

Antigone

For the whole of last week we studied Antigone, written by Sophocles. However, we used the version adapted by Jean Anouilh because it links to Anne Frank, previously studied by us too. Antigone is a Greek Tragedy and the version we looked at, questioned the whole idea of the society manipulating people and the German authority.

The play is set in Thebes, as in the two versions, and stuck to the same themes also found in Cyrano de Bergerac, also studied by our class. These themes were that her inner self could never change, linking to Cyrano's inner and outer beauty themes. We could see that when she was all full of blood and hurt but still called herself a queen. There is also "values and virtues" being explored for it shows Antigone that she hangs on to what she thinks it is right independent of the consequences, like the death she faced.

In the Anouilh version, a monologue is introduced giving to the audience an overview of the play because Greek Tragedies take place in only one day. The audience then is placed in the story by this monologue for it gets a reference to the past of the scene they will see and a reference to the future too. For example, they are told all about Antigone and her family and are told too about her death. That however does not make the play uninteresting but it increases your curiosity to understand what may have happened between the things you were told happened before and the things as a consequence.

The tone and the informal language used in this play were very effective because it humanised the characters for the audience. The fact the language is simpler and adapted to our times, the characters turn to be much more realistic for us and understandable than if the words were like the strictness and confusingness of the real Antigone version.

In class, we had to then act a scene that included the following themes of Greek Theatre: loyalty, obedience, oppression, freedom. And the following elements of drama: sound or percussion, offstage voice, direct address to the audience, chorus.

Our group came up with a plot that took place in a hospital. In the middle of the stage, to show importance and focus, was a chair or bed where a man sat. He was very old and dying. His daughter comes in and the father, who discovered she sold her body to pay for his treatment, began to argue trying to convince her to stop that for he would rather die instead.

The sound used was of the heart beat measure done by the voice of one of the people of the chorus standing around, they were the nurses. It kept changed with the condition of the father, who in the end died making the measure sound as a long beep. An offstage voice was used as the daughter's conscience that reflected directly to the audience.

The Greek Tragedy themes worked well for loyalty was shown by the daughter towards the father when she stood up for having to sell herself to pay for the father's treatment. Obedience was a consequence of the father's death. Even though he told her to

quit this life as a prostitute, she was stubborn and did NOT obey. However, due to his death, she eventually did for there was no longer a treatment for her to pay for. Oppression and freedom was seen in the father. Oppression when he saw himself lost for having to die for his daughter to leave to a better condition and in his death too was the freedom and relief of the father for no longer suffering and for the daughter no having to do that anymore.

At last, we all enjoyed a lot working with Greek Theatre and saw how they thought about in those times so differently than us, however both always lead by what society imposes and makes up our opinions. It was interesting to how all worked out and people worked and understood well all the points of Antigone, even though our presentation ended up slightly confusing because of lack of time. Overall, it was a very pleasant experience.