for communal values, support for his burial is circumscribed by its elitist emphasis. The insistence on the "rightness" of his burial serves to hook the audience into accepting the (elite) values embodied in the description of Polyneices and in the construction of his monument.<sup>104</sup> Antigone's reference to "unwritten laws" and the larger communal values at stake may in fact serve to obscure class antagonism, for elite values (assimilated to the communal values of burial) are presented as beneficial to the entire polis without any particular concessions to its lower-class members.<sup>105</sup> Although the play's defense of the principle of the proper treatment of Polyneices' corpse reflects standard Athenian practice of burying both slaves and citizens, the representation of Polyneices' monument promotes the social status of the individual, elite citizen by using a particular form of commemoration that hearkened back to the heroic past while simultaneously appealing to a group of wealthy Athenians in the 440s. *Antigone* may question some of the fault lines of Athenian society, but it also affirms an archaic and elitist practice of celebrating the elite citizen male, as archaic elites had done and as a few Athenian families continued to do.<sup>106</sup>

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Since the body of scholarship on this play is immense, I have chosen to make use of works that are representative of some of the main approaches to the play. For



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Antigone as ideal citizen, see Whitman 1951, 85–88; Blundell 1989, 146; Antigone as “bad woman”: Knox 1964, 75–76; Murnaghan 1986, 207; Sourvinou-Inwood 1990 (e.g., 148: “subverting the polis order”; see, however, the more nuanced response of Foley 1995); Calder 1968, 404 (“to side with Antigone” is a “historical anachronism”). For general discussion and relevant bibliography, see, e.g., Foley 1996 and 2001, 172–200; Hester 1971; Griffith 1999 and 2001; Ostwald 1986; Oudemans and Lardinois 1989. See now Harris 2004a for the role of *nomos* in the play.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Cerri 1979 and 1982; Patterson in this volume; Rosivach 1983. For discussions of burial monuments in Athens, see, e.g., Bergemann 1997; Boardman and Kurtz 1971; Salta 1991.

<sup>3</sup> For the role of tragedy in questioning civic values, see, e.g., Croally 1994; Goldhill 1990. Also Tyrrell and Bennett 1990, 456, who comment how Sophocles uses Antigone in order “to build interior conflicts that mitigate but never transgress the absolutes of the outer frame”; he is thus able to “touch upon . . . sensitive areas of Athenian life.” Seaford (1994, 365) rightly contests the “exclusively intellectualist view that the essence of tragedy is to question rather than to affirm.” For discussion of the ideological thrust(s) to drama and its production, see, e.g., Csapo 2004; di Benedetto 1971; Griffith 1995 and 2002; Rose 1992 and 1995; Roselli, Forthcoming; Seaford 1995; Wilson 2000; Wohl 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Vernant 1988a, and 1988b. See Csapo and Miller 1998 for discussion of the competing ideological systems within the shift from an aristocratic to a democratic dominant in Athens. Williams (1977, 121–35) elaborates a useful Marxist model of ideology that comprises an emergent, residual, and dominant thrust, a model I have found useful in conceptualizing changes in Athenian culture. I would thus dispute the somewhat vague notion of a “heroicizing” trend in tragedy and prefer to focus instead on drama’s engagement with the polis and the conditions of production: drama addresses contemporaneous concerns in Athens rather than simply preserving memories of the past. See note 3 above for examples of such “ideological” interpretations of the Greek theater.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., Gregory 1991; Goldhill 2000. Said (1998) provides a helpful survey of some of the major trends in discussions of tragedy and politics.

<sup>6</sup> See, e.g., Bazant 1987; Burn 1987; Killet 1994; Matheson 1995, 297; Paul-Zinserling 1994; Stears 1995.

<sup>7</sup> For discussion of theoretical approaches to burials as evidence, see, e.g., Brown 1995; Morris 1991; Small 1995. In brief, I view burials as providing evidence for social structure as well as serving to express the agent’s perceptions. As in the case of all material culture, the relationship between the monuments and the living are of central importance: the family’s self-presentation of their place in terms of social position and religious beliefs is conditioned in part by the very social structure in which the family members lived and experienced the world.

<sup>8</sup> For discussion, see, e.g., Bergemann 1997, 117; Garland 1989; Kurtz and Boardman 1971. Archaic *kouroi* continued to be erected in c. 480: Knigge 1983.

<sup>9</sup> For standard dating of the introduction of funerary monuments, see, e.g., Meyer 1993, 107–8; Mikalson 1984, 223–24; Leader 1997, 684. The standard dating is preferred by Closterman and by Ferrario, both in this volume. Stears (1995, 113) places the introduction of figurative sculpture on grave monuments to c. 450; see also Stears 2000, 41 (“perhaps even in the 440s”) and Diepolder 1931, 7. In my brief discussion,

I largely follow Stears's treatment of the evidence. For references to explanations adduced for the absence of funerary monuments after c. 480, see Keesling 2005, 396 n. 5. Clairmont (1993, intro. vol.: 230–67) provides an overview of previous scholarship on funerary monuments. For the increased popularity of images of women in funerary contexts, see, e.g., Leader 1997; Stears 1995; Osborne 1997.

<sup>10</sup> For discussion of white-ground lekythoi, see Kurtz 1956; Oakley 2004, 149–50 (on the vases by the Tymbos Painter discussed here). Nakayama (1982) examines the various kinds of burial monuments depicted on white-ground lekythoi.

<sup>11</sup> See, e.g., Leader 1997; Killet 1994; Lissarrague 1992; Sutton 1981, 48–51.

<sup>12</sup> Stears 2000, 35–37. The lekythoi with freestanding sculpture were painted by the Sabouroff Painter, active in the first half of the fifth century, and his slightly younger colleague, the Thanatos Painter.

<sup>13</sup> Humphreys (1980, 112) also notes the difficulty in determining whether the vases “adhere to actual usage.”

<sup>14</sup> As noted above, the existence of actual monuments depicted on some lekythoi weakens the argument that such scenes of seated women on stelae as depicted on lekythoi c. 450 do not refer to real monuments. Another alternative is to suppose that these white-ground lekythoi were produced *before* sculpted funerary monuments reappeared and exerted a determinate influence on the production of funerary reliefs. In light of the shared iconography and funerary roles of the reliefs and the lekythoi, as well as the dating of both lekythoi and reliefs from the same period, I suggest that both objects are best seen as contemporaneous products of a new trend in funerary iconography. See Shapiro's essay in this volume for discussion of the relationship between the representation of tumuli in Attic vase painting and actual tumuli in Athens; cf. Ferrario's suggestion (in this volume) that the monuments depicted on lekythoi function as either a subversive reference to archaic values or a sign of their abandonment.

<sup>15</sup> See, e.g., Richter 1961; Stears 1995, 113; van Wees 1998. Himmelmann (1999, 14) notes that the sculpture's monumentality has heroic connotations.

<sup>16</sup> Eupheros: Kerameikos P1169; Lyceas and Chairedemos: Piraeus Museum 385; Philoxenos and Philoumene: Malibu 83.AA.378. Philoxenos wears a helmet and a cuirass with a double row of *pteryges* (see Clairmont 1993, 2: 121); his elaborate dress (which presumably would have been accompanied by a shield and sword) suggests a somewhat wealthier hoplite; see van Wees 2004 for discussion of the various social classes who served as hoplites. See Grossman 2001 for discussion of men (depicted as soldiers, wearing *himation*) and women on stelae emphasizing family genealogy. Monuments depicting males on horseback (e.g., Berlin Pergamon Museum 742; Clairmont 1993, 2: 130) evoke class pretensions more clearly; Eupheros's strigil suggests his athletic prowess. Nonetheless, the significant factor is that classical reliefs tend to depict males in the context of the *oikos* or as upstanding citizens of the polis.

<sup>17</sup> See Shapiro 1991 for the effects of Solonian legislation on iconography. There were other factors that contributed to the new citizenship law: see Boegehold 1994; Osborne 1997; Patterson 1981 and 2005. In this section I focus on the aspects of class and civic status, which were part of a much more complex series of relations represented by images of women in funerary display. I follow Patterson in a more inclusive notion of citizenship in Athens, but here address only the use of women to promote and define the civic and social status of males. For a reading of stelae with images of women as involved in the construction of female consciousness, see Younger 2002.

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Younger's notion of the Kerameikos as a "cemetery" that "on occasion became primarily a women's space" (167) is, however, problematic. See note 44 below.

<sup>18</sup> Osborne 1997, 28, 32; see also Stears 1993, 1995, 2001.

<sup>19</sup> Civic values of the family promoted in burial display: Himmelmann 1999; Stears 1995, 113. For the role of the family in constructing civic identity see Patterson 1998. Stears (2000, 53) connects the disappearance of large-scale tombs and the diffusion of stone stelae to "the growing egalitarianism of the first decades of the century" which, in addition to other social forces, pressured elites "to conform to the new ideology to which the majority of the population adhered."

<sup>20</sup> Other examples of the role of burials in determining one's family and citizenship: Demosthenes 57.28, 40, 70 (see Closterman's discussion in this volume). See Bergemann 1997, 32–33 and Humphrey 1980 for the role of funerary markers in promoting one's Athenian civic credentials. Monuments and the ways in which funerary rites were carried out could also be used to promote an individual's position within the community and to provide evidence of good character (Isaeus 2.35–36, 8.25–26).

<sup>21</sup> Patterson (Forthcoming) rightly notes that some women, such as Myrrhine and Lysimache, were prominently honored with public monuments for their roles in the polis. Stears (1993, 167) notes that the monument's size reflected the "social persona" of the deceased.

<sup>22</sup> Miller 1997, 216. For the use of women to promote the wealth of the *oikos*, see also Roccas 1995 and 2000. Ancient literary sources likewise attest the ideological significance of the public display of women for purposes of promoting class distinction. Aristotle, for example, notes the use of women as class markers for oligarchs and the inability of the poor to emulate such practices (*Pol.* 1300a4–8); in another passage (1322b38–23a7) he notes that "some of these offices are obviously not of a popular character [*dēmotikai*], for instance that of Superintendent of Women and of Children; for the poor having no slaves are forced to employ their women and children as servants."

<sup>23</sup> Miller 1997, 193. See also Miller 1992 on the transference of Achaemenid signs of status from men to women in Athenian culture; she further notes (1997, 250): "The allocation of these honorific symbols to the margin of Athenian society challenges the potency of the model [i.e., status distinction], but without diminishing its ability to confer status and to distinguish the women of the elite from everyone else."

<sup>24</sup> Miller 1997, 216–17: "It is no coincidence that there occurred a corresponding expansion of the role of elite women in the expression of social standing through luxury. Their lack of political power combined with their traditional social function of providing bonds between *oikoi* made women an appropriate and effective semiotic vehicle." The so-called Anacreontic Booners, men dressed in clothing borrowed from the east, provides one exception to the general tendency for Greek women to adopt eastern items, the use of which by either men or women promoted class distinction. For recent discussion, see Miller 1999.

<sup>25</sup> Clairmont 1993, 2: 150; Bergemann 1997, 187 (A20); Garland 1982, 142. Stewart (1997, 124–27) emphasizes the "unproletarian status" of Hegeso. The two other stelae would have been painted and may have included references to the males.

<sup>26</sup> The domestic setting is also indicated on stelae depicted on white-ground lekythoi (such as those by the Tymbos Painter): the seated woman holds a mirror, which suggests the interior space of the *oikos*.

<sup>27</sup> For discussion of the occasionally ambiguous status of the “attendants,” see Kurtz 1989; Reilly 1989. Oakley (2000) rightly emphasizes the range of female relationships depicted on white-ground lekythoi.

<sup>28</sup> The ankle-length, sleeved *khitôn* does not by itself indicate servile status (Miller 1997, 161), but some attendants engaged in servile activity do wear such garments. One fragmentary *naiskos* (Agora S 2480) contains a kneeling female attendant attaching a seated woman’s sandals (see Grossman 1995, 89–94 for description). Pausanias (10.25.4) describes such a scene from Polygnotus’s *Ilioupersis*: one of Helen’s attendants (*therapaina*) kneels to fasten her sandals. Pausanias remarks that the names of the attendants are not the same as those of the slaves (*doulas*) in the *Iliad* (3.144: *amphipoloi*). The essential aspect of the attendant is the kind of labor she performs; the garment is not the determining factor. A white-ground lekythos by the Bosquanet Painter (Berlin 3291) shows a short-haired attendant woman carrying a stool on her head and a small flask in her hand; she brings them to a standing woman. The attendant’s labor as well as her physiognomy suggest her slave status (Himmelman 1971, 39–40).

<sup>29</sup> The high costs of funerary monuments is emphasized in Morris 1992, 135–38 and Oliver 2000a; *contra*: Nielsen et al. 1989 and Bergemann 1997, 131–42.

<sup>30</sup> Additional evidence for the costs of burial: Morris 1994 and Nielsen et al. 1989, 414. Morris (1994, 70) argues that the evidence of lavish monuments reflects a pattern of spending that would not have been acceptable before c. 420. But his argument ignores other means of displaying wealth that were available to the elite (e.g., houses: Nevett 2000 and Davies 1981, 50–51; Persian luxury items: Miller 1997; dedications: Stears 2000); it also downplays the continuity of Homeric-style tumuli present in the Kerameikos throughout the fifth century (although discussed in Morris 1992, 40 and 1994, 76–77). These aspects are not fully integrated with his general thesis of fifth-century restraint c. 500–430. There were other practices (such as *leitourgiai*) that also allowed for the expression of class interests that did not merely, if at all, support the “public good”: see Wilson 2000 for the *chorêgia*, Gabrielsen 1994 for the *trierarkhia*.

<sup>31</sup> Rate of pay based on building accounts for the Erechtheum; for discussion see Loomis 1998; Randall 1953.

<sup>32</sup> For discussion see Bergemann 1997, 135; Nielsen et al. 1989. Aristophanes (*Ach.* 691) implies that some families saved up for burial. Lawton (1995, 22–26) suggests that the costs refer to the inscription alone (and not any relief work). See Oliver 2000a for a sober reassessment of the prices of funerary monuments. He suggests that prices for documentary reliefs are not very helpful in determining costs of funerary monuments and also rightly points out the additional costs involved in erecting a monument—including the stone itself, its transportation, wood, lead—which would have increased the final price of the monument. But prices for documentary reliefs do provide some context for the costs of carving on funerary monuments; Oliver does not consider evidence from building accounts providing costs for pedimental sculpture (as discussed in Bergemann 1997).

<sup>33</sup> For discussion of polychromy on Attic reliefs, see Posamentir, Forthcoming; Scholl 1996, 185–200. A fragmentary stele from the Athenian Agora (S 2909), for example, preserves two figures in outline: a seated woman attended by a standing woman, wearing a *peplos* and holding a box. As Grossman (1995, 72) notes, the outline technique would have served as a guide for the painter. Such painted stelae, affordable

to a broader public than more elaborately sculpted monuments, suggests that the phenomenon of representing women on funerary reliefs was not restricted to the wealthiest in Athens.

<sup>34</sup> It has been suggested (e.g., Ridgway 1981) that the absence of some kind of foundation for these more perishable monuments makes their presence less likely. But if the monument itself was made of wood, it is hard to see why any foundational support could not also have been made of a perishable material that has not survived in the archaeological record.

<sup>35</sup> For sculpted reliefs of men erected in fifth-century Athens, see, e.g., Bergemann 1997; Stears 2000. For the representation of males in domestic settings, see Bazant 1985; Osborne 1997.

<sup>36</sup> The heroic burial discussed by Shapiro in this volume was part of the complex of tombs around Mound G. For discussion of these heroic tumuli, see Houby-Nielsen 1995; Morris 1992, 132–34 and 1994, 76–78; Stears 2000, 33, 51 (all with additional bibliography). Due to limitations of space in this paper, I refer mostly to monuments in the Kerameikos; for helpful discussion of other areas where burials tend to be grouped, see Closterman 1999; Salta 1991.

<sup>37</sup> See Bergemann 1997, 23–24 for discussion (with additional bibliography) of these tumuli; other tumuli were not framed by a wall, and thus they might have cost less.

<sup>38</sup> Additional passages: *Il.* 7.86, 11.371, 16.457; *Od.* 11.75, 12.14. On the body of the hero, see Morris 1987, 46–47; Vernant 1990.

<sup>39</sup> See Houby-Nielsen 1995, 153–63 and Shapiro in this volume for discussion of these funerary mounds. Closterman (also in this volume) examines the use of peribolos tombs in fifth-century Athens and contrasts their function with that of tumuli. For discussion of the centrality of Homer in classical Athenian culture, see Ford 1998.

<sup>40</sup> Morris 1996, 77. Houby-Nielsen (1995, 156) argues that the burying group was composed of those belonging to a “common social status” and that some tumuli “express a specific context related to the Lydian luxury lifestyle *truphe*.”

<sup>41</sup> Houby-Nielsen *ibid.*, 163; tumuli could mark individual (esp. in the archaic period: *ibid.*, 130) or multiple burials.

<sup>42</sup> In addition to individual graves and tumuli, some families built peribolos tombs, which became more common in the later fifth century; see Closterman’s discussion in this volume on these tombs and on changes in Athenian burial practices.

<sup>43</sup> In light of changes in demographics with the increasing numbers of urban laborers (Harris 2002b), Pericles’ radical politics of “giving the people what is theirs,” the ostracism of Thucydides (son of Melesias), and the citizenship law (see note 100 below), it is likely that there was some pressure to conform to dominant civic models. Discussion of changes in fifth-century Athenian society include Csapo and Miller 1998; Patterson 1981, 40–81; Raaflaub 1998.

<sup>44</sup> See Stroszeck 2003 for discussion of the many different kinds of activities and people attested in the Kerameikos. See Patterson in this volume for discussion of the location of burials in Athens.

<sup>45</sup> Griffith (1999, 31 n. 94) notes the possibility that the intensification of the issue of burial was the product of “class variables.”

<sup>46</sup> See Vernant 1990, 67–68 on *aikizein* in Homer. Rosivach (1983, 206) explains examples of mutilation in drama by the fact that the characters “are drawn from the

world of epic"; for "the practices of exposure/mutilation" was "something which would be otherwise unacceptable behavior in the fifth century." I agree with the argument that such treatment was not considered normal in the fifth century; however, there is evidence that such behavior continued throughout the fifth and fourth centuries. Whereas Rosivach tends to emphasize moral values in his discussion of Creon's prohibition of burial (e.g., 208 n. 50), I focus on social status. See my discussion below.

<sup>47</sup> For discussion of benefactors and *kharis*, see Kurke 1991; Wilson 2000; Schmitt-Pantel 1992.

<sup>48</sup> See Griffith 1999, 34–38 for discussion of Creon's character and morality. The Chorus likewise support Creon's moralizing of the burial of Polyneices (see, e.g., the *parados*, esp. *Ant.* 127, 130; or the first stasimon, esp. 365–75). The overlapping of moral and social values in Creon's description of Polyneices is discussed further below.

<sup>49</sup> Antigone's defense of their equal treatment here recalls her complaint to Ismene that Creon has "dishonored" one of their brothers (*Ant.* 22; cf. 72).

<sup>50</sup> Jebb (1891, 101 ad 519) accepts the reading of the manuscripts but does note that the force of ὅμοις conveys the same idea as ἴσους. Although I prefer the scholiast's variant, which would also give some added force to Creon's response in 520, the reading is not essential for the point here. The conjectures for the manuscripts' ἴσους (520) proposed by editors do not much improve the sense of the line.

<sup>51</sup> I owe some of these references to Edward Harris's paper, "The Origins of Slavery in Archaic Greece," delivered at a conference entitled "Class Struggles in Ancient Greece" in April 2005 at Scripps College. For discussion of slaves in Periclean Athens, see Patterson, Forthcoming.

<sup>52</sup> For discussion of *basanos* see Bushala 1968; Mirhady 2000. Gagarin (1996) makes the useful distinction between penal and judicial torture; Hunter (1992, 284–87) provides discussion of the routine beating of slaves. See duBois 1991, 35–62 for the role of *basanos* in defining some of the differences between citizens and slaves. For allusions to *basanos* in *Antigone*, see below.

<sup>53</sup> For text and recent discussion of the tablet, see Harris 2004b.

<sup>54</sup> As Harris (2004a, 46) notes, Creon's tyrannical behavior and assertion of his absolute authority would have been more at home in Sparta.

<sup>55</sup> See Patterson in this volume; for discussion of the burial monuments of slaves, see Bähler 1998; Bergemann 1997; Scholl 1996.

<sup>56</sup> Foley (2001, 172 n. 1) suggests that "an Athenian audience would have assumed that close relatives had a cultural, if not legal, responsibility to bury the dead." Demosthenes (*Makart.* 43.57–58) attests the responsibility of the demarch to collect the dead not claimed by families. The polis clearly required the burying of the dead, both citizens and slaves (see Patterson in this volume), but in the case of those families who did not share the sense of responsibility demanded by the polis and failed to remove and bury the body, the demarch had to contract for the removal and burial of the body.

<sup>57</sup> This is perhaps a more literal reading of the line, as Patterson (in this volume) understands it.

<sup>58</sup> Some might argue against my reading of *doulos* here on the grounds that characters in tragedy routinely use such terms as "slave" and "beast" to belittle other characters. However, at no time in the play does Creon call Polyneices a slave; rather, Antigone uses the term to argue against Creon's treatment of her brother. The assumption that drama did not use such terms in a metaphorical sense as well as a literal one

has rightly been critiqued by Harris 2002a, 429 n. 43 (with additional references). In Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis*, for example, Menelaus uses *doulos* in a sense similar to Antigone's: to Agamemnon's claim that Menelaus has no business watching over his affairs, he replies that he "wanted to" and that he is not Agamemnon's slave (*IA* 330). For a more generic usage of *doulos*, see Euripides, *Or.* 488. For discussions of slaves in drama, see, e.g., Hall 1997; Patterson, Forthcoming.

<sup>59</sup> The fighting during the Peloponnesian War provides numerous examples of the cruel treatment of captives as well (see Pritchett 1991, 238–42). Van Wees (2004, 148) notes that those defeated in battle "might suffer any fate from execution to instant release, depending on the circumstances of their capture and the interests of the captors." Rosivach (1983) discusses the practice of *anaïresis* in the fifth and fourth centuries; he suggests that in comparison with the "primitive world of Homer," abuse of "one's former enemies was clearly no longer a normal behavior" (1983, 199). See further Shapiro in this volume. Polyneices could also be viewed as a traitor (*Ant.* 209–10), but there is no evidence that the bodies of traitors once executed could not be recovered by the family; the bodies of traitors were removed from the borders of Attica: Harris 2004a, 53 n. 64 (with additional references).

<sup>60</sup> Pritchett (1991, 205) argues that "efforts to treat atrocities in Homer as exceptional, or traceable to one society are misguided." It is only in the fourth century in Athens that we see some "evidence which suggests an attempt at a slight amelioration in the conditions of life imposed upon captives" (*ibid.*, 242). Such abusive treatment of a corpse would, nonetheless, have been shocking to many Greeks (Parker 1983, 47). In tragedy, one might compare the mutilation of Agamemnon's body (*Cho.* 439; see Garvie 1986, 163 ad 439; see also Sophocles, *El.* 445) or Alcmena's proposal to have Eurystheus killed and fed to the dogs (*Heracl.* 1045–51). Seaford (1994, 128 n. 119) notes the possibility that Alcmena decapitated him. For discussion of the perversion of funerary rites in *Oresteia*, see now Hame 2004; however, I find problematic her use of "historical" sources as the norm that tragedy then manipulates.

<sup>61</sup> For discussion see Rosivach 1983; Harris 2004a, 38–39. Increased discussion of the Hellenic custom of *anaïresis* may have been a response in part to the escalation of atrocities during the Peloponnesian War; for references see Ste. Croix 1972, 20–21 and Pritchett 1991, 205–45.

<sup>62</sup> This apparent contradiction between Creon's attack on Polyneices' class and social status, on the one hand, and the broader norms that prohibit such treatment, on the other, could be resolved by considering the role of different social groups in the polis (and the audience) and their competing values. See also note 56 above.

<sup>63</sup> For discussion of Creon's violation of Greek burial custom and Athenian law, see Harris 2004a, 37–39.

<sup>64</sup> Although the Chorus waver momentarily with their expression of sympathy for Antigone (*Ant.* 801–5), this is tempered by their apparent mockery of her (839), their statement that she has gone to the extremes of boldness (853–56), and their continued support for Creon (872–74). The closing words at the end of the play likewise reflect their support for Creon (see Griffith 1999, 353 ad 1334–35; for additional discussion see Griffith *ibid.*, 260 ad 801–82). Harris (2004a, 41–44) notes that the Chorus may harbor doubts about Creon's decree while nonetheless supporting the king outwardly.

<sup>65</sup> See Donlan 1977 and Osborne 2000 for discussion of social and moral vocabulary; see also Wohl 2002, 72–123. Osborne (2000, 25) suggests that pseudo-Xenophon

“never uses” *kakos* (as well as *agathos*) “as social terms”; he does not, however, discuss what appears to be a use of *kakos* as a social term at [Xenophon], *Ath. Pol.* 2.20. I suggest that the usefulness and effectiveness of the terms resides precisely in the overlapping of moral and social meanings.

<sup>66</sup> The term was also used to describe “good” slaves in funerary reliefs that were likely built by the owners: Bergemann 1997, 148–49; Scholl 1996. In Euripides’ *Medea* the Nurse uses the term to explain her concern for the family to the *paidagōgos* (*Med.* 54). The difference in perspective is informative: the slave is “useful” to his owner, whereas the citizen is “useful” to the polis.

<sup>67</sup> See now Roselli 2005, 23–26 for discussion of the social and political significance of the characters of Aeschylus and Euripides in *Frogs*.

<sup>68</sup> On the status of the Guard see Griffith 1999, 164 ad 223–331. See Stevens 1945 for discussion of colloquialism; comic portrayal of the Guard: Petrovic 2003; Seidensticker 1982, 80–85; Griffith 1999, 55–56, 164 ad 223–331. Whereas Seidensticker and Petrovic emphasize the “comic relief” of such scenes, I find that comic elements in Sophocles point to social divisions within the citizen body. It is interesting to note Creon’s frequent references to “payment” and “hiring” (see Griffith 1999, 175 ad 302–3, and 303 ad 1035–39): such “low” vocabulary may also serve to highlight Creon’s vulgar character and improper (tyrannical) behavior as ruler of Thebes; see further Petrovic 2003, 208.

<sup>69</sup> *Ethopoeia* and sociolect in the representation of social status: Csapo 2002, 142; Csapo and Miller 1998, 120. At *Poetics* 1451b14, Aristotle describes comedy and iambic poetry (i.e., low genres) as dealing with particulars.

<sup>70</sup> See Griffith 1999, 176 ad 308–9 for the suggestion that Creon’s threat to kill the Guard by hanging was a “familiar mode of execution, at least for low-class criminals or traitors.” For additional clues of the Guard’s status one should also note that his opening address to Creon begins with *anax* (*Ant.* 223).

<sup>71</sup> See further Griffith 1999, 170 ad 264–67 for additional allusions to *basanos* in the play.

<sup>72</sup> For further limits placed on Antigone’s defiance of Creon’s proclamation see *Ant.* 904–15; for discussion of this passage, see Foley 2001, 175–83; Griffith 1999, 277 ad 904–15; Neuberg 1990. Sophocles’ *Ajax* provides a similar response to the issue of burial in terms of social status. Menelaus (*Aj.* 1062–5, 1089) forbids the burial of Ajax’s body. Described as ὑβριστής (1092) by the Chorus, Menelaus goes on to describe Ajax as an enemy and claims his action was not *kalon* (1032); Agamemnon similarly depicts Ajax as an enemy (1356). Odysseus, who defends Ajax’s right to burial, interestingly defends his erstwhile enemy as ἐσθλός: it is not just to harm a noble man (1344–45); for Odysseus, Ajax may have been ἐχθρός but he was γενναῖος (1355). Much like Antigone’s defense of Polyneices’ burial, Odysseus defends Ajax’s right to burial in part by asserting the elite status of Ajax.

<sup>73</sup> Rosivach (1983, 209) notes that Creon is motivated by honor: “The sense of superiority one may take from dishonoring one’s enemy . . . after death.”

<sup>74</sup> On the concept of hubris, see Cairns 1996; Fisher 1992; MacDowell 1990, 18–22.

<sup>75</sup> For discussion of the symbolism of Conon’s portrayal of a cock, see Csapo 1993, esp. 20–21.

<sup>76</sup> See both Rehm and Shaprio in this volume for discussion of Creon’s hubris. Whereas Rehm discusses the tyrannical aspect of Creon’s behavior (in comparing him



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to Capaneus and Lycurgus), and Shapiro emphasizes the affront to the gods committed by Creon and the Homeric Achilles, I focus on Creon's attack on the social standing of Polyneices.

<sup>77</sup> Mastronarde (1994, 612 ad 1644) notes the "indignant and disapproving" tone of Antigone's question (see also *Ajax* 1385 for Odysseus's refusal to insult [*ephubrisai*] the dead). The prohibition on mistreating the corpse is also suggested by *κέχρηται* in 1663: Mastronarde 1994, 616 ad 1663.

<sup>78</sup> The play's support for Antigone has fueled the modern theater's interest in the "renegade" female character fighting oppression (see, e.g., Hall 2004, 18; Wilmer 2005, 136). In addition to the role of class and social status as limiting factors for Antigone's actions, she also limits the sphere of her action in terms of her gendered role; see Foley 1996, 58 and Patterson in this volume.

<sup>79</sup> Her later visit to the site of the burial (*Ant.* 426–31) is, as Griffith notes (1999, 196 ad 423–28), not problematic: there is nothing abnormal about subsequent visits to the grave; see Griffith *ibid.*, 190 ad 376–440 (with additional bibliography).

<sup>80</sup> More recently, Griffith (1999, 331 ad 1209–10) has noted that Creon moves quickly to remove the source of pollution so vividly described by Teiresias and that he could not have known that Antigone would commit suicide.

<sup>81</sup> I do not mean to suggest that Sophocles was writing a tract on burial; some of the terms used to describe the burial of Polyneices are ambiguous at best. However, I do believe that all of the references present a coherent image of a specific kind of burial and monument that an audience would have easily recognized.

<sup>82</sup> Griffith (1999, 330 ad 1196–98) explains the phrase as "the highest part of the plain" and, noting that Polyneices traditionally fell at the Seventh Gate, suggests that the sense of "furthest edge" of the plain is less likely (as Lloyd-Jones translates in his Loeb edition). The adjective often seems to have the meaning of "topmost" in the context of geographic locations (e.g., polis, mountains), and whereas Creon in Euripides' *Phoenissae* orders the body to be "cast out" unburied beyond the city (*Phoen.* 1630), there is no reference in *Antigone* to the moving of the body. Jebb (1891, 212 ad 1197) has it both ways and explains the phrase as "the plain's northern edge, where it touches the lower slopes of the hills. The 'furthest' was thus also the highest part." As I suggest below, the details of the location emphasize the conspicuous location of the tomb: its visibility would argue against understanding *akros* as "furthest edge." See further Patterson and Rehm in this volume for the location of Polyneices' tomb; in contrast to my reading, Patterson understands the location to be at the edge of the city's territory. The fact that the Athenian theater audience would be familiar with the fifth-century practice of erecting tombs in prominent places by the city gates suggests that a location closer to the city would be easily understood from the context. See Shapiro (in this volume) on the audience's familiarity with Homeric-style burials (like Polyneices') in the Kerameikos.

<sup>83</sup> See Patterson in this volume for discussion of the location of tombs in Athens.

<sup>84</sup> See *Il.* 23.44–47, 245–48 for the "heaping up" of the funerary mound for Patroclus; the explicit concern for visibility in the case of Achilles' *tumbos* (*Od.* 24.80–84), described in terms similar to Polyneices' *tumbos*, is paralleled by fifth-century mounds in the Kerameikos. In Euripides' *Hecuba*, Odysseus claims that the bare minimum suffices for daily needs but expresses his concern for a tomb worthy of honor (*Hec.* 317–20). See Closterman in this volume for the visual display of the peribolos façade;

Bergemann (1997, 23–24) discusses the prominence of monumental tumuli in the Kerameikos.

<sup>85</sup> If he was, in fact, understood to be buried where he fell on the battlefield, Polyneices' burial might have evoked earlier Athenian practices such as the "heroic" burial for the dead at Marathon (Bergemann 1997, 24). For the use of Homeric models by the Greek elite to define themselves, see Stein-Hölkeskamp 1989.

<sup>86</sup> The reference to Creon's attendants (*Ant.* 1108, 1214), who in effect recover the body and build a tomb for it, might have had some additional resonance with an Athenian audience. As Patterson suggests, the public slaves of the *astynomoi* were charged with disposing of bodies left in the streets (see her essay in this volume for discussion of public burial in Athens). Although the body of Polyneices has obviously been left by the road (near the Seventh Gate) for different reasons, the audience may well have understood the action of Creon and his slaves in terms of the state's concern with burial for those abandoned by the roadside. There may also be a suggestion of the size of the mound in the plural verbs and participles used by the Messenger (e.g., 1202, 1205) to describe the attendants building the tomb. Although a product of Roman elite culture, Cicero's *post aliquanto* law is often understood as describing Athenian practices at the end of the archaic period. According to Cicero, the law states that no one should build a tomb that was grander than ten men could accomplish in three days (*Leg.* 2.64; for discussion of funerary legislation, see, e.g., Garland 1989; Stears 2000; cf. Morris 1992). Although they clearly did not take three days to build Polyneices' tomb, if the law indeed reflected Athenian practice, then the play's insistence on the plural attendants (where it could have simply had Creon dispatch *one* guard to complete the task) may have served as another indication of the labor required to build the monument. The potential allusions to the state's obligation to bury the poor as well as its restrictions on lavish display nicely encapsulate some aspects of the debate over Polyneices' social status in the play.

<sup>87</sup> See Griffith 1999, 168 ad 249–50; the reference to ἐκβολή (*Ant.* 250) may contain an allusion to mining practices and thus provide further elaboration of the monument; explicit references to mining are, however, late: Strabo 14.5.28, 9.1.23.

<sup>88</sup> See Seaford 1994, 129–30 (citation from 130) for discussion of the cult of Ajax in the play.

<sup>89</sup> Aeschylus's *Libation Bearers* similarly provides no details on the location of Agamemnon's tomb (e.g., *Cho.* 106, 336) and only minimal description: Orestes refers to the *oxthos* (4) of the tomb (i.e., a mound) and expresses his wish that Agamemnon had been buried on the battlefield with a *taphos* heaped high with earth (350–54); although there is little description of the *tumbos* in the text, presumably an audience would have seen Agamemnon's tomb represented on stage during the performance (e.g., 488).

<sup>90</sup> The adjective *xestos* is highly suggestive. It can mean "smooth" or "polished" in the sense that the stone (or wood) has been hewn; it can thus also have the sense of "carved." The description of Alcestis's tomb may have brought to mind sculpted reliefs depicting women located by the roadside (in keeping with burial practices in ancient Greece). In light of my argument for the aristocratic burial of Polyneices and the contested nature of funerary commemoration in Athens, it would seem likely that Euripides' evocation of Alcestis's sculpted relief develops a more demotic (or perhaps even "radical") stance; for discussion of these elements in Euripides, see Roselli 2005 and Forthcoming.

<sup>91</sup> See Shapiro in this volume for discussion of a Homeric-style burial in the Ker-

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ameikos from the late fifth century which perhaps belonged to Alcibiades—a “later day Polyneices.”

<sup>92</sup> The Chorus—Theban elders described as rulers (*Ant.* 940) and wealthy (843)—express doubts about Creon’s edict once Teiresias has explained the damage done to the polis by Creon; nonetheless, they appear to rally behind the disgraced Creon at the end of the play (see Griffith 1999, 353 ad 1334–35; cf. Griffith 1998) and are explicitly praised by Creon for their devotion and obedience to past rulers (*Ant.* 165–67).

<sup>93</sup> In his speech to the Chorus on assuming control of the city, Creon claims that he who keeps his mouth shut due to fear rather than helping the city is the worst man (*Ant.* 78–81). It is with some irony that Haemon describes a segment of the population that suffers from such a fear (of Creon). Later in the play Antigone also acknowledges that not all of the citizens agree with her stance (907). For discussion of the public’s opinions, see Erp Taalman Kip 1996.

<sup>94</sup> On the relation between the play and the rhetoric of the funeral oration, see Tyrrell and Bennett 1990; Foley 1995, 140–41. Holt (1999, 667 n. 31) argues for a distinction between the Argive dead in Lysias’s oration and *Antigone*, while claiming that “Antigone is no representative of Athenian civic values.” Yet Lysias (2.7) explicitly refers to “Adrastus and Polyneices” as campaigning against Thebes and the fact that the Thebans would not allow the “bodies” to be buried. Holt’s statement that Polyneices is a “traitor” assumes that Creon and the wealthy Theban elders who support him are correct in their judgment; the reference to the divided opinions of the citizens in the play points to a more complex response to Polyneices.

<sup>95</sup> See Harris 2004a, 38–39. Foley (2001, 278–79) discusses earlier examples of Athens’ intervention in the case of suppliants and the laws of the gods. Teiresias’s reference to the Epigonoï (*Ant.* 1080–83) further connects Antigone’s act with the broader mythical and political narrative of Creon’s refusal of burial.

<sup>96</sup> Harris (2004a, 36) provides convincing arguments that Antigone has a “strong case in regarding Creon’s command not to bury Polyneices as only an order (*kerugma*) without the force of law (*nomos*). His order does not qualify as a law and does not meet all the criteria required for an established law.”

<sup>97</sup> Sophocles’ innovations with the representation of the characters and the plot known from archaic and earlier classical treatments was likely part of his strategy to connect the play with current concerns (see Griffith 1999, 7–11 for discussion of the innovations). Shapiro (in this volume) discusses the originality of Sophocles’ treatment but emphasizes the religious rather than the political aspects of Antigone’s actions.

<sup>98</sup> Removed from public discussions of the economy and the distribution of public funds (i.e., the surplus), women would have provided an optimal means by which to promote class interests without involving the specific political rights of male citizens and the administration of the polis. This is, however, not to suggest that women had no share in the polis: see Patterson 1998 and 2005.

<sup>99</sup> Thus Hegeso’s stele could promote her citizenship as well as the *oikos*’s civic status (thereby asserting the male’s citizenship), but the peribolos tomb in which it was placed would also suggest the family’s relative wealth in Athens; for discussion of the costs of peribolos tombs, see Bergemann 1997, 133–42. Even Bergemann’s low estimate of 100 drachmas (one third of the annual pay for a skilled worker in Athens) for smaller periboloi still required up to three times the expenditure necessary for an individual stele.

<sup>100</sup> The traditional dating of Thucydides’ ostracism to 443/2 is supported by

Phillips 1991; see, however, Krentz 1985 and Brenne 2002, 93-94 for a dating after 440. Andrewes (1978) offers critical discussion of the sources (particularly in terms of Athens' empire and the use of allied funds); but now see Kallet 1998.

<sup>101</sup> See *TrGF* 4: T1-107 for testimonia concerning the life of Sophocles and his social milieu. His service as *proboulos* during the crisis following the losses in Sicily may suggest a rather conservative orientation (cf. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1419a). Lysias's *Against Eratosthenes* (12.65) points to the fact that Theramenes' father, Hagnon, was one of the *probouloi* as evidence for Theramenes' oligarchic leanings. Sophocles' conservatism does not, however, necessarily imply oligarchic sympathies.

<sup>102</sup> The situation in the audience was undoubtedly more complicated than this. All members of the elite would not necessarily or mechanically side with the elite leader, Creon, nor would all lower-class members of the audience mechanically oppose him. However, the language of class and social status in the play would seem to be designed to appeal to and elicit the support of certain social groups in the audience.

<sup>103</sup> In addition to the play's critique of Creon's behavior, there were also *nomoi* that required the burial of citizens and slaves; see notes 56 and 60 above. Although the composition of the theater audience is crucial for evaluating the social and political aspects of performance, there are still many questions that need to be resolved. I hope to provide an analysis of the theater audience in a forthcoming book-length study of female characters in tragedy. See Revermann, *Forthcoming* for discussion of the theater audience.

<sup>104</sup> The fact that the play centers on the action of a *female* character is not unrelated to emerging developments in Athenian funerary display. The play borrows from the new iconography of imagery of women but employs its potential ambiguities (that is, women used to represent the family, citizenship, and wealth) in order to promote the values of the conservative elite as well as the general principle of burial. See Patterson in this volume for a somewhat different, but not incompatible, emphasis on Sophocles' choice of a female character to challenge Creon.

<sup>105</sup> See Rehm in this volume for the perversion of the notion of "family values" by the Republican Party and the attempt (so far mostly successful) to promote their own values under the guise of promoting communal values.

<sup>106</sup> I would like to thank Cynthia Patterson for the opportunity to work on Sophocles and the invitation to contribute to this volume. This paper has benefited greatly from her invaluable comments and advice as well as the judicious comments of Kate Gilbert, the anonymous readers, and Steven Oberhelman. All remaining errors of fact or judgment are my own.

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