Role Of Fate In Antigone Essay, Research Paper

The Role of Fate in Antigone

Sophocles? Antigone concerns the struggle of a young woman battling for justice at all costs. The idea of fate is a staple throughout Greek Literature, and Sophocles uses the concept of fate to dictate the actions of a character. Antigone?s destiny is one of predestination, a mission of the gods which begins with her ill-fated family and Creon?s decree, and ends with her own actions.

The Ancient Greek plays contain a concept of fate that dictates every action taken by, and every word spoken by a character. Sophocles? Antigone is not different, fate controls Antigone?s life in various ways including her lineage. Antigone is the product of an incestuous relationship between Oedipus and Jocasta, her cursed family history suggests that she too is subject to the curse. The acts of Oedipus are contrary to the gods and the deities must reconcile all products of his deeds. Thus, Antigone is doomed from the moment she is born, her acts of civil disobedience are just the strings the gods use to manipulate their puppet.

Next, Creon?s pronouncement that Polyneices must not be buried pits Antigone against earthly law, and it is the will of the gods that she bury her brother because that is the only just action. Antigone, from the moment from the declaration, is destined to die because it is her fate and her duty to bury her brother. This civil disobedience is a tool of the gods to govern earth but heavenly law in the most extreme case. Antigone?s decision to bury her brother is not one of free will but of divine direction, for with Sopholces and Greek drama there is no free will. Sophocles considers free will a mortal misconception and a celestial instrument the gods use to carry-out their will on earth.

Then, Antigone seals her fate by completing the burial of her brother. Under the idea of free will she would have been able to save herself by not completing the task, but since the deed is just and the will of the gods she has no choice but to properly honor her fallen sibling. There s no doubt that her actions will mean death, and even Creon?s last minute efforts could not change her destiny.

Thus, Antigone, perhaps one of the most noble of literature?s characters, is a victim of fate and destiny and not of personal pride or obstinance. Ancestry, human law, and personal actions all lead to Antigone?s downfall but none could prevent them, because fate controls the life of Antigone. A marionette of the gods, the strings obvious and tight, pull her from here to there only to fall when the strings break.