Antigone , The Qualities Of Creon Essay, Research Paper

THE QUALITIES OF CREON

As readers, we have to make judgments and interpretations of different characters. In

the book, Antigone, translated by David Greene, there is a character by the name of

Creon. While reading Antigone, some important descriptions about Creon become

apparent. He views himself as the perfect leader, believes he is always correct, and wants

control over people.

Creon believes he is the only perfect ruler for Thebes. He believes that he can create a

better city with his presence: “I would not be silent if I saw ruin, ” (p.168 l.203-204).

“I would not count any enemy of my country as a friend-” (p.168 l.205-206). He further

continues by stating “I will make her greater still” (p.168 l.210). In this last quote Creon

declares that he will improve the city (she) by his rulings. Creon describes how his

qualities make him a good ruler and how he would act in different situations.

Furthermore, Creon views himself a good leader because he believes he has the best

attributes and no one can compare to him. Creon shows his over-confidence when he

boasts of his role as the perfect ruler of Thebes.

In addition, Creon believes he is always correct in his judgments and his beliefs.

Before the sentry even explains the event that has occurred, the sentry states that

he is only a messenger and that he has not committed the act. Yet Creon still accuses

the sentry of receiving money for the act and threatens to punish him. “That will teach

you in the days to come from what you may draw profit ill-gotten gains ruin more than

they save” (p.172-173 l.342-346). Creon does not think logically that the sentry would

not turn himself in for such an impious act. Consequently, the Chorus suggests that the

act may have been committed by God. Creon stops this “nonsense” conversation

immediately and rebukes that Zeus and the gods would not honor criminals. Creon seems

to believe he knows everything and stubbornly refuses to listen to others. He goes as far

as not believing his son, Haemon, when Haemon informs his father of the reputation he

has created to the citizens. Creon believes that “It seems this boy (Haemon) is on the

woman s side (Antigone)” (p.190 l. 803). Creon refuses to believe what Haemon says

and attacks Haemon for siding with Antigone. Creon s stubbornness brings about his own

downfall when he chooses not to believe Teiresias, the blind prophet. Instead, Creon

falsely accuses Teiresias of making “profit from silver-gold ” (p.200 l.1096). Insulted

by the false remark of trying to make money, Teiresias tells Creon of the dangerous future

ahead revolving Creon. Creon not only thinks he is the perfect ruler, but also stubbornly

refuses to listen to others and believes what he thinks is correct, even without basis

or proof.

Creon is a very authoritative person and demands control of others. When talking to

the Chorus, Creon does not ask them to abide by the decree but demands that they follow.

“That you should not side with those who disagree” (p.169 l. 238). Creon expects loyalty

from others. It is apparent that Creon is very dominating and wants to be in control. “The

man the city sets up in authority must be obeyed in small things and in just but also in their

opposites” (p.187 l. 720-723). Through this quote the reader realizes that Creon wants

obedience in everything he decides even if he is at fault. “Their is nothing worse than

disobedience to authority” (p.187 l. 726-727). This quote further supports Creon s belief

that everyone shall remain faithful to him even if he rules unjustly. This characteristic of

Creon makes him rule by his own judgment instead of through the well-being of the

city and the citizens. This is proved true when Creon says “Should the city tell me how I

am to rule them?” (p.189 l. 794). Creon has forgotten that the ruler is supposed to reach

for the best counsel for the city and the citizens. Creon expects and demands loyalty from

everyone even if he is a bad ruler.

Creon thinks very highly of himself. He is under the impression that he is a great ruler

and will improve Thebes although he ends up doing the opposite. In addition, Creon

believes he is always correct even if he isn t. Another characteristic of Creon is that he

wants to be in authority and expects loyalty from everyone. Creon is obviously an over-

confident and dominating figure that needs to readjust his view of life and his role in

society.