I told you that I would talk about Antigone today.

I am not the one who has decreed that Antigone is to be a turning point in the field that interests us, namely, ethics. People have been aware of that for a long time. And even those who haven't realized this are not unaware of the fact that there are scholarly debates on the topic. Is there anyone who doesn't evoke Antigone whenever there is a question of a law that causes conflict in us even though it is acknowledged by the community to be a just law?

And what is one to think of the scholars' contribution to the discussion of Antigone? What is one to think of it when one has, like me, gone over the ground for one's own interest and for the interest of those one is speaking to?

Well now, while I have tried to omit nothing that seemed important in all that has been said on the question, so as not to deprive either you or me of the help that I might derive from this lengthy historical survey, I have nevertheless often had the impression that I was lost in quite extraordinary byways. One learns that the opinions formulated by the pens of our great thinkers over the centuries are strange indeed.

1

Antigone is a tragedy, and tragedy is in the forefront of our experiences as analysts - something that is confirmed by the references Freud found in Oedipus Rex as well as in other tragedies. He was attracted by his need of the material he found in their mythical content. And if he himself didn't expressly discuss Antigone as tragedy, that doesn't mean to say it cannot be done at this crossroads to which I have brought you. It seems to me to be what it was for Hegel, although in a different way, namely, the Sophoclean tragedy that is of special significance.

In an even more fundamental way than through the connection to the
Oedipus complex, tragedy is at the root of our experience, as the key word "catharsis" implies.

For you the word is no doubt more or less closely associated with the term "abreaction," which presupposes that the problem outlined by Freud in his first work with Breuer, namely, that of discharge, has already been broached - discharge in an act, indeed motor discharge, of something that is not so simple to define, and that we still have to say remains a problem for us, the discharge of an emotion that remains unresolved. For that is what is involved here: an emotion or a traumatic experience may, as far as the subject is concerned, leave something unresolved, and this may continue as long as a resolution is not found. The notion of unfulfillment suffices to fill the role of comprehensibility which is required here.

Read over Freud and Breuer's opening pages and, in the light of what I have attempted to focus on for your benefit in our experience, you will see how difficult it now is to be content with the word "fulfillment" that is employed in this context, and to state simply, as Freud does, that the action may be discharged in the words that articulate it.

That catharsis which in this text is linked to the problem of abreaction, and which is already specifically invoked in the background, has its origins in the thought of classical antiquity. It is centered on Aristotle's formula at the beginning of Chapter VI of his Poetics: Aristotle there explains at length, in a classification of the genres, what must be present for a work to be defined as a tragedy.
The passage is a long one and we will return to it later. One finds there a
description of the distinguishing characteristics of tragedy, of its compo-
sition, and of what, for example, distinguishes it from epic discourse. I simply
put on the blackboard the end point or final words of this passage, what in
logical causality is known as its τέλος. It is formulated by Aristotle as ὁ
ἔλεος καὶ φόβος περαινόνσα στὶν τῶν τοιοῦτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν.
That is to say, a means of accomplishing the purgation of the emotions by a
pity and fear similar to this.

These words which seem so simple have over the centuries produced a
flood - indeed a whole world - of commentaries, whose history I can't even
begin to trace here.

The references I will make to this history are highly selective and to the
point. We usually translate the word "catharsis" by something like "purga-
tion." And thus, all of us here, especially if we are doctors, are, from the
school desks of our so-called secondary schools on, more or less familiar with
the term "purging," which has a certain Molieresque meaning. And this is
the case because the Molieresque element here merely echoes an ancient med-
ical concept, namely, in Moliere's own words, the one which involves the
elimination of "peccant humors."
Moreover, that is not very far from what the term still, in fact, evokes. But it also has a different resonance. And to make you sense it right away, I can simply point out what in the course of our work here I recently expounded for you with reference to the name of the Cathars.

What are the Cathars? They are the pure. Ἐνθυράκι is a pure person. And the word in its original sense doesn't mean illumination or discharge, but purification.

Doubtless in classical antiquity, too, the term "catharsis" was already used in a medical context, in Hippocrates, for example, with a specifically medical meaning; it is linked to forms of eliminadon, to discharge, to a return to normality. But, on the other hand, in other contexts it is linked to purification and especially to ritual purificadon. Hence the ambiguity which we, as you might suspect, are far from the first to discover.

So as to refer to a specific individual, I will mention the name of Denis Lambin, who reinterprets Aristotle in order to emphasize the ritual function of tragedy and the ceremonial sense of purificadon. It's not a matter of affirming that he is more or less right than someone else, but of simply identifying the sphere in which the question is raised.

We shouldn't, in fact, forget that the term catharsis is strangely isolated in the context of the Poetics. It's not that it isn't developed and commented on there, but we will learn very little about it until some new papyrus is discovered. I assume you know that what we have of the Poetics is only a part, roughly half, in fact. And in the half that we have there is only the passage referred to which discusses catharsis. We know that there was more because at the beginning of Book VIII, in the numbering of Didot's classic edition of
the *Politics*, Aristotle speaks of "that catharsis which I discussed elsewhere in the *Poetics*. In Book VIII his subject is catharsis in connection with music, and as things turned out, it is there that we learn much more about catharsis. In this text catharsis has to do with the calming effect associated with a certain kind of music, from which Aristotle doesn't expect a given ethical effect, nor even a practical effect, but one that is related to excitement. The music concerned is the most disturbing kind, the kind that turned their stomachs over, that made them forget themselves, in the same way that hot jazz (*le hot*) or rock 'n' roll does for us; it was the kind of music that in classical antiquity gave rise to the question of whether or not it should be prohibited.

Well now, says Aristotle, once they have experienced the state of exaltation, the Dionysian frenzy stimulated by such music, they become calm. That's what catharsis means as it is evoked in Book VIII of the *Politics*.

Yet not everyone enters into such states of excitement, even if everyone is in the position of being at least slightly susceptible. There are the παθητικοί as opposed to the ευθανοστικοί. The former are in the position of being prey to other passions, namely, fear and pity. Well, it turns out that a form of catharsis or calming effect will be granted them by a certain music also, by the music, one may assume, that has a role in tragedy. And this comes about through pleasure, Aristotle tells us, leaving us once again to reflect on what might be meant by pleasure and at what level and why it is invoked on this occasion. What is this pleasure to which one returns after a crisis that occurs in another dimension, a crisis that sometimes threatens pleasure, for we all know to what extremes a certain kind of ecstatic music may lead? It is at this point that the topology we have defined - the topology of pleasure as the law of that which functions previous to that apparatus where desire's formidable center sucks us in - perhaps allows us to understand Aristotle's intuition better than has been the case heretofore.

In any case, before I go on to define the beyond of the apparatus referred to as the central point of that gravitational pull, I want to emphasize that element in modern literature which has given rise to the use of the term catharsis in its medical sense.

The medical notion of Aristotelian catharsis is, in effect, more or less current in a sphere that goes far beyond the realm of our colleagues, the writers, critics, and literary theoreticians. But if one seeks to determine the culminating moment of this conception of catharsis, one reaches a point of origin beyond which the concept is much broader and where it is far from obvious that the word catharsis has only the medical connotation.
The triumph of the latter conception of its meaning has a source to which it is worth making an erudite reference here. The paper in question is by Jakob Bernays and it appeared in a review in Breslau. I couldn't tell you why Breslau is involved, since I wasn't able to consult enough biographical material on this Jakob Bernays. If I am to believe Jones's book on Freud, the latter, as you will probably have realized, belongs to the same family from which Freud took his wife, namely, a distinguished Jewish bourgeois family, that had long since acquired a form of nobility in the sphere of German culture. Jones refers to Michael Bernays as a professor in Munich, who was condemned by his family as a political apostate, as someone who changed his political allegiance for the sake of his career. As for Jakob Bernays, if I am to believe the person who looked into this for me, he is simply mentioned as someone who had a distinguished career as a Latinist and a Hellenist. Nothing further is said except that he didn't achieve his academic success at the same cost as Michael.

What I have here is an 1880 version of two papers by Jakob Bernays, reprinted in Berlin, on the subject of Aristotle's theory of drama. They are excellent. It is rare to find such a satisfying work by an academic in general, and even more so by a German academic. It is as clear as crystal. And it is no accident if the virtual universal adoption of the medical notion of catharsis occurs at that time.
It is a pity that Jones, who was himself so knowledgeable, didn't believe it appropriate to place a greater emphasis on the personality and the work of Jakob Bernays; little attention has been paid to him. It is nevertheless difficult to imagine that Freud, who was by no means indifferent to the reputation of the Bernays' family, wasn't aware of him. It would have been a way of referring Freud's original use of the word catharsis to its best source.

Having said that, I will now return to what most concerns us in this commentary on Antigone, namely, the essence of tragedy.

2

Tragedy - we are told in a definition that we can hardly avoid paying attention to, since it appeared scarcely a century after the time of the birth of tragedy - has as its aim catharsis, the purgation of the 

οθεν-ηπατον of the emotions of fear and pity.

How is one to understand that formula? We will approach the problem from the perspective imposed on us by what we have articulated on the subject of the proper place of desire in the economy of the Freethan Thing. Will this allow us to take the additional step required by this historical revelation?

If the Aristotelian formulation appears at first sight to be so closed, it is due to the loss of a part of Aristotle's work as well as to a certain conditioning within the very possibilities of thought. Yet is it so closed to us after all as a consequence of the progress made in our discussions of ethics here over the past two years? What in particular has been said about desire enables us to
bring a new element to the understanding of the meaning of tragedy, above all by means of the exemplary approach suggested by the function of catharsis - there are no doubt more direct approaches.

In effect, Antigone reveals to us the line of sight that defines desire. This line of sight focuses on an image that possesses a mystery which up till now has never been articulated, since it forces you to close your eyes at the very moment you look at it. Yet that image is at the center of tragedy, since it is the fascinating image of Antigone herself. We know very well that over and beyond the dialogue, over and beyond the question of family and country, over and beyond the moralizing arguments, it is Antigone herself who fascinates us, Antigone in her unbearable splendor. She has a quality that both attracts us and startles us, in the sense of intimidates us; this terrible, self-willed victim disturbs us.

It is in connection with this power of attraction that we should look for the true sense, the true mystery, the true significance of tragedy - in connection with the excitement involved, in connection with the emotions and, in particular, with the singular emotions that are fear and pity, since it is through their intervention, δί' ἐλεου καὶ φόβου, through the intervention of pity and
fear, that we are purged, purified of everything of that order. And that order, we can now immediately recognize, is properly speaking the order of the imaginary. And we are purged of it through the intervention of one image among others.

And it is here that a question arises. How do we explain the dissipatory power of this central image relative to all the others that suddenly seem to descend upon it and disappear? The articulation of the tragic action is illuminating on the subject. It has to do with Antigone's beauty. And this is not something I invented; I will show you the passage in the song of the Chorus where that beauty is evoked, and I will prove that it is the pivotal passage. It has to do with Antigone's beauty and with the place it occupies as intermediary between two fields that are symbolically differentiated. It is doubtless from this place that her splendor derives, a splendor that all those who have spoken worthily of beauty have never omitted from its definition.

Moreover, as you know, this is the place that I am attempting to define. I have already come close to it in previous lectures, and I attempted to grasp it the first time by means of the second death imagined by Sade's heroes - death insofar as it is regarded as the point at which the very cycles of the transformations of nature are annihilated. This is the point where the false metaphors of being (l'étant) can be distinguished from the position of Being (l'être) itself, and we find its place articulated as such, as a limit, throughout the text of Antigone, in the mouths of all the characters and of Tiresias. But how can one also not fail to see this position in the action itself? Given that the middle of
the play is constituted of a time of lamentation, commentary, discussions, and appeals relative to an Antigone condemned to a cruel punishment. Which punishment? That of being buried alive in a tomb.

The central third of the text is composed of a detailed series of vowel gradations, which informs us about the meaning of the situation or fate of a life that is about to turn into certain death, a death lived by anticipation, a death that crosses over into the sphere of life, a life that moves into the realm of death.

It is surprising that dialecticians or indeed aestheticians as eminent as Hegel and Goethe haven't felt obliged to take account of this whole field in their evaluation of the effect of the play.

The dimension involved here is not unique to Antigone. I could suggest that you look in a number of places and you will find something analogous without having to search too hard. The zone defined in that way has a strange function in tragedy.

It is when passing through that zone that the beam of desire is both reflected and refracted till it ends up giving us that most strange and most profound of effects, which is the effect of beauty on desire.

It seems to split desire strangely as it continues on its way, for one cannot
say that it is completely extinguished by the apprehension of beauty. It continues on its way, but now more than elsewhere, it has a sense of being taken in and this is manifested by the splendor and magnificence of the zone that draws it on. On the other hand, since its excitement is not refracted but reflected, rejected, it knows it to be most real. But there is no longer any object.

Hence these two sides of the issue. The extinction or the tempering of desire through the effect of beauty that some thinkers, including Saint Thomas, whom I quoted last time, insist on. On the other hand, the disruption of any object, on which Kant insists in *The Critique of Judgment*.

I was talking to you just now of excitement. And I will take a moment to have you reflect on the inappropriate use that is made of this word in the usual translation into French of *Triebregung*, namely, "émoi pulsionnel," "instinctual excitement." Why was this word so badly chosen? "Emoi" (excitement) has nothing to do with emotion nor with being moved. "Emoi" is a French word that is linked to a very old verb, namely, "émoyer" or "esmayer," which, to be precise, means "faire perdre a quelqu'un ses moyens," as I almost said, although it is a play on words in French, "to make someone lose" not "his head," but something closer to the middle of the body, "his means." In any case a question of power is involved. "Esmayer" is related to the old gothic word "magnan" or "mogen" in modern German. As everybody knows, a state of excitement is something that is involved in the sphere of your power relations; it is notably something that makes you lose them.

We are now in a position to be able to discuss the text of *Antigone* with a view to finding something other than a lesson in morality.

A thoroughly irresponsible individual wrote a short time ago that I am powerless to resist the seductions of the Hegelian dialectic. The reproach was formulated at a time when I was beginning to articulate for you the dialectic of desire in terms that I have continued to employ since. And I don’t know if the reproach was deserved at the time, but no one could claim that the individual involved is especially sensitive to these things. It is in any case true that Hegel nowhere appears to me to be weaker than he is in the sphere of poetics, and this is especially true of what he has to say about *Antigone*.

According to Hegel, there is a conflict of discourses, it being assumed that the discourses of the spoken dialogues embody the fundamental concerns of the play, and that they, moreover, move toward some form of reconciliation. I just wonder what the reconciliation of the end of *Antigone* might be. Fur-

- There is an additional problem in English, since the equivalent for the German "Trieb" and the French "pulsion," i.e., "drive," has no adjectival form.
ther, it is not without some astonishment that one learns that, in addition, this reconciliation is said to be subjective.

Let us not forget that in Sophocles's last play, *Oedipus at Colonus*, Oedipus's final malediction is addressed to his sons; it is the malediction that gives rise to the catastrophic series of dramas to which *Antigone* belongs. *Oedipus at Colonus* ends with Oedipus's last curse, "Never to have been born were best..." How can one talk of reconciliation in connection with a tone like that?

I am not tempted to regard my own indignation as particularly worthy; others have had a similar reaction before me. Goethe notably seems to have been somewhat suspicious of such a view, and so was Erwin Rohde. When I went and looked up his *Psyche* recently, a work that I made use of to bring together classical antiquity's different conceptions of the immortality of the soul, and that is an admirable work, which I strongly recommend, I was pleased to come across an expression of the author's astonishment at the traditional interpretation of *Oedipus at Colonus*.

Let us now attempt to wash our brains clean of all we have heard about *Antigone* and look in detail at what goes on there.

3

What does one find in *Antigone*? First of all, one finds Antigone.

Have you noticed that she is only ever referred to throughout the play with the Greek word *παῖς*, which means "the child"? I say that as a way of coming to the point and of enabling you to focus your eye on the style of the thing. And, of course, there is the action of the play.

The question of the action in tragedy is very important. I don't know why someone whom I'm not very fond of, probably because he is always being shoved under my nose, someone called La Bruyere, said that we have arrived too late in a world that is too old in which everything has already been said. It's not something I've noticed. As far as the action of tragedy is concerned, there's still a lot to be said. It's far from being resolved.

To return to Erwin Rohde, whom I complimented just now, I was astonished to find that in another chapter he explains a curious conflict between the tragic author and his subject, a conflict that is caused by the following: the laws of the genre oblige the author to choose as frame a noble action in preference to a mythic action. I suppose that is so that everyone already knows what it's all about, what's going on. The action has to be emphasized in relation to the ethos, the personalities, the characters, the problems, and so forth, of the time. If that's true, then Mr. Anouilh was right to give us his little fascist Antigone. The conflict that results from the dialogue between the
The splendor of Antigone

poet and his subject is, according to Erwin Rohde, capable of generating conflicts between action and thought, and in this connection, echoing a great many things that have already been said before, he refers with some relevance to the figure of Hamlet.

It's entertaining, but it must be difficult for you to accept, if what I explained last year about *Hamlet* meant anything to you. *Hamlet* is by no means a drama of the importance of thought in the face of action. Why on the threshold of the modern period would *Hamlet* bear witness to the special weakness of future man as far as action is concerned? I am not so gloomy, and nothing apart from a cliché of decadent thought requires that we should be, although it is a cliché Freud himself falls into when he compares the different attitudes of Hamlet and Oedipus toward desire.

I don't believe that the drama of Hamlet is to be found in such a divergence between action and thought nor in the problem of the extinction of his desire. I tried to show that Hamlet's strange apathy belongs to the sphere of action itself, that it is in the myth chosen by Shakespeare that we should look for its motives; we will find its origin in a relationship to the mother's desire and to the father's knowledge of his own death. And to take a step further, I will mention here the moment at which our analysis of *Hamlet* is confirmed by the analysis I am leading up to on the subject of the second death.

Don't forget one of the effects in which the topology I refer to may be recognized. If Hamlet stops when he is on the point of killing Claudius, it is because he is worried about that precise point I am trying to define here: simply to kill him is not enough, he wants him to suffer hell's eternal torture. Under the pretext that we have already busied ourselves a great deal with this hell, should we see it as beneath our dignity to make a little use of it in the analysis of a text? Even if he doesn't believe in hell anymore than we do, even if he's not at all sure about it, since he does after all question the notion - "To sleep, perchance to dream..." - it is nevertheless true that Hamlet stops in the middle of his act because he wants Claudius to go to hell.

The reason why we are always missing the opportunity of pointing to the limits and the crossing-points of the paths we follow is because we are unwilling to come to grips with the texts, preferring to remain within the realm of what is considered acceptable or, in other words, the realm of prejudices. If I were not to have taught you anything more than an implacable method for the analysis of signifiers, then it would not have been in vain - at least I hope so. I even hope that that is all you will retain. If it is true that what I teach represents a body of thought, I will not leave behind me any of those handles which will enable you to append a suffix in the form of an "-ism." In other words, none of the terms that I have made use of here one after the other - none of which, I am glad to see from your confusion, has yet managed to
impress itself on you as the essential term, whether it be the symbolic, the
signifier or desire - none of the terms will in the end enable anyone of you to
turn into an intellectual cricket on my account.

Next then in a tragedy, there is a Chorus. And what is a Chorus? You will
be told that it's you yourselves. Or perhaps that it isn't you. But that's not
the point. Means are involved here, emotional means. In my view, the Chorus
is people who are moved.

Therefore, look closely before telling yourself that emotions are engaged
in this purification. They are engaged, along with others, when at the end
they have to be pacified by some artifice or other. But that doesn't mean to
say that they are directly engaged. On the one hand, they no doubt are, and
you are there in the form of a material to be made use of; on the other hand,
that material is also completely indifferent. When you go to the theater in the
evening, you are preoccupied by the affairs of the day, by the pen that you
lost, by the check that you will have to sign the next day. You shouldn't give
yourselves too much credit. Your emotions are taken charge of by the healthy
order displayed on the stage. The Chorus takes care of them. The emotional
commentary is done for you. The greatest chance for the survival of classical
tragedy depends on that. The emotional commentary is done for you. It is
just sufficiently silly; it is also not without firmness; it is more or less human.

Therefore, you don't have to worry; even if you don't feel anything, the
Chorus will feel in your stead. Why after all can one not imagine that the
effect on you may be achieved, at least a small dose of it, even if you didn't
tremble that much? To be honest, I'm not sure if the spectator ever trembles
that much. I am, however, sure that he is fascinated by the image of Anti-
gone.

In this he is a spectator, but the question we need to ask is, What is he a spectator of? What is the image represented by Antigone? That is the question.

Let us not confuse this relationship to a special image with the spectacle as a whole. The term spectacle, which is usually used to discuss the effect of tragedy, strikes me as highly problematic if we don't delimit the field to which it refers.

On the level of what occurs in reality, an auditor rather than a spectator is involved. And I can hardly be more pleased with myself since Aristotle agrees with me; for him the whole development of the arts of theater takes place at the level of what is heard, the spectacle itself being no more than something arranged on the margin. Technique is not without significance, but it is not essential; it plays the same role as elocution in rhetoric. The spectacle here is a secondary medium. It is a point of view that puts in its place the modern concerns with mise en scène or stagecraft. The importance of mise en scène should not be underrated, and I always appreciate it both in the theater and
in the cinema. But we shouldn't forget that it is only important - and I hope you will forgive the expression - if our third eye doesn't get a hard-on; it is, so to speak, jerked off a little with the *mise en scène*.

In this connection I have no intention of giving myself up to the morose pleasure I was denouncing earlier by affirming a supposed decline in the spectator. I don't believe in that at all. From a certain point of view, the audience must always have been at the same level. *Sub specie aeternitatis* everything is equal, everything is always there, although it isn't always in the same place.

But I would just mention in passing that you really have to be a student in my seminar - by which I mean someone especially alert - to find something in the spectacle of Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*.

I am amazed at the murmur of pleasure that that name seems to have aroused among a significant number of you here today. I am ready to believe that this effect is only due to the moment of illusion produced by the fact that the things I say are calculated to emphasize a certain mirage, which is, in effect, the only one aimed at in the series of cinematographic images referred to. But it isn't reached anywhere except at one single moment. That is to say at the moment when early in the morning among the pines on the edge of the beach, the jet-setters suddenly begin to move again after having remained motionless and almost disappearing from the vibration of the light; they begin to move toward some goal that pleased a great many of you, since you associated it with my famous Thing, which in this instance is some disgusting object that has been caught by a net in the sea. Thank goodness, that hadn't
yet been seen at the moment I am referring to. Only the jet-setters start to walk, and they remain almost always as invisible, just like statues moving among trees painted by Uccello. It is a rare and unique moment. Those of you who haven’t been should go and observe what I’ve been teaching you here. It happens right at the end, so that you can take your seats at the right moment, if there are any seats left.

Now we are ready for Antigone.

Our Antigone is on the point of entering the action of the play, and we will follow her.

4

What else can I tell you today? I am hesitating because it is late. What I want to do is lead you from one end to the other to make you appreciate its scope. There is nevertheless one thing that you could do between now and next time, and that is read the play. I don’t suppose that alerting you last time by telling you that I would be talking about Antigone was even enough to make you glance at it, given the average level of zeal you display. It would, how-

The ethics of psychoanalysis

ever, not be without interest if you did so before next time.

There are a thousand ways of doing so. First of all, there’s Mr. Robert Pignarre’s critical edition. For those who know Greek, I recommend the interlinear translation, since a word by word rendering is amazingly instructive, and I will be able to make you see the extent to which my points of reference are perfectly articulated in the text by the signifiers, so that I don’t have to search for them all over the place. If I find a word now and then which echoes what I have to say, that would be a by no means arbitrary mode of confirmation. On the contrary, I will show you that the words I use are the words that are to be found running like a single thread from one end of the play to the other, and that these words give it its structure.

There is one other thing I would like to point out.

One day Goethe in a conversation with Eckermann was in a speculative mood. A few days previously he had invented the Suez canal and the Panama canal. I must say that you have to be quite brilliant to have extremely clear views on the subject of the historical function of these two pieces of equipment in 1827. Then one day he comes across a book that had just come out and has been completely forgotten since by a certain Irish, which is a nice little commentary on Antigone, and that I know through Goethe.
I don't see how it is so different from Hegel's commentary; it's a little more simpleminded, but there are some amusing things in it. Those who sometimes criticize Hegel for the extraordinary difficulty of his statements will find their taunts ratified by Goethe's authority. Goethe certainly rectifies the Hegelian view that Creon is opposed to Antigone as one principle of the law, of discourse, to another. The conflict is thus said to be linked to structures. Goethe, on the other hand, shows that Creon is driven by his desire and manifestly deviates from the straight path; he seeks to break through a barrier in striking at his enemy Polynices beyond limits within which he has the right to strike him. He, in fact, wants to inflict on him that second death that he has no right to inflict on him. All of Creon's speeches are developed with that end in view, and he thus rushes by himself toward his own destruction.

If it's not exactly stated in those terms, it is implied, intuited, by Goethe. It is not for him a question of a right opposed to a right, but of a wrong opposed to - what? To something else that is represented by Antigone. Let me tell you that it isn't simply the defense of the sacred rights of the dead and of the family, nor is it all that we have been told about Antigone's saintliness. Antigone is borne along by a passion, and I will try to tell you which one it is.

But one thing is strange, and that is that Goethe tells us he was shocked, rattled, by one point in her speeches. When every move has been made, her capture, her defiance, her condemnation, and even her lamentations, and she stands on the edge of the celebrated tomb with the martyrdom that we have
witnessed already behind her, Antigone stops to justify herself. When she has already seemed to have been moved to a kind of "Father, why hast thou forsaken me?", she steps back and says, "Understand this: I would not have defied the law of the city for a husband or a child to whom a tomb had been denied, because after all," she says, "if I had lost a husband in this way, I could have taken another, and even if I had lost a child with my husband, I could have made another child with another husband. But it concerned my brother αὐτάκεκρος, born of the same father and the same mother." The Greek term that expresses the joining of oneself to a brother or sister recurs throughout the play, and it appears right away in the first line when Antigone is speaking to Ismene. Now that Antigone's mother and father are hidden away in Hades, there is no possibility of another brother ever being born:

μητρὸς 8' ἐν Ἀλώνω καὶ πατρὸς καὶ Κενθόποιν
οὐκ ἐστὶν ἀδελφὸς ὅσις ἐν ἰδιαίτερών

The sage from Weimar finds that all that is a bit strange. He's not the only one. Over the centuries the reasoning found in that extraordinary justification has always left people uncertain. It's important that some madness always strike the wisest of discourses, and Goethe cannot help emitting a wish. "I wish," he says, "that one day some scholar will reveal to us that this passage is a later addition."

This is the truth of a prudent man, one who knows the value of a text, one who always takes care not to formulate ideas prematurely - for isn't that how one exposes oneself to all kinds of risks? - and naturally when one makes
such a wish, one can always hope that it will be realized. But there were at least four or five nineteenth-century scholars who said that such a position is untenable.

A story just like it is said to be in Herodotus, in the third book. In truth, there isn’t too great a relationship apart from the fact that it is a question of life and death and of a brother, father, husband and child. It concerns a woman who as a result of her lamentations is offered the possibility of choosing one person in her family to be pardoned, the whole family having been condemned, as was possible at the Persian court. The woman explains why she chooses her brother over her husband.

On the other hand, just because two passages resemble each other doesn’t mean to say that one is copied from the other. Why, in any case, would the copied lines have been inserted there? In other words, this passage is so little apocryphal that these two lines are quoted roughly ninety years later by Aristotle in the third book of his Rhetoric in a passage that explains how one should explain one’s acts. It is difficult to believe the someone who was living ninety years after Sophocles would have quoted these lines as a literary example.

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if they carried with them the odor of a scandal. That seems to render the thesis of a latter addition highly doubtful.

In the end, precisely because it carries with it the suggestion of a scandal, this passage is of interest to us. You can already see why; it is only there so as to furnish additional evidence to something that next time I will try to define as the aim of Antigone.

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